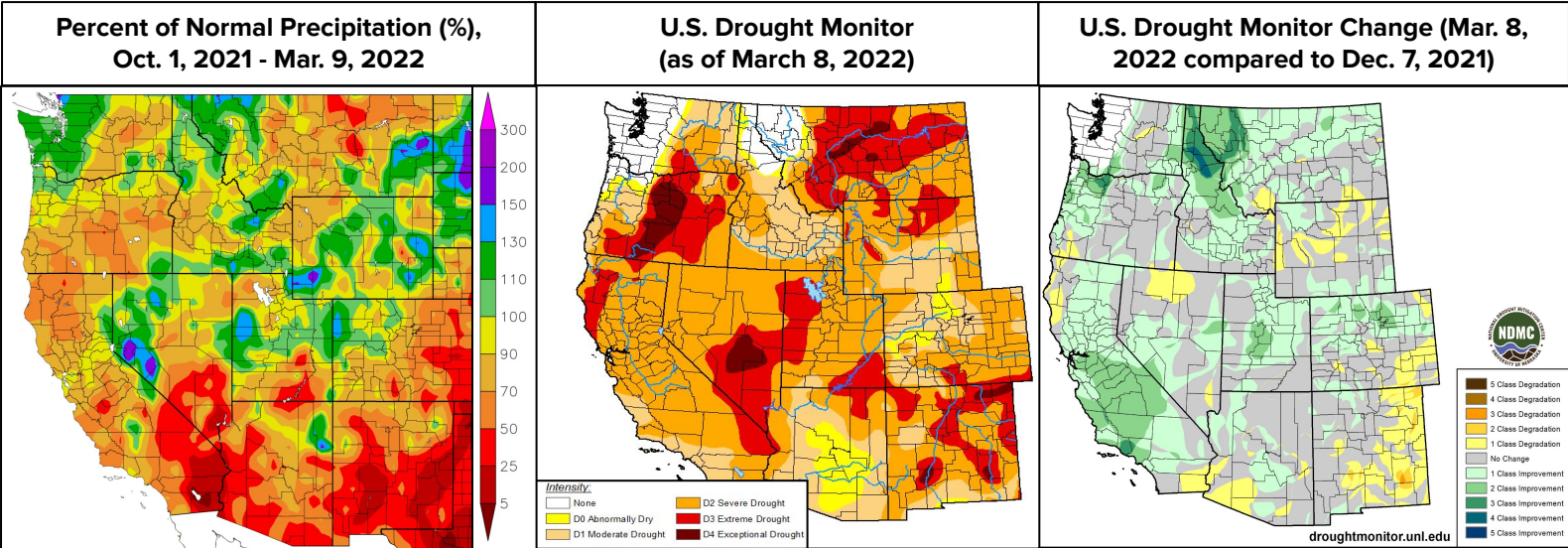


Mountain West Spring Hazard Outlook

Drought Conditions to Persist

Setting the Stage: Precipitation and Soil Moisture

The winter season brought some much-welcomed precipitation to many locations across the western U.S. Even so, much of the region still only received near normal to a little below normal precipitation for the winter season. While this winter precipitation helped to improve drought conditions across many areas, the latest Drought Monitor shows that widespread drought conditions still exist across almost the entire western U.S., with the exception of the coastal Pacific Northwest, northern Idaho, and northwest Montana.



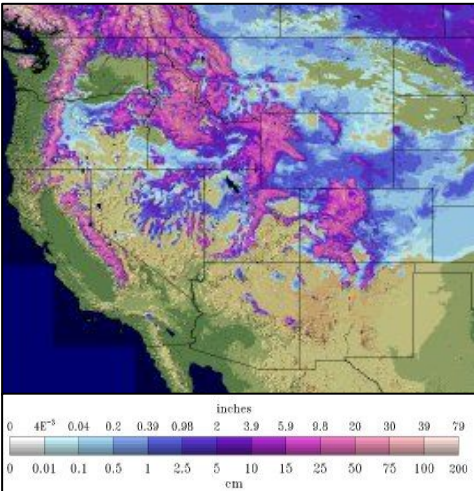
ABOVE: Percent of 1991-2020 Normals Precipitation from Oct. 1, 2021 to Mar. 9, 2022. (Source: [HPRCC](#))

ABOVE: U.S. Drought Monitor as of Mar. 8, 2022 (Source: [U.S. Drought Monitor](#))

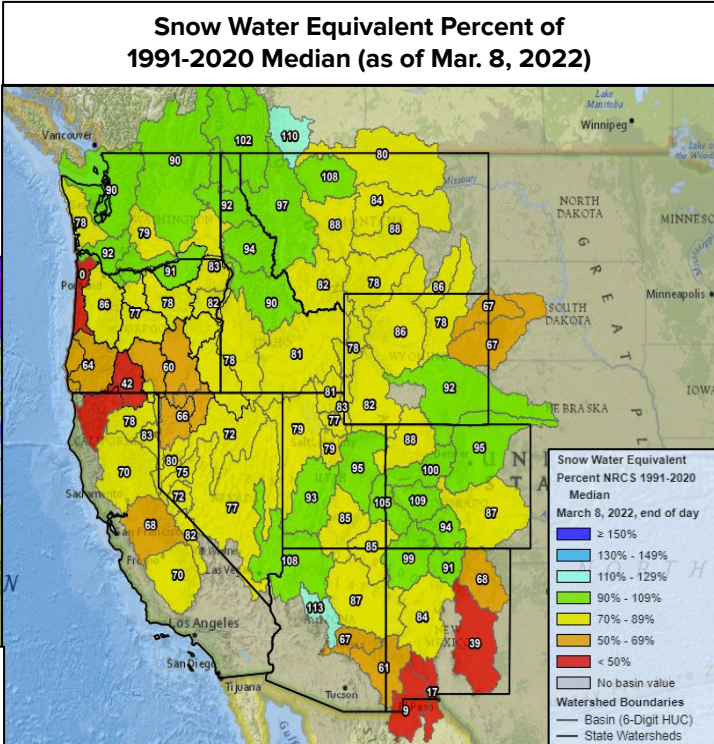
ABOVE: Change in U.S. Drought Monitor Class (Source: [U.S. Drought Monitor](#))

Setting the Stage: Snow Pack

After a wet December, well above normal snow water equivalent was present at the start of 2022. However, conditions have trended drier since the start of the year, with some parts of the west experiencing record dryness in January and February. As a result, much of the western U.S. is trending towards snow drought conditions, particularly for locations where the spring outlook favors warmer and drier conditions. The typical peak for snow water equivalent across the West generally occurs from late March through early April, so there is still time for the seasonal snowpack to build. However, continued dry conditions, warmer than normal temperatures, and increasing late winter sun angles will all be working against snowpack accumulation.



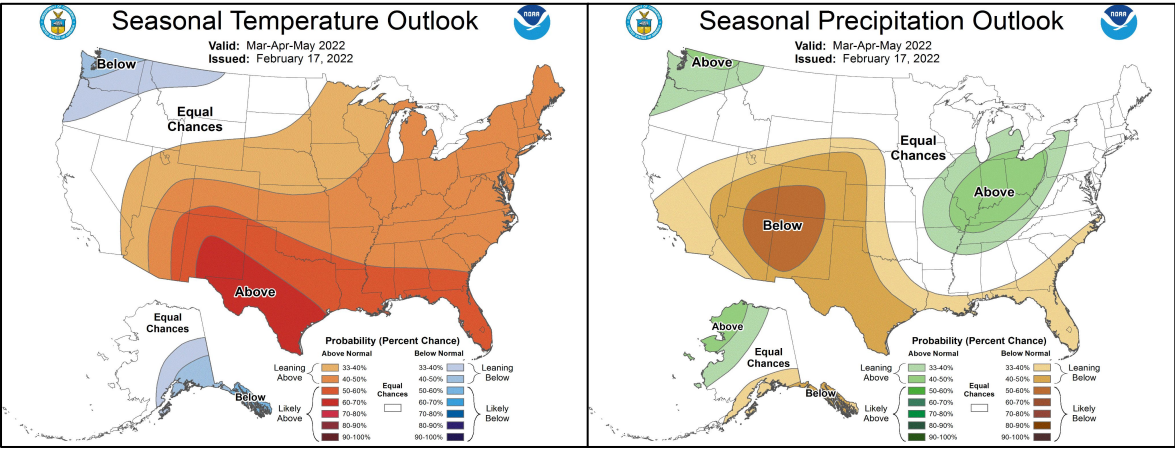
ABOVE: Snow Water Equivalent Map as of Mar. 10, 2022. (Source: [OWP/NOHRSC](#))



ABOVE: Snow Water Equivalent Map as a Percent of 1991-2020 Median (Mar. 8, 2022) (Source: [NRCS](#))

Spring Climate Outlook: March - May

The long-range outlook for March through May favors increased chances for warmer and drier than normal conditions across the southern Rockies, with cooler and wetter than normal conditions slightly favored across the Pacific Northwest.

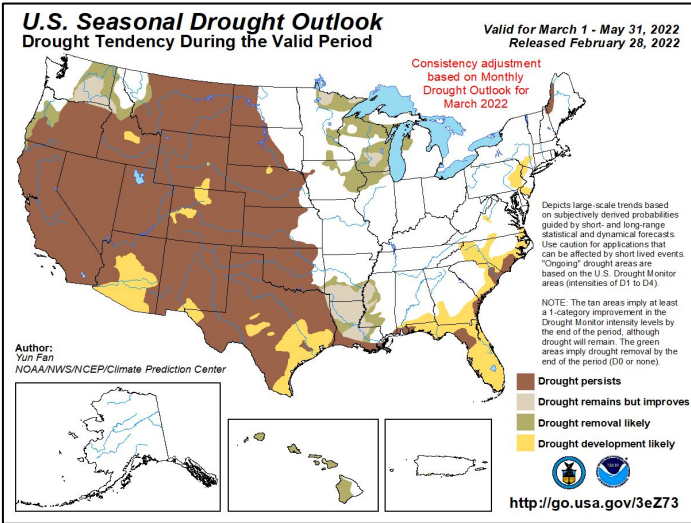


ABOVE: Temperature, Precipitation Outlooks for March through May 2022. (Source: [CPC](#))

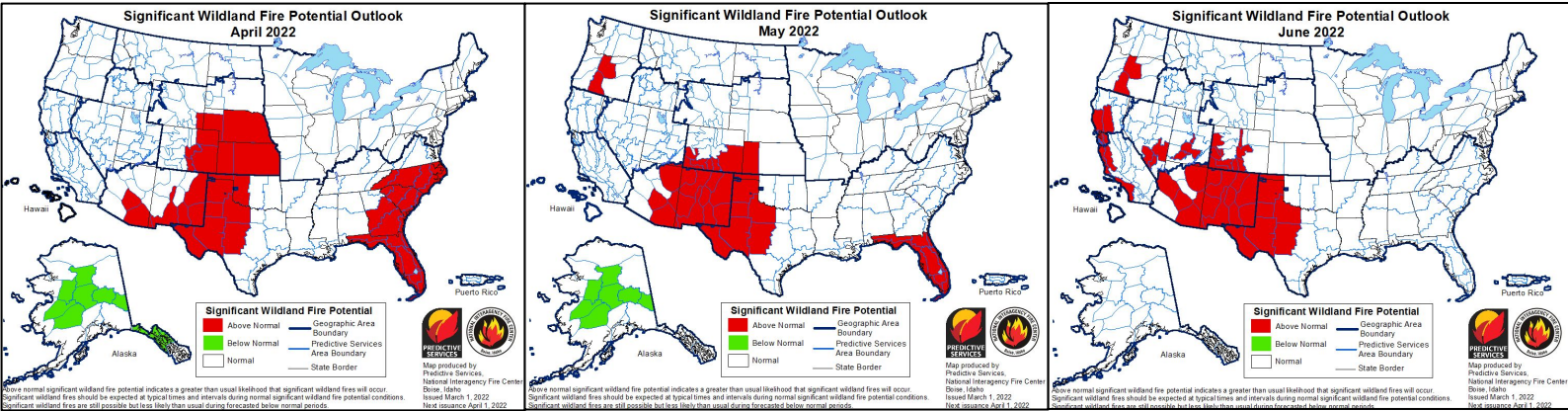
Potential Impacts

With notably low streamflow and water levels across much of the West and with generally dry soils due to ongoing drought conditions, here are some potential impacts for this spring:

- Ongoing drought conditions through the spring and likely into the summer, particularly across the southern portion of the region.
- Potential for enhanced wildland fire activity across the Central and Southern Rockies and parts of the southwest, given the presence of dry fuels.
- Stress on water resources for communities.
- Continued impacts for water recreation and/or tourism.
- Lack of water resources for crops and livestock.



ABOVE: U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook (March-May 2022). (Source: [CPC](#))



ABOVE: April, May, and June 2022 Significant Wildland Fire outlooks (Source: [NIFC](#))

For more information visit:

Local Forecast – [weather.gov](#)

Long-Range Outlooks –

[cpc.ncep.noaa.gov](#)

River Forecasts –

[water.weather.gov/ahps/forecasts.php](#)

Weather & Climate Data – [ncei.noaa.gov](#)

Fire Outlook – [nifc.gov/nicc](#)

Drought Information – [drought.gov](#)

Agricultural Outlook – [usda.gov/oce/ag-outlook-forum](#)

Streamflow Data -

[https://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?id=ww](#)

