



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Building a Weather-Ready Nation

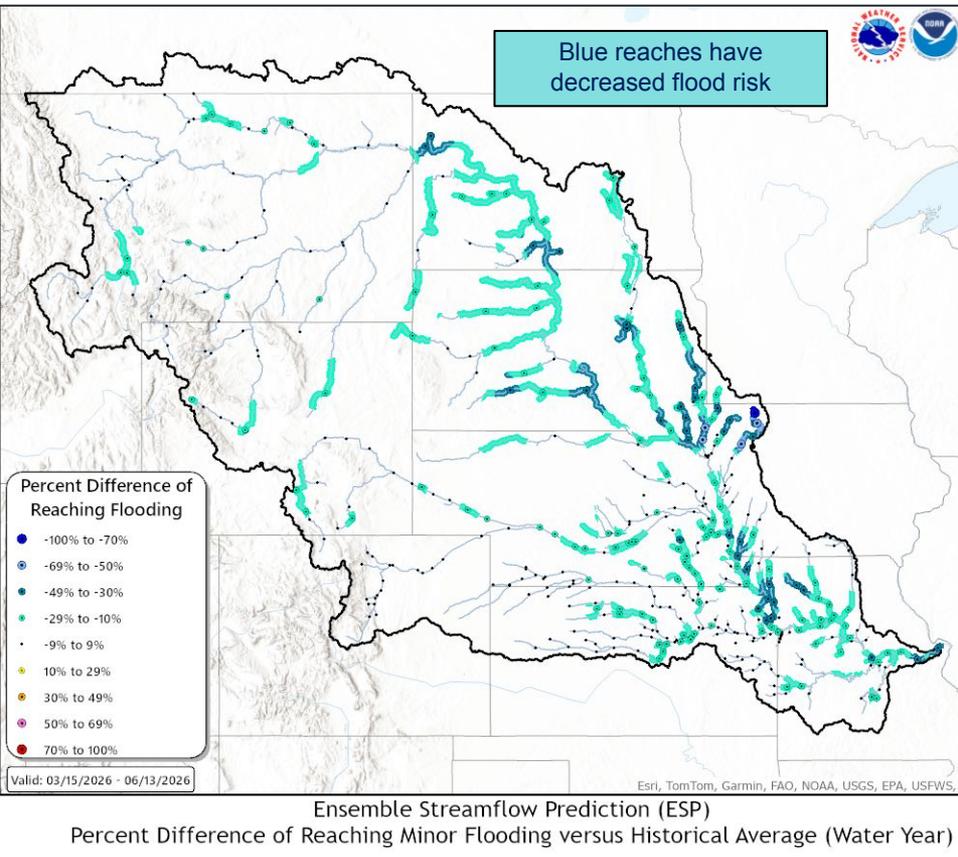
2026 Flood Potential Outlook

Missouri River Basin

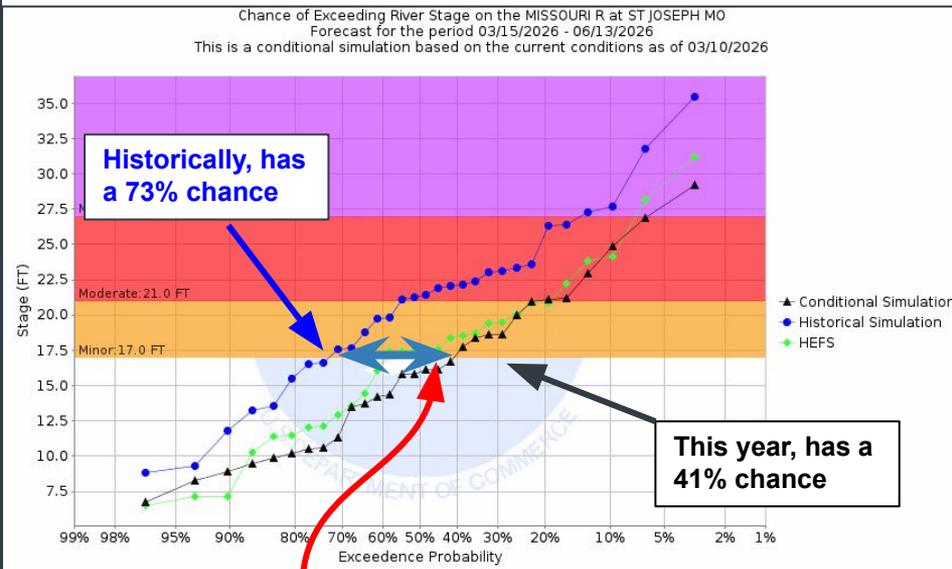
March 12th, 2026

MISSOURI BASIN

CHANCE OF REACHING FLOOD STAGE IN 2026 AS COMPARED TO HISTORICAL



Many rivers in the eastern portion of the basin have a REDUCED flood potential this year.

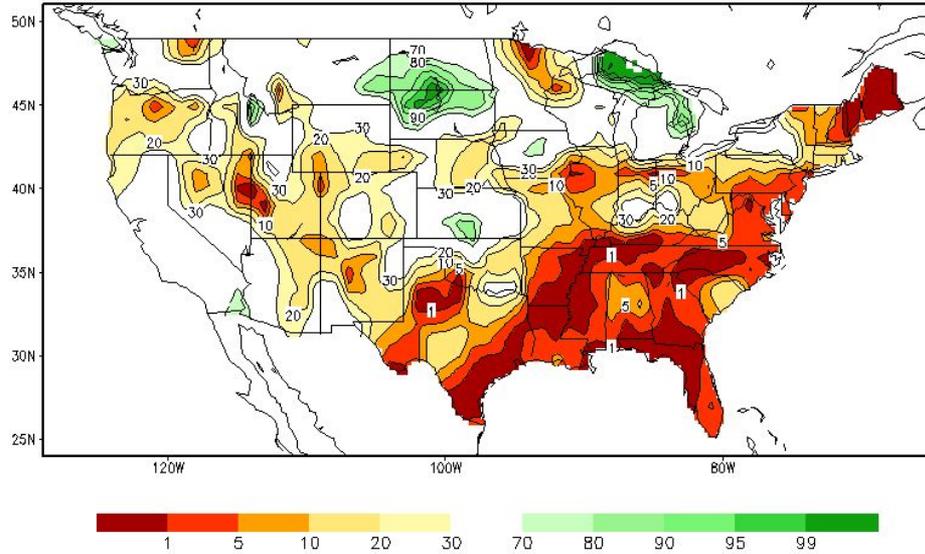


32 percent decrease in chance to reach flood stage during next 3 months



MISSOURI BASIN SOIL MOISTURE CONDITIONS

Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile
MAR 11, 2026

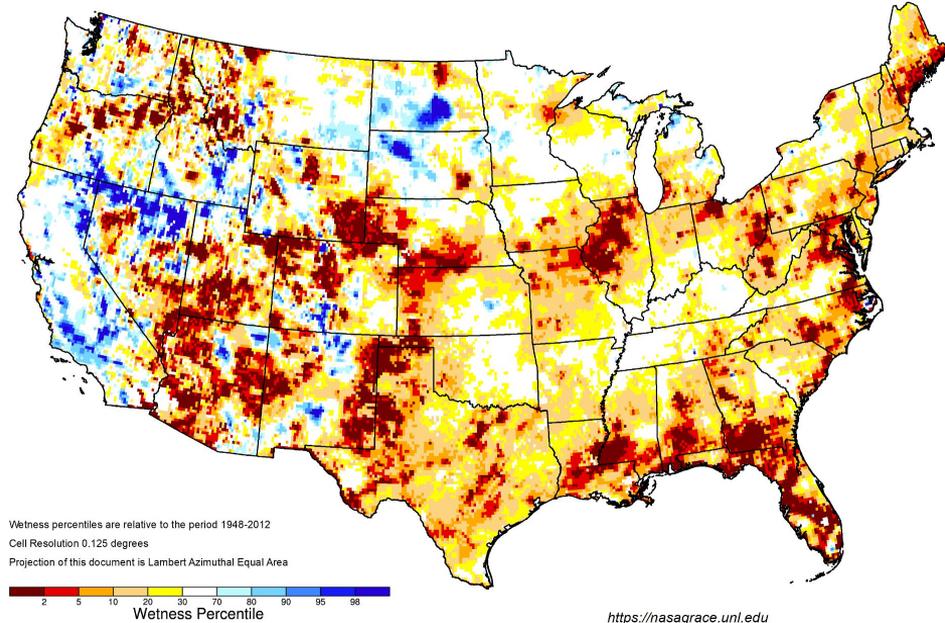


Courtesy: NOAA Climate Prediction Center



GRACE-Based Shallow Groundwater Drought Indicator

March 09, 2026



<https://nasagrace.unl.edu>

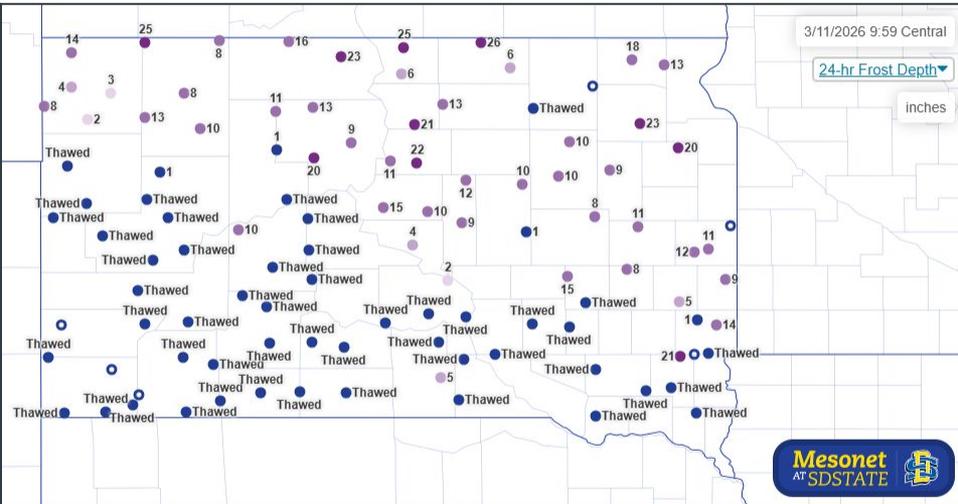
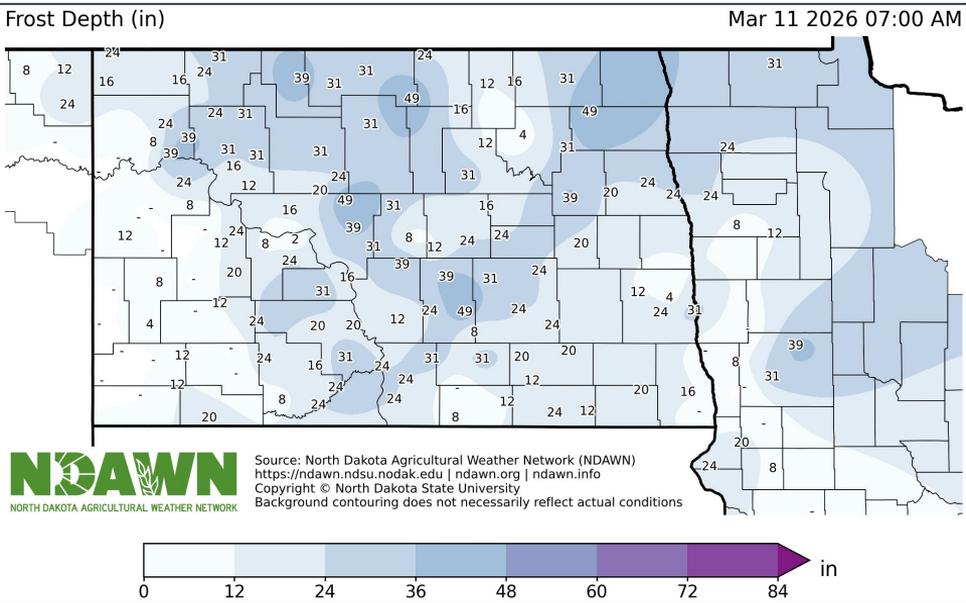
Soils are very dry over much of the basin with the exception of North and South Dakota.



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MISSOURI BASIN SOIL TEMPERATURE & FROST DEPTHS

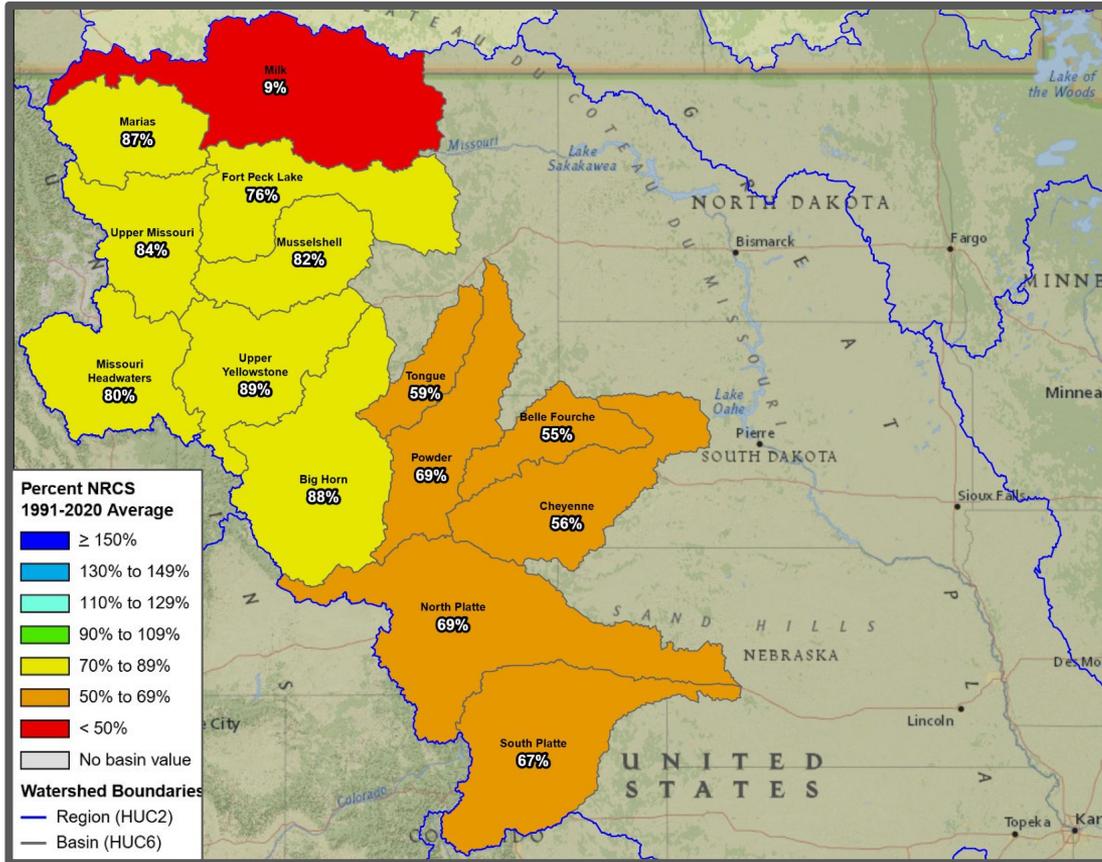


Shallow soil temperatures are beginning to warm. The lack of snowpack is causing frost depths to fluctuate; developing and thawing across southern SD. This could lead to increased Spring runoff if snowmelt & rainfall cannot penetrate into the soil.



MISSOURI BASIN

Mountain Snowpack As of 11 March 2026

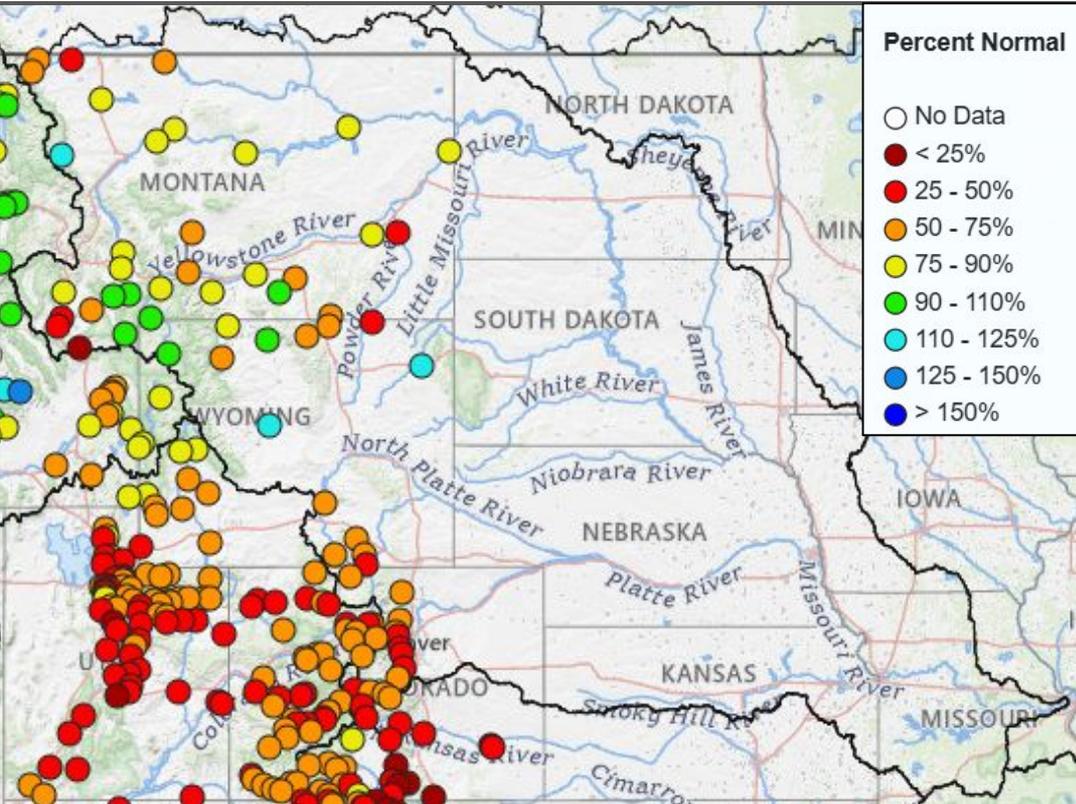


Mountain snowpack is below average

We are about 80% of the way through the peak seasonal snow equivalent accumulating period

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Mountain Runoff Volume April-September Percent of Normal

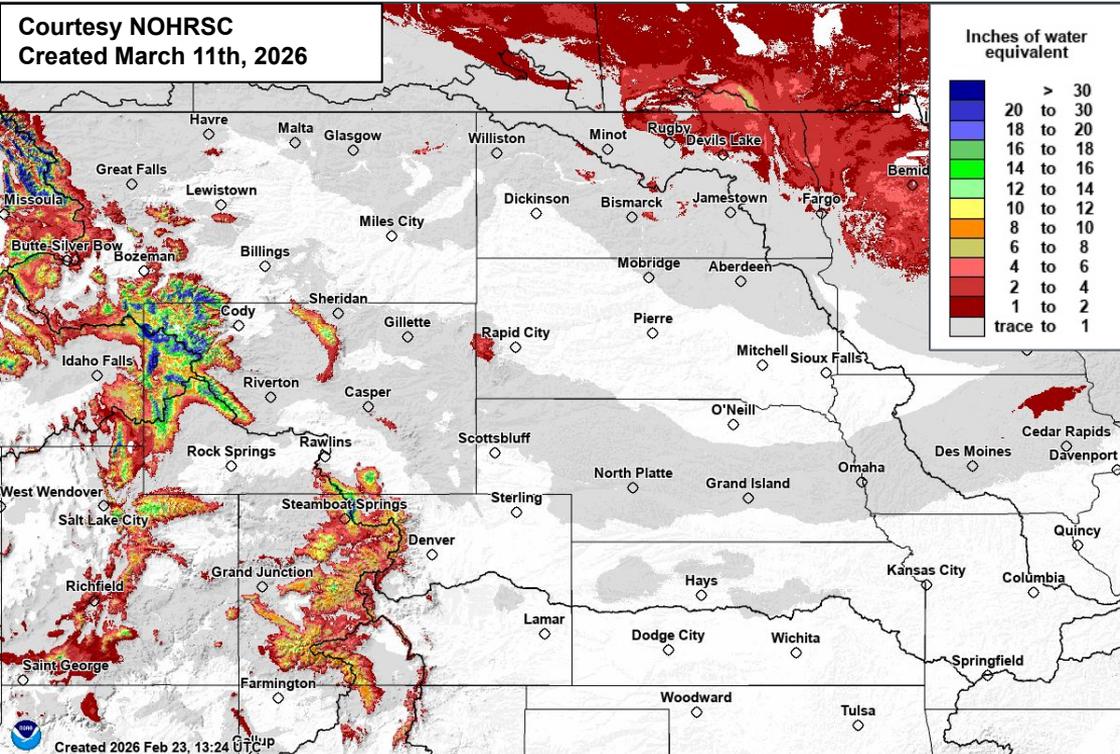


Mountain runoff volume projected to be below normal (per 01 Mar 2026 Outlook)

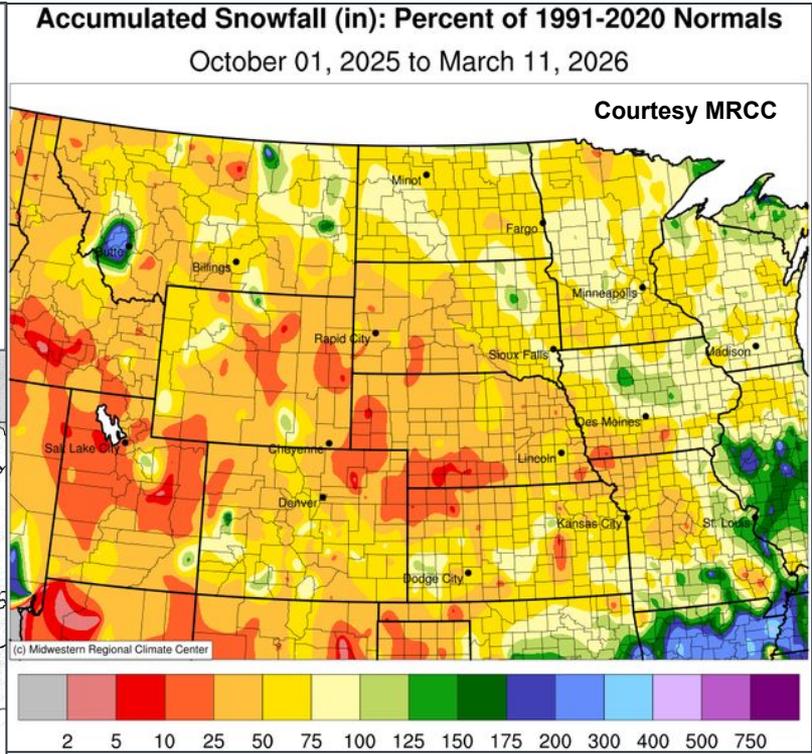
- Upper Missouri above Ft. Peck: 79%
- Yellowstone: 81%
- North Platte: 64%
- South Platte: 47%

MISSOURI BASIN

Plains Snowpack



Plains snowpack is widespread, but shallow. Gray areas only have 1 inch or less of snow water equivalent.



Snowfall this season remains much below normal across the basin.



MISSOURI BASIN

Locations **Expected** to Flood Through Mid-June

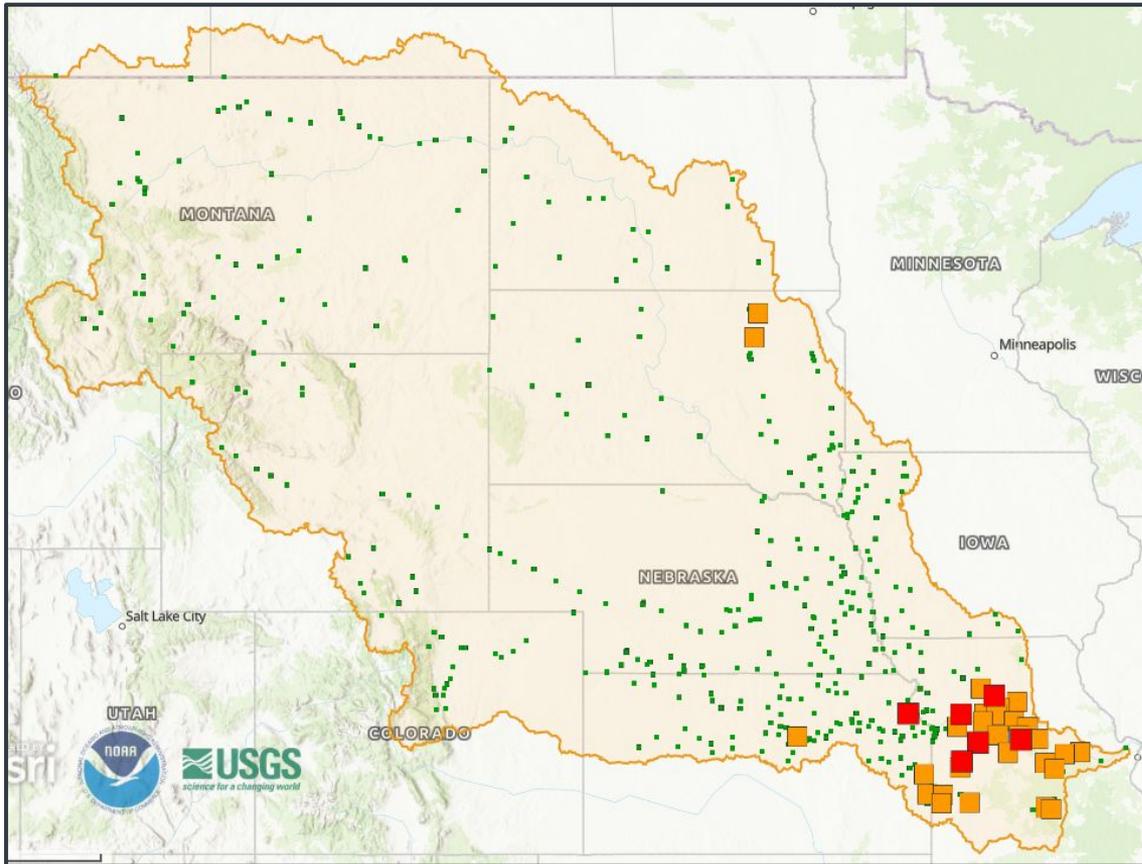
Long Range Flood Outlook

Greater than 50% chance of exceeding river flood levels

0	Major
6	Moderate
28	Minor
396	No Flooding

Flooding should be limited to the lower portion of the basin (indicated by orange and red squares). This is typical.

Springtime flooding in the lower basin is driven by thunderstorm activity.



MISSOURI BASIN

Locations **Possible** to Flood Through Mid-June

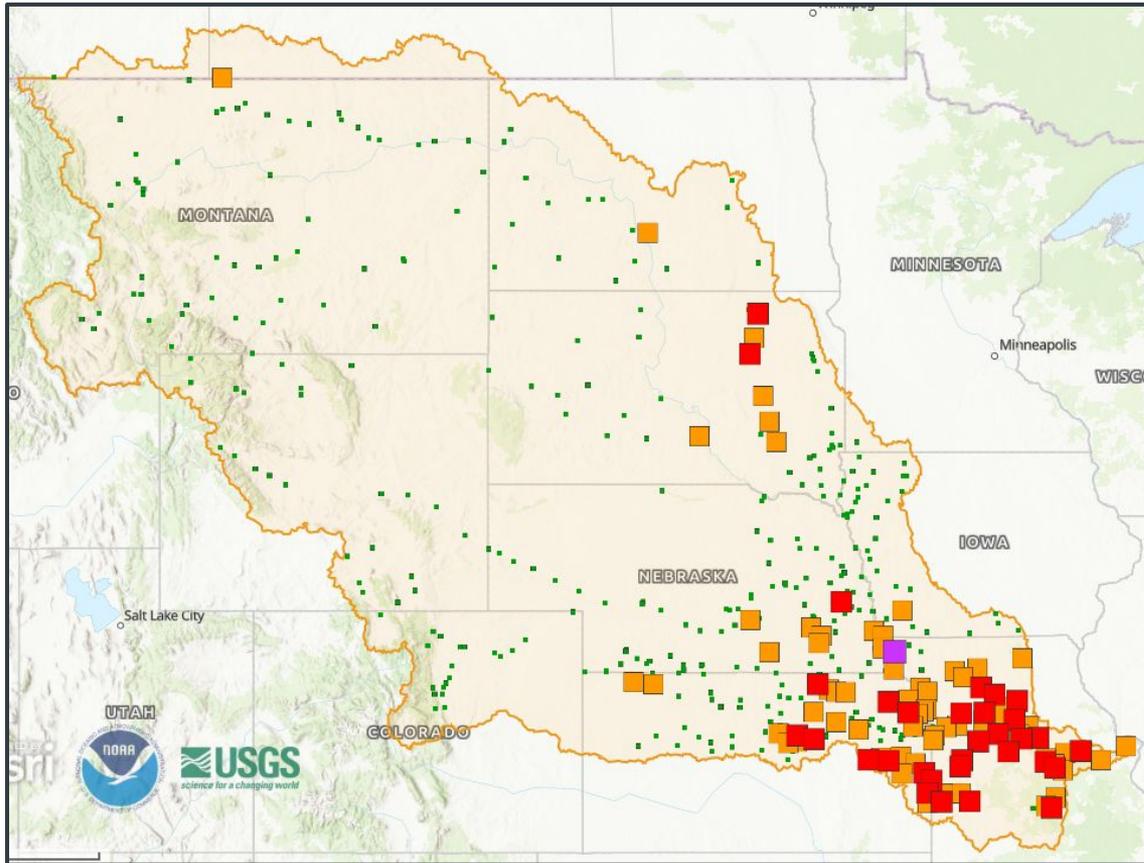
Long Range Flood Outlook

Greater than 25% chance of exceeding river flood levels

1		Major
32		Moderate
63		Minor
334		No Flooding

Flooding is possible in the eastern portion of the basin (indicated by orange, red, & purple squares).

Springtime flooding in the lower basin is driven by thunderstorm activity and a combination of snowmelt and rainfall in the northern basin.



MISSOURI BASIN

Flood Potential Outlook: Summary Points

- **Overall, spring flood risk is generally below normal this spring.** Drier conditions and below-average winter precipitation have reduced the basin-wide flood risk.
- Mountain snowpack and snow water equivalent across much of the western basin is below average. We still have roughly 20% of snow accumulating period remaining.
- Plains snowpack has been largely absent and shallow this winter and is not expected to contribute significantly to spring flooding.
- Frost depths are decreasing across the Dakotas as soils begin thawing. Wetter than normal soils could pose concern during possible rainfall events
- Ice jam break-up flooding risk is low. **Where river ice remains, risk for break-up ice jamming remains.**
- **Flood Potential mountains:** No flooding currently expected.
- **Flood Potential northern plains:** No flooding currently expected.
- **Flood Potential lower basin:** Episodic minor-to-moderate level flooding likely due to thunderstorm activity.
- **Flood Potential Missouri River:** Minor flooding possible downstream of Kansas City, also due to thunderstorm activity.

