

A photograph of a clear blue sky with green and brown trees in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the sky.

The Month in Review: April 2021

National Weather Service

Charleston, WV

Photo courtesy of the National
Weather Service Charleston, WV

April 2021 Climate Summary

April was characterized generally by below normal temperatures across the region, with the highest departures of 2-4 degrees being across eastern and southern West Virginia and northeast Kentucky. Precipitation totals varied, with below normal precipitation of 50-100% seen in general across the area, with the one major exception being a narrow area in northeast Kentucky to just west of Charleston that was above normal due to a heavy rainfall event on April 28th. There was some snowfall in April, but it was generally on the light side and overall, below normal for most of the area. This same theme applied to the winter as a whole, with a good portion of the area being below normal in terms of seasonal snowfall.

April began quite chilly across the area following the passage of a cold front at the end of March. As a result, widespread frost/freeze was seen to start the month, and even some light accumulating snow in the mountains. This would be followed by a significant warmup, with Charleston seeing four consecutive days (April 7-10) with high temperatures of 80 or above. With the warmup would come a return to a more unsettled pattern and eventual return to cooler weather for the mid-month timeframe. Several disturbances would affect the area during this timeframe, with impacts being on the minor side. Of note however were isolated severe thunderstorms producing 0.75-1.00" hail in Pocahontas and Upshur counties in West Virginia on April 9th. The same general area would receive rainfall of up to 1.68" reported near Cass in Pocahontas county for the April 10-11th period.

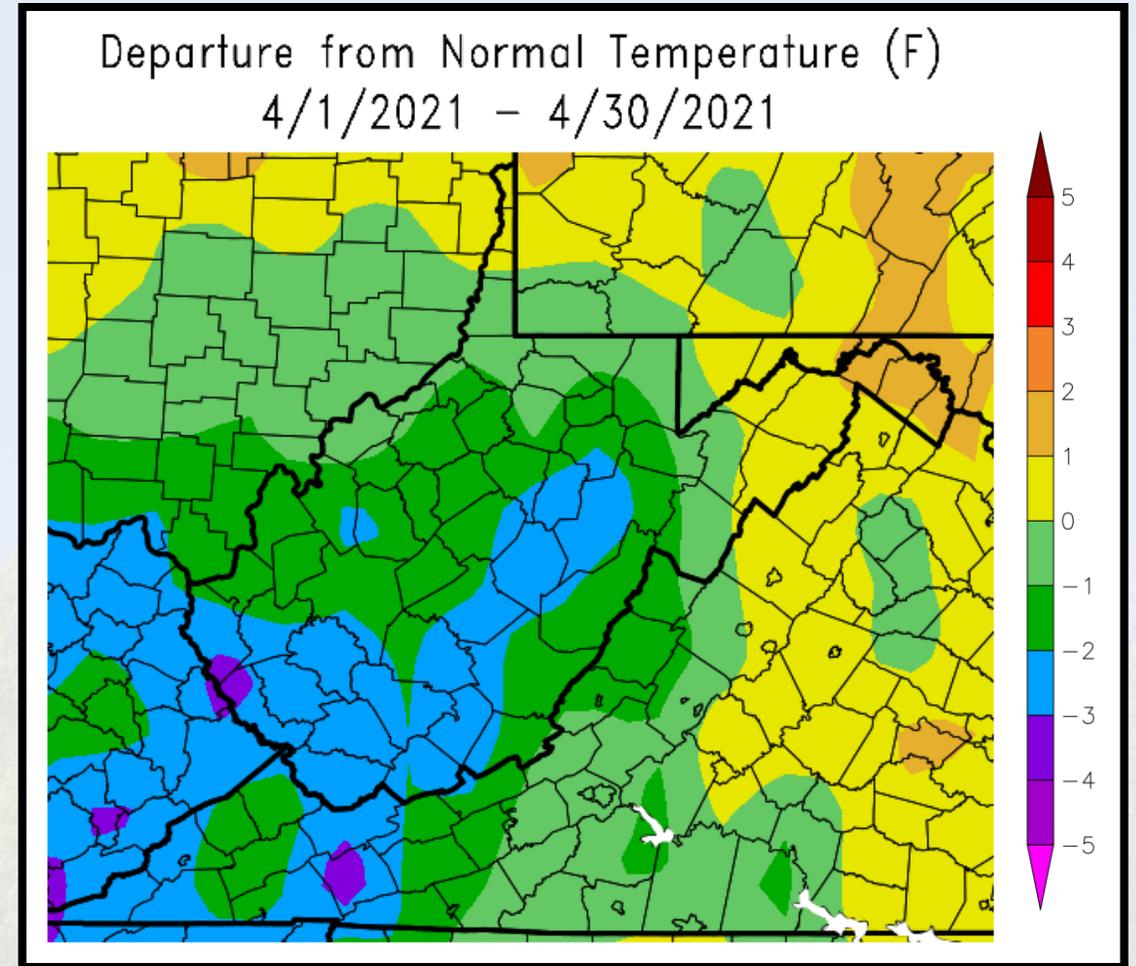
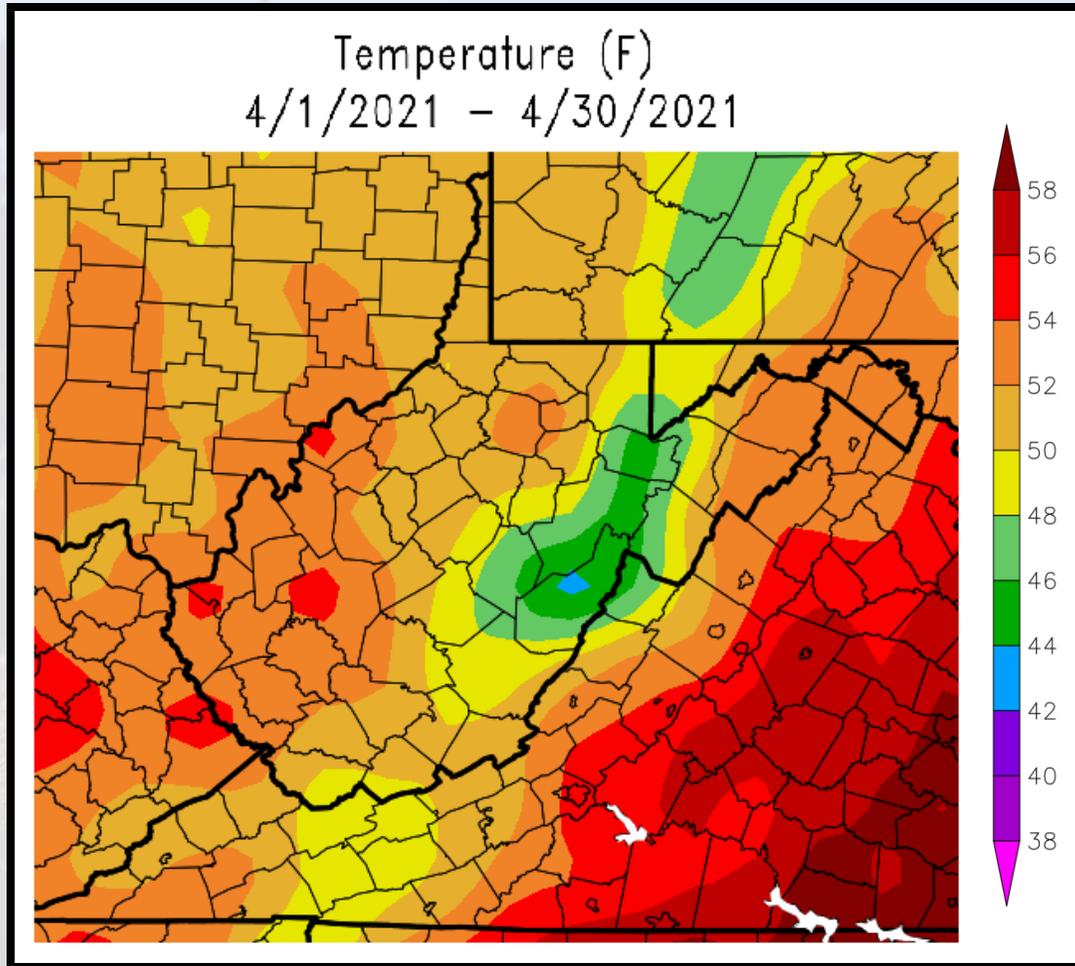
April 2021 Climate Summary (Continued)

Much colder weather would arrive to the area following the passage of a cold front on the morning of April 21st. Some areas, including areas outside of the mountains, would even see a bit of light accumulating snow as the front moved through. This would be followed by a widespread freeze for the area.

Temperatures would significantly warm heading into the end of the month, with mid-80s being seen across the lowlands on April 27-28th. A couple of disturbances would affect the area, with the most noteworthy being on April 28-29th. Rainfall during this period would be locally heavy, with Huntington setting a daily rainfall record on April 28th. Some nearby locations in northeast Kentucky would see close to 3" of rain that evening. The cold front associated with this system would sweep through the following evening, providing cooler and very windy conditions to close out April.

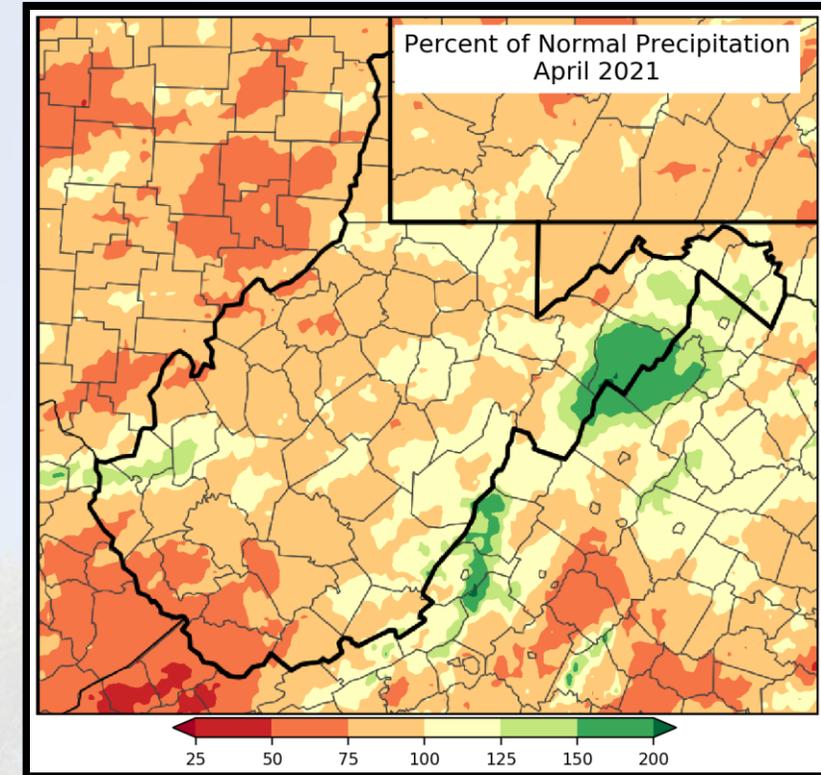
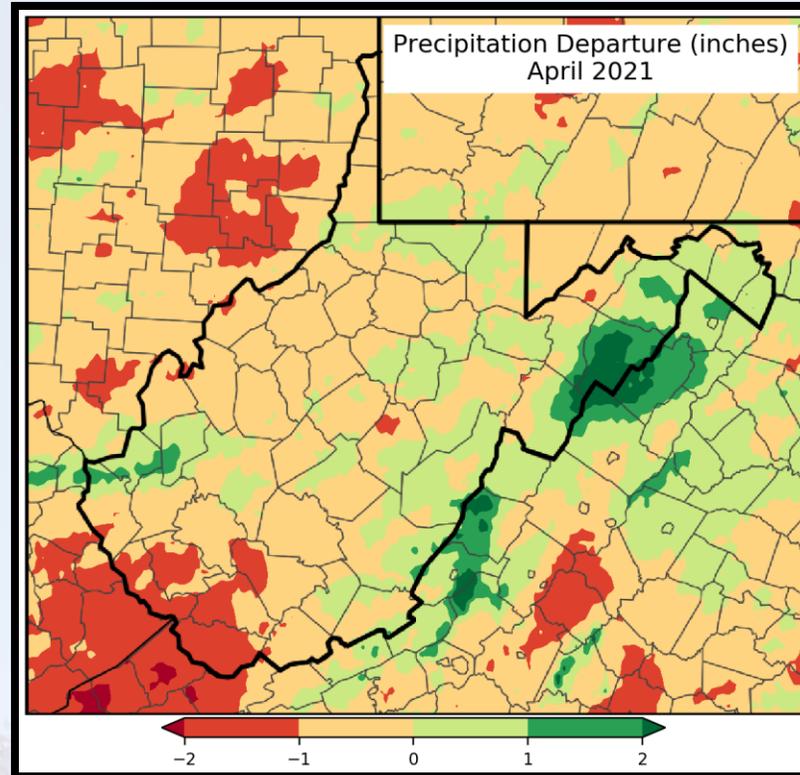
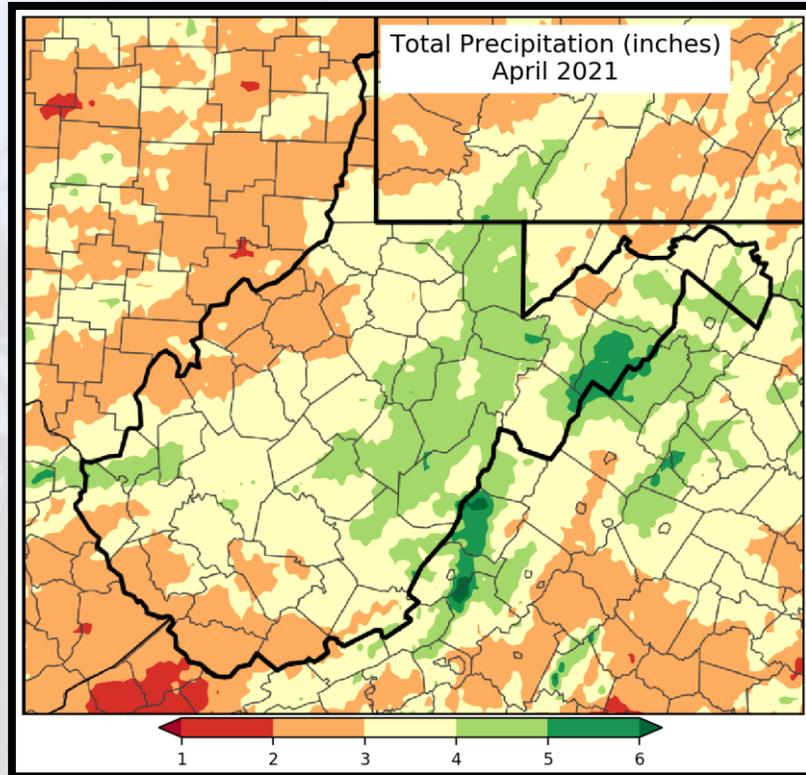
Event summaries for noteworthy events will be provided, along with temperature/precipitation departures for April. In addition, a record events list for the month of April as well as temperature/precipitation outlooks are also included.

April 2021 Average Temperature/Departure



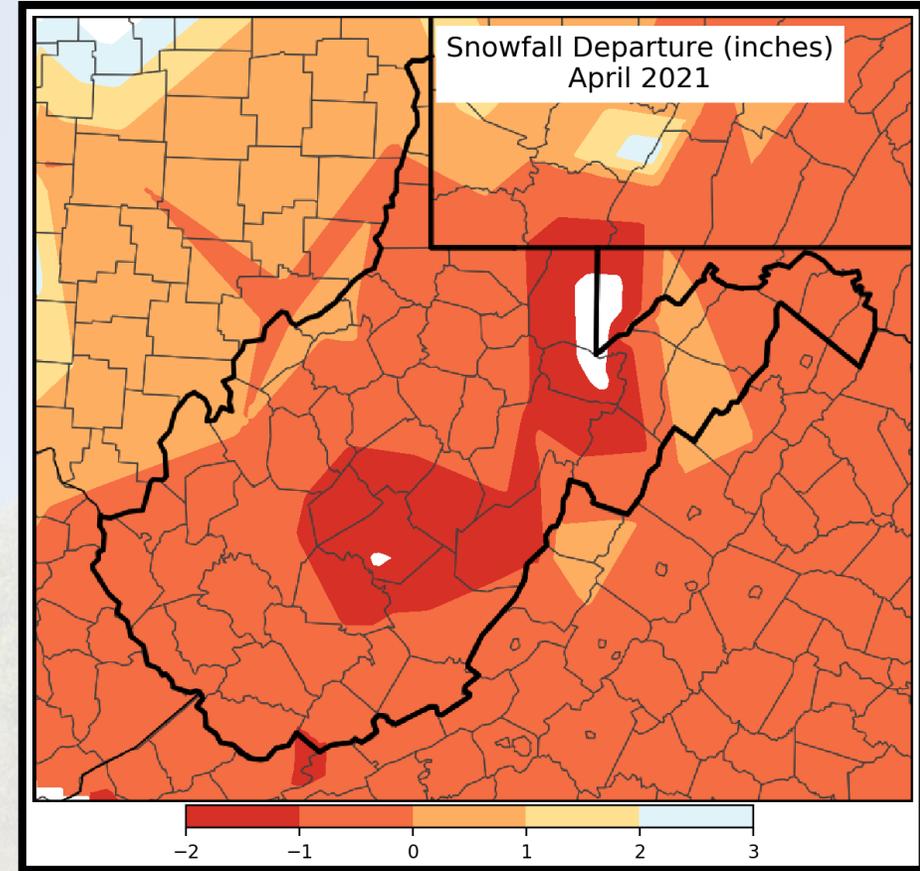
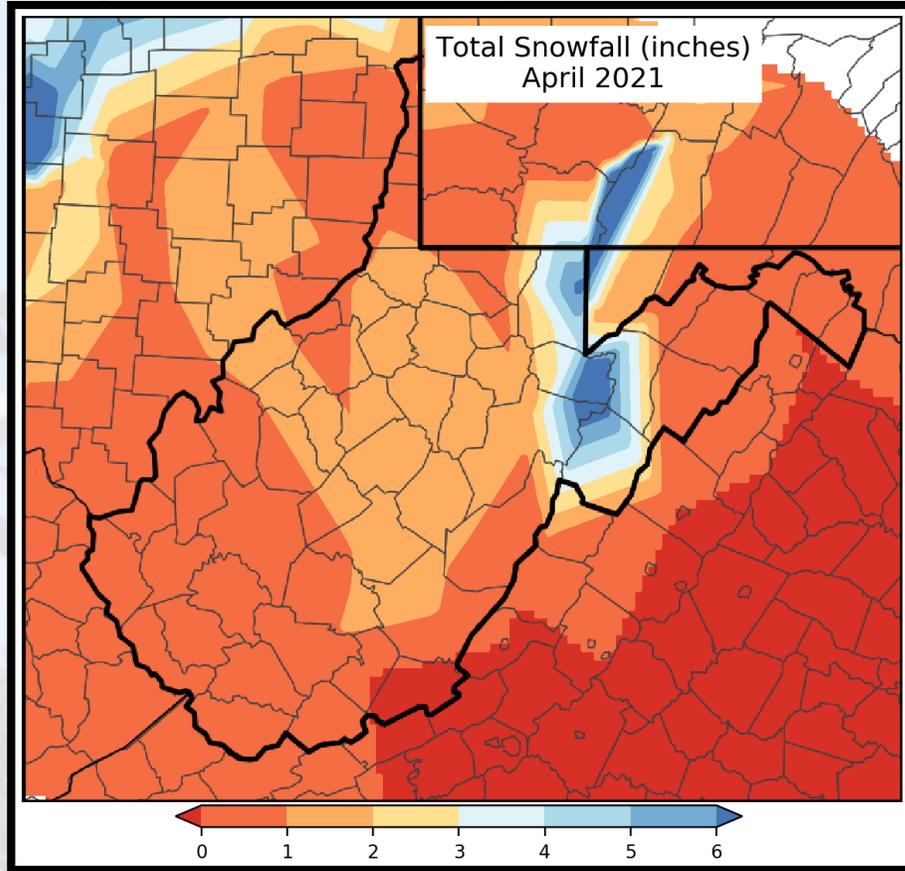
Temperatures were near to slightly below normal across northern portions of the area, while the rest of the region was below normal for the month, generally ranging from 1-4 degrees below normal (depending on location).

April 2021 Precipitation/Departure/Percent of Normal



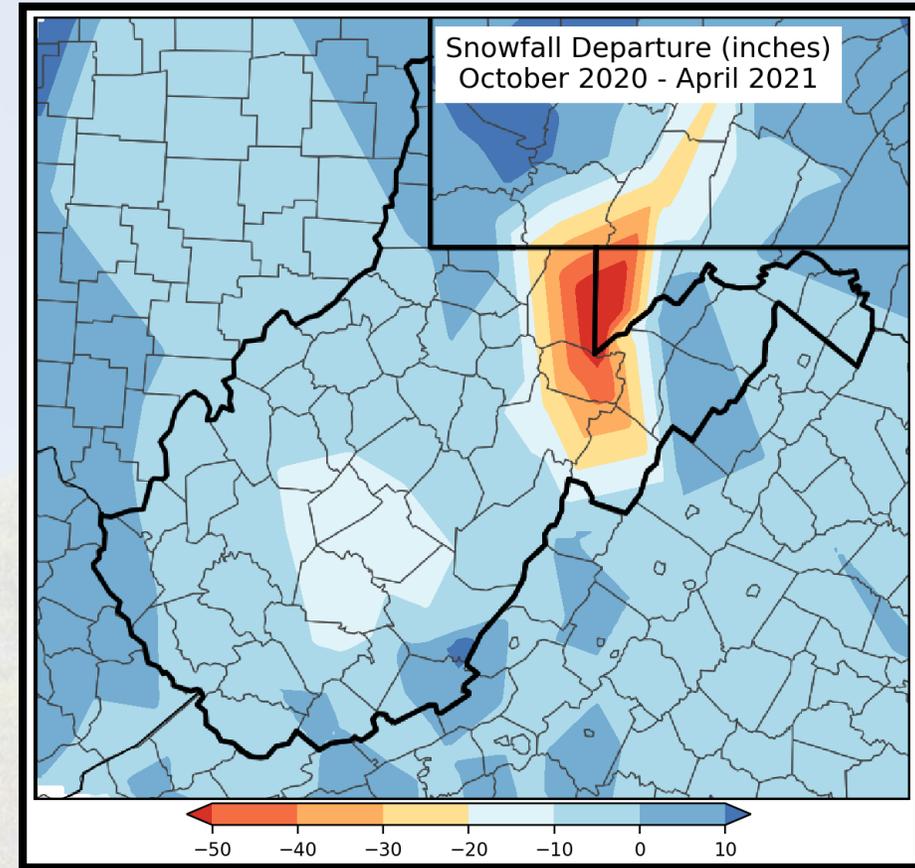
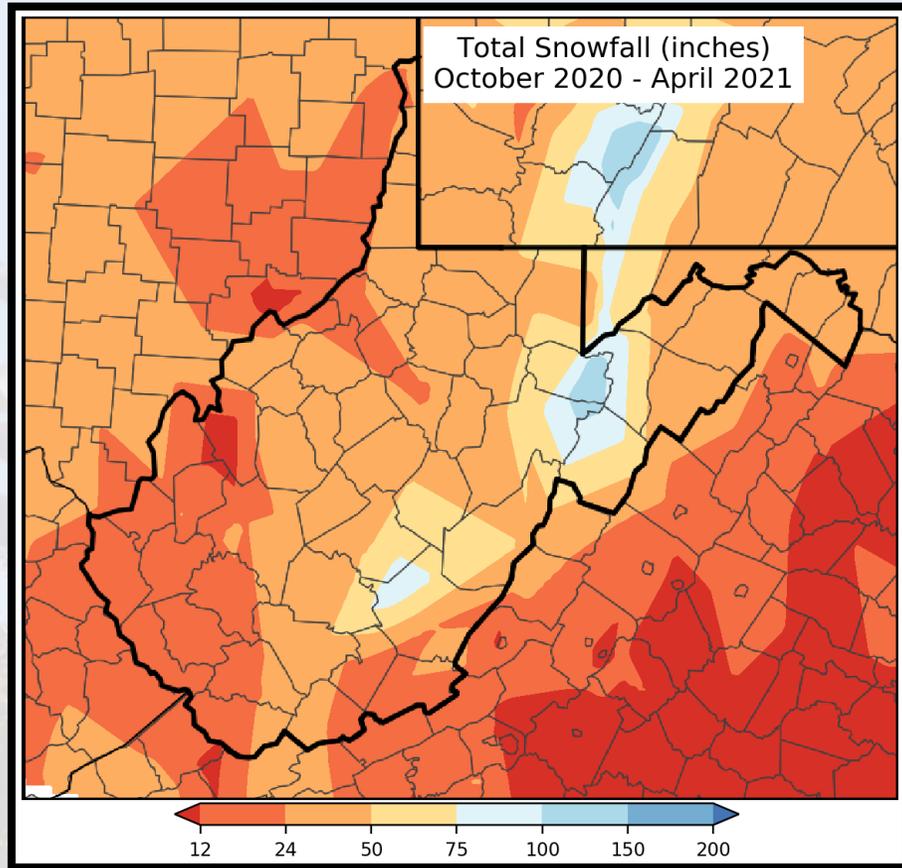
April featured a significant spread in precipitation totals, with central and eastern areas of WV, including portions of northeast KY, receiving more compared to the surrounding areas in southwest/northern WV, Virginia, and portions of southeast OH. Below normal precipitation of 50-100% was seen in general across the area, with the one major exception being a narrow area in northeast KY to just west of Charleston that was above normal due to a heavy rainfall event on April 28th. Huntington set a daily rainfall record of 1.90" on the 28th.

April 2021 Snowfall/Departure



April in general featured a slight departure in terms of snowfall over most of the area, with southeast Ohio being the exception. While snow totals were less than 2" for the lower elevations, portions of the higher terrain did receive a few more inches, but still ended with a departure for the month. Although the snowfall departure map does not have it labeled, the white shading across portions of West Virginia corresponds to a snowfall departure of 2-3".

Seasonal Snowfall to Date/Seasonal Departure (Through the end of April)



Seasonal snowfall this winter varied significantly across the area (as is usual) based on location/elevation. The general theme however was that of a below normal winter in terms of snowfall, with the largest departures being in the mountains. The one main exception to this was across far western WV, northeast KY, and portions of southeast OH, where slightly above normal snowfall occurred in spots.

April 2021 Drought Monitor

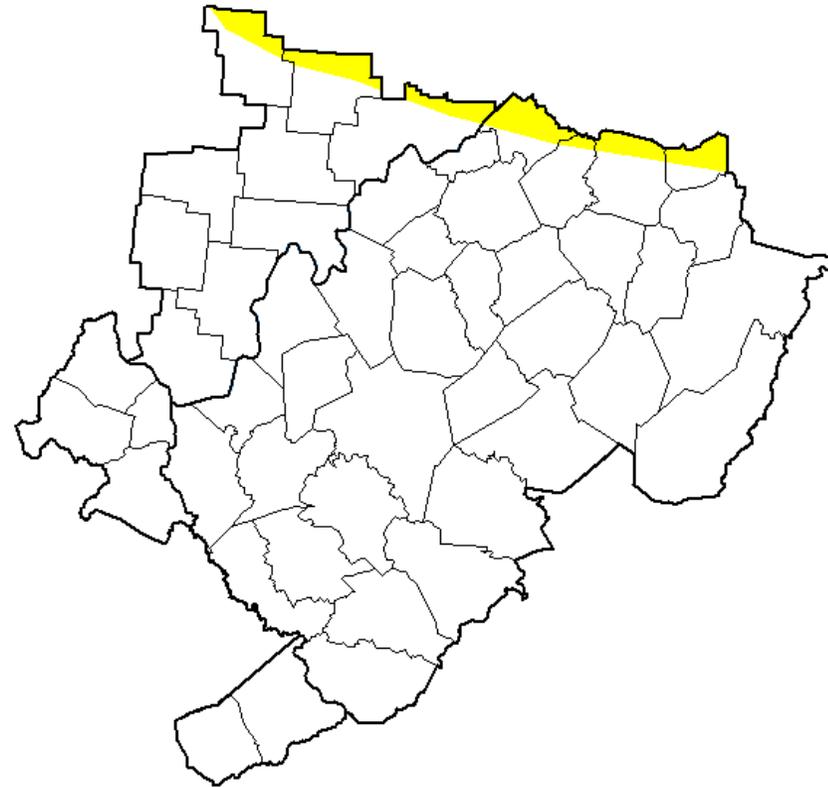
Precipitation departures in April across far northern portions of the area led to a D0 (abnormally dry) area being present near the end of April. It encompassed approximately 3.3% of the area.

U.S. Drought Monitor Charleston, WV WFO

April 27, 2021
(Released Thursday, Apr. 29, 2021)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	96.69	3.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 04-20-2021	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 01-26-2021	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12-29-2020	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-29-2020	94.33	5.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 04-28-2020	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00



Intensity:

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

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NCEI/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

April 2021 Temperature Statistics for Selected Cities

	Avg Maximum Temperature	Avg Maximum Temperature Departure	Avg Minimum Temperature	Avg Minimum Temperature Departure	Average Temperature	Average Temperature Departure
Beckley	62.9	-1.5	40.7	-1.9	51.8	-1.7
Charleston	66.9	-2.5	42.4	-2.1	54.7	-2.2
Clarksburg	64.1	-3.5	41.5	-1.6	52.8	-2.5
Elkins	62.5	-3.1	35.8	-1.5	49.2	-2.3
Huntington	66.6	-2.2	43.4	-2.1	55.0	-2.2
Parkersburg	66.3	-0.6	41.1	-1.3	53.7	-0.9

Abbreviations: Avg, Average

Notes: Temperatures/Departures are in degrees Fahrenheit

April 2021 Precipitation Statistics for Selected Cities

	Precipitation	Precipitation Departure	Precipitation Year to Date	Precipitation Year to Date Departure
Beckley	2.04	-1.54	15.49	2.99
Charleston	2.26	-1.30	13.25	-0.09
Clarksburg	2.23	-1.66	9.57	-4.61
Elkins	2.73	-1.37	11.92	-2.17
Huntington	4.47	0.56	15.17	1.79
Parkersburg	2.59	-1.03	12.06	-0.59

Notes: All units are in inches. Precipitation Year to Date corresponds to precipitation since January 1st.

April 2021 Snowfall Statistics for Selected Cities

	Snowfall	Snowfall Departure	Seasonal Snowfall	Seasonal Snowfall Dep
Beckley	0.8	-0.7	44.4	-11.5
Charleston	Trace	-0.5	23.5	-8.0
Clarksburg	M	M	M	M
Elkins	1.2	-1.1	55.2	-13.7
Huntington	Trace	-0.3	11.4	-8.4
Parkersburg	M	M	M	M

Abbreviations: Dep, Departure; M, Missing

Notes: All units are in inches. Seasonal snowfall and the corresponding seasonal snowfall departures include all snowfall tallied from the first snow in the fall, through the end of April.

Record Events for April

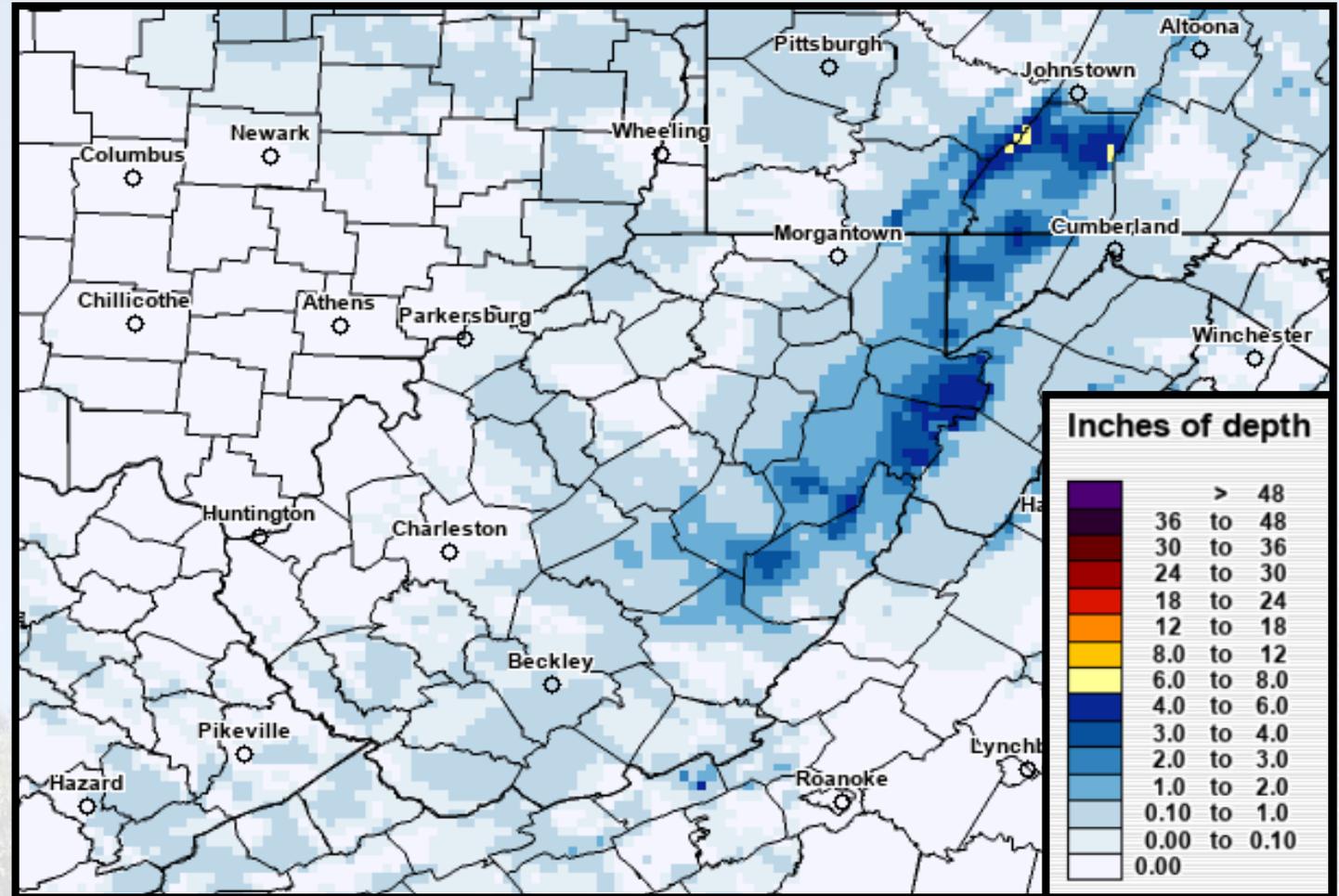
- April 2nd: Record low temperature set at Parkersburg, WV. A record low temperature of 21 degrees was set at Parkersburg, breaking the old record of 25 degrees set in 1992.
- April 3rd: Record low temperature set at Huntington, WV. A record low temperature of 24 degrees was set at Huntington, tying the old record of 24 degrees set in 1904.
- April 3rd: Record low temperature set at Parkersburg, WV. A record low temperature of 21 degrees was set at Parkersburg, breaking the old record of 23 degrees set in 1992.
- April 8th: Record high temperature set at Clarksburg, WV. A record high temperature of 84 degrees was set at Clarksburg, tying the old record of 84 degrees set in 1954.
- April 21st: Record daily maximum snowfall set at Charleston, WV. A record snowfall of a trace was set at Charleston, tying the old record of a trace set in 2001 and tied in 2009.
- April 22nd: Record low temperature set at Huntington, WV. A record low temperature of 30 degrees was set at Huntington, breaking the old record of 31 degrees set in 2020.
- April 22nd: Record daily maximum snowfall set at Huntington, WV. A record snowfall of a trace was set at Huntington, tying the old record of a trace set in 2016.
- April 23rd: Record low temperature set at Charleston, WV. A record low temperature of 27 degrees was set at Charleston, breaking the old record of 29 degrees set in 1927, 1982, and 1986.
- April 28th: Record daily maximum rainfall set at Huntington, WV. A record rainfall of 1.90" was set at Huntington, breaking the old record of 1.76" set in 2002.

April Noteworthy Events

- March 31st – April 2nd Rain, Snow, and Cold Spell
- April 21st Late Season Snow
- April 28-30th Heavy Rain and High Wind

March 31st – April 2nd Rain, Snow, and Cold Spell

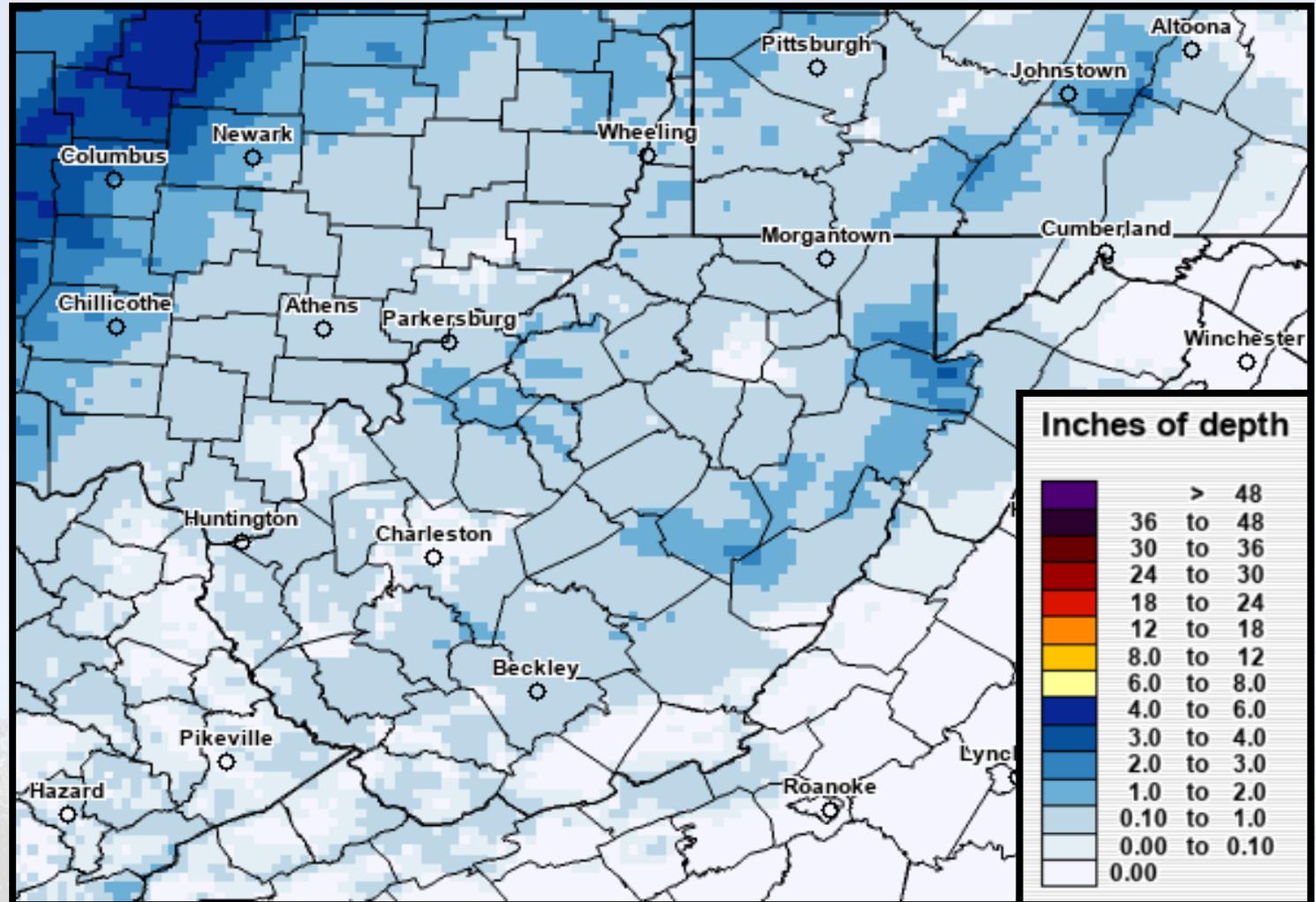
A cold front approached and passed through the area on the afternoon of March 31st providing a soaking rain areawide with amounts of 0.50-1.00”+ common. Much colder air moved in following the passage of the front, with some accumulating snow occurring in the mountains (Snowshoe, WV reported 3.0”). Cold weather would linger through April 2nd, with widespread frost/freeze conditions occurring for a few nights across the area. Huntington, WV set a record low on April 3rd, while Parkersburg, WV did on both April 2nd and April 3rd.



48 Hour Snowfall Ending at 8 AM EST April 2

April 21st Late Season Snow

A strong cold front moved across the area during the early morning hours of April 21st, resulting in a brief period of snowfall across portions of the area, with snow showers lingering in spots throughout the day. While amounts were on the light side, it was a noteworthy event given the time of year. Snowfall totals were generally an inch or less, with a bit more at the highest of elevations. Charleston, WV tied its daily maximum snowfall record with a trace. A widespread freeze would follow on the mornings of April 22nd and 23rd.



48 Hour Snowfall Ending at 8 AM EST April 22

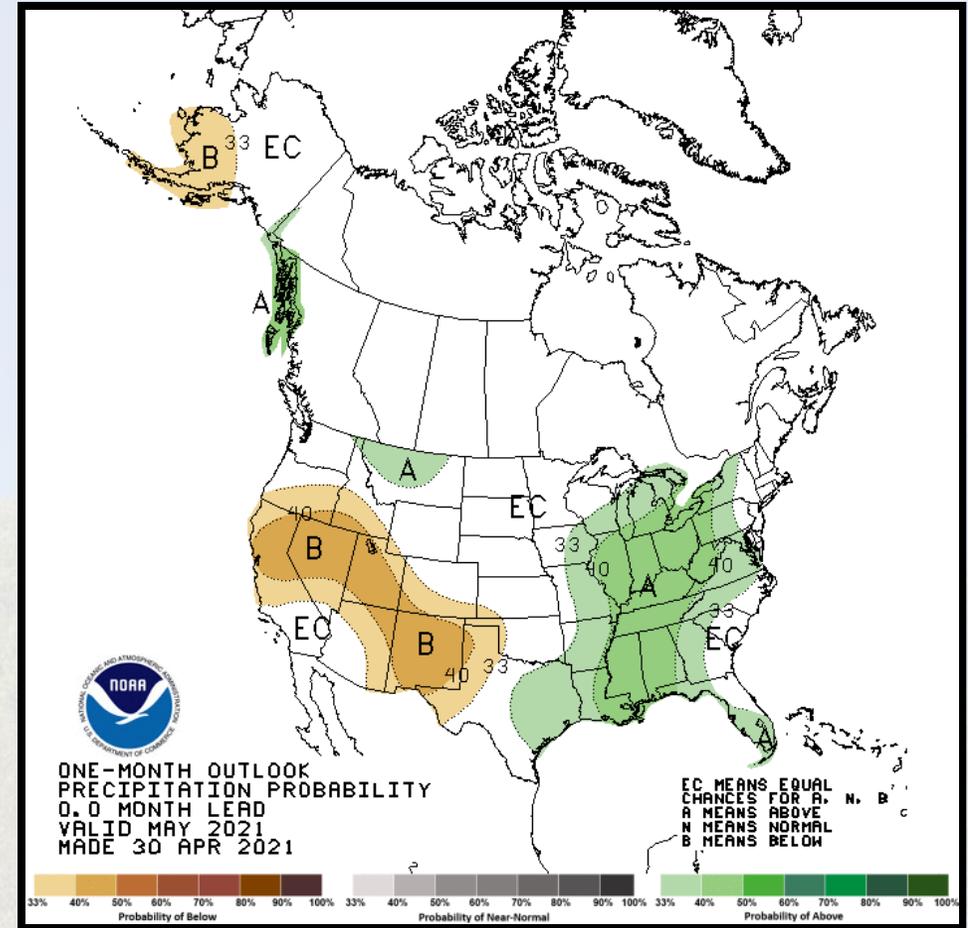
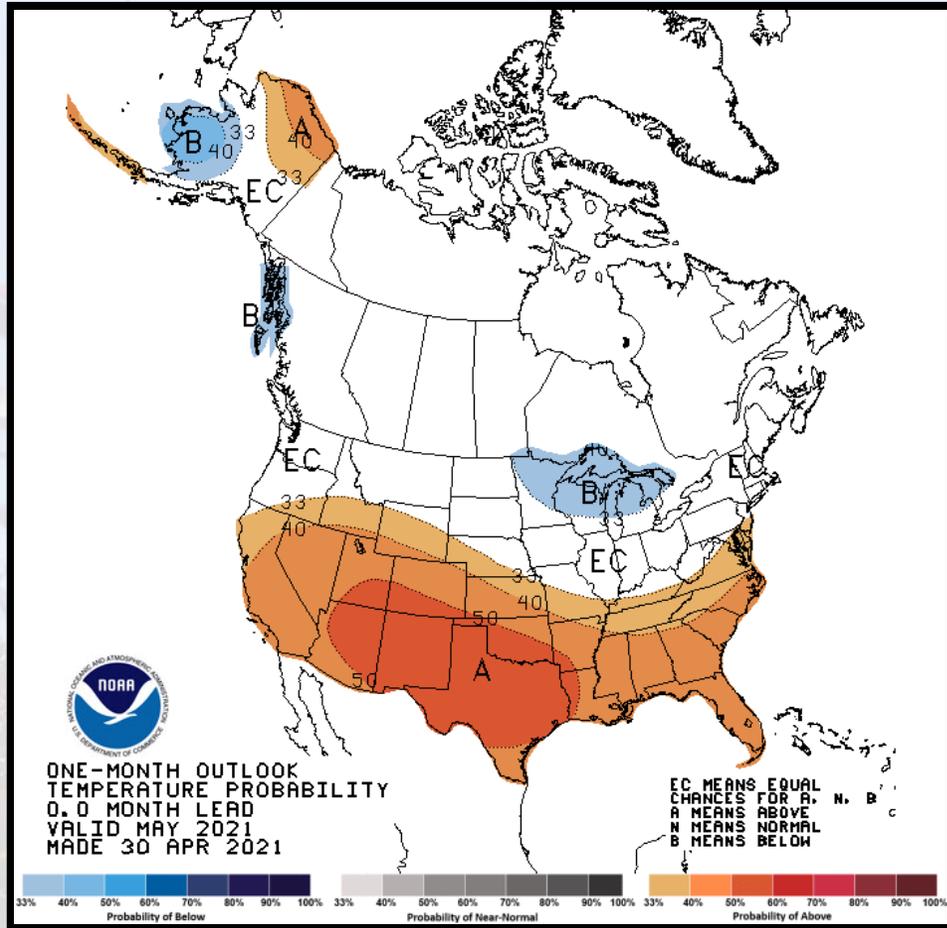
April 28-30th Heavy Rain and High Wind

A quasi-stationary boundary situated to the northwest of the area on April 28th would slowly begin to move southward towards, and through the area on the evening of April 29th. Scattered showers/storms developed out ahead of the front during the evening of April 28th, providing localized heavy rainfall of up to 2.88" in Carter county Kentucky near Grayson. Some flash flooding and even a water rescue was reported in the area. The heaviest totals were generally from northeast Kentucky to just west of Charleston. Huntington, WV set a daily rainfall record of 1.90".

More showers/storms would affect the area on the 29th as the cold front approached and moved through. In its wake, cooler temperatures and windy conditions moved in. Wind gusts of 30-50+ mph (see figure right) were reported, causing some tree and power line damage. Event total rainfall amounts of over 1.00" were common, with 2-3"+ in localized areas.

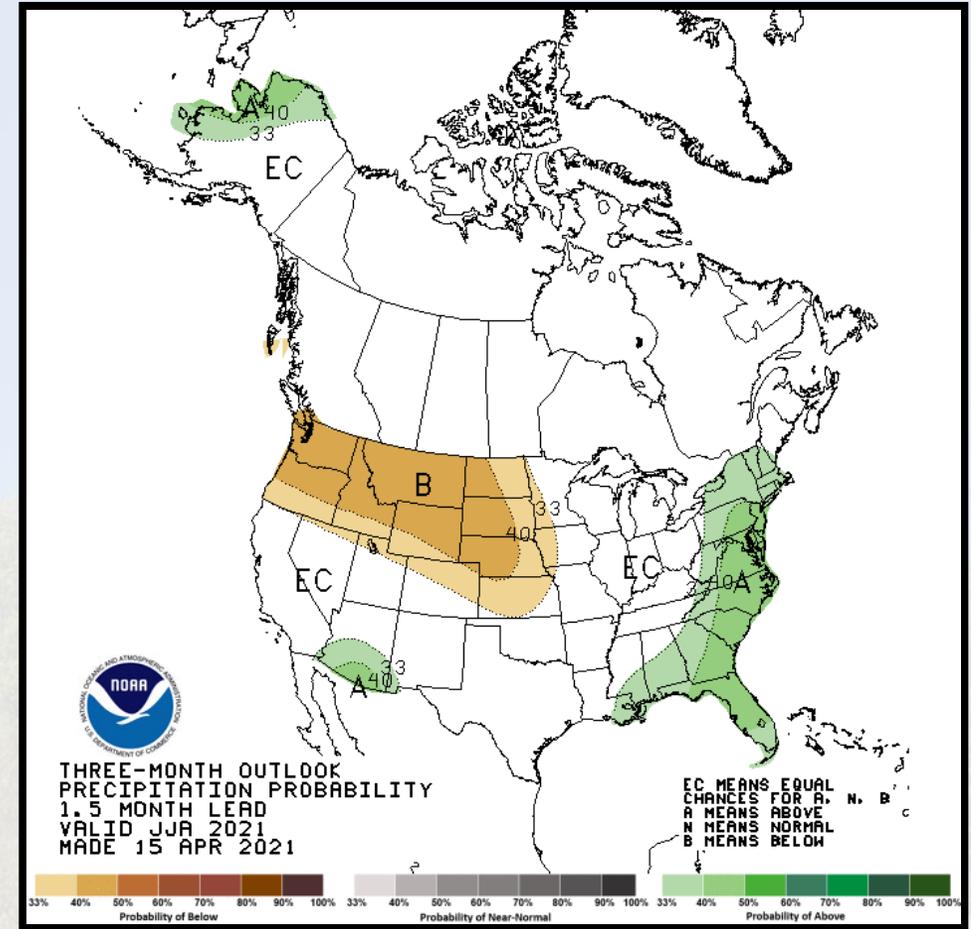
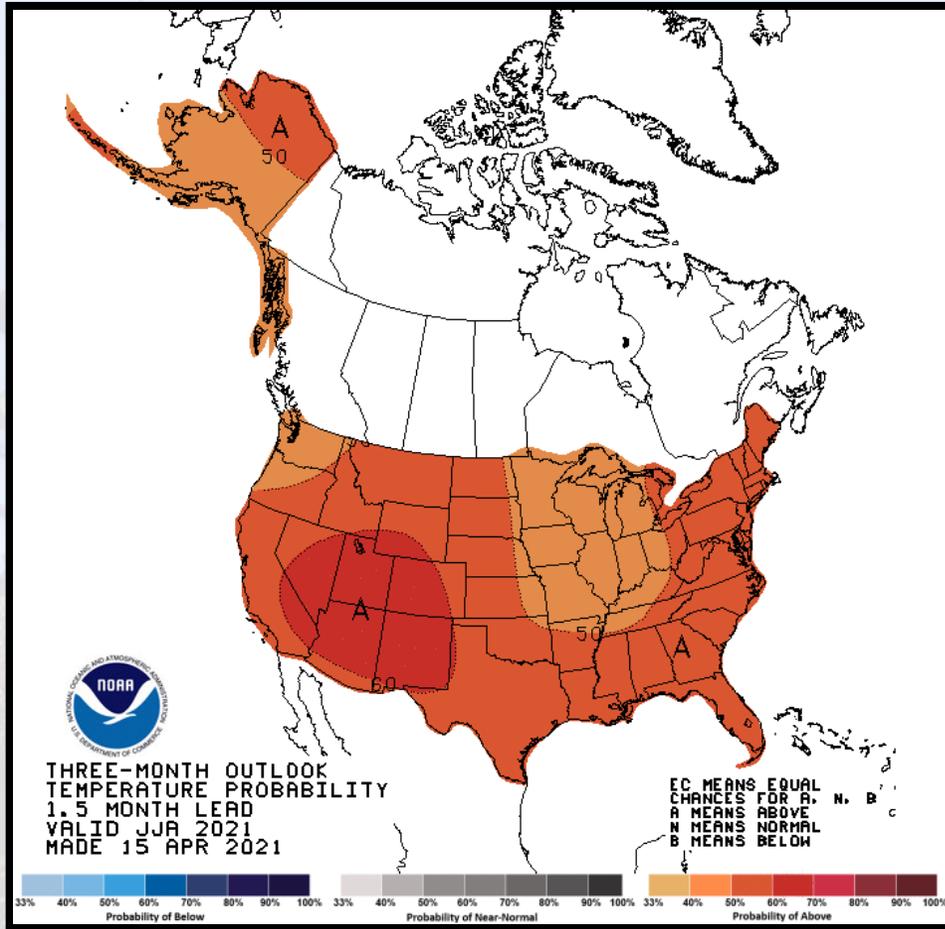
*****PEAK WIND GUST*****			
LOCATION	MAX WIND GUST MPH	TIME/DATE OF MEASUREMENT	
OHIO			
...Athens County... Athens Airport	47	255 PM	4/30
...Jackson County... James A Rhodes Airpo	36	415 PM	4/30
...Vinton County... Zaleski	38	251 PM	4/30
WEST VIRGINIA			
...Barbour County... Bridgeport	37	215 PM	4/30
...Harrison County... Clarksburg Airport	51	226 PM	4/30
...Kanawha County... Charleston Airport	39	515 PM	4/30
...Raleigh County... Beckley Airport	45	428 PM	4/30
...Randolph County... Elkins Airport	44	232 PM	4/30
...Taylor County... Grafton	45	230 PM	4/30
...Upshur County... Buckhannon Airport	39	1255 PM	4/30
...Wayne County... Huntington Airport Beech Fork	40 37	543 PM 714 PM	4/30 4/30
...Wood County... Parkersburg Airport	46	252 PM	4/30

May Outlook



Climate Prediction Center One-Month Temperature and Precipitation Outlook for the United States.

Summer Outlook



Climate Prediction Center Three-Month Temperature and Precipitation Outlook for the United States: covering meteorological summer (June, July, and August).

We are looking for volunteer observers!

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www.cocorahs.org

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Thank You!