

Southern Plains Drought Outlook Summary

Thursday, May 21, 2015
Issued: 1:00pm CDT

National Weather Service
Southern Region Headquarters
Regional Operations Center
Fort Worth, TX

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817-978-1100 x 147

Current Drought Situation

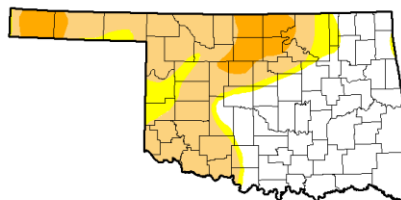
- 70% of TX is now completely drought free.
- Significant drought improvement has taken place across all of TX, NM, and OK.**
- TX and OK both have no areas of extreme (D3) drought for the first time since 11/23/10 and 3/8/11 respectively. NM achieved this in March 2015.

U.S. Drought Monitor Oklahoma

May 19, 2015
(Released Thursday, May 21, 2015)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Current | 49.19 | 50.81 | 41.94 | 8.98 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Last Week 5/12/2015 | 39.66 | 60.34 | 47.39 | 24.52 | 3.72 | 0.00 |
| 3 Months Ago 3/17/2015 | 1.40 | 98.62 | 65.04 | 45.54 | 22.81 | 5.75 |
| Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015 | 25.63 | 74.37 | 62.03 | 40.84 | 21.74 | 5.70 |
| Start of Water Year 9/1/2014 | 8.55 | 91.45 | 73.31 | 58.13 | 20.92 | 4.64 |
| One Year Ago 5/20/2014 | 5.78 | 94.22 | 81.08 | 73.26 | 61.24 | 34.25 |



Intensity

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| D0 Abnormally Dry | D3 Extreme Drought |
| D1 Moderate Drought | D4 Exceptional Drought |
| D2 Severe Drought | |

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:
Brad Rippey
U.S. Department of Agriculture



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

For Southern Plains Drought Monitor go to:
<http://www.drought.gov/drought/regional-programs/southernplains/southern-plains-home>

Current and Ongoing Drought Impacts

- Reservoir conditions have improved dramatically across TX and OK.**
- Statewide, TX reservoir levels have increased to 79% full from 62% full 6 months ago. An increase of over 3.3 trillion gallons!**
- Nearly all reservoirs across the eastern 1/2 of OK are at or above full pool.**

U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico

May 19, 2015
(Released Thursday, May 21, 2015)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Current | 31.16 | 68.84 | 36.65 | 12.54 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Last Week 5/12/2015 | 26.19 | 73.81 | 55.27 | 14.58 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 3 Months Ago 3/17/2015 | 13.84 | 86.16 | 67.61 | 25.98 | 3.70 | 0.00 |
| Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015 | 12.01 | 87.99 | 65.38 | 29.10 | 3.70 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year 9/1/2014 | 16.70 | 83.30 | 62.57 | 30.04 | 0.08 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago 5/20/2014 | 0.09 | 99.91 | 97.58 | 87.50 | 37.23 | 5.60 |

Intensity

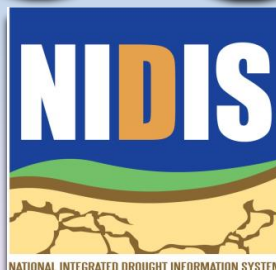
| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| D0 Abnormally Dry | D3 Extreme Drought |
| D1 Moderate Drought | D4 Exceptional Drought |
| D2 Severe Drought | |

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U.S. Drought Monitor Texas

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(Released Thursday, May 21, 2015)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Current | 70.11 | 29.89 | 15.37 | 3.29 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Last Week 5/12/2015 | 64.42 | 35.58 | 22.75 | 7.68 | 1.93 | 0.00 |
| 3 Months Ago 3/17/2015 | 29.21 | 60.79 | 43.38 | 27.81 | 13.92 | 4.48 |
| Start of Calendar Year 1/1/2015 | 34.37 | 65.63 | 44.68 | 25.73 | 11.70 | 3.17 |
| Start of Water Year 9/1/2014 | 29.92 | 71.00 | 48.95 | 29.54 | 11.28 | 2.69 |
| One Year Ago 5/20/2014 | 9.82 | 90.18 | 72.31 | 56.11 | 40.35 | 25.05 |

Intensity

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| D0 Abnormally Dry | D3 Extreme Drought |
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| D2 Severe Drought | |

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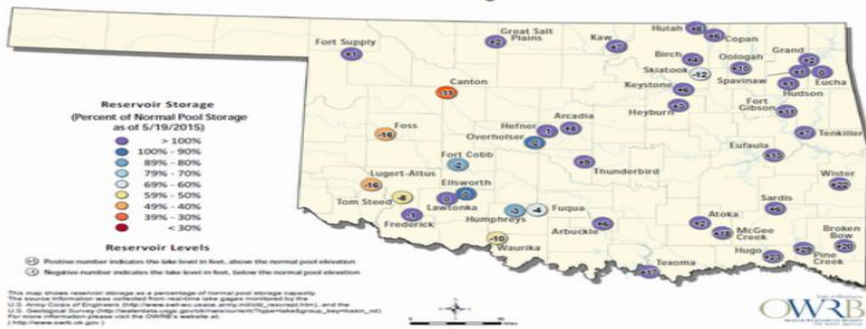
Nearly all of the Region has Seen Significant Relief. Flooding is now a significant concern across much of TX and OK.

Texas: 70% of the state is drought free, the highest percentage since October 2010. Recent heavy rains in the north and east parts of the state have significantly improved regional water storage conditions, with all reservoirs east of I-35 at or above 90% capacity. Reservoirs serving Dallas and Fort Worth have each risen over 50% in the past 3 months, to 98% and 97% full respectively.

Oklahoma: 50% of the state is drought free, up from 1% a mere 6 months ago. Only 9% of the state remains in severe drought, the lowest since February 2011. Nearly all reservoirs in the eastern 2/3 of the state are at 100% capacity. In the past year, Oklahoma has gone from 61% coverage of extreme drought or worse to 0%.

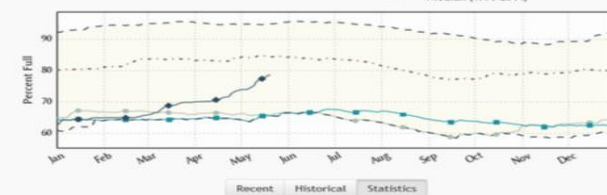
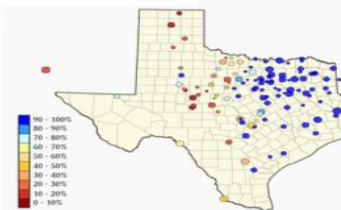
New Mexico: 31% of the state is drought free, the largest amount since December 2010. For the third consecutive month, there are no longer any extreme (D3) or exceptional (D4) drought areas in the state. This last occurred in March 2011. With the summer monsoon starting in June, these improvements should continue.

Oklahoma Surface Water Resources
Reservoir Levels and Storage as of 5/19/2015



Texas Reservoirs

- Monitored Water Supply Reservoirs are 78.5% full on 2015-05-20



Drought Conditions (Percent Area) in D3-D4 (Extreme to Exceptional Drought)

| State | Current | Last Week | 3 Months Ago | 1 Year Ago |
|------------|---------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Oklahoma | 0% | 4% | 23% | 61% |
| Texas | 0% | 2% | 14% | 40% |
| New Mexico | 0% | 0% | 4% | 3% |

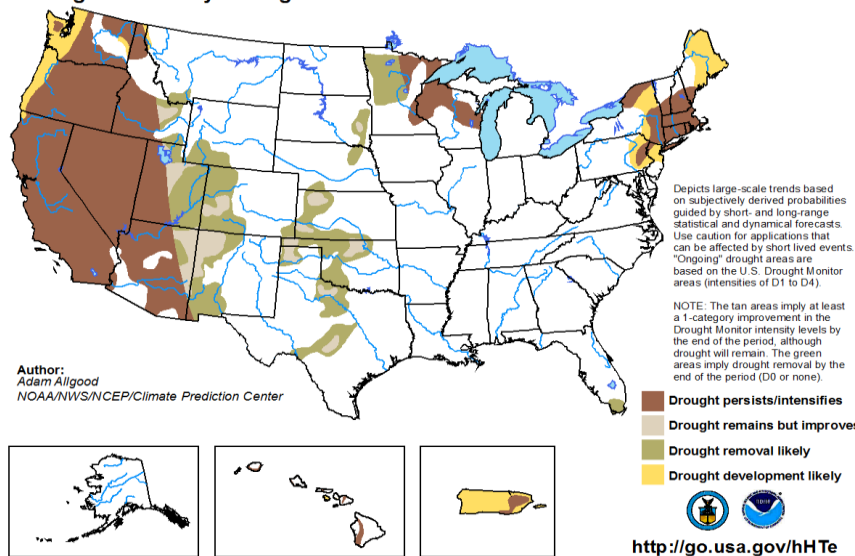


Three-Month Outlook Precipitation

- **Above normal rainfall is favored through August** across nearly all 3 states. The only exception is deep south TX, where equal chances of above or below normal are forecast.
- The latest Drought Outlook shows **drought conditions improving or ending through August** across all of the region.

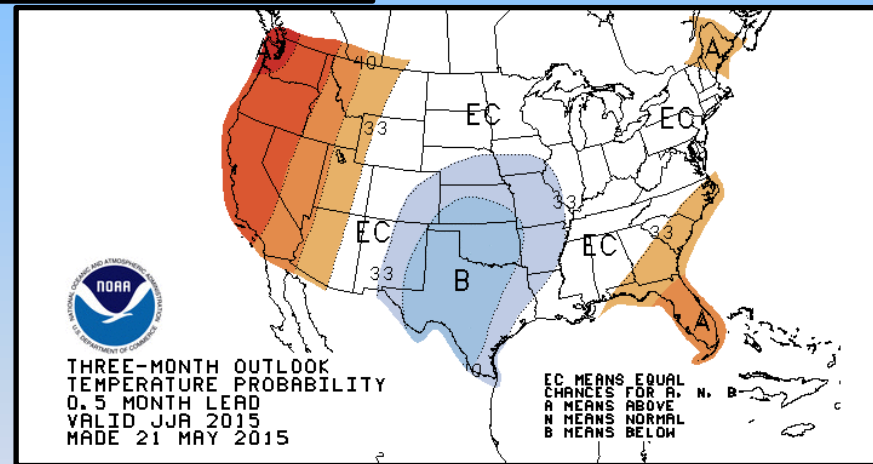
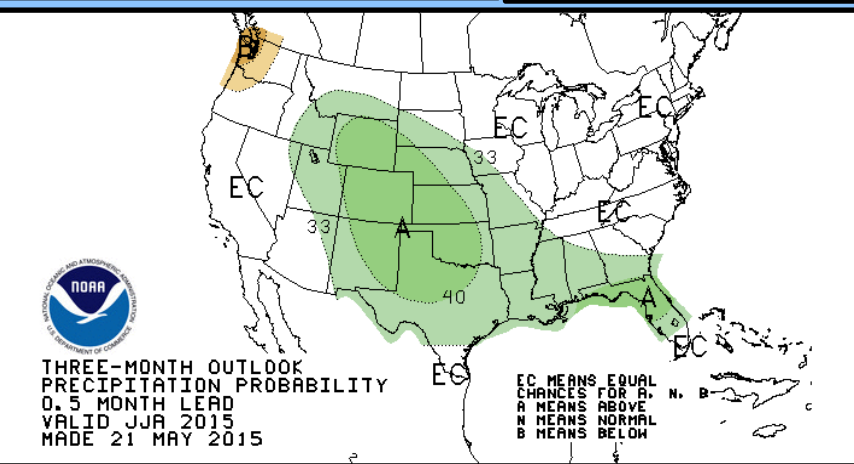
U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for May 21 - August 31, 2015
Released May 21, 2015



Three-Month Outlook Temperature

- **Below normal temperatures are favored through August** for nearly the entire region, with the only exception being the western 1/3 of NM.
- **Should the above normal rainfall persist through summer, the 2010-2015 drought will likely be over.**



Looking Ahead Through the End of August

- **El Nino has arrived!** Warm sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean in place since the fall of 2014 have an 80% chance of continuing through 2015. Based on this El Nino feature and its connection to Southern Plains weather, the most recent seasonal outlook through August 2015 favors above normal rain chances for all of New Mexico, Oklahoma, and all but south Texas. With June being one of the wetter months in OK and TX, above normal rains in June will likely end this 5 year drought. Similarly, above average monsoonal rains in NM in July and August will likely end their 5 year drought.



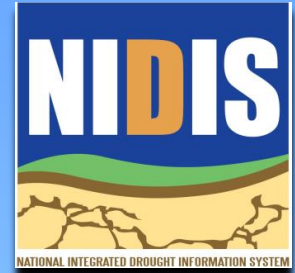
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This information along with other drought
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