Wyoming — *Climate Overview*

Highlights for the State

Temperatures for March were above to well above normal. Laramie's average temperature for March was higher than its averages for April in 2015 and 2016. Cheyenne's March average was higher than its April average last year.

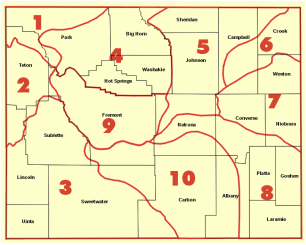
Precipitation for March was above normal overall, but quite varied statewide. Lovell and a station southeast of Cody received less than 25% of their normal March precipitation while several stations in central and southwest WY were over 400% of their normal.

Drought conditions have remained much the same since the last Outlook, with only a little bit of improvement in the northeast.

Snowpack has dropped considerably in the northeast and the Little Snake River Basin (extreme south-central Wyoming). Western snowpack amounts are at record highs for basins like the Wind, Upper Green, and Sweetwater.

Temperature and Precipitation

March was a warm month statewide. All stations had above-normal temperatures with many of them being 4°F to 8°F above normal. Statewide, Wyoming's average temperature ranked as the 4th warmest March since 1894. Climate Division (CD) rankings varied slightly between the 2nd warmest (CDs 1, 2, and 10) and the 6th warmest (CD 3).

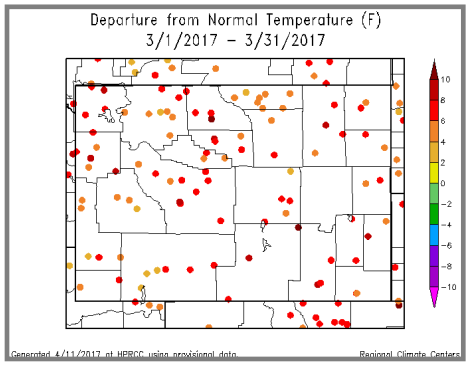


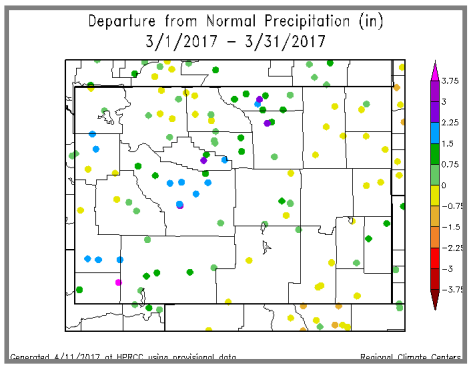
Wyoming Climate Divisions

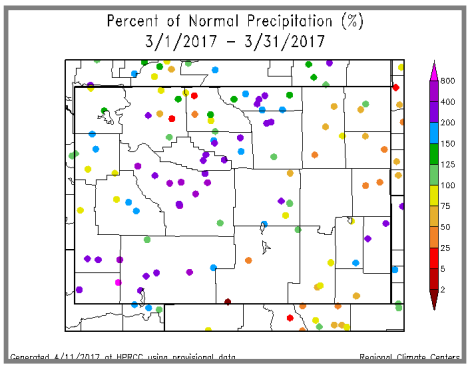
April temperatures, so far, have been well-above normal in the east. Stations in western Wyoming have been cooler than those in the east but most still have average temperatures that are above normal.

For statewide precipitation, March was the 14th wettest of the last 123 years. Precipitation was much more varied across the state with CD 9 being the 4th wettest since 1894 and CD 7 being the 22nd driest (102nd wettest). The notably wet areas included CD 3, CD 9, southeastern CD 4, and western CD 5.

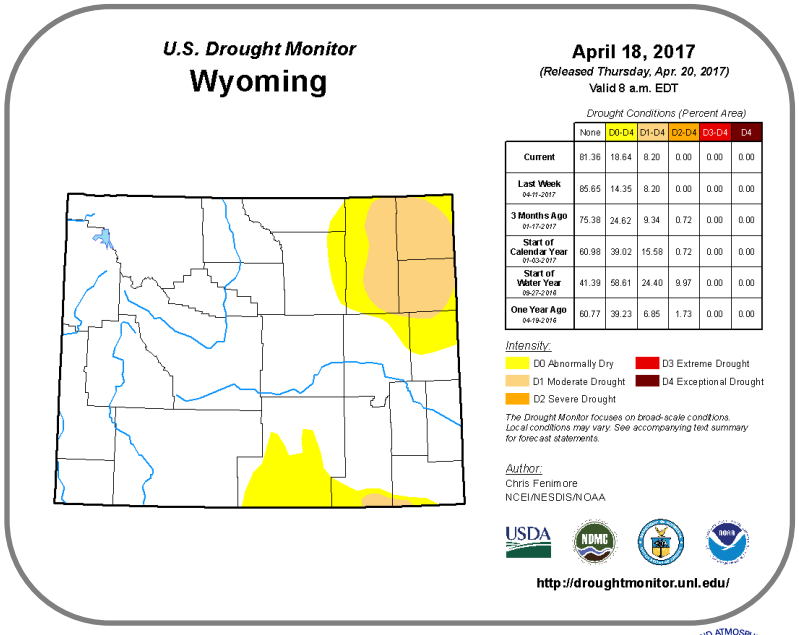
April's precipitation (through the 12th) has been below normal in the northwest and southeast. The rest of the state has been above normal. This includes some helpful precipitation in the drought-impacted area in the northeast.







Wyoming — *Current Drought Conditions*



Drought conditions have only somewhat improved in the northeast part of Wyoming. This area has had some relief lately from recent precipitation events. Because of this moisture, the Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions have been removed from southeastern Niobrara County.

The areas of Moderate Drought (D1) in the northeast part of Niobrara County have been downgraded to D0. D1 in the very northeastern corner of Crook County has also been downgraded to the D0 category.

In the south-central part of Wyoming (Carbon and western Albany counties) low precipitation amounts have warranted the westward expansion of the D0 there.

Drought conditions in eastern Wyoming will likely persist for a while longer since the area has, until late, been receiving below-normal precipitation.

The U.S. Drought Monitor, is a weekly map of drought conditions produced jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The U.S. Drought Monitor website is hosted and maintained by the NDMC. http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Wyoming — *Drought Indicators*

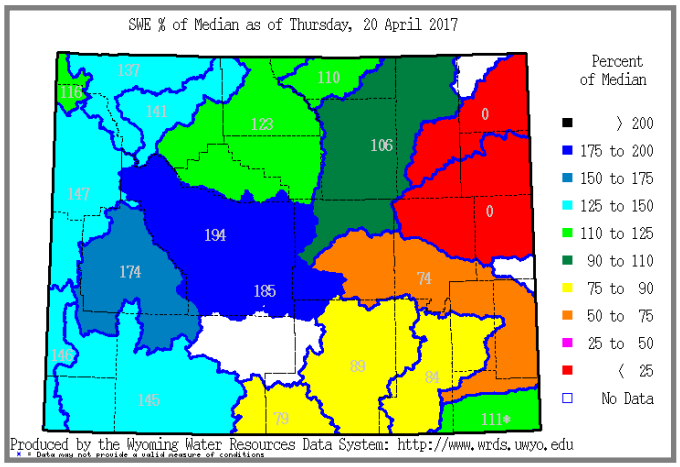
Snowpack

The statewide snowpack is at record highs in parts of central Wyoming. The eastern part of the state, with the exception of the Powder River Basin, has dropped below normal and in cases like the Cheyenne and Belle Fourche has melted out completely. In the west, though, snowpack is very good.

This high snowpack and the first weeks of spring runoff has already caused flooding, and there is high potential for more flooding in parts of the Wind, Upper Green, and Shoshone river basins.

Snowpack products can be found at: http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/products_and_data.html

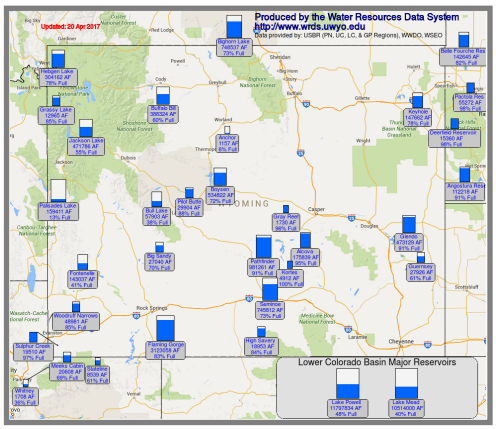
Do you have drought impacts to report? We still need your on-the-ground reports and you can input them here: http://droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport/



Water Resources

Reservoirs statewide are still in good shape. Several reservoirs in central and western Wyoming, such as Palisades, Bull Lake, and Jackson Lake, have been lowered to below-normal levels to make room for the expected high snowpack runoff.

The map below shows reservoir conditions in Wyoming as of April 20. This map may be accessed online at: http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/surface_water/teacups.html

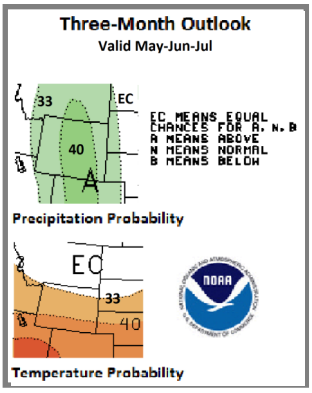


Wyoming — *Short- and Long-term Outlooks*

Weather and Climate Outlooks

For the next two weeks, Wyoming looks to have better chances for below-normal temperatures and above-normal precipitation.

Looking at the May to July time frame, all but the very northern part of the state has elevated chances of above-normal temperature. The chances increase as one goes south. For precipitation, too, the entire state has odds favoring above-normal amounts, with the odds being a bit higher for the central region of Wyoming. For June through August, the pattern is somewhat similar for temperature but with the northeastern third of the state having even chances of above, below, or normal temperature. For the same time period, the entire state has better chances for above-normal precipitation with the odds higher for the western two-thirds. Looking at the July thru September outlook, all of Wyoming has elevated chances for above-normal temperatures and above-normal precipitation.



Drought conditions are expected to persist in the northeast part of the state for a while longer. In the south-central parts of the state, D0 is expanding. The area is expected to have above-normal precipitation but, with above-normal temperatures also possible, the extent and intensity of drought there still could increase.

Need a Forecast?

Visit your local National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office for the most up-to-date forecast at: http://www.weather.gov

Stay Tuned and In Touch

The next Wyoming Drought Impacts and Outlook Summary will be released around June 9th. If you need information in the meantime, please reach out to any of the partners listed to the right or contact Tony Bergantino directly at Antonius@uwyo.edu

The Wind River Indian Reservation and Surrounding Area Climate and Drought Summary at: WindRiverRes-Climate-Drought-Summary-Mar2017.html

Heard Around the State

Laramie Co., Apr 14: The grass is very dry. Brush fires are happening all over the area. There has been no real moisture in two months.

Washakie Co., Mar 25: Fruit trees have started budding out- which is too soon as night time temperatures are barely hovering above freezing. After the 3/4 " rain on Thursday, things have greened up significantly.

Park Co., Apr 9: I continue to see more birds; the robins are now back in significant numbers...I'm seeing new buds appear on the end of some of the trees in the neighborhood.

Partners

Wyoming State Climate Office
www.wrds.uwyo.edu
National Integrated Drought Information System
www.drought.gov
National Weather Service
Riverton Weather Forecast Office
www.weather.gov/riw/
Cheyenne Weather Forecast Office
www.weather.gov/cys/
High Plains Regional Climate Center
www.hprcc.unl.edu
National Drought Mitigation Center
www.drought.unl.edu
USDA Northern Plains Climate Hub and University of Wyoming Extension
www.climatehubs.oce.usda.gov/northernplains/
Western Water Assessment
wwa.colorado.edu