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## Wyoming's Climate: February 2012

### Snowpack

Snowpack improved again in February for many areas. At the end of the month the Upper Bear basin in the southwest remained at about 70% while the Upper North Platte, Little Snake, and Lower Green in the southern and southwest portions of the state were at 89%, 84%, and 82% respectively. The Wind, Upper Green, and Snake River basins in the west-central part of the state were at 91%, 93%, and 93%. Moving to the northwest corner of the state, conditions continued to improve with the Madison-Yellowstone at 95% and the Shoshone basin right at normal with 99% of snowpack. In the southeast in the Lower North Platte, conditions were similar with snowpack being at 101%. Finally the northern and northwest portions of the state were even better with the Bighorn, Belle Fourche, and Powder-Tongue basins improving to 110%, 115%, and 132% respectively. With the exception of the south central and southwest, conditions are good as we move into March.

### Precipitation

February saw improvement in many areas of the state, especially in the northern half. The eastern half of the state also either remained the same or, in many locations, improved. The southern tier of counties in the state, where D0, D1, and (just recently) D2 drought levels have been introduced saw a little improvement, but locations in Sweetwater, Sublette, and parts of Lincoln County are still wanting for precipitation.

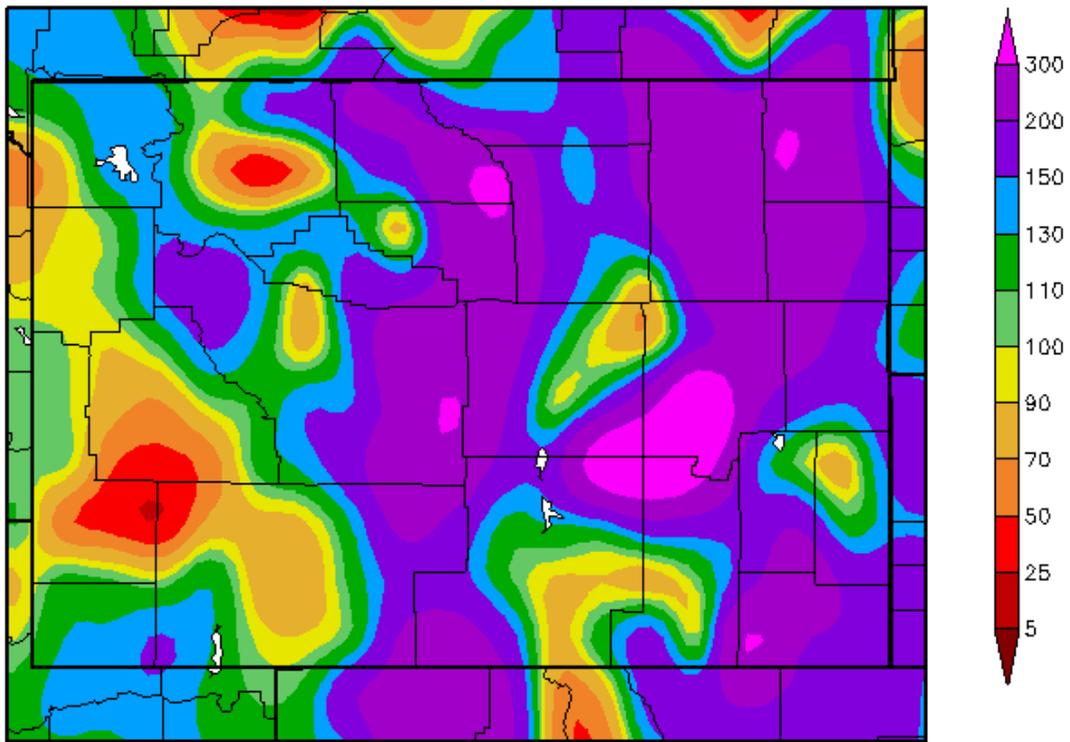
### Temperature

The above normal temperatures for January were followed by some well below normal temperatures in February in many places in Wyoming. With a few exceptions, the entire eastern half of the state saw normal to below normal temperatures with the southwest experiencing monthly average temperatures 2°F to 5°F below normal. There were also cooler averages in the western counties. There were exceptions in counties such as Park, Big Horn, Fremont, Washakie, and Sweetwater where temperatures, though mostly less "above-average" than in January, were still above normal.

The D0 (Abnormally Dry) category introduced to the southern and southwest portion of the state as well as the northeastern corner of Crook County remained in place during February. The D1 (Moderate Drought) in southeast Sweetwater/southwest Carbon counties remained as well. The D1 category was also introduced to portions of Uinta and Teton counties as well as a small section of southwestern Sweetwater County. Additionally, D2 (Severe Drought) was introduced to the extreme southwest corner of Uinta county on 21 February when the D1 category there was expanded to the northeast. This marks the first time since 29 June 2010 where there has been any D2 shown in Wyoming.

*This report was prepared by the Wyoming State Climate Office, which is part of the Wyoming Water Resources Data System at the University of Wyoming. More information can be found at: <http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu> and [http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/sco/climate\\_office.html](http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/sco/climate_office.html). Special thanks to the National Weather Service's Riverton and Cheyenne Offices and the NRCS Casper Office for supplying much of the data and information used in this report.*

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)  
2/1/2012 - 2/29/2012

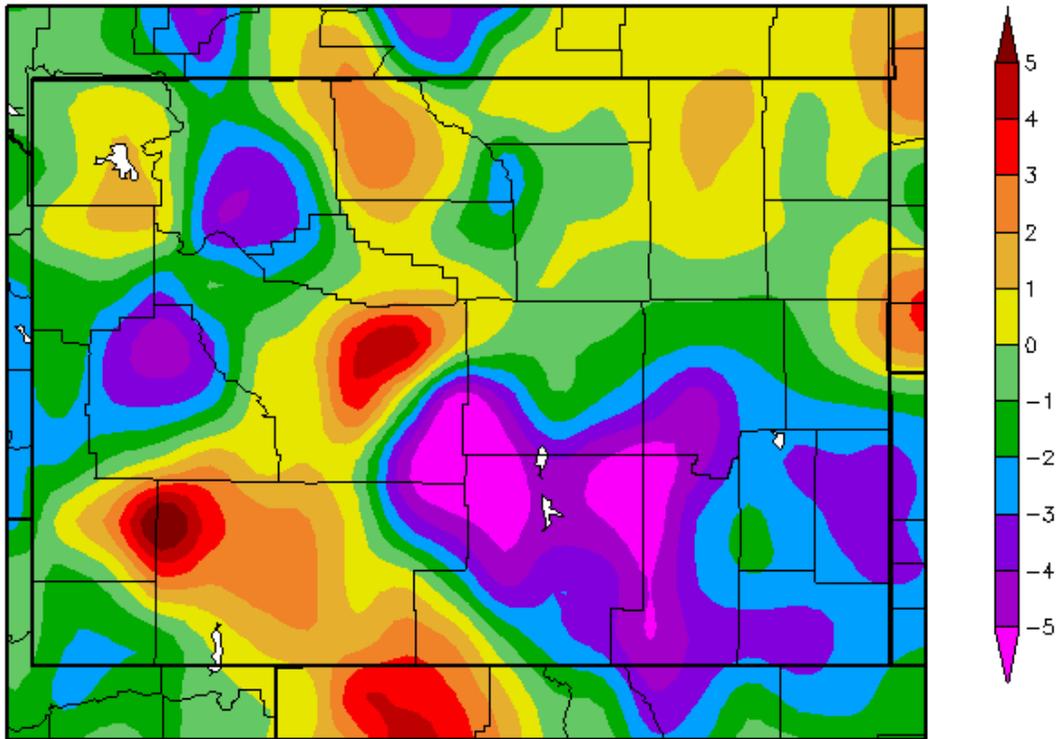


Generated 3/2/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

**Map showing February 2012 precipitation as a percentage of historical averages (vs. 1971-2000 “normal” period) for Wyoming. Courtesy of the High Plains Regional Climate Center.**

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)  
2/1/2012 - 2/29/2012



Generated 3/2/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

**Map showing mean February 2012 temperatures as departures from historical averages (vs. 1971-2000 “normal” period) for Wyoming. Courtesy of the High Plains Regional Climate Center.**

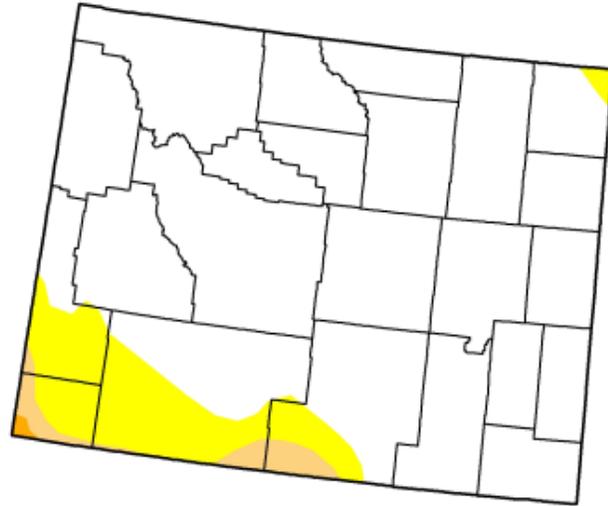
# U.S. Drought Monitor

## Wyoming

February 28, 2012  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

*Drought Conditions (Percent Area)*

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	87.60	12.40	2.23	0.16	0.00	0.00
Last Week (02/21/2012 map)	87.11	12.89	2.48	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago (11/29/2011 map)	99.84	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	99.84	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	98.26	1.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (02/22/2011 map)	71.37	28.63	1.02	0.00	0.00	0.00



Intensity:

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

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

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, March 1, 2012  
Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center

**Map showing Wyoming Drought Status as of the end of February 2012. Courtesy of the US Drought Monitor.**