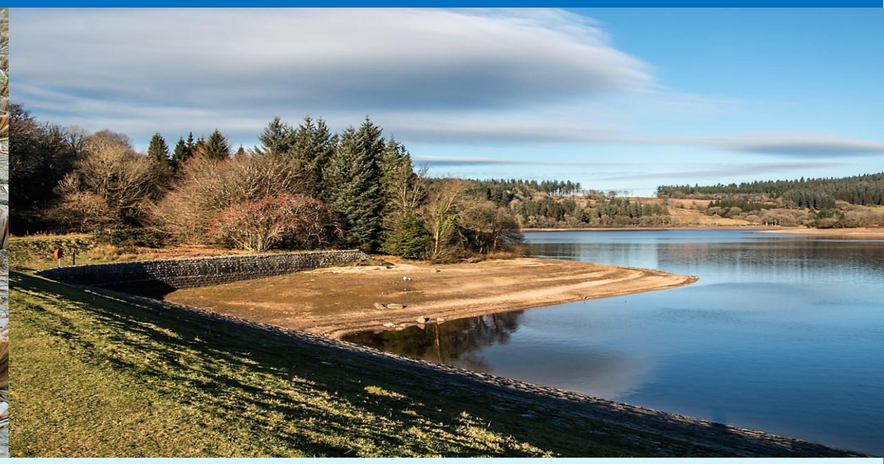
Drought Information Statement for Southern NM/Far West TX

Valid April 6, 2024

Issued By: NWS El Paso (Santa Teresa, NM)

Contact Information: sr-epz.nws@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated May 7, 2024 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/EPZ/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.



U.S. Drought Monitor

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Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for southern New Mexico and far west Texas

Drought Intensity and Extent

- **D3 (Extreme Drought)**
  Southern New Mexico lowlands including portions of Otero, Dona Ana, Luna, Grant, and Hidalgo Counties.
  El Paso, TX
- **D2 (Severe Drought)**
  Covering majority of south-central New Mexico and Hudspeth County Texas
- **D1 (Moderate Drought)**
  Central New Mexico (76% of area)

- Winter precipitation and mountain snowpack has allowed drought status to improve across western New Mexico.

  Drought will persist through the Spring in southern New Mexico and west Texas.

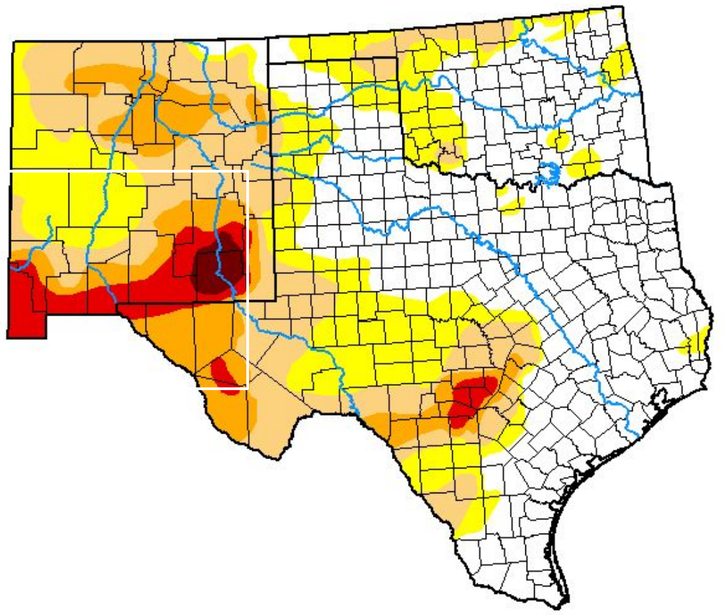

Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor valid April 2

Recent Change in Drought Intensity

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Link to the latest 3-month change map for southern New Mexico and far west Texas

12-Week Drought Monitor Class Change.

- **Drought Worsened:**
  No drought worsening was observed

- **Drought Improved:**
  Improvement across western and central New Mexico and the Gila/Lincoln National Forests. Winter precipitation was well above seasonal normals in those areas.

- **No Change:**
  Much of the I-10 corridor and International Border. Far West Texas including El Paso and Hudspeth Counties.

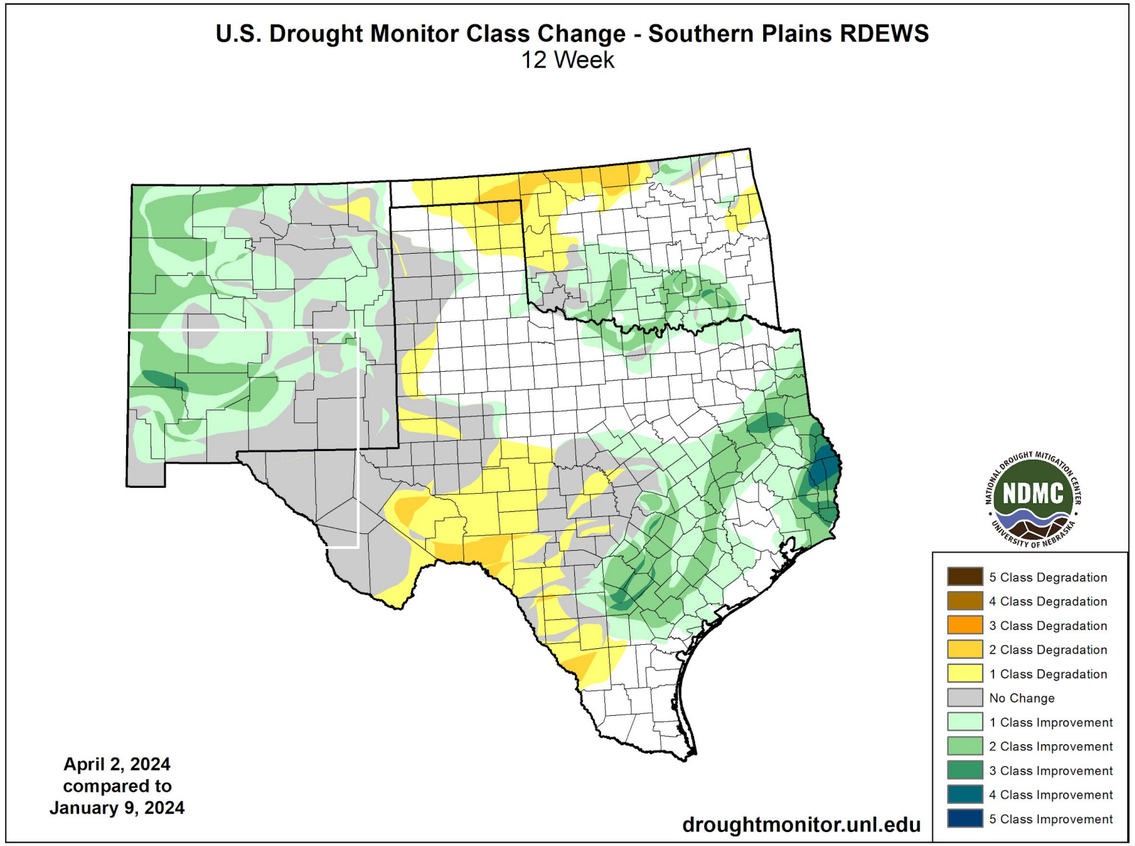

Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor 3-month change map valid April 2

Precipitation

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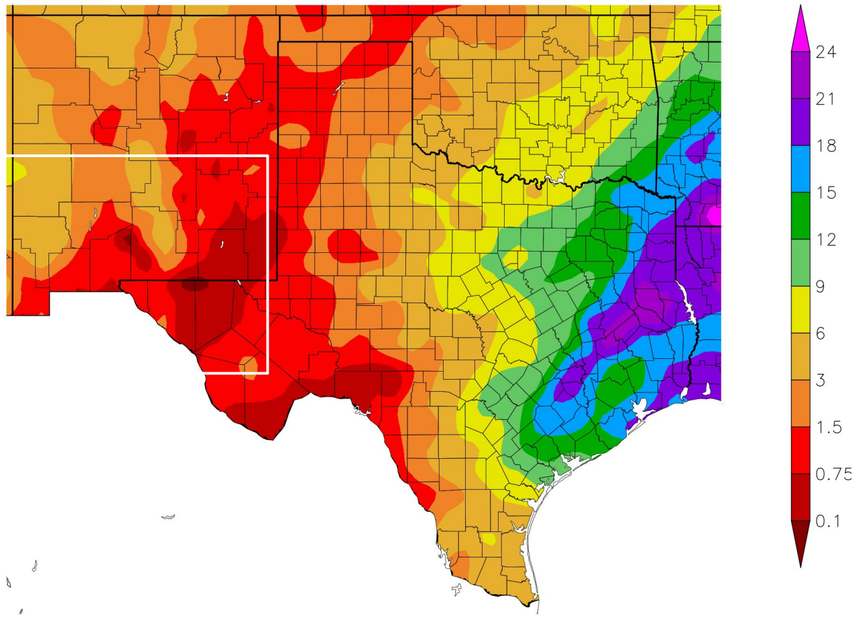
90-day rain totals, 0.75-2.00” along I-10 corridor. 4-8” over mountain forests and western New Mexico

Precipitation greatly favoring western New Mexico (150-200% of normal)

Much drier across far west Texas down to Big Bend (50-90% of normal).

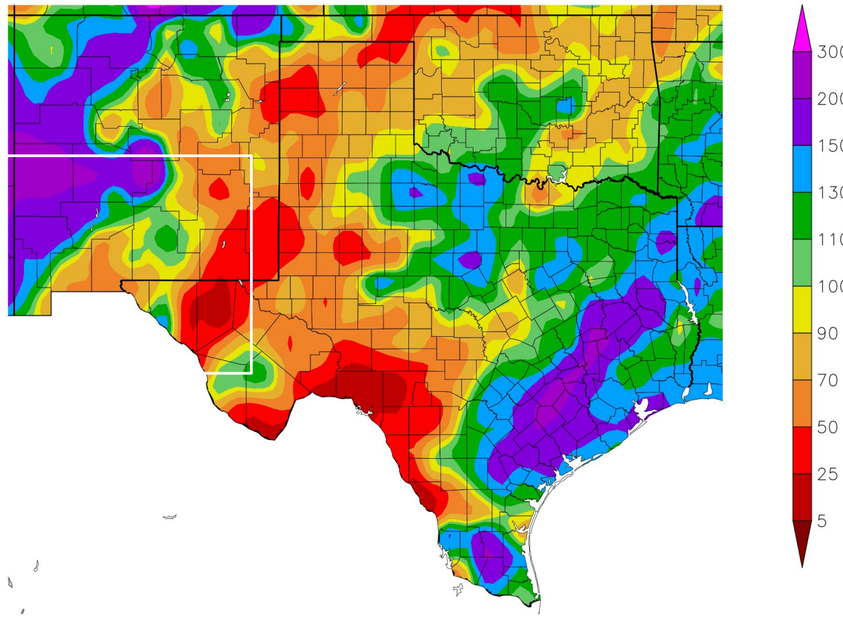
Precipitation (in)
1/1/2024 – 3/31/2024



Generated 4/4/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Cente

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
1/1/2024 – 3/31/2024



Generated 4/4/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Cent

Image Captions:
Left - Precipitation Amount
Right - Percent of Normal Precipitation
Data Courtesy High Plains Regional Climate Center.
Data over the past 30 days ending 3/31/2024

Temperature

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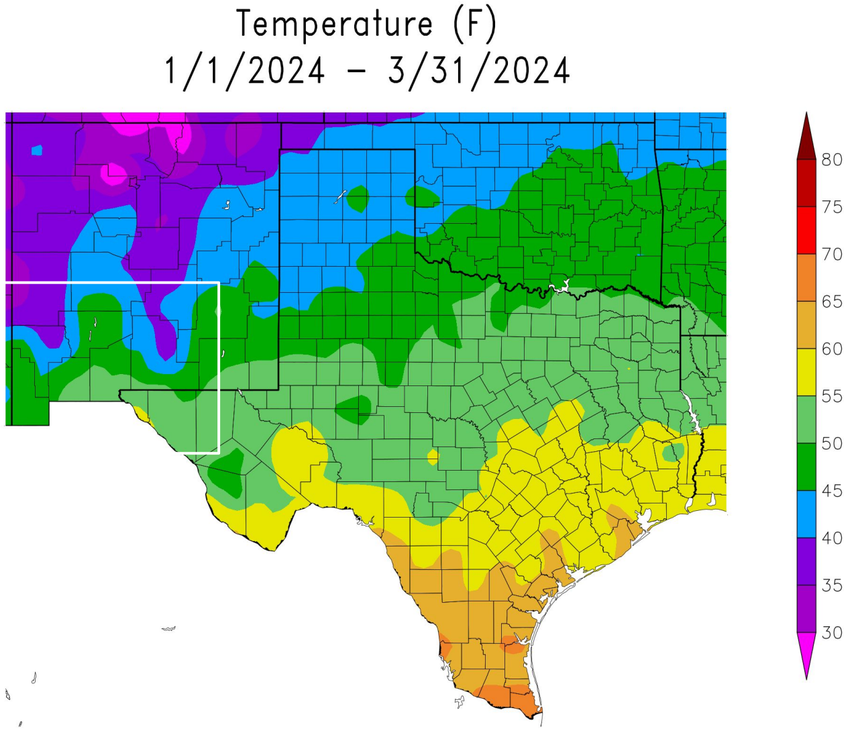
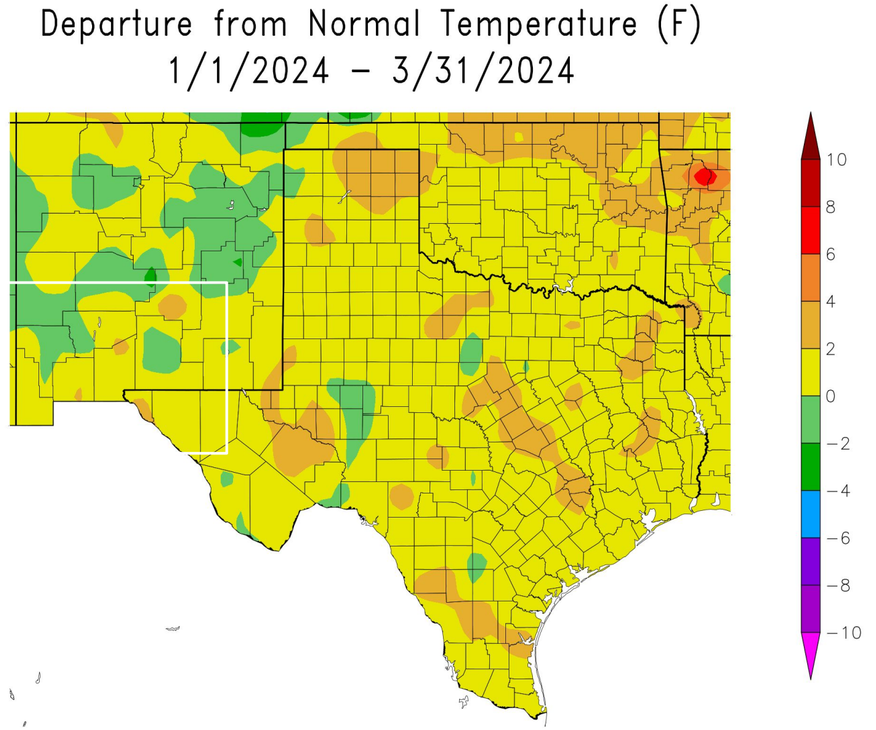
- Slightly above normal winter temperatures. No significant cold snaps this year.
- 2023 was hottest year on record for El Paso
- Average high temperatures 1-3 degrees above seasonal normals



Generated 4/4/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.



NOAA Regional Climate Cen Generated 4/4/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Image Captions:
Left - Average Temperature
Right - Departure from Normal Temperature
Data Courtesy High Plains Regional Climate Center
Data over the past 30 days ending 3/31/2024

Summary of Impacts

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Links: See/submit Condition Monitoring Observer Reports (CMOR) and view the Drought Impacts Reporter

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows in Gila and Mimbres have picked up as mountain snowmelt begins. Expect a steady river rise in the next few months, with rapid surges possible due to mountain rains. Gila River levels have increased to 5-6 feet at Redrock and Virden. Rio Grande water has been released below the Caballo Dam in early March with streamflow expected through the end of summer. Elephant Butte storage sits at 21.8% capacity (slightly below 30-year median flow). River flooding risk is low at this time.

Agricultural Impacts

- Rio Grande headwater snowpack remains above climate normals, which aided in the early release from Caballo Dam. Drought status will keep demand high. 2023 season allotment was 14 inches and a potential 2024 season allotment of 12 inches. Please refer to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) website or your local municipality for more information.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Short-term fuel moisture has been higher recently, allowing for several prescribed fires in the Gila and Lincoln Forests this month. High fire danger expected in April/May as fuels dry due to high winds and low humidity.

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

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- Gila and Mimbres river basin streamflows running near climate averages
- Rio Grande basin streamflows near normal as well

Gila River Stages

Gila 2.75 ft
Redrock 5.68 ft
Virden 6.23 ft

Rio Grande Stages

El Paso 4.15 ft

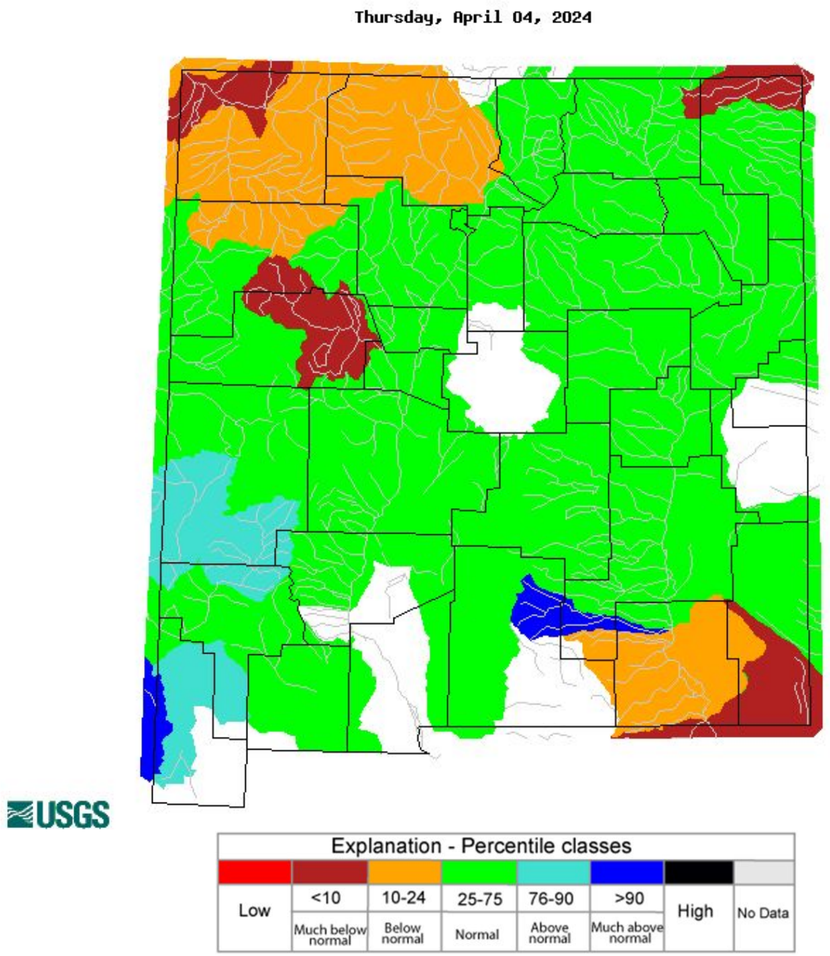

Image Caption: USGS 7 day average streamflow HUC map valid April 4, 2024

Agricultural Impacts

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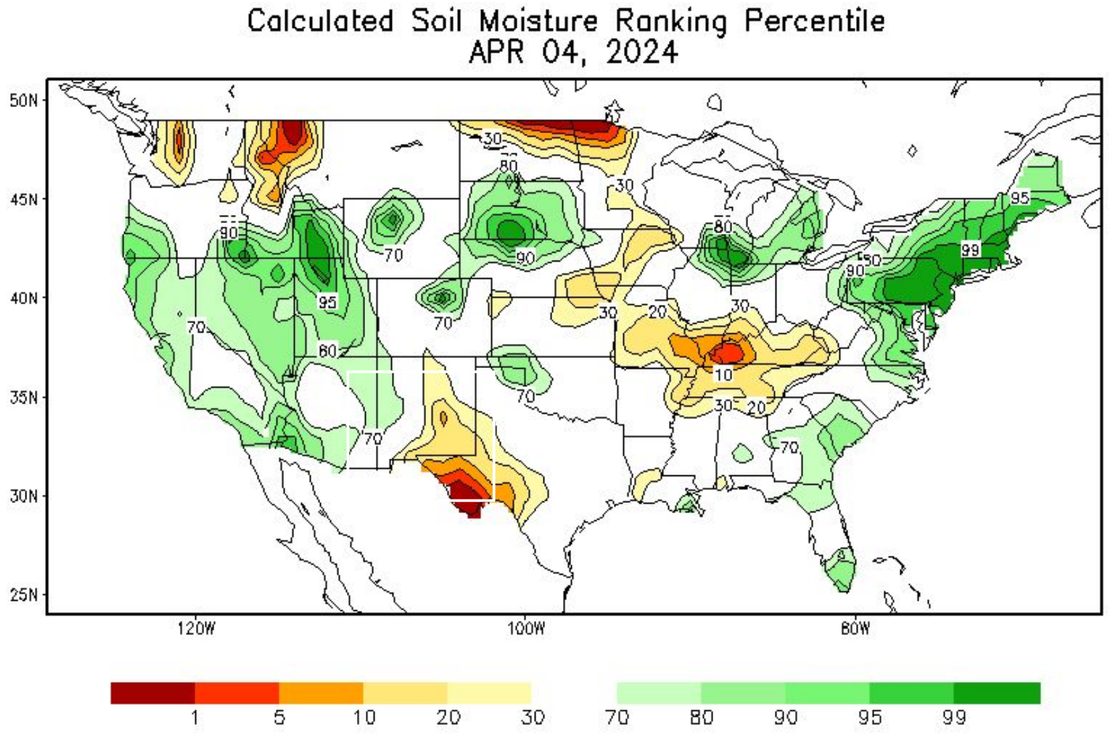

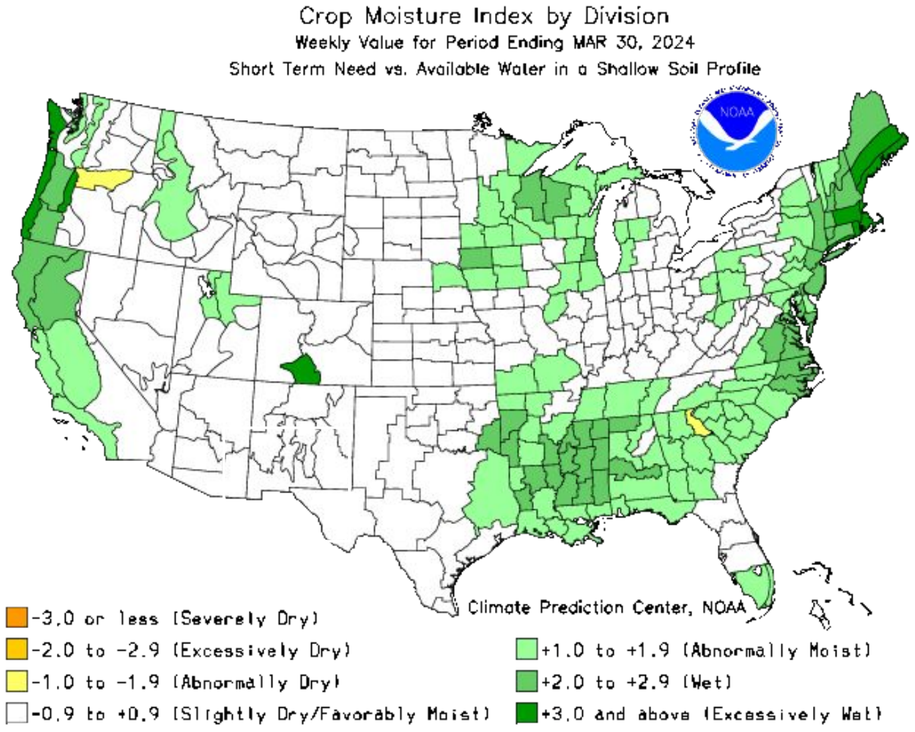

Image Captions:
Left: CPC Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile valid April 4, 2024
Right: Crop Moisture Index by Division. Weekly value for period ending March 30, 2024

Fire Hazard Impacts

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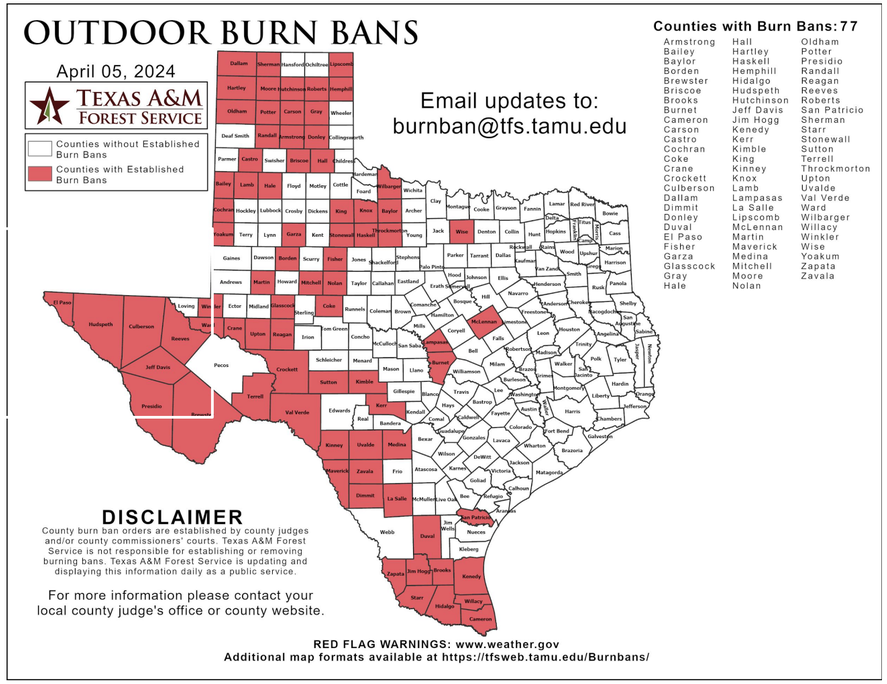
Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.]

Latest TX Burn Ban map available [here]

Latest NM Fire Restrictions available [here]



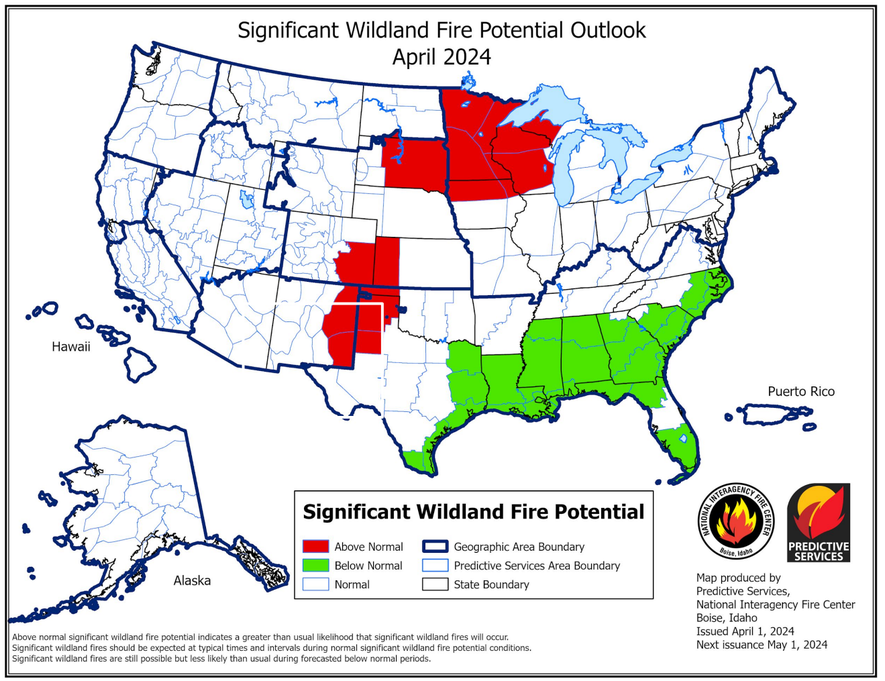


Image Caption: [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook] for April 2024

Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

April 5, 2024
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- Precipitation chances this week limited to northern New Mexico and area mountains. Dry conditions through the first half of April for the lowlands.
- Gila Region snowmelt likely to improve streamflow this month, closer to normal over Lincoln National Forest.
- No major change in drought stats expected this month due to seasonal dry time of year.

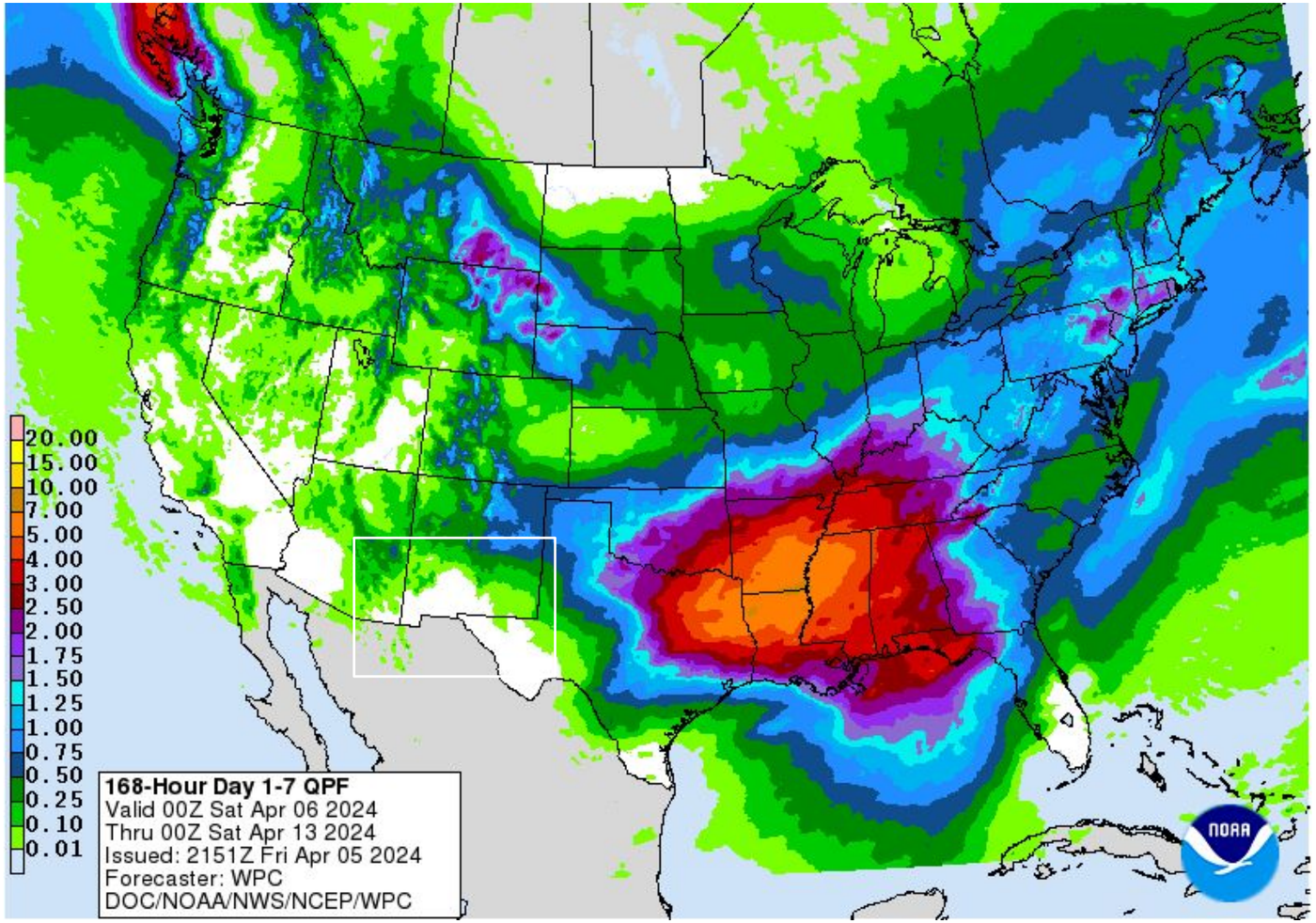

Image Caption: Weather Prediction Center 7-day precipitation forecast valid Apr 8 to Apr 13

Rapid Onset Drought Outlook

April 5, 2024
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Links to the latest Climate Prediction Center 8 to 14 day Temperature Outlook and Precipitation Outlook.

- Sporadic precipitation chances in April may provide temporary relief, however drought conditions are expected to persist through the Spring season.

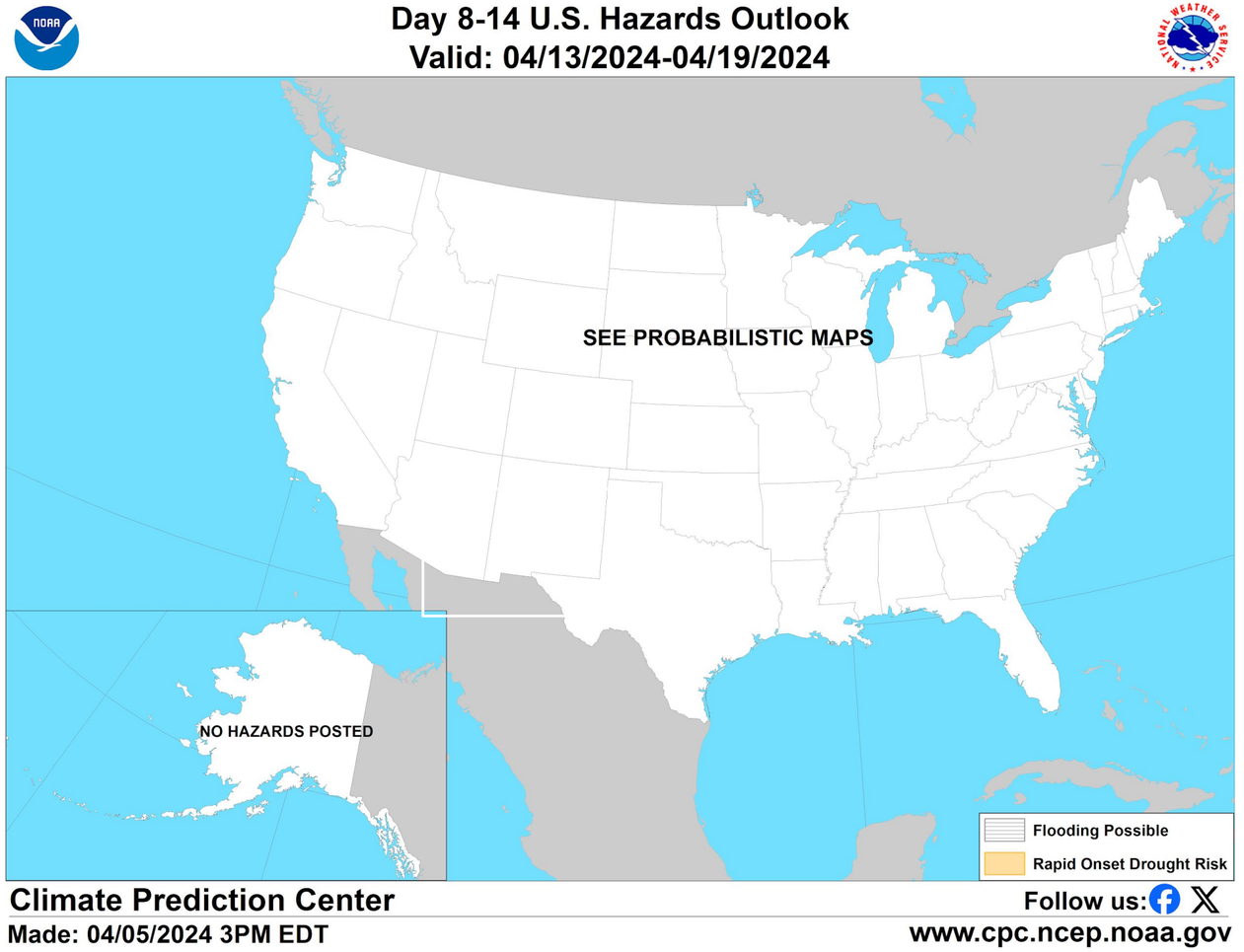

Image Caption:
Days 8 to 14 U.S. Hazards Outlook Valid Apr 13 to Apr 19

Long-Range Outlooks

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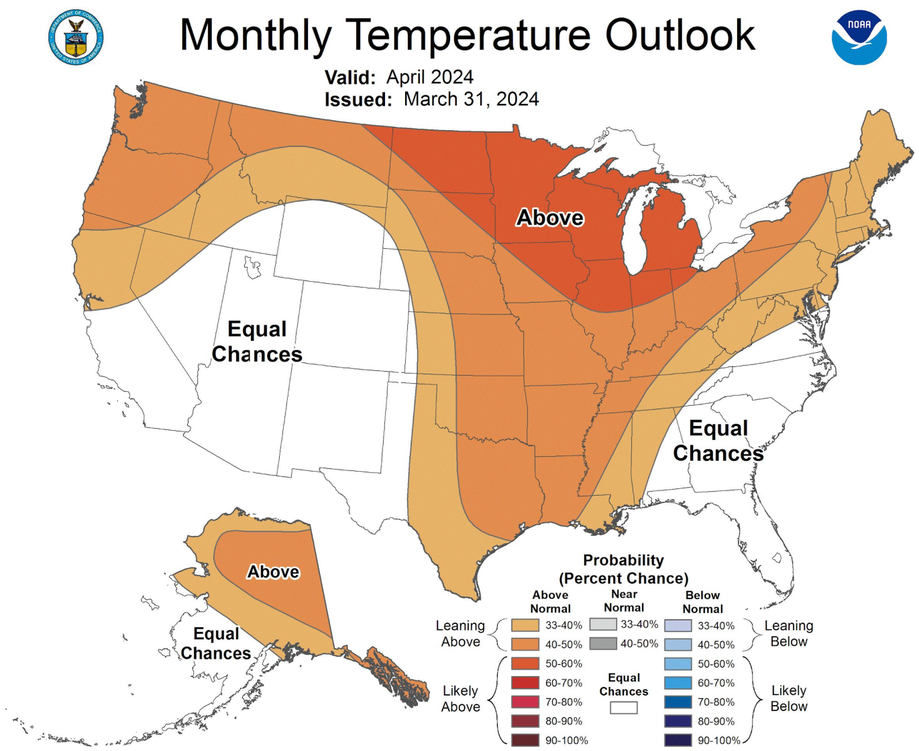
The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- Equal chances for temperatures through the month of April, likely near normal.
- 40-50% chance for above normal precipitation westward into Arizona. Likely closer to normal for far west Texas (monthly average for El Paso: 0.17”)



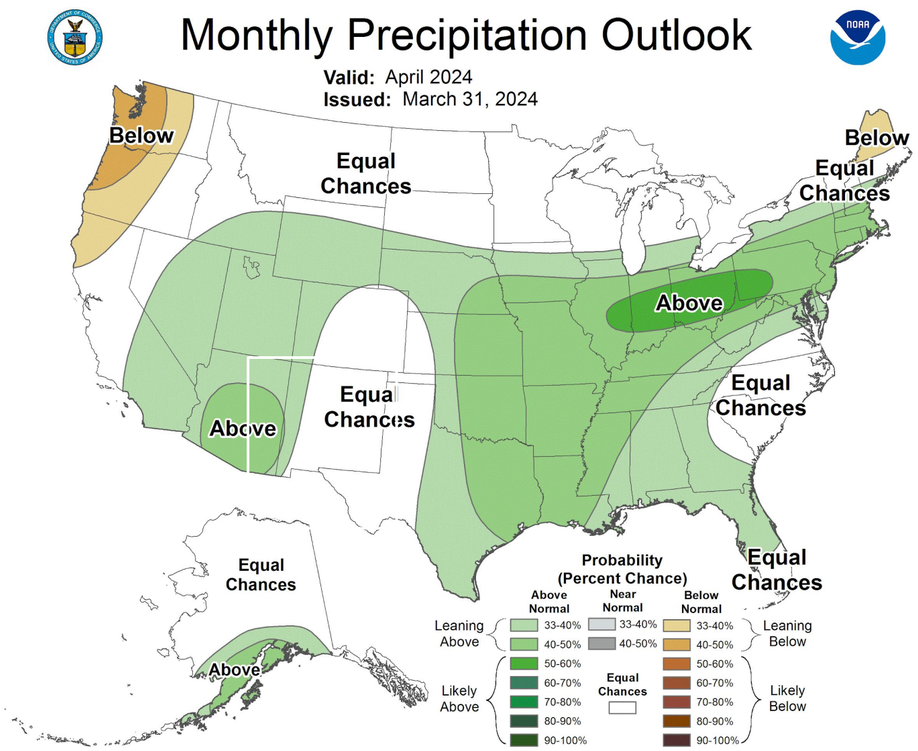


Image Captions:
Left - Climate Prediction Center Monthly Temperature Outlook.
Right - Climate Prediction Center Monthly Precipitation Outlook.
Valid April 2024

Drought Outlook

April 5, 2024
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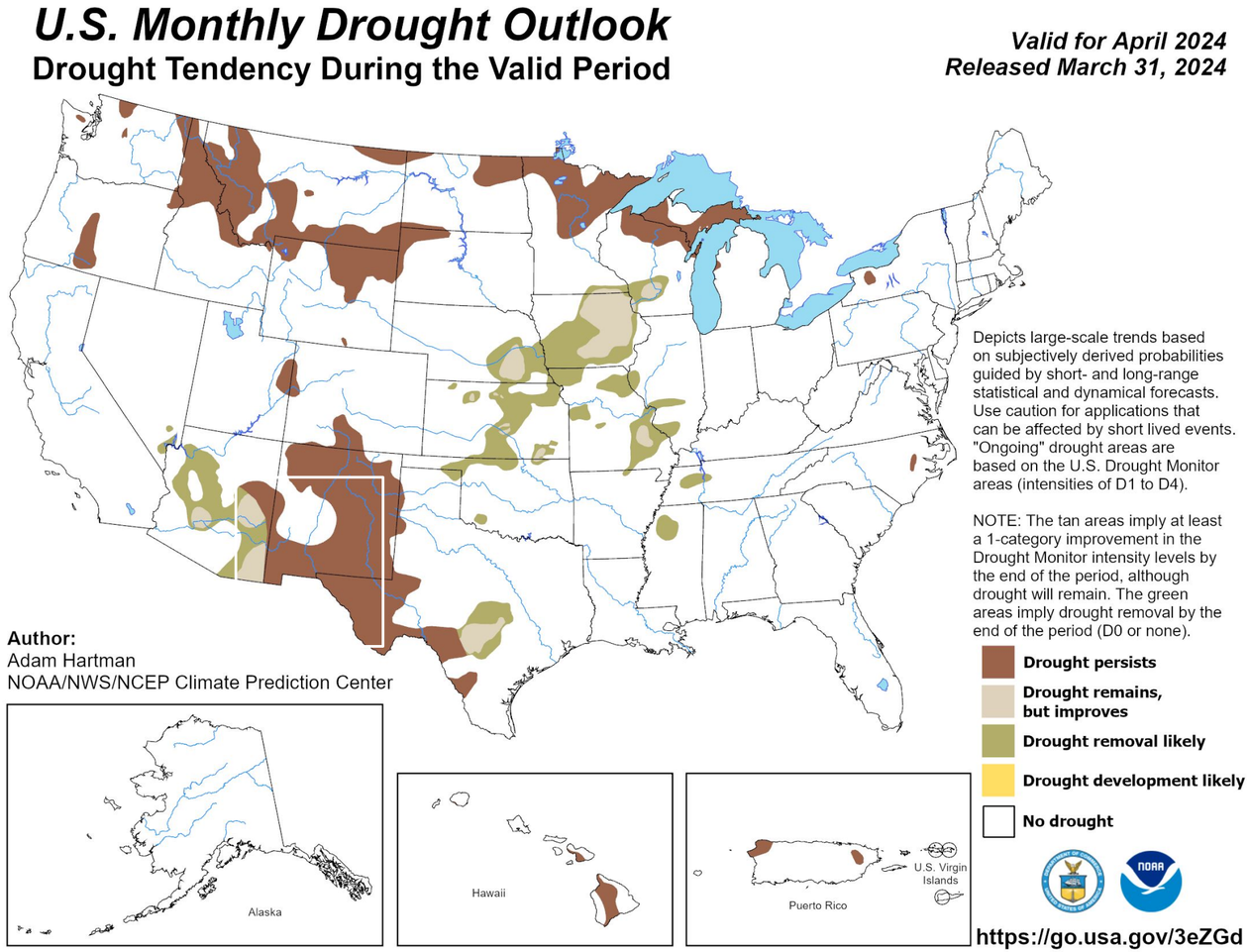
The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- Drought conditions are expected to persist through April, with few changes.



Links to the latest:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook
Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook

Image Caption:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook valid for April 2024