



Drought Information Statement for South-Central & Southwest Arizona, and Southeast California

Valid March 22, 2025

Issued By: National Weather Service Phoenix

Contact Information: nws.phoenix@noaa.gov

- This product may be updated around April 22, 2025
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/psr/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/?dews_region=130&state=All for regional outlook

- Drought conditions continue to worsen locally with well below normal precipitation the past 6 months
- Extreme Drought continues across central and western Arizona, as well as southeast California with pockets of Exceptional Drought developing



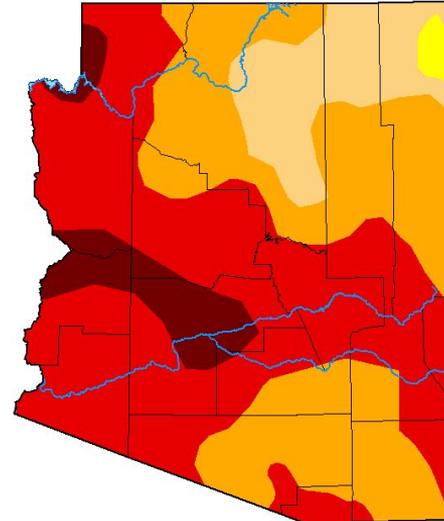


U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

- EXCEPTIONAL DROUGHT EMERGES WHILE EXTREME DROUGHT CONTINUES ACROSS WESTERN AND CENTRAL ARIZONA
- Drought intensity and Extent
 - D4 (Exceptional Drought):** northern La Paz, central Maricopa counties
 - D3 (Extreme Drought):** southern La Paz, Yuma, southwest and eastern Maricopa, Gila, and northern Pinal counties

U.S. Drought Monitor Arizona



March 18, 2025
(Released Thursday, Mar. 20, 2025)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.13	88.02	54.65	7.21
Last Week 03-11-2025	0.00	100.00	99.13	88.02	55.40	7.21
3 Months Ago 12-17-2024	9.19	90.81	56.37	37.19	11.19	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2025	3.74	96.26	76.63	45.54	14.03	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2024	27.62	72.38	39.91	4.61	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 03-19-2024	17.42	82.58	42.56	13.19	1.83	0.00

Intensity



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

Brad Rippey
U.S. Department of Agriculture



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor valid 5 am MST March 18, 2025



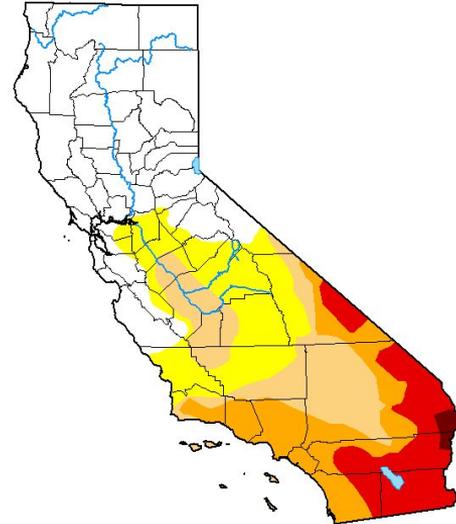


U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

- EXTREME DROUGHT CONTINUES THROUGH SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
- Drought intensity and Extent
 - **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**: far northeast Riverside County
 - **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Imperial and much of Riverside counties
 - **D2 (Severe Drought)**: north-central Riverside County

U.S. Drought Monitor California



March 18, 2025
(Released Thursday, Mar. 20, 2025)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	42.90	57.10	39.81	24.73	11.76	0.73
Last Week 03-11-2025	41.78	58.22	41.58	24.83	14.75	0.73
3 Months Ago 12-17-2024	43.49	56.51	16.72	5.70	1.03	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-07-2025	39.11	60.89	35.93	10.43	1.06	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2024	28.40	71.60	10.67	0.08	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 03-19-2024	95.46	4.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity



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Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor valid 5 am PDT March 18, 2025

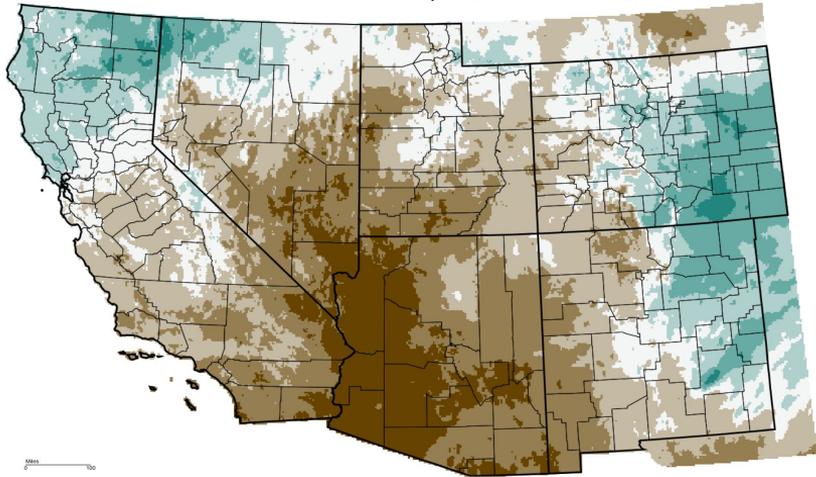




Precipitation

- Rainfall across central and western Arizona, as well as SE California has been well less than 25% of normal so far this Water Year (since Oct 2024)
- Many locations along the lower Colorado River valley have received minimal since the summer monsoon
- Rapid intensification of short term drought impacts have been experienced in the past 6 months

Southwest - Precipitation
October 2024 - February 2025, Percentile



Metadata: Drought Tracker, WCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prods, created 05 Mar 2025

Southwest - Precipitation
October 2024 - February 2025, Percent of 1991-2020 Average

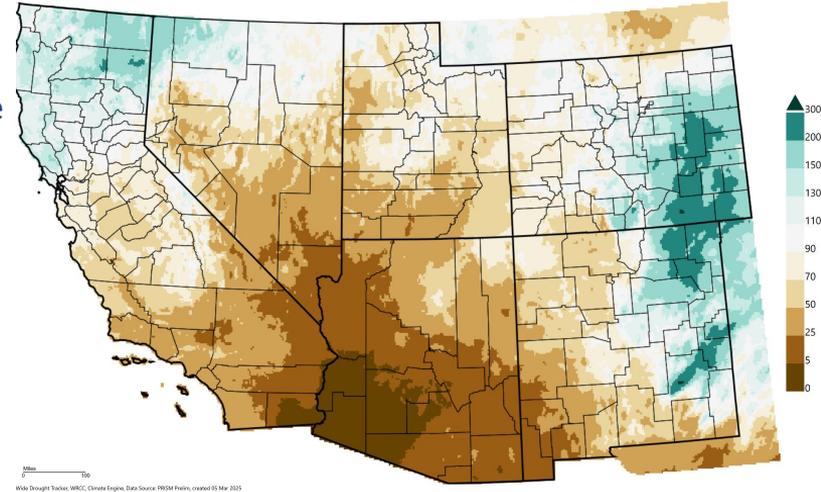


Image Captions:
Left - Water Year Precipitation Percentile Ranking
Right - Water Year Percent of Normal Precipitation
Data Courtesy [WestWide Drought Tracker](#).
Data over the past 5 months ending February 2025

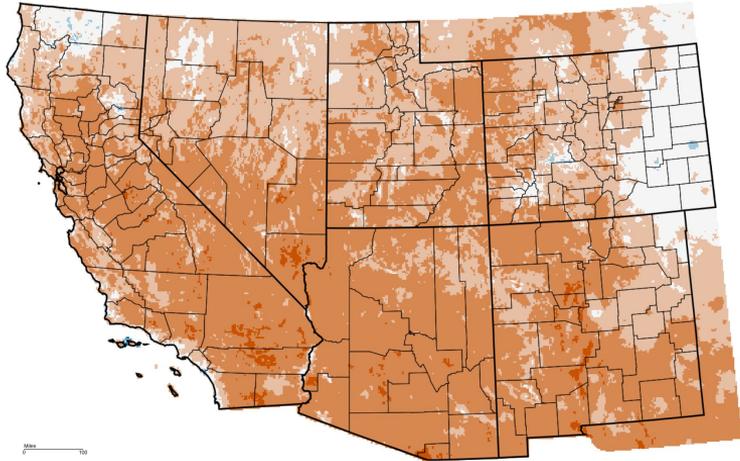




Temperature

- Average temperatures this Water Year (since Oct 2024) are up to 3°F above normal
- This abnormal warmth in the top 10th percentile has heightened evapotranspiration losses and more rapidly depleted soil moisture

Southwest - Mean Temperature
October 2024 - February 2025, Percentile



WestWide Drought Tracker, WPC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Profs, created 03 Mar 2025

Southwest - Mean Temperature
October 2024 - February 2025, Departure from 1991-2020 Average

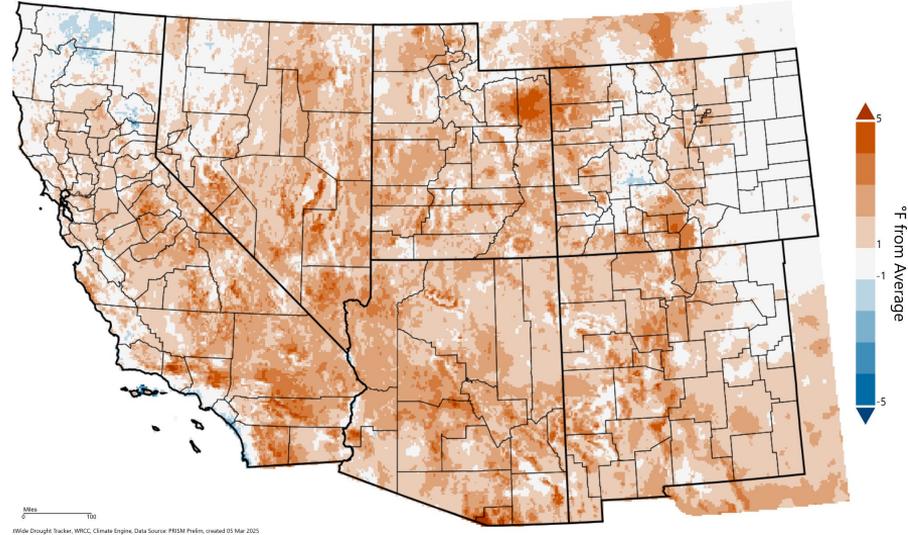


Image Captions:
Left - Water Year Temperature Percentile Ranking
Right - Water Year Departure from Normal Temperature
Data Courtesy [WestWide Drought Tracker](#)
Data over the past 5 months ending February 2025





Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Tier 1 shortage conditions remain in effect on the Colorado River impacting water deliveries in Arizona for 2025
- Unregulated inflow into Lakes Powell is expected less than 75% of average this spring which will keep Lake Powell and Mead water levels depressed such that restrictions are likely through 2026.

Agricultural Impacts

- There are no known impacts at this time

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Many smaller wildfires have continued this winter in areas typically not prone to wildfire this time of year. This has stressed resources across Arizona heading into the typical spring/early summer wildfire season.

Other Impacts

- Ranchers in western Arizona have experienced a significant lack of forage growth due to absent rainfall the past 6-9 months. Supplemental feed has been necessary in many locations to compensate.

Mitigation Actions

- A Drought Emergency Declaration remains in effect for the state of Arizona as signed by the governor in accordance with the [Arizona Drought Preparedness Plan](#). The continuation of this Drought Emergency has been recommended by the [Drought Interagency Coordinating Group](#)

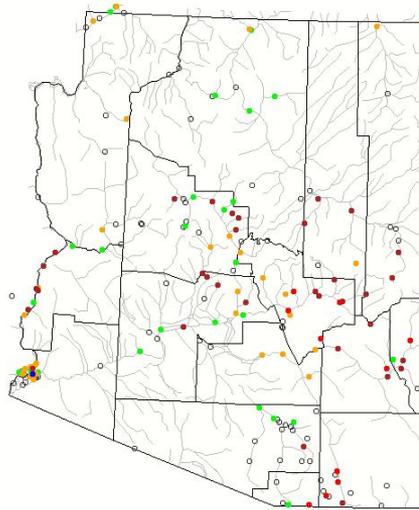




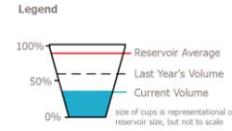
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Small and medium unregulated rivers and streams across most of Arizona were flowing at below average levels
- Small to medium sized reservoirs remained at or above the long term average, but below levels seen last year
- Larger reservoirs on the Colorado river continue to hover well below average forcing shortage conditions and reduced water deliveries

Friday, March 21, 2025



Explanation - Percentile classes							
Low	<10	10-24	25-75	76-90	>90	High	No Data
	Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal		



Reservoir	Capacity	Current Storage*	Max Storage*	One-Month Change in Storage*
1. Lake Powell	34%	8,275	24,322	-393.5
2. Lake Mead	34%	8,923	26,159	+248.5
3. Lake Mohave	91%	1,655	1,810	+54.0
4. Lake Havasu	91%	560	619	+5.2
5. Lyman	32%	10	30	+0.1
6. San Carlos	18%	162	875	-2.0
7. Verde River System	50%	145	287	+1.6
8. Salt River System	73%	1,481	2,026	-11.2

*KAF: thousands of acre-feet

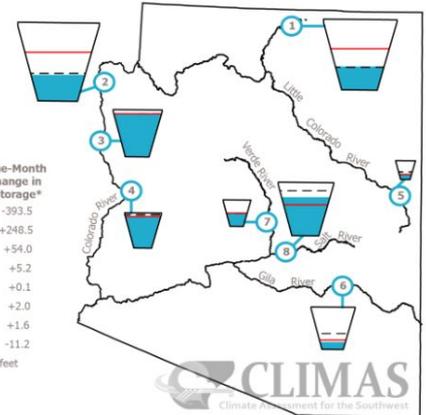


Figure 1. Arizona reservoir volumes for the end of January 2025 as a percent of capacity. The map depicts the average volume and last year's storage for each reservoir. The table also lists current and maximum storage, and change in storage since last month.

Image Caption:
 Left: USGS 14 day average streamflow compared to historical streamflow valid Mar 21, 2025. Data courtesy of [USGS](#)

Right: Arizona reservoir status. Data courtesy of [CLIMAS](#)



Fire Hazard Impacts

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

- Persistent dry conditions continue to support dead fine fuels below 8% over much of the local area despite the frequently cooler winter temperatures.
- The threat of significant large wildland fires will be above normal across southeast and central Arizona in April with the potential for this area to expand north through the spring.

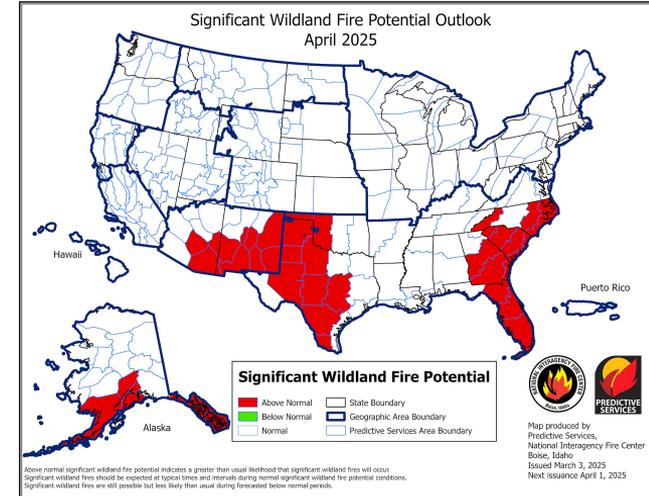
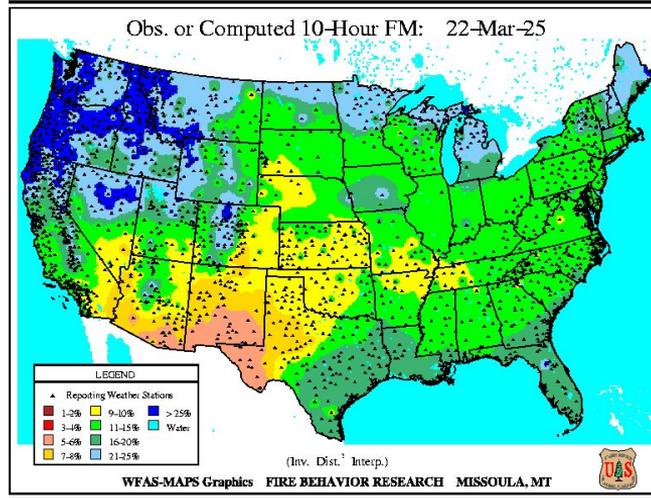


Image Caption: Left - 10-hour dead fuel moisture from [Wildland Fire Assessment System](#)
Right - [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook](#) for April 2025



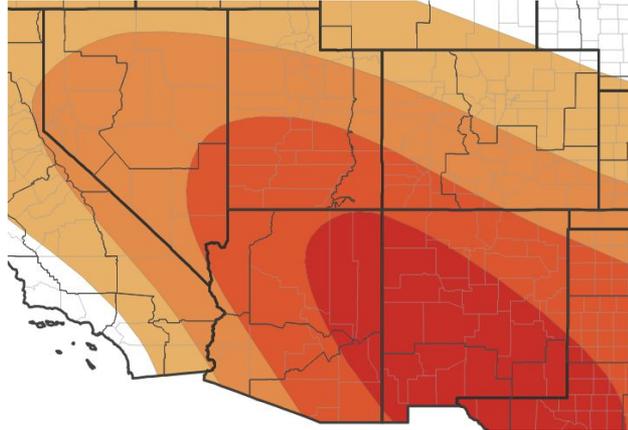


Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Temperatures over the next 3 months (Apr-May-Jun) have slightly better chances of averaging at above normal levels
- Odds are slightly tilted towards total precipitation during the Apr-May-Jun time frame falling in a below normal category

Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for April 1, 2025–June 30, 2025



Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures



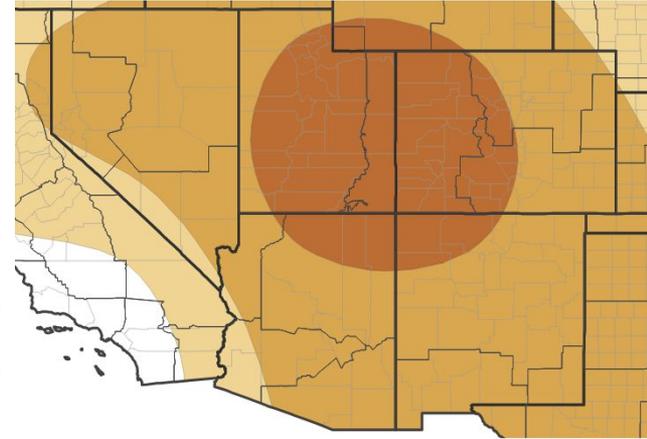
Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/20/25

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for April 1, 2025–June 30, 2025



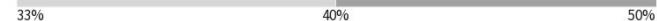
Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/20/25



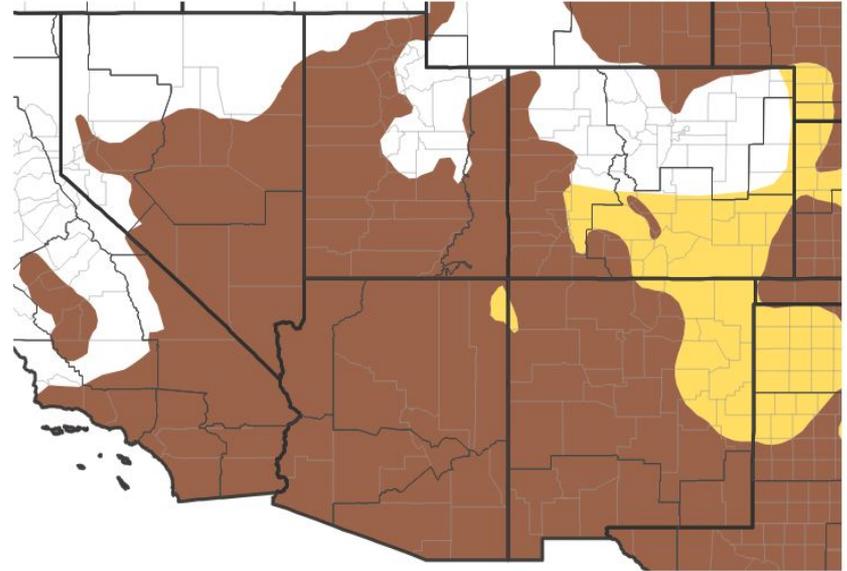


Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Extreme Drought currently exists over central and western Arizona, as well as southeast California
- Precipitation the remainder of the spring will be crucial for future drought trends
- Given a current weak La Nina and odds for drier than average weather through the spring, drought should persist or worsen over much of the region

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for March 20, 2025–June 30, 2025



Drought Is Predicted To...



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/20/25

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

