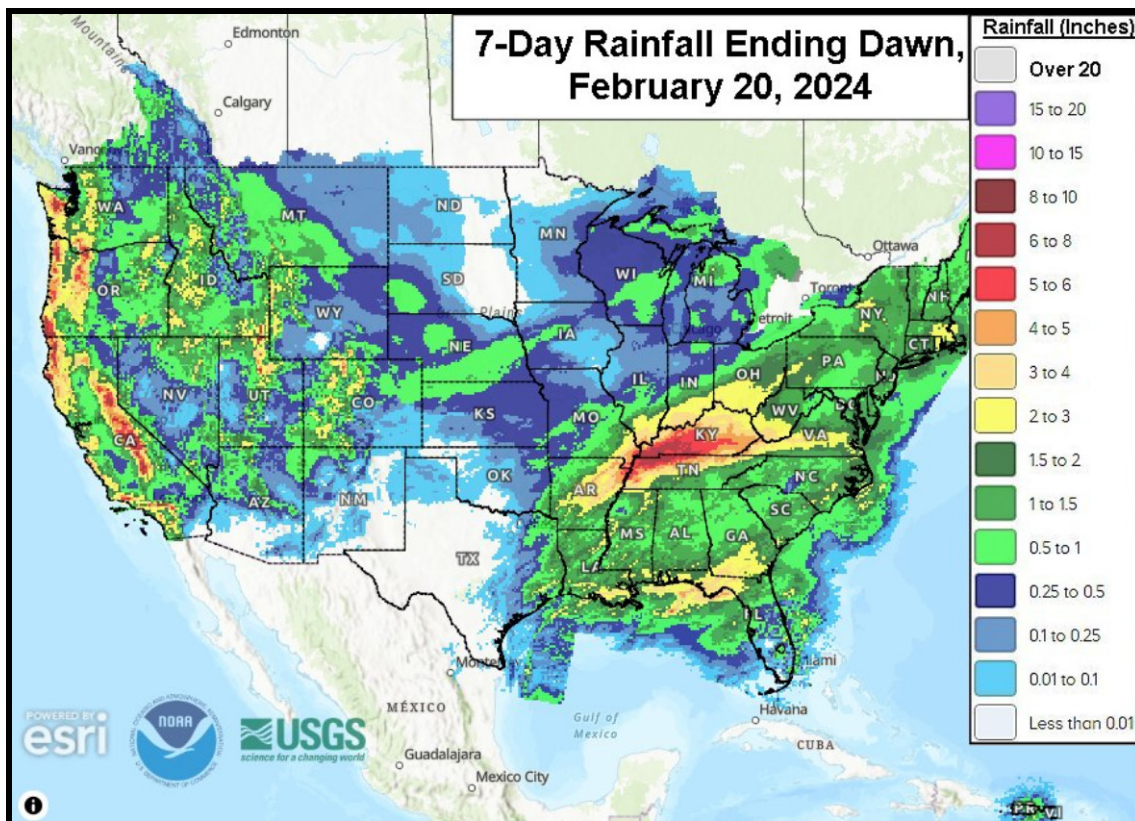


U.S. Plains Precipitation Will Remain Limited In Coming Weeks

By Andrew Owen and Drew Lerner

Kansas City, February 21 (World Weather Inc.) – The moisture profile varies significantly across the main production areas in the United States. The High Plains region is struggling with moisture deficits due to drier biased conditions over the winter season, though parts of the region received significant moisture in November. Waves of precipitation from the Delta and lower Midwest into the southeastern states, along with portions of the Pacific Northwest and California in the past few months resulted in adequate to excessive soil moisture. The areas of greatest concern include the southwestern desert region and a large part of the Great Plains and western Corn Belt due to dryness from August through October and that which has occurred since the beginning of December. There is also some dryness prevailing from Florida to southeastern Virginia. These precipitation anomalies are unlikely to change over the next few weeks.

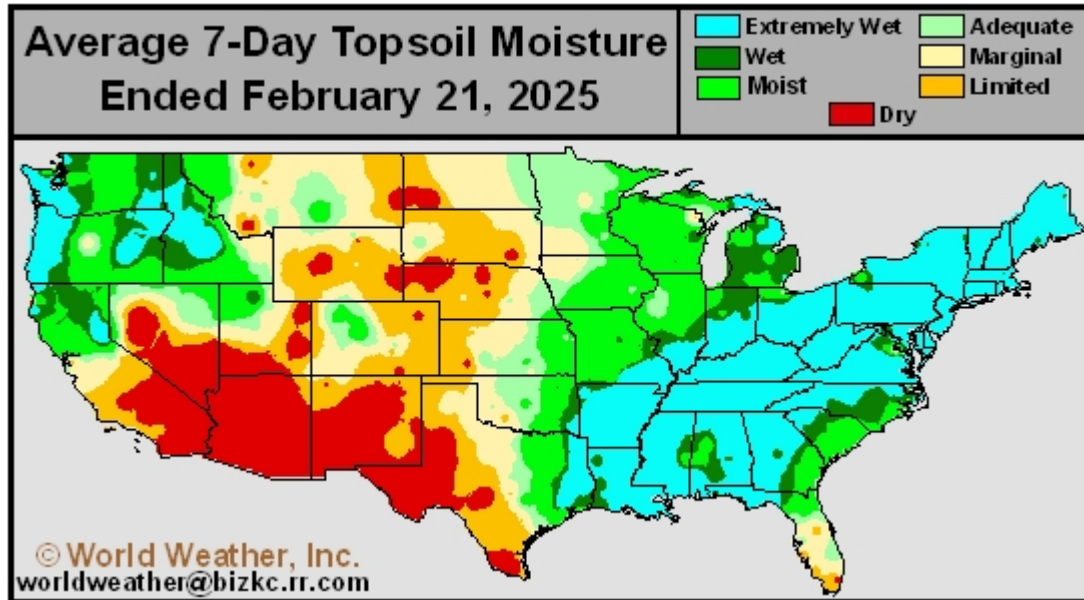
Excessive rainfall during the past week in the northern Delta and lower Ohio River Valley saturated the ground and induced flooding. The region received 1.50 to 6.00 inches of rain with local totals varying from 6.00 to 8.00 inches. This region needs to dry down.



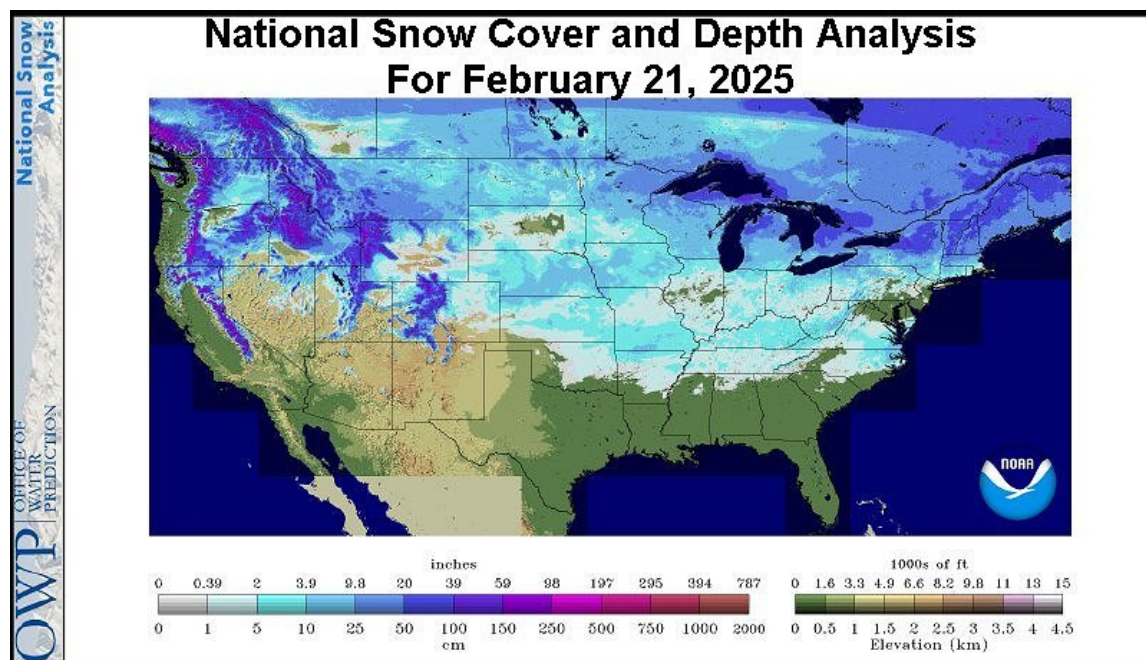
The southeastern states and southern Delta received 0.50 to 3.00 inches of moisture this past week while other locations in the Midwest into Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado received 0.10 to 1.00 inch of moisture. Other locations in the Plains received little to no

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precipitation. California and much of the Pacific Northwest received anywhere from 0.50 to 4.00 inches of moisture with drier pockets in interior Washington. Several areas in the Sierra Nevada, northwestern California, and the Cascade Mountains also received 4.00 to 8.00 inches of moisture with some very heavy snow accumulation.

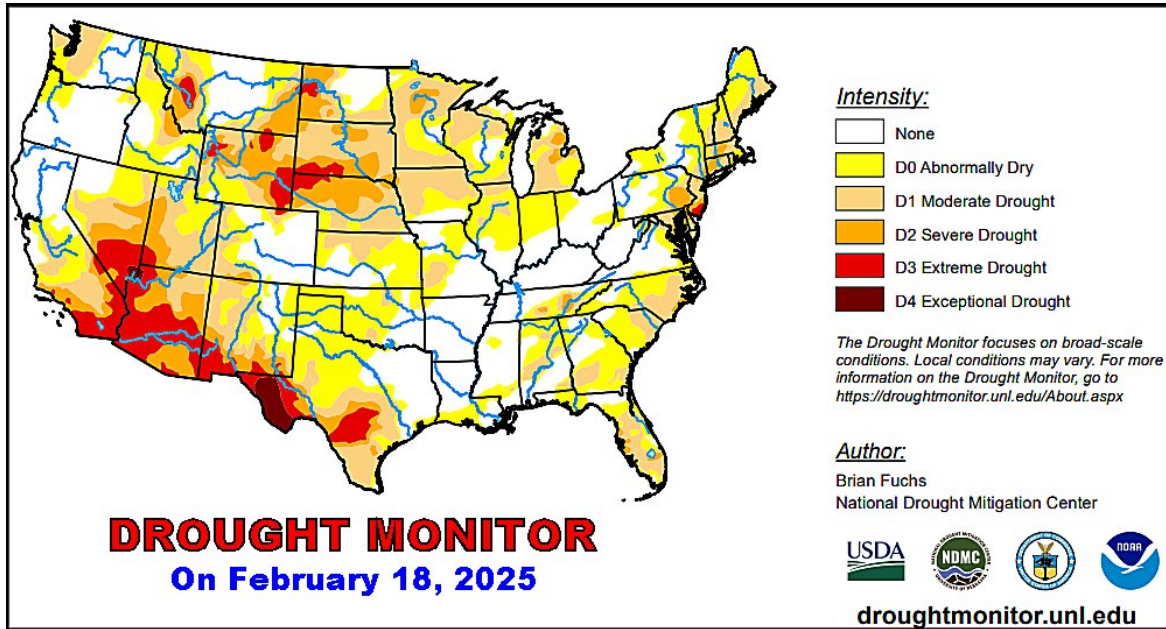


As of this morning, snow was noted on the ground in much of the northern and central Plains into the Midwest and even northern sections of the Delta. The snowpack was generally light, though several locations in Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and portions of Nebraska and Iowa had 10 inches or more of snow on the ground; however, the moisture content in that snow was very low limiting the benefit upon melting.



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The high Plains region has short to very short soil moisture. Much of Texas and Oklahoma into Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, and Montana were drier than normal for the 90-day period ending February 15 and many of these same areas along with a part of the western Corn Belt were quite dry August through October. The six month moisture deficits in this region are high resulting in the continued moderate to severe drought classification showing up in the Drought Monitor.

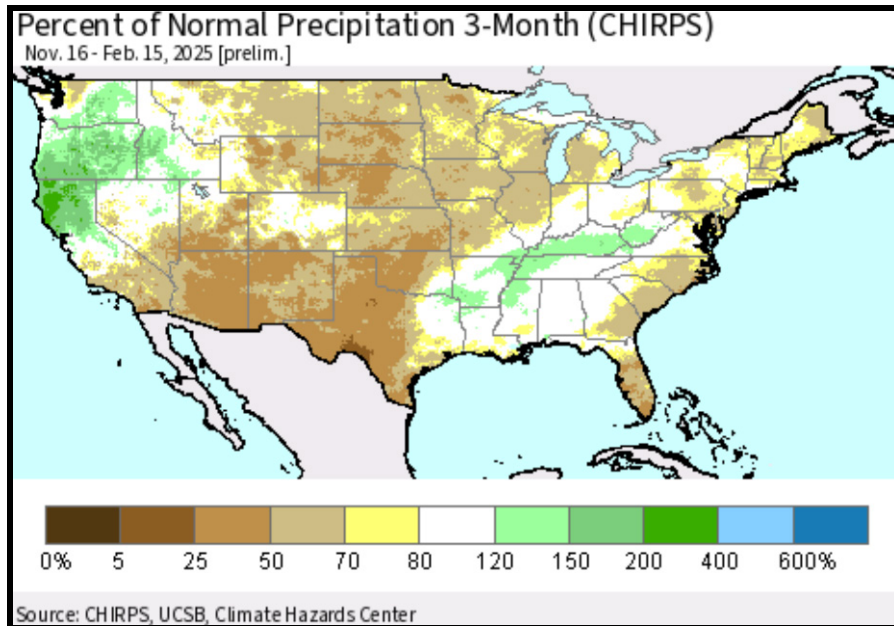


Several areas in the central and northern Plains will see minor improvements to topsoil moisture once the snow melts, though a significant amount of the moisture will likely run off and will not seriously change the soil moisture deficits. Portions of hard red winter wheat country in the central and southern Plains will have some moisture available when crops come out of dormancy this spring; however, timely rain will be imperative to restore soil moisture from the Texas Panhandle and western Oklahoma into eastern Colorado, western Kansas, and southwestern Nebraska to support wheat improvements after bitter cold induced some crop damage in the past two months. The Dakotas and Montana will also need timely precipitation to support favorable planting conditions this spring and to improve winter crop conditions.

WESTERN U.S. MOISTURE SITUATION

Oregon, northern California, and much of Washington received near to above normal precipitation for the 90-day period ending February 15. Soil moisture is rated adequate to excessive. California reservoirs are generally near or above historical averages and the northern section of the Sierra Nevada had above normal snowpack for February 20. Central and southern sections of the Sierra Nevada otherwise had below normal snowpack, ranging from 74-90%. Despite the below normal snowpack in portions of the Sierra Nevada, the Pacific Northwest and California should have ample moisture to support good planting this spring. Winter wheat prospects in the Pacific Northwest are also relatively favorable.

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WEATHER OUTLOOK

A large section of the production region east of the Rockies will receive below normal precipitation through the end of next week, though there will be a few opportunities for precipitation. A high-pressure ridge over western North America will divert moisture away from the region. An upper-level trough will gradually build over the Hudson Bay next week. Disturbances will track between the ridge and trough and promote periods of erratic precipitation from the northern Plains into the Midwest and portions of the Delta and southeastern states. Resulting precipitation will be light and unable to significantly soil moisture.

Light snow will accumulate from portions of the northern Plains into the Midwest, ranging from a dusting to 1 or 2 inches in most locations. A disturbance will also generate 0.50 to 2.00 inches of rain in portions of Louisiana over the weekend and early next week. Some light rain will also reach northern Florida, southern Georgia and neighboring locations. These areas will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of rain and locally more.

In the meantime, the Pacific Northwest and extreme northwestern California will have several opportunities for precipitation as disturbances track over the ridge. Precipitation totals will be enough to bolster or keep soil moisture near current levels. Snowpack will increase significantly in the Cascade Mountains as well.

A more active weather pattern will be possible for the main production areas east of the Rocky Mountains March 1 – 7. Disturbances will likely continue to track around the trough over central Canada and will promote spotty precipitation for portions of the Midwest and Plains. Resulting precipitation will likely be too light to significantly bolster soil moisture in the driest locations of the Plains. Periods of significant rain will also be possible in portions of the Delta and southeastern states.

A gradual warming trend is slated for much of North America in the coming days as arctic air that recently advanced into the region abates to the north. Daytime

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temperatures will be warm enough to melt snow for portions of the Plains and Midwest. Colder weather will be possible toward the latter part of next week in the Upper Midwest and neighboring locations as the trough intensifies.

ADDITIONAL IMPACTS

Hard red winter wheat prospects will remain mostly unchanged for the central and southern Plains in the coming weeks. The potential for precipitation during the first week of March will be welcome, though additional rain will be needed later in March to support the best development conditions. The southwestern Plains are unlikely to get much moisture from the early-March precipitation events and will stay too dry.

The wettest areas in the Midwest, Delta, and southeastern states will also have an opportunity to dry down marginally through the end of next week. Flood potentials may decrease, though the boost in rain during the first week of March could still promote localized flooding in the Delta and southeastern states.

Winter crop prospects and spring planting prospects in the Pacific Northwest and California will remain generally good as well.

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