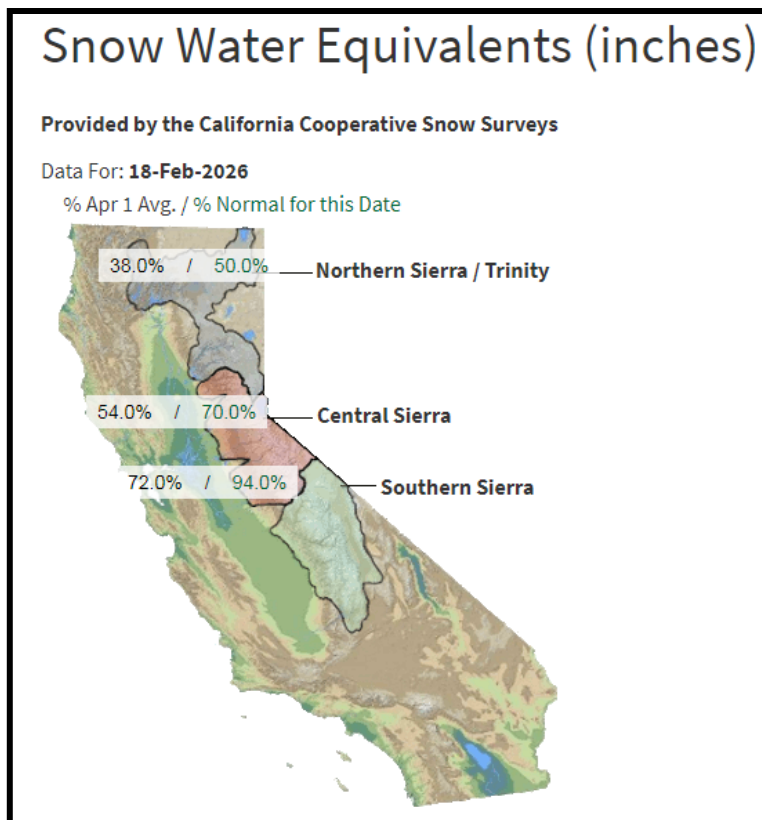


Western United States Snowpack Still Below Normal

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, February 19 (World Weather Inc.) – California received significant amounts of moisture during the past week that helped bolster mountain snowpack across the Sierra Nevada. Despite this recent influx of precipitation, mountain snowpack across the western United States remains below normal for this time of year. Precipitation over the winter trended below normal in a large section of the western U.S., the central and southern Rocky Mountains in particular. Reservoir levels remain above historical levels in California and there should be enough moisture for the upcoming season. Concerns are otherwise growing for moisture shortages this year in the remaining states where snowpack remains well below normal. California and the Cascade Mountains will see several waves of precipitation during the coming week. Mountain snowpack will further increase, though overall snowpack will likely remain below normal. The Rocky Mountains will also have a few opportunities for precipitation. Snowfall in these areas will marginally bolster snowpack and the need for abundant precipitation will remain high late this month into March.



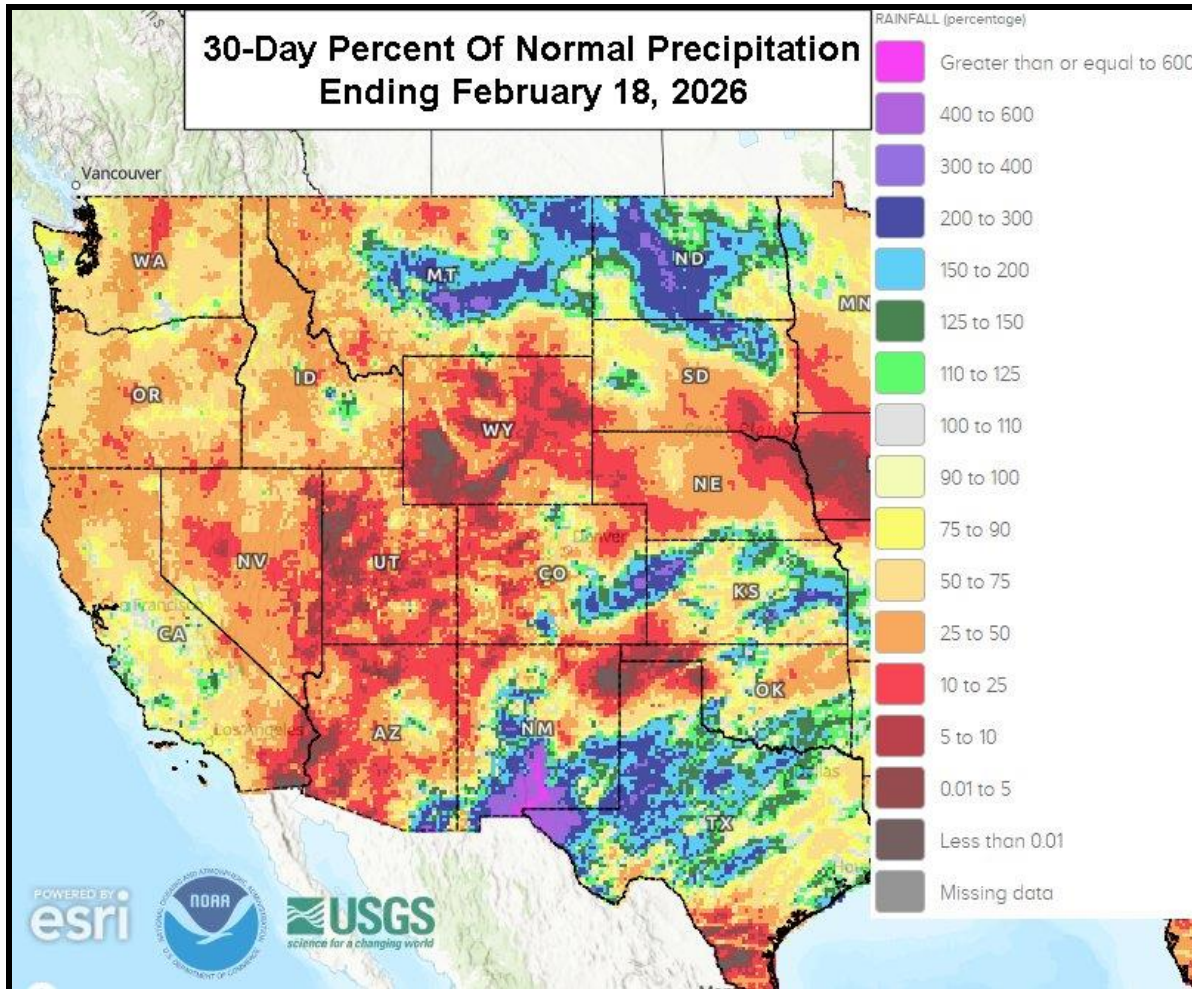
California saw waves of precipitation during the past week that helped bolster snowpack in much of the Sierra Nevada. Snowpack remains below normal as of February 18 with snow-water equivalents ranging from 50% to 94%. However, snow-water equivalents ranged from 39% to 71% as of February 11. While significant improvements were noted in the past week, additional precipitation would be welcome across the state. Reservoir levels across California remain above or slightly above historical levels despite many areas trending drier than usual during the past month. The outlook for the upcoming season across

California is relatively favorable due to the ample moisture in storage and improving snowpack across the Sierra Nevada.

Snowpack elsewhere in the western United States is below to well below normal. As of February 18. Many areas in Oregon, southern Washington, and the southern Rocky Mountains had less than 50% of normal snowpack for this time of year. Precipitation in the Pacific Northwest was generally below or slightly below normal for the 90-day period

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ending February 18, though pockets in western Washington, northern Oregon, and southeastern Idaho were wetter or slightly wetter than usual. Many areas in the central and southern Rocky Mountains region otherwise received less than 50% of normal precipitation during this time.



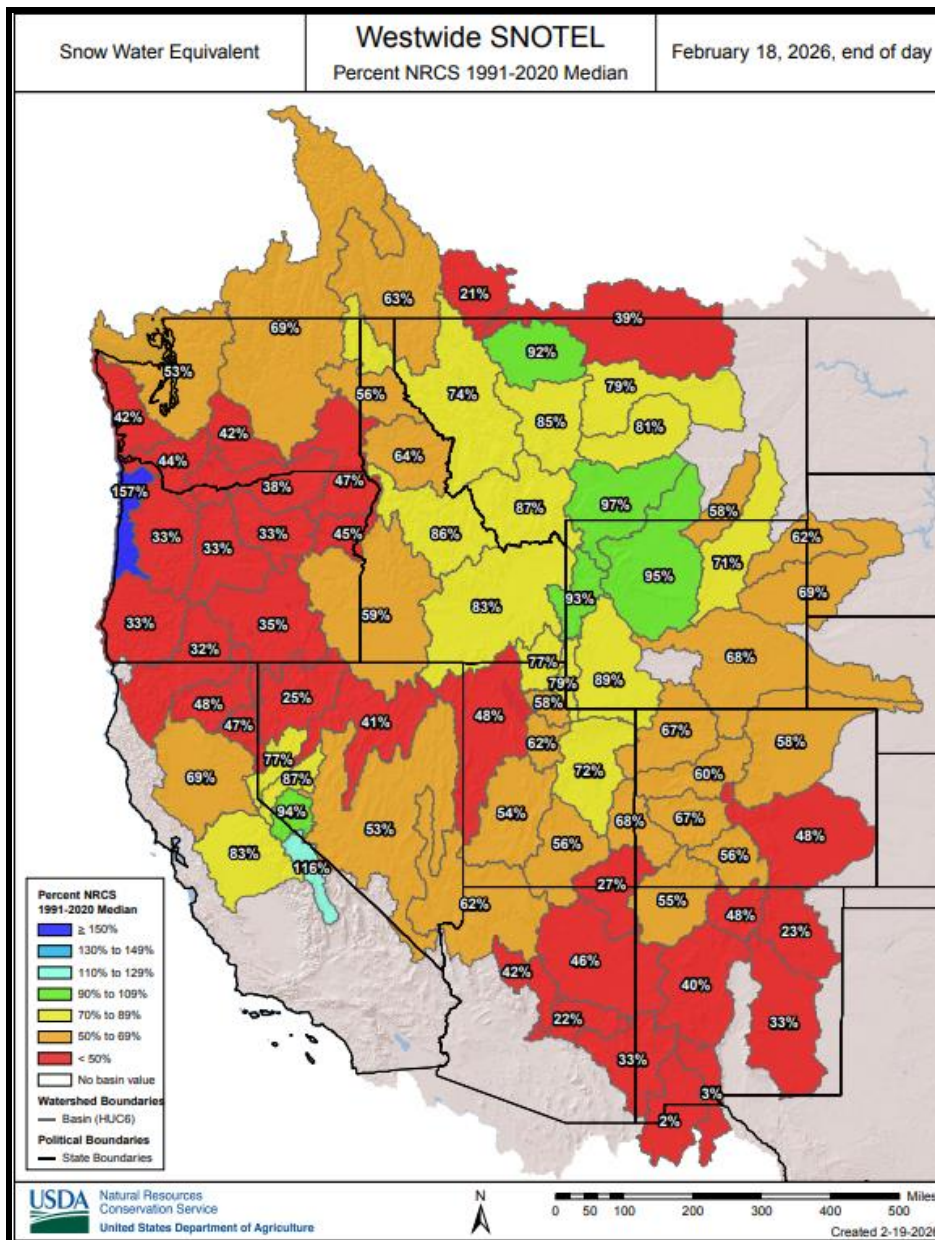
Reservoir levels are below capacity in much of the Pacific Northwest. Many areas in Oregon and Idaho had less than 50% of moisture in capacity. The lack of snowpack, reduced water in storage, and drought or abnormally dry conditions have caused increasing concerns for the upcoming season. Winter grains and oilseeds may develop unevenly at times. Moisture shortages may become a growing concern later this summer across the region as well. The need for abundant precipitation will remain high in the coming weeks.

Drought or abnormally dry conditions were also noted in much of the central and southern Rocky Mountains region. The lack of mountain snowpack and ongoing drought are also increasing concerns for moisture shortages later this year. Significant amounts of precipitation are needed in the coming weeks to improve the outlook for the upcoming season.

Western North America will receive varying amounts of precipitation during the coming week. An upper-level disturbance will shift from west to east today into Friday that will promote the first round of precipitation. An upper-level low-pressure trough will help

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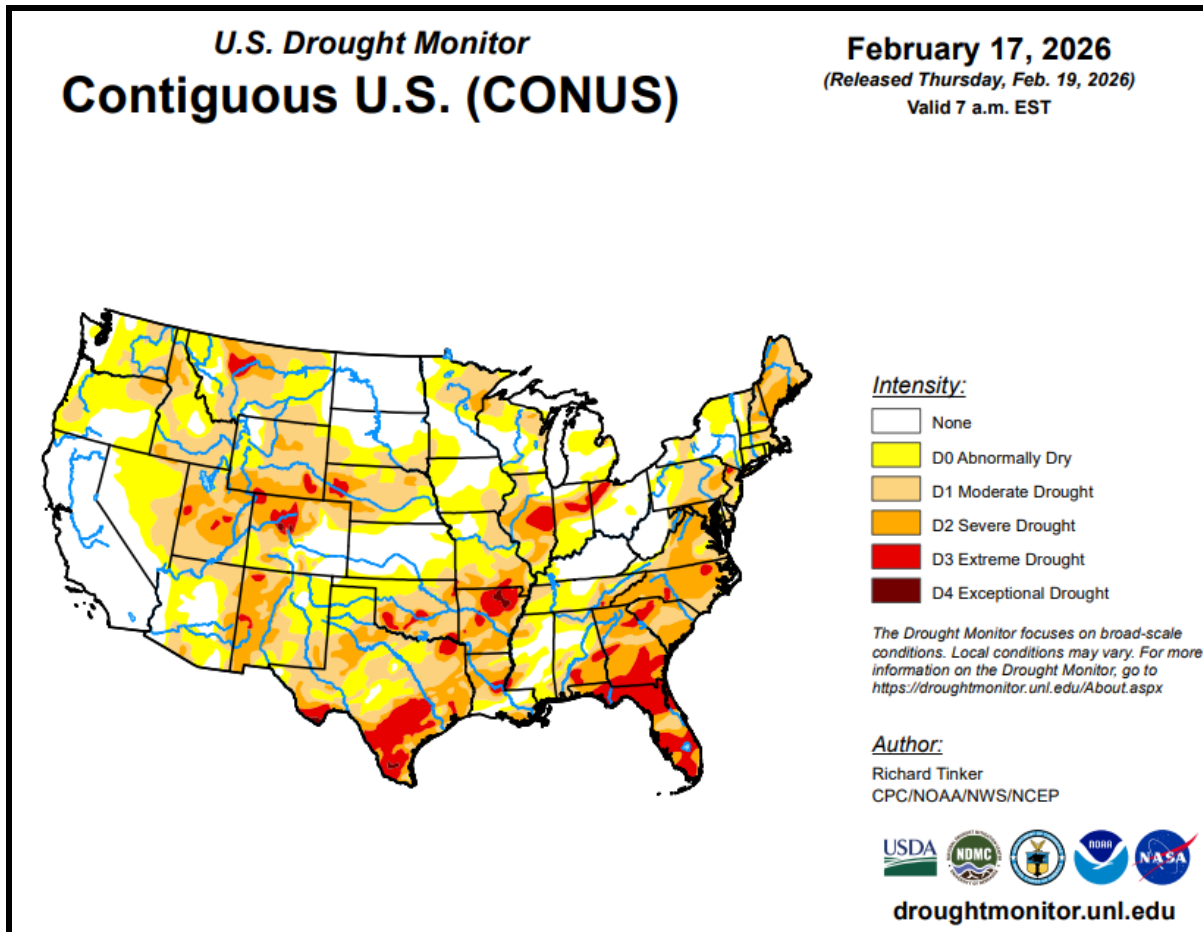
send precipitation in the Pacific Northwest over the weekend. Precipitation will continue for the Pacific Northwest, California, and portions of the Rocky Mountains region at the beginning and middle of next week.



Northern California and the Sierra Nevada into the Cascade Mountains will receive 1.00 to 4.00 inches of moisture with local amounts of 6.00 inches or more in northern California, southwestern Oregon, and the higher elevated areas in the Sierra Nevada. California's Central Valleys and portions of Idaho will receive 0.40 to 2.00 inches of moisture with locally greater amounts. Lowland areas in the Pacific Northwest and the remaining Rocky Mountains region will receive 0.10 to 1.00 inch of moisture with locally greater amounts.

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The Pacific Northwest will again have several opportunities for precipitation February 27 – March 5 as an upper-level low-pressure trough builds over Canada. Disturbances tracking around the trough may promote wetter than usual conditions for much of the region. California and the central and southern Rocky Mountains region will otherwise trend drier than usual.



Mountain snowpack will further increase for the Sierra Nevada in the coming week due to the additional precipitation. Snowpack may remain slightly below normal levels for this time of year in the northern and central Sierra Nevada despite additional precipitation. However, the additional precipitation and ample moisture in storage will continue to support a good outlook for the upcoming season.

Waves of precipitation in the Pacific Northwest will help bolster mountain snowpack in the Cascade Mountains and northern Rocky Mountains. Precipitation will likely be too light to bring snowpack to normal levels for this time of year, though significant improvements are expected. The need for additional precipitation will remain high late this month into February to improve the outlook for both the winter grains and summer crops grown in the region.

Mountain snowpack in the central and southern Rocky Mountains region will not increase significantly in the coming weeks despite periods of spotty precipitation. Concerns for significant moisture shortages will persist across the region unless precipitation potentials increase drastically later in March.

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