Water Supply Outlook
National Weather Service Portland OR
350 PM PST Wednesday February 5 2020

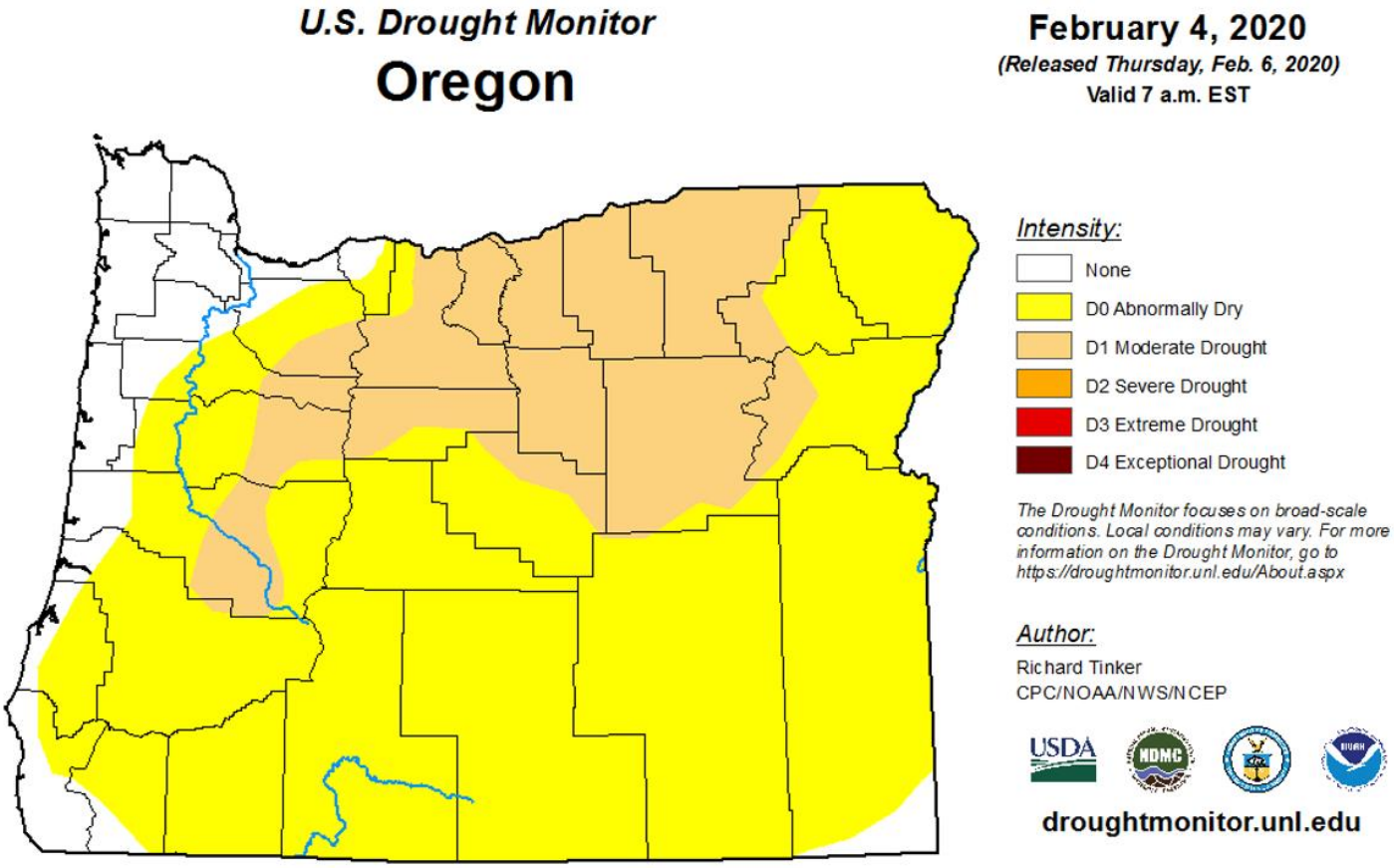
OREGON WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK AS OF FEBRUARY 5TH, 2020

The water supply forecast for the spring and summer of 2020 is near to above average for northeast Oregon, near-average for western Oregon, and below-average for central, south-central, and southeast Oregon. Water supply forecasts have increased significantly from one month ago for many watersheds, especially in northwest and northeast Oregon. Note that there are still about two months for mountain snow accumulation and three months for significant rainfall, and significant changes in conditions and water supply forecasts are possible.

The February outlook by the Climate Prediction Center highlights the likelihood of above-average temperatures and below-average precipitation for much of southern Oregon, with equal chances for near, above, or below average temperatures and precipitation for northern Oregon. For more information on seasonal outlooks, visit cpc.ncep.noaa.gov.

Refer to the sections below and links provided for details regarding snowpack, precipitation, seasonal climate outlooks, reservoirs, streamflow, water supply forecasts, and spring flood potential.

The next update to this outlook will be issued by March 5, 2020.



Precipitation and Temperatures across Oregon

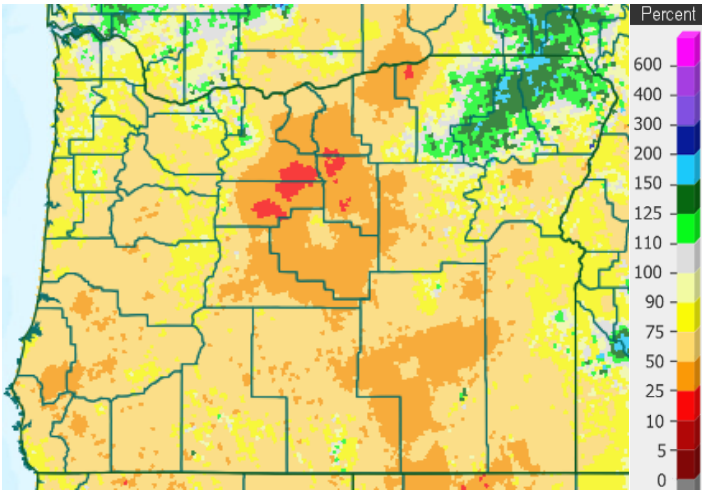
Precipitation for the 2020 water year thus far (Oct 1, 2019 through February 4, 2020) ranges from 50 to 80 percent of average in Oregon. January 2020 was notably above-average for much of the state, especially the northwest Coast Range, the Cascades, and the Blue and Wallowa Mountains. However, January precipitation was below-average for much of central and southern Oregon.

Temperatures so far this winter have been above-average, generally 1 to 3 degrees, and this trend continued in January, with temperatures in most of the state 1 to 2 degrees above average. That said, temperatures were cool during some of the heavy precipitation in January, resulting in much-needed mountain snow.

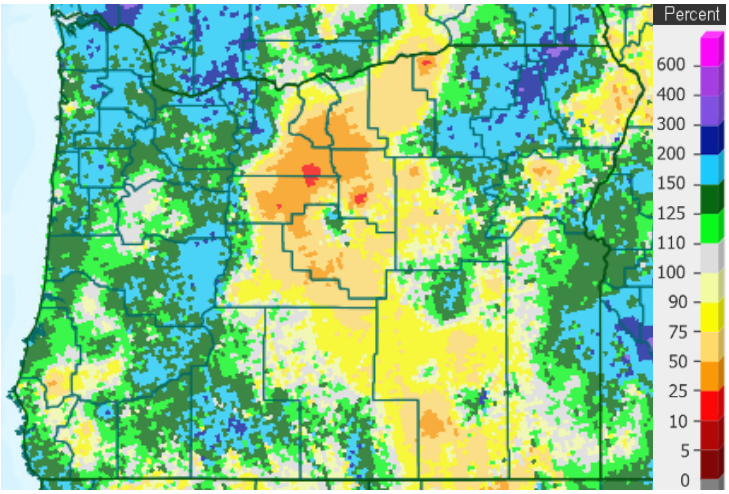
Details on precipitation and temperatures:

NOAA National Weather Service - Northwest River Forecast Center
www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/water_supply/wy_summary/wy_summary.php

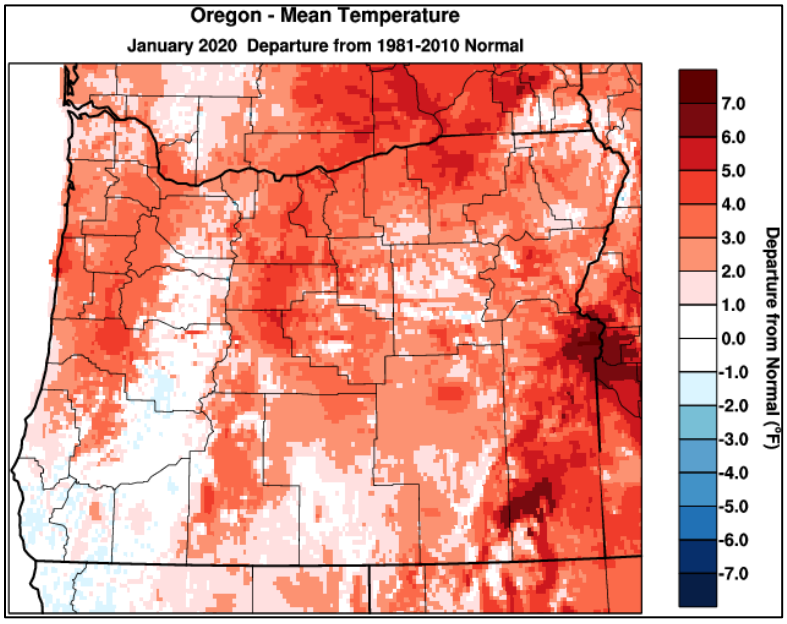
NOAA NWS - California-Nevada River Forecast Center (Klamath basin)
www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/water_resources_update.php



Water Year 2020 Precipitation - % of Average



January 2020 Precipitation - % of Average



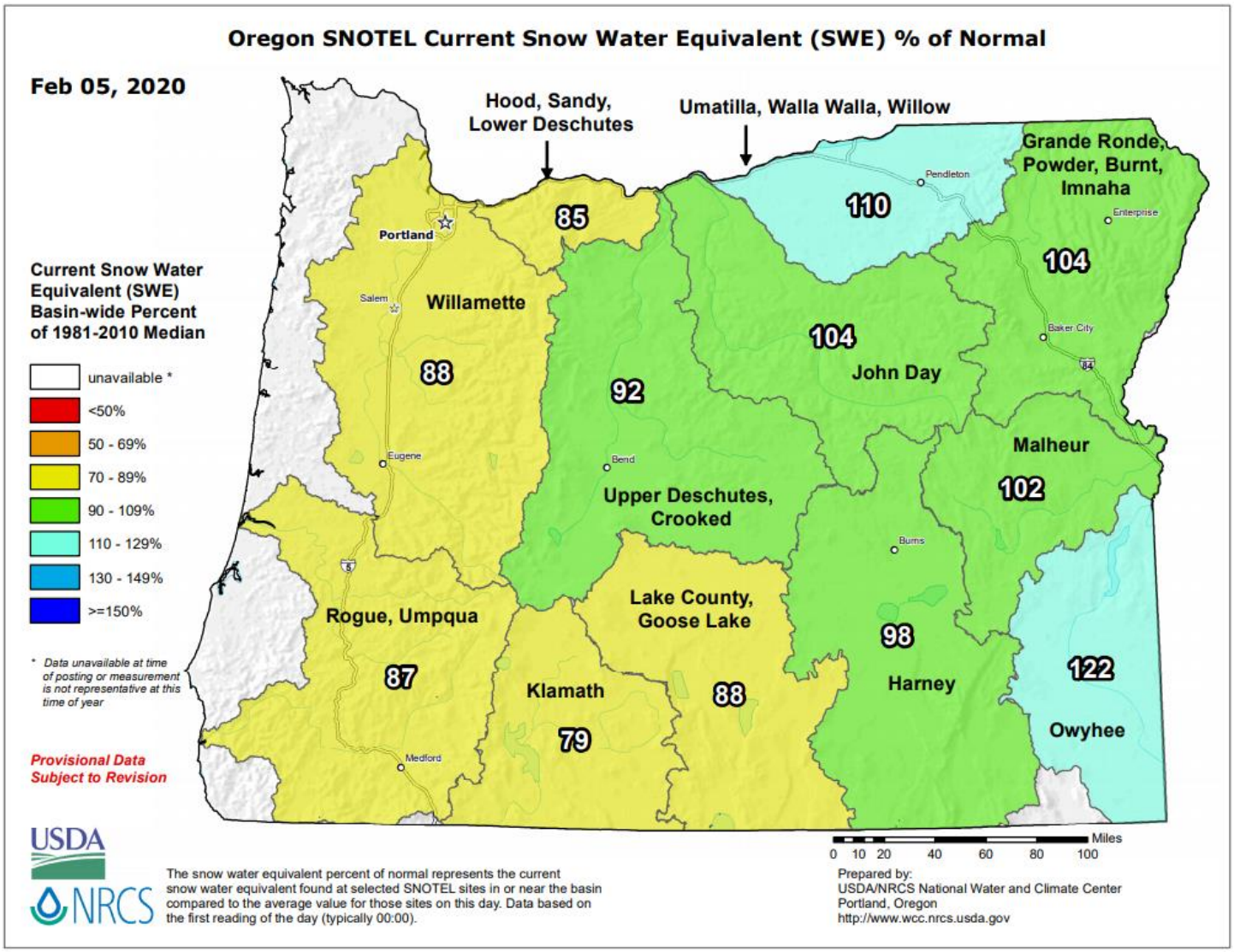
Snowpack across Oregon

As of early February, mountain snowpack is above average for portions of northeast and far-southeast Oregon, near-average for the rest of central and eastern Oregon, and a little below-average for the Cascades and western Oregon. The highest is 122 percent of average in the Owyhee basin, and the lowest is 81 percent in the Klamath basin. Snowpack increased significantly in January, generally 10 to 60 percent, with the biggest increases in terms of percentage in northeast Oregon mountains.

Additional snowpack information:

NOAA National Weather Service - Northwest River Forecast Center
www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/snow/

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/snow/



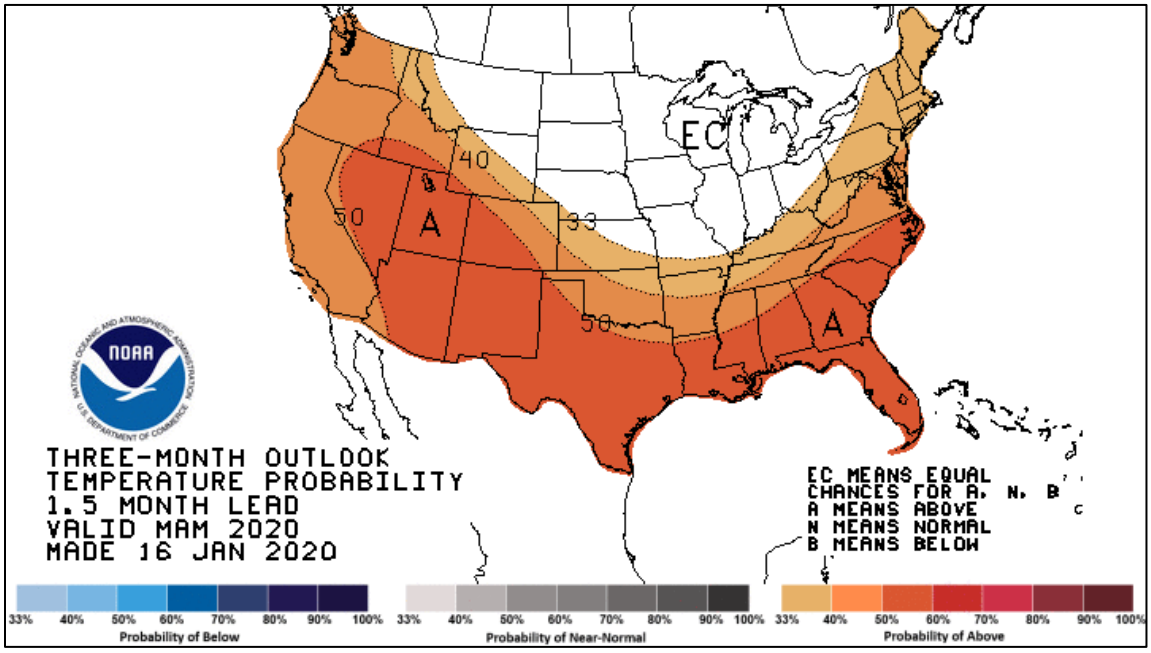
Precipitation and Temperature Outlook

The Climate Prediction Center produces monthly and seasonal outlooks, in which there is a weighing of the odds of near-normal, above-normal, or below-normal temperatures and precipitation.

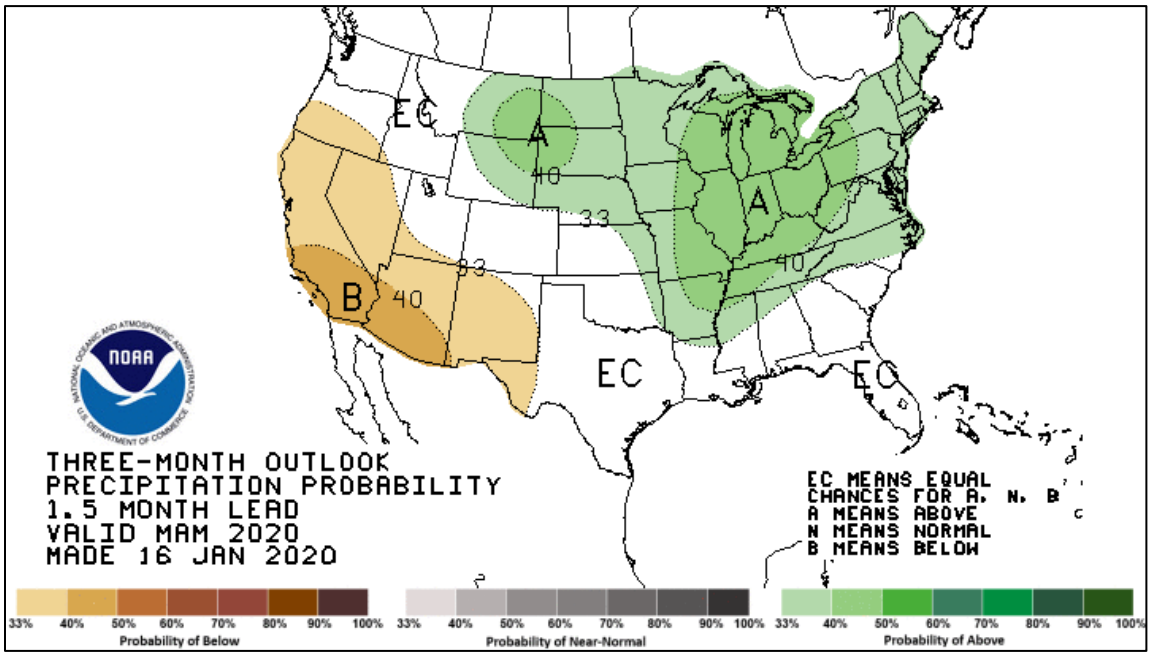
The February outlook by the Climate Prediction Center highlights the likelihood of above-average temperatures and below-average precipitation for much of southern Oregon, with equal chances for near, above, or below average temperatures and precipitation for northern Oregon.

The March through May outlook indicates an enhanced likelihood of above-average temperatures statewide and a slightly-enhanced likelihood of below-average precipitation for southern Oregon, with equal chances for northern Oregon.

Visit www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov for more about seasonal outlooks.



March-April-May Outlooks



Reservoirs

Reservoir storage as of early February is highly variable, which is pretty typical for this time of year. Irrigation reservoirs around the state range from 25 to 100 percent of capacity.

Corps of Engineers flood control reservoirs in western Oregon are being maintained at or near minimum pool for optimal flood control storage. Refill of these projects typically begins in February.

Owyhee Reservoir, the largest irrigation project in the state, has storage of 517,000 acre-feet, 72 percent of capacity, as of early February. This is a 4 percent increase from a month ago.

Reservoir data is provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Additional reservoir information:

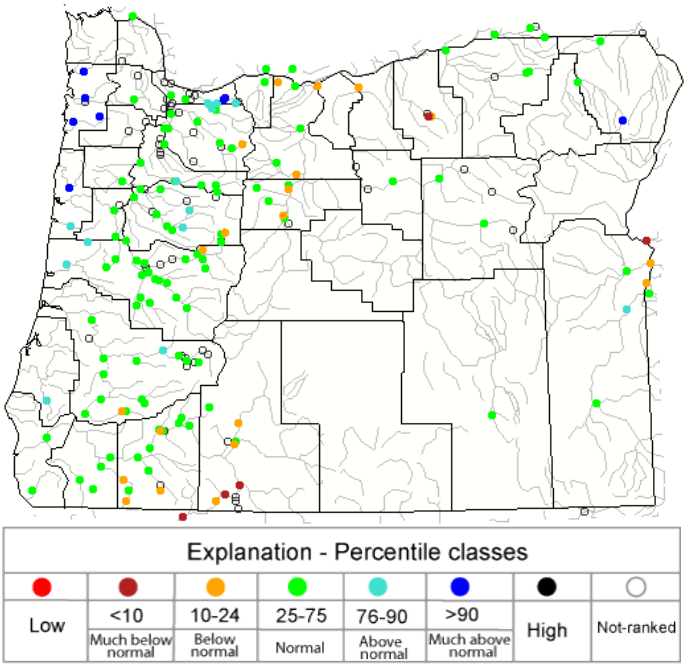
www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/basin.html
www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/select.html
www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/nwp/teacup/willamette/

Observed Streamflow

Observed runoff so far this water year is below-average for Oregon rivers, ranging from 65 to 90 percent of average for western and northeast Oregon and 40 to 80 percent of average for south-central and southeast Oregon.

January streamflow was above-average for the north Oregon coastal rivers, near-average for the rest of western Oregon along with northeast Oregon, and below-average for central and southeast Oregon.

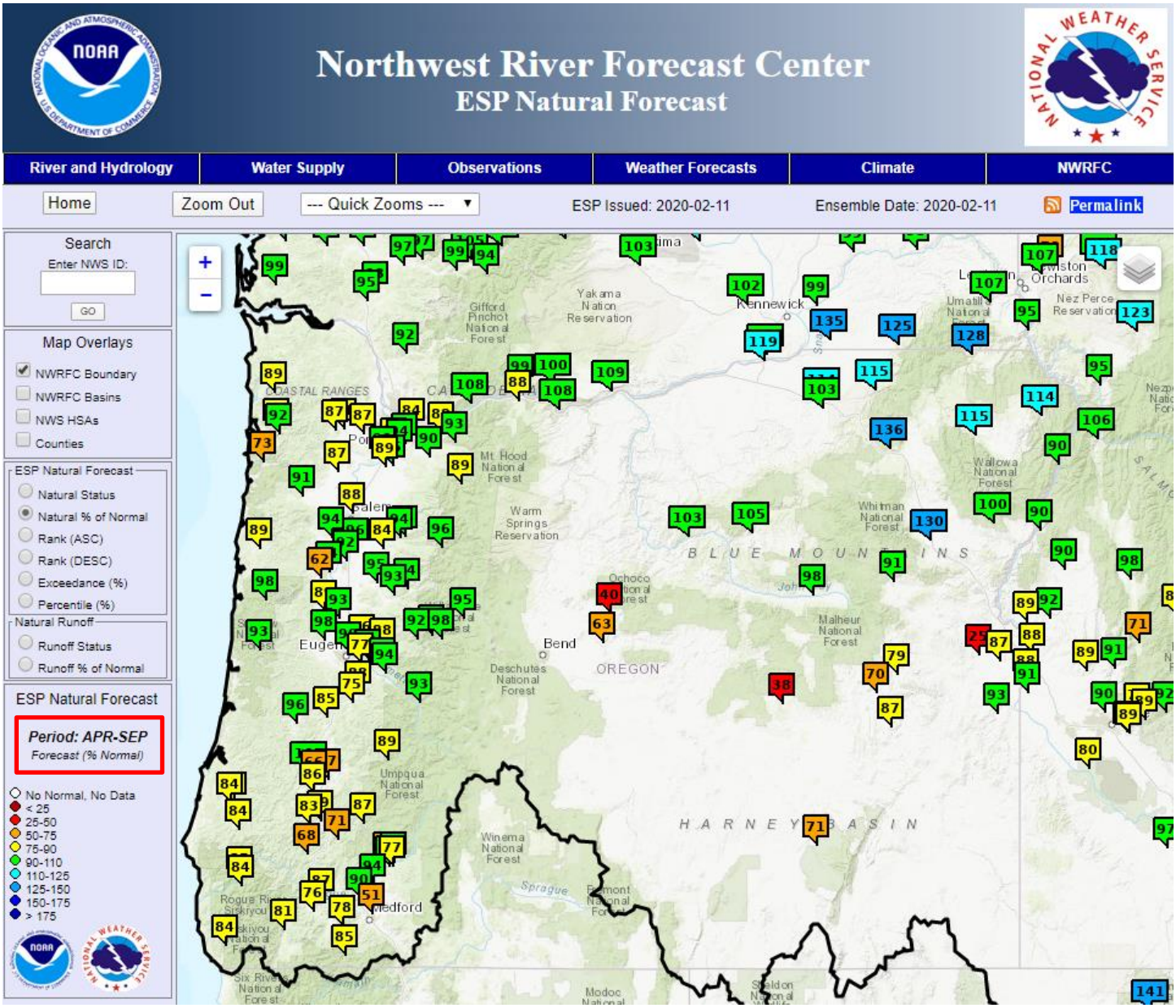
Visit waterwatch.usgs.gov for details on observed streamflow. Water year and monthly runoff data is available at www.nwrfc.noaa.gov for several locations in Oregon.



Water Supply Seasonal Forecasts

Water supply forecasts for April-September runoff volume are generally near to a little below-average statewide. However, forecasts for northeast Oregon are above average, ranging from 105 to 120 percent of average. In contrast, forecasts for central and eastern Oregon basins range from 40 to 80 percent of average. Forecasts for western Oregon range from 70 to 90 percent. Precipitation in February, March, and April could have a major impact on these forecasts, so keep an eye on forecast trends through the rest of winter and spring.

The forecast for the Columbia River at The Dalles, which is a good index of conditions across the Columbia Basin, is 106 percent of average for April-September, an increase of 5 percent from a month ago.



Details on basin-scale water supply forecasts:

NOAA National Weather Service - Northwest River Forecast Center
www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/ws/

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/