

MARCH 2022



WestFAST News

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Chair – Roger Gorke; Federal Liaison Officer – Heather Hofman

Reclamation announces funding opportunity for drought resiliency Funds from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will help improve water supply reliability

USBR 3/24/22



The Bureau of Reclamation today announced a funding opportunity for WaterSMART: Drought Resiliency Projects. This program provides federal cost-share funds for entities to take a proactive approach to drought through building projects that increase water supply reliability and improve water management.

Eligible applicants include:

- States, Tribes, irrigation districts and water districts.
- State, regional or local authorities, the members of which include one or more organizations with water or power delivery authority.
- Other organizations with water or power delivery authority.

- Nonprofit conservation organizations that are acting in partnership with an entity listed.

Applicants must be in one of the following states or territories: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico.

Applicants are invited to submit proposals under the following funding groups:

Funding Group I: Up to \$500,000 in federal funds will be available for projects that generally should be completed in two years.

Funding Group II: Up to \$2,000,000 in federal funds will be available for larger projects that may take up to three years to complete. Projects in this group may be funded on an annual basis, and if so, funding for the second and third years of the project is contingent upon future appropriations.

Funding Group III: Up to \$5,000,000 in federal funds will be available for larger projects that may take up to three years to complete.

Applications are due June 15, 2022. For more information on this funding opportunity, visit www.grants.gov and search funding opportunity number R23AS00005.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law contains \$400 million over five years for WaterSMART grants,

including drought resiliency projects. In 2022, Reclamation is making \$160 million available and will release other funding opportunities this spring. To learn more about how Reclamation is implementing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, please visit www.usbr.gov/bil.

For more than 100 years, Reclamation and its partners have developed sustainable water and power solutions for the West. This funding opportunity is part of the Department of the Interior's WaterSMART Program that focuses on collaborative efforts to plan for and implement actions to increase water supply reliability including investments to modernize infrastructure. Find out more information at [Reclamation's WaterSMART program webpage](#).

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Fiscal Year 2023 Drought Resiliency Projects Webinar

On March 24, 2022, The Bureau of Reclamation published a funding opportunity for the WaterSMART Drought Response Program's Drought Resiliency Projects (DRP).

This funding opportunity supports the implementation of drought mitigation projects that will build long-term resilience to drought. Through this funding opportunity, Reclamation provides financial assistance for projects that, when implemented, will increase water supply reliability and improve water management.

The Bureau of Reclamation will host a webinar on Friday, April 8, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. MDT to discuss eligible applicants, project types, and the evaluation criteria for the DRP funding opportunity. [Click here](#) to join the live event or use the same link to watch a recording after the completion of the live event. Attached is a flyer with more information about the webinar for you to share with anyone who may be interested. The funding opportunity is [available on grants.gov](#) (opportunity number R23AS00005). Applications are due by June 15, 2022, at 4 pm MDT.

Spring Outlook: Drought to expand amid warmer conditions Flood risk for Upper Midwest, Midwest and Southeast

NOAA 3/17/22

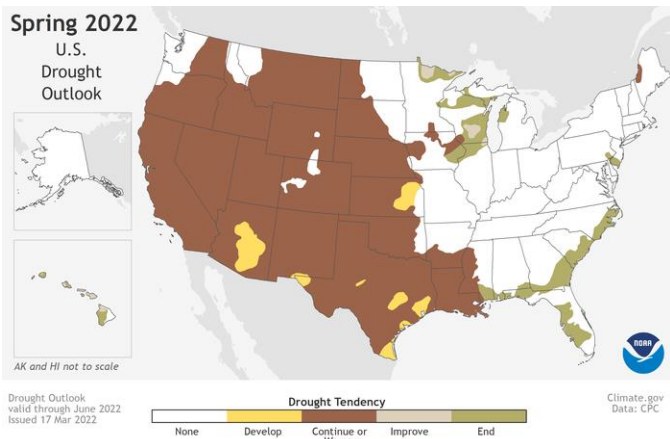


A look at a nearly empty Grant Lake in California, USA, August 2021. NOAA's 2022 Spring Outlook predicts prolonged, persistent drought in the West. (George Rose/Getty Images)
Resources Animation: U.S. Climate Outlook for Spring 2022 (no audio)

UPDATED: March 17, 2022. *This news release was updated to reflect the anticipated moderate flood risk for the James River in South Dakota.*

NOAA issued its U.S. Spring Outlook today and for the second year in a row, forecasters predict prolonged, persistent drought in the West where below-average precipitation is most likely. [NOAA's Climate Prediction Center](#) — part of the National Weather Service — is also forecasting above-average temperatures for most of the U.S. from the Desert Southwest to the East Coast and north through the Midwest to the Canadian border from April to June.

“NOAA’s Spring Outlook helps build a more weather and climate ready nation by informing local decision makers and emergency managers of this spring’s hazardous weather, such as extreme drought,” said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. “NOAA’s seasonal outlooks provide advanced warning of the conditions to come, enabling communities to make preparations that boost their resilience to these hazards.”



This map depicts where there is a greater than 50% chance of drought persistence, development, or improvement based on short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts during March 17 through June 30, 2022. (NOAA)

Spring Outlook for drought, temperature and precipitation

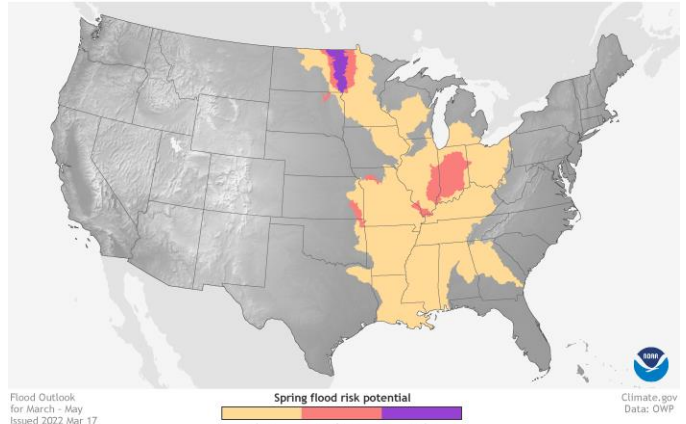
“Severe to exceptional drought has persisted in some areas of the West since the summer of 2020 and drought has expanded to the southern Plains and Lower Mississippi Valley,” said Jon Gottschalck, chief, Operational Prediction Branch, NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center. “With nearly 60% of the continental U.S. experiencing minor to exceptional drought conditions, this is the largest drought coverage we’ve seen in the U.S. since 2013.”

Short-term drought recently developed in a region stretching from North Carolina southward through parts of Florida. Dry conditions will bring an elevated risk of wildfires across the Southwest and southern Plains and north to the Central Plains, especially when high winds are present. Drought conditions in the Southwest are unlikely to improve until the late summer monsoon rainfall begins.

More than half of the U.S. is predicted to experience above-average temperatures this spring, with the greatest chances in the Southern Rockies and Southern Plains. Below-average temperatures are most likely in the Pacific Northwest and southeast Alaska.

Above-average precipitation is most likely in portions of the Great Lakes, Ohio Valley, mid-Atlantic and the west coast of Alaska, while below-average precipitation is forecast for portions of the Central Great Basin, Southwest, Central and Southern Rockies and Central and Southern Plains, eastward to the Central Gulf Coast.

Spring 2022: U.S. Flood Outlook



This map depicts the locations where there is a greater than 50% chance of moderate or minor flooding during March through May, 2022. (NOAA)

Spring flood risk

There is a minor-to-moderate flood risk throughout much of the eastern half of continental U.S., including the Southeast, Tennessee Valley, lower Mississippi Valley, Ohio Valley, and portions of the Great Lakes, upper Mississippi Valley, and middle Mississippi Valley. An above-normal ice breakup and flood potential is also present in Alaska.

“Due to late fall and winter precipitation, which saturated soils and increased streamflows, major flood risk potential is expected for the Red River of the North in North Dakota and moderate flood potential for the James River in South Dakota,” said Ed Clark, director, NOAA’s National Water Center. Spring snowmelt in the western U.S. is unlikely to cause flooding.

NOAA’s National Hydrologic Assessment evaluates a number of factors, including current conditions of snowpack, drought, soil saturation levels, frost depth, streamflow and precipitation.

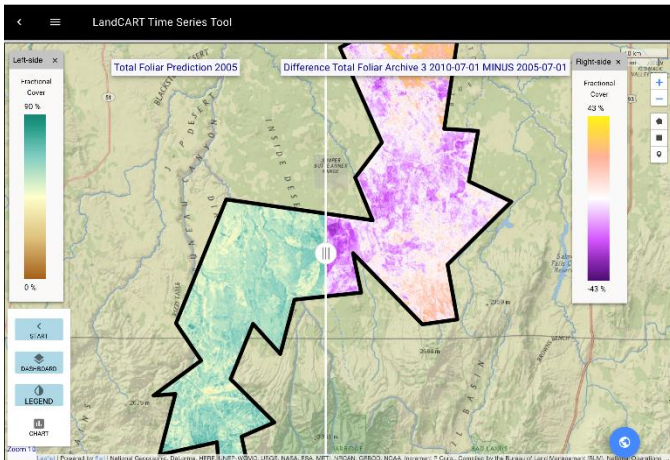
About NOAA Outlooks

NOAA produces seasonal outlooks to help communities prepare for weather and environmental conditions that are likely during the coming months to minimize impacts on lives and livelihoods. Heavy rainfall at any time can lead to flooding, even in areas where the overall risk is considered low. Rainfall intensity and location can only be accurately forecast days in the future, therefore flood risk can change rapidly. Stay current with flood risk in your area with the latest official watches and warnings at weather.gov. For detailed hydrologic conditions and forecasts, go to water.weather.gov.

LandCART: A Wide-Eyed View of America's Wide-Open Spaces

By [Aries Keck](#)

NASA 3/25/22



LandCART map image displaying foliage variations in Idaho and Nevada before and after the 2007 Murphy Complex Fire. Credit: LandCART/U.S. Bureau of Land Management

A powerful mapping tool is providing, for the first time, a way to track vegetation changes across the entire Western United States.

Called the Landscape Cover Analysis and Reporting Tools, or [LandCART](#), the web-based mapping tool launched on February 15, 2022. This new comprehensive view of this vast area of sagebrush, grasslands, mountains and other terrain is possible due to bringing together NASA satellite and other Earth observations, as well as climate data, ground-level observations, and historical information. LandCART applies machine learning algorithms to these data sets and creates maps that track vegetation changes across the vast expanses of the American West.

The goal is to create easy-to-use maps so land managers, conservationists and others can make informed decisions, said lead scientist Gregory Okin, a UCLA geography professor. LandCART is supported by the [Ecological Forecasting](#) Program area with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

More information about LandCART is available at the UCLA story: [Web tool co-created by UCLA a veritable 'Swiss Army knife' for land management.](#)

Upcoming Meetings and Webinars

WestFAST Webinars: WestFAST is hosting a [series of webinars](#) to discuss the importance of water resources related to wildfire prevention, reduction, recovery, and rehabilitation:

April 27, 2022 10:00 am MT - [Using Soil Moisture Information to Better Understand and Predict Wildfire Danger: A Review of Recent Developments and Outstanding Questions](#)

2022 WSWC Spring (198th) Meetings and Washington Roundtable

April 5-7, 2022 – Crystal City, VA

Other Federal News

USDA 3/3/22. [President Biden and USDA Invest More Than \\$166.5 Million in Infrastructure to Protect American Communities](#)

NOAA 3/8/22. [February capped off a warm, dry winter for U.S.](#)

USBR 3/8/22. [Reclamation provides \\$5.6 million to improve water treatment technologies](#)

FWS 3/8/22. [Interior Department Begins Implementation of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Investments to Build Ecosystem Resilience, Habitat Restoration in Klamath Basin](#)

USBR 3/8/22. [Snow measurement technology evaluated in new report](#)

USGS 3/10/22. [The U.S. Geological Survey selected the Willamette River Basin in the Pacific Northwest as the latest location for an in-depth examination of factors affecting water supply and demand.](#)

ACOE 3/11/22. [Publication: Field Guide to Identifying the Upper Extent of Stream Channels](#)

NOAA 3/14/22. [February 2022 was Earth's 7th warmest on record](#)

USBR 3/17/22. [Reclamation approves an additional \\$17.5 million for drought resiliency projects](#)

[USGS 3/21/22. A new report released today and compiled by the U.S. Geological Survey \(USGS\) in cooperation with the Bureau of Reclamation \(USBR\) provides updated information on Lake Powell's storage capacity.](#)

[ACOE 3/25/22. Statement by Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works on the President's Fiscal Year 2023 Budget](#)

[FWS 3/25/22. President proposes \\$3.6 billion budget for the National Park Service in FY23](#)

[EPA 3/28/22. Statement by EPA Administrator Regan on the President's Fiscal Year 2023 Budget](#)

[USBR 3/28/22. President Proposes \\$1.4 billion in Fiscal Year 2023 for Bureau of Reclamation](#)

[USDA 3/28/22. Statement by Secretary Vilsack on the President's Fiscal Year 2023 Budget](#)

[EPA 3/28/22. EPA Releases Final Strategic Plan to Protect Public Health, Address Climate Change, and Advance Environmental Justice and Equity](#)

[DOI 3/28/22. Secretary Haaland Highlights President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Investments in Water Resilience and Indian Country in New Mexico Visit](#)

[USGS 3/28/22. President Proposes \\$1.7 Billion FY 2023 Budget for USGS.](#)

[FWS 3/28/22. President's \\$2B Service Budget Request Prioritizes Conservation, Key Administration Initiatives](#)

[DOI 3/28/22. President Biden's Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Makes \\$18.1 Billion Investment in Interior Department Initiatives](#)

[NOAA 3/29/22. NOAA FY 2023 budget advances a Climate-Ready Nation, New Blue Economy and Equity](#)

[FWS 3/30/22. 20 States to Share More Than \\$18 Million in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Grants for](#)

[Boating Infrastructure; Grants Support Communities, Outdoor Recreation](#)

[USBR 3/31/22. Reclamation awards \\$3 million to 17 Tribes for water projects](#)

[DOI 3/31/22. Interior Department Announces \\$420 Million in Rural Water Funding from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)

People

[FWS 3/8/22. Martha Williams Sworn In as Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service](#)

[USBR 3/14/22. Ken Nowak selected as Reclamation's Research and Development Office program manager](#)

[USBR 3/15/22. Michael Brain named Reclamation's deputy commissioner](#)

[NPS 3/31/22. 100-year-old National Park Service Ranger Betty Reid Soskin retires after remarkable career](#)

The Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 13 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council (WSWC), and the Western Governors Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water resources.