

March 2024 Newsletter

Featured Article



No-Till Wheat Farming in The Dalles, Oregon

Amy Kaser grows wheat with her father on their farm in Wasco County, near The Dalles, Oregon. In the 1990s, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service helped farmers in Wasco County switch to no-till farming. Since implementing this practice, the Kasers have seen benefits such as reduced erosion and increased resilience to weather extremes. As the climate changes and extreme weather events become more frequent, this practice is helping the Kaser family's farm maintain productivity and withstand increased climate variability.

Opportunities



Regional Climate Adaptation Catalyst

Alaska Climate Adaptation Science Center and the Northwest Boreal Partnership are hiring a Regional Climate Adaptation Catalyst. This person will facilitate information exchange among communities, the University of Alaska - Fairbanks, and agency partners to develop integrated climate adaptation solutions. Individuals who have a background in natural or social sciences or sustainable development, and/or may be steeped in indigenous knowledge and traditional ways of knowing are preferred. **Apply by 1 April.**

Drought Update

Despite recent record-setting warmth in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, previous weeks of heavy precipitation improved snowpack and lessened precipitation deficits in many areas of the Northwest. This led to improvements in drought or abnormal dryness in numerous locations. Precipitation in western and central Oregon continued to chip away at long-term precipitation deficits, leading to the removal of one long-term moderate drought (D1–tan) area and coverage reductions of another. Heavy precipitation in northwest Washington (with some locations likely seeing over 9 inches of liquid precipitation) led to a reduction in moderate drought and abnormal dryness (D0–yellow) coverage. In central Idaho, moderate drought coverage was reduced to abnormal dryness, while northern Idaho saw some areas of extreme drought (D3–orange) reduced to moderate drought. Alaska remains free of drought and abnormal dryness.



National Integrated Drought Information System



CoCoRaHS Community Rain Hail Snow Network



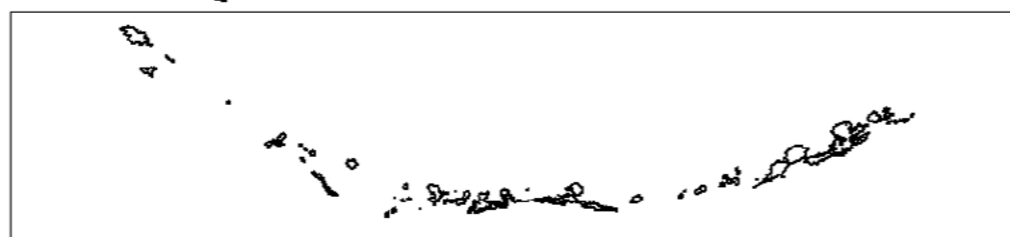
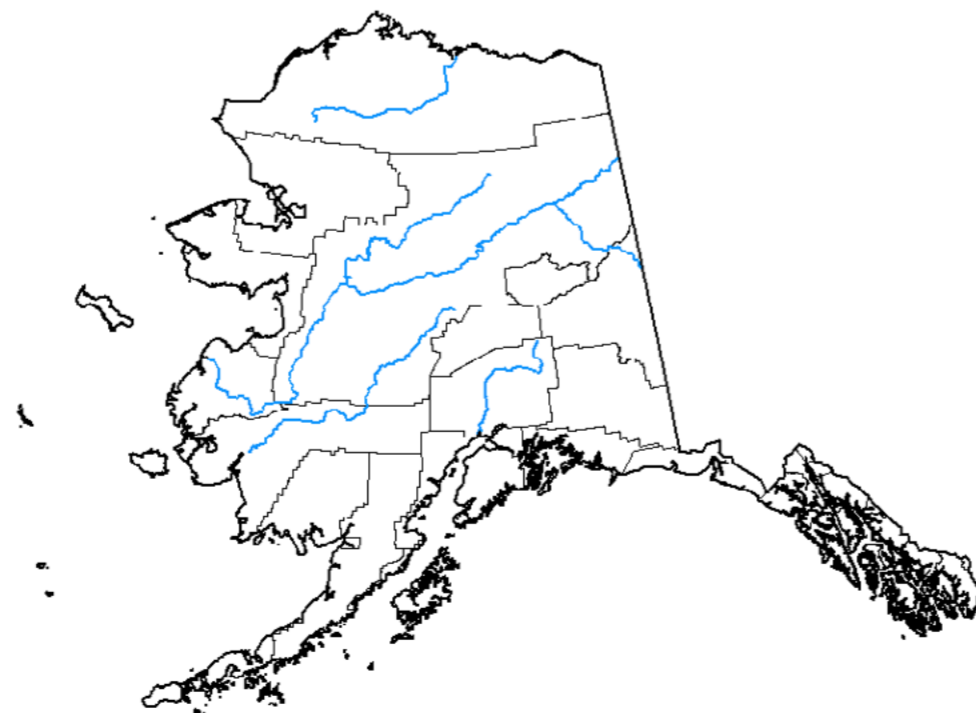
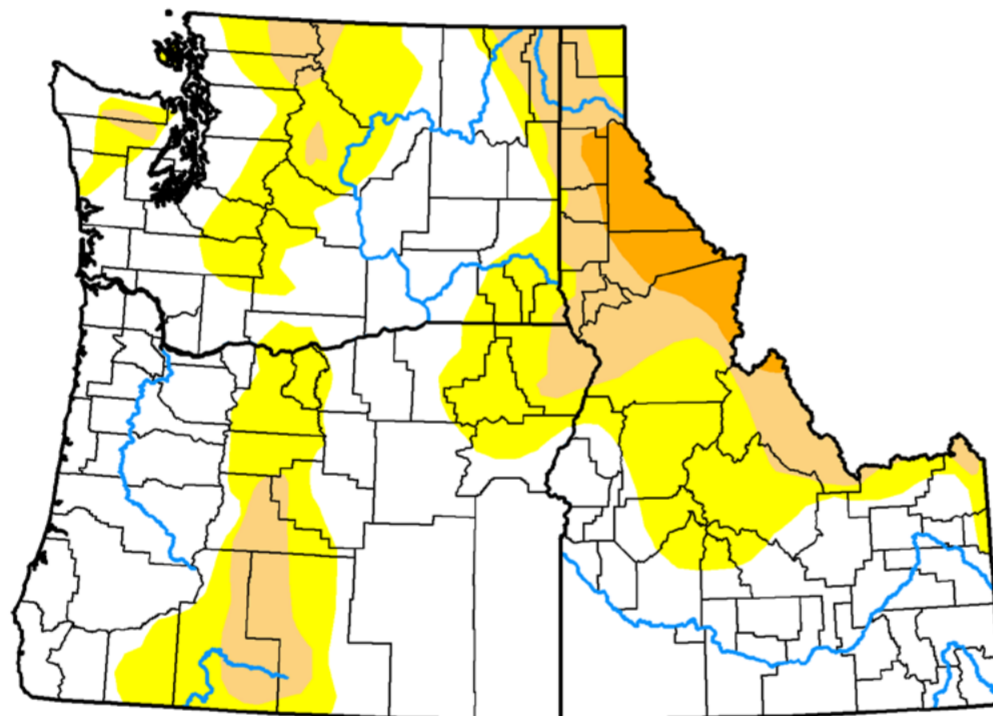
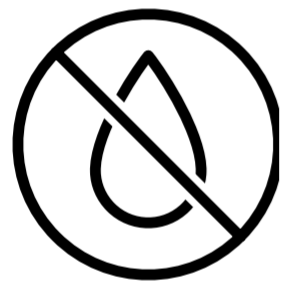
Condition Monitoring Observer Reports

U.S. Drought Monitor USDA Northwest Climate Hub

March 19, 2024
(Released Thursday, Mar. 21, 2024)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	88.31	11.69	4.15	0.88	0.00	0.00
Last Week 03-12-2024	87.96	12.04	4.32	0.88	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 12-19-2023	85.25	14.75	5.31	1.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-02-2024	84.63	15.37	5.68	1.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-26-2023	80.15	19.85	14.48	7.82	1.55	0.00
One Year Ago 03-21-2023	75.02	24.98	16.02	4.22	0.84	0.16



Intensity:

- None
- D2 Severe Drought
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

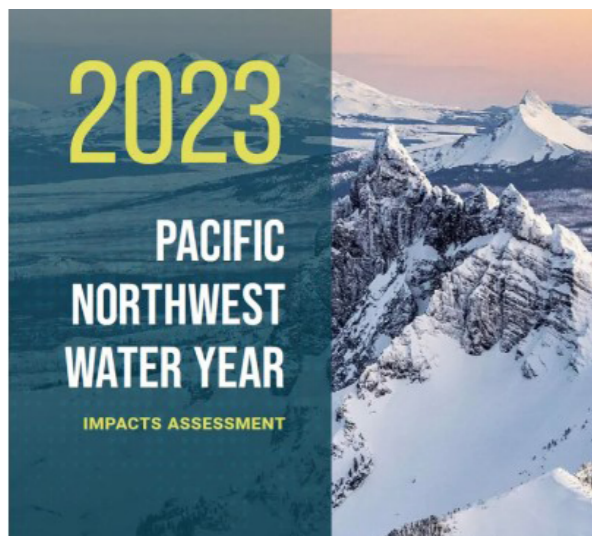
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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U.S. Department of Agriculture



droughtmonitor.unl.edu



2023 Pacific Northwest Water Year Impacts Assessment

This report summarizes the 2023 water year conditions and sector impacts as a resource for future management of drought and other climate extremes.



Snow Water Equivalent in the Northwest

From drinking water to irrigation water, snow provides a critical source of water in the Northwest, and climate change will affect its availability. Learn more from the Northwest Climate Hub.



Two Frameworks to Help with Climate Adaptation

To help land managers make challenging climate adaptation decisions, scientists have come up with several frameworks, including the RAD (Resist, Accept, Direct) and the RRT (Resistance, Resilience, Transition) frameworks. Learn more from the Agricultural Climate Network.



High Mountain Streams Act as Strongholds for Cold-Water Species

This Rocky Mountain Research Station bulletin discusses research on cold-water refuges. High mountain streams will be less sensitive to rising temperatures and will be able to provide protection for wildlife, including fish and the animals that rely on them.



Climate Change Impacts in the Northwest

Climate change is raising temperatures and changing rain and snow patterns in the Northwest. These changes affect recreation, industry, livelihoods, and human health and safety. Learn more from the Northwest Climate Hub.



Alaska and a Changing Climate

Alaska is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the US. This is affecting permafrost, glaciers, snowpack, precipitation, and the frequency and intensity of extreme events. Learn more from the Northwest Climate Hub.

Workshops and Conferences



Greening Fire Tech Expo, 2–4 April, online

This virtual event connects people from across the fire, procurement, and business communities to share knowledge and identify opportunities to integrate sustainable practices into wildland fire operations and incidents. The Expo will include a panel of government speakers and a showcase of green equipment, gear, and services that can reduce the environmental footprint of wildland fire operations and incidents.



Defending and Growing the Core by Breaking the Cycle of Annual Grass Invasion, 3 April, online

Invasive annual grasses are the leading cause of degradation and loss of US sagebrush grasslands, reducing forage and habitat, fueling larger and more frequent wildfires, and threatening rural economies. In this one-day virtual workshop, participants will learn about guiding principles, strategic planning processes, and tactics for managing annual grass invasion in the sagebrush biome.



2024 National Tribal Leaders Climate Summit, 15–17 April, Auburn, Washington

The summit will engage tribal leaders, citizens, staff, youth and collaborators in conversation about navigating the cultural, economic, and social challenges of climate change. The goals of the event include hearing from tribal communities on the frontlines of climate change; exploring what a just transition looks like for diverse tribal nations; and discussing how tribal sovereignty and co-management can advance climate action.



7th International Fire Behavior and Fuel Conference—Fuel, Fire and Smoke: Evolving to Meet Our Climate Challenge, 15–19 April, Boise, Idaho

In a changing climate, understanding altered fire behavior and human responses is critical. This conference shares knowledge from past fire management experience, current work, and emerging research, innovation, and techniques to develop integrated solutions to fire management challenges.



2024 Lowell Wakefield Fisheries Symposium, 16–18 April, Sitka, Alaska

Climate change is causing shifts in the distribution of fish and other aquatic species. The symposium will bring together fishery researchers and managers to address how political decisions, jurisdictional arrangements, and survey management structures can adapt to environmental changes and shifting species distributions.



National Adaptation Forum, 14–16 May, St. Paul, Minnesota

The National Adaptation Forum is a bi-annual convening for adaptation professionals to innovate, network, and focus on established and emerging climate adaptation issues of the day. The forum provides opportunities for professional development through training sessions, facilitated presentations and panels, and formal and informal networking sessions.



Tribal Forestry: Understanding Current Issues and Challenges in Contemporary and Traditional Management of Forested Landscapes, Thursdays until 25 April, 9am PDT

Tribes and first nations have been forest stewards since time immemorial. This webinar will focus on the current state of tribal forest management and indigenous stewardship in the context of climate change with a series of speakers from different tribes, universities, non-profits, and agencies.



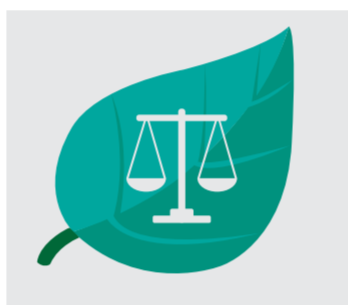
March Alaska Climate Outlook Briefing, 22 March, 12pm AKDT

This webinar will review recent and current climate conditions around Alaska, discuss forecasting tools, and ending with the Climate Prediction Center's forecast for April 2024 and the early spring season. Join to learn what has happened and what may be in store with Alaska's seasonal climate.



Climate Friendly Lawns, 27 March, 12pm PDT

Lawns have great carbon storage potential. In this webinar from Oregon State University's Turf Management Program, learn what types of lawns are most eco-friendly, and how best to mow, fertilize, and irrigate for both healthy plants and maximum carbon storage.



Incorporating Climate and Environmental Justice into Research and Resource Management, March to May

In partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center, the National Climate Adaptation Science Center is hosting a webinar series and two coffee hour discussions. This series aims to engage audiences interested in the intersection between climate and environmental justice and environmental research.



Webinars, 28 March to 9 May, 12pm PDT, every other Thursday

In this series, speakers will explore the ethics of engaging with the populations most vulnerable to the impacts of environmental and climate change, which are often low-income communities, communities of color, indigenous and tribal communities, and people experiencing disenfranchisement.



Coffee hours, 29 March or 10 May, 1pm PDT

These coffee hours allow participants can further explore series topics in facilitated breakout group discussions. Registration is limited to 40 people each.



Pacific Northwest Drought Early Warning System February Webinar, 22 April, 11am PDT

This webinar will provide timely information on current and developing drought conditions in the region, and climatic events like El Niño. Speakers will also discuss the impacts of these conditions on issues such as wildfires, floods, disruption to water supply and ecosystems, as well as impacts to affected industries like agriculture, tourism, and public health.



Funding

March



Oregon and Idaho Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The Natural Resource Conservation Service CSP grants help producers build on existing conservation efforts while strengthening their operations. Benefits can include enhanced resilience to weather and market volatility, decreased need for agricultural inputs, and improved wildlife habitat conditions. **Applications due 27 March for Oregon and 3 May for Idaho.**

Oregon

Idaho

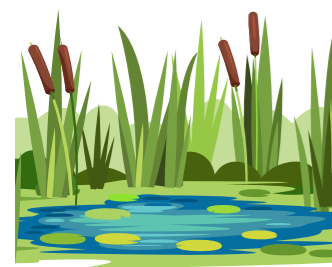
June



The 2024 Bullitt Prize

This prize awards \$100,000 to a conservation and environmental justice leader or group working on a project or action to address a conservation or environmental justice issue in Washington. Applicants must be 35 years of age or younger, from an underrepresented group, from Washington state or implementing work that impacts Washington, and have demonstrated leadership that advances the environmental movement. **Apply by 1 June.**

April



America's Ecosystem Restoration Initiative: America the Beautiful Challenge 2024

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, through cooperative agreements from the USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, among others, is supporting grant funding opportunities for new voluntary conservation and restoration projects throughout the US. This year, the Challenge will award approximately \$119 million in nationwide funding to conserve, connect, and restore the lands, waters, and wildlife upon which we all depend. **Pre-Proposals due 4 April.**



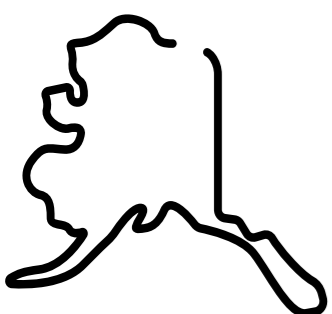
Supporting Natural Climate Solutions in the Pacific Northwest

The Paul G Allen Family Foundation is seeking proposals for projects that implement natural climate solutions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, British Columbia, and Alaska. The goal is to deploy place-based projects to accelerate climate change mitigation, while benefitting biodiversity and human well-being. **Letters of intent due 12 April.**



NRCS Alaska Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

This program provides agricultural producers with financial assistance and conservation planning services to help private landowners implement improvements on their land using what NRCS calls "conservation practices." Using these practices can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil, and better wildlife habitat, all while improving agricultural operations. This program allows producers to voluntarily implement conservation practices with co-investment from NRCS. **Applications funded on a rolling basis but must be submitted by 19 April to be considered for Fiscal Year 2024.**



Alaska Indigenous Engagement Program Grants

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center is seeking proposals for projects that collaborate with indigenous knowledge holders. These projects will develop new ways of sharing and developing knowledge between indigenous and scientific communities. In addition, the grants may support consortia that bring together Alaska Native community members to promote environmental monitoring and knowledge sharing workshops. **Applications due 26 April.**

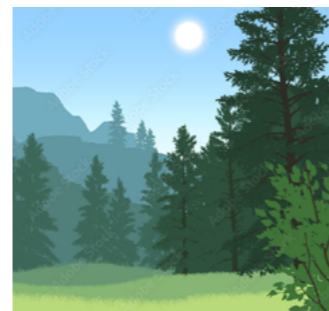
July



Conservation Reserve Program: Continuous Enrollment Period

This is a USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is devoted to conservation benefits. Program participants establish long-term, resource-conserving vegetative species, such as approved grasses or trees to control soil erosion, improve the water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance. **Contact the FSA at your local USDA Service Center by 31 July.**

August



Forest Landowner Support

These USDA Forest Service grants provide competitive opportunities to entities and organizations for delivering technical and financial assistance to private forest landowners, including tribes, underserved landowners, and smaller-acreage landowners. Proposals are being sought in two areas: Opportunity 1) To support the participation of underserved landowners and landowners owning less than 2,500 acres in emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience; Opportunity 2) To support tribal access to emerging private markets for forest resilience or climate mitigation. **Applications due 21 August.**

Ongoing



Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants

This program provides loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems, or to make energy efficiency improvements. Funds may be used for the purchase and installation of renewable energy systems, or for the purchase, installation, and construction of energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing. **Applications are accepted for multiple deadlines until 30 September 2024.**

