an overview of the 2012-2013 drought in eastern OR and southern ID

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drought monitor over the past 13 years in Idaho
precipitation departures from normal - 2012
fire
Climate recap, March-May 2013

*An upside-down May was the outlier of spring 2013. The month started out warm and dry, but ended cool and wet. The stormy close to the month helped boost long-term precipitation deficits from the prolonged drier than normal period at the beginning of the calendar year.

Precipitation

Spring was generally drier than normal across the southern tier of the Pacific Northwest, especially in eastern Oregon and southern Idaho, where drought and fire activity are a concern heading into summer.

Western Washington and the Northern Idaho Panhandle were wetter than normal in Spring, driven mostly by an active weather pattern at the end of May. The Columbia River Gorge, and Yakima Valley were among the wettest anomalies in the region in May. Yakima, WA and Portland, OR both recorded their third wettest May on record.

Temperature

Averaged over the season and across the region, temperature departures from normal were minimal. The warmest temperatures of the season were recorded in early and mid-May. Daytime temperatures in the three-state region topped 90°F in mid-May.

Pacific NW Impacts, March-May 2013

Agriculture

*Washington cherry growers expect smaller yield this year due to cool and windy weather during pollination. Growers lost early-blooming crop due to cracking from rain in May (USDA Crop Bulletin)*

*Oregon strawberries arrived earlier than last year thanks to warm and dry weather, but rain in late spring is causing rot in some varieties (OSU Extension)*

*Irrigation is being used in the Snake River Plain to assist with crop emergence prior to the main growing season due to limited spring precipitation.

Water Resources

*Severe drought conditions currently exist in eastern Oregon and western Idaho. Moderate drought conditions are occurring in southern and eastern Oregon and Idaho. Drought is expected to persist or intensify across Oregon and Idaho into the summer.

PNW Counties with a formal drought declaration:

- **Idaho**: Blaine, Butte, Clark, Fremont, and Lincoln Counties
- **Oregon**: Klamath County

*Reservoir levels are lower than average across most of eastern Oregon and southern Idaho and levels are far below last year.

*Snowpack melted out quickly in southern Oregon and southern Idaho, but a robust snowpack persisted in the Washington Cascades and Northern Idaho, reducing fire danger and drought concerns. Snowpack levels increased through May in the northern Columbia River Basin.

Recreation/Economy

*Owing to low snowpack, the North Entrance road of Crater Lake National Park (OR) opened on May 17, 2013. This is almost a month earlier than last year. Low snow helped save on snow removal costs which were expected to be impacted by Federal sequestration (Klamath Falls Herald and News)*
Welcome!

Drought is one of the most costly natural disasters affecting the U.S. The National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) was established in 2006 (NIDIS Act) to help begin to move society from a reactive response to drought to a proactive stance. NIDIS was envisioned to be a dynamic and accessible drought information system that provides users with the ability to determine the potential impacts of drought and the associated risks they bring, and the decision support tools needed to better prepare for and mitigate the effects of drought. In this, NIDIS forms the backbone of a national Drought Early Warning System and the U.S. Drought Portal is the public face of NIDIS on the Web.

Learn More...

Products

Tools

Resources
• Water year 2012 below normal
• July-September 2012 exceptionally dry
• Some relief end of 2012
• January-August 2013
  • 10th driest on record in Idaho
  • 6th driest on record in OR
• Idaho most acres burned in lower 48 (715K) in 2013
thank you!

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