

Water Supply Availability Committee/Drought Readiness Council Meeting – April 15th, 2026

Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

Attendees

Cameron Greenwood – OWRD
Curtis Peetz – OEM
Jason Ward – NRCS
Henry Pai – NWRFC
Larry O’Neill – OCS
Carrie Boudreau – USGS
Corinne Horner – USBR

Salina Hart – USACE
Tom Elliot – ODOE
Chantal Wikstrom – OHA
Nick Sirovatka – ODA
Shane Cossel – ODEQ
Spencer Sawaske – ODFW
Rachel LovellFord – OWRD

Conditions Updates

Jason Ward, NRCS

- Snowpack
 - As of 4/14, snow water equivalent (SWE) was 12% of median and 8% of median peak.
 - As of 4/14, statewide SWE is well below normal in all basins, ranging from 2% (Owyhee and Malheur basins) to 27% (Grande Ronde-Burnt-Powder-Imnaha).
 - SWE percentiles are well below normal for most of the state with many stations recording their lowest or second lowest SWE.
 - In the Cascade Range, SWE generally melted out 37-60 days earlier than normal, with many stations melting out more than 60 days earlier than normal. In the Blue Mountains and Wallowas, SWE generally melted out 13-60 days earlier than normal.
- Precipitation
 - As of 4/14, statewide precipitation was 87% of the median.
 - As of 4/14 water year-to-date (WYTD) precipitation is just below normal for most of the state. Conditions in the Hood-Sandy-Lower Deschutes and Umatilla-Walla Walla-Willow basins are near normal.
 - Precipitation in March was generally below normal for most of the state. Basins in part northeastern Oregon were near normal, and the Hood-Sandy-Lower Deschutes Basin was above normal.
 - From 4/1-4/13, precipitation was generally normal to above normal. In the Willamette and Hood-Sandy-Lower Deschutes basins, conditions were below normal.
 - Precipitation percentiles for the WYTD indicate well below normal conditions for most of the Cascades and Blue Mountains with some normal to above normal precipitation recorded in northern parts of the Oregon Cascades.
- Soil Moisture
 - Soil moisture products (GRACE, Topofire, SPoRT-LiS) show some agreement indicating drier-than-normal conditions across much of the state.
- Water Supply Outlook
 - April 1st streamflow volume forecasts indicate below to well below normal conditions in Oregon.

Henry Pai, NWS + NWRFC

- Precipitation
 - Precipitation over the last 30 days (3/15-4/13), was below normal across western Oregon. In central and eastern Oregon, conditions ranged from below to near normal.

- Water year-to-date (WYTD) precipitation has been below normal for most of western Oregon. In central and eastern Oregon, precipitation ranged from below to near normal
- Temperature
 - Temperatures over the last 30 days (3/15-4/13), were above normal statewide.
 - WYTD temperatures have been above normal statewide.
- Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI)
 - Over the last 30 days (ending 4/9), evaporative demand was high across Oregon, especially in southcentral and southeastern Oregon.
- Outlook
 - NWRFC 10-day precipitation outlook (ending 4/24) indicates normal to above normal precipitation for most of western and parts of central and eastern Oregon. Additionally, below normal precipitation is forecasted for parts of southwestern and central Oregon.
 - 8-14 day outlook (4/21-4/24) indicates probabilities leaning towards above normal precipitation for most of the state with near normal precipitation for part of northwestern Oregon. The outlook also indicates probabilities leaning towards below normal temperatures for most of the state with near normal temperatures for much of western and southcentral Oregon.
 - Seasonal temperature outlooks through September indicate probabilities leaning towards above normal temperatures statewide with the likelihood of above normal temperatures increasing in central and eastern Oregon as summer progresses.
 - Seasonal precipitation outlooks through July indicate probabilities leaning towards below normal precipitation statewide. As summer progresses there are equal chances of below normal, normal, or above normal precipitation for most of the state with probabilities leaning towards below normal precipitation in northern parts of Oregon from June through August.
- ENSO
 - ENSO-neutral conditions are present and favored through April-June 2026 (80% chance). In May-July 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (61% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.
- Streamflow Forecast
 - Observed runoff for March was generally below normal statewide with some normal to above normal flows in parts of northwestern and northeastern Oregon.
 - **Recent observed runoff was generally below normal statewide. Normal to above normal flows were observed in parts of northwestern and northeastern Oregon.**
 - April through September streamflow forecasts are below normal statewide. In parts of southwestern, central, and eastern Oregon, streamflow forecasts are well below normal.
 - Crooked River near Prineville (Crook and Jefferson counties)
 - Observed runoff from January through March was below normal. Forecast for April through June is below normal.
 - North Fork John Day River at Monument (Grant County)
 - Observed runoff from January through March was below normal. Forecast for April through July is below normal.
 - Grande Ronde at Troy (Wallowa County)
 - Observed runoff in February was below normal. In March, observed runoff was just below normal. Forecast for April through June is below normal.
 - Rogue at Raygold (Jackson County)
 - Observed runoff from November through March was below normal. Forecast for April through September is below normal.
 - Willamette at Salem

- Observed runoff from October through March was below normal. Forecast for April through September is below normal.
- Owyhee at Owyhee Dam
 - Observed runoff from January through March was below normal. Forecast for April is below normal.
- Columbia River at the Dalles Dam
 - Observed runoff from October through March has been variable ranging from below to above normal. The forecast through September is near normal.

Larry O'Neill, OCS

- ENSO
 - In Oregon, El Niños are generally warm and dry. However the strongest El Niños (Very Strong El Niños) are generally wet and warm and produce snowpacks rivalling Strong La Niñas. This big difference in outcomes could produce even more uncertainty in seasonal weather forecasts and outlooks
 - Very strong El Niños are close to the wettest phase whereas strong El Niños are the driest ENSO phase. Neutral ENSO conditions are close to normal precipitation. Strong La Niñas are close to the wettest ENSO phase.
- USDM
 - As of 4/7, 66% of the US West is in moderate to extreme drought.
 - As of 4/7, 63% of Oregon is in moderate to severe drought. 28% of Oregon is in severe drought.
 - Over the last four weeks, there has been USDM degradations across much of Oregon.
- Temperature
 - March 2026 was Oregon's second warmest march since 1895, 7.5°F above the 20th century average.
 - October through March was Oregon's second warmest since 1895.
 - April 2025 through March 2026 was the warmest period on record in Oregon.
- Precipitation
 - Much of Oregon received below to well below normal precipitation in March. In parts of northwestern Oregon, March precipitation was near to above normal.
 - Precipitation conditions from October through March were below normal for most of Oregon.
 - April 2025 through March 2026 was Oregon's 5th driest period since 1895. Most of Oregon received below to well below normal precipitation over this period.
 - Jefferson County
 - 12-month precipitation was the 22nd lowest and 81% of normal.
 - 12-month temperatures were the warmest at +4.5°F.
 - Wallowa County
 - 12-month precipitation was the 9th lowest and 78% of normal.
 - 12-month temperatures were the warmest at +4.4°F.
 - Jackson County
 - 12-month precipitation was the 9th lowest and 71% of normal.
 - 12-month temperatures were the warmest at +4.5°F.
 - Morrow County
 - 12-month precipitation was the 12th lowest and 77% of normal.
 - 12-month temperatures were the warmest at +4.9°F.
 - Grant County
 - 12-month precipitation was the 14th lowest and 76% of normal.

- 12-month temperatures were the warmest at +4.9°F.
 - Crook County
 - 12-month precipitation was the 12th lowest and 69% of normal.
 - 12-month temperatures were the warmest at +4.6°F.
- Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) and Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI)
 - Oregon experienced well above normal evaporative demand over the last 30 days
 - It is important to consider evaporative demand during spring because the soil moisture is at its annual peak and much of the winter precipitation can simply evaporate away prematurely and likely won't replenish until next winter.
 - 12-month SPEI values for much of western and northeastern Oregon correspond with extreme to exceptional drought conditions. Combines with the low snowpack and low streamflows, significant change in the USDM are likely over the coming weeks.

Carrie Boudreau, USGS

- Northeastern Oregon
 - John Day River: near normal conditions
 - Grande Ronde River: near normal conditions
 - East Fork Willowa River: above normal conditions
 - Willow Creek: below normal conditions
 - North Fork John Day River: near normal conditions
 - John Day River: near normal conditions
- Central Oregon
 - Metolius River: below normal conditions
 - Shitike Creek: below normal conditions
- Northwestern Oregon
 - Nehalem River: below normal conditions
 - Siletz River: below normal conditions
- Southwestern Oregon
 - Chetco River: below normal conditions
 - South Umpqua River: near normal conditions
- Upper Klamath Lake – elevation currently ~4142.6 ft
 - Williamson River: below normal conditions
 - Link River: below normal conditions
- Southeastern Oregon
 - Donner und Blitzen River: near normal conditions
 - Owyhee River: well below normal conditions

Cameron Greenwood, OWRD

- Streamflow conditions in March were below normal for much of the state. However, in parts of western, central, and northeastern Oregon conditions were near to above normal.
- Streamflow conditions over the water year-to-date (WYTD) have been below normal for much of the state, especially in parts of southwestern and northeastern Oregon. WYTD conditions in parts of northwestern, northeastern, and central Oregon have been near normal.
- Recent streamflow conditions over the last seven days (through 4/13) were below normal for much of the state with some near to above normal streamflows recorded in parts of the Cascades, Blue Mountains, and Wallows. Conditions over the last 28 days (through 4/13) have also generally been below normal, with more normal to above normal streamflows in the Cascades, Blue Mountains, and Wallows.
- Jackson County

- WYTD: 66%
- Elk Creek: near normal conditions
- Big Butte Creek: below normal conditions
- Jefferson County
 - WYTD: 97%
 - Metolius River: below normal conditions
 - Lake Creek: well below normal conditions
- Crook County
 - WYTD: 46%
 - Crooked River: well below normal conditions
- Grant County
 - WYTD: 80%
 - John Day River: near normal conditions
 - South Fork John Day River: below normal conditions
- Morrow County
 - WYTD: 38%
 - Willow Creek: below normal conditions
 - Butter Creek: below normal conditions
- Wallowa County
 - WYTD: 123%
 - Bear Creek: near normal conditions
 - Lostine River: above normal conditions

Corinne Horner, USBR

- Operations Activities:
 - April water supply forecasts – generally dropped compared to March forecasts due to dry conditions and early melt
 - FRM operations at Scoggins
 - Dry year coordination with NMFS/USFWS in Crooked
 - Low flood risk in most basins, managing for water supply
- Water Supply Notes
 - Refill unlikely in all basins except Tualatin
 - Near normal storage contents across much of OR due to good carryover will help provide a normal irrigation season (except Powder, Burnt, and Umatilla)
 - Expecting low carryover at the end of the season

Drought Readiness Council

Drought Declaration Requests

- Crook County – Conditions support a state drought declaration. DRC in support of recommending Crook County’s drought declaration request to the Governor’s Office.
- Grant County - Conditions support a state drought declaration. DRC in support of recommending Grant County’s drought declaration request to the Governor’s Office.
- Jackson County - Conditions support a state drought declaration. DRC in support of recommending Jackson County’s drought declaration request to the Governor’s Office.
- Jefferson County - Conditions support a state drought declaration. DRC in support of recommending Jefferson County’s drought declaration request to the Governor’s Office.
- Morrow County - Conditions support a state drought declaration. DRC in support of recommending Morrow County’s drought declaration request to the Governor’s Office.
- Wallowa County - Conditions support a state drought declaration. DRC in support of recommending Wallowa County’s drought declaration request to the Governor’s Office.