Oregon
Water Conditions Report
June 26, 2017

Only four SNOTEL sites in Oregon now have measureable snow water equivalent, the highest value, at 12.5 inches, is measured at the Summit Lake SNOTEL site located on the divide between the Upper Deschutes and Willamette Basins. While this may seem somewhat meager, it is well above 250 percent average for this time of year.

For a statewide summary refer to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) final (June 1, 2017) Water Supply Outlook for the 2017 water year. In general, most of the snow monitoring sites in the state either melted out on time or in some cases up to 3 weeks later than normal. See page 3 for region-specific examples illustrating snowpack conditions through the season.

Statewide mountain precipitation has continued to be well above average in most locations. The last two weeks have seen little mountain precipitation (precipitation for the month of May was at 69 percent). Regardless, statewide mountain precipitation continues to be above average for the water year, buoyed by the above-average rain and snow during the winter months. As of June 26th, 2017, statewide mountain precipitation (based upon SNOTEL data) is 126%. .

With the exception of the northern portion of Malheur County, most of Oregon was warmer than normal for the month of May. See page 5 for a graphic depicting conditions over the past month. Over the next 8 to 14 days, the NOAA Climate Prediction Center is forecasting enhanced probabilities of above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation across most the state.

The most recent three month outlook continues to indicate a higher likelihood of above normal temperatures and an equal chance of above or below normal precipitation between now and September. The next outlook will be issued on July 20, 2017. Previous discussions of a developing El Nino have now have given way to suggested ENSO neutral conditions this fall and winter. What this means for the Pacific Northwest is, in a word, uncertainty. For an update, refer to this blog on the June 2017 forecast.

Statewide streamflows for the month of May were almost 135 percent of normal. Regionally during the month of May, streamflow conditions east of the Cascades were at 130 percent and 140 percent on the west side. May was the fourth consecutive month of above normal streamflows. As of late last week, streamflows were trending downward but still at a statewide average of a little under 100 percent. Of note, flows in the Umatilla and North Coast Basins are at 45 and 60 percent of normal, respectively. If this trend continues, flows for the month of June will probably end up being normal to a little lower than normal (especially in western Oregon).
The above normal statewide snowpack at the peak of the past season continues to support an optimistic outlook for normal to above normal summer streamflows, especially in snowmelt dominant watersheds. Refer to the NRCS June 1st streamflow volume forecast for more region specific information for the summer season.

Most of the state's water supply reservoirs are at normal to above normal levels for this time of year. Willamette and Rogue project reservoirs are on track for a good summer season. Central Oregon reservoirs are between 75 and 95 percent of capacity with ample snowmelt expected. Most Eastern Oregon reservoirs are now releasing stored water for the summer supply season. For the most recent near real-time, site-specific reservoir conditions (teacup diagrams) visit the USBR or USACE websites.

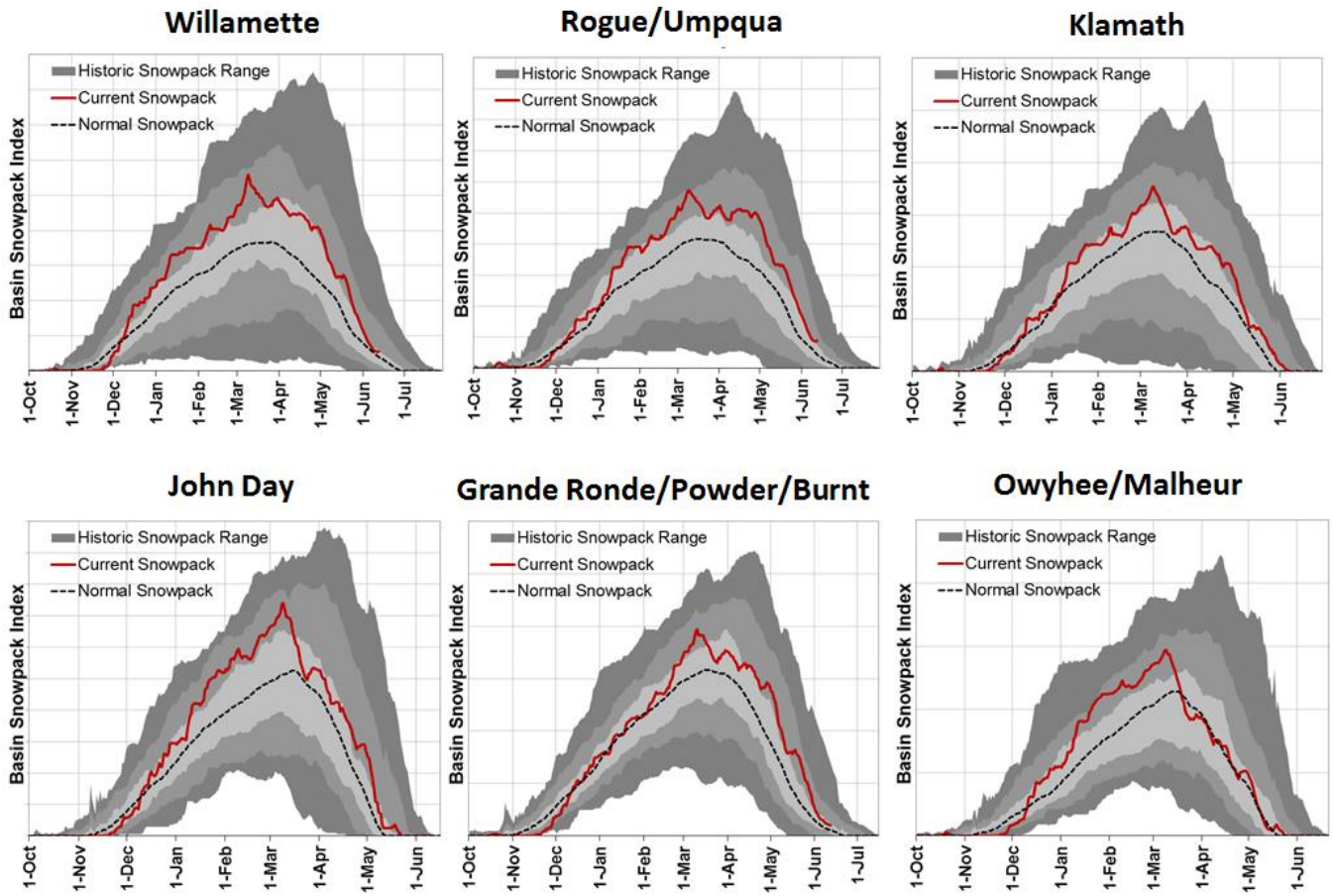
No change in drought status in the past several weeks. The most recent report from the US Drought Monitor indicates that Oregon (and the entire Northwest) is no longer listed in any drought category. The last time this condition was observed was in 2011.

The Oregon Department of Forestry continues to forecast a below average 2017 fire season. Despite the dry period and warm up in May, most areas in the state show fuel moistures and fire indices near or below average for this time of year. With a cool and wet year already, and some forecasts indicating continued cool and possibly wet, fire season is likely to be below average again this summer.

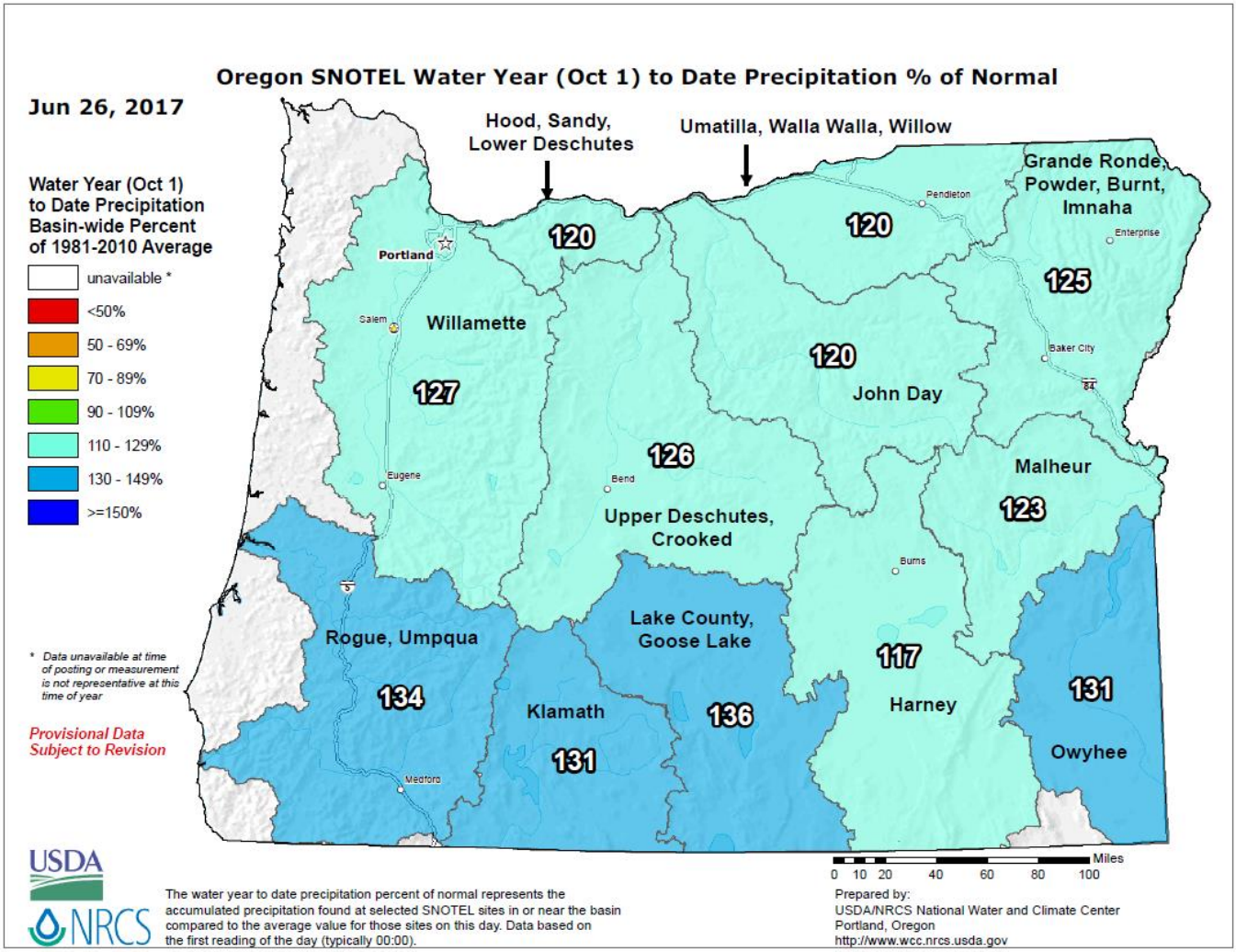
Data & Products: Page:

Season Snowpack Plots - Percent of Normal

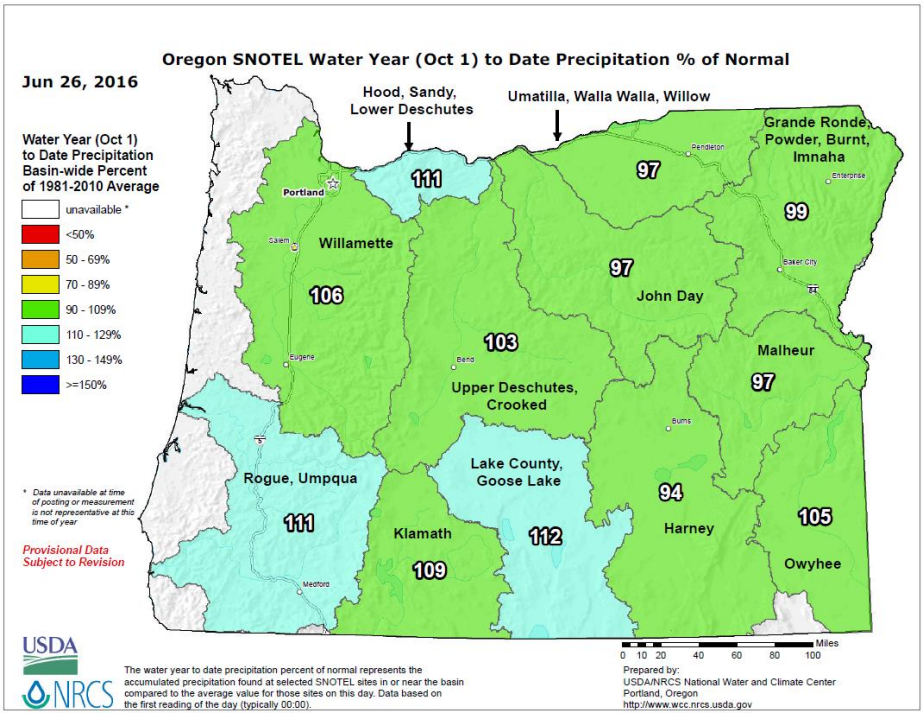
Water Year 2017 – June 12th



Precipitation (mountain) - Percent of Normal



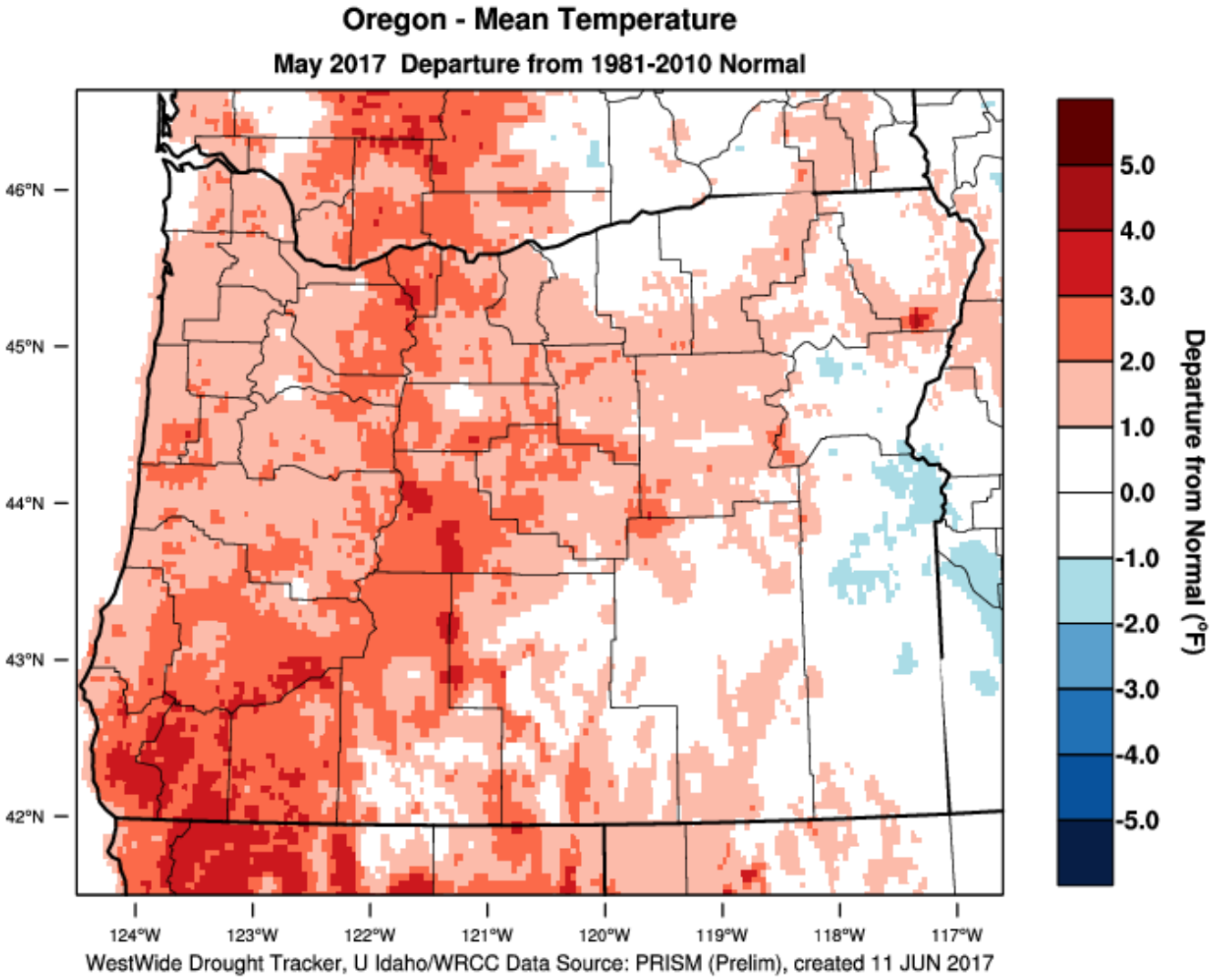
Compared to this time last year -



Temperature – (1 Month) Departure from Normal

Website: http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/wwdt/index.php?folder=mdn1

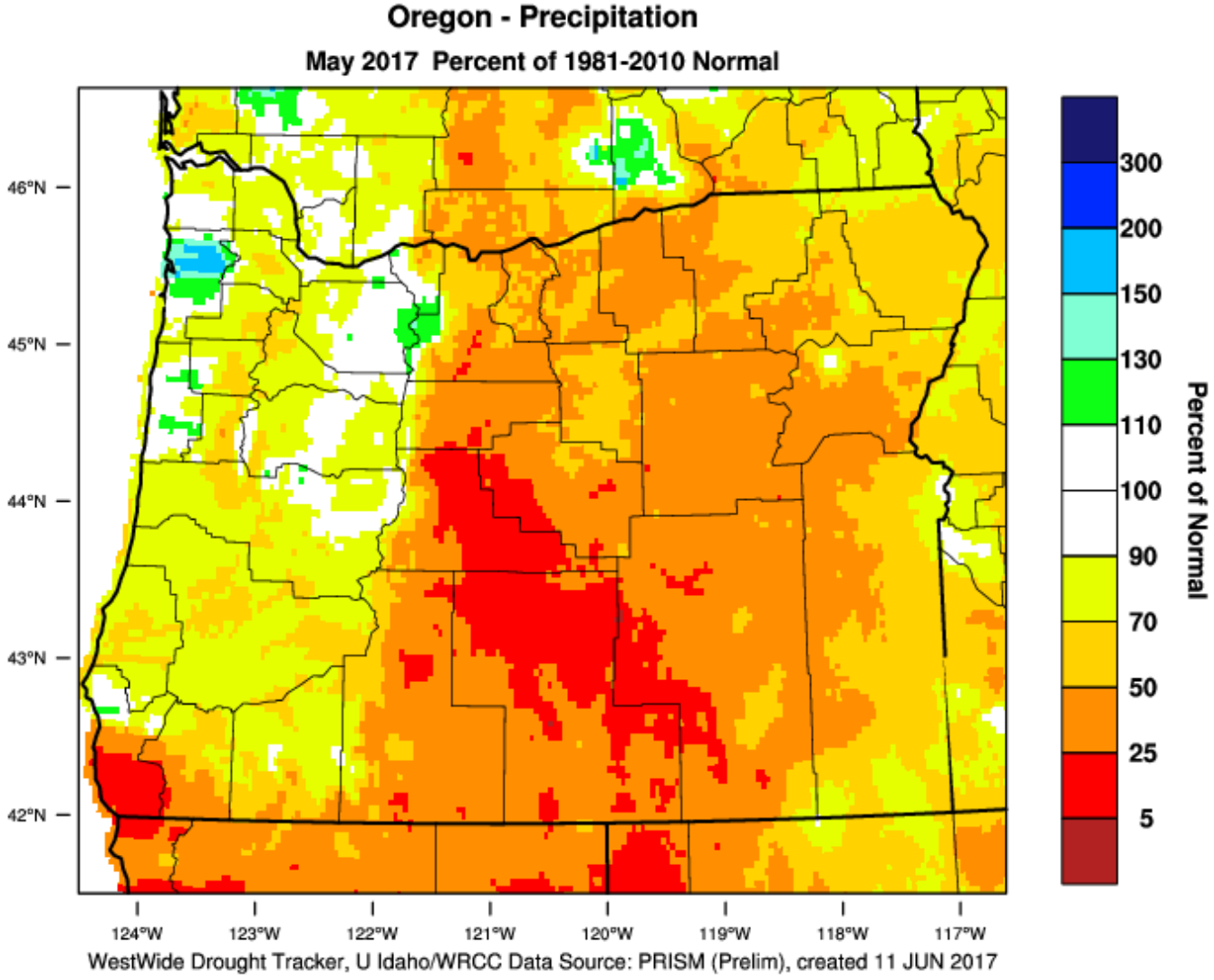
PRISM > Temperature Anomaly 1 Month > Oregon



Precipitation – (1 Month) Percent of Normal

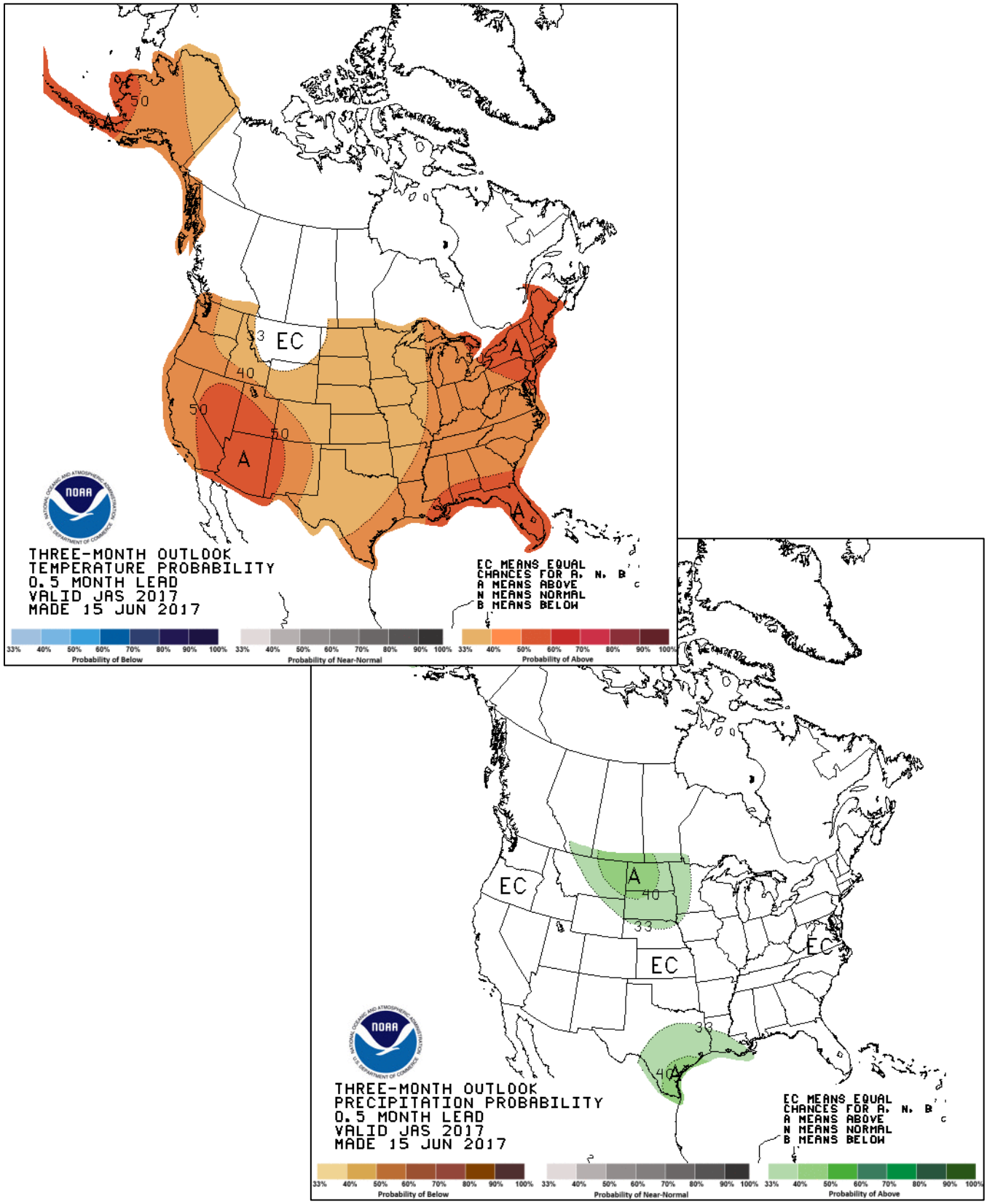
Website: http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/wwdt/index.php?folder=pon1

PRISM > Precipitation Anomaly 1 Month > Oregon



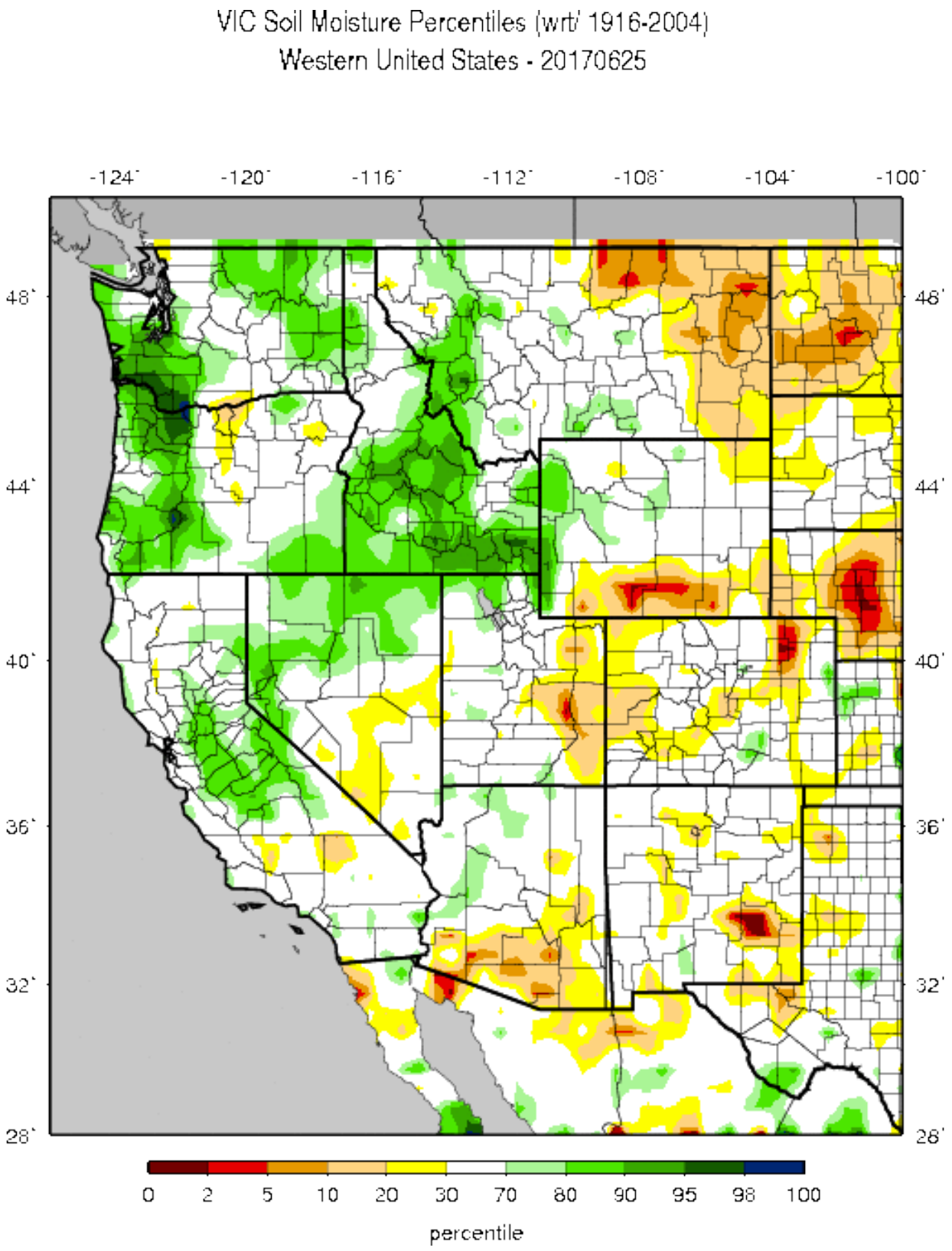
Three Month Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

July-August-September – Follow link for the latest information.
Website: http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1

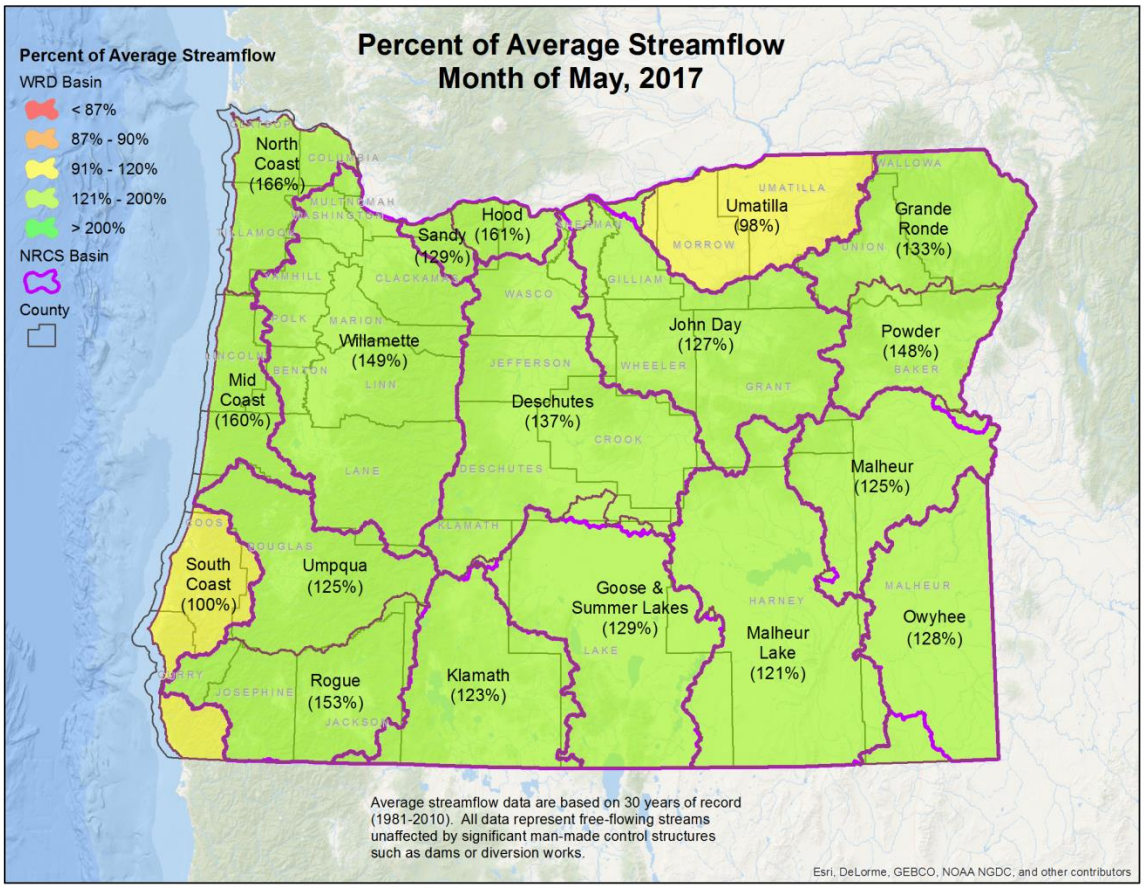


Soil Moisture - Percentile

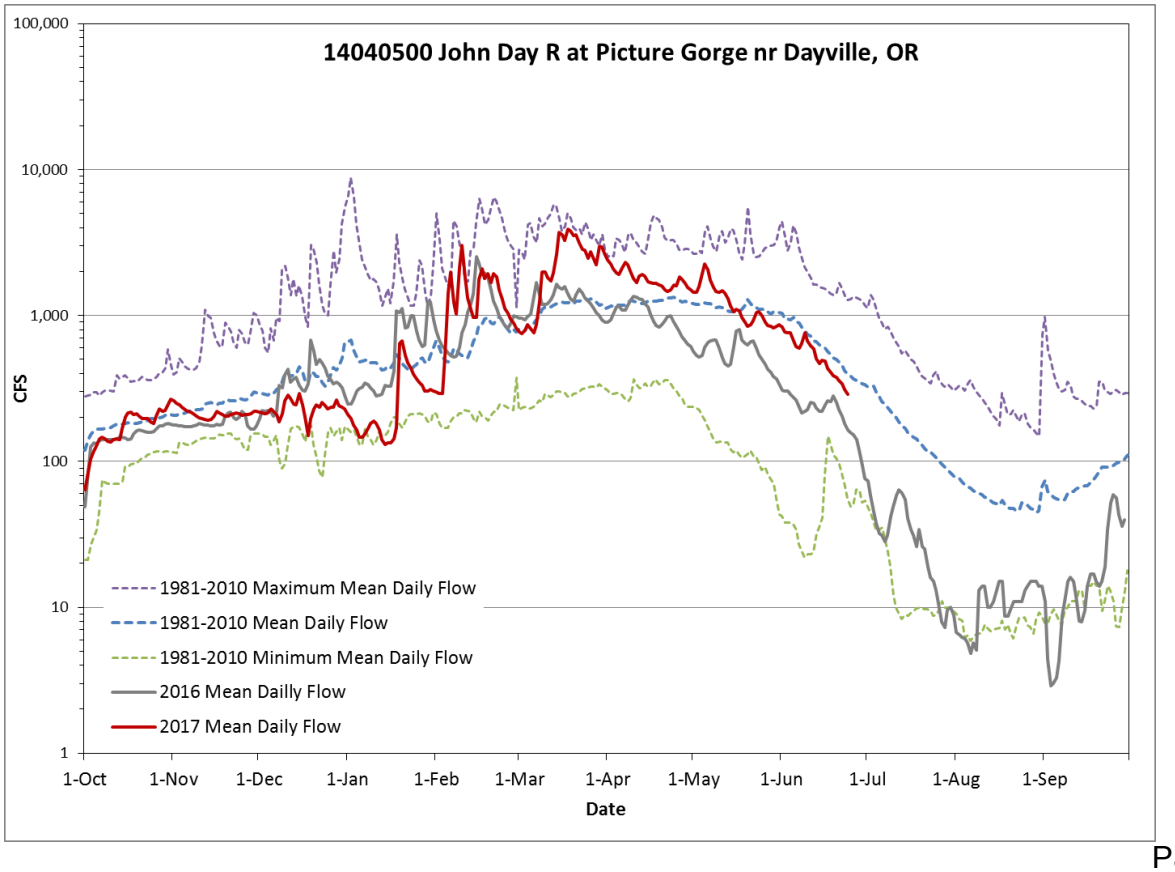
Website:
http://www.hydro.washington.edu/forecast/monitor/curr/conus.mexico/west.vic.sm_qnt.gif



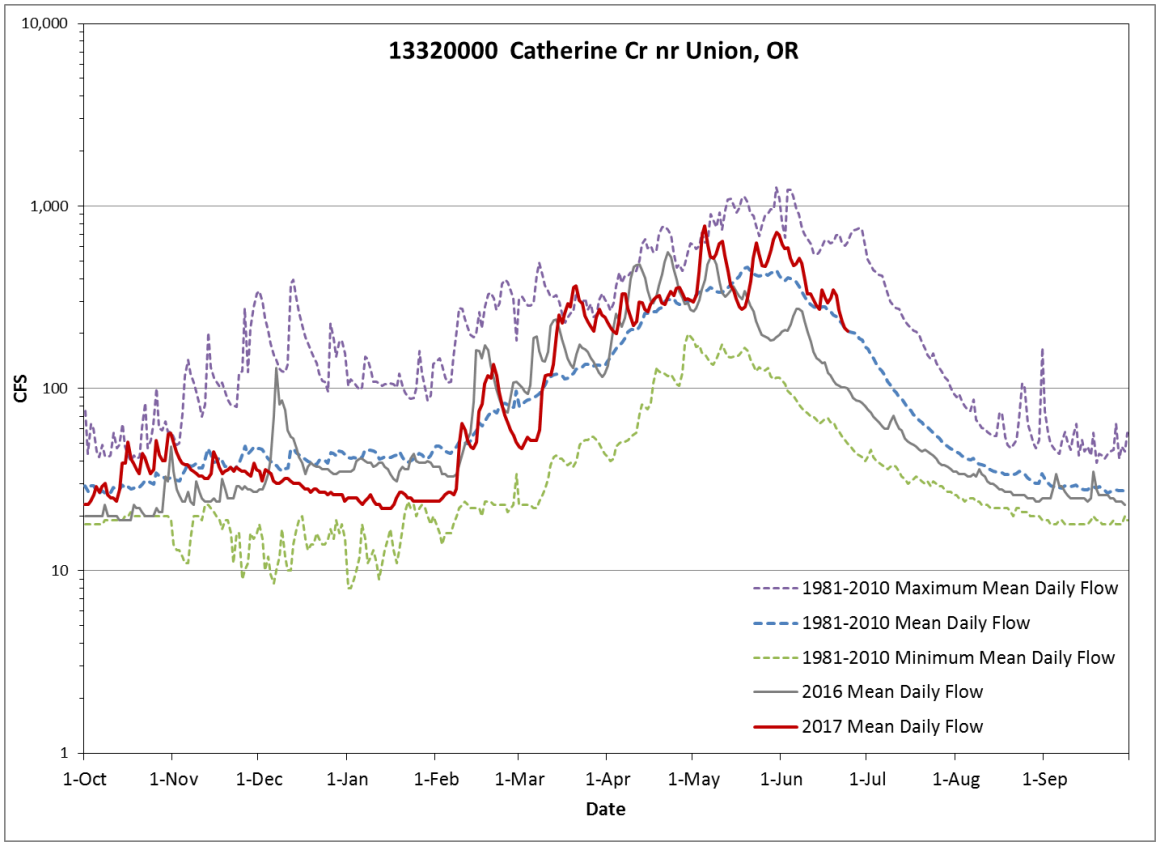
Regional Streamflow Conditions - May



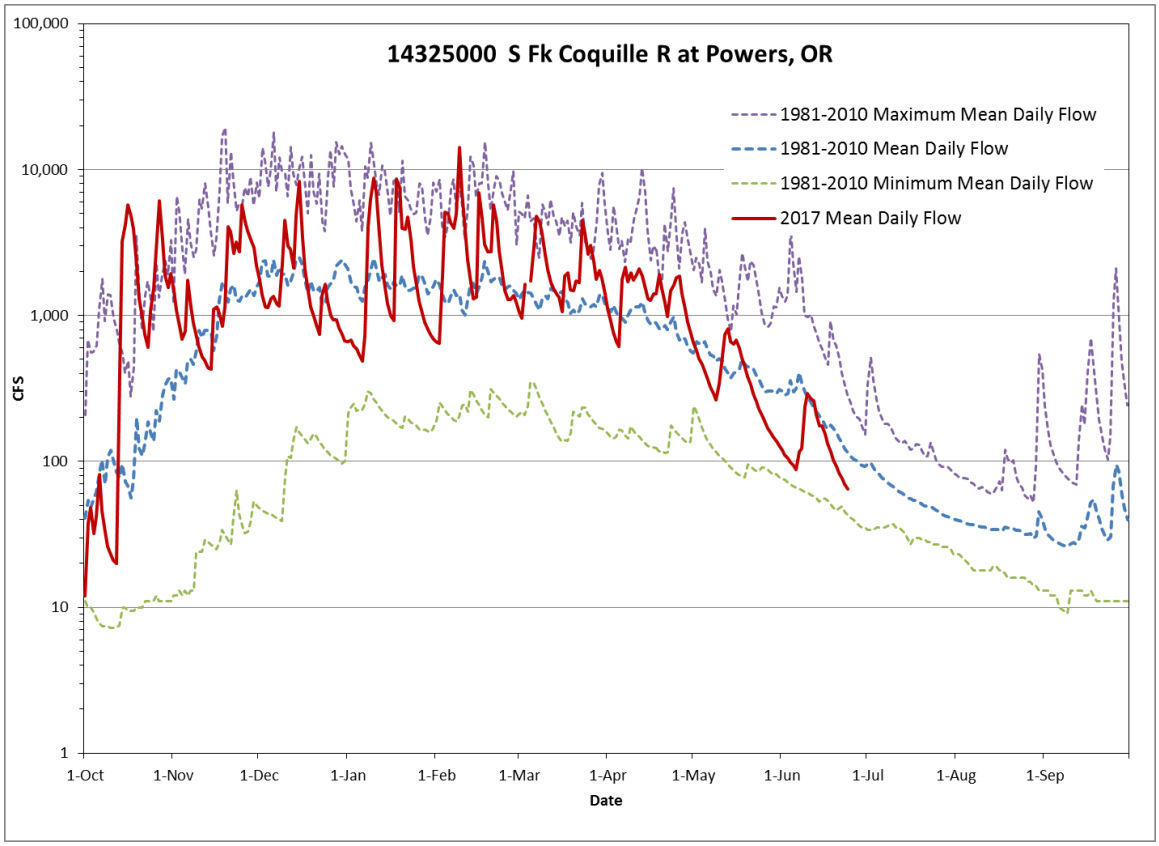
Streamflow Example – North Central Oregon (Umatilla)



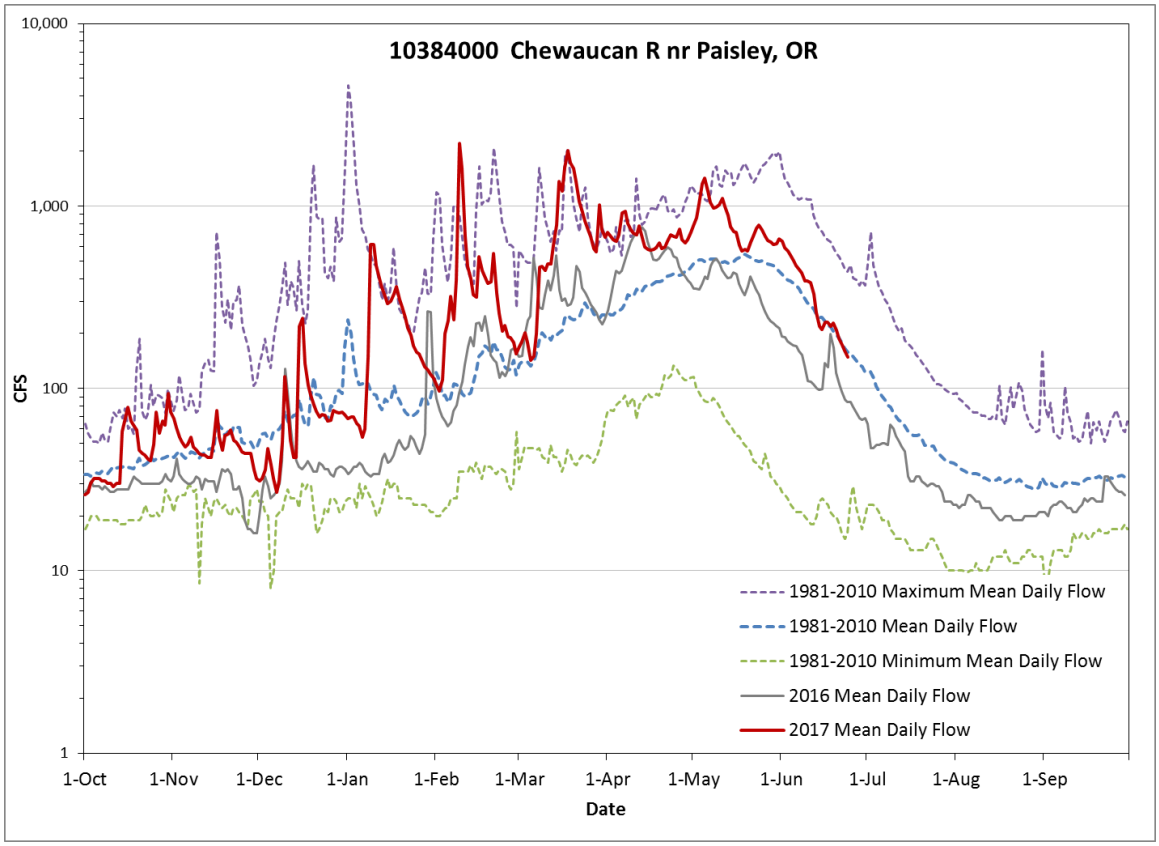
Streamflow Example – Eastern Oregon (Grande Ronde)



Streamflow Example – Western Oregon (South Coast)



Streamflow Example – South Central Oregon (Goose & Summer Lake)



Regional Reservoir Storage Conditions - May