

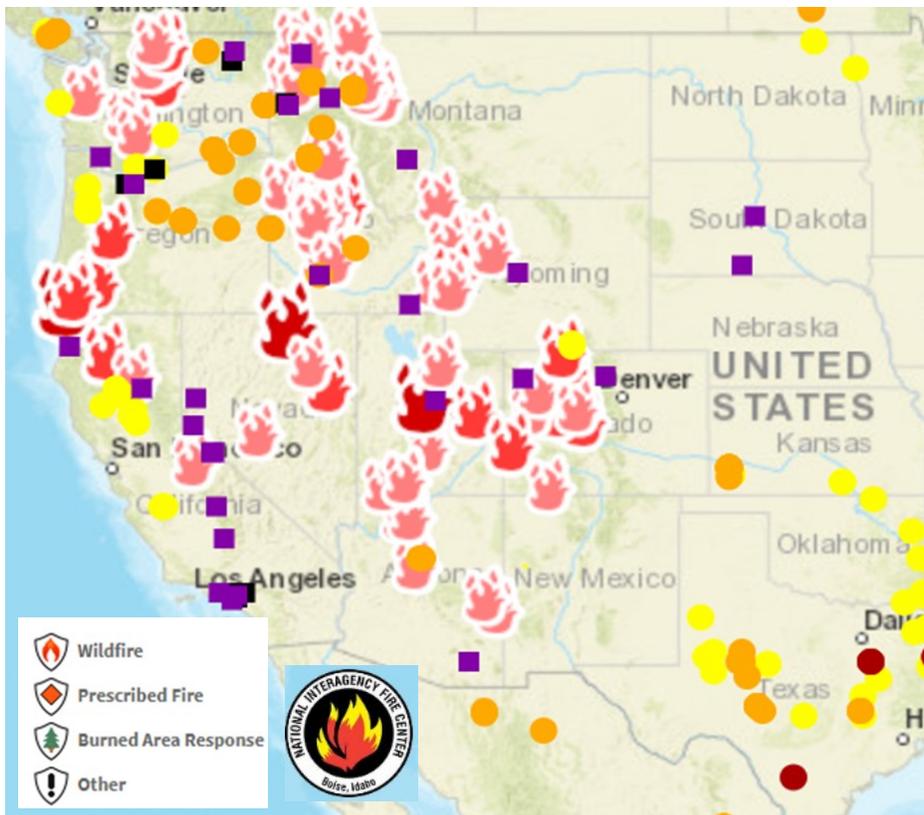
Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council (WSWC) and the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.



Wildfires Continue in the West

(WestFAST/USFS 09/30/18)

New wild fires in the West have decreased, however many existing fires continue to burn. To keep up with locations (including Alaska) and nature of the fires, the U.S. Forest Service website has detailed information and real time updating. U.S Forest Service Website: <https://www.fs.fed.us/science-technology/fire/information>



Get the latest incident specific wildfire data, including personnel count, cost, acres, percent contained and structures threatened, from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's map.

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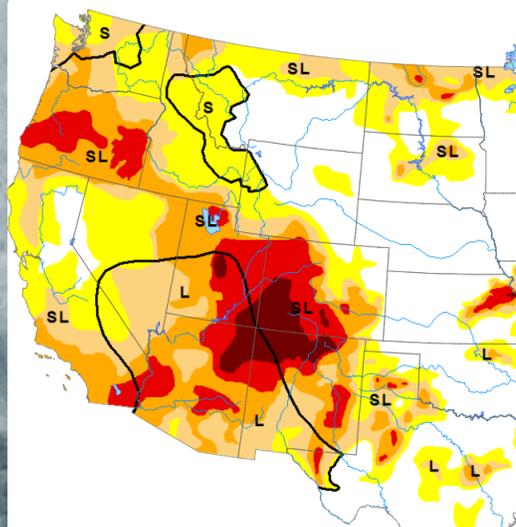
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Drought Continues in the West

(NOAA 10/2/18)

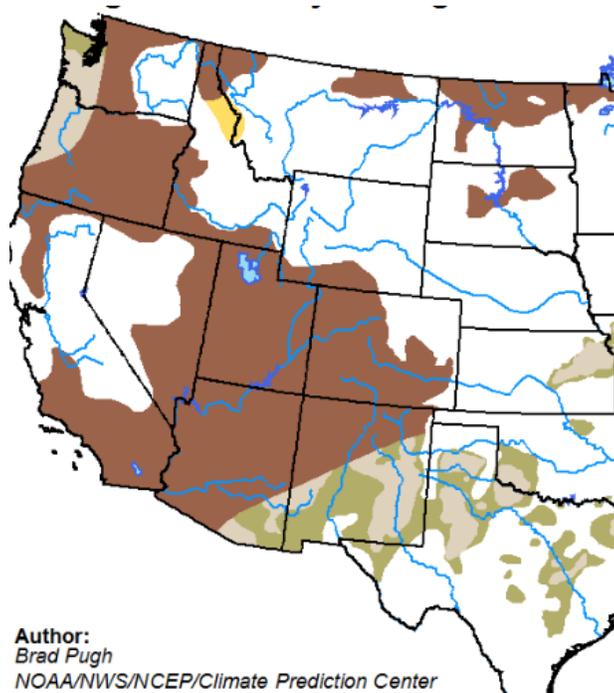
Here is the latest drought monitor with drought increasing across portions of the west and particularly intense in the four corners region.



Drought Monitor October 2, 2018



Latest U.S. Drought Outlook (NOAA SEPT. — DEC. 2018)



Author:
Brad Pugh
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Climate Prediction Center

- Drought persists
- Drought remains but improves
- Drought removal likely
- Drought development likely



<http://go.usa.gov/3eZ73>

Multiple BAER Teams are in action all around the country, especially here in the west after this last few months of widespread wildfires. Most of the actions taken by the teams are to help with short term emergency stabilization techniques to help reduce the amount of erosion damage that often happens with the wet season across the West. This doesn't mean the teams doesn't address longer term mediation efforts, as the teams often provide meaningful longer term recover efforts recommendations to the agencies and land owners for the burned areas.

Not only do WestFAST agency employees become BAER Team members in the assessment process, but data that is provided by the agencies is very useful. Mapping data from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), satellite data from NASA, weather data and forecasts for the future from (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) , and engineering and streamflow expertise from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are among the many source of information as rehabilitation of burned lands occurs for years after the fires.

More information on BAER Teams may be found on at the following web locations: <https://www.fs.fed.us/naturalresources/watershed/burnedareas-background.shtml>

<https://www.nifc.gov/BAER/>

Interagency Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Teams (WestFAST 09/30/18)

BAER Teams are made up of an interagency group of experts for which, the WestFAST agencies are well represented. Disciplines on the team include hydrologists, soil scientists, engineers, biologists, vegetation specialists, archeologists, and others who rapidly evaluate the burned area and prescribe emergency stabilization treatments. A BAER assessment usually begins before the wildfire has been fully contained.

USGS Explores Advances in Capabilities in Risk Assessment (USGS 09/18/18)

A new USGS report, *Science for a Risky World: A USGS Plan for Risk Research and Applications*, defines for the first time the role of USGS in risk research and applications. This includes hazard assessments, operational forecasts and warnings, vulnerability assessments, risk assessments, risk communication, decision-support systems, and post-event assessments. These activities and products are connected by the need to directly support decision makers in their efforts to better understand societal risk from hazards and to have the necessary information to make science-based, risk reduction decisions. The Risk Plan identifies the Bureau's core competencies in this arena and includes background on and specif-



ic recommendations for building institutional capacity for creating sustained partnerships, supporting professional staff, and improving product delivery.



Looking north from Riverside Park at flooding on the South Platte River at Fort Morgan at the downstream/east side of the Colorado Highway 52 bridge on September 15, 2013 (Credit: Ben Glass. Public domain.)

Full article: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/science-a-risky-world-a-usgs-plan-risk-research-and-applications-usgs-publishes-strategic-plan>

USDA Releases Standard Indicators and Laboratory Procedures to Assess Soil Health for Public Comment

(USDA NRCS 09/18/18)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is releasing a set of standard indicators and associated laboratory procedures to assess soil health. These measures – recommended through a multi-organizational collaboration among soil health experts in the federal, university, public and private sectors – are being developed to improve conservation planning and implementation across the United States.

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has posted a draft Technical Note detailing these soil health indicators and associated laboratory methods in the Federal Register for public review and comment. NRCS is accepting comments on this Technical Note through December 13, 2018.

"We are committed to supporting our nation's farmers, ranchers, and foresters as they work to build healthier soils across their operations," said Bill Northey, USDA's Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation. "Standardized measures give us consistency in scientifically assessing soil health and will improve our ability to evaluate soils across the United States using methods that are objective and actionable."

NRCS and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) led a diverse coalition of technical experts in selecting methods to assess six standard soil health indicators, which focus on key physical and biological processes that must function well in healthy soils. Those indicators are:

- organic matter recycling and carbon sequestration,
- soil structure stability,
- general microbial activity,
- carbon food source,
- bioavailable nitrogen, and
- microbial community diversity

Laboratory methods for assessing each indicator were chosen based on interpretability, ease of use, cost effectiveness, measurement repeatability, and ability to inform agricultural management decisions. USDA will work closely with other stakeholders to ensure that the indicators and corresponding laboratory methods are appropriately understood and applied across diverse agricultural environments. USDA developed these quantitative assessment methods to improve customer service and facilitate data sharing nationwide, leading to broader collaboration among soil health experts across the Department and beyond.

Review and comment on the draft Technical Note in the Federal Register by December 13, 2018. Learn more about the basic principles of soil health on the [NRCS website](#).

Reclamation Launches Funding Opportunity for Desalination and Water Purification *(BOR 09/12/18)*

The Bureau of Reclamation is making the 2019 funding opportunity for the Desalination and Water Purification Research Program. The funding opportunity is availa-



ble for private industry, universities, water utilities and other research sponsors to submit proposals to cost-share laboratory-scale and pilot-scale projects



A desalination research unit at the Brackish Groundwater National Desalination Research Facility in Alamo, New Mexico.

that address DWPR goals and objectives. To view this funding opportunity, please visit www.grants.gov and search for funding opportunity number BOR-DO-19-F001. Applicants for desalination and water purification research projects funding must submit their proposals by 4:00 p.m. MST on Thursday, December 13, 2018.

The goal of the DWPR Program is to increase water supplies by reducing cost, energy consumption and environmental impacts of treating impaired and otherwise unusable waters. Reclamation is interested in research where the benefits are widespread and where research has a national significance — where the issue are of large-scale concern and the benefits

accrue to a large sector of the public. Funding is available, subject to appropriations, in two areas, Laboratory and Pilot Scale projects:

- Laboratory scale projects are typically bench scale studies involving small flow rates. They are used to determine the viability of a novel process, new materials or process modifications. Federal funding is limited to no more than \$150,000.
- Pilot scale projects test a novel process at a sufficiently large scale to determine the technical, practical and economic viability of the process and are generally preceded by laboratory studies that demonstrate they technology works. Federal funding is limited to no more than \$400,000 per proposal, up to \$200,000 will be available in the first year and up to \$200,000 for an optional second year for finalizing testing, justified modifications and evaluation.

Individuals, institutions of higher education, commercial and industrial organizations, private entities, State and local governments, federally funded research and development centers, Tribal governments and organizations, United States-Mexico binational research foundations and inter-university research programs, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. For institutions of higher education and for United States-Mexico binational research foundations and inter-university research programs, non-Federal cost share is not required but highly encouraged. All other applicants must provide at least 75 percent non-Federal cost share.

The DWPR program is supporting the Department of the Interior's priorities, including: creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt, utilizing our natural resources, and restoring trust with local communities, among others. To learn more about Reclamation's Desalination and Water Purification Research Program please visit www.usbr.gov/research/dwpr.

Upcoming Meetings:

The WSWC Fall (188th) Meeting will be held in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho on October 23-26, 2018. For further information, please see:

<http://www.westernstateswater.org/upcoming-meetings/>.



Federal News *(Control click to articles)*

08/30: [Reclamation Announces \\$74.6 Million Agreement for Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project](#)

08/30: [EPA Seeks Input on Regulatory Approach for Managing Excess Flows](#)

09/04: [USGS Moving Mountains: Elwha River Still Changing Five Years After World's Largest Dam-Removal Project: More than 20 million tons of sediment flushed to the sea](#)

09/04: [Ask the scientist: How can the weather spark and spread wildfires?](#)

09/04: [Idaho Ag or Private Timber Producer See NRCS to do a damage assessment](#)

09/05: [Interior Announces More Than \\$36 Million to Boost Wetland, Waterfowl Conservation, Access to Public Lands](#)

09/05: [Hunting and Fishing Opportunities Expanded at 30 of America's National Wildlife Refuges](#)

09/06: [To help forecast air quality and issue timely warnings, NOAA aims to answer what fires emit and how](#)

9/10: [Reclamation releases draft environmental document on recycled water for San Luis National Wildlife Refuge](#)

09/11: [USDA Nebraska Providing Funds to Protect and Restore Agricultural Working Lands, Grasslands and Wetlands](#)

9/14: [BLM hosts public meetings for Draft Bears Ears National Monument Plans](#)

09/14: [USGS Big Thompson Floods of 1976 and 2013 - A Visual Comparison](#)

09/14: [Proposals for Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership sought](#)

9/18: [Regulatory Division: Protecting the Waters of the United States](#)

09/18: [NOAA – Climate by the numbers a hot August](#)

09/18: [ECOSTRESS Maps LA's Hot Spots](#)

09/18: [Secretary Zinke Announces \\$100 Million to Support State Parks and Outdoor Recreation](#)

09/19: [Conserving the Cultural Landscape](#)

09/19: [NRCS Montana Program Funding Applications Set for October 19, 2018](#)

09/19: [NRCS Colorado – Wild Fire Financial Assistance Available](#)

09/20: [NRCS Seeks Input on 2019 Conservation Priorities for California](#)

09/20: [EPA Updates RFS Website to Improve Transparency](#)

09/20: [Reclamation to Hold Public Meeting to Discuss Environmental Assessment of Green River Water Exchange Contract](#)

09/20: [BLM hosts public meetings for Draft Grand Staircase-Escalante Monument Plans](#)

09/21: [Delta Islands and Levees study releases final EIS for review](#)

09/21: [Reclamation awards \\$30 million contract for environmental and cultural resources](#)

09/21: [Exploratory work begins at Shasta Dam](#)

09/25: [NRCS Wyoming Announces Financial Assistance for Natural Resource Conservation](#)

09/25: [NASA Tests Tiny Satellites to Track Global Storms](#)

09/25: [Trails Center exhibit will explore the mystery of Wyoming](#)

09/28: [Nation's Wildlife Gets \\$50 Million Boost from Funding to States](#)



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