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Idaho

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Idaho Panhandle Snowpack Update Water Year 2026

March 11, 2026 | Peter Youngblood, NRCS Snow Survey

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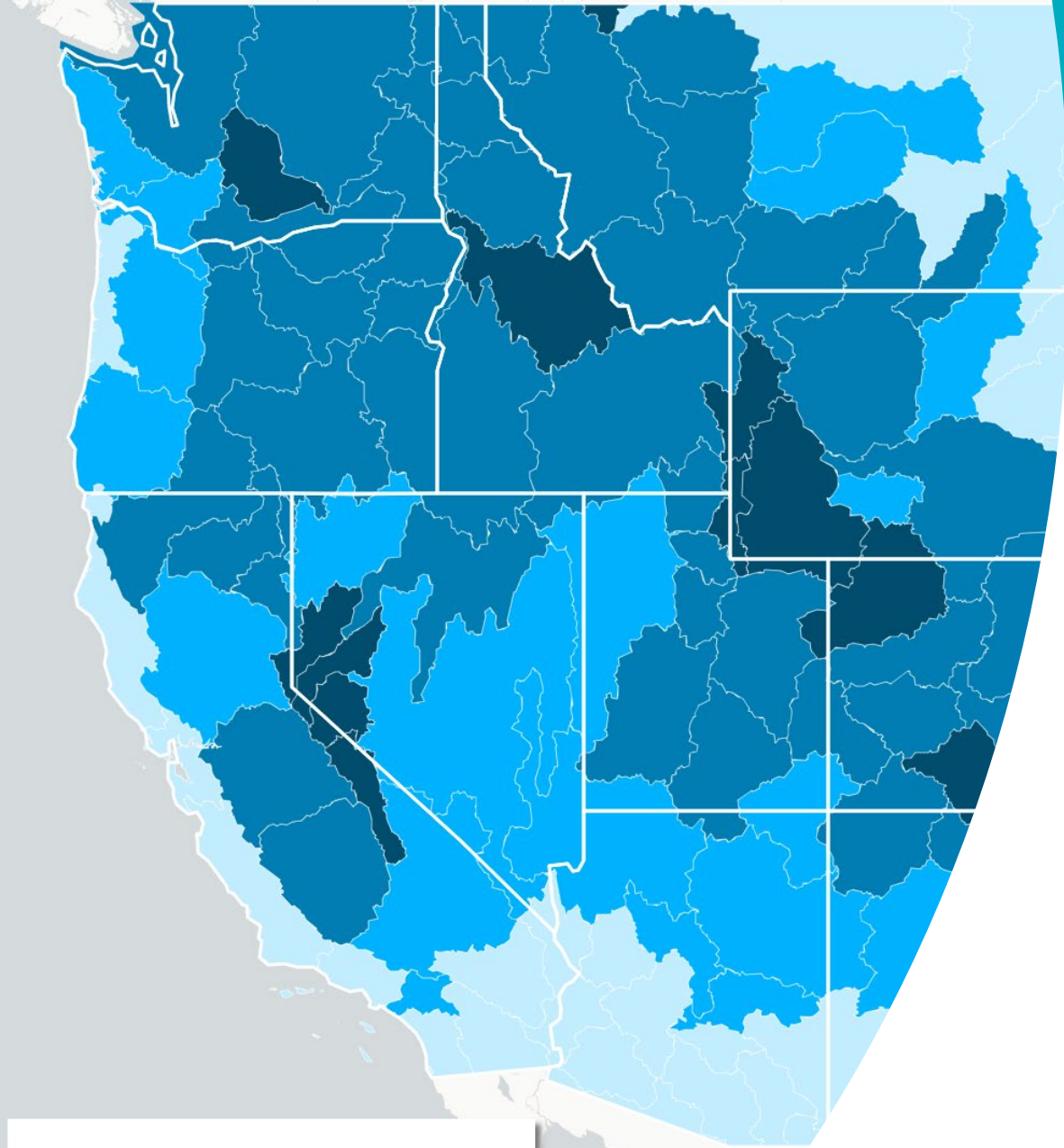
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United States Department of Agriculture

Who We Are & What We Do





Spokane

ANNUAL BASIN STATISTICS:

VOLUME OF RUNOFF FROM SNOW AND RAIN:

9.24M acre-feet

PERCENT OF RUNOFF FROM SNOW:

59.5%

VOLUME OF RUNOFF FROM SNOW:

5.5M acre-feet

VOLUME OF RUNOFF FROM RAIN:

3.74M acre-feet

Pend Oreille

ANNUAL BASIN STATISTICS:

VOLUME OF RUNOFF FROM SNOW AND RAIN:

39.32M acre-feet

PERCENT OF RUNOFF FROM SNOW:

68.6%

VOLUME OF RUNOFF FROM SNOW:

26.98M acre-feet

VOLUME OF RUNOFF FROM RAIN:

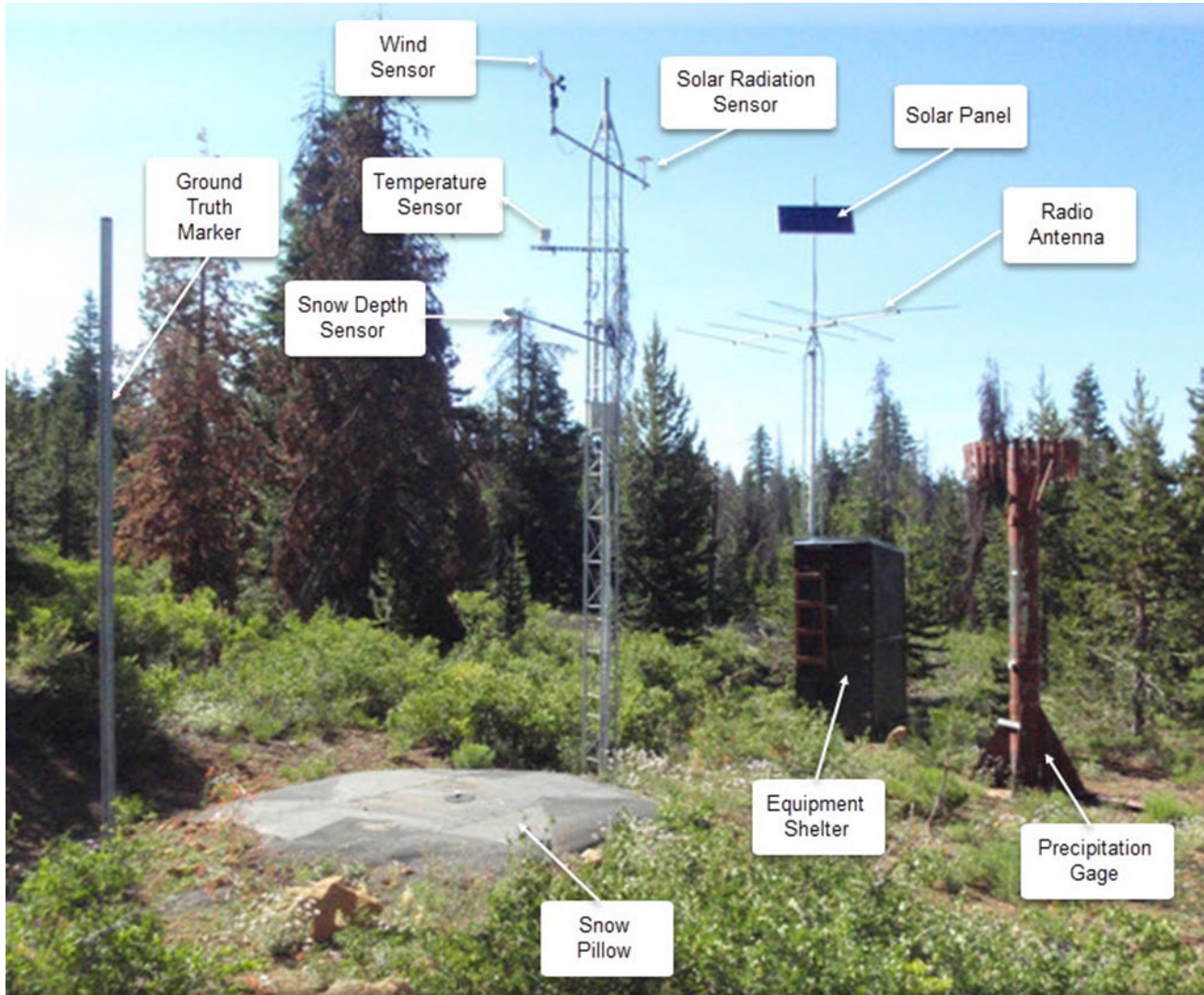
12.33M acre-feet

Annual Percentage of Runoff From Snow



states on/off

SNOTEL Site



Snow Courses



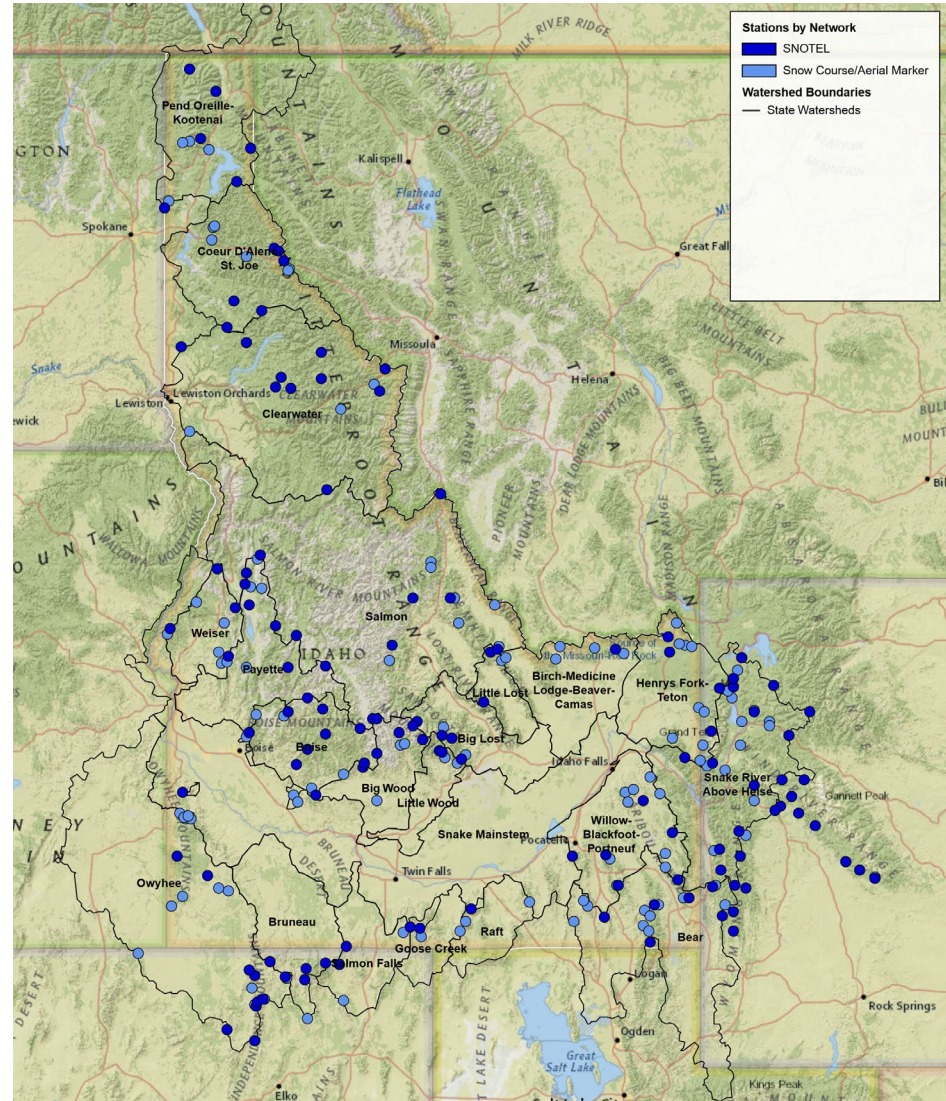
- 
- Snow courses are permanent snow measuring locations marked at endpoints by signs on poles or trees
 - Typical snow courses have 5 – 10 measurement points spaced at 50 feet
 - Middle points sometimes marked by poles too



Idaho Snow Measurement Network

Idaho Stations

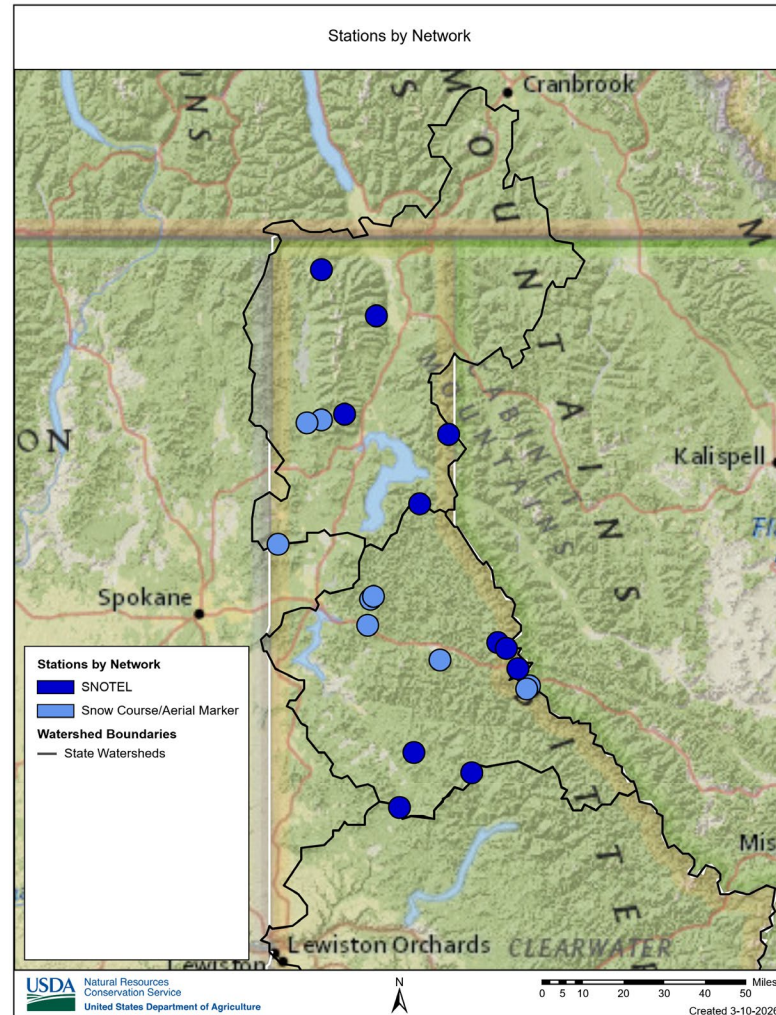
- 129 automated stations (SNOTEL & SNOLITE)
- 115 active Snow Courses (manual measurements)



Idaho Snow Measurement Network

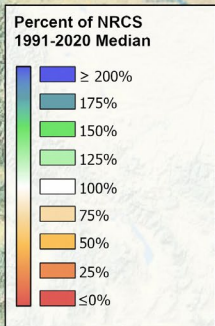
Panhandle Stations

- 16 automated stations (SNOTEL)
- 14 active Snow Courses (manual measurements)



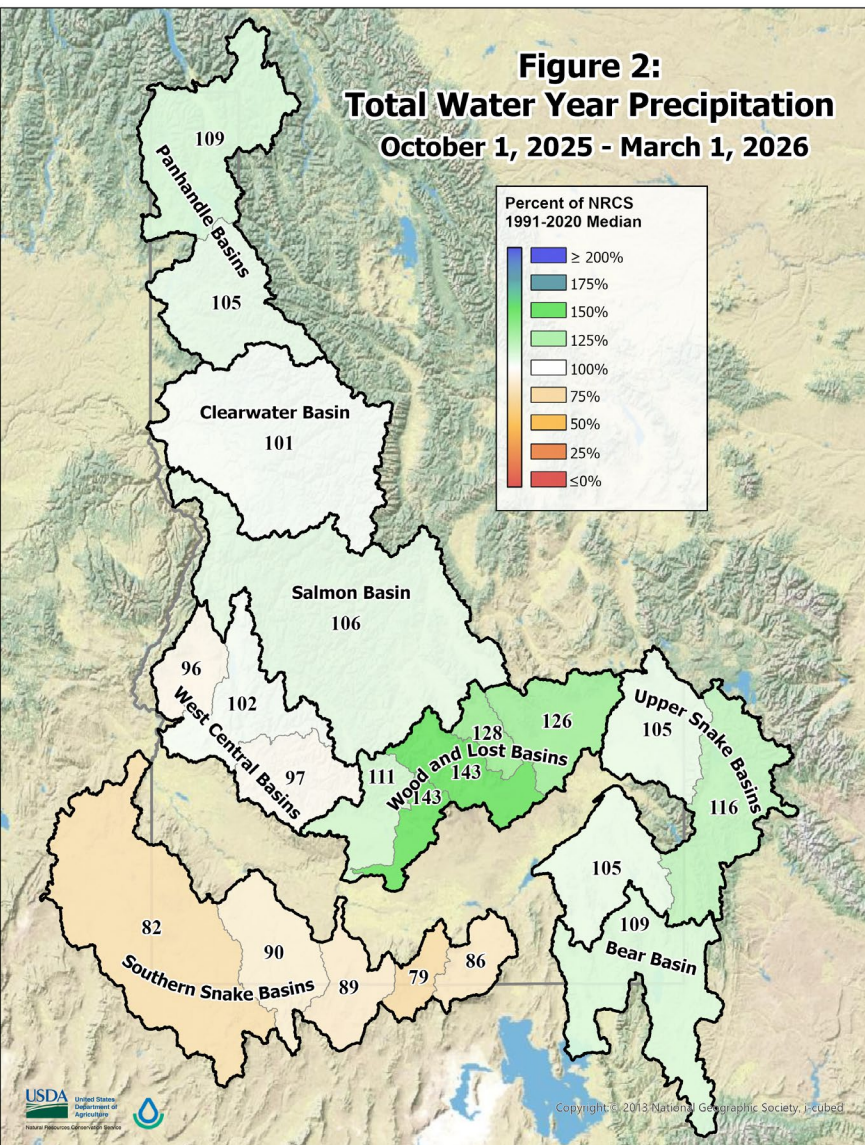
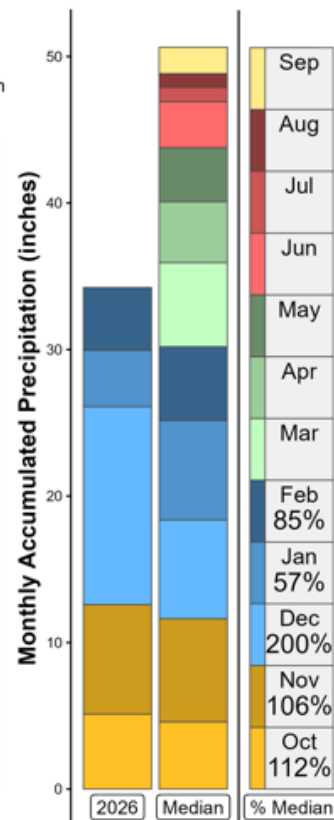
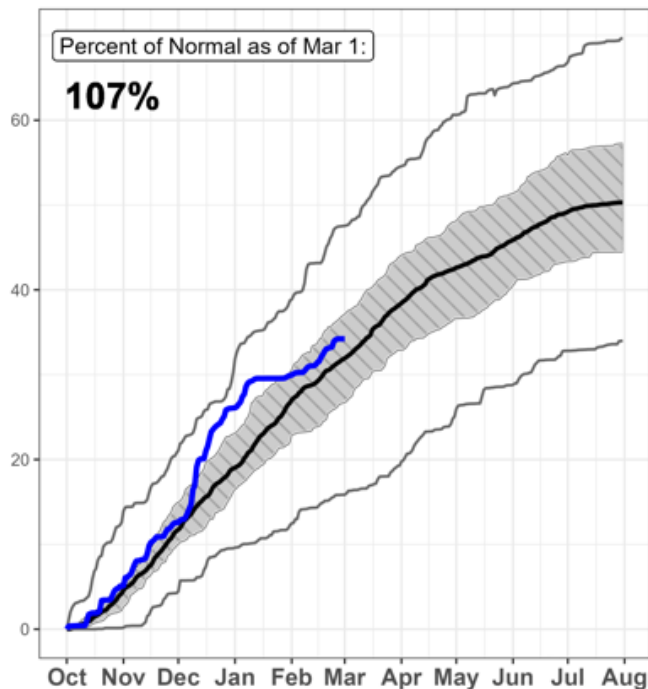
Total Water Year Precipitation

**Figure 2:
Total Water Year Precipitation
October 1, 2025 - March 1, 2026**



Total Water Year Precipitation

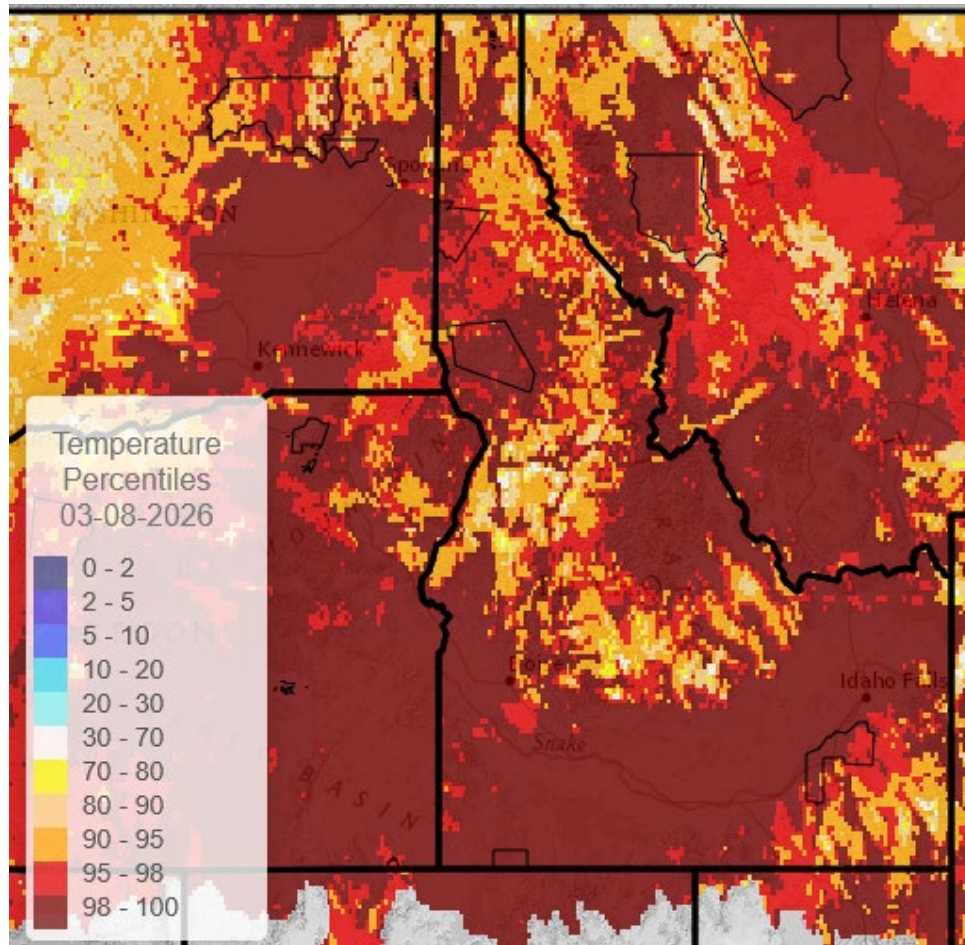
Interquartile Range Current WY Median Max & Min



Warm Start to 2026

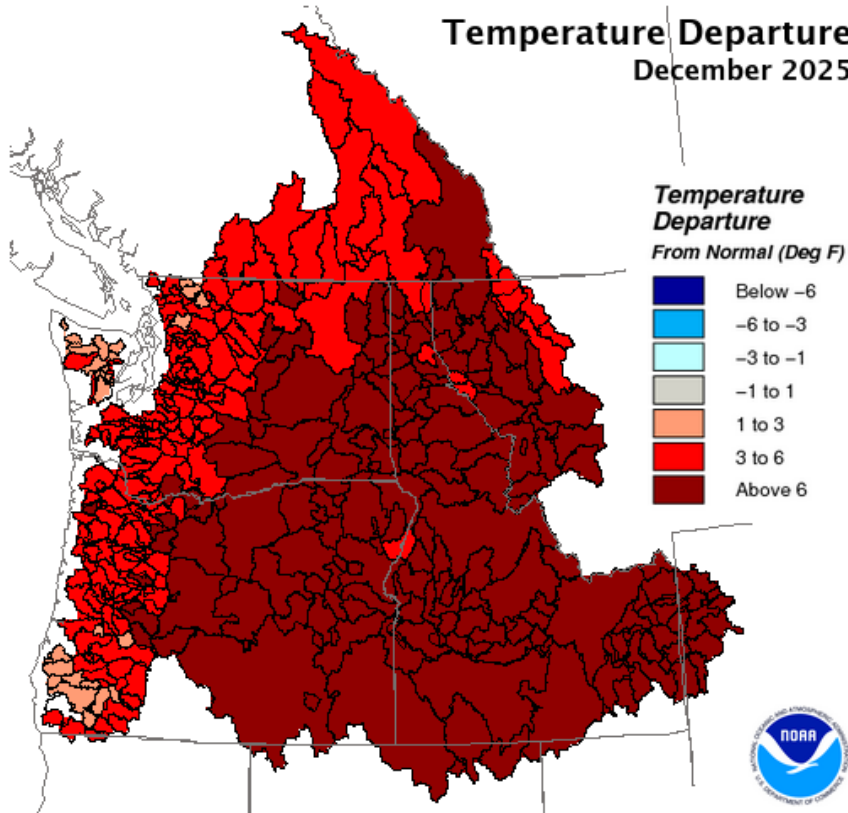


Current Water Year Temperature Percentiles



Warm and Wet December

**Temperature Departure
December 2025**

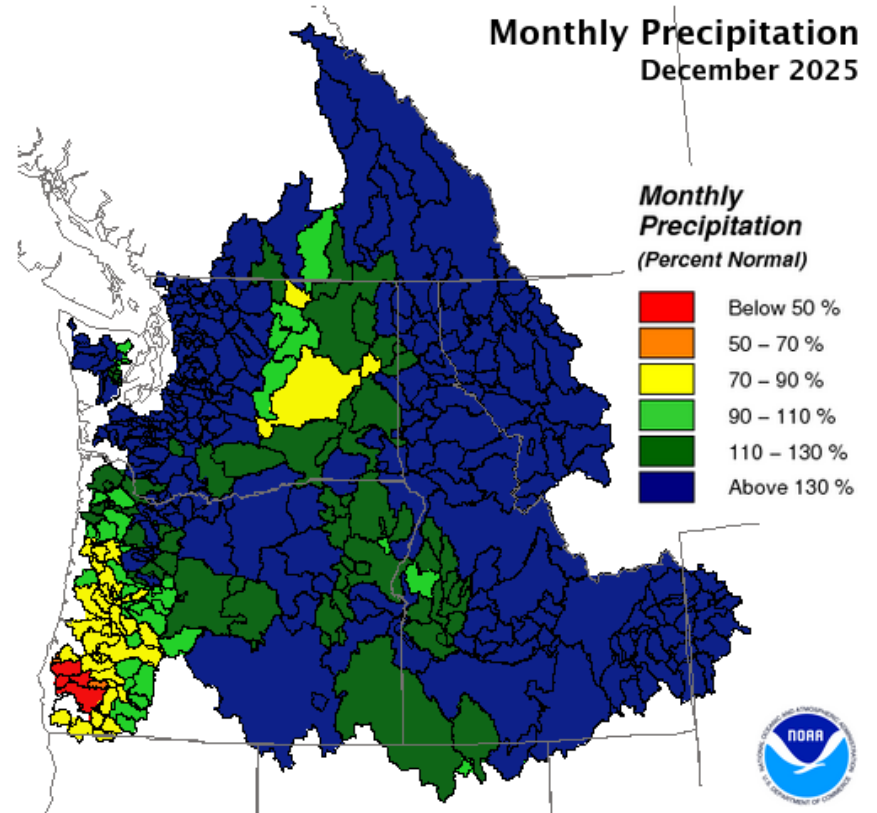


Creation Time: Thursday, Jan 1, 2026

Northwest River Forecast Center



**Monthly Precipitation
December 2025**



Creation Time: Thursday, Jan 1, 2026

Northwest River Forecast Center

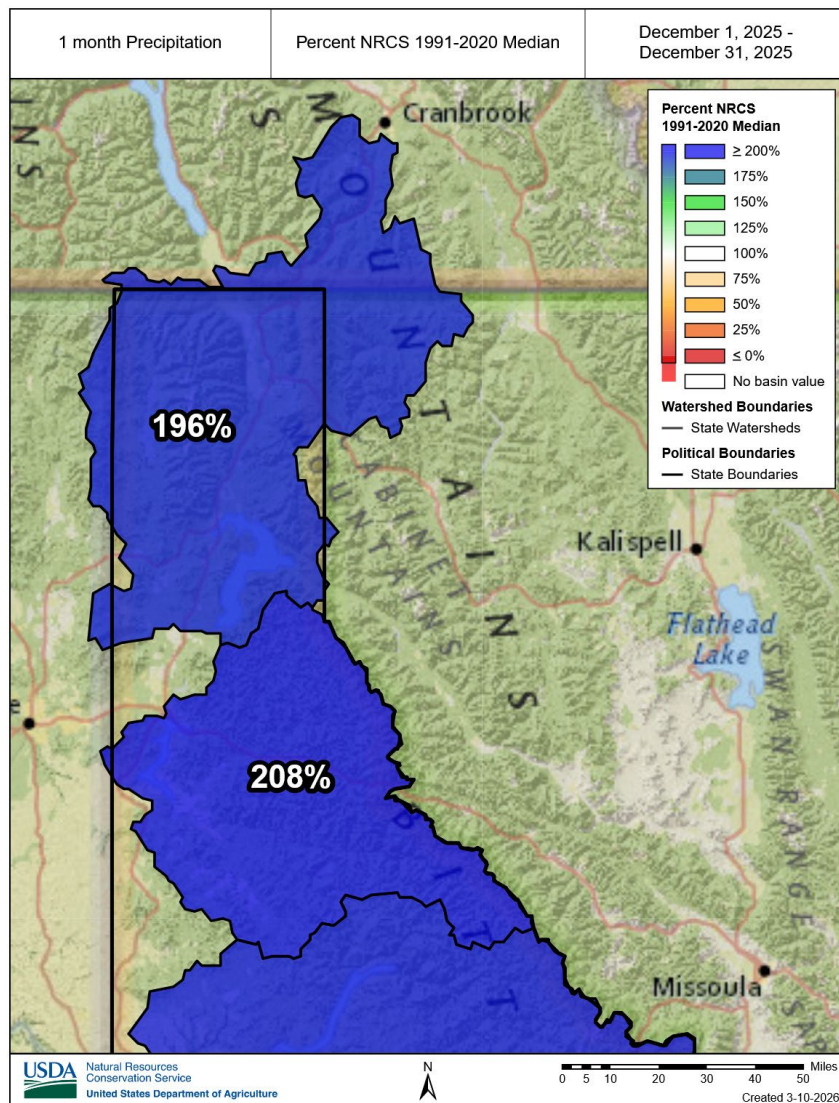
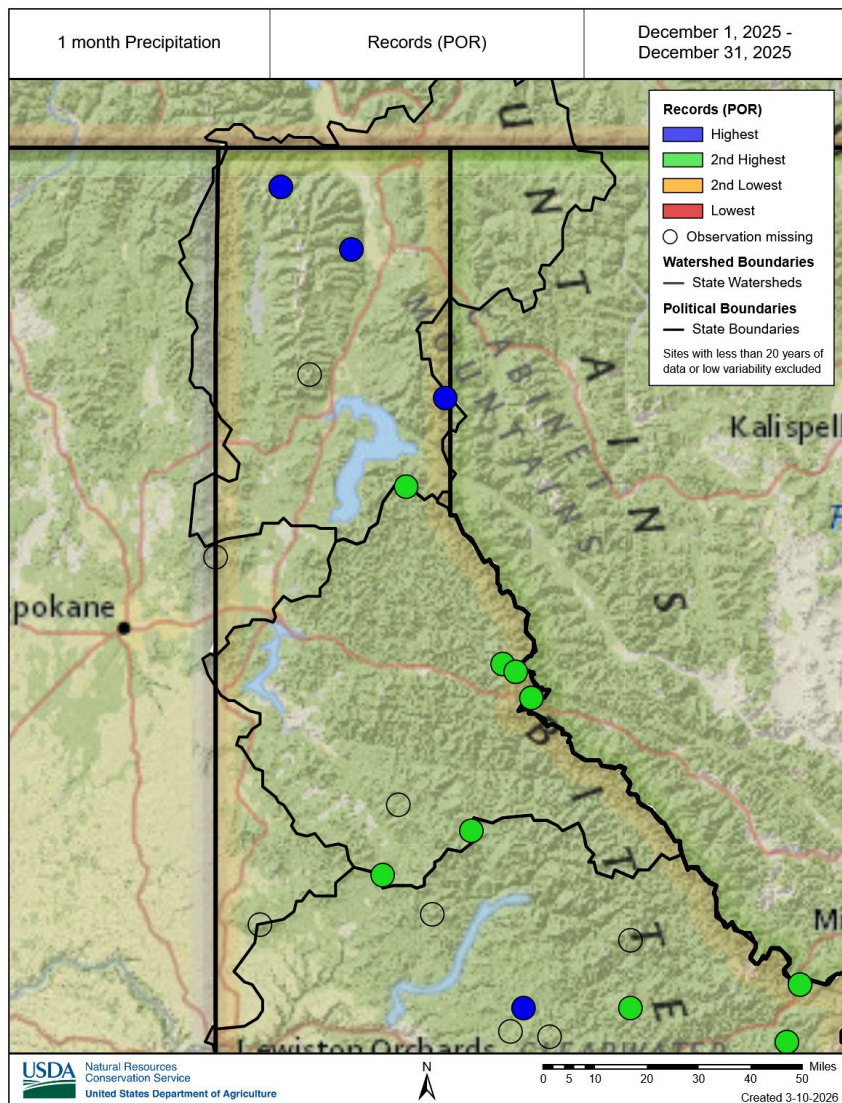


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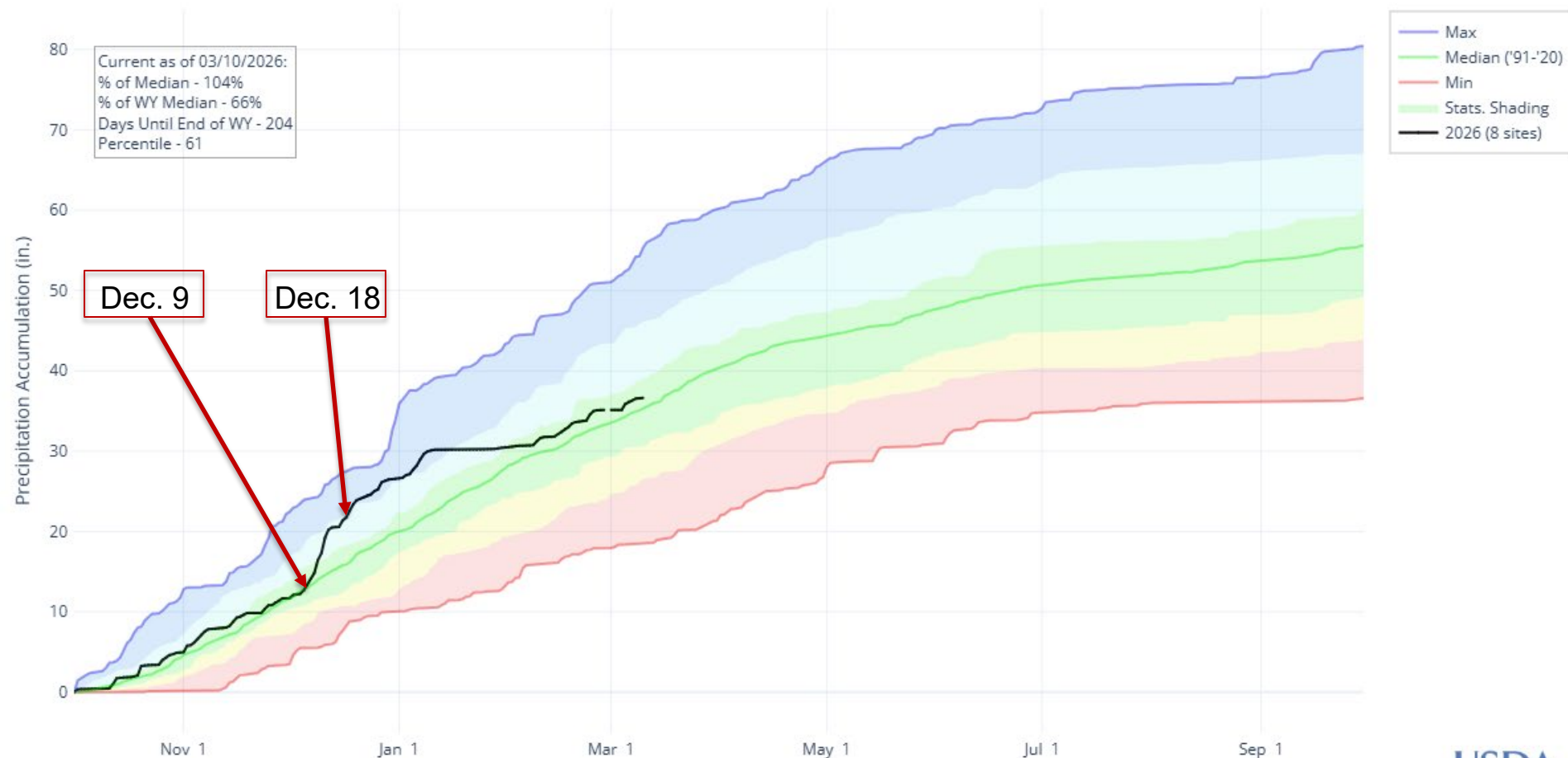


Near Record High December Precipitation



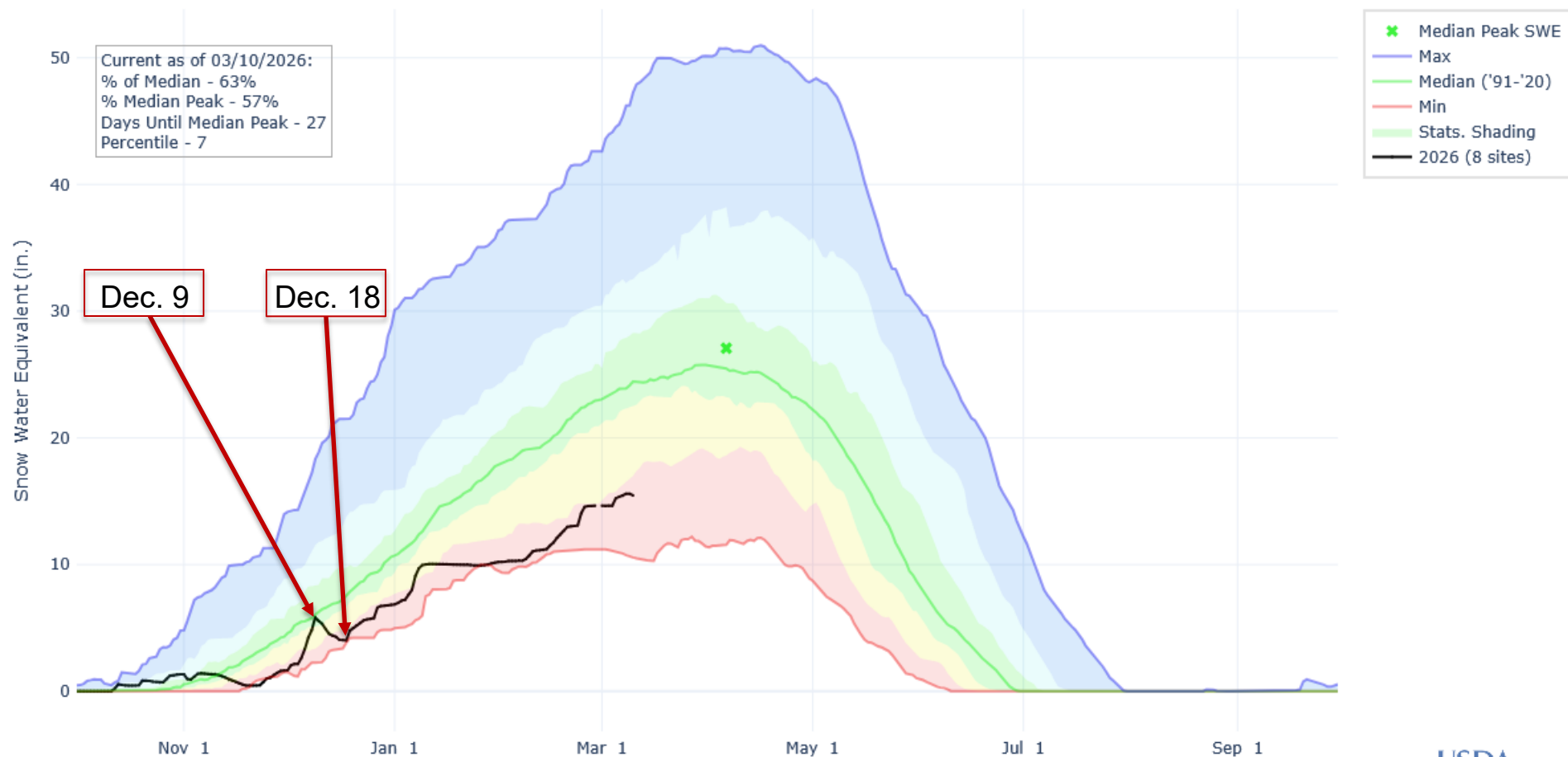
December Rains

PRECIPITATION ACCUMULATION IN COEUR DALENE-ST. JOE

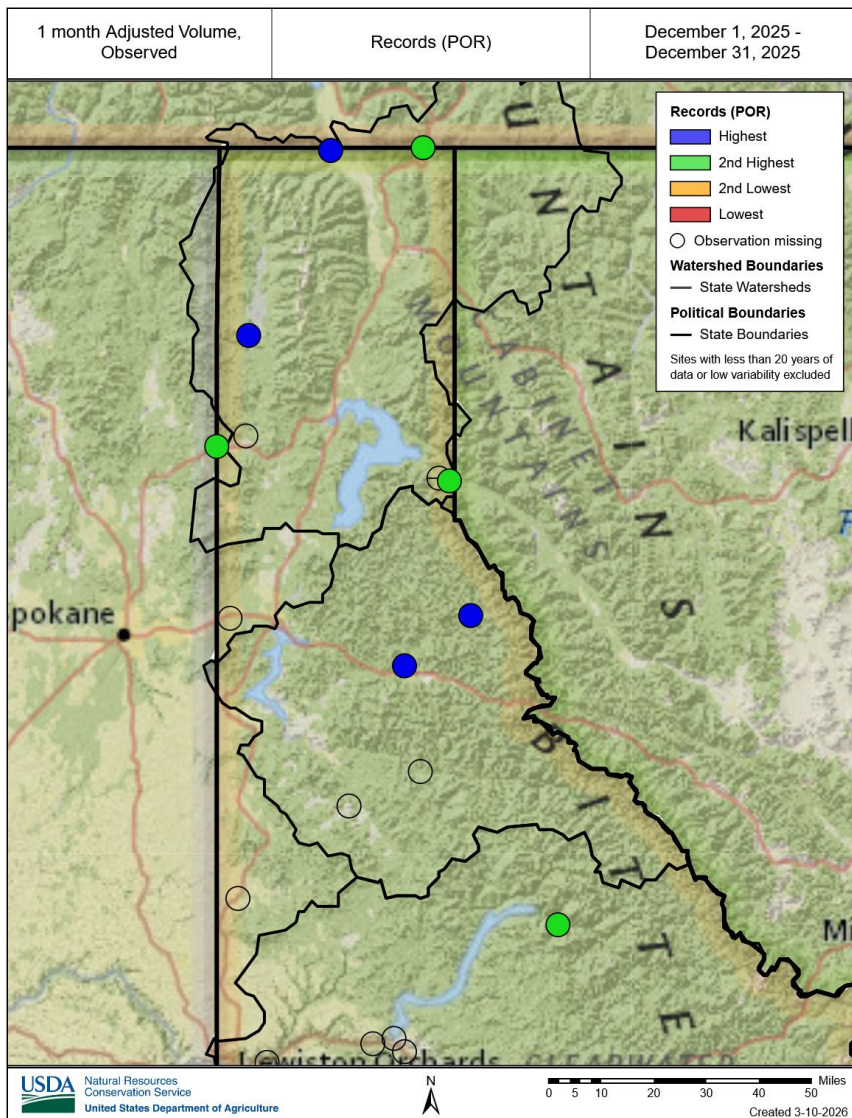


December Snowpack Decline

SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN COEUR DALENE-ST. JOE



Record Streamflow Volume in December



Records Set:

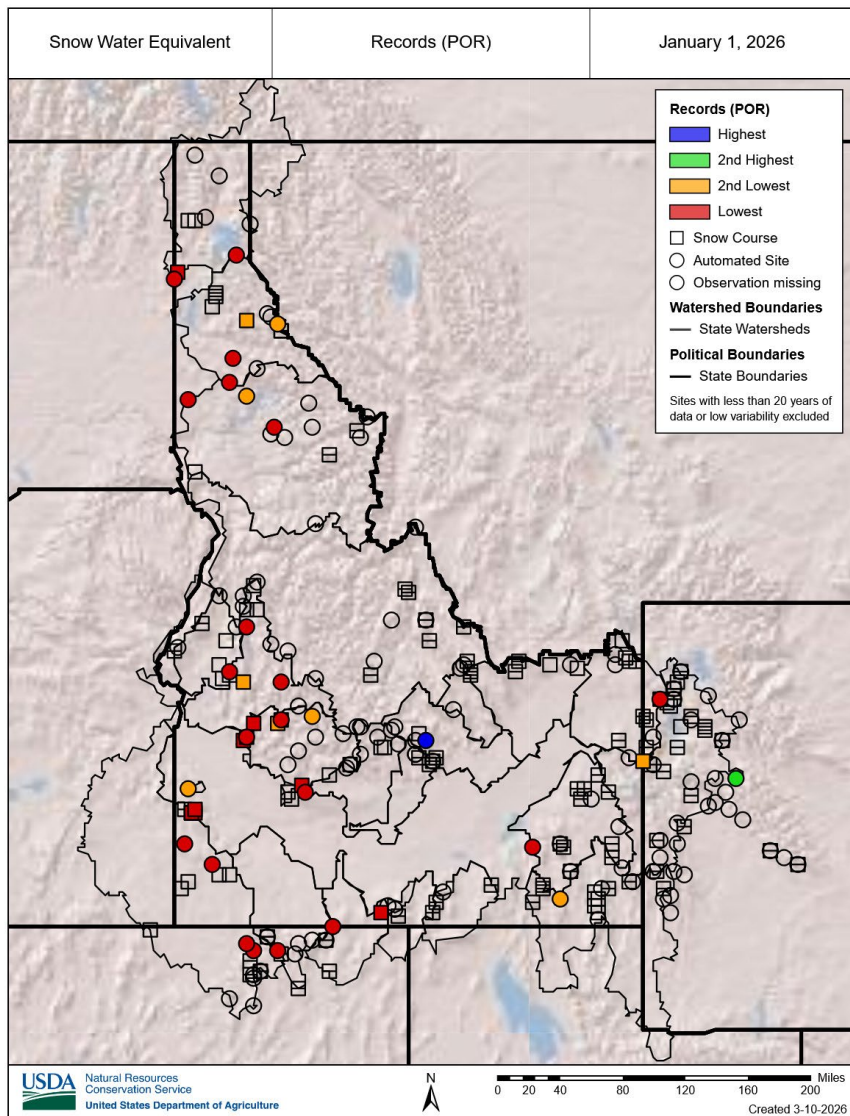
- NF CdA R Nr Prichard
- NF CdA R at Enaville
- Priest R nr Coolin
- Boundary Ck nr Porthill

Second Highest:

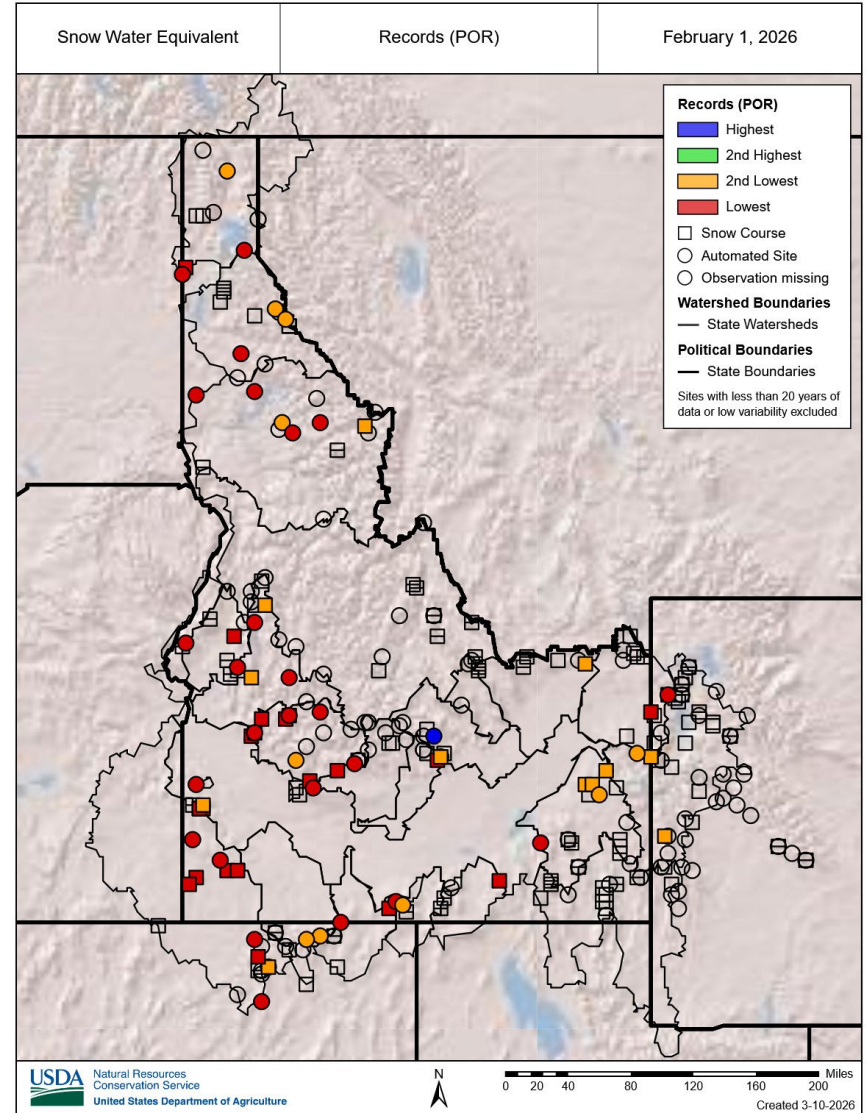
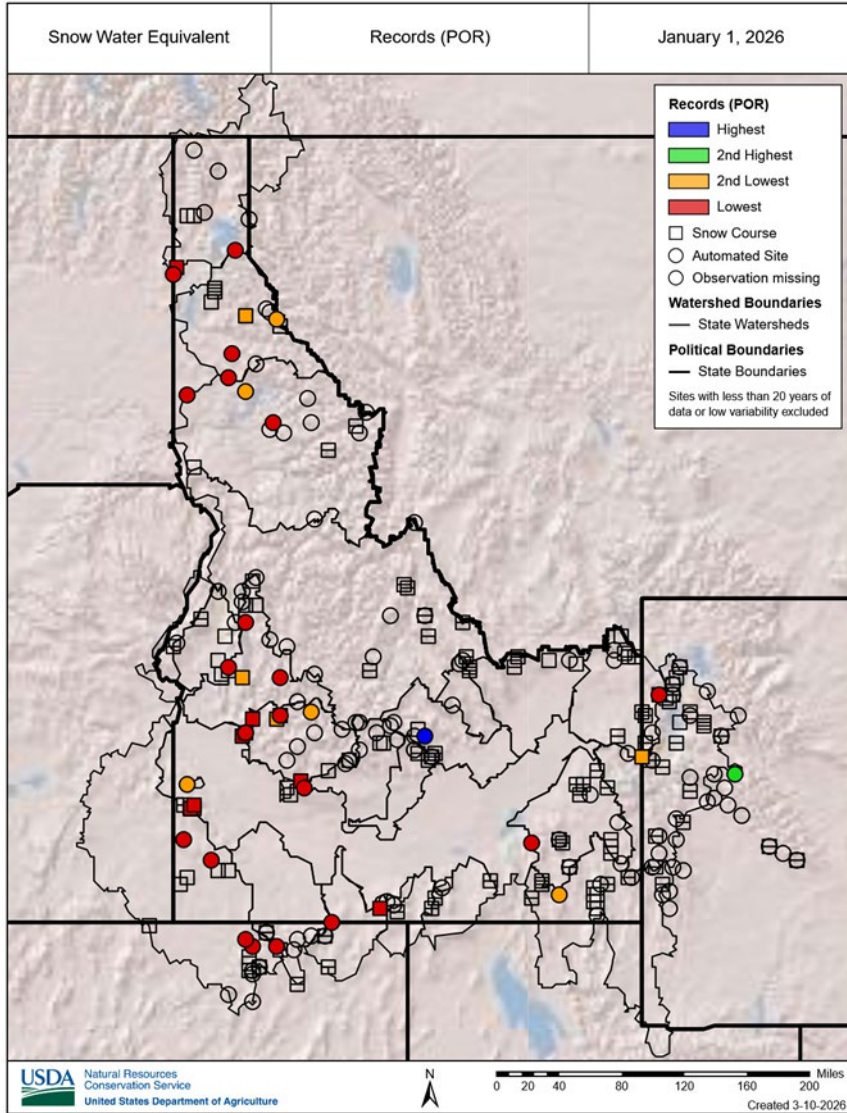
- Clark Fork R bl Cabinet Gorge Dam
- Pend Oreille R at Newport
- NF Clearwater R nr Canyon Rs



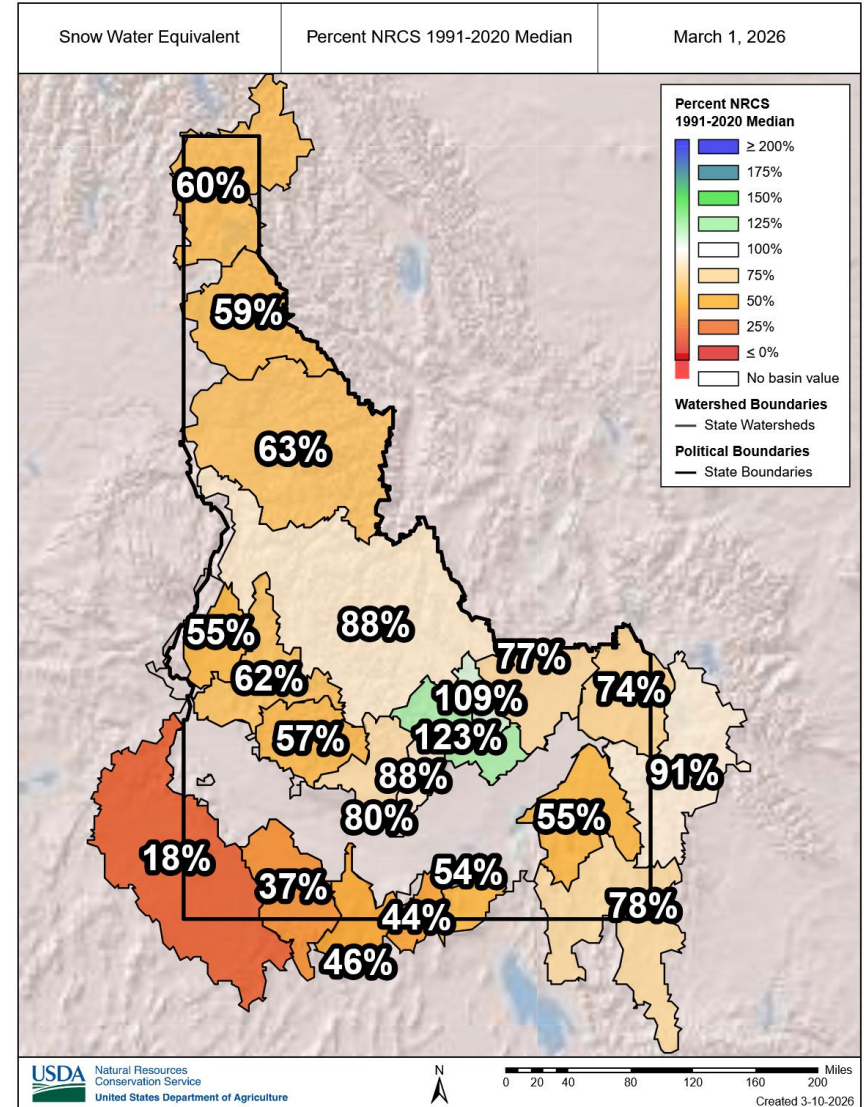
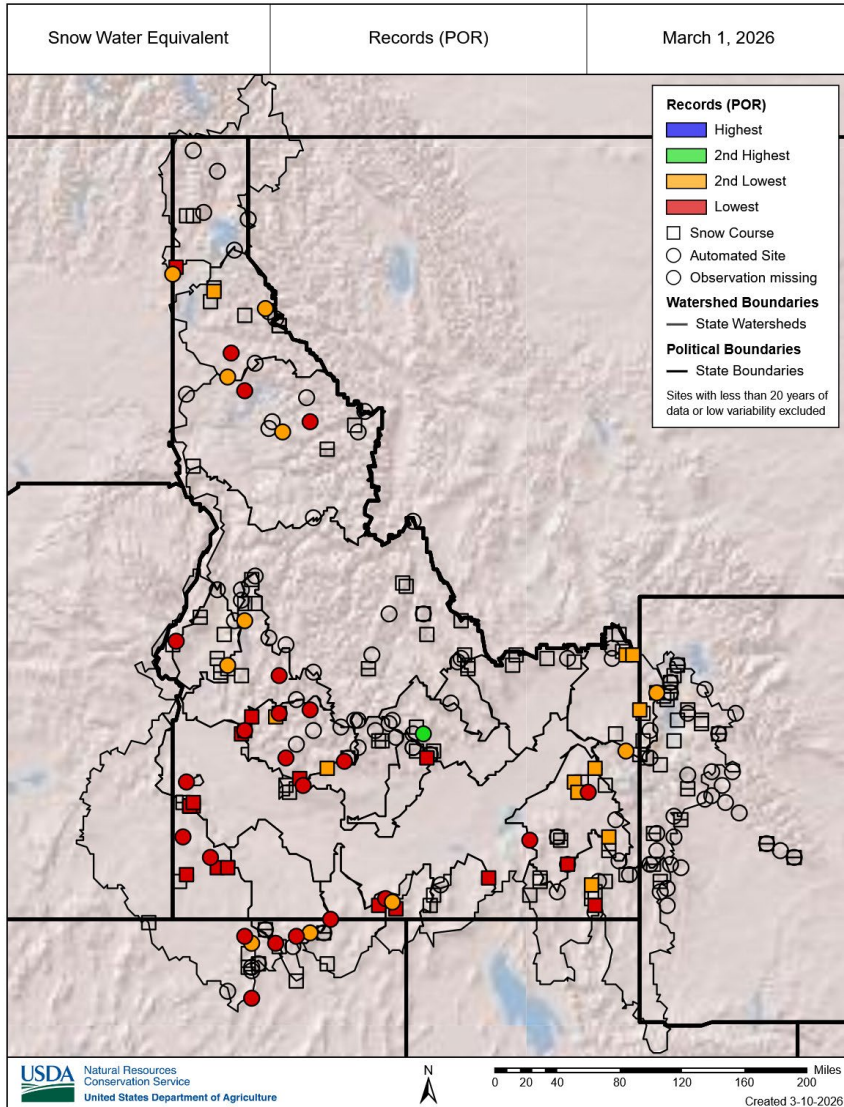
Snowpack Records on January 1st



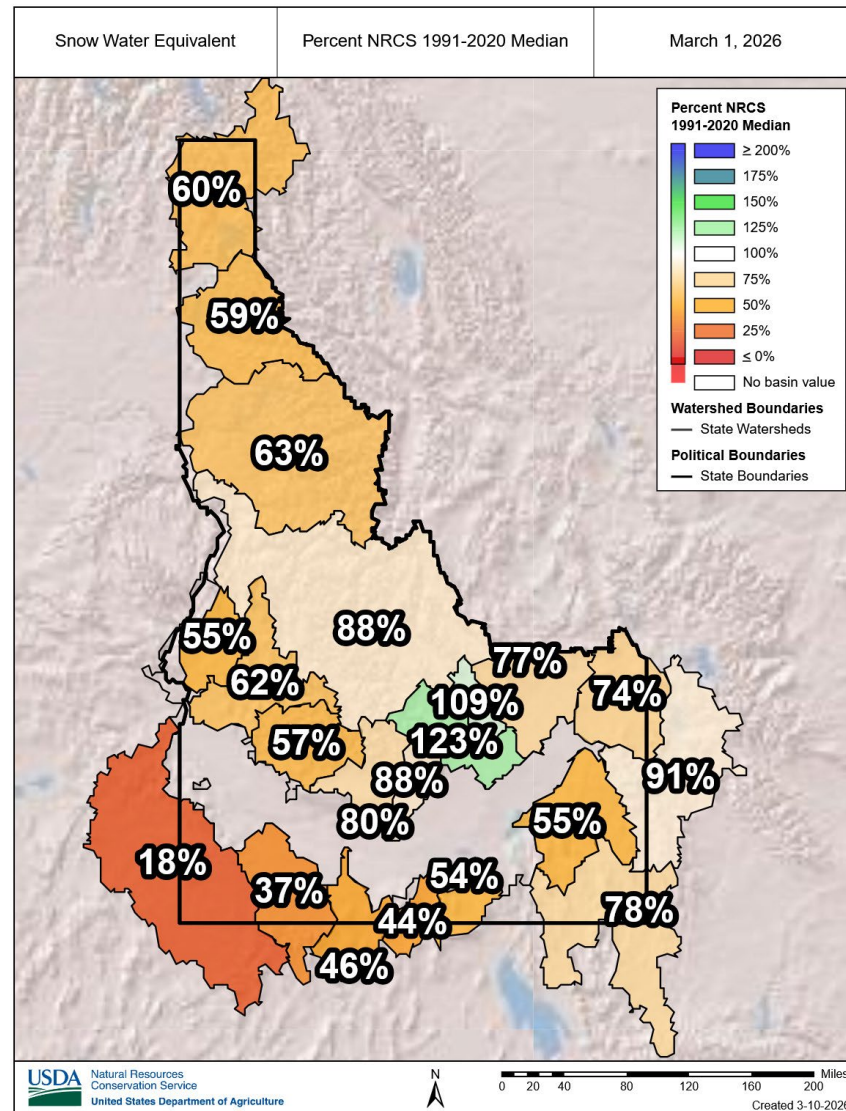
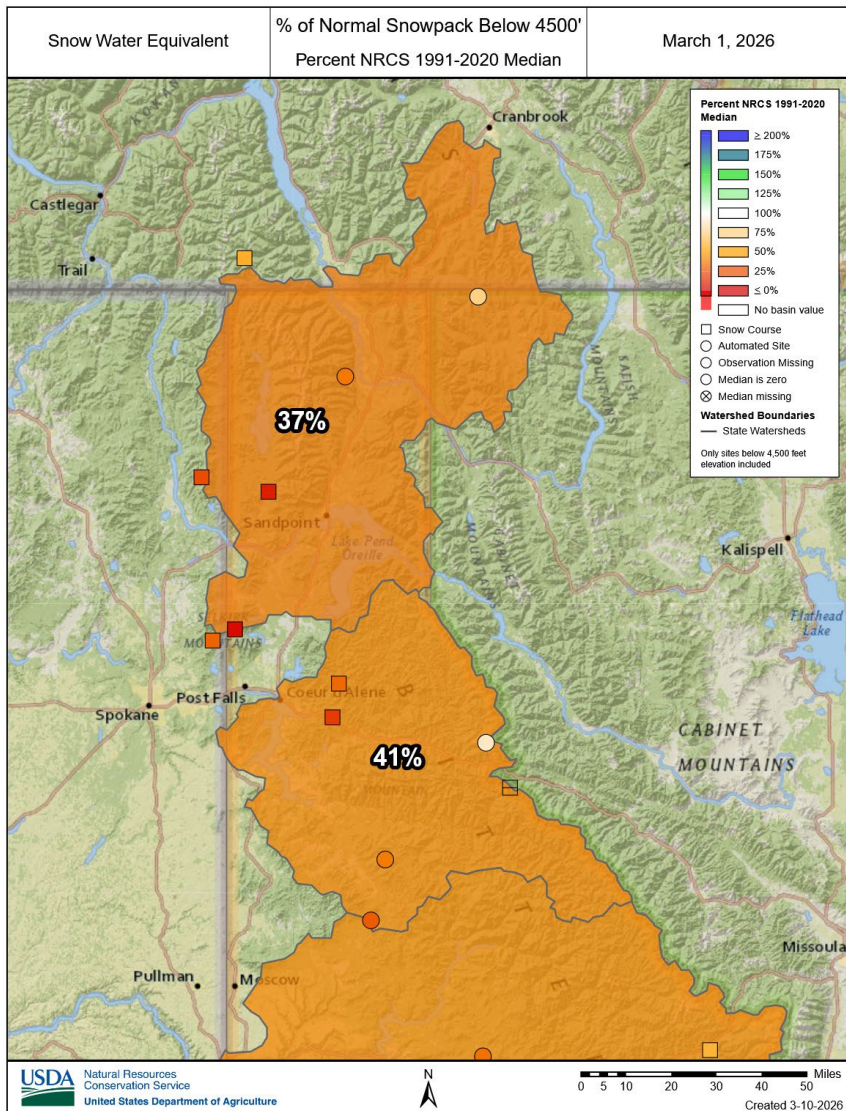
February 1st – No Improvements



Minor Improvements by March 1

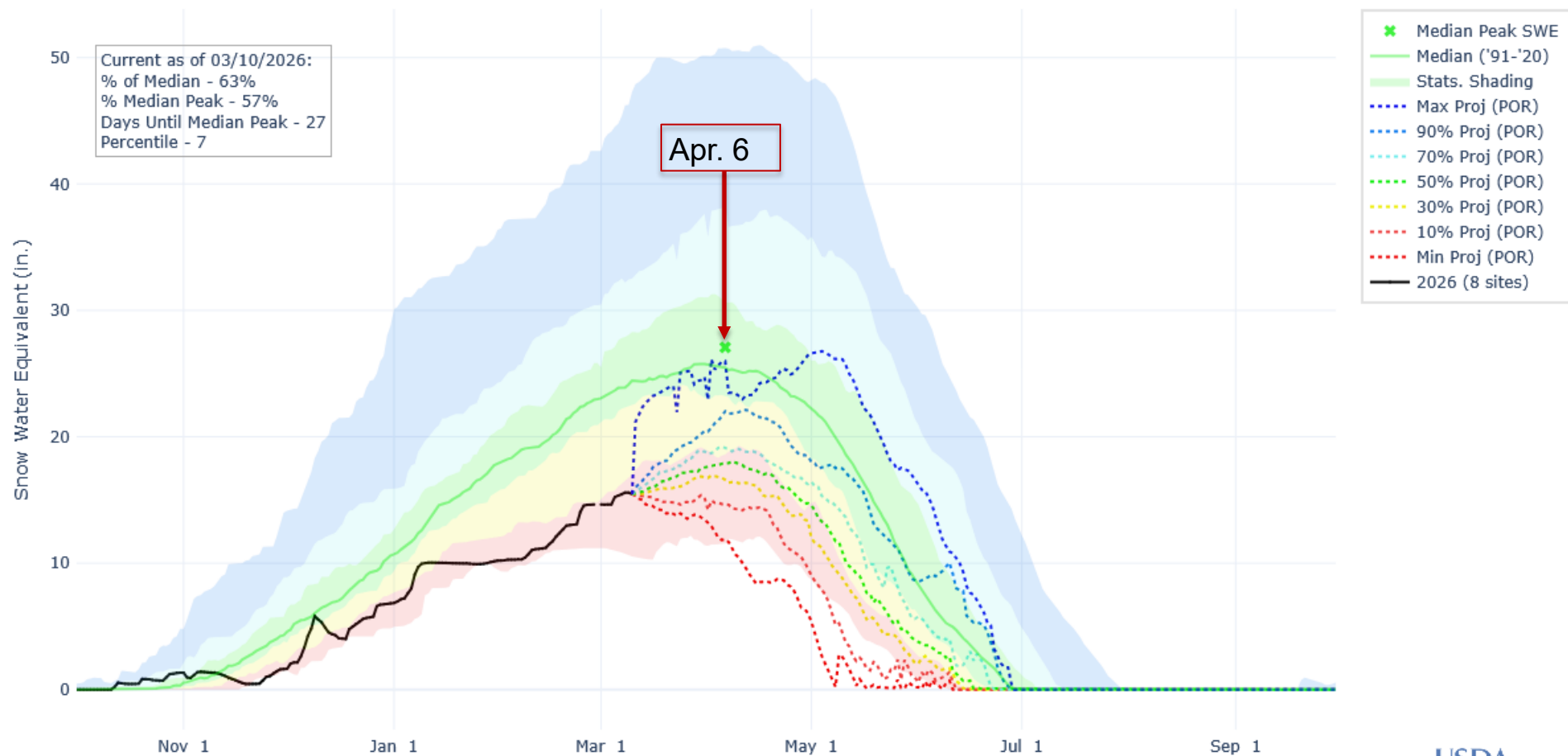


Low Elevation Snowpack Well Below Normal



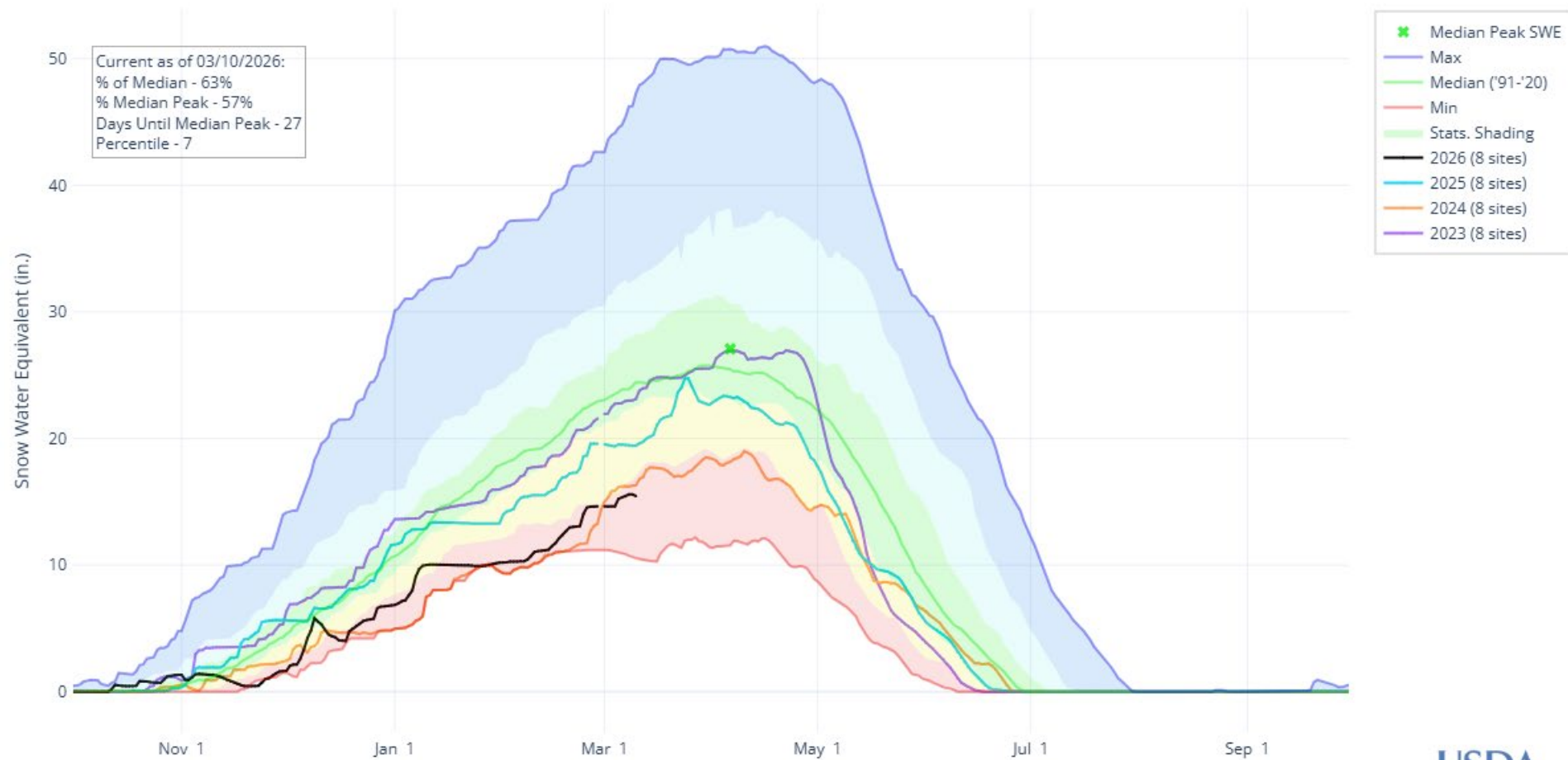
Little Chance to Recover

SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT PROJECTION IN COEUR DALENE-ST. JOE



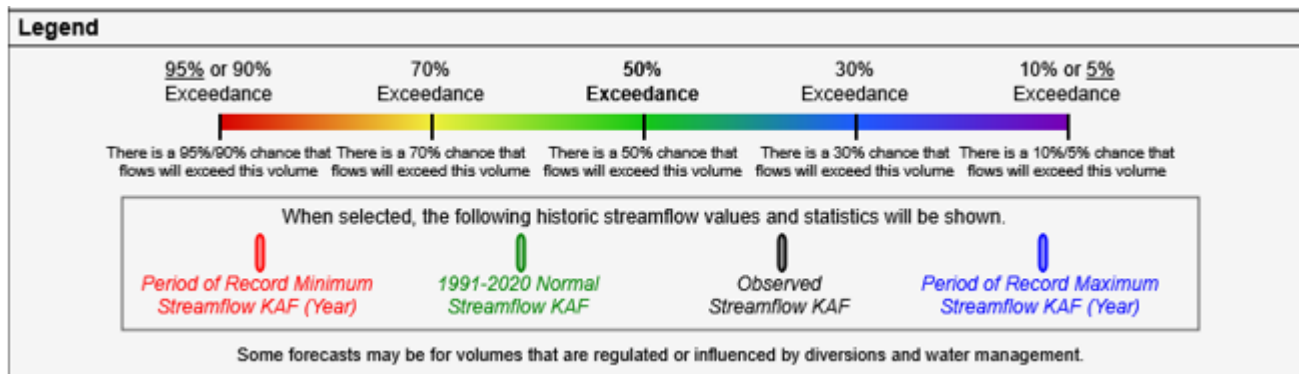
Below Normal Snowpack Since 2023

SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN COEUR DALENE-ST. JOE

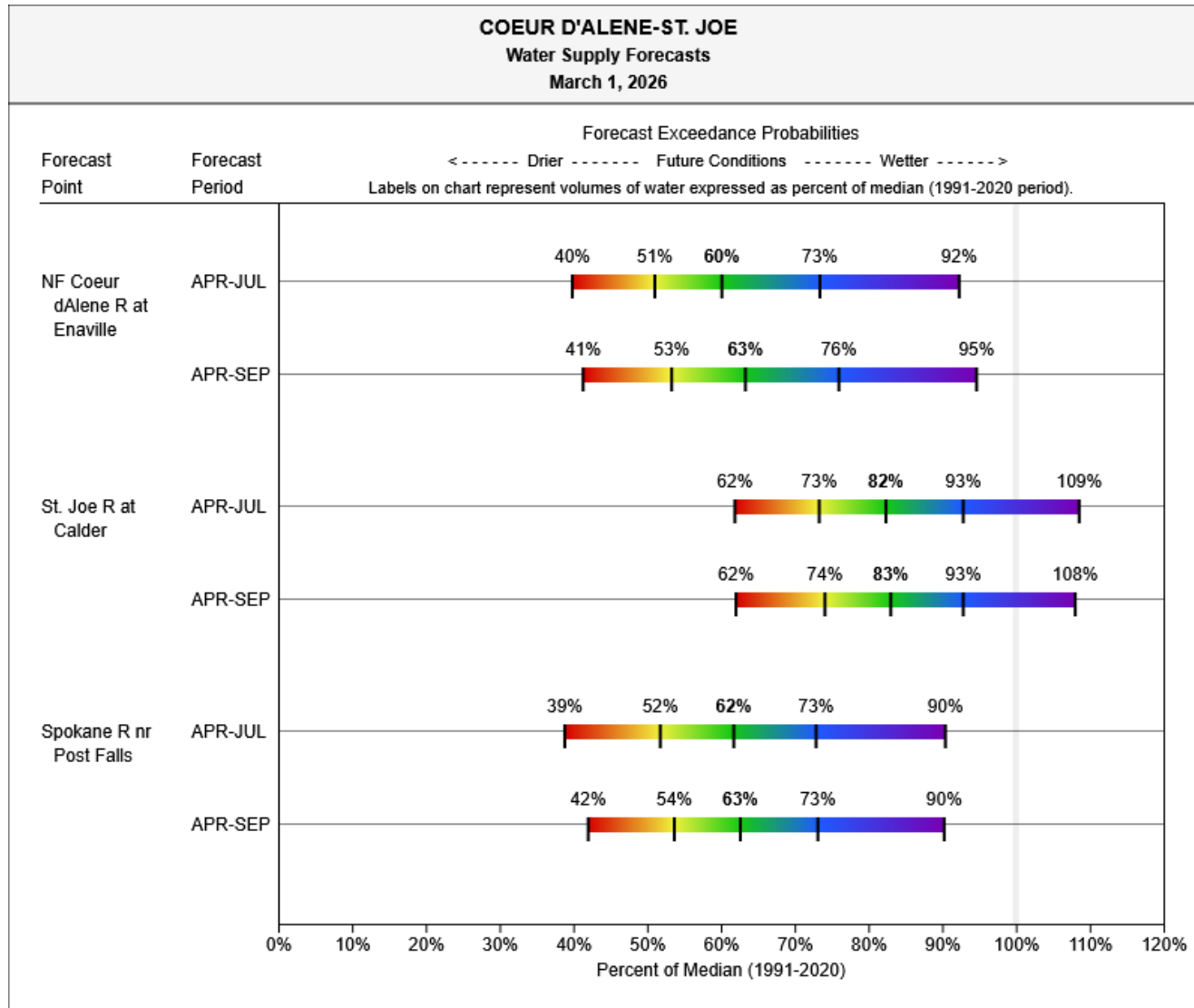


NRCS Water Supply Forecasts

- Published Monthly between February – June
- Uncertainty includes future weather, model simplifications, and data limitations
- Due to uncertainty, forecasts are presented as a range of values, each with a specific probability of occurrence



March 1 Water Supply Forecasts

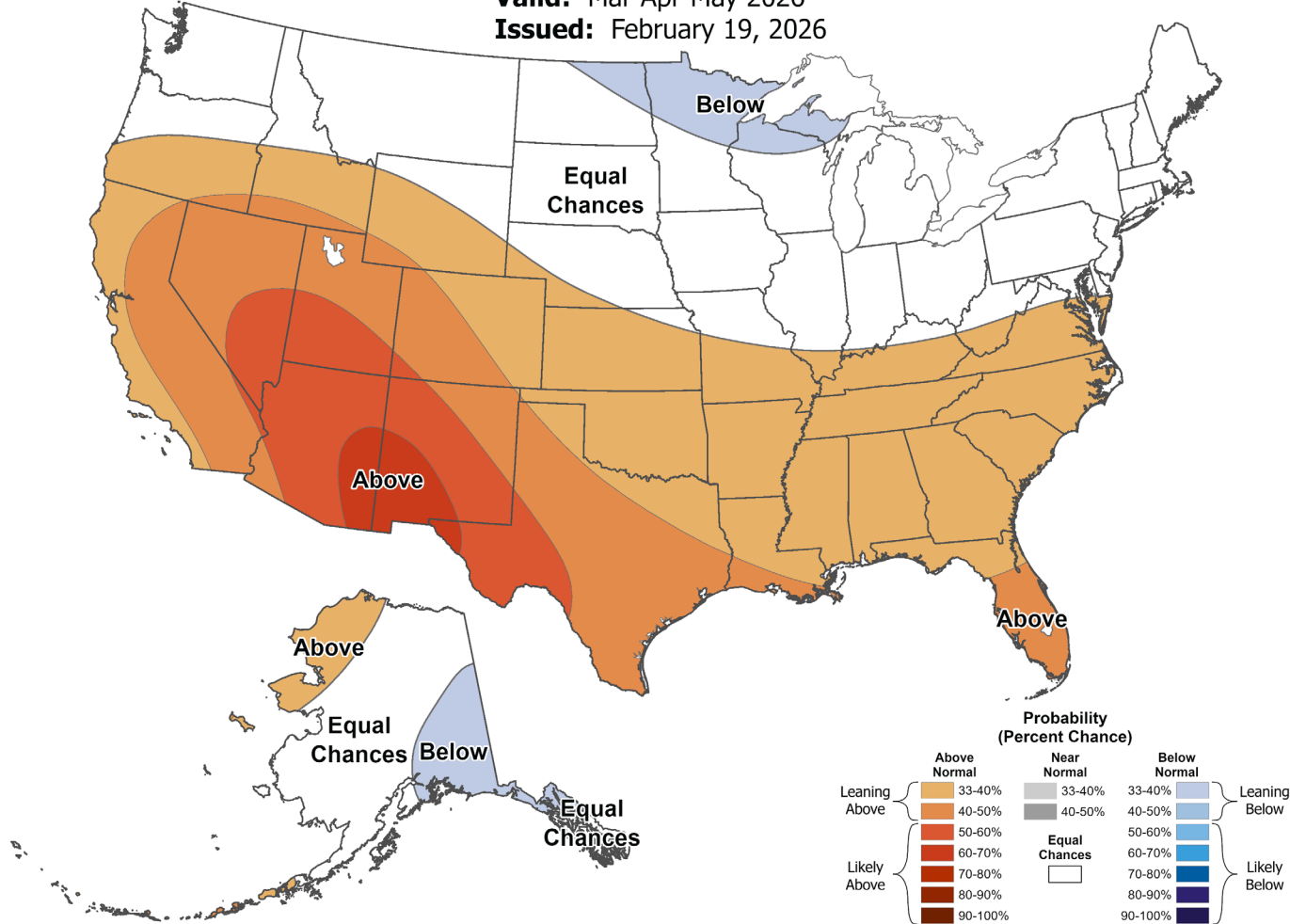


NOAA Seasonal Outlook

Seasonal Temperature Outlook

Valid: Mar-Apr-May 2026

Issued: February 19, 2026

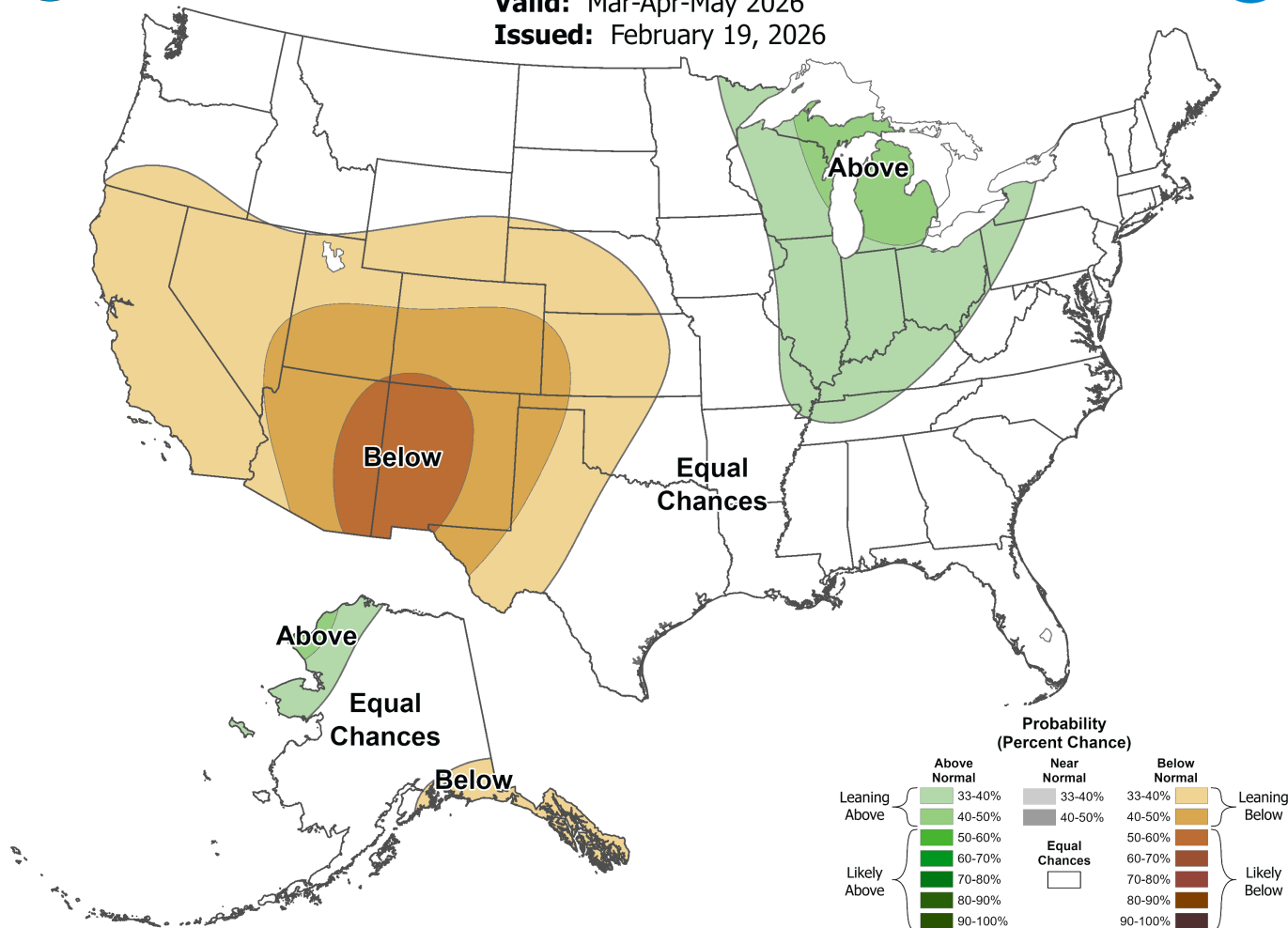


NOAA Seasonal Outlook

Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

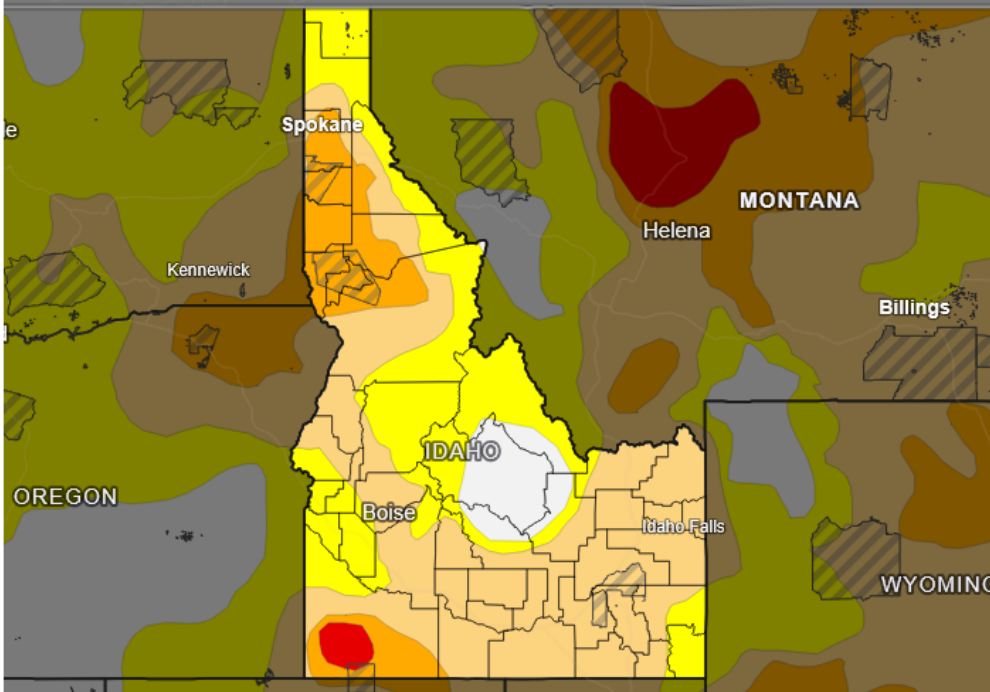
Valid: Mar-Apr-May 2026

Issued: February 19, 2026





U.S. Drought Monitor: Idaho



- Drought & Dryness Categories**
- D0 - Abnormally Dry
 - D1 - Moderate Drought
 - D2 - Severe Drought
 - D3 - Extreme Drought
 - D4 - Exceptional Drought
 - Total Area in Drought (D1-D4)

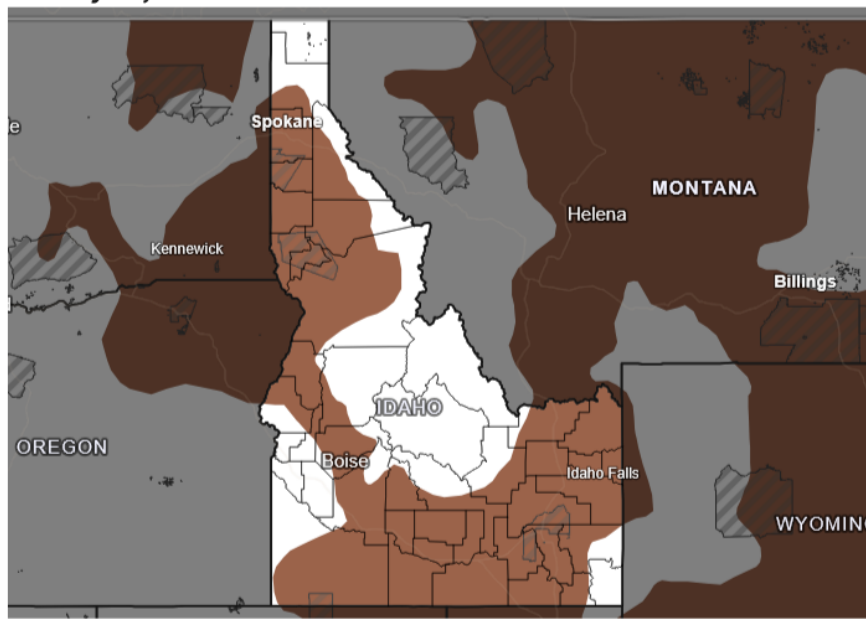
Tribal Nations
 Tribal Nation Boundaries

Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA
 Data Valid: 03/03/26

Drought.gov

Continued Drought

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for February 28-May 31, 2026



- % of ID**
- 30.3%**
 - 49.5%**
 - 11.9%**
 - 1.4%**
 - 0.0%**
 - 62.8%**



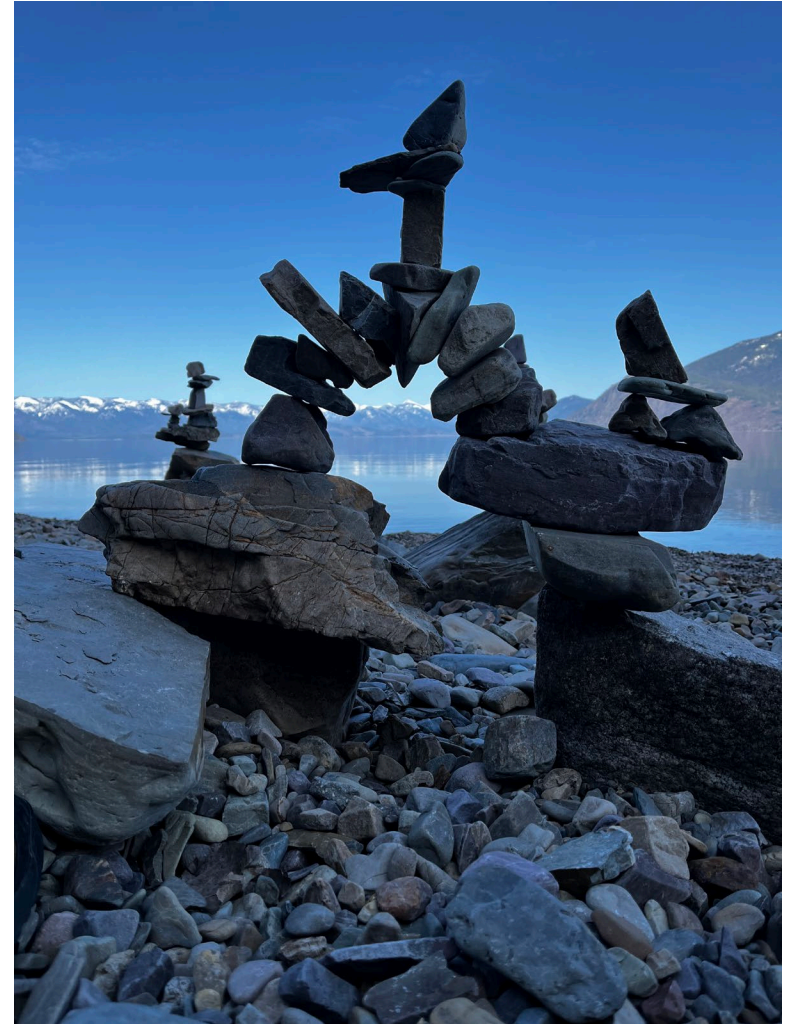
Tribal Nations
 Tribal Nation Boundaries

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center
 Last Updated: 02/28/26

Drought.gov

Summary

- **Warm conditions**
 - December Flooding
- **Below normal snowpack**
 - Extremely unlikely to reach normal peak snowpack
- **Near normal 2026 precipitation**
 - So far...
- **Below normal streamflow forecasts**
- **Drought conditions persist**





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