



<http://drought.mt.gov>

Map Key

- Continental Divide
- Drought Impact Type

Drought Status

March 2011

- Moist
- No Drought
- Slightly Dry
- Moderately Dry **(Drought Alert)**
- Severely Dry **(Severe Drought)**
- Extremely Dry **(Severe Drought)**

Drought Impact Types -

- A** = Agricultural - Soil Moisture, Range conditions
- H** = Hydrological - Water Supplies, Streamflow, Groundwater

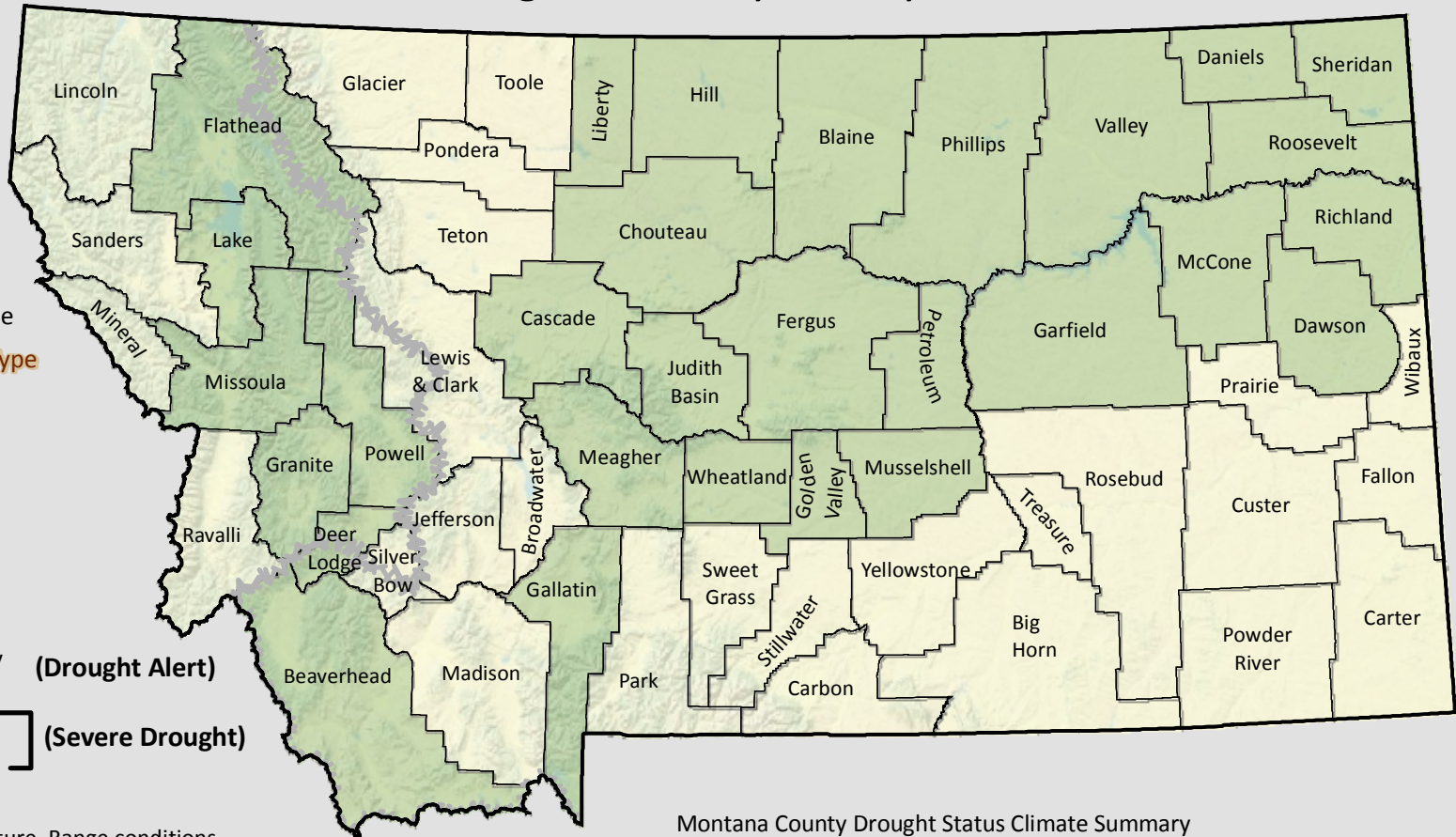
Drought Alert - Governor's Drought Advisory Committee strongly encourages local officials to convene local drought committees.

Severe Drought - Local officials should have local drought planning efforts underway or should reconvene the local drought committee at the earliest opportunity. For recommended responses, see the Montana Drought Plan



<http://nris.mt.gov/drought/>

Montana Drought Status by County - March 2011



Montana County Drought Status Climate Summary

With under two weeks of winter remaining and just over one month of mountain snowpack snow water content accumulation remaining for Montana, the snow water equivalent of 17 of the state's major river basins ranges from about 105- to 125-percent of the 30-year average 1971-2000. According to NRCS National Water and Climate Center, February was the fourth consecutive month of above average mountain precipitation. The NRCS March 10, 2011 Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) map indicates that all of the 54 river basins included are rated as Near Average to Extremely Wet with more than two-third of the total basins ranging from Slightly Wet to Extremely Wet. See: http://nris.mt.gov/Nrcs/Mar11/SWSI/swsi03_11.pdf

The March 10, 2011 El Nino/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Diagnostic Discussion from the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) concludes that the ongoing La Nina climate anomaly event dating from early fall 2010 is weakening which is typical for ENSO events which influence Montana climate from November through April. After spring the CPC climate model suite (Fig. 6) is inconclusive for ENSO trends. See: http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/ens0_advisory/ensodisc.pdf

The CPC one-month climate outlook for March issued February 28 calls for a 40- to 50- percent chance of colder than normal temperatures and above normal precipitation for Montana east of the Continental Divide, and a 50 percent or better chance for same west of the Divide. The March-April-May climate outlook calls for a 40 percent chance or better for cooler than average temperatures for most of the state, while precipitation is forecast to be within the normal range of climatology. A strong winter temperature anomaly ranging from 4- to 10- F. degrees colder than normal conditions has persisted since fall for the NE and Hi-Line regions of the state. See: <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/anomimage.pl?mon90dTdep.gif>

The March 9 U.S. Geological Survey water supply report reported that streamflow and reservoir contents statewide continued to range between normal to above normal for the month of February. Due to an above average mountain snowpack late in the historic accumulation period, the strong water supply outlook forecasted by NRCS, and the normal to well above normal surface water conditions as depicted on the SWSI map for reservoir storage, soil moisture and streamflow, the Drought Committee designated all counties to be within the No Drought category except for six counties west of the Divide and 22 counties east of the Divide designated as Moist as of March 1. Concerns at this time are for damage or loss from localized flooding from anomalously warm periods and survivability of newborn livestock in the eastern and northern regions of the state. See National Weather Service experimental newborn livestock tool: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/tfx/canl/canl.php>