



Montana Water Supply and Moisture Status by County - March 20, 2013

<http://drought.mt.gov>

Map Key

Drought Impact Type

Continental Divide

Moisture Status

March 2013

- Extremely Moist
- Moderately Moist
- Slightly Moist
- Near Average (Normal)
- Slightly Dry
- Moderately Dry (Drought Alert)
- 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.

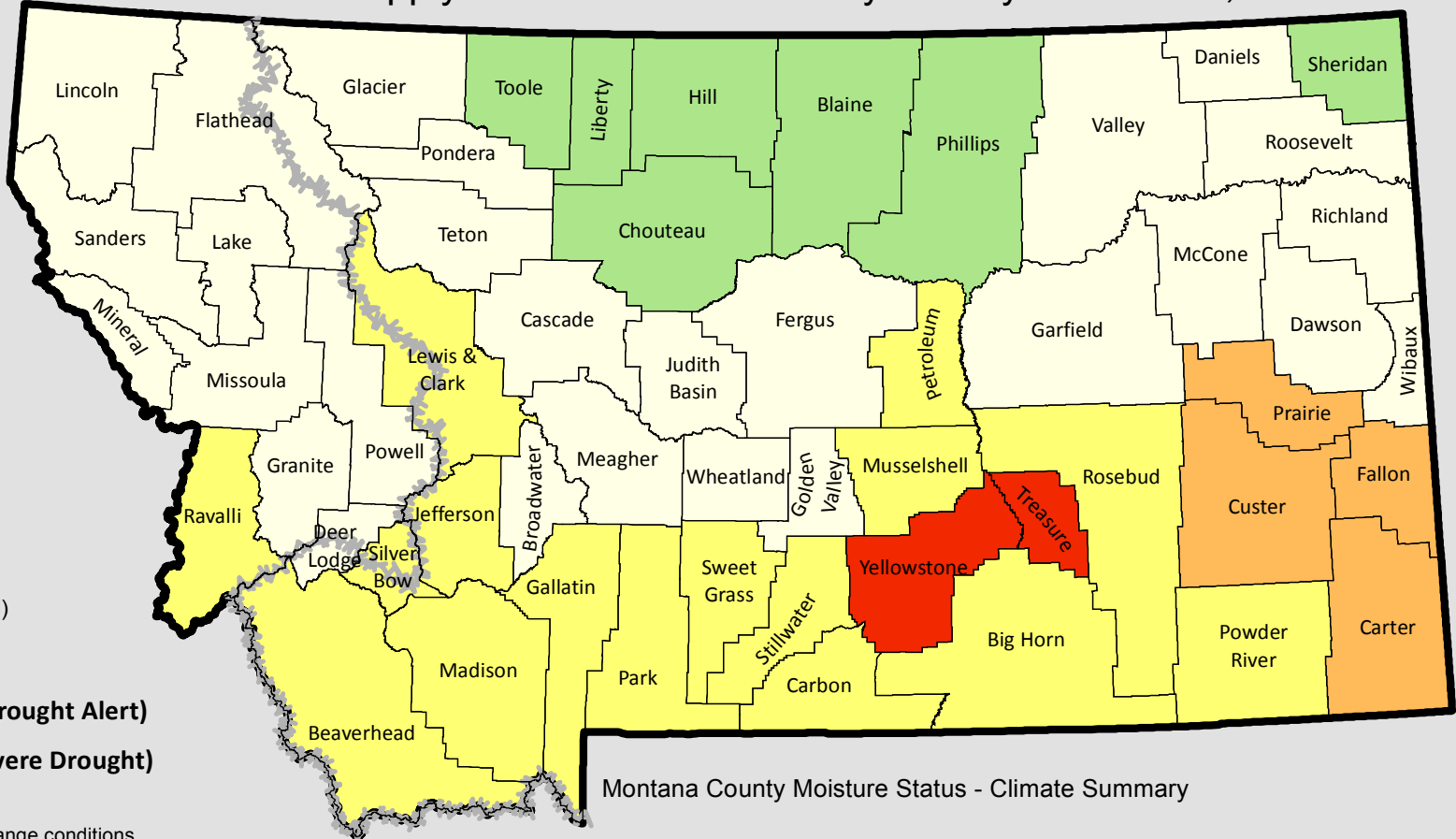
Severe Drought - Local officials

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 County Moisture Status - Climate Summary

According to the Great Falls National Weather Service January 2013 Weather/Precipitation Summary, "a weak ridge of high pressure aloft dominated the weather across much of Montana during January". The ridge of high pressure produced temperatures that averaged near to above normal across the state. Southwest valleys trapped cold air keeping daily lows as much as 10 F below normal. January was the tenth of the past twelve months with above normal temperatures.

Scattered areas of the state received above normal precipitation "with a large swath through the central region and the northwest below normal," making January the first month since October to average below normal precipitation statewide. The wettest areas were over portions of the west and mountainous areas." From January 11th to the 14th, a snowstorm brought blizzard conditions to the northeast with a foot or more of snowfall. High winds caused drifting as much as 9 feet high at Scobey. The western part of the state received generous amounts from this event as well. Southwest mountains and the Highwoods and Belt received as much as 15-inches of snow.

The NRCS Snow Survey reported that as of February 19, snow water content for the Columbia River Basin of Montana was 87 percent of normal; the Missouri River Basin was 90 percent, and the Yellowstone Basin 88 percent of average for the period of record 1981-2010. NOAA's Climate Prediction Center (CPC) February 19, 8- to 14-day (Feb 27- Mar 5) climate outlook calls for 40- to 50-percent chance for above normal temperatures and below average precipitation. The CPC February 7 ENSO Outlook calls for neutral conditions for the Northern Hemisphere through spring. ENSO-neutral means that there is little if any confidence for La Nina conditions (usually wetter and cooler winter for Montana) or El Nino conditions (drier and warmer for Montana). This does not mean that the state will not experience wide swings in temperature and precipitation (weather) however due to the wide range of natural variability of the state's climate.