



<http://drought.mt.gov>

Map Key

Continental Divide

Drought Impact Type

Moisture Status

February, 2012

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

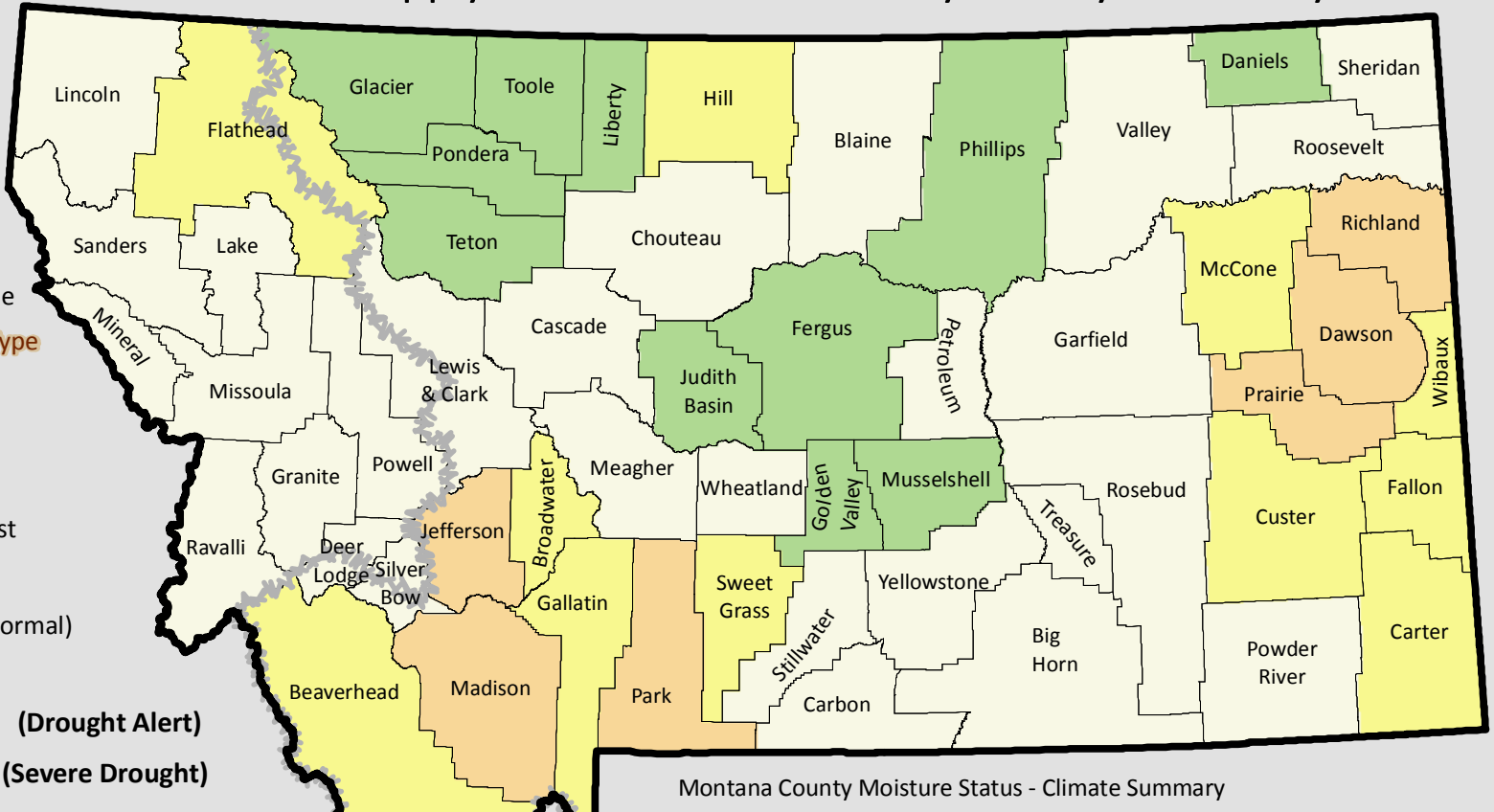
Drought Impact Types -

- 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

Montana Water Supply and Moisture Status by County - February 2012



Montana County Moisture Status - Climate Summary

The USDA Crop-Weather Report for the month ending February 29, 2012 reported that temperatures ranged from below zero F. to well into the 50s across the state with the daily average low temperature in the upper 20s to 30sF generally. Ft. Benton had the warmest temperature recorded for the month at 56F. West Glacier received 2.77 inches of precipitation for the month, the most of any reporting station in the state. The Montana Climate Atlas indicates that valley elevations across the state typically receive from 0.40 to 0.70 inches for February. The Montana Water Supply and Moisture Status Map by county indicates that there are 6 counties rated as Moderately Dry with 11 counties in each the Slightly Wet and Slightly Dry categories with the remaining counties classified as Near Average.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center (CPC) February 28th 8- to 14-day outlook calls for temperatures to be slightly below average and precipitation to range from slightly above to above average for the western two-thirds of the state. CPC's February 16 one-month forecast for March indicates that the western three-fourths of the state should experience equal chances for above or below temperatures and the northwest corner of the state slightly above average precipitation, with the remainder of the state equal chances for above or below precipitation.

As of February 28, the NRCS Snow, Water, and Climate Services Snotel network of mountain precipitation gauges indicated that the snow water equivalent (SWE) for the major river basins of the state ranges from 81 percent in the Gallatin to 132 percent for the Tongue River basin. The lowest SWEs are found in the headwaters of the Missouri River basin with the highest SWEs in the Lower Yellowstone River basin. The SWEs of Missouri Mainstem tributaries, which include the Sun, Teton, Marias, Smith, Musselshell, and Judith River basins range from 103- to 108 percent of the 30-year average 1971-2000.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center February 9, 2012 ENSO Update reported the ongoing La Nina Advisory as indicating a continuing "weak-to-moderate strength La Nina" over the remainder of this winter with "a return to ENSO-neutral conditions during the Northern Hemisphere spring, (March through May) which are likely to continue into the summer." Montana experiences cooler and wetter conditions during La Nina winters generally with little predictability before mid-September and out past May 1.



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