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# Sage Winds

National Weather Service - Boise, Idaho

[www.weather.gov/boise](http://www.weather.gov/boise)

SERVING NWS SKYWARN SPOTTERS,  
CO-OP OBSERVERS & COCORAHS OBSERVERS

## The State Of The Union? DROUGHT.

The strong ridge of high pressure that brought oppressive heat to the central U.S. in June, remained nearly static through the month of July. As a result, record heat persisted and active weather was confined to coastal areas and locations near the Canadian border. Subsequently, moisture-rich systems were essentially non-existent across the Heartland through the month of July.

The image below shows the most recent "U.S. Drought Monitor"; a national drought assessment tool created by combining various drought indices and known impacts. It is released by the

National Drought Mitigation Center (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) in partnership with the USDA and NOAA.

### Percentage of the nation currently impacted by drought:

**Moderate Drought or Worse: 52.7%**

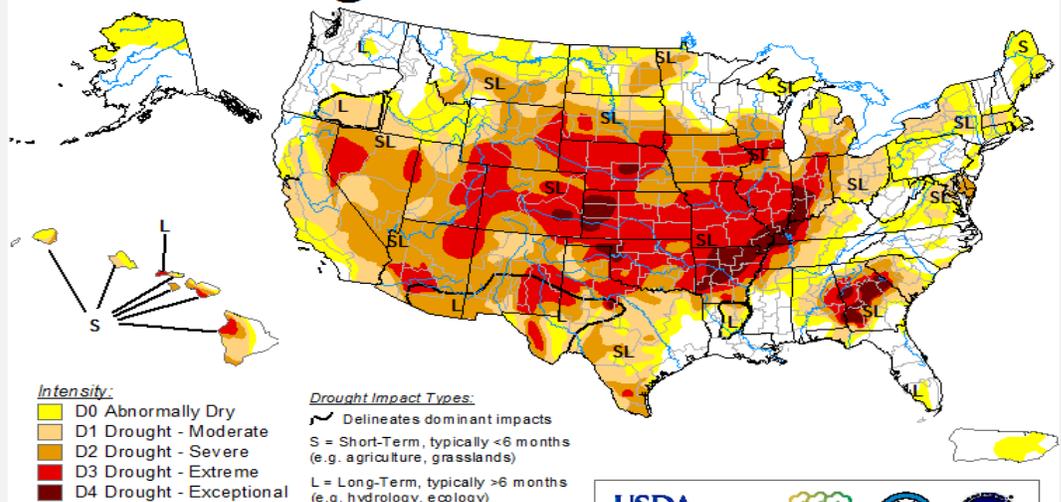
**Severe Drought or Worse: 38.1%**

**Extreme Drought or Worse: 18.6%**

**Exceptional Drought or Worse: 2.5%**

### U.S. Drought Monitor

July 31, 2012  
Valid 7 a.m. EDT



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Released Thursday, August 2, 2012

Author: Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center

24-HR SPOTTER HOTLINE: 1-800-882-1428

## Wireless Emergency Alerts

Before now, the National Emergency Alert System consisted primarily of television and radio alerts. More recently, however, FEMA and the FCC have teamed with major mobile carriers to add cellular devices to this warning system!

Now, when certain public safety alerts are issued, cell towers will relay alerts (in the form of free SMS messages) to mobile devices in the affected geographic area. For example, imagine you're an Idahoan on vacation in northwest Wisconsin. You're busy walleye fishing when the National Weather Service forecast office in Duluth, MN issues a Tornado Warning encom-

passing your current fishing hole. At the moment of Warning issuance, a Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) will automatically alert (ring and vibrate) and appear on your phone's main screen.

### What Types of Alerts Will Appear?

- Presidential Alerts
- AMBER Alerts
- Imminent Threat Alerts (mainly NWS Warnings)

### Any Caveats?

Yes. Not all cell carriers have opted to participate at this time. However, all *major carriers* are participating. As for cell phones—not all of them, especially older ones, are WEA capable.

For detailed WEA info:

<http://www.fema.gov/commercial-mobile-alert-system>

**FUN FACT:** The combined coverage of all major mobile carriers can reach about 97% of the United States population.

## Baker County Goes Supercellular!

On July 14th, upper level forcing, ahead of a low pressure system over central Oregon, combined with increased low-level moisture and elevated wind shear values to spur severe thunderstorms across eastern Oregon. One particular storm, a [supercell](#) that developed over central Oregon, tracked northeast across Baker County—wreaking havoc in Bridgeport, Durkee, and other locations on its path. WFO forecasters initially issued a Severe Thunderstorm Warning for this storm, but increasingly strong rotation eventually prompted a Tornado Warning. Storm impacts included localized flooding, hail up to marble-size, and extensive

crop damage from the hail. The image below is a hail drift from near Bridgeport, Oregon from this storm.



BOI.SPOTTER@NOAA.GOV

# A Rare Colorado Tornado



Known *not* for its size or strength, but for its elevation!

On July 28th, a tornado touched down on Colorado's Mount Evans—at an elevation of approximately **11,500 feet!** Unfortunately, it wasn't enough to break the standing record, which is held by a 2004 tornado touchdown at Sequoia National Park in California. Its elevation? **12,000 feet!** (Image at left courtesy of Sheila Gavin.)

## Weather In The News

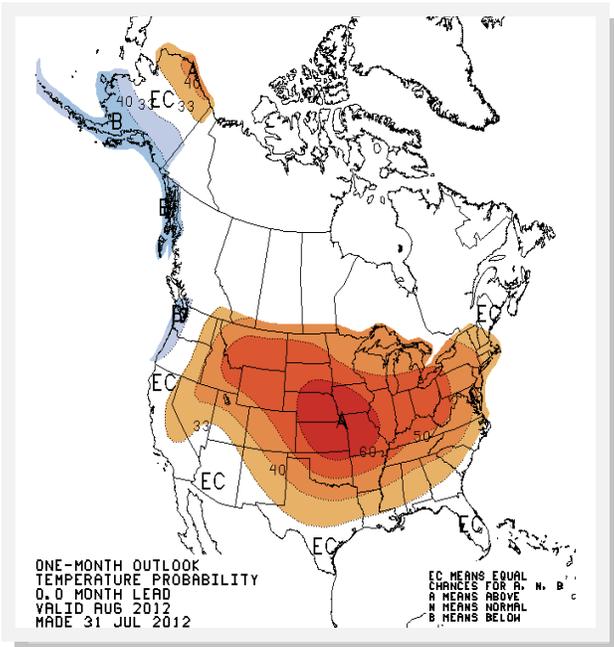
[“Widespread Drought Is Likely To Worsen” - New York Times](#)

[“Drought’s Footprint” - New York Times](#)

[“Tropical Storm Ernesto Forecast to Become Hurricane...” The Washington Post](#)

[Most Current Information on TS Ernesto —NWS' National Hurricane Center](#)

## August Outlook



Temperature Outlook  
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Precipitation Outlook  
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