Montana Weather Summary

May 1, 2002
next issuance: Wednesday, May 15.

Montana precipitation summary, April 15-30.

East of the Continental Divide, precipitation was highly variable during the period - well above normal in parts of the south to near zero precipitation in parts of the north. Most of the precipitation over the south fell as convective snow on the 15th and again on the 18th. The hardest hit areas received over 1.50 inches of water equivalent from these storms. Glacier and Toole counties in north central Montana received snow on the 23rd with localized areas above 0.20 water equivalent. Rain and snow showers spread over most of the region on the 29th and 30th with amounts less than a quarter inch.

West of the Continental Divide, there was very little precipitation. The most organized storm system during the period gave rain and snow to the area on the 17th, with amounts up to a quarter inch. For the remainder of the period, precipitation was scattered and light.

Historical Rank of Precipitation (inches)
for the Past Month and Water Year to Date

Location	April 1 - April 30	Rank as driest	October 1 - April 30	Rank as driest	Years on Record
Cut Bank	0.51	29th	1.20	3rd	83
Bozeman	1.16	26th	4.52	13th	50
Great Falls	0.42	17th	2.54	4th	109
Havre	0.18	10th	1.22	2nd	109
Helena	0.62	36th	2.47	4th	109
Missoula	0.70	17th	6.65	27th	50
Kalispell	0.66	31st	5.48	9th	101
Glasgow	0.73	51st	2.06	9th	98
Billings	2.09	38th	4.20	2nd	54
Miles City	1.07	34th	2.21	4th	65

For an automated version of this chart, updated daily, go to
http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/greatfalls/getproduct.pl?PCPNTOTALS

For a state map of % of normal water year precip (updated around the 7th of each month), go to
http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/tfx.php?TEXT+wateryear_percent.html

For the latest information on streamflows from the USGS, go to
http://mt.waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/sw

For the latest streamflow forecasts from the NRCS (updated around the 5th of each month), go to
http://nris.state.mt.us/nrcs/Apr02/04_02stfp.pdf

Montana precipitation forecast.

As of April 30, the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) forecasts above normal precipitation across Montana for the period May 8th through the 14th. The outlook for May, and for May through July, issued by the CPC on April 18th, calls for equal chances of above and below normal precipitation. Graphics and text relating to these outlooks can be found at
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/multi_season/13_seasonal_outlooks/color/seasonal_forecast.html

El Niño may be developing in the equatorial waters off of South America. A moderate to strong El Niño usually causes a drier than normal period in Montana, especially during the Winter. For the latest details on El Niño, go to http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory

The Montana Drought Summary is produced by the National Weather Service Office in Great Falls, Montana, and is updated twice a month. This document is posted on the internet at http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/drought_semi.pdf. Any further inquiries about the drought can be directed to WFO Great Falls at (406) 453-2081. Many more links can be found on the Drought Information Page of the NWS Great Falls web site at
http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/tfx.php?HTML+drought.