

Seasonal Climate Forecast Verification

January – March 2026

Issued: April 11, 2026

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ODF Team: Julie Vondrachek; Kristin Cody; Gary Votaw; Sherri Pugh

Format and Purpose:

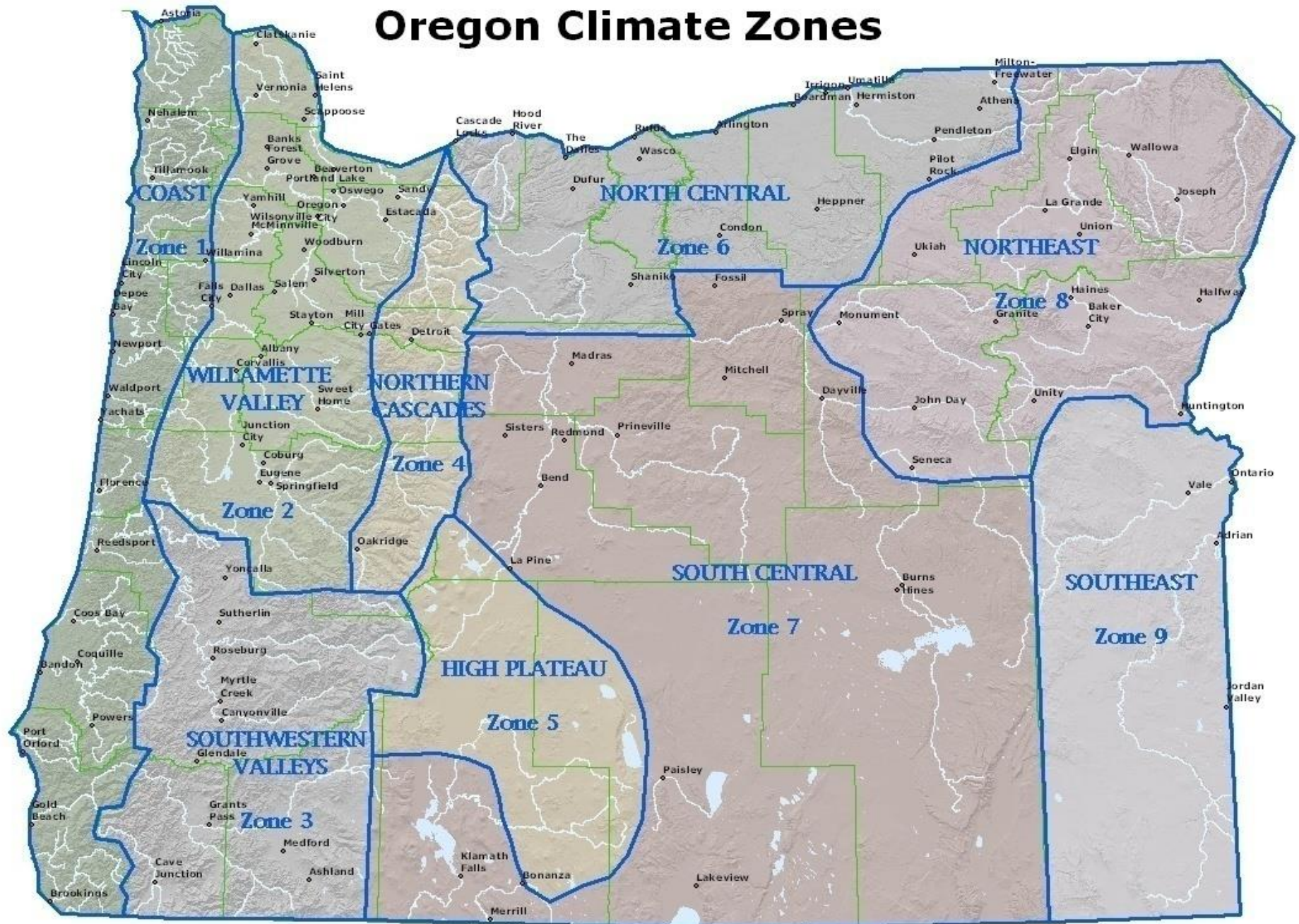
- A side-by-side comparison of the “Seasonal Climate Forecast” vs. what (Actually Occurred) is done for both the 1-month & 3-month forecasts.*
- The accuracy of each forecast is reviewed, and the need for analog-year updates is examined.
- This is part of an ongoing assessment of the utility of this forecast method.**

**Utilizes 1991-2020 long-term averages*

**See “Forecasting Methods...” at:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/natural-resources/pages/weather.aspx>

Oregon Climate Zones

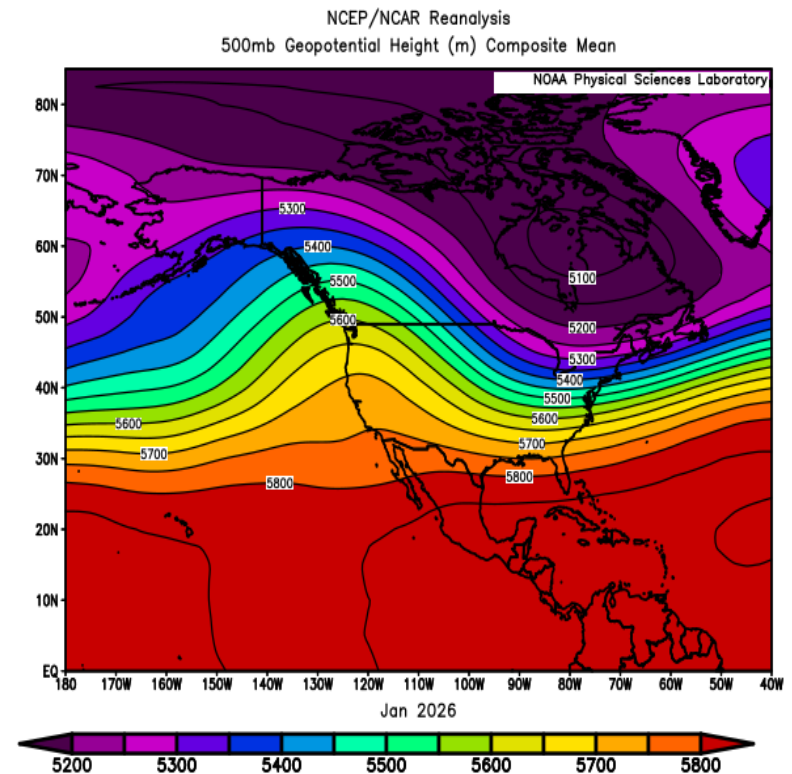
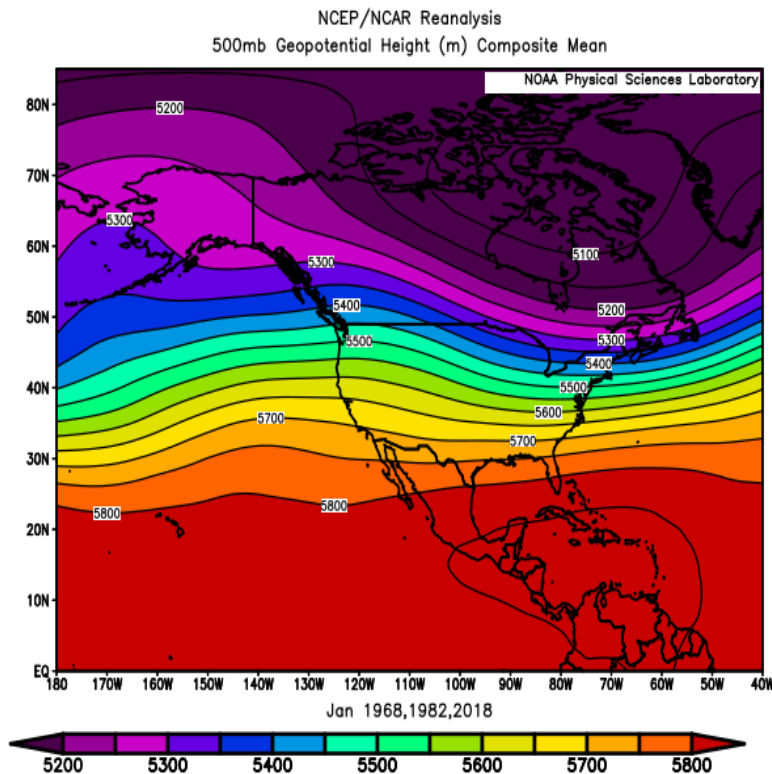


January 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/(Actual)

Forecast Upper-Air Pattern

Actual Upper-Air Pattern



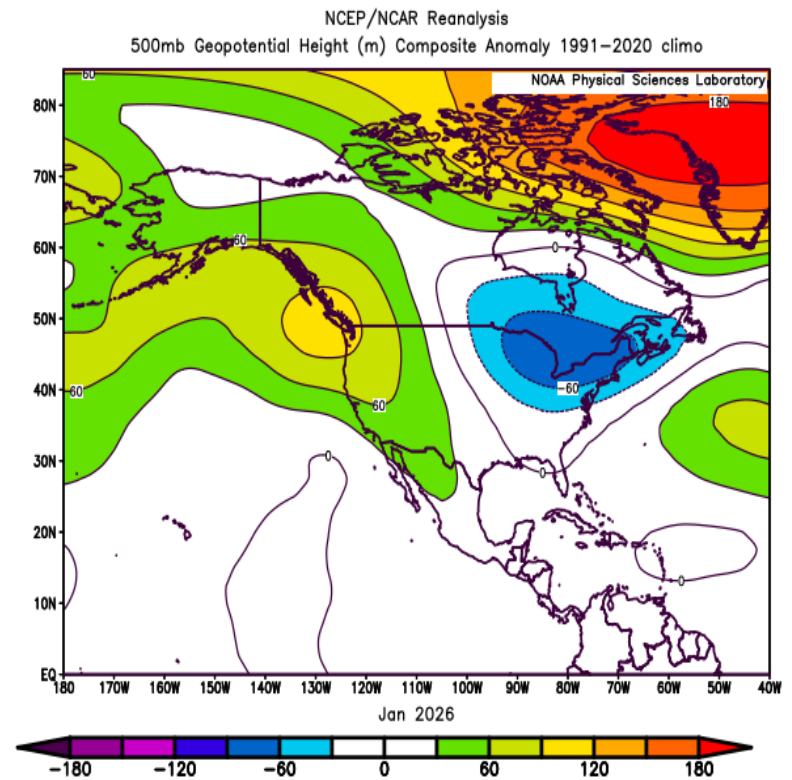
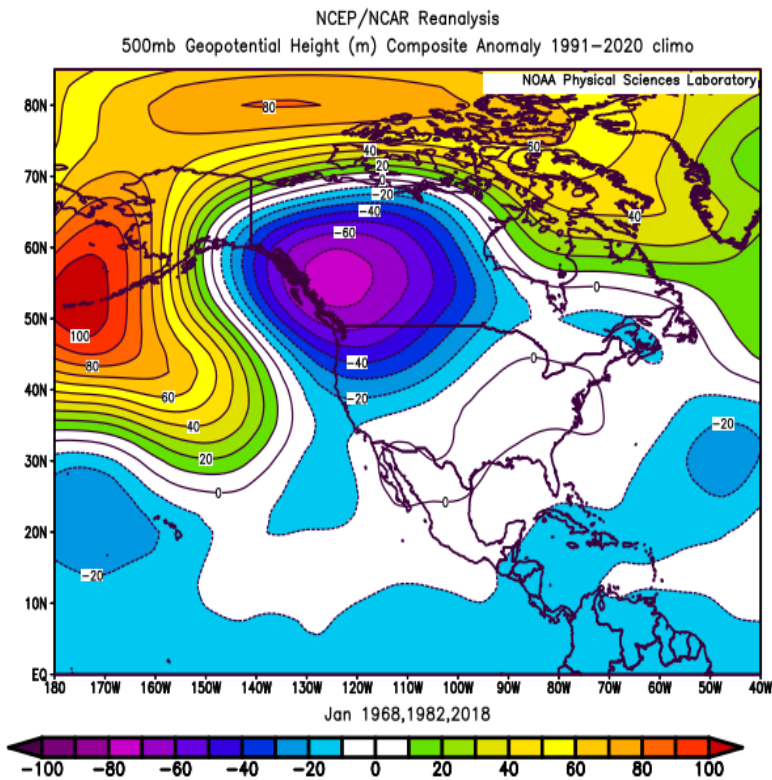
- 1968 & 1982 analogs had anomalous ridging in the western and central Gulf of Alaska respectively. 2018 had anomalous ridging over the Rockies.
- Actual ridging was strong and centered over the west coast. *A “forecast miss.”*

January 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/(Actual)

Forecast Upper-Air Anomalies

Actual Upper-Air Anomalies

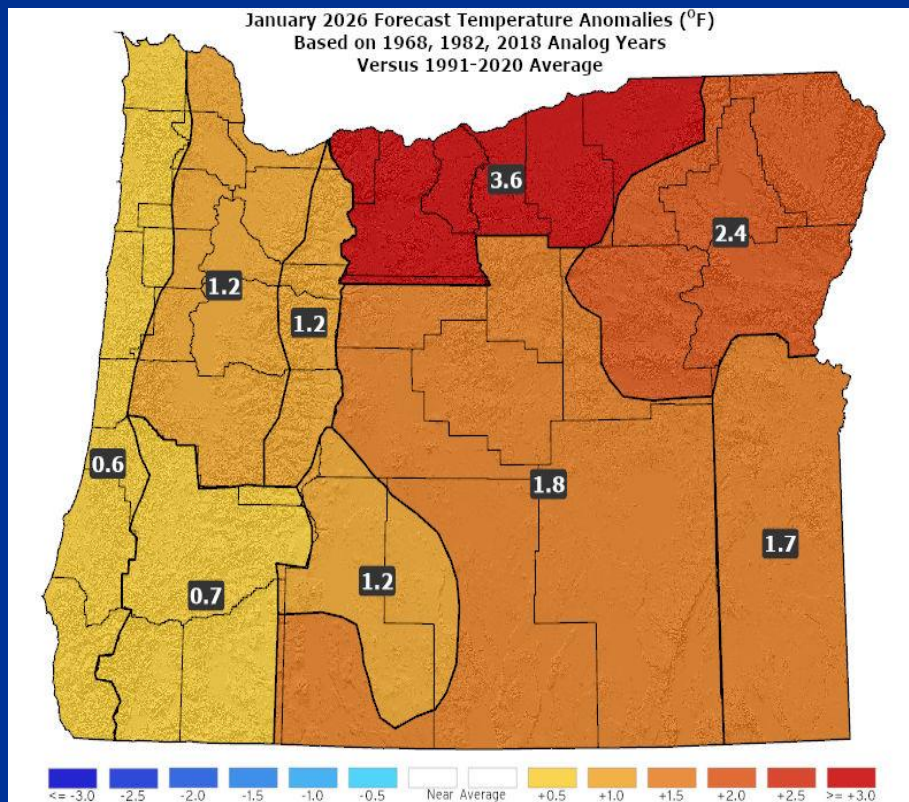


- Analog average (left) had anomalous troughing over Oregon. Strong anomalous ridging was observed (right). A “forecast miss.”
- The best analog match was 2018, which also had anomalous ridging over Oregon.

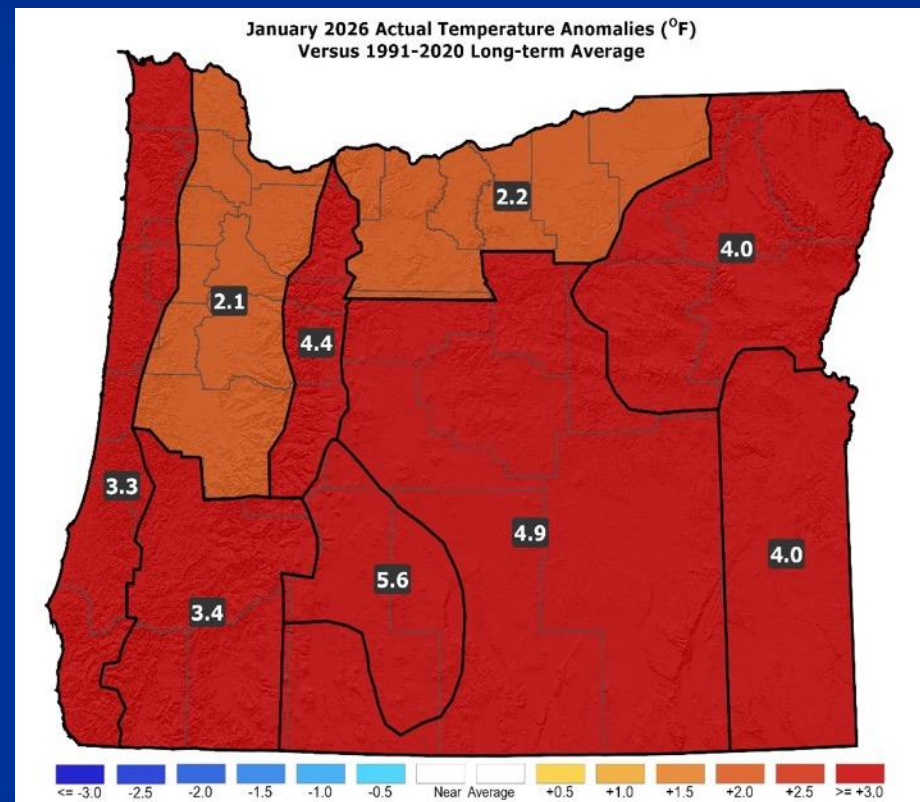
January 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/(Actual)

Forecast Temperatures



Actual Temperatures



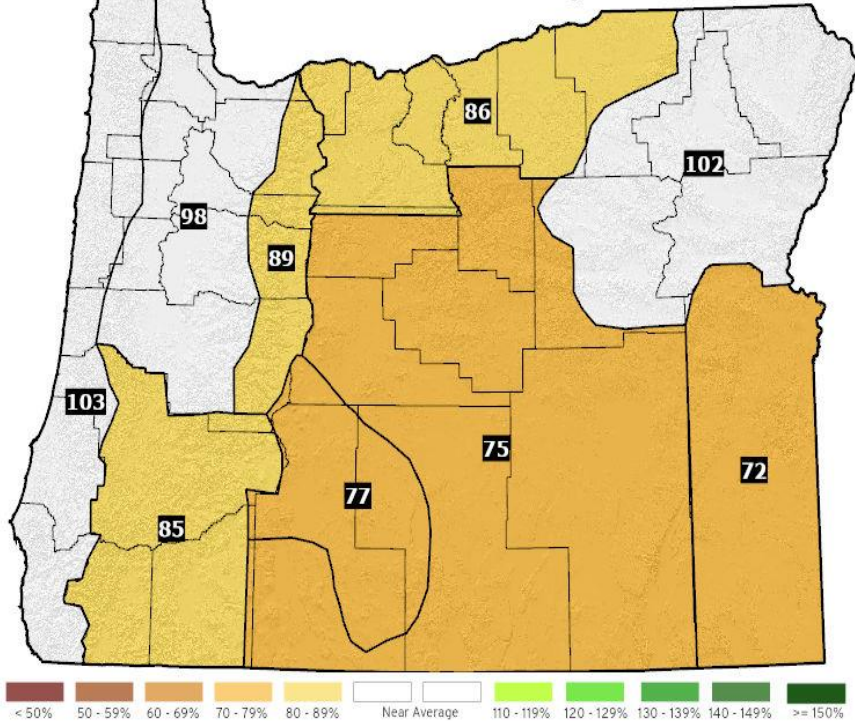
Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

January 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/(Actual)

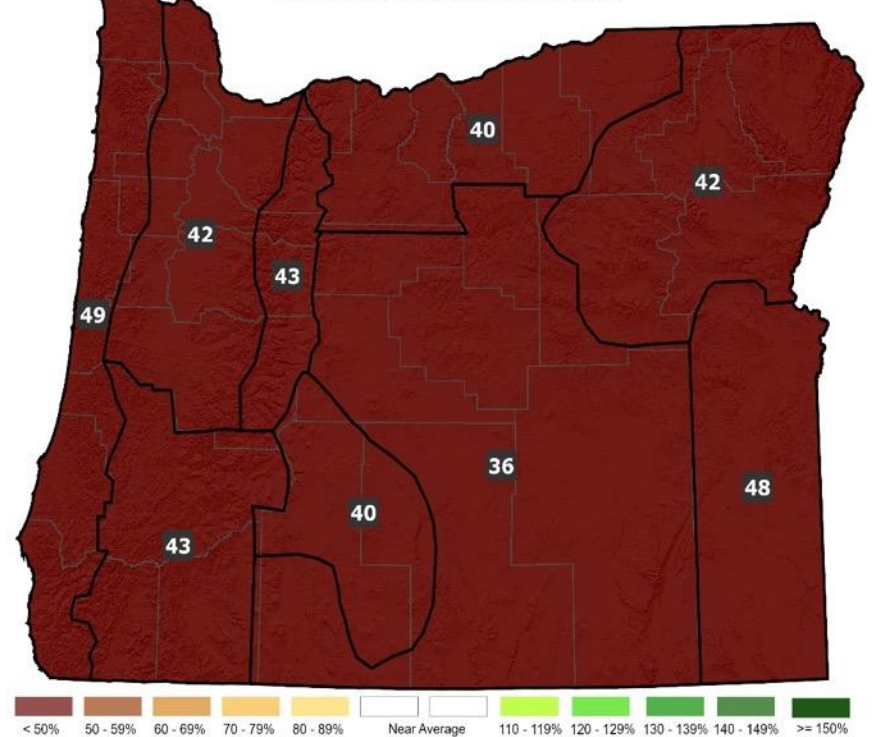
Forecast Precipitation

January 2026 Forecast Precipitation Anomalies (% of Avg.)
Based on 1968; 1982; 2018 Analog Years
Versus 1991-2020 Average



Actual Precipitation

January 2026 Actual Precipitation Anomalies (% of Avg.)
Versus 1991-2020 Long-term Average

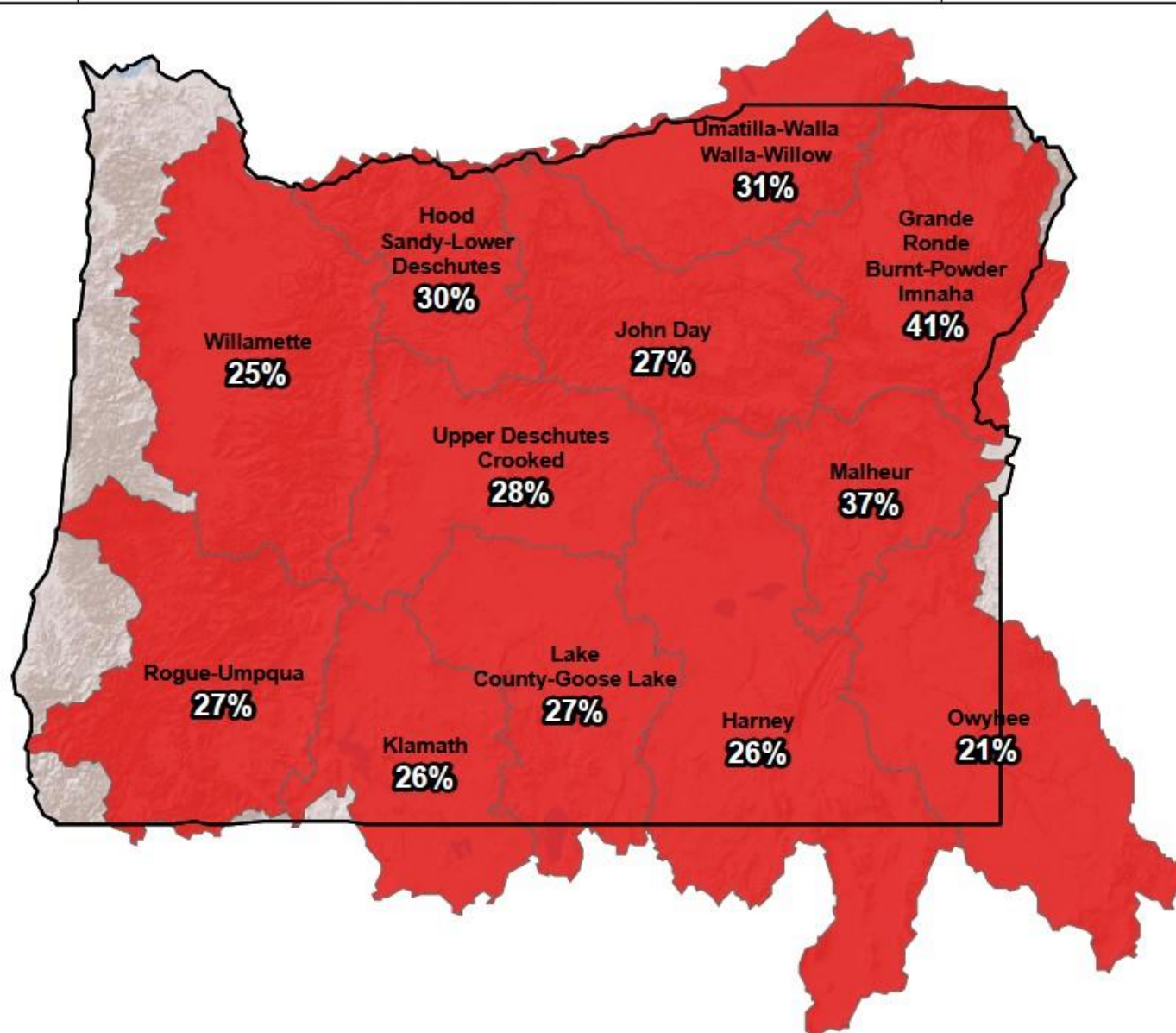


Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

January 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025) / (Actual)

- 2018 (*which turned out being best analog match*) was “blow-torch” warm and skewed the analog average warm, despite 1968 & 1982 being cool. (January 2026 temperatures looked remarkably like 2018...well above average but not record warm.)
A “*partial forecast hit.*”
- Near or below-average precipitation. 1968 & 2018 had below-average mountain snow. 1982 had the reverse. (January 2026 had well-below-average precipitation and mountain snow.) A “*partial forecast hit.*”

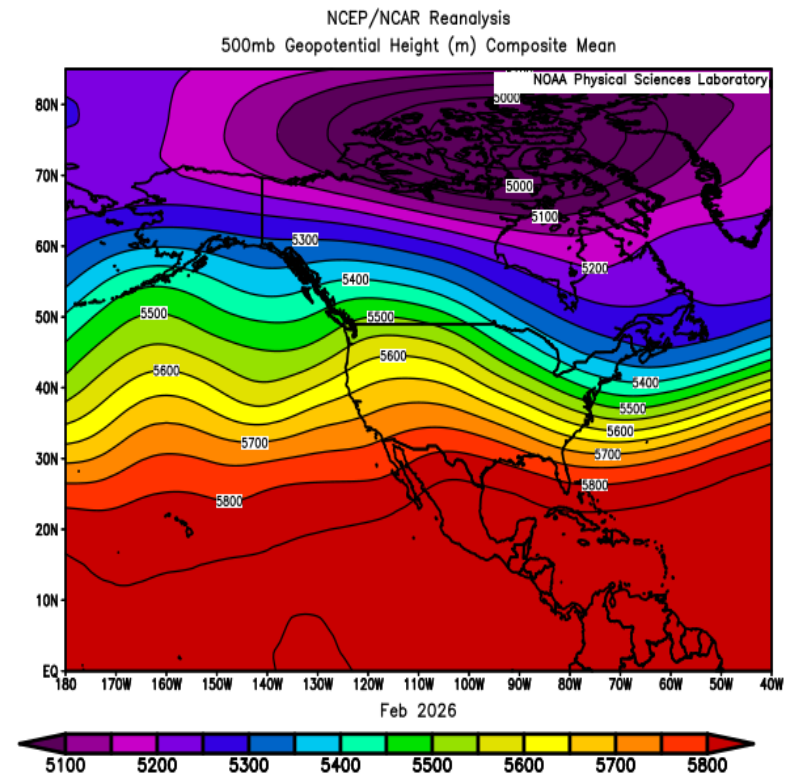
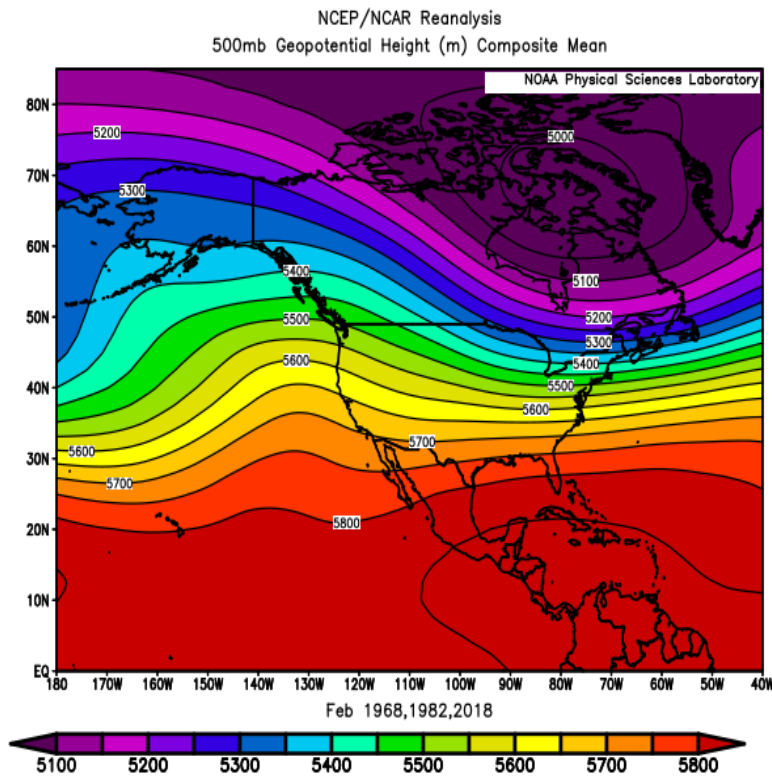


February 2026

(Forecast Issued January 15, 2026)/ (Actual)

Forecast Upper-Air Pattern

Actual Upper-Air Pattern



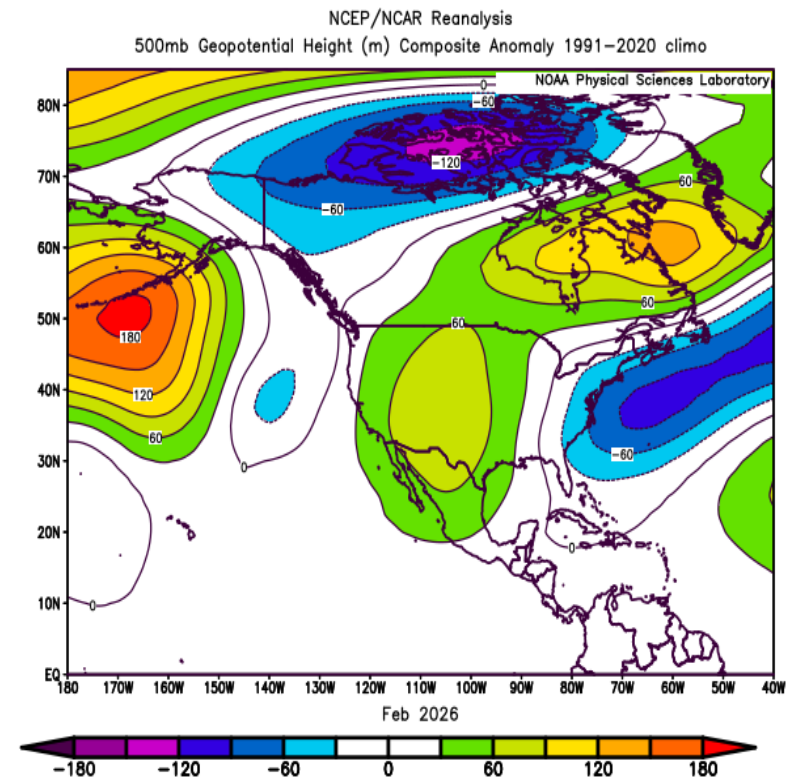
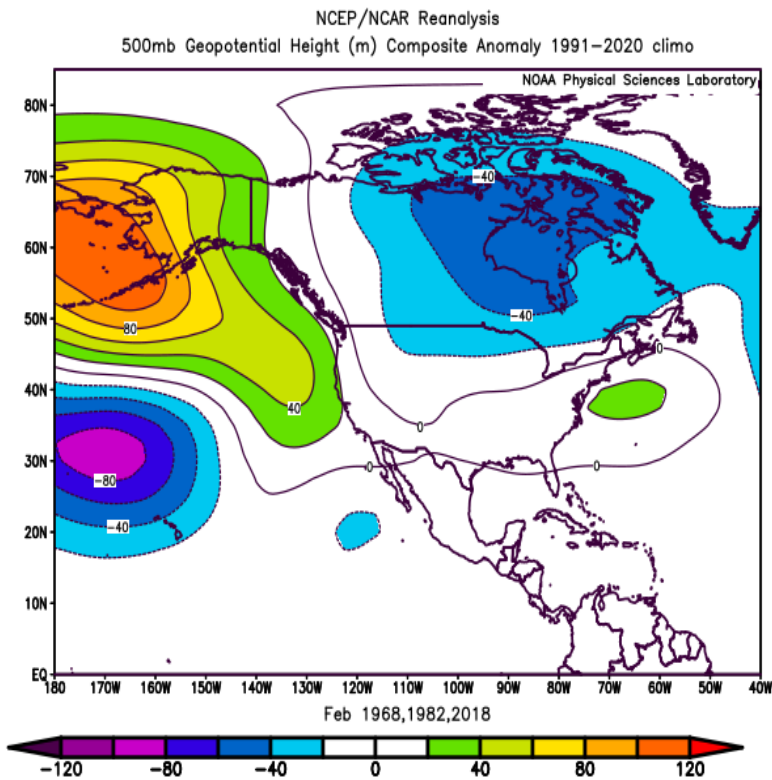
- The forecast (left) and the observed pattern (right) both showed mean ridging near the west coast. A “partial forecast hit.”

February 2026

(Forecast Issued January 15, 2026)/ (Actual)

Forecast Upper-Air Anomalies

Actual Upper-Air Anomalies

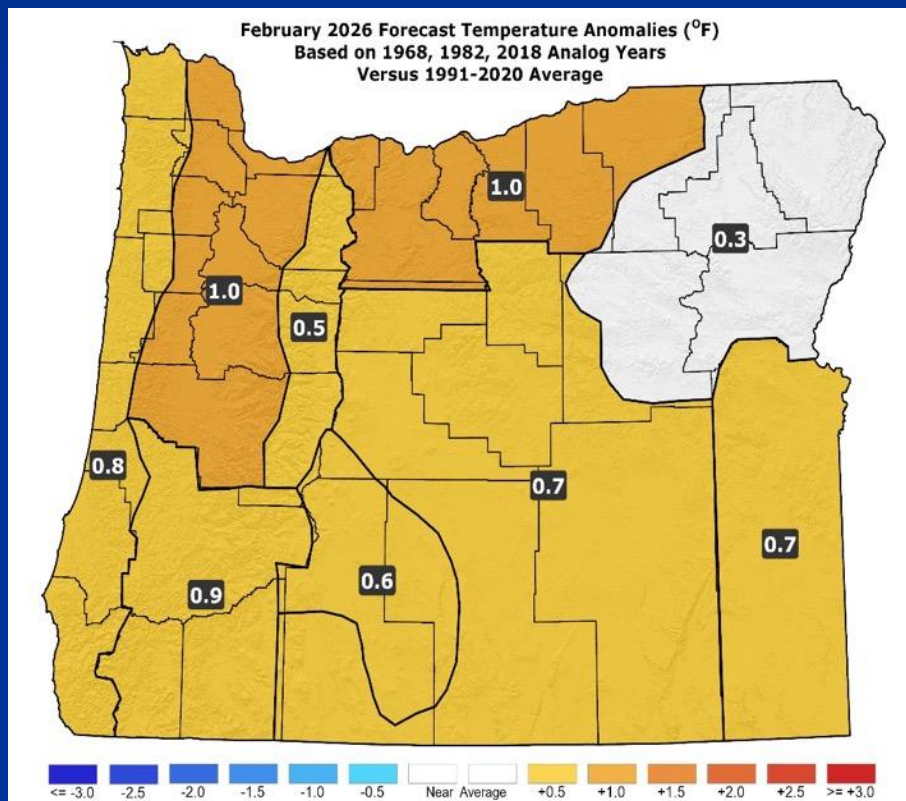


- Upper-air anomalies were minimal for both the analog composite (left), which had widely varying individual solutions, and the observed pattern (right). The latter had more ridging over the Rockies... *Only a “partial forecast hit.”*

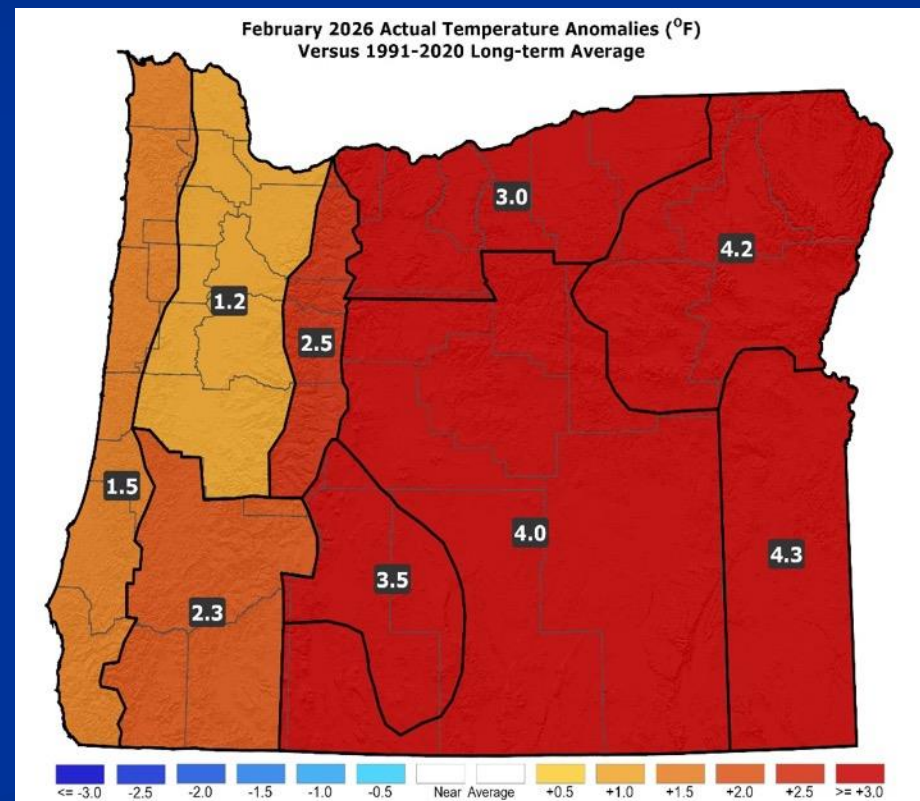
February 2026

(Forecast Issued January 15, 2026)/(Actual)

Forecast Temperatures



Actual Temperatures

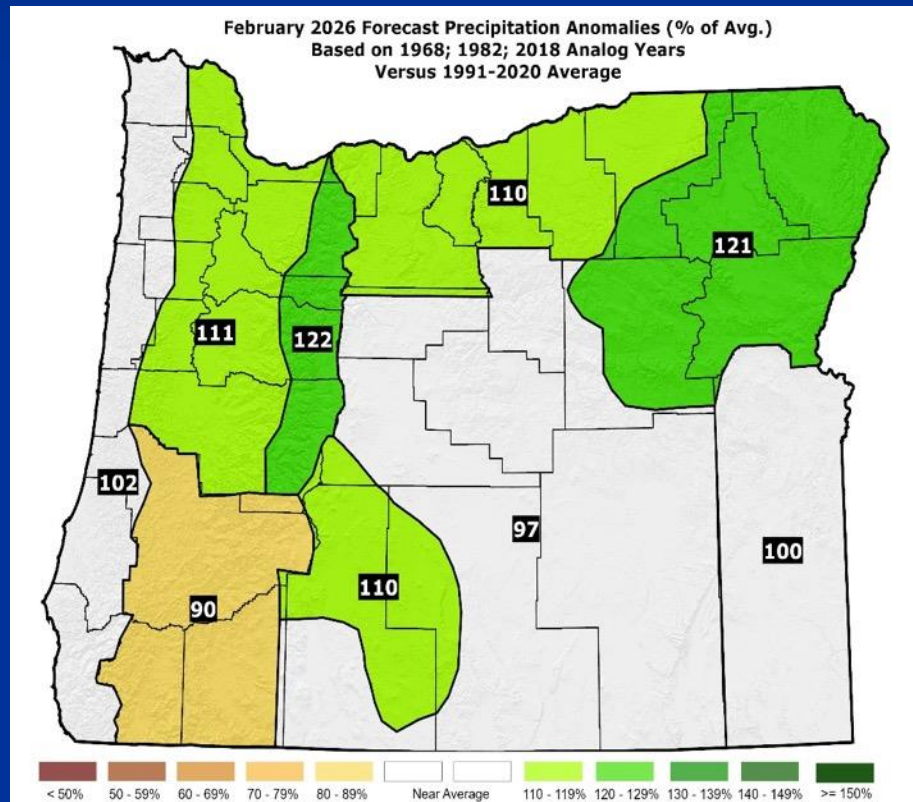


Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

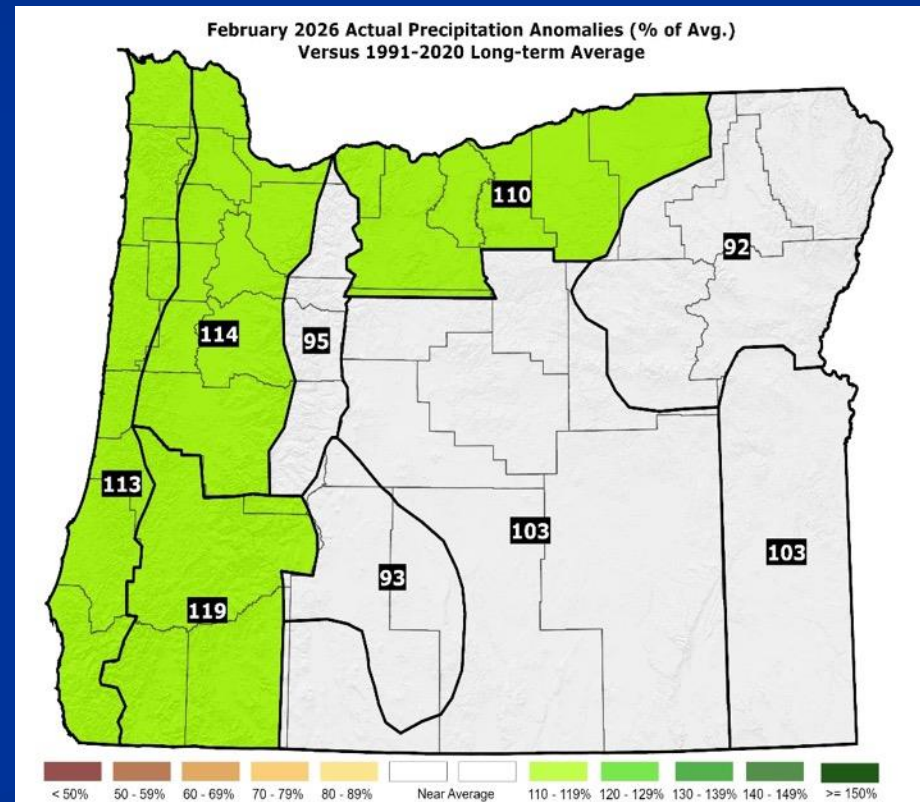
February 2026

(Forecast Issued January 15, 2026)/(Actual)

Forecast Precipitation



Actual Precipitation

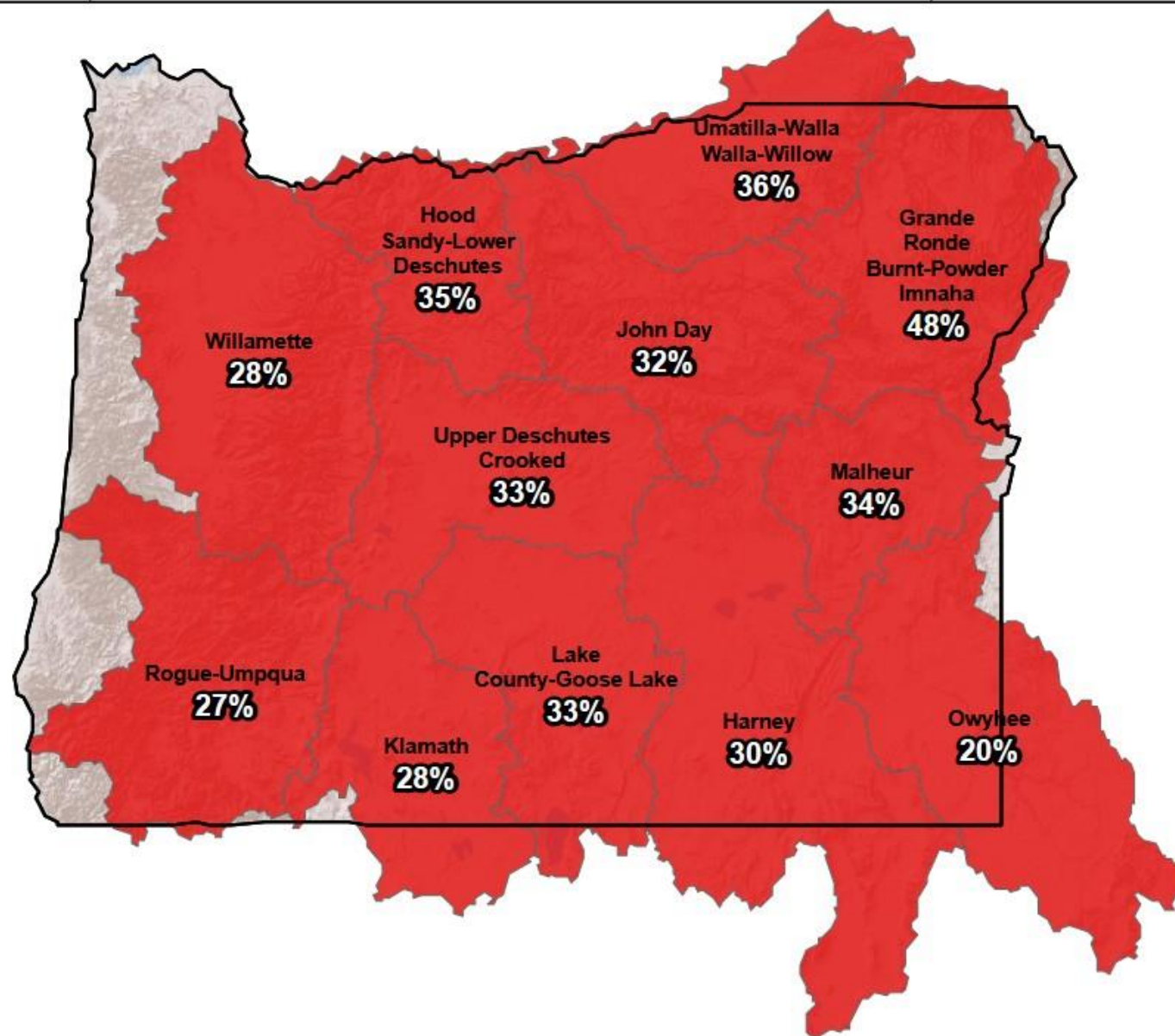


Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

February 2026

(Forecast Issued January 15, 2026)/ (Actual)

- Analogs had diverse weather. 1968 was very mild with anomalous ridging over Oregon. 1982 & 2018 had more active and cooler weather. Their blend called for slightly warmer than average conditions. (Strong ridging early in the month transitioned to a cool mid-month trough, then a period of mild SW flow, before a ridge returned. Temperatures were quite mild.) A “partial forecast hit.”
- 1968 & 1982 were wetter than average...2018 was drier but had significant valley snow. (The analog-blend forecast for precipitation was solid. There were some areas with brief western valley snow at mid-month. Mountain snowpacks remained well below normal.) A “partial forecast hit.”



Percent NRCS
1991-2020 Median

- ≥ 150%
- 130% to 149%
- 110% to 129%
- 90% to 109%
- 70% to 89%
- 50% to 69%
- < 50%
- No basin value

Watershed Boundaries

— State Watersheds

Political Boundaries

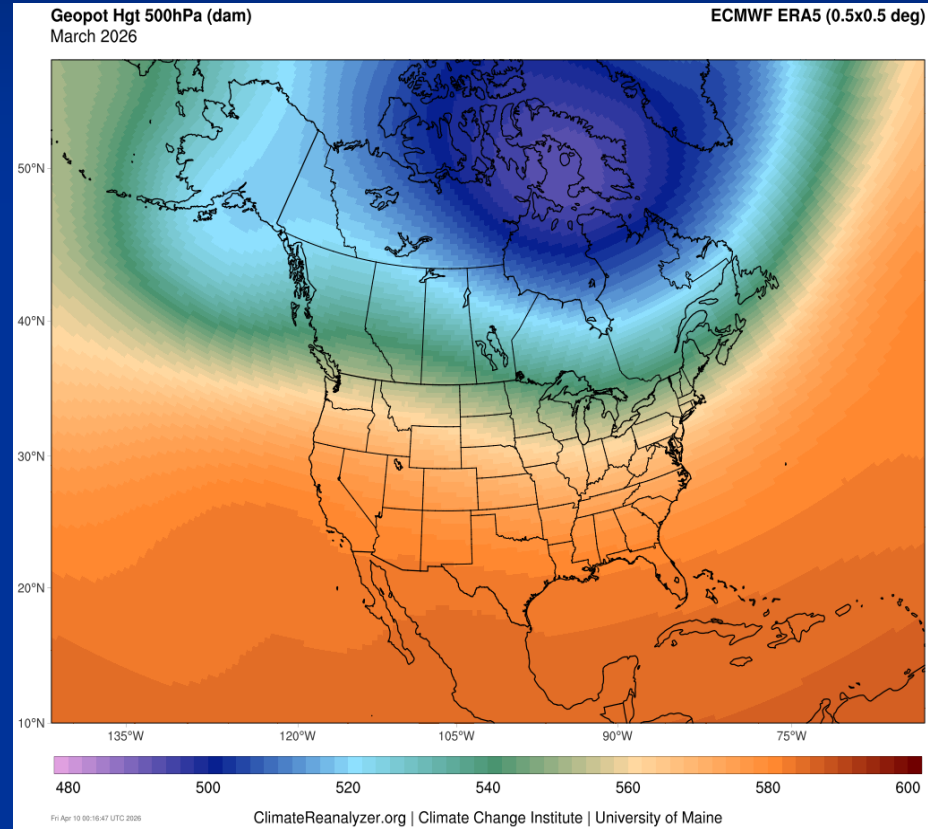
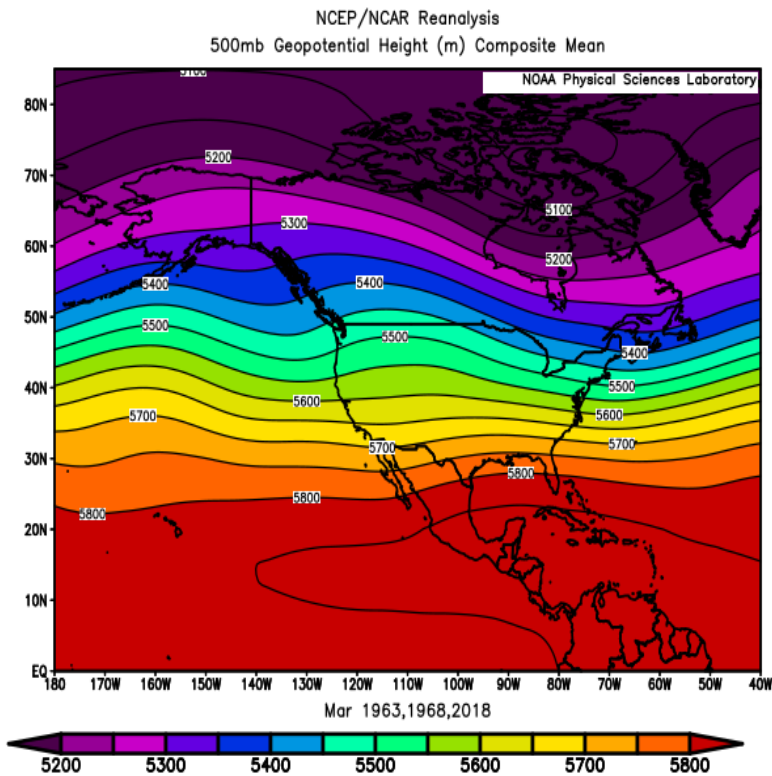
— State Boundaries

March 2026

(Forecast Issued February 20, 2026) / (Actual)

Forecast Upper-Air Pattern

Actual Upper-Air Pattern



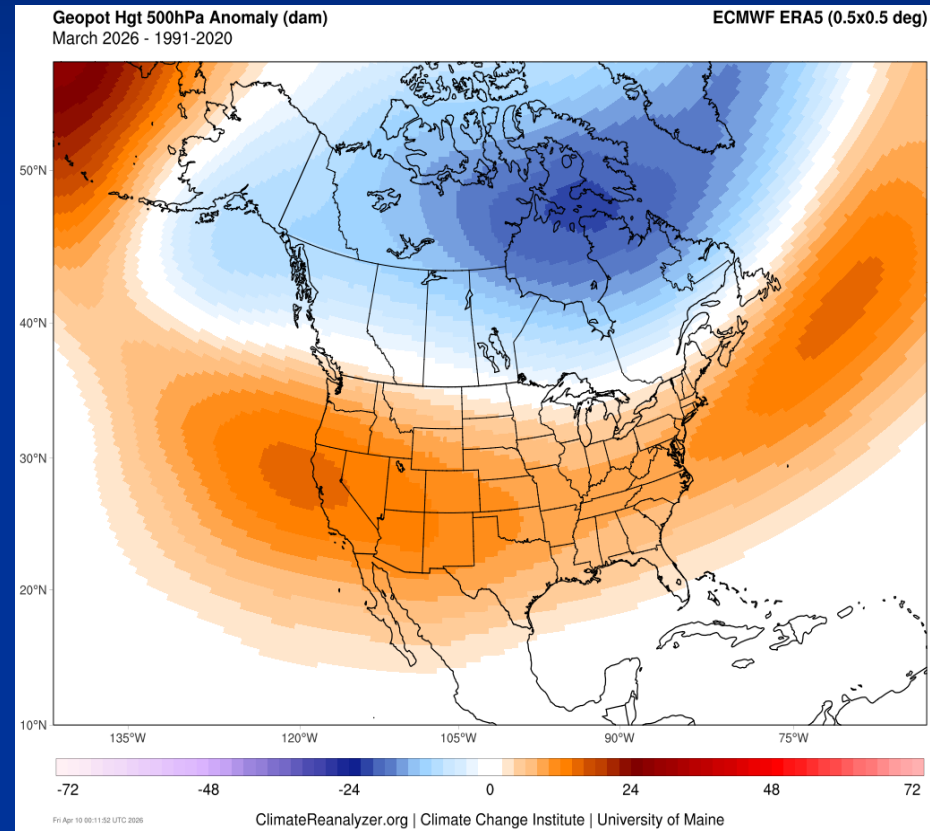
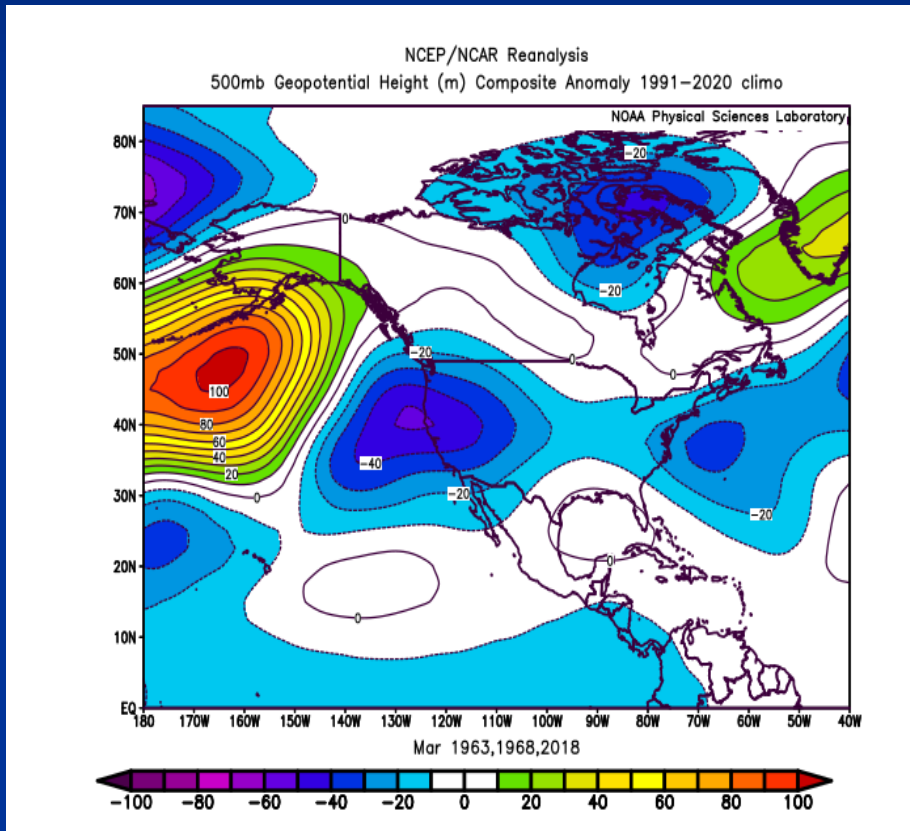
- Analogs (left) had some anomalous troughing with WSW flow aloft over Oregon. Oregon did have prevailing WSW flow aloft (right) but with more ridging than indicated by the analogs. A “partial forecast hit.”

March 2026

(Forecast Issued February 20, 2026) / (Actual)

Forecast Upper-Air Anomalies

Actual Upper-Air Anomalies

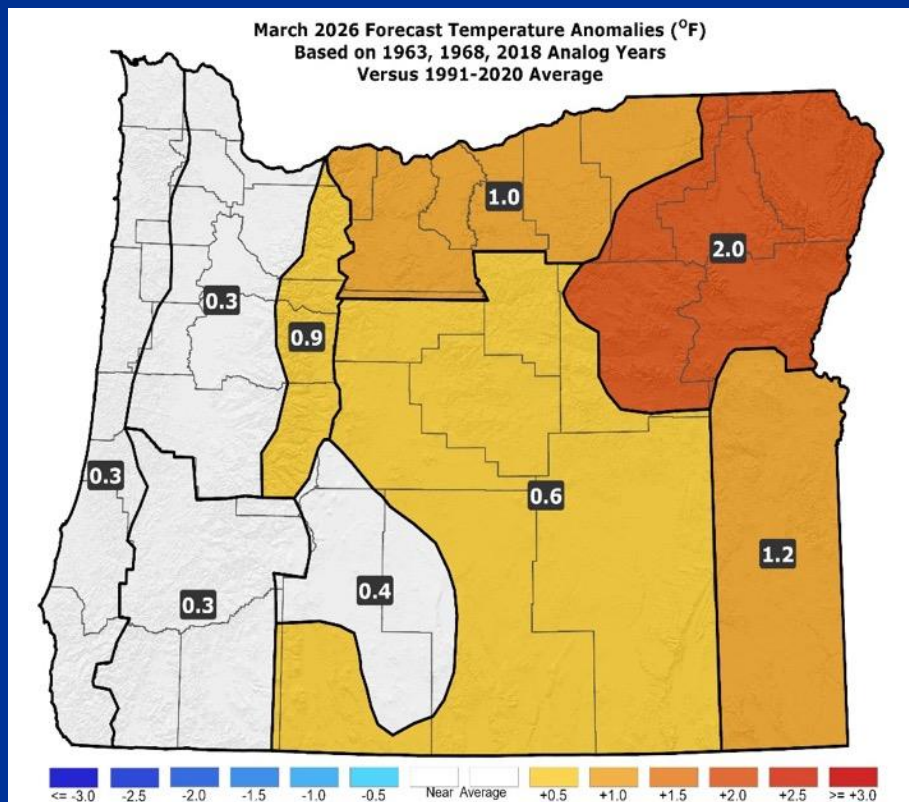


- The analog forecast (left) showed anomalous troughing over Oregon, which was in stark contrast to the anomalous ridging observed (right). *A big “forecast miss.”*

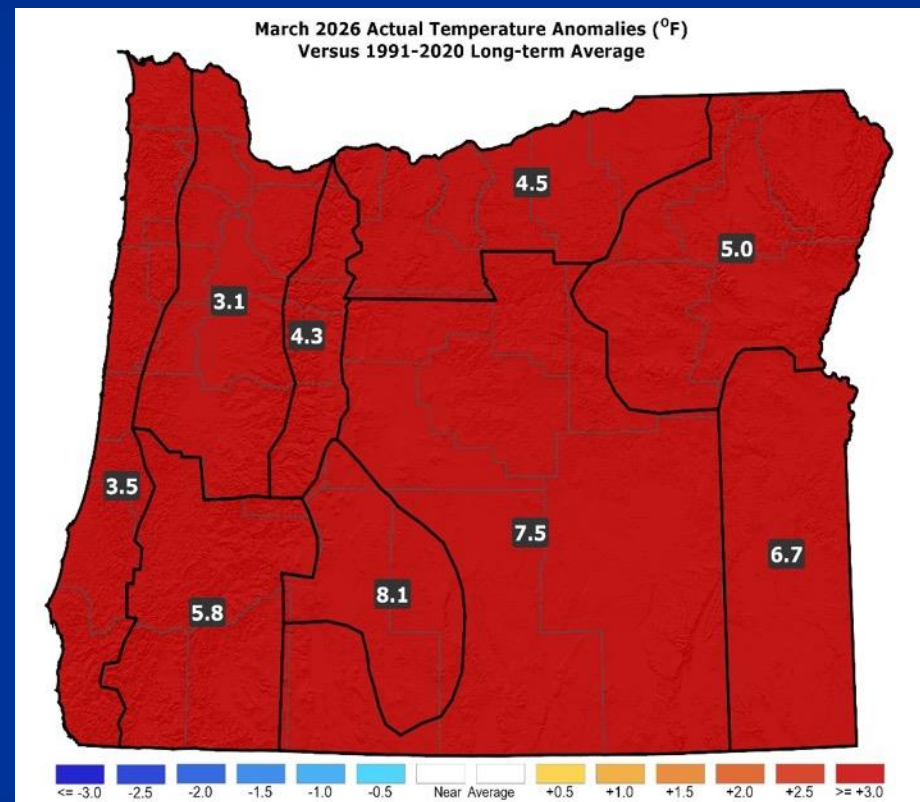
March 2026

(Forecast Issued February 20, 2026) / (Actual)

Forecast Temperatures



Actual Temperatures

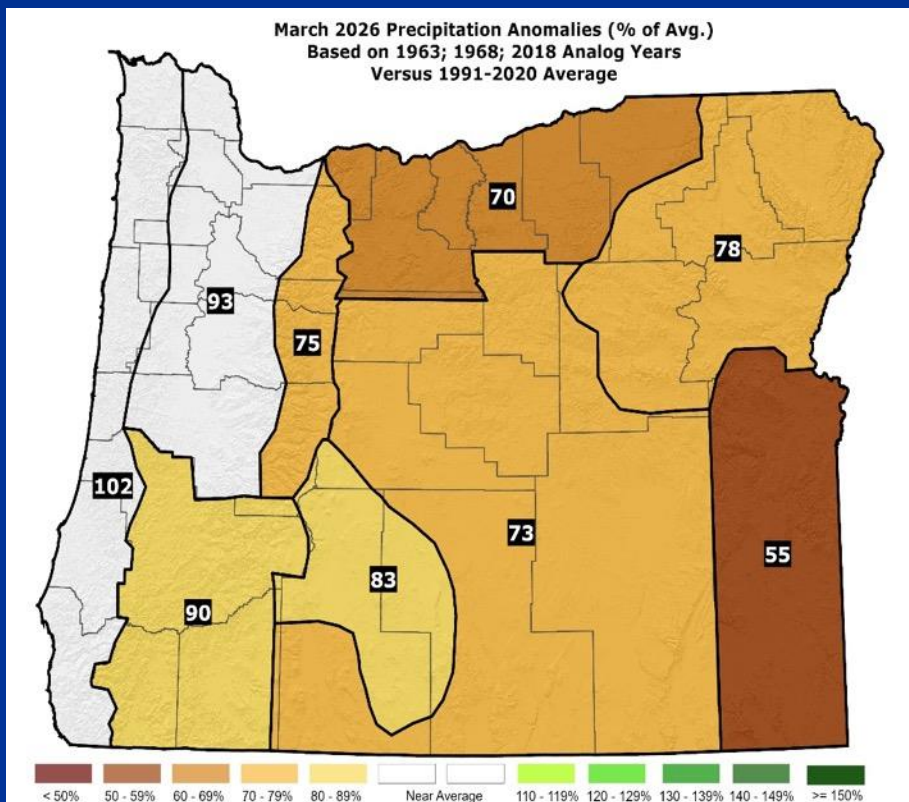


Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

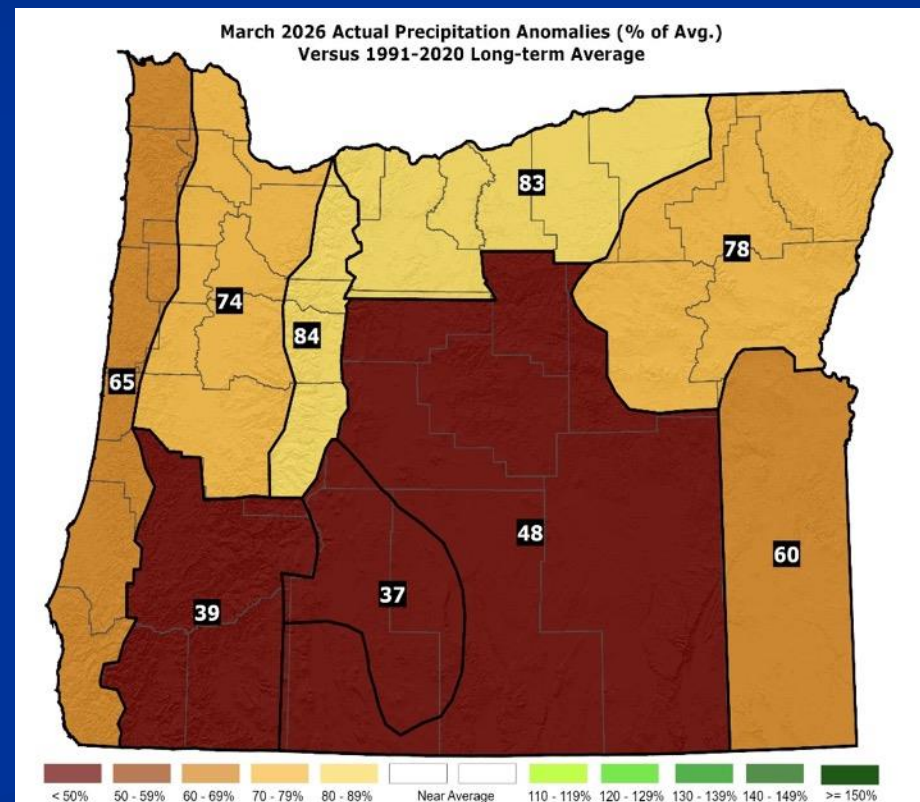
March 2026

(Forecast Issued February 20, 2026) / (Actual)

Forecast Precipitation



Actual Precipitation

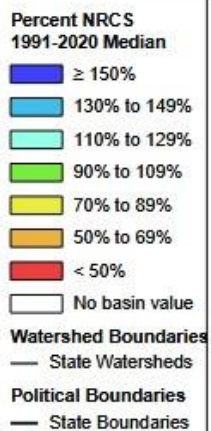
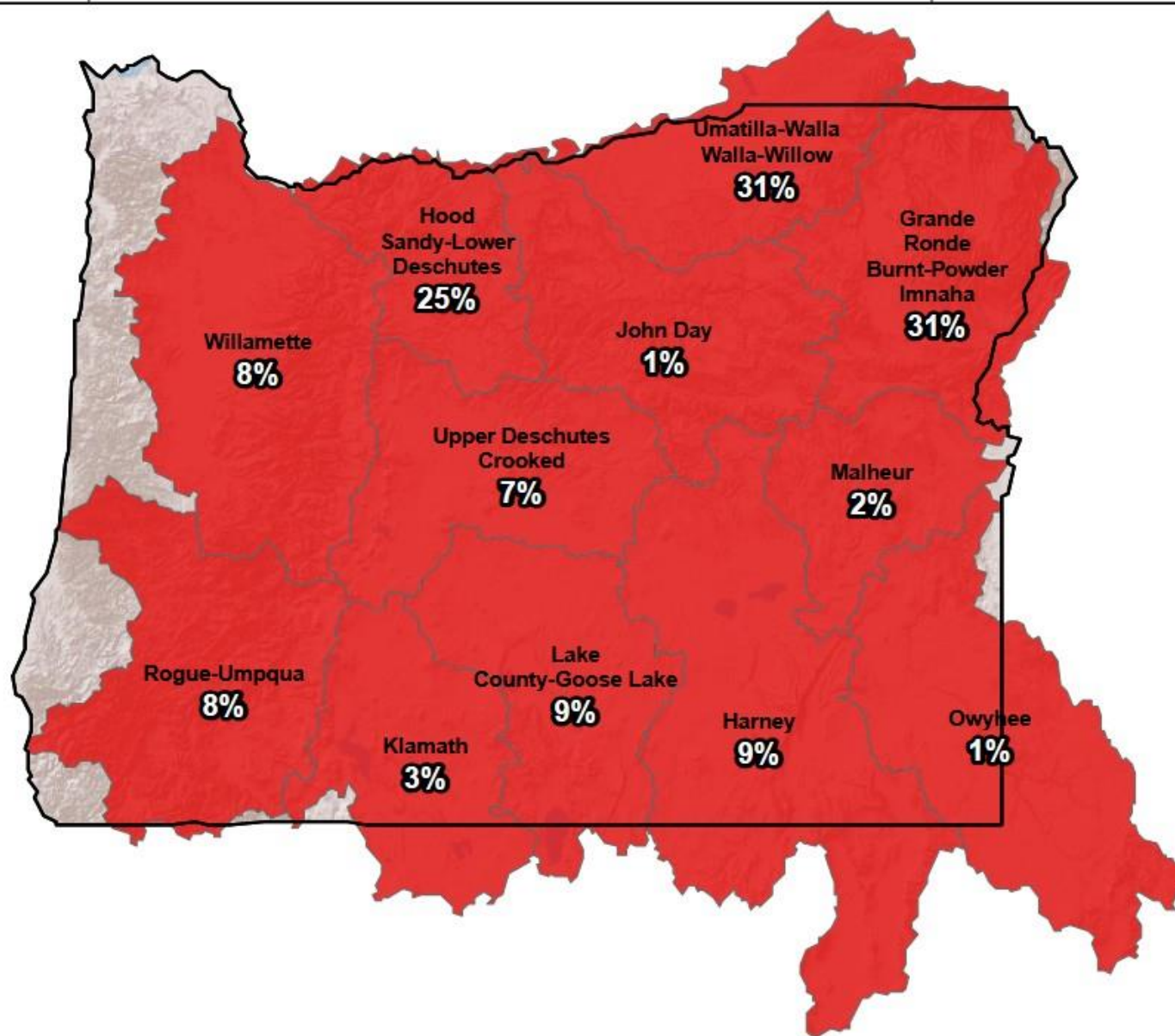


Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

March 2026

(Forecast Issued February 20, 2026) / (Actual)

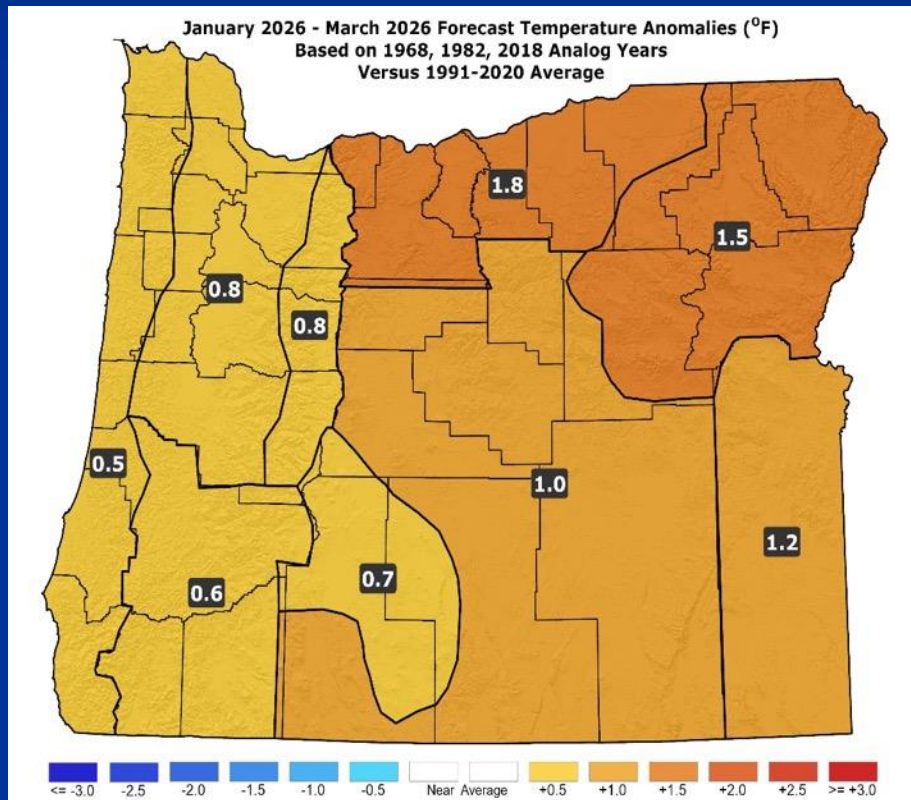
- Analogs had high variability in temperatures, ranging was a relatively warm 1963 to a cool 2018. Their blend predicted warmer-than-average conditions, especially east. (Temperatures were well-above normal. The southern half of central and eastern Oregon...zones 5, 7, & 9...recorded their warmest March on record.) A “*partial forecast hit.*”
- The 1963 analog was wetter than average, but the analog blend was drier than average. (Despite a mid-month “Atmospheric River” event across northern zones, the month was generally dry. Mountain snowpacks finished March at near-record-low levels (next slide). A “*partial forecast hit.*”



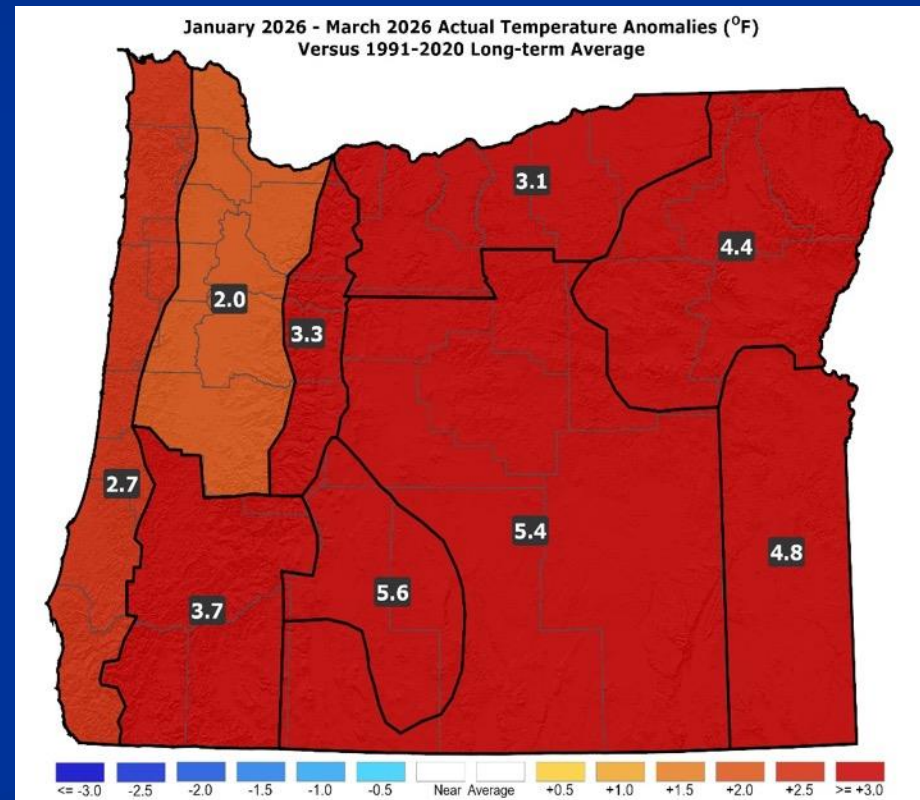
January – March 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/(Actual)

Forecast Temperatures



Actual Temperatures

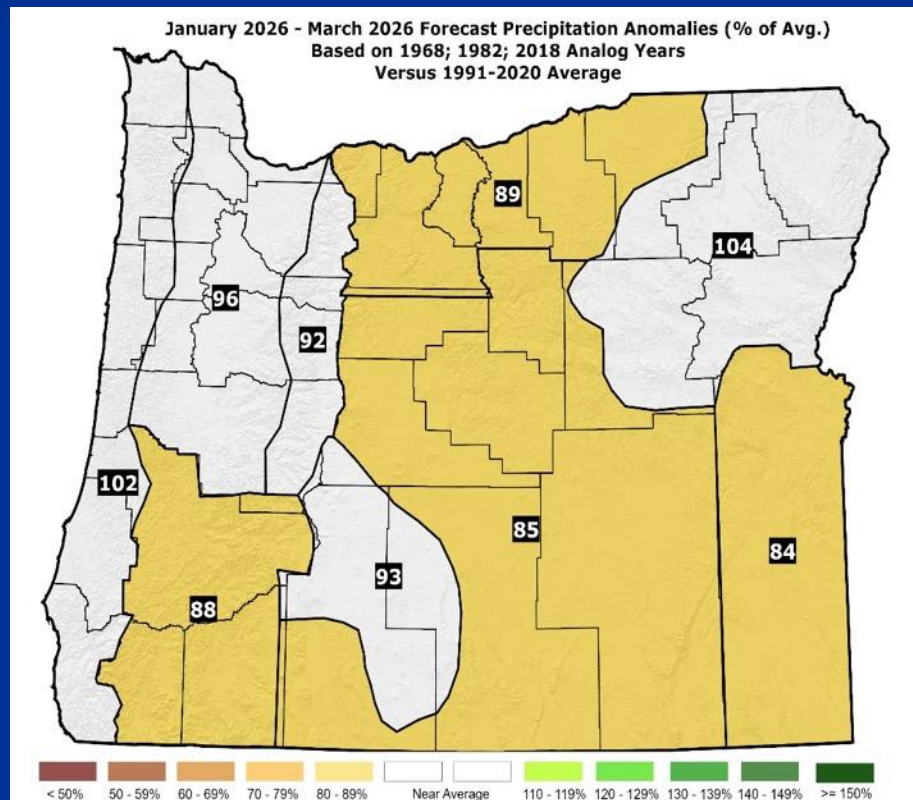


Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

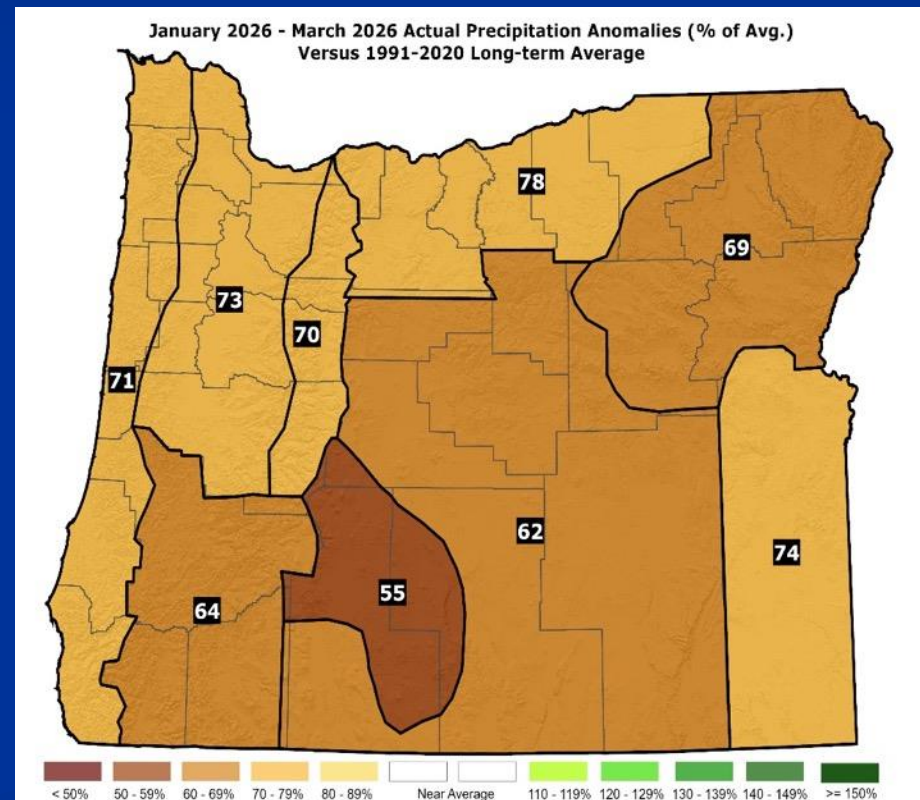
January – March 2026

(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/(Actual)

Forecast Precipitation



Actual Precipitation



Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

January – March 2026

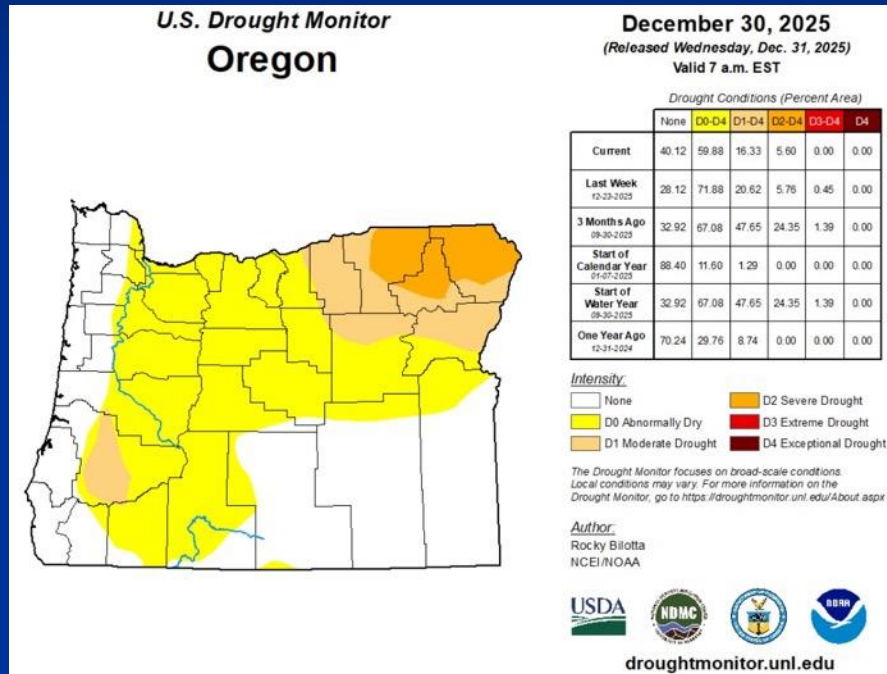
(Forecast Issued December 18, 2025)/ (Actual)

- A relative warm 1968 was somewhat countered by cooler 1982 and 2018 analogs, but their blend remained warm. (Extremely mild conditions dominated the period.) Only a “partial forecast hit (direction of anomaly correct).”
- Near or slightly-below-average precipitation. (January had below-average rain and mountain snow. February was slightly wet with near-average mountain snow. March skewed dry, despite a wet week north at mid-month. Overall, precipitation was below average, and mountain snowpacks were abysmal.) A “partial forecast hit (direction of anomalies correct).”

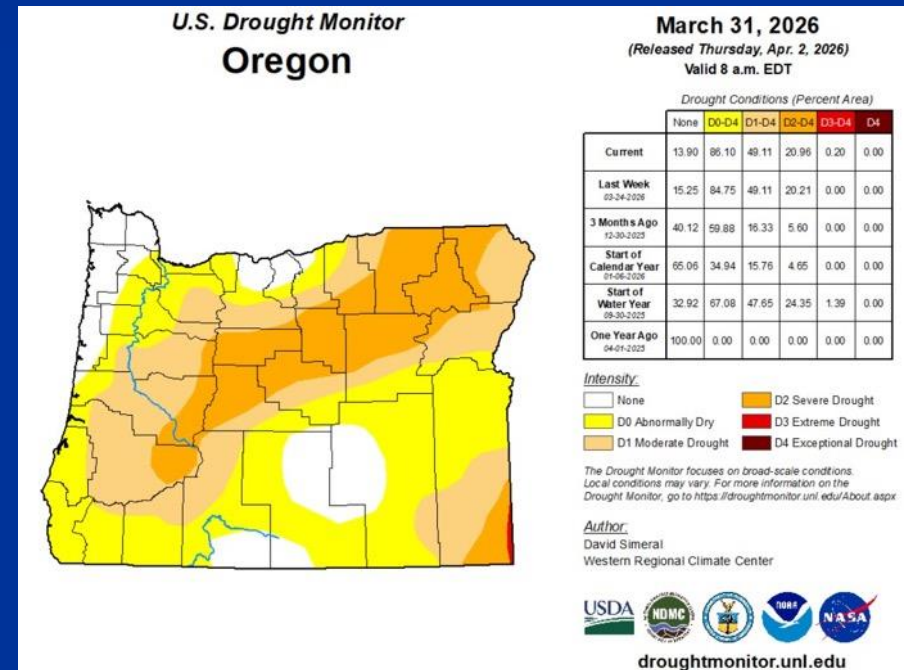
Oregon Drought Status

(Drought Worsened During the “Wet” Season!)

December 30, 2025



March 31, 2026



Courtesy: National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC)

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

Forecast Resources

- ODA Seasonal Climate Forecast Home:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/natural-resources/pages/weather.aspx>

- CPC Official US Three-Month Forecasts (Graphics):

https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=01

- CPC US 30-Day & 90-Day Forecasts (Discussions):

https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/fxus07.html

- CPC Weekly & Monthly ENSO Discussions:

https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory

- Australian Government Climate Model Summary:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/model-summary/#region=NINO34&tabs=Overview>

- Australian Government ENSO Wrap-Up:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso>

- IRI ENSO Quick Look:

<https://iri.columbia.edu/our-expertise/climate/forecasts/enso/current/>

Water Supply / Fire-Potential Outlook

- CPC U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook:

https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/season_drought.png

- NRCS Snow Water Equivalent Oregon Map:

https://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/ftpref/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/or_swepctnormal_update.pdf

- NRCS/USDA Snow Water Equivalent Products:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/wcc/home/snowClimateMonitoring/snowpack/>

- NDMC U.S. Drought Monitor:

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

- NIDIS North American Drought Portal:

<https://www.drought.gov/nadm/content/percent-average-precipitation>

- WRCC WestWideDroughtTracker:

<https://www.wrcc.dri.edu/wwdt/>

- NWCC Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (video)

<https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/predict/outlook.aspx>

Updated Mid-Month

Your Feedback is Welcome!

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https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORODA/subscriber/new?topic_id=ORODA_14

Contact: Pete Parsons, ODF Lead Meteorologist
at 503-945-7448 or peter.gj.parsons@odf.oregon.gov

A Meyer