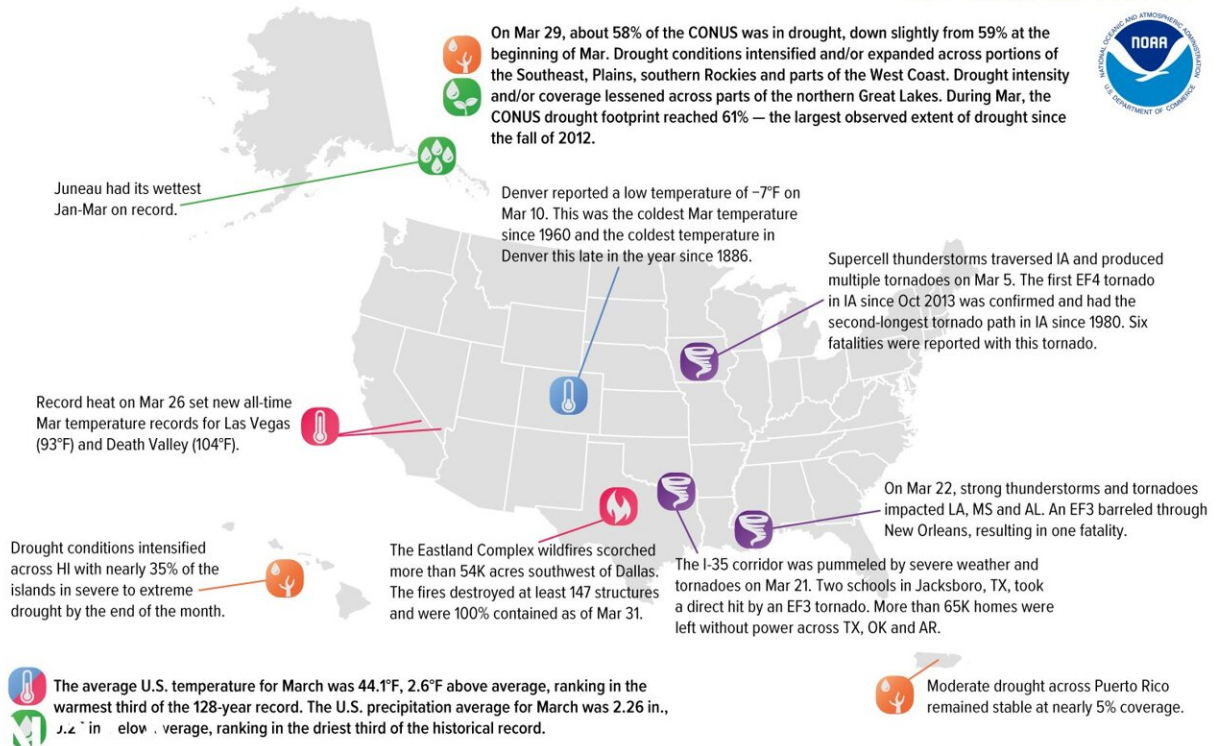


A warm, dry March worsened record drought conditions

April 11 2022

U.S. Selected Significant Climate Anomalies and Events for March 2022



Please Note: Material provided in this map was compiled from NOAA's State of the Climate Reports. For more information please visit: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc>

A map of the United States plotted with significant climate events that occurred during March 2022.

March 2022 marked the third month in a row where precipitation was

below average across the contiguous U.S., which led to an expanding drought and areas of record dryness throughout the West.

March also brought several rounds of severe weather that pounded parts of the nation.

Below are more takeaways from NOAA's latest monthly U.S. climate report:

Climate by the numbers

Year to date (January through March 2022)

The average contiguous U.S. temperature for the year to date was 36.3 degrees F (1.2 degrees above average), which ranks in the middle third of the record.

The year-to-date [average rainfall](#) was 5.66 inches—1.30 inches below average—ranking as the seventh-driest January-March period for the U.S. on record.

The current multi-year [drought](#) across the western U.S. is the most extensive and intense drought in the 22-year history of the U.S. Drought Monitor. Across some parts of the West, precipitation for the first three months of 2022 was at or near record-low levels.

During March, drought coverage across the contiguous U.S. reached 61%—the largest observed extent of drought since fall of 2012. With below-average snow cover and critically low reservoirs in some places, concerns are mounting that the western drought will continue to intensify and strain water supplies.

March 2022

The average monthly temperature across the contiguous U.S. was 44.1 degrees F (2.6 degrees above the 20th-century average) and ranked in the warmest third of the 128-year climate record.

Temperatures for the month were warmer than average across much of the West, and from the Midwest to the East Coast. Alaska also saw above-[average temperatures](#) across much of the state, with Anchorage and Talkeetna both reporting a top-10 warm March.

The average precipitation in the contiguous U.S. last month was 2.26 inches (0.25 of an inch below average), ranking in the driest third of the climate record.

Precipitation was below average across much of the West, northern and southern Plains, and from the Tennessee Valley to the Mid-Atlantic and parts of the Northeast. Above-average precipitation fell from the central Plains to the Great Lakes, as well as across parts of the Deep South and Southeast. North Dakota saw its seventh-driest March on [record](#), while Michigan had its eighth wettest.

Other notable climate events in March

- Tornadoes took a toll: Several severe weather outbreaks produced strong and damaging tornadoes last month. On March 5, supercell thunderstorms produced at least 13 confirmed tornadoes across Iowa, including a confirmed EF4 tornado in Winterset. From March 21-22, severe weather and tornadoes were reported from Texas to Alabama, including an EF3 tornado that substantially damaged two schools in Jacksboro, Texas; an EF3 tornado that ripped through the New Orleans metro area;

and a [severe weather](#) outbreak impacted the Gulf Coast states from March 30-31, with at least 14 tornadoes and two fatalities.

- Billion-dollar disasters update: So far in 2022, no billion-dollar weather and climate disasters have been confirmed, although several events are currently being evaluated. An updated analysis based on a 2022 Consumer Price Index adjustment calculates that the U.S. has sustained 323 separate [weather](#) and [climate](#) disasters since 1980, where overall damages and costs reached or exceeded \$1 billion. The total cost of these 323 events exceeds \$2.195 trillion.

More information: Report: www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/national-climate-202203

Provided by NOAA Headquarters

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