

No type of weather left out in start to spring

Rain, snow, and hail, and variable temperatures — Nebraska experienced a range of weather to start the spring season. The monthly total precipitation was heaviest for a pocket of east-central Nebraska, including the Omaha metro area, receiving more than 3 inches, which is more than an inch greater than normal for March. A couple of other wet pockets were in north-central Nebraska (2 inches or greater) and the Panhandle (more than an inch). The rest of Nebraska was on the dry side in which a half inch to an inch less than normal was received. The statewide average precipitation of 1.13 inches was 0.37 below normal.

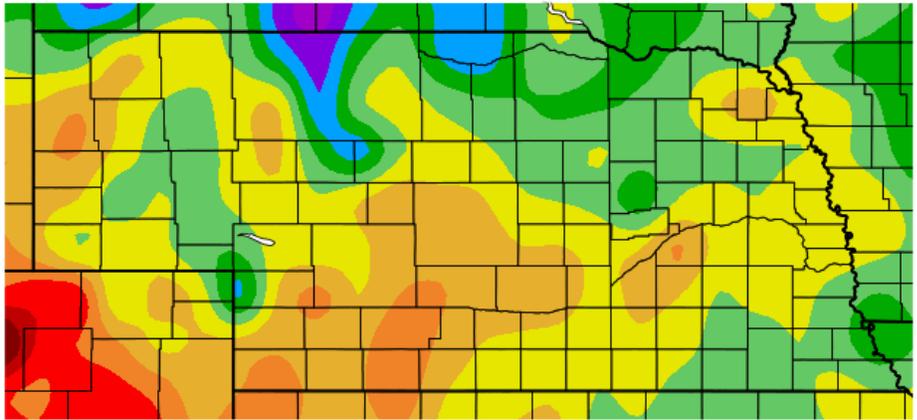
Several record rainfall amounts were received March 16. Omaha (0.87 inches), Norfolk (0.83 inches) and Valentine (0.75 inches) all received the highest totals for that date. The Nebraska Mesonet station near West Point received 0.91 inches on March 17. Severe weather season got its start with 1-inch hail reported on March 23 at Edison in Furnas County. Just a few miles south into Kansas were much more widespread hail reports.

Snow was plentiful across northern Nebraska with more than a foot for the monthly total at Bloomfield in the northeast and Harrison in the northwest. The heaviest totals in southern Nebraska occurred in the Holdrege and Minden areas in which 4 inches to 6 inches fell on March 19. Elsewhere, monthly totals ranged from 0 to less than 2 inches.

Temperature

Temperatures averaged on the cool side for southeast, west central, north central and portions of northeast Nebraska. Temperature departures were 1 to 3 degrees cooler than an average March. The rest of the state experienced relative warmth with temperatures 1 to 2 degrees

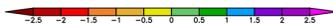
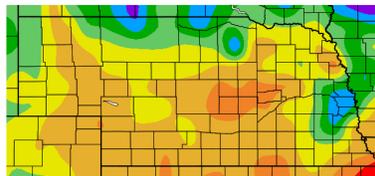
DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL TEMPERATURE (F)



HIGH PLAINS REGIONAL CLIMATE CENTER

All maps generated using March provisional data.

DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL PRECIPITATION



HIGH PLAINS REGIONAL CLIMATE CENTER

above average. The average monthly temperature for the whole state was near normal (+0.3°F) at 38.4 degrees.

McCook and a handful of other communities in southern Nebraska took the top spot with the highest daily maximum temperature of 78 degrees. The lowest air temperature for the month was observed in northeast Nebraska, 4 degrees above zero at Wausa and Crofton. Nighttime lows were mostly below freezing for the month, particularly for

March extremes

Nebraska's statewide weather network operated by the Nebraska Mesonet at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cataloged the following extremes this March:

Highest air temperature: 78°F on March 4 at McCook 4NE

Lowest air temperature: 4°F on March 8 at Wausa 2SW

Greatest 24-hour temperature change: 40°F, from 66°F to 26° on March 16 at Alliance 6NW

Highest 4-inch bare soil temperature: 65°F on March 22 at Guide Rock 3E

Lowest 4-inch bare soil temperature: 23°F on March 21 at Ainsworth 2NE

Highest precipitation: 0.91 inches on March 17 at West Point 2W

Highest 5-second wind gust: 61 mph on March 5 at Long Pine 2OS

northern and western Nebraska. Low temperatures above freezing occurred more frequently (about 10 days) in the southeast portion of the state.

Although early, producers were beginning to issue concerns in regard to spring planting of warm-season crops. Temperatures at the end of March were averaging 10 to 20 degrees below normal east of the Panhandle. These cool temperatures developed last year in mid-April, and this, coupled with frequent rainfall, led to significant planting issues through the end of May.

Soil temperatures at the 4-inch depth averaged in the high 30s to low 40s at the start of April. Afternoon highs have been in the mid 40s in the north to mid 50s in the south. Early morning lows dip just below freezing to the mid 30s. However, on the morning of March 8, the soil temperature at Ainsworth dipped to 23 degrees. The warmest reading was 65 degrees on the afternoon of March 22 at Guide Rock 3E in southcentral Nebraska.

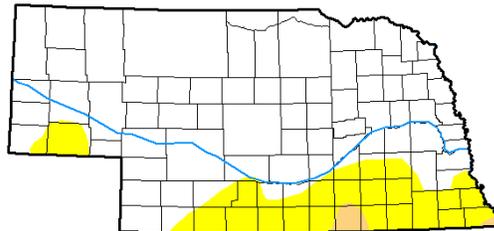
Drought

Dryness conditions improved overall in Nebraska during the month. Enough precipitation was received in northern and a portion of southeast Nebraska for an elimination of abnormal dryness (D0) in those areas. By month's end, 18 percent of the state, mostly along the southern border, was abnormally dry and 1 percent in moderate drought. Conditions remain much worse to our south with extreme drought in the southern plains and U.S. southwest.

Mountain snowpack conditions for the North and South Platte basins as of early April are trending just below normal (75 percent to 100 percent). Snowpack levels to the north are generally running above normal and are below normal to the south. Significant snow events can occur in April and May, so stay tuned for updates in the coming monthly reports.

**U.S. Drought Monitor
Nebraska**

April 3, 2018
(Released Thursday, Apr. 5, 2018)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Current | 81.17 | 18.83 | 1.05 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Last Week 03-27-2018 | 81.17 | 18.83 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 3 Months Ago 01-02-2018 | 9.32 | 90.68 | 2.03 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Start of Calendar Year 01-02-2018 | 9.32 | 90.68 | 2.03 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year 09-26-2017 | 82.67 | 17.33 | 4.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago 04-04-2017 | 74.30 | 25.70 | 3.77 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

Intensity:
 D0 Abnormally Dry D1 Moderate Drought
 D2 Severe Drought D3 Extreme Drought
 D4 Exceptional Drought

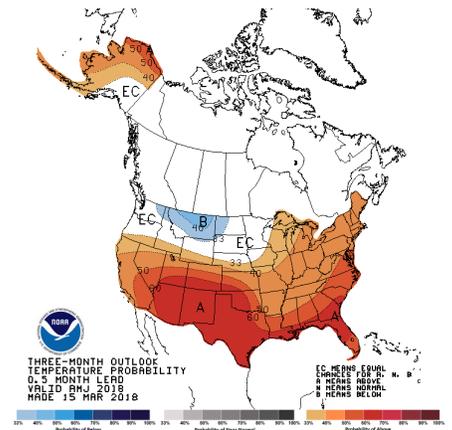
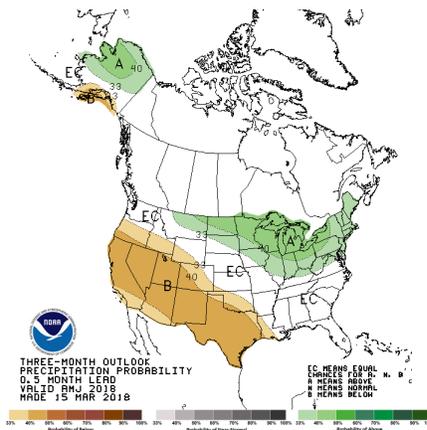
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:
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NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



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

90-DAY OUTLOOK PRECIPITATION (LEFT) & TEMPERATURE



Outlook

An enhanced probability of cooler and wetter-than-normal conditions is projected for the month of April, according to the NOAA Climate Prediction Center. If this verifies, it is a continuation of weather we've experienced since the end of March. For the three-month period of April through June, however, the probability shifts toward an increased chance

of above-normal temperatures for the southern half of Nebraska. Precipitation probabilities place Nebraska in the equal chances category for above-, near-, and below-normal precipitation. The trends are for increased chances of wetness to our north and east and dryness to our south and west.

— Martha Shulski,
state climatologist and NSCO director



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