

Key Points:

- Much of New England and portions of Eastern Upstate New York are currently experiencing drought conditions.
- Drought is not a major concern for the Mid-Atlantic states.
- A large portion of the Southwest continues to experience drought conditions that are expected to persist in some areas, though the NMME predicts some chance of wetter conditions.
- Our forecasts available here: <http://bit.ly/pdsi-x>.

Northeast Region

Drought conditions are varied across the Northeast. A large portion of the New England states are currently experiencing drought conditions (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). Additionally, many counties across Upstate New York are experiencing drier conditions as moisture deficits have developed across the region. The orange areas in Figure 1 indicate the negative drought index values the region is experiencing as a result of the moisture deficits. Across the Mid-Atlantic states, drought conditions are not present and are not anticipated in the coming season based on seasonal outlooks from the National Weather Service and our seasonal forecast.

Continental United States

A large portion of the Southwest, particularly the Four Corners region, is currently experiencing Exceptional Drought conditions (Fig. 2) [1]. Through the coming months the drought in this area is expected to persist in parts of Texas and New Mexico, while improvement in the drought conditions are expected across Arizona. Areas in California, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado will see conditions continue without forecasted improvement (Fig. 3). Additionally, a mild drought is forecasted for the Pacific Northwest.

References cited:

- [1] <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>
 [2] http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/season_drought.png
 [3] http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/la_nina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf

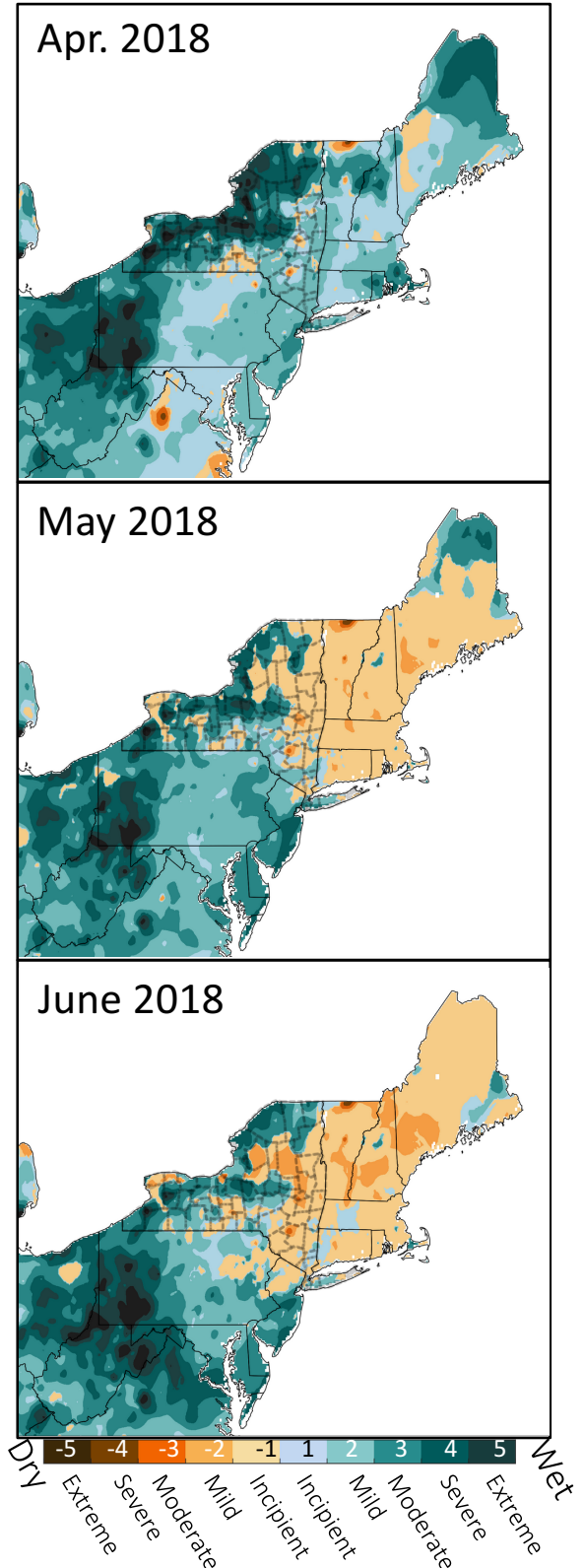


Figure 1. NYS/NE Drought atlas maps from the second quarter of 2018.

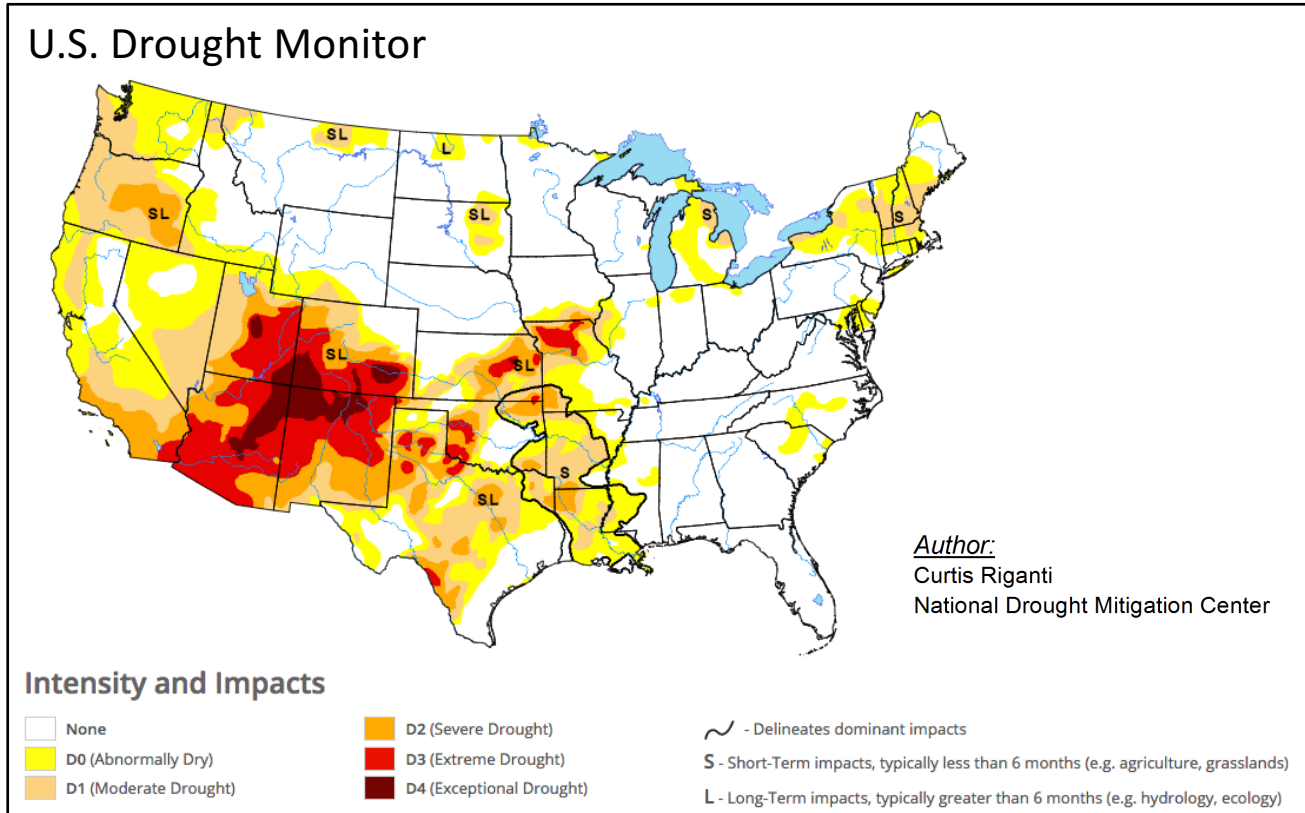


Figure 2. US Drought monitor map for the Continental United States [1].

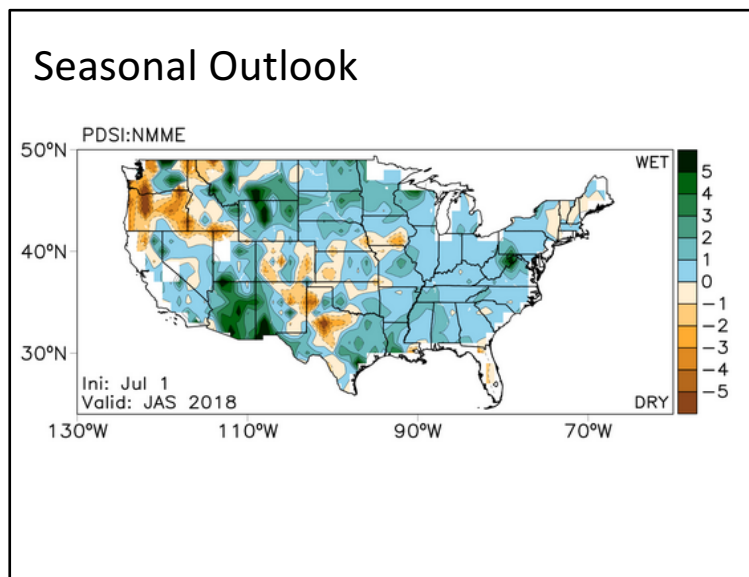


Figure 3. July, August, September seasonal drought forecast

Though forecasts suggest that the drought in some areas of the Southwest will persist throughout the summer months and likely into the autumn, the area may find some relief this coming winter. Current forecasts place a 65% chance of an El Niño event occurring during the 2018-2019 winter months [3]. El Niño events can bring more precipitation to the Southwest. This will be an important area to focus on as forecasts continue to become available during the next few months.

Author:
Toby R. Ault
toby.ault@cornell.edu
Dept. of Earth & Atmos. Science, Cornell, University