

N.E. Oregon Snowpack Report

Measuring Site	Elevation	Snow Water Equivalent (inches)				Snow Depth
		Now	Average	% of avg.	Last year	
Aneroid Lake	7,300	13.8	22.6	66%	21.2	41
Anthony Lakes	7,125	19.5	27.7	70%	28.2	49
Barney Creek	5,830	2.6	9.4	28%	11.4	6
Beaver Reservoir	5,150	5.9	9.6	61%	15.7	16
Bourne	5,800	4.9	13.6	36%	15.3	10
Eilertson Meadow	5,440	4.5	6.4	70%	10.7	10
Gold Center	5,340	4.4	4.6	96%	12.6	2
High Ridge	4,980	17.8	24.0	74%	35.2	41
Little Alps	6,300	6.8	13.4	51%	13.6	21
Little Antone	4,560	2.4	6.4	38%	8.6	6
Moss Springs	5,850	18.4	24.2	76%	30.4	42
Mount Howard	7,910	12.9	15.4	84%	13.6	34
Schneider Meadow	5,400	18.1	24.8	73%	31.0	42
Taylor Green	5,740	7.8	19.3	40%	27.7	15
Tipton	5,150	5.5	11.2	49%	13.8	18
W. Eagle Meadow	5,500	16.0	27.6	58%	29.7	34
Wolf Creek	5,630	7.9	16.0	49%	17.1	30
AVERAGE				60%		

Source: U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

Snowpack

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The individual sites ranged from 96% of average at Gold Center, near Granite, to just 28% of average at Barney Creek, near the South Fork of the Burnt River southwest of Unity.

Overall, the water content was 60% of average.

That's a disturbing statistic for irrigation officials such as Doug Birdsall.

He manages the Powder Valley Water Control District, which supplies water from two reservoirs — Pilcher Creek and Wolf Creek — to farms and ranches in the North Powder area.

"We're concerned," Birdsall said on Tuesday, April 5. "It's not looking real good. The reservoirs are pretty low and the snowpack is pretty low."

Pilcher Creek Reservoir, which can supply water to Wolf Creek, was holding about 36% of its capacity, while Wolf Creek was at 18%.

"That's real low for this time of year," Birdsall said.

The abnormally dry March, besides contributing to the shrinking snowpack, also means fledgling crops need irrigation water earlier than usual.

Rainfall during March at the Baker City Airport totaled a meager 0.28 of an inch — barely a third of average.

Birdsall said he started supplying irrigation water on Wednesday, April 6. That's about a week earlier than last year, which itself was drier than usual.

Although it's too early to predict with great accuracy whether either or both of the reservoirs in his district will fill this spring, Birdsall said "it's not looking likely at this point."

Birdsall's colleague, Wes Morgan, is also reluctant to forecast water supplies considering the many factors involved, including something as infamously unpredictable as weather.

Morgan manages the Burnt River Irrigation District in southern Baker County.

His district's lone reservoir, Unity, is in rather better shape than Birdsall's, at 67% of capacity on Tuesday, April 5.

But that statistic isn't enough to convince Morgan to issue bold proclamations.

"I'm not confident by any means that it will fill," Morgan said of Unity Reservoir.

One reason is the aforementioned water content in the snow at Barney Creek. Morgan measures the snow there, and he wasn't pleased to calculate that the water content had plummeted from 7.4 inches at the start of March to 2.6 inches at month's end.

Barney Creek is in the South Fork Burnt River drainage, which includes the highest mountains in the irrigation district and, as one of the last places to hold snow as spring progresses, is an important source of water for later in the spring and into summer.

Morgan points out that the current situation, with the snowpack at 28% of average, isn't the worst he's seen.

In 2015 there was no snow to measure at Barney Creek at the end of March.

Holding out hope for spring rain

Ralph Morgan slipped into his muck boots before start-

"It's not looking good, that's for sure.

Unless we get some rain it's going to be a poor year, that's the way it looks to me."

— Ralph Morgan, Baker County cattle rancher

County declares drought emergency

Baker County commissioners on Wednesday, April 6, approved a resolution declaring a drought disaster in the county and asking Gov. Kate Brown and federal officials to follow suit.

Commissioners passed the resolution one day shy of one year since they approved a nearly identical document, on April 7, 2021.

State and federal drought declarations could make county property owners eligible for financial aid and other assistance, and give state water regulators more flexibility in allocating water.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, 84% of Baker County is in extreme drought, the second most severe in a four-level rating system, behind only exceptional drought.

A year ago, just 16% of the county was in extreme drought.

ing his ranch work on Monday morning, April 4.

Turns out he needn't have bothered with the boots.

Morgan, who runs his cattle herd near Baker City, said his choice of footwear was prompted by a forecast for rain.

And although showers did fall, the amounts, he said, were scarcely sufficient to dampen the ground, much less leave him slogging through puddles.

Morgan said the rain gauge at his home along the Powder River southwest of Baker City showed .12 of an inch.

Another gauge, in Bowen Valley just south of town, picked up half that much.

Morgan said there's only patchy snow left at lower elevations, so he doesn't expect a significant runoff into streams this spring.

The only potential savior, then, is a series of soggy spring storms.

"It's not looking good, that's for sure," Morgan said on Tuesday, April 5. "Unless we get some rain it's going to be a poor year, that's the way it looks to me."

Birdsall said spring rains can help in two main ways.

The most obvious, of course, is by keeping the soil moist when plants are beginning to grow, giving crops a solid start.

And if enough rain falls, he said, farmers and ranchers can get by without calling for any water, or at least much less water, from reservoirs. That allows irrigation districts to hold more water for release in the summer, when rain is much less likely.

"Rain would help a bunch," Birdsall said.

Hoping for storms isn't far-fetched in Baker County.

Historically, spring is the wettest season here.

At the Baker City Airport, May has the highest average rainfall, at 1.42 inches, while June ranks second, at 1.26 inches. April's average is 0.79. Combined, those three months account for 35% of the annual precipitation at the airport, where records date to 1943.

Lots of wind, little rain

The relatively few storms that have swept through Baker County since early in the winter have been stingy with their moisture, but quite generous with their wind.

Jean Ann (Conrad) Miller

March 1926 - January 2022

Jean Ann Conrad was born at home on the family ranch in Imbler, Oregon, to Charles (Todd) and Pearl Conrad. She graduated from Imbler High School in 1943 and received awards for all-around girl and drama at graduation. During her school years starting at age 9 Jean Ann raised award-winning 4-H steers. She showed the steers in Union County and at the Pacific International Livestock show in Portland. In 1939 she had the Grand Champion steer in the open division, which sold for \$.60 a pound, the most ever at that time.



During high school Jean Ann met Edmond Miller from nearby Cove at a dance in La Grande. After her graduation, they eloped to Boise, Idaho. They were married for 74 years before his death in 2017. Jean Ann followed Ed to various states and Europe while he served in the Air Force. During those years she worked at various jobs including a dentist office and department stores in several cities.

After the war they returned to Oregon and lived in Corvallis, Cove, La Grande, Huntington, Lake Oswego and Beaverton. Jean Ann was a homemaker and mother to three. She volunteered for years at the Lake Oswego Senior Community Center and later for more than 25 years at the Beaverton School District's Continuing Education for Young Parents child care facility.

Survivors include her daughter, Jody (Kip Leonard); sons, Jeff (Laura) and Mark (Jennifer Moffatt); grandchildren, Ross Miller, Reed Miller (Emily), Nick Leonard (Caroline Lafferty), JJ Miller (Abby), Annie Miller, Connor Kelley and Jack Kelley; two great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Jean Ann was predeceased by her three siblings: Clifford Conrad, June Van Blokland and Wes Conrad.

Jean Ann's and Ed's remains will be interred at the Summerville Cemetery near Imbler. The family is grateful for the care provided by Hearthstone at Murrayhill and Hospice during Jean Ann's final days.

U.S. Drought Monitor Baker County, OR

March 29, 2022
(Released Thursday, Mar. 31, 2022)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.89	84.11	0.00
Last Week 03-24-2022	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.89	84.11	0.00
3 Months Ago 12-30-2021	0.00	0.00	0.00	23.29	76.71	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2022	0.00	0.00	0.00	23.29	76.71	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2021	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.63	81.37	0.00
One Year Ago 04-01-2021	2.51	16.45	30.26	34.36	16.42	0.00

Intensity
None D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

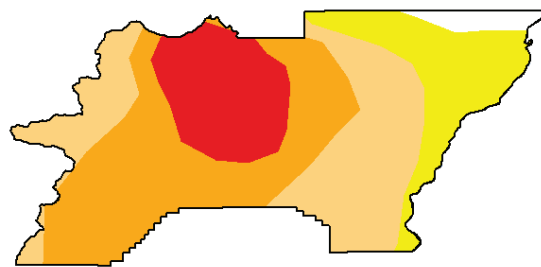
Author:
Deborah Bathke
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor Baker County, OR

March 30, 2021
(Released Thursday, Apr. 1, 2021)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	2.51	16.45	30.26	34.36	16.42	0.00
Last Week 03-25-2021	2.80	16.16	30.26	34.36	16.42	0.00
3 Months Ago 12-31-2020	1.86	12.43	41.64	44.07	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2020	1.86	12.43	41.64	44.07	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2020	1.45	17.44	56.29	24.83	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 04-02-2020	7.72	92.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity
None D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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Brad Pugh
CPC/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

But it's a generosity that ranchers and irrigation officials don't appreciate.

Ralph Morgan said the Monday cold front that convinced him to put on waterproof boots was an example of the persistent trends.

The scanty rain showers were propelled by wind gusts that exceeded 50 mph in several places.

That wind quickly evaporates most of what little moisture accompanied the storm, he said.

The storm also ushered in much colder air, with temperatures plunging into the 20s the mornings of Tuesday, April 5, and Wednesday, April 6.

With such chilly temperatures, a layer of ice forms on the ground surface, which prevents the water from soaking into the soil, Wes Morgan said.

Worse still, the wind dissipates that moisture.

The result, he said, is soil that's dry and cold, the precise opposite of what alfalfa and

other crops need.

"A bad combination," he said.

Lower elevation snow receding

Although March can bring snow to even the lower valleys of Baker County, the month typically builds the snowpack primarily at higher elevations in the Elkhorn and Wallowa mountains.

That trend is reflected even in the generally dismal snowpack numbers for this March.

Of the four measuring sites where the water content increased during March, three are above 7,000 feet — Anthony Lakes, 7,125 feet, and two stations in the Wallows, Aneroid Lake at 7,300 feet, and Mount Howard, near Wallowa Lake, at 7,910 feet.

The fourth site is Moss Springs in the western Wallows, which is at 5,850 feet.

None of the four posted a significant boost in snowpack during March, however.

At Anthony Lakes, for instance, the water content in-

creased during the month from 17.7 inches to 19.5.

In March 2021, by contrast, the gain was much greater — from 22.7 inches to 28.2.

At Moss Springs, the water content rose this March from 17.7 inches to 18.4. Last March the monthly increase was from 26.6 inches to 30.4.

The difference between this March and last, though, was much more dramatic at lower-elevation measuring stations. Several of those had increases during March 2021, but the opposite this year.

At Schneider Meadow, for instance, in the southern Wallows north of Halfway, the water content this March dropped from 19.1 inches to 18.1.

Schneider Meadow, although its elevation is a modest 5,400 feet, often is one of the snowier sites in the region, as the southern Wallows are a focal point for winter storms.

Last March was more typical, as the water content at Schneider Meadow rose from 29.5 inches to 31 inches.

Karen Carnes Inman

September 16, 1938 - April 21, 2022

Karen Carnes Inman, age 83, died peacefully on Monday, April 21, 2022, at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital after bravely fighting a brain tumor for over four years. On Wednesday, April 6, 2022, a funeral service was held at Culley's Meadowwood Funeral Home (1737 Riggins Rd, Tallahassee, FL 32308).

There will be a graveside service on Saturday, April 9, 2022, at 11 a.m. at Mount Hope Cemetery in Baker City (1012 S Bridge St, Baker City, OR 97814), where she will be laid to rest next to her husband of 48 years, Col. Roger Inman. Rev. Aletha Bonebrake of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church will officiate.

Karen was born in Baker, Oregon, on September 16, 1938, the daughter of Kenneth Donald Carnes and Virginia Carnes (Carlson). The family moved to Portland, OR in 1941 during WWII, then returned to Baker, where Judy and Karen graduated from Baker High School.

Karen was active in many high school activities. TriHiY, Thespians, and Rainbow Girls are a few. She was selected for the National Honor Society, graduating at the top of her class in 1956. Karen then went to Portland, where she received an RN degree at Good Samaritan Hospital Nursing School in 1959. Karen then worked as a surgical nurse.

She married her high school sweetheart, Roger Inman, in June 1960 at St. David's Episcopal Church in Portland. Roger was attending veterinary school at Washington State, and they lived in college housing in Pullman, WA. Here they became parents of twin girls (Ann and Amy) in 1962. Roger earned his DVM degree in 1963 and immediately entered the Air Force, where they began their many adventures of traveling and living in many places



while raising a family: Myrtle Beach, SC, Ramstein AFB in Germany, where their third daughter, Jill, was born, Columbus, OH where their fourth daughter, Marla was born. They finally settled in Tallahassee, FL, in 1984, where Roger began a new career with the Florida Department of Agriculture.

Karen enjoyed traveling, RVing, fishing, cooking, birding, sewing, gardening, and spending time with her family. She volunteered for many organizations such as Girl Scouts, the children's schools, and various Air Force organizations. In Tallahassee, she enjoyed

volunteering as a tax consultant at a senior center, a voting poll coordinator, positions in the Retired Officers Wives Club and the Antebellum Statehood Crewe in Springtime Tallahassee. She enjoyed being a member of the FSU University Musical Associates and the Theater Patrons with Roger and friends.

Karen is survived by her sister, Judy Brookhart and her husband, Bob Heriza of Baker City, OR; her four daughters and their spouses: Ann and Eric Gaylord of Huntington Beach, CA; Amy and Bill Demins of Winter Park, FL; Jill Marie Inman and Ken Ryan of Leesburg, VA; Marla and Brian Blair of Tallahassee, her sister-in-law (and traveling companion), Jody Inman of Anacortes, WA. She is also survived by her seven grandchildren: Megan and Ryan Gaylord, Robert and Benjamin Landerman, Julia and Keith Inman-Ryan, Sydney Blair, and her two nieces: Janet Sutton (Inman) and Stephanie Brookhart, and her two nephews: Scott Brookhart and Craig Brookhart.

To leave an online condolence for the family of Karen, please visit www.grayswestco.com