# Southern Plains Drought Outlook Summary

## Thursday, May 15, 2014
## Issued: 11:00am CDT


**National Weather Service**

***Southern Region Headquarters***
***Regional Operations Center***
***Fort Worth, TX***

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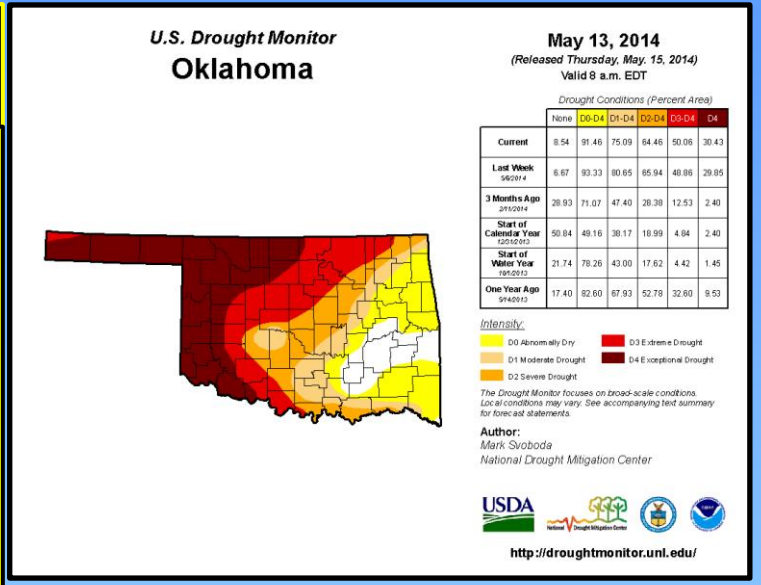
**817-978-1100 x 147**

# Current Drought Situation

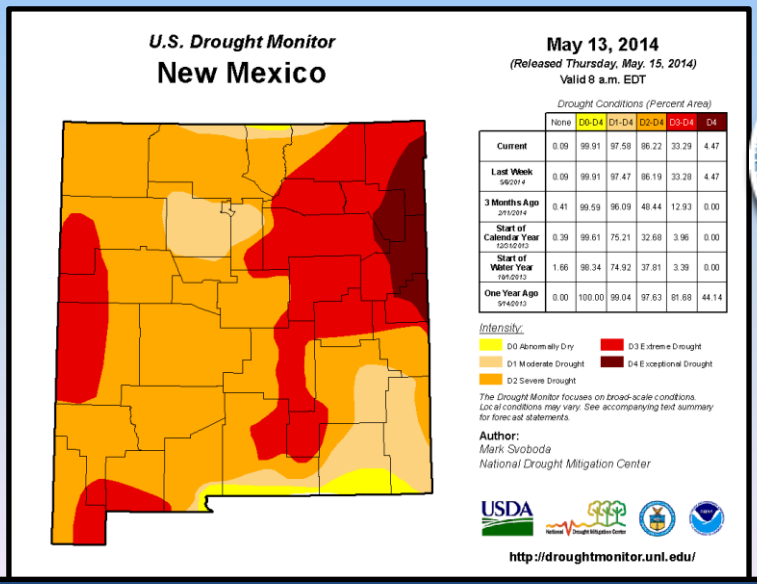
- Drought conditions (D1 or worse) now cover more than 70% of OK and TX, and more than 90% of NM.
- The likelihood of an El Nino event developing continues to increase. Now near 80%.
- El Nino development would have limited drought impacts through the summer but likely drought relief in the fall/winter for NM and TX.




**For Southern Plains Drought Monitor go to:**
**http://www.drought.gov/drought/regional-programs/southernplains/southern-plains-home**

# Current/Ongoing Drought Impacts

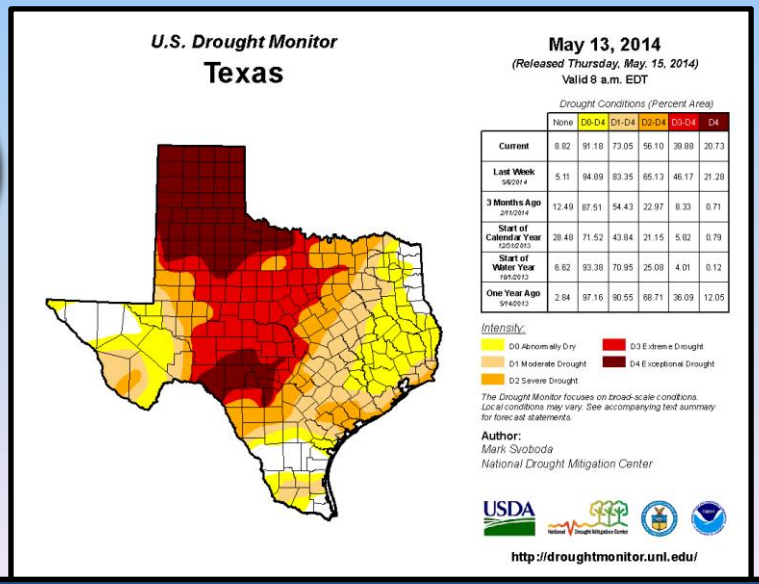
- Over 2/3 of the winter wheat crop in TX and OK is in poor to very poor condition
  - Oklahoma's harvest is projected to be the worst since the 1950's. (source: USDA)
- Statewide, Texas reservoirs at lowest levels since 1990. (source: TWDB)
- Wichita Falls TX considering Stage 5 water restrictions and exploring re-use of wastewater for drinking. (source: wichitafallstx.gov)
- 3 of the 4 largest reservoirs in NM at 18% or less of storage capacity. The largest, Elephant Butte, is at only 18% of capacity.




NOAA — National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration — U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service

NIDIS — National Integrated Drought Information System




**Website:** http://www.srh.noaa.gov **Twitter:** @NWS_Southern_US
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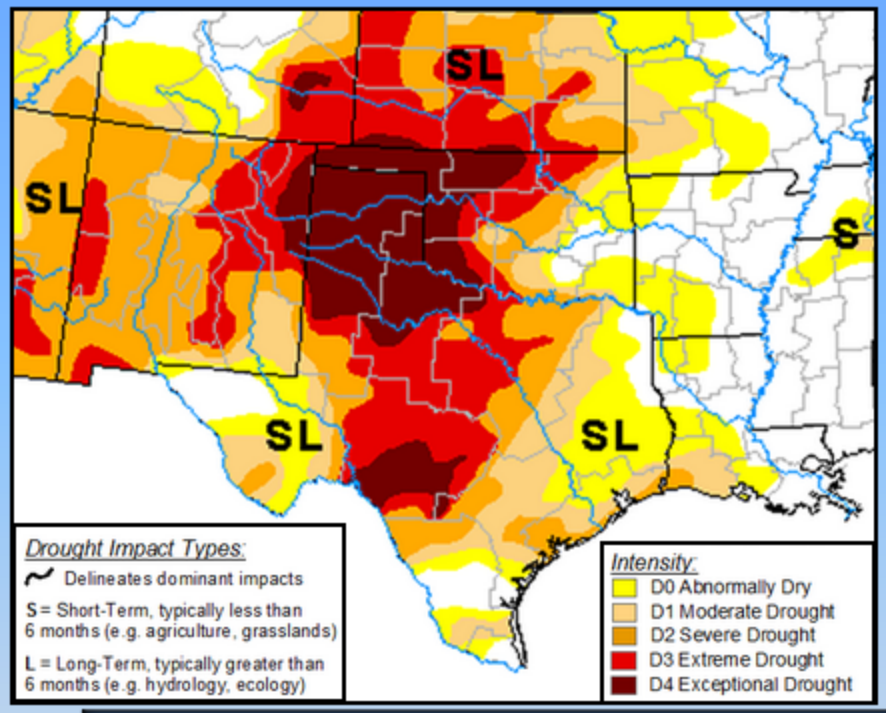
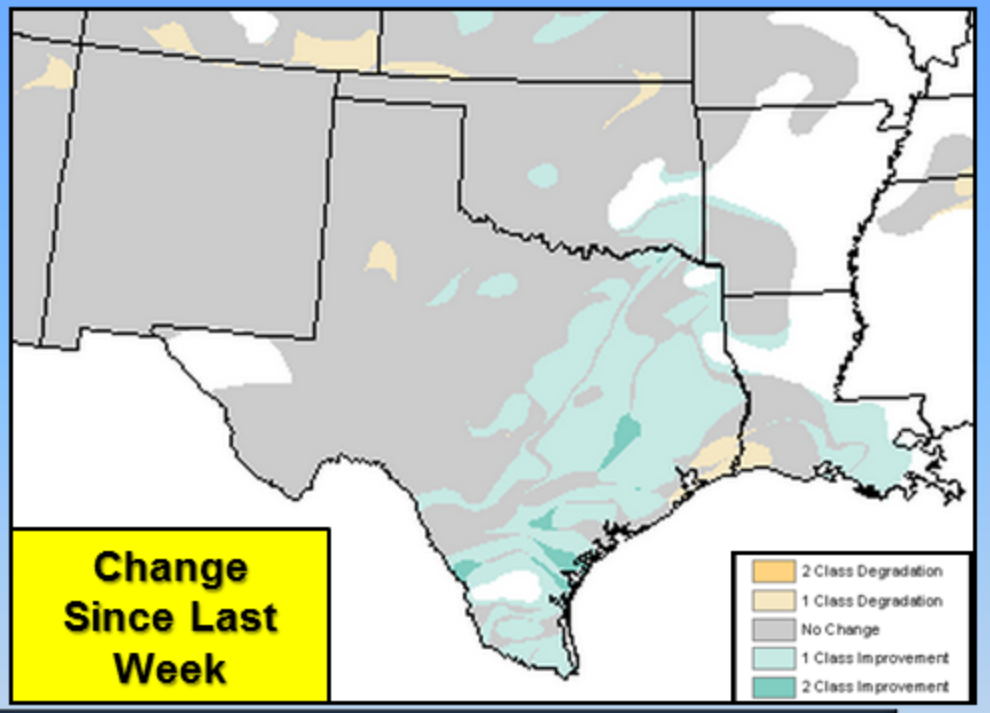
# Drought Monitor Released May 15, 2014

**Data valid through 6am CT on Tuesday, May 13, 2014**




| Drought Conditions (Percent Area) in D3-D4 (Extreme to Exceptional Drought) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State | Current | Last Week | 3 Months Ago | 1 Year Ago |
| Oklahoma | 50.06% | 48.86% | 12.53% | 32.60% |
| Texas | 39.88% | 46.17% | 8.33% | 36.09% |
| New Mexico | 33.29% | 33.28% | 12.93% | 81.68% |

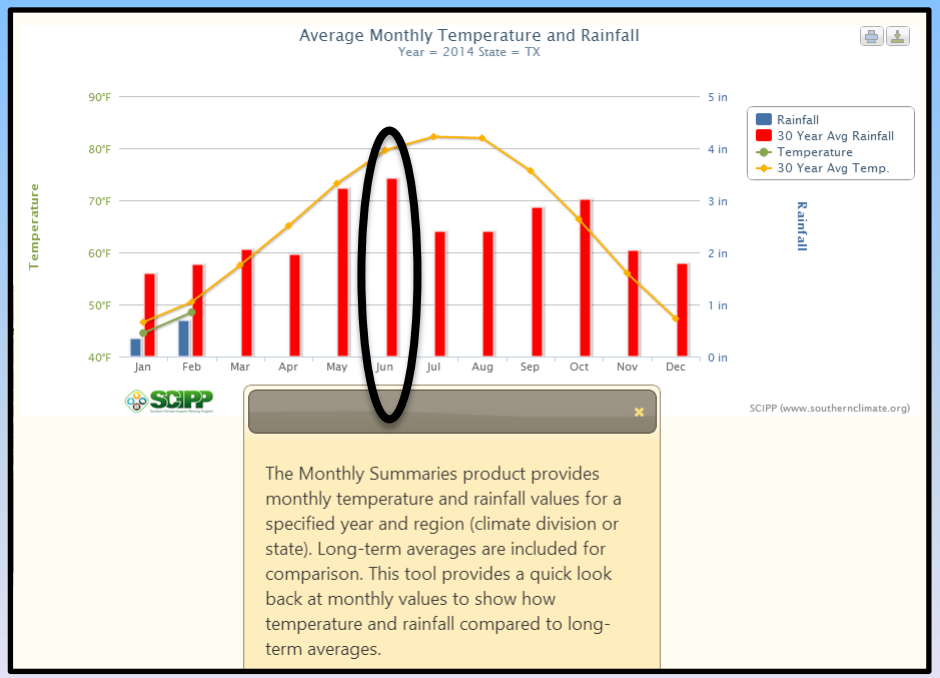
**Despite some short term improvements in south and east Texas this past week, overall drought conditions in the Southern Plains remain dire.**

**Since October 2010, it has been the driest such period in over a century in west TX & southwest OK**

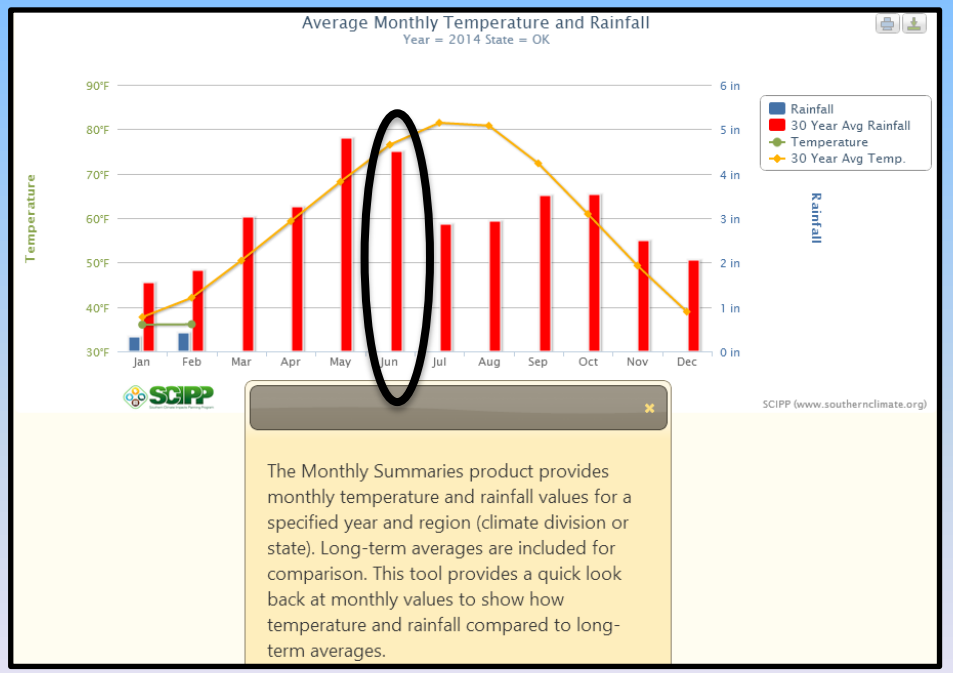
**(Note: "driest such period" is defined as any consecutive 42 month period)**

**Some relief is hoped for:**

- **June is typically the wettest month in Texas and 2nd wettest in Oklahoma (see graphs below)**
- **The potential for El Nino development by the fall continues. Texas and New Mexico have a strong signal for above normal precipitation in the fall and winter during El Nino events.**




**Texas 30 year average rainfall depicted in red bar graph**




**Oklahoma 30 year average rainfall depicted in red bar graph**

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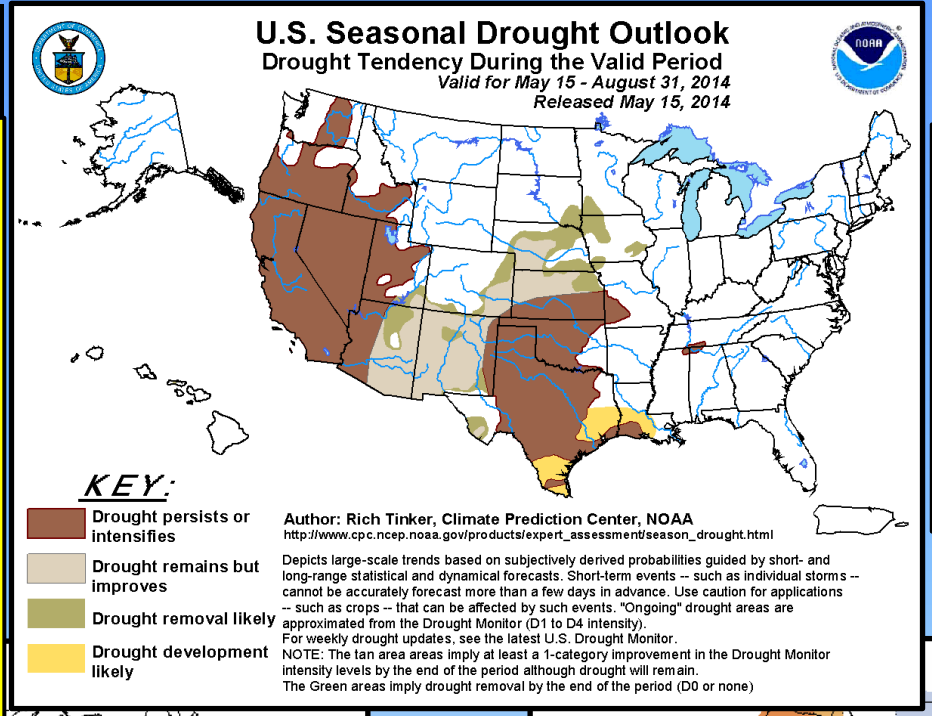
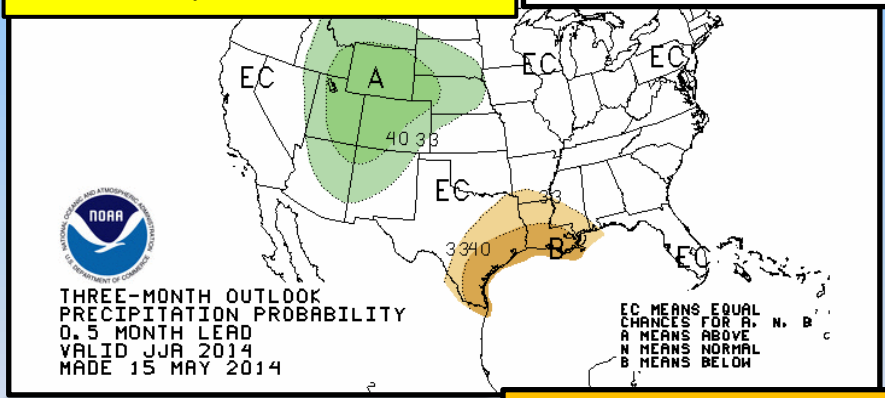
## 3-month Outlook Precipitation

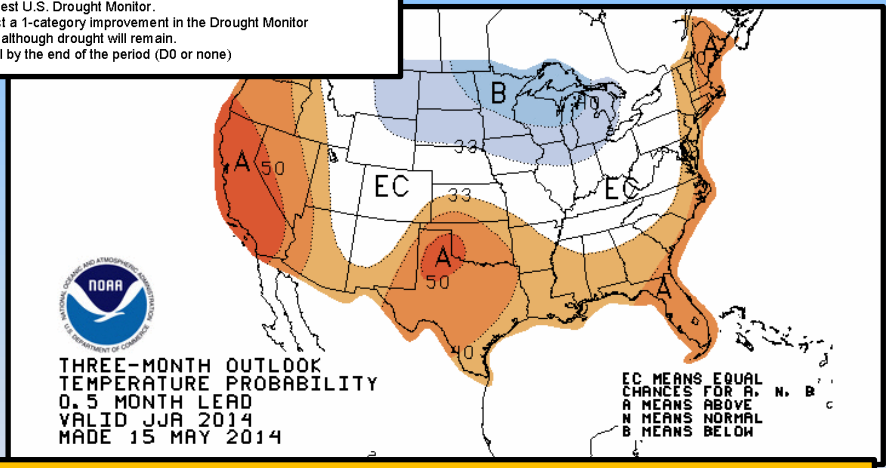
- Increased chances for below normal rainfall in south and east TX.
- June typically is one of the wettest months in TX and OK ; Even near normal rainfall should bring some short term drought relief.
- Increased chances for above normal rainfall through August for much of NM, leading to some improvement (as shown in U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook).




## 3-month Outlook Temperature

- Increased chances for above normal temperatures for all of TX, OK, and most of NM.
- Increased evaporation of any rain that does fall is likely with higher temperatures … further exacerbating surface reservoir water deficits.




## Southern Plains Drought Summary

- **The geographic extent of extreme and exceptional drought has increased over six-fold in Texas, over ten-fold in Oklahoma, and nearly ten-fold in New Mexico since the start of the calendar year.**
- **Since October 2010, when the Southern Plains drought began, it has been the driest comparable 42-month period in over a century in many parts of west Texas and southwest Oklahoma.**
- **Potential relief does lie ahead; June is one of the wettest months of the year climatologically in Oklahoma and Texas. June also marks the onset of the summer wet season in New Mexico. Parts of New Mexico typically get up to 50% of their yearly precipitation during June/July/August.**

# Information provided by:
# **National Weather Service**
# Southern Region Headquarters
# Regional Operations Center
# Fort Worth, TX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**This information along with other drought resources also available on the Southern Plains drought.gov web portal**

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NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM

http://www.drought.gov/drought/regional-programs/southernplains/southern-plains-home