



OREGON WATER MONTHLY

Published monthly by Oregon Water Coalition with coverage important to Oregon agriculture

SEPTEMBER 2015
VOL. 22 • ISSUE 9

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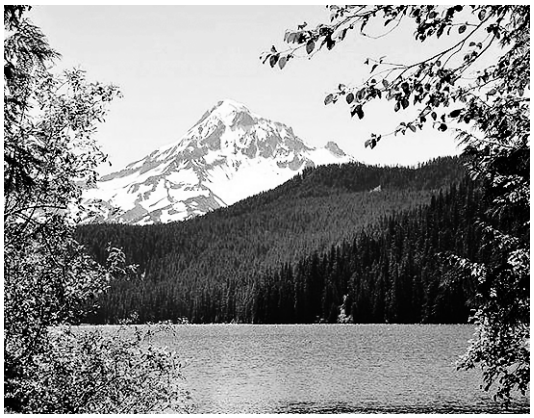
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Oregon faces uncertain drought recovery, reservoirs may not adequately refill

Water levels in reservoirs across Oregon are two-thirds below average as summer ends, but autumn and winter weather may not offer much help, experts say.



BULL RUN LAKE, MOUNT HOOD PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Oregon may have a difficult time recovering from drought conditions given anticipated weather patterns.

Mountain snowpacks that provide irrigation water and replenish reservoirs are facing another tough year as the "El Niño" atmospheric pattern bodes for warmer winter weather. Water levels in reservoirs across Oregon are two-thirds below average as summer ends, but autumn and winter weather may not offer much help.

"There's a lot of concern those reservoirs won't fill," said April Snell, executive director of the Oregon Water Resources Congress, which represents irrigation districts.

At this point, the deviation toward higher temperatures over winter is projected to be among the three most significant variations since the 1950s, said Tom Di Liberto, meteorologist for the Climate Prediction Center at the National Weather Service.

"We do expect it to be one of the strongest ones," he said. While a strong El Niño is reliably associated with warmer weather, the impact on precipitation is less clear — the event generally indicates drier conditions in Oregon, but that's not inevitable, he said.

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Drought recovery uncertain, reservoirs may not fully refill

"El Niño is never a guarantee of a certain set of outcomes," Di Liberto said. "Weather can be chaotic." Areas of low pressure tend to usher in storms toward the southern West Coast during El Niño winters, but it's tough to say where this "anomaly" will be strongest, so the Northwest may also be affected, he said. With higher temperatures, though, the precipitation isn't as likely to come in the form of snow, he said.

Aside from El Niño, another significant weather pattern to watch is the Arctic Oscillation, which determines whether storms around the North Pole will spread out and impact lower latitudes.

This trend may either enhance or conflict with the effects of El Niño, though it's too early to tell, Di Liberto said. "Those are the type of patterns we don't have a ton of predictability with."

Soil moisture is another consideration heading into winter, as the ground must be saturated before snowpacks become available in the form of runoff, said Scott Oviatt, Oregon snow survey supervisor for the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"We're worried that we're going into the water year with a deficit," he said, noting that some regions in Oregon have experienced several years of insufficient moisture. "That has made the situation worse and it's why we've been so susceptible to wildfire this year."

Despite the "exhausted" soils, it wouldn't be desirable for Oregon to see "high intensity" precipitation that would lead to flash flooding, he said.

That risk is particularly acute in areas that have suffered from wildfires, since ash impedes the soil's ability to take on water, Oviatt said.

It's preferable for the state to encounter a progression of "low intensity" storms that will replenish moisture without overwhelming the soil.

Low stream flows across Oregon in 2015 caused water regulators to shut off irrigation for junior water rights holders weeks ahead of normal, said Diana Enright, spokesperson for the Oregon Water Resources Department.

Water calls also went back further in time in terms of priority date — the John Day River, for example, was regulated back to 1876, while Fifteenmile Creek in the Hood River area was regulated back to 1861, according to OWRD. In other words, irrigators with more recent priority dates had irrigation shut off.

It was also unusual that irrigators in the Northwest corner of Oregon were subject to water calls, Enright said.

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USGS studying low snowpack, river flows offer clue to drought

U.S. Geological Survey hydrologic technicians are currently taking measurements from hundreds of streams and rivers across the western United States as part of a low flow study.



NORTHWEST SNOWPACK FROM SPACE PHOTO: SEAWIFS PROJECT, NASA-GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER, ORBIMAGE

Spring snowpack in the western United States was extremely low in 2015 compared to long-term averages. Warmer winter temperatures meant that precipitation fell more often as rain than snow and some places received less-than-normal precipitation.

In August and September, USGS hydrologic technicians will measure stream flow and water temperature in hundreds of rivers and streams in California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington to document the severity of this year's drought.

"This year's warmer, drier weather provides a preview of how future droughts may impact water resources in the study area," said Chris Konrad, USGS hydrologist and study project chief. "The goal is to provide information to resource managers to help understand differences in how streams respond to drought and plan for future drought impacts in the region."

With less spring and summer snowmelt at higher elevations, many western rivers and streams reached peak flows earlier than normal and are now at or near historically low flows. These conditions create stresses on domestic and agricultural water supplies, fish and wildlife, and forests and rangelands.

"This is a large scale study including six states, nearly 500 streams and rivers, and dozens of technicians," said Rich Ferrero, USGS Northwest Regional Director. "The streamflow data will be important for future drought planning and resource management decisions throughout the western United States."

Hydrologic technicians from USGS water science centers are measuring streamflow and USGS scientists will then compare those data with measurements from previous years to answer several water-management questions, including:

- Which rivers and streams depend on snowmelt and/or groundwater to sustain flows?
- How are low flows and associated higher stream temperatures affecting habitat for fish and other aquatic species?

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USGS studying low snowpack, flows offer clue to future drought

- Does 2015 serve as a model for how streams will respond to climate change?
- Which rivers were most vulnerable to warm, dry weather in terms of reaching historic low flow levels in 2015?

The data will be compiled and analyzed with a summary report of findings planned for publication in late 2016.

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ Scientists conduct drought study in six western states
+ USGS mapping tool offers data on pesticides in streams
+ NOAA releases new climate science strategy
+ Researchers give dry farming a try
+ Council releases draft report to congress on 'State of Columbia Basin'

Writer: Staff
Publisher: Columbia Basin Bulletin
Published: September 11, 2015
URL: cbbulletin.com

Salish-Kootenai Tribes acquire and rename Flathead Lake dam

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes have officially acquired control and assets of Kerr Dam, renaming the hydro operation on Flathead Lake the 'Salish Kootenai Dam.'

The tribes held a ceremony in Pablo, Mont., on Saturday Sept. 5, with tribal council members, drums, dancers and historical photographic displays to mark an event that was negotiated 30 years ago.

Tribal Council Chairman Vernon Finley said that "It is a time of great happiness and great sorrow. We are regaining what we lost. We have a great responsibility."

The dam was purchased for $18.2 million from Northwest Energy, after a succession of ownerships by PPL Montana and the Montana Power Co. Negotiations for a transfer of the Federal Energy Commission license and ownership of the dam date back to 1985.

The dam was built on tribal lands by a subsidiary of the Montana Power Co. in 1934 at a bend in the Flathead River flowing downstream from Flathead Lake.

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Maps show how EPA's overreach imperils U.S. agriculture, housing

The American Farm Bureau Federation released more maps that show how the EPA intends to radically expand jurisdiction over land use via the newly issued Waters of the U.S. rule.



DITCH THE RULE CAMPAIGN PHOTO: AMERICAN FARM BUREAU

Implementation of the WOTUS rule in at least 13 states was recently halted by a court in North Dakota pending further hearings.

The maps prepared by Geosyntec Consulting show the dramatic expansion of the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory reach across wide swaths of land in Missouri, Oklahoma, New York and Wisconsin.

Nearly all of the states' total acreage would fall under EPA scrutiny. Landowners have no reliable way to know which of the water and land within that area will be regulated, yet they must still conform their activities to the new law.

"The EPA's new rule places farmers in the agency's crosshairs for using the same safe, scientifically sound and federally approved crop protection tools they've used for years," AFBF President Bob Stallman said.

"This rule creates a new set of tools for harassing farmers in court, and does it all with language that is disturbingly vague and subject to abuse by future regulators. It's worth saying again: The EPA needs to withdraw this rule and start over."

Maps detailing EPA's overreach in seven states can be found at the Farm Bureau news site (FBNews).

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ Washington and Oregon defend EPA's new water rule
+ Capital Press: So much for clarity with new WOTUS rule
+ Injunction against federal water rule may expand
+ EPA enforces new water rule in 37 states despite injunction
+ EPA water rule impact clear as mud, ag groups say
+ What you need to know about Clean Water Act rules
+ No Clean Water Act permit needed for Klamath drain
+ States' attorneys ask judge to stop new federal water rule
+ Maps show big increase in EPA authority, regulatory uncertainty
+ Judge finds evidence EPA was arbitrary, capricious in writing WOTUS rule

Writer: Staff
Publisher: American Farm Bureau
Published: September 4, 2015
URL: fb.org

24th Oregon Water Law Conference date set for November 12-13 in Portland

The 24th annual Oregon Water Law Conference is scheduled for Thursday and Friday, November 12-13 at the Hilton Executive Tower in Portland.

The event is sponsored by Oregon Water Resources Department. Program co-chairs are David E. Filippi of Stoel Rives and Richard M. Glick of Davis Wright Tremaine.

"This year's event will continue coverage of legislative, administrative and judicial water law and policy developments, featuring experts from all levels of government, tribes, nonprofits and private practice.

An underlying theme of the conference is coping with drought conditions. We'll discuss how the drought is affecting Oregonians, the potential for developing new municipal water supplies and storage, and making the most of what we have while still preserving aquatic ecosystems.

Attendees will hear about California's and other western states' experience responding to drought, the Oregon Water Resources Department's current thinking on the best regulatory approach and a special presentation by the Governor's Natural Resources Advisor, Richard Whitman, on building resilience. Also, hear a report on the latest efforts by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and others nationally to develop water quality trading programs.

As always, the event will include updates on water issues in key basins, including the Willamette, Klamath, Deschutes and Owyhee. The conference will also include presentations on how water issues affect economic development, including the wine industry, hydropower and ports."

Visit the *Latest Seminars* section online at ***theseminargroup.net*** to learn more.

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ Oregon Water Law Conference November 12-13
+ OWRC Law Seminar October 7

Writer: Richard Glick, Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP
Publisher: The Seminar Group
Published: September 14, 2015
URL: theseminargroup.net

*e*EDITION Headlines

1. Dates set for Mid-Columbia irrigation districts to end service for 2015 season.
2. Odessa Subarea: East Columbia Basin Irrigation District sued over financing plan.
3. Washington and Oregon defend EPA's new 'Waters of the U.S.' (WOTUS) rule.
4. Kennewick Irrigation District gets second Washington drought emergency grant.

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NEW *Oregon Water Monthly eEdition*

Oregon Water Monthly's new eEdition is a re-imagined and expanded full-color version with additional items not available in print. Subscribe now to receive it monthly!

Oregon Water Coalition is giving you more ways to get news of issues important to the economic success of irrigated agriculture in the Northwest. In addition to the newly designed Oregon Water Monthly you are reading now, you can catch up on all the latest news coverage in our Press Room newsblog online at ***oregonwater.org/news.***

Follow older coverage from our legacy pages. Just visit ***oregonwater.org/legacy***. And starting in June 2015, OWC is proud to unveil a brand new monthly electronic news source, Oregon Water Monthly *eEdition*. Inside it, you will find all of the coverage of our printed newsletter and more, with additional content and related articles that simply cannot fit here. If you'd like to receive this electronically-delivered email-distributed publication each month, either 'in addition' to or 'instead' of your printed newsletter, point your browser to the web link below to subscribe now. You may also unsubscribe or opt out anytime.

+ oregonwater.org/subscribe

Salish-Kootenai Tribes acquire and rename Flathead Lake dam

It was one of the first hydroelectric dams in the country to be licensed by the federal government, with a 50-year term that arranged for lease payments to the tribes.

Since then, tribal leaders have strived to acquire the dam. The tribes filed a license application competing against Montana Power Co. in 1976, prior to the first license's expiration in 1980.

That led to a nine-year dispute that ended with a negotiated settlement in 1985 with a new 50-year license that included provisions for tribal co-management of the dam and an option for the tribes to acquire the dam for the final 20 years of the license term, starting in 2015.

The turn of events are historic. "We are the only tribe that is a sole operator of a dam," said Rob McDonald, tribal communications director.

"We paid the conveyance price and Northwestern accepted," said Brian Lipscomb, chief executive officer of Energy Keepers Inc., the tribal subsidiary that will operate the dam.

"Under the contract that was negotiated 30 years ago, today we can rest assured that both parties have performed, in good faith, and both EKI and Northwestern Energy have met their obligations—allowing the tribes to become owners of Kerr Dam."

McDonald added, "The dam will be operated to the regs of the same previous owners."

There has been opposition. Montana State Sen. Bob Keenan, R-Bigfork, and former state Sen. Verdell Jackson, also a Republican, filed a motion in a Washington, D.C., district court last week seeking to block the license transfer.

The motion was denied on the same day of a hearing on the matter, Sept. 4, on all counts. The court ruled a restraining order is "an extraordinary remedy that may only be awarded on a clear showing that the plaintiff is entitled to such relief."

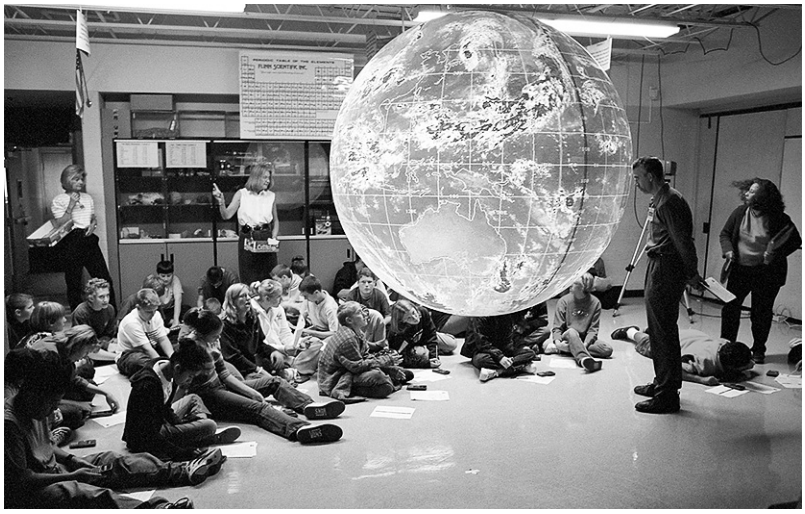
"Plaintiffs have failed to make such a showing," the court ruled. "Specifically, plaintiffs attack the lack of a public hearing regarding the transfer of the Kerr Project license to Energy Keepers, Inc., a wholly owned tribe subsidiary and the designation of CSKT and EKI as co-licensees. Plaintiffs have failed, however, to meet their burden to demonstrate that FERC was obligated to provide a public hearing for the Kerr license transfer."

"Moreover, that we have waited until the eve of the transfer counsels against the granting of an emergency injunction," and that "may be grounds for denial because such delay implies a lack of urgency and

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NOAA's Climate Science Strategy: Reducing effects of climate change

Today, NOAA took a first step in providing regional fisheries managers and stakeholders with information needed to reduce the effects of climate change and build resilience.



NOAA SCIENCE CENTERS PHOTO: NOAA

"NOAA just announced that for the globe the month of July – and actually, the entire year so far – was the warmest ever recorded, driven largely by record warm ocean temperatures," said Eileen Sobeck, assistant NOAA fisheries administrator.

"Those warmer waters – along with rising seas, coastal droughts and ocean acidification – are already putting people, businesses, and communities at risk.

"With this strategy, we're taking a proactive approach in providing information on current and future conditions to try and reduce impacts and increase our resilience."

NOAA's Fisheries Climate Science Strategy identifies seven key steps to increase production, delivery, and use of climate-related information to support the management of fish stocks, fisheries, and protected species.

The steps focus on how a changing climate affects living marine resources, ecosystems, and the communities that depend on them, and how to respond to those changes.

"We are already seeing marine animals change where they live to deal with changing climate.

"We're even seeing population numbers of some species drop," said Richard Merrick, Ph.D, NOAA Fisheries director of scientific programs and chief science advisor.

"Providing more information on current and future conditions will fill a crucial need. Our nation's marine resource managers, along with the businesses and communities that depend on those resources, need to know what changes are coming so they can take appropriate action to mitigate any negative effects on our economy and environment."

The strategy identifies key risks in the U.S. from climate change, including millions of U.S. jobs, ocean fisheries worth billions, protected marine species, habitats that provide valuable services, and the health and enjoyment of our oceans and coasts from recreation and tourism.

Following release of the strategy, NOAA Fisheries science centers and regional

Continued Page 9

Lowest Snake River sockeye salmon return since 2007

Some 101 Snake River sockeye salmon made it back to Idaho this year, but just 44 swam all the way to Redfish Lake on their own. Making it all happen required effort and resiliance.

To reach 101, it took a combined effort of trapping at both Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River in Washington state (51 fish) and Sawtooth Fish Hatchery on the Salmon River in Idaho's Stanley Basin (6 fish) – and trucking them to Idaho Fish and Game's Eagle Hatchery near Boise – plus the 44 fish that migrated from the mouth of the Columbia River to Redfish Lake.

This month, IDFG personnel will increase that return number and release around 650 more adults to spawn in Redfish and Pettit lakes near Stanley, Idaho.

How do you turn 101 fish into 650? The same way you turn a single fish into a salmon run - carefully and creatively, according to IDFG. That's what agency biologists have done since 1992 when a lone sockeye dubbed "Lonesome Larry" returned to Idaho, and biologists have used an intensive captive broodstock program to save this endangered species.

Redfish Lake sockeye, the southern-most population of sockeye salmon in the world, swim 900 miles from the Pacific Ocean to a 6,500-foot elevation in central Idaho's Sawtooth Basin to spawn.

The Columbia and Lower Snake rivers had unseasonably high temperatures this summer, warm enough to kill migrating sockeye. To ensure the fish's survival, the regional Technical Management Team, made up of both fisheries and dam operators, provided cold water from Dworshak Dam when it was available to keep water in the lower Snake River cold enough to encourage the fish to pass the dams.

In addition, IDFG crews trapped 51 adult sockeye at Lower Granite Dam about 30 miles downstream from Lewiston and trucked them to the Eagle Hatchery, an IDFG facility near Boise.

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ New Columbia fall chinook forecast: Over 1 million fish
+ Council to assess salmon habitat blocked by Gr. Coulee
+ Dike breach offers salmon and steelhead new habitat
+ Smoke, lower air temperatures keep Lower Snake cooler
+ Study: Reducing time and cost to estimate fish passage

Council releases draft report on 'State of Columbia River Basin'

The Northwest Power Act requires the Northwest Power and Conservation Council to report annually to the U.S. Congress on the 'current state of the Columbia River Basin.'



COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN PHOTO: FOTOLIA

The report also documents the Council's activities and must be released in draft form for 90 days of public comment prior to submission to the U.S. Congress.

The current draft report produced by the Council, "The State of the Columbia River Basin Draft Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2015" is available. The comment period closes Monday, December 21, 2015.

The final report will be submitted to Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and House Committee on Natural Resources.

"It was a year of records in the Columbia River Basin, one of the world's great rivers for hydropower and salmon, and the economic engine of the Pacific Northwest region of the United States," says the report.

"More salmon and steelhead returned from the ocean in 2014 and were counted at Bonneville Dam, 146 miles inland and the first place where fish can be counted, than in any year since the dam was completed in 1938: 2,574,321 by the end of the calendar year. The credit for this success lies in many places, including favorable ocean conditions during the three to five years most of those fish spent at sea, improved passage survival at dams, improving habitat conditions in the places where wild fish spawn, careful controls on the number of fish allowed to be harvested, and improving knowledge and practice at fish hatcheries.

"But it also was a year when, ironically, ocean water off the Northwest coast inexplicably warmed to levels never seen before – bad news for cold-water species like salmon – and precipitation, particularly mountain snowfall, was so far below normal in the winter of 2014/15 that drought emergencies were declared in parts of Idaho, Oregon and Washington. The winter was the warmest on record in Washington and the second-warmest in Oregon. "Fortunately, the drought and

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OWC ON THE WEB

If you have not visited the totally NEW Oregon Water Coalition website, see the changes today. The all new site unveiled in early-2015 delivers additional content to our members and anyone else interested in the issues many of us care about. The redesigned site brings all new functionality and a totally revamped look and feel. Improvements and upgrades include sliding presentation panels, an all new integrated Press Room newsblog (now in the same place as the regular site), mobile-responsive resizing, lightbox-enhanced viewing effects, semantic, intuitive menus, and a fresh look.

Keep informed of all the latest issues and developments in water, irrigation and agriculture throughout the Northwest at oregonwater.org

Unlike our monthly newsletter, occasionally edited for content, internet coverage is unlimited by space and publishing deadline. This means expanded and more timely coverage. Visit ***oregonwater.org***



Drought Watch: Oregon Water Resources Department offers info on conditions, more

Oregon is experiencing drought conditions in many areas of the state. Learn more about current conditions, drought assistance, and what you can do to use water wisely.

Visit the Oregon Water Resources Department's new *Drought Watch* page to learn more about current conditions, drought assistance, and what you can do to use water more wisely.

With drought emergencies now declared in more than half of Oregon's 36 counties, it's important to stay up to date on all current data and new developments.

Resources at the site include OWRD's new weekly drought reports, drought water right summary reports, basin water supply status reports and maps, historical executive drought orders, and a lot more.

Find additional resources including reservoir storage diagrams for the Deschutes, Rogue, Tualatin, Umatilla and Willamette River Basins, and Southeastern Oregon.

Other useful data can be accessed from the site, such as the latest Oregon water supply outlook, three-month outlook, temperature precipitation probability, Oregon surface water supply index, and 7-day average streamflow compared to historical streamflow for the same day.

Visit the updated OWRD *Drought Watch* page on the web anytime at:

+ drought.oregon.gov

OREGON WATER MONTHLY

Oregon Water Monthly is published and mailed twelve times each year by the Oregon Water Coalition. With news important to Oregon agriculture, this printed publication, along with its electronic and online counterparts, is available to all current OWC members. An archived version of each issue is available online one month after publication. Oregon Water Monthly's new *eEdition* is a re-imagined and expanded full-color version with additional items not available in print. You can subscribe online at ***oregonwater.org/subscribe***







NW Council's 'State of Columbia Basin' report released to public

unusually warm weather did not extend to the upper parts of the Columbia River Basin, even though precipitation was at or below normal in the mountains of southeastern British Columbia, where the river begins. As a result, the impacts on hydropower, which provides nearly half of the region's electricity, were minimal.

"The Columbia River water supply and runoff were low enough in the spring and summer of 2015 to trigger dry-year operating rules under the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion to protect juvenile salmon and steelhead, including threatened and endangered species, migrating to the ocean, and adult fish returning to spawn. This meant that storage reservoirs were drawn down deeper than normal to provide more water for fish migration. Also, in dry years more juvenile fish are transported around dams in barges than are left in the river to migrate on their own. The low runoff combined with high temperatures and low rainfall during the summer of 2015 led to disastrous conditions for migrating adult salmon and steelhead.

"The Columbia River and its tributaries were much warmer than usual, and this made for lethal or near-lethal conditions for adult salmon and steelhead, which can't tolerate water warmer than 68 degrees for long. At times and in places throughout the Columbia River Basin summer water temperatures were well above 70 degrees, leading to fish die-offs. At least half of the anticipated 500,000 sockeye salmon expected to return in 2015 are believed to have died in the unusually warm Columbia. Dead sturgeon, apparently also victims of warm water, were found in the Columbia in central Washington.

"The near-record low runoff in 2015 did not result from a lack of precipitation but from a lack of snow, particularly in the United States' portion of the Columbia River Basin. Thus, the winter of 2014-15 could be an anomaly, or it could be an example of what the average winter in the Pacific Northwest could be like by the end of the century, if predictions of an increasingly warmer climate prove accurate."

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ New NWPCC binational report points to areas of Columbia River collaboration

Writer: John Harrison
Publisher: NWPCC
Published: September 3, 2015
URL: nwcouncil.org

USGS mapping tool provides data on pesticides in streams

A new interactive mapping tool created by the U.S. Geological Survey provides predicted concentrations for 108 pesticides in streams and rivers across the United States.

According to the USGS, the new tool also identifies which streams are most likely to exceed water-quality guidelines for human health or aquatic life.

Citizens and water managers can create maps showing where pesticides are likely to occur in local streams and rivers and evaluate the likelihood of concentrations exceeding water-quality guidelines. The predictions can also be used to design cost-effective monitoring programs.

"Because pesticide monitoring is very expensive, we cannot afford to directly measure pesticides in all streams and rivers," said William Werkeiser, USGS Associate Director for Water. "This model can be used to estimate pesticide levels at unmonitored locations to provide a national assessment of pesticide occurrence."

"The USGS pesticide model is a valuable tool that we can use, along with other modeling and analytical tools, to evaluate data as we complete ecological risk assessments for pesticides," said Dr. Donald J. Brady, Director, Environmental Fate and Effects Division, Office of Pesticide Programs, EPA.

"Streams and rivers most vulnerable to pesticides can be assessed," said Wes Stone, USGS hydrologist and lead developer of the model.

"For instance, many streams in the Corn Belt region are predicted to have a greater than 50 percent probability that one or more pesticides exceed aquatic-life benchmarks."

The online mapping tool is based on a USGS statistical model – referred to as Watershed Regression for Pesticides ('WARP') – which provides key statistics for thousands of streams, including the probability that a pesticide may exceed a water-quality benchmark and the reliability of each prediction.

The WARP model estimates concentrations using information on the physical and chemical properties of pesticides, agricultural pesticide use, soil characteristics, hydrology, and climate.

The new mapping tool is available online at:

+ cida.usgs.gov/warp/home

Writer: Staff
Publisher: Columbia Basin Bulletin
Published: September 18, 2015
URL: cbbulletin.com

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Salish-Kootenai Tribes acquire Kerr Dam

irreparable harm." The plaintiffs, the court noted, had been aware of the Sept. 5 license transfer date for more than a year. The ruling also states that the plaintiffs failed to substantiate claims that questions of equity tilt in their favor.

"To the contrary, the equities tilt in the favor of concluding that a transfer of the dam to the (CSKT) are in accordance with a plan that has been in place since 1985 and to which plaintiffs failed to challenge in court until the eve of the transfer."

Brian Lipscomb, chief executive officer of Energy Keepers Inc., said there will be no changes in the way the dam has been operated, because the terms of the original license are still in place.

Lipscomb said water users and the public will not be impacted in any noticeable way. "The only change is in a positive way, in that people who live around Flathead Lake are going to manage it and they appreciate that," he said, adding that he has spoken with many Flathead Lake property owners who support the tribal acquisition of the Salish Kootenai Dam.

The dam is a three-unit hydroelectric plant on the Flathead River about five miles southwest of Polson and the natural outlet of Flathead Lake. The units have a total generating capacity of 194 megawatts.

The dam began operation in 1938. It is 541 feet long and 205 feet high.

Its installation raised the level of Flathead Lake by 10 feet over the natural lake outlet. The dam's 28-mile-long reservoir has a storage capacity of 1.2 million acre-feet.

The dam is classified as a "storage generation" project because it uses the water stored in its reservoir to generate electricity.

Flathead Lake, which lies in the Flathead Valley of northwest Montana, is the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi. The lake is 28 miles long, up to 15 miles wide and more than 300 feet deep.

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ Group seeks to stop transfer of Kerr Dam to tribes
+ Lawsuit: Plaintiffs defend Kerr Dam acquisition effort
+ Panel sets Kerr Dam price for Salish-Kootenai tribes
+ Grant aids Salish-Kootenai plan for Kerr Dam purchase
+ Tribes seek comment to return salmon above Gr. Coulee
+ Umatilla tribes use BPA funds to acquire acreage for improvements of salmon spawning, rearing

Writer: Staff
Publisher: Columbia Basin Bulletin
Published: September 11, 2015
URL: cbbulletin.com

Drought recovery uncertain, Oregon reservoirs may struggle

In Polk County, for example, Rickreall Creek was regulated back to 1940 and the Luckiamute River was regulated to 1964.

Longtime area residents said they hadn't experienced such shortages before, Enright said. "We don't usually regulate in those areas." With the possibility that more precipitation will fall as rain rather than snow, the management of reservoirs may need to be reconsidered, said Snell of the Oregon Water Resources Congress.

Water is traditionally released during winter to ensure adequate flood control, but if recent conditions are the "new normal," those requirements must be balanced against the need for adequate water during summer, she said.

If there is an upside to the drought, it's that more people are thinking about the need for water supply management and development.

"It's an eye-opener for folks," Snell said.

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ Kennewick Irrigation District to wrap season at 60%
+ Two Washington irrigation districts get drought grants
+ Kittitas growers find alternative water source
+ Roza district growers get water a little longer
+ Yakima reservoir levels likely to be half of normal
+ Another step taken to bring water to Odessa Subarea
+ Mid-Columbia agencies asked to push conservation
+ Rain washes away 'extreme' drought in W. Washington
+ Drought threatens westside water rights, Ecology warns
+ Water group comes out swinging over flood control releases
+ Governor Brown Declares Drought In Linn County
+ Touchet Irrigation District fined for illegal water use
+ Kennewick District users call for Columbia River water rights

Writer: Mateusz Perkowski
Publisher: Capital Press
Published: September 16, 2015
URL: capitalpress.com

NOAA's Climate Science Strategy: Reducing effects of climate change

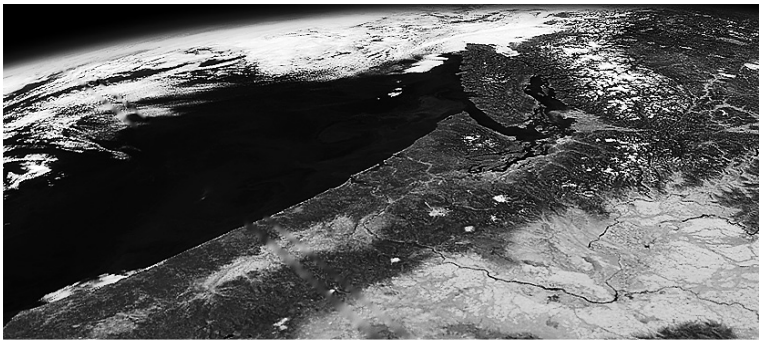
offices will work with partners and stakeholders – including fishery management councils, other federal agencies, and tribes – to develop and finalize regional action plans by late 2016 that address objectives in the strategy.

These regional action plans will identify strengths, weaknesses, priorities, and actions to implement the Strategy in each region over the next five years. NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources.

More at: **oregonwater.org/news**

+ Winter El Niño: Wet Southern California, dry Northwest
+ Record So. California rain swamps roads, swells rivers
+ El Niño looking to be one of strongest since 1997
+ Study: Is West Coast blob responsible for Northwest drought?

Writer: Jennie Lyons
Publisher: NOAA
Published: August 25, 2015
URL: noaa.gov





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