MAC-T Monthly Call

Midwest Agriculture and Climate Team

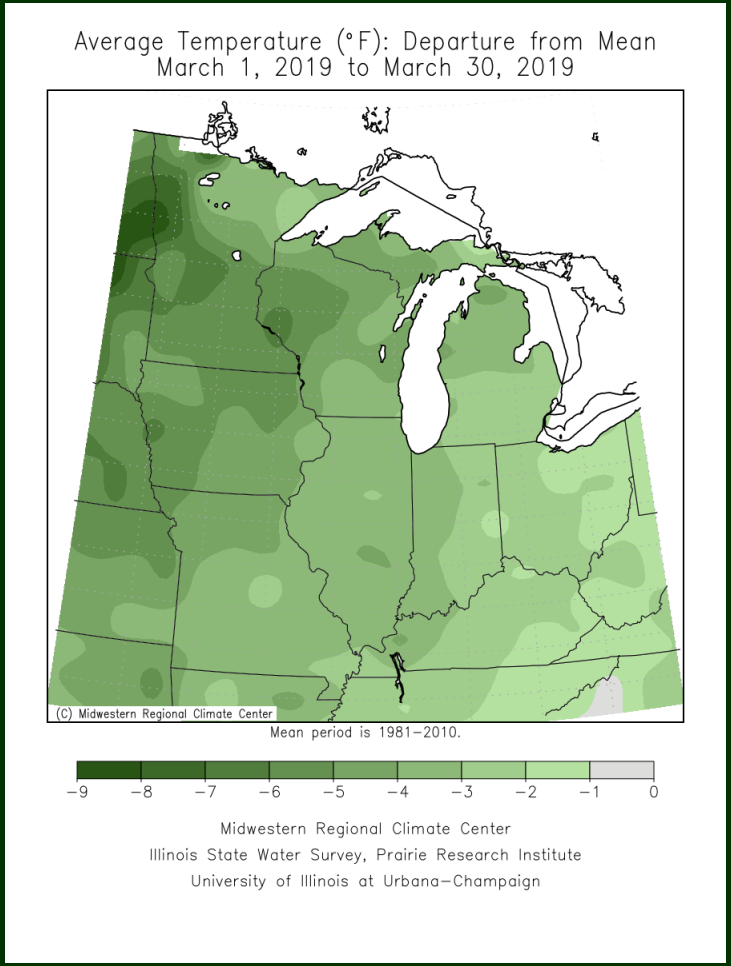
April 1, 2019

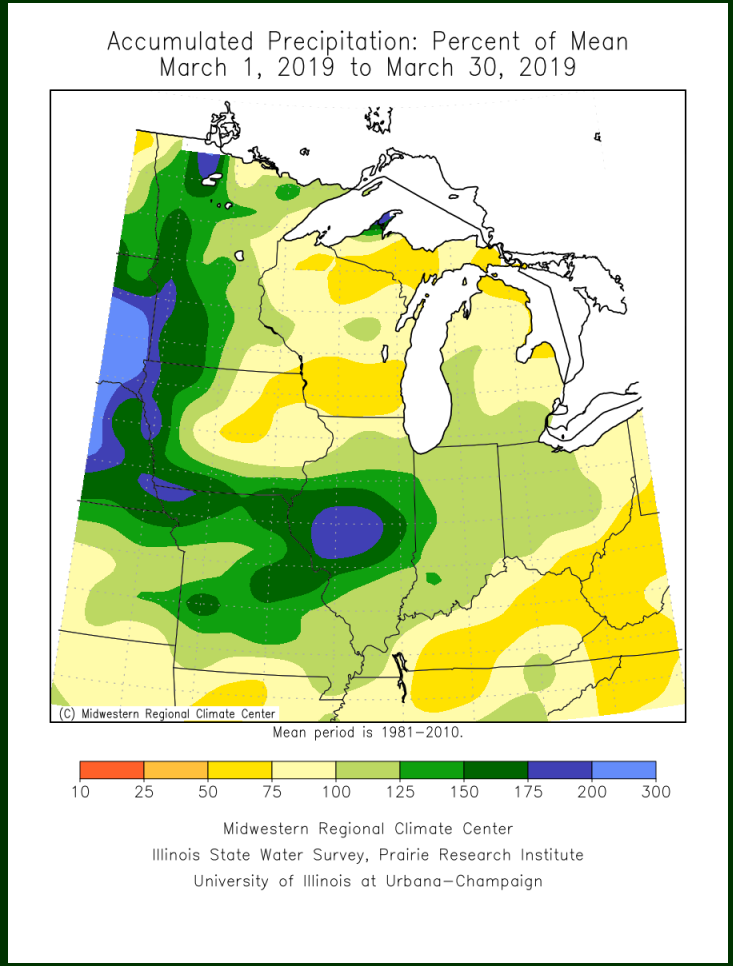
For more information:

Dennis.todey@ars.usda.gov

Charlene.Felkley@ars.usda.gov

USDA Midwest Climate Hub
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

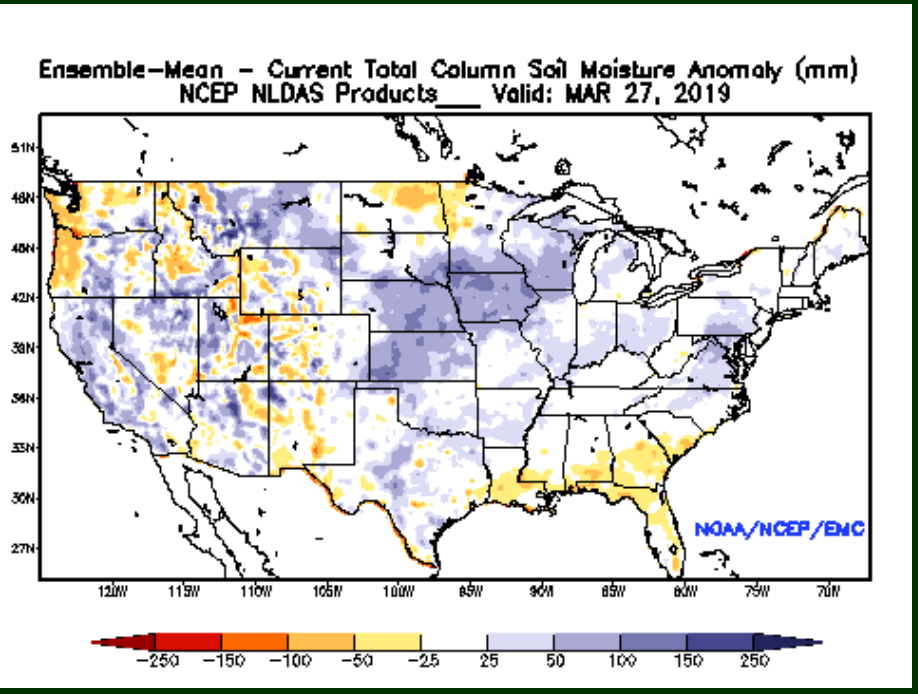




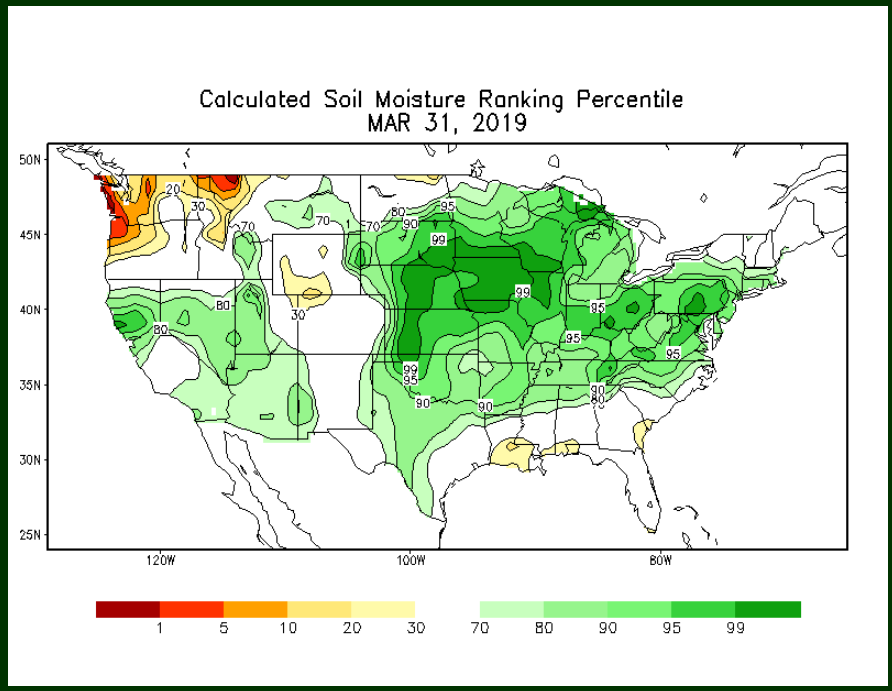
- March temperatures (as expected) were below average throughout the region – worse into the Plains. Departures ranged from 1-2°F below avg. in the east to 8-9°F in the west.
- Precipitation was actually below average in large areas including the Great Lakes and south of the Ohio River. Much of the wetter-than-average areas were quite wet with nearly double average precipitation.

http://mrcc.isws.illinois.edu/cliwatch/watch.htm#curMonths

Soil Moisture



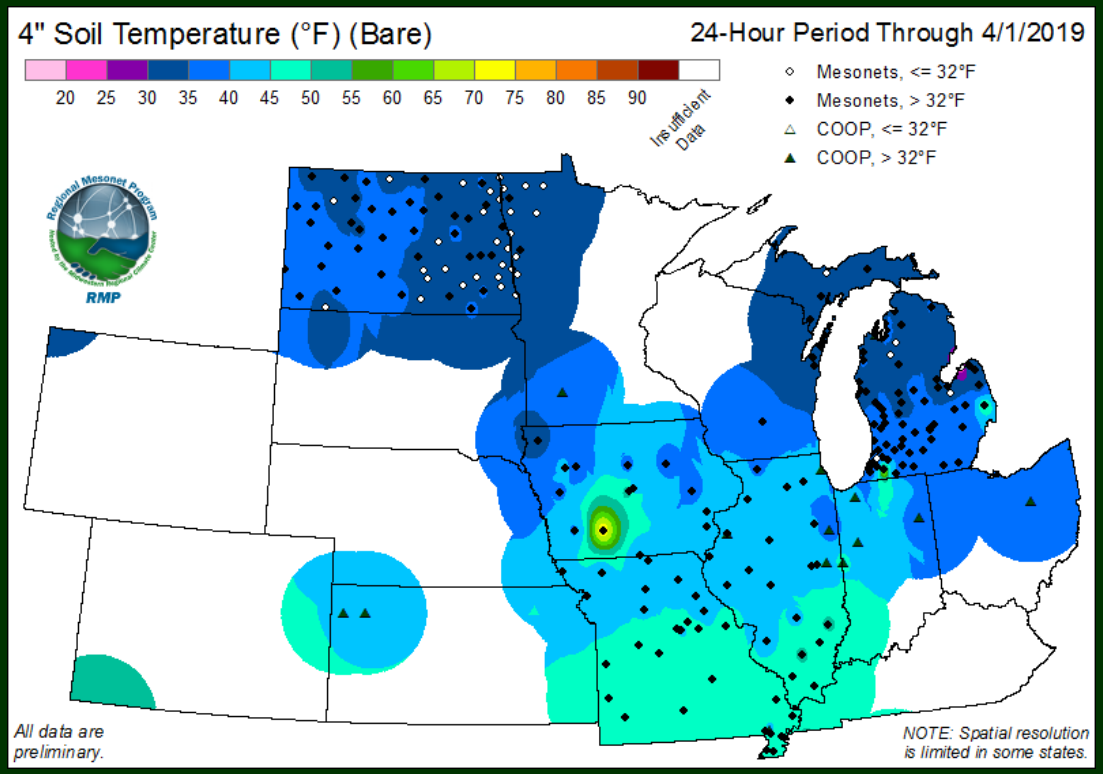
- Heavy precip fell over already wet areas increasing wetness issues.
- Dry areas of the eastern Corn Belt have helped starting to dry soils approaching planting.
- Soils are still in the 90th percentile over most of the region with 99th centered on Iowa and central plains.



http://www.emc.ncep.noaa.gov/mmb/nldas/drought/

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/Soilmst_Monitoring/US/Soilmst/Soilmst.shtml#

Soil Temperature



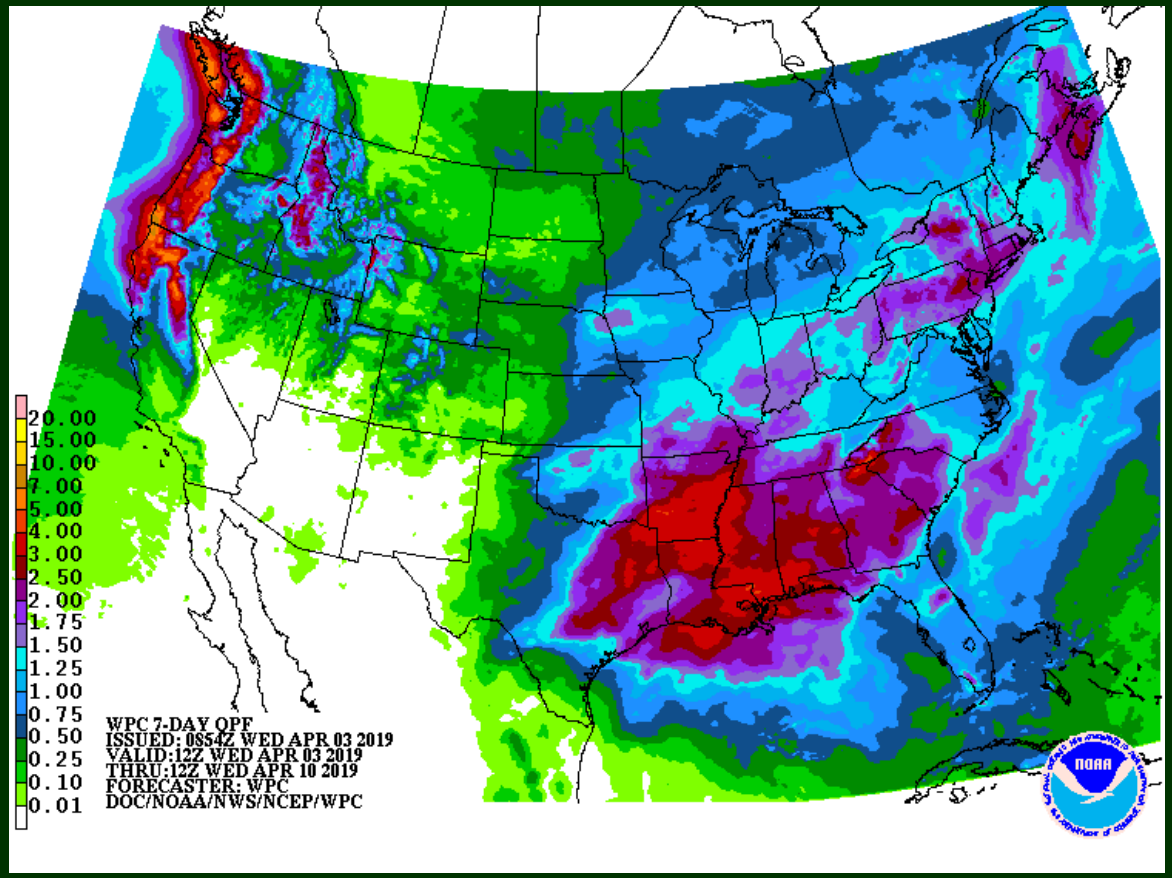
- Soil temperatures are still well below potential planting. But areas are generally above freezing except some further north.

https://mrcc.illinois.edu/RMP/currentMaps.html

Assorted AG Issues

- Wet soils will continue to be an issue slowing initial field activity.
- Flooding is still possible along major rivers. Recovery efforts just getting started in worst hit areas of western Corn Belt.
- High water levels will slow river transport on the Mississippi
- Potential for early season seedling diseases with wet conditions.
- Just starting bud-break/green-up of perennials. Cold still possible in later April – monitor for freeze problems.

1-7 Day Precip (updated)

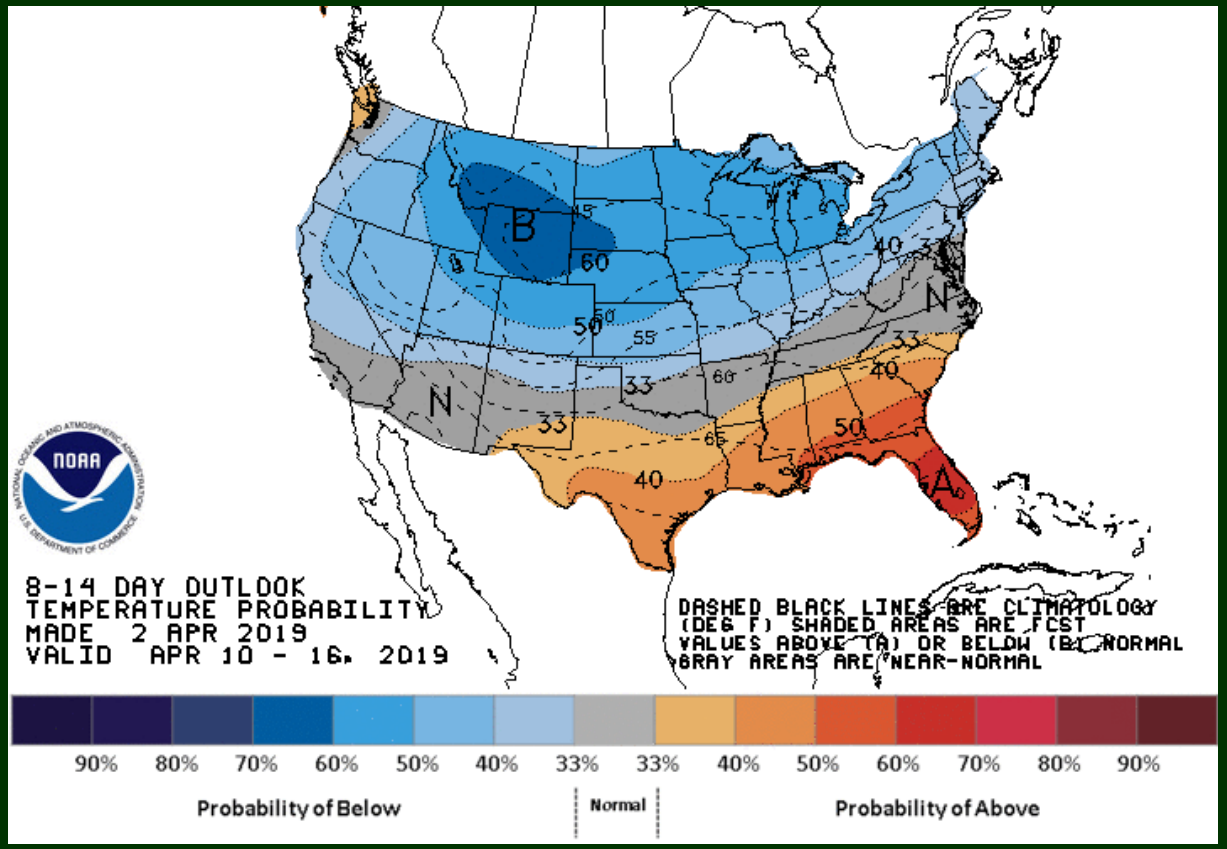


- Several expected precip amounts (some possibly heavier), which will keep soils wet.
- ~~Eastern Corn Belt continues to be drier.~~
- Northern areas (which are still melting snow and running off) fortunately are expecting less precip in the next week.

http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/qpf/day1-7.shtml

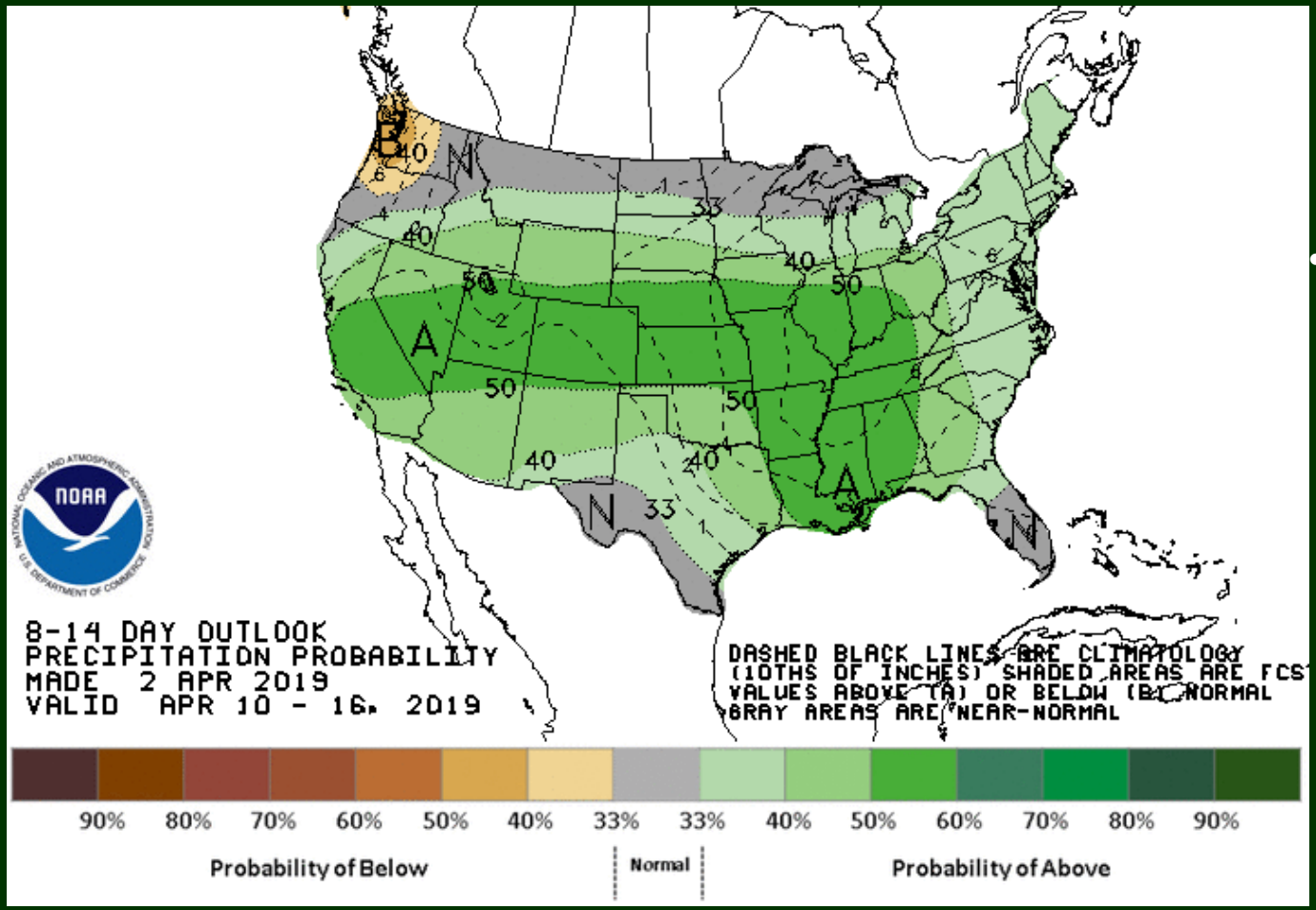
Temperature Outlook

- Warmer early April gives way to likely colder conditions over most of the region.
- Near normal likely elsewhere.



http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

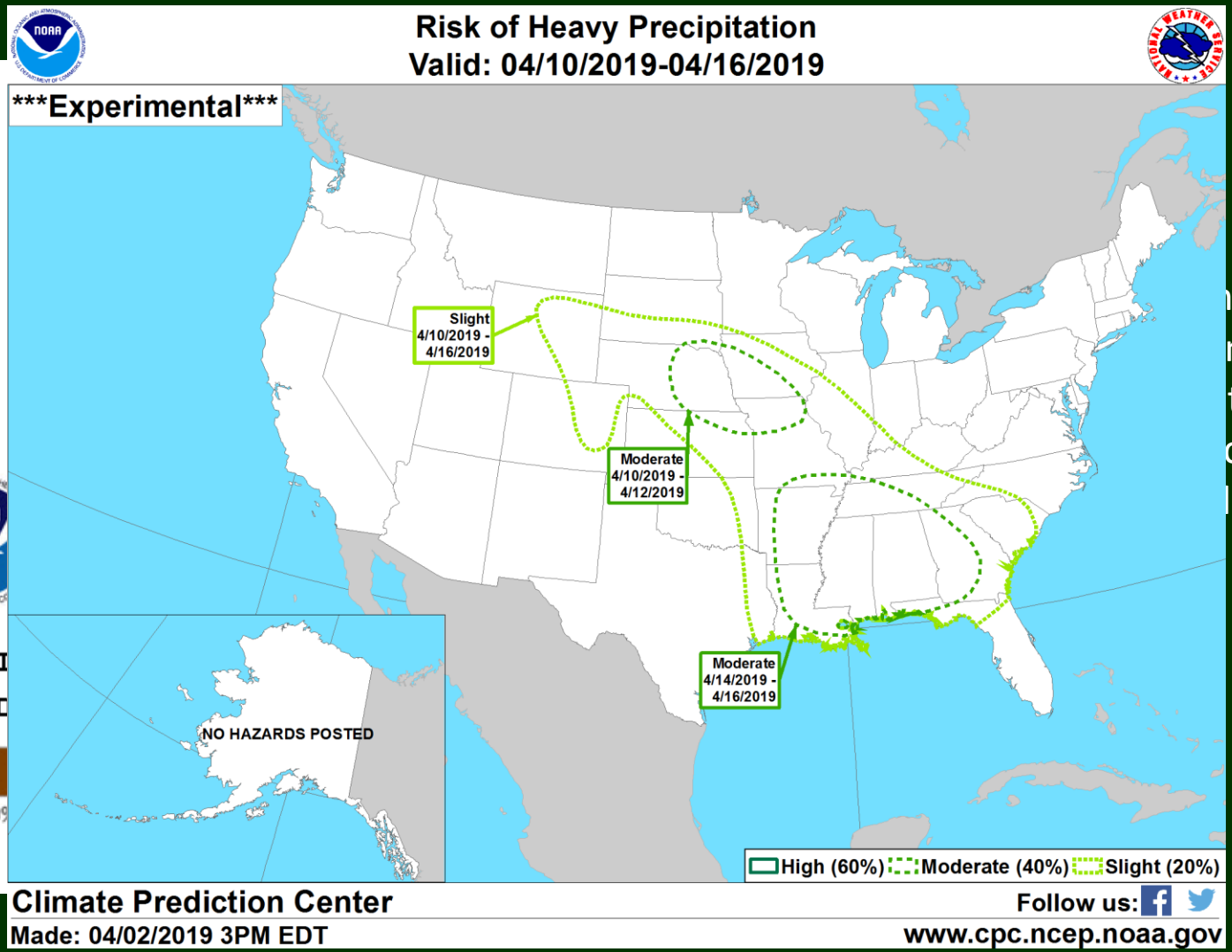
Precipitation Outlook



- A more active pattern seems likely to continue with several precip events into mid-April.

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

Precipitation Outlook

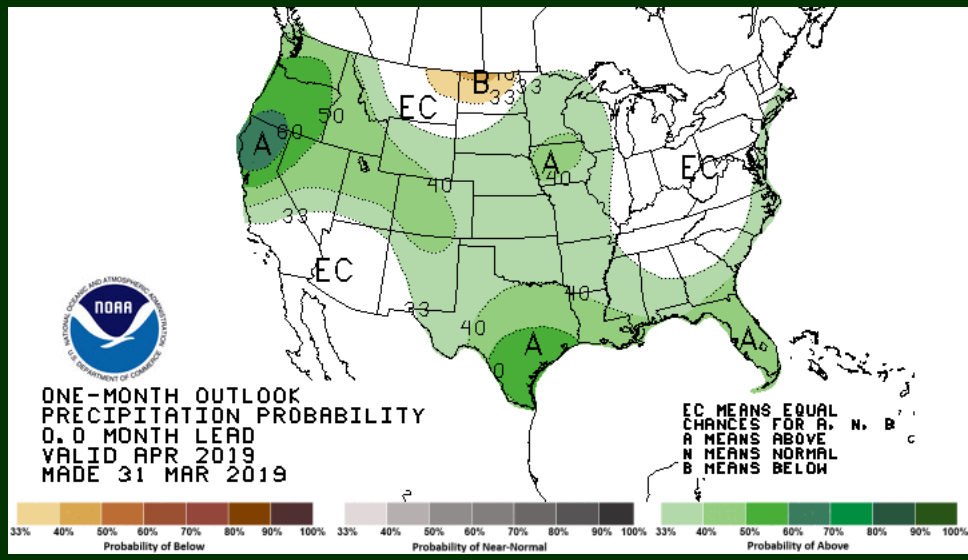


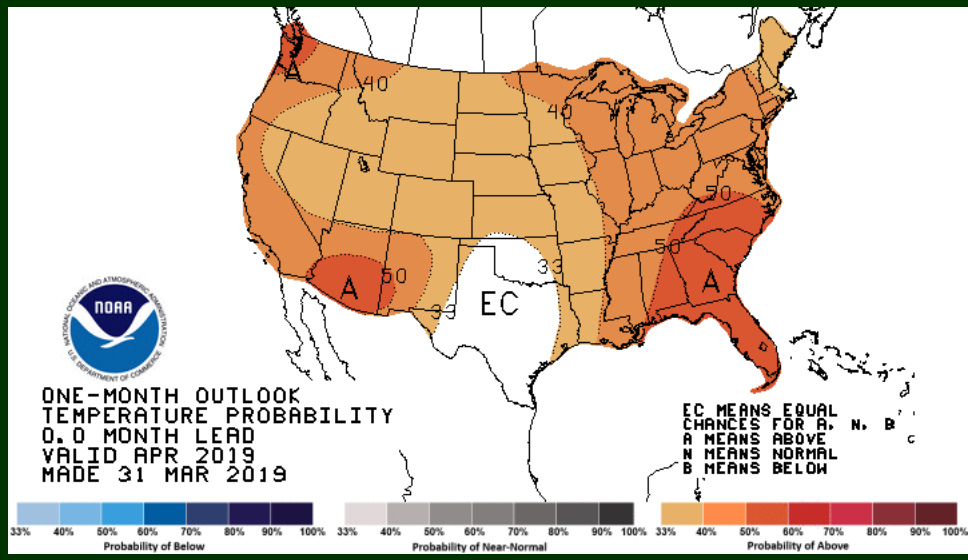
ore active pattern
ms likely to
tinue with several
cip events into
l-April.

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

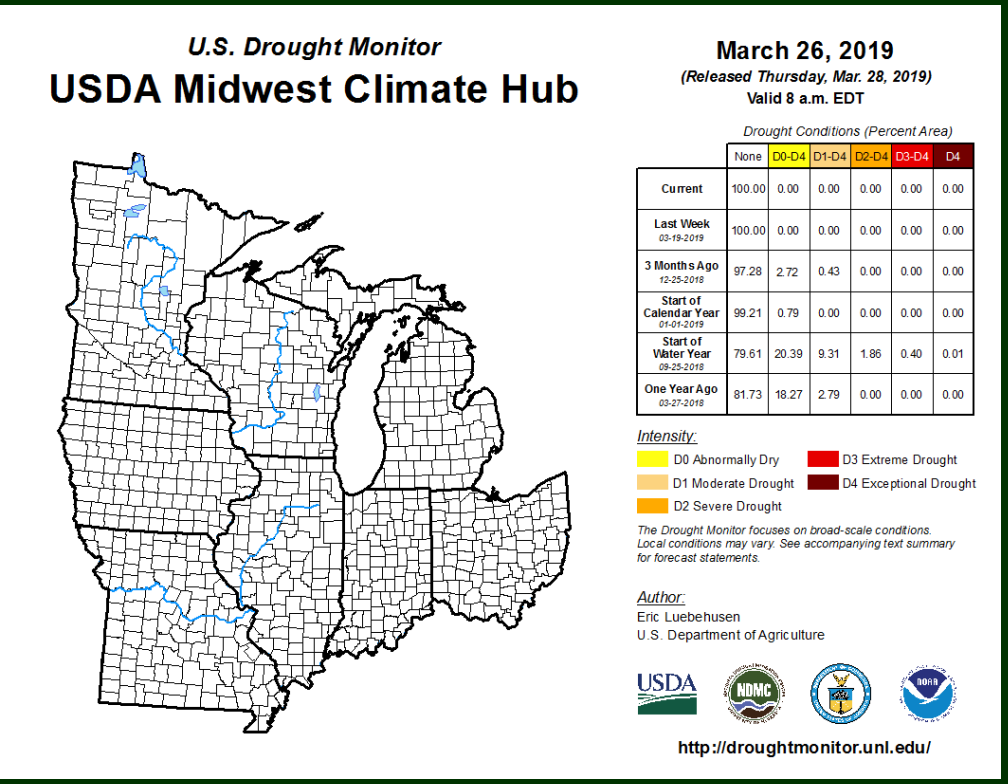
1-Month Outlook

- Precip chances are slightly increased for April except for eastern states.
- Slightly higher chance of warmer-than-average temperatures over the whole region.
- Eastern Corn Belt has the better chance of moving on planting earlier.
- Central Corn Belt likely to be somewhat delayed in activity.





Drought in the Midwest



The Midwest remained free of drought, with significant flooding impacting the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

**In the history of the USDM (since 2000) the Midwest Climate Hub region has never had a multi-week run with nothing noted in the region (now 5 consecutive weeks). There have only been two single weeks of no coverage previously.

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

Summary

- March was cold, but varyingly wet/dry across the region.
- Soils are generally much wetter than average, but somewhat better in the eastern Corn Belt.
- Generally wetter conditions, but warmer are more likely into at least early April.
- Field activity more likely in the eastern Corn Belt.
- Wetness problems should continue in soils and runoff.

Next MAC-T Monthly Call

Next Call **Wednesday, May 1st.**