

IMPROVING DROUGHT EARLY WARNING

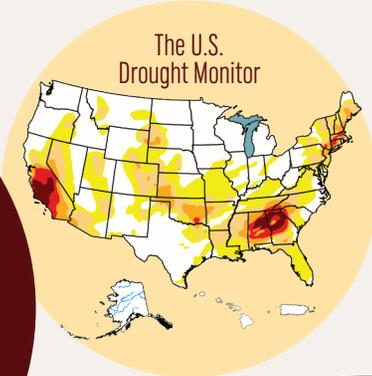
Based on a survey of the network by the National Drought Mitigation Center, with funding by the National Integrated Drought Information System.



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WHAT IS THE U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR NETWORK?

a A group of 425+ observers from across the country who supply input about local conditions or impacts to the authors of the U.S. Drought Monitor map.



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WHAT BENEFITS?

- a
- The science of drought
 - Awareness
 - Communication
 - Decision-making
 - Credibility
 - Validity
 - Local characterization of drought
 - Network member organization

89%

say the USDM process has improved the ability to provide early drought warnings in the United States.

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WHO ARE THE OBSERVERS?

- a
- Climatologists
 - Meteorologists
 - Hydrologists
 - Remote sensing specialists
 - Ag scientists
 - Biologists
 - Natural resource scientists
 - Social scientists

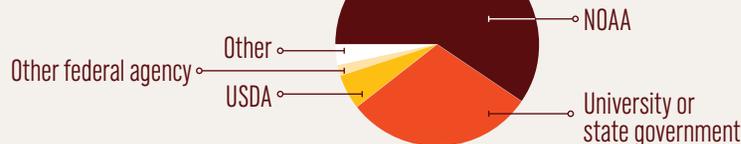
How long have they been involved?



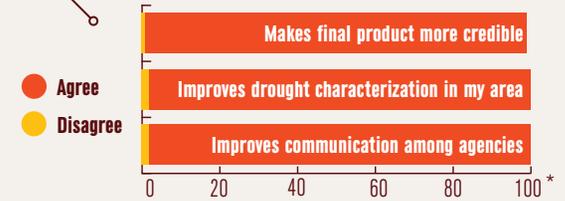
Number of respondents*

*209 participated in this survey question

Where do they work?



Benefits to the nation



Benefits to science



* Each graphic reflects 100 percent of responses; not every participant answered every question.

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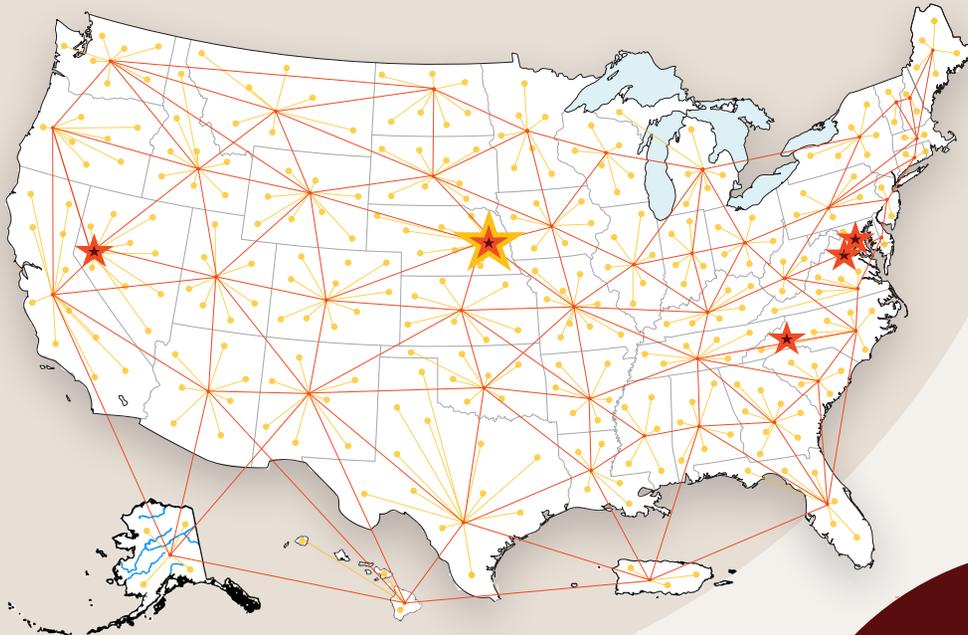
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The network in action

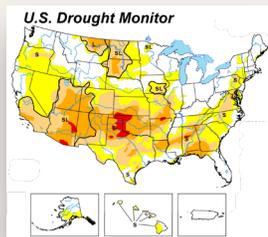
This is a conceptual illustration of how the network of 425+ observers gathers and reports climate information and impacts to authors of the U.S. Drought Monitor map and narrative each week. Observers are in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory, and they use input from local stakeholders (represented by yellow dots) in their recommendations to the author.

✂ Network of observers
 ● Stakeholders
 ★ Author location
 ★ USDM operational home



The final product

The U.S. Drought Monitor map is released weekly and is available at: droughtmonitor.unl.edu.



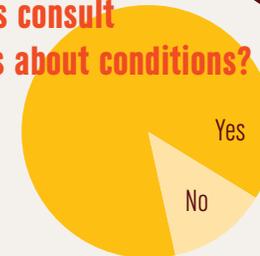
HOW DOES IT WORK?



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Observers get a working copy of the week's drought map with proposed category changes based on drought indicators by Monday of each week. They provide feedback on its accuracy, and their suggestions are reviewed and if verified are incorporated into the finalized map, released on Thursdays.

Do observers consult stakeholders about conditions?



WHO CREATES THE MAP?

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Authors are from the National Drought Mitigation Center, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Centers for Environmental Information, Western Regional Climate Center, and Climate Prediction Center.

How many hours do observers spend gathering local input?

When area is experiencing severe or worse drought



Want to know more? Email droughtmonitor@unl.edu.