

# NOAA's National Climatic Data Center



## News Highlights



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The National Climatic Data Center's News Highlights is a quarterly publication for NCDC data users. Address comments or article suggestions to:  
[ncdc-outreach@noaa.gov](mailto:ncdc-outreach@noaa.gov)

### The Director's Corner

Greetings to our Data Users:

The 2005 NOAA Data and Information Users' Workshop held in Asheville, NC, was well attended and generated lots of valuable feedback. These workshops are an important opportunity for us to listen to the needs of our constituents. We strive to maintain and develop a range of climate data products, which meet the broad needs of our users. We also continually strive to strengthen our on-line capabilities and make more data available to you in near-real time. You will see that work has already begun on several of the user recommendations including a more effective webpage search function. We expect, over the next several months, to begin acting upon many of the valuable recommendations that were received from the workshop. Communication with our customers is paramount in maintaining our working relationship while also enabling us to provide the best level of products possible.

Dr. Thomas R. Karl

### Product News and Updates

- Frost/Freeze Data, 1971-2000 (CLIM20-01) is now online:

<http://www5.ncdc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/climatenormals/climatenormals.pl>

- The NCDC homepage now includes a direct link to the "search by map" GIS interface, which continues to have new features added.

- A 2002-2004 CDROM of daily data (DS3200 and 3210, in archive format) is available in the Online Store.

- The 2004 Integrated Surface Hourly DVD is available in the Online Store. This DVD provides global hourly data for over 11,000 stations.

- NCDC has incorporated a new search function into its homepage. A Google license was recently purchased to facilitate a more powerful and accurate web-search for NCDC data and products. Please try it out!

### User Survey Now on NCDC Website:

NCDC has placed the approved NESDIS user survey on the NCDC homepage, where users can easily complete the survey. The survey and its software were originally developed two years ago for a survey at that time, with results reported at the NESDIS Constituents Meeting and the AMS National Meeting. We are now conducting the same survey. The results will be compared to the previous survey. Various areas of interest include customer support and data access via the Web. The survey can be found on NCDC's homepage, between the links to the privacy policy and FirstGov.



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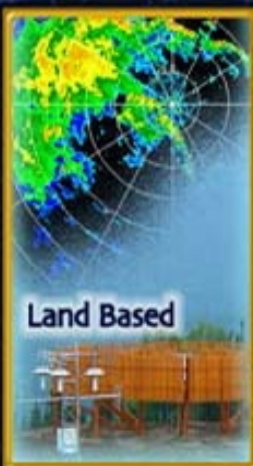
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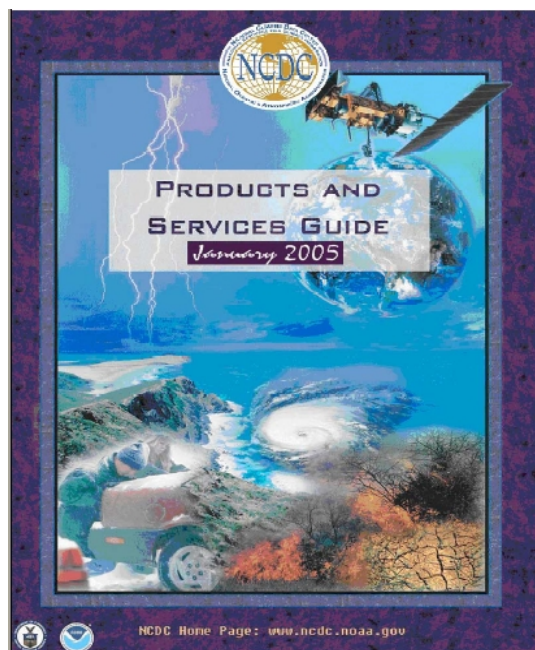
**HOW ARE WE DOING?**  
A user survey

**FIRSTGOV**  
The U.S. Government's Official Web Portal

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**Products and Services Guide:**

NCDC produced an updated version of its Products and Services Guide for 2005. The 102-page Guide includes informative sections on 2004 highlights, world wide web services, CDROM products, digital datasets, and publications; with web-enabled links to each URL provided in the Guide. It's available online in PDF format at the following URL: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/climateproducts.html>. We also have CDROM copies of the Guide available as needed, and the CD's were widely distributed at the national AMS conference in San Diego in January.



## World Weather Records 1991-2000 CDROM:

The World Weather Records (WWR) 1991-2000 CDROM is now available through the On-line Store. Click on the CDROM Products link on the left-hand side-bar of the NCDC homepage, to get to the page for the WWR CD.

The CD contains monthly data for global reporting stations for the 1991-2000 period, and the write-up in the On-line Store provides further details.

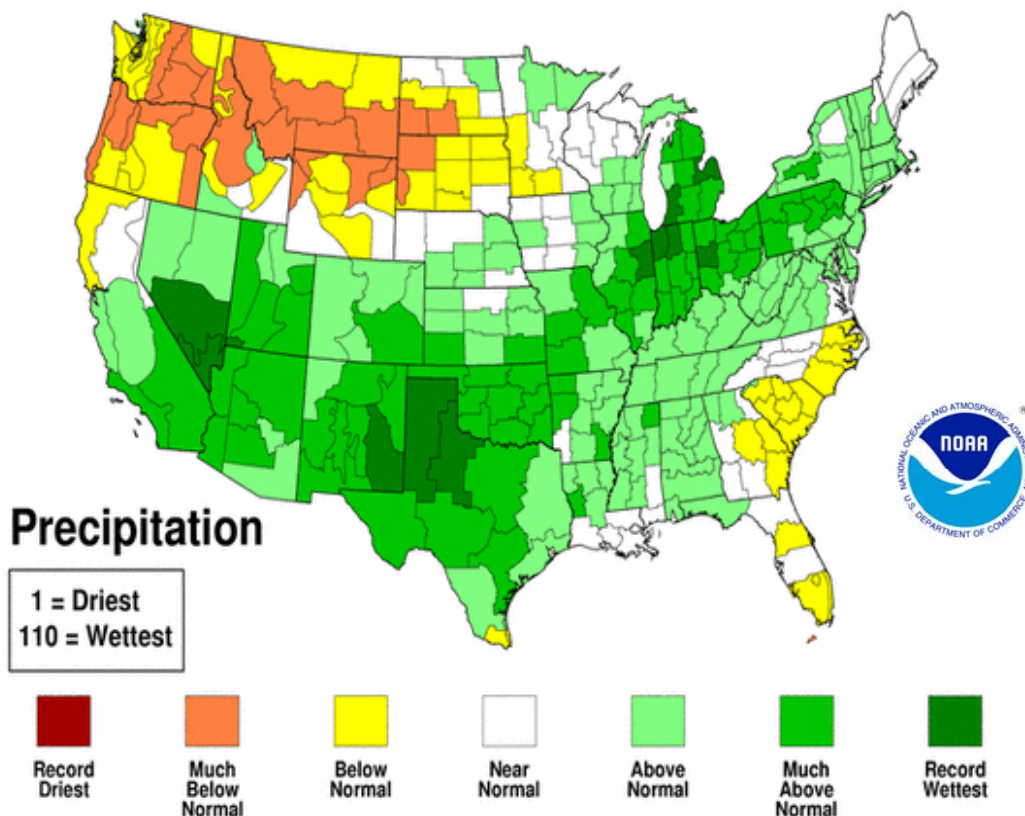
## U.S. State of the Climate - Winter 2004/2005:

The United States experienced its eighth warmest winter on record for 2004/2005. Temperatures across much of the nation were above normal, with the mean temperature in 38 states ranking above average. Only Maine ranked significantly below average for temperature. Drier-than-average conditions occurred in the Northwest with moderate to-extreme drought (as defined by a widely used measure of drought - the Palmer Drought Index) affecting 72 percent of the Pacific Northwest (Wash., Ore., Idaho) at the end of winter. This was dramatically higher than the 14 percent affected on December 1, but below the recent peak of 92 percent in November 2002 and the all-time record of 100 percent most recently set in 1977. More than 60 percent of the broader Northwest (Wash., Ore., Idaho, Mont., Wyo.) was also in moderate-to-extreme drought at the end of the winter. This was also reflected in the snow pack. Less than 25 percent of average March 1 snow pack existed in the western half of Washington and Oregon, and widespread areas with less than 70 percent of average snow pack were evident across most of the Northwest.

Beginning in autumn 2004, a series of Pacific storms brought above average, and in some cases, record precipitation to the Southwest. Based on preliminary data, downtown Los Angeles had over 18 inches of rain during the winter, exceeding the normal winter rainfall by around 12 inches. Record precipitation for the water-year to date (Oct.-Feb.) was recorded at stations across parts of the Southwest, especially in Utah. And while rain fell along the southern California coast during the winter, snow fell in the Sierra Nevada and mountainous Southwest. Snow pack was more than 150 percent of average in the southern Sierras and across parts of southern Nevada and Utah. New Mexico and Arizona also had widespread above average snow pack as of March 1.

# Nov 2004 - Jan 2005 Divisional Ranks

National Climatic Data Center/NESDIS/NOAA



## 2005 NOAA Data and Information Users' Workshop:

The 2005 NOAA Data and Information Users' Workshop was held May 11-13, 2005, at the Asheville Renaissance Hotel and was filled to over capacity with 204 registrants. Brigadier General (USAF retired) Jack Kelly provided the keynote address, "Towards a Global Earth Observation System of Systems," followed by Mr. Gregory W. Withee, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Service, who spoke on "U.S. Contribution to a Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)." Overall, the workshop was highly successful, presented a very positive image for NOAA, and successfully gathered a significant number of helpful suggestions by participants.

Session 1 provided the status of NOAA data distribution. Dr. Thomas Karl provided an update concerning NCDC issues. He was followed by Glenn Rutledge (Model Output/Reanalysis), John Bates (Remote Sensing Applications), Steve Del Greco (NEXRAD), Neal Lott (In-Situ Data), David M. Anderson (Paleo-climatology), and Jay Lawrimore (Monitoring and Products). Christopher Fox and Kurt Schnebele presented updates from other data centers; Greg Mandt and Mike Campbell provided the view from the National Weather Service. Richard G. Reynolds of NESDIS Office of Systems Development spoke on "What Is CLASS and How Will It Serve NOAA Clientele?" Dave Zilkoski from the National Ocean Service provided an oversight of the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). Poster sessions, directed by Tamara Houston, were held during breaks in the main hallway outside the conference room and featured attendants for each poster.

Session 2 provided an opportunity for customers to speak to NOAA and was moderated by Len Pietrafesa. Lee Branscome, Matthew Howard, Robert Twilley and Michael Johnson were NOAA data customers who participated on the panel.

A summary of the 2003 NOAA Data Users' Workshop (Boulder, CO) and a list of suggestions and accomplishments resulting from that workshop were provided by Benjamin Watkins. Breakout sessions attended by as many as 60 people each were conducted during Session 3 and filled most of the remainder of the agenda. Breakout groups were divided into the four principal disciplines of climate, weather, oceanography, and geophysics. Each group was asked to discuss the following questions: a) New technologies: What do you foresee as the existing and emerging technologies that will be valuable to you in the future? In what ways will they be valuable to you?; b) Metadata: What information about the data (metadata) should be provided to make that data most useful to you now, and in the future?; c) Inventories: What dataset inventory is needed? What format?; d) Standards: Are there other standards to which you would like for us to adhere? Do you see emerging standards that would prove useful and profitable for you, or make your task easier? What are they?; e) GIS: What systems do you use? How do you use them? How can NOAA best support your use of this technology? What do you anticipate your future GIS needs to be?; f) CLASS: We are planning a Users' Group focusing on CLASS issues: What organizations would you suggest be invited to join the CLASS Users' Group? What CLASS-related issues would be paramount for the Users' Group to address?

Facilitators provided by Jessica Hartung and Anna Poulsen of Integrated Works Strategies, LLC, were used to help conduct the breakout sessions. In addition, general experts and note takers were provided in each session, and roving experts in each of the fields presented by the questions were employed. Axel Graumann and William Angel provided the NCDC expertise for climate and weather, respectively. Jeff Arnfield provided roving expertise for metadata questions and Mike Squires for GIS-related questions. While the note takers were summarizing their findings, several short informative presentations were provided, including Rich Baldwin's "NCDC GIS Map Services."

Social events for the workshop included a reception dinner with speaker, and a tour of NCDC. The reception was held in the outside plaza and offered a perfect networking opportunity. Dave Jones, President and CEO of Storm Center Communications, Inc. and President of the Foundation for Earth Sciences provided a highly entertaining and informative dinner speech "Innovation in the 21st Century - Raising the Environmental IQ of America." An optional tour of NCDC was provided to approximately 60 registrants by Greg Hammer, William Angel, Stuart Hinson, and Sam McCown.

During registration, participants were provided a canvas NOAA briefcase which contained several memento items commissioned by Greg Hammer. Included was a CD-ROM which contained a CLASS tutorial and other information useful to customers, and was specifically designed and produced for the workshop by Jeff Robel.

Plans are underway to provide a workshop report, speaker presentations and a summary of suggestions from the Breakout Sessions on the workshop's web page at <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/usrswkshp/index.html>.



The central planning team for the workshop consisted of Sam McCown (Chair), Ben Watkins, Vernell Woldu, Greg Hammer, Tamara Houston, and Jeff Robel (all from NCDC); George Sharman (NGDC); Pat Kirk (NODC); Mike Crane (NCDDC); Barbara Mayes (NWS); Dick Reynolds, Steve Short, and Dane Clark (all from Short and Associates); Anna Poulsen and Jessica Hartung (both from Integrated Work Strategies, LLC); and Jill Reisdorf (UCAR/JOSS).

In addition to those mentioned earlier, numerous other NCDC personnel helped make the workshop a success including Karen Owen, Joann Sceizina, Jan Carpenter, Scott Stephens, Mark Lackey, Harry Dahlberg, Sharon Capps-Hill, Bob Nagan, Winnie Womack, Jenny Pressley, Carolyn Bradford, Liz Love-Brotak, Sara Veasey, Glenn Hyatt, Debbie Riddle, David Smith, Linda Statler, Larry Carr, and Ray Payne.