

**U.S. Drought Monitor Forum
Holiday Inn Capitol
Washington, D.C.
October 20-21, 2005**

Event: The 2005 U.S. Drought Monitor forum, co-hosted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of the Chief Economist and the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center, was held in Washington, D.C., on October 20-21.

Background: Drought is the leading hazard in economic losses each year in the United States. In 1999, a monitoring tool known as the U.S. Drought Monitor was developed to help assess drought conditions in the United States. The U.S. Drought Monitor is a collaborative effort between federal and academic partners, including:

- University of Nebraska-Lincoln, National Drought Mitigation Center
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Chief Economist, World Agricultural Outlook Board, Joint Agricultural Weather Facility
- U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service, Climate Prediction Center
- U.S. Department of Commerce; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service; National Climatic Data Center

Eight lead authors rotate the responsibility of preparing the U.S. Drought Monitor. Issued weekly and released each Thursday at 8:30 a.m. Eastern Time, the U.S. Drought Monitor is a synthesis of multiple indices, outlooks, and impacts depicted on a map and in narrative form. The official Web site for the U.S. Drought Monitor can be found at:

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm/>

The first U.S. Drought Monitor forum was held at Lincoln, Nebraska, in November 2000. In April 2002, a second forum was held at NCDC headquarters in Asheville, North Carolina. At that workshop, the North American Drought Monitor (NADM)—a cooperative effort between drought experts in Canada, Mexico, and the United States—was initiated, part of a larger effort to improve the monitoring of climate extremes on the continent. Issued monthly since March 2003, the NADM is based on the end-of-month U.S. Drought Monitor analysis and input from scientists in Canada and Mexico. Major participants in the NADM program include the entities involved with the production of the U.S. Drought Monitor, as well as Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, the Meteorological Service of Canada, and the National Meteorological Service of Mexico. The NADM Web site is:

<http://lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/monitoring/drought/nadm/nadm-map.html>

The first forum devoted entirely to the NADM was held at Asheville in June 2003, followed by the third U.S. Drought Monitor forum at Cedar City, Utah, in October 2003. At that time, it was decided to hold NADM and U.S. Drought Monitor workshops in alternating years. Agriculture and Agri-food Canada hosted the most recent NADM forum at Regina, Saskatchewan, in October 2004.