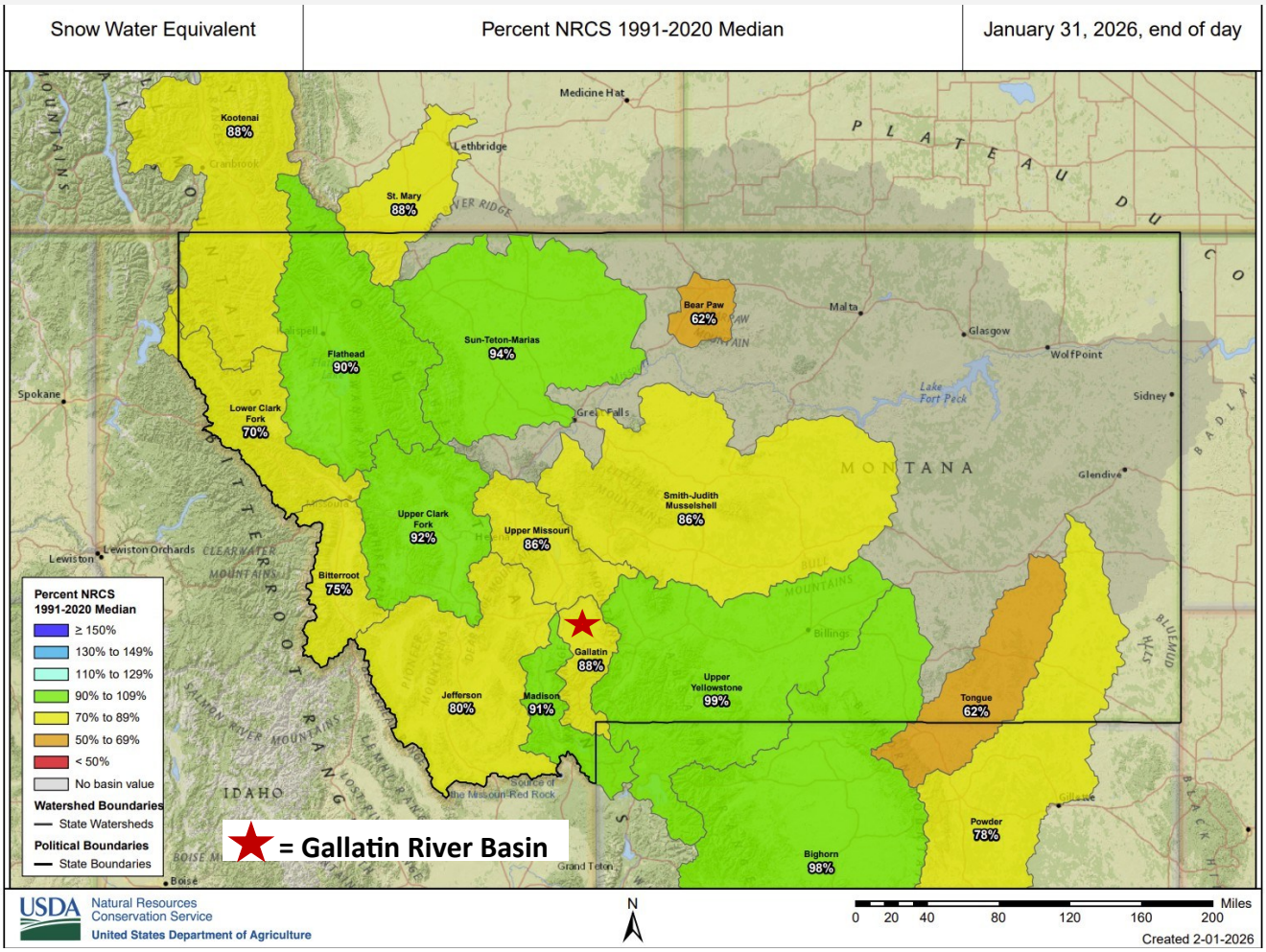
Gallatin Water Supply Outlook
February 2026



SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN GALLATIN

SNOWPACK SUMMARY (Water Year (WY) = October 1st—September 30)

*Data current as of 2/28/2026

We are currently in Water Year 2026 (black line). The Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) was below normal (median, green line) within the Gallatin River Basin on February 28th, 2026 at 12.3 inches (a 2.6 increase since last month). Last year, on February 28th, 2025, the SWE was at 15.2 inches (central blue line). Detailed end-of-month SNOTEL site information follows.

'What's going on with this weird Montana winter? | Belgrade News

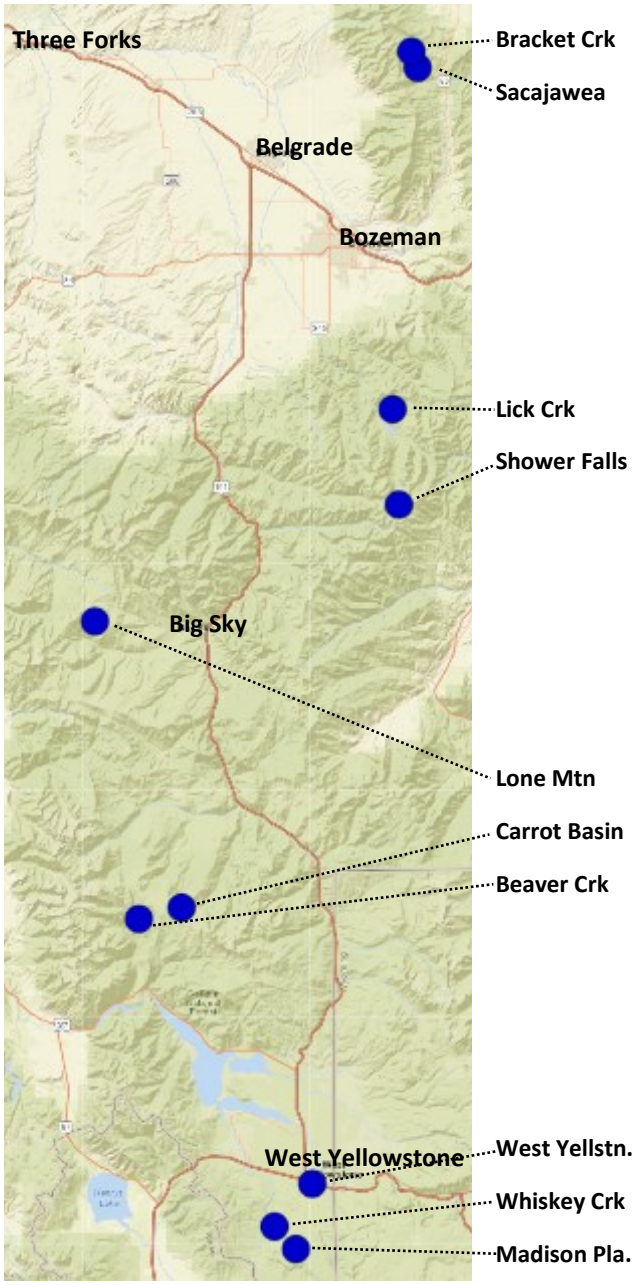
Snowpack Data
Gallatin River Basin—February 2026

Gallatin Valley Region (Bozeman-Belgrade-Four Corners)					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Brackett Creek	Feb. 2025	57	16.3	96	17.0
	Feb. 2026	40	13.5	79	
Sacajawea	Feb. 2025	42	11.9	99	12.0
	Feb. 2026	15	5.7	48	

Hyalite Region (Gallatin Gateway)					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Lick Creek	Feb. 2025	37	9.9	104	9.5
	Feb. 2026	16	4.5	47	
Shower Falls	Feb. 2025	68	19.8	114	17.4
	Feb. 2026	52	14.8	85	

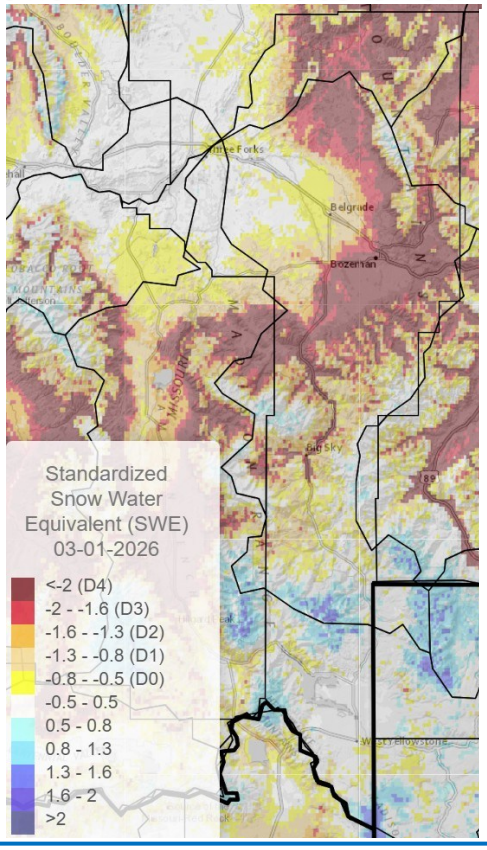
Lee Metcalf Wilderness Region (Big Sky)					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Beaver Creek	Feb. 2025	50	12.5	86	14.5
	Feb. 2026	43	12.3	85	
Carrot Basin	Feb. 2025	68	19.8	88	22.6
	Feb. 2026	67	21.9	97	
Lone Mountain	Feb. 2025	56	16.7	111	15.0
	Feb. 2026	41	12.9	86	

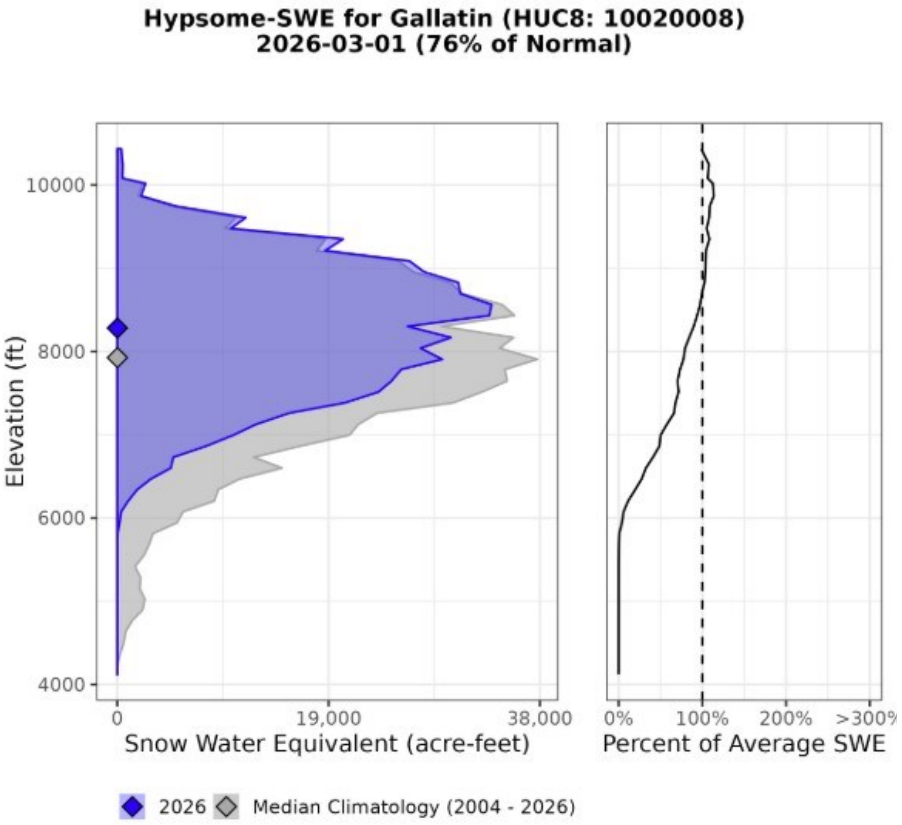
West Yellowstone Region					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Madison Plateau	Feb. 2025	57	16.0	77	20.9
	Feb. 2026	55	16.7	80	
West Yellowstone	Feb. 2025	36	8.7	78	11.2
	Feb. 2026	28	7.9	71	
Whiskey Creek	Feb. 2025	46	12.0	83	14.4
	Feb. 2026	40	10.9	76	



Standardized SWE from SNODAS & Hypsome-SWE

Gallatin River Watershed—February 2026





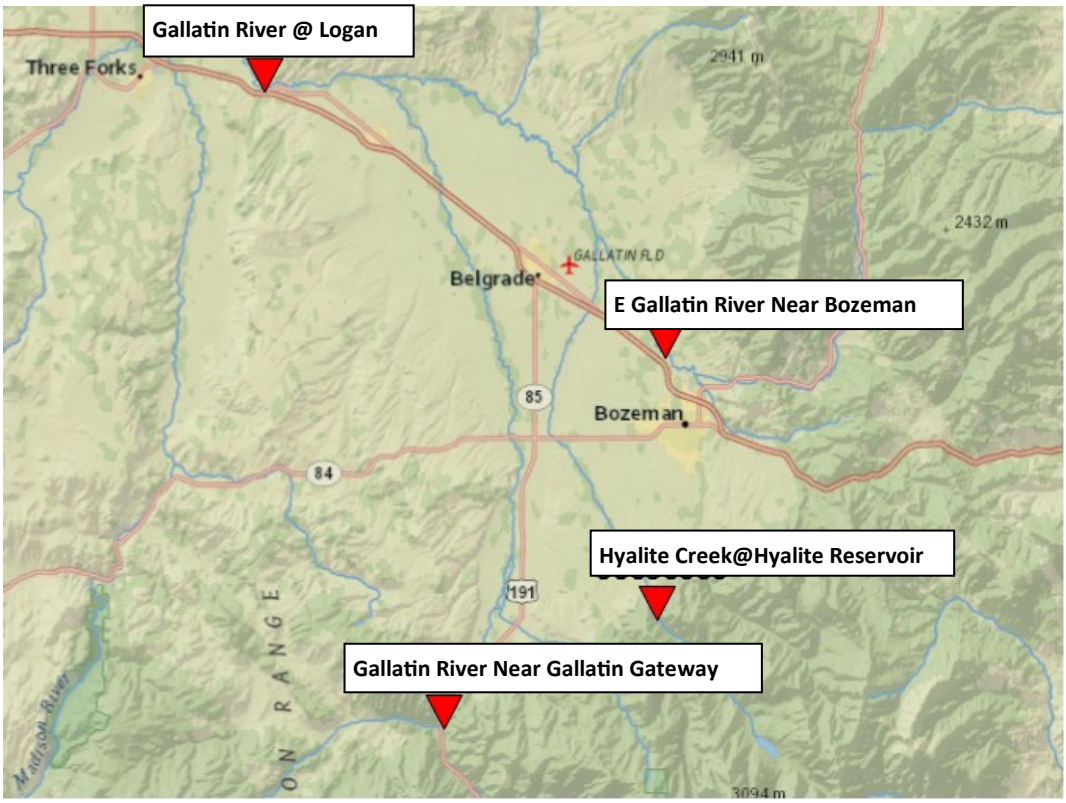
OVERVIEW *Data current as of 3/1/26

Left Map: This data set contains estimates of standardized snow pack anomalies based on the snow water equivalent (SWE) depth from the NOAA National Weather Service's National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center SNOw Data Assimilation System (SNODAS). SNODAS is a modeling and data assimilation system created to provide the best possible estimates of snow cover and associated parameters to support hydrologic modeling and analysis. Negative (red) values represent less than average SWE, while positive (blue) values represent greater than average SWE. Standardization is based on data from 2004-present and computed daily.

Right Graph: Hypsome-SWE represents a method to evaluate the distribution of SWE across watersheds. Hypsome-SWE is loosely based on hypsometry, the area-elevation relationship of a basin. Instead of evaluating the area-elevation relationship, here they evaluate the cumulative SWE and elevation relationship. More specifically, in this module, they compare the median hypsome-SWE curve for February using the SNODAS period of record (2004-present) to the February 2026 SWE distribution. This allows for a rapid assessment of the distribution of SWE within a basin with respect to elevation and allows for easy comparison to the expected distribution given the SNODAS period of record.

Streamflow Data

Gallatin River Basin—February 2026



March 1st 2026 Gallatin Watershed Streamflow					
Station Name	2026 Discharge (cfs)	% Normal	Normal Discharge (cfs)	2025 Discharge (cfs)	Period Of Record (Yrs)
Gallatin at Logan	623	90	691	655	109
E Gallatin near Bozeman	46.8	82	57.4	51.7	11
Hyalite Creek at Hyalite Reservoir	18.9	105	18	21.7	71
Gallatin near Gallatin Gateway	292	101	288	320	95

STREAMFLOW SUMMARY *Data current as of 2/28/26

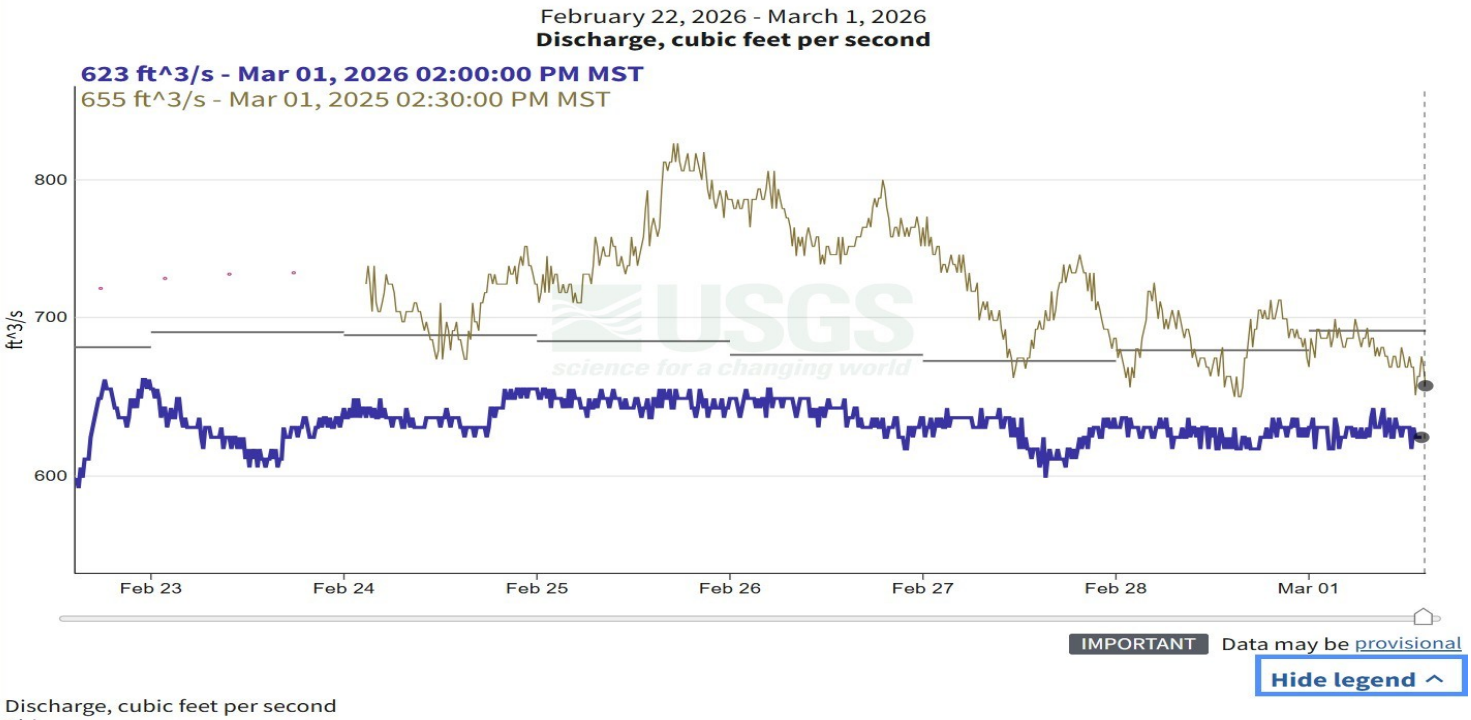
The E Gallatin near Bozeman and Hyalite Creek sites are no longer ice affected.

The Gallatin at Logan and the E Gallatin near Bozeman Gallatin sites have below normal discharge values while the Hyalite Creek and Gallatin near Gallatin Gateway sites have discharge values above normal. All sites have discharge values below what they were at this time last year.

Streamflow Data

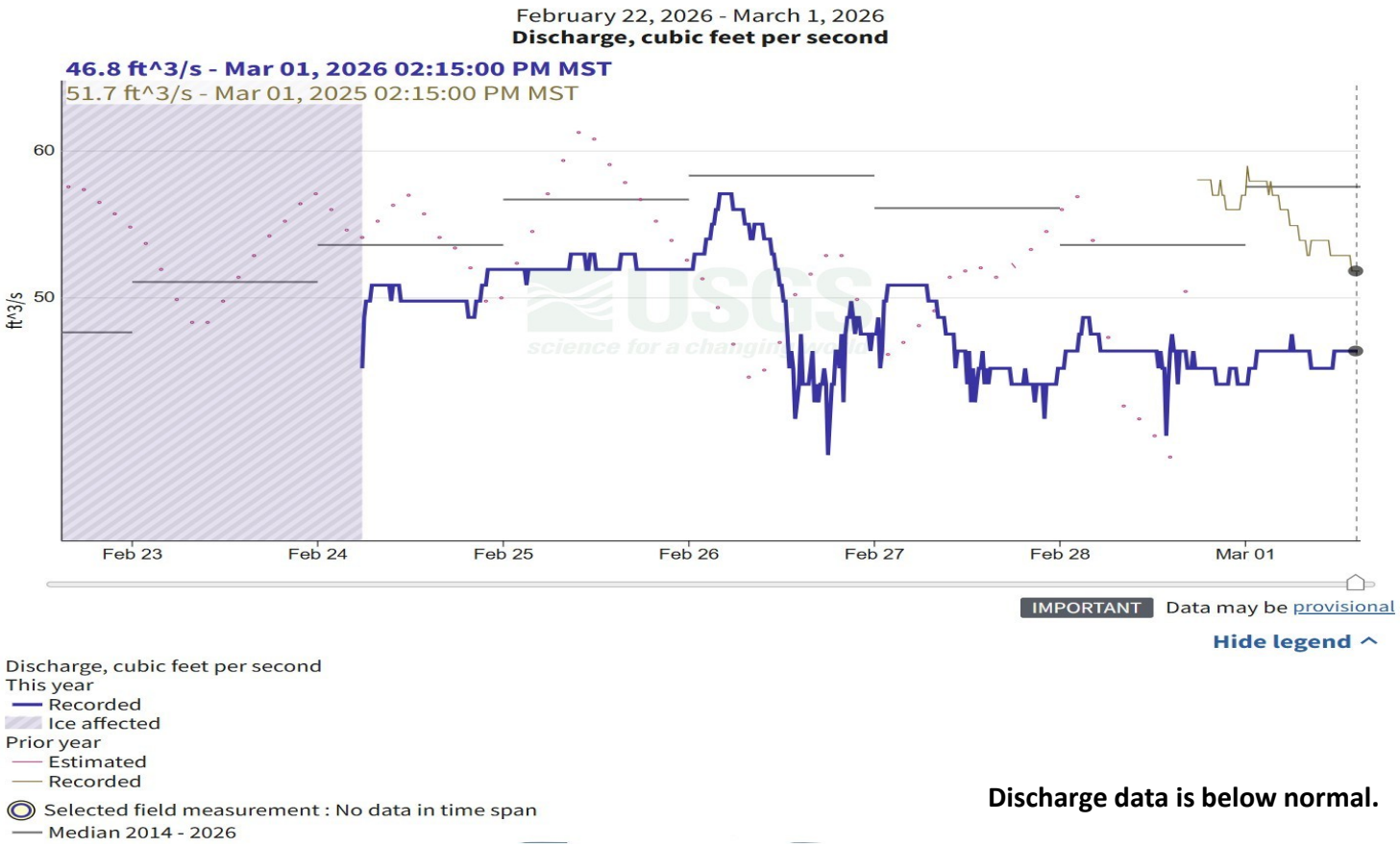
Gallatin River Basin—February 2026

Gallatin River at Logan MT - USGS-06052500 Subscribe to WaterAlert



Discharge data is below normal.

E Gallatin R ab Water Reclamation Fa nr Bozeman MT - USGS-06048650 Subscribe to WaterAlert

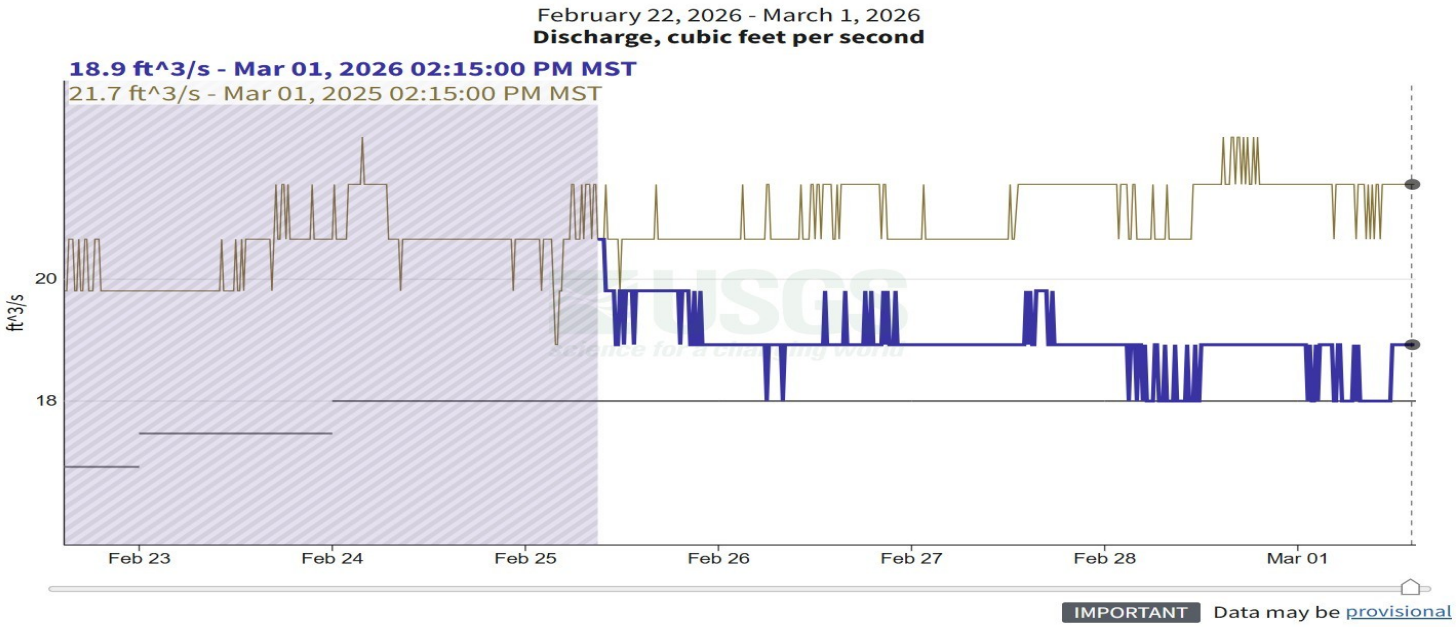


Discharge data is below normal.

Streamflow Data

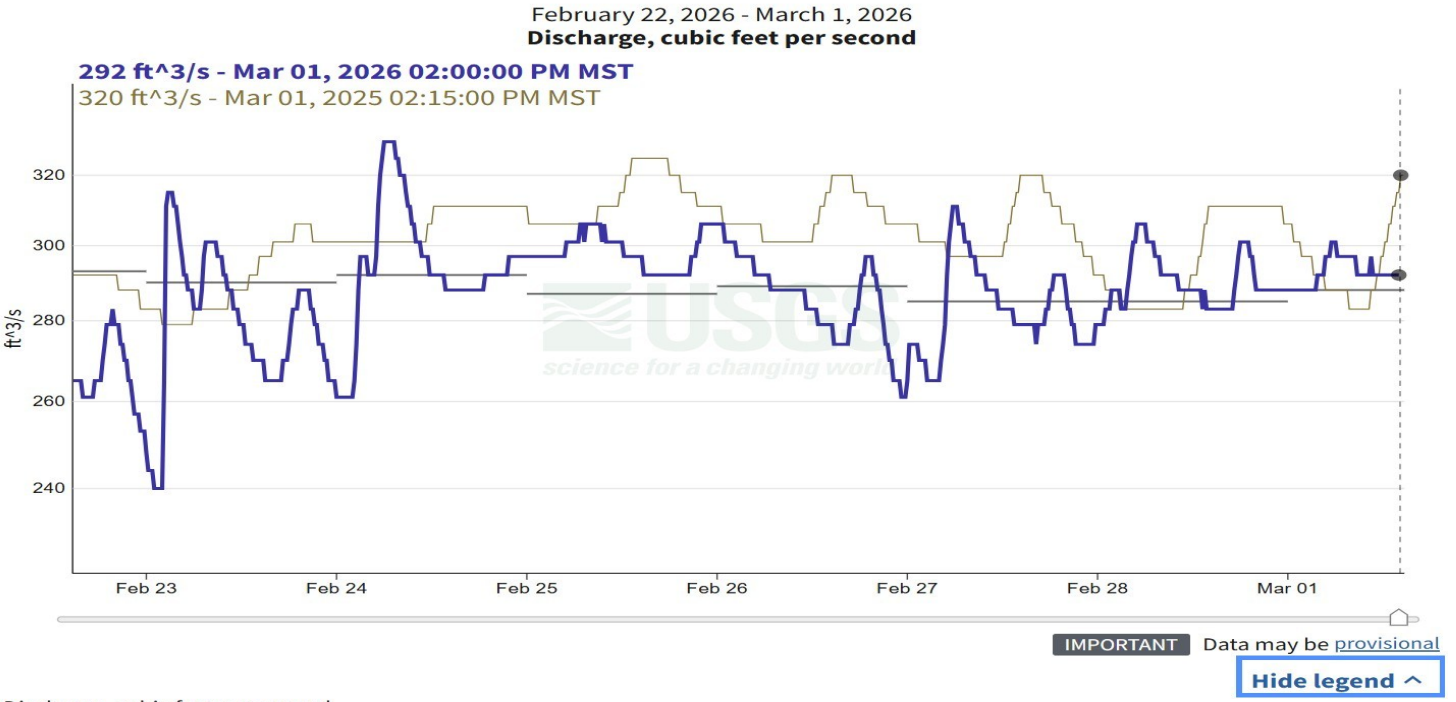
Gallatin River Basin—February 2026

Hyalite C at Hyalite R S nr Bozeman MT - USGS-06050000 Subscribe to WaterAlert



Discharge data is slightly above normal.

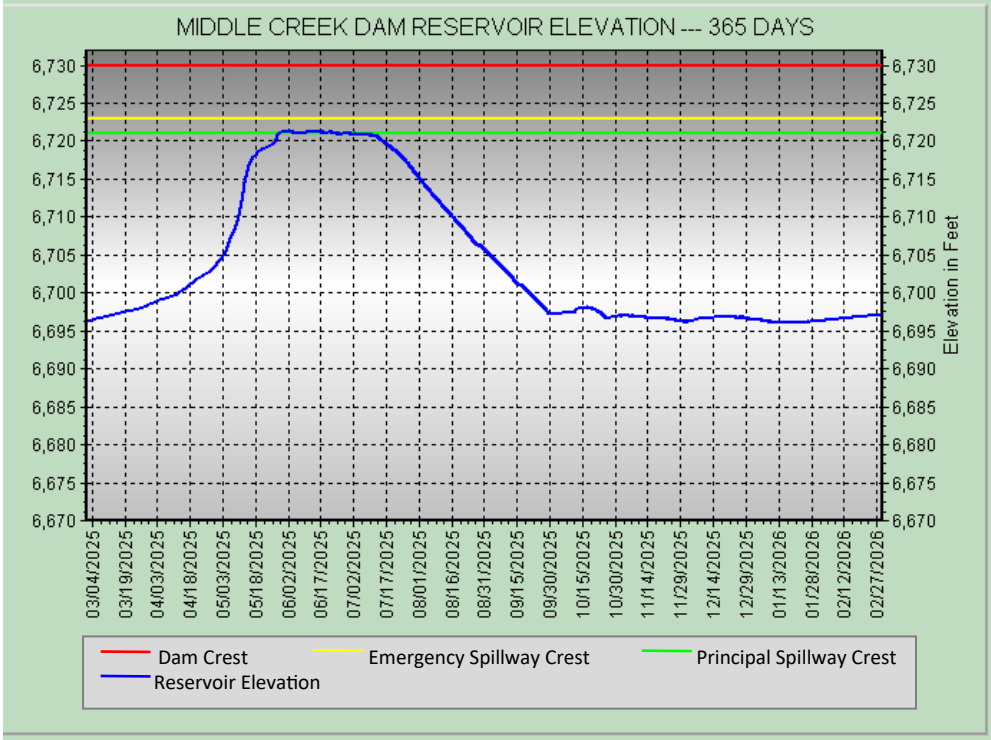
Gallatin River near Gallatin Gateway, MT - USGS-06043500 Subscribe to WaterAlert



Discharge data is above normal.

Water Storage Data

Middle Creek Dam, Hyalite Reservoir—February 2026



TIME OF LAST READING	3/1/2026 1:00 PM
RESERVOIR ELEVATION	6,697.1 FT
RESERVOIR VOLUME	5,481 AF

REFERENCE INFORMATION	FT (MSL)	AC-FT
DAM CREST	6730	12,790
EMERGENCY SPILLWAY CREST	6723	10,707
PRINCIPAL SPILLWAY CREST	6721	10,184
LOWEST USEABLE ELEVATION	6637	0

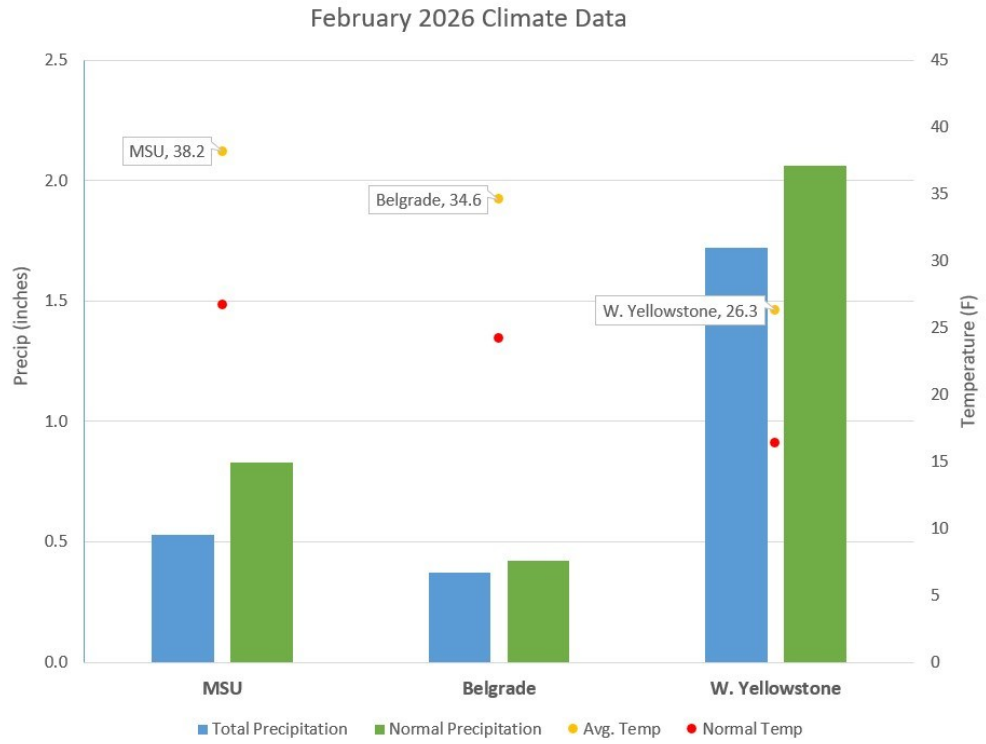
*** PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION ***

RESERVOIR SUMMARY *Data current as of 3/1/26

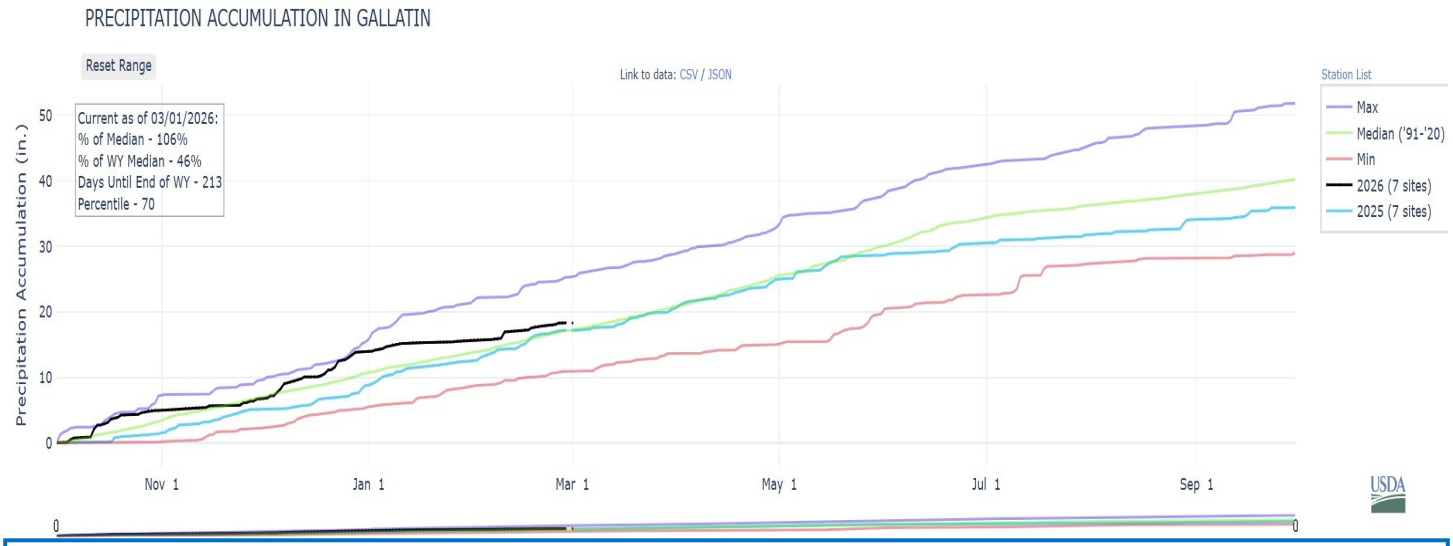
Middle Creek Dam Reservoir elevation is 6,697.1 ft, which is 23.9 ft below the principal spillway crest (6,721 ft). The reservoir elevation has increased by 0.8 ft since February 1st, 2026 (date of last relevant WSO report). Reservoir volume is 5,481 acre-ft, which is 119 acre-ft more than on February 1st, 2025.

Climate Data

Gallatin County—February 2026



Above graph depicting ACIS climate data representing the entire month of February 2026.



TEMP & PRECIP SUMMARY (Water Year (WY) = October 1st—September 30)

*Data is current as of 3/1/26

Average temperatures have increased at the MSU, Belgrade, and West Yellowstone sites since January 2025. All sites have had above normal temperatures for this time of year. All sites experienced below average precipitation in February 2026 (ACIS graph).

We are currently in Water Year 2026 (black line). The total accrued precipitation for the Gallatin River Basin as of February 28th, 2026 is above normal (median, green line) at 18.3 inches (USDA graph). The total accrued precipitation for WY 2025 on February 28th, 2025 was 17.2 inches (central blue line).

Soil Moisture Data

Mesonet Stations—February 2026

Manhattan Soil Probe Depth (in)	Soil Temp (°F)	Soil Water Content (%)
8" - Surface	32.0	14.9
20" - Shallow rooting	32.18	23.0
36" - Deep Rooting	34.34	8.0

Bozeman Soil Probe Depth (in)	Soil Temp (°F)	Soil Water Content (%)
4" - Surface	40.01	23.25
8" - Shallow rooting	32.99	25.45
20" - Deep Rooting	32.18	25.25

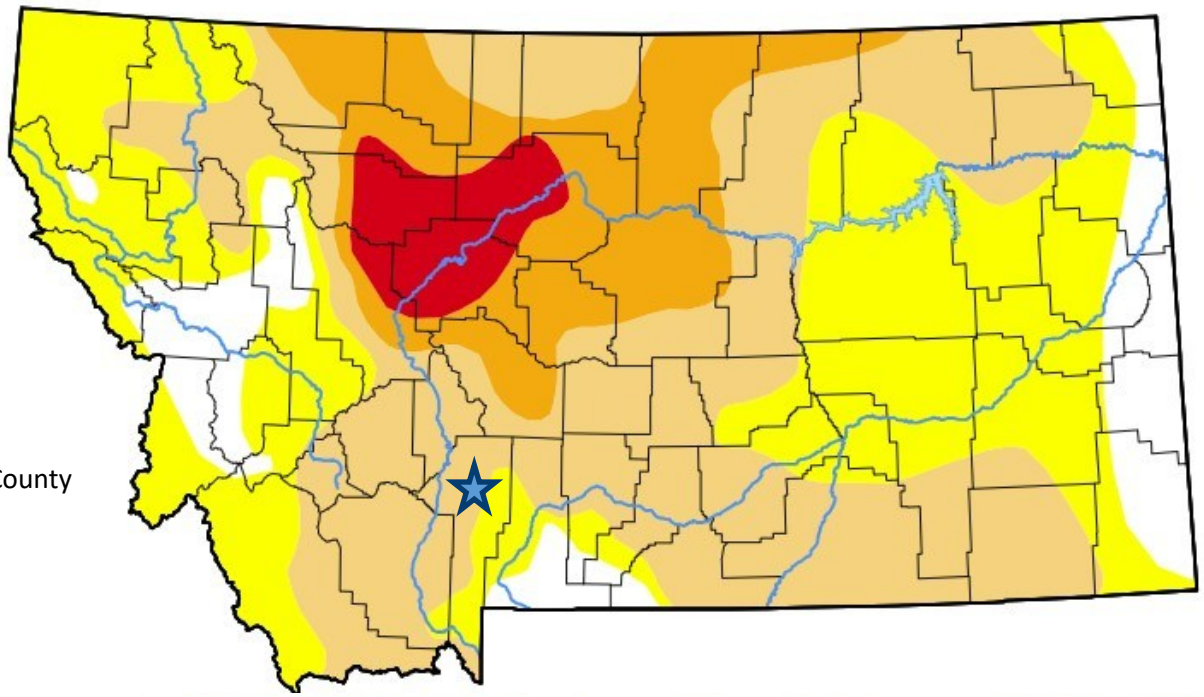
SOIL MOISTURE SUMMARY *Data current as of 3/1/26

Since January 2025, at the Manhattan station the soil temperature increased at 8”, while decreasing at 20” and 36”. At the Bozeman station, the soil temperature increased at 4” and 8”, while decreasing at 20”.

The soil water content at the Manhattan station has increased at 20”, while increasing at 8” and 36”. At the Bozeman station, soil water content increased at all depths.

Drought Index Data

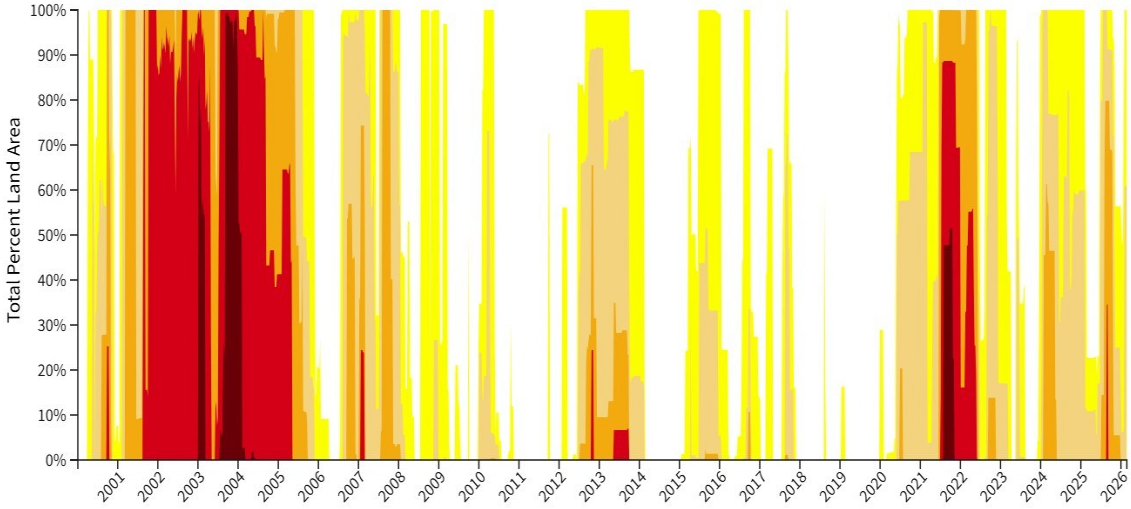
Gallatin County— February 2026



= Gallatin County

Intensity:

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data



Historical Conditions for Gallatin County, 2000-Present

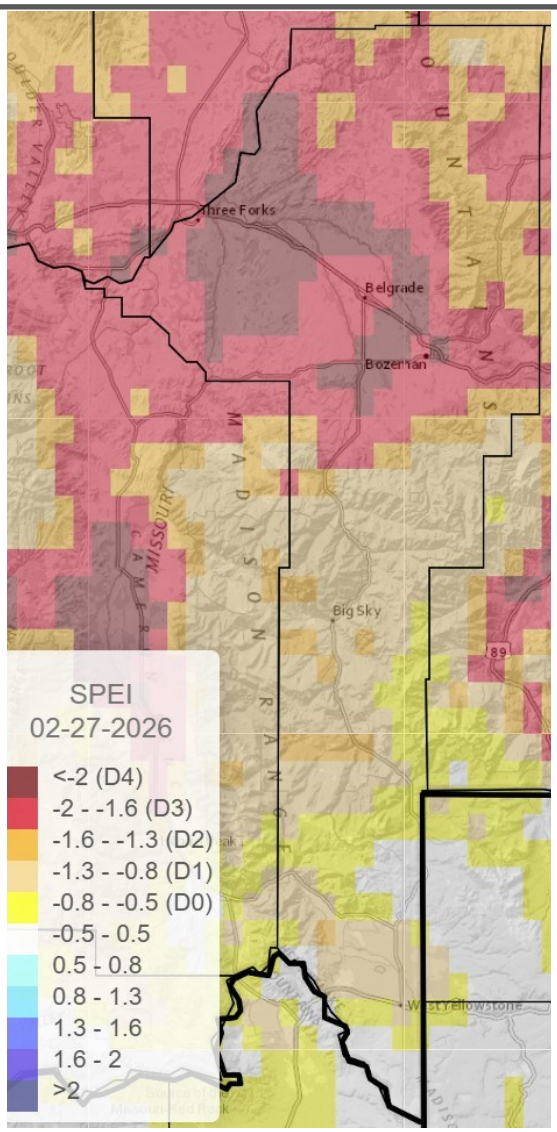
DROUGHT INDEX SUMMARY *Data is current as of 2/26/26

39.12% of Gallatin County is experiencing abnormally dry drought conditions. Impacts include low soil moisture contributing to poor crop germination and dry pastures, increased fire danger, and low streamflow with impacts to recreational fishing.

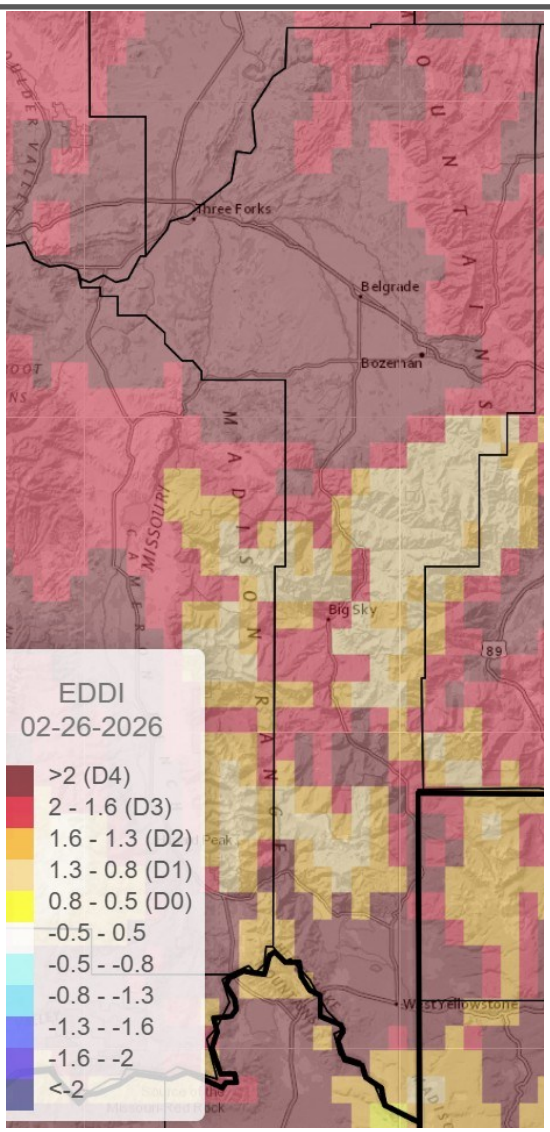
60.86% of Gallatin County is experiencing moderate drought conditions. Impacts include feeding livestock supplemental hay, crops are stressed, and growth is poor. Fire restrictions may be implemented.

Help ground truth information with the MT Drought Impact Reporter! Submit reports anytime of year, wet or dry! https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/9256e9943a964af5ad7e0280e1407712

Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index



Evaporative Demand Drought Index



SPEI & EDDI Overview *Data is current as of 2/26/26

The maps above show the current Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI, Left) and Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI, Right) for February 2026.

SPEI takes into account both precipitation and potential evapotranspiration to describe the wetness (positive blue values) or dryness (negative red values) of a time period. SPEI has been calculated for February 2026 to represent drought impacts on hydrological conditions for the past 30 days. SPEI incorporates the important effect of atmospheric demand on drought.

EDDI has examined how deviated from normal the atmospheric evaporative demand is for Gallatin County in February 2026. EDDI is an experimental drought monitoring and early warning guidance tool. EDDI can offer early warning of agricultural drought, hydrologic drought, and fire-weather risk. Positive (red) values represent dryness categories, while negative (blue) values represent wetness categories.

Gallatin County Water Supply Outlook

Source Information & Helpful Links

Gallatin Conservation District:

- Archive of Water Supply Outlook Reports
- Living by the Water
- 310 Permit Forms & Info

Snowpack:

- USDA / NRCS Interactive Map
- Montana Snow Survey Homepage
- NRCS / NWCC National Water & Climate Center
- Standardized Snow Water Equivalent (SWE from SNODAS & Hypsome –SWE

Streamflow:

- USGS Real Time Streamflow
- State of Montana Gaging Stations
- DNRC Water Right Query System

Water Storage:

- DNRC Water Projects—Middle Creek Real Time Data
- Middle Creek Early Warning System
- BOR—Montana Lakes and Reservoirs

Climate:

- ACIS Database
- NRCS Montana Current Conditions
- Montana Snow Survey Homepage
- US Climate Data

Soil Moisture:

- Montana Mesonet
- DNRC Drought Status by County

Drought:

- US Drought Portal
- US Drought Monitor

SPEI & EDDI:

Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index

Evaporative Demand Drought Index

Helpful Partner Websites:

- Department of Natural Resources & Conservation
- Gallatin County MSU Extension Office
- Gallatin Local Water Quality District
- Gallatin River Task Force
- Gallatin Watershed Council
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
- Montana Natural Resource Conservation Services
- Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators