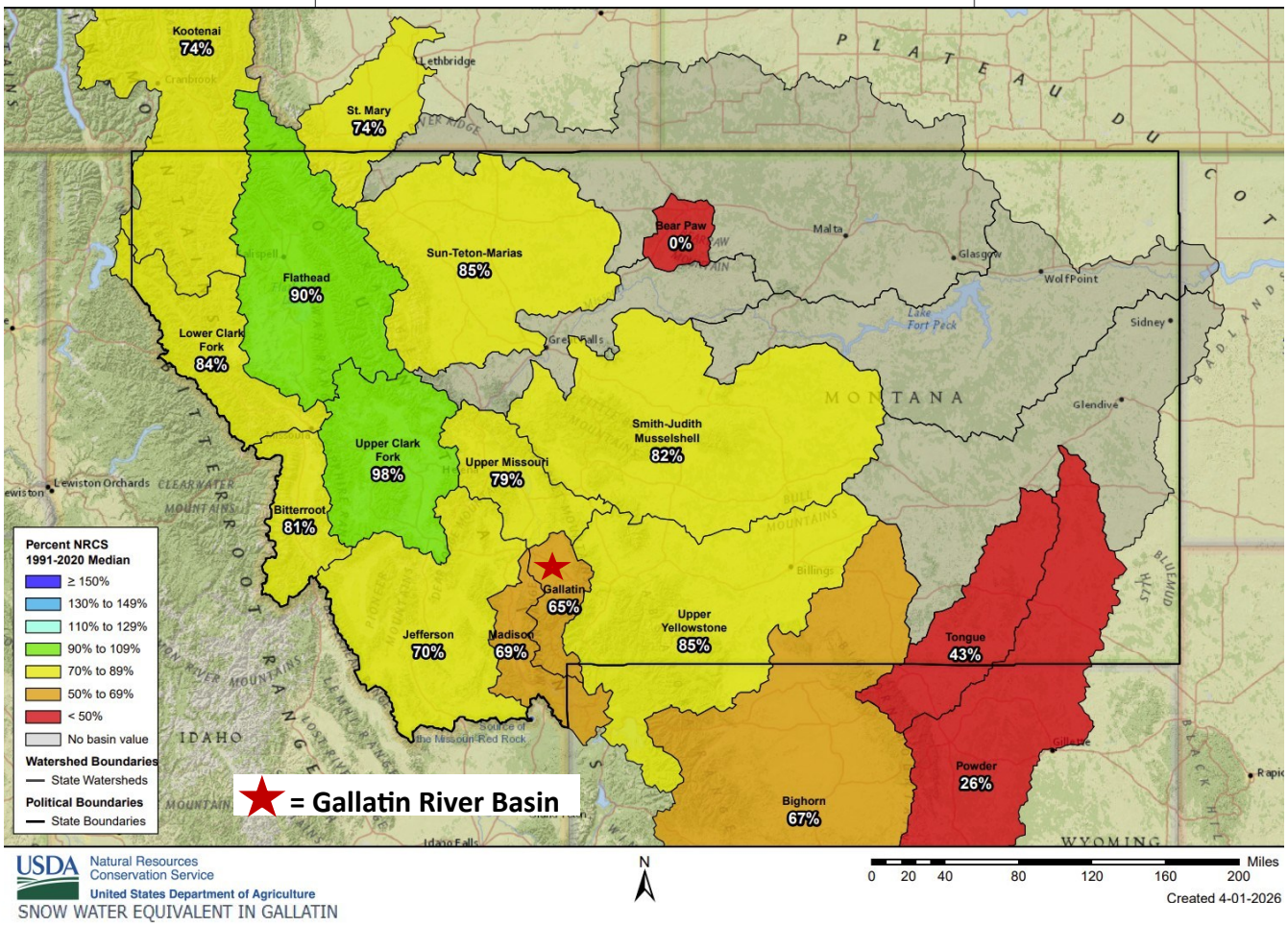
Gallatin Water Supply Outlook
March 2026

Snow Water Equivalent | Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median | March 31, 2026, end of day



SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN GALLATIN

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

*Data current as of 3/31/2026 and 4/1/2026

We are currently in Water Year 2026 (black line). The Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) was below normal (median, green line) and minimum (red line) within the Gallatin River Basin on March 31st, 2026 at 11.2 inches (a 1.1 decrease since last month). Last year, on March 31st, 2025, the SWE was at 17.9 inches (central blue line). Detailed end-of-month SNOTEL site information follows.

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

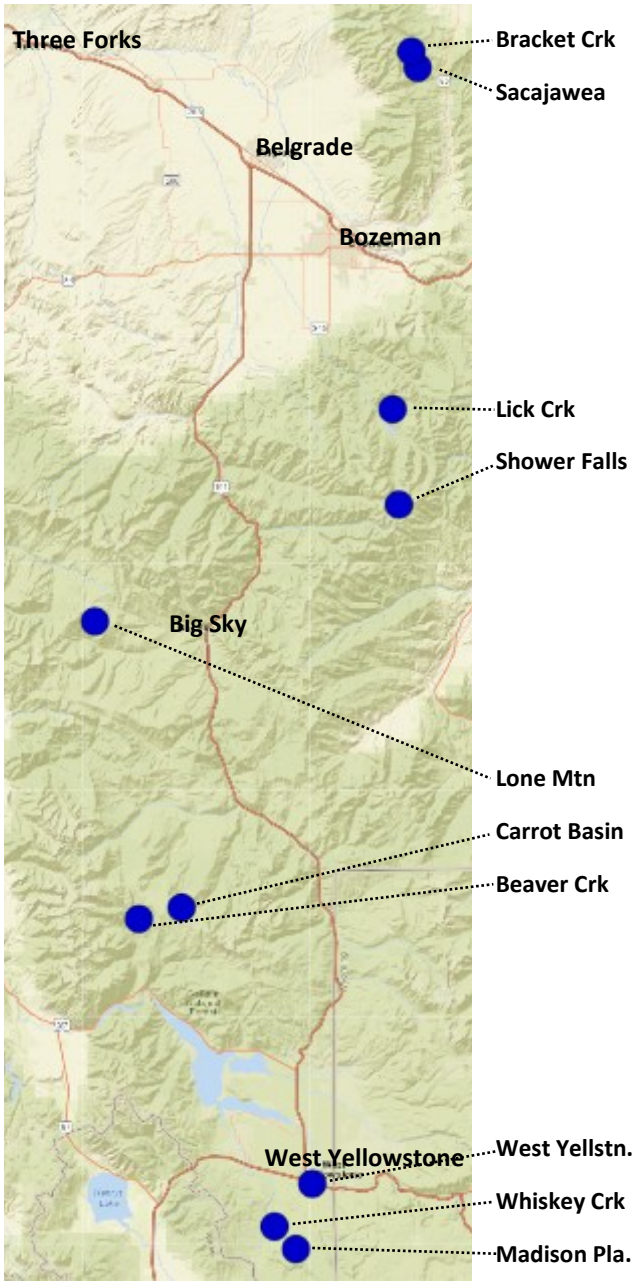
Snowpack Data
Gallatin River Basin—March 2026

Gallatin Valley Region (Bozeman-Belgrade-Four Corners)					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Brackett Creek	March 2025	62	19.9	106	18.8
	March 2026	32	11.8	63	
Sacajawea	March 2025	40	12.7	97	13.1
	March 2026	2	0.6	5	

Hyalite Region (Gallatin Gateway)					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Lick Creek	March 2025	37	11.8	108	10.9
	March 2026	9	3.4	31	
Shower Falls	March 2025	75	23.5	121	19.5
	March 2026	56	16.7	86	

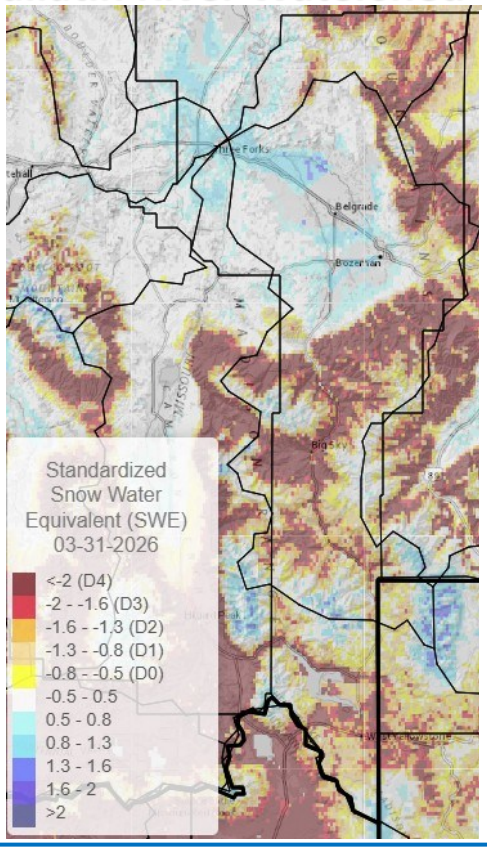
Lee Metcalf Wilderness Region (Big Sky)					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Beaver Creek	March 2025	51	14.8	91	16.2
	March 2026	33	11.7	72	
Carrot Basin	March 2025	76	24.7	99	25.0
	March 2026	64	23.2	93	
Lone Mountain	March 2025	62	20.5	124	16.5
	March 2026	41	14.6	88	

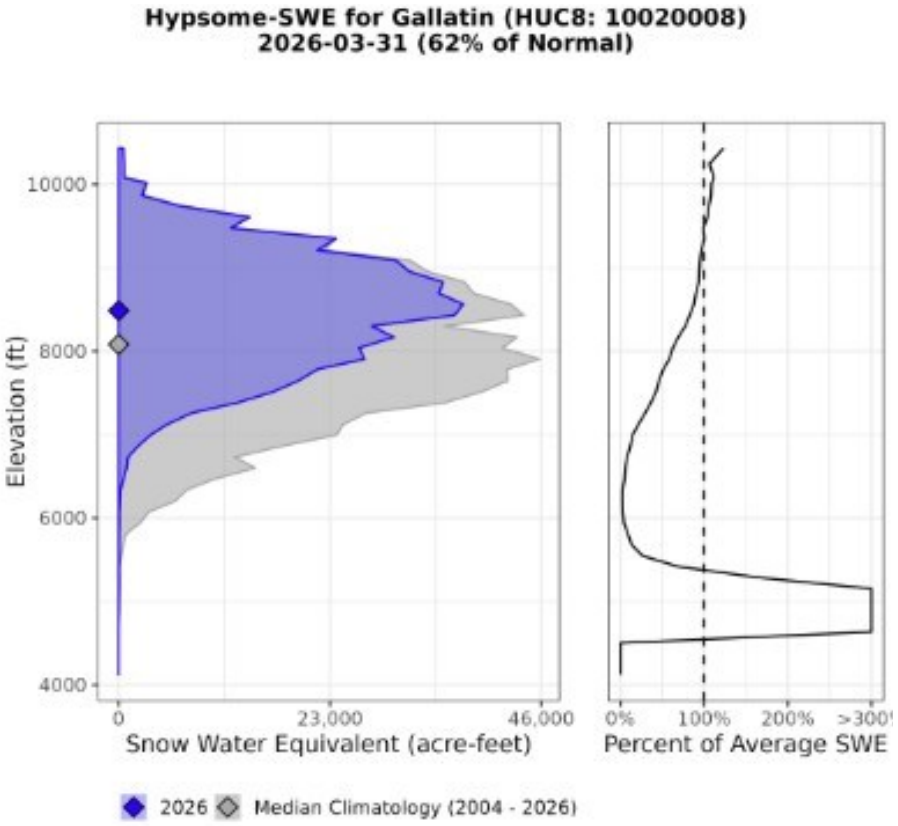
West Yellowstone Region					
Station Name	*Date*	*Snow Depth (in)*	*SWE (in)*	*SWE % Normal*	*Normal SWE 1971-2000 (in)*
Madison Plateau	March 2025	72	21.9	94	23.2
	March 2026	38	14.9	64	
West Yellowstone	March 2025	36	10.4	85	12.2
	March 2026	4	2.4	20	
Whiskey Creek	March 2025	54	15.4	97	15.9
	March 2026	21	8.3	52	



Standardized SWE from SNODAS & Hypsome-SWE

Gallatin River Watershed—March 2026





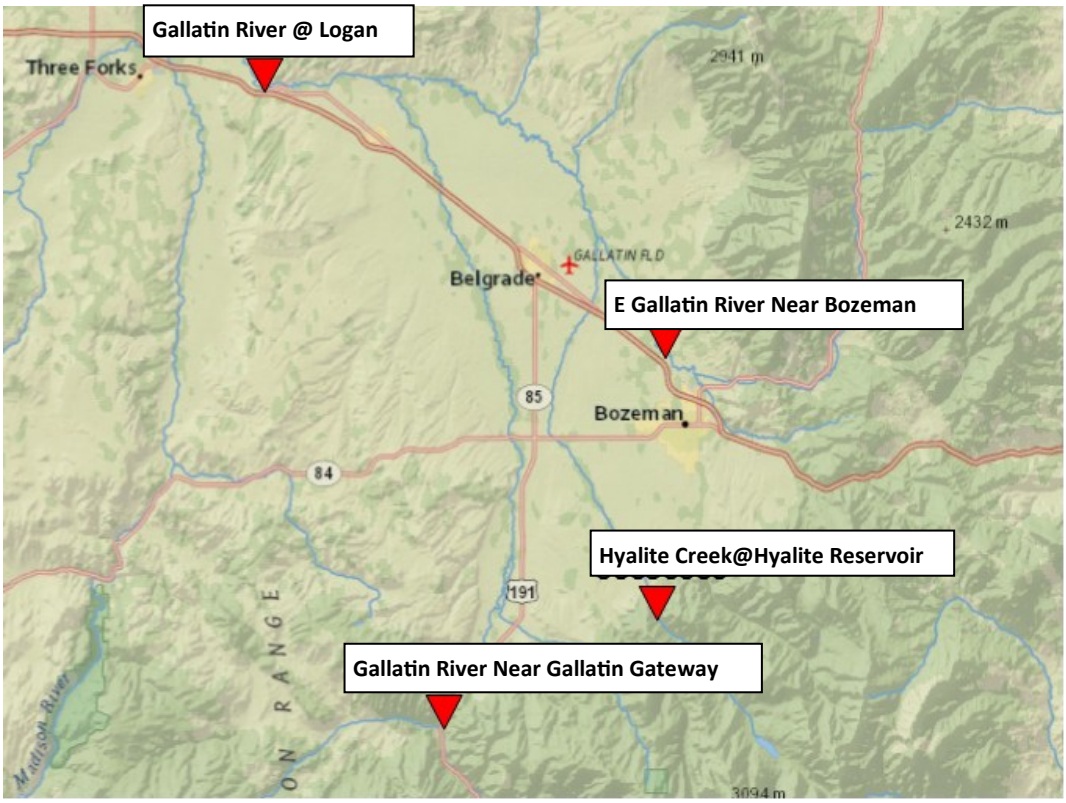
OVERVIEW *Data current as of 3/31/26

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 March using the SNODAS period of record (2004-present) to the March 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—March 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	894	109	817	1050	109
E Gallatin near Bozeman	93.7	84	111	206	11
Hyalite Creek at Hyalite Reservoir	19.8	98	20.15	18.9	72
Gallatin near Gallatin Gateway	584	181	322	408	95

STREAMFLOW SUMMARY *Data current as of 3/31/26

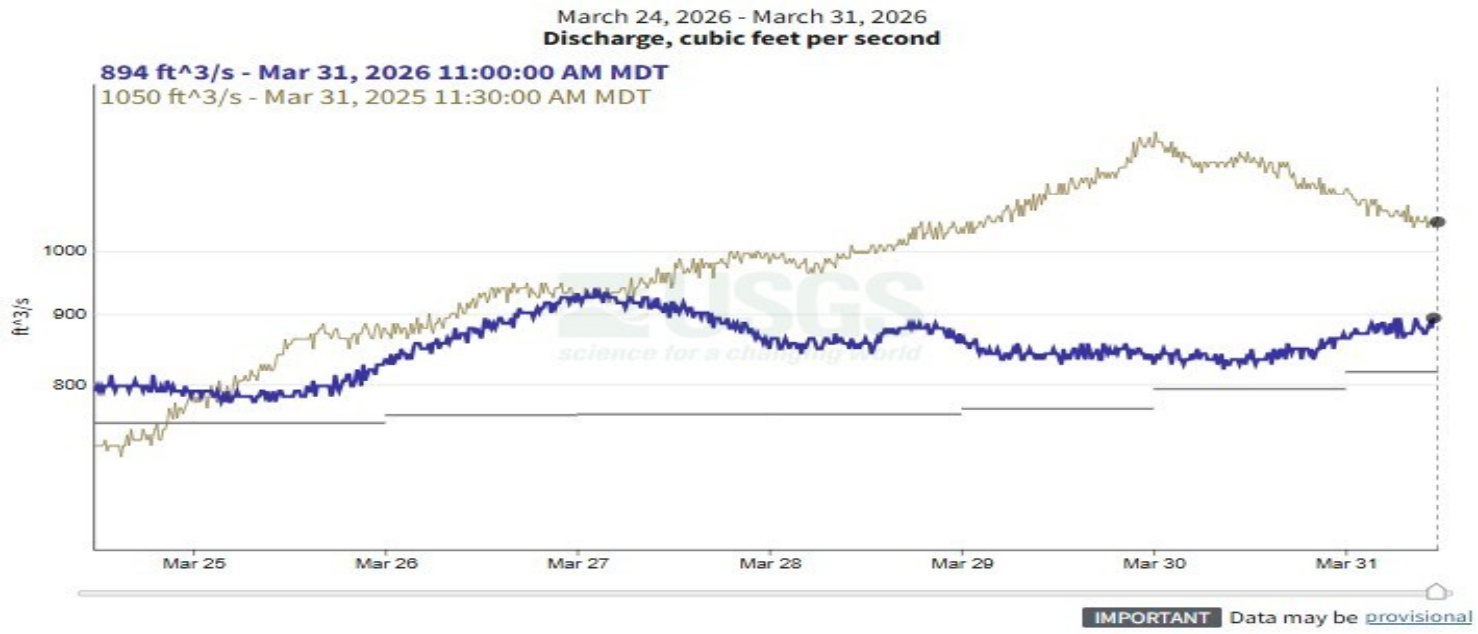
The E Gallatin near Bozeman and Hyalite sites have below normal discharge values, while the Gallatin at Logan and Gallatin near Gallatin Gateway sites have discharge values above normal.

The Gallatin at Logan and E Gallatin near Bozeman sites have discharge values below what they were at this time last year. The Hyalite Creek site has discharge slightly above last year while the Gallatin near Gallatin Gateway site has discharge noticeably higher for this time last year.

Streamflow Data

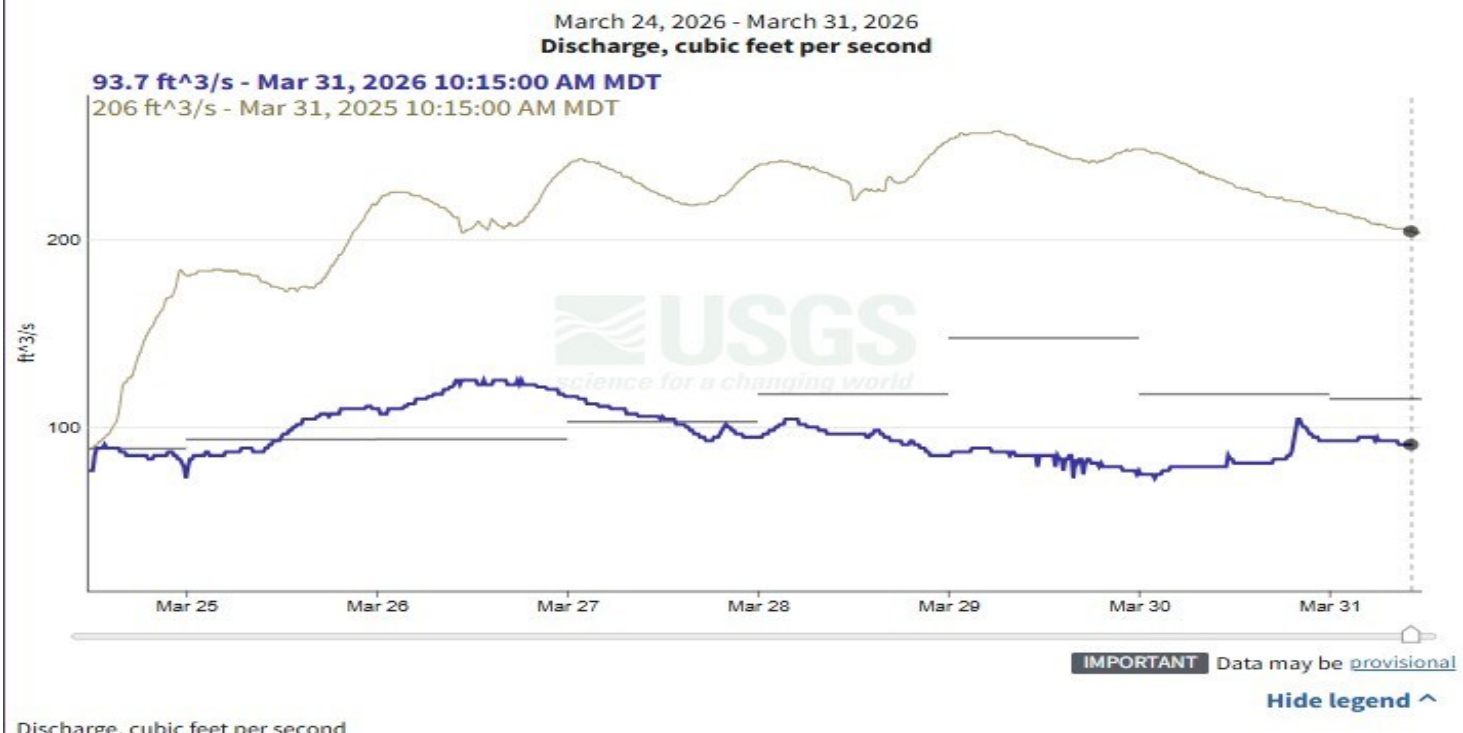
Gallatin River Basin—March 2026

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



Discharge data is slightly below normal.

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

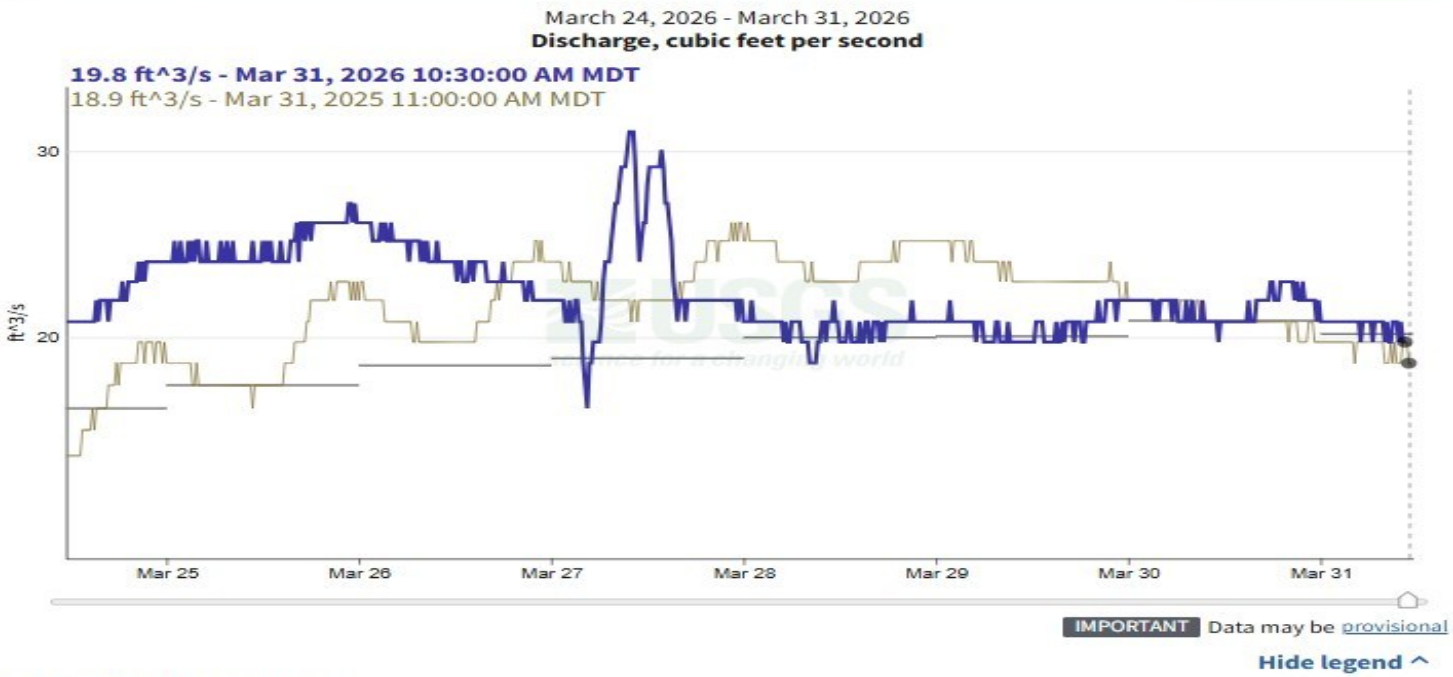


Discharge data is below normal.

Streamflow Data

Gallatin River Basin—March 2026

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



Discharge, cubic feet per second
This year
— Recorded
Prior year
— Recorded
◎ Selected field measurement : No data in time span
— Median 1895 - 2026

Discharge data is slightly above normal.

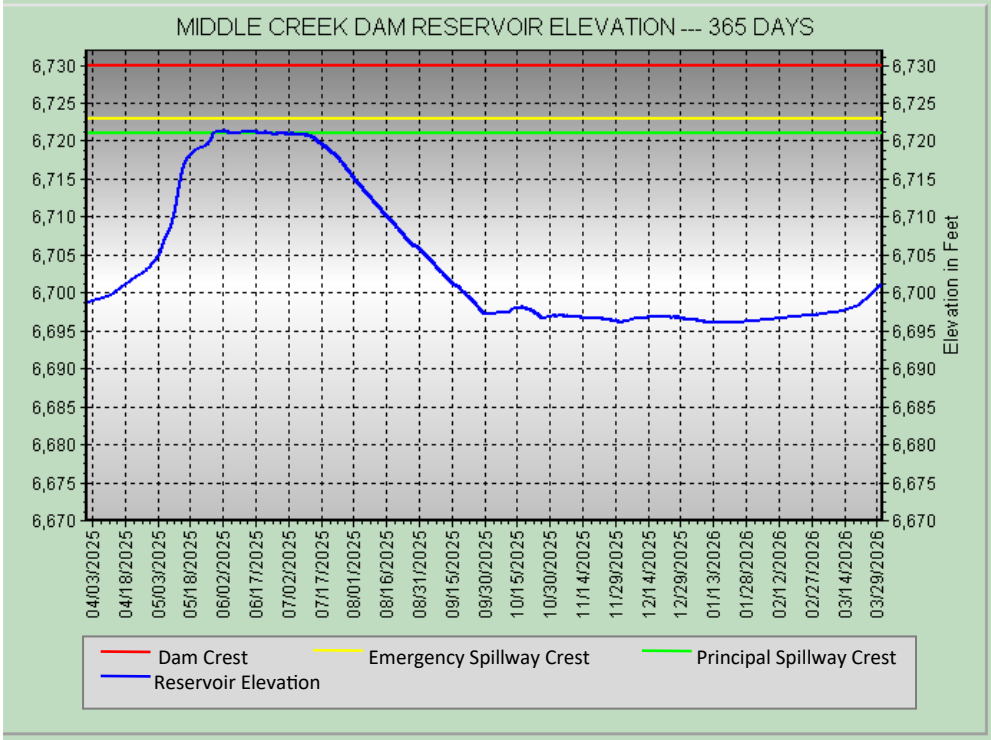
Gallatin River near Gallatin Gateway, MT - USGS-06043500 Subscribe to WaterAlert

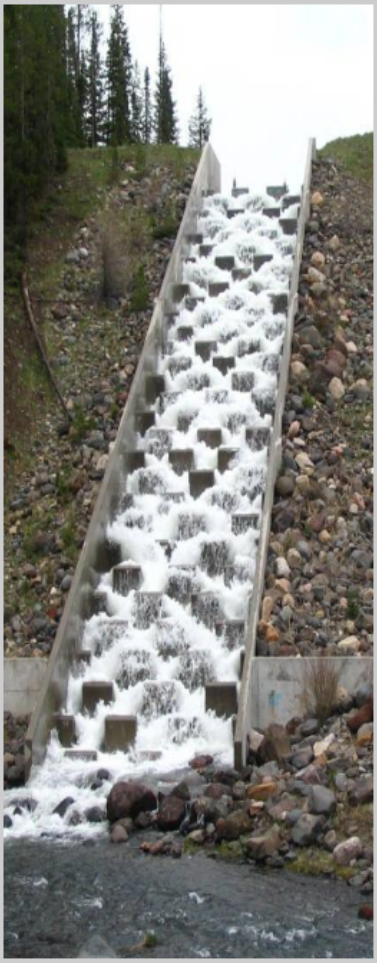
Discharge, cubic feet per second
This year
— Recorded
Prior year
— Recorded
◎ Selected field measurement : No data in time span
— Median 1889 - 2026

Discharge data is above normal.

Water Storage Data

Middle Creek Dam, Hyalite Reservoir—March 2026





TIME OF LAST READING	3/31/2026 10:00 AM
RESERVOIR ELEVATION	6,701.2 FT
RESERVOIR VOLUME	6,109 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

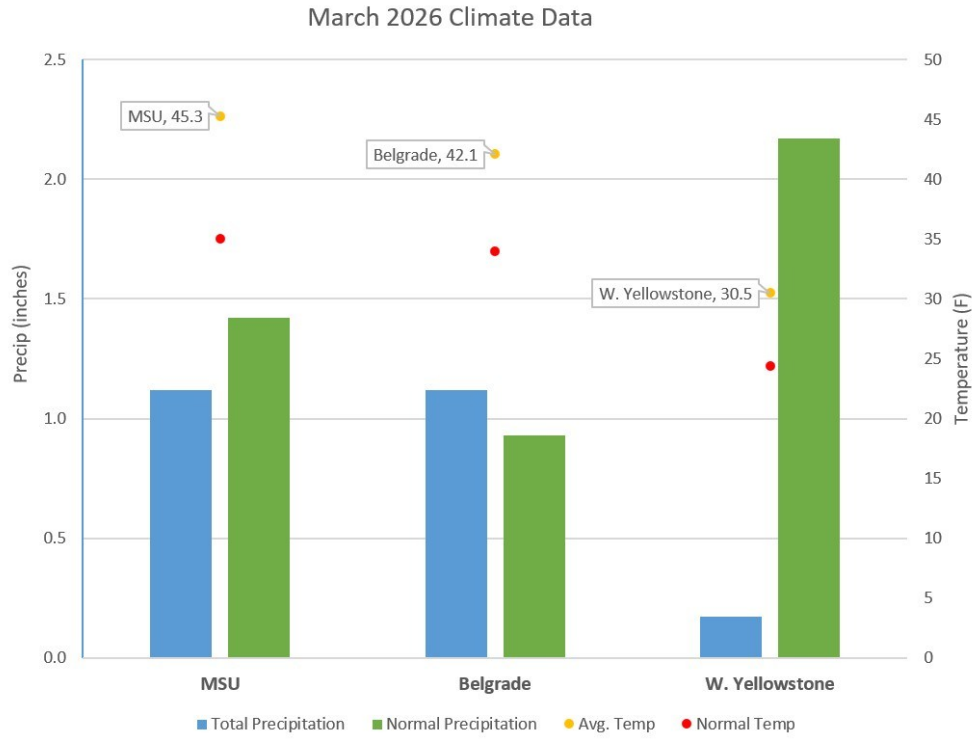
*** PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION ***

RESERVOIR SUMMARY *Data current as of 3/31/26

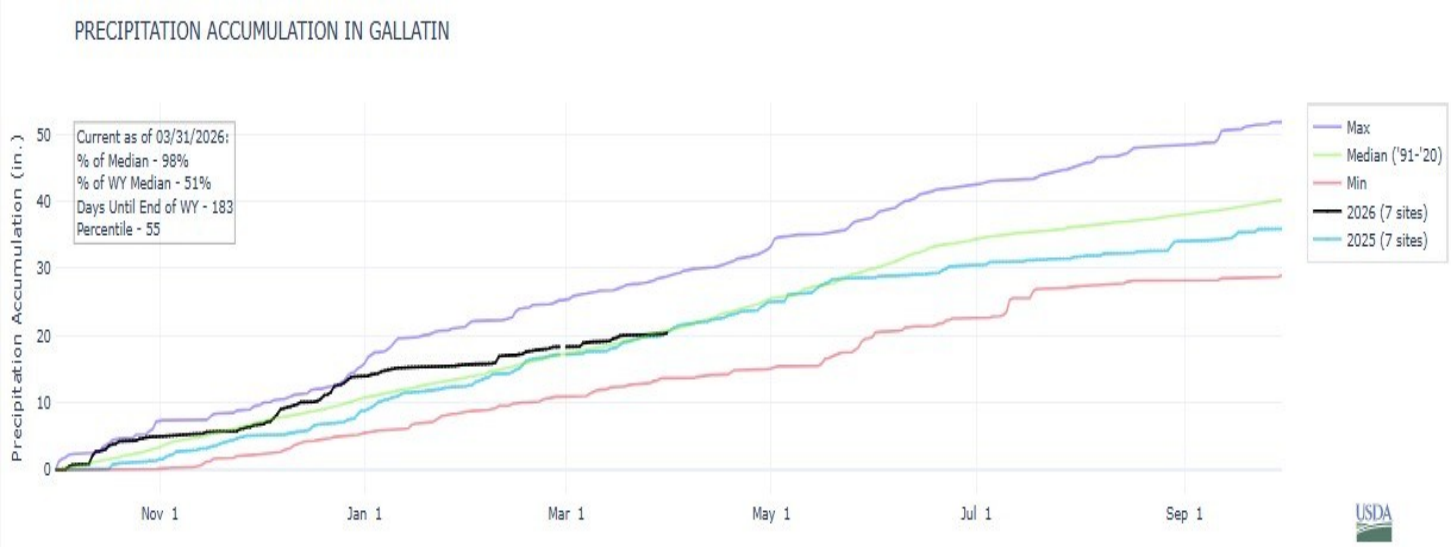
Middle Creek Dam Reservoir elevation is 6,701.2 ft, which is 19.8 ft below the principal spillway crest (6,721 ft). The reservoir elevation has increased by 4.1 ft since March 1st, 2026 (date of last relevant WSO report). Reservoir volume is 6,109 acre-ft, which is 628 acre-ft more than on March 1st, 2025.

Climate Data

Gallatin County—March 2026



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



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

*Data is current as of 4/1/2026

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

We are currently in Water Year 2026 (black line). The total accrued precipitation for the Gallatin River Basin as of March 31st, 2026 is below normal (median, green line) at 20.4 inches (USDA graph). The total accrued precipitation for WY 2025 on March 31st, 2025 was 20.5 inches (central blue line).

Soil Moisture Data

Mesonet Stations—March 2026

Manhattan Soil Probe Depth (in)	Soil Temp (°F)	Soil Water Content (%)
8" - Surface	44.06	26.30
20" - Shallow rooting	43.52	8.10
36" - Deep Rooting	41.90	19.10

Bozeman Soil Probe Depth (in)	Soil Temp (°F)	Soil Water Content (%)
4" - Surface	39.20	23.15
8" - Shallow rooting	41.99	26.80
20" - Deep Rooting	42.89	23.35

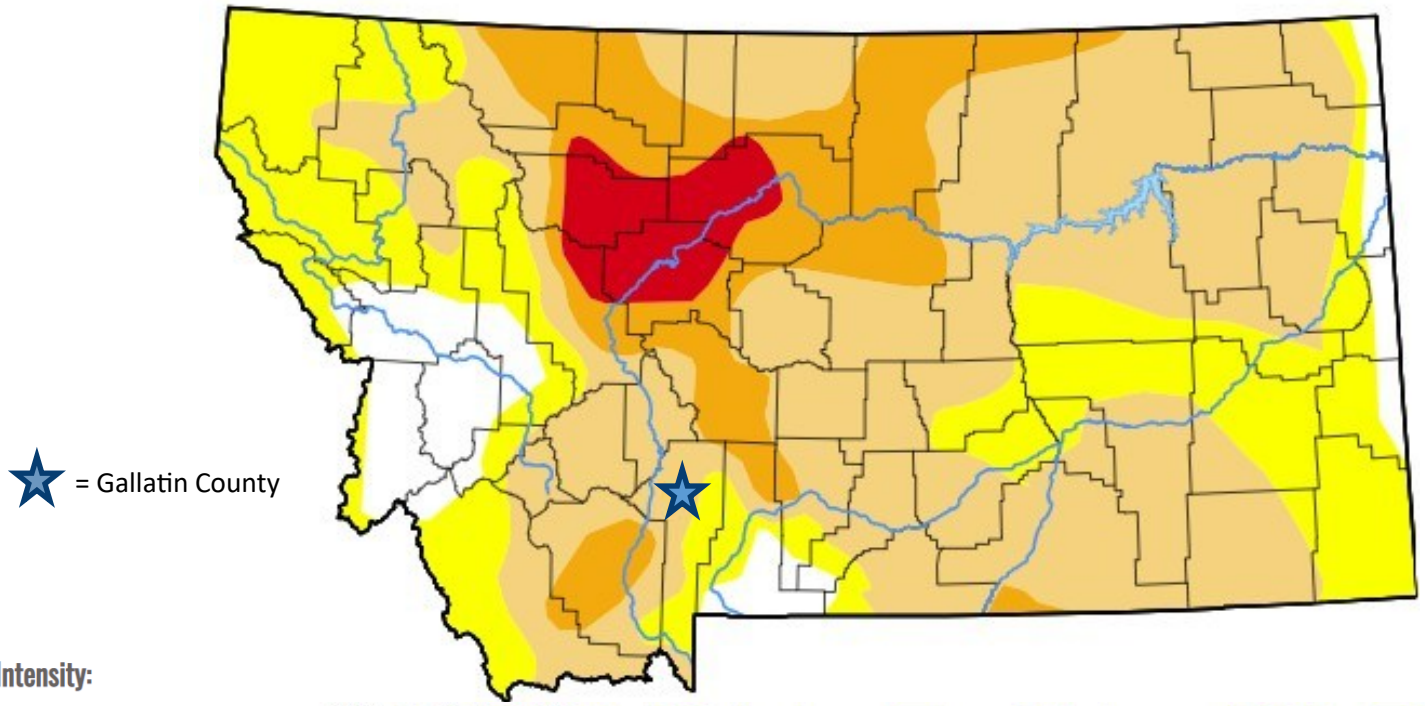
SOIL MOISTURE SUMMARY *Data current as of 3/31/26

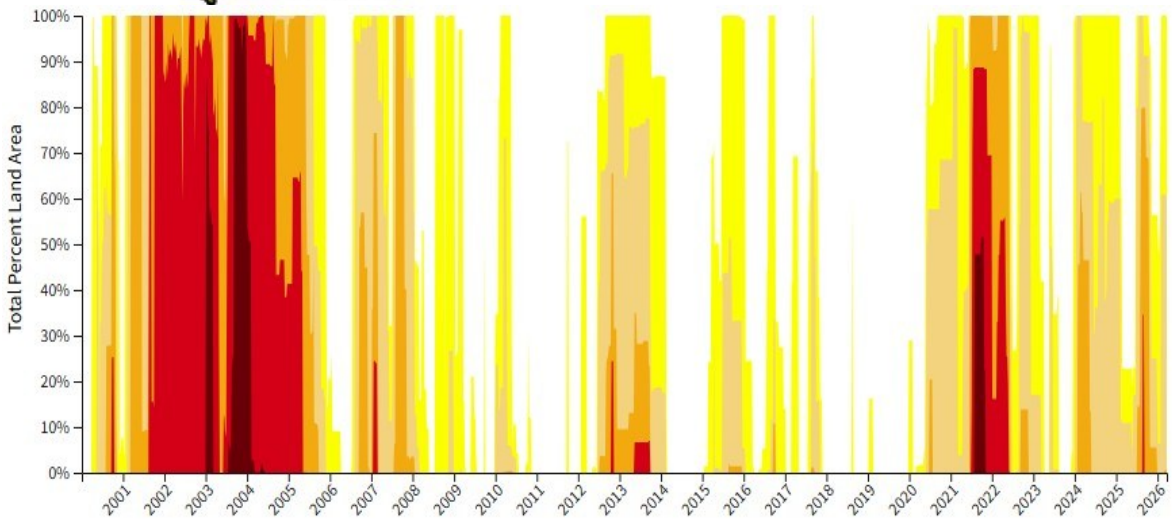
Since February 2025, at the Manhattan station the soil temperature increased at all depths. At the Bozeman station, the soil temperature increased at 8” and 20”, while decreasing slightly at 4”.

The soil water content at the Manhattan station has increased at 8” and 36”, while decreasing at 20”. At the Bozeman station, soil water content increased at 8”, while decreasing slightly at 4” and 20”.

Drought Index Data

Gallatin County— March 2026





Historical Conditions for Gallatin County, 2000-Present

DROUGHT INDEX SUMMARY *Data is current as of 3/26/26

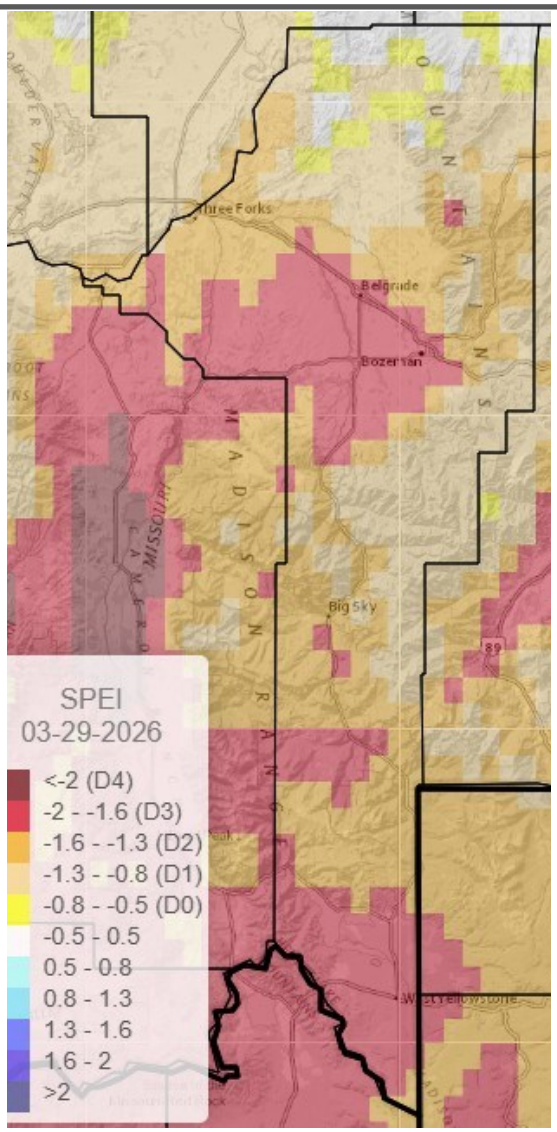
39.43% of Gallatin County is experiencing abnormally dry drought conditions. Impacts include low soil moisture contributing to poor crop germination and dry pastures, increased fire danger, and low streamflow with impacts to recreational fishing.

60.03% 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.

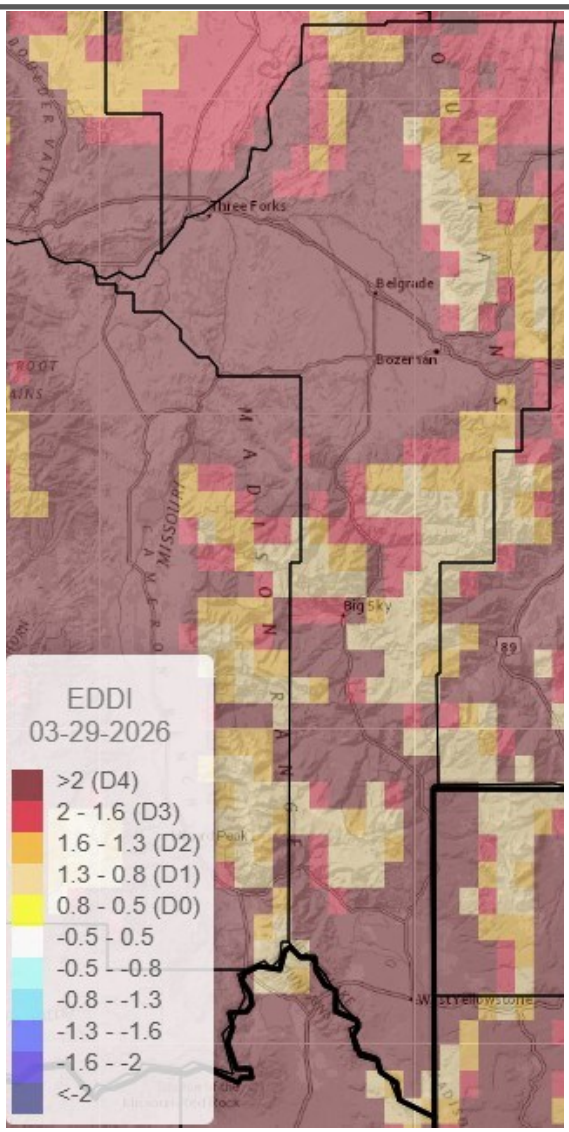
0.54% of Gallatin County is experiencing Severe Drought conditions at this time. Impacts include lower hay and crop yields, lower hay quality, non-existent subsoil moisture, high danger and fire count, poor air quality, low to dry livestock ponds, and stressed water wells.

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 3/29/26

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