



United States Department of Agriculture

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
Risk Management Agency

April 14, 2003

TO: Ross J. Davidson
Administrator

FROM: Dave P. Paul /S/ *Dave P. Paul*
Director

SUBJECT: Regional Irrigation Assessment for Spokane Region

This Regional Irrigation Assessment is provided in accordance with instructions in the Loss Adjustment Manual, FCIC-25010. The Regional Office Director is required to share information about areas suspected of having inadequate water for irrigation with regional insurance providers.

Parts of the west is experiencing severe drought conditions. The U.S. Drought Index lists abnormally dry conditions in Southern Idaho and Southeast Oregon. Precipitation totals and snow water content in these areas are 44% - 58% of average as of April 10, 2003. The Natural Resources and Conservation Service SNOTEL measurements within the severe drought areas reveal the lowest snow water content in the last 20 years, with many of the sites approaching the lowest levels since 1977.

Basin increases in snowpack and precipitation also increased April - September streamflow forecasts by as much as 21 percentage points. National Weather Service is predicting the possibility of continued above average temperatures, which would contribute to faster melt rates. The spring precipitation trend looks to be equal chances of above, below, or near normal.

We have reviewed and continue to track summaries of the streamflow forecast probabilities, basin area reservoir supplies, and SNOTEL data from the Water and Climate Center of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Based on the review of data available as of March 7, the following counties by state are identified where the availability of water for irrigation is most suspect:



Spokane Regional Office • 112 N University Road #205 • Spokane, WA 99206-5295

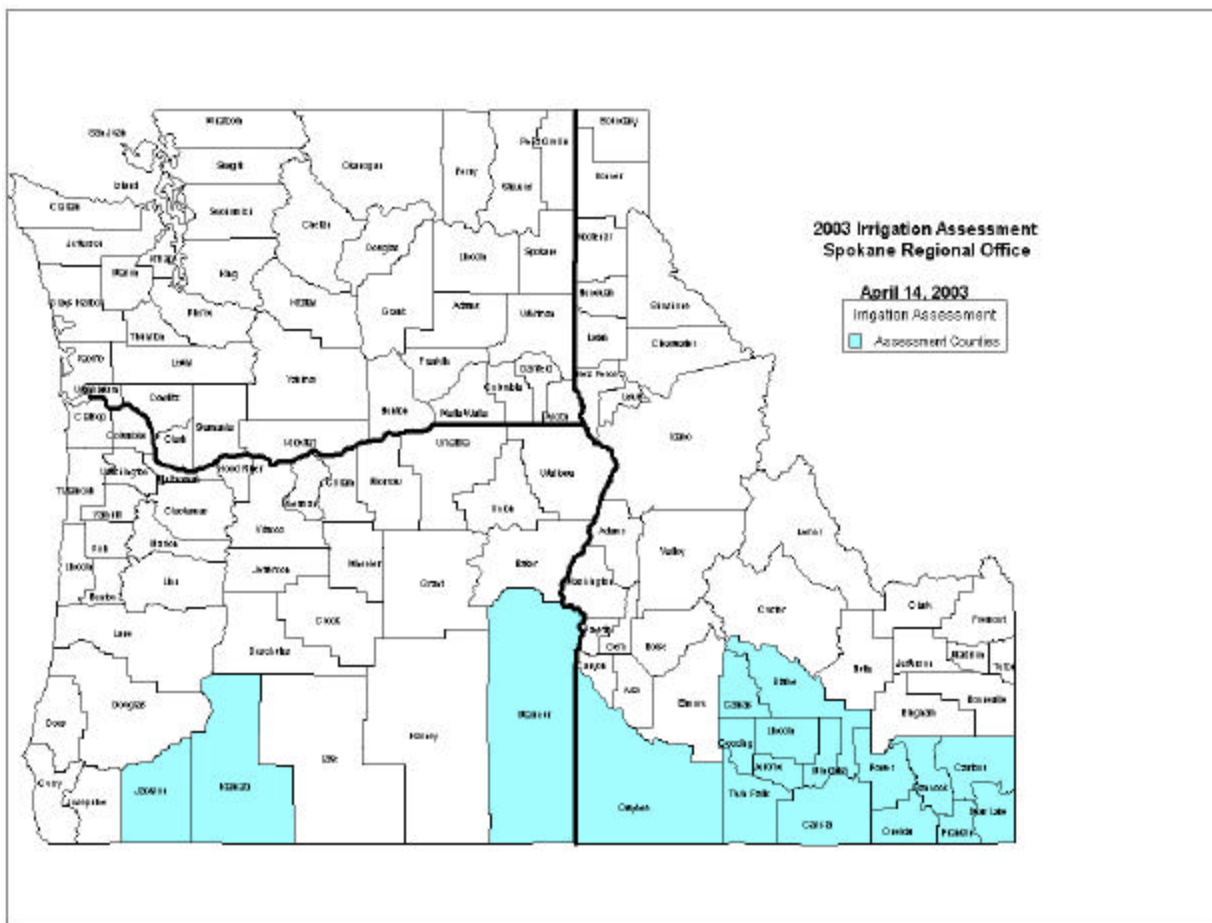
The Risk Management Agency Administers and Oversees
All Programs Authorized Under the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

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Bannock, Bear Lake, Blaine, Cassia, Camas, Caribou, Franklin, Gooding, Jerome, Minidoka, Lincoln, Oneida, Owyhee, Power and Twin Falls counties, Idaho and Jackson, Klamath and Malheur County, Oregon.

Insured crops under an irrigated practice may be affected by the suspected lack of irrigation water in the identified counties. Irrigated crops for the applicable counties are identified on the actuarial documents and on our website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov>.

We will continue to track summaries of the streamflow forecast probabilities, basin area reservoir supplies, and SNOTEL data from the Water and Climate Center of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and inform the Administrators Office of any deteriorating conditions. We encourage insurance providers to notify the Spokane Regional Office immediately of any other counties or areas of suspected irrigation water shortages.



If you have questions, please call our office at 509-353-2147.