

How will Climate Change Affect the Northwest?

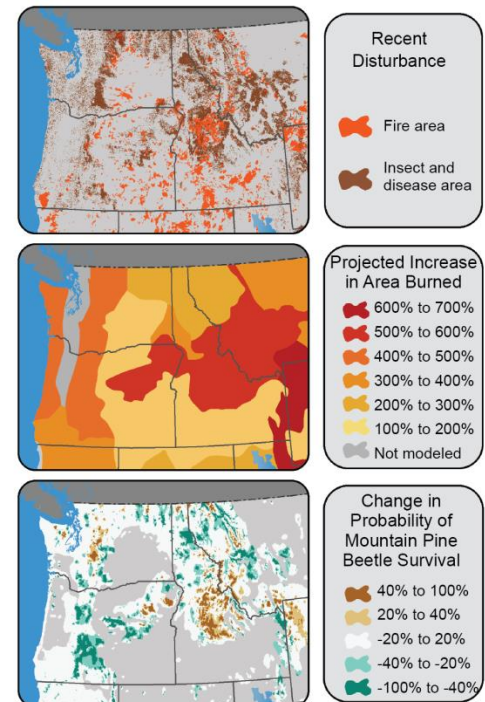
Climate change means the Northwest U.S. is threatened by potential water shortages, insect outbreaks and increased wildfires.

In addition to national data, the [Third National Climate Assessment](#) has chapters that explore how climate change will affect different regions of America.

Among the National Climate Assessment’s [findings for the Northwest](#):

- Earlier snowmelt because of climate change is reducing water supply in summer in the Northwest.
- Under worst case scenarios, if climate pollution continues unchecked, summer precipitation in the Northwest could decrease as much as **30 percent** by the end of the century.
- Average snowpack in the Cascade Mountains, as measured on April 1, has decreased by about **20 percent** since 1950.
- By 2050, snowmelt in some areas is projected to shift **three to four weeks earlier** than the 20th century average.
- Warmer and drier conditions have helped increase the number and spread of wildfires in western U.S. forests since the 1970s.
- Higher temperatures and drought stress are contributing to outbreaks of mountain pine beetles in Northwest forests, and outbreaks are likely to continue with ongoing warming.
- Increased wildfire risk, and insect and tree disease outbreaks, are already causing **widespread tree die-off** -- and are virtually certain to cause more.

Insects and Fire in Northwest Forests



Source: National Climate Assessment

Want even more info? Check out these [state-by-state fact sheets](#) on the White House web site.