

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/23/2020 1:52:51 PM

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Title:

Comments: Re: Williams et al and the question of whether the Forest does still have opportunity for management within a natural rate of variation

Excerpt : The megadrought represents the second driest 19-year period since 800 CE, exceeded only by a late-1500s megadrought, the study appearing this week in the journal Science.

"The megadrought-like trajectory of 2000-2018 soil moisture was driven by natural variability superimposed on drying due to anthropogenic warming," the study states.

The study covers an area stretching across nine U.S. states from Oregon and Montana down through California and New Mexico, and part of northern Mexico, according to the Columbia University blog State of the Planet. It identified four megadroughts lasting decades: during the late 800s, the mid-1100s, the 1200s, and the late 1500s.

Scientists then compared those megadroughts to soil moisture records from observed weather from 2000 to 2018. "Their conclusion: as measured against the worst 19-year increments within the previous episodes, the current drought is already outdoing the three earliest ones," the blog states.

Because of global warming, the authors say that average temperatures since 2000 have been pushed 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit above what they would have been otherwise.

"Because hotter air tends to hold more moisture, that moisture is being pulled from the ground. This has intensified drying of soils already starved of precipitation," the blog states.

<<<https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2020/05/21/569577.htm>>>