



Economic Research Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# Drought, Water Supply, and Western Agriculture

## 2023 USDA Ag Outlook Forum

Moderator: Nicholas Potter (USDA-ERS)

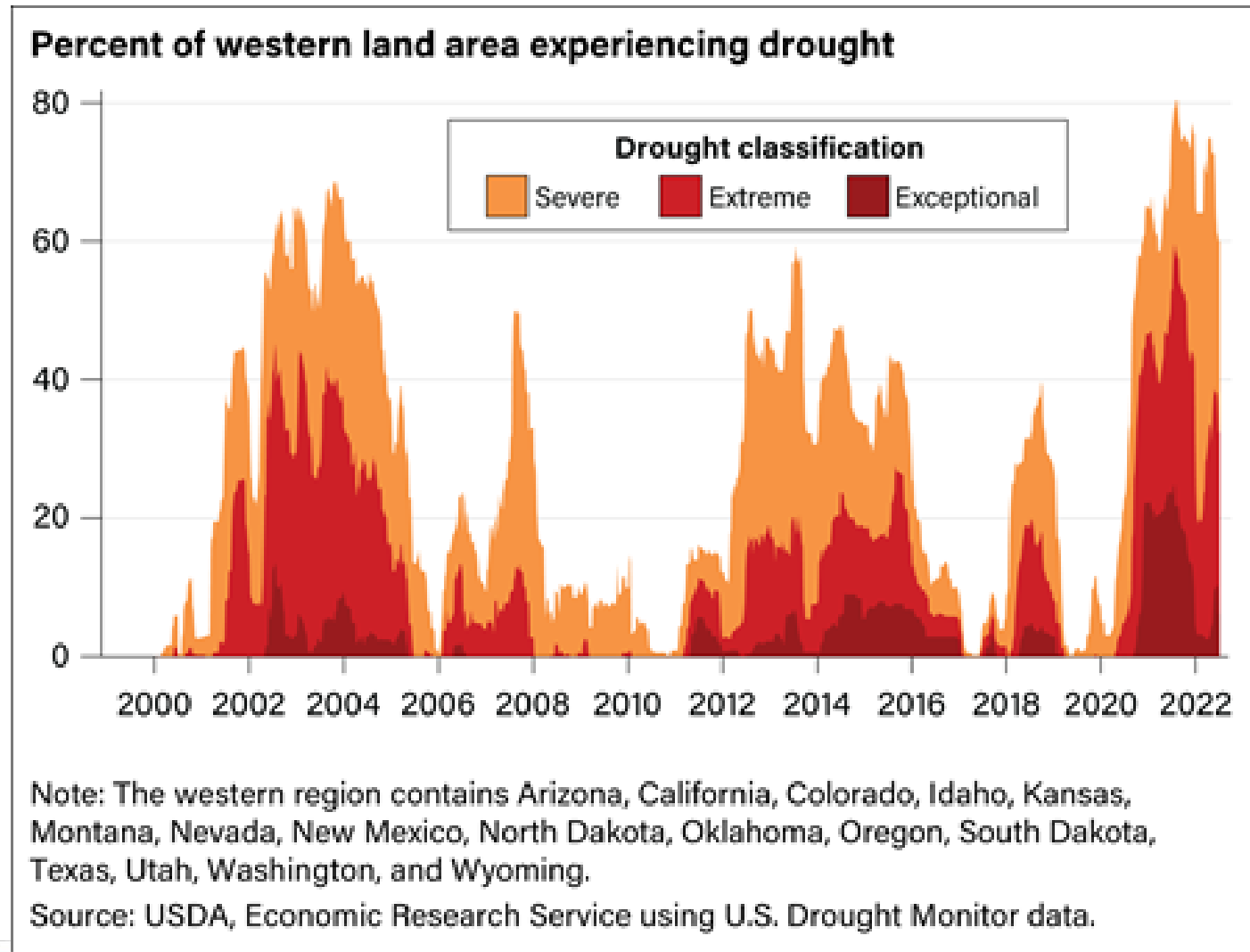
Speakers: Charles Luce (U.S. Forest Service)  
Brian Fuchs (U.S. Drought Monitor)  
Tony Willardson (Western States Water Council)

**Economic Research Service**

[www.ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov)



# Drought Prevalence is High Throughout the Western U.S.



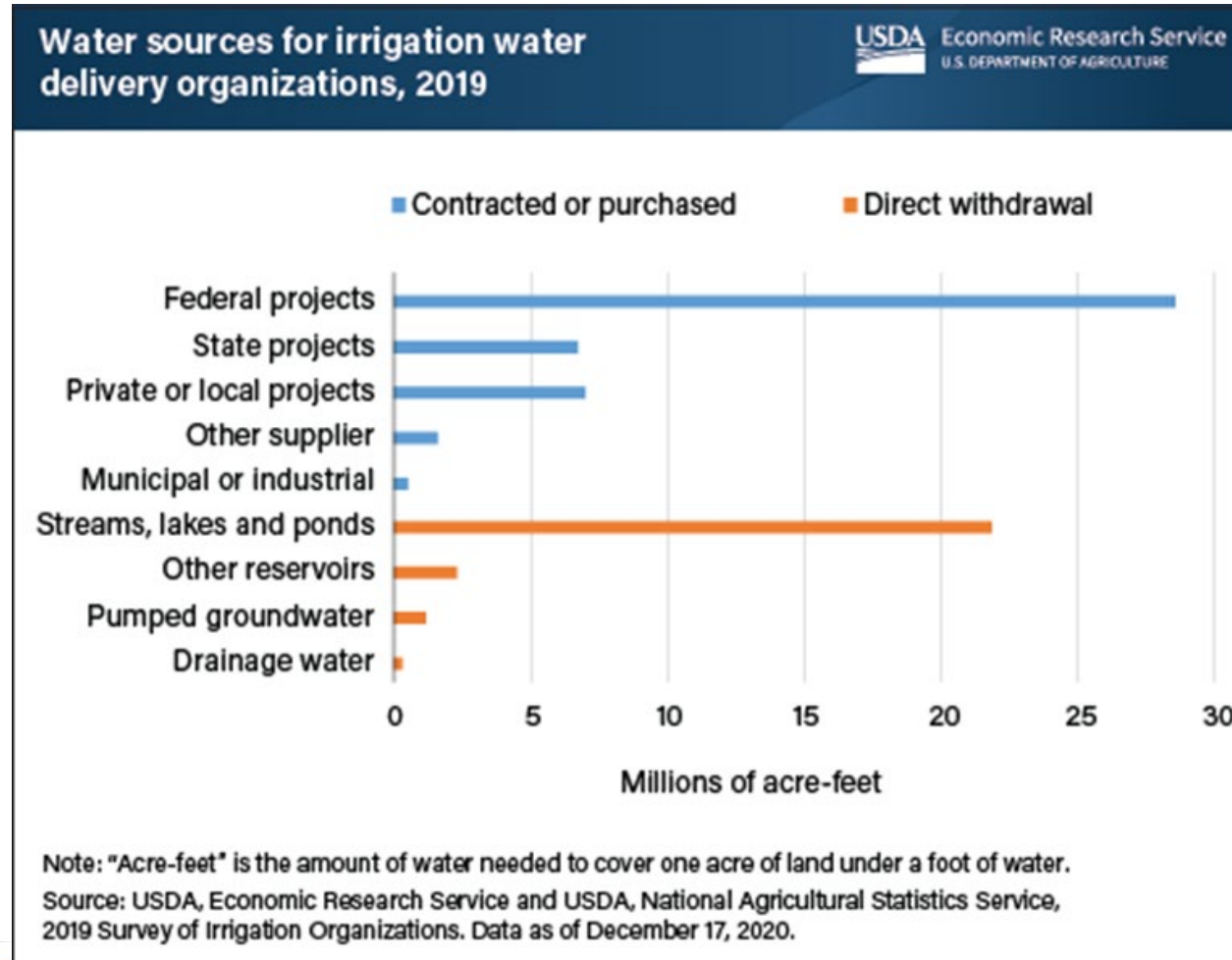
Source: [USDA ERS - Drought in the Western United States](https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-other/drought-in-the-western-united-states).



**Economic Research Service**  
[www.ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov)



# Federal Water Projects and Direct Surface Water Withdrawals are the Largest Sources of Irrigation Organization Water

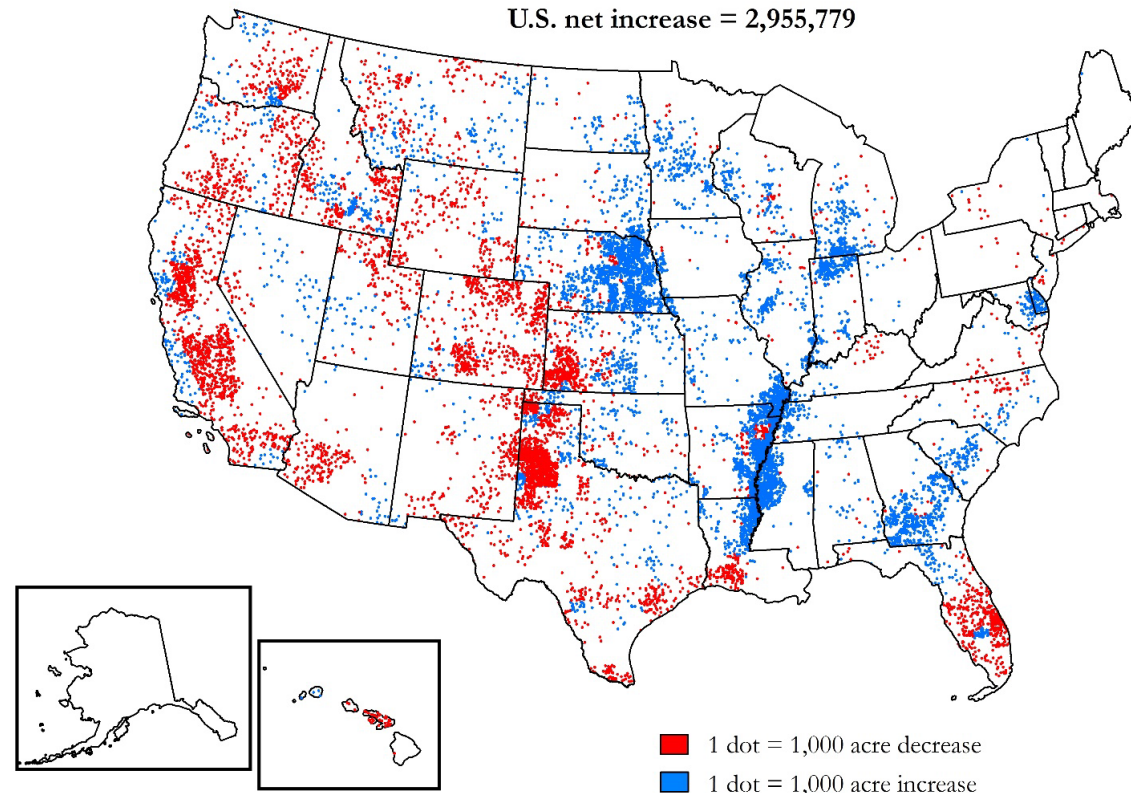


Source: [USDA-ERS Chart of Note](#).



# Irrigated Acreage has decreased in the Western U.S. and increased in parts of the Midwest and Eastern U.S.

Change in irrigated farmland acreage, 1997-2017



Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service,  
2017 and 1997 Censuses of Agriculture

Source: [USDA ERS - Trends in U.S. Irrigated Agriculture.](#)



**Economic Research Service**  
[www.ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov)





# Session Roadmap

- Increasing drought frequency and severity and its effects on streamflows and resulting water supplies (**Charles Luce**, USDA U.S. Forest Service)
- Federal programs to enhance drought resiliency (**Brian Fuchs**, U.S. Drought Monitor)
- Regional efforts to respond to water scarcity in the western U.S. (**Tony Willardson**, Western States Water Council)

