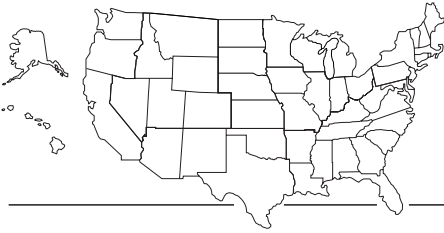


The LandReport

A Monthly Report for the
American Landowner



Newsletter

JANUARY 2016 • LANDREPORT.COM



EL NIÑO OFFERS CALIFORNIA RELIEF FROM FOUR-YEAR DROUGHT

Above-average snowpack in the Sierras a critical first step.

Cattlemen, farmers, and other landowners are enjoying a much-needed wet spell after enduring several years of brutal drought. Snowstorms and thundershowers have drenched much of the Golden State and replenished bone-dry reservoirs to near-serviceable levels. And the good news is that the National Weather Service (NWS) in Sacramento is predicting more wet weather in the mountains through springtime. The latest



Winter snowpack in the northern Sierra Nevadas is currently 24 percent above normal. © Shutterstock

snowpack figures from NWS Sacramento show that the Northern Sierras are 29 percent above normal levels, the Central Sierras are at 18 percent above normal, and the Southern Sierras are 17 percent above the norm. According to the forecast office, these numbers reflect the highest snowpack levels since 2011. Credit El Niño, which has been pushing storms eastward from Japan, north of Hawaii, and directly toward the California coast. For updates on climatic conditions, follow the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Sacramento on Twitter [@NWSSacramento](#) and NWS Los Angeles [@NWSLosAngeles](#).

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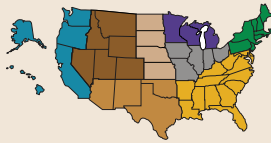
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FOREST SERVICE



NATIONAL

WILDFIRES TORCH RECORD

ACREAGE IN 2015. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that wildfires burned a record 10,125,149 acres across the United States last year. The 2015 total eclipsed the previous record, which was set in 2006. Of last year's blazes, more than 50 exceeded 50,000 acres, and 20 exceeded 100,000 acres. In addition, more than 4,500 homes and other structures were destroyed. Tragically, 13 wildland firefighters, including seven U.S. Forest Service firefighters, perished in the line of duty. Vilsack cited these figures on Jan. 6 when he renewed his plea for Congress to pass the bipartisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, which is budget neutral and has broad stakeholder support. Read more [HERE](#).



WEST

INTERIOR

LAND EXCHANGE

BLM HITS PAUSE BUTTON ON WILKS

SWAP. BLM Central Montana District Manager Mark Albers announced that his office will not green-light a land exchange proposed by Wilks Ranch, an entity owned by Dan and Farris Wilks

of Cisco, TX. The decision, which was announced at a Jan. 26 meeting of the Central Montana Resource Advisory Council, is the latest setback for the Land Report 100ers. Two years ago, an exchange proposed by Wilks Ranch was turned down; this week's announcement concerned a 2015 proposal that would have obligated the Wilks to transfer more than 5,000 acres. Those lands included 3,600 acres in or adjacent to the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. That acreage would have provided permanent access to 50,000 acres of public land within the Missouri Breaks currently inaccessible by vehicle. Alber's decision was not final, but he deemed the complex nature of the exchange, which involved parcels in different counties, too time- and staff-intensive to be currently pursued. A Wilks Ranch representative told the *Great Falls Tribune* that the lack of an explanation for not pursuing the exchange was "cavalier" on the part of the BLM. "We're sitting here in the dark yet again trying to understand what they think is the fatal flaw and why they are refusing to open up a public process to take an objective look at the proposal," he said.

ZACA CREEK RANCH

\$14,250,000

Santa Ynez Valley, California



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AUCTION

UTE LAKE RANCH ON THE BLOCK.

A 23,000-acre mix of deeded and leased land in Eastern New Mexico featuring Ute Lake frontage will be auctioned in four tracts on

Feb. 19. An existing development tract already features a plated 44-lot subdivision that has been approved and is ready to sell. The lots range in size from 1.5 to 5 acres. The other tracts include excellent cow-calf country that has not been grazed in more than a year. At 8,600 acres, Ute Lake is the second largest freshwater lake in the Land of Enchantment and conveniently located minutes from Interstate 40. For more information on this investment opportunity, contact either Scott Burton at Mason & Morse Ranch Company at (575) 760-8088 or scott@ranchland.com, or Joel King at United Country Dynasty Auction & Realty at (870) 847-0945 or jking@unitedcountrydynasty.com. Read more [HERE](#).

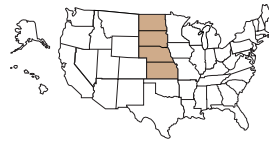


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GREAT PLAINS

AUCTION

NEBRASKA FARMLAND

NORTHERN NEBRASKA FARMLAND

FETCHES \$46 MILLION. [Farmers National Company](#) announced the sale of a 13,440-

acre Keya Paha County farm. The transaction

closed in 2015. According to *Brownfield Ag News*, the \$46 million sale price was a potential record for Northern Nebraska farmland. Dave Hickey and Robert Litz of Farmers National Company represented the seller, [Summit Farms](#). The buyer's details were not disclosed. The land consisted of nearly 6,400 acres of irrigated crop ground, watered by 49 center pivots. Also included were nearly 7,000 acres of pasture and hayland, 1.5 million bushels of grain storage, machinery storage, shop facilities, and a cattle feedlot facility. Hickey told *Brownfield Ag News* that the sale broke down to roughly \$5,000-plus per acre for the irrigated cropland and \$1,500 to \$2,000 per acre for the pastureland and hay ground. Read more [HERE](#).



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