National Weather Service
Quad Cities, IA/IL
Thursday, February 25, 2021

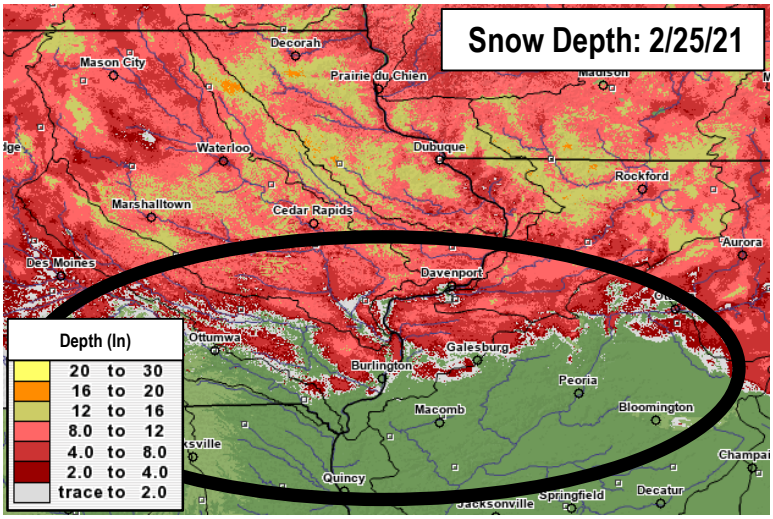
2021 Spring Flood Outlook

Near to Locally Above Normal Risk for Flooding

- ***Risk for flooding is above normal for local watersheds with high snowpack***
- Risk for ***Minor Flooding*** on the Mississippi River is above normal for locations downstream of the Quad Cities.
- The rate of the snowmelt, additional snowfall, and heavy spring rains will highly influence the occurrence and severity of flooding this spring.

What's New?

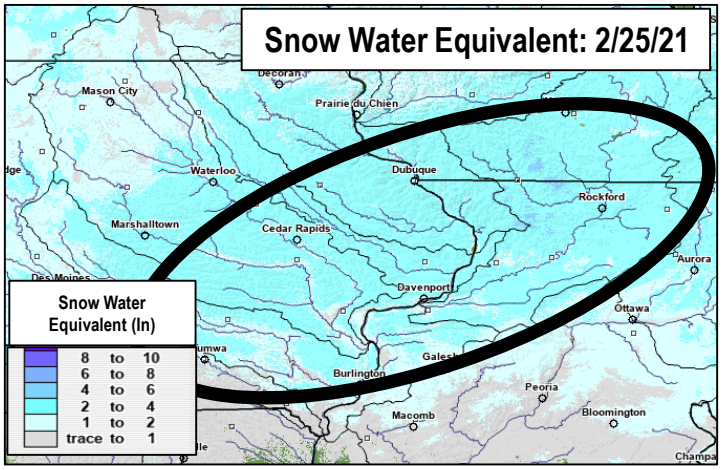
- Minimal changes in over the past 2 weeks have led to only minor modifications in the flood risk.
- Snowpack has begun to slowly melt. With warm temperatures expected to continue in the coming weeks, extensive loss of the snowpack is likely.
- Loss of snow has caused within bank rises on rivers in the circled area on the image to the right.
- Ice cover on the rivers will need to be monitored as it breaks up. While risk isn't high for ice jam flooding, until rivers are ice free there is potential for ice jams to develop.



Liquid Water Content across eastern Iowa and northern Illinois remains at 2" to 4" with less moisture on average in areas to the north.

Soil moisture remains near normal for much of the region, with a small area from eastern Iowa into northwest Illinois that has slightly above normal soil moisture going back to last fall. Rivers also continue to run at levels near normal and do have some capacity for snowmelt runoff.

With snow beginning to melt and frozen ground still a factor, smaller rivers and creeks in the area with high snowpack will have the potential for flooding in the coming weeks.



Highest concern for flooding in the near term will be on smaller rivers in the encircled area as snow melts.

March Temperature and Precipitation forecast:

Week 2: Temp/Precip Outlook / Risk of Hazardous Weather March: Temp/Precip Outlook

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Bottom Line:

- **Rivers with the highest probability for flooding are watersheds with a deep snowpack and the Mississippi River near and downstream of the Quad Cities.**
- **Chances are highest for Minor flooding to occur this season, where additional spring moisture would be needed for more extreme flooding to occur.**
- **Snowmelt will be primary driver for spring flooding, with spring precipitation being a high contributor.**
- **Soils have capacity for moisture once the ground thaws to reduce runoff.**
- ***The rate of snowmelt will be essential to the occurrence of flooding.***

Spring Flood Threat Checklist (as of February 25, 2021)

Threat for Flooding	Impact to Potential Spring Flooding	Change in Threat Since Last Outlook	Link to Image of Information
River Levels	**Neutral**	Unchanged	USGS WaterWatch
Soil Moisture	Decreased Threat	Unchanged	CPC Soil Moisture
Snowpack/Liquid Content in the Snowpack	**Mississippi River**: Near to Above Normal	Unchanged	Snow/Liquid Equivalent Analysis
	IA/IL/MO local rivers: Near to Above Normal	Unchanged	
Rate of Snowmelt	**Unknown**	N/A	**24**, **48**, & **72** hr Snowmelt
Frost Depth	Decreased Threat	Unchanged	Frost Depth Map
Spring Precipitation	**Near Normal**	N/A	Mar-May Outlook

Combination of Factors →

Mississippi River – Near Normal/Above Normal Downstream of the Quad Cities
Local Rivers – Near to Above Normal

2021 Probabilistic Spring Flood Outlook Update:
March 11, 2021

https://www.weather.gov/dvn/2021_springfloodoutlook

The National Weather Service urges those with interests in flooding to stay tuned to additional communications going through the spring season.