

Midwest

Extreme high and low streamflows also are expected to change with warming. Increasing winter rainfall (as opposed to snowfall) is expected to lead to more winter flooding in relatively warm watersheds on the west side of the Cascades.



see increased growth. In the longer term, forest growth is expected to decrease as summertime soil moisture deficits limit forest productivity, with low-elevation forests experiencing these changes first. The extent and species composition of forests are also expected to change as tree species respond to climate change. There is also the potential for extinction of local populations and loss of biological diversity if environmental changes outpace species' ability to shift their ranges and form successful new ecosystems.

Agriculture, especially production of tree fruit such as apples, is also an important part of the regional economy. Decreasing irrigation supplies, increasing pests and disease, and increased competition from weeds are likely to have negative effects on agricultural production.

declining summer streamflows

Northwest salmon populations are at historically low levels due to stresses imposed by a variety of human activities including dam building, logging, pollution, and over-fishing. Climate change affects salmon throughout their life stages and poses an additional stress. As more winter precipitation falls as rain rather than snow, higher winter streamflows scour streambeds, damaging spawning nests and washing away incubating eggs. Earlier peak streamflows flush young salmon from rivers to estuaries before they are physically mature enough for the transition, increasing a variety of stresses



