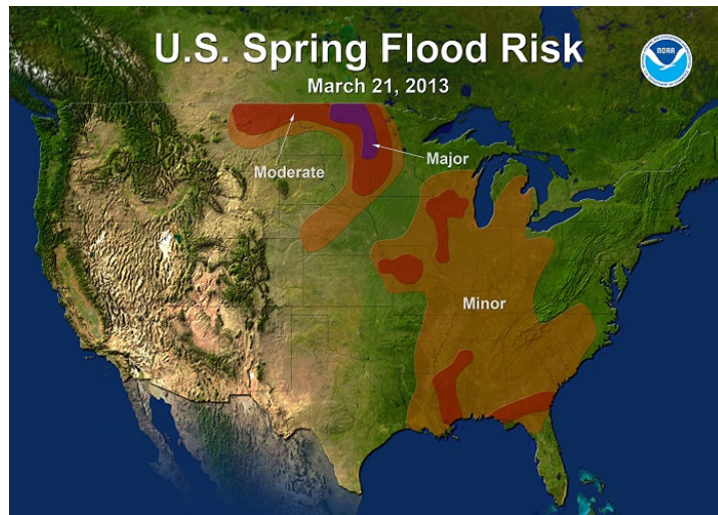# APRIL SNOWS BRING MAY OUTRAGE: RECORD FLOODING AHEAD

Map, national hydrologic assessment via NOAA-NWS

In contrast to headline news today, the weather seems perfectly harmless — until one looks carefully at these maps.

Though increased soil moisture levels may be a big improvement over this past summer's drought, a serious problem remains: there's been too much late snow and it's going to melt quickly.

Based on the 21-MAR-2013 hydrologic map above, conditions along the Red River basin were quite bad; changes of major flooding were already predicted at that time. Since that report, the State Climatology Office at University of Minnesota recorded 4 inches of water (which includes 13 inches of snow) at their Twin Cities campus. This same station, however, received between 6-15 inches less snow over the last month than Fargo, North Dakota, located on the Red River.

The data used for the Percent Chance of Flooding map below is dated 15-APR-2013, before the final snowfall tally after The Weather Channel-branded winter storm "Xerxes" on 16-APR-2013. The area

between Bismarck and Fargo received at least two feet of snow.
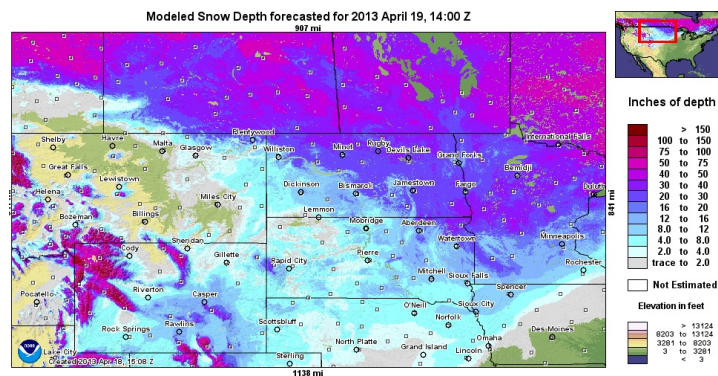
Graphic: NOAA Nat'l Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center

I'm no meterologist, climatologist, or hydrologist, but it sure looks to me like the chances of major flooding have increased from 80% to 100%. Just an uneducated guess on my part; I'll also speculate flooding will accelerate within the next week-10 days without doing any additional research into the subject. (Hint: It's called "spring.")
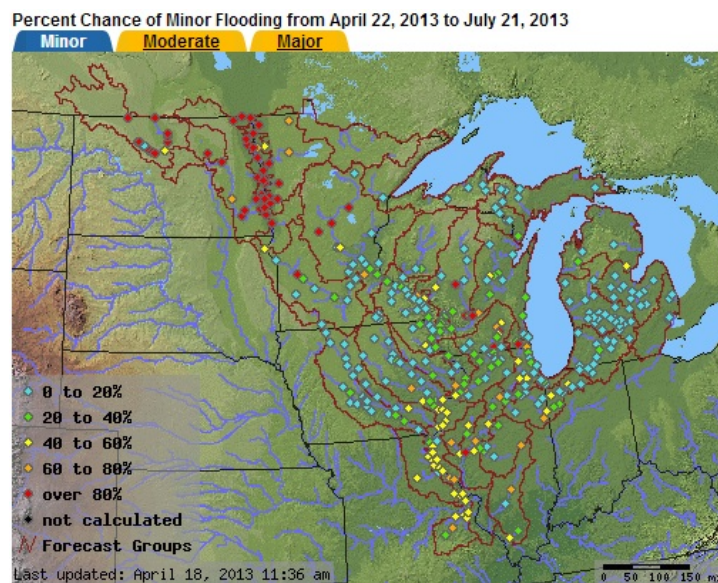
Graphic: NOAA-NWS River Forecast Office

Fortunately some folks in Minn-Dak are watching this situation

carefully; volunteers in Fargo have begun filling sandbags in preparation, for example.

The total number of bags to be filled by the end next Tuesday won't be adequate, though, against anticipated record water levels. A certain mess lies ahead.

While we have virtually nothing in the way of predictive tools to help us defend against disaffected youth intent on killing and maiming us, we do have tools to predict slow-moving challenges like annual flooding affecting millions of Americans.

Doesn't it seem like more of us would be aware of the risks and dangers so that we as individuals, businesses, and government agencies can take truly effective measures more than a week or two in advance? Shouldn't the age of Big Data offer us better information for local/state/federal budgeting in response to weather volatility and incipient natural disasters?

Oh wait…that would require intelligent, rational actors in government instead of science-illiterate, reactionary anti-tax freaks in office who cannot countenance paying for baseline services from National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Weather Service — let alone adequately fund development and implementation of new and better predictive technologies for use by the same..

In the meantime you can anticipate the media will be shocked, SHOCKED! when they finally clue in.

It would be nice if a few more members of Congress would be equally shocked to the point that they clued in, too.