“clear gold” become a trilateral flashpoint as populations continue to grow and demand continues to rise?

2. Gujarat State, Northwestern India
Gujarat provides a classic example of what is

rates will consume the available groundwater reservoir in less than 25 years. Like Gujarat, irrigated agriculture in the region is rather quickly heading toward unsustainability.

reservoir is coming close to being drained, it must be concluded that agriculture in the region—*as we now practice it*— is increasingly vulnerable to natural climate variability. The next megadrought will have a crippling effect. But it gets worse. ***All*** climate models project a net decline in summertime soil moisture in the midwestern heart of North America as a consequence of progressive global warming and enhanced evaporation. Superimposing that trend on the natural variability in precipitation over the last millenium paints a picture that must give cause for serious concern.

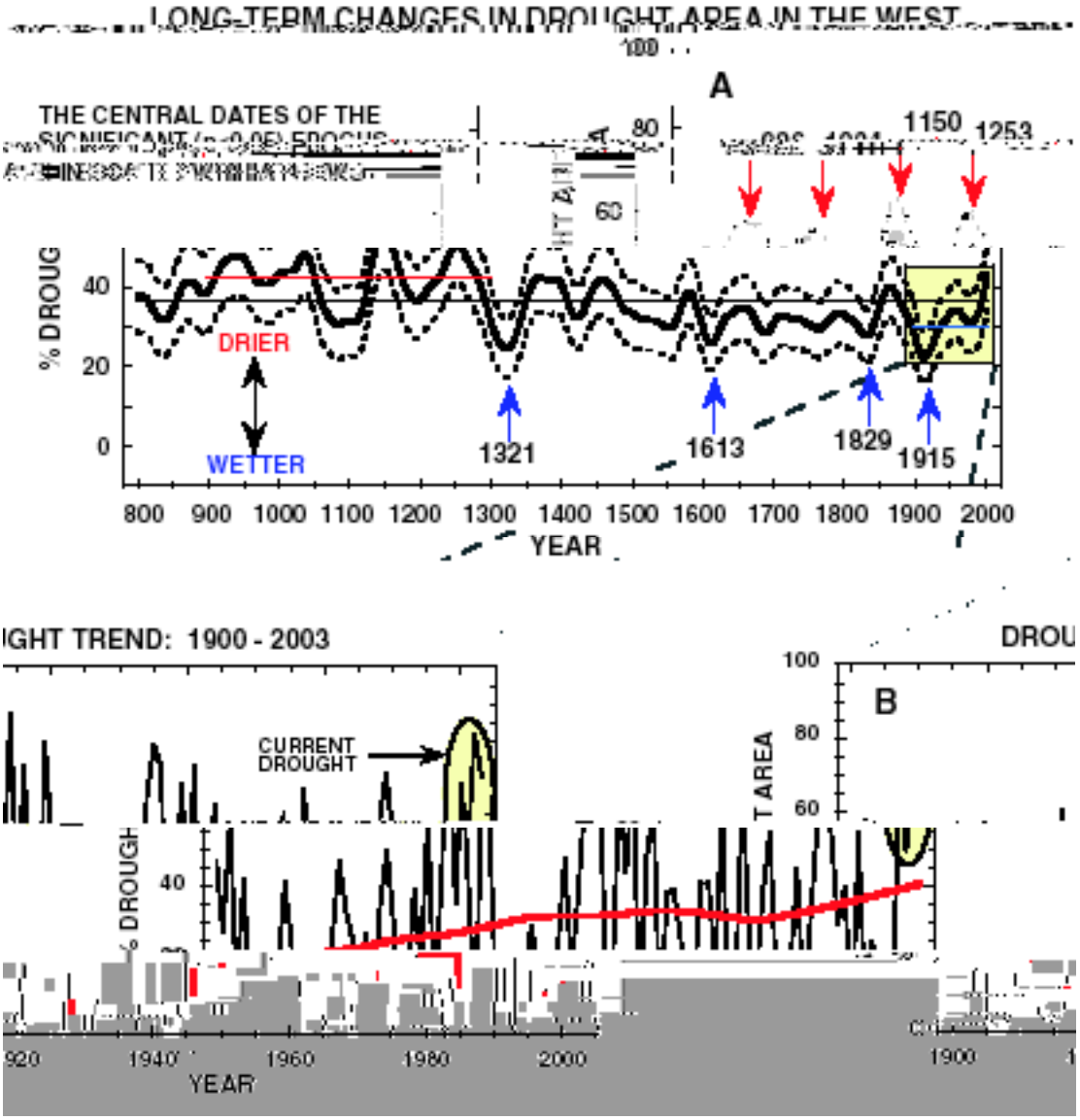

Figure 3. Estimation of relative area of drought in western North America between northern Mexico and southern Canada over the last 1,200 years. The compilation is based on the study of annual growth rings in drought-sensitive tree species. The upper curve has been smoothed with a 60-year running average to highlight long-term events. From Cook et al. (2004)[7].