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*Earth's Future*

Supporting Information for

**Identifying Coherence Across End-of-Century Montane Snow Projections in the Western United States**

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- Text S1 and S2
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26 **Introduction**

27 Text S1 and Text S2 provide additional details on the snow projection datasets  
28 compared in the main text. Figures S1 through S12 provide additional figures in formats  
29 analogous to those presented in the main text, but for different domains and periods.  
30 Finally Table 1 includes snow projection statistics, including specific statistics and values  
31 referenced in the main text. Here, these text, figures, and statistics support and  
32 complement the findings of the associated study, but are not necessary for the  
33 understanding of the study results presented in the main text.

34 **Text S1: NEX6-C and NEX6-M modeling procedure**

35 The NEX6-M and NEX6-C snow water equivalent (SWE) projections developed for  
36 this study were made using a two-step modeling approach, which 1) developed baseline  
37 simulations representative of snow evolution in historical periods, and 2) perturbed the  
38 baseline simulations with future climate-change signals. While straightforward, this  
39 change-factor approach (also termed the *delta method*) is a reliable approach for  
40 determining hydrological and ecological climate sensitivities (Barsugli et al., 2020;  
41 McKelvey et al., 2011; Sofaer et al., 2017).

42 Historical snow simulations were forced with meteorological data from the Modern-  
43 Era Retrospective Reanalysis, version 2 (MERRA-2; Gelaro et al., 2017). The forcing  
44 variables used were air temperature, specific humidity, downwelling shortwave radiation,  
45 downwelling longwave radiation, wind speed, wind direction, surface pressure, and  
46 precipitation. Prior to forcing simulations, MERRA-2 was downscaled to the model  
47 resolution ( $0.01^\circ$ ). Coarse grid cell mean precipitation from MERRA-2 was spatially  
48 disaggregated using the underlying and finer-scale (1 km) monthly climatology  
49 precipitation patterns from Parameter-elevation Regressions on Independent Slopes  
50 Model (PRISM; Daly et al., 2008, 1997). MERIT elevations maps and terrain-based lapse  
51 rates (e.g., Cosgrove et al., 2003) were also used to downscale meteorological forcing  
52 data. Finally, slope and aspect corrections were used to calculate terrain shading impacts.  
53 The downscaling approaches used here are discussed in-depth in Arsenault et al. (2018).

54 Future climate change signals were derived from the Coupled Model Intercomparison  
55 Project, phase 6 (CMIP6; Eyring et al., 2016). Prior to accessing this data, CMIP6 daily-  
56 average historical and future climate data were downscaled to  $0.1^\circ$  resolution by the  
57 NASA Earth Exchange Global Daily Downscaled Projections (NEX-GDD-CMIP6;  
58 Thrasher et al., 2022). NEX-GDDP-CMIP6 data was downscaled using the popular bias  
59 correction spatial disaggregation (BCSD) approach (Wood et al., 2004), which uses  
60 overlapping periods of climate models (from CMIP6) and historical observations as the  
61 basis for determining the climate model bias and sub-grid variability at monthly intervals.  
62 Here, observations came from the reanalysis-based Global Meteorological Forcing  
63 Dataset (GMFD; Sheffield et al., 2006). Readers are referenced to Thrasher et al. (2022)  
64 and Wood et al. (2004) for more information on NEX-GDDP-CMIP6 and BCSD,  
65 respectively.

66 The Land Information System (LIS; Kumar et al., 2006) was used to simulate snow  
67 evolution at fine spatial resolutions ( $0.01^\circ$ ,  $\sim 1$  km) and hourly timesteps over the five  
68 Western US montane watersheds. LIS simulations in this study were performed using the  
69 Noah-Multiparameterization (Noah-MP) land surface model (Niu et al., 2011), which  
70 accounts for a discrete canopy layer, and multilayer snow representations. Landcover  
71 classifications came from satellite-derived International Geosphere-Biosphere

72 Programme (IGBP) classifications (Friedl et al., 2022, 2002), and soil maps were derived  
 73 from the International Soil Reference and Information Centre (ISRIC; Batjes, 1995).  
 74 Spatially varying maximum snow albedo was prescribed using historic observations  
 75 (Barlage et al., 2005) from the MODerate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer  
 76 (MODIS). Finally, modeled snow albedo decayed in accordance to a decay factor from  
 77 the Canadian Land Surface Scheme (CLASS) parameterization (Verseghy, 1991).  
 78 Snowfall and rainfall were partitioned at each hourly timestep using a method from  
 79 Jordan (1991),

$$\begin{aligned}
 80 \quad & F_{snow} = 1: && T_{air} < 0.5^{\circ}C \\
 81 \quad & F_{snow} = 1 - [0.2T_{air}]: && 0.5^{\circ}C < T_{air} < 2.0^{\circ}C \\
 82 \quad & F_{snow} = 0.6: && 2.0^{\circ}C < T_{air} \leq 2.5^{\circ}C \\
 83 \quad & F_{snow} = 0: && T_{air} > 2.5^{\circ}C
 \end{aligned}$$

84  
 85 where  $T_{air}$  is hourly and  $0.01^{\circ}$  air temperature and  $F_{snow}$  is the fraction of precipitation  
 86 that fell as snow. This model setup is similar to a number of recent studies that employed  
 87 LIS and Noah-MP for snow modeling purposes (Cho et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021;  
 88 Wrzesien et al., 2022).

89 We partitioned the historical and future records into discrete records of time that were  
 90 long enough to encompass climate variability, while short enough to compare climate  
 91 impacts on snow across multiple periods between present-day and 2100. Here, we used a  
 92 variogram-type approach to determine the number of years at which historical and  
 93 projected interannual climate variability plateaued (e.g., Chiveron et al., 2015; Subyani,  
 94 2019). First, we calculated the downscaled NEX-GDDP-CMIP6 median air temperature  
 95 for each  $0.01^{\circ}$  grid cell across all days in a random water-year. Then, the spatial  
 96 coefficient of variation (standard deviation divided by the mean) was calculated. This  
 97 was performed initially for one year, and then was repeated, starting again in the same  
 98 year, but including successively longer periods of time (e.g., 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, and  
 99 so on). By plotting the air temperature coefficient of variation versus the number of years  
 100 it was calculated over, we could determine the number of years beyond which interannual  
 101 climate variability did not increase further (i.e., the variogram reaches a plateau). This  
 102 approach was repeated for both air temperature and cumulative precipitation, and for  
 103 randomly selected starting years.

104 In all cases, periods of 14 – 18 years minimized the impact of annual climate  
 105 variability on median air temperature and precipitation. Here, to increase the likelihood of  
 106 encompassing interannual climate variability, we partitioned the historical and future  
 107 climate records into 20-year windows. Since the NEX-GDDP-CMIP6 “historic” data  
 108 record runs from January 1950 to December 2014, the 20-year historical period for this  
 109 study was assumed to span from water-year 1995 to water-year 2014 (October 1994 to  
 110 September 2014). Since the CMIP6 “projections” started on January 2015, we selected  
 111 the first 20-year future period to span between October 2015 and September 2035 (water-  
 112 year 2016 to 2035). We then identified three more future 20-year periods including  
 113 water-years: 2036 – 2055, 2056 – 2075, and 2076 – 2095. The 20-year windows used in  
 114 this study align with period-lengths used by several other climate studies (e.g., Mahony et  
 115 al., 2022; Planton et al., 2012; Reifen and Toumi, 2009).

116 Baseline snow simulations were developed to represent historical snow evolution  
 117 between water-year 1995 and 2014. For each individual grid cell and hour of the water-

118 year, model forcings were provided from the downscaled MERRA-2 forcing discussed  
119 above. We then used a two-step calibration approach to match 1995 – 2014 total snow  
120 volume from the Western US reanalysis (Fang et al., 2020; Margulis et al., 2016) (see  
121 Section 2.1 in the main text). Since precipitation is commonly cited as the first-order  
122 driver of model errors in mountainous regions (e.g., Cho et al., 2022; Günther et al.,  
123 2019; Raleigh et al., 2015; Wayand et al., 2013; Wrzesien et al., 2022), we first focused  
124 on tuning the precipitation forcing. Starting in October of each year, the simulated  
125 cumulative increases in SWE were calculated from LIS simulations. This was then  
126 compared to the cumulative increases SWE from the WUS reanalysis in the same month.  
127 Using the percent-difference between the end-of-month cumulative increases in SWE  
128 from the reanalysis and LIS simulation, cumulative precipitation for the baseline  
129 simulation was scaled (assumed to be constant in space). Snow simulations were then  
130 performed again, and this procedure was repeated until end-of-month cumulative  
131 increases in SWE from the reanalysis and LIS-simulations converged. This method was  
132 repeated for each successive month in the snow accumulation season, between October  
133 and May.

134 Overall, the baseline simulation tended to have SWE that was more spatially  
135 homogeneous than the snow reanalysis. This is a known issue for land surface models in  
136 mountainous terrain, which do not always represent complex processes like wind-  
137 redistribution, preferential deposition, and avalanching. While modeling approaches have  
138 been developed to correct for these issues (e.g., Pflug et al., 2021; Vögeli et al., 2016;  
139 Wrzesien et al., 2022), it was not clear whether spatial disagreements in SWE between  
140 the baseline simulation and reanalysis were due to missing processes in Noah-MP, or  
141 issues with the spatial heterogeneity of model forcing (Livneh et al., 2014). To avoid  
142 over-fitting the baseline simulations, we only calibrated the precipitation using the  
143 approach discussed above. We expect this simulation to serve as a strong baseline for  
144 historical snow evolution, especially given the first-order elevation, vegetation, and  
145 terrain-shading drivers of snow accumulation and depletion represented in the LIS  
146 modeling framework. In fact, after calibration, the total snow volume for these two  
147 datasets had a temporal coefficient of variation of greater than 0.95, and the SWE spatial  
148 coefficient of variation at peak snowpack timing ranged between 0.78 and 0.91, across  
149 the five domains.

150 The NEX-GDDP-CMIP6 product was used to derive 20-year average changes (relative  
151 to the historical period) to meteorological conditions for each model grid cell. These  
152 change signals were calculated for a set of 23 Global Climate Models (GCMs) available  
153 at the time of this project (Thrasher et al., 2022) and emissions scenarios from Shared  
154 Socioeconomic Pathway 2-4.5 (SSP 2-4.5). The GCMs used in this study can be found in  
155 Text S2. For each GCM, model grid cell, and day of the water year, the difference  
156 between the median future (e.g., 2056 – 2075) and historical (1995 – 2016) climate  
157 variables were calculated. Climate conditions for a single day of the water year can vary  
158 significantly across 20-year time frames, so we do not expect change factors calculated at  
159 daily time steps to be representative of the underlying trends with climate change.  
160 Therefore, following approaches used by Barsugli et al. (2020), the difference between  
161 future and historical climate variables were averaged across monthly time frames to  
162 calculate change-factors, or future differences to the monthly-average air temperature,  
163 relative humidity, shortwave radiation, longwave radiation, wind speed, and cumulative

164 precipitation, relative to the historical period. We noted that differences in climate  
165 variables at monthly time frames sometimes resulted in sporadic change-factors. For  
166 example, at monthly intervals, a difference of one or two precipitation events could result  
167 in significant differences (-100% to 150%) in monthly cumulative precipitation. To  
168 minimize this issue, we aggregated monthly change-factors across three-month moving  
169 windows, including the months both before and after the focus month. These change  
170 signals were then applied to the baseline simulation to generate the two novel snow  
171 projections presented in the main text. We did this two ways:

- 172 1. **NEX6-C:** NEX-GDDP-CMIP6 20-year average monthly projected changes to  
173 climate were applied to the 20-year baseline calibrated simulation. Despite the  
174 interannual variations in meteorological and snow conditions, the monthly  
175 perturbations to the climate variables were assumed to be the same in each year.
- 176 2. **NEX6-M:** The same climate perturbations as the NEX6-C simulation were used  
177 to perturb the snow simulation. However, these perturbations were applied to a  
178 single-year baseline simulation performed using the 20-year median  
179 meteorological conditions from the historical period (1995 – 2014).

## 181 **Text S2: GCMs used by each snow projection dataset**

182 NEX6-M [CMIP6, SSP2-4.5]: ACCESS-CM2, ACCESS-ESM1-5, CESM2, CESM2-  
183 WACCM, CMCC-ESM2, CNRM-CM6-1, CNRM-ESM2-1, EC-Earth3,  
184 FGOALS-g3, GFDL-CM4, GFDL-CM4\_gr2, GFDL-ESM4, GISS-E2-1-G, ITM-  
185 ESM, INM-CM4-8, INM-CM5-0, KACE-1-0-G, MIROC-ES2L, MPI-ESM1-2-  
186 HR, MP1-EMS1-2-LR, MRI-ESM2-0, NorESM2-LM, NorESM2-MM

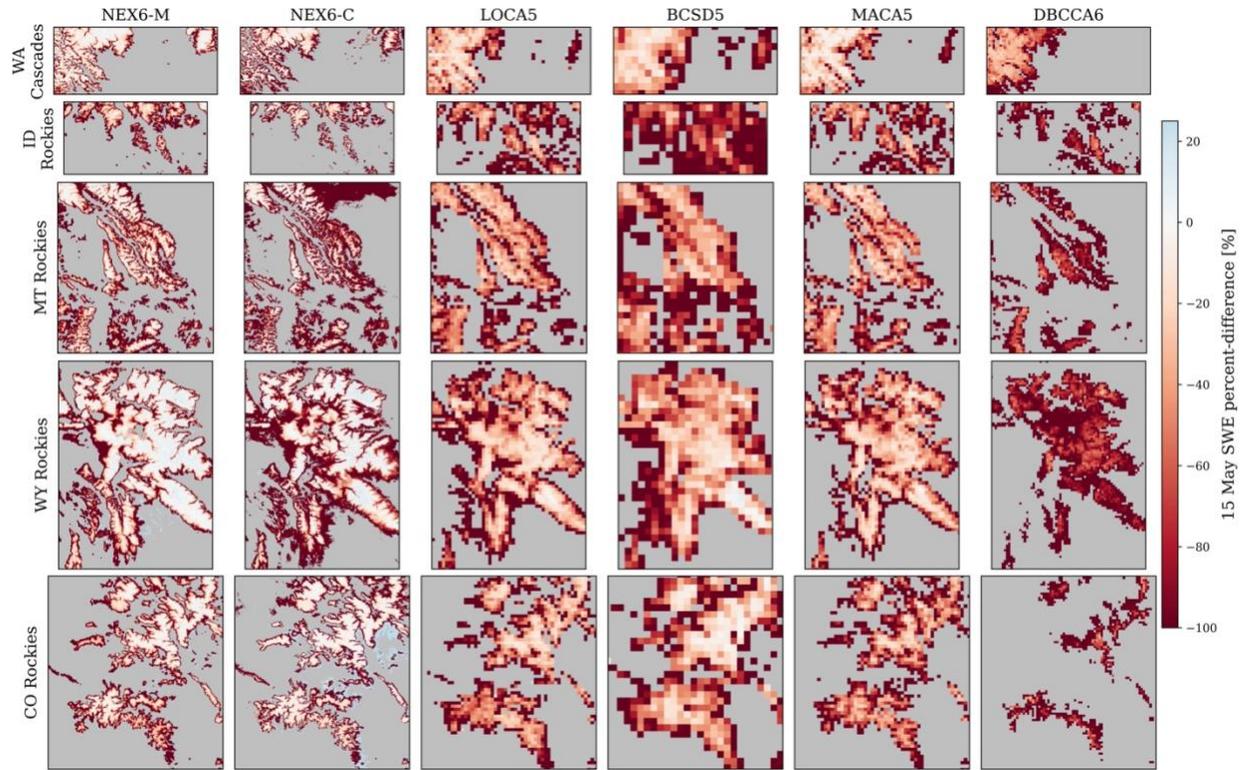
187 NEX6-C [CMIP6, SSP2-4.5]: ACCESS-CM2, ACCESS-ESM1-5, CESM2, CESM2-  
188 WACCM, CMCC-ESM2, CNRM-CM6-1, CNRM-ESM2-1, EC-Earth3,  
189 FGOALS-g3, GFDL-CM4, GFDL-CM4\_gr2, GFDL-ESM4, GISS-E2-1-G, ITM-  
190 ESM, INM-CM4-8, INM-CM5-0, KACE-1-0-G, MIROC-ES2L, MPI-ESM1-2-  
191 HR, MP1-EMS1-2-LR, MRI-ESM2-0, NorESM2-LM, NorESM2-MM

192 LOCA5 [CMIP5, RCP 4.5]: ACCESS1-0, ACCESS1-3, CESM1-BGC, CESM1-CAM5,  
193 CMCC-CM, CMCC-CMS, CNRM-CM5, EC-Earth, FGOALS-g2, GFDL-CM3,  
194 GFDL-EMS2G, GFDL-EMS2M, GISS-E2-H, GISS-E2-R, INMCM4, MIROC-  
195 ESM, MIROC-ESM-CHEM, MIROC5, MPI-ESM-LR, MPI-ESM-MR, MRI-  
196 CGCM3, NorESM1-M

197 BCSD5 [CMIP5, RCP 4.5]: ACCESS1-0, BCC-CSM1-1, BCC-CSM1-1-M, CANESM2,  
198 CCSM4, CESM1-BGC, CESM1-CAM5, CMCC-CM, CNRM-CM5, CSIRO-  
199 Mk3-6-0, FGOALS-G2, FIO-ESM, GFDL-CM3, GFDL-EMS2G, GFDL-  
200 EMS2M, GISS-E2-H-CC, GISS-E2-R, GISS-E2-R-CC, HadGEM2-AO,  
201 HadGEM2-CC, HadGEM2-ES, INMCM4, IPSL-CM5A-MR, IPSL-CM5B-LR,  
202 MIROC-ESM, MIROC-ESM-CHEM, MIROC5, MPI-ESM-LR, MPI-ESM-MR,  
203 MRI-CGCM3, NorESM1-M

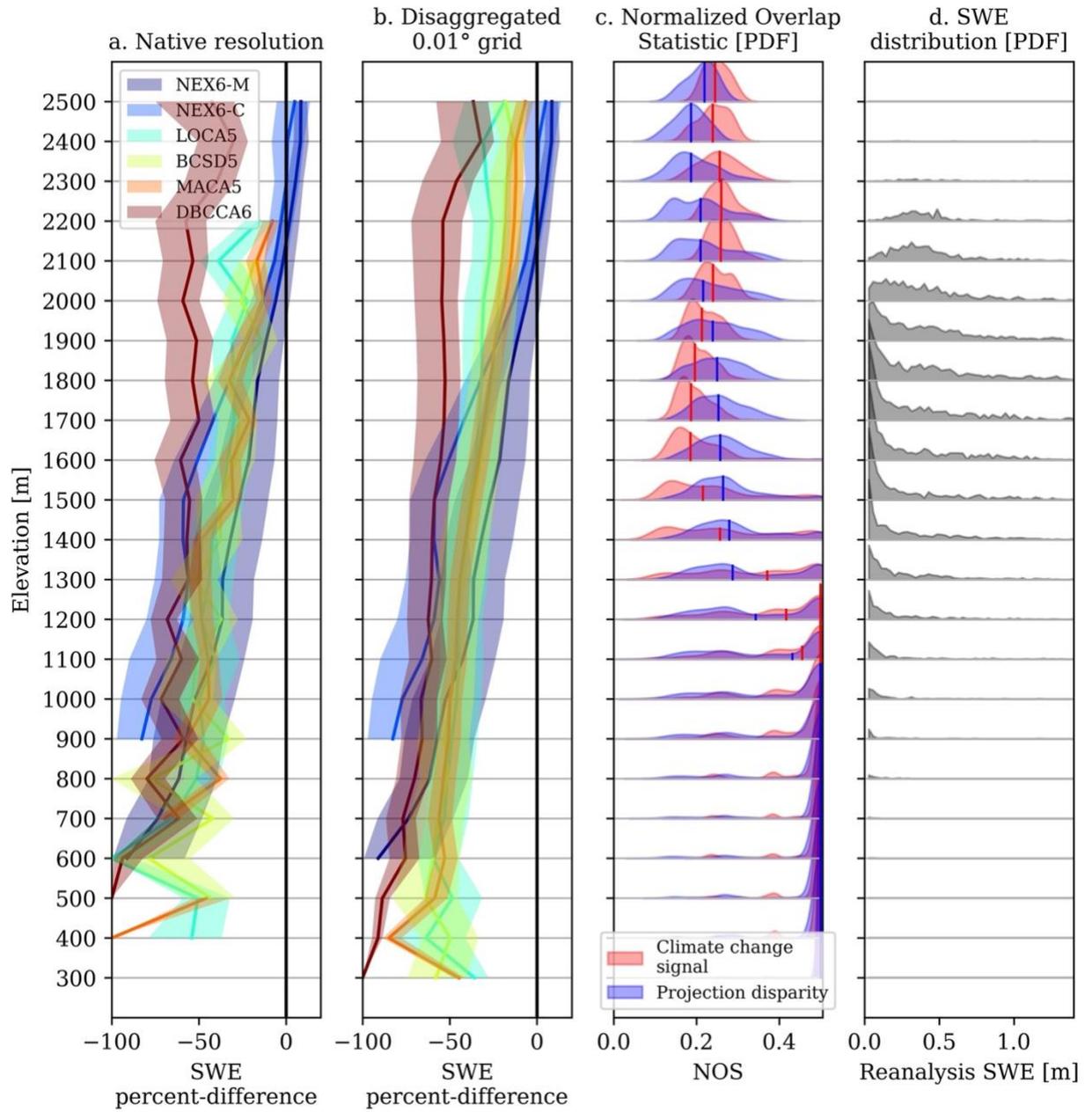
204 MACA5 [CMIP5, RCP 4.5]: BCC-CSM1-1-M, CANESM2, CCSM4, CNRM-CM5,  
205 CSIRO-Mk3-6-0, HadGEM2-CC, HadGEM2-ES, IPSL-CM5A-MR, MIROC5,  
206 NorESM1-M

207 DBCCA6 [CMIP6, SSP2-4.5]: ACCESS-CM2, BCC-CSM2-MR, CNRM-ESM2-1, MPI-  
208 ESM1-2-HR, MRI-ESM2-0, NorESM2-MM



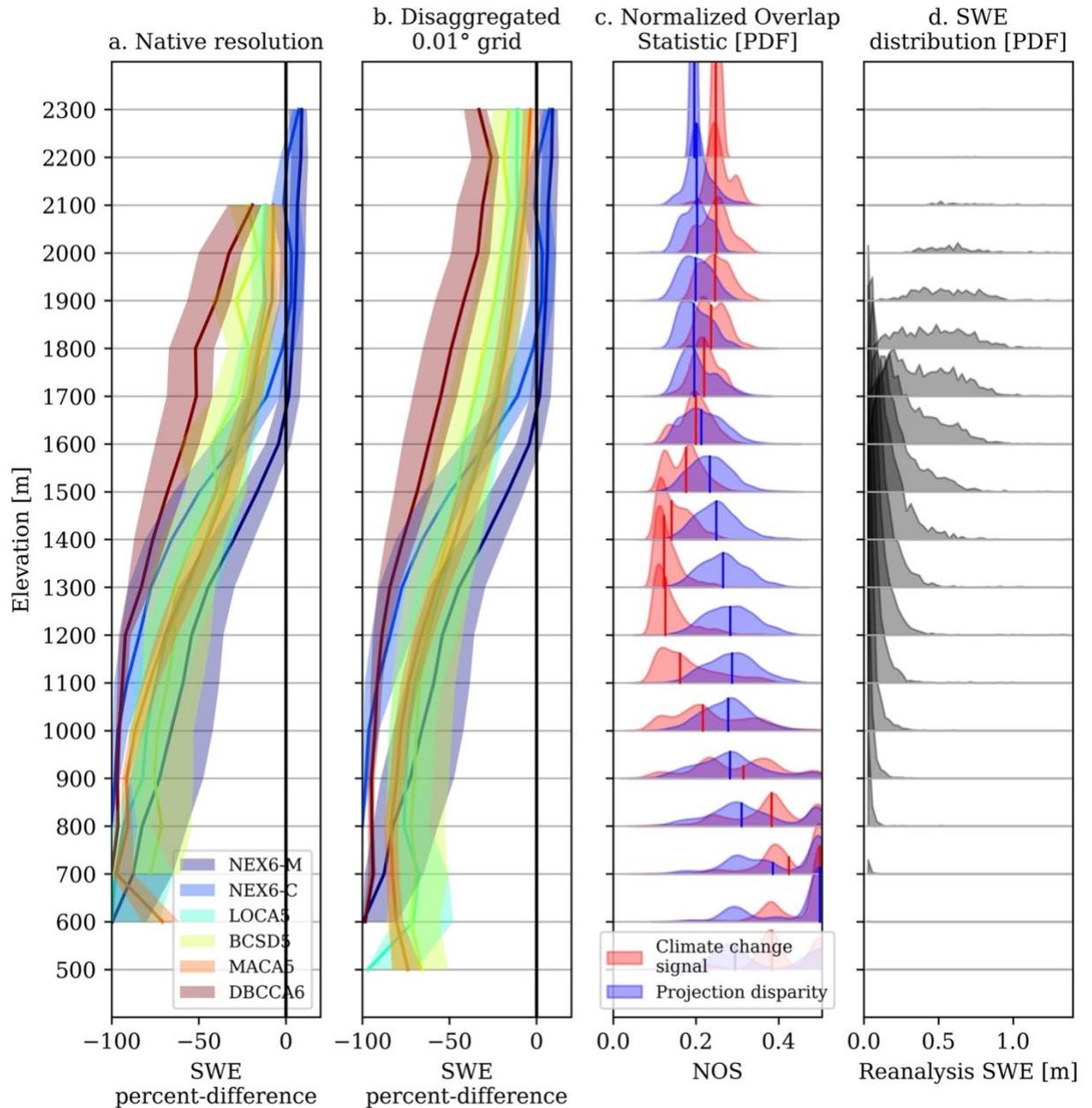
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Figure S1. Spatial plots of GCM-ensemble median percent changes to 15 May SWE.



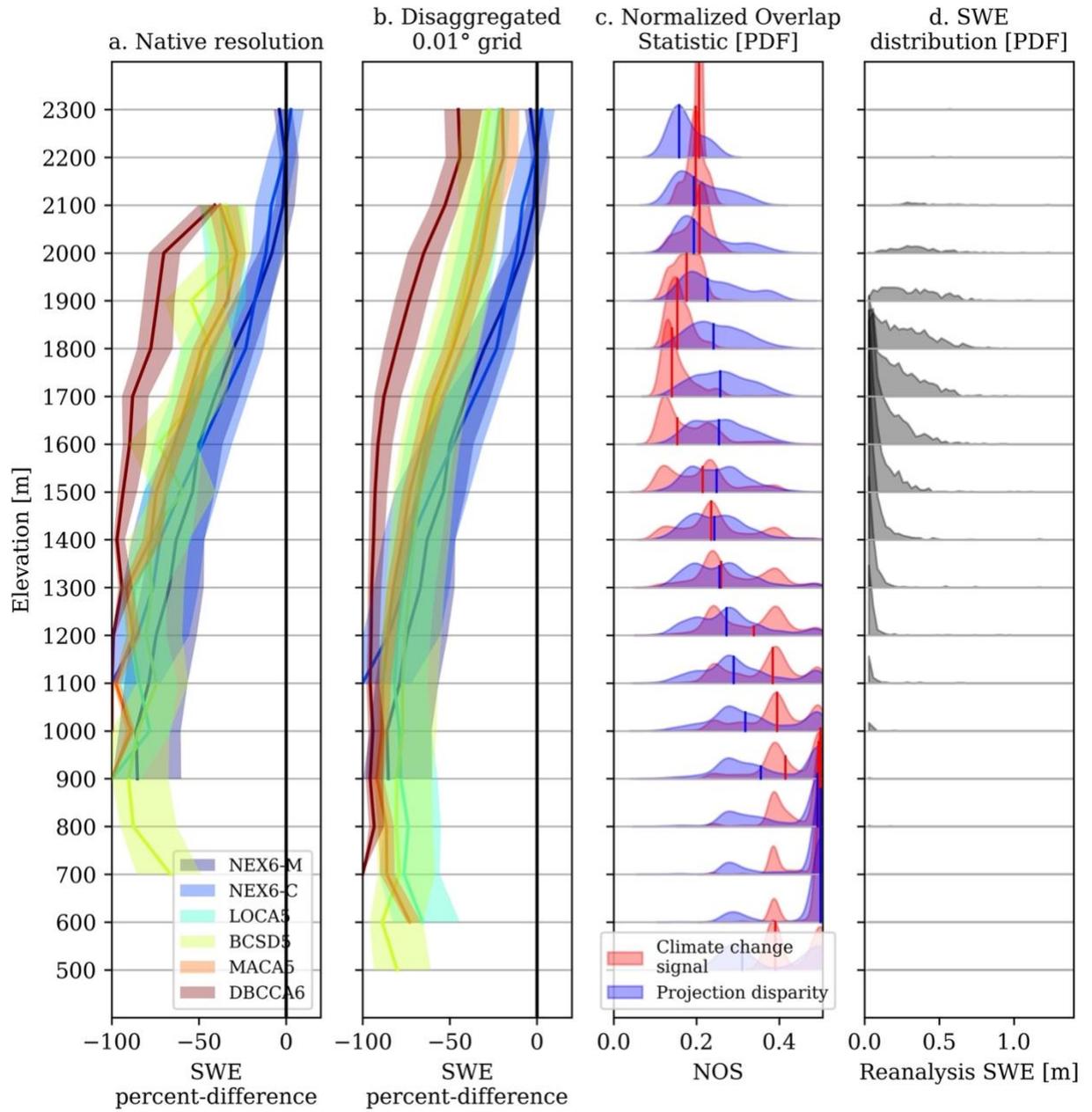
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Figure S2. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the WA Cascades domain on 15 May.



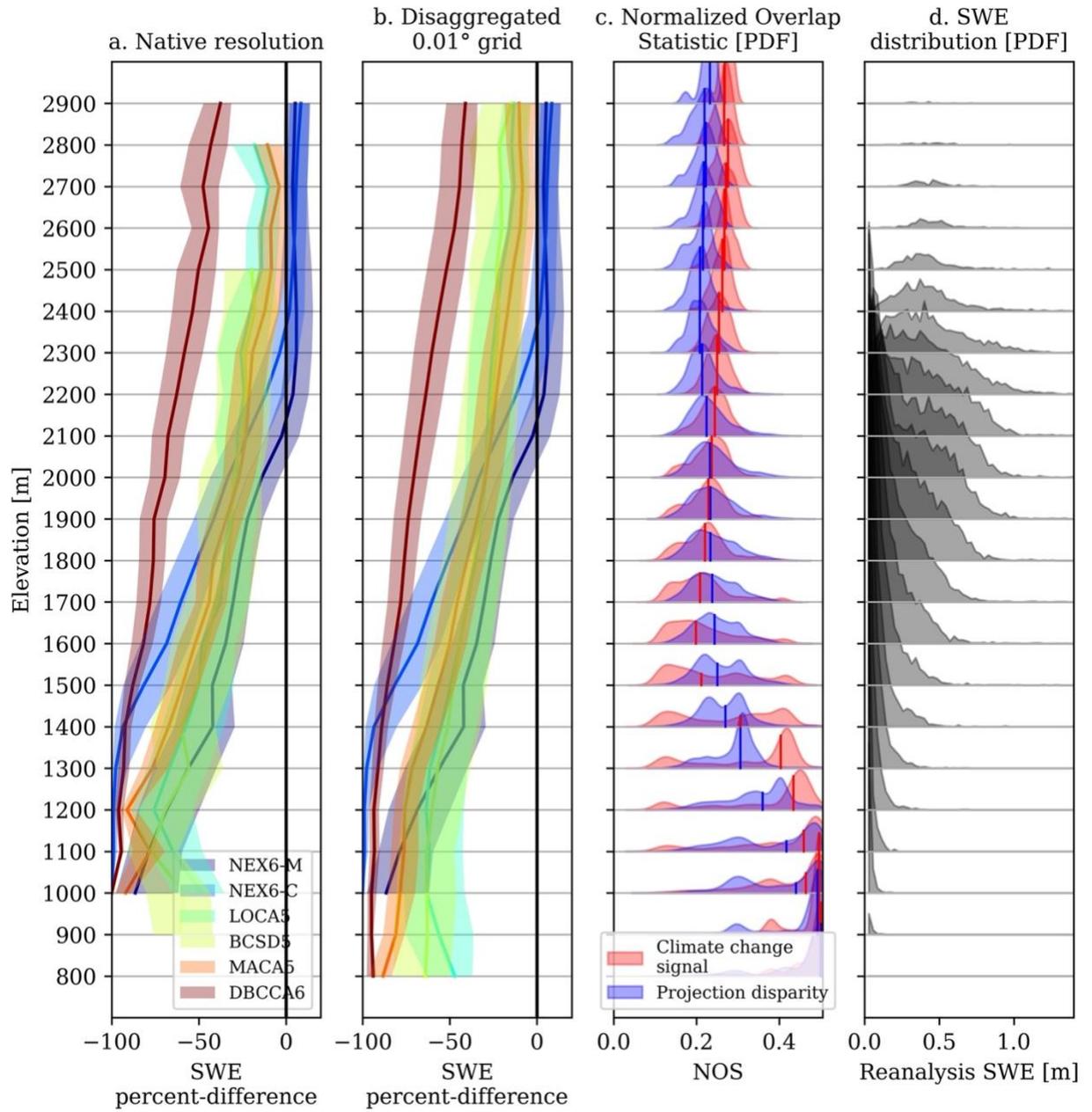
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Figure S3. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the ID Rockies domain on 15 April.



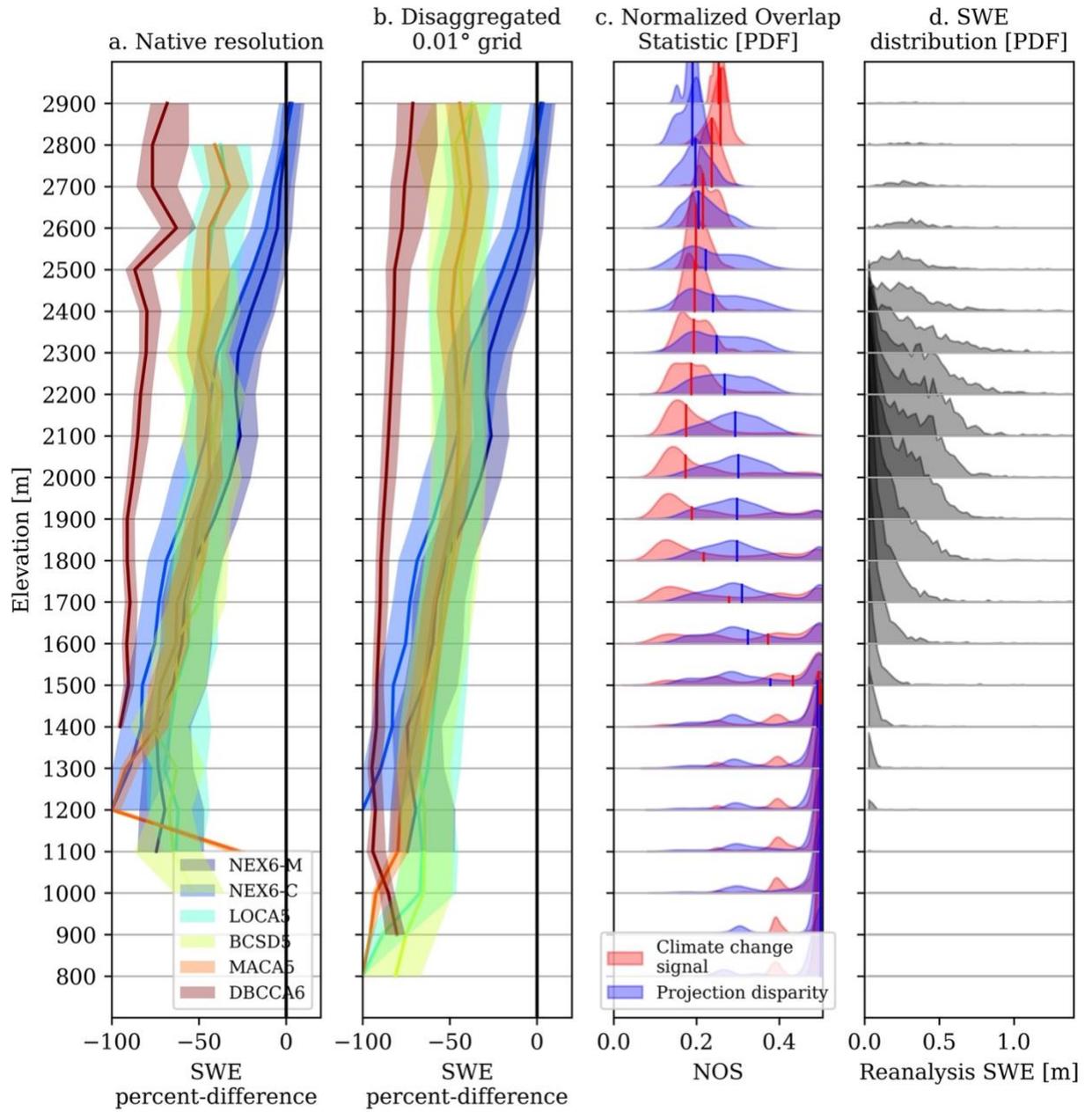
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Figure S4. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the ID Rockies domain on 15 May.



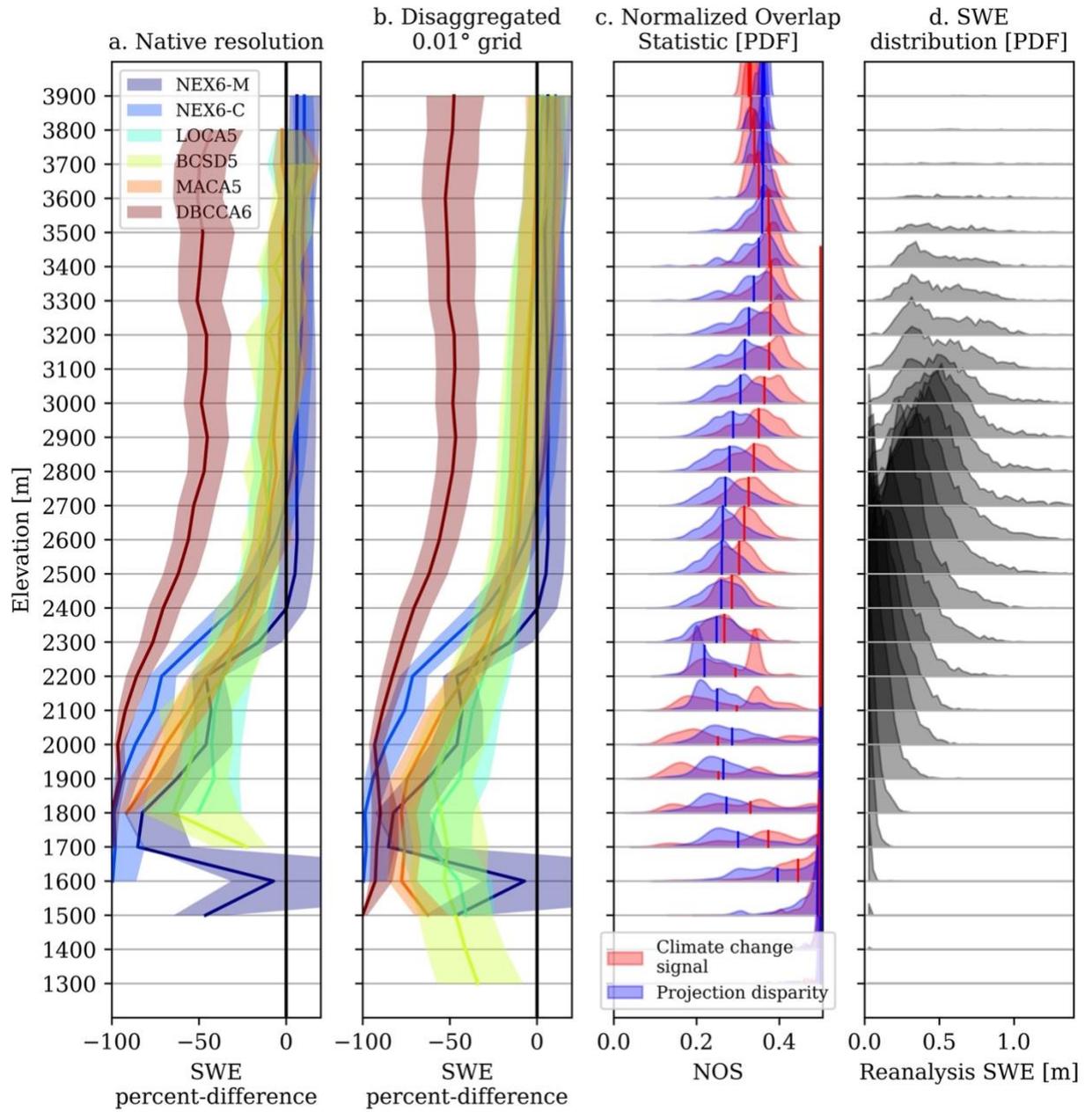
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Figure S5. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the MT Rockies domain on 15 April.



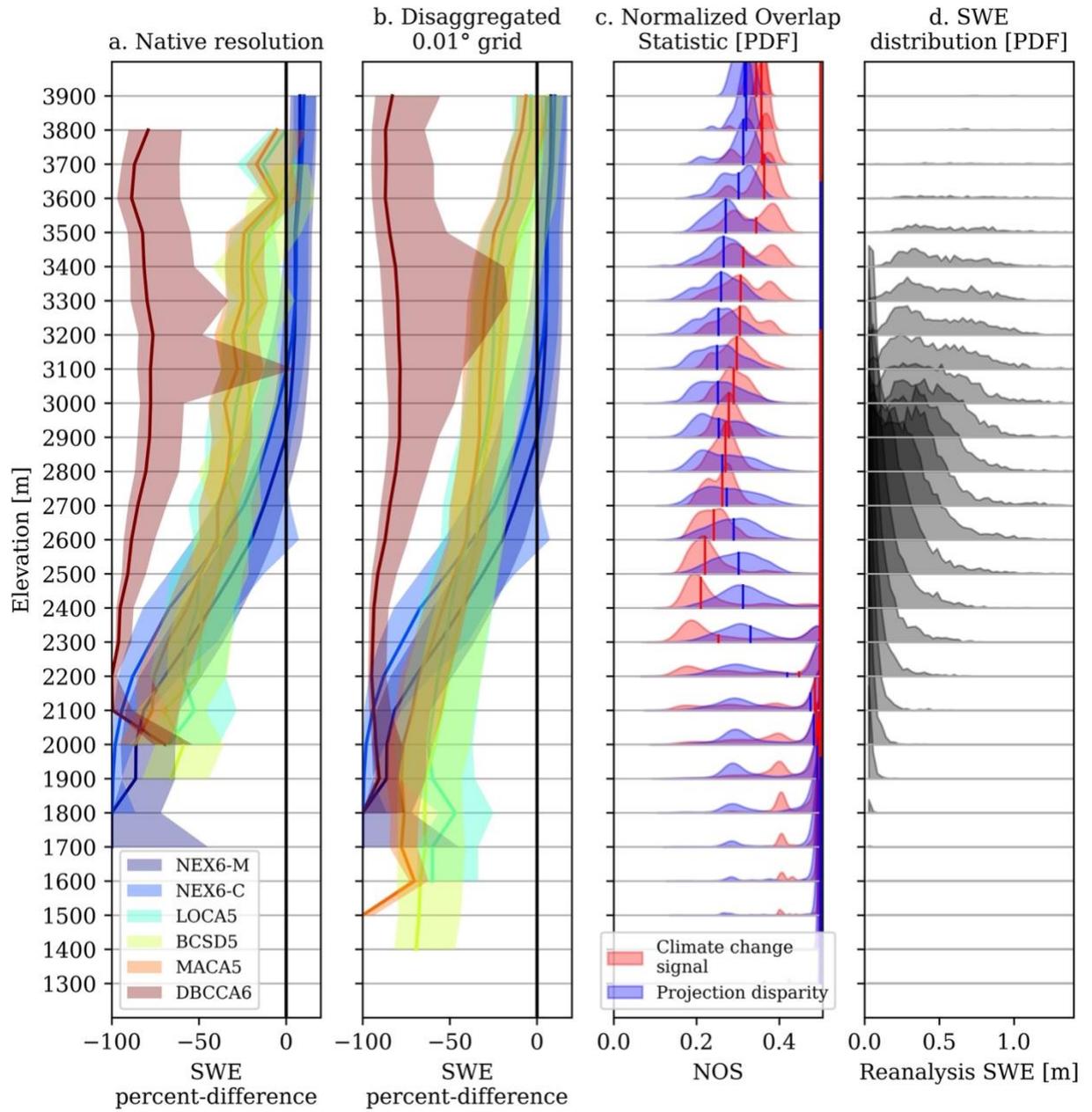
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Figure S6. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the MT Rockies domain on 15 May.



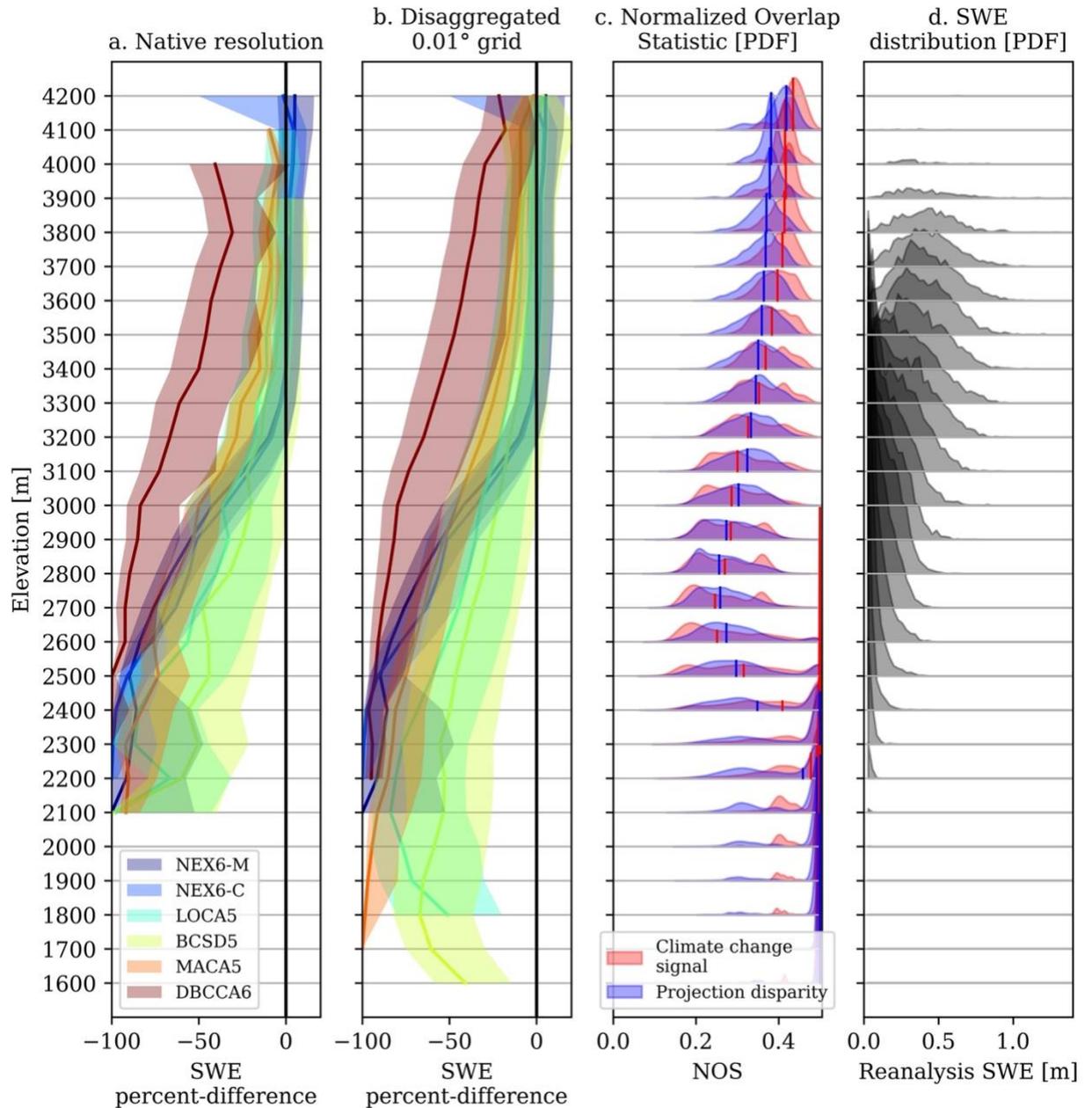
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Figure S7. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the WY Rockies domain on 15 April.



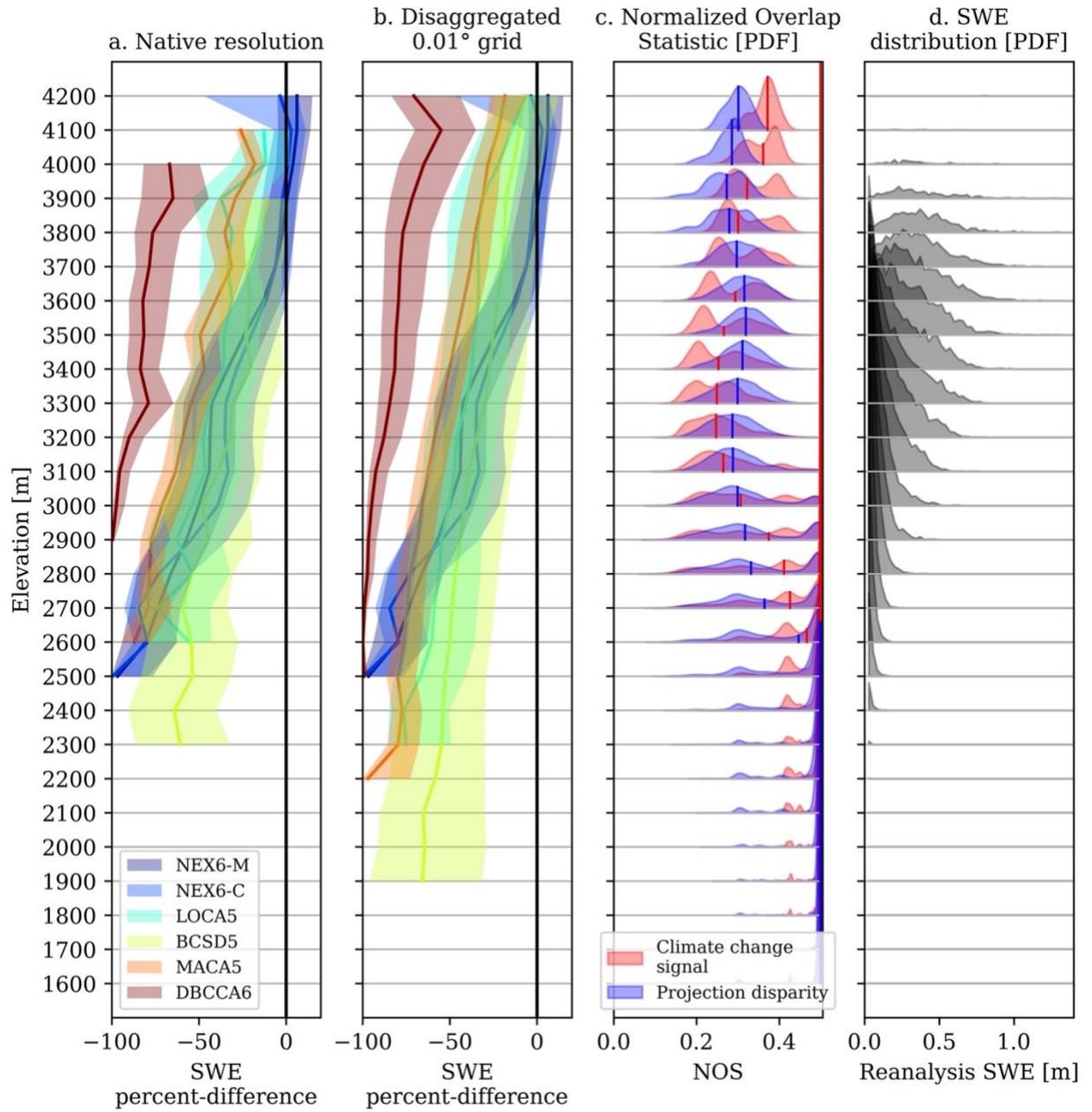
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Figure S8. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the WY Rockies domain on 15 May.



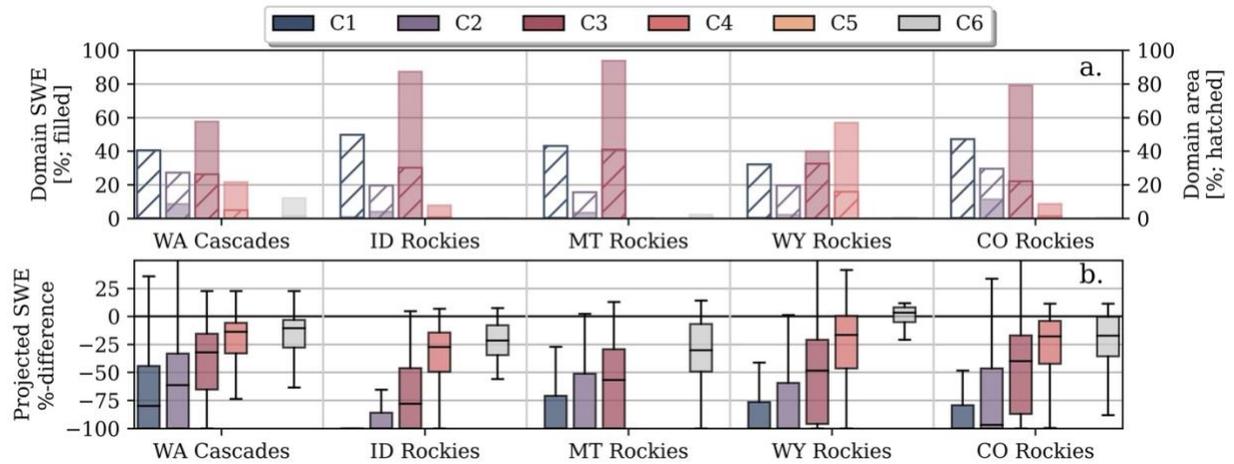
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Figure S9. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the CO Rockies domain on 15 April.



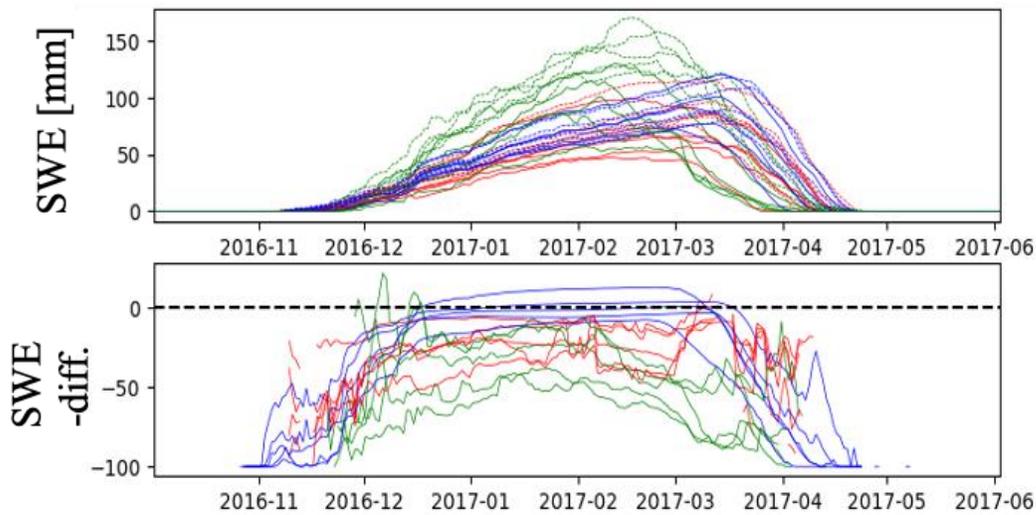
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Figure S10. Same as Figure 5, but shows data for the CO Rockies domain on 15 May.



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Figure S11. Same as Figure 8, but shows data for 15 May.



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Figure S12. SWE magnitude (top) in the WA Cascades domain averaged for 4 different elevation bands in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century (solid) and end-of-century (dashed periods). The lines are colored by the data from NEX6-M (blue), NEX6-C (red), and DBCCA6 (green) projections. The bottom plot depicts the percent-difference between the end-of-century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century SWE from each day presented in the top plot.

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Table S1. Snow projection statistics. Statistics are broken down by elevation bands selected to highlight spans where different elevational patterns emerge for each projection dataset.

Domain	Projection	Maximum elevation resolved	First elevation with SWE increases	Elevation Band Statistics			
				Lower limit	Upper limit	Mean SWE %-difference	SWE projection gradient [SWE %-diff/100m]
WA Cascades	NEX6-M	2775	1650	450	1350	-68	2
				1350	1650	-11	12
				1650	2550	5	0
	NEX6-C	2775	1950	550	1350	-88	3
				1350	1850	-24	12
				1850	2550	1	0
	LOCA5	2434	-	350	2250	-47	3
	BCSD5	2124	-	250	1850	-57	4
MACA5	2434	2050	350	1450	-64	2	
			1450	2250	-10	4	
DBCCA6	2463	-	350	2550	-52	2	
ID Rockies	NEX6-M	2295	1750	550	1350	-79	6
				1350	1650	-19	12
				1650	2350	3	1
	NEX6-C	2295	1850	750	1350	-94	4
				1350	1850	-41	18
				1850	2350	2	0
	LOCA5	2076	-	550	2150	-61	5
	BCSD5	2103	-	650	2150	-65	4
MACA5	2076	-	550	850	-94	-3	
			850	2150	-57	6	
DBCCA6	2105	-	650	2150	-79	4	
MT Rockies	NEX6-M	2967	2150	950	1850	-64	6
				1850	2150	-14	6
				2150	2950	4	0
	NEX6-C	2967	2450	950	1450	-98	4
				1450	2350	-48	9
				2350	2950	3	1
	LOCA5	2813	-	950	2850	-52	2
	BCSD5	2801	-	850	2550	-54	3
MACA5	2813	-	950	2850	-49	4	
DBCCA6	2868	-	950	2950	-79	1	
WYB	NEX6-M	3916	2450	1450	2250	-68	7

				2250	2450	-8	15
				2450	3950	5	0
	NEX6-C	3916	2750	1550	2250	-88	8
				2250	2450	-40	19
				2450	3950	-1	2
	LOCA5	3793	3550	1750	2450	-55	6
				2450	3850	-12	1
	BCSD5	3691	3450	1650	2550	-49	7
				2550	3750	-11	1
	MACA5	3793	3850	1750	2550	-48	9
				2550	3850	-8	1
	DBCCA6	3830	-	1650	2750	-77	5
				2750	3850	-52	0
	CO Rockies	NEX6-M	4159	3450	2050	2750	-91
2750					3250	-42	12
3250					4250	0	1
NEX6-C		4159	3450	2050	2750	-89	11
				2750	3250	-37	12
				3250	4250	0	0
LOCA5		4087	-	2050	3250	-59	5
				3250	4250	-13	1
BCSD5		3903	4150	2050	3950	-43	4
MACA5		4087	-	2050	3450	-59	5
				3450	4150	-13	1
DBCCA6		4030	-	2050	2950	-94	2
				2950	4050	-65	4

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