

Nevada Drought Update - January 2025

9 January 2025

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**Drought expands and intensifies across Nevada, with most extreme impacts in the south.
Little to no precipitation expected until the end of the month.**

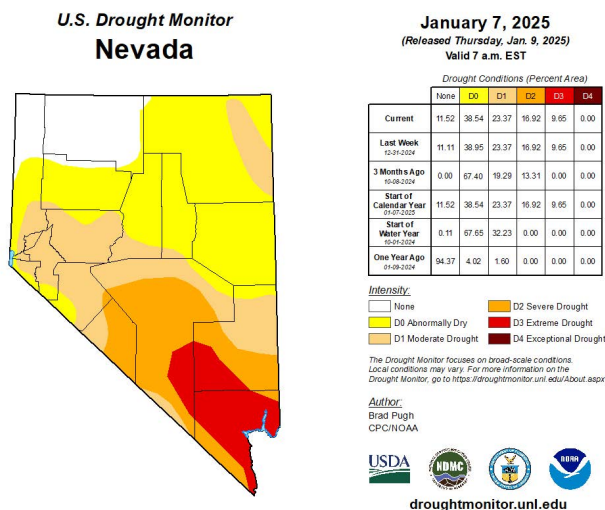


Figure 1. U.S. Drought Monitor for Nevada on 7 January 2025.

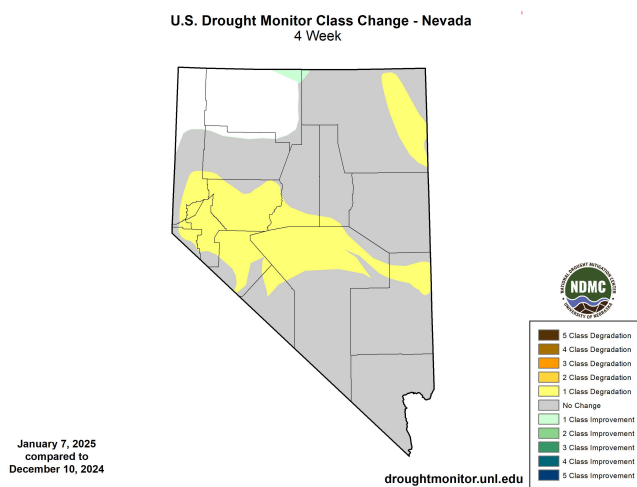


Figure 2. U.S. Drought Monitor class change for Nevada between 10 December 2024 and 7 January 2025.

Except for Humboldt and northern Washoe County, drought continues to impact Nevada, with conditions expected to persist or worsen over the next month. Currently, approximately 89% of the state is in drought or abnormally dry conditions, varying significantly from this time last year, when only 6% of the state was impacted (Table 1). Additionally, 9.7% of Nevada territory is covered by Extreme (D3) Drought, a marked increase from the beginning of last month (December 2024) with only 2.5% (Fig. 1). Extreme (D3) Drought conditions have continued to impact the Colorado Basin region and northward, covering almost all of Clark County, and southern Nye and Lincoln County. Less extreme conditions are noted moving northward, with Severe (D2) Drought present over the rest of Nye and Lincoln County, Moderate (D1) Drought extending north and east in through Churchill and lower Washoe County, and Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions found elsewhere. A zone of drought degradation (D1 to D2) was recorded along a band extending east from Carson City, affecting majorities of the counties of Churchill, Mineral, Carson City, Storey, and Douglas, and portions of other counties (Fig. 2).

Temperatures were uniformly above normal in December, reversing the below normal pattern from November. Most regions experienced temperatures much above normal (within the top 10% of area measurements compared to every December since 1895; Fig. 3). Near-record to record warmth occurred in Clark, Lincoln, Nye, Esmeralda, Carson City, and Mineral County. All counties south of Elko recorded below normal precipitation values (bottom 33%; Fig. 4). For the fifth month in a row, Las Vegas reported no measurable precipitation which is now the second-longest such streak on record. As of 8 January 2025, the city has not recorded measurable precipitation since 0.08" fell on 13 July 2024. Zones that experienced more precipitation, especially in the northwest, incurred less extreme warming increases. Sections of Washoe, Pershing, Churchill, and Humboldt County recorded temperatures that were normal or only in the top 33%.

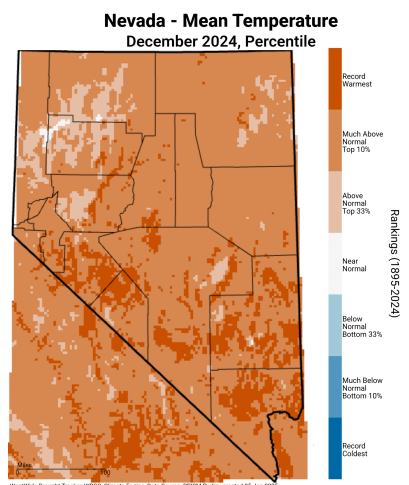


Figure 3. Average monthly temperature for December 2024 compared to all Decembers since 1895 (WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC).

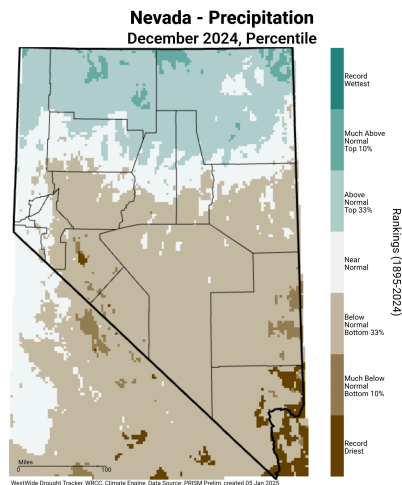


Figure 4. Total monthly precipitation for December 2024 compared to all Decembers since 1895 (WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC).

Table 1. Percent of Nevada in each drought class from the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Date	9 April 2024	9 July 2024	8 October 2024	7 January 2025
None	95	78	0	11
Abnormally Dry- D0	3	22	68	39
Moderate Drought- D1	2	0	19	23
Severe Drought- D2	0	0	13	17
Extreme Drought- D3	0	0	0	10
Exceptional Drought- D4	0	0	0	0

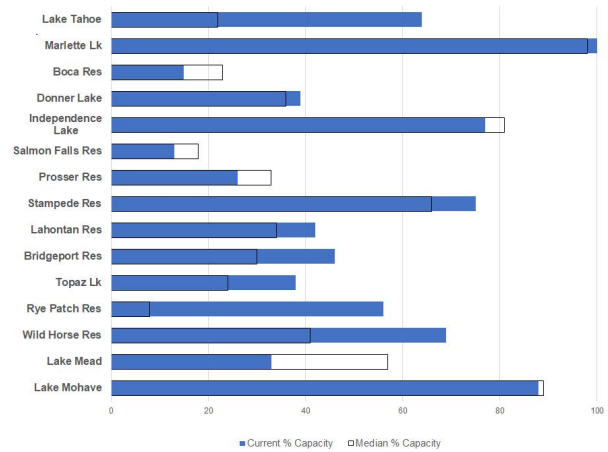


Figure 5. Reservoir storage capacity on 1 January 2025.

Reservoir storage across Nevada continues to be mixed, with an overall slight increase in levels from last month. Lake Tahoe, along with Topaz Lake and Stampede, Bridgeport, Rye Patch, and Wild Horse Reservoirs, are above median capacity levels (Fig. 5). Marlette, Donner, and Independence Lake, and Lake Mohave in northern Arizona are close to median capacity. Boca and Prosser Reservoirs continue their trend from last month, with levels notably below their median. Snow water equivalent is currently well above median values across most basins in the state, led by the Black Rock Desert (166%) and Humboldt (151%) basins in the northwest and north-central (Fig. 6). The Truckee, Carson, and Walker basins are close to median values and the Central Nevada Desert Basins are at 136% of median values for the date. Snowpacks at lower elevations in these basins are minimal to non-existent, however, which may not be adequately reflected in basin-wide summaries due to limited monitoring stations at these elevations. In southern Nevada, the lower Colorado-Lake Mead basin is at 28% of median values, with no snowpack at all in the Spring Mountains.

Although drought conditions are projected to persist across southern and extreme northeastern Nevada over the next month (Fig. 8), no additional drought development is expected across the state. The latest U.S. monthly outlook for January 2024 indicates a likelihood (>50% probability) of above normal temperatures (Fig. 7) and equal chances for above or below normal precipitation, except in the extreme south where below normal precipitation (30-40% probability) is favored. The latest numerical weather forecast guidance from 9 January 2025 indicates very low probabilities of precipitation across the state through at least 20 January, suggesting that normal monthly precipitation may be difficult to attain unless a very stormy period develops at the end of the month.

SNOTEL Snow Water Equivalent Percent of Median

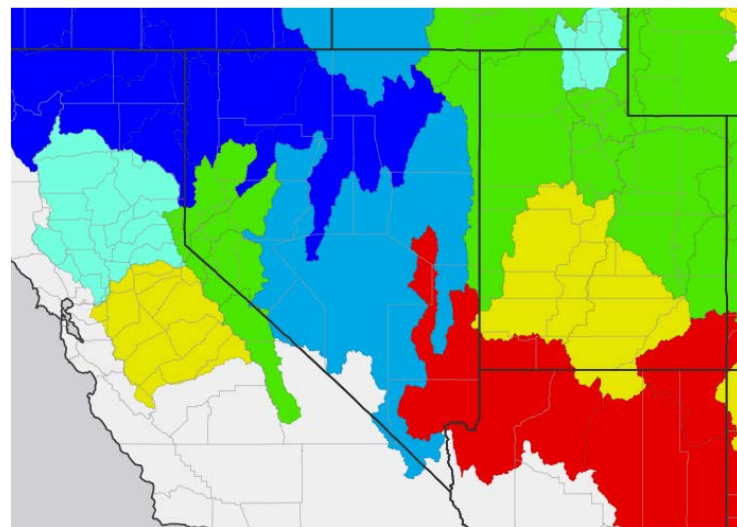


Figure 6. Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) percent of 1991-2020 median values for major watersheds on 7 January 2025 based on measurements from the Snow Telemetry (SNOTEL) network of stations. Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Monthly Precipitation Outlook



Valid: January 2025
Issued: December 31, 2024

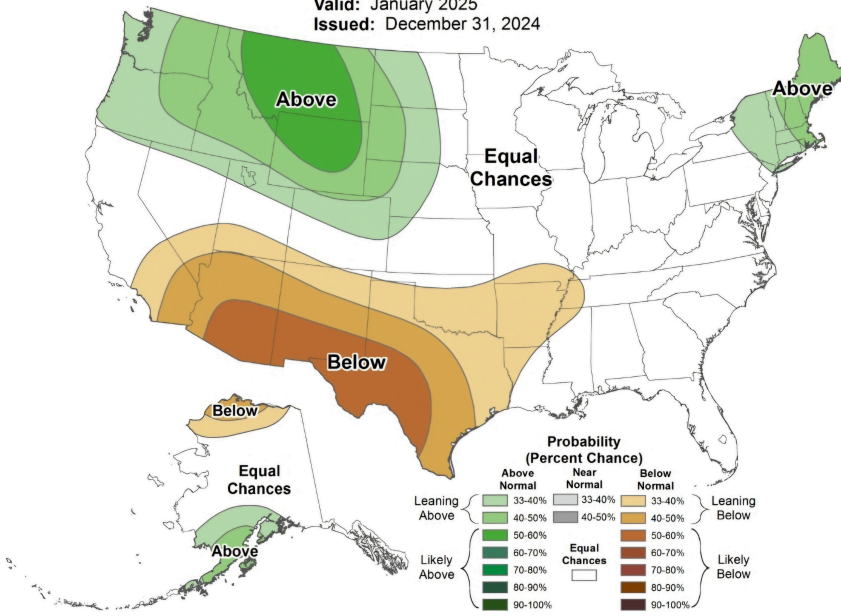
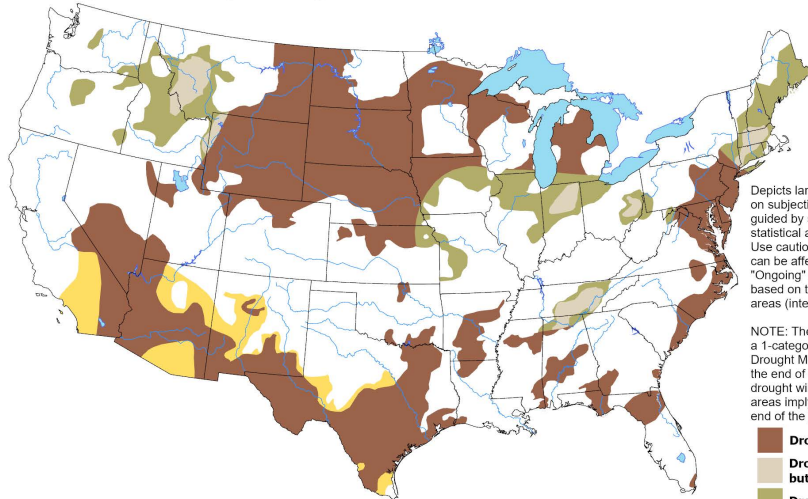


Figure 7.
U.S. monthly temperature outlook for January 2025.

U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for January 2025
Released December 31, 2024

Figure 8.
U.S. monthly drought outlook for January 2025.



Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).



Monthly Temperature Outlook



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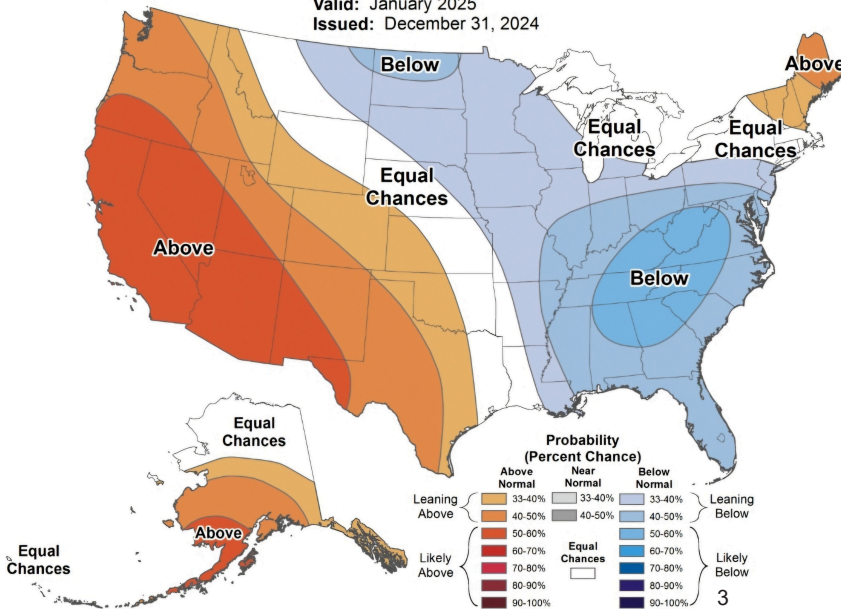


Figure 9.
U.S. monthly precipitation outlook for January 2025.



<https://go.usa.gov/3eZGd>