aq-uh5/nac
4:9-4
c1

NEVADA CLIMATE SUMMARY

Office of the
State Climatologist
Offices:
226 and 322 Mackay Science
(702)784-1723

APRIL 1991
VOLUME 9, NUMBER 4

Nevada State Library
MAY 22 1991
Documents Section

John W. James
State Climatologist
Mackay Science Hall
University of Nevada-Reno
Reno, NV 89557

SYNOPSIS

April was a wet month in most of the northern one-quarter of the State, but below normal elsewhere, with no precipitation falling in Southern Nevada. Temperatures were generally below normal Statewide, repeating a cooling trend that began last month after a very warm February, and a cold December and January.

Water Year Precipitation (October 1, 1990--April 30, 1991) now ranges from only 45-65% of normal in the East Slope Sierra Nevada Watersheds of the Tahoe-Truckee, Carson and Walker Rivers, 65-90% of normal in the Humboldt River Area, 75-85% in the Owyhee, 60-105% in Central Nevada, up to 70-105% in the South. This is the 5th straight year of drought over most of the State, with the East Slope Sierra Nevada Watersheds in the worst condition. After the bulk of the year's precipitation occurred in that area (October-April), the percentage of normal precipitation the past five years has been: 1986-87 50-55%, 1987-88 50-60%, 1988-89 90-100%, 1989-90 60-65%, and 1990-91 50-60% of normal.

TEMPERATURE

Temperatures averaged 2-4 degrees below normal across South Central Nevada, in the Lower Humboldt River Valley, and in the northeast portion of the State. Other areas were near or just a little below normal. No State extreme records were approached, as several locations around Lake Mead and along the Colorado River reached the low 90's this winter (e.g., Cottonwood Cove 94 degrees on the 6th, Echo Bay, Laughlin and Logandale 92 degrees, and Boulder Beach 91 degrees). The State April record high is 106 degrees, recorded at both Laughlin and Cottonwood Cove in 1989. On the other end of the scale a few locations dropped into the single figures. For example, both Spring Valley State Park in Lincoln County, and Diamond Valley near Eureka had 8 degrees, and Manhattan, above Smokey Valley, and nearby Reese River fell to 9 degrees. Ruth, near Ely dropped to -12 in April, 1963.

Lake Mead water temperatures warmed from 58-63 degrees as the month progressed.

PRECIPITATION

The extreme northern portion of the Silver State had a very wet month, with 2-2 1/2 times the normal amount at Vya, McDermitt, Orovada, Paradise Valley, Mountain City, Wildhorse Reservoir and Jarbidge. Betsy Williams at Jarbidge 4N recorded

the most precipitation this month with 4.06", with an unusually high 19 days of measurable amounts. Jarbidge, with 3.67", and Owyhee with 3.30" were not far behind.

Lamoille took snowfall honors at the lower elevations, as Nathan Yost measured 21" at the western foot of the Ruby Mountains.

Dry gages were found in Southern Nevada, with zero precipitation on a line from about Beatty to Hiko and Caliente. This lack of precipitation dried up much of the gains made on the drought during a very wet March.

SUNSHINE, WIND & EVAPORATION

An unusual amount of cloudiness associated with the several storm systems that crossed the northern portion of Nevada caused sunshine hours to be below normal in that area. These same storms also caused wind averages to be above average Statewide. For example, Ely had only 55% of the possible sunshine hours and normal of 68%, and a little above normal wind averages, while Reno was near normal in sun hours with 80% (normal = 81%), but had well above normal wind speeds. Sunny, dry Las Vegas had an unusually high 93% of the possible sunshine hours (normal = 87%), and well above normal wind averages, as dry weather fronts trailed across the area.

Peak wind gusts at mountain top sites reached 79 mph on the 24th atop 9700 foot Slide Mountain and 84 mph on the 6th at 8500 foot Peavine Mountain, both near Reno.

Evaporation was above normal in the sunny dry South, with 12.15" at Boulder City, being 120% of normal, 9.83" at Pahrump, and 8.85" at Bobby Curry's Logandale site. In Central Nevada, Silverpeak and 10.88" (107% of normal). In the West, Fallon and Honey Lake had a near normal 6.25" and 5.23", respectively, while Ruby Lake in the East was well below the 5.10" normal with only 3.24".

NOTE: We were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Midas weather observer Paul Ford. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife Petey and his family and friends.

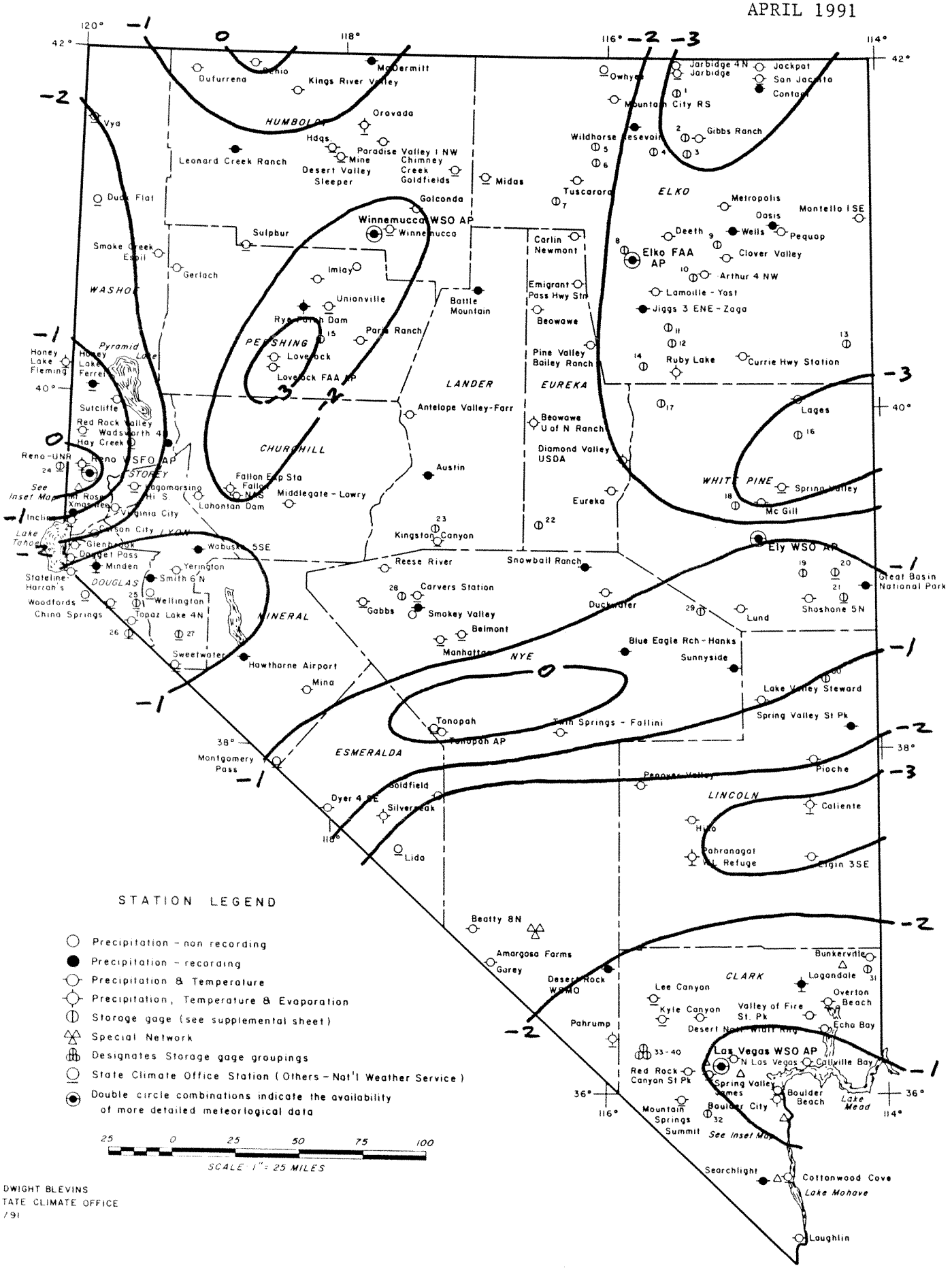
John W. James
State Climatologist

NEVADA

CLIMATE STATIONS

DEPARTURE OF MEAN TEMPERATURE FROM NORMAL

APRIL 1991



STATION LEGEND

- Precipitation - non recording
- Precipitation - recording
- Precipitation & Temperature
- Precipitation, Temperature & Evaporation
- Storage gage (see supplemental sheet)
- Special Network
- Designates Storage gage groupings
- State Climate Office Station (Others - Nat'l Weather Service)
- Double circle combinations indicate the availability of more detailed meteorological data

25 0 25 50 75 100

SCALE 1" = 25 MILES

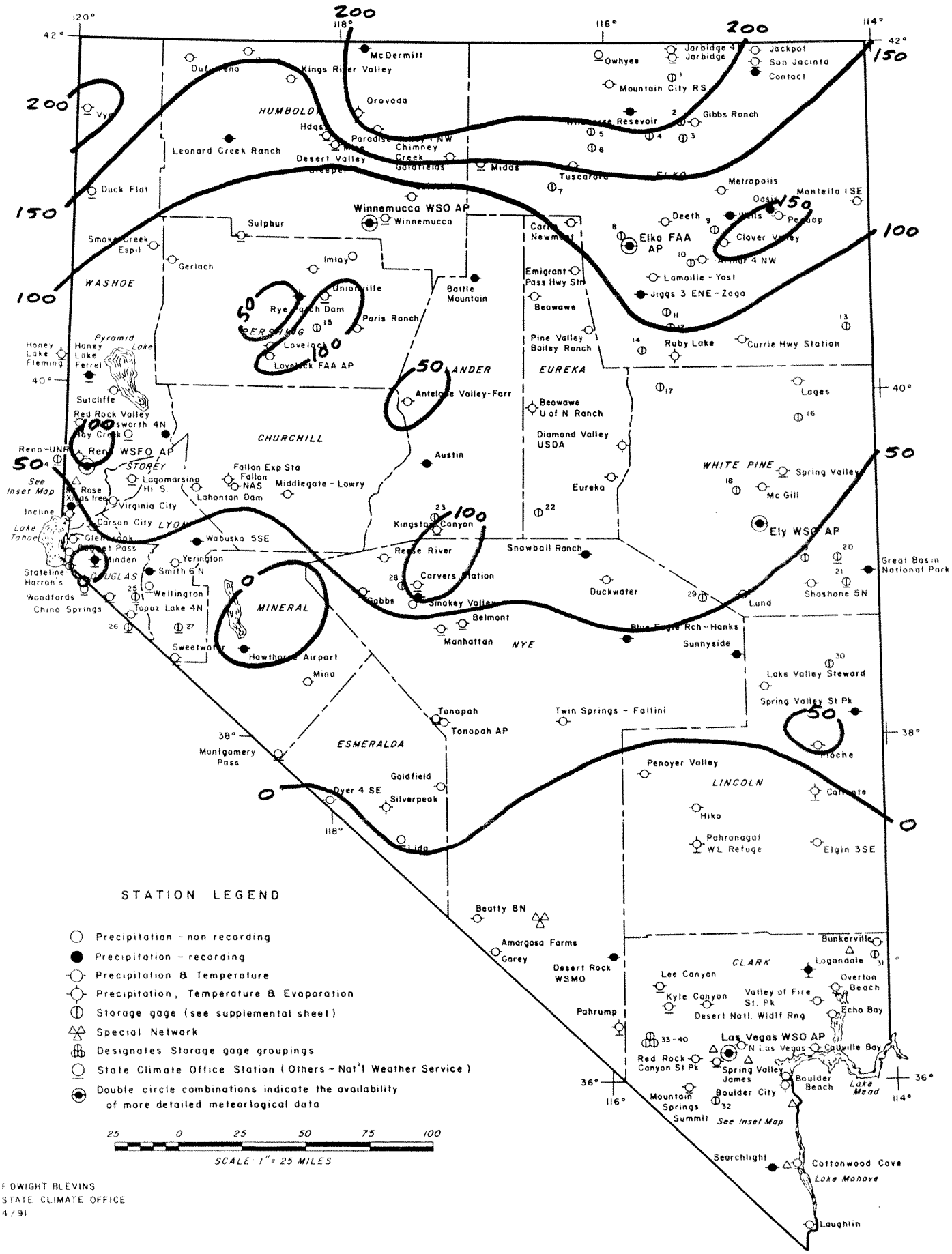
F DWIGHT BLEVINS
STATE CLIMATE OFFICE
4/91

NEVADA

CLIMATE STATIONS

PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL PRECIPITATION

APRIL 1991



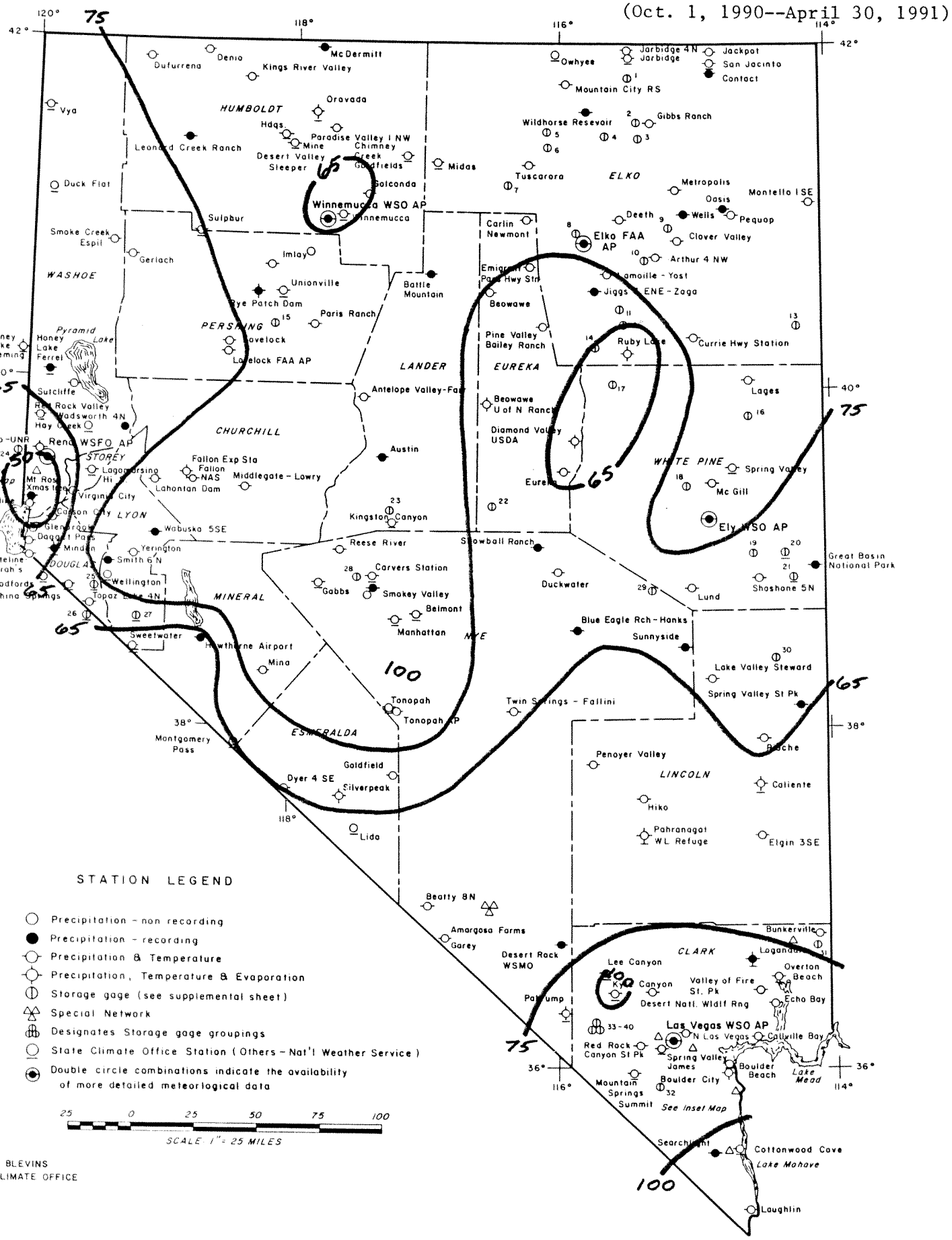
F DWIGHT BLEVINS
STATE CLIMATE OFFICE
4/91

NEVADA

CLIMATE STATIONS

PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL PRECIPITATION

WATER YEAR 1990-91
(Oct. 1, 1990--April 30, 1991)



F DWIGHT BLEVINS
STATE CLIMATE OFFICE
4/91