

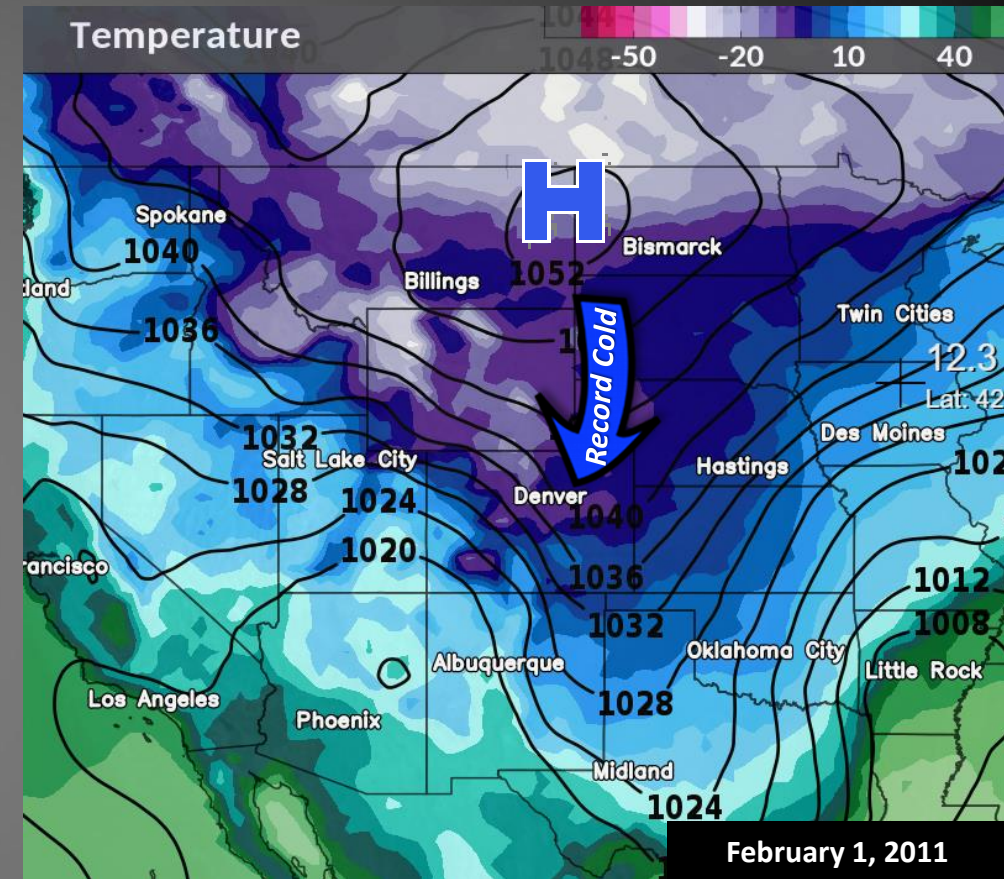
# The Decade's Top Weather Events



## #6: February 1-3, 2011 Arctic Outbreak ("The Big Chill")

Issued February 9, 2020 3:01 PM MDT

A powerful winter storm dumped widespread heavy snow across NM on February 1<sup>st</sup>. A strong area of surface high pressure with an arctic airmass then moved south along the Front Range of the Rockies in the wake of the winter storm through February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The combination of existing snowpack and a bitter cold arctic airmass over the region set the stage for record breaking cold. This was the coldest air most folks had seen since 1971. Angel Fire dropped to -39°, Eagle Nest -36°, Dulce -33°, and Las Vegas -32°. Millions of dollars in damage occurred over northern and central NM due to burst water pipes in residential, commercial, and municipal buildings. Massive demand for gas resources left several rural communities in northern NM without heat for days. New all-time record low temperatures were set over parts of the state. Wind chill temperatures between -35° and -50° were reported over the northern mountains and the eastern plains.



Location February 3, 2011	New All-Time Record Lows	Period of Record
Zuni Pueblo	-32°	1949-2020
Winston	-27°	1904-2020
Elk	-24°	1895-2020
Tucumcari	-19°	1949-2020
Santa Fe Airport	-18°	1941-2020
Jemez Dam	-9°	1953-2020
Silver City Airport	-9°	1960-2020
Tularosa	-8°	1906-2020
Carlsbad Caverns	-4°	1935-2020

The high temperature of 9° at the Albuquerque Sunport on February 2nd was the 3rd coldest high temperature on record.

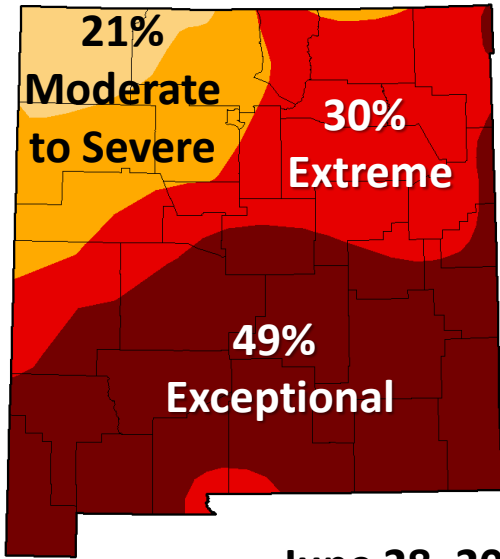
The Albuquerque Sunport reported 88 consecutive hours of below freezing temperatures.

The high temperature of 10° at the Roswell airport on February 2nd was the 2nd coldest high temperature on record.

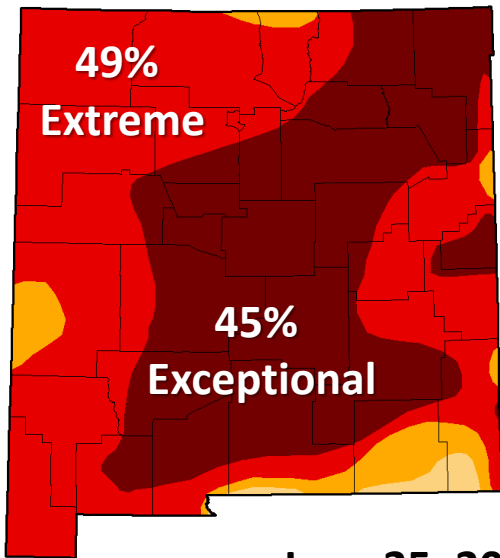
# The Decade's Top Weather Events

## #5: The 2011-2015 Drought & Wildfires

Weather Forecast Office  
Albuquerque, NM  
Issued February 9, 2020 3:01 PM MDT



June 28, 2011



June 25, 2013

Extreme drought existed in NM for 48 consecutive months.

Roswell reported 140 consecutive days with no precipitation.

2012 was the 3rd driest and 2nd warmest year on record for NM.

Statewide reservoir storage fell to 36% of average.

Wildfires burned a total of 719,339 acres in NM from 2011 to 2015.

Dust storms and massive tumbleweed drifts plagued eastern NM.



June 8, 2012  
Little Bear Fire | Ruidoso, NM



December 19, 2012  
Dust storm from plane | Chris Manno



June 6, 2011  
Wallow Fire Smoke | Albuquerque, NM

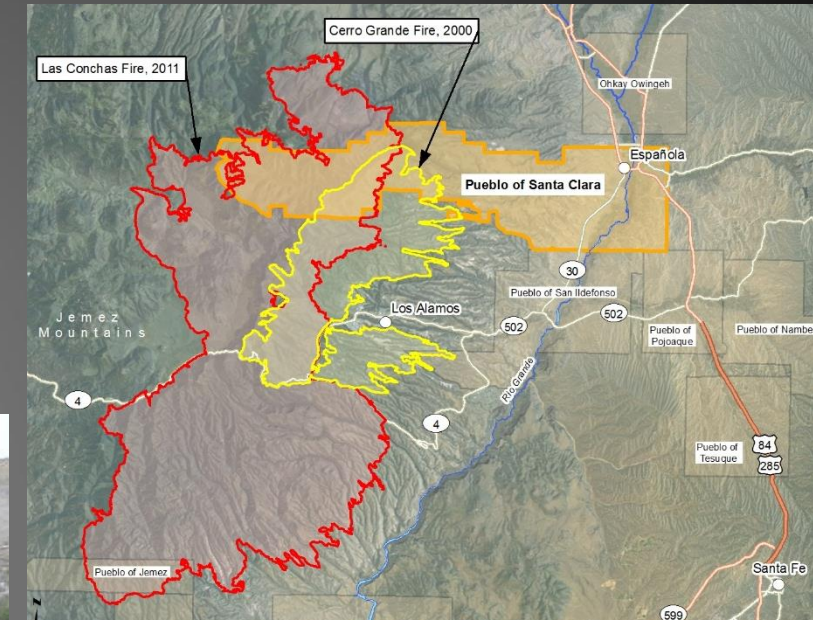
# The Decade's Top Weather Events

## #4: The 2011 Las Conchas Fire and Flash Floods

Weather Forecast Office  
Albuquerque, NM  
Issued February 9, 2020 3:01 PM MDT



The Las Conchas Fire began around 1 pm on June 26, 2011 when a gust of wind blew a tree over power lines. Within 14 hours the fire had consumed around 43,000 acres. This explosive fire growth was the equivalent of roughly one acre per second for 14 consecutive hours. Wildfire smoke plagued communities with poor air quality for weeks. The fire was contained on August 1, 2011 after a total of 156,953 acres burned. The complex terrain within the scorched burn area set the stage for extreme flash flooding. The Dixon Apple Orchard was destroyed by flash flooding after the fire. Canyons through Los Alamos, Bandelier, and pueblo lands on the east slope of the Jemez Mountains experienced significant flash flooding for several years.



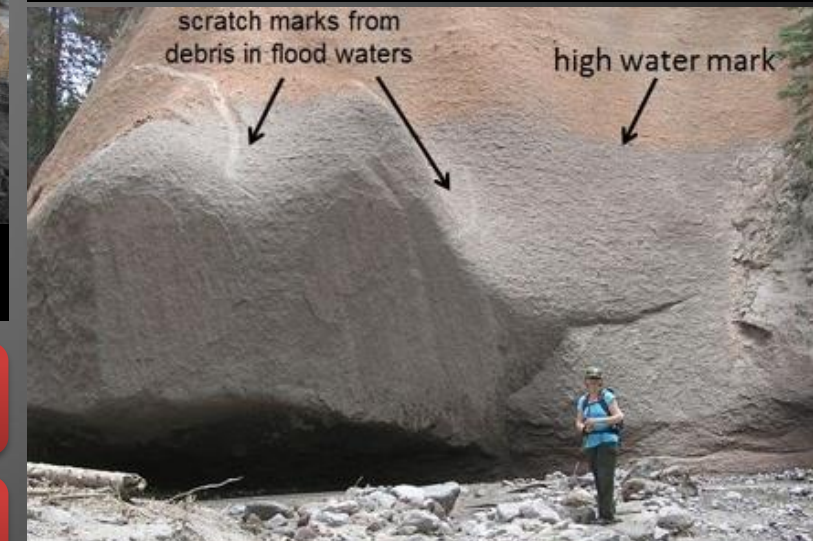
Burn Area (Red) | Courtesy of USACE ABQ District



June 26, 2011 | Las Conchas Fire  
Photo by Lillie Veon



August 22, 2011 | Dixon Apple Orchard  
Photo by Kerry Jones



July 25, 2011 | Barbara Judy

At least 36 serious flash floods occurred on the Las Conchas burn scar between 2011 and 2019.

The fire established a NM state record for largest wildfire in modern history (2011). The record was broken the following year by the Whitewater-Baldy complex in the Gila National Forest.

# The Decade's Top Weather Events

Weather Forecast Office  
Albuquerque, NM



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## #3: September 11-13, 2013 Historic Flooding

An unseasonably deep upper level low pressure system that became nearly stationary over the Great Basin on September 10<sup>th</sup> provided a steady stream of near record monsoon moisture over NM through the 18<sup>th</sup>. Several upper level waves moved northeast within the monsoon plume resulting in widespread historic rainfall amounts with significant flooding. Rainfall totals of 3-6" were common with localized amounts of 10". This heavy rainfall broke several monthly records for September and also made a huge dent in the multi-year drought over the area. A few river gages reported record crests and some were actually destroyed. Unfortunately, two fatalities occurred in NM due to flooding. A detailed event summary is available at:

<https://www.weather.gov/abq/2013septemberflooding>



Road Destroyed to Mogollon, NM  
NWS Damage Survey

Location	New September Record	Period of Record
Las Vegas	7.31"	1940-2020
Pecos	7.03"	1916-2020
El Rito	6.35"	1903-2020
Santa Fe	4.32"	1941-2020
Albuquerque	3.97"	1891-2020
Stanley	3.94"	1909-2020
Bernardo	3.68"	1936-2020

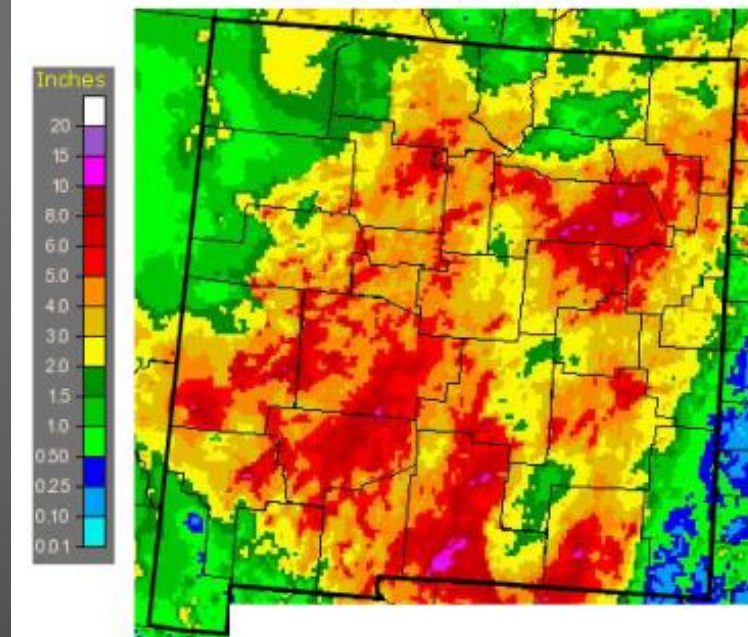


Rio Chama near Chamita, NM  
Alana Grimstad | KRQE



Rio Puerco near Bernardo, NM  
Civil Air Patrol

Observed Precipitation  
1-21 September 2013



# The Decade's Top Weather Events

Weather Forecast Office  
Albuquerque, NM

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## #2: June 6-8, 2014 Severe Weather Outbreak

A multi-day, significant severe weather outbreak began over central and eastern NM on June 6, 2014 and continued almost unabated through June 8<sup>th</sup>. Deep moisture and strong instability allowed numerous supercell thunderstorms to develop across the region. Large hail, damaging winds, torrential rainfall, flash flooding, funnel clouds, and tornados were reported by observers across central and eastern NM. Widespread damage from wind and hail occurred to many vehicles, homes, crops, and livestock. Damage amounts were estimated in the millions of dollars.



Clovis, NM | June 7, 2014  
Photo by Liana McAlister

73 reports of large hail were received by the NWS.

10 tornados and 12 funnel clouds were observed across eastern NM.

Thunderstorm winds downed power poles, power lines, trees, and resulted in significant damage to several homes and businesses.

Hail up to 4" in diameter produced catastrophic damage at the NMSU Agricultural Science Center north of Clovis.

A large folk festival tent at Balloon Fiesta Park was destroyed.

The Albuquerque NWS issued 99 Severe Thunderstorm Warnings and 23 Tornado Warnings over the three day period.



Near Mosquero, NM | June 6, 2014  
Photo by Kerry Jones



Corona, NM | June 7, 2014  
Photo by Todd Shoemake



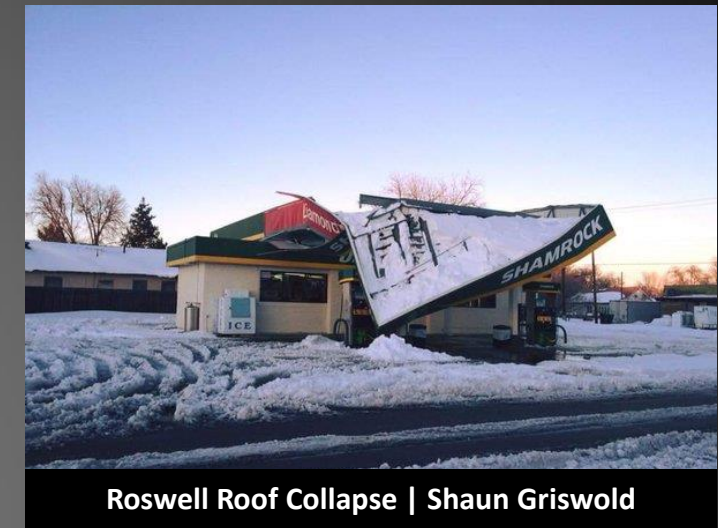
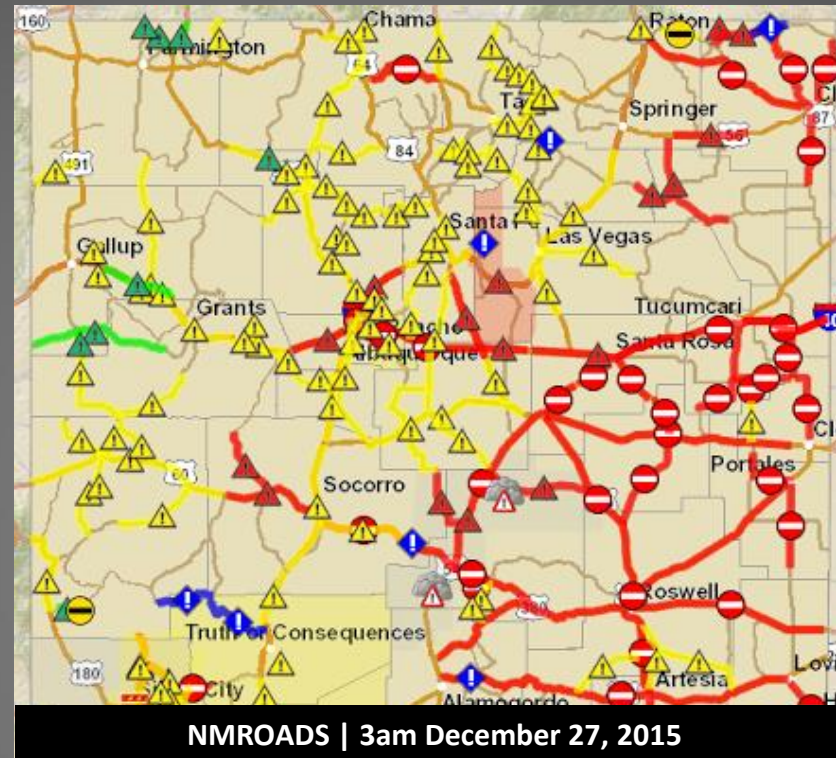
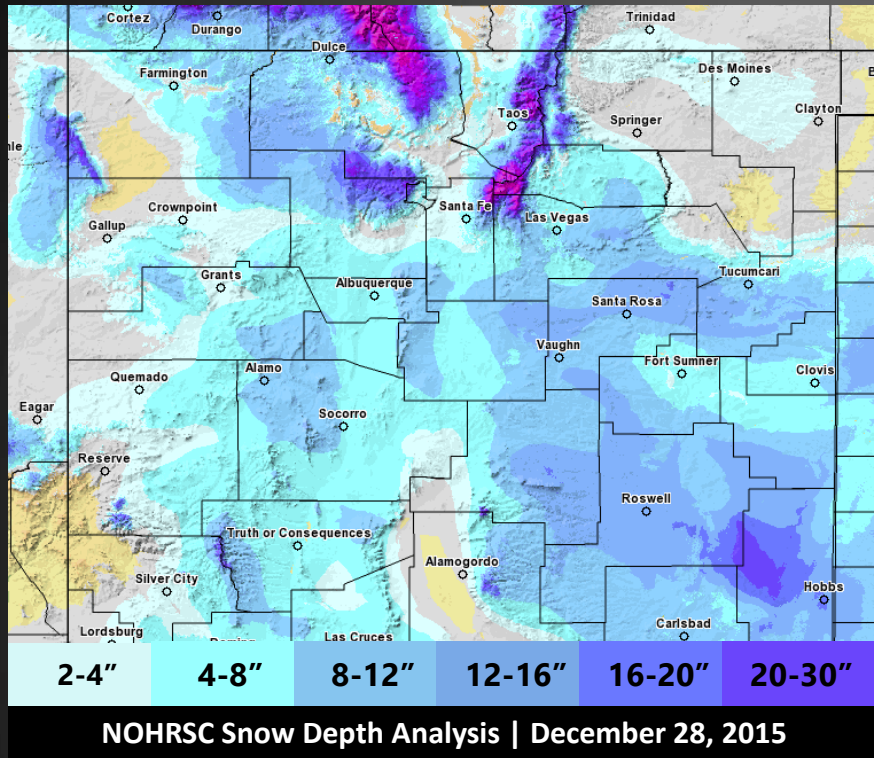
Roy, NM | June 6, 2014  
Photo by Brett Wright

# The Decade's Top Weather Events

## #1: December 26, 2015 Historic Blizzard

Weather Forecast Office  
Albuquerque, NM

Issued February 9, 2020 3:01 PM MDT



- 12.4" of snow at the Roswell airport set a new all-time daily snowfall record.
- 60 to 80 mph winds with heavy snow produced snow drifts of 6-10 feet across eastern NM.
- A civil emergency was declared after 455 motorists were stranded across the eastern plains.
- Numerous roadways were closed across eastern NM, including I-40 from Albuquerque to Amarillo.
- An estimated 30,000 to 50,000 livestock perished in the paralyzing blizzard conditions.