





NIDIS

Madison's 3rd coldest day this winter (Dec 11, 2024). Uredit: WISCO.

North Central U.S. Climate & Drought Outlook December 19, 2024

Bridgette Mason, Assistant State Climatologist

Wisconsin State Climatology Office

University of Wisconsin-Madison

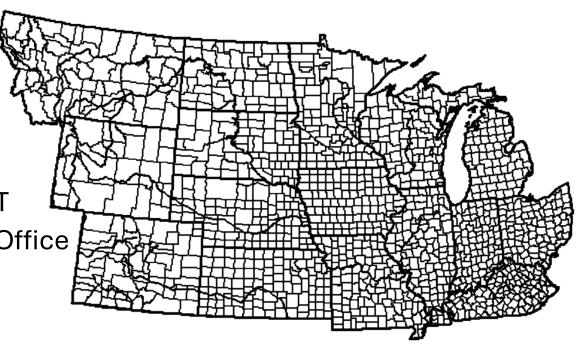
bmmason2@wisc.edu



608-263-2374

General Information

- Providing Climate Services to the North Central U.S.
 - Collaboration Among:
 - NOAA NCEI, NWS, OAR, and NIDIS
 - USDA Climate Hubs
 - American Association of State Climatologists
 - Midwest and High Plains Regional Climate Centers
 - National Drought Mitigation Center
- Today's and Past Recorded Webinars
 - <u>https://mrcc.purdue.edu/webinars</u>
 - https://hprcc.unl.edu/webinars.php
- Next Webinar
 - Thursday, January 16, 2024 @ 1:00pm CST
 - Dr. Zachary Hoylman Montana Climate Office



Outline

- Recent Temperature & Precipitation
- Impacts
 - Agriculture
 - Drought
 - Hydrology
- Winter weather
- Outlooks
- Questions

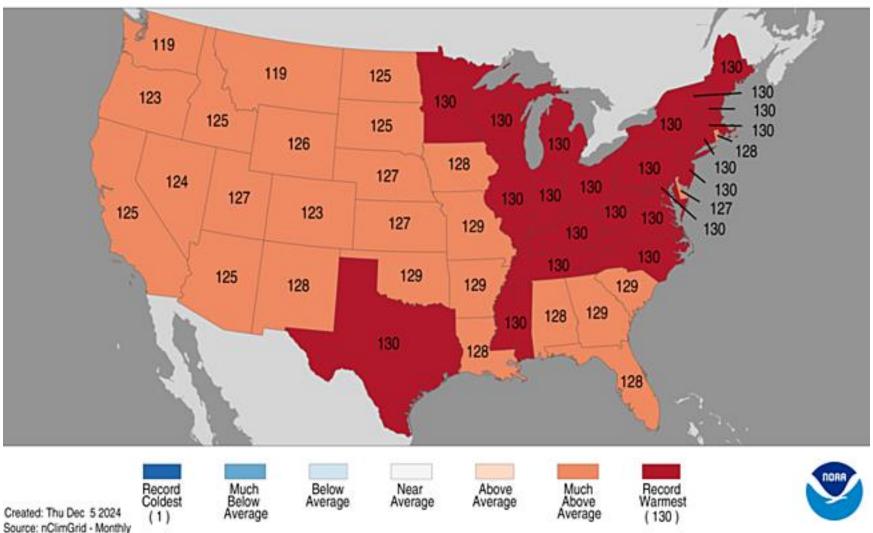


Recent Temperature & Precipitation

January-November 2024

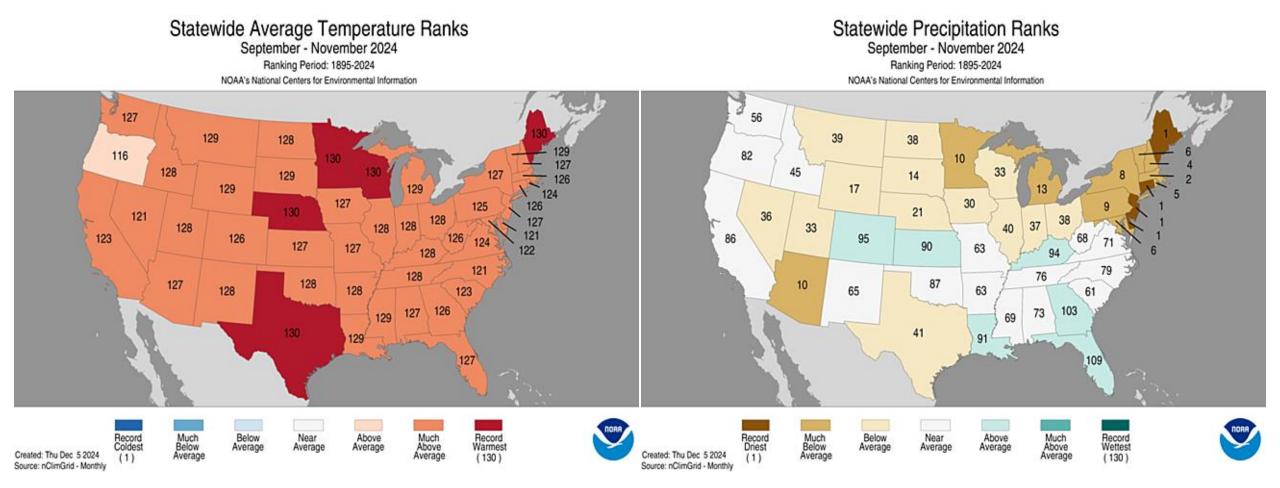
Statewide Average Temperature Ranks

January - November 2024 Ranking Period: 1895-2024 NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information



- Record warmest Jan-Nov 2024 in North Central U.S.:
 - IL, IN, KY, MI, MN, OH, WI
- Many other states in our region near their record warmest Jan-Nov 2024

Autumn (September-November)

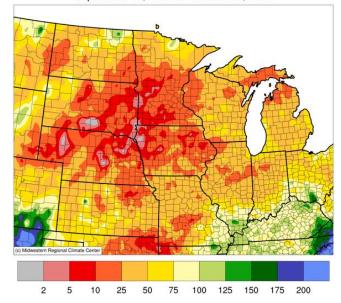


- Record warmest fall: MN, NE, WI
- 2nd or 3rd warmest for all others in the region
 - Except CO, which was 4th warmest

- Drier than average in mid & northern states
 - Particularly MN & MI
- Wetter than average in CO, KS, and KY
- Near normal in MO

September 1-October 30 → October 31-November 30

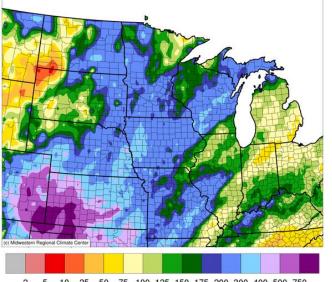
Accumulated Precipitation (in): Percent of 1991-2020 Normals September 01, 2024 to October 30, 2024



Credit: MRCC cli-MATE

Accumulated Precipitation (in): Percent of 1991-2020 Normals

October 31, 2024 to November 30, 2024



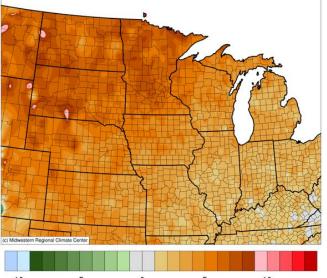
• Sept 1-Oct 30 Precip

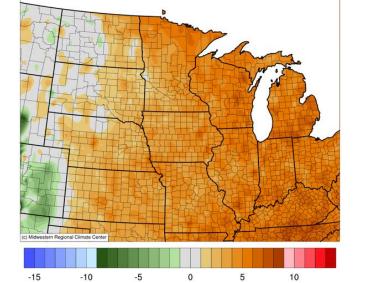
- Most of region < 50% of normal
- Patches in the Plains < 5% of normal
- Oct 31-Nov 30 Precip
 - Widespread 200+% of normal
 - 750% of normal in SW KS/SE CO
 - Monthly totals of 2-10+" in KS

Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normals September 01, 2024 to October 30, 2024

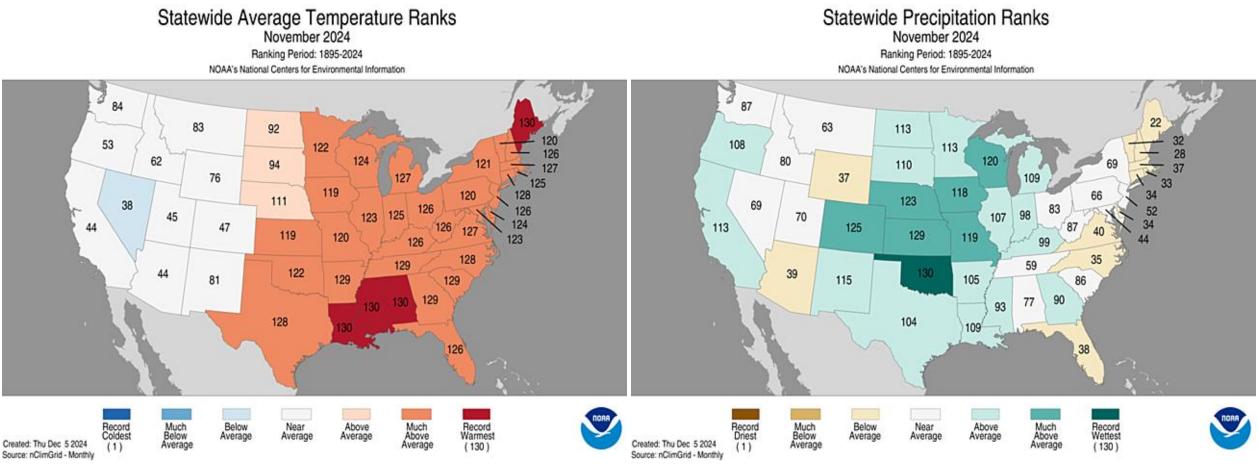
Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normals October 31, 2024 to November 30, 2024

- Sept 1-Oct 30 Temp
 - Widespread warmth, particularly to the northwest (+8-10°F)
- Oct 31-Nov 30 Temp
 - Warmer to the east
 - Near normal to the west
 - Below normal in CO & WY







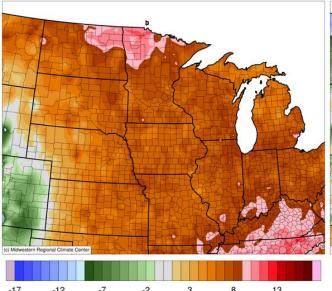


- Top 10 warmest for Midwestern states (11th for IA)
- Warmer than normal in the Plains
- Near normal to west

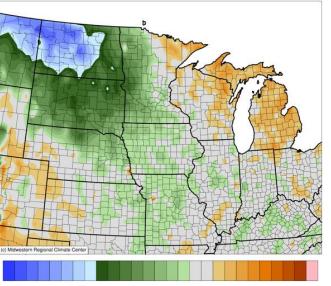
- Kansas saw its 2nd wettest November
- CO, NE, IA, WI had top 10 wettest
- Wetter than normal for others, except OH, MT, WY

November 1-19 \rightarrow November 20-30

Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normals Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normals



November 01, 2024 to November 19, 2024



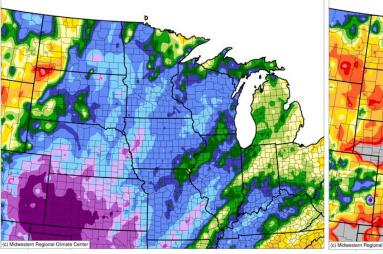
November 20, 2024 to November 30, 2024

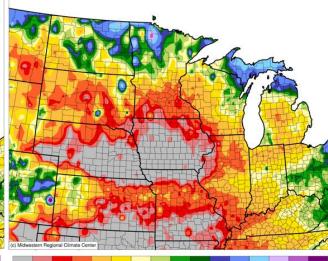
- Nov 1-19 Temp
 - Widespread +8-10°F, except CO & WY
- Nov 20-30 Temp
 - Significant change to cold in northern Plains

Accumulated Precipitation (in): Percent of 1991-2020 Normals Accumulated Precipitation (in): Percent of 1991-2020 Normals

November 01, 2024 to November 19, 2024

November 20, 2024 to November 30, 2024





Highway 32 in Big Piney, Ozarks, MO | Nov 4-5 2024 Credit: <u>NWS SGF</u>

Credit: MRCC cli-MATE

- Nov 1-19 Precip
 - Widespread 200+% of normal
 - 750% of norm in KS & CO
- Nov 20-30 Precip
 - < 75% of normal for most
 - A few > 100% on the fringes

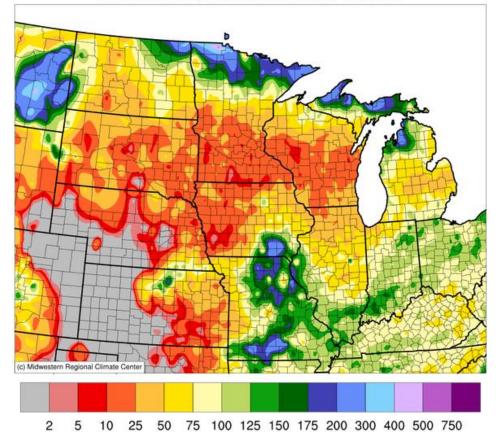
2 5 10 25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 300 400 500

2 5 10 25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 300 400 500 75

December

Accumulated Precipitation (in): Percent of 1991-2020 Normals

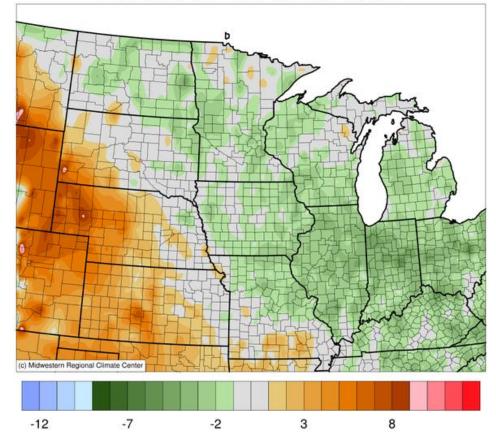
December 01, 2024 to December 17, 2024



- Very little precip in the southern Plains
- Widespread < 50% of normal precipitation
- Exceptions: far north and southeast Midwest
- **Reminder**: Climatologically driest time of year

Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normals

December 01, 2024 to December 17, 2024



- Warmer (cooler) than normal to the west (east)
- Rollercoaster of temps between cold & warm

Impacts

Agriculture

West Lafayette, IN Credit: Melissa Widhalm



Indiana Credit: Austin Pearson

Graves County, KY | Nov 21 2024 Credit: Jerry Brotzge



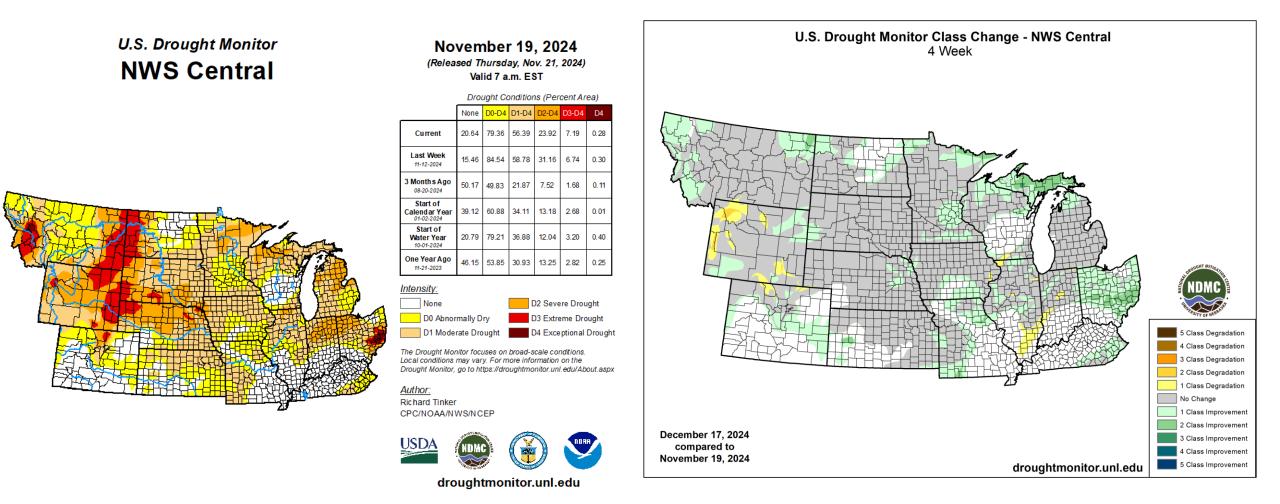
Louisville, KY | Nov 21 2024 Credit: Edward (Chip) Zimmer



- Fast-paced harvest season with little rain breaks
- Winter wheat seems to be doing better than anticipated, likely because rain fell at the right time
- Pasture/rangeland recovering with precipitation
- Rose bushes blooming and banana trees surviving until mid-November
- Waterfowl migration delayed because of warmth



Drought Change – Nov 19 to Dec 17

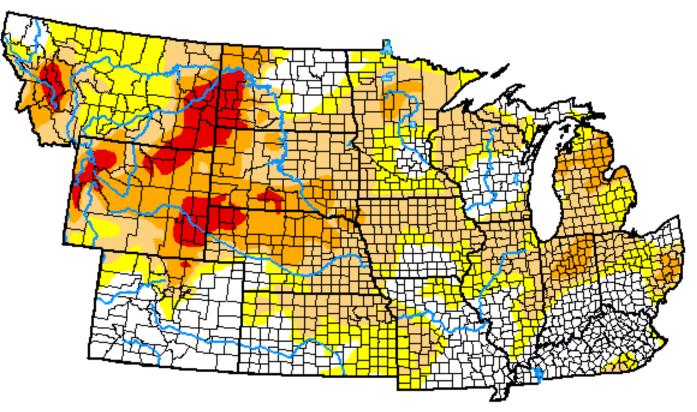


- Exceptional drought (D4) in Ohio
- Extreme drought to the west
- 56% of region in drought (D1-D4)

• Mostly unchanged with many patches improvement and only a few patches of degradation

U.S. Drought Monitor – Dec 17

U.S. Drought Monitor NWS Central



December 17, 2024 (Released Thursday, Dec. 19, 2024) Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)						
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	28.36	71.64	50.94	20.20	5.39	0.00
Last Week 12-10-2024	24.76	75.24	53.14	20.41	6.08	0.00
3 Month s Ago 09-17-2024	23.85	76.15	39.29	12.69	3.05	0.46
Start of Calendar Year 01-02-2024	39.12	60.88	34.11	13.18	2.68	<mark>0.01</mark>
Start of Water Year 10-01-2024	20.79	79.21	36.88	12.04	3.20	0.40
One Year Ago 12-19-2023	39.58	60.42	32.81	14.43	3.04	0. 17

Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx

Author:

Brian Fuchs National Drought Mitigation Center



• 51% of region in drought (D1-D4)

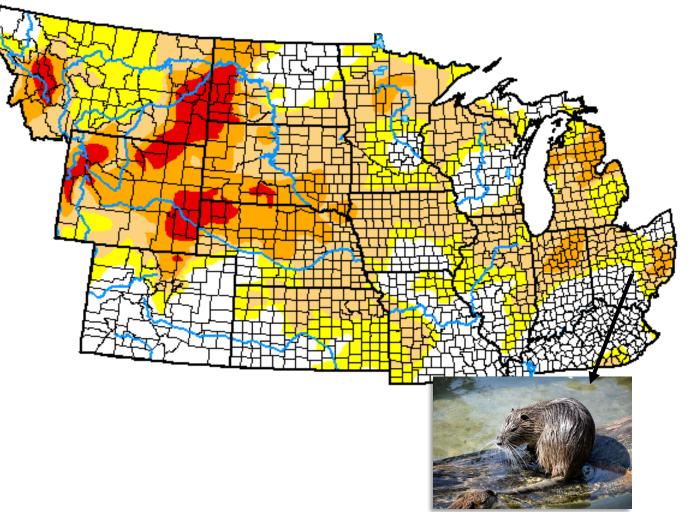
٠

Lingering drought since the summer for some, such as out west and even in lowa

droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor – Dec 17

U.S. Drought Monitor NWS Central



December 17, 2024 (Released Thursday, Dec. 19, 2024) Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	28.36	71.64	50.94	20.20	5.39	0.00
Last Week 12-10-2024	24.76	75.24	53.14	20.41	6.08	0.00
3 Month s Ago 09-17-2024	23.85	76.15	39.29	12.69	3. 0 5	0.46
Start of Calendar Year 01-02-2024	39.12	60.88	34.11	13.18	2.68	0.01
Start of Water Year 10-01-2024	20.79	79.21	36.88	12.04	3.20	0.40
One Year Ago 12-19-2023	39.58	60.42	32.81	14.43	3.04	0. 17

Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx

Author:

Brian Fuchs National Drought Mitigation Center



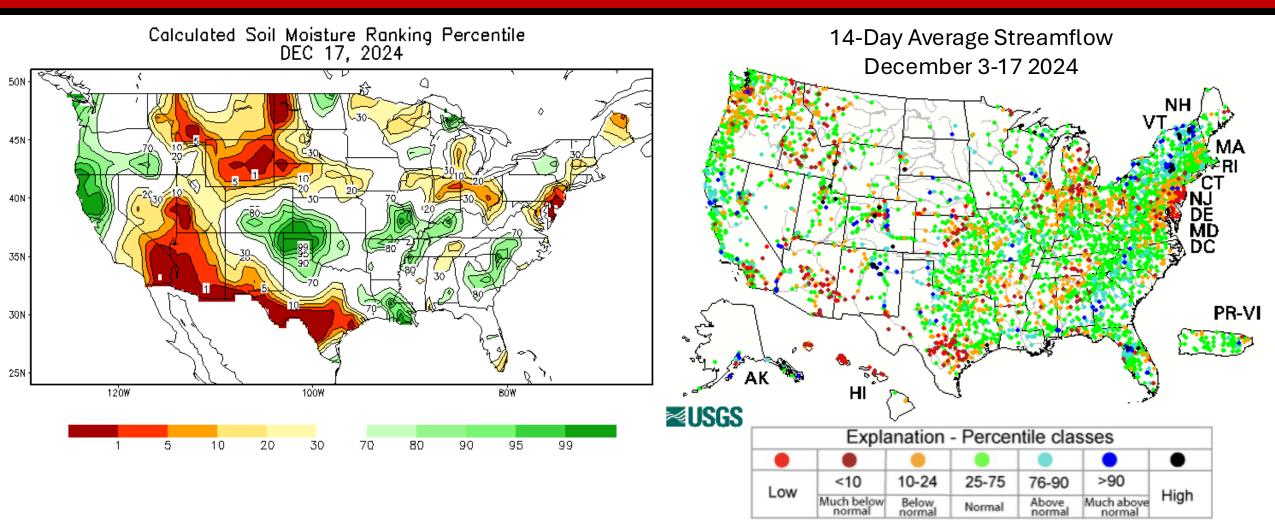
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

- Ecological drought indicator: muskrats and muskrat traps
- Due to drought, muskrats are in farm ponds

٠

 Muskrat traps at local hardware stores are at all-time lows

Soil Moisture and Streamflow



- November precip helped recharge soils
- Lack of December precip causing decline in moisture
 - Fortunately, ET is not adding to the loss

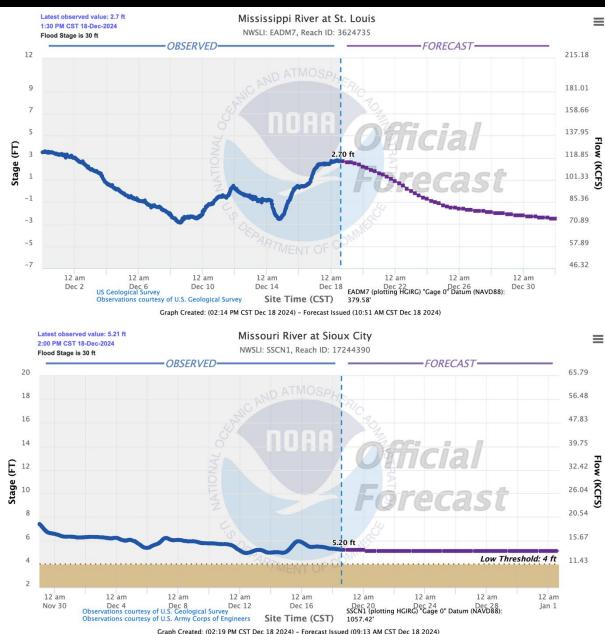
• Soils took up most of the initial precip, causing streamflow to rebound slower

- Mixed bag around the region
- Gap in the northern Plains due to frozen gauges

Credit: NOAA CPC

Major Rivers

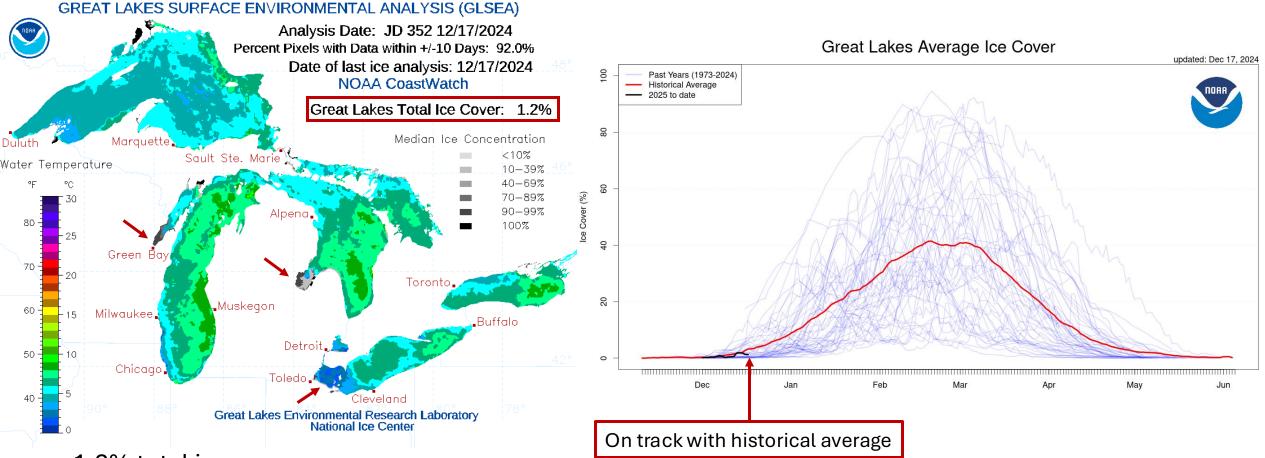
- Mississippi River
 - Monitoring low levels around St. Louis
 - Effect of decreased flows on the Missouri River
 - Low stages mean the threat for ice bites
 - Dredging south of St. Louis
- Missouri River
 - Winter release from Gavins Point Dam (South Dakota) around Dec 13
 - Final decrease in flow will reach St. Louis next week
 - Recent rains caused minor flooding in MO
 - Saw ice last week in the north and west, but warm temps this week stopped the formation
 - No longer seeing floating pan ice at Bismarck, ND
 - Water temps in ND are hovering around 32°F, so the next cold snap should start ice formation right away
- Ohio River
 - "Sweet Spot" between drought improvement and minimal floods



Mississippi at St. Louis: NOAA NWPS

Missouri at Sioux City: NOAA NWPS

Great Lakes Ice Cover



- 1.2% total ice cover
- Ice forming in shallow regions: Saginaw Bay, Western Lake Erie, Green Bay

Credit: GLSEA

Credit: NOAA GLERL

Local Lake Ice Cover

- Lakes Monona and Wingra (Madison, WI) declared iced-over December 13 and 1, respectively
 - 2 days ahead of (later than) normal for Monona (Wingra)
 - Records going back to 1800s
- Lake Monona re-opened as of December 17

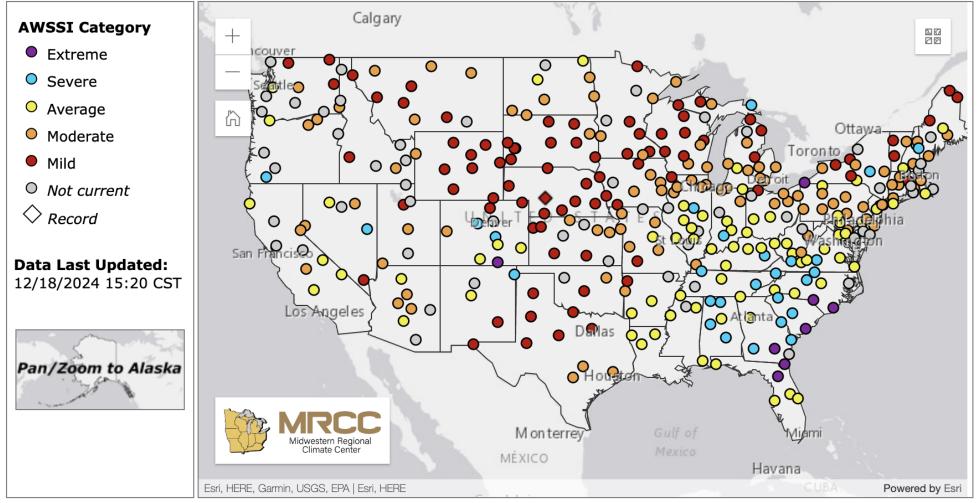




Winter Weather

Accumulated Winter Season Severity Index

- What is AWSSI? A way to quantify the severity of winter
- Variables included: maximum & minimum temperatures, snowfall, snow depth

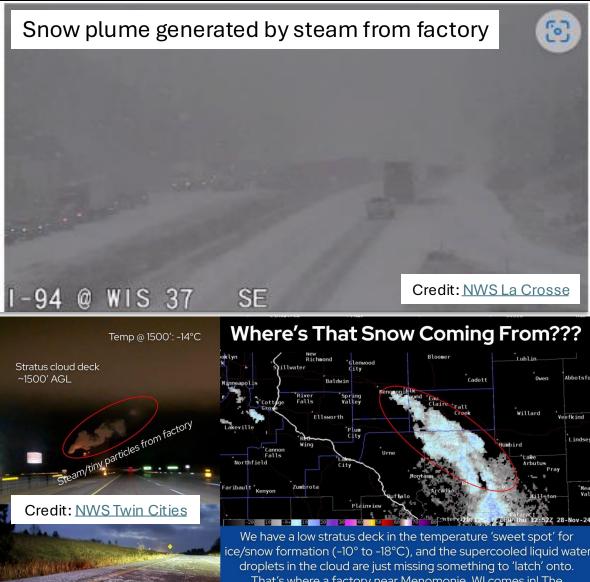


Credit: MRCC

I'm dreaming of a...White Thanksgiving!

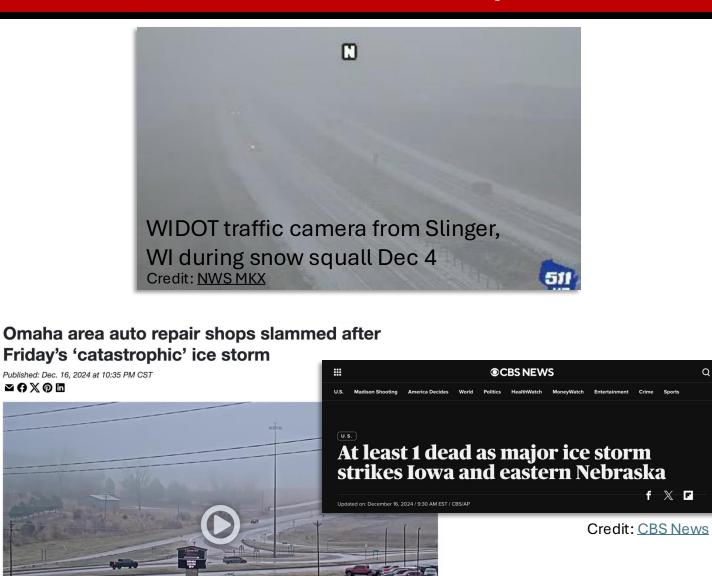


2024 saw 1-3", which is only a 12% probability! Credit: Laura Edwards & <u>NWS Aberdeen</u>

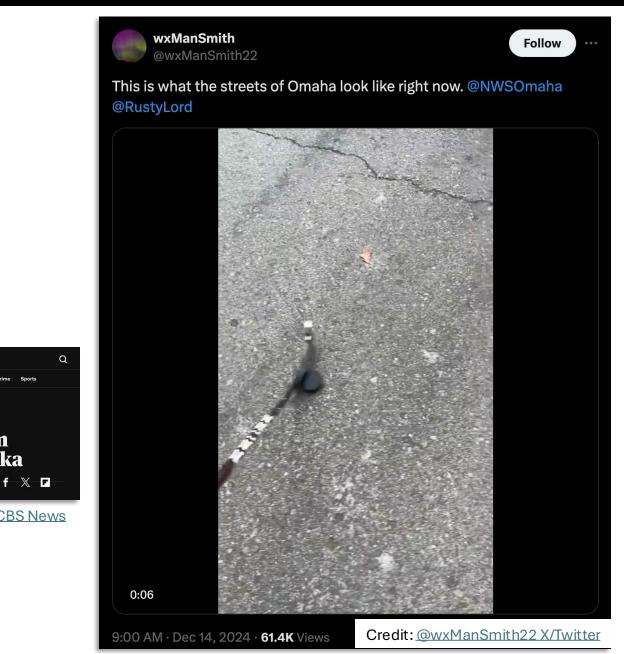


That's where a factory near Menomonie, WI comes in! The steam/tiny particles emitted from the factory are just enough to create snowflakes. This narrow plume of snow extends for nearly 100 miles to the southeast. A light dusting has accumulated on roads/grassy areas, so take caution if traveling for the holiday.

Snow Squalls and Ice Storms



Credit: KOLN-KGIN



Banged up cars are lining up at auto body shops across the Omaha metro.

ICE STORM CAUSES HUNDREDS OF CRASHES, KEEPS BODY SHOPS BUSY

OMAHA

OLIGI AS COLINTY

Lake Effect Snow

Year-to-date (YTD) average surface temperatures by lake (°F) January 1 - November 24

Lake	YTD 2024	YTD long-term average	YTD long-term minimum	YTD long-term maximum
Superior	47.4	44.4	40.3	47.9
Michigan	53.7	50.6	46.7	53.7
Huron	51.9	49.0	45.7	51.9
Erie	56.7	53.9	51.5	56.7
Ontario	54.9	51.7	48.3	54.9

Credit: NOAA GLERL

- Lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario broke their records for year-to-date (Jan 1-Nov 24) maximum temperatures
 - Result of warm fall 2024 & warm winter 2023-24



Lake Effect Snow

Saybrook, OH with 63.2" of snow! Credit: <u>NWS/Erin Buckley Arsulic</u>





NWS Gaylord 🤣 @NWSGaylord • Nov 29

View from beneath one of those intense lake effect bands this morning. Snow is fluffy but wet. If you run into one of these, it will quickly be discombobulating. Please drive safely out there and send us snow reports! #miwx #northernmichigan #lakeeffect #snow



Credit: <u>NWS Gaylord</u> Stats Credit: <u>NOAA Climate.gov</u>

Right: Gaylord, MI on Dec 2, 2024 Credit: <u>NWS Gaylord</u>

Winter Recreation

Terry Peak Ski Area in Black Hills, SD | Dec 17, 2024 Credit: <u>Stewart Lodge Cam</u>

SECURITY SYSTEMS

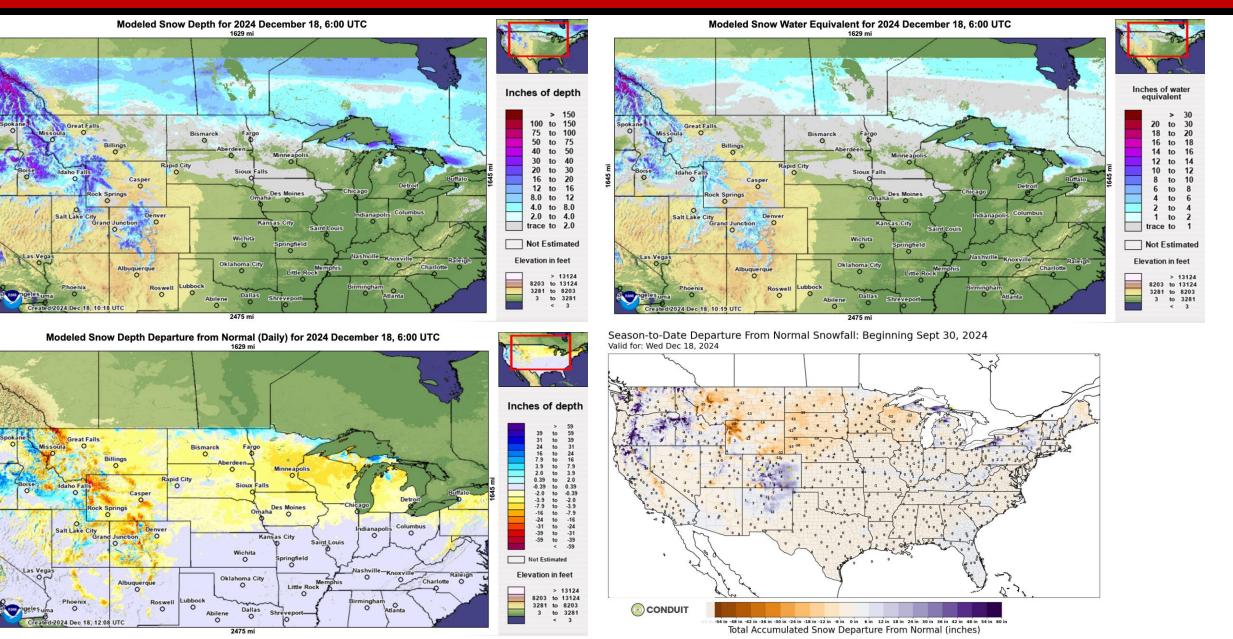
Browns-Steelers in Cleveland, OH | Nov 21, 2024 Credit: <u>Mary Clarke</u>





Snowmobilers in the Keweenaw Peninsula, MI Credit: Bridgette Mason

Current Snow Observations & Anomalies



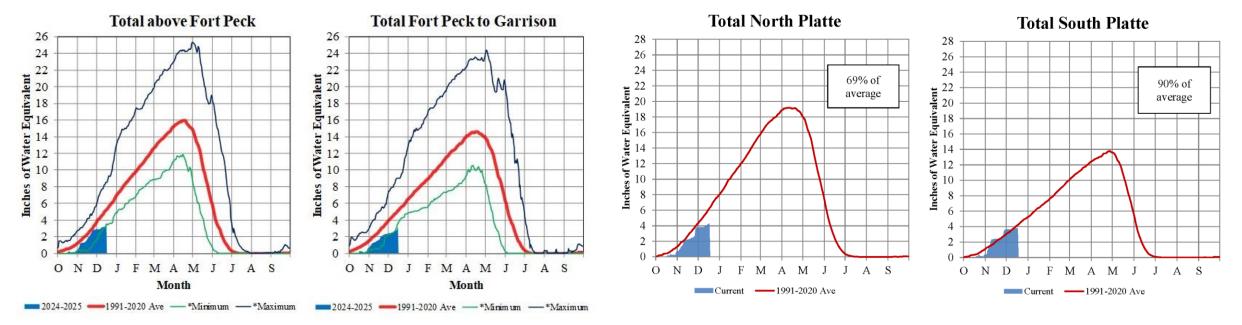
Credit: NOHRSC

Credit: <u>Ag Wx</u>

Snowpack Water Content

Missouri River Basin – Mountain Snowpack Water Content December 16 2024

Platte River Basin – Mountain Snowpack Water Content December 17 2024



- Snowpack water content is running below average as of mid December
- Accumulation is still early in the season, thus there is still room to increase water content

On December 16, 2024 the mountain Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) in the "Total above Fort Peck" reach is 3.8" and 72% of the (1991-2020) average. The mountain SWE in the "Fort Peck to Garrison" reach is 3.2" and 62% of the (1991-2020) average. The normal peak for both reaches occurs near April 17.

The North and South Platte River Basin mountain snowpacks normally peak near April 10 and the end of April, respectively. As of December 17, 2024, the mountain snowpack SWE in the "Total North Platte" reach is 4.2", 69% of the (1991-2020) average. The mountain snowpack SWE in the "Total South Platte" reach is 3.8", 90% of the (1991-2020) average.

Credit: USACE

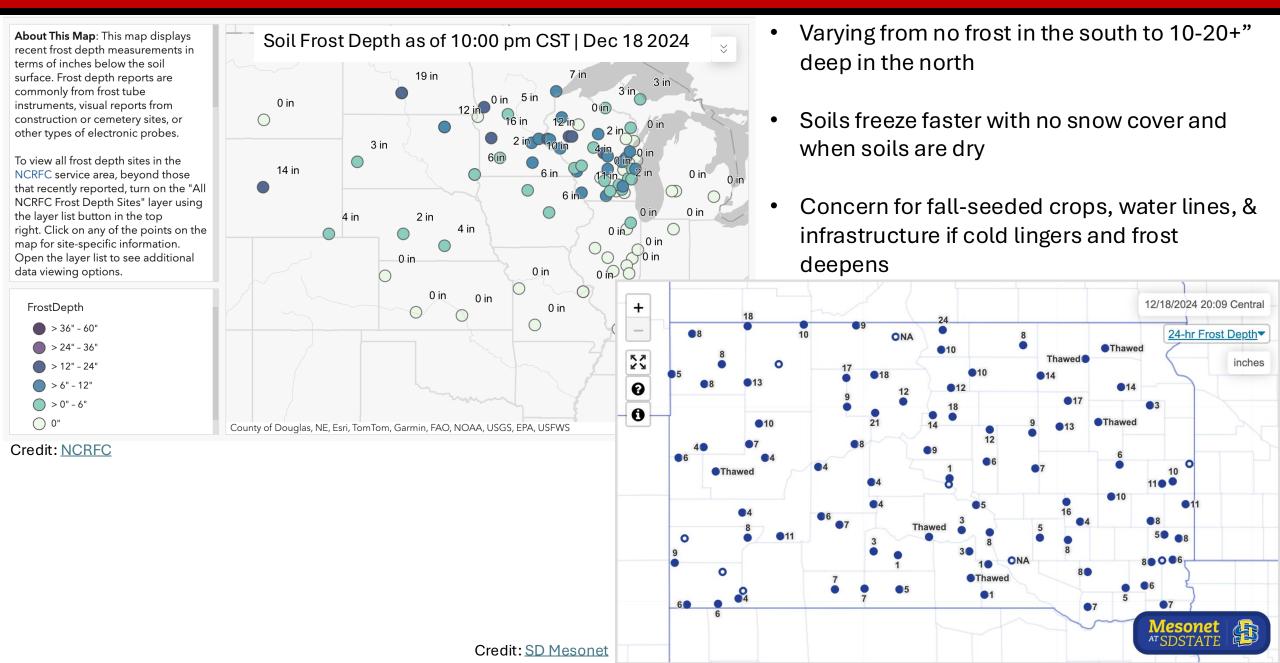
*Refers to the minimum or maximum SWE in the basin for that day in the historical years 1991-2020

Credit: USACE

Source: USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service

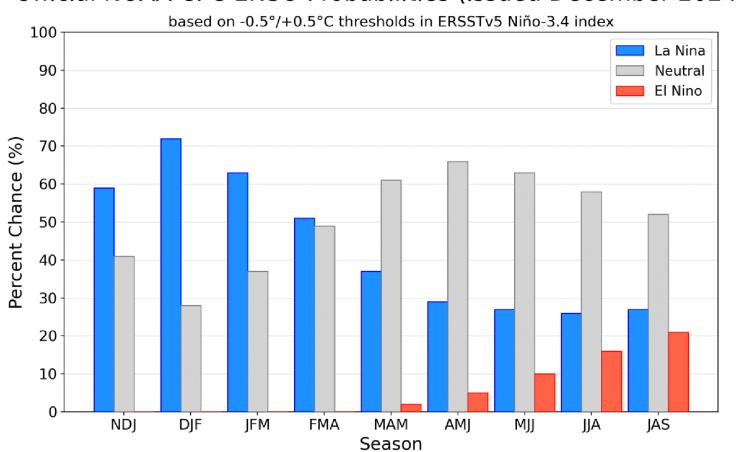
Provisional data. Subject to revision

Frost Depth



Outlook

La Niña Watch



- Official NOAA CPC ENSO Probabilities (issued December 2024)
 - La Niña Watch means conditions in the tropical Pacific Ocean are favorable for La Niña

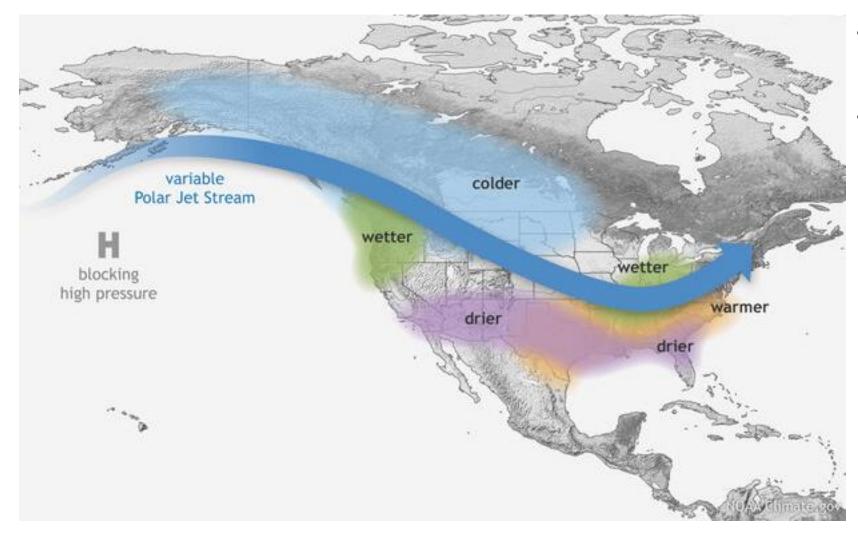
• La Niña conditions

- Sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific are cooler than normal by 0.5°C or more
- There is an **atmospheric response** in the tropical Pacific
- While La Niña criteria may not officially be met, the ocean and atmosphere are reflecting La Niña behavior

Figure 7. Official ENSO probabilities for the Niño 3.4 sea surface temperature index (5°N-5°S, 120°W-170°W). Figure updated 12 December 2024.

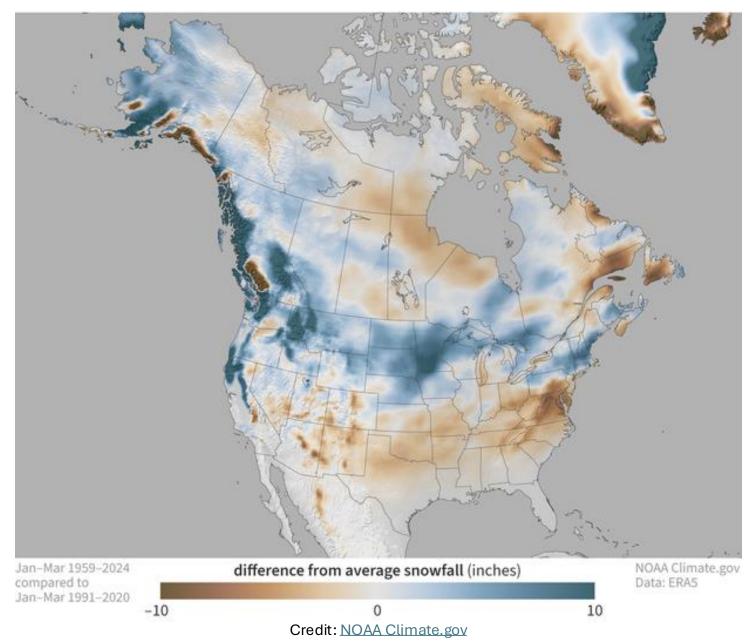
Credit: NOAA CPC

Typical Winter La Niña Pattern



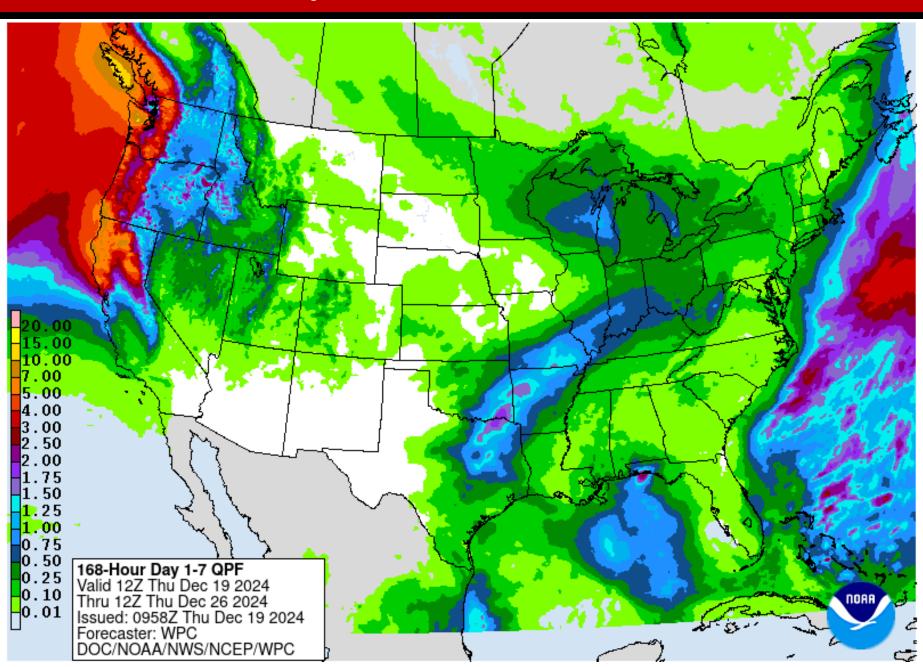
- Cooler for the northern Plains
- Wetter for the Ohio Valley

Snowfall During Weak La Niña Winters (January-March)



- 9 weak La Niña winters compared to the 1991-2020 average
- Most of the North Central U.S. saw aboveaverage snowfall during the weak La Niña winters
- **Reminder**: Other climate signals, longterm trends, and short-term weather patterns can disrupt historical patterns

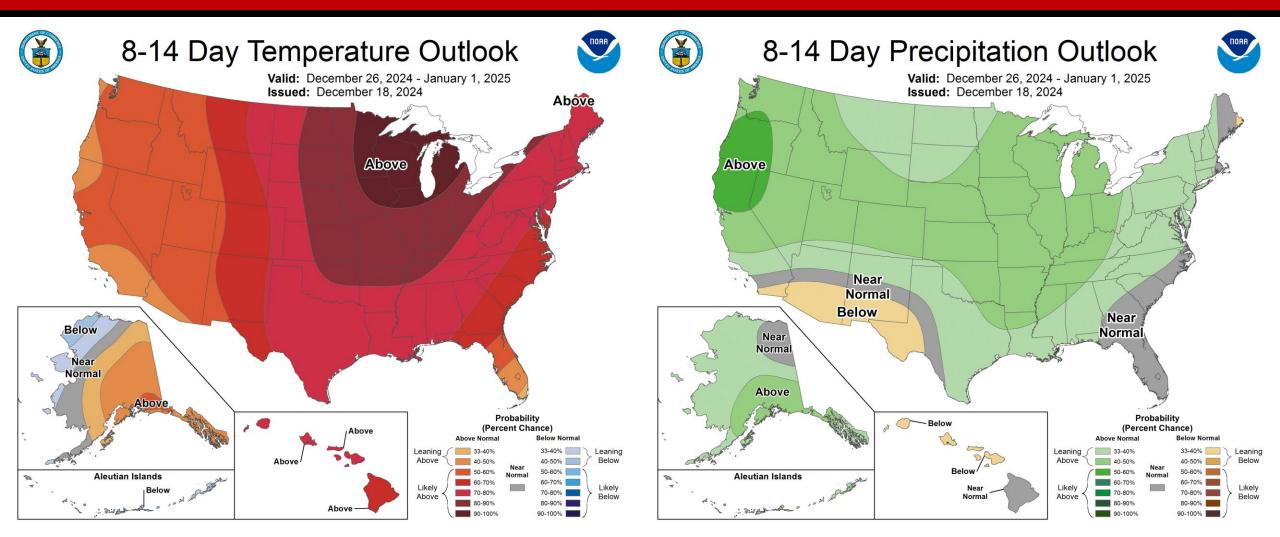
Precipitation Forecast – December 19-26



- Higher chances for precip over Great Lakes and southern Midwest
- Low chances for Plains and western states

Credit: <u>NWS WPC</u>

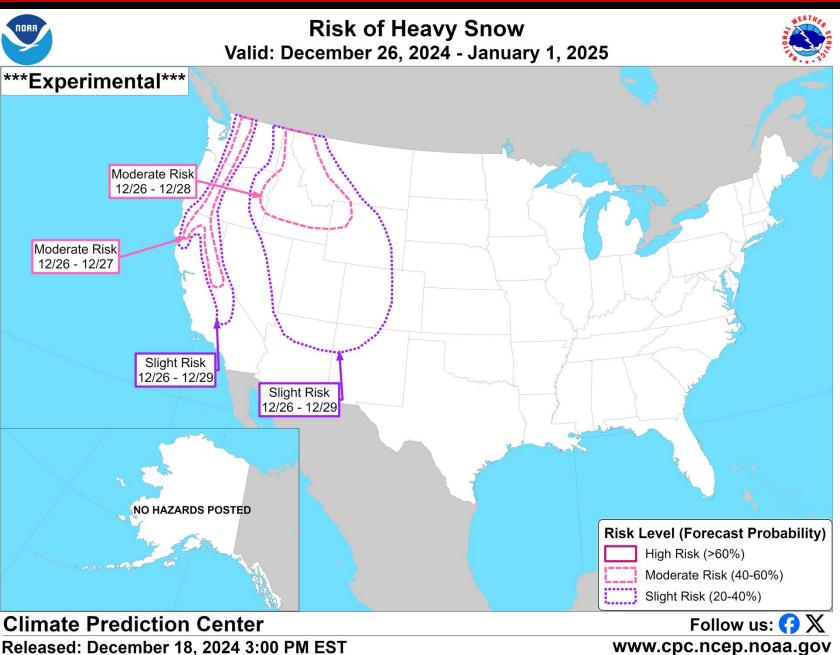
8-14-Day Outlook



• Very likely warmer than normal to end the year and slightly elevated chance for wetter than normal

Credit: NOAA CPC

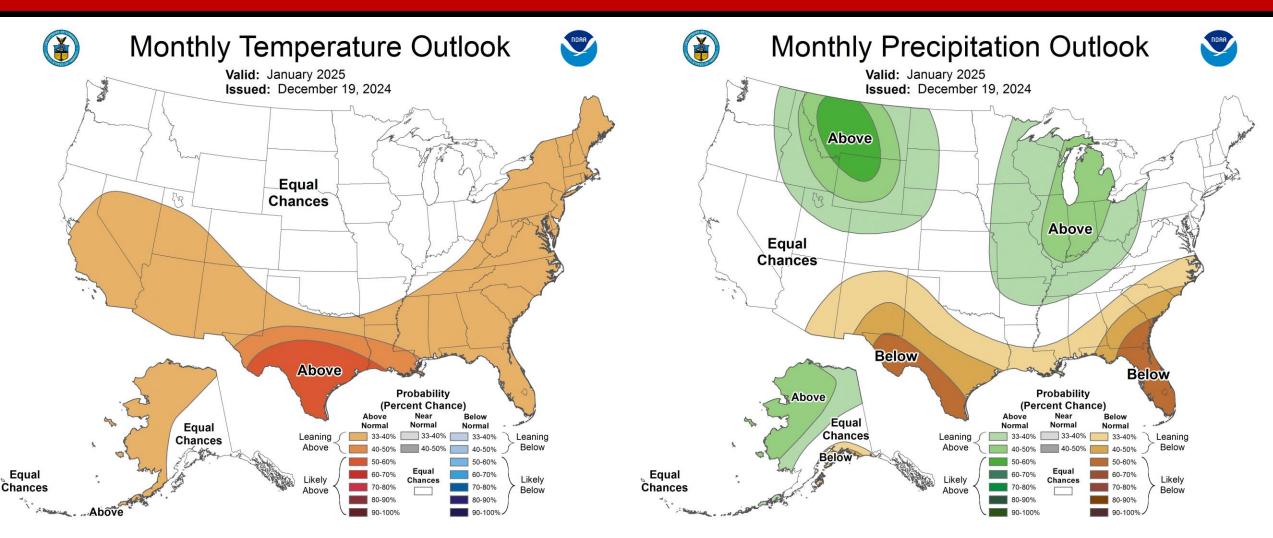
Potential Hazards



- Moderate risk (40-60%) for high elevation snowfall in western MT & northwest WY
- Slight risk (20-40%) for western WY & CO
- Could increase snowpack, but disrupt holiday travel

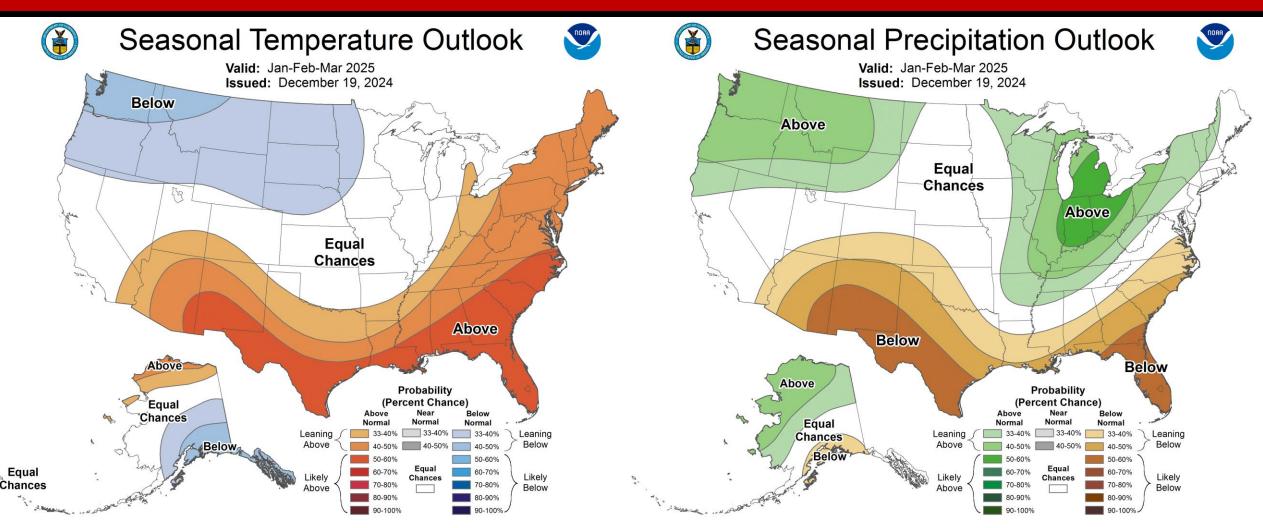
Credit: <u>NOAA CPC</u>

January 2025 Outlook



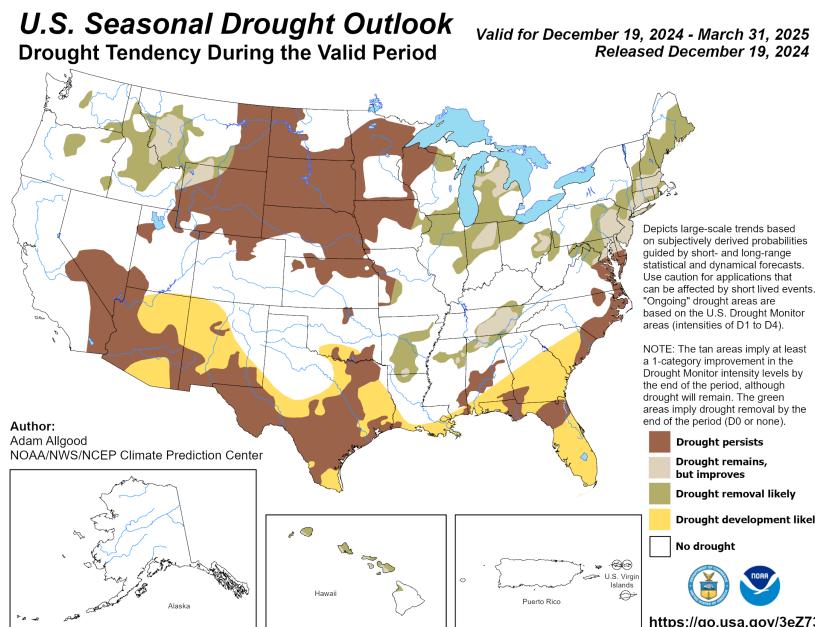
- Region-wide equal chances for above, near, or below normal temperatures
- Higher probability for wetter than normal conditions in the Great Lakes & especially Northern Rockies

January-February-March 2025 Outlook

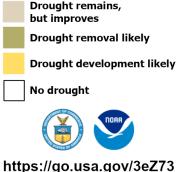


- Slightly elevated chance for cooler in the north/northwest, warmer in the far east
- Higher probability for wetter than normal conditions in the Northern Rockies & especially Great Lakes

January-February-March 2025 Outlook

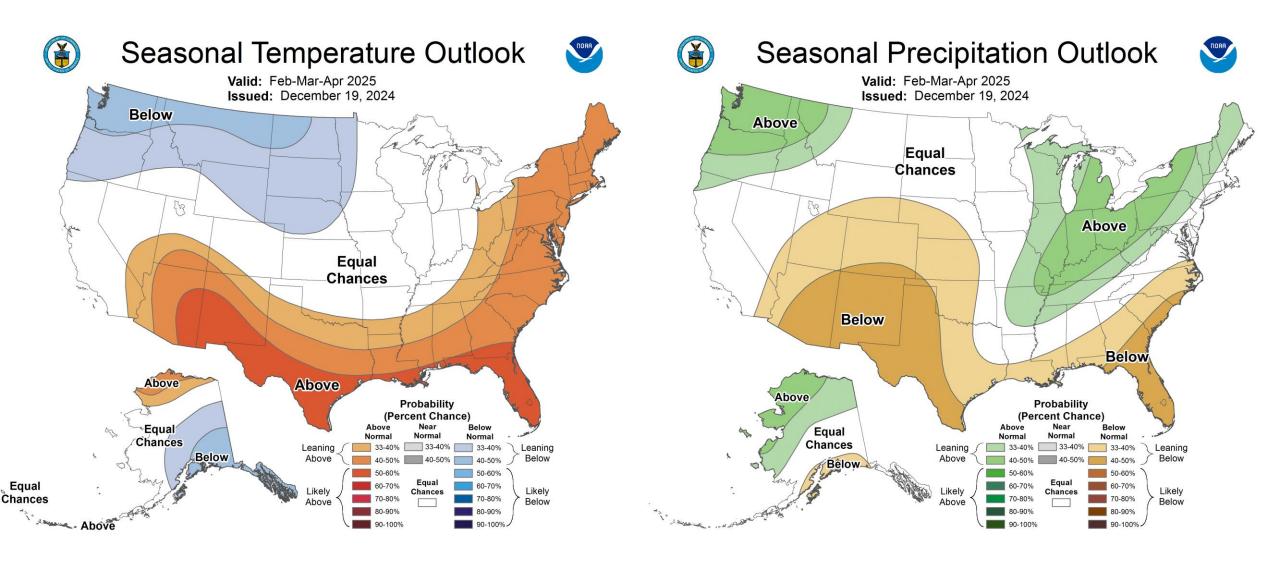


- Perhaps some drought improvement for the Great Lakes states and western MT & WY
- Persistent drought for Plains
 - Winter is our driest season, so drought improvement is difficult at this time of the year normally



Credit: NOAA CPC

February-March-April 2025 Outlook



Summary

Current Conditions

- Some drought and hydrology recovery, although slowing with less precip
- No major issues on the Mississippi, Missouri, or Ohio Rivers
 - Monitoring low flows around St. Louis and the threat for ice bites
- Great Lakes and local ice cover near normal for this time of year
- Winter made an appearance in the region, though some feel it more
- Outlook
 - Best chances for precip for eastern & southern Midwest over next 7 days
 - Potential for significant snow in the Rockies & west between Dec 26-29
 - Weak La Niña Watch for Jan-Mar, meaning the potential for cooler and snowier conditions
 - Note: Relatively high chance La Niña will not officially emerge

Further Information – Partners

- Today's and Past Recorded Presentations
 - <u>https://mrcc.purdue.edu/webinars</u>
 - <u>https://hprcc.unl.edu/webinars.php</u>
- NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information <u>www.ncei.noaa.gov</u>
- Monthly Climate Reports (US & Global) <u>https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/</u>
- NOAA Climate Prediction Center <u>www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov</u>
- Climate Portal <u>www.climate.gov</u>
- U.S. Drought Portal <u>www.drought.gov</u>
- National Drought Mitigation Center <u>https://drought.unl.edu</u>
- State Climatologists <u>http://www.stateclimate.org</u>
- Regional Climate Centers
 - Midwestern <u>https://mrcc.purdue.edu</u>
 - High Plains <u>https://hprcc.unl.edu</u>
- USDA Midwest Climate Hub https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/midwest









Thank you very much! Questions?

Climate

- Bridgette Mason <u>bmmason2@wisc.edu</u>
- Dennis Todey <u>dennis.todey@usda.gov</u>
- Doug Kluck <u>doug.kluck@noaa.gov</u>
- Gannon Rush grush2@unl.edu
- Melissa Widhalm <u>mwidhalm@purdue.edu</u>
- Brian Fuchs <u>bfuchs2@unl.edu</u>
- Molly Woloszyn <u>molly.woloszyn@noaa.gov</u>
- Weather
 - <u>crhroc@noaa.gov</u>

Light snowpack the morning of Dec 18, 2024 in southern WI | Credit: Bridgette Mason