



Drought Information Statement for Southern NM/Far West TX

Valid January 3, 2024

Issued By: NWS El Paso (Santa Teresa, NM)

Contact Information: sr-epz.nws@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated February 7, 2024 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/EPZ/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.





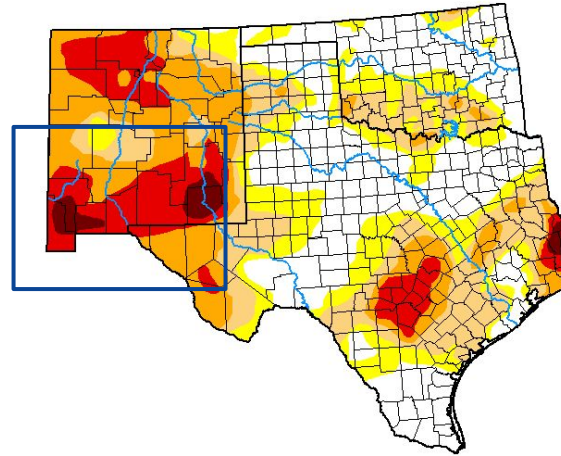
U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for southern New Mexico and far west Texas

- Drought intensity and Extent
 - D4 (Exceptional Drought): Portions of Southwest New Mexico including Mimbres River Basin
 - D3 (Extreme Drought): Covering majority of Southern New Mexico and El Paso, TX
 - D2 (Severe Drought): Covering majority of southwest New Mexico and far west Texas (95% of area)

- Precipitation and mountain snow may improve temporary conditions next few months, but drought conditions will persist through the winter.

U.S. Drought Monitor Southern Plains RDEWS



December 26, 2023
(Released Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	31.75	68.25	51.12	32.40	14.26	2.12
Last Week 12-19-2023	26.49	73.51	53.94	33.33	14.97	2.22
3 Months Ago 09-26-2023	7.01	92.99	79.77	57.36	32.68	9.19
Start of Calendar Year 01-03-2023	18.90	81.10	53.71	32.77	13.89	2.76
Start of Water Year 09-26-2023	7.01	92.99	79.77	57.36	32.68	9.19
One Year Ago 12-27-2022	18.16	81.84	53.06	32.35	13.73	2.55

Intensity:

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought

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:
Rocky Bliotta
NCEI/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor valid 8am EDT December 26





Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest [3-month change map](#) for southern New Mexico and far west Texas

- 12-Week Drought Monitor Class Change.
 - Drought Worsened: Slight degradation over portions of central New Mexico.
 - Drought Improved: No drought improvement was observed

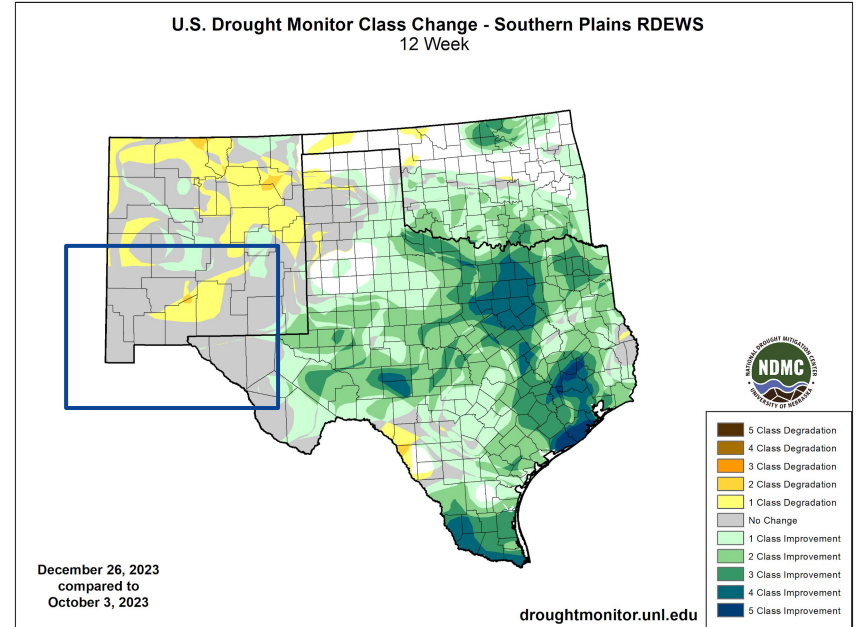


Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor 3-month change map valid 8am EDT December 26

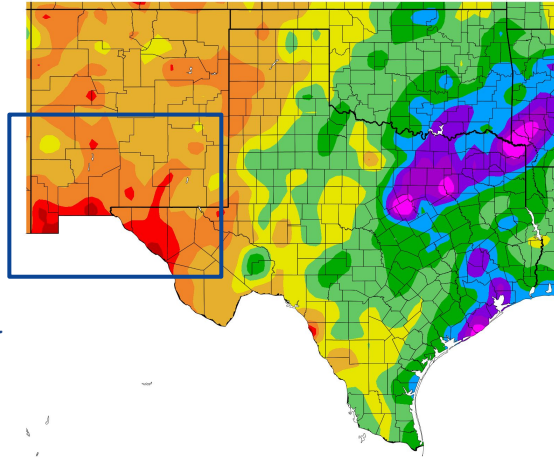




Precipitation

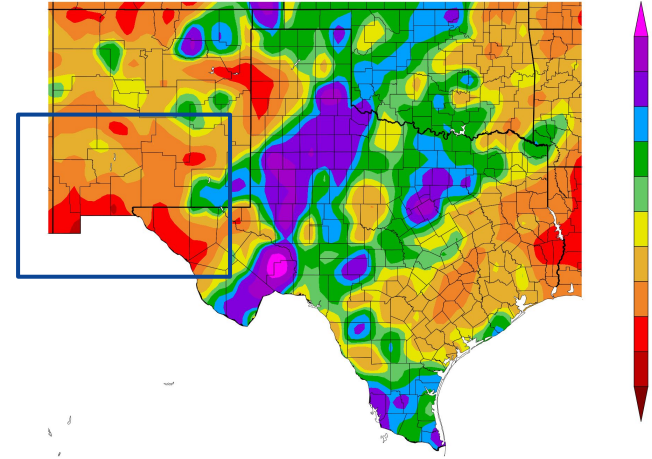
- 90-day rain totals, generally below 1” along I-10 corridor. 2-4” over mountain forests.
- Below normal rainfall during the fall season (50-70% of normal).
- Combined below normal rainfall, above normal temperatures, and breezy conditions result in favorable environment for drought persistence

Precipitation (in)
10/1/2023 – 12/31/2023



Generated 1/2/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
10/1/2023 – 12/31/2023



NOAA Regional Climate Center Generated 1/2/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Center

Image Captions:
 Left - Precipitation Amount
 Right - Percent of Normal Precipitation
 Data Courtesy High Plains Regional Climate Center.
 Data over the past 30 days ending 12/31/2023

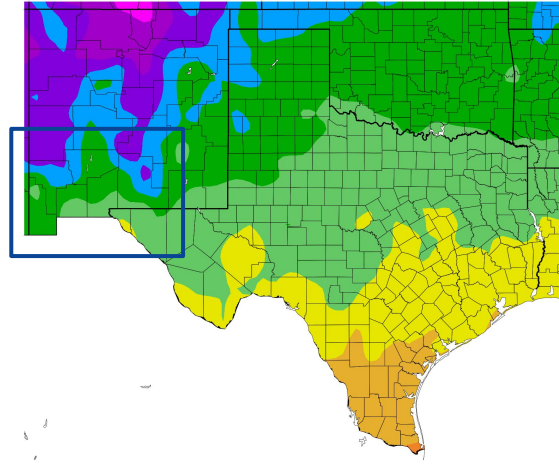




Temperature

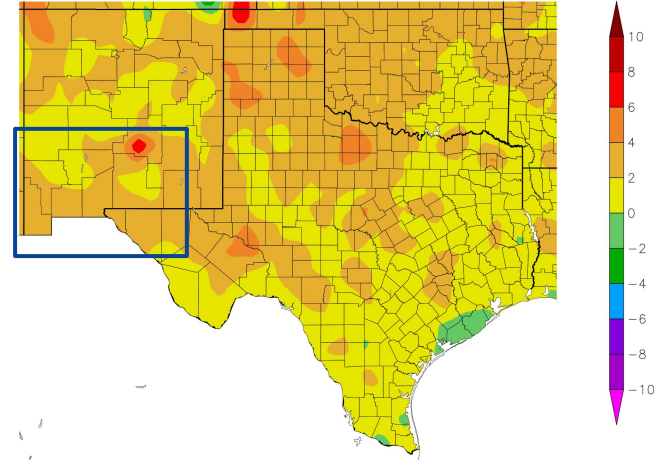
- Oct-Dec period above normal after record summer/fall heat wave. No significant cold snaps yet.
- Hottest Aug-Oct period in recorded history
- Average high temperatures 2-3 degrees above seasonal normals

Temperature (F)
10/1/2023 - 12/31/2023



Generated 1/2/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
10/1/2023 - 12/31/2023



NOAA Regional Climate Center - Generated 1/2/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Image Captions:
Left - Average Temperature
Right - Departure from Normal Temperature
Data Courtesy High Plains Regional Climate Center
Data over the past 30 days ending 12/31/2023



Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows in Gila and Mimbres basins remain quiet this winter season. Gila River levels remain around 4-5 feet at Redrock and Virden, a slight uptick from autumn. Rio Grande has dried up below the Caballo Dam with no streamflow. Elephant Butte storage has increased to 23.6% capacity (near 30-year median flow). River flooding risk is low at this time.

Agricultural Impacts

- Hatch and Mesilla Valley irrigation season has ended, with a 2023 season allotment of 14 inches. Forecast is leaning toward above precipitation forecasted over the next 30 days. Please refer to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) website or your local municipality for more information.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Fuel moisture was below normal for much of late fall, allowing for several prescribed fires in the Gila and Lincoln Forests. Elevated fire danger may return early in 2024 pending the mountain snowpack.

Mitigation Actions

- Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information.





Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Gila and Mimbres river basin streamflows running well below average
- Rio Grande has dried up below the Caballo Dam with no streamflow

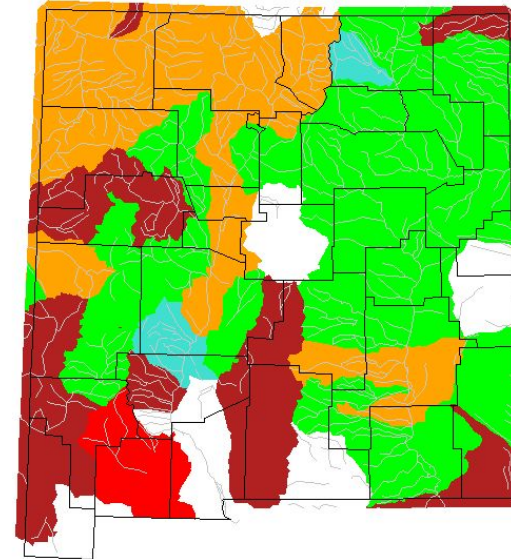
Gila River Stages

Gila 1.32 ft
 Redrock 4.18 ft
 Virden 5.49 ft

Rio Grande Stages

El Paso Low Stage

Tuesday, January 02, 2024



Explanation - Percentile classes							
Low	<10	10-24	25-75	76-90	>90	High	No Data
	Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal		

Image Caption: USGS 7 day average streamflow HUC map valid January 2, 2024





Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center](#).

Latest TX Burn Ban map available [here](#)

Latest NM Fire Restrictions available [here](#)

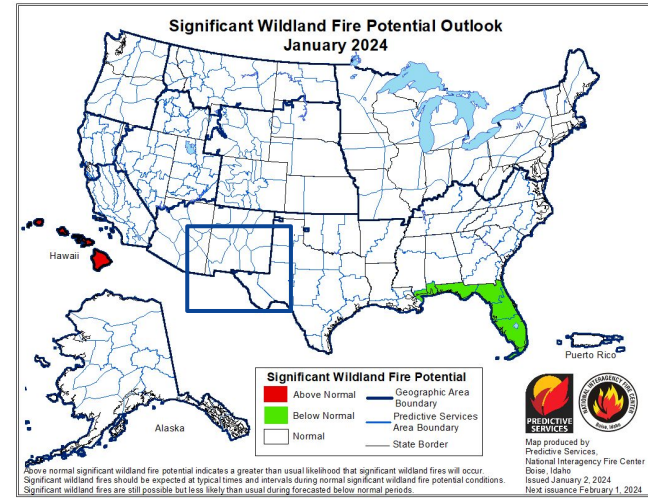
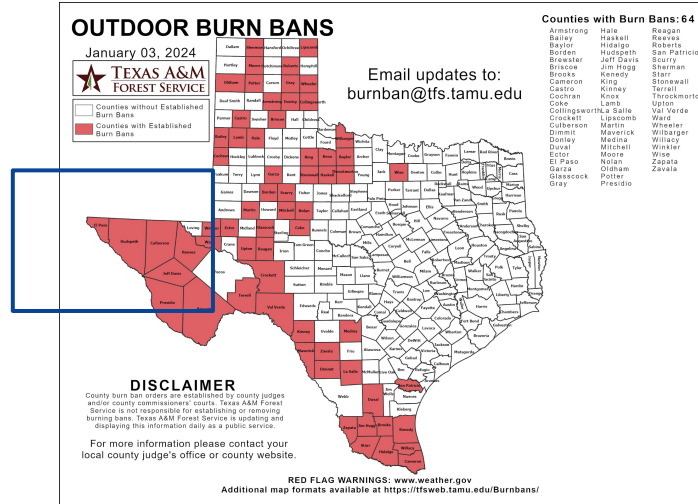


Image Caption: [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook](#) for January 2024





Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- Series of winter storms bringing mountain snows this week and with cooler temperatures. Lowland rains will be possible but generally light in intensity.
- Temporary improvement to drought status is possible, but long-term impacts likely to persist.

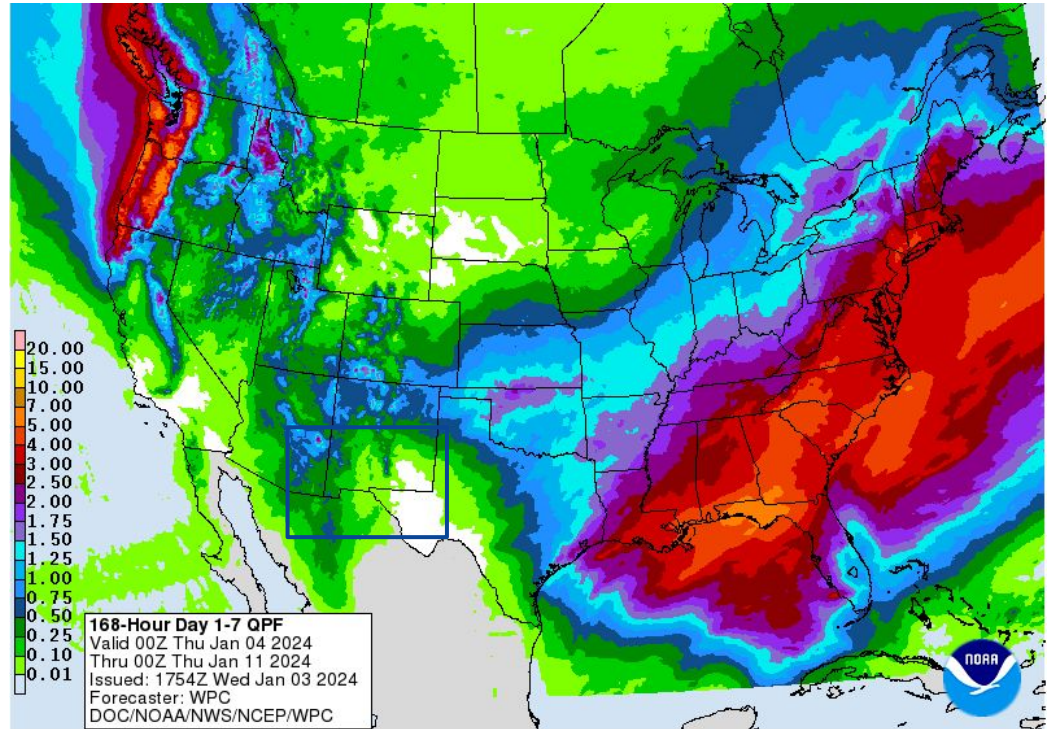


Image Caption: Weather Prediction Center [7-day precipitation forecast](#) valid Jan 4 to Jan 11





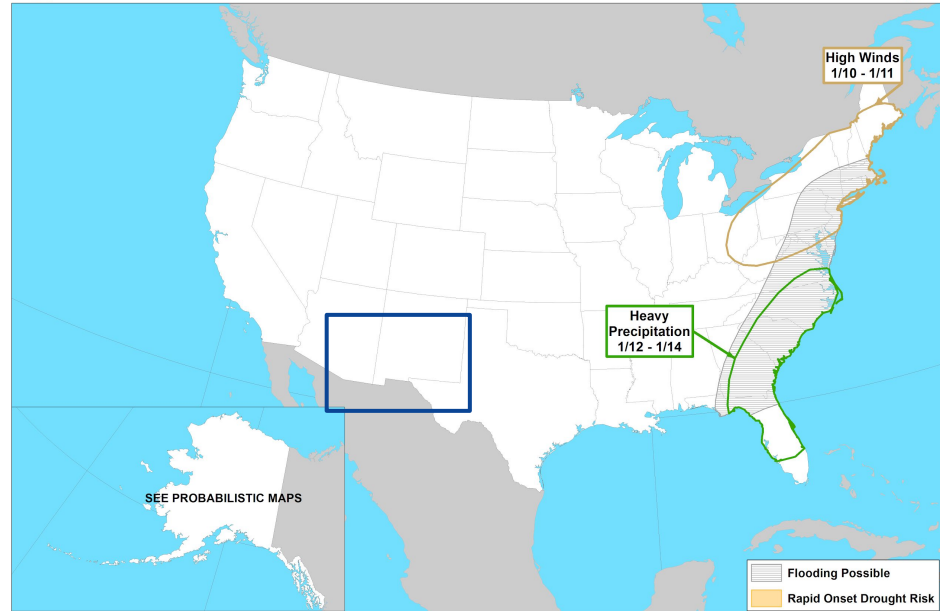
Rapid Onset Drought Outlook

Links to the latest Climate Prediction Center 8 to 14 day [Temperature Outlook](#) and [Precipitation Outlook](#).

- Sporadic precipitation chances in January may provide temporary relief, however drought conditions are expected to persist through the winter season.



Day 8-14 U.S. Hazards Outlook
Valid: 01/10/2024-01/16/2024



Climate Prediction Center
Made: 01/02/2024 3PM EST

Follow us:
www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov

Image Caption:
[Days 8 to 14 U.S. Hazards Outlook](#) Valid Jan 10 to Jan 16





Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Equal chances for temperatures (likely near normal) through the month of January.
- Equal chances for precipitation (monthly average for El Paso: 0.39")
- NOAA's official Winter Outlook can be found [here](#)

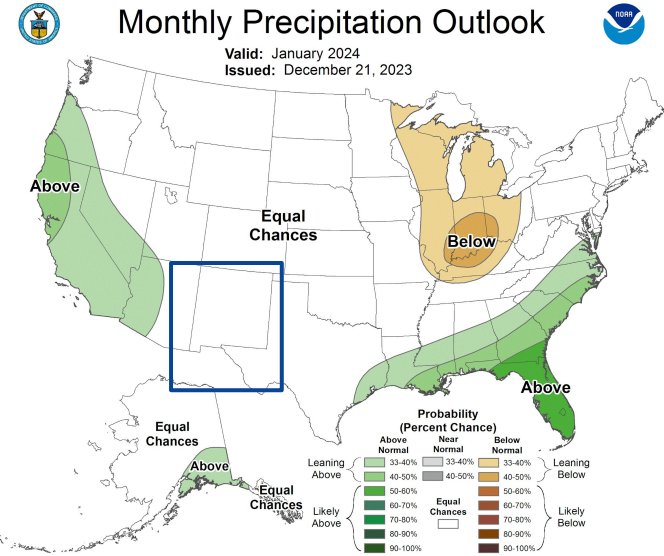
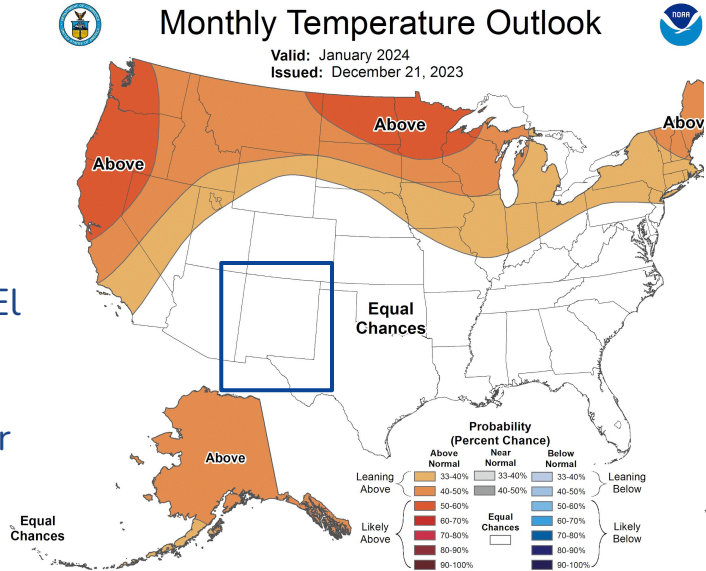


Image Captions:

Left - [Climate Prediction Center Monthly Temperature Outlook](#)

Right - [Climate Prediction Center Monthly Precipitation Outlook](#)

Valid January 2024





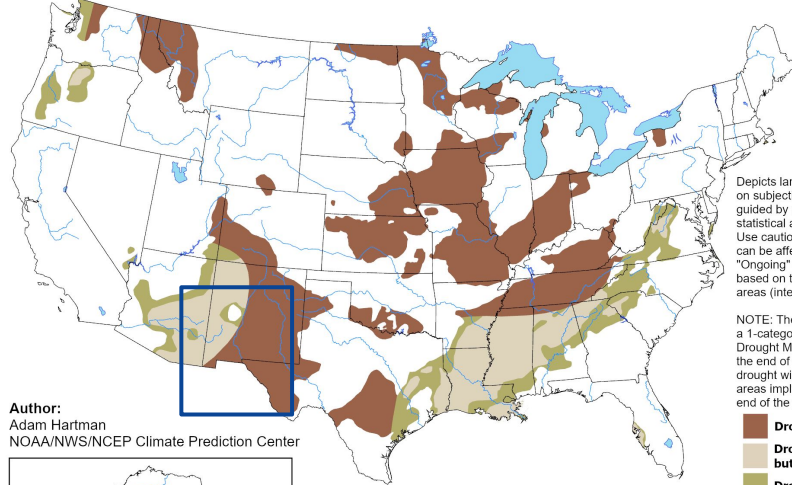
Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Western New Mexico: Drought conditions may improve as we head into Spring, greatly depending on the mountain pack the next two months.
- Rest of New Mexico and Far West Texas: Drought conditions expected to persist through the winter.

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

Valid for January 2024
Released December 31, 2023

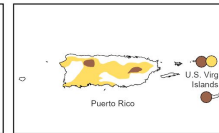
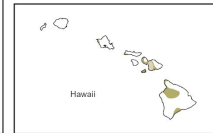


Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to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

- Drought persists
- Drought remains, but improves
- Drought removal likely
- Drought development likely
- No drought

Author:
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NOAA/NWS/NCEP Climate Prediction Center



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

Image Caption:

Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook Released December 31, 2023 valid for January 2024

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
El Paso, TX