



Drought Information Statement for Southern NM/Far West TX

Valid February 5, 2024

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

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

- This product will be updated March 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.





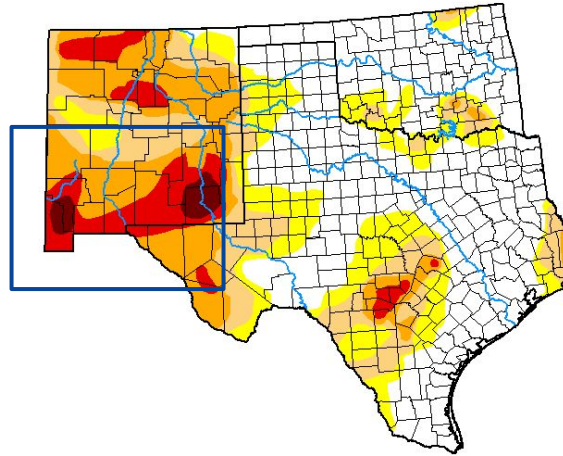
U.S. Drought Monitor

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 along Continental Divide
 - 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 (100% of area)
- Precipitation and mountain snow may temporarily improve conditions next few months, but drought will persist into Spring.

U.S. Drought Monitor Southern Plains RDEWS

January 30, 2024
(Released Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	45.26	54.74	38.64	24.32	8.80	1.47
Last Week 01-23-2024	38.70	61.30	42.47	26.31	11.19	1.47
3 Months Ago 10-31-2023	15.61	84.39	68.70	45.34	16.30	3.02
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2024	31.65	68.35	51.27	31.88	13.52	2.12
Start of Water Year 09-26-2023	7.01	92.99	79.77	57.36	32.68	9.19
One Year Ago 01-31-2023	16.91	83.09	56.58	33.63	14.11	2.65

Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme 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:

Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor valid January 30





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: No drought worsening was observed
 - Drought Improved: Slight improvement across southern New Mexico, but most areas remain the same.

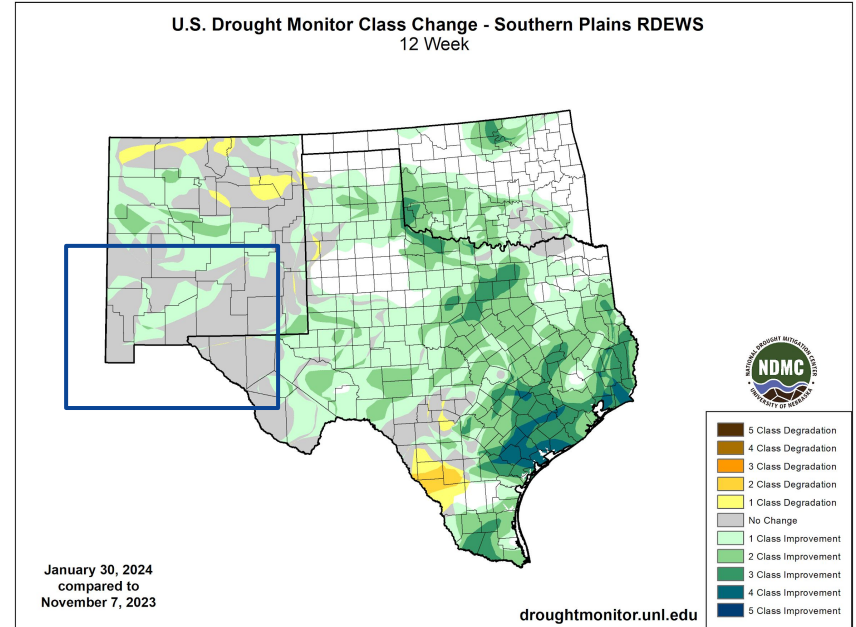


Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor 3-month change map valid January 30





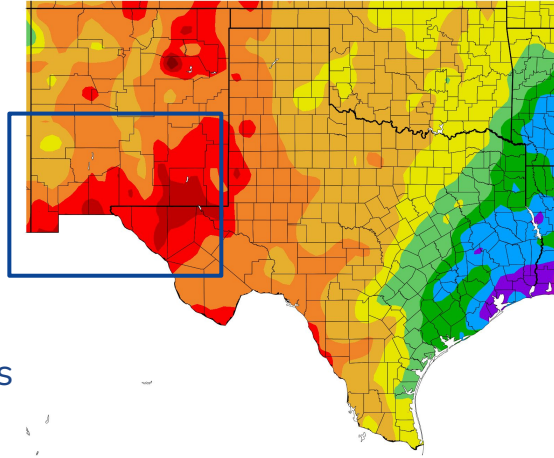
Precipitation

90-day rain totals, 0.75-1.25” along I-10 corridor. 3-5” over mountain forests.

Near normal precipitation for Gila Region, below normal along International Border (50-75% of normal).

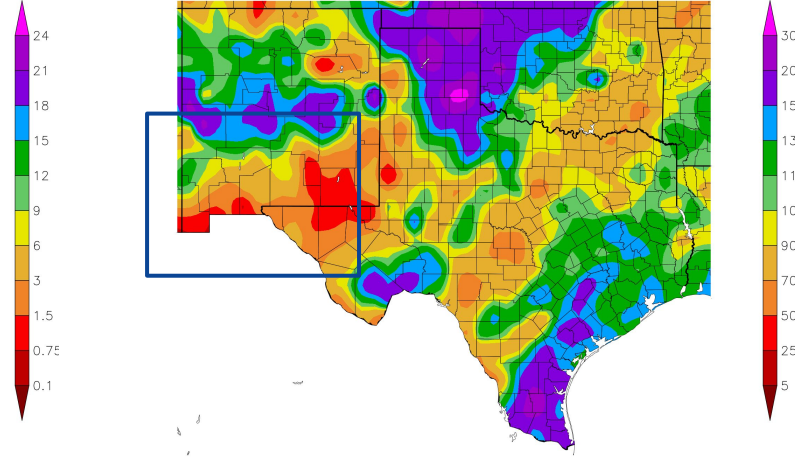
Drought was fairly static last few months as precipitation is low but closer to seasonal normals. Headed into typically driest time of year.

Precipitation (in)
11/1/2023 – 1/31/2024



Generated 2/4/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
11/1/2023 – 1/31/2024



NOAA Regional Climate Center Generated 2/4/2024 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 1/31/2024

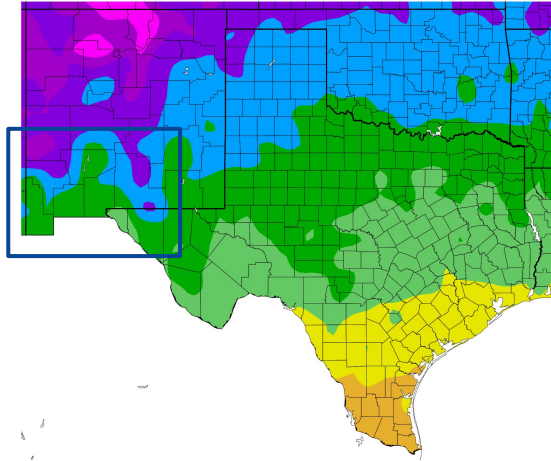




Temperature

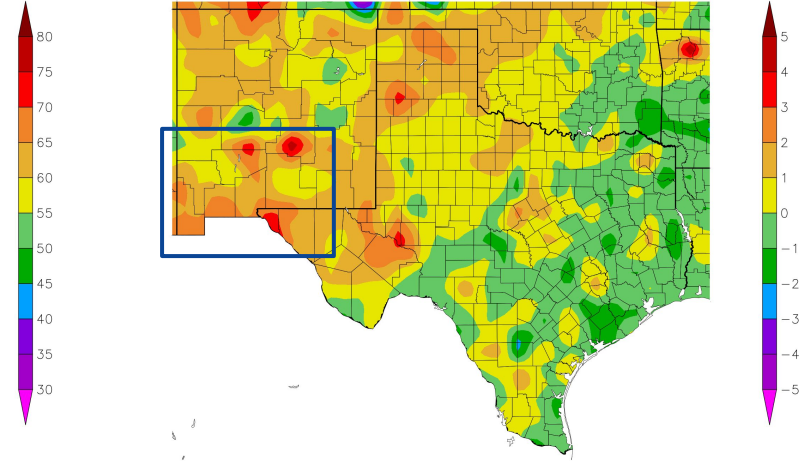
- Still averaging above normal temperatures after hottest year on record. January cold snaps were short-lived.
- 2023 was hottest year on record for El Paso
- Average high temperatures 1-3 degrees above seasonal normals

Temperature (F)
11/1/2023 - 1/31/2024



Generated 2/4/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
11/1/2023 - 1/31/2024



NOAA Regional Climate Cen Generated 2/4/2024 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 1/31/2024





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. Mountain snowpack sources for the Gila are above normal so far, indicating the potential for higher streamflow this Spring. Gila River levels remain around 4-5 feet at Redrock and Virden. Rio Grande has dried up below the Caballo Dam with no streamflow. Elephant Butte storage has increased to 25.2% capacity (near 30-year median flow). River flooding risk is low at this time.

Agricultural Impacts

- Hatch and Mesilla Valley irrigation season may be shorter than usual this year, given drought status and below normal snowpack over Colorado headwaters. 2023 season allotment was 14 inches. Please refer to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) website or your local municipality for more information.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Short-term fuel moisture has been higher recently, allowing for several prescribed fires in the Gila Forest this month. High fire danger may return March/April as winds pick up.





Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Gila and Mimbres river basin streamflows running closer to average (a change from last update)
- Rio Grande has dried up below the Caballo Dam with no streamflow

Gila River Stages

Gila 1.81 ft
 Redrock 4.41 ft
 Virden 5.63 ft

Rio Grande Stages

El Paso Low Stage

Saturday, February 03, 2024

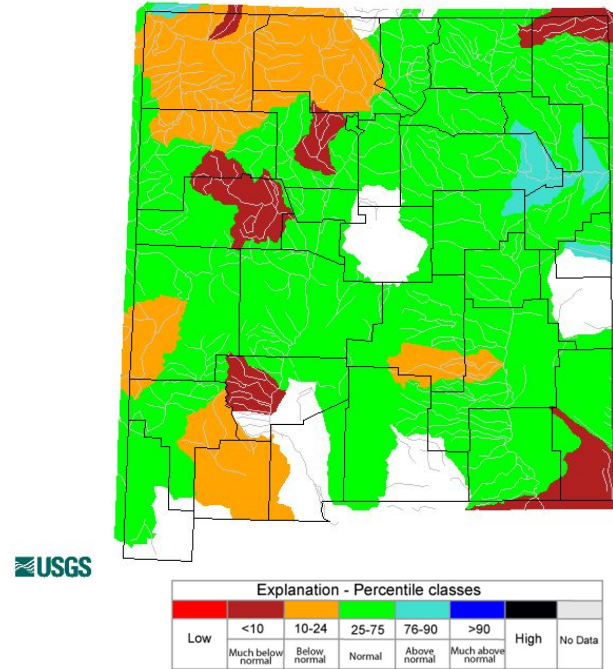


Image Caption: USGS 7 day average streamflow HUC map valid February 3, 2024





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](#)

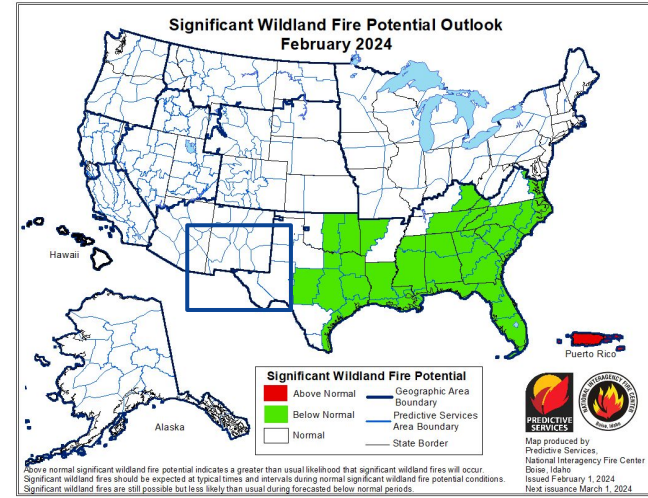
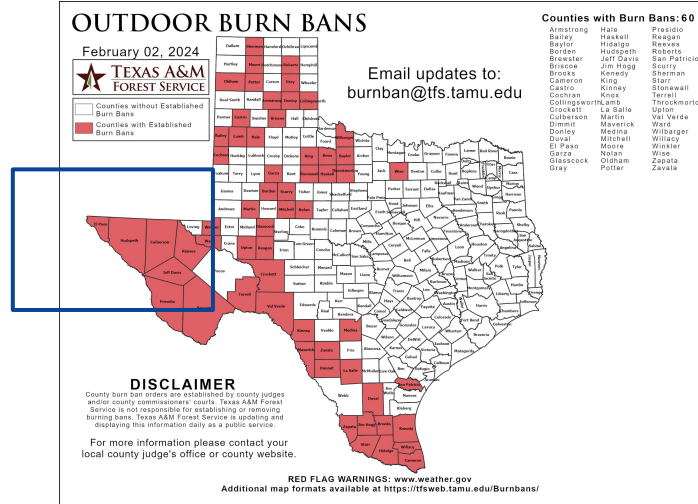


Image Caption: [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook](#) for February 2024





Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- Series of winter storms bringing mountain snows this week. Lowland rains will be generally light in intensity.
- Gila Region snowpack likely to remain above normal through February, closer to normal over Lincoln National Forest.
- Temporary improvement to drought status is possible, but long-term impacts likely to persist.

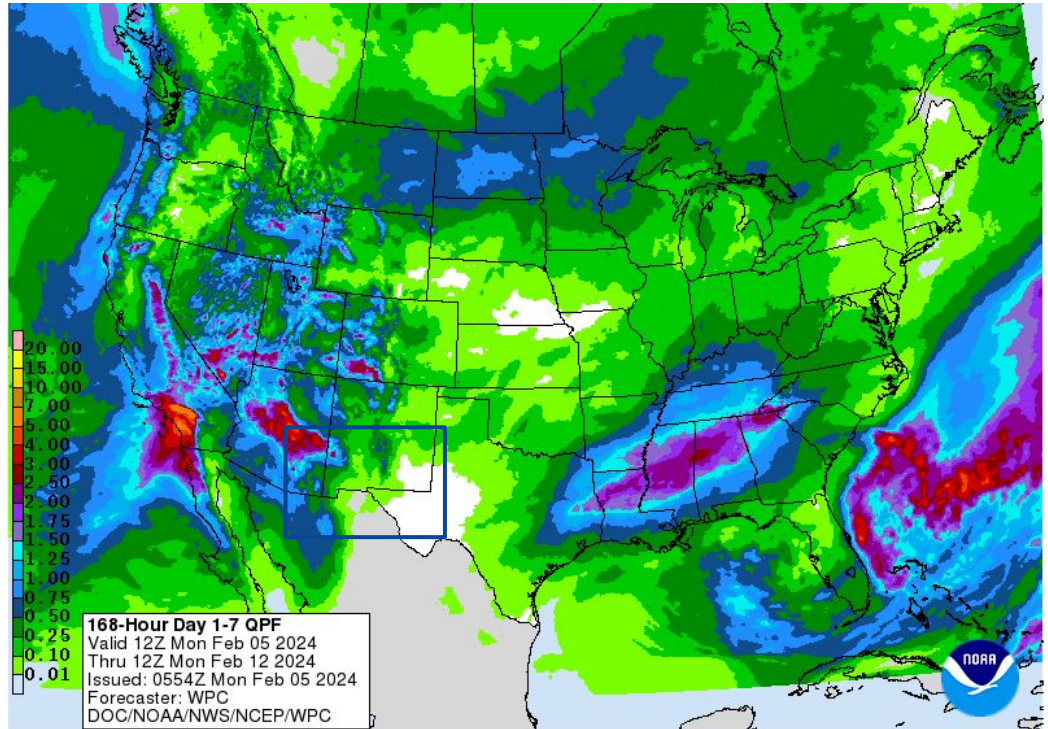


Image Caption: Weather Prediction Center [7-day precipitation forecast](#) valid Feb 5 to Feb 12





Rapid Onset Drought Outlook

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

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



Day 8-14 U.S. Hazards Outlook
Valid: 02/10/2024-02/16/2024



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

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

Image Caption:
[Days 8 to 14 U.S. Hazards Outlook](#) Valid Feb 10 to Feb 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 February.
- Equal chances for precipitation (monthly average for El Paso: 0.40")
- NOAA’s official Winter Outlook can be found [here](#)

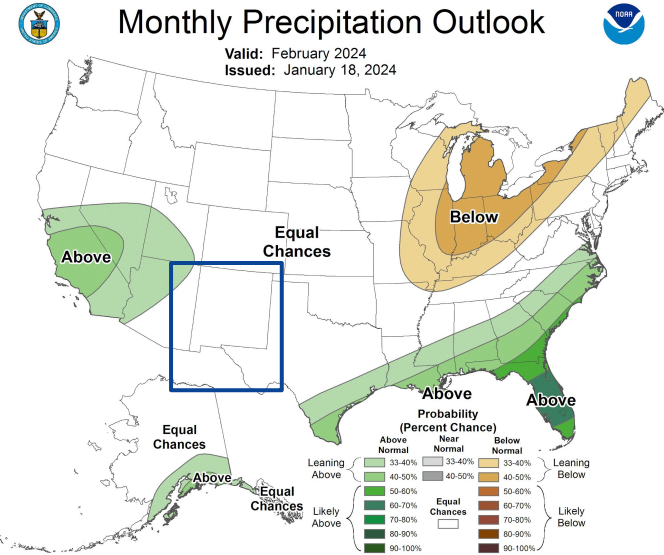
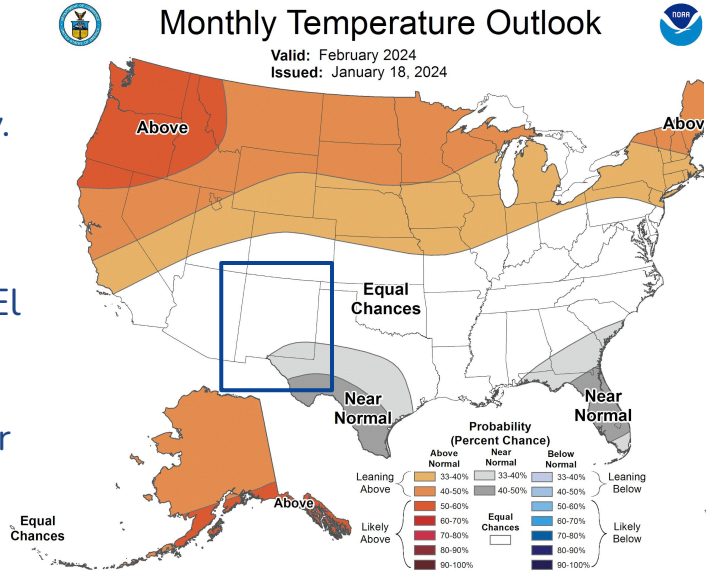


Image Captions:

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

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

Valid February 2024





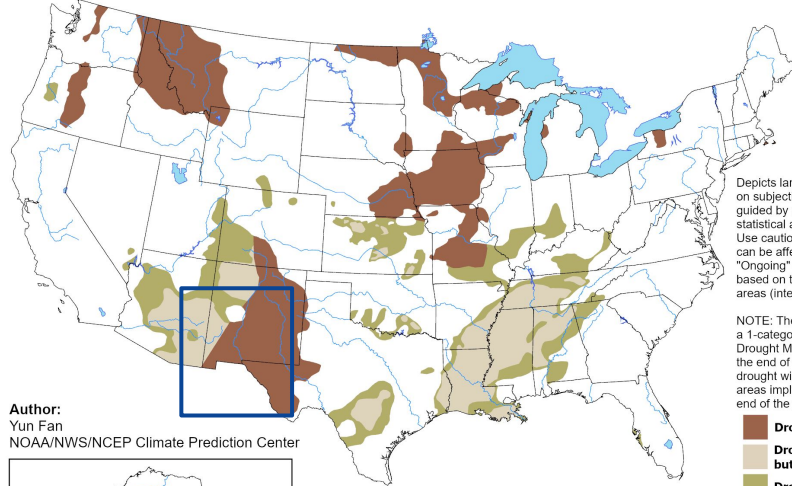
Drought Outlook

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

- Western New Mexico: Drought conditions continuing to improve due to above normal mountain snowpack, possible removal in some areas.
- Rest of New Mexico and Far West Texas: Drought conditions expected to persist into Spring.

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

Valid for February 2024
Released January 31, 2024

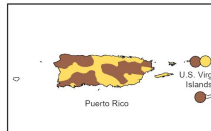
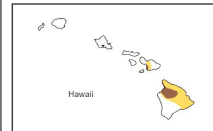


Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to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

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

Image Caption:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook Released
January 31, 2024 valid for February 2024

Links to the latest:
[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)
[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)