

The Weather Wire

December 2014

Volume 21 Number 12

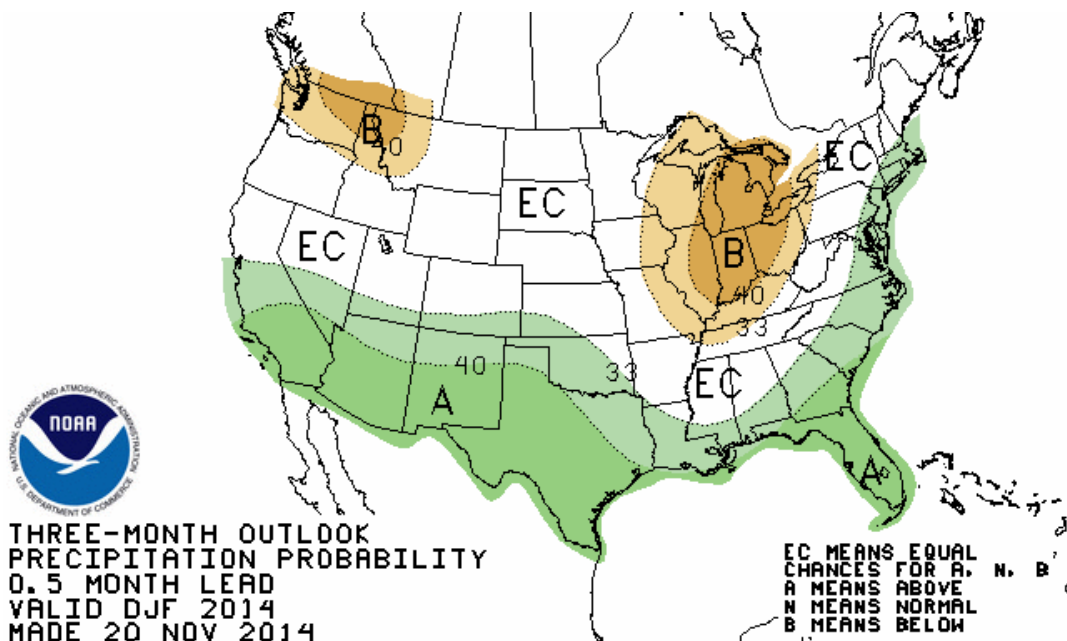
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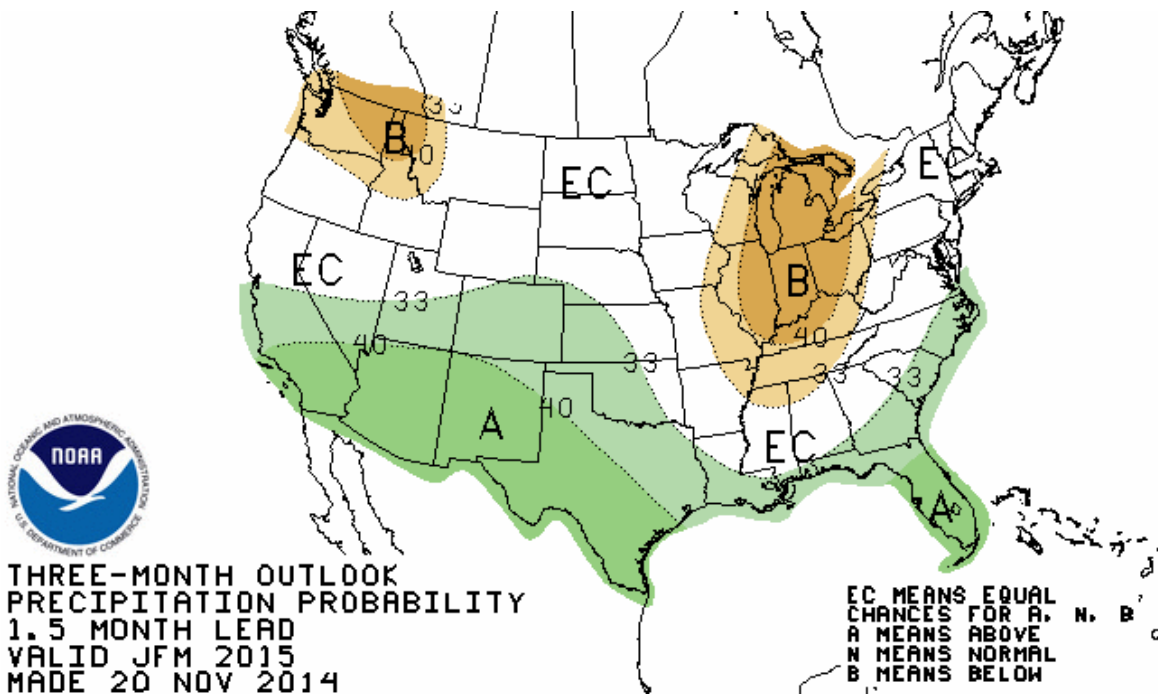
Updated Winter Preview

We have been receiving quite a few inquiries on what we expect for the winter season from clients and our opinion has not changed since our last update in the September newsletter. In September we were expecting a slow start to the snow season picking up towards the middle part of winter with a strong finish in the spring. Considering it is still fall and winter is still a few weeks away the early part of the snow season has indeed been light in the snowfall department. We expect the snow to pick up during the mid to latter part of December and continue into January and February. The threat still exists for a couple big snow events in the spring as we are currently transitioning into an El Nino cycle. The drought monitor confirms what we believe will happen the coming months. Below are 3-month precipitation projections:

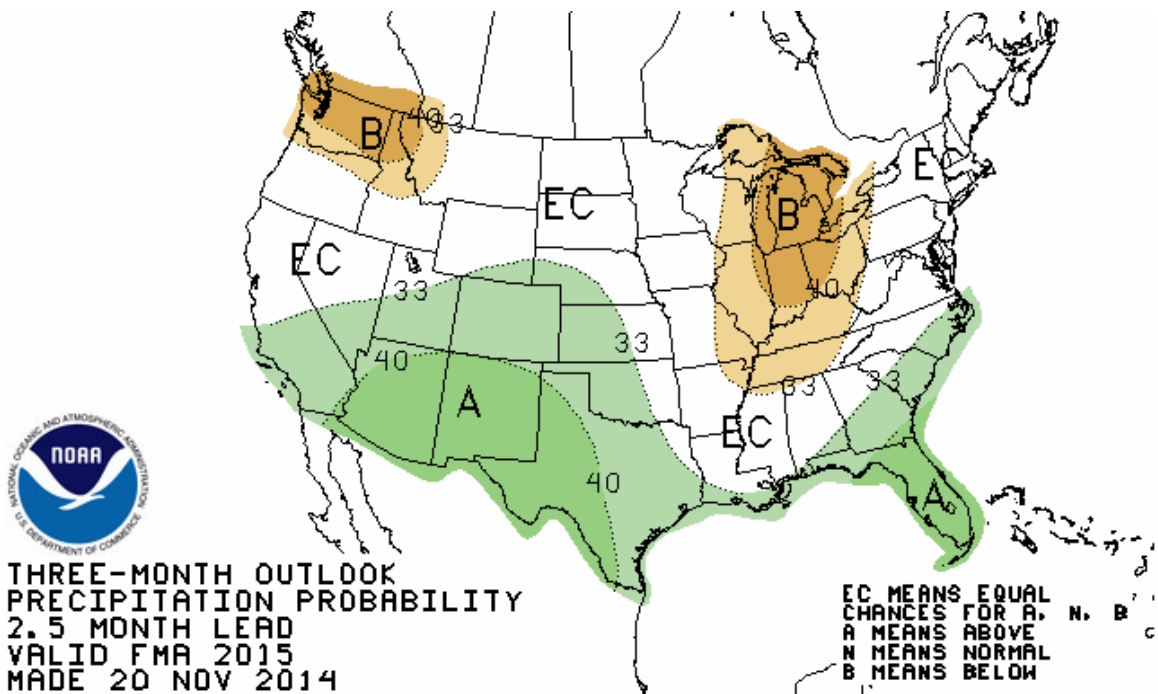
Dec – Jan – Feb:



Jan – Feb – Mar:



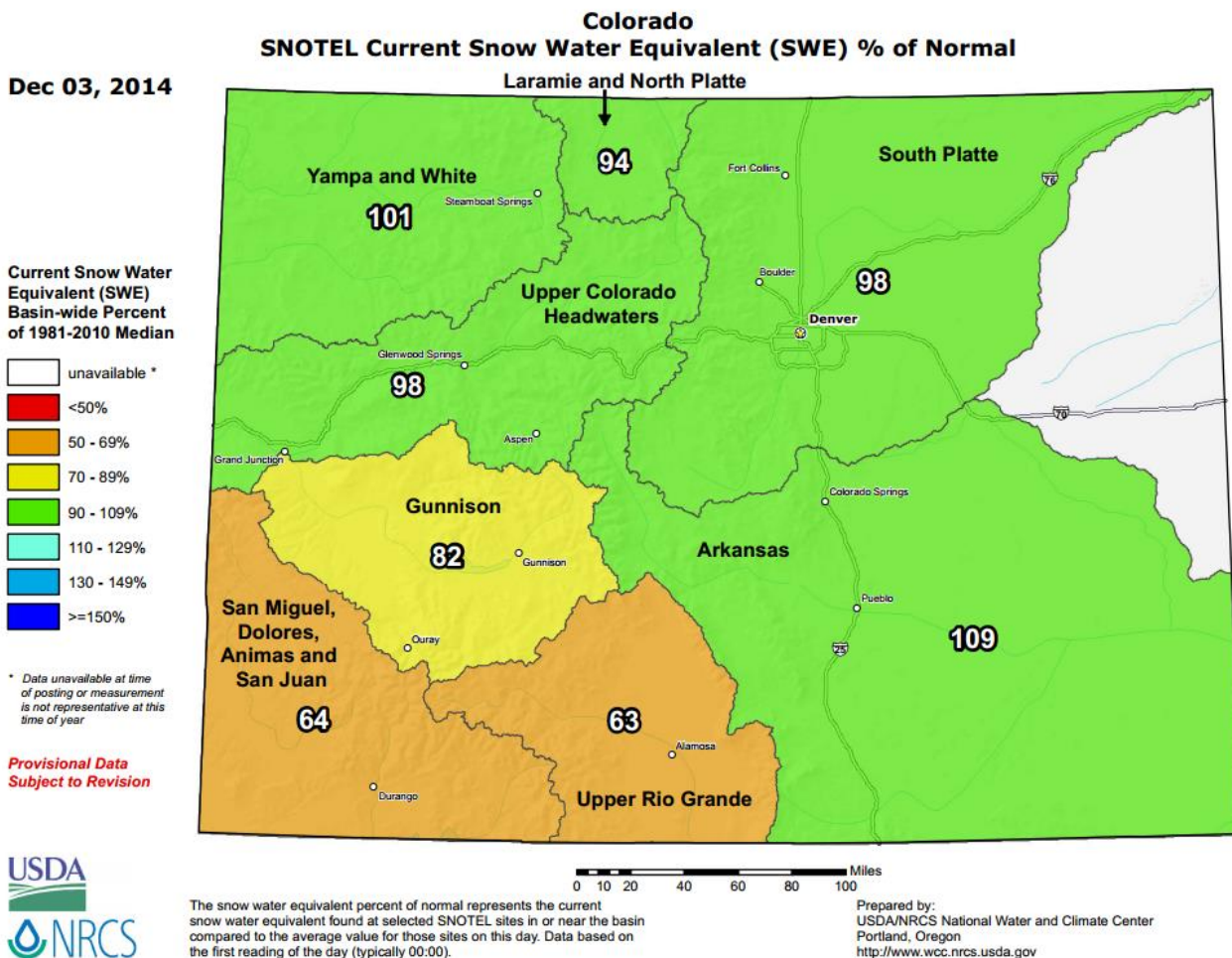
Feb – Mar – Apr:



The transition to an El Niño cycle typically favors above normal precipitation over the desert SW extending into Texas and can sometimes produce above normal precipitation for NE Colorado as well. The three month trend maps show the likelihood of above normal precipitation slowly creeping northward as we move into the early spring months. If this trend holds true then we can expect a return to normal snowfall and possibly above normal snowfall especially in the February, March and April time frame. Since we are starting out the snow season well below normal in snowfall the increase mid to late

winter and spring may not be enough to get us back to normal for the entire season but all it takes is a “big” snow or two in the spring to gain quite a bit of ground.

The snow for the plains has been below normal to this point but in the mountains snow is closer to normal in many mountain ranges with the exception of the San Juan Mountains where snowfall is significantly below normal. The San Juans will benefit the most however in an El Nino cycle so there is still plenty of time to get to normal in the SW portions of the state. Below is a map showing current snow water equivalent for the river drainages in the state.



Precipitation maps can be found at:

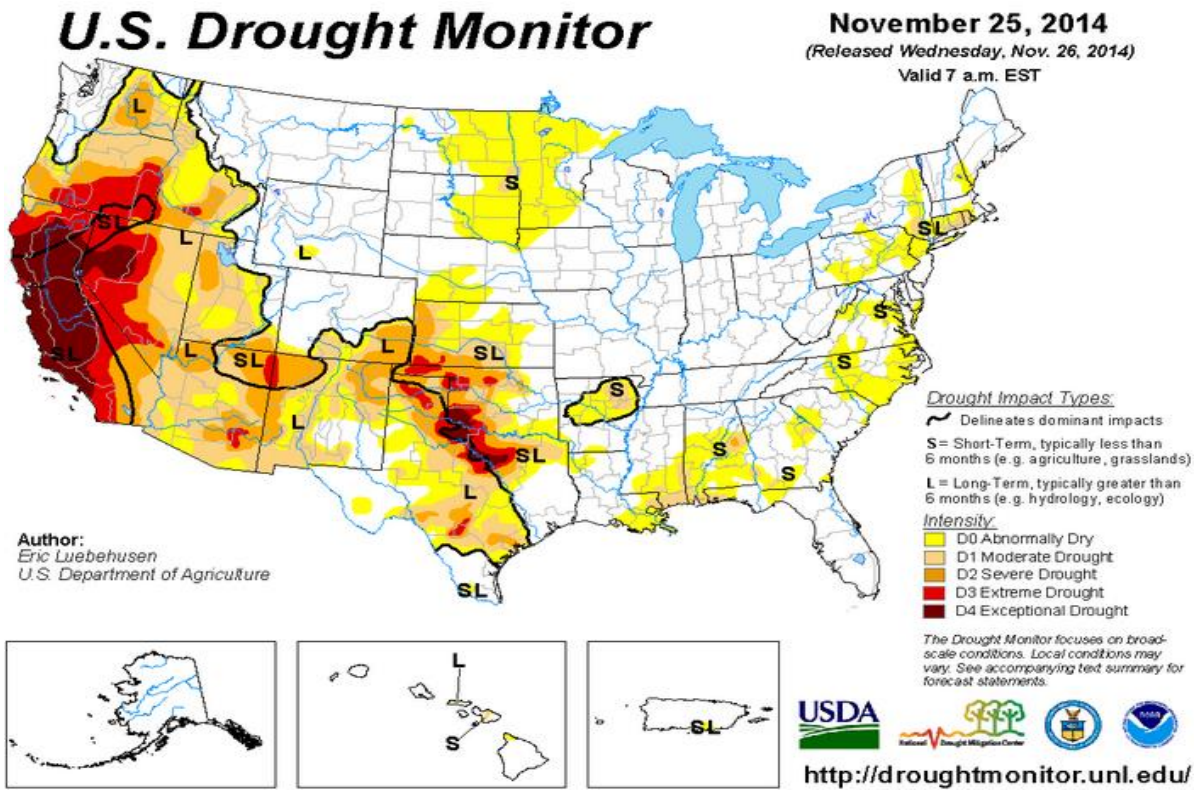
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/SupplementalInfo/Forecasts.aspx>

Colorado Snow Water Equivalent maps can be found on the web at:

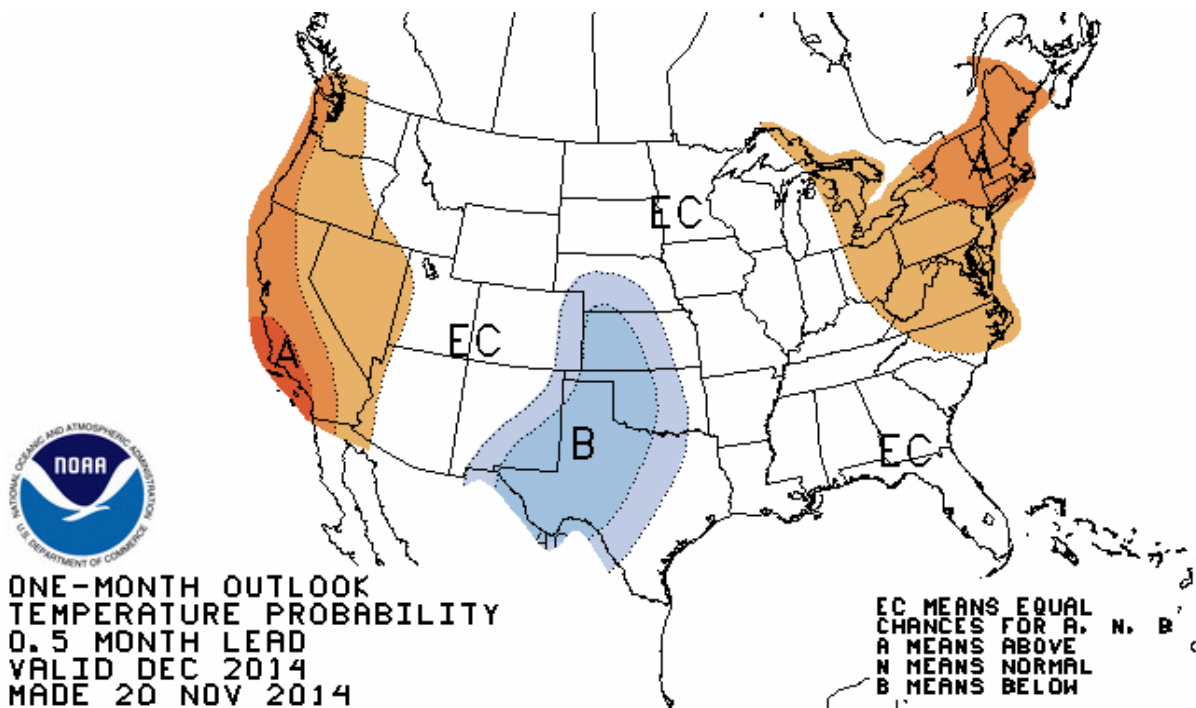
http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/ftpref/data/water/wcs/gis/maps/co_swepctnormal_update.pdf

Drought Update

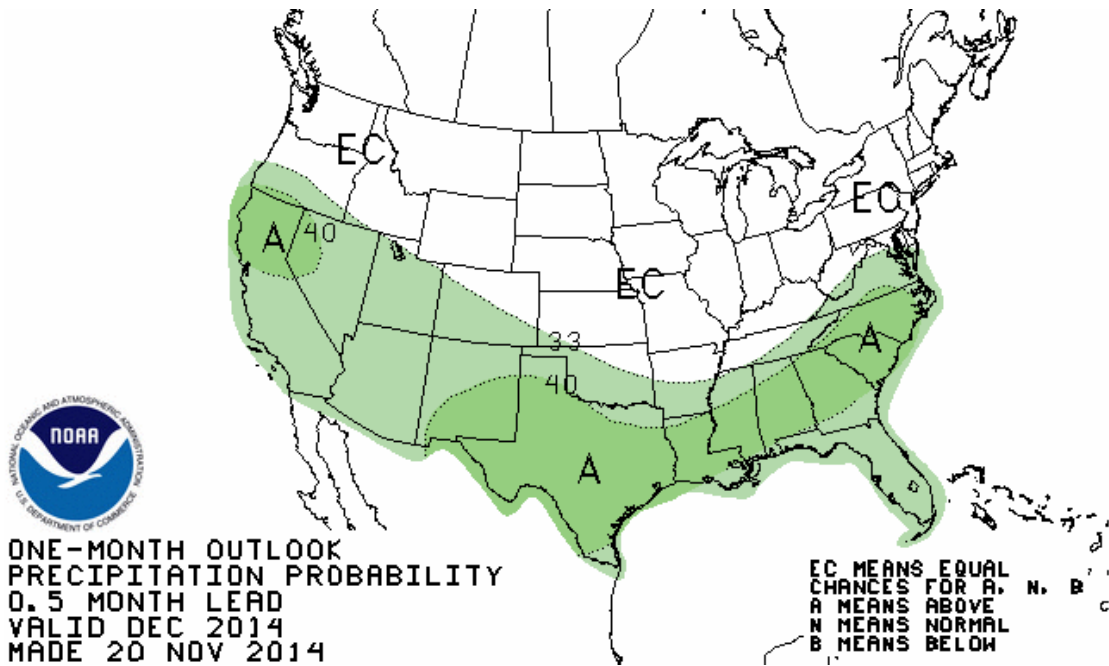
Drought severity has eased over AZ and NM with exceptional drought over a large area of CA persisting. Drought free conditions over much of Colorado with the exception of SE portions of the state. The eastern US remains relatively drought free.



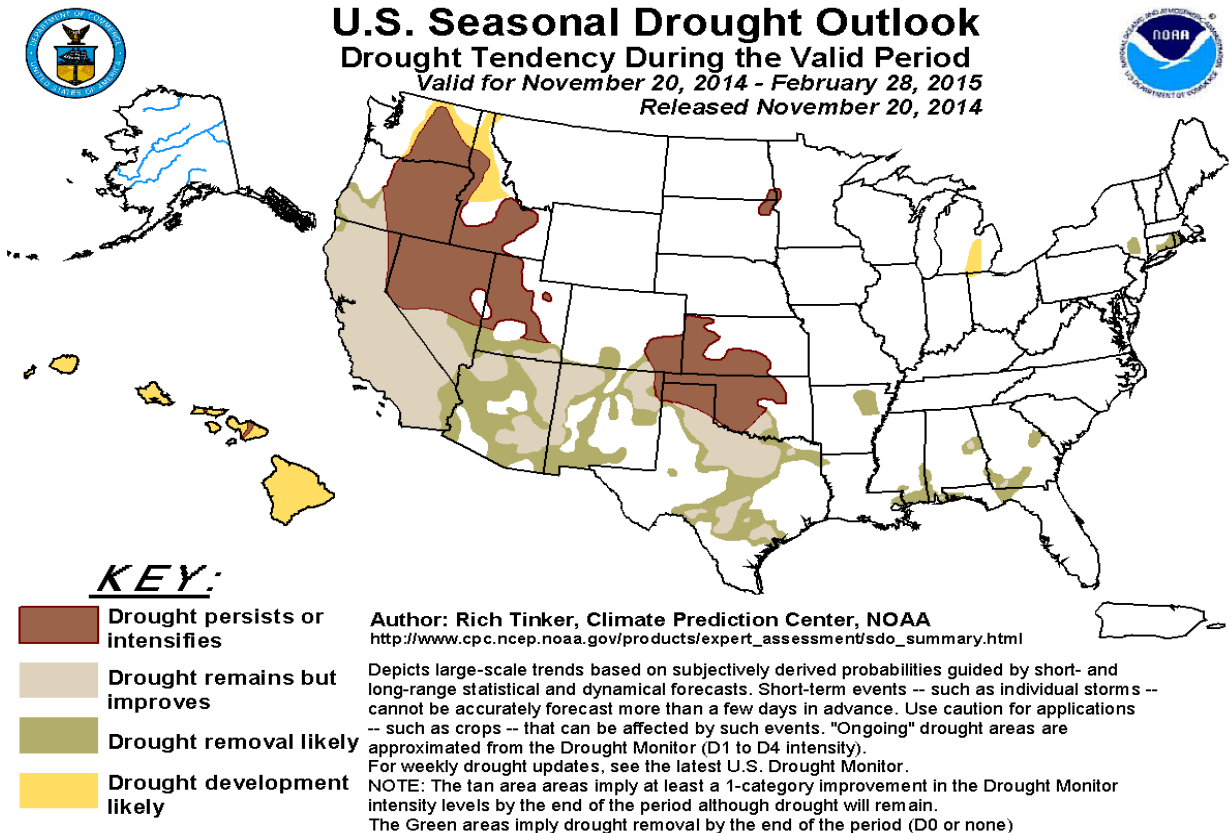
The map below shows forecasted temperature deviances for December 2014. A slight bias towards below normal temperatures exists over far E Colorado with equal chances for above or below normal temperatures over most of the state.



The map below shows forecasted precipitation deviances for December 2014. Near normal precipitation is expected over NE Colorado with a bias towards above normal temperatures over S and SW portions of the state.



Drought conditions are forecast to persist over SE Colorado with drought free conditions over most of the state. Drought conditions are forecast to improve over much of CA, AZ, NM and TX as we transition into an El Niño type pattern this winter.



November Summary

November of 2014 was above normal in precipitation, below normal in snowfall and below normal in temperature. The month started out and ended warm but there was an early arctic outbreak from the 11-16th which pushed temperatures to record lows. The average high temperature for the month was 50.6 degrees compared to 52.1 on average. Average low temperatures were 21.8 degrees compared to 24.5 on average. The combination of the high and lows resulted in a monthly mean temperature of 36.2 degrees which was 2.1 degrees below normal. There were a number of temperature records set during the month including two new record low temperatures of -13 on the 12th and -14 on the 13th. Precipitation for the month at DIA was 0.76" which was 0.15" above the normal of 0.61". With above normal precipitation one would think snow was above normal as well but that was not the case as a couple of storms during the first week of the month produced more rain than snow. Snowfall for November was only 4.0" at DIA which was less than half of the normal of 8.7". Other areas of the City fared better but still remained below normal. The City of Boulder was the only area to experience near normal snowfall in November.

November Stats

TEMPERATURE (IN DEGREES F)

AVERAGE MAX	50.6	NORMAL 52.1	DEPARTURE -1.5
AVERAGE MIN	21.8	NORMAL 24.5	DEPARTURE -2.7
MONTHLY MEAN	36.2	NORMAL 38.3	DEPARTURE -2.1
HIGHEST	72 on 11/1 and 11/29		
LOWEST	-14 on 11/13		

DAYS WITH MAX 90 OR ABOVE	0	NORMAL	0
DAYS WITH MAX 32 OR BELOW	5	NORMAL	2
DAYS WITH MIN 32 OR BELOW	22	NORMAL	23
DAYS WITH MIN ZERO OR BELOW	4	NORMAL	1

TEMPERATURE RECORDS

Record high min of 45 on 11/9, Record Low max of 16 on 11/11,
Record low max of 6 on 11/12, Record low of -13 on 11/12, Record low of -14
on 11/13

HEATING DEGREE DAYS

MONTHLY TOTAL	857	NORMAL 801	DEPARTURE 56
SEASONAL TOTAL	1254	NORMAL 1382	DEPARTURE -128

COOLING DEGREE DAYS

MONTHLY TOTAL	0	NORMAL 0	DEPARTURE 0
YEARLY TOTAL	701	NORMAL 769	DEPARTURE -68

PRECIPITATION (IN INCHES)

MONTHLY TOTAL	0.76	NORMAL 0.61	DEPARTURE 0.15
YEARLY TOTAL	18.18	NORMAL 13.95	DEPARTURE 4.23
GREATEST IN 24 HOURS	0.30" on 11/3		
DAYS WITH MEASURABLE PRECIP.	6		

SNOWFALL (IN INCHES)

MONTHLY TOTAL	4.0	NORMAL 8.7	DEPARTURE -4.7
SEASONAL TOTAL	4.0	NORMAL 14.0	DEPARTURE -10.0
GREATEST IN 24 HOURS	2.2" on 11/12		
GREATEST DEPTH	NA		

WIND (IN MILES PER HOUR)

AVERAGE SPEED	10.1mph
PEAK WIND GUST	54mph from the N on 11/10

MISCELLANEOUS WEATHER

NUMBER OF DAYS WITH THUNDERSTORM	1	NORMAL	0
NUMBER OF DAYS WITH HEAVY FOG	1	NORMAL	1
NUMBER OF DAYS WITH HAIL	0		
NUMBER OF SUNNY DAYS	4		
NUMBER OF PARTLY CLOUDY DAYS	21		
NUMBER OF CLOUDY DAYS	5		
AVERAGE RELATIVE HUMIDITY	53%		

December Preview

The month of December over time has proven to be highly variable in both temperature and snowfall. December boasts the least amount of snow ever recorded with 0.0" in 1881 as well as the most snow ever recorded, 57.4" in 1913. Temperatures are sometimes as warm as the mid to upper 60s and other days where the temperature does not even climb above zero. December typically features at least one major arctic outbreak with daytime highs only in the single digits and overnight lows plunging to well below zero. The shortest days of the year will occur on the winter solstice the 21st of the month. Although there is a great deal of variability on average temperatures are in the 40s for highs and upper teens for overnight lows. There are usually around 4 storms during the month producing 0.35" or precipitation. Snowfall on average is 8.5" and is one of the snowier months of the year ranking 3rd. Snow that falls in December can remain in the heavily shaded areas for long periods of time. December of 2014 is expected to feature 3-4 storms during the month that will have the potential to produce plowable snow. Near normal precipitation and snowfall are expected.

DENVER'S DECEMBER CLIMATOLOGICALLY NORMAL (NORMAL PERIOD 1981-2010 DIA Data)

TEMPERATURE

AVERAGE HIGH	42.8
AVERAGE LOW	17.1
MONTHLY MEAN	30.0
DAYS WITH HIGH 90 OR ABOVE	0
DAYS WITH HIGH 32 OR BELOW	6
DAYS WITH LOW 32 OR BELOW	29
DAYS WITH LOWS ZERO OR BELOW	2

PRECIPITATION

MONTHLY MEAN	0.35"
DAYS WITH MEASURABLE PRECIPITATION	4
AVERAGE SNOWFALL IN INCHES	8.5"
DAYS WITH 1.0 INCH OF SNOW OR MORE	3

MISCELLANEOUS AVERAGES

HEATING DEGREE DAYS	1086
COOLING DEGREE DAYS	0
WIND SPEED (MPH)	8.4mph
WIND DIRECTION	South
DAYS WITH THUNDERSTORMS	0
DAYS WITH DENSE FOG	1
PERCENT OF SUNSHINE POSSIBLE	67%

EXTREMES

RECORD HIGH	79 on 12/5/1939
RECORD LOW	-25 on 12/24/1876 and 12/22/1990

WARMEST	43.8 in 1933
COLDEST	17.5 in 1983
WETTEST	5.21" in 1913
DRIEST	0.00" in 1881
SNOWIEST	57.4" in 1913
LEAST SNOWIEST	0.0" in 1881

Sunrise/Sunset (July - December Denver area)

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
	SR - SS	SR - SS	SR - SS	SR - SS	SR - SS	SR - SS	
01	0534-0831	0558-0812	0627-0731	0655-0642	0728-0556	0701-0435	01
02	0535-0831	0559-0811	0628-0729	0656-0641	0729-0555	0702-0434	02
03	0535-0831	0600-0810	0629-0728	0657-0639	0630-0454	0703-0434	03
04	0536-0830	0600-0809	0630-0726	0658-0637	0631-0453	0704-0434	04
05	0536-0830	0601-0808	0631-0725	0659-0636	0632-0452	0705-0434	05
06	0537-0830	0602-0807	0631-0723	0700-0634	0634-0451	0706-0434	06
07	0538-0830	0603-0806	0632-0721	0701-0633	0635-0450	0707-0434	07
08	0538-0829	0604-0805	0633-0720	0702-0631	0636-0449	0708-0434	08
09	0539-0829	0605-0803	0634-0718	0703-0629	0637-0448	0708-0434	09
10	0540-0829	0606-0802	0635-0717	0704-0628	0638-0447	0709-0434	10
11	0540-0828	0607-0801	0636-0715	0705-0626	0639-0446	0710-0434	11
12	0541-0828	0608-0800	0637-0713	0706-0625	0640-0445	0711-0434	12
13	0542-0827	0609-0758	0638-0712	0707-0623	0642-0444	0712-0435	13
14	0542-0827	0610-0757	0639-0710	0708-0622	0643-0443	0712-0435	14
15	0543-0826	0611-0756	0640-0708	0709-0620	0644-0443	0713-0435	15
16	0544-0826	0612-0754	0641-0707	0710-0619	0645-0442	0714-0435	16
17	0545-0825	0613-0753	0642-0705	0711-0617	0646-0441	0714-0436	17
18	0546-0824	0614-0752	0643-0703	0712-0616	0647-0440	0715-0436	18
19	0546-0824	0615-0750	0644-0702	0714-0614	0648-0440	0715-0437	19
20	0547-0823	0616-0749	0645-0700	0715-0613	0649-0439	0716-0437	20
21	0548-0822	0616-0747	0646-0658	0716-0612	0651-0439	0717-0437	21
22	0549-0822	0617-0746	0646-0657	0717-0610	0652-0438	0717-0438	22
23	0550-0821	0618-0745	0647-0655	0718-0609	0653-0437	0717-0439	23
24	0551-0820	0619-0743	0648-0654	0719-0608	0654-0437	0718-0439	24
25	0551-0819	0620-0742	0649-0652	0720-0606	0655-0437	0718-0440	25
26	0552-0818	0621-0740	0650-0650	0721-0605	0656-0436	0719-0440	26
27	0553-0817	0622-0739	0651-0649	0722-0604	0657-0436	0719-0441	27
28	0554-0816	0623-0737	0652-0647	0723-0602	0658-0435	0719-0442	28
29	0555-0815	0624-0736	0653-0645	0724-0600	0659-0435	0719-0442	29
30	0556-0815	0625-0734	0654-0644	0726-0559	0700-0435	0720-0443	30
31	0557-0814	0626-0732		0727-0557		0720-0444	31

Snowfall

October 2014 to April 2015

City	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Aurora (Central)	0.0	5.5						5.5
Brighton	0.0	2.7						2.7
Broomfield	0.0	5.6						5.6
Castle Rock	0.2	7.0						7.2
Colo Sprgs Airport	0.0	6.8						6.8
Denver DIA	0.0	4.0						4.0
Denver Downtown	0.0	5.0						5.0
Golden	0.0	9.5						9.5
Fort Collins	0.0	4.9						4.9
Highlands Ranch	0.0	7.8						7.8
Lakewood	0.0	5.3						5.3
Littleton	0.0	6.3						6.3
Parker	TR	6.5						6.5
Sedalia - Hwy 67	0.0	6.7						6.7
Thornton	0.0	4.1						4.1
Westminster	0.0	6.3						6.3
Wheat Ridge	0.0	6.4						6.4

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