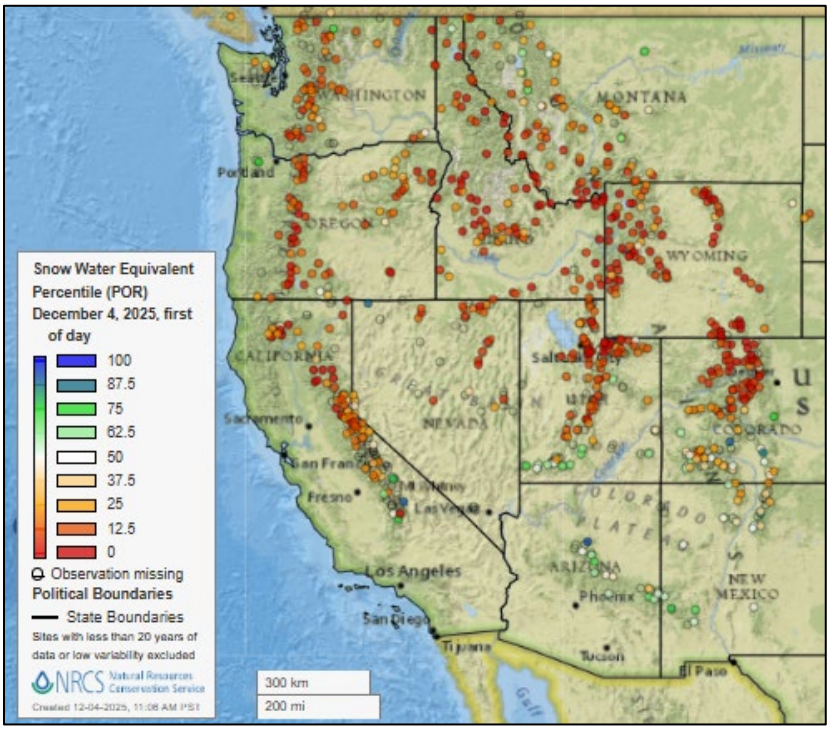
United States Department of Agriculture

Water and Climate Update

December 4, 2025

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) produces this weekly report using data and products from the National Water and Climate Center and other agencies. The report focuses on seasonal snowpack, precipitation, temperature, and drought conditions in the U.S.

Low snowpack accumulation recorded across the West



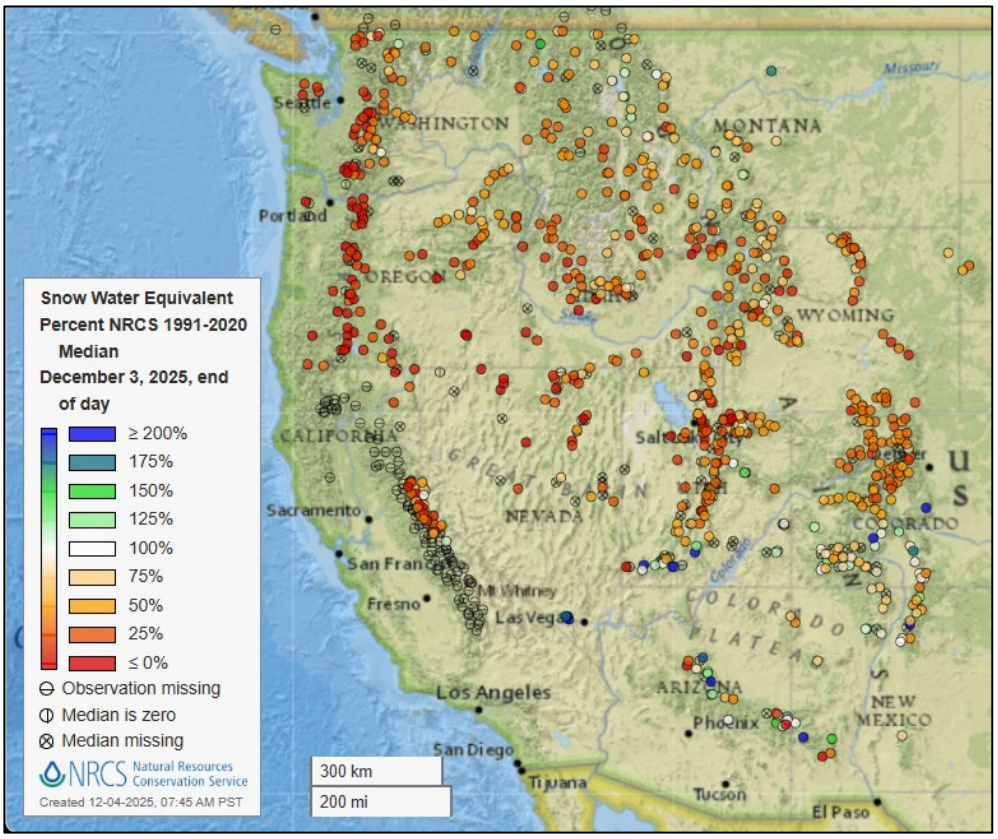
Snowpack season in the western U.S. typically begins in early December and ends with peak snow accumulation in the springtime. While it is still early in the snowpack season, the recorded snow water content, or the amount of liquid water stored in the snowpack, is at record and near-record lows across the SNOTEL network as of December 4. Western U.S. water supplies rely heavily on snowmelt during the spring to sustain streamflow and replenish reservoirs. Other factors that shape water supply include seasonal precipitation and temperature. While there is time to build the snowpack, each day counts as water managers and winter recreationists keep a close eye on winter conditions and snowpack evolution.

Related:

Daily snowpack percent of median – Interactive Map, NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program

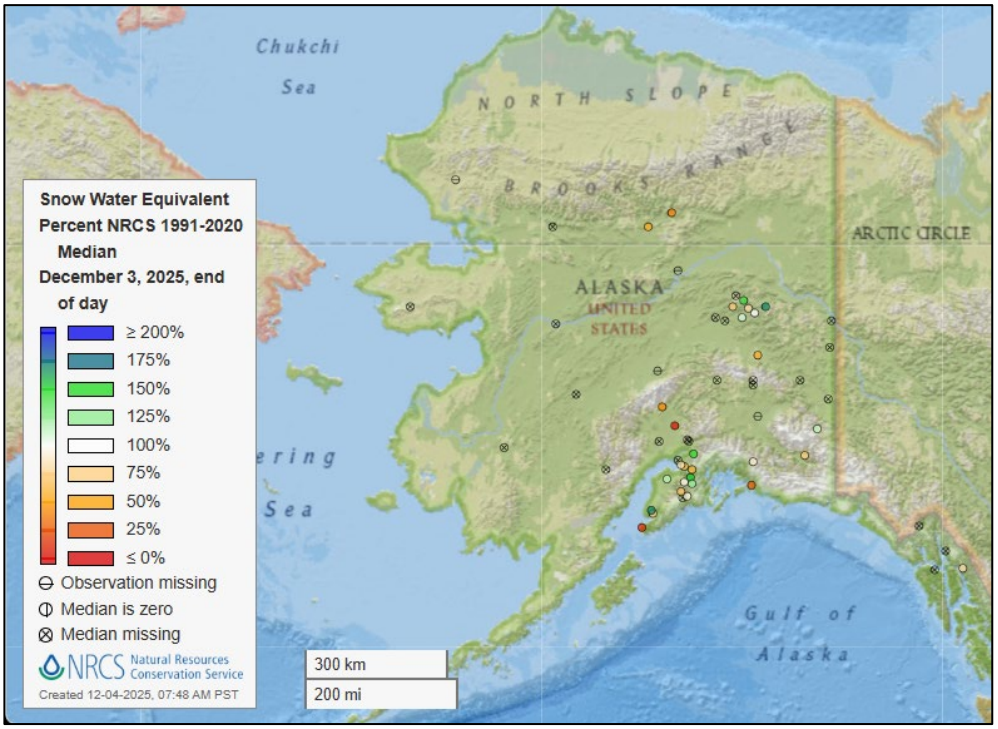
Winter storms blanket the East, while the US West is wondering: Where's the snow? – The Weather Channel

Snow



[Snow water equivalent percent of median map]

See also:
[Snow water equivalent values (inches) map]

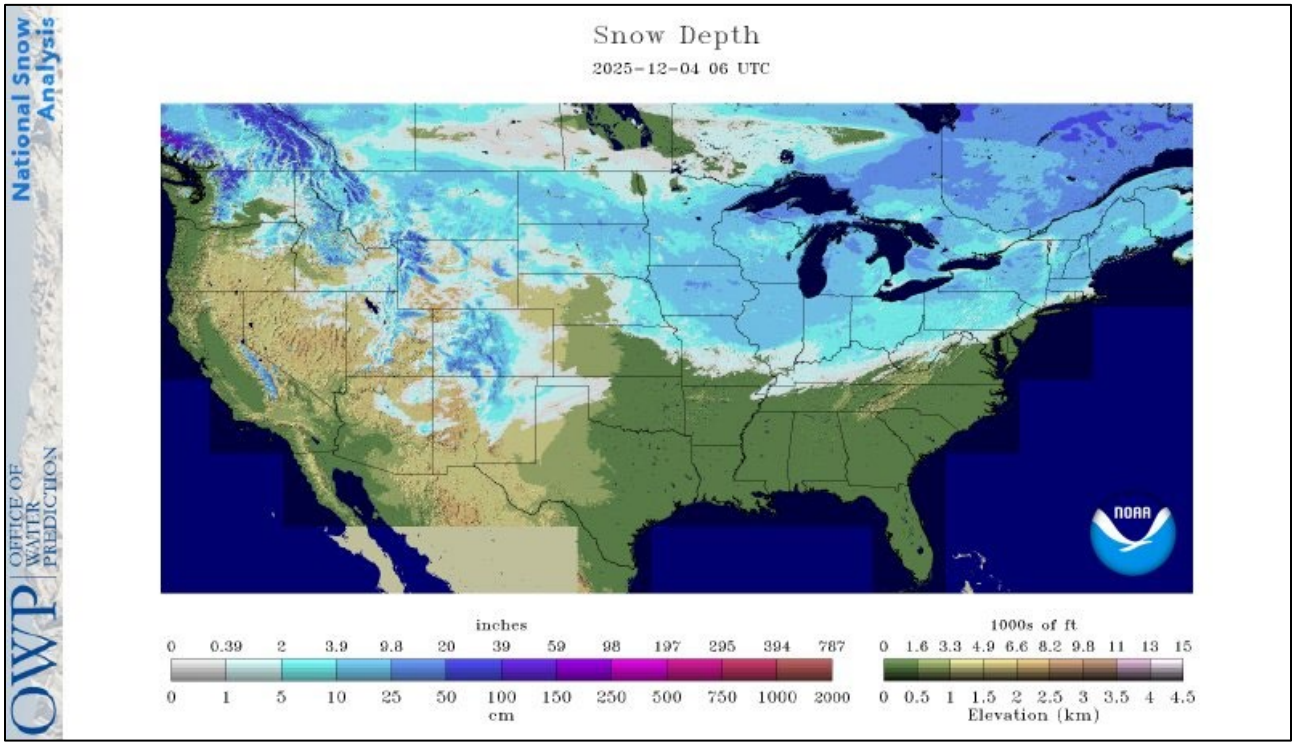


[Alaska snow water equivalent percent of median map]

See also:
[Alaska snow water equivalent values (inches) map]

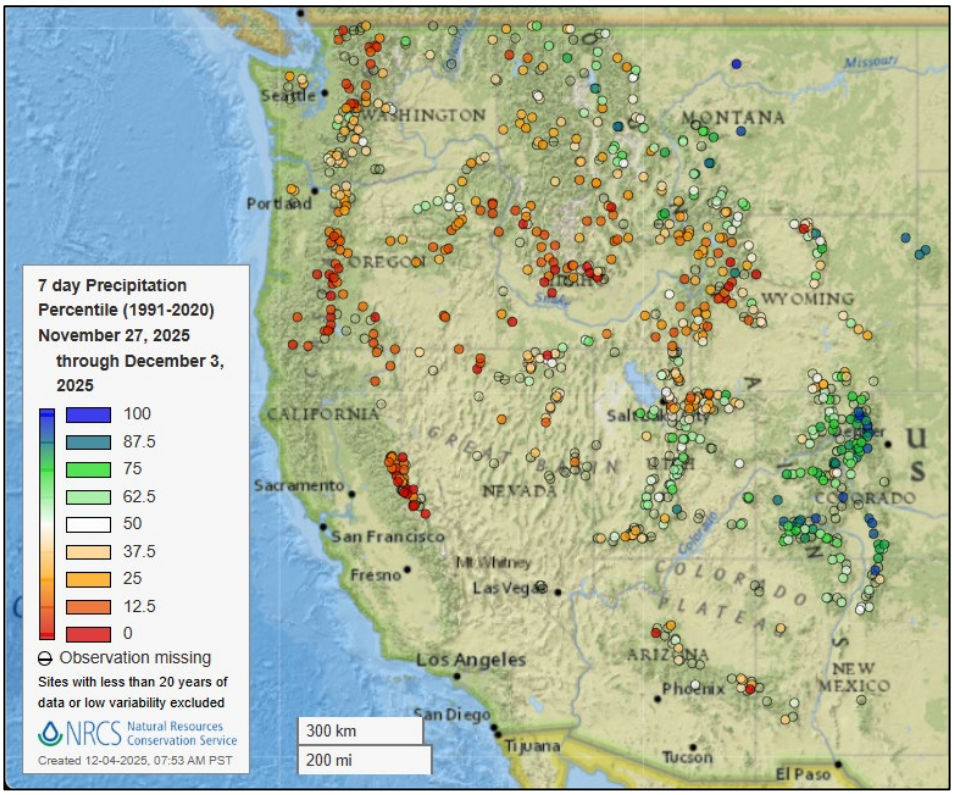
Current Snow Depth, National Weather Service Snow Analysis

Source: NOAA NWS National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center



Precipitation

Last 7 Days, NRCS SNOTEL Network

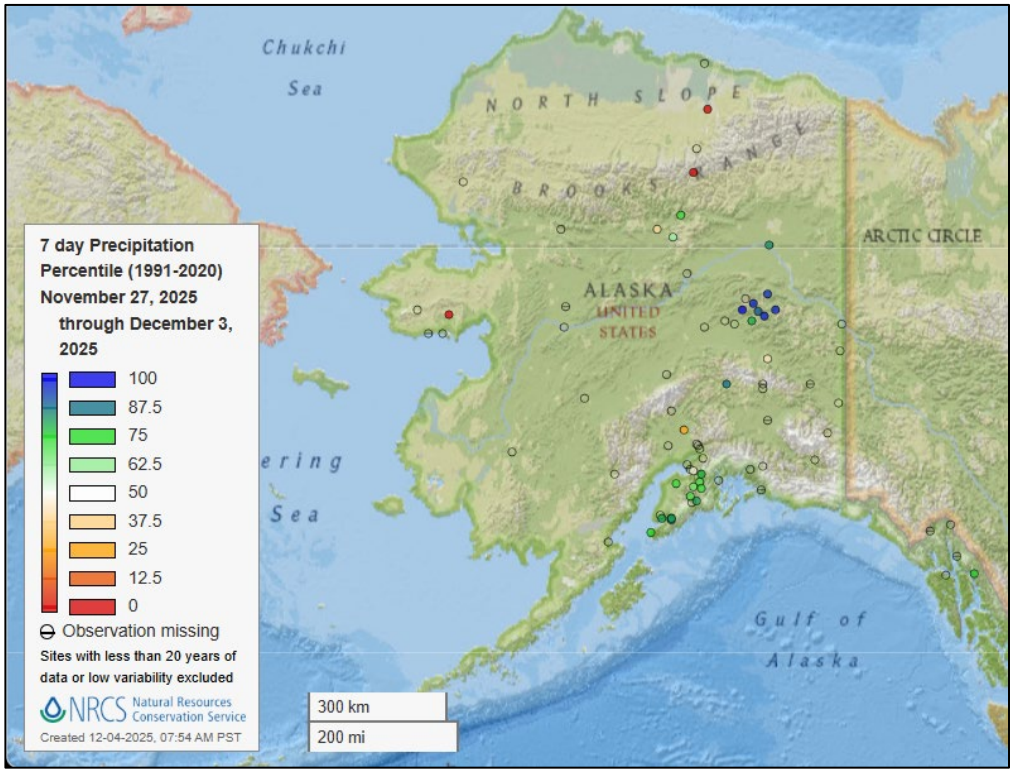


[7-day precipitation percentile map]

See also:
[7-day total precipitation values (inches) map]

[Alaska 7-day precipitation percentile map]

See also:
[Alaska 7-day total precipitation values (inches) map]

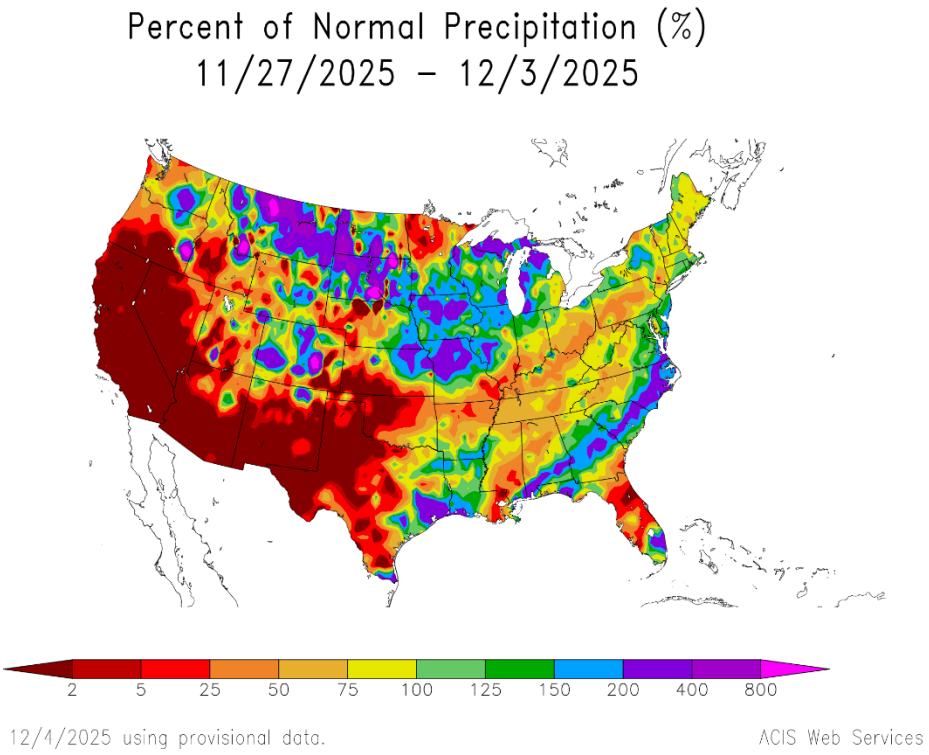


Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day precipitation percent of normal map] for the continental U.S.

See also: [7-day total precipitation values (inches) map]

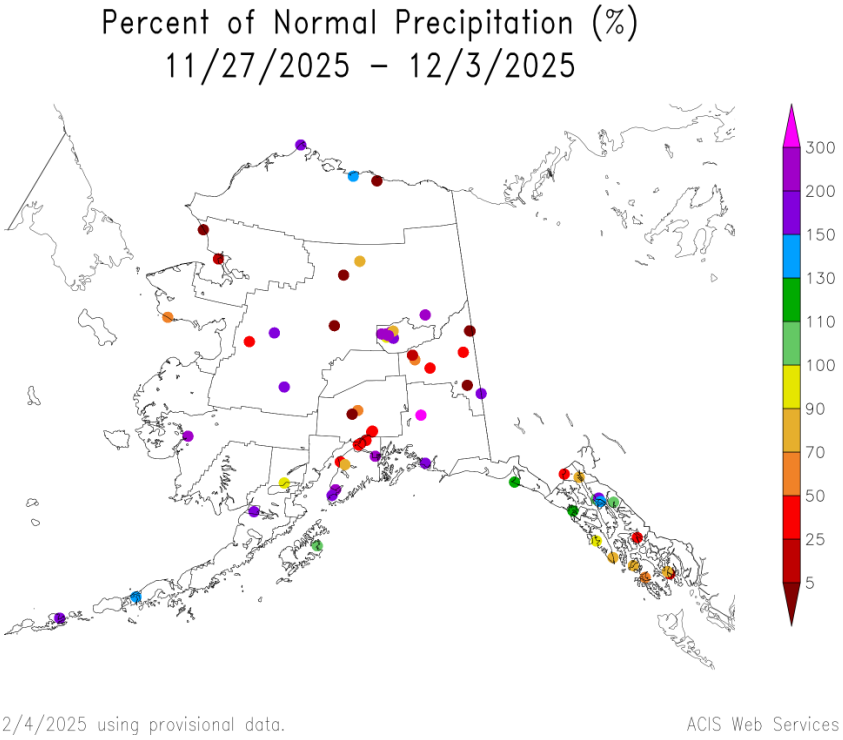


Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

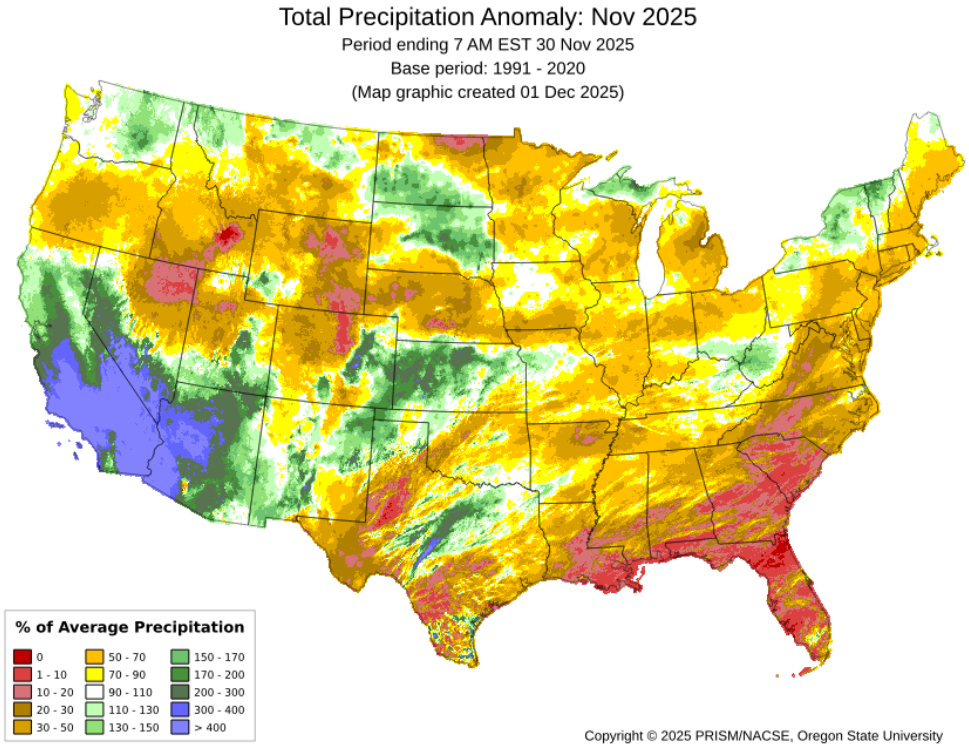
[7-day precipitation percent of normal map] for Alaska.

See also:
[7-day total precipitation values (inches) map]



Monthly, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

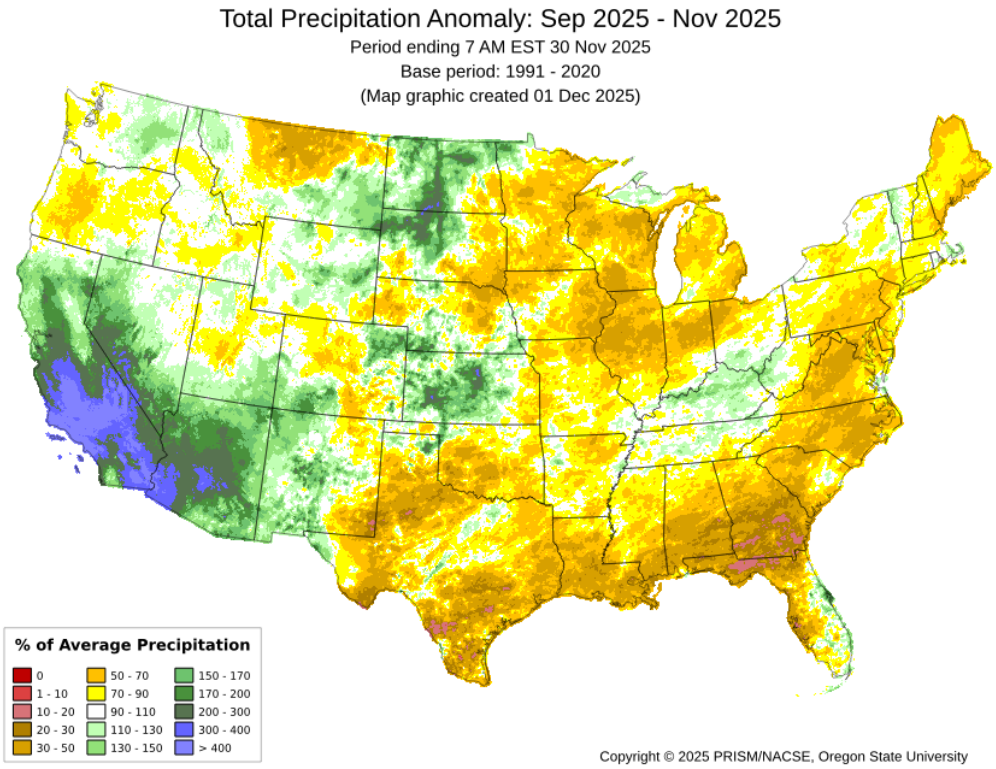


Monthly national total precipitation anomaly map

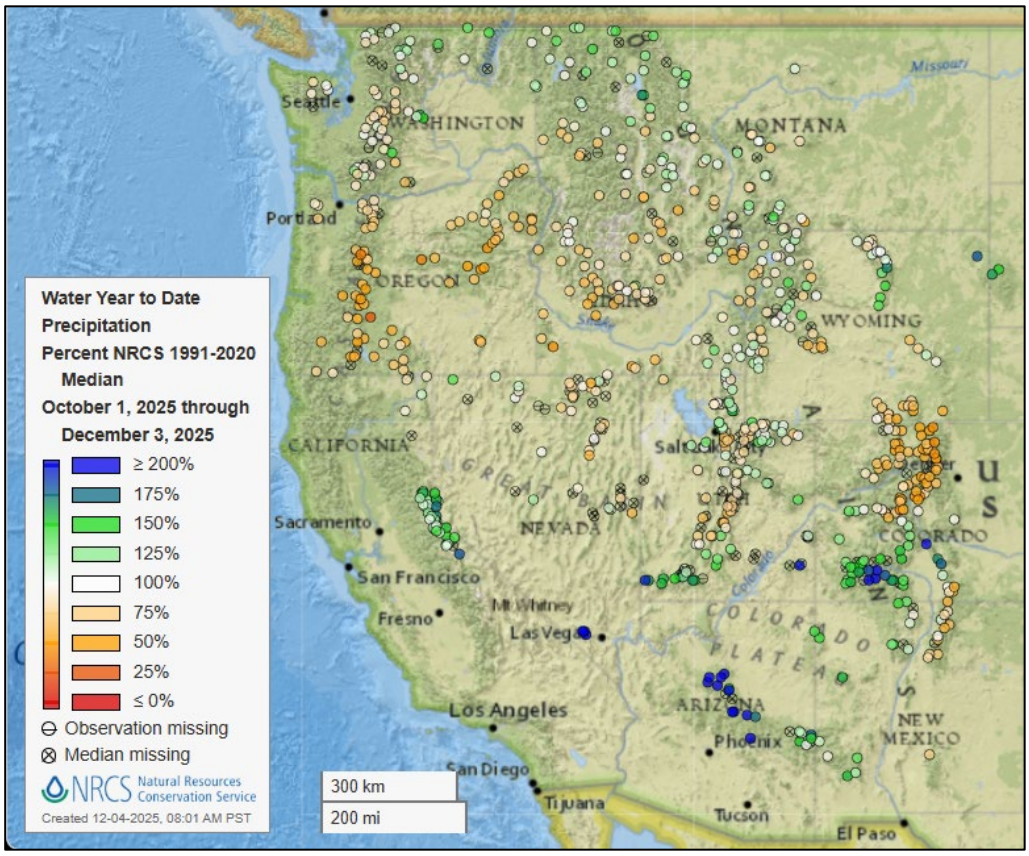
Last 3 Months, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

September through November 2025 precipitation anomaly map



Water Year-to-Date, NRCS SNOTEL Network

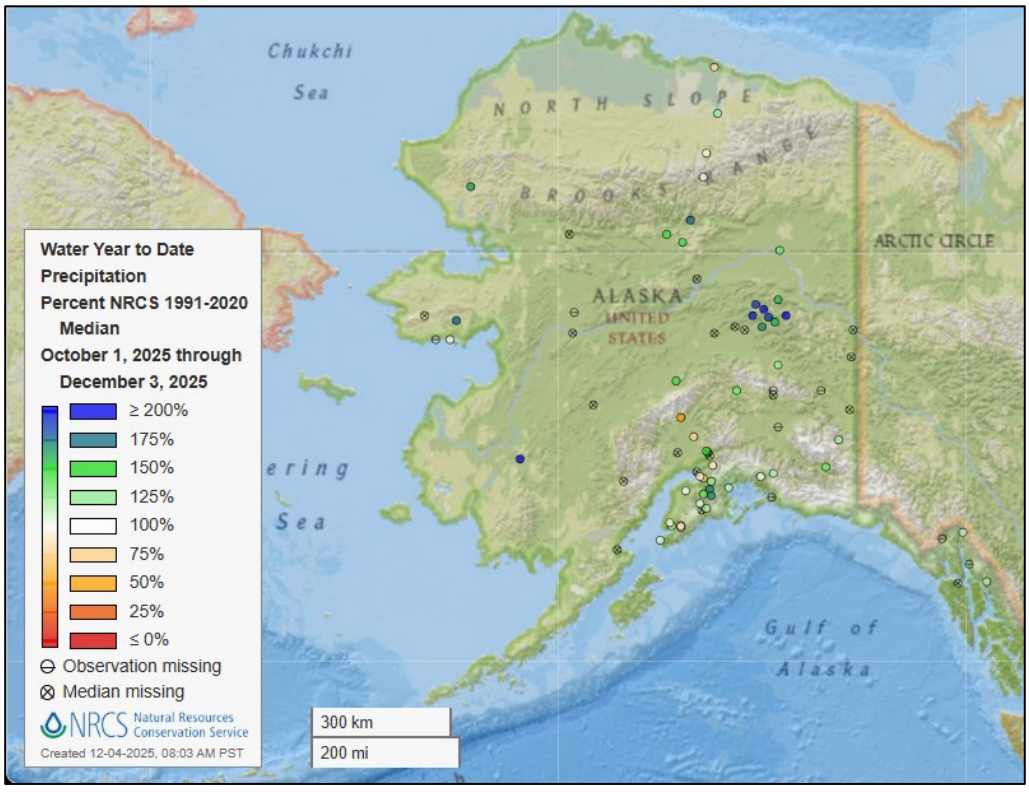


[2026 water year-to-date precipitation percent of median map]

See also:

[2026 water year-to-date precipitation percent of average map]

[2026 water year-to-date precipitation values (inches) map]



[Alaska 2026 water year-to-date precipitation percent of median map]

See also:

[Alaska 2026 water year-to-date precipitation percent of average map]

[Alaska 2026 water year-to-date precipitation values (inches) map]

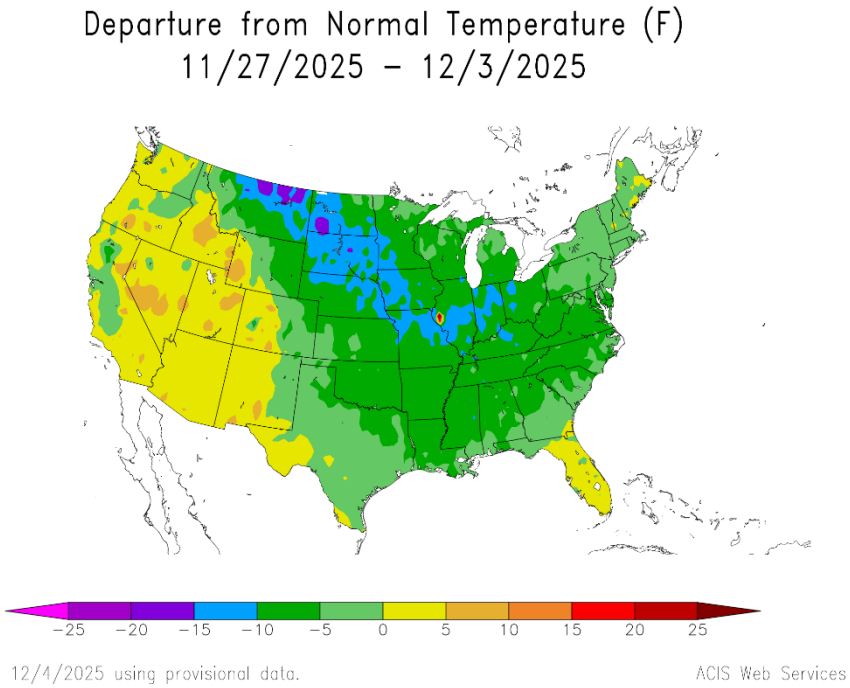
Temperature

Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

7-day temperature anomaly map for the contiguous U.S.

See also: 7-day temperature (° F) map

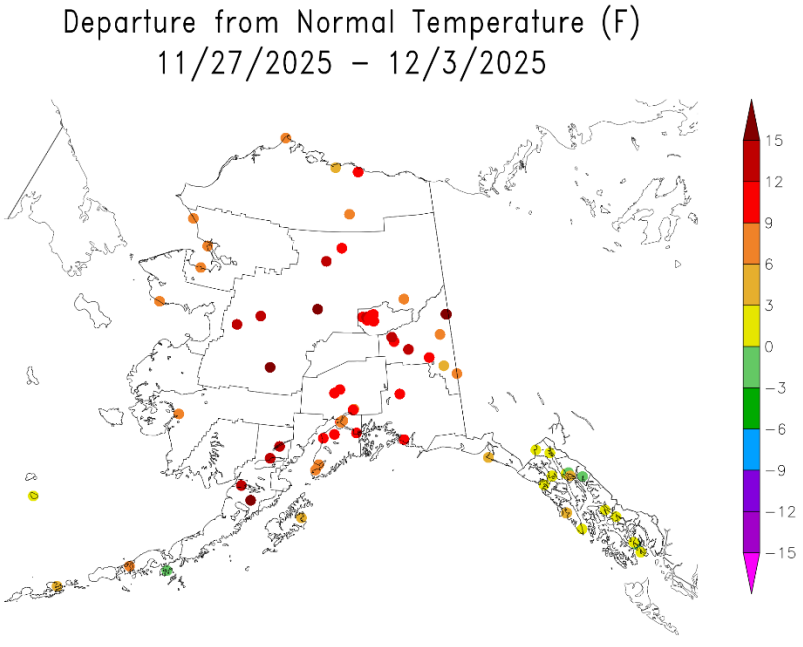


Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

7-day temperature anomaly map for Alaska.

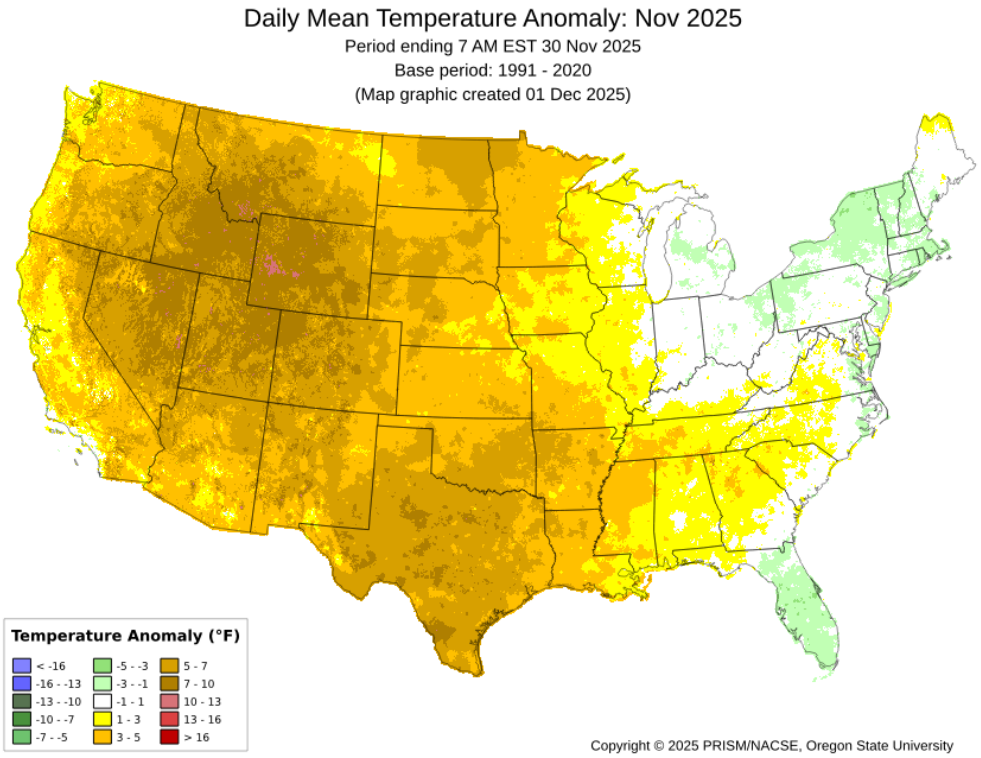
See also: 7-day temperature (° F) map



Monthly, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

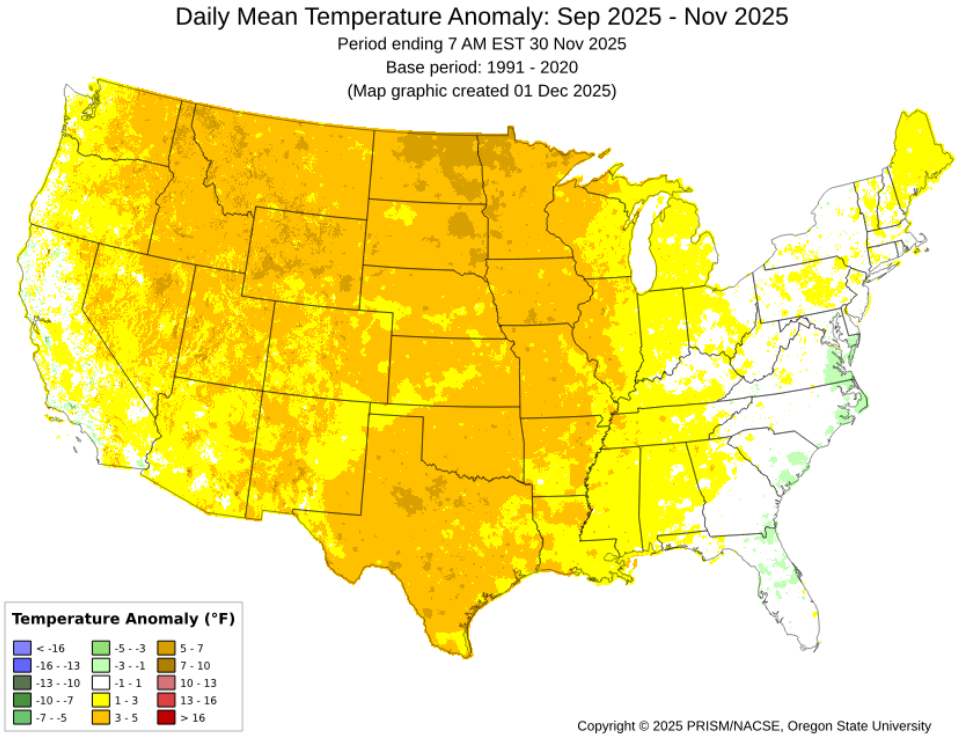
Source: PRISM

[Monthly national daily mean temperature anomaly map]



Last 3 Months, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

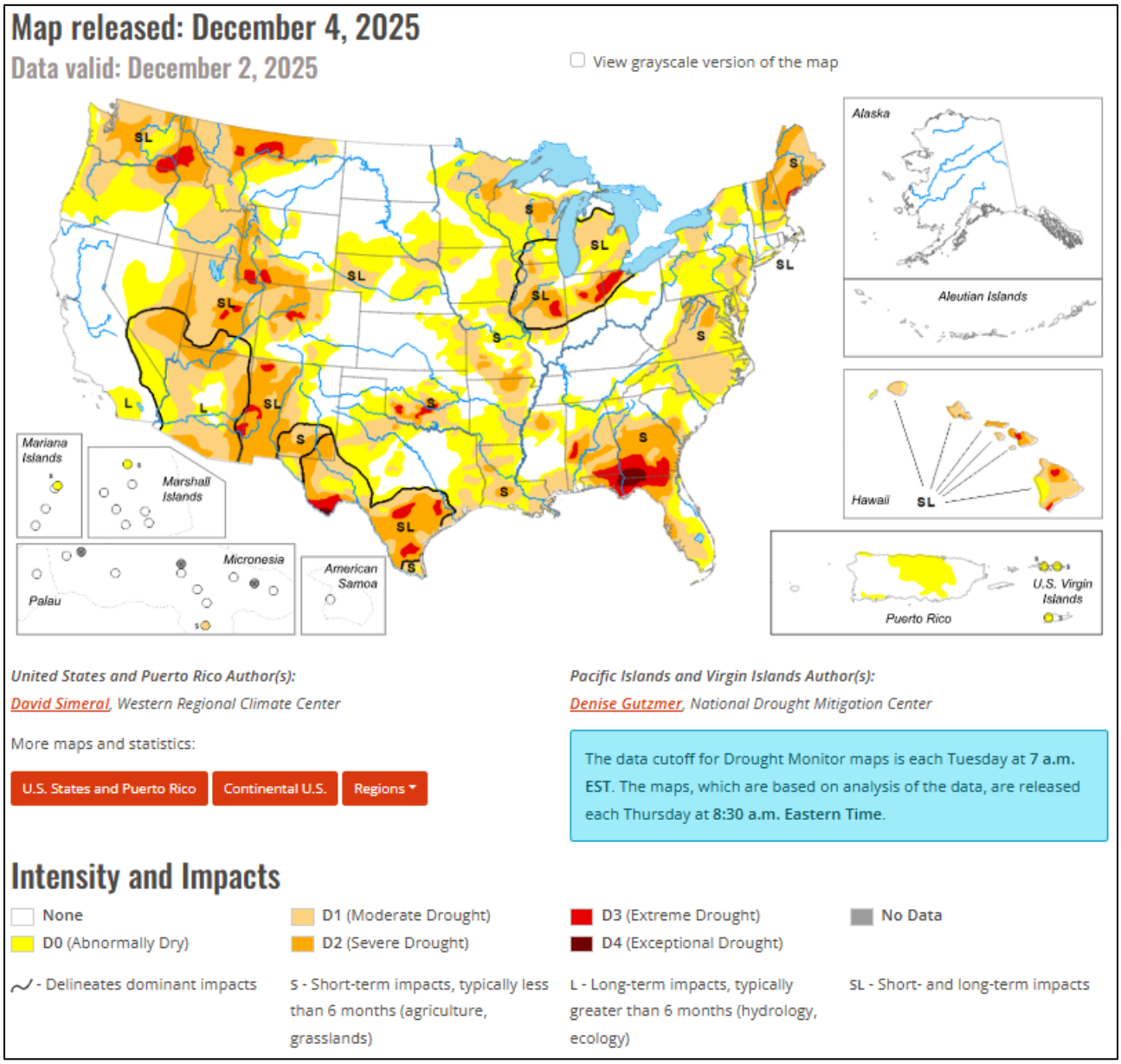


[September through November 2025 daily mean temperature anomaly map]

Drought

U.S. Drought Monitor
Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

U.S. Drought Portal
Source: NOAA



Current National Drought Summary, December 2, 2025

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

"This U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) week saw improvement in drought-related conditions across areas of the West, Plains, Midwest, South, Southeast, and the Northeast. Out West, improvements continued in areas of eastern California and southern Nevada, where conditions since the beginning of the Water Year (October 1) have improved significantly. As of early December, mountain snowpack conditions continue to be well below normal levels for the time of year across much of the western U.S., except for isolated areas of the Southwest and southern Rockies, where recent storms have boosted snowpack conditions well above normal levels. As of December 2, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) SNOw TELemetry (SNOTEL) network reported the following region-level (2-digit HUC) snow-water equivalent (SWE) levels: Pacific Northwest 43%, Missouri 47%, Upper Colorado 53%, Great Basin 39%, Lower Colorado 121%, Rio Grande 64%, and Arkansas-White-Red 53%. In California, the statewide snowpack was 39% of normal (December 3), with the Southern Sierra at 78%, Central Sierra at 36%, and Northern Sierra at 17%. Elsewhere on the map, conditions continued to improve in drought-affected areas of central and northeastern Texas, where precipitation during the past month has been above normal. In the Southeast, drought conditions have intensified in recent months, both in spatial extent and intensity, including in southern Georgia and Florida Panhandle where soil moisture and streamflow levels have dropped significantly in recent weeks. In the Northern Plains, Midwest, and Northeast, moderate-to-heavy snowfall accumulations provided some minor relief to drought-affected areas."

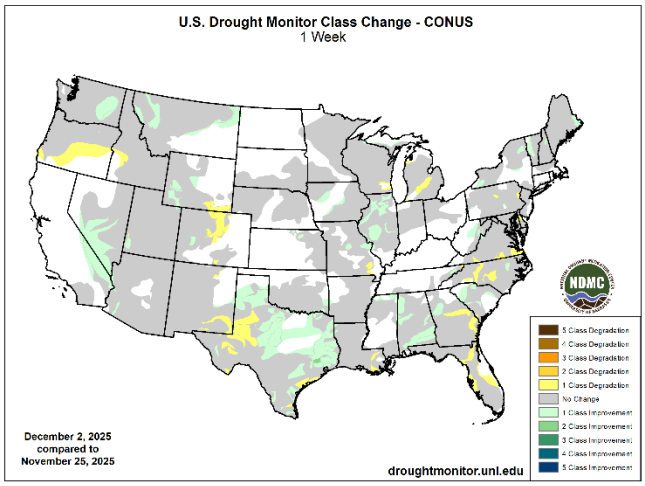
National Drought Summary – West

"Out West, recent storms and overall improving conditions on short-term indicators (precipitation, soil moisture, streamflows) led to improvements on the map in California (eastern Sierra, Mojave Desert), Nevada (west-central, southern), Utah (southwestern), Wyoming (central, southwestern), Montana (northwestern, central, northeastern), and Washington (southeastern). Conversely, degradations were made on the map in areas of Oregon (central, southern), Idaho (west-central), Wyoming (southeastern), Colorado (central, north-central), and New Mexico (southeastern). For the week, most of the region experienced dry conditions except for portions of the Pacific Northwest and isolated areas in the central and northern Rockies. In the Pacific Northwest, light-to-moderate precipitation accumulations were observed along the coastal areas of northwestern Oregon and western Washington. Despite this week's storm activity, significant precipitation deficits (2 to 10 inches since October 1) remain, with the greatest anomalies observed in the Olympic Peninsula and Cascade Range. In terms of the snowpack out West, below-normal SWE levels are being observed at SNOTEL stations across most of the West, except for areas in the southern Sierra, Colorado Plateau, and southwestern Colorado. In California, the NWS Forecast Office in Los Angeles is reporting that November was one of the wettest Novembers in the last 50+ years across southwestern California. Moreover, the city of Santa Barbara has reported the wettest water-year start on record through November with over 9.5 inches observed. Other areas in Santa Barbara County, including areas of the Santa Ynez Mountains, have received over 15 inches for the contemporaneous period."

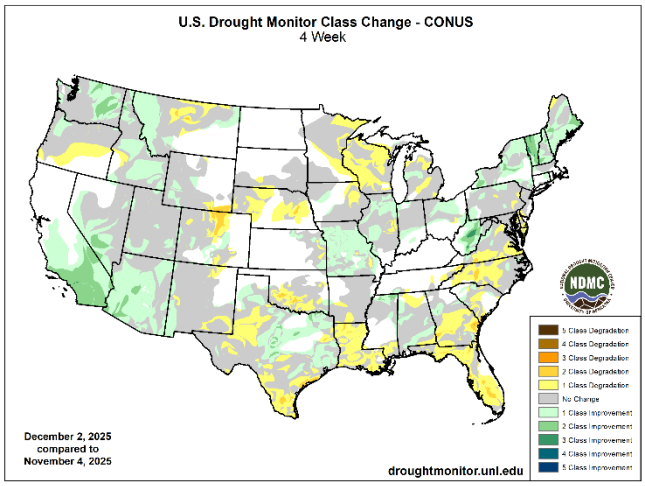
Changes in Drought Monitor Categories over Time

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

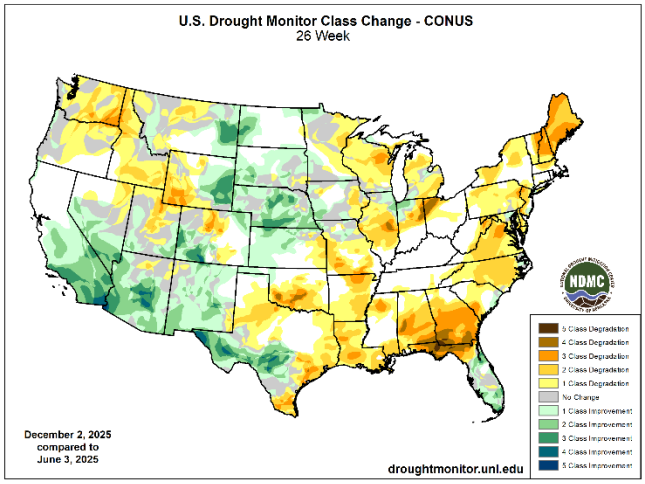
1 Week



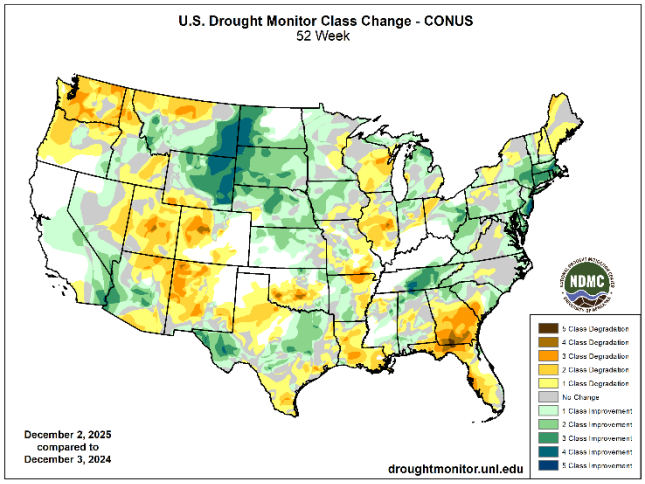
1 Month



6 Months



1 Year



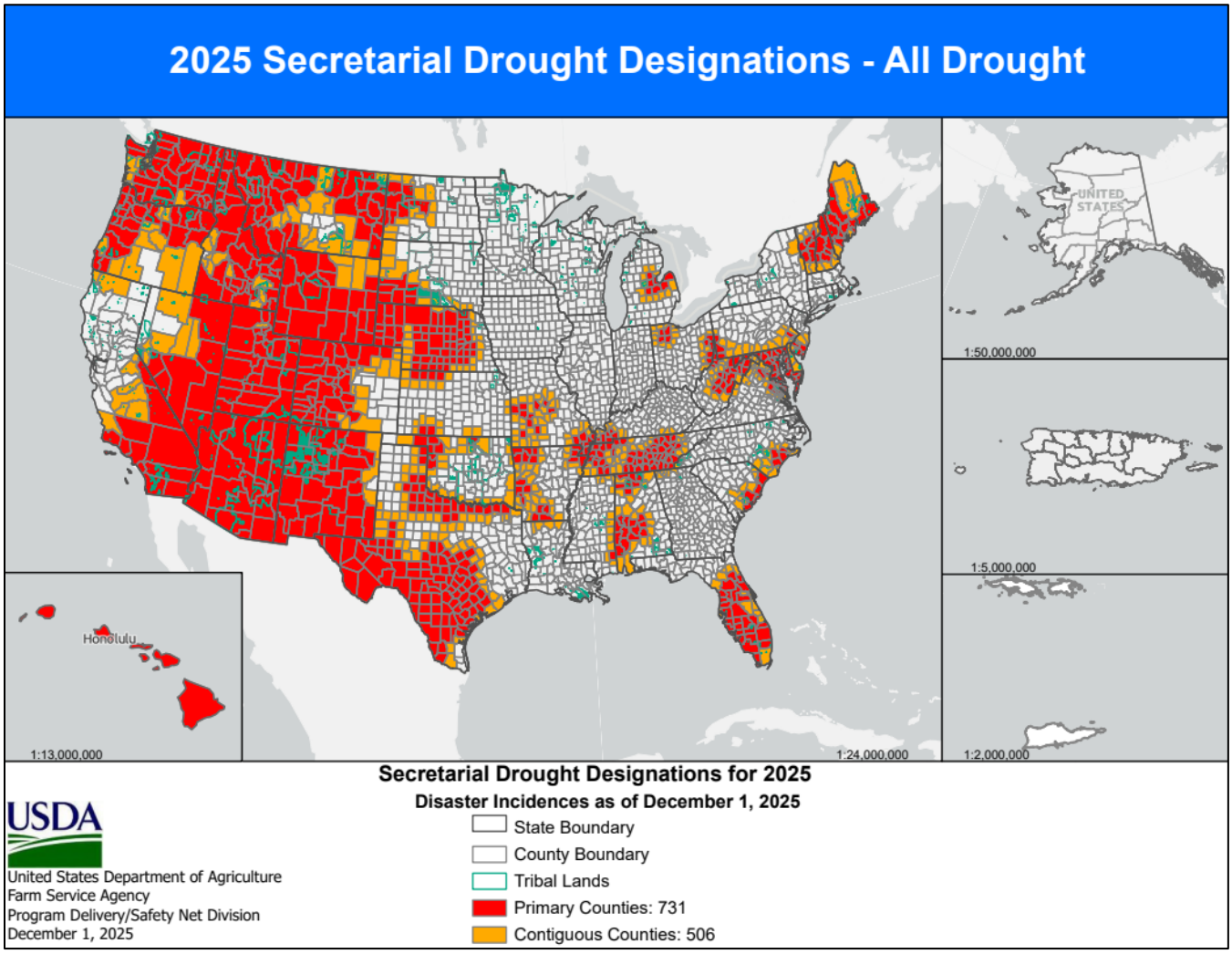
Changes in drought conditions over the last 12 months for the contiguous U.S.

Highlighted Drought Resources

- Drought Impact Reporter
- Quarterly Regional Climate Impacts and Outlook
- U.S. Drought Portal Indicators and Monitoring
- U.S. Population in Drought, Weekly Comparison
- USDA Disaster and Drought Information

USDA Secretarial Drought Designations

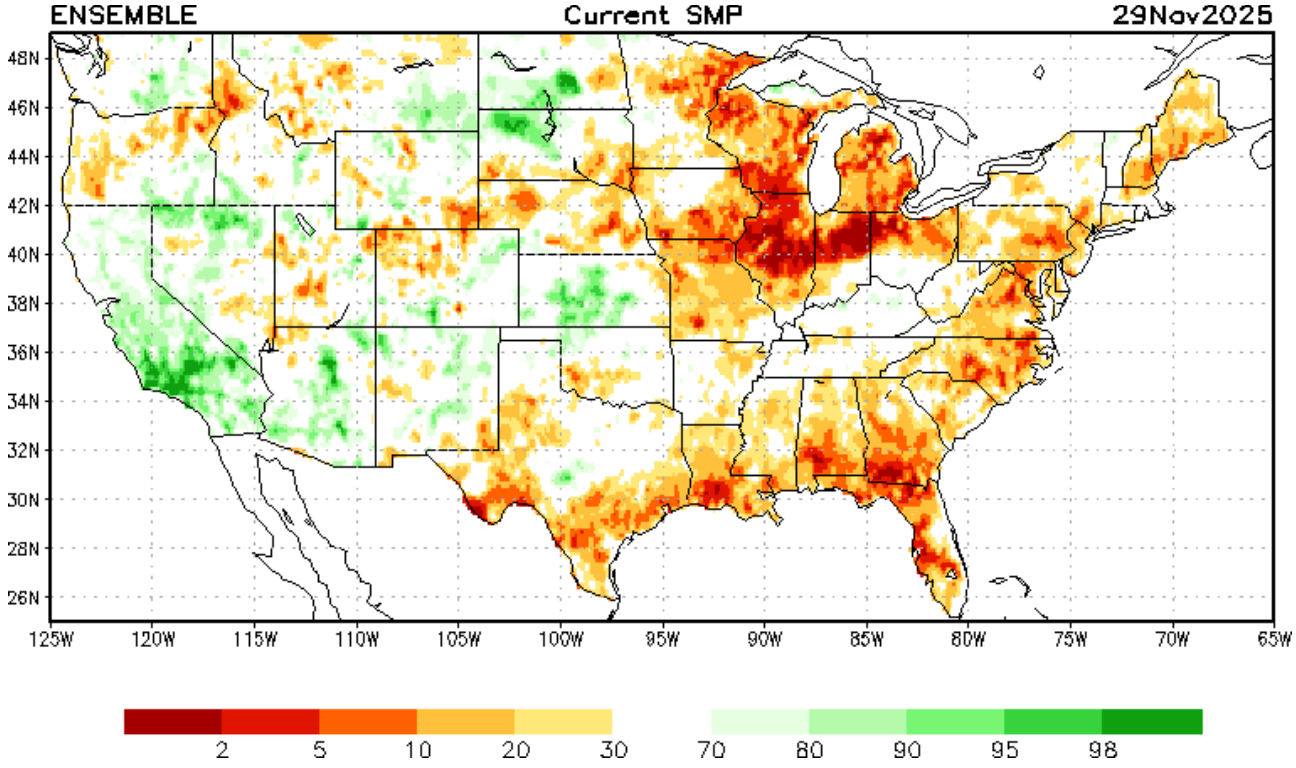
Source: USDA Farm Service Agency



Other Climatic and Water Supply Indicators

Soil Moisture

Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Prediction

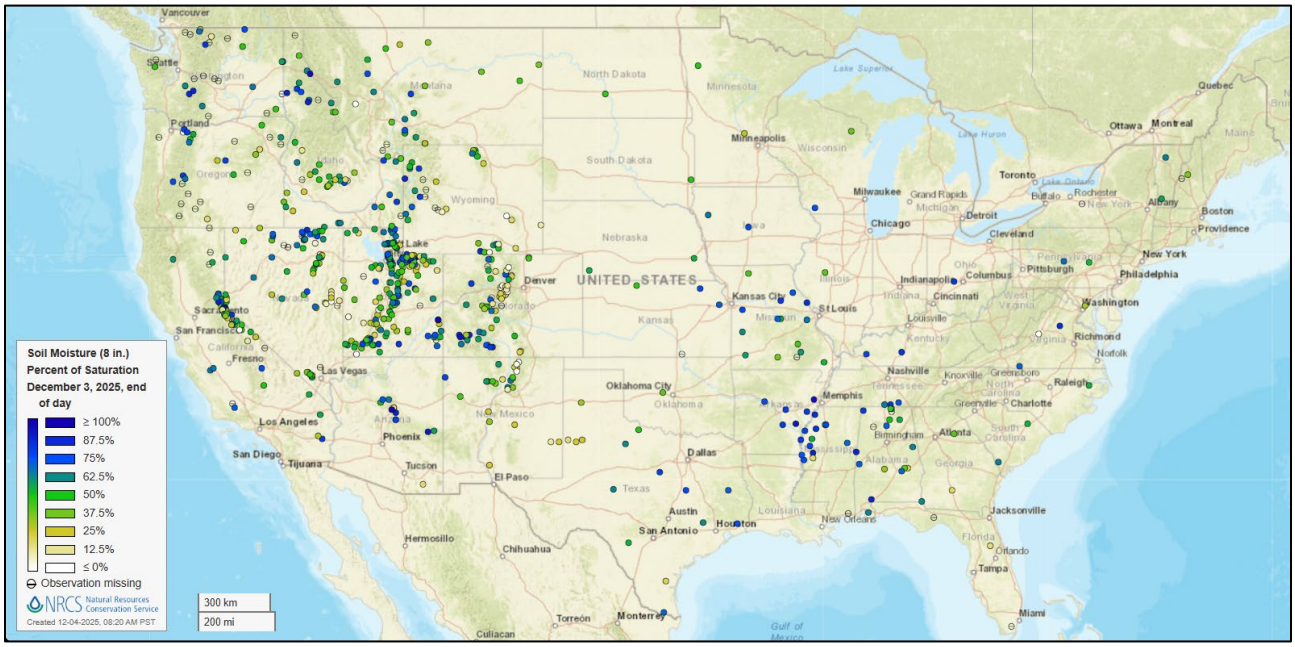


Modeled soil moisture percentiles as of November 29, 2025

Soil Moisture Percent of Saturation

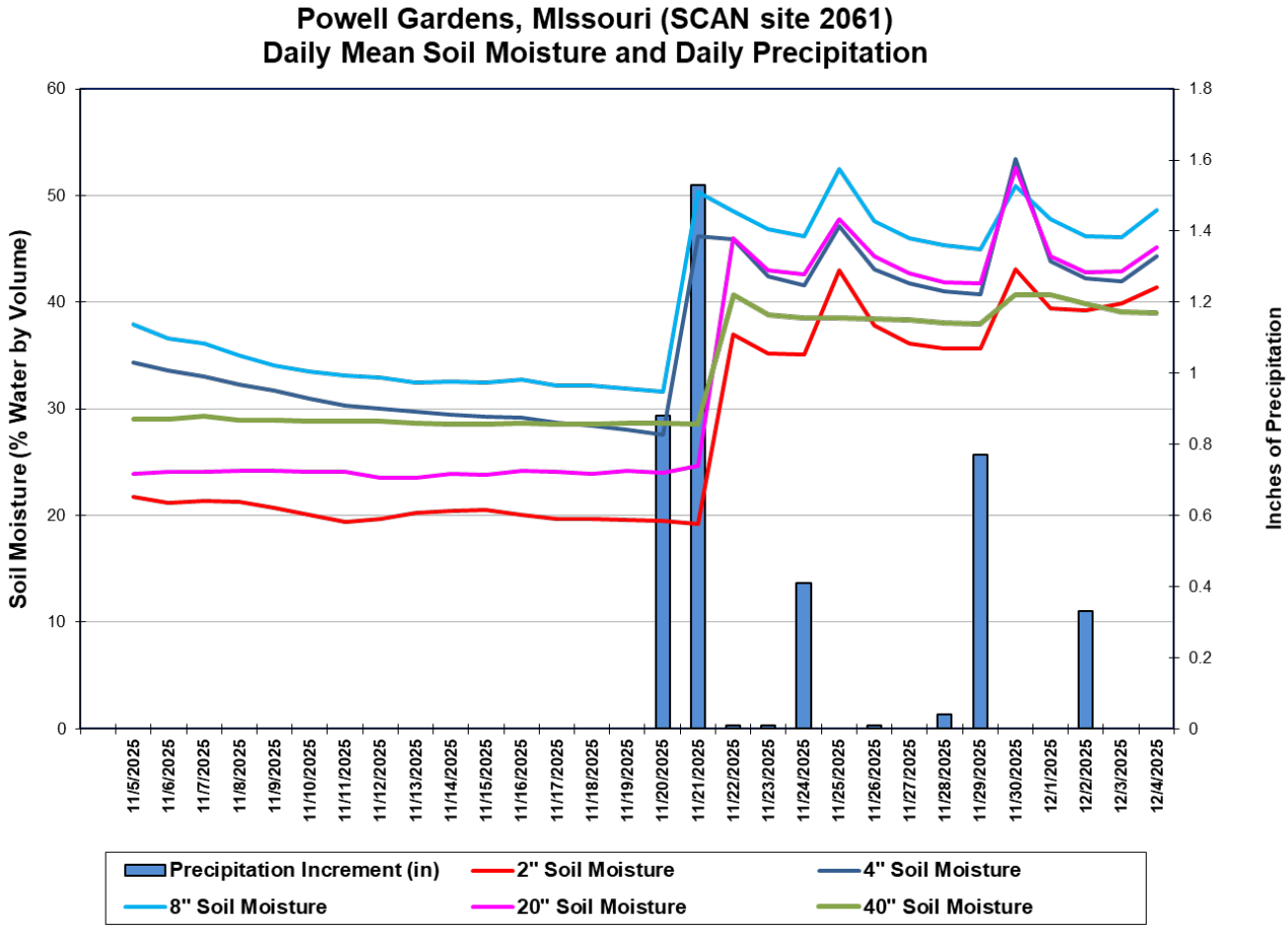
Source: NRCS SNOTEL and Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)

U.S. soil moisture map at 8-inch depth:



Soil Moisture

Source: NRCS Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN)



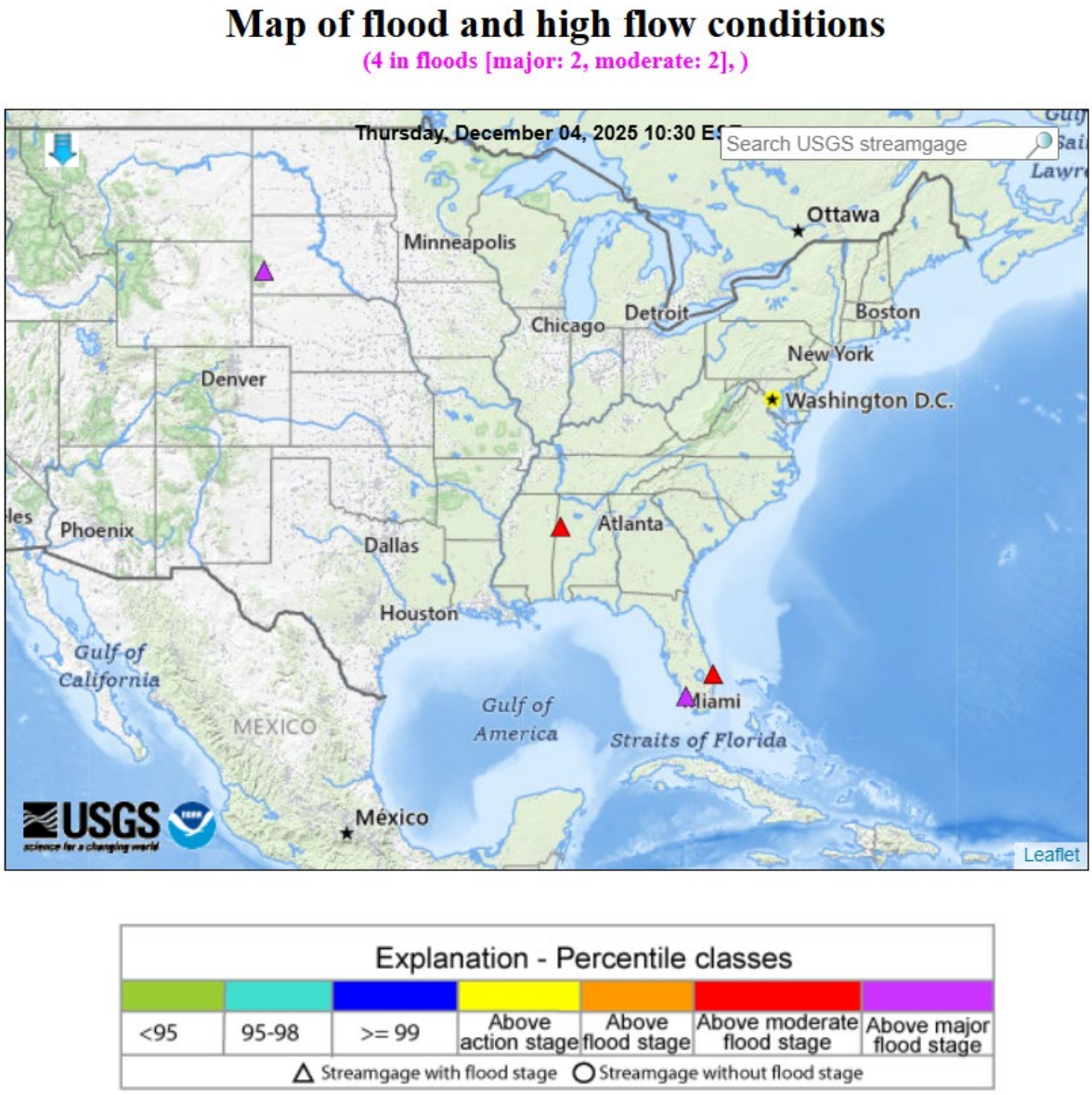
This chart shows the precipitation and soil moisture for the last 30 days at the Powell Gardens SCAN site in Missouri. Soil sensors at all depths recorded pronounced increases in soil moisture after the site received 2.41 inches of precipitation between November 20-21. Total precipitation for the 30-day period was 3.99 inches.

Soil Moisture Data Portals

- USCRN Soil Moisture
- National Soil Moisture Network
- NOAA Climate Prediction Center Soil Moisture
- NASA Grace

Streamflow, Drought, Flood, and Runoff

Source: U.S. Geological Survey [WaterWatch Streamflow Map]



[WaterWatch: Streamflow, drought, flood, and runoff conditions]

Reservoir Storage

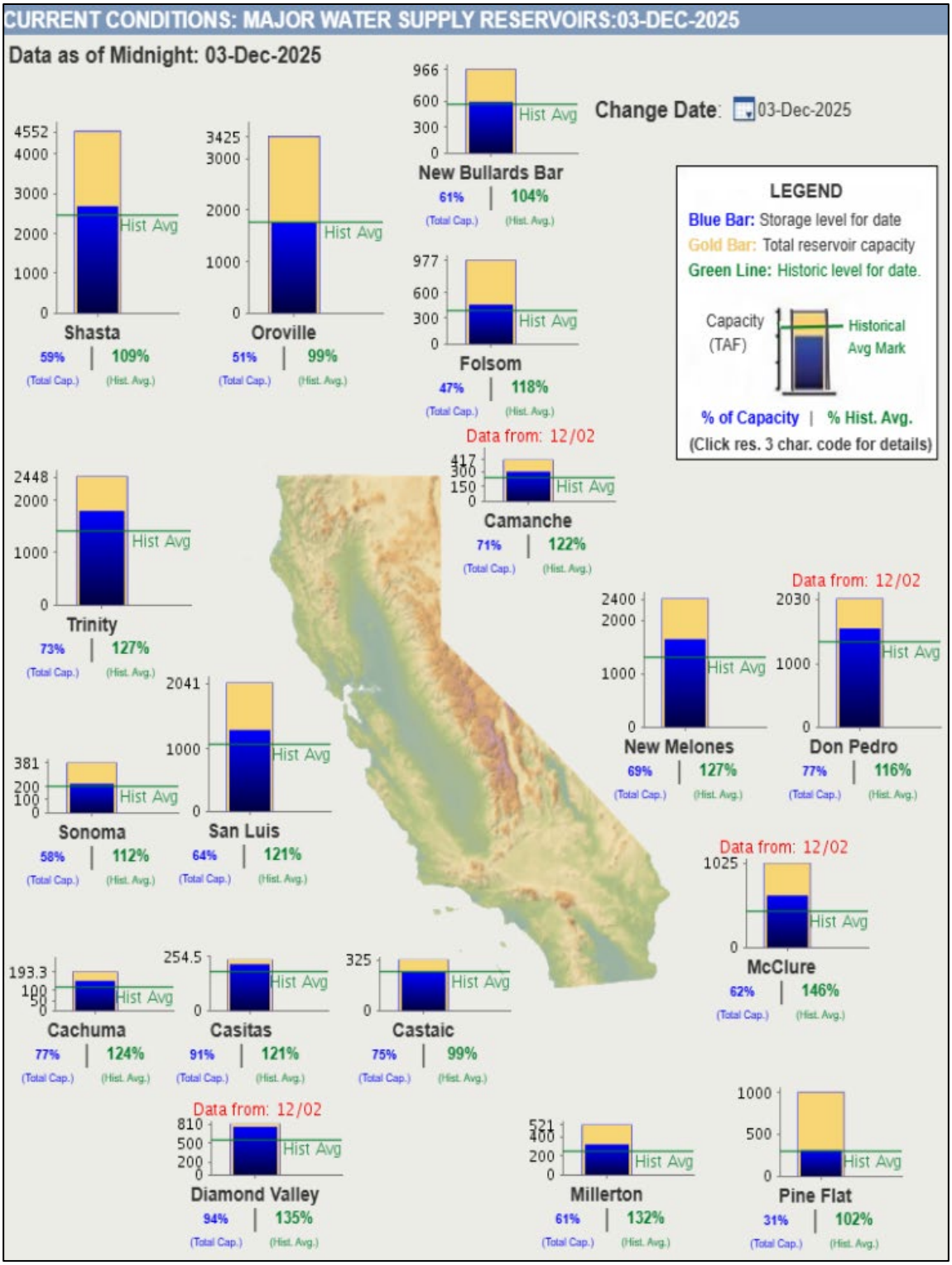
Hydromet Teacup Reservoir Depictions

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

- [Upper Colorado]
- [Pacific Northwest/Snake/Columbia]
- [Sevier River Water, Utah]
- [Upper Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas]

Current California Reservoir Conditions

Source: California Department of Water Resources



Current California Reservoir Conditions

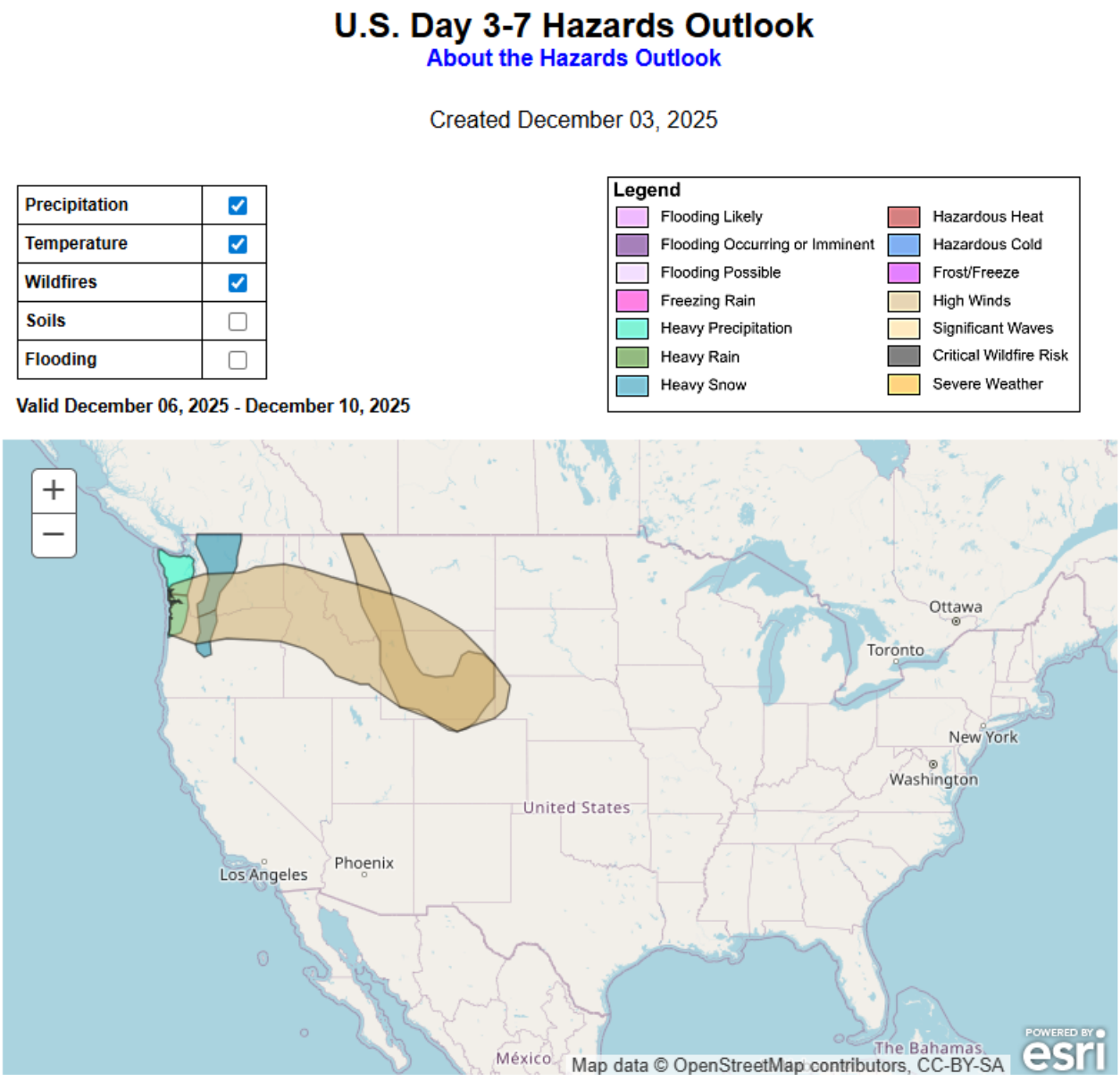
Agricultural Weather Highlights

Author: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB

National Outlook, Thursday December 4, 2025: "Unsettled, showery weather across the South will persist for several days while gradually shifting eastward. Additional rainfall over the next 5 days could reach 2 to 4 inches or more from southern Louisiana to the coastal Carolinas. Some snow will fall along the northern edge of the Southern precipitation, with accumulations expected on Friday in portions of the middle Atlantic States. Farther north, frigid conditions will temporarily ease across the Midwest and Northeast, followed by the return of very cold weather during the weekend and early next week. Elsewhere, periods of precipitation will continue across the northern tier of the western U.S., from the Pacific Northwest to the northern Rockies. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for December 9 – 13 calls for the likelihood of above-normal temperatures along and west of a line from Montana to Louisiana, while colder-than-normal conditions will cover the Midwest and the East. Meanwhile, below-normal precipitation should occur across the southern half of the country, except for wetter-than-normal weather in southern Florida. Generally wet weather will also prevail across the northern half of the U.S., likely leading to additional snowfall in the Midwest and Northeast."

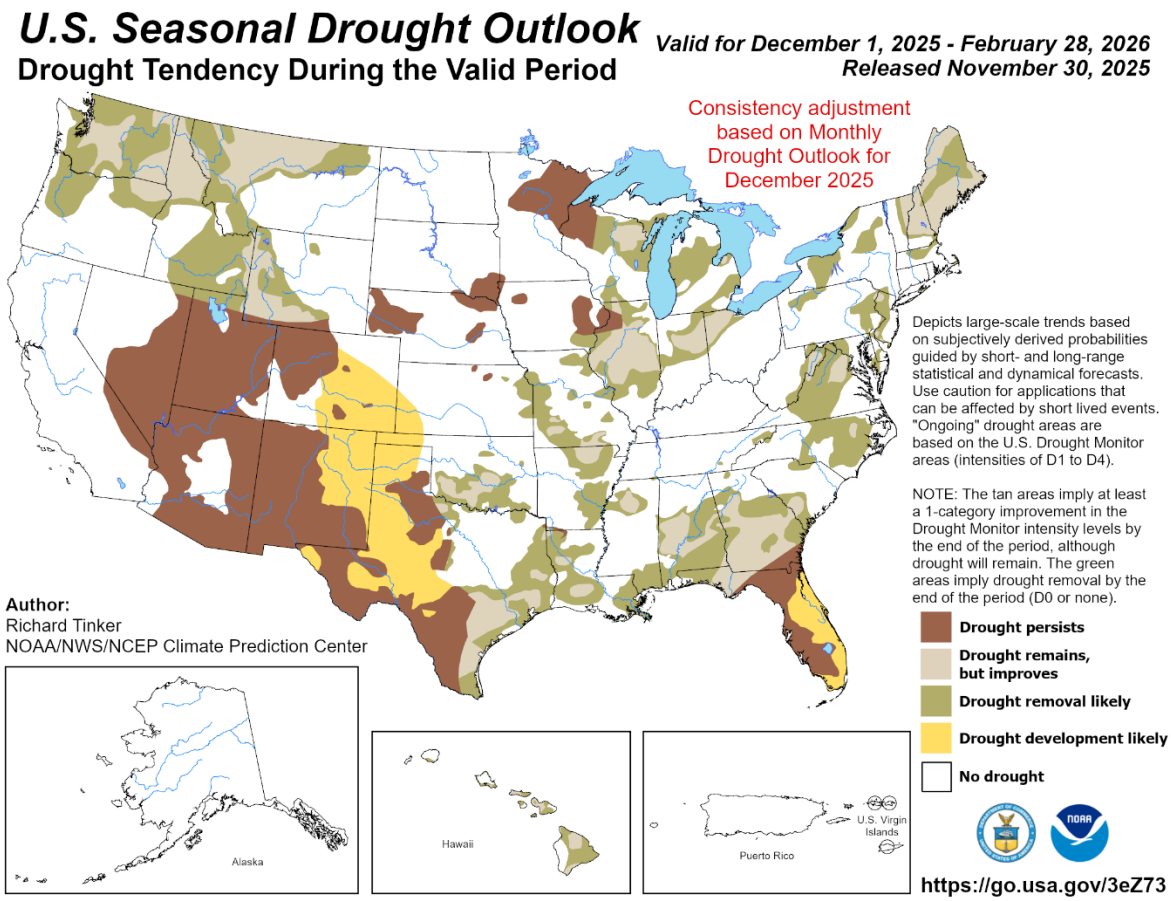
Weather Hazards Outlook: December 06 – 10, 2025

Source: NOAA Weather Prediction Center



Seasonal Drought Outlook: December 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026

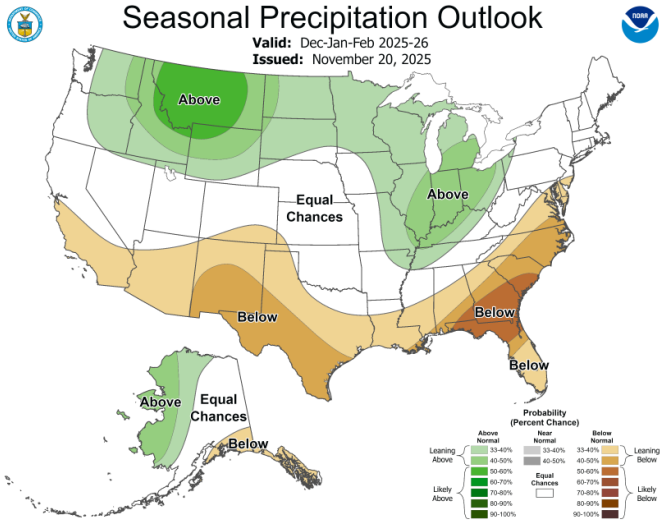
Source: National Weather Service



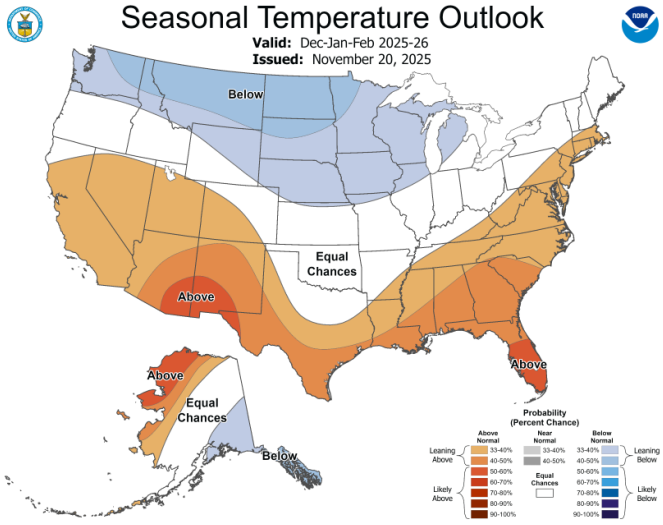
Climate Prediction Center Three-month Outlook

Source: National Weather Service

Precipitation



Temperature



December-January-February 2025-2026 precipitation and temperature outlook summaries

More Information

The NRCS National Water and Climate Center publishes this weekly report. We welcome your feedback. If you have questions or comments, please contact us.