



The Weather Wire

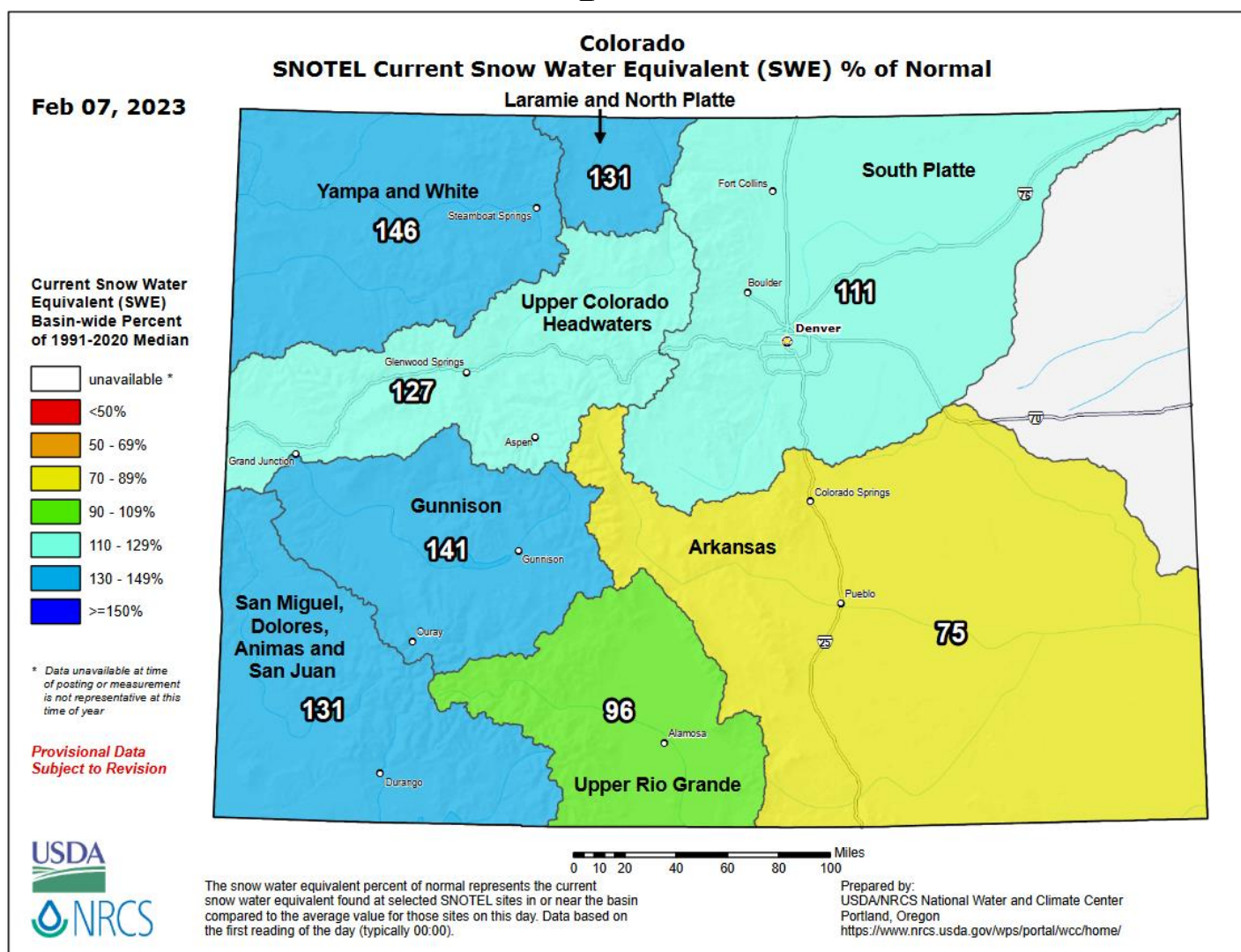
February 2023

Volume 30 Number 2

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Current Colorado Snowpack

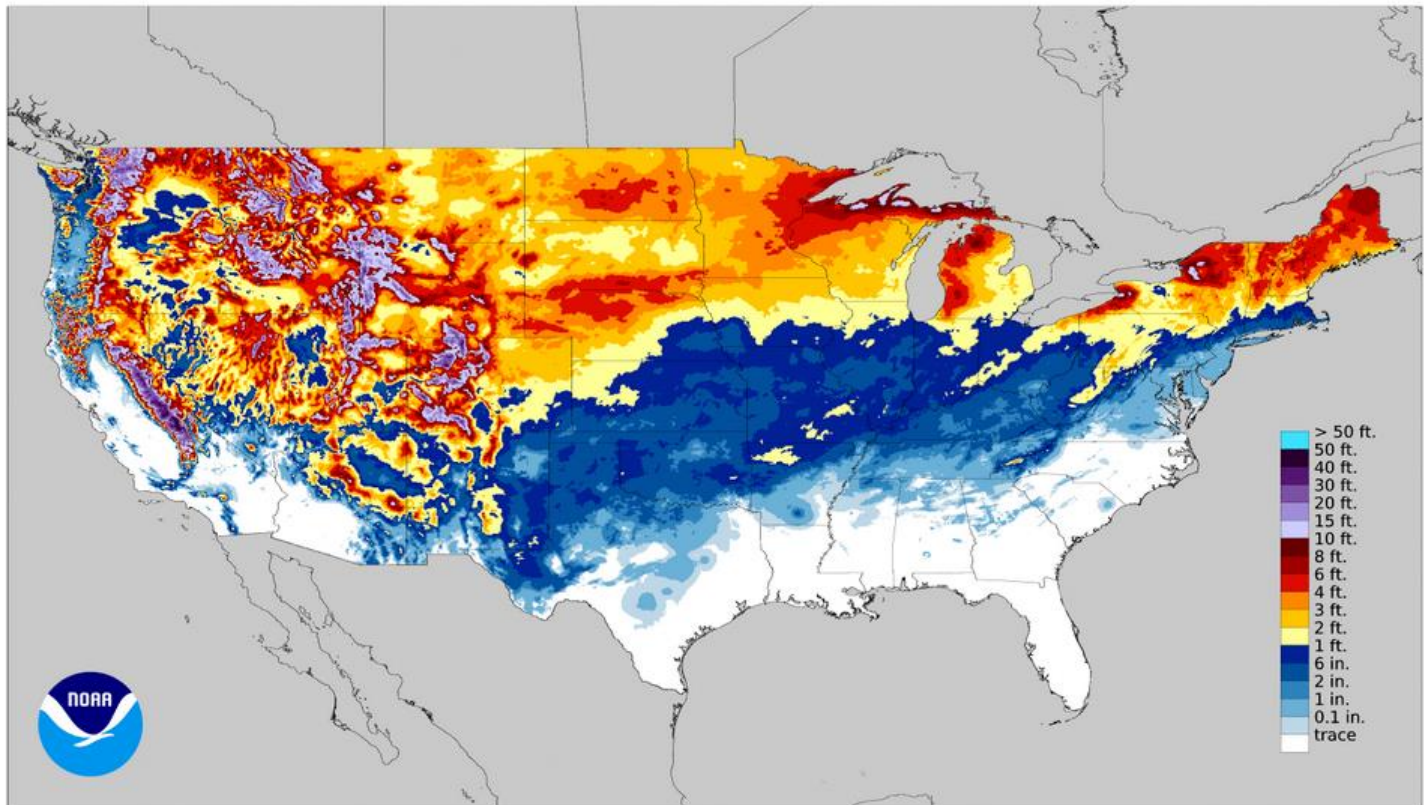


Colorado snowpack is at or above normal for many river basins in the state except for the Arkansas River of SE Colorado. The western mountains are doing well with the current snow water equivalent, but the next few months will be very important to how our water supply looks in the summer. In a perfect world

Lower 48 Snowfall Accumulation

National Snowfall Analysis: accumulation from 2022-09-30 to 2023-02-07

Issued 2023-02-07 14:58:30 UTC



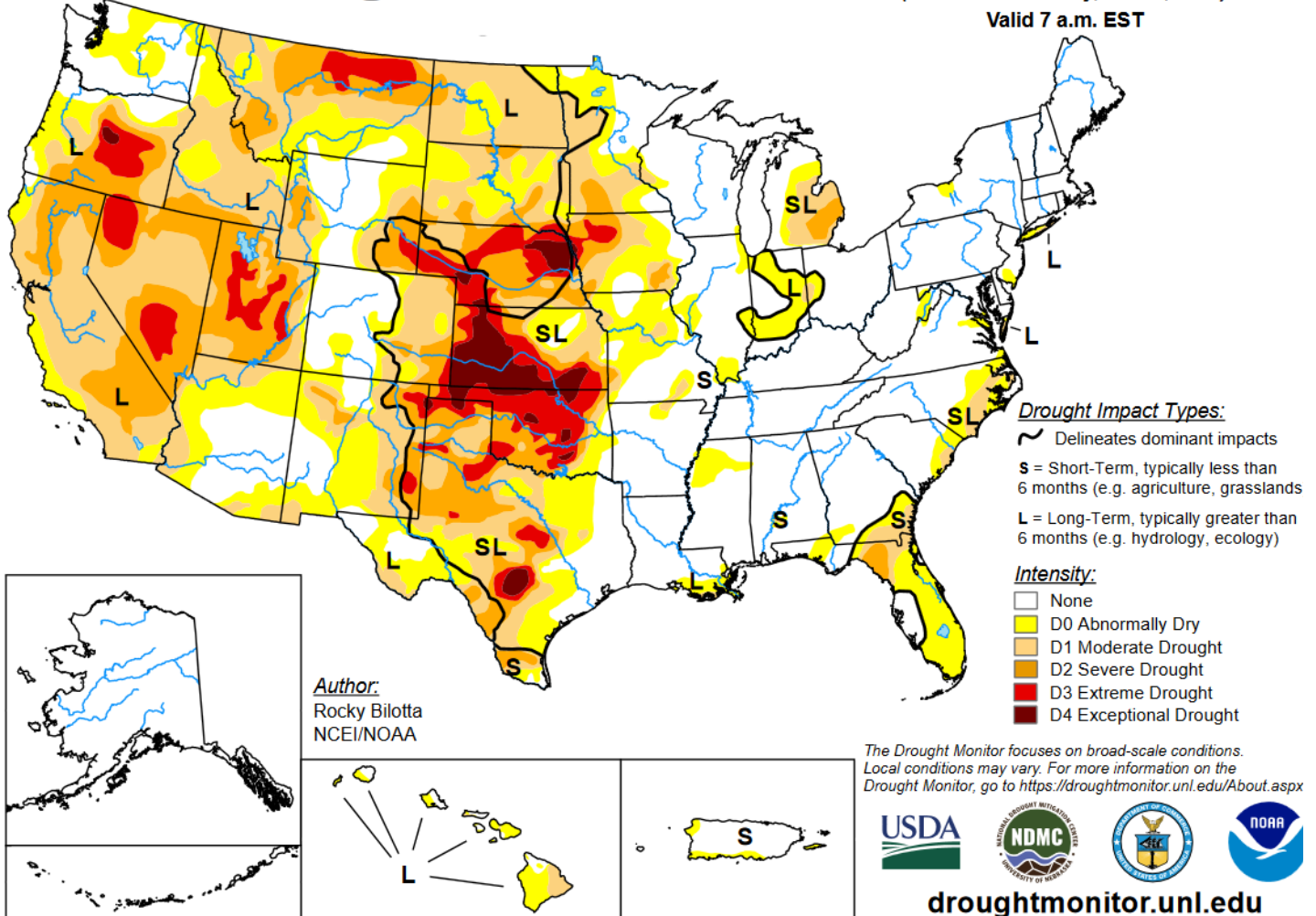
The map above shows accumulation of snowfall since October over the lower 48 states. Notice how the big cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington have experienced very little snow this season. Some areas of the Sierra Nevada in California have reported 30-40 feet of snow so far and more will certainly fall over the coming months. Some states such as UT/NV and CA have already experienced normal to above normal snowfall for an entire season!

Drought Update

Overall, much of eastern CO remains under abnormally dry conditions or moderate drought. Much of western Colorado is currently drought free most areas. Drought conditions remain but have improved over CA/NV and UT over the past month. East of the Mississippi river drought coverage is minimal and not severe.

U.S. Drought Monitor

January 31, 2023
(Released Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

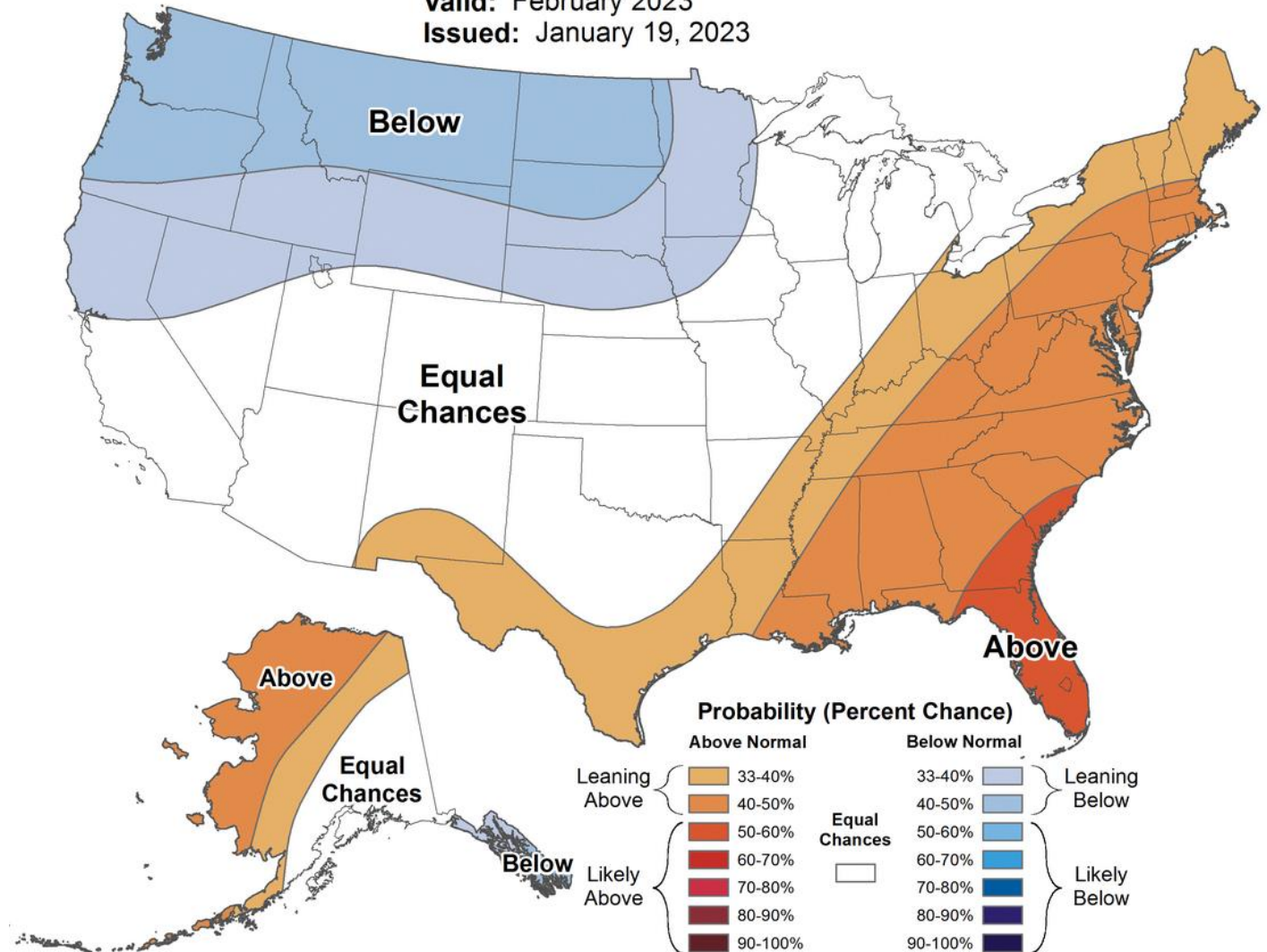


The map below shows forecasted temperature deviances for February 2023. There are equal chances for above or below normal temperatures over the state of Colorado.



Monthly Temperature Outlook

Valid: February 2023
Issued: January 19, 2023



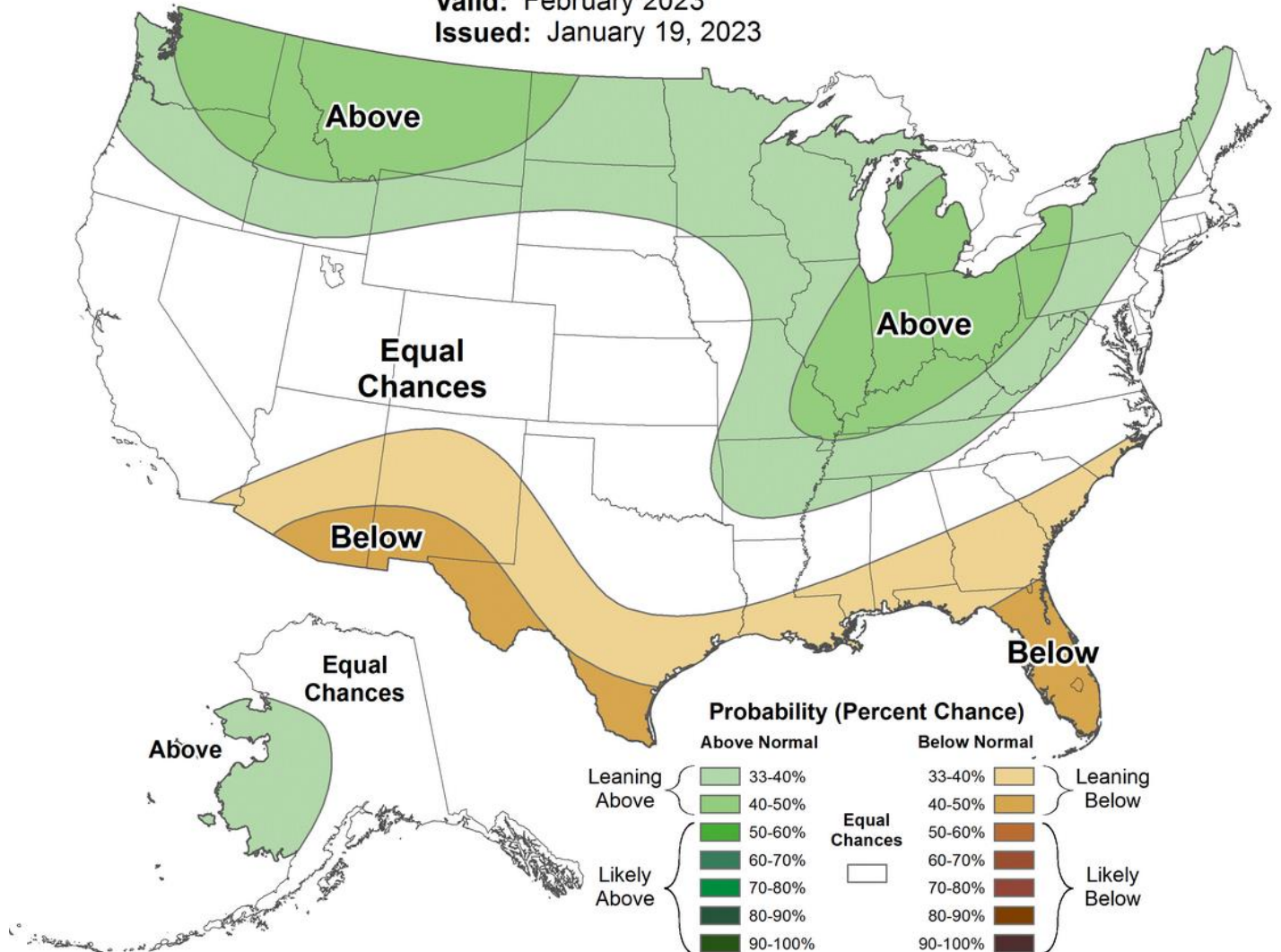
The map below shows forecasted precipitation deviances for February 2023. Colorado is “sandwiched” between potential above and below normal precipitation. This equates to equal chances for above or below normal precipitation during the month.



Monthly Precipitation Outlook



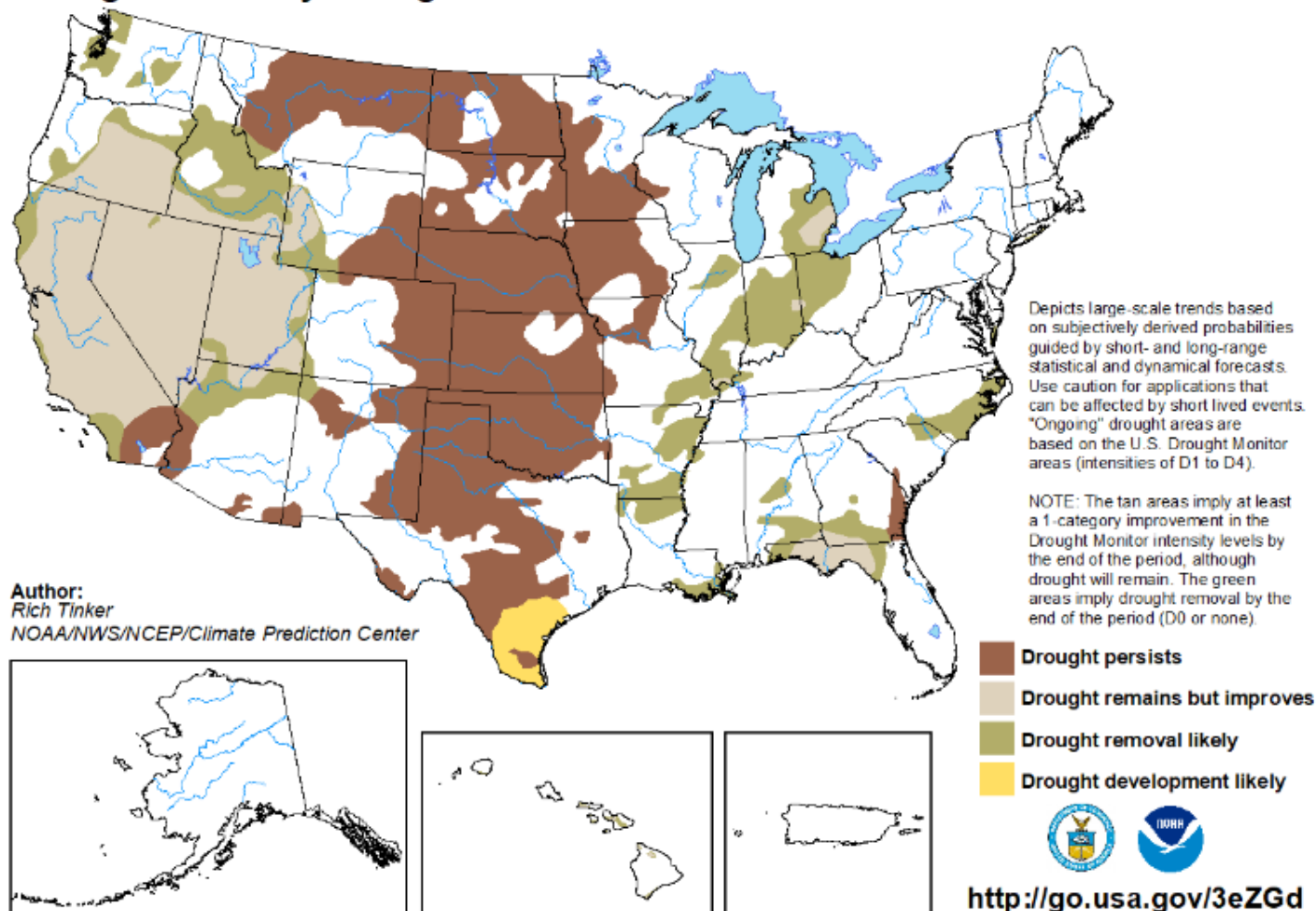
Valid: February 2023
Issued: January 19, 2023



Drought conditions are expected to persist over eastern Colorado during the month of February. Drought conditions are expected to improve dramatically over parts of CA/NV and UT but drought will likely remain in the short term.

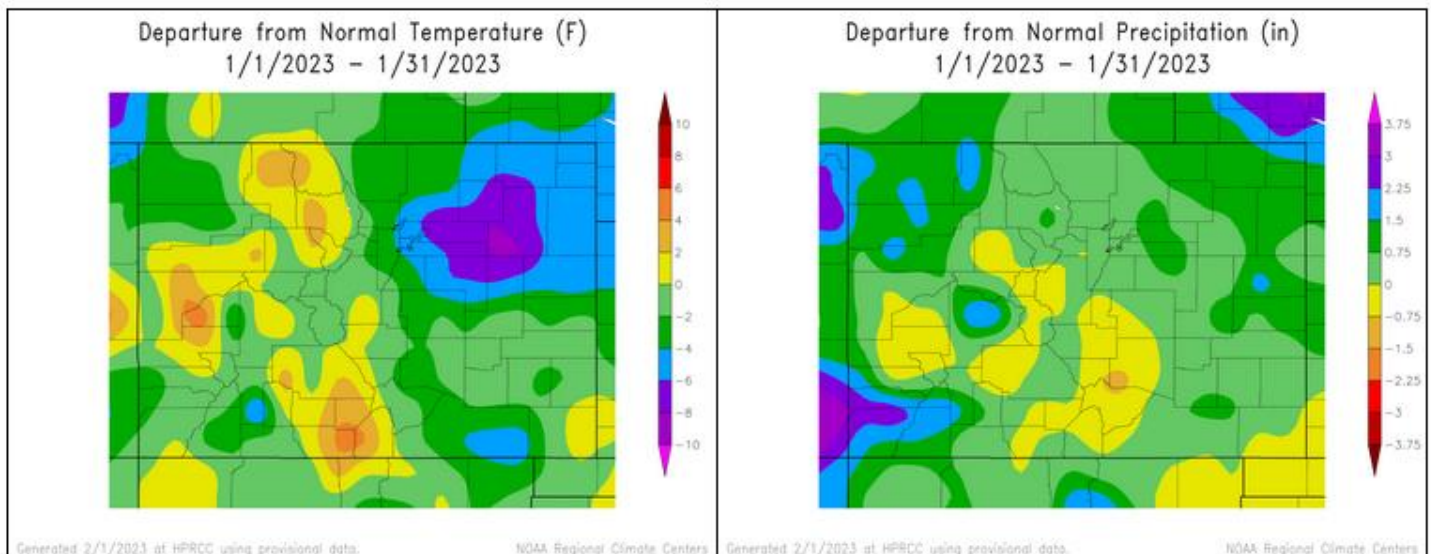
U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for January 2023
Released December 31, 2022



January Summary

January of 2023 was the 3rd month in a row with below normal temperatures and above normal snowfall for the Denver Metro area. The high temperature never reached 60°F at DIA and afternoon highs only reached the 50's twice during the month on the 10th and 14th. Snow cover on the ground remained on place for many areas with DIA reporting a snow depth of 2" or more 26 of the 31 days of the month, snow depths only decreased below 2" during the 13-17th of January. The month would have been below normal in temperatures regardless of an arctic outbreak pushing temperatures well below zero to end the month which resulted in January temperatures coming in well below normal. There were 14 days at DIA where the high temperature never reached or exceeded the freeing mark which is 9 days above the normal of 5! Average daily high temperatures were 34.3°F which was 10.3 degrees below the normal of 44.6°F. Low sun angle during the month of January and persistent snow cover helped to keep temperatures on the frigid side over much of NE Colorado and the South Platte River valley extending to Nebraska. Low temperatures averaged 15.7°F during the month which was 3.0 degrees below the normal of 18.7°F. Combining the average monthly highs and lows resulted in a monthly mean temperature of 25.0°F which was 6.7 degrees below the normal of 31.7°F and ranks as the 17th coldest January on record. For reference, the all-time record coldest January and coldest month in Denver history is 16.9°F set in 1930. Being so cold one would think the snow was dry and powdery with low water content... Well, that was not always the case there was certainly some champagne powder to be had the last couple weeks of the month but the major storm on the 17-18th of the month that produced 9.2" at DIA was a heavy "wet" snow for January standards. That storm produced 0.87" of liquid with a snow to liquid ratio of 10.6" of snow to 1.0" of moisture which is much more of a spring type storm more typically associated with March or April. That heavy/wet snow did not melt well with the cold temperatures and partially remains on the ground in many areas even with this last warm stretch of weather to start February. Overall, January tallied 1.25" of moisture and 13.0" of snow. Most areas from Fort Collins to Castle Rock reported between 8-14" of snow with DIA somewhat on the higher side which is somewhat uncommon. Snow was frequent and accumulated along the I-25 corridor during the days of the 1-3rd, 11th, 17-18th, 20-21st, 23-25th and 27-31st. Below is departure from normal temperature and precipitation maps for January 2023. Notice the well below normal temperatures are generally confined to northeastern Colorado where there was more persistent snow coverage.



From Colorado Springs to Pueblo temperatures were still below normal but nowhere to the degree of northeastern areas of the state. Snowfall was slightly above or below normal along the I-25 corridor from Monument into Pueblo. The average high temperature in Colorado Springs was 42.0°F, which was 3.0 degrees below the normal of 45.0°F. The average low temperature was 20.2°F, which was 1.7 degrees above the normal of 18.5°F. Combining the average high and low temperatures resulted in a monthly mean temperature in Colorado Springs of 31.1°F which was 0.6 degrees below the normal of 31.7°F. Colorado Springs set a new record high temperature

for the date on the 14th of the month with a reading of 67°F. The Colorado Springs municipal airport reported 0.40” of moisture which was 0.11” above the normal of 0.29”. Snowfall came in at 5.3” which was 0.4” above the normal of 4.9”.

Further south into Pueblo average high temperatures were 45.9° and average lows were 14.5°F, both of which were slightly below normal for January standards. The monthly mean temperature was 30.2°F which was 1.7 degrees below the normal of 31.9°F. Precipitation came in below normal at 0.17” and the airport in Pueblo reported 2.3” of snow. The 2.3” of snow was 2.6” below the normal of 4.9” and the 0.17” of moisture was 0.12” below the normal of 0.29”. The Pueblo area was one of the few areas of the state that experienced below normal precipitation during the month.

January Statistics DIA

TEMPERATURE (IN DEGREES F)	OBSERVED VALUE	NORMAL VALUE		DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL
AVERAGE MAX	34.3°F	44.6°F		-10.3°F
AVERAGE MIN	15.7°F	18.7°F		-3.0°F
MONTHLY MEAN	25.0°F	31.7°F		-6.7°F
DAYS WITH MAX 90 OR ABOVE	0.0	0.0		0.0
DAYS WITH MAX 32 OR BELOW	14	5.0		9.0
DAYS WITH MIN 32 OR BELOW	30	29		1.0
DAYS WITH MIN 0 OR BELOW	3	2		1
	OBSERVED VALUE	DATE(S)	NORMAL VALUE	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL
HIGHEST	59°F	1/14		
LOWEST	-10°F	1/30		
HEATING DEGREE DAYS				
MONTHLY TOTAL	1233		1034	199
SEASONAL TOTAL (since 7/1)	3597		3402	195
COOLING DEGREE DAYS				
MONTHLY TOTAL	0		0	0
YEARLY TOTAL (since 1/1)	0		0	0
PRECIPITATION (IN INCHES)				
MONTHLY TOTAL	1.25”		0.38”	0.87”
YEARLY TOTAL	1.25”		0.38”	0.87”
GREATEST IN 24 HOURS	0.87”	1/17-1/18		

DAYS WITH MEASURABLE PRECIP.	12		4.4	7.6
SNOWFALL (IN INCHES)				
MONTHLY TOTAL	13.0"		6.4"	6.6"
SEASONAL TOTAL	36.9"		25.4"	11.5"
GREATEST IN 24 HOURS	9.2"	1/17-1/18		
GREATEST DEPTH	6.0"	1/18		

February Preview

Will February continue to feature below normal temperatures and above normal snowfall for the Denver Metro area? If you believe the Drought Monitor trends for the month, eastern Colorado is expected to have equal chances for above/below normal temperature and precipitation. With snow cover over much of NE CO still the temperatures may trend to below normal for this area with areas lacking snow coverage potentially ending up with above normal temperatures. The snow cover helps to keep temperatures colder than their potential as some of the heat energy used to warm the atmosphere is used to melt snow instead of the air. During the month of February, we begin to gain daylight at a more rapid rate and temperatures begin to respond but not very quickly. Sunrise to start the month is 7:06am and to end the month is 6:32am with a gain of 34 minutes. Sunset starts the month at 5:21pm and ends at 5:52pm making for a gain of 31 minutes. 65 minutes of daylight is added but the average monthly mean temperatures only gain about 1 degree from January at 32.7°F (January mean temperatures is 31.7°F). Average highs to start the month begin at 44° and end the month at 49°F while average lows start off at 19°F and end the month at 23°F. The real temperature gains begin in March and arctic air can still frequent the area in February as record lows are -10 or more below zero each day through the 18th of the month. After 3 colder than normal and above normal snowfall months in a row it would make sense for February of 2023 to take a step back and feature below normal to near normal snowfall and temperatures that are near normal to above normal.

DENVER'S JANUARY CLIMATOLOGICALLY NORMAL	
(NORMAL PERIOD 1991-2020 DIA Data)	OBSERVED VALUE
TEMPERATURE	
AVERAGE HIGH	45.7°F
AVERAGE LOW	19.7°F
MONTHLY MEAN	32.7°F
DAYS WITH HIGH 90 OR ABOVE	0.0
DAYS WITH HIGH 32 OR BELOW	5.3
DAYS WITH LOW 32 OR BELOW	26.0
DAYS WITH LOWS ZERO OR BELOW	1.6
PRECIPITATION	

MONTHLY AVERAGE	0.41"
DAYS WITH MEASURABLE PRECIPITATION	5.5
AVERAGE SNOWFALL IN INCHES	7.6"
DAYS WITH 1.0 INCH OF SNOW OR MORE	4.0
MISCELLANEOUS AVERAGES	
HEATING DEGREE DAYS	1000
COOLING DEGREE DAYS	0
WIND SPEED (MPH)	9.7 mph
WIND DIRECTION	North
DAYS WITH THUNDERSTORMS	0
DAYS WITH DENSE FOG	2
NUMBER OF DAYS MOSTLY SUNNY/PARTLY CLOUDY/CLOUDY	11/11/6
EXTREMES	
RECORD HIGH	80 on 2/10/2017
RECORD LOW	-25 on 2/1/1951, 2/8/1936
WARMEST	43.7 in 1954
COLDEST	17.7 in 1899
WETTEST	2.01" in 1934
DRIEST	0.01" in 1883
SNOWIEST	22.4" in 2015
LEAST SNOWY	TR 2009

Snowfall

City	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr/May	Total
Aurora (Central)	TR	8.2"	12.4"	10.5"				31.1"
Boulder	0.1"	24.5"	16.0"	9.3"				49.9"
Brighton	0.0"	9.0"	10.2"	11.6"				30.8"
Broomfield	TR	15.1"	16.1"	10.7"				41.9"
Castle Rock	3.8"	5.6"	11.1"	13.3"				33.8"
Colo Sprgs Airport	TR	7.4"	3.9"	5.3"				16.6"
Denver DIA	TR	10.9"	13.0"	13.0"				36.9"
Denver Downtown	TR	9.1"	9.6"	9.7"				28.4"
Fort Collins	0.2"	9.2"	4.0"	8.8"				22.2"

Golden	2.0"	22.6"	16.2"	10.5"				51.3"
Highlands Ranch	2.5"	10.6"	11.2"	8.6"				32.9"
Lakewood	TR	10.6"	14.2"	9.0"				33.8"
Littleton	1.2"	14.1"	11.0"	8.8"				35.1"
Monument	5.5"	5.8"	13.2"	13.3"				37.8"
Parker	1.0"	6.9"	11.0"	12.6"				31.5"
Sedalia - Hwy 67	5.2"	7.6"	10.6"	15.2"				38.6"
Thornton	TR	12.6"	12.5"	11.8"				36.9"
Westminster	TR	13.3"	15.5"	10.2"				39.0"
Wheat Ridge	TR	15.2"	14.4"	12.0"				41.6"
Windsor	0.0"	8.6"	7.3"	9.9"				25.8"

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