

December 2020 Climate Summary

Overview

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Synopsis

December 2020 was warmer and drier than normal.

Early December brought a storm system across southern New Mexico on the 1st and 2nd with mostly light snow outside the high mountains. The exception was far northern Albuquerque and Rio Rancho, as several locations reported 6 to 8 inches of snowfall. Moderate snow fell over northern and central New Mexico from the 10th to the 11th and from the 12th to 13th. A weaker disturbance crossed the state on the 15th with light snow reports in the north. Strong winds blasted the area on the 22nd and 23rd, then a final storm of the year brought light to moderate snow to the north and west, as well as light freezing rain and freezing fog to the eastern plains on the morning of the 29th.

Bernalillo Dec 2 - Courtesy of ComoQueRivers
via Twitter



Sedillo Hill Dec 12 - courtesy of Amy Marsh via Twitter



Rio Rancho Dec 2 - Courtesy Ti Cortiz via Twitter



December 2020 Climate Summary

Statewide Precipitation Trends

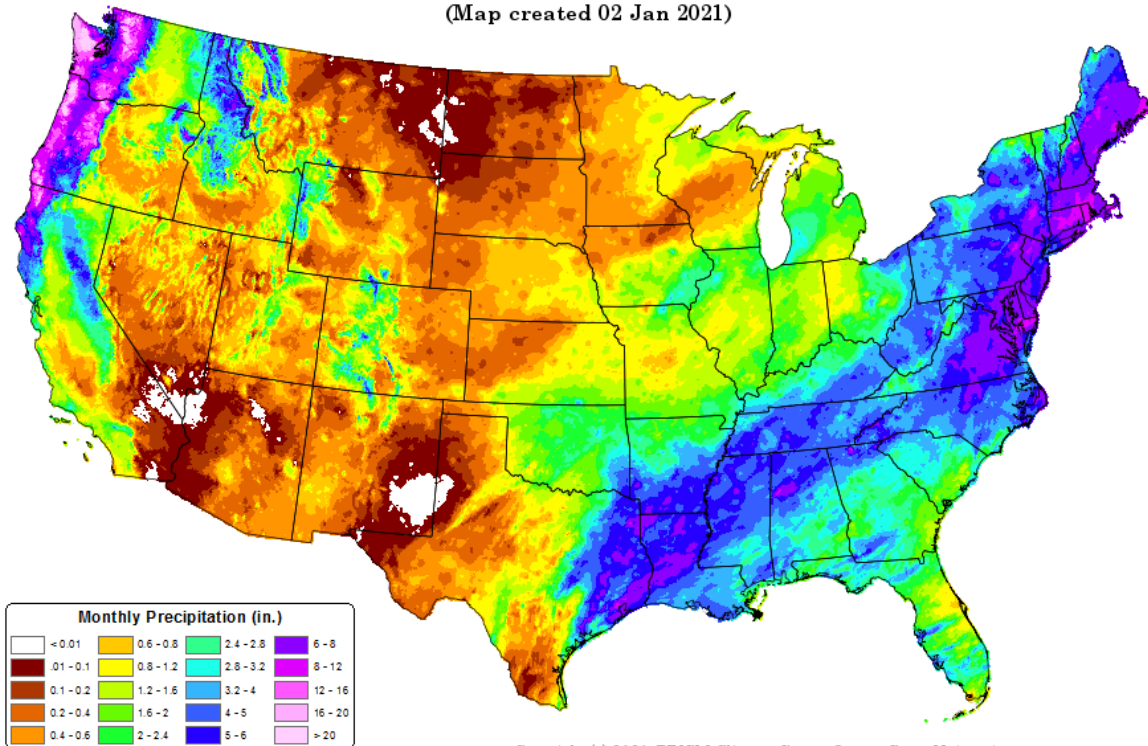
Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Actual Precipitation

Total Precipitation: Dec 2020

Period ending 31 Dec 2020
(Map created 02 Jan 2021)

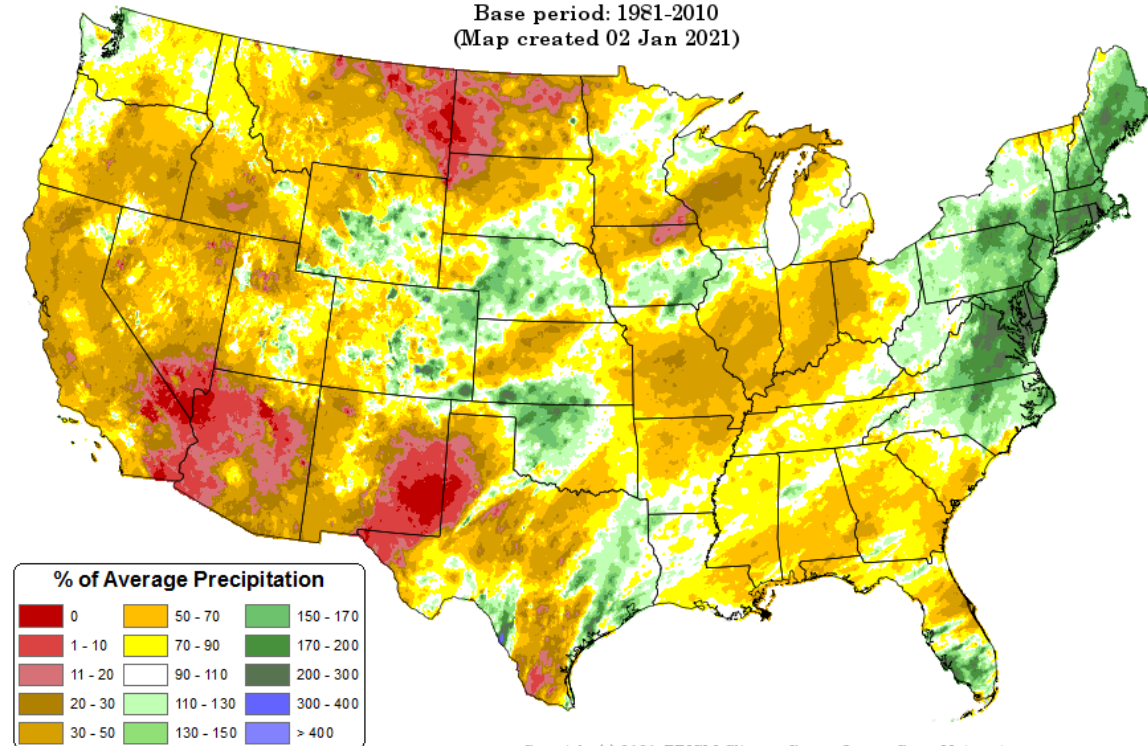


Copyright (c) 2021, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

Precipitation Anomaly

Total Precipitation Anomaly: Dec 2020

Period ending 31 Dec 2020
Base period: 1981-2010
(Map created 02 Jan 2021)



Copyright (c) 2021, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

December 2020 Climate Summary

Statewide Temperature Trends

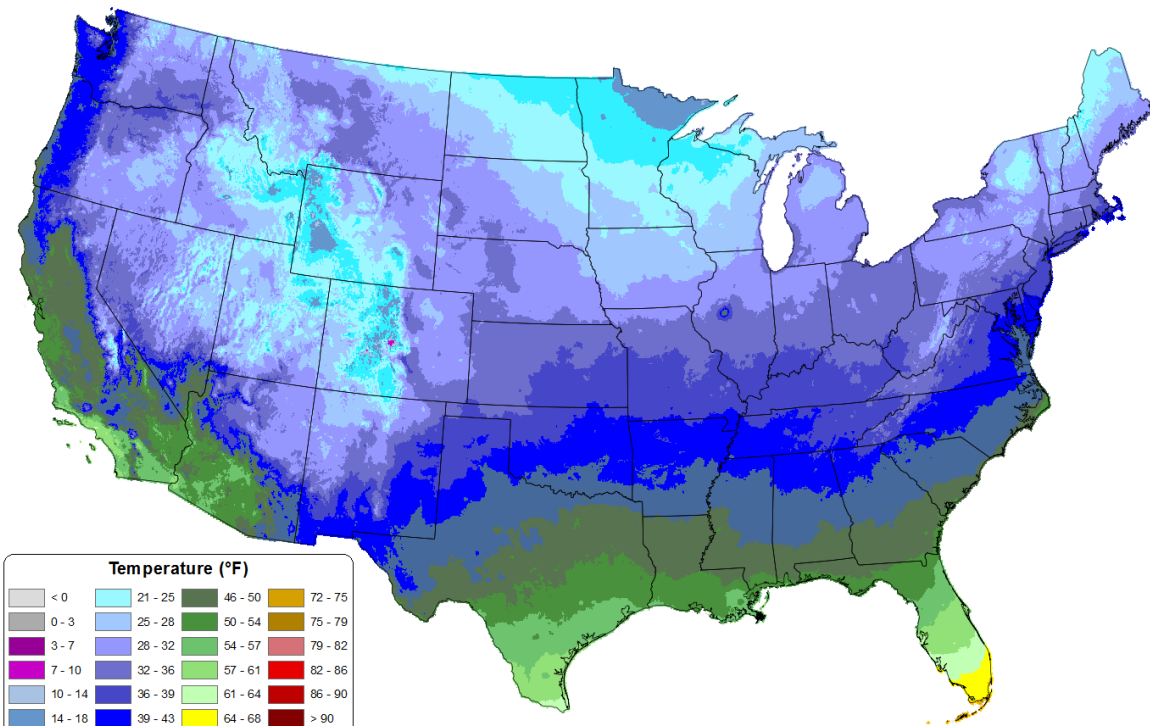
Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Actual Temperature

Average Daily Mean Temperature: Dec 2020

Period ending 7 AM EST 31 Dec 2020
(Map created 02 Jan 2021)

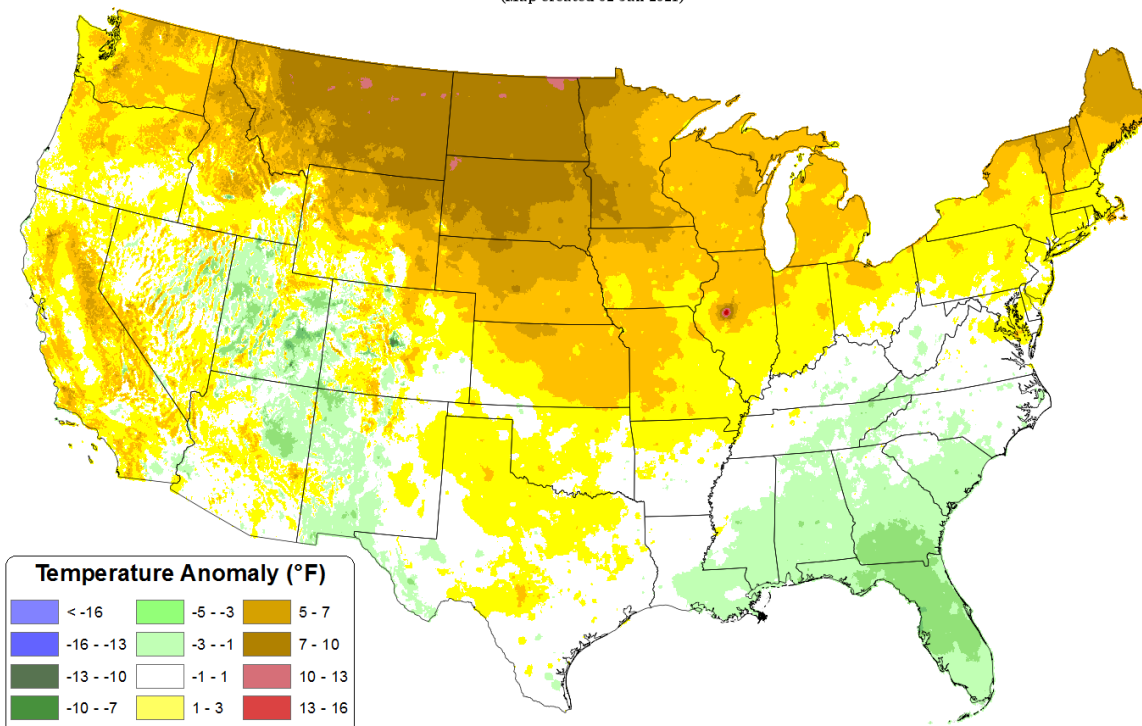


Copyright (c) 2021, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University

Temperature Anomaly

Daily Mean Temperature Anomaly: Dec 2020

Period ending 7 AM EST 31 Dec 2020
Base period: 1981-2010
(Map created 02 Jan 2021)



Copyright (c) 2021, PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University



NWS Albuquerque

weather.gov/abq

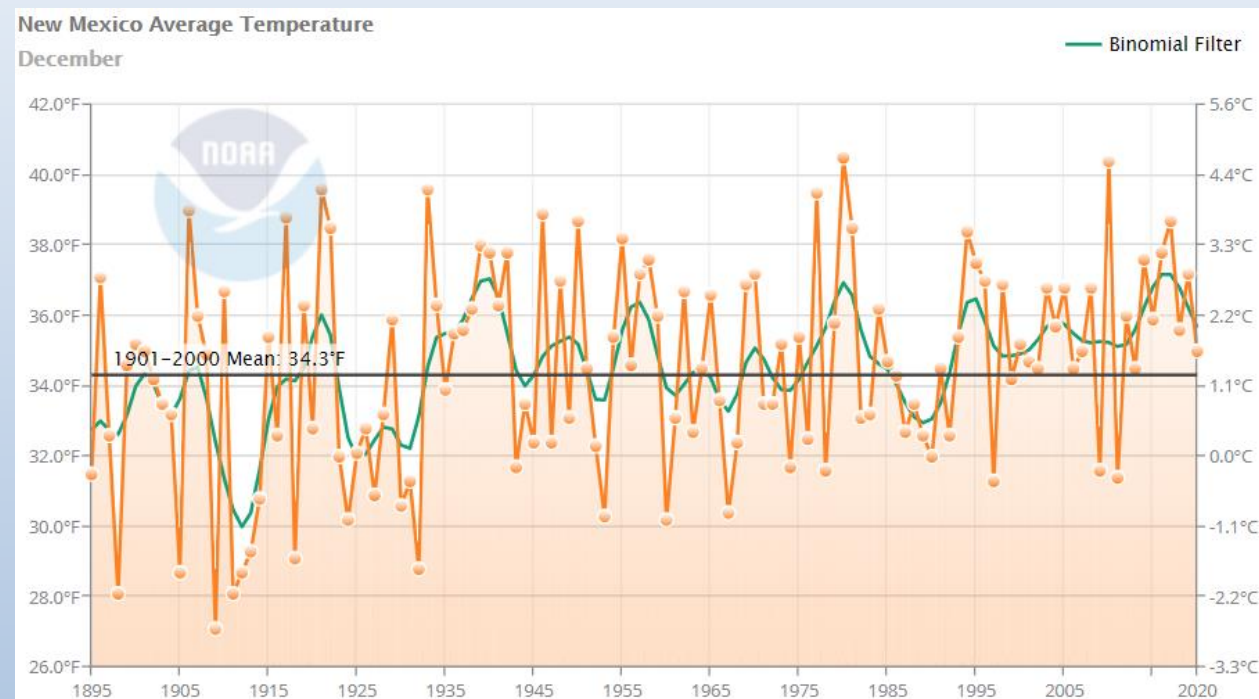
December 2020 Climate Summary

Statewide Temperature & Precipitation Trends

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT

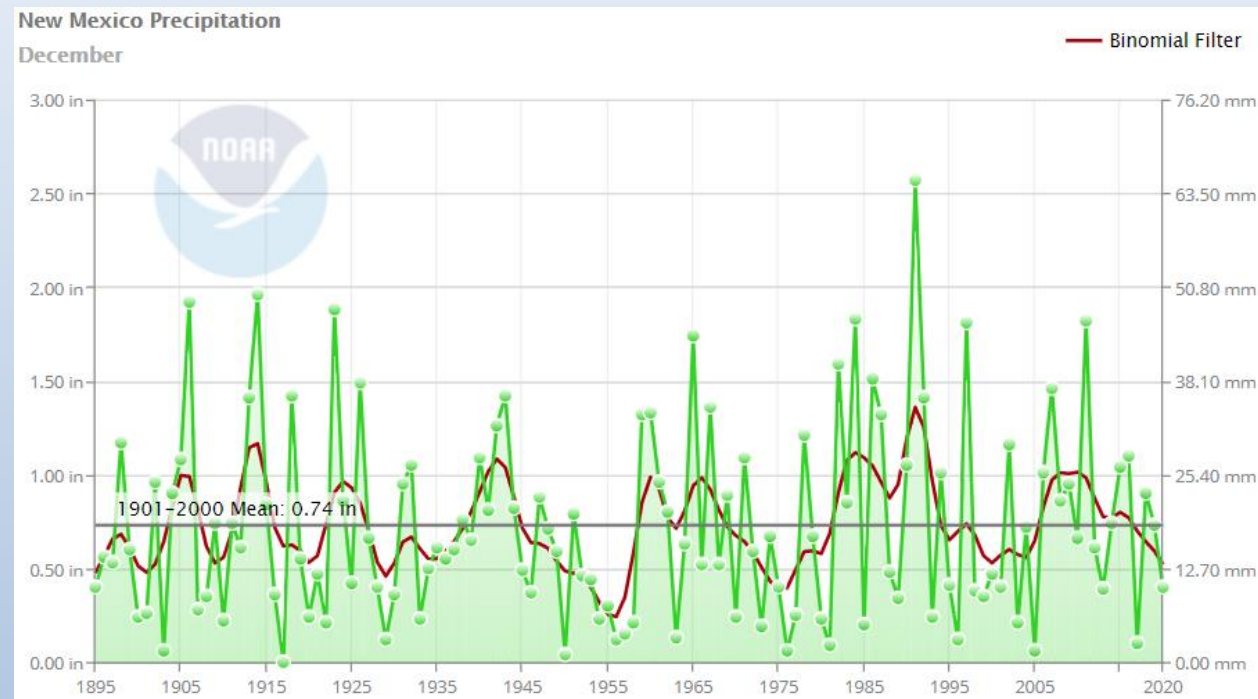


Temperature



The average statewide temperature was 35.0° which was 0.7° above the long-term normal of 34.3° (1901-2000). This ranks as the 68th warmest December on record for New Mexico.

Precipitation



The average statewide precipitation was 0.41" which was 0.33" below the long-term normal of 0.74" (1901-2000). This ranks as the 38th driest December on record for New Mexico.

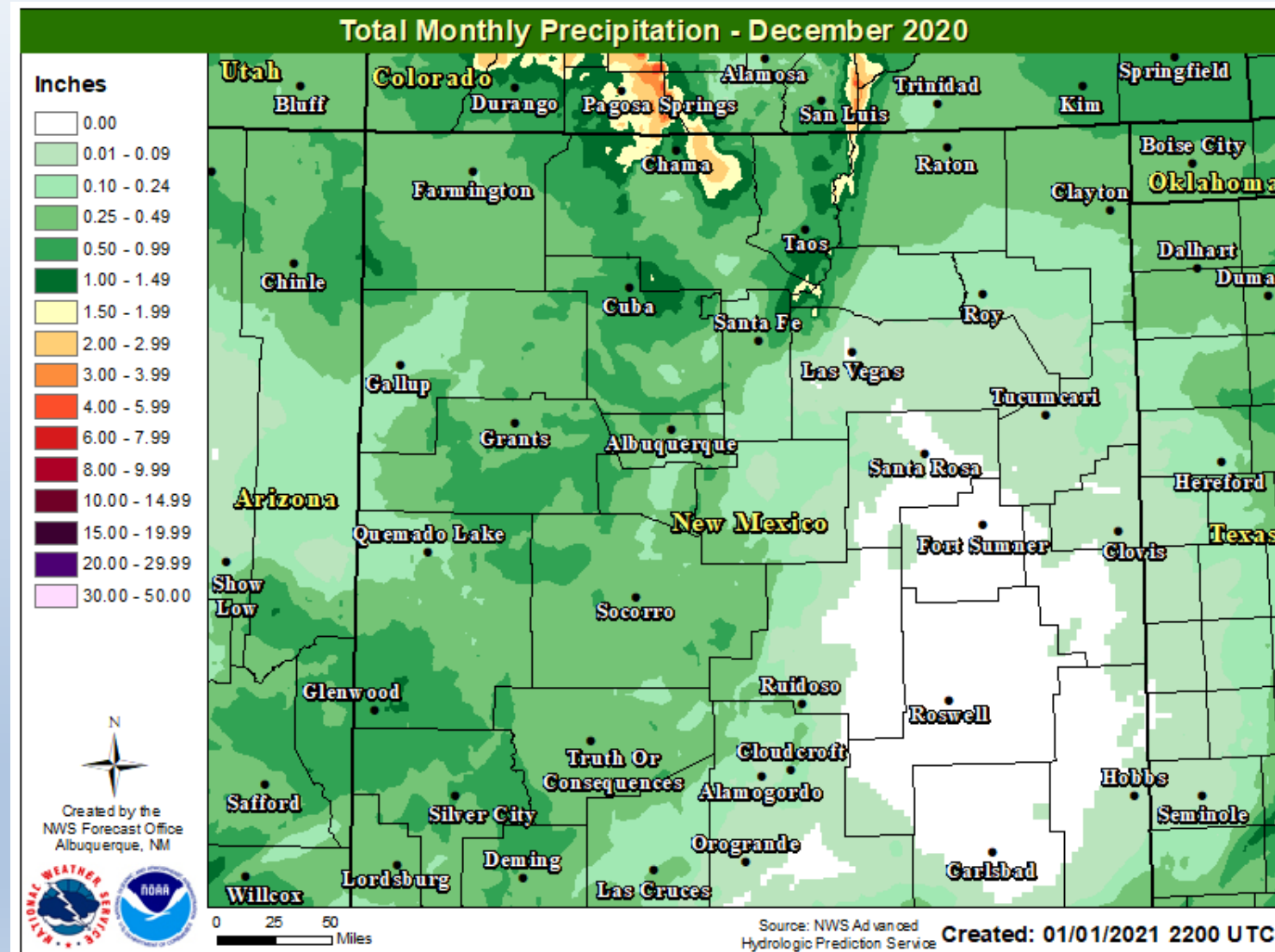
December 2020 Climate Summary

Monthly Precipitation

Weather Forecast Office

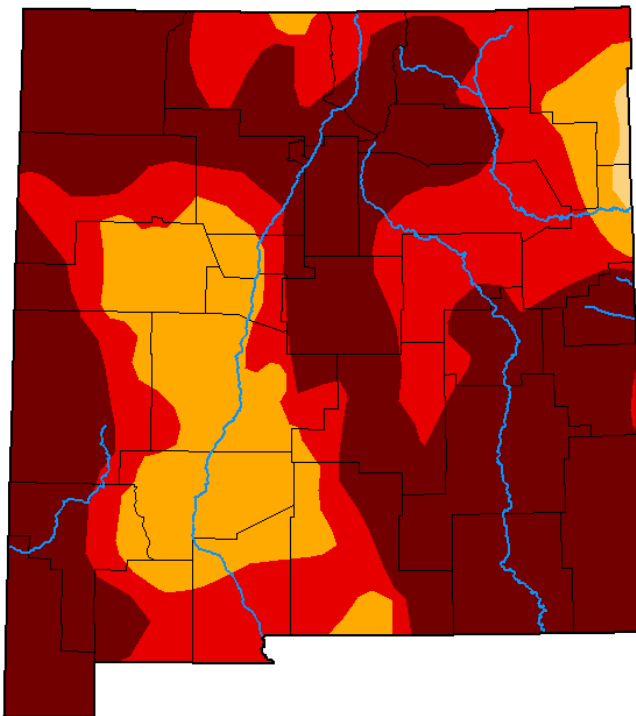
Albuquerque, NM

Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Here is a more detailed image of the December 2020 precipitation.

U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico



December 1, 2020

(Released Thursday, Dec. 3, 2020)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.59	82.26	53.27
Last Week 11-24-2020	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.59	79.21	50.95
3 Months Ago 09-01-2020	0.03	99.97	94.68	65.29	29.33	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2019	52.86	47.14	28.33	15.26	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-29-2020	0.00	100.00	99.92	73.65	39.88	2.90
One Year Ago 12-03-2019	52.69	47.31	31.96	16.52	0.00	0.00

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>

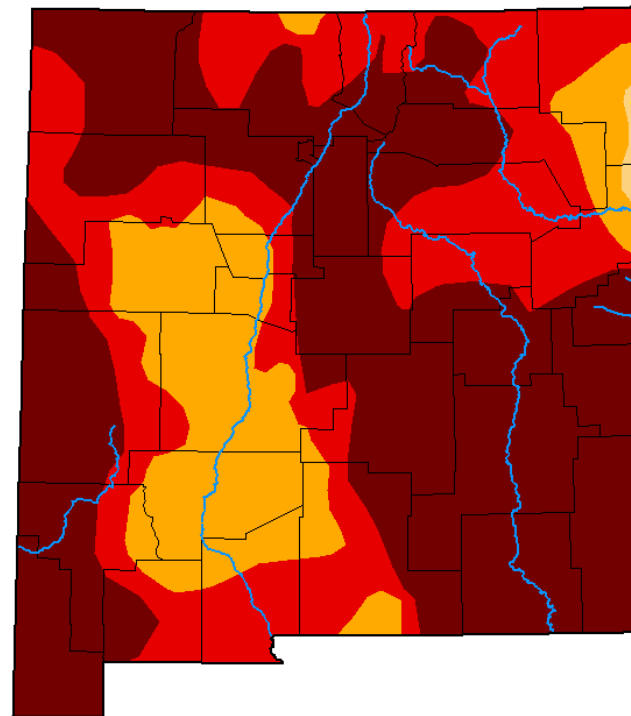
Author:

Richard Heim
NCEI/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico



December 29, 2020

(Released Thursday, Dec. 31, 2020)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.97	99.59	82.26	53.20
Last Week 12-22-2020	0.00	100.00	99.97	99.59	82.26	53.20
3 Months Ago 09-29-2020	0.00	100.00	99.92	73.65	39.88	2.90
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2019	52.86	47.14	28.33	15.26	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-29-2020	0.00	100.00	99.92	73.65	39.88	2.90
One Year Ago 12-03-2019	52.86	47.14	28.33	15.26	0.00	0.00

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:

Adam Hartman
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Very little change occurred to drought conditions through December 2020. Extreme to exceptional drought covers nearly 82% of the state of which nearly 53% is considered exceptional.

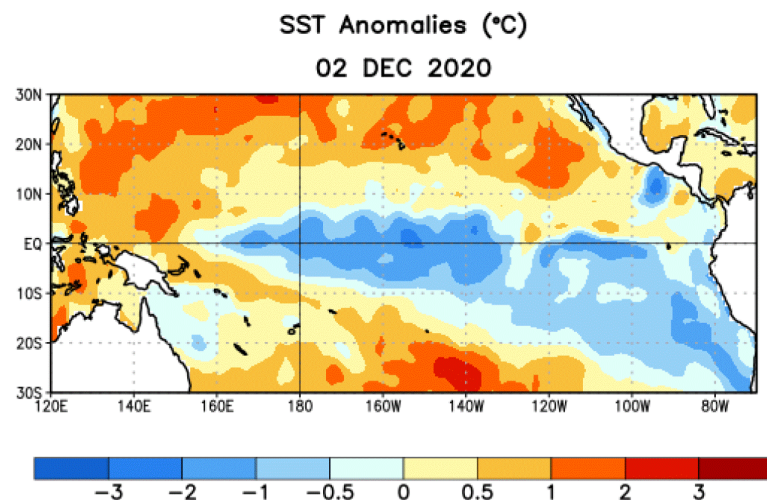


Figure 1. Average sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (°C) for the week centered on 2 December 2020. Anomalies are computed with respect to the 1981-2010 base period weekly means.

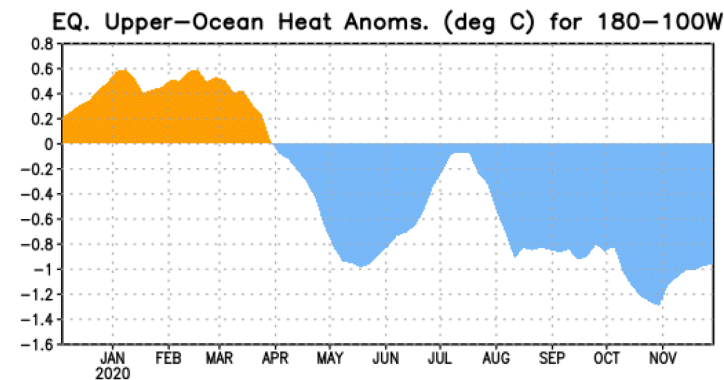


Figure 3. Area-averaged upper-ocean heat content anomaly (°C) in the equatorial Pacific (5°N-5°S, 180°-100°W). The heat content anomaly is computed as the departure from the 1981-2010 base period pentad means.

EQ. Subsurface Temperature Anomalies (deg C)

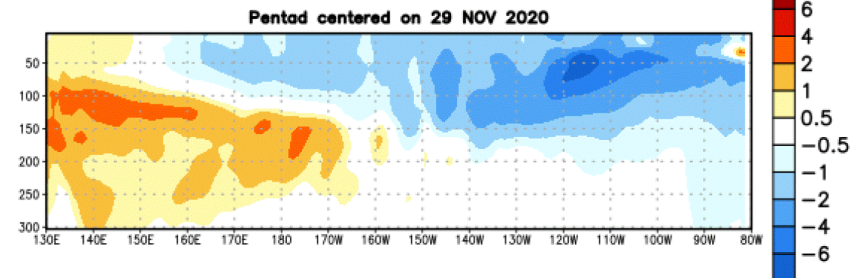


Figure 4. Depth-longitude section of equatorial Pacific upper-ocean (0-300m) temperature anomalies (°C) centered on the pentad of 29 November 2020. Anomalies are departures from the 1981-2010 base period pentad means.

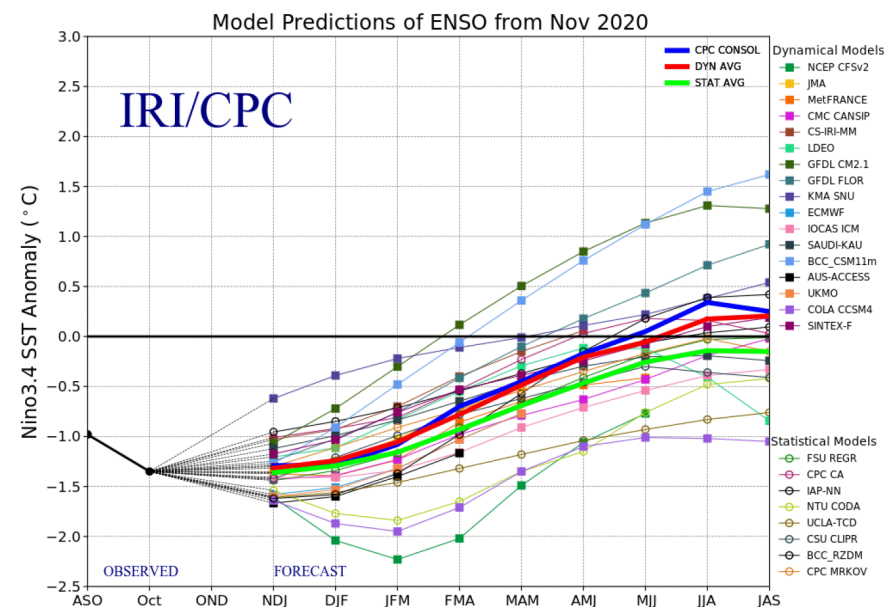


Figure 6. Forecasts of sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies for the Niño 3.4 region (5°N-5°S, 120°W-170°W). Figure updated 19 November 2020.

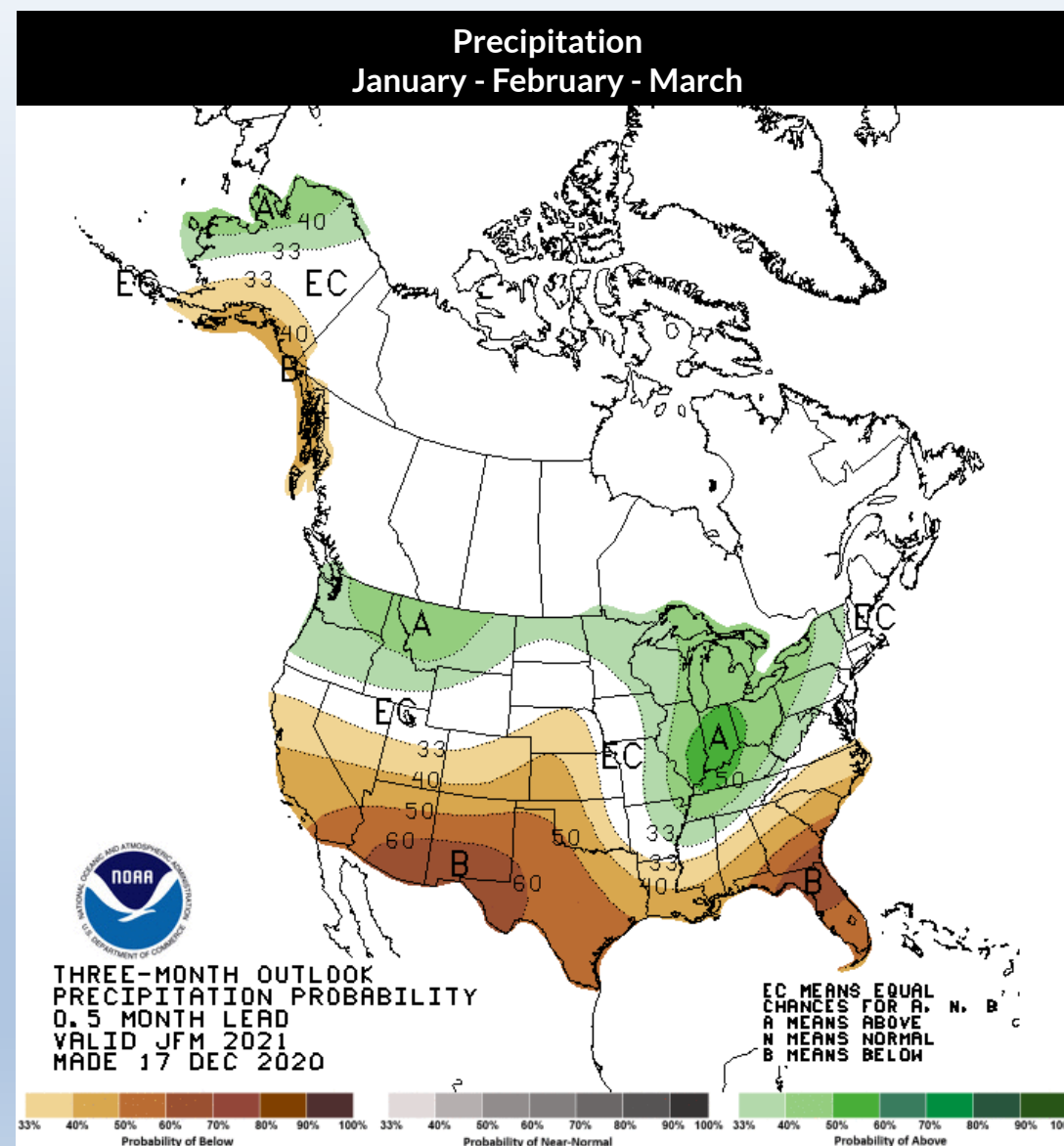
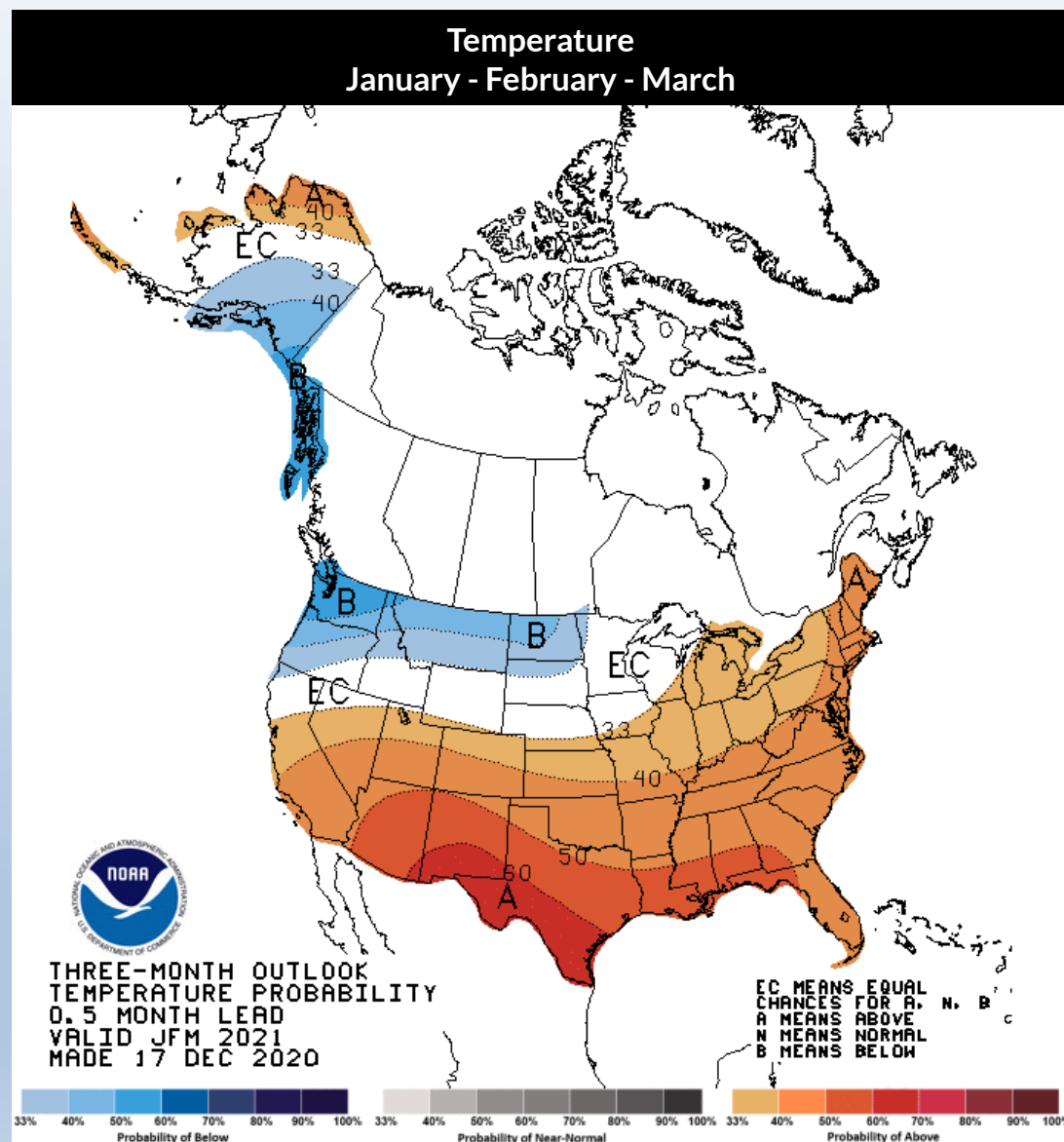
December 2020 Climate Summary

Temperature & Precipitation Outlook

Weather Forecast Office

Albuquerque, NM

Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT

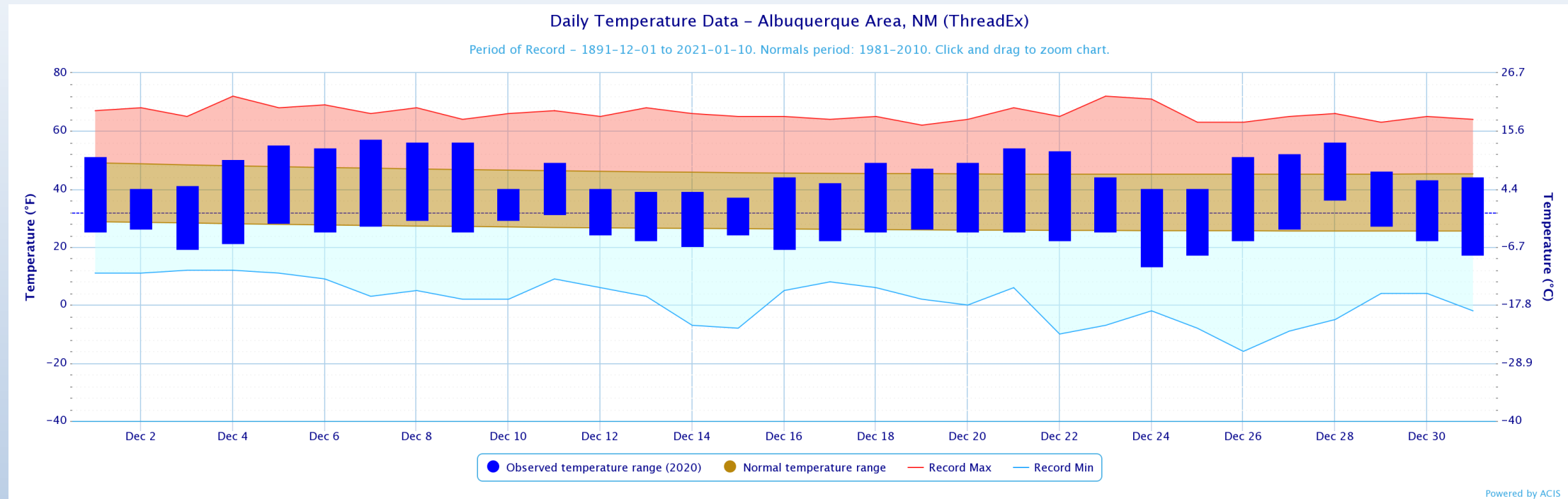


The three month climate outlook favors above normal temperature probabilities while precipitation favors below normal probabilities. This outlook will favor persistent or worsening drought conditions over NM.

December 2020 Climate Summary

Albuquerque Sunport Temperatures

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



The average temperature for Albuquerque was 35.5°, which was 0.8° below the normal of 36.3°. The average maximum temperature for the month was 47.0°. This was 0.9° above the normal average maximum temperature of 46.1°. The average minimum temperature for the month was 24.0°. This was 2.5° below the normal average minimum temperature of 26.5°. This ranks as the 58th coldest December on record.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

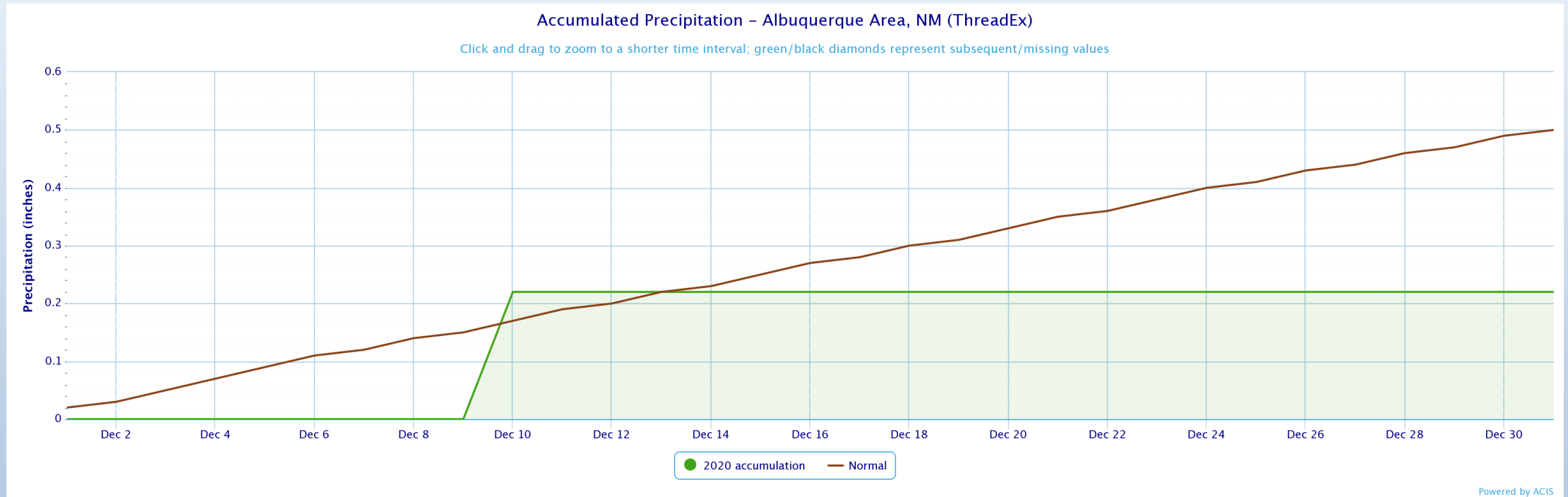
Albuquerque Sunport Precipitation

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Normal Precipitation = 0.50"

Actual = 0.22"



There was 0.22" of precipitation measured at Albuquerque, compared to the normal of 0.50", or 0.28" below normal.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

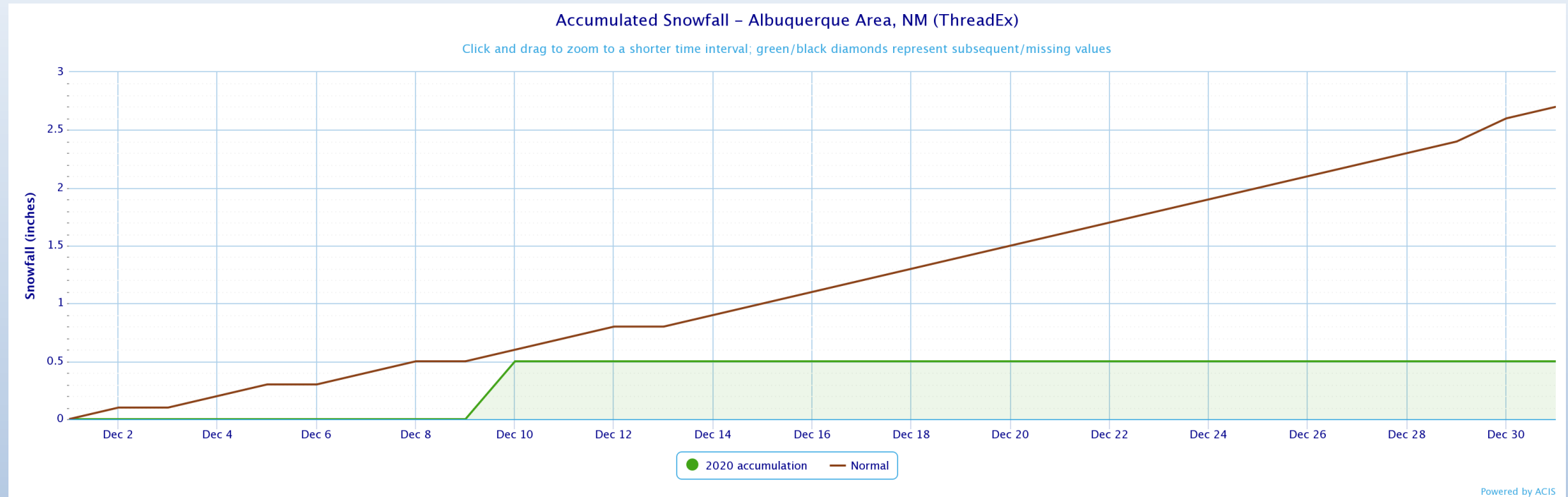
Albuquerque Sunport Snowfall

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Normal Snowfall = 2.7"

Actual = 0.5"



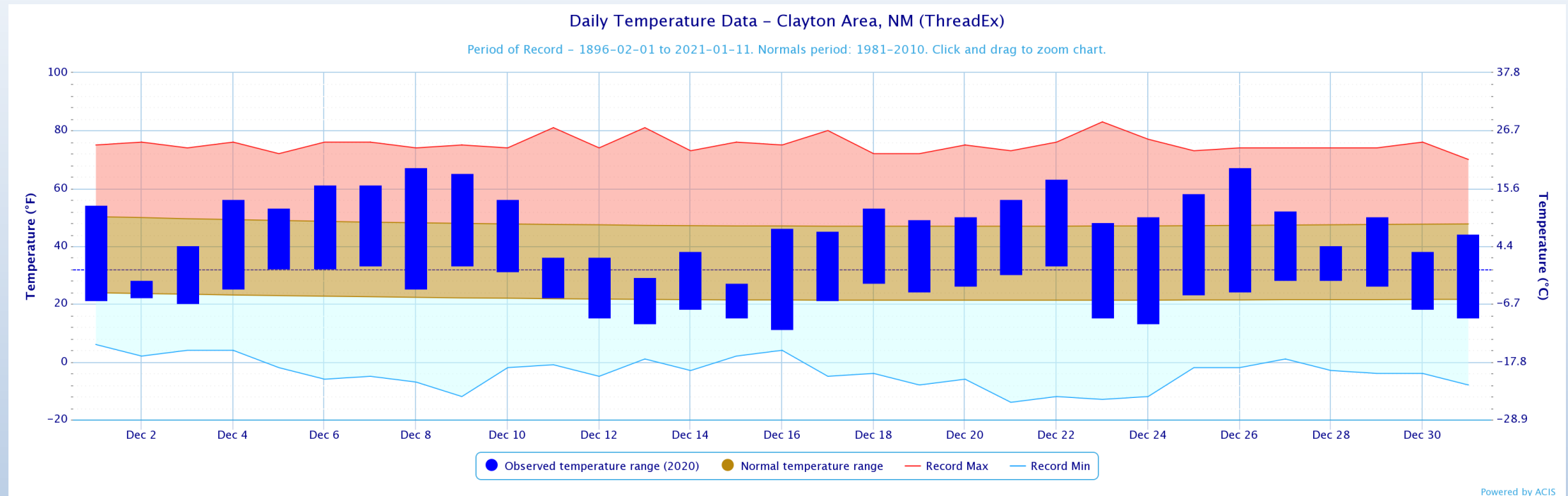
There was 0.5" of snow measured at Albuquerque, compared to the December normal of 2.7", or 2.2" below normal.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

Clayton Temperatures

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



The average temperature for Clayton was 36.0°, which was 1.2° above the normal of 34.8°. The average maximum temperature for the month was 48.9°. This was 1.2° above the normal average maximum temperature of 47.7°. The average minimum temperature for the month was 23.2°. This was 1.3° above the normal average minimum temperature of 21.9°. This ranks as the 50th warmest December on record.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

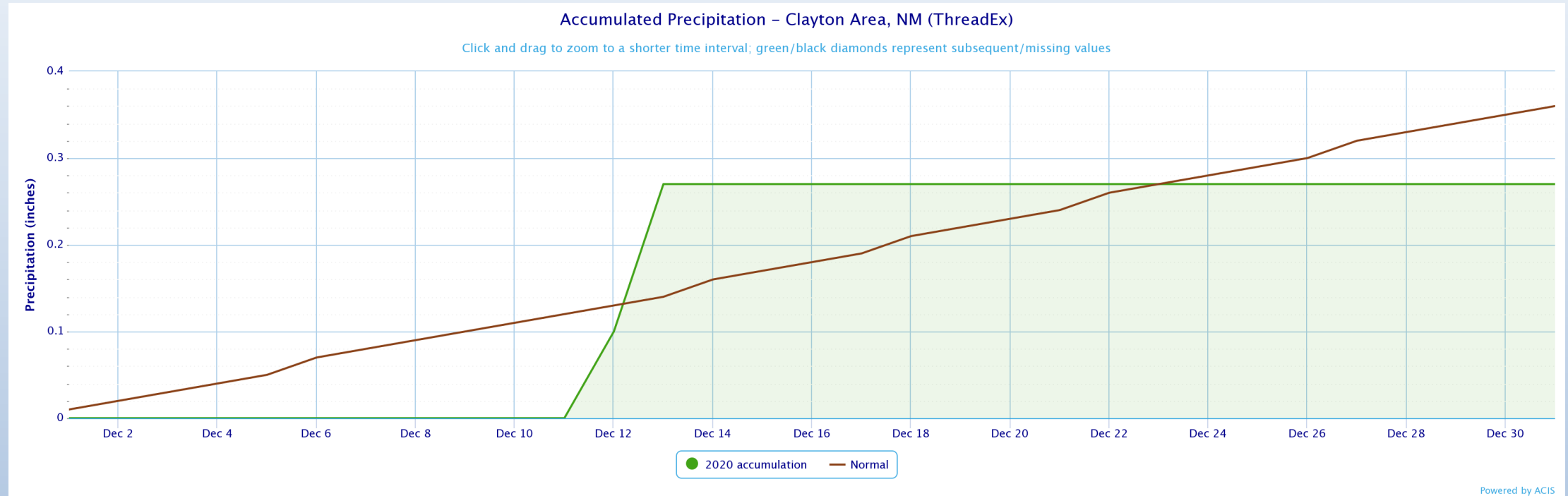
Clayton Precipitation

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Normal Precipitation = 0.36"

Actual = 0.27"



There was 0.27" of precipitation measured at Clayton, compared to the normal of 0.36", or 0.09" below normal. This was the 59th driest December on record (1893-2019).

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

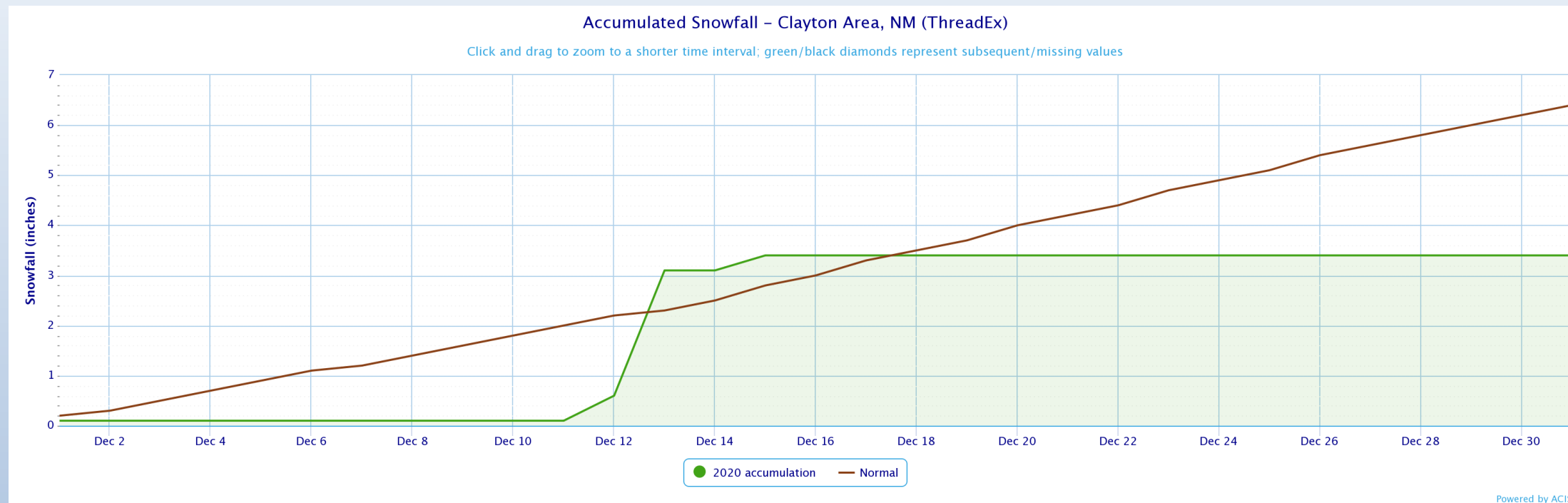
Clayton Snowfall

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Normal Snowfall = 6.4"

Actual = 3.4"



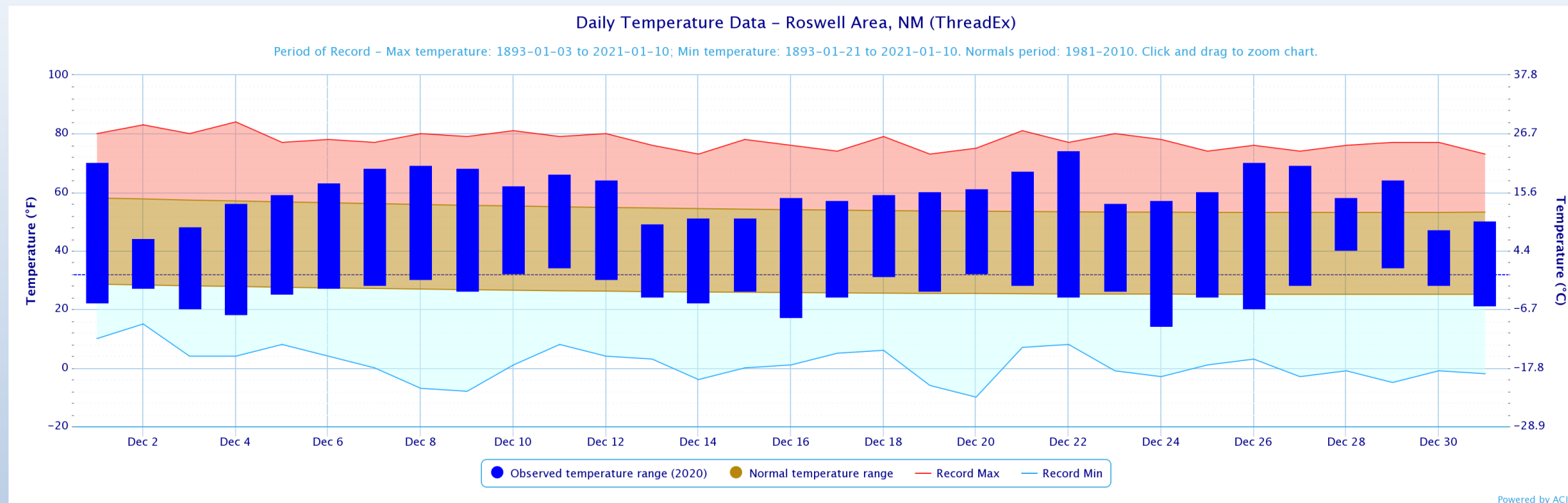
There was 3.4" of snow measured at Clayton, compared to the December normal of 6.4", or 3.0" below normal.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

Roswell Temperatures

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



The average temperature for Roswell was 43.0°, which was 2.6° above the normal of 40.4°. The average maximum temperature for the month was 59.8°. This was 5.2° above the average maximum temperature of 54.6°. The average minimum temperature for the month was 26.1°. This was 0.0° above the normal average minimum temperature of 26.1°. This was tied for the 25th warmest December on record.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

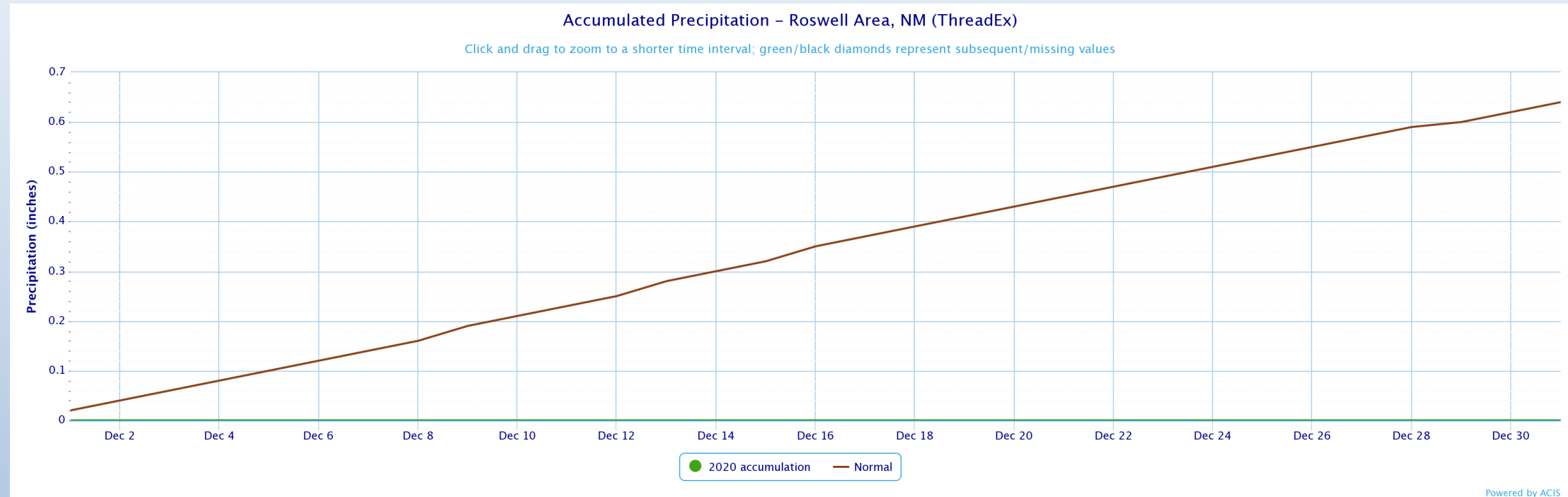
Roswell Precipitation

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Normal Precipitation = 0.64"

Actual = Trace



There was a trace of precipitation measured at Roswell, compared to the normal of 0.64", or 0.64" below normal. This was tied for the 6th driest December on record (1893-2020).

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

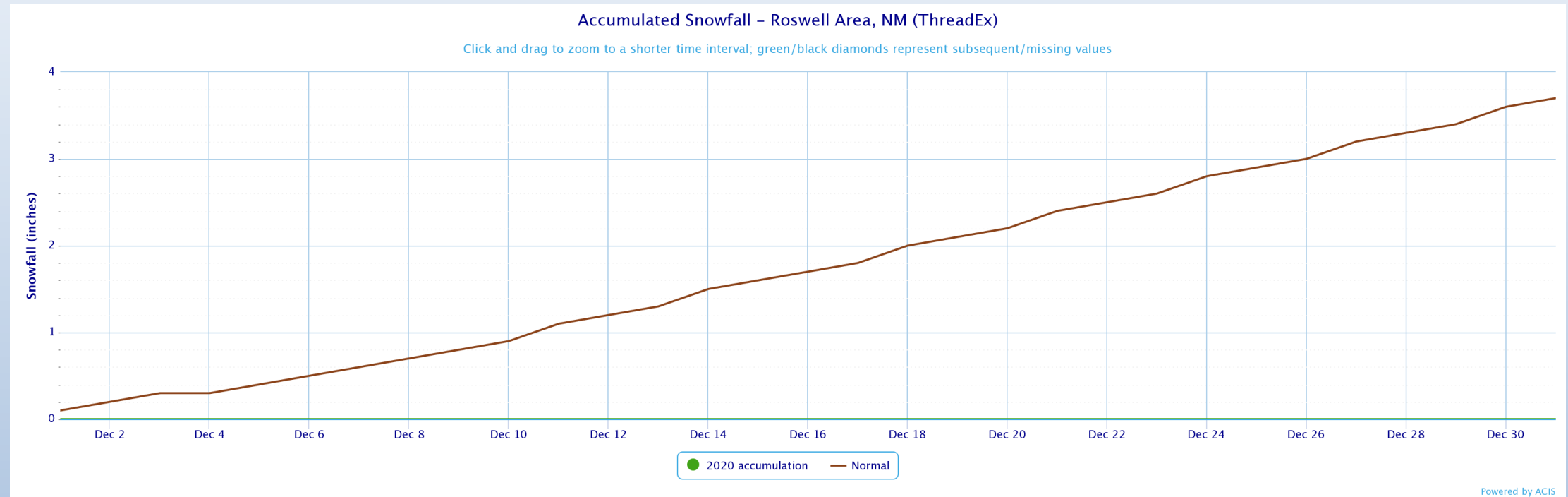
Roswell Snowfall

Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Normal Snowfall = 3.7"

Actual = Trace



There was a trace of snow measured at Roswell, compared to the December normal of 3.7", or 3.7" below normal.

Record Type	Date	New Record	Previous Record

December 2020 Climate Summary

Severe Weather*








Weather Forecast Office
Albuquerque, NM
Issued January 12, 2021 12:33 AM MDT



Event Type	Begin Date	County/Zone Name	Magnitude	Type	Event Narrative
Winter Weather	12/1-12/2/2020	Sandia/Manzano Mts including Edgewood			Large motor vehicle pile-up along I-40 between Tijeras and Sedillo.
Winter Weather	12/2/2020	Middle Rio Grande Valley/ABQ Metro	3-8"		Narrow band of heavy snow impacted southern Rio Rancho.
Winter Storm	12/12-12/13/2020	Johnson/Bartlett Mesas and Raton Pass	3-6"		Closure of U.S. 64 between Raton and Capulin.
Winter Storm	12/12-12/13/2020	Union County			Closure of U.S. 64 between Capulin and Clayton.
Heavy Snow	12/12-12/13/2020	Northern Sangre de Cristo Mountains	10-20"		Red River to Taos Ski Valley.
Heavy Snow	12/12-12/13/2020	Southern Sangre de Cristo Mountains	8-15"		Truchas to Chamisal and the Santa Fe ski area.
Heavy Snow	12/12-12/13/2020	Tusas Mountains including Chama	8-12"		Chama to Canjilon and Hopewell Lake.
High Wind	12/26-12/27/2020	Far Northeast Highlands	63 kt	Gust	Raton airport recorded sustained winds up to 48 mph with gusts to 72 mph.
Heavy Snow	12/27-12/29/2020	Tusas Mountains including Chama	8-10"		Chama to Ensenada.
Heavy Snow	12/27-12/29/2020	Northern Sangre de Cristo Mountains	8-13"		Red River to Taos Ski Valley.

*Storm reports are considered preliminary until a final review is certified in the NWS Storm Data publication.
Certified data is available three to four months post-event at: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>



-  NCEI Climatological Rankings: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/national/rankings>
-  PRISM Climate Data: <http://www.prism.oregonstate.edu/>
-  NWS Local Climate Pages: <https://w2.weather.gov/climate/index.php?wfo=abq>
-  NCEI Storm Data: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>
-  Questions?: sr-abq.webmaster@noaa.gov
-  NWS Albuquerque Facebook
-  @NWSAlbuquerque & #nmwx