



Monthly Climate Report

NWS Reno NV

Issued: 10/15/2026



Weather Synopsis & Highlights:

September 2026 temperatures were generally near average south of Interstate 80, and between 1 and 3 degrees cooler than average north of Interstate 80 (Figure 1). Precipitation in September was near average north of Interstate 80, although September is typically a dry month so this didn't translate to significant rainfall. Most of this rain occurred early in the month. From I-80 southward, dry conditions prevailed with rainfall amounts between 0% and 50% of average (Figure 2).

September began with dry conditions and gusty winds (Photo 1), with Red Flag Warnings in effect on the 1st for parts of northeast CA and western NV. Temperatures were below average through the first week of the month, with a cold front bringing areas of wetting rainfall (between 0.10" and 0.50", with isolated amounts up to 1") to northeast CA and northwest NV on the 3rd and 4th. The coolest day overall was the 4th with highs mainly in the 60s to near 70 for lower elevations especially from US-50 northward, and upper 50s-near 60 for the Tahoe basin.

On the 6th, another Red Flag Warning was in effect for parts of the eastern Sierra and west central NV due to gusty winds and low humidity. A warming trend then returned from the 8th through 11th, with highs rebounding to the lower 90s for western NV valleys and 80s near the Sierra. The second week of September was dry overall, except for isolated rain showers and a few lightning strikes on the 10th across the eastern Sierra and western NV, producing sparse rainfall amounts of 0.10" or less (Photo 2). A stronger storm moving across Oregon produced a dry and windy day on the 12th, with peak gusts generally between 40-50 mph and Red Flag Warnings in effect. After this storm passed through, temperatures trended downward with highs mainly in the 70s on the 14th.

After a brief warmup on the 15th, the next storm dropped in from the Pacific Northwest from the 16th through 17th, bringing breezy winds and cooler temperatures again (mainly 70s for lower elevations and 60s near the Sierra through the 18th). Precipitation was sparse and limited to far northeast CA, while a new fire start (Floriston Fire) on the 16th led to a closure of westbound I-80 between the CA-NV state line and Truckee for 2 days, followed by a partial reopening of one lane for the next 3 days (Photo 3).

A warming trend returned from the 19th through 24th, with highs rebounding to the 80s for lower elevations and 70s near the Sierra, while a few sites in west central NV reached 90 degrees by the 24th. A weak low pressure brought isolated showers and thunderstorms mainly for the eastern Sierra and parts of northeast CA on the 21st and 22nd. Rainfall amounts were sparse and light (less than 0.10") in most areas, except parts of Mono County near the Sierra crest and White Mountains received 0.25-0.50".

A dry cold front passage on the 25th brought gusty winds of 35-45 mph and sufficiently low humidity for Red Flag Warnings in much of western NV and parts of the eastern Sierra. Cooler conditions with highs mainly in the 70s for lower elevations and 60s near the Sierra continued through the 27th, along with a few brief rain showers (Photo 4). A weak low pressure then brought temperatures down even more on the 28th, with highs closer to 70 degrees for lower elevations and lower 60s near the Sierra. Bands of rain with embedded lightning produced totals between 0.10" and 0.50" in parts of Lyon, Pershing, Churchill, Alpine and northern Mono counties during the morning of the 28th. The final two days of September featured dry conditions, mainly light winds and a warming trend as highs returned to the upper 70s to mid 80s by the 30th.

Hydrology:

September marked the end of the 2026 water year and did not add any notable hydrologic events to the water year tally. In fact, there were no flood related products issued by the NWS Reno office during the month of September. Instead September was a busy month preparing for potential post-fire flooding with many recent burns in steep terrain above developed areas. The Floriston Fire was added to this list in September. While the Floriston Fire, at 622 acres, is small when compared to many of the fires in the area this year, the steep terrain directly above I-80 is prone to rock fall, flooding, and debris flows.

Wildfires can increase runoff and flood risk, especially during the first few years after a fire. No two fires are the same, but the loss of trees, shrubs and ground cover lead to more rapid runoff and erosion. Fires can also alter the soil properties, enhancing runoff and erosion. In steep terrain post-fire debris flows or debris laden floods can be very impactful. These events can be triggered rapidly by less than 15 minutes of heavy rain creating a warning challenge. NWS Reno works closely with partners to monitor recent burns to improve public safety. If you live, work or travel below recent burns in steep terrain, you can learn more about post fire hazards from a great new [fact sheet](#) created by our friends at the [California Geological Survey](#).

September mountain precipitation was above normal in the Truckee basin and NW Nevada and far NE California (Figure 3). Water year 2026 mountain precipitation was near normal for the east side of the Sierra, but below normal for the rest of Nevada with the exception of the Spring mountains (Figures 4 and 5). NRCS SNOTEL mountain soil moisture ended the 2026 water year very near the long term median for both the east side of the Sierra and the Humboldt (Figure 6) while satellite-derived soil moisture shows dry conditions throughout the region (Figure 7). This contrast in soil moisture information may highlight a difference between higher mountain locations and drier lower elevation valleys. Water year 2026 observed streamflows were near normal for the Truckee, Carson and Walker basins, but well below normal in other areas (Figure 8). Remember, much of this water came early in the water year with rain and snowmelt before the typical spring snowmelt. As of the end of September, reservoir storage was still above normal in Lake Tahoe and the Walker system, slightly below normal for the Truckee and Carson, and well below normal for Rye Patch on the lower Humboldt (Figure 9).

Drought Update:

The U.S. Drought Monitor depicts all of the NWS Reno service area in D0 (abnormally dry), and about 69% of the area in D1 (moderate drought). Also, D2 (Severe drought) covers about 12% of the area, and mostly

confined to eastern Pershing County (Figure 10 top). Portions of Mineral and Churchill counties experienced one class degradations from D0 to D1 (Figure 10 middle). During September,

Over the course of the 2025-2026 water year, moderate drought developed in western Pershing, northern Lyon, Washoe, Storey, and Carson City counties in western Nevada. Moderate drought also developed in the Surprise Valley, east and far northern Lassen County, as well as in eastern Sierra, Nevada, and Placer counties in California. Meanwhile, the drought status didn't change in Mineral County, while eastern Pershing and Churchill experienced worsening drought conditions (Figure 10 bottom). The 2026 Water Year temperatures were well above normal throughout the region (Figure 11). [Preliminary data for Nevada statewide Water Year temperatures](#) indicate the warmest year on record exceeding 2015 and 1934. 2026 Water Year precipitation was near normal for eastern California and far western Nevada, while below normal for central, eastern and southern Nevada (Figure 12).

Additional Information on Drought and Climate:

[Report Drought conditions here](#)
[Nevada statewide Drought update](#)
[NV State Climate Office](#)
[NV Living with Drought](#)
[Drought Monitor](#)
[New Drought.gov](#)
[California Nevada Drought Early Warning System](#)
[NOAA CPC Drought page](#)
[CNAP Drought tracker](#)
[California Nevada River Forecast Center](#)
[WRCC Drought Tracker](#)
[WRCC Enso page](#)
[WRCC Monthly Climate Summaries](#)
[Evaporative Demand Drought Index](#)
[US Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

Contact NWS Reno Climate Team
rev.climate@noaa.gov 775-673-8100
<https://www.weather.gov/rev/>

Photos:



Photo 1: Lenticular clouds over Reno on the 2nd, prior to the arrival of a cold front on the 3rd. Photo courtesy of NWS Reno.

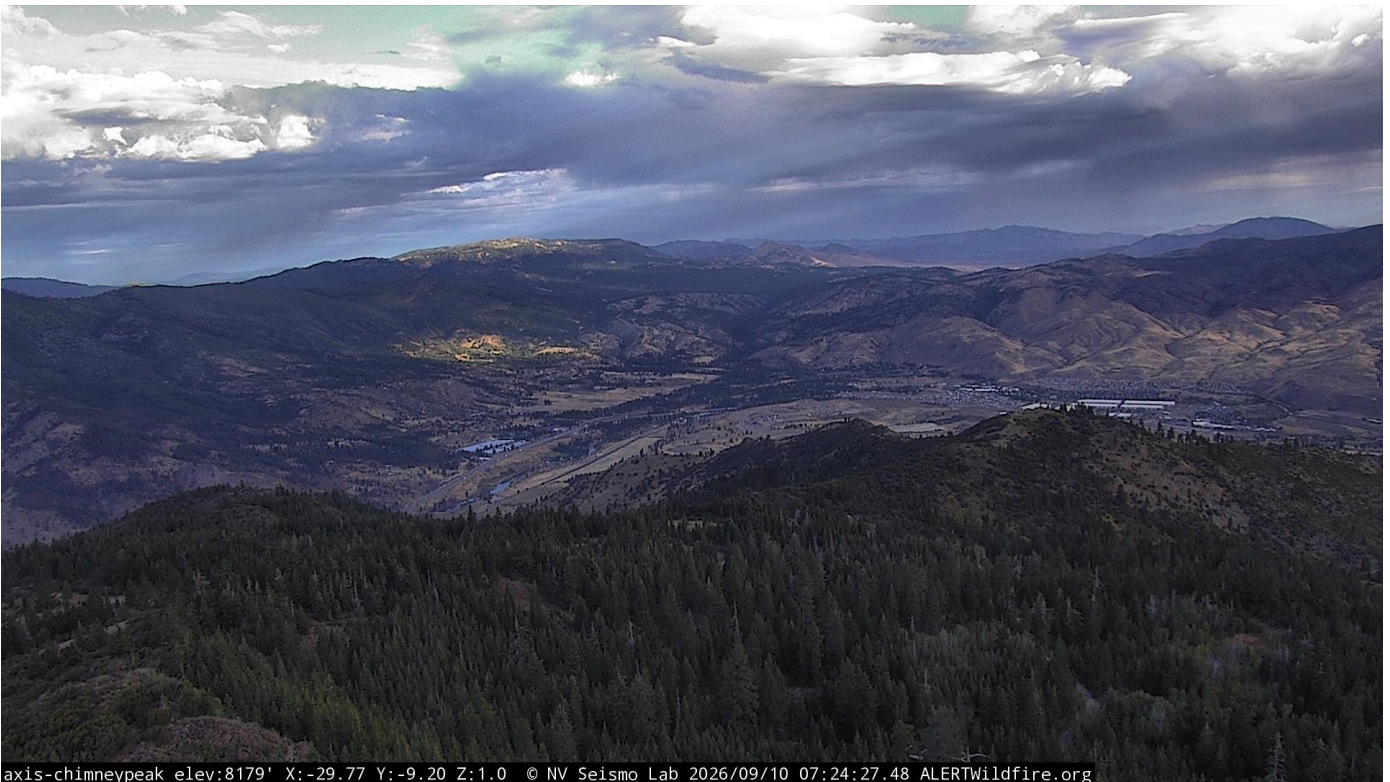


Photo 2: Early morning showers north of Verdi on September 10th. Photo courtesy of Nevada Seismological Laboratory, University of Nevada, Reno, and NV Energy.



Photo 3: Floriston Fire west of Reno along I-80 September 16th. Photo courtesy of U.C. San Diego and CalFire.

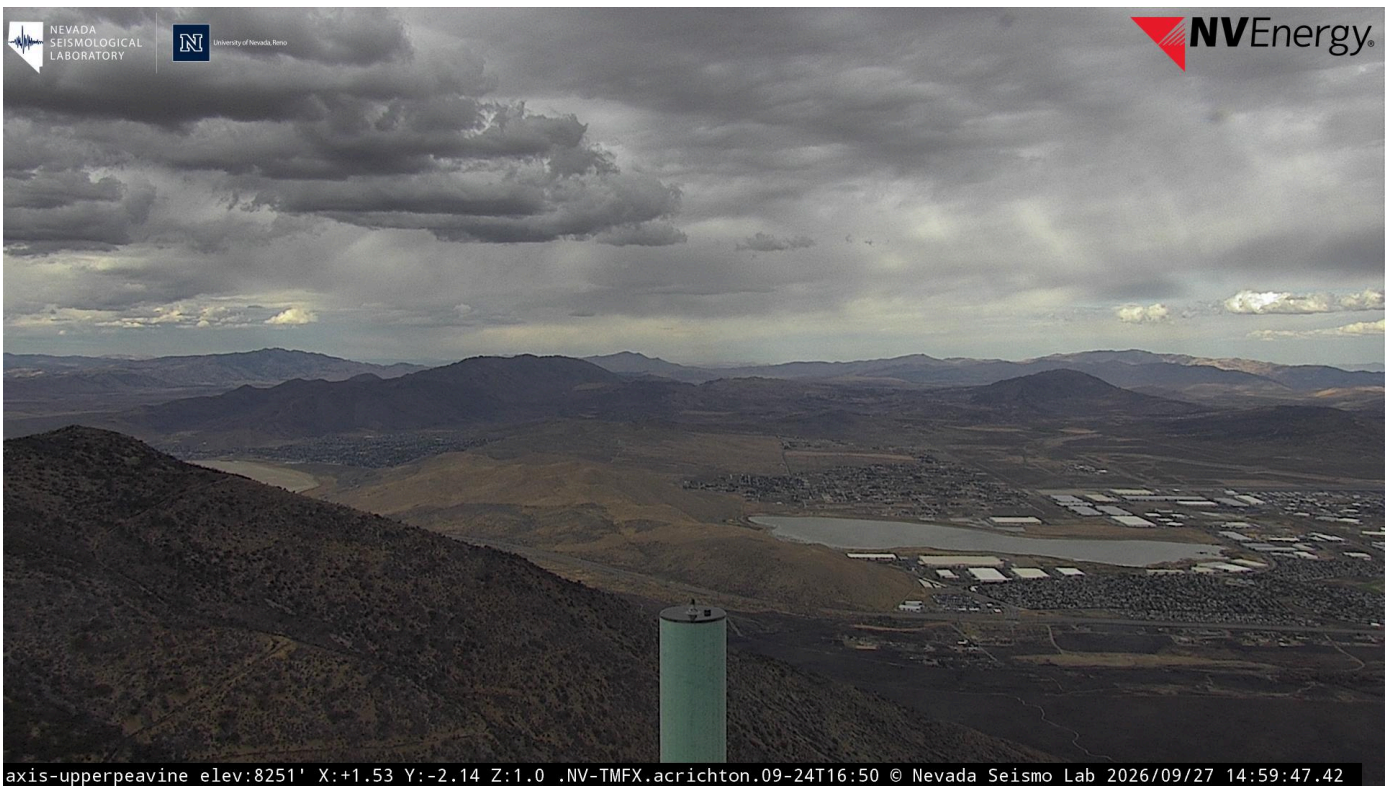
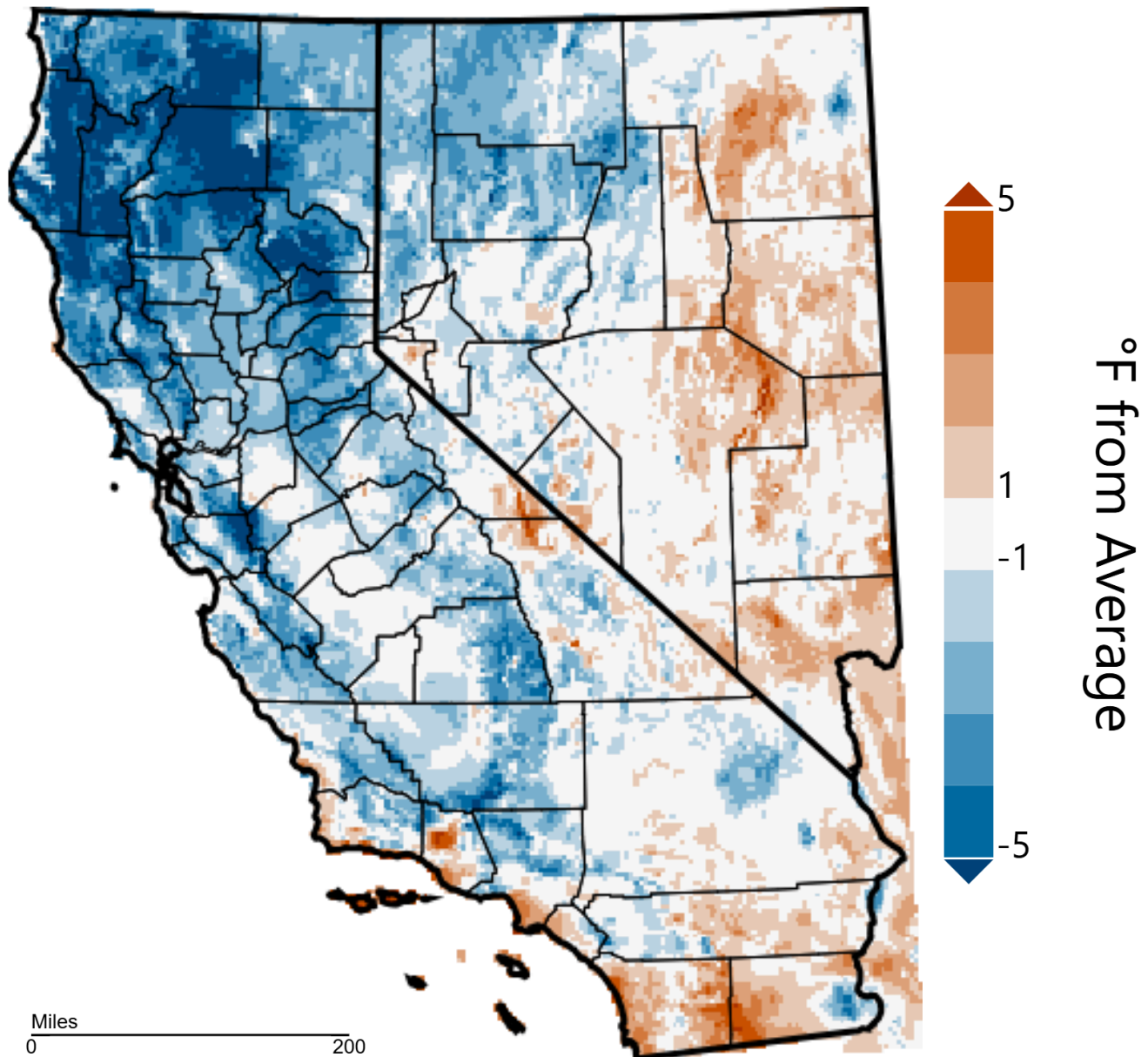


Photo 4: Light virga showers on Peavine on September 27th. Photo courtesy of Nevada Seismological Laboratory, University of Nevada, Reno, and NV Energy.

Figures:

California-Nevada - Mean Temperature

September 2026, Departure from 1991-2020 Average

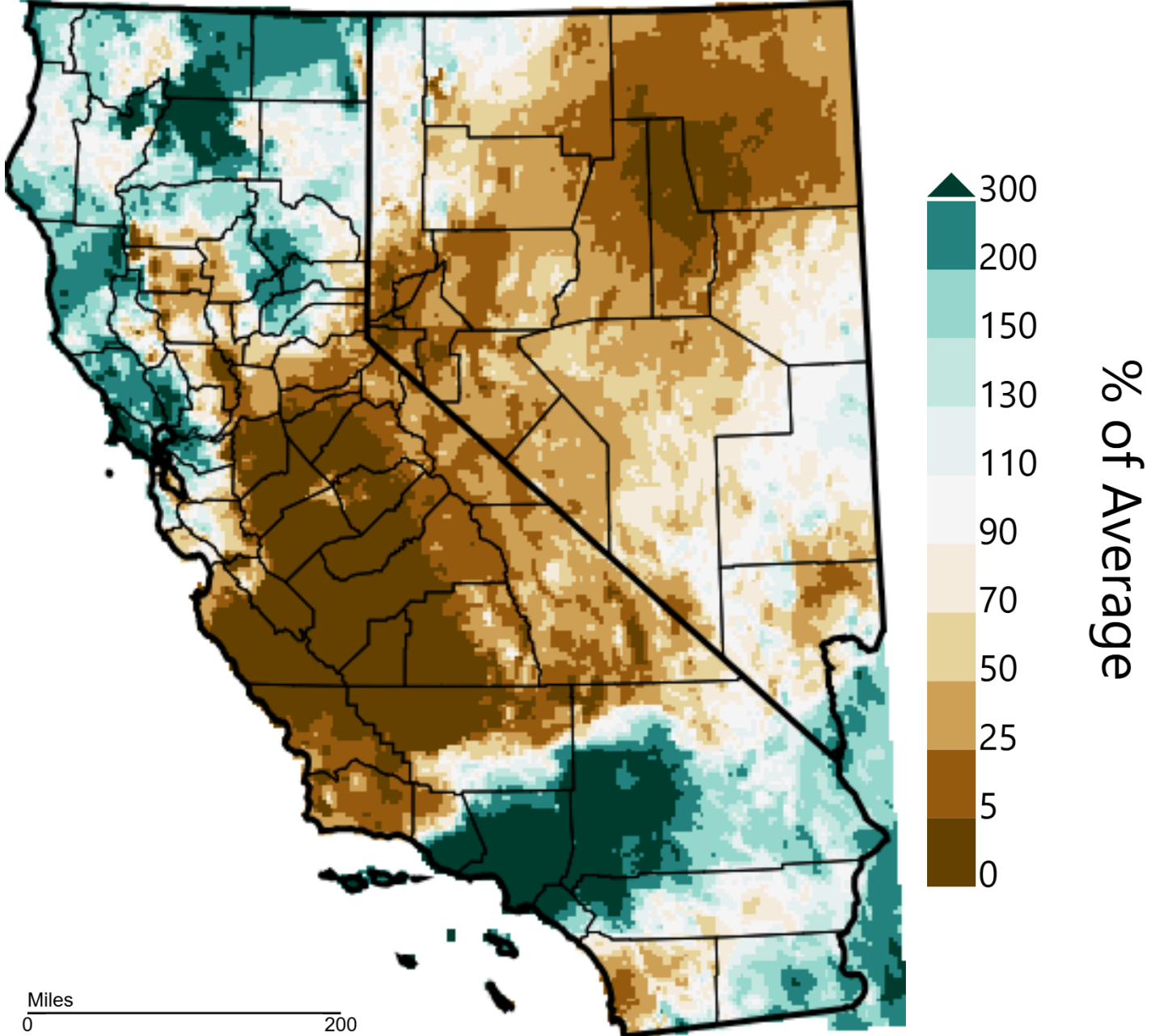


WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Oct 2026

Figure 1: Departure from normal temperatures for September 2026. ([WWDt](#))

California-Nevada - Precipitation

September 2026, Percent of 1991-2020 Average



WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Oct 2026

Figure 2: Percent of normal precipitation for September 2026. ([WWD T](#))

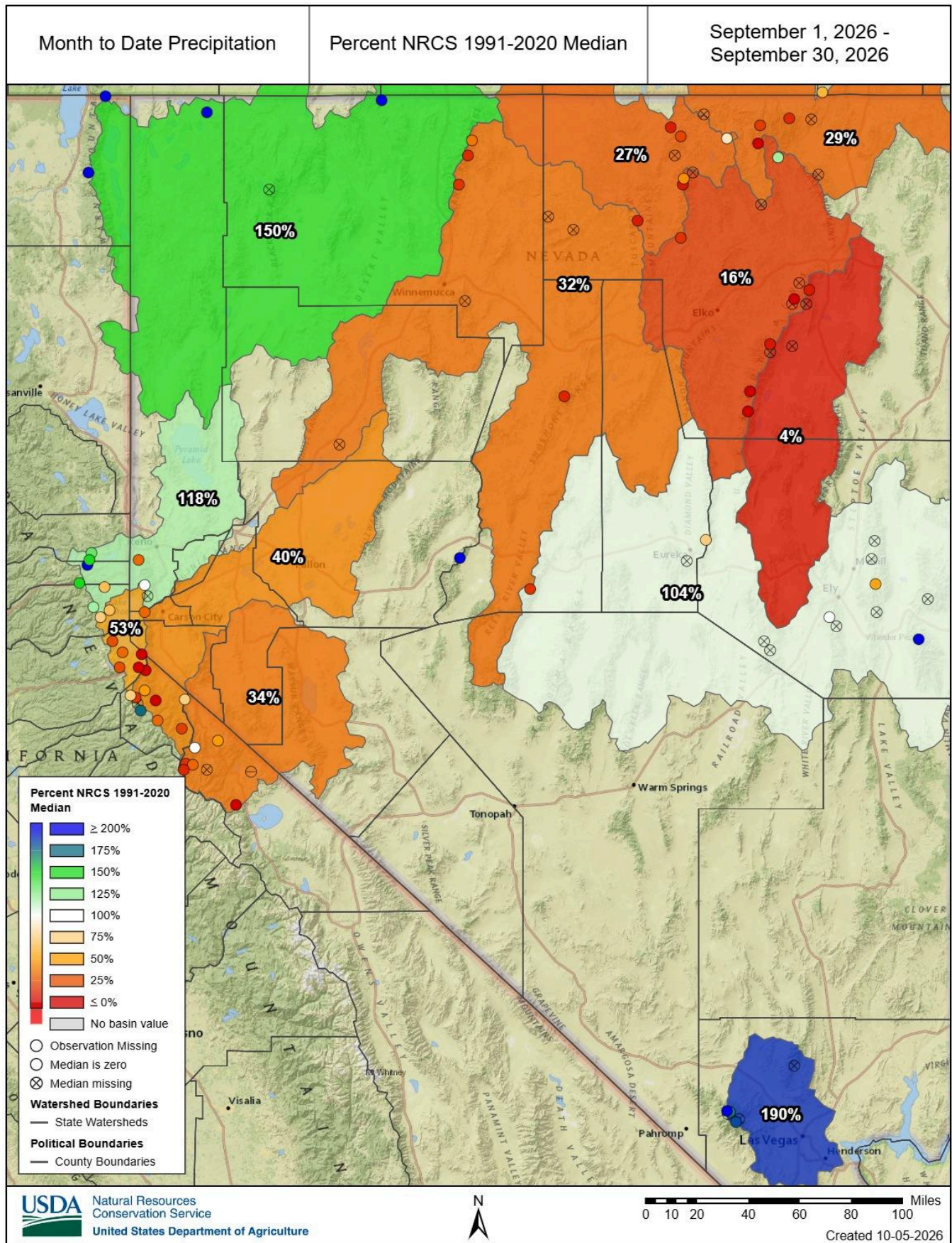


Figure 3. SNOTEL mountain precipitation for September 2026.



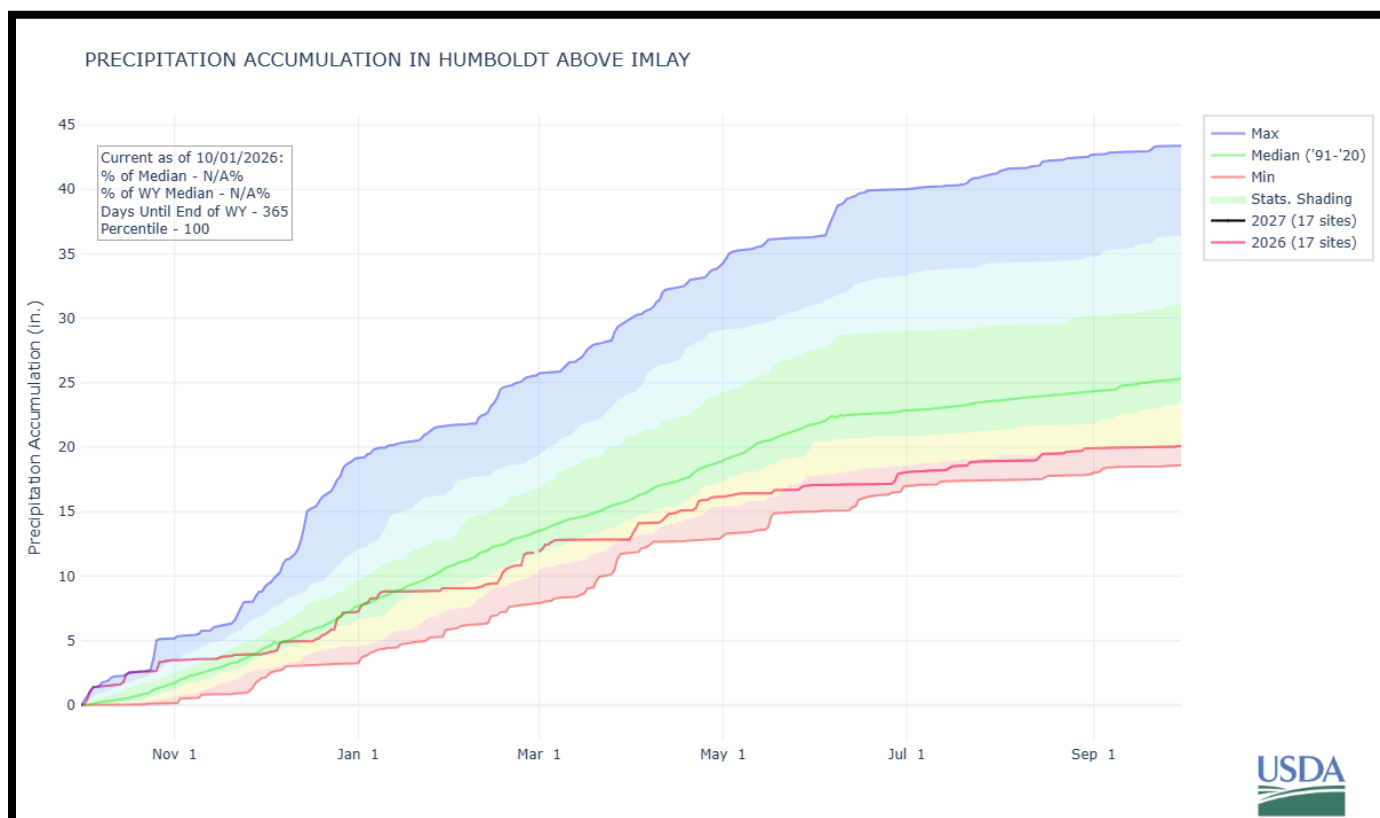
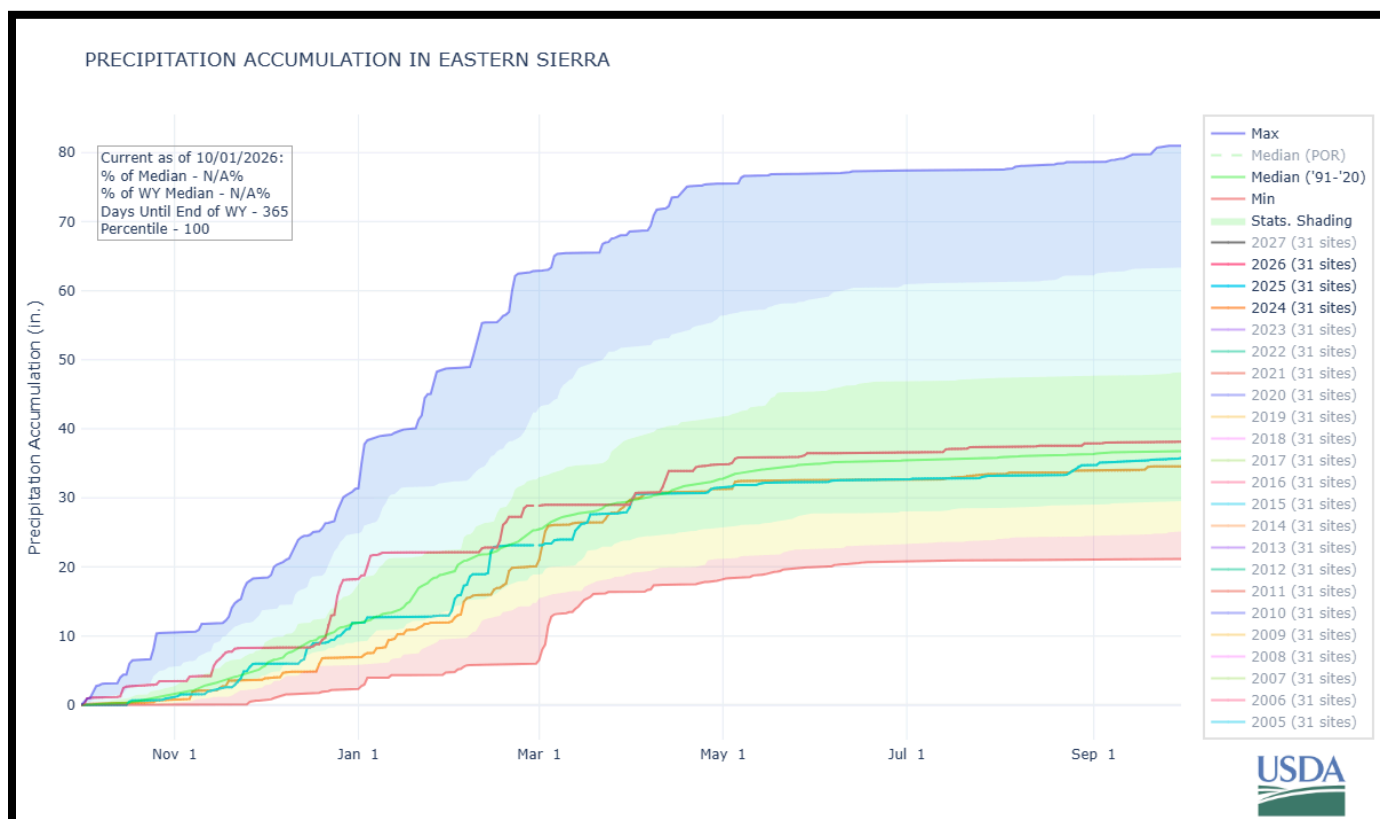


Figure 5. [NRCS SNOTEL](#) water year 2026 precipitation in red for the combined Tahoe, Truckee, Carson and Walker basins (top), and Humboldt basin (bottom).

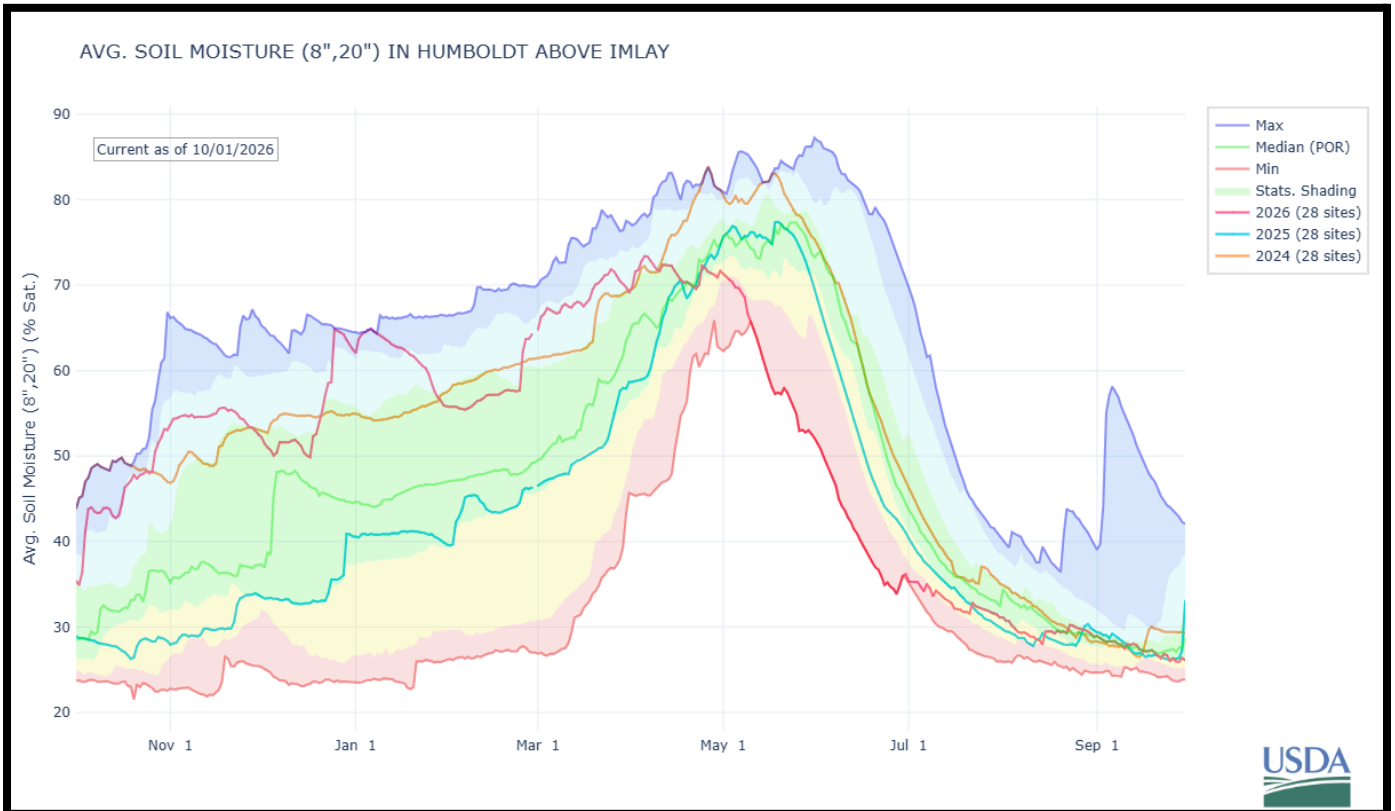
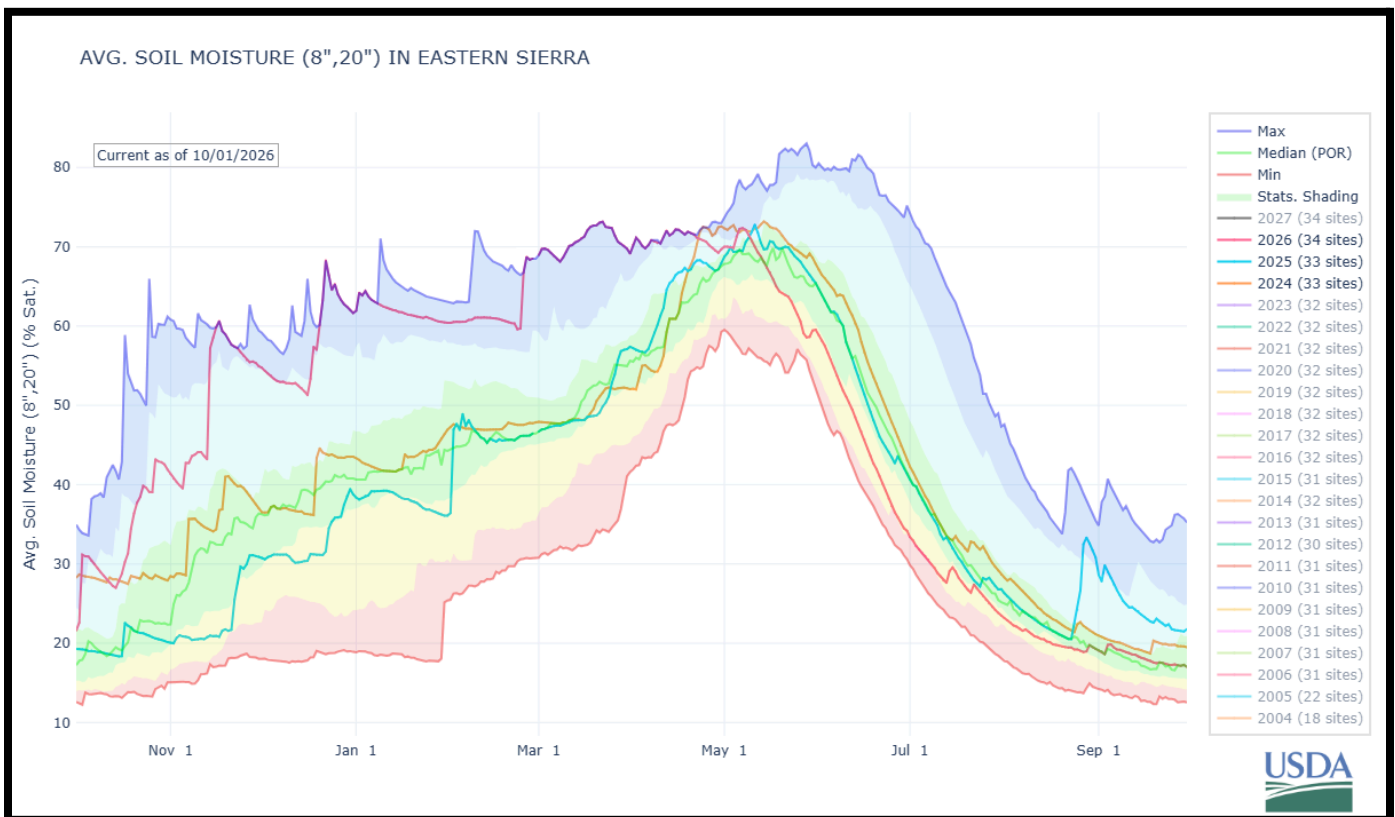


Figure 6. [NRCS SNOTEL soil moisture](#) for the combined Tahoe, Truckee, Carson and Walker basins (top), and Humboldt basin (bottom) indicated in black for the water year 2026. Water years 2025 and 2024 are plotted in blue and orange respectively for additional perspective.

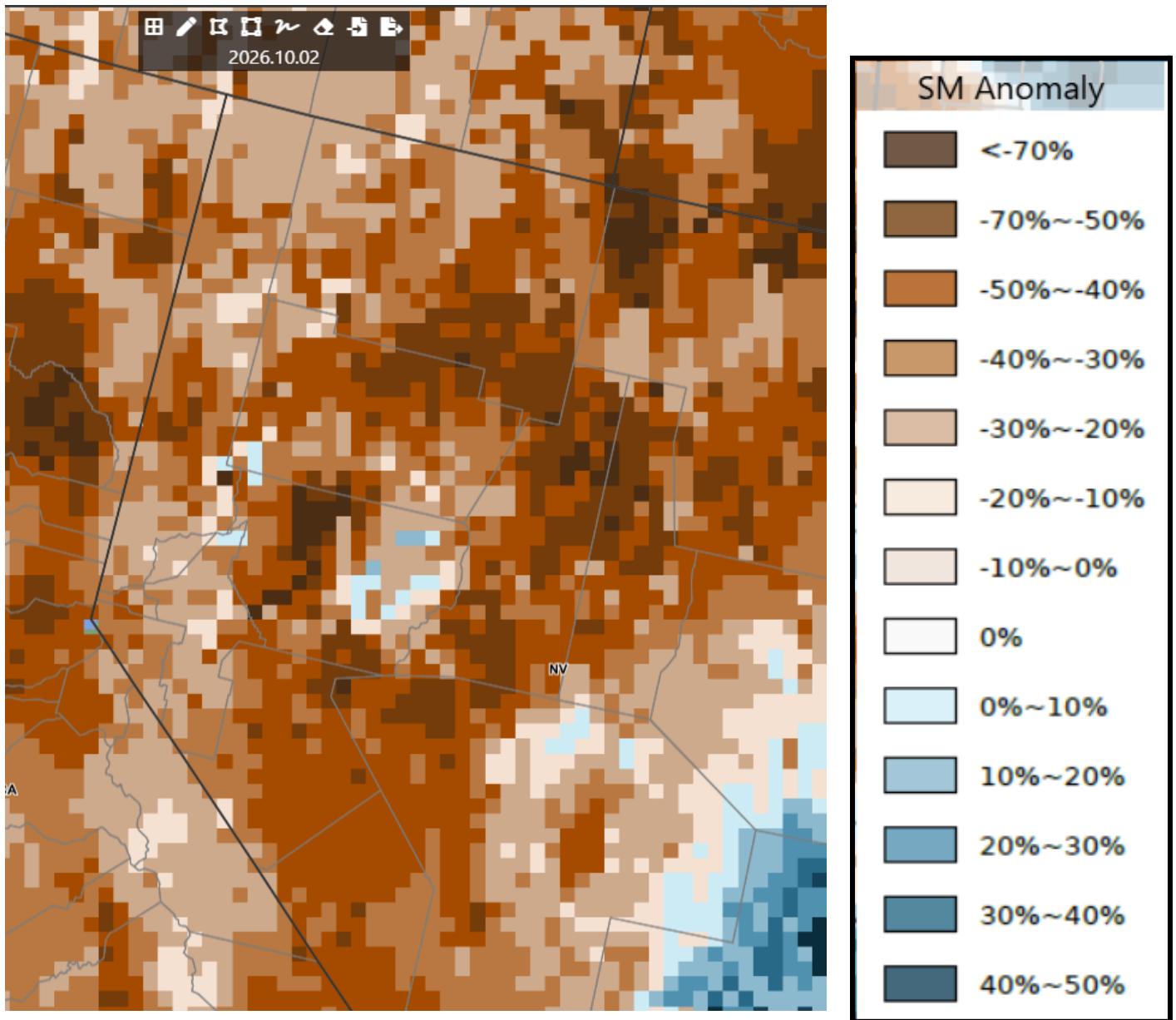


Figure 7. [Crop-CASMA](#) Soil Moisture Anomaly 10/02/2026.

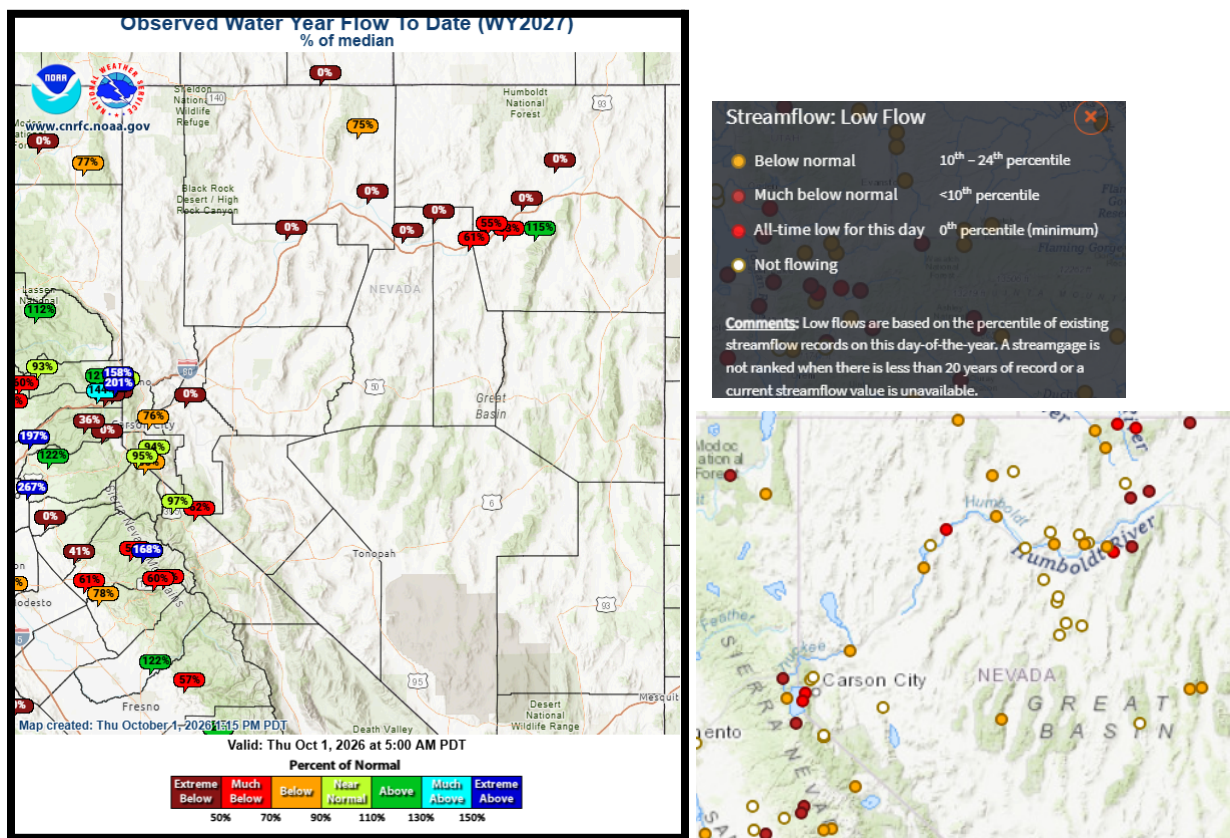


Figure 8. [CNRFC](#) Water year 2026 observed flow to date as % of median and USGS streamflow low flow anomalies as of October 1st.

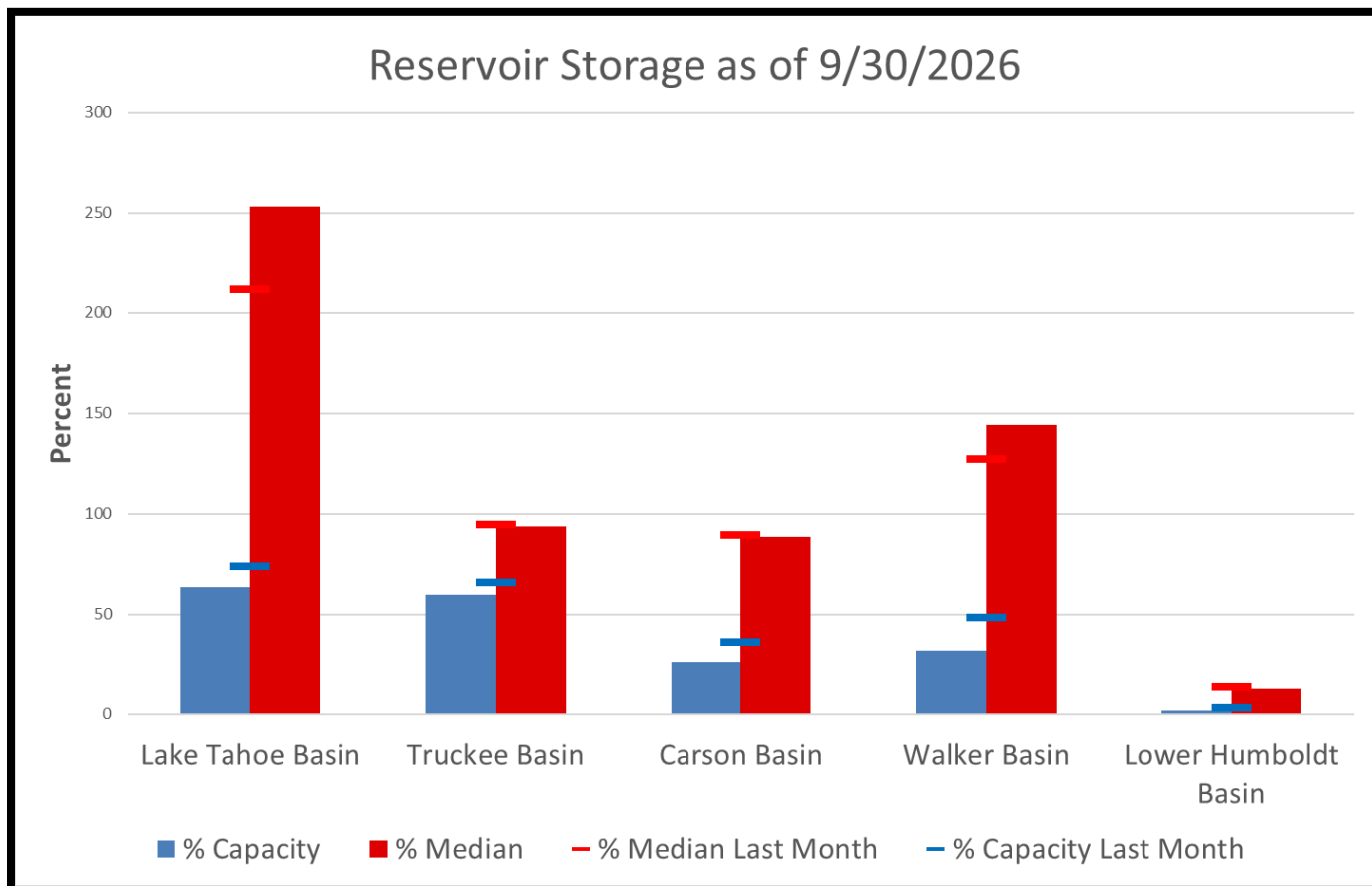


Figure 9. End of September reservoir storage relative to capacity and median for this month and last month.

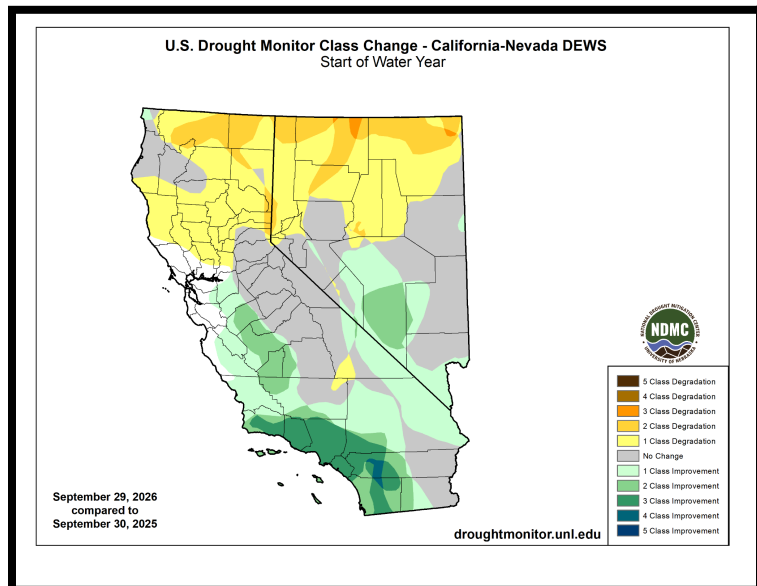
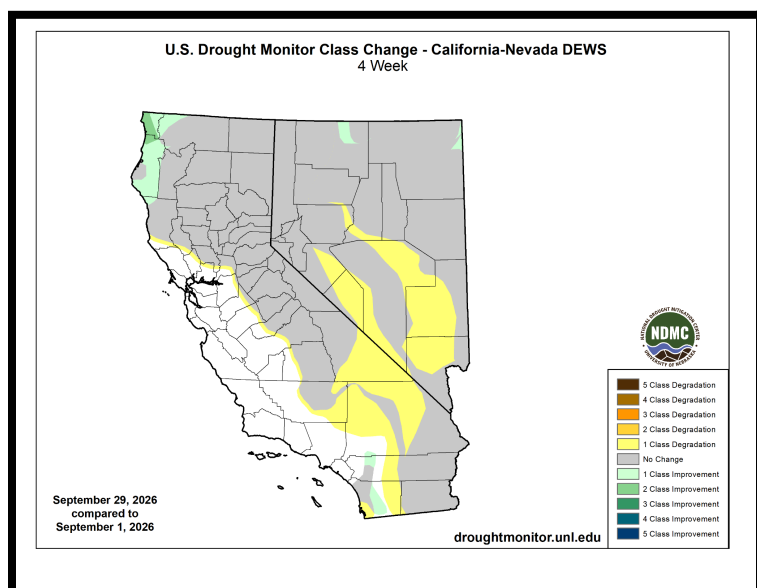
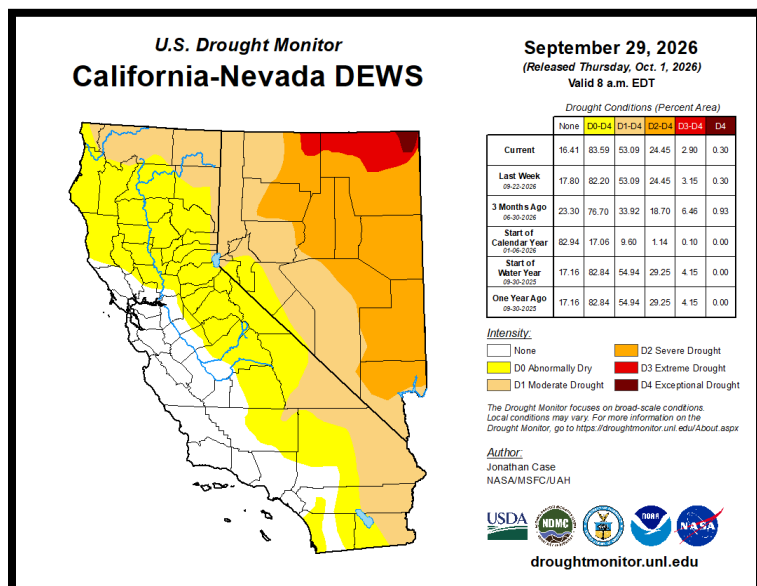
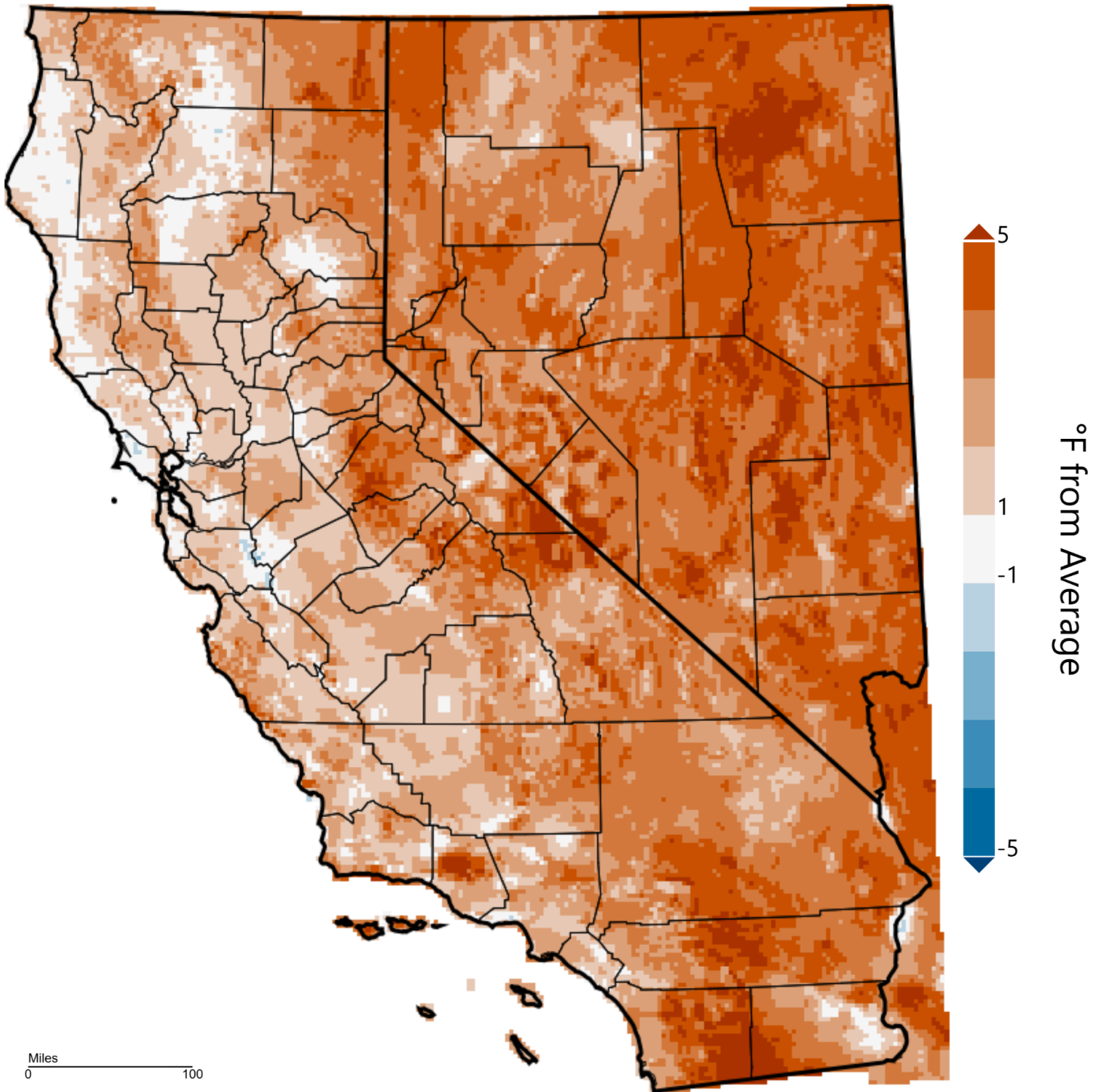


Figure 10. Drought Monitor Status on September 29th (top), the 4 week change map (middle) and the water year change (bottom). Check for updates at: [Drought Monitor](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu).

California-Nevada - Mean Temperature

October 2025 - September 2026, Departure from 1991-2020 Average

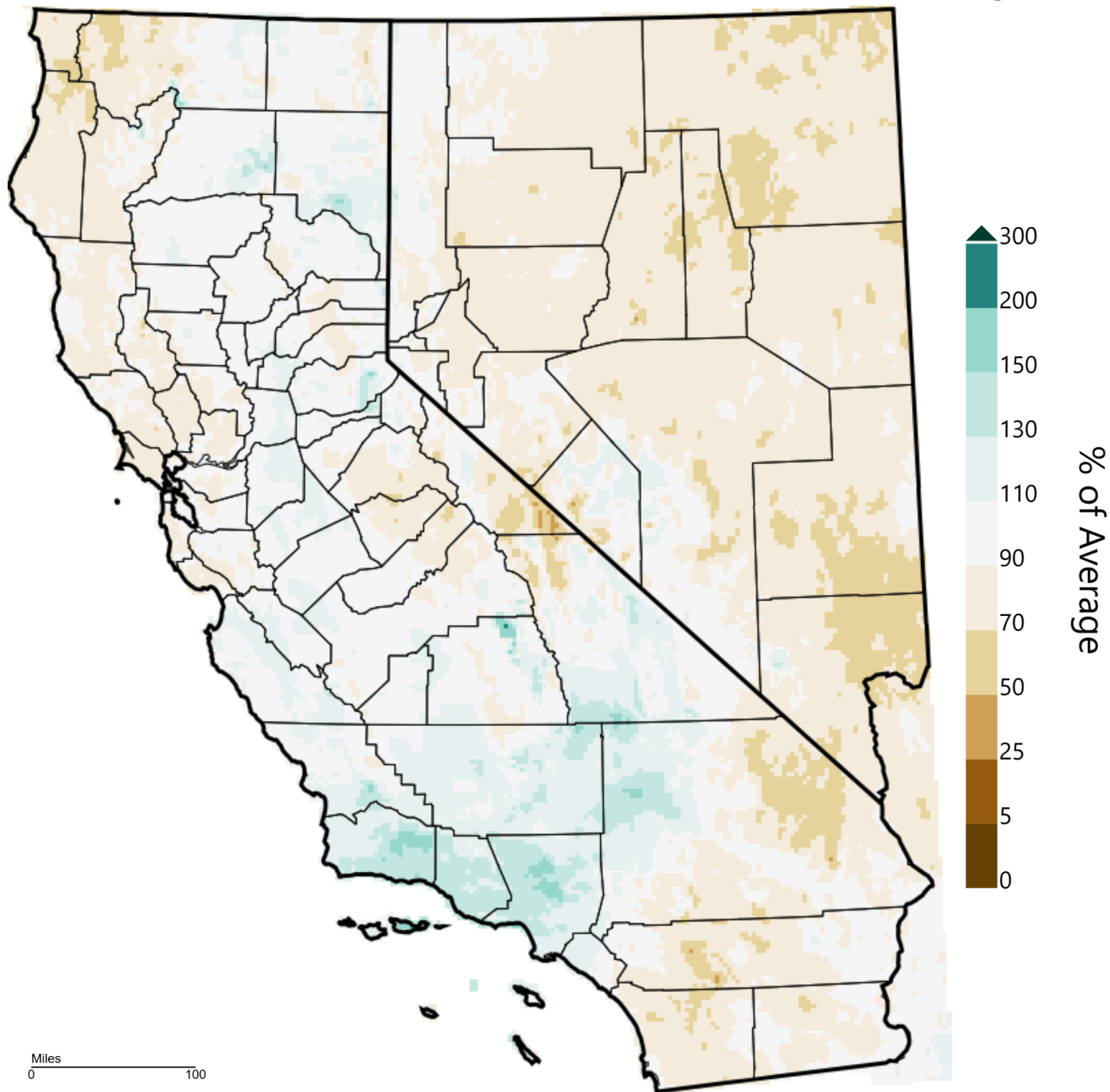


WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Oct 2026

Figure 11. Water year to date mean temperature departure. Courtesy of West Wide Drought Tracker. ([WWDT](#))

California-Nevada - Precipitation

October 2025 - September 2026, Percent of 1991-2020 Average



WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Oct 2026

Figure 12. Water year to date precipitation. Courtesy of West Wide Drought Tracker. ([WWDT](#))