Drought Information Statement for the Mojave Desert and Eastern Sierra

Valid May 20, 2025

Issued By: WFO Las Vegas, NV

Contact Information: nws.lasvegas@noaa.gov

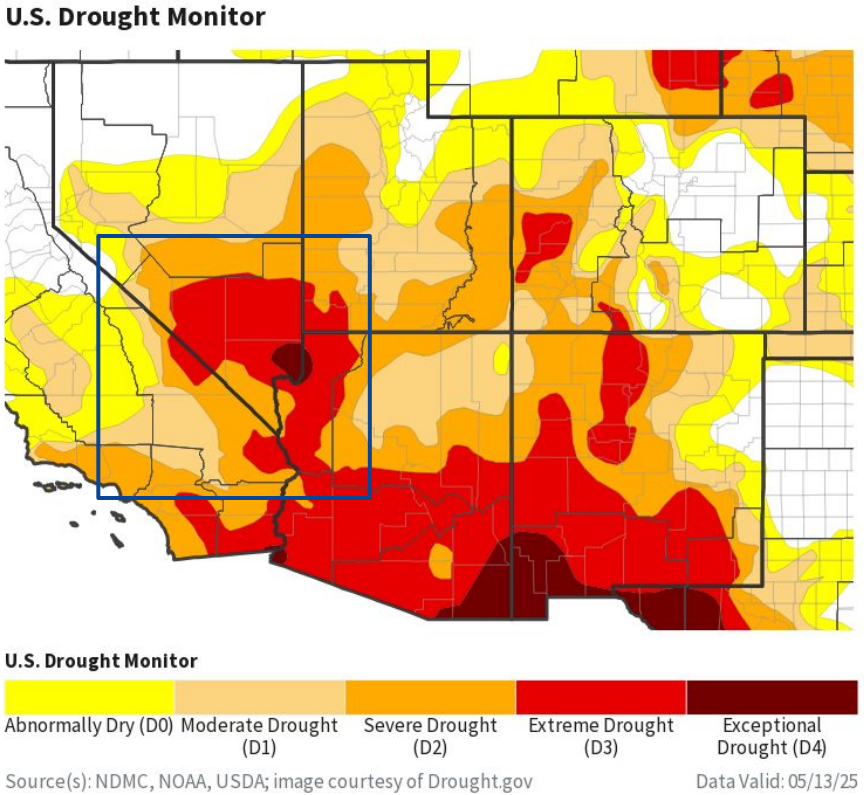
- This product will be updated around June 19, 2025 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/VEF/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/ for regional drought status updates.

- A storm system brought unseasonably high amounts of precipitation to southern Nevada, southeastern California, and northwestern Arizona for four days in early May, which is usually a dry month.
- This precipitation allowed for some improvement in drought intensity. However, long range precipitation totals are still below average for the water year.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for the Southwestern United States

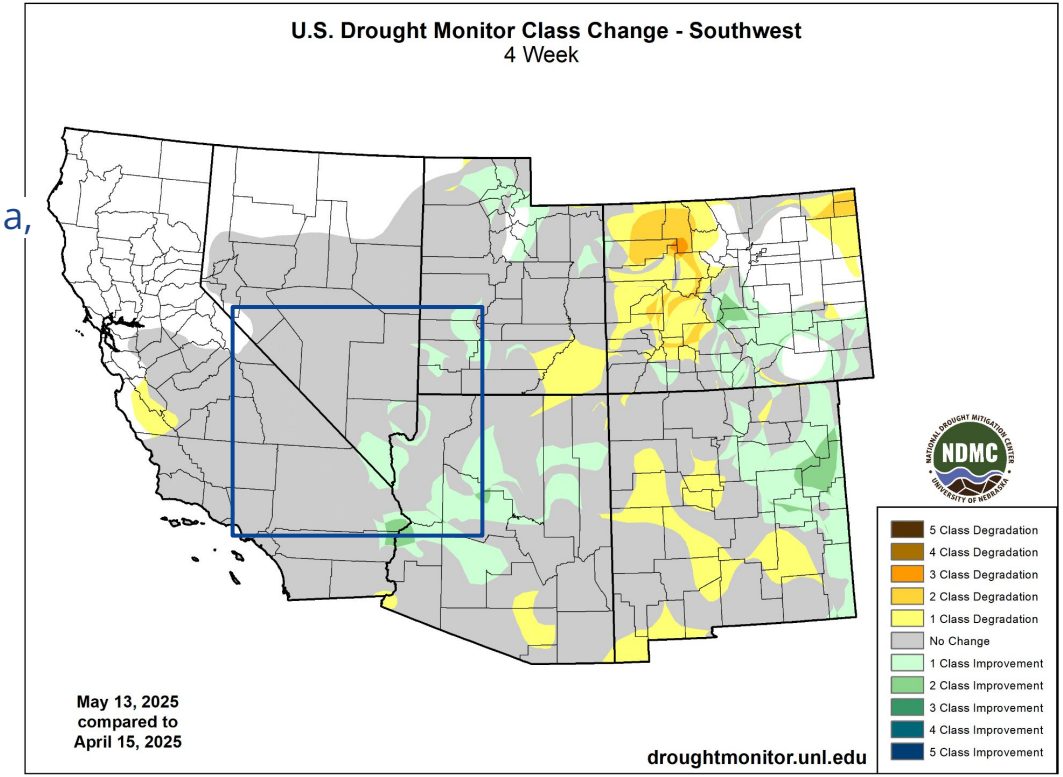
- Drought Intensity and Extent
  - **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**: Areas to the north and east of Lake Mead.
  - **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Most of Mohave and Lincoln Counties, northern Clark County, central Nye County, eastern San Bernardino County, and Death Valley in Inyo County.
  - **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Esmeralda County, northern Lincoln County, sections of central Inyo and San Bernardino Counties, and southwestern Clark County.
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Western San Bernardino County, sections of central Inyo County, western Esmeralda County.
  - **D0 (Abnormally Dry)**: The Eastern Sierra, Owens Valley, and White Mountains in Inyo County.



Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest 4-week change map for Southwestern United States

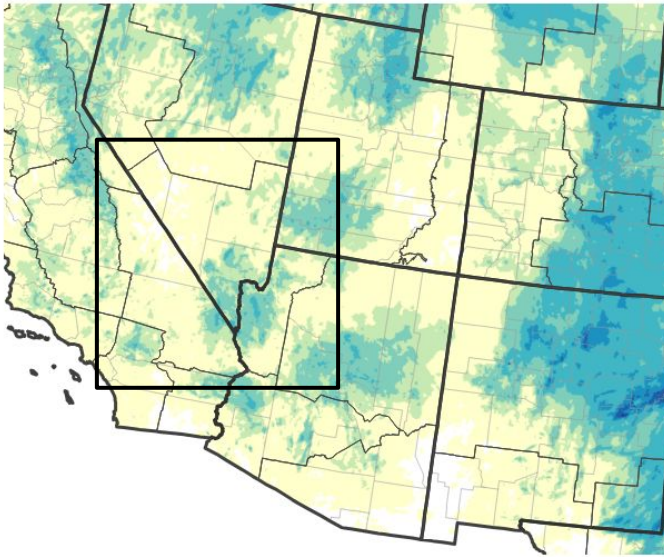
- Four Week Drought Monitor Class Change.
  - **Drought Worsened:** No widespread degradation was observed.
  - **No Change:** Most of southern Nevada, southeastern California, and northwestern Arizona.
  - **Drought Improved:** Southern Clark County, areas along the Bill Williams River in Mohave and San Bernardino Counties.



Precipitation

- A system in early May brought well above normal precipitation amounts to parts of the area. May is usually a dry month.
- Las Vegas measured 1.44 inches of rainfall from May 3 to 6, making it the wettest May on record. It was also the first occurrence of four consecutive days with measurable precipitation at Las Vegas in May.

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (Inches)

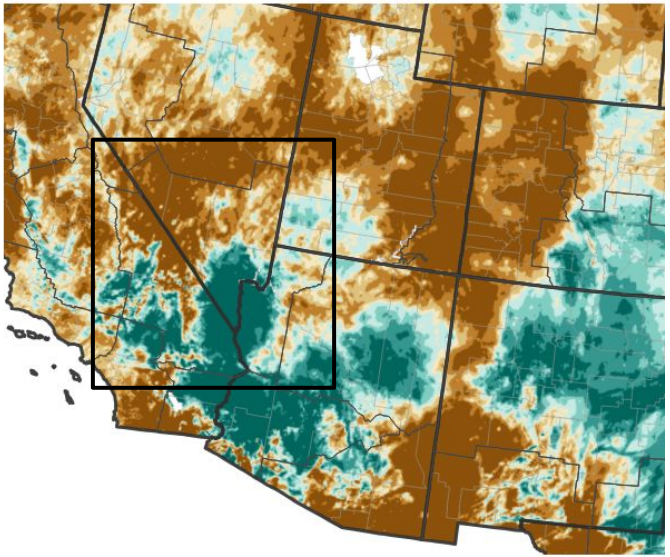


Inches of Precipitation

0 | 0.01 | 0.5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8

Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; Last image courtesy of Drought.gov

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



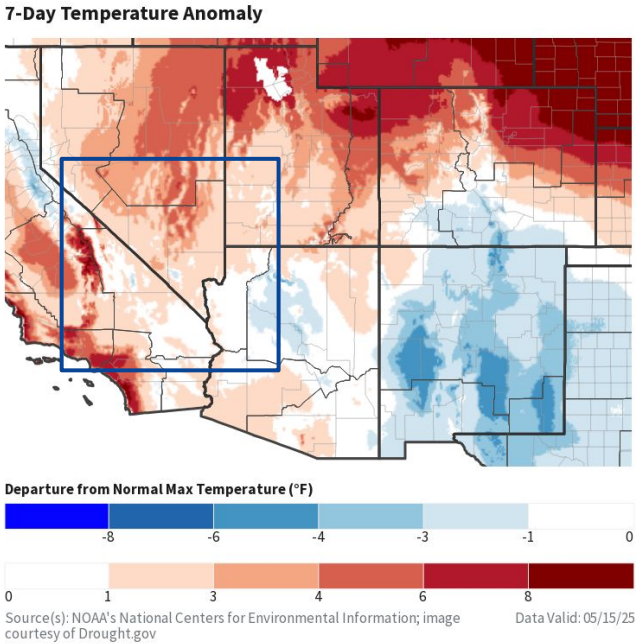
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)

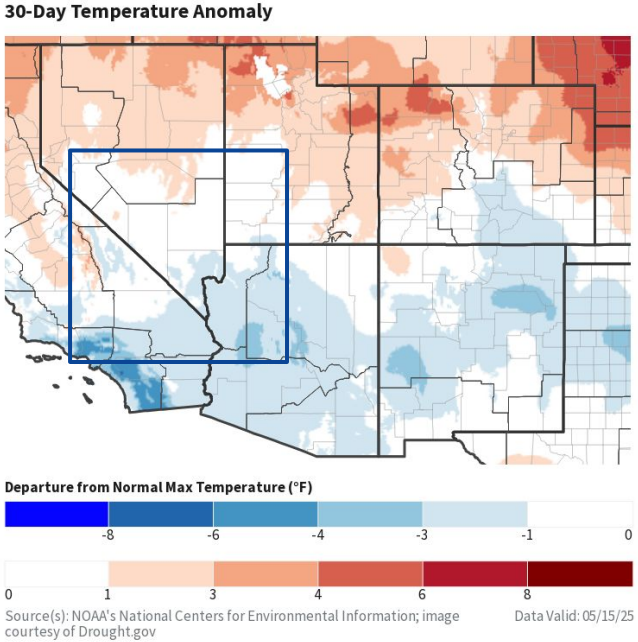
0% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 100% | 150% | 200% | 300%

Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; Last image courtesy of Drought.gov

Temperature

- Maximum temperatures over the last 7 days have been near to slightly above normal for most of the forecast area.
- Maximum temperatures over the last 30 days have been near to slightly below normal across the area.





Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit Condition Monitoring Observer Reports (CMOR) and view the Drought Impacts Reporter

Hydrologic Impacts

- Lake Mead is at 1,059.21 feet in elevation, or 32 percent full.

Agricultural Impacts

- May rain was welcome for livestock, but planting schedules needed to be adjusted.
- Below level snowpack in most areas, which will impact rivers, streams and irrigation this summer.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Early May rain could have kick-started the growth of fine fuels (grasses and invasive plants) that can dry out quickly, becoming fuel for fires.

Other Impacts

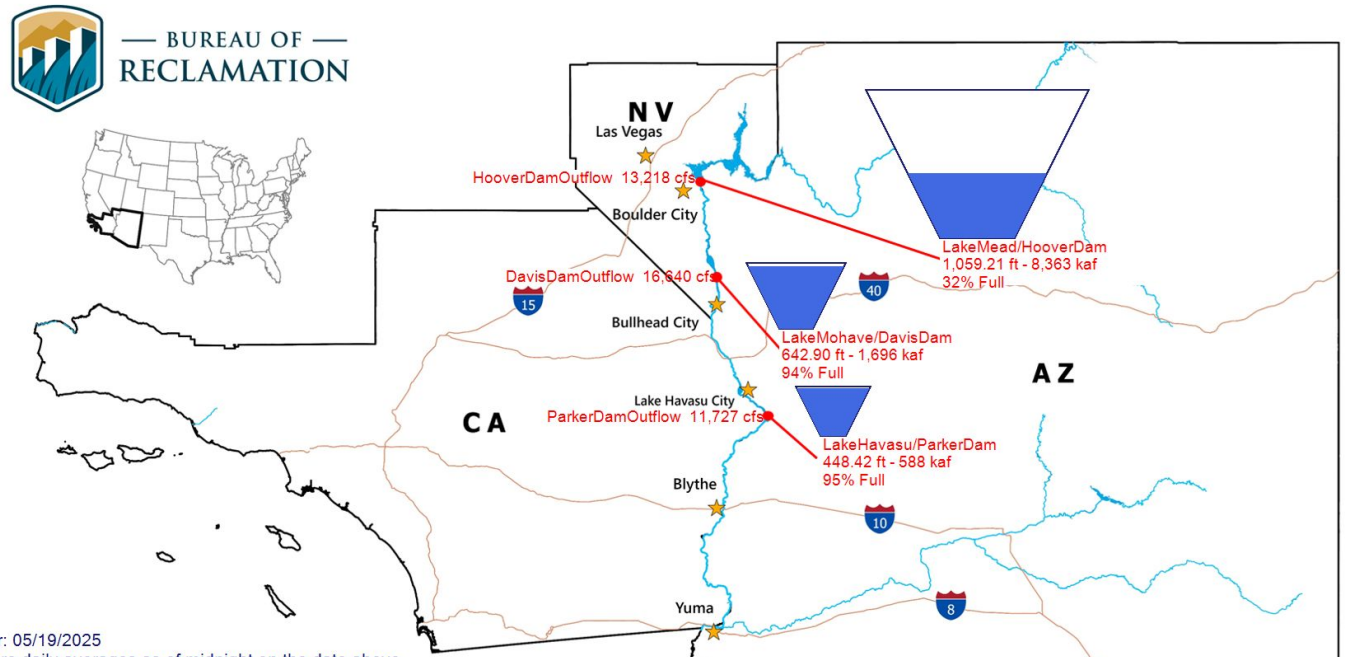
- There are no known impacts at this time.

Mitigation Actions

- Southern Nevada Water Authority switched to the summer landscape watering schedule.

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Lake Mead is at 1,059.21 feet in elevation, or 32% full.
- Lake Mohave is at 642.90 feet in elevation, or 94% full.
- Lake Havasu is at 448.42 feet in elevation, or 95% full.
- The Bureau of Reclamation 24-month study indicates a decrease in Lake Mead's elevation this summer. Lake Mohave and Lake Havasu remain steady.

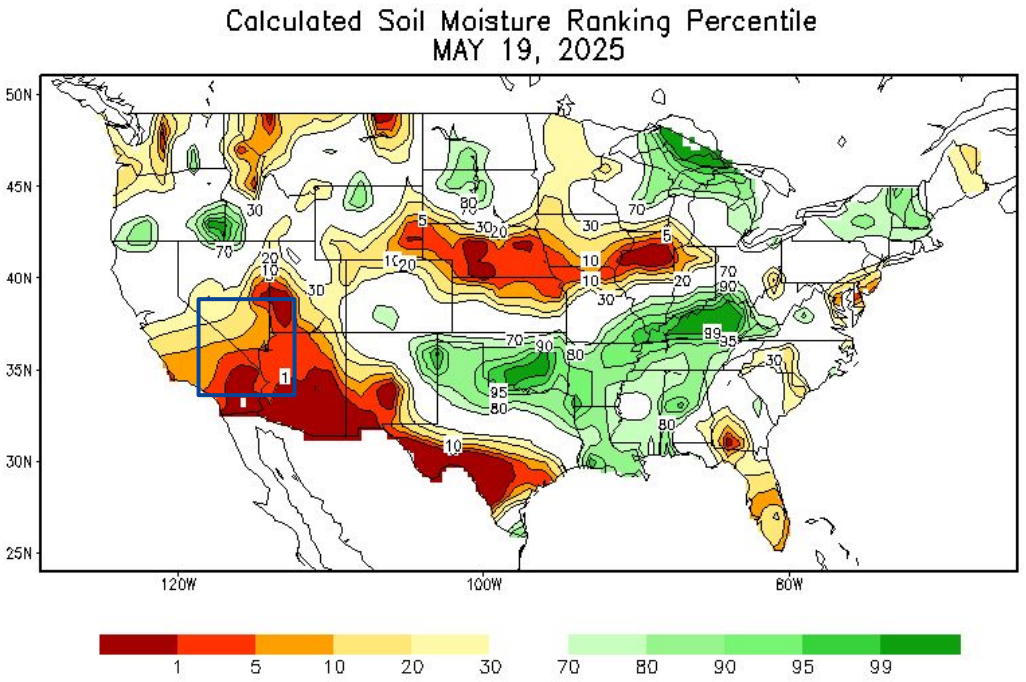


Data for: 05/19/2025
Flows are daily averages as of midnight on the date above.
Elevations and Storage Volumes are midnight values.
Last updated on: 05/20/2025 9AM MST

LEGEND:
cfs: Flows in cubic feet-per-second
kaf: Storage volumes in thousand-acre-feet
ft: Elevations in feet above mean-sea-level

Agricultural Impacts

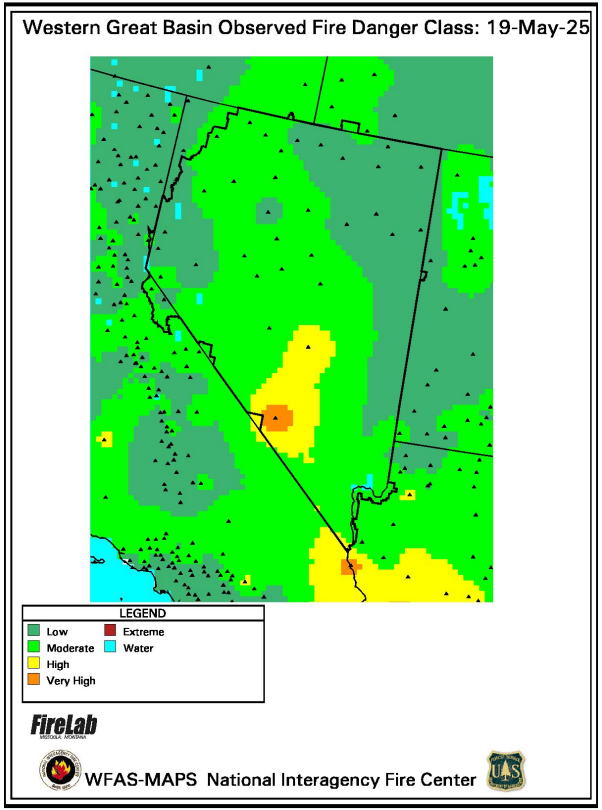
- May rain was welcome for livestock.
- Planting schedules needed to be adjusted.
- Below level snowpack in most areas, which will impact rivers, streams and irrigation this summer.
- Groundwater and reservoirs may not be recharged with early snowmelt.



Fire Hazard Impacts

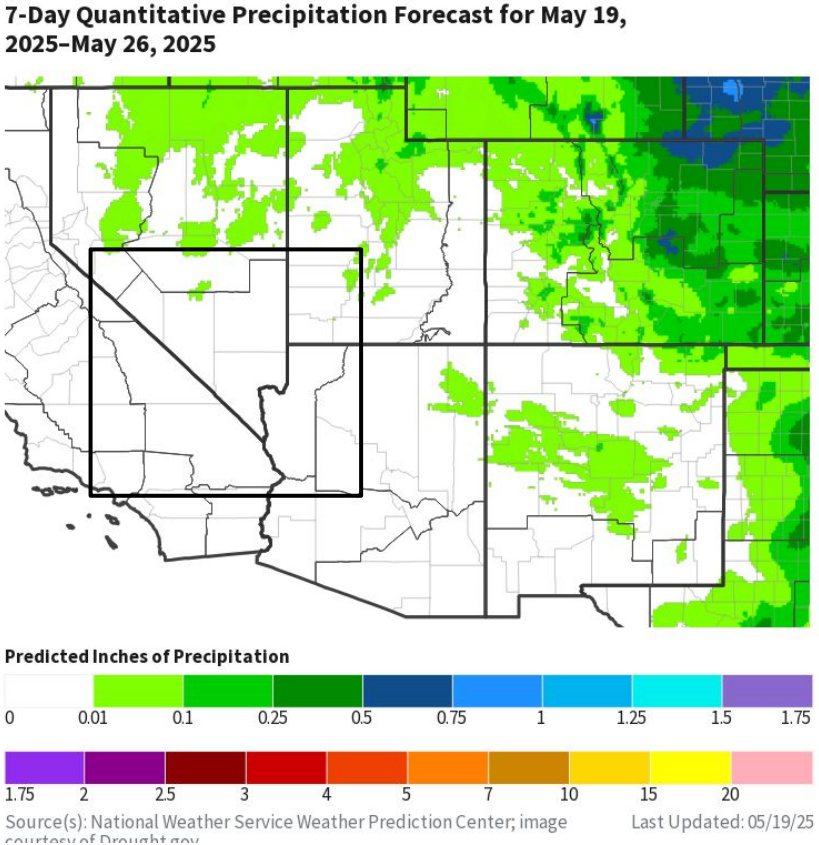
Link to Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.

- Early May rain could have kick-started the growth of fine fuels (grasses and invasive plants) that can dry out quickly, becoming fuel for fires.



Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- Most of the forecast area will be dry over the next seven days.

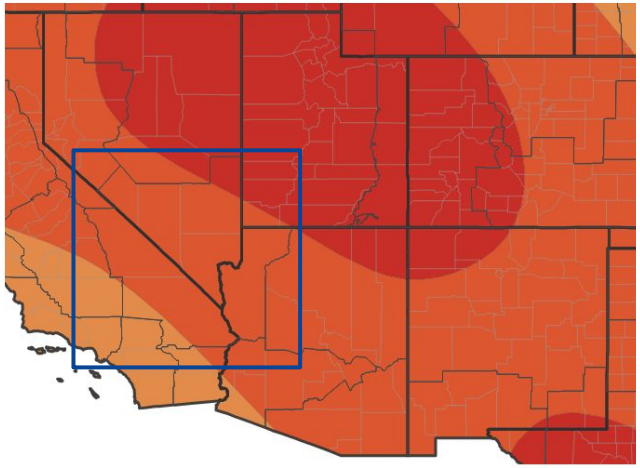


Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- There is a 40 to 70% probability of above normal temperatures across the area through August 31, with the greatest probability in northern Lincoln County.
- There is a 33 to 40% probability of above normal precipitation in areas along and east of the Colorado River. The remainder of the area has equal chances of above or below normal precipitation.

Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for June 1, 2025–August 31, 2025



Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures

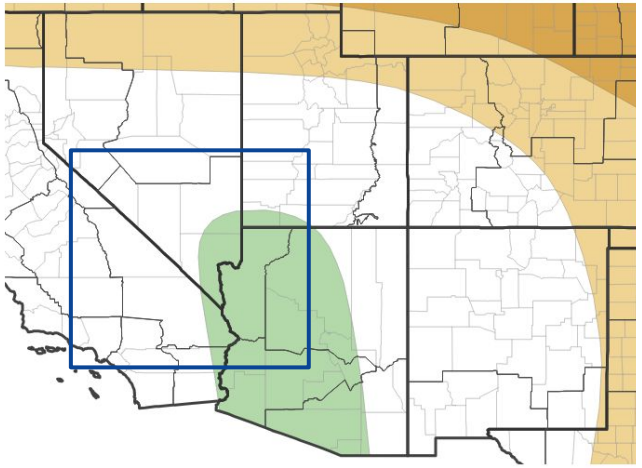
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures

33% 40%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 0

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for June 1, 2025–August 31, 2025



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

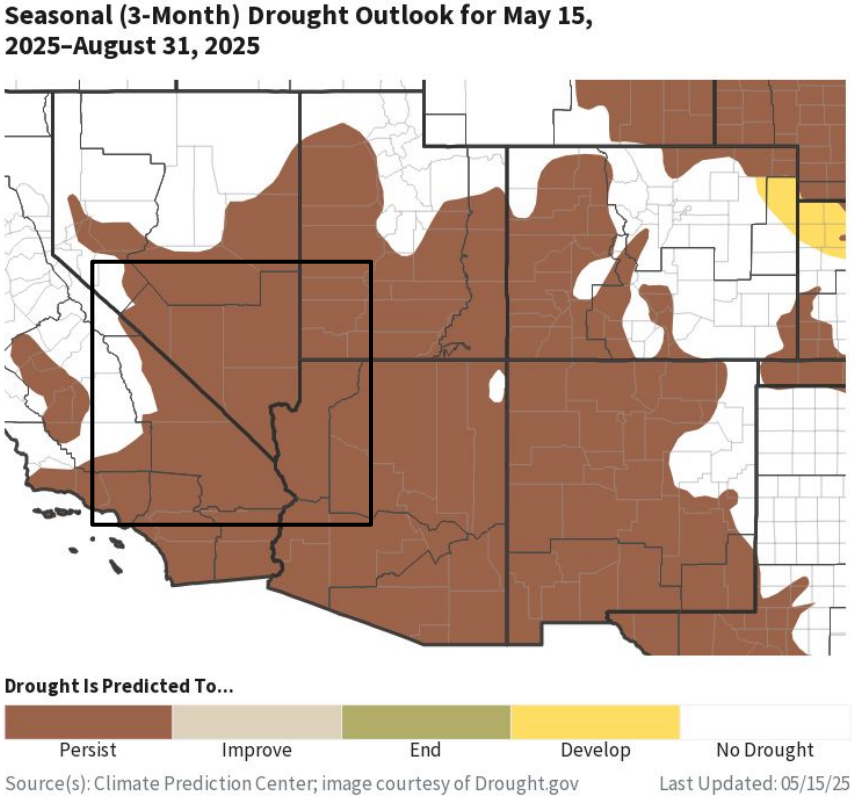
33% 40%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 0

Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- Drought is expected to persist through August 31 for most of southern Nevada, northwestern Arizona, and southeastern California outside of the Eastern Sierra, Owens Valley, and White Mountains.



Links to the latest:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook
Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook