

Nevada State Climate Office

Photo by A. Csank

Quarterly Report & Outlook April - June 2020

Notable Weather & Climate in Nevada

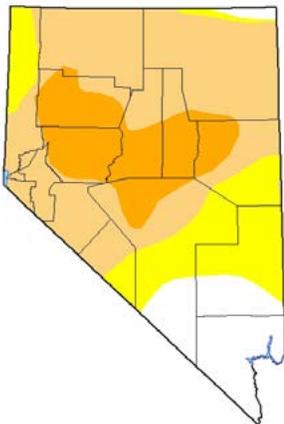
Much of Nevada was drier than usual from April through June. Parts of northern Clark County, eastern White Pine, and parts of Lyon, Churchill, Storey, Washoe and Pershing counties received less than half the expected precipitation. There were some small pockets of wet conditions in southern Nevada and in parts of Elko county, and the southern Sierra were quite wet. Following a dry winter across the northern part of the state, dry spring conditions meant a return to drought, with D2, Severe Drought, across much of north-central Nevada.

On average, spring was warmer than normal in most locations. Seasonal averages don't always provide a picture of the weather we actually experienced, and this spring was a prime example. The seasonal average shows that around Reno,

temperatures were within a degree or two of normal. A closer look at the data shows just what a weird spring it was. At the Reno Airport, warm weather in late April and early May, with daytime highs from 10 to 17.5°F above normal, was followed by a mid-May cold spell with daytime temperatures often more than 10°F below normal. Daytime high temperatures rebounded to 96°F (18.8°F above average) on May 28 and fell to 21.3°F below average by June 7. During that June cold snap, nighttime temperatures at the airport dropped to 35°F. Reno was back in the 90s by June 20.

Elko experienced similarly erratic temperatures that averaged very close to normal. It hit 88°F in late April at the Elko Airport. That's the hottest Elko's ever gotten in April. Four days later, high temperatures were 21°F cooler. Las Vegas also saw significant swings in temperature. On May 6, the airport temperature climbed to 101°F. It's the earliest it's ever been that warm, beating 1989 by one day. Just about a month later the nighttime low fell to 60°F. While that might not seem too cold, it is unusual for Las Vegas in June. Since 2000, it's happened three times -- in 2011, 2017 and this year. It was more common before 2000; typically Las Vegas could count on at least a few June nights with temperatures at or below 60°F every year.

June 23, 2020
Drought Monitor



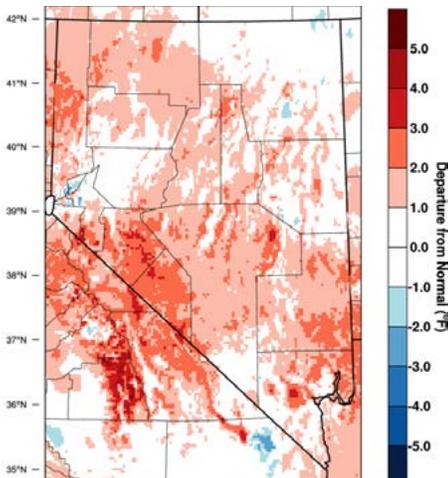
Intensity:
None
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Moderate Drought
D2 Severe Drought
D3 Extreme Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought

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>

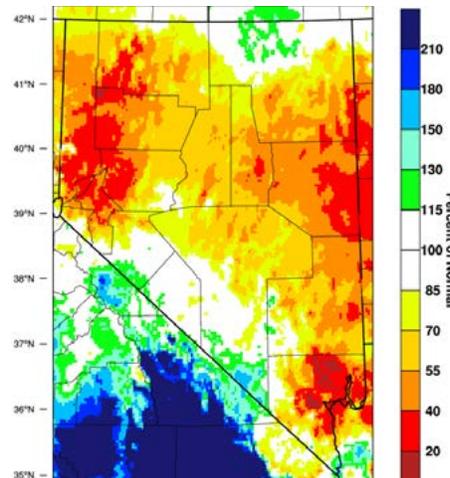
Author:
Adam Hartman
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



April - June Departure
from Normal Temperature



April - June Percent of
Normal Precipitation

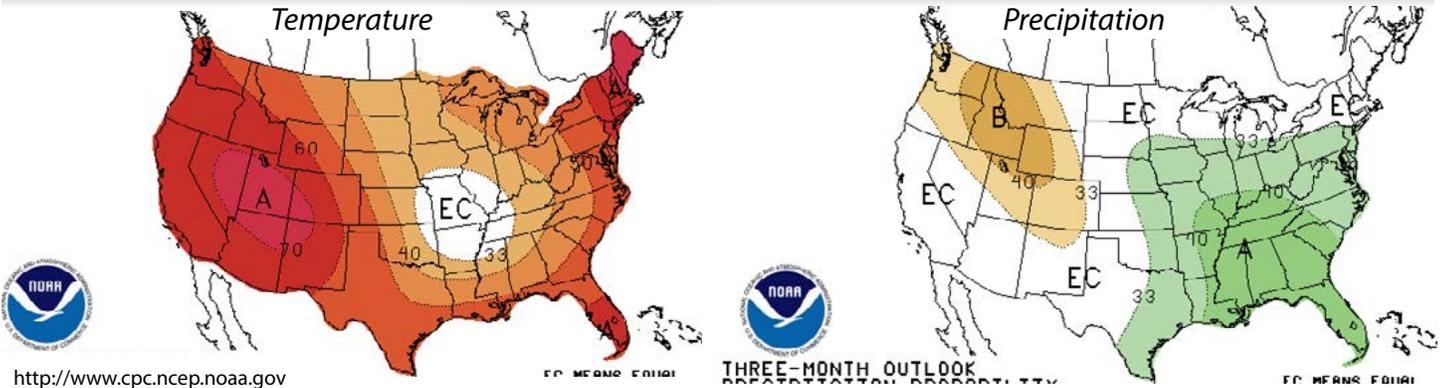


Maps from WestWideDroughtTracker, <https://wrcc.dri.edu/wwdt/archive.php>

State Climatologist, Steph McAfee (smcafee@unr.edu or climate@unr.edu)



Outlook for July - September



I'm not sure I've ever seen an outlook from the Climate Prediction Center that is quite as certain as the temperature forecast for this summer (I'm keeping an eye out for window-fan sales ...). From central Nevada southeast to the Four Corners, the CPC is anticipating a 70 - 80% chance that temperatures will be above normal through September. Across the rest of Nevada, there is a 60 - 70% chance of above normal temperatures during some of the hottest months of the year. In each of Nevada's four climate divisions, July is, on average the hottest month, followed by August. Of course, the hottest spell during the summer could come at any time. So now might be the time to brush up on staying safe in extreme heat. **Ready, gov has tips on how to prepare for heat ahead of time, as well as steps you can take when the mercury starts to climb.** Don't forget the furry members of the family! They might also need help staying safe in the heat. The **American Veterinary Medical Association** has the information you need. If the temperature outlook seems certain, the precipitation forecast is not, with roughly equal chances of wet, dry, or normal conditions across most of the state. In far northern Nevada and across Elko county, there are slightly better than even odds of a drier than normal summer (33 - 40%). Even if your area gets normal or generous rain this summer, high temperatures dry things out fast, so vegetation could be crispy. Keep an eye on conditions and follow recommendations around fire safety in your yard and while enjoying Nevada's outdoors.

In-depth: Staying safe in fire season

Summer in the West means wildfire. As of June 30, there had already been six large fires in Nevada, according to the **National Interagency Fire Center** (NIFC). The largest, the Twin fire near Alamo, was over 25,000 acres. The roughly 2,500 acre Mahogany Fire was burning near a campground near Mt. Charleston where residents of Las Vegas can get out to escape the heat. Evacuations were necessary in north Reno as the 3,000 acre Poeville Road fire burned on Peavine Peak. Other large fires this year include the Monarch (contained at about 2,300 acres) outside of Gardnerville, the Brown Fire near Lund which reached over 8,000 acres, and the 4,500 acre Miller fire burning north of Pioche.

Learning about wildfire and staying informed are important. The newly updated and redesigned **Living with Fire** website is full of information about things you can do ahead of time to reduce the likelihood of wildfire and to keep your home and neighborhood safer from fire. There are also planning tools for keeping your family safe if a wildfire threatens your home, and links to county, state, and federal information and resources. **Nevada Fire Information** provides real-time information about active fires, current fire weather and fire restrictions in Nevada. You can follow them on Twitter @NevadaFireInfo!

This summer, get informed and stay safe!

The State Climate Office website is moving. Stay tuned for a new location and a new look!