

Montana Drought/Precipitation Summary

January 3, 2005

Montana weather and precipitation summary, December 2004.

In December, the fall trend of warm and dry continued. Temperatures averaged from five to eight degrees above normal. Other than in mountainous locations, precipitation was generally absent across the state. A late month storm brought snow to most of the state with blizzard conditions in the far eastern portion. A mild period in mid-month warmed temperatures to 67F at Huntley on the 11th, while in the northeast, Scobey dropped to -31F on the 23rd and Placer Basin in the south central fell to -35F. At several locations east of the divide, this was the windiest December in several years. Cut Bank recorded their highest wind gust (78 mph) since January 1992. A 112 mph gust was recorded at Logan Pass on the 3rd and the winds reached 106 mph near East Glacier on the 11th.

Historical Rank of Precipitation (inches) for the Past Month and Water Year to Date

Location	Dec 1 - Dec 31	% of Normal	Oct 1 - Dec 31	% of Normal	Rank	Percentile	Years of Record
Billings	0.25	37	1.98	74	30 th driest	42 nd	71
Bozeman	0.23	40	1.64	66	19 th driest	31 st	62
Butte	0.37	70	0.77	40	9 th driest	8 th	106
Cut Bank	0.02	6	0.95	78	48 th wettest	51 st	97
Dillon	0.18	78	1.19	97	32 nd driest	54 th	59
Glasgow	0.59	159	1.36	93	46 th driest	43 rd	108
Great Falls	0.43	64	1.64	75	36 th driest	32 nd	112
Havre	0.16	31	0.93	59	25 th driest	20 th	125
Helena	0.36	78	0.87	54	12 th driest	10 th	124
Kalispell	1.21	73	3.34	82	39 th driest	37 th	106
Lewistown	0.46	55	1.78	68	18 th driest	17 th	104
Livingston	0.28	50	2.24	90	46 th driest	46 th	102
Miles City	0.29	64	1.98	94	50 th wettest	55 th	112
Missoula	0.53	46	1.28	44	5 th driest	5 th	104

For an automated version of this chart, updated daily, go to
<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/greatfalls/getproduct.pl?PCPNTOTALS>

For a state map of % of normal water year precipitation (updated around the 7th of each month), go to:
http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/txf.php?TEXT+wateryear_percent.html

For the latest information on mountain snow pack from the NRCS, go to:
<http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/index.html>

For the latest U.S. Drought Monitor, issued weekly by the Climate Prediction Center (CPC), go to:
<http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html>

Montana precipitation/temperature forecast.

As of January 1st, the CPC January temperature forecast is a 50 to 65% chance of warmer than normal conditions. The January precipitation forecast is for equal chances of wetter or drier than normal conditions. For the period January through March, the forecast calls for a 50 to 60% chance of above normal temperatures and equal chances of above or below normal precipitation over the state. Graphics and text relating to these outlooks, and additional long-range forecasts can be found at

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/multi_season/13_seasonal_outlooks/color/seasonal_forecast.html

Further inquiries about the moisture conditions can be directed to Dave Bernhardt or Gina Loss at (406) 453-2081. Many more links can be found on the Drought Information Page of the NWS Great Falls web site at
<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/txf.php?HTML+drought>