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Wyoming's Climate: December 2011

Snotel

Snowpack is building at a slower rate than last year and is below normal for several basins. The Bighorn basin is right about normal as is the Shoshone and, to a lesser extent, the Belle Fourche. The Powder-Tongue is above normal at 117%. The remaining basins are in the range of 60% to 80% of normal.

Precipitation

December saw a drying with respect to the normal throughout much of Wyoming, particularly in the counties of Teton, Sweetwater, Sublette, Carbon, Natrona, Johnson, Sheridan, Crook, and Weston. Precipitation was at about the same percent of normal compared to November for Lincoln and Laramie while there was some improvement in Goshen and Platte.

Temperature

With the exception of the northeast, temperatures in Wyoming were near normal to below normal for December.

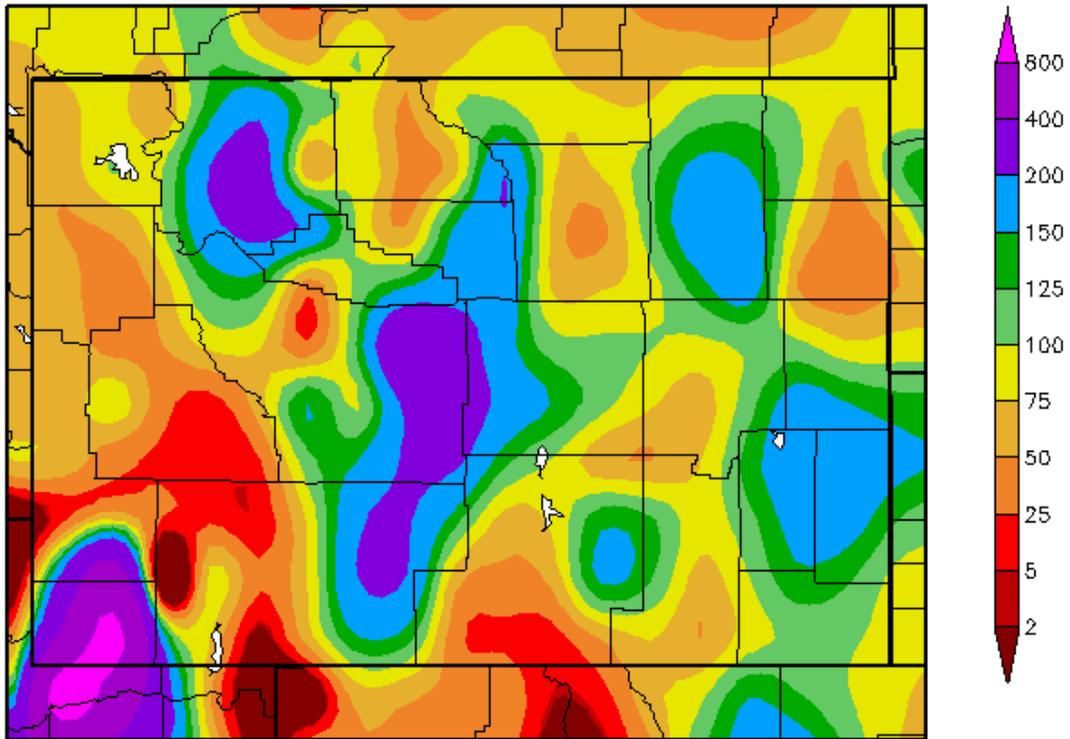
The northeast part of Wyoming saw above normal temperatures with departures from normal ranging from 2°F to 6°F above normal in Sheridan, Johnson, Campbell, Crook, and Weston counties. Goshen, Platte, and Laramie counties ranged from near normal to 4°F below normal while Albany, Carbon, and Fremont counties were generally 4°F to 8°F below normal. The first week in December saw unusually cold temperatures in Laramie with a low of -29°F recorded on the 5th. This was not, however, low enough to break the -33°F record for that date set in 1972.

Southern Lincoln, Sweetwater, Sublette, Big Horn, Natrona, Park, and Uinta counties were generally within +/- 2°F of normal while northern Lincoln and Teton counties ranged from 2°F to 4°F below normal.

The D0 (Abnormally Dry) category that was introduced into the very northeastern part of Crook County on 08 November remained. Below normal snowpack is causing concern in areas of the state, particularly the south and southwest.

This report was prepared by the Wyoming State Climate Office, which is a division of the Wyoming Water Resources Data System at the University of Wyoming. More information can be found at: <http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu> and http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/sco/climate_office.html. Special thanks to the National Weather Service's Riverton and Cheyenne Offices and the NRCS Casper Office for supplying much of the data and information used in this report.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
12/1/2011 – 12/31/2011

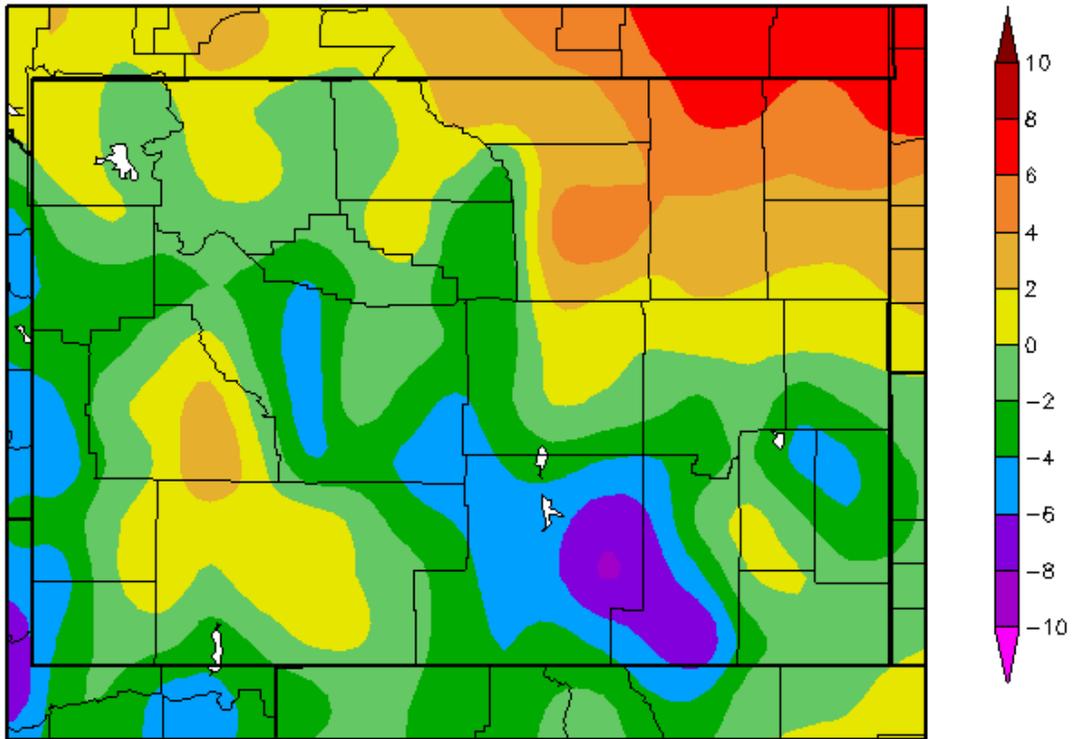


Generated 1/11/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Map showing December 2011 precipitation as a percentage of historical averages (vs. 1971-2000 “normal” period) for Wyoming. Courtesy of the High Plains Regional Climate Center.

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
12/1/2011 – 12/31/2011



Generated 1/11/2012 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Map showing mean December 2011 temperatures as departures from historical averages (vs. 1971-2000 “normal” period) for Wyoming. Courtesy of the High Plains Regional Climate Center.