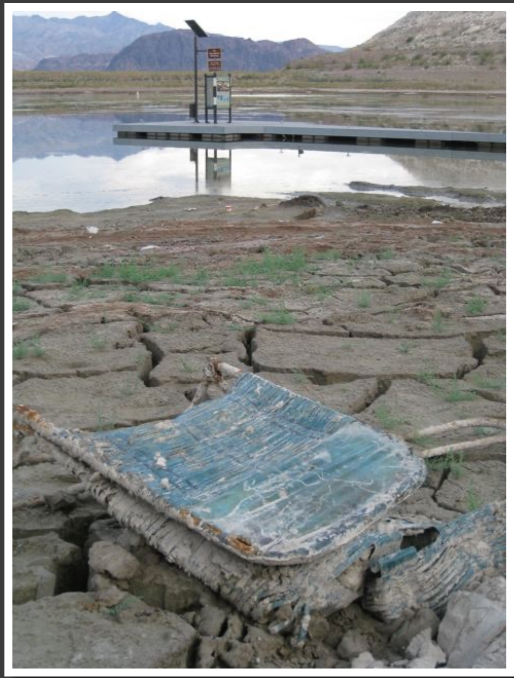
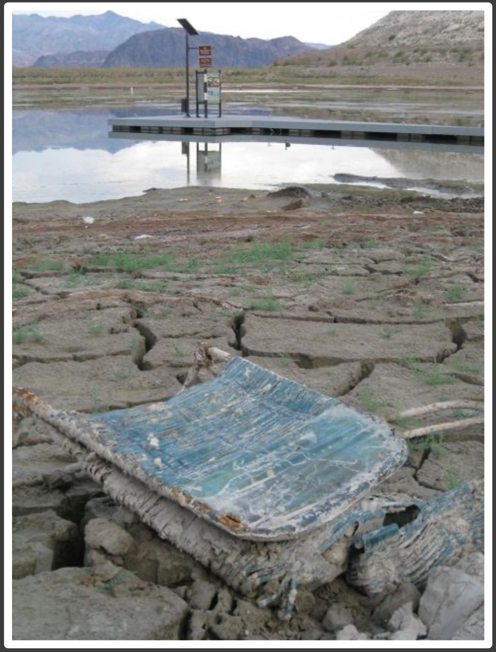


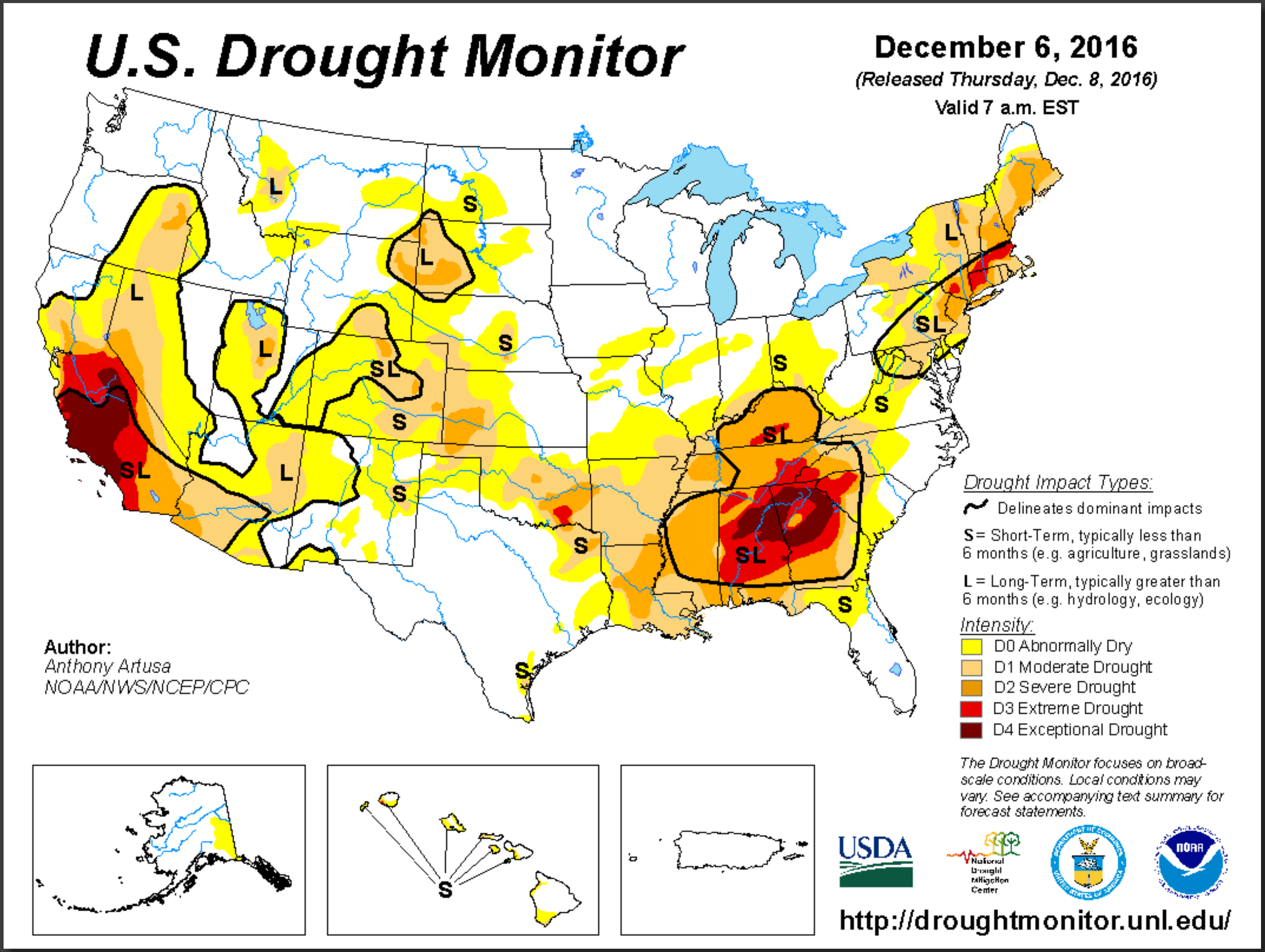
COMMUNICATING DROUGHT

John Fleck, University of New Mexico Water Resources Program director
Author, *Water is For Fighting Over: And Other Myths About Water in the West*
CRWUA, December, 2016

Key points

- “Drought” is no one thing
- In communicating about “drought”, you need to be clear about who your audience is

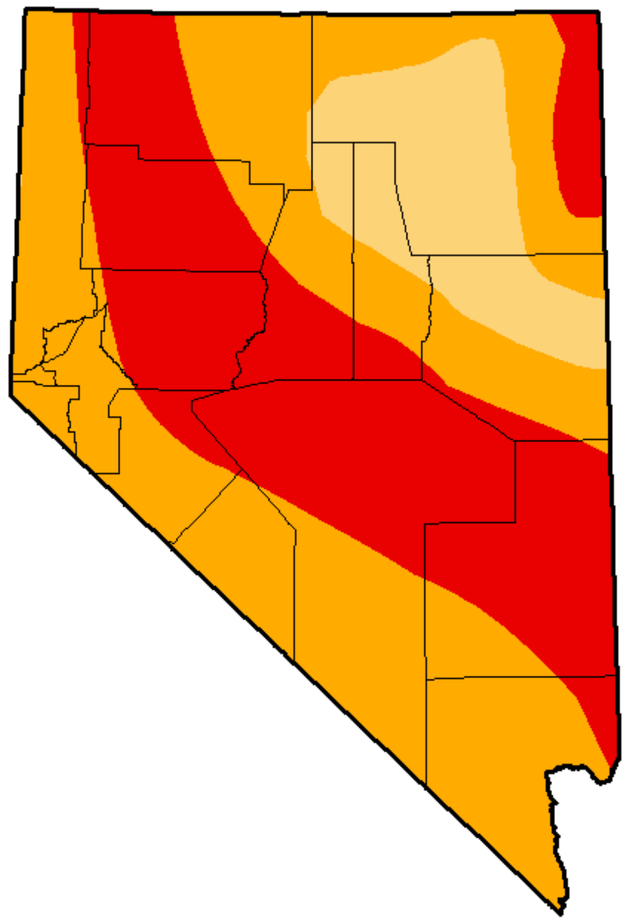




Drought in America – the weekly Drought Monitor

U.S. Drought Monitor

Nevada



August 3, 2004

(Released Thursday, Aug. 5, 2004)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	86.95	38.58	0.00
Last Week *7/27/2004*	0.00	100.00	100.00	86.95	38.58	0.00
3 Months Ago *5/4/2004*	0.00	100.00	100.00	84.39	18.05	0.00
Start of Calendar Year *12/30/2003*	0.75	99.25	94.52	91.48	29.11	2.26
Start of Water Year *9/30/2003*	0.00	100.00	98.29	94.74	57.69	3.99
One Year Ago *8/5/2003*	0.00	100.00	99.35	95.29	63.01	3.19

Intensity:

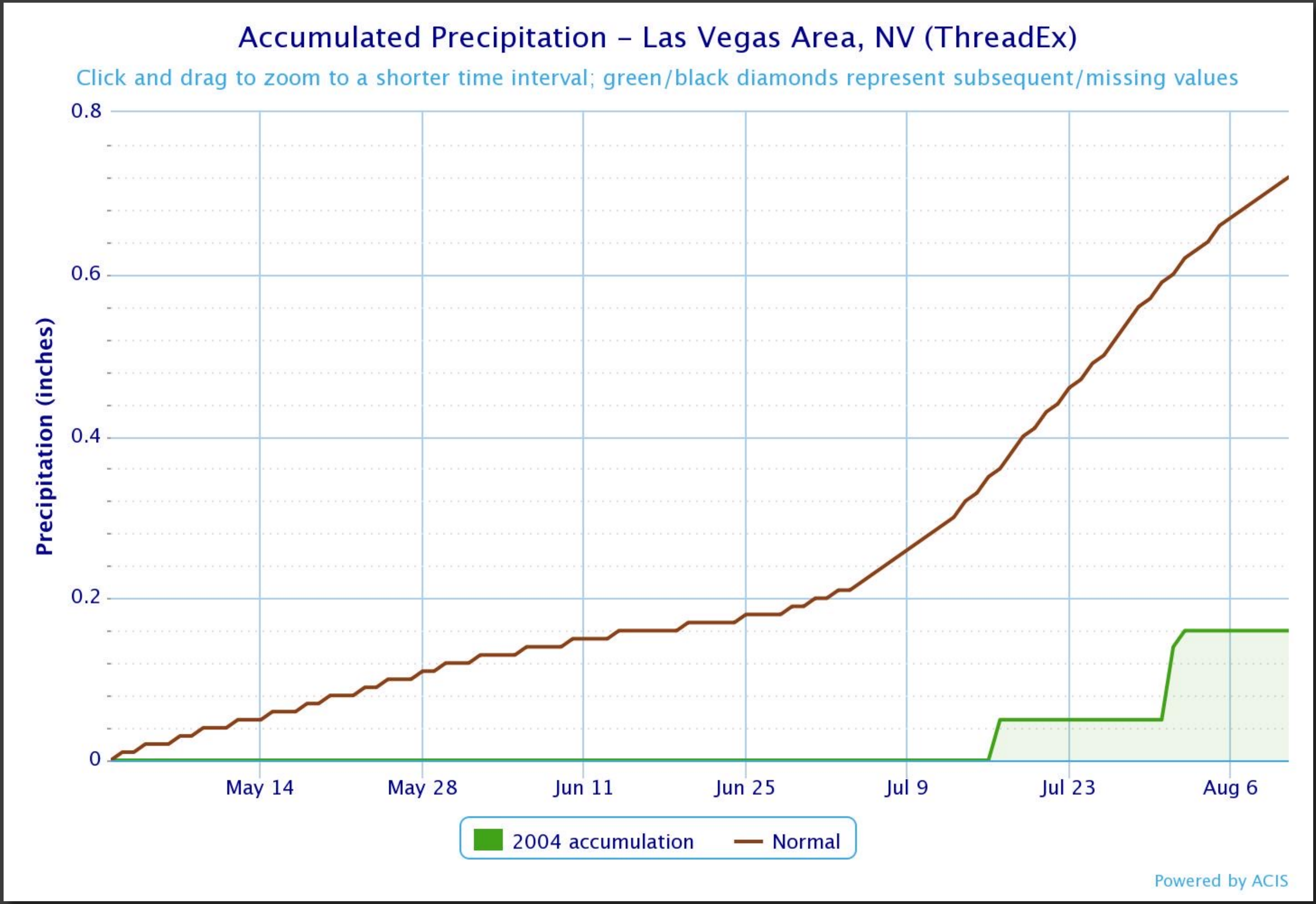
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:
Mark Svoboda
National Drought Mitigation Center

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

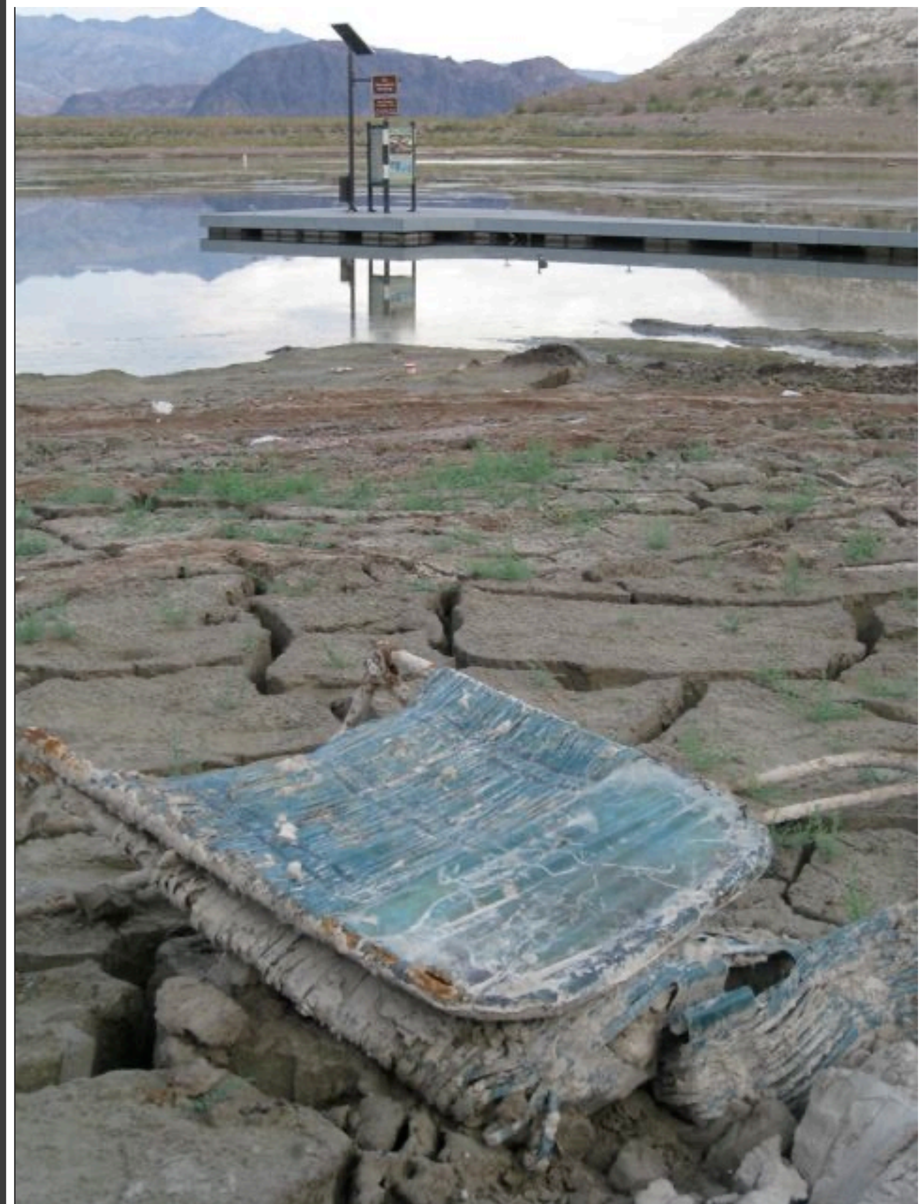
“Severe drought” in Southern Nevada – August 2004



A summer with little rain

In the five years prior to the summer of 2004

- Las Vegas precipitation was normal
- Lake Mead dropped 80 feet.



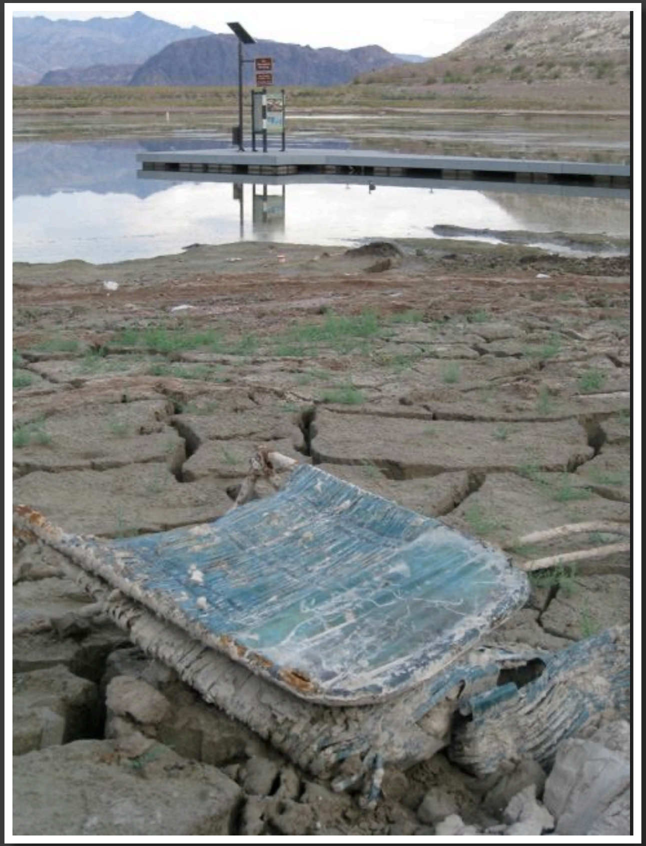
A definition of drought:

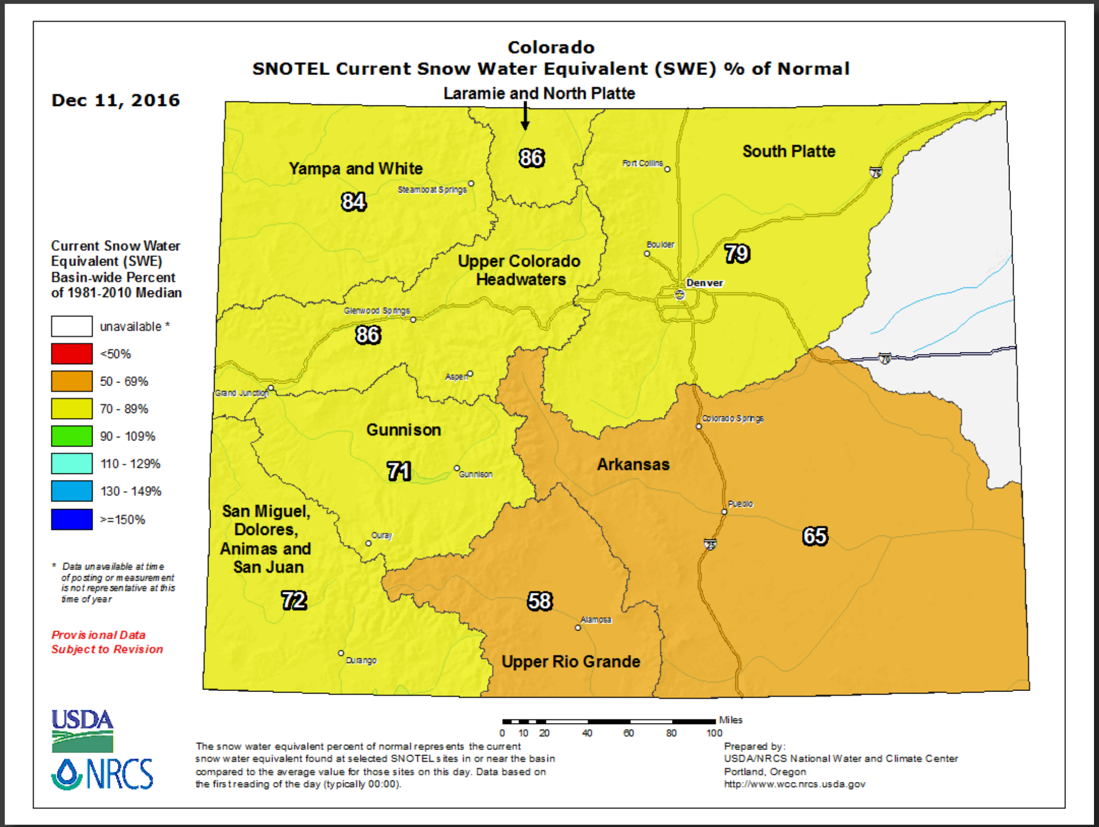
"Insufficient water to meet needs."

Kelly Redmond, Deputy Director,
Western Regional Climate Center

Kinds of drought

- Meteorological drought
- Agricultural drought
- Hydrologic drought
- Socioeconomic drought





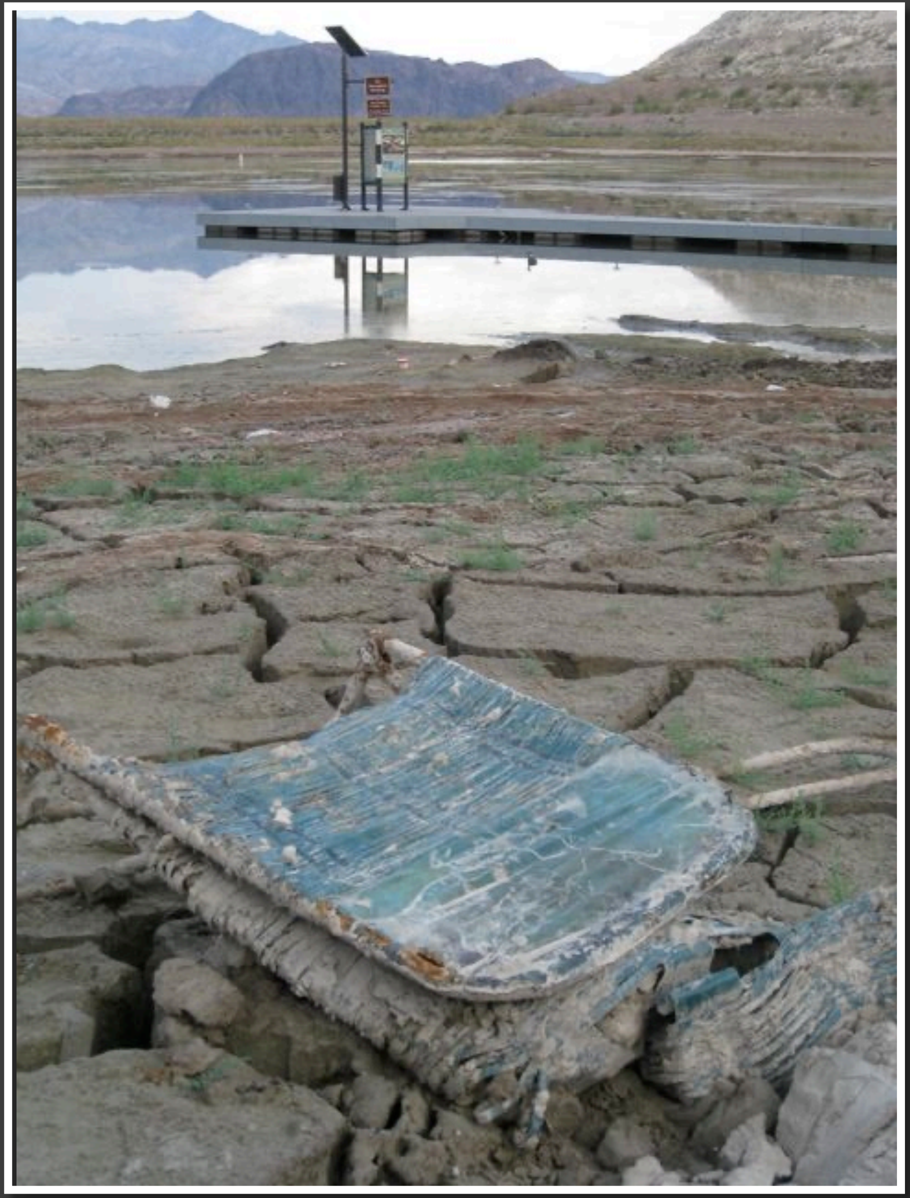
In the Colorado River Basin, the geography of drought matters

Who are we trying to communicate with?

- water users
- decision makers
- the "general public"

Channels

- old media
- direct (bill stuffers, advertising)
- new media



UNMwater
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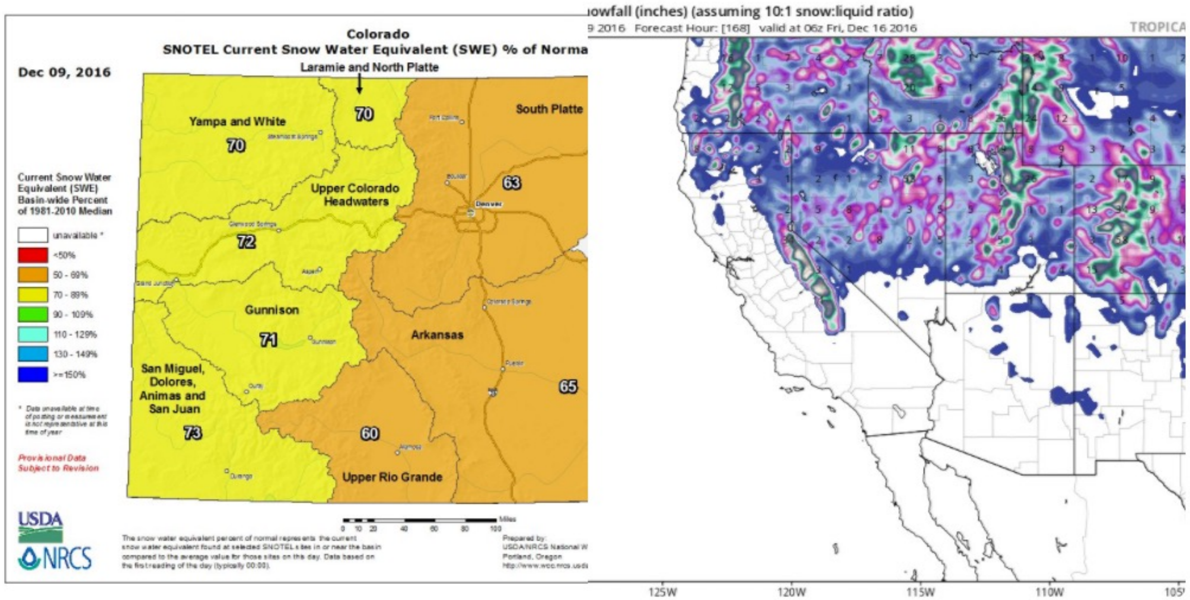
Following

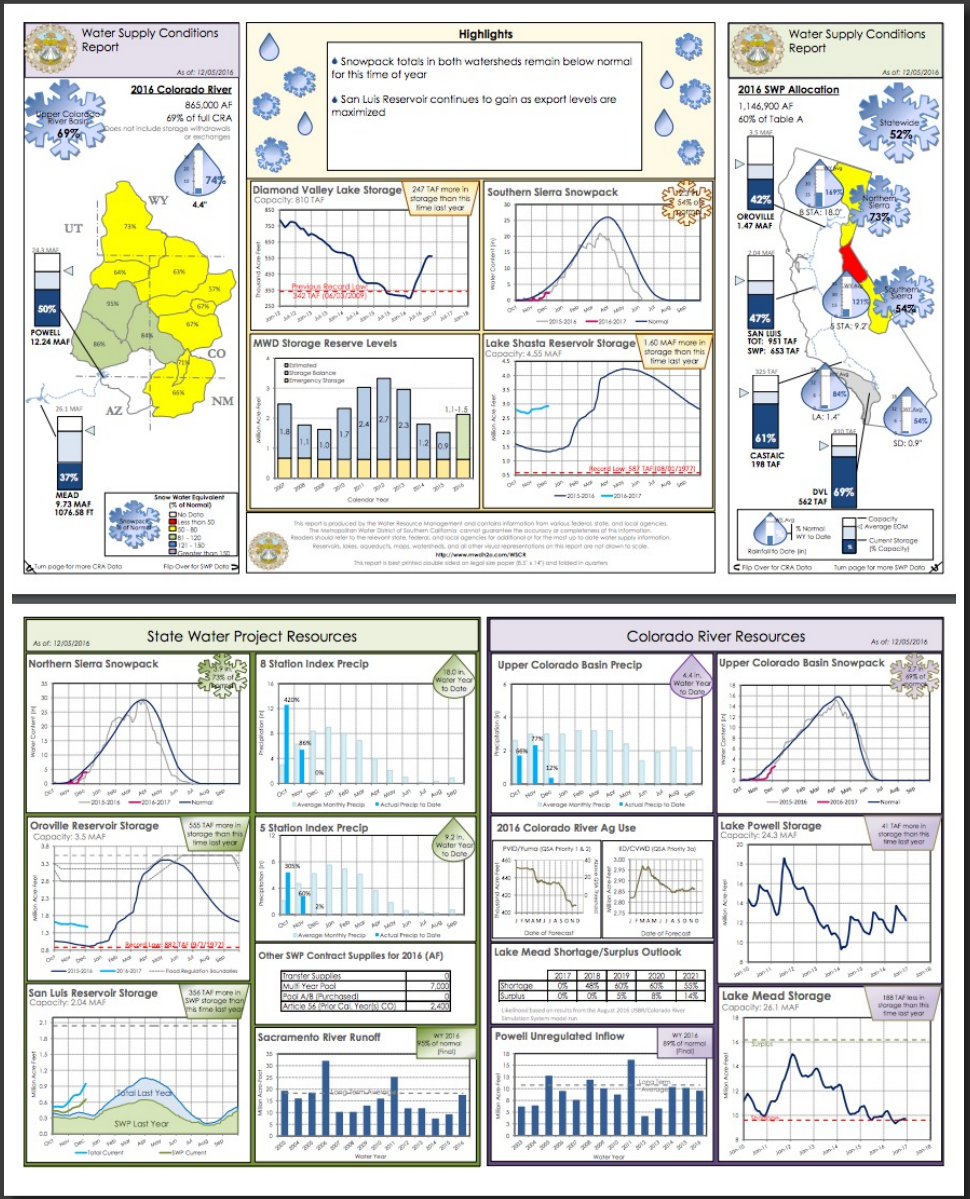
Snowpack still thin in headwaters of New Mexico's big rivers, but the next week looks promising #nmwater



6:18 AM - 9 Dec 2016

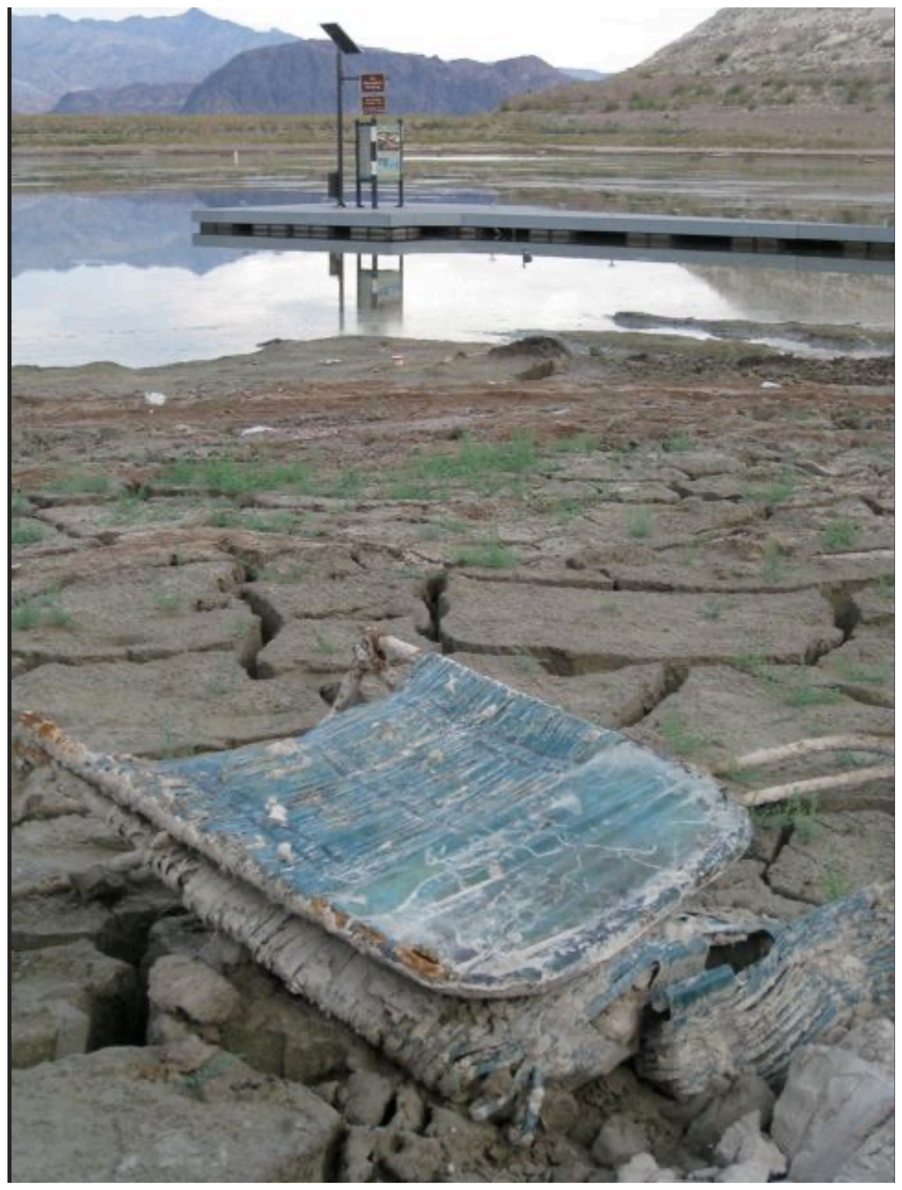
@UNMwater

Make your critical information easy to find



MWD: http://www.mwdh2o.com/PDF_About_Your_Water/2.2.4_water_supply_conditions.pdf

Repetition



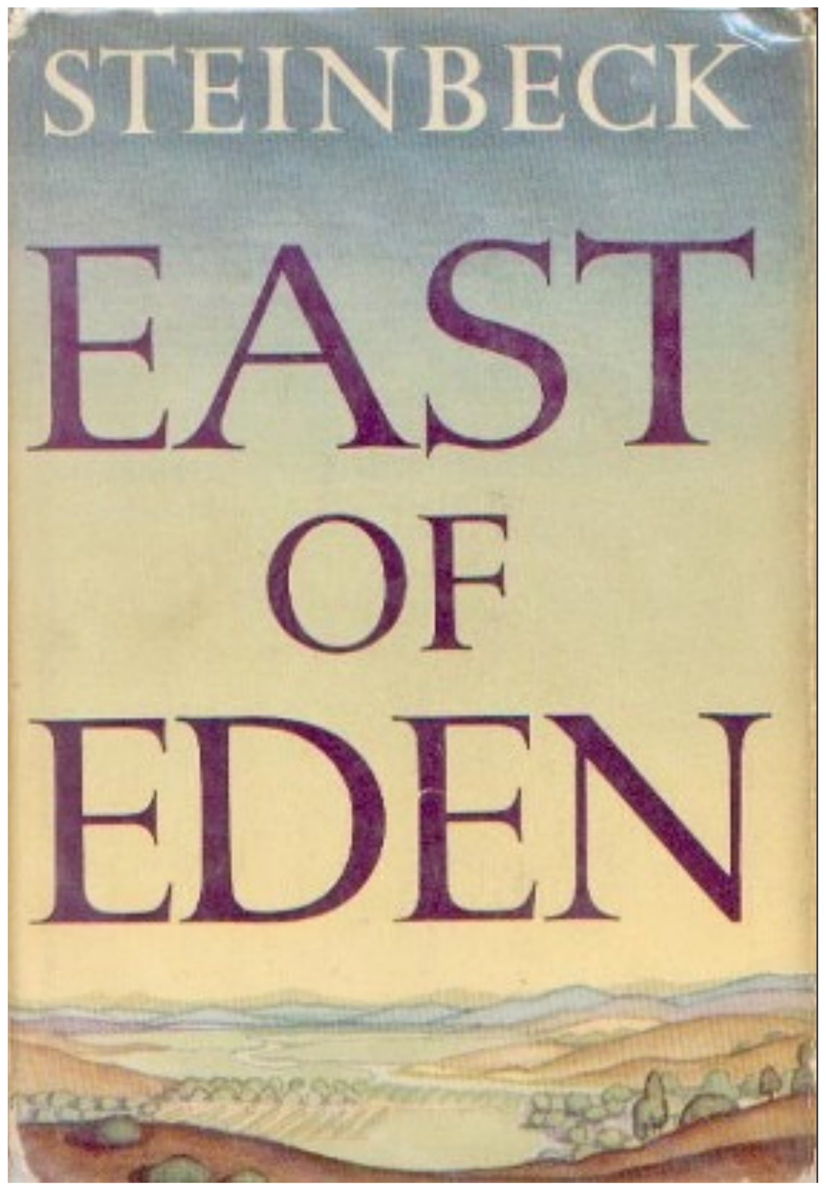
Q: What’s the word for the opposite of “drought”?

Q: What's the word for the opposite of "drought"?

A: "Pluvial"

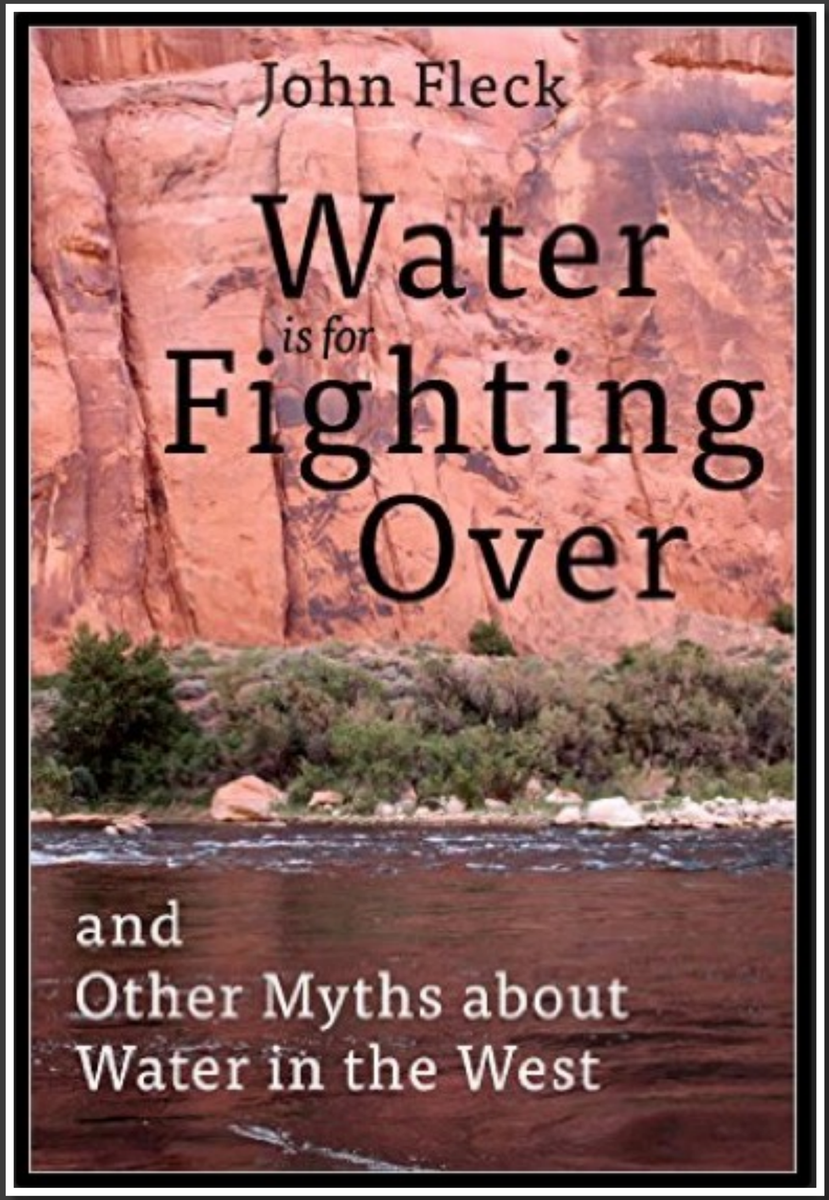
But when was the last time you heard someone say that?

"And it never failed that during the dry years the people forgot about the rich years, and during the wet years they lost all memory of the dry years. It was always that way."



Shameless book plug

(mentions “drought” 43 times, an average of once every 5 pages)



Thanks to Island Press and the University of New Mexico

fleckj@unm.edu

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