

**MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

**JANUARY 12, 2026 - 2:00 P.M.**

Directors having been duly notified; Chairman Kelly called the special meeting to order at 2:02 pm. The following Directors and Staff were present:

<b>DIRECTORS</b>			<b>STAFF</b>
John P. Kelly, Chairman	Present	Jason Casuga	Chief Engineer/CEO
Colin T. Baugh, Vice Chairman	Present	Joe Holvey	General Counsel
Brian Jiron, Director	Absent	Jeff Wechsler	Chief Water Counsel
Stephanie Russo Baca, Director	Present	Pamela Fanelli	Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
J. Chris Lopez, Director	Present	Eric Zamora	Director of Technical Services
Michael T. Sandoval, Director	Present	Christine Nardi	Director of Human Services
Karen Dunning, Director	Present	Amanda Molina	Director of Communications
		Casey Ish	Director of Lands & Conservation

The following names of individuals were interested viewers, callers and/or participants

Estella Gamboa, MRGCD	Anne Marken, MRGCD	Jimmy Beal
Doug Strech, MRGCD	Arturo Rio, MRGCD	

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Estella Gamboa led the Pledge of Allegiance at today's meeting.

Chairman John Kelly declared a quorum, and the meeting was publicly noticed. This meeting was a hybrid meeting. Director Jiron was not in attendance at the Special meeting. Rollcall votes will not be necessary for regular motions.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA**. Seconded by Director Lopez. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 - WATER AVAILABILITY REPORT** - Anne Marken, River Operations & Telemetry Manager

Anne Marken gave the water availability report. She stated that the basin received some moisture and snow accumulation last week. She displayed SNOTEL maps and graphs from the NRCS SNOTEL Network, which monitors snowpack conditions in the basin. The first map showed conditions in each of the basins that are relevant to the Middle Valley water supply as of January 6th, which was at or below 50% of median. The second map showed conditions as of today in those same basins, and conditions in the three upper basins improved, so the storms helped slightly improve conditions but noted enough to bring them close to the average for this time of year. She discussed a map showing aggregate snowpack data from the SNOTEL sites in the Upper Rio Grande Basin, and current conditions are similar to last year, but well below where they were in 2024. She said there is a lot of uncertainty between now and the end of snow accumulation season, and a couple of storms could really change snowpack conditions. However, if the conditions continue to trend the way they have been, they should expect limited water supply conditions in the spring. She shared that the National Weather Service 2-week

Outlook shows the basin is expected to experience warmer than average temperatures with equal chances for above or below average precipitation, and the three-month outlook graphs show they are likely to experience above average temperatures and below average precipitation. Ms. Marken reminded the board that MRGCD will be unable to store any native Rio Grande water for Middle Valley use due to the Compact debt, and after spring runoff, MRGCD will have limited ability to augment naturally occurring flows into the Middle Valley. She said summer and fall will largely depend on rainfall-driven inflows to meet Middle Valley farmer needs. She voiced that the official Compact debt for 2025 will be announced at the Compact Commission Meeting in April, but preliminary accounting model runs indicate the debt could increase by 7,500 acre feet for this year, bringing the total debt to around 132,000 acre feet.

*See also Appendix I.*

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 - MRGCD RECOMMENDATIONS ON WATER SERVICE CHARGE AND WATER BANK LEASE RATES AND FEES** - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO and Pam Fanelli, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

Ms. Fanelli expressed that per state statute 73-18-8-1, MRGCD should use a cost-of-living index to determine the annual adjustment of the water service charges to reflect increased costs of providing irrigation water. She explained that MRGCD used the 2025 CPI index, which was 3%, so that will increase the water service charge by \$1.78 per acre, taking it from \$59.25 to \$61.03 for Water Season 2026. She added that the new rate will be billed in November 2026.

Chairman Kelly stated that last year, after freezing the water service charge during COVID, they did a big catch up of \$8 per acre on the water service charge, and they talked about using CPI for annual increases instead of leaving it the same and having to do big catch ups going forward.

Mr. Casuga voiced they also looked at setting the water bank rates. He explained that MRGCD has a water bank, and when the water bank is open, there is an opportunity for MRGCD constituents who have lands that do not have water rights, to be able to petition to get and use water that comes from the water bank. He noted that alternate curtailment is also housed within the water bank, where they allow a landowner to dry a piece of property and use that water that dried on that specific property on another property. He stated that since New Mexico is in Compact debt, the ability to lease water from the MRGCD in that portion of the water bank is unavailable. However, they recommend continuing to allow the alternate curtailment process within the water bank. He said the water service charge they set for the year affects the rate set for the water bank, it is the same water rate; although, there is an administrative fee and lease rate. He added they will be looking at raising the water service charge in the water bank, similar to the overall water service charge for the valley.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 - ITEMS FOR THE FLOOR** (Comments are limited to three (3) minutes)

There was no public comment made at today's Special Meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 - CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION M-01-12-26-233 FOR THE ADOPTION OF WATER SERVICE CHARGE RATE PER ACRE FOR THE 2026 IRRIGATION SEASON**

Director Lopez made the **MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION M-01-12-26-233 FOR THE ADOPTION OF WATER SERVICE CHARGE RATE PER ACRE FRO THE 2026**

**IRRIGATION SEASON.** Seconded by Director Dunning. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED.**

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chairman Baugh	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Dunning	Yes
Director Russo Baca	Yes	Director Lopez	Yes

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 - CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION M-01-12-26-232**  
**FOR THE ADOPTION OF WATER BANK AND ALTERNATE CURTAILMENT LOCATION**  
**RATES FOR THE 2026 IRRIGATION SEASON**

Director Sandoval made the **MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION M-01-12-26-232 FOR THE ADOPTION OF WATER BANK AND ALTERNATE CURTAILMENT LOCATION RATES FOR THE 2026 IRRIGATION SEASON.** Seconded by Director Russo Baca. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED.**

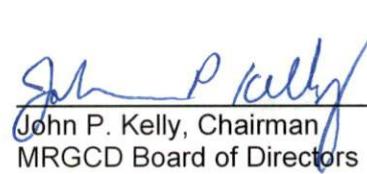
Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chairman Baugh	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Dunning	Yes
Director Russo Baca	Yes	Director Lopez	Yes

With no further comments, questions, or concerns, Chairman Kelly adjourned the meeting at 2:18pm.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of January 12, 2026.

**ATTESTED:**

  
Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM  
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

  
John P. Kelly, Chairman  
MRGCD Board of Directors

# Water Supply Update

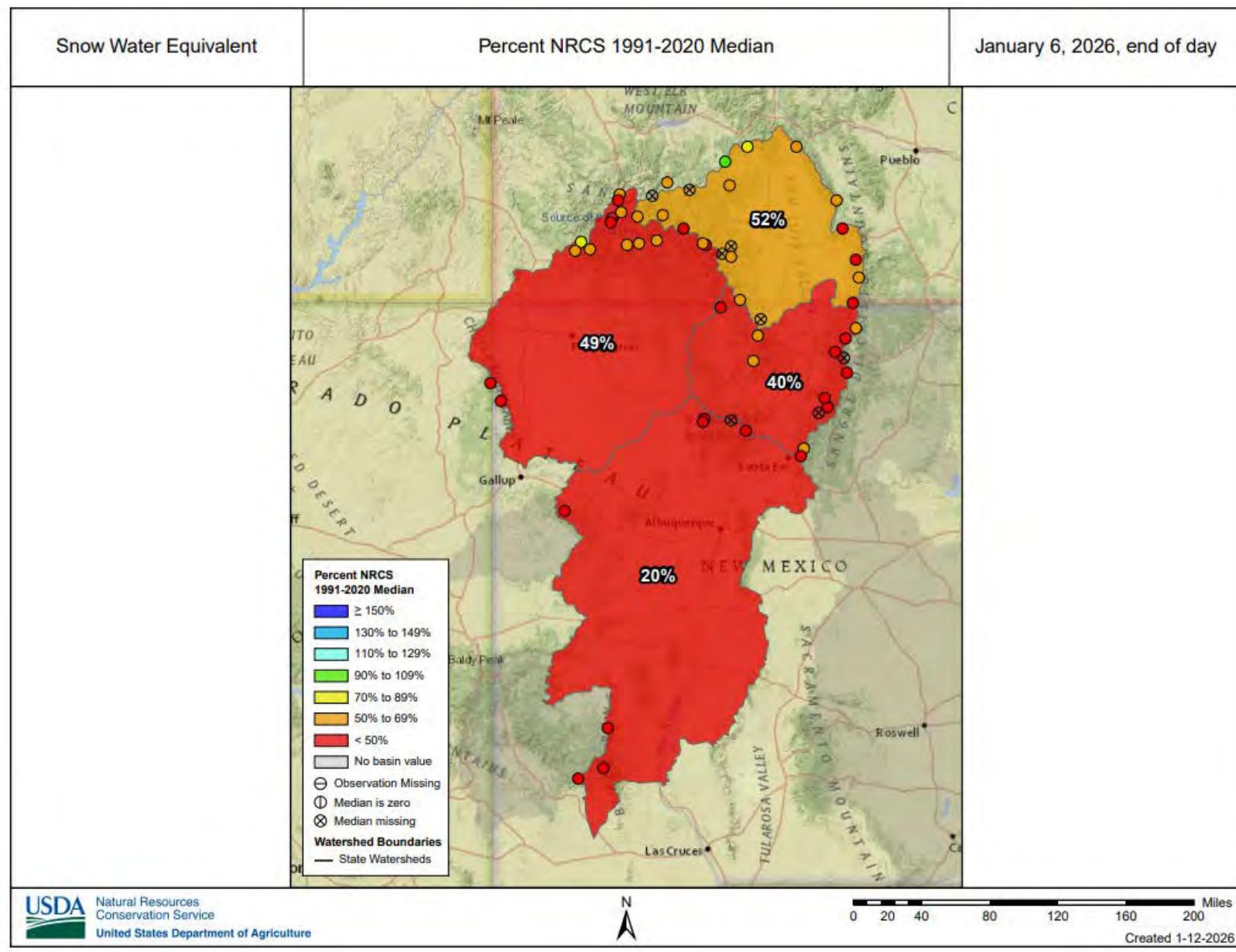
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## Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Board of Directors Special Meeting

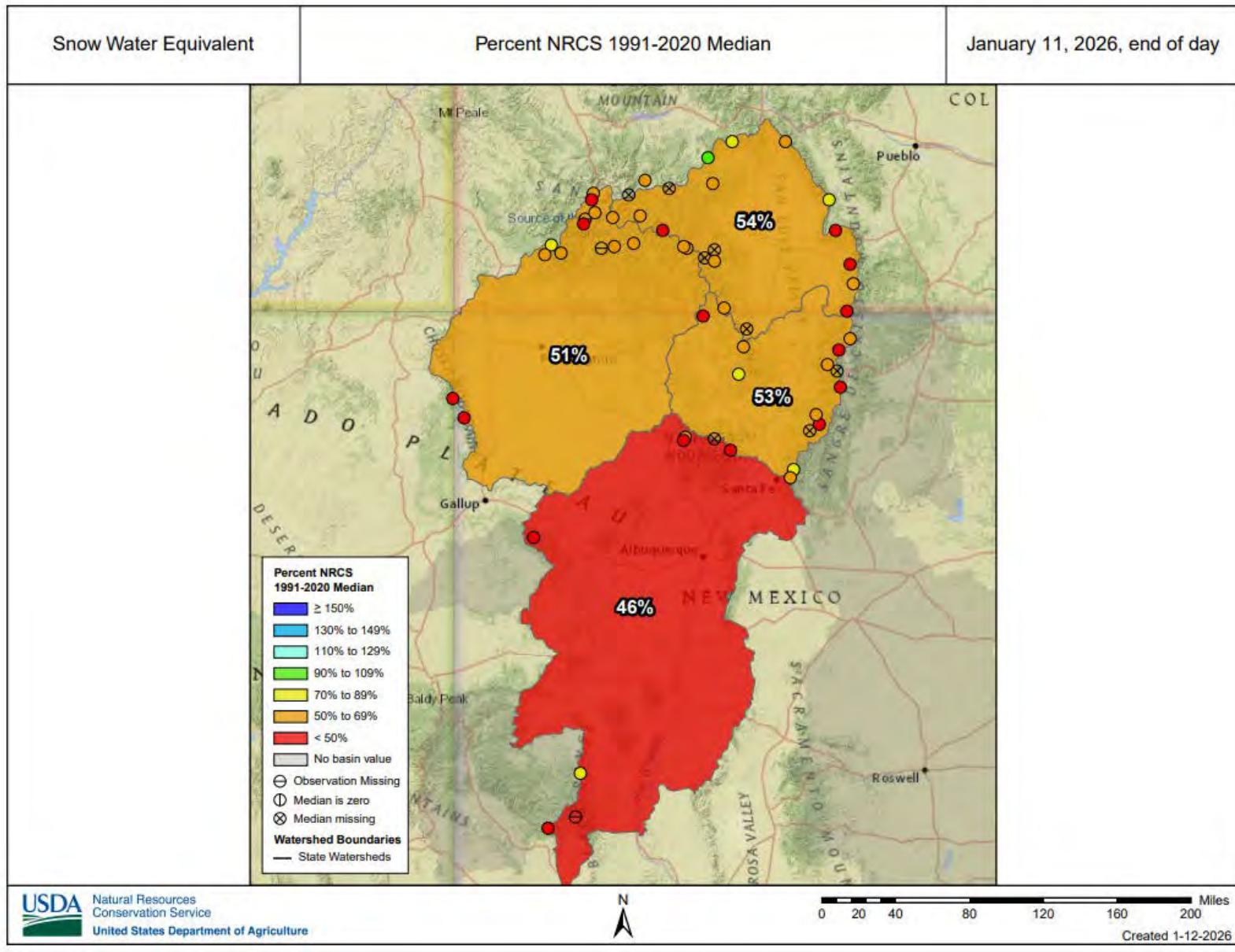
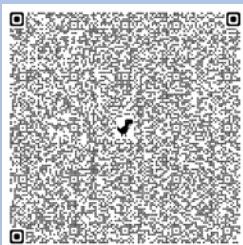
Prepared and Presented by: Anne Marken

Date: 1/12/2026



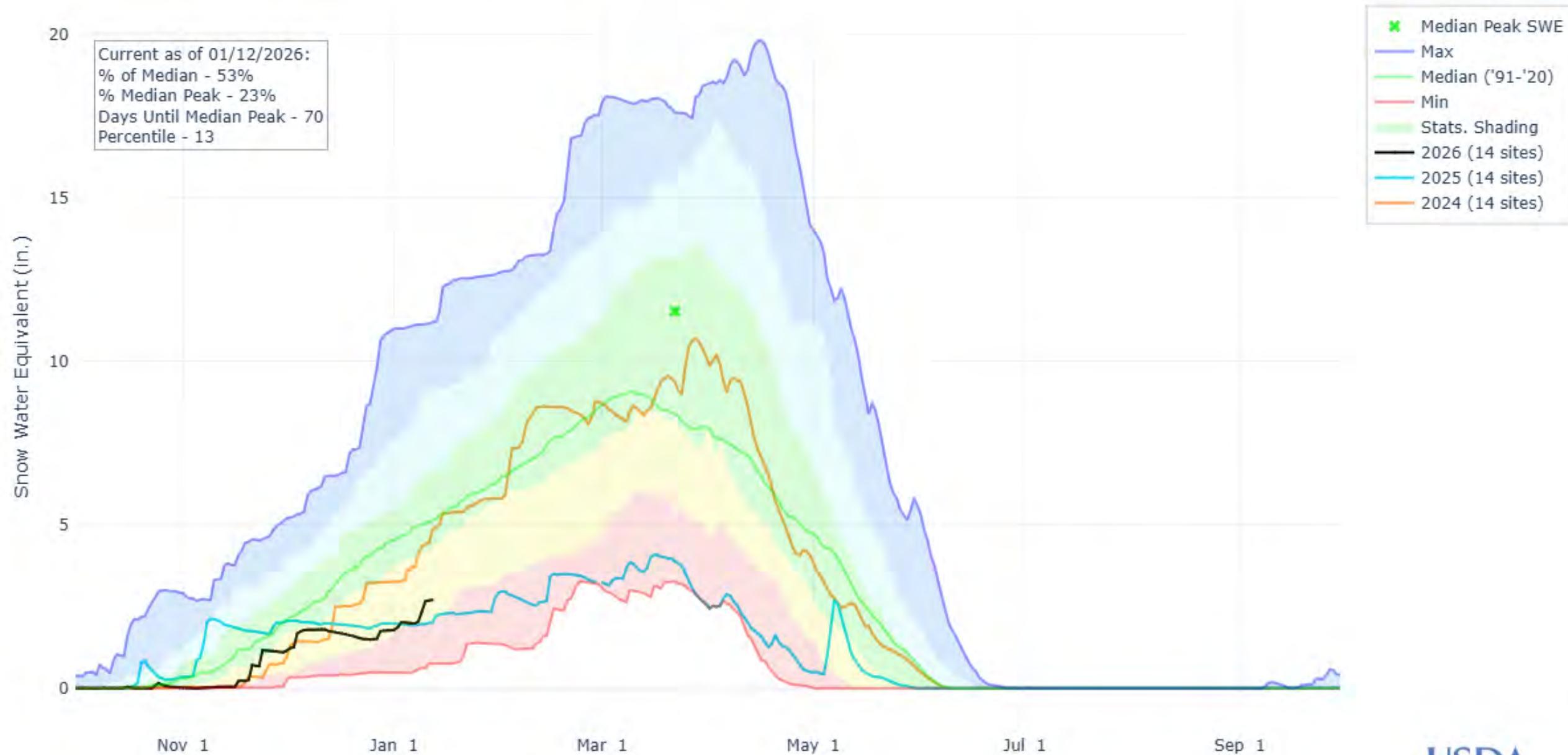


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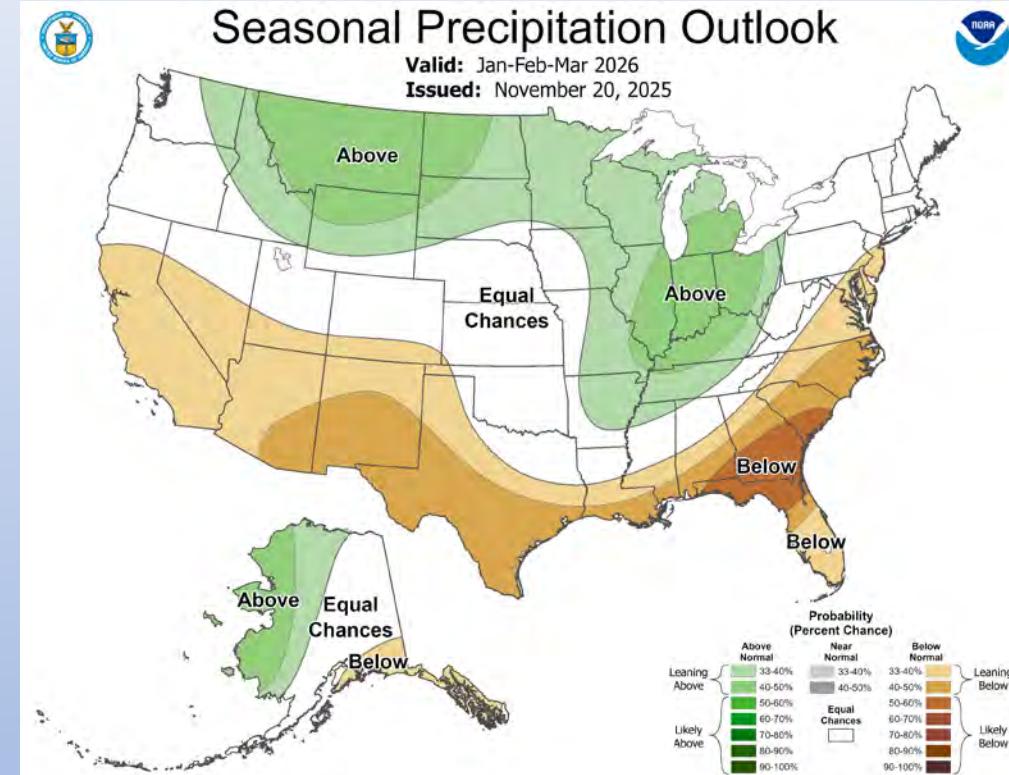
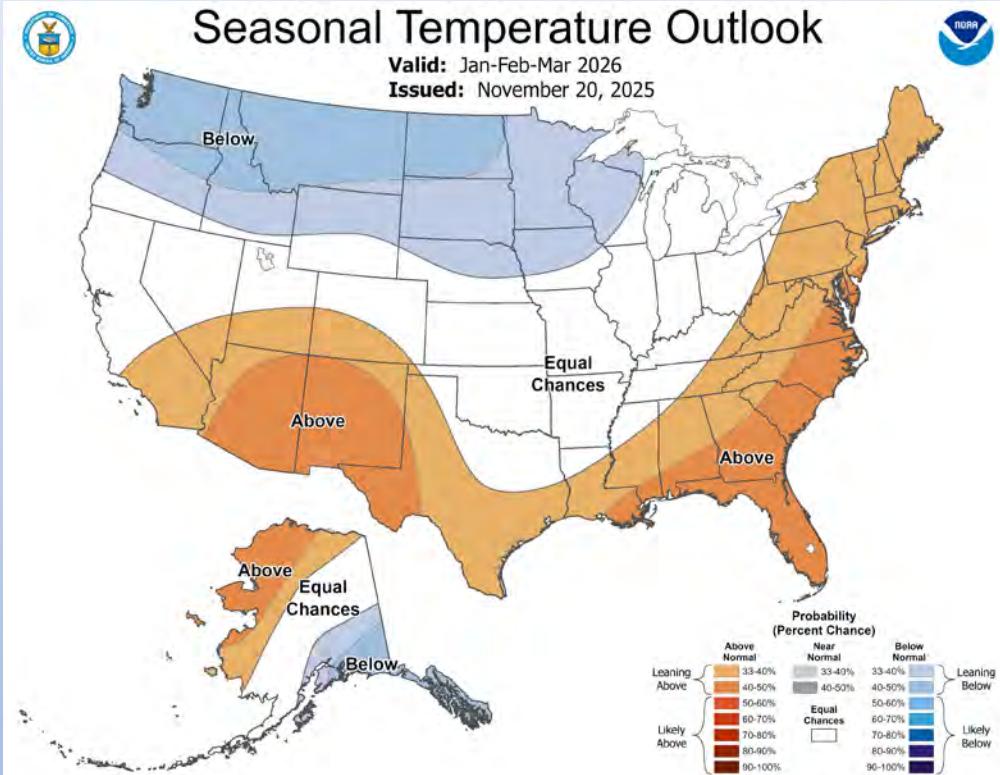


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## SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN RIO CHAMA-UPPER RIO GRANDE



# NWS Seasonal Outlook



[https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long\\_range/seasonal.php?lead=1](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1)



# Questions?

