

April 1, 2012

Dear Precipitation Observer,

2011 had its share of summer heat. Many areas in central and southern Minnesota hit 100 degrees this past summer. The warmest place in the state for 2011 was at the Twin Cities International Airport with 103 degrees on June 7. However, the biggest heat related news story of the summer was the oppressive dew point temperatures in mid July. Many locations saw dew point temperatures of 80 or greater. A new state record dew point temperature of 88 degrees was reported on July 19 at Moorhead. This broke the old record of 86 degrees that was set on July 23, 2005.

July was also quite stormy, with one of the most widespread severe events occurring on July 1. A large cluster of thunderstorms produced wind damage from South Dakota across Minnesota and into northwest Wisconsin. Six tornadoes touched down with this event. Another extreme weather event of note for the year was severe storms in northwest Minnesota. Winds were clocked at 121 miles an hour just west of Donaldson in Kittson County in Northwest Minnesota and this is the strongest wind speed on record measured in Minnesota.

The number of tornadoes in 2011 was down quite a bit from the year before. In 2010 there were 113 tornadoes reported in Minnesota, the highest number for a state in the US. In 2011 there were 31 tornadoes, closer to the long term average of 27. One person died in 2011 due to a tornado in Minnesota and that was the one that hit Minneapolis on May 22.

The developing drought took center stage during the fall. The drought began in late July and intensified during September and October. Some places in central and southern Minnesota saw their driest autumn in history since modern weather record keeping began in the 19th century. The dryness, along with above normal temperatures really parched the landscape. On September 29th numerous field fires fanned by strong winds were reported in southern Minnesota. Available soil moisture in November at Waseca was at the lowest in over a decade compared to the same dates in previous years.

The map on the back of this sheet depicts the total precipitation from all our rain gauge readers from September 1 to November 30, 2011 and the departure from normal. Many places in southern and central Minnesota were from five to six inches short of normal.

The 2011 listing of monthly precipitation totals for locations in your county should depict your measurements. If your data are missing, or if inaccurate values are shown for you, please let us know and we will correct the values in the data archive (contact: climate@umn.edu or 651-296-4214).

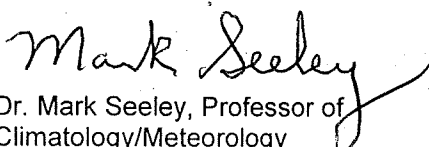
The enclosed **annual** observation form is for your personal records only. Please use the **monthly** forms to report data to the network administrator. You can also provide your data on-line (contact: climate@umn.edu). Your data, and data from all of our volunteers, can be viewed on the State Climatology Office Web site (<http://climate.umn.edu>). Please pass this Web address along to friends, colleagues, teachers, and anyone who shares your interest in the weather.

Thank you for contributing your data to the statewide precipitation archive. We appreciate your time and your hard work. You provide an important public service, and we are most grateful.

Sincerely,

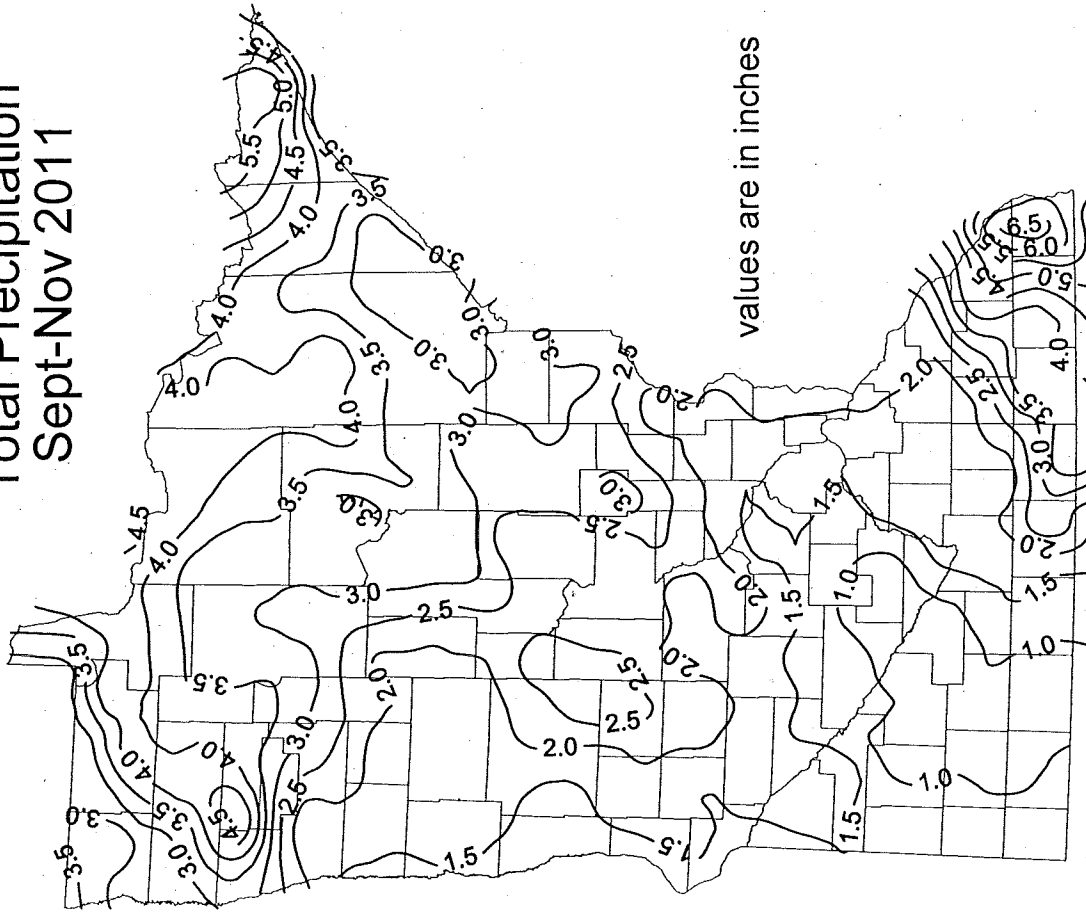


Pete Boulay, Climatologist
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Department of Natural Resources – St. Paul, MN



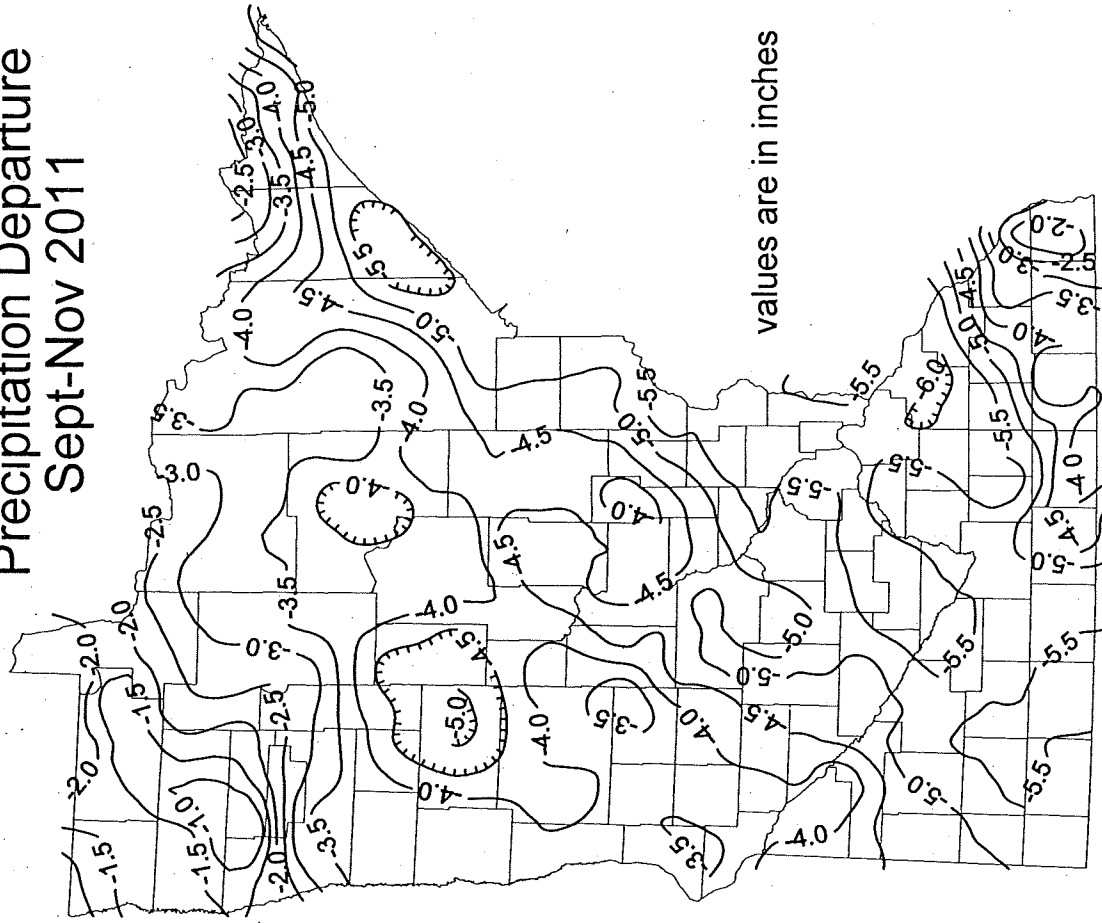
Dr. Mark Seeley, Professor of
Climatology/Meteorology
University of Minnesota – St. Paul, MN

Total Precipitation Sept-Nov 2011



MN DNR State Climatology Office

Precipitation Departure Sept-Nov 2011



MN DNR State Climatology Office