Hydrology Report – November 2026

Upper Basin Hydrology

- Water Year 2027 began on October 1, 2026. Snowpack is currently at 87% of the median (November 9, 2026).
- October temperatures were approximately 3–7°F above average across most of the Upper Colorado River Basin.
- The Basin Forecast Center is estimating Lake Powell inflow for water year 2027 at 10 million acre-feet or 104% of average.

Current reservoir status

- As of November 9, 2026, Lake Mead is at an elevation of **1,039.9** feet and has about 7.0 million acre-feet in storage (27% capacity).
- As of November 9, 2026, Lake Powell is at an elevation of 3,539.1 feet and has about 6.4 million acre-feet in storage (27% capacity).
- Total system storage for the upper and lower basins is around 19.9 million acre-feet (34% capacity).

2026 reservoir operations

- Reclamation announced on April 17, 2026, that releases from Glen Canyon Dam will total 6 million acre-feet during water year 2026. In addition, between 660,000 acre-feet and 1 million acre-feet will be released from Flaming Gorge Reservoir to help stabilize Lake Powell elevations.
- Lake Mead will operate in a Level 1 Shortage Condition in calendar year 2026.
- Accordingly, in 2026, Nevada's consumptive use will be reduced by 13,000 acre-feet under the 2007 Interim Guidelines and Nevada will make a Drought Contingency Plan contribution of 8,000 acre-feet.
- Arizona and Mexico are also required to take shortage and make a water savings contribution in 2026. Those amounts are significantly larger than Nevada's obligations.
- The total combined volumes for Arizona, Nevada, and Mexico are 613,000 acre-feet in calendar year 2026, which will save the equivalent of about 8 feet in elevation in Lake Mead.

Water Use in Southern Nevada [1]

- Southern Nevada's consumptive use for January through September of 2026 was 173,151 acre-feet.

Reclamation's Lake Mead and Lake Powell Projections [2]

- Reclamation uses computer models to forecast reservoir elevations based on planned water use and anticipated runoff. The October 24-Month Study forecasts Lake Mead to be between 1,034.5 and 1,034.2 feet in elevation by the end of 2026.
- Reclamation's October 24-Month Study forecasts Lake Powell's elevation to be around 3,518.3 feet by the end of 2026.

[1] 2026 consumptive use data is preliminary.

[2] Reclamation modeling assumes the current operational guidelines and planned conservation activities.



Colorado River Commission of Nevada

Hydrology Update

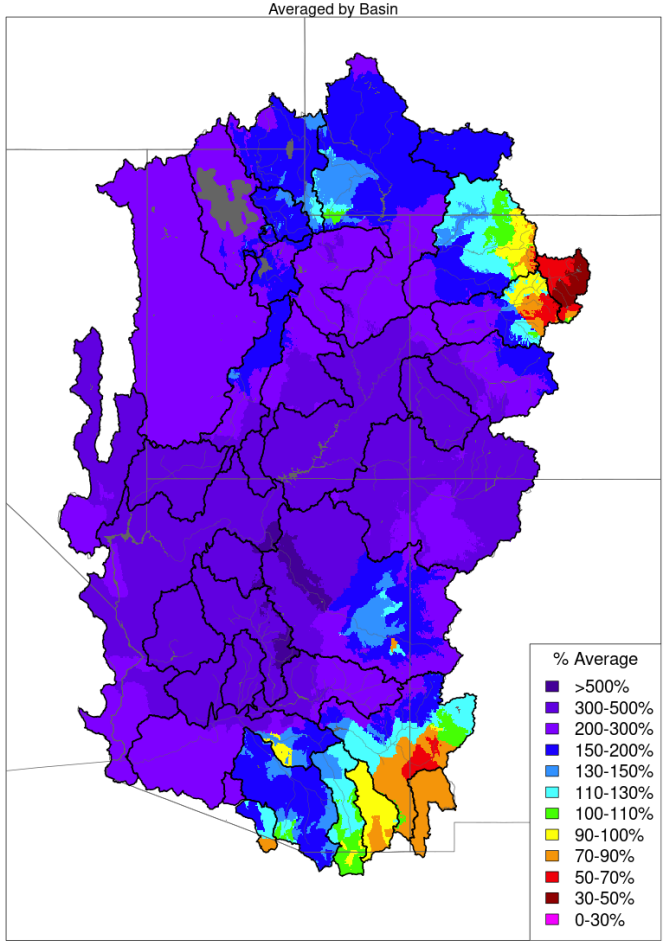
Warren Turkett

November 10, 2026



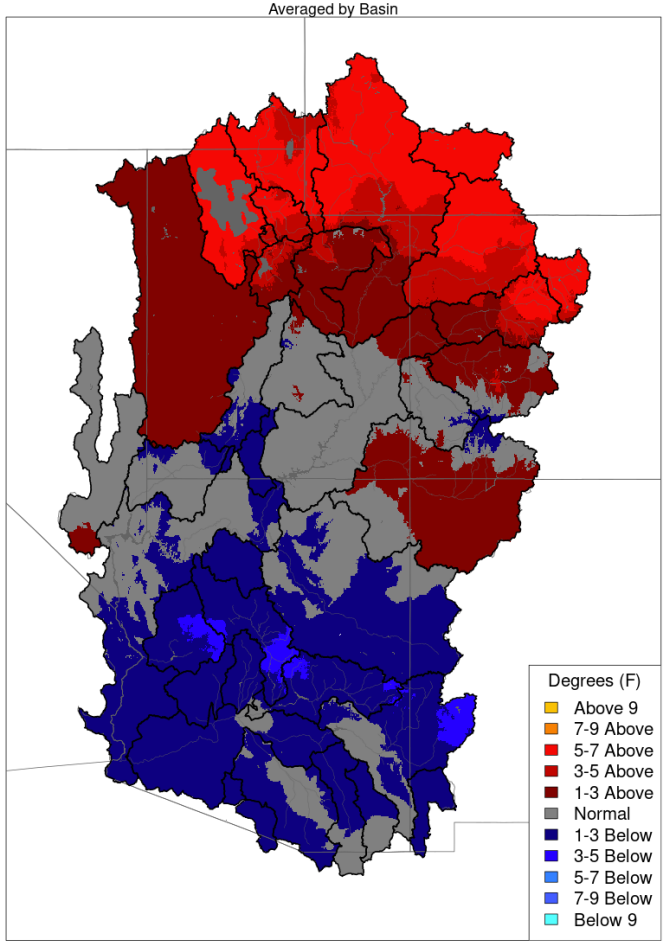
Precipitation and Temperature

Monthly Precipitation - October 2026
Averaged by Basin



Prepared by NOAA, Colorado Basin River Forecast Center
Salt Lake City, Utah, www.cbrfc.noaa.gov

Max Temp - Monthly Deviation - October 2026
Averaged by Basin



Prepared by NOAA, Colorado Basin River Forecast Center
Salt Lake City, Utah, www.cbrfc.noaa.gov

Lake Powell %Average Precipitation Water Year 2027

Area	Oct	Water Year
UC-Powell	208	208



Upper Basin Snowpack

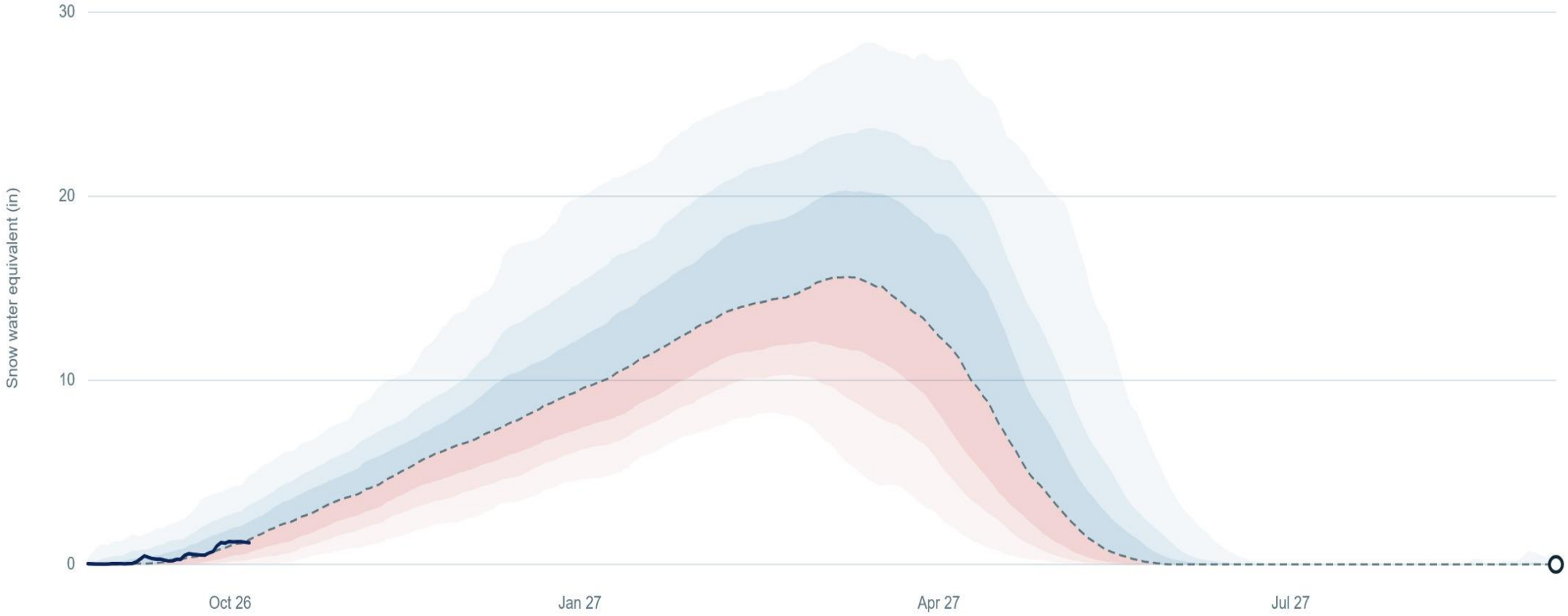
Lake Powell 104 — Water Year 2027

1991–2020 median — This water year — Historical range (min–max)

Nov 9: 1.17 in, 87% of median
Peak Nov 4: 1.24 in (8% Med Pk) · Med Peak Apr 6: 15.62 in

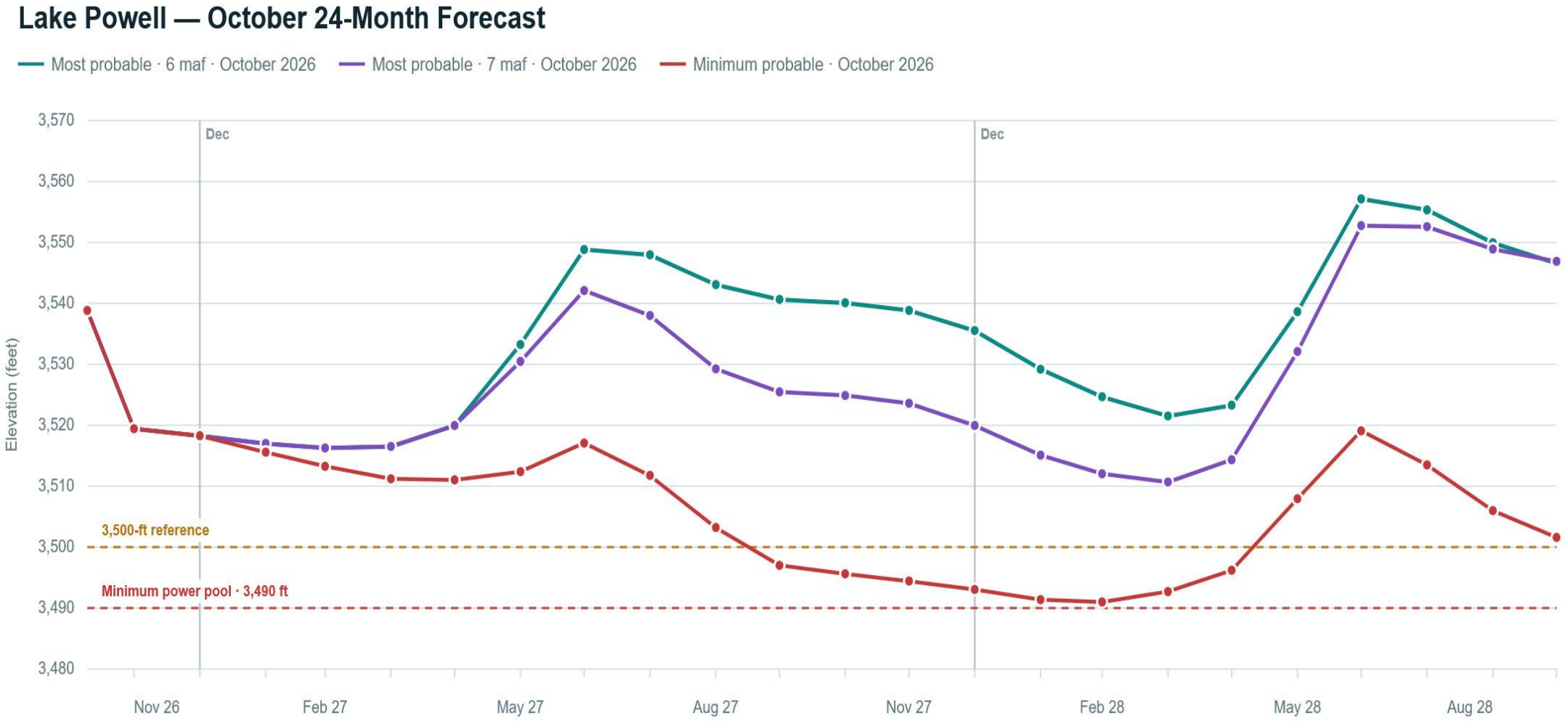
Lake Powell unregulated inflow (kaf), as of 2026-11-01

Period	Obs to Date	Full Fcst	%Avg
Apr-Jul	0	5,600	88%
Water Year	1,610	10,010	104%





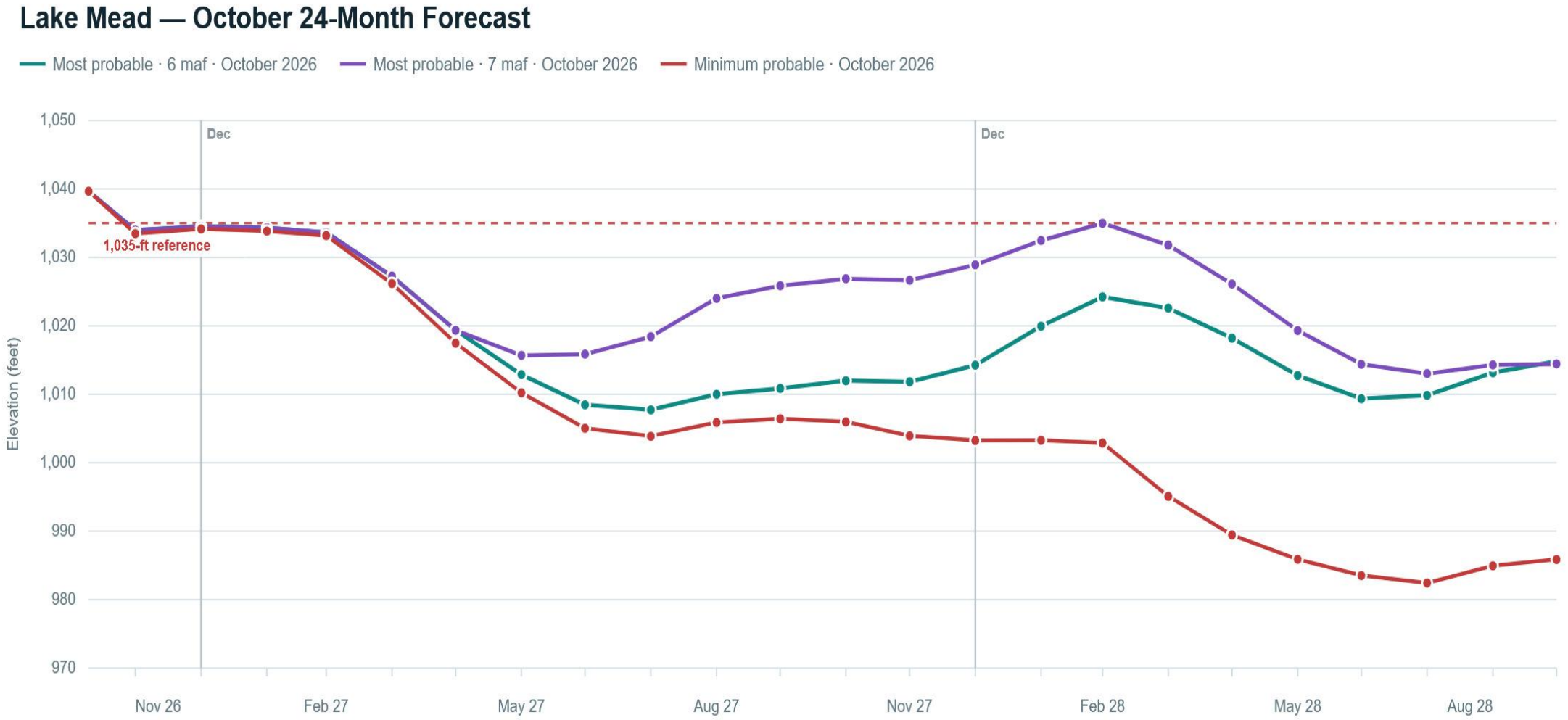
Lake Powell Projections



November 9, 2026, elevation: 3,539.1 feet



Lake Mead Projections



November 9, 2026, elevation: 1,039.9 feet



Water Use In Southern Nevada

2026 January - September Southern Nevada Water Use[1]	Acre-Feet
Nevada Annual Allocation	300,000
Drought Contingency Plan contribution	-8,000
Interim Guidelines Shortages	-13,000
Diversions	353,935
Return Flow Credits	180,785
Consumptive Use	173,151

[1] 2026 Consumptive use data is preliminary.