

Warm weather taking toll on Sierra snowpack

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nearly a week of unseasonably warm weather took its toll on a still-bountiful Sierra snowpack, with no new storms expected anytime soon.

Temperatures across the Reno-Tahoe area are expected to drop about 20 degrees today, slowing the snowpack meltdown.

Experts now are looking to February to bring back storms needed to keep the snowpack deep, providing needed water for next summer.



This season's next snow may show reduced water content.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

"We're losing a little, but the bigger concern is just no storms coming," said Dan Greenlee, snow surveyor with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

After a series of heavy December storms layered the mountains in white, January arrived with a snowpack at twice-normal levels. Storms petered out, and temperatures rose, with the

Lake Tahoe Basin's snowpack dropping from 227 percent of average on Jan. 1 to 176 percent on Tuesday.

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