

CLIMATE CHANGE IN MINNESOTA: CURRENT TRENDS AND MODEL PROJECTIONS

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IN RECENT YEARS there has been increasing recognition by scientists that the Western Great Lakes climate is showing several distinct trends or changes in character. Among these are: (1) warmer mean temperatures (heavily weighted to warm winters and higher overnight minimums); (2) change in frequency of tropical-like dew points (70 F or greater) in the summer months; and (3) an overall increase in variability of precipitation and other hydrologic features. These climate trends are clearly linked to visible and measurable consequences that are already being observed, and have serious implications. They are also compatible with transitional climate scenarios that climate models indicate are part of the future for the state of Minnesota over the next hundred years. Various perspectives on these climate trends, observed consequences in Minnesota, and climate model projections will be shared.

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