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EDITORS AND REPORTERS: NH State Climatologist Beth Hall’s complete December forecast is available at http://unh.edu/news/docs/NHClimate_Dec2007.pdf. Hall can be reached at 603-862-3136 and Beth.Hall@unh.edu.

DURHAM, N.H. – New Hampshire should have a white Christmas, with additional snow predicted for the month of December and low temperatures that should halt most melting, according to Beth Hall, New Hampshire state climatologist at the University of New Hampshire.

Hall’s December 2007 climate forecast for the Granite State calls for a 17 percent probability for snow to fall on Christmas Day in southern New Hampshire, and a 75 percent probability for there to be snow on the ground. In northern New Hampshire, there is a 27 percent probability for snow to fall on that date, and an 85 percent probability that there will be snow on the ground. Usually on Dec. 25, the Granite State averages between 5 and 7 inches of snow on the ground.

“In December, we experience the shortest days of the year. The Northeast Regional Climate Center predicts average daytime temperatures will drop to the 20s and 30s, with the nights even colder. That means any snow that we do get before Christmas Day should last through the holiday,” Hall said.

Models from the Climate Prediction Center indicate New Hampshire is forecast to have temperatures above normal and precipitation similar to the climatological averages from past years. From November to January, Hall said New Hampshire has a strong chance of seeing above normal temperatures, with precipitation close to climatological norms.

“What this implies is that with normal precipitation amount but above-normal temperatures, New Hampshire will probably see less snow than typical. The precipitation that does fall will either be as rain, or perhaps freezing rain. Without the slow melt-rate of snow, this could suggest an increased chance of flooding, especially if the ground freezes enough to discourage soil absorption,” Hall said.

At UNH, Hall teaches courses on meteorology and climatology in addition to specialized courses on how and why severe weather occurs. She holds a Ph.D. in atmospheric sciences from the University of Nevada.