

OCTOBER 2020



WestFAST News

682 East Vine Street / Suite 7 / Murray, UT 84107 / (801) 685-2555/ www.westernstateswater.org/westfast

Chair – Patrick Lambert; Federal Liaison Officer – Deborah Lawler

2020-21 Winter outlook leans warm and dry across southern U.S.

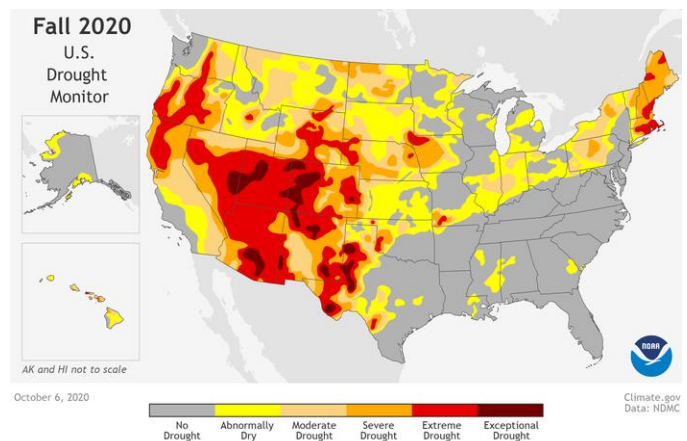
NOAA 10/15/20.

Winter outlook forecasts cooler North, warmer South with ongoing La Nina

NOAA's winter forecast for the U.S. favors warmer, drier conditions across the southern tier of the U.S., and cooler, wetter conditions in the North, thanks in part to an ongoing La Niña. Forecasters at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center - a division of the National Weather Service - are also closely monitoring persistent drought during the winter months ahead, with more than 45% of the continental U.S. now experiencing drought.

"NOAA's timely and accurate seasonal outlooks and short-term forecasts are the result of improved satellite observations, more detailed computer forecast modeling, and expanding supercomputing capacity," said Neil Jacobs, Ph.D., acting NOAA administrator. "From expansive and multi-hazard winter storms to narrow but intense lake effect snow, NOAA will provide the necessary information to keep communities safe."

Currently, large areas of drought extend over the western half of the U.S., with parts of the Northeast also experiencing drought and near-record low stream flows. With a La Niña climate pattern in place, southern parts of the U.S. may experience expanded and intensifying drought during the winter months ahead.



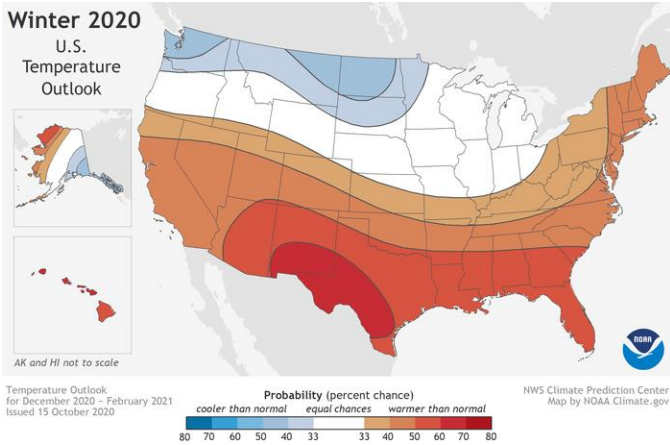
Extreme (bright red) to exceptional (dark red) drought conditions existed across much of the U.S. West as of October 6, 2020, with lesser categories of drought or dry conditions across much country outside of the Gulf and Southern Appalachian states, which have received rainfall from several tropical systems over the summer. Map by NOAA Climate.gov, based on data provided by the Climate Prediction Center.

"With La Niña well established and expected to persist through the upcoming 2020 winter season, we anticipate the typical, cooler, wetter North, and warmer, drier South, as the most likely outcome of winter weather that the U.S. will experience this year," said Mike Halpert, deputy director of NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

Temperature

The greatest chances for warmer-than-normal conditions extend across the Southern tier of the U.S. from the Southwest, across the Gulf states, and into the Southeast. More modest probabilities for warmer temperatures are forecast in the southern

parts of the west coast, and from the Mid-Atlantic into the Northeast. Above-average temperatures are also favored for Hawaii and western and northern Alaska.

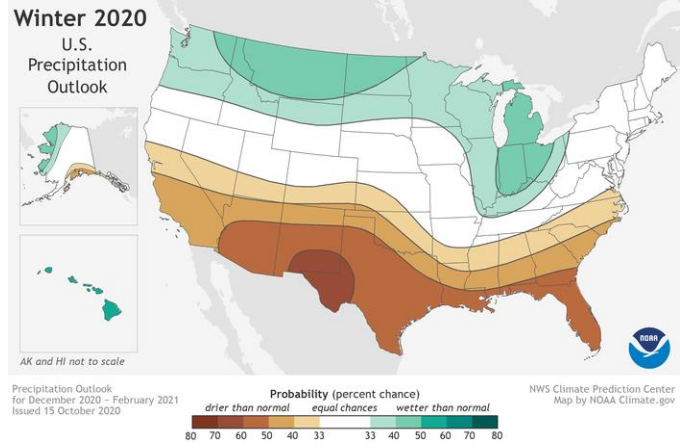


This map shows the probability (percent chance) that winter temperatures (December 2020-February 2021) at any location will be in the upper, middle, or lower third of the climatological record (1981-2020). Red colors indicate a warmer-than-average month is most likely, while blues indicate a cooler-than-average month is most likely. Darker colors mean higher chances; not more extreme conditions. Map by NOAA Climate.gov, using data from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

Below-normal temperatures are favored in southern Alaska and from the northern Pacific Northwest into the Northern Plains, with equal chances for below-, near- or above-average temperatures in the remaining regions.

Precipitation

Wetter-than-average conditions are most likely across the northern tier of the U.S., extending from the Pacific Northwest, across the Northern Plains, Great Lakes, and into the Ohio Valley as well as Hawaii and northern Alaska. The greatest chances for drier-than-average conditions are predicted in the Southwest, across Texas, along the Gulf Coast, and in Florida.



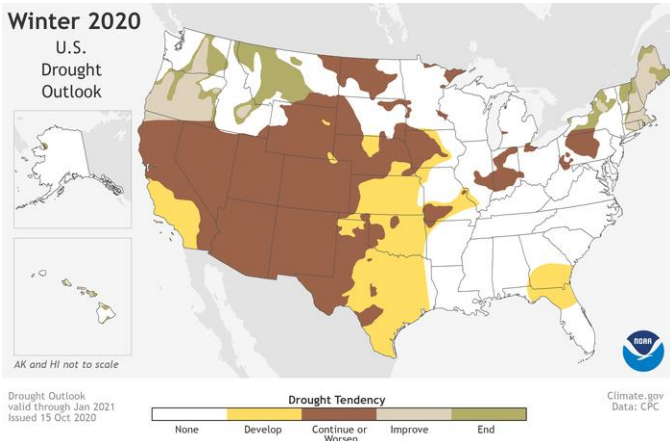
This map shows the probability (percent chance) that winter precipitation (December 2020-February 2021) at any location will be in the upper, middle, or lower third of the climatological record (1981-2020). Green colors indicate a wetter-than-average month is most likely, while browns indicate a drier-than-average month is most likely. Darker colors mean higher chances; not more extreme conditions. Map by NOAA Climate.gov, using data from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

More modest chances for drier conditions are forecast in southern Alaska, and from California across the Rockies, Central Plains, and into the Southeast. The remainder of the U.S., including the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast falls into the category of equal chances for below-, near-, or above-average precipitation.

Drought

Widespread, ongoing drought is currently in place across the western half of the continental U.S. as a result of the weak Southwest summer monsoon season and near-record high temperatures. Drought is also present in parts of the Northeast, Ohio Valley, Hawaii, and Alaska. The ongoing La Niña is expected to expand and intensify drought across the southern and central Plains, eastern Gulf Coast, and in California during the months ahead. Drought conditions are expected to improve in the northern Rockies, Northwest, New England, Alaska, and Hawaii over the coming months.

The WESTERN STATES FEDERAL AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West, including: BLM, DOD, EPA, FWS, NASA, NOAA, NPS, NRCS, Reclamation, USACE, USFS, and USGS. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council and the Western Governors' Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.



Drought outlook for the upcoming three-month period (November 2020-January 2021). While drought is likely to improve in some areas, much of the U.S. West will likely see drought continue or worsen. Map by NOAA Climate.gov, based on data from the Climate Prediction Center.

NOAA’s seasonal outlooks provide the likelihood that temperatures and total precipitation amounts will be above-, near- or below-average, and how drought conditions are favored to change. The outlook does not project seasonal snowfall accumulations as snow forecasts are generally not predictable more than a week in advance.

NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center updates the three-month outlook each month. The next update will be available November 19.

Seasonal outlooks help communities prepare for what is likely to come in the months ahead and minimize weather's impacts on lives and livelihoods. Empowering people with actionable forecasts and winter weather tips is key to NOAA’s effort to build a more Weather-Ready Nation.

Upcoming Meetings

[Western Governors Association 2020 Winter Meeting](#)

Virtual Meeting
December 10, 2020

[Western Governors 2021 Annual Meeting](#)

Sunriver, OR
May 14-16, 2021

[Western States Water Council Spring 2021 \(195th\) Meetings](#)

El Paso, TX, or virtually
March 23-26, 2021

Upcoming Events

[WestFAST Webinar: The Bureau of Reclamation’s Transportation Program](#)

Wednesday, November 18, 2020, at 10:00AM MST

[WestFAST Webinar: Salinity in the Western United States](#), Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at

1:00PM MST

Other Federal News

EPA 10/01/20. [U.S. EPA Announces \\$108 Million Loan to Improve Water Quality in the California Delta](#)

NRCS 10/01/20. [USDA Announces 2021 Priority Watersheds for Water Quality](#)

Rural Development 10/01/20. [USDA Launches New, Streamlined Process for Private Lenders to Invest in Rural America](#)

USDOJ 10/03/20. [Trump Administration breaks ground on long-awaited Arkansas Valley Conduit to bring safe, clean water to rural Colorado communities](#)

USBR 10/03/20. [Trump Administration breaks ground on long-awaited Arkansas Valley Conduit to bring safe, clean water to rural Colorado communities](#)

NRCS 10/05/20. [USDA Seeks New Partnerships to Safeguard, Restore Wetland Ecosystems](#)

NOAA 10/06/20. [NOAA’s Climate Program Office awards \\$48.7M to advance climate and decision support science, build community resilience](#)

The WESTERN STATES FEDERAL AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West, including: BLM, DOD, EPA, FWS, NASA, NOAA, NPS, NRCS, Reclamation, USACE, USFS, and USGS. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council and the Western Governors’ Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.

NOAA 10/06/20. [NOAA awards \\$11.6 million for harmful algal bloom research](#)

NOAA/NIDIS 10/06/20. [Ecological Drought Enters Unfamiliar Territory](#)

BLM 10/07/20. [BLM Approves Project to Increase Water Sources for Wildlife In Riverside County](#)

BLM 10/07/20. [The Bureau of Land Management Colorado Realigns District Boundaries](#)

NOAA/NIDIS 10/08/20. [NIDIS Announces Five New Research Projects](#)

NRCS 10/08/20. [Rule Change Helps Producers Implement More Conservation Activities](#)

EPA 10/13/20. [EPA Recognizes Water Conservation Leaders in Colorado](#)

NOAA 10/13/20. [Simulations of Atmospheric Rivers, Their Variability and Response to Global Warming Using GFDL's New High-Resolution General Circulation Model](#)

WHITE HOUSE 10/13/20. [Executive Order on Modernizing America's Water Resource Management and Water Infrastructure](#)

EPA 10/14/20. [EPA recognizes Texas organizations; leaders in water conservation](#)

NRCS 10/14/20. [USDA Updates RCPP Announcement to Clarify Forestry Eligibility - Proposal deadline for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program extended to November 30](#)

WHITE HOUSE 10/14/20. [President Donald J. Trump is Modernizing America's Water Resource Management and Infrastructure](#)

NOAA 10/15/20. [U.S. Winter Outlook: Cooler North, warmer South with ongoing La Nina. Persistent drought dominates the Western landscape](#)

NOAA 10/16/20. [September 2020: Another record-setting month for global heat](#)

USDOJ 10/16/20. [Trump Administration Transfers Federal Water Project in North Dakota to Local Water Users](#)

NOAA 10/21/20. [Estuarine forecasts at daily weather to subseasonal time scales](#)

NOAA 10/23/20. [The Rise of El Niño and La Niña](#)

NRCS 10/23/20. [New Rule Makes Enhancements to Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#)

EPA 10/27/20. [EPA Announces New Actions to Support Water Reuse, Highlights Water Subcabinet Coordination](#)

NOAA 10/27/20. [AI agreement to enhance environmental monitoring, weather prediction. NOAA and Google announce new data partnership](#)

Rural Development 10/27/20. [Trump Administration Invests \\$891 Million in Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements in 43 States](#)

EPA 10/28/20. [EPA Highlights Increased Investment in Water Infrastructure Through State Revolving Funds](#)

USBR 10/28/20. [Reclamation launches prize competition seeking new inland purification methods to increase usable water](#)

NASA 10/29/20. [More Water, Less Concentrate](#)

NRCS 10/29/20. [USDA Funds Conservation Innovation with \\$14.6 Million Investment in New Tools, Technology Development](#)

USDOJ 10/29/20. [Colorado Springs Agrees to Improve Stormwater Management in Settlement with the United States](#)

USFS 10/30/20. [USDA Forest Service Seeks Comments on Rangeland Management Rule Change](#)

USGS 10/30/20. [USGS Unveils Mobile Flood Tool for the Nation](#)

The WESTERN STATES FEDERAL AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West, including: BLM, DOD, EPA, FWS, NASA, NOAA, NPS, NRCS, Reclamation, USACE, USFS, and USGS. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council and the Western Governors' Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.

PEOPLE

NPS 10/27/20. [National Park Service announces Cicely Muldoon as Yosemite National Park's new superintendent](#)

USBR 10/28/20. [Reclamation names Patrick Dawson Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Division Chief](#)

USBR 10/28/20. [Reclamation selects Brian Hollis as Assistant Regional Director for the Missouri Basin & Arkansas-Rio Grande-Texas Gulf Regions](#)

USBR 10/28/20. [Reclamation selects Marlon Duke as Assistant Regional Director for the Missouri Basin & Arkansas-Rio Grande-Texas Gulf Regions](#)

The WESTERN STATES FEDERAL AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West, including: BLM, DOD, EPA, FWS, NASA, NOAA, NPS, NRCS, Reclamation, USACE, USFS, and USGS. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council and the Western Governors' Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.