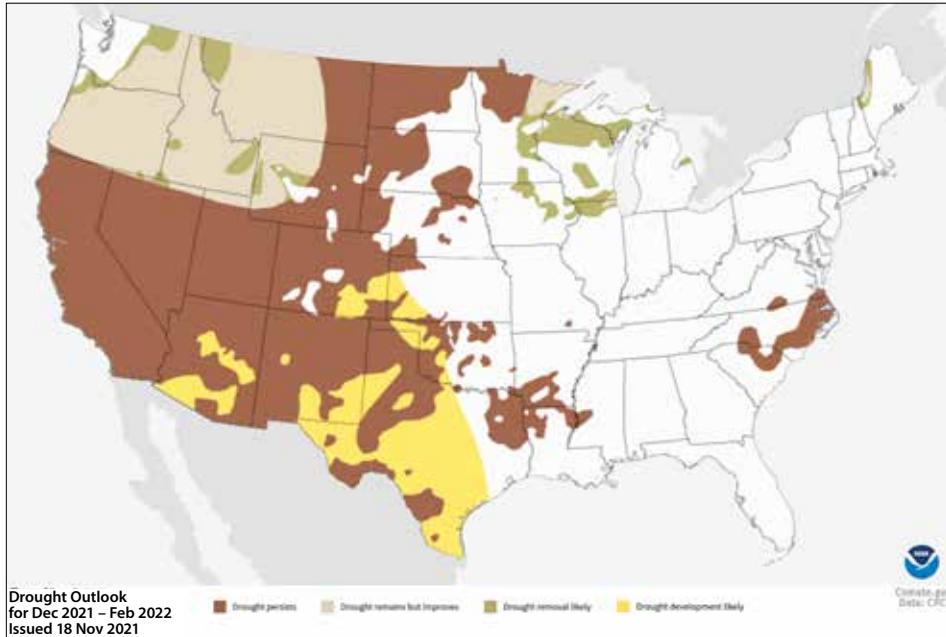


Winter Weather Outlook



La Niña predicted to bring drought relief for the Northwest but southern states may have a dry winter.

by *Cristin Tavernaro*

The redeveloped La Niña is expected to bring cooler, wetter conditions across the northwestern part of the U.S., warmer, wetter weather in the Northeast, and persistent, dry forecasts in the South.

As of late November, just more than 50% of the continental U.S. was experiencing drought conditions. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported the summer of 2021 to be the hottest on record since it began recording data 126 years ago. Summer 2021 even topped the summer of the 1936 Dust Bowl temperatures by 0.01 of a degree.

With wetter than normal conditions expected for much of the Northwest, La Niña is expected to bring relief to the drought conditions in the Pacific Northwest, Idaho and the western portions of Montana and Wyoming. Hawaii will also likely see some drought improvement. However, drought is expected to develop and persist in the western half of the Great Plains and remain in the West and Southwest. You can find the recent U.S. Drought Monitor in Market Tracks on Page 26.

Warmer than normal temperatures are predicted for much of the Midwest, Southwest and Mid-Atlantic region. The greatest chances for above-average temperatures are forecasted near the East Coast, mostly in the Southeast and Northeast.

Below-normal temperatures will accompany predictions of wetter weather in the Pacific Northwest and extend to most of the Dakotas. However, warmer temperatures are expected in the states surrounding the Great Lakes, even though the region is forecast to experience a wet winter.

The southern border of New Mexico and south Florida have the greatest chance for drier than average conditions, with moderate chances for dry weather extending to the rest of the Southwest, California and the southern half of the southeastern states. A curve of equal chances for below-, near- or above-average precipitation bends through the middle of the continental U.S. and extends up the Northern Plains and follows the east coast up from the Mid-Atlantic to the Northeast.

La Niña gained strength during the fall, according to the NOAA Climate Prediction Center. It has about a 50% chance to continue from March to May of 2022. **HW**

Editor's note: Visit Cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/ for more information from the NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

