



Winter Outlook (2010 -2011)

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Overview: La-Nina conditions have developed in the equatorial Pacific Ocean with sea surface temperatures about 1 degree Celsius below normal. La-Nina conditions are expected to last through the winter of 2010-11

What does this mean for the Pacific Northwest: Typically, La-Nina conditions give way to cool and wet conditions for Oregon and Washington during the winter months.

This coming winter, global climate models indicate an increased probability of greater than normal precipitation for the October 2010 - March 2011 time frame. Temperature-wise, there is equal chance of being near normal, above or below normal for the October- December time period, but increased probability of having below normal temperatures for the January - March 2011 time period.

History and previous La-Nina Episodes: Not all winters during La-Nina episodes are the same. The last La-Nina episode occurred during the winter of 2007-2008. Previous to 2007, the last La-Nina years were during the 1998-2001 time frame. Very strong storms have occurred during some La-Nina years, such as the winter of 2007-2008 while other La-Nina years didn't have any extraordinarily strong storms.

Conclusion:

For Oregon and Washington, on average we can expect:

- (1) Increased odds on cooler than normal temperatures.
- (2) Increased odds on above average precipitation.
- (3) Increased odds of an above average snowpack in the mountains.

For preparedness activities, expect an active winter weather pattern this coming winter with numerous storms moving across Oregon and Washington.