

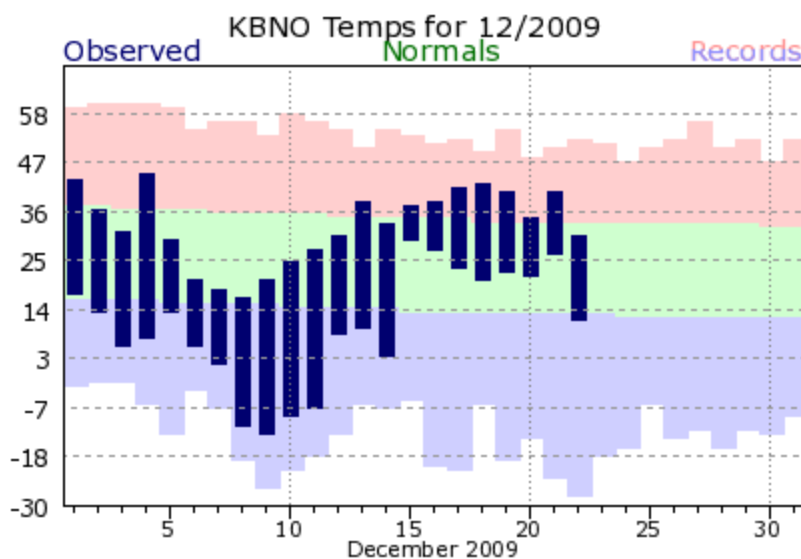
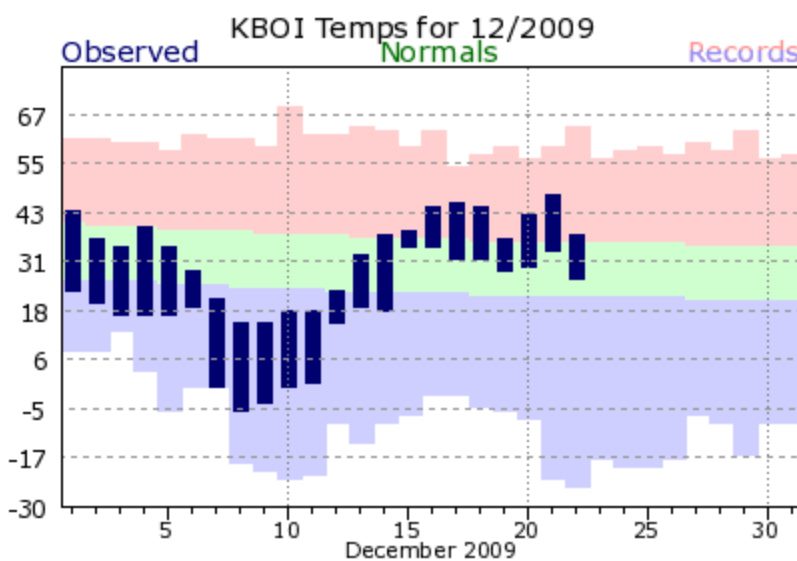
December 2009

Merry Christmas to All and a Happy and Wonderful New Year



Snow and cold in the Snake River Plain

On December 4-10 cold air moved into the area bringing some light snow to most valley locations. The charts below (Boise on top, Burns on bottom) show how temperatures plunged over the area. This cold snap came to an end as a strong Pacific storm moved into the area on the 14th—16th bringing as much as 30 inches of snow to the mountains. Bogus Basin received 2 feet of snow in two days providing enough snow to open the resort for the season.



Sage Winds

El Niño Update

http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/lanina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf

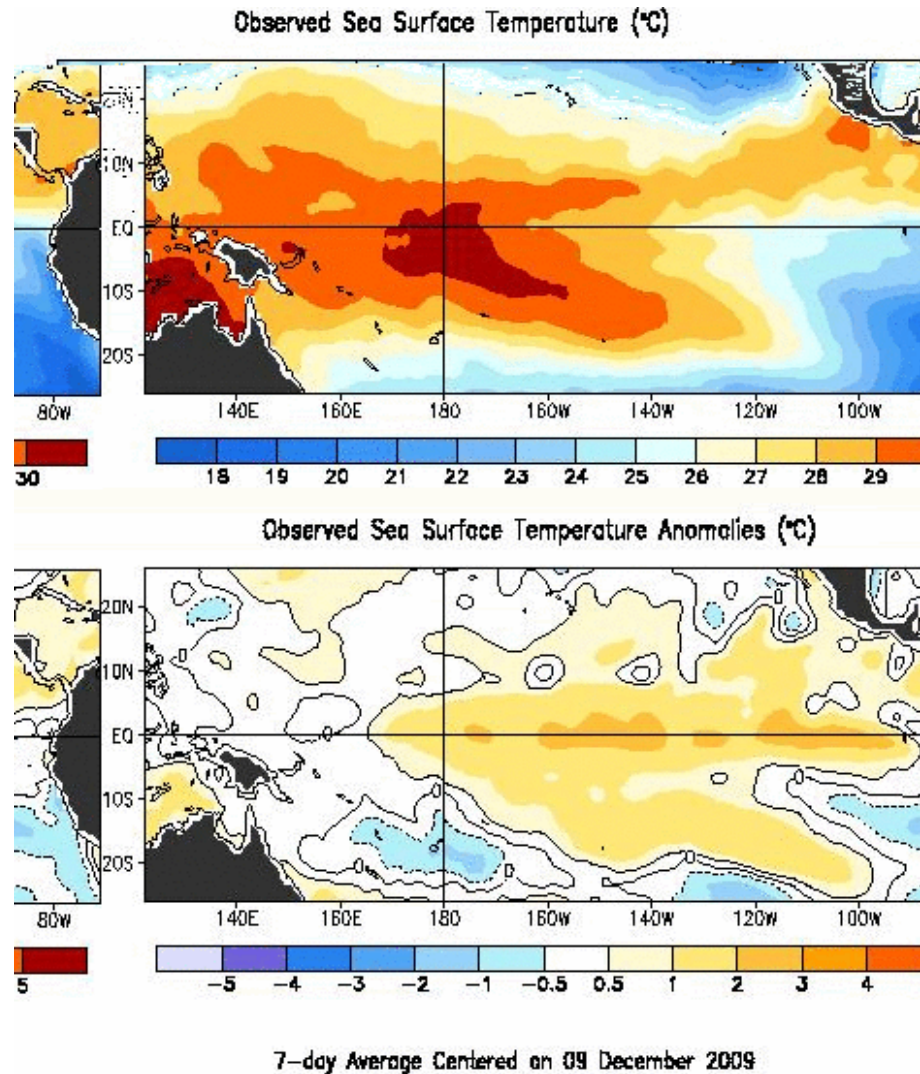
The charts below to the right show the equatorial Pacific with Mexico in the upper right, South America far right, and Australia in the lower left.

The top chart shows sea surface temperatures, the bottom chart the deviation from normal. It is the bottom chart that shows the anomalous warming that has taken place in the central and eastern Equatorial Pacific.

An El Niño is defined when temperatures are well above normal east of the dateline (the solid vertical line just left of center on the charts).

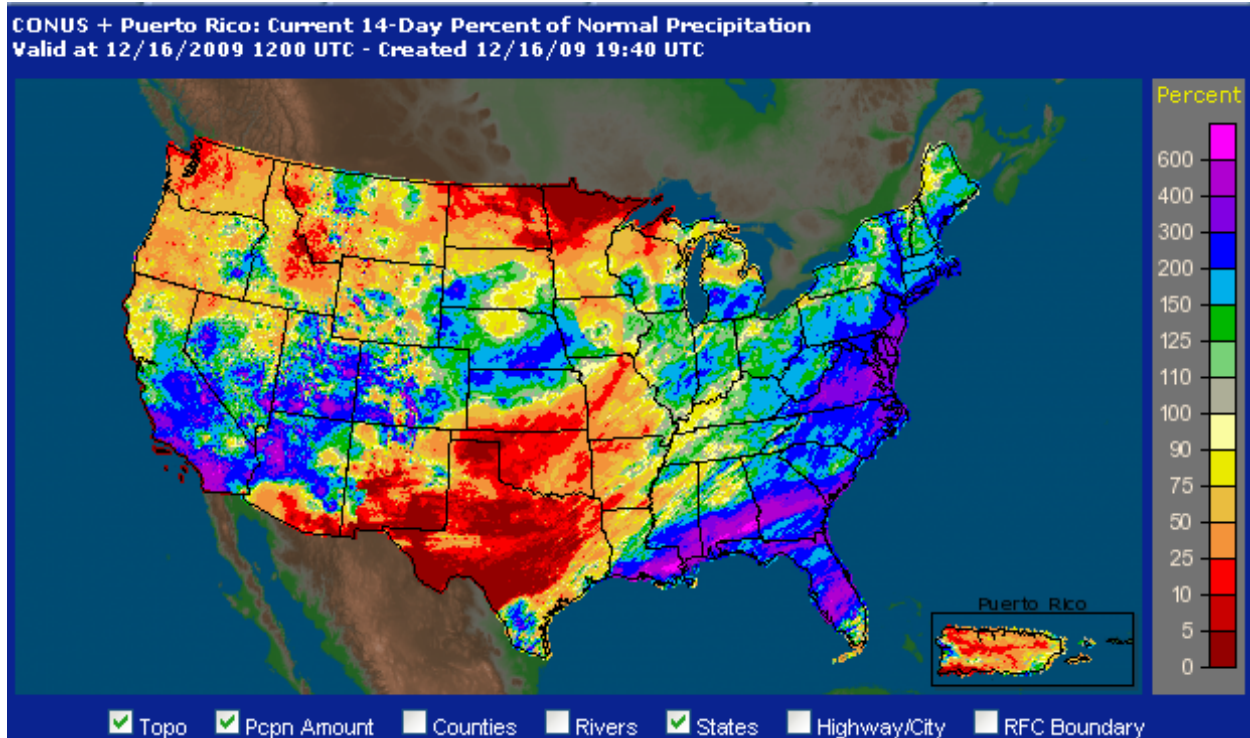
Impacts from this pattern usually mean wetter than normal across the southern tier of the United States, drier than normal across the north (including Idaho and the Pacific Northwest), and warmer than normal over the northern United States.

Despite our recent cold snap and heavy snow, winter is just beginning so there is lots of time for this El Niño forecast to work out.



United States Rainfall Patterns

Check out <http://water.weather.gov/>. From this link you can modify the parameter you are viewing. If you're interested in yesterday's precipitation, it's right there updated by 10am each day. If you're interested in longer term trends, check out the Departure from Normal and Percent of Normal charts and select a longer time period like 7 days or 60 days. Looking at the long term charts show which areas of the country have been exceptionally dry or wet. If you click on the map you can zoom into a region to get a more detailed view.



Winter Snow Pack Information

How much snow is in the mountains? How much snow is normally on the ground at this time of year? Snow depth in the mountains of the Western United States is measured by the Soil Conservation Service. You can check out their Idaho data at <http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/recreation/depth.html>. For Oregon the web link is http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/maps/orwa_hucs_map.html. Idaho and Oregon each show this data in a slightly different format. These charts show snow depth, snow water equivalent, and a comparison to last year and normal values. Despite our recent cold weather and heavy snow, much of the state is at slightly below normal for the amount of snow expected at this time of year. This is consistent with the long range El Niño forecast.

Weather in the News

- While not affecting the weather yet, volcanoes can cool the earth's atmosphere if enough ash particles are ejected high into the atmosphere—

http://www.usatoday.com/weather/environment/2009-12-16-volcano-wednesday_N.htm

- Winter has barely begun and here is the first prediction of the 2010 Hurricane season—

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34354877/ns/weather/>

- Cold in Europe—http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34497831/ns/world_news/

- Flooding in Venice—<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34574678/ns/weather/>

- “Nothing Lasts Forever” - http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34468573/ns/us_news-life/

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Weather Humor



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