MONTHLY/SEASONAL OUTLOOK

Eastern Area

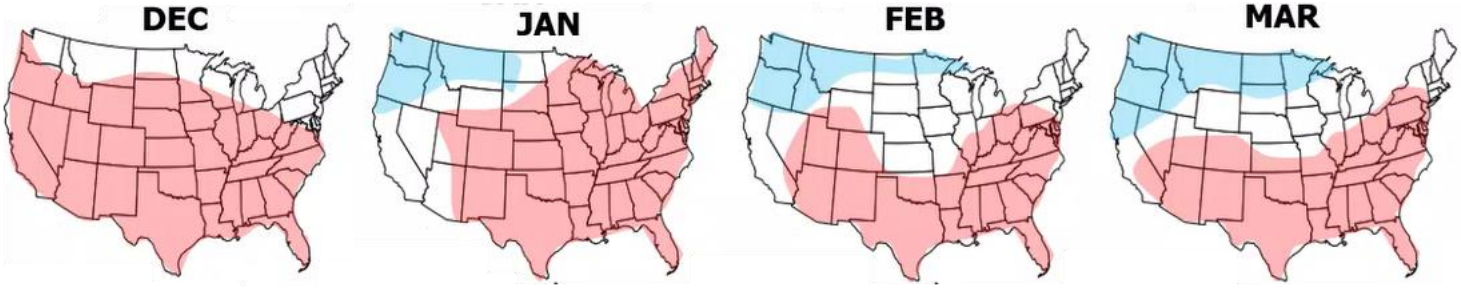
Updated: ***December 19, 2024*** ***Valid:*** ***November 2024 - January 2025***

Fire Potential Outlooks

December 2024	January 2025	February 2025
		

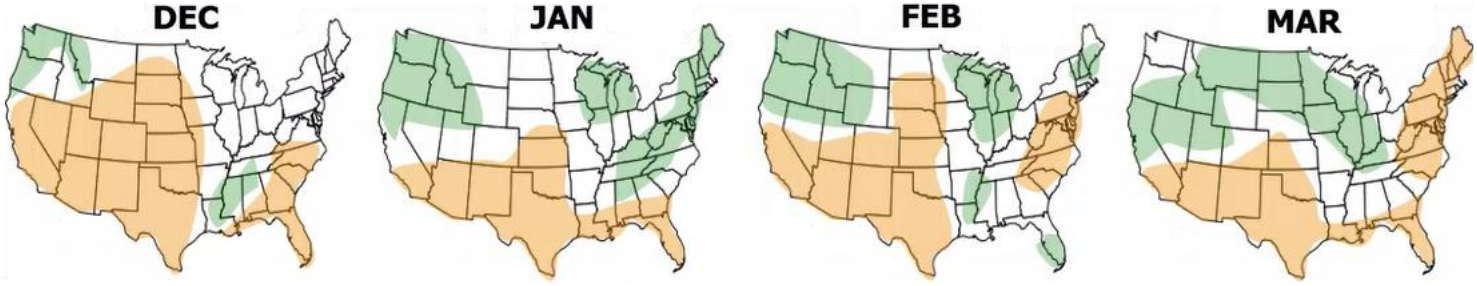
Predictive Services Temperature and Precipitation Outlooks

Temperature

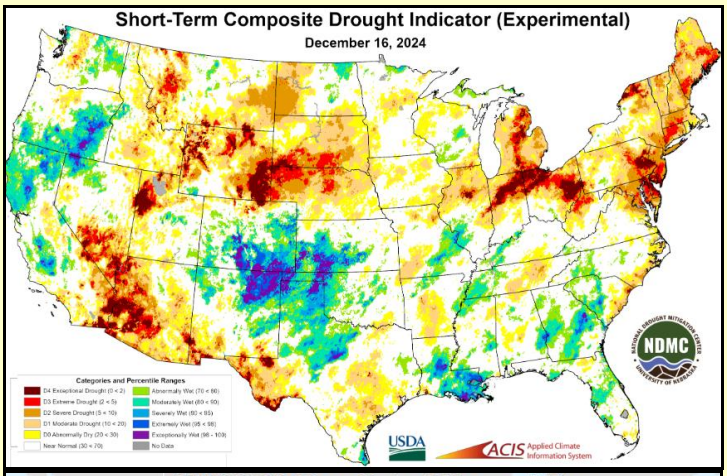


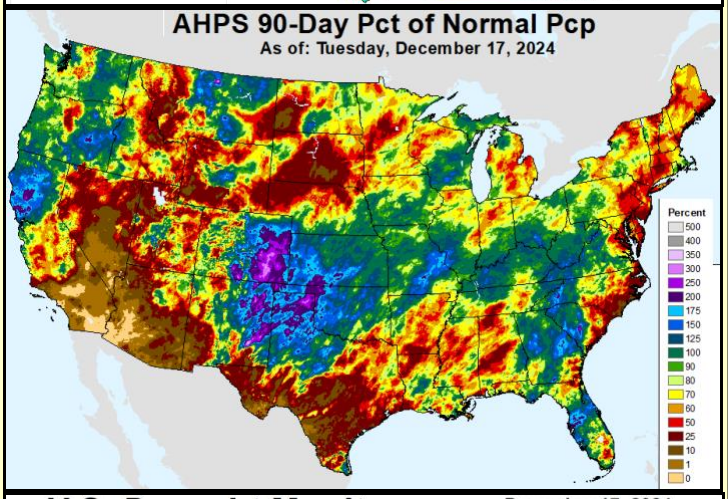
Below Normal =	Above Normal =

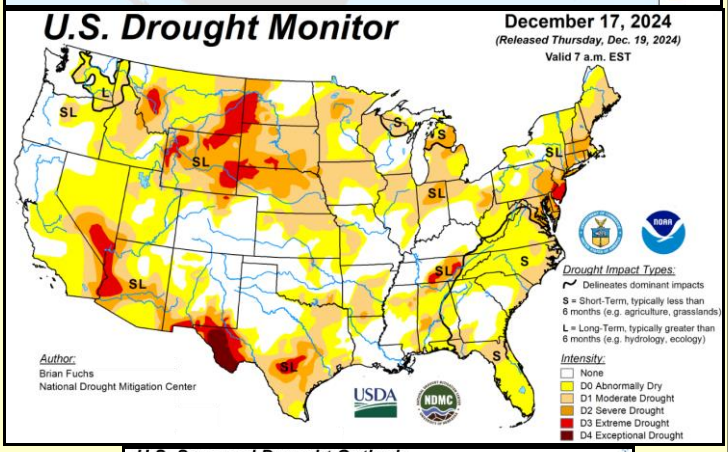
Precipitation

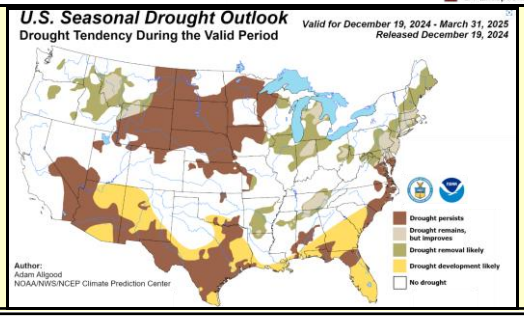


Below Normal =	Above Normal =









Discussion

Normal fire potential is forecast across the majority of the Eastern Area through March 2025. The greatest 30-to-60-day negative precipitation anomalies towards the end of November were indicated across the eastern tier of the Eastern Area with the greatest deficits over the southeastern Mid-Atlantic States. Short term negative precipitation anomalies developed through the latter portion of November over parts of the Mid-Mississippi Valley. Longer term extreme or exceptional drought levels remained in place across southeastern Ohio, northern West Virginia, southern New Jersey, Delaware, and eastern Massachusetts. Moderate to severe drought levels were indicated along the East Coast, northern Great Lakes, northern Illinois and Indiana, and northwestern Ohio. Precipitation events were expected to persist over the Northeast and northern Mid-Atlantic States through the first part of December curtailing longer term drought levels.

Weather/Climate Trend Outlook Discussion:
Neutral El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions remained in place over the central Pacific towards the end of November 2024. There is less confidence in a transition to a La Nina sea surface temperature (SST) regime heading into the winter season. If a La Nina SST episode does occur, it is now expected to only prevail into the early spring of 2025. Other sea surface temperature regimes also contribute to global weather patterns adding to some uncertainty in long term weather forecasts. Near to above normal temperature trends overall are forecast over much the Eastern Area into January with precipitation trends more uncertain.

Fuels:
The eastern tier of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states has been experiencing significant drought conditions and fire activity in areas with historical above normal values for the Keetch-Byrum Drought Index (KBDI). Recent precipitation events in the Northeast have reduced fire activity and occurrence to more normal levels, but KBDI values are still historically above normal and any interior burning on current fires will likely last throughout the winter unless significant precipitation or snowpack occurs during the outlook period. Leaf fall, dry available surface fuels, like grass and pine needles, and human activities will continue to create potential for ignitions during dry and windy days until a soaking rain or series of frequent precipitation events can maintain a moist surface fuels environment. The Mid-Atlantic states of New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland have largely been missed with recent precipitation events and are expected to continue to have above normal fire activity either in occurrence or occasional larger problem fires in December and potentially through the outlook period if significant or frequent rainfall remains absent from the area. In the Great Lakes states the Canadian Forest Fire Danger System (CFFDRS) indices are still showing drying deep into the soil in several areas of Minnesota and Michigan, which could impact the spring fire season depending on how significant the snowpack is and the timing of the melt. The southern tier of Eastern Area has been receiving precipitation and relief to the fall drought so is predicted to be normal for the outlook period. For the majority of the Eastern Area, dormancy of grasses and shrubs combined with leaf fall will increase the available fuels environment so that any prolonged dry periods and days with persistent winds will increase potential for fire activity during the outlook period, unless snow is on the ground.

Eastern Area Predictive Services
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