



Weather Service Says El Niño To Continue

Wetter than average conditions are expected along much of the southern tier of the United States this winter, as moderate El Niño conditions continue in the Pacific Ocean, according to the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center.

Meteorologist John Janowiak recently told a group of California emergency managers that the upcoming winter will bring above-normal precipitation to the southern half of California and Nevada, and warmer temperatures over much of the north-central states.

"El Niño has positive impacts for the country as a whole, with warmer winters in the north-central states and relatively abundant precipitation in the semi-arid areas of the Southwest," said Janowiak. "Based on recent trends, we expect the waters in the eastern equatorial Pacific to continue to warm, and mature El Niño conditions will prevail from December through February 2003."

The winter 2002-2003 outlook predicts dry conditions in states in the Ohio Valley and northern Rockies, wet conditions, with

increased storm activity across the south, and warmer than average conditions in the north, including southern and southeastern Alaska. Elizabeth Morse, meteorologist in charge of the Weather Service forecast office in Sacramento, said, "Everything from agriculture to summer drinking water is affected by how wet the winter storms are and where they go. Since we can't control the storms, we need to prepare and react sensibly."

At a briefing in Texas, Bill Proenza, southern region director, said, "The present El Niño is expected to bring more snow to the Southern Plains, Texas Panhandle and the mountains of the Southwest this winter. The likelihood of above-normal precipitation is welcomed because it will help to alleviate the severe drought conditions and wildfire threat that has plagued the southwestern United States in recent months."

For more information online, visit:

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory

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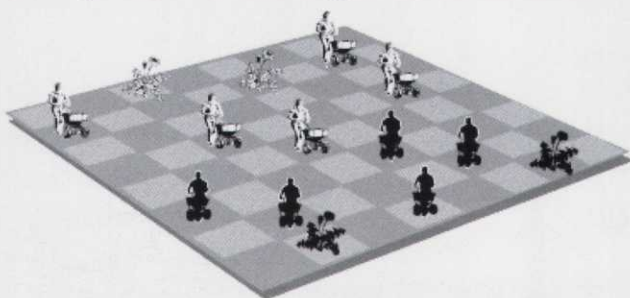
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