WINTER 2020-2021

Mark Nelsen

A MILD LA NIÑA WINTER



OREGON

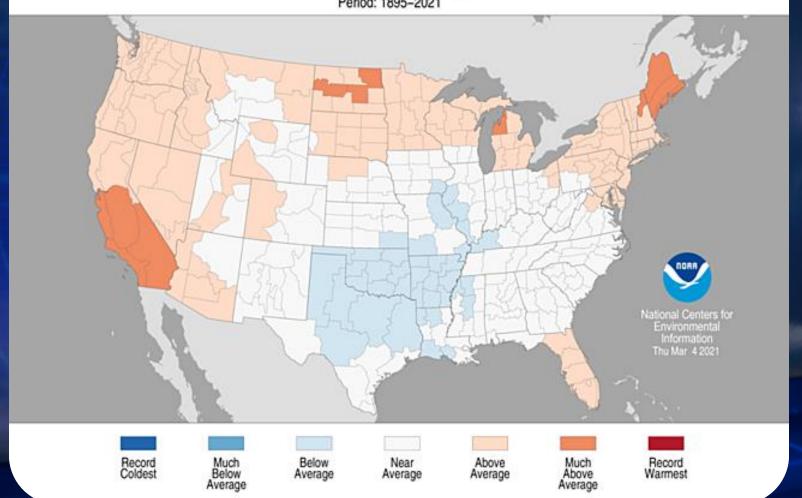
Winter 2020-21

- Warmest La Niña winter in Western Oregon in 70 years
- November-March = A mild winter "saved" by 5 wintry days in the lowlands of NW Oregon & SW Washington
- Low Cascade snowpack until mid-February, then two weeks of big snowstorms...La Niña redeemed in Cascades
- Still waiting for regional arctic blast.
 7th consecutive winter without a widespread arctic outbreak.
 (December 2013 was the last)

Winter Temperature Anomaly

Divisional Average Temperature Ranks December 2020–February 2021

Period: 1895-2021





OFFICIAL SNOW TOTAL: 10.1"

at PQR (NWS Office)

7.6" Downtown (KGW-TV)

PIC BY OCA HOEFLEIN



FIRST. LIVE. LOCAL. WEATHER

2020-21



1 measurable snow/ice event

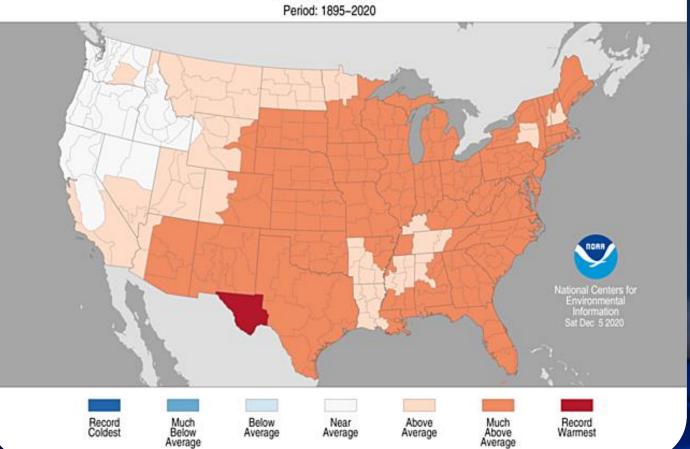
SNOW

FRZ RAIN/ICE

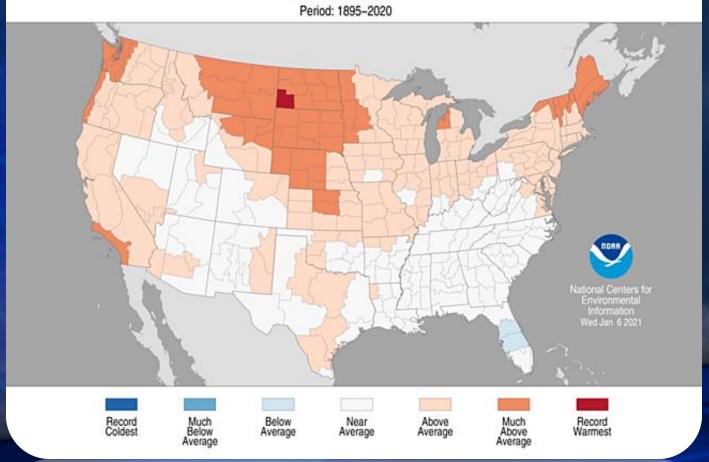
Feb 11 6.1" Feb 12 3.8" Feb 13 .1" Feb 14

.75" Feb 12/13/14

Divisional Average Temperature Ranks November 2020

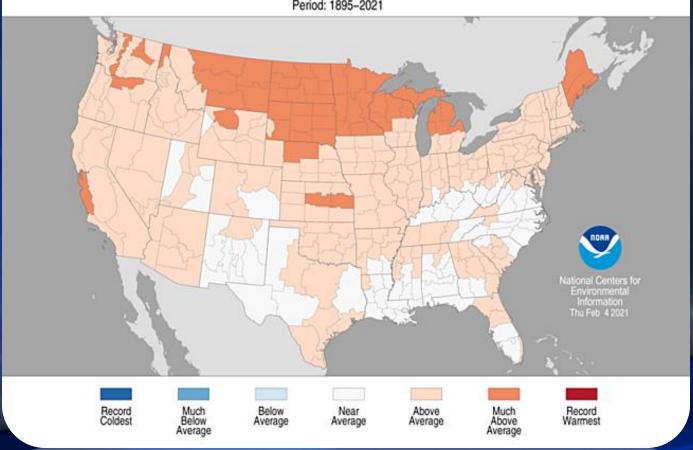


Divisional Average Temperature Ranks December 2020

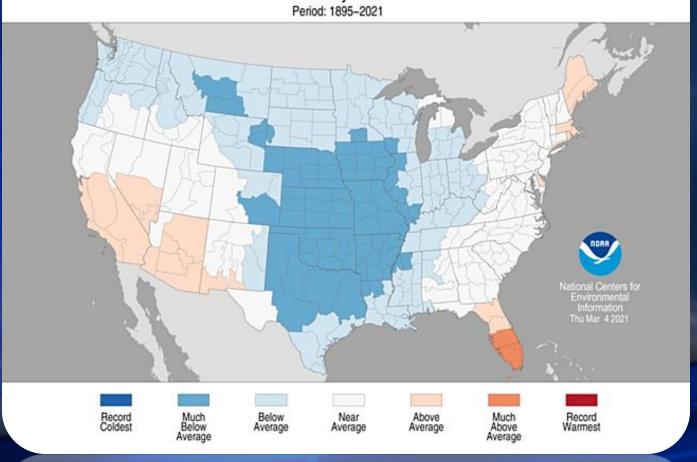


Divisional Average Temperature Ranks January 2021

Period: 1895-2021

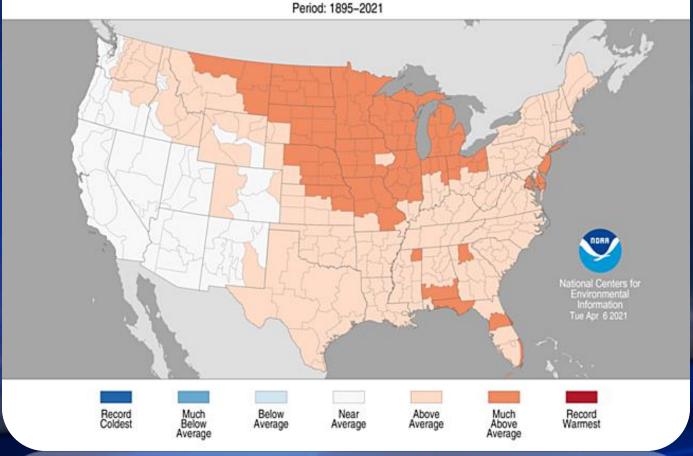


Divisional Average Temperature Ranks February 2021



Divisional Average Temperature Ranks March 2021

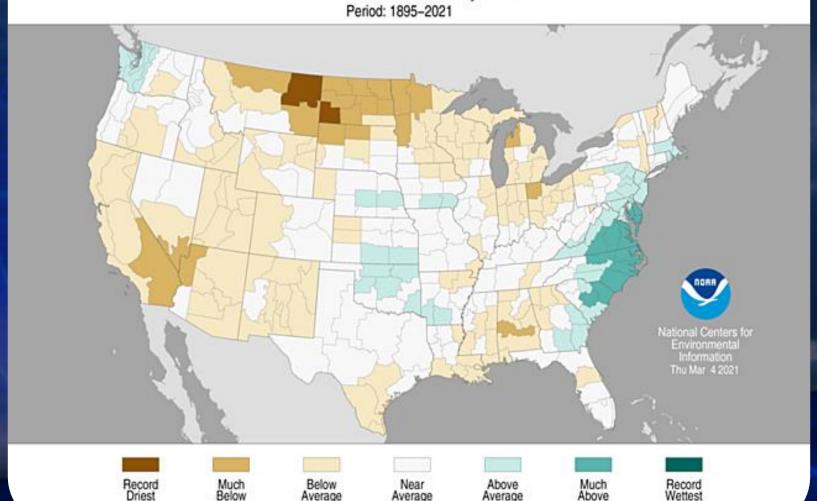
Period: 1895-2021



Winter Precip Anomaly

Divisional Precipitation Ranks

December 2020-February 2021



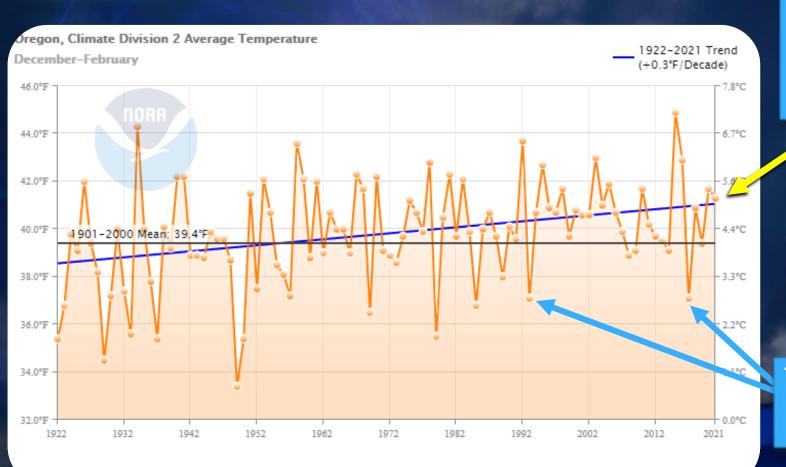
Average

Average

Western Valleys Winter Temperature

(the past 100 years)

Another mild one. Last "cold" winter was 2016-17



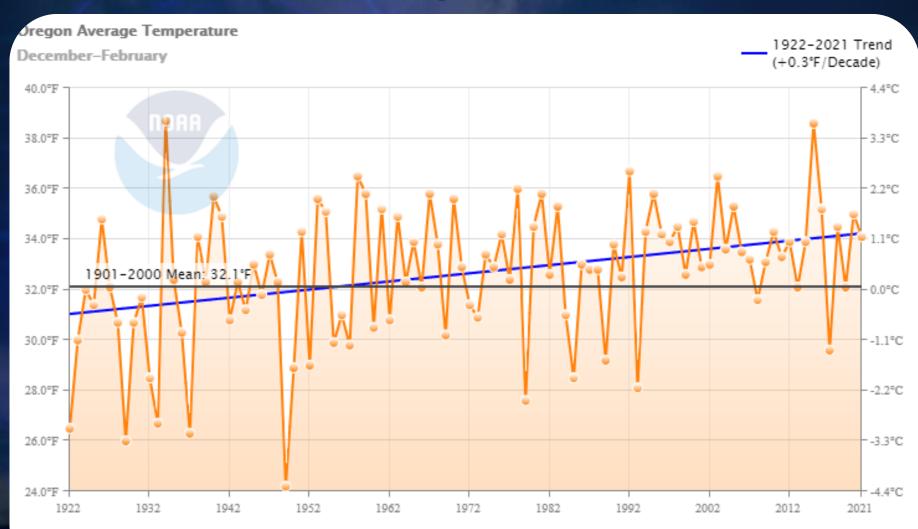
Last Winter in Oregon
Zone 2
(Willamette Valley)

The last two cold winters (92-93 & 16-17)

Oregon Winter Temps

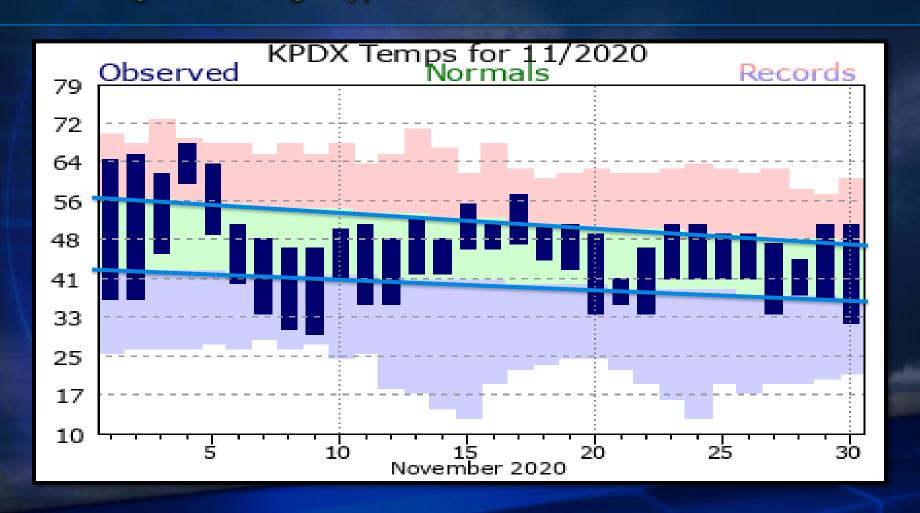
(the last 100 years)

Slow Warming Trend (0.3/decade)



NOVEMBER

Nothing interesting...typical mild & wet weather. No storms



NOVEMBER 2ND







REDMOND Nov 2nd 3,000 ft.

In the "High Desert"

NOVEMBER

Nice ski season start higher up on Mt. Hood mid month



NOVEMBER

Weak tornado November 10th



ST. HELENS TORNADO

12:20 PM TUESDAY

EF-0

60-65 mph wind

1.7 mile path / Damage 200 yards wide

- Passed through St. Helens
- Roof damage to home, large limbs down
- 3rd Oregon tornado in 2020

No injuries or deaths

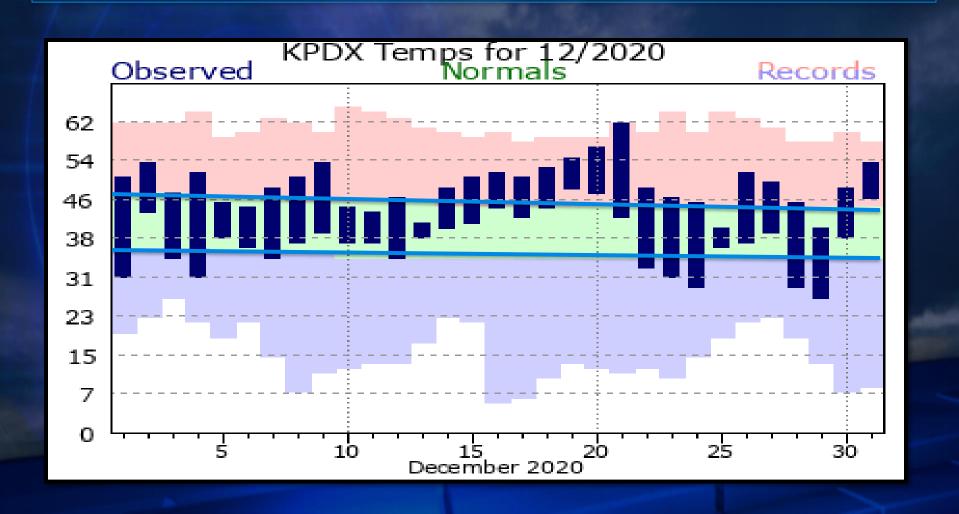
No injuries or deaths

OLG OLGGOTH COLHIGGOTH EOEO

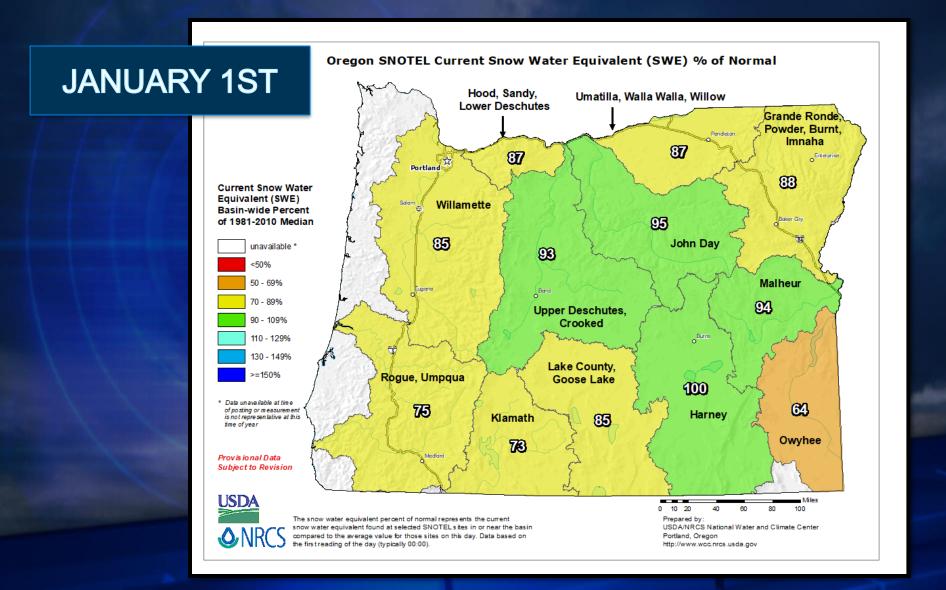


DECEMBER

Nothing to see here...mild and wet. Very warm mid-month

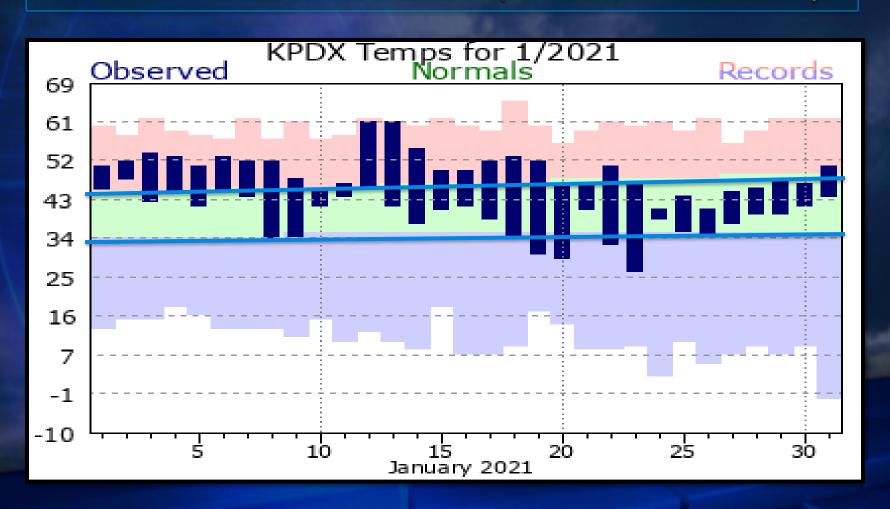


Snowpack slips below average as we headed into January...

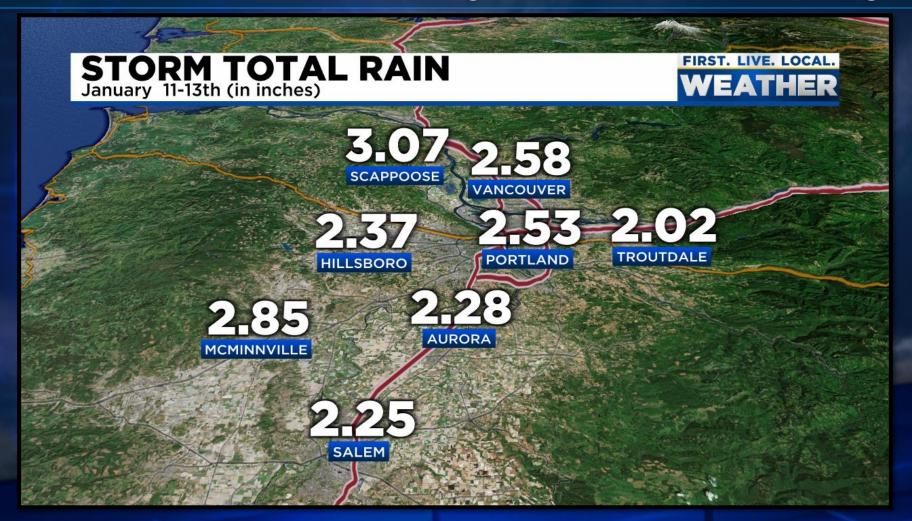


Another mild & wet month...

Didn't need to turn off outside chicken coop water line until mid-February!



Finally! Rain & windstorm mid-January
Lots of river flood warnings, most = minor flooding



Finally! Rain & windstorm mid-January Lots of river flood warnings, most = minor flooding

THE BIG NUMBERS



HEAVIEST IN CASCADES & COAST RANGE

9.90 June Lake (Cascades)

9.70 North Fork (Bull Run Watershed)

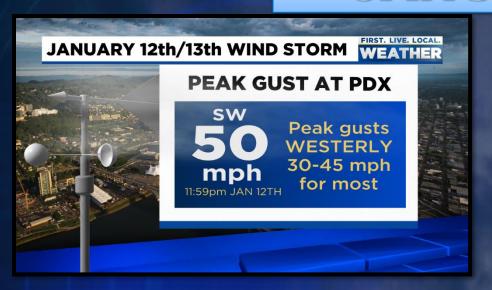
8.72 Log Creek (Bull Run Watershed)

8.60 Haskins Dam (Coast Range)

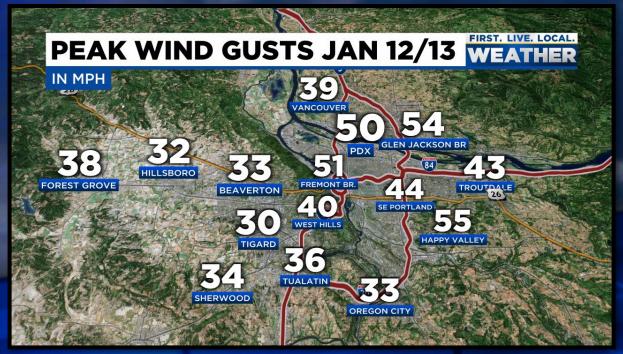
8.50" Falls City

Finally! Rain & windstorm mid-January Lots of river flood warnings, mainly minor flooding

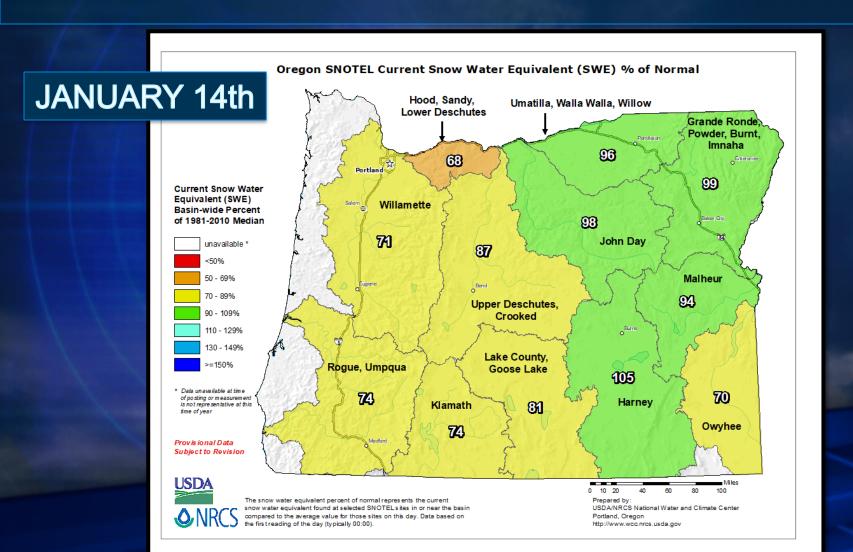




Final cold front with atmospheric river pushes a rare surge of westerly wind across northern Willamette Valley



Atmospheric river melts more of Cascade snowpack



RECORD WARM FIRST 1/2 WINTER WEATHER

FIRST. LIVE. LOCAL.

OF 50° DAYS

December 1st-January 19th

- 31 PORTLAND MOST ON RECORD
- 35 SALEM MOST IN 100 YEARS
- 40 ASTORIA MOST ON RECORD

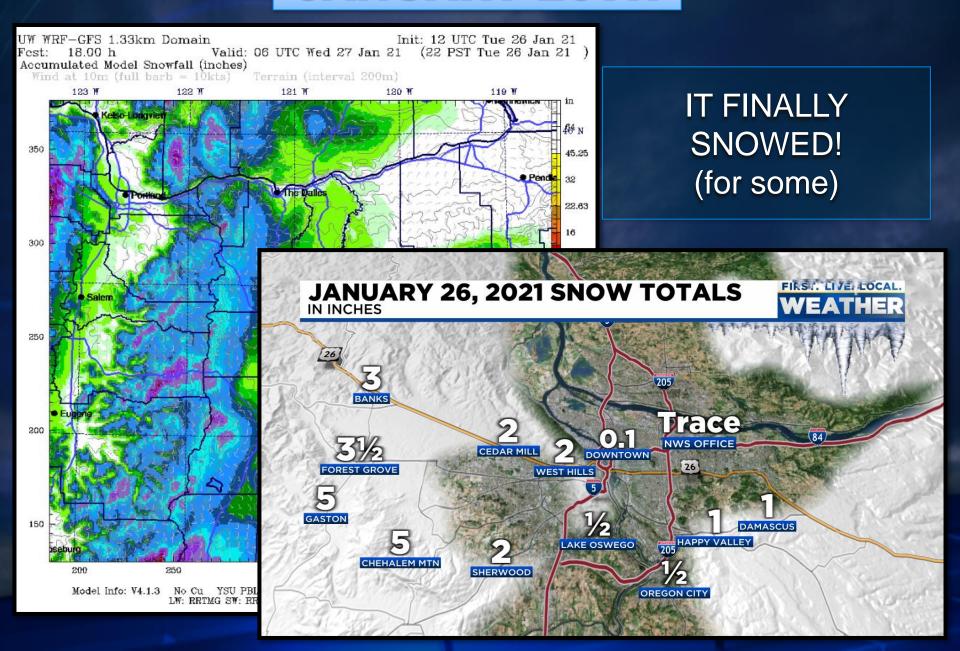




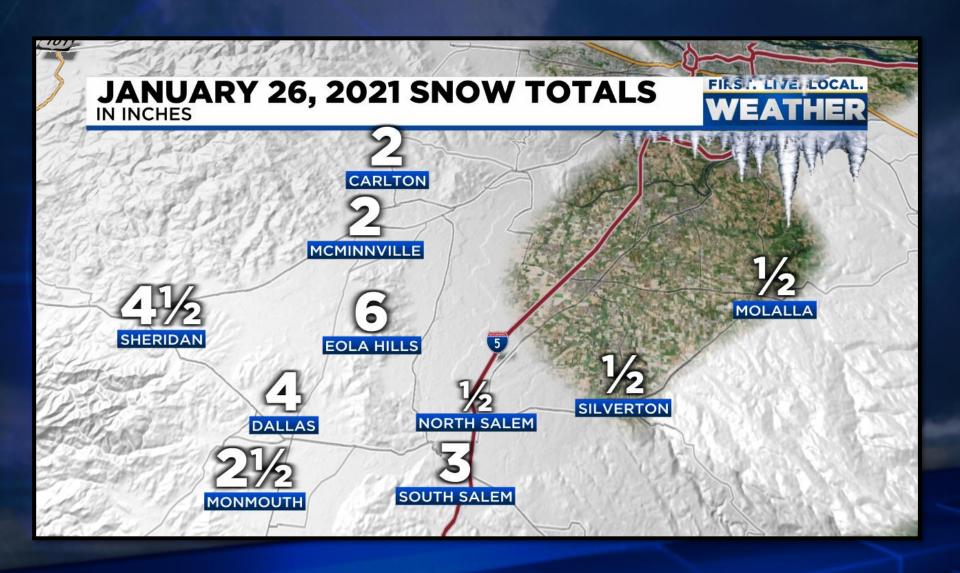
First snow of season for some in lowlands
January 26th



JANUARY 26TH

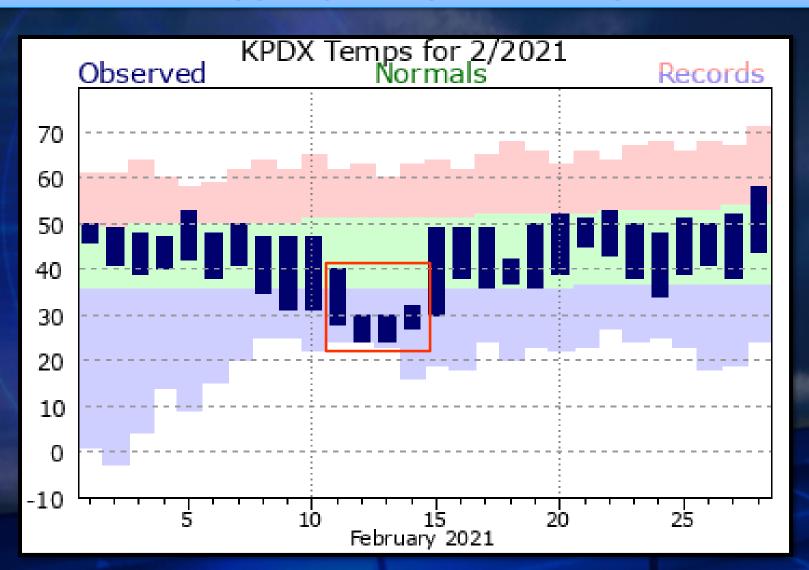


JANUARY 26TH



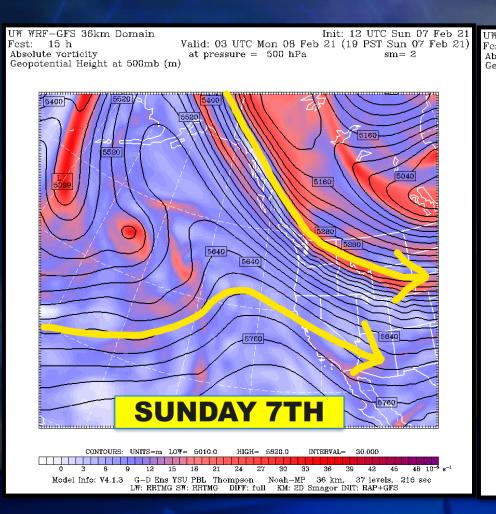
FEBRUARY

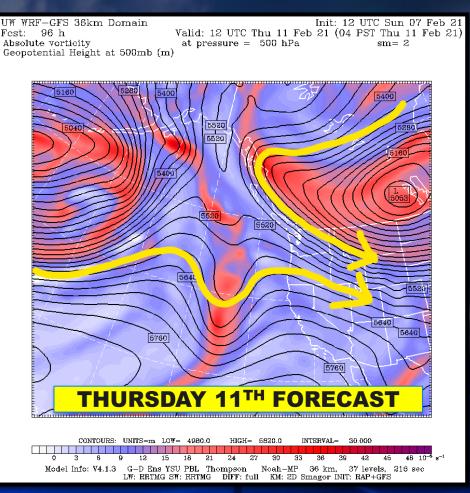
Typical temps...except for 11th-14th
4 COLD & MEMORABLE DAYS!



HISTORIC ARCTIC AIRMASS SURGES INTO MIDDLE OF USA MID-FEBRUARY

- Some of cold air surges over Rockies and down into Columbia Basin
- Flowed over Cascades and through Gorge Thursday, February 11th
- Models struggled with details...but they all had the general forecast correct

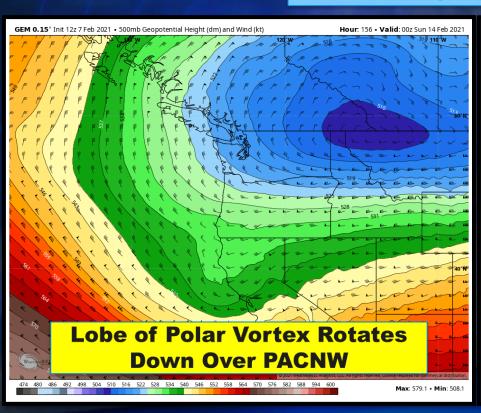


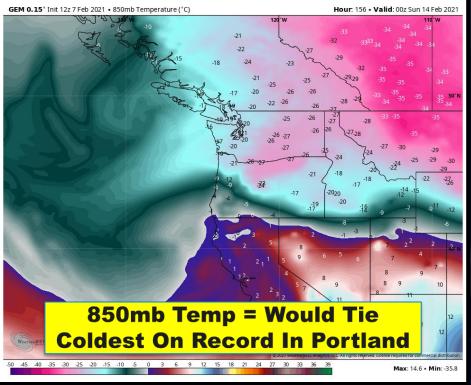


HISTORIC COLD AIRMASS SURGES SOUTH INTO MIDDLE OF USA

THIS GEM MODEL FORECAST DID NOT HAPPEN

FEBRUARY 13TH

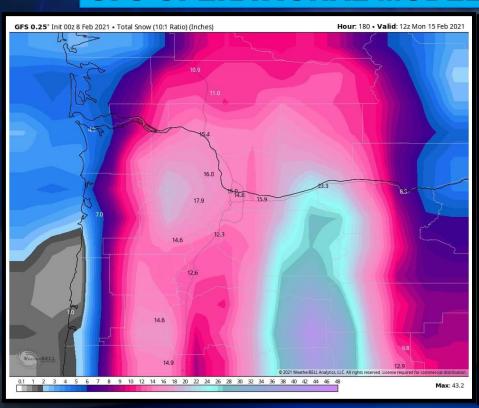


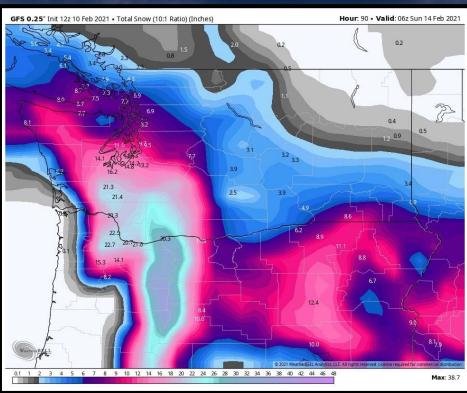


BUT HOW MUCH SNOW MIGHT WE SEE?

- Don't forecast specific snow totals until 2-3 days ahead of event
- Model ensembles were extremely helpful with this event

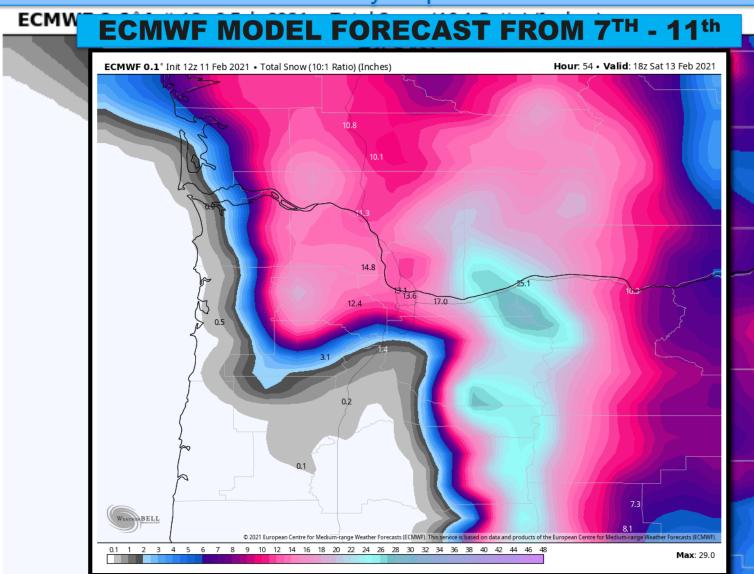
GFS OPERATIONAL MODEL FORECAST FROM 7TH & 10th





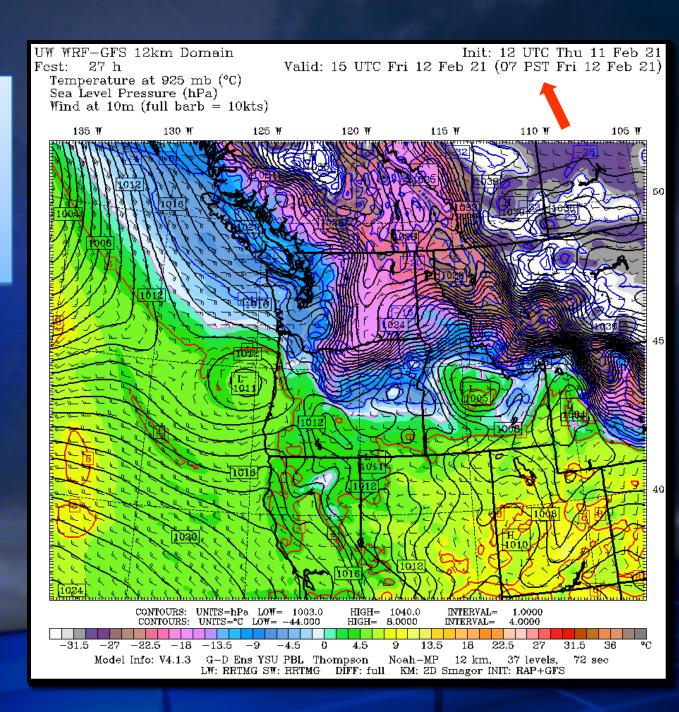
BUT HOW MUCH SNOW MIGHT WE SEE?

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Several surface lows moved toward coastline Thursday-Monday

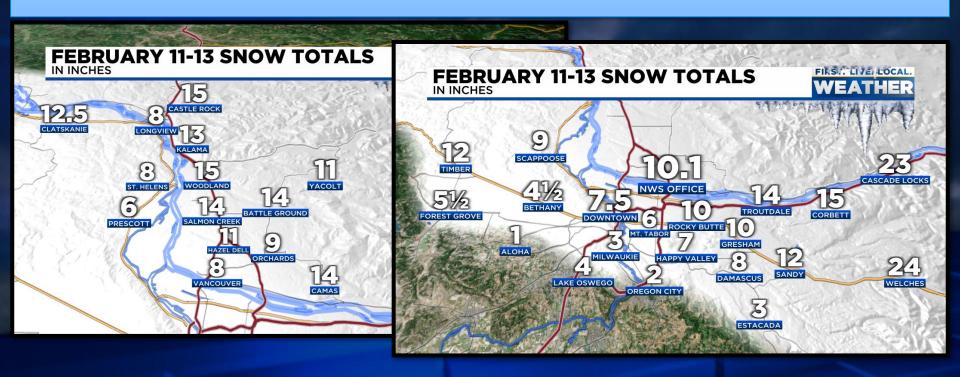
Maps from Thursday AM WRF-GFS run



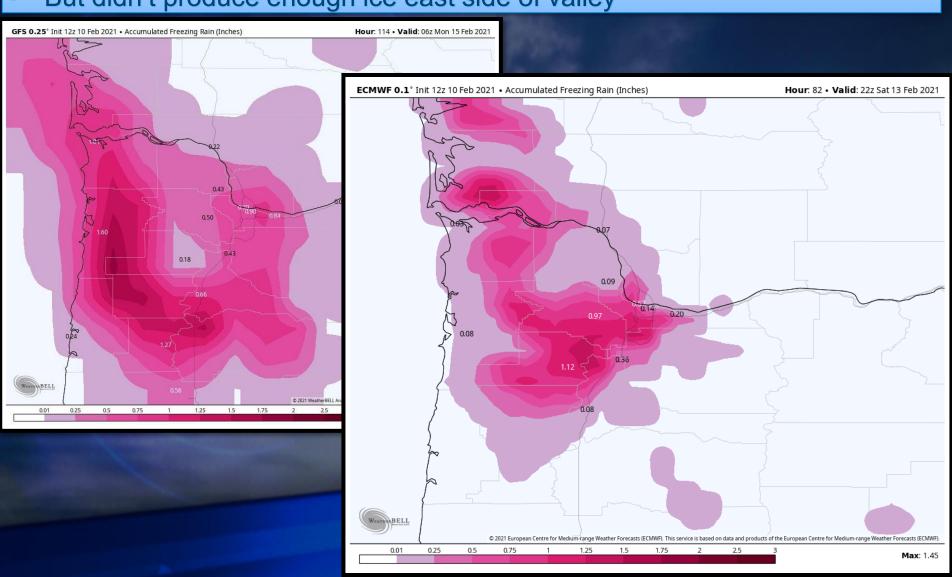
MODELS FORECAST 3 "WAVES" OF PRECIPITATION

- Ended up as 2 main surges (+ very light snow first evening = nervous forecasters)
- Freezing drizzle in-between in metro
- 1) Thursday night Friday sunrise
- 2) Friday 8am-Saturday 6am
- 3) Saturday 6am-Sunday 10am
- 4) Sunday 10am-Monday 10am

- (.04") (all snow @ PDX)
- (.97") (mainly metro snow, ice south)
- (.09") (mixed precip)
- (.47") (all freezing rain)



- Models did a relatively good job showing thick icing south/west edge of cold airmass coming out of Gorge
- But didn't produce enough ice east side of valley

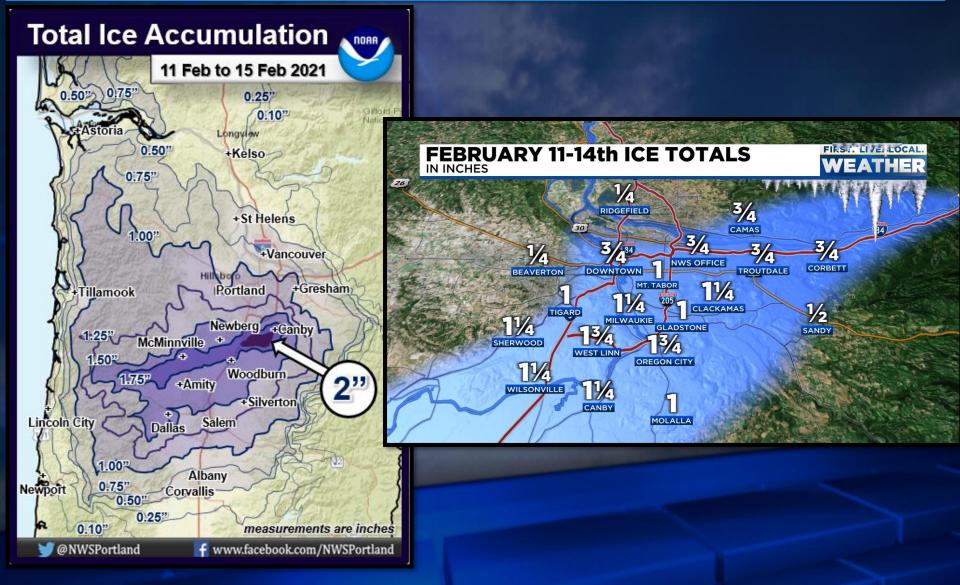


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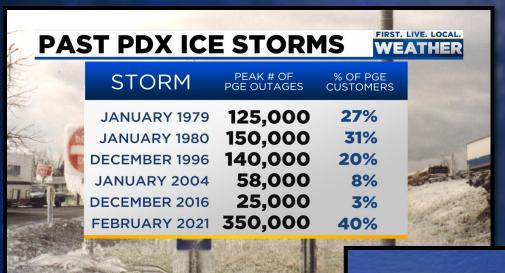




- Historic Ice Storm south metro to central Willamette Valley
- Worst since January 1943?



Historic Ice Storm south metro to central Willamette Valley



PAST PGE O	UTAGE #s	WEATHER
STORM	Peak # of PGE customers out	Longest Outages
2021 Snow/Ice	350,000	14 days?
2008 Snow/Ice	130,000	7 days
2006 Wind	250,000	4.5 days
1996 Ice	140,000	5 days
1995 Wind	300,000	6 days
1962 Columbus Day	262,000	14 days

GOOD FORECASTS BY NWS & PORTLAND MEDIA LEADING UP TO EVENT

- 1. No crazy model snow maps unleashed on social media (whew!)
- 2. Winter Storm watches/warnings issued well ahead of event
- 3. General idea of "snowy north half metro, icy south half" worked out well
- 4. Lots of meteorological minefields to navigate that week!

IMHO: SNOW/ICE STORM WAS FORECAST BETTER THAN ANY OF PAST 25 YEARS (January 1998, January 2004, December 2008, January 2017, February 2021)

It seems increasingly likely that SOMETHING is in the works along the I-5 corridor for late this week. Some sort of snow/ice/cold "event" is on the way for some part of the corridor between Seattle and Eugene. Maybe even out to portions of the coastline.

It's still too far out (4 days) to know how things will play out in detail, but at this point it's fair to make these statements:

- Some, or maybe a large, part of western Oregon and/or western Washington lowlands will get a significant snowfall (2-4"+) within the next 7 days.
- 2. The chance for a widespread "arctic freeze" is low right now in our viewing area <u>west of the Cascades</u>. At this point widespread temps below 20 degrees appear unlikely.

Sunday evening blog post (7th)

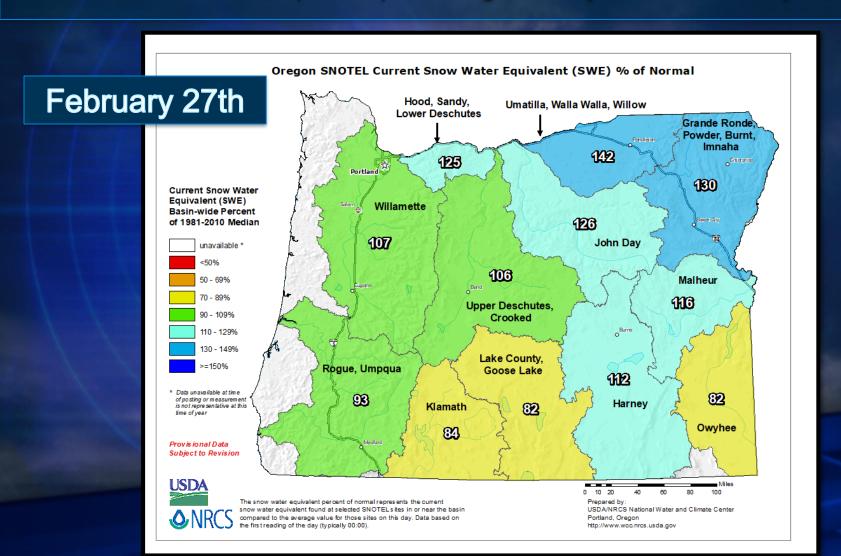
Tuesday evening blog post (9th)

THE MAIN POINTS THIS EVENING

- o An approaching snow/ice storm from late Thursday through early Sunday could be an epic one for some of us in the lowest elevations. That's for any time in winter, but especially so this late in the season. This could be the biggest February snowstorm of my career for at least parts of the metro area! Somewhere between 2-12" is a first good estimate of total snow during that time. Heaviest north and east metro, including Longview/Kelso. Lighter south & west due to more of the precip falling as freezing rain instead of snow.
- o As some models have been hinting, two waves of precipitation from Thursday through Saturday likely won't be separate "storms", but seem like one continuous event. However there should be a bit of a break before a third, and warmer system arrives later Sunday.
- o Much of the metro area will remain mainly frozen from Thursday night to Sunday morning

2+ WEEKS OF BIG CASCADE SNOWFALL 11TH-28th

Washington & Northern Oregon mountains have a deep snowpack on ground by end of February

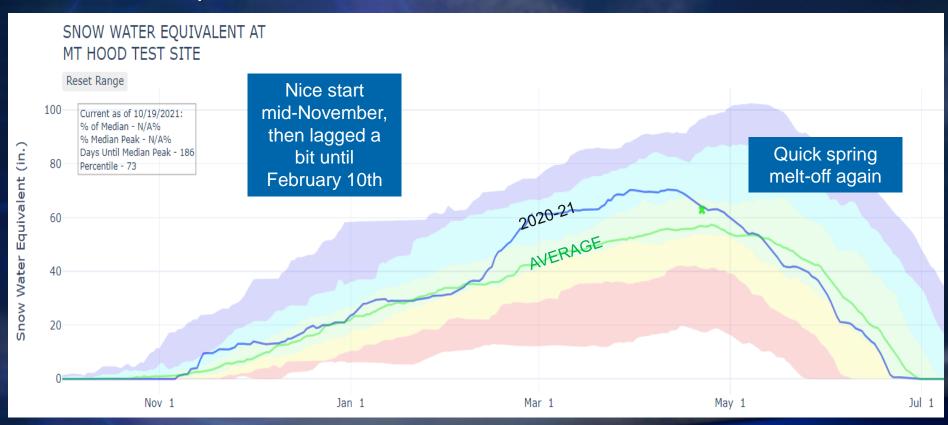


Mountain Snowpack @ 5,400'

Bottom of Pucci Lift @Timberline

Water Year Precipitation: BELOW AVERAGE (after March)

Snowpack: ABOVE AVERAGE

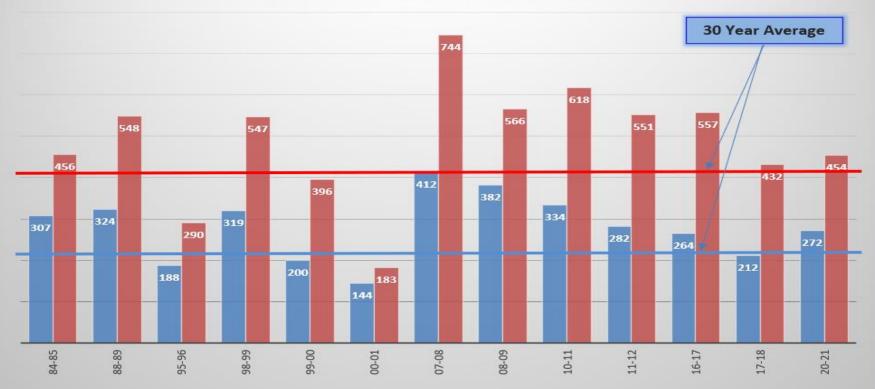


Cascade Snowfall

- 1. Nice start above 4,000' in late November
- 2. Skiing conditions just "okay" until mid-February
- 3. Mt. Hood snowfall up to about normal for entire season

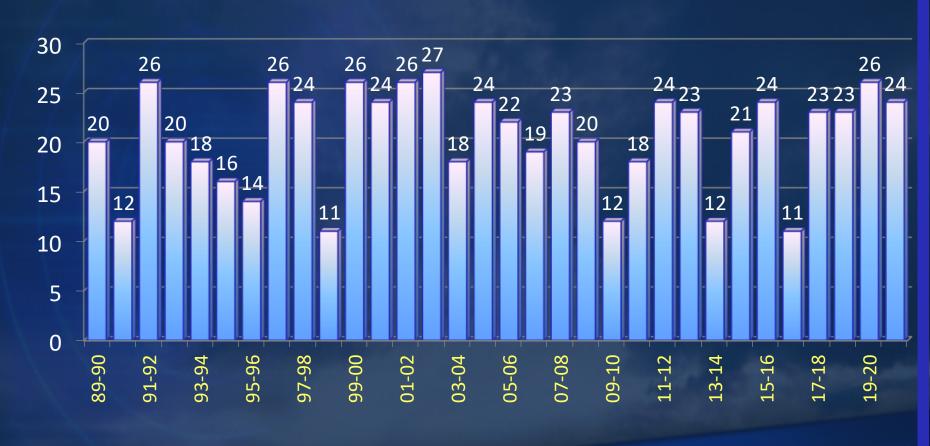
Winter Snowfall On Mt. Hood During La Nina Winters

Meadows vs. Gov't Camp (in inches)



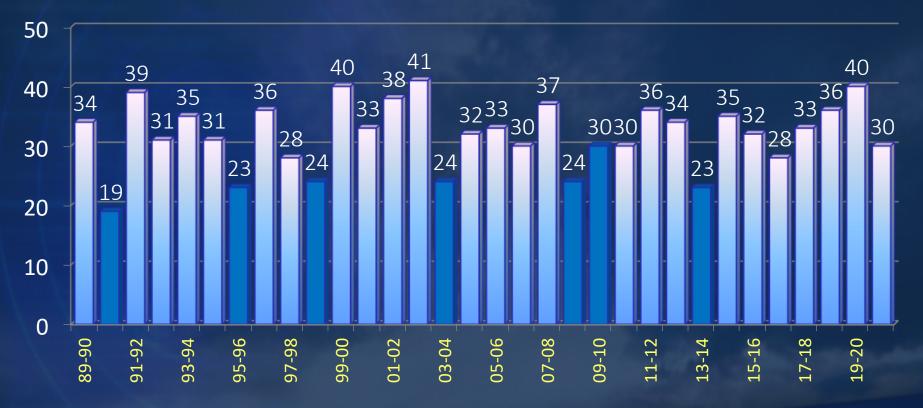
Winter temps go easy on our gardens

Winter Minimum Temperature @PDX



A Better Measure of an Arctic Blast

Coldest Daytime High at PDX



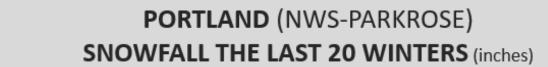
Blue = Widespread PACNW Arctic Air Outbreak

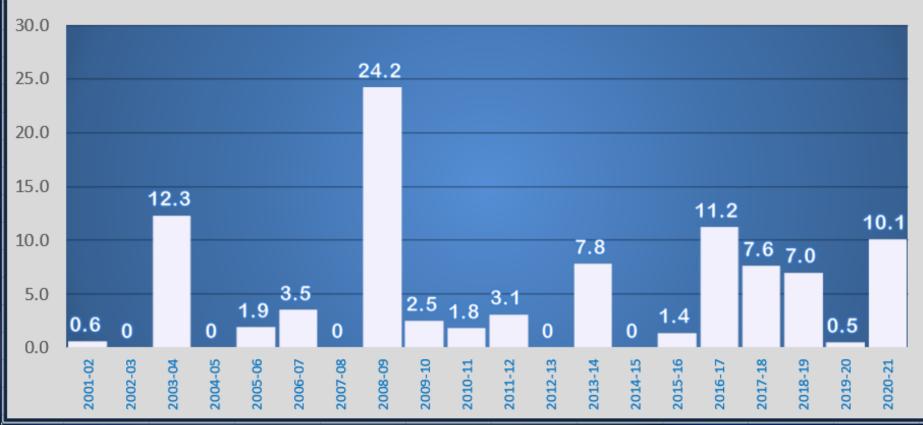
Last "arctic blast" was December 2013

Previous events: Nov 2010, Dec 2009, Dec 1998, Dec 1990

	PORTLAND HISTORIC	AL ARCTIC BLA	ST INFO							
1	GREEN BOX = SIGNIFIC	CANT/HISTORIC	EVENTS, BUT N	NOT A REGI	ONWIDE A	RCTIC AIR C	OUTBREAK			
	YELLOW BOX = REGIO	NWIDE ARCTIC	AIR OUTBREAK							
ı		Lowest	Lowest	Coldest	Coldest	Lowest	PDX Co	oldest		
	Month/Year	500mb Height	500/1000 Thk	850mb T	925mb T	Dewpoint	High	Low	Comments	
	February 2021			-0.7	-1.9		30	24	Edge of historic cold	airmass
	January 2017			-9.3	-5.2		28	11	Cool airmass at first,	then lo
	Early Feb 2014	532	524	-7.3	-7.7	1	23	19	NOT ARCTIC BLAST S	trong e
	Dec 2013	529	514	-14.1	-9	-2	28	12	Little/no snow metro	area.
	Late Feb 2011			-10	-7		32	18		
	Nov 2010			-12.5	-9		30	18	Mainly dry cold blast	from n
	Dec 2009			-12.3	-10		30	12	3 consecutive below	freezin
	Dec 2008			-9.3	-8		24	20	Huge snow event. Big	g storm
	Jan 2004			-8.1	-3		24	18	NOT ARCTIC BLAST M	1ajor sr
	Dec 1998	526	506	-17.5	-13		24	11	Not too much east w	ind, the
	Late Jan 1996			-7	-7		23	14	Extremely cold and w	indy, lo
	Jan 1993			-8	-5		31	22		
	Dec 1990	515	505	-22.1	-17	-4	19	12	Coldest 850mb temp	on reco
	Feb 1990	527	507	-12	-7		34	20		
١	Feb 1989	515	505	-16.7	-15	-6	15	9		
	Nov 1985	533		-10.7	-9	10	25	13	Didn't technically med	et crite
	Dec 1983	531		-16.1	-12	-4	20	12		
	Jan 1980	516		-14.5			27	13	Short, but heaviest sn	ow on
	Dec/lan 1078-70	537		-13.5	-10	2	10	13	14 days @/helow 33	degree

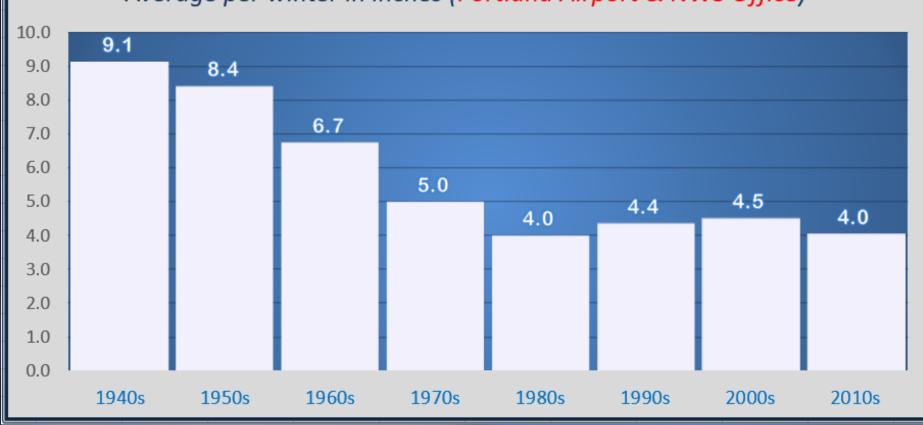
Been working on arctic air events, along with Tanis Leach...slow progress





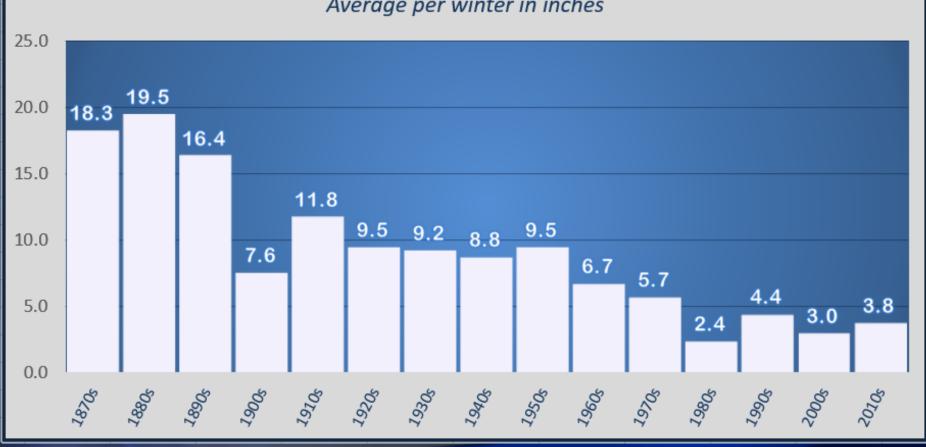


Average per winter in inches (Portland Airport & NWS Office)





Average per winter in inches

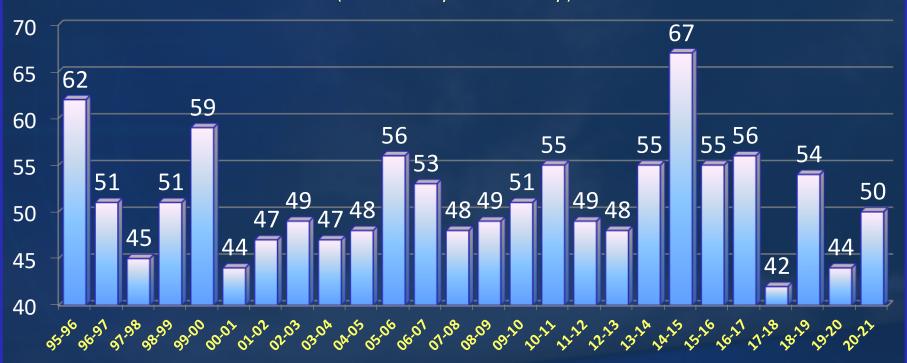


No Wind Storms

25 winters without a major REGIONAL storm

Yearly Peak Wind Gust at PDX in MPH

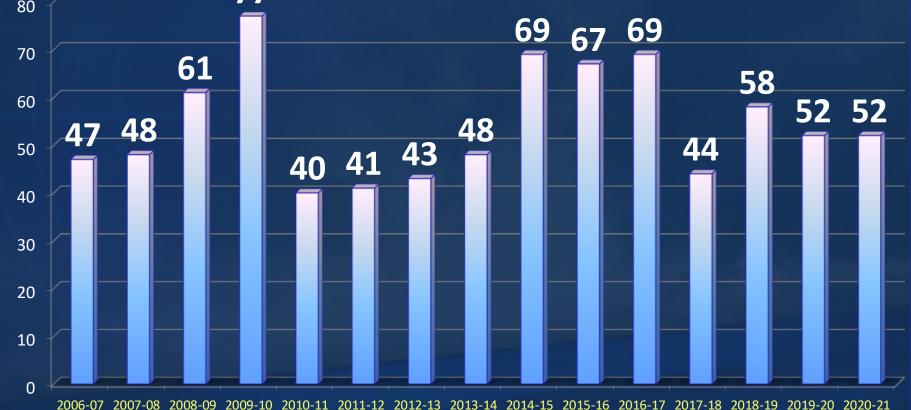
(Generally southerly)



EASY EAST WIND SEASON

No long periods of extreme wind...somewhat "normal"





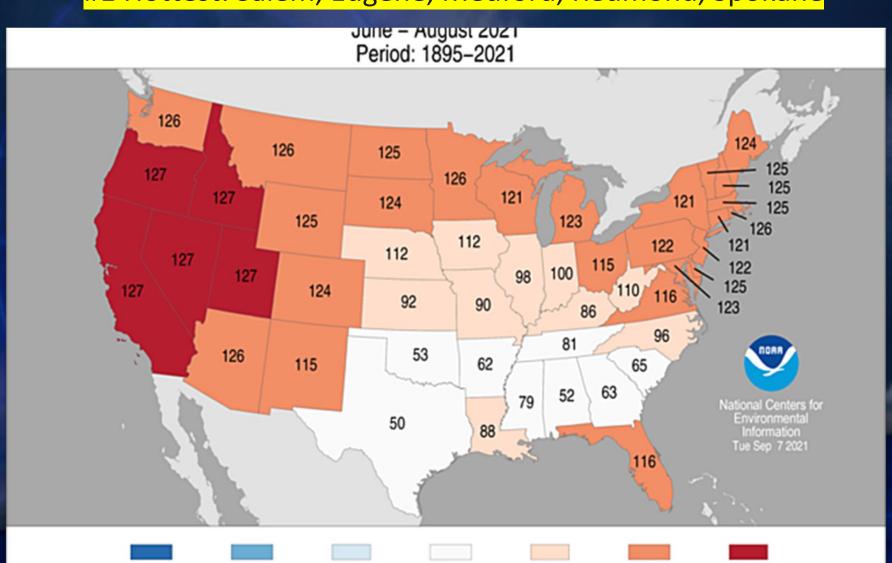
FINAL THOUGHTS

- 1. If pattern shifted just 100 miles farther north; it would have rained Valentine's weekend!
- 2. The "wet" part of La Niña turned out correct, but warmer than forecasters expected and far less active than a typical event.
- 3. Could we have ANOTHER winter with measurable snow at PDX for 2021-22?

SUMMER: BLAZING HOT

Hottest or 2nd hottest all states west of Rockies

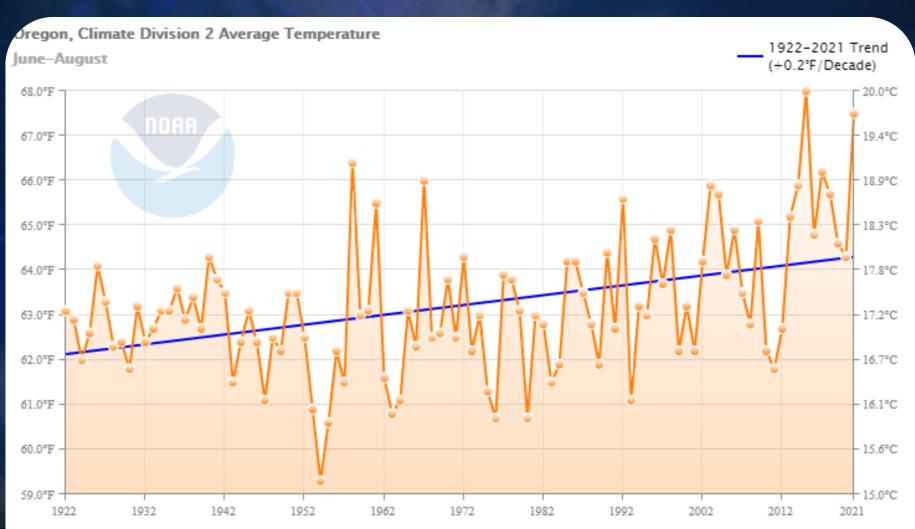
#1 Hottest: Salem, Eugene, Medford, Redmond, Spokane



SUMMER: BLAZING HOT

2nd hottest in western valleys (2015 = #1)

WESTERN VALLEYS: 9th consecutive warm (or hot) summer



SUMMER 2021

Tied for hottest in Portland with 2015

4 HEATWAVES THIS SUMMER



95°, 108°, 112°, 116°, 93° June 25th-29th

94°, 98°, 94°

July 28th-30th

91°, 90°, 96°

Aug 2nd-4th

93°,102°,103°,96°,93°,94°Aug 10th-15th

SUMMER 2021

Tied for hottest in Portland with 2015

90° DAYS IN PORTLAND WEATHER





HOW ABOUT THIS COMING WINTER?

LIGHTNING ROUND OF WINTER FORECASTS

Organizations/individuals who can't make it here today or don't want to be here OR
They don't know (or care) that we exist.

COLLECTION OF WINTER OUTLOOKS

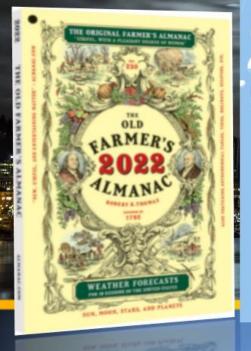
- 1. Old Farmer's Almanac
- 2. Farmers' Almanac
- 3. AccuWeather
- 4. Rod Hill (KGW)
- 5. Models

THOSE ALMANAC FORECASTS?

BETTER LUCK FLIPPING A COIN?

WEATHER

2021-2022 WINTER WEATHER FORECAST





Remember the accuracy...

THOSE ALMANAC FORECASTS?

BETTER LUCK FLIPPING A COIN?

MICHIGAN STREET, CO., P. Co.,

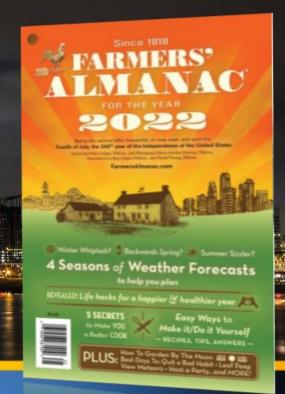
WEATHER



2021-22 WINTER OUTLOOK

Frosty Flip-Flop Winter





Remember the accuracy...



Pacific Northwest & Northern Rockies

A La Niña winter typically translates to a stormy season for the Pacific Northwest, and while La Niña is in the offing this winter, it may not trigger as much stormy weather as in years past.

"La Niña may not come and do the same things that we typically see because it's weaker," Pastelok explained.

A wet winter is still anticipated with plenty of snow in the mountains, but it might not total as much as last winter, and more breaks in the stormy pattern are projected. Still, there will be enough precipitation to lay down a healthy snowpack for ski resorts across the Pacific Northwest and the northern Rocky Mountains.



ROD'S WINTER FORECAST 2021-2022

1. NO CHANCE OF A WET WINTER

DRY JANUARY, LESS THAN 2" OF PRECIPITATION

- 2. COLDER THAN NORMAL TEMPERATURES
 JANUARY COLDEST MONTH
- 3. VALLEY SNOW: AT LEAST 4-6"
 EQUAL CHANCE OF BIG STORM OR NOT / DEC, JAN, FEBRUARY



TEMPERATURES NOVEMBER - MARCH

NOVEMBER: NEAR NORMAL

DECEMBER: COLD, 1-3° BELOW NORMAL

JANUARY: COLDEST MONTH, -3 TO 4°

FEBRUARY: COLD, 1-2° BELOW NORMAL

MARCH: COLD, 1-2° BELOW NORMAL

VALLEY SNOW FORECAST

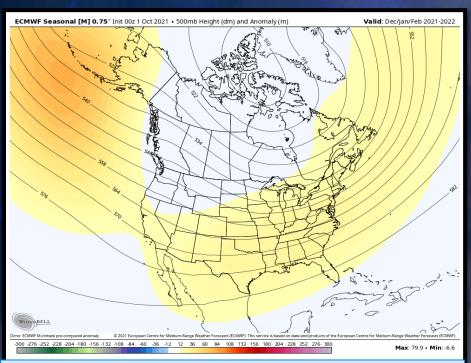
SNOW IS LIKELY, AT LEAST 4-6"



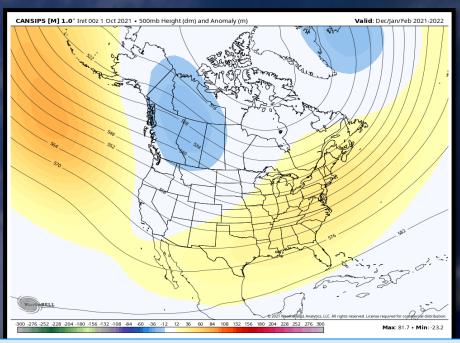
SNOW CHANCES DEC, JAN, FEBRUARY

EQUAL CHANCE OF A BIG STORM OR NOT LAST FEBRUARY 10.1"

TWO MODEL FORECASTS

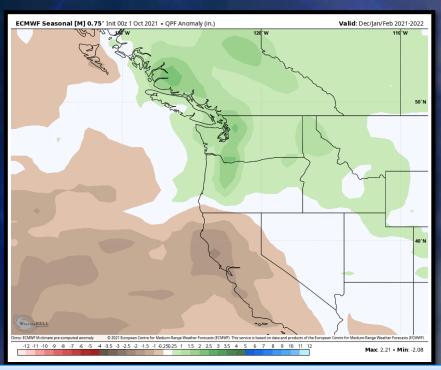


ECMWF DEC-FEB 500MB

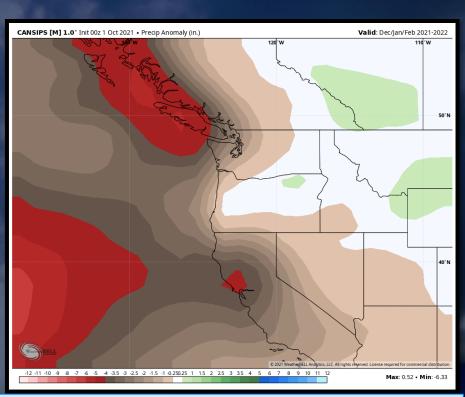


CANSIPS DEC-FEB 500MB

TWO MODEL FORECASTS



ECMWF DEC-FEB PRECIP ANOMALY



CANSIPS DEC-FEB PRECIP ANOMALY

