TRANSCRIPT

NOAA August 2023 Climate Media Briefing

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Media advisory about briefing:

https://www.noaa.gov/media-advisory/noaa-monthly-us-global-climate-report-call-september-21

Vanessa (Operator):

Thank you for standing by.

At this time, all participants are in a listen only mode until the question and answer session of today's conference. At that time, you may press *1, unmute your phone and record your name to ask a question.

I would like to inform all parties that today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

I would now like to turn the conference over to your host, Mr. John Bateman. Thank you, you may begin.

John Bateman:

All right, thanks Vanessa and good morning everyone. Thank you for joining this monthly climate update call, part of this suite of climate services that NOAA provides to government, business, academia, the media and the public to support informed decision-making.

I'm John Bateman with NOAA Communications and I'll be facilitating the call today. If you have additional questions after the conclusion of today's call, my colleague John Leslie and I can both be reached by email at and I will spell it. N-E-S-D-I-S.P-A @N-O-A-A.G-O-V. That's nesdis.pa for public affairs @noaa.gov.

Today's update will feature three short presentations followed by an operator assisted question and answer session at the end. A copy of the presentation our speakers will follow, can be downloaded from the link in the media advisory.

And with that, I'll introduce our speakers. Our first presenter is Karin Gleason monitoring section sheet from NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information who will provide a summary of the August 2023 US and Global Climate Report, as well as the latest drought monitor update.

Our second presenter is Brett Whitin, the Service Coordination Hydrologist at the California Nevada River Forecast Center, who will review the impacts from tropical storm Hilary that pushed across the southwestern US in August.

And our third speaker is Scott Handel, a meteorologist at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center who will provide the latest El Nino update as well as the US temperature, precipitation, and drought outlook for October, November and December.

Our first speaker will be Karin Gleason from NOAA NCEI. Karin?

Karin Gleason:

Thank you John, and thanks to everyone for joining the call today. Let's begin by looking at slide number two and the global temperature data for August of 2023.

We see that the global surface temperature anomaly was 1.25 degrees Celsius above the 20th century average, making it the warmest August on record. This August was the first August to exceed the 1 degree Celsius above average threshold and exceeds the previous warmest August, which was in 2016 by 0.29 degrees Celsius. That is 0.1 degrees Celsius lower than the all-time highest monthly temperature anomaly on record, which occurred back in March of 2016. And the August value is the third-highest anomaly for any month on record.

Looking at global ocean temperature dataset, we see that it set a record high for the fifth consecutive month. And the August sea surface temperature anomaly value was 1.03 degrees Celsius and it was the highest anomaly value for any month on record. The previous record warmest anomaly value occurred last month in July. When looking at land only we see that the 1.72 degree Celsius warm anomaly value is also a record for the month of August. Continents that ranked record warm for the month includes South America, North America, Africa, and Asia. Europe, and Oceania ranked second warmest for the month. Record warm temperatures, which can be seen in the dark red areas in the map on the right of this slide covered nearly 13% of the world's surface, which is the highest August coverage since the start of this particular record in 1951.

Shifting our attention now to slide number three and the June through August global temperatures, we see the seasonal temperature maps for the Northern Hemisphere meteorological summer, and the Southern Hemisphere meteorological winter. The global surface temperature anomaly was 1.15 degrees Celsius above the 20th century average, making it the warmest June, July and August on record. This was also the first such period to exceed the 1 degree Celsius above average threshold. In fact, the most recent 10 June through August periods have been the warmest 10 periods on record. Global land and ocean temperatures as separate entities were also each warmest on record for this three month period.

Moving on to slide number four, we see the global temperature percentile map for the January to August period and the 2023 year to date temperature comparison to the 10 warmest years on record. The January to August global surface temperature average was 1.06 degrees Celsius above average, which translates to the second-warmest January to August temperature in the 174-year record. Looking at the time series on the right side of the slide, we see that only 2016 fared warmer through the first eight months of the year, and 2016 ended the year as warmest on record and still maintains that record. According to NCEI's temperature ranking outlooks statistical analysis, there is a 95% chance that 2023 will end as either the warmest or the second-warmest year on record.

Turning our attention now to slide number five and zooming in a little closer to home, we see that August temperatures averaged 74.4 degrees Fahrenheit for the month, which is 2.3 degrees Fahrenheit above average. This translates to a ranking of 90 warmest. Looking at the temperature rank map on the left, we see that in general temperatures were above average across much of the western half of the contiguous USs, the upper Midwest, and throughout the Southeast. Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida each ranked warmest on record.

For this month looking at precipitation for the contiguous US it averaged 2.74 inches, which is 0.12 inch above average, and looking at the distribution that translates to a near average month. Looking at the precipitation map on the right precipitation was above average from the west coast to the northern plains across portions of the mid-Mississippi Valley, Southeast, Eastern Great Lakes, and the Northeast. Below average precipitation occurred across parts of the South, the Gulf Coast, the Western Great Lakes. Louisiana ranked driest on record while California and Nevada each ranked second wettest for the month of August.

Looking at slide number six and summertime temperatures for the contiguous USs, we see that it averaged 73 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit above average. This is the 15th warmest summer on record for the US. Looking at the temperature ranks map on the left, we see above average temperatures across the West, the Northern Plains, the South, parts of the Southeast, and the northeast Louisiana ranked warmest on record for this three month period. We also saw temperatures that were below average across a portion of the Ohio and Tennessee Valleys.

Looking at precipitation, the contiguous US average was 8.35 inches, which was 3/100 of an inch above average, which ends up being a near average summer precipitation average. Looking at the ranks map on the right of the slide, we see above average seasonal precipitation from the West Coast to parts of the Central Plains across the Eastern Great Lakes, the Northeast, the Tennessee Valley, and portions of the Southeast. Wyoming, Vermont, and New Hampshire each ranked wettest on record while New Mexico and Louisiana ranked third driest for this summer season.

Moving on to slide number seven, we see the year-to-date temperatures for the contiguous US averaged about 55.6 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit above average. This ranks as the 13th warmest such year-to-date on record. Looking at the map on the left and the temperature ranks for the first eight months of the year, we see temperatures were above average across much of the Eastern US, Central and Southern Plains, as well as across portions of the Northwest with near to below average temperatures from the West Coast to the Northern Plains. Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida each ranked warmest on record for this. Precipitation for this year to date period averaged 21.19 inches, which is nearly 1/2 inch above average and that ranks near average for the season.

Looking at the precipitation ranks map on the right, we see above average precipitation from California to the Central Rockies also in portions of the Plains, Great Lakes, Southeast and Northeast. Below average precipitation occurred across the Northwest parts of the South and Northeast... I'm sorry, below average precipitation occurred across the Northwest and parts of the South, Upper Midwest, the Mid-Atlantic and Florida. Maryland ranked ninth driest while New Hampshire ranked third West for this eight month period.

Turning our attention now to slide number eight and the latest US drought monitor map that was released this morning. We see that approximately 37.8% of the contiguous US is currently in drought. This is up by about 7% when compared with the coverage in mid-August. We did see drought conditions lessen or diminish across portions of the Western Southwest, primarily due to Hilary, and then we saw conditions expand and intensify quite a bit across portions of the Northwest, the northern tier, Central Plains, the upper Midwest, the Great Lakes, the Mid-Atlantic, as well as the deep south.

Looking at locations outside of the contiguous US, we saw drought coverage expand and intensify across the main islands of Hawaii. A small portion of drought that was present across portions of Central Alaska was eliminated. And we see that drought is less intense than it was mid-month last month across portions of Puerto Rico.

And with that, I'll turn the presentation over to Brett.

Actually, no, I take that back. I still have one more slide. I have a billion dollar weather and climate disasters map. My apologies. Looking at slide number nine, we have our latest update for this map and we see that there were 23 disasters that have been confirmed through the end of August. This is the most number of events identified not only for this eight month period, but also the most events during a single calendar year since we began tracking these records in 1980.

Eight newly identified events were added to the map this month and they include Hurricane Idalia, the Hawaii firestorm, the mid-July Northeast flooding and North Central severe weather events, as well as the mid or the Minnesota Hailstorms from August 11th, and several other severe storm events that occurred during July. This brings the year-to-date summary totals to 18 severe storm events, 2 flooding events, 1 tropical cyclone, 1 winter storm, and 1 wildfire event. The total cost of the events so far in 2023 exceeds $57.6 billion and has resulted in 253 direct and indirect fatalities.

And now with that, I will turn the presentation over to Brett. Thank you.

Brett Whitin:

Thank you.

So I'm going to be focusing on Hurricane Hilary and mainly focusing on precipitation, but I'll also touch upon drought and water resources as well.

So on slide 10, we'll start off here and look at the two-day accumulated precipitation totals for Hurricane Hilary. And you can see from the color shading, there's a lot of areas in Southern California and Southern Nevada that are orange-ish, which is roughly five inch totals of rainfall over a two-day period.

And moving on to slide 11, the graphic on the left here is average annual rainfall for California. So you can see in that same region of southern California, there's a lot of browns which are desert areas that get 0 to 5 inches of rain annually. So many of the locations saw annual precipitation totals exceeded in that 48 hour period in Hilary and a larger area saw 50 to 150% of annual rainfall total.

There's a nice writeup on the Center for Western Weather and Water Extreme, CWEEE, website that has a graphic that shows that relationship between precipitation from Hilary and how it compares to annual totals. And the link is right there on slide 11.

Moving on to slide 12, if we focus just on August precipitation percentiles, there's a lot of the area in the west that had much above normal precipitation and the area that I circled there in red, that's the darker color, and those are record wettest areas for August precipitation. But as you can see, a lot of the Western US saw top 10% wettest.

Going on to slide 13, California statewide, August precipitation was the second-highest in California history. You can see here that 1983 was the second-highest on the y-axis of this graphic, we have percent of normal August precipitation and the x-axes are the year. So 1983 was the highest, it was influenced by Hurricane Ishmael and also there was another system that kind of hit the northern part of the state at the same time that they increased that total. So August precipitation of 2022 is the second-wettest due to Hilary.

Moving on to slide 14, this is California statewide monthly precipitation just to kind of show the wild ride we've had in California this year. The blue line is the monthly precipitation for 2023. As you can see, we exceeded the 10th percentile monthly precipitation in January in California. Again in March, and then a third time in August due to Hurricane Hilary. And this is a similar trend for Nevada as well.

Now, moving on to drought impacts. On slide 15 to the right, you can see the drought monitor map from August 15th prior to when Hilary hit and on the left August 29th, 2023 drought monitor after Hurricane Hilary. And so the area I circled in red there is really where we saw changes in the drought monitor. So that area had abnormally dry and moderate drought. And as you can see in August 29th, a lot of that area is now white, which means has no drought classification. So those were the biggest changes to drought status after Hurricane Hilary.

Moving on to slide 16, just touching upon water resource impacts this graphic to the left of the notes here is a storage graphic for Pine Flat Reservoir in the Southern Sierra in California. So this graphic shows storage gains over the entire 2023 water year. And the area I circled in red is really the storage changes that occurred during Hilary.

So as you can see, there were significant storage gains in the spring due to the record setting snowpack in the Southern Sierra and then reservoir storages began to fall and in the summer months and we saw a little uptick in storage in that red circle due to Hurricane Hilary, but it was fairly minimal and that's just a general conclusion overall in the west from Hurricane Hilary. We did see storage gains and a lot of reservoirs, but they were fairly minor throughout the West, I've been focusing a lot on California, but that also statement is true for other areas of the west including the Pacific Northwest.

So with that, I think I am done with my Hilary discussion and I'll pass it over to Scott.

Scott Handel:

Thank you Brett, and good morning everyone. This is Scott Handel meteorologist from the National Weather Service Claim Prediction Center. I'm going to start you off by bringing your attention to slide 17 of the presentation with the current observations and forecast from the southern oscillation. The figure on the left shows the current sea surface temperature anomalies in the Tropical Pacific. The orange and red shading represents areas where the sea surface temperatures are above normal. And the blue areas correspond to the areas where sea surface temperatures are below normal. As you can see, there's a lot of red near the center of the map indicating that on average sea surface temperatures are currently above normal near the equator. Sea surface temperatures in what's called the medial 3.4 region in the Tropical Pacific are roughly 1.6 degrees Celsius above normal, which puts us firmly in El Nino territory, which starts when sea surface temperatures rise to 1/2 a degree Celsius above normal.

Looking to the future, a continuation of El Nino is by far the most likely scenario as we head into the winter. The chart on the right indicates that there's over a 95% chance of El Nino through the upcoming winter. Additionally, there's around a 70% chance that this will be a strong El Nino event by the November, December, January season.

Now moving from the tropics to closer to home, I'd like to draw your attention to slide 18, which represents our monthly outlooks for the month of October. These outlooks represent the probabilities of the mean temperature or total precipitation for the month will be below, near, or above normal. The red and orange shading on the map to the left indicates areas where above normal temperatures are the most likely outcome. While the blue shading indicates areas where below normal temperatures are the most likely.

Looking at the map on the left, the first thing that stands out, there's a lot of red and orange on the map indicating that most of the country is favored to have warmer than normal temperatures in October. This is especially true from the Northeast and Great Lakes, Southwest across the Appalachians to the Western Gulf Coast region where there's greater than a 50% chance of above normal temperatures. This anticipated warmth is due to a variety of factors such as model guidance, an anticipated northward shift in the circulation pattern early in the month, and above normal sea surface temperatures, both in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

There's also a greater than a 50% chance of above normal temperatures for Northwestern Alaska due in part to much below normal sea ice extent in the adjacent Arctic Ocean. Looking at precipitation, the areas in the green on the map on the right indicate regions where the total precipitation [inaudible 00:21:02] to be above normal for October. And the brown areas represent regions where below normal precipitation is the most likely scenario. Below normal monthly total precipitation amounts are favored for parts of the Great Lakes region in the Northeast. My short-term model guidance is favoring high pressure and ridging to establish itself further north than normal.

This northward shift may allow for increase unsettled conditions far to the South from the mid-Atlantic states to the middle Mississippi Valley, Central Plains and Southwest corresponding to the green shading on the map. A slight tilt toward below normal precipitation is indicated for the Pacific Northwest consistent with potential El Nino impacts.

Conversely, a slight tilt toward above normal precipitation is shown for parts of the Northern and Western Alaska associated with low [inaudible 00:21:44] and above normal sea surface temperatures in surrounding waters. Probabilities in all locations are modest due to the low predictability common during this time of year.

Looking further ahead now to the three-month period from October, November and December, I'd like to bring your attention to slide 19. During this period, the potential impacts from El Nino become more apparent with above normal precipitation favored in the map to the right for the Southeast westwards of the Southern Plains and northward along much of the East Coast.

For temperature, you also notice a lot more white on the map to the left compared to the October outlook, particularly in parts of the Southern United States. This represents an area of increased uncertainty as El Nino, which tends to favor

below normal temperatures across mostly the southern United States, battles recent trends which tends to favor warmer than normal conditions.

Further to the north, warmer and drier than normal weather is favored for the Pacific Northwest, parts of the Northern Rockies as well as parts of the Great Lakes consistent with anticipated El Nino impacts. El Nino as well as recent trends in above normal sea surface temperatures also favor increasing more for the Northeast with a greater than 50% chance above normal temperatures for Northern New England. Milder than normal weather is also favored for Alaska, especially for the North slope due in part to much below normal sea ice extent in the adjacent Arctic Ocean. This below normal sea ice extent as well as potential El Nino influences and recent trends also support increased chances for above normal precipitation for Northern and Western Alaska.

Wrapping things up with the drought outlook, I'd like to bring your attention to slide 20. The brown areas in the map indicate where drought is currently ongoing and expected to continue. This includes much of the interior Northwestern contiguous United States eastward to parts of the Northern Rockies, Northern Plains, and Upper Mississippi Valley, as well as parts of the Southwest and virtually all of Hawaii. On the flip side, ground improvement or removal is likely for the Central and Southern Plains, parts of the Middle and Lower Mississippi Valley, pockets of the Appalachians, and parts of Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands.

That's it from the climate prediction. Back to you John.

John Bateman:

Thank you so much, Scott.

We will now take specific questions from the call participants. Please be sure to identify who you'd like to answer the question, if possible. And Vanessa, could you please remind the call participants how they can ask a question and then please queue up the first question?

Vanessa (Operator):

Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press *1, unmute your phone and record your name. Your name is required to ask a question. If you need to withdraw your question, please press *2. Again, to ask a question, please press *1.

Looks like you have one question in queue so far. Brian Bloomberg, your line is open.

Brian Bloomberg:

Hi, thanks for doing this. Quick question on the drought across the US south, how much of that is a result of the kind of dearth of tropical systems moving into that area this summer? And as a follow-up, I'm just kind of curious how you expect the oceanic heatwave to influence the weather as we continue into the colder months here.

Karin Gleason:

This is Karin Gleason, I can address the issue about the drought in the South, in particular Texas and what might be influencing that. And certainly, not having tropical systems has an impact if drought conditions are present. So, for instance, it's been dry and it's been exceedingly warm throughout the entire summer months of this year throughout much of the Southern Plains and including Texas. So they've been very warm, record warm, and they've been very dry. So that in and of itself creates those intense drought conditions. Not having tropical systems making landfall, or influencing the lack of precipitation in that area, certainly, it won't improve the situation. So it's not that the drought was caused by the lack, it's that the lack of tropical systems just aren't bringing relief to an area that's been near record warm, and record warm and very dry throughout the warm season.

Brian Bloomberg:

What about Louisiana same thing? 'Cause I noticed that's even worse than Texas.

Karin Gleason:

Yes, Louisiana it's the same thing. For the summer season, they were warmest on record and they were warmest for August as well, and they were driest for August, and third driest for the summer season. So when you combine the record heat and the record to near record low precipitation, you've got intense drought conditions during the warm season that form, and no relief from tropical activity.

Scott Handel:

Hi, this is Scott Handle from the Climate Prediction Center and I could speak to what may happen in the future too. So, as you know, we're currently experiencing above normal sea surface temperatures in the Tropical Pacific consistent with El Nino. And when we get to the cooler winter months, that tends to favor a more active weather in the southern part of the country, and above normal precipitation for almost the entire or most of the southern tier of the United States from the West Coast all the way to especially the Southeast and also tends to favor more active East Coast storm tracks, so more precipitation along much of the East coast from the southeast to the mid-Atlantic. Conversely, it tends to favor more drier than normal conditions for a lot of the northern tier, particularly the Northern Rockies and Northwest, as well as parts of the Great Lakes, and also warmer than normal conditions across much of the northern tier of the country.

Brian Bloomberg:

The other thing I was wondering about is the warmth in the Atlantic. I assume it's not just going to disappear come November 1st or something, but how much would that influence that? I mean, if you have storm tracks going up the East Coast, would that lead to more energy for those storms, or anything like that?

Scott Handel:

Well, I can say that just El Nino winters in general already tend to favor more of an East Coast storm track. And also, if you have warmer than normal Atlantic sea surface temperatures, that could provide some more moisture as well. So those could work together for potentially more active East Coast storm track during the winter months.

Brian Bloomberg:

Thank you.

Vanessa (Operator):

The next question comes from Belger of New York Times. Line is open.

Belger:

Hi, thanks for this.

I actually don't really have questions about the specifics of your presentation this time, but I was wondering if maybe Karin, or even John could talk a little bit more broadly about these monthly climate updates in general. I've been covering them for a few months now and month after month. So we have record high temperatures for the globe and I find it to be a depressing but important exercise. And I was just wondering how you guys at NOAA kind of see the purpose of these updates more broadly? And when do you see these temperature records for all month after month what kinds of conversations does it spark at NOAA?

Karin Gleason:

This is Karin Gleason. I'm not 100% sure that I fully heard the question, but I think what you're saying, let me see if I can repeat the question, is that in these monthly climate calls at present, we're in clearly a warm regime. We have been really since summer months at record, or near record warmth across the globe on average.

I don't know that we necessarily have conversations behind the scenes during cooler periods about it being cooler necessarily. I mean, I think all of our conversations as we're analyzing the data and producing our reports kind of just revolve around what the data are telling us and what the messages are that we should be sharing with people about the information because it is somewhat complex. And so, we're trying to find a way to make it understandable. And so, like I said, we're in a regime right now that's clearly warmer than it has been, and near record warmth and record warmth. And that trend probably will continue through much of the rest of the year and into next year.

So I would say if you're wondering about conversations, perhaps, what you might be looking for is maybe... Nobody knows when this is going to end. But certainly with El Nino apparently still strengthening, we anticipate based on the way the atmosphere behaves as a result of that, that we expect the heat to continue through the rest of 2023, which is clearly indicated by our temperature ranking outlook with a 95% chance of warmest to second-warmest on record for the year. But it's possible that 2024 could be even warmer than 2023 depending on whether or not Nino continues to strengthen or remain strong into the early part of next year. So we're kind of thinking it's a wait and see situation, but we anticipate to still remain in this record to near record territory globally for several months to come.

Vanessa (Operator):

[inaudible 00:31:54] of Hindustan Times, your line is open.

Speaker 8:

Hi, this is [inaudible 00:32:03] from Hindustan Times. I have a couple of questions. One is that I was just looking at the slides and I wanted to understand whether there's a 95% chance of this year being the warmest or the second-warmest year on record. Is that correct?

And also, when we say that there is a 70% chance of a strong El Nino in the next few months, October, November onwards, how does this impact places like the Asian region, the South Asian region particularly, what do you expect for that region? And what are the chances of us hitting 1.5 degrees above the pre-industrial level this year or the next year? Thank you.

Karin Gleason:

So this is Karin Gleason. I think I can address the first and possibly the last question. The first question is about the temperature ranking outlook, NOAA's temperature ranking outlook for the globe. There is currently a 95% chance that by the end of this calendar year, the annual global temperature will be either warmest, or second-warmest on record. So what you said, I believe, is indeed correct. So approximately a 95% chance that the year will end as either the warmest or the second-warmest year on record.

And I don't know if anyone else can address the third question, but at the National Center for Environmental Information, we don't really deal with predictions for where temperatures are going to go. We know they have been warm and they have been exceeding previous records by rather significant margins each month the last couple of months, which is pretty remarkable. So it's going to be hard to know exactly where each month is going to go and what thresholds they might exceed. I mean, we are reaching a point where certain months are exceeding 1 degree Celsius for the first time in those given months, or the given seasons. So I don't know what the timeframe would be if the warming

were to continue when we would exceed 1.5, but we certainly are setting records that are significantly larger than prior records. And so, we're watching that closely. Thank you.

Scott Handel:

Yeah, this is Scott Handel from the Client Prediction Center too. I could speak to going forward, particularly for the El Nino. So right now, in Tropical Pacific and what's known as the Nino 3.4 region, the SSTs, or sea surface temperatures are currently 1.6 degrees Celsius above normal. So that's already above the 1.5 degree threshold for a strong event. So when we go moving forward into the winter months, a strong event is more likely than not as we head into, as we head into the winter months. So I just wanted to clarify that. And El Nino in general is a near certainty regardless of strength and a strong event is more likely than not as well. So just wanted to clarify that going forward.

Speaker 8:

Sure.

And anything on the South Asian region, what do you expect? Because it's going to be winter here, but are the winters going to be warmer than usual?

Scott Handel:

Yeah, this is Scott [inaudible 00:35:59]. Oh, go ahead. Sorry to interrupt. Yeah, so this is-

Speaker 8:

No, no, I was just asking.

Scott Handel:

Yeah, I could speak to the United States in particular for El Nino impact. So for the United States in particular, El Ninos tend to favor kind of cooler and wetter than normal conditions across much of the southern tier of the contiguous United States, and kind of warmer, and drier than normal conditions for much of the northern contiguous United States. Now, one thing that's a challenge for this particular forecast is that in many areas where in the Southern United States where El Nino tends to favorite cool, recent trends are leaning warm. So there's really a battle going on between El Nino and recent trends as far as which one's going to win out. So there's a lot of uncertainty there, but El Nino in general tends to favor that cooler weather in the southern parts of the country and warmer weather in the northern parts of the country.

Speaker 8:

Sure. Thank you so much.

Vanessa (Operator):

We have two questions left in queue. Let's see... Haley of the Los Angeles Times, your line is open.

Haley:

Hey, good morning. Can you hear me?

Vanessa (Operator):

Yes ma'am.

Haley:

Hello?

Okay, thanks. You mentioned that El Nino's impact will start to be more apparent getting into November and December, and you talked about some of the expectations for the South and East. Can you talk a little bit about the anticipated effect for the Western US and California?

Scott Handel:

Yes, this is Scott Handel again. So California is an interesting case because here is a prime example of where El Nino and recent trends are in opposition to each other. Given that this is likely to be a strong event during the core of the winter months, we are leaning toward above normal precipitation for Southern California and the Los Angeles area. But probabilities aren't that high because there's two factors. One is no two El Ninos are exactly alike, and there's a lot of variation among El Nino events. And also when you look at recent trends for some of the winter months, there's actually been a dry trend recently when you compare the last 15 years to the last 30 years for parts of California. So those two opposing forces are battling each other this year. But given the strong El Nino, that's likely to occur this winter, we are leaning toward above normal precipitation slightly for the Los Angeles area this winter.

Haley:

Thank you.

And just to be clear, when you talk about recent trends, you said 15 years, 15, 30 years, not what's the time period for recent trends?

Scott Handel:

Thank you, I'll clarify that. So when we talk about recent trends, we are comparing the last 15 years on average to what's known as a 30-year climatology. And that climatology is based on 1991 to 2020. So we're comparing these last 15 years to that 30 year climatology base period.

Haley:

Thanks.

Vanessa (Operator):

Okay, your last question comes from Drew Costley. Your line is open.

Drew Costley:

Hi y'all. Thanks for doing this. Drew Costley here from Verite News. I wanted to know what weather conditions will contribute to drought conditions improving in Louisiana and that sort of area, despite I think it was drought remains, but will improve? What weather conditions will contribute to that in October. And then for the three-month forecast where there is some precipitation chances, I think slightly above normal precipitation chances?

Scott Handel:

This is Scott Handel again. One thing that could help Louisiana would be, what we call, more active or more moisture in the Southern United States. And fortunately, at least during the core winter months, the El Ninos tend to favor more precipitation, or above normal precipitation for Louisiana during those core winter months. So that is potentially good news for Louisiana in the sense that it may promote increased chances for above known precipitation for Louisiana, and we are, in fact, favoring that in our outlooks as well.

Vanessa (Operator):

Okay, there's no further questions or comments in queue.

John Bateman:

All right. Thanks so much, Vanessa. If there are no further questions, I will wrap up this climate call.

First, we want to thank all of our speakers for their time and to everyone else for participating in the conference call. I will end by reminding you to mark your calendar for a few upcoming events. The release of the September 2023 US Climate Report is scheduled for October 10th. The release of the September 2023 Global Climate Report is scheduled for October 13th. And in lieu of NOAA's September media climate call, NOAA will host its 2023/'24 winter outlook, press briefing at 11:00 AM Eastern time on Thursday, October 19th. Again, that is the 2023/'24 Winter outlook press briefing at 11:00 AM Eastern on Thursday, October 19th. A media advisory will be sent out and posted to noaa.gov ahead of the briefing. Lastly, an audio file of this call will be posted on the noaa.gov and Media Advisory site later today. And if you have any further informational needs, please feel free to email me, John Bateman. My contact information is available at the top of the media advisory. Thank you.

Vanessa (Operator):

That concludes today's call. You may disconnect at this time. Hosts please stand by for your line count and post.

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