Seasonal Climate Forecast Verification
May – July 2020
Issued: August 20, 2020

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Photo: Jan Curtis
https://www.flickr.com/photos/79387036@N07/
Format and Purpose:

- A side-by-side comparison of the “Seasonal Climate Forecast” vs. what (Actually Occurred) is done for both the 1-month & 3-month forecasts.*

- The accuracy of each forecast is reviewed, and the need for analog-year updates is examined.

- This is part of an ongoing assessment of the utility of this forecast method.**

*Utilizes 1981-2010 long-term averages

**See “Forecasting Methods…” at:

https://oda.direct/Weather
Negative anomalies were both predicted (left panel) and observed (right panel) over the Gulf of Alaska. However, anomalies observed over Oregon were minimal, as opposed to the forecast of slightly-negative. A “partial forecast hit.”
May 2020
(Forecast Issued April 16, 2020)/(Actual)

Forecast Temperatures

Actual Temperatures

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
May 2020
(Forecast Issued April 16, 2020)/(Actual)

Forecast Precipitation

Actual Precipitation

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
Weak anomalous upper-level troughing over the western U.S. (Anomalous troughing set up farther offshore than predicted, resulting in slightly-warmer-than-expected upper-level temperatures over Oregon.) *Mostly a “forecast hit.”*

Below-average temperatures. (Temperatures were slightly-above average.) *A “forecast miss.”*

A switch to near or above-average precipitation. (Precipitation was above average statewide.) *A “forecast hit.”*
The predicted (left panel) mean upper-level trough, for the west coast, set up slightly farther to the east (right panel) but still covered most of Oregon. A forecast “hit.”
June 2020
(Forecast Issued May 21, 2020) / (Actual)

Forecast Temperatures  Actual Temperatures

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
June 2020
( Forecast Issued May 21, 2020 )
( Actual )

Forecast Precipitation

Actual Precipitation

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
Analogs indicated that anomalous upper-level troughing over Oregon would cool temperatures back to near average, but wide-ranging solutions lowered forecast confidence. (A significant shift in the upper-level pattern, to weak anomalous troughing over Oregon, resulted in statewide temperatures cooling back to near average.) A “forecast hit.”

Precipitation near or below average. (Precipitation ranged from slightly-below average, in south-central Oregon, to above average across both western and eastern Oregon…overall, there was slightly more rain than predicted.) A “partial forecast hit.”
Positive “warm” anomalies were predicted (left) over Oregon, but the observed anomalies (right) over Oregon were minimal. Negative anomalies extended further into the western U.S. than occurred in the analog years. Forecast “marginal.”
July 2020
(Forecast Issued June 18, 2020) / (Actual)

Forecast Temperatures

Actual Temperatures

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
July 2020
(Forecast Issued June 18, 2020)/(Actual)

Forecast Precipitation

Actual Precipitation

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
Generally above-average temperatures, except for the coast, but prolonged periods of extreme heat unlikely. (The month started out cool and ended warm. Overall, temperatures were modestly-above average, except for along the eastern border, where it was a little cooler than average. There were no significant hot spells, although the final week did bring a couple of fairly-hot days.) A “forecast hit.”

Below-average precipitation, in what is already the driest month of the year. (Precipitation was below average. Some locations, like Salem, did not receive any measurable rain, which is not that uncommon for July.) A “forecast hit.”
Predicted anomaly pattern (left) has a similar appearance to the observed pattern (right), with minimal anomalies over Oregon in both. *Mostly a “forecast hit.”*
May – July 2020
(Forecast Issued April 16, 2020)/ (Actual)

Forecast Temperatures

Actual Temperatures

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
May – July 2020
(Forecast Issued April 16, 2020) / (Actual)

Forecast Precipitation

Actual Precipitation

Data courtesy of the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)
A transition from a relatively-cool and damp May to a modestly-warm and dry July should yield near-average temperatures and precipitation overall. (Conditions ranged from relatively warm and wet in May, to near-average in June, to slightly-warm and very dry in July. Overall, the period was slightly warmer than predicted, mainly west, and slightly wetter than predicted. However, no large departures from average were observed.) A “forecast hit.”
Updated Mid-Month

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