SIGNIFICANT FIRE POTENTIAL

July - October 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- ENSO-neutral, but gradual cooling. La Niña possible in fall/winter.
- Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) surrounding Hawai‘i to remain warmer than normal through October, leading to above normal temperatures.
- Near to below normal precipitation expected through October.
- Increasing drought, mainly lee sides. Above Normal Significant Fire Potential

The eastern tropical Pacific is in the ENSO-neutral category. It is expected to gradually cool (Fig 1 page 2). Current outlooks through the fall/winter give equal chances for the neutral category to continue and a La Niña pattern to develop, with almost no chance of an El Niño pattern. Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) surrounding the Hawai‘ian Islands are close to average near the Big Island and warmer than average elsewhere (Fig 2), and little change is expected through October. Temperatures throughout Hawai‘i were above average in June (Fig 3), and rainfall was well below average in all areas except eastern Maui and NW Hawai‘i (Fig 4). The Drought Monitor shows that around two thirds of the region is now considered Abnormally Dry, with increasing areas of Moderate and Severe Drought (Fig 5). The KBDI (higher numbers indicate drier soils and increasing fire danger) from Honolulu shows below normal values, but increasing more rapidly than the normal curve typically does this time of year (Fig 6). NOAA outlooks call for warmer and drier than average conditions over the next 4 months, especially on lee sides. Trade winds are expected to bring closer to normal rainfall to windward sides. Drought conditions are expected to spread and worsen, mainly on lee sides. Fuel loading among the fine fuel crop is above normal, and considerable curing has taken place. Significant Fire Potential is Above Normal on the lee sides of all islands through October, and Normal elsewhere.
This product made possible by important scientific contributions from personnel from:
NOAA/NWS, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, the University of Hawai'i, the State of Hawai'i, and the United States Army