SIGNIFICANT FIRE POTENTIAL

August - November 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 November, leading to above normal temperatures.
- Near to below normal precipitation expected through November.
- Hurricane Douglas eased drought conditions in some areas.
- Drought continues many lee side areas. Above Normal Significant Fire Potential those areas through October. Normal elsewhere through Oct, and in all areas in Nov.

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 or for a weak La Niña pattern to develop. 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 November. Temperatures throughout Hawai‘i were above average in July (Fig 3). Rainfall was above average in central and western islands, primarily due to Hurricane Douglas passing just to the north of the islands. Rainfall was below normal in the east (Fig 4). Rainfall from Douglas was enough to trim some of the areas of Abnormally Dry and Drought from the Drought Monitor product (Fig 5), but the effects will not last more than a few weeks, and the outlook calls for drier than average weather through the fall. 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). Drought conditions will likely spread and intensify again over the next few months, 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 some lee sides of all islands through October, and Normal elsewhere. Significant Fire Potential returns to near Normal in all areas in November as the rainy season begins.


Contact: redding.fwx@fire.ca.gov
Figure 1: ENSO Plume Chart - July 2020

Figure 2: Sea Surface Temperature (SST) anomaly - July 31, 2020

Figure 3: July Temps (Dept from ave.)

Figure 4: July PCPN (% of ave.)

Figure 5: Drought Monitor July 28, 2020

Figure 6: Honolulu KBDI July 31, 2020

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

Contact: redding.fwx@fire.ca.gov