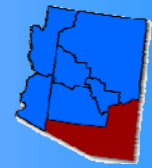




Southeast Arizona Climate Summary

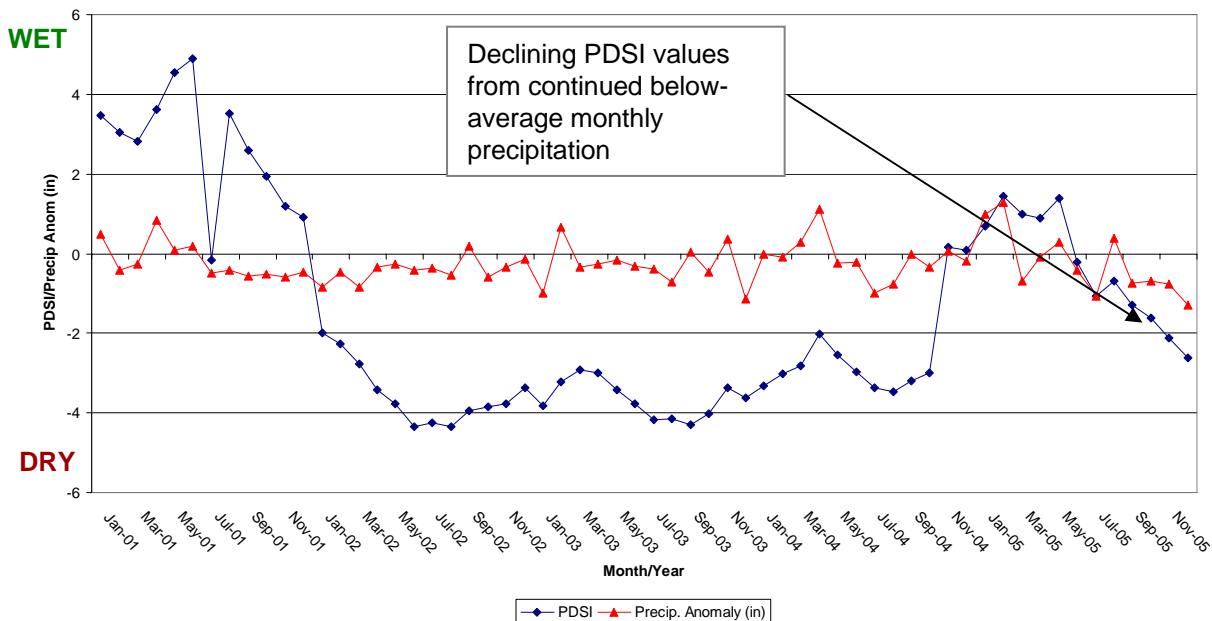
Winter 2006



February 2, 2006 – The early winter period has been exceptionally dry and warm for southeast Arizona. December 2005 was the 7th driest since 1948 with a climate division average of 0.07 inches of precipitation for the southeast corner of the state. Temperatures were also warm with an average monthly temperature several degrees above average at 48.4 °F. December 2005 was the 7th warmest December on record since 1948. Dry and warm conditions have continued through January exacerbating short-term drought conditions. Douglas, Arizona reported a total of 0.10 inches of rainfall which is close to 1 inch below average. The National Weather Service also reports that Tucson received no measurable rainfall in January 2006. This has only happened nine times in the instrumental record and is the first time since 1972. Below average rainfall back through the fall has made this the driest September-January period on record for Tucson.

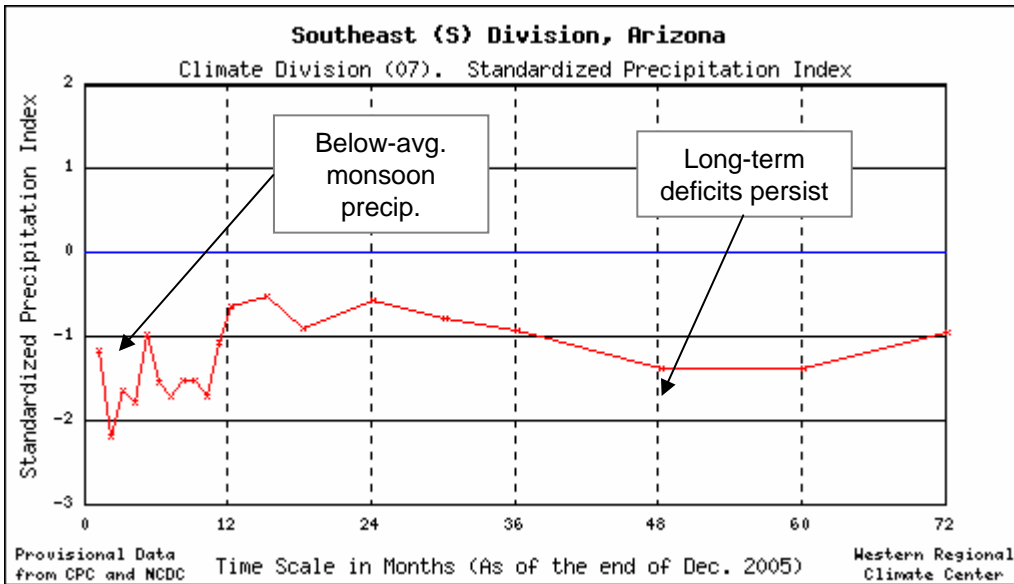
Forecasts for the upcoming early-spring season (March-April-May) from the Climate Prediction Center indicate that the southwest U.S. will see above normal temperatures with an increased chance of below average precipitation. A trend in above normal temperatures is expected to continue leading to the above normal temperature forecast. The precipitation forecast is based on the recent development of La Nina conditions in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Weak La Nina conditions have been in place for several months now and may be in part responsible for the strong and persistent ridge of high pressure that has been in place over the southwest United States. La Nina conditions are expected to continue through the spring, but have their greatest impact on southwest U.S. winter precipitation amounts. The drier-than-average forecast is relying on the strong ridge pattern and weak La Nina conditions to persist, causing late winter/early spring precipitation amounts in March and April to be below-average. (More information at <http://www.noaaneews.noaa.gov/stories2006/s2572.htm/>)

Southeast Arizona Palmer Drought Severity Index and Precip. Anomaly: Jan. 2001 - Dec. 2005



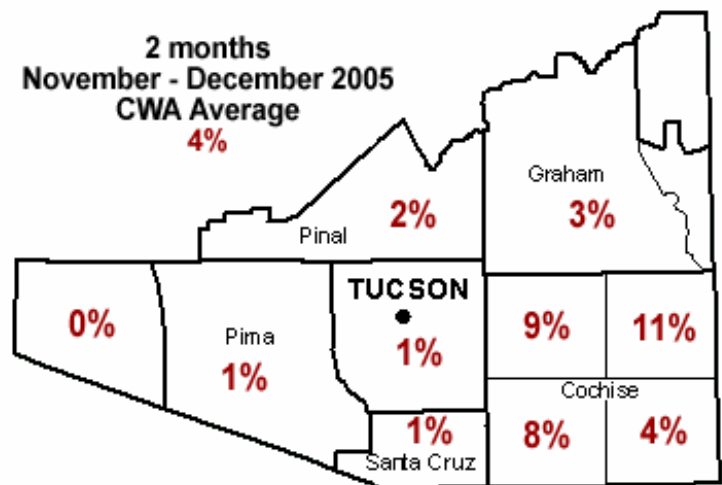
Exceptionally dry conditions over the last four months have caused short-term drought conditions to intensify. The brief return to positive (wet) PDSI values from winter 2005 precipitation has been reversed by recent negative precipitation anomalies. Below-average fall 2005 and early winter 2006 precipitation amounts have brought PDSI values below -2 indicating very dry conditions.

Southeast Arizona Climate Summary – Winter 2006



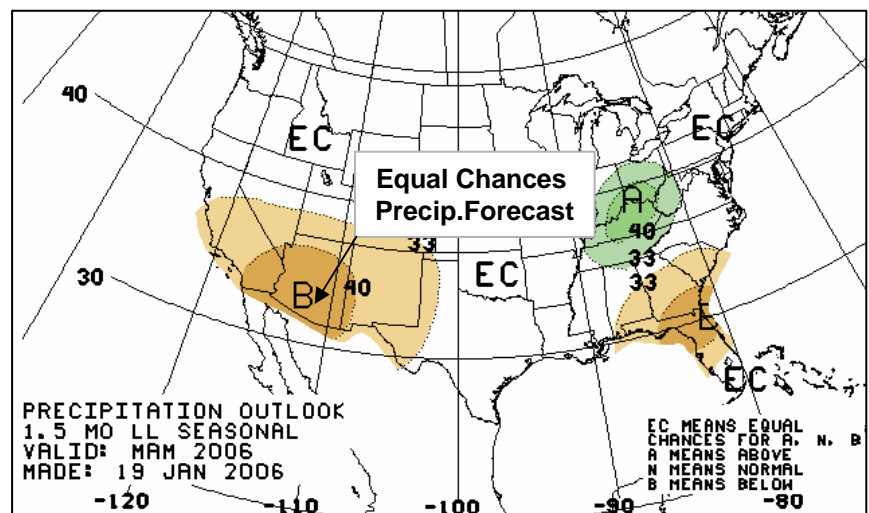
The 2 to 10 month windows show precipitation amounts between 1 and 2 standard deviations below average. These values indicate exceptionally dry conditions since winter 2005 and highlight the impact of both below average summer 2005 and winter 2005/06 precipitation amounts on short-term drought conditions. Long-term drought conditions have also intensified in the 3 to 6 year window (36 to 72 months) with SPI values from -1 to -1.5.

Late fall/early winter precipitation amounts for the November-December period were less than 10% of normal across most counties of southeast Arizona. Pima and Santa Cruz counties received the least amount of precipitation with amounts at 1% of average for the period. Areas of Cochise County received slightly more precipitation, but were still way below average in the 4-11% range (percent of normal precipitation for the Nov-Dec period).



http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/twc/climate/seazDM/cwa_percent.php

The March-April-May seasonal forecast from the Climate Prediction Center depicts a slight increase in chances of below-average precipitation for southeast Arizona. This forecast means that there is a 40% chance of below-average precipitation, a 33% chance of average, and a 26% chance of above-average precipitation for the March-April-May period. The slight shift in probabilities towards below-average precipitation is due to the development of weak La Nina conditions in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.



From: http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/lead02/off02_prpc.gif