



National Weather Service, Boise, Idaho

Sage Winds

December 2010

<http://weather.gov/boise>

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant declared Christmas a National Holiday.

December Snow

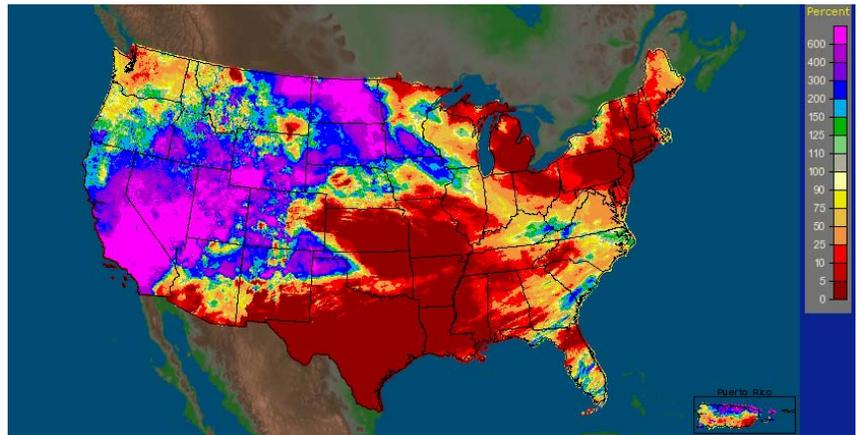
This winter's long term forecast has been turning out pretty good for the Pacific Northwest. Early in the fall the Climate Prediction Center (<http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/>) predicted that precipitation would be above normal over the area. While a few areas of Idaho remain below normal, most of the area is doing quite well. As of December 20, Boise has received 2.19 inches of precipitation, well above the normal of 1.38 inches for the whole month, and there are more storms heading our way. McCall hasn't been doing quite as well but may still end up with above normal precipitation for the month of December.

While our December precipitation is turning out very nice for the area, our precipitation is nothing compared to what California has received in just 2 days.

Mountain areas around Los Angeles and in the Sierra Nevada have picked

up 2 to 15 inches of rain. The snow in the Sierra Nevada has been nothing short of phenomenal with upwards of 10 feet falling in just three days (Dec 18-20). This has been the wettest storm in many years for the Sierra Nevada. The image above is the departure from normal for 7 days worth of precipitation ending Monday Dec 20. The values across California northeast into Utah are astounding. (Data available at

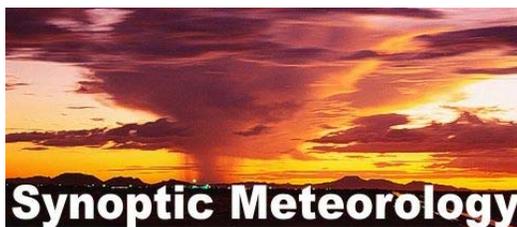
<http://water.weather.gov/precip/>)



SkyWarn Spotter Training

At the moment there are no classes scheduled for the area. Stay tuned as the annual quad county training in the Twin Falls/Gooding/Jerome area is in the early planning stages. And likewise in the Boise area, a spring training session is in the early planning stages. We'd like to get out to other areas so stay tuned to the newsletter and the our web page for training opportunities.

But in the meantime, and for those that are interested, great training on all sorts of weather items is available online at the Jet-Stream—Online School for Weather located at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream/global/global_intro.htm



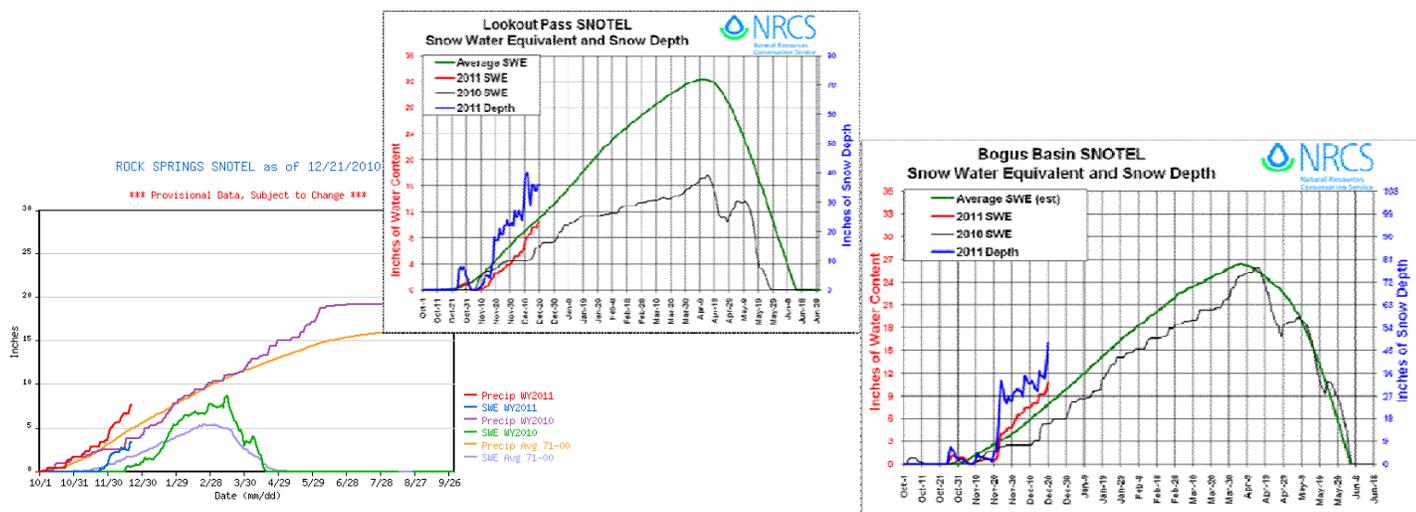
Take a look, there is a lot of information to peruse during those long cold winter nights.



Mountain Snowpack

As mentioned on the front page, our winter is starting out on a fairly wet foot with many valley locations (such as the Treasure Valley around Boise) quite wet. But how about the mountains? The SNOTEL data which the National Resources Conservation Service maintains shows conditions vary from below normal over the panhandle of Idaho to many stations a tad above normal over most of the south. The SNOTEL charts for Idaho are available at

<http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/recreation/depth.html>. Data for Oregon is available at <http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/maps/>. Below are a few recent graphs...



Changes at NWS Boise

This will be my last newsletter. After 31 years and 4 days working for the NWS, I will retire at the end of December. 31 years ago I started my career with the National Weather Service in Fairbanks, Alaska as a Meteorologist Intern. After working in Fairbanks for 8 years I transferred to Portland, Oregon where I worked 6 more years. In the mid 90s I kept my southern track going and worked in Tucson, Arizona for 8 more years. In the fall of 2002 we made our last move, this time back north ending up in Boise, Idaho. In those 31 years I have gone to work with a smile on my face every single day. I have truly been blessed with a job that I thoroughly enjoy.

In my years with the NWS I've worked on assignments that have taken me from Point Barrow, Alaska at the northern tip of North America to the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. I've walked on the Bering Sea placing buoys in mid winter and I've given spotter talks in Burns, Boise, Tucson, Council, and places in between. I've meet people from all across this great country of ours always trying to give the best forecast I can. I've seen technology change from teletypes running at 110 Baud to our latest computers with network speeds of millions of bits per second. When I began work we hand drew all our weather charts, now we have multiple computer screens drawing weather charts.

So I will now become a Skywarn Spotter and receive all the future newsletters just like everyone else. I'll call in my reports or send them via eSpotter to help the NWS staff with ground truth reports. As you know from previous newsletters, I love to garden so now instead of tending my plants briefly in the evening, I can more leisurely watch my garden grow. I also have a woodshop in my garage which will now get much more use. I've been a long time photographer that has not done much in the past 30 years. Time to update my gear and get out again. And I will also have more time to travel to remote spots of this beautiful planet we live on. The photo to the right is a self portrait taken in the mountains above Fernie, British Columbia. Just one tiny spot of great alpine beauty that I hope to catch more of in the years to come.



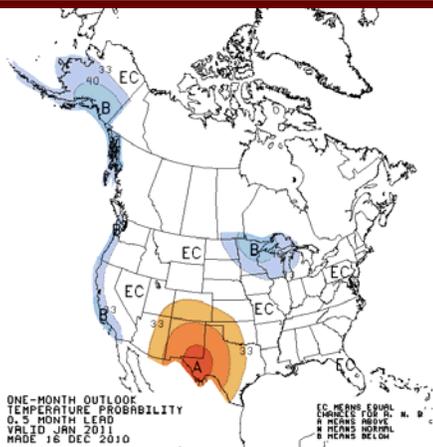
So with this newsletter done, Megan will pick up where I leave off and continue to keep us all informed about happenings at the Boise NWS office. So long:)

Paul

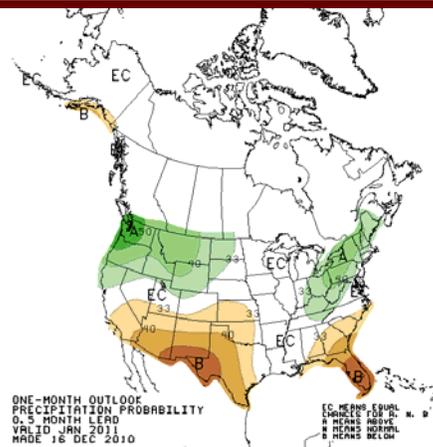
January Outlook

<<<—Temperature Outlook

Precipitation Outlook—>>>



<http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/>



Weather Humor



That's one way to
get to work.

Bldg 3807
Boise, Idaho, 83705

<http://tinyurl.com/26hvzbz>

National Weather Service
3833 S. Development Ave

Email: boi.spotter@noaa.gov
Admin Phone: (208) 334-9860

Weather in the News

2010 Hurricane Season in Review—

http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2010/20101129_hurricanesseason.html

Buffalo, NY, They love their snow—http://www.noaa.gov/features/02_monitoring/lakesnow.html

When Travel gets difficult—<http://tinyurl.com/26hvzbz>

European Winter—<http://tinyurl.com/2aejor7>

Removing ice from the gutters—http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5lcX_M9Aml

Payette Avalanche Center—<http://www.payetteavalanche.org/>

Zion National Park Flooding—<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40770785/ns/weather/>

Colorado Snow—<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40757238/ns/weather/>

California Water—<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40762935/ns/weather/>

Remember, keep sending in those snow reports. Your report helps make the next winter storm forecast that much more accurate.