



NATIONAL WEATHER  
SERVICE -  
SEATTLE/TACOMA

# SKYWARN® Spotter News

www.weather.gov/seattle

WINTER 2011

## La Nina 2 - The Sequel

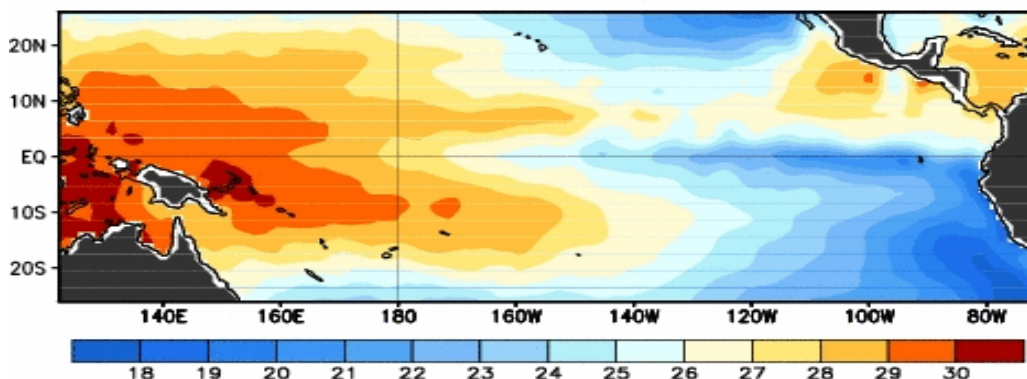
Colder than normal eastern and central Pacific Ocean equatorial waters are back in place again for this winter season and return to La Nina. Cooler than normal sea-surface temperatures in these equatorial waters are expected to continue through the winter.

La Nina's on average tend to bring our area below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation over a winter season. The seasonal outlook for this winter is quite close, with good odds for a wetter than normal and temperatures below normal for this winter. This phenomenon also tends to produce a good mountain snowpack. [cont page 4...](#)

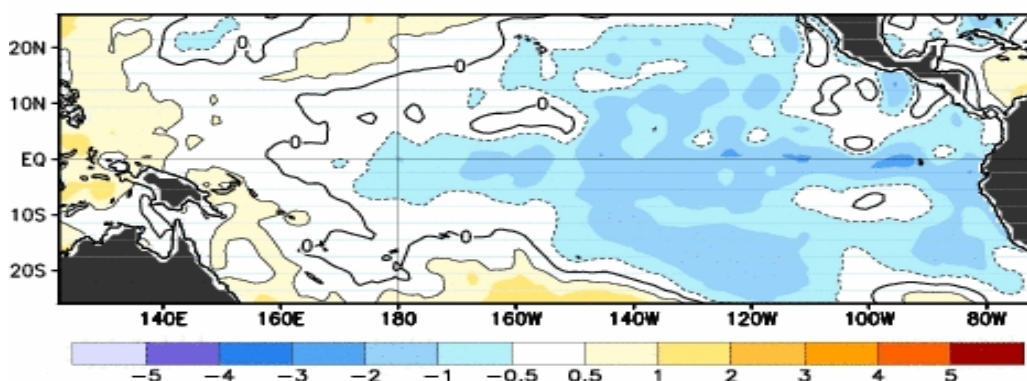
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Observed Sea Surface Temperature (°C)



Observed Sea Surface Temperature Anomalies (°C)



7-day Average Centered on 30 November 2011

Source: NOAA Climate Prediction Center



## Spotter Training Update

Skywarn Weather Spotter Training this fall has been held in Mason, Island, Kitsap and Snohomish counties as well as the cities of Kent and Federal Way. Over 150 people attended these sessions. For new spotters, welcome aboard the Skywarn Weather Spotter team! We have been offering new snow boards and snow measuring sticks as well. We look forward to more snow reports with these new tools this winter and beyond.

More spotter training is planned for 2012. So look for spotter training announcements either in your mailbox or via our web site at [www.weather.gov/seattle](http://www.weather.gov/seattle) under the "Add'l Observations" then "Weather Spotters" link or the home page headline.

## 2012 NWS Golf Association Tourney Set

The 2012 National Weather Service Golf Association outing has been set for Jun 18-22 in Des Moines, IA. The planned courses are at A.H. Blank and Waveland Golf Course with hotel accommodations at the Hampton Inn near the Des Moines Airport.

Plan now to be a part of this fun week, see old friends and meet new ones! As always, spouses, family members, retirees and guests are welcome to participate or just join for socializing during the week. Play golf on any number of days during the week. You don't have to attend the entire week but it is great fun if you do.

More event information can be found at [www.users.hoosierlink.net/slashley/nwsgolf/nwsga12/2012.html](http://www.users.hoosierlink.net/slashley/nwsgolf/nwsga12/2012.html). This page will be updated in February or early March with final plans, times, costs and an online registration form.



## How to Measure Snow

Want a refresher on how to measure snow? You can review this process via the training link at [www.cocorahs.org](http://www.cocorahs.org). Yet, we can summarize to some degree here.

First, use two pieces (roughly 2' x 2') of plywood or the like, to use as snow boards, or use the boards we have provided at spotter training recently. One piece can be used to measure total snow and the other for 'new' snow since the last measurement. Paint them both white in color so they will not absorb the sun's heat energy.

Place the two snow boards in an open area away from tall obstructions, likely close to your rain gauge. Be sure to 'flag' both boards so you can find them once they are snow-covered, and have a ruler, yardstick, or the snow stake provided at spotter training handy.

Snow boards provide much more accurate snow measuring platforms than using your deck, lawn or driveway. You're welcome to measure snowfall as often as you wish. It should be measured at least once or twice a day, such as first thing in the morning and then the evening, and shortly after a period of snowfall has ended to determine new snow totals. Contact us when you get one inch or more per hour, or 4" in 12 hours per our spotter criteria. Now, let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

## Winter Weather Emergency Car Kit

Does your vehicle have a winter weather emergency kit? Here are some items to include in your kit:

Jumper cables	Cat litter or sand (snow/ice tire traction)	Shovel
Ice scraper	Blankets	First Aid Kit
Flashlights & batteries	Food & Water	Chains or cable chains
Weather/AM/FM radio	Warm Clothing	

Also, how about these?

Cell phone with emergency numbers	Diapers and formula for small children
Filled Tank of gas	

If you find yourself stranded or stuck, move off the roadway as much as possible so road crews and emergency vehicles can pass, stay with your vehicle, use your emergency flashers, call for help and wait until it arrives. And ensure your tires have plenty of tread throughout the season.

Visit [www.takewinterbystorm.org](http://www.takewinterbystorm.org) for more car and home winter preparedness checklists and tips!

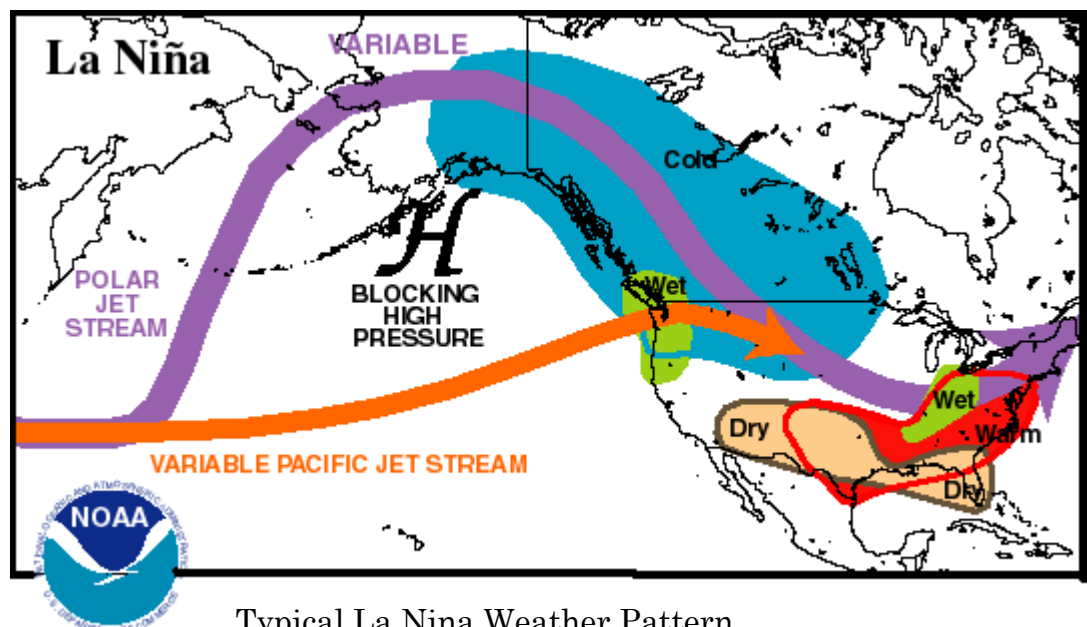
## La Nina cont...

**La Nina conditions are forecast this winter. Are you ready for La Nina?**

cont from page 1... La Nina's also tend to bring our area increased odds on wind storms and lowland snow events, as well as flooding events. So far this fall, we've already had a few wind events mainly along the coast and north interior as well as some flooding during mid November. Will lowland snow events, and more flooding or wind events be ahead? Well, the answer to that question remains into early 2012. Stay on top of expected weather by visiting our web site at [www.weather.gov/seattle](http://www.weather.gov/seattle).

Spotter reports are important during any hazardous weather events. Reports on strong winds, snow, heavy rainfall, flooding and landslides have already been received. Keep those reports coming!

Spotter reports help reinforce the warning message through media and web site outlets. So, have your spotter criteria sheet handy and give us a call when significant weather occurs again in your area. Thanks!



# Spotter Trivia

Our area's weather is terrain driven and snowfall clearly follows that trend throughout western Washington. Can you correctly match these communities with their average annual snowfall?

The answers can be found elsewhere in Skywarn Spotter News.

Elma	699"
Paradise	13"
Forks	11"
Arlington	7"
Sequim	444"
Snoqualmie	6'
Stampede Pass	5"



NOAA Sandpoint campus  
in North Seattle

## SKYWARN Recognition Day

The 2011 Skywarn Recognition Day event was held on Dec 2 and 3. This event began in the central U.S. in 1999 and has become a nationwide event, celebrating the contributions volunteer Skywarn radio operators make to the National Weather Service. This year, over 100 NWS offices again participated in the event.

We had four radio operators work our NWS Seattle amateur radio workstation, operating on VHF, UHF, HF and Echolink. With permission, we used the K7MMI repeater system that reaches much of western Washington. We had a total of 85 contacts during the event. We shared current weather conditions and discussed the latest forecasts and other topics.

Thanks go to Bob Larkin (KC8TYE), Dennis D'Amico, Jeff Michalski and Ted Buehner who worked the NWS Seattle radio workstation (WX7SEA).



# Citizen Weather Observing Program (CWOP)

CWOP is a system that permits those with automated weather stations to report their data on-line to a suite of weather observation web sites. A growing number of Skywarn weather spotters are taking advantage of this opportunity. If you have an automated weather station linked to your personal computer combined with broadband or DSL communications, or you get such a system as a holiday gift, please visit [www.wxqa.com](http://www.wxqa.com) for more information if you are interested. Join the CWOP team!

In addition, you can view CWOP and all other on-line weather stations on our web site by visiting our web site at [www.weather.gov/seattle](http://www.weather.gov/seattle) and click on the "Observations" link.

## CoCoRaHS Update

Thanks again to all the CoCoRaHS spotters across the region. We now have over 875 registered "CoCoRaisins" across WA. Way to go! Our goal is 5000 observers across the state.

Our wet season is here and we need more rainfall reporters across the region. Your data is valuable to us here at NWS along with the TV weather anchors and many others. We use CoCoRaHS reports to study precipitation variability across our geographically diverse area. Your lowland snowfall reports are crucial during winter storms. Your reports also help verify the radar algorithms and precipitation estimates, including the new coastal radar. With all the Doppler radars in the state equipped with dual-polarization technology, more rainfall reporters are needed to provide 'ground truth' to this new technology.

If you haven't done so already, please check out [www.cocorahs.org](http://www.cocorahs.org) for more information about the CoCoRaHS program. There's no limit to the number of observers...so join today! We look forward to meeting new volunteers in the months to come!



# National Weather Service Seattle

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## Climate Newsletter

The Office of the Washington State Climatologist produces a monthly weather summary that is available online or by email. To view OWSC's latest newsletter please visit:

[www.climate.washington.edu/newsletter](http://www.climate.washington.edu/newsletter)

## Feedback!

Your feedback is wanted! Please let us know ...

What would you like to see in future Skywarn newsletters?

Additional spotter training?

CoCoRaHS training?

Comments or questions?

Contact [jeff.michalski@noaa.gov](mailto:jeff.michalski@noaa.gov)

## Trivia Question Answers

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Forks	13"
Snoqualmie	11"
Arlington	7"
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