

# Top 10 Weather Events in 2020

1. Heavy Low Elevation Snow - January 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>
2. Record Dry February
3. Wet End to May – Heavy rain on May 30<sup>th</sup>
4. August 15<sup>th</sup> Record High Temperatures
5. August 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Dry Lightning
6. September 5<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> Inland Record High Temperatures
7. Extreme Fire Weather Conditions September 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>
8. Coastal Record High Temperatures - September 28<sup>th</sup>
9. November 9<sup>th</sup> Cold Snap
10. December 25<sup>th</sup> Strong Winds

Notable Mention: One inch hail was reported on July 22<sup>nd</sup> in Trinity County and Ukiah saw 113 days with temperatures above 90 degrees breaking the old record of 103 set in 1924.



# January 16<sup>th</sup> Heavy Snow



Location	Snow Depth	Time Observed	Site Elevation
8 WSW Hoopa*	36 Inches	10:00 AM	3,400 Feet
5 WSW Willow Creek	12 Inches	12:49 PM	3,000 Feet
1 NNW Zenia	8 Inches	12:58 PM	3,000 Feet
2.5 W Weaverville	8 Inches	12:00 PM	2,736 Feet
5 E Bridgeville	6.9 Inches	08:00 AM	2,675 Feet
Gasquet	4.5 Inches	09:40 AM	400 Feet
10 N Laytonville	3.7 Inches	08:00 AM	2,078 Feet
8 ENE Blue Lake	4 Inches	08:30 AM	1,400 Feet
1 NW Redway	2 Inches	07:00 AM	500 Feet

1 NW = One mile Northwest of site

\*Pictured here courtesy of Jerry and Kristi Peck

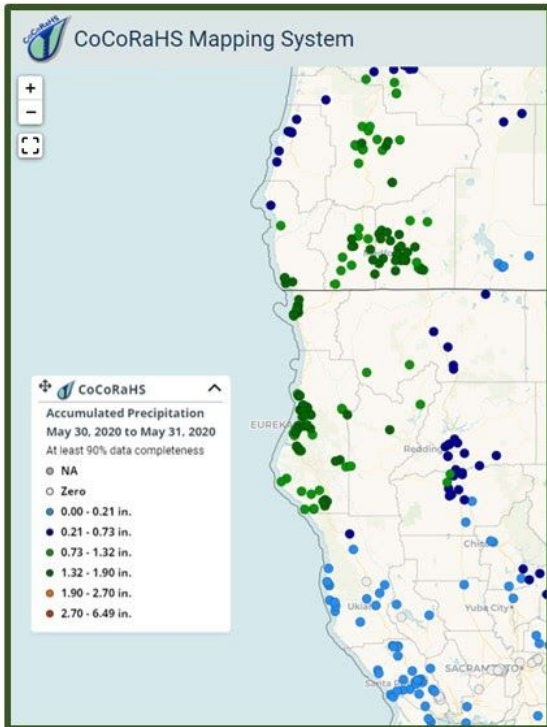
Heavy Low Elevation Snow - Late on January 15<sup>th</sup> and early on January 16<sup>th</sup> heavy widespread rain and snow fell across the area. Snow levels dropped through the event and significant snow fell at elevations below 500 feet. This caused numerous travel impacts and power outages. At the peak of the power outages early in the morning over 60,000 people were out of power in Humboldt county due to a transmission impacted by the winter weather. Most areas had power restored late in the morning, but in some of the rural areas it took four days or more for power to be restored.

Dry February - All long term climate sites in Northwest California had one of their top three driest months.



# Wet End to May

## May 30th Rainfall totals



### May 30th Rainfall

**Eureka: 1.38 Inches**

7<sup>th</sup> wettest day ever recorded in  
May in Eureka

Wettest calendar day in 2020

**Crescent City: 1.30 Inches**

Wettest day since January 25<sup>th</sup>

Sixth wettest day in 2020

Wet End to May - An unseasonably strong storm brought heavy rain, numerous thunderstorms, and hail up to one half inch in Humboldt and Del Norte counties on May 30th. Eureka recorded it's 7<sup>th</sup> wettest day ever recorded in May. For more details see the article in the summer issue of the North Coast Observer: <https://www.weather.gov/eka/NewsletterArchive>

August Record High Temperatures - High pressure building over the area and light easterly winds at the coast brought record high temperatures to much of Northwest California on August 15th. This offshore flow helped to keep the marine air off the coast and allow temperatures even at the immediate coast warm to near 80 degrees. For more details see the article in the Fall issue of the North Coast Observer:  
<https://www.weather.gov/eka/NewsletterArchive>



# Dry Lightning Event



## August 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> 2020

- Numerous lightning strikes
- Very dry vegetation (see previous heat event)
- Little to no rain with the lightning strikes

### The Result:

Hundreds of wild fires some of which grew into the record setting **August Complex**.

August Dry Lightning - Numerous thunderstorms occurred across northern California on August 16th and 17th. The combination of very little rain falling with this lightning and the record setting heat the previous days created a dangerous situation. An upper-level low developed off the coast of southern California on August 15th. Early in the morning of the 16th, a shortwave trough moved around the low and produced numerous thunderstorms across the San Francisco Bay area. These storms moved north through the day. Another shortwave brought additional thunderstorms on the 17th starting numerous wildfires including the August Complex which went on to become the largest wildfire in California history at just over one million acres. For more details see the article in the Fall issue of the North Coast Observer:

<https://www.weather.gov/eka/NewsletterArchive>

September Inland Record High Temperatures - High pressure brought hot temperatures to the inland areas which tied or broke the high temperature records in Ukiah and Potter Valley on September 5th, 6th, and 7th. Ukiah reached 113 degrees and Potter Valley reached 110 degrees, both of which were only 2 degrees off their all-time records in over 80 years of records. In Ukiah this was the hottest since 1981 and in Potter Valley the hottest since 2005. Both were only 2 degrees off their all-time records. Graphic with records.



# Extreme Fire and Smoke Conditions



September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Smoky skies at Noon in Eureka - Photo Credit: Karen Kidwell



Weather Conditions at 7am September 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2020			
Station Name	Location	Peak Wind	Relative Humidity
Ship Mountain Raws	Del Norte county	23 MPH	7 Percent
Schoolhouse Raws	N. Humboldt County	33 MPH	10 Percent
Keeland Raws	C. Humboldt County	11 MPH	6 Percent
Mendocino Pass Raws	NE Mendocino County	17 MPH	10 Percent
Knoxville Creek Raws	S. Lake County	29 MPH	9 Percent

Extreme Fire Weather Conditions - A dry cold front brought strong winds to the area on September 8th. This led to rapid fire growth of ongoing fires and helped to spread several new fires including the Slater Fire. All this fire growth led to extensive smoke across much of the state (including the coast) and numerous evacuations. The Slater fire started on the 8th near Happy Camp and rapidly spread into Del Norte and Josephine counties burning numerous structures and closing Hwy 199. Southern Humboldt saw numerous evacuations as well. All this fire growth led to extremely thick smoke across much of the state. This included the North Coast when skies remained exceptionally dark and orange through much of the day. For more details see the article in the Fall issue of the North Coast Observer: <https://www.weather.gov/eka/NewsletterArchive>





# Coastal Heat Wave



Location	High temperature	Old Record	All-time Record
Crescent City Arpt.	95	89 in 1921	97 in 1939
Mckinleyville Arpt.	91	N/A	N/A
Eureka – Woodley Island	87	87 in 2017	87 in 2017 87 in 1993
Scotia	77	86 in 1979	104 in 2017
Fort Bragg	83	85 in 1958	91 in 1987

September Coastal Record High Temperatures - High pressure and weak easterly winds on September 28th produced temperatures in the upper 80s to low 90s in the coastal areas. Eureka reached 87 degrees which tied the all-time high temperature ever recorded in 133 years of records. In Eureka there was smoke aloft which may have prevented the temperatures from getting even warmer. These factors make the records at Crescent City and Eureka even more impressive.

November Cold Snap - On the morning of November 9th temperatures dropped into the teens and 20s and across much of the area. Four of the 6 sites in our area that have long term records set a daily record. For some locations these were the coldest temperatures since the winter of 2017. This was the result of a cold and very dry airmass moving over the region. For more details see the article in the Fall issue of the North Coast Observer:  
<https://www.weather.gov/eka/NewsletterArchive>

Christmas Day Wind Event - Early in the morning on December 25th a strong area of low pressure moved by the area well off the coast. This low pressure and associated frontal boundaries brought a peak wind of 82 mph on Cooskie Mountain in the King Range four miles south of Petrolia.