January got the new year of 2018 off to a comparatively slow start. The average mean temperature for El Paso was 46.6°F with only .1 of an inch of rain which compares to the normal values of 45.1°F and .4 of an inch. This was courtesy of a large persistent upper level ridge of high pressure over and along the west coast of the United States (La Nina) which deflected the Pacific storm systems far to the north of southern New Mexico. The resultant dry northwest flow aloft was instrumental in returning drought conditions to the area with most of southern New Mexico now in Moderate Drought (D1) and Far West Texas in abnormally dry conditions (D0).

As the Pacific storm systems traversed up and over the west Coast ridge and moved into the Great Plains of the United States, polar air in its wake would push westward into New Mexico and give the Borderland a seesaw effect to the max temperatures about six times during the month with the most pronounced on January 16 when the max temperature in El Paso did not get out of the 30s, plunging some 30 degrees from the day before. Precipitation for just about all areas remained below normal courtesy again to the Negative Enso pattern (La Nina). Precipitation most areas was running about 25% of normal and this is taking its effect on the Southern Rockies snowpack which is only about 36% of normal.
About the only storm of interest was a strong Pacific storm on January 10 which produced around 5 to 7 inches of snow in the Cloudcroft area and 68-74 mph winds along the east facing slopes of the San Andres and Franklin Mountains.

La Nina conditions are expected to continue through spring, then transition back to neutral conditions for the summer. The longer outlook is for possible El Nino conditions for this next fall and winter. NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center continues to forecast below normal chances for precipitation until mid summer with the arrival of the North American Monsoon.
Contrail El Paso area
Jan 3

Desert Mirages near Santa Teresa Jan 23

Desert Sunset Jan 3
Blood Moon west of Santa Teresa Jan 22
Chilly Across the U.S.

Cold Front plunges south and spreads cold arctic air across much of the U.S.

Air Temperature (°F)
7:00 AM January 16, 2018 CST

Data provided by NOAA's National Weather Service. Created 7:30:32 AM January 16, 2018 CST. © Copyright 2018
How is the upper Rio Grande Basin snow pack doing? Not good. These charts show snow pack is 50% or less than normal.
How is the upper Rio Grande Basin snow pack doing? Not good. These charts show snow pack is 50% or less than normal.

Normal snow pack as of Dec 31

Normal snow pack as of Jan 31
Upper Rio Grande Basin Time Series Snowpack Summary

Based on Provisional SNOTEL data as of Jan 31, 2018

Current as Pct of Normal: 36%
Current as Pct of Avg: 36%
Current as Pct of Last Year: 24%
Current as Pct of Peak: 23%
Normal as Pct of Peak: 64%
Pct of Normal Needed to Reach Peak: 216%
Normal Peak Date: Apr 10
NORTHERN NEW MEXICO AND SOUTHERN COLORADO SNOW PACK

Compared to 1981-2010 Median:

- Rio Grande:
  - 2017: 162%
  - 2018: 36%
- San Juans:
  - 2017: 170%
  - 2018: 37%

Average
La Niña Advisory in Effect

ENSO Alert System

- El Niño or La Niña Watch: Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of El Niño or La Niña conditions in the next six months.

- El Niño or La Niña Advisory: Issued when El Niño or La Niña conditions are observed and expected to continue.
ENSO IS IN LA NIÑA PHASE. IT IS LIKELY TO LAST INTO EARLY SPRING; THEN LIKELY BACK TO NEUTRAL BY LATE SPRING.
Current drought conditions for New Mexico and 3 month change

- Abnormally Dry – D0
- Moderate Drought – D1
- Severe Drought – D2
- Extreme Drought – D3
- Exceptional – D4

January 23, 2018

October 31, 2017
Current drought conditions for Texas as of January 31, 2017

Intensity:

- D0 - Abnormally Dry
- D1 - Moderate Drought
- D2 - Severe Drought
- D3 - Extreme Drought
- D4 - Exceptional Drought

Build your own custom slider maps here at:
http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Maps/ComparisonSlider.aspx
Temperature and precipitation data for January 2018 in El Paso
2018 year-to-date temperature and precipitation data El Paso
Temperature and precipitation outlook
For February-April 2018

Temperature

Precipitation
Temperature Outlook Through April 2019

Feb 2018
Feb-Mar-Apr 2018
Mar-Apr-May 2018
Apr-May-Jun 2018
May-Jun-Jul 2018

Jun-Jul-Aug 2018
Jul-Aug-Sep 2018
Aug-Sep-Oct 2018
Sep-Oct-Nov 2018
Oct-Nov-Dec 2018

Nov-Dec-Jan 2018/19
Dec-Jan-Feb 2018/19
Jan-Feb-Mar 2019
Feb-Mar-Apr 2019
Precipitation Outlook Through April 2019
January 2018 radar rainfall estimate with surface rainfall reports
Total Precipitation: 01 December 2017 - 31 December 2017
Period ending 7 AM EST 31 Dec 2017
(Map created 01 Jan 2018)
Month: JANUARY
Calm: 13.27%
Variable: 1.45%

Wind Rose - KELP - EL PASO INTL
% Frequency of Wind Speed from a Direction
POR: 19730101-20140602

- 1 – 5 mph
- 6 – 10 mph
- 11– 16 mph
- 17 – 22 mph
- 23 – 28 mph
- 29 – 33 mph
- 34 – 39 mph
- 40 – 45 mph
- 46 – 51 mph
- 52 – 56 mph
- 57 mph or more

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/epz/?n=elpwindrosedata
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Location (County)</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 130 PM</td>
<td>SAN AUGUSTIN PASS-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 74 MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 900 PM</td>
<td>EL PASO 9 NEW-EL PASO</td>
<td>PK WIND 68 MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 651 PM</td>
<td>EL PASO AIRPORT-EL PASO</td>
<td>PK WIND 61 MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 840 PM</td>
<td>WSMR MAIN POST 1 SE-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 61 MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 500 PM</td>
<td>LAS CRUCES 6SW-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 55 MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 700 PM</td>
<td>CHAPARRAL 2 E-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 54 MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 11 1258 PM</td>
<td>SIERRA BLANCA 1 SE-HUDSPETH</td>
<td>PK WIND 50 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 11 1101 AM</td>
<td>HIGH ROLLS-OTERO</td>
<td>PK WIND 49 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 11 600 PM</td>
<td>CLOUDCROFT 1SE-OTERO</td>
<td>HEAVY SNOW 5.7 IN</td>
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<td>JAN 16 1224 AM</td>
<td>EL PASO 6 NW-EL PASO</td>
<td>PK WIND 57 MPH</td>
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<td>JAN 16 1226 AM</td>
<td>DRIPPING SPRINGS-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 49 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 16 1240 AM</td>
<td>ROAD FORKS 6NE-HIDALGO</td>
<td>PK WIND 45 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 16 1205 AM</td>
<td>SANTA TERESA 5 SW-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 41 MPH</td>
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<td>SAN AUGUSTIN PASS-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 69 MPH</td>
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<td>JAN 21 800 AM</td>
<td>EL PASO 10 NE-EL PASO</td>
<td>PK WIND 56 MPH</td>
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<td>JAN 21 755 AM</td>
<td>WSMR MAIN POST-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 51 MPH</td>
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<td>SUNSPOT 1S-OTERO</td>
<td>PK WIND 51 MPH</td>
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<td>JAN 21 1252 AM</td>
<td>DELL CITY 1N-HUDSPETH</td>
<td>PK WIND 49 MPH</td>
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<td>JAN 21 1135 AM</td>
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<td>EL PASO AIRPORT-EL PASO</td>
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<td>PK WIND 45 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 21 701 AM</td>
<td>MAYHILL 1NE-OTERO</td>
<td>PK WIND 45 MPH</td>
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<td>JAN 21 957 AM</td>
<td>HIGH ROLLS 1SW-OTERO</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 21 310 PM</td>
<td>TULAROSA 19NW-OTERO</td>
<td>PK WIND 45 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 21 1000 AM</td>
<td>CHAPARRAL 2E-OTERO</td>
<td>PK WIND 44 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 21 136 AM</td>
<td>FAYWOOD-GRANT</td>
<td>PK WIND 43 MPH</td>
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<td>RADIUM SPRINGS-DONA ANA</td>
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<td>DEMING AIRPORT-DONA ANA</td>
<td>PK WIND 42 MPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAN 21 1200 PM</td>
<td>OROGRANDE 4NW-OTERO</td>
<td>PK WIND 42 MPH</td>
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Don't Forget-Current and past issues of our Weather Digest are available on our website at http://www.weather.gov/epz/

Just click on “Local Programs>Weather Digest”, then choose which month’s Digest to view. Also, though discontinued, don’t forget to check out our back issues of Southwest Weather Bulletin.