



MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 18, 2022

2021-2022 Wet Season Rainfall Summary for Hawai'i

Summary of October 2021 through April 2022 wet season

- Started the wet season with severe or extreme drought in all of the counties in the state.
- La Niña returned in fall 2021 after a brief return to ENSO-neutral.
- Wet season forecast called for above average rainfall, especially along the east-facing slopes of the state. There was the potential for lower than average rainfall in the leeward areas of Maui and the Big Island, which was consistent with tendencies expected in a moderate to strong La Niña.
- Wet season produced near to below average rainfall at most locations.
 - Significant monthly extremes.
 - October and November: Dry overall, except for wet windward Big Island in October.
 - December: Very wet over most areas of the state.
 - January through March: Dry overall.
 - April: Wet along windward areas.
- December rainfall eliminated all drought in the state.
- By end of April, severe to extreme drought conditions were back in the leeward areas of O'ahu, Maui County, and the Big Island.

Wet season statistics

- Overall: 12th driest in the last 30 years (average rankings from 8 sites)
- Kaua'i
 - Most rain totals 40 to 80% of average.
 - Mount Wai'ale'ale: 16th highest wet season total in 30 years (206.30 inches, 91% of average).
 - Līhu'e Airport: 22.19 inches, 16th wettest Oct – Apr in the last 30 years.
- O'ahu
 - Most O'ahu totals 70 to 100% of average.
 - Honolulu Airport: 17.98 inches (140% of average), ranked 6th wettest.
 - Just 8 days account for 90% of the wet season total.
- Maui County
 - Maui County totals mostly 40 to 80% of average.
 - Kahului Airport: 8.64 inches, 10th driest wet season.
- Big Island
 - Most Big Island totals 40 to 80% of average.
 - Hilo Airport: 68.16 inches, 10th driest wet season.



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Dry season (May through September 2022) outlook

- Probabilities favor La Niña persisting through the rest of the year.
 - Slightly lower chance of return back to ENSO-neutral briefly in the summer before returning to La Niña in the fall.
 - Would be only the 3rd time in 50 years to have La Niña 3 years in a row.
- NOAA Climate Prediction Center's forecast probabilities and climate model consensus favor below normal precipitation through the dry season and possibly into the early part of the next wet season.
- Existing areas of extreme drought (D3 category) and exceptional drought (D4) in Maui County and the Big Island expected to expand.
- Severe drought (D2 category) in the leeward areas of O'ahu expected to expand and possibly worsen to extreme drought, mainly for the agriculture sector.
- Leeward areas of Kaua'i County expected to develop severe drought during the summer, mainly for agriculture issues.
- Below average windward rainfall statewide could produce pockets of moderate to severe drought (D1 to D2 category) in those areas.
 - For windward areas, summer drought often involves a normal number of days with rainfall, but a lower than normal amount of rain per day.
 - Supply systems dependent on surface water and rain catchment will be most vulnerable.
- Significant wildfire risk expected to develop much earlier than the normal late-July to early-August time frame. Leeward areas will have the highest risk.

On the Web:

Wet Season Maps

Kaua'i: https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/kauai_2122_hooilo.gif

O'ahu: https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/oahu_2122_hooilo.gif

Moloka'i/Lāna'i: https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/molan_2122_hooilo.gif

Maui: https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/maui_2122_hooilo.gif

Big Island: https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/bigis_2122_hooilo.gif

State percent of average:

<https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosum/Hooilo22HIPctAvg.jpg>

NOAA National Weather Service Honolulu HI: <https://www.weather.gov/hfo/>

NOAA Climate Prediction Center: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>

U.S. Drought Monitor: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>