



MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 18, 2023

Wet Season Rainfall Outlook for the State of Hawai'i

Summary of the dry season (May through September 2023)

- Statewide: Most locations had near to below average rainfall.
 - The 2023 dry season started a bit late, but drought developed in June, then spread and intensified through the rest of the dry season. Severe drought (D2 category, U.S. Drought Monitor map) seen in all four counties by the end of the dry season.
 - Drought became extreme (D3 category) in leeward Maui and localized areas on the Big Island at the end of the dry season.
 - Worst impacts were on Maui and the Big Island, with large brush fires on both islands, especially on August 8, and poor pasture conditions.
- 8th driest dry season in the last 30 years (based on rankings from 8 key sites).
 - 2015 dry season was the wettest in the last 30 years.
 - 2010 dry season was the driest in the last 30 years.

Outlook for the wet season (October 2023 through April 2024)

- NOAA's Climate Prediction Center (CPC): El Niño developed in the spring and intensified during the summer. The current El Niño is likely to peak as a strong event and continue into spring 2024 with a 3 in 10 chance of a "historically strong" event (e.g. 1997-98, 2015-16).
- Climate model consensus favors large scale below average rainfall through the entire wet season.
- Widespread moderate drought (D1 category) with embedded areas of severe drought (D2 category) to exceptional drought (D4 category)
 - Potential for more than 40 percent of the state to be in severe to exceptional drought (D2 to D4) by the end of February.
 - Drought expected to continue into the 2024 dry season.
- Sectors sensitive to short term rainfall deficits likely to have the most severe impacts.
 - Agriculture: Non-irrigated crops and pastures.
 - Water supply: Systems utilizing surface water inputs, and residents on rainfall catchment systems.
 - Brush fires: "Out of season" fires due to continued presence of dry fuels. Red Flag days possible late in the wet season as the potential for stronger winds increases.
- Other impacts
 - Higher likelihood of large north shore surf events, especially in January and February.



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Wet Season Rainfall Outlook for the State of Hawai'i - cont'd

Wet season preparedness reminders

- Much fewer heavy rain events expected in the 2023 - 2024 wet season, but we should still be prepared if an isolated heavy rain event occurs. A flash flood can still happen within overall drought conditions.
- Do not drive on roads with fast-flowing water.
 - Just 1 to 2 feet of fast-flowing water can sweep most vehicles off a road.
 - Roads may also be severely undercut.
- Do not walk across flooded streams.
 - If you're hiking and get stranded, wait for the water to recede.
 - Streams in Hawai'i generally recede quickly.
- If you travel through a flood-prone area, identify alternate routes ahead of time.
- If you live in a flood-prone area, have an evacuation plan in case flood waters quickly threaten your home.
- Stay informed of conditions that could change rapidly
 - Avoid dry weather complacency.
 - Rainfall with thunder and lightning may hit hard but be very brief.
 - Move indoors during a thunderstorm.
 - Check out the latest forecasts, watches, warnings, and advisories via the media, NOAA Weather Radio, the Internet, or one of several weather mobile phone apps.
 - Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) on mobile phones notify you that you're in a significant, life-threatening flash flood warning area.

On the Web:

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

NOAA Weather Ready Nation: <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/>

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

FEMA Flood Preparedness Information: <https://www.ready.gov/floods>

Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency: <http://dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/>

State of Hawai'i-DLNR National Flood Insurance Page: <https://dlnreng.hawaii.gov/nfip/>

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

Maps:

Dry season totals: <https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosun/KauRain2023.jpg>

Dry season % of average: <https://www.weather.gov/images/hfo/hydrosun/KauPctAvg2023.jpg>