



Drought Status Report

March 2012

The very dry La Niña circulation pattern continued through February and March with few precipitation events in Arizona.

Slight rain and snowfall occurred in northwestern and southern Arizona, and the winter storm on March 18 and 19 brought some relief to northern Arizona. However, precipitation totals were not adequate to alleviate the worsening drought conditions in those areas, and much of the central counties remained very dry.

Most of the state is still well below 50% of average precipitation for the calendar year and below 70% of average for the water year (October 1, 2011—September 31, 2012). The continued dryness led to expansion of extreme drought (D3) in Maricopa, western Pinal, southern Yavapai and northeastern La Paz counties. The higher elevations of the western and central Mogollon Rim fared better, generally reporting >85% of average for the water year.

The La Niña pattern is weakening, and by the end of April we should return to neutral conditions, though long-term outlooks are for warmer than normal conditions all the way through the end of the year.

Summary produced by the State Drought Monitoring Technical Committee - April 3, 2012.

