

Late October rains could dampen wildfires and help with drought, forecasters say

October 15 2021, by Paul Duginski



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A wetter-than-average forecast for late October could dampen wildfires burning in Northern California and help ease drought conditions, according to the National Weather Service.

The latest weather outlook for the latter part of this month calls for above-normal precipitation in California, with possible high-elevation

heavy snow in the Sierra Nevada and the Cascades. There is also potential for an atmospheric river between Oct. 21 and Oct. 27, forecasters said.

The increase in moisture is anticipated to quell ongoing wildfire activity and help to improve [drought conditions](#), said the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

There is a moderate risk of heavy precipitation from southern Oregon to Central California.

Although the outlook, issued Wednesday, peers fairly far into the future in weather terms, the models have been consistent in recent days about development of this [weather](#) pattern over the northeastern Pacific, according to forecasters.

"We are monitoring this, and it looks like it could be something above normal, but nothing earth-shattering," said David King, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Bay Area office in Monterey. King pointed out that October is not normally a very wet month, so it wouldn't take a lot to lift it above normal.

Climate scientist Daniel Swain tweeted Tuesday that there are strengthening signs that a wet pattern may develop in about 10 days and encouraged his Twitter followers to "stay tuned."

The pattern change would follow a week of dry, windy conditions with high wildfire risk continuing throughout California.

It also follows an October outlook that showed California with equal chances of above-average, near-average or below-average precipitation and temperatures. The eight- to 12-day temperature outlook issued Wednesday shows most of California with a probability of normal or

slightly below-normal readings.

The conditions would come as a welcome change after California was one of several Western states that endured their hottest summers on record in 2021.

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