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This is the drought that doesn't end. Yes, it goes on and on, my friends.

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DINA RUDICK/GLOBE STAFF

A field of seedlings died at Smolak Farms in North Andover during this summer's drought.

By Matt Rocheleau

GLOBE STAFF SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

We'll likely know who will be our next president before these local drought conditions start to

subside.

Forecasters expect some rain this fall, but they predict overall precipitation totals for the season to be below-average to average — at best.

Temperatures, meanwhile, will continue to run warmer than normal, weather experts say.

“I don't think there's going to be a major change in the overall pattern,” said Paul Pastelok, senior meteorologist and lead long-range forecaster for AccuWeather.com. “We have the fall highlighted as warm and rather dry.”

“It won't be completely dry, of course,” he added. He said a system this weekend should bring a bit of rain, and there might be some more the following weekend.

“But I think there's going to be long periods between precipitation,” Pastelok said.

After a [record-setting dry and hot summer](#), a parched Massachusetts is suffering its [worst drought in more than a decade](#). The spell has had adverse effects on [crops](#), [waterways](#), and [wildlife](#), and [may shorten the region's fall foliage season](#).

So far in 2016, Boston has received 20.6 inches of precipitation. Normally the city would have about 30 inches at this point in the year.

The trend may start to turn somewhat toward the end of meteorological fall, which runs from September through November.

“I think there may be a little more rain in November,” Pastelok said. Even so, “I don't think it will be extreme enough to get us out of this [drought] situation.”



Temperatures should also be closer to the historical average, perhaps even slightly below, for November, he said.

Pastelok said he doesn't expect our area will see any snowfall until mid- to late-November, though higher elevations, particularly in northern parts of New England, will likely see snow earlier.

Historically Boston starts to get measurable snowfall in November, averaging 1.3 inches for the month.

The National Weather Service's [latest forecast](#) for September through November calls for above average temperatures and average precipitation for our region, and it also calls for the [drought to persist](#). Those predictions were made on Aug. 18. The weather service is due to update them Thursday.

As for winter, Pastelok said his early prediction is that the Boston area will see slightly above normal snowfall for the season, while temperatures will be consistent with historical averages, or perhaps warmer than usual.

He said it looks like the bulk of the season's snowfall will arrive in January.

There's also some concern that the wintry weather will drag into March and April.

"It may not be the biggest, heaviest snow-producing season, but it seems like it's drawn out," said Pastelok. "We could have a long winter season and not much of a spring."

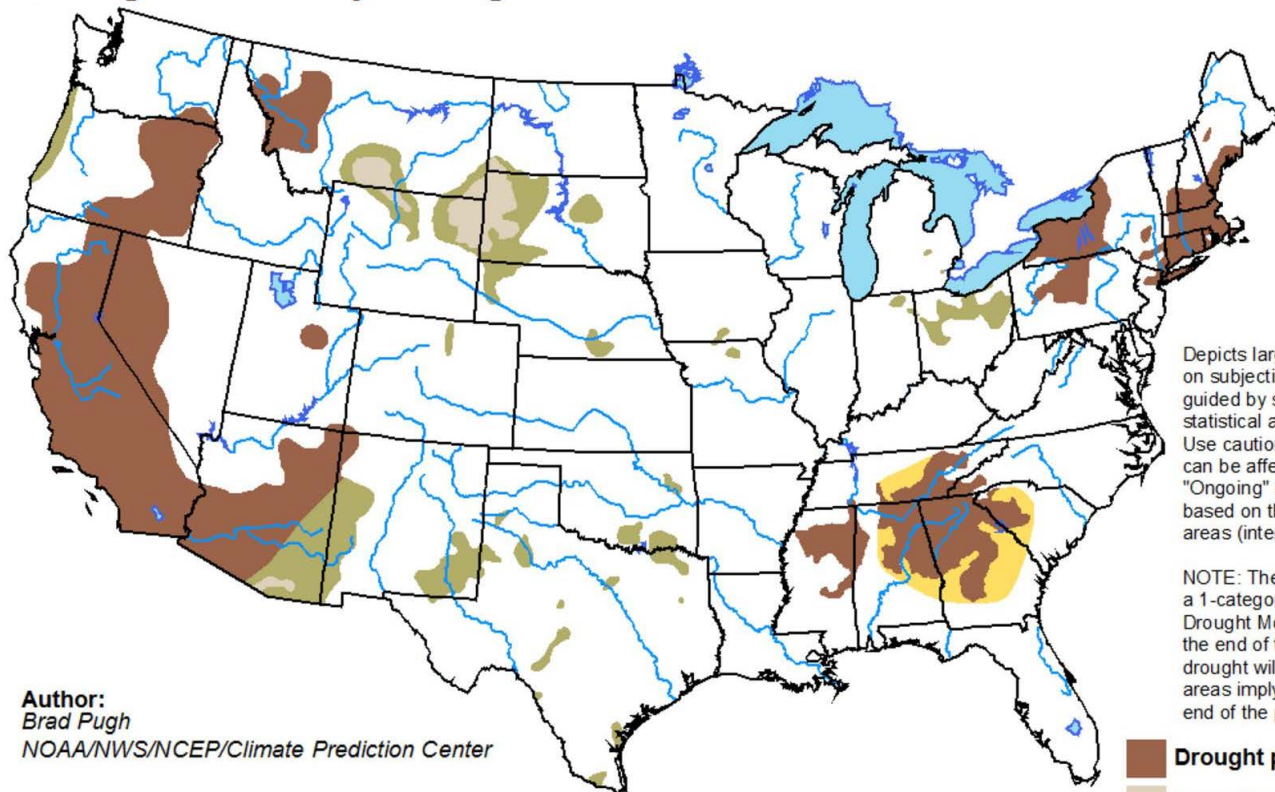
But, he noted, the confidence in such long-range predictions is relatively low for now, in part because there is no strong El Niño or La Niña cycle.

El Niño and La Niña are weather phenomena spawned by changes in sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. If they are strong, they can significantly affect long-term weather patterns for large swaths of the globe, boosting meteorologists' faith in making broad monthly and seasonal predictions well in advance.

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for August 18 - November 30, 2016
Released August 18, 2016



Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

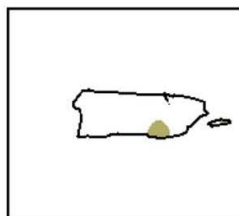
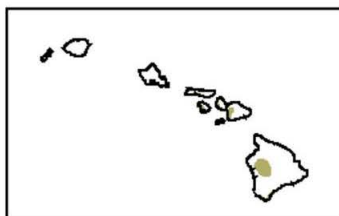
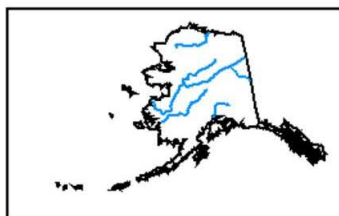
NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).

Author:
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NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Climate Prediction Center

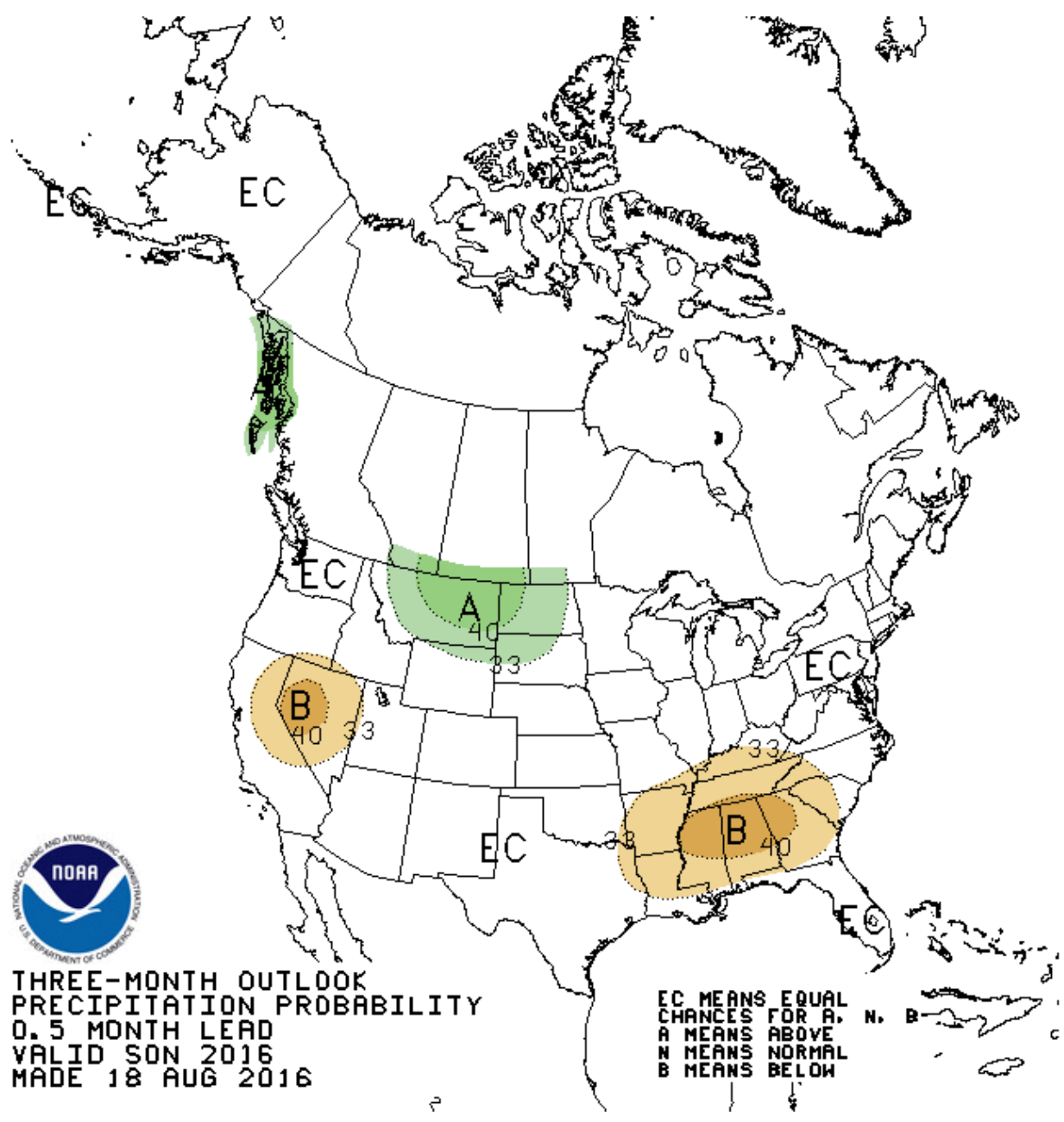
-  Drought persists
-  Drought remains but improves
-  Drought removal likely
-  Drought development likely



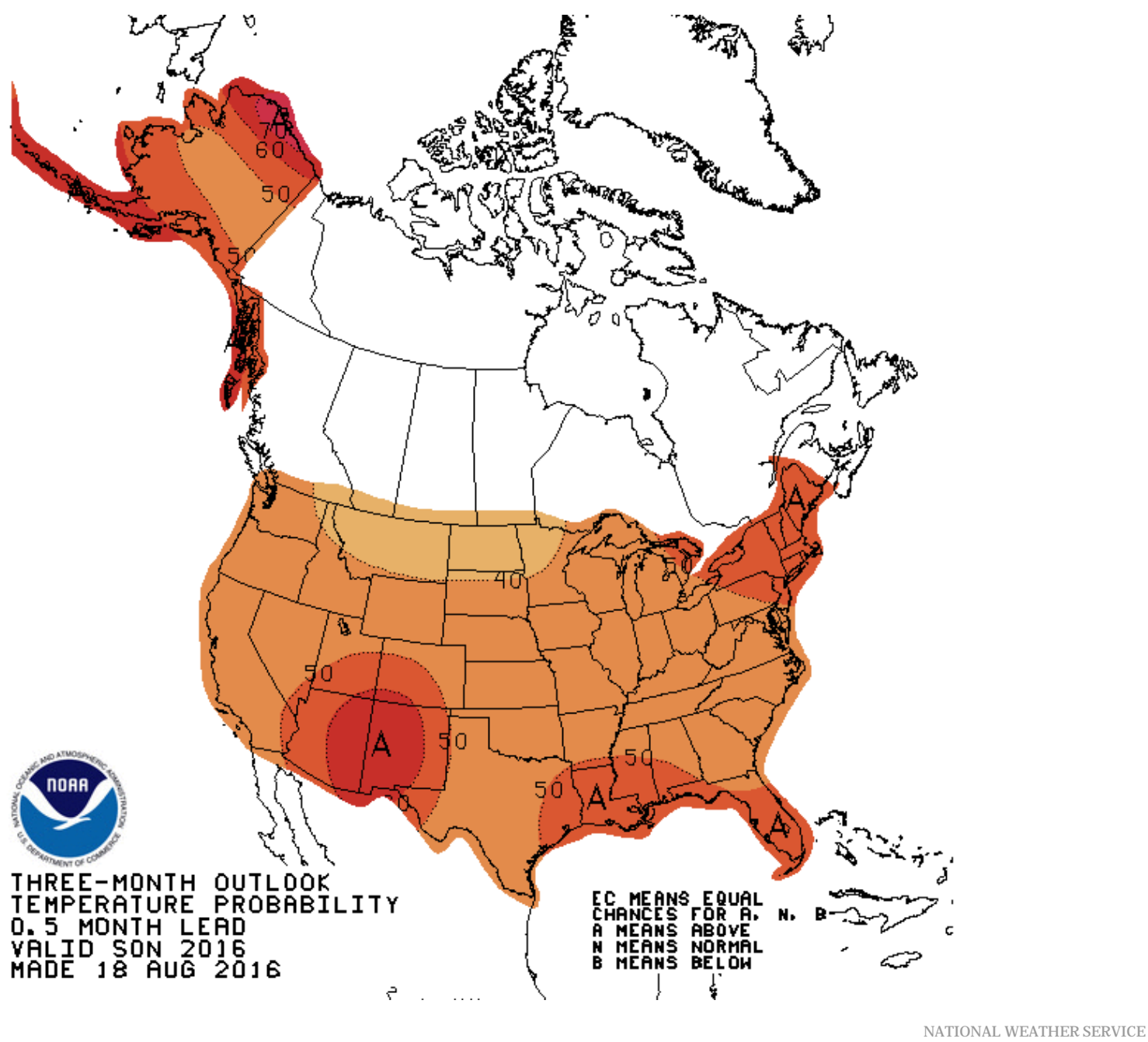
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