



A fresh snow on Mary's Peak from the winter of 2019.
ZACH URNESS / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Odds favor wetter and snowier winter than normal

Zach Urness Salem Statesman Journal
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Everyone that was complaining about how hot and dry Oregon was over the summer is about have their love for rain put to the test.

Northwest Oregon is expected to see rain almost every day beginning Wednesday and lasting for the next week, offering a possible preview of what’s forecast to be a wetter and cooler autumn and winter than normal, according to long-term forecasts.

That would be good news for a state coming off one of the hottest and driest periods on record and with 96% of the state still experiencing severe drought.

“If these projections come to fruition, it would go a long way toward alleviating or putting a big dent in the drought,” said Chris Burling, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Portland. “We are expecting more precipitation than normal in the short term but it will need to be a season-long trend to get us back to close to normal.”

What’s fueling the optimism is a La Nina pattern in the ocean that often, but doesn’t always, fuel wetter and cooler conditions. It can also lead to a snowier winter, particularly in the Cascade Range.

Every long-term forecast from the National Weather Service’s Climate Prediction Center gives the Pacific Northwest a good shot at wetter-than-normal winter, while temperature forecasts trend closer toward normal or slightly cooler than normal winter.

The weather that actually shows up is, of course, always a roll of the dice, Burling stressed.

“You don’t know until the systems actually show up what you’re going to get,” Burling said. “But I think it’s reasonable to expect a little more snow particularly in the higher elevations of the Cascades.”



Brandenburg snow shelter at Ray Benson Sno-Park in December 2020.
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In the last water year — which begins and ends Oct. 1 — Salem recorded 36.75 inches of rain, well below the average of 39.31. Portland was also below normal and has recorded four straight years with below-average precipitation.

What’s coming in the short term?

In the short term, northwest Oregon is expected to see some form of rain just about every day but not major amounts, with no flooding projected.

“We’ll get a few breaks here and there, but once we hit Wednesday, we’re going to see a new system coming through ev-

ery 12 to 24 hours with rain or showers,” Burling said. “We’re not expecting the type of rain that would bring flooding. It’ll be maybe a quarter inch here and there, and maybe a few periods of heavy rain, but the systems are moving pretty fast.”

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Market

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path that is twice its length. It now winds around the resort’s main lodge and along the entire length of the resort property.

The Nov. 26 through Jan. 9 event “pays homage to Silverton’s history, but also German Christmas market tradition,” Karalyn Demarest of Moonstone Hotels, owner of the resort, said.

The overall German theme will be reflected in some of the choices in food (gingerbread hearts) and drink (biertgarten), a booth selling imported German nutcrackers and ornaments, and a lighting section dedicated to the German St. Nicholas doppelganger, Krampus.

The new mural on the side of one of the buildings at the start point of the event’s lighted pathway entering into the vendor market was a purposeful addition, Demarest said.

“Since Silverton and the surrounding areas are well-known for their amazing murals, we decided to hire a local muralist, Lori Rodrigues to hand-paint a new Silverton Christmas Market mural for us,” she said.

Rodrigues currently lives in Beaverton.

“She’s painted a number of murals in downtown Silverton,” Demarest said, pointing out works on the Wolf Building, the town’s covered footbridge and the Bobbie the Wonder Dog mural on Water Street. Rodrigues has also done mural work at the Vista House on Crown Point in the Columbia River Gorge, in St. Paul and other Oregon sites.

Rodrigues, 52, said the 40-foot Christmas Market mural is similar in size to her very first mural, a creation referred to as the Old Oak mural on Silverton’s downtown Main Street.

She said the Christmas Market mural’s themes evolved from discussions with the event organizers and centered on “blending Germany and Silverton and the Christmas season, which either confused me or inspired me.”

Rodrigues’ other murals were depictions of history. This one, she said, allowed her to be more creative.

“All the different elements to make the mural seem fanciful and instead made me realize that anything goes, and I can make it as magical as I want,” she said. “As for what invoked my inspiration, I read the request for proposal very carefully and suddenly I could see the

snowy village reminiscent of Germany.”

Some Silverton images she was asked to incorporate into the mural were already icons of Germanic heritage, including the Wolf Building (named for an Austrian) and the snow-covered fir and pine trees. And neighboring Mt. Angel is famous for its German themes and Oktoberfest.

She added Bobbie the Wonder Dog and a covered footbridge to the new mural to represent the history of Silverton.

“It occurred to me that on Sept. 11, 2001 and this Sept. 11, 20 years later, I was painting a mural with Bobbie the Wonder Dog,” she said, saying the prior mural, “was a fantasy of Bobbie going somewhere magical.”

“That inspired me to ‘blend in’ Silverton’s downtown to develop the image that I have depicted on the wall leading into the Christmas Market,” she said.

“I like the idea of wondering, ‘Where DID Bobbie go?’

Freelance writer/photographer Geoff Parks is based in Salem. Have a Silverton story idea? E-mail him at geoffparks@gmail.com.

has recently reduced that to 17 tons after a more recent analysis of the bridge.

The new bridge will not be load-limited.

Project

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Road to the north and Sunnyview Road to the south while the construction

takes place.

The bridge over the tributary of the Little Pudding River between 60th Avenue and 64th Place was built in 1922 and expanded in 1947.

ODOT had placed a weight limit of 20 tons due to its design and age, but it

Chemawa

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educational achievement of its student population.”

That 2015 review, the senators wrote in the recent letter, determined the school had made significant progress on violence prevention policies since prior reviews in 2008 and 2014, but also that the school’s measures were merely “adequate” to prevent violence against both students and teachers at the school.

“In the six years that have passed since your office’s review, we have continued to receive complaints about alleged financial mismanagement at the school,” the senators wrote Interior Inspector General Mark Greenblatt.

“These allegations have been difficult to evaluate due to the school’s opaque financial practices,” they wrote. “Our offices have repeatedly asked school officials for basic financial data. To date, we have not received a satisfactory response to those requests.”

The Bureau of Indian Education, in response to requests from Oregon Public Broadcasting, acknowledged there was an oversight on all the expenditures of school budgets but not detailed financial audits, the senators wrote.

Wyden and Merkley argue their delegations have worked in good faith with school officials and BIE to obtain answers and address issues.

“However,” they wrote, “after several years, we remain deeply concerned that we cannot receive satisfactory answers to the most basic questions related to the school’s accounting practices.”

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Timeline

- In 2013, the U.S. Government Accountability Office determines that the Bureau of Indian Education "lacks clear procedures for decision-making" and that in turn resulted in "BIE acting outside the scope of its authority and undermining school officials' ability to assess student performance."
- In a 2014 follow-up report, according to the release, the accountability office further determined BIE "doesn't adequately monitor school expenditures using written procedures or a risk-based monitoring approach, contrary to federal internal control standards."
- In July 2015, the Office of Inspector General released two reports on academic achievement and violence prevention policies at Chemawa.
- A 2017 investigative series by Oregon Public Broadcasting shines a spotlight on Chemawa, highlighting the deaths of three students as well as allegations of fraud, mismanagement, lack of transparency and abuse at the school.
- BIE responds in 2018 to earlier concerns with a new financial and program oversight policy; however, federal officials said their offices have "continued to receive complaints about alleged misuse of financial resources at the school."
- During Congressional hearings in May 2019, Oregon Reps. Kurt Schrader and Suzanne Bonamici criticize Chemawa for failing students and the tribes who entrust their children to the school's care.

- Schrader and Bonamici press for answers from the Department of Interior about issues raised in the OPB series and promise changes that possibly include turning the school into a nonprofit with more tribal oversight and greater financial accountability.
- As of 2021, that had not happened; however, both Schrader and Bonamici said the school was making improvements following a visit in Aug. 2019.

Agency

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More information about the positions and applying is available at www.fs.usda.gov/main/r6/jobs. The Forest Service will also be hosting a Facebook Live session to provide information and answer questions on Oct. 26 at 5 p.m.

The Pacific Northwest region of the Forest Service spans 24.7 million acres of land across Oregon and Washington. This area includes 16 National Forests, a National Scenic Area, a National Grassland and two National Volcanic Monuments. These lands are used for recreation, timber, animal forage and habitats.

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