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PROGNOSTIC DISCUSSION FOR MONTHLY OUTLOOK  
CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER NCEP  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WASHINGTON DC  
3 PM EST THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16 2000

30-DAY OUTLOOK DISCUSSION FOR DECEMBER 2000

EQUATORIAL PACIFIC SSTs ARE COOLER THAN NORMAL AND THE CIRCULATION IN THE TROPICAL PACIFIC BASIN HAS RETURNED TO A PATTERN TYPICAL OF COLD ENSO EVENTS. BOTH STATISTICAL AND DYNAMIC MODELS INDICATE THAT COOLER THAN NORMAL SSTs WILL PERSIST IN THE NINO 3.4 REGION THROUGH THE MONTH OF DECEMBER. HOWEVER - EQUATORIAL PACIFIC SSTs ARE CLOSER TO NORMAL THAN THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE LAST TWO YEARS - ESPECIALLY NEAR THE DATE LINE - WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT REGION FOR ITS INFLUENCE ON GLOBAL CIRCULATION. THIS ENABLES OTHER SOURCES OF ATMOSPHERIC VARIABILITY - MOST IMPORTANTLY THE MADDEN-JULIAN OSCILLATION (MJO) TO PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN DETERMINING CIRCULATION PATTERNS IN DECEMBER. WITH THE COLD EVENT WEAK - MJO RELATED DISTURBANCES HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE IT THROUGH TO THE EASTERN PACIFIC - AND CAN ERASE THE TYPICAL COLD EVENT CIRCULATION PATTERNS FOR A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF A MONTH. MJO ACTIVITY - HOWEVER - IS NOT PREDICTABLE BEYOND ABOUT 2 WEEKS SO CANNOT BE RELIED UPON AT THIS TIME FOR PREDICTIVE SIGNAL IN DECEMBER. ANOMALOUS SOIL MOISTURE CONDITIONS HAVE LITTLE LASTING EFFECT ON THE AIR TEMPERATURES AT THIS TIME OF YEAR AND BOTH THE NUMERICAL GCM AND STATISTICAL MODELS SHOW LITTLE SKILL FOR DECEMBER - SINCE IT IS A TRANSITION SEASON BETWEEN FALL AND WINTERTIME CIRCULATION PATTERNS.

THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS INDICATE ONLY A WEAK SIGNAL FOR THE DECEMBER FORECAST. THE FORECAST REFLECTS A COLD EVENT SIGNATURE IN AREAS WHERE THE TELECONNECTION BETWEEN ENSO AND U.S. CLIMATE IS THE STRONGEST. PROBABILITIES ARE LOW BECAUSE THE MJO CAN ALTER OR ELIMINATE THE TYPICAL COLD-EVENT SIGNATURES. VARIABILITY IN WEATHER PATTERNS TENDS TO BE HIGHER THAN NORMAL WHEN ENSO IS WEAK OR ABSENT - SO CLIMATOLOGICAL PROBABILITIES ARE INDICATED THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE NATION. THE COUPLED MODEL INDICATES BELOW NORMAL TEMPERATURES OVER MUCH OF THE NORTHEASTERN U.S. - WHICH COUNTERACTS RECENT TRENDS FOR WARMTH THERE AND WILL BRING THE EXPECTED TEMPERATURES MORE IN LINE WITH THE 61-90 NORMALS - WHICH ARE QUITE A BIT COOLER THAN MUCH OF THE NATION HAS EXPERIENCED IN RECENT YEARS. WARMTH IN THE SOUTHERN U.S. AND DRY CONDITIONS IN FLORIDA AND THE SOUTHWEST ARE RESIDUAL COLD-EVENT EFFECTS. THE SSTs OFF THE WESTERN U.S. ARE IN EXCESS OF ONE DEGREE C BELOW NORMAL IN SOME AREAS AND SHOULD INFLUENCE AREAS ALONG THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST. ABOVE MEDIAN PRECIPITATION IN TEXAS AND SURROUNDING AREAS ARE INDICATED BY OCN.

ALASKAN TEMPERATURES ARE LIKELY TO BE COOLER THAN NORMAL IN THE NORTHWEST - AS INDICATED BY CCA AND OCN. THE COUPLED MODEL FORECASTS WARMER THAN NORMAL TEMPERATURES IN THE SOUTHEAST - WHICH CONTRADICTS THE OTHER TOOLS - HENCE CLIMATOLOGICAL TEMPERATURE FREQUENCIES ARE PREDICTED FOR SOUTHERN ALASKA AND THE PANHANDLE. THE COUPLED MODEL STRONGLY INDICATES ABOVE MEDIAN PRECIPITATION ALONG THE ALASKAN PANHANDLE.

NOTE - THIS CLIMATE OUTLOOK IS INTENDED FOR USE ONLY PRIOR TO THE START OF THE VALID PERIOD. WITHIN THE VALID PERIOD OBSERVATIONS AND MEDIUM RANGE FORECASTS SHOULD BE CONSULTED.

NOTE - THE NEXT 0.5 MONTH LEAD-TIME MONTHLY OUTLOOK WILL BE ISSUED THURSDAY DECEMBER 14 2000.

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