

WATER SUPPLY AVAILABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING

December 3 2015
Department of Ecology

Time	Subject	Responsible	Representing
10:00	Welcome/Intros	Jeff Marti	Ecology
10:05-10:15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background 2. Current Status of Drought Declaration 3. Options for declaration extension 4. Yakima Basin 5. EWEC 	Jeff Marti	Ecology
10:15-10:25	Snowpack conditions	Scott Pattee	NRCS
10:25-10:40	Regional Climate Perspective <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recent precipitation and temperature 2. Seasonal forecasts/El Niño 3. Relationship of ENSO to streamflow 	Nick Bond/Karin Bumbaco	Office of State Climatologist
10:40-10:50	Overview of this summer's streamflow conditions, existing Streamflow Conditions	John Clemens	USGS
10:50-10:55	River Forecasts	Brent Bower	NWS
10:50-11:00	Status and Forecast for Yakima Basin Water Supply	Chris Lynch	Bureau of Reclamation
11:00-11:20	Group Discussion: Is the Group ready at this time to make a recommendation that any geographic area is likely have less than 75 percent of water supply?	All	
11:20-11:30	Schedule for Next Meeting	Jeff Marti	Ecology

Current Status of State Drought Declaration

- Expiration date of statewide declaration is December 31.
- Do we?
 - Let the declaration lapse
 - Extend declaration statewide
 - Extend regionally (e.g. east of Cascades, or for specific watersheds)
- Executive Water Emergency Committee will meet on December 11th
- Continue to evaluate through the winter and into spring



Policy considerations

- Statutory threshold for drought declarations. To extend, there must be a reasonable expectation that water supply conditions will not be met. ...but absolute certainty regarding water supply forecasts can only be achieved in hindsight.
- Agencies must weigh desire for certainty vs need for preparation
- Drought response requires numerous administrative actions that take time: Communication. Rule Making. Funding. Hiring temporary staff.
- In the Yakima Basin, a state declaration could help facilitate emergency actions by the federal government.
- 2015 Drought wounds are fresh....

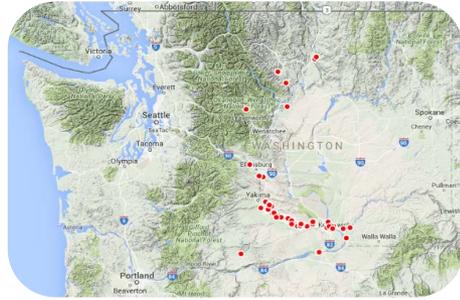


The Risks of Waiting

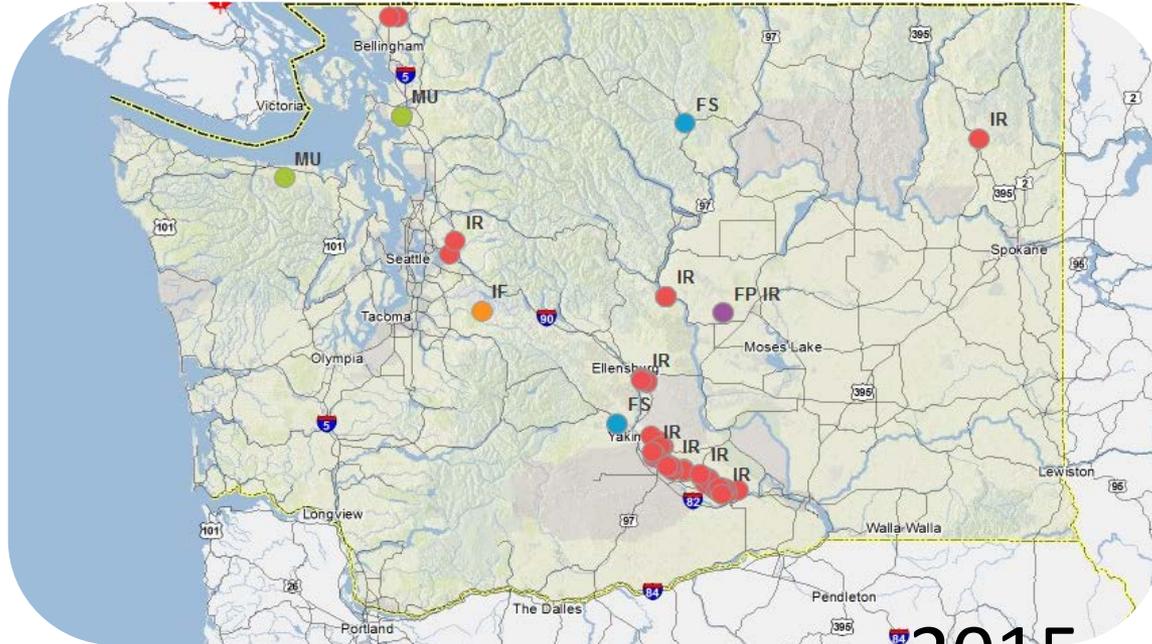
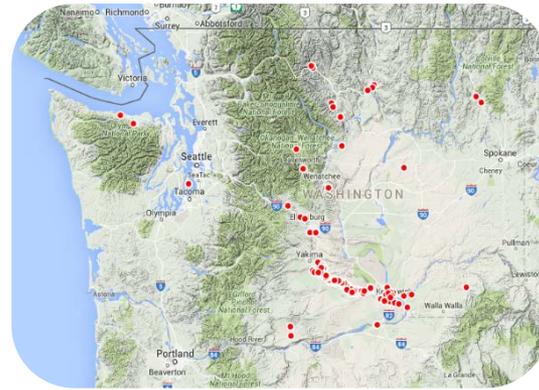
- Agriculture areas are most time sensitive (Yakima, Walla Walla, Wenatchee)
 - Farmers need to make decisions and investments early in early Spring
 - To be effective, options for leasing, emergency transfers and drought relief need to be in place
 - Complex agreements with other water users are often necessary before certain actions can proceed
- Other users may have more ability to adapt as the season progresses (e.g., public water suppliers)



2001



2005



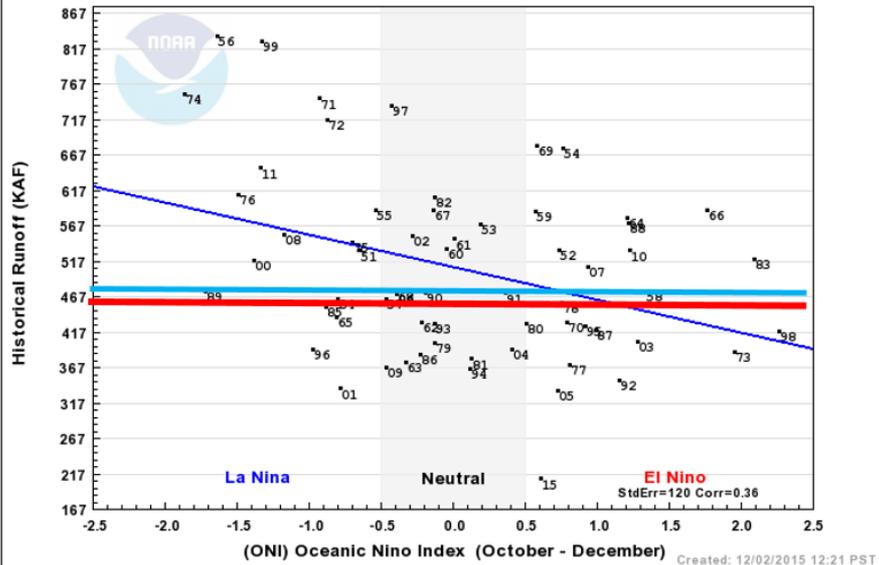
2015

Forecasting this year's water supply

- It's very early in the water year
- APR-SEPT river forecasts are of limited value at this time of year, do not yet factor in actual springtime conditions
- Would it be reasonable to put more weight on other forecast measures?
 - seasonal climate forecasts
 - understanding of relationship between El Niño and streamflow
- Would the use of such other measures be more appropriate in some watersheds than others?



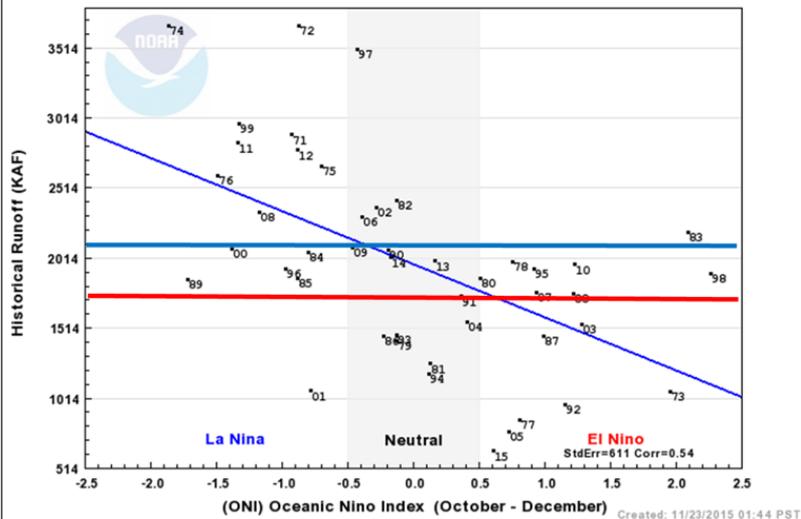
**Historical Naturalized Runoff vs (ONI) Oceanic Nino Index
(ELWW1) ELWHA-AT MCDONALD BRIDGE NEAR PORT ANGELES (APR-SEP)**



Mean All Years: 474
KAF

Median El Nino
Years: 466 KAF (98
percent of normal)

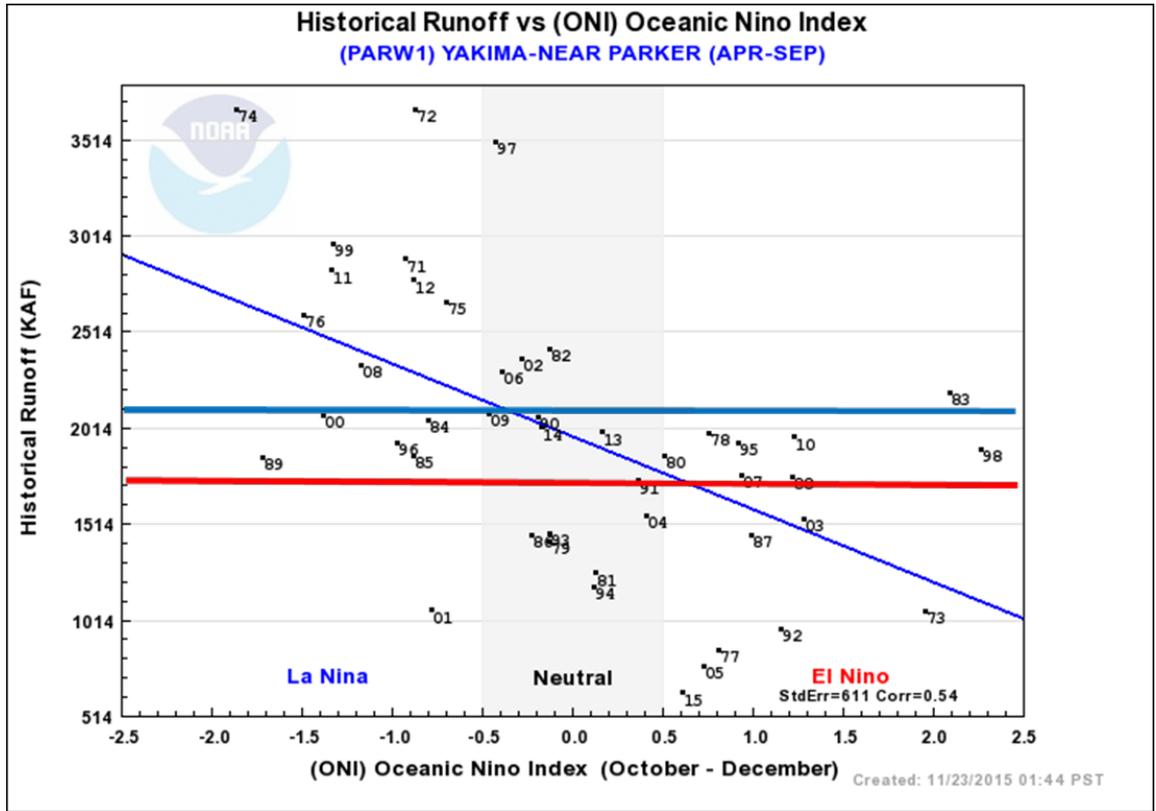
**Historical Runoff vs (ONI) Oceanic Nino Index
(PARW1) YAKIMA-NEAR PARKER (APR-SEP)**



Median All Years: 2144
KAF

Median El Niño Years:
1717 KAF (80% of
normal)
Average El Niño Years:
1632 KAF (76% of
normal)

#end#



**Median All Years:
2144 KAF**

**Median El Niño
Years: 1717 KAF
(80% of normal)**

**Average El Niño
Years: 1632 KAF
(76% of normal)**