

Preliminary Significant U.S. Weather and Climate Events for 2012

SNOW PACK

3rd smallest winter snow cover extent. Below-average snowpack was observed for much of the West.

WARM

Warmest year on record for the nation. 19 states record warm. The 4th warmest winter, warmest spring, and second warmest summer contributed to 2012 having an average temperature 3.2F above average and 1.0F above the previous record warm year of 1998.

WILDFIRES

Over 9.2 million acres burned nationwide during 2012. CO experienced its most costly fire on record in June. The Whitewater-Baldy fire was the largest on record for NM.

COLD

Coldest January on record in AK. The monthly average temperature in Bettles was -35.6F. Snowiest winter in Anchorage with 134.5 inches.

FLOOD

Storms caused record flooding in and around Duluth, MN on June 20th with over 8 inches of rainfall observed in 24 hours. Rivers in the area reached their highest levels on record.

TORNADOES

An early season tornado outbreak on March 2-3 in IN, OH, WV, and KY resulted in 42 fatalities. This was the deadliest tornado outbreak of 2012.

DROUGHT

The 2012 drought peaked in July with over 60% (PDSI) of the nation experiencing drought conditions, comparable to the drought episodes of the 1950s. Corn and soybean crops failed across a large portion of the Great Plains and Midwest. Water levels along the Mississippi approached record lows and slowed commercial shipping.

STORMS

On March 9th a storm system brought severe weather to HI. A rare tornado hit Oahu. Largest hailstone on record for the state in Oahu.

POST-TROPICAL CYCLONE SANDY

Made landfall near Atlantic City, NJ with sustained winds of 80 mph in late October. Record storm surge along NJ and NY coasts along with heavy rain and snow. Over 8 million people lost power, 131 fatalities.

STORMS

A straight-line wind storm called a derecho caused significant damage from IN to MD. Over 250,000 customers lost power, including the densely populated Washington, D.C. area.

HURRICANE ISAAC

Made landfall near the mouth of the Mississippi River in late August with winds of 80 mph. Significant storm surge and flooding rains along the Gulf Coast. 9 fatalities.

WET

Florida had its wettest summer on record, partially due to Hurricane Isaac and Tropical Storm Debby. Seasonal precipitation was 140 percent of average.

