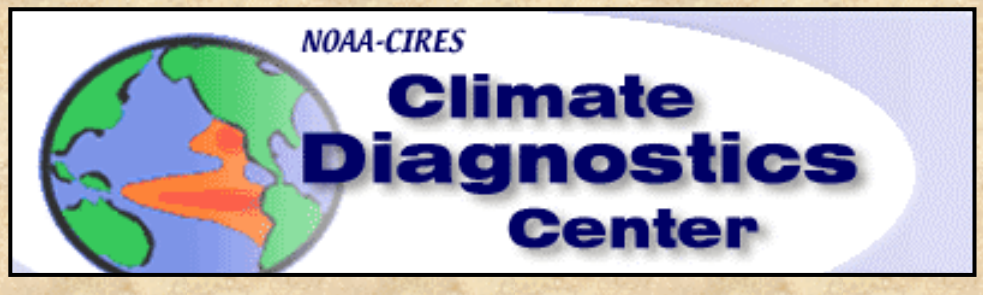

Seasonal Outlook through September 2006

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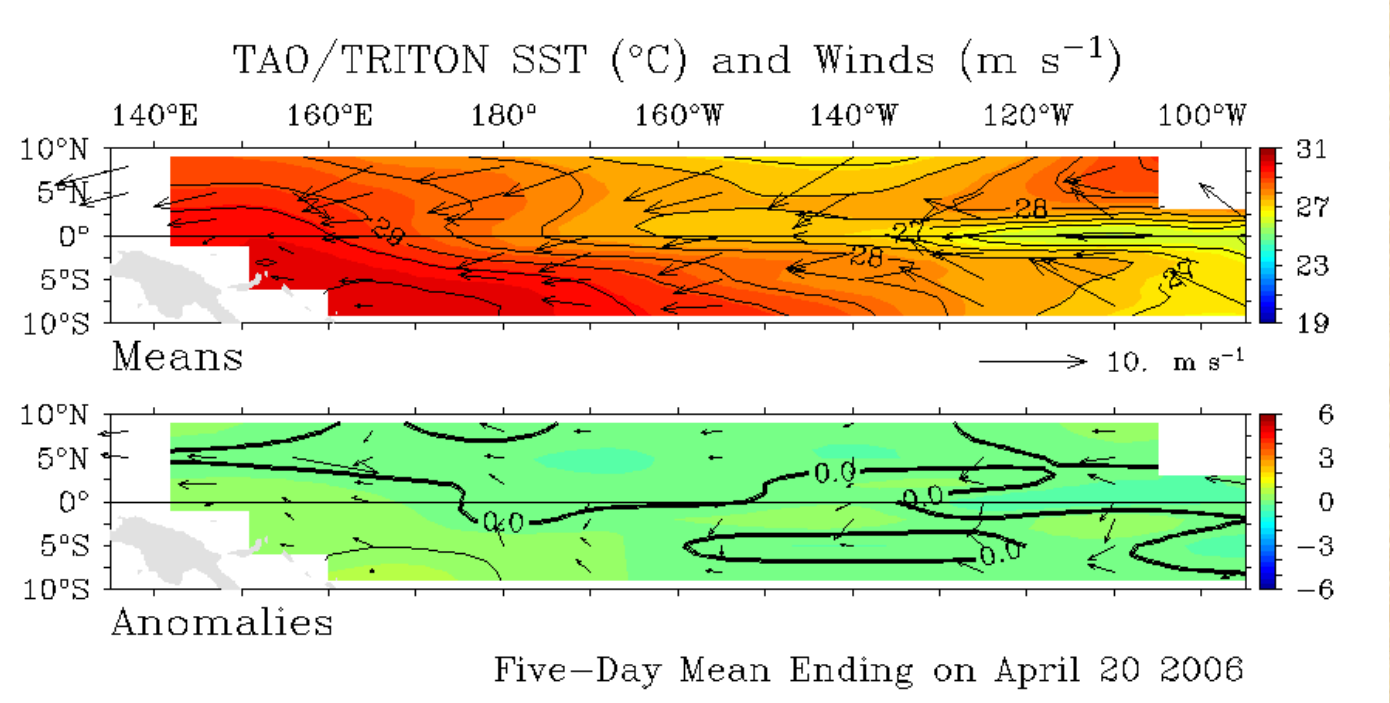
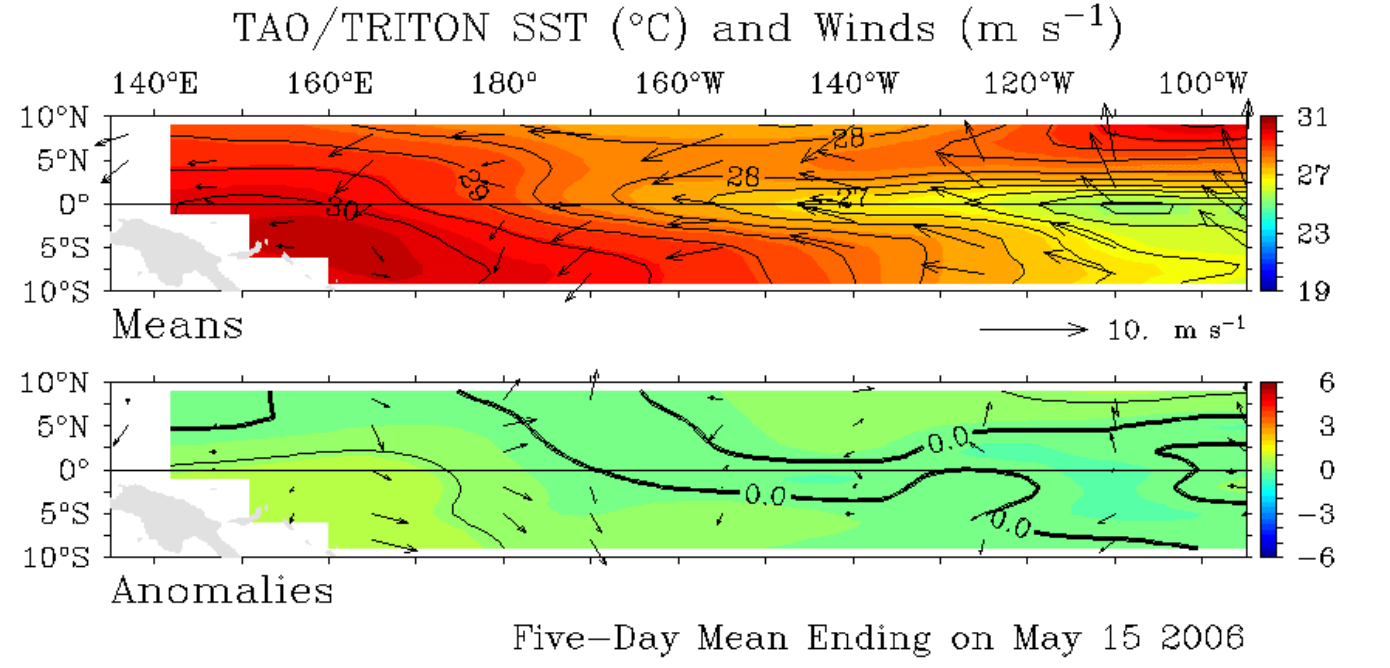
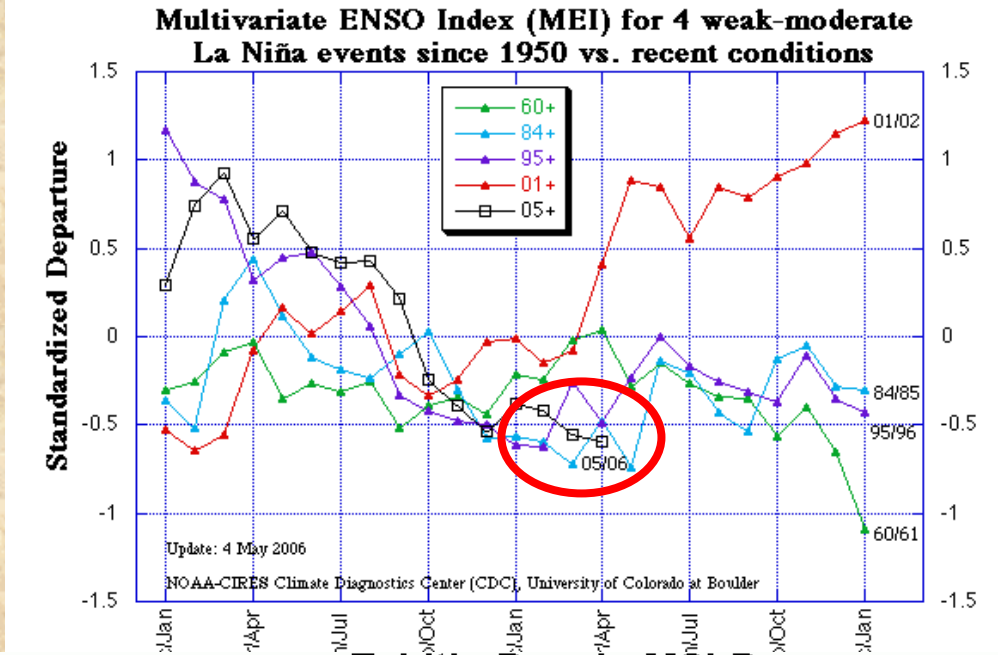
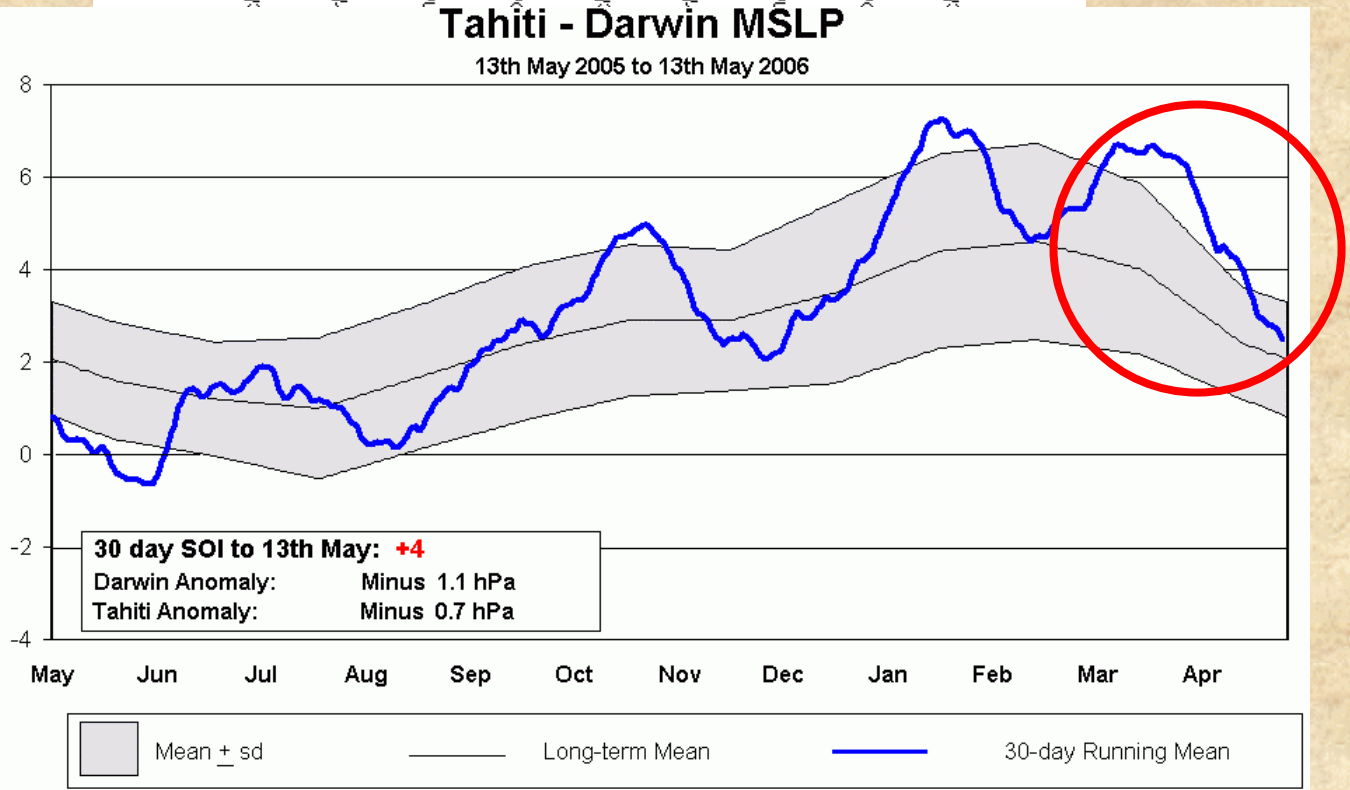
- **ENSO: La Niña down for the count?**
- **After a poor performance over last month, any hope for the (near) future?**
- **CPC forecasts for May-July/July-September 2006**
- **Experimental forecast guidance**



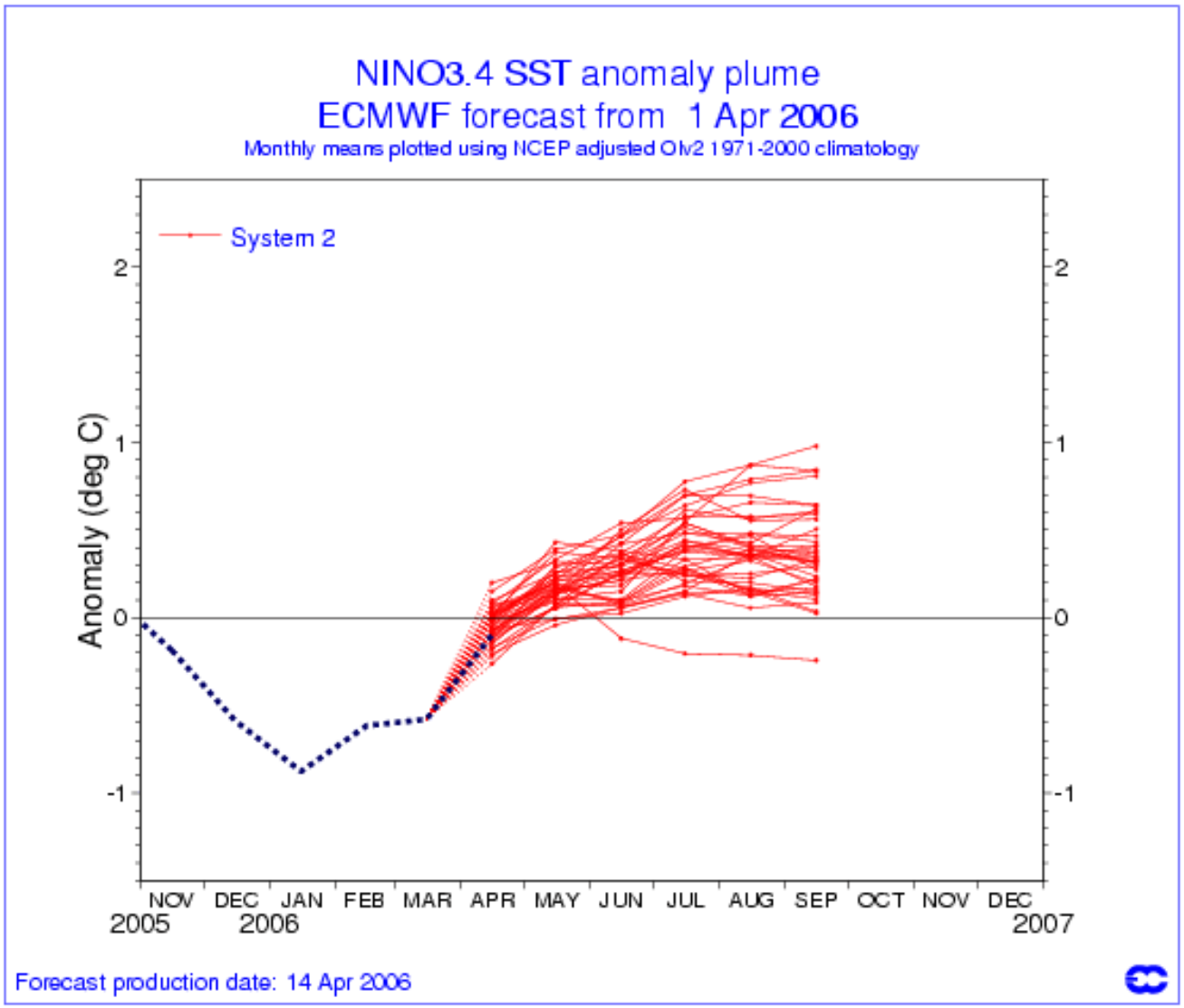


Current state of ENSO (bottom) compared to April - based on sea surface temperatures alone, this La Niña is gone. Even the trade winds are showing signs of weakening, finally.

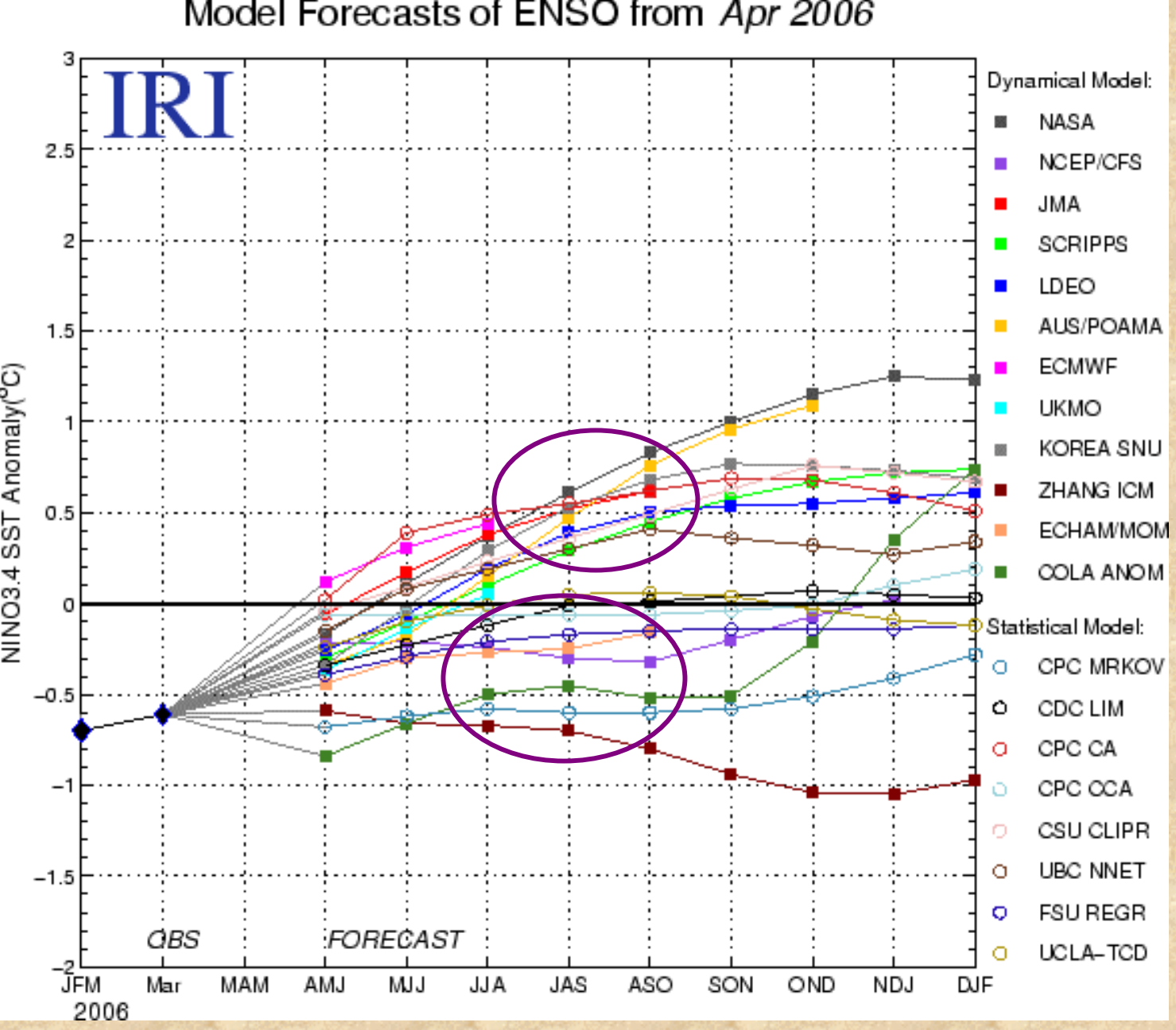




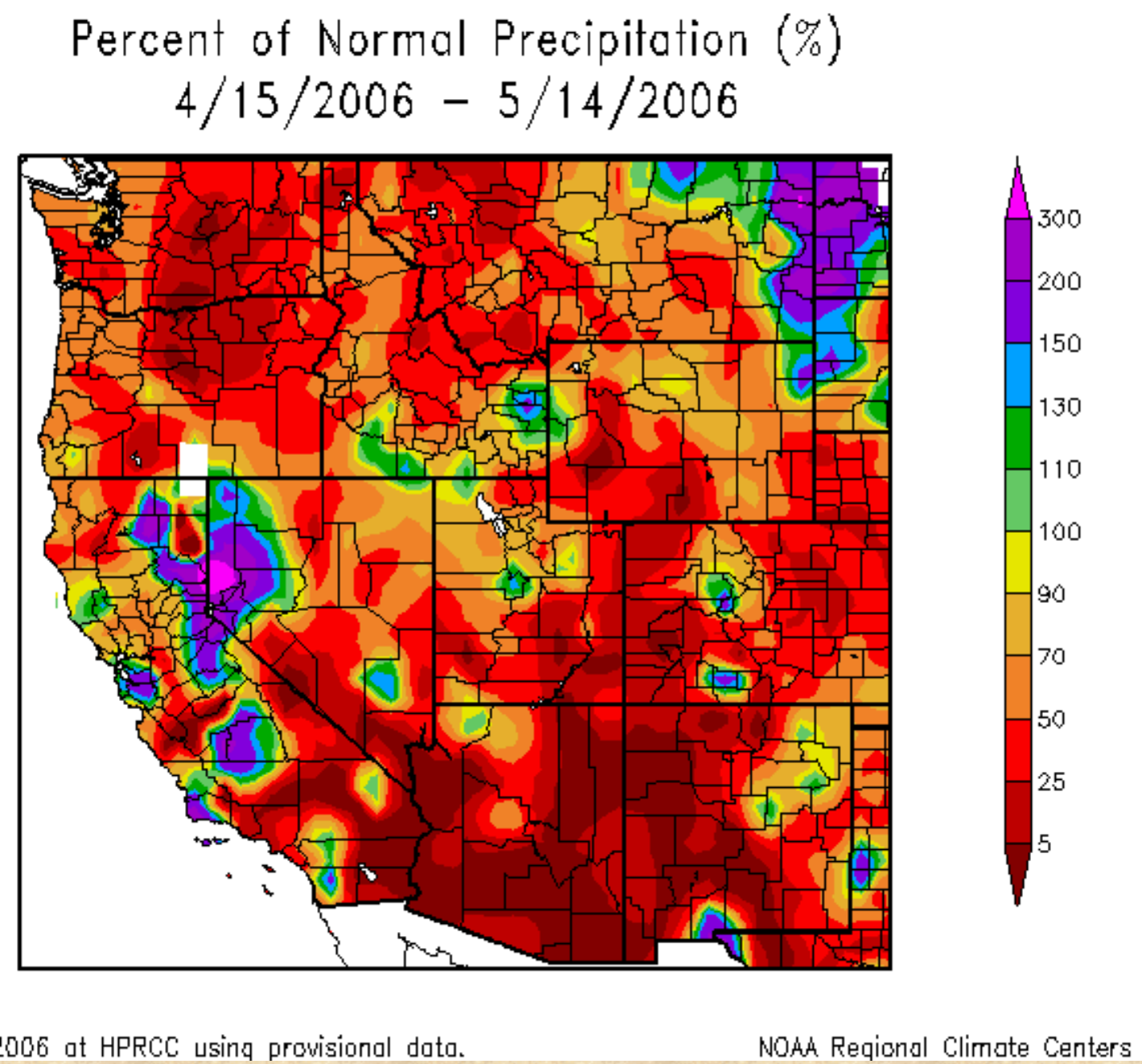
However, the most recent MEI values (March-April)are still trending down (top), mostly due to persistent atmospheric conditions (ref. Southern Oscillation Index, below) that seem to indicate that the atmosphere is taking its time to ‘forget’ our recent La Niña event.



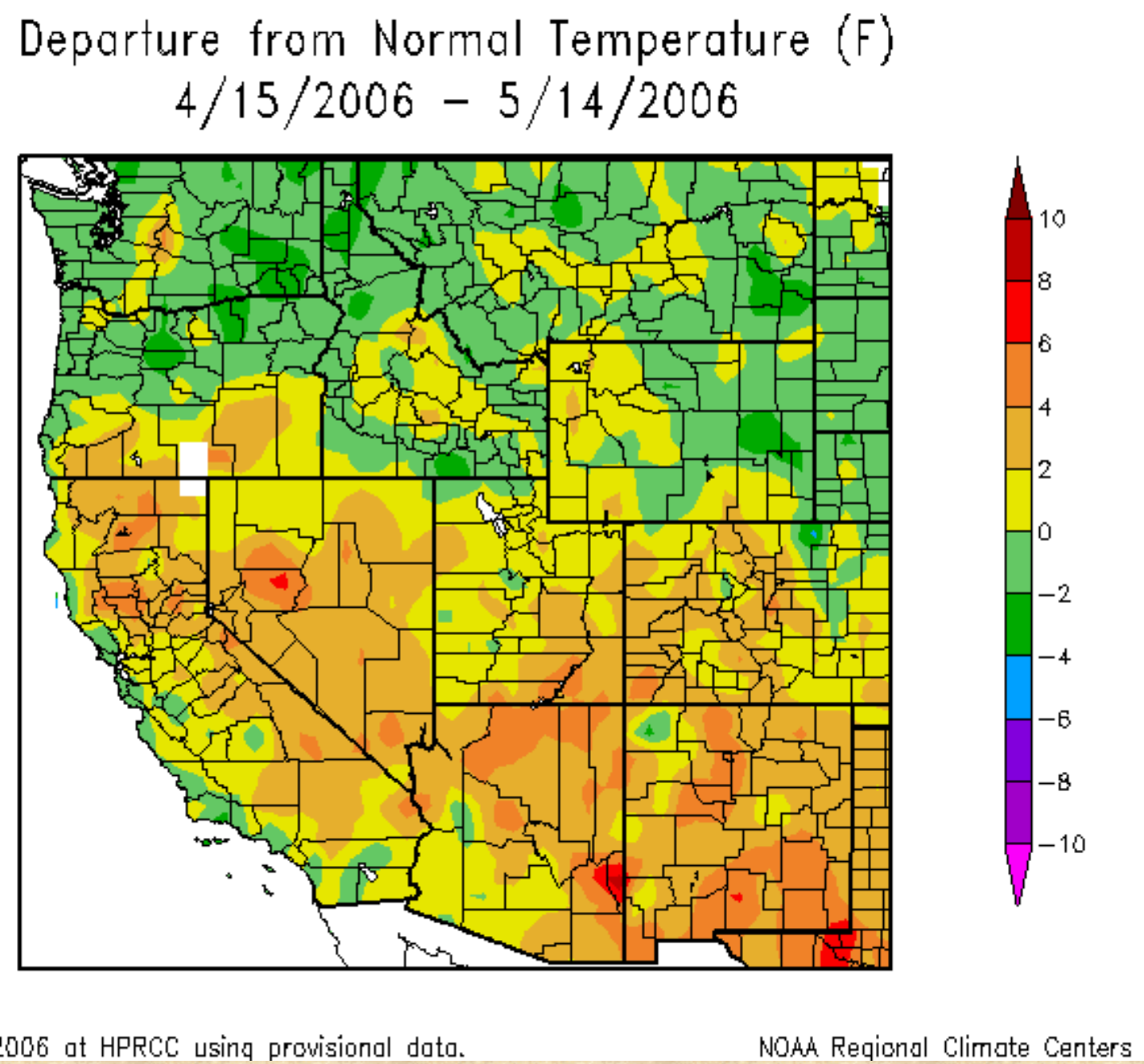
The European model's most recent forecast is adamant about a continued rebound into above-normal conditions (only one out of 50 'spaghetti scenarios' stays below normal). Since this time of year is known as the 'spring predictability barrier', we should remain cautious. Nevertheless, the increase in April SST was well anticipated.



ENSO forecasts from 12 numerical & 8 statistical forecast models: about half of the models push for a rapid transition towards El Niño conditions, while the other half slowly drift towards ‘normal’.

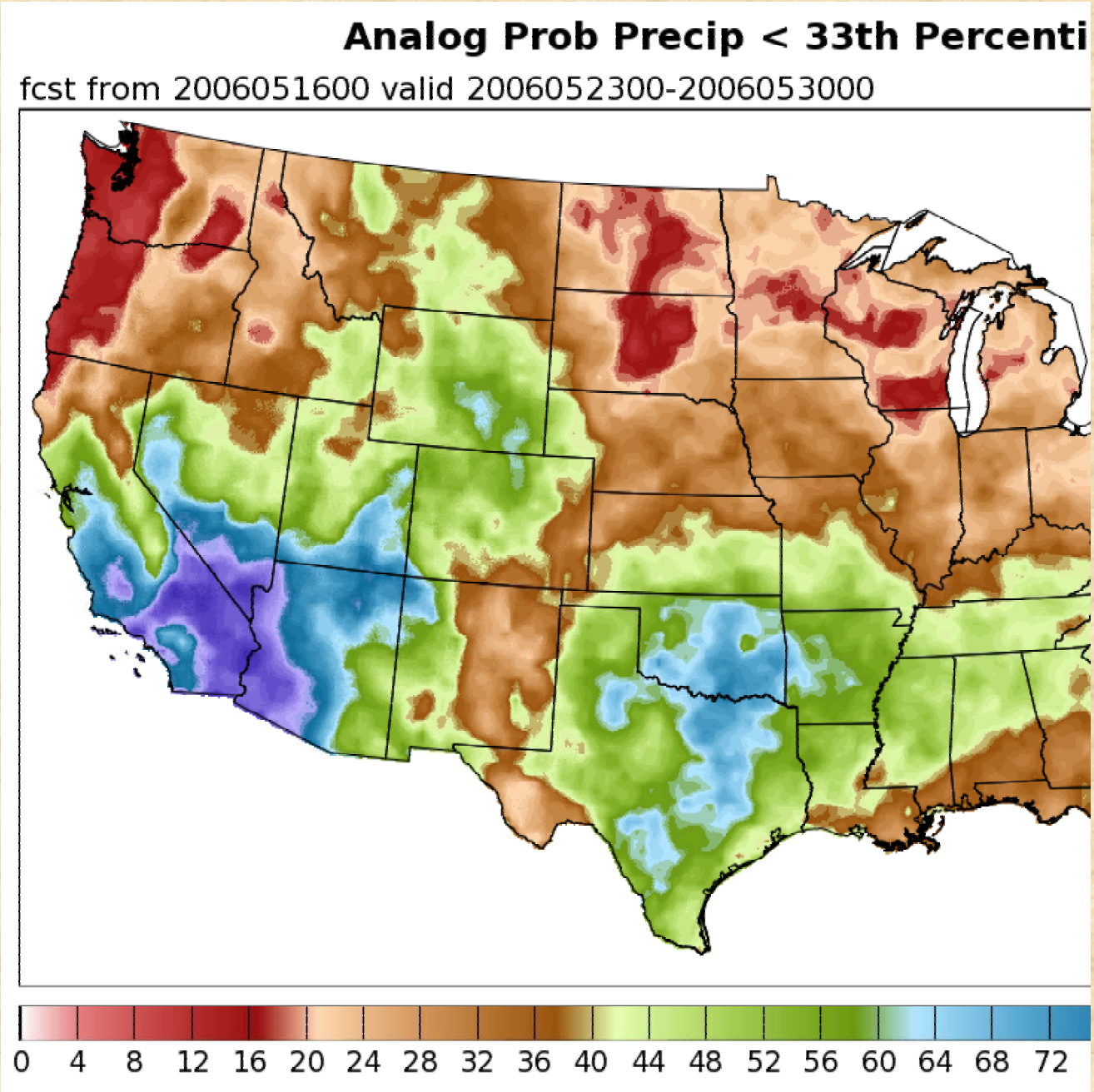


For the month since our last meeting, the storms that did come through in the last three weeks have not been delivering the moisture that is typical for spring, resulting in widespread shortfalls on both sides of the Divide.

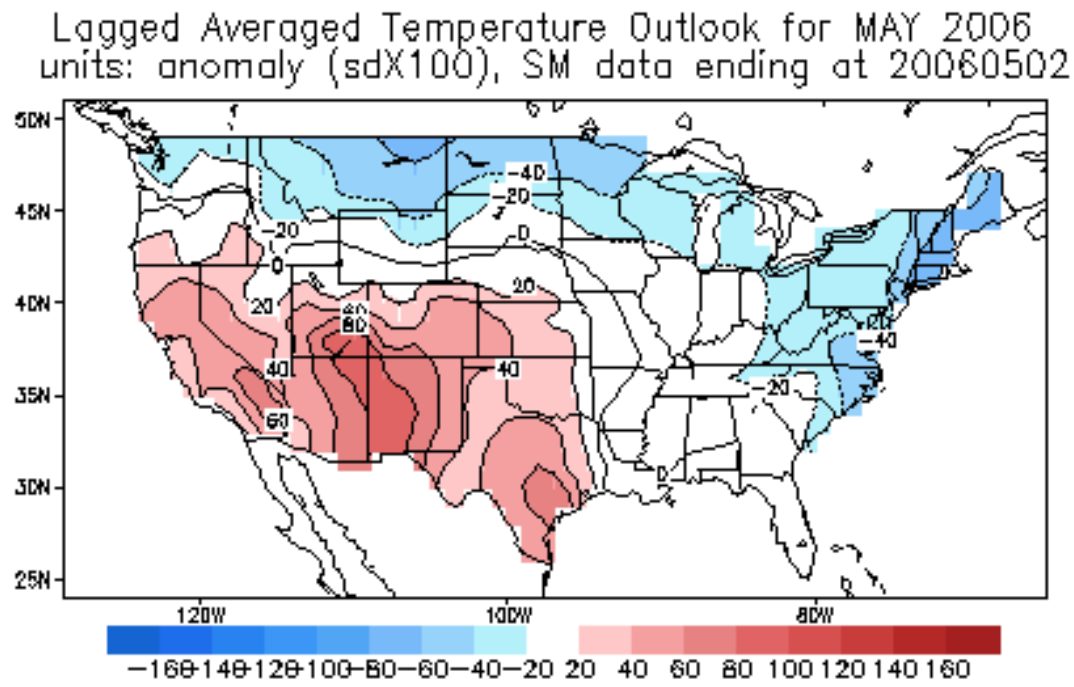


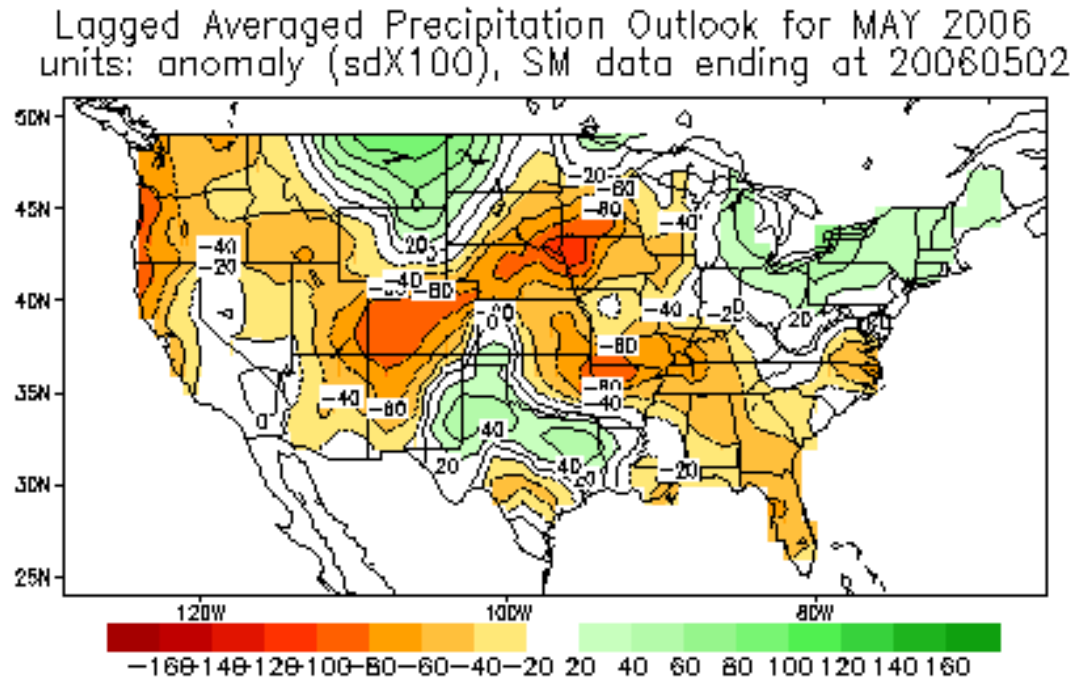
Some cool weather during the last month has helped to reduce the impact of this dry spell, but is definitely on its way out.

After a dismal April, is May going to ‘deliver the ‘goods’?



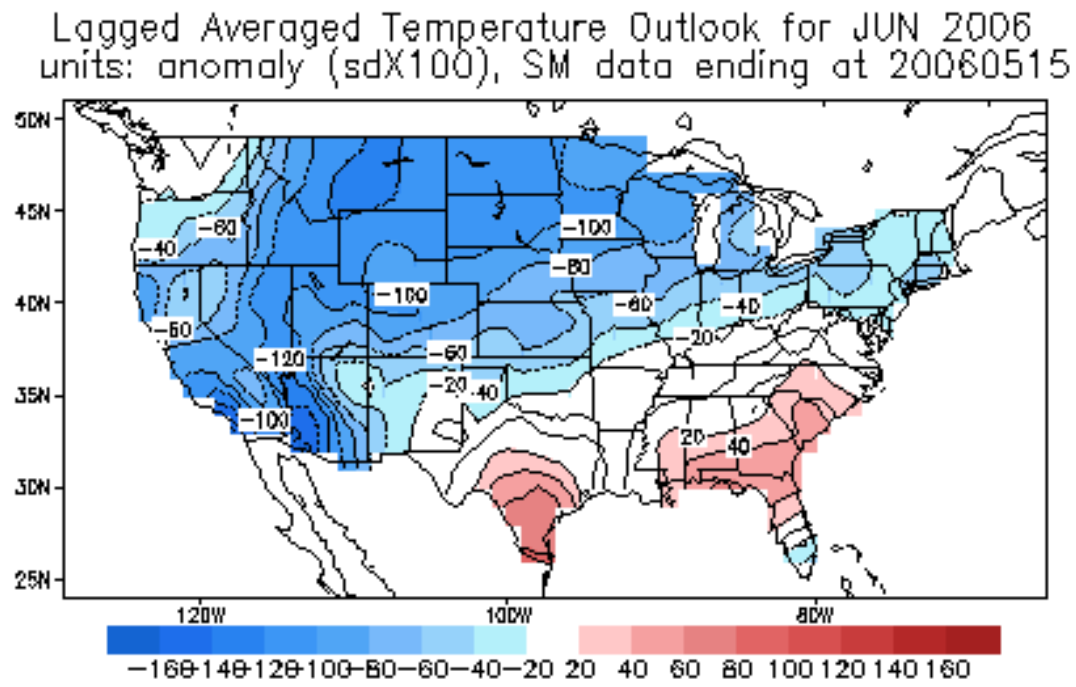
After a few anemic storms, the outlook for the remainder of May is not encouraging. Here is the down-scaled (5km resolution) version of the ‘reforecast’ forecast for ‘Week 2’. The odds are almost twice as high as usual for moisture to total less than the lowest 1/3 of the distribution (<0.5”).

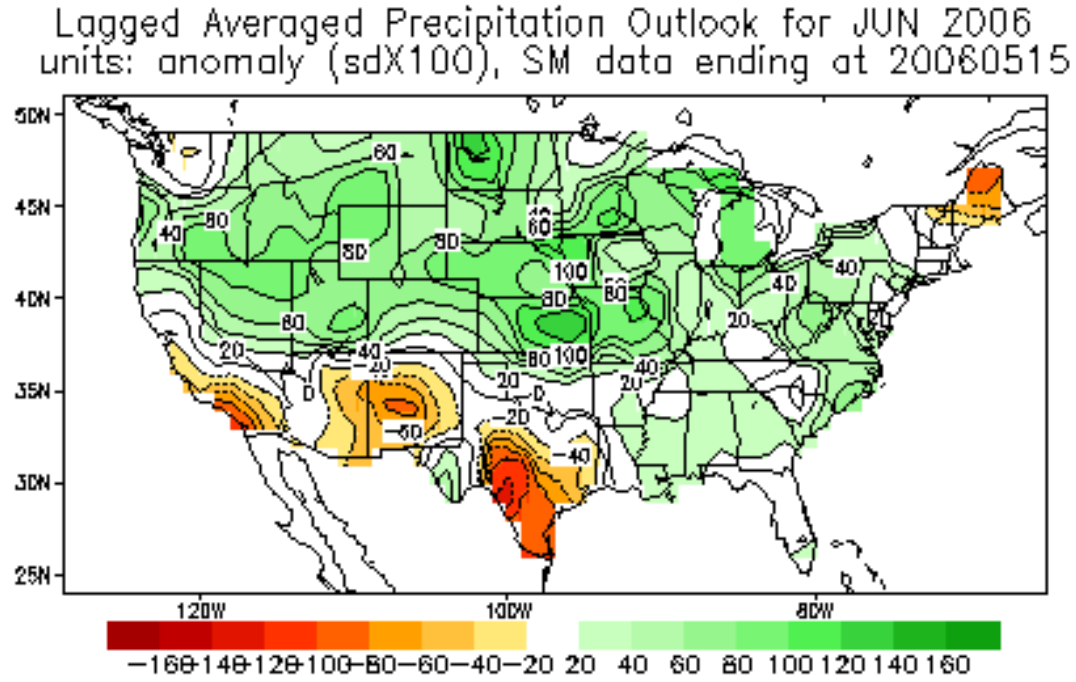




After a dismal April, is May going to 'deliver the 'goods'?

Two weeks ago, the 'Constructed Analog' forecast for May called for a continued tilt towards dry conditions, along with above-average temperatures. The skill of this forecast tool is better for this time of year than almost any other time. This forecast from two weeks ago appears to be verifying "nicely".

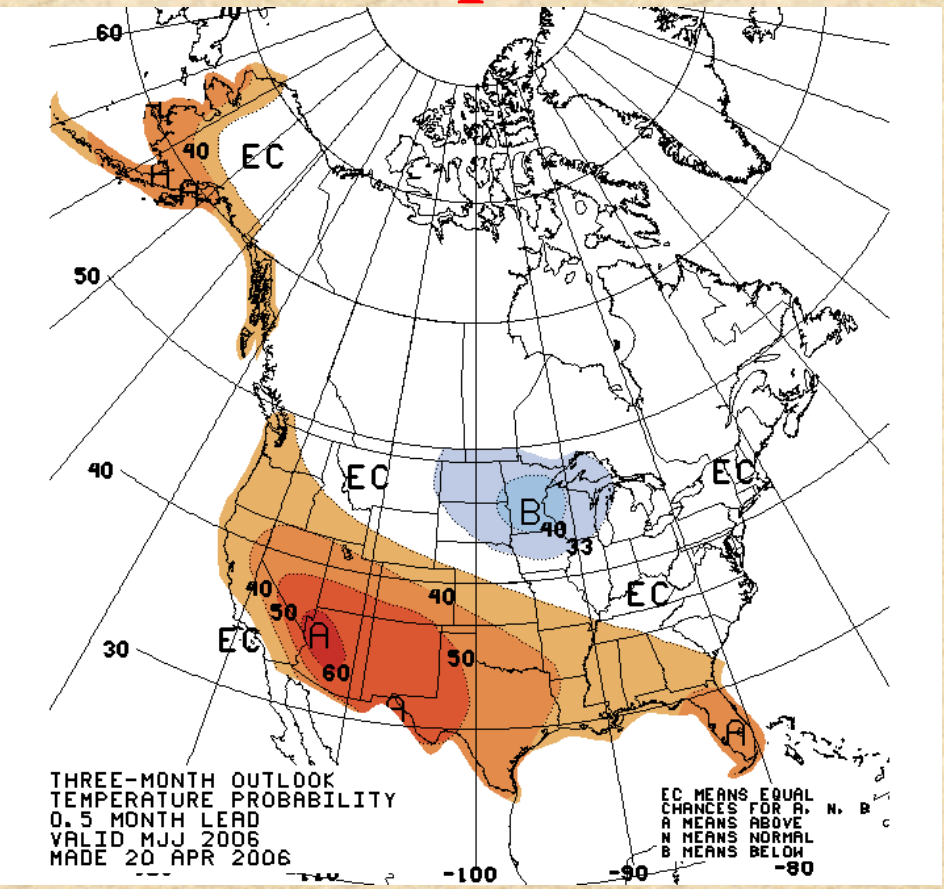


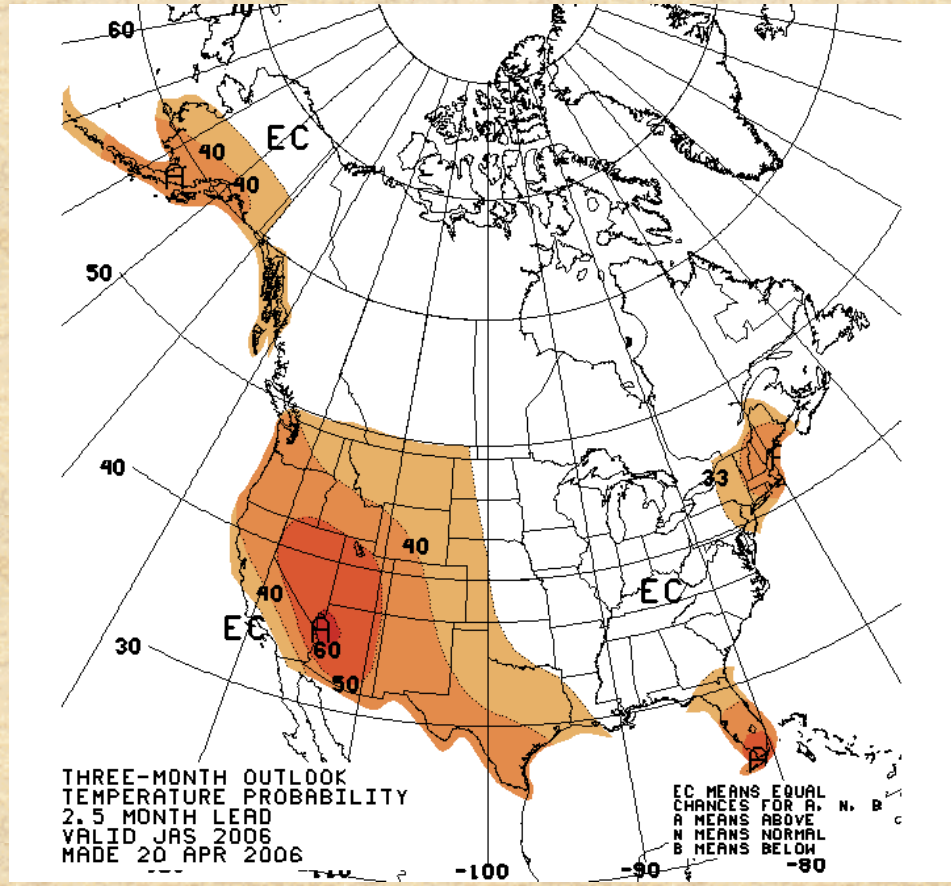


After a dismal April, is June going to 'deliver the 'goods'?

The 'Constructed Analog' forecast for June calls for a switch to cooler and wetter weather that is supported by decent historic skill for Wyoming (less for Colorado).

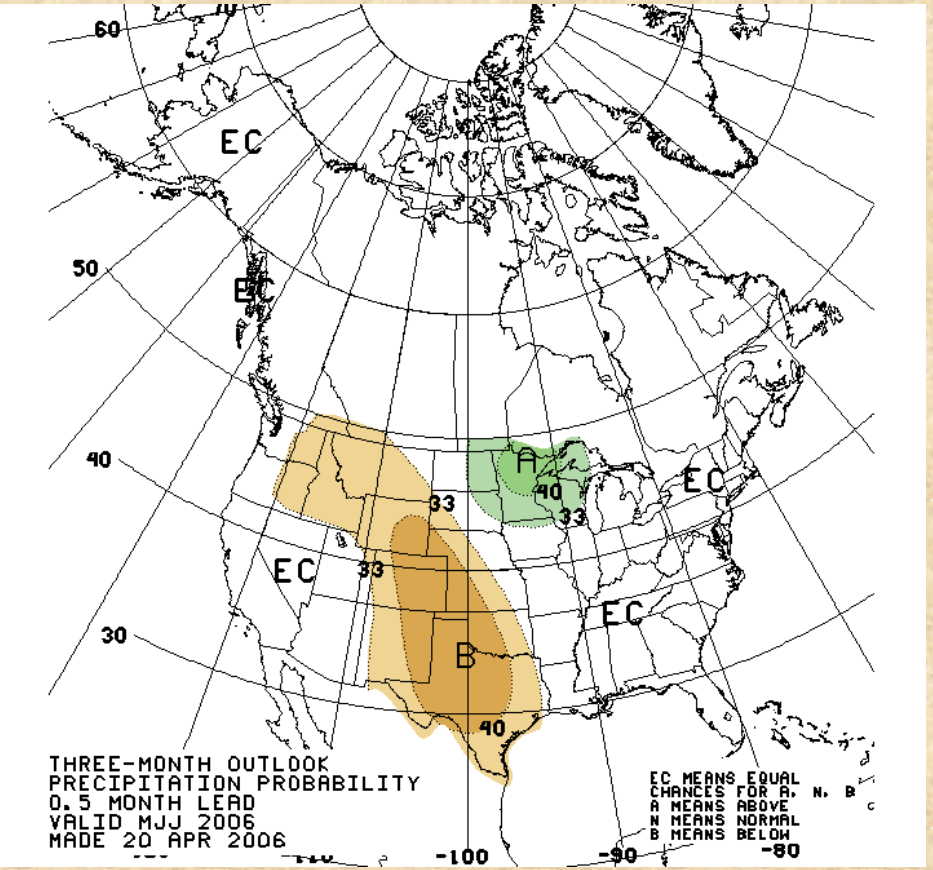
Temperature Forecasts (CPC)

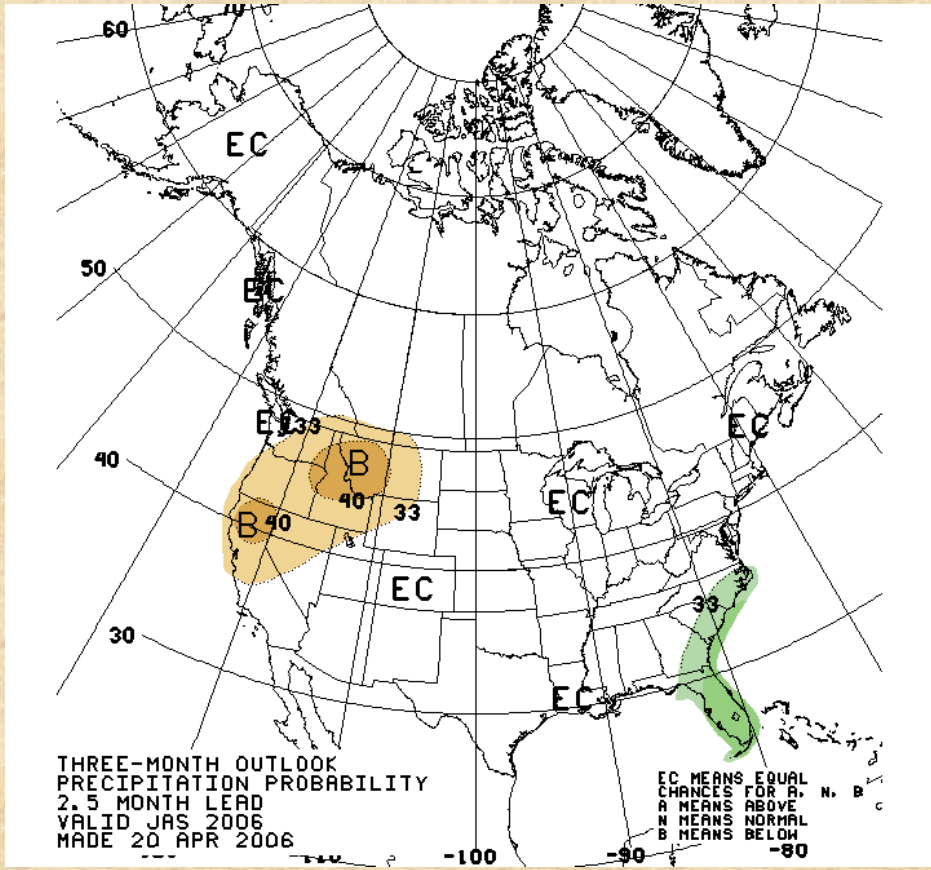




According to CPC's official forecasts, May-July 2006 (left) and July-September 2006 (right) are expected to be more likely to be on the warm side of the 1971-2000 climate normals over much of the Western and Southern U.S. This includes all of Colorado, although our trend-based odds not as overwhelming as in Arizona.

Precipitation Forecasts (CPC)

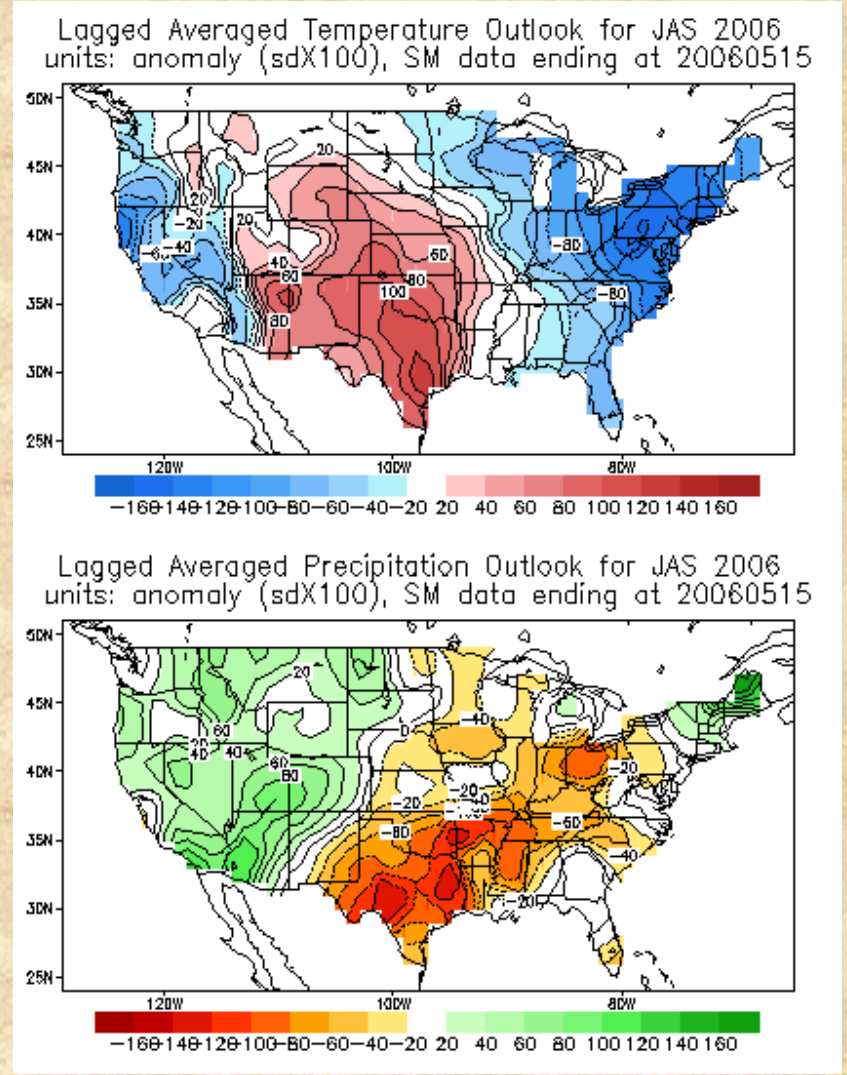


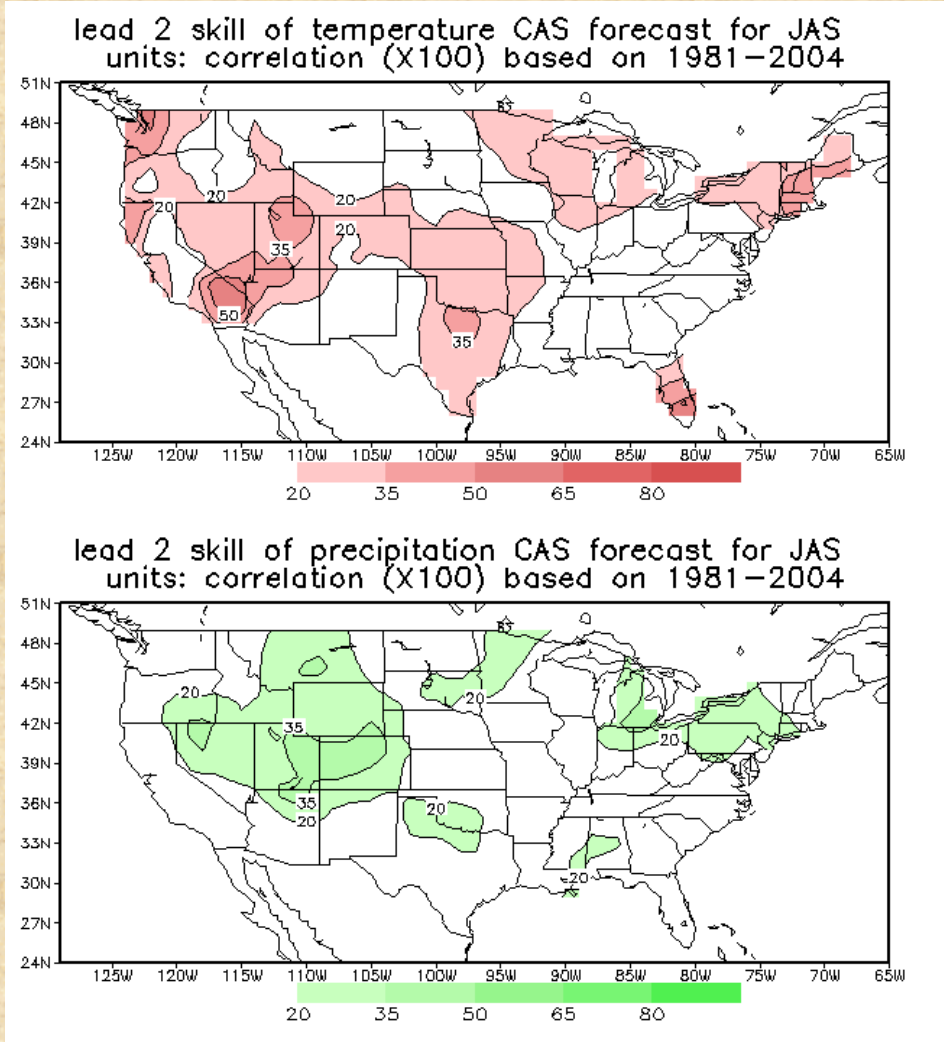


CPC precipitation forecasts are tilted towards dryness in early summer (left), and “EC” (“we don’t know”) for late summer.

Source (for CPC forecasts): ***http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/forecasts/***

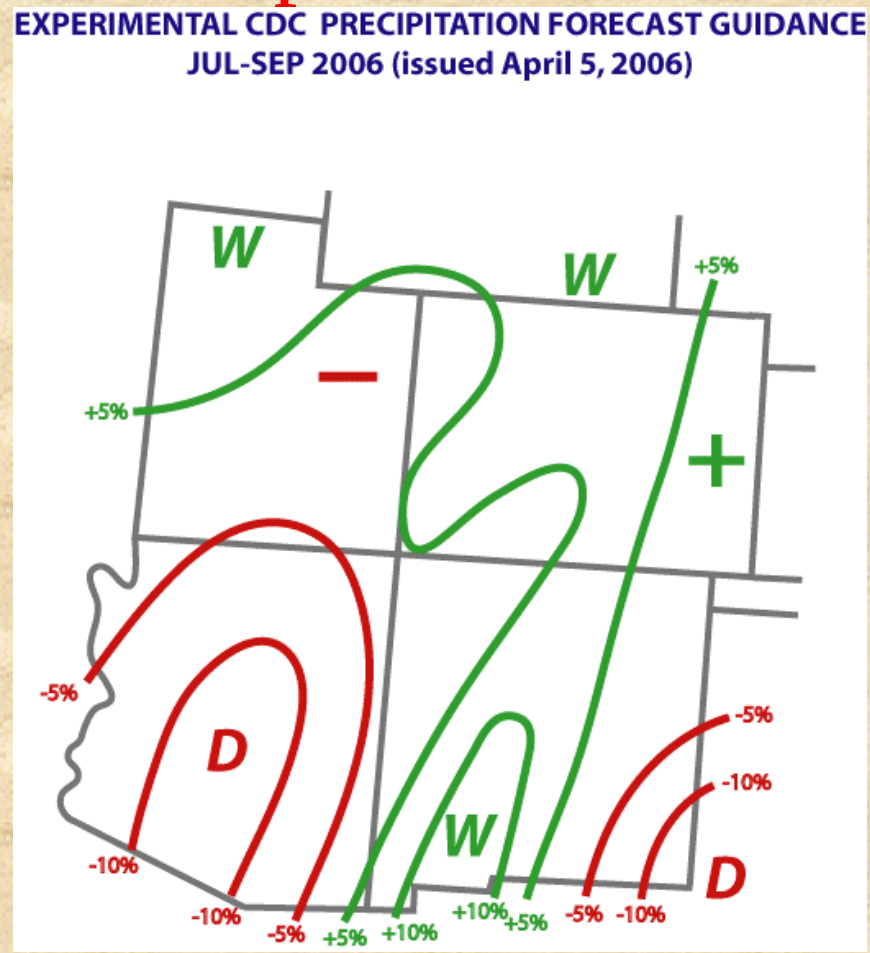
Constructed Analog Forecasts (CPC)

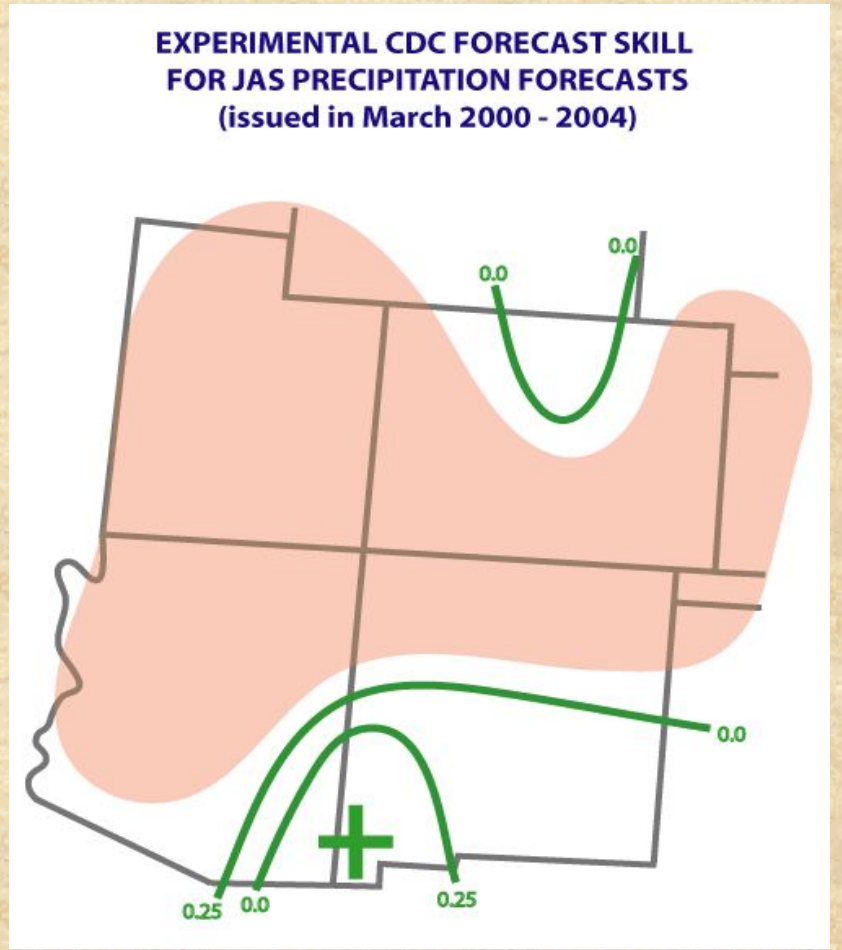




According to ‘Constructed Analog’ forecasts from CPC, late summer (left) combines warmer -than-average temperatures with an enhanced monsoon. At this lead-time, the skill for the precipitation forecast in Colorado is surprisingly good.

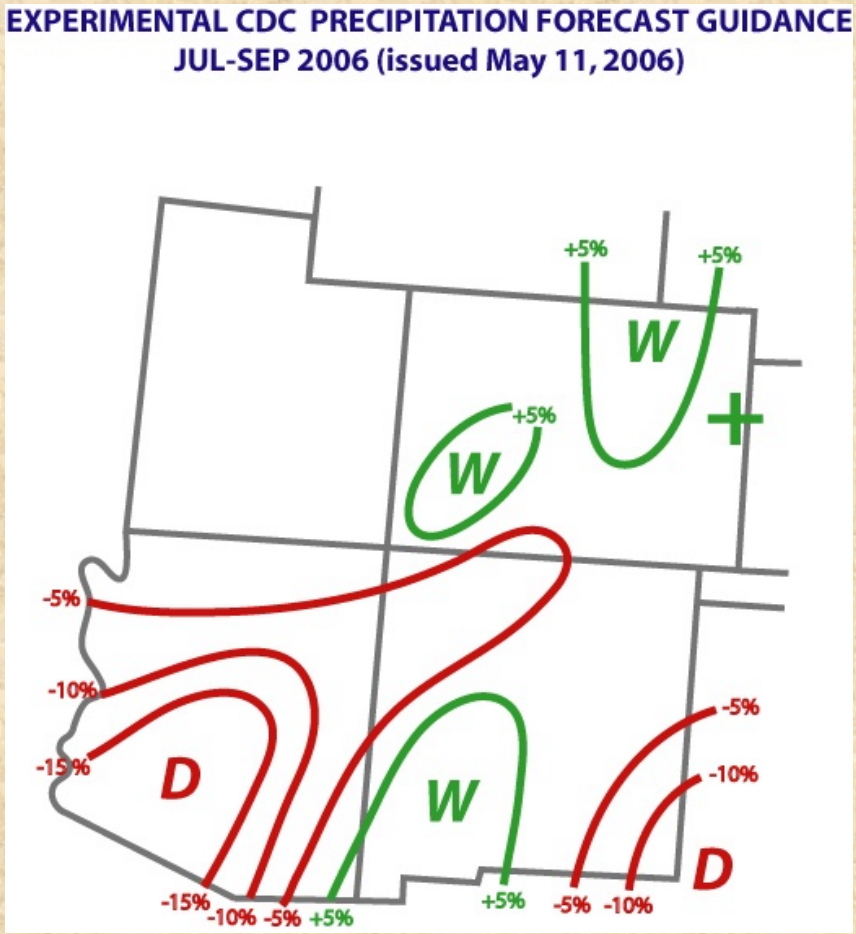
Experimental CDC "Forecast Guidance"

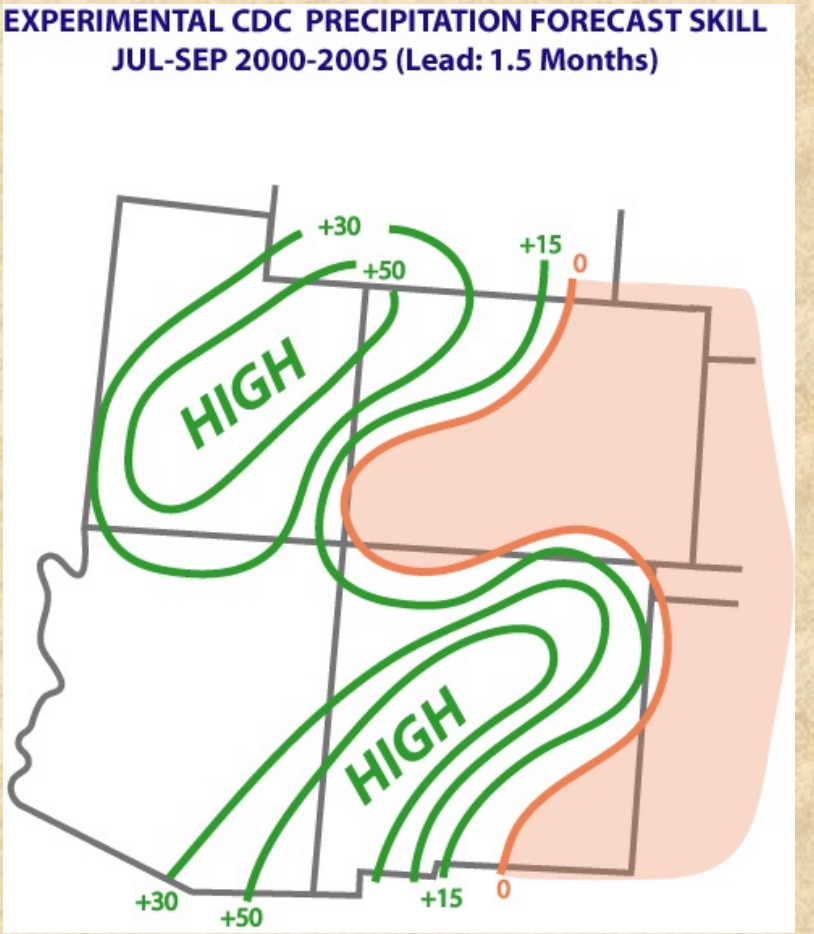




My first forecast of the summer monsoon (left) last month was not supported by much historic skill, except over north-central Colorado (and southern NM). Nevertheless, it was good to see some green on the map (after my updated April-June forecast that was towards dry conditions.

Experimental CDC "Forecast Guidance"





My updated forecast of the summer monsoon (left) maintains a positive tilt of the odds for Colorado, supported by decent skill in the northwestern part of the state (and very high skill in Utah, where the forecast is neutral, and southwestern NM where it is wet). Updated web page by Friday!

Source: **klaus.wolter@noaa.gov;** *http://www.cdc.noaa.gov/people/klaus.wolter/SWcasts/*