

Looks like warm weather will persist from the northern Plains south to the Texas Gulf Coast and across portions of the central and northern Rockies over the next five days as a broad upper-level ridge remains in place. For the most part, the eastern half of the country will see temperatures average out close to normal during the 1-5 day period as a zonal to weak trough flow pattern persists aloft and another weak cold front makes it way across the Ohio Valley into the Northeast Tuesday into Wednesday. By the end of the period, temperatures may begin to reach slightly above normal values across the Ohio Valley and Mid-Atlantic out ahead of the next cold front which is due to move across this coming weekend. Slightly below normal temperatures are expected across extreme west Texas and New Mexico this week as monsoon moisture combines with upper-level disturbances to produce several periods of clouds and rain.

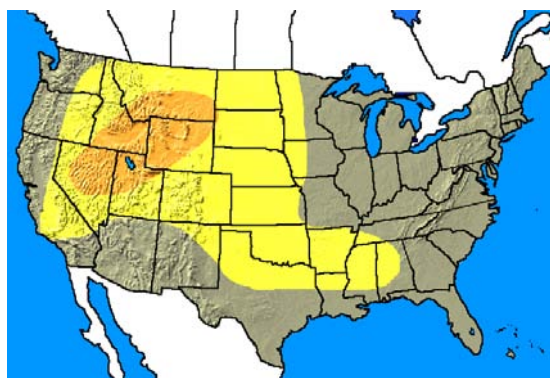
During the 6-10 day period, models continue to indicate periodic frontal systems moving across the eastern third of the country with a weak upper-level trough in place especially across the upper Great Lakes and Northeast. As a result, temperatures are likely to continue to average out close to normal values. The upper-level ridge now centered across the central Plains is expected to retrograde westward and strengthen somewhat during the period. Therefore, temperatures are expected to remain slightly above normal across much of the Plains and will likely further increase to well above normal across the inner-mountain west.

During the 11-15 day period, models show the upper-level ridge across the Rockies shifting even further west in response to a deepening upper-level trough developing across the northern Plains and upper Great Lakes. As a result, temperatures are expected to be more near normal across portions of the Plains while above normal temperatures will be likely across the Pacific Northwest and Great Basin regions. Above normal temperatures are also expected across the eastern US as weak upper-level ridging is likely to develop in response to the trough over the upper Great Lakes. By the end of the period this trough may drag in some Canadian air resulting in slightly cooler than average temperatures across the upper Great Lakes. Will monitor future model runs before indicating such a cool down.

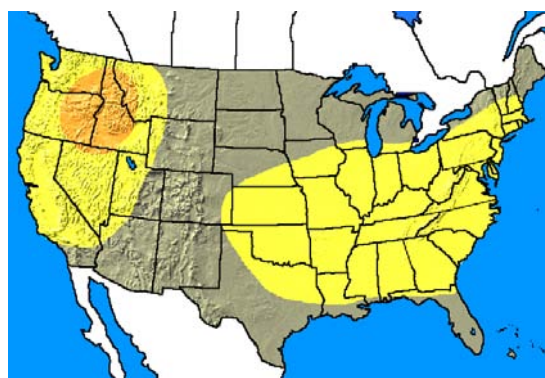
**1-5 Day Forecast Temperature Anomalies
August 15-19**









**6-10 Day Forecast Temperature Anomalies
August 20-24**



**11-15 Day Forecast Temperature Anomalies
August 25-29**



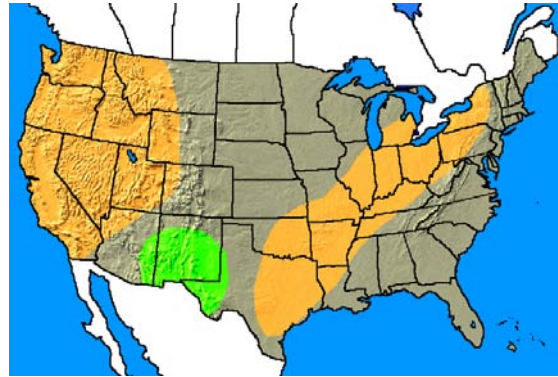
KEY to Forecast Temperature Anomalies		-3 F to -6 F		+3 F to +6 F
		-7 F to -10 F		+7 F to +10 F
		-11 F or Lower		+11 F or Higher

The cold front currently moving through the Ohio and Tennessee Valley regions will continue to slide eastward across the east coast bringing shower and thunderstorm activity during the first couple days of the 1-5 day period. High pressure will build across the eastern US in wake of this front keeping dry conditions in place across the lower Great Lakes and Ohio Valley. Below average precipitation is also expected to continue across the southern Plains and Texas Coast as a ridge of high pressure remains in place. Dry conditions will dominate much of the western US as an upper-level high pressure ridge is in control over this area as well. Some increased monsoon moisture will interact with a couple upper-level disturbances over the next few days to help produce some much needed rainfall across New Mexico and west Texas.

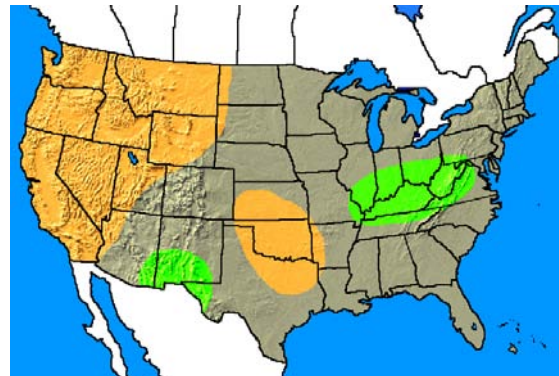
During the 6-10 day and 11-15 day periods, models indicating a stronger upper-level ridge across the western US, which will likely result in continued dry conditions. Also, portions of the southern Plains are expected to remain dry as a weaker but steady upper-level ridge persists across this area. Somewhat wetter conditions appear to be in store across portions of the upper Mississippi Valley, Ohio Valley, and lower Great Lakes regions as a couple upper-level troughs move across with their associated frontal systems. Some models indicate these fronts stalling which would possibly create a set-up for periods of heavier rainfall. Latest models also show the monsoon flow across New Mexico weakening somewhat by the end of the 6-10 day period and thus more normal precipitation is expected. Finally, an increase in moisture is also progged by some models over portions of the southeastern US during the 11-15 day period. Have cautiously decided to buy this scenario and have placed an area of above normal precipitation. However, will monitor future model runs to see if this trend continues.

Below is a map showing the latest drought situation across the country. As you can see the northern and southern Plains suffer the biggest deficit. Latest long-range precipitation models indicate no significant improvement across either region. Would not be surprised if the far western US gets a little drier as well.

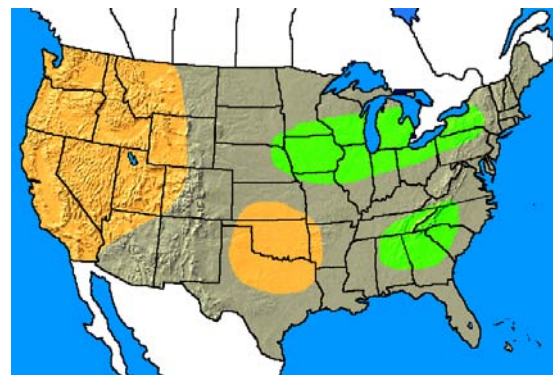
1-5 Day Forecast Precipitation Anomalies August 15-19



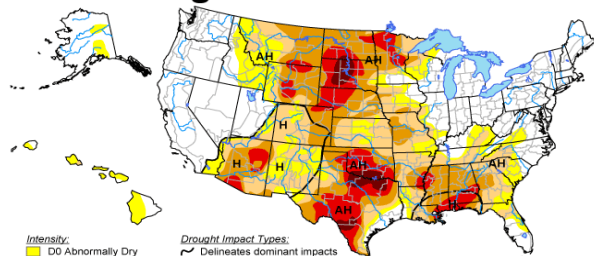
6-10 Day Forecast Precipitation Anomalies August 20-24



11-15 Day Forecast Precipitation Anomalies August 25-29



U.S. Drought Monitor August 8, 2006



Intensity:
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Drought - Moderate
 D2 Drought - Severe
 D3 Drought - Extreme
 D4 Drought - Exceptional

Drought Impact Types:
 ~ Delineates dominant impacts
 A = Agricultural (crops, pastures, grasslands)
 H = Hydrological (water)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary

