Why Focus on Bilateral Coordination for Drought Early Warning in the Rio Grande/ Bravo Basin?

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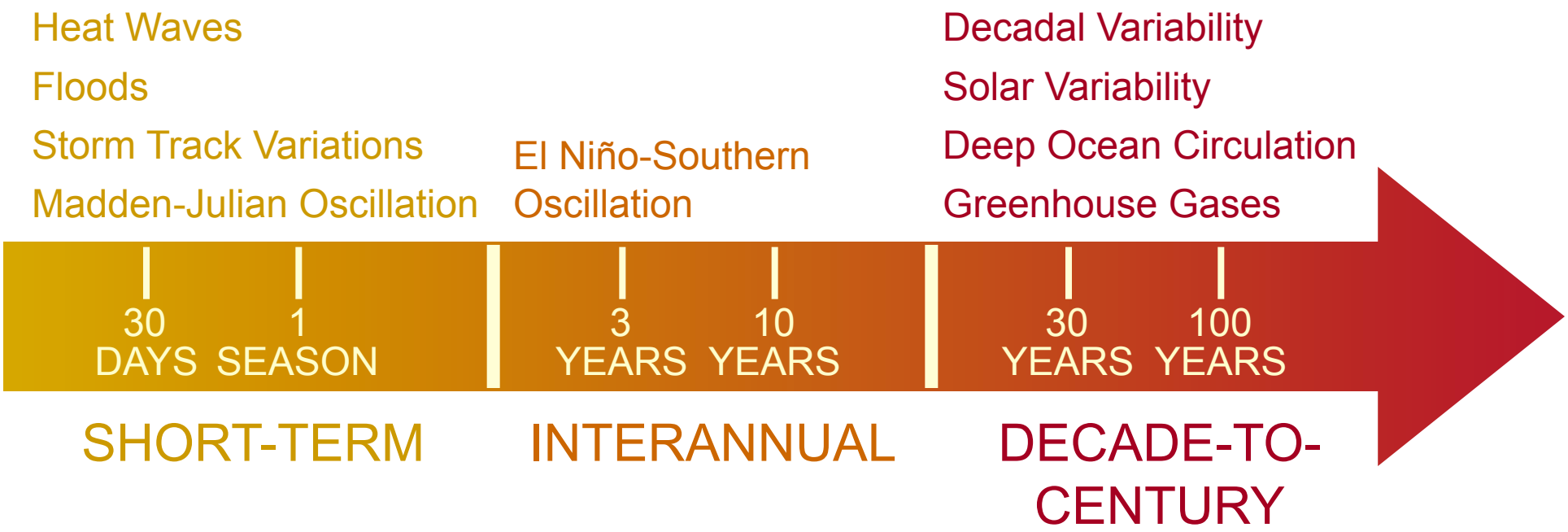
Drought is perhaps the most obstinate and pernicious of the dramatic events that Nature conjures up. It can last longer and extend across larger areas than hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes. At its most severe, drought creates vast, windblown dust bowls—eroding the landscape, damaging terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat, contributing to widespread wildfire, causing hundreds of millions of dollars in losses, and dashing hopes and dreams.

-National Drought Policy Commission Report, 2000

Drought Contributors

Short & Long Range

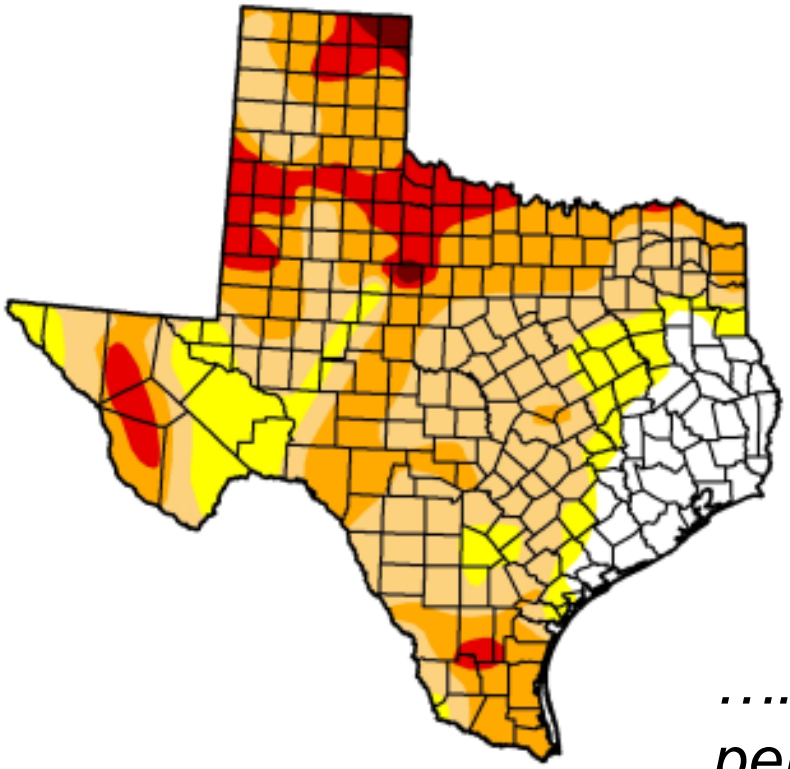
— SCALE OF DROUGHT —



Droughts span an enormous range of time scales

Droughts can be caused by a number of complex and interacting variables

Drought is Local



…..as with rainbows each person experiences their own drought

-Kelly Redmond

Context

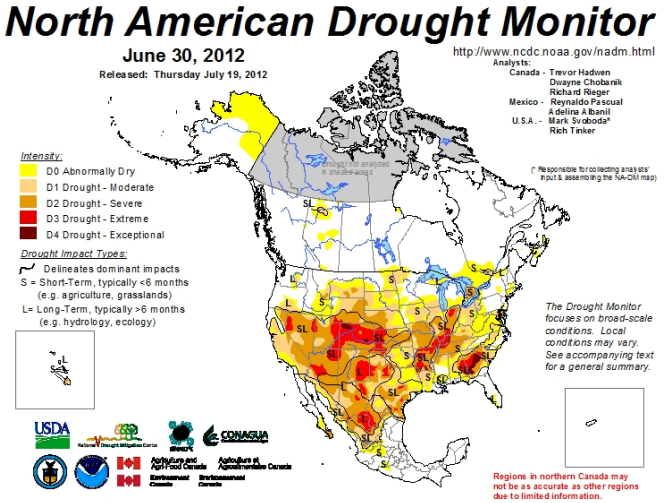
- Recent political agreements:
  - Western Governors Association (WGA): focused on climate extremes, including drought, and early warning systems
  - North American Climate Services Partnership (NACSP): facilitate exchange of climate information and improve climate products & services

Cancun Discussion

- How could we work regionally to improve early warning and monitoring of drought and other climate hazards?
  - Improving data sources and data sharing
  - Improving input into the North American Drought Monitor
  - Improved predictive capabilities

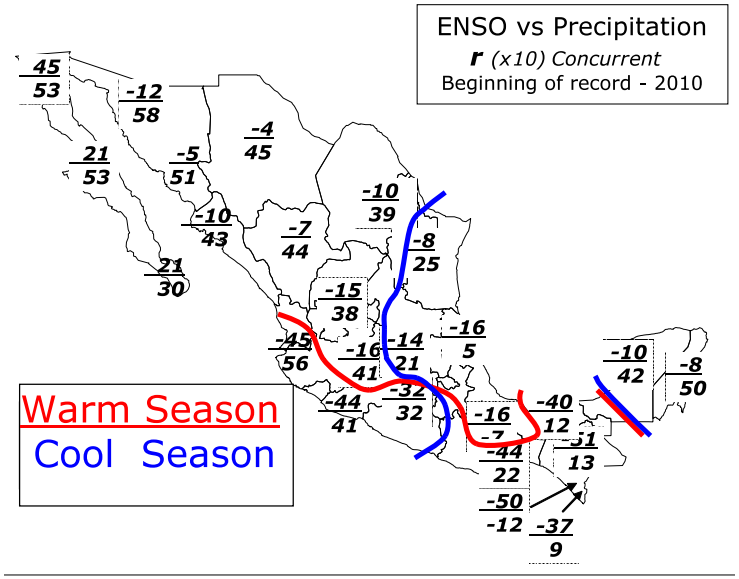
Opportunities

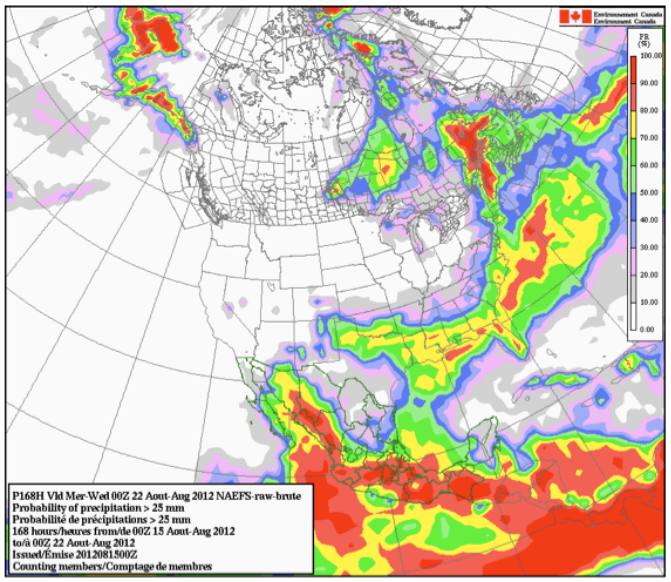
- Data and monitoring gaps focused around early detection of drought
  - North American Drought Monitor (NADM)
    - Data and Information feeding into NADM
      - Who provides: federal, state, local input
      - Ways to capture drought impact information
- "Ground truth" existing products and services



Opportunities

- Predictions and Scenarios
  - How to effectively use forecast information (e.g. seasonal, streamflow, etc.)
  - Integrate forecasts into monitoring and preparedness activities (e.g. climate outlook forums)
  - Establish scenario planning exercises





Benefits and Partnerships

- Build sustained user partnerships
  - Establish early warning capacity and frameworks
  - Multi-hazard needs assessment/synthesis
- What are the benefits and could they sustain the process?

Thanks