

La Niña may be gaining steam to return to Tahoe

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

La Niña, the weather pattern that helped produce an epic winter for the Reno-Tahoe region in 2011, could return in a few months.

The U.S. Climate Prediction Center on Thursday issued a La Niña watch, citing conditions indicating a return of the climatic phenomenon sometime next fall.



Heavy snow last winter forced trees into houses.
Photo/LTN file

La Niña, characterized by cooler surface ocean temperatures in the eastern Pacific, was in place from late 2010 through much of 2011 but was declared over by the climate center two months ago.

So-called “neutral” conditions are in place today. Predictions into what will happen next vary by computer model, but some suggest the return of a mild La Niña by fall.

The climate center also cites “the historical tendency for significant wintertime La Niña episodes to be followed by

relatively weaker La Niña episodes the following winter.”

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