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# The Pickle Barrel Review

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTON  
MOUNTAIN DIGITAL RADIO ASSOCIATION

August 2020

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## **Introduction**

Greetings one and all to the first issue of the Pickle Barrel Review! The hope is to make this a regular monthly publication filled with the latest happenings not only of the W7NEO system, and the NE-OREGON room, but System Fusion and other Ham Radio related goings on as well. That said, we invite others to contribute with articles, or if your club or organization is having an event such as a tailgate, swap meet, VE testing, or whatever you can list it here as well. The only thing we ask is that your contribution be nonpolitical (unless it's a government action that directly affects Ham Radio), respectful of others (no personal attacks), and relatively family friendly. So, all that said, feel free to reach in the barrel, grab yourself a pickle, pull up a chair and have sit while we discuss the latest happenings in Ham Radio.

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## **Repeater Updates**

This month was a busy one for the W7NEO system. Work continued with the Cabbage Hill repeaters (444.975 & 146.88) trying to reduce, and or eliminate all together the noise interference that was trashing the 146.88 machine. Although we did install an inline A/C noise filter it appears that perhaps we may not have been the only ones falling victim to the noise. Although the filter was effective at reducing the noise, it seems to have simply stopped all on it's own. Ironically it was after a conversation on the repeater in which a comment was made that we finally had the contact information for the FCC enforcement division and was planning on simply handing the issue over to them. I'm not saying that the originator of the noise was listening, but it is nice to not have to deal with the noise for the past few weeks. Fingers crossed it stays gone!

Another progress report pertains to the Weston Mountain repeaters. After (literally) years of talking the installation and raising of the tower is finally complete! For photos of this monumental undertaking check out the Photo Gallery section of the web site. Unfortunately, due to safety concerns we were unable to go the entire 45 feet and had to instead settle for 35 feet. Considering just how high the antennas "weren't," and how well they were still performing regardless, raising both the 147.040 and the 441.700 antennas up another 25 feet, in addition to upgrading both of the feedlines to 7/8" Helix will most definitely result in some increased coverage for both machines. We might still add the missing 10 ft of tower at a later date depending upon availability of equipment such as a bucket truck, etc. So, either way I'm sure we'll be doing the Happy Dance once we are able to verify the improved coverage.

Speaking of both Cabbage Hill and Weston Mountain, the analog side of each site will be undergoing a slight change. The 441.700 DR2X will be getting replaced with a Kenwood TKR-850, and for the 146.880 repeater on Cabbage Hill the DR1X will be getting replaced with a Kenwood TKR-750. These are both commercial

grade repeaters, and if the reviews are correct both machines should provide excellent service for years to come. Although the DR2X is to be repurposed, one of the two DR1X (refurbished) will most likely be going up for sale. The other has already been spoken for.

Well that's about it for our system status update for now. I wish I could tell you all that we have a date and will be installing the Chandler Butte repeater soon, but unfortunately this CONVID 19 fiasco that has a choke hold on everything is also delaying our installation of a new repeater on the system. Hopefully next month I'll have some better news.

- Lynn Wilson, K7LW

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## **Disaster Preparedness**

So last winter was abit on the crazy side with all the flooding, and what not, which makes most of us wonder if there have been any indications as to what we can expect for this winter? One of the things that has a significant effect on weather is the formation of either an El Nino, or an El Nina. Okay so what exactly is an El Nino, or El Nina? Well I'm glad you asked;

*The El Niño/Southern Oscillation has a major influence on climate patterns in various parts of the world. This naturally occurring phenomenon involves fluctuating ocean temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific, coupled with changes in the atmosphere. Scientific progress on the understanding and modelling of this phenomenon has improved prediction skills to within a range of one to nine months in advance, giving society the opportunity to prepare for associated hazards such as heavy rains, floods and drought.*

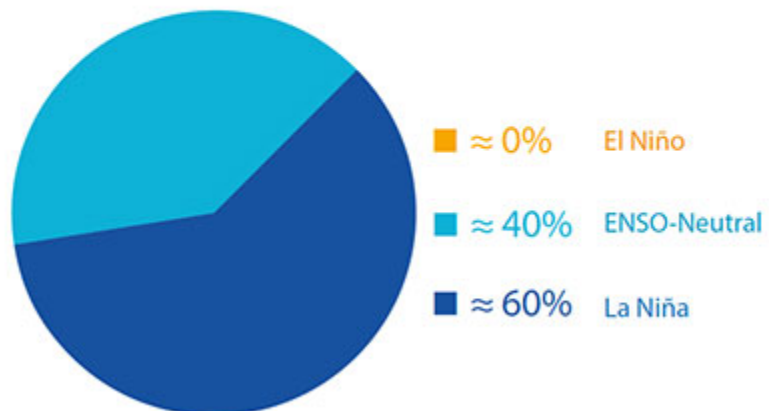
Organizations such as the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) track the potential formation of both the El Nino and El Nina's in order to try and get a leg up on just what to expect for winter and summer weather patterns. Here is what their saying about this winter:

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) status in the tropical Pacific remains neutral, signifying that neither El Niño nor La Niña is currently occurring. However, since May both surface and sub-surface waters in the region have leaned to below average. The latest forecasts from the WMO Global Producing Centers of Long Range Forecasts indicate that tropical Pacific sea surface temperatures are likely to cool further, potentially reaching La Niña levels during September 2020. Given current conditions and model predictions, the chance of La Niña during September-November 2020 is estimated to be around 60%, with about a 40% chance for ENSO-neutral conditions to continue. Chances for La Niña decrease to 55% for the December-February 2020/2021 period. National Meteorological and Hydrological Services will closely monitor changes in the state of ENSO over the coming months and provide updated outlooks.

### In summary:

- The tropical Pacific has been an ENSO-neutral condition since July 2019. However, since May 2020, sea surface temperatures over the area have leaned slightly towards below-average.
- Current observations show below-average surface and sub-

ESTIMATED ENSO PROBABILITIES  
FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2020



- surface water temperatures in the tropical Pacific, suggesting a likely tendency towards further decreases in sea surface temperature, possibly reaching La Niña thresholds during September 2020.
- Model predictions and expert assessment indicate that the probability for La Niña development during September-November 2020 is about 60%, while that for ENSO-neutral conditions continuing is 40% and that for El Niño is near-zero. For the December-February 2020/2021 season, the probability for La Niña slightly drops to about 55%, while that for ENSO-neutral remains at 40% and that for El Niño marginally rises to 5%.
- Sea surface temperatures in the east-central Pacific Ocean are most likely to be in the range of 0.3 to 1.3 degrees Celsius below average during

September-November 2020, and 0.1 to 1.2 degrees below average during December-February 2020/2021.

The state of ENSO will continue to be carefully monitored by WMO Members and partners. More detailed interpretations of the implications for regional climate variability will be carried out routinely by the climate forecasting community over the coming months and will be made available through the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services.

So there you have it. As if COVID 19 wasn't enough right?

As a disclaimer, the closest I've ever been to being a meteorologist is having maintained various weather monitoring sensors for the feds, owning my own home weather monitoring station, and watching the evening news for the local weather forecast. Other than that I'm just as confused as everyone else with this stuff.

\*Information contained within this article was obtained primarily from [The World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#).

- Lynn Wilson, K7LW

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### **Emergency Communications**

- The ARES folks (Both Oregon & Washington) are planning on having a SET (Simulated Emergency Test) exercise Saturday October 3rd from 0800 to 1400 +/-.
  - Please be aware that the WMDRA (W7NEO) does not participate in any of the above listed training, this information is made available to our users for informational purposes only.
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### **Local Events**

Thanks to COVID 19 most all of the normal yearly events such as Ham Fests, Swap Meets, etc. are pretty much all on hold until further notice. Hopefully once this

plague has tired of ravaging the countryside we can get back to normal and go back to holding our cherished nerd conventions once again. But should you have any knowledge of events such as VE testing, or even something virtual locally going on let us know and we'll get it in the Review for others.

Thanks!

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### **VE Testing**

- Hermiston ARC - September 12, 2020 15:00 - 17:00 – Visit their web page at <https://ai7ho.org/> for location, and other details.
- Tri-Cities ARC - Sept 20, 2020 – Visit their web page at <http://www.w7az.org/> for location, and other details.