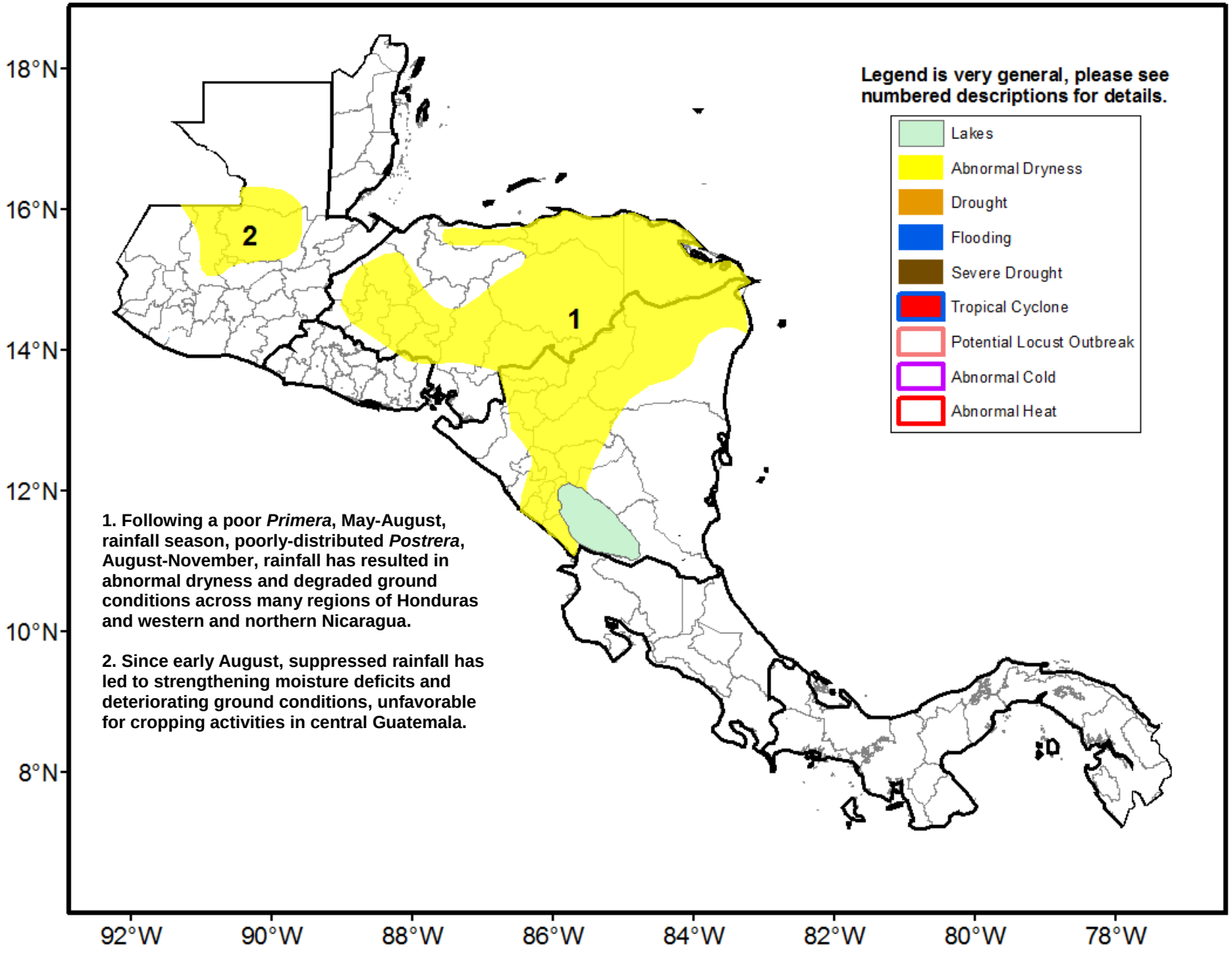
Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook
November 22 – 28, 2018

Dryness has remained across Central America as suppressed rainfall continued over the recent weeks.



1. Following a poor *Primera*, May-August, rainfall season, poorly-distributed *Postrera*, August-November, rainfall has resulted in abnormal dryness and degraded ground conditions across many regions of Honduras and western and northern Nicaragua.

2. Since early August, suppressed rainfall has led to strengthening moisture deficits and deteriorating ground conditions, unfavorable for cropping activities in central Guatemala.

Near-average rainfall forecast over Central America during the next week

From November 13–19, drier weather pattern was observed over Central America, with suppressed rainfall throughout the interior of the region, except the southern Caribbean, where moderate to heavy showers were recorded. This past week's lack of rainfall has led to the strengthening of thirty-day rainfall deficits over northern Central America and southward expansion onto central Nicaragua. Large thirty-day rainfall deficits were now registered over many areas, including parts of Guatemala, Honduras, eastern El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and portions of Panama. An analysis of rainfall frequency also showed that below-average number of rainy days prevailed across the region over the past thirty days. This could indicate an early cessation of seasonal rainfall over many local areas during the past few weeks. Since the beginning of August, accumulated rainfall ranged between 50-80 percent of average across Guatemala, Honduras, north-central Nicaragua, and northwestern Costa Rica. The distribution of rainfall was uneven both in space and time over the past three and plus months and has already adversely impacted cropping activities over many areas. Degraded conditions were displayed over local areas of central and northern Guatemala, southeastern Honduras, north-central Nicaragua, central Costa Rica, and western Panama, according to recent Vegetation Health Index analysis.

For next week, near-average rainfall is expected over Central America, with light to locally moderate rainfall along the Atlantic tier and suppressed rain elsewhere. Farther south, heavy showers are forecast over portions of Costa Rica and Panama. With the second rainfall season coming to an end, the chance for rainfall recovery is slim. Conversely, persisting dry conditions could increase the risks for forest fires over many local areas.

Week 1 Rainfall Total Forecast and CMORPH climatology (mm)
November 21 – 28, 2018

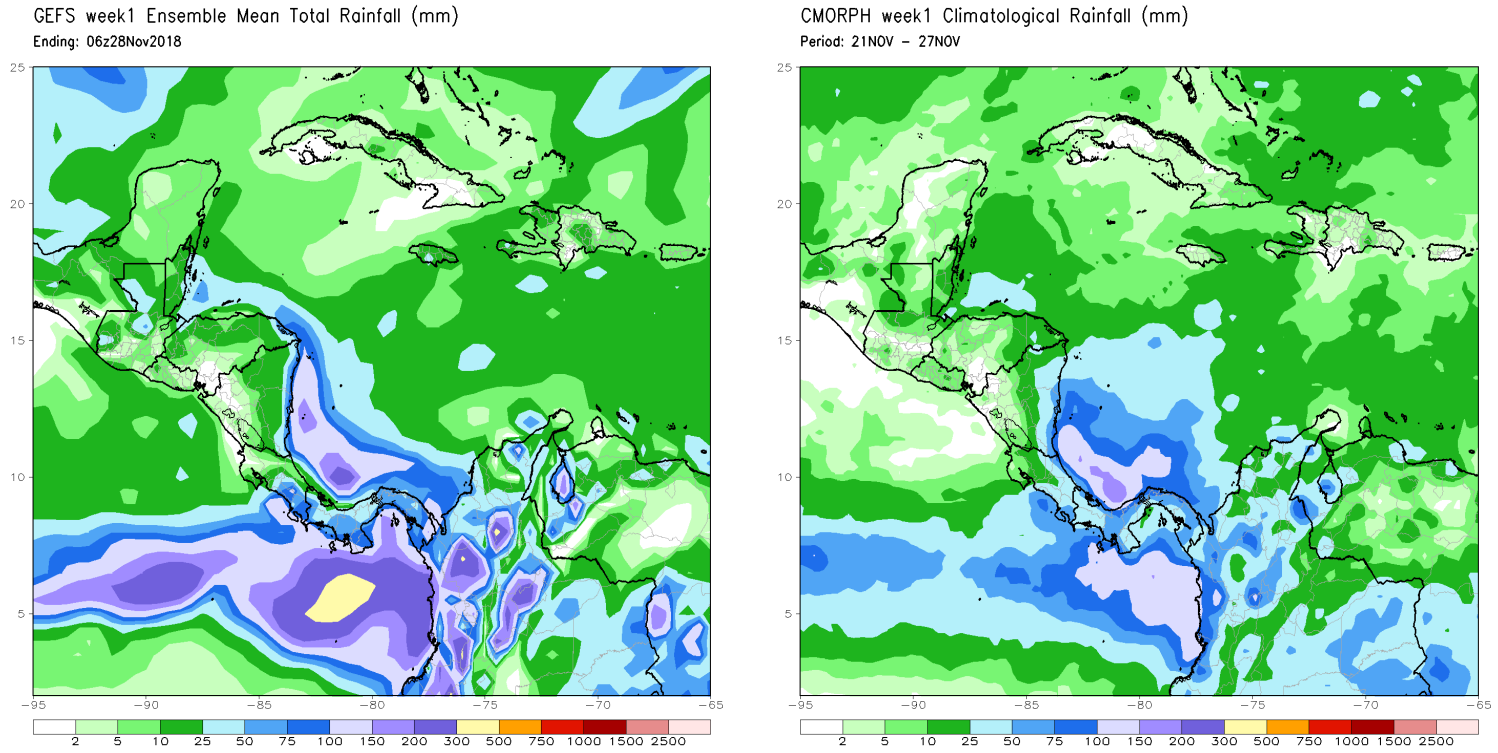


Figure 1: Source NOAA / CPC

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-683-3424.