Winter 2017-2018 SWOP Conference Call

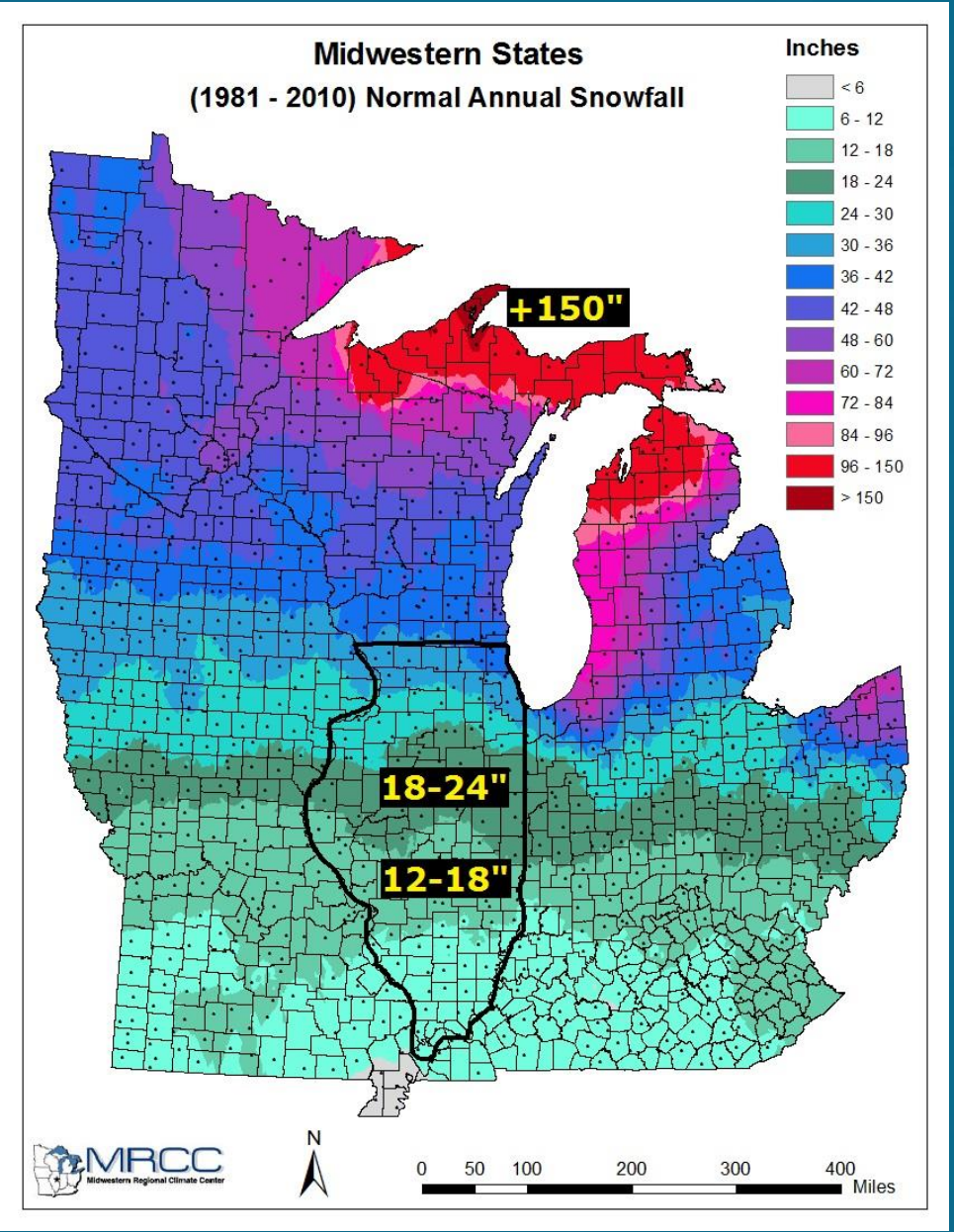
Matt Barnes

So What Exactly is a "Normal" Winter in Central Illinois?

Let's find out...

Markes Rodgers
Rosamond
Christian County
March 21, 2006

Average Annual Snowfall



Peoria: 24.6

Champaign-Urbana: 23.2

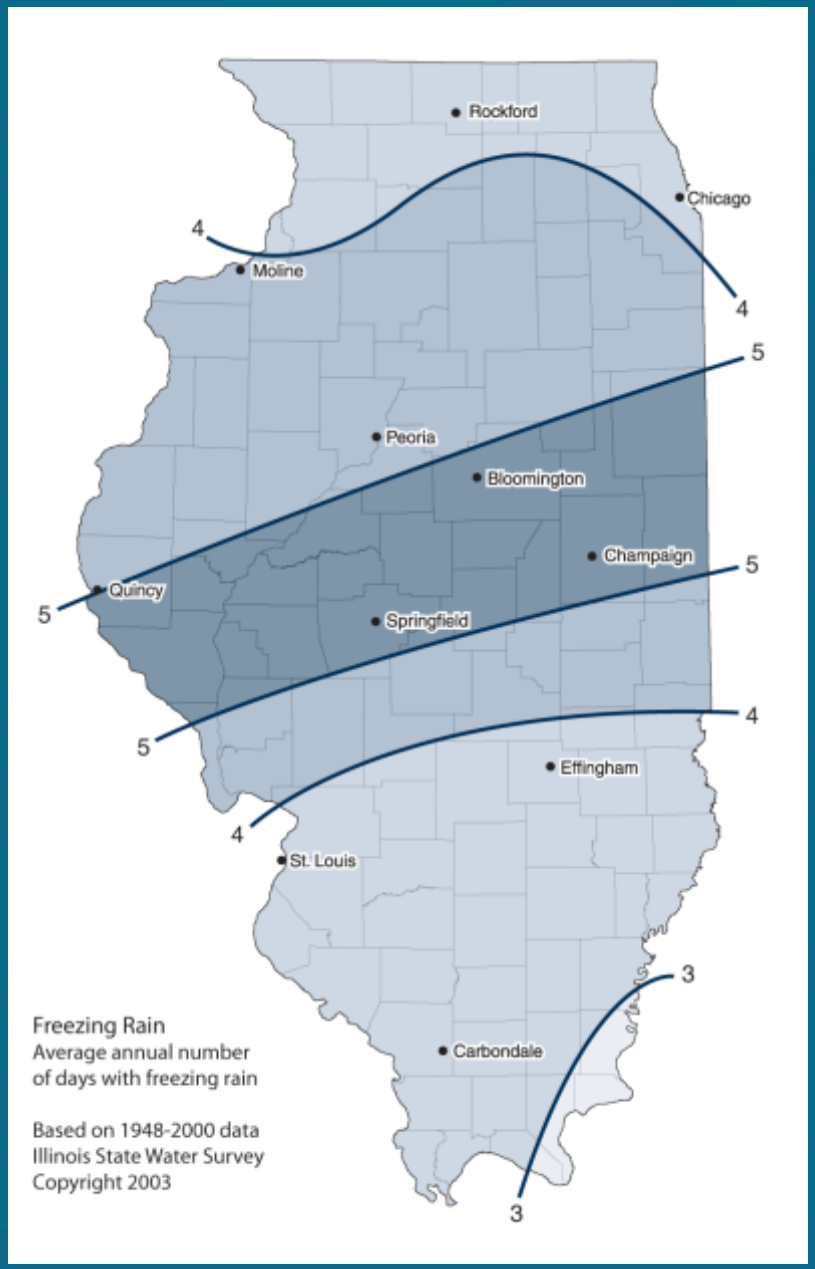
Springfield: 20.9

Bloomington-Normal: 19.9

Charleston: 17.2

Olney: 11.6

Average Freezing Rain Days

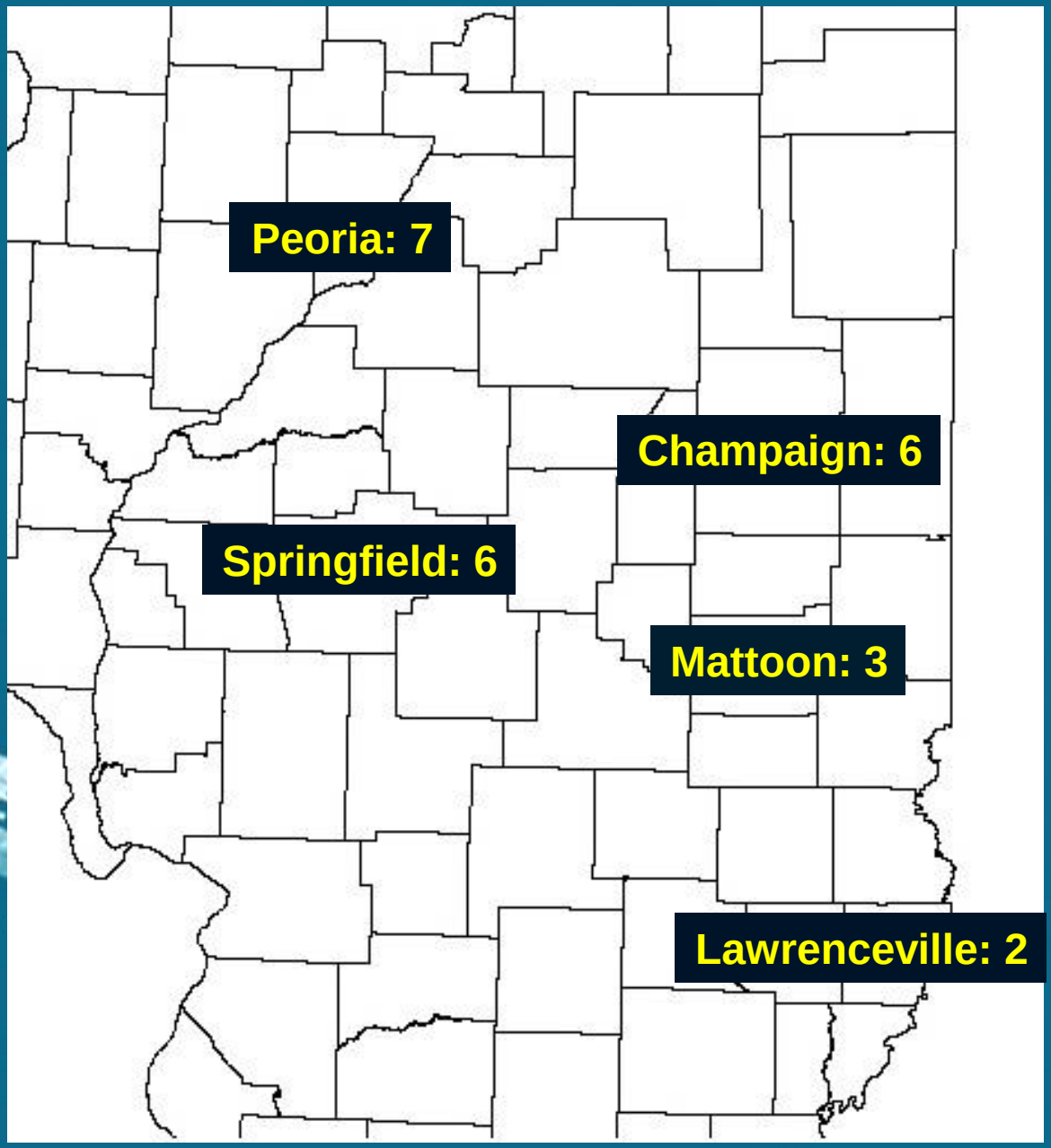


UNIQUE GEOGRAPHY

Cold source region to the north (CANADA)

Warm/Moist source region to the south (GULF OF MEXICO)

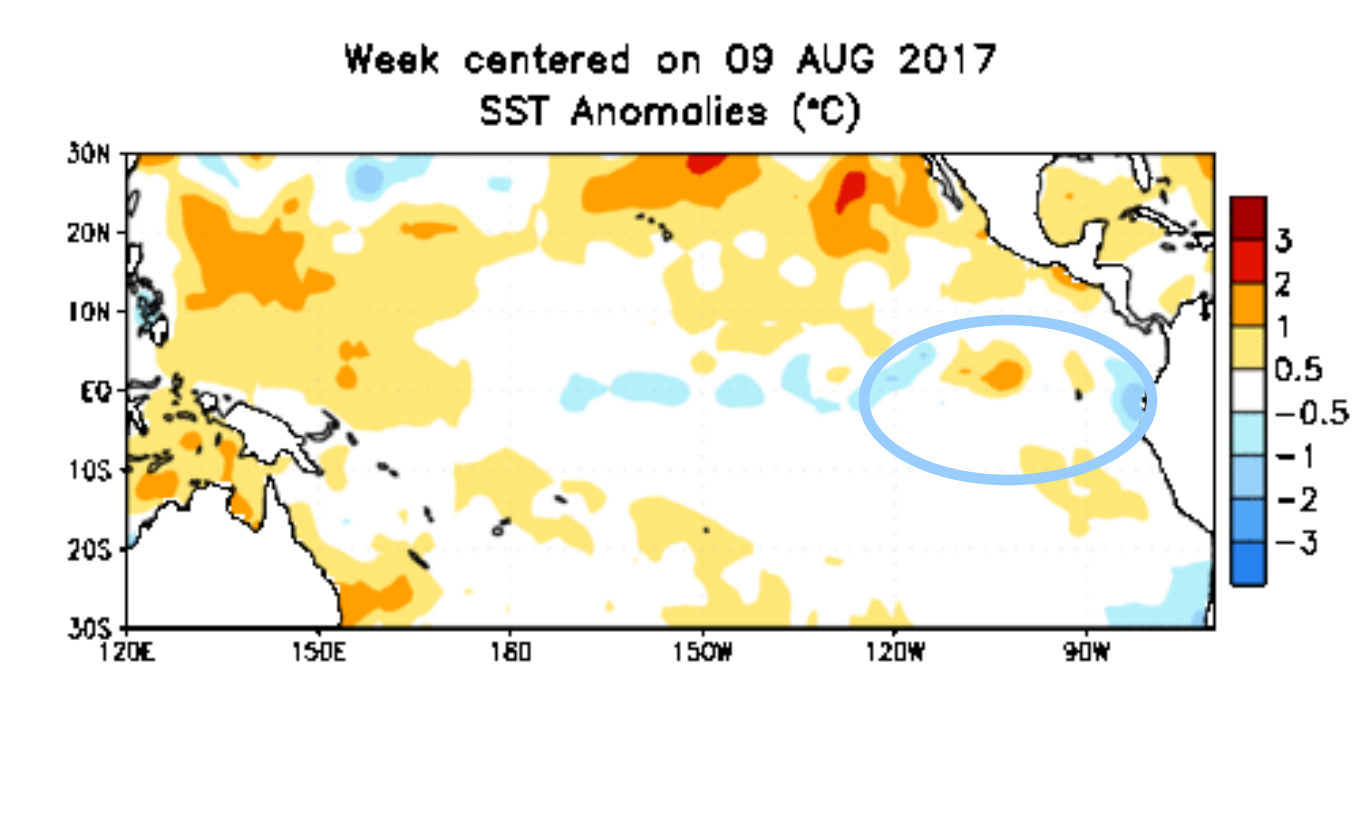
Average Days Below Zero



What Pattern is Evident For This Coming Winter?

- A weak "La Nina" event is currently ongoing in the Equatorial Pacific
- La Nina is a cooling of the waters off the coast of Ecuador/Peru
- This event is expected to persist through February

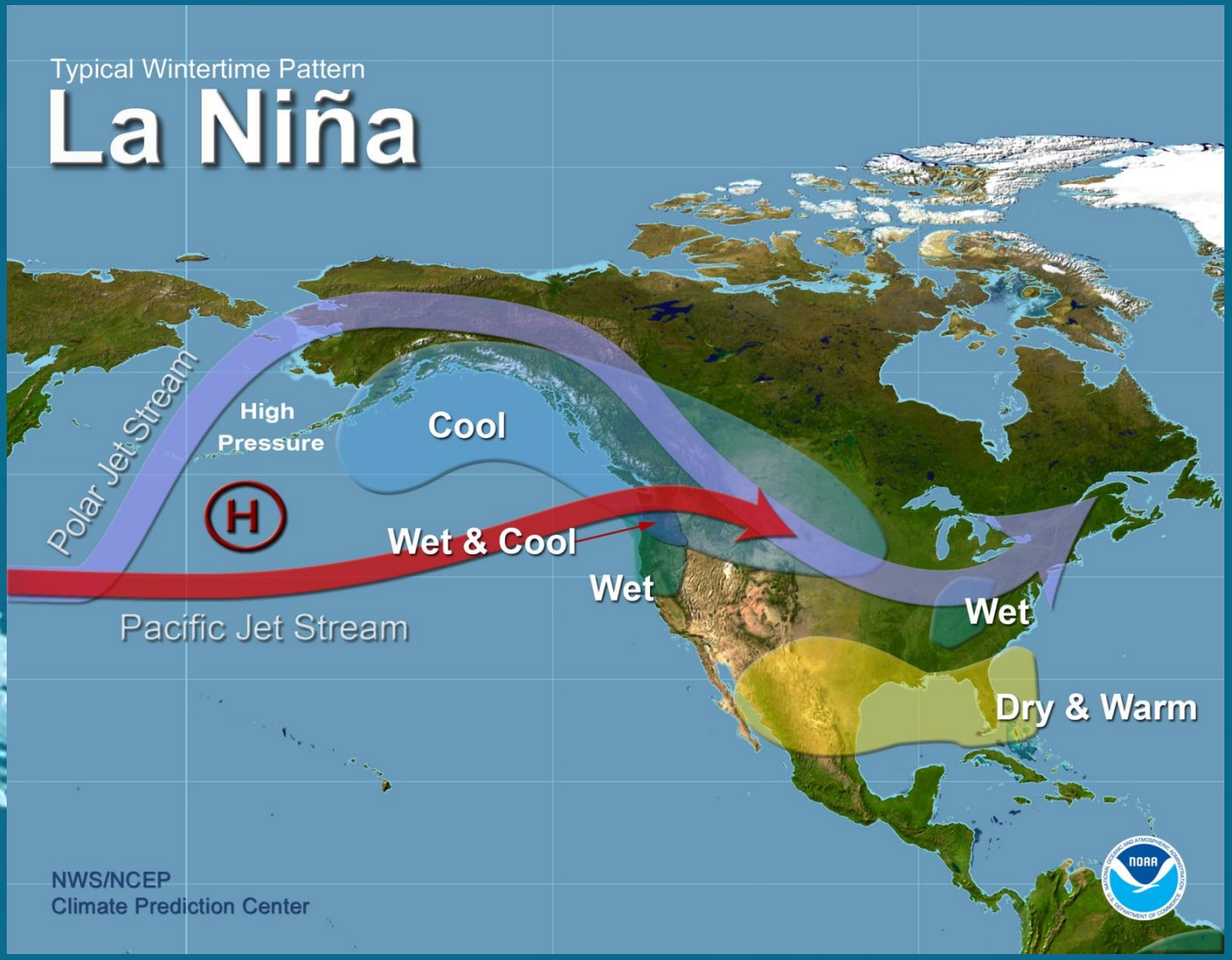
La Nina



Blue colors show cooler than normal sea-surface temperatures

Weak La Nina (1-2 degrees below)

Typical La Nina Weather Pattern

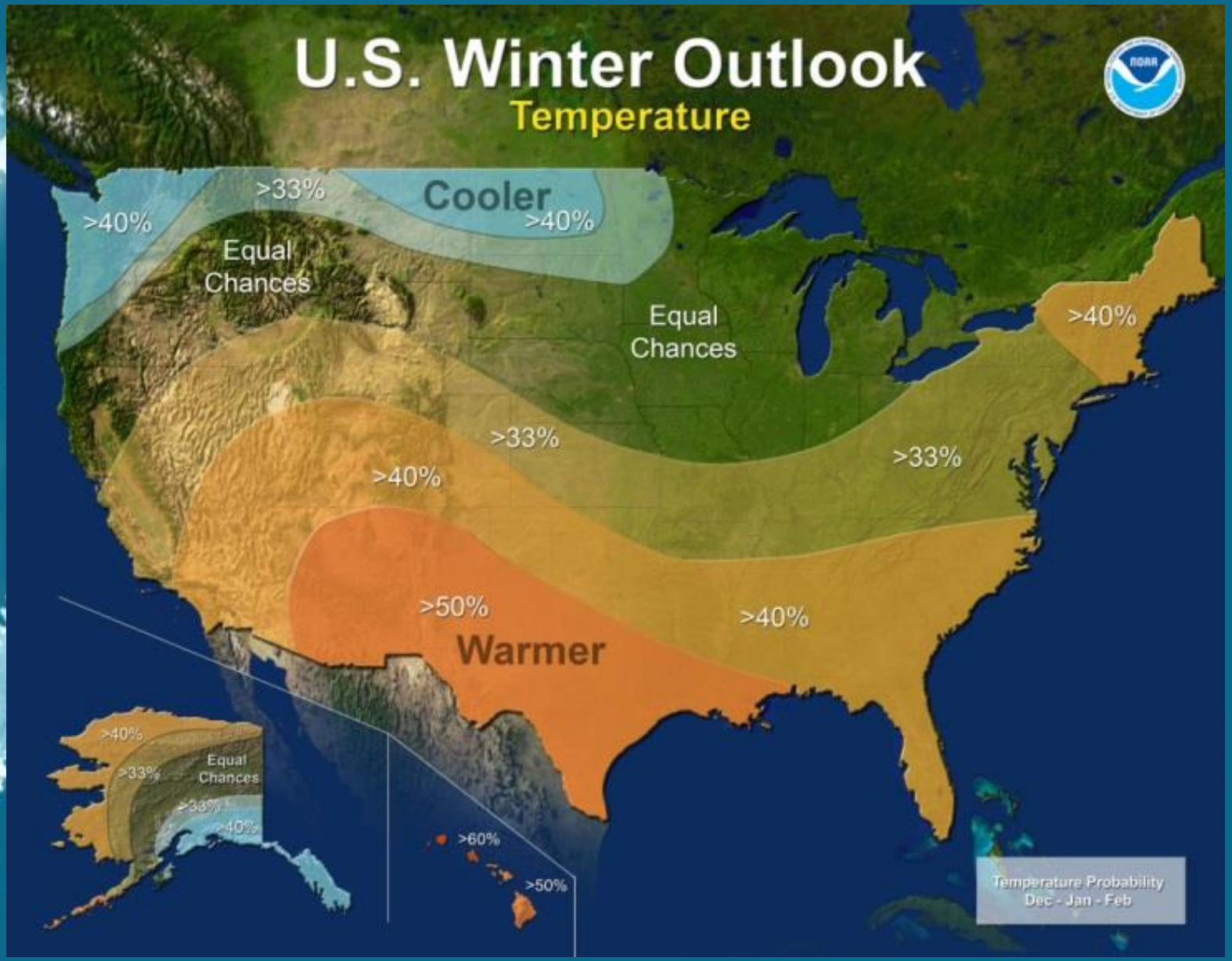


La Nina

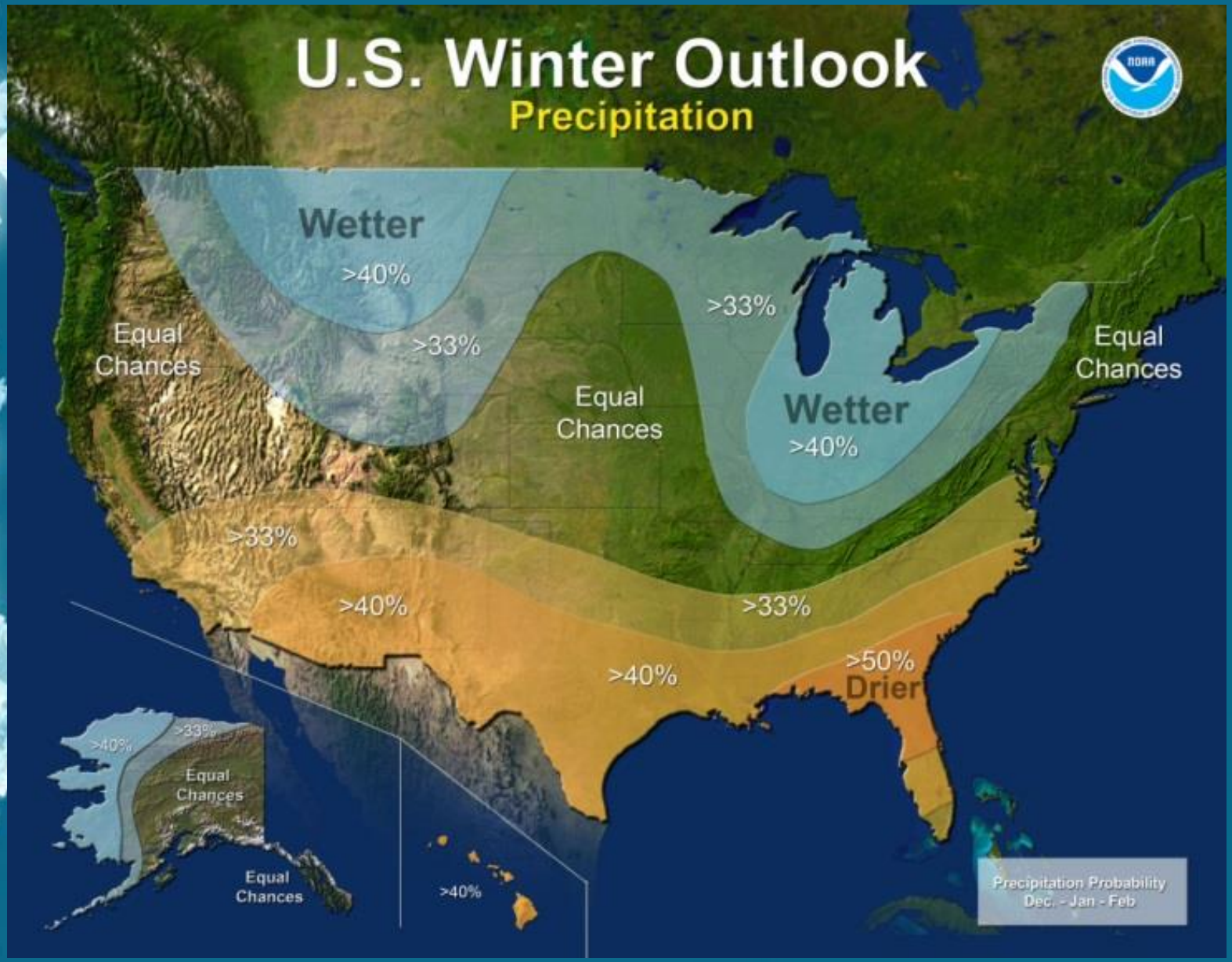
- Important to note that El Nino/La Nina has only a **minor** direct influence on Illinois winters
- Varies depending on strength/location of El Nino/La Nina event as well as timing of onset
- Other short-term circulations are much better (but can't be accurately predicted more than a **couple weeks** in advance)

Now for the Official Winter 2017-2018 Outlook…

2017-2018 Winter Outlook



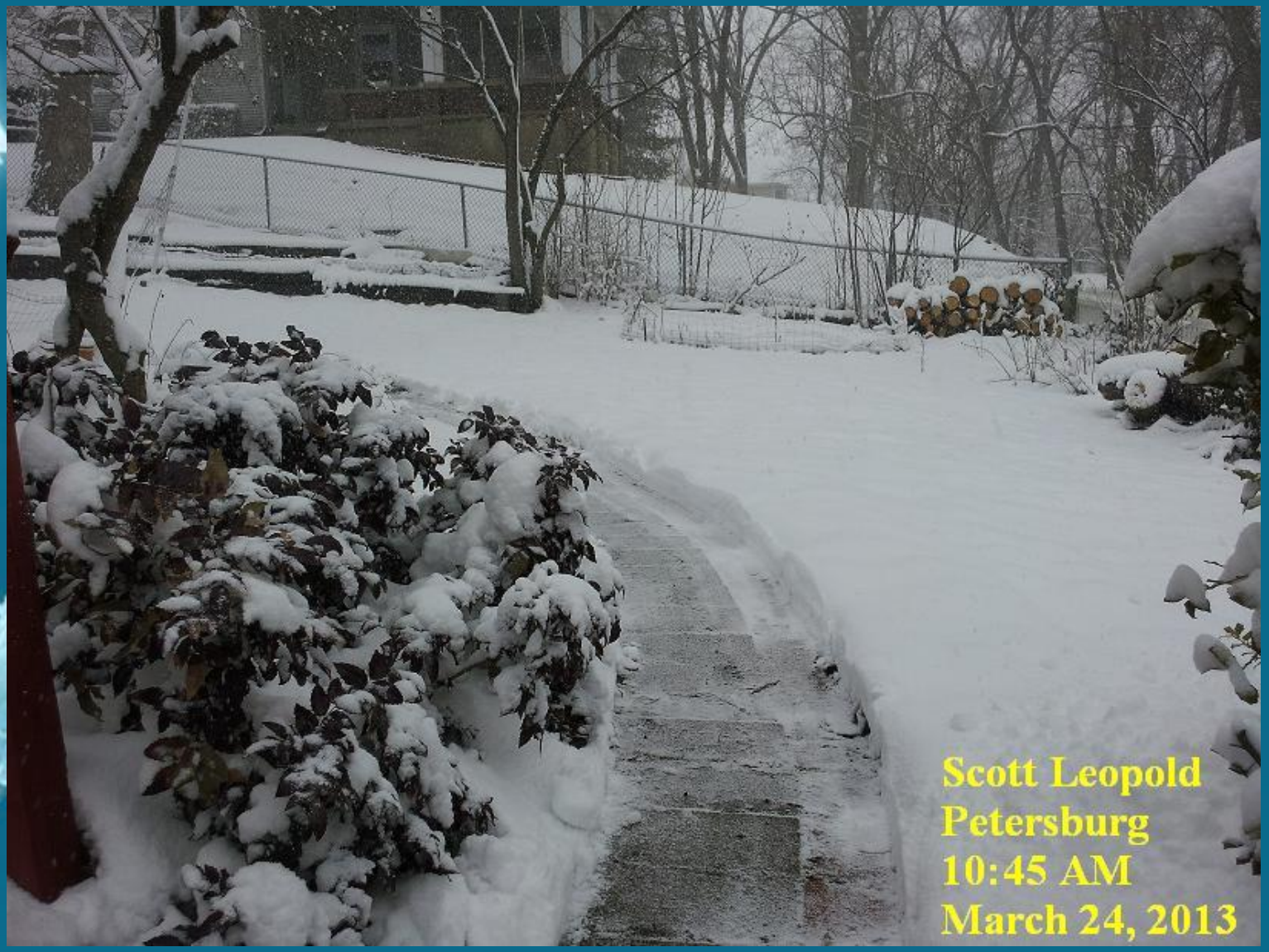
2017-2018 Winter Outlook



Winter Outlook Summary

- **Temperature: No clear trend**
- **Precipitation: Trending above normal (not necessarily snow)**
- **Good chance this winter will be colder than last**
- **Expect large temperature swings (no long periods of cold/warm)**

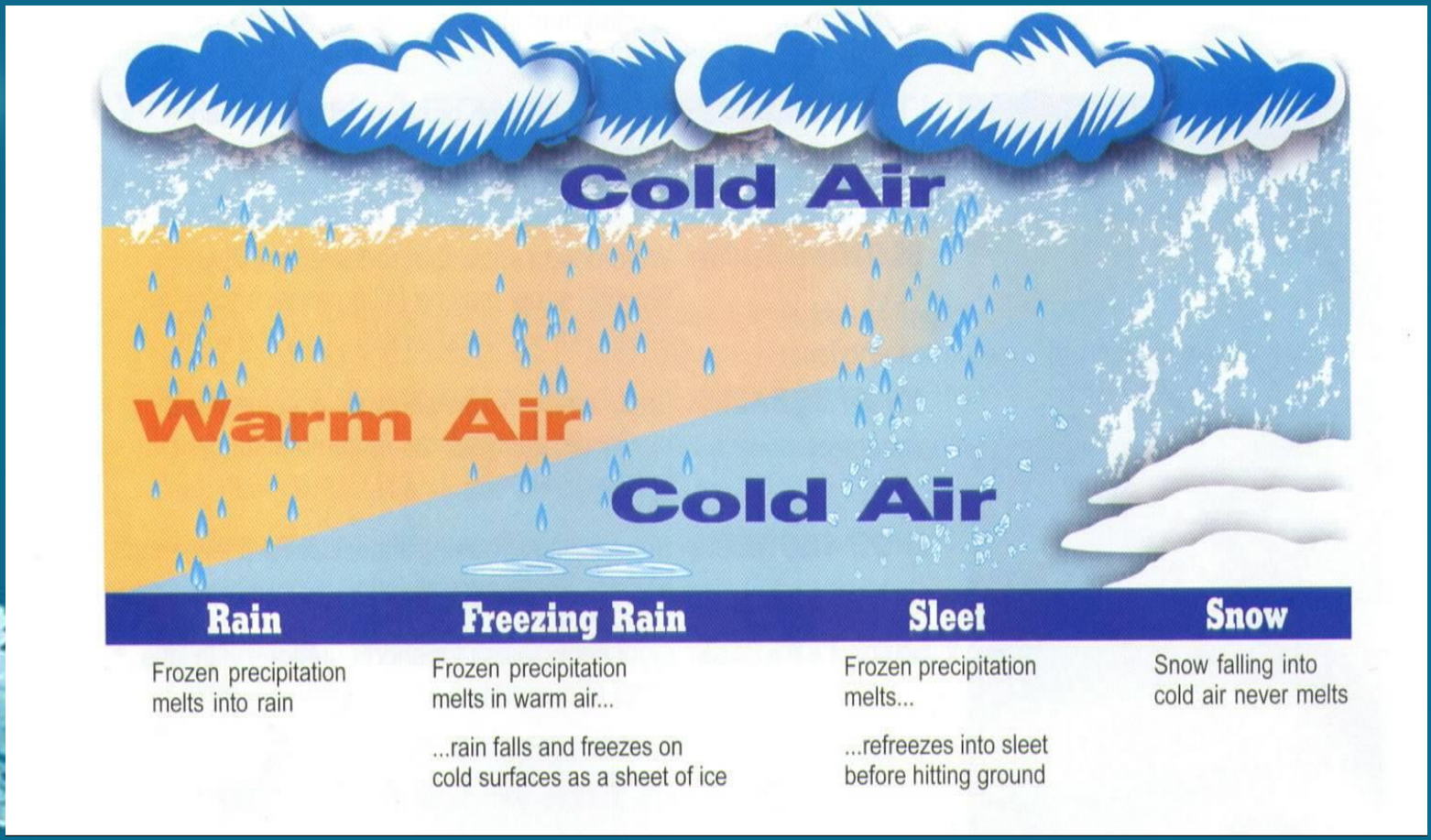
Shifting Gears to Reporting…



Winter Weather Reporting

- **Time of Precipitation Onset:** this can help us assess our current accumulation forecasts
- **Type** (are you getting rain, snow, sleet, freezing rain, or a mixture?)
- **Snowfall measurements** (both during and after the event)

Precipitation Types



Winter Weather Reporting

- **Snowfall** is the amount of NEW snow that has occurred since your last measurement
- **Snow Depth** is the total amount of snow on the ground (both old and new)
- Both can be measured with an official NWS snowstick…or a basic yardstick

How to Measure Snow

- Select a flat, grassy location well away from obstructions (drifting effect)
- Do NOT take measurements on concrete or asphalt surfaces (melting effect)
- Do NOT measure snow drifts
- Take an average of at least 5 readings and use this as your official total

How to Measure Ice

- Find a tree or shrub branch
- Use tape measure or ruler to measure the ice thickness on the top side and bottom side of branch
- Divide by 2 to get the average ice accumulation
- Example: ¾” + ¼” divided by 2 yields ½”

Winter Resources

SWOP Training Page

weather.gov/ilx/swop-training

YouTube Training Videos

4 short clips (5-8 minute)

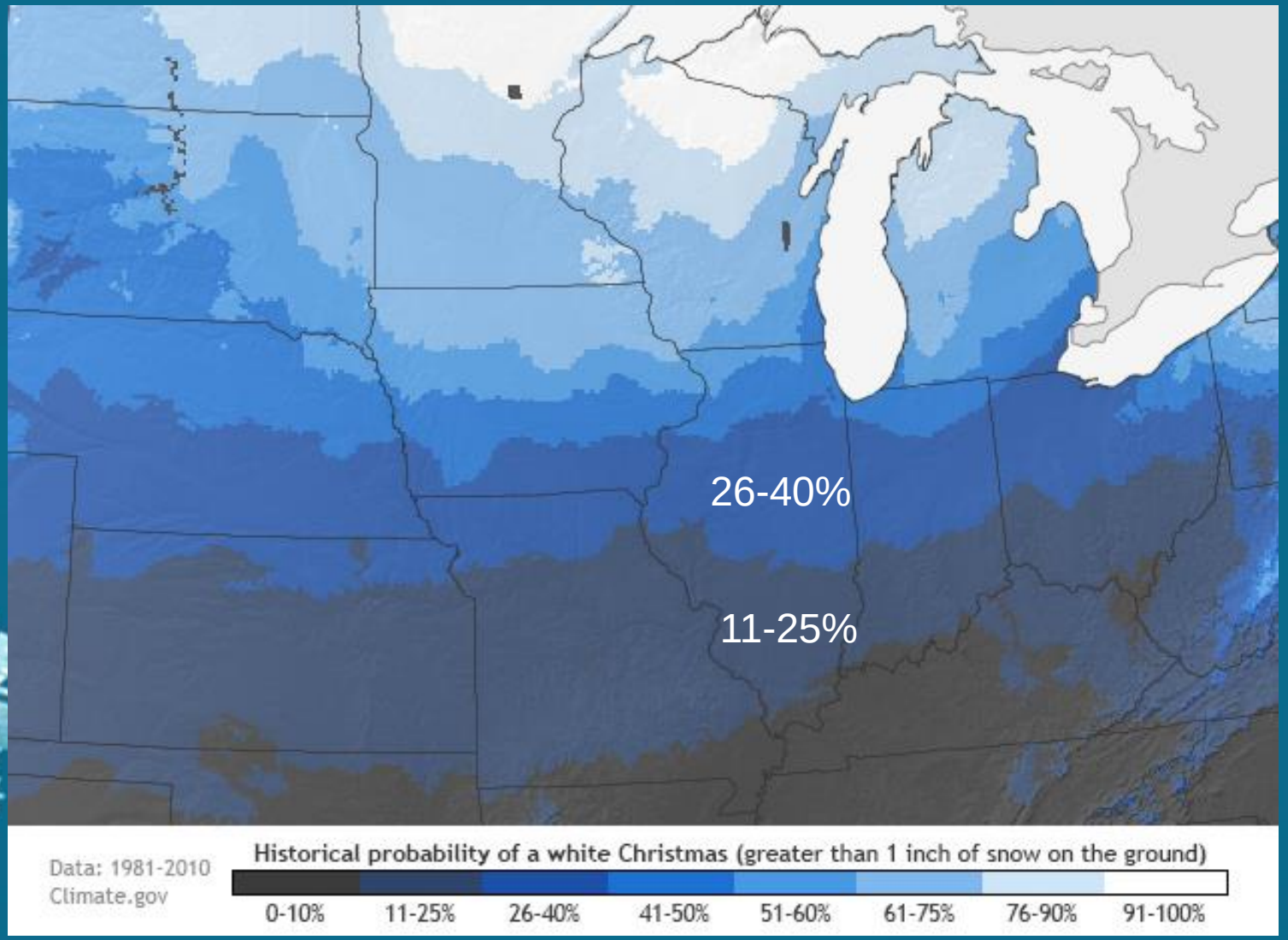
Part 1: Overview of SWOP Program

Part 2: Measuring Snow

Part 3: Selecting a Spot to Measure Snow

Part 4: Snow Measurement Demonstration

Chances of a White Christmas



Questions?