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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Historic Hurricane Season – 2015 Summary for the Central Pacific Basin

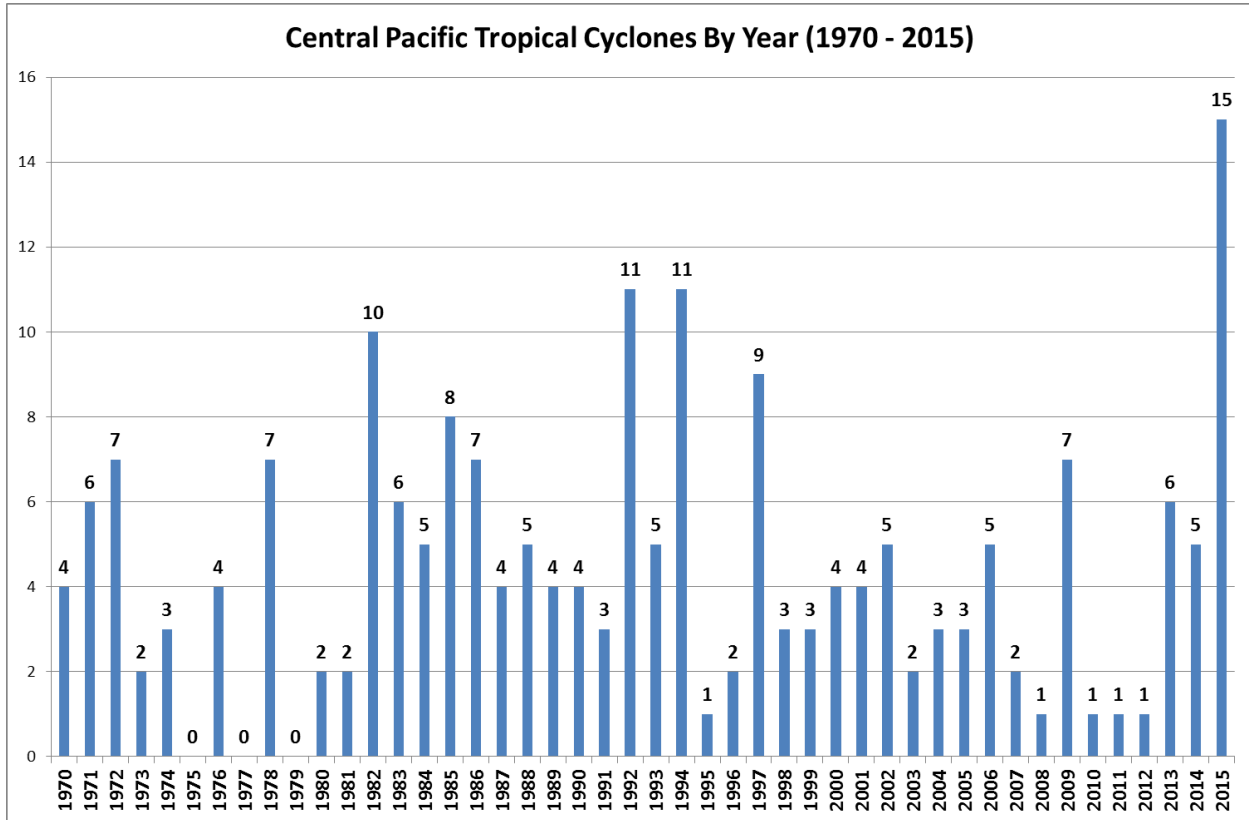
The 2015 hurricane season officially ended on December 1st, with numerous records for high activity levels shattered along the way. The tropical cyclone activity, heavily influenced by a strong El Nino in progress, and widespread warm ocean temperatures across the central Pacific basin, started fast in early July, and continued at a frenetic pace through October. Although there were many more tropical cyclones in the basin than normal, none of these made landfall in the main Hawaiian Islands. There were direct impacts to Johnston Island and portions of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands, which resulted in the evacuation of research staff on Laysan.

Impacts on the State of Hawaii: Heavy rains and flash flooding were observed from the Big Island to Oahu as moisture bands from the remnants of Tropical Storm Nora passed through the area. The effects of high surf and coastal inundation from multiple cyclones moving in close proximity to the islands were seen in locations such as the eastern shore of the Big Island and Maui near Hana.

The following table outlines the Central Pacific tropical cyclones, their lifecycle dates within the basin, and maximum wind speeds.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates (UTC)</u>	<u>Max Wind /mph/</u>
Tropical Storm Ela	July 8-10	45
Tropical Storm Iune	July 10-13	40
Tropical Storm Halola	July 10-12	55
Hurricane Guillermo	August 2-7	105
Hurricane Hilda	August 8-13	140
Hurricane Kilo	August 20 - September 1	140
Hurricane Loke	August 21-26	75
Hurricane Ignacio	August 27 - September 4	145
Hurricane Jimena	September 1-9	120
Tropical Storm Malia	September 19-22	40
Tropical Storm Niala	September 25-28	65
Hurricane Oho	October 3-8	95
Tropical Depression 8-C	October 3-4	30
Tropical Storm Nora	October 11-15	60
Hurricane Olaf	October 20-26	130

Seasonal Comparisons:



The 15 tropical cyclones in the Central Pacific in 2015 easily eclipsed the previous most active year(s) since 1970: 1992 and 1994 with 11 tropical cyclones each year. Normally, 4 to 5 tropical cyclones develop or move across the central Pacific basin each year during the hurricane season (June 1st through November 30th)

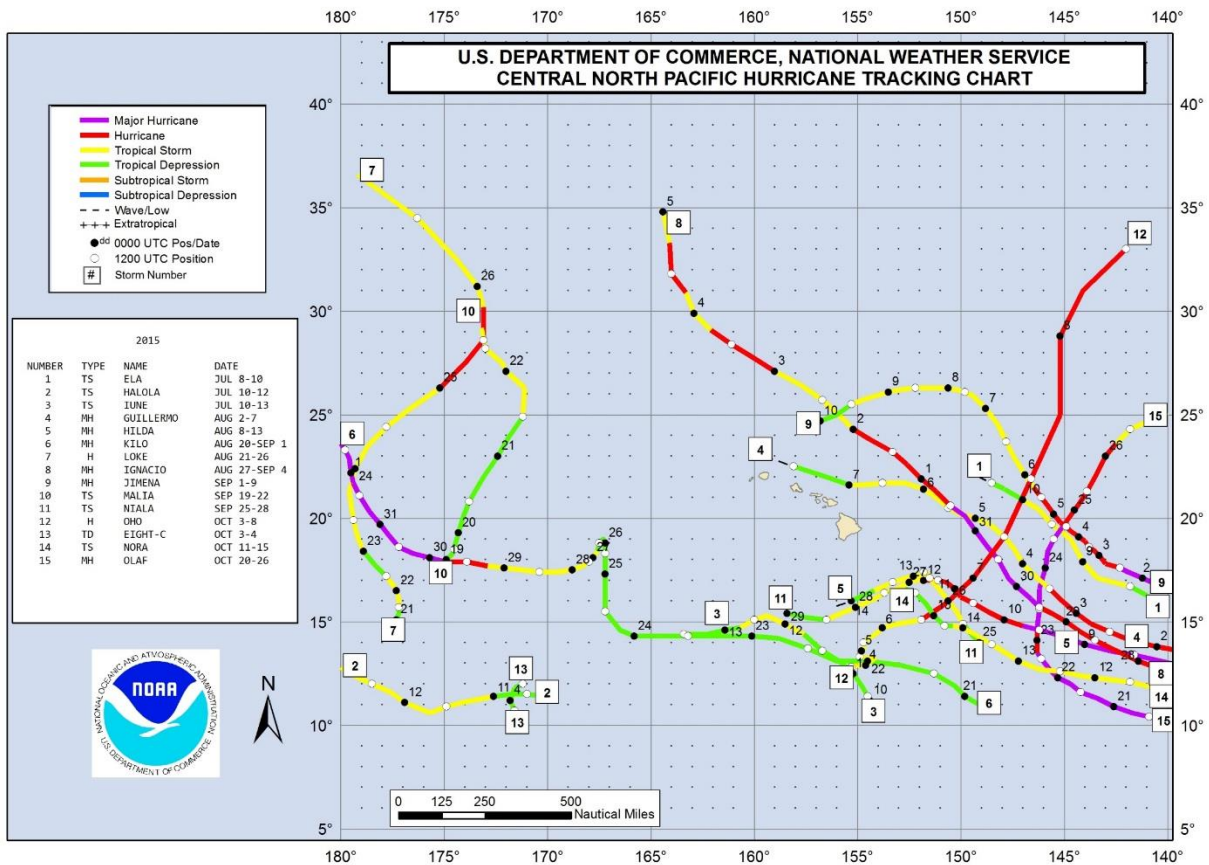
Listing of Select Records:

- 5 Hurricanes (3 Major Hurricanes) in August – previous record 2
- 3 Tropical Storms in July – previous record 1
- Earliest tropical cyclone to develop to tropical storm strength in the central Pacific during hurricane season: Ela on July 9th. Previous record, Wali on July 17th, 2014.
- Kilo and Ignacio (while in the central Pacific basin) were part of a historic central and eastern Pacific outbreak - 3 major hurricanes (Jimena in east Pacific) at once for the first time on record. Kilo, Ignacio and Jimena were all Category 4 intensity concurrently. Prior to this, two concurrent Category 3 hurricanes, let alone Category 4, had never been recorded in the central Pacific basin.
- Olaf was the strongest central Pacific basin hurricane on record so late in the year.

Hurricane Hunter missions:

The United States Air Force Reserve's 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, flew 34 total missions in the central Pacific in 2015 to gather extremely valuable weather reconnaissance data on the tropical cyclones which threatened the State of Hawaii. These constituted a total of 586.7 hours of flying time in support of forecast operations for tropical cyclones Ela, Guillermo, Hilda, Kilo, Ignacio and Oho as they trekked across the central Pacific. This support accounted for over half of the nationwide total of hours flown (1141.4 hours), and a large portion of the total number of missions nationwide (96 missions).

2015 Tropical Cyclone Track Map (Preliminary):



Additional Graphics Links: Tropical Cyclone Track Map (Larger) -

<https://www.facebook.com/US.NationalWeatherService.Honolulu.gov/photos/a.120037254732828.19697.113020565434497/918823828187496/?type=3&theater>

Satellite mapping overlay of all cyclones around the Hawaiian Islands –

<https://www.facebook.com/US.NationalWeatherService.Honolulu.gov/photos/a.120037254732828.19697.113020565434497/904018966334649/?type=3&theater>

Web Links:

Public Information Statement - <http://www.prh.noaa.gov/data/HFO/PNSHFO.1512182100>

CPHC Tropical Cyclone Product Archive - <http://www.prh.noaa.gov/cphc/tcpages/archive.php>

CPHC Annual Summaries - <http://www.prh.noaa.gov/cphc/summaries/>

NOAA Hurricane Season Summary for 2015 - <http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2015/120115-below-normal-atlantic-hurricane-season-ends-active-eastern-and-central-pacific-seasons-shatter-records.html>