



United States Department of Agriculture

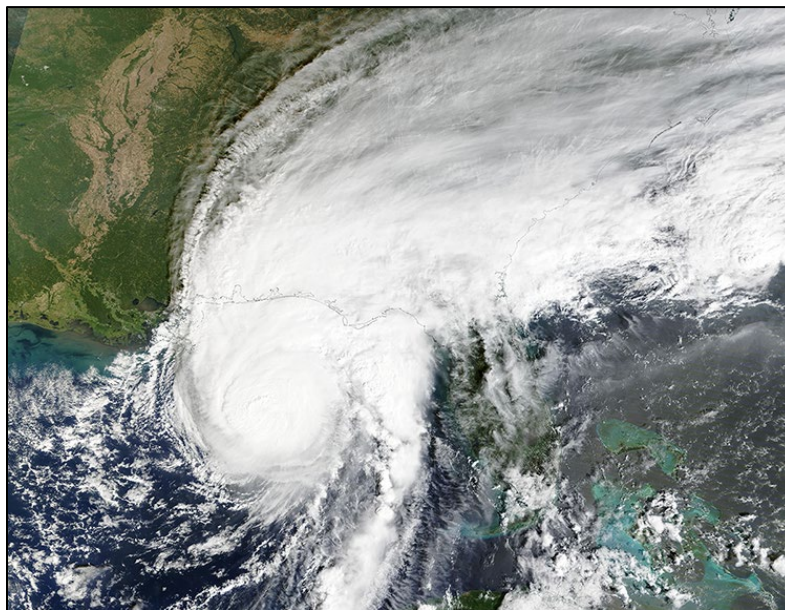
Water and Climate Update

October 16, 2026

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) produces this weekly report using data and products from the [National Water and Climate Center](#) and other agencies. The report focuses on seasonal snowpack, precipitation, temperature, and drought conditions in the U.S.

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Storms batter the U.S. coastlines and beyond



Hurricane Isaias slammed into the Gulf states on October 9, destroying many homes and causing widespread power outages. Isaias downgraded to a Category 2 hurricane as it made landfall, with winds over 100 mph and storm surge over five feet being recorded. The hurricane brought heavy rain into the mid-Atlantic, causing flash flooding and landslides. Over one dozen tornadoes were also spawned from the storm in North Carolina. Meanwhile, the west coast was also impacted by tropical activity. On October 10, remnants from Tropical Storm Rachel battered the southern California coast, inundating homes as the storm surge coincided with high tide. Precipitation from the storm made its way through parts of the western U.S., breaking records and depositing the first snow of the season to some mountains along the way.

Related:

[Hurricane Isaias Satellite Imagery and Summary](#) – NASA

[Rapid Reaction: Heavy Rain, Tornadoes Accompany Isaias in NC](#) – NC State Climate Office

[Isaias moves north as Rachel batters Southern California](#) – PBS

[Record breaking precipitation at SNOTEL sites October 10-12, 2026](#) – Interactive Map, NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program

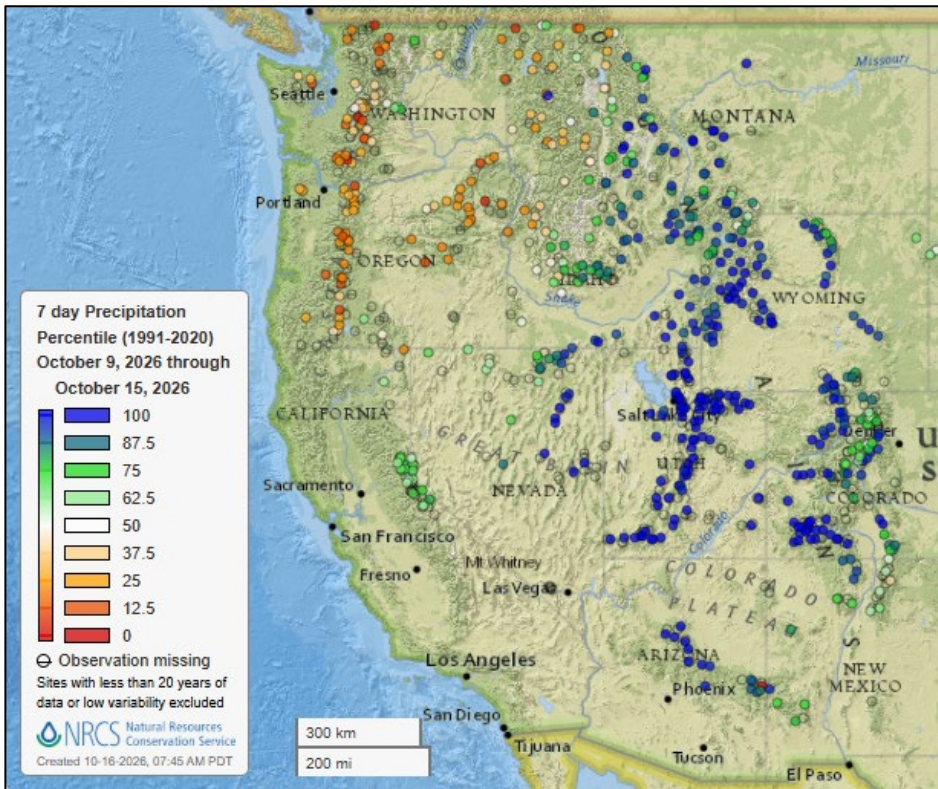
[Tropical Storm Rachel's remnants are gone, but they left a record-high benefit](#) – KSL (Salt Lake City, UT)

['First widespread snowfall' in forecast. Why it's a rare event](#) – USA Today

The NRCS delivers practical, voluntary, and locally led conservation solutions that help producers conserve natural resources, strengthen agricultural production, and keep working lands productive for generations to come.

Precipitation

Last 7 Days, NRCS SNOTEL Network



[7-day precipitation
percentile map](#)

See also:
[7-day total precipitation
values \(inches\) map](#)

[Alaska 7-day
precipitation
percentile map](#)

See also:
[Alaska 7-day
total
precipitation
values \(inches\)
map](#)



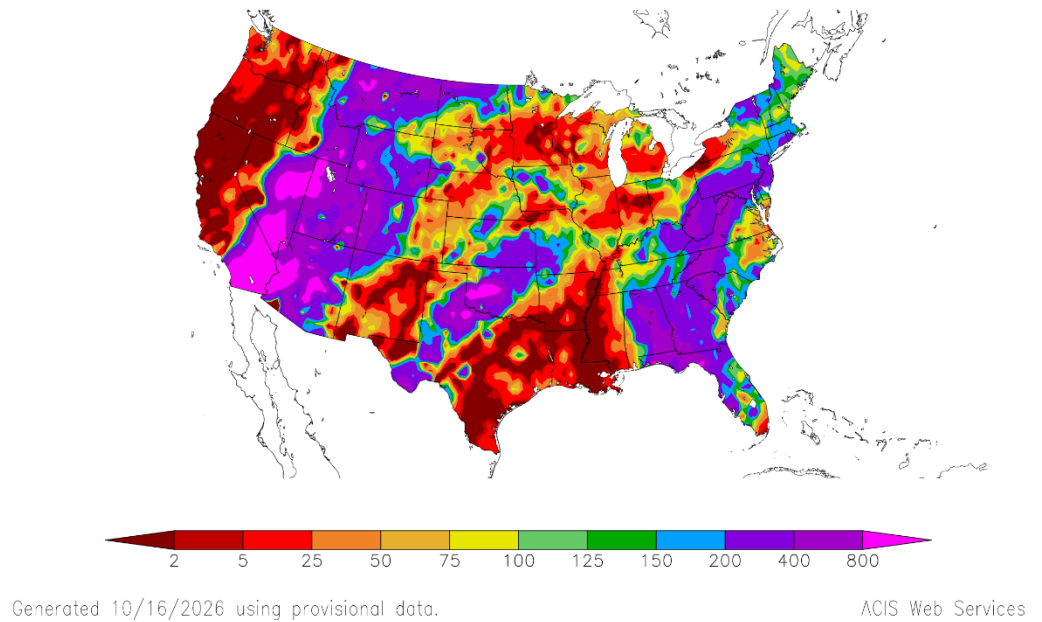
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day precipitation percent of normal map](#) for the continental U.S.

See also: [7-day total precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
10/9/2026 – 10/15/2026



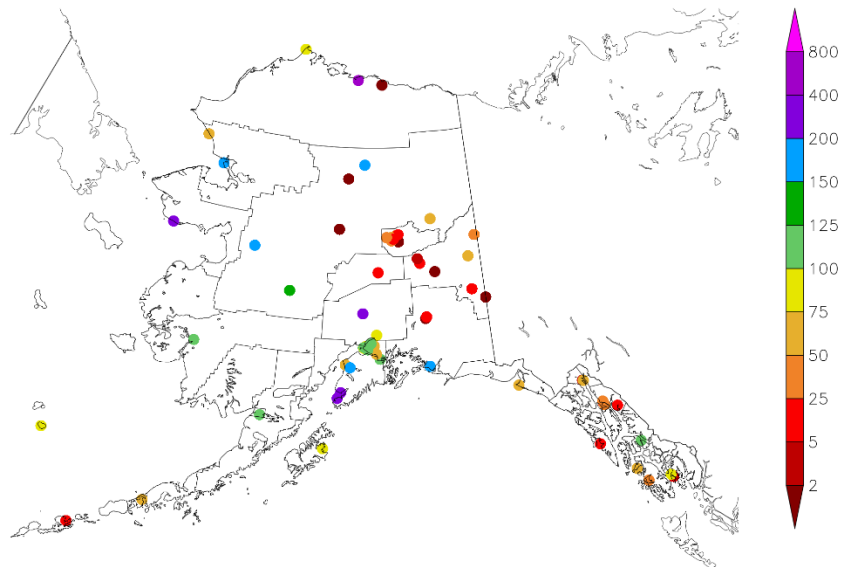
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day precipitation percent of normal map](#) for Alaska.

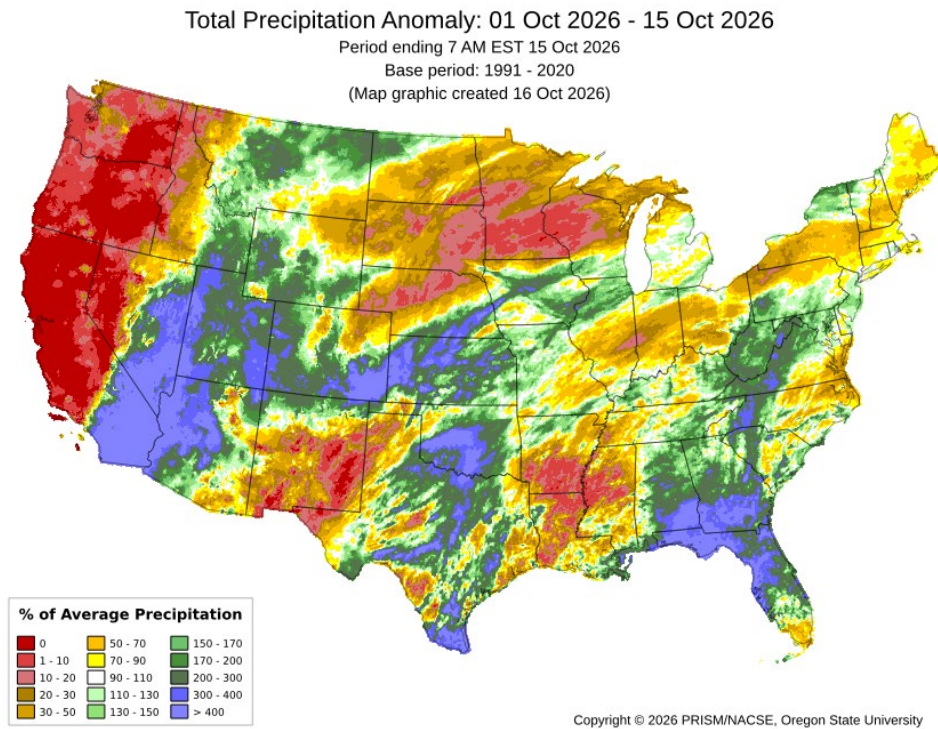
See also: [7-day total precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
10/9/2026 – 10/15/2026



Month-to-Date, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

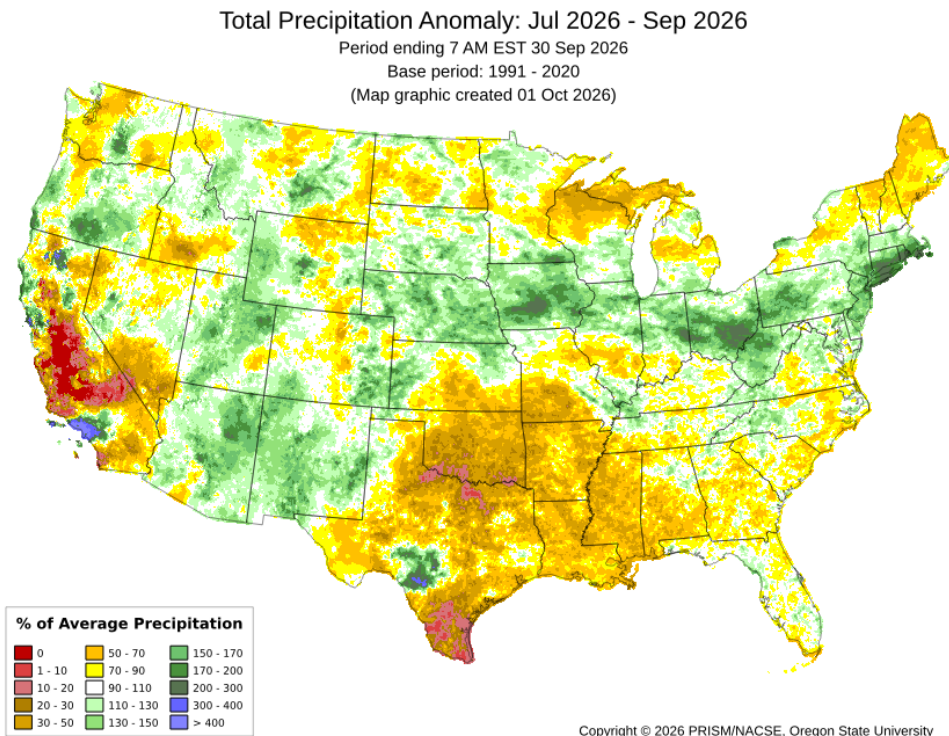
Source: PRISM



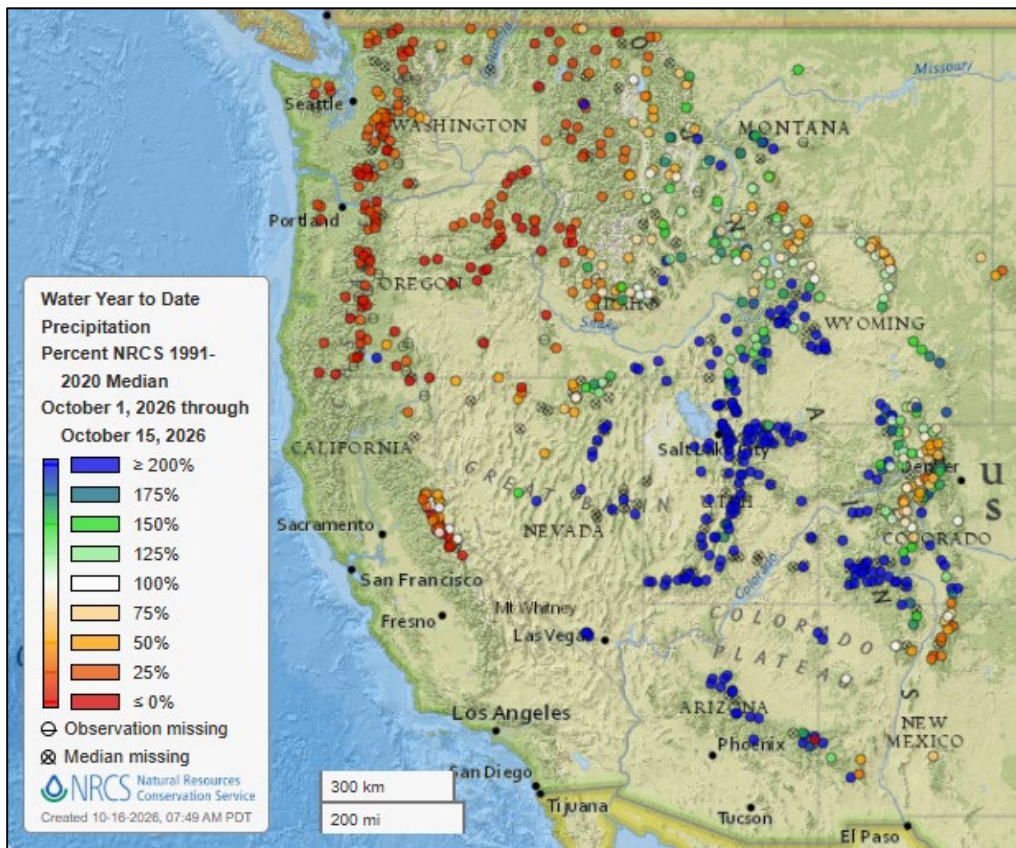
Last 3 Months, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

[July through September 2026 precipitation anomaly map](#)



Water Year-to-Date, NRCS SNOTEL Network

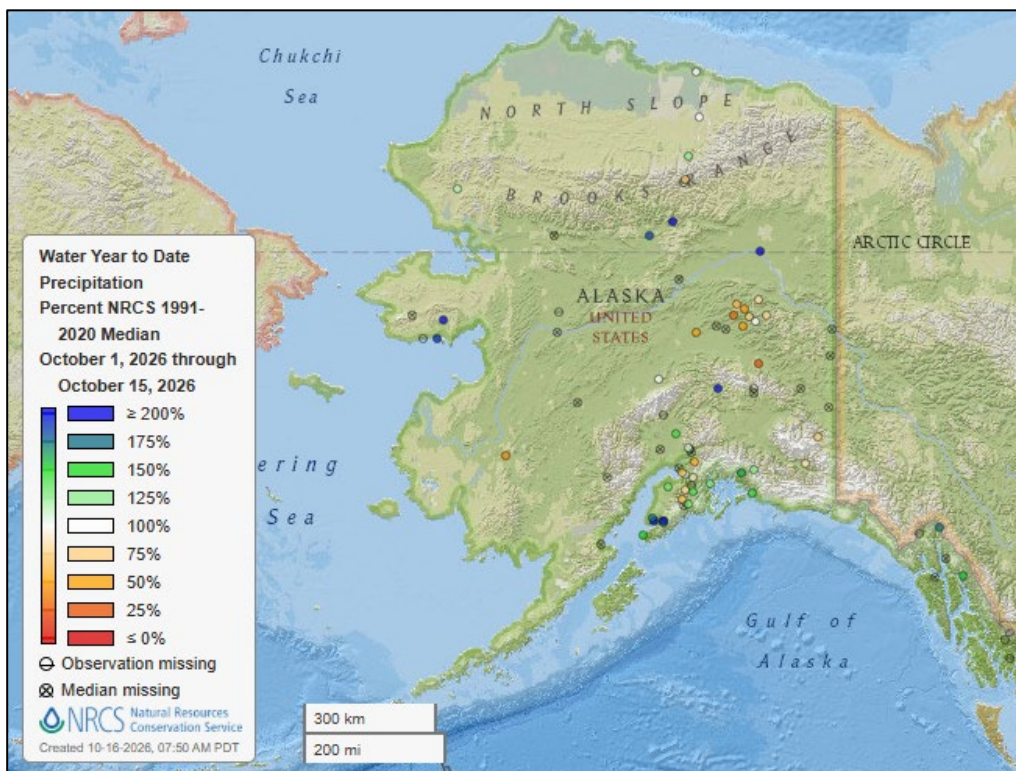


[2027 water year-to-date precipitation percent of median map](#)

See also:

[2027 water year-to-date precipitation percent of average map](#)

[2027 water year-to-date precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)



[Alaska 2027 water year-to-date precipitation percent of median map](#)

See also:

[Alaska 2027 water year-to-date precipitation percent of average map](#)

[Alaska 2027 water year-to-date precipitation values \(inches\) map](#)

Temperature

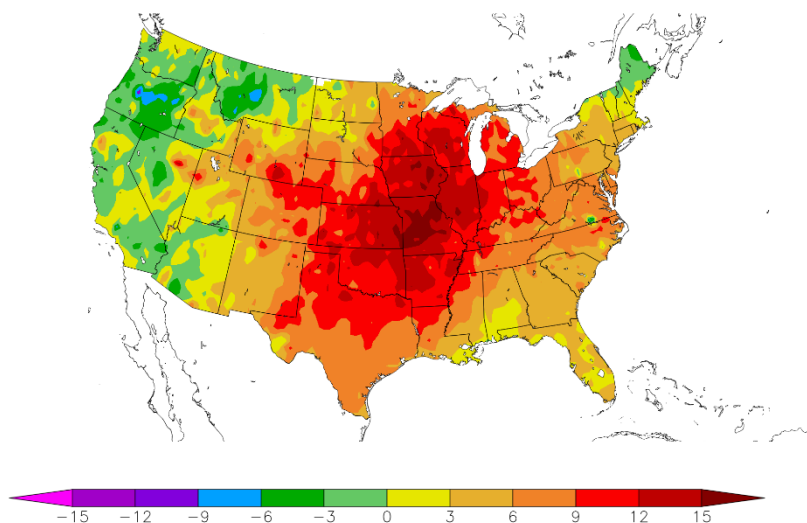
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day temperature anomaly map](#) for the contiguous U.S.

See also: [7-day temperature \(° F\) map](#)

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
10/9/2026 – 10/15/2026



ACIS Web Services

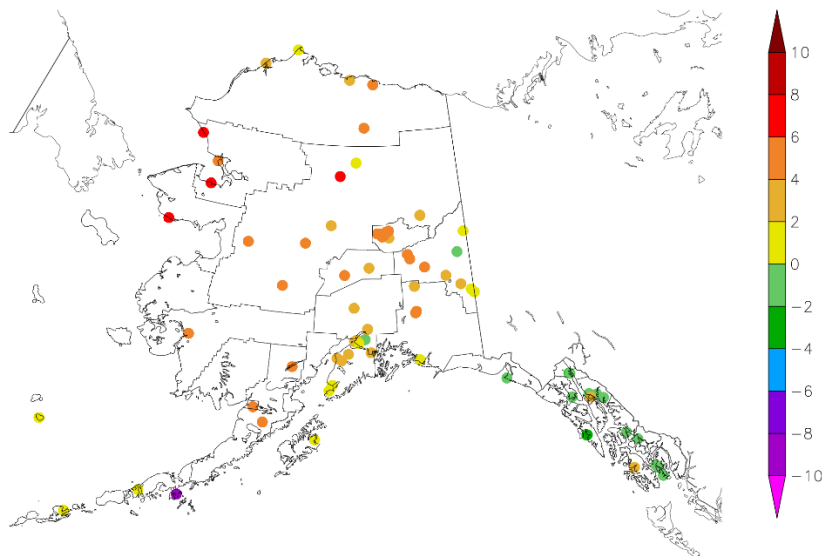
Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

Source: Regional Climate Centers

[7-day temperature anomaly map](#) for Alaska.

See also: [7-day temperature \(° F\) map](#)

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
10/9/2026 – 10/15/2026

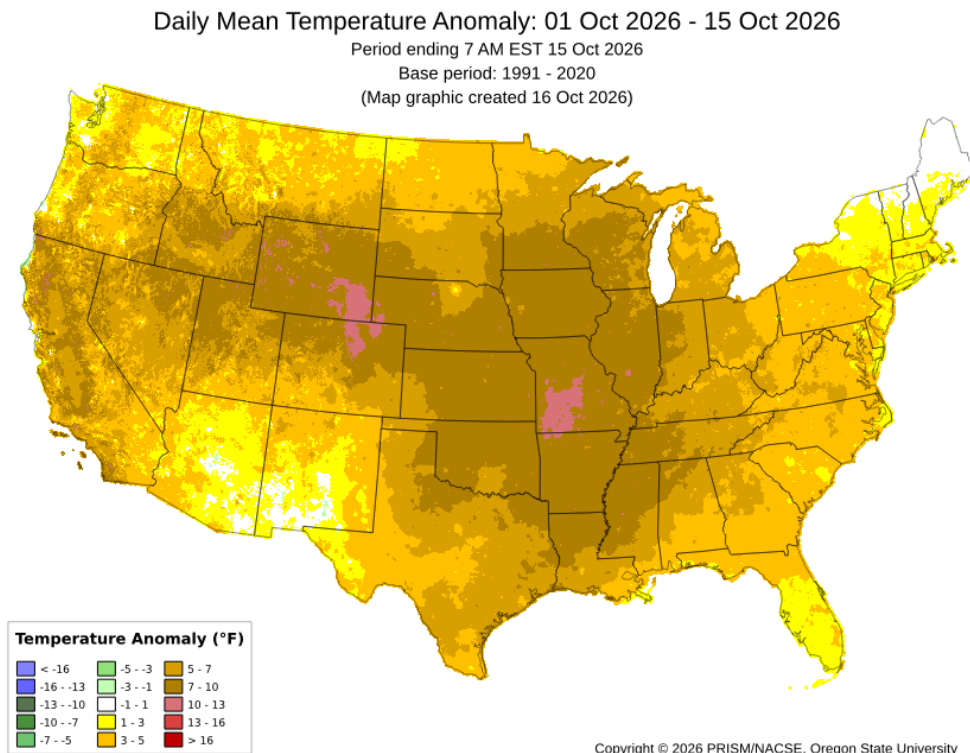


ACIS Web Services

Month-to-Date, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

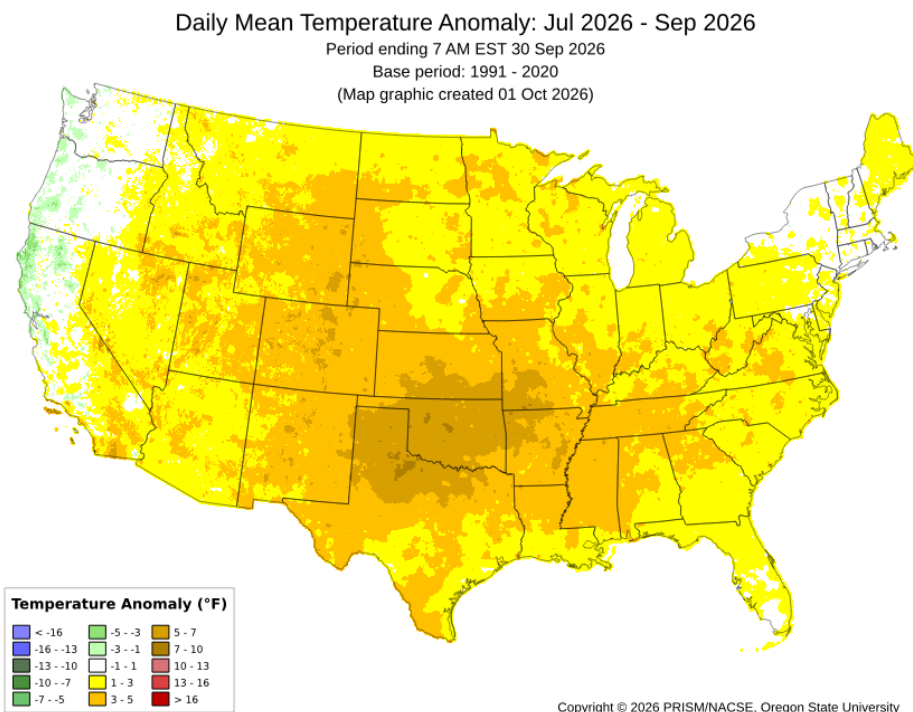
[Month-to-date
national daily
mean
temperature
anomaly map](#)



Last 3 Months, All Available Data Including SNOTEL and NWS Networks

Source: PRISM

[July through
September 2026 daily
mean temperature
anomaly map](#)



Drought

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

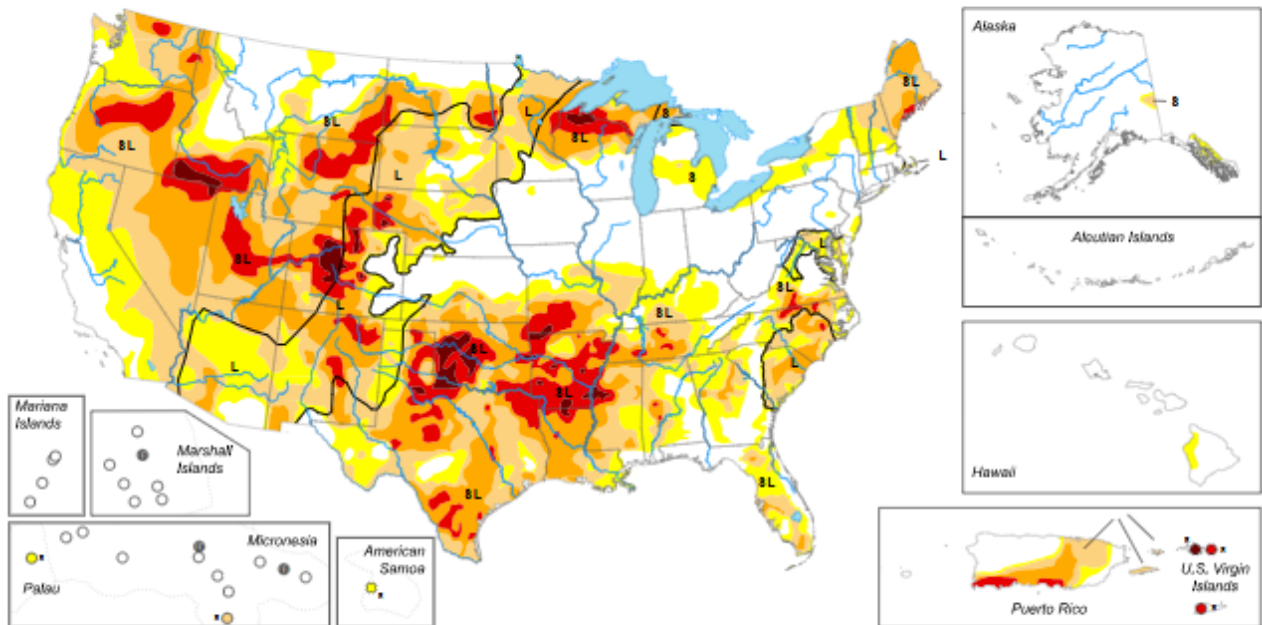
[U.S. Drought Portal](#)

Source: NOAA

Map released: October 15, 2026

Data valid: October 13, 2026

☐ View grayscale version of the map



United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):

[Lindsay Johnson](#), National Drought Mitigation Center

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):

[Anthony Artusa](#), NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC

More maps and statistics:

[U.S. States and Puerto Rico](#)

[Continental U.S.](#)

[Regions +](#)

The data cutoff for Drought Monitor maps is each Tuesday at 8 a.m. EDT. The maps, which are based on analysis of the data, are released each Thursday at 8:30 a.m. Eastern Time.

Intensity and Impacts

None

D0 (Abnormally Dry)

D1 (Moderate Drought)

D2 (Severe Drought)

D3 (Extreme Drought)

D4 (Exceptional Drought)

No Data

- Delineates dominant impacts

S - Short-term impacts, typically less than 6 months (agriculture, grasslands)

L - Long-term impacts, typically greater than 6 months (hydrology, ecology)

SL - Short- and long-term impacts

Current [National Drought Summary](#), October 13, 2026

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

"Drought conditions changed considerably across the U.S. this week. Heavy rain and early-season snow brought relief to parts of the West and Southeast, while unusually warm and dry weather continued to worsen drought across portions of the Midwest and South. In the West, a strong storm system combined with moisture from the remains of Hurricane Rachel, bringing rain and mountain snow to parts of the region. Snowfall totals reached 11 inches near Philipsburg, Montana, and nearly 10 inches at Great Falls, Montana, while rain and snow also affected portions of Idaho, Wyoming and Utah. Additional precipitation across the Southwest helped improve drought conditions in parts of Arizona, New Mexico and the Rockies. Despite these improvements, significant drought persisted across portions of the Great Basin and Southwest.

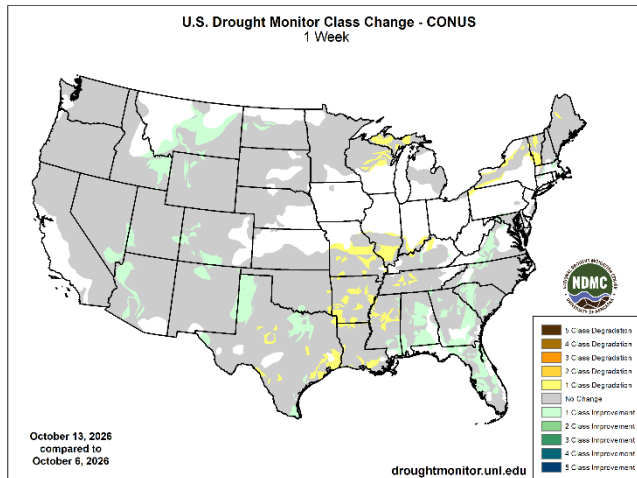
Farther east, temperatures averaged 8 to 16 degrees above normal across portions of the Plains and Midwest. Combined with limited rainfall, the unusual warmth contributed to worsening drought across Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. A broader area of drought deterioration extended from southern Illinois and Indiana through Missouri and Kentucky into the lower Mississippi Valley and Tennessee. Some of the most significant deteriorations occurred across southwestern Missouri, southern Arkansas and northern Louisiana, where persistent warmth and rainfall deficits continued to intensify drought conditions. In contrast, recent rainfall supported localized improvements across western and northern Texas, including portions of the Texas Panhandle.

The Southeast experienced some of the week's most widespread improvements as Hurricane Isaias brought heavy rainfall to the region, with totals exceeding 12 inches in parts of the Florida Panhandle and southern Alabama. Although the rainfall caused localized flooding, it also helped ease drought from Virginia through the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama and Florida, with some locations improving by more than one drought category. In the Northeast, drought changes were mixed and largely depended on where precipitation fell. Areas receiving beneficial rainfall experienced localized improvements, while drought persisted or worsened in locations that missed the heavier precipitation."

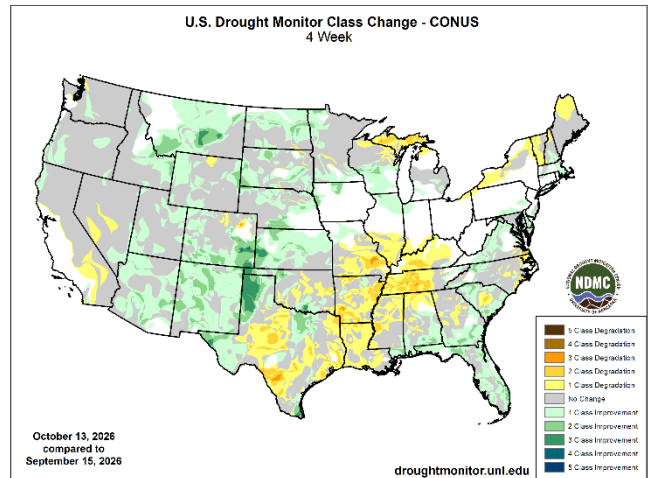
Changes in Drought Monitor Categories over Time

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

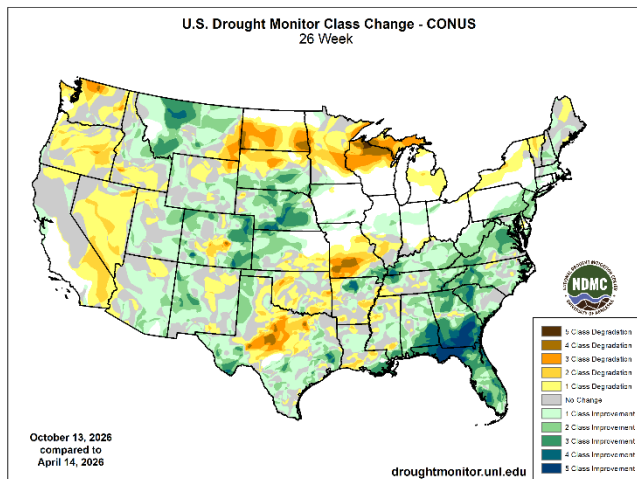
1 Week



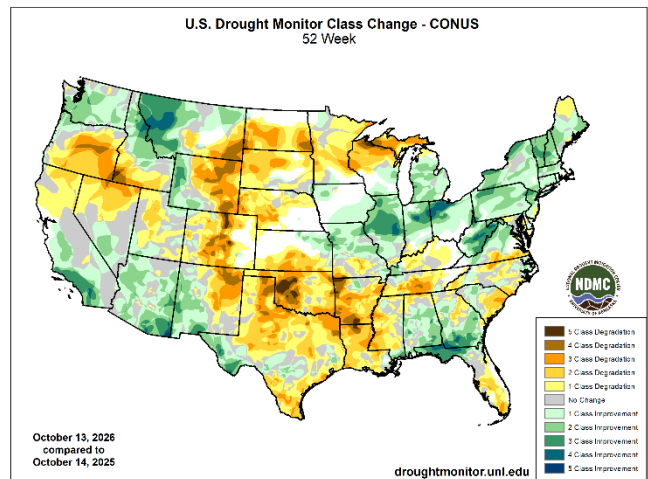
1 Month



6 Months



1 Year



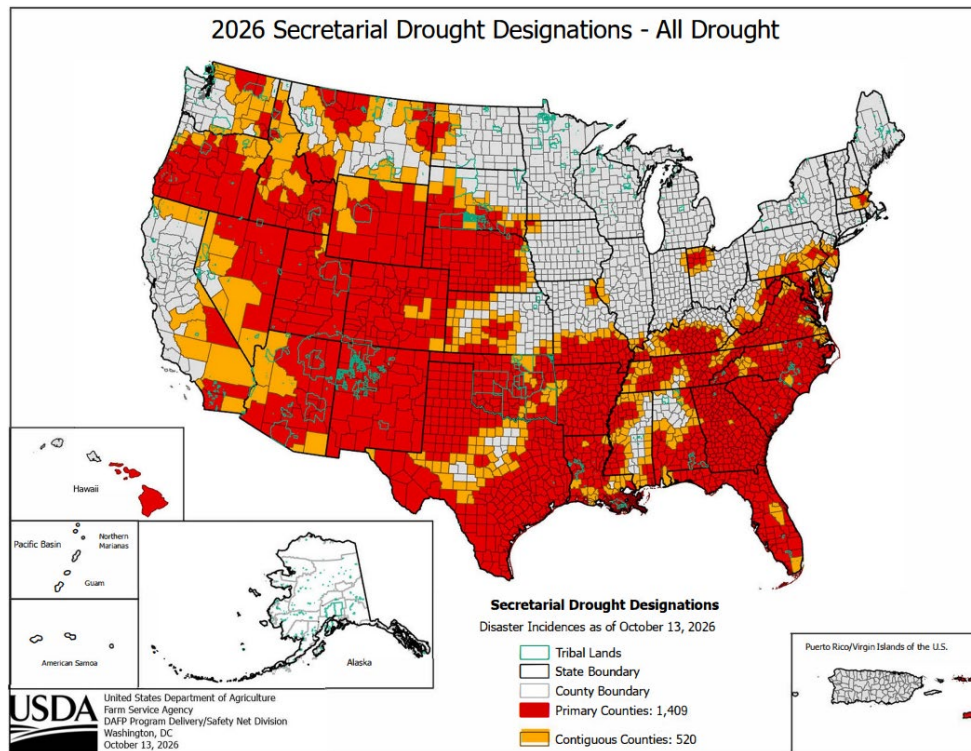
[Changes in drought conditions over the last 12 months for the contiguous U.S.](#)

Highlighted Drought Resources

- [Drought Impact Reporter](#)
- [Quarterly Regional Climate Impacts and Outlook](#)
- [U.S. Drought Portal Indicators and Monitoring](#)
- [U.S. Population in Drought, Weekly Comparison](#)
- [USDA Disaster and Drought Information](#)

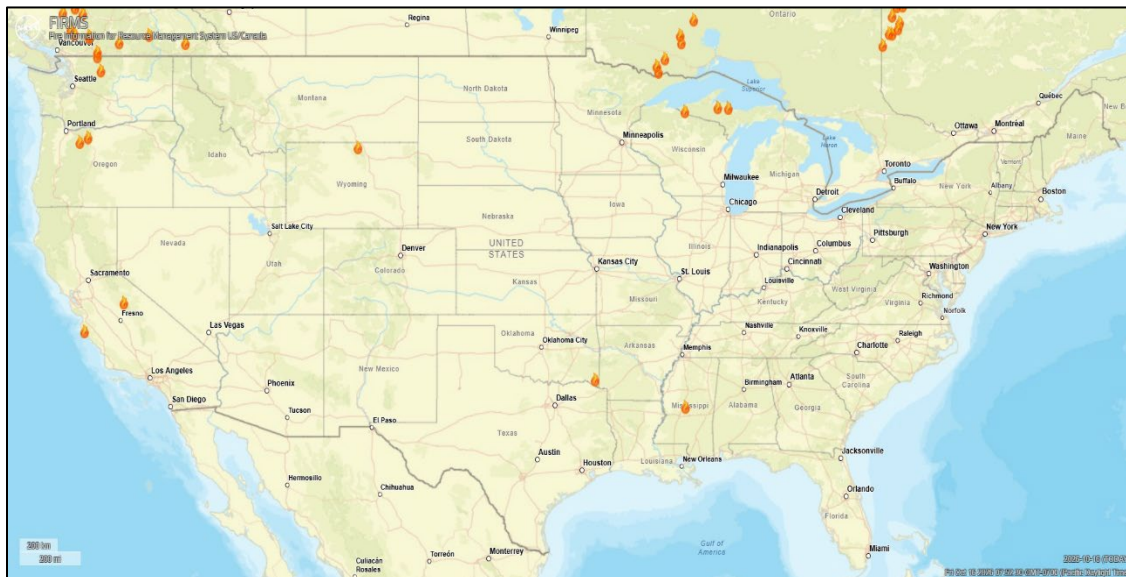
USDA Secretarial [Drought Designations](#)

Source: USDA Farm Service Agency



Wildfires: [Fire Information for Resource Management System US/Canada](#)

Source: NASA/USDA Forest Service



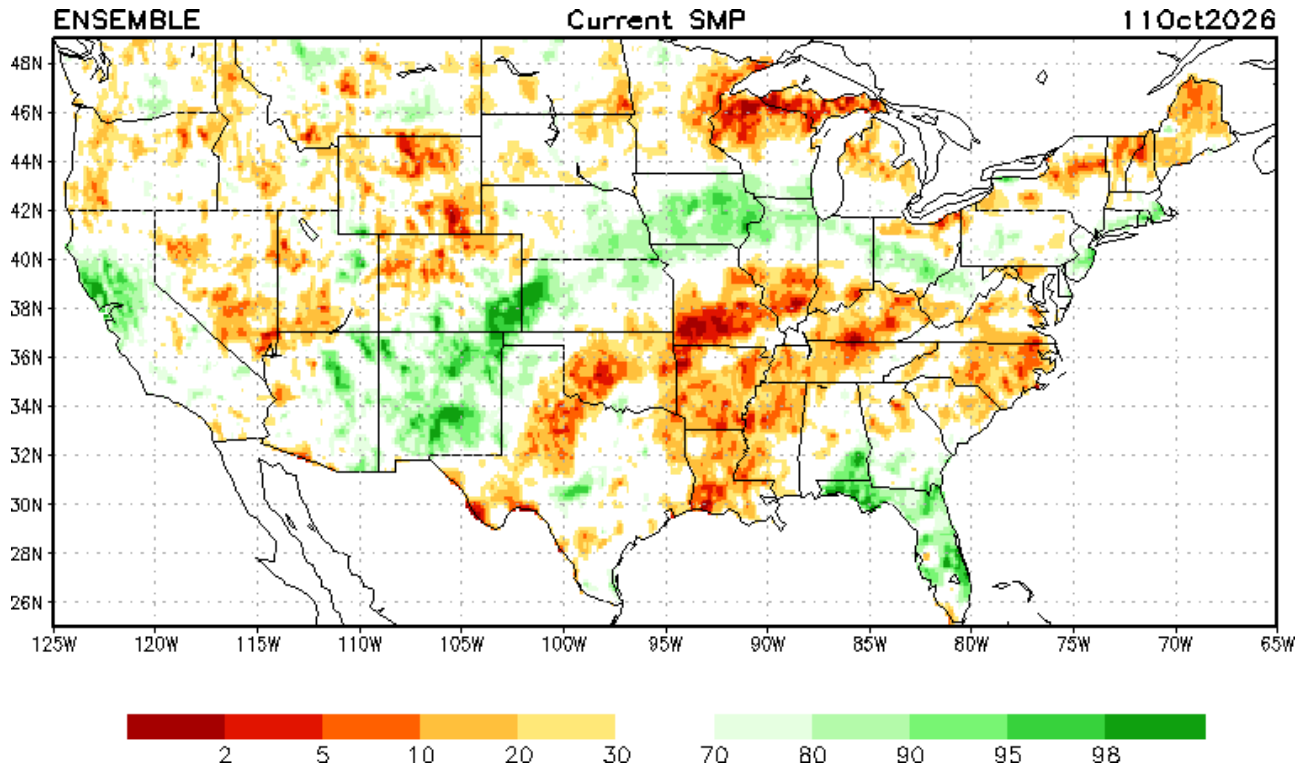
Highlighted Wildfire Resources

- [National Interagency Fire Center](#)
- [InciWeb Incident Information System](#)
- [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#)

Other Climatic and Water Supply Indicators

Soil Moisture

Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Prediction

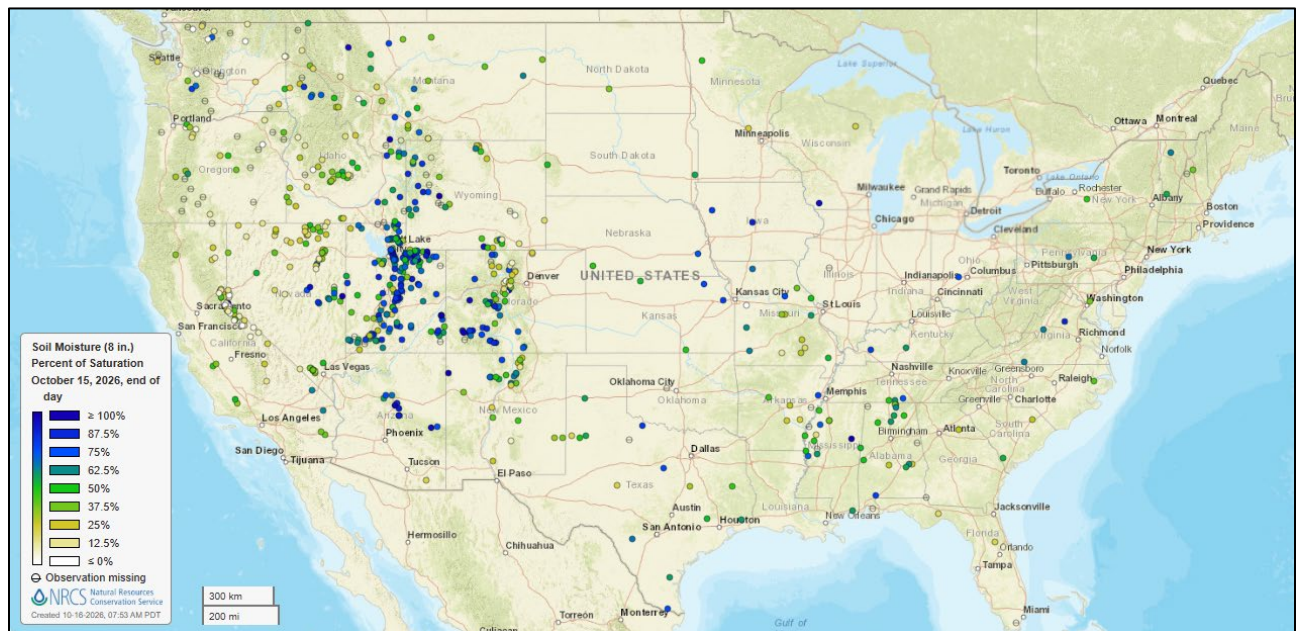


[Modeled soil moisture percentiles](#) as of October 11, 2026

Soil Moisture Percent of Saturation

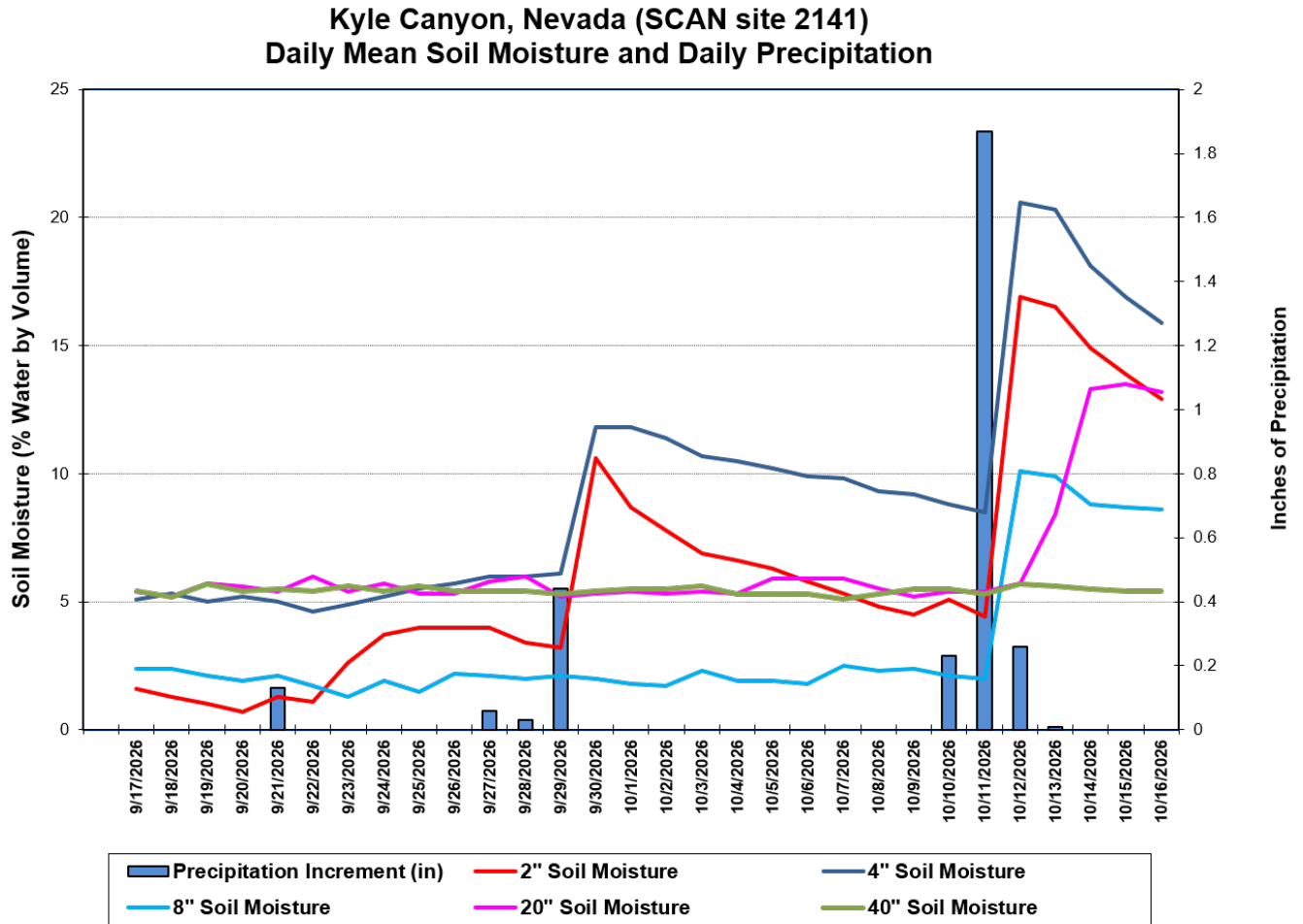
Source: NRCS SNOTEL and [Soil Climate Analysis Network](#) (SCAN)

[U.S. soil moisture map at 8-inch depth:](#)



Soil Moisture

Source: NRCS [Soil Climate Analysis Network](#) (SCAN)



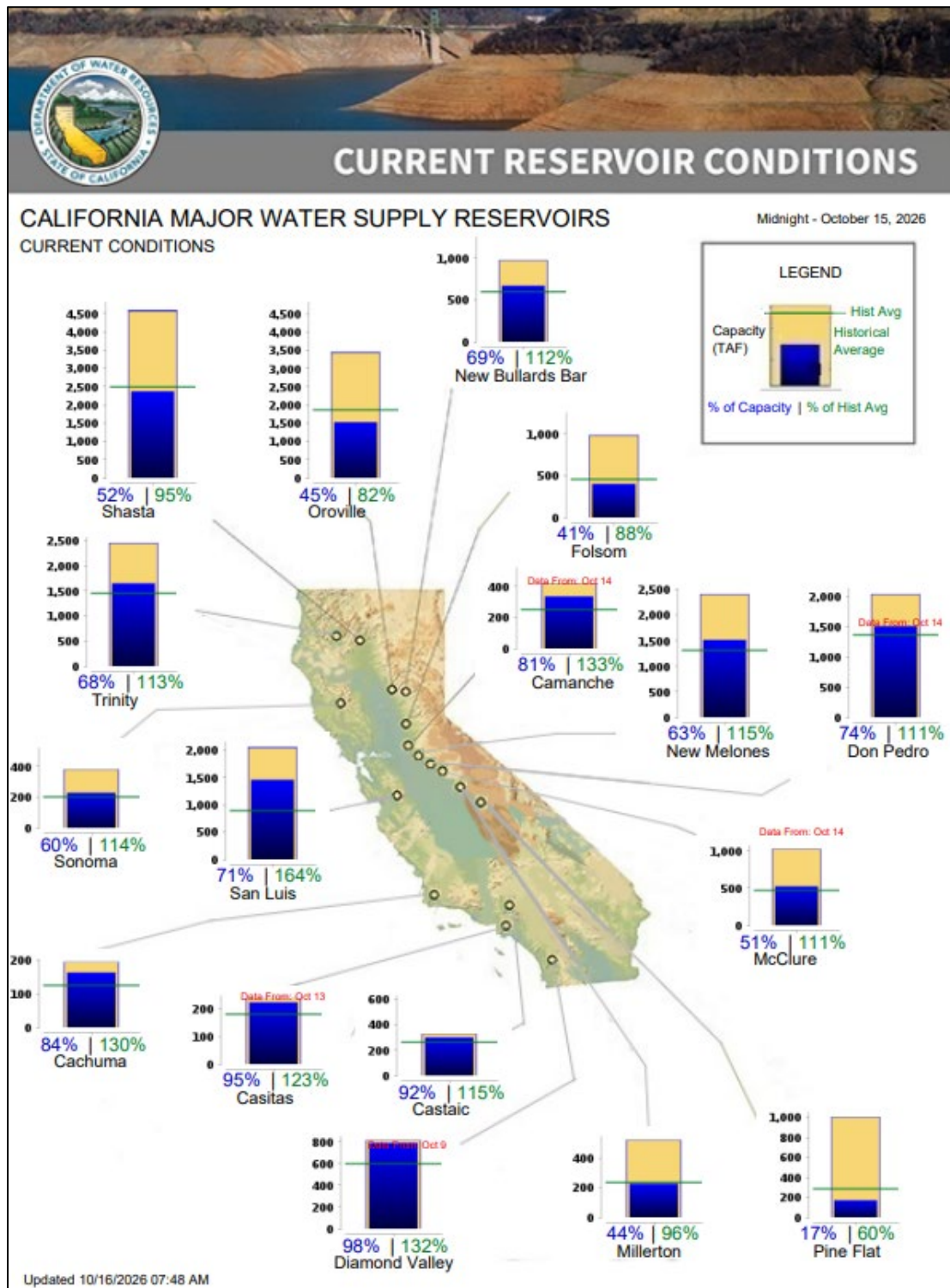
This chart shows the precipitation and soil moisture for the last 30 days at the [Kyle Canyon](#) SCAN site in Nevada. Soil sensors two and four inches beneath land surface recorded increases in soil moisture after the site received 0.44 inches of precipitation on September 29. Tropical Storm Rachel then deposited 2.36 inches of precipitation at the site between October 10-12, after which soil sensors at all depths recorded increases in soil moisture. Total precipitation for the 30-day period was 3.03 inches.

Soil Moisture Data Portals

- [USCRN Soil Moisture](#)
- [National Soil Moisture Network](#)
- [NOAA Climate Prediction Center Soil Moisture](#)
- [NASA Grace](#)

Current California Reservoir Conditions

Source: California Department of Water Resources



[Current California Reservoir Conditions](#)

Agricultural Weather Highlights

Author: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB

National Outlook, Friday October 16, 2026: “A cold front currently extending from the lower Great Lakes States to the western Gulf Coast region will shift eastward, clearing the Atlantic Seaboard on Friday and Saturday. However, a low-pressure system is forecast to form along the front during the weekend just east of the middle Atlantic States, with coastal areas possibly experiencing high winds, heavy surf, and beach erosion. Meanwhile, much of the central U.S. will experience dry weather during the next 5 days, accompanied by a warming trend. Much of the western U.S. will also remain dry into early next week, aside from a few Southwestern showers. By Tuesday, however, precipitation will more broadly overspread the West, from California into parts of the Southwest and Intermountain West. Elsewhere, a brief cool spell across the central and eastern U.S. will be replaced by warmer weather next week. Still, freezes should end the growing season during the weekend as far south as the central Plains and northern and western Corn Belt, while frost may occur along and north of a line from west-central Texas into the Ohio Valley. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for October 21 – 25 calls for the likelihood of near- or above-normal temperatures and precipitation across much of the country. Cooler-than-normal conditions will be confined to the Far West, including California and the Great Basin, while drier-than-normal weather should be limited to the eastern U.S., excluding Florida’s peninsula.”

Weather Hazards Outlook: [October 18 – 22, 2026](#)

Source: NOAA Weather Prediction Center

U.S. Day 3-7 Hazards Outlook

[About the Hazards Outlook](#)

Created October 15, 2026

Precipitation	☒
Temperature	☒
Wildfires	☒
Soils	☐
Flooding	☒

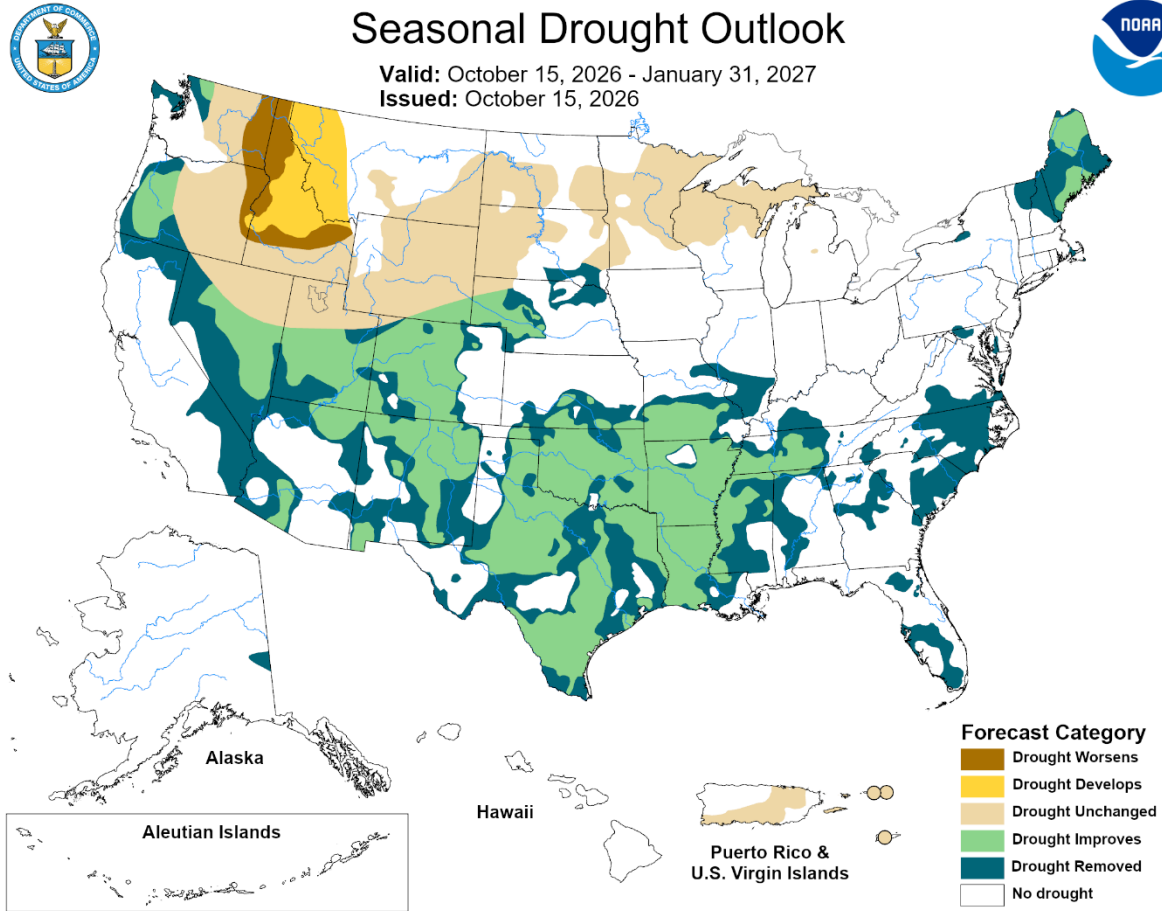
Legend	
	Flooding Likely
	Flooding Occurring or Imminent
	Flooding Possible
	Freezing Rain
	Heavy Precipitation
	Heavy Rain
	Heavy Snow
	Hazardous Heat
	Hazardous Cold
	Frost/Freeze
	High Winds
	Significant Waves
	Critical Wildfire Risk
	Severe Weather

Valid October 18, 2026 - October 22, 2026



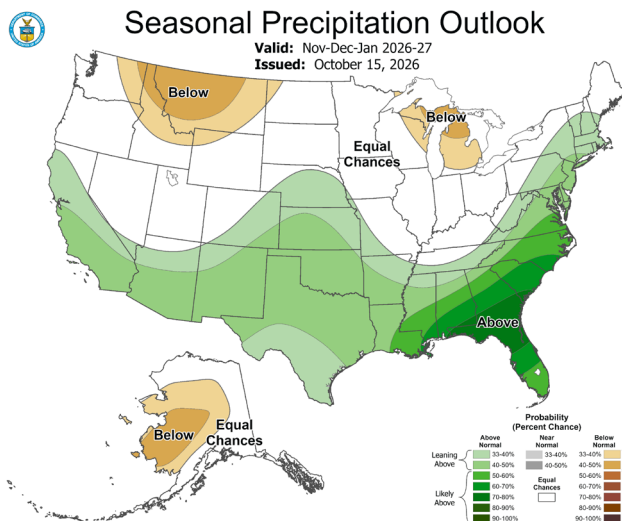
Seasonal Drought Outlook: [October 15, 2026 – January 31, 2027](#)

Source: National Weather Service

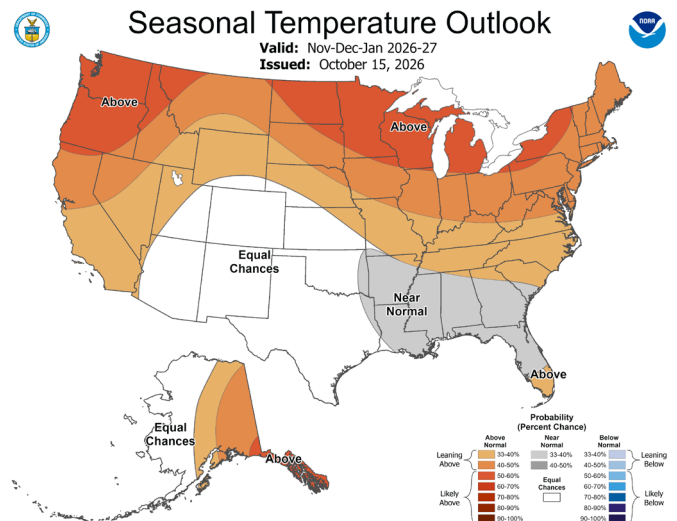


Climate Prediction Center Three-month Outlook

[Precipitation](#)



[Temperature](#)



[November-December-January 2026-2027 precipitation and temperature outlook summaries](#)

More Information

The NRCS [National Water and Climate Center](#) publishes this weekly report. We welcome your feedback. If you have questions or comments, please [contact us](#).