

National Drought Summary for April 22, 2025

Summary

Last week, heavy rain again fell on parts of the Nations Midsection along a strong quasi-stationary front. A swath of heavy amounts (over 2 inches) extended from central Texas northeastward through eastern Oklahoma, southeastern Kansas, northwestern Arkansas, much of Missouri, and southern Illinois. The largest amounts (4 to locally 8 inches) covered a band from the Middle Red River (south) Valley into central Missouri. Farther north, 2 to 4 inches also soaked much of southeastern Nebraska, eastern Iowa, and central through southwestern Wisconsin. More widely scattered amounts of 2 to 4 inches affected southeastern Texas, northern Louisiana, and the northern half of Alabama. Existing dryness and drought improved in most areas affected by heavy precipitation, in addition to portions of the central Rockies where less robust precipitation compounded frequently above-normal totals during the past several weeks. Meanwhile, subnormal amounts propelled intensifying drought and dryness along parts of the East Coast, scattered portions of the Southeast. East-central and southern Texas, parts of the central and northern Plains, and both the northern and southern tiers of the Rockies and adjacent lower elevations. In many areas that observed worsening conditions, unusually warm weather (temperatures generally 3 to 6 deg. F. above normal) have prevailed for the past 4 weeks, particularly across the southern half of the Great Plains, the Southeast, and the southern and middle Atlantic States.

Northeast

Several tenths to a little more than an inch fell on the higher elevations of the Northeast and the St. Lawrence Valley, with scattered light precipitation at best reported elsewhere. For most of the region, drought status was unchanged from last week. Some improvement was brought into interior southern New Hampshire, and deterioration to moderate drought was introduced in a small part of east-central West Virginia. Near-record to record low streamflows for this time of the year are widespread across an area from northern Virginia through central Maryland, southeastern Pennsylvania, and southern New Jersey, and many other sites report significantly below-normal flows. On April 23, a state of emergency was declared due to an uncontrolled fire in New Jersey that started the previous day just after the valid Drought Monitor period. The Jones Road Wildfire has expanded from south of Toms River into Ocean and Lacey Townships. As of this writing, the fire covers 12,500 acres (almost 20 square miles) but has been 40 percent contained, per numerous news reports.

Southeast

Scattered heavy rain was reported across the northern half of Alabama, but most other locations received little if any precipitation. This prompted several areas of dryness and drought expansion, but the most widespread deterioration was noted across southern Georgia, southeastern Alabama, and Florida, where abnormal dryness was expanded to cover almost the entire region, and expanded areas of severe (D2) to extreme (D3) drought were established over the central and southern Florida Peninsula. As of April 23, 89 separate fires across Florida had scorched more than 3,400 acres (5 square miles). Farther north, a broad new area of severe drought (D2) enveloped portions of the eastern Carolinas. Several patches in the Virginia and North Carolina Piedmont and Foothills, part of the coastal Carolinas, and several areas on the Florida Peninsula received only 25 to 50 percent of normal precipitation during the past 60 days.

South

A few small patches of dryness cropped up in Tennessee and the Lower Mississippi Valley, but widespread, entrenched drought is limited to areas from east-central Texas and central Oklahoma westward, despite heavy precipitation in a narrow band from the Middle Red River Valley into west-central Texas. Significant eastward expansion of dryness and drought was prominent across east-central Texas, with smaller areas of deterioration noted elsewhere. For the past 90 days, precipitation totals have been 4 to 7 inches below normal across a broad area from south-central through east-central Texas (specifically, from Walker, Grimes, and Brazos Counties southwestward through Lavaca County and some adjacent areas).

Midwest

Conditions varied considerably across this Region, as has been the case for the past several weeks. Moderate to heavy rain (generally over 1.5 inches) fell on a sizeable area covering most of Missouri, southern Illinois, central and eastern Iowa, southeastern Minnesota, and central through southwestern Wisconsin. The heaviest amounts (4 to 8 inches) were fairly widespread across central and southwestern Missouri. Any dryness or drought in most of these areas improved notably with the exception of a portion of interior northeastern Iowa, where 60- and 90-day amounts remained below normal. Moderate to locally heavy precipitation (generally 0.5 to 2.0 inches) fell across the rest of the central and northern Great Lakes Region, central Illinois, and part of southwestern Indiana. Elsewhere, most locations reported a few tenths of an inch. Kentucky was generally dry, but intense rains during the prior few weeks kept any dryness at bay there, and this week's deluging rainfall in Missouri removed most of the large abnormally dry (D0) area that had covered most central, northern, and western parts of the state. The rainfall across Wisconsin and Michigan eroded dryness and drought in those states, though some moderate to severe drought (D1-D2) stubbornly persisted in the east-central Lower Peninsula. Drought coverage (D1) increased in

northern Minnesota, which was missed by the heavier precipitation. In the far northwestern part of the state, areas near the Canadian border have received only about half of normal precipitation for the past 1-2 months.

High Plains

Moderate to locally heavy precipitation (over 0.5 inch, with isolated amounts topping 2 inches) fell on some of the higher elevations of Colorado and Wyoming. On the other side of the Region, heavy rains, amounting to several inches in some places, doused southeastern Kansas. Elsewhere, amounts exceeded 0.5 inch in several scattered areas mostly in the High Plains and central Kansas, but most other locales recorded a few tenths at best. Dryness and drought broadly improved by one category across a broad section of southeastern Kansas, and more localized improvement was noted in some of the wetter areas of the higher elevations. Conditions were mostly unchanged across the rest of the High Plains, but a few localized areas worsened enough to increase one category on the map. Extreme drought (D3) continued to affect much of southeastern Colorado and portions of adjacent southwestern South Dakota and western Nebraska. Less than half of normal rainfall was reported over the past 90 days in some areas of west-central and north-central South Dakota, northeastern and southeastern Nebraska, and central through southern Kansas.

West

Moderate to locally heavy rain (generally 1 to 2.5 inches) fell on south-central Montana, but only scattered to isolated moderate amounts approaching an inch were noted elsewhere in the state. In other locations, several tenths of an inch of precipitation fell on and near some of the higher elevations, but most places reported little or none. Despite the moisture observed in part of the state, the eastern and western sections of Montana saw some D0 and D1 expansion, though the more severely affected areas (D2 to D3) were unchanged. Along the southern tier of the region, expansion of the broad-scale severe to extreme drought was noted in parts of New Mexico, southern Utah, and adjacent Arizona. The most intense levels of drought (D3 and D4) now cover a broad area from southeastern California, southern Nevada, and southwestern Utah through much of Arizona, southern and western New Mexico, and the Texas Big Bend into south-central parts of the state.

Caribbean

A wet week across the Commonwealth kept dryness and drought at bay.

All three of the U.S. Virgin Islands have received significant precipitation this week. This has caused well water levels to rise for two of the three islands. It appears that the wet season has arrived.

CoCoRaHS stations for St. Croix Island have recorded anywhere from 0.59 to 2.81 of rain for the week. Well water levels for the Adventure 28 well remained steady at 17.1 ft. St. Croix Island remains free of drought and dryness.

St. John Island received 0.66 to 3.08 of rain this week, according to the CoCoRaHS stations around the island. This rain has caused well water levels to rise compared to last week, as the Susannaberg DPW 3 well is now at 9.98 ft. Due to beneficial precipitation and increased well water levels, St. John Island became drought and dryness free this week.

St. Thomas Island also became drought and dryness free. Precipitation observations from CoCoRaHS ranged from 3.4 to 4.83. The Grade 3 School well is now at 4.3 ft., which is almost a 2-foot increase compared to last week.

Overall, much-needed rain has reached each of the islands, keeping them drought and dryness free.

Pacific

Recent periods of moderate precipitation have ended abnormal dryness in south-central and southwestern parts of the state, but such conditions persist in most of the southeastern parts of the state..

Substantial precipitation fell on Oahu, Kauai, and Nihau, broadly improving drought classifications by one category. Less beneficial rains fell elsewhere, keeping drought and dryness essentially unchanged in most areas. Some deterioration was noted on southwestern parts of the Big Island, where a strip of extreme drought (D3) was introduced along the immediate coast.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) continues with the pattern of dryness that has been observed last week. Alingalapalap and Jaluit have received 1-category degradations due to continued lack of adequate precipitation. All islands except Majuro are likely to receive degradations due to the lack of precipitation across the RMI next week. In particular, Kwajalein, Utirik, and Wotje did not receive any measurable precipitation this week, while Mili only received 0.45 of rain this week. Majuro has received 1.06 of rain this week, and has 23 million gallons of water in its reservoir.

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) moved to a drier pattern this week. Lukunor, Nukuoro, and Pohnpei have received inadequate weekly precipitation at 0.05, 0.05, and 0.47 of rain, respectively. These three islands may be moving towards abnormal

dryness if they continue to receive little precipitation. Pingelap and Yap are headed towards severe drought if they continue to receive inadequate precipitation. Kosrae is in consideration for a 1-category downgrade to abnormal dryness due to three consecutive weeks of inadequate precipitation. Kapingamarangi remains abnormally dry, with only 1.16 of rain received this week. Though Chuuk Lagoon has received only 1.29 of rain this week, the island will stay free of drought and dryness due to receiving adequate precipitation in the weeks prior.

The Marianas Islands continue to see beneficial yet inadequate weekly precipitation. Guam and Rota saw 0.52 and 1.3 of rain this week. Though Guam received inadequate precipitation this week, Rota had seen the first week where precipitation was satisfactory. These islands will remain abnormally dry for this week. Saipan will continue to be in severe drought due to low precipitation. AMME NPS Saipan only received 0.06 of rain this week, while there was 0.6 of rain at the Saipan INTL Airport.

For the month of April, the Republic of Palau has seen anywhere from 6-8 of rain. However, this week, the WSO Palau received 1.88 of rain, which is only slightly below a typical weekly precipitation. Koror has received slightly less rain than WSO Palau, at 1.55 this week. The Republic of Palau overall remains drought and dryness free due to adequate monthly precipitation so far.

American Samoa has received below-average weekly precipitation. For example, Pago Pago received 1.15 of rain. The Toa Ridge and Siufaga Ridge have received 1.08 and 1.69 of rain this week. Though it is inadequate, monthly precipitation for these two stations have been adequate, at 4.51 and 4.48, respectively. American Samoa remains drought and dryness free overall.

Looking Ahead

During April 23-28, 2025, substantial portions of the contiguous United States are expecting at least moderate precipitation (several tenths), with scattered heavy amounts over 2 inches. This includes a swath from northwestern Wyoming across southern Montana and most of the Dakotas, the Upper Mississippi Valley, through much of the Great Lakes and New England. Heavy amounts could be most widespread in the Red River (south) Valley, central Oklahoma, and from the central Plains into Iowa. In addition, most of the central and southern Great Plains should receive several tenths of an inch to near 2 inches, along with the Lower Mississippi Valley, southern and central Appalachians, and the interior Southeast. Elsewhere, several tenths of an inch are expected in the Middle Mississippi Valley, the lower Great Lakes, and from the South Atlantic States into southern New England. In the West, a few tenths to about 1.5 inches of precipitation are forecast for southern Oregon, northern and eastern California, the northern Great Basin, and the swath of higher elevations from central Utah through western Montana and adjacent Idaho. Meanwhile, little or no precipitation is forecast for most of the Four Corners Region, southern sections of the Great Basin and California,

southern Texas, the immediate Gulf Coast, most of Florida, and southeastern Georgia. Temperatures are expected to average below normal in the Southwest and California, but above normal over most other portions of the contiguous United States. Daily high temperatures are expected to average 8 to 10 deg. F. above normal over the Northeast and mid-Atlantic Region, parts of the Lower Mississippi Valley and adjacent areas, and many locations in and around South Dakota.

The Climate Prediction Centers 6-10 day outlook valid April 29 May 3, 2025 favors wetter than normal conditions southeastern Rockies eastward through the Middle and Lower Mississippi Valley, and most of the Eastern States outside eastern New England and southern Florida. Meanwhile, subnormal precipitation is most likely across the northern Plains, central and western Rockies, the Intermountain West, and California. Wet weather is slightly favored in the remaining dry areas in southeastern Alaska and Hawaii. Warm weather should prevail across the contiguous United States outside the southern High Plains and adjacent Rockies. The greatest odds for warmth extend from California and the Great Basin through the northern Rockies and Intermountain West, plus across the lower Mississippi Valley and the Eastern States. Warmth is also significantly favored across Hawaii. Subnormal temperatures are expected to be limited to Alaska.

Author(s)

Richard Tinker, NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC

Daniel Whitesel, National Drought Mitigation Center