

National Drought Summary for September 30, 2025

Summary

This week, widespread rains fell from parts of southern Missouri and Arkansas northeastward into the northeast U.S. Amounts of 1-2 inches were common, and locally higher amounts fell, especially in northwest and southern Arkansas, parts of Tennessee and Kentucky and in eastern New York and southern New England. Many of the areas which received these rains were experiencing drought or abnormal dryness. For some, the rain provided enough relief to improve conditions, while for others, especially in south-central Missouri and northern Arkansas and in New England, heavier rains were only enough to halt recent worsening trends. Very dry weather continued in northern parts of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, most of Lower Michigan and the northern Great Plains and Upper Midwest, leading to some deterioration in areas that have remained dry recently. Recent precipitation in parts of the High Plains and West led to improvements for the northern Colorado Front Range into the southeast half of Wyoming, and in portions of New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and Oregon. Continual dry weather led to worsening conditions in northern Montana and adjacent western North Dakota, where abnormal dryness and moderate and severe drought expanded in coverage. Widespread flash drought conditions occurred this week across parts of the far south-central and Southeast U.S. Impacts were acute in portions of southern Georgia, where the peanut crop was suffering as a result of the rapid drying. While precipitation amounts varied widely, above-normal temperatures were standard across most of the U.S., except for parts of Arizona and New Mexico. In most of the rest of the U.S., temperatures were between 2-6 degrees above normal, while the northern Great Plains, Upper Midwest and Northeast baked in September heat that generally ranged from 6-10 degrees warmer than normal.

Localized degradations occurred in parts of Hawaii this week, where short-term precipitation deficits continued amid poor streamflow conditions and impacts to vegetation. Rainfall from a tropical wave reduced precipitation deficits in eastern Puerto Rico, leading to the removal of one of the ongoing areas of abnormal dryness. Alaska remained free of drought or abnormal dryness this week.

Northeast

The Northeast was warmer than normal this week, with temperatures generally ranging from 6-10 degrees above normal, especially in the western half of the region. A swath of moderate to heavy rain fell from West Virginia northeast through eastern New York into parts of central New England. In eastern New York, locally over 5 inches of rain fell, which was enough to increase streamflow and soil moisture while reducing recent precipitation shortfalls.

In New England, heavier rains of mostly 1 to locally 4 inches were only enough to put the brakes on the developing drought, as streamflows decreased substantially after the event and rains struggled to infiltrate deeper into soils. Additionally, significant short-term rainfall deficits still exist in many areas despite the rain. The recent very dry weather has led to many wells and springs running dry in parts of New England. Moderate and extreme drought expanded slightly in New Hampshire and Massachusetts and in eastern Maine, respectively, where

rainfall amounts were lighter this week. In far western New York, flash drought conditions have been developing amid large short-term precipitation deficits and lowering soil moisture, and moderate drought expanded and severe drought developed along the south shore of Lake Ontario.

In Pennsylvania and western and northern West Virginia, recent rainfall amounts were much more beneficial, providing a boost to streamflow and soil moisture and leading to widespread improvement in ongoing drought and abnormal dryness. Localized 2-category improvements occurred in western West Virginia where some of the heaviest rain fell. Farther south in West Virginia, severe and extreme drought continued, as this week's rains were not enough to improve conditions.

Southeast

Warmer-than-normal temperatures covered the Southeast region this week, with temperatures spiking 6-8 degrees above normal in parts of Virginia and North Carolina. Scattered heavy rains, ranging from 1 to locally over 3 inches, fell across parts of southern Virginia and western North Carolina, northern Georgia and northern Alabama. Meanwhile, mostly dry weather, with local exceptions, continued in central and southern Alabama, Georgia, and along the Florida Gulf Coast.

This week's heavier rains, which mostly ranged from 1-4 inches, were sufficient to improve soil moisture quantity and streamflow while lessening short-term precipitation deficits in parts of southern Virginia, western North Carolina and South Carolina and northern parts of Georgia and Alabama.

Central and southeast Alabama and southern Georgia saw continued rapid drying this week amid mostly drier weather and above-normal temperatures. Short-term precipitation deficits and soil moisture deficits are quite low in some areas, particularly southern Georgia, where the dryland peanut crop was suffering amid a very dry period over the last month and a half. Wildfire risk also increased this week across Alabama. Short-term moderate drought developed in parts of the central Florida Panhandle amid similar conditions. Across the western half of the Florida Peninsula, abnormal dryness expanded as rainfall deficits grew and streamflows struggled.

South

Like most other regions this week, the South was warmer than normal for late September, with temperature anomalies mostly checking in 2-6 degrees above normal. Rainfall amounts across the region varied widely. Far northern Louisiana and southern and northwest Arkansas were quite wet, with widespread rain amounts from 2-4 inches, with locally higher amounts. Heavier rain amounts of 2-4 inches also fell in parts of southern and western Tennessee. More isolated 1-2 inch rain amounts fell in central Texas and southeast Oklahoma. The central Texas rains were sufficient for a few local improvements, though one area that remained drier saw a local expansion of moderate drought. Farther southeast in Texas, mostly drier weather led to widespread expansion in severe drought in the Austin area, along with expanding moderate

drought and abnormal dryness nearby and to the east. Recent drier and warmer weather led to some local expansion of abnormal dryness and short-term moderate drought in central Oklahoma. Moderate drought and abnormal dryness expanded in southern Louisiana and southern Mississippi, with localized severe drought developing along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in response to recent very dry weather and lowering soil moisture amounts. Moderate and severe drought also expanded in east-central Mississippi amid deficits in soil moisture and short-term precipitation.

The heavier rains in parts of Tennessee and Arkansas increased soil moisture and streamflow and lessened precipitation deficits in the areas of heaviest rainfall. This led to widespread 1-category improvements and a 2-category improvement in southwest Arkansas. Despite the rainfall in northern Arkansas, short-term precipitation deficits remained significant enough that improvements in this area were mostly limited this week.

Midwest

Well-above-normal temperatures covered the Midwest region during the last week of September, with temperatures of 6-10 degrees above normal in Ohio, Indiana, northern Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Lower Michigan. Heavy rain amounts of 1-3 inches, with locally higher amounts, fell in far southern portions of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio, much of Kentucky, and parts of west-central Missouri and southeast Michigan.

The heavy rainfall in the aforementioned areas was sufficient for 1-category improvements where short-term precipitation shortfalls lessened and soil moisture and streamflow increased. In tandem with the 2-category improvement in western West Virginia, isolated 2-category improvements occurred in southeast Ohio and far northeast Kentucky.

Mostly dry weather occurred in northeast Missouri, central and northern Illinois, the northern half of the Michigan Lower Peninsula, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Decreases in soil moisture and streamflow and growing short-term rainfall deficits led to 1-category degradations in parts of northern Minnesota, northern Minnesota, the central Michigan Lower Peninsula, northern Indiana, northwest Ohio, central and northern Illinois and nearby southern Wisconsin and the St. Louis area. Impacts from this short-term drought included poor crop yields in Ohio, widespread poor forage production across southern Missouri recently and disease in white-tailed deer in Kentucky.

High Plains

Mostly warmer-than-normal temperatures occurred across the High Plains this week, except for central and southern parts of Colorado. The Dakotas and northern Wyoming were especially warm as September reached its end, with temperatures mostly 6-10 degrees above normal. Widespread moderate to heavy precipitation fell from southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas into northern Colorado and southeast Wyoming, including some wintry precipitation at higher elevations. Rainfall amounts locally exceeded 2 inches in parts of northeast Colorado and adjacent parts of Nebraska and Kansas.

In northern Colorado and southeast Wyoming, recent precipitation improved soil moisture and

streamflow and reduced precipitation shortfalls, leading to widespread 1-category improvements in these areas. In south-central South Dakota, recent wetter weather led to the removal of moderate drought, as conditions were re-evaluated this week in that area. Moderate drought expanded slightly in the San Luis Valley of south-central Colorado, where short-term precipitation deficits mounted amid poor vegetation conditions.

West

In the West this week, temperatures were mostly warmer than normal, with the exception of parts of Arizona and New Mexico. Isolated rains of 2 or more inches fell in parts of west-central New Mexico, leading to localized 1-category improvements there. More significant heavy rain, locally exceeding 2 inches, fell across parts of central Arizona this week. Unfortunately, this led to a significant and deadly flooding event. The heavy rains in central and southern Arizona also led to 1-category improvements in this weeks Drought Monitor. Isolated heavy rain fell in central and northeast Nevada (along the Utah border), leading to isolated 1-category improvements. A re-evaluation of conditions in central and north-central Oregon led to some local improvements there, where soil moisture and streamflow have improved and precipitation deficits lessened. Just to the northwest of those improvements, poor vegetation conditions, low streamflow and significant precipitation deficits led to a small expansion in severe drought. Severe drought expanded in south-central Utah where long-term precipitation deficits grew alongside soil moisture and streamflow shortages. Recent dry weather and dropping soil moisture, streamflow and groundwater levels led to expansions of severe and moderate drought and abnormal dryness across northern Montana.

Caribbean

Above-normal rainfall across eastern Puerto Rico, associated with a passing tropical wave, led to a reduction in coverage of abnormal dryness. Temperatures this week across the island were mostly 1-2 degrees above normal.

At the start of the drought week (Wed, Sept 24 Tue, Sept 30) a tropical wave (AL94) brought showers and thunderstorms to the region. After the wave passed, steamy conditions resulted in high heat index values (at least 108 deg F). Minor concentrations of Saharan dust moved over the islands on Sept 29. Though major Hurricane Humberto was at least 500 miles away to the north (Sept 29), the beaches of the U.S. Virgin Islands were still within reach of the northeasterly ocean swells it generated.

Rainfall observations for the past week in St. Croix ranged from 0.51-inch at VI-SC-25 (Christiansted 4.4 W) to 1.62 inches at VI-SC-29 (Frederiksted 2.5 NNE). Intermediate amounts included 0.60-inch at both VI-SC-24 (Christiansted 2.1 ENE) and VI-SC-30 (Christiansted 1.7 SW), 0.63-inch at VI-SC-31 (Christiansted 3.2 W), 0.96-inch at VI-SC-10 (Christiansted 1.6 E), 1.01 inches at VI-SC-23 (Christiansted 6.5 W), 1.31 inches at VI-SC-20 (Frederiksted 1.7 ESE), 1.32 inches at VI-SC-35 (Frederiksted 1.3 ENE), and 1.58 inches at VI-SC-34 (Frederiksted 1.9 NE). The observation of 0.02-inch at the Henry Rohlsen Airport appears way too low given the surrounding locations and was thus discounted this week. The Standardized Precipitation Index

(SPI) values this week for East Hill (672560) for 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12-months were: +1.45, +0.49, +0.54, +0.52, +1.23, which did not favor dryness or drought. Groundwater levels at the Adventure 28 Well in St. Croix ranged from 18.34 feet (4:45 pm AST, Sept 24) to 18.15 feet (11:45 pm AST, Sept 30), indicating a slight overall rise in groundwater level. Although St. Croix's drought designation is being kept as D0(S) this week, reassessment next week and the fact that we are well within the traditional rainy season (August through November) may warrant its removal.

On the island of St. John, rainfall measurements ranged from 1.36 inches (only 4 days of data) at VI-SJ-8 (Cruz Bay 7.4 E) to 3.38 inches at VI-SJ-3 (Windswept Beach). Intervening amounts of 2.05 and 3.34 inches of rain were noted at VI-SJ-10 (Cruz Bay 3.1 NNW) and VI-SJ-5 (Cruz Bay 1.6 E), respectively. For Windswept Beach, the last three monthly rainfall amounts were 2.07 inches in July, 7.26 inches in August, and 8.81 inches (preliminary) in September 2025. SPI values this week for East End (672551) were unavailable. At the Susannaberg Dpw 3 well in St. John, the groundwater levels ranged from 11.21 feet (10:00 a.m. AST, Sept 24) to 8.58 ft (4:45 am AST, Sept 30), exhibiting a significant rise of 2.63 feet in well water level. The island of St. John remains free of dryness and drought.

On St. Thomas, weekly precipitation amounts ranged from 1.72 inches at VI-ST-13 (Charlotte Amalie 1.2 NNW) to just shy of the 2-inch mark (1.99 inches) at VI-ST-15 (Charlotte Amalie West 1.3 N). An intermediate amount of 1.84 inches was observed at VI-ST-14 (Nadir 0.3 E (Tropical Marine)) which fits in nicely with the other stations, though with the caveat that only one day of data was available this week. The Cyril King Airport estimated 0.97-inch of rain this week, which may be correct, though it is roughly half the total of the other stations. The SPI values at Cyril King Airport (11640) for 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12-months were: +0.30, -0.18, +0.47, +0.41, +1.27 (wet at 12-months, otherwise near normal at other time ranges). At the Grade School 3 Well in St. Thomas, groundwater levels ranged from 5.54 feet (9:15 a.m. AST, Sept 24) to 3.78 feet (1:15 a.m. AST, Sept 26). Though not as large a rise in well water level as that on St. John, a rise of 1.76 feet is significant nonetheless. The island of St. Thomas remains free of dryness and drought.

Pacific

Precipitation in southeast Alaska was mostly above normal by 1-4 inches this week, while in most other parts of the state, precipitation was within a few inches of normal. Temperatures were a mixed bag, though they tended to lean about 3-6 degrees colder than normal in central, western and northern Alaska this week. Alaska remained free of drought or abnormal dryness this week.

Below-normal rainfall occurred on eastern and parts of the northern Big Island of Hawaii this week. Extreme drought expanded slightly in the southern portion of the island, while reductions in streamflow and recent rainfall deficits led to the expansion of severe drought in the northeast. In parts of northern and eastern Oahu, drier weather also occurred this week, leading to expansions in moderate and severe drought where rainfall deficits grew, streamflow dropped and vegetation health struggled. Temperatures across the state were generally 0.5-2 degrees below normal.

A variety of weather features affected the USAPI region this past drought week (Wed, Sept 24 Tue, Sept 30). The lions share of the activity was located over the western Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Palau, and the ocean waters well north of Palau, which were visited by two tropical cyclones, Supertyphoon Ragasa and Typhoon Bualoi. Ragasa was already on its way out of the area at the start of the period, and Bualoi was pulling away from Yap and Koror as it headed toward the Philippines. In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), elevated long-period north swell emanating from distant Tropical Storm Neoguri generated hazardous surf of 8-10 feet and dangerous rip currents along north-facing reefs of the Marianas. Over the eastern FSM, a large shield of clouds and showers was observed early in the period due to a residual InterTropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) fragment, trade wind troughs, and the Tropical Upper-Tropospheric Trough (TUTT) to the north. Ocean swell from distant Neoguri resulted in 6-8 foot rises in water level, primarily in Pohnpei and Kosrae. A moderately active ITCZ brought periods of on-and-off showers and some thunderstorms to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) this week. Late in the period, Invest 93W was moving away from the Marianas; in its wake, several trade wind and surface troughs moved through the area. American Samoa enjoyed a relatively dry week as a high pressure system just south of the islands continued to limit shower activity. A widespread area of cloudiness and shower activity remained just north of the area. Late in the week, a predominantly dry and stable atmosphere over American Samoa was giving way to an area of weak low-level convergence and a trough, accompanied by embedded showers within the trade wind flow.

For the 7-day period ending 12z September 30th, SPoRT (GPM IMERG) satellite-based rainfall estimates depicted generally 1-inch or less for the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the eastern and central Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and broad regions of 1-2 inches (locally 2-4 inches) of rain primarily over the western FSM and ocean waters north of Palau. The higher totals for the latter region are due in part to the passage of tropical cyclones. South of the equator, American Samoa remained near the southern edge of an elongated rain band which produced up to an inch of rain.

Over the CNMI, measured precipitation amounts this past week ranged from 0.92-inch at Tinian to 4.42 inches at Saipan. Intermediate rainfall totals included 2.18 inches at Guam, 2.24 inches at the Rota Airport, 2.98 inches at Agat, and 3.63 inches at Dededo. Given the 1-inch and 4-inch weekly and monthly thresholds, respectively, for meeting most water needs across the CNMI, Tinian was the only station to fall short of the weekly minimum threshold this week. However, the preliminary September rainfall total for Tinian was 6.01 inches, which was more than enough to meet the 4-inch monthly requirement. Rota and Agat both recorded the past 12 weeks and the past 4 months as wet, with provisional September precipitation totals of 8.33 and 12.41 inches, respectively. The provisional September precipitation totals for Saipan and Guam, respectively, are 10.35 and 12.14 inches. Incidentally, the previous three months have experienced more than enough precipitation to meet most water requirements at Saipan, with the totals for June, July, and August being 5.51, 14.78, and 6.65 inches, respectively. Conditions continue to be free of dryness and drought across the CNMI.

Across the FSM, a mix of wet (2+ inches) and dry (<2 inches) stations were noted this past drought week. Precipitation amounts ranged from 0.44-inch at Lukunoch to 5.58 inches at

Gilman. Intermediate rainfall amounts that fell short of the 2-inch minimum weekly requirement included 0.69-inch at Kapingamarangi, 1.04 inches at Nukuoro, 1.51 inches at Pohnpei, and 1.97 inches at Chuuk. Intermediate rainfall amounts that surpassed the 2-inch requirement included 2.65 inches at Kosrae, 3.25 inches at Woleai, 4.11 inches at Rumung, 4.59 inches at North Fanif, and 4.76 inches at Yap. Some preliminary monthly rainfall amounts that fell short of the 8-inch monthly minimum requirement to meet most water needs include a meager 2.00 inches at Kapingamarangi and 5.19 inches at Lukunoch. Areas that exceeded the 8-inch minimum for September 2025 (data is preliminary) include 8.46 inches at Nukuoro, 13.09 inches at Pohnpei, 15.11 inches at Chuuk, and 18.91 inches at Yap. A few miscellaneous statistics for the region include the last 4 weeks being dry in Kapingamarangi (which retains its D1(S) designation), the last 12 weeks and last 12 months have been wet at Kosrae, wet conditions from December 2024 through August 2025 at Lukunoch, prior to this week 11 straight wet weeks at Pohnpei (including wet conditions recorded from October 2024 through September 2025), and a wet April through September 2025 for Chuuk. Either no data, or not enough data, was available for an analysis of the stations of Fananu, Pingelap, and Ulithi this week. In summary, no dryness or drought was indicated at any of the FSM stations except for Kapingamarangi (D1(S)).

For the Republic of Palau, Koror measured 4.18 inches of precipitation this past week, and preliminary data shows 11.08 inches of rain fell during the month of September. In addition, the past 12 months have registered as wet. At Airai (WSO Palau), 2.81 inches of rain was reported, still well above the 2-inch weekly minimum requirement. Palau remains free of dryness and drought this week.

Across the RMI this week, precipitation totals ranged from 1.80 inches at Jaluit (a dry week) to 4.20 inches at Wotje. Intermediate accumulations included 2.91 inches at Ailinglaplap, 3.34 inches at Majuro, and 3.66 inches at Kwajalein. Preliminary September rainfall totals include 6.87 inches at Wotje (dry), 10.92 inches at Kwajalein, 11.52 inches at Ailinglaplap, 12.87 inches at Majuro, and 15.15 inches at Jaluit. The drought designations remained dryness and drought-free at Kwajalein, Ailinglaplap, Jaluit, and Majuro this week. Data was not available at Mili and Utirik this week, precluding any possible analysis. Wotje reported 4.20 inches of rain this week (with 2.45 inches of that falling on the last day of the period), and a preliminary 6.87 inches for the month of September. Though this is a decent amount of rainfall this past week, Wotje has been struggling to get any recent wet weeks or months, so its depiction is left at D0(S) this week.

South of the equator, relatively dry conditions prevailed across American Samoa this past week. Rainfall amounts were clustered around the 1-inch mark, with 0.97-inch at Toa Ridge, 1.06 inches at Pago Pago (with a hefty 6.67 inches the previous week), and 1.10 inches at Siufaga Ridge. The provisional rainfall accumulations for September for these same stations respectively were 8.43 inches, 11.17 inches, and 10.79 inches. Tutuila remains free of dryness and drought this week.

Looking Ahead

Between the evening of Wednesday, Oct. 1 and Monday, Oct. 6, the National Weather Service

Weather Prediction Center is forecasting mostly dry weather across large portions of the Contiguous U.S., spanning from southern California east and northeast through the Ohio Valley, eastern Great Lakes and Northeast. Outside of the Southeast, precipitation amounts of at least 0.75 inches are confined to parts of the Sierra Nevada, northern Nevada, northern Utah, parts of Idaho, northern Wyoming, southern Montana, western South Dakota and central North Dakota. Heavier rain amounts are forecast in parts of southeast Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, far southern South Carolina, far southeast Georgia and much of the Florida Peninsula. In the Florida Peninsula and far southeast Louisiana, rainfall amounts may exceed 4 inches.

Looking ahead to Oct. 7-11, forecasts from the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) strongly favor above-normal precipitation in the Southwest U.S., especially Arizona and New Mexico, while above-normal precipitation is moderately favored in parts of the central Great Plains, Upper Midwest and Florida Peninsula. The CPC forecast slightly favors below-normal precipitation in parts of the south-central U.S. and parts of the northern Pacific Coast. Most of the southwest, central and eastern U.S. are favored to see above-normal temperatures, alongside the far northwest. Portions of the West spanning California into central and eastern Montana may see near-normal temperatures.

The CPC forecast for Hawaii favors above-normal precipitation and temperatures across the entire state.

In Alaska, the CPC forecast strongly favors above-normal precipitation in the northwest part of the state and below-normal precipitation in the southeast. Warmer-than-normal temperatures are strongly favored for most of the state, except for southeast Alaska, where near-normal temperatures are more likely.

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