

National Drought Summary for January 13, 2026

Summary

It was a more active week nationwide, with significant precipitation across the central Plains, Midwest, and Southeast. Parts of Mississippi and Alabama received more than 5 inches of rain. In the Plains and Midwest, much of the precipitation fell as rain rather than snow due to unseasonably warm temperatures. Portions of the Southwest and central Rocky Mountains also received beneficial rain and snow, slowing drought intensification and leading to localized improvements. Temperatures were warmer than normal across most of the country, with near-to slightly below-normal temperatures limited to the West and Southwest. The largest departures occurred in the upper Midwest and northern Plains, where temperatures were 1520F above normal.

Northeast

Temperatures were well above normal, generally 912F above average, with coastal areas 69F above normal. Above-normal precipitation occurred in the northern and southern portions of the region, while Pennsylvania through southern New England remained dry, receiving only 2550% of normal precipitation. Improvements to moderate drought and abnormally dry conditions occurred in western and central New York. Northern Pennsylvania continued in a wetter pattern, allowing for moderate drought improvement, while southern portions remained dry and saw moderate and severe drought expand. Severe drought improved in northern New Hampshire and Vermont. Moderate drought expanded in eastern Massachusetts but improved centrally, while abnormally dry conditions expanded in southern Connecticut. Southern Virginia remained dry, with moderate and severe drought expanding.

Southeast

Significant rainfall occurred from southern Mississippi through western North Carolina, with areas along and north of this corridor receiving 200400% of normal precipitation. Temperatures were 912F above normal across most of the region, with central and southern Florida 69F above normal. Drought improvements occurred from west-central Alabama northeastward through western North Carolina. East of this area, drought conditions worsened, with degradations across central and eastern North Carolina, much of South Carolina, central and southern Georgia, southeast Alabama, and the western Florida Panhandle. Moderate and severe drought expanded across central and southern Florida, with a new area of severe drought in far southern Florida.

South

Temperatures were above normal across nearly the entire region, with departures of 912F above normal in the east and 69F above normal across Texas and Oklahoma. Northern Louisiana, Mississippi, central and eastern Tennessee, and southeast Arkansas received well above-normal precipitation, with southern Mississippi recording 200400% of normal. Central

and southern Texas, eastern Oklahoma, and Arkansas remained largely dry. Drought improvements occurred across Mississippi, southern Louisiana, and eastern Tennessee, including improvements to severe drought in northwest Mississippi and northern Louisiana. In contrast, drought expanded across much of Arkansas and eastern and southern Texas. Extreme drought expanded across south Texas, with a new area in northeast Texas. Moderate and severe drought also expanded across east Texas into Arkansas, while abnormally dry conditions increased in central Texas and western Oklahoma. Severe drought expanded from eastern Arkansas into western Tennessee.

Midwest

Temperatures were well above normal throughout the region, ranging from 12 to 16°F above normal in most areas and 8 to 12°F above normal in the east. Above-normal precipitation fell across much of Iowa, southern Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and northern Illinois and Missouri. Much of the precipitation fell as rain, which was unusual for January, and with soils largely unfrozen, infiltration was efficient. Drought conditions improved by one category across much of Wisconsin and Michigan. Moderate and severe drought improved in central Illinois, while moderate drought and abnormally dry conditions improved in northern Missouri and southern Iowa. Moderate drought was also removed out of eastern Iowa. Southern Missouri remained dry, with moderate and severe drought expanding.

High Plains

Above-normal precipitation occurred across eastern Colorado, Kansas, and southeast Nebraska, falling primarily as rain and infiltrating soils due to warm temperatures. Much of the rest of the region remained dry. Temperatures were 10 to 15°F above normal across most areas, with parts of the Dakotas and eastern Montana 15 to 20°F above normal. Southeast Colorado was the only area near to below normal. Abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions improved in southeast Nebraska, eastern Kansas, and parts of south-central Colorado. Drought expanded across eastern Wyoming, west-central South Dakota, and northeast Colorado.

West

Above-normal precipitation occurred across southeast Arizona, western and central New Mexico, parts of Colorado, and western Washington. Temperatures were mixed, with California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico up to 5°F below normal, while northern areas were 5 to 10°F above normal and parts of central Montana 15 to 20°F above normal. Most drought changes reflected improvement, including moderate drought and abnormally dry conditions in western Montana and central Idaho, severe drought in western Colorado, and severe to extreme drought in eastern Arizona, western New Mexico, eastern Nevada, and western Utah. However, drought expanded in southwest Idaho and northern Nevada, extreme and exceptional drought expanded in central Colorado, and abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions expanded across much of eastern Wyoming.

Caribbean

For Puerto Rico, abnormally dry conditions were improved this week in the areas that received the most rain and the indicators improved.

This week, rainfall in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) was light to moderate, primarily due to brief trade-wind showers. The region is currently in its dry season, when the subtropical high and strong trade winds keep rainfall low and sporadic.

St. Croix experienced scattered light rain this week. The totals reported were 1.54 inches at VI-SC-10 (Christiansted 1.6 E) and 1.58 inches at VI-SC-20 (Frederiksted 1.7 ESE). VI-SC-30 (Christiansted 1.7 SW) received 0.88 inches, while VI-SC-35 (Frederiksted 1.3 ENE) reported 0.82 inches. Additionally, VI-SC-23 (Christiansted 6.5 W) recorded 0.41 inches, and VI-SC-34 (Frederiksted 1.9 NE) received 0.57 inches of rainfall. The Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) values for East Hill over the past 1 to 12 months ranged from -0.1 to -1.13, indicating conditions from normal to short-term abnormally dry. In contrast, the 3- to 9-month SPI values for Christiansted Hamilton indicate that the western parts of St. Croix are experiencing drought conditions. As of January 13, 2026, the water level at Adventure 28 Well in St. Croix, USVI, is recorded at 19.04 feet. This marks an increase from 18.98 feet in the previous week. Additionally, this level is higher than it was on the same date last year, January 23, 2025, when it was 16.04 feet. These observations indicate that St. Croix is still experiencing abnormally dry conditions.

This week, Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas recorded 0.24 inches of rainfall. The one-month SPI for the airport, which was -1.72 as of January 8, 2026, indicates that conditions are drier than normal. Additionally, the rainfall totals for VI-ST-13 (Charlotte Amalie, 1.2 NNW) and VI-ST-15 (Charlotte Amalie West, 1.3 N) were 0.73 inches and 0.50 inches, respectively, with one day of data missing for the latter. The depth to the water level below the land surface at the Grade School 3 well in St. Thomas, USVI, has been steadily increasing since mid-October 2025. On January 13, 2026, the water level reached 7.66 feet, up from last week's 7.50 feet. This persistent increase in the depth of the water level below the land surface indicates the island is in moderate drought conditions.

Similarly, St. John recorded low rainfall, with only 0.57 inches reported at VI-SJ-3 (Windswept Beach). In addition, VI-SJ-5 (Cruz Bay 1.6 E) received only 0.08 inches this week. The depth to the water level below the land surface at the Grade School 3 well in St. Thomas, USVI, has been increasing since mid-October. As of January 13, 2026, the water level was recorded at 7.66 feet, up from last weeks 7.50 feet. This rise in water depth indicates that the island is currently experiencing moderate drought.

Pacific

In Alaska, abnormally dry areas expanded in the north and central portions of the state with some reduction in the Kenai Peninsula where there has been an abundance of snow recently.

In Hawaii, a couple days of decent rain over east and southeast Big Island from the Hilo area to South Point, continuing the good rainfall from the Kona low the weekend before. With this

continued rain, moderate drought was improved in South Point on the Big Island. Improvement to moderate drought was also made in the South Kohala District of the Big Island (including Honokaia, Puukapu, Nienie, Waimea Town) where water restriction reduced from 25% reduction to 10% due to recent rains refilling the Waikoloa Reservoirs to a satisfactory level.

This week, light to moderate rainfall was observed across most areas of the Marshall Islands, except for Kwajalein, which experienced a more intense rainfall event. Kwajalein recorded a total of 7.15 inches of rain for the week, including 4.97 inches on January 9, 2025. As a result, Kwajalein has improved from abnormally dry conditions to being drought-free. Majuro and Mili received 1.87 inches and 1.51 inches of rain this week, respectively, and remain free of drought conditions. Although Ailinglapalap and Jaluit reported minimal rainfall (0.07 inches and no rainfall, respectively), both islands remain drought-free due to the wet conditions experienced in previous weeks. In contrast, Wotje and Utirik received rainfall amounts of 0.63 and 0.57 inches, respectively, which keep them in short-term abnormally dry conditions.

Rainfall in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) this week exhibited significant spatial variability. This week, Chuuk Lagoon experienced 2.62 inches of rainfall, while Pohnpei received 3.38 inches. Woleai recorded 1.4 inches of rain due to persistent convective activity. The rainfall totals for other locations are as follows: Kapingamarangi received 0.26 inches, Kosrae had 0.43 inches, Lukunor recorded 0.73 inches (with one day of missing data), Nukuoro received 0.36 inches, and Yap recorded 0.78 inches. In contrast, Pingelap reported no rainfall (with three days of missing data), continuing its abnormally dry conditions.

American Samoa is currently in its tropical wet season, experiencing near-normal rainfall conditions this week. Pago Pago recorded 2.18 inches, while Siufaga Ridge measured 0.79 inches and Toa Ridge received 0.65 inches of rain. As a result, American Samoa remains free from drought.

Palau experienced wet weather and heavy rainfall this week. The Weather Service Office in Airai reported 3.48 inches of rain, while Koror recorded 3.51 inches. Consequently, the island is free from drought.

This week, the Mariana Islands experienced intermittent light to moderate rainfall. According to the weekly rainfall report, Guam received 1.96 inches, Rota reported 1.85 inches, and Saipan recorded 0.51 inches. Tinian reported 0.18 inches of rain, although data for four days is still pending. Since January is usually part of the dry season and given the recent wet conditions, the Mariana Islands are currently free from drought.

Looking Ahead

Over the next five to seven days, much of the western half of the U.S. is anticipated to be dry from the West into the Plains. The wettest areas are anticipated to be over the Great Lakes region and into the Northeast. At the end of the period, there could be some coastal precipitation in portions of south and east Texas as well as Louisiana. Temperatures during this time are anticipated to well above normal over the West, with departures of 10-13F above normal from Nevada into Utah and Wyoming. Cooler-than-normal temperatures will be commonplace over the eastern half of the country, with the greatest departures over the upper

Midwest and Great Lakes with departures of 10-13F normal. The below-normal temperatures will migrate all the way into the South, with portions of the Southeast and Florida 6-9F below normal.

The 6-10 day outlooks show that the likelihood of above-normal temperatures over much of the Southwest and southern Plains. The best chances of below-normal temperatures will be over the upper Midwest and into the Northeast. From the northern Plains into the Southeast and Florida and areas east of here have the best chances of below normal temperatures.

Precipitation is expected to be below normal over Florida and the coastal areas of the Pacific Northwest. The best chances of above-normal precipitation are anticipated over the Tennessee Valley as well as over the Rocky Mountains and into the Southwest.

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