

National Drought Summary for April 7, 2026

Summary

This U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) week saw degradations across the areas of the West, Southeast, and Mid-Atlantic, while rainfall during the past week led to improvements in drought-affected areas of the South, Plains, and Midwest. In the Midwest, widespread improvements were made after another round of precipitation during the past week leading to removal of areas of drought on the map in Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In these areas, precipitation totals ranged from 2 to 5 inches. Similarly, significant rainfall was observed in portions of Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana leading to targeted improvements. Out West, generally dry conditions prevailed across much of the region, although modest precipitation totals were observed in areas of the Pacific Northwest, Northern California, Intermountain West, and Southwest with the highest totals logged in California. Despite the much-needed precipitation, conditions deteriorated on the map in Oregon, California, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, and New Mexico. In the Hawaiian Islands, conditions have improved significantly during the past two months due to historic rainfall events observed across the island chain. Elsewhere, dry conditions continued across much of the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic, leading to degradation in conditions from Virginia to Florida.

According to the latest U.S. temperature and precipitation analysis by NOAA's Center for Environmental Information, March 2026 was the warmest March on record for the contiguous U.S. (CONUS) with average temperatures reaching 9.4 F above the 20th-century average. For the month, 1,432 counties observed their single warmest March day on record (1950-present). Moreover, the April 2025 to March 2026 period was the warmest 12-month span recorded for CONUS since 1895. In terms of precipitation, the January to March period was the driest on record for CONUS, breaking the previous record set in 1910.

Coming into April, mountain snowpack conditions remain well below normal despite this week's precipitation across the higher elevations of the Cascades, Sierra, and Rockies. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) SNOw TELelemetry (SNOTEL) network (April 7), region-level (2-digit HUC) snow water equivalent (SWE) values (percent of median) are as follows: Pacific Northwest 50%, Missouri 58%, Upper Colorado 26%, Great Basin 18%, Lower Colorado 17%, Rio Grande 13%, and Arkansas-White-Red 10%. In California, statewide snowpack is 16% of normal (April 7), with the Southern Sierra at 27%, Central Sierra at 19%, and Northern Sierra at 5%.

Northeast

This week, continued improvements were made in areas of Pennsylvania, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine in response to precipitation this week and overall improving conditions observed during the past 30 days. Over the past 60-day period, precipitation was near normal to above normal (110-200+%) across Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and western Massachusetts. Conversely, areas of Maine continue to observe precipitation deficits for the contemporaneous period, ranging from 1 to 4 inches. Snowpack conditions continue to decline seasonally, with the National Weather Service National

Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center (NWS NOHRSC) reporting 61% snow cover (compared to 91% last month) for the Northeast Region, with an average depth of 3.5 inches, and a maximum depth of 69 inches. For the week, temperatures were above normal across most of the region, with the greatest departures (915 F) observed in the southern half of the region.

Southeast

During the past week, dry conditions prevailed across most of the region, except for some isolated light-to-moderate rainfall accumulations (1 to 3 inches) observed in southern Florida, southwestern Georgia, and southern Alabama. On the map, drought expanded and intensified across much of the region including in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. In southern Georgia and northern Florida, areas of Exceptional Drought (D4) expanded in response to continued dryness, very poor soil moisture and hydrologic conditions. Impacts are being reported in northern Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, according to the National Drought Mitigation Centers (NDMC) Conditions Monitoring Observer Reports (CMOR) tool. According to data from the Southeast Regional Climate Centers Climate Perspectives tool, the past two months (February 7 to April 7) have been very dry across areas of the region, with near-record dryness observed in the following locations: Gainesville, FL (2nd driest; -4.7 inch departure); Tallahassee, FL (4th driest; -6.13 inches); Savannah, GA (3rd driest; -4.36 inches); Montgomery, AL (2nd driest; -4.34 inches); North Charleston, SC (5th driest; -3.93 inches); and Charlotte, NC (7th driest; -2.85 inches). In terms of average temperatures for the week, above-normal temperatures (5 to 15 F) were observed across the entire region, with Virginia experiencing the greatest departures.

South

On this weeks map, improvements were made in drought-affected areas of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas, while areas of Tennessee saw degradations. In terms of precipitation during the past week, moderate to heavy rainfall accumulations (ranging from 3 to 6 inches) were observed in Texas, Oklahoma, and isolated areas of Louisiana. In Arkansas, some beneficial rains fell in the far-western portion of the state, which led to a boost in streamflow conditions. However, dry soils and significant precipitation deficits remain across the state with the NDMC CMOR tool showing many new impact reports during the past week. Looking at climatological rankings for the past 60-day period (February 7 to April 7), record to near-record dryness was observed in the region, Monticello, AR (4th driest; -5.7 inches), and Monroe, LA (7th driest; -6.69 inches). In Texas, Water for Texas (April 7) reports statewide reservoirs at 74% full, with eastern reservoirs in good condition while many western and southern reservoirs remain below normal. Average temperatures for the week were above normal across the region (2 to 12+ F).

Midwest

On this weeks map, widespread improvements were made across Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri,

Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio in response to the cumulative impacts of precipitation events during the past 30-day period. Noteworthy, some multiple-category improvements were made in northern portions of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio where the heaviest precipitation totals (ranging 2 to 5 inches) were observed during the past week. In Kentucky, short-term dryness and developing hydrologic drought conditions led to expansion and intensification of drought. NWS NOHRSC (Northern Great Lakes Region) reports 42% of the region is covered by snow, at an average depth of 5.5 inches, and a maximum depth of 71 inches. Temperatures were above normal across most of the region, with anomalies ranging from 2 to 15 F. Looking at climatological rankings for the past 30-day period (March 7 to April 7), numerous locations ranked among their wettest or near-wettest on record, including Chicago, IL: (2nd wettest; +2.57 inches); Lake Geneva, WI (wettest on record; +6.33 inches), Lafayette, IN (wettest on record; +3.75 inches); Toledo, OH (wettest on record; +4.43 inches), and Saginaw, MI (wettest on record; +3.66 inches).

High Plains

On this weeks map, rainfall (1 to 4 inches) during the past week led to targeted improvements in far eastern portions of Kansas and Nebraska. Meanwhile, conditions deteriorated on the map in areas of central and western Kansas, and southwestern South Dakota. For the week, average temperatures were 4 to 10+ F below normal across much of the region with the greatest departures observed in the Dakotas. Looking at climatological rankings for the past 60-day period (March 7 to April 7), several locations ranked among their driest on record, including Dodge City, KS (driest on record; -1.51 inches); Goodland, KS (driest on record; -1.05); and Manhattan, KS (2nd driest; -1.81 inches). In terms of hydrologic conditions, the U.S. Geological Survey is reporting below to much below normal streamflows across southwestern South Dakota, southern Nebraska, and central/western Kansas.

West

Conditions continued to deteriorate in the region with degradations made across southern Oregon, Northern California, southwestern Montana, northwestern Wyoming, and New Mexico. Despite some precipitation falling across the mountain ranges of the region this week, the snowpack conditions remain extremely poor with the remaining snowpack primarily restricted to the highest elevations. In Colorado, NRCS is reporting statewide SWE at the lowest on record. Historically, median peak SWE in Colorado occurs on April 8, however, this year peak SWE occurred on March 8. In Washington state, the Department of Ecology issued a statewide emergency drought declaration as projected water supplies are expected to be well below normal levels. In the Colorado River Basin, Lake Powell is 24% full, while Lake Mead is 33% full, according to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Across areas of the Far West, very dry conditions were observed during the past 30-day period (March 7 to April 7), with record to near-record dryness at the following locations: Eugene, OR (10th driest; -2.57 inches); Medford, OR (9th driest; -1.38 inches); Crescent City, CA (2nd driest; -5.58 inches); Mount Shasta, CA (driest on record; -5.35 inches); San Francisco, CA (5th driest; -2.34 inches); Santa Cruz (driest on record; -3.13 inches); Monterey, CA (3rd driest; -2.8 inches), and San Diego, C

(driest on record; -1.24 inches).

Caribbean

No changes were made this week in Puerto Rico.

Near the beginning of the current drought week (Wed, Apr 1 Tue, Apr 7) strong high pressure over the western Atlantic maintained breezy trade winds across the region. Winds of 15-20 mph were generally noted, with gusts of 25-30 mph or higher. Dangerous rip currents were a concern for northward and eastward-facing beaches. As time progressed, a band of above-normal precipitable water (PW) values (the 75th climatological percentile for this time of year is near 1.7 inches) moved in from the northeast and spread across the islands. As moisture deepened and became more established over the area, passing showers became more frequent. The lack of a well-defined trade wind cap, combined with a nearby upper-level trough, aided in the formation of showers and isolated thunderstorm activity. For the mid to late part of the drought week, broad surface high pressure over the central to eastern Atlantic resulted in south to southeasterly winds. Increasing low-level moisture from the Caribbean overspread the USVI and nearby Puerto Rico, with PW values rising to near 2.0 inches. Above-normal heat index values returned to the region by the end of the period. SPoRT-based IMERG satellite imagery provided rainfall estimates for the drought week, with most areas indicating under one inch of rain.

Relatively dry conditions were noted across the U.S. Virgin Islands this past drought week, near the height of the climatological dry season. No adjustments were deemed necessary to any of the drought depictions.

Measured precipitation amounts on St. Croix this past week ranged from 0.17-inch (2 days of missing data) at VI-SC-35 (Frederiksted 1.3 ENE) to 1.54 inches at VI-SC-20 (Frederiksted 1.7 ESE). Intermediate rainfall values (in increasing order) were: 0.24-inch (2 days missing) at VI-SC-24 (Christiansted 2.1 ENE), 0.26-inch at VI-SC-34 (Frederiksted 1.9 NE), 0.34-inch (2 days missing) at VI-SC-29 (Frederiksted 2.5 NNE), 0.39-inch at VI-SC-23 (Christiansted 6.5 W), 0.49-inch (1 day missing) at VI-SC-25 (Christiansted 4.4 W), 0.51-inch at VI-SC-30 (Christiansted 1.7 SW), 0.58-inch at 11624 (Rohlsen Airport), 0.62-inch (1 day missing) at VI-SC-10 (Christiansted 1.6 E), and 0.65-inch at 672560 (East Hill). The Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) values at East Hill for 1-, 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-months are: +1.03, +1.64, -0.27, +0.11, and +0.03, indicating there are no drought concerns at this time. The Adventure 28 Well water levels have ranged from a high of 20.46 feet early on Apr 1 to a low of 20.71 feet late on Apr 7.

Rainfall amounts on St. Johns in ascending order included 0.32-inch at 672551 (East End), 0.71-inch at VI-SJ-3 (Windswept Beach), 1.13 inches at VI-SJ-5 (Cruz Bay 1.6 E), and 1.23 inches at VI-SJ-10 (Cruz Bay 3.1 NNW). Historically, March is the driest month of the year at Windswept Beach, with a 1984-2025 mean rainfall value of 1.75 inches; this March's accumulation was 2.25 inches. In February, the total precipitation at Windswept Beach was 3.37 inches. The Susannaberg Dpw 3 Well water levels peaked at 13.48 feet early on Apr 1, and then gradually declined to 13.73 feet on Apr 5, with a slight rebound towards the end of the period.

St. Thomas precipitation included 0.51-inch at 11640 (King Airport), 0.70-inch at VI-ST-13 (Charlotte Amalie 1.2 NNW), and 0.90-inch at VI-ST-15 (Charlotte Amalie West 1.3 N). The 1-, 3-, and 6-month SPI values at King Airport were +0.55, +0.56, and -1.14, which indicates additional assessment and reevaluation of parameters are warranted during the next few weeks. The Grade School 3 Well water levels peaked at 5.92 feet at the start of Apr 1, with steady decline thereafter to 6.92 feet near the very end of Apr 7.

Pacific

No changes were made this week in Alaska.

In the Hawaiian Islands, the cumulative impact of several significant storm events has erased drought across the island chain, except some areas on the Big Island which have some remaining longer-term deficits as well as areas of dryness showing up on satellite-based vegetation health indices.

At the beginning of the drought week, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) experienced the passage of a shear line fragment and spotty showers. Several days later, surface high pressure moved off the coast of Japan, which tightened the pressure gradient with the Near-Equatorial Trough (NET) which led to an increase in both ocean swell and winds. Rip currents were a concern for northward and eastward facing beaches. The second half of the drought week was associated with a seasonal trade-wind pattern attended by considerable cloud cover and scattered showers. Over the western Federated States of Micronesia (w-FSM), the nearby NET displayed the presence of an embedded circulation early in the drought week, while Palau was near a convergence zone produced by the circulation and the prevailing northeast winds. Drier conditions were noted for Yap and Palau. What remained of tropical disturbance 99W passed over Weno (the capital of Chuuk). Wet weather ensued at Chuuk, as a trade wind surge brought an increase in both showers and thunderstorms. Later in the drought week, the main two features for the w-FSM region included the NET and the incoming Invest 90W. South of the NET axis, scattered to numerous showers were observed on satellite imagery. For Palau and Yap, a dry trade wind pattern remained over the region, with the exception of an approaching trough which was expected to produce only a few showers. For the eastern FSM region (e-FSM), a tropical disturbance was located near Kiribati near the start of the drought week, producing heavy rainfall and gusty winds as it drifted around. The combination of this disturbance and the NET brought unsettled weather conditions to the region. A deepening in ITCZ convection as it interacted with the NET and embedded NET disturbance downstream, brought periods of intense showers, thunderstorms, and strong to near gale-force winds to Pohnpei and Kosrae, and extended farther east into Majuro, part of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). In the South Pacific, Tropical Cyclone (TC) Vaianu, remained well west and south of American Samoa, with little if any direct impacts from this system before the drought week came to a close.

Satellite-based rainfall estimates (from SPoRT GPM/IMERG) for the past 7-days ending 12z Apr 7 show a pattern that broadly favors the heavier precipitation amounts (1-4 inches) over central and eastern portions of the USAPI domain north of the equator. Much of this was

consolidated into linear or quasi-linear bands, especially over the southern and eastern RMI. Smaller-scale clumps of more isolated convection were noted in the vicinity of Pohnpei. Much of the CNMI and w-FSM (including Palau) were shown to have received under a half-inch of precipitation for the week.

In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) rainfall amounts were relatively light this past drought week ranging from 0.07-inch at Agat to 0.68-inch at Saipan International Airport. The previous three months have been wet in Saipan (exceeding the minimum water requirement of 4 inches), with 13.72 inches being recorded in March alone. Rota Airport measured 0.19-inch of rain this week, with every month from June 2025 through March 2026 registering wet. The March total of 15.94 inches is nearly four times the monthly minimum water requirement of 4 inches. Dededo came in with 0.21-inch for the week, with two days of data missing. Guam reported 0.34-inch of rain this past drought week, with the previous five weeks being wet, as well as each month from June 2025 through March 2026. Guam received 14.90 inches in March. There was not enough data to perform a reliable analysis at Tinian this week. Though this was a dry week for the CNMI, the amount of precipitation received in past months (including March 2026) was more than enough to justify the ongoing drought-free conditions.

The Republic of Palau experienced a very dry week, with only 0.15-inch of precipitation measured at Koror (2 days of missing data) and 0.23-inch at Airai (WSO Palau). The March 2026 monthly totals were 11.20 inches and 12.62 inches, respectively, which easily surpassed the 8-inch minimum water requirement. Despite this very dry week in Palau, past months (including March) have been wet. Drought-free conditions continue.

Across the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), rainfall amounts ranged from 0.09-inch at Ulithi to 10.81 inches at Pohnpei. Intermediate values included 0.17-inch (1 day missing) at Rumung, 0.29-inch at North Fanif, 0.37-inch (1 day missing) at Gilman, 0.55-inch (1 day missing) at Yap Island, 1.19 inches at Lukunoch, 1.22 inches (1 day missing) at Kosrae, 1.28 inches at Kapingamarangi, 1.38 inches at Nukuoro, and 6.72 inches at Chuuk. Only Chuuk and Pohnpei exceeded the 2-inch weekly minimum requirement this week to meet most water needs. Fananu, Pingelap, and Woleai did not report precipitation amounts this week and were therefore left out of the analyses. One station that bears monitoring is Lukunoch, currently depicted as D0(S). The previous three months, January, February, and March 2026 reported rainfall totals of 6.73 inches, 5.95 inches, and 6.11 inches, respectively, all falling short of the 8-inch minimum threshold.

In the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), measured rainfall amounts ranged from 0.60-inch at Jaluit (though with 4 days of missing data) to 3.57 inches at Majuro. Intermediate values included 0.70-inch at Utirik, 1.62 inches at Wotje, 1.79 inches at Mili, 2.41 inches at Kwajalein, and 2.74 inches at Ailinglaplap. Weekly minimum water requirements of at least 2 inches were therefore met at Kwajalein, Ailinglaplap, and Majuro. For the month of March 2026, precipitation amounts included 3.49 inches at Wotje (dry), 6.49 inches at Kwajalein (dry), 7.70 inches at Utirik (dry), 16.17 inches at Ailinglaplap (wet), and a whopping 20.30 inches at Mili (wet). Based on Automated Weather Station (AWS) data, a 1-category improvement was rendered to the drought depictions at both Utirik (now becomes D2-S) and Wotje (now becomes D1-S).

In the South Pacific, American Samoa precipitation during the past drought week included 0.61-inch (1-day missing) at Toa Ridge, 0.79-inch at Pago Pago Airport, and 1.95-inch (1-day missing) at Siufaga Ridge. Though Siufaga Ridge came close to reaching the 2-inch weekly minimum cutoff, all three locations fell short this week and came in as dry. During the week before last, Pago Pago reported 6.20 inches (wet), and the March total was 11.96 inches (wet). For March, Siufaga Ridge observed 7.22 inches of rain (dry) and Toa Ridge observed 7.65 inches (dry). No changes were deemed necessary this week to the drought depiction for American Samoa.

Looking Ahead

The NWS Weather Prediction Center 7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast calls for precipitation accumulations generally ranging from 1 to 4 inches across eastern portions of the Southern Plains, Midwest, and Northeast, with the heaviest totals (locally 3 to 4 inches) along a corridor extending from eastern Oklahoma and Arkansas through the Mid-Mississippi Valley into eastern portions of the Upper Midwest. Across the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic, very dry conditions are expected, with little or no precipitation across most areas. The highest totals in the region are expected in isolated areas of eastern Florida, where accumulations may reach 2 to 3 inches. Across the High Plains, light-to-moderate precipitation accumulations ranging from 0.25 to 1.5 inches are expected, with the greatest totals across the eastern extent of the region. In the West, moderate-to-heavy liquid precipitation accumulations are expected across areas of California, particularly along the central and northern Sierra Nevada and coastal ranges, as well as portions of the central and northern Rockies, with lighter to moderate totals across portions of the Pacific Northwest. Dry conditions are expected to prevail across much of the Southwest, including areas of the southeastern California deserts, southern Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico.

The NWS 610-Day Temperature Outlook (valid April 1418, 2026) calls for above-normal temperatures across nearly all of the contiguous U.S., with the highest probabilities across the eastern half of the country, including the Midwest, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Northeast. Below-normal temperatures are limited to areas along the broader U.S.-Canada border region in the Northern Plains and Upper Midwest, while near-normal temperatures are expected across parts of the Pacific Northwest.

In terms of precipitation, the 610-Day Outlook calls for above-normal precipitation across the Far West, northern Rockies, New Mexico, Texas, the South (eastern extent), portions of the central and southern Plains, Midwest, and Northeast. Near-normal precipitation is expected across the Intermountain West, Desert Southwest, areas of the South, Mid-Atlantic, and coastal New England. Below-normal precipitation is favored across the Southeast and portions of the Mid-Atlantic.

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