

National Drought Summary for July 14, 2026

Summary

Heavy rain fell this week across parts of the United States, bringing widespread relief from ongoing drought and abnormal dryness from northeast Texas northeast through the Mid-Atlantic. Recent rains shifted drought impacts more towards the longer term in some areas. Localized improvements after recent precipitation occurred in parts of southern New York and southern New England and in portions of the central Great Plains. Localized improvements occurred in small areas of northwest Alaska and north-central Puerto Rico after heavy rains this week. An assessment of shorter-term conditions in Utah and portions of western Oklahoma and western and southern Texas led to a few improvements. Warm and dry weather occurred this week in the western Great Lakes, especially in far northern Wisconsin, parts of the Michigan Upper Peninsula, northern Minnesota and eastern North Dakota. These areas saw widespread degradation given this week's conditions. Drier areas in central Colorado also saw the expansion of extreme and exceptional drought this week. Abysmal streamflow and short-term precipitation deficits continued across parts of Washington, leading to widespread degradation there. Severe drought expanded in both south-central Puerto Rico and southeast Florida owing to short-term rainfall deficits in both areas.

Northeast

Heavier rains this week, locally over 2 inches, fell in southern parts of the Northeast region and in parts of eastern Massachusetts. In both areas, improved streamflow and soil moisture and lessened short-term precipitation deficits contributed to locally-improving conditions, especially in West Virginia, New Jersey, southern Pennsylvania and portions of Maryland and Delaware. Short-term rainfall deficits grew in eastern Maine along with lowering streamflow, leading to a small expansion of abnormal dryness, though no drought areas expanded or were introduced in the Northeast this week. Temperature anomalies across the region tended 3-6 degrees warmer-than-normal in western Pennsylvania, while elsewhere they were mostly within 3 degrees of normal.

Southeast

Widespread moderate-to-heavy rain fell across parts of the Southeast region this week, especially in Virginia and the Carolinas. Despite temperatures running 3-6 degrees above normal in the eastern Carolinas and southeast Georgia, the locally heavy rains and widespread moderate amounts mostly resulted in improvements or put a halt on further degradation of ongoing drought. Isolated spots in central Virginia and south-central North Carolina saw extreme drought expand, where 6-month precipitation deficits continued to grow and soil moisture and streamflow sank further below normal. Elsewhere, improvements were widespread in North Carolina and Virginia, while isolated locations in South Carolina and Georgia and the Florida Panhandle improved. Recent rainfall, especially from this week, helped to lessen short-term precipitation deficits that were starting to build in areas already suffering from long-term drought or abnormal dryness. These rains also augmented soil moisture and

streamflow in many areas.

South

Wet weather occurred this week across much of Tennessee, portions of northern Alabama, much of south-central and western Louisiana and portions of eastern and south-central Texas. The heaviest rains exceeded 5 inches in parts of Texas and Louisiana, while 2-5 inches of rain were common in parts of Tennessee. Temperatures across the region were mostly within 3 degrees of normal, except for the southern Texas Panhandle and western north Texas, where temperatures were commonly 3-6 degrees warmer than normal. Temperatures from 3-6 degrees below normal occurred along the Rio Grande near Del Rio, Texas. From eastern Texas across southern Louisiana, and in Tennessee and far northeast Arkansas, this week's rains lessened or locally eliminated precipitation deficits and led to improvements in soil moisture and streamflow. Conditions were reassessed and improved in parts of western and southwest Texas, adjacent western Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Panhandle and in parts of western and northern Arkansas, where recent precipitation has lessened mid-term precipitation deficits and locally improved streamflow and soil moisture.

Midwest

Heavy rains drenched the area from south of St. Louis (in southeast Missouri and southern Illinois) through much of Kentucky. Flash flooding impacted some areas south of St. Louis as a result of the heavy rain, where amounts exceeded 5 inches across a widespread area. However, these rains also lessened or eliminated precipitation deficits across many areas of southeast Missouri, southern Illinois and Kentucky, leading to widespread improvements to the Drought Monitor this week. More improvement may occur in the coming weeks as the impact of these rains on the water cycle is analyzed further. For now, the few remaining areas of drought in Missouri and south-central Kentucky are long-term in nature, though some shorter-term impacts lingered this week near the Kentucky/Virginia border. Farther north, mostly drier weather occurred, with a few exceptions. Heavier rains of 2-4 inches fell in north-central Iowa, leading to localized improvements to ongoing moderate drought and abnormal dryness. A narrow area of 2-inch rains fell across central Minnesota, though this was not enough to improve drying conditions in this region overall. Heavier rain amounts in the Keweenaw Peninsula in the Michigan Upper Peninsula alleviated short-term precipitation deficits there, and abnormal dryness was removed.

In northern parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin, and in the far western reaches of the Michigan Upper Peninsula, short-term precipitation deficits grew amid declining soil moisture and streamflow, leading to widespread development or expansion of abnormal dryness and moderate drought, and a small increase in severe drought coverage in northern Minnesota. Much of the southern half of the Midwest region saw temperatures within 3 degrees of normal, with local exceptions. In Minnesota, northern Wisconsin and northern Michigan, temperatures were mostly 3-6 degrees warmer than normal, with northern Minnesota mostly 6-9 degrees above normal. Amid the mostly hot and dry weather, fires were also occurring this week in

northeast Minnesota. Isolated areas of moderate drought also developed in eastern Wisconsin, where short-term dryness led to similar conditions to areas farther north, albeit less widespread. In western Iowa, short-term precipitation deficits increased and soil moisture levels dropped, leading to an expansion of moderate drought.

High Plains

Rains exceeding 2 inches fell this week in northeast South Dakota and from parts of south-central Nebraska southeast through parts of northeast Kansas. Spotty heavy rain, locally in the 1.5-2-inch range, fell across eastern Colorado, western Kansas, western Nebraska and southwest South Dakota, as well as a few areas in North Dakota. These rains led to localized improvements in eastern Colorado, western Kansas and western Nebraska, where soil moisture improved and precipitation deficits decreased in severity. Widespread improvement to ongoing drought and abnormal dryness occurred in northeast South Dakota where the heaviest rains fell there. In eastern North Dakota, short-term precipitation deficits combined with reduced soil moisture, resulting in widespread expansion of abnormal dryness with a small area of moderate drought. A few areas in north-central and northwest South Dakota had a few degradations where short- and mid-term precipitation deficits and low soil moisture occurred. Temperatures in the northern portions of the High Plains region, particularly from northwest Nebraska north, were 3-9 degrees above normal this week as a heat wave took hold. The impacts of this heat and locally drier weather will be assessed in the coming weeks.

West

Aside from some moisture in southeast Arizona from the North American Monsoon, mostly dry weather occurred in the West this week to the west of the Continental Divide. In southeast Arizona, rains totaling 1-2 inches fell, though these were not enough to improve conditions. In southeast New Mexico, conditions were reassessed along with those in western Texas, leading to localized improvements where soil moisture, streamflow and mid-term precipitation deficits have recently improved. Localized improvements also occurred in parts of Utah where short-term precipitation deficits lessened. However, widespread severe and extreme drought was still taking place across most of the state amid poor streamflow across Utah. In eastern Washington, short- and mid-term precipitation deficits, recent warm temperatures and poor soil moisture led to the expansion of moderate drought. Moderate and severe drought also developed or intensified across several other parts of the state, where precipitation deficits persisted and soil moisture and streamflow decreased. Hot temperatures occurred from Arizona and western New Mexico northward to Montana and Wyoming. Temperatures were 3-6 degrees above normal for the week across most of these areas, while northeast Wyoming and south-central and eastern Montana were 6-12 degrees warmer than normal. Several cities in southern and eastern Montana set all-time record highs on Sunday, July 12, including readings of 115 F in Miles City and 111 F in Billings. The impacts of this heat wave on ongoing drought conditions will be assessed in the coming weeks. Temperatures along the Pacific Coast were generally within 3 degrees of normal.

Caribbean

Small-scale improvements occurred in moderate drought and abnormal dryness in north-central and northwest Puerto Rico after heavier rains this week alleviated some short-term rainfall deficits. Elsewhere, very dry conditions remained, and short-term severe drought expanded in south-central Puerto Rico. Recently reported drought impacts in the southern areas of Puerto Rico have included brush fires, wells running low and water rationing. Streamflow levels are very low across most of Puerto Rico. Aside from the areas which saw improvement this week, most of Puerto Rico saw below-normal rainfall again this week. Temperatures ranged from 1-3 degrees warmer than normal across most of Puerto Rico.

A weak tropical wave moved across the eastern Caribbean at the start of the drought week (Wed, Jul 8 – Tue, Jul 14, 2026). However, its deepest tropical moisture remained well south of the islands, and a drier-than-normal weather pattern accompanied by increasing Saharan dust became established. With the reduction of rainfall coverage, the primary weather concerns turned to dangerous heat, elevated to critical fire danger, breezy to windy easterly trade winds, and hazy skies with occasional reductions in visibility and air quality. Fire weather conditions across the USVI are most prominent on St. Croix, where persistent rainfall deficits, critically dry vegetative fuels, and elevated Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values continue. Warm nighttime temperatures are expected to persist due to Saharan dust limiting radiational cooling.

The drought depictions for the 3 U.S. Virgin Islands have been degraded this week, from severe drought (D2-S) to extreme drought (D3-S), to keep pace with the worsening rainfall deficits, mostly declining well-water levels, increasingly negative short-term SPI (Standardized Precipitation Index) values, near or record-high temperatures, severely depleted soil moisture, and generally increased fire risk. Observed impacts are lack of water to fill cisterns, vegetation stress, increased grass fires, and likely a lack of water for agricultural purposes.

NASA-SPoRT satellite-based quantitative precipitation estimates for the week ending 12z July 14 indicated light rainfall accumulations (<0.50-inch). The following CoCoRaHS precipitation measurements are valid for a 7-day period unless noted otherwise, and for St. Croix. The measurements ranged from a trace at Rohlsen Airport (#11624, 6 days of data) to 0.45-inch at VI-SC-25 (Christiansted 4.4). Intermediate rainfall amounts in ascending order include: 0.07-inch at VI-SC-20 (Frederiksted 1.7 ESE), 0.15-inch at VI-SC-30 (Christiansted 1.7 SW, 6 days of data), 0.16-inch at East Hill (#672560), 0.27-inch at VI-SC-29 (Frederiksted 2.5 NNE), 0.28-inch at VI-SC-23 (Christiansted 6.5 W), 0.31-inch at VI-SC-10 (Christiansted 1.6 E, 6 days), and 0.44-inch of precipitation at VI-SC-34 (Frederiksted 1.9 NE). The latest SPI values at Rohlsen Airport are -3.35, -1.83, and -2.04 (corresponding to 1-, 3-, and 6-months, respectively), and reflect the serious precipitation deficits that are mounting. At East Hill, though not as severe in the shorter-term as Rohlsen Airport, the SPI values are still impressive with -1.28, -1.43, -0.30, -0.96, and -0.38 (corresponding to 1-, 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-months, respectively). The USGS well water depth plot for the Adventure 28 Well shows that well water levels declined this past week, from a high of 23.49 ft below the ground surface to a low of 24.06 ft.

On the island of St. John, a rainfall observation of 0.03-inch was made at VI-SJ-10 (Cruz Bay 3.1 NNW), with an observer noting very hot conditions at Fish Bay, on the South Shore of St.

John. Even 10 feet underground, the dirt was "...like powder". At this location, the June rainfall total was only 0.21-inch, and so far in July only 0.06-inch of rain was recorded. At Windswept Beach (VI-SJ-3), 0.12-inch of rain fell this week. The June rainfall total was only 0.23-inch, and so far in July only 0.15-inch of rain fell. The SPI values at Windswept Beach at 1-, 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-months, respectively, showcase the deteriorating moisture conditions with -2.03, -1.69, -0.31, -1.22, and -0.23. At East End (#672551) no precipitation or SPI values were available this week. The USGS well water depth plot for the Susannaberg Dpw-3 Well shows that well water levels declined this past week, from a high of 16.42 ft below the ground surface to a low of 16.74 ft.

On St. Thomas, King Airport (#11640) came in with a trace of precipitation (6 days of data), and available SPI data for 1-, 3-, 6-, and 9-months, respectively, included values of -2.73, -2.78, -0.51, -1.25, emphasizing the rapidly deteriorating conditions on the island. Station VI-ST-15 (Charlotte Amalie West 1.3 N) reported 0.06-inch of rain this week, though there were only 3 days of available data. The Grade School 3 USGS Well water depth plot revealed the water level dropped initially from 9.90 ft on July 8th to 10.27 feet on July 9th, only to gradually rise thereafter to 9.77 feet below the ground surface by the close of the period (July 14th).

Pacific

After recent rainfall, short-term moderate drought in northwest Alaska was removed, and nearby coverage of abnormal dryness lessened. Abnormal dryness developed in the northeast Interior of Alaska, where warm and dry conditions prevailed this week. Precipitation anomalies varied this week across Alaska, though wetter-than-normal weather occurred in the Anchorage area, leading to the removal of abnormal dryness there. Temperatures in north-central Alaska were mostly 3-9 degrees warmer than normal, while temperatures elsewhere were mostly either within 3 degrees of normal or 3-6 degrees cooler than normal.

Temperatures in Hawaii this week were mostly within a couple degrees of normal and tended warmer-than-normal on Oahu and the Big Island. Windward areas of the Hawaiian Islands were wetter-than-normal again this week in some locations, while the leeward sides continued to be drier. Drought has not yet developed in these areas, as March was quite wet across much of the state. However, abnormal dryness expanded in leeward areas of the Big Island, in central Maui and the lower leeward slopes of west Maui, and developed in some leeward portions of Molokai.

In the beginning of the drought week (Wed, Jul 8 – Tue, Jul 14, 2026), Invest 97W was located south of Pohnpei heading west-northwest. Over the weekend, Guam noted an increase in shower coverage and thunderstorms. On Monday, 97W was located over the Philippine Sea, spreading showers and thunderstorms over Palau and Yap. On the southern side of 97W, southwesterly flow initiated a monsoon surge over parts of the western North Pacific; however, it was slightly weaker and displaced farther north than anticipated. This resulted in reduced precipitation and thunderstorm chances for Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) late in the drought week. Meanwhile, a weak disturbance (briefly designated as 98W) traversed the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and eastern Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) late in the period. South of the equator, a trough over

northeast of American Samoa produced widespread showers across the territory early in the drought week. However, mid to upper-level shear limited the deep convection, resulting in areas of light, misty rain. A surface high pressure system developed near New Zealand with American Samoa's winds coming from a southerly direction through the weekend. By Monday, Jul 13, southeast trades became established, with a few embedded showers within the trade wind flow. South to southeast ocean swell contributed towards elevated seas, dangerous high surf, strong rip currents, and king tides.

NASA SPoRT satellite-based precipitation estimates for the week ending 12z Jul 14 revealed a notable, coherent region of 1-4 inch rainfall amounts well west of the CNMI, and another but more ragged area of 1-4 inch precipitation amounts is seen over the RMI and eastern Micronesia. The remainder of the domain received precipitation amounts mostly under 1-inch. Rainfall amounts across American Samoa totaled <0.75-inch on SPoRT imagery.

The USAPI region remains free of abnormal dryness and drought this week.

Across Guam and parts of the CNMI, fewer rain gauge measurements this week are probably still related to the devastating effects of the recent super-typhoon named Bavi. The following precipitation measurements are valid for the past 7-days unless noted otherwise. In Guam, 2.37 inches of rain fell this past drought week, with the July total to date of 19.15 inches. These amounts easily surpass the 1-inch weekly minimum and 4-inch monthly minimum rainfall amounts needed to address most water requirements. In fact, the monthly total of 19.15 inches thus far is almost 5 times the monthly minimum water requirement. Guam has also exceeded its monthly minimum water requirement for every month dating back to August 2025. Dededo received 2.21 inches of rain this past week, and has seen 19.43 inches of rain so far in the month of July. Tinian's weekly rainfall just missed the 1-inch mark (0.99-inch) for meeting minimum weekly water requirements. Saipan recorded 0.60-inch of precipitation this week (6 days of data). There was no precipitation data for Rota Airport this week. The 9.5 inches (xmACIS2 data) reported at Agat was initially deemed suspicious given the much drier surrounding areas. However, this amount is comparable to that of Yap Island and Gilman farther west, suggesting Agat may have been influenced by one or more of Super-Typhoon Bavi's spiral rain bands. For now, the value of 9.5 inches is considered preliminary.

The Republic of Palau received generous precipitation this past drought week. Koror received 2.18 inches of rain (6 days of data but still meeting the 2-inch weekly minimum water requirement), and June rainfall totaled 13.51 inches (well in excess of the 8-inch required minimum). So far in July, Koror received 4.79 inches of rain which is 68 percent of normal. WSO Palau (in Airai) measured 1.79 inches of rain this past week, with 13.78 inches for the month of June. The total precipitation for the month of July so far is 5.81 inches.

Across the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), rainfall amounts ranged from 1.74 inches at Ulithi (the only FSM station to not reach the weekly minimum rainfall amount of 2 inches) to 10.04 inches (6 days of data) at Gilman (on the south side of Yap Island). At Ulithi, 1.94 inches of precipitation was recorded in July thus far, which is 32.5 percent of normal. The following are intermediate rainfall amounts in ascending order: Chuuk (2.22 inches this past week, and so far 4.34 inches in July which is 79 percent of normal), Kosrae (2.35 inches), Nukuoro (2.87 inches), Woleai (2.88 inches), Lukunoch (3.29 inches, 5 days), Rumung (5.22 inches, 6 days,

with total July rainfall thus far of 6.10 inches), Pohnpei (5.46 inches), Kapingamarangi (5.90 inches, with 7.09 inches thus far in July which is 124 percent of normal), North Fanif (6.28 inches), and Yap Island (9.22 inches). This past week, Yap Island and Gilman received in excess of 8-inches of rain, which is the minimum water requirement for a full month. No data was available at Fananu and Pingelap this week.

Rainfall amounts over the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) ranged from 1.55 inches at Jaluit (5 days) to 7.06 inches at Majuro (6 days). Intermediate precipitation amounts included 1.88 inches (5 days) at Ailinglaplap, 1.95 inches at Utirik, 2.12 inches at Wotje, 3.79 inches at Kwajalein, and 5.95 inches at Mili. This week, the three stations that fell short of the 2-inch mark (the minimum rainfall threshold to meet most water needs) were Jaluit, Ailinglaplap, and Utirik.

South of the equator, American Samoa reported 1.83 inches of rain at Siufaga Ridge, 2.11 inches at Toa Ridge, and 2.46 inches (4 days) at the Pago Pago Airport.

Looking Ahead

The National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center is forecasting mostly dry weather across much of the Great Plains and Midwest through the evening of Monday, July 14. Heavier rain, locally in the 2-5 inch range in parts of Arizona, is forecast to fall in areas of south-central and southwest Texas and from Arizona and western New Mexico north into southwest Colorado, portions of Utah and a few parts of Wyoming and far south-central Montana. Heavy rains of 1-2 inches are forecast in the Florida Big Bend region, though the heaviest amounts are forecast to mostly stay offshore. Rain amounts of 0.75 inches or more are forecast from the southern Appalachian Mountains to the Northeast, and in parts of coastal North Carolina. Rains of 0.75 inches or more are also forecast in the Michigan Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Michigan. Mostly dry weather is forecast along the West Coast.

Looking ahead to July 21-25, the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center's forecast favors wetter-than-normal weather in parts of the southwest United States, especially in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. The forecast also favors above-normal precipitation from southeast California north through Montana and from the Texas Panhandle to North Dakota, though at lower confidence than in the Four Corners states. The forecast favors above-normal precipitation across most of the eastern U.S. to the east of the Appalachian Mountains, with the exception of south Florida, where near-normal rainfall is expected. Below-normal rainfall is slightly favored in Deep South Texas. Above-normal temperatures are favored in the western United States (except for parts of Arizona and New Mexico) and across the South and Southeast regions. The forecast favors near-normal temperatures in the northern Great Plains, while cooler-than-normal temperatures are more likely in the Upper Midwest, Great Lakes and Northeast.

For July 21-25, above-normal precipitation is favored in all of Alaska except for the southeast region of the state, where below-normal precipitation is more likely. Warmer-than-normal temperatures are favored in southeast Alaska and far-eastern interior Alaska. In south-central and southwest Alaska, the forecast favors cooler-than-normal conditions. In Hawaii, both above-normal precipitation and temperatures are favored.

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