



Drought Information Statement for The Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles

Valid September 26, 2026

Issued By: WFO Amarillo

Contact Information: sr-ama.webmaster@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated on or before October 31st 2026.
 - Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
 - Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/AMA/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
 - Please visit [https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/\[link\]](https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/[link]) for regional drought status updates.
-
- Rain deficits continued to grow until about September 22nd before improving with a pattern change that brought several inches of rain to parts of the combined Panhandles.
 - Some areas remain with high deficits at this time.

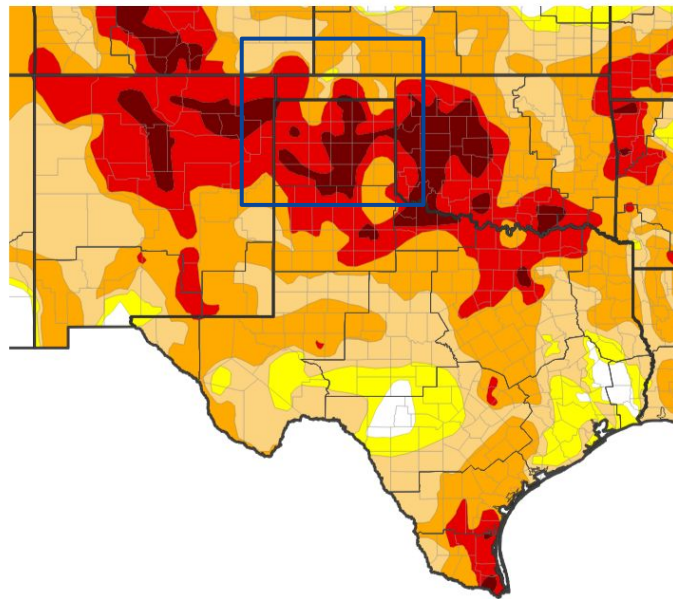


U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for [The Southern Plains]

- Drought intensity and Extent
 - **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**: A wide swath across the central to eastern Texas Panhandle to include parts of Oldham, Deaf Smith, Potter and Randall Counties.
 - **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Parts of all counties in the Oklahoma and Texas Panhandles.
 - **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Parts of Texas and Beaver Counties in Oklahoma. Sherman, northern Lipscomb, and Collingsworth Counties in Texas
 - **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Small areas of Texas and Beaver County in Oklahoma and Texas County.
 - **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: None.

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 09/22/26



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National Weather Service
Amarillo, Texas

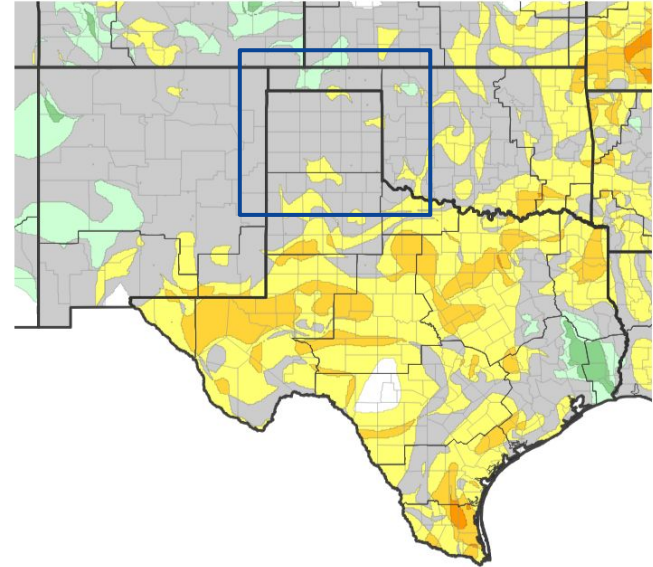


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest [4-week change map](#) for [The Southern Plains]

- Four Week Drought Monitor Class Change.
 - Most of the area has seen no improvements or degradation in drought categories in the last 4 weeks.

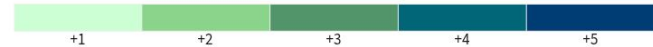
U.S. Drought Monitor 4-Week Change Map



Drought Degradation



Drought Improvement



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

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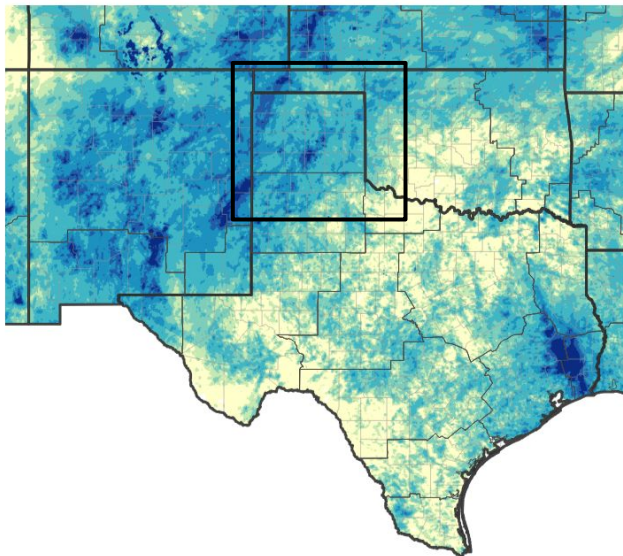
National Weather Service
Amarillo, Texas



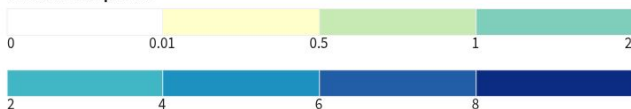
Precipitation

- Up until 9/22 2026 rainfall deficits remained between 6 and 9 inches below normal since Jan 1.
- A pattern change around 9/23 started bringing those deficits down by 2 to 4 inches, mainly across the western combined Panhandles.

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (inches)



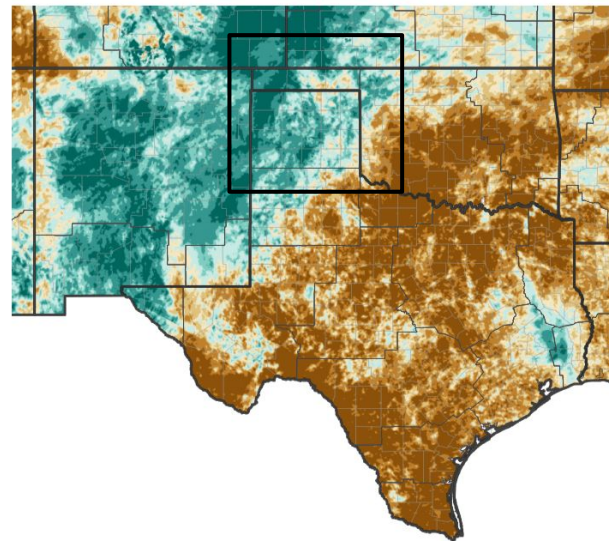
Inches of Precipitation



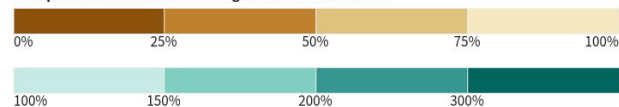
Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System;

Last Updated: 09/26/26

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System;
image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 09/26/26



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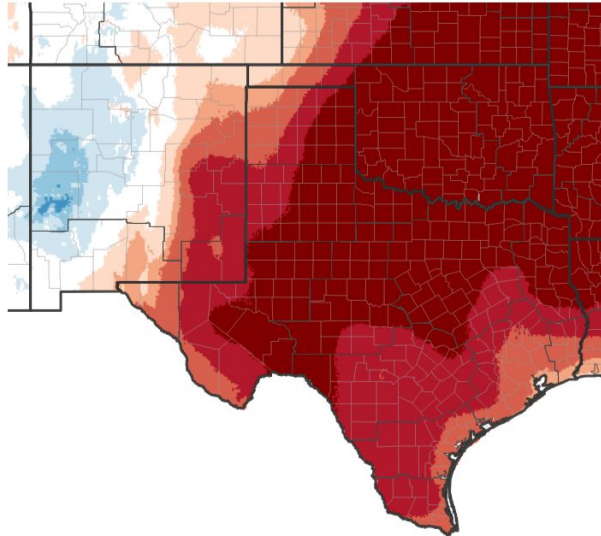
National Weather Service
Amarillo, Texas



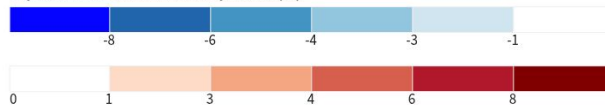
Temperature

- Valid 9/22, temperatures have remained 4 to 10 degrees above normal over the past week for the central to southeast combined Panhandles. The northwest third of the Panhandles saw temperatures 1 to 4 degrees above normal.

7-Day Temperature Anomaly



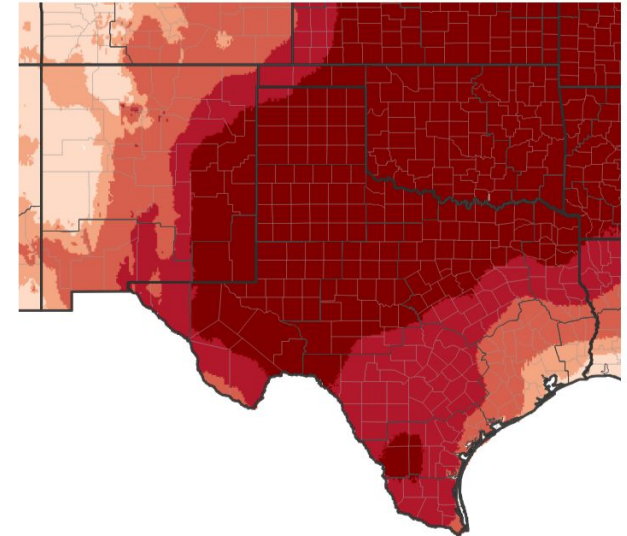
Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



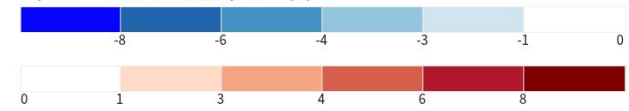
Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 09/22/26

30-Day Temperature Anomaly



Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 09/22/26





Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

Hydrologic Impacts

- Recent rainfall and forecast rainfall is prompting local officials to closely monitor playa lakes for flooding concerns.

Agricultural Impacts

- Non-irrigated crops have been unable to grow at this time.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Lack of rain is leaving areas across the combined Panhandles with dead and dormant grasses still susceptible to fire starts.
- Recent rainfall in the past week have started to help improve vegetation. Greening of vegetation is slow and will need time to severely drop fire hazards in the long term.

Other Impacts

- There are no known impacts at this time

Mitigation Actions

- Avoid activities involving sparks and flames are dead vegetation.
- Clear brush from homes and property to mitigate threats of wildfires.

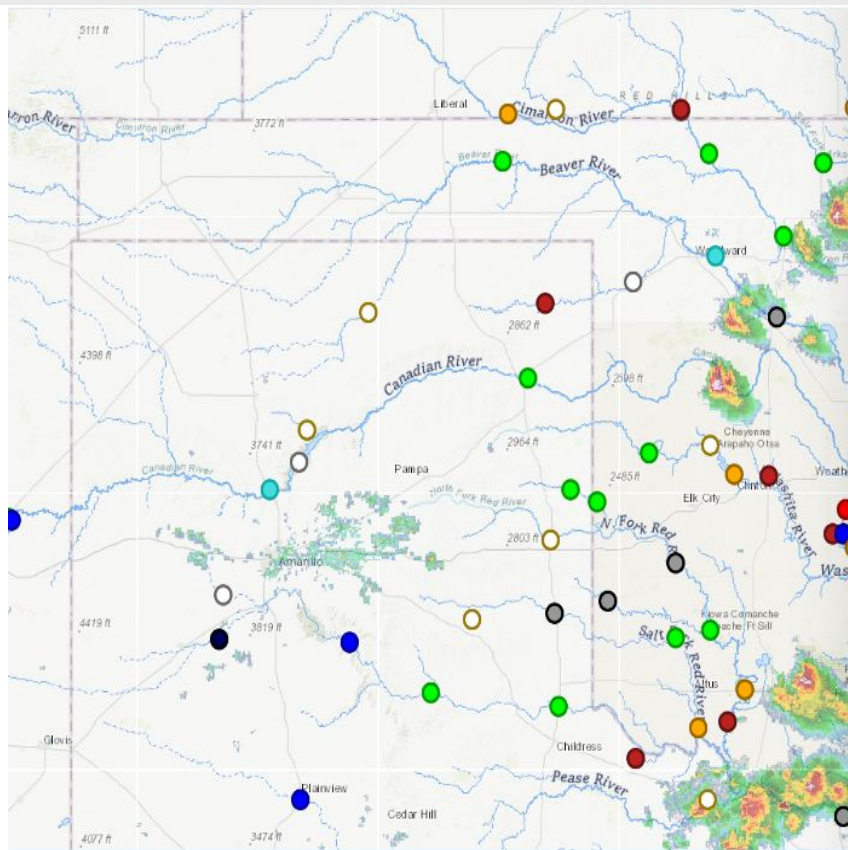




Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Recent rainfall in the past few days has brought many rivers and streams to near and above normal streamflow.

<https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov/app/nwd/en/?aoi=default>



All-time high for this day	100 th percentile (maximum)
Much above normal	>90 th percentile
Above normal	76 th – 90 th percentile
Normal	25 th – 75 th percentile
Below normal	10 th – 24 th percentile
Much below normal	<10 th percentile
All-time low for this day	0 th percentile (minimum)
Not flowing	
Not ranked	
Measurement flag	
Recent measurement unavailable	

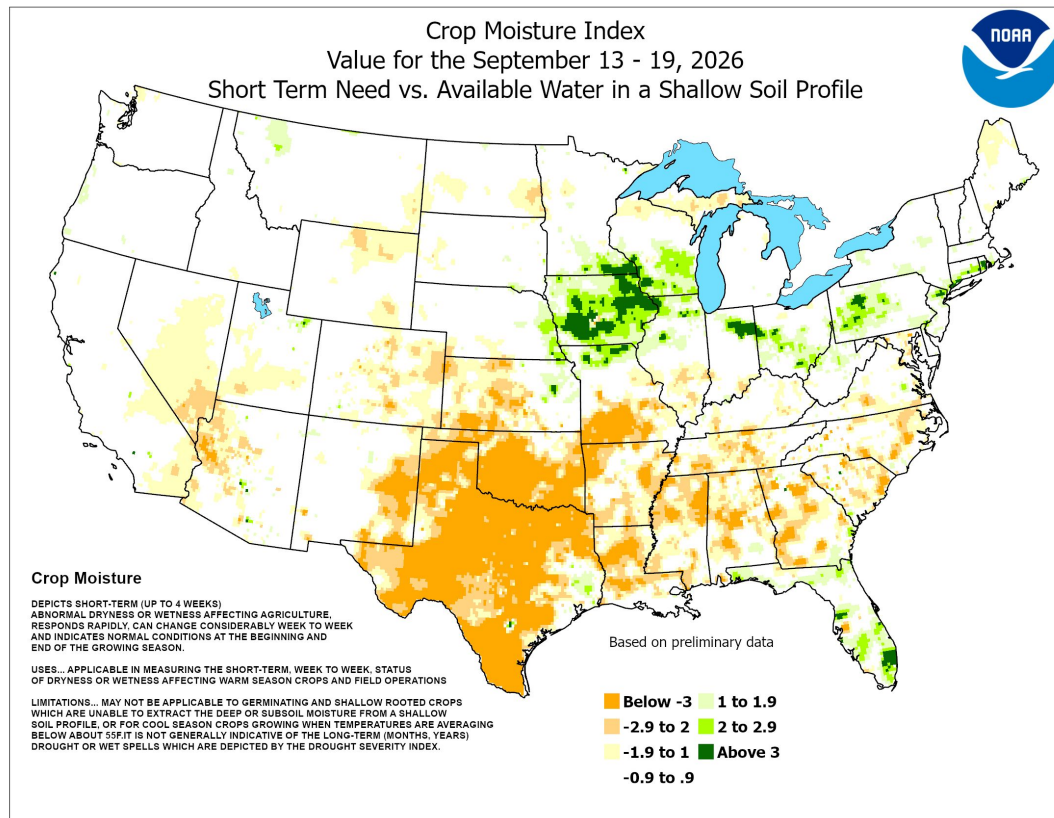
Comments: Marker color indicates the current streamflow condition. Categories are based on the percentile of existing streamflow records on this day-of-the-year. A streamgage is not ranked when there is less than 20 years of record or a current streamflow value is unavailable. Flood stages are maintained by the National Weather Service (NWS) and are not established for all USGS streamgages.





Agricultural Impacts

- Soil moisture has recently begun to improve since 9/22. However, in terms of the Crop Moisture Index, soils remain Abnormally Dry to Severely Dry with more rain and time to improve.





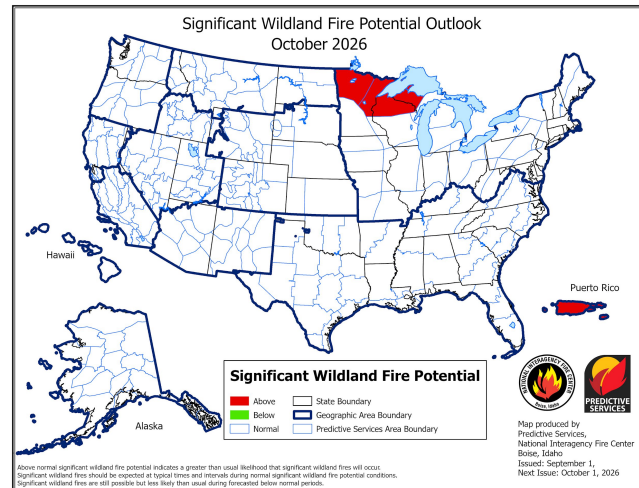
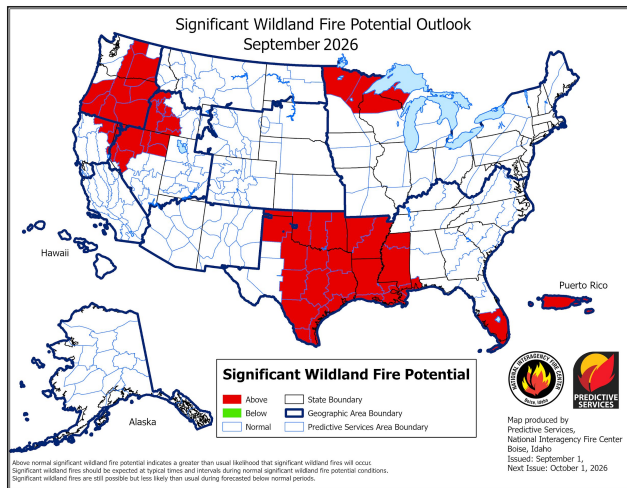
Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center](#).

- Patchy areas of dry vegetation remains due to drought conditions
- Very few counties have lifted burn bans at this time.

Latest TX Burn Ban map available [here](#).

Latest OK Burn Ban map available [here](#).

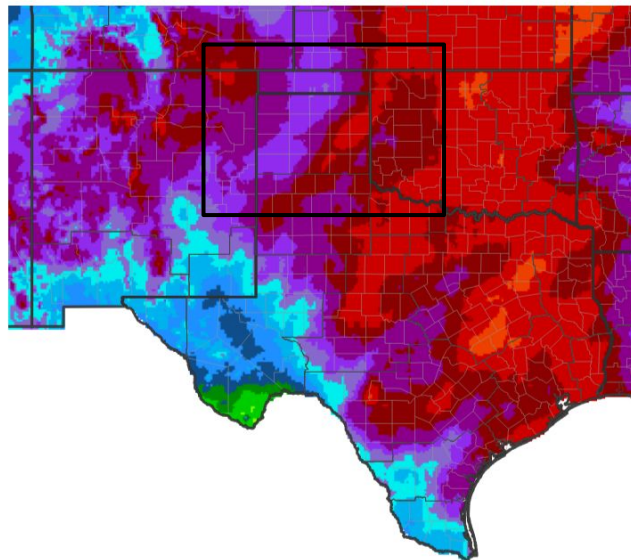




Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- More precipitation is expected this week as an upper level system is forecast to come in from the west and combine with what is currently known as Hurricane Polo. Polo is expected to be a Depression around El Paso by 11 AM Wednesday morning (9/30).
- Current model blends give a 30 to 50 percent chance for 1" of rain in 24 hours across the combined Panhandles.

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for September 26, 2026–October 3, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation



Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center; image Last Updated: 09/26/26

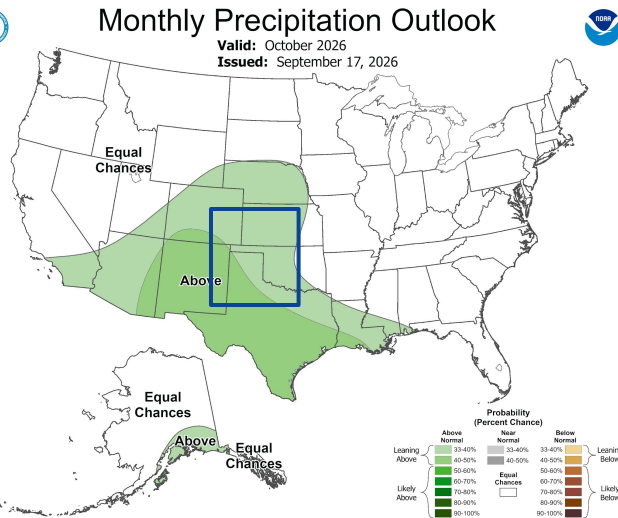
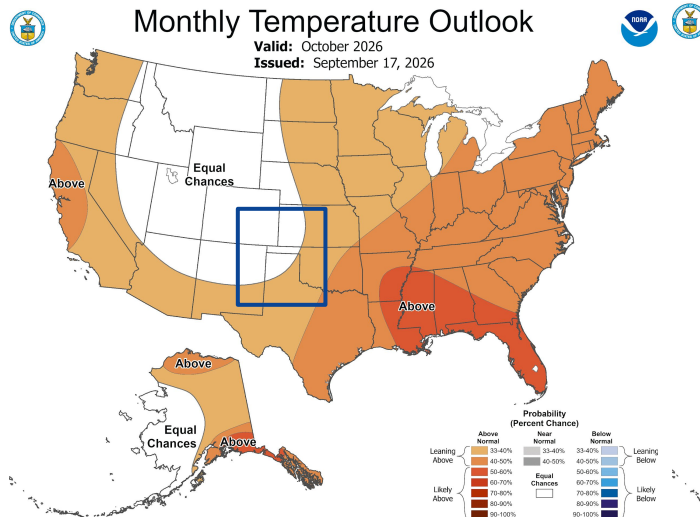




Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- The combined Oklahoma and Texas Panhandles have a 33 to 50 percent chance for above normal precipitation for the month of October.
- The combined Panhandles are favoring near normal temperatures to slightly favoring above normal temperatures during the coming October.



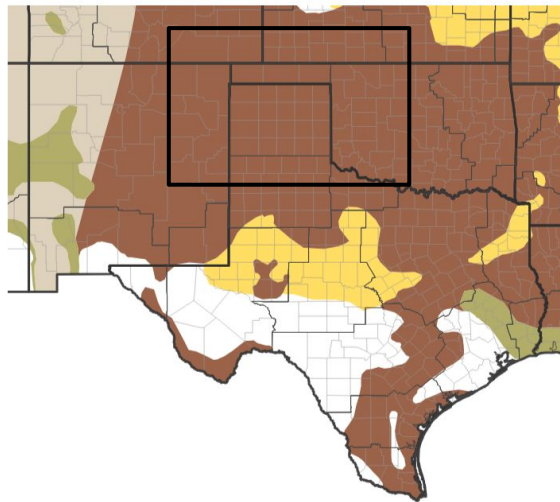


Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Drought conditions are expected to improve over the next 2 to 3 months. This is largely driven by expectations of impacts from a forecasted strong to very strong El Nino pattern.

1-Month Drought Outlook for September 1,
2026–September 30, 2026

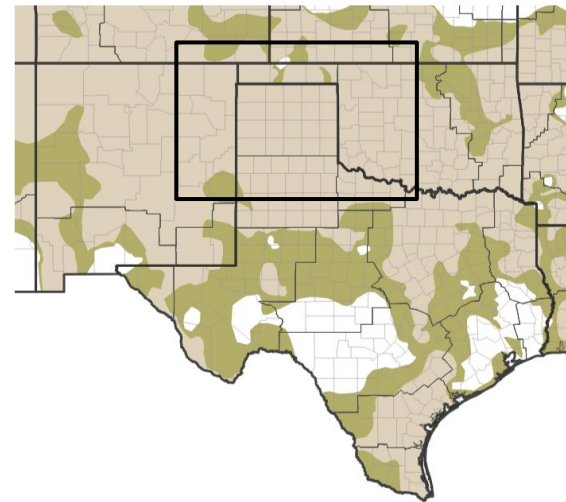


Drought Is Predicted To...



Source: Climate Prediction Center image courtesy of Drought.gov. Last Updated: 08/31/26

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for September 17,
2026–December 31, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...



Source: Climate Prediction Center image courtesy of Drought.gov. Last Updated: 08/31/26

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)



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