



Drought Information Statement for Northern and Eastern Maine

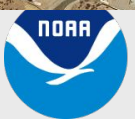
Valid April 4, 2026

Issued By: WFO Caribou, ME

- This product will be updated by May 7, 2026 or sooner, if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/car/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/car> for regional drought status updates.

- Maine's drought continues with frozen soils north & widespread precipitation deficits hurting recovery.
- The short-term recovery in streamflow and groundwater is a temporary fluctuation rather than a reversal of the long term drought trend.
- Despite any minor improvements to drought classifications this spring, the outlooks suggest that the overall drought trajectory could worsen again in the warm season unless precipitation overperforms.

Disclaimer: NWS Caribou Drought Information Statement updates will be made on a monthly basis due to the seasonal change, and may not match the weekly USDM. For more information visit link: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>





U.S. Drought Monitor

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

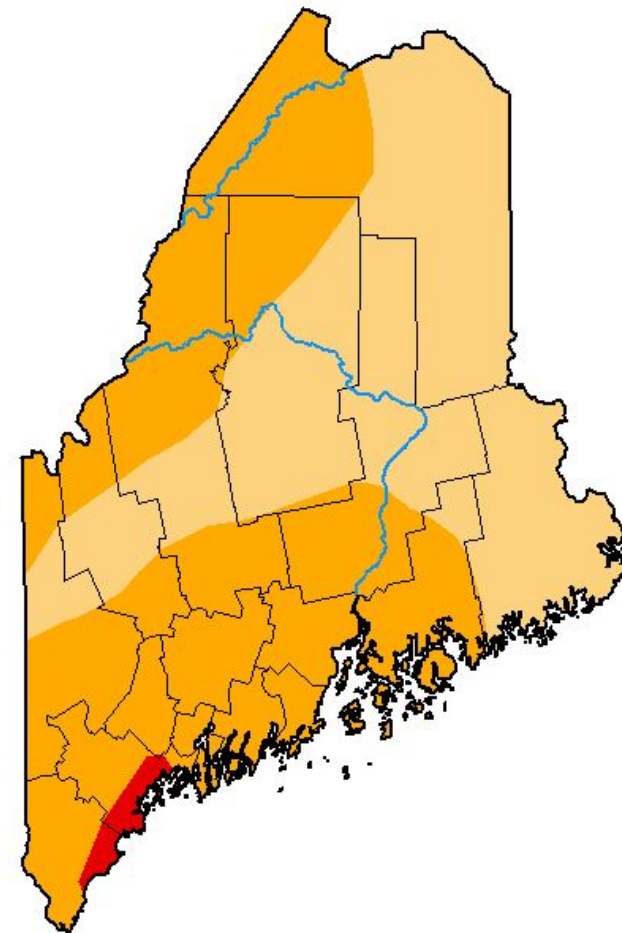
Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Maine

● Drought Intensity and Extent:

- **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Northern Somerset, northern Piscataquis, northwest Aroostook, southern Penobscot, central & southern Hancock counties.
- **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Eastern & southern Aroostook, central & southern Piscataquis, northern & central Penobscot, far northern Hancock & all of Washington counties.
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: No areas.

U.S. Drought Monitor Maine

March 31, 2026
(Released Thursday, Apr. 2, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

David Simeral
Western Regional Climate Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Percentage of Maine in Drought

- **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: 0%
- **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: 46.15%
- **D2 (Severe Drought)**: 52.61%
- **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: 1.24%



National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

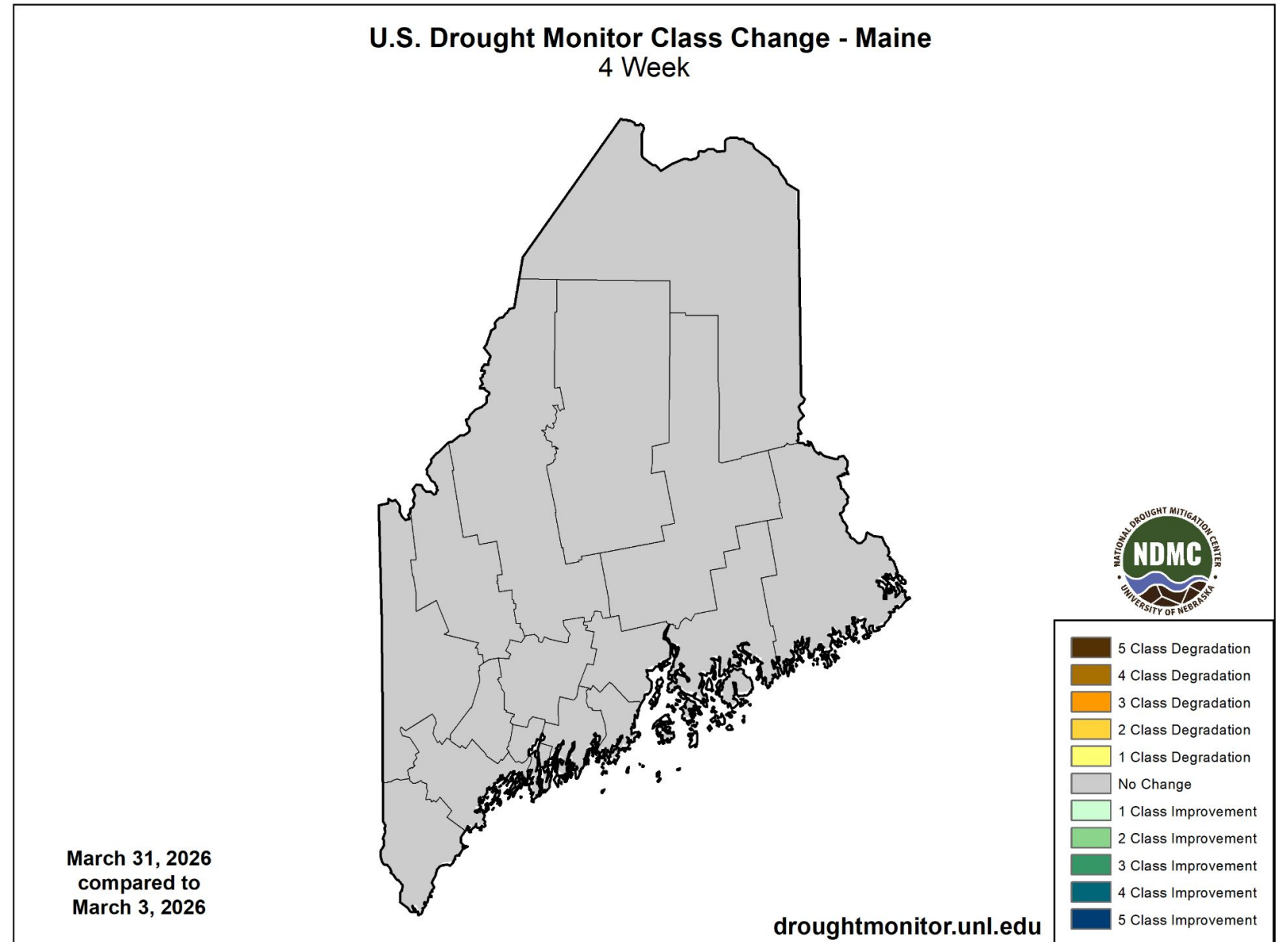


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

Link to the latest [1-month change map](#) for Northeast U.S.

- Four week drought monitor class change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** No Areas.
 - **Drought Improved:** No Areas.
 - **No Change:** All of Maine.





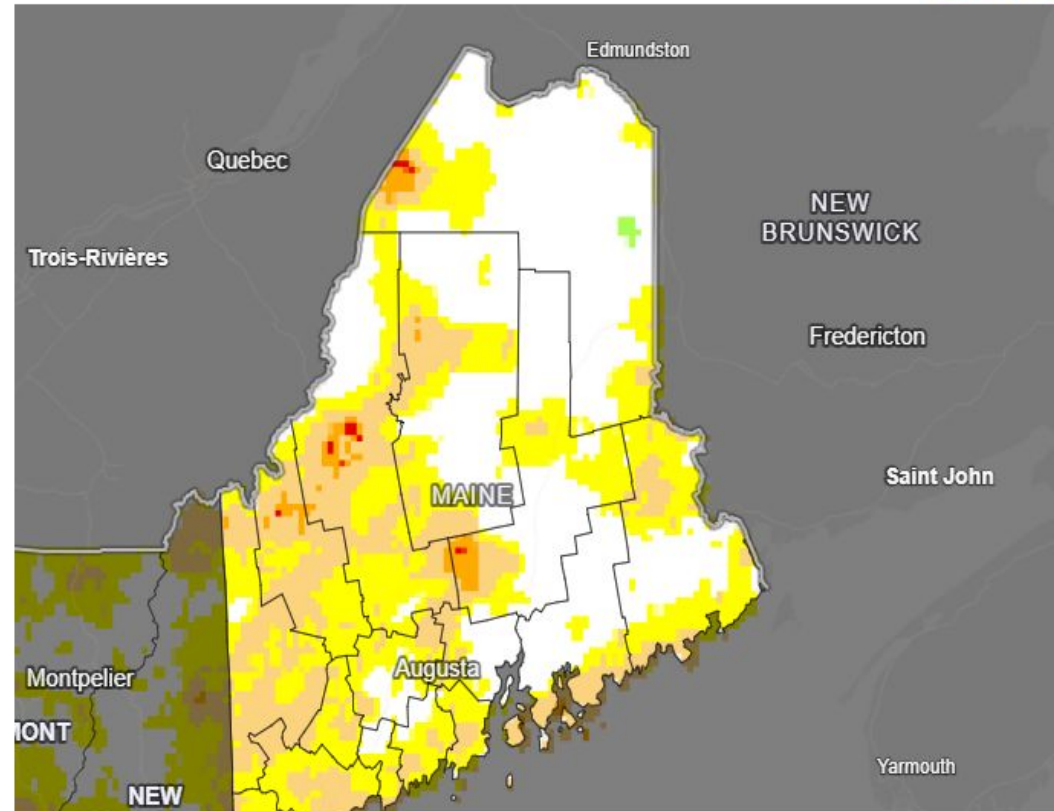
Short & Long Term Drought Index

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

Link to the Maine [Drought.gov](http://www.drought.gov) Maps: www.drought.gov/states/maine

- The Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index (MIDI) estimates current short-term drought conditions by combining several indicators of drought into a single, map from changes in precipitation and moisture over the past 3 months.
- Short term drought conditions indicate improvements based on spring recharge.
- The Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index (MIDI) estimates current long-term drought conditions by combining several indicators of drought into a single, map from changes in precipitation and moisture over the past 5 years.

Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Dry Conditions



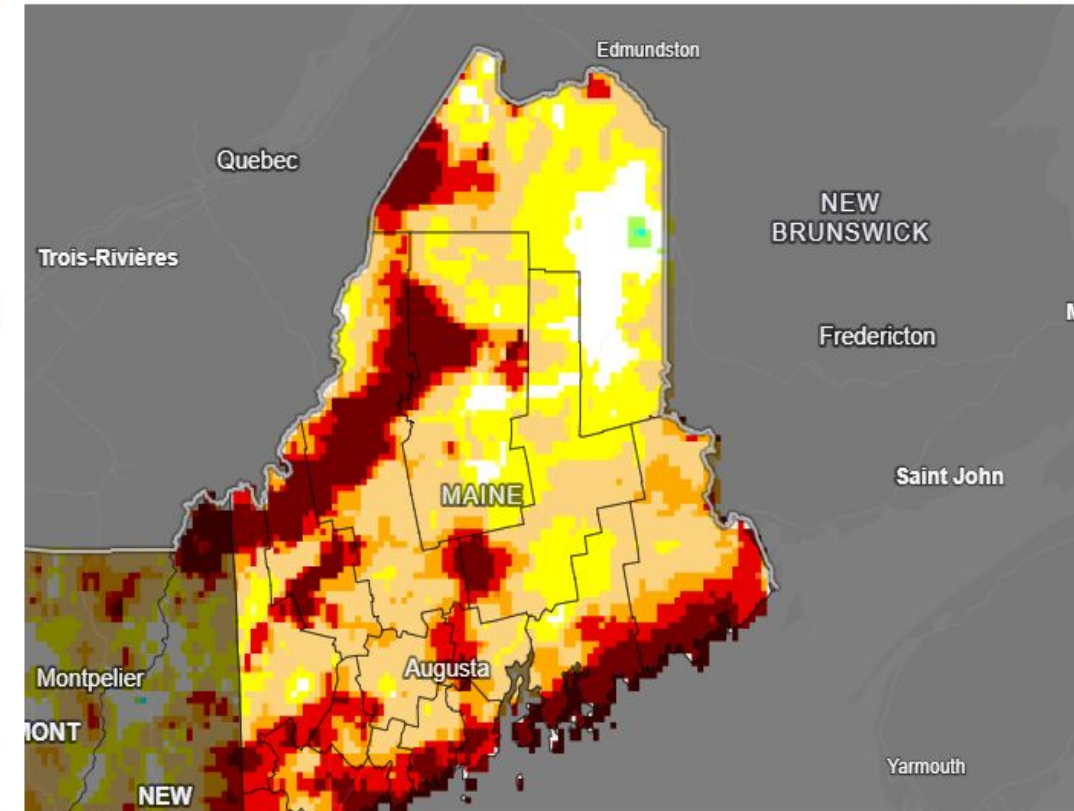
Wet Conditions



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine
Data Valid: 03/31/26

Drought.gov

Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Dry Conditions



Wet Conditions



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine
Data Valid: 03/31/26

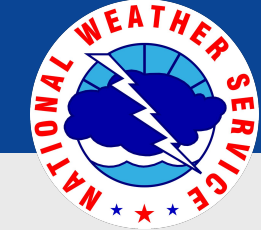
Drought.gov



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

This experimental map is based on methodology from the NOAA National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME



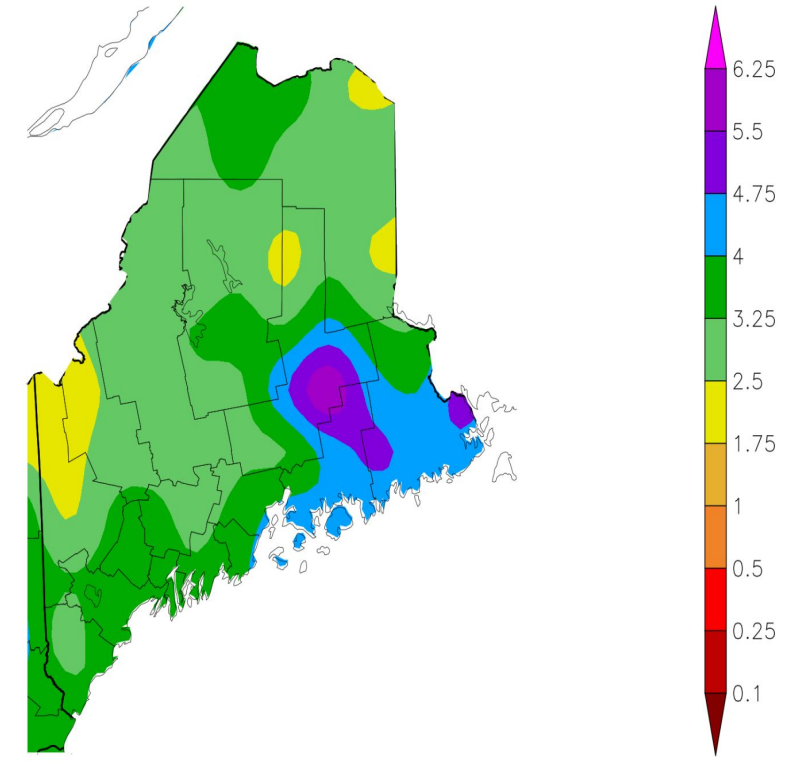
30 Day Precipitation

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

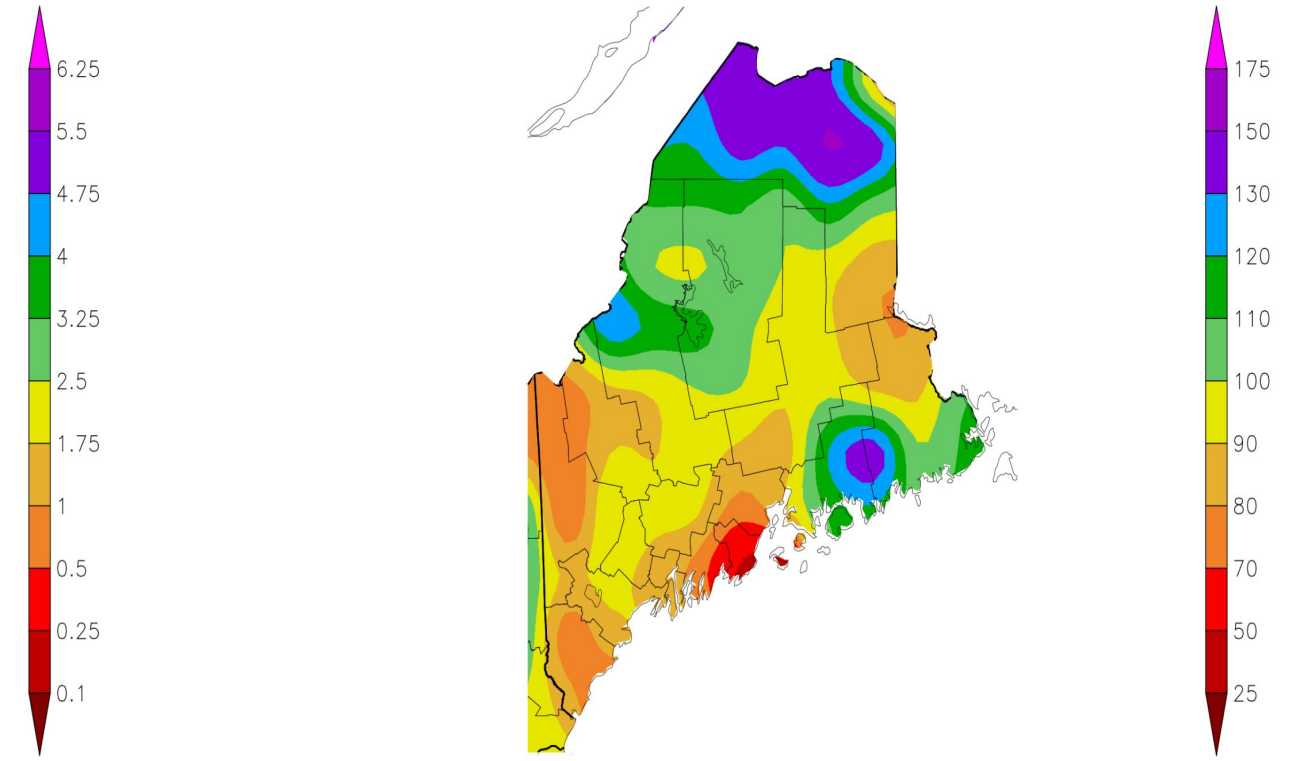
- Precipitation has been slightly above normal across Northern Maine but mostly frozen precipitation. Slightly above normal precip in portions of the Downeast Coast.
- Precipitation was slightly below to well below normal in the rest of the forecast area.

Precipitation (in)
3/4/2026 - 4/2/2026



Generated 4/3/2026 using provisional data.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
3/4/2026 - 4/2/2026



ACIS Web Services Generated 4/3/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



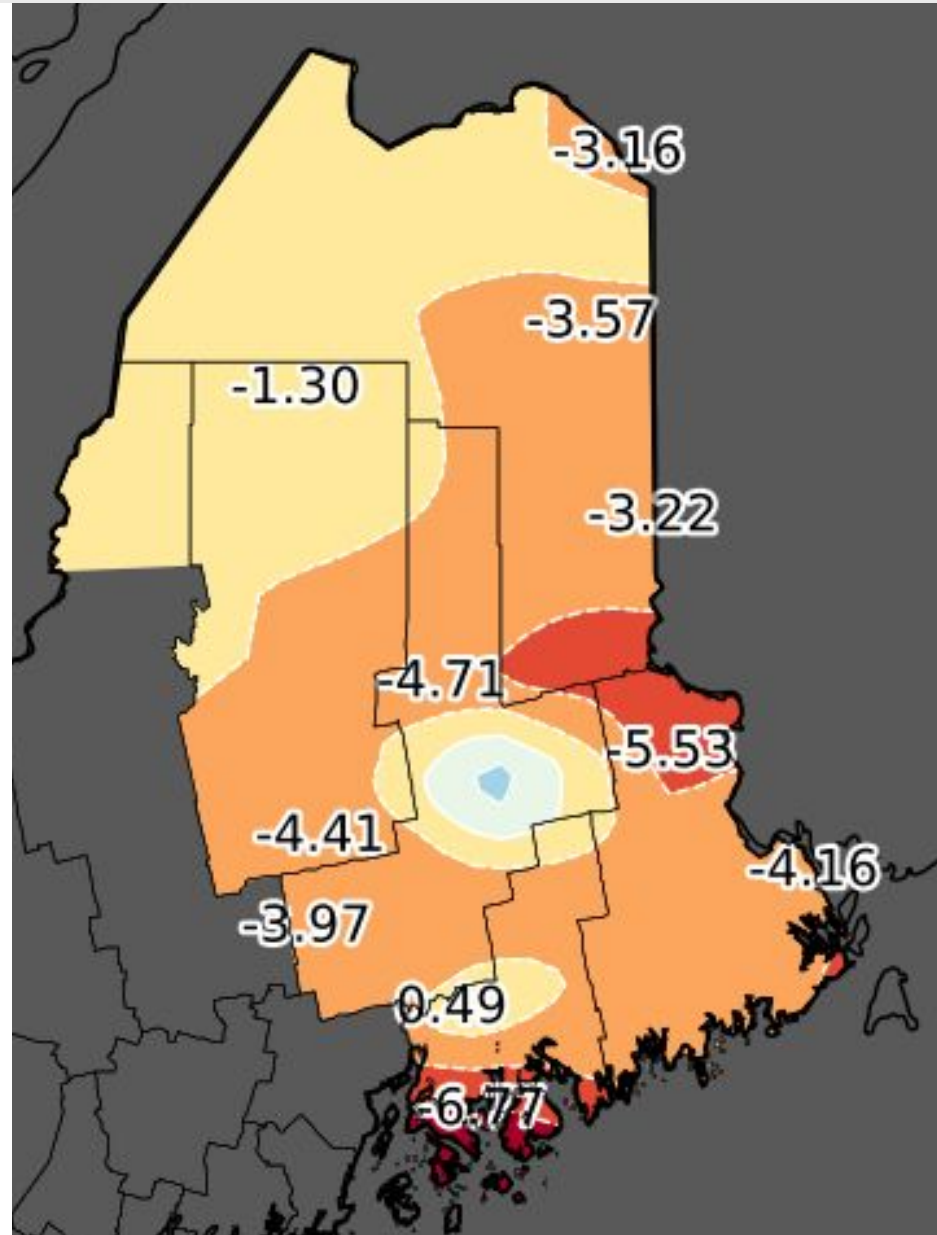


Precipitation Deficits

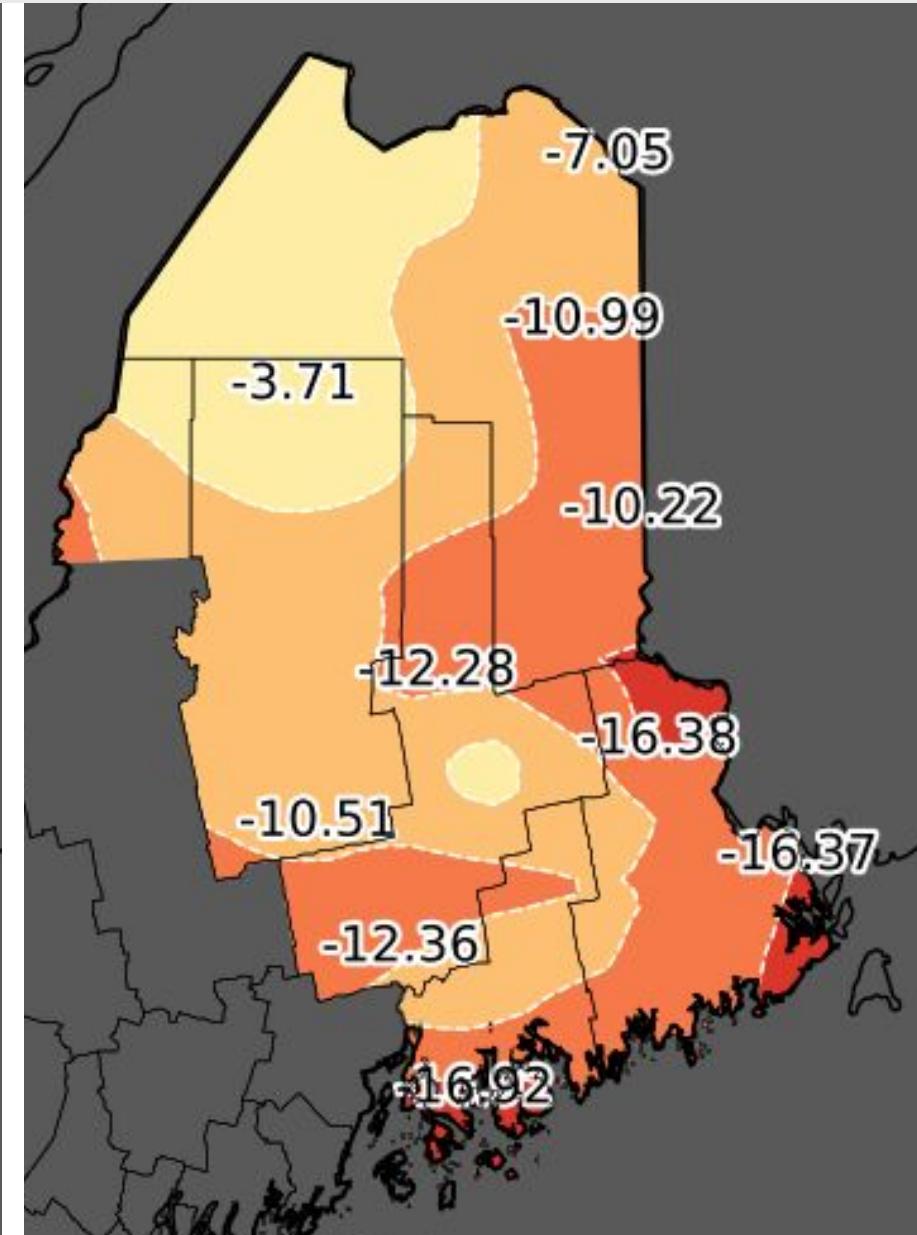
April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

Link to [Iowa State University IEM](#)

- Prolonged precipitation deficits for a year across much of the area. Worst deficits are in the St. Croix River Basin.
- Continued significant deficits since January 1, 2026.



Since January 1, 2026



Since June 1, 2025





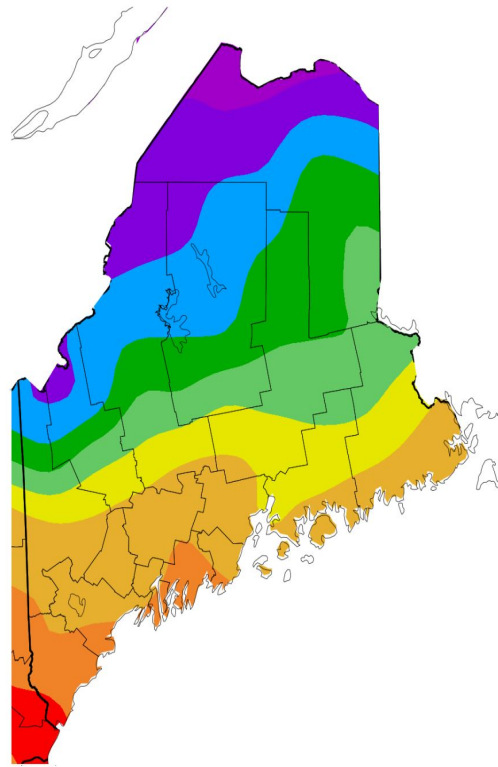
30 Day Temperatures

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

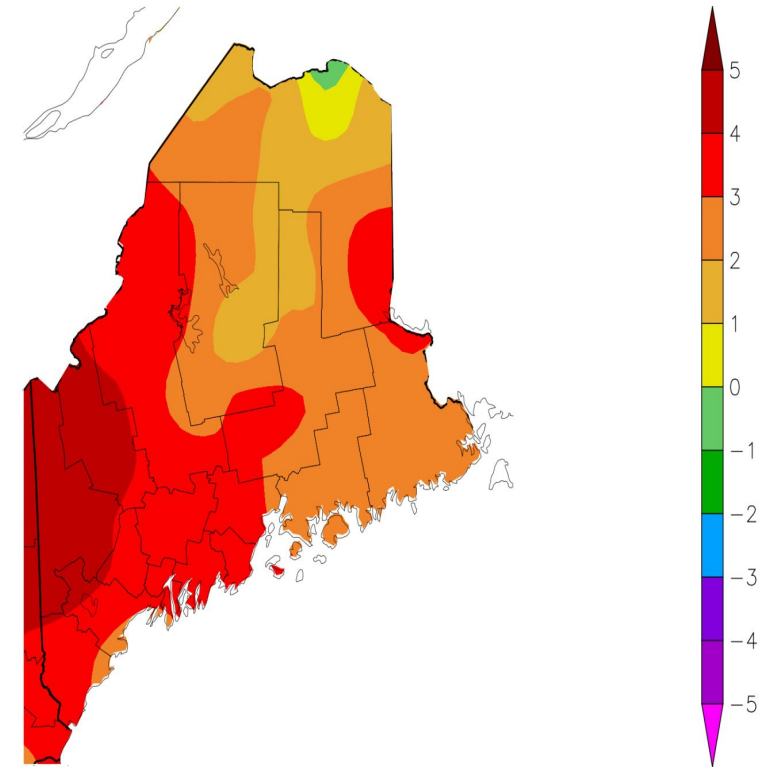
- 30 Day Temperatures have been running 1-3 degrees above normal. Temperatures near normal across the Eastern St. John Valley.
- Average temperatures above 32°F have been mainly from the Bangor Region to Downeast Coast.
- Average temperatures below 32°F have been across the Central Highlands to Northern Maine.

Temperature (F)
3/4/2026 - 4/2/2026



Generated 4/3/2026 using provisional data.

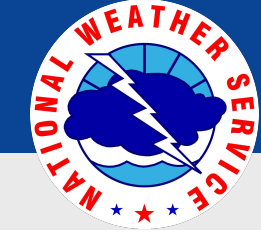
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
3/4/2026 - 4/2/2026



ACIS Web Services Generated 4/3/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services





Snowpack & Snow Water Equivalent

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

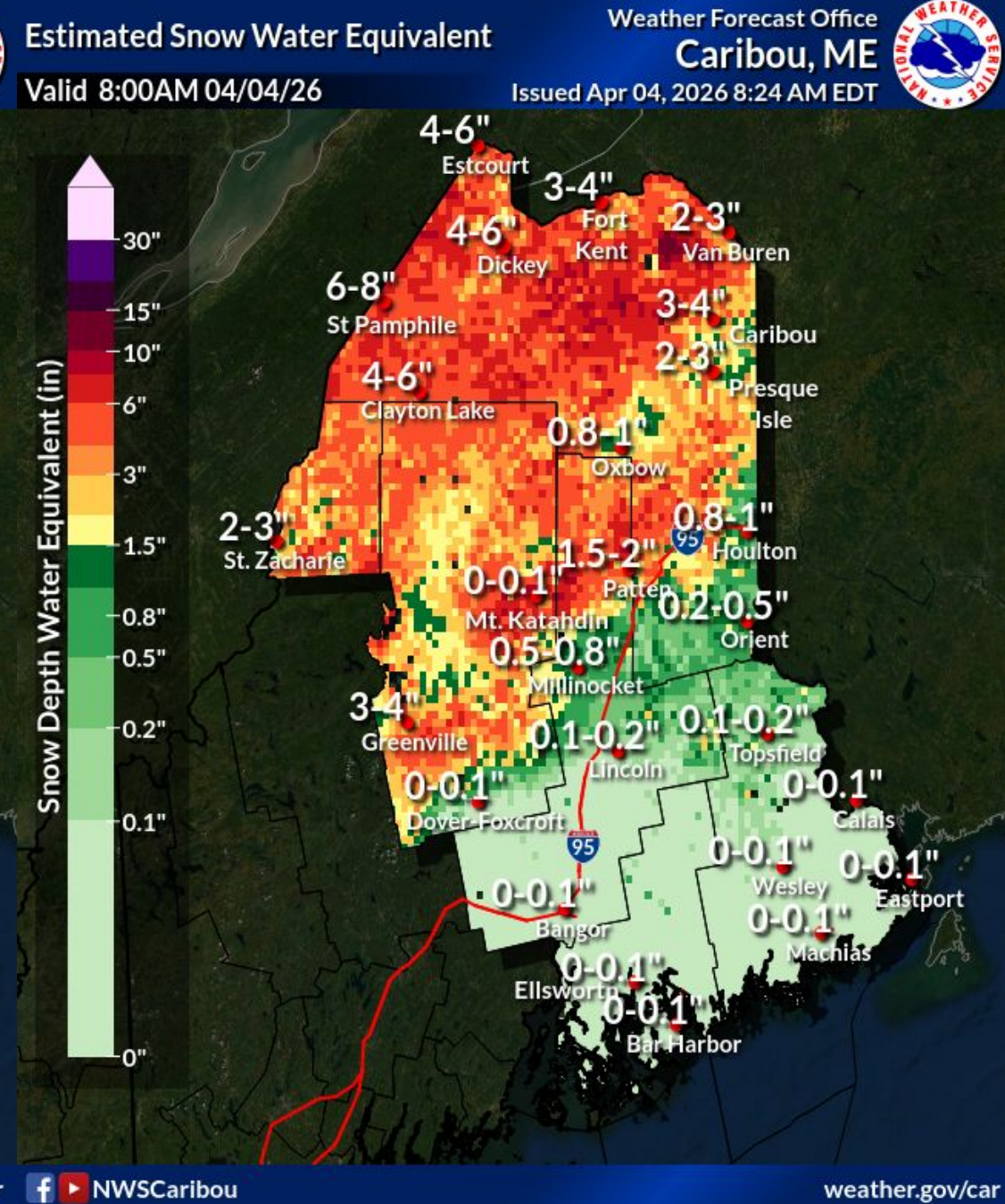
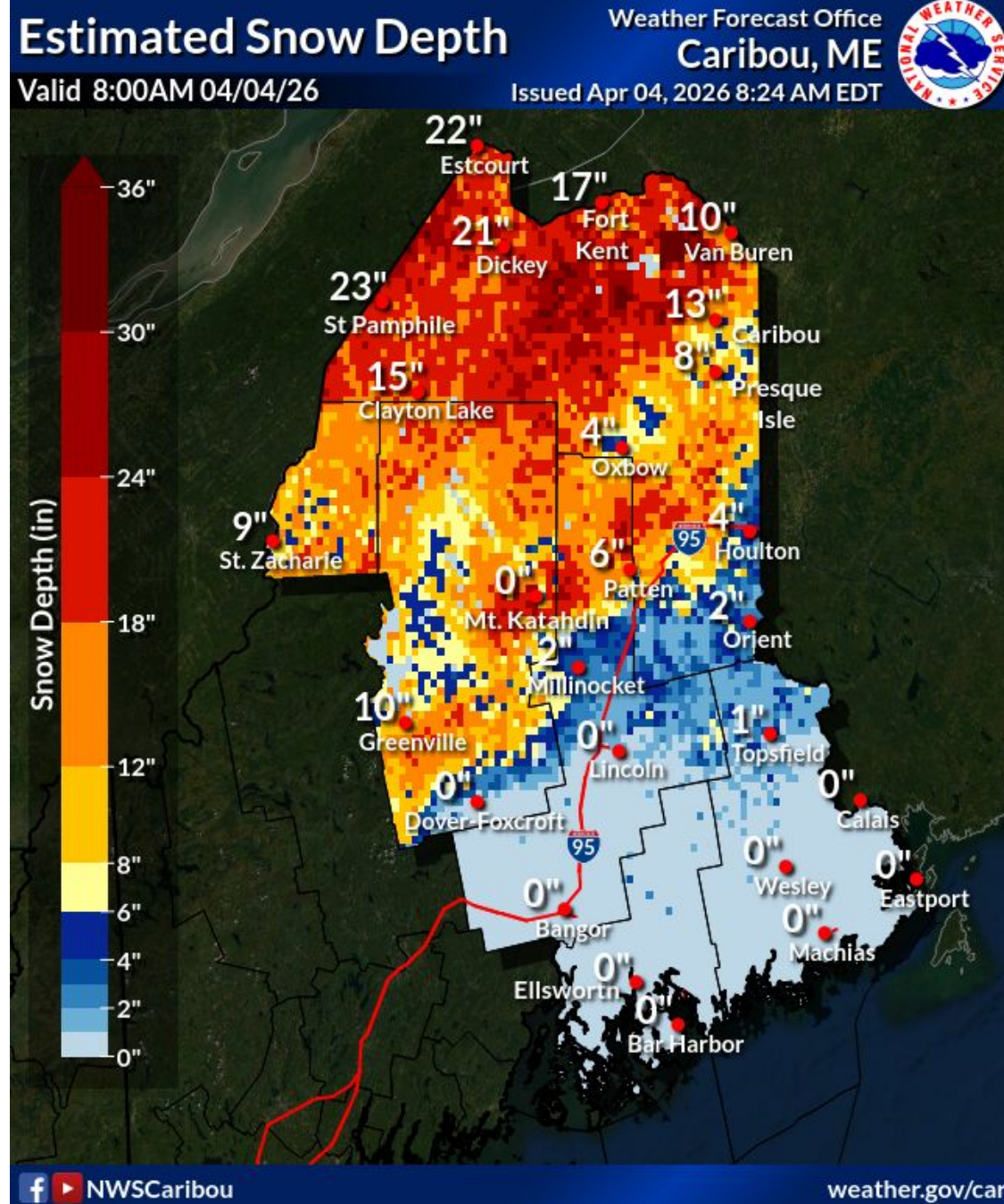
Link to [National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center \(NOHRSC\)](#)

- Ground remains frozen mainly from the Central Highlands to the Aroostook/Washington County border and points northward.

Bare Ground / Trace snowpack conditions exist in the Bangor Region to Downeast Maine.

Snowpack is below normal across much of the area.

The only "normal" snowpack conditions are in far Northern Maine across the Crown and in the St. John Valley to far Northeast Aroostook County.





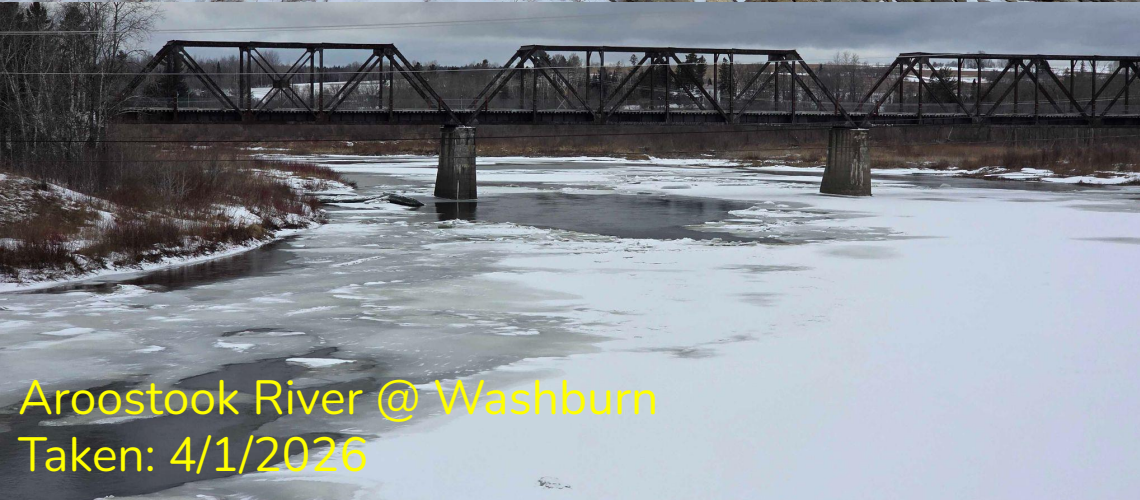
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

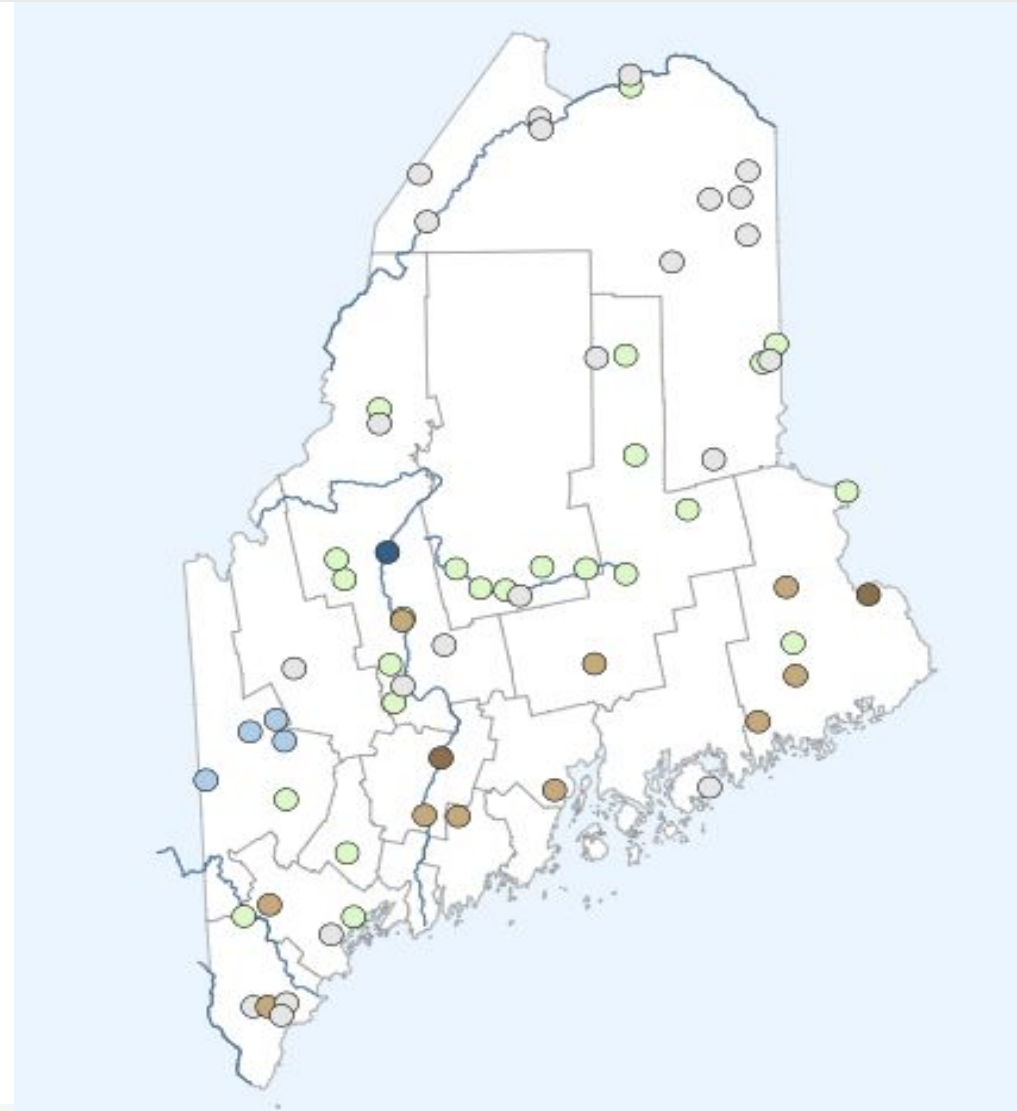
- River flows are mainly “below normal” discharge values except “near normal” in the central areas of the forecast area. Ice continues to decay/rot in place across the rivers across Northern Maine, ice has flushed in remaining areas.



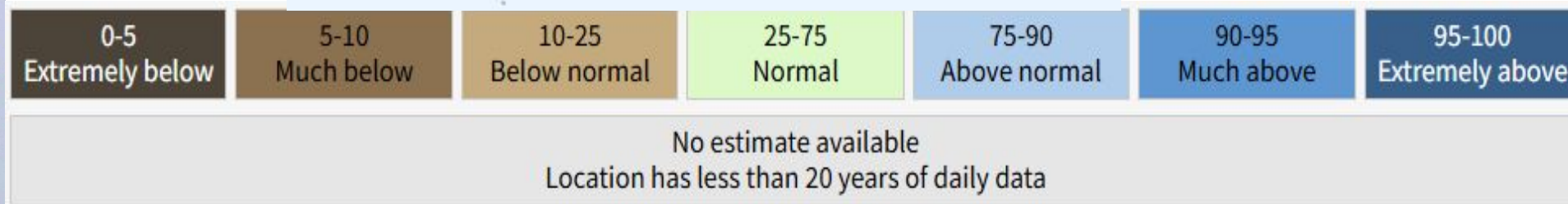
Aroostook River @ Washburn
Taken: 4/1/2026

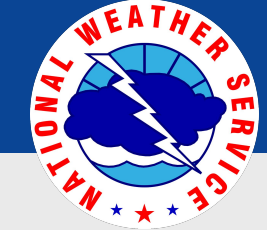


Aroostook River @ Washburn
Taken: 4/1/2026



USGS streamflow compared to historical streamflow. St. John, Allagash, Fish & Aroostook Rivers are ice covered therefore no statistics available.



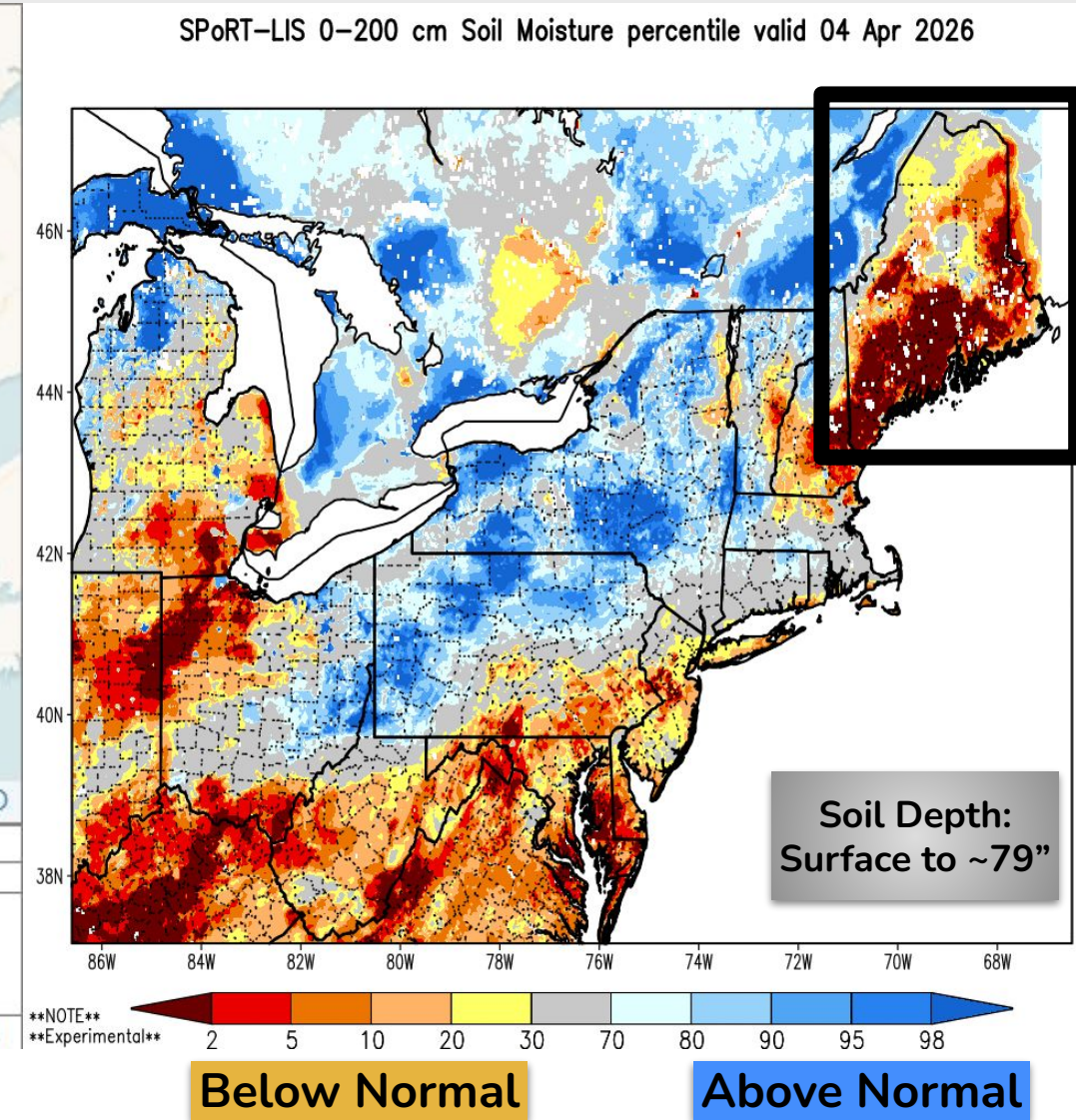
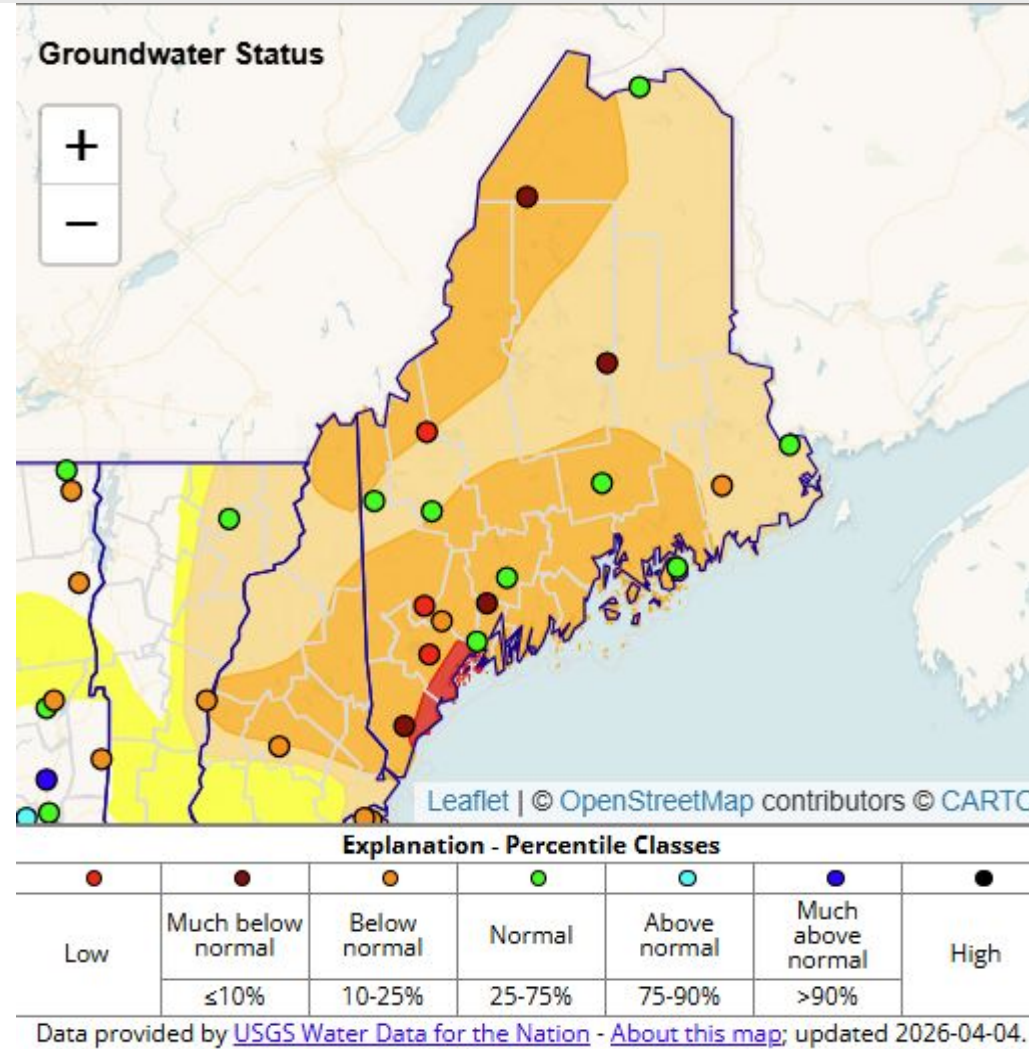


Groundwater

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

The short-term recovery in groundwater was a temporary fluctuation rather than a reversal of the long term drought trend.

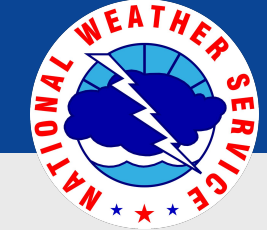
- The prolonged drought has left moisture deficit in the deeper soils.
- As the frost fully thaws, capillary action will draw moisture downward from the topsoil to fill these deeper voids, essentially robbing the surface layer of its recent gains.
- As of April 4th, ground frost was still present for all but Downeast areas and lower Penobscot Valley. The undergoing thawing which can occur rapidly once insulating snow is gone.



Note: Soil moisture estimates are more subjective in the winter when snow and ground frost are present.

Image Captions:
[USGS Groundwater Gauge Status](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-200cm Depth](#)

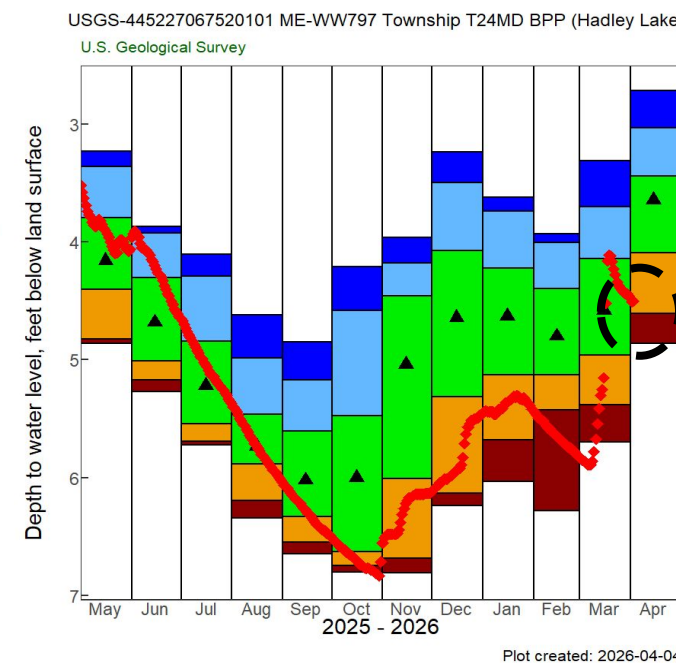
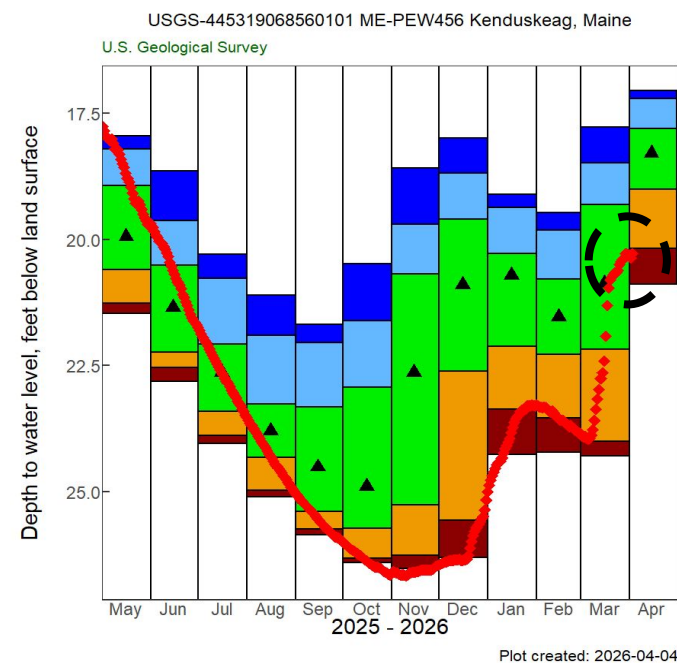
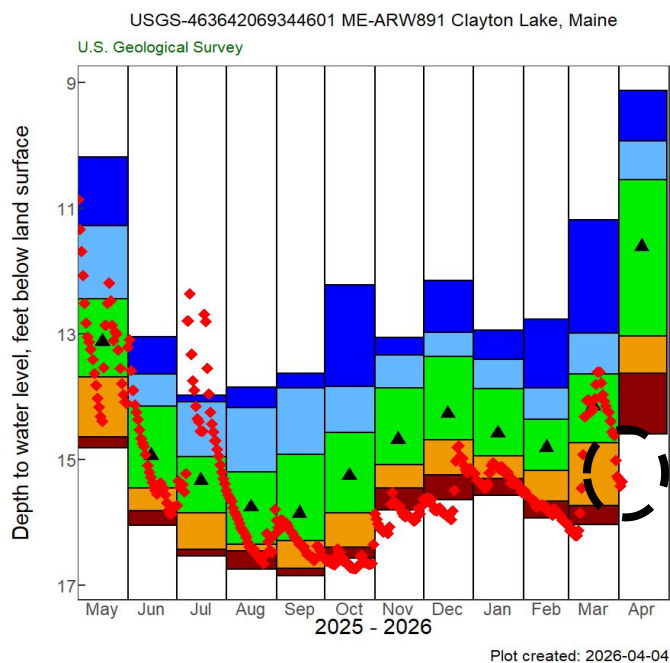
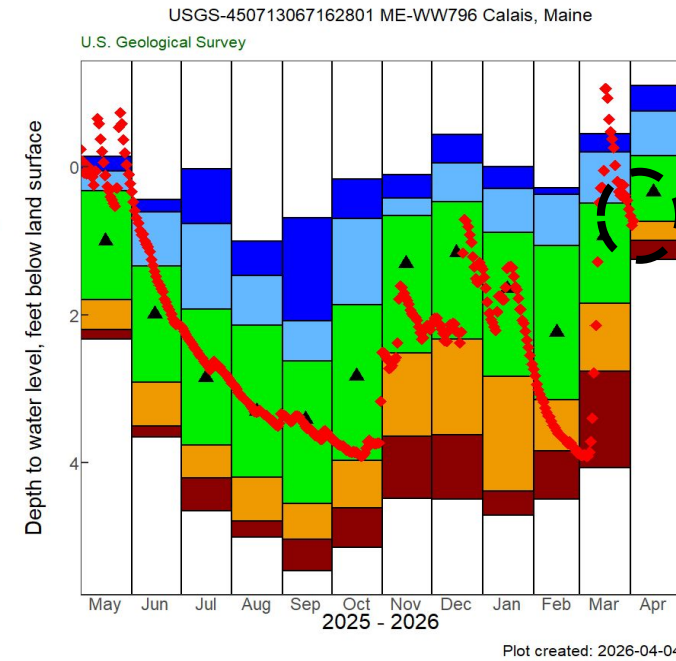
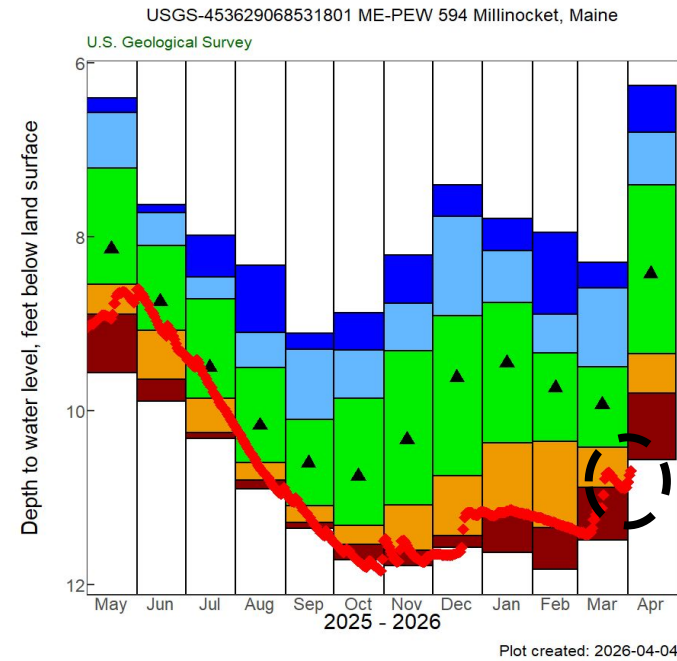
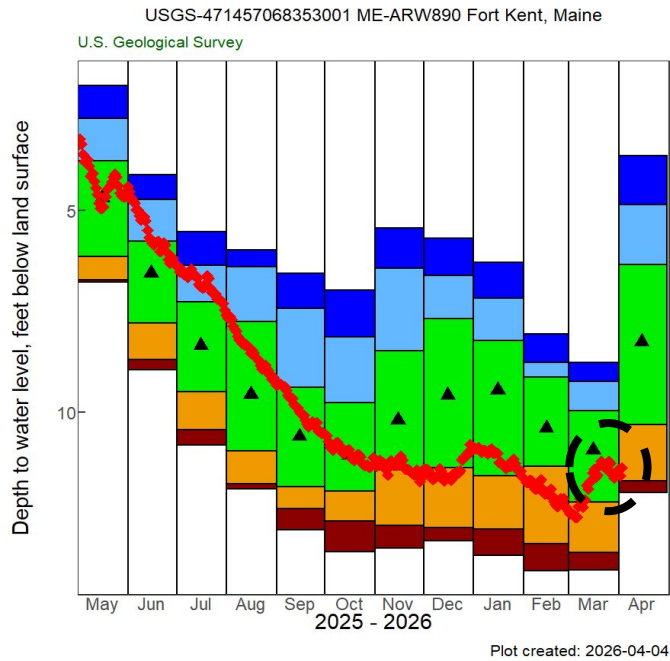




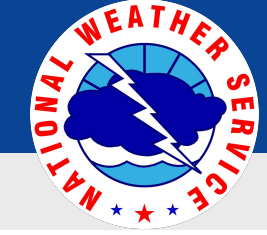
Groundwater Gage Plots

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

USGS Groundwater Levels in New England: https://newengland.water.usgs.gov/web_app/GWW/GWW.html



There has been little recovery at Millinocket & Clayton Lake through the winter months. Any recovery this spring at Fort Kent, Calais, Hadley Lakes and Kenduskeag was short lived and groundwater worsening.

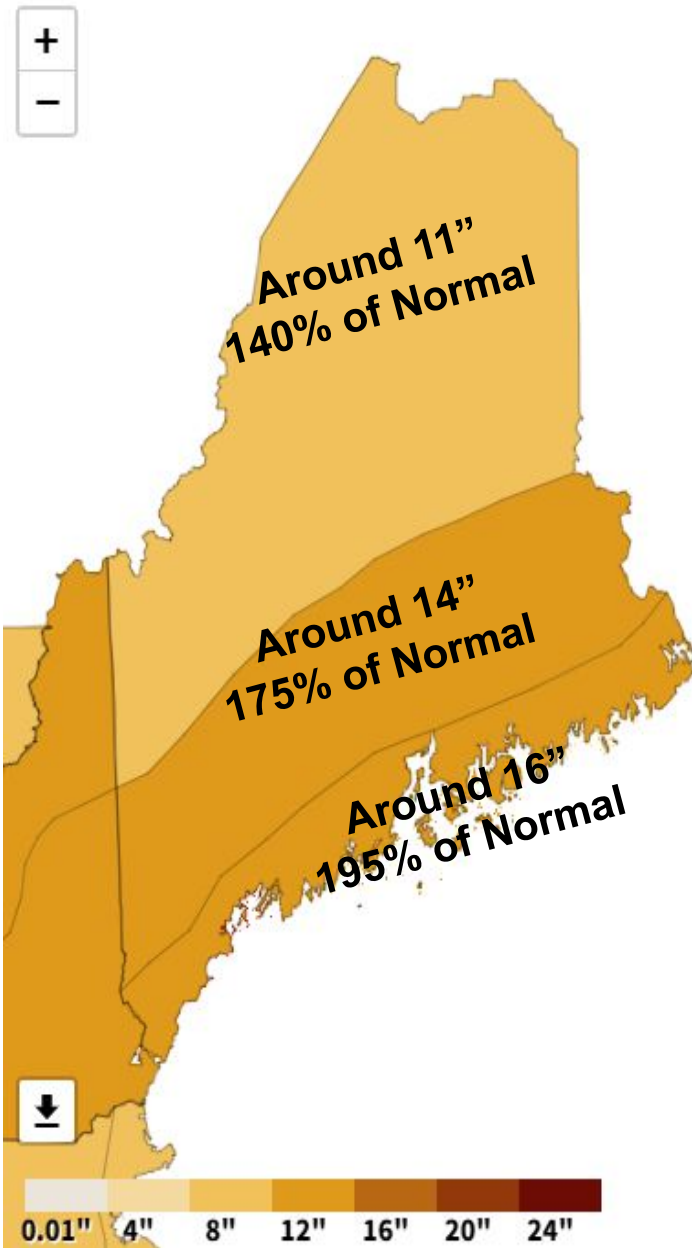
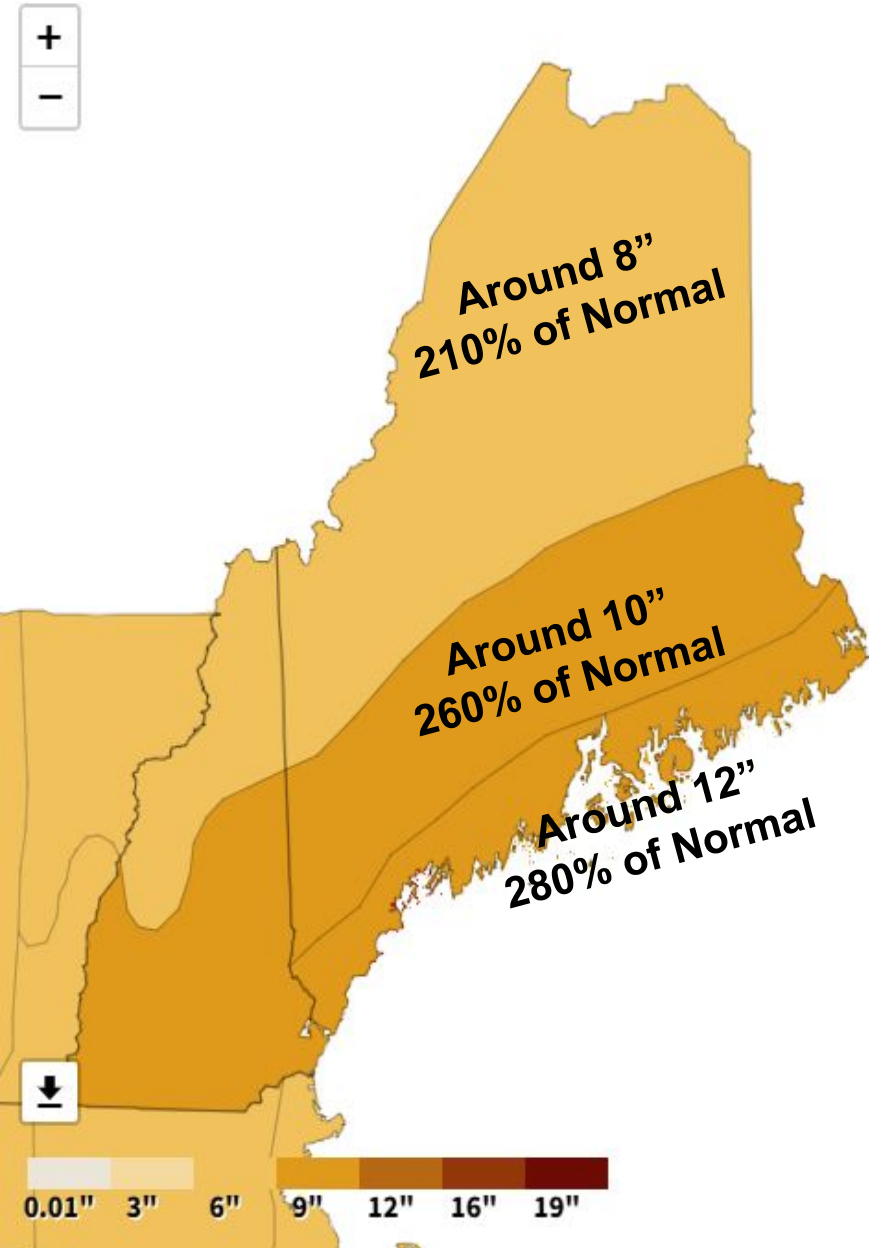


Rainfall Needed to "End the Drought"

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

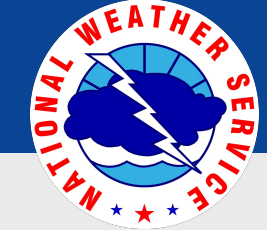
Precip Needed to End Drought Conditions in 1 Month

Precip Needed to End Drought Conditions in 2 Months



- Steady, light-rain events with high absorption rates are ideal once frost has thawed. Snowfall melting during the day into unfrozen soils is ideal but snowpack is minimal in some locations.
- Ground frost remains in the northern 1/2 to 2/3 of the forecast area. Thawing will begin to increase with the increasing sun angle.
- While accumulating snow is often a positive sign for areas experiencing drought, the stored water, measured as snow water equivalent (SWE), does not provide an immediate benefit for drought recovery until it actually melts and begins to enter the wider water system.





Summary of Impacts

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- The majority of the streamflows across the area remain “near normal” to “below normal” ([USGS](#))
- Lakes & ponds, although ice covered, are near to below normal water levels.

Dry Drinking Water Wells

- No new dry well reports in March but groundwater conditions are worsening.
- Maine EMA Dry Well Survey: <https://maine-dry-well-survey-maine.hub.arcgis.com/>

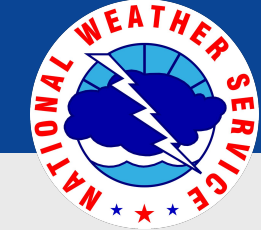
Mitigation Actions

- Conserve water and follow directions from local officials.

Ice Impacts & Flood Threats

- Northern Rivers are 65-80% ice covered, with near normal to below normal flows.
 - Ice is continuing to rot/decay in place with several openings/thinning areas.
 - Limited Ice Jam Threat
- Mostly ice free in the Central Highlands, Baxter Region, Downeast and Bangor Regions.
- Ponds/lakes levels are low, exposing rocks.
- Flood Threat remains normal across Northern Maine & Moosehead Region. Below normal flood threat for the Central Highlands, Bangor Region & Downeast Maine.
See the latest Winter/Spring Flood Outlook [Here](#).





Long Range Outlooks (April)

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

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

Main Takeaways for April:

- No significant signal for above/below temperatures in the state.
- Slight signals of *above normal precipitation* (snow or rain).

Pattern Outlook

- Weak La Niña is continuing to weaken and return towards ENSO neutral. We continue to monitor shorter term subseasonal patterns to control the forecast. The change to ENSO neutral will be significant enough to change the pattern.

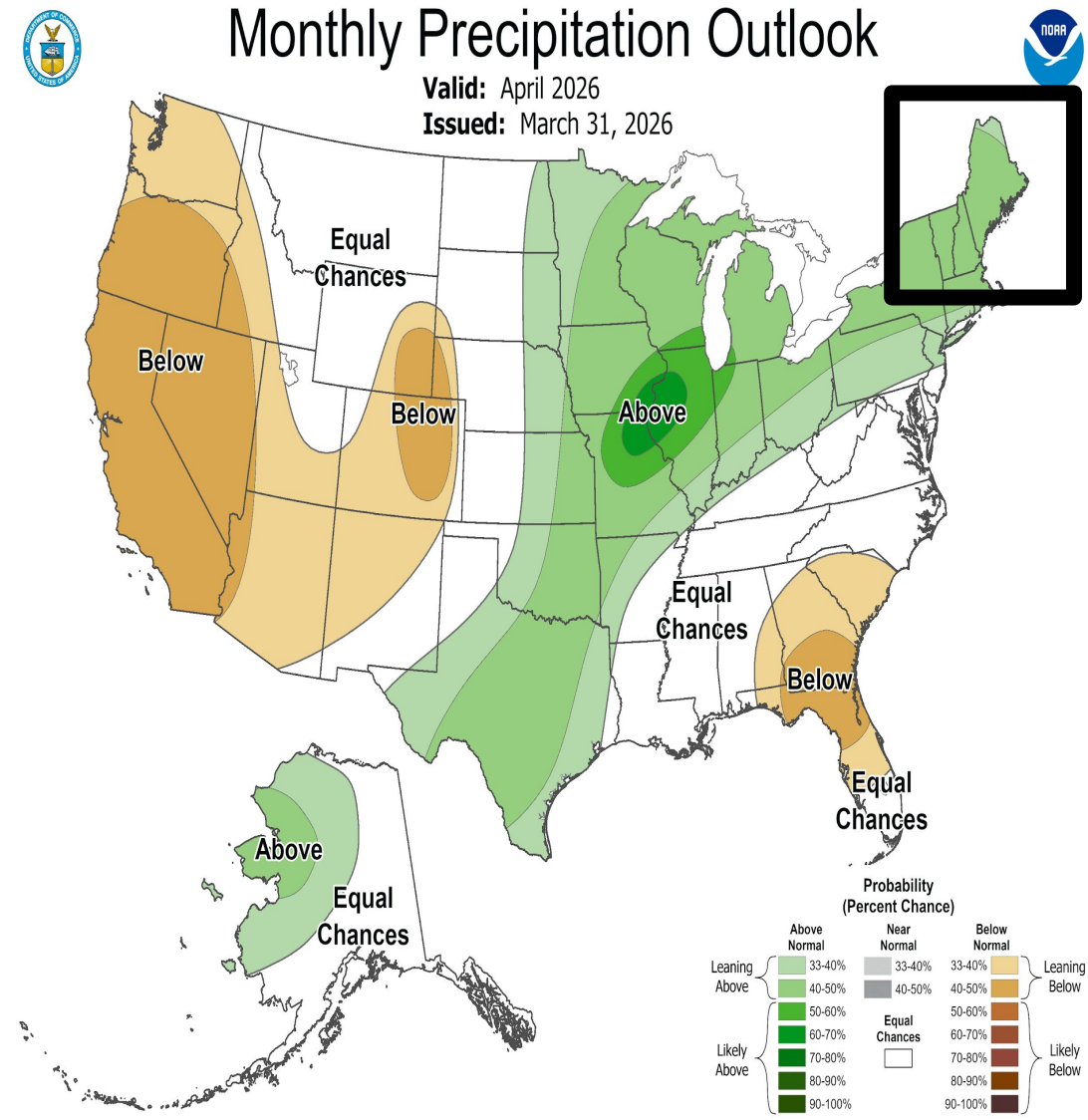
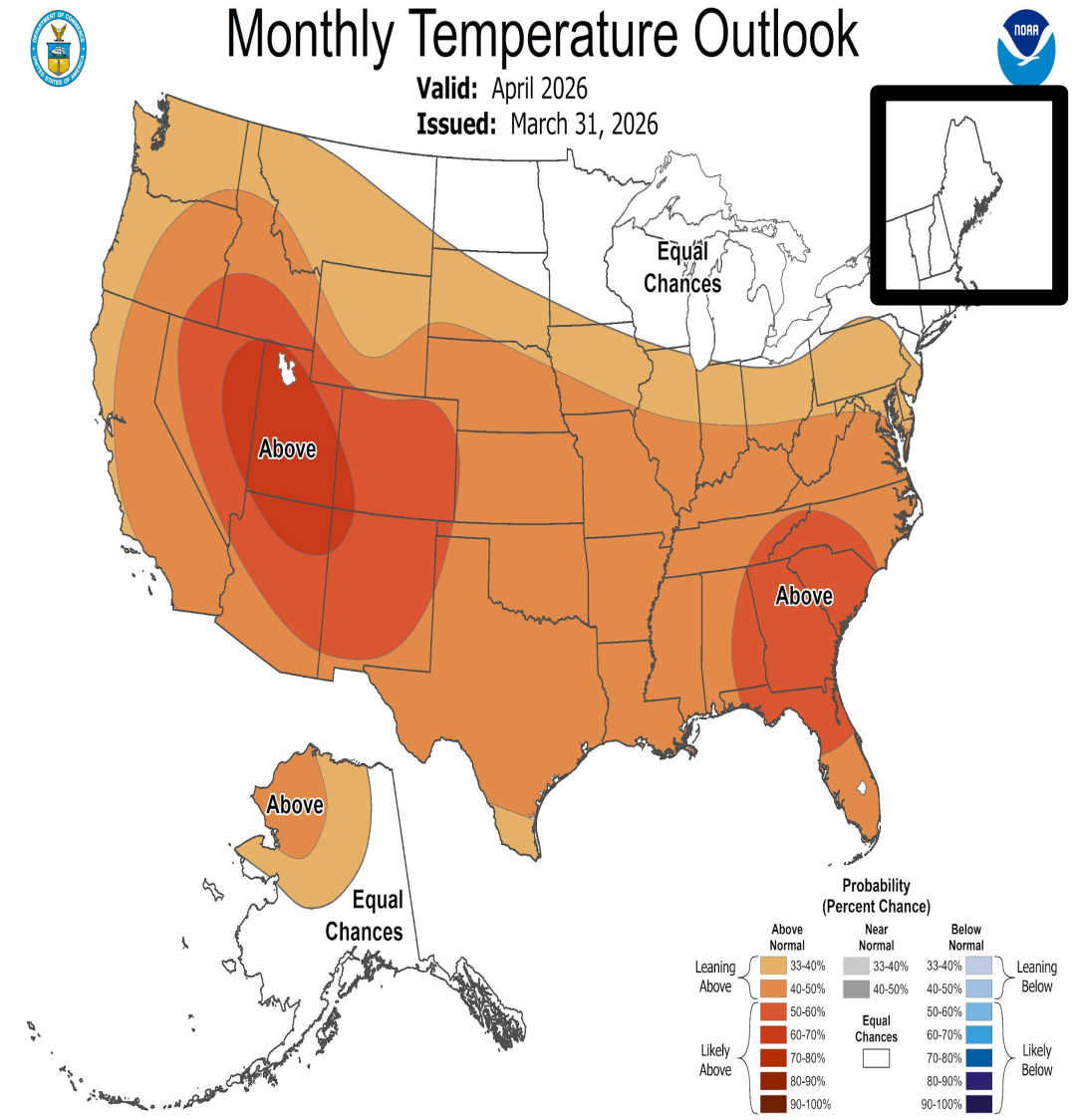
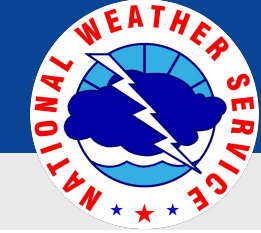


Image Captions:
 Left - [Climate Prediction Center 1 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
 Right - [Climate Prediction Center 1 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)
 Valid Mar 31, 2026



Long Range Outlooks (April-June)

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

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

Main Takeaways for Feb-Apr:

- No strong signals of *above or below normal* temperatures in the state.
- No strong signals of *above or below normal precipitation* (snow or rain).

Pattern Outlook

- Weak La Niña is continuing to weaken and return towards ENSO neutral. We continue to monitor shorter term subseasonal patterns to control the forecast. The change to ENSO neutral will be significant enough to change the pattern.

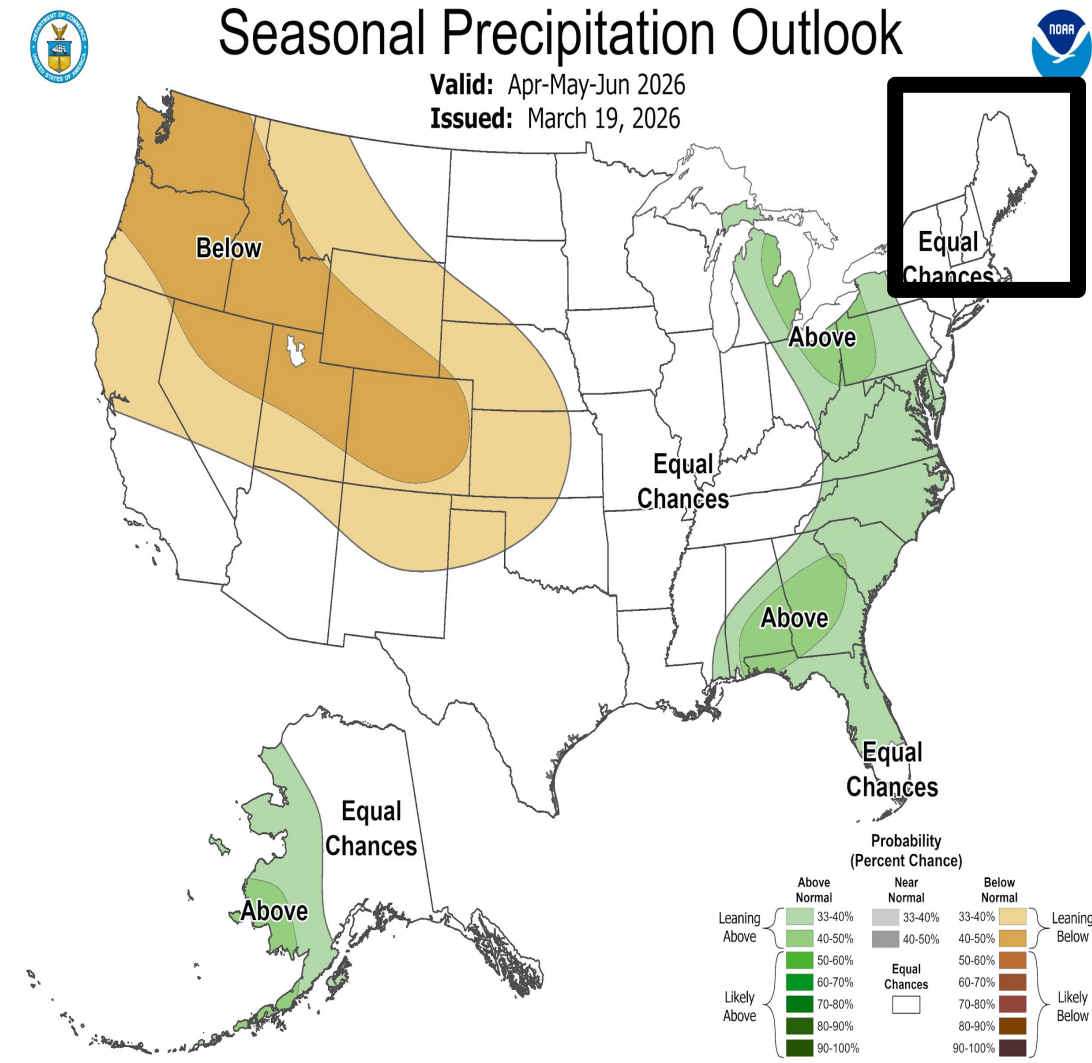
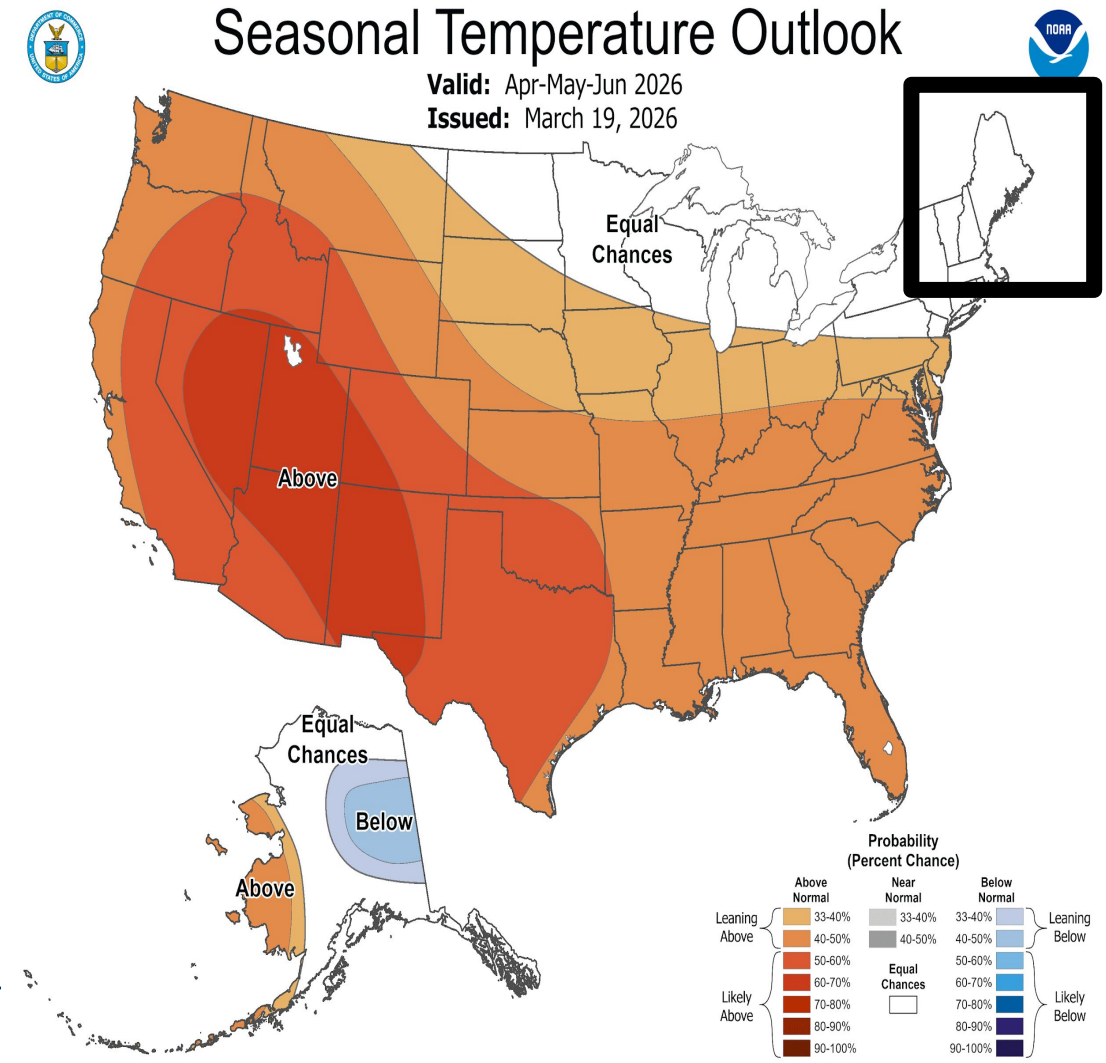
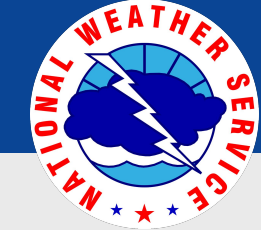


Image Captions:
Left - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
Right - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)
Valid Mar 19, 2026.



April Drought Outlook

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

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

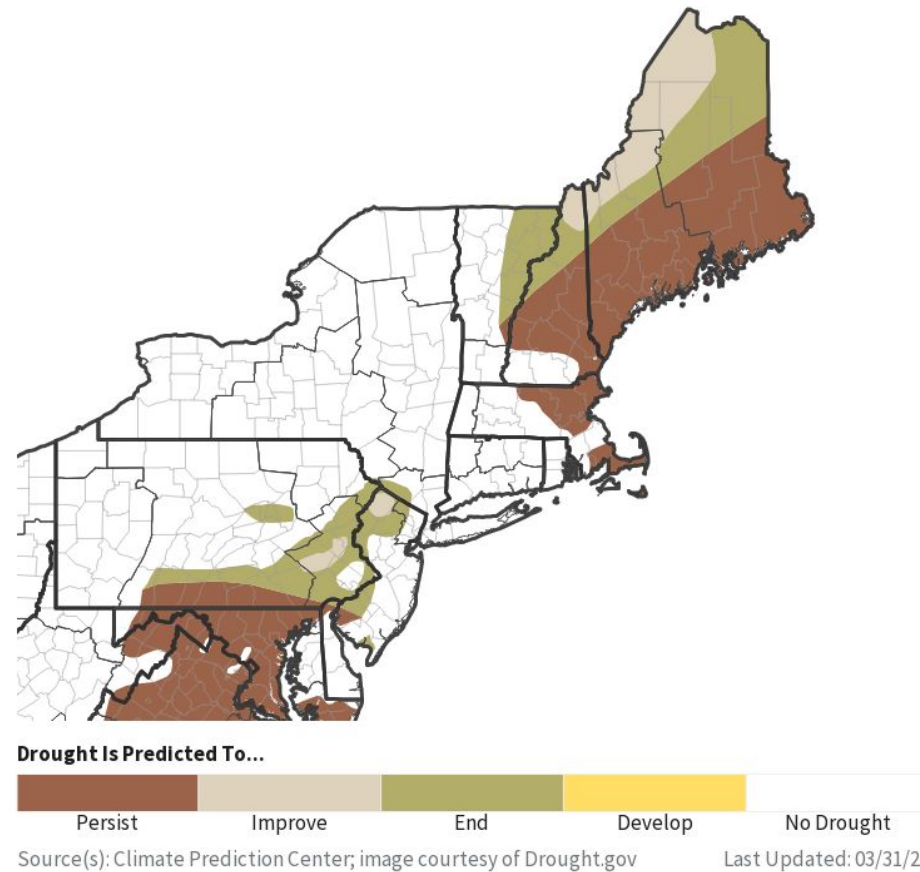
Main Takeaways

- Signals point to improvement near the Maine/Quebec border.
- Drought likely to persist in large portions of the area.

Possible Impact

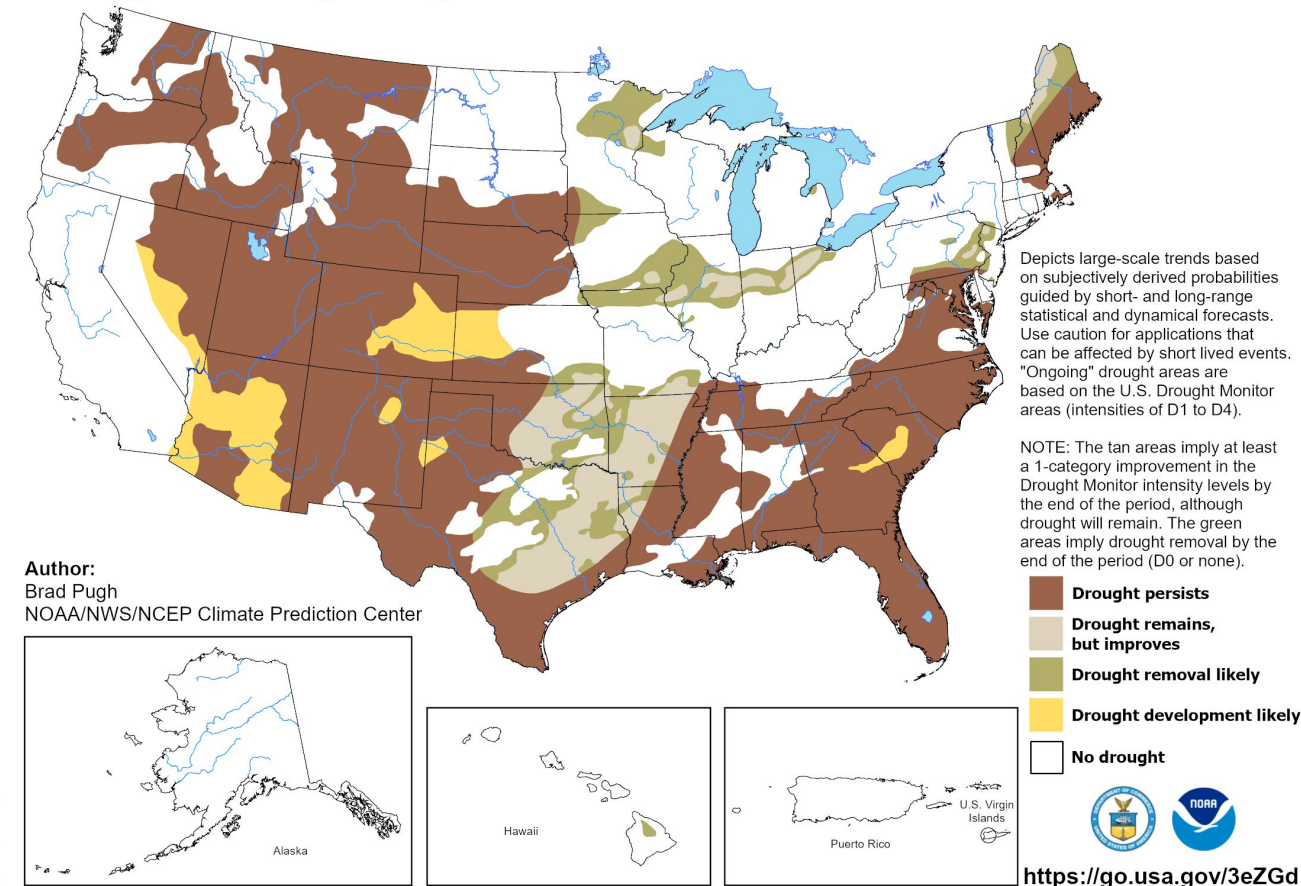
- Drinking water supply issues possible due to deep groundwater deficits.

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

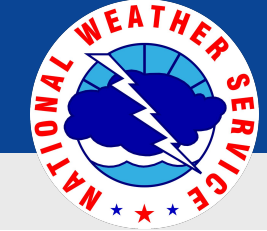


U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for April 2026
Released March 31, 2026



Links to the latest:
[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)
[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

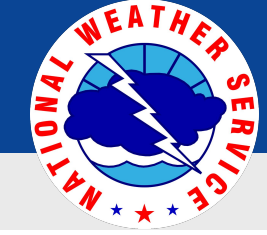


Main Takeaways

April 4, 2026
9:32 PM EDT

- **Bottom Line:** Categorical improvements may appear this month due to surface condition recovery, however long-term drought persistence is the favored outlook for the 2026 warm season.
 - *Full aquifer recovery is unlikely this spring.*
- Groundwater trends continue to slowly worsen. Recent rain and snowmelt has saturated the top layer of soil, increased streamflows and reservoir levels, and slightly buoyed shallow groundwater levels.
- Outlook: Despite these improvements in water levels, the long-term prognosis remains concerning
 - Spring recharge is on trajectory to finish below climatological normals, with the recharge window closing faster than usual due to early snow losses in the headwaters.
 - The prolonged drought has left a severe moisture deficit in the deeper soils and groundwater. As the frost fully thaws, moisture will be drawn downward from the topsoil to fill these deeper voids, essentially robbing the surface layer of its recent gains.
 - Once green-up occurs, plants will begin actively pumping water from the soil. This demand coupled with the deep-layer deficits could rapidly reduce topsoil moisture.
- Repeating wetting rains through spring will be vital to sustain soil moisture, otherwise evaporative losses will dominate.
- Stakeholders should prepare for a potential flash drought scenario where topsoil moisture dissipates rapidly once the canopy fills in.
- **Long Term Drought Persistence** is expected into the warm season.





Useful Links

- <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>
- <https://www.weather.gov/car/DroughtInformationStatement>
- <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/car>
- <https://www.weather.gov/car/EMhome>
- <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Contact Information

Web

→ www.weather.gov/car

Phone (public)

→ (207) 492-0182

Questions? Email

→ nws.caribou@noaa.gov

→ james.sinko@noaa.gov (Hydrology Program Manager)

! Disclaimer !

- Updates to the Drought Information Statement will be made monthly, unless significant changes necessitate more frequent updates.
 - ◆ Weekly updates to the US Drought Monitor can be found at droughtmonitor.unl.edu
 - ◆ Drought conditions are less variable in the winter season due to dormant vegetation and frozen ground conditions.