



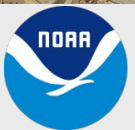
Drought Information Statement for Northern and Eastern Maine

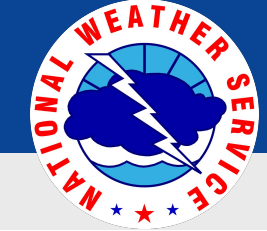
Valid September 3, 2026

Issued By: WFO Caribou, ME

- Next update by Thursday, September 17th unless conditions warrant sooner
- 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.

- Although rainfall is occurring, the groundwater and streamflows continue to worsen across the region leading to the expansion of Moderate & Severe Drought
- Much of Eastern & Northern Maine is seeing Below to Much Below Normal Groundwater & Streamflow conditions
- Drought persistence expected into the fall





U.S. Drought Monitor

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

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

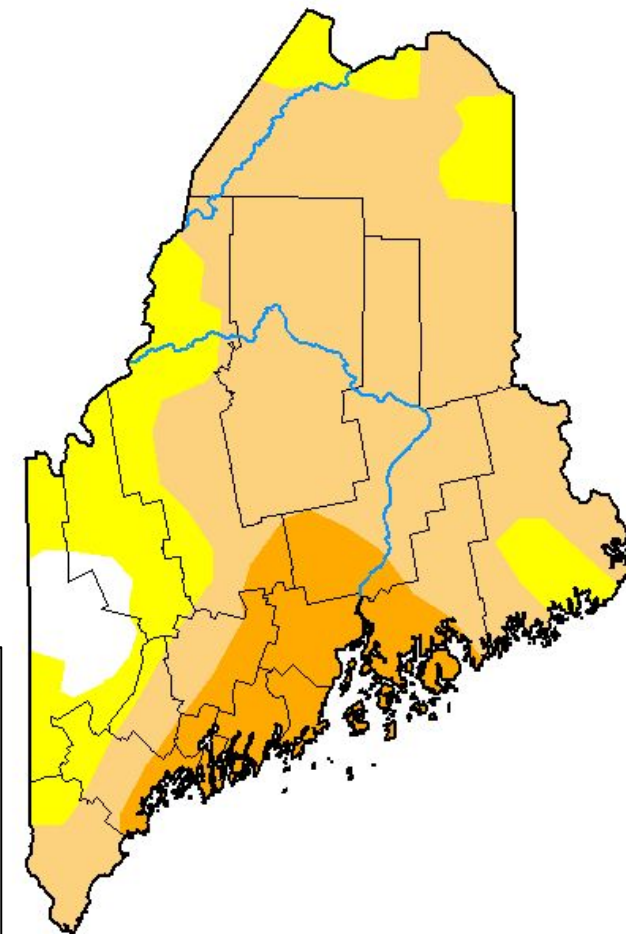
- **Drought Intensity and Extent:**

- **D2 (Severe Drought):** Far Southern Penobscot, Southwest Hancock counties.
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** Much of Aroostook, All of Piscataquis, Much of Penobscot, Eastern & Northern Hancock and Northern & Eastern Washington counties.
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** Far Northern & Northeast Aroostook and South-Central Washington counties.

Percentage of Maine in Drought

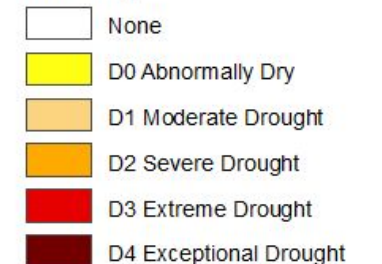
- **No Drought:** 4.03%
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** 22.41%
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** 59.84%
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** 13.73%

U.S. Drought Monitor Maine



September 1, 2026
(Released Thursday, Sep. 3, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity:



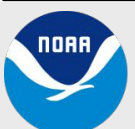
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Curtis Riganti
National Drought Mitigation Center

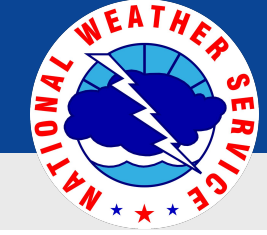


droughtmonitor.unl.edu



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

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

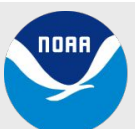
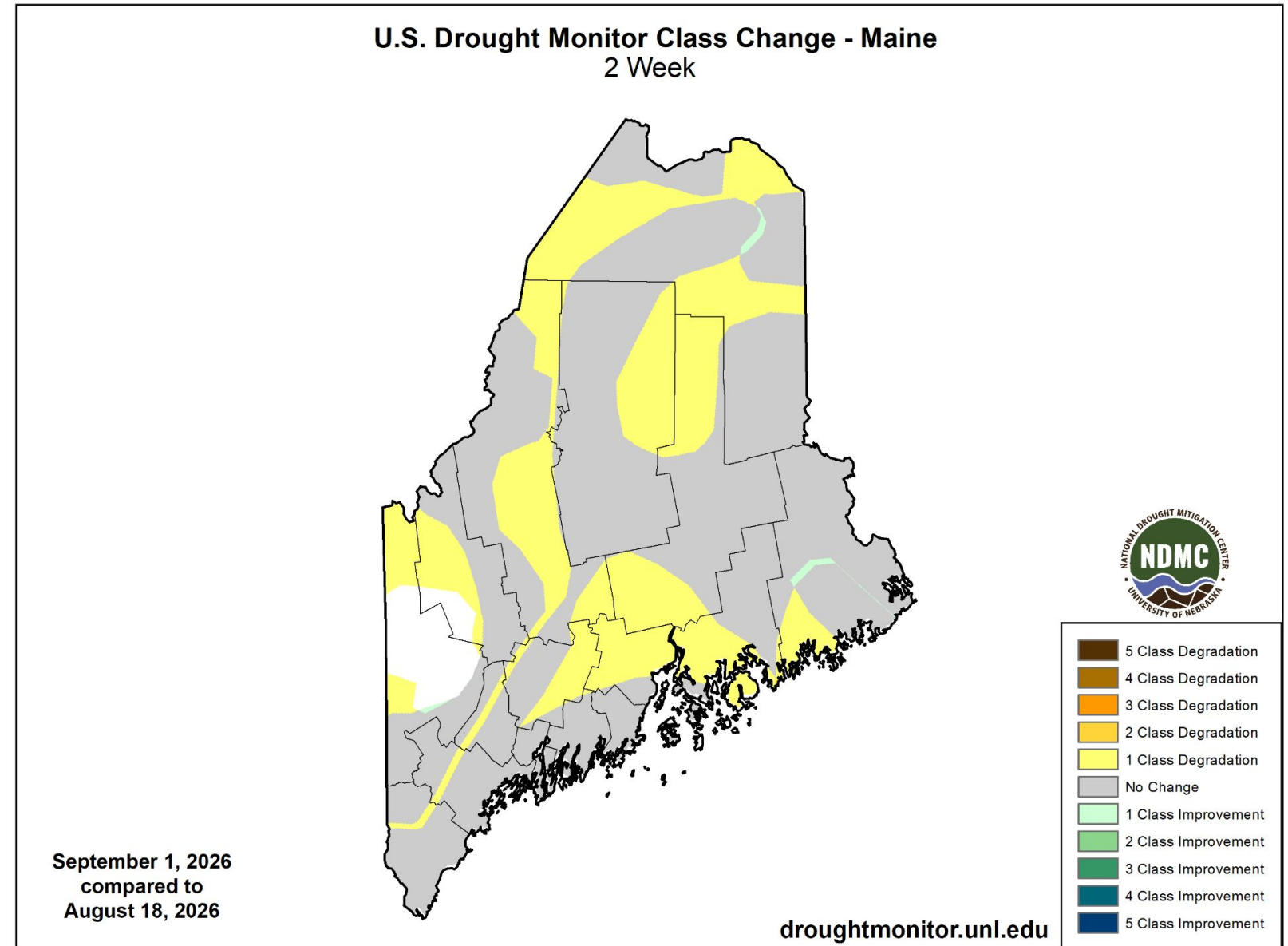


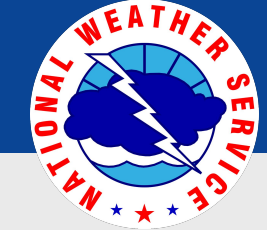
Recent Change in Drought Intensity

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

Link to the latest [2-week change map](#) for Northeast U.S.

- Two week drought monitor class change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** Several locations in Aroostook, Northern Piscataquis and Northern Penobscot counties. Additional worsening in Southern Penobscot, Southwest Hancock and far Southwest Washington counties.
 - **Drought Improved:** None.
 - **No Change:** Rest of the forecast area.



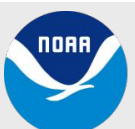
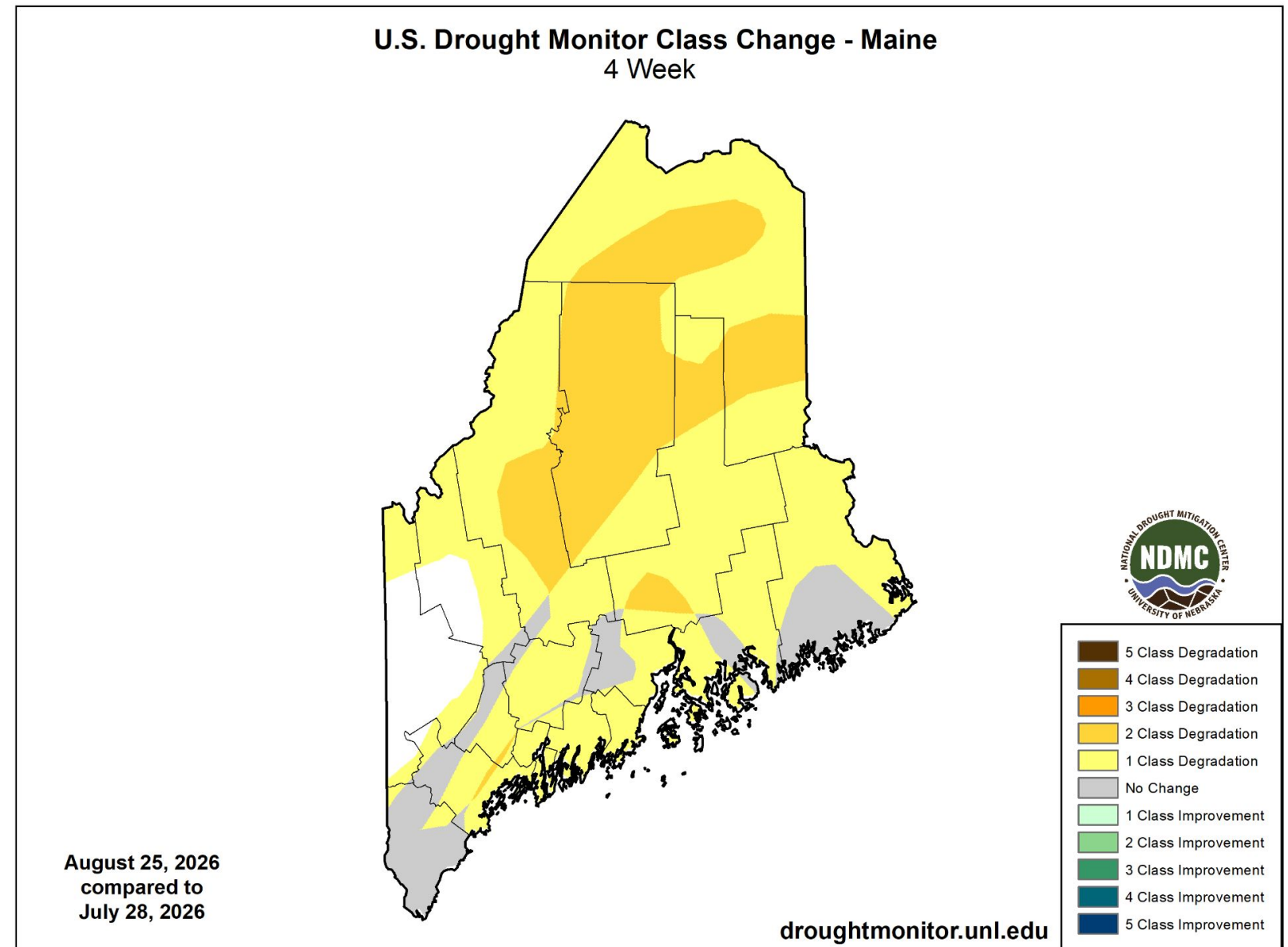


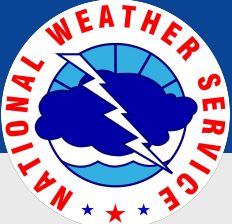
Recent Change in Drought Intensity

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

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

- Four week drought monitor class change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** Nearly the entire forecast area.
 - **Drought Improved:** None.
 - **No Change:** Small areas of Washington and Hancock counties.



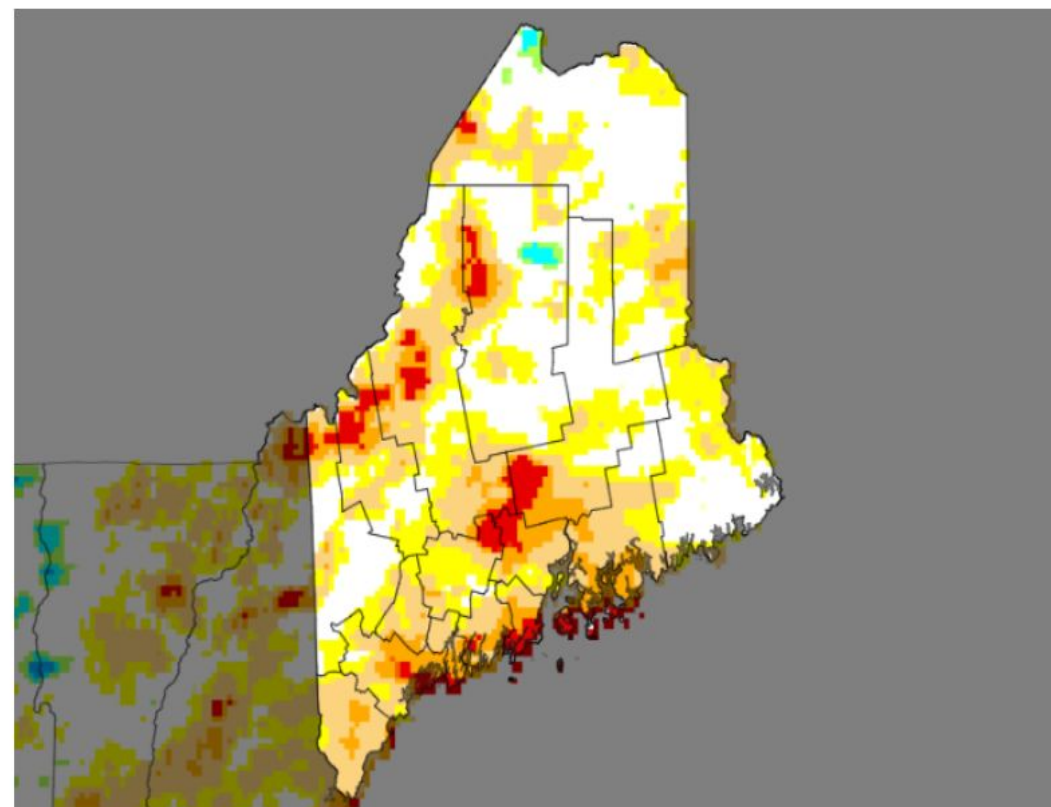


Short & Long Term Drought Index

Link to the Maine [Drought.gov](https://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.
- Continued worsening of groundwater & surface water conditions.
- 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



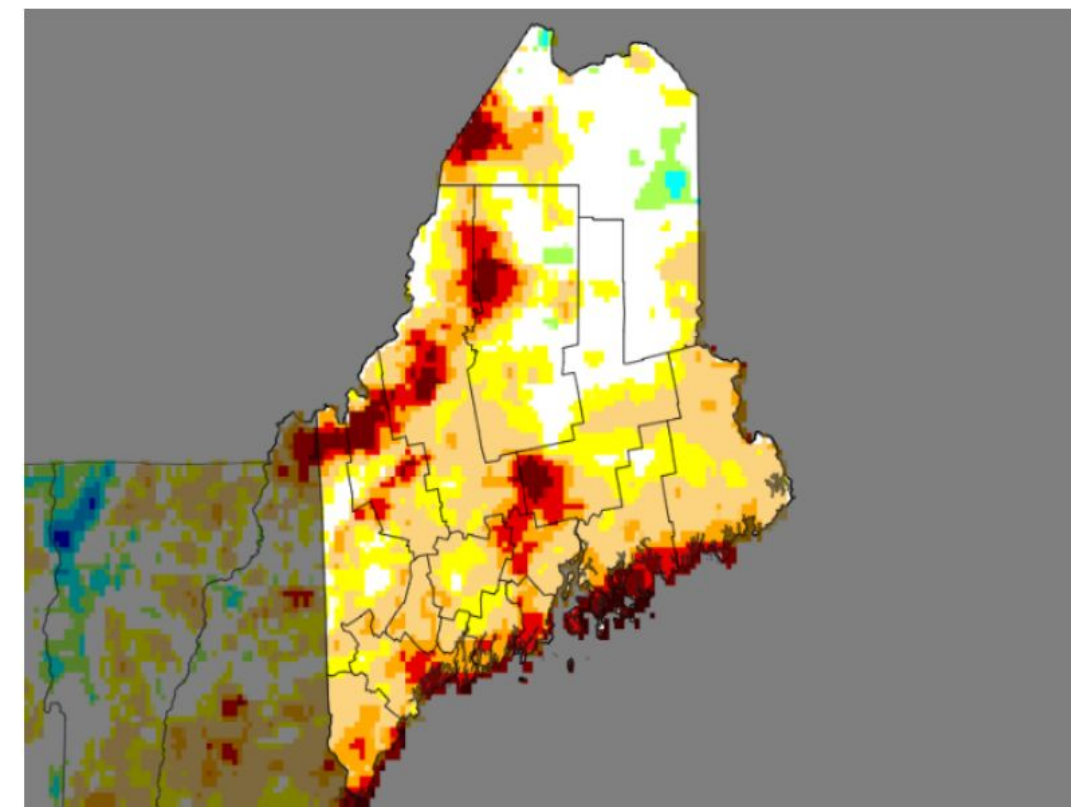
Wet Conditions



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine
Data Valid: 08/28/26

Drought.gov

Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Dry Conditions



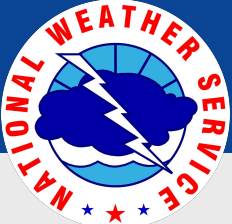
Wet Conditions



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine
Data Valid: 08/28/26

Drought.gov

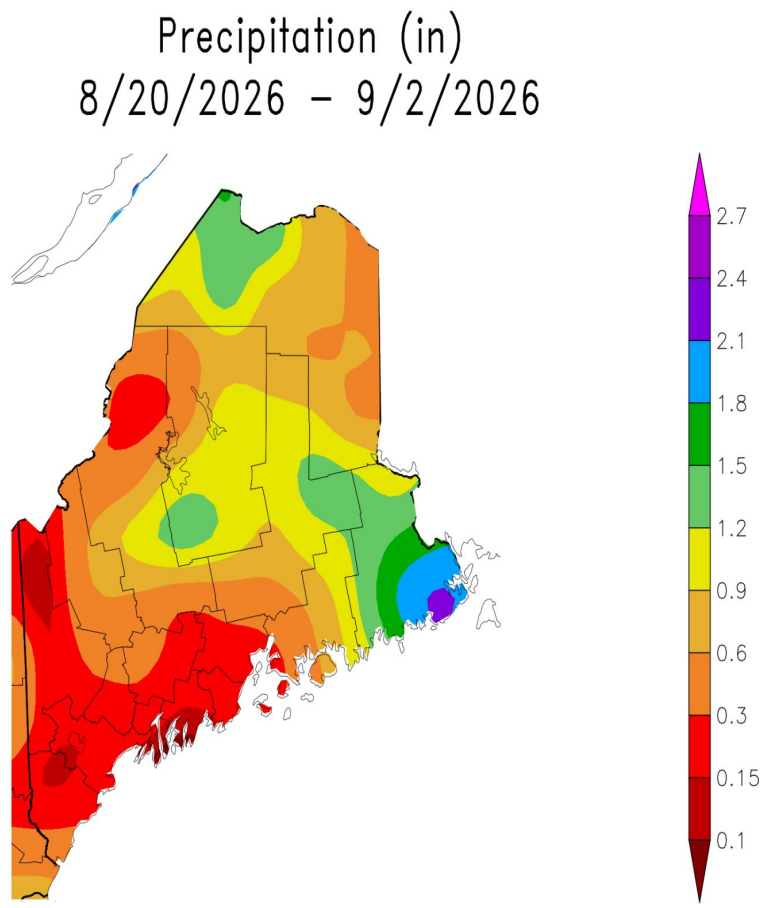




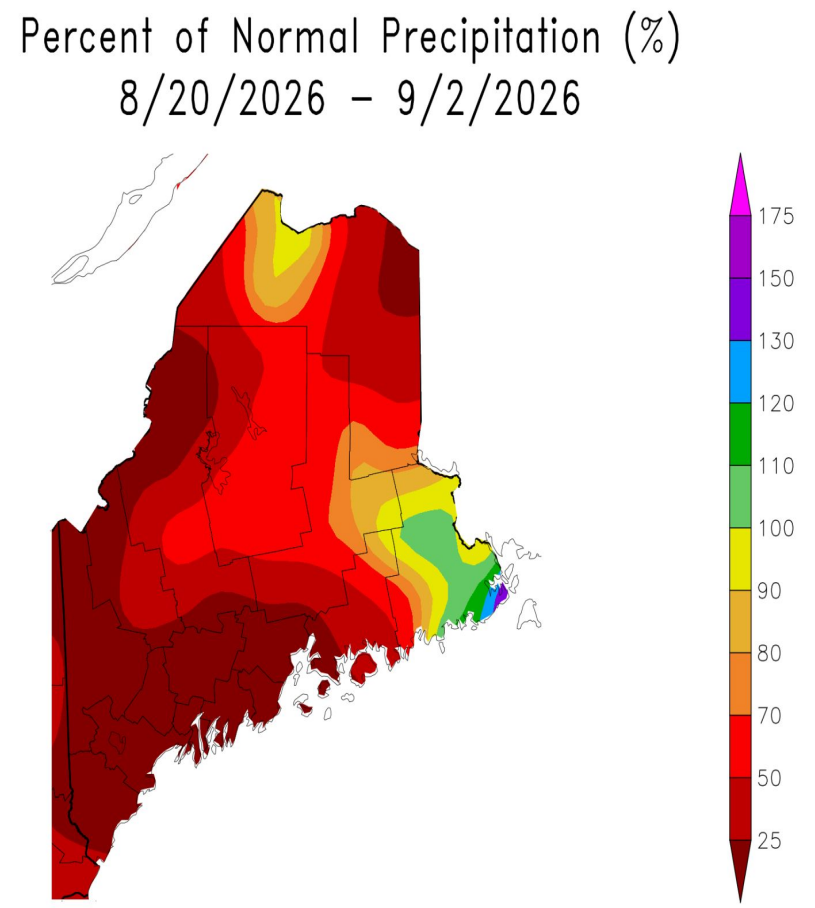
14 Day Precipitation

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

- Precipitation is much below normal across much of Northern & Eastern Maine with much of the rainfall just isolated to scattered in nature.
- Near to slightly above normal precipitation in very isolated areas of extreme eastern Downeast Maine.



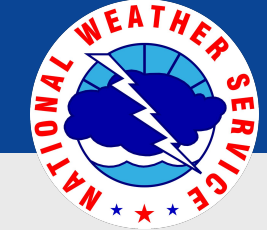
Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.



ACIS Web Services Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



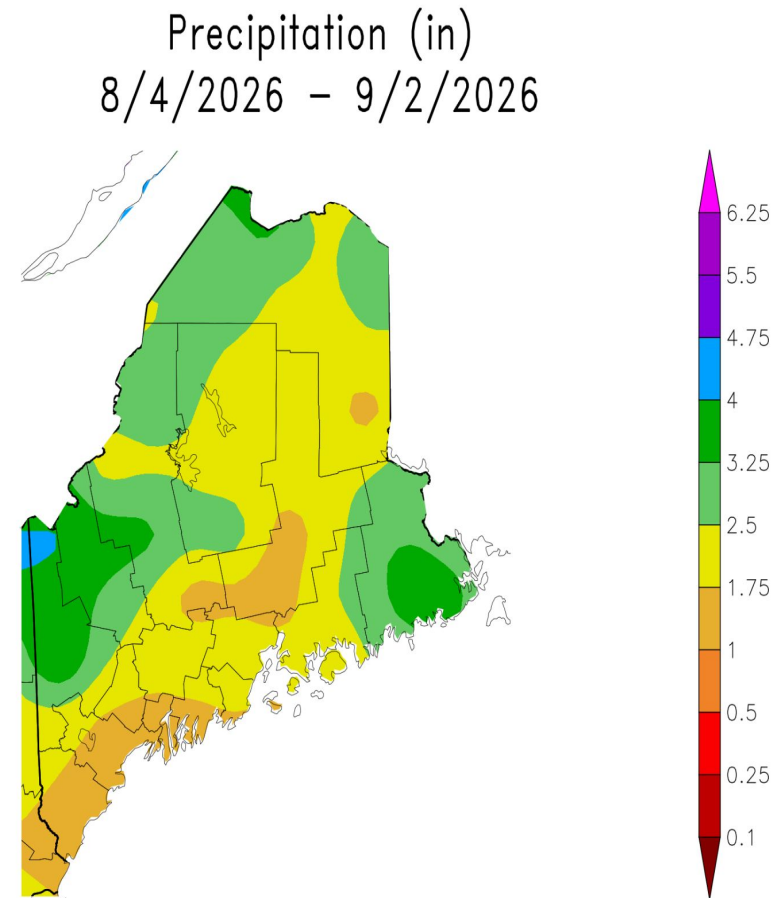


30 Day Precipitation

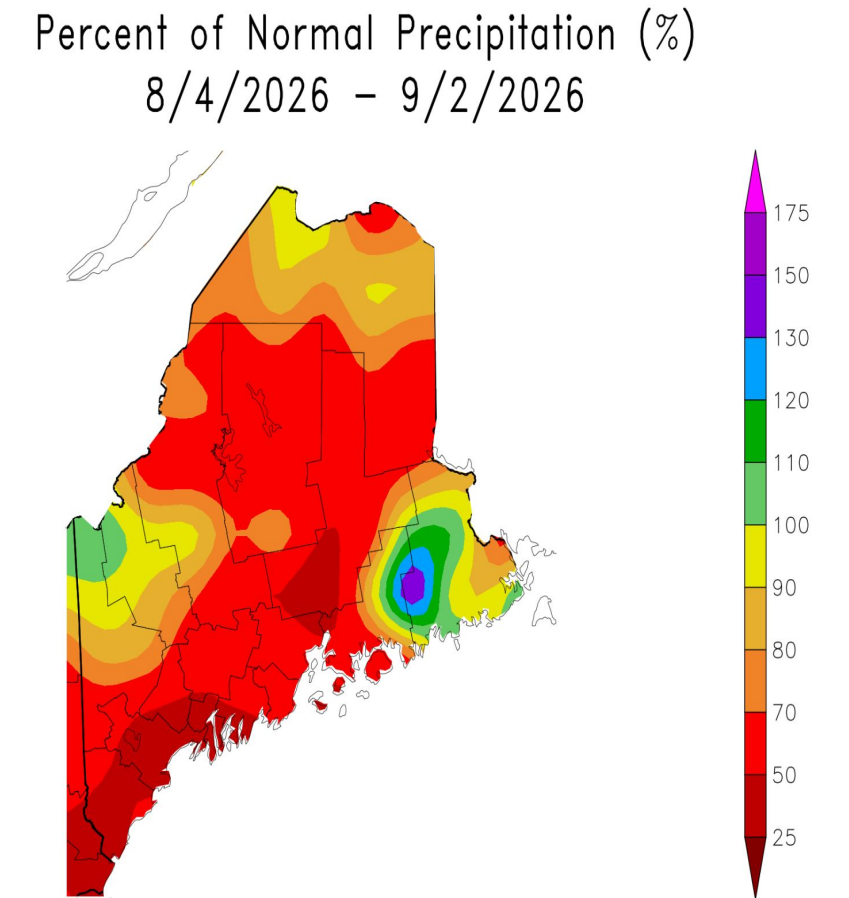
September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

- Precipitation is below normal across much of Northern & Eastern Maine with much of the rainfall just scattered showers and thunderstorms the last 30 days.
- Slightly above normal precipitation in very isolated areas of Downeast & Northern Maine thanks to isolated convection.



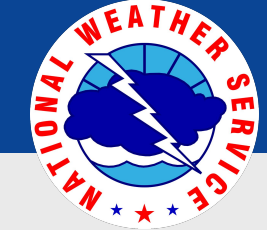
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ACIS Web Services Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



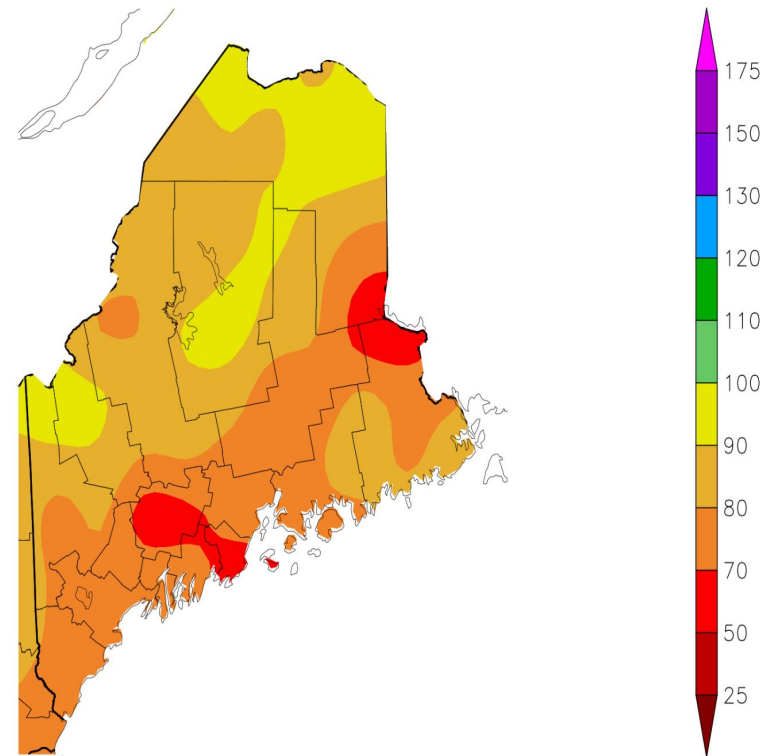


Precipitation Deficits

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

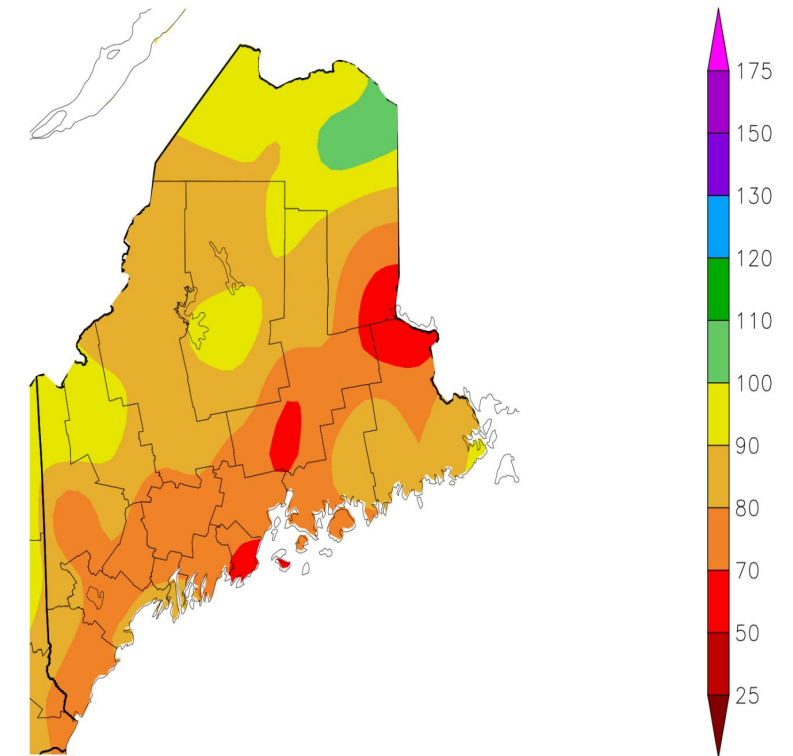
- 2026 precipitation deficits compounding the deficits from the 2025 Drought in much of the area.
- Northern Maine is running 90-100% of normal precipitation values for 2026. This explains why there is a *slower degradation* of the ongoing dry conditions for the north, compared to other regions.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
10/1/2025 – 9/2/2026



Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.

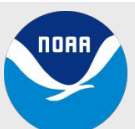
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
1/1/2026 – 9/2/2026

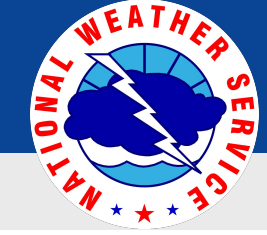


ACIS Web Services Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Much of the area is seeing compounding drought impacts.

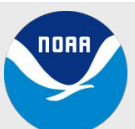


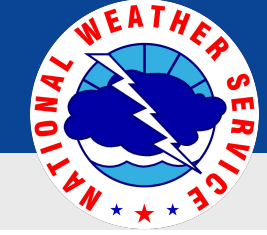


Precipitation Deficits

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

City	Precipitation Since Jan 1st	Departure from Normal since Jan 1st	Jun 1 - Aug 31 Precipitation	Jun 1 - Aug 31 Precipitation Departure	Water Year to Date Oct 1, 2025 - Aug 31, 2026	Water Year to Date Departure Oct 1, 2025 - Aug 31, 2026
Caribou	28.30"	+1.75"	12.30"	+0.57"	37.54"	+0.28"
Houlton	18.54"	-6.53"	7.26"	-3.93" 4th Driest on Record (Since 1948)	26.90"	-8.98"
Millinocket	23.77"	-3.35"	10.73"	-1.43"	33.61"	-5.38
Bangor	17.66"	-8.38"	5.44"	-4.65" Tied 4th Driest on Record (Since 1926)	26.48"	-11.47





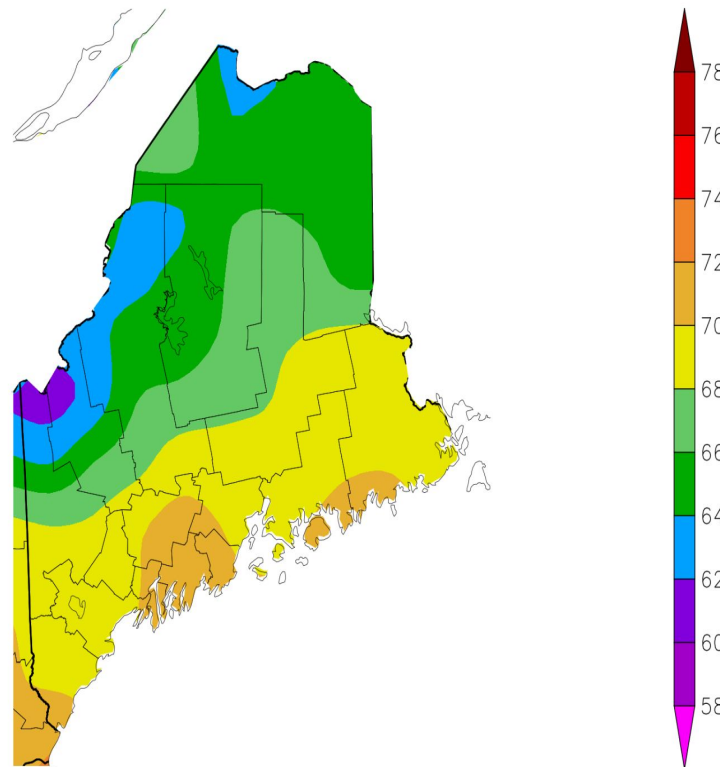
30 Day Temperatures

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

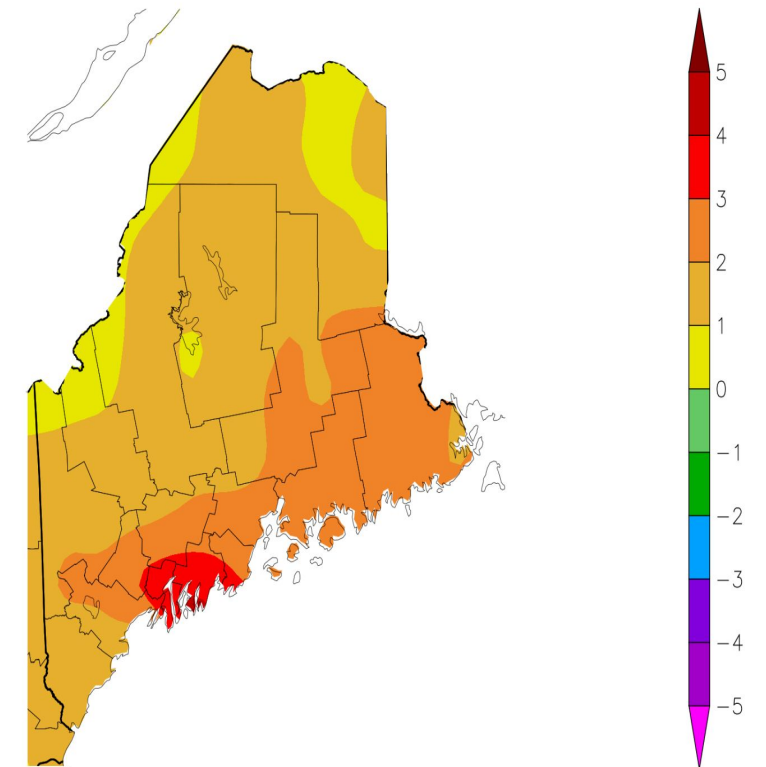
- 30 Day Temperatures have been running 1-2.5 degrees above normal across much of Eastern/Northern Maine.
- Warm temperatures + lack of rainfall causing increased evaporation and in growing season causing significant demand on the water system.

Temperature (F)
8/4/2026 – 9/2/2026



Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.

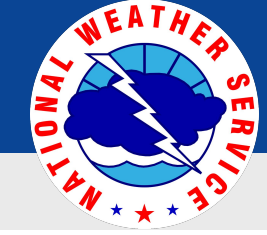
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
8/4/2026 – 9/2/2026



ACIS Web Services Generated 9/3/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



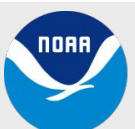
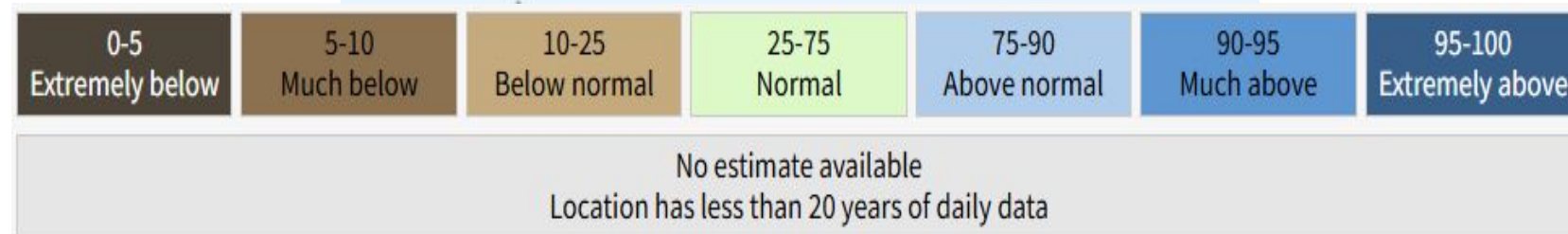
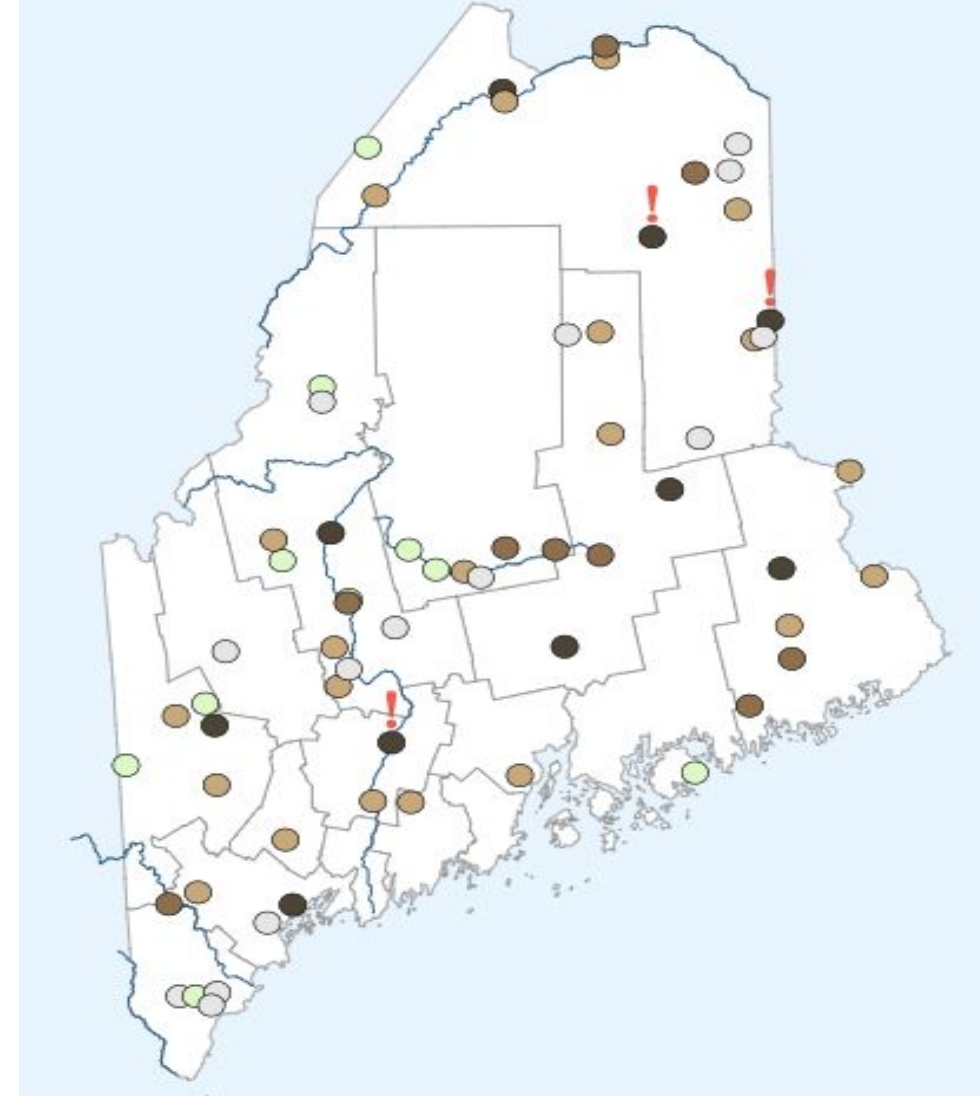


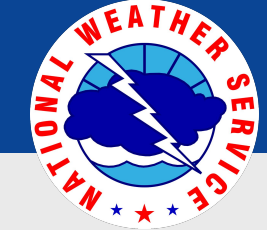
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

USGS Streamflow State of Maine Dashboard: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/state/maine/>

- **Northern Basins:**
 - Below to Much Below Normal flows
 - 13 of 14 gages Below Normal or worse
- **Central Highlands, Moosehead & Baxter Regions:**
 - Below to Much Below Normal flows
 - 12 of 15 gages Below Normal or worse
- **Downeast to Bangor Basins:**
 - Below to Much Below Normal flows
 - 6 of 9 gages Below Normal or worse
- **Areawide Trends:**
 - Expect flows to remain below normal.



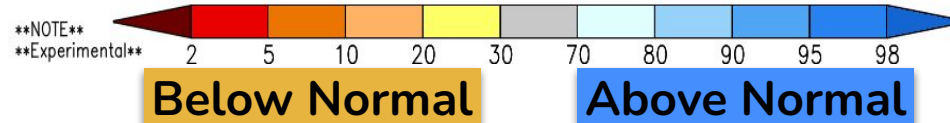
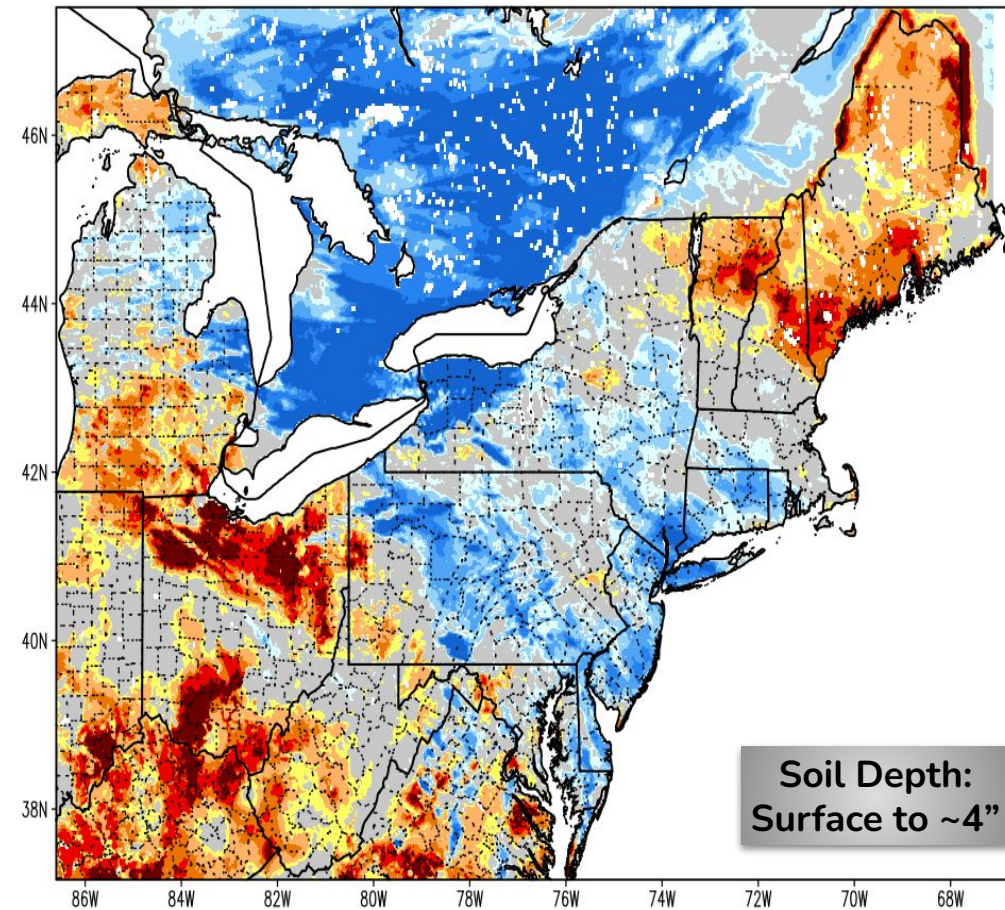


Groundwater Impacts

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

- Near surface soil moisture across much of Maine has continued to struggle and remains very dry. Minor areas of near normal Downeast and Moosehead Region.
- Deeper soil moisture down to near 39" has worsened rapidly through the summer growing season.

SPoRT-LIS 0-10 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 03 Sep 2026



SPoRT-LIS 0-100 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 03 Sep 2026

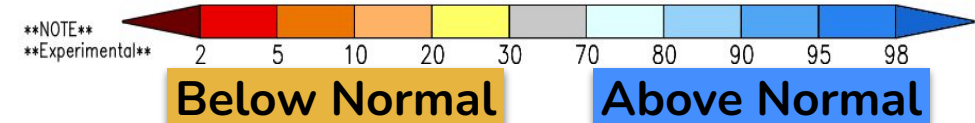
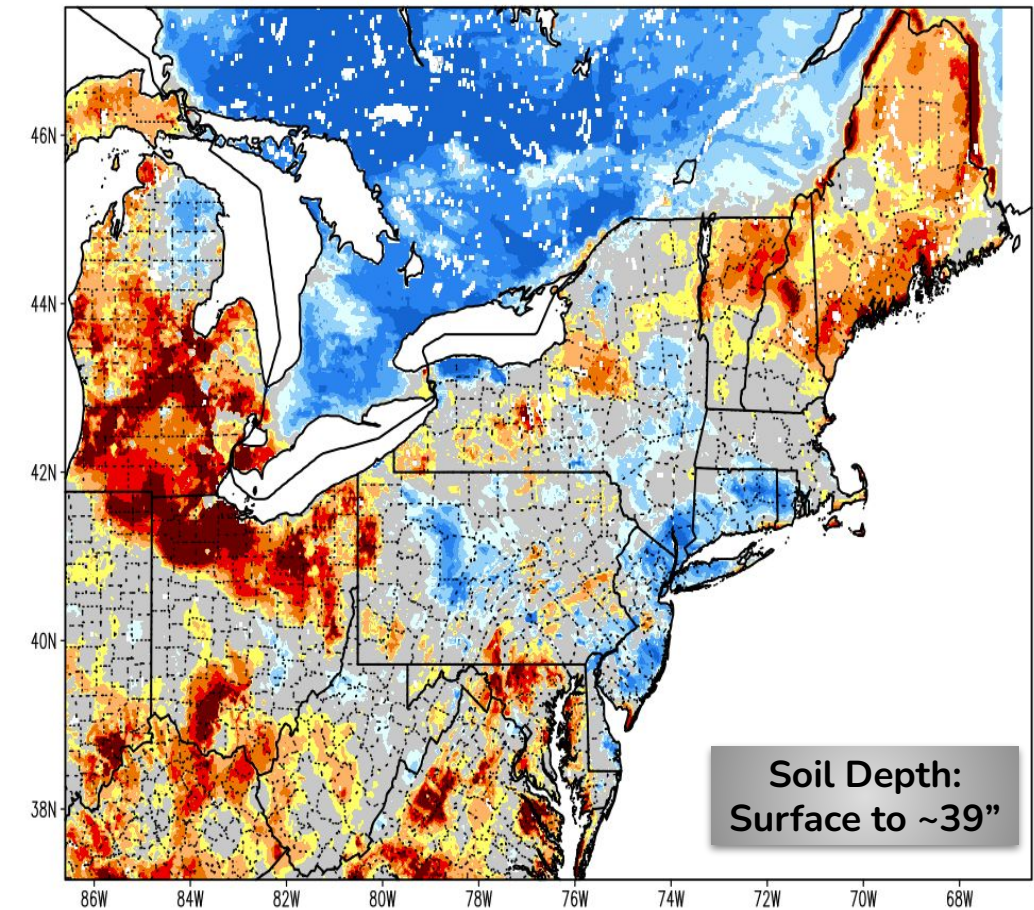
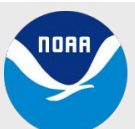
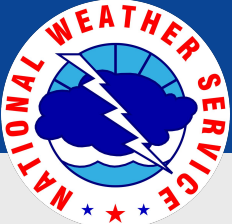


Image Captions:
National Water Model
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-10cm Depth](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-100cm Depth](#)





Groundwater

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

- The 2025-26 Drought that did improve in the late spring only improved enough to lower drought conditions. Deeper moisture only improved slightly, but is being taxed heavily in the 2026 growing season combined with rainfall deficits in July and August 2026. This is leading to the well below normal groundwater conditions.

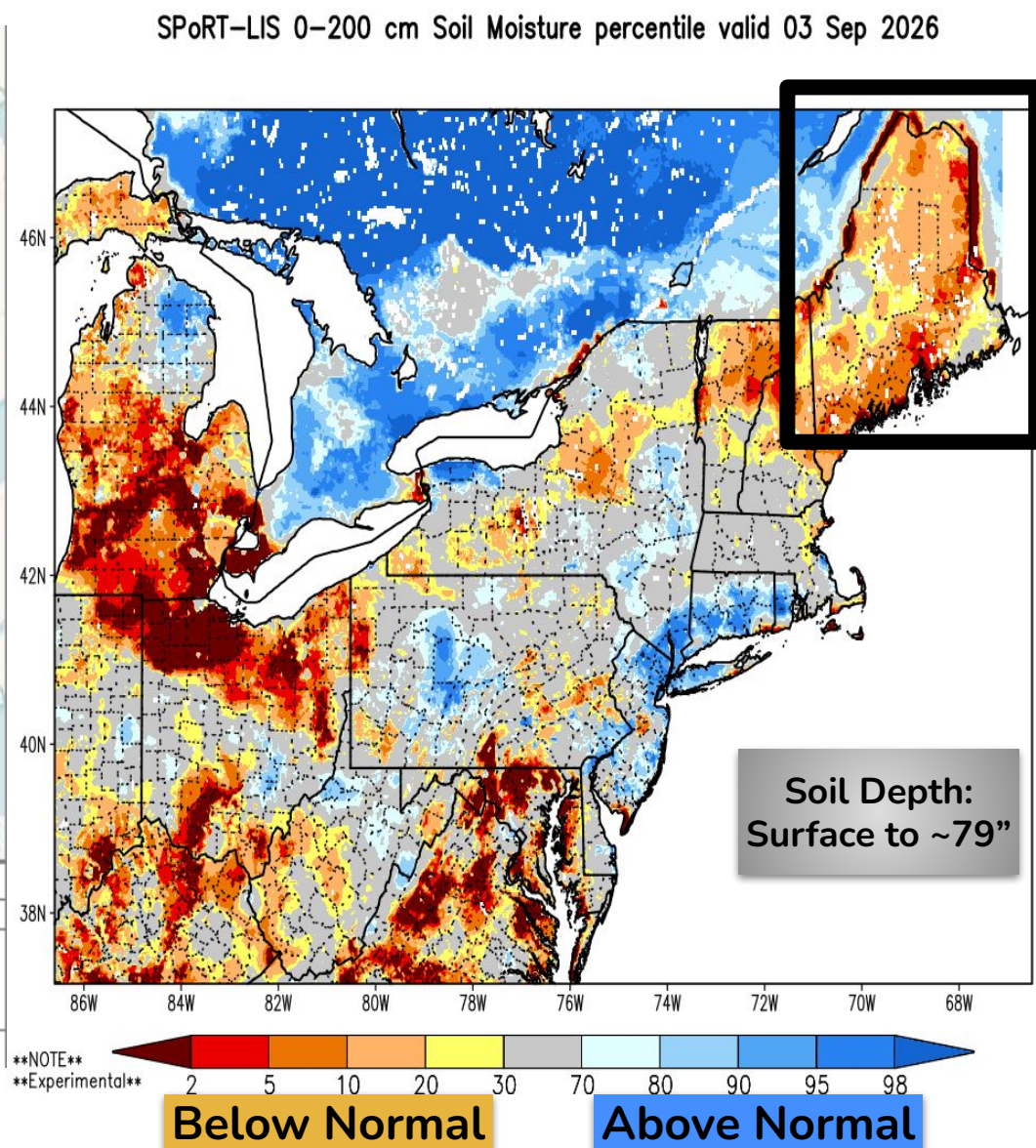
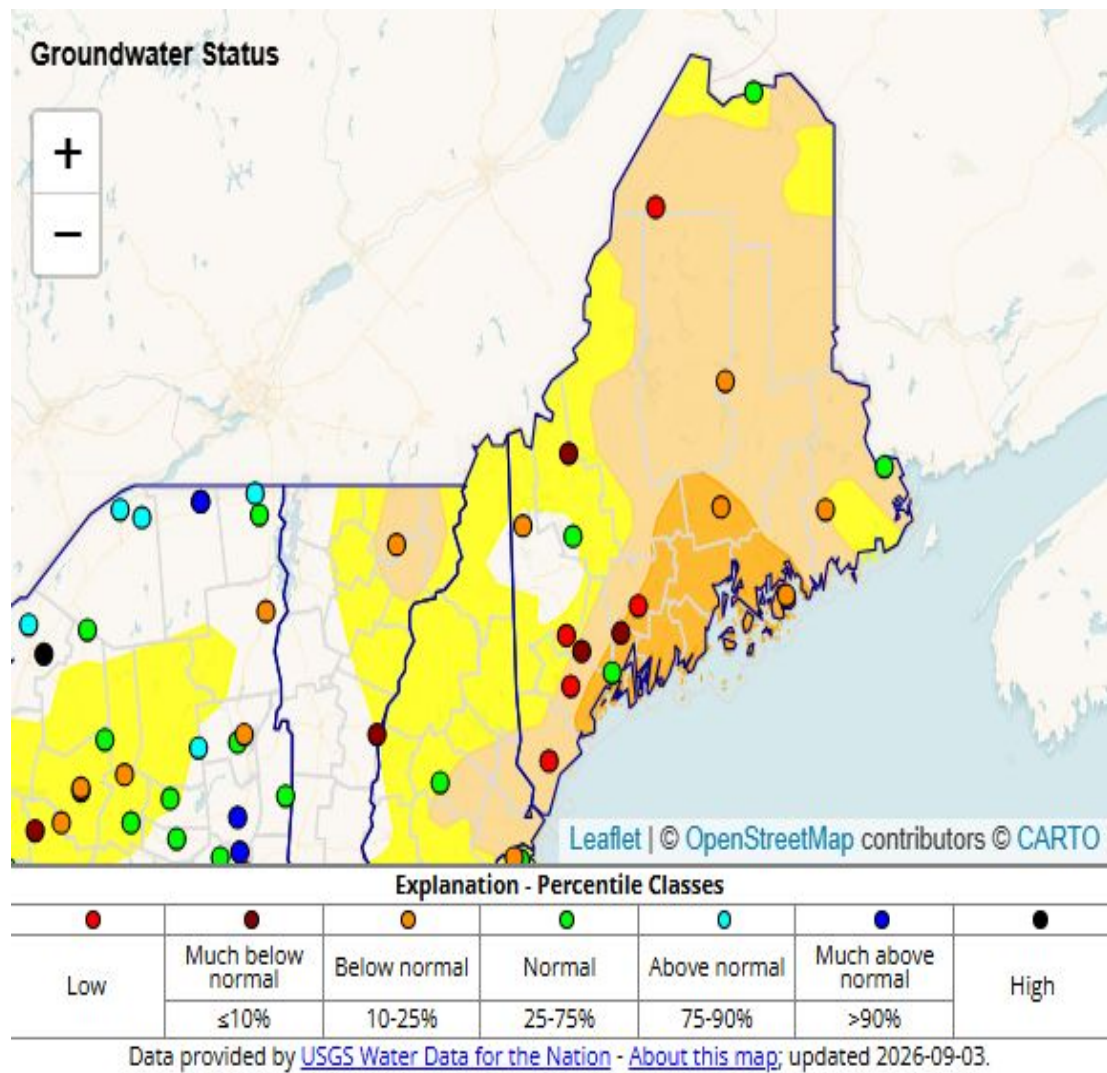
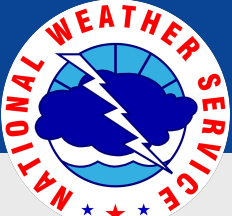


Image Captions:
[USGS Groundwater Gauge Status](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-200cm Depth](#)

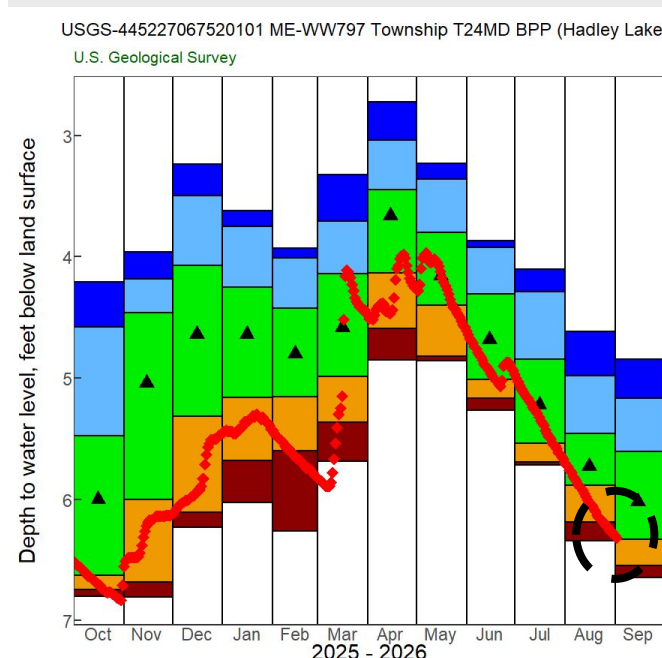
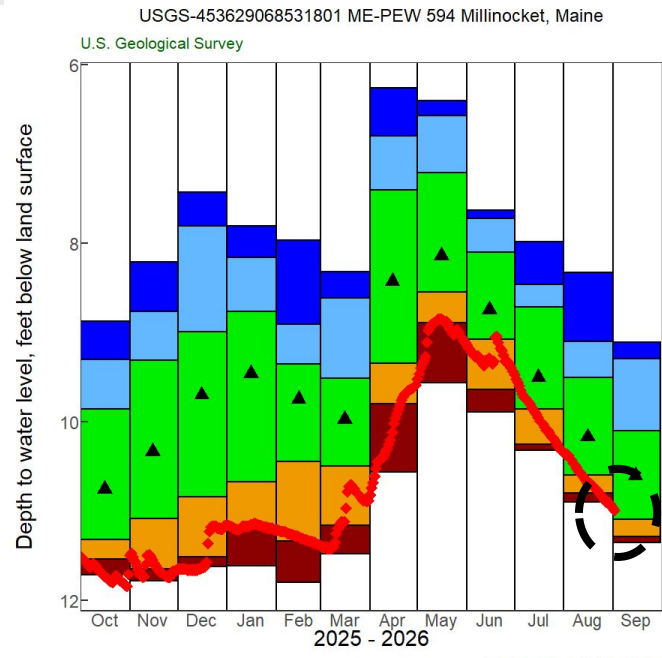
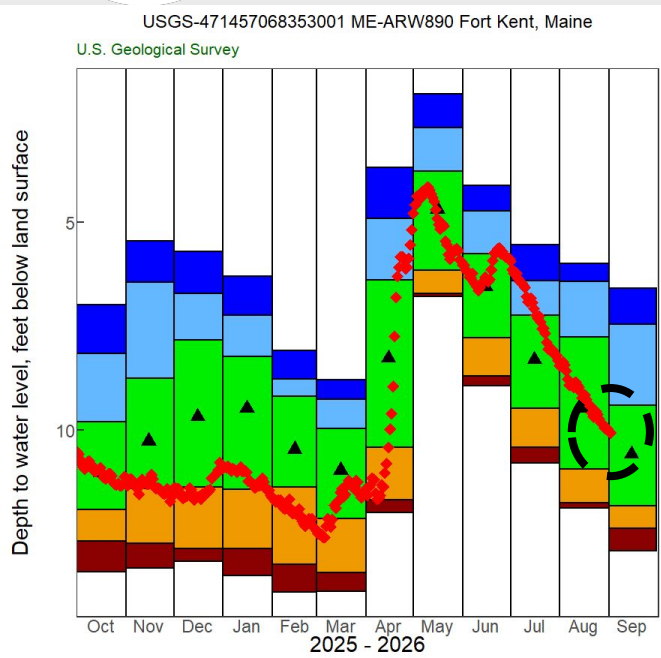




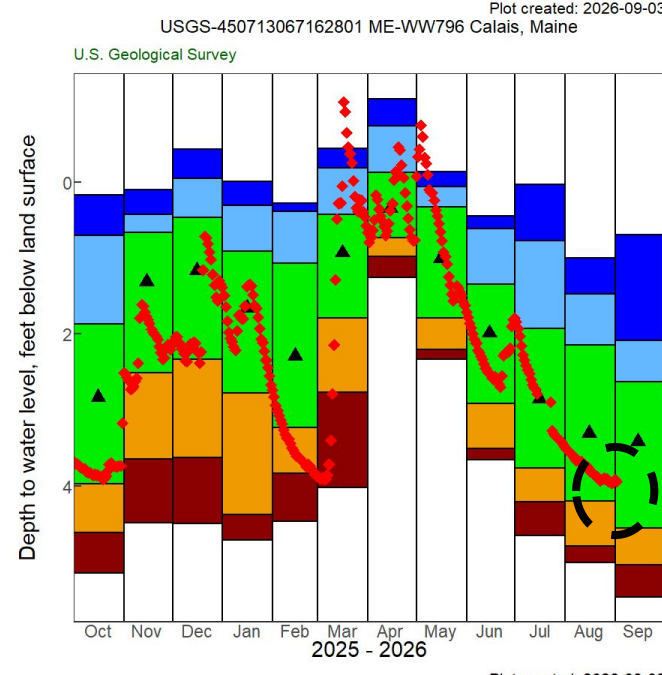
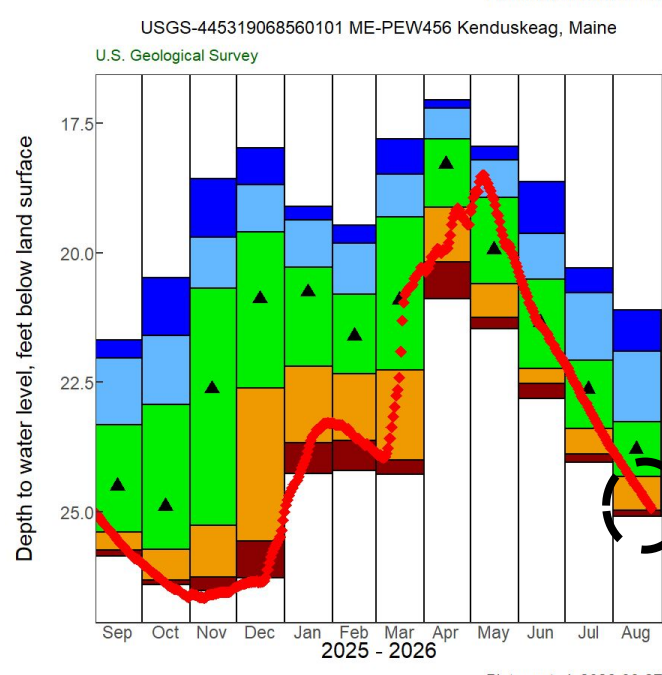
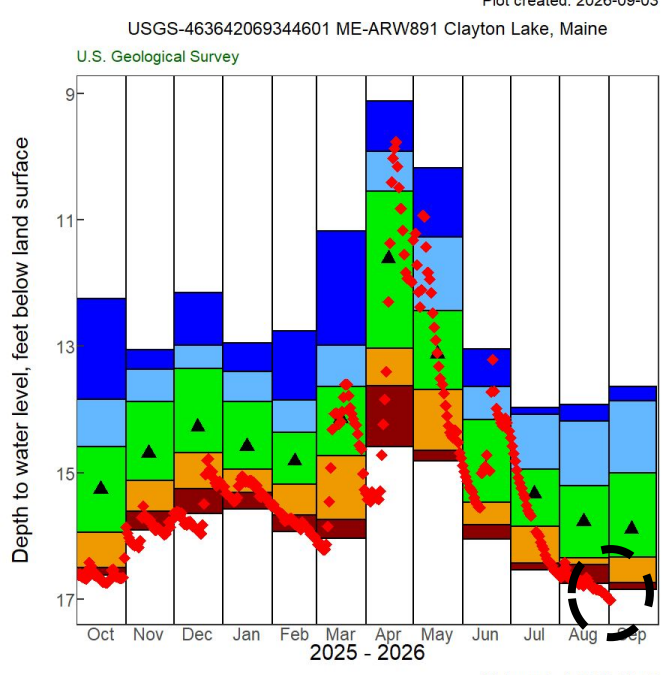
Groundwater Gage Plots

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

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

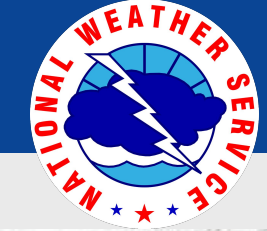


Groundwater gage data indicates high water system demand due to the growing season, compounded by a failure to fully recover from the 2025-26 drought. Consequently, multiple locations are currently reporting conditions at or near record lows.



September is typically our driest time of the year. So monthly stats are lower.

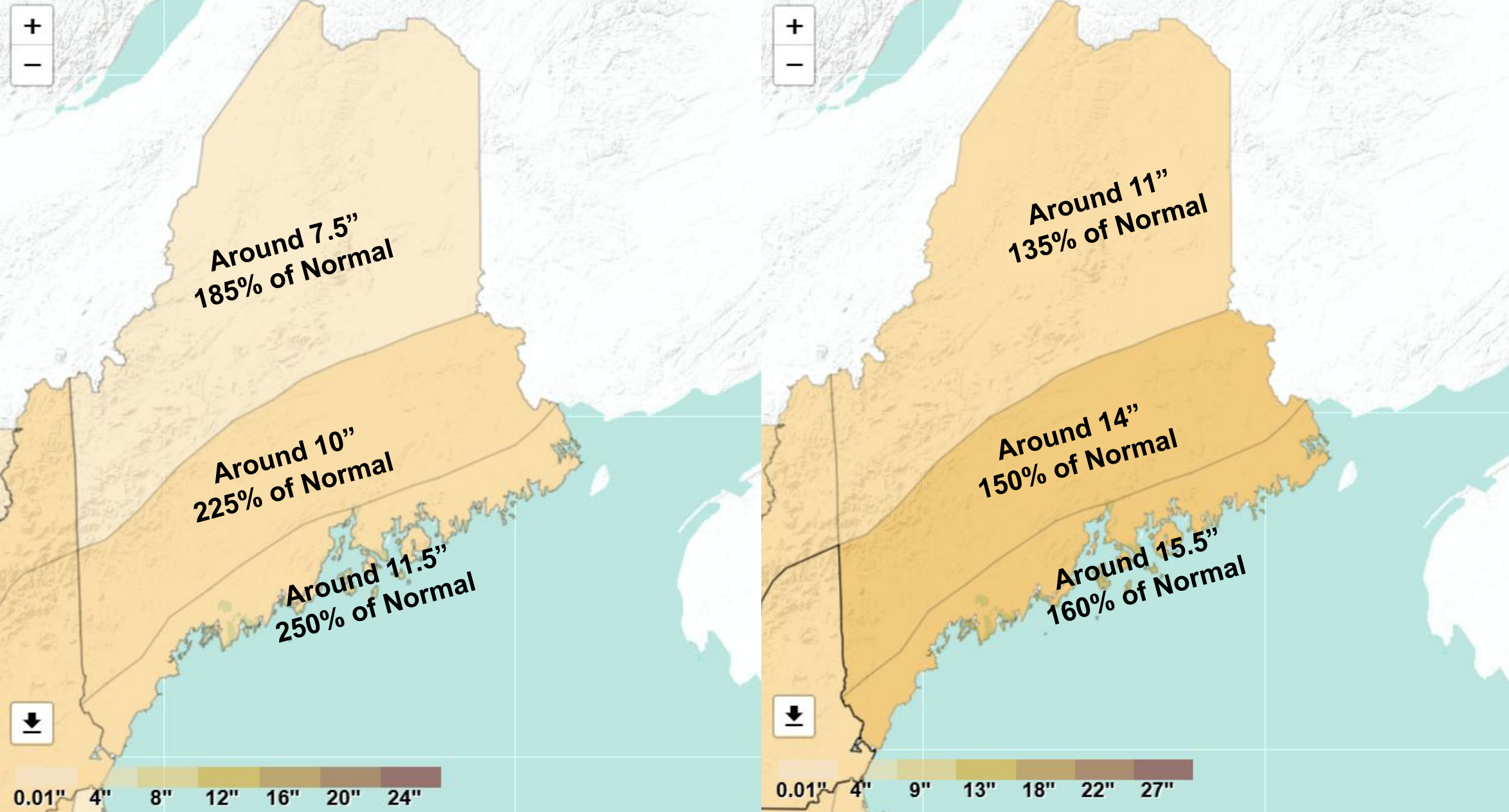




Rainfall Needed to “End the Drought”

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

Precip Needed to End Drought Conditions in 1 Month Precip Needed to End Drought Conditions in 2 Months

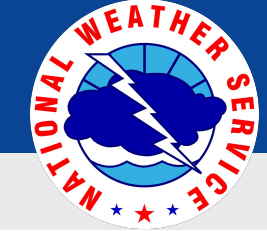


- Steady, light-rain events with high absorption rates are ideal.
- These values have decreased slightly due to recent light rainfall and the expected gradual reduction in demand as the growing season ends.



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

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME



Summary of Impacts

September 3, 2026

1:15 PM EDT

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Regional streamflows, lake levels, seasonal wetlands, and storage reservoirs are experiencing widespread drops due to a combination of seasonal midsummer drawdown, diminished surface runoff, and heightened water demand.
- Lakes/ponds running below normal exposing rocks posing threats to recreational activities.

Aquifer Deficits

- Groundwater recharge continues to lag across the region, maintaining significant, lingering storage deficits. Multiple monitoring wells across Eastern/Northern Maine are currently reading Below Normal to Much Below Normal compared to historical climatological baselines. Low water tables are compounded by multi-year precipitation deficits and depleted baseline levels carried over from previous dry seasons.

Dry Drinking Water Wells

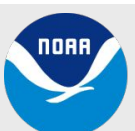
- A few new dry well reports; will monitor as conditions worsen.
- Maine EMA Dry Well Survey: <https://maine-dry-well-survey-maine.hub.arcgis.com/>

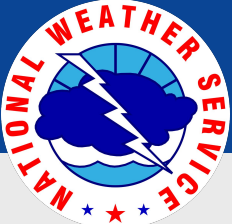
Agricultural Impacts

- Reduced soil moisture has forced farmers to expand irrigation. Apple orchards and blueberry fields have reportedly shown visible moisture stress, field corn exhibits stunted growth, and perennial gardens are wilting. Severe dryness is triggering premature leaf drop in some maples and wild apple trees. Pasture growth has stalled in many areas, forcing dairy producers to begin supplemental hay feeding ahead of schedule. Agricultural and rural communities are actively mitigating water shortages by hauling water for livestock, curtailing non-essential outdoor and indoor water use, and managing low or dry domestic and agricultural wells.

Mitigation Actions

- Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information.





Long Range Outlooks (September)

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

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

Main Takeaways for September:

- No significant signal for above/below normal temperatures in the state.
- No significant signal for above/below normal precipitation in the state.

Pattern Outlook

- El Niño is continuing to strengthen but uncertainty remains on the subseasonal pattern influences in September. This is concerning given our ongoing dry conditions.

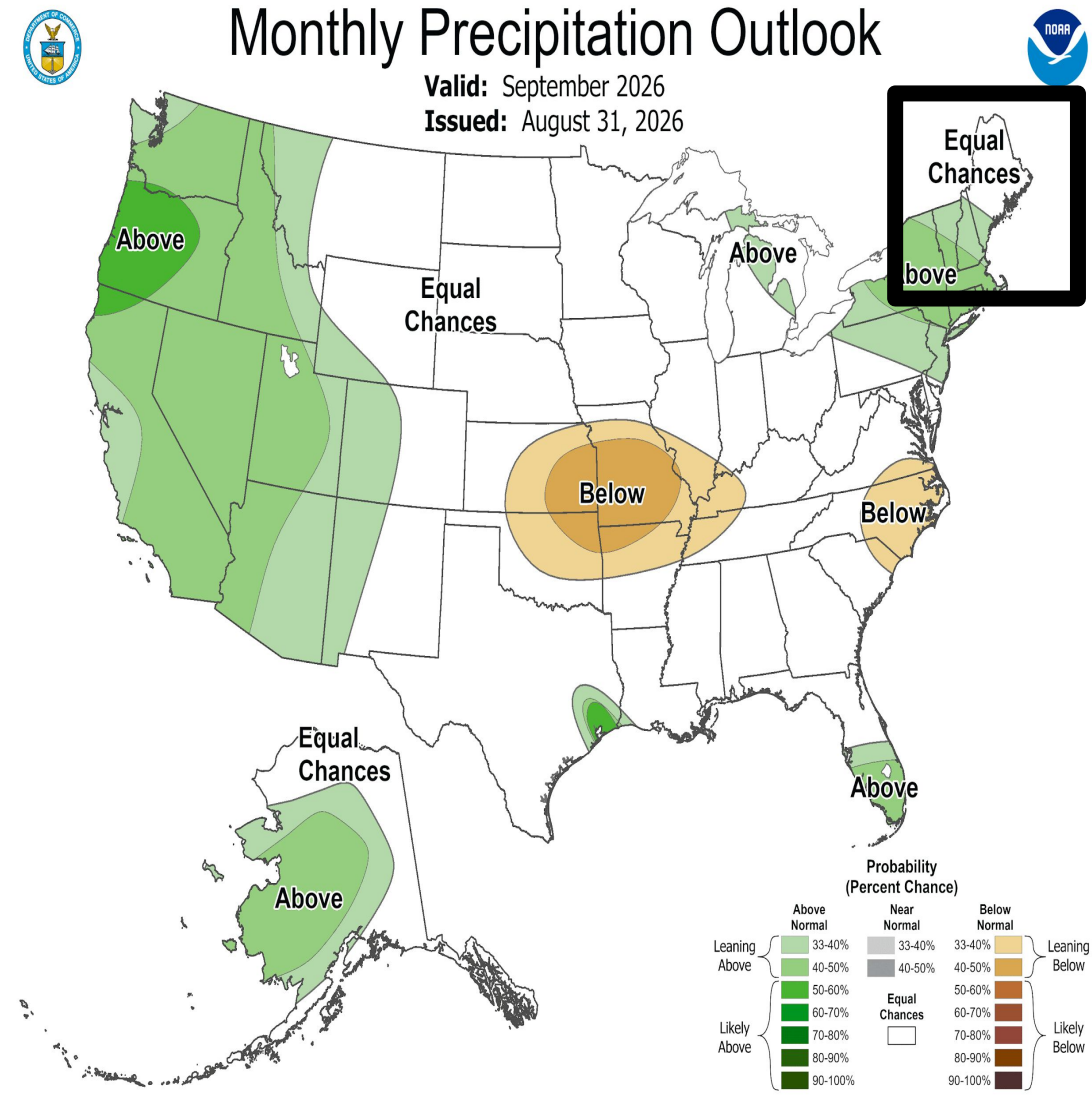
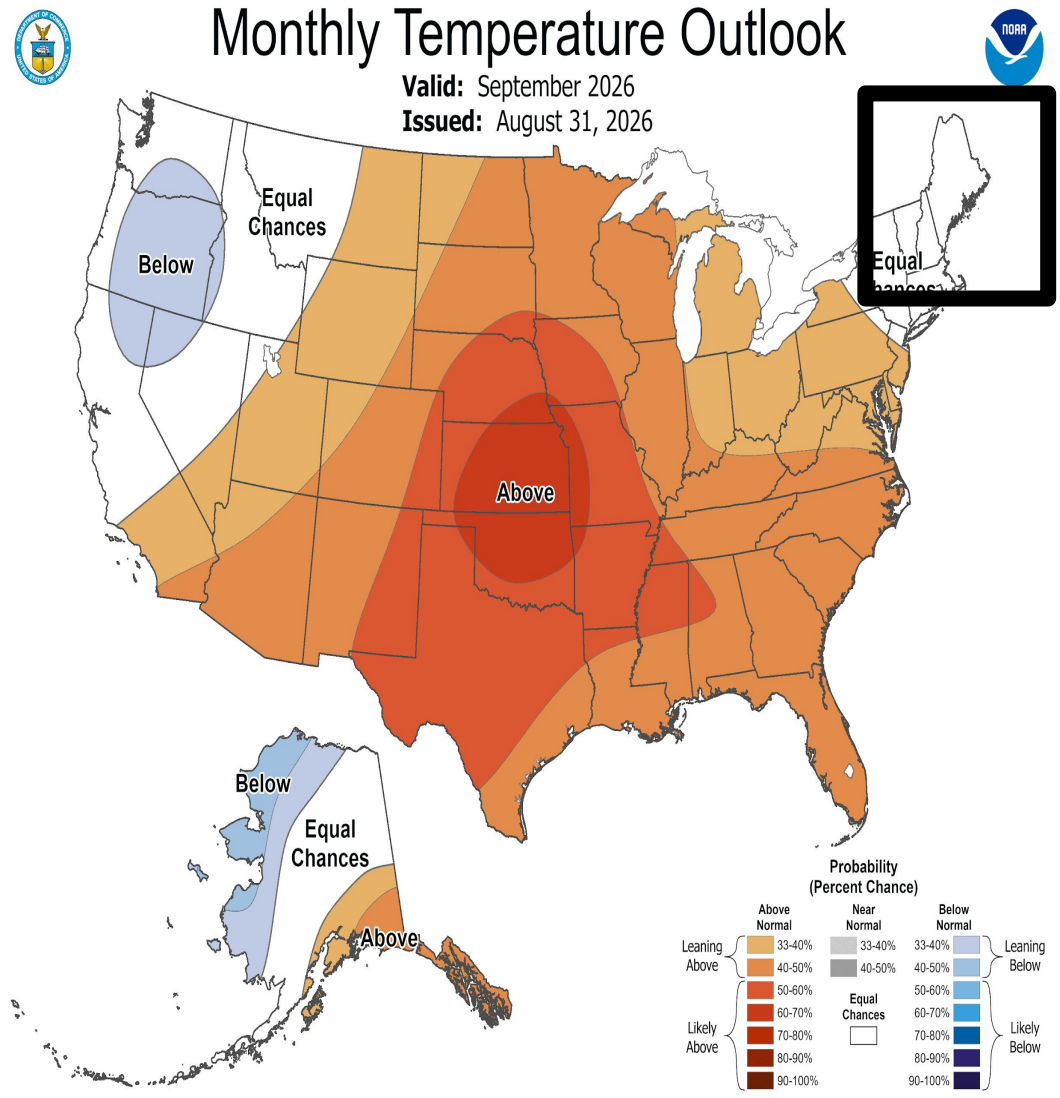
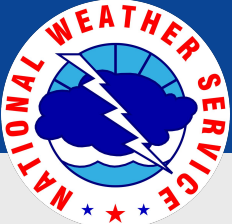


Image Captions:
Left - [Climate Prediction Center 1 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
Right - [Climate Prediction Center 1 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)





Long Range Outlooks (Sept-Nov)

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

Main Takeaways for Sept-Nov:

- Weak signal for above normal temperatures in the state.
- Weak signal for below normal precipitation in the state.

Pattern Outlook

- El Niño is continuing to strengthen but uncertainty remains on the subseasonal pattern influences this fall. This is concerning signals given our ongoing dry conditions.

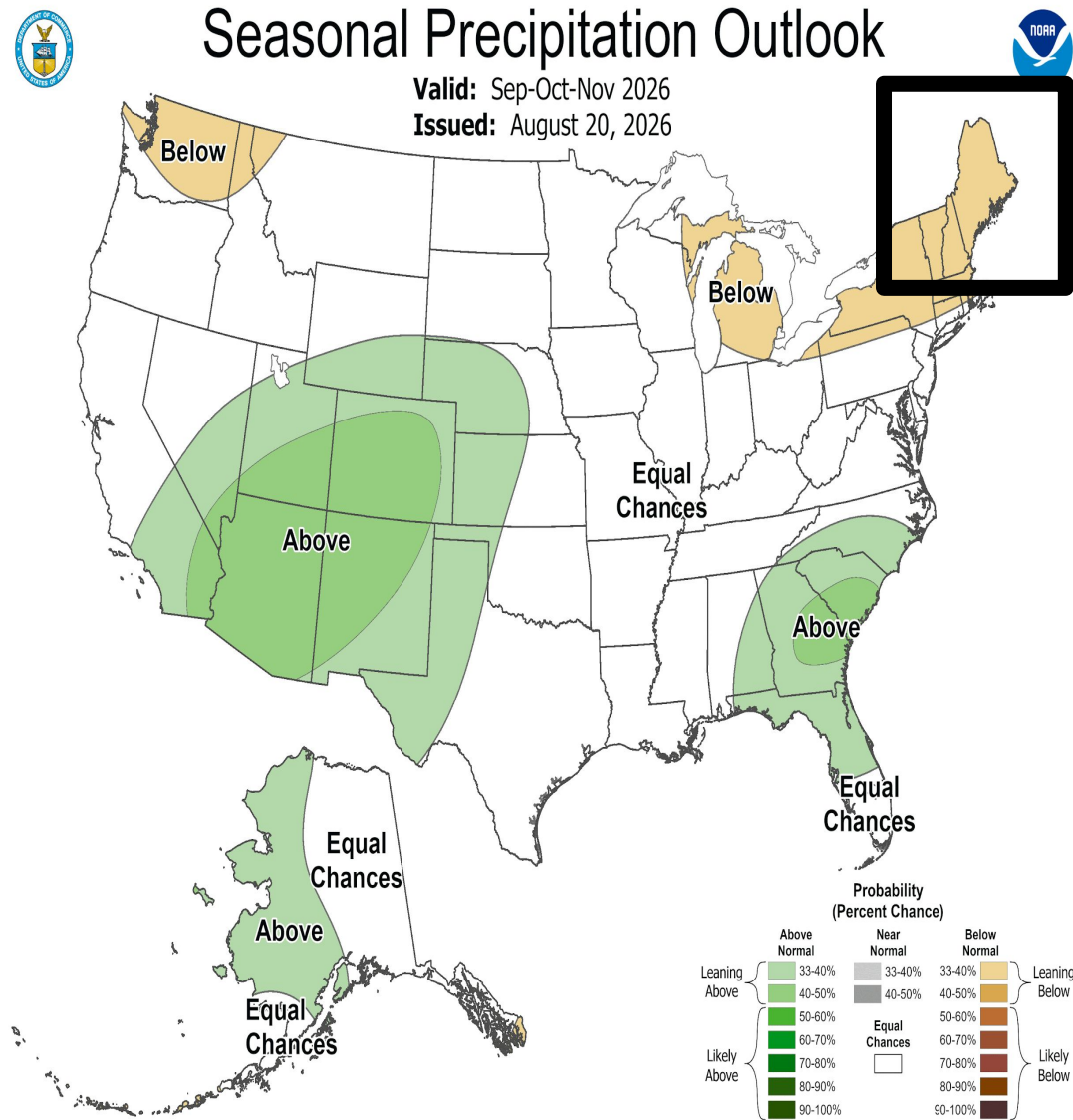
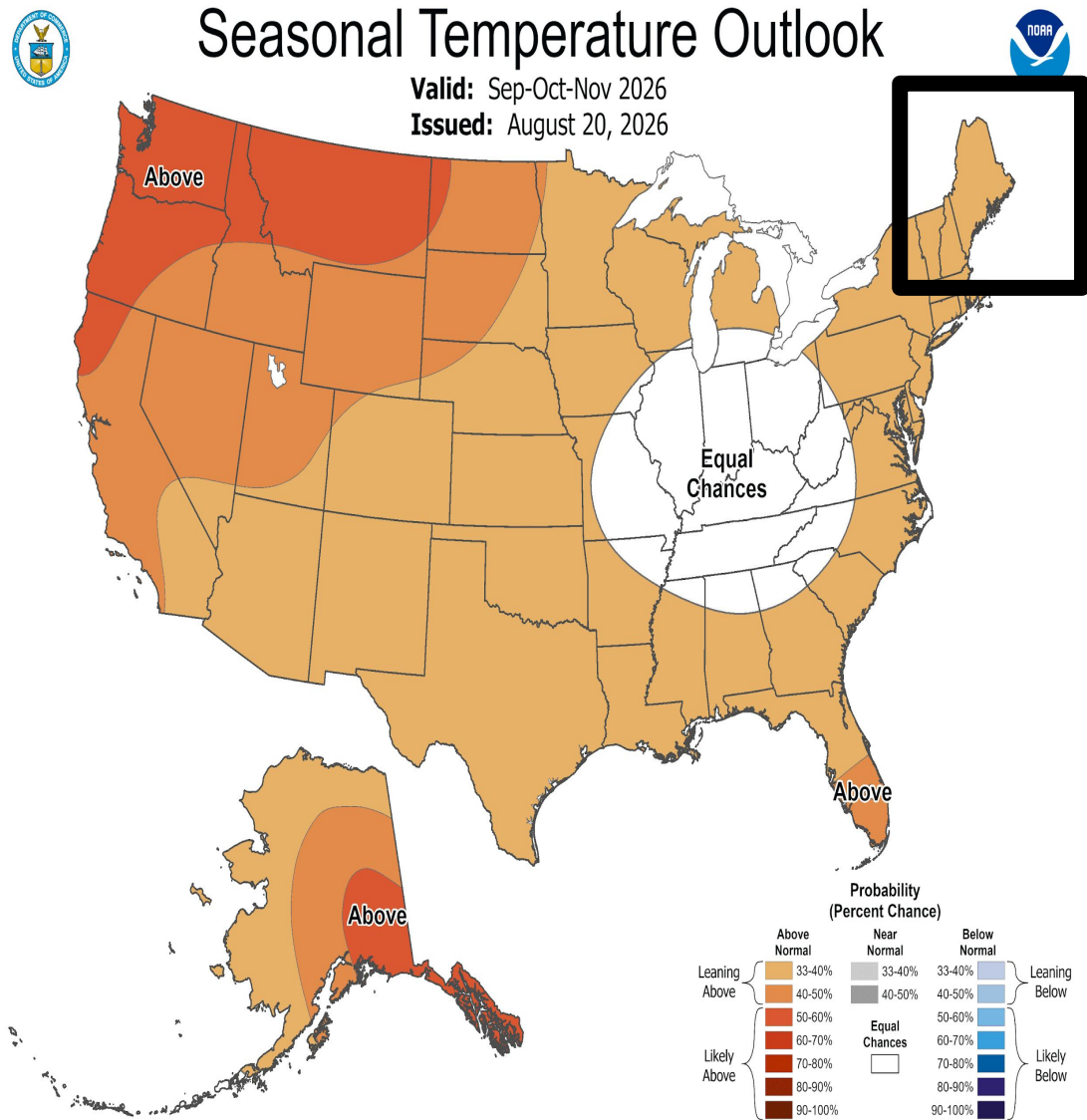
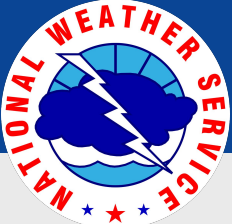


Image Captions:
Left - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
Right - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)





El Niño / Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

El Niño is strengthening, with a **greater than 90% chance** of a very strong event during the Northern Hemisphere fall and winter 2026-27. The CPC Official ENSO outlook indicates there is a **69% chance of a historic event** that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño events dating back to 1950.

Historical Winter Impacts in Maine

Strong to Very Strong events historically deliver above-normal winter temperatures and precipitation:

Storm Type & Precipitation

- Higher proportion of winter storms produce rain/sleet/freezing rain rather than long-lasting dry snow, particularly in coastal and southern areas.

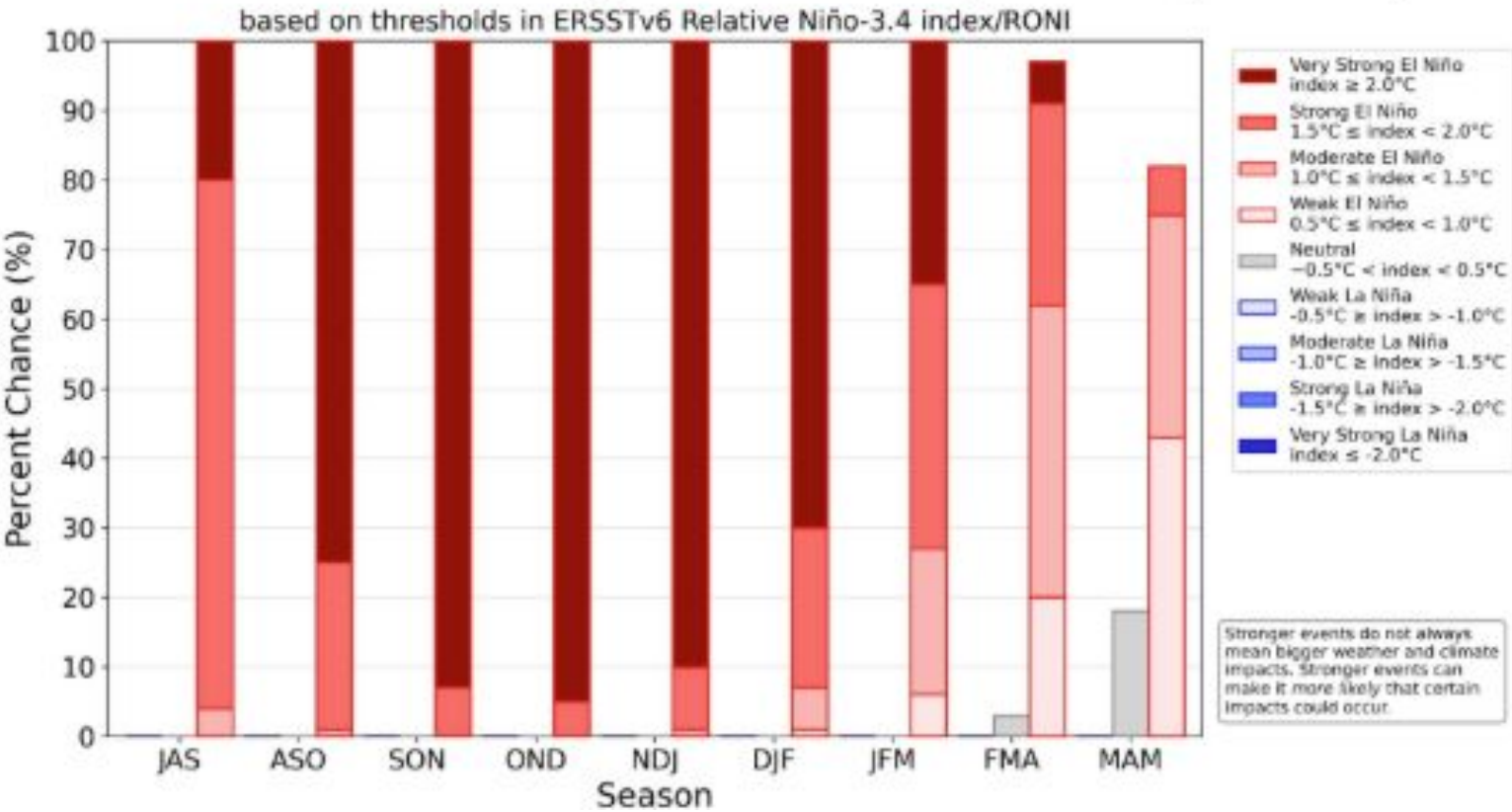
Repeated Snowpack Melt

- Periods of mild temperatures between weather systems often cause existing snowpack to melt repeatedly throughout the season.

Runoff & Hydrologic Recharge

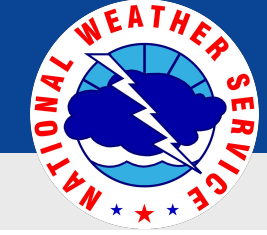
- Frequent runoff events favor robust surface water replenishment (lakes, reservoirs, streamflows), while shallow ground frost aids deep groundwater recharge. Northern Maine deep frost prevents recharge.

NOAA CPC ENSO Strength Probabilities (issued August 2026)



Net Drought Outlook: Even with expectations of a deficient seasonal snowpack, the net hydrologic impact is often favorable for reducing drought.

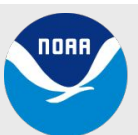




Main Takeaways

September 3, 2026
1:15 PM EDT

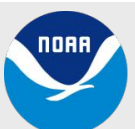
- **Bottom Line:** drought continues to worsen across Eastern and Northern Maine with no significant improvements expected. Short term rainfall likely to help groundwater, although short lived.
 - *Full aquifer recovery is unlikely until Winter 2026 / Spring 2027.*
- Groundwater trends continue to show significant worsening.
- Outlook: Long-term prognosis remains concerning, but a strong El Niño Winter is hopeful.
 - Will need to monitor trends for fire danger, drinking water supplies and surface water conditions.
- Repeating light wetting rains will be vital to improve soil moisture, otherwise evaporative losses will dominate.
- Stakeholders should prepare for worsening drought conditions this fall.
- **Note: Groundwater & streamflow levels reach climatological minimums in September.**

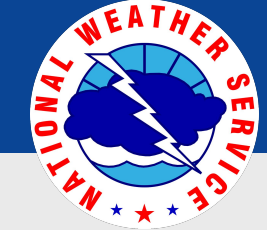




<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/016ac3b48c5049909106a23e6556311b>

- Condition Monitoring Observer Reports on Drought (CMOR-Drought) is a tool provided by the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) in partnership with the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS).
- Submit reports here:
<https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx>
- The tool allows citizen scientists to submit observation reports relating to drought, which are presented in a map that can be used to view and access submitted information and attachments. These reports are vital for determining the drought conditions.





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)*