



Drought Information Statement for Northern and Eastern Maine

Valid December 5, 2025

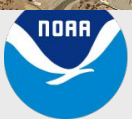
Issued By: WFO Caribou, ME

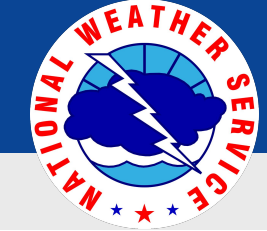
- This product will be updated January 8, 2026 or sooner, if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/car/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/car> for regional drought status updates.

- Maine's drought to persist over the winter with frozen soils hurting recovery.
- Very little recovery in Downeast Maine

Disclaimer: Starting 12/5/2025, 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

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

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

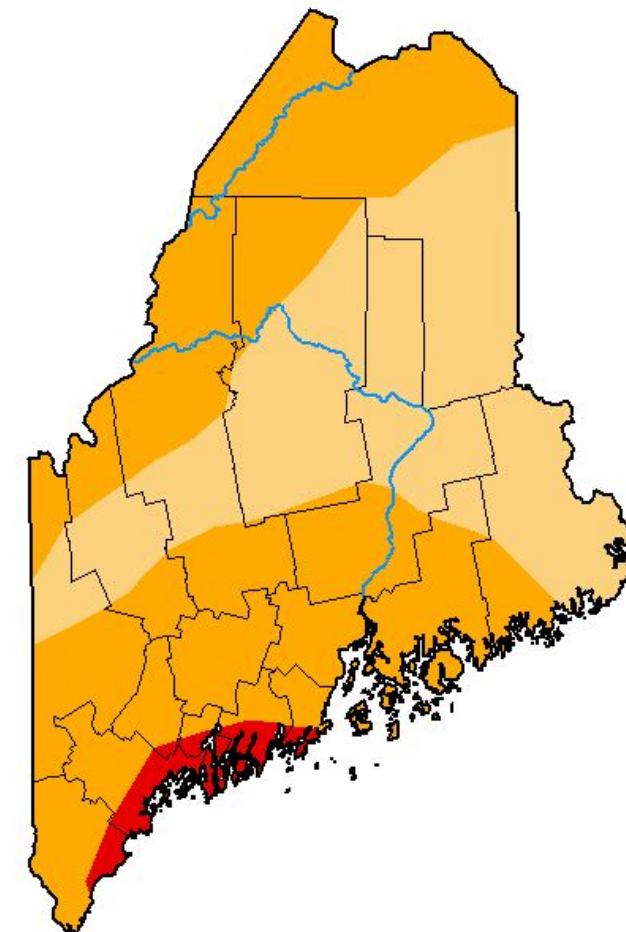
- **Drought Intensity and Extent:**

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

Percentage of Maine in Drought

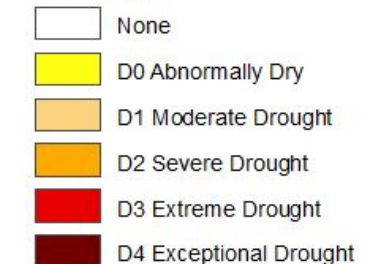
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** 0%
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** 36.55%
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** 60.38%
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):** 3.07%

U.S. Drought Monitor Maine



December 2, 2025
(Released Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Intensity:



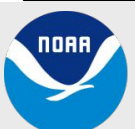
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

David Simeral
Western Regional Climate Center

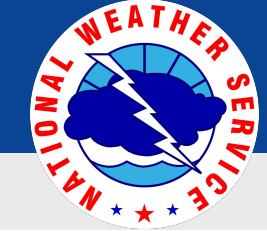


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National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

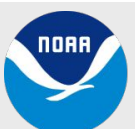
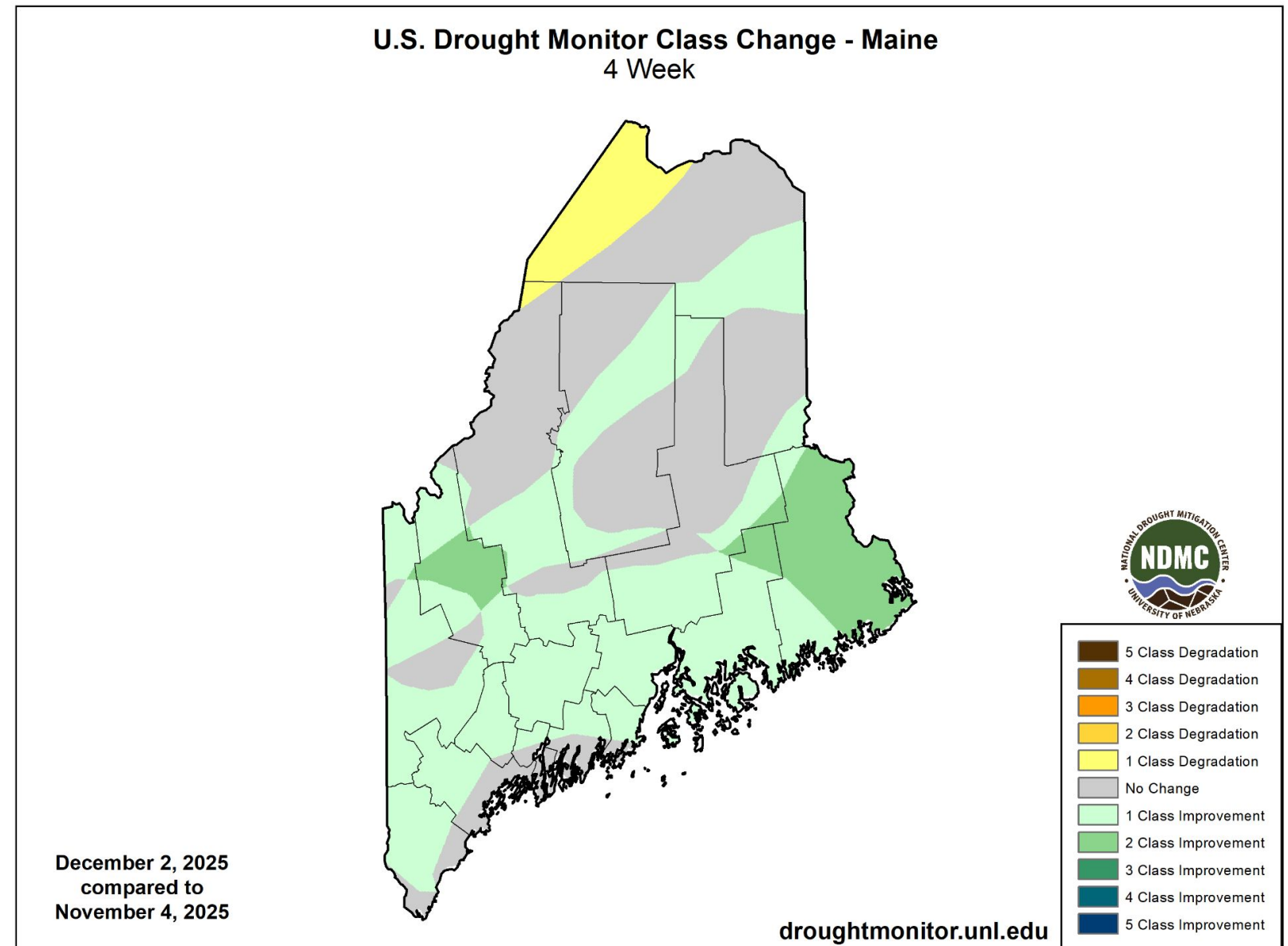


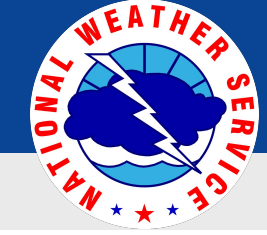
Recent Change in Drought Intensity

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

Link to the latest [4-week change map](#) for Northeast U.S.

- Four week drought monitor class change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** Far North Woods in northwest Aroostook County.
 - **Drought Improved:** Downeast, Southern Penobscot River region, portions of the Central Highlands to northern Baxter Region & Eastern Aroostook.
 - **No Change:** Rest of the North Woods to eastern St. John Valley, much of the Baxter Region into southern Aroostook County.





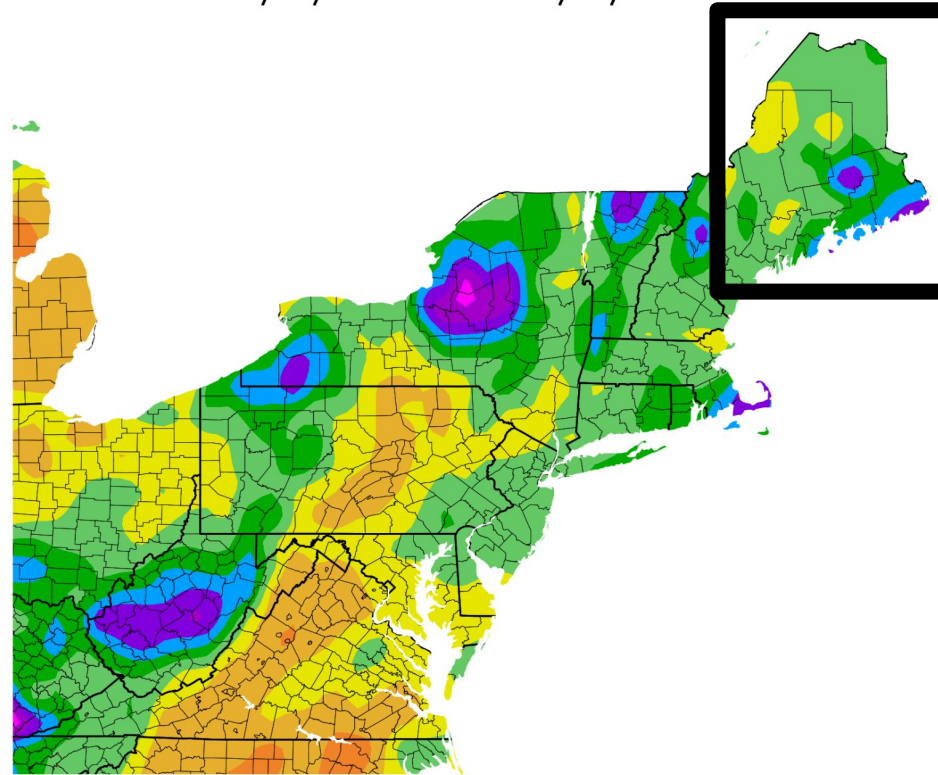
Precipitation

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

- We have seen some rainfall & snowfall, but precipitation over the last 30 days has been below normal (50-80% range).
- Much of the northern half of the state has seen snowfall with little liquid content.

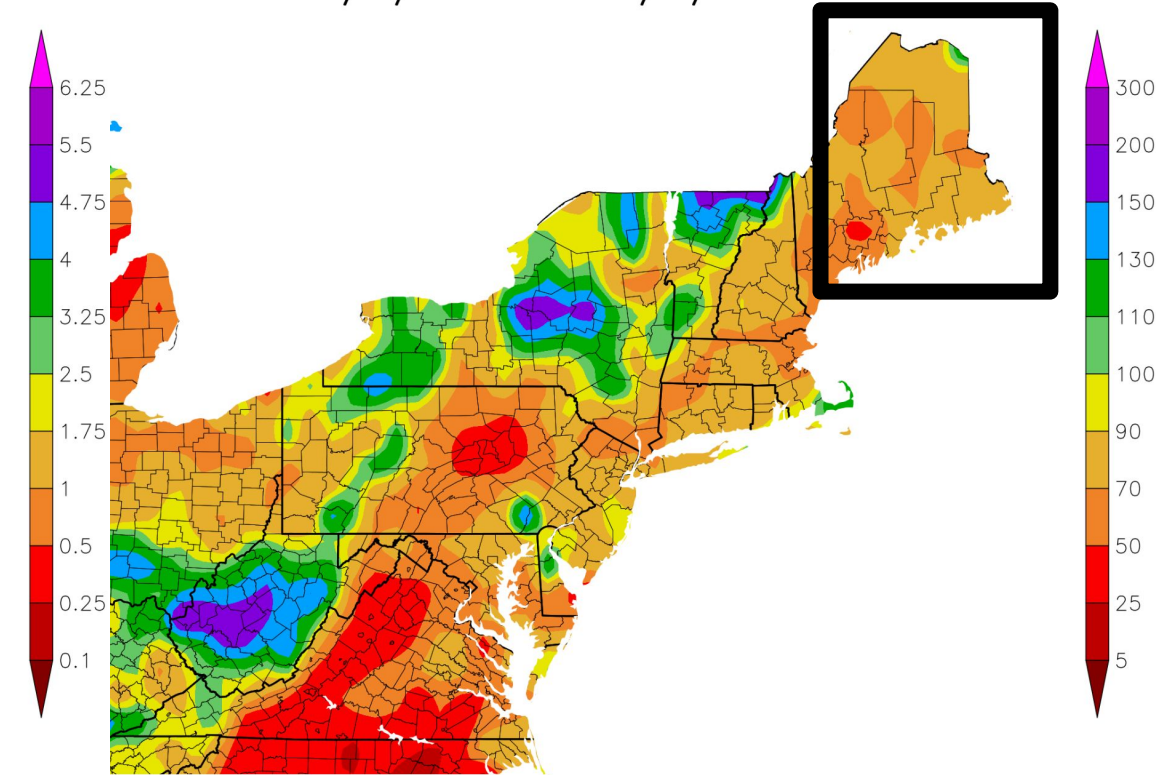
Precipitation (in)
11/5/2025 – 12/4/2025



Generated 12/5/2025 using provisional data.

Total precipitation over the past
30 days

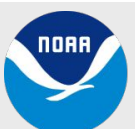
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
11/5/2025 – 12/4/2025

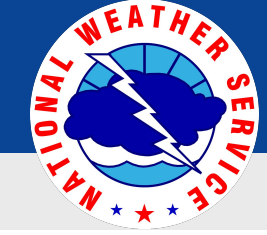


ACIS Web Services/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services/2025 using provisional data.

Percent of normal precipitation
for the past 30 days





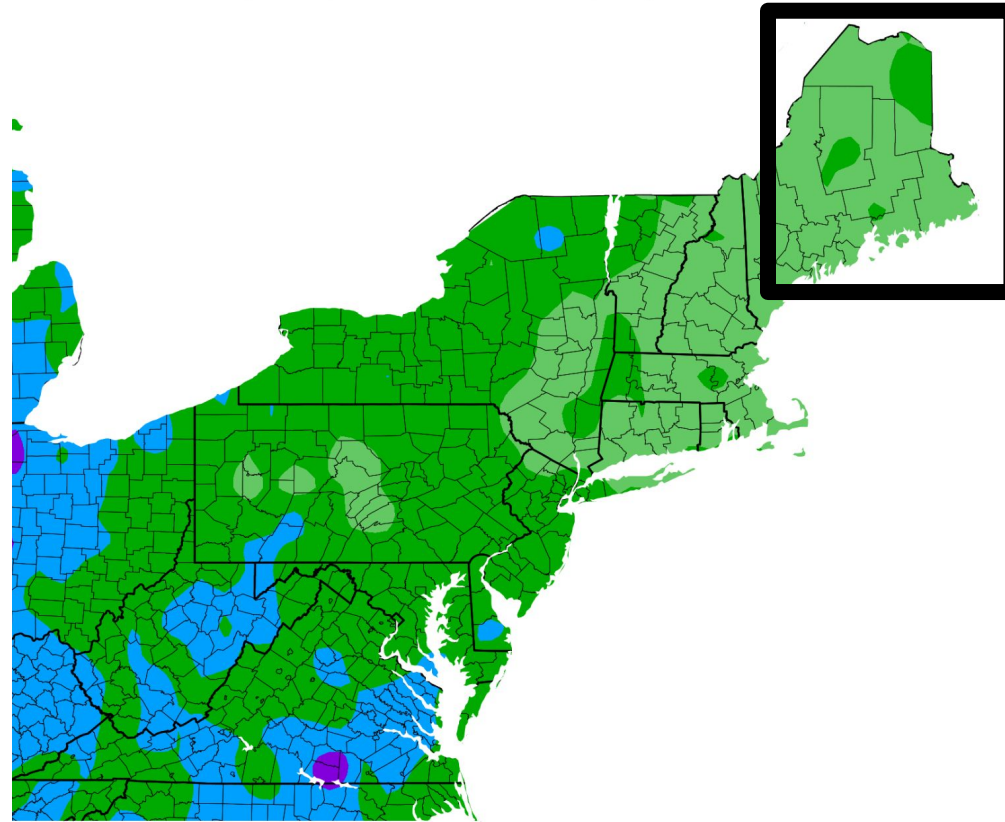
Temperature

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

- 7 day temperature trends are generally well below normal by 2-5 degrees
- 30 day trends are generally 1-2 degrees below normal. Near normal for a small area near Allagash to Fort Kent.

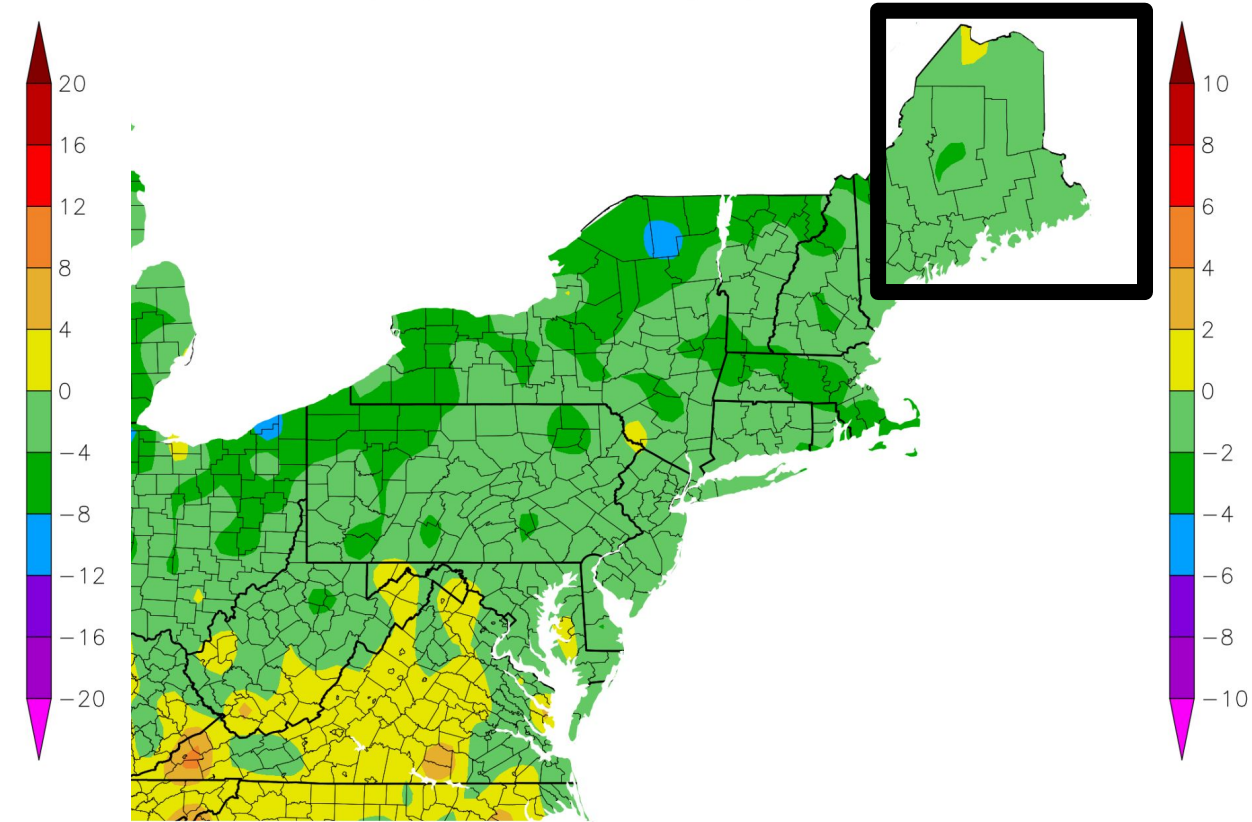
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
11/28/2025 – 12/4/2025



/2025 using provisional data.

Temperature departure from
normal over the past 7 days

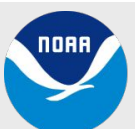
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
11/5/2025 – 12/4/2025



ACIS Web Services /2025 using provisional data.

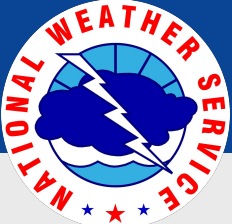
ACIS Web Services

Temperature departure from
normal over the past 30 days



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National Weather Service
Caribou, ME



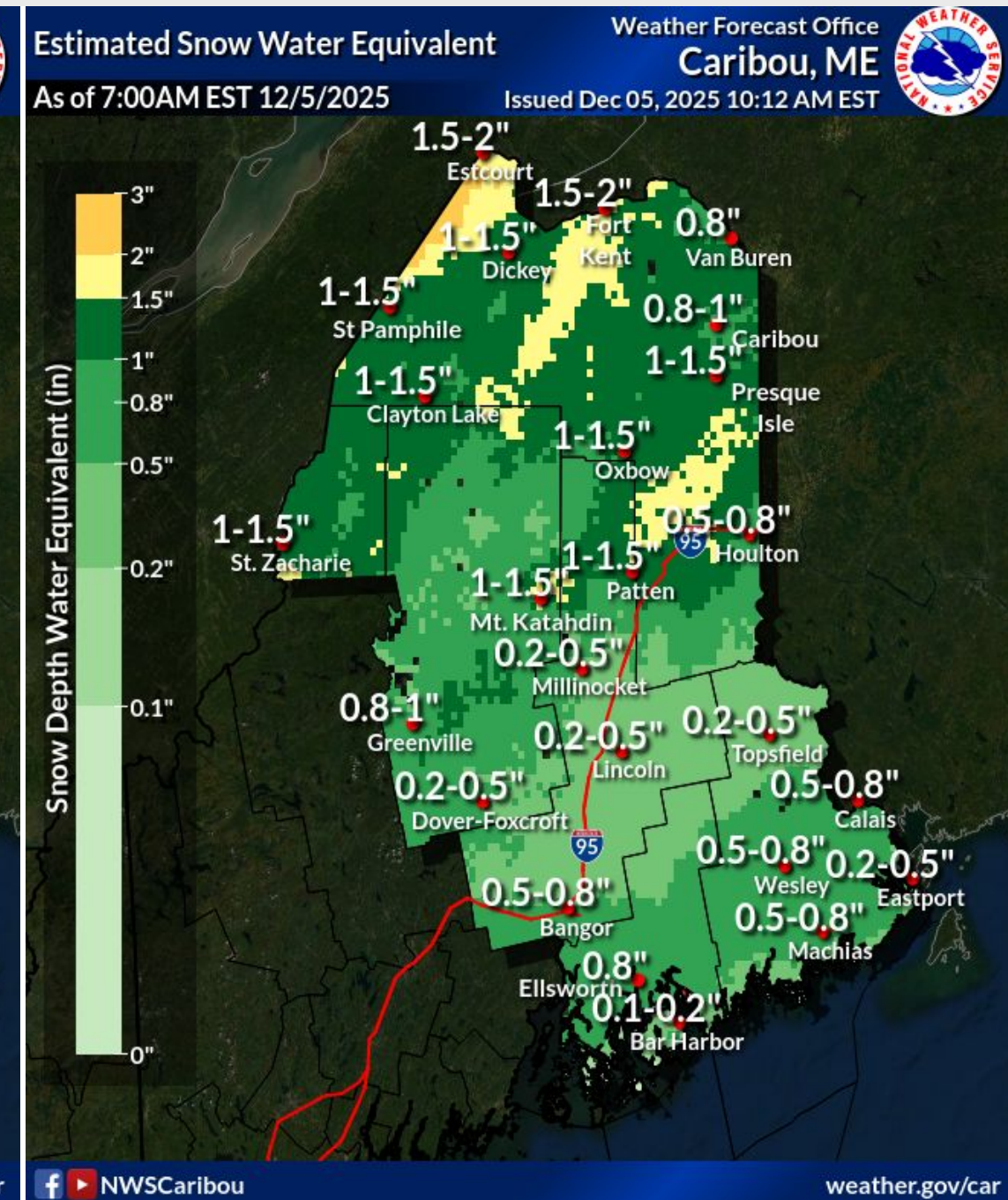
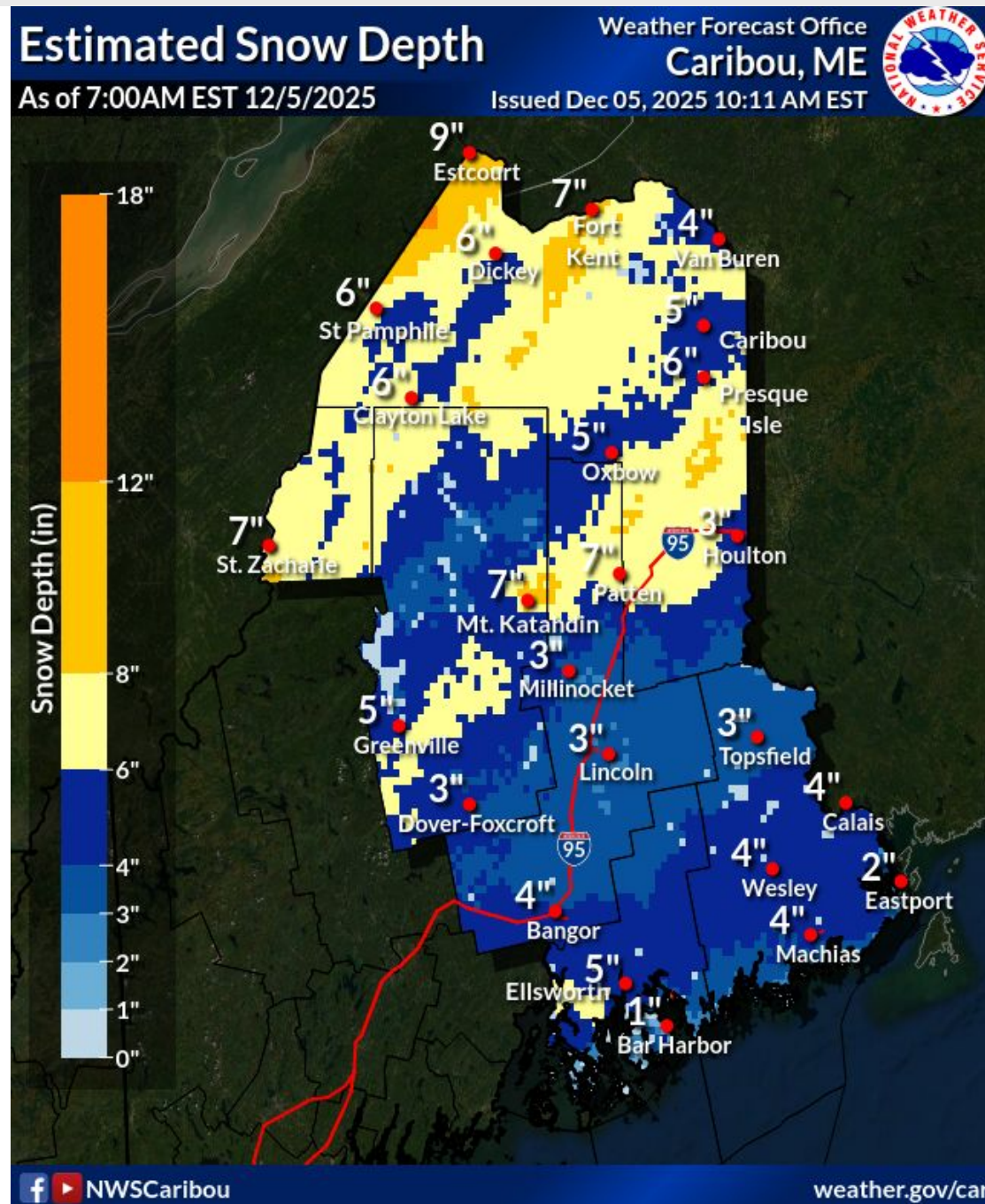
Snowpack & Snow Water Equivalent

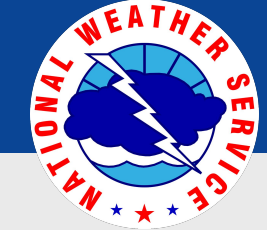
December 5, 2025
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Link to [National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center \(NOHRSC\)](#)

- Ground is freezing in much of northern & north-central Maine. Ground remains thawed in Downeast areas.

Although accumulating snow is often a positive sign for areas experiencing drought, the stored water does not provide an immediate benefit for drought recovery until it actually melts and begins to enter the wider water system if the ground is thawed.

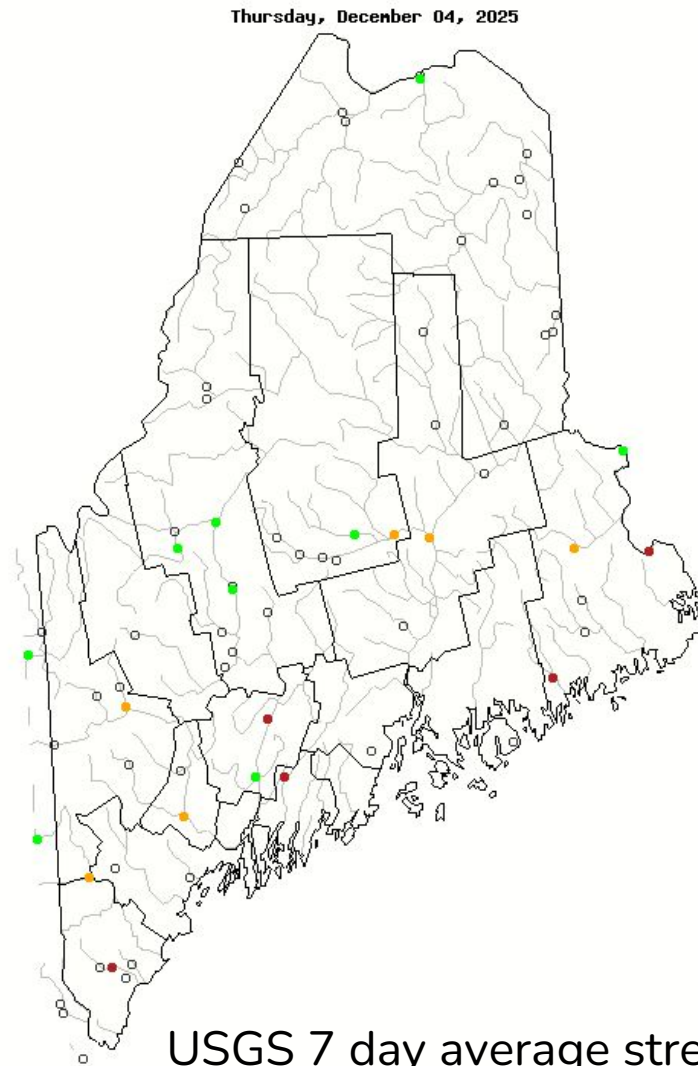




Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

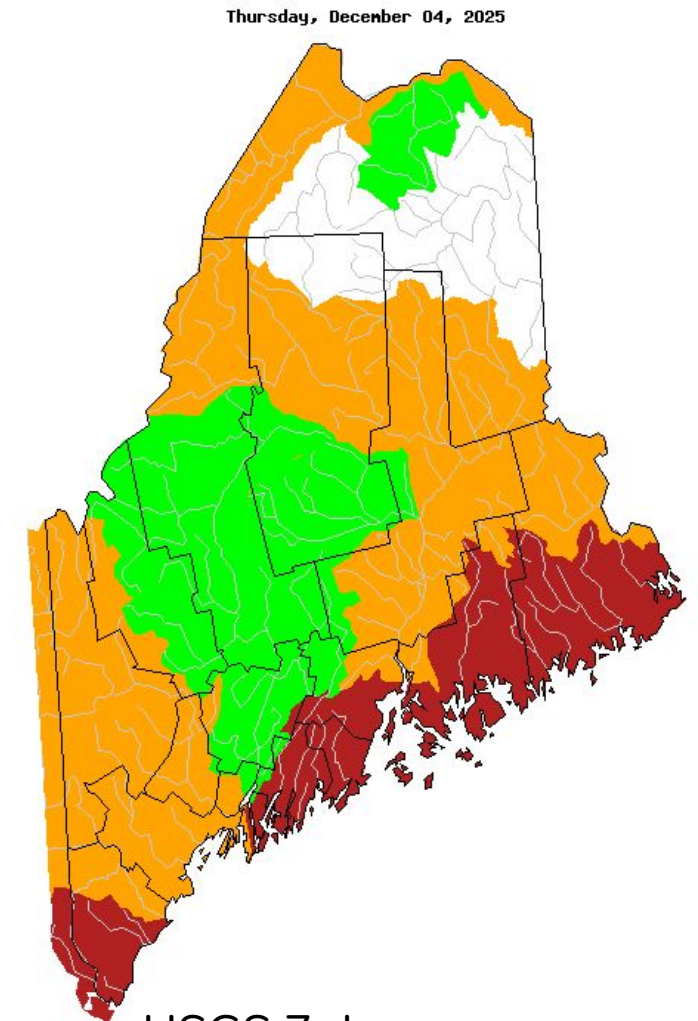
December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

- 7 day river flows have degraded back to “below normal” to “much below normal” discharge values.
- Ice in the Aroostook River basin is the reason for no ranking.
- The Piscataquis & Fish River basins are the only “normal” conditions.



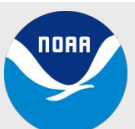
USGS 7 day average streamflow compared to historical streamflow

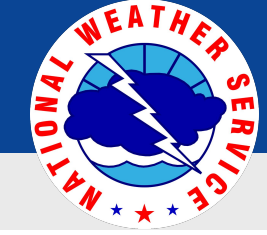
Explanation - Percentile classes							
Low	<10 Much below normal	10-24 Below normal	25-75 Normal	76-90 Above normal	>90 Much above normal	High	Not-ranked



USGS 7 day average streamflow HUC map

Explanation - Percentile classes							
Low	<10 Much below normal	10-24 Below normal	25-75 Normal	76-90 Above normal	>90 Much above normal	High	No Data





Groundwater Impacts

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

- Near surface soil moisture across much of Maine has improved, and is now at or above normal.
- Deeper soil moisture continues to be significantly below normal in the Bangor region, Downeast, northern Maine and Central Highlands.

SPoRT-LIS 0-10 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 05 Dec 2025

SPoRT-LIS 0-100 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 05 Dec 2025

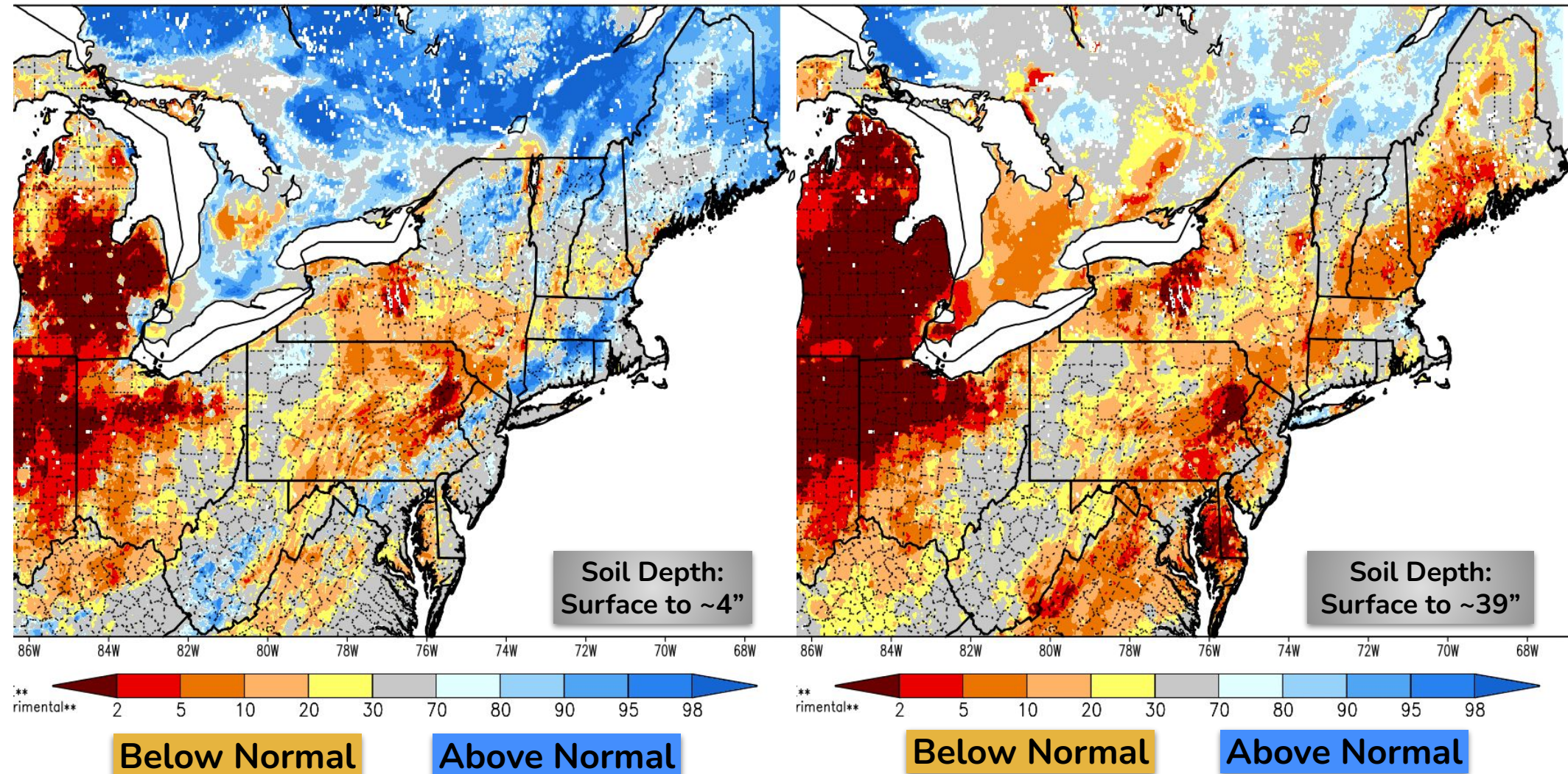
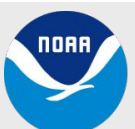


Image Captions:

National Water Model

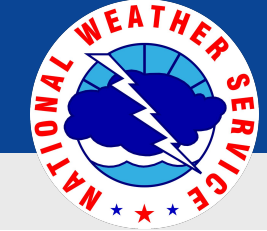
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-10cm Depth](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 10-40cm Depth](#)

>This indicator will be less relevant heading into winter as the ground freezes.



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Caribou, ME



Groundwater Impacts

December 5, 2025
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The Greatest Drought Concern through the winter months for Drinking Water

- Deep layer moisture continues to be “below” to “much below normal” as it takes time for recent events to percolate through the soil.
- Drinking water wells continue to be dry. No significant improvements yet.
- Maine Drought Task Force Dry Well Survey reporting page [here](#).

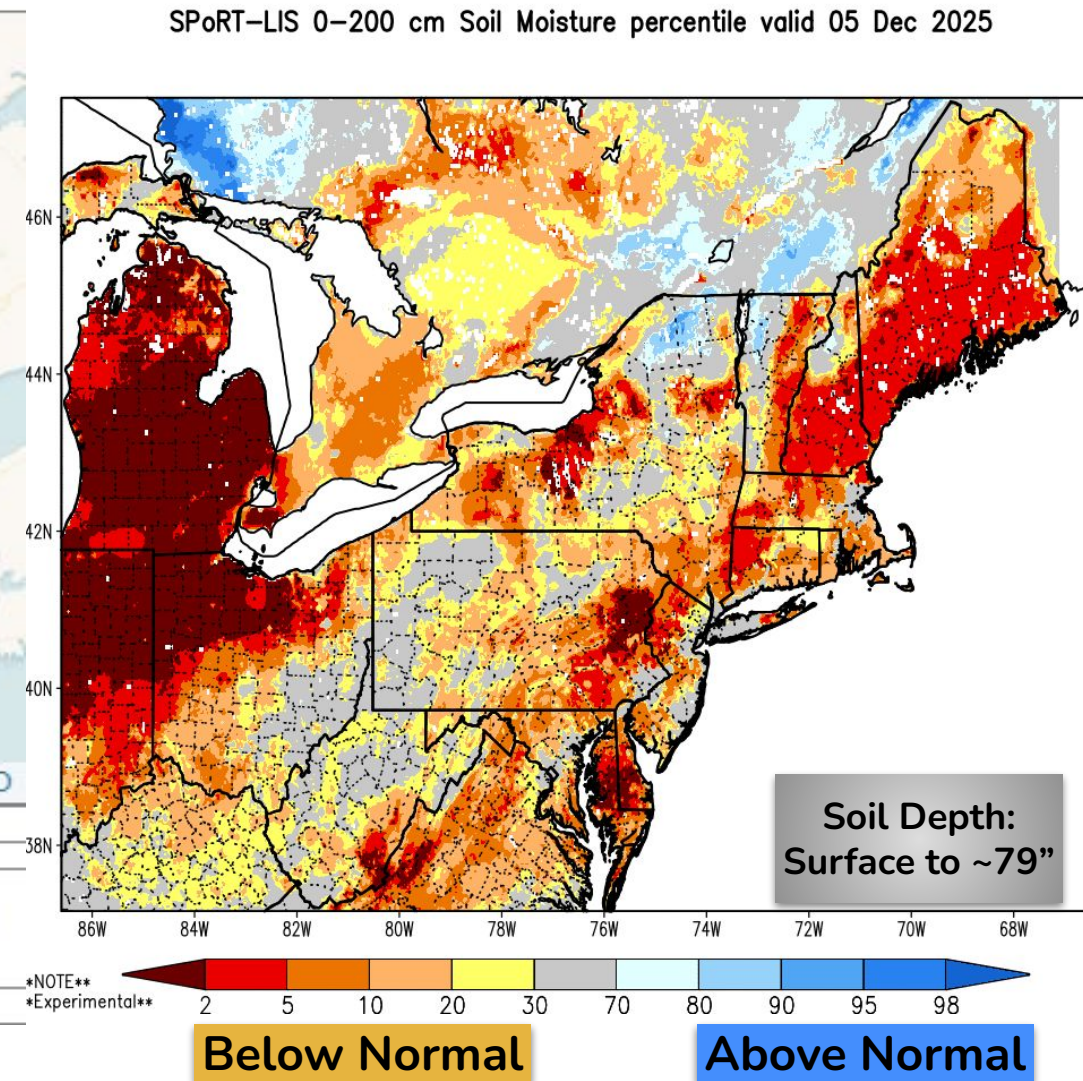
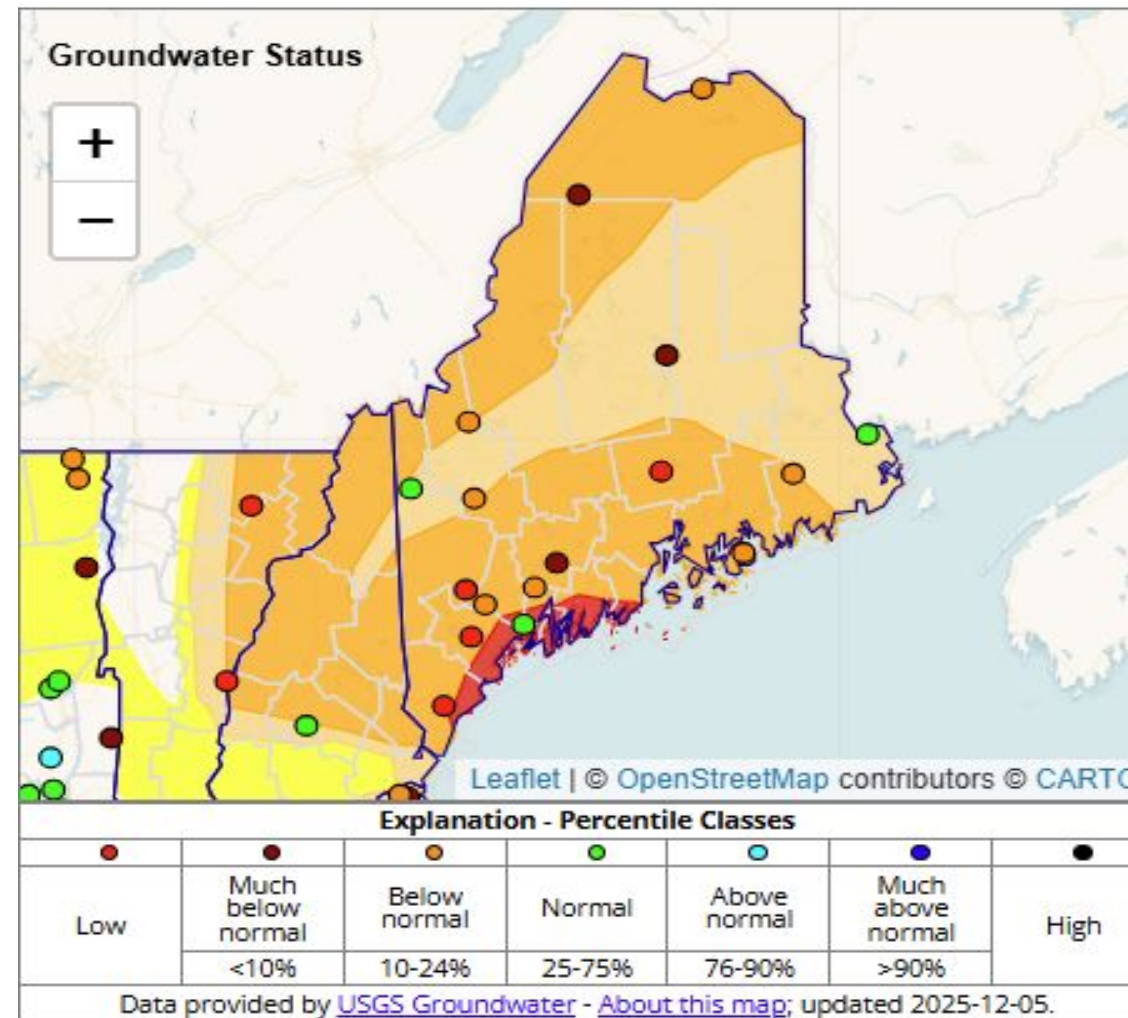
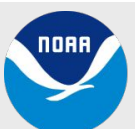
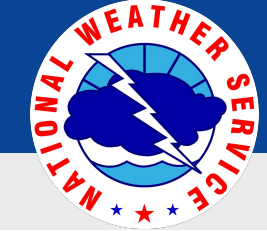


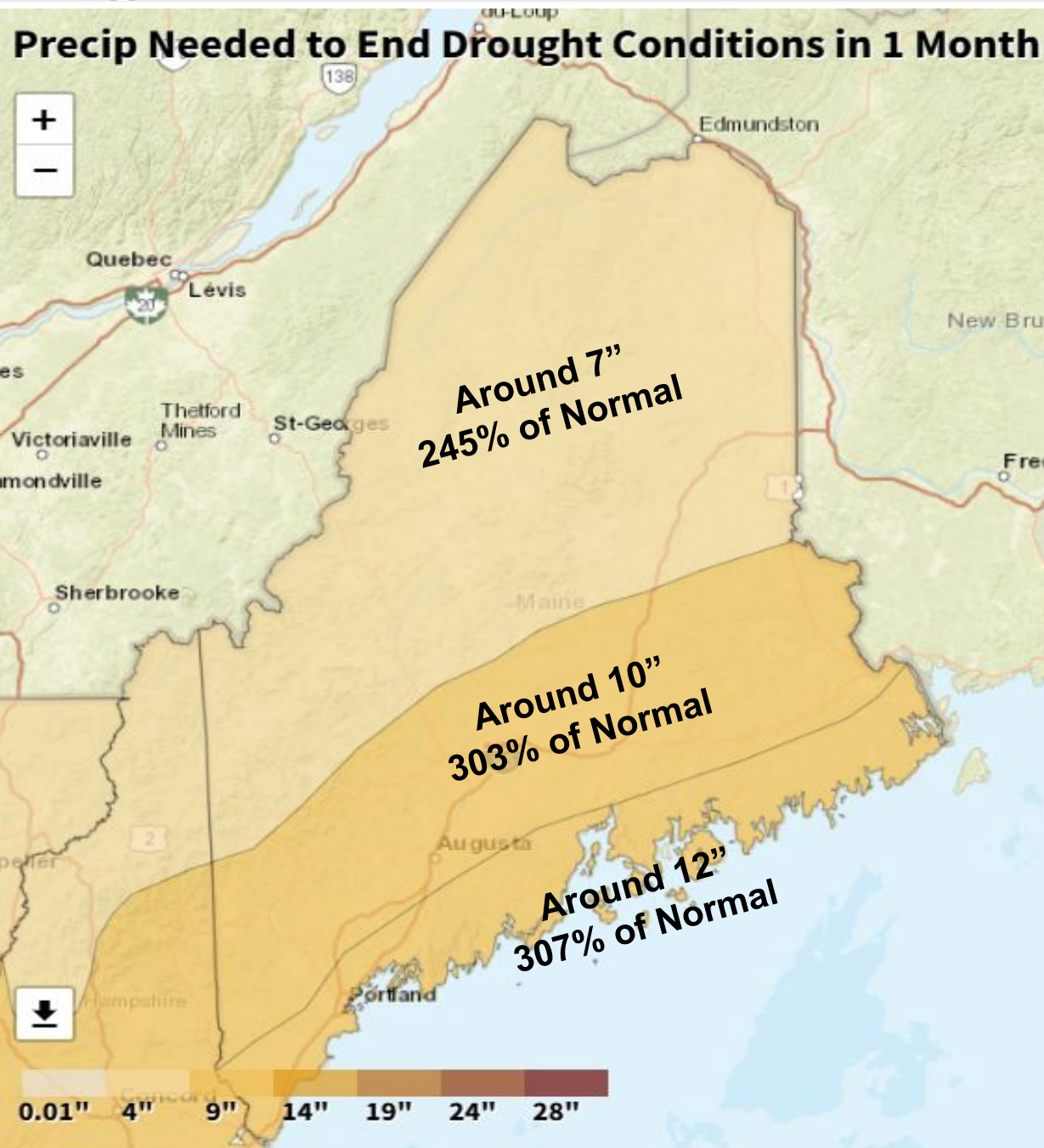
Image Captions:
[USGS Groundwater Gauge Status](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-200cm Depth](#)



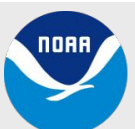


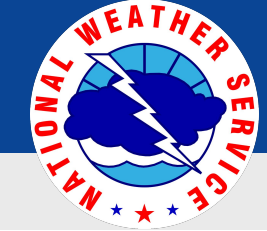
Rainfall Needed to “End the Drought”

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST



- 245-305% of normal precipitation over the next month is needed to ameliorate drought conditions before the ground freezes (very unlikely).
 - Once frozen, precipitation that would normally replenish groundwater won't soaking in, leaving wells and aquifers with little recovery until the spring thaw
- Steady, light-rain events with high absorption rates are ideal. Snowfall melting during the day into unfrozen soils is ideal.
- **7-12" of liquid precipitation** is needed to see full recovery before the ground freezes.
- Ground frost in Maine has started across northern regions and higher elevations, and ground freeze expected in mid December in southern areas, with long cold snaps often necessary to make depths over 4".
- 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

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- The majority of the monthly streamflows across the service area have gone down to “below normal” in the past 7 days; a few in Central Highlands and Bangor region are still near normal. [\(USGS\)](#)
- Lakes & ponds are slowly returning to near normal but most remain below normal.

Dry Drinking Water Wells

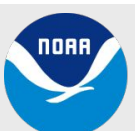
- Dry well reports continue, most of these occurring in Bangor Region and Downeast Maine.
- Maine EMA Dry Well Survey: <https://maine-dry-well-survey-maine.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Some improvement has been reported in the last week for groundwater levels in eastern Downeast areas and eastern Aroostook county.
- Very little groundwater improvement in western Downeast areas, Bangor region, Baxter region and North Woods.

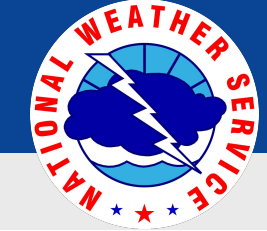
Mitigation Actions

- Conserve water and follow directions from local officials.

Winter Ice Impacts

- Ice is developing across much of the rivers in northern & north-central Maine due to recent cold weather.
- Increasing potential of “*anchor ice*” forming in the rivers & streams due to lower flows.
- Ponds/lakes levels low with ice formation exposing rocks posing risk to recreational activities.





Winter Drought Considerations

December 5, 2025

10:23 AM EST

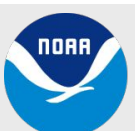
Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

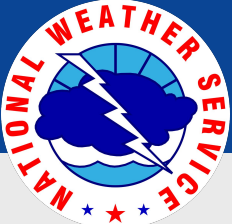
Overview: Maine's drought is likely to persist over the winter with frozen soils hurting recovery.

- Recharging soil moisture before freeze-up is critical so it can be locked-in and saved for spring.
- There is some potential for rainfall as an active pattern through mid December favors mixed precipitation events tracking into the region.
- If the snowpack in December remains or grows, it can act as an insulator, limiting deeper frost depths .
- Once the ground freezes, water infiltration becomes difficult regardless of winter rainfall or snowmelt.
- Winter is the driest time of the year since cold air cannot hold as much moisture as warm air.
- Monthly precipitation averages drop to 2-3 inches both January and February.

Looking ahead to Spring:

- A snowpack through winter is crucial to act as a natural water reservoir, as spring snowmelt helps recharge soil and aquifers.
- Below-normal snowfall could extend the drought and impact agriculture in 2026.
- The timing and rate of snowmelt will be vital to sustaining base flow in rivers and lakes the next warm season.
- Even an active spring flood season can be insufficient to fully recharge aquifers in severe drought conditions.





Long Range Outlooks (Dec-Feb)

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

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

Main Takeaways for Winter 2025-26:

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

Winter Pattern Outlook

- Weak La Nina will result in subseasonal factors playing larger role in the pattern. Analog years point to a volatile pattern with periods of wild temperature swings and an active storm track.

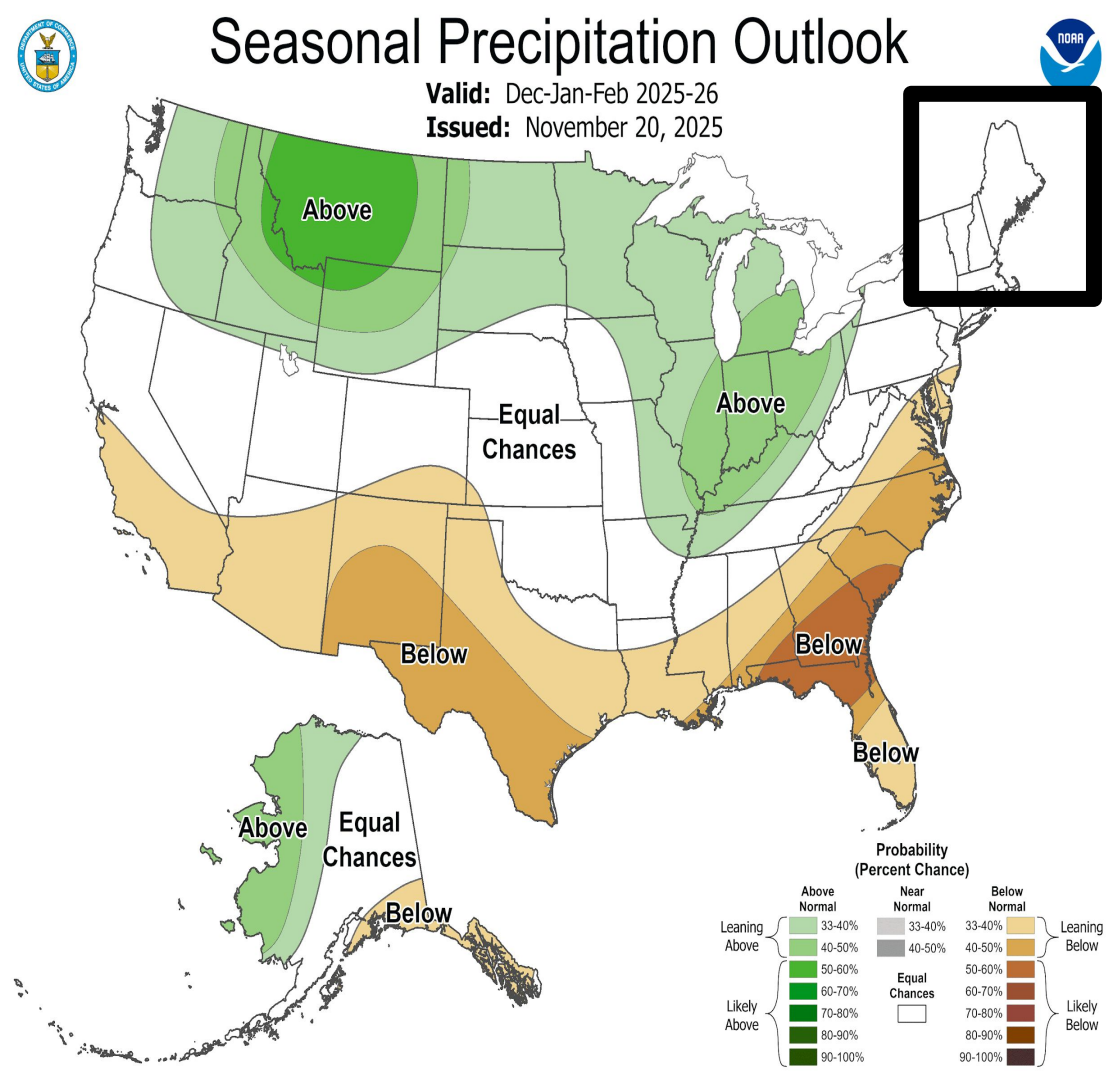
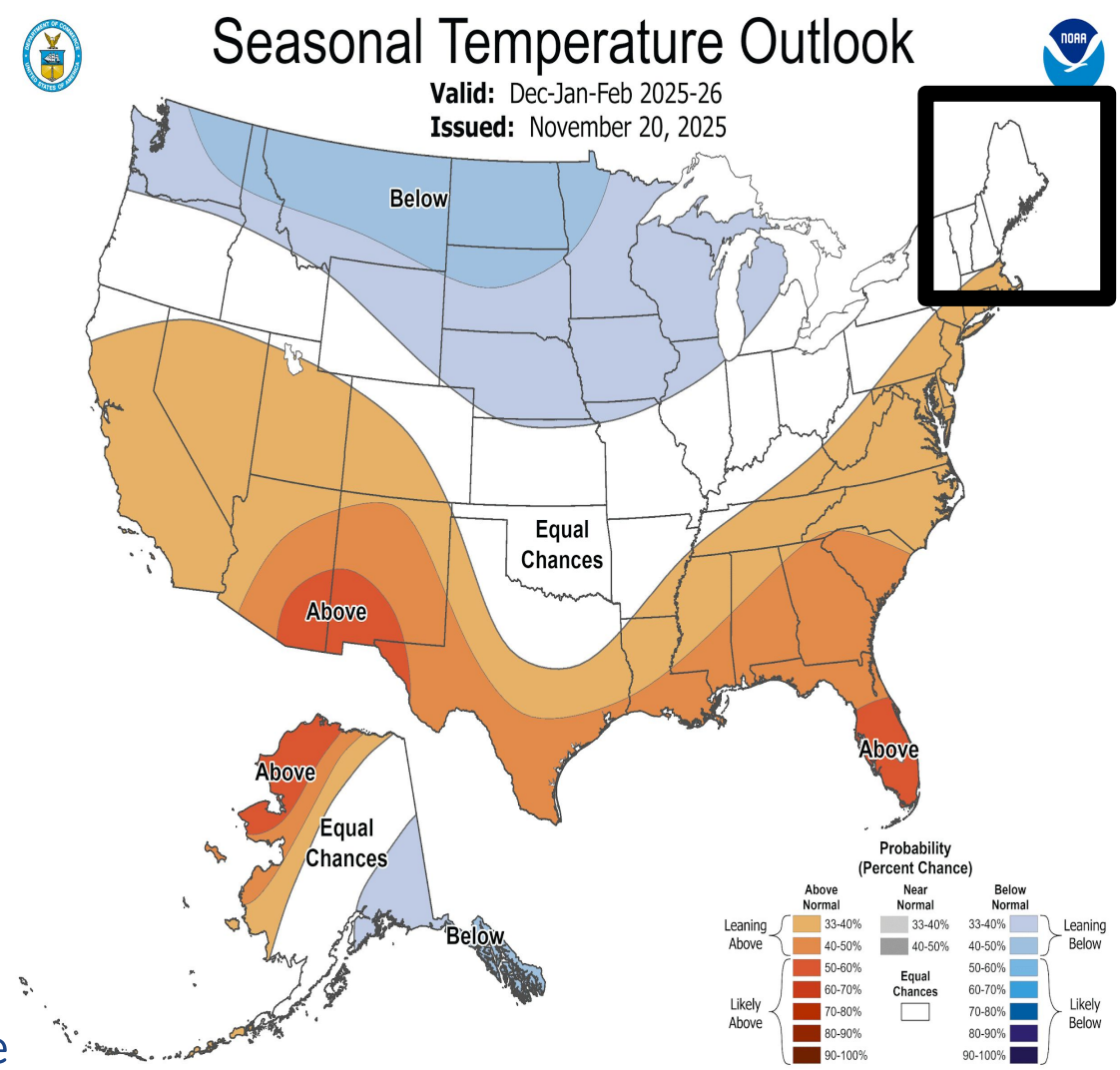
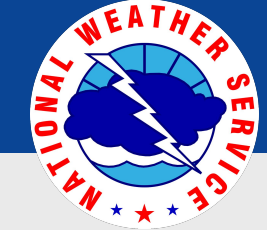


Image Captions:
Left - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
Right - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)
Valid Nov 20, 2025.





Main Takeaways

December 5, 2025
10:23 AM EST

- Widespread Moderate to Severe Drought conditions continue across northern and eastern Maine, with very little improvements in most locations.
- Impacts include, but are not limited to: Dry drinking water wells, low lake/pond and river/stream levels and dried marshlands.
- 7-12 inches of rainfall, roughly 245-305% of normal, is needed between now and when the ground freezes (already freezing in northern Maine). Otherwise, drought will linger throughout the winter.
- Accumulating snow can be beneficial to drought by insulating the ground before it has a chance to freeze; plus it stores water that can melt and contribute to groundwater recharge.
- The severity of the ongoing drought indicates long-term drought conditions persisting into the 2025-26 winter.

Contact Information

Web

→ www.weather.gov/car

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.

