



Drought Information Statement for Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa

Valid May 15th, 2025

Issued By: NWS Omaha/Valley

Contact Information: nws.omaha@noaa.gov or 1-800-452-9074

- This product will be updated June 24, 2025 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at drought.gov/drought-information-statements
- Please visit weather.gov/Omaha/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit drought.gov/drought-status-updates?dews_region=41 for regional drought status updates

- **DRY CONDITIONS HAVE BROUGHT EXPANSION OF DROUGHT CONDITIONS**
- **A HOT AND DRY SUMMER IS FORECAST ACROSS THE AREA WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BRING WORSENING CONDITIONS**



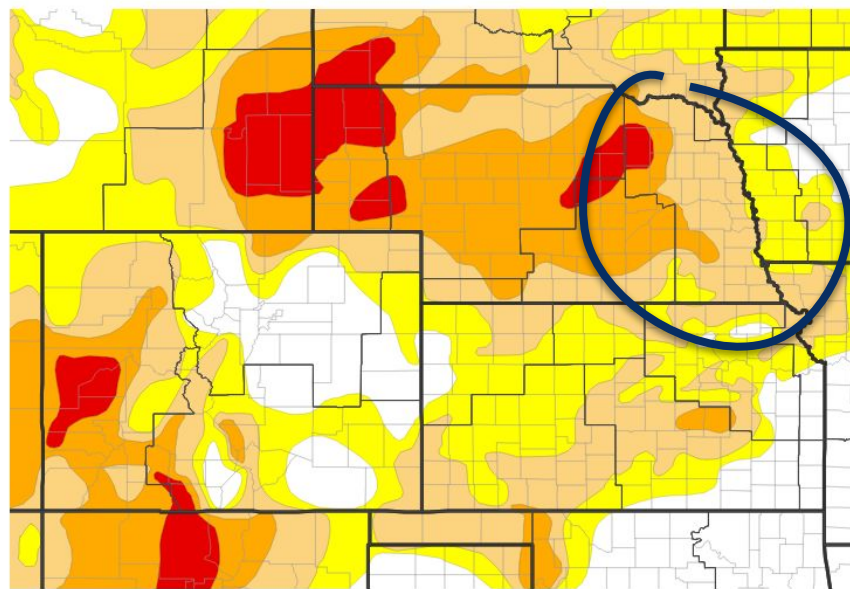


U.S. Drought Monitor

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

- The area was drought free in mid-July. Things deteriorated quickly through the fall with very little change since late November.
- Drought intensity and Extent
 - **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** None
 - **D3 (Extreme Drought):** The Antelope County area has seen drought intensify over the past 30 days.
 - **D2 (Severe Drought):** Severe drought is relegated to the western fringe of the forecast area.
 - **D1 (Moderate Drought):** Nearly the entire remainder of eastern Nebraska is designated as “moderate drought”.
 - **D0 (Abnormally Dry):** Western Iowa is now considered “abnormally dry”. Expect drought conditions to worsen here with odds leaning toward a warm and dry summer.

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor



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

Data Valid: 05/13/25



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

National Weather Service
Omaha/Valley, NE

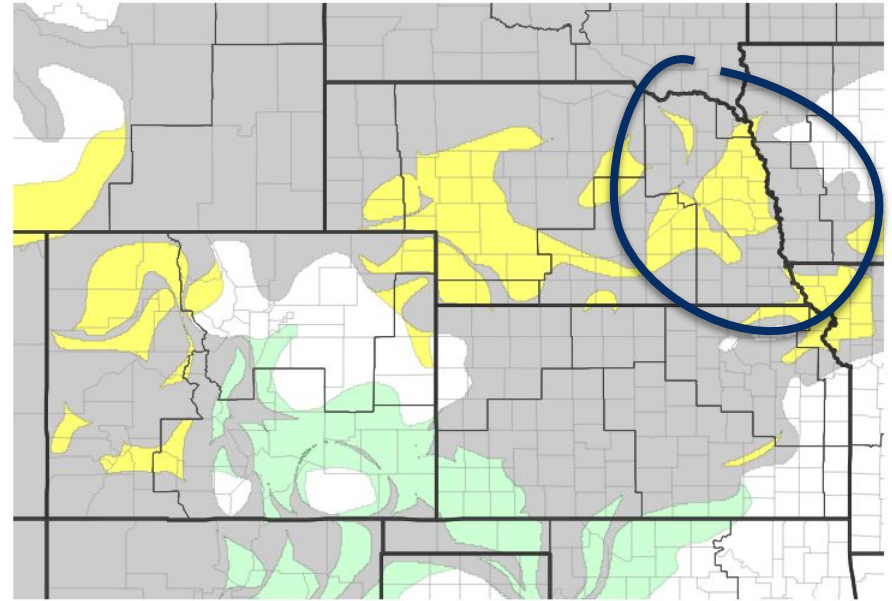


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

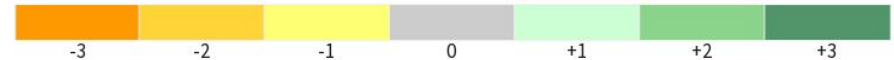
Link to the latest [4-week change map](#)

- One Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** Large swaths of Nebraska from the Omaha metro through south-central Nebraska to Sidney, NE in the southern panhandle.
 - **No Change:** Western Iowa, northeast Nebraska, southwest Iowa.
 - **Drought Improved:** None
- Changes are more pronounced on longer timelines: View the [Change Maps](#)

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map



Drought Change Since Last Week



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

Data Valid: 05/13/25

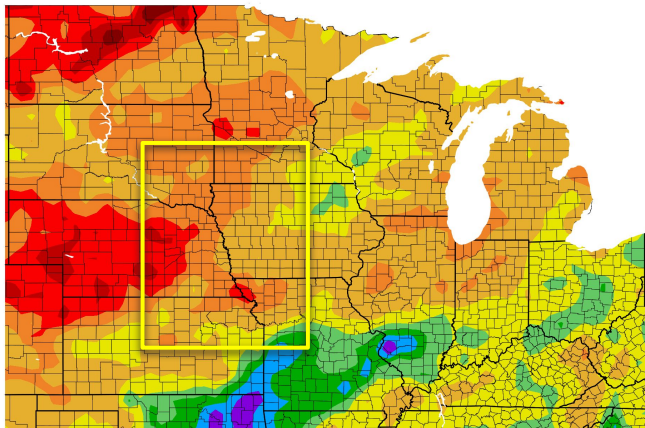




Precipitation

Over the Past 30 Days

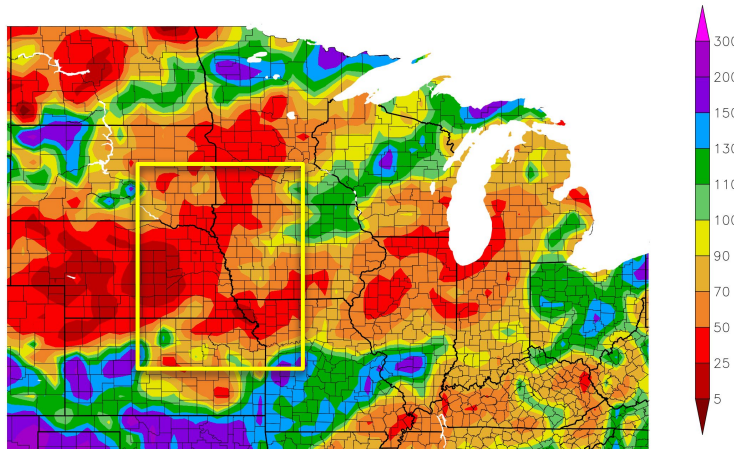
Precipitation (in)
4/15/2025 – 5/14/2025



Generated 5/15/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
4/15/2025 – 5/14/2025



Generated 5/15/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

- Very little precipitation has fallen across the area over the past 30 days with more than half of the area recording less than 50% of normal precipitation.
- The second half of May brings a pattern change and a chance of significant precipitation. This rainfall would be welcomed before drier conditions are favored for the summer months.





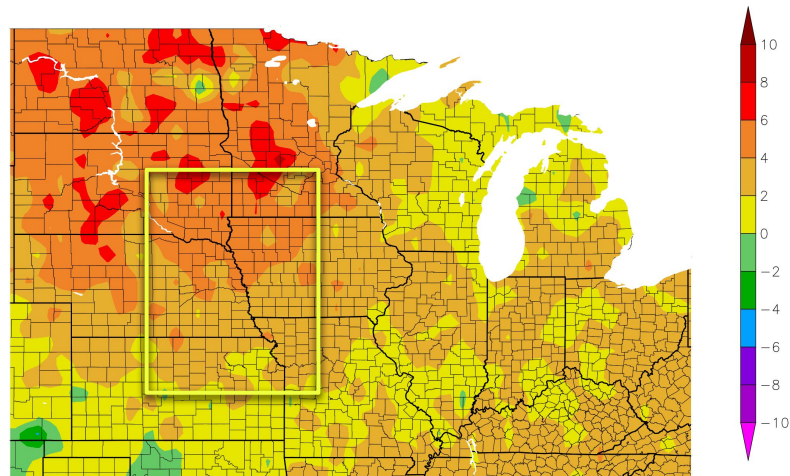
Temperature

Over the Past 30 Days

- Warmer than normal conditions have prevailed over 2025 so far and there's no reason to think that won't continue.
- Lincoln, Norfolk, and Omaha have all averaged warmer than even recent climatological averages. This is in part to the dry conditions.

	Norfolk	Omaha	Lincoln
Average Temperature (1/1 to 5/14) vs 30 Year Average (1991-2020)	+1.1°	+1.0°	+1.4°

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/15/2025 – 5/14/2025



Generated 5/15/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services





Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Groundwater levels in Nebraska generally dipped in 2024. Southeast Nebraska groundwater levels dropped 10-15 feet compared to 2023 according to a UNL study. ([NebraskaPublicMedia.org](#))

Agricultural Impacts

- Continued winter wheat damage from ongoing drought. ([weather.gov/MBRFC](#))
- Low water in stock ponds and limited water for livestock and/or irrigation. ([weather.gov/MBRFC](#))

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Nebraska continued a fire ban for central and western parts of the state including areas north of Columbus and west of Norfolk. ([Nebraska.gov](#))
- Pottawattamie and Shelby counties are currently under a burn ban (Iowa State Fire Marshal)

Other Impacts

- A new NIDIS-funded study examined the impact of severe drought on respiratory mortality in Iowa. ([iopScience.iop.org](#))

Mitigation Actions

- As of 5/15/25, Shenandoah, IA remains in stage 4 water restrictions. ([KMAland.com](#))
- Regional Water Rural Water Association implemented “level RED” restrictions on water usage. This includes customers in Shelby, Harrison, and northern Pottawattamie counties in Iowa ([pottcounty-ia.gov](#))

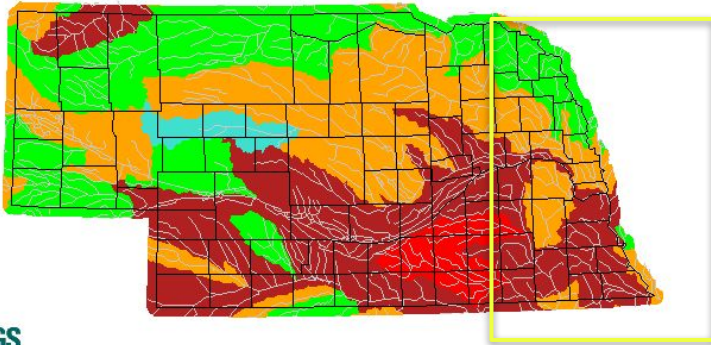




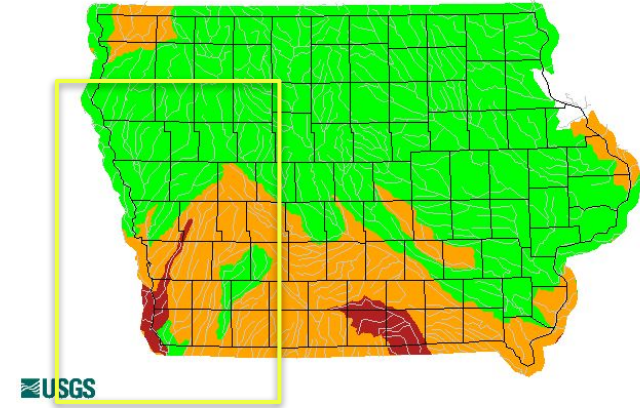
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- As is reflected in the drought monitor, Iowa's hydrologic conditions are much closer to normal than those recorded in Nebraska.
- The worst streamflow conditions in southeast Nebraska correlate to where groundwater levels have fallen the most over the past year.

Hednesday, May 14, 2025



Hednesday, May 14, 2025



Explanation - Percentile classes

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

Image Captions:

Left USGS 7 day average streamflow NE HUC map

Right USGS 7 day average streamflow IA HUC map

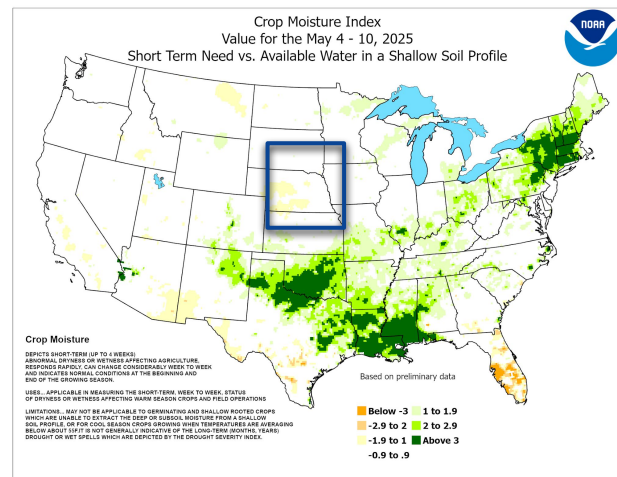
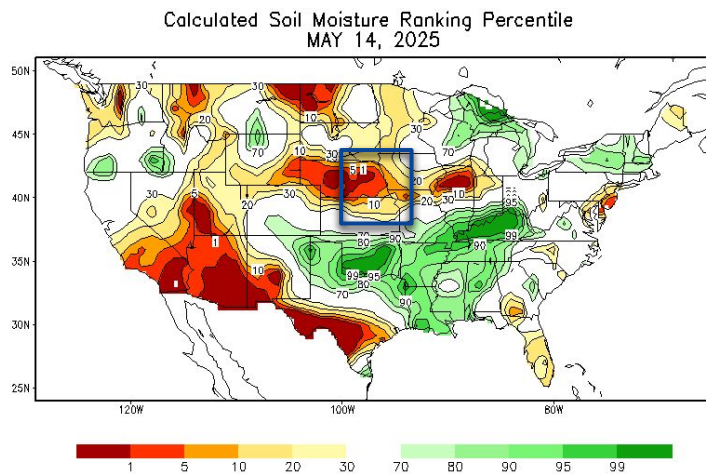




Agricultural Impacts

Link to the Latest [USDA Crop Progress Reports](#) by State

- Nebraska's dry soils are quite obvious on this map which shows a large portion of the area under the 10th percentile of mid-May soil moisture ranking.
- The Crop Moisture Index is starting to indicate the dryness is affecting ag activity across parts of Nebraska.



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Drought Outlook

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

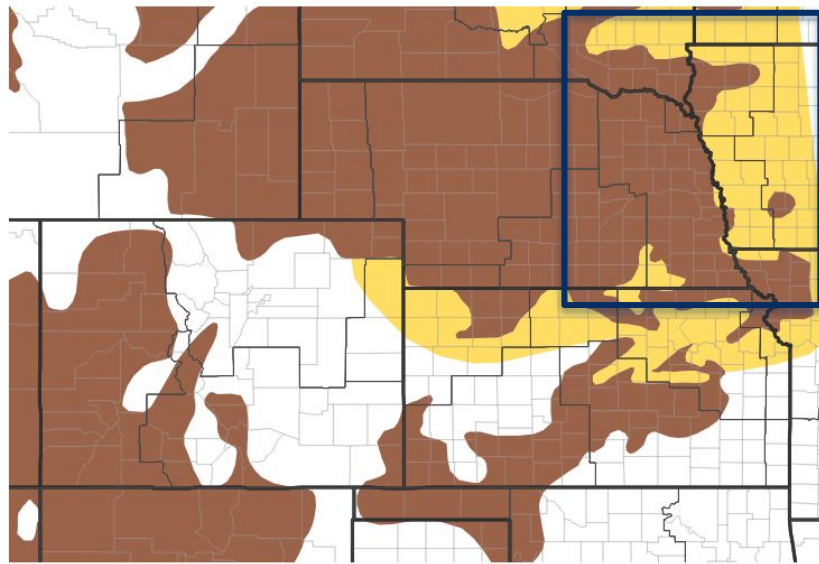
- A lack of meaningful precipitation across the area over the past thirty days has warranted significant expansion of drought conditions across Nebraska.
- With the long-range forecast leaning warm and dry, the Climate Prediction Center has forecast that the drought will continue in eastern Nebraska and expand farther east into Iowa.

Link to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for May 15, 2025–August 31, 2025



Drought Is Predicted To...



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 05/15/25

