



Drought Information Statement for South Central and Southeast Colorado Valid July 17th, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information: nws.pueblo@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated by August 14th, 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/pub/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates> for regional drought status updates.

- Drought conditions continue to deepen across south central and southeast Colorado



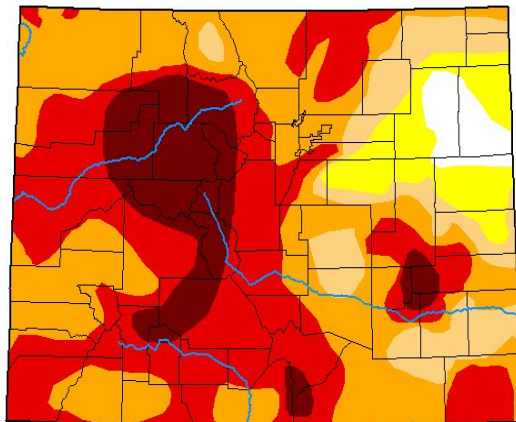
U.S. Drought Monitor

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

• Drought intensity and Extent

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** Lake, most of Chaffee, western Saguache, northern Mineral, eastern Costilla, southwest Huerfano, western Las Animas, eastern Crowley, western Kiowa, northeast Otero and northwest Bent, counties.
- **D3 Extreme Drought:** Southeast Chaffee, the rest of Saguache and Mineral, Rio Grande, western Conejos, Alamosa, eastern Costilla, most of the rest of Huerfano, western Las Animas, western Fremont, northwest Teller, extreme east central El Paso, Custer, southwest Pueblo, southeast Crowley, northern Otero, northwest Bent, western Kiowa, and most of Baca, counties.
- **D2 Severe Drought:** Eastern Conejos, western Costilla, eastern Fremont, the rest of Teller, western, northern and eastern El Paso, most of the rest of Pueblo, northeastern Huerfano, most of the rest of Las Animas, western Crowley, western and northern Otero, northern Bent, central into eastern Kiowa, northern and southeastern Prowers, and northern and eastern Baca, counties.
- **D1 Moderate Drought:** South central El Paso, north central Pueblo, southeast Otero, southern Bent, central Prowers, northeast Las Animas, and northeast Kiowa, counties.
- **D0: Abnormally Dry:** N/A

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado



July 14, 2026

(Released Thursday, Jul. 16, 2026)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	2.86	97.14	90.29	79.86	45.70	12.17
Last Week 07-07-2026	1.68	98.32	91.06	81.56	43.79	10.03
3 Months Ago 04-14-2026	0.00	100.00	97.79	82.84	54.42	21.59
Start of Calendar Year 01-06-2026	25.96	74.04	46.22	15.77	4.35	0.67
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	45.82	54.18	45.19	35.88	14.34	0.00
One Year Ago 07-15-2025	42.78	57.22	44.90	30.40	8.79	0.00

Intensity

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate 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 <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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droughtmonitor.unl.edu



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Pueblo, Colorado

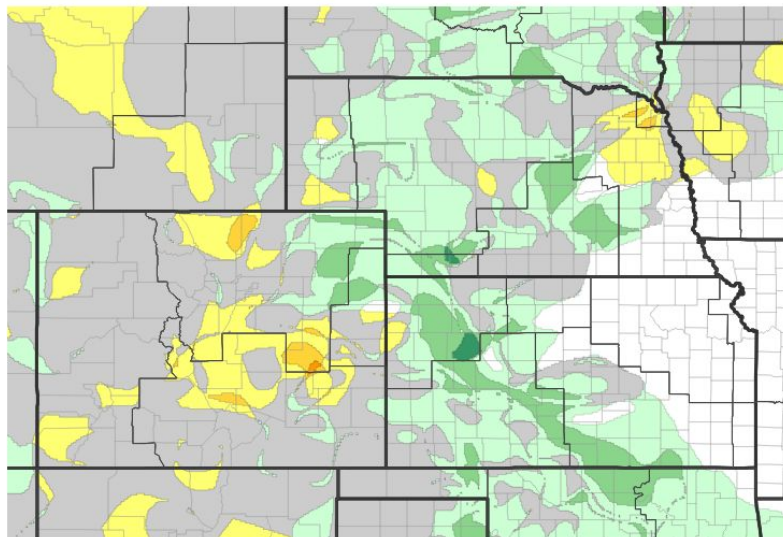


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

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

- 4 Week Drought Monitor Class Change.
 - **Drought Worsened:** Portions of south central and southeast Colorado
 - **No Change:** Portions of south central and southeast Colorado
 - **Drought Improved:** Small pockets across the southeast plains

U.S. Drought Monitor 4-Week Change Map



Drought Degradation



Drought Improvement



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

Data Valid: 07/07/26



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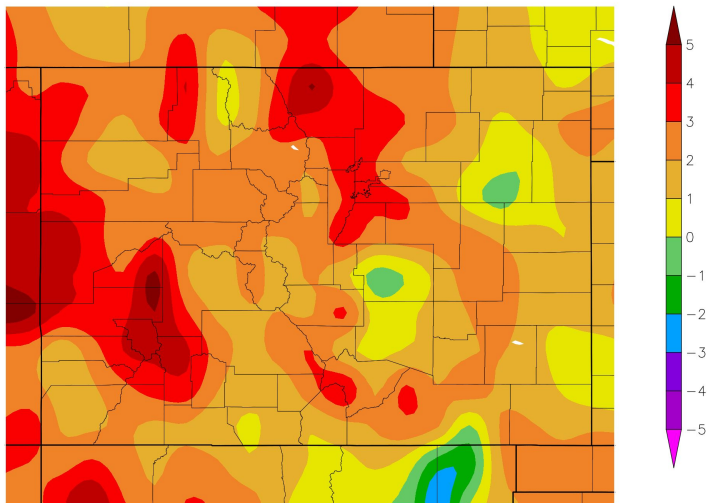
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Month to Date Temperature and Precipitation Departure

Links to the latest [HPRCC Mean Temperature](#) and [Precipitation](#) departures from normal month to date

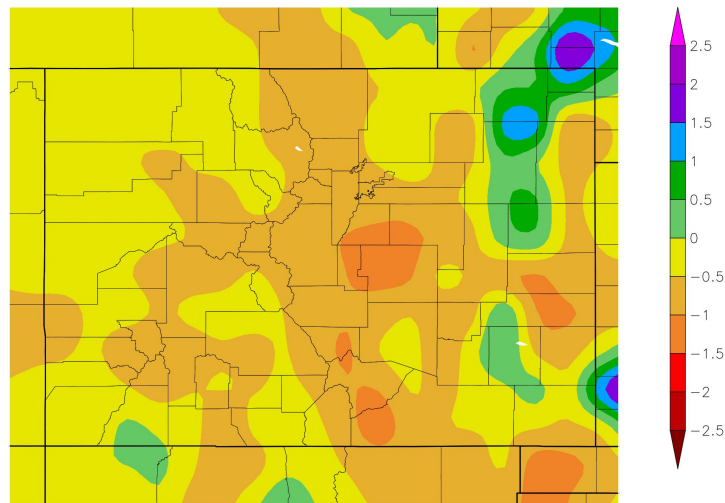
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
7/1/2026 – 7/15/2026



Generated 7/16/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
7/1/2026 – 7/15/2026



Generated 7/16/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

July thus far, has been warm and fairly dry, with scattered showers and thunderstorms bringing spotty beneficial moisture to areas over and near the higher terrain and portions of the southeast plains.



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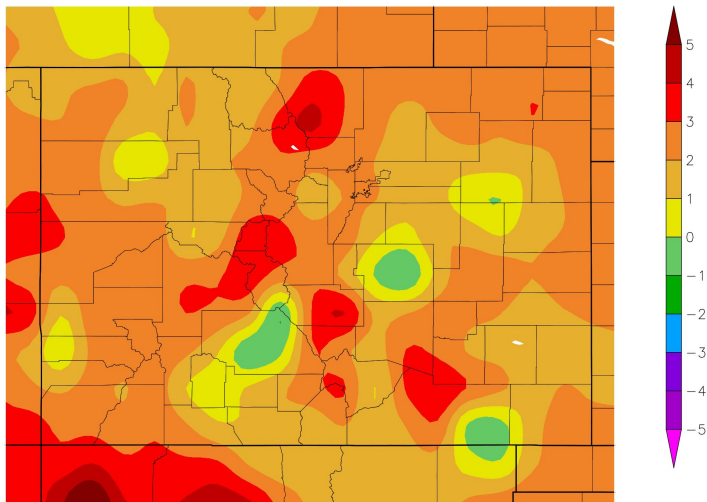
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Past 3 Month Temperature and Precipitation Departure

Links to the latest [HPRCC Mean Temperature](#) and [Precipitation](#) departures from normal over the past 3 months

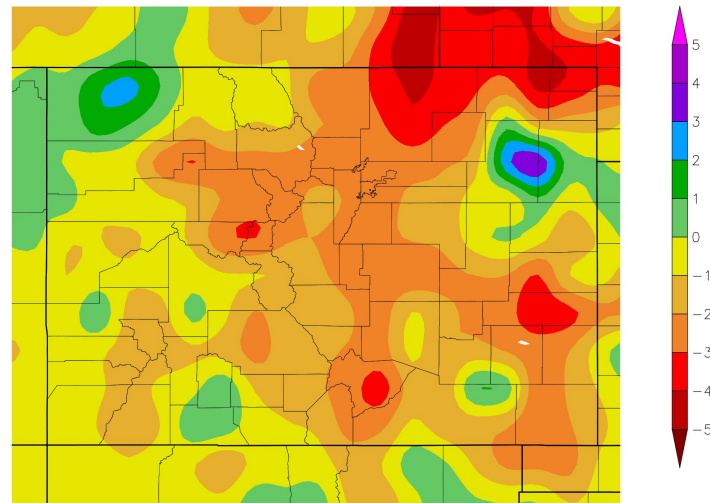
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/1/2026 – 6/30/2026



Generated 7/10/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
4/1/2026 – 6/30/2026



Generated 7/10/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

April started out stormy across the higher terrain, with a few other passing storm systems bringing some precipitation to the higher terrain through the middle and end of the month. May started out cool and wet, with a passing system bringing well below seasonal temperatures. along with showers across the plains and higher terrain snowfall in the May 5th-6th timeframe. Ridging into the middle of the month brought warm and dry conditions. June started out generally warm and dry across south central and southeast Colorado, with passing weather systems through the middle and end of the month bringing some precipitation across the higher terrain, along with periods of severe thunderstorms across the southeast Plains.



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Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Statewide streamflows are running below to well below seasonal levels.
- Statewide reservoir storage continues to drop, leading to boat ramp closures and limited boating and recreation on area lakes.

Agricultural Impacts

- Soil moisture is running below seasonal levels across most of south central and southeast Colorado. ([CPC Daily Soil Moisture Ranking](#))

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Warm, breezy and dry conditions has led to several large wildfires across the state throughout the month of June and into early July.

Mitigation Actions

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

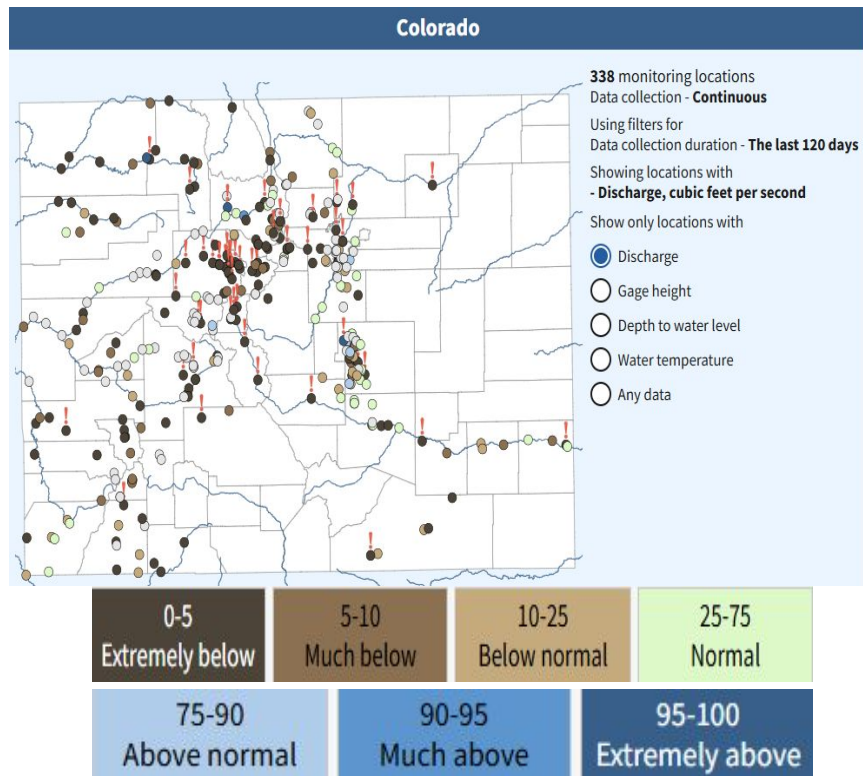




Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

Links to [Current NRCS Mountain Precipitation](#) and [NWS Western Water Supply and Streamflow Forecasts](#)

- Stream flow remains below seasonal normals across south central and southeast Colorado.
- NRCS data indicates **statewide mountain precipitation** for the month of **June** was **39 percent of median**, as compared to 112 percent of median at this time last year. This brings statewide WY 2026 precipitation to 75 percent of median, as compared to 86 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the **Arkansas basin**, **June precipitation was 40 percent of median**, as compared to 185 percent of median at this time last year. This brings Arkansas basin WY 2026 precipitation to 66 percent of median, as compared to 94 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the **Upper Rio Grande basin**, **June precipitation was 85 percent of median**, as compared to 227 percent of median at this time last year. This brings Upper Rio Grande basin WY 2026 precipitation to 76 percent of median, as compared to 84 percent of median at this time last year.



[USGS Colorado streamflow](#) valid July 17th, 2026

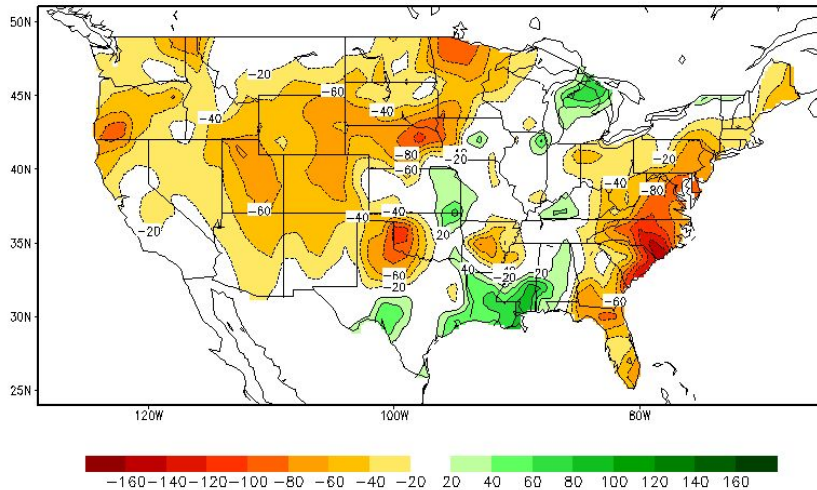




Agricultural and Water Supply Impacts

- CPC data indicates soil moisture is running below seasonal norms across much of south central and southeast Colorado, save for pockets of above normal conditions across the far southeast plains

Calculated Soil Moisture Anomaly (mm)
JUL 15, 2026



- NRCS data indicated [statewide Colorado Reservoir Storage](#) was at 65 percent of median at the end of June, as compared to 85 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the [Arkansas basin](#), reservoir storage was at 76 percent of median at the end of June, as compared to 105 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the [Rio Grande basin](#), reservoir storage was at 74 percent of median at the end of June, as compared to 88 percent of median at this time last year.

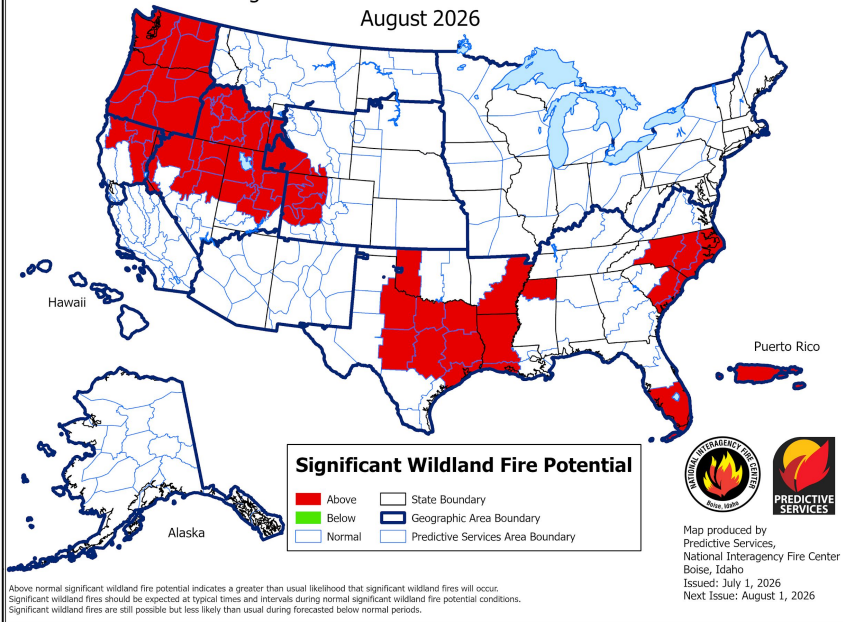




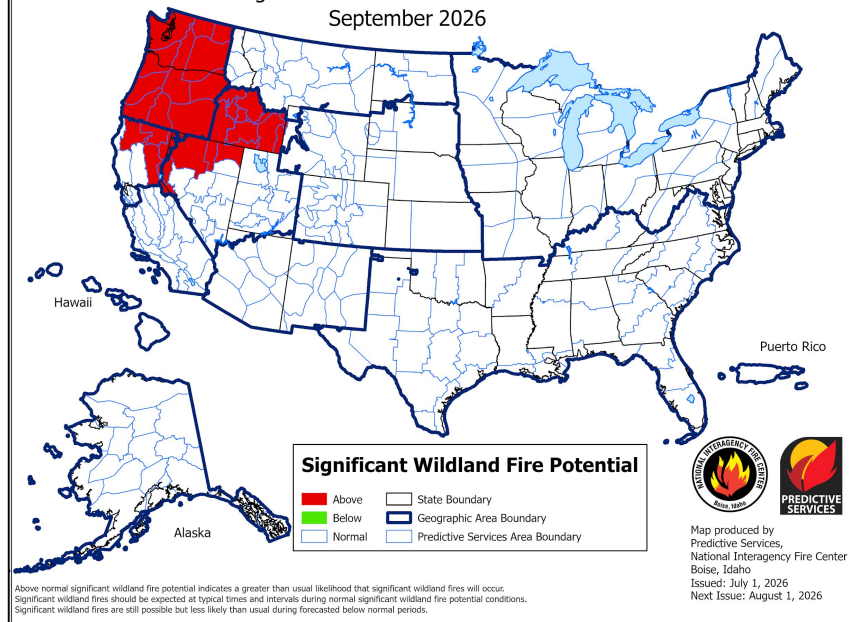
Fire Hazard Impacts

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

Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook
August 2026



Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook
September 2026



Increasing monsoonal moisture is expected to bring abundant wetting rains to portions of south central and southeast Colorado, leading to a lessening potential for significant wildland fires through the end of the summer.



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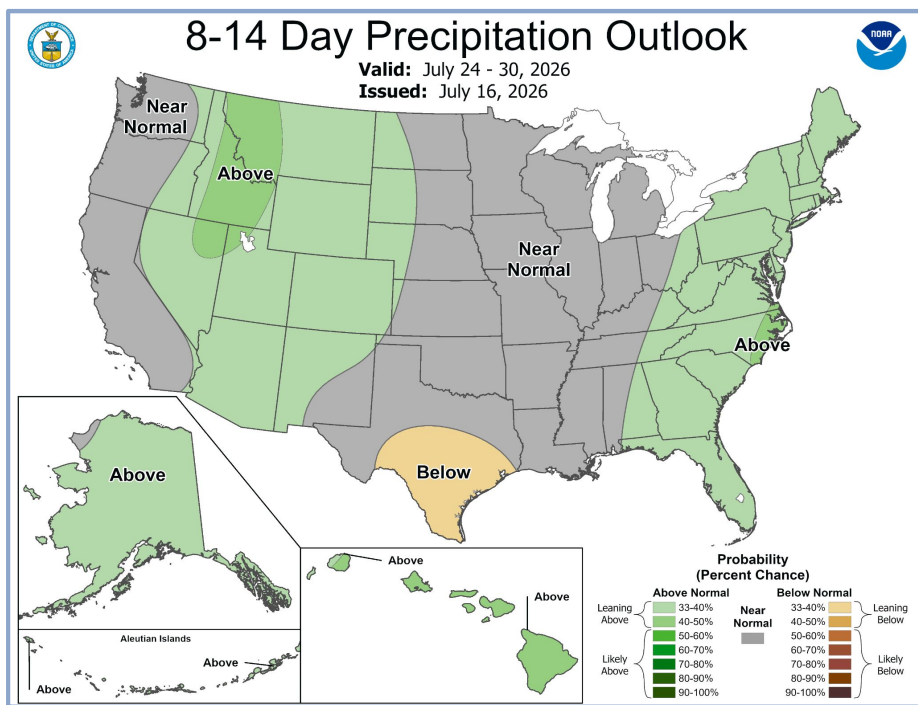
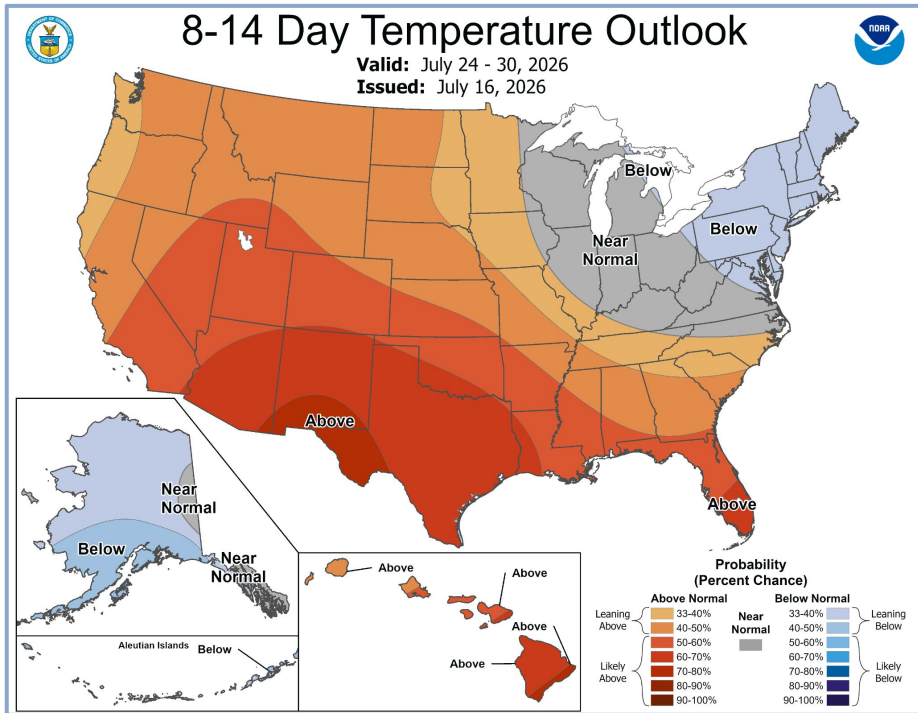
Link to [Latest Fire Restrictions across the state of Colorado](#)

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Monthly Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov)



The CPC 8 to 14 day outlook, valid July 24th-30th, indicates better chances of above normal temperature, along with at and above normal precipitation across south central and southeast Colorado.





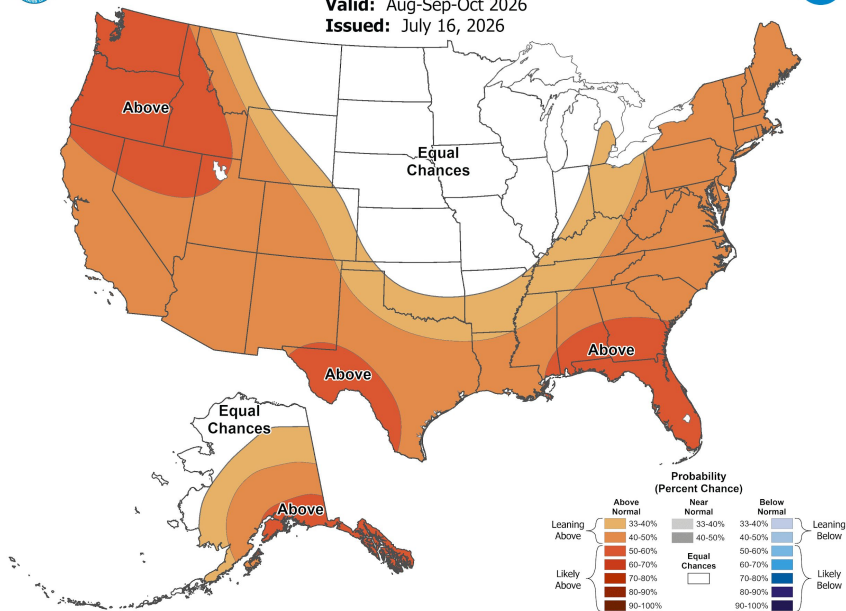
Seasonal Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

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



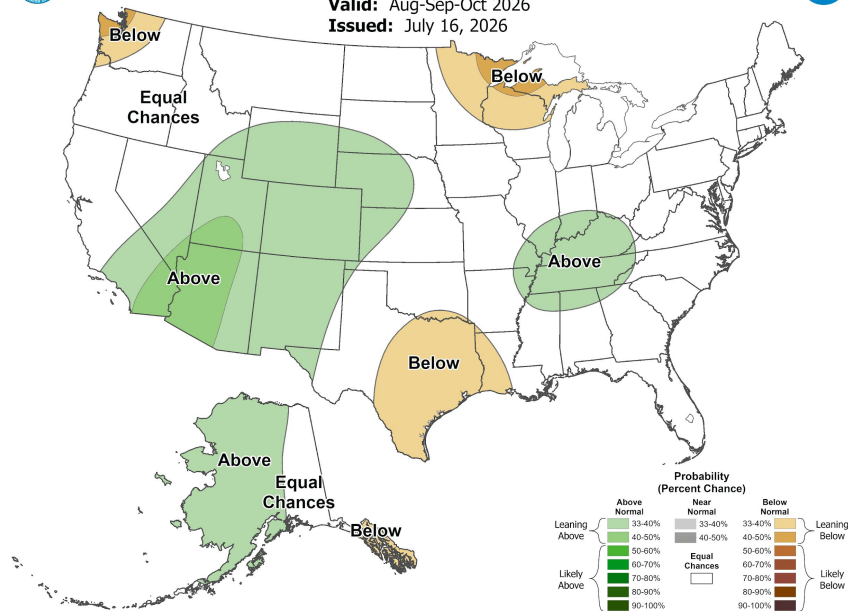
Seasonal Temperature Outlook

Valid: Aug-Sep-Oct 2026
Issued: July 16, 2026



Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Aug-Sep-Oct 2026
Issued: July 16, 2026



The CPC outlook for August through October supports warmer conditions with at and above normal precipitation across most of south central and southeast Colorado.



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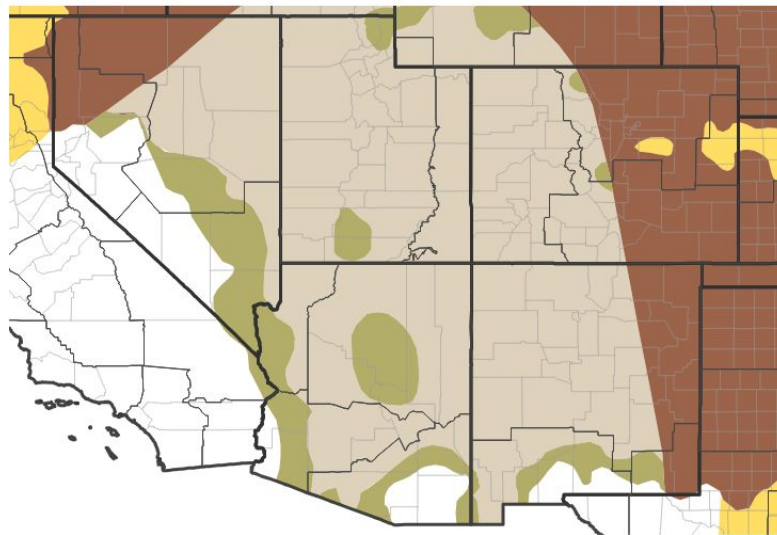


Drought Outlook

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

The potential for a more robust monsoon season across the Desert Southwest into western Colorado brings the expectation of some improvement in the drought across south central Colorado, with some drought persisting across portions of southeast Colorado through the rest of the summer into the early fall.

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for June 30, 2026–September 30, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...



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

Last Updated: 06/30/26

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)



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