Drought Information Statement for South Central and Southeast Colorado Valid August 27th, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Pueblo, Colorado
Contact Information: nws.pueblo@noaa.gov

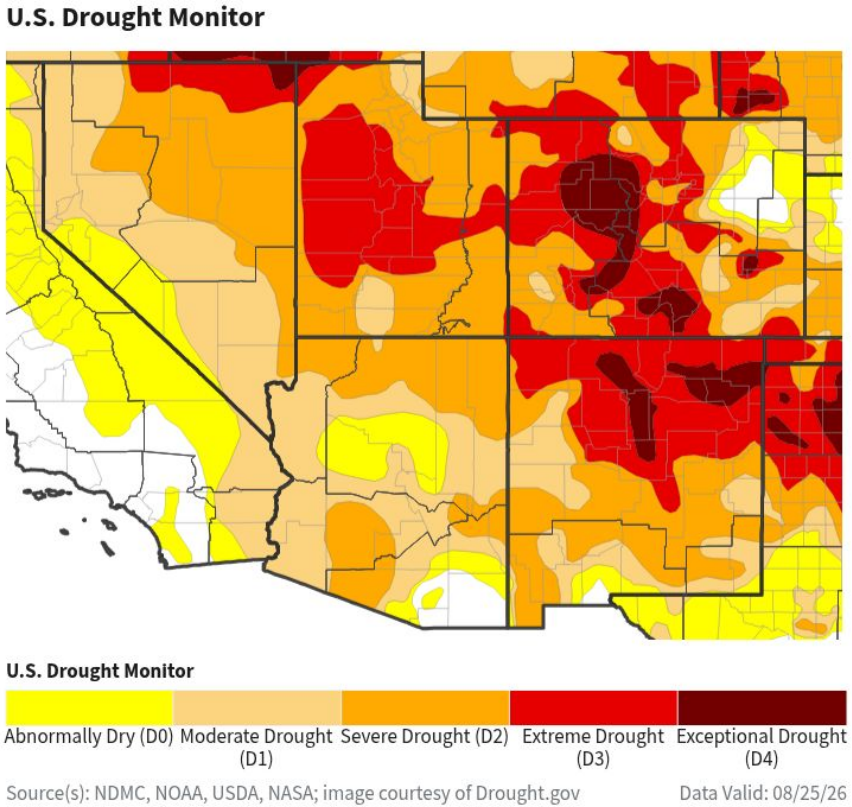
- This product will be updated by September 18th, 2026 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/pub/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates for regional drought status updates.

- Moderate to Exceptional Drought conditions continue across south central and southeast Colorado, with only spotty relief from monsoonal rains

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for Colorado

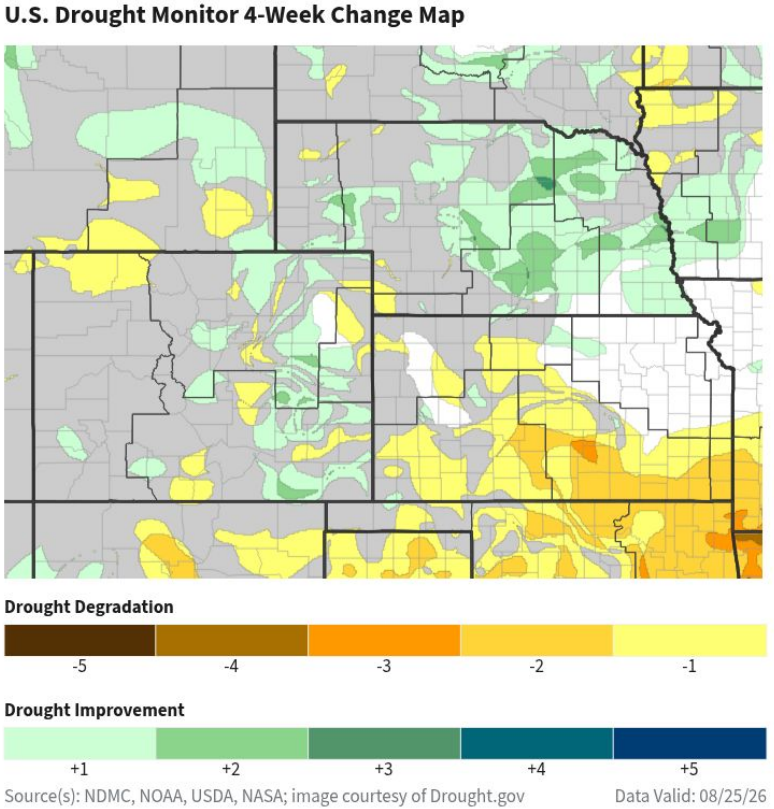
- **Drought intensity and Extent**
  - **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** Lake, most of Chaffee, western Saguache,northern Mineral, northeastern Costilla, the eastern 2/3rd of Alamosa, the western 2/3rds of Huerfano, western Las Animas, western Kiowa, extreme northeast Otero and extreme northwest Bent, counties.
  - **D3 Extreme Drought:** Southeast Chaffee, the rest of Saguache, north central Mineral, southeast through northwest Rio Grande, most of Conejos, western Alamosa, the rest of Costilla,the southern 2/3rds of Fremont, Custer, western Pueblo, the rest of Huerfano, western Las Animas, northwest Teller, north central El Paso, eastern Crowley, northeast Otero, northwest Bent, western Kiowa, and southern Baca, counties.
  - **D2 Severe Drought:** Southern Mineral, western Rio Grande, extreme western Conejos, northern Fremont, the rest of Teller, southwest, south central and northeastern El Paso, central Pueblo, central and southeast Las Animas, most of the rest of Crowley, Otero and Bent, eastern Kiowa, northern Prowers, and northern and eastern Baca, counties.
  - **D1 Moderate Drought:** Southeast El Paso, eastern Pueblo, extreme eastern Crowley, northeast Otero, southern Bent and Prowers, central through northeast Las Animas, and northeast Baca counties.
  - **D0: Abnormally Dry:** N/A



Recent Change in Drought Intensity

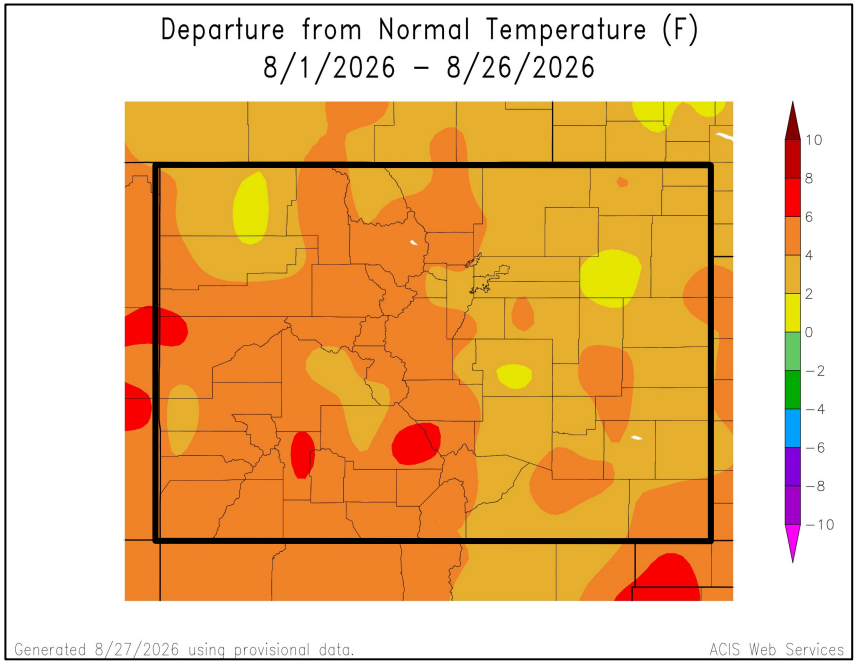
Link to the latest 4-week change map for Colorado

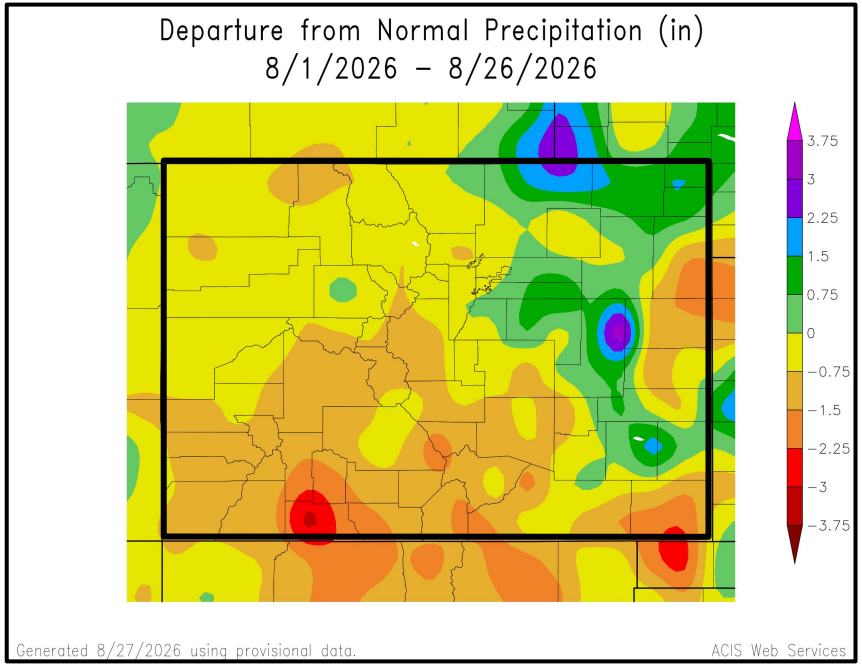
- 4 Week Drought Monitor Class Change.
  - **Drought Worsened:** Portions of the San Luis Valley, El Paso county and the southeast Plains.
  - **No Change:** Much of south central and southeast Colorado
  - **Drought Improved:** Pockets along the ContDvd and the southeast plains



Month to Date Temperature and Precipitation Departure

Links to the latest HPRCC Mean Temperature and Precipitation departures from normal month to date



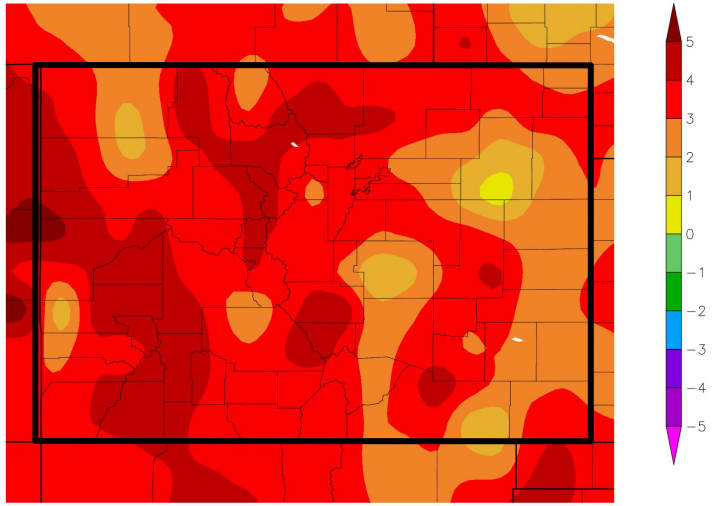


August, thus far, has been unseasonably warm across south central and southeast Colorado, with periods of monsoonal moisture bringing some beneficial moisture to the region, with pockets of above average rainfall across the southeast Plains.

Past 3 Month Temperature and Precipitation Departure

Links to the latest HPRCC Mean Temperature and Precipitation departures from normal over the past 3 months

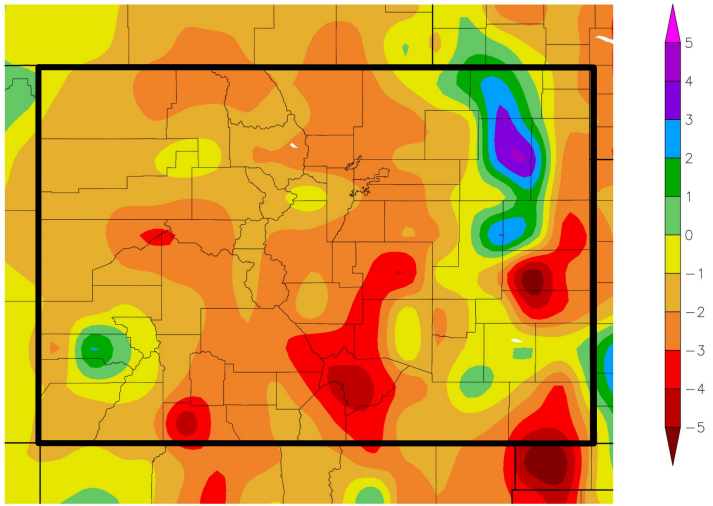
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
5/29/2026 – 8/26/2026



Generated 8/27/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
5/29/2026 – 8/26/2026



Generated 8/27/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

The Summer of 2026 (June, July, August) started out generally warm and dry across south central and southeast Colorado, with passing weather systems through the middle and end of June bringing some precipitation across the higher terrain, along with periods of severe thunderstorms across the southeast Plains. July saw record breaking heat through the middle and end of the month, especially across the SE plains, with smoke from wildfires prevalent throughout much of the beginning of the month. Monsoonal moisture worked into the region towards the middle and end of July, bringing periods of heavy rains, as well as extensive flash flooding on Aspen Acres burn area. August, thus far, has been unseasonably warm across SC and SE Colorado, with periods of monsoonal moisture bringing some beneficial moisture to the region, with pockets of above average rainfall across the southeast Plains.

Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Monsoonal moisture and periods of heavy rain have brought big fluctuations in daily area streamflow, however, general streamflow conditions across south central and southeast Colorado remain below to much below seasonal levels.
- Statewide reservoir storage continues to drop, bringing some area boat ramp closures and limited boating and recreation on some 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

- Increased precipitation and generally light wind regimes associated with the summer monsoon have helped to lower fire danger across the region. However, some area fuels remain critical, with some area fire restrictions still in place.

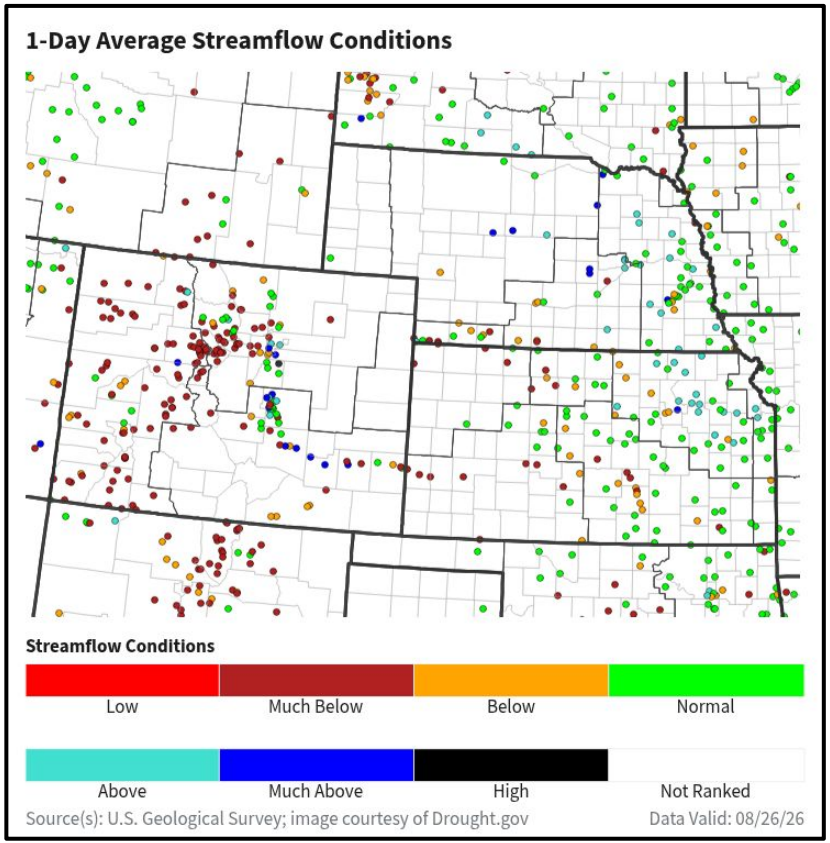
Mitigation Actions

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

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

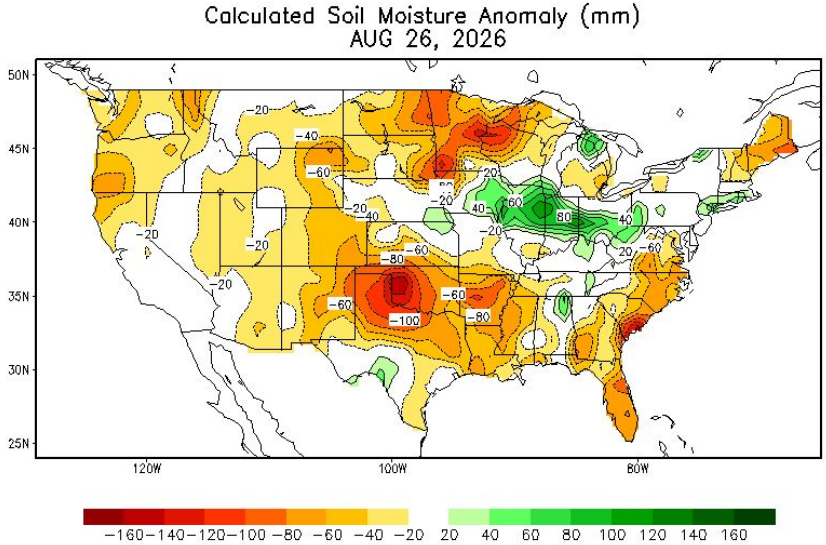
Links to Current NRCS Mountain Precipitation and NWS Western Water Supply and Streamflow Forecasts

- Monsoonal moisture and periods of heavy rain have brought big fluctuations in daily area streamflow, however, general streamflow conditions across south central and southeast Colorado remain below to much below seasonal levels.
- NRCS data indicates **statewide mountain precipitation** for the month of **July was 109 percent of median,** as compared to 73 percent of median at the same time last year. This brings statewide WY 2026 precipitation to 77 percent of median, as compared to 85 percent of median at the same time last year.
- In the **Arkansas basin**, **July precipitation was 80 percent of median,** as compared to 111 percent of median at this time last year. This brings Arkansas basin WY 2026 precipitation to 67 percent of median, as compared to 96 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the **Upper Rio Grande basin**, **July precipitation was 87 percent of median**, as compared to 102 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 85 percent of median at this time last year.



Agricultural and Water Supply Impacts

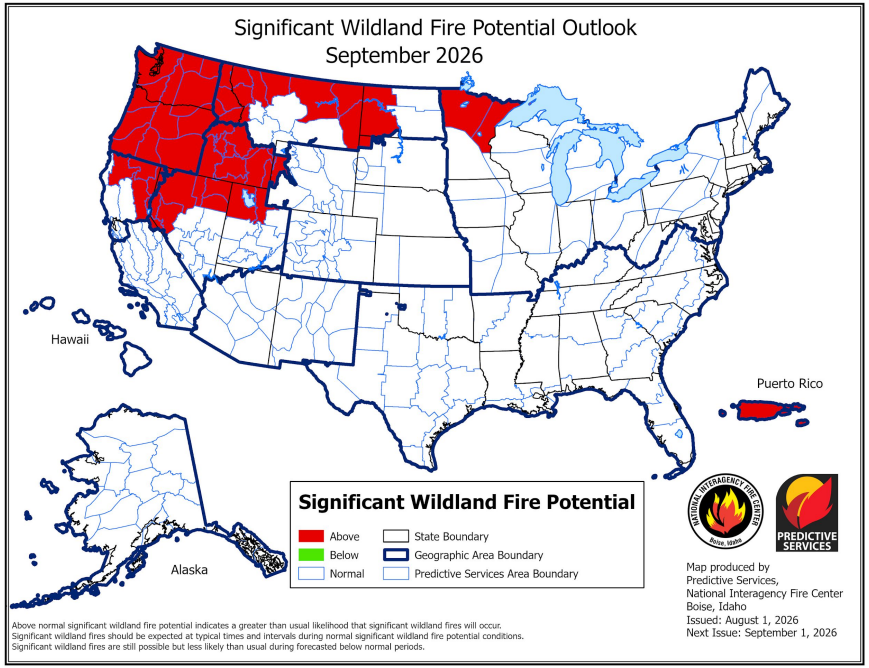
- The latest CPC data indicates soil moisture is running below to well below seasonal norms across south central and southeast Colorado

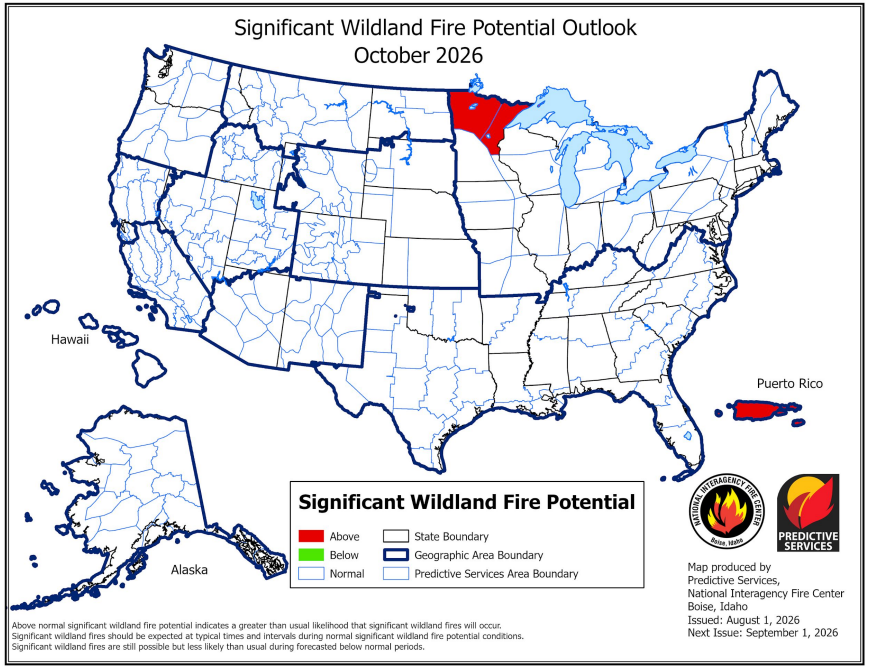


- NRCS data indicated statewide Colorado Reservoir Storage was at 60 percent of median at the end of July, as compared to 81 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the Arkansas basin, reservoir storage was at 75 percent of median at the end of July, as compared to 101 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the Rio Grande basin, reservoir storage was at 88 percent of median at the end of July, as compared to 98 percent of median at this time last year.

Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.

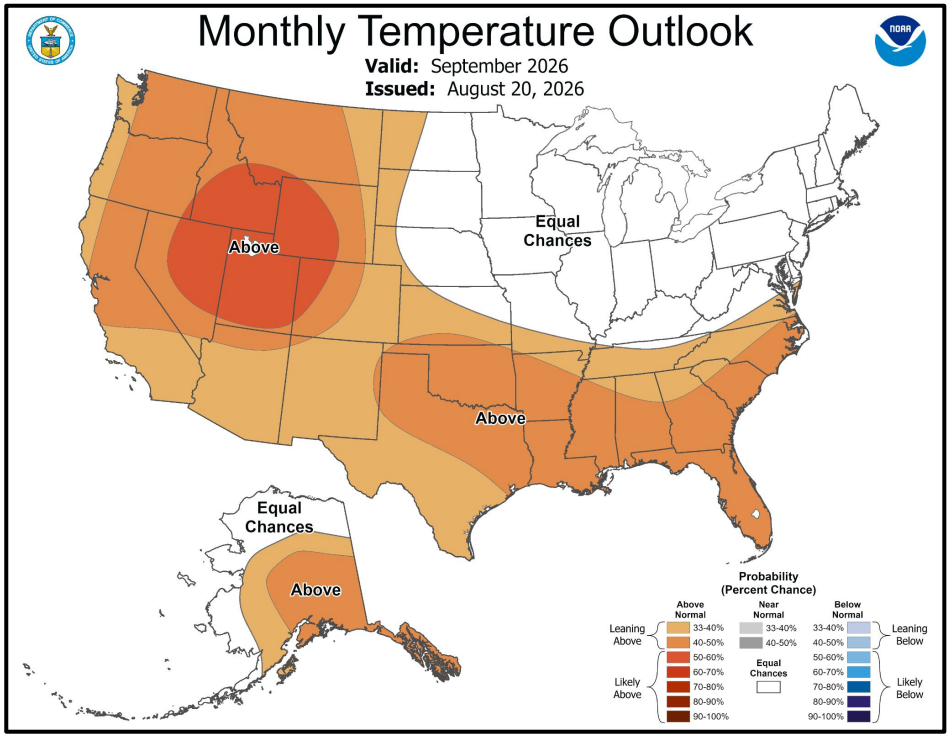


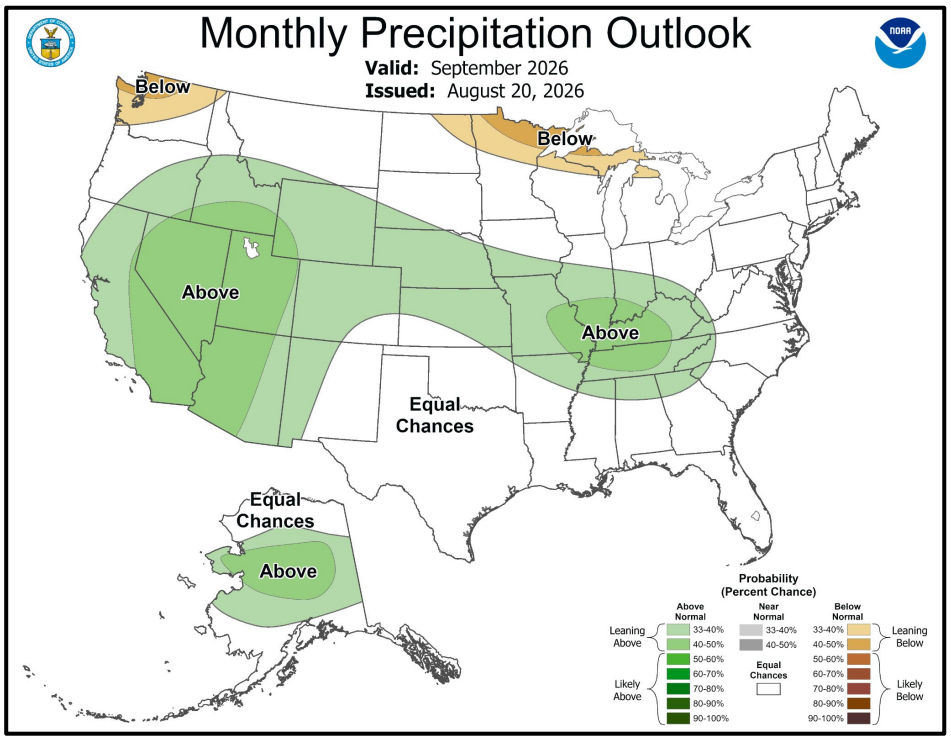


Increased precipitation and generally light wind regimes associated with the summer monsoon have helped to lower fire danger across the region. However, some area fuels remain critical, with some area fire restrictions still in place.

Monthly Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

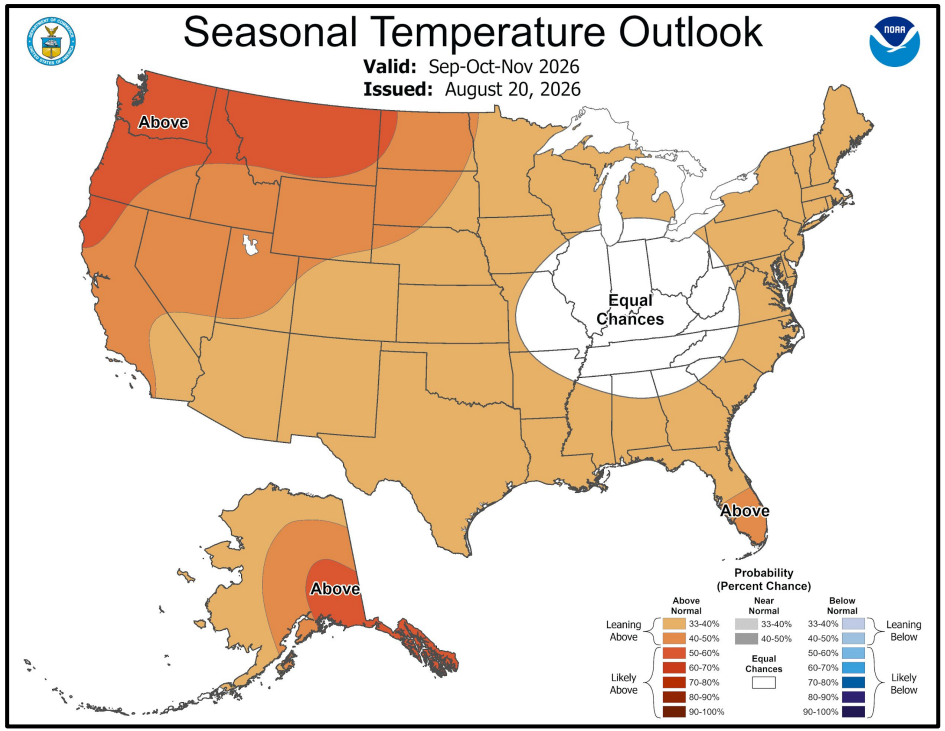


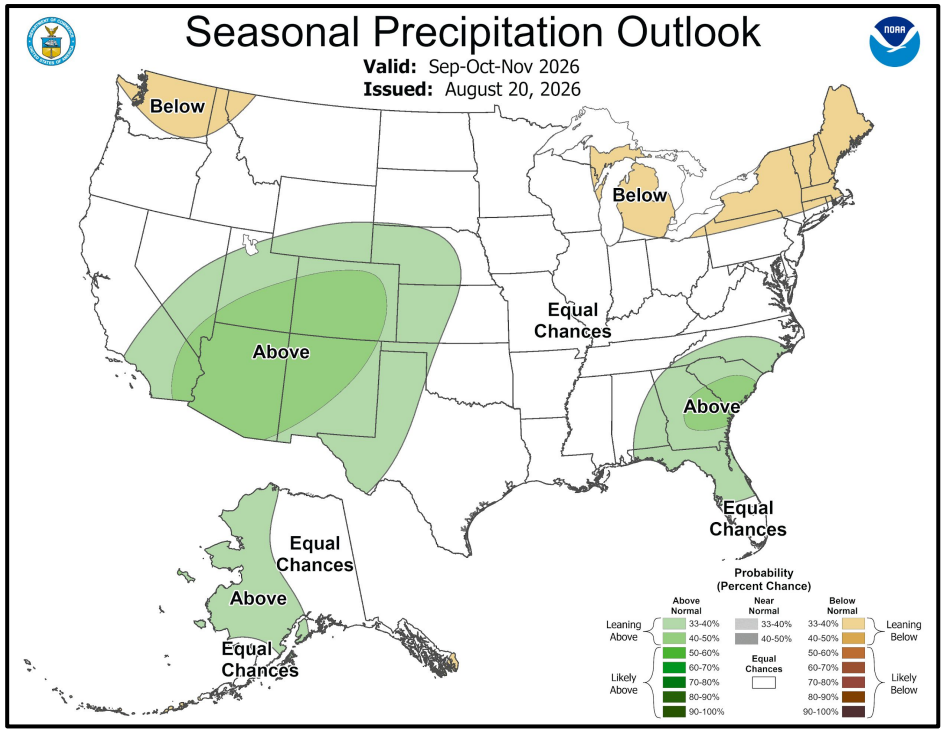


The CPC September outlook indicates better chances of above normal temperatures and precipitation across south central and southeast Colorado, save for equal chances of above, below and near normal precipitation across the southeast plains.

Seasonal Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage



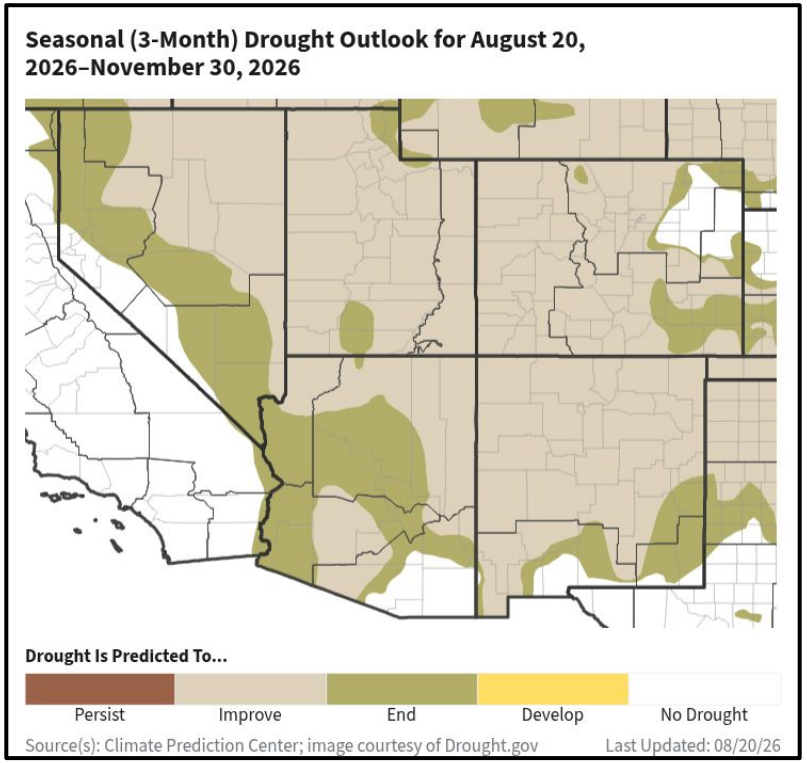


The CPC outlook for September through November indicates better chances of warmer and wetter conditions across south central and southeast Colorado.

Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

The potential for warmer and wetter conditions through the upcoming Fall Season (September through November) supports the CPC forecast for improving drought conditions across south central and southeast Colorado.



Links to the latest:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook
Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook