

Drought Information Statement for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands

Valid September 24th, 2026

Issued By: WFO San Juan, PR

Contact Information: sr-sju.webmaster@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated when drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/sju/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.





U.S. Drought Monitor

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

DROUGHT CONDITIONS: Drought conditions have deteriorated across St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands, now under an **Exceptional Drought (D4)**. Conditions have improved in Puerto Rico due to recent rainfall.

Drought Intensity and Extent:

- **U.S. Virgin Islands:** Exceptional Drought (**D4**) conditions in St. Thomas, Extreme Drought (**D3**) in St. Croix and St. John.
- **Puerto Rico:** (**D3**) are present along the southern plains, Severe Drought (**D2**) along the east and interior. Moderate drought (**D1**) along portions of the central interior and extreme northeast, and Abnormally Dry conditions (**D0**) cover the south-southeast

U.S. Drought Monitor Caribbean

September 22, 2026

(Released Thursday, Sep. 24, 2026)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	31.96	68.04	57.74	45.25	9.64	0.00
Last Week 09-15-2026	26.18	73.82	68.03	57.19	37.14	0.00
3 Months Ago 06-23-2026	31.76	68.24	23.45	5.89	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2026	78.70	21.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	95.49	4.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 09-23-2025	90.44	9.56	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Note: Statistics do not include areas represented by points.

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

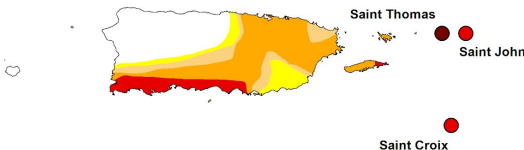


Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor valid 8 AM EDT September 22nd, 2026 .



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Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest [4-week change map](#) for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.

U.S. Drought Monitor Class Change:

- **1 Class degradation** is observed for St. Thomas.
- **1 to 2 Classes improvement** is observed along most of eastern, north central and interior Puerto Rico.

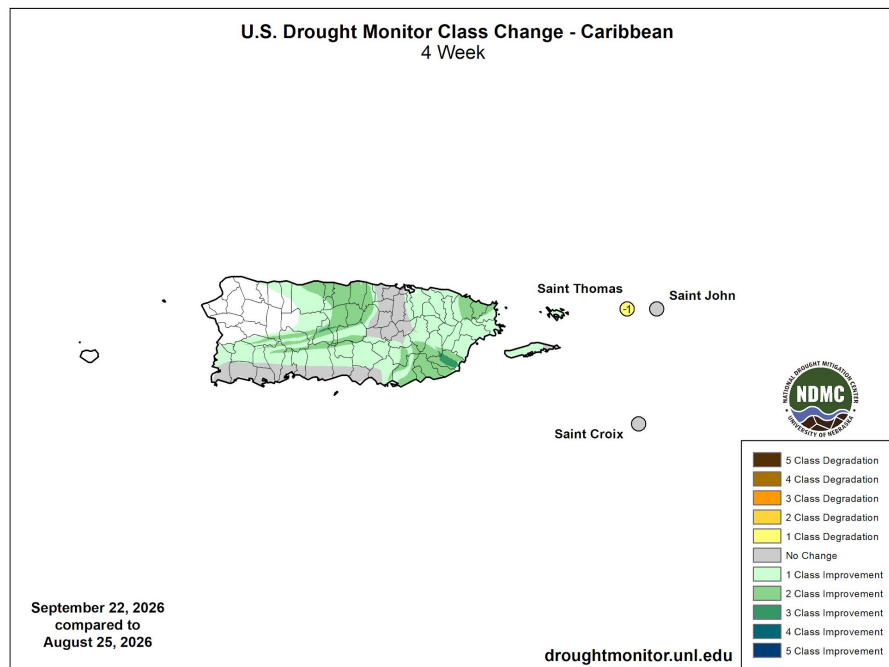


Image Caption: U.S. Drought Monitor 4-week change map valid 8 AM AST September 22nd, 2026.



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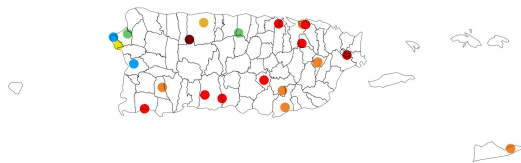


Rainfall

Link to generate the latest [ACIS Climate Maps](#)

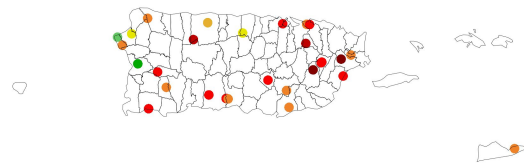
- Based on 60 and 90-days average, most COOP and CoCoRaHS stations are still showing below normal precipitation values.
- Above normal values are observed in some stations along northwest Puerto Rico

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
7/25/2026 – 9/22/2026



Generated 9/23/2026 using provisional data.

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
6/25/2026 – 9/22/2026



ACIS Web Services

Image Captions:
Left - 60-day Departure of Normal Precipitation for Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands
Right - 90-day Departure of Normal Precipitation for Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands
Data Courtesy High Plains Regional Climate Center/NWS COOP Stations.





Summary of Impacts for the Virgin Islands

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

Water Supply Impact

- Water shortages are reported across all islands and supplies are limited. Water production is limited and roughly equals consumption.

Agricultural Impact

- The Virgin Island Department of Agriculture ordered hay and water for livestock. Farmers are reporting crop losses and stopped planting new crops. Some plants such as banana and coconut are falling down or wilting. Mortality rates are increasing along livestock (sheep, goats, cattle), poultry and wildlife. The cost for feed stores is increasing, which add additional socioeconomic constraints. Soil moisture is very low across all islands.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Wildfire concern is increasing. No burn order is in effect for the Virgin Islands

Mitigation Actions

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a Drought Disaster Declaration. The users are advised to use water with caution.





Summary of Impacts for Puerto Rico

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Water Supply Impact

- Lago La Plata remains in Operational Adjustment levels. Lago Blanco, Fajardo, Guayabal and Cidra are at observational levels. Wells along southern Puerto Rico remain at critical or operational adjustment levels.

Agricultural Impact

- Water restrictions were imposed along the irrigation channels in the southwest. The lack of rain affected crops such as avocados, breadfruit, coffee, sweet pepper, and coconut. Hay and water are restricted. Recent rainfall brought temporary relief for farmer, but produce will not likely recover on time to supply the seasonal demands.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Fire reports have diminished due to recent rainfalls.

Mitigation Actions

- Water rationing was implemented in the south, but only for agricultural purposes. U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a Drought Disaster Declaration. The users are advised to use water with caution.





Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

The latest 28-day average historical streamflow from USGS can be found [here](#)

- The 28-day average streamflow from the USGS river gauge network indicates most rivers are running below to much below normal.
- However, some rivers in the northeast, northwest, and the interior are running near normal.
- Groundwater wells are showing decreasing water levels along southern [Puerto Rico](#), and across the [Virgin Islands](#).

Puerto Rico 28-Day Average Streamflow Status

28-day average streamflow compared with historical 28-day streamflow

58 of 77 stations ranked · Last refreshed: Sep 24, 2026, 7:21 AM AST

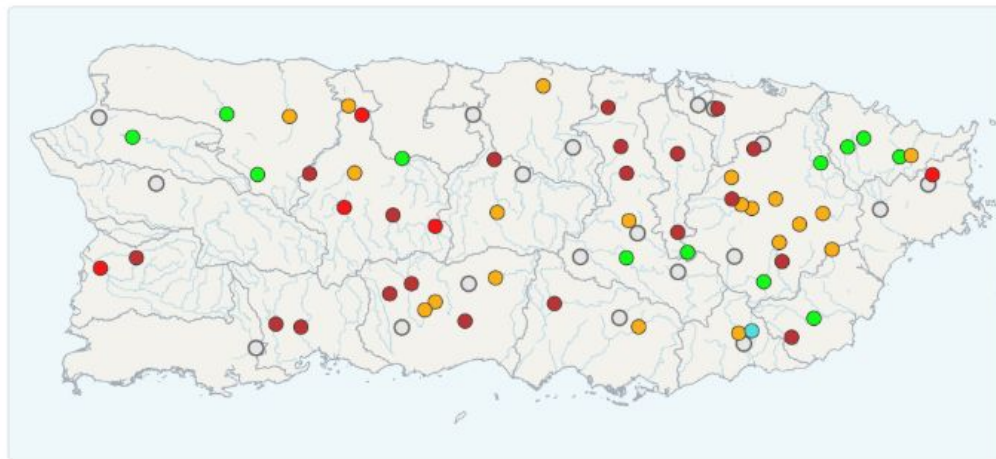
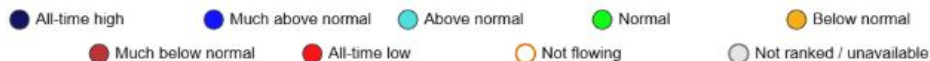


Image Caption: USGS streamflow plot valid Thursday, September 22nd, 2026





Long-Range Outlooks

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

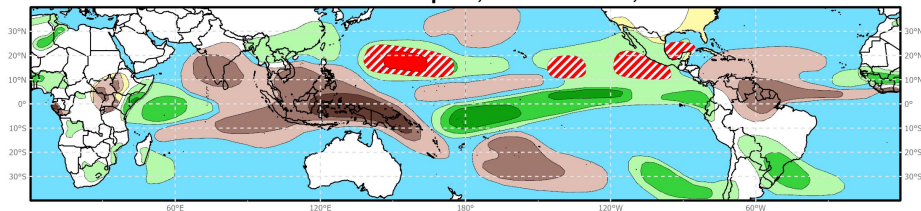


Global Tropics Hazards Outlook

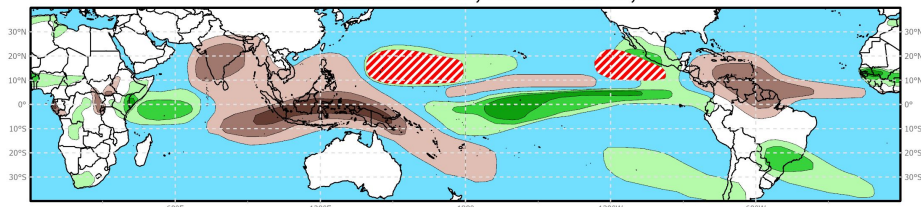
Climate Prediction Center



Week 2 - Valid: Sep 30, 2026 - Oct 06, 2026



Week 3 - Valid: Oct 07, 2026 - Oct 13, 2026



Tropical Cyclone (TC)
Formation Probability



Tropical Depression (TD)
or greater strength

Above-Average
Rainfall Probability



Weekly total rainfall in the
Upper third of the historical range

Below-Average
Rainfall Probability



Weekly total rainfall in the
Lower third of the historical range

Above-Average
Temperatures Probability



7-day mean temperatures in the
Upper third of the historical range

Below-Average
Temperatures Probability



7-day mean temperatures in the
Lower third of the historical range

Issued: 09/22/2026

This product is updated once per week and targets broad scale conditions integrated over a 7-day period for US interests only.
Consult your local responsible forecast agency.

Image Caption: Global Tropics Hazards Outlook for September 30-October 13, 2026.

- The **Global Tropics Hazards Outlook** indicates below normal precipitation chances for the northeastern Caribbean through at least mid-October.



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Long-Range Outlooks

The latest three-months precipitation outlook can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- In the **North American Multi-Model Ensemble (NMME)**, favors much **BELOW** normal precipitation for the period of October-December 2026 ([50-60% chance](#)).

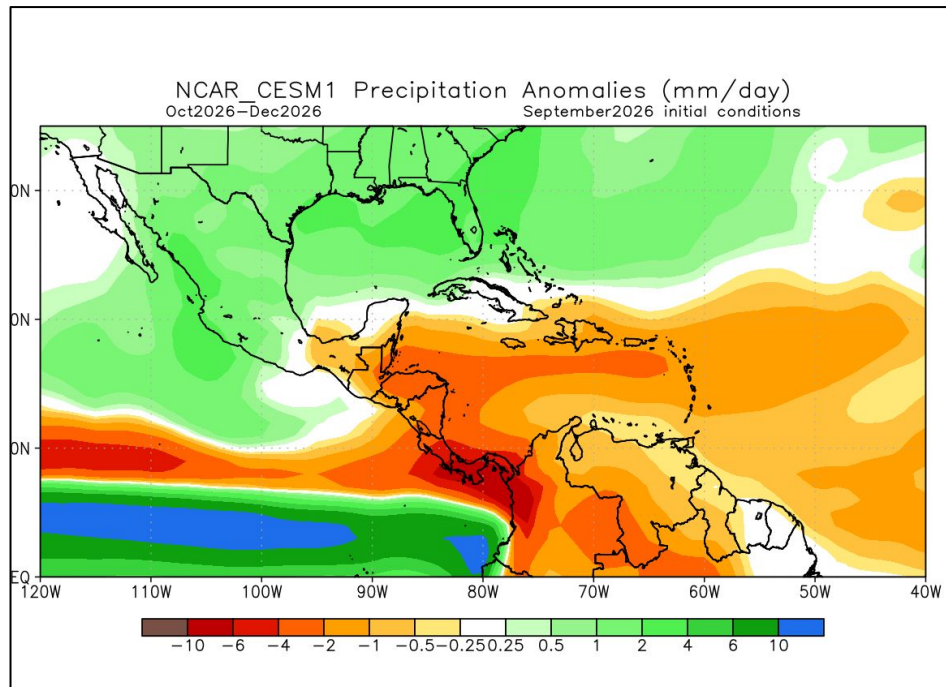


Image Caption: NMME precipitation forecast issued for October-December 2026.

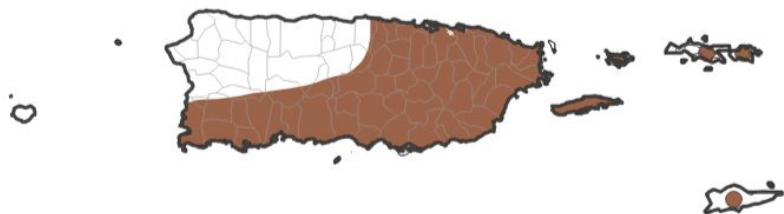




Drought Outlook

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

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for September 17,
2026–December 31, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...



- Based on the latest forecast, drought conditions are expected to persist across most of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.



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