Drought Information Statement for Eastern Oklahoma and Northwestern Arkansas
Valid September 10, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Tulsa, OK

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

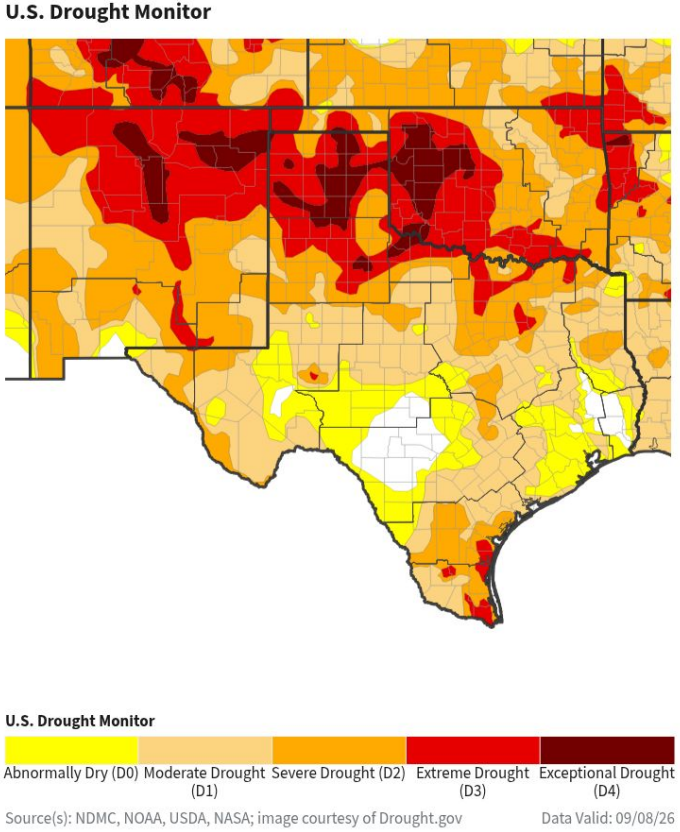
- This product will be updated October 9, 2026 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/tsa/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates for regional drought status updates.

- Drought conditions have rapidly worsened across eastern Oklahoma and northwestern Arkansas.
- Exceptional Drought (D4) conditions are now present in northwest AR.
- Extreme Drought (D3) conditions are affecting many counties.
- Lack of rainfall and well above normal temperatures over the last 30 to 60 days have led to this flash drought.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for Eastern Oklahoma and Northwestern Arkansas

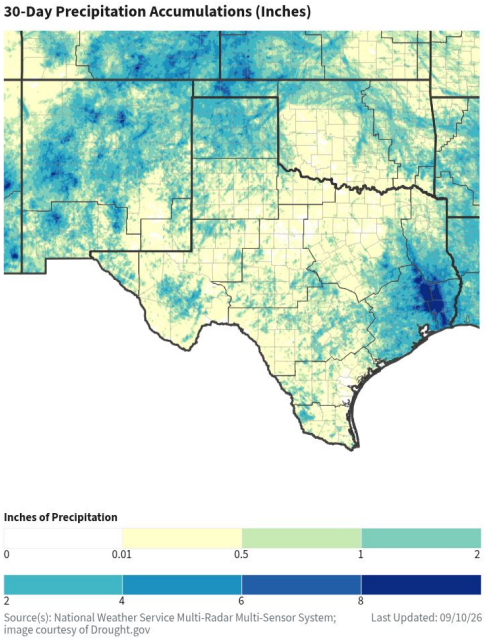
- Drought intensity and Extent
  - **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**: Benton and Washington Counties in northwest AR
  - **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Osage, Washington, Nowata, Rogers, Craig, Mayes, Ottawa, Delaware, Adair, Sequoyah, Le Flore, Pushmataha, and Choctaw Counties in eastern OK and Benton, Washington, Madison, Crawford, Sebastian, and Franklin Counties in northwest AR
  - **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Pawnee, Osage, Washington, Nowata, Rogers, Mayes, Tulsa, Wagoner, Cherokee, Delaware, Adair, Sequoyah, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Okfuskee, Creek, McIntosh, Pittsburg, Latimer, Haskell, Le Flore, Pushmataha, and Choctaw Counties in eastern OK and Carroll, Madison, Sebastian, and Franklin Counties in northwest AR
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Pawnee, Osage, Creek, Tulsa, Wagoner, Okmulgee, Muskogee, McIntosh, Pittsburg, Sequoyah, and Cherokee Counties in eastern OK, and Carroll and Madison Counties in northwest AR
  - **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: none

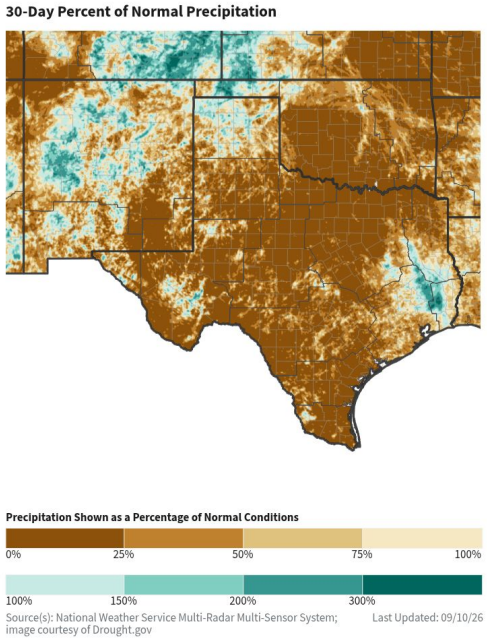


Precipitation

- Over the last 30 days (ending at 7 am CDT September 9, 2026), rainfall totals have ranged from 0” to 3”, with most of eastern Oklahoma and northwestern Arkansas receiving 0.2”-1”. This corresponds to <1% to around 83% of normal, with most of the area 2% to 25% of normal.

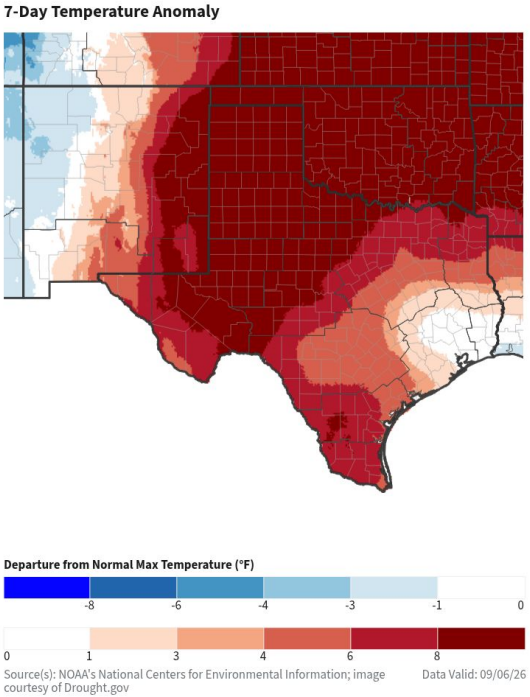
- Over the last 60 days (ending at 7 am CDT September 9, 2026), rainfall totals have ranged from around 0.25” to 9.5”, with most of the area receiving 1”-4”. This corresponds to 2%-120% of normal, with most of the area at 10%-50% of normal.

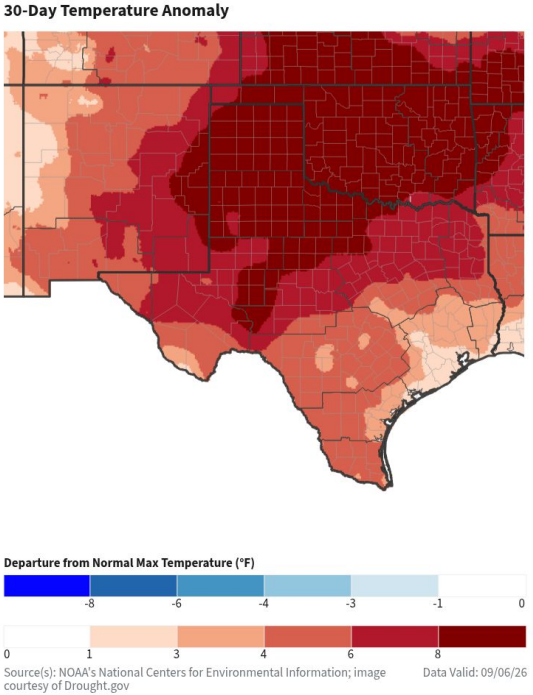




Temperature

- Temperatures were well above normal for August and the beginning of September, with numerous days at or above 100°F across the region.
- August was the warmest on record in Fayetteville, AR (since 1949); 3rd warmest on record in Fort Smith, AR (since 1882), and 5th warmest on record in Tulsa, OK (since 1905).
- McAlester, OK and Fayetteville, AR recorded the hottest average August maximum temperature on record, with Fort Smith, AR coming in as 2nd hottest on record.
- Fort Smith, AR, Fayetteville, AR, and McAlester, OK set new records for number of days in August ≥ 100°F





Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Numerous rivers had below normal streamflow or were not flowing at all as of September 9, 2026 according to the USGS.
- Most USACE reservoirs in eastern OK and northwestern AR were only utilizing 79%-94% of their conservation pools as of September 9, 2026 (https://www.swt-wc.usace.army.mil/map/)

Agricultural Impacts

- Numerous reports across northeastern OK and northwestern AR of widespread, severe agricultural impacts (https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx)

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Burn bans were in effect across most of eastern Oklahoma and all of northwestern Arkansas as of September 9, 2026.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential is above normal for all of Oklahoma and Arkansas for September 2026.

Other Impacts

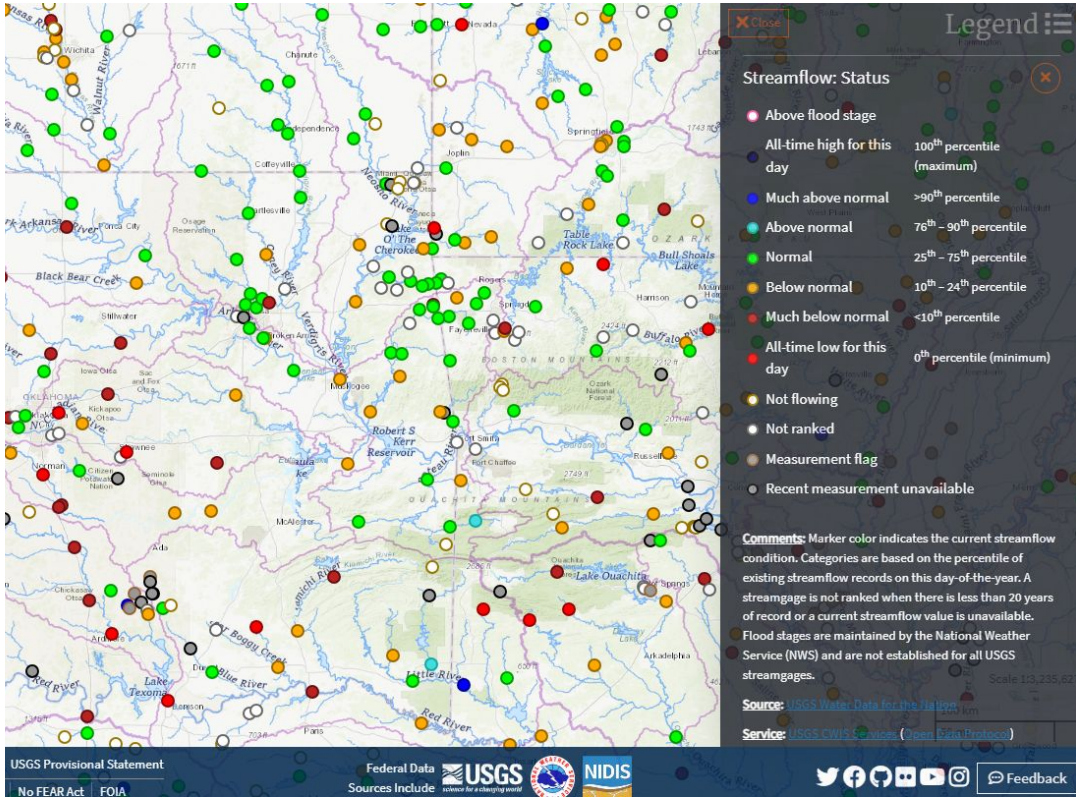
- Trees are stressed or dying, and wildlife is looking for food and water.

Mitigation Actions

- The City of Bixby, OK has mandatory water conservation measures in place. Mandatory lawn irrigation water restrictions in place for the Benton/Washington Regional Public Water Authority in northwestern AR. The Beaver Water District in northwestern AR recommends alternating lawn watering. The City of Fort Smith, AR has voluntary water conservation measures in place.

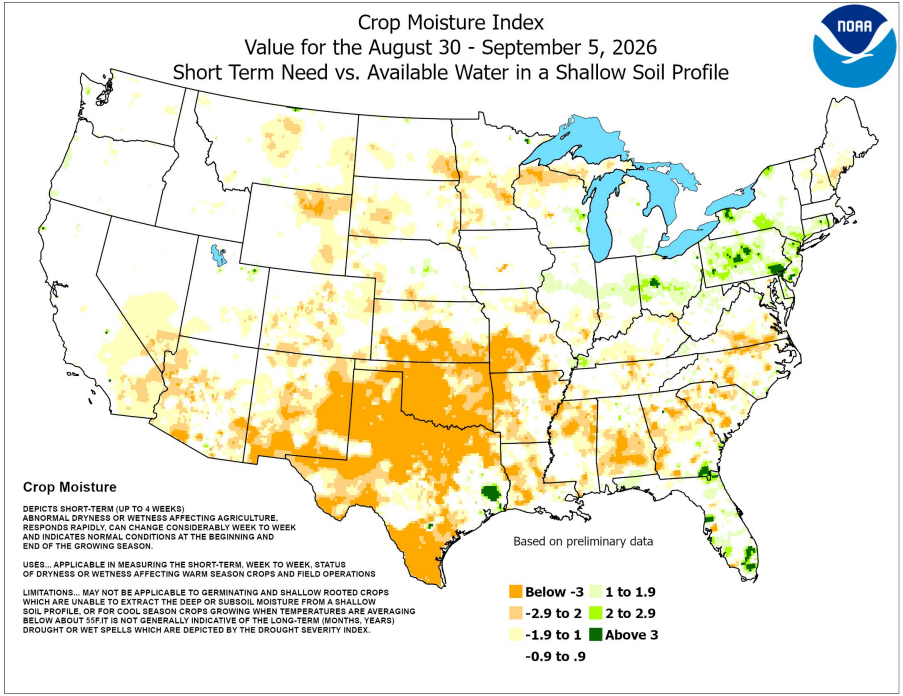
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- The 9/09/2026 USGS streamflow (image on the right) was normal to much below normal for this date for most rivers across northeastern OK and northwestern AR, and some rivers were not flowing at all.
- USGS gages that were much below normal:
  - Bird Creek at Hwy 266 near Catoosa
  - White River near Fayetteville
  - Kiamichi River near Clayton
  - Red River at Arthur City
- USGS gages that were at an all-time low for this day: Yocum Creek near Oak Grove
- USGS gages reporting no flow:
  - Tar Creek near Commerce and at 22nd St Bridge at Miami
  - Horse Creek at Afton
  - Haikey Creek at 101st St at Tulsa
  - Jones Creek, Frog Bayou, and Jack Creek at Winfrey
  - Black Fork near Page
  - Kiamichi River near Big Cedar
- Most USACE reservoirs in the Arkansas, Verdigris, lower Red, and upper White River Basins were operating at 79% to 94% of their conservation pools as of 9/09/2026.



Agricultural Impacts

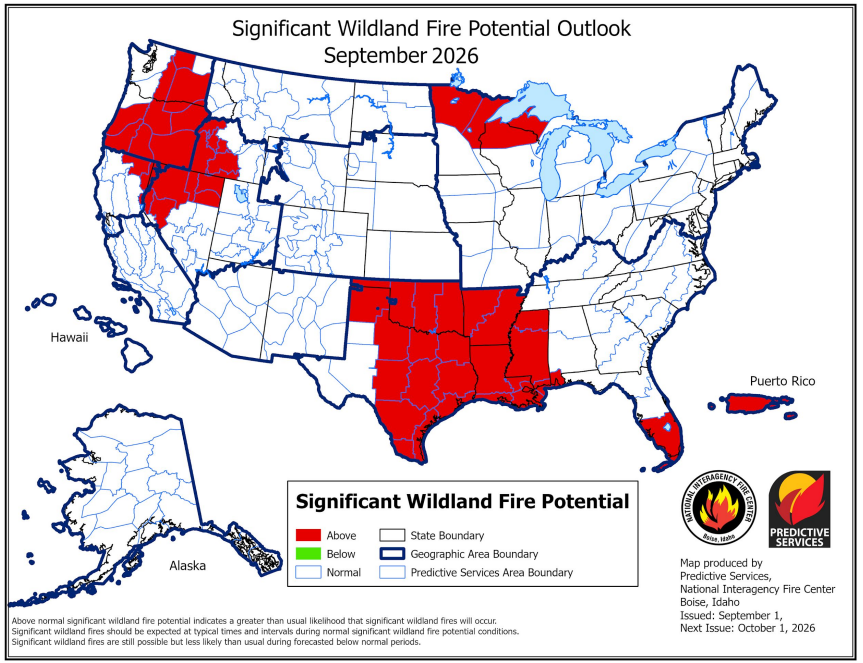
- Numerous reports across northeastern OK and northwestern AR of widespread, severe agricultural impacts:
  - Dried up ponds, creeks, springs and wells going dry
  - Poor water quality in ponds with some water
  - Poor range conditions with most grass brittle/dying and of no nutritional value, requiring supplemental feeding for livestock
  - Loss of corn and soybean crops
  - Planted seed not sprouting
  - Dry, cracking ground
  - Poor growth and loss of calves/livestock
  - Early selling of livestock
  - A farm in northern Benton Co. reported their fish pond has reached to lowest level in 20 years.



Fire Hazard Impacts

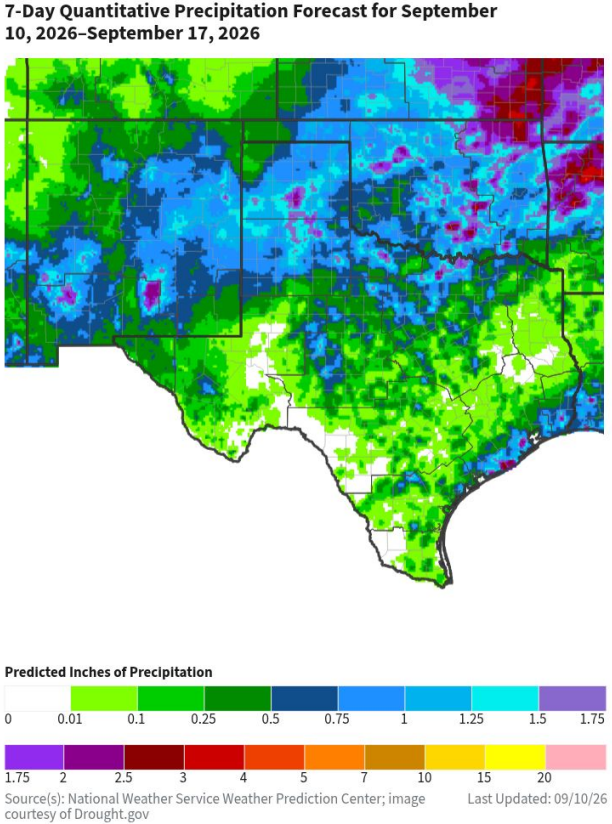
Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.]

- Burn Bans were in effect for a large portion of eastern OK and all of northwest AR as of September 9, 2026.
- Burn Bans in eastern OK: Washington, Tulsa, Nowata, Craig, Ottawa, Delaware, Mayes, Rogers, Cherokee, Adair, Muskogee, McIntosh, Haskell, Sequoyah, Le Flore, Latimer, Pittsburg, Pushmataha, and Choctaw Counties
- Burn Bans in northwest AR: Benton, Carroll, Washington, Madison, Crawford, Sebastian, and Franklin Counties
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential is above normal for all of Oklahoma and Arkansas for September 2026.
- Rapid fire spread should be expected when fire weather parameters of warm temperatures, low relative humidity, and gusty winds are present.



Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- Showers and thunderstorms were ongoing today and the chance for rain will continue through September 12, 2026.
- There is also a 20%-40% chance of rain September 15-17.
- 0.50” to 3” of total rainfall is currently forecast over the next 7 days.
- Localized higher rain totals may occur in areas that have thunderstorm activity.
- Temperatures will be near normal today, with a return to above normal temperatures for the remainder of the 7-day forecast.



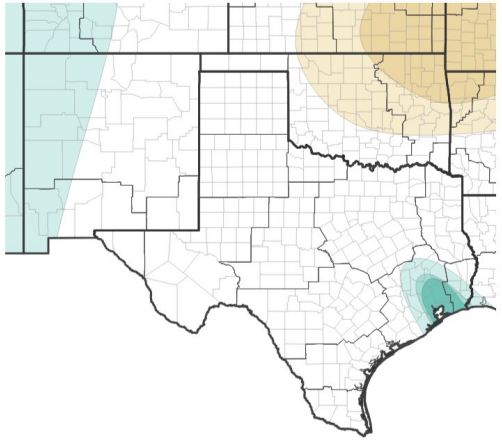
Long-Range Outlooks

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

- There is an enhanced chance for below median precipitation across most of eastern OK and northwestern AR, though there is an equal chance for above, near, or below median precipitation across far southeastern OK for September.
- For the September-November season, there is an equal chance for above, near, or below median precipitation across eastern OK and northwestern AR.

- There is a significantly enhanced chance for above normal temperatures across all of eastern OK and northwestern AR for September.
- For the September-November season, there is an enhanced chance for above normal temperatures across all of eastern OK and northwestern AR.

Monthly Precipitation Outlook for September 1, 2026–September 30, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

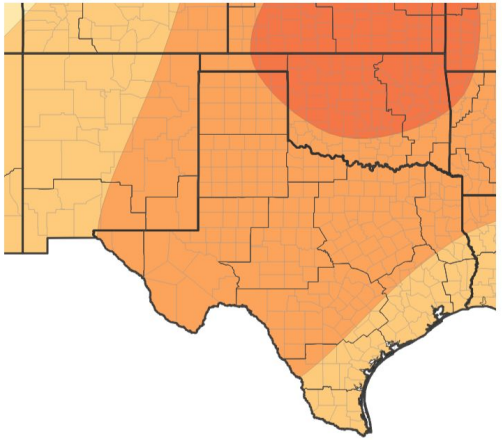
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 08/31/26

Monthly Temperature Outlook for September 1, 2026–September 30, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50%

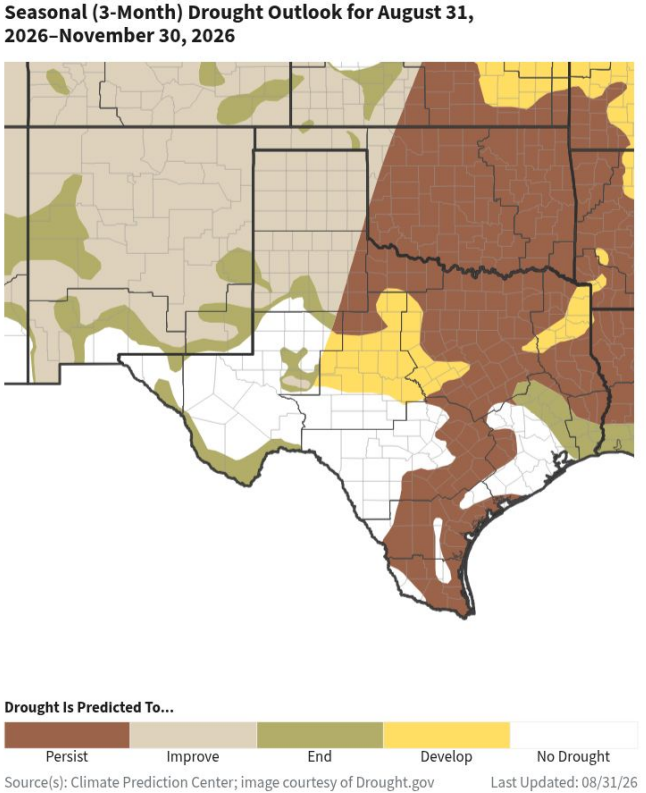
Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 08/31/26

Drought Outlook

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

The Seasonal Drought Outlook for August 31 - November 30, 2026:

- Drought conditions are expected to persist across all of eastern OK and northwestern AR.



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