



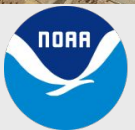
Drought Information Statement for Northern and Eastern Maine

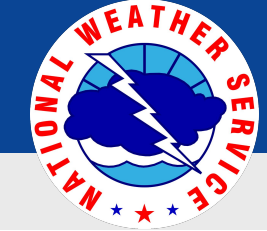
Valid October 1, 2026

Issued By: WFO Caribou, ME

- Next update by Thursday, October 8th unless conditions warrant sooner
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/car/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/car> for regional drought status updates.

- Drought conditions persist; streamflows near record lows.
- Below-normal groundwater in Eastern and Northern Maine.
- Recent rainfall provides temporary relief in Downeast and Bangor.
- Drought expected to continue through fall, with potential winter relief.





U.S. Drought Monitor

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

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

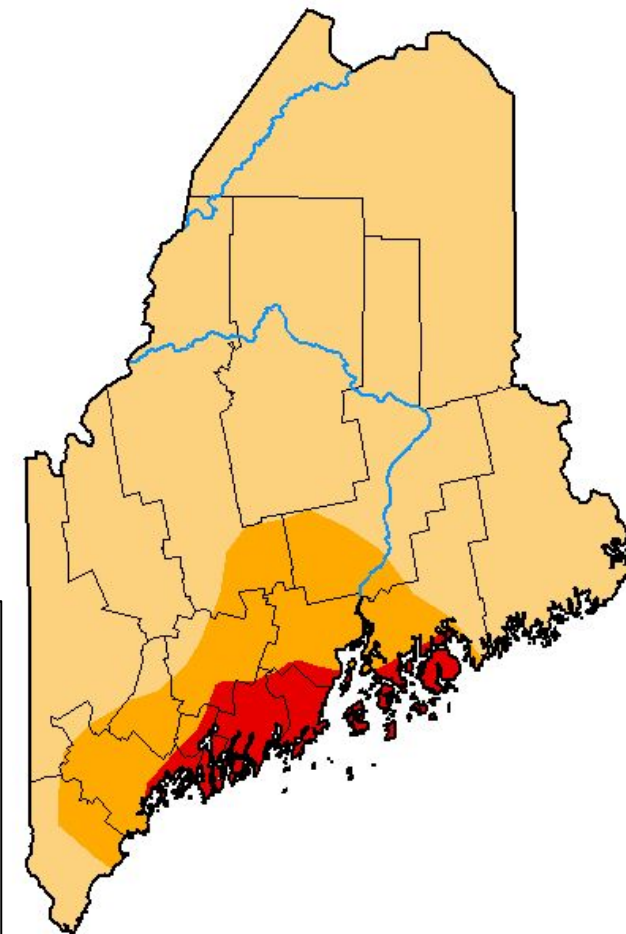
- **Drought Intensity and Extent:**

- **D3 (Extreme Drought):** Coastal Hancock County mainly MDI to Castine.
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** Southern Penobscot and Western Hancock counties
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** All of Aroostook, Washington, Piscataquis, Northern & Central Penobscot and Northern Hancock counties.

Percentage of Maine in Drought

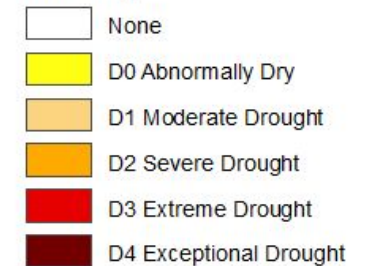
- No Drought: 0.00%
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** 0.00%
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):** 80.71%
- **D2 (Severe Drought):** 14.38%
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):** 4.92%

U.S. Drought Monitor Maine



September 29, 2026
(Released Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity:



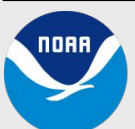
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Jonathan Case
NASA/MSFC/UAH

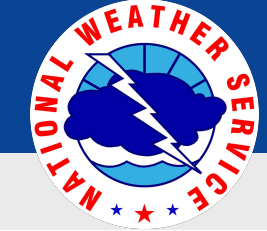


droughtmonitor.unl.edu



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

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

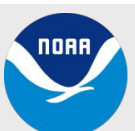
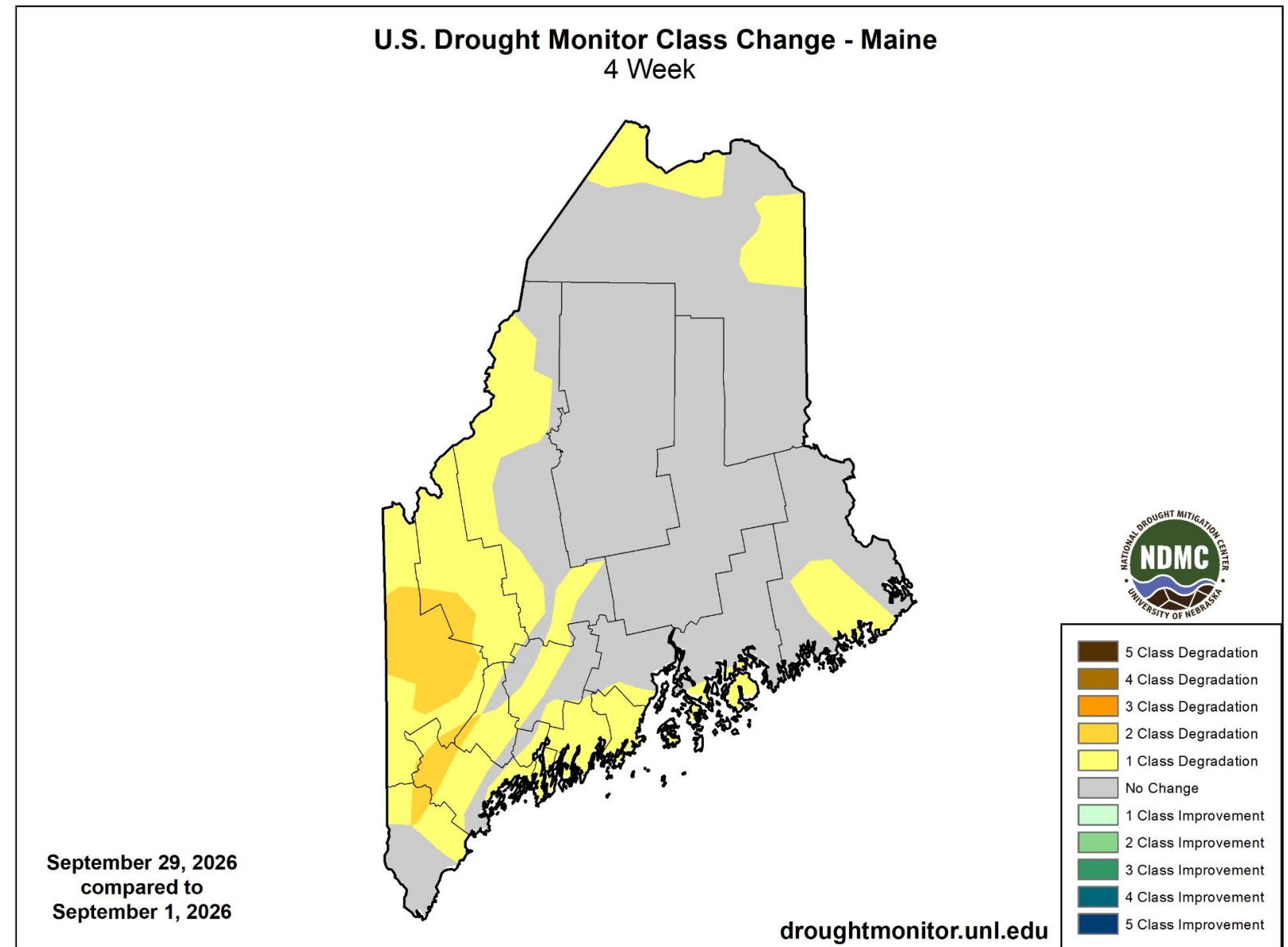


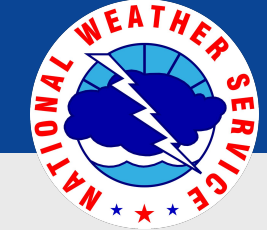
Recent Change in Drought Intensity

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Link to the latest [1-month change map](#) for Northeast U.S.

- Four week drought monitor class change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** Western St. John Valley to northern Crown; small areas of coastal Hancock and south-central Washington counties.
 - **Drought Improved:** None.
 - **No Change:** Rest of the area.



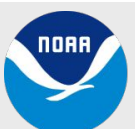
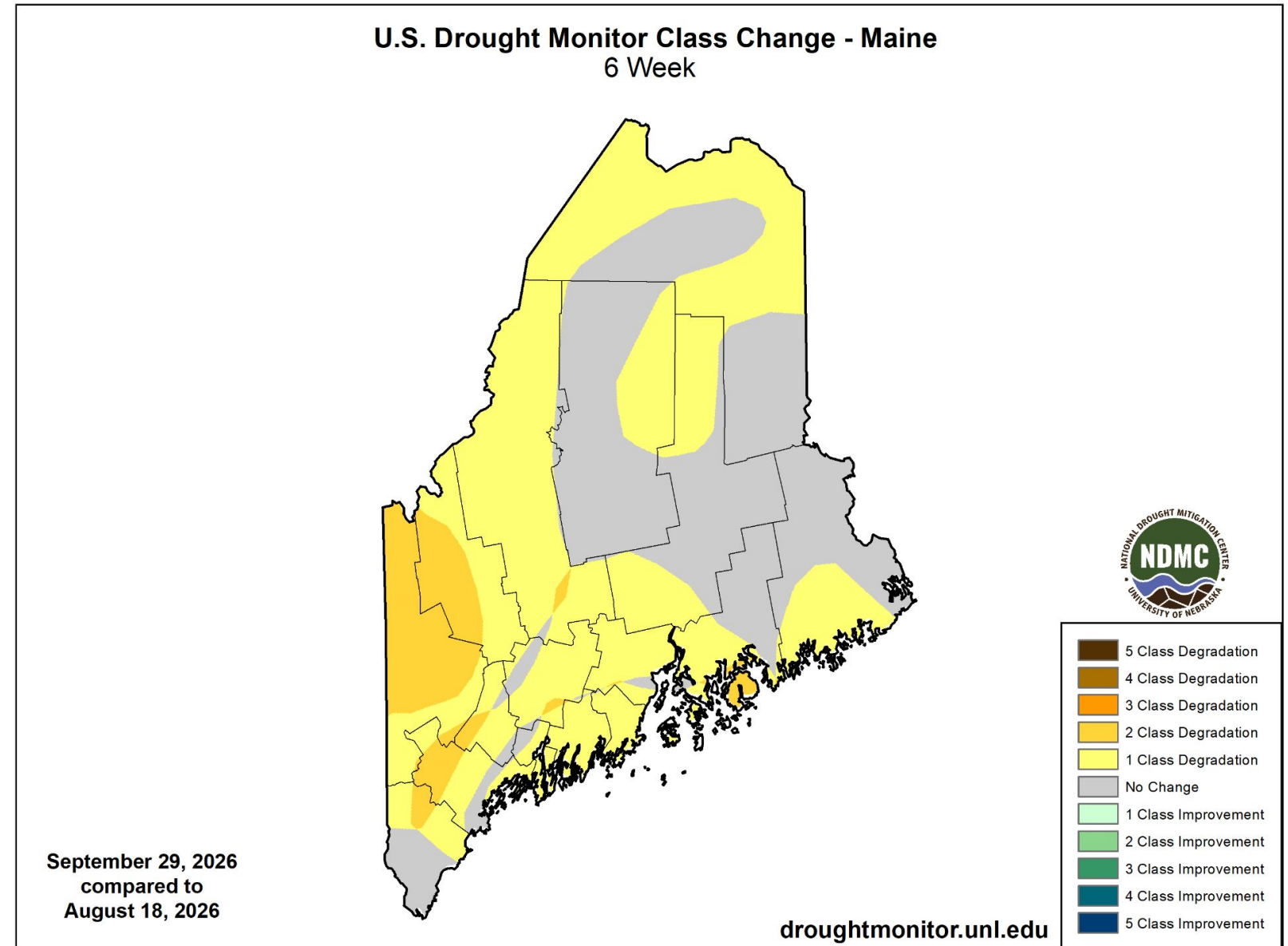


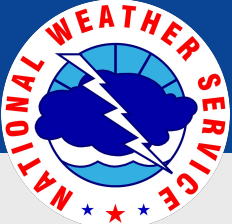
Recent Change in Drought Intensity

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Link to the latest [6-week change map](#) for Northeast U.S.

- Four week drought monitor class change:
 - **Drought Worsened:** Northern and Northeast Aroostook, Northeast Piscataquis, Northern Somerset, Northern and far Southern Penobscot, Southwest Hancock, and Southern Washington counties.
 - **Drought Improved:** None.
 - **No Change:** Central Penobscot, Northern, Much of Piscataquis & Eastern Hancock, Northern & far Eastern Washington counties.





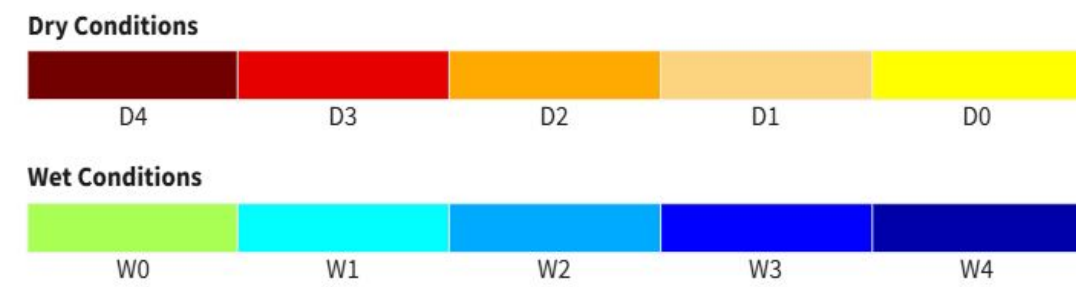
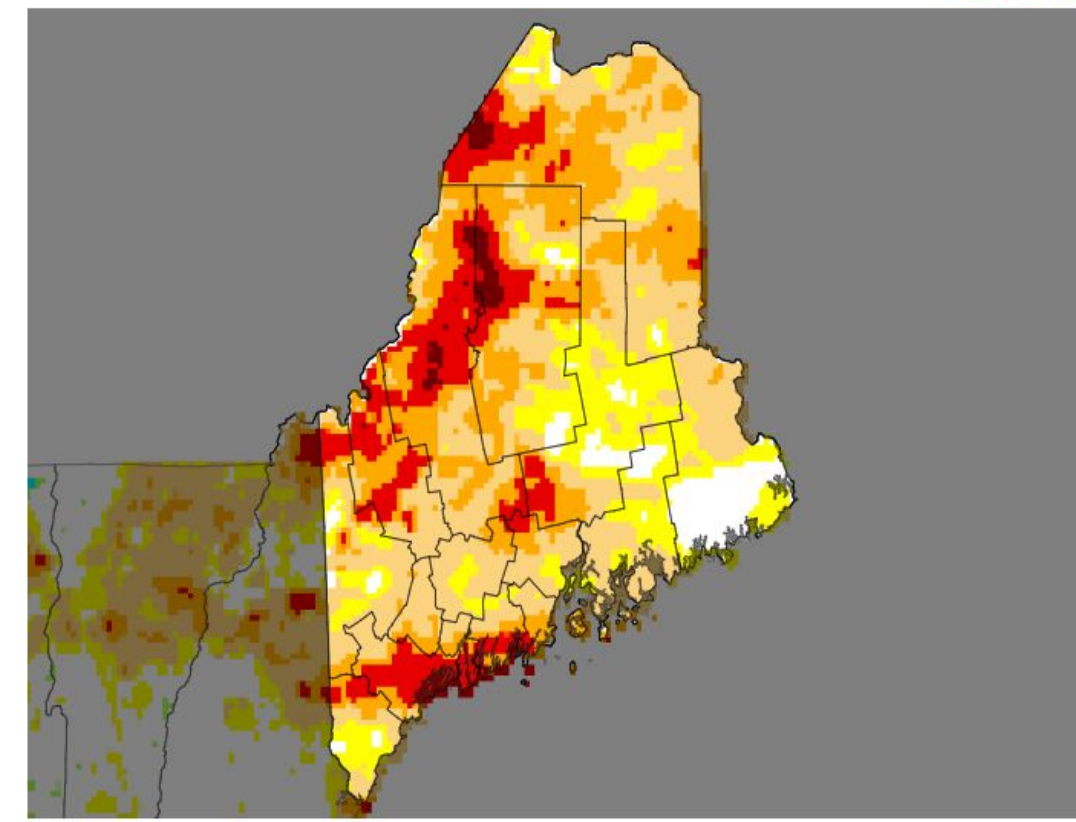
Short & Long Term Drought Index

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Link to the Maine [Drought.gov](https://www.drought.gov) Maps: www.drought.gov/states/maine

- The Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index (MIDI) estimates current short-term drought conditions by combining several indicators of drought into a single, map from changes in precipitation and moisture over the past 3 months.
- Continued worsening of groundwater & surface water conditions in large sections of the forecast area.
- The Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index (MIDI) estimates current long-term drought conditions by combining several indicators of drought into a single map from changes in precipitation and moisture over the past 5 years.

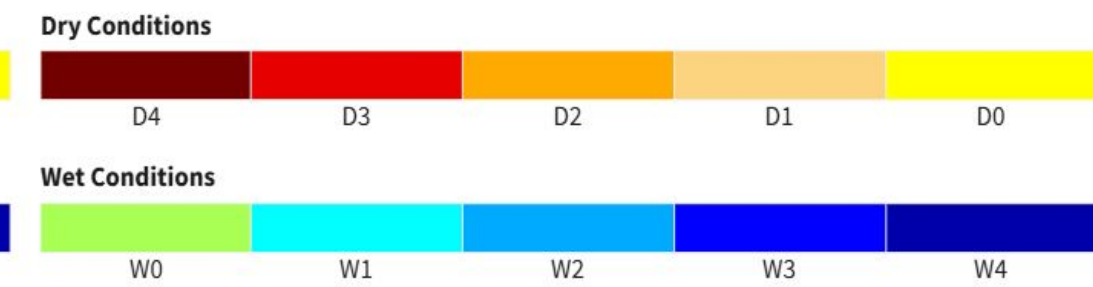
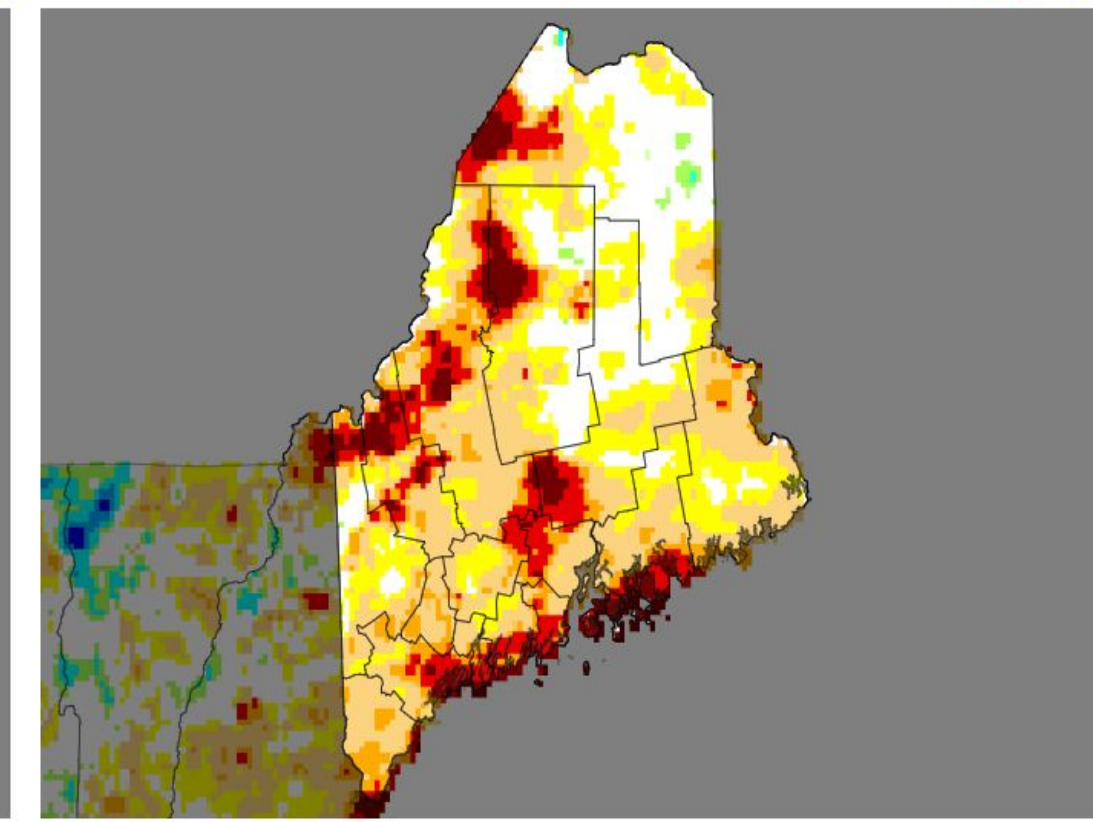
Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine
Data Valid: 09/22/26

[Drought.gov](https://www.drought.gov)

Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine
Data Valid: 09/22/26

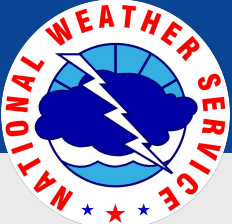
[Drought.gov](https://www.drought.gov)



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

This experimental map is based on methodology from the NOAA National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME



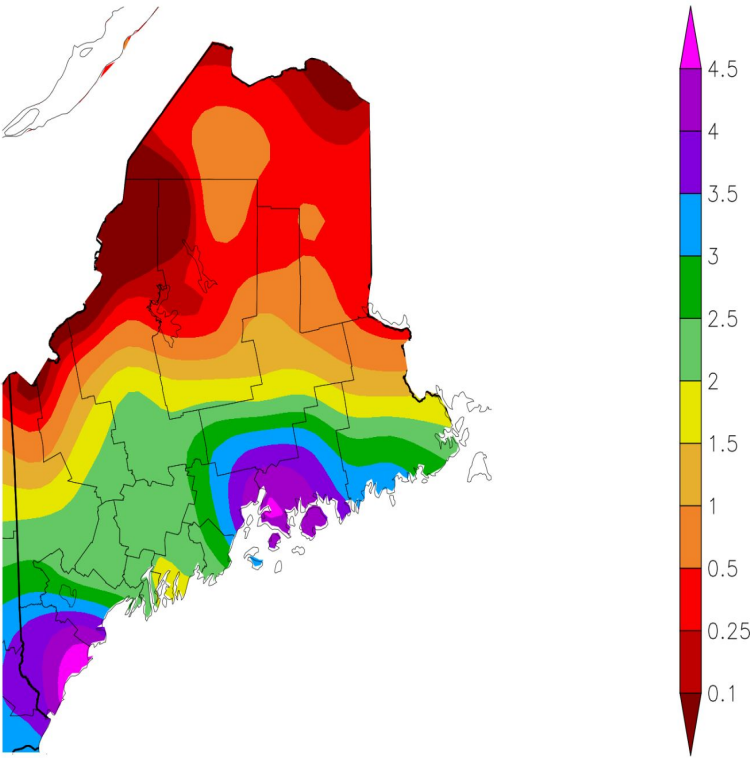
14 Day Precipitation

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

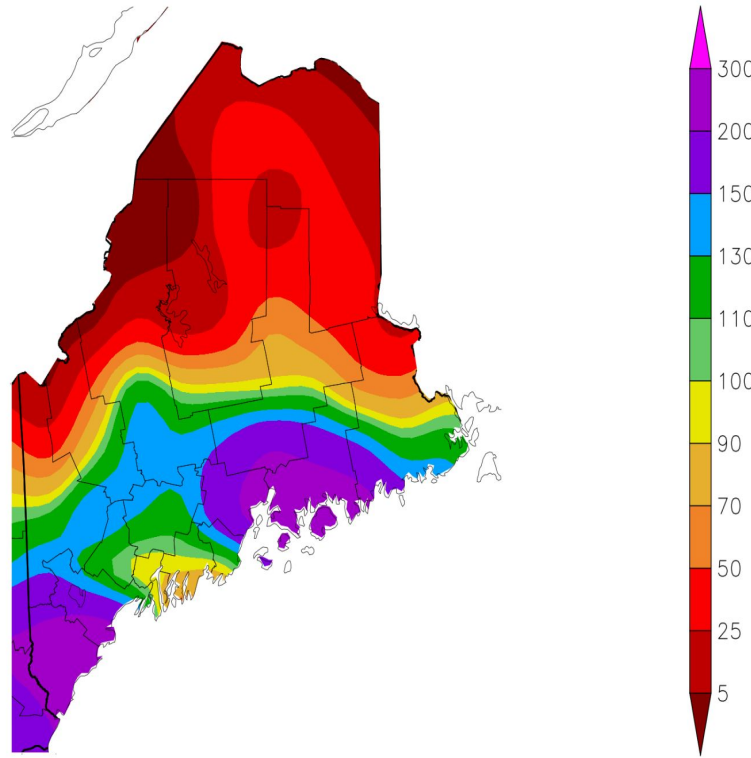
- Precipitation Above Normal for the Bangor Region & Downeast Maine.
- Precipitation Near Normal for Southern Piscataquis County eastward to interior Downeast near Calais.
- Precipitation Below Normal to Much Below Normal for all of Northern Maine, Moosehead Region to Northern Washington County.

Precipitation (in)
9/17/2026 – 9/30/2026



Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

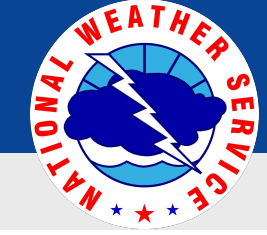
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
9/17/2026 – 9/30/2026



ACIS Web Services Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services





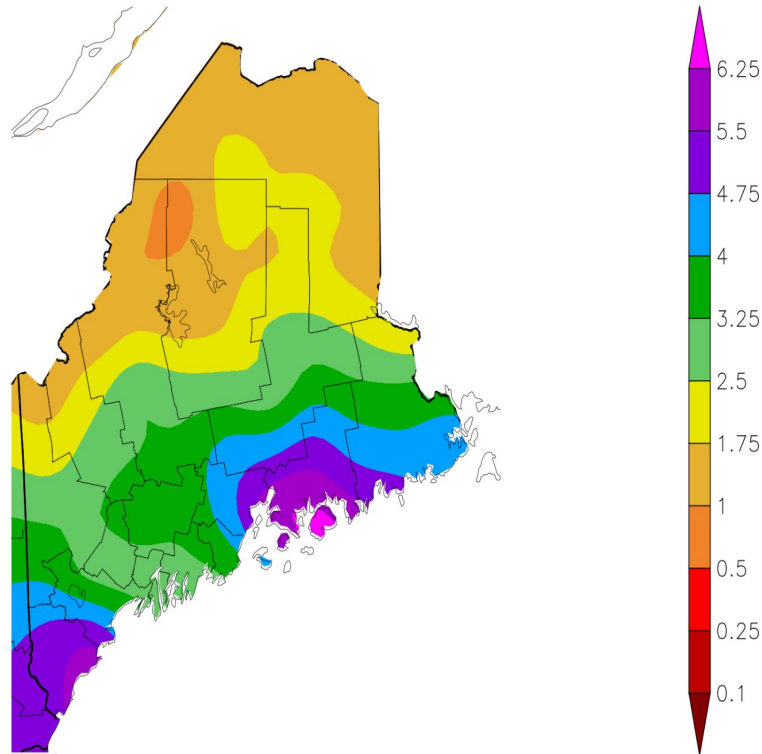
30 Day Precipitation

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

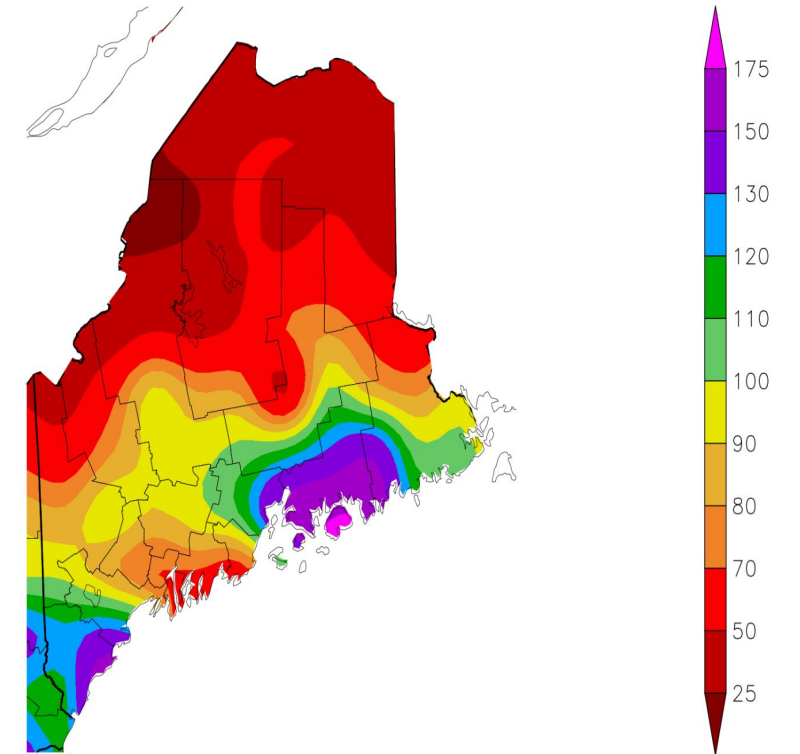
- Above Normal precipitation for much of Hancock County, far Southwest Washington County and extreme Southern Penobscot County.
- Precipitation Below Normal to Much Below Normal for all of Northern Maine, Moosehead Region to Northern Washington County.

Precipitation (in)
9/1/2026 – 9/30/2026



Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
9/1/2026 – 9/30/2026



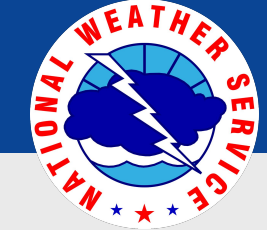
ACIS Web Services Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



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National Weather Service
Caribou, ME



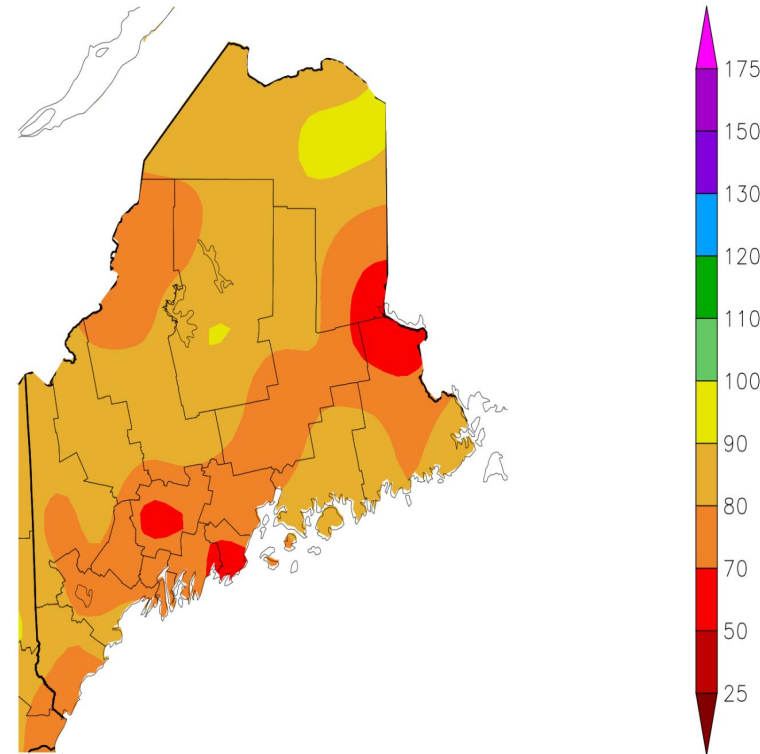
Precipitation Deficits

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Water Year = October 1st - September 30th

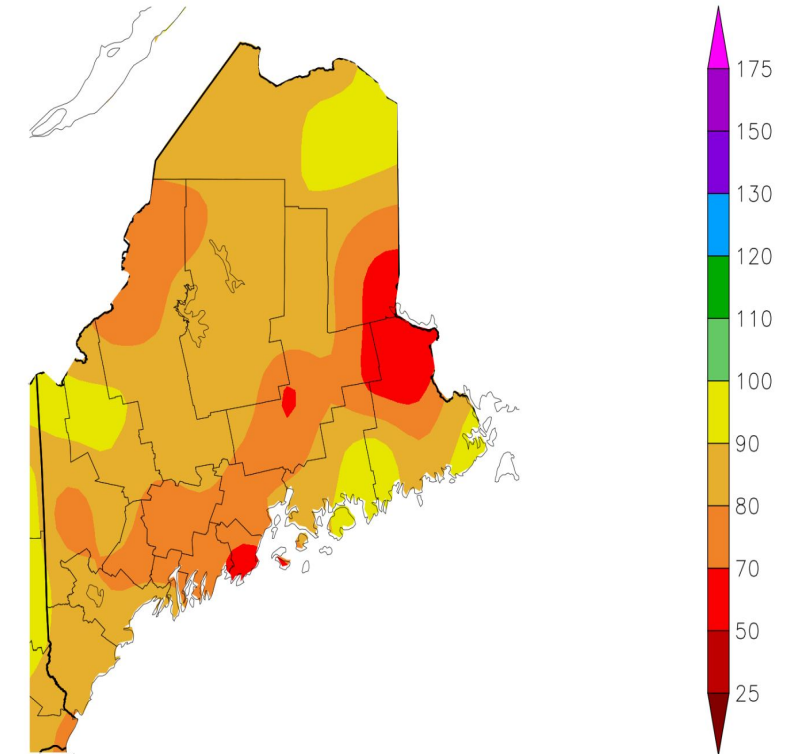
- Houlton was the 6th driest “*Water Year*” on Record (28.49"), Records began in 1948.
- Bangor was the 12th driest “*Water Year*” on Record (31.62"), Records began in 1926.
- 2026 precipitation deficits compounding the deficits from the 2025 Drought in much of the area.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
10/1/2025 – 9/30/2026



Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

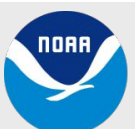
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
1/1/2026 – 9/30/2026



ACIS Web Services Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

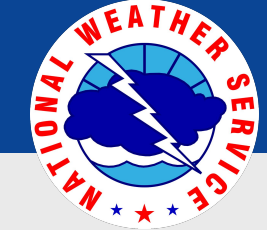
ACIS Web Services

Much of the area is seeing compounding drought impacts.



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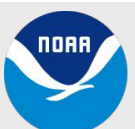
Precipitation Deficits

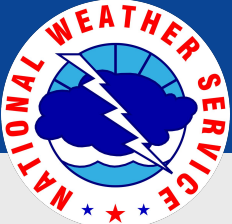
October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

City	Precipitation Since Jan 1st	Departure from Normal since Jan 1st	Water Year to Date Oct 1, 2025 - Sept 30, 2026	Water Year to Date Departure Oct 1, 2025 - Sept 30, 2026
Caribou	29.60"	-0.16"	38.84"	-1.86"
Houlton	20.13"	-8.13"	28.49"	-10.79"
Millinocket	26.25"	-4.25"	35.09"	-7.51"
Bangor	22.80"	-6.77"	31.62"	-10.09"

- Houlton is currently 6th driest year to date on record.
 - Records began in 1948
- Bangor is currently 11th driest year to date on record.
 - Records began in 1948.
- Millinocket is currently 27th driest year to date on record.
 - Records began in 1903

- Bangor was the 12th driest Water Year on Record.
 - Records began in 1926
- Houlton was the 6th driest Water Year on Record.
 - Records began in 1948





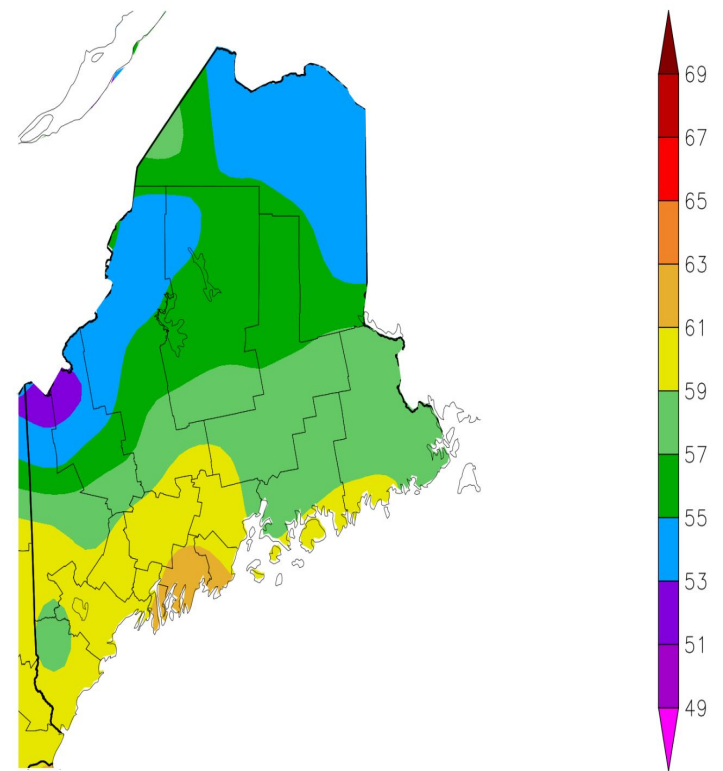
30 Day Temperatures

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

Link to [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)

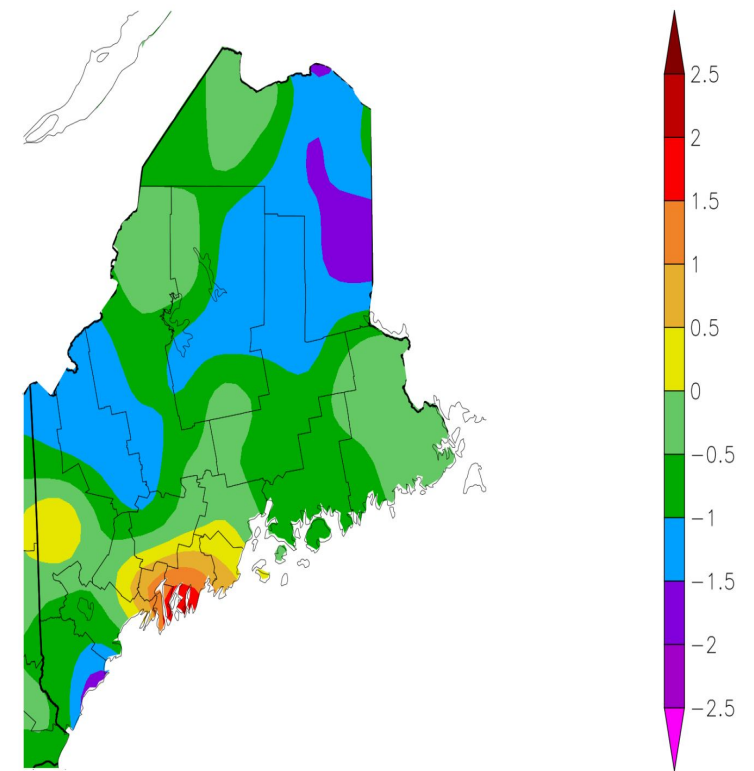
- 30 Day Temperatures have been running 0.5-1 degrees below normal across the North Woods, Bangor Region into Downeast Maine.
- 1-2.5 degrees below normal across the Central Highlands into Eastern Aroostook County.
- Cooling temperatures will lead to reduce evaporation demand combined with the end of the growing season.

Temperature (F)
9/1/2026 - 9/30/2026



Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

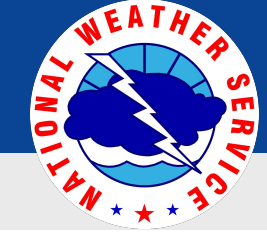
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
9/1/2026 - 9/30/2026



ACIS Web Services Generated 10/1/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



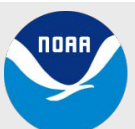
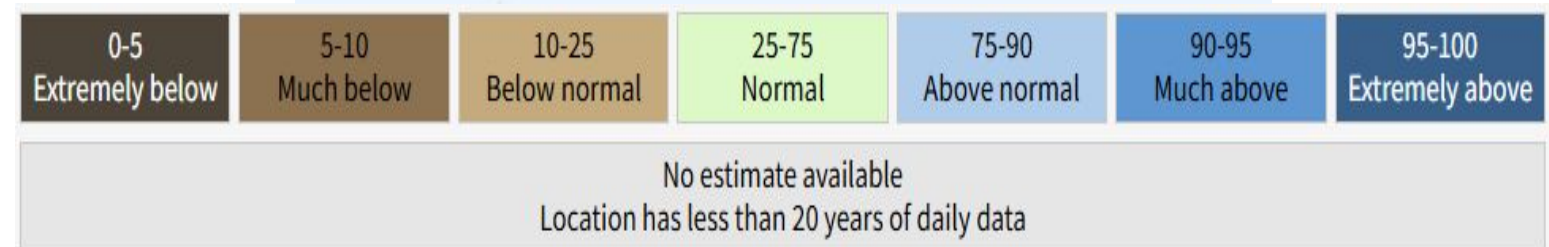
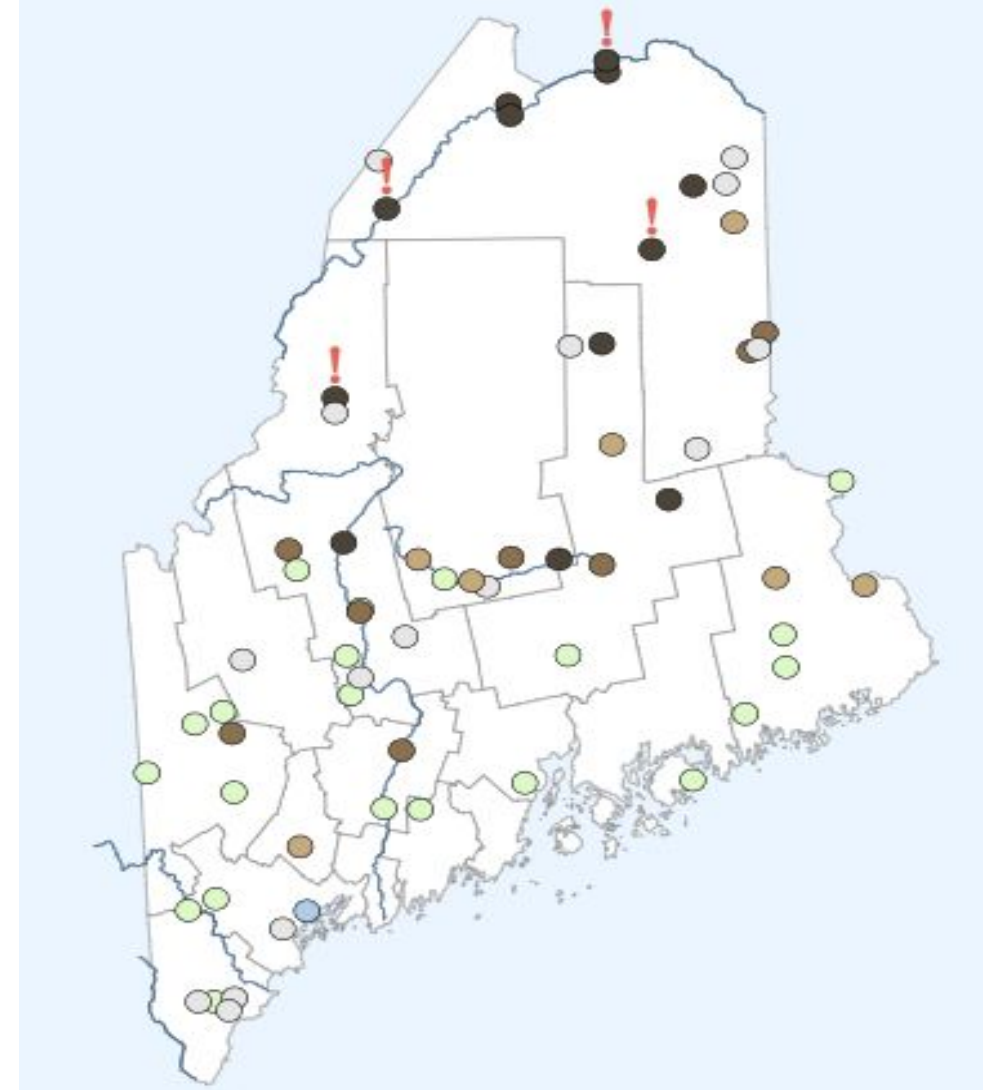


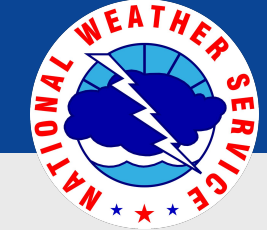
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

USGS Streamflow State of Maine Dashboard: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/state/maine/>

- **Northern Basins:**
 - Below to Much Below Normal flows
 - 2 of 14 gages Below Normal
 - 11 of 14 gages Much Below Normal
 - 1 gage “not ranked”
- **Bangor, Central Highlands & Moosehead Regions:**
 - Below to Much Below Normal flows
 - 3 of 15 gages Normal
 - 3 of 15 gages Below Normal
 - 6 of 15 gages Much Below Normal
 - 3 gages “not ranked”
- **Downeast Basins:**
 - Below to Much Below Normal flows
 - 1 of 9 gages Above Normal
 - 4 of 9 gages Normal
 - 2 of 9 gages Below Normal
 - 2 gages “not ranked”
- **Areawide Trends:**
 - Expect flows to remain below normal.
 - Normal flows will slowly fall.





River Gage Low Flow Records Set

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

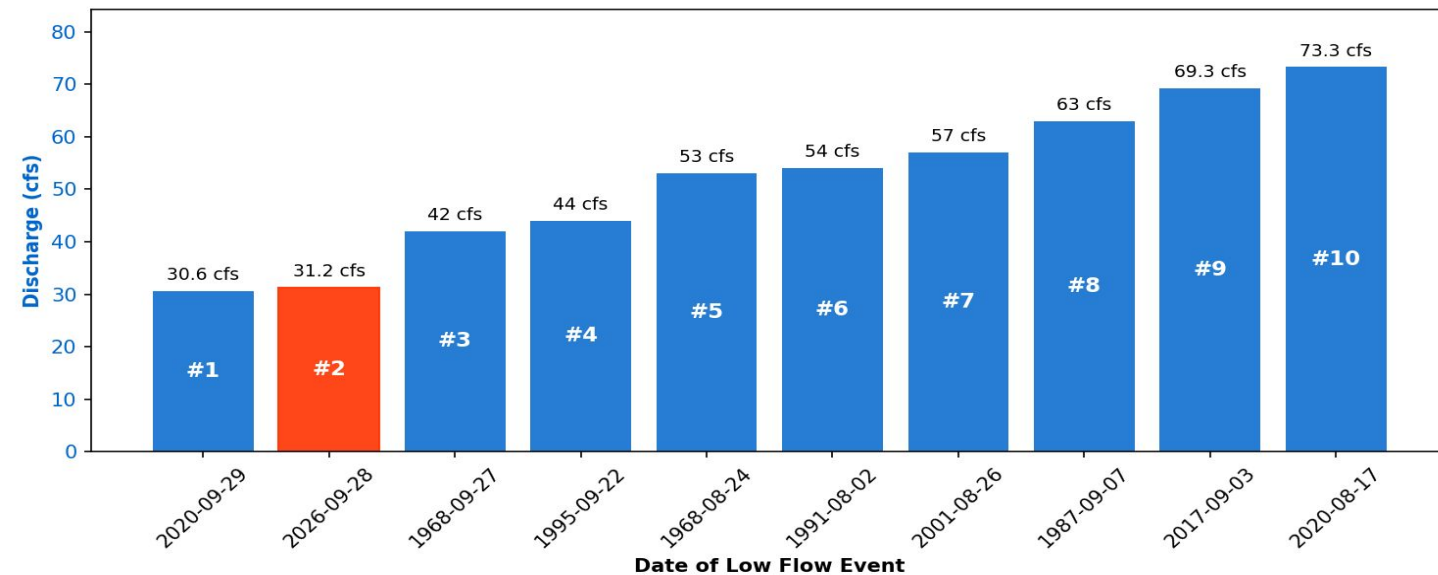
Observations Courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey

Aroostook River @ Washburn:
6th lowest flow since 1930 was set on 9/28/2026

Mattawamkeag River @ Mattawamkeag:
2nd lowest flow since 1934 was set on 9/27/2026

Piscataquis River @ Blanchard:
2nd lowest flow since 1996 was set on 9/26/2026

Aroostook River Near Masardis, Maine
Top 10 Lowest Flow Events: MASM1
(Period of Record: 1957-2026)

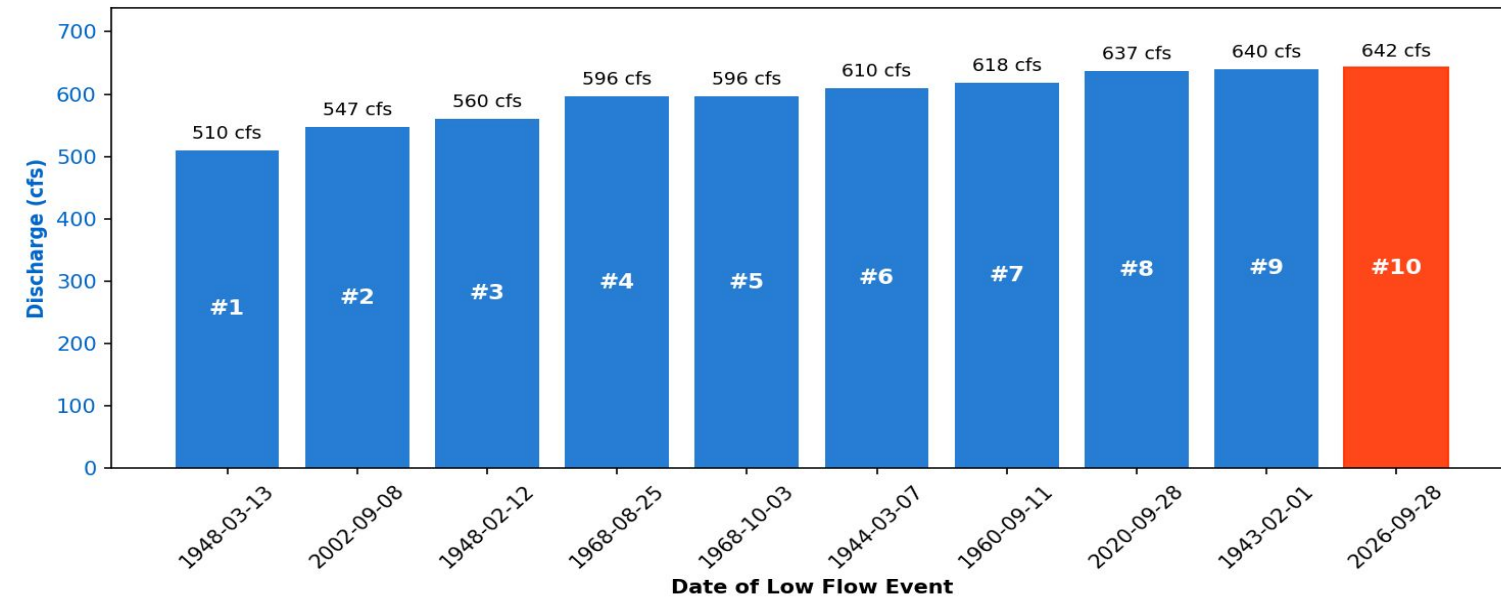


Observations Courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey
USGS Site: 01015800

Graphic Created: October 01, 2026

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

St. John River Below Fish R, Nr Fort Kent, Maine
Top 10 Lowest Flow Events: FTKM1
(Period of Record: 1926-2026)



Observations Courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey
USGS Site: 01014000

Graphic Created: October 01, 2026

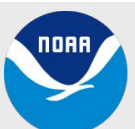
National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

St. John River @ Nine Mile:
2nd lowest flow since 1950 was set on 9/27/2026

St. John River @ Fort Kent:
10th lowest flow since 1926 was set on 9/28/2026

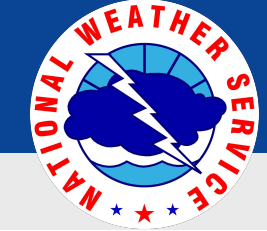
Aroostook River @ Masardis:
2nd lowest flow since 1957 was set on 9/28/2026

Narraguagus River @ Cherryfield:
3rd lowest flow since 1948 was set on 9/24/2026



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U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Caribou, ME

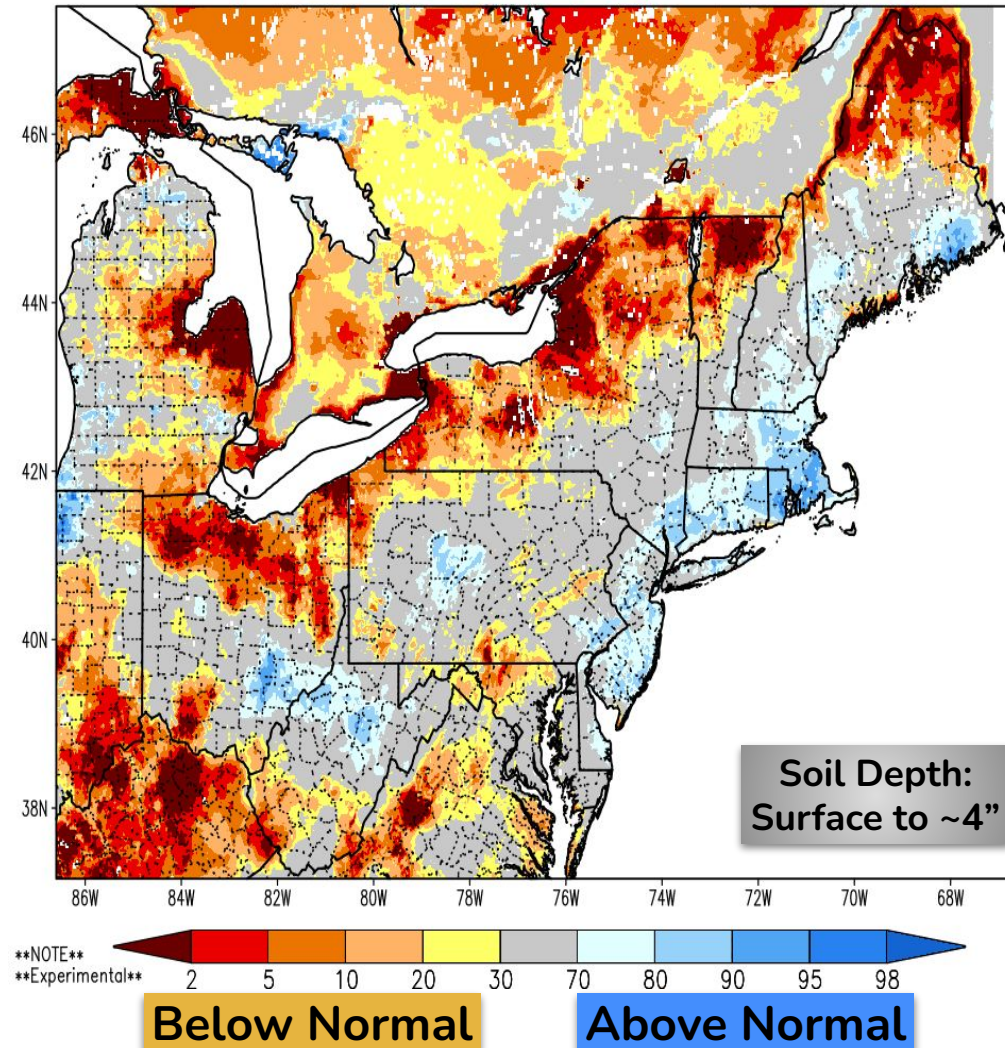


Groundwater Impacts

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

- Near surface soil moisture across Downeast Maine to Bangor region has improved thanks to recent rainfall.
- Near surface soil moisture across much of Northern Maine has continued to struggle and remains very dry.
- Deeper soil moisture down to near 39" continues to struggle as surface plants soak up all the available water in addition to significant rainfall deficits.

SPoRT-LIS 0-10 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 01 Oct 2026



SPoRT-LIS 0-100 cm Soil Moisture percentile valid 01 Oct 2026

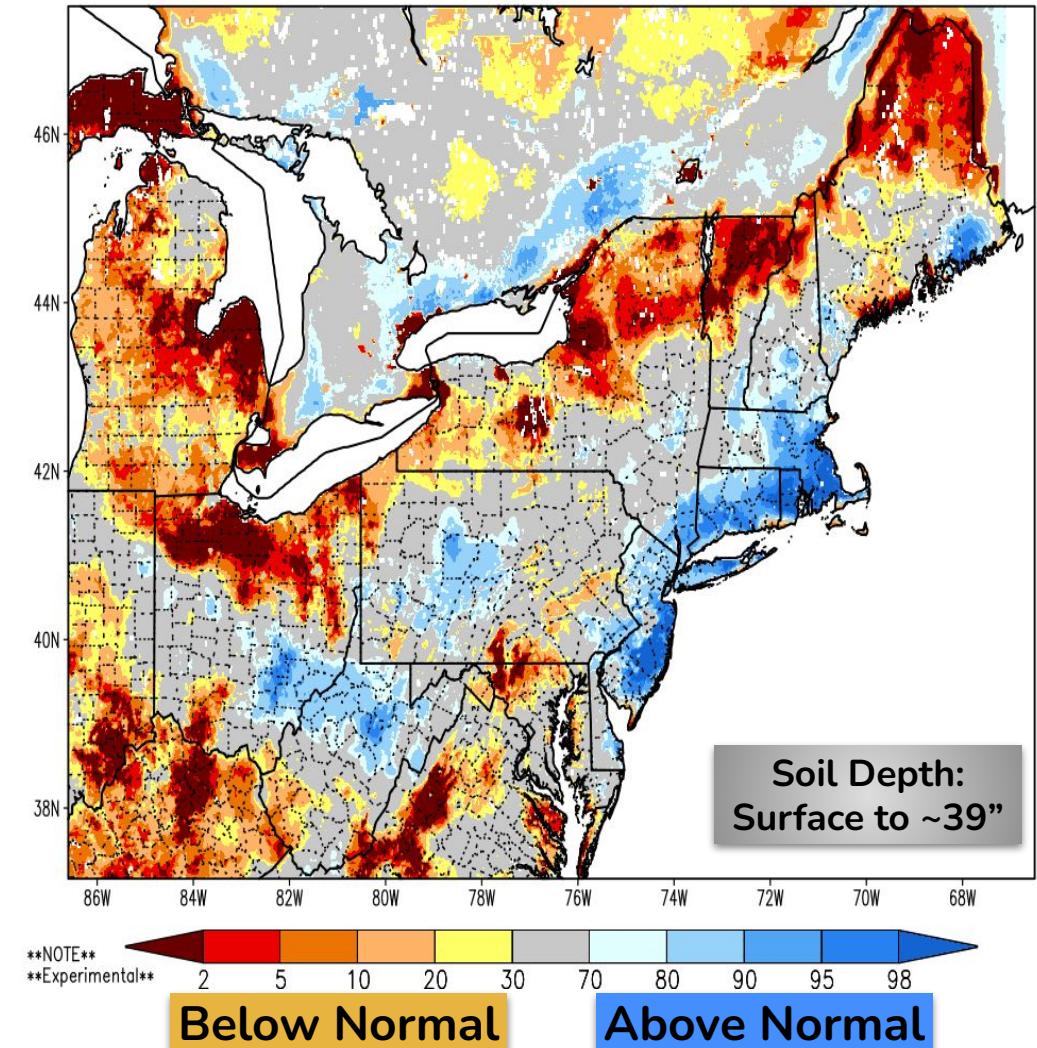
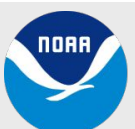
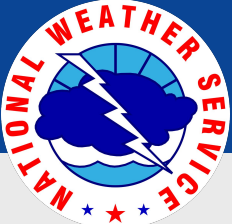


Image Captions:
National Water Model
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-10cm Depth](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-100cm Depth](#)





Groundwater

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

- Much of the area is experiencing Below Normal to Much Below Normal Groundwater levels. Deeper soils continue to be impacted from the 2025-26 drought & long term deficits.
- Clayton Lake just dipped to record low conditions.
- Low end “Normal” conditions at Fort Kent and Calais.

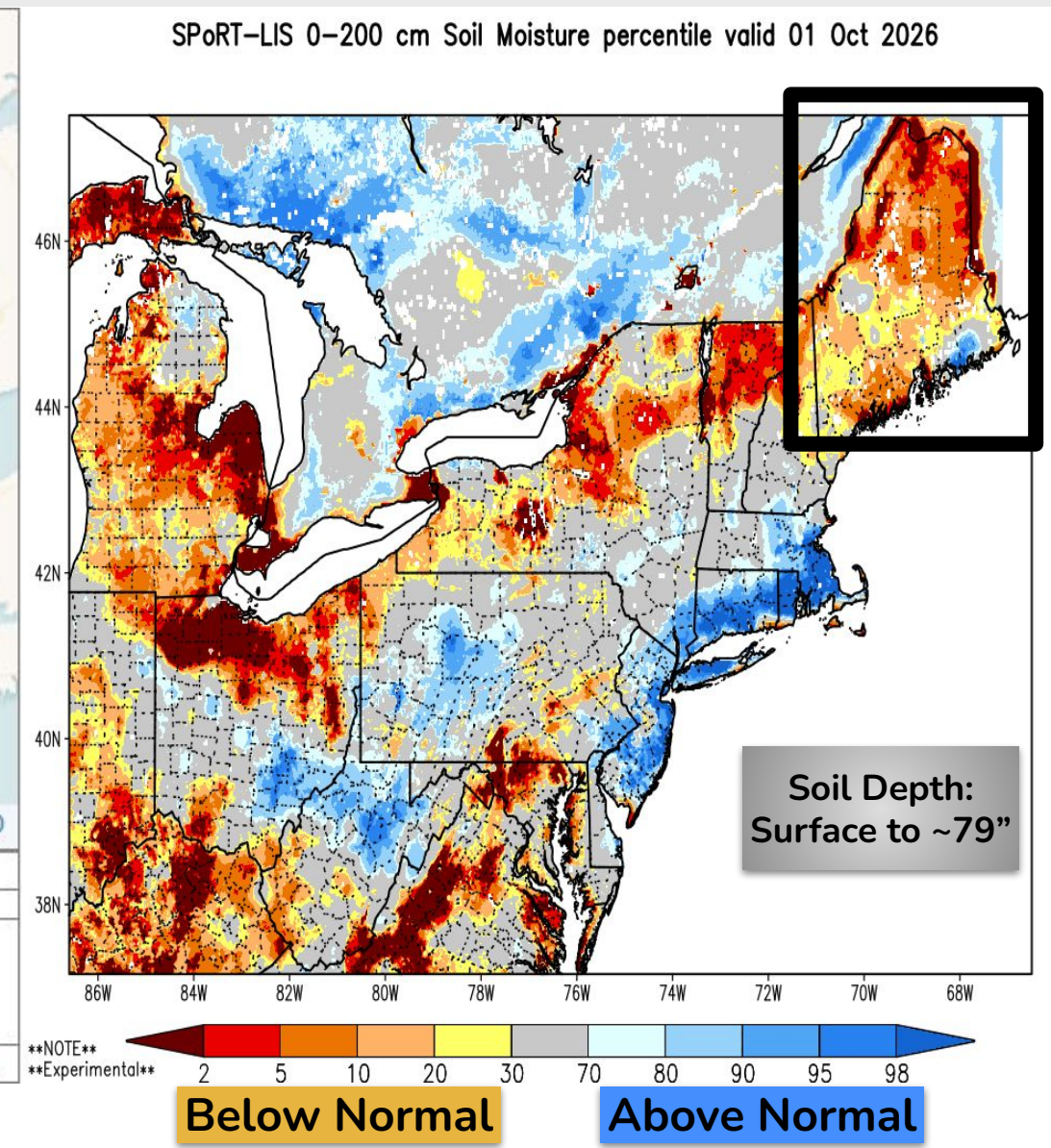
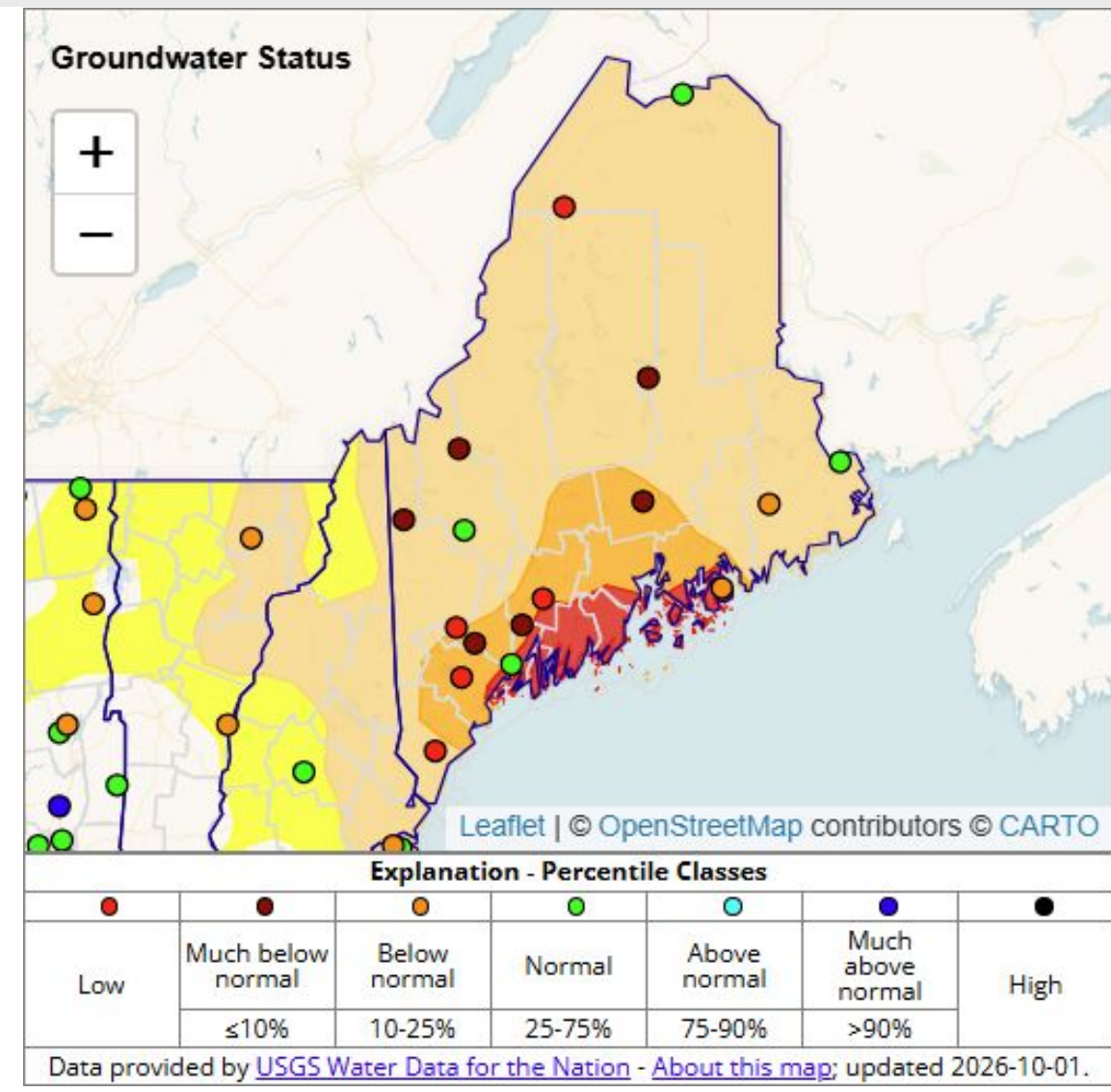
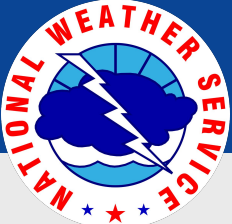


Image Captions:
[USGS Groundwater Gauge Status](#)
[Soil Moisture Percentile 0-200cm Depth](#)



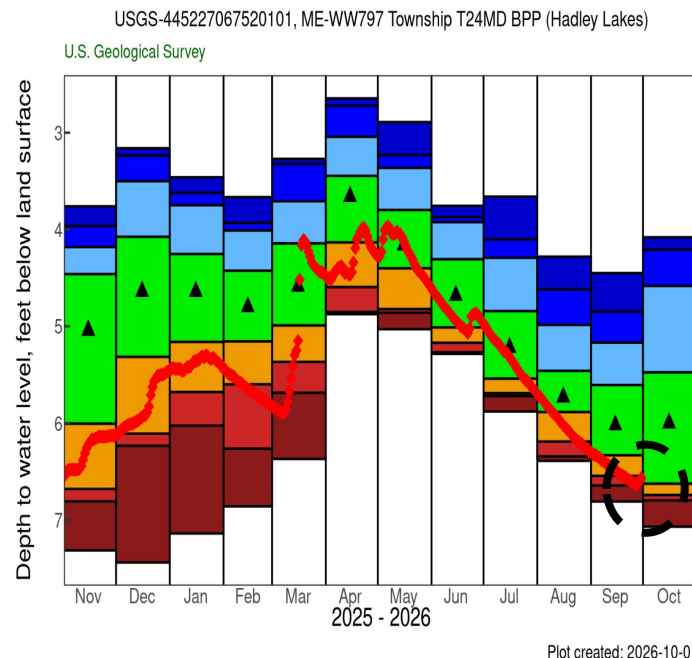
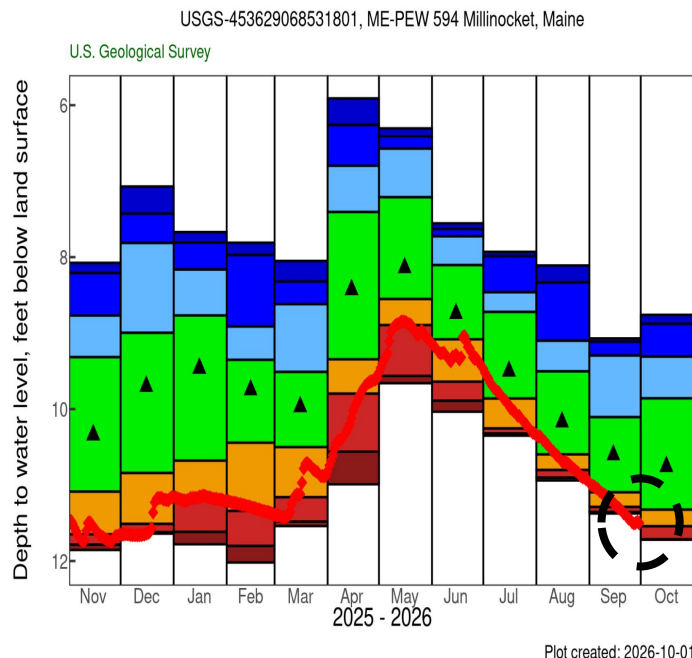
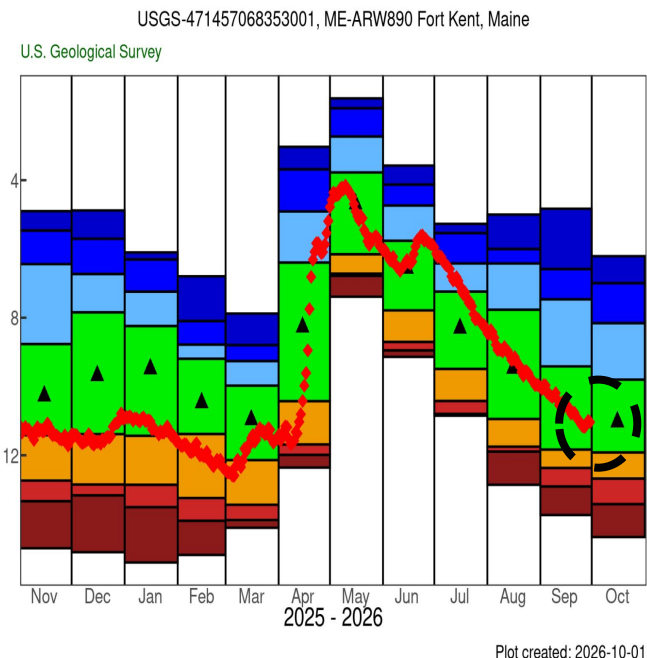


Groundwater Gage Plots

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

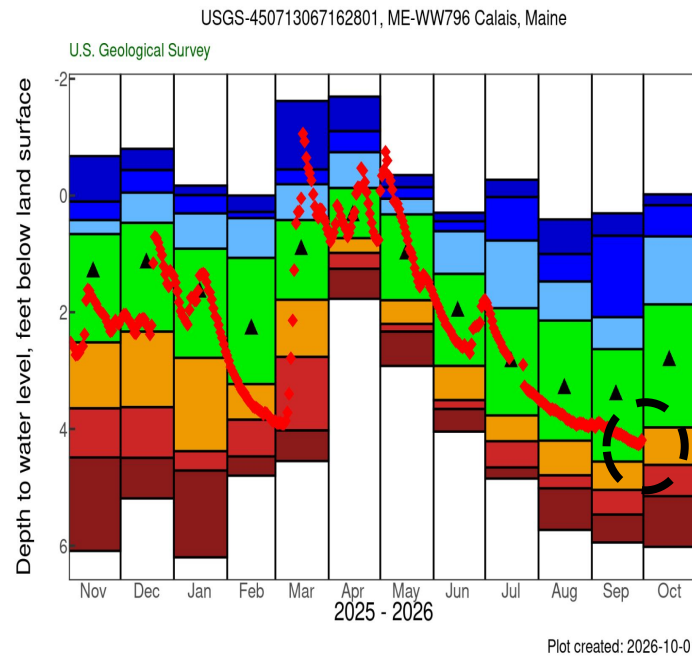
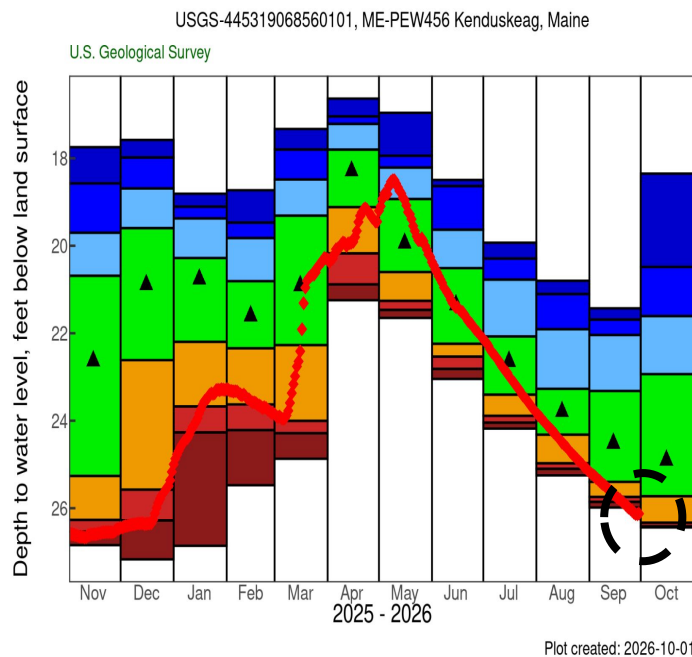
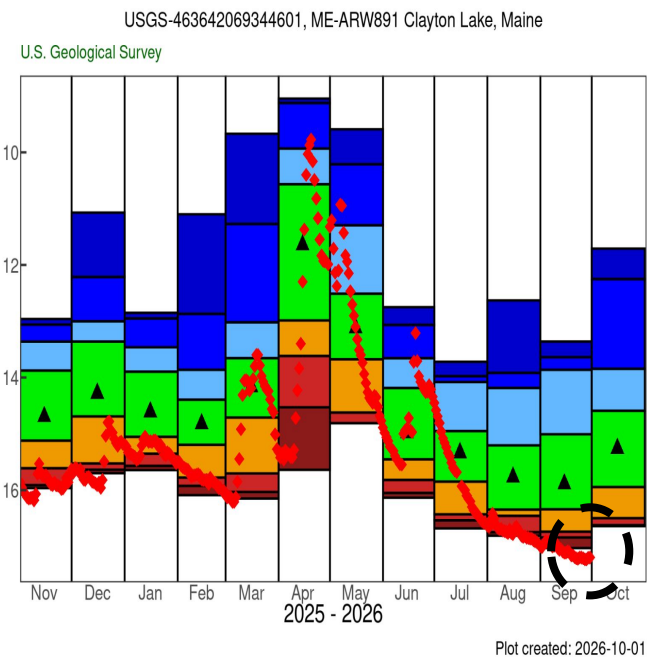
USGS Groundwater Levels in New England: https://newengland.water.usgs.gov/web_app/GWW/GWW.html

Depth to water level, feet below land surface



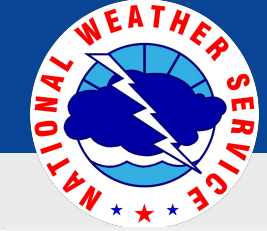
Groundwater gage data indicates high water system demand due to the growing season, compounded by a failure to fully recover from the 2025-26 drought. Consequently, multiple locations are currently reporting conditions at or near record lows.

Depth to water level, feet below land surface



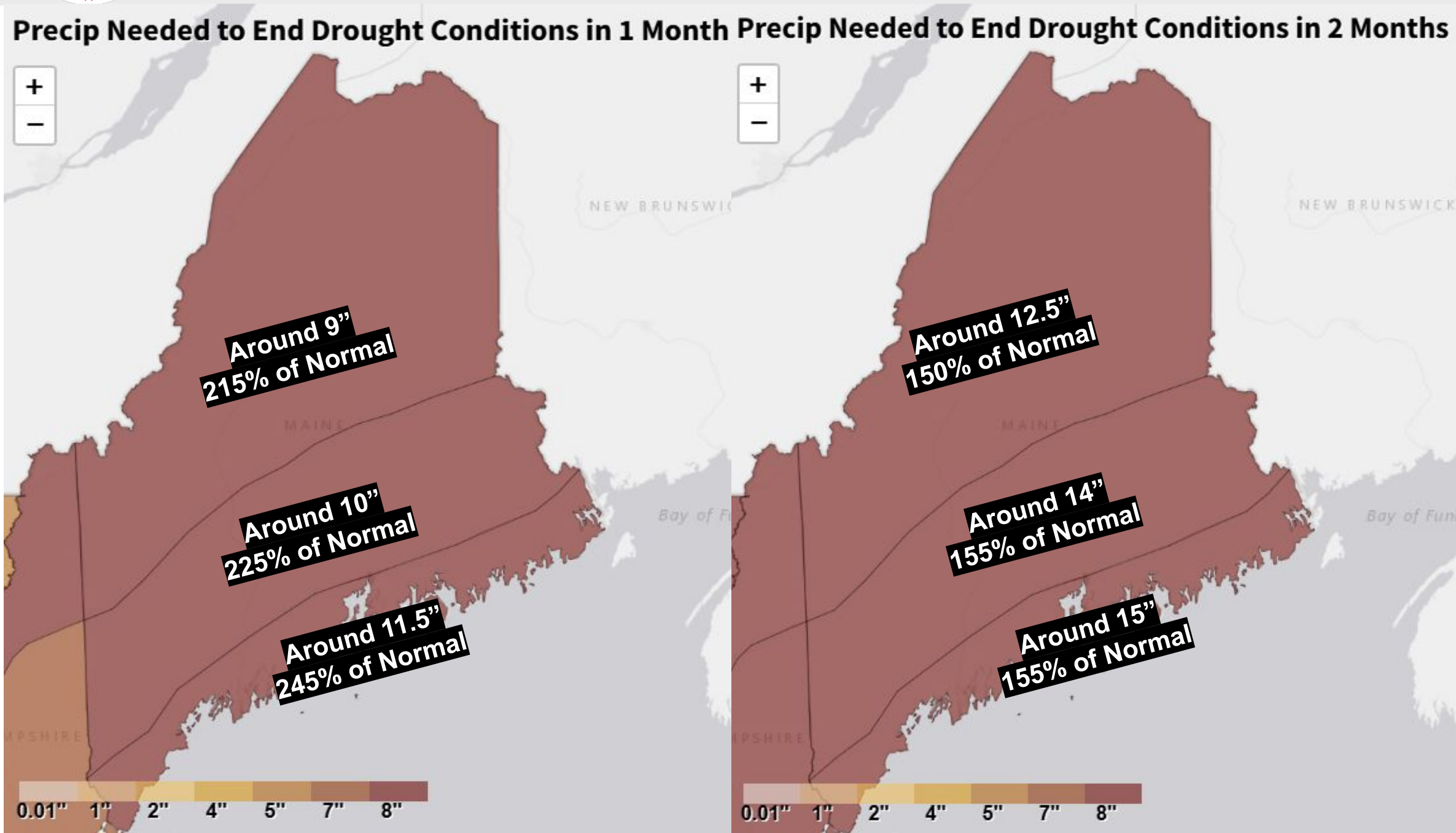
A few locations are “normal” but lower end normal conditions for September.



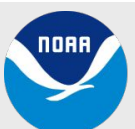


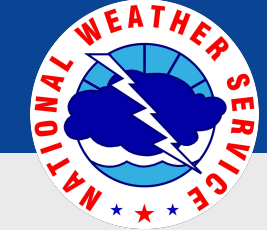
Rainfall Needed to “End the Drought”

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT



- Steady, light-rain events with high absorption rates are ideal.
- Northern areas these values have increased due to recent significant precipitation deficits.
- Overall widespread persistent rainfall is needed to overcome this drought.





Summary of Impacts

October 1, 2026

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Regional streamflows, lake levels, seasonal wetlands, and storage reservoirs are experiencing widespread below normal conditions due to a combination of seasonal drawdown, precipitation deficits, lack of runoff, and water demand.
- Lakes/ponds running below normal exposing rocks posing threats to recreational activities.

Aquifer Deficits

- Groundwater recharge continues to lag across the region, maintaining significant, lingering storage deficits. Multiple monitoring wells across Eastern/Northern Maine are currently reading Below Normal to Much Below Normal compared to historical climatological baselines. A few sites are at record low groundwater conditions. Low water tables are compounded by multi-year precipitation deficits and depleted baseline levels carried over from previous dry seasons.

Dry Drinking Water Wells

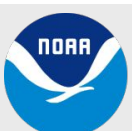
- A few new dry well reports; will monitor as conditions worsen.
- Maine EMA Dry Well Survey: <https://maine-dry-well-survey-maine.hub.arcgis.com/>

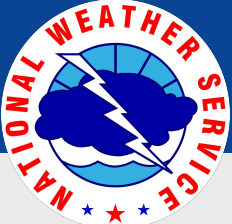
Agricultural Impacts

- Growing season is coming to an end but there has been agricultural impacts due to the ongoing drought. Please continue to report via the above CMOR link.

Mitigation Actions

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





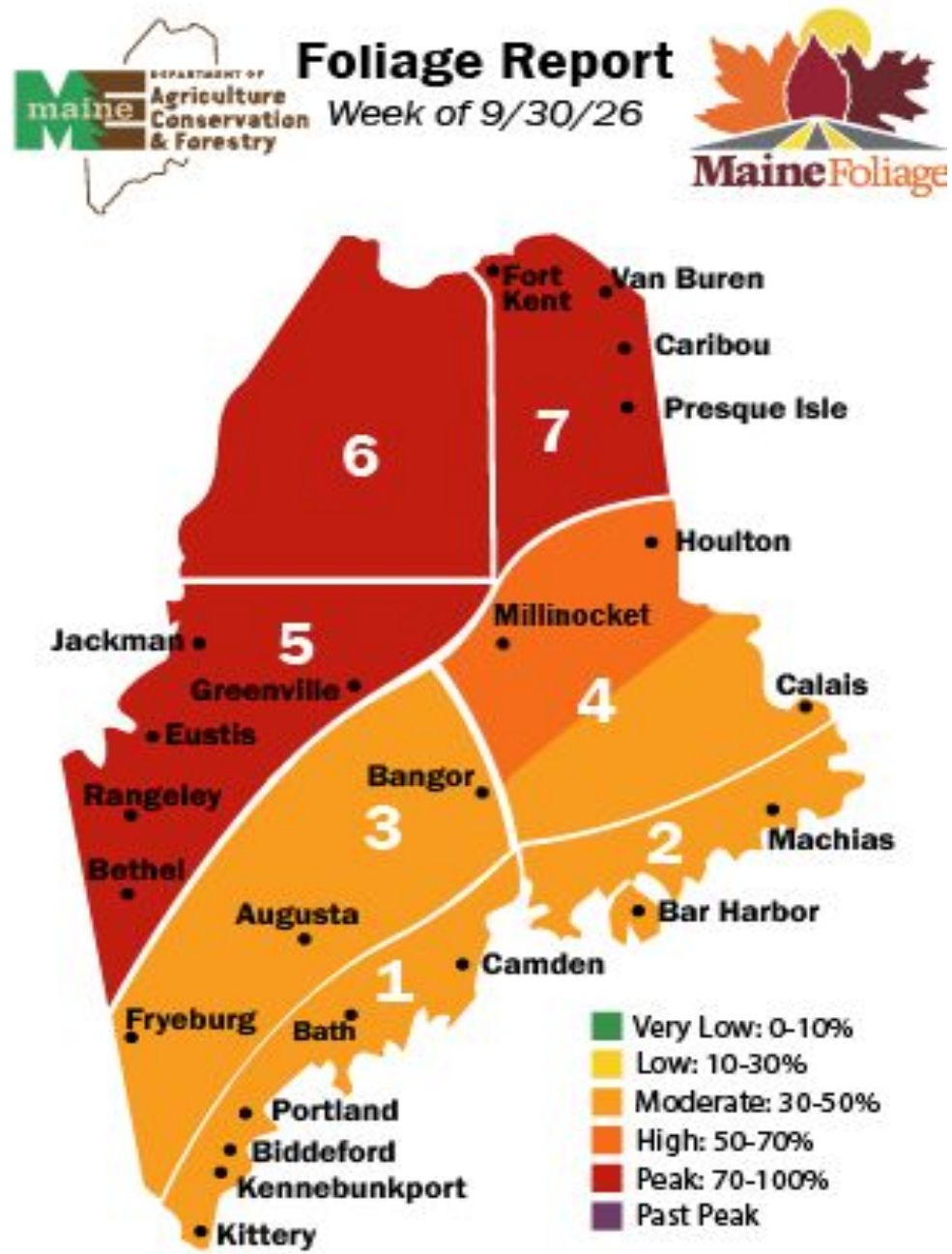
Fall Foliage Impacts

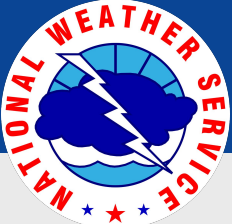
October 1, 2026
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Maine Fall Foliage Report: www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/projects/fall_foliage/report/index.shtml



While drought stress can lead to early leaf drop, browner leaves, and patchy color, sunny days paired with crisp, cool nights can still produce vibrant fall foliage across New England.

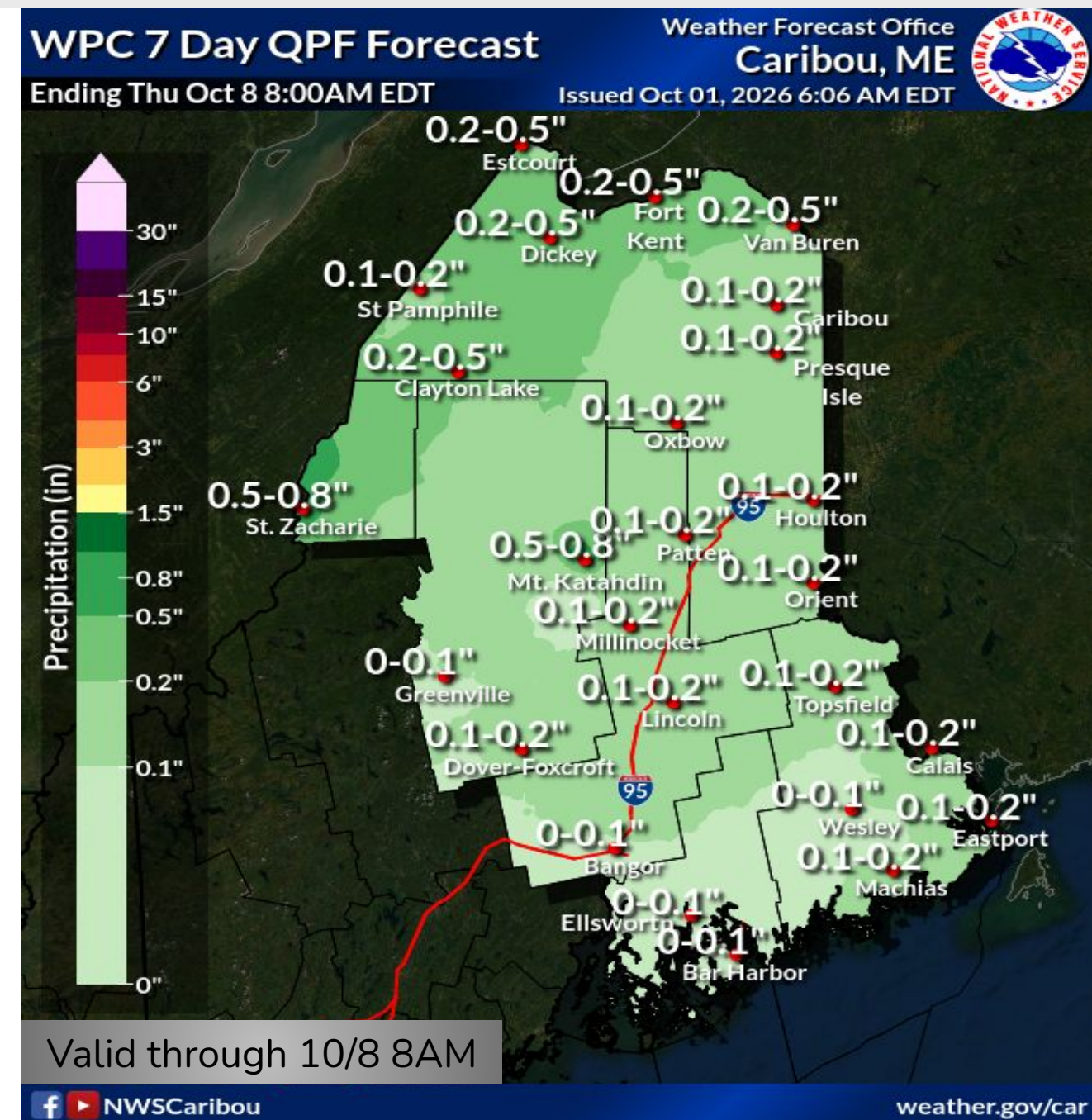


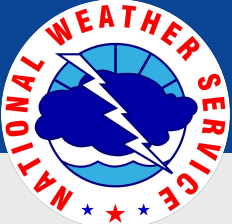


Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

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- Very little if any precipitation expected across the area over the next 7 days. Any precipitation will be light and short lived.





Long Range Outlooks (October)

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

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

Main Takeaways for September:

- No significant signal for above/below normal temperatures in the state.
- No significant signal for above/below normal precipitation in the state.

Pattern Outlook

- El Niño is continuing to strengthen but uncertainty remains on the subseasonal pattern influences in October. This is concerning given our ongoing dry conditions.

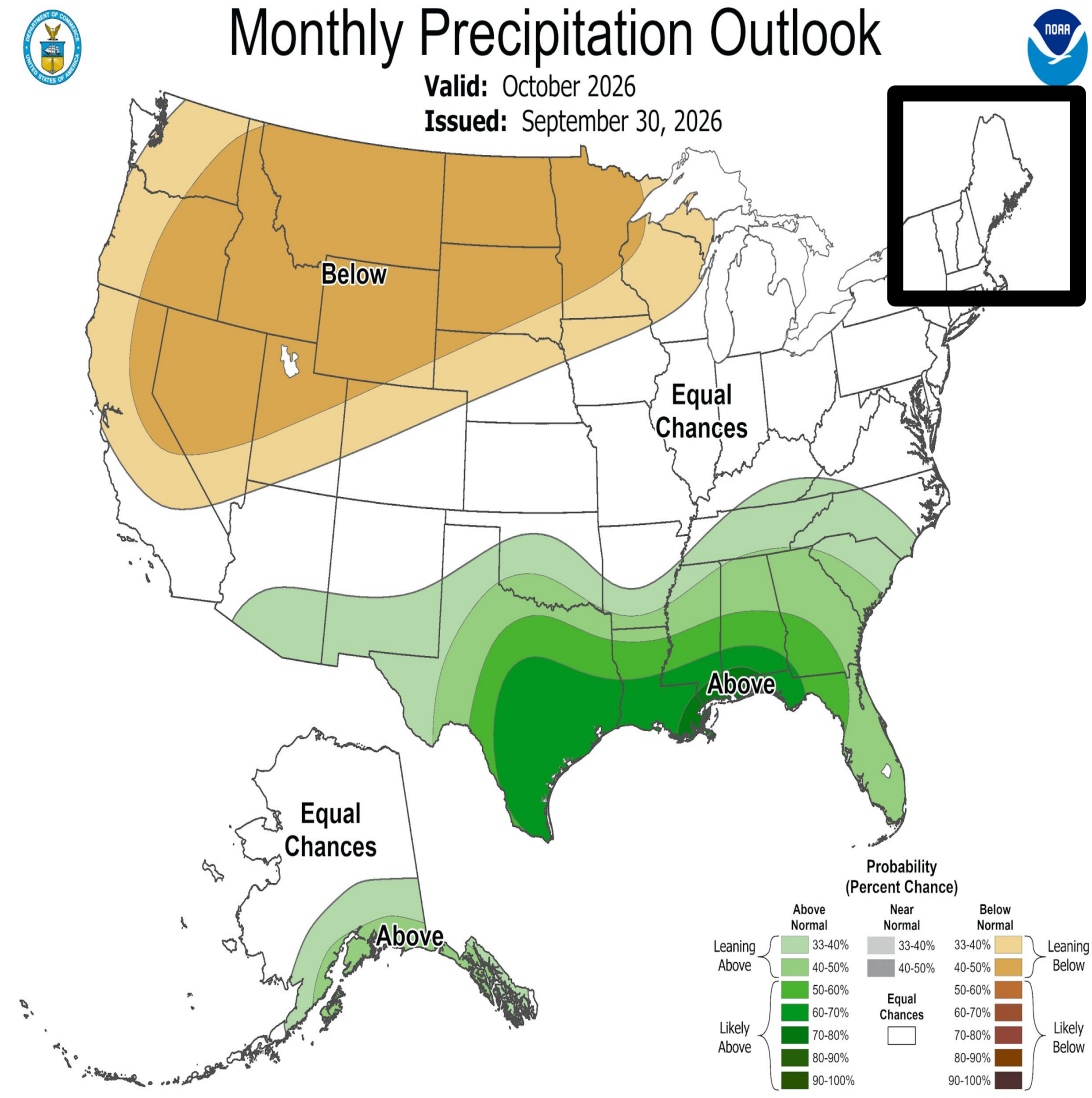
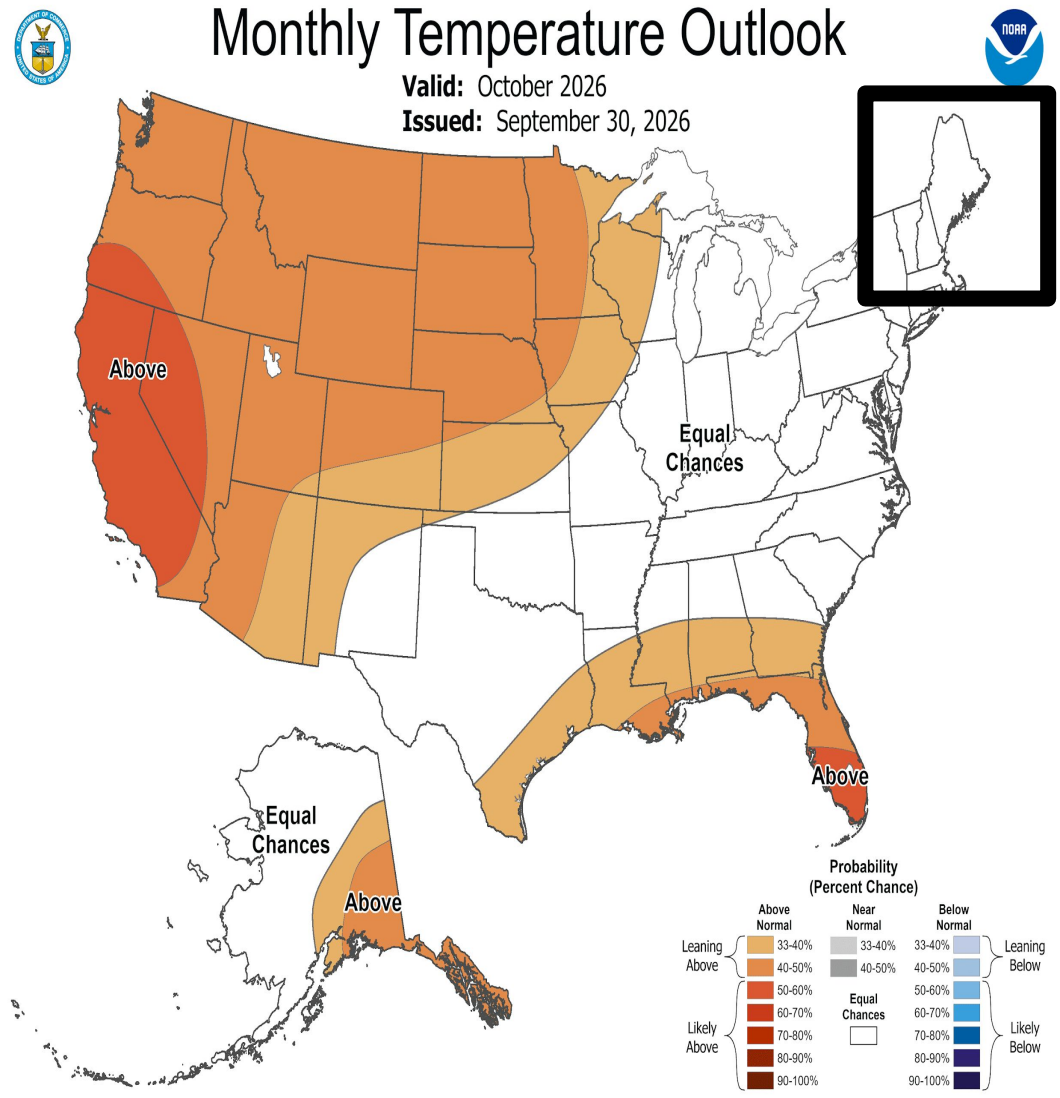
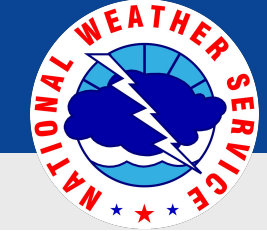


Image Captions:

Left - [Climate Prediction Center 1 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
Right - [Climate Prediction Center 1 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)





Long Range Outlooks (Oct-Dec)

October 1, 2026
1:07 PM EDT

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

Main Takeaways for Oct-Dec:

- Moderate signal for above normal temperatures in the state.
- No significant signal for above/below normal precipitation in the state.

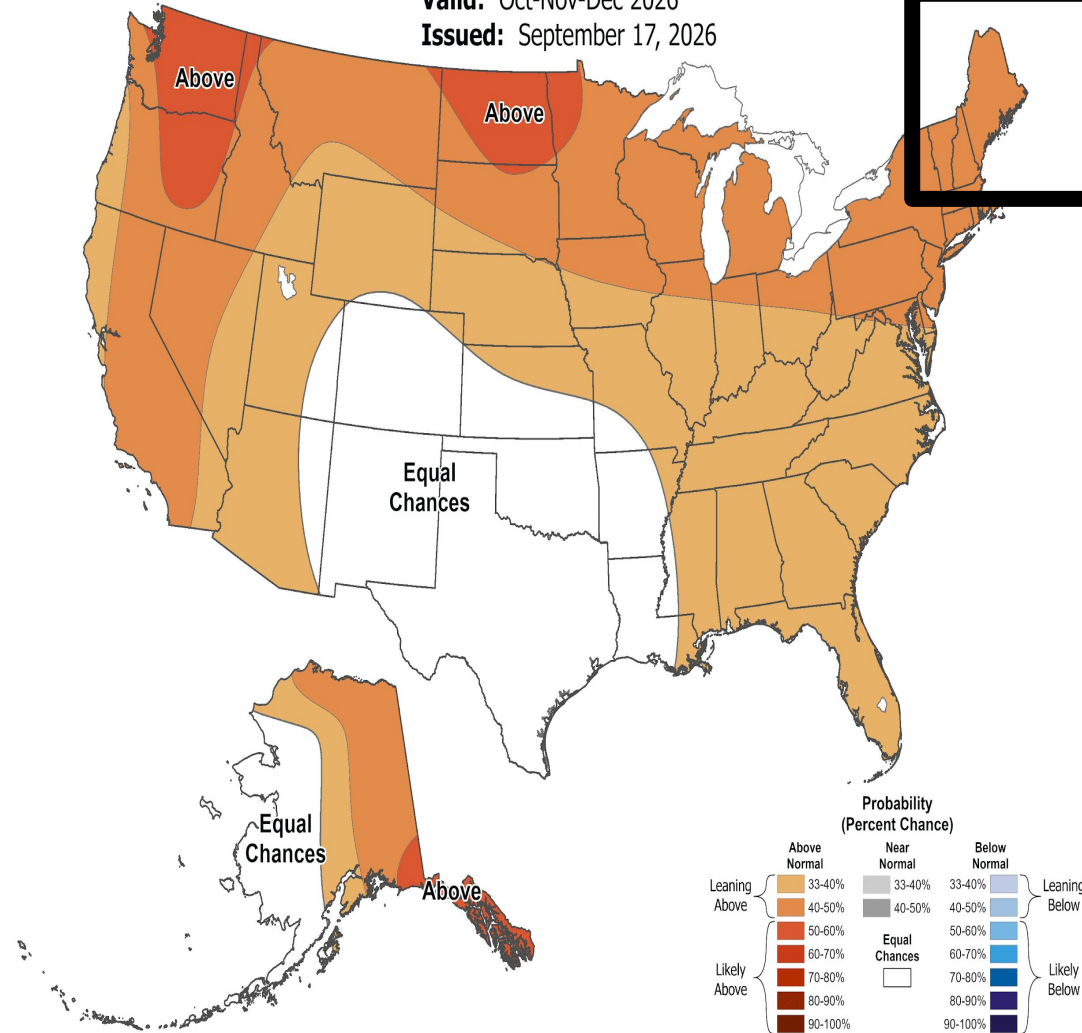
Pattern Outlook

- El Niño is continuing to strengthen but uncertainty remains on the subseasonal pattern influences this fall into early winter. This is concerning signals given our ongoing dry conditions.



Seasonal Temperature Outlook

Valid: Oct-Nov-Dec 2026
Issued: September 17, 2026



Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Oct-Nov-Dec 2026
Issued: September 17, 2026

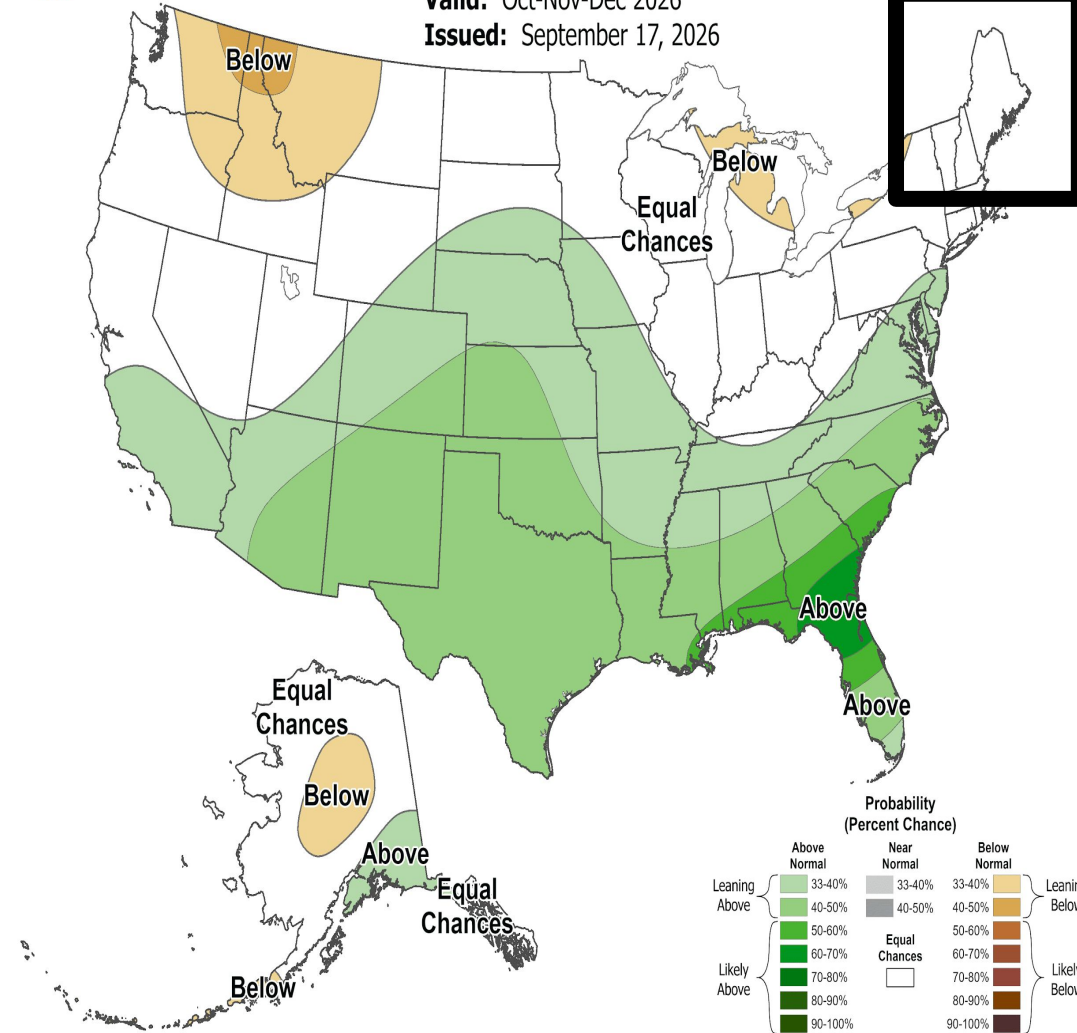
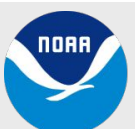
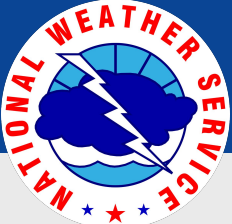


Image Captions:

Left - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Temperature Outlook.](#)
Right - [Climate Prediction Center 3 Month Precipitation Outlook.](#)





El Niño / Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

October 1, 2026
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El Niño is strengthening, with a **greater than 90% chance** of a very strong event during the Northern Hemisphere fall and winter 2026-27. The CPC Official ENSO outlook indicates there is a **75% chance of a historic event** that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño events dating back to 1950.

Historical Winter Impacts in Maine

Strong to Very Strong events historically deliver above-normal winter temperatures and precipitation:

Storm Type & Precipitation

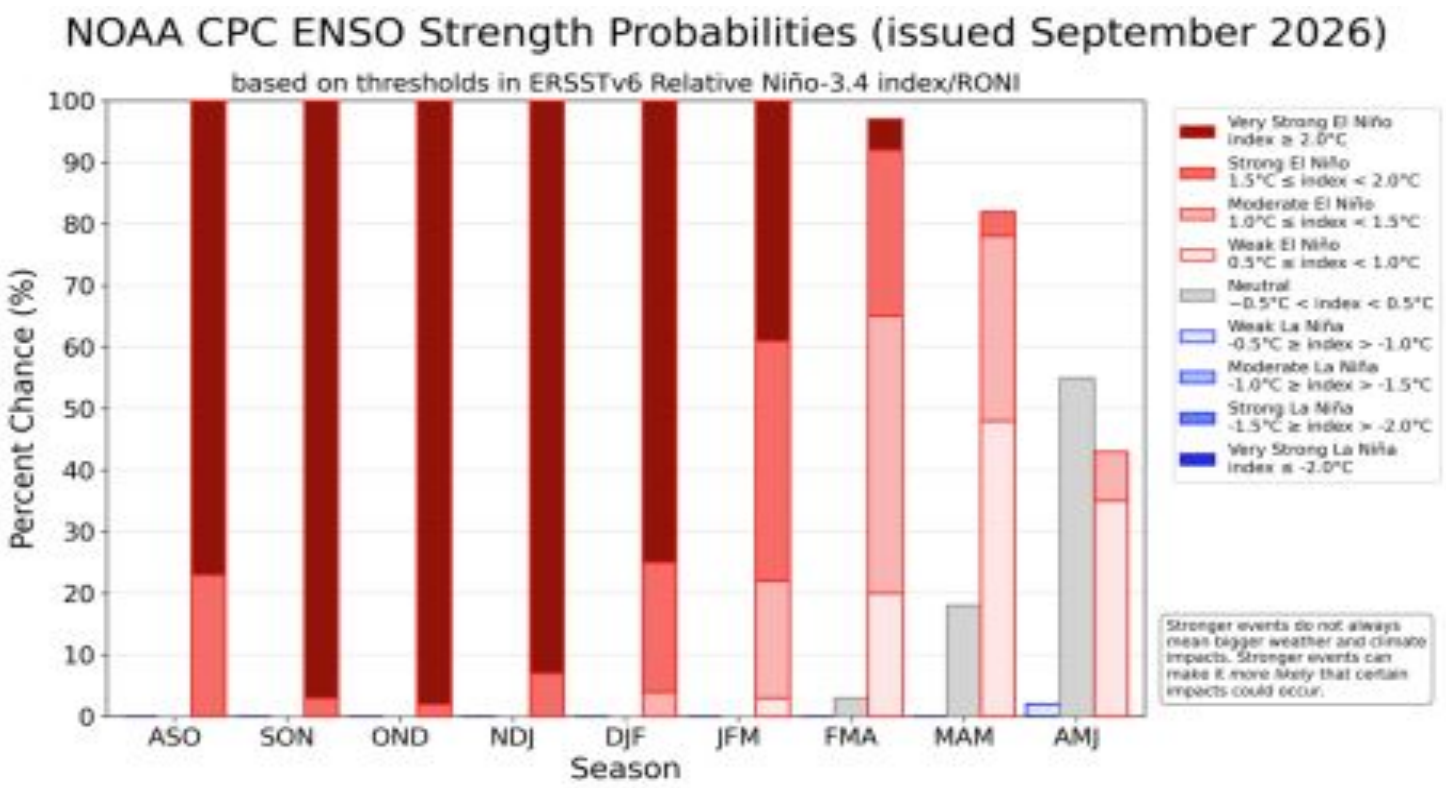
- Higher proportion of winter storms produce rain/sleet/freezing rain rather than long-lasting dry snow, particularly in coastal and southern areas.

Repeated Snowpack Melt

- Periods of mild temperatures between weather systems often cause existing snowpack to melt repeatedly throughout the season.

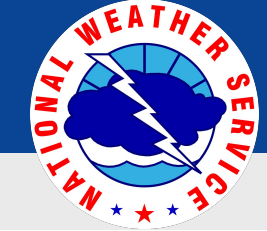
Runoff & Hydrologic Recharge

- Frequent runoff events favor robust surface water replenishment (lakes, reservoirs, streamflows), while shallow ground frost aids deep groundwater recharge. Northern Maine deep frost prevents recharge.



Net Drought Outlook: Even with expectations of a deficient seasonal snowpack, the net hydrologic impact is often favorable for reducing drought.

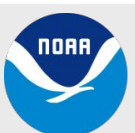




Main Takeaways

October 1, 2026
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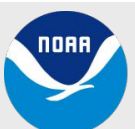
- **Bottom Line:** drought continues across Eastern and Northern Maine with no significant improvements expected. Recent rainfall has helped near surface groundwater & streamflows, expected to be short lived.
 - *Full aquifer recovery is unlikely until Winter 2026 / Spring 2027.*
- Groundwater trends continue to show significant worsening.
- Outlook: Long-term prognosis remains concerning, but a strong El Niño Winter is hopeful.
 - Will need to monitor trends for fire danger as the growing season ends, drinking water supplies and surface water conditions.
- Repeating light wetting rains will be vital to improve soil moisture, otherwise evaporative losses will dominate.
- Growing season ending now will significantly reduce the demand on the water system.
- Stakeholders should prepare for continued drought conditions this fall.
- ***Groundwater & streamflow levels are at climatological minimums in Early October.***

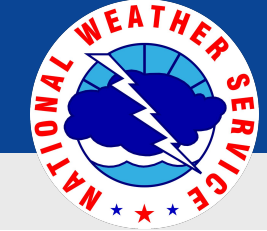




<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/016ac3b48c5049909106a23e6556311b>

- Condition Monitoring Observer Reports on Drought (CMOR-Drought) is a tool provided by the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) in partnership with the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS).
- Submit reports here:
<https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx>
- The tool allows citizen scientists to submit observation reports relating to drought, which are presented in a map that can be used to view and access submitted information and attachments. These reports are vital for determining the drought conditions.





Useful Links

- <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>
- <https://www.weather.gov/car/DroughtInformationStatement>
- <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/car>
- <https://www.weather.gov/car/EMhome>
- <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Contact Information

Web

→ www.weather.gov/car

Phone (public)

→ (207) 492-0182

Questions? Email

→ nws.caribou@noaa.gov

→ james.sinko@noaa.gov (*Hydrology Program Manager*)