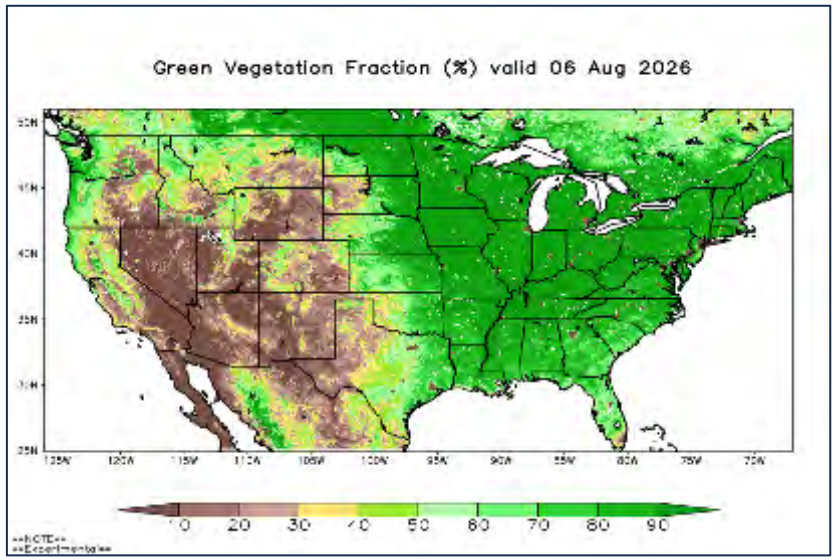
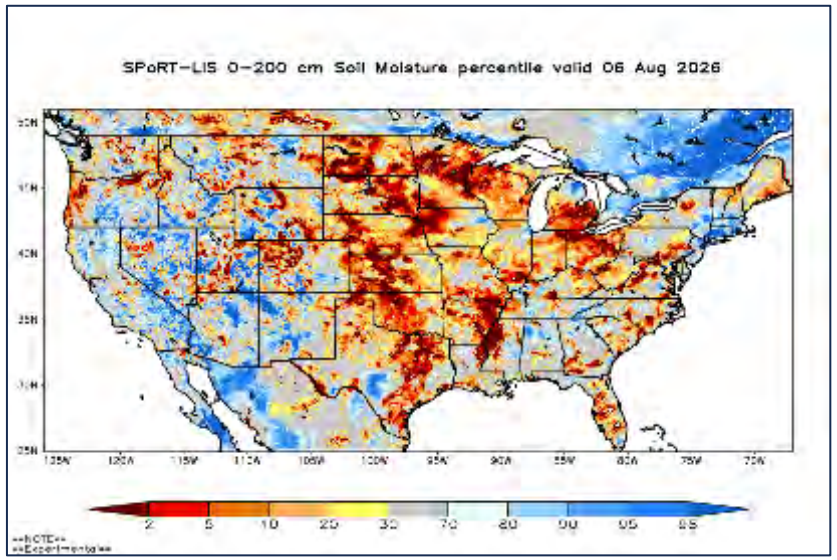
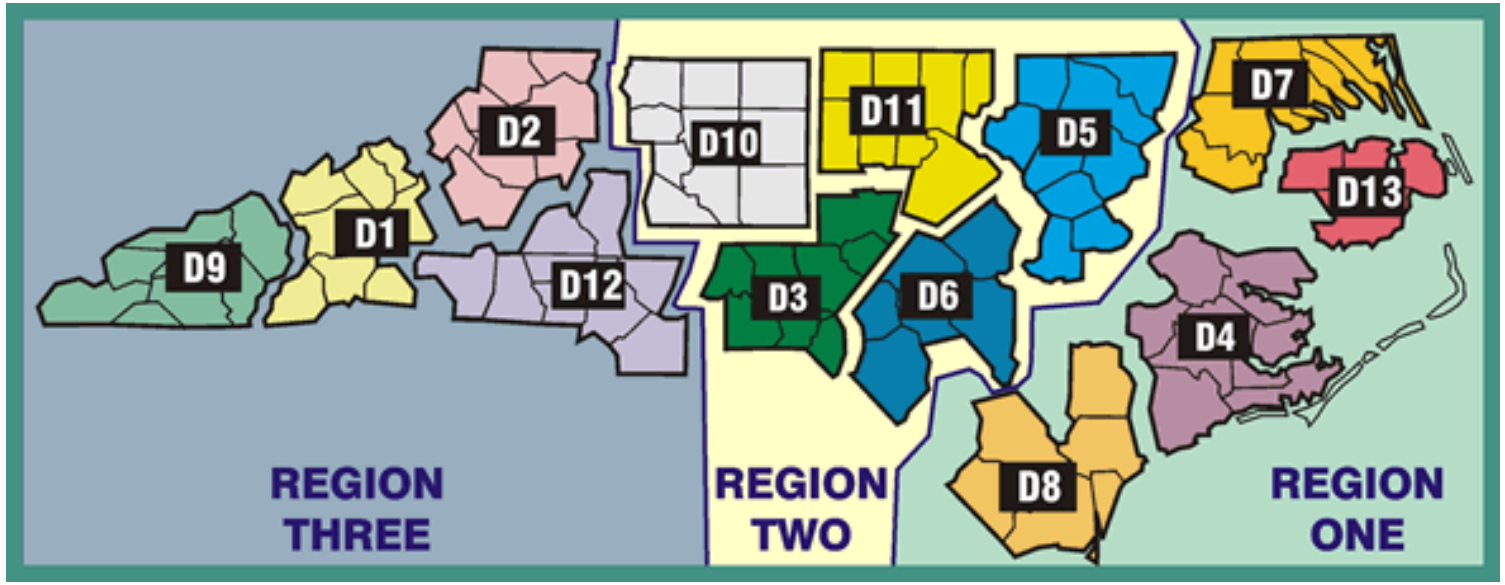
August - 2026

Monthly Fire Danger Assessment NCFS – All Regions







Date: August 7, 2026

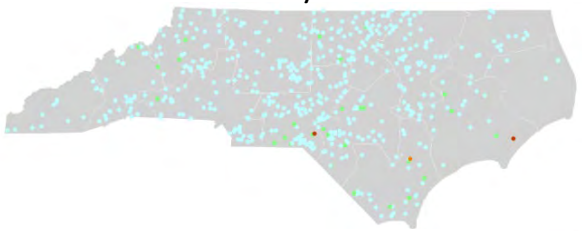
Created by: Jamie Dunbar
Fire Environment Staff Forester
NC Forest Service

Statewide Wildfire Context

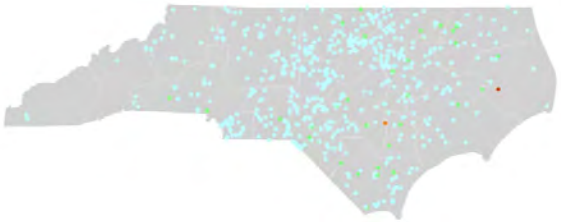
January: 10-yr avg is 339 fires for 702 acres
February: 10-yr avg is 639 fires for 1,683 acres
March: 10-yr avg is 1,009 fires for 6,401 acres
April: 10-yr avg is 627 fires for 6,803 acres
May: 10-yr avg is 283 fires for 1,298 acres
June: 10-yr avg is 231 fires for 2,383 acres
July: 10-yr avg is 182 fires for 551 acres
***August: 10-yr avg is 126 fires for 420 acres**
September: 10-yr avg is 194 fires for 422 acres
October: 10-yr avg is 265 fires for 1,996 acres
November: 10-yr avg is 534 fires for 6,173 acres
December: 10-yr avg is 372 fires for 733 acres

April: 1,165 incidents for 2,503 acres
May: 566 incidents for 2,327 acres
June: 626 incidents for 2,332 acres
July: 357 incidents for 1,726 acres

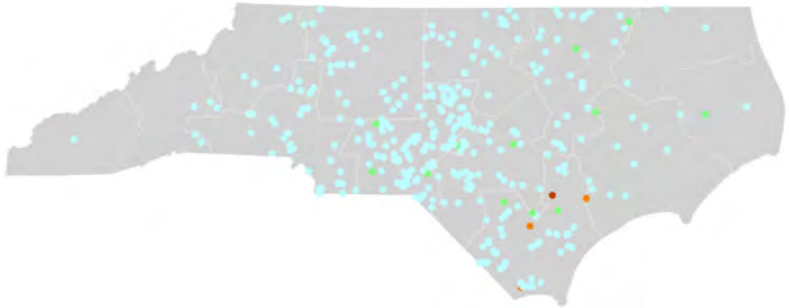
May 2026



June 2026



July 2026



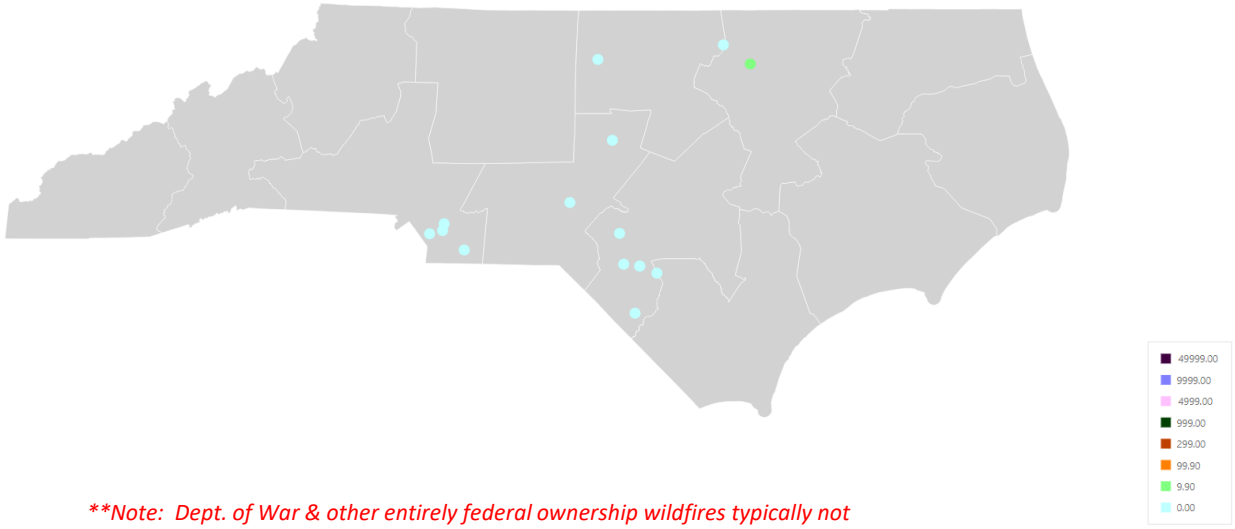
August - MTD Activity (ending 8/7 am): 15 incidents for 25.6 acres

All wildfire activity data is preliminary
Does not include additional federal wildfires/acres
2016-2025 CY Average

**Largest incidents by discovery date, 7-Day Activity:
from fiResponse & preliminary reporting only

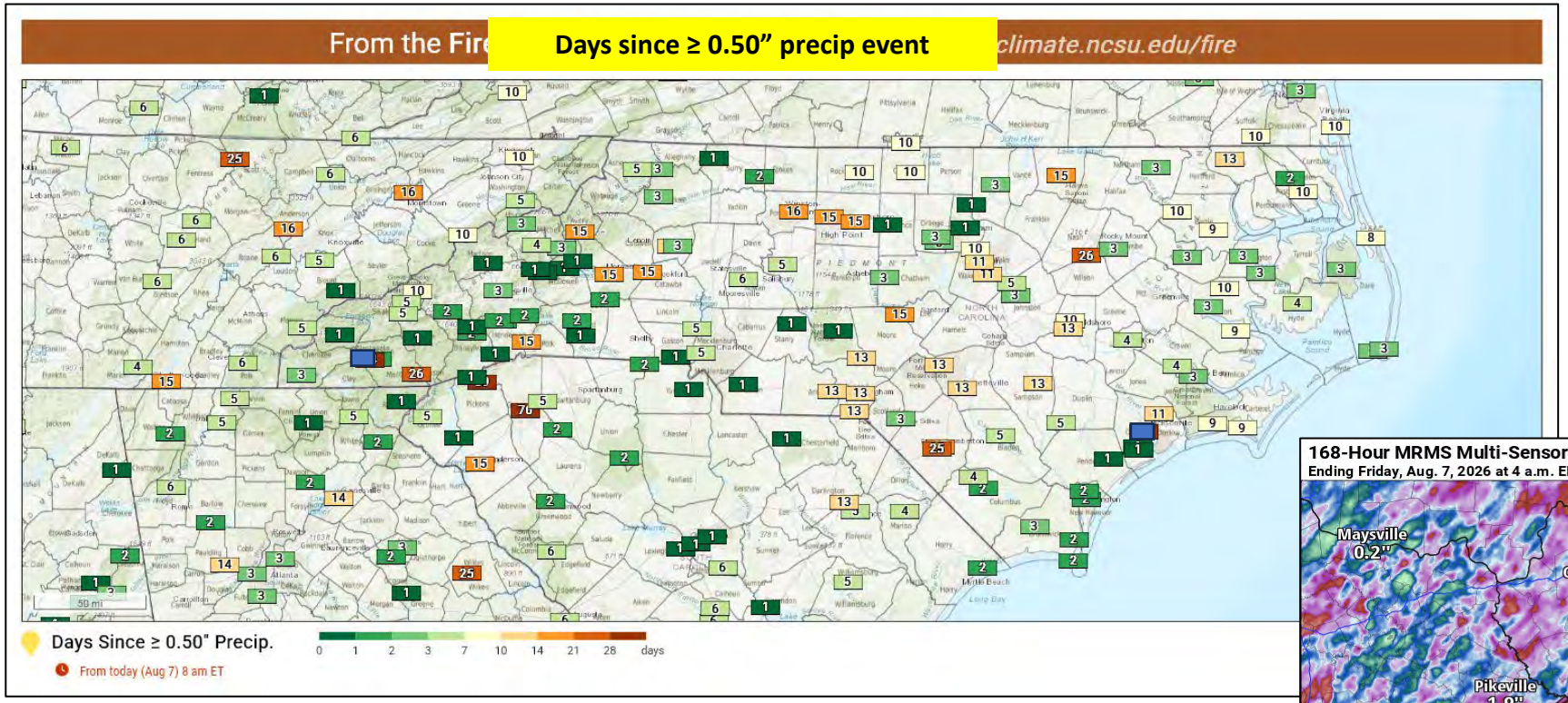
Incident Name	Discovery Date	Region	District	County	Acres
Reynolds Rd	8/1/2026	Region 2	District 5	Franklin County	15.00
Skipper St	8/1/2026	Region 2	District 6	Robeson County	5.00
W Great Marsh Church Rd	8/6/2026	Region 2	District 6	Robeson County	2.17
Love Dr	8/1/2026	Region 2	District 6	Robeson County	2.00
Old Blanchard	8/1/2026	Region 2	District 11	Alamance County	1.00
Chickenfoot Rd	8/5/2026	Region 1	District 8	Bladen County	0.10
Baker Cir	8/5/2026	Region 2	District 3	Moore County	0.10
Holly Ridge	8/7/2026	Region 2	District 3	Chatham County	0.10
Tea Cup Dr	8/3/2026	Region 2	District 6	Robeson County	0.05
Weddington Rd	8/3/2026	Region 3	District 12	Union County	0.01

August – MTD Activity (ending 8/7 am)



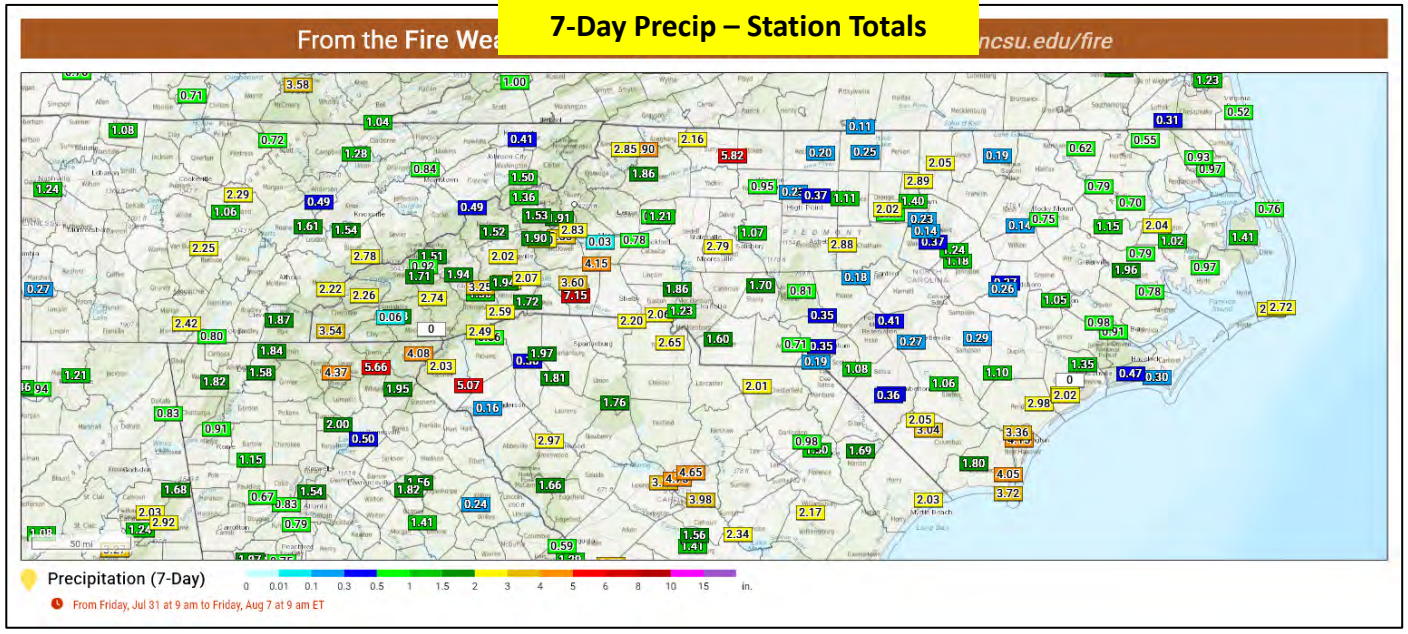
***Note: Dept. of War & other entirely federal ownership wildfires typically not shown on fiResponse, unless NCFS integrated into response.*

Days since ≥ 0.50” precip event

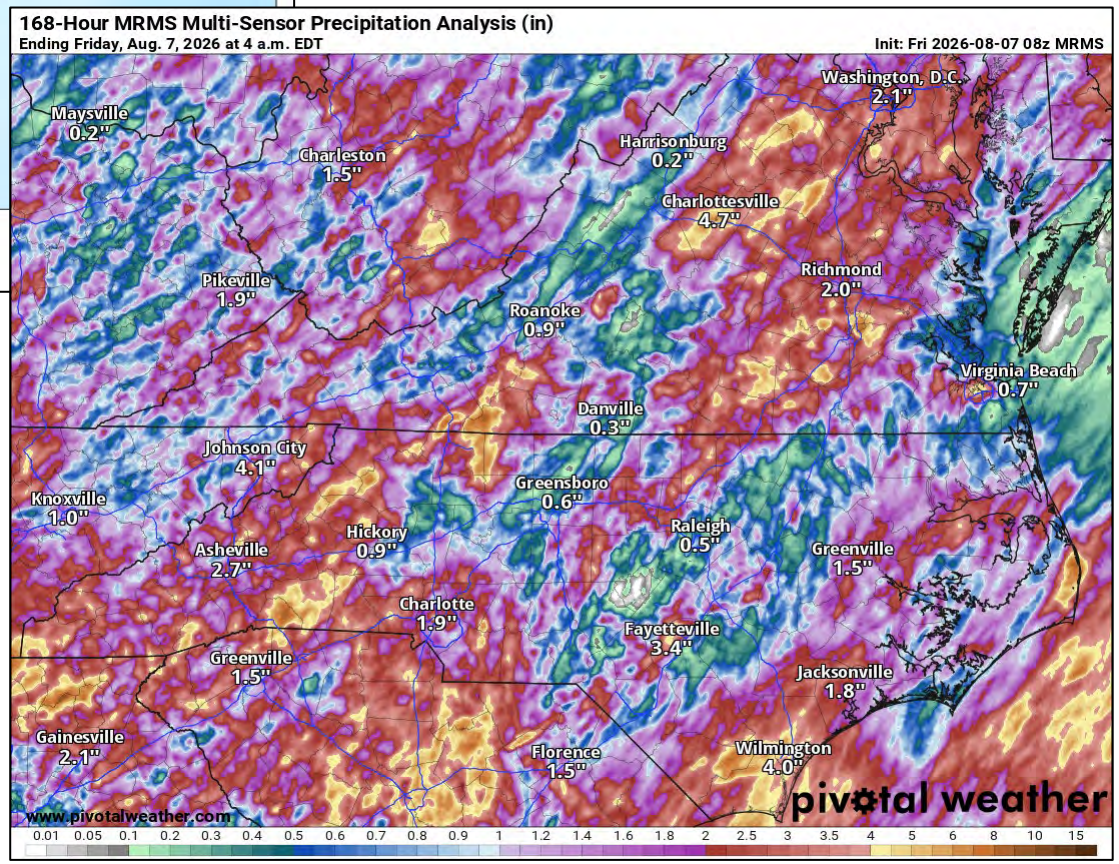


Note: Several stations showing 0.00 or trace amounts of precip likely have rain gauge malfunctions (reminder that map includes AWOS, ASOS, RAWS and Mesonet Stations)

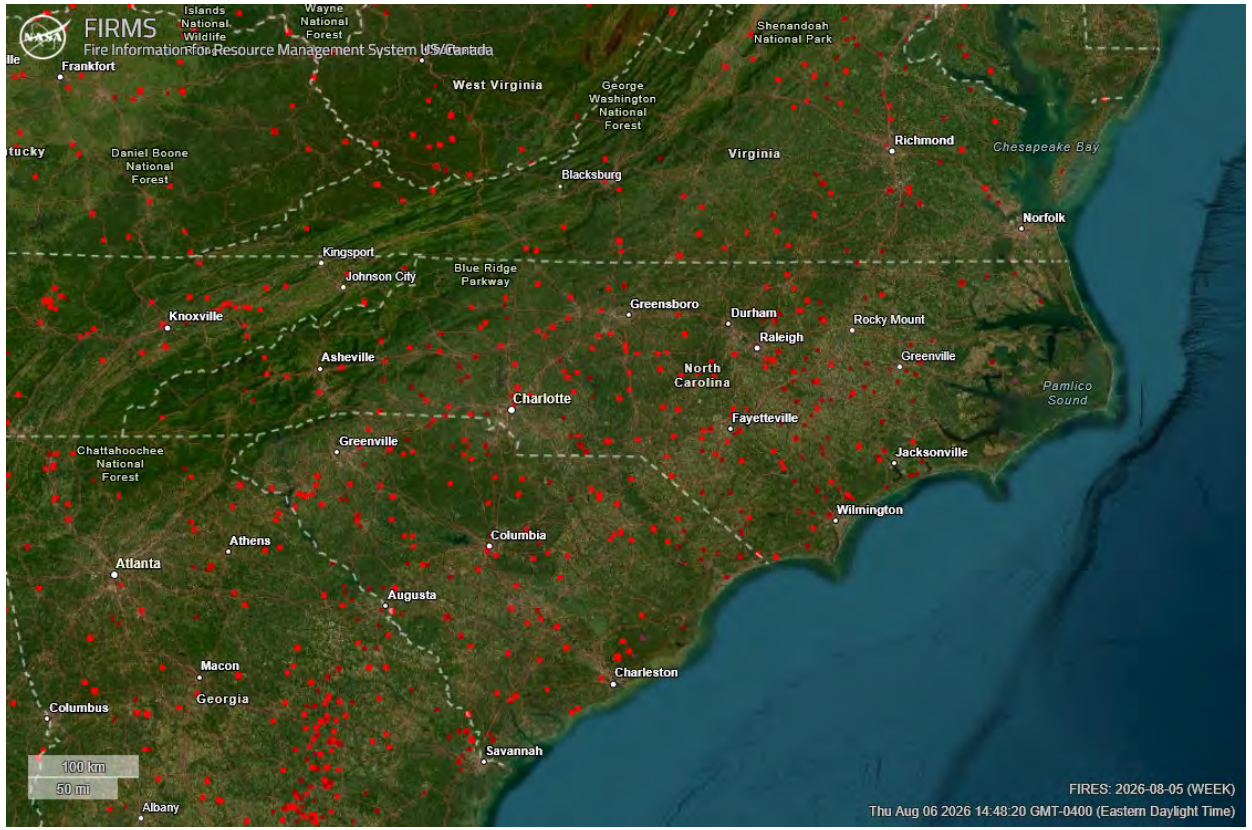
7-Day Precip – Station Totals

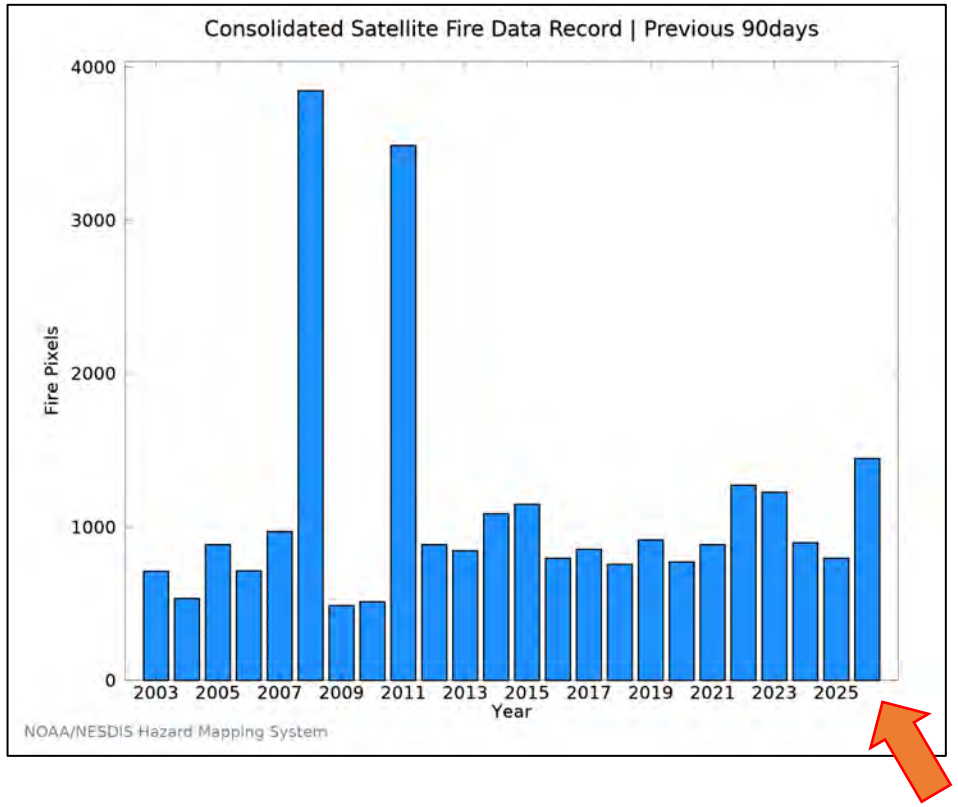


7-Day Precip Estimate



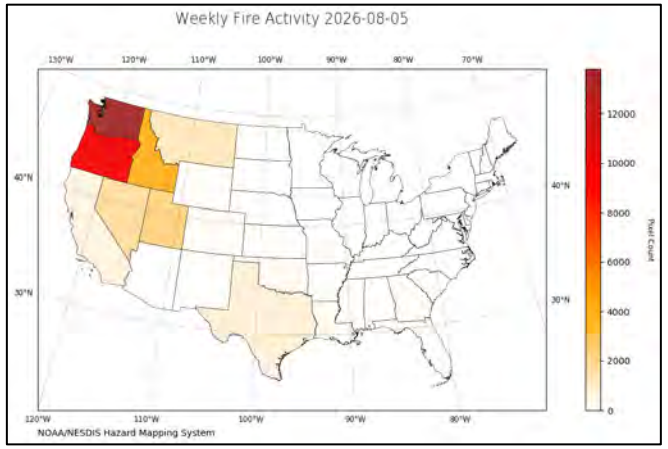
Weekly Heat Detects

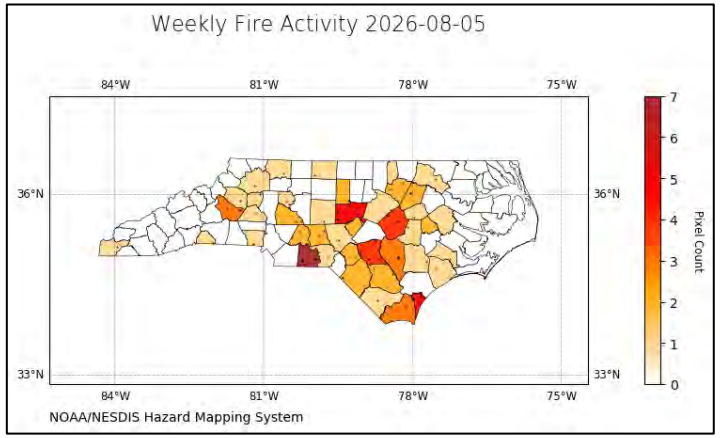




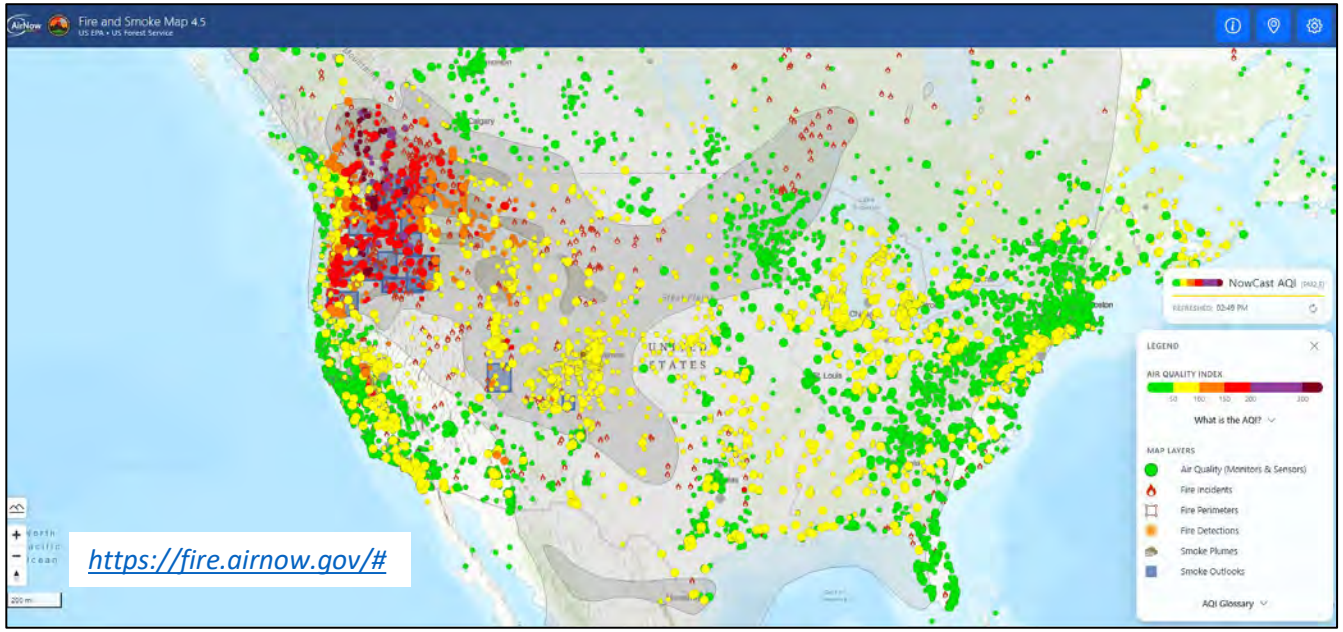
NC Map showing past week satellite detects from same source & bottom right maps display fire pixel counts. US & NC map below is Weekly, ending on 8/5/26. Note that cloud cover, heat intensity, and other factors can limit detections, not all detects may be "forestry related". Top right is a bar graph showing total fire pixels by year for past 90-days (note 2008 & 2011). Hazard Mapping System link:

https://www.ospo.noaa.gov/products/land/hms.html#maps



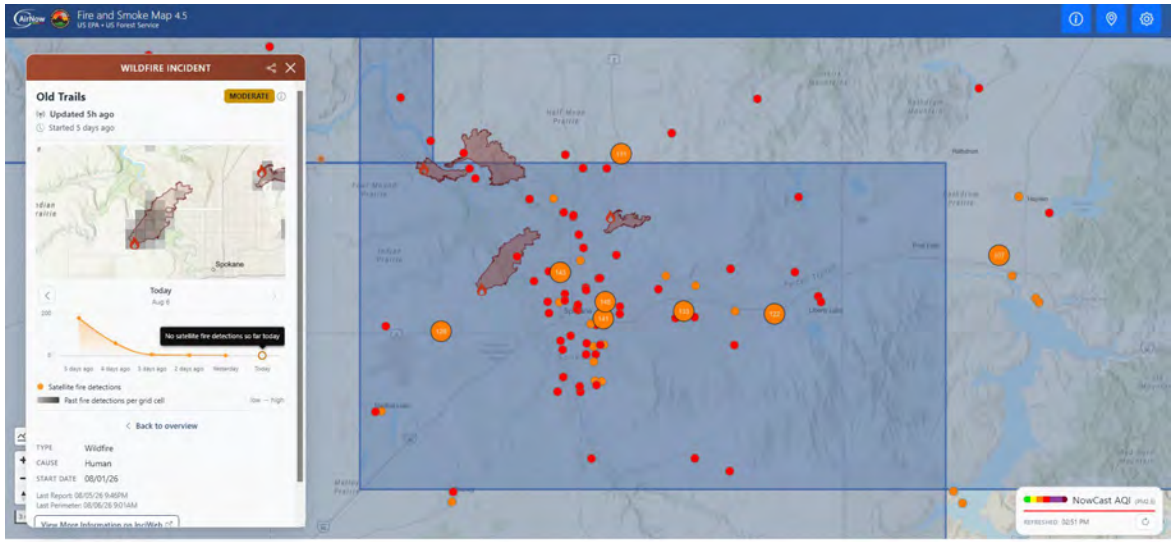


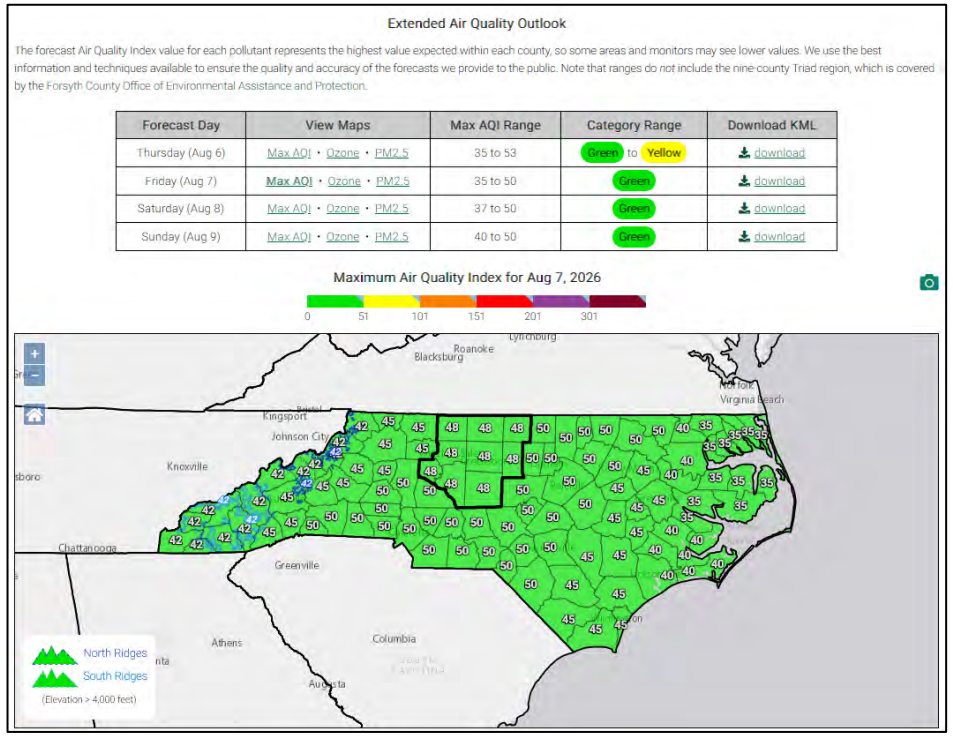
Air Quality Notes



https://fire.airnow.gov/#

Updated to Version 4.5. Update includes new functionality for larger incidents – example below for the "Old Trails" Fire near Spokane, WA.





This forecast was issued on **Thursday, August 6, 2026** at **3:15 pm**. This forecast is currently valid.

Today's Air Quality Conditions

Current daily average fine particulate levels are in the Code Yellow range in the Triangle and Wilmington metro areas thus far today, with Code Green conditions being observed elsewhere across the state. Ozone levels have predominantly been observed in the Code Green range today.

For a display of the most recent Air Quality Index (AQI) conditions throughout the day, visit the Ambient Information Reporter (AIR) tool.

General Forecast Discussion

High pressure will dominate over the southeastern US on Friday and through the weekend with typical summer diurnal showers and storms continuing through the period. PM2.5 levels will hover in the upper Green to low Yellow range across the state. Ozone levels should hold in the Green range thanks to cloud cover.

Outlook

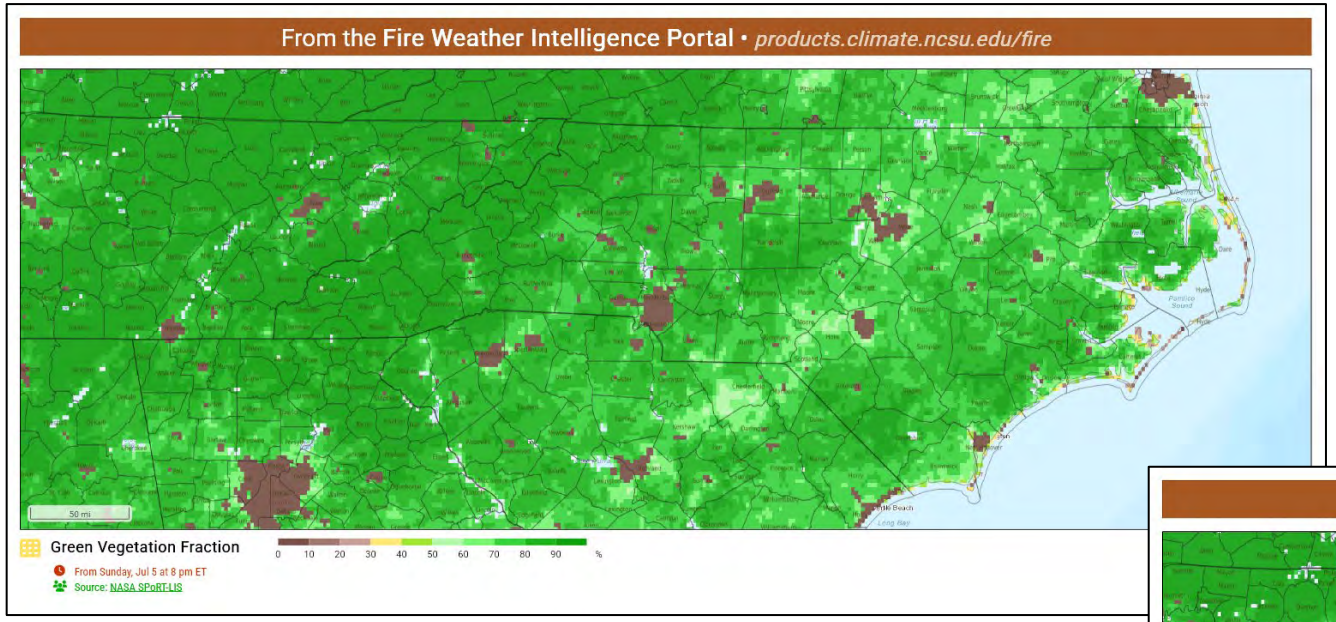
Overall good air quality is expected through Sunday, with some moderate Code Yellow hourly readings expected at times.

Author: *Sara Kreuser (sara.kreuser@deq.nc.gov) - NC Division of Air Quality*

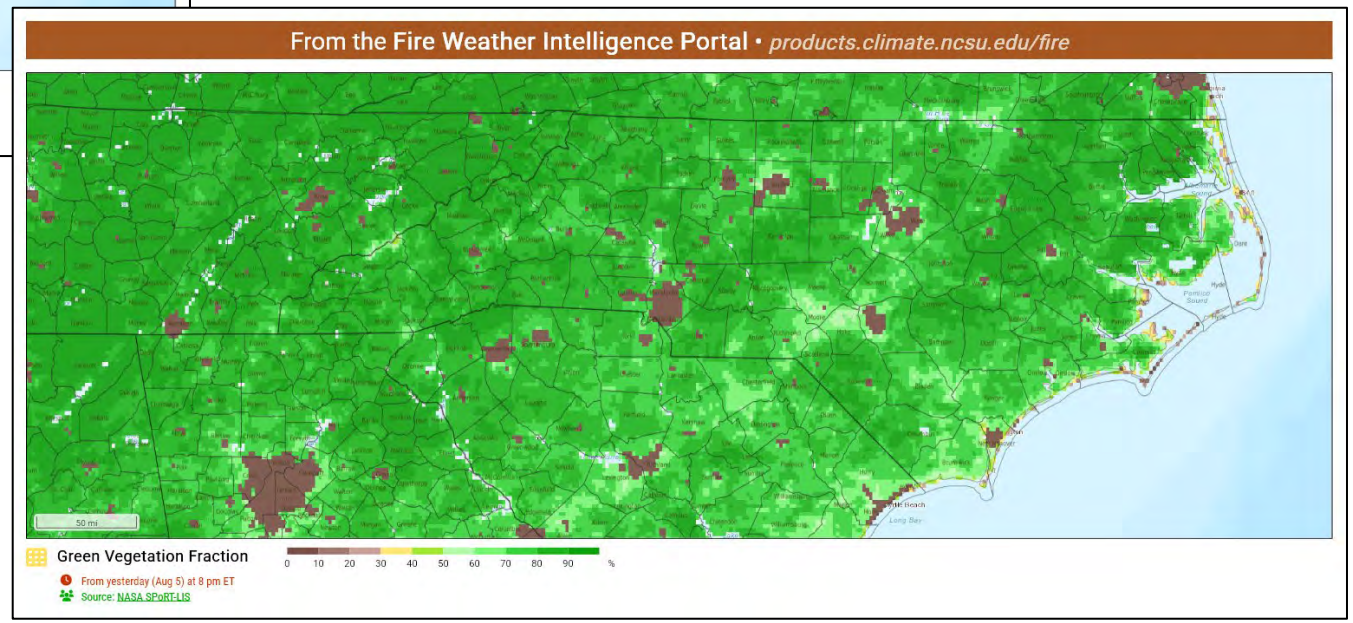
https://airquality.climate.ncsu.edu/discussion/?view=latest

SPoRT Modeled Green Vegetation Fraction

July 5, 2026



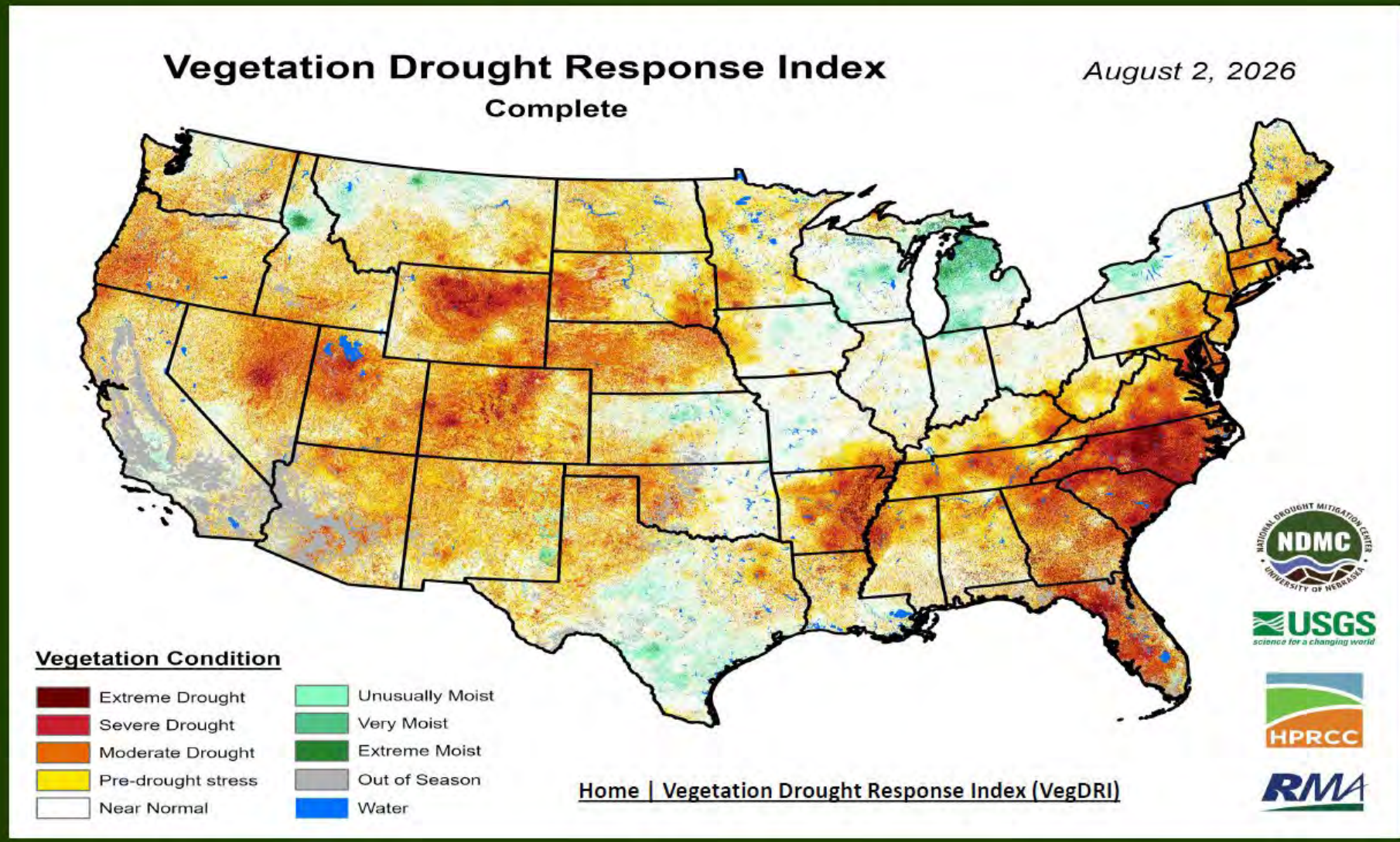
August 5, 2026



The daily GVF graphic show overall greenness across the state – left is 7/5, right is 8/5. Several areas of the state are exhibiting significantly more relative greenness following the recent period of rain events. These maps can help illustrate potential drought impacts & agricultural crop growth cycles. Actual greenness & moisture content depends on species, aspect, and drought impacts.

Drought impacts have an influence on herbaceous & woody shrub live fuel volatility, highly drought stressed species (especially waxy shrub and conifers) are much less resistant/contribute to spread in heaviest impacted areas. Higher GVF values **should not** always be interpreted as meaning "effective green" and lower forest volatility due to drought/seasonal progression. **This is especially the case for coastal/sandhill plant communities with deep fluffy duff/litter, organic soils, and conifer & waxy shrub species still in significant drought.**

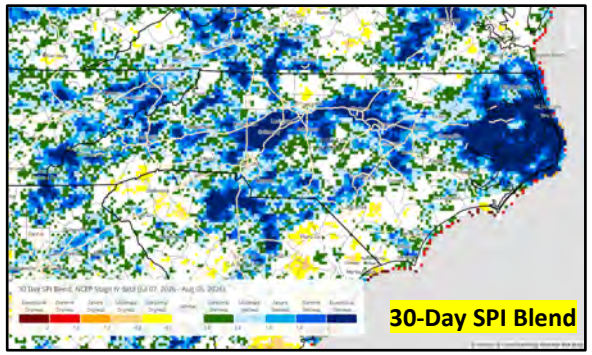
Early August VegDRI

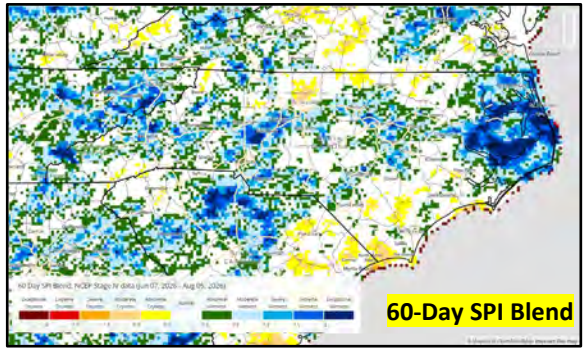


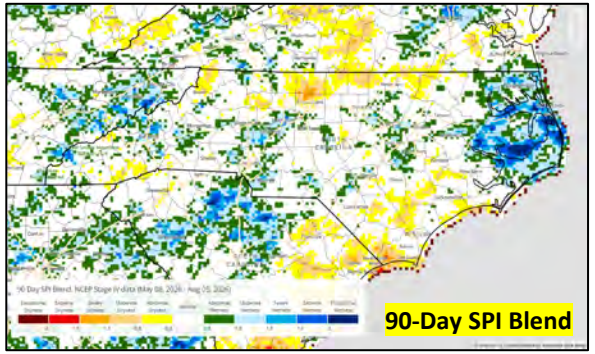
From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

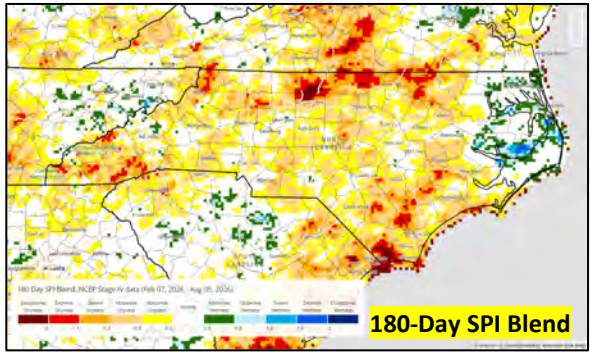
https://vegdri.unl.edu/FAQ.aspx

https://srcc.tamu.edu/water_portal/

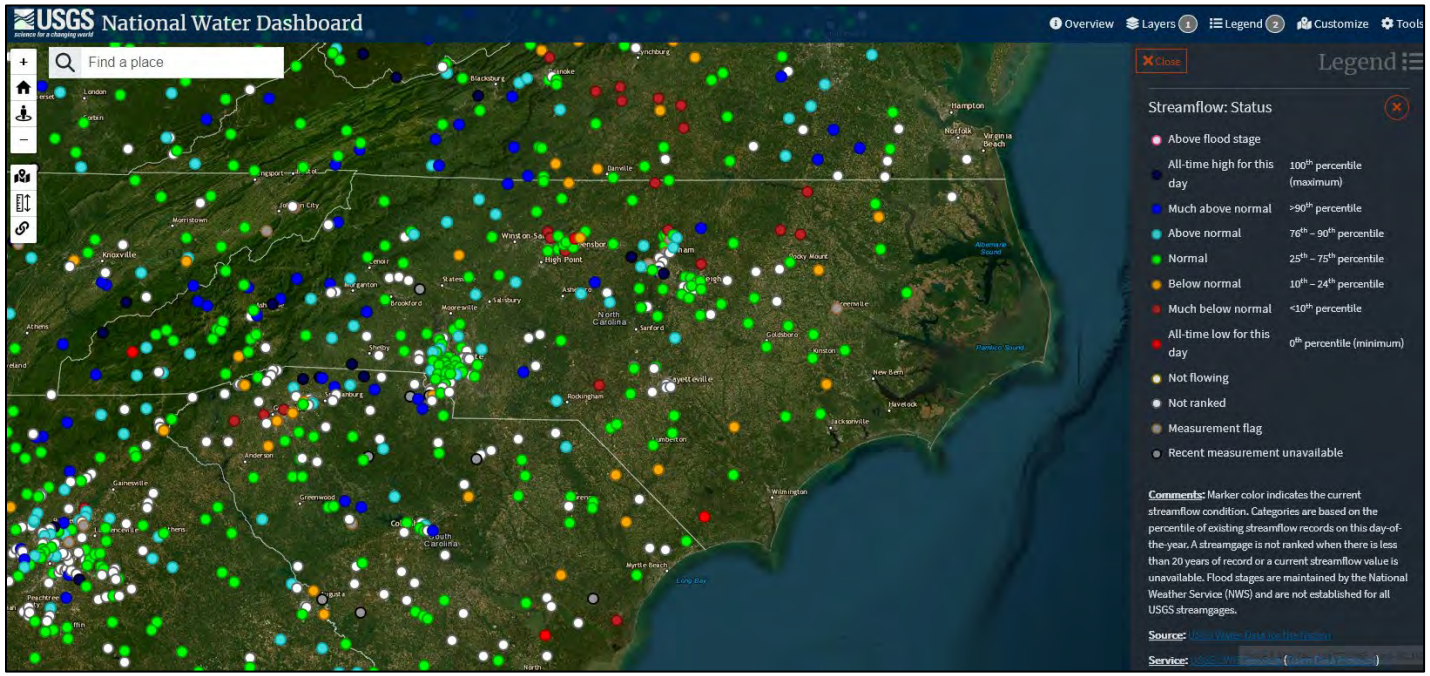








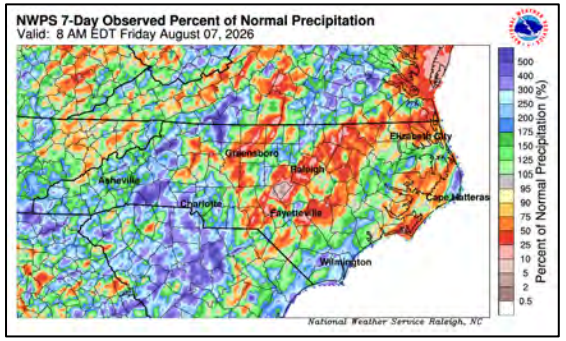
New USGS Streamflow Map: Real-time



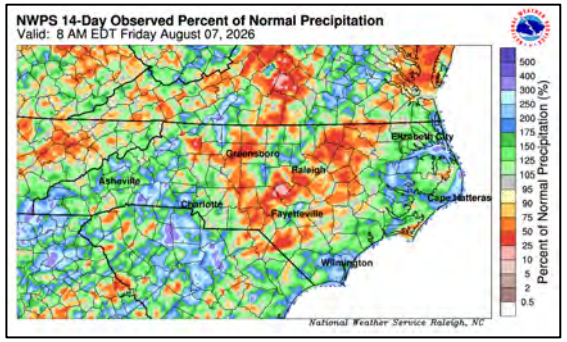
Improvements over short to medium time scale SPI maps, most pronounced in NE & Central Coast areas (D-7 & D-13). Longer time scale SPI products continue to indicate entrenched conditions scattered around state. As growing season continues it takes more rainfall to meet minimal evaporative demands & replenish shallow groundwater.

Real-time streamflow from 8/7/26 shows many station have returned to near normal for the time being. However, drought impacted soils + short-duration/high-intensity precip events lead to rapid run-off and limited absorption. Elevated larger system stream gauges don't adequately represent smaller scale hydrologic unit recovery. Some stations are already trending towards below normal as water moves through the system.

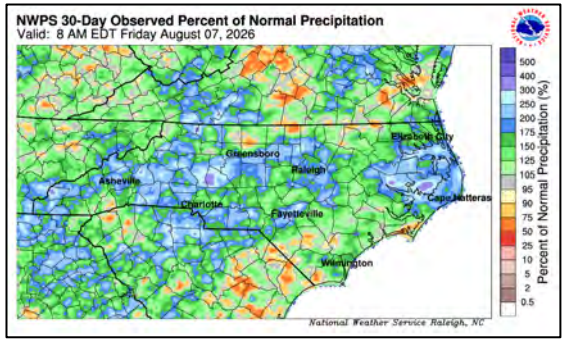
7-Day PNP



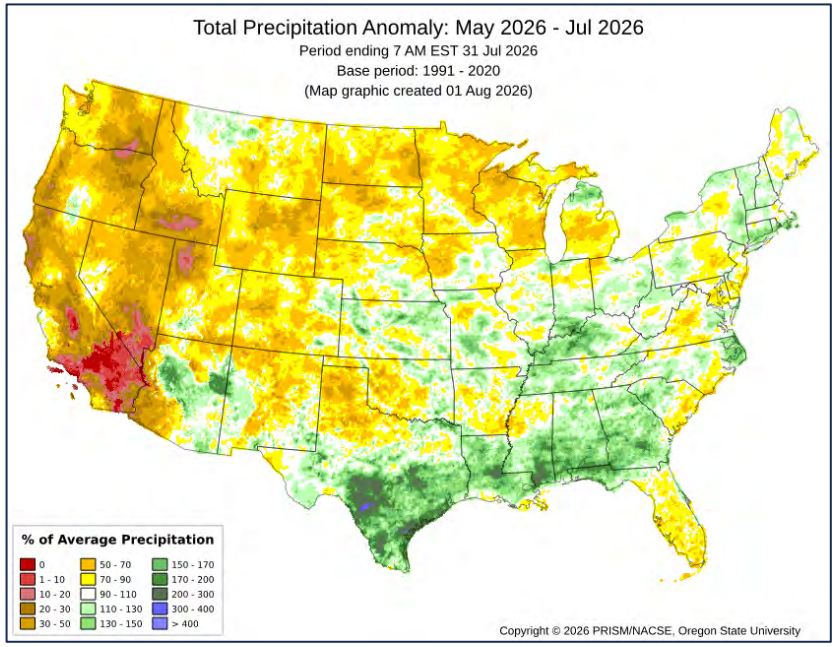
14-Day PNP

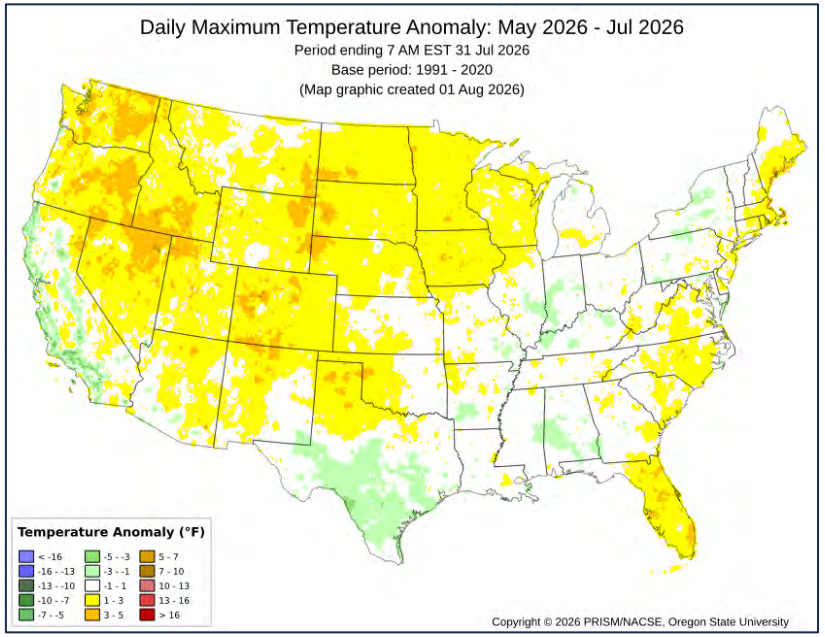


30-Day PNP

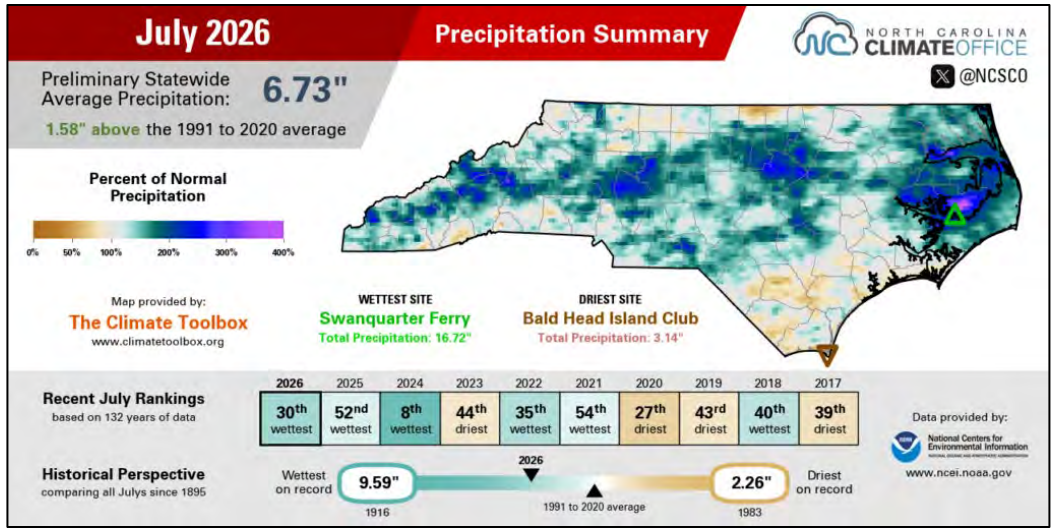


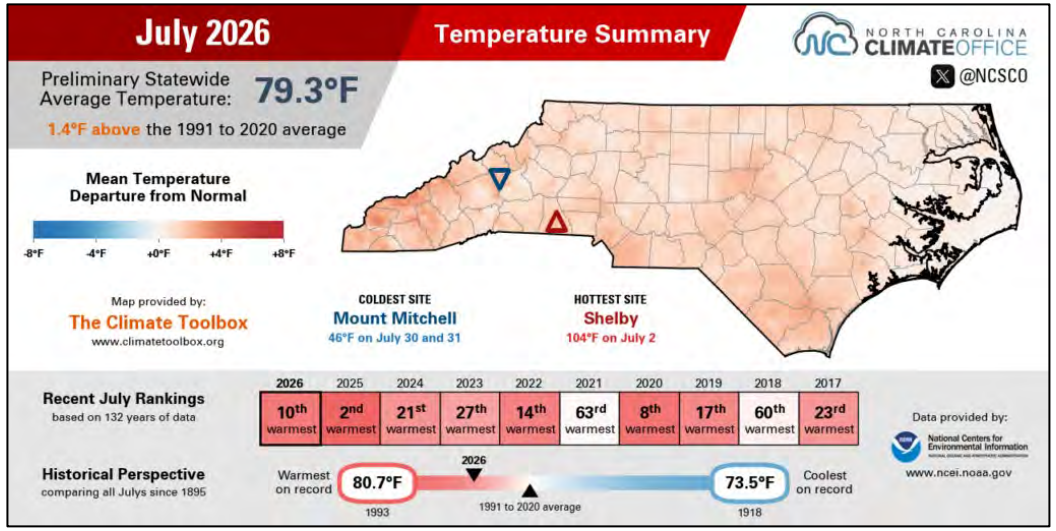
May-Jul 2026 National Scale Anomaly Maps



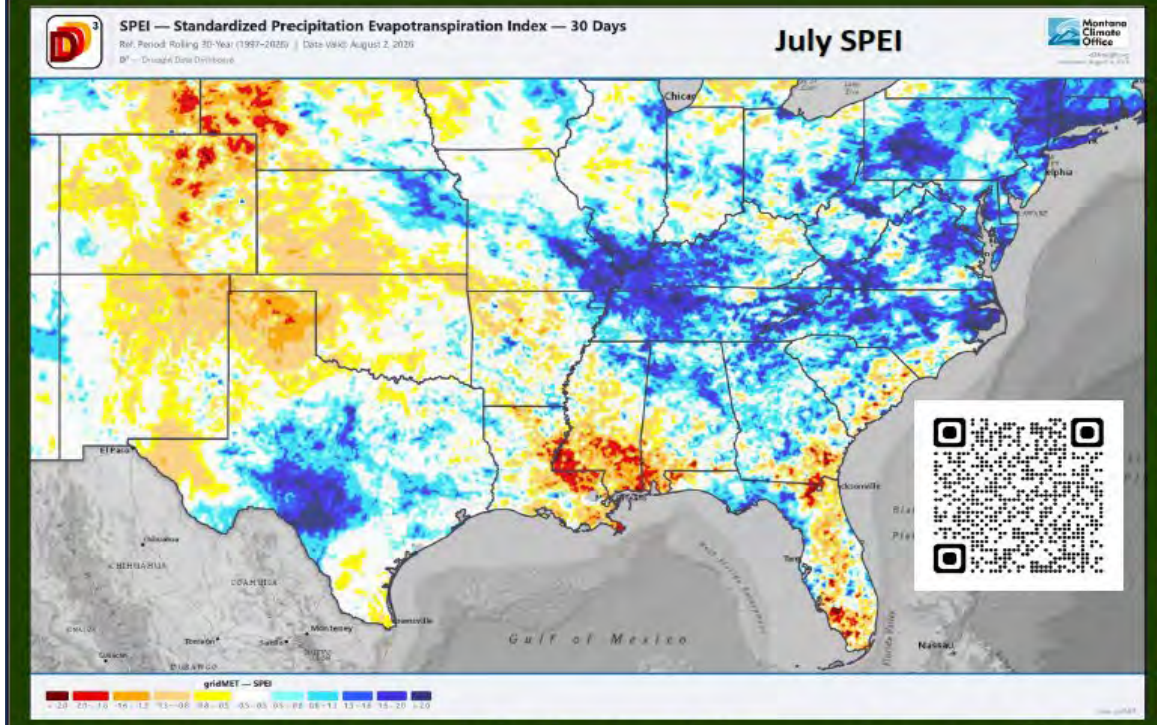


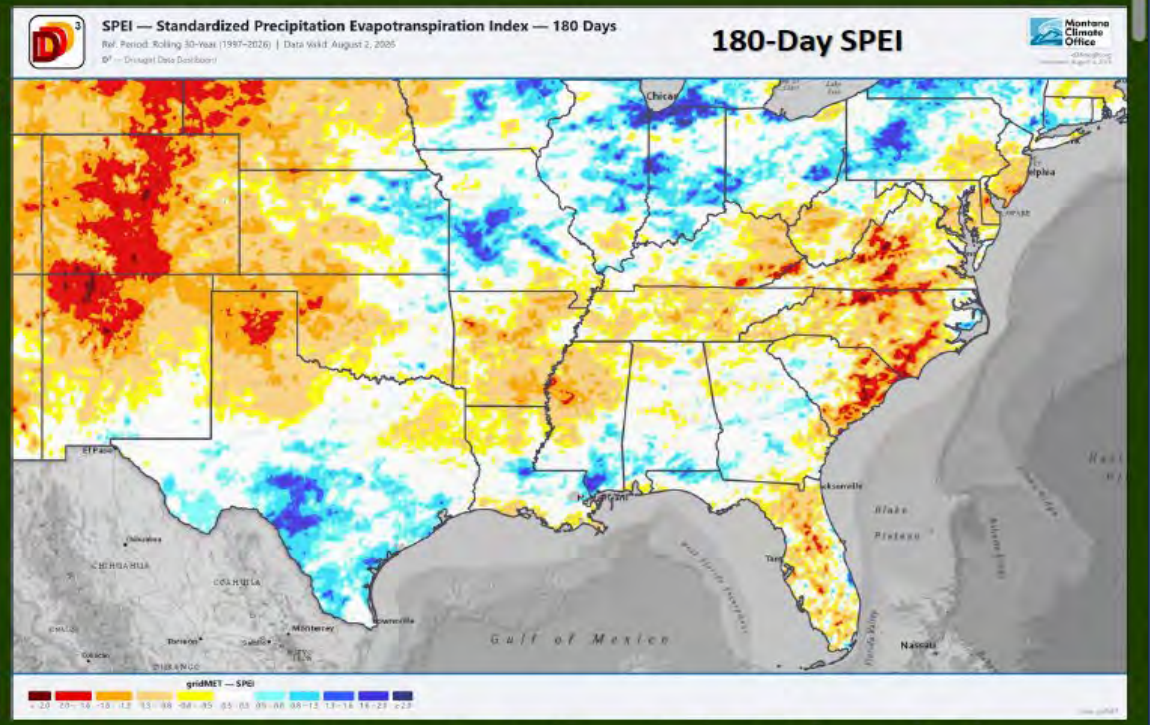
NC SCO – July 2026 Precip and Temp Summary





Standardized Precipitation-Evapotranspiration Index





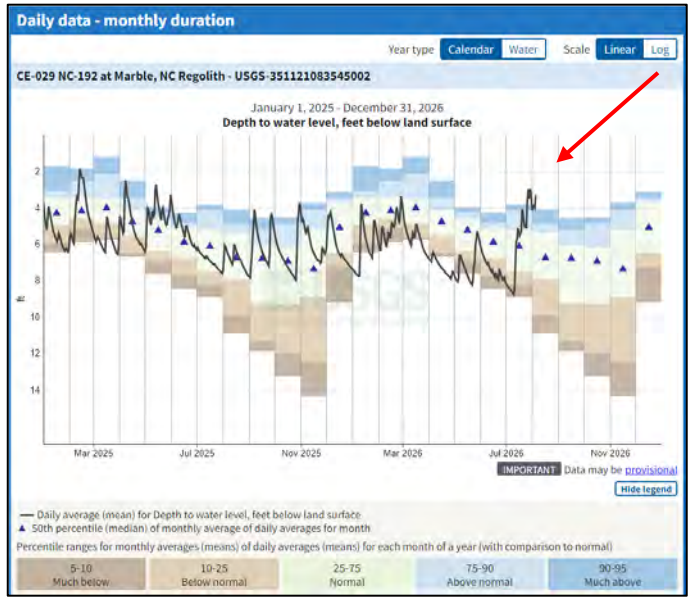
- Indications of flash drought in Florida and the coastal Southeast (prior to recent relief)
- Parts of Louisiana into south Mississippi and southwest Alabama saw flash drought begin in July
- High Plains and far western Oklahoma re-emerging dryness

- Long-term drought remains significant in the Southeast despite recent relief
- Long-term drought also evident in the Mid-Mississippi Valley, western Oklahoma and the Texas panhandle
- Moisture elsewhere in Texas and along the Gulf Coast came in bursts

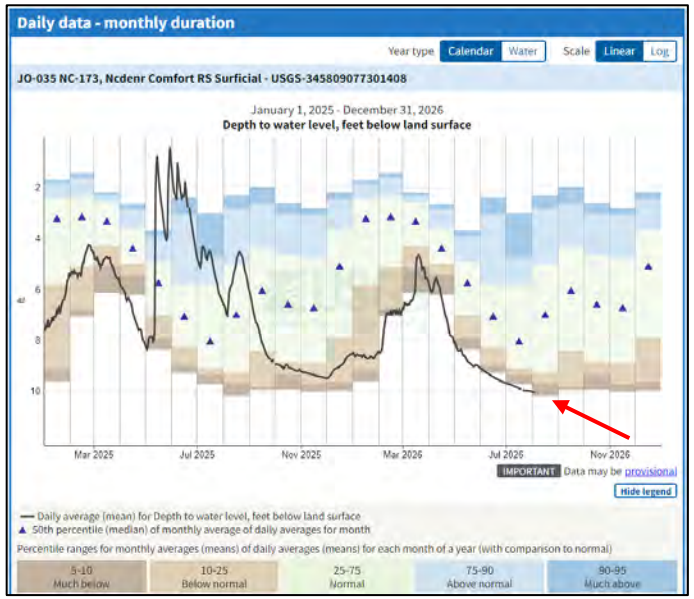
From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

USGS Monitoring Wells - https://waterdata.usgs.gov/state/North%20Carolina/#dataTypes=72019

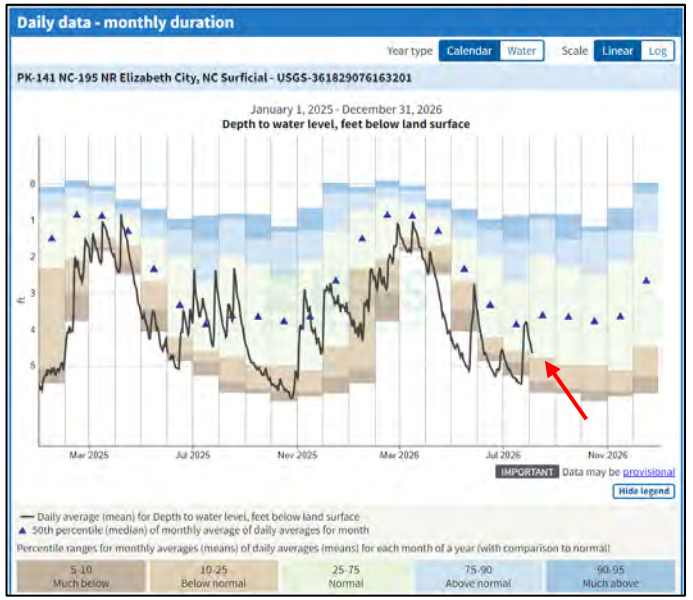
Marble Regolith – Cherokee Co.



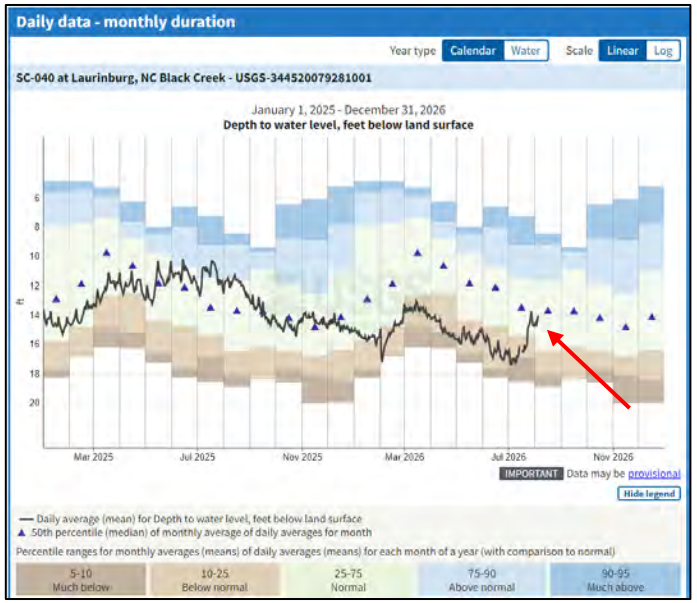
Comfort RS Surficial Well – Jones Co.



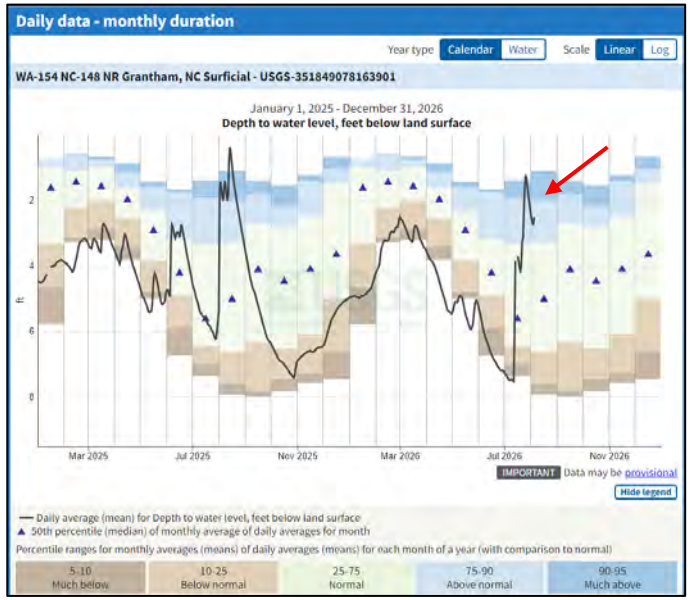
Elizabeth City Surficial Well – Pasquotank Co.



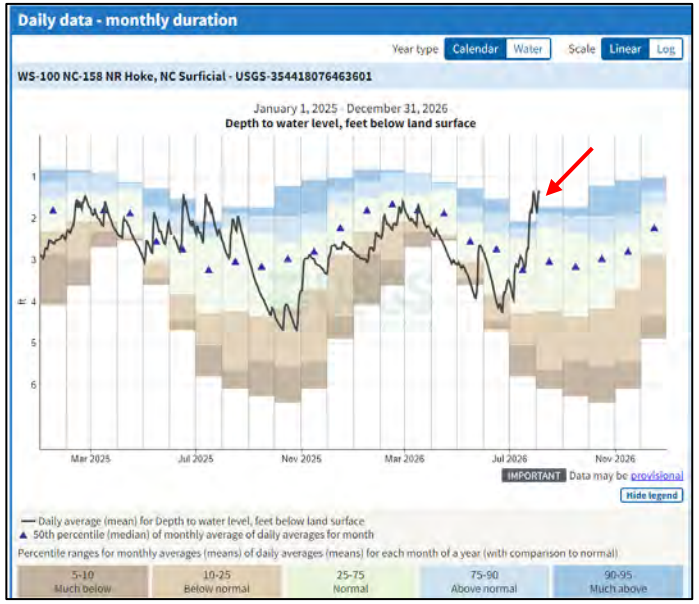
Black Creek – Scotland Co.



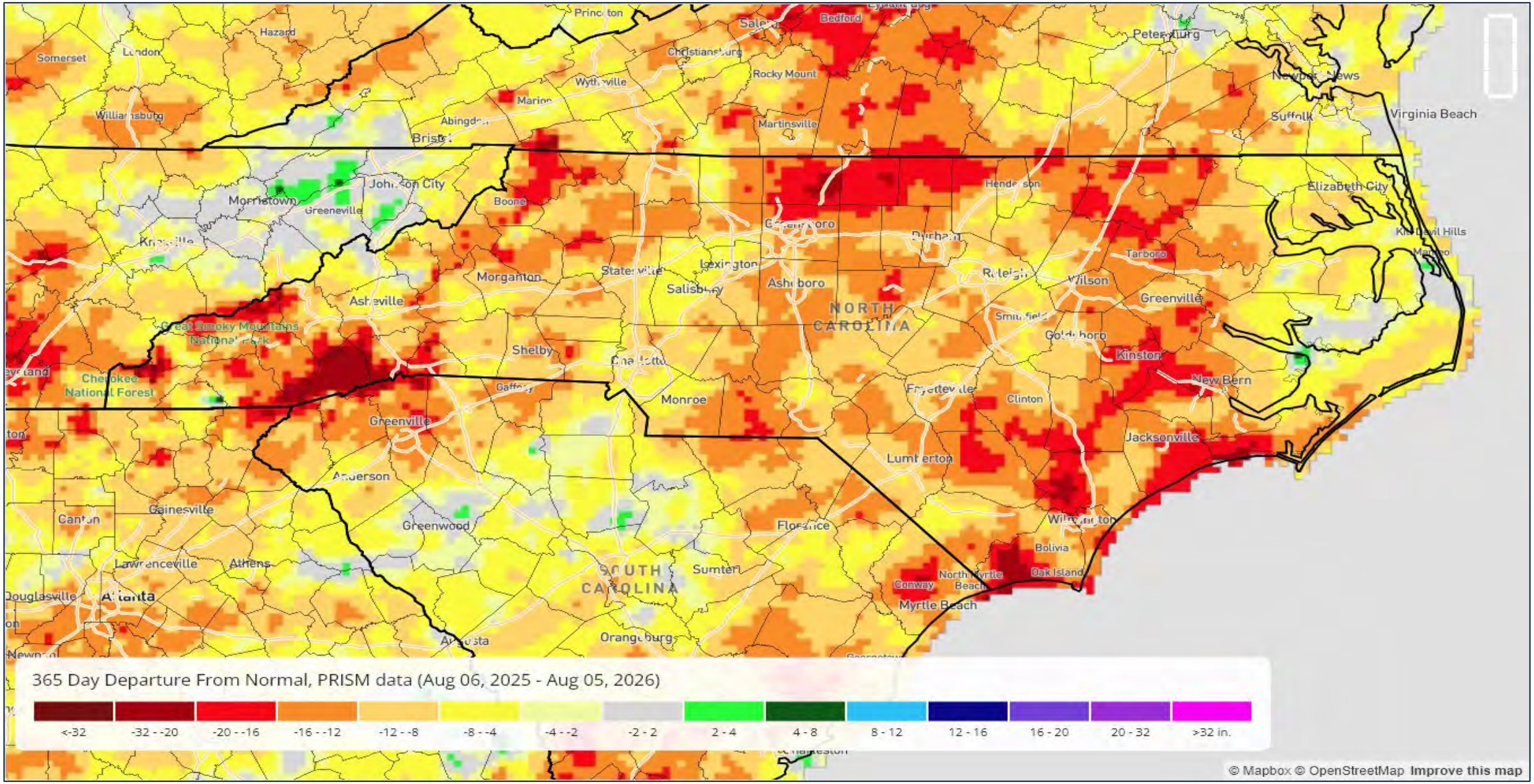
Grantham Surficial Well – Wayne Co.



Hoke Surficial Well – Washington Co.

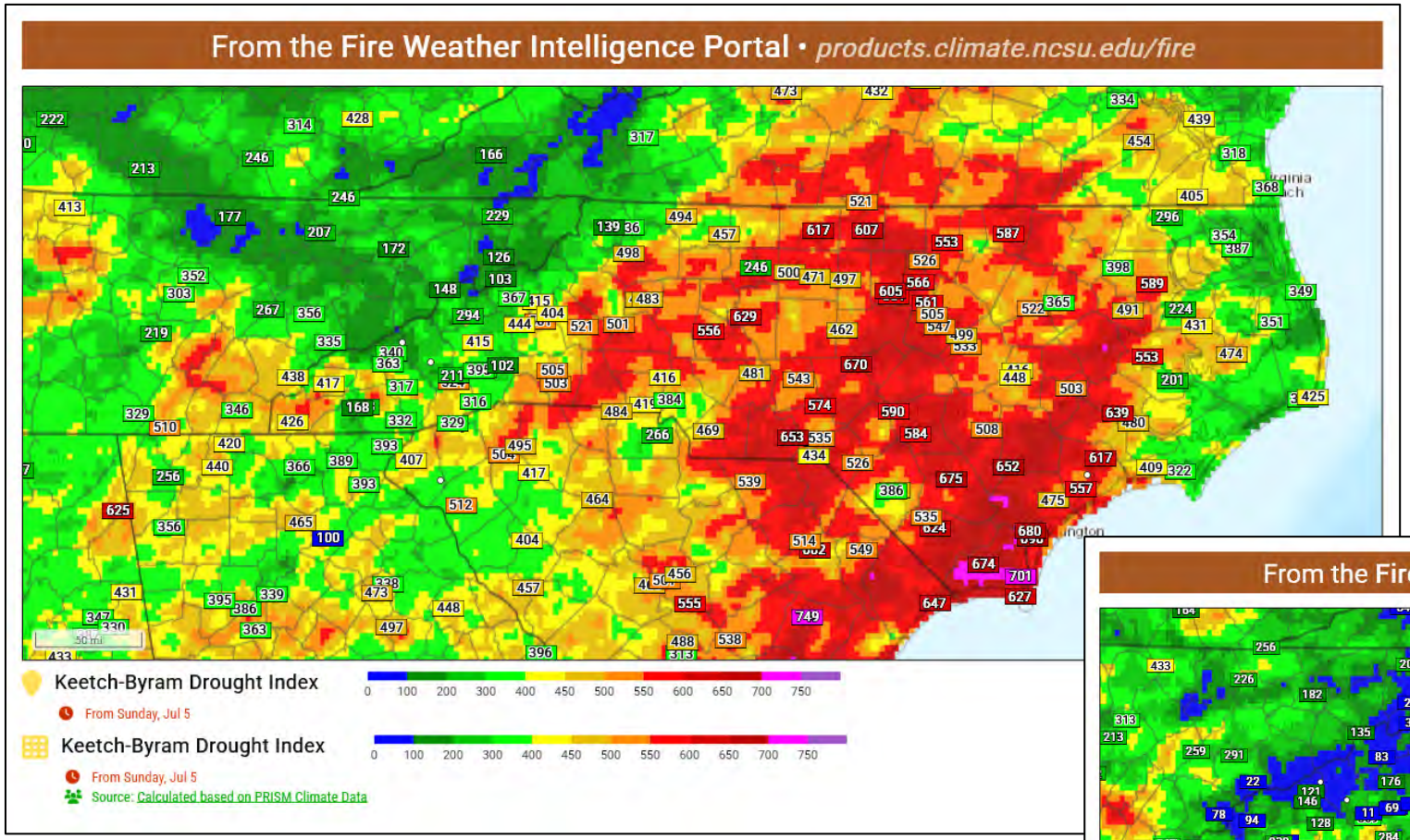


12-Month Departure From Normal (inches)

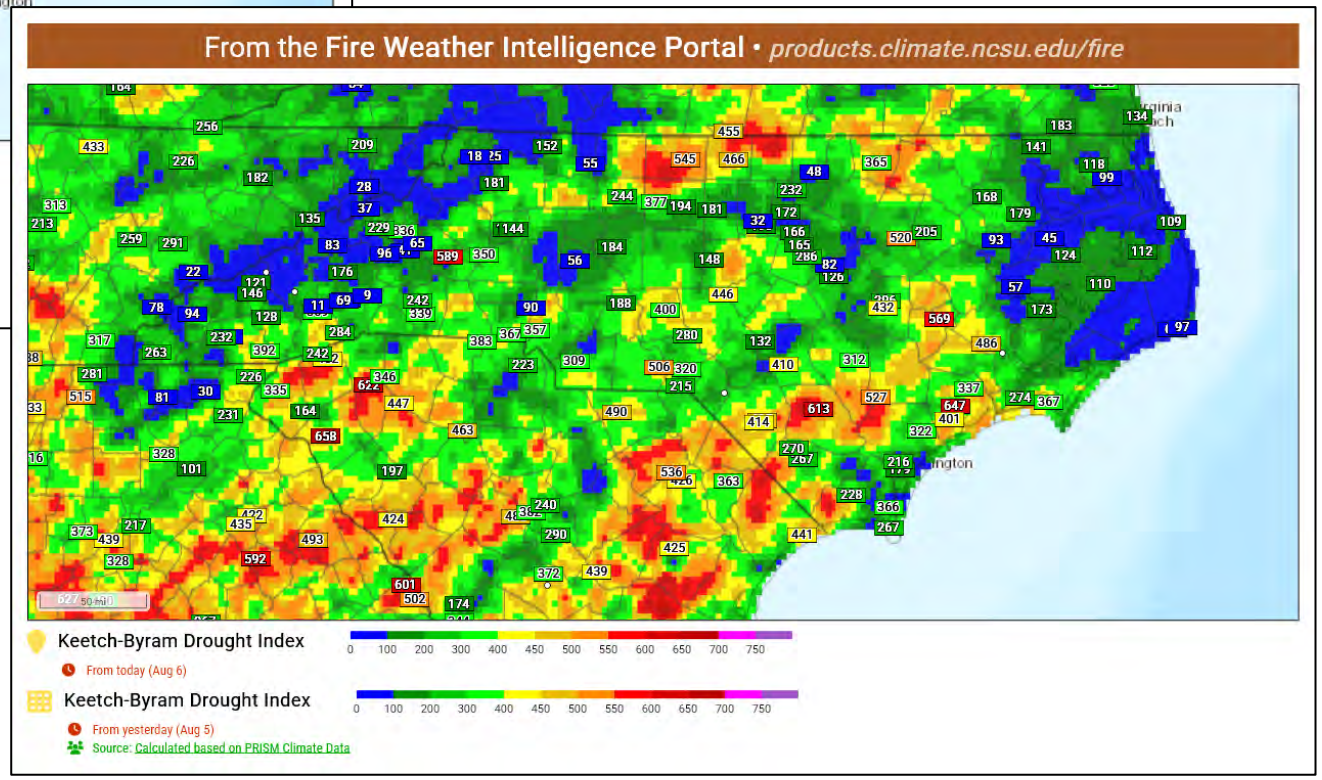


Still have significant deficits.
16”-20” deficits in bright red colored areas at 1-yr timescale.

July 5, 2026 - KBDI



August 6, 2026 - KBDI

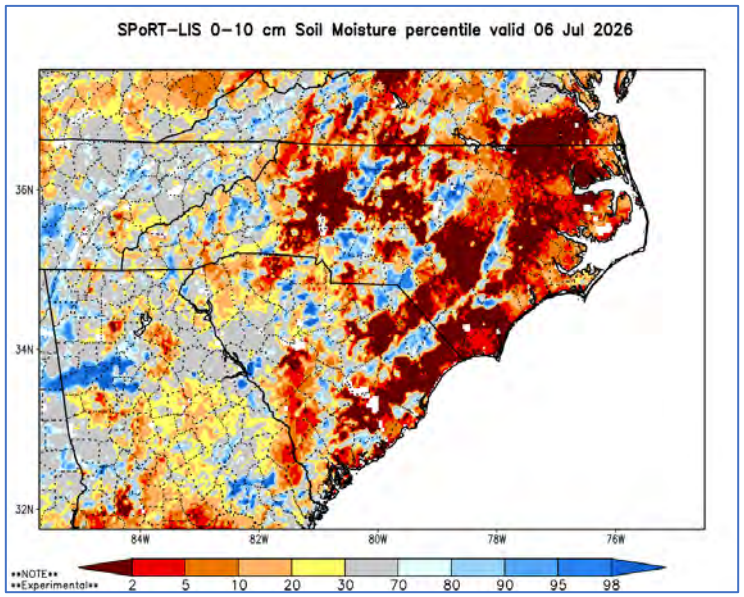


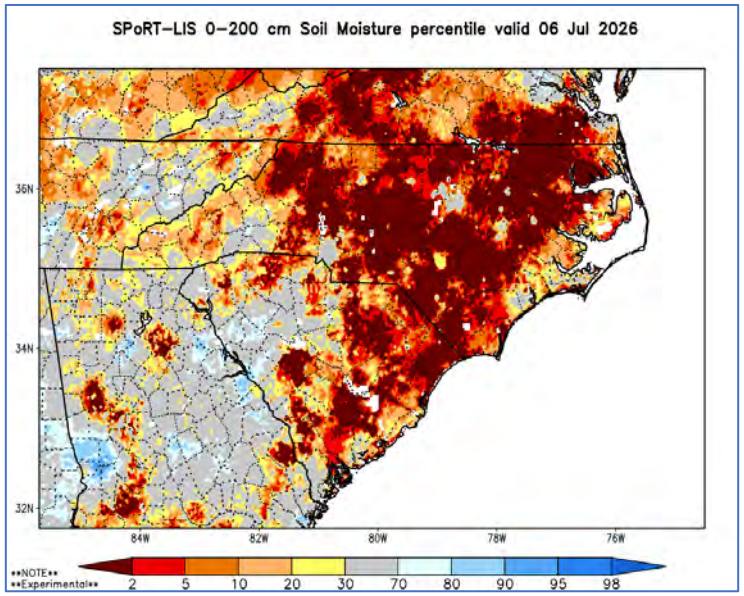
- KBDI values have decreased in many areas of the state due to wetting rains over the past several weeks – see July vs August map above & right. Rainfall has been generally convective/thunderstorm based, meaning that intense rainfall can quickly transition from 3”+ to < 0.20” over very small distances. Hence the popcorn effect being displayed.

Also, KBDI gridded outputs are coarse scale & can’t model site specific conditions such as artificial drainage impacts or overall runoff vs absorption. Point values are calculated via FEMS using station observations, with similar overall limitations noted above. Short-duration & high intensity rainfall often runs off vs absorbing. KBDI can not adequately model this, or deep systemwide hydrologic drought influences.

SPoRT Modeled Soil Moisture Percentiles for ~4” and ~72” profile.

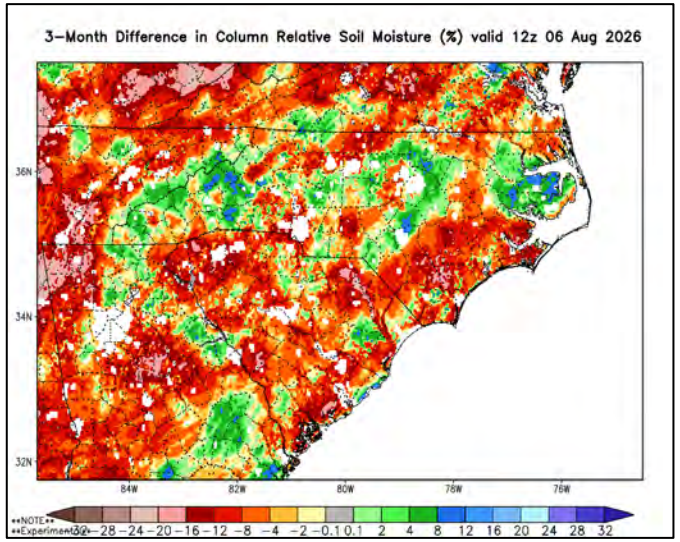
7/6/26





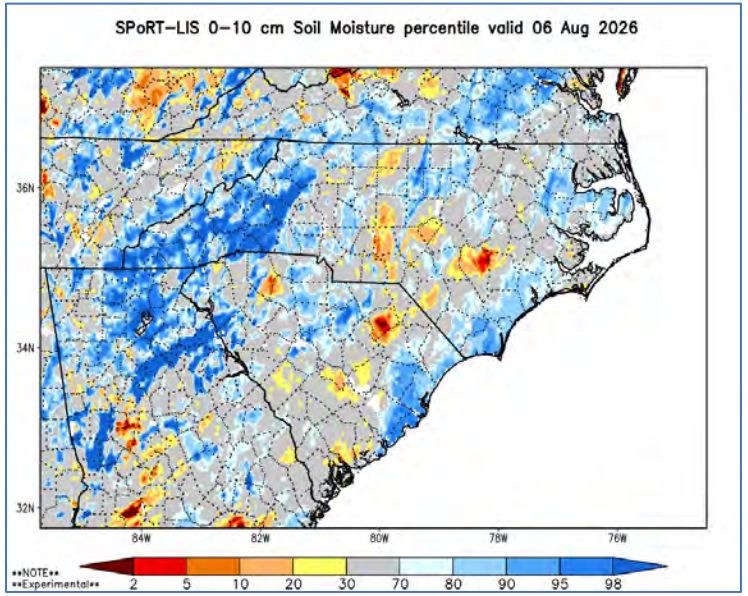
~ 4-Weeks ago Left, today on Right.
3-month difference graphic below.

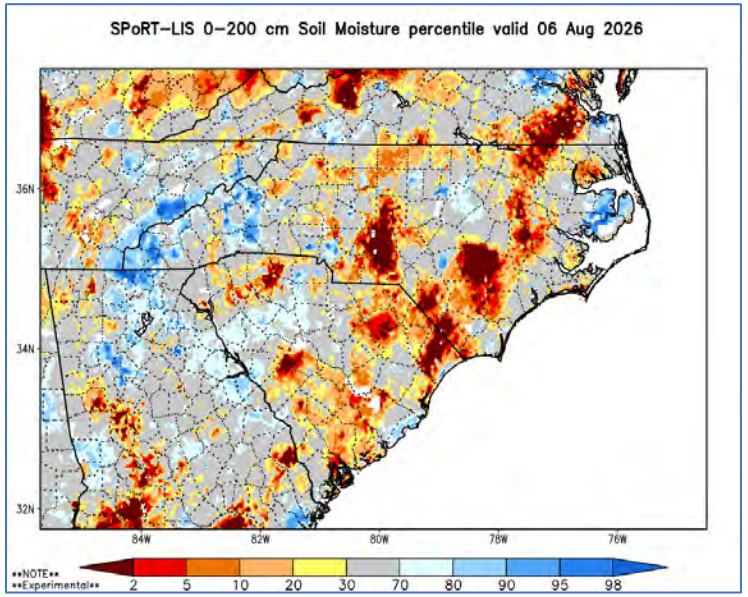
More significant improvement at both shallow and deeper soil levels, but significant full profile dryness remains for several large areas of the state. Active growing season will hasten soil moisture depletion, without adequate weekly precip.

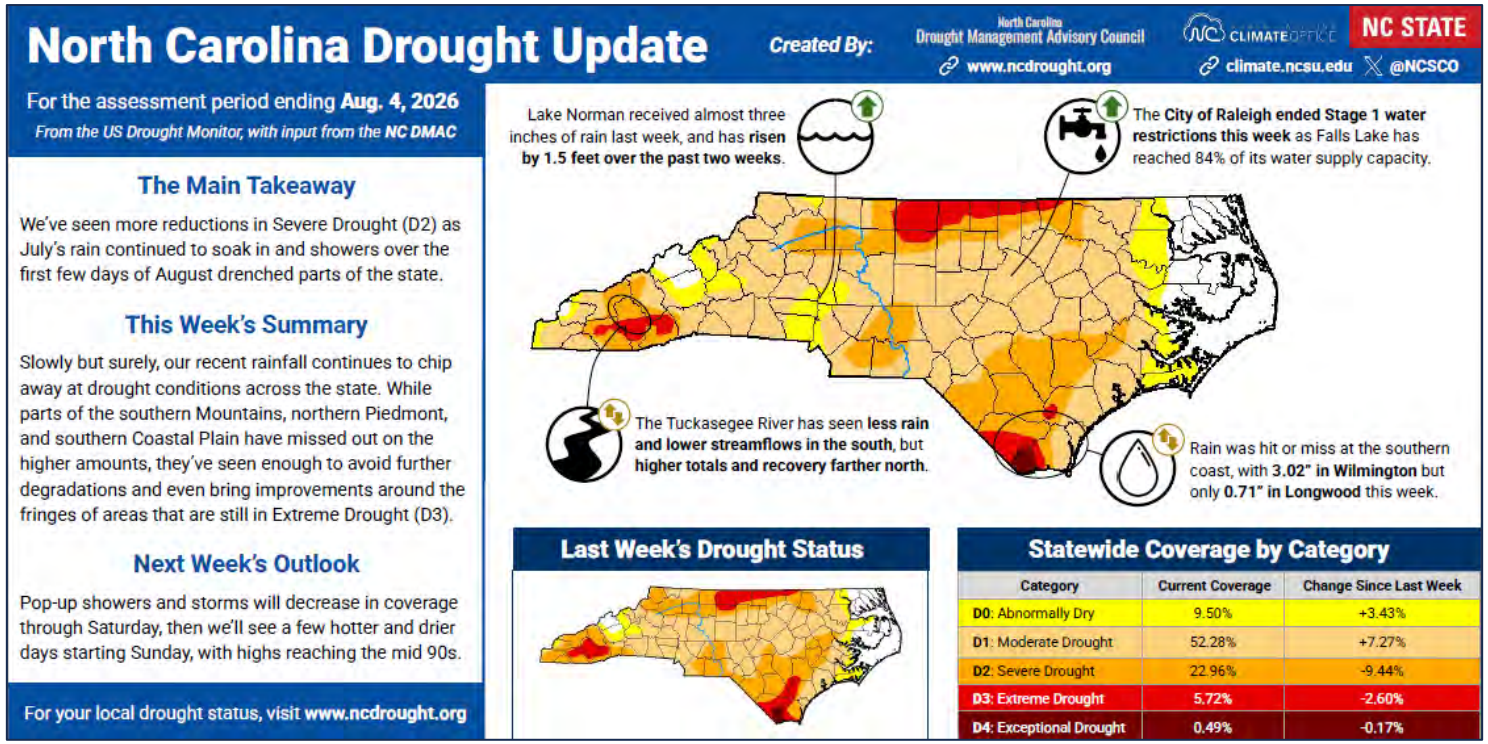


https://weather.ndc.nasa.gov/sport/case_studies/lis_NC.html

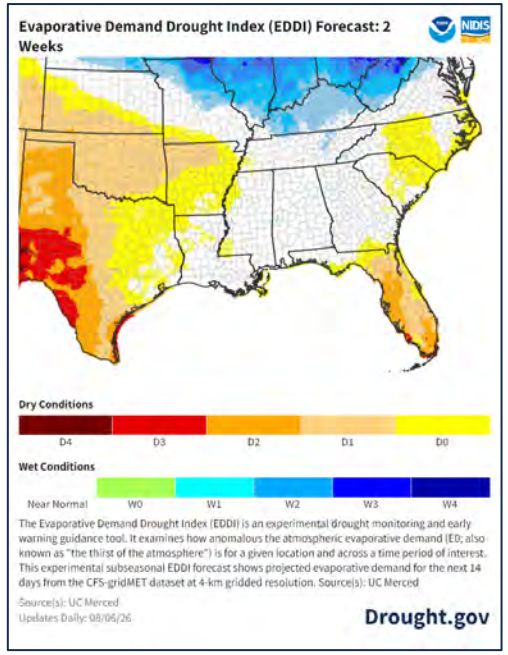
8/6/26

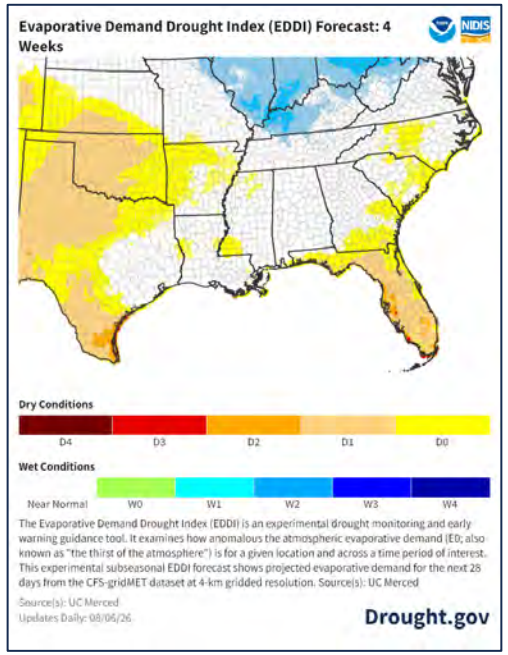






https://www.drought.gov/data-maps-tools/evaporative-demand-drought-index-eddi-subseasonal-forecasts



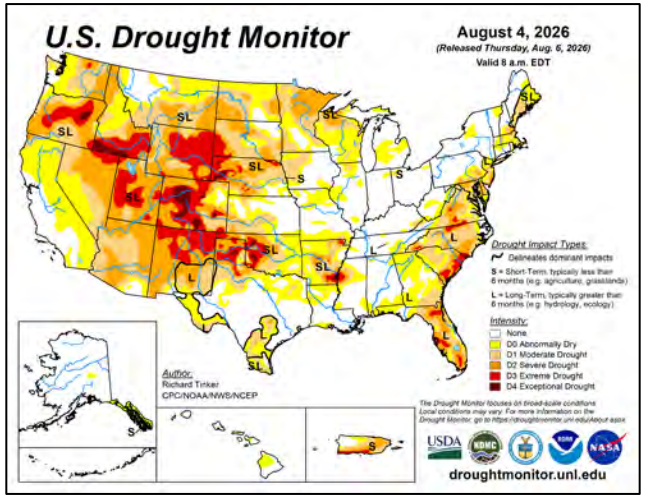


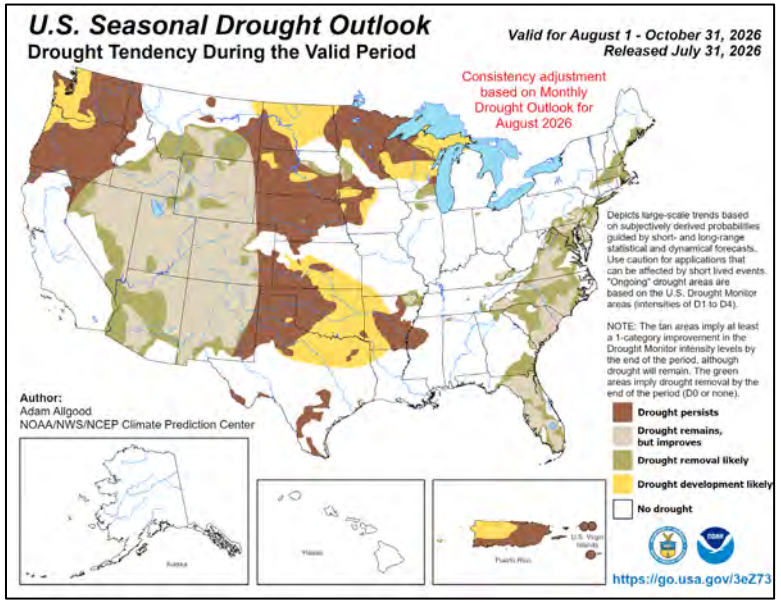
EDDI & Drought

EDDI Maps - The EDDI maps at the top right illustrate modeled evaporative demand at the two-week and four-week avg level. They are trending near to slightly above normal for parts of NC in the 2 & 4-week time scale. Warmth, lack of precip and dry air accelerates this index.

US Drought Monitor – Most recent USDM map release above (8/6/26).

Seasonal Drought Outlook - See detailed state/regional discussions here. No clear signal on drought relief in statewide context (also see Aug-Sept CPC Outlook).



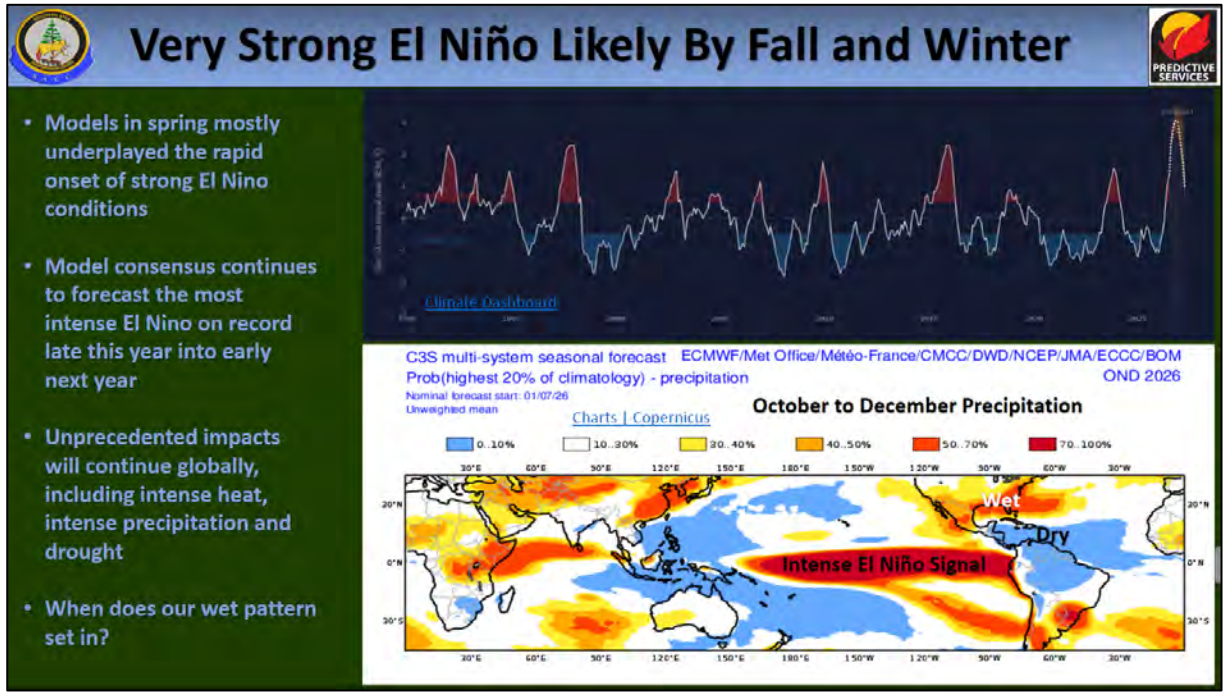


ENSO Notes from the CPC (8/3/26 Slide Update)

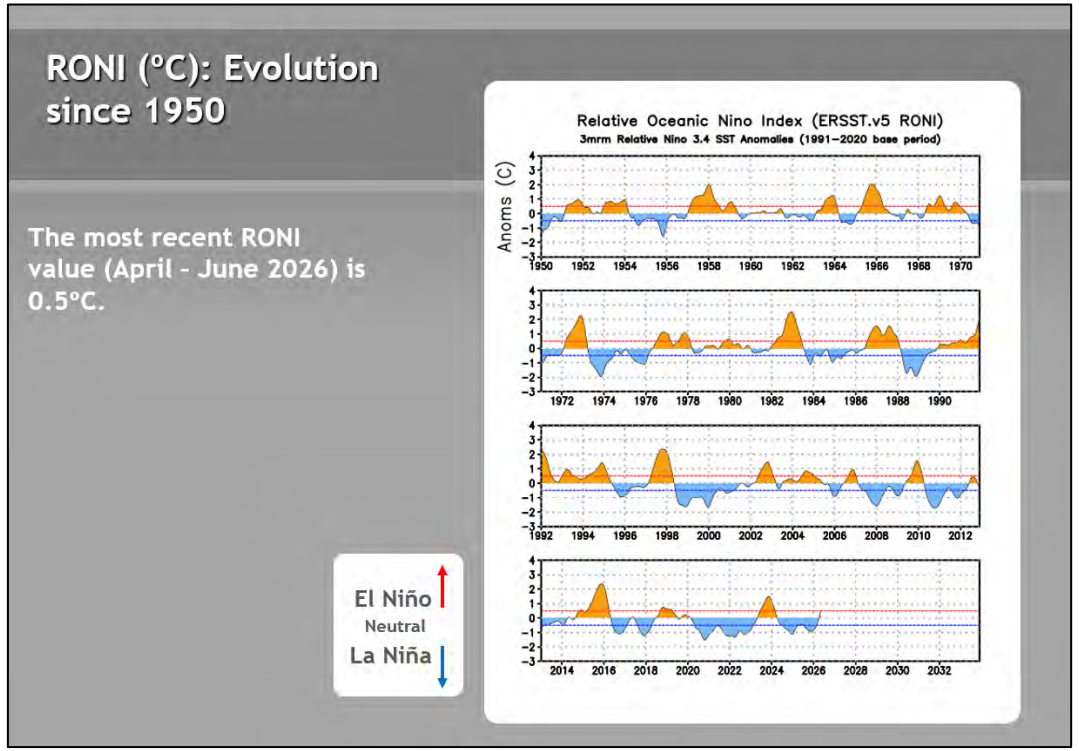
ENSO Alert System Status: **El Niño Advisory**

El Niño continues and will strengthen through the end of the year, with a 97% chance it will persist through early spring 2027.

ENSO, or El Nino Southern Oscillation, is a fluctuation in the sea surface temperature (SST) in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Research has shown that even slight changes in the SST, particularly in area 3.4, can influence weather in North America. Generally, when SSTs are lower than normal, known as La Nina, NC has drier than normal conditions and can have more fire occurrence. However, La Nina also can lead to more tropical activity. El Nino, on the other hand, usually means wetter weather for NC (typically later in fall/winter – not summer), but less opportunity for tropical landfalls due to increased wind shear. Recent changes in defining either ENSO state can be found here.



From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

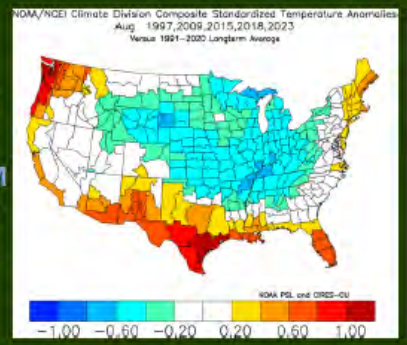
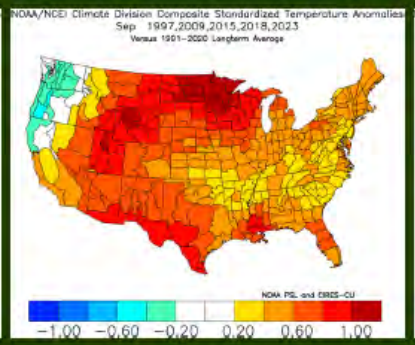
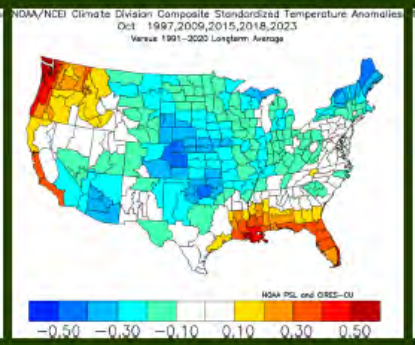
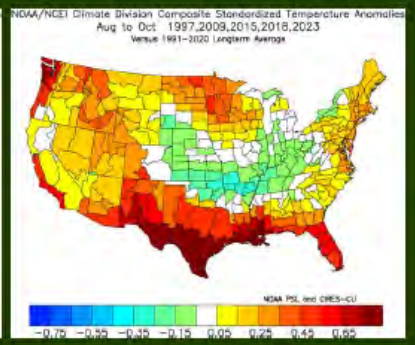
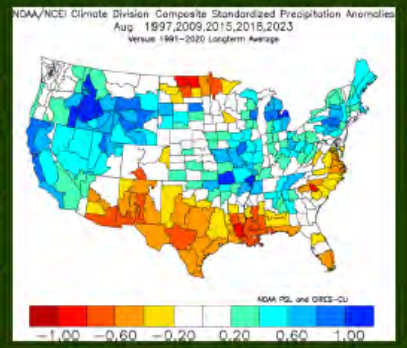
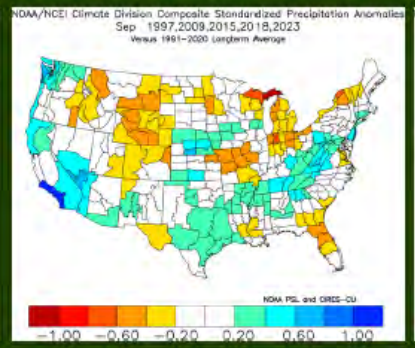
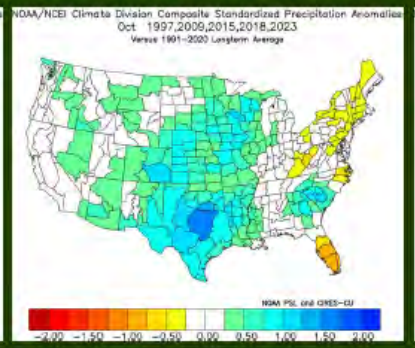
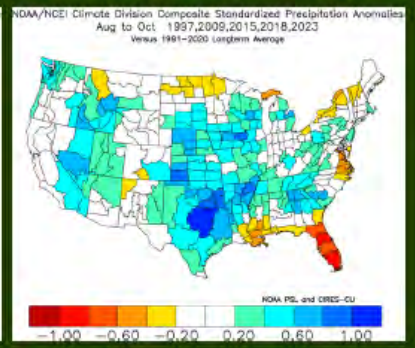


From the most recent CPC Diagnostic Discussion (ENSO Diagnostics Discussion):

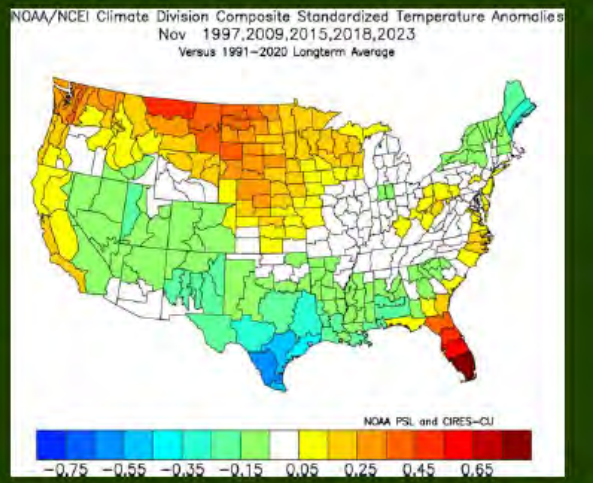
The North American Multi-Model Ensemble (NMME) average, including the NCEP CFSv2 (Fig. 6), forecasts El Niño to intensify through 2026. Alongside model forecasts, a strong coupling of the atmospheric and oceanic circulation across the Pacific contributes to very high confidence that El Niño will continue through early 2027 (Fig. 7). There is an 81% chance of a very strong El Niño during October-December (Fig. 8) that would rank among the largest El Niño events in the historical record going back to 1950. Even the strongest El Niño events do not lead to the typical impact everywhere, but stronger events can more significantly tilt the odds in favor of expected outcomes (see CPC outlooks for probabilities of seasonal anomalies). In summary, El Niño continues and will strengthen through the end of the year, with a 97% chance it will last through early spring 2027.

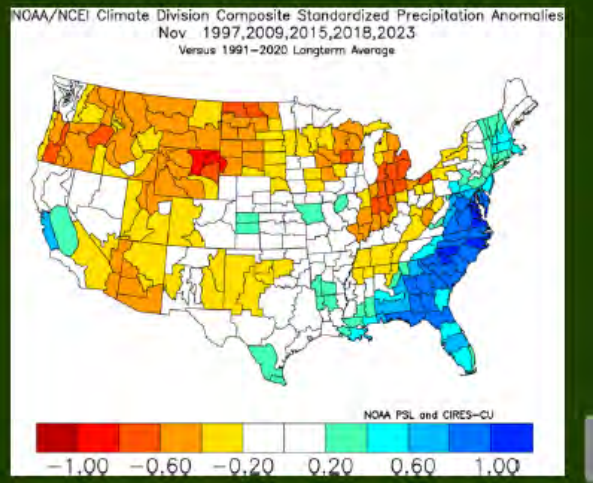
Slide Source: https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/lanina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.ppt

El Niño Analogs

	August Analogs	September Analogs	October Analogs	August - October Analogs
TEMPS				
PRECIP				

November ENSO Analogs



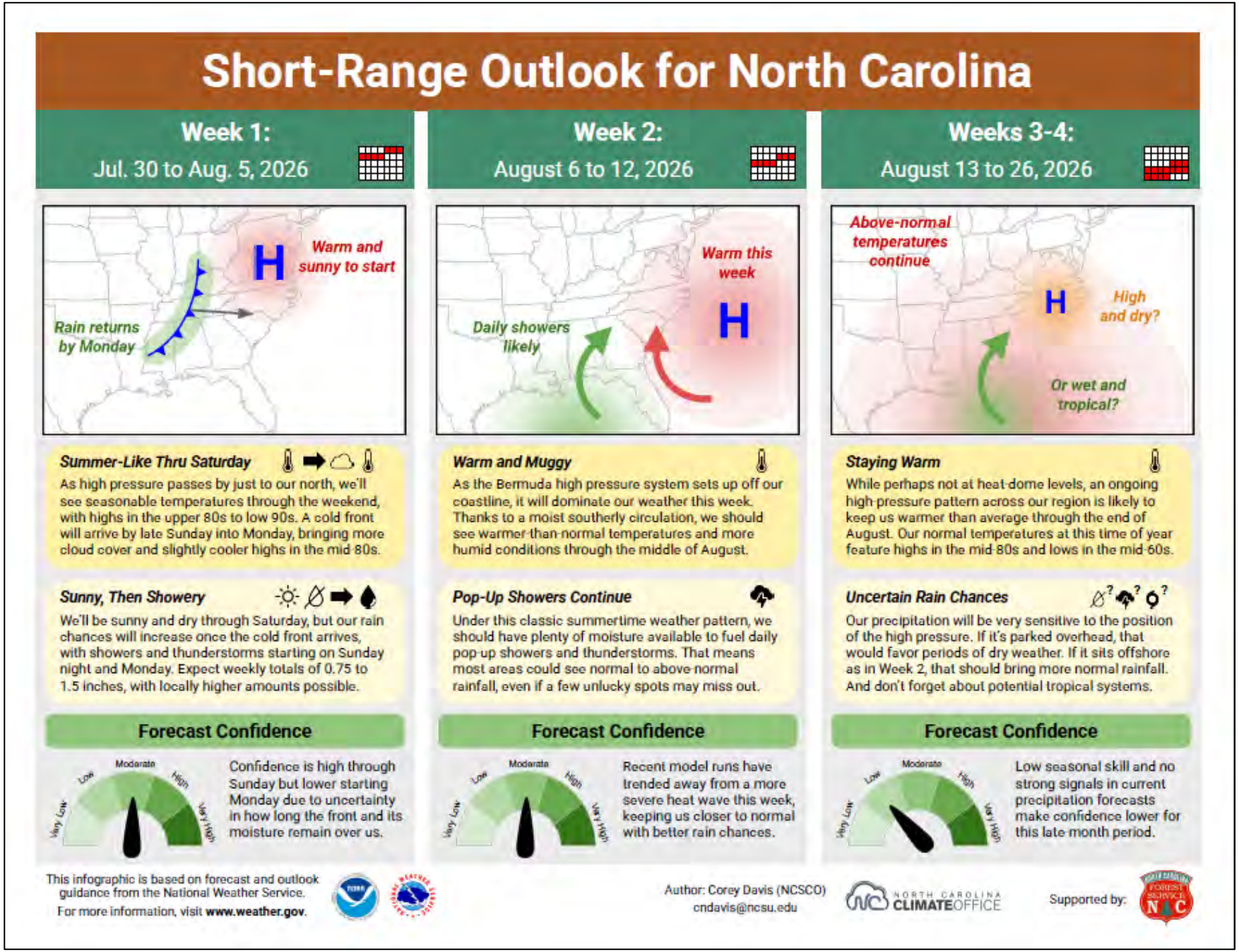


- Analogs include very strong El Niños in 1997 & 2015, strong El Niños in 2009 & 2023 and years with rapid transitions from La Niña to El Niño, including 2009, 2018 and 2023
- Tropical activity can greatly sway blended rainfall maps when only using a few years of data; expect drier conditions in August and September if the hurricane season stays quiet
- Images on the right for November are well supported by current model guidance

From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

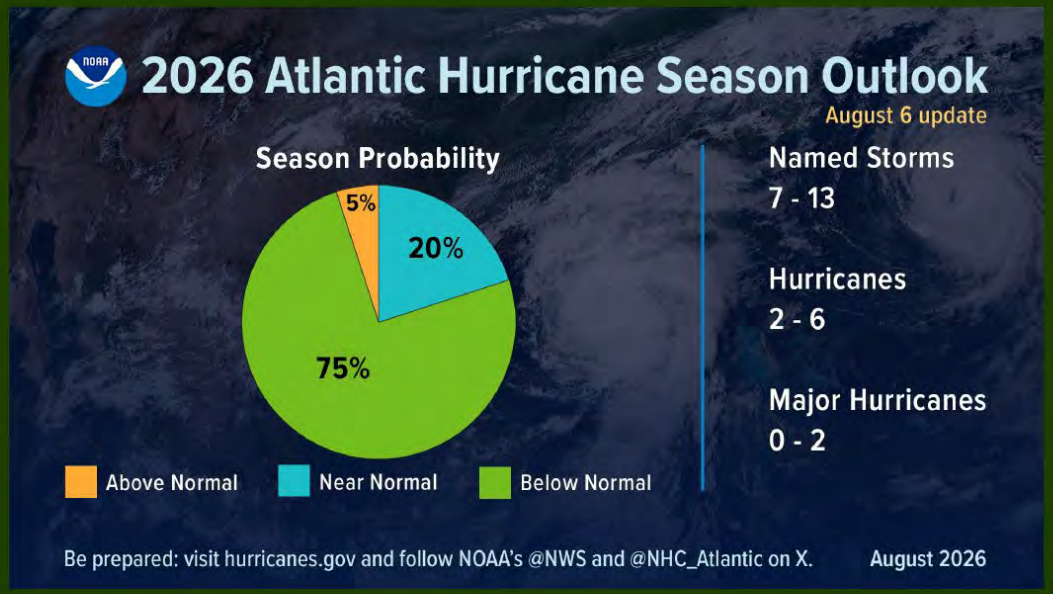
State Climate Office: Short-Range Monthly Outlook for NC

Released ***7/30/26***
Location: https://climate.ncsu.edu/fire/outlooks/

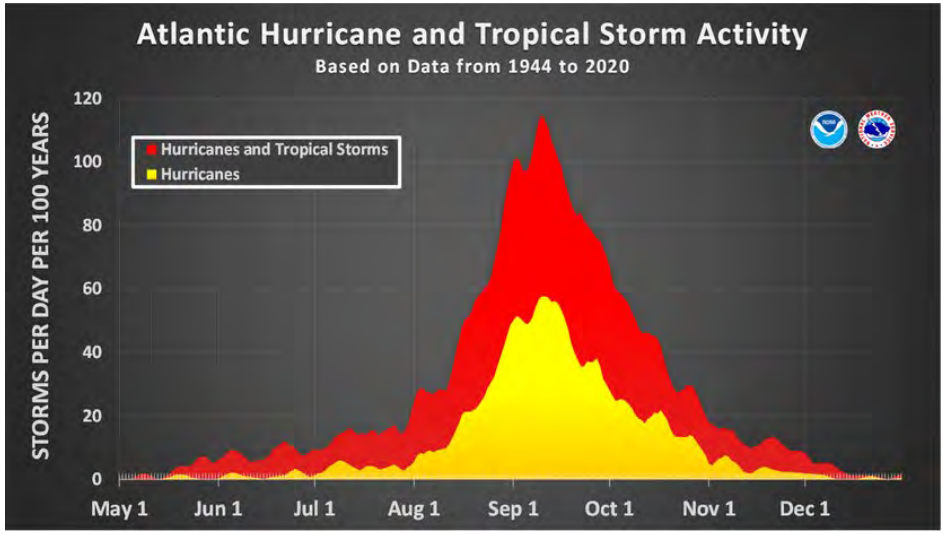


Not Much of a Hurricane Season Expected

- NOAA increased the odds for a below normal hurricane season
- Colorado State's August update also maintained high confidence in a below average season and low probabilities for a major hurricane striking the U.S. coast
- African waves could begin to develop late next week – will be a test of the expected seasonal conditions
- All it takes is one!

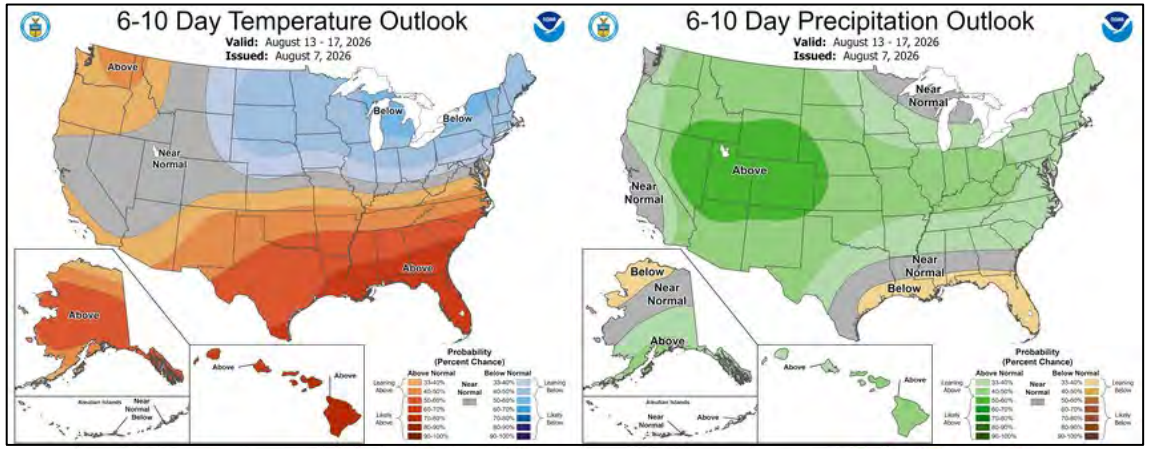


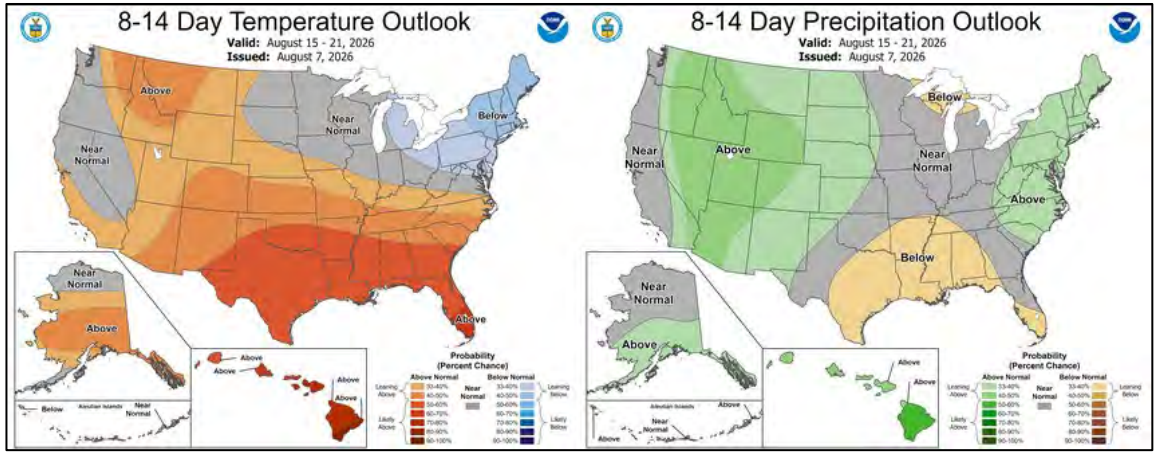
From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26



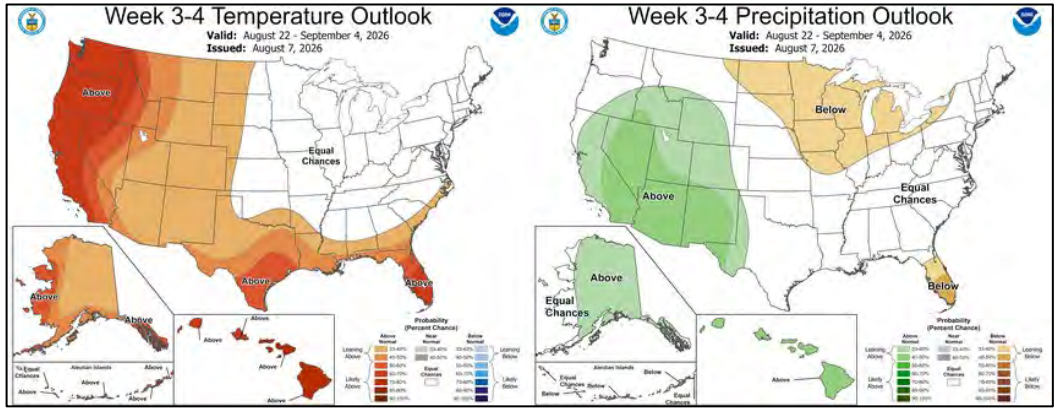
Temp & Precip Outlook

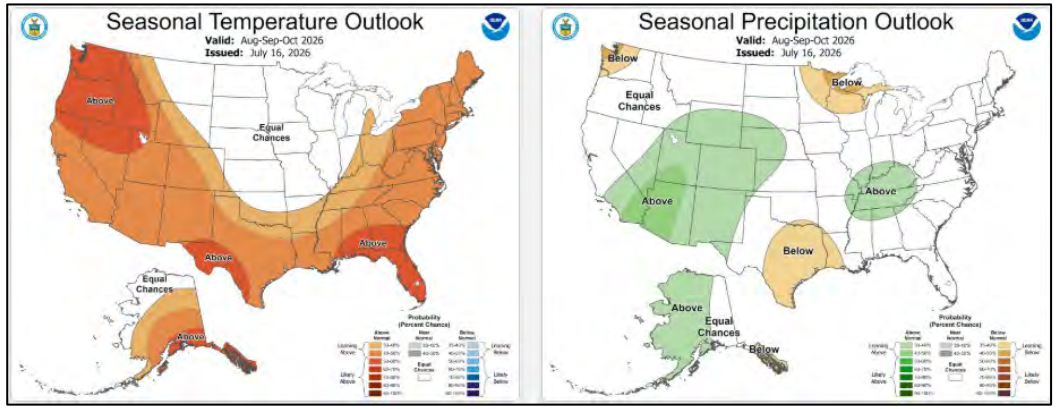
6-10 Day, 8-14 Day, Weeks 3-4, 3-Month Aug/Sept/Oct (released 7/18)





Source: https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/



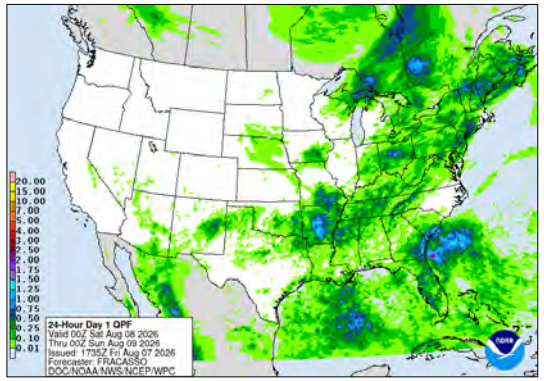


Keep the current deficits in mind at longer time scales. Trend generally remains promising, but long way to go & forecast uncertainty, mainly driven by isolated thunderstorms or tropical (in)activity as we move through summer.

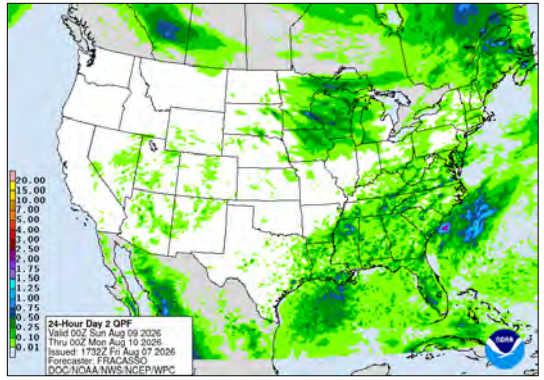
Quantitative Precipitation Forecast, 7-Day

Location: https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/#

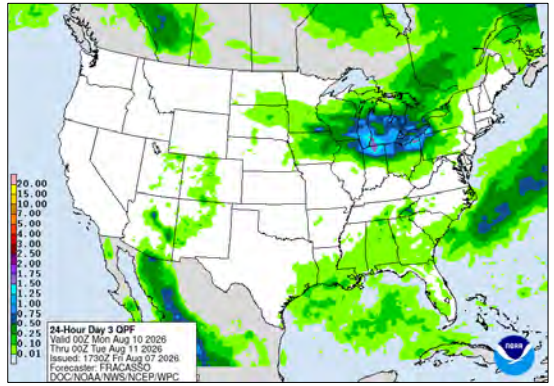
Day – 1



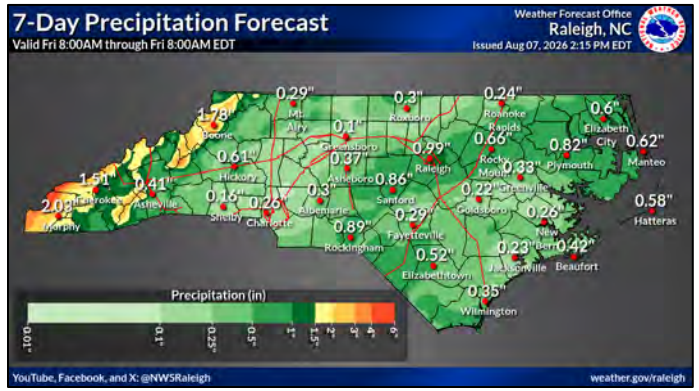
Day - 2



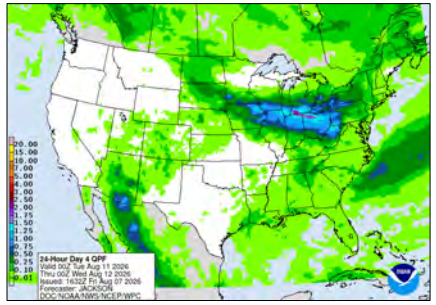
Day - 3



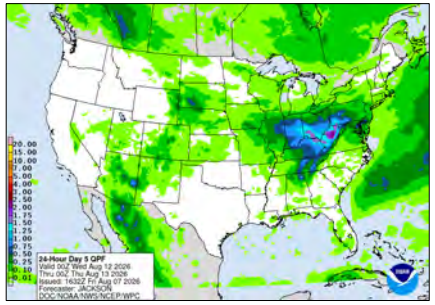
Zoom - Days 1 – 7 QPF



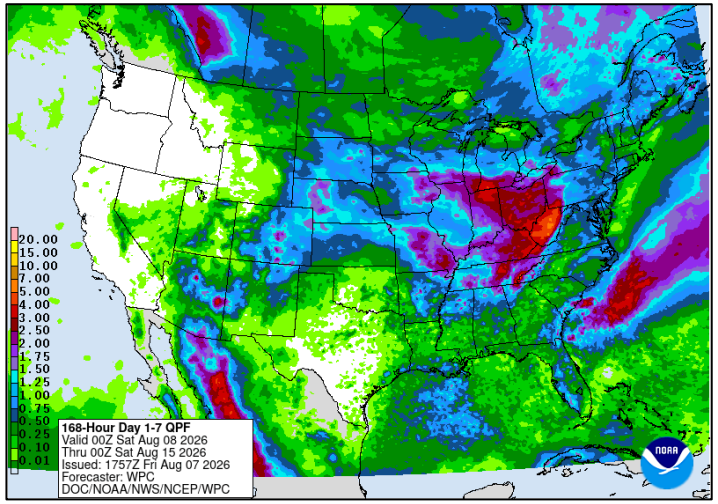
Day - 4



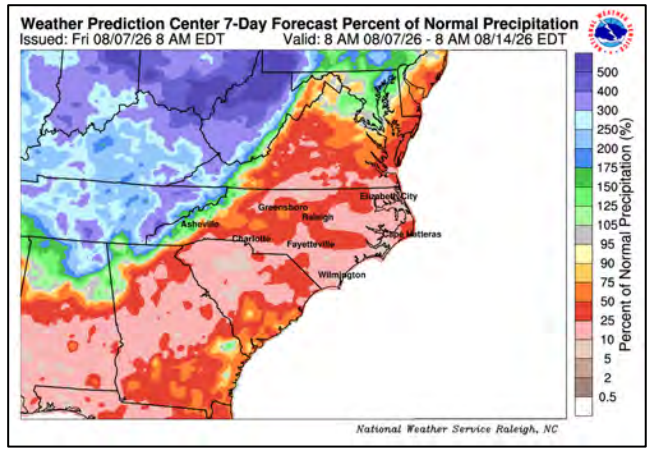
Day - 5



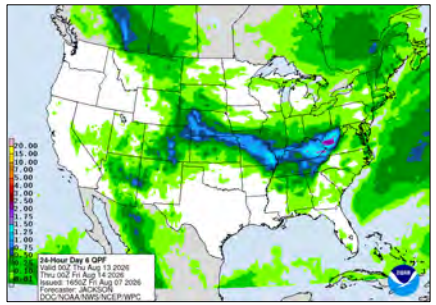
Days 1 – 7 QPF



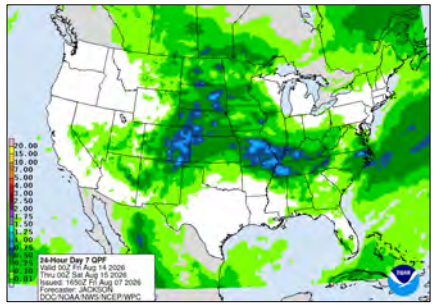
7-Day QPF Percent of Normal



Day - 6



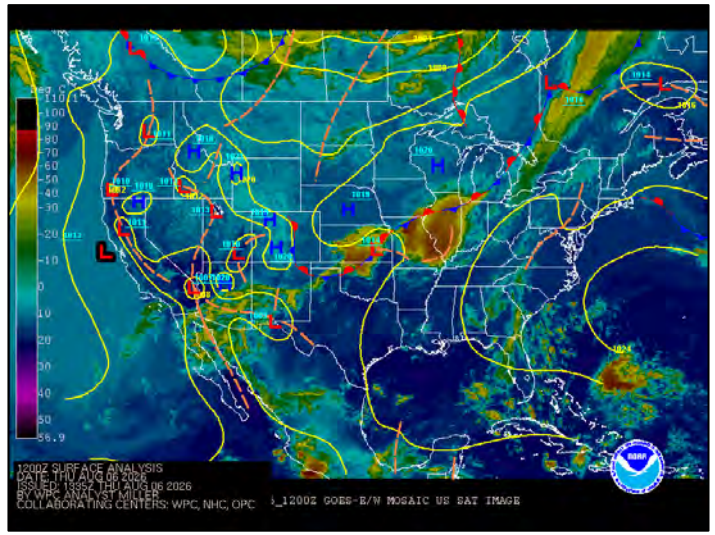
Day - 7



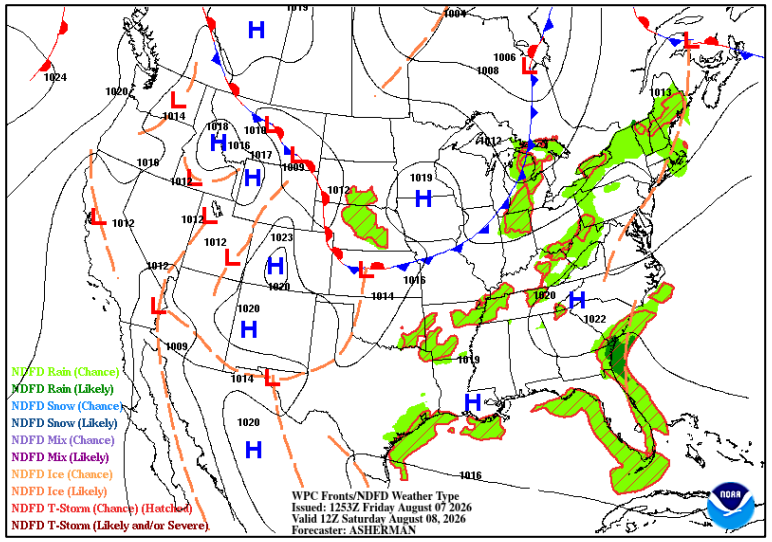
Precip chances generally trend down as we move into next week – with warmer and drier conditions (including drier air).

WPC Forecasted Surface Fronts & Sea-Level Pressures

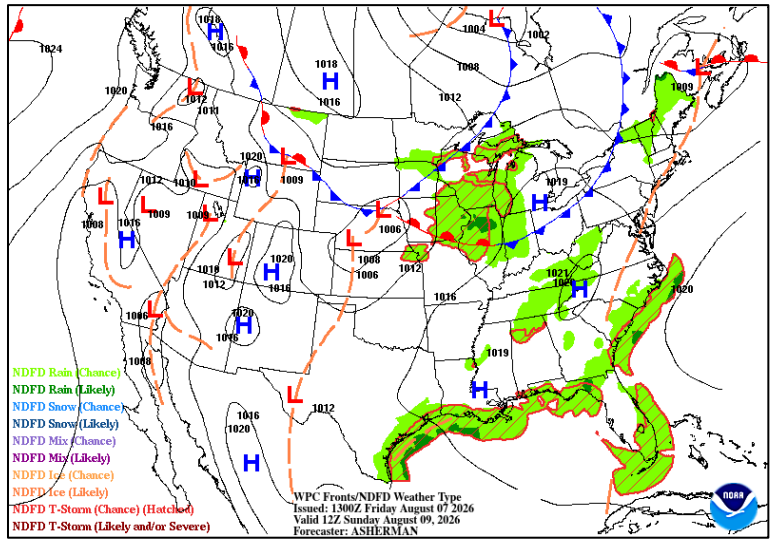
Day-1 @ 12Z Surface Analysis



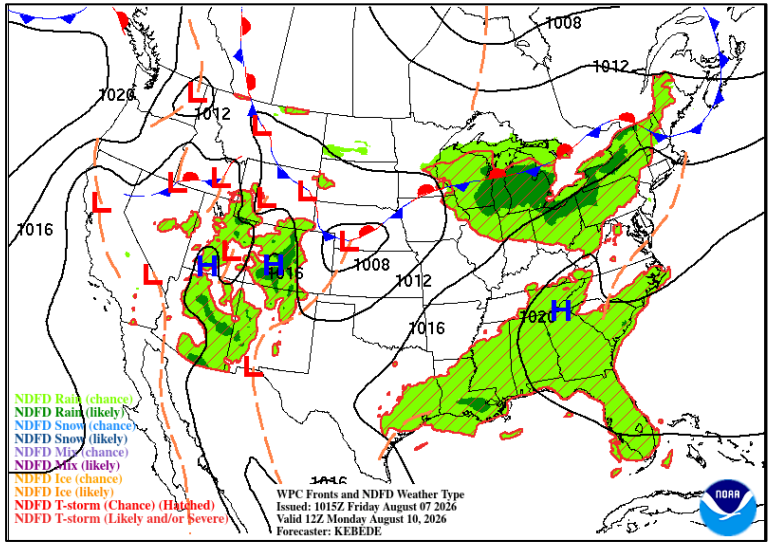
Day 2 - @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



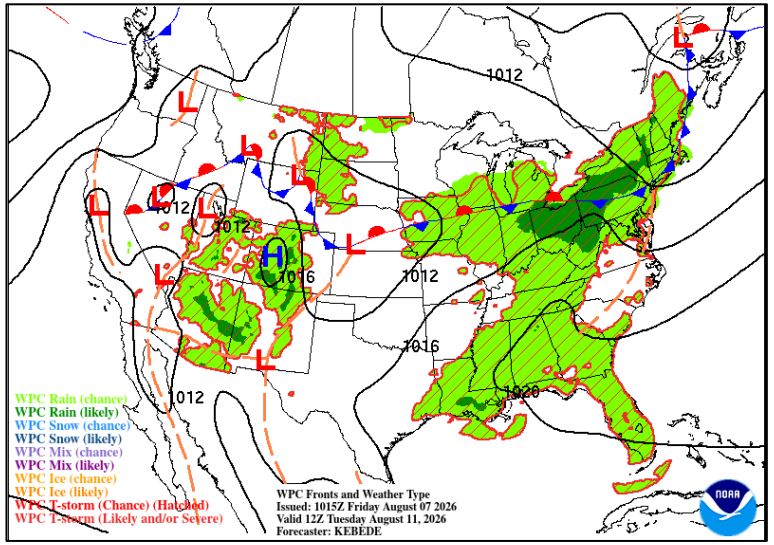
Day 3 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



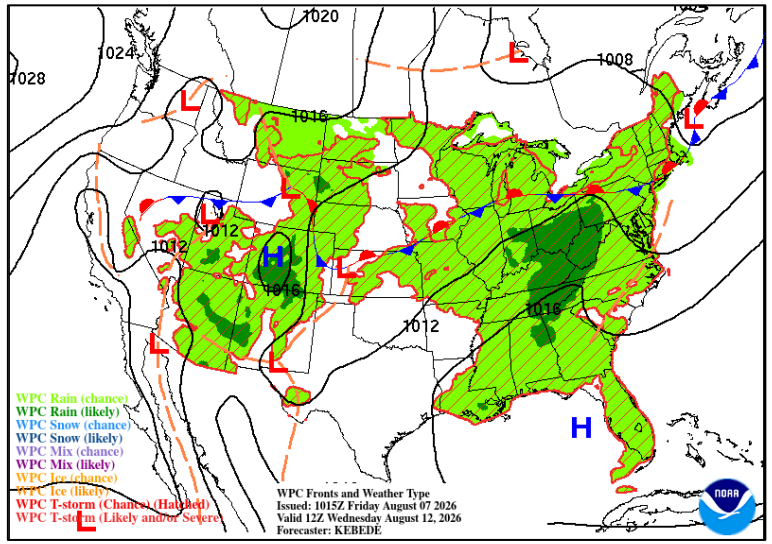
Day 4 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



Day 5 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



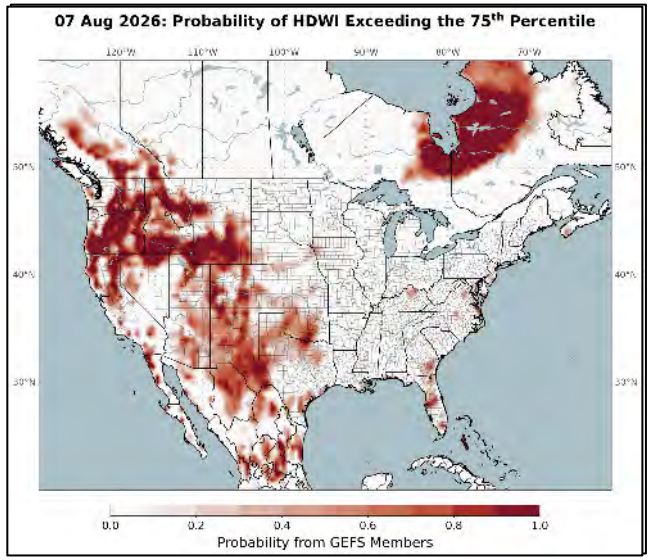
Day 6 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



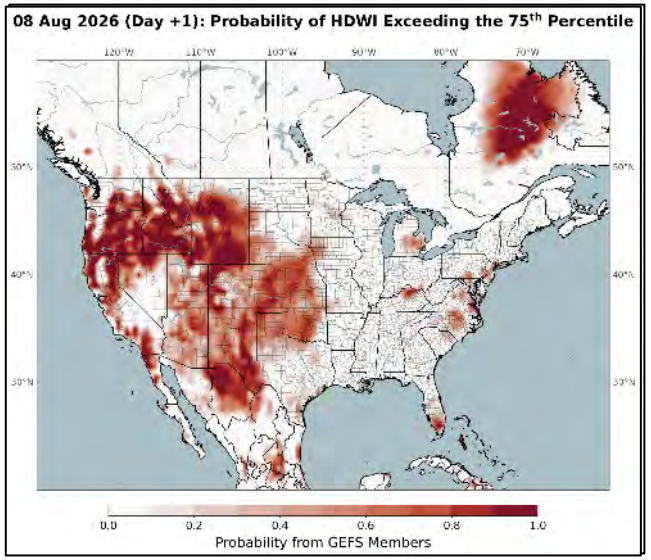
Location: https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/#

Hot-Dry-Windy Index (HDW)

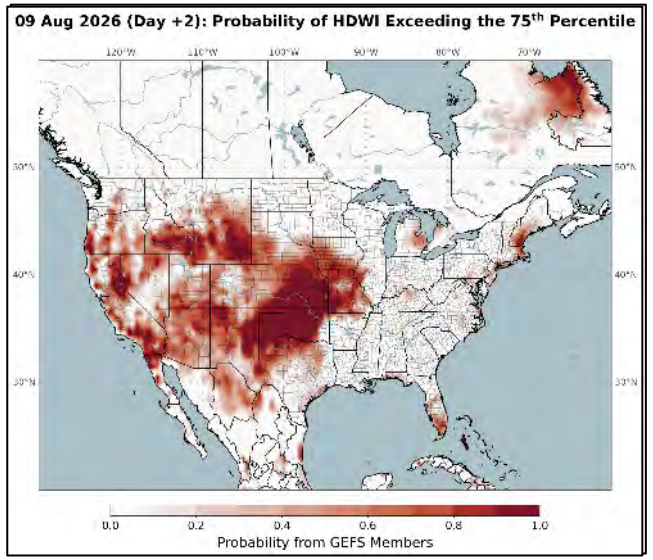
Friday > 75th Percentile



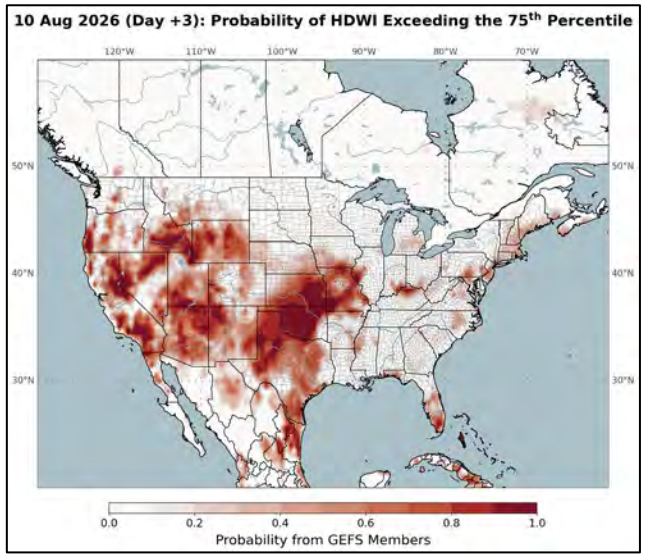
Saturday > 75th Percentile



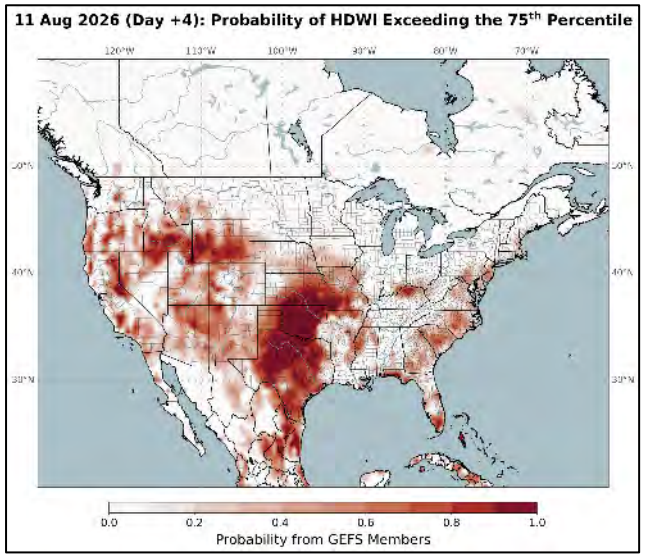
Sunday > 75th Percentile



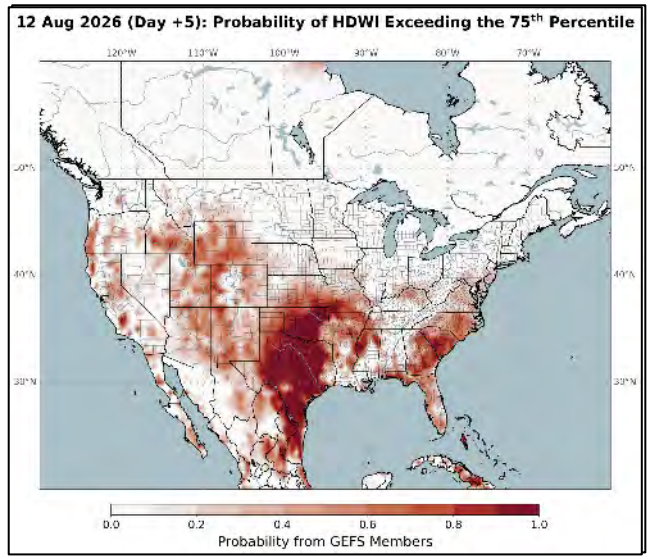
Monday > 75th Percentile



Tuesday > 75th Percentile



Wednesday > 75th Percentile

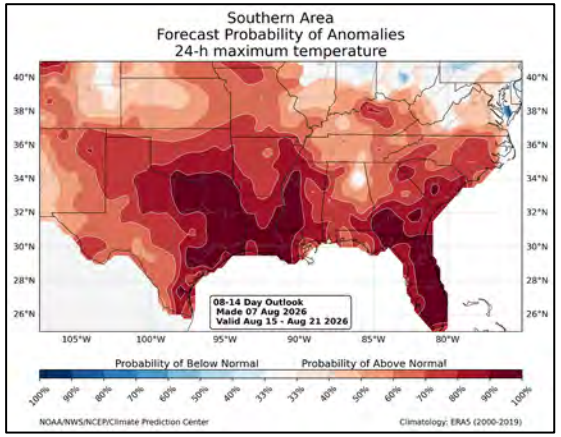


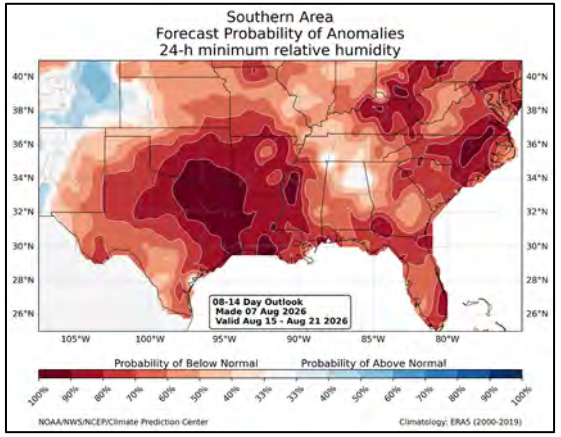
- Another visualization tool to pick up on broader weather, but with *limitations
- Only uses Max VPD (atmospheric moisture & temp) & Max Wind Speed to generate outputs
- Coarse Resolution - 0.5 Degree Grid
- No Account of Local Fuel Conditions (greenness, etc.) and Topo

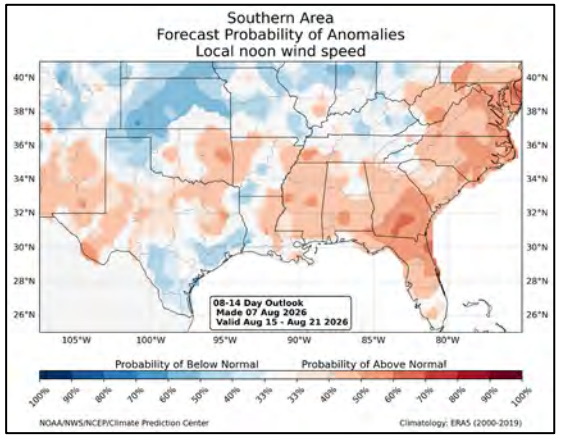
Increasing level of overall dry air, days 4-7.

https://hdwindex.fs2c.usda.gov/probs.html

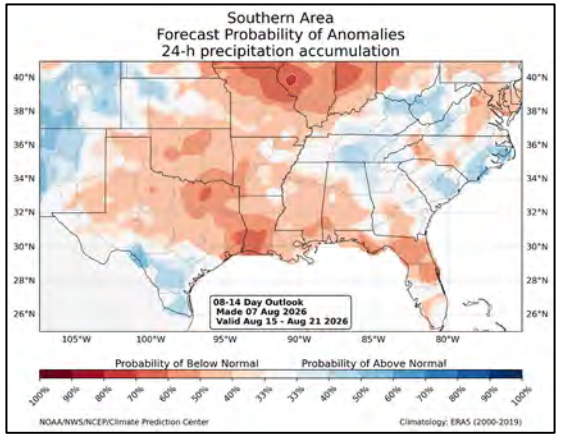
Week Two Forecast Anomalies: 8/15 – 8/21

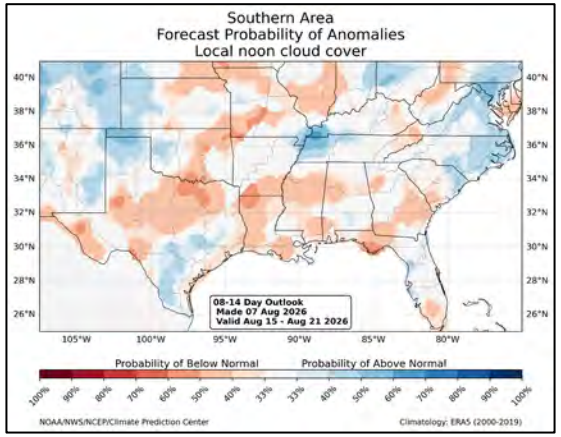






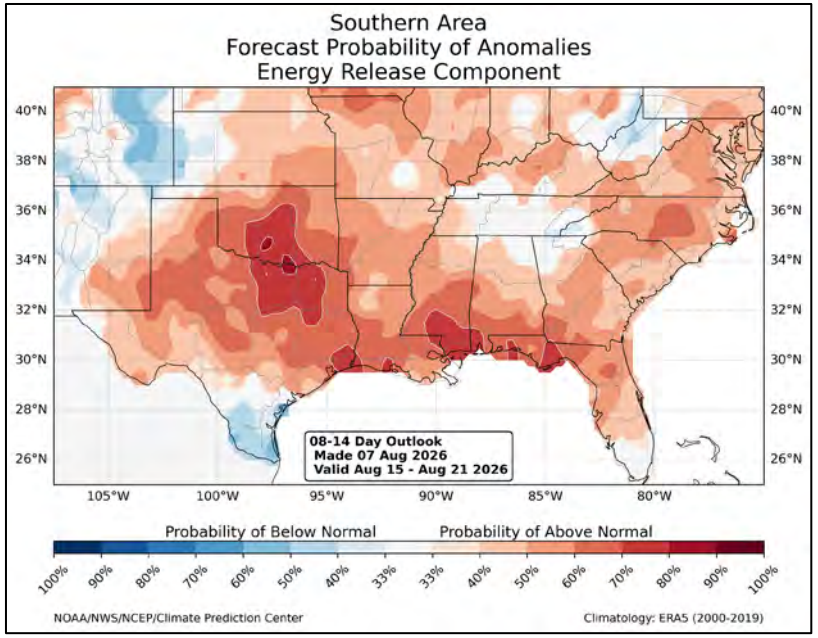
https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/extremes/fire-weather/cpc_wk2fw_index.html

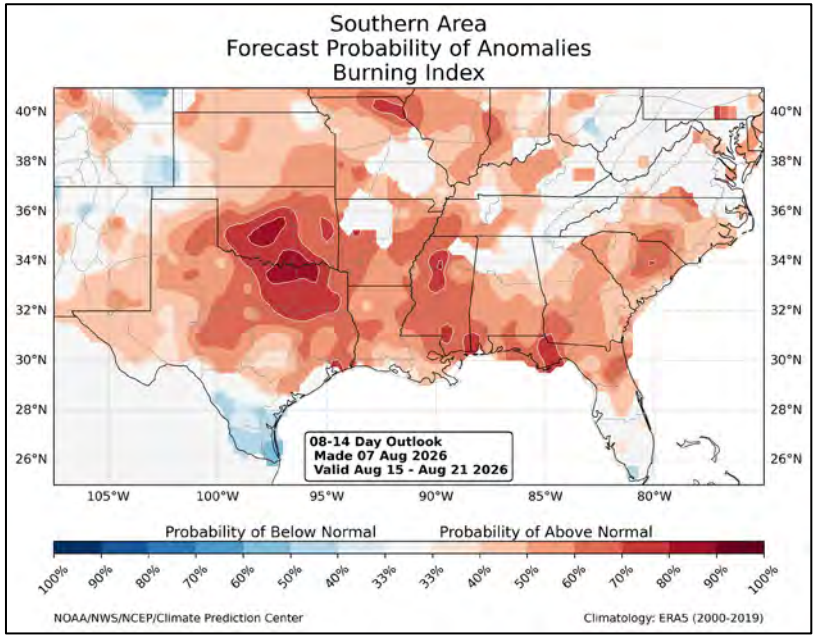




Important to note that there is significant forecast uncertainty as you go further out in time.

Models favor a return of drier than normal air and warmer than normal temps. Forecast then applies those weather variables to show potential for near normal BI & ERC at week two for much of NC. Remember to apply this in seasonal context.

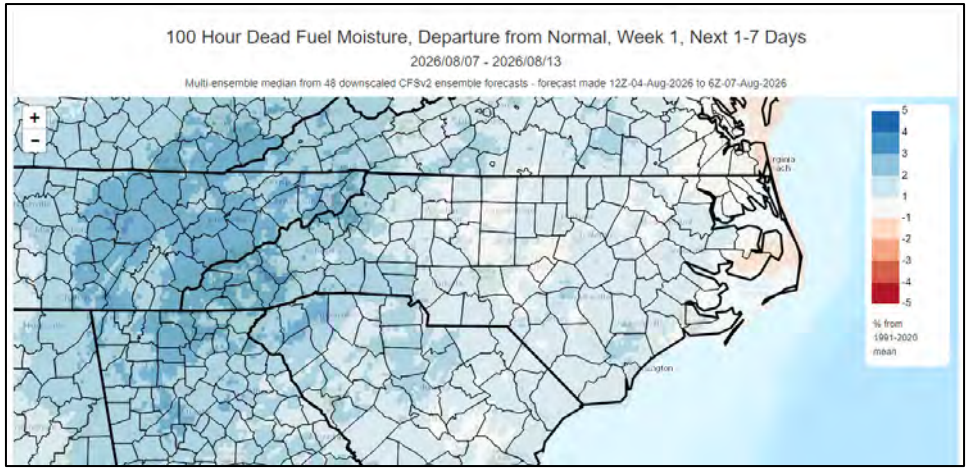




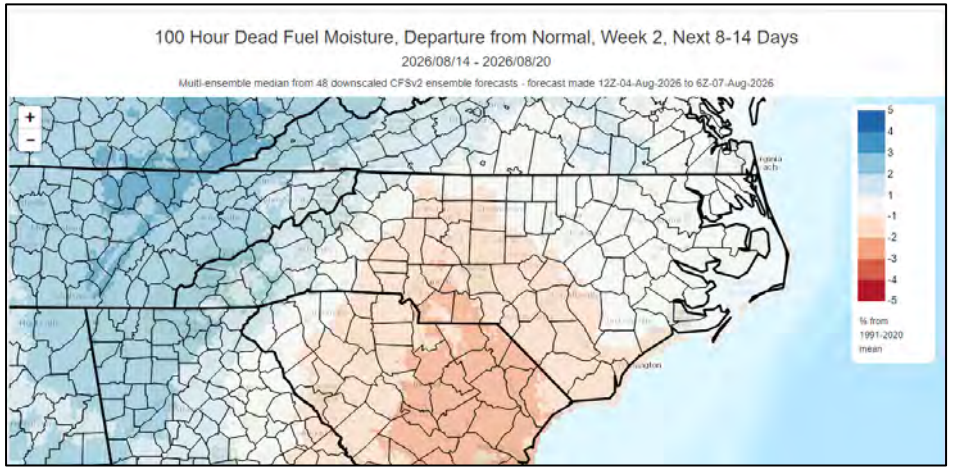
Modeled Departure from Normal by Week: 100-hr Fuels

Output relies on experimental forecast outputs and is subject to change

Week-1



Week-2

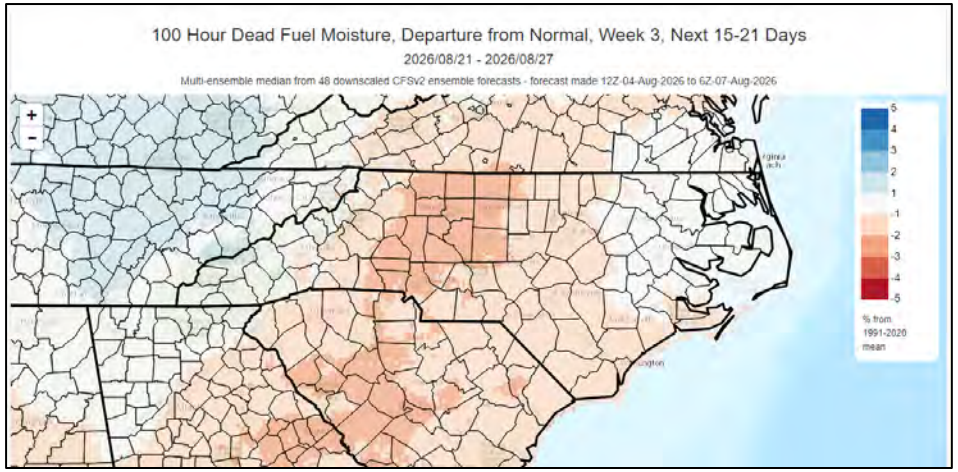


This output can provide insight into general drying trends and potential impacts to overall fire danger, especially prior to full green-up or in drought conditions. Outputs relate to interactions of warmer/colder temps, moist/dry air masses, precip amt/duration, wind and overnight RH recovery trends.

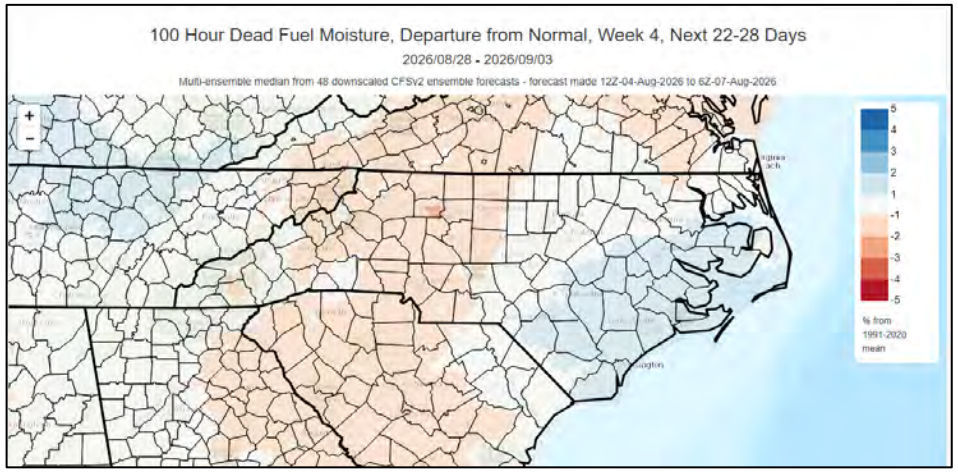
Note that <u>modeled</u> impacts of warmer/drier conditions (lower % mc or "worse") are forecast to be most significant during Weeks 2-3.

Important to note that there is significant forecast uncertainty as you go further out in time, especially relating to any potential storm tracks.

Week-3



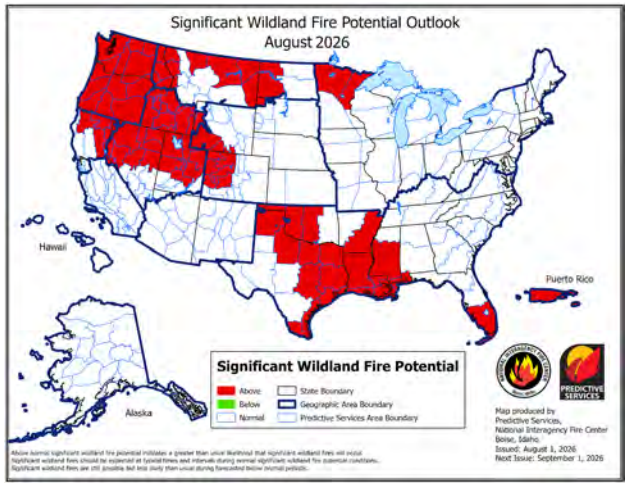
Week-4



From: https://climatetoolbox.org/tool/Climate-Mapper

Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook: *Updated 8/1/26*

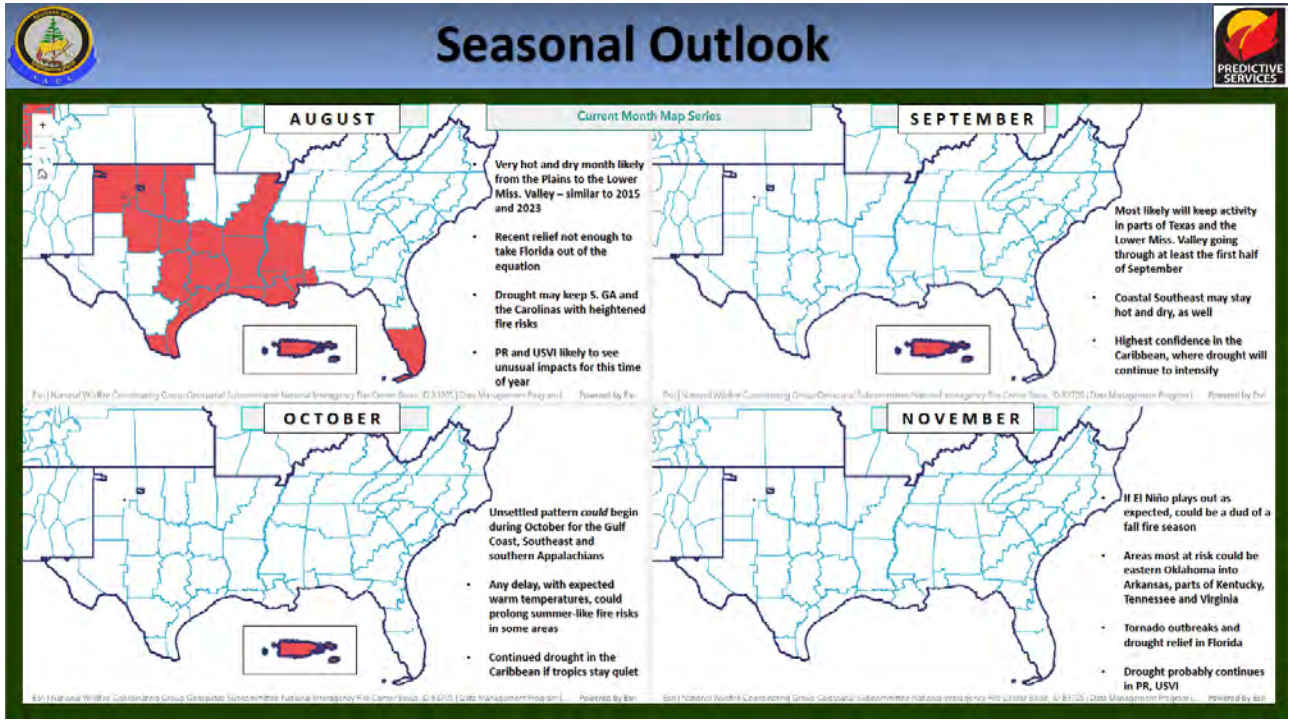
August



September

October

November



Drought intensification, especially at a smaller scale, can help push fuels to be more receptive, easily leading towards more/larger extended attack fires.

**A significant fire is one that requires resources from outside the district (other than aviation). IA potential is based more on shorter term weather factors. Just a few days of dry weather can increase IA activity considerably as we have consistently seen from year to year.*

https://www.nifc.gov/nicc-files/predictive/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf

FEMS & NFDRS Notes:

- Mesonet Stations lost on 10/1/25, added back to FEMS on 1/29/26 (no prior period of record), added back to our SIGS on 3/12/26 after models better aligned.
- **Live Fuel Moisture Model remains at national catalog settings** – does not always align with local conditions, some stations continue to show being near dormancy despite observed "greenness." Recent rains have increased modeled LFM, but likely to see a sharp crash again due to model limitations as weekly precip declines. See daily HLFM map.
- FM-Z and FM-Y include only dead fuels.
- Data & modeling updates will occur after next data update – will redownload/process FF+ data when FEMS data is adjusted again.
- GSI derived herbaceous fuel moisture (HFM) being used to help temper Adj & Hazard Ratings in Growing Season
- Current working HFM thresholds to reduce FDRA specific Adj. Rating or Hazard Rating by 1 level is ≥ 130%, reduce by 2 levels is ≥ 190%; subject to adjustment as program updates occur.
- Period of Record (Fires + Weather) now: **2010-2024**
- Period of Record for new analysis: **2011-2025**
- FDOP edits to be completed when we get the new data, process it and coordinate with cooperators.

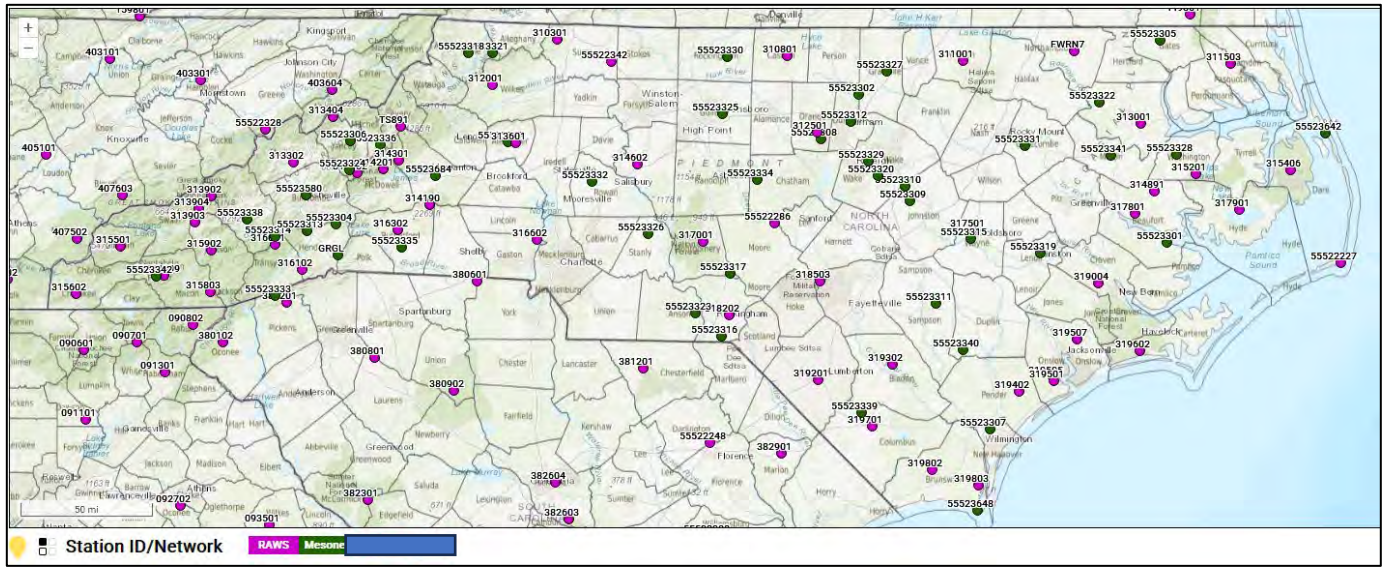
Fuel Model Z does not include live fuels

Fuel Load by Fuel Model

NFDRS Fuel Model	Fuel Loading (tons ac^{-1})						
	1-hr	10-hr	100-hr	1000-hr	Herbaceous	Woody	Drought
V	0.1	0	0	0	1	0	0
W	0.5	0.5	0	0	0.6	1	1
X	4.5	2.45	0	0	1.55	7	2.5
Y	2.5	2.2	3.6	10.16	0	0	5
Z	4.5	4.25	4	4	0	0	7

Note 1: *Drought fuel load is currently turned off in FEMS and is not added to the calculations.*

Note 2: *Herbaceous fuel transfers between live and dead herbaceous fuel classes. Dead herbaceous fuel takes on the fuel moisture of the 1-h fuel.*



FDRA	Special Interest Group Stations (SIG Stations)	Missing SIG Stations
Northern Coastal Plain	Dare Bomb Range, Elizabeth City, Fairfield, Greens Cross, Pocosin Lakes NWR	0
Southern Coastal Plain	Beaufort, CL1 Sandy Run, New Bern, Turnbull Creek, Hofmann, Whiteville, Sunny Point, Finch's Station	0
Eastern Piedmont	Central Crops RS**, Lake Wheeler**, Oxford Tob RS**, Upper Coastal RS**, Warrenton	0
Sand Hills	Fort Bragg, Horseshoe House, Rockingham, Sandhills RS**	0
Western Piedmont	Caswell Game Land, Duke Forest, Lexington, Mt Island Lake	0
Blue Ridge Escarpment	North Cove Pinnacle, Raven Knob, Redezvous Mtn, Rutherford Co Hq, Taylorsville (Lenior)	0
Central Mountains	Davidson River, Guion Farms, Mtn Hort RS**, Seven Mile Ridge	0
Northern Highlands	Busick, Jessen Station, Upper Mtn RS**	0
Southern Highlands	Highlands, Jackson County, Locust Gap, Tusquitee	0

Analysis Settings				Matrix Combinations	
FDRA	Time Range	Daily Extremes	FM	Staffing/Hazard Level	Adjective Rating
Northern Coastal Plain	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/BI	ERC
Southern Coastal Plain	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/BI	ERC
Eastern Piedmont	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/BI	ERC
Sand Hills	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/BI	ERC
Western Piedmont	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/BI	ERC
Blue Ridge Escarpment	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/IC	ERC
Central Mountains	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/IC	ERC
Northern Highlands	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/BI	ERC
Southern Highlands	2010-2024	Y	Z	ERC/IC	ERC

Fire Weather Intelligence Portal – Current Links & Notes

The interim breakpoints and percentiles based on FEMS implementation have been applied to the FWIP for North Carolina FDRAs. Content continues to be added and tools updated. Updated versions of the Hazard Assessment Tool, Adjective Fire Danger Rating Tool, and Daily Forecast/Observed Indices by Station have been implemented effective 3/12/26. The new versions automatically replaced the older versions. Additional features will be added (data analysis).

- Public Facing Fire Danger Page & Fire Danger Digest Table
  (NC ratings based on ERC-Z analysis)
- Station Viewer Portal
  (Past, Current, Forecast Conditions Tab)
  *HOURLY Station Fire Danger Observations have been added on the PAST and CURRENT Conditions Tabs, as of 3/6/26
- Hazard Assessment Tool
  (based on ERC-Z/BI-Z or ERC-Z/IC-Z depending on FDRA)
- FEMS Forecast NFDRS Indices by Station
- FEMS Observed NFDRS Indices by Station
- Quality Control Viewer Tool
- Summary Site – Supplemental Tools

The Weekly Outlook Tool is still offline – being revised to conform to new analysis/FEMS integration.

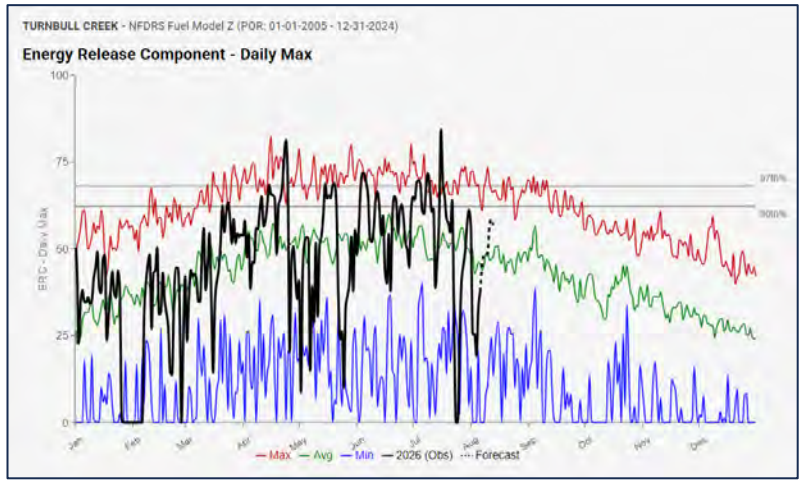
FEMS Note (Portal Link)

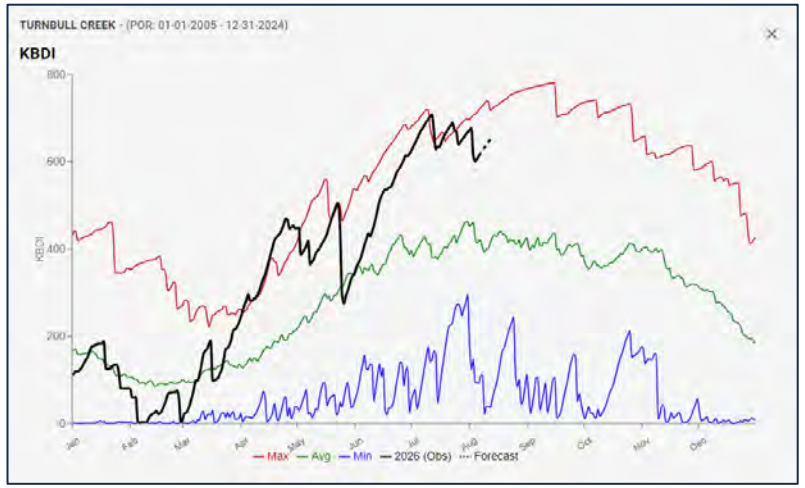
Seasonal Trend Chart Examples – Coastal RAWS

FEMS version 3.7 recently released. See the Release Notice for further details of enhanced tools/capabilities. Now includes VPD (max daily and hourly).

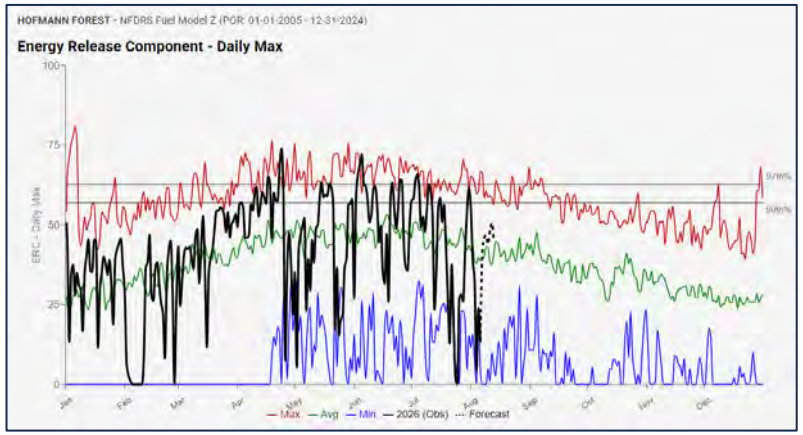
Newly released guide link:
Understanding the Basics of NFDRSv4

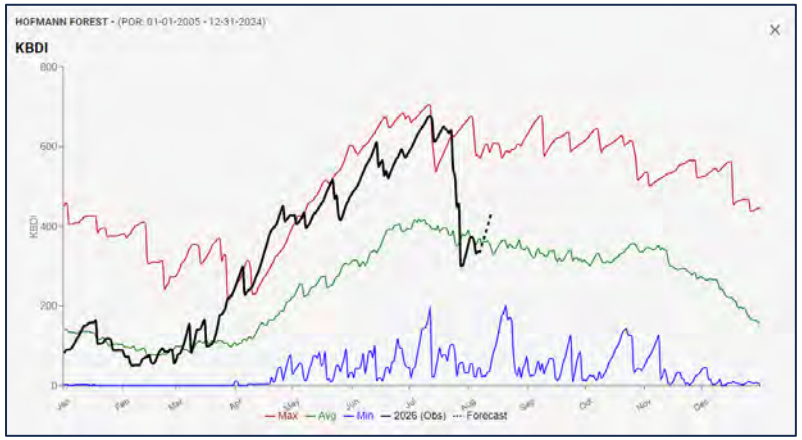
R1/D8/Bladen Co – Turnbull Creek RAWS



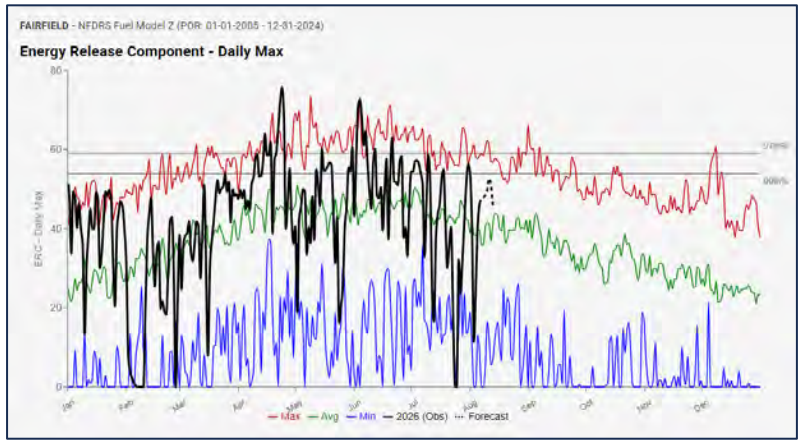


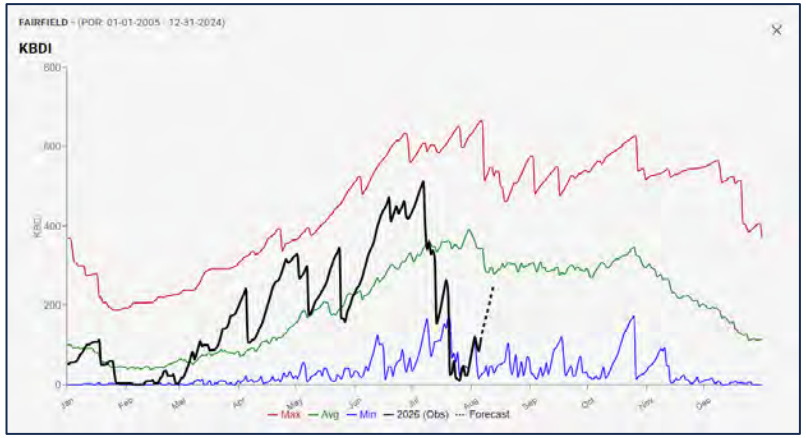
R1/D4/Onslow Co – Hofmann Forest RAWS



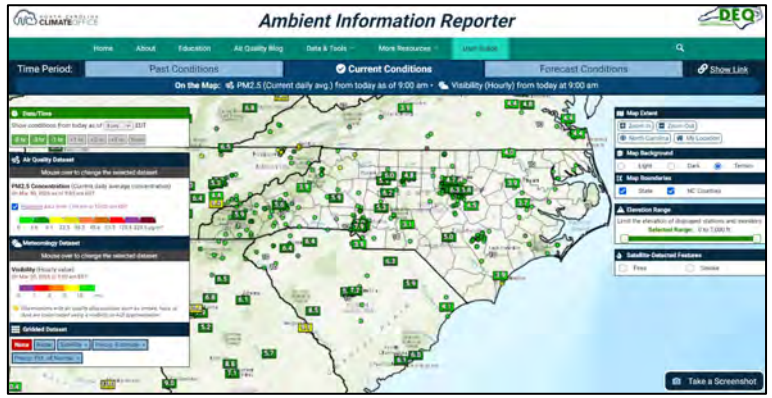


R1/D13/Hyde Co – Fairfield RAWS





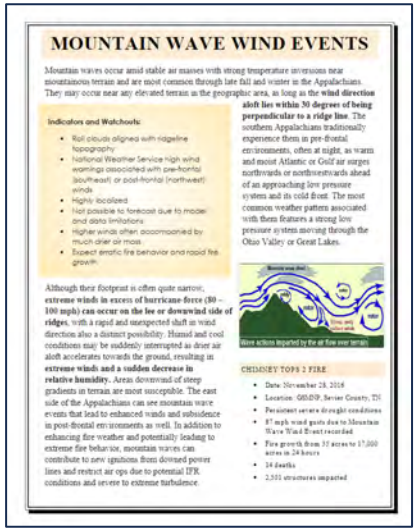
Other Resources:



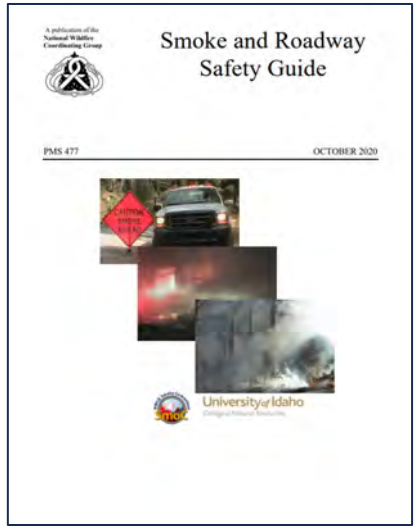
- https://airquality.climate.ncsu.edu/air/
- https://fire.airnow.gov/

"Fuels and Fire Management Considerations for Hurricane Damaged Areas"

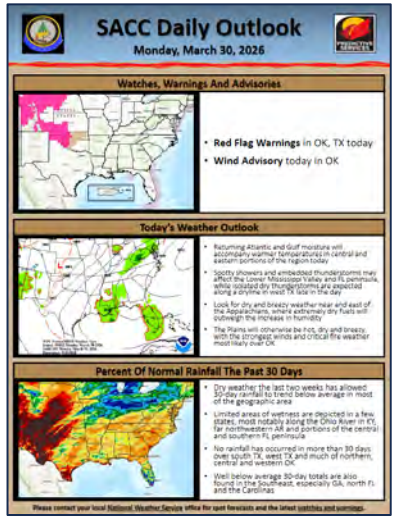
https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/resources/predictive/MaySpringRiskAssessment_20260506.pdf



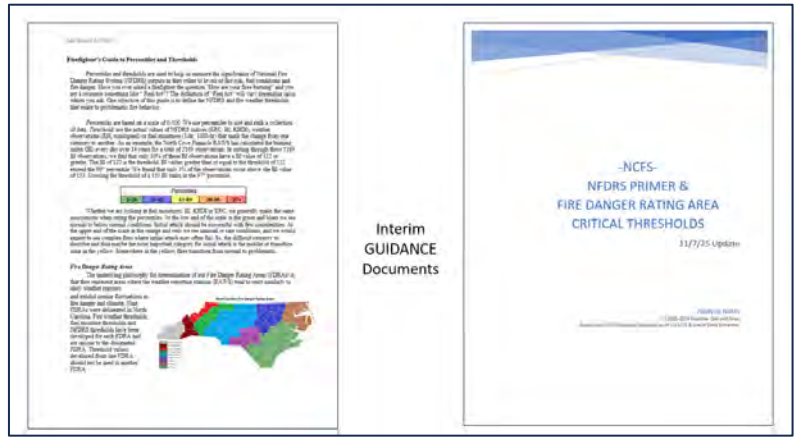
https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/predictive/outlooks/MountainWavesFactSheet.pdf



- Southern Fire Exchange Superfog Publication
- NWCG - Smoke and Roadway Safety Pocket Card
- NWCG – Smoke and Roadway Safety Guide



https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/resources/predictive/sacc-daily-outlook.pdf



Interim GUIDANCE Documents

From SACC Daily Outlook – Friday (8-7-26)

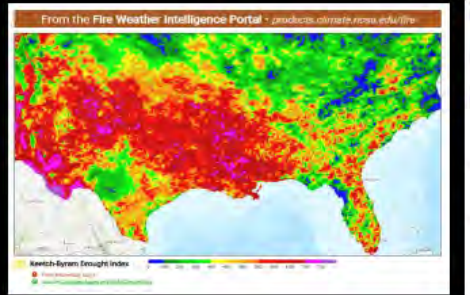
SACC Daily Outlook

Friday, August 7, 2026

Watches, Warnings and Advisories

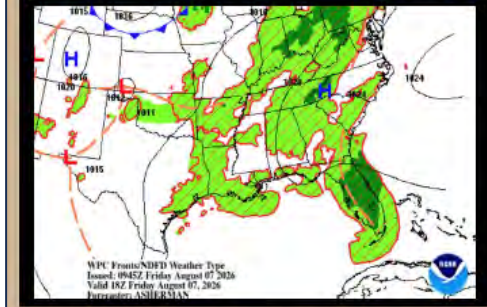
- **Heat Advisory** in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **Air Quality Alert** for the Memphis metro
- **Flood Warning** in south Texas

Keetch-Byram Drought Index



- A gridded version of the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI), based on OSU PRISM data through Wednesday
- KBDIs above 600 are now widespread from large parts of the Southern Plains into the Lower Mississippi Valley
- Embedded areas of KBDIs above 700 in pink are estimated in the Trans Pecos, the High Plains into the Red River Valley and portions of east Texas, in addition to scattered areas of Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi
- Conditions are considerably more variable in the Southeast and Appalachian states due to the hit and miss nature of recent rainfall on top of some of the long-term drought
- While scattered relief is expected into early next week in the Plains and Lower Mississippi Valley, most areas will continue to see this leading indicator of drought trend higher over the next couple of weeks, with critical values above 700 becoming more widespread

Today's Weather



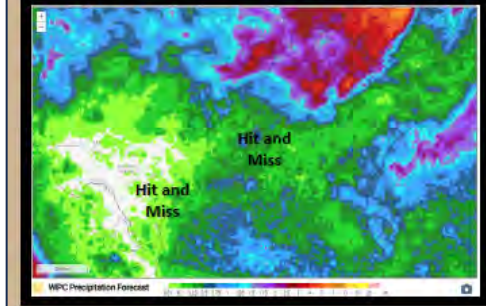
- A tropical wave approaching the coastal Southeast will trigger scattered to numerous showers and thunderstorms across the Florida peninsula, with more isolated activity just to the north
- Isolated to widely scattered thunderstorms are possible for the rest of the Gulf coastal plain
- A weakening front near the northern tier of the region will produce a few clusters of showers and storms from the High Plains into Arkansas, while scattered storms are possible over the higher elevations of the Appalachians
- Triple-digit heat will continue in most of north Texas into Oklahoma, with hot and humid weather affecting most of the rest of the region
- The Caribbean islands will continue to dry out, and elevated fire weather conditions are in store

Please contact your local National Weather Service office for spot forecasts and the latest watches and warnings.

SACC Daily Outlook

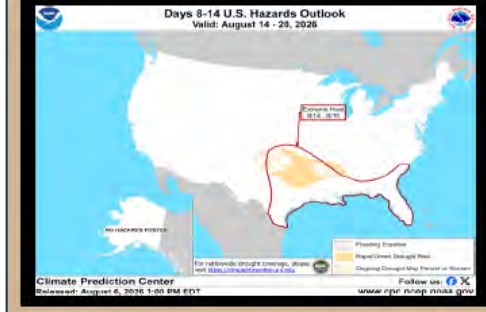
Friday, August 7, 2026

Forecast Precipitation the Next Week



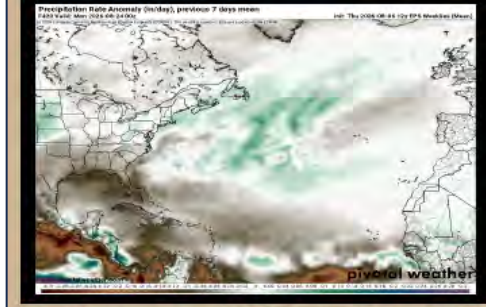
- Showers and thunderstorms today will result in some 1-3" rainfall totals in the coastal Southeast, but most areas will see much less due to their fast-moving nature
- Despite some opportunities for beneficial rain along the Gulf coastal plain into the Lower Mississippi Valley through early next week, heavy rainfall will be hit and miss – some areas may see 2-3" that runs off quickly, while other spots nearby stay dry
- Fronts occasionally making it near the northern edge of the region will produce the most widespread rainfall over the next week in parts of far northern Arkansas into Kentucky, the Tennessee Valley and portions of the Appalachians; flash flooding is possible, especially in the mountains
- Spotty showers and storms today in the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles into northern Oklahoma will be followed by a drier stretch this weekend into the middle of next week, but some monsoonal activity could drift in later in the week
- Widespread above average temperatures are in store next week, with records above 100° becoming increasingly likely over portions of the Plains, Lower Mississippi Valley and coastal Southeast

Week Two Hazards



- A classic late summer El Niño weather pattern will persist through mid-month and beyond across the Southern Area
- Strong high pressure aloft will promote an extended stretch of hotter and drier than normal conditions from the Southern Plains to the coastal Southeast, with periods of extreme, triple-digit heat likely
- Flash drought onset is all but certain from the Plains to the Lower Mississippi Valley; CPC's confidence is higher farther north, but many areas already seeing flash drought impacts are likely to see a worsening trend, extending from the eastern Hill Country in Texas into Louisiana, Mississippi, portions of south Alabama and perhaps the Florida peninsula
- A more active weather pattern looks to continue across the Appalachians and adjacent areas, which could eventually lead to some river flooding
- The potential for tropical activity to affect the lower 48 is very low through the third week of the month

Week Three Precipitation



- Rainfall anomalies from the European ensembles for the week ending August 23rd are depicted; brown areas denote drier than average conditions for this time of year
- A high pressure ridge that sets up across the area next week is likely to persist into late August
- In addition to continued well above average temperatures across the region, a feed of dry air originating from the African continent will stream across the Caribbean and into the southern U.S.
- This pattern will limit typical rainy season thunderstorms along and well inland from the Gulf Coast, over the Florida peninsula and likely most of the period for the Caribbean islands
- Tropical waves exiting Africa may have limited windows to develop into tropical cyclones, but the areas of wetter conditions are currently favored well southeast and north of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands

Please contact your local National Weather Service office for spot forecasts and the latest watches and warnings.

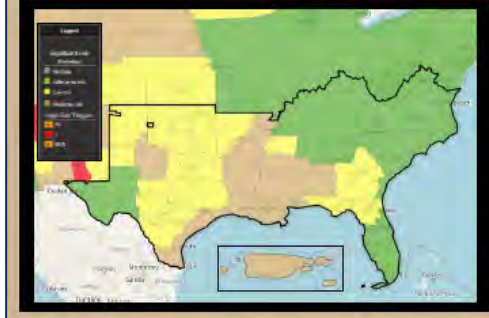
From SACC Daily Outlook – Friday (8-7-26)

SACC Daily Outlook

Friday, August 7, 2026

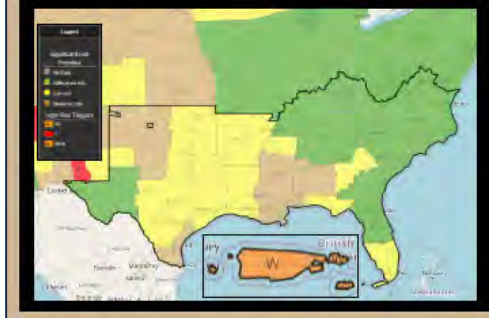
PREDICTIVE SERVICES

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Today



- Hot and dry conditions will be followed by another round of isolated to widely scattered thunderstorms in the Lower Mississippi Valley and Texas coastal plain – lightning ignitions could occur, and erratic outflow winds may impact any new or existing fires, including the active **Range 39** and **Early Bird Fires**, in additional to any intentional burns
- Gulf moisture pooling along a weakening front will bring some slight improvements to the fire environment in most of north Texas and Oklahoma, but fuels will be receptive to the widely scattered thunderstorms over the panhandles into Oklahoma; western north Texas will be most likely to see hot, dry and breezy conditions
- Areas to the north and west of a tropical wave over the Southeast will see a relatively warmer and drier day; isolated storms will still be possible in Alabama, Georgia and north Florida, which could bring new ignitions and gusty outflow winds; lightning holdovers may pop up
- Hot, dry and typically breezy conditions will be the rule for the Caribbean islands, with any isolated showers and storms confined to the western mountains

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Saturday



- **Caribbean**: near-record to record heat will combine with unusually dry air and gustier winds to result in **high-risk significant fire potential**
- Another hot day with locally critical humidity will be followed by spotty afternoon thunderstorms across the Lower Mississippi Valley into south Alabama and the Florida panhandle; lightning ignitions and erratic wind gusts will be the main hazards
- Hot, dry and breezy conditions will return to northwest Texas and western Oklahoma, potentially allowing lightning holdovers to emerge; RH will be as low as 8-15% in the panhandles and 15-25% elsewhere; wind gusts from 20-30 mph will be common
- Fuels will be more marginal in most of the rest of Texas into the west side of the Lower Mississippi Valley, while south Florida will see hotter and drier conditions return

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Sunday

- **Caribbean**: despite a passing tropical wave, dense Saharan dust will limit shower and thunderstorm activity, allowing for mostly dry and windy conditions to continue; gusts up to 40 mph are expected, perhaps locally higher with any fast-moving squalls
- Moderate SFP will expand across north Texas and Oklahoma as very hot, dry and breezy conditions become more widespread; wind gusts will again reach 20-30 mph, locally higher in the panhandles, with RH ranging from 10-20% in western areas to 20-30% farther east
- Hit and miss thunderstorms will develop again in the Texas coastal plain and Lower Mississippi Valley, with more receptive conditions anticipated over Mississippi, eastern Louisiana and the Alabama coastal counties
- The increase in humidity should temper fuels over coastal and deep south Texas, but lightning ignitions could still occur
- Isolated storms over south Florida and highs well into the 90s will result in low SFP

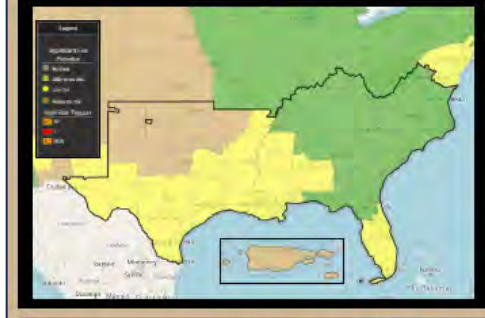
National 7-Day Significant Fire Potential Outlook High Risk Trigger Definitions

SACC Daily Outlook

Friday, August 7, 2026

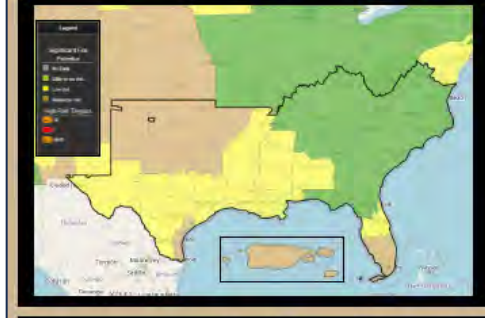
PREDICTIVE SERVICES

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Monday



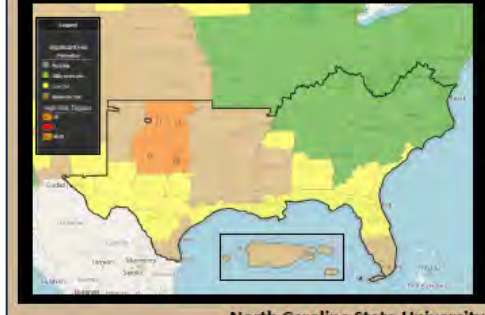
- Widespread triple-digit heat, critically low humidity and breezy conditions will result in moderate SFP across most of north Texas into Oklahoma and portions of Arkansas; most of these areas will see wind gusts of at least 15-25 mph, locally to 35 mph in the panhandles; high-risk upgrades are possible in western areas if widespread rain does not occur today
- Widely scattered thunderstorms will continue to target the western and central Gulf coastal plain, with otherwise hot and humid conditions expected in most areas; even if no lightning ignitions immediately pop out, holdovers from this activity may become more of a problem later next week as the landscape dries and warms
- Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands will continue to see dusty, dry and hot conditions; winds may ease compared to the weekend
- Look for low SFP across the Florida peninsula as heat continues to build and thunderstorms remain isolated

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Tuesday



- Very hot, dry and breezy conditions will bring increasingly critical fuels to north Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas Tuesday, with elevated fire weather persisting; RH will range from 10-20% in western areas to 20-35% farther east; isolated storms will be possible in northeast Texas, southeast Oklahoma and portions of western Arkansas
- Drier and hot conditions will bring moderate SFP back to coastal south Texas, while some drier areas are possible in the Lower Mississippi Valley as storms trend more isolated or widely scattered
- A Saharan air mass will overspread the Florida peninsula, limiting any thunderstorms; near-record heat will return, and fire potential will increase over southern areas as a result
- An increase in initial attack is possible elsewhere in the Southeast as temperatures become very hot

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Wednesday

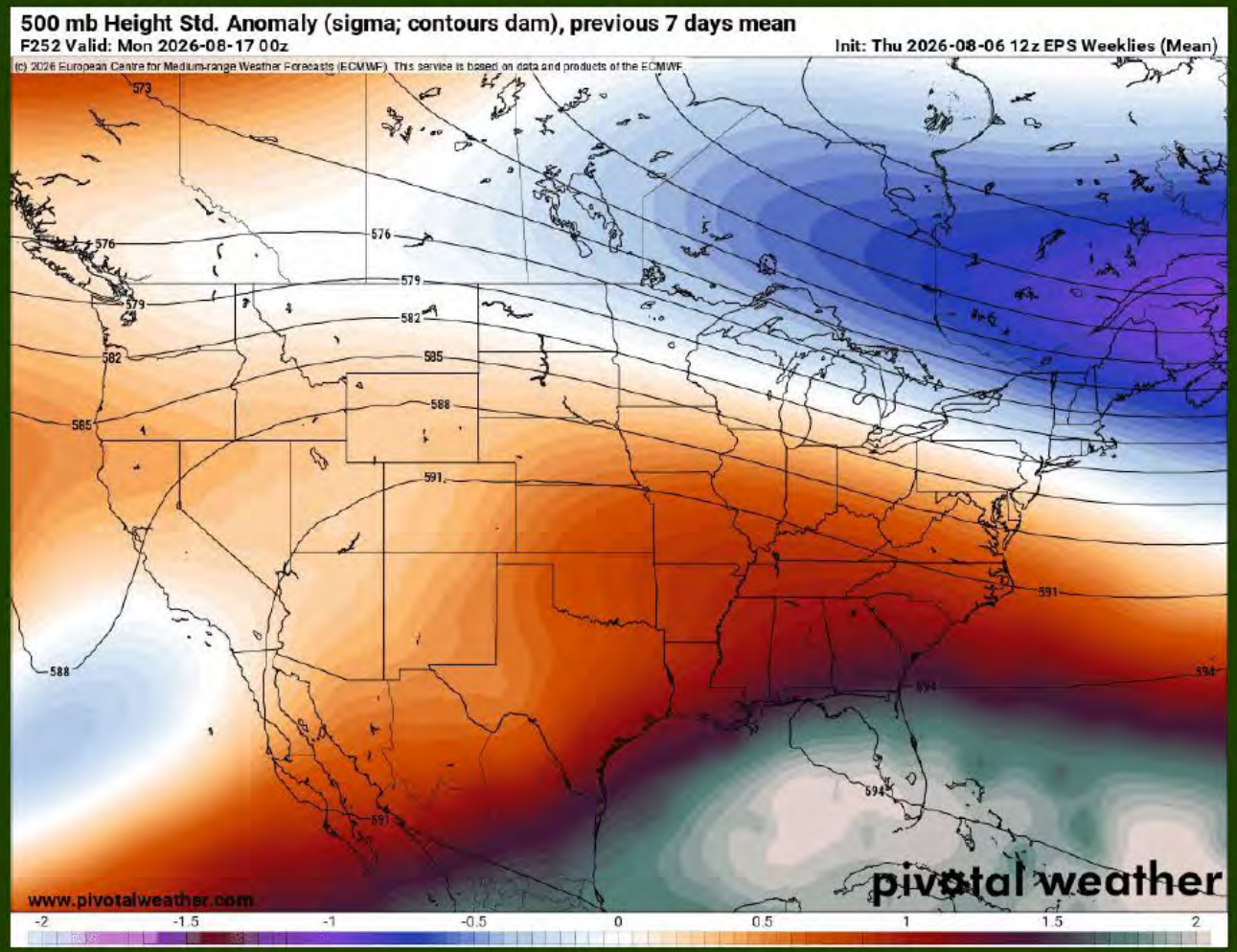


- **Plains**: the fire environment will be increasingly supportive of significant fires as high temperatures from 100-110°, RH as low as 15-25% and S wind gusts from 25-30 mph occur amid critically to extremely dry and increasingly cured fuels – these conditions will continue into Thursday over north Texas, with lower confidence in Oklahoma due to a potential frontal boundary
- An overall warming and drying trend is on tap for east Texas into the Lower Mississippi Valley, bringing an increase in moderate SFP; lightning holdovers could continue to emerge, while isolated thunderstorms are still possible
- Expect near-record heat and only isolated thunderstorms from the Florida peninsula into the coastal Southeast; fire activity may increase regionally
- No appreciable changes are forecasted for the Caribbean islands, though scattered showers are possible

North Carolina State University Fire Weather Intelligence Portal

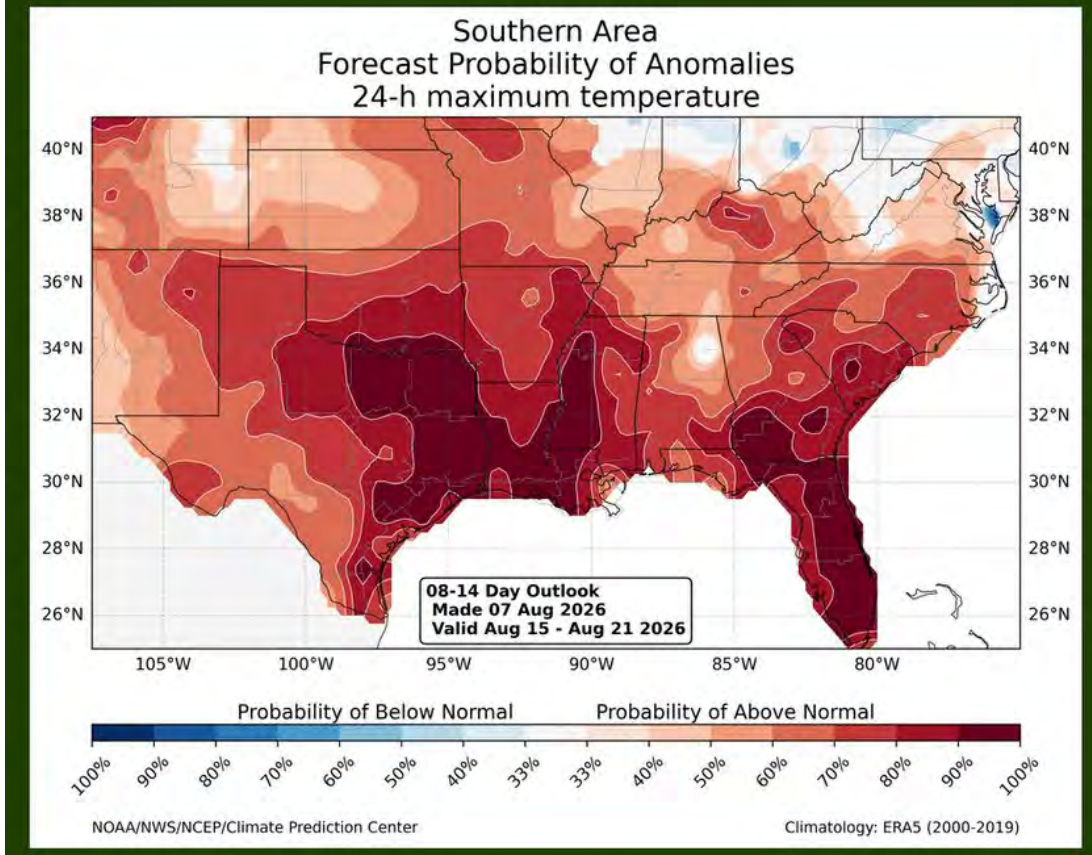
Pattern Into Early September

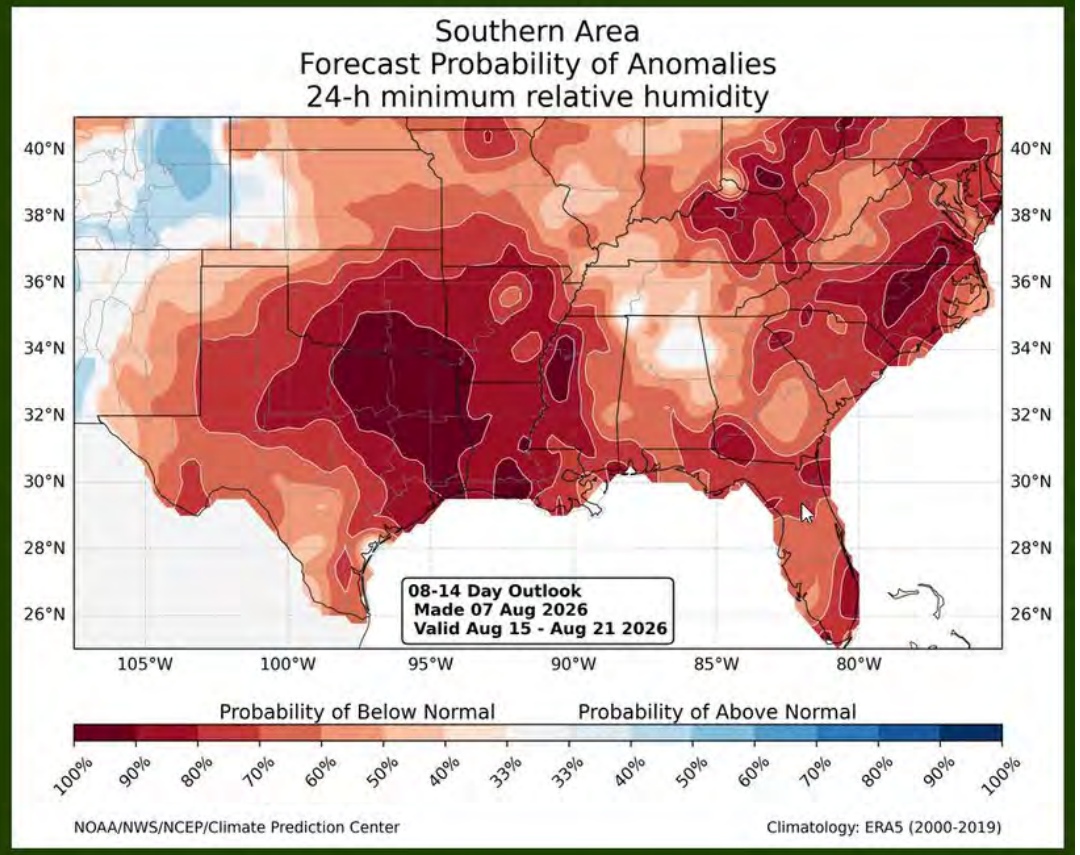
- Forcing from the strong El Niño will produce a classic pattern response over the Southern Area through the next few months
- Ridging aloft builds across the area next week, promoting a heating and drying trend fort he Plains, Lower Mississippi Valley and coastal Southeast
- Could be persistent into September
- Very low potential for tropical impacts



From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

Week Two – Hot and Dry





Prepare for NWS minimum RH and NFDRS forecasts to perform poorly in this pattern, especially days 4-7

From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

Rainfall Trends

- Storms will be hit and miss for the Gulf coastal plain and Lower Mississippi Valley into early next week
- Rainfall today and tomorrow in the coastal Southeast will be locally heavy, but drier trends develop behind the departing tropical wave
- Wet weather returns to the Appalachians and Tennessee Valley next week with stalling fronts
- Monsoonal activity could return to the High Plains and Trans Pecos late next week
- Well below average rainfall for Florida and the Caribbean

From SA Fire Environment Briefing 8/7/26

Overall Notes

- Chipping away at the drought. Several multi-day periods of unsettled weather/soaking rain events have been beneficial over the past 2-3 weeks, helping decrease difficulty of control of established fires and reduce actionable IA across the state. However, fire activity for the month of July ended well above 10-yr average for both fire count and acres in statewide context. There has been **significant variability** in precip totals across the landscape – impacting current/expected fire danger at the local scale.

- Significant long-duration precip deficits **still exist** even with many stations receiving 4”-12” over the past 30-days. On the high end - Fairfield RAWS received 19.88” over the past 30-days (FWIP link). Short-term improvement include better 100-hr & 1000-hr recovery, shallow duff rewetting and observed regreening of herbaceous species in yards & on road shoulders for many areas.

- CPC outlooks continue to favor warmer conditions, with slightly better precip chances moving through the next couple weeks, however the extent of this remains in question. The focus of better chances of precip over the next 1-2 weeks looks generally focused west and north. It will still take many inches of precip to continue the drought turn-around as we move through the remaining part of our growing season – for which there is no clear signal. We need both higher minimum daily RH’s + repeated precip events to recharge and maintain fuels.

- A drying trend appears likely as high pressure reestablishes (see earlier slides) along with an extended period of drier air across the Southeast US (lower min daily rh’s). This will likely lead to an increase in initial attack again, especially in areas that are still in heavily entrenched drought with fuels that can easily transition back to receptivity. The generalized bump in shallow soil moisture and live fuel moisture should help reduce but not erase extended drought impacts to live and dead fuels.

- For closed canopy hardwood forests - the full benefit of seasonally “green” conditions continue to be modified **at the local level** by drought, storm damage/canopy closure (Helene), and soil available moisture related to live fuels. Drought conditions will continue to more directly impacting potential fire behavior in conifer/mixed conifer & shrub forests during the growing season.

- **Statewide** – Where fires do establish & overlap with drought impacts, continue to expect enhanced difficulty of control & significant mop-up issues. Reburn risk remains on any smoldering fire footprints once browning and leaf-drop/needle cast occurs, especially in drought impacted areas that overlap with fire effective weather. Lightning holdover fires will also become more likely again, as 100’s and 1,000’s dry – assuming forecasts hold.

- Please refer to Appendix B in the Updated SA Spring Risk Assessment related to critical fire weather and environmental conditions such as sea breezes, thunderstorm outflow winds, tropical cyclone related conditions, etc. Also refer to links related to superfog risk & associated roadway safety guidance

- **FEMS reminder -** utilizes the NBM (National Blend of Models) hourly gridded weather once a day to help generate hourly fire danger forecasts over the next 7-day forecast period. As evidenced multiple times over the past year or so – the NBM can/will blend out extreme lows/highs when facing atypical weather patterns in the Southeast - daily min-rh’s in particular. So, moving into this drier spell we may find that the NBM derived min-rhs going into the NFDRS outputs don’t perform as well as expected. Meaning forecast minimum rh’s could be significantly higher than actual, leading to understated forecast dead fuel dryness over the 7-day forecast period. Fire danger forecast outputs from FEMS are then used within the FWIP. FEMS continues through its first year of operational deployment and improves with each new release version (now 3.7).

Daily Adjective Level Outputs for each FDRA (ERC, from FM-Z)
(Reduced/Modified by Live Herb Fuel Moisture if modeled ≥ 130 % or ≥ 190%)

Low | Moderate | High | Very High | Extreme

FDRA	Recent Data (Calculated from hourly estimates)							Forecast Data (Calculated using hourly forecasts)						
	FRI JUL 31	SAT AUG 1	SUN AUG 2	MON AUG 3	TUE AUG 4	WED AUG 5	THU AUG 6	FRI AUG 7	SAT AUG 8	SUN AUG 9	MON AUG 10	TUE AUG 11	WED AUG 12	THU AUG 13
Southern Highlands	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Central Mountains	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Northern Highlands	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Blue Ridge	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Western Piedmont	H	M	L	L	L	M	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Sandhills	H	M	M	M	L	L	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	M
Eastern Piedmont	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Southern Coast	V	H	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	M	L
Northern Coast	M	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L

*Changes in actual precipitation amounts, min/max rh’s and other weather variables have significant impact on the model as you go further out in forecast period. FEMS model settings are yielding LHFM values lower than they should be for several FDRAs, thereby there is no “step-down” in Adj Rating or Hazard Level to consider green’s impact to the fire environment.

Observed Averages (FM-Z) by FDRA for 8/6/26

Summary by Region — Permalink | Download Data | Screenshot

Note: FDRA averages include **only the SIG stations** in each region with data available today

Region Details			Fire Danger and Fuel Moisture Averages									Weather Averages			
FDRA	NUM STN	MOD	MAX BI	MAX ERC	MAX IC	MAX SC	KBDI	MIN 1HR	MIN 10HR	MIN 100HR	MIN 1000H	MAX TEMP	MIN RHUM	MAX GUST	TOTAL PRCP
Southern Highlands	4	Z	22.6 18%	32.4 32%	3.8 27%	2.7 16%	200 -201	13.9% 74%	16.4% 72%	21.1% 82%	21.9% 82%	82°F	66%	13 MPH	0.26 IN.
Central Mountains	4	Z	25.9 29%	33.0 34%	6.5 41%	3.6 48%	186 -97	12.4% 60%	15.9% 71%	20.0% 75%	20.2% 57%	83°F	55%	12 MPH	0.78 IN.
Northern Highlands	3	Z	24.0 33%	24.0 27%	2.7 32%	5.8 82%	53 -148	15.5% 73%	19.5% 82%	21.1% 78%	21.3% 64%	81°F	67%	13 MPH	0.85 IN.
Blue Ridge Escarpment	5	Z	27.6 26%	29.3 20%	6.6 36%	4.8 55%	157 -176	12.7% 75%	17.2% 82%	21.5% 91%	22.6% 95%	86°F	61%	19 MPH	0.47 IN.
Western Piedmont	4	Z	34.5 34%	41.6 40%	8.3 33%	5.2 39%	193 -217	11.7% 74%	13.6% 68%	19.1% 72%	21.5% 80%	90°F	58%	18 MPH	0.17 IN.
Sandhills	4	Z	45.0 67%	47.1 52%	14.1 57%	7.9 72%	295 -138	10.0% 62%	12.1% 47%	17.9% 60%	21.2% 78%	94°F	50%	22 MPH	0.05 IN.
Eastern Piedmont	5	Z	48.3 73%	47.2 57%	13.3 58%	9.6 80%	197 -127	10.8% 64%	12.1% 42%	17.6% 60%	19.9% 68%	92°F	55%	14 MPH	0.00 IN.
Southern Coast	8	Z	25.1 18%	28.6 24%	5.1 24%	3.9 21%	353 -1	14.2% 80%	16.1% 74%	20.3% 74%	22.8% 91%	90°F	63%	15 MPH	0.18 IN.
Northern Coast	5	Z	33.5 30%	41.1 52%	8.0 41%	5.4 22%	129 -201	11.8% 64%	13.8% 57%	18.4% 51%	20.3% 54%	92°F	59%	16 MPH	0.01 IN.