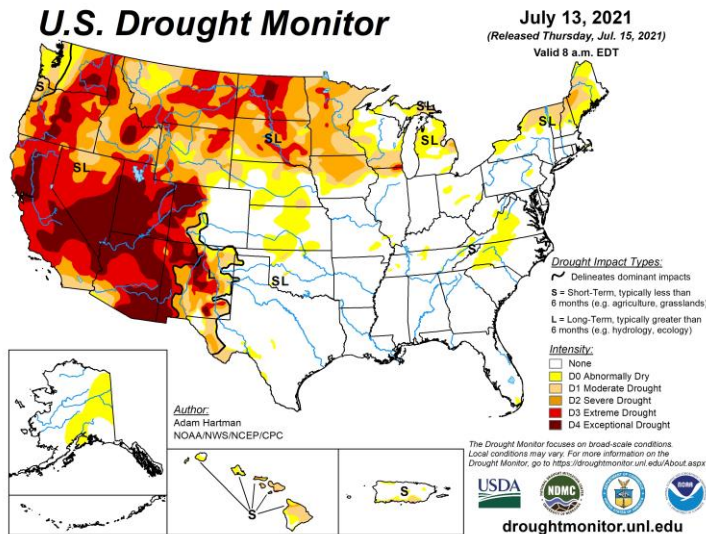


Regional Drought and Water Supply Status

July 2021

SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS (as of July 15, 2021) – NORMAL

The latest U.S. Drought monitor released on July 15 indicates that the COG region is currently free of drought, although our region received below normal amounts of precipitation over the past 30 days. Potomac streamflows are near median levels, and local reservoirs remain full. Long-term forecasts indicate that we should remain drought free over the next three months.

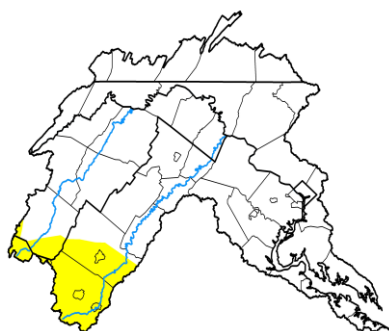


Drought Stage - Normal

The current drought stage as defined in [COG's water supply and drought response awareness plan \(the Plan\)](#) is Normal. COG's Plan focuses on tracking and responding to drought conditions as it relates to regional water supply.

Note that a 'Megadrought' persists in western U.S., as another extremely dry year develops. According to a [June 23rd article in the New York Times](#), "The current Southwestern drought is the driest 20-year period since the last megadrought in the late 1500s, and the second-driest since the 800s." The region has been in a state of drought nearly every year since 2000, when the Drought Monitor was established.

U.S. Drought Monitor Potomac Watershed



U.S. Drought Monitor
July 13, 2021
(Released Thursday, Jul. 15, 2021)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	89.27	10.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 07-08-2021	89.50	10.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 04-15-2021	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2020	99.95	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2020	84.80	15.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 07-18-2020	60.51	39.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:
None
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Moderate Drought
D2 Severe Drought
D3 Extreme Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought

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

Author:
Adam Hartman
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Drought Stages VADEQ and MDE - Normal

COG jurisdictions that are monitored by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality ([VADEQ](#)) and Maryland Department of the Environment ([MDE](#)) are under a normal status.

Streamflow, reservoir, and groundwater levels – Near Normal

Potomac streamflows are currently near median levels. Most of the regional groundwater wells monitored are at normal levels, and local reservoirs are full.

Forecasts and Precipitation – Normal to below Normal

The latest U.S. Seasonal Outlook indicates that drought is not likely in the COG region over the next three months. The Potomac River Basin received below normal amounts of precipitation over the past 30 days, and the 7-day forecast calls for roughly 1.0 – 1.75 inches of rain in the COG region.

POTOMAC STREAMFLOW

Instantaneous flows readings on July 15 were:

Little Falls -4,680 cfs (median, 4,060 cfs) Point of Rocks -3,380 cfs (median, 3,190 cfs)

Source: USGS Little Falls: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?01646500>

Source: USGS Point of Rocks: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?01638500>

POTOMAC BASIN PRECIPITATION (as of 7/12/21)

The Potomac Basin received 3.0 inches of rain in the last 30 days, which is 11% to 25% below average.

Source: Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center

<https://www.weather.gov/marfc/BasinPrecipitation30Day>

GROUNDWATER LEVELS

Most of the groundwater levels are within a normal range in the COG region. Source: USGS and Pennsylvania Water Science Center

<https://groundwaterwatch.usgs.gov/statemap.asp?sc=51&sa=VA>

<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/current/?type=gw>

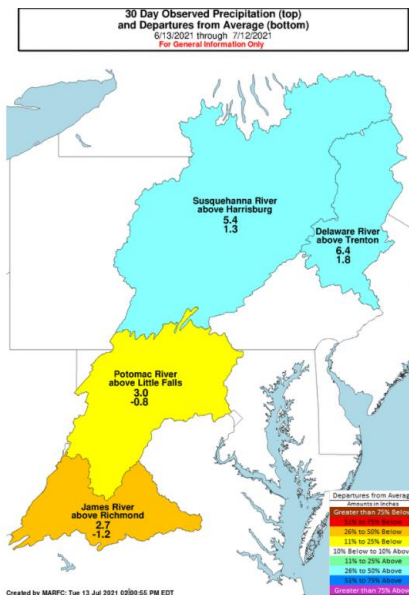
<https://pa.water.usgs.gov/apps/potomac/>

DROUGHT OUTLOOK

The latest U.S. Seasonal Outlook released on July 15 indicates that drought is not expected in the COG region over the next three months.

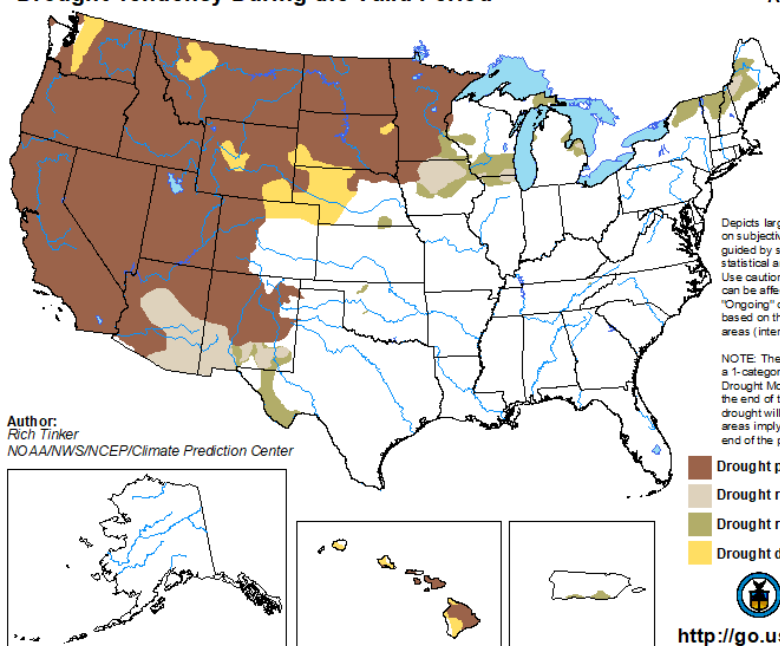
Source:

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/sdo_summary.php



U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for July 15 - October 31, 2021
Released July 15



RESERVOIR LEVELS

Drinking water reservoirs at Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca are full.

Source: <http://www.nab-wc.usace.army.mil/nab/potopub.html>

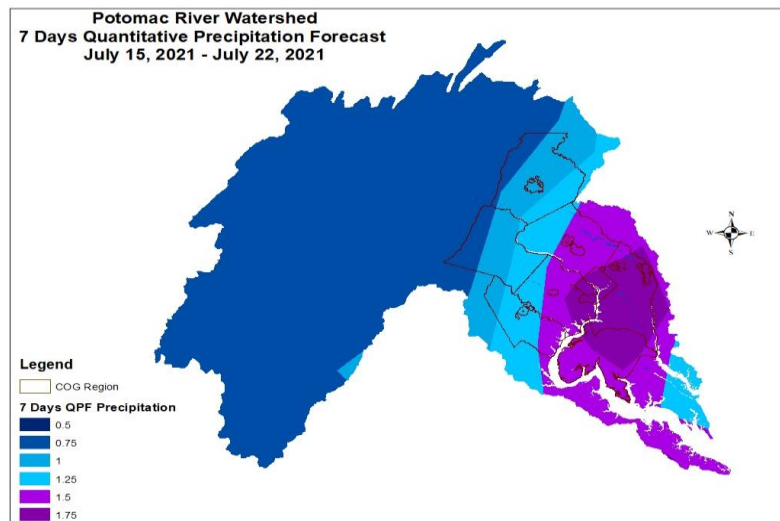
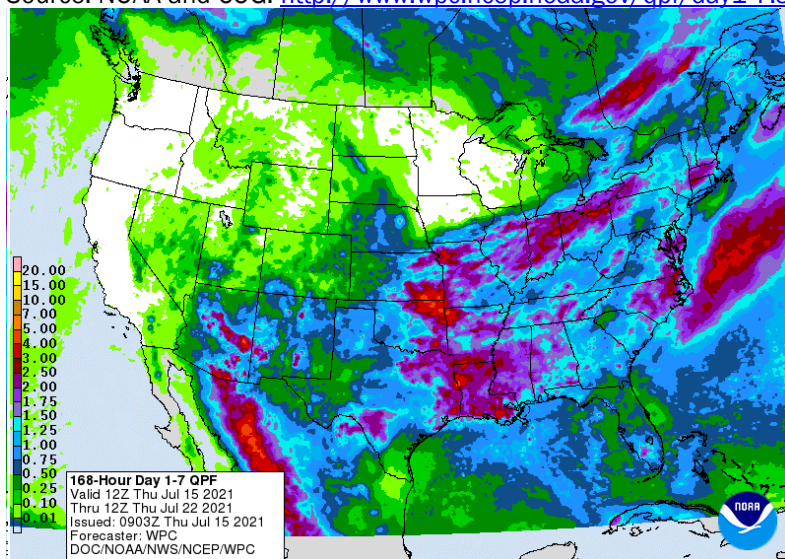
As of the July 2021 report, there is a near normal probability of releases from the Washington metropolitan area's back-up water supply reservoirs for the 2021 summer and fall seasons. Generally, the use of Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca reservoirs is triggered by low flows brought about by a combination of low precipitation and low groundwater levels. There is an 8 to 19 percent conditional probability that natural Potomac flow will drop below 600 to 700 million gallons per day (MGD) at Little Falls through December 31 of this year. Source: ICPRB

<https://www.potomacriver.org/focus-areas/water-resources-and-drinking-water/cooperative-water-supply-operations-on-the-potomac/drought-monitoring-and-operations/water-supply-outlook-status/>

7 DAY PRECIPITATION FORECASTS

The 7 Day quantitative precipitation forecast calls for roughly 1.00 to 1.75 inch of rain in the COG region.

Source: NOAA and COG: <http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/qpf/day1-7.shtml>



For additional information please visit COG's Water Supply and Drought website:

<https://www.mwco.org/drought>