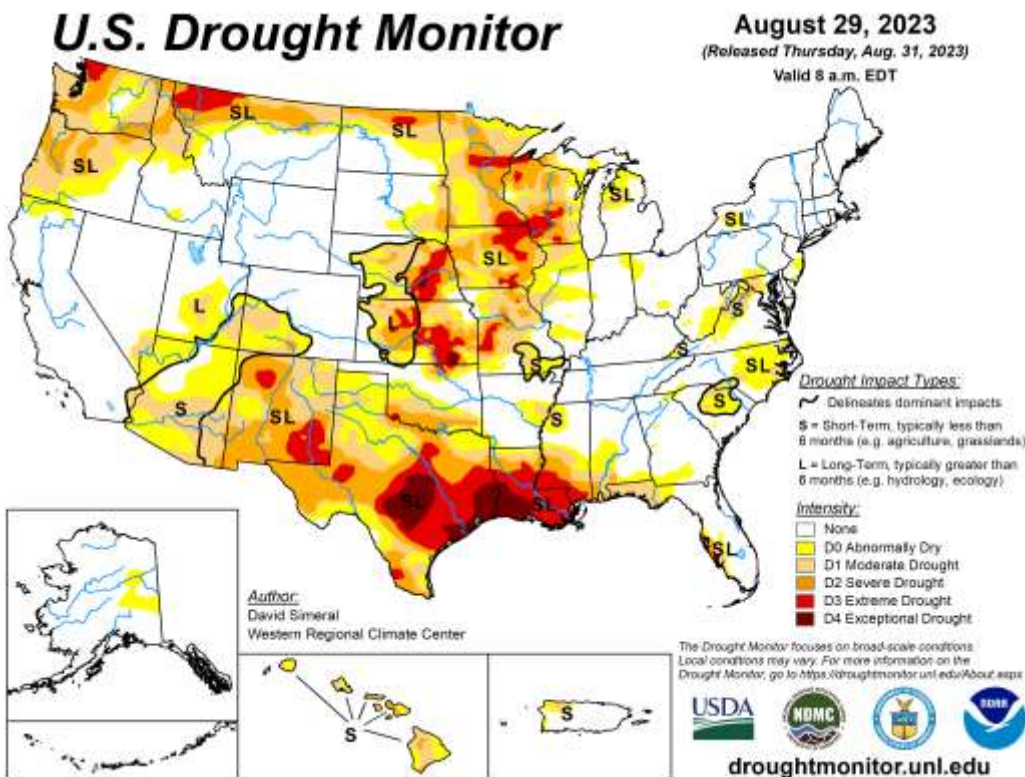


Regional Drought and Water Supply Status September 2023

Summary of Current Conditions in the COG Region - As of August 31, 2023

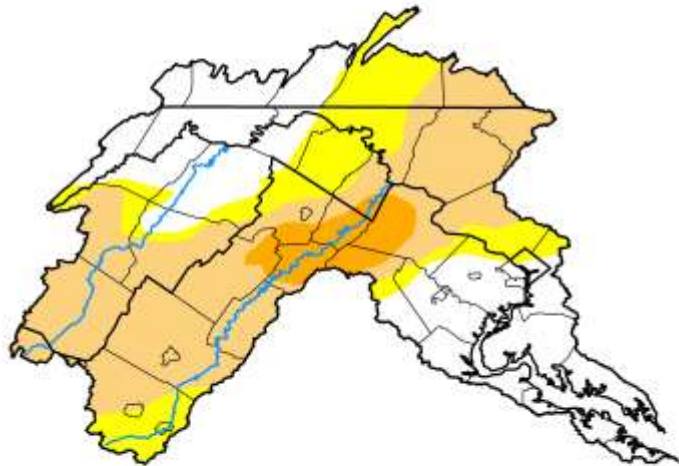
The latest U.S. Drought monitor indicates that abnormal dryness and moderate drought conditions are still present in the COG region along with a small area of severe drought in Loudoun County, Virginia. Potomac streamflow levels dropped significantly since our last report and triggered drought operations by [ICPRB's CO-OP](#). These operations include issuing morning and afternoon updates to stakeholders regarding streamflow, weather, and demand conditions and using river flow forecasting tools to determine whether changes are needed to meet upcoming water demands. Such operational changes could include scheduling water supply releases from our area's upstream reservoirs, Jennings Randolph, and Little Seneca. The most recent Water Supply Outlook from ICPRB predicts up to 51% probability that flows will be low enough to require water releases from these reservoirs.

The current drought stage as defined in COG's [Metropolitan Washington Water Supply and Drought Awareness Response Plan](#) (the Plan) is Normal, The Drought Coordination Technical Committee is scheduled to meet next week to discuss the possibility of entering a Drought WATCH, the second stage of the Plan. If declared, a press release will be issued urging residents and businesses to voluntarily conserve water along with a reminder that our water supply is well-protected due to decades of careful planning and preparation. For more information, please visit COG's Water Supply and Drought website: <https://www.mwcog.org/drought>



U.S. Drought Monitor Potomac Watershed

August 29, 2023
(Released Thursday, Aug. 31, 2023)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	33.81	18.92	41.08	6.22	0.00	0.00
Last Week 08-24-2023	33.80	40.44	25.76	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 06-01-2023	36.37	48.77	16.86	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2023	99.06	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-15-2022	89.89	10.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 08-01-2022	97.85	2.15	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:

David Simeral
Western Regional Climate Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Drought Stage - Normal

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

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VADEQ) issued a drought Watch for the Northern Virginal region due to low groundwater levels. MDE issued a [drought watch advisory](#) for the northern part of Montgomery County and central and western portions of the state encouraging voluntary water conservation. The areas served by WSSC are not included in this advisory.

Potomac Streamflow – Below median levels

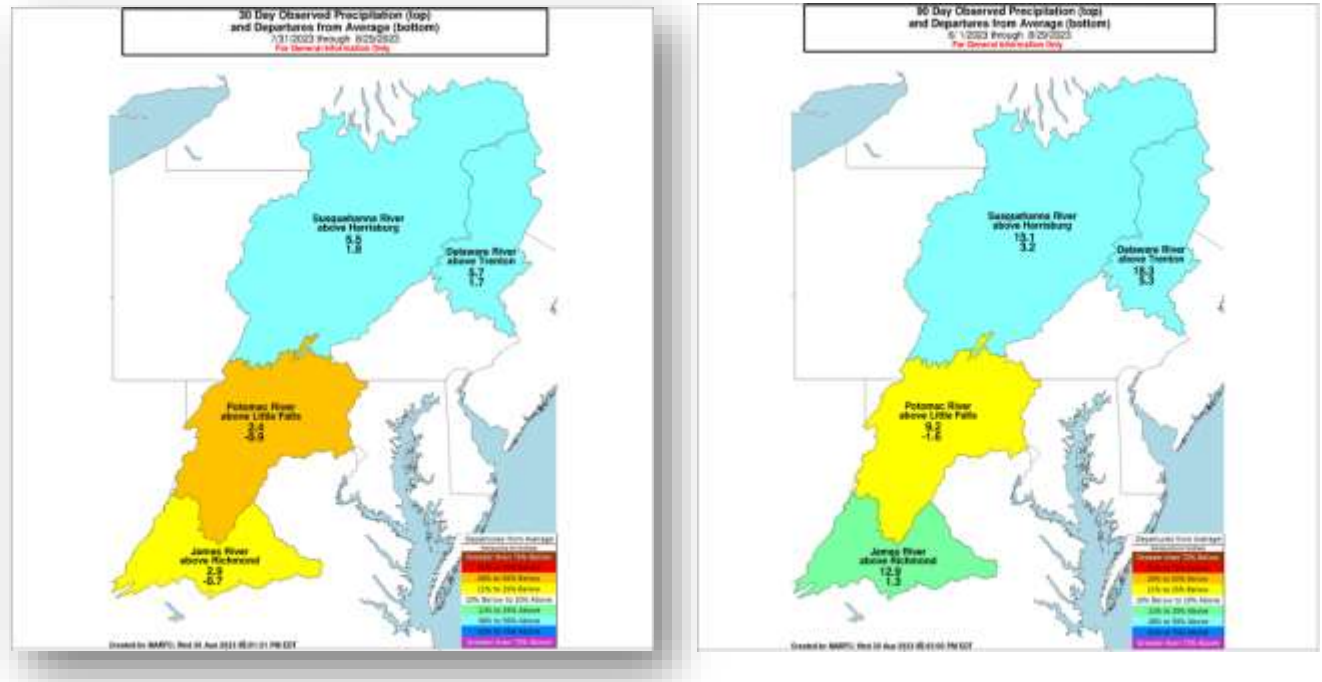
Instantaneous flows readings:

- Little Falls: 610 cfs (median, 2,390 cfs) Source: as of August 31 [USGS Little Falls](#)
- *Point of Rocks: 1,310 cfs (median 2,350 cfs) Source: as of August 31 [USGS Point of Rocks](#)
- *Hydropower operations affect river flows and large fluctuations were observed at the Shepherdstown and Point of Rocks gages.

Potomac Basin Precipitation 30 and 90 Day (through 08.31.23) –Below Normal

The Potomac Basin received 2.4 inches of precipitation in the last 30 days, 0.9 inches below normal and 9.2 inches, 1.6 inches below normal over the past 90 days.

Source: [Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center](https://www.mrlfc.com/)



Groundwater Levels – Below Normal

In the COG region, groundwater levels are below normal.

Source: <https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov/app/nwd/?region=lower48&aoi=default>

Reservoir Levels - Normal

Drinking water reservoirs at Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca are currently slightly below their normal pool levels.

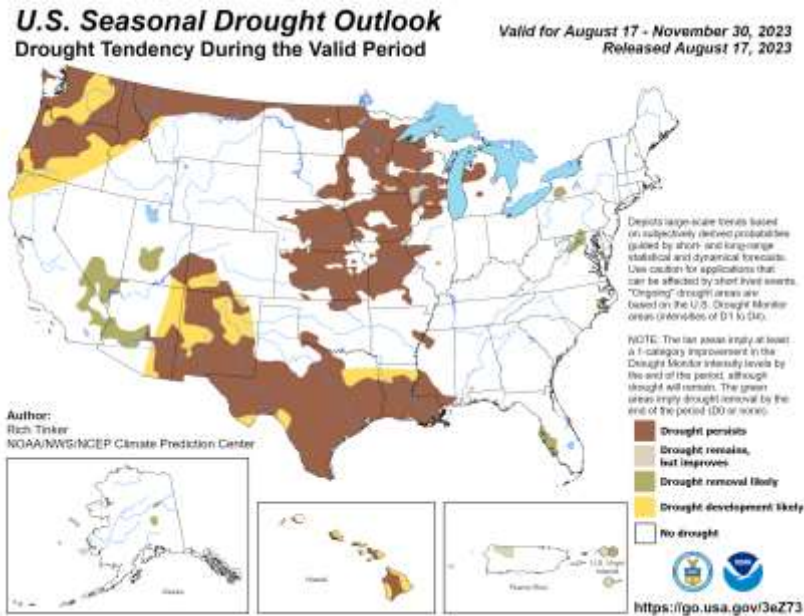
Source: <http://www.nab-wc.usace.army.mil/nab/potopub.html>

Probability of Reservoir Releases – Above Normal

As of the September 2023 report, there is a **much above-normal probability** of releases from the Washington metropolitan area's back-up water supply reservoirs for the 2023 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 a **34 to 51** 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.icprb.org/)

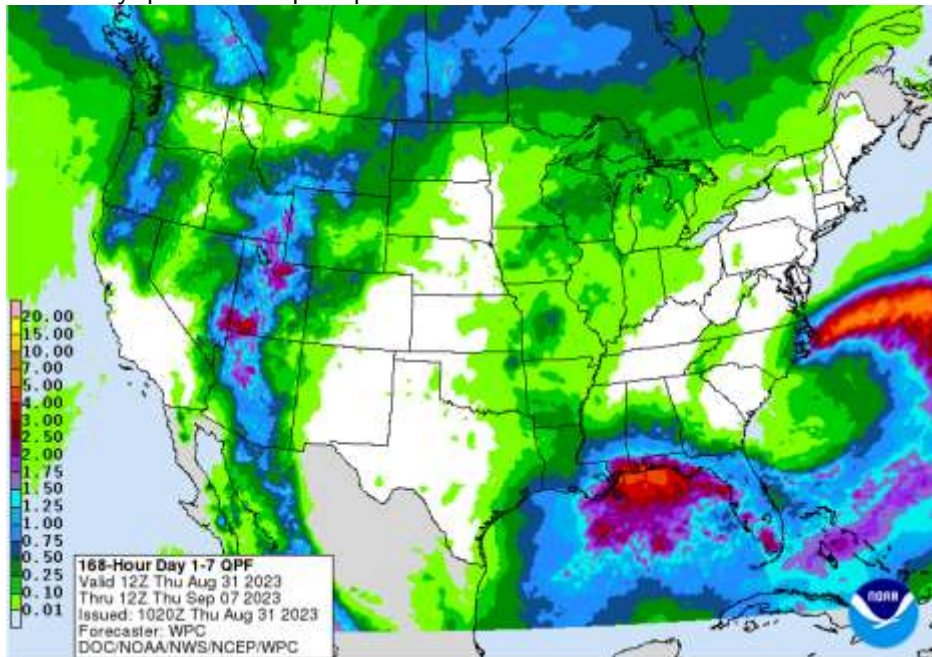
Seasonal Drought Outlook - Drought Removal Likely

Yellow areas are likely to see drought develop. Brown areas are likely to see drought persist. Tan means drought is likely to improve at least one category, and green means drought is likely to end. NOAA Climate.gov map, based on data from NOAA Climate Prediction Center.



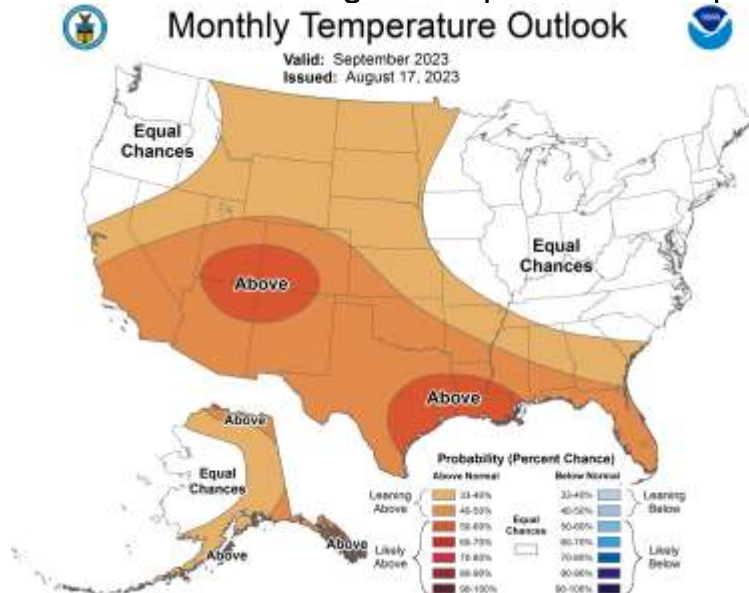
Short Term Precipitation Outlook

The 7 Day quantitative precipitation forecast calls little to no rain in the COG region.

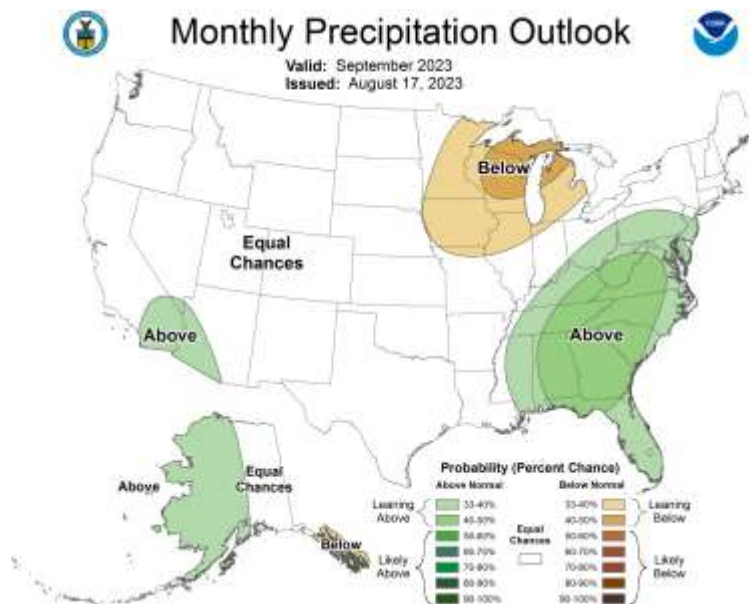


Source: [NOAA NWS Weather Prediction Center](https://www.weather.gov/wmo) and COG

U.S. Climate Outlook for August – Temperature and Precipitation



The Monthly Temperature Outlook for September 2023 indicates that there are equal chances for a warm, cool, or near-average September. For more details on how to interpret these maps, [Understanding NOAA's monthly climate outlooks](#). Map by NOAA Climate.gov, based on data from the Climate Prediction Center.



The Monthly Precipitation Outlook for September 2023 indicates our region is leaning towards above normal amounts of precipitation for the month. For more details on how to interpret these maps [Understanding NOAA's monthly climate outlooks](#). Map by NOAA Climate.gov, based on data from the Climate Prediction Center.