

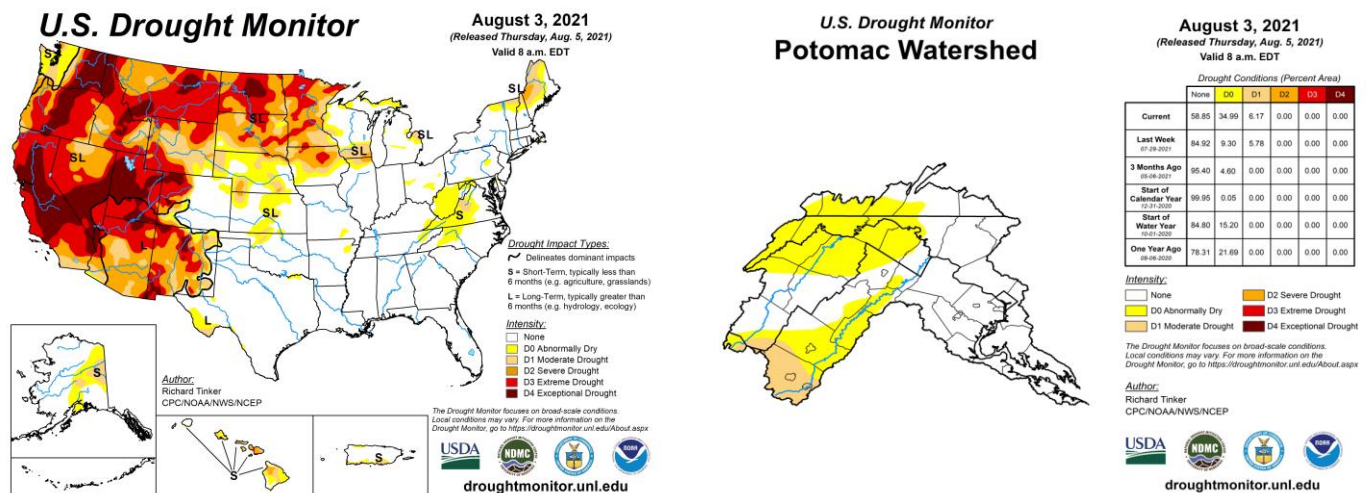
Regional Drought and Water Supply Status August 2021

SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS - As of August 6, 2021

The latest U.S. Drought monitor released on August 5 indicates that the western portion of the Potomac watershed is experiencing abnormally dry conditions, but the COG region remains free of drought. Areas that are abnormal dry (D0) have an increased fire risk and show signs of stunted crop growth, lawns that turn brown, and gardens that wilt.

Streamflow in the Potomac has dropped below a low-flow monitoring threshold of 2,000 cubic feet per second at Point of Rocks. When this low flow occurs, ICPRB's Section for [Cooperative Water Supply Operations on the Potomac \(CO-OP\)](#) works with water utilities in the COG region, Fairfax Water, Washington Aqueduct, WSSC and Loudoun Water, to monitor and report Potomac flow and withdrawals on a daily basis until normal flow resumes.

Our region's major supply agencies have paid for water storage held in reservoirs in the Potomac Basin. These reservoirs can augment water supply during low flow conditions to ensure the region's water supply demands are met. At present, there is sufficient flow in the Potomac River to meet the Washington metropolitan area's water demands without releases from upstream reservoirs. COG will continue to monitor conditions and provide additional updates if needed throughout the month.



Drought Stage - Normal in the COG Region

The current drought stage as defined in [COG's water supply and drought response awareness 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 western portion of the Potomac Basin is experiencing abnormal dryness and a small portion of moderate drought.

Drought Stages VADEQ and MDE - Normal in the COG Region

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.

POTOMAC STREAMFLOW - Below Normal, Daily monitoring and reporting of withdrawals

Instantaneous flows readings on August 6 were:

Little Falls -1.950 cfs (median, 2,750 cfs)

Point of Rocks -1,620 cfs (median, 2,820 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 8/4/21)

The Potomac Basin received 1.9 inches of rain in the last 30 days, which is 26% to 50% 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>

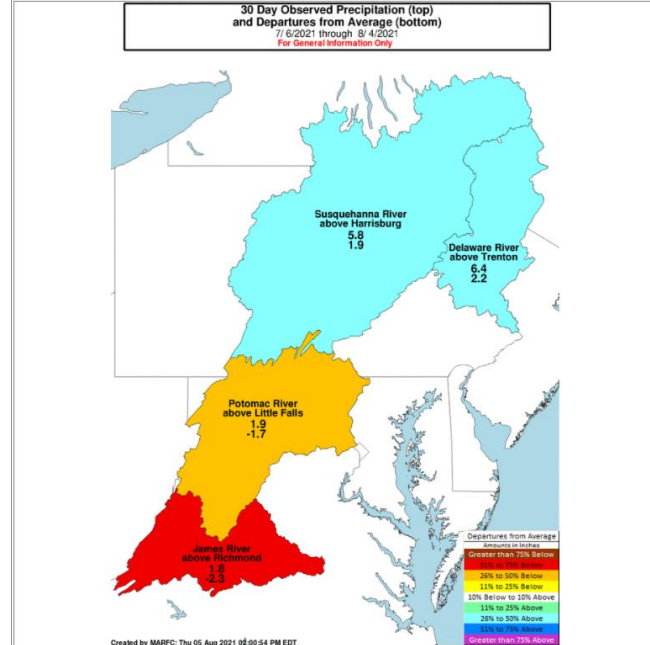
<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/current/?type=gw>

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

DROUGHT OUTLOOK

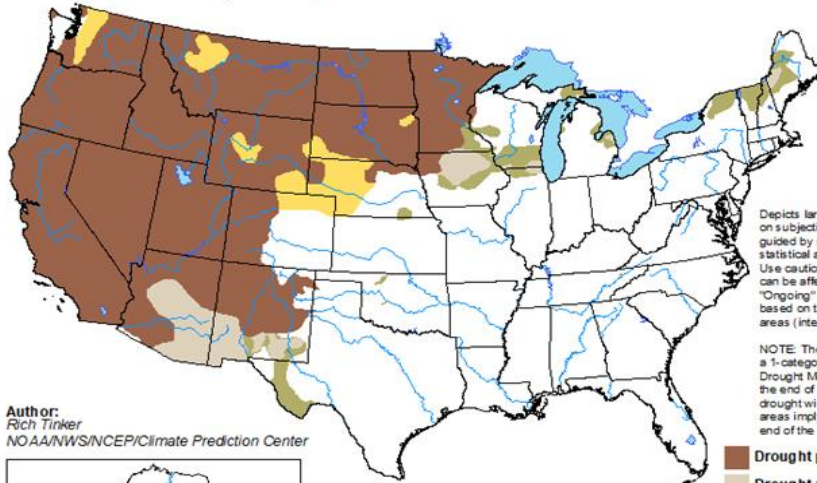
The latest U.S. Seasonal Outlook released on July 15 indicates that drought is not expected in the COG region over the next three months.

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

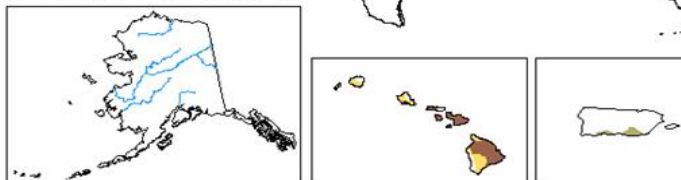


Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).

- Drought persists
- Drought remains but improves
- Drought removal likely
- Drought development likely

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<http://go.usa.gov/3e273>

RESERVOIR LEVELS

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

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

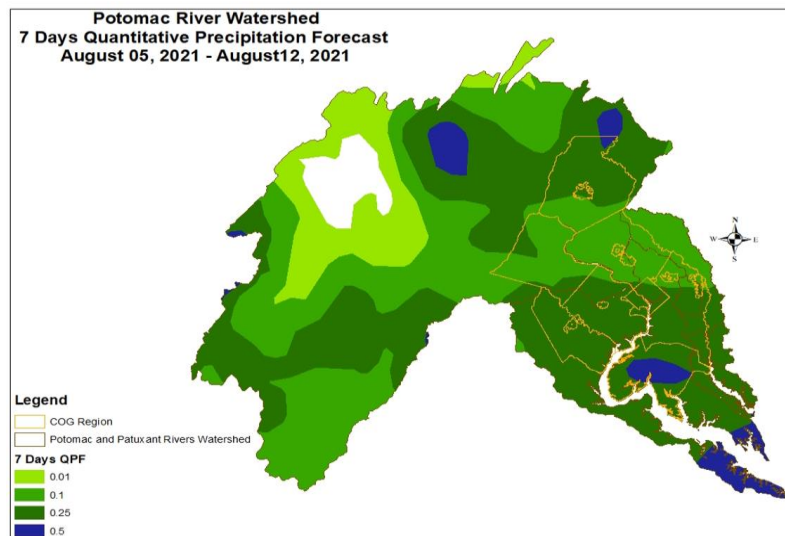
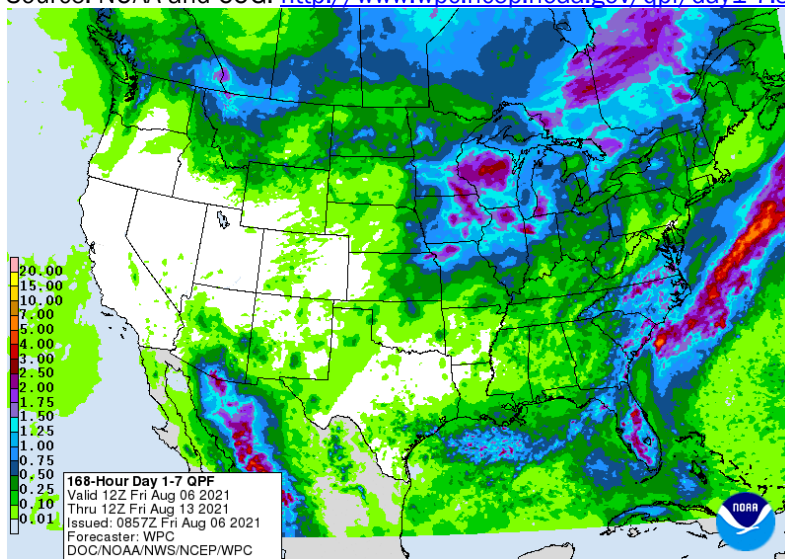
As of the August 2021 report, there is an above normal probability of releases from the Washington metropolitan area's back-up water supply reservoirs for the 2021 summer and fall seasons. Generally, the use of Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca reservoirs is triggered by low flows brought about by a combination of low precipitation and low groundwater levels. There is a 7 to 21 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 0,10 to 0.25 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.mwcog.org/drought>