

Regional Drought and Water Supply Status

May 2025



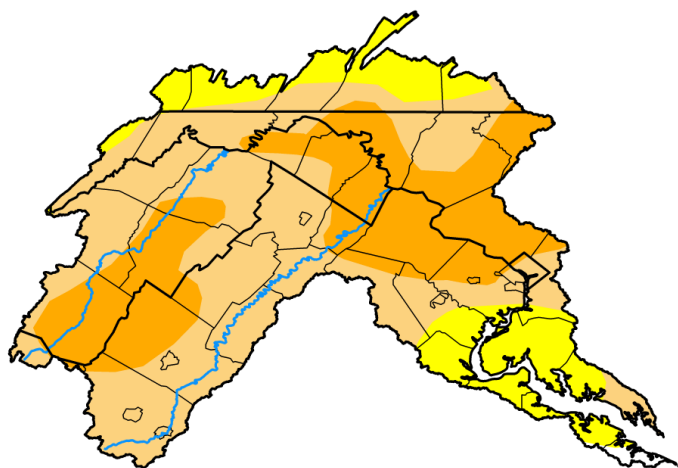
Summary of Current Conditions in the COG Region

The [Drought Watch](#) declared by COG's Drought Coordination Committee on July 29, 2024, is still in effect. Although some much-needed precipitation is in the short-term forecast, our region needs multiple days of continuous rain to recover from the long-term effects of below normal precipitation, groundwater, and streamflow levels. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor indicates that most of the Potomac Basin is experiencing some level of drought.

A [voluntary water restriction](#) for the Baltimore area was issued by the Baltimore City Department of Public Works. Liberty Reservoir, one of their main sources of drinking water, is at the lowest level it has been in about two decades. The Virginia Department of

Environmental Quality issued a [drought advisory update](#) for the Northern Virginia region and the areas monitored in the COG region by the Maryland Department of the Environment are under a [Drought Watch](#). Local backup reservoirs remain full.

U.S. Drought Monitor Potomac Watershed



May 6, 2025

(Released Thursday, May. 8, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	0.54	16.70	49.76	33.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 05-01-2025	0.54	12.95	56.61	29.91	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 02-06-2025	1.10	19.78	66.69	12.43	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-09-2025	2.33	27.31	57.93	12.43	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-03-2024	19.32	37.95	25.75	14.23	2.75	0.00
One Year Ago 05-09-2024	98.77	1.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate 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>

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CPC/NOAA



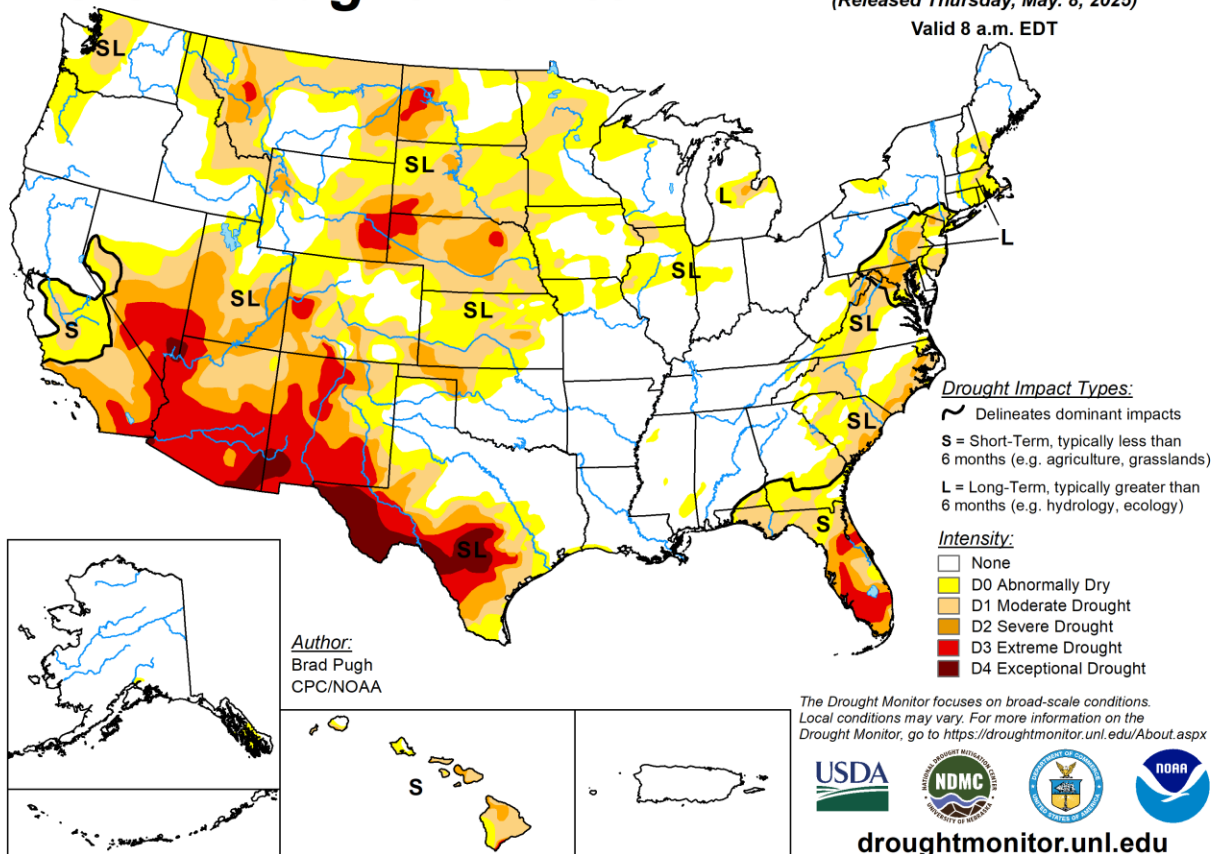
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor

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Potomac Streamflow

Instantaneous flows readings as of May 8

Little Falls: 14,800 cfs (median 12,000 cfs) Source: [USGS Little Falls](#)

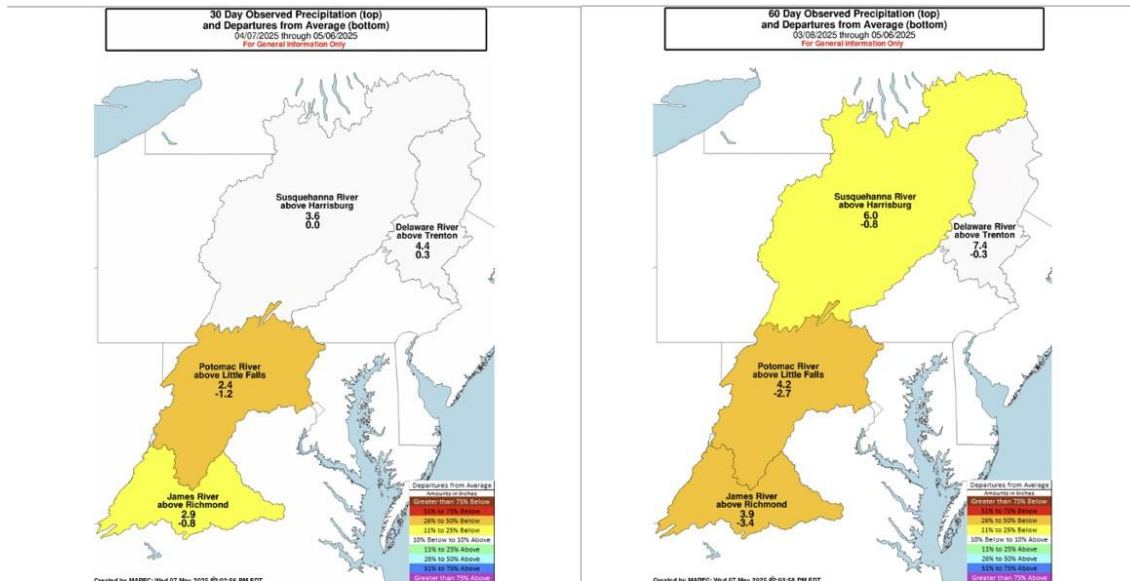
Point of Rocks: 14,200 cfs (median 9,660 cfs) Source: [USGS Point of Rocks](#)

Potomac Basin Observed Precipitation and Departures from Average

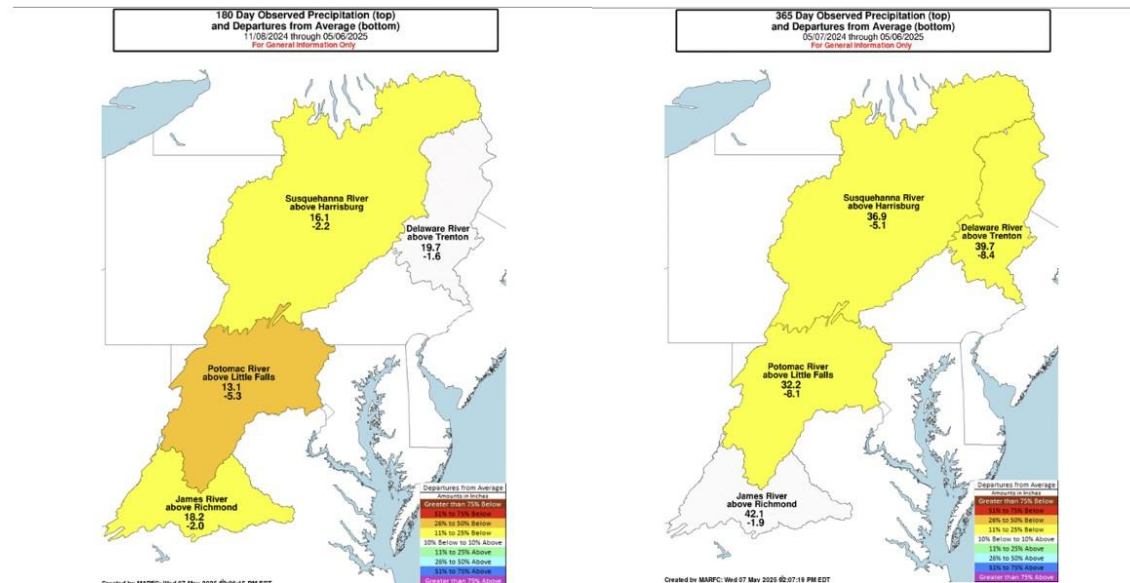
Source: https://www.weather.gov/marfc/precipitation_departures

30 Day	2.4 inches of precipitation, 1.2 inches below normal
60 Day	4.2 inches of precipitation, 2.7 inches below normal
180 Day	13.1 inches of precipitation, 5.3 inches below normal
365 Day	32.2 inches of precipitation, 8.1 inches below normal

30 and 60 Day Observed Precipitation and Departure from Average



180 and 365 Day Observed Precipitation and Departure from Average



Groundwater Levels

Groundwater levels are below normal throughout the COG region.

Source: <https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov/app/nwd/?region=lower48&aoi=default>
<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/va/nwis/current/?type=gw>
<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/current/?type=gw>

Reservoir Levels

Drinking water reservoirs at Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca are at normal levels.

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

Probability of Reservoir Releases

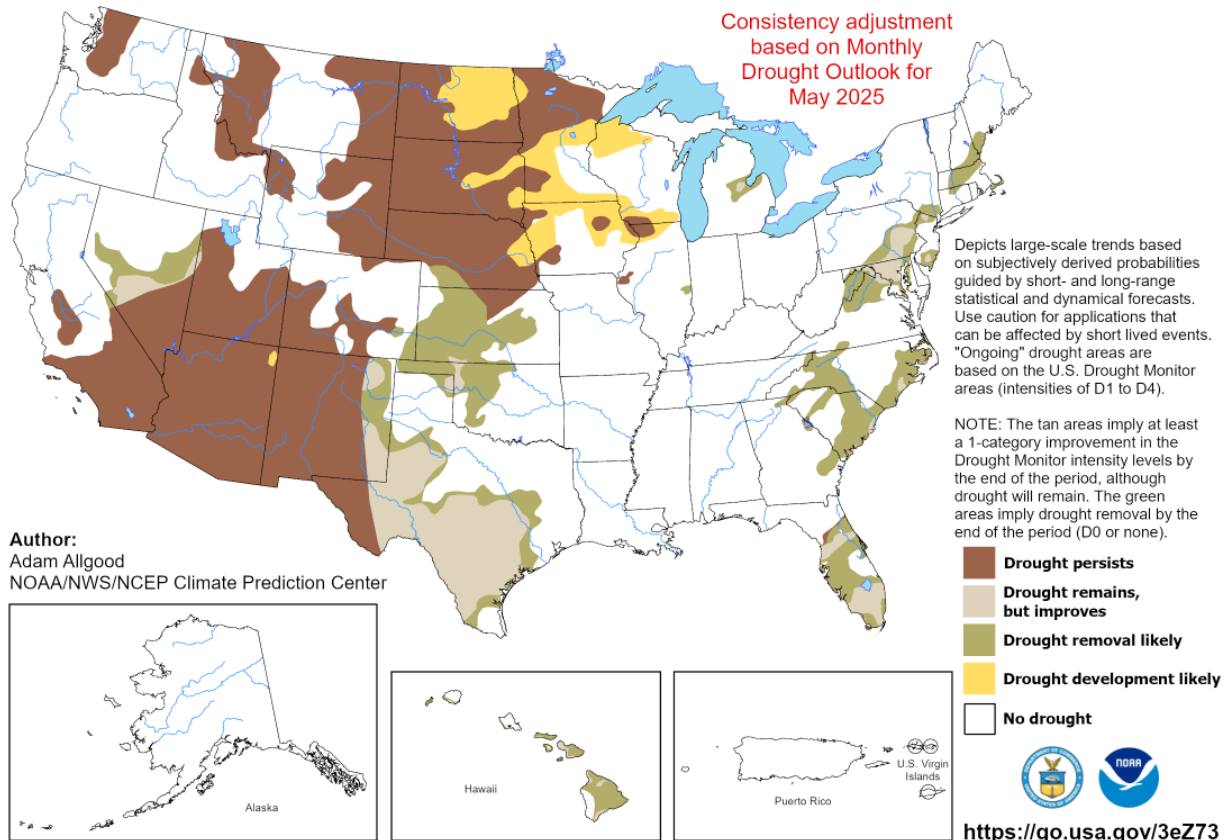
As of the May 2025 report, the probability of needing water supply releases from the Washington metropolitan area's backup reservoirs during summer and fall remains above normal due to persistently dry conditions across the Potomac basin. Generally, the use of Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca reservoirs is triggered by low flows brought about by a combination of low precipitation and low groundwater levels. There is a **22 to 36** 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](#)

Seasonal Drought Outlook

The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook indicates that our region could see some drought improvement over the next few months. Source: [National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center](#)

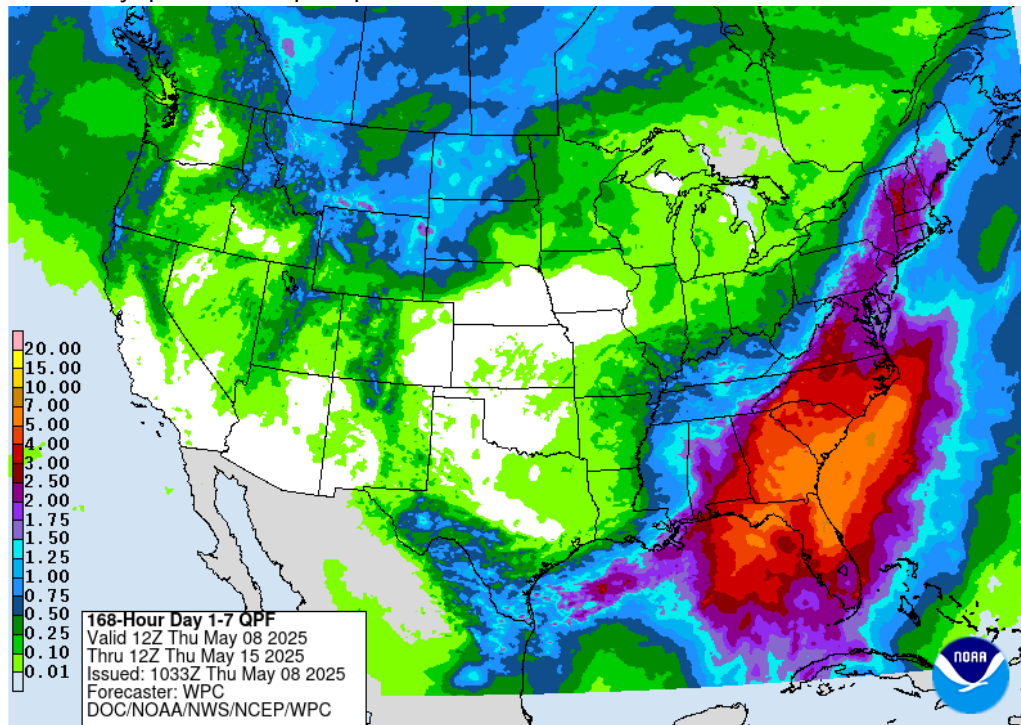
U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for May 1 - July 31, 2025
Released April 30, 2025



Short Term Precipitation Outlook

The 7 Day quantitative precipitation forecast calls for 1.5 to 1.75 inches of rain.



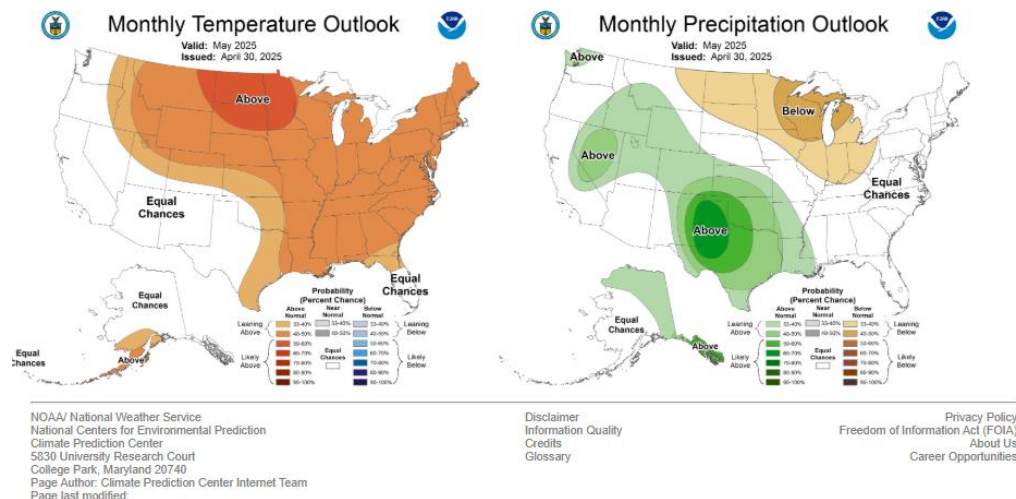
Source: [NOAA NWS Weather Prediction Center](https://www.weather.gov/wpc)

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

Leaning towards above normal temperatures and equal changes of above, below, or normal precipitation for the month of May.

Updated OFFICIAL 30-Day Forecasts

Issued: April 30, 2025



For more details on how to interpret these maps [Understanding NOAA's monthly climate outlooks](https://www.noaa.gov/understanding-noaa-monthly-climate-outlooks). Map by NOAA Climate.gov, based on data from the Climate Prediction Center.