



DROUGHT COORDINATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (DCTC)

DRAFT Meeting Summary June 17, 2025

All meeting materials and presentations are located on COG's DCTC meeting site:
<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2025/6/17/drought-coordination-technical-committee/>

Action Items

- The DCTC unanimously recommended lifting the regional drought watch declared by the Drought Coordination Committee (DCC) on July 29, 2024.
- COG staff will reach out to members of the DCC and CAO committee via email to share this recommendation and request any feedback or objections by COB June 18, 2025.
- A press release will be issued on Friday, June 20, 2025, pending no objections, to lift the drought watch and encourage wise water use throughout the year.

Summary

COG's Drought Coordination Technical Committee met on June 17 to discuss current conditions and consider lifting the regional drought watch that was issued on July 29, 2024. The committee received updates from the NOAA National Weather Service, USGS, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the region's water utilities. Based on the totality of information presented, there was a unanimous recommendation to lift the regional drought watch.

Reports on Regional Conditions

Weather Service Report: Rich Tinker from the Weather Service provided a detailed briefing on the recent weather patterns and their impact on drought conditions. He highlighted significant improvements in rainfall and streamflow levels over the past six weeks, with most areas experiencing above-normal precipitation. The forecast indicates a tendency towards above-normal precipitation for the upcoming months.

Recent Weather Patterns: Rich detailed the changes in weather patterns over the last six weeks, showing significant improvements in rainfall and streamflow levels. The April 29 drought monitor indicated severe drought conditions, but recent rainfall has led to substantial improvements, with most areas now experiencing above-normal precipitation.

Precipitation Data: Rich presented data showing total precipitation for the last 60 days, highlighting that areas like the Maryland Panhandle received upwards of 15 inches of rain,

significantly above normal levels. The 60-day anomaly map showed areas more than eight inches above normal in the western Maryland Panhandle and eastern West Virginia Panhandle.

Streamflow and Groundwater: Rich discussed current streamflow maps, showing daily and 28-day mean streamflow levels. He noted that streamflows have significantly increased, with many areas now in the top ten percentile for this time of year. Groundwater levels are also starting to respond positively to recent precipitation.

Short Term Forecast: Rich indicated that the next seven days will likely see above-normal precipitation, especially in the central to northwest parts of the basin. The 8 to 14-day outlook also suggests wetter than normal conditions.

Long-Term Forecast: Rich noted that the monthly and seasonal precipitation forecasts favor above-normal precipitation. The drought outlook predicts continued improvement, with no strong signals indicating a significant dry period in the near future.

USGS Streamflow and Groundwater Update: Chuck Walker from the USGS presented an update on streamflow and groundwater levels. He noted that streamflow conditions have shifted from low to normal or above normal, and groundwater levels are starting to respond positively to recent precipitation. However, some wells in the DC-Baltimore metro areas are still showing low levels.

ICPRB Water Supply Outlook: Sarah Ahmed from ICPRB reported improvements in groundwater and streamflow levels, with most wells showing positive trends. The 12-month precipitation deficit has reduced significantly, and storage levels in reservoirs are normal. The outlook for the next water supply report is expected to be much better.

Maryland Department of the Environment Update: Lainey Reed from the Maryland Department of the Environment indicated that central Maryland is still under a warning status, while Western Maryland is normal. Groundwater levels in parts of central Maryland are still low, and there is a precipitation deficit since the beginning of the water year.

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality Update: Andrew Noyes from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality reported that drought conditions have almost been erased in the Commonwealth, with all regions now in normal status. The primary concern is groundwater levels, with an indicator well in Clark County remaining below the fifth percentile.

Utility Updates: Fairfax Water, Washington Aqueduct, Loudon Water, and WSSC all reported normal operations and close to normal reservoir levels.

Lifting the Drought Watch: Steve provided a recommendation to lift the drought watch and received approval from the region's water utility general managers. COG will send an email to the DCC and regional CAOs to verify that they agree with this recommendation. An announcement via a press release will be issued on Friday morning, pending no objections from the CAOs.

Helpful Links

COG's Water Supply and Drought Page

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

ICPRB Water Supply Outlook and Status

<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/>

MDE Drought Page

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/DroughtInformation/Pages/index.aspx>

VADEQ Drought Page

<https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/water-quantity/drought>

U.S. Drought Monitor

<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap.aspx>