

North Carolina Drought Update

For the assessment period ending January 4, 2022

Statewide Condition Summary

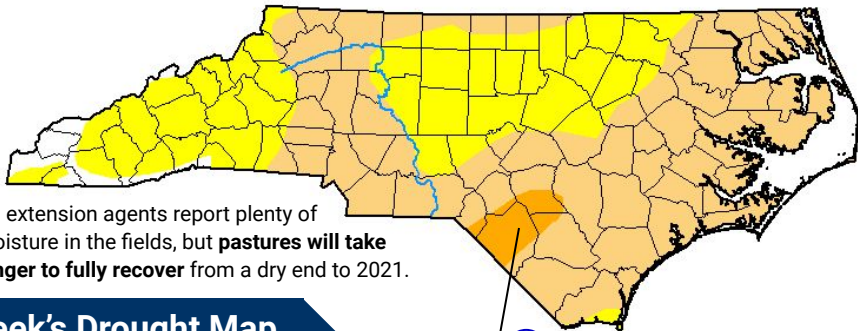
This Week's Drought Monitor of North Carolina Map

From the US Drought Monitor, authored by Rich Tinker (CPC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP) with input from the North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council (ncdrought.org)

Lakes across the state got a boost from the rain, and **most are at or above their seasonal target levels.**

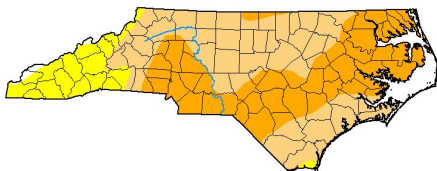


Groundwater levels have steadily risen after this week's rainfall, although wells in eastern NC remain below normal.



Ag extension agents report plenty of moisture in the fields, but **pastures will take longer to fully recover** from a dry end to 2021.

Last Week's Drought Map



While more improvements may come as water works its way downstream, **14-day and 28-day streamflows remain much below normal** in Robeson and Bladen counties.

What's Changed? After the recent precipitation, most of the state has seen a one-category improvement on the map, including the near-removal of Severe Drought (D2).

What's New? This week's rain and snow event brought a **widespread 2 or more inches of precipitation**, with local totals of up to 5 inches. That helped refill reservoirs and saturate the ground for the first time since September.

Why is Drought Still Present? While it's very wet in the short-term, this week's event did not fully eliminate the precipitation, streamflow, and deeper soil moisture deficits accumulated in recent months. Drought remains where these conditions are dry dating back to the fall.

Statewide Coverage By Category

Category	Coverage This Week	Change Since Last Week
D0: Abnormally Dry	36.96%	+24.47%
D1: Moderate Drought	57.44%	+12.28%
D2: Severe Drought	2.76%	-38.88%
D3: Extreme Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D4: Exceptional Drought	0.00%	0.00%

This infographic was created by

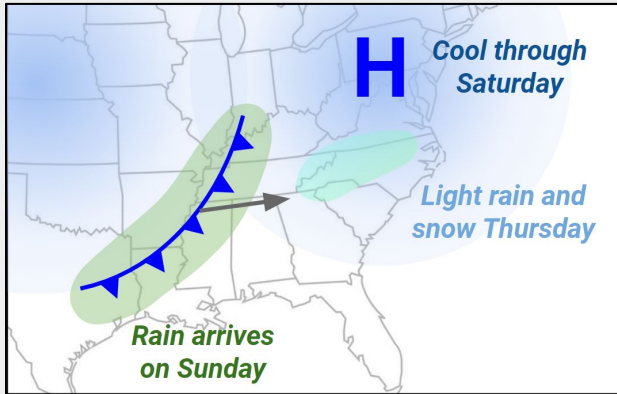


NORTH CAROLINA
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Short-Range Outlook for North Carolina

Week 1:

January 6 to 12, 2022

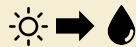


A Mostly Cool Week



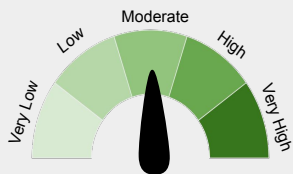
After a mild day today, high pressure building to the north will funnel in cooler air on Friday and Saturday, keeping temperatures mostly in the 30s. Sunday will be warmer again, in the 50s, before another cold front drops us back into the 40s early next week.

Rain Arrives on Sunday



A band of light rain (and snow in the Mountains) will move through tonight, with limited accumulations. After a sunny weekend, a better rain chance begins Sunday night, with a cold front bringing a half-inch to an inch of rain statewide through midday Monday.

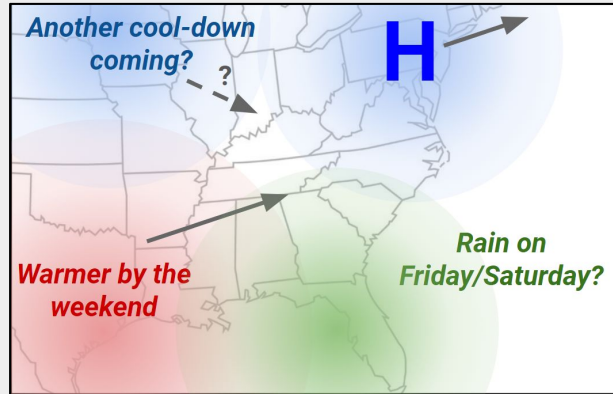
Forecast Confidence



Models are in fairly good agreement about rainfall amounts on Sunday, but slightly differ in the timing of the frontal passage.

Week 2:

January 13 to 19, 2022



Up-and-Down Temperatures



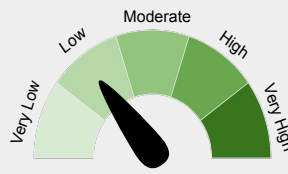
As high pressure over the eastern US moves away, expect seasonable temperatures by next weekend. Some forecasts hint at a return of cooler weather by Monday, Jan. 17, but that cool-down would be short-lived before we warm up again later in the week.

Moisture Closes In?



Warmer air arriving from the southwest could also bring moisture from the Gulf and a chance of rain next Friday and Saturday. However, rain totals could be lower if this moisture remains mostly to our south, as depicted by some current model forecasts.

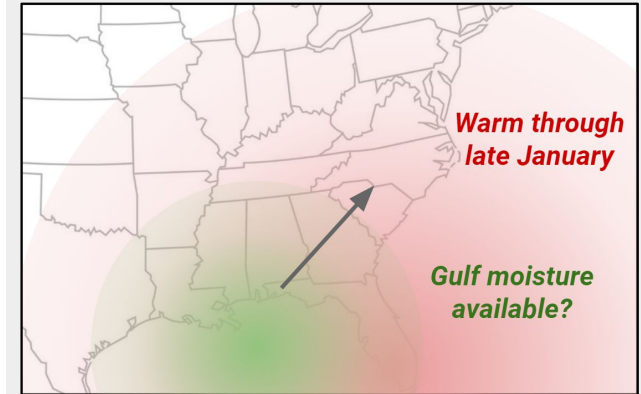
Forecast Confidence



Predicting a pattern change more than a week in advance always carries uncertainty, which should clear up in coming days.

Weeks 3-4:

Jan. 20 to Feb. 2, 2022



Mostly Warm to End the Month



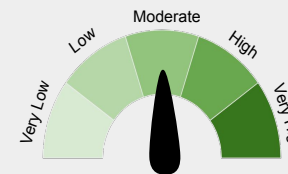
Late January should see a more typical La Niña pattern return, with generally warmer weather in the Southeast US. Cool days are still possible, though, especially in our climatological coldest time of year. Normal highs range from the upper 40s to mid 50s.

Likely Dry, But Precip. Still Possible



Although La Niña favors drier weather for NC since the storm track tends to shift to our north, model forecasts and our recent systems show we still have a chance at tapping into Gulf moisture and seeing some precipitation in the final weeks of the month.

Forecast Confidence



Model forecasts are in good agreement about a warmer pattern, but our precipitation possibilities are literally up in the air.