

North Carolina Drought Update

For the assessment period ending January 31, 2023

Statewide Condition Summary

This Week's Drought Monitor of North Carolina Map

From the US Drought Monitor, authored by Rocky Bilotta (NOAA/NESDIS/NCEI) with input from the North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council (ncdrought.org)

What's Changed? Another week with heavier rainfall across eastern NC brought improvements to Abnormally Dry (D0) and Moderate Drought (D1) conditions.

What's New? Two separate soaking rain events last Wednesday and this Monday totalled 2 to 3 inches across parts of northeastern NC, and continued the recent pattern of wetter weather for the Coastal Plain. While some seasonal deficits remain, especially in the Wilmington area, we're trending in the right direction.

How Wet Was January? Most of the state was up to 2 inches above their normal January precipitation, including Elizabeth City (+0.72") and Lumberton (+1.64").

Statewide Coverage By Category

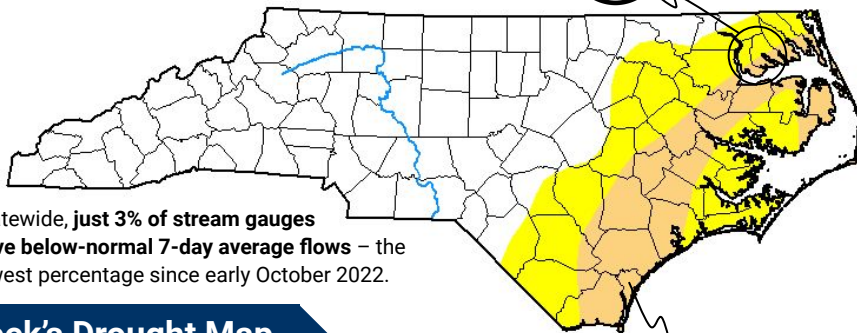
Category	Coverage This Week	Change Since Last Week
D0: Abnormally Dry	21.63%	+4.26%
D1: Moderate Drought	14.97%	-10.82%
D2: Severe Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D3: Extreme Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D4: Exceptional Drought	0.00%	0.00%



Major reservoirs remain in good shape, and recent rains will make it easier for them to reach their rising target levels this spring.



CoCoRaHS observers in the northeast report standing water in ditches and lawns for the first time this winter.

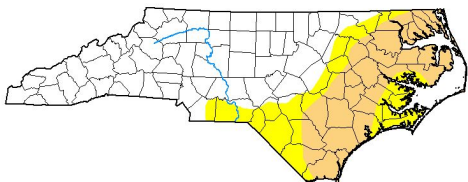


Statewide, just 3% of stream gauges have below-normal 7-day average flows – the lowest percentage since early October 2022.



Wilmington was one of the driest areas in the past week, with just 0.48 inches total from Jan. 24th to 31st.

Last Week's Drought Map



This infographic was created by

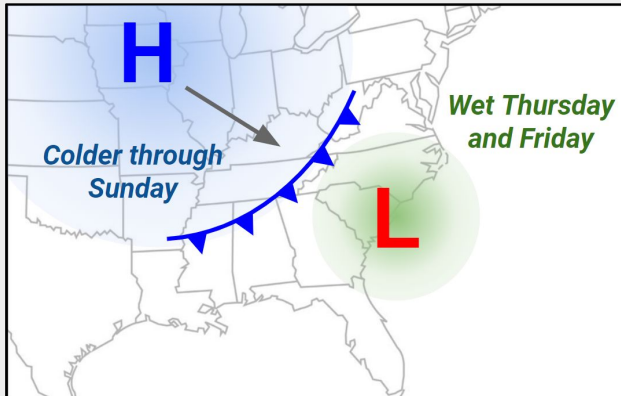


NORTH CAROLINA
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Short-Range Outlook for North Carolina

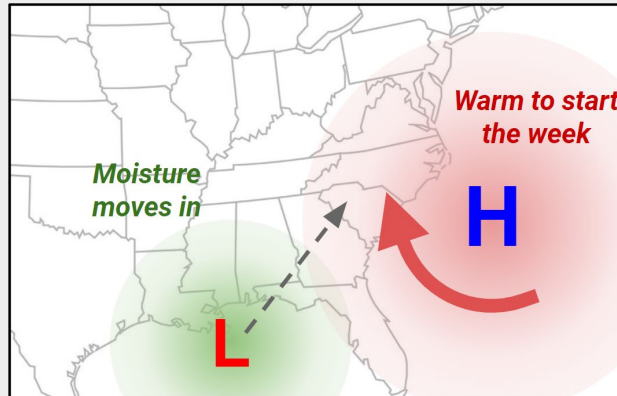
Week 1:

February 2 to 8, 2023



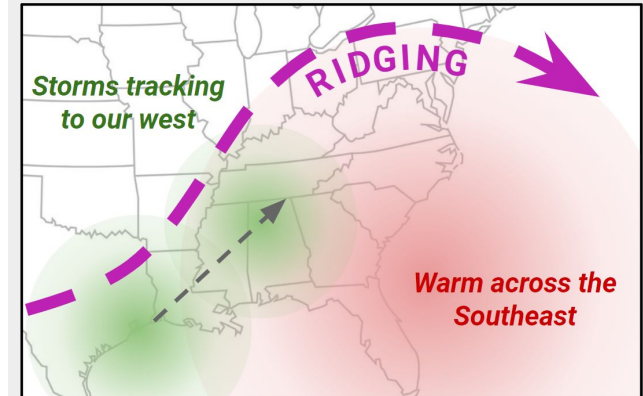
Week 2:

February 9 to 15, 2023



Weeks 3-4:

Feb. 16 to Mar. 1, 2023



Chilly This Weekend



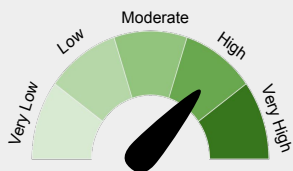
Under cloudy skies, temperatures will only reach the 40s today and Friday. A cold front moving through on Friday will drop us into the 10s and 20s by Saturday morning, with highs near 40°F. We should finally warm back above normal by Monday afternoon.

A Rainy Start



Offshore low pressure will fuel ongoing rainfall today through Friday morning. Storm totals could reach up to an inch across the southern Coastal Plain. Light rain is also possible on Sunday, mainly in our far eastern counties as another low develops offshore.

Forecast Confidence



Current forecasts show good agreement about the rainfall amounts today and Friday, while Sunday has been trending drier.

A Warm Start to the Week



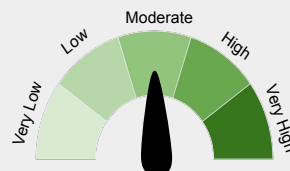
Warmer temperatures are likely to linger as high pressure sets up offshore by next Friday. After next weekend, uncertainty is higher, with some model forecasts keeping us in a warm pattern while others drop our temperatures to or slightly below normal.

Remaining Wet?



With southwesterly flow around the high pressure system bringing in moisture off the Gulf of Mexico, the pattern should support precipitation – although there no signs of anything frozen at the moment. Still, expect at least one good rain chance this week.

Forecast Confidence



Models are in agreement about the large-scale pattern to start the week, but some back off on the warmth later in the week.

Warm Weather Likely



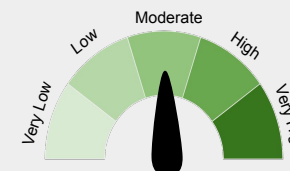
Most longer-range model forecasts have been consistently showing a warm pattern emerging by mid-February, with persistent jet stream ridging over the Southeast US. Our normal high temperatures in late February range from the upper 50s to low 60s.

Wet in the West?



With the expected jet stream configuration, storms and moisture tracking out of the Gulf of Mexico would likely remain to our west, but they could still reach the Mountains. That would be a similar pattern to what we had late last fall and early this winter.

Forecast Confidence



Confidence is high for a warm end to February. Greater uncertainty surrounds the potential precipitation pattern.