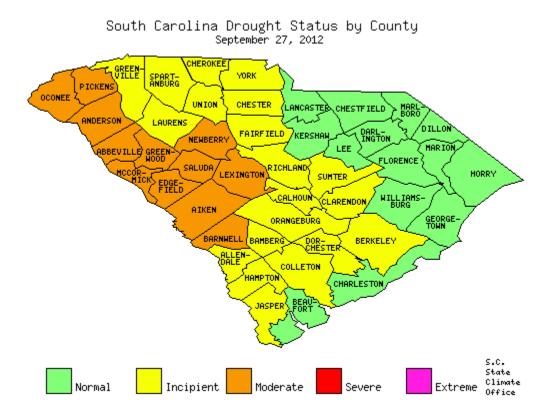
South Carolina Current Drought Status

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SC Drought Committee lowers status for 21 counties



Discussion:

For the first time since Feb. 2011, portions of South Carolina are drought free based on the SC Drought Response Committee's official declaration issued Sept. 27, 2012. The committee met via conference call and downgraded 14 counties to no drought. Elsewhere in the state the committee downgraded Greenville and Laurens to incipient and Abbeville, McCormick, Edgefield, Aiken and Barnwell to moderate. Oconee, Pickens, Anderson, Greenwood, Lexington, Newberry, Saluda were maintained at moderate. Spartanburg, Cherokee, Union, York, Chester, Fairfield, Richland, Sumter, Calhoun, Clarendon, Orangeburg, Berkeley, Orangeburg, Dorchester, Bamberg, Colleton, Allendale, Hampton, and Jasper were maintained at incipient.

According to Hope Mizzell, SC State Climatologist, there was consensus among all the drought indicators that the drought status improved for many counties. Based on data from the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHaS), 60-day rainfall totals in some of the counties removed from drought exceeded 16 inches, which is over 150% of

normal for the period (Huger 5.5 SE: 20.8", Kingstree 7.9 NW: 17.19", Bluffton 2.3 NNE: 17.78", Mt. Pleasant 4.1 NE: 16.67").

The committee decided to maintain the drought status for 25 counties since there was not overwhelming support from the indicators that conditions in those counties have significantly improved. The committee's decision also took into consideration information provided by the National Weather Service and State Climatology Office that we are entering the time of year (Oct. - Nov.) which is climatologically the driest.

Marion Rizer, Colleton County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner, stated, "The summer rainfall for my area was enough to produce the best corn crop I've ever harvested since I started farming in 1975. If the drought meeting had been held a few weeks ago I would have voted to remove the drought for my area, but several weeks have passed with no rain and all that water is gone."

George Galleher, Duke Energy Hydro Fleet Operations engineer, reported that, "Dry conditions in the Catawba-Wateree, Broad River Basin and Keowee-Toxaway are likely to persist throughout the fall and into the winter. Without significant rainfall the Keowee-Toxaway Lake levels (particularly Lake Jocassee) are not expected to increase during the fall of 2012."

According to Darryl Jones, SC Forestry Commission, there was near a record low for fires around the state in the last two months, "We only had 18 fires during August and September is also low." The concern now is drying conditions, "Everything is currently green, but fall is typically drier and so we do expect to have increased fire activity in the months ahead."

Drought Response Committee Chairman Ken Rentiers stated, "The Committee will continue to monitor the situation closely and reconvene in early December or sooner as needed."

DNR protects and manages South Carolina's natural resources by making wise and balanced decisions for the benefit of the state's natural resources and its people. Find out more about DNR at the DNR Web site.

Drought Status: 09-27-2012

County	Status
Abbeville	Moderate
Aiken	Moderate
Allendale	Incipient
Anderson	Moderate
Bamberg	Incipient
Barnwell	Moderate
Beaufort	Normal
Berkeley	Incipient
Calhoun	Incipient
Charleston	Normal
Cherokee	Incipient
Chester	Incipient
Chesterfield	Normal
Clarendon	Incipient
Colleton	Incipient
Darlington	Normal
Dillon	Normal
Dorchester	Incipient
Edgefield	Moderate
Fairfield	Incipient
Florence	Normal
Georgetown	Normal
Greenville	Incipient
Greenwood	Moderate
Hampton	Incipient
Horry	Normal
Jasper	Incipient
Kershaw	Normal
Lancaster	Normal
Laurens	Incipient
Lee	Normal
Lexington	Moderate
Marion	Normal

County	Status
Marlboro	Normal
McCormick	Moderate
Newberry	Moderate
Oconee	Moderate
Orangeburg	Incipient
Pickens	Moderate
Richland	Incipient
Saluda	Moderate
Spartanburg	Incipient
Sumter	Incipient
Union	Incipient
Williamsburg	Normal
York	Incipient