

South Carolina Current Drought Status

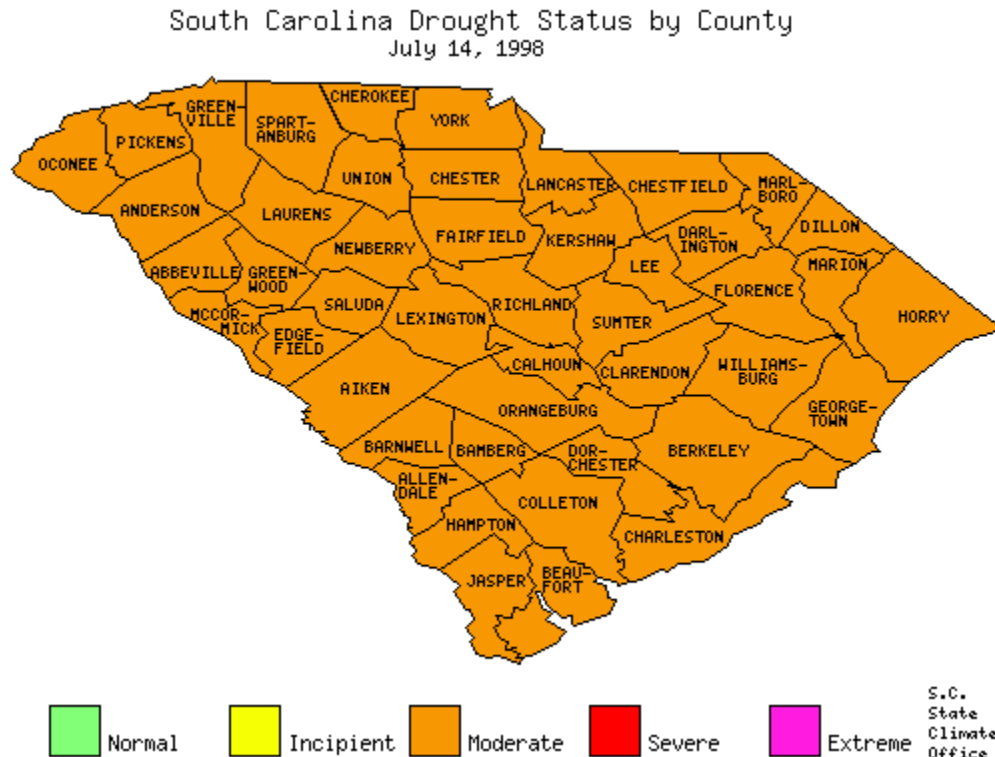
State Climate Office

NEWS RELEASE

DNR News 803-667-0696

July 14, 1998

MODERATE DROUGHT DECLARED FOR ALL COUNTIES IN SOUTH CAROLINA



For previously issued drought statements [see the archived status reports](#).

[Table of all counties and drought status.](#)

[Drought Response Committee Meeting Sign-In sheet.](#)

After meeting with the S.C. Drought Response Committee today in Columbia, the S.C. Department of Natural Resources has issued a moderate drought declaration for all counties in South Carolina. A moderate drought declaration, which is the second of four drought levels specified in the Drought Response Act of 1985, means that drought conditions have continued to deteriorate and are expected to persist. Therefore, the Department's Land, Water & Conservation Division will increase its monitoring and assessment of drought-related variables

such as temperature, precipitation, runoff, streamflow, ground-water levels, reservoir levels, soil moisture, and public water supplies. The State Drought Response Committee is comprised of representatives from five state agencies: Department of Agriculture, Department of Health & Environmental Control, Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Commission, and Emergency Preparedness Division.

The Crop Moisture Index, which measures short-term soil moisture needed for crop growth, indicates that extremely dry conditions exist across the state and are severely impacting growers and grazing livestock throughout South Carolina. Freddy Vang, Deputy Director of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources' Land, Water and Conservation Division, told the committee that the Department is working with members of the agricultural community both here and in Washington to determine what measures can be taken to alleviate these "difficult times for the farmers in our state." "We are keenly aware of the severity of the situation with regard to the agricultural community," said Vang. "If there is any action that we can take to assist those whose livelihood depends on agricultural and forestry interests, then we are prepared to act immediately."

The National Weather Service forecast calls for a coastal storm that will bring possibly one inch of rain from Beaufort to Myrtle Beach with lesser amounts inland to Columbia over the next 48-72 hours. According to State Climatologist Mike Helfert, "Such a rainfall event will not be sufficient to end the current drought situation where some areas in the state have received less than 40% of normal rainfall since June 1, 1998 (see enclosed map). Although the long-term forecast for the remainder of July does not indicate any substantial relief, it does call for above normal rainfall in August and September."

A survey of water suppliers across the state conducted by the Department indicates that most reserves are adequate to meet the increased demand. According to Vang, "Excess rainfall in the late winter and spring of this year has contributed to ample storage in large reservoirs and aquifers. However, those water suppliers who depend on ground-water wells in the Piedmont, and small reservoirs or unregulated streams may experience water shortages in the near future," said Vang. The Drought Response Committee encourages local water suppliers to review drought response ordinances and plans for their area. The Department's Drought Information Center has been activated in Columbia, and the public is asked to contact the Center at 803-737- 0800 if they need additional information, or if other problems arise.

Larry Barr, Fire Management Staff Forester from the South Carolina Forestry Commission, told the Committee today that "South Carolina is at a high level of fire danger. The current drought situation has contributed significantly to the increase in available fuels across the state." Barr also said that since July 1, the number of fires has increased significantly.

DNR will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as needed. Integrated drought information is available on the DNR's State Climatology Office Internet Web Site:
http://www.dnr.sc.gov/climate/sco/drought_info.html

Contact Dr. Mizzell in Columbia at (803) 734-9568 or e-mail at mizzellh@dnr.sc.gov for more information.

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: 07-14-1998

County	Status
Abbeville	Moderate
Aiken	Moderate
Allendale	Moderate
Anderson	Moderate
Bamberg	Moderate
Barnwell	Moderate
Beaufort	Moderate
Berkeley	Moderate
Calhoun	Moderate
Charleston	Moderate
Cherokee	Moderate
Chester	Moderate
Chesterfield	Moderate
Clarendon	Moderate
Colleton	Moderate
Darlington	Moderate
Dillon	Moderate
Dorchester	Moderate
Edgefield	Moderate
Fairfield	Moderate

County	Status
Florence	Moderate
Georgetown	Moderate
Greenville	Moderate
Greenwood	Moderate
Hampton	Moderate
Horry	Moderate
Jasper	Moderate
Kershaw	Moderate
Lancaster	Moderate
Laurens	Moderate
Lee	Moderate
Lexington	Moderate
Marion	Moderate
Marlboro	Moderate
McCormick	Moderate
Newberry	Moderate
Oconee	Moderate
Orangeburg	Moderate
Pickens	Moderate
Richland	Moderate
Saluda	Moderate
Spartanburg	Moderate
Sumter	Moderate

County	Status
Union	Moderate
Williamsburg	Moderate
York	Moderate