

# South Carolina Current Drought Status

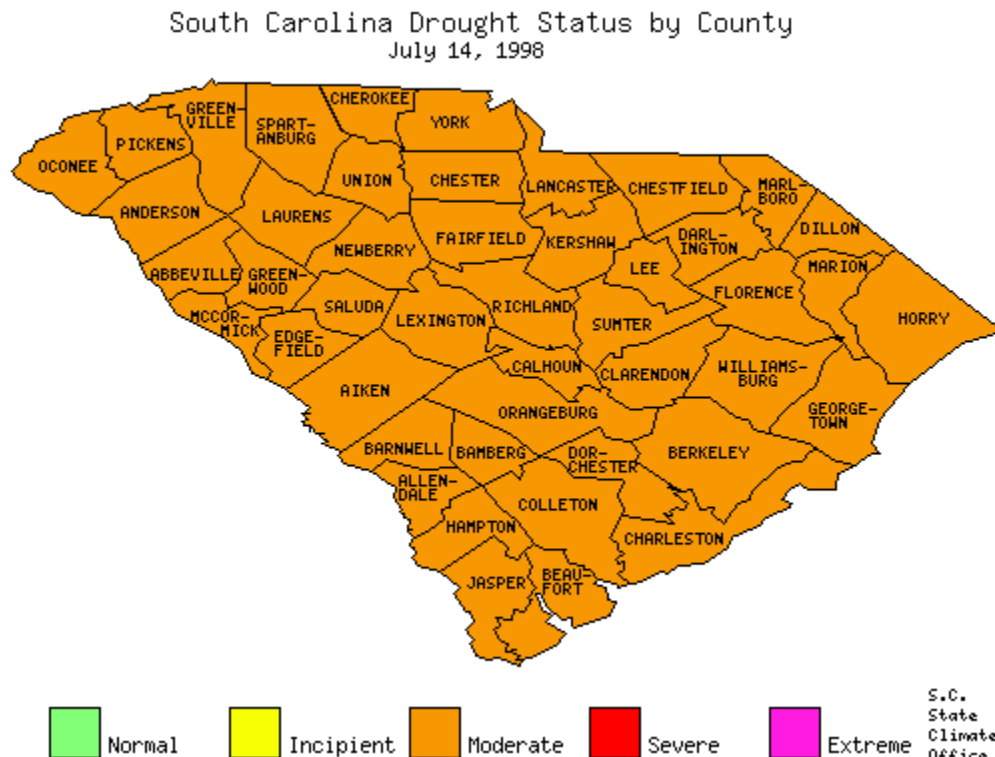
State Climate Office

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](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](mailto: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 Table

Current Drought Status by County				
Normal	Incipient	Moderate	Severe	Extreme
County Status	County Status	County Status	County Status	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
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	UNION Moderate	WILLIAMSBURG Moderate
YORK Moderate				