



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Abnormally dry conditions return to part of North Carolina

RALEIGH – A lack of rainfall has brought back abnormally dry conditions to parts of central and southeastern North Carolina – the first time since Dec. 1 that any part of the Tar Heel State has experienced dry conditions.

Thursday's federal drought map shows that 26 counties in the Sandhills, the Wilmington area and parts of the Triangle and Triad are abnormally dry, due to rainfall deficits that have contributed to below average streamflows and groundwater levels in the region. Normal conditions prevail in the rest of the state, according to the map at the state's drought website, www.ncdrought.org.

Abnormally dry is not a drought category. Rather, it indicates that if rainfall deficits continue an area could return to drought.

Drought and dry conditions are based on the impacts a lack of rainfall is having on streams, groundwater, lakes, reservoirs, wildfire activity and crops.

The state's Drought Management Advisory Council, a group of scientists, water resources experts, foresters and others, meet once a week, as needed, to assess current conditions and recommend drought or dry conditions for North Carolina. The council sends its recommendation to officials with the National Drought Monitor, who make the final determination about which areas are experiencing drought, dry or normal conditions. The monitor's official drought map for the United States is released Thursday morning.

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