



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Release: Immediate
Date: Dec. 6, 2012

Contact: Sarah M. Young
Phone: 919-707-9033

Drought, dry conditions blanket most of North Carolina

RALEIGH – Lack of adequate rainfall has thrust 65 counties into a moderate drought and left another 16 counties abnormally dry for this time of year.

“Although we still haven’t had any reports of public water supplies being affected, we are seeing impacts to streams, groundwater levels and inflows to reservoirs,” said Tom Reeder, director of the N.C. Division of Water Resources.

State officials say people should follow water restrictions enacted by their local water systems. For each system’s water conservation status, go to www.ncwater.org/Drought_Monitoring/reporting/displaystate.php. For tips and ways to save water, go to www.savewaternc.org.

Today’s drought map, which can be found at www.ncdrought.org, shows the drought spreading over central and western North Carolina. Moderate drought now covers 65 counties, compared to 54 counties last week. Moderate drought is the least severe of the four drought categories. Another 16 counties this week are abnormally dry, which means they are not experiencing drought but could be if dry conditions persist.

Drought categories are based on stream flows, groundwater levels, the amount of water stored in reservoirs, soil moisture, the time of year and other relevant factors for assessing the extent and severity of drought conditions.

Fall is usually one of the driest seasons, and the historical drought map supports that fact. North Carolina has experienced some form of drought during the fall in seven of the past 10 years.

“November was the seventh driest on record in terms of statewide average rainfall since 1895,” said Ryan Boyles state climatologist for the N.C. State Climate Office and a member of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council. “Meteorologists do not have a clear picture of the winter forecast this year. If the state does not receive adequate rainfall in the winter, it could create bigger problems next year if spring and summer months are also dry.”

However, Boyles notes that winter is historically the time of year when North Carolina’s water supplies are recharged because water usage decreases. To see the archived drought maps, go to www.ncdrought.org/archive/.

###

Jamie Kritzer, Public Information Officer
Phone: (919) 707-8602
<http://www.facebook.com/ncdenr>
1601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1601
[RSS](#)

Jamie.Kritzer@ncdenr.gov
Facebook:

RSS feed: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/opa/news-releases-rss>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/NCDENR>