



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Drought conditions return to North Carolina for first time since May

RALEIGH – Drought has returned to North Carolina for the first time in more than a month, due to below normal rainfall and record-breaking temperatures.

Conditions in 17 counties, including Mecklenburg and Wake, grew worse this week as moderate drought returned to parts of central and southwestern North Carolina.

It's the first time since May 29 that any counties have experienced moderate drought, which is the least serious of the four drought categories.

“We’re seeing impacts to streamflows, inflows into reservoirs and low groundwater levels, but we are not seeing widespread impacts to public water supplies,” said Donna Jackson, chairwoman of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council. “At this point, we want people to be prepared to take the appropriate actions to save water should conditions worsen during the coming months.”

A technical advisory group of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council in early June announced that the state was drought-free for the first time in almost a year. Thursday’s federal drought map shows that in addition to the 17 counties experiencing a moderate drought, 35 others are abnormally dry because drought conditions could return without adequate rainfall. The drought map can be seen at www.ncdrought.org.

The drought categories from least-to-most serious are moderate, severe, extreme and exceptional.

The introduction of moderate drought conditions in the 17 North Carolina counties is based on the lack of adequate rainfall, which contributes to below normal streamflows, low flows into reservoirs and below normal groundwater levels.

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