



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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No drought or dry conditions in North Carolina for the first time in three years

RALEIGH – North Carolina is not experiencing drought or abnormally dry conditions for the first time in three years, thanks to recent rainfall from Tropical Storm Andrea and several other storm systems.

The rainfall from Tropical Storm Andrea helped eliminate lingering abnormally dry conditions in eastern North Carolina. The last time the U.S. Drought Monitor depicted no drought or abnormally dry conditions in North Carolina was during the week of April 20, 2010.

These conditions are reflected on the federal drought map for North Carolina, which is released every Thursday. To see the most recent drought map, go to www.ncdrought.org.

“Recent rains have brought relief to the lingering dry conditions in eastern North Carolina,” said Bob Stea, chairman of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council. “Streams, groundwater and soil moisture levels have greatly improved and are near longer-term averages.”

While dry conditions are no longer present, drought officials say they cannot forecast what the summer months will bring.

“North Carolina’s rainfall becomes more difficult to forecast, as well as less reliable, during the summer months,” said Michael Moneypenny, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Raleigh and a member of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council. “Weather systems are typically weaker and the bulk of our rainfall comes from scattered shower and thunderstorm activity that pops up during the heat of the day.”

Ryan Boyles, director of the State Climate Office at N.C. State University and a member of the N.C. Drought Management Advisory Council, added: “Winter climate conditions can be predicted several months in advance due to factors such as La Niña. However, summer seasonal conditions are not currently predictable, and the upcoming summer is just as likely to be dry as wet.”

With little guidance to rely upon, conditions will have to be monitored closely. Conditions can worsen quickly because North Carolina’s hot summer months bring about higher rates of evaporation.

For tips and ways to save water, go to www.savewaternc.org.

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