

# North Carolina Drought Update

Created By:

North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council

NORTH CAROLINA CLIMATE OFFICE

NC STATE

[www.ncdrought.org](http://www.ncdrought.org)

[climate.ncsu.edu](http://climate.ncsu.edu) @NCSCO

For the assessment period ending **Dec. 31, 2024**  
 From the US Drought Monitor, with input from the NC DMAC

## The Main Takeaway

Thanks to more than 2 inches of rainfall along the Blue Ridge last week, Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions have improved to near-normal for much of the Mountains.

## A Statewide Status Update

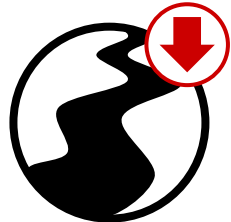
For much of the **Mountains**, last weekend's heavy rain ensured December was wetter than normal. Asheville and Hickory were about an inch above normal, with Marion almost 3 inches above normal for the month.

Across the **Piedmont**, weekly totals ranged from 0.5 to 1.5 inches, but the three-month rainfall deficits of 4 to 6 inches support an ongoing Abnormally Dry designation.

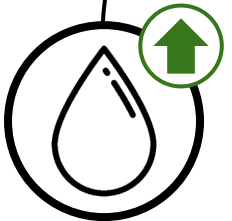
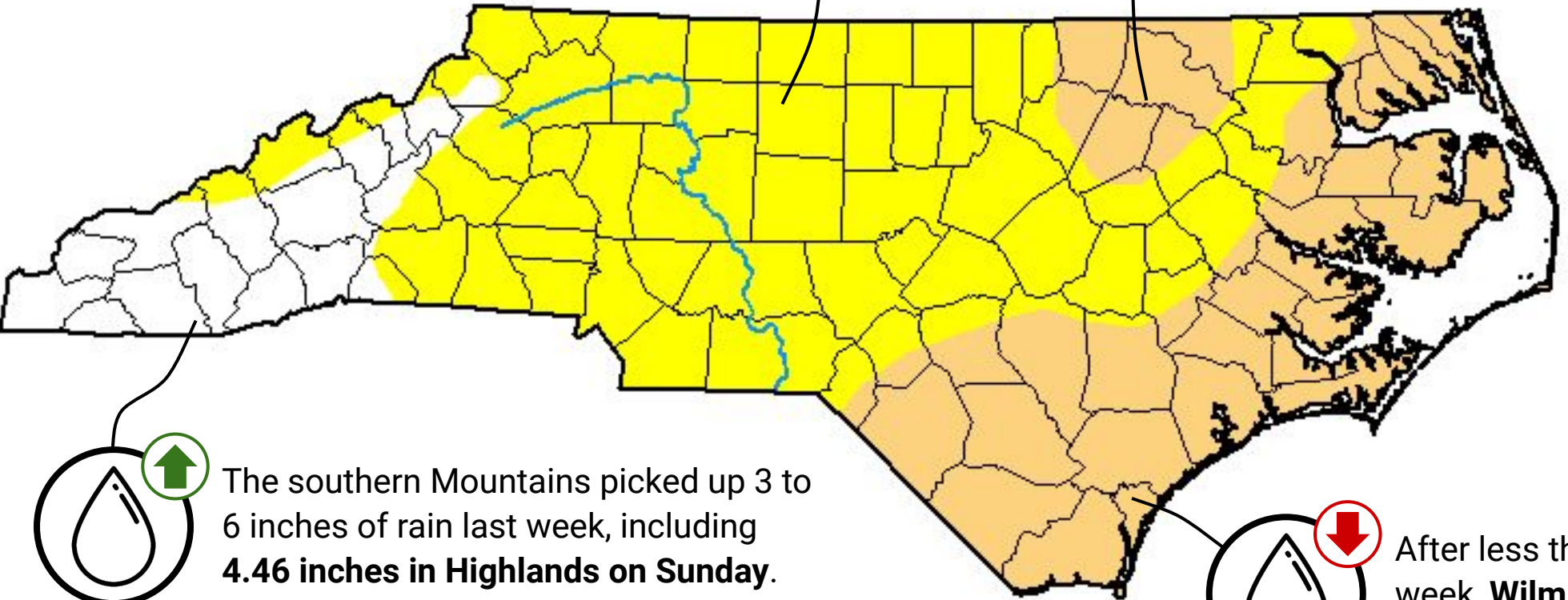
The **Coastal Plain** had even lower totals last week, and seasonal deficits are now in the 6 to 9-inch range. That means lingering drought that's approaching the Severe Drought (D2) level in spots, especially in the northeast.

For your local drought status, visit [www.ncdrought.org](http://www.ncdrought.org)

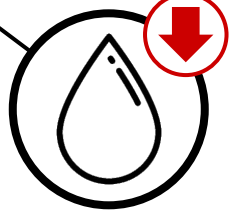
Although **soil moisture has surged** from the Triad westward, **Greensboro remains 1.93 inches below its normal precipitation** over the past two months.



The 7-day average streamflows on **Fishing Creek** are at the **historical 3rd percentile** after less than a quarter-inch of rain last week.

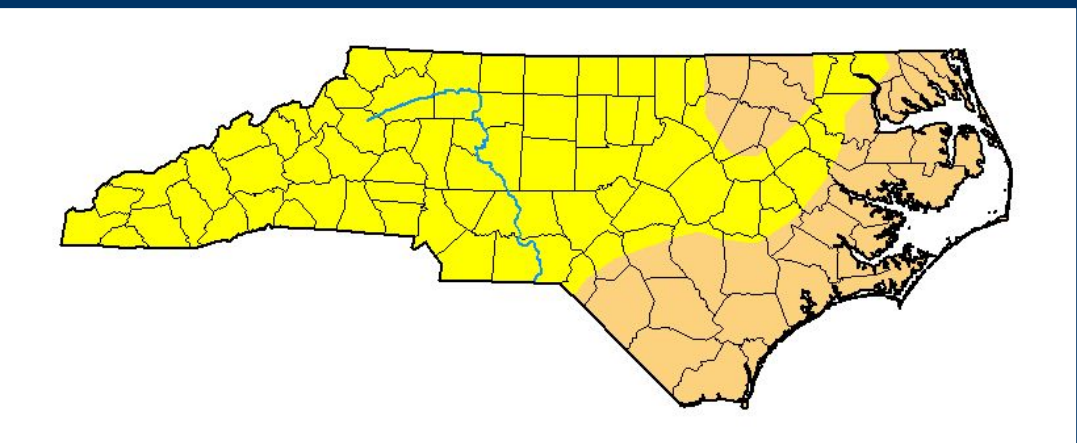


The southern Mountains picked up 3 to 6 inches of rain last week, including **4.46 inches in Highlands on Sunday**.



After less than an inch of rain last week, **Wilmington is 8.69 inches below normal in the past 3 months**.

## Last Week's Drought Status



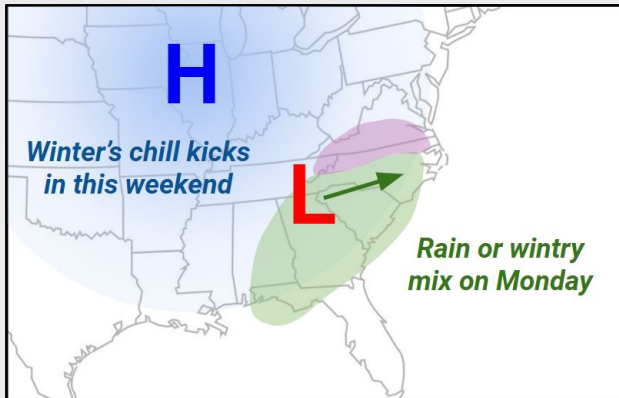
## Statewide Coverage by Category

Category	Current Coverage	Change Since Last Week
D0: Abnormally Dry	54.31%	-11.26%
D1: Moderate Drought	34.43%	0.00%
D2: Severe Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D3: Extreme Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D4: Exceptional Drought	0.00%	0.00%

# Short-Range Outlook for North Carolina

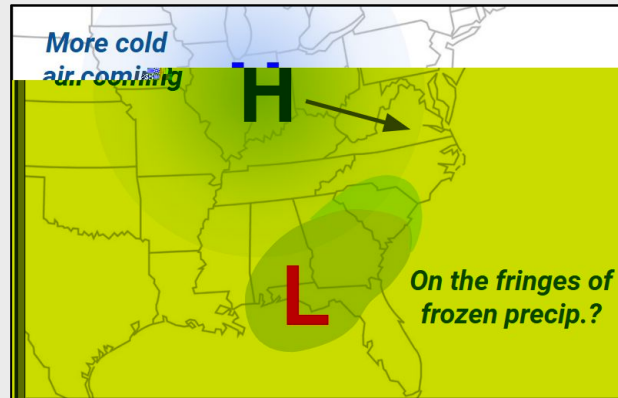
## Week 1:

January 2 to 8, 2025



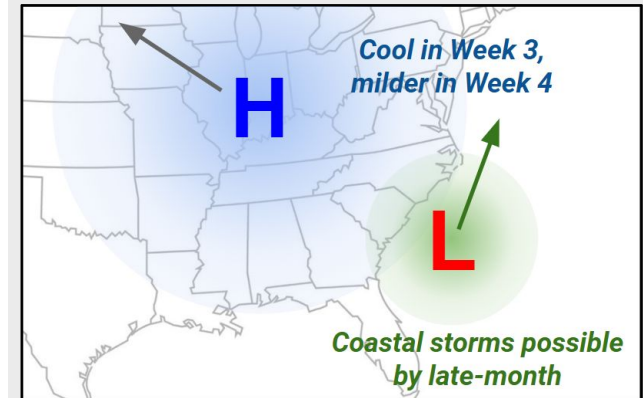
## Week 2:

January 9 to 15, 2025



## Weeks 3-4:

January 16 to 29, 2025

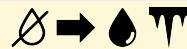


### A Cooldown Coming



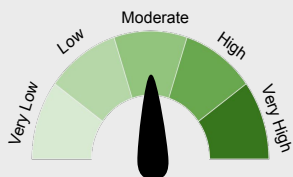
After a seasonable and sunny start to the year, we'll see increasing cloud cover on Friday as an Arctic cold front arrives. Much colder air will settle in beginning on Saturday, with high temperatures in the upper 30s or low 40s and nighttime lows in the 20s.

### Wet Weather on Monday



With a cold air mass still in place, a low pressure system will move in Sunday night and precipitation will last through Monday. Current forecasts show a mostly rain event statewide, but it could begin as snow flurries or freezing rain in the north and west.

### Forecast Confidence



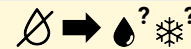
Frozen precipitation could be more widespread if the low pressure tracks farther south, but otherwise this looks like a rain event.

### Cold Weather Continues



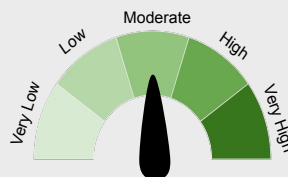
As the atmospheric gates to the Arctic remain open, at least one reinforcing shot of cold air is likely this week, continuing a cooler pattern through the middle of the month. Some forecasts show temperatures 10 to 15 degrees below normal for parts of the week.

### Precip. at Our Doorstep



While Arctic highs diving southward favor cold and dry weather, models also hint at storm systems developing along the Gulf coast this week. If their moisture reaches far enough north, we could see precipitation – and perhaps even something frozen.

### Forecast Confidence



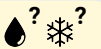
Strong model agreement about the colder pattern is offset by uncertainty about the precipitation chances in our region this week.

### One More Cold Week



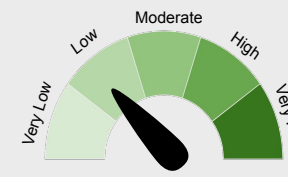
Current longer-range forecasts show colder weather, associated with jet stream troughing and surface high pressure, remaining across our region in Week 3 before relaxing in Week 4, which would bring our temperatures closer to normal by the end of January.

### A Wintry Storm Track?



Above-normal precipitation is generally expected along the eastern seaboard, especially as high pressure retreats in Week 4. Any coastal storms forming while cold air is still in place could give our best shot at snow during this wintry-looking month.

### Forecast Confidence



Some models haven't been as optimistic about our precipitation chances, showing a drier pattern through late January.