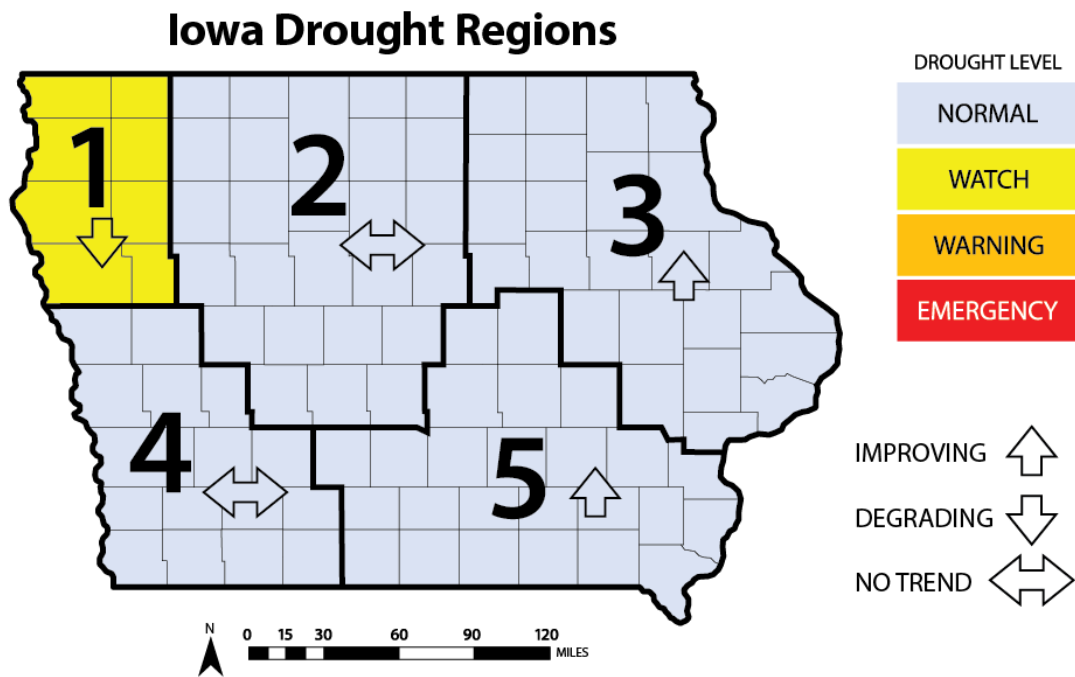


WATER SUMMARY UPDATE

Published Date July 9, 2026 | Issue 181

A snapshot of water resource trends for June 2026

IOWA DROUGHT CONDITIONS



CONDITION SUMMARY – DROUGHT EXPANDS IN THE NORTH AND WEST IN JUNE

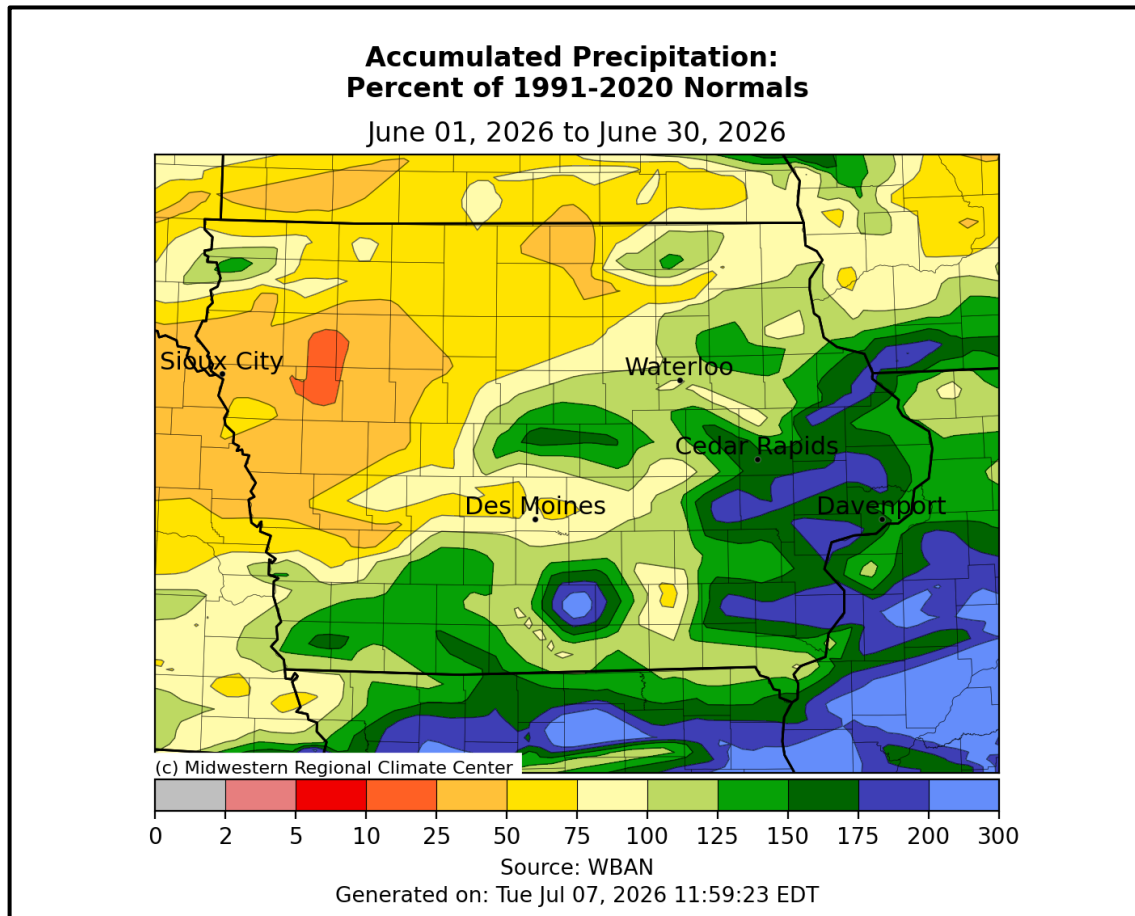
Precipitation trends diverged across Iowa in June, characterized by unusual dryness in the northwest and above-average moisture in the southeast. Consequently, approximately one-third of the state is now classified under D0 – Abnormally Dry conditions or worse. This dryness is primarily located across northern and western portions of the state, while conditions in eastern and central Iowa returned to normal. Over the course of the month, new areas of D1 – Moderate Drought emerged in northern and western Iowa, maintaining the active drought watch for northwest Iowa. The Climate Prediction Center’s (CPC) Seasonal Drought Outlook indicates that the existing drought in the northwest will likely persist through September. Whereas the newly developed area of drought in northern Iowa is expected to be removed. For July, the statewide outlook indicates equal chances of above-, below-, or near-normal temperatures and precipitation statewide.

June Precipitation and Temperature

Iowa’s statewide precipitation totaled 5.22 inches, or 0.04 inches below normal. The southeastern half of Iowa experienced wetter than average conditions, with locations in extreme eastern and south-central Iowa reporting above normal totals approaching five inches. In contrast, the state’s northwestern half experienced unseasonal dryness with widespread deficits in the 2.00-4.00-inch range. Monthly precipitation totals ranged from 0.92 inches in Cherokee to 14.75 inches at a Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow (CoCoRaHS) network gauge in Russell.

The statewide average temperature was 70.3 degrees, 0.40 degrees above normal. Statewide temperatures were generally near normal across Iowa, with scattered pockets of slightly warmer conditions. Little Sioux and Sioux City Airport reported the month's high temperature of 97 degrees on the 28th and 29th, respectively, on average 12 degrees above normal. Elkader reported the month's low temperature of 41 degrees on the 3rd, 11 degrees below normal.

June 2026 ties multiple years as the 64th warmest and ranks as the 96th driest June in 154 years of statewide records. A warmer June occurred just last year, while a drier one occurred in 2023.



Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI)

The SPI is an index based on accumulated precipitation for various time scales. SPI is the most commonly used indicator worldwide for detecting and characterizing meteorological droughts. The SPI indicator measures precipitation differences based on a comparison of observed total precipitation amounts over the period of interest with the long-term historical precipitation record for that period. Droughts are characterized by negative SPI values, while positive SPI values indicate wet periods. The range of SPI values is between -3 and +3, denoting “extremely dry” to “extremely wet”.

Ninety-day SPI values for all drought regions in June (comparing April, May, and June precipitation) range from -0.2 to 1.2, with one of the five values above zero. Drought Region 3 180-day SPI value had the largest increase, and all of the values are above zero.

Drought Region	3-month SPI	6-month SPI	IDP Classification ↑ = improving ↓ = degrading ↔ = no trend
1	-0.2	-0.2	Watch ↓
2	0.1	0.6	Normal ↔
3	1.2	1.6	Normal ↑
4	0.2	0.4	Normal ↔
5	1.1	1.1	Normal ↑

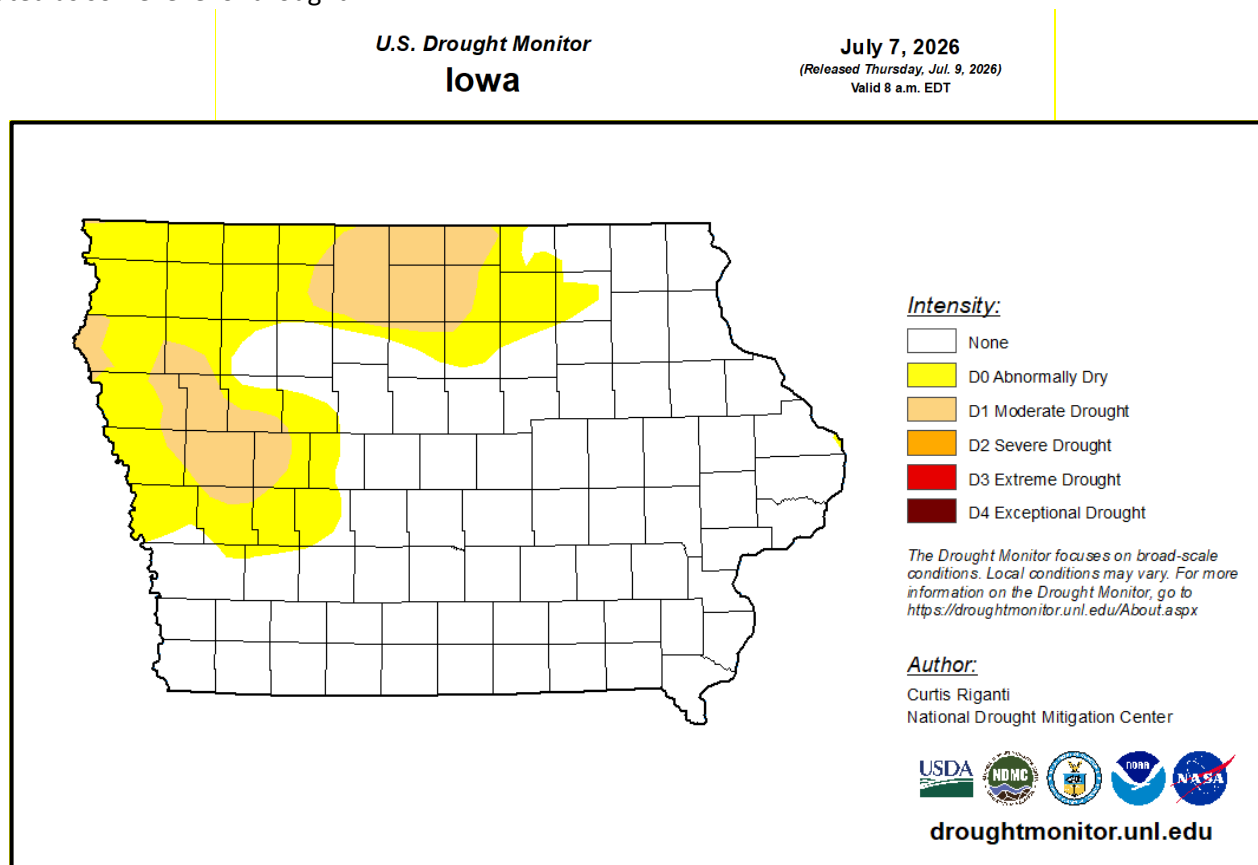
Standardized Streamflow Index (SSI) and Streamflow

SSI is a metric that compares current streamflow against the historical record to determine how far away the current streamflow value is from the river's historical mean observed on the same date. The 30-day SSI values in four of the five drought regions have increased, with Drought Region 5 having the largest 30-day SSI increase in June compared to May. Drought Region 1 is the only region with a decrease in 30-day SSI values relative to the previous month.

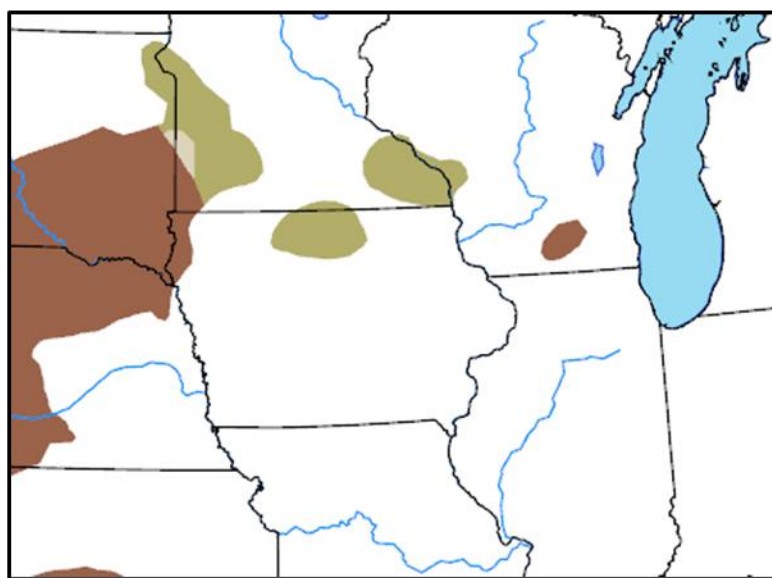
According to the US Geological Survey, in June, streamflow levels were largely classified as normal conditions across much of Iowa. Currently, no stream gages are classified as extremely below or much below. Rather, most gages across the state indicate normal, above-normal, much-above, and extremely-above flows. The Missouri River gage near Decatur and the East Fork 102 River near Bedford in southern Iowa are extremely below normal.

US DROUGHT MONITOR AND DROUGHT CONDITIONS

The latest US Drought Monitor (USDM), released on July 9, indicates a continued dry trend across northern and northwestern Iowa. Although central and eastern Iowa saw conditions improve, the northern and western regions remain categorized under D0 – Abnormally Dry status, with pockets of D1 – Moderate Drought either persisting or developing. Currently, just over 30 percent of the state is experiencing some level of dryness, and 10 percent is designated as some level of drought.

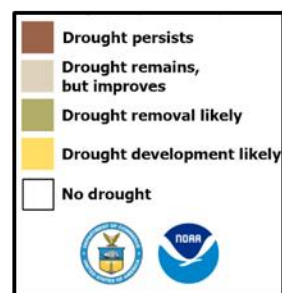


The Seasonal Drought Outlook, released by the CPC on June 30, 2026, and is valid through September 30, 2026, indicates that much of Iowa is projected to remain drought-free through September. However, drought conditions in the far northwest are expected to persist, whereas the northern portion of the state will likely see drought removal. The Seasonal Precipitation and Temperature Outlook offers no clear signal for precipitation across Iowa, and a chance for below normal temperatures for much of the state. The outlook for July has no clear signal for temperature or precipitation. The Seasonal Drought Outlook considers the impacts of recent precipitation as well as seasonal precipitation outlooks.



U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for July 1 - September 30, 2026
Released June 30, 2026



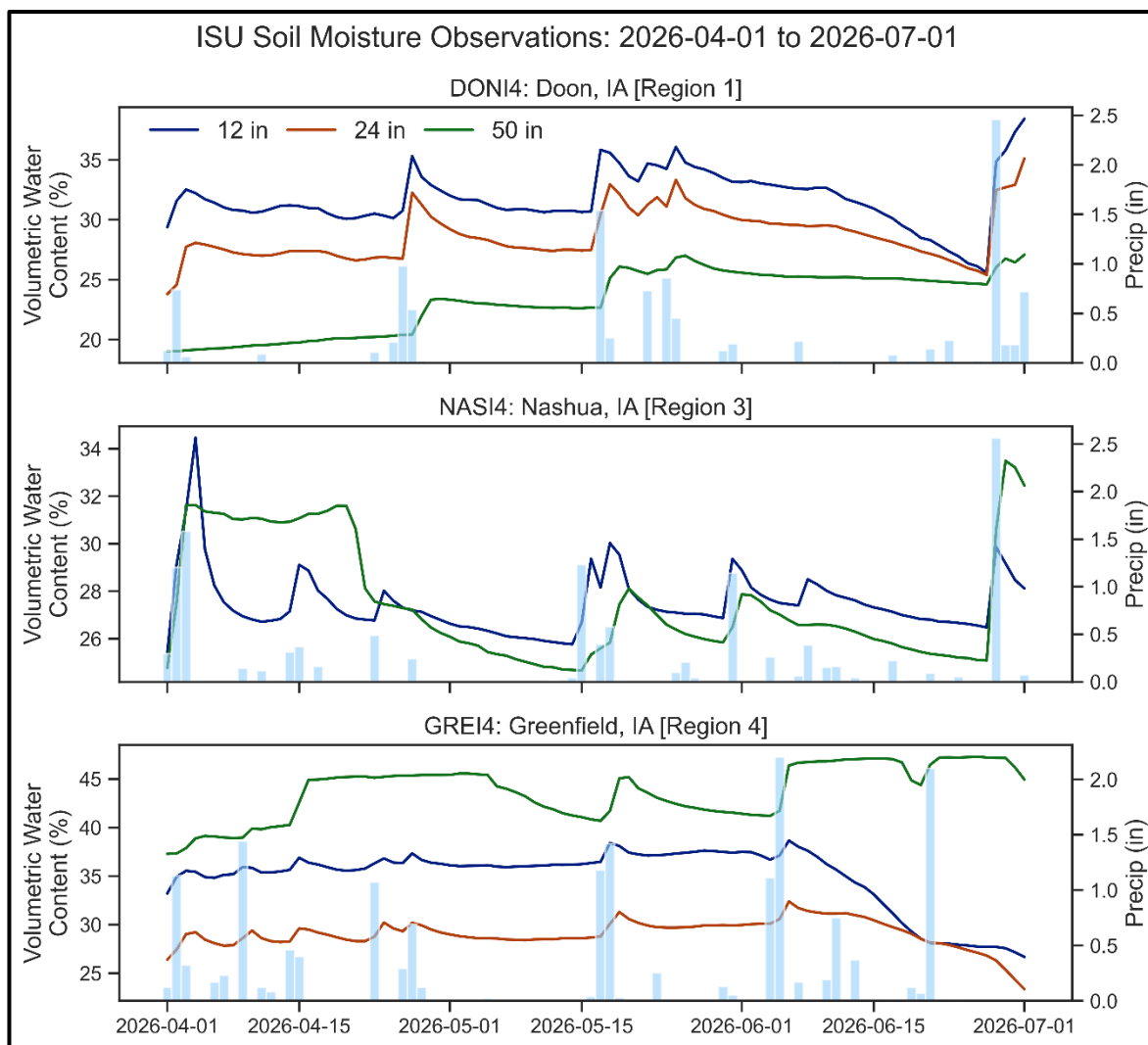
OTHER WATER RESOURCE INFORMATION

Border River Conditions

In their monthly update of Missouri River conditions dated July 6, 2026, the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) indicates that the volume of water stored in the system of reservoirs is 49.1 Million Acre-Feet (MAF), which is nearly the same volume as last month. The updated annual runoff forecast for the upper Missouri River Basin above Sioux City is 15.5 MAF or 60% of the average annual runoff. The mountain snowpack was below normal and peaked approximately a month earlier than normal. "Mountain snowpack peaked much earlier than normal this year and completely melted by the end of June," said John Remus, chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Basin Water Management Division. "June runoff was below-normal to well-below-normal in every reach due to below average precipitation, dry basin conditions and below average mountain snowpack. Dry conditions are expected to continue in July."

June Soil Moisture

Soil moisture in the surface has decreased in areas of northwestern and north central Iowa, with saturation ranging between 15 and 35%. Soil moisture has increased in southern Iowa, with saturation around 60%. At lower layers of soil, saturation in northwestern Iowa ranges between 25 and 40%, whereas for southern and eastern Iowa ranges from 50 to 80%.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This edition of the Water Summary Update continues to reflect use of the 2023 Iowa Drought Plan (IDP), which was developed as a collaborative effort between the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. The IDP can be seen in its entirety on the DNR’s website: [The Iowa Drought Plan](#).

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