

**Drought News— Northeast wells continue drying up, drillers, bulk water haulers incredibly busy**  
**September 30, 2016**

**Northeast wells continue drying up, drillers, bulk water haulers incredibly busy**

Well drillers and bulk water haulers in southern Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont were working overtime, trying to keep up with requests for new or deepened wells and water deliveries. Many people considered their wells reliable for decades, but suddenly they are empty. Situation is similar in parts of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

**Water supply emergency for four Connecticut towns**

The Connecticut Department of Health issued a 30-day public water supply emergency for Greenwich, Stamford, Darien and New Canaan because water demand decreased little, despite earlier calls for water conservation.

**New Hampshire water conservation**

More than two dozen municipalities or water systems in New Hampshire, mainly in the southeastern third, have banned outdoor lawn watering to extend water supplies until the drought ends. Problems with water supplies have occurred as far north as Carroll County and as far west as Keene.

**Massachusetts cranberry growers anxious**

A hot, parched summer may leave some Massachusetts cranberry growers without enough water to flood bogs to collect the berries. Other factors working against cranberry growers were rising production costs, decreased crop values, changing consumer habits and rising competition from other cranberry growing regions.

**Georgia peanuts growers decide whether to dig**

An estimated one-third of Georgia's dryland peanuts produced very little and were still being ravaged by drought. Some of the peanuts were in such poor shape that it was not worth digging them.

**Pennsylvania trout nurseries losing trout**

Hot days, warm waters and too little fresh water have led to the deaths of many young trout at the Bald Eagle Sportsmen Club's co-op and many of the state's 160 trout nurseries. There will be fewer trout to be stocked and caught in the spring.

**Eastern Oregon reservoir at 4 percent of capacity**

The Phillips Reservoir in Baker County did not fill during the 2015-16 winter, allowing only a partial water delivery rather than a full allotment during the 2016 growing season. On Sept. 28, the reservoir held 2,780 acre-feet of water, amounting to about 4 percent of the reservoir's 73,500 acre-feet capacity. With drought persisting for four years in the region, it could take two winters of above-normal snowfall to refill the reservoir.

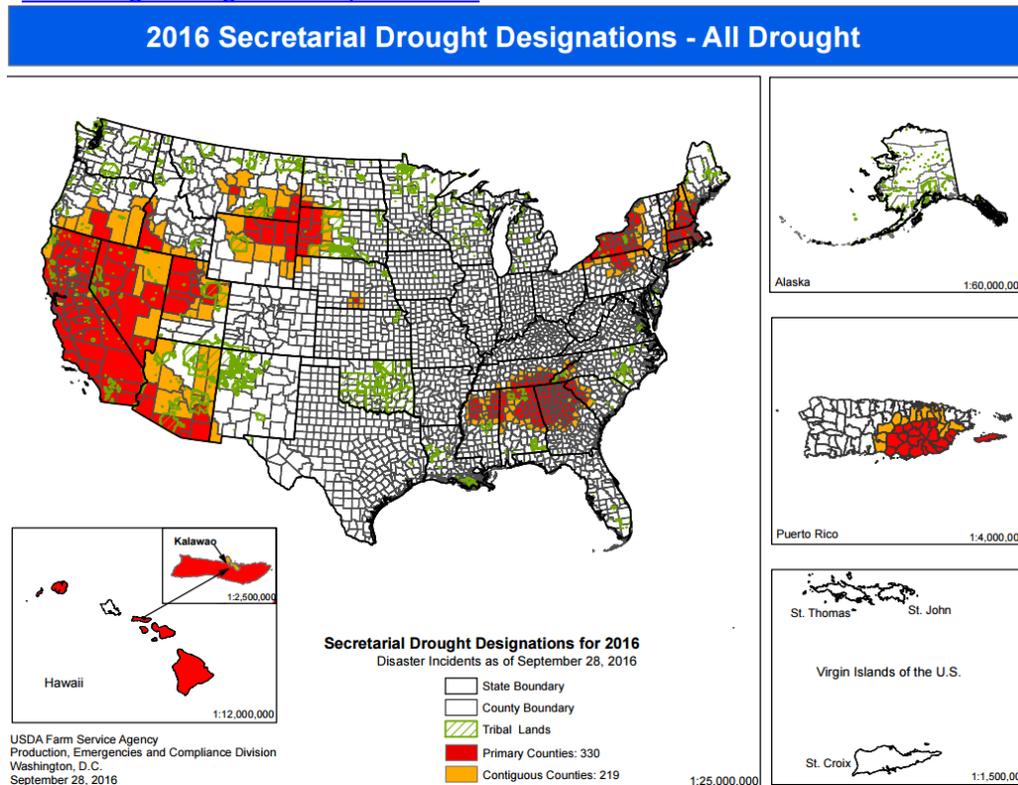
**Stage one drought advisory in Birmingham, Alabama**

Birmingham Water Works issued a stage one drought advisory and urged residents to use water wisely due to the projected shortfall in precipitation for the next month. With the recent heat, water use in Birmingham has been higher than usual in September.

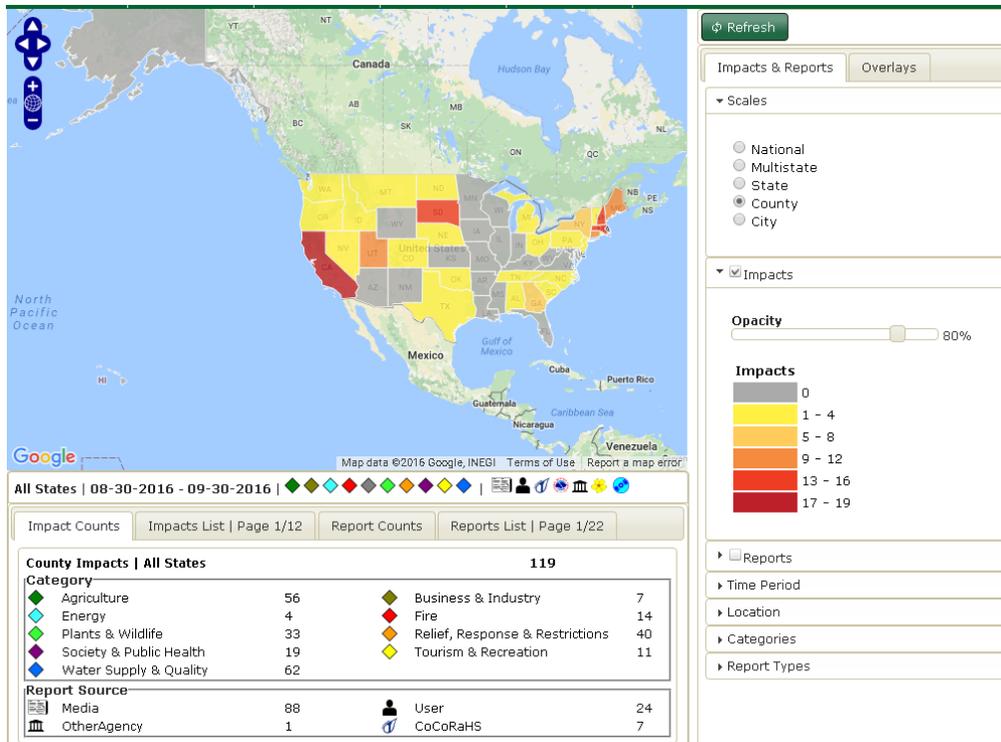
### Prolific well drilling in California's San Joaquin Valley

As drought persisted and water deliveries from the state and federal projects were slim, California farmers resorted to using groundwater to keep crops growing. In the San Joaquin Valley in 2015, farmers dug about 2,500 new wells, the most in one year and five times the annual average for the previous 30 years. From 2012 through 2015, San Joaquin Valley farmers dug more than 5,000 wells, more than were dug altogether during the previous 12 years.

### [2016 drought designations by the USDA](#)



The [Drought Impact Reporter](#) has 164 impacts total for the past 30 days.



## Agriculture

### [Cranberries at 200: Market Changes, Drought Create a Crisis](#)

Attleboro Sun Chronicle (Mass.)

Sept 27, **Massachusetts**. A hot, parched summer may leave some Massachusetts cranberry growers without enough water to flood bogs and collect the berries. Other factors working against cranberry growers were rising production costs, decreased crop values, changing consumer habits and rising competition from other cranberry growing regions.

### [Difficult decisions in store for Georgia dryland peanut producers](#)

Thomasville Times Enterprise (Ga.)

Sept 28, **Southern Georgia**. An estimated one-third of Georgia's dryland peanuts produced very little and were still being ravaged by drought. Some of the peanuts were in such poor shape that it was not worth digging them. The lesser cornstalk borer has been a huge problem, the damage from which can lead to *Aspergillus flavus* fungus, which often leads to carcinogenic aflatoxin growth. Underground white mold has caused more problems too.

### [Drought Has Hurt RI's Apple Crop, Along with Unfavorable Spring](#)

Portsmouth Patch (R.I.)

Sept 28, **Rhode Island**. The late spring freeze, combined with the summer drought, left Rhode Island apple growers with a small apple crop.

### [Mild drought pushes back pumpkin season, patches working to catch up](#)

WDTN-TV 2 News (Moraine, Ohio)

Sept 29, **Western Ohio**. Drought during the summer slowed pumpkin growth in western Ohio, so the crop was about two weeks behind schedule.

## Business & Industry

### [Well companies flooded with calls for new wells as drought persists](#)

New Hampshire Union Leader

Sept 25, **New Hampshire**. The owner of a well-drilling business in Amherst said they had a backlog of three to four weeks, with the phone ringing steadily in the last two weeks and most calls coming from Hillsborough and Rockingham counties. A well driller based in Hudson reported getting quite a few calls from the Kingston area. An Epping well driller was getting calls from Barrington, Brentwood, Durham, Epping, Madbury and Nottingham.

### **Fire**

#### [California wildfire destroys 8 homes, injures firefighter](#)

Yahoo! News

Sept 29, **California**. A wildfire in the Santa Cruz Mountains has blackened 6 ½ square miles and was 34 percent contained on Sept. 29.

#### [Fast-moving wildfire scorches 1,500 acres in 'extremely dry' Sonoma County](#)

Los Angeles Times

Sept 26, **Sonoma County, California**. The Sawmill Fire began on Sept. 25 and quickly charred 1,500 acres in Sonoma County, prompting mandatory evacuations for residents in the Geysers area. After five years of drought, vegetation was very dry, according to Cal Fire.

#### [Yellowstone: worst wildfire season in decades](#)

KGWN Cheyenne (Wyo.)

Sept 25, **Yellowstone Nation Park, Wyoming**. More of Yellowstone National Park burned this summer than in any year since 1988, with firefighting costs in the tens of millions of dollars.

### **Plants & Wildlife**

#### [Heat and drought impacting cooperative trout nurseries in Pennsylvania](#)

Outdoor News (Plymouth, Minn.)

Sept 26, **Pennsylvania**. Hot days, warm waters and too little fresh water have led to the deaths of many young trout at the Bald Eagle Sportsmen Club's co-op and many of the state's 160 trout nurseries. There will be fewer trout to be stocked and caught in the spring.

### **Society & Public Health**

#### [NH drought sufferers resort to water shaming on social media](#)

New Hampshire Union Leader (Manchester)

Sept 28, **Southern New Hampshire**. Many southern New Hampshire residents were airing their frustrations on Facebook about neighbors watering lawns amid the drought. Plaistow, Fremont and Kingston were a few of the communities with active social media users.

### **Tourism & Recreation**

#### [Blue skies equal a green summer for paddle rentals](#)

New London Day (Conn.)

Sept 25, **Connecticut**. Connecticut's hot, droughty summer was great for kayak, canoe and paddleboard rentals and also led to brisker sales than usual of outdoor gear. An outfitter in Mystic said that his season was twice as good as 2015 and that paddleboards were hugely popular. Business for an outfitter in North Cornwall was rather mixed, being very, very slow for

river trips, with drought dropping river levels, but lake rentals at state parks has been very, very busy, due to the dry weather.

## **Water Supply & Quality**

### [A Paltry Puddle](#)

Baker City Herald (Ore.)

Sept 28, **Eastern Oregon**. The Phillips Reservoir in Baker County did not fill during the 2015-16 winter, allowing only a partial water delivery of 1.25 acre-feet of water rather than a full allotment of 3.5 acre-feet, for irrigation during the 2016 growing season. One Baker Valley farmer had to leave 15 percent of his land fallow for lack of irrigation water.

On the morning of Sept. 28, the reservoir held 2,780 acre-feet of water, amounting to about 4 percent of the reservoir's 73,500 acre-feet capacity. With drought persisting for four years in the region, it could take two winters of above-normal snowfall to refill the reservoir.

### [As southern Maine's drought deepens, homeowners with shallow dug wells get desperate](#)

Portland Press Herald (Maine)

Sept 28, **Southern Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont**. Well drillers and bulk water haulers in southern Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont were working overtime, trying to keep up with requests for new or deepened wells and water deliveries. Many people considered their wells reliable for decades, but suddenly they are empty.

### [Birmingham Water Works issues drought advisory, asks customers to use water 'wisely'](#)

ABC3340 (Birmingham, Ala.)

Sept 27, **Birmingham, Alabama**. Birmingham Water Works issued a stage one drought advisory and urged residents to use water wisely due to the projected shortfall in precipitation for the next month. With the recent heat, water use in Birmingham has been higher in September than it usually is.

### [DEC Announces Water Conservation Measures to Maintain Salmon River Flows](#)

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Sept 30, **Central New York**. Water releases from the Salmon River Reservoir into the Salmon River were lowered to bolster salmon egg collection. The DEC also closed the Lower Fly Fishing Area on the Salmon River.

### [DPH Declares Water Supply Emergency For Four Towns In Fairfield County](#)

Hartford Courant (Conn.)

Sept 29, **Connecticut**. The Connecticut Department of Health issued a 30-day public water supply emergency for Greenwich, Stamford, Darien and New Canaan because water demand decreased little, despite earlier calls for water conservation.

### [Drought continues; Concord urges end to outdoor watering, Deerfield bans it](#)

Concord Monitor (N.H.)

Sept 27, **New Hampshire**. More than two dozen municipalities or water systems in New Hampshire, mainly in the southeastern third, have banned outdoor lawn watering to extend water supplies until the drought ends. Problems with water supplies have occurred as far north as Carroll County and as far west as Keene.

The New Hampshire Drought Management Team and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services have urged the public to conserve water and have warned against lawn watering.

[Farmers say, 'No apologies,' as well drilling hits record levels in San Joaquin Valley](#)

The Sacramento Bee

Sept 25, **San Joaquin Valley, California.** As drought persisted and water deliveries from the state and federal projects were slim, California farmers resorted to using groundwater to keep crops growing. In the San Joaquin Valley in 2015, farmers dug about 2,500 new wells, the most in one year and five times the annual average for the previous 30 years, according to a Sacramento Bee analysis of state and local data. From 2012 through 2015, San Joaquin Valley farmers dug more than 5,000 wells, more than were dug altogether during the previous 12 years. Most of the new wells were in Fresno and Tulare counties, where officials issued an average of nearly 10 agricultural well permits each business day in 2015, although some of the permits were not used. The permit-issuing pace has slowed in the first few months of 2016, but still remained higher than pre-drought levels.

[Lack of rain continues to strain Riverhead's water supply](#)

Riverhead News Review (Mattituck, N.Y.)

Sept 29, **Riverhead, New York.** Riverhead's supply of freshwater sits precariously above a layer of seawater, providing the island-dwellers with potable water and necessitating conservation as rain fails to replenish groundwater stores. Many wells across Suffolk County were below to much below normal, and the Peconic River was contaminated with blue-green algae.

[Water agency warns of drought severity, urges conservation](#)

Wilton Bulletin (Conn.)

Sept 29, **Connecticut.** South Norwalk Electric and Water strongly urged its customers to conserve 15 percent of typical water use because drought and heavy water demand brought the reservoir level down to 41 percent of capacity, triggering a drought watch.

[Wells gone dry in Finger Lakes](#)

MPN Now (Canandaigua, N.Y.)

Sept 25, **Finger Lake region of New York.** Dry wells in the Finger Lakes region have people thinking creatively to ration water for themselves and their livestock. High demand prompted municipal providers to restrict water use to bring demand down.

## **International**

[EU crop monitor cuts maize yield estimate due to hot, dry summer](#)

Reuters

Sept 26, **Europe.** The European Union's crop monitoring service lowered the corn yield forecast for the second month to 6.84 tons per hectare, a decrease from 7.23 tons per hectare in August.

[Russian wheat sowings threatened by dry weather](#)

Agrimoney.com

Sept 26, **Russia.** Low soil moisture levels in the Black Sea region may jeopardize the next winter wheat crop, according to the European Commission. Dryness in the western Ukraine was also a concern.

### ['We Are Thirsty' Say Tunisians as Drought Creates Tensions](#)

Bloomberg

Sept 24, **Tunisia**. Tunisia faces challenges with extremism and economic woes, but now drought has introduced other problems because crops were not growing. Reservoirs and dams were also at dangerously low levels that could lead to a “catastrophic situation,” according to the country’s previous agriculture minister.