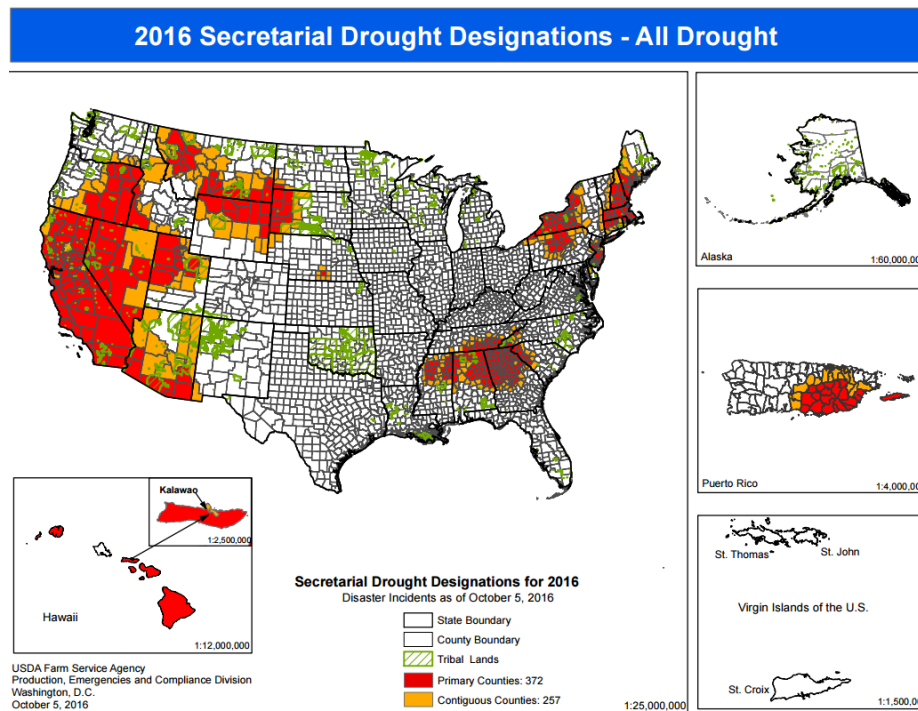


Drought News—Ever-tightening water supplies in Northeast; burn bans prevalent in Southeast

October 21, 2016

With three large sections of the country dealing with drought, article volume is pretty high as though it were mid- to late summer. The water shortage in the Northeast continues to worsen with more communities calling for water conservation.

As for the Southeast, there has been a little bit of media coverage of issues there throughout the summer, but I have been finally hearing more in the news from Alabama, and even a little bit from Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana, but it has mainly been about burn bans, not crop loss. Northern Mississippi, for example, had drought nearly all summer, but got little media coverage. Some parts of the country just do not make much noise about being in drought until it gets really bad. The Southeast is one of the quiet areas, unless a large city like Atlanta is affected. Looking at the Oct. 5 USDA graphic below, crop production was obviously seriously affected because northern Mississippi got a disaster designation, but there was little about it in the news as far as I know.



Drought warning in northern New Jersey

A drought warning was issued for 14 of New Jersey's 21 counties, allowing the Department of Environmental Protection to more closely manage reservoir systems.

Call for water conservation in New Hampshire

As drought expanded in New Hampshire and hundreds of private wells run dry, the public was urged to abide by all water restrictions and conserve where possible.

Drought emergency declaration in Alabama

Gov. Robert Bentley of Alabama signed an order banning outdoor fires for 46 counties in the north and central of the state, due to intensifying drought that has led to fast-moving wildfires. Forty-six counties were under a no burn order, while the remaining counties were in a fire alert. Twenty-eight counties were in a drought emergency, due to depleted water supplies.

Critical water situations in Haralson Co., Ga.; Oneida, Tenn.; Dorset, Vt.; and Waterbury, Conn. Details in the Water section below.

Fire danger very high with burn bans sprinkled from eastern Texas to western North Carolina, and from Tennessee to the south.

Cattle farmers hurting in northeastern Alabama

Cattle farmers in northwestern Alabama began feeding their livestock because the summer's drought parched pastures and grasses, leaving nothing for the animals to eat. Conditions were so dire that many were hoping for Farm Service Agency relief.

Honey production halved in Maine

Maine's apiarists reported that honey production was down by 50 percent to 100 percent as drought affected much of the state. Honey losses were largest in southern Maine, particularly in Cumberland and York counties, where drought was harshest.

Maine farmers buying hay

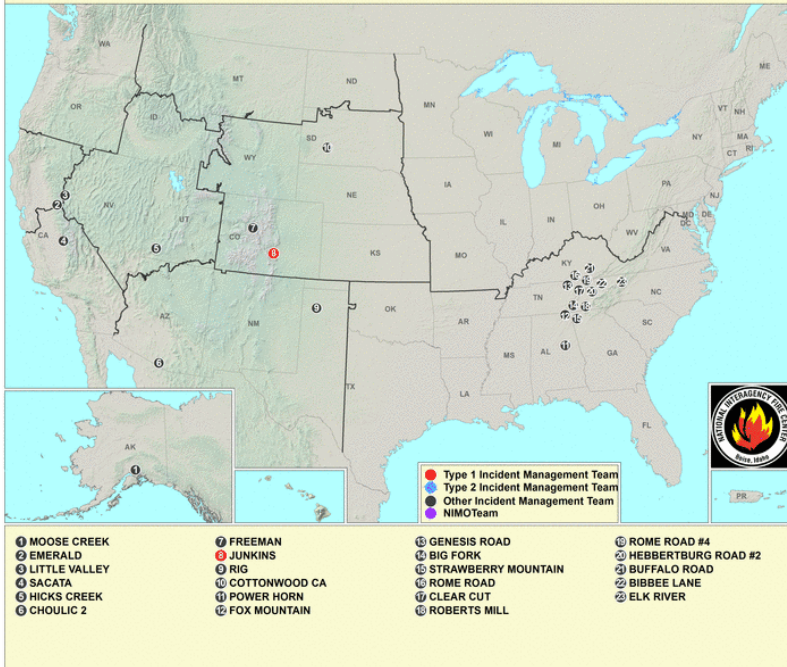
Drought cut sharply into the amount of hay and grain able to be grown in Maine, leaving growers looking around for winter feed to purchase for their livestock.

"We're hearing of such general unavailability, some folks are going into Canada to get feed," said the agricultural services director for the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association.

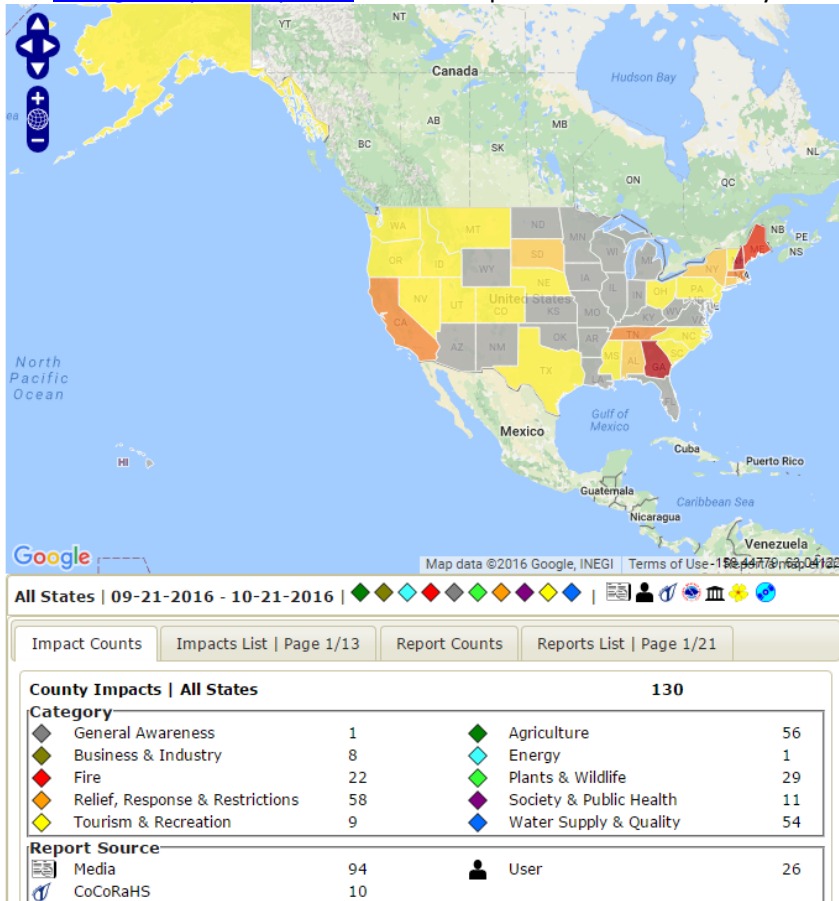
Plenty of large wildfires in the vicinity of eastern Tennessee, as seen on the [Active Fire Mapping Program](#).

Current Large Incidents

October 21, 2016



The [Drought Impact Reporter](#) has 161 impacts for the last 30 days.



Agriculture

[Bone-dry: Drought worsens in Northeast Mississippi, burn bans expanded](#)

Daily Journal (Tupelo, Miss.)

Oct 11, **Northeastern Mississippi.** A sod grower near Baldwyn had to irrigate because little rain had fallen since August. Corn and soybean production was down somewhat, although earlier planted crops did better.

Burn bans covered 45 of Mississippi's 82 counties, including 17 counties in the northeastern part of the state.

[Cattle farmers hope for assistance](#)

TimesDaily.com (Florence, Ala.)

Oct 20, **Northwestern Alabama.** Cattle farmers in northwestern Alabama began feeding their livestock because the summer's drought parched pastures and grasses, leaving nothing for the animals to eat. Conditions were so dire that many were hoping for Farm Service Agency relief. Farms ponds were going dry, forcing some farmers to haul water to the cattle.

"In northwest Alabama, a lot of farmers had to sell their herds because the grass is gone, and that has caused a high volume in the market that made prices come down," said Colbert Extension Coordinator Danny McWilliams.

[Drought a sticking point for Maine beekeepers as honey production falls off this fall](#)

Portland Press Herald (Maine)

Oct. 15, **Maine.** Maine's apiarists reported that honey production was down by 50 percent to 100 percent as drought affected much of the state. Honey losses were largest in southern Maine, particularly in Cumberland and York counties, where drought was harshest.

A Portland bee keeper with 150 hives said that she normally harvests 2,000 to 3,000 pounds of honey in the fall, but this fall, the bees made no extra honey, apart from what the bees need to survive the winter. She estimated a gross loss of \$20,000.

[Drought having an impact on the local Christmas tree crop](#)

WHNT News 19 (Huntsville, Ala.)

Oct 18, **Alabama.** Drought hampered the growth of Christmas trees on a tree farm near Huntsville. The trees typically grow one and a half to two feet and then need shaping, but this year, there was little growth. Some Virginia pines were about six inches shorter than normal.

[Worsening drought leaves Maine farms, wells in bad shape](#)

Bangor Daily News (Maine)

Oct. 14, **Maine.** Drought cut sharply into the amount of hay and grain able to be grown in Maine, leaving growers looking around for winter feed to purchase for their livestock.

"We're hearing of such general unavailability, some folks are going into Canada to get feed," said Dave Colson, the agricultural services director for the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. "Or they're selling off some livestock or not raising replacement heifers, which may come back to affect them sometime in the future."

Energy

[Drought conditions continue, question of impact on energy](#)

WHNT News 19 (Huntsville, Ala.)

Oct 19, **Alabama**. Low water levels in the Tennessee Valley Authority's lakes could force the agency to carefully manage its water stores or hydropower production could suffer.

Fire

[Forestry officials warn of record drought as wildfire season starts](#)

WBIR.com (Knoxville, Tenn.)

Oct 17, **Eastern Tennessee along Kentucky border**. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture warned the public that drought conditions require those attempting to burn materials outdoors to use additional caution.

[Burn bans issued, rain chances may return late in the week.](#)

ArkLaTex (Shreveport, La.)

Oct 10, **Louisiana**. The lack of rainfall prompted burn bans in Hempstead County in Arkansas and Harrison County in Texas.

[Division of Forestry asks residents not to burn Sunday, Monday](#)

Kenai Peninsula Clarion (Alaska)

Oct 16, **Interior, southcentral Alaska**. The Alaska Division of Forestry asked residents in South central and Interior areas to avoid outdoor burning and the use of burn barrels until Oct. 18, due to high winds, no snow cover and dry conditions. The combination of conditions increased the fire danger.

[Drought extends ban on outdoor burning in Forsyth](#)

Atlanta Constitution-Journal (Ga.)

Oct 18, **Northern Georgia**. The Georgia Forestry Commission announced that burn permits would not be issued in Forsyth County and other counties in its Coosa South District.

"The GFC cited the current drought conditions, ongoing fire activity and forecast models showing no significant moisture as the reasons for not allowing outdoor burning," stated Forsyth officials in a news release. "A timeline for the burning restrictions has not been determined and will depend on weather conditions."

[Fire Danger Increasing in Western North Carolina](#)

The Mountaineer (Waynesville, NC)

Oct 18, **Western North Carolina**. The U.S. Forest Service and the North Carolina Forest Service have warned the public to be especially careful due to the rising fire danger in western North Carolina. The fire danger was expected to remain elevated into December.

[Governor Bentley Signs Drought Emergency Declaration, Bans Burning in 46 Counties](#)

The Office of Alabama Governor Robert Bentley (Montgomery)

Oct 12, **Alabama**. Gov. Robert Bentley of Alabama signed an order banning outdoor fires for 46 counties in the north and central of the state, due to intensifying drought that has led to fast-moving wildfires. Forty-six counties were under a no burn order, while the remaining counties were in a fire alert.

[Hanover firefighting effort hampered by drought](#)

Sun Journal (Lewiston, Maine)

Oct 17, **Hanover, Maine**. Firefighters did not have enough local water to extinguish a fire in Hanover and had to transport water from Bethel. The fire chief of Rumford noted that the usual brooks and ponds they typically access were dry, due to the drought.

General Awareness

[Asheville sees 10 days without rain, severe drought emerges](#)

Asheville Citizen-Times (N.C.)

Oct 20, **Western North Carolina**. Since the start of 2016, Asheville was about eight inches behind on rainfall, according to the NWS.

[Despite recent rainfall, Utah needs more storms to put dent in state's drought](#)

KSL TV (Salt Lake City, Utah)

Oct 17, **Utah**. After five years of drought and poor runoff, Utah needs good rainfall to soak the soil and plentiful snow in the mountains for good runoff to refill reservoirs.

[Drought's grip on Southern California to tighten with La Niña, forecasters say](#)

Los Angeles Times

Oct 20, **Southern California**. This fall's anticipated La Niña is expected to bring drier than normal conditions to Southern California.

Plants & Wildlife

[Drought causing trees to become at risk of falling over](#)

WWLP-22News (Chicopee, Mass.)

Oct 19, **Massachusetts**. Some regional trees have become brittle and weak from the lack of rainfall, warned Eversource, an electric services company. The trees might even fall over during the winter and take down power lines. People were cautioned that trees with cracks in the trunks, bare branches, dropping bark or dead roots could be dying and need attention.

Relief, Response, & Restrictions

[Drought Conditions are Worsening: NHDES Urges the Public to Look for Ways to Conserve Water, to Report Water Shortages and Economic Impacts](#)

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

Oct 21, **New Hampshire**. As drought expanded in New Hampshire and hundreds of private wells ran dry, the public was urged to abide by all water restrictions and conserve where possible.

[Drought emergency for 28 Alabama counties](#)

TimesDaily.com (Florence, Ala.)

Oct 19, **Northern Alabama**. Twenty-eight Alabama counties were in a drought emergency as drought and above normal temperatures persisted. The 28 counties were Colbert, DeKalb, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, Morgan, Blount, Cherokee, Cullman, Etowah, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Walker, Winston, Calhoun, Chambers, Chilton, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Randolph, Talladega and Tallapoosa. Falling reservoir and groundwater levels were also pointing toward drought becoming more severe, particularly in north, east and central Alabama.

[Drought warning declared in 14 New Jersey counties](#)

The Trentonian (N.J.)

Oct 21, **New Jersey**. A drought warning was issued for 14 of New Jersey's 21 counties, allowing the Department of Environmental Protection to more closely manage reservoir systems. The 14 counties are Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren.

[U.S., N.H. officials want to hear from dairy farmers](#)

Concord Monitor (N.H.)

Oct 16, **New Hampshire**. U.S. Department of Agriculture and New Hampshire officials held a forum at the N.H. Audubon Society to hear from dairy farmers and invite them to share their experiences and concerns as the federal authority prepares to craft another federal farm bill. Already in 2016, 19 of the state's 120 dairy farmers have gone out of business.

Society & Public Health

[Extreme drought causes home foundation cracks across the Valley](#)

WHNT 19 (Huntsville, Ala.)

Oct 12, **Alabama**. Many home foundation repair businesses in northern Alabama were busy because dry conditions have caused large cracks and damage to many home foundations. One repair business bought more trucks to keep up with demand for service, although home owners must wait up to three weeks before someone can inspect the home.

Tourism & Recreation

[Drought could make bagging a duck or goose more challenging](#)

The Buffalo News (N.Y.)

Oct 17, **Western New York**. Duck and goose hunters in New York may have to wade through the state's marshes rather than use a boat because drought has dropped water levels so low that boats may not float in some areas, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Water levels were low or nonexistent at the state-managed marshes at the Iroquois and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuges and Northern Montezuma, Oak Orchard and Tonawanda Wildlife Management Areas, said the DEC. The DEC limited the number of hunting permits issued for opening weekend starting Oct. 22.

Water Supply & Quality

[Alcoa, Maryville and Tuckaleechee utility districts ask customers to reduce water use due to drought](#)

WVLT-TV (Knoxville, Tenn.)

Oct 18, **Eastern Tennessee**. Voluntary water conservation was requested from customers in Alcoa, Maryville and Tuckaleechee as the flow of the Little River dropped. Preparations were underway to operate interconnections and an auxiliary raw water line that will send water to the Alcoa Water Treatment Plant.

[Birmingham implements drought surcharge for excess water use](#)

The News Courier (Athens, Ala.)

Oct 20, **Birmingham, Alabama**. Residents of Birmingham could face a surcharge of 200 percent for excess water use after Birmingham Water Works enacts stage 3 of its drought management plan on Nov. 19. The surcharge would be added to the regular water bill, meaning people who use a lot of water could end up paying about three times as much as usual for their water.

[Bledsoe County prison's water runs brown and smells bad](#)

Chattanooga Times Free Press (Tenn.)

Oct 18, **Bledsoe County, southeastern Tennessee.** Drought forced a Bledsoe County prison to switch water sources, which unfortunately brought brown, foul-smelling water that stained laundry, although the water was safe to consume. The prison will switch back to another water supply once a water shortage was alleviated.

[Claremont Poised to Implement Mandatory Water Restrictions](#)

Valley News (West Lebanon, N.H.)

Oct 18, **Claremont, New Hampshire.** Claremont's Department of Public Works foresees the need for mandatory water restrictions because the flow of the Sugar River was 16 cubic feet per second, the second lowest rate in 88 years. The water intake was also just 16 inches below the water's surface. In addition, drought was forecast to persist through the end of the year, making conservation essential.

[Connecticut officials allow temporary pipeline to supply water, ease drought](#)

New Haven Register (Conn.)

Oct 19, **Connecticut.** Connecticut officials issued an amended emergency order, allowing the construction of a temporary pipeline to carry water to four communities. The state Department of Public Health declared a public water supply emergency in September for Greenwich, Stamford, Darien and New Canaan. The order allowed the Aquarion Water Company to divert water from other sources. The more recent order will permit Aquarion to divert water from an additional source and construct a temporary pipeline to carry water to the four towns.

[Connecticut Water calls on Shoreline customers to conserve](#)

New Haven Register (Conn.)

Oct 17, **Coastal Connecticut.** The Connecticut Water Co. urged water customers in Guilford, Madison, Clinton, Westbrook and Old Saybrook to curb water use by 15 percent. Calls for voluntary water saving with the goal of 10 percent conservation began in July, but more was needed from these five communities.

[Dire drought: Use violators could have water shut off](#)

Bristol Press (Conn.)

Oct. 19, **Bristol, Connecticut.** All outdoor water use was prohibited in Bristol because the city's reservoirs had fallen below 50 percent of capacity. Those who violate the new mandatory order may have their water turned off, announced the city's Department of Water. Once water service has been terminated, it may remain off for a minimum of 24 hours.

[Most severe drought restrictions imposed in this Georgia county](#)

Atlanta Journal Constitution

Oct 16, **Haralson County, Georgia.** Haralson County entered a level III drought because the level of the Tallapoosa River has dropped so low that the county water authority sent crews out to tear down beaver dams on the river to allow as much water as possible to flow. The county was buying water from Anniston, Alabama and Carroll County to supplement the dwindling Tallapoosa River, which plunged three feet over the course of two days. After removing four beaver dams, the reservoir filled four inches.

[Norwich Public Utilities issues water warning](#)

The Day (New London, Conn.)

Oct 19, **Norwich, Connecticut**. Norwich Public Utilities issued a water supply warning on Oct. 19 because its two major reservoirs fell to 60 percent of capacity, the lowest in 30 years. Residents and commercial customers were encouraged to reduce water use by 10 percent until drought abated. A total reservoir content of 60 percent equaled about 200 days' worth of municipal water for NPU's nearly 11,000 customers.

[Residents asked to restrict water use](#)

Independent Herald (Oneida, Tenn.)

Oct 18, **Northern Tennessee**. Oneida's water supply was in a dire emergency situation because area streamflows have dipped to historic lows. The flow of the Big South Fork River fell to 17 cubic feet per second, its lowest level in nearly eight years.

[Vermont water district requests conservation measures as water supply drops](#)

Portland Press Herald (Maine)

Oct 17, **South Royalton, Dorset, Vermont**. Water officials in Dorset began turning off the water nightly because the water supply was low, due to drought. The South Royalton Water Department asked its customers to avoid "leisurely" water uses, such as car washing and lengthy showers, to limit water use. Conservation was needed because the White River was low. The department was concerned that it may not be able to continue taking water from the river if its level continued to drop.

[Water restrictions issued for Henderson County](#)

Asheville Citizen-Times (N.C.)

Oct 17, **Henderson County, North Carolina**. Stage I water restrictions took effect in Hendersonville because the Mills River flowed at 59 cubic feet per second, considerably below the average of 115 cubic feet per second. The river is the primary source of water for Henderson County, which was in moderate drought.

[Water Supply Emergency Declared In Waterbury](#)

Harford Courant (Conn.)

Oct 20, **Waterbury, Connecticut**. A public water supply emergency was declared in Waterbury, due to ongoing drought and no rain in the forecast. During the 30-day emergency, Waterbury may not add new customers without prior approval from the Department of Public Health and all water users must observe the mandatory outdoor watering ban.

International

[Drought, hunger add to South Sudans woes](#)

Industries News

Oct 21, **South Sudan**. A drastic food shortage in northern South Sudan, stemming from drought and an economic crisis, meant that as many as 4.8 million people were hungry, said the World Food Programme. According to the Famine Early Warning System Network, some households were at "catastrophic" famine level 5, indicating that "starvation, death and destitution are evident."

[Nearly 850,000 people in Madagascar face 'alarming' hunger levels : U.N](#)

Reuters

Oct 20, **Southern Madagascar**. Almost 850,000 people in southern Madagascar were facing “alarming” levels of hunger, according to U.N. agencies. Food supplies ran out in August, but the next harvest will not be ready until March. Aid was desperately needed to prevent the situation from deteriorating.

[Papua New Guinea Drought: WFP Food Distributions Wind Up Amid Signs of Recovery](#)

ReliefWeb

Oct 20, **Papua New Guinea**. Food distributions that began in June ended in September as Papua New Guinea recovered from El Niño-driven drought.