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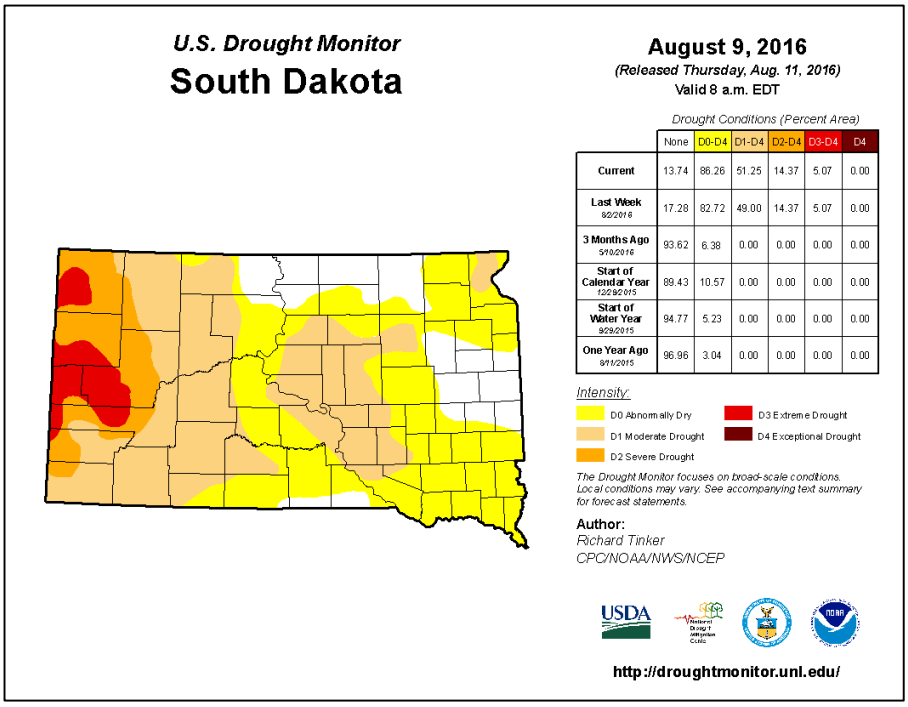
South Dakota Climate & Drought Summary

August 15, 2016

U.S. Drought Monitor
As of August 9, 2016, the U.S. Drought Monitor shows over 50% of South Dakota in drought, defined as D1 (Moderate) or worse. About 9% of the state is in Severe (D2) drought, and 5% is in Extreme (D3) drought.



Over the last two weeks, drought conditions have improved in many areas. The last seven days have been relatively wet, especially in eastern South Dakota. Weekly totals of three to five inches were reported in north central (Campbell, Mcpherson counties), east central (Grant, Codington, Clark, Hamlin, Deuel), southeast (Hutchinson, Yankton) and central (Stanley, Hughes and Lyman). A small area of drought expansion has grown in Sully, Potter and Faulk counties. The U.S. Drought Monitor map can be found at: http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu.

14-day Summary
Statewide, temperatures were near average for the last two weeks. Most eastern locations were slightly above average for the 14-day period, 1 to 4 degrees above average. Western locations ranged from 2 degrees cooler to 4 degrees warmer than average. The relatively moderate temperatures have reduced water use demand by crops and vegetation, and allowed soils to retain moisture for a longer period of time.

Some localized single day totals topped out over 4-6" in Codington county (Watertown area) on Friday (Aug. 12) morning, which spurred on some flash flood warnings. Fortunately, most storms did not bring much hail in the last 7 days.

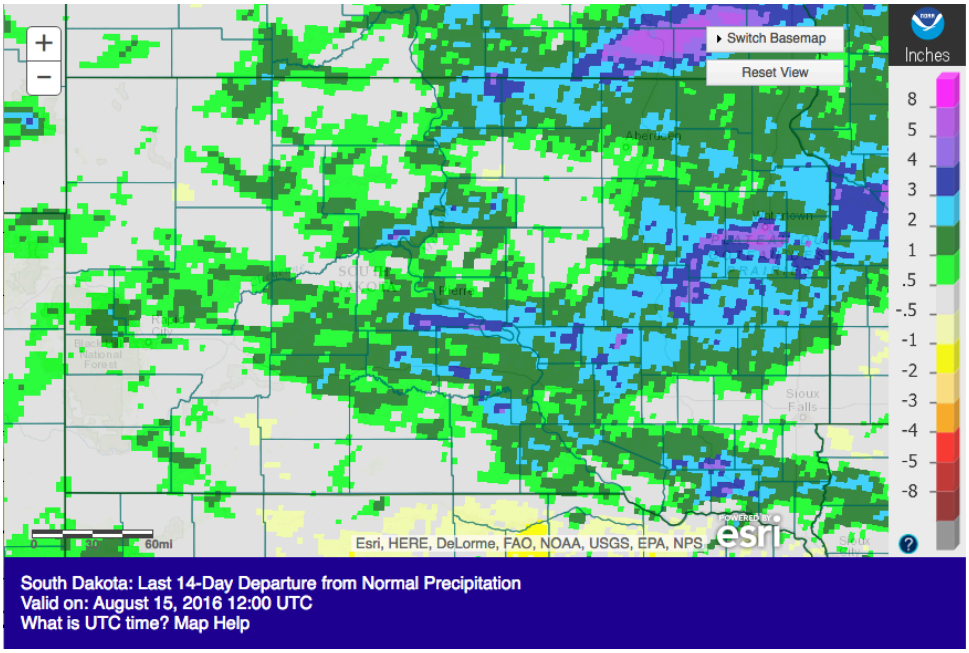


Figure: 14-day rainfall, departure from average,for South Dakota. Source: NOAA National Weather Service, http://water.weather.gov/precip/#.

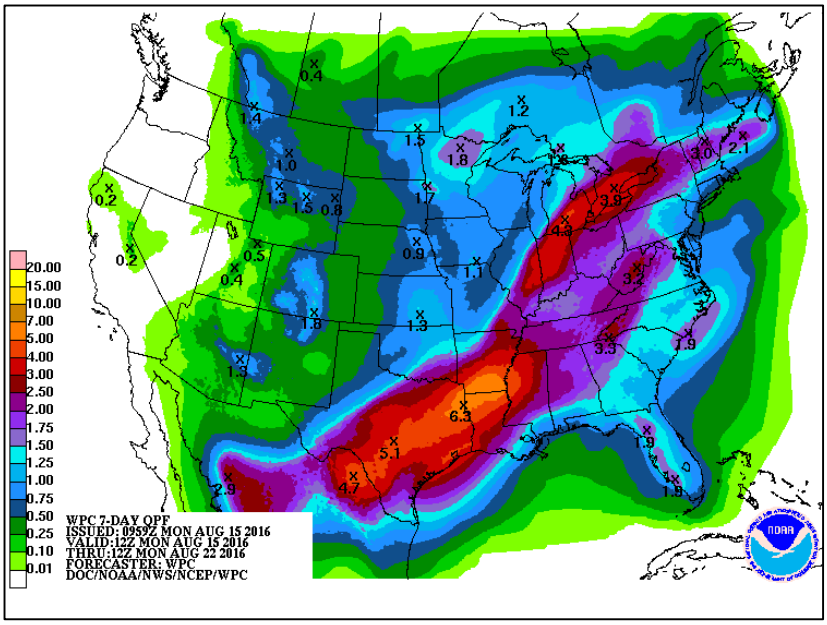
Impacts

Drought conditions improved slightly over the last two weeks, as recent rains will help with soybean crop conditions and maintain corn crop conditions. Many significant drought impacts from earlier season dryness remain despite the rainfall and moderate temperatures, particularly in pasture/forage and corn cropping areas. In agricultural areas, some corn has already been chopped for silage due to previous dry conditions in June and July. Recent rainfall has been beneficial for soybeans as they are in grain fill stage this month.

Rainfall has brought some grasses out of dormancy, and many areas that have been in drought are experiencing a green-up. This is occurring primarily in pasture/range and prairie areas. There has been a reduction in fire occurrences since wheat harvest and haying activities have ended. Fire danger has reduced substantially, given the recent rains.

Forecast

In the next couple of days, warm temperatures in 80s and low 90s are expected. Cooler than average temperatures will follow a cold front late this week. Forecast temperatures for Friday and Saturday are 10-15 degrees below average for this time of year.



A somewhat active weather pattern will bring some scattered chances of rain over the coming 7 days. Total rainfall amounts will be small, however. Far eastern SD could receive half inch or more, as could far western SD, with less expected through the central region. Drier and slightly warmer conditions will return after the weekend. Temperatures are projected to remain cooler than average through the next 14 days, with some more chances of rain next week.

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