



Monthly Climate Summary

Volume 20, No. 8



August

2026



Clouds shine at Marmarth 2N NDAWN.

In This Issue:

[Precipitation](#)

[Temperature](#)

[August 2026 Overview](#)

After a hot July, August temperatures across North Dakota finished near average with most North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN) stations within a couple of degrees of the current 30-year average. Rainfall was different story with some areas receiving well above normal precipitation while others stayed very dry. The east remained dry, as the central and southern Red River Valley moved into Extreme Drought (D3). Northwestern North Dakota north of the Missouri River had a wet August, as did parts of the southwest.

In short, August lived up to North Dakota's reputation where conditions can vary sharply from one spot to the next and from one month to the next.

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026

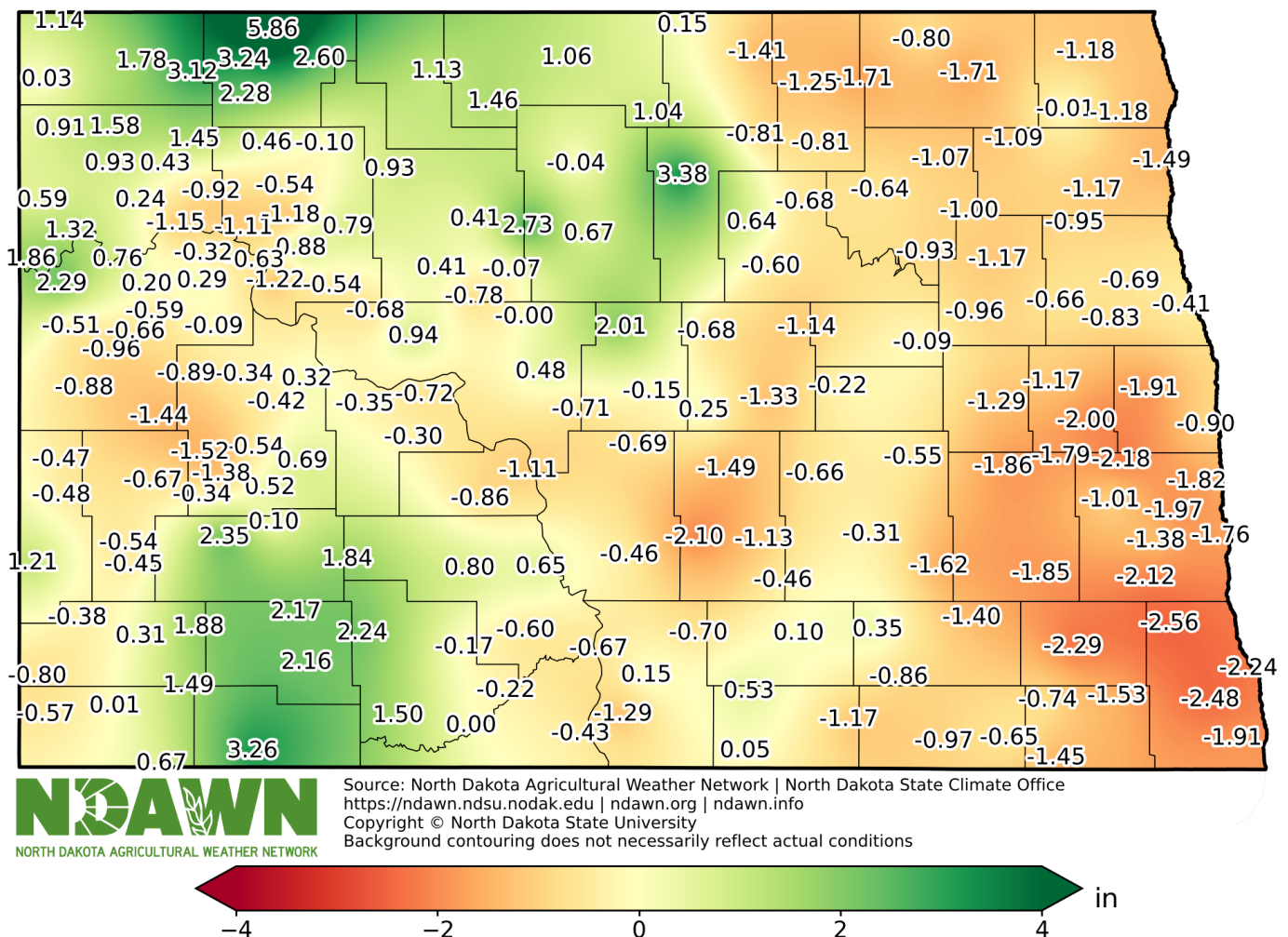


Figure 1: Departure from Normal Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations during August 2026

Precipitation Summary

August 2026 Statewide Average Precipitation: 1.98"

Percent of Normal Statewide Precipitation: 90%

Statewide averages do not tell the whole story this month. While the western half of the state, except West Central North Dakota, received dousing, albeit spotty, thunderstorms, the eastern half, especially the southern Red River Valley, received very little rain. To further illustrate the disparity, August 2026 was Williston's 15th wettest August since records began, whereas Fargo finished with the 12th driest August.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026

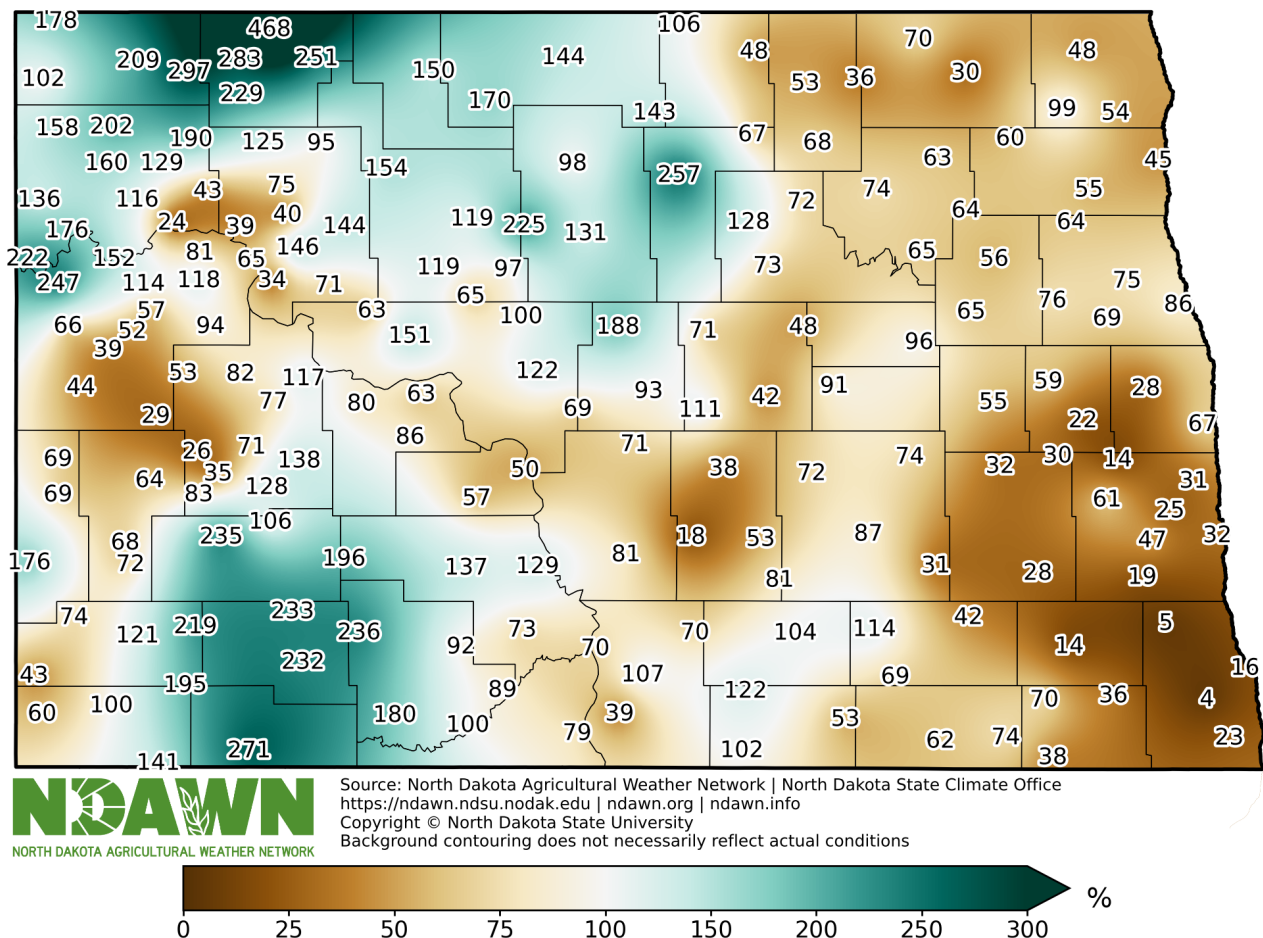


Figure 2: Percent of Normal Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations in August 2026

Precipitation

The maximum monthly precipitation recorded by NDAWN in North Dakota during the month of August was 7.45 inches at the Portal 1SE station in Burke County, 468% of normal (Figure 3). The majority of that rain, 5.33", fell between August 13-14, producing an impressive two-day total.

On the extreme flipside of things, the minimum monthly precipitation recorded by NDAWN in North Dakota was in Richland County at the Mooreton 3SW station with 0.11 inches of precipitation, 4% of normal.

Total Precipitation (in)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026

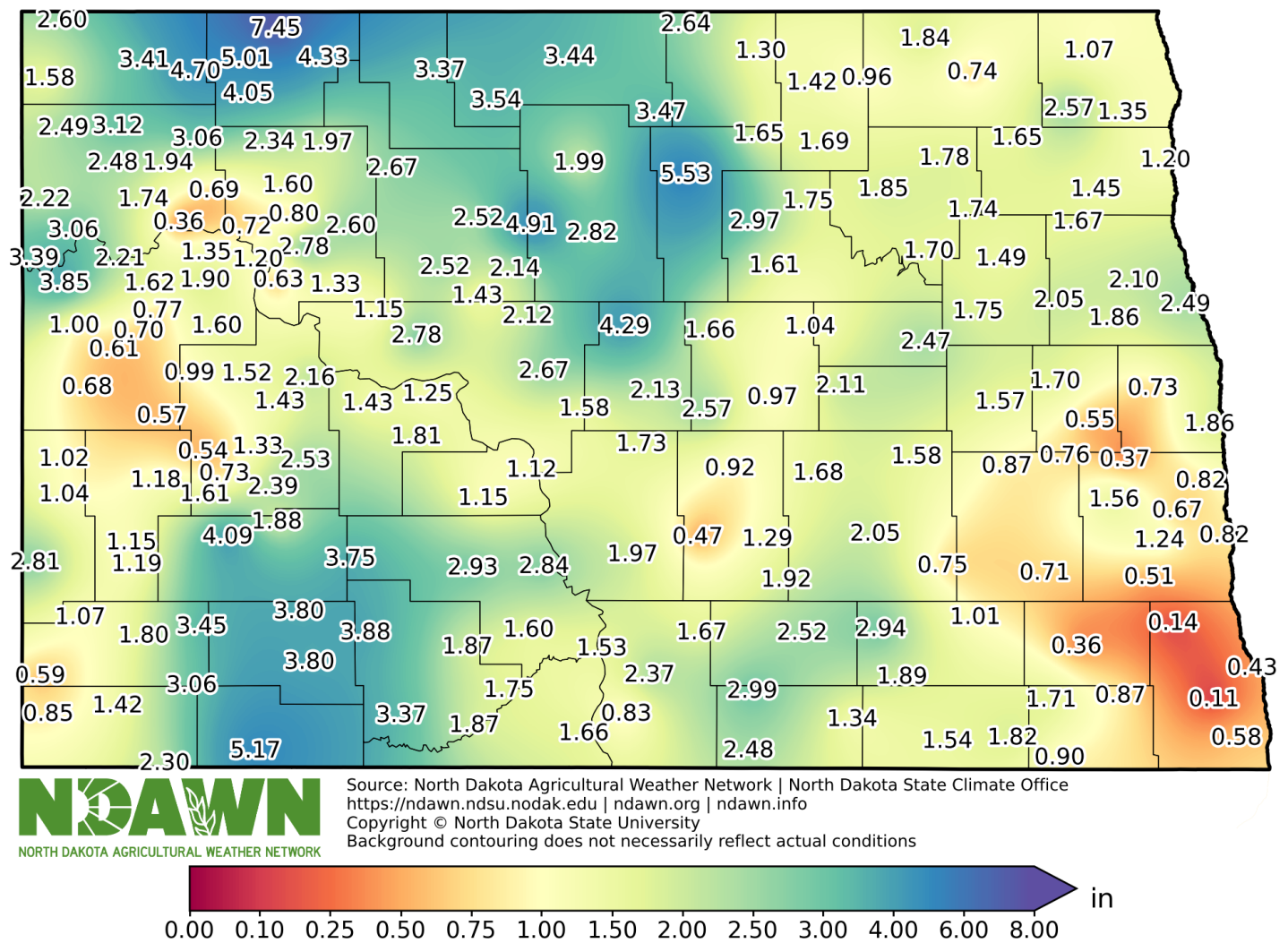
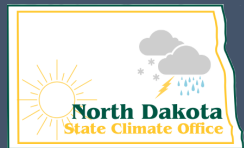


Figure 3: Total Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations in August 2026

Precipitation

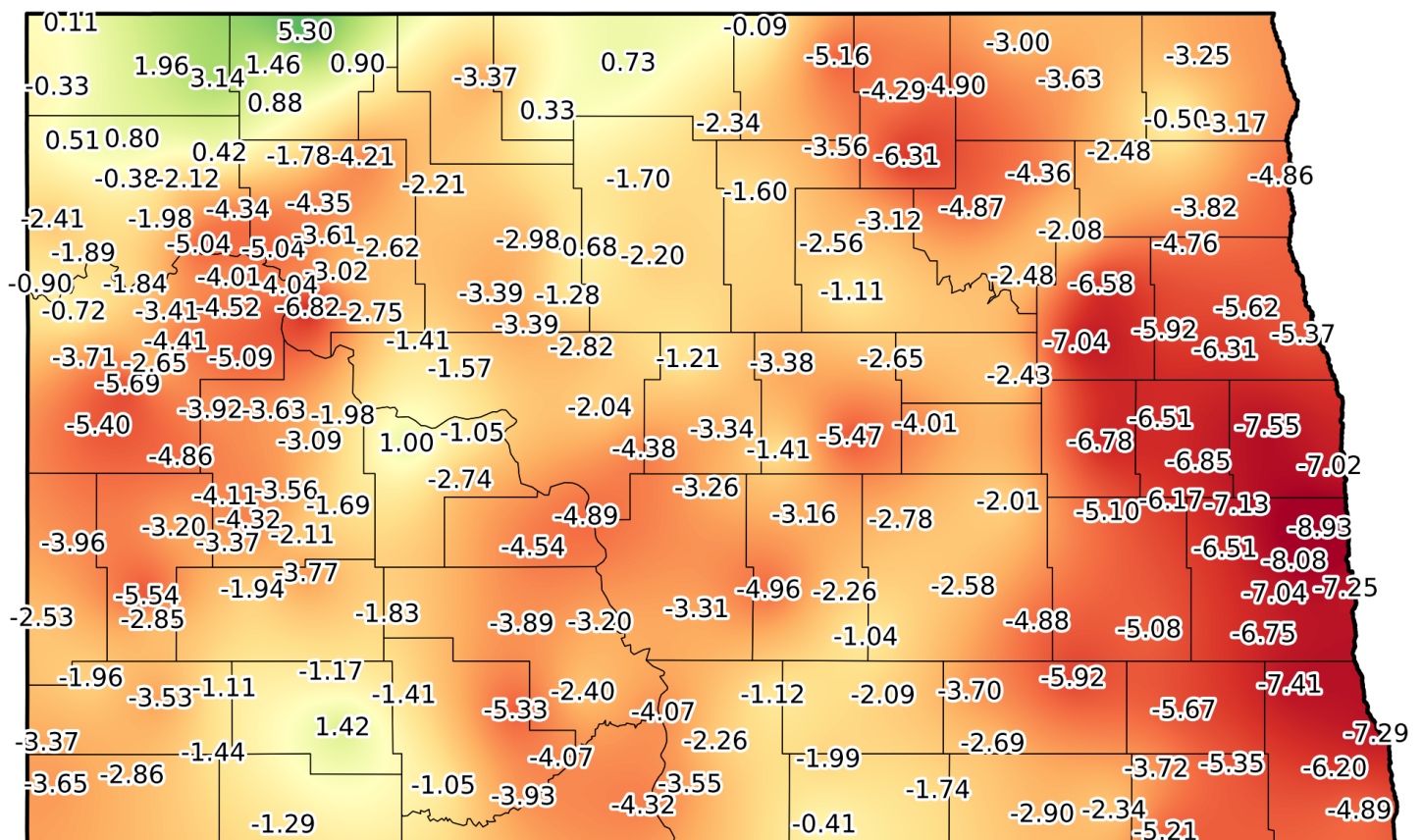
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With one month left in the current growing season, statewide average precipitation is at 9.57", 75% of normal or -3.19" from normal, for April – August (Figure 4). However, precipitation has been uneven this summer. The northwestern corner of the state has been wetter, especially in August, and are running at a surplus currently. Conversely the central Red River Valley, is seeing precipitation deficits in the 7-9" range.

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)

04-01-2026 - 08-31-2026



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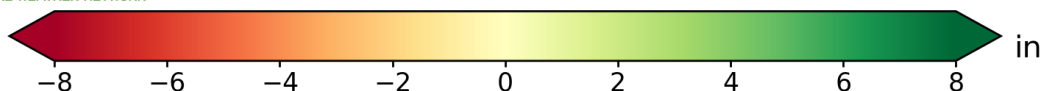


Figure 4: Departure from Normal Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations since April 1, 2026

Extreme Drought (D3) was added to Golden Valley and parts of Bowman, Slope, and Billings County on August 11. This was the first instance of D3 in the state since May 27, 2025. D3 was subsequently added to Traill and parts of McKenzie, Cass, and Steele County, with 6.3% of the state ranked as such as of August 25 (Figure 5). In total, 85.7% of the state is currently ranked in a drought category (D1-D3).

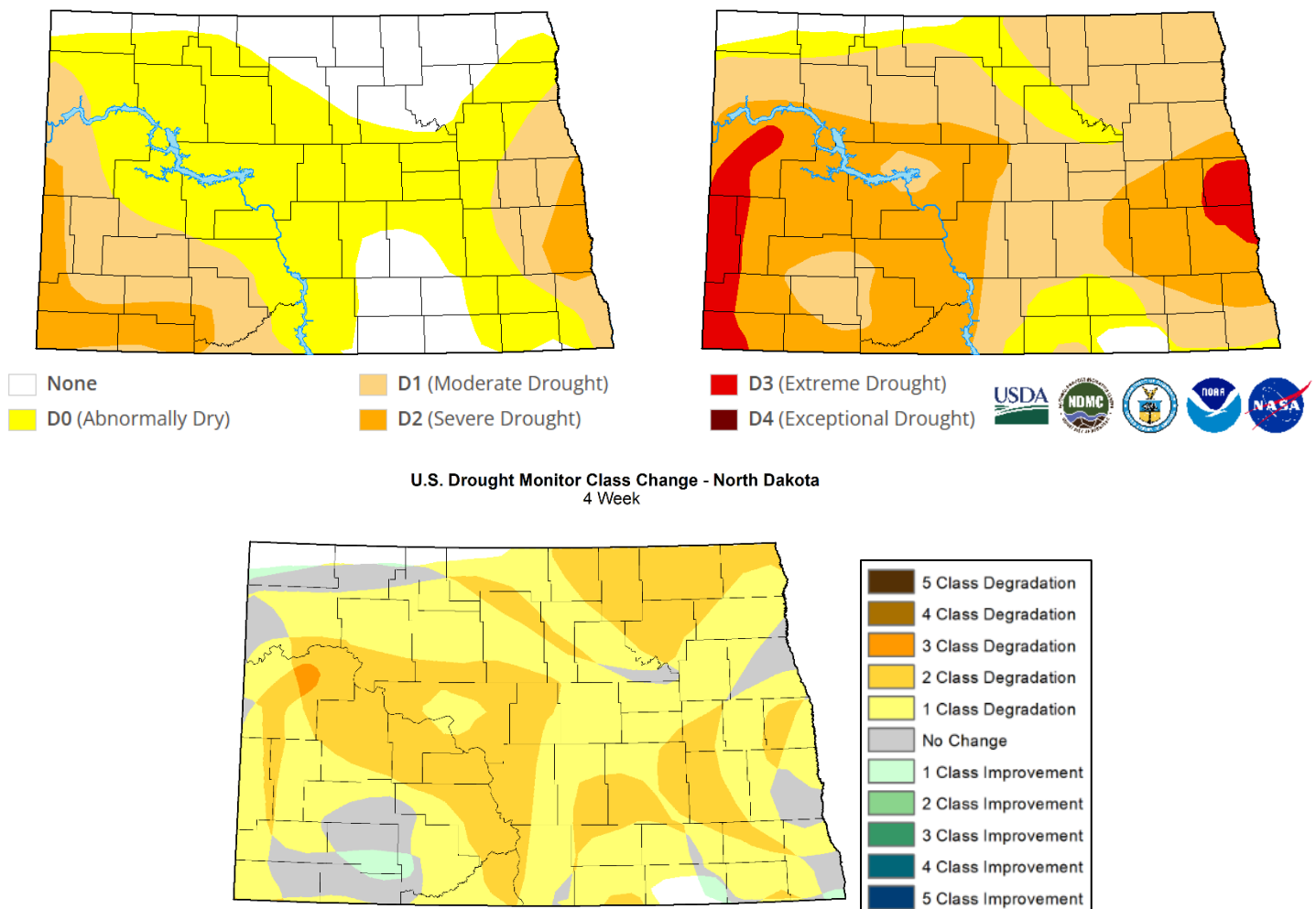


Figure 5: U.S. Drought Monitor conditions July 28, 2026 (top left), August 25, 2026 (top right), and Class Change (bottom)

Week	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
2026-07-28	21.93	49.69	19.86	8.52	0.00	0.00
2026-08-25	3.39	10.94	41.97	37.43	6.27	0.00
Change	-18.54	-38.75	+22.11	+28.91	+6.27	0.00

Table 1: Categorical Percent Area and change between July 28 and August 25, 2026 in the U.S. Drought Monitor

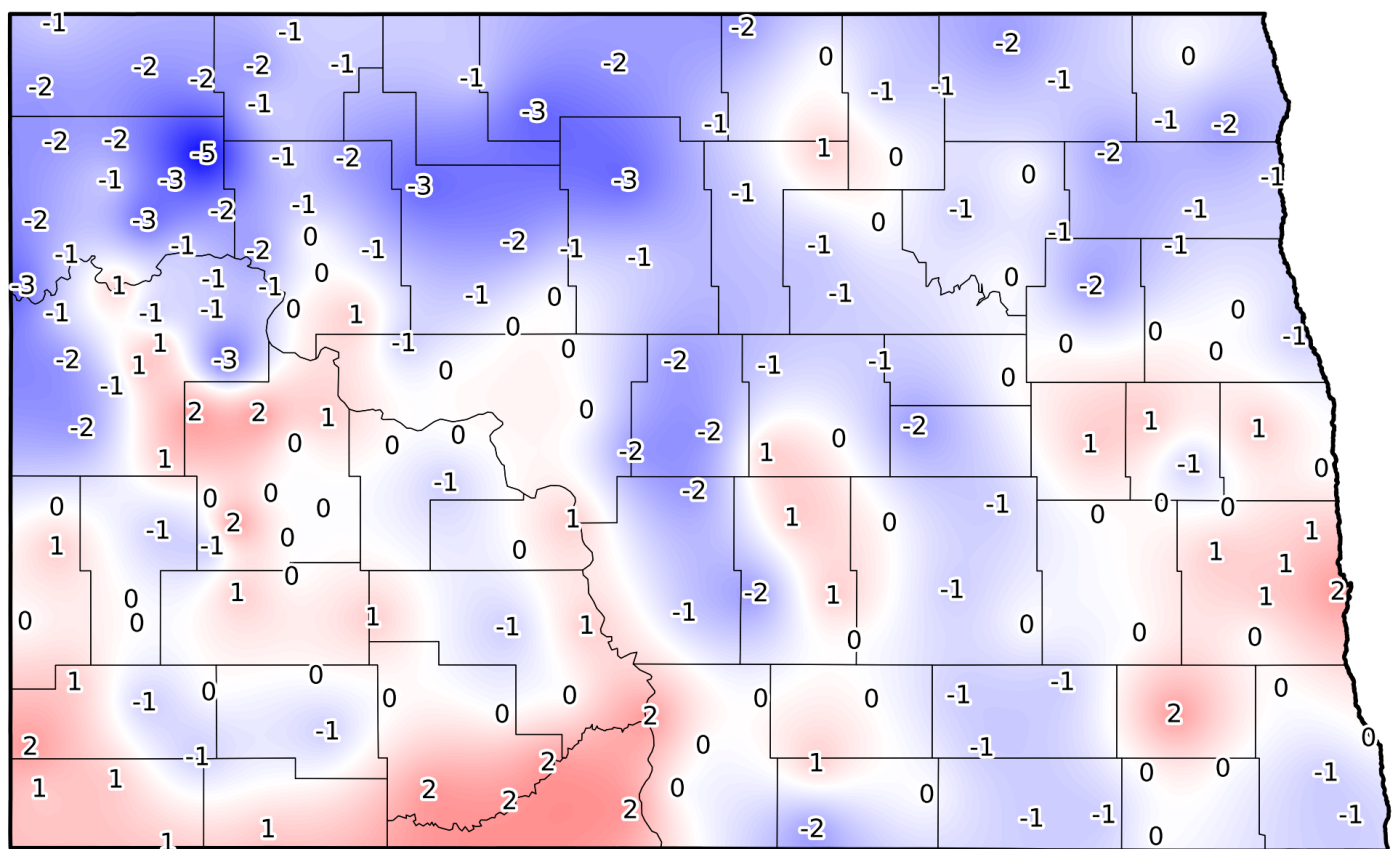
Temperature Summary

August 2026 Statewide Average Temperature: 67.4°F

Departure from Normal Statewide Temperature: 0.4°F below normal

After a much warmer than normal July, August offered a reprieve with temperatures around normal. Continuing the trend of the summer, Northwest North Dakota was significantly cooler than average, while South Central was much warmer.

Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F) 08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026



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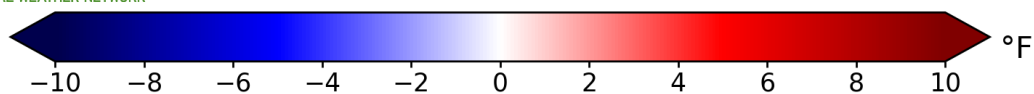
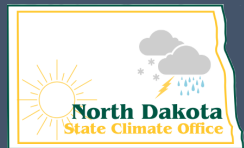


Figure 6: Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in August 2026

Temperature

7

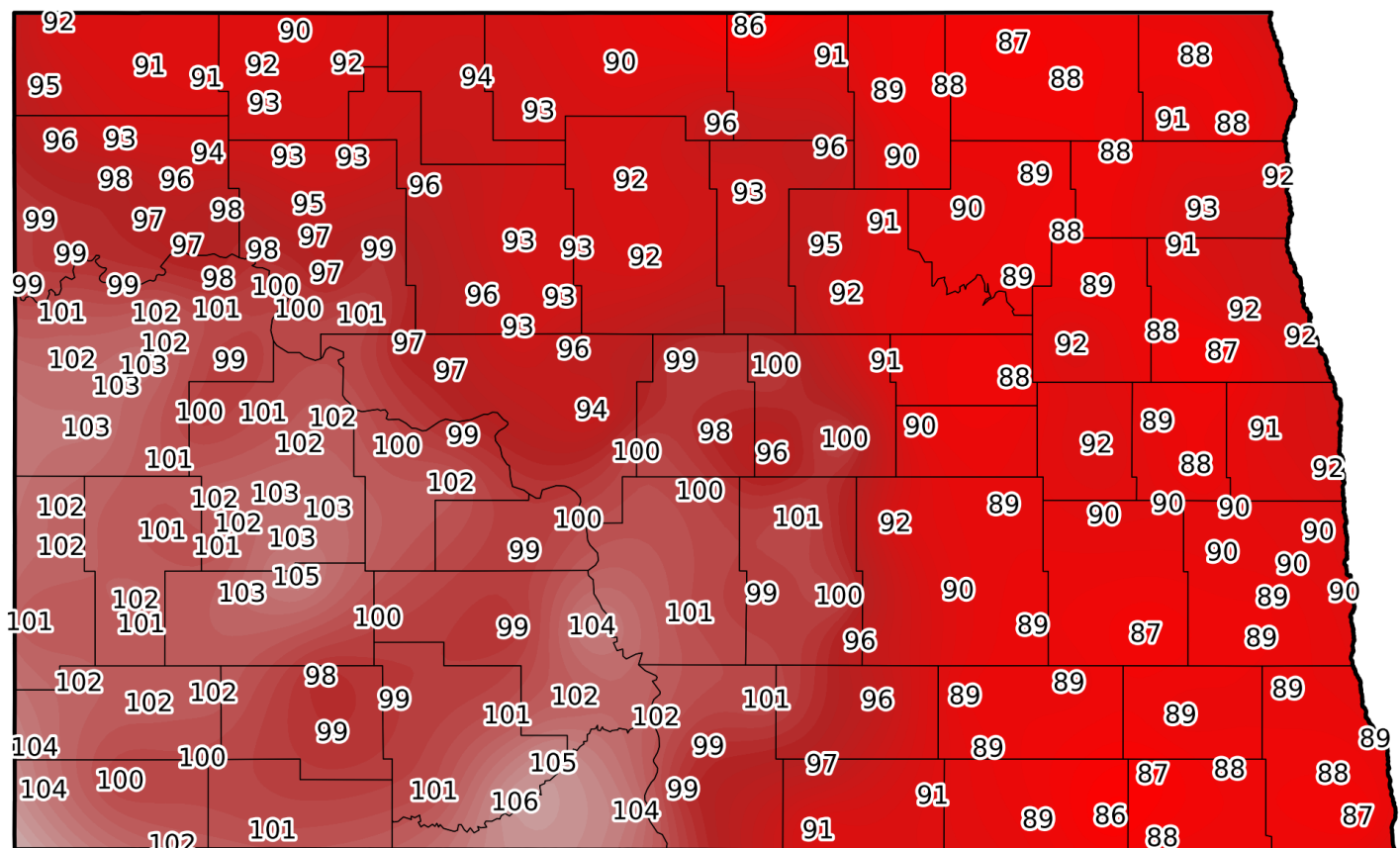


The highest temperature recorded during August at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was 105.8°F at St. Gertrude 12S NDAWN in Grant County on August 2 (Figure 7). Contrary to July where many days with highs in the 100s were recorded, August only saw two such days (August 1 & 2).

Average highs were typically in the 80s, with a statewide average maximum temperature of 81.4°F, which is about normal.

Maximum Temperature (°F)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026



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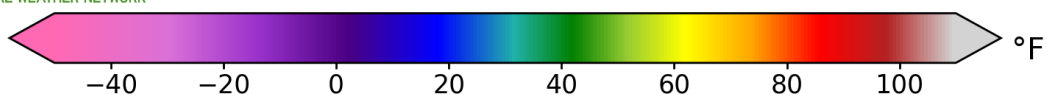


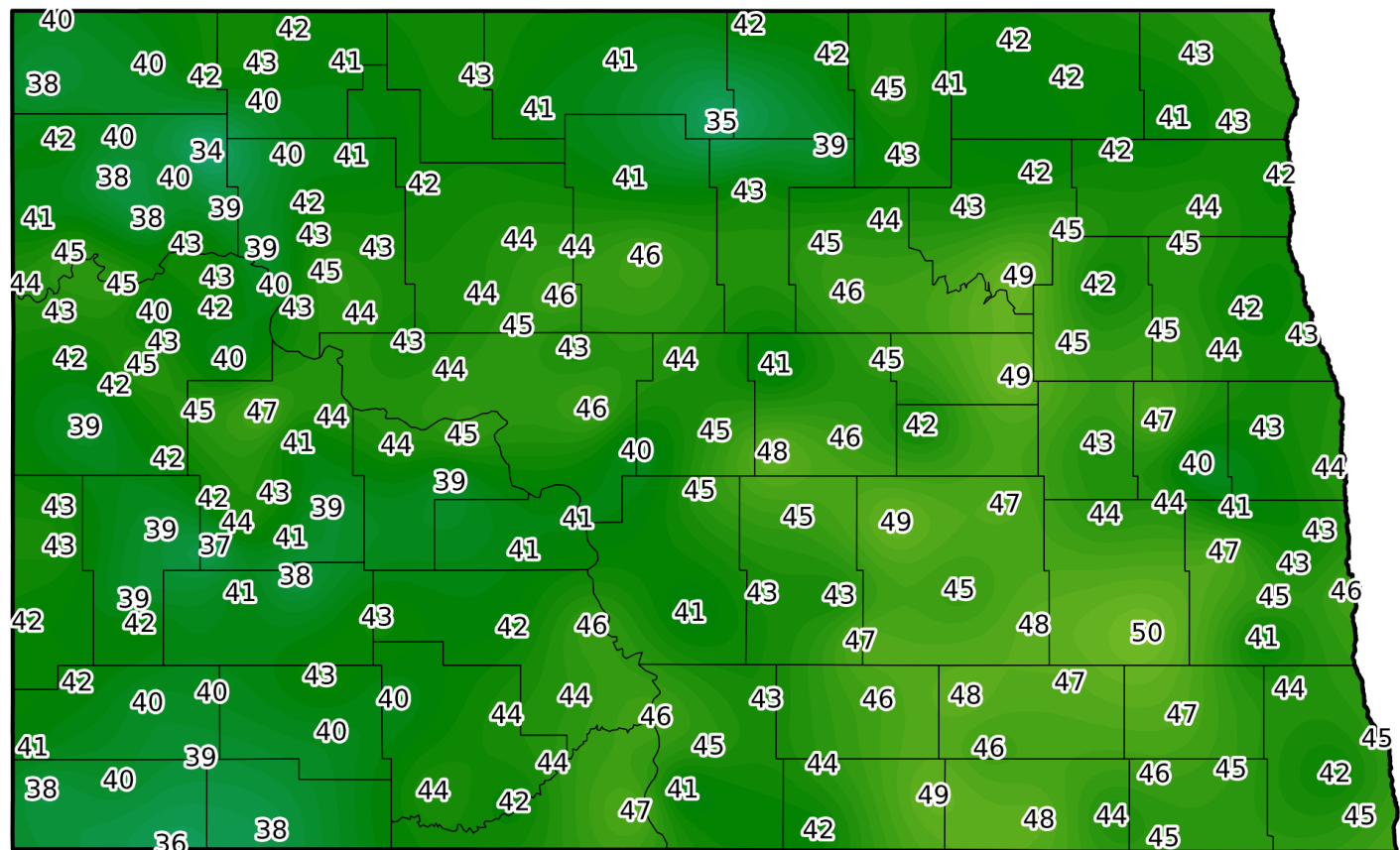
Figure 7: Maximum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in August 2026

Temperature

The lowest temperature recorded during August at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was 34.3°F on August 7 at Tioga 7NW NDAWN in Williams County (Figure 8).

Minimum Temperature (°F)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026



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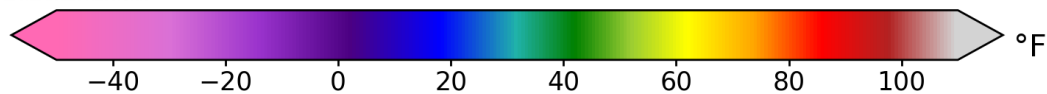


Figure 8: Minimum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in August 2026

North Dakota August 2026 Overview

Precipitation	Total	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record
	1.98"	2.19"	-0.21"	70th Wettest	4.54" (1900)
				63rd Driest	0.73" (1929, 1933)

Temperature	Average T	Avg Max T	Avg Min T	Maximum	Minimum
	67.4°F	81.4°F	53.4°F	105.8°F	34.3°F
Anomaly	-0.4°F	+0.2°F	-1.0°F		
Rank					
Warmest	61st Warmest	62nd Warmest	63rd Warmest		
Coollest	68th Coolest	70th Coolest	67th Coolest		
Record					
Warmest	73.8°F (1983)	88.8°F (1961)	58.9°F (1983)	114°F (Medora, 1900)	20°F (Flasher, 1907)
Coollest	61.2°F (1977)	74.0°F (1911)	47.7°F (1977)		

Table 2: August precipitation & temperature summary for North Dakota. 2026 statistics from NDAWN station data. Ranking and records based on NCEI climate data (1895-2026) (NOAA).

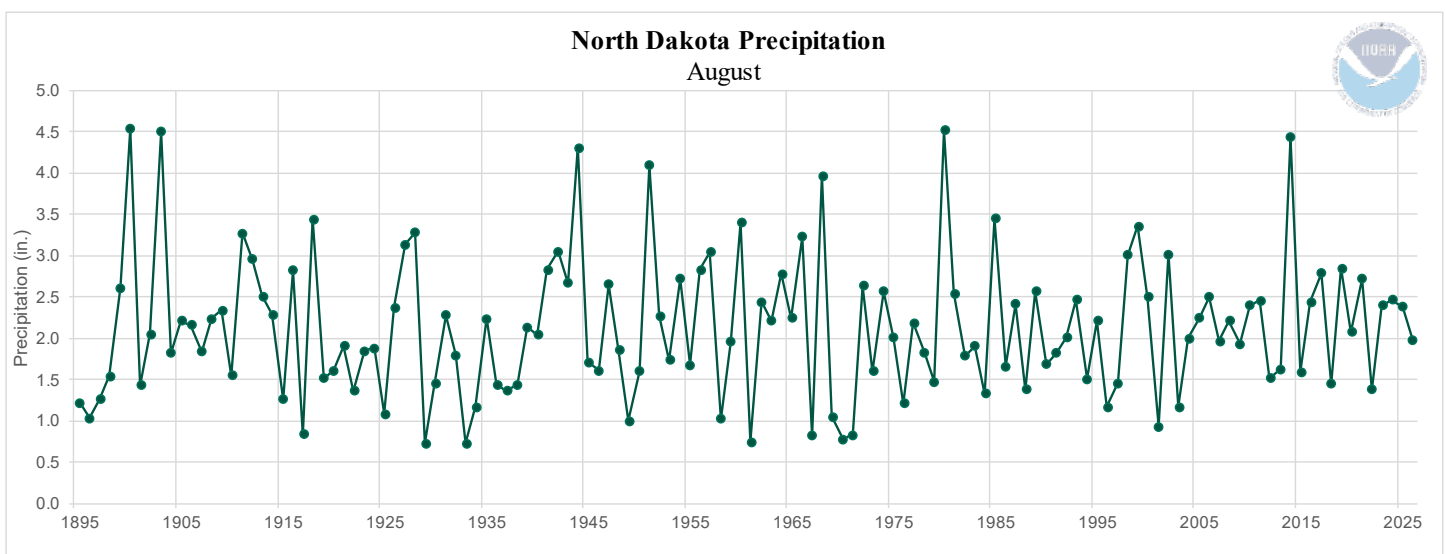


Figure 9: Average Precipitation in North Dakota for August (via NCEI)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026

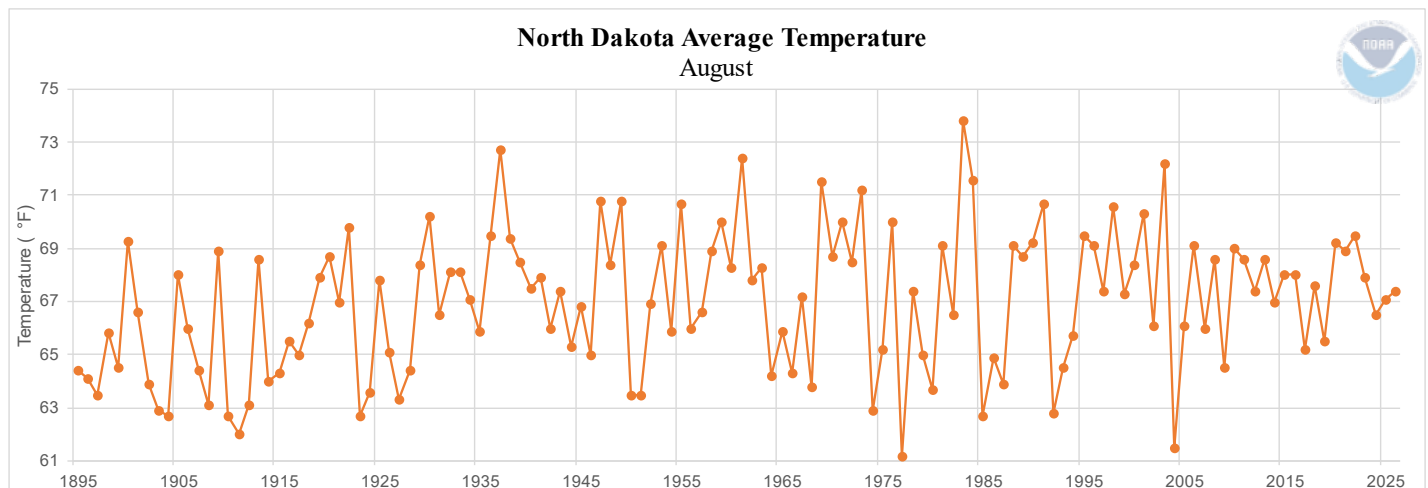
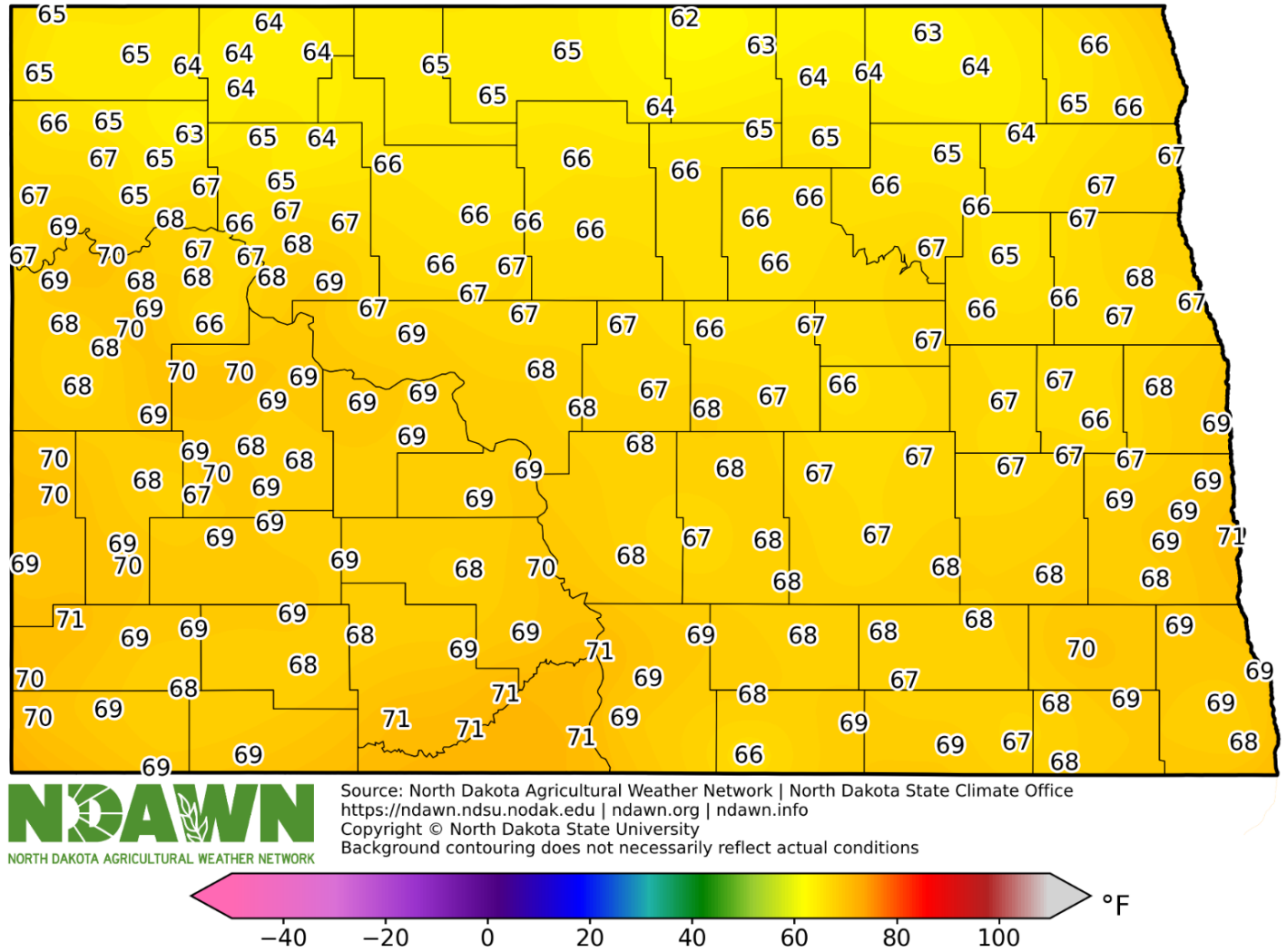


Figure 10: Average Air Temperature for August 2026 at NDAWN stations (top) and historically via NCEI (bottom)

Average Daily Maximum Temperature (°F)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026

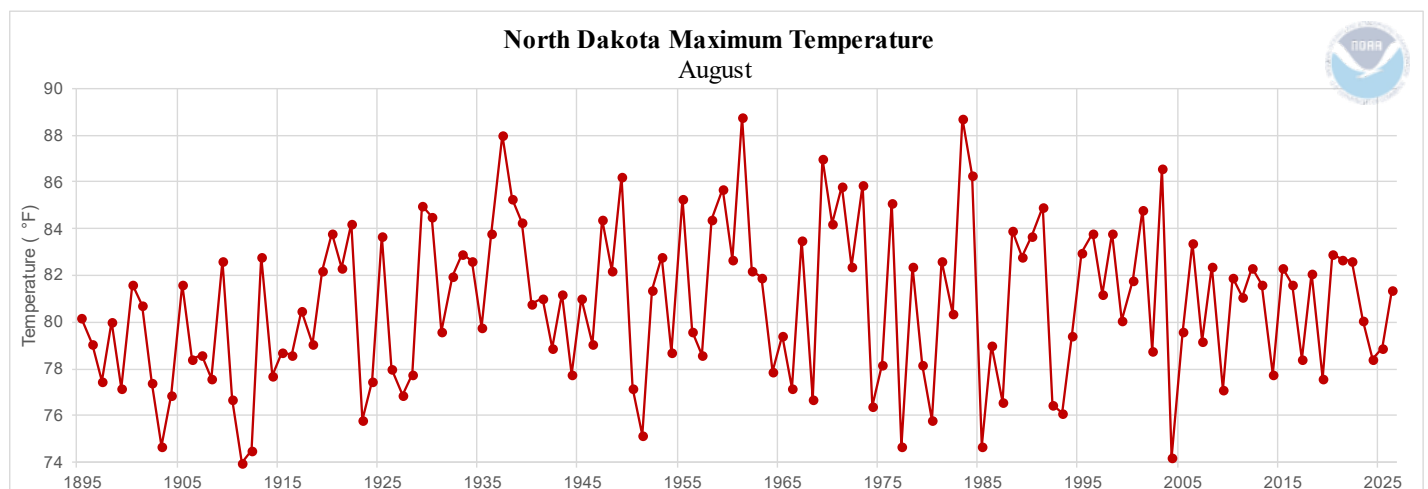
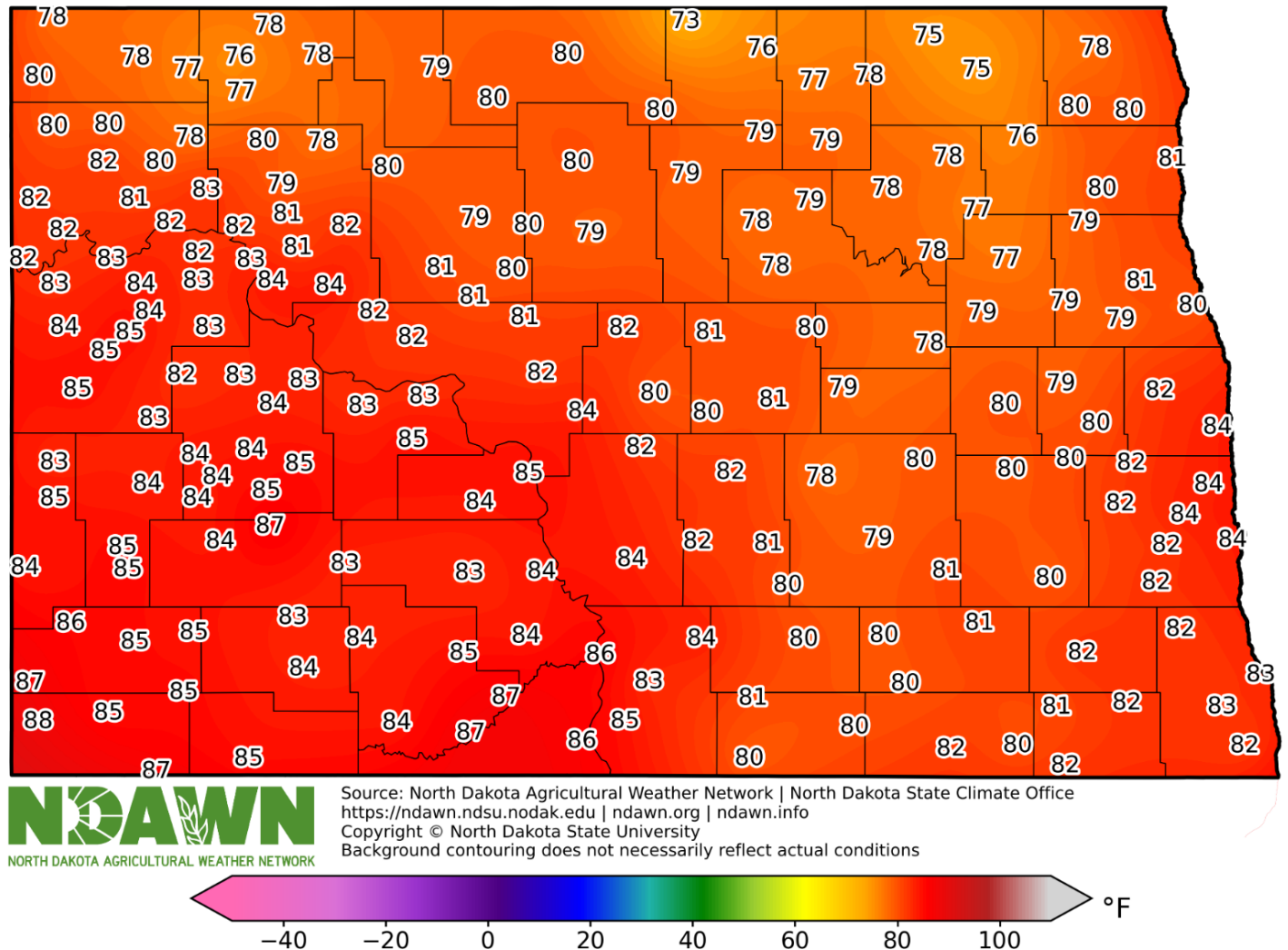
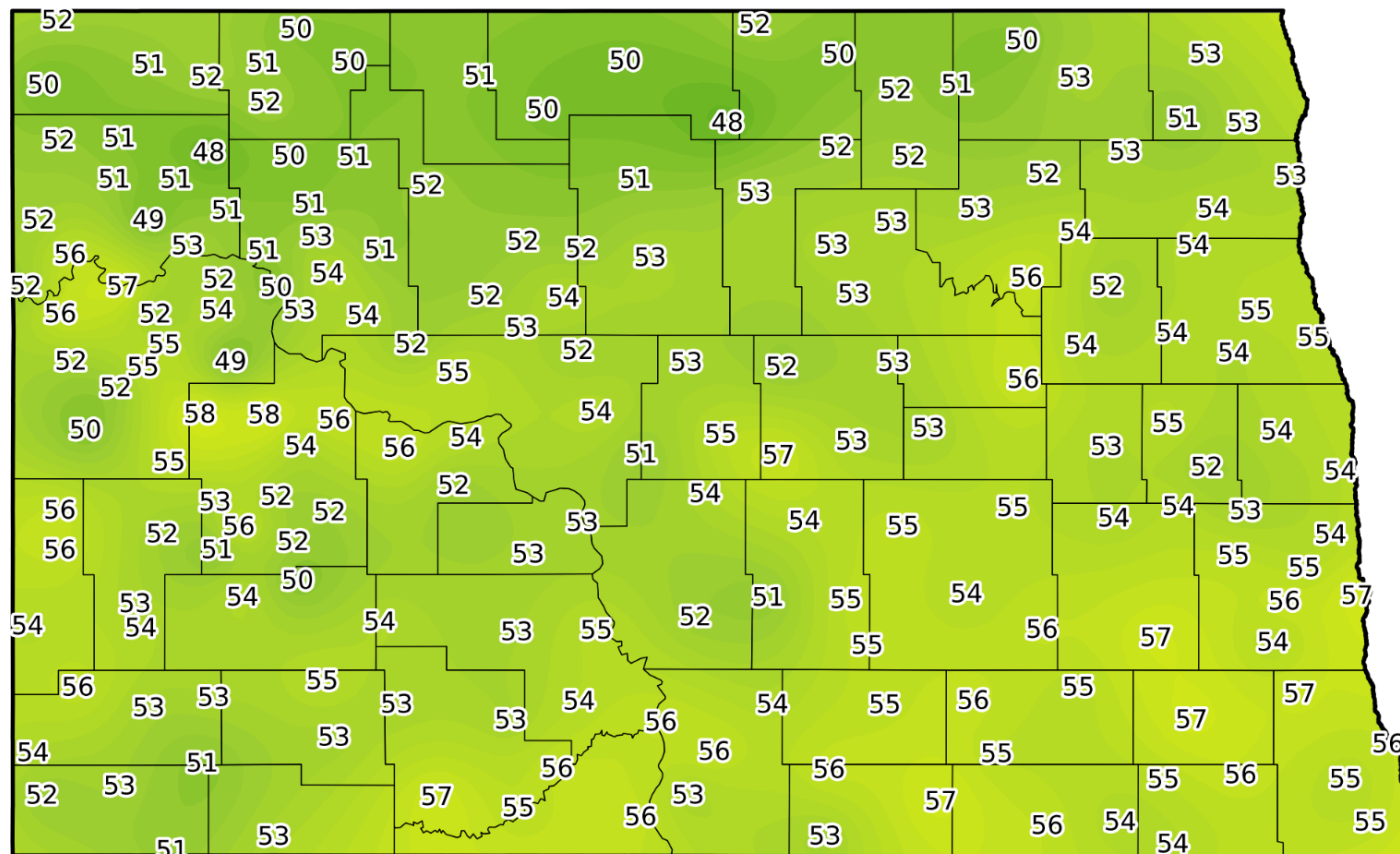


Figure 11: Average Maximum Temperature for August 2026 at NDAWN stations (top) and historically via NCEI (bottom)

Average Daily Minimum Temperature (°F)

08-01-2026 - 08-31-2026



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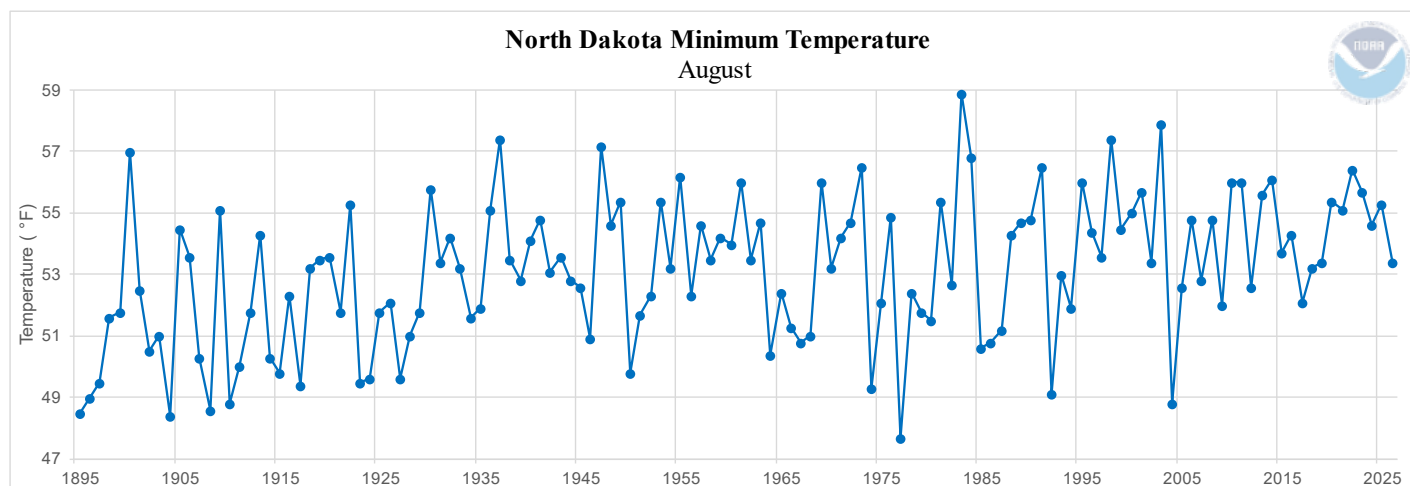
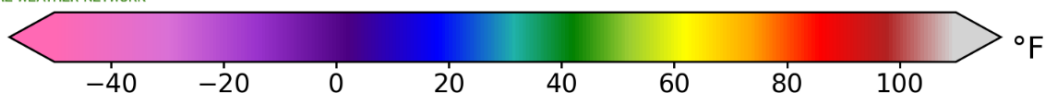


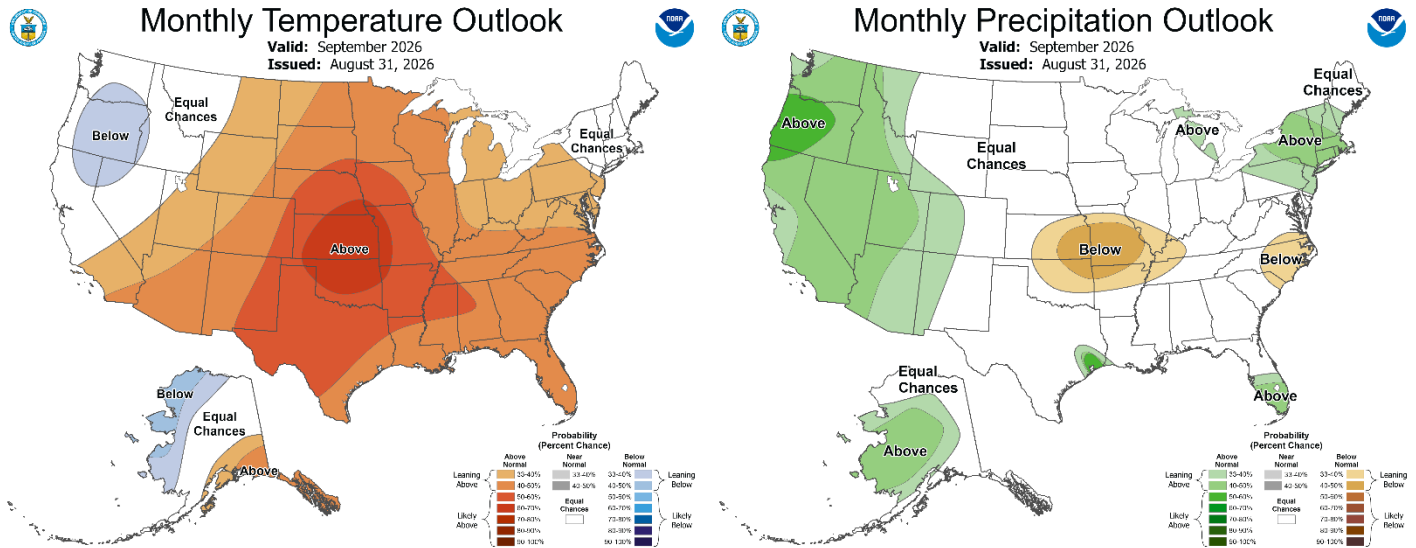
Figure 12: Average Minimum Temperature for August 2026 at NDAWN stations (top) and historically via NCEI (bottom)

August 2026 City Overview

	Total // Average	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record
Bismarck					
Precipitation	1.45"	3.59"	-2.14"	81st Wettest	9.29" (1998)
				71st Driest	0.01" (2001)
Temperature	71.0°F	69.6°F	+0.4°F	38th Warmest	75.6°F (2003)
				112th Coolest	62.0°F (1977)
Fargo					
Precipitation	0.82"	2.56"	-1.74"	135th Wettest	9.58" (1900)
				12th Driest	0.18" (1984)
Temperature	70.6°F	69.0°F	+1.6°F	34th Warmest	74.1°F (1937)
				111th Coolest	61.5°F (1885)
Grand Forks					
Precipitation	3.00"	3.03"	-0.03"	46th Wettest	12.16" (1944)
				84th Driest	0.07" (1915)
Temperature	69.2°F	68.1°F	+1.1°F	42nd Warmest	74.5°F (1983)
				89th Coolest	60.8°F (2004)
Williston					
Precipitation	2.70"	1.57"	+1.13"	15th Wettest	5.06" (1947)
				106th Driest	0.03" (2001)
Temperature	68.1°F	69.0°F	-0.9°F	65th Warmest	78.0°F (1983)
				53rd Coolest	61.5°F (1977)

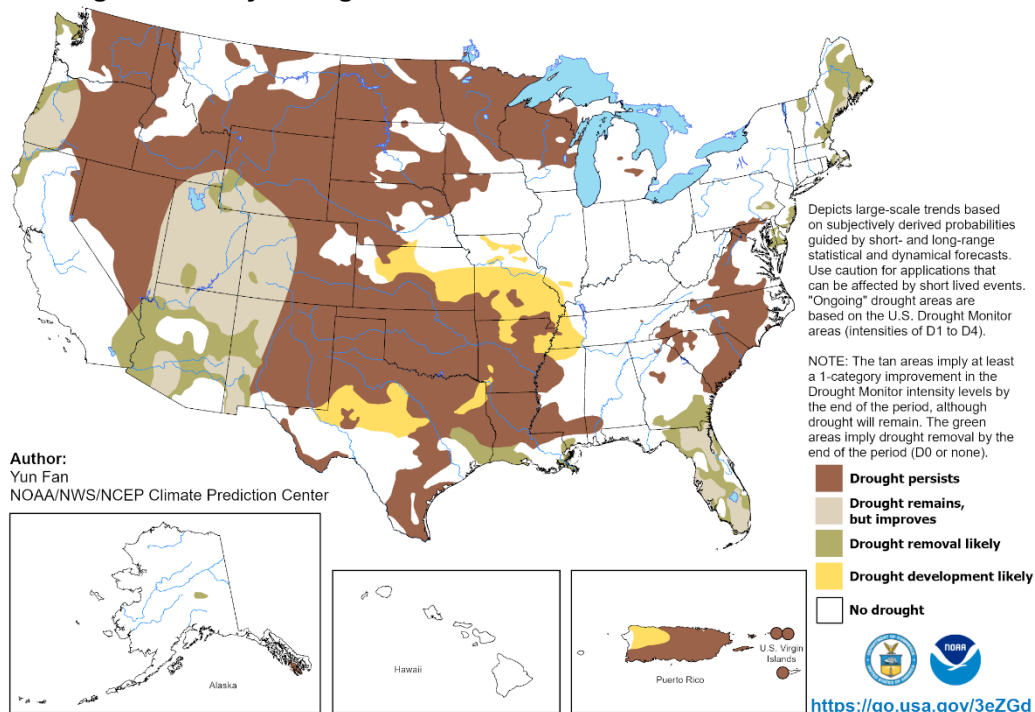
Table 3: August precipitation & temperature summary for select North Dakota cities. Ranking and records based on NCEI climate data (Bismarck 1875-2026; Fargo 1881-2026; Grand Forks 1893-2026; Williston 1907-2026) (NOAA).

Monthly Outlook for September 2026



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

Valid for September 2026
Released August 31, 2026



Editor: Julia Poblotski
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