



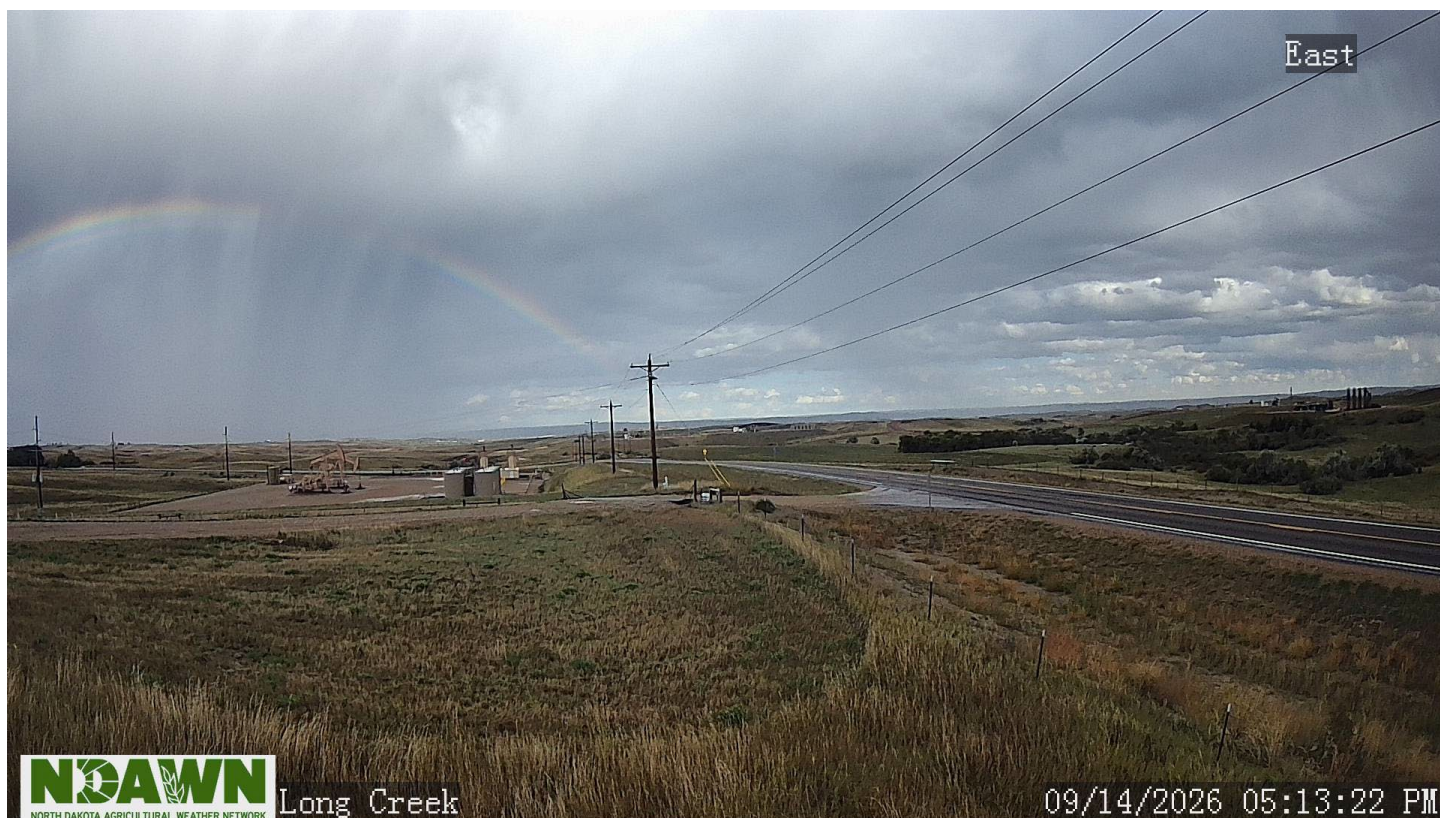
Monthly Climate Summary

Volume 20, No. 9



September

2026



Rain interrupts a rainbow at Long Creek NDAWN.

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September 2026 continued the pattern of warmer than normal early autumn weather in North Dakota. Like the past several years, September finished well above normal for temperatures. Although the growing season was poor because of the summer drought, most of the state did not record a freeze during the month, extending the growing season slightly. On the whole, most of the North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN) stations in the state recorded an average temperature between 2°F and 5°F above the current 30-year average (FIGURE 1).

Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F) 09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026

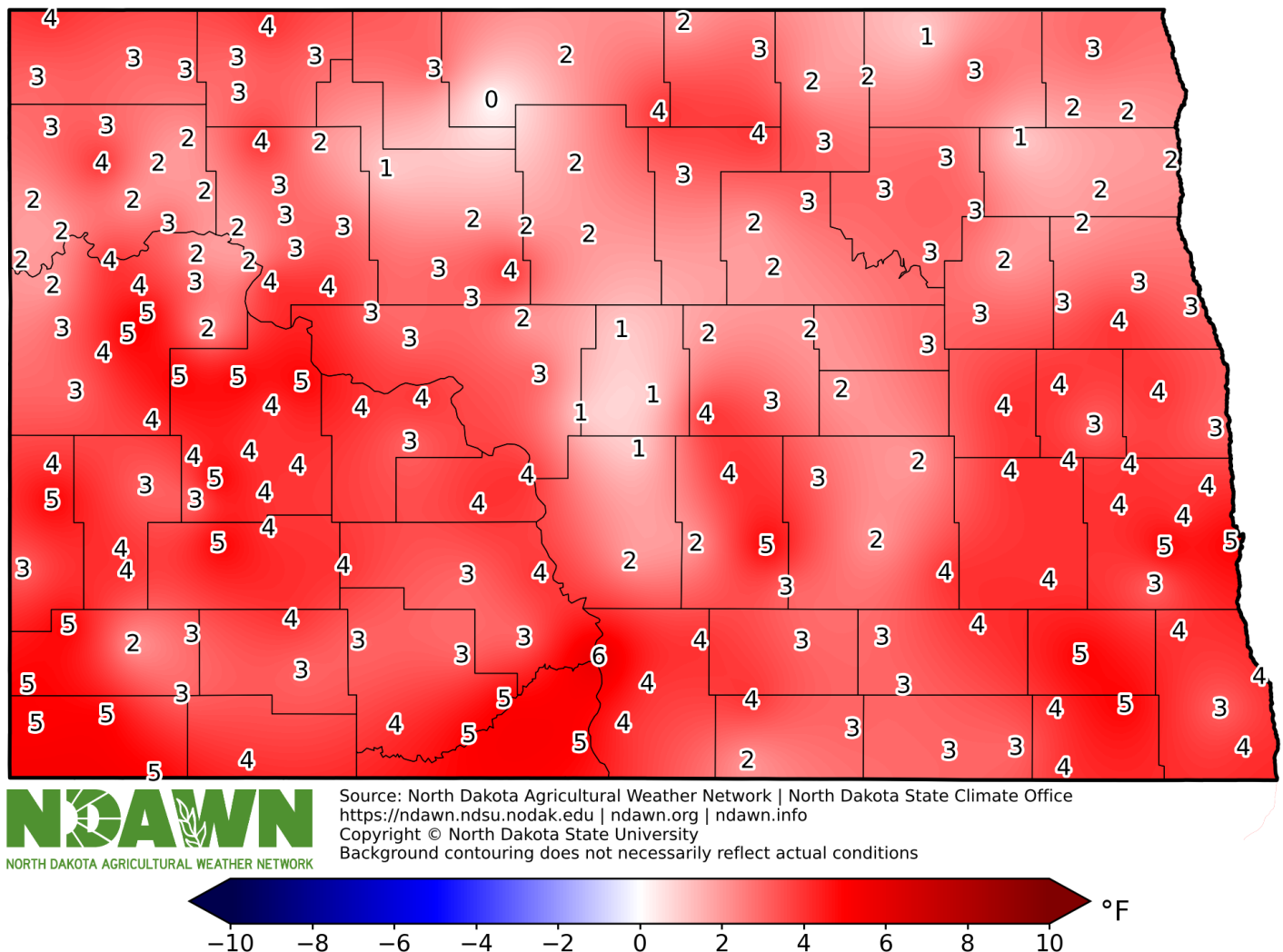


Figure 1: Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations during September 2026

Precipitation Summary

September 2026 Statewide Average Precipitation: 2.96"

Percent of Normal Statewide Precipitation: 153%

After recording a very dry summer, much of North Dakota recorded a very wet September. There were exceptions, especially in southwestern and the far southeastern corner of the state, yet elsewhere, rain near or above 200% of average was common (FIGURE 2). Although this did not eliminate the long-term precipitation deficits experienced during the summer, it did certainly improve the short-term soil moisture. Because the rain occurred late in season, much of the moisture will stay in the soil and be useable in the 2027 growing season.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026

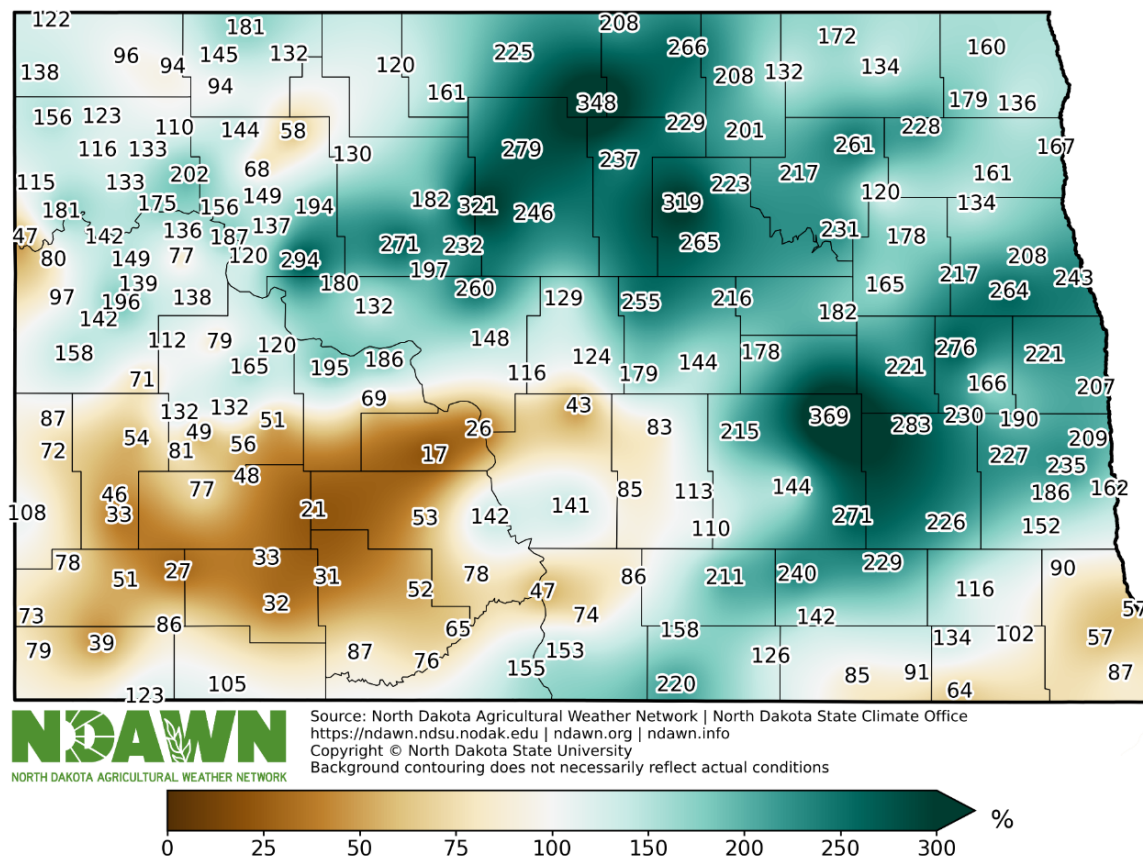


Figure 2: Percent of Normal Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations in September 2026

Precipitation

The maximum monthly precipitation recorded by NDAWN in North Dakota during the month of September was 7.97" at the Courtenay 5W station in Stutsman County, 369% of normal (FIGURE 3). The majority of that rain, 5.89", fell between September 28-29, producing an impressive two-day total. On the other side of the spectrum, the minimum monthly precipitation was in Oliver County at the Center 5S station with 0.35" of precipitation, 17% of normal.

East Central North Dakota received more rain in September, with an average of 5.23", than the meteorological summer (June – August), 4.38", despite the current 30-year average rainfall amounts being 2.59" and 9.95", respectively.

Total Precipitation (in)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026

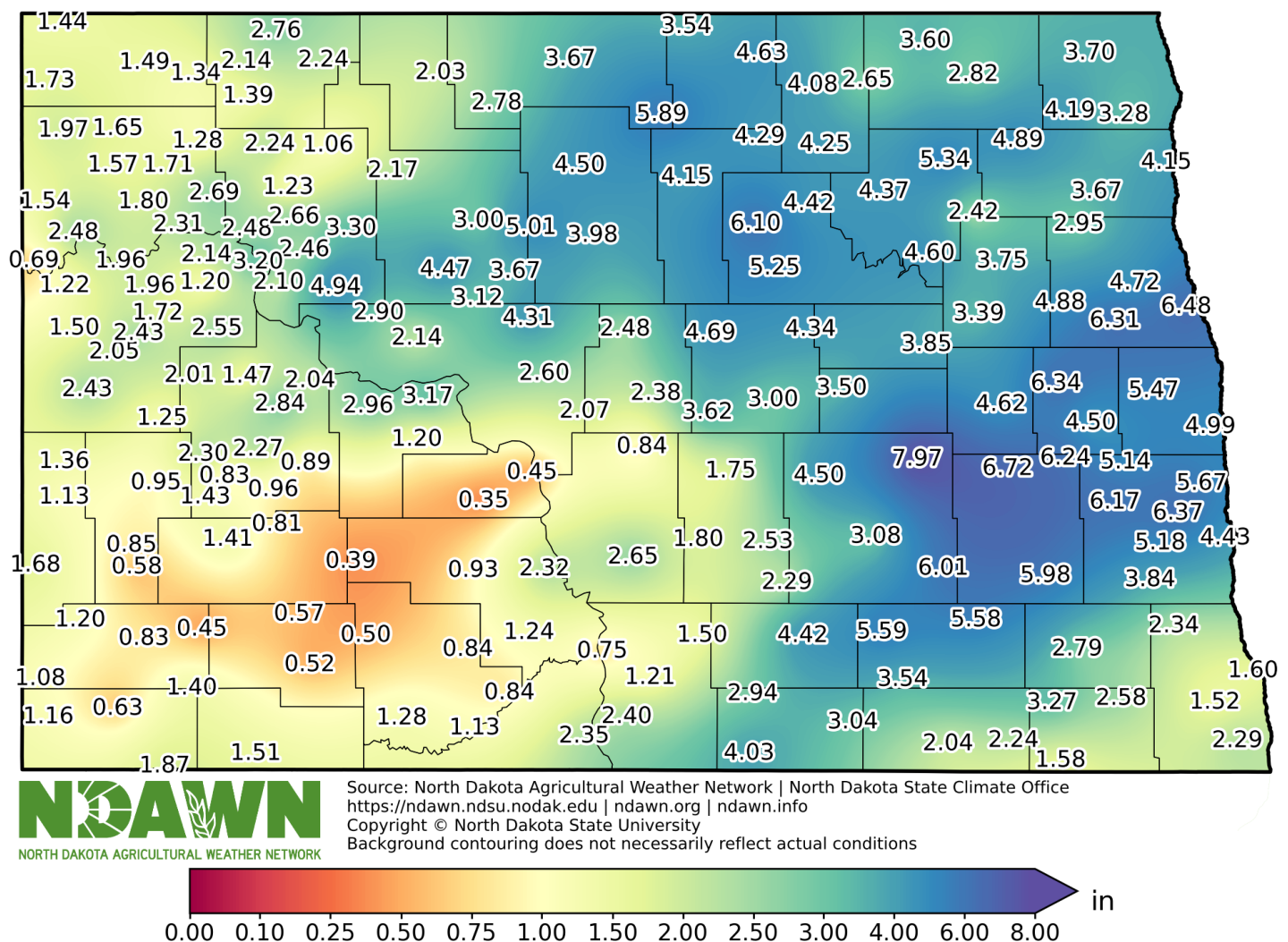


Figure 3: Total Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations in September 2026

Long-Term Precipitation Summary

As the calendar page flips from September to October, it marks the start of a new water year. The concluding water year, running from October 2025 through September 2026, averaged 18.01" of precipitation statewide, which is 93% or -1.43" of normal (FIGURE 4). However, as is typical of the North Dakotan climate, the precipitation was not evenly distributed. The central and southern Red River Valley was very dry, the northern half of the state was generally wetter, and the rest of the state was generally slightly drier than normal.

Total Precipitation (in)

10-01-2025 - 09-30-2026

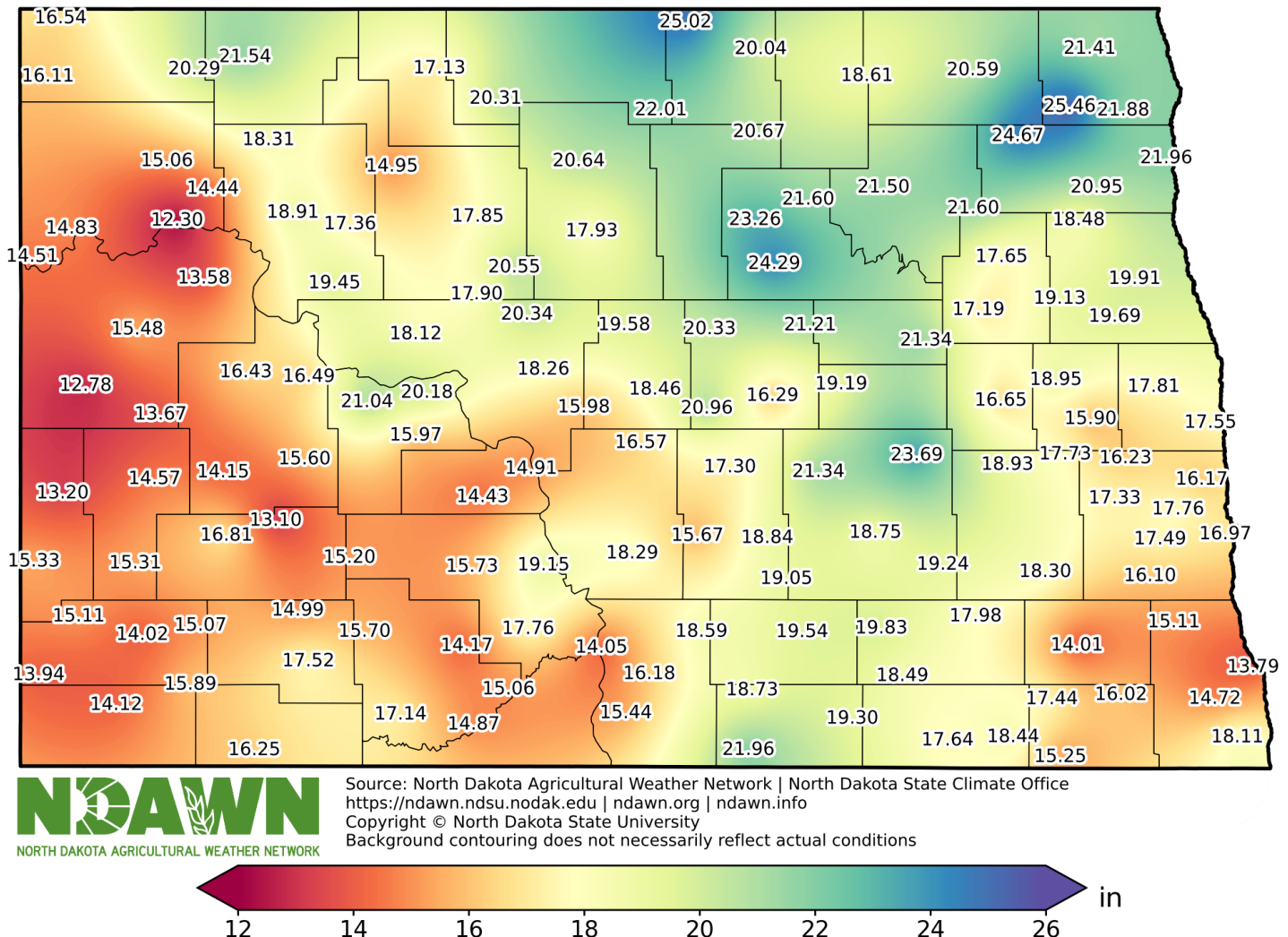
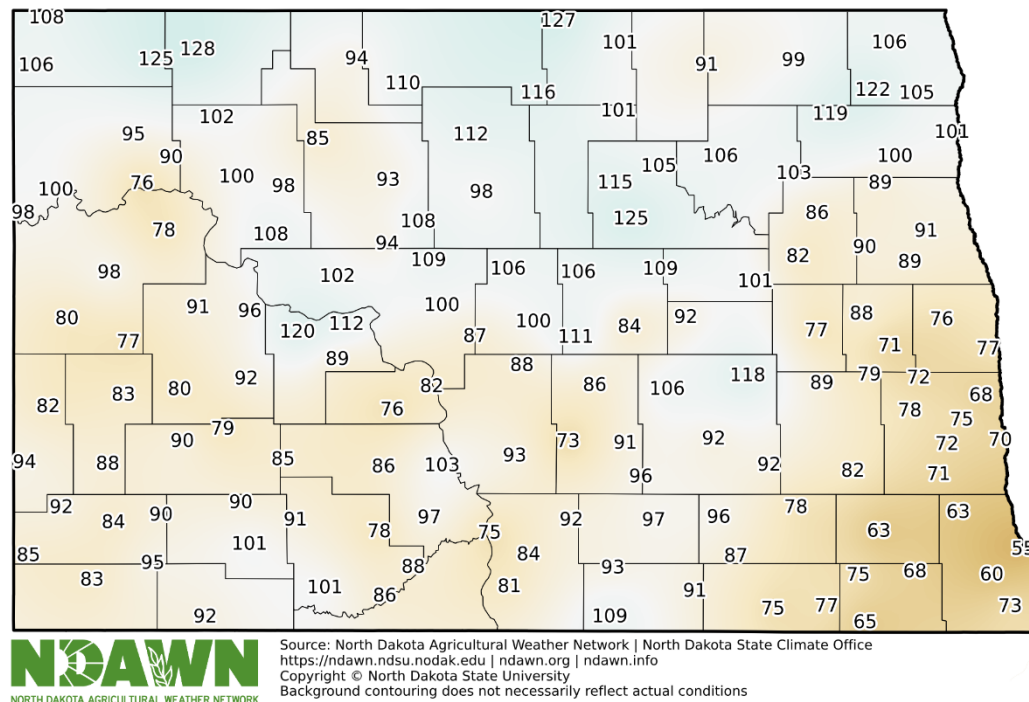


Figure 4: Total Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations for the concluding water year. Percent of and Departure from Normal Precipitation are on the following page.

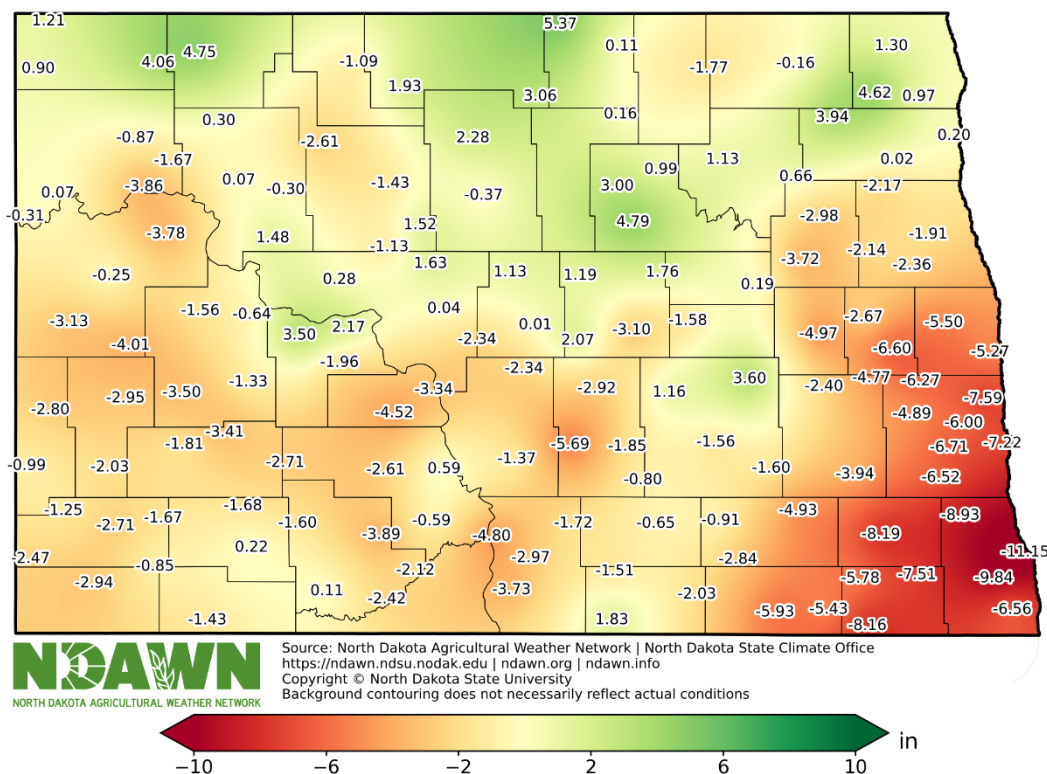
Precipitation



Percent of Normal Precipitation (%) 10-01-2025 - 09-30-2026



Departure from Normal Precipitation (in) 10-01-2025 - 09-30-2026



Improvements were seen in the U.S. Drought Monitor during September. The northern third of the state was able to be removed from any drought category completely, thanks to an average of 3.35" of precipitation (185% of normal) across Northwest, North Central, and Northeast North Dakota (FIGURE 5). Far southeastern North Dakota, however, continued the trend from previous months and missed out on much of the precipitation that the rest of eastern North Dakota received, expanding Extreme Drought conditions.

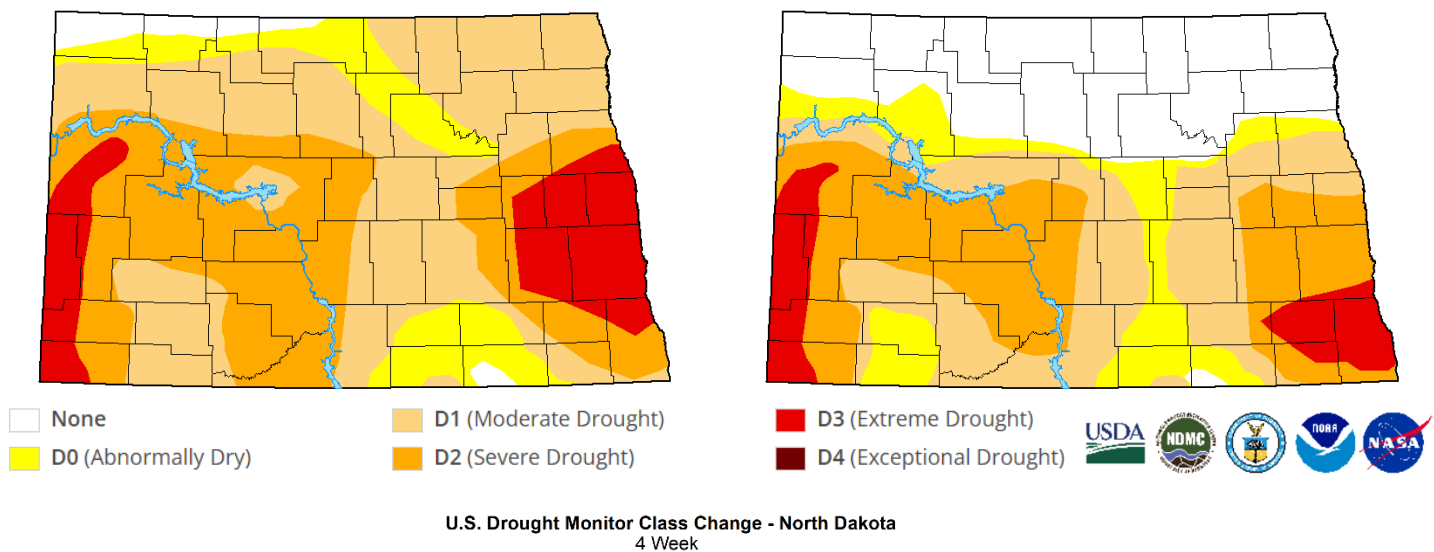


Figure 5: U.S. Drought Monitor conditions September 1 (top left), September 29 (top right), and Class Change (bottom)

Table 1: Categorical Percent Area and Overall Change in the U.S. Drought Monitor Throughout September

Week	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
2026-09-01	2.81	11.32	39.89	33.03	12.95	0.00
2026-09-29	28.79	12.76	24.95	25.97	7.54	0.00
Change	+25.98	+1.44	-14.94	-7.06	-5.41	0.00

Source: U.S. Drought Monitor

Temperature Summary

September 2026 Statewide Average Temperature: 61.4°F

Departure from Normal Statewide Temperature: 3.2°F above normal

If it feels like the past few Septembers have been quite nice temperature-wise, you would be correct. The previous five Septembers all ranked in the Top 15 for warmest Septembers on record for North Dakota. September 2026 has joined that list, tied for 13th warmest, pushing 2022's September out (TABLE 2). There are two other instances where 5 or more years within a single 10-year span are on a Top 15 rankings list for statewide average temperature: 5 times between 1983 and 1992 for warmest Februarys and 6 times between 1903 and 1912 for coolest Augusts.

Table 2: Top 16 Warmest Septembers on Record for North Dakota

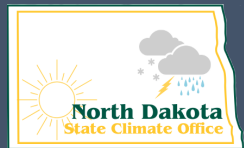
Rank	Year	Average Temperature [°F]
1	2024	64.6
2	1897	63.5
Tied 3	1948, 2009	63.3
5	1940	62.5
6	1998	62.4
Tied 7	2021, 2025	62.2
Tied 9	2013, 2015	62.0
Tied 11	1906, 2023	61.9
Tied 13	1938, 2026	61.4
15	1978	61.2
16	2022	61.0

Source: NDAWN (2024-2026), NWS Climate Data (1895-2026) (NOAA)

Additionally, September 2026 set the record for highest average minimum temperature with 50.2°F, beating out the 49.7°F from 2024 and 2009. Among these Top 15 rankings, 6 are since 2019.

Temperature

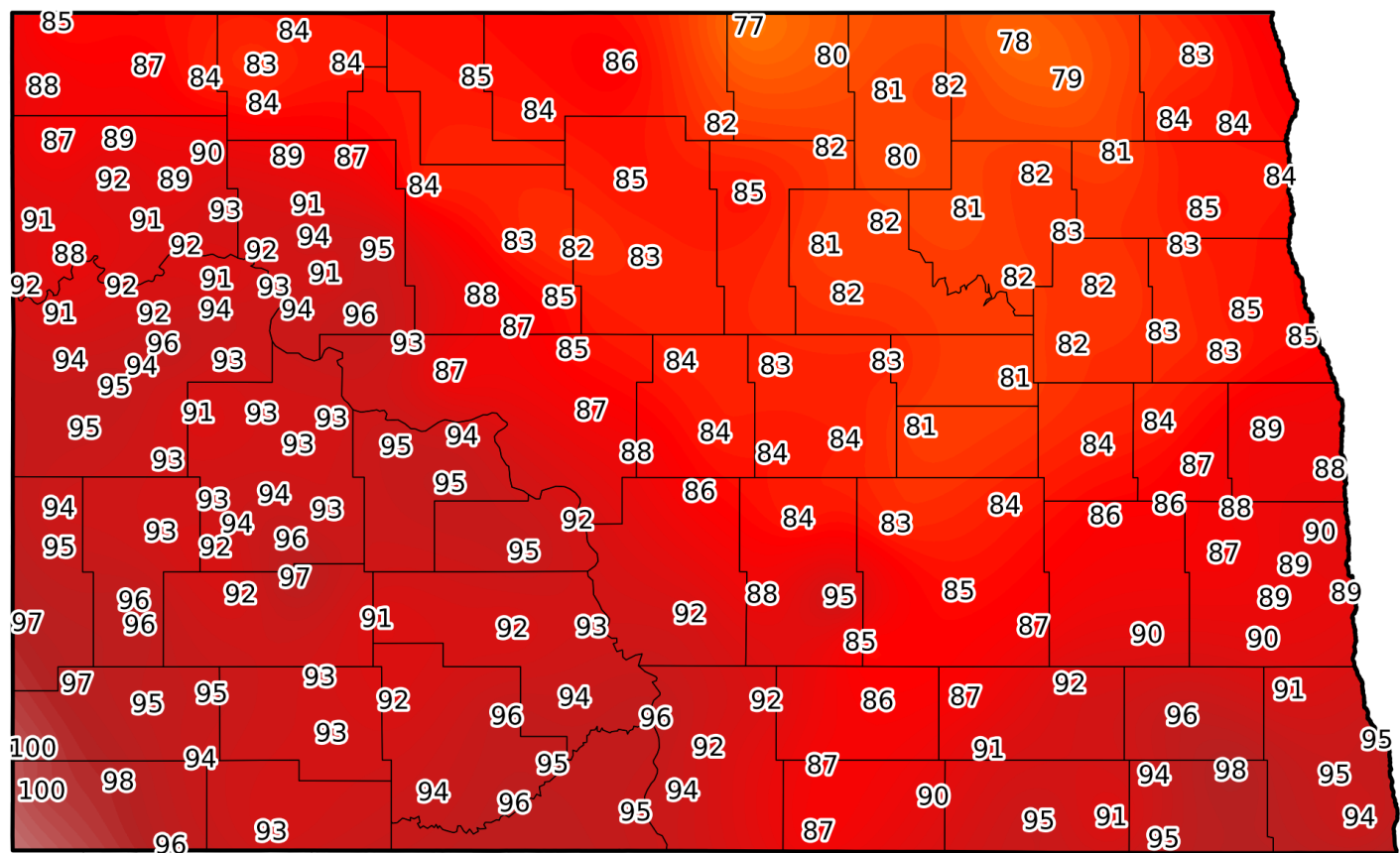
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The highest temperature recorded during September at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was 100.2°F at Marmarth 2N NDAWN in Slope County on September 4 (FIGURE 6). Maximum temperatures were much milder than August, with a statewide average maximum temperature of 72.6°F for September, which is 1.1°F above normal.

Maximum Temperature (°F)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026



NDAWN
NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL WEATHER NETWORK

Source: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network | North Dakota State Climate Office
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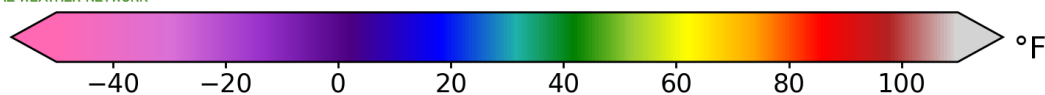


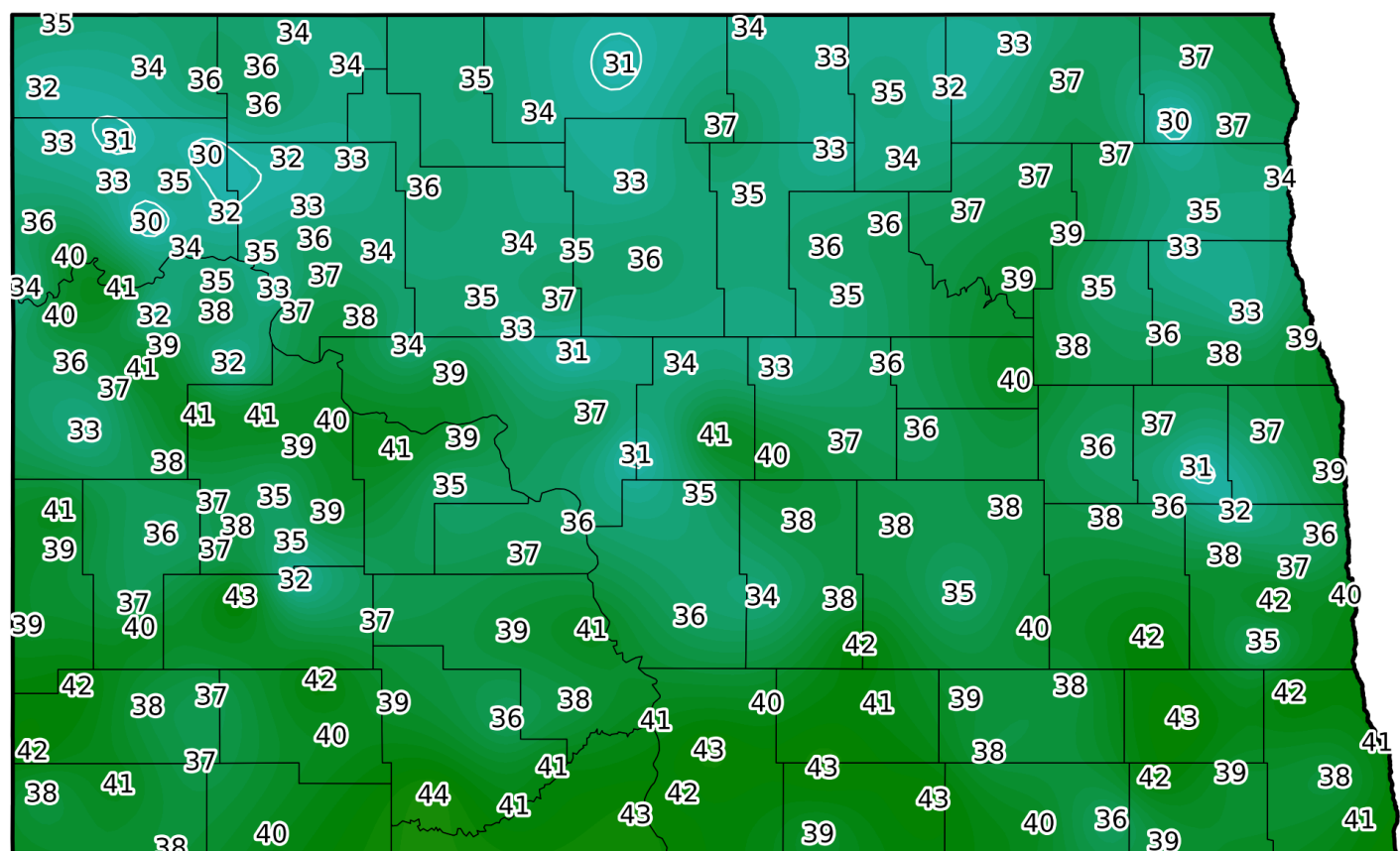
Figure 6: Maximum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in September 2026

Temperature

The first widespread frost occurred on September 13 in northwestern and north central North Dakota, with some spots seeing a freeze. The lowest temperature recorded during September at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was 30.0°F on September 30 at Epping 2SE NDAWN in Williams County (FIGURE 7). The statewide average minimum temperature was 50.2°F (5.2°F above normal), a new record high for September.

Minimum Temperature (°F)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026



NDAWN
NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL WEATHER NETWORK

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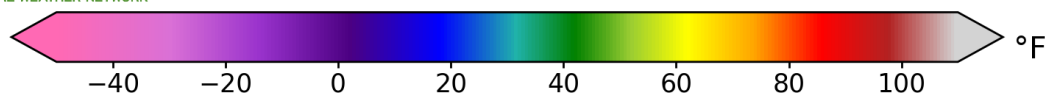


Figure 7: Minimum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in September 2026

North Dakota September 2026 Overview

Table 3: September Precipitation & Temperature Summary for North Dakota

Precipitation	Total	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record
	2.96"	1.93"	+1.03"	13th Wettest	5.90" (2019)
				120th Driest	0.20" (2012)
Temperature	Average T	Avg Max T	Avg Min T	Maximum	Minimum
	61.4°F	72.6°F	50.2°F	100.2°F	30.0°F
Anomaly	+3.2°F	+1.1°F	+5.2°F		
Rank					
Warmest	13th Warmest	39th Warmest	1st Warmest*	*The previous record for warmest average minimum temperature was 49.7°F in 2009 and 2024	
Coolest	119th Coolest	93rd Coolest	132nd Coolest		
Record					
Warmest	64.6°F (2024)	79.6°F (1897)	50.2°F (2026)	114°F (Medora, 1900)	20°F (Flasher, 1907)
Coolest	45.4°F (1965)	55.7°F (1965)	35.2°F (1965)		

Source: NDAWN (2024-2026), NWS Climate Data (1895-2026) (NOAA)

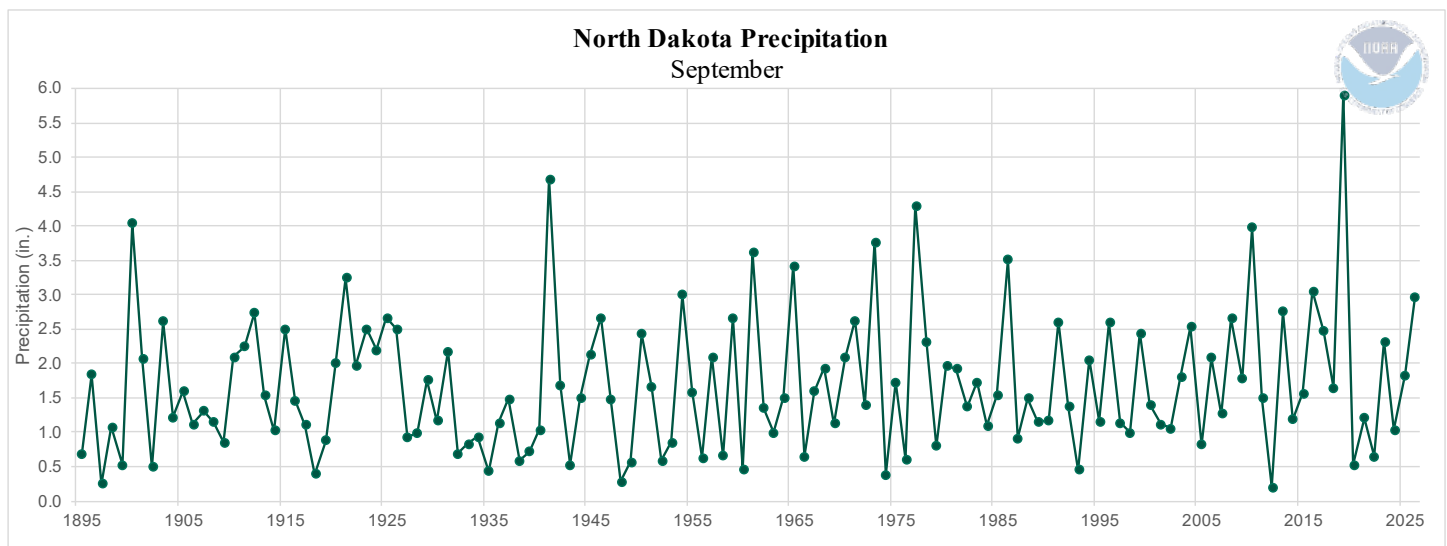
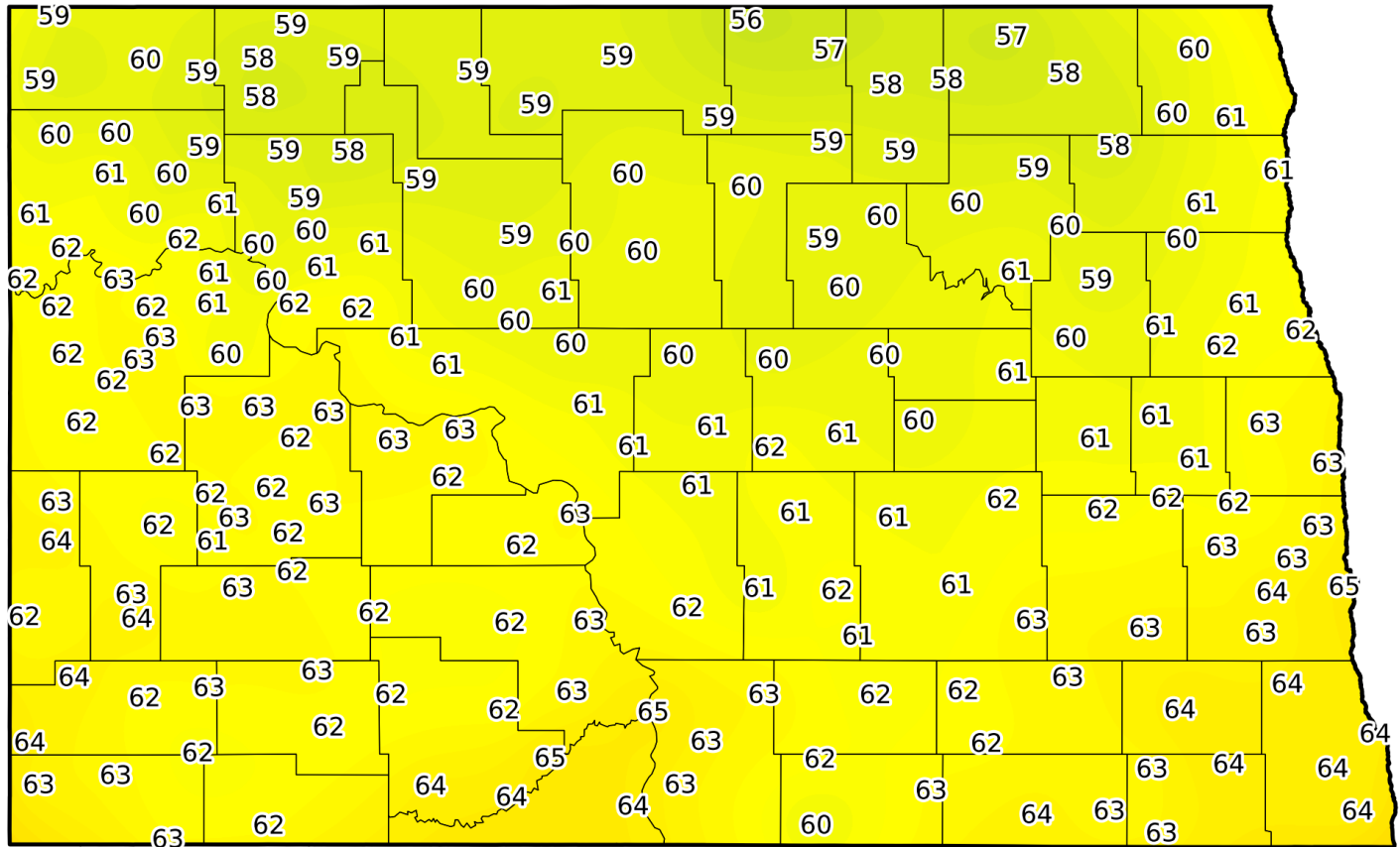


Figure 8: Average Precipitation in North Dakota for September (via NCEI)

Average Air Temperature (°F)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026



Source: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network | North Dakota State Climate Office
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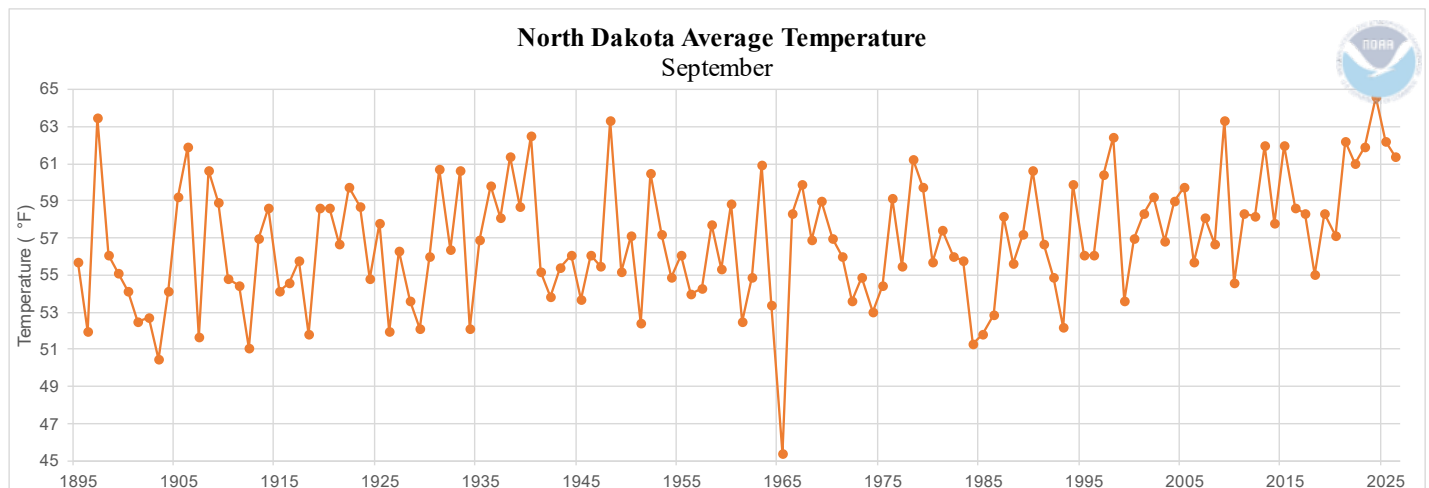
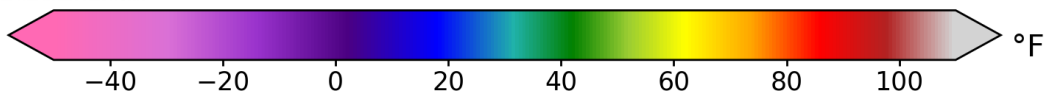
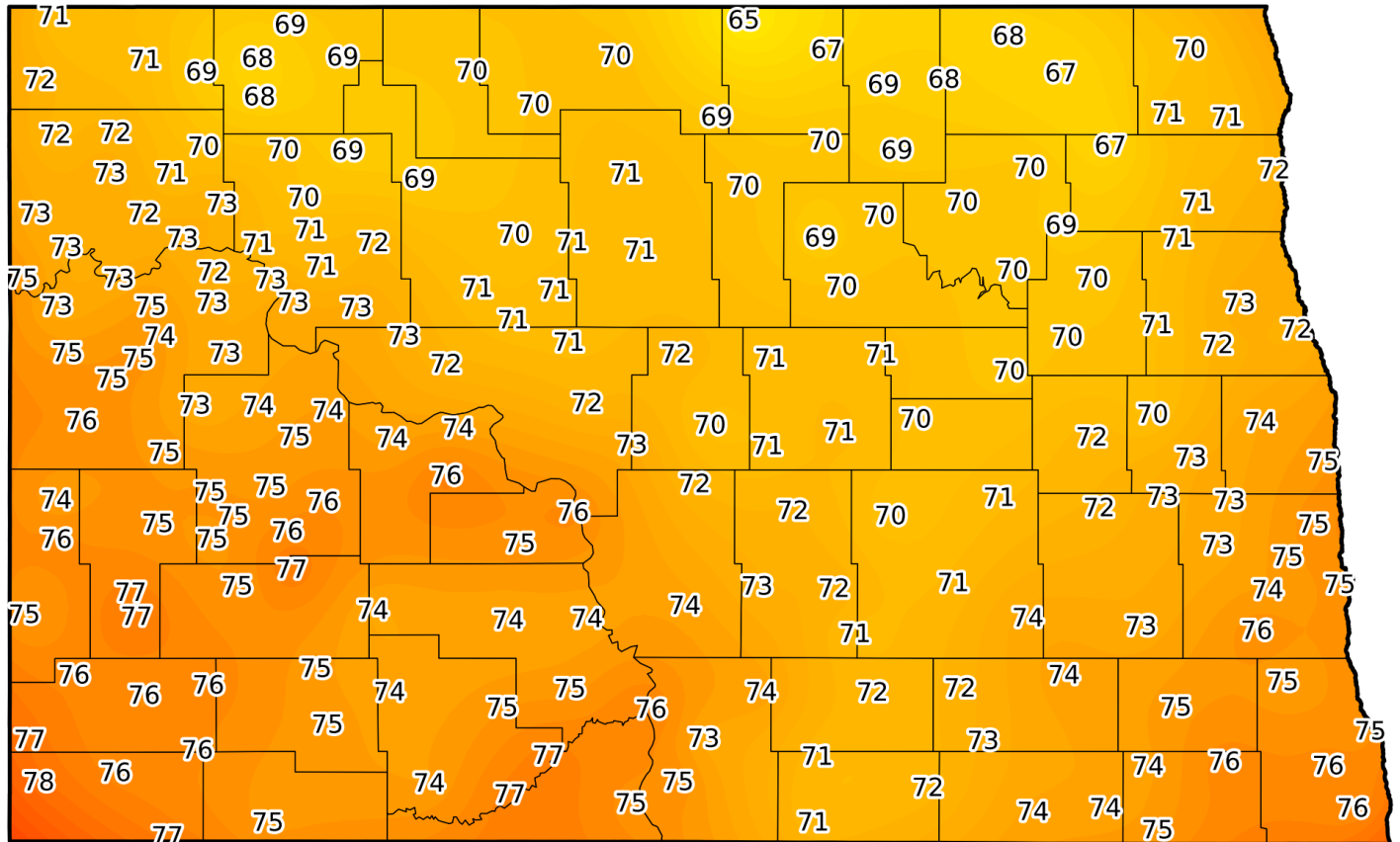


Figure 9: Average Air Temperature for September 2026 at NDAWN stations (top) and historically via NCEI (bottom)

Average Daily Maximum Temperature (°F)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026



NDAWN
NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL WEATHER NETWORK

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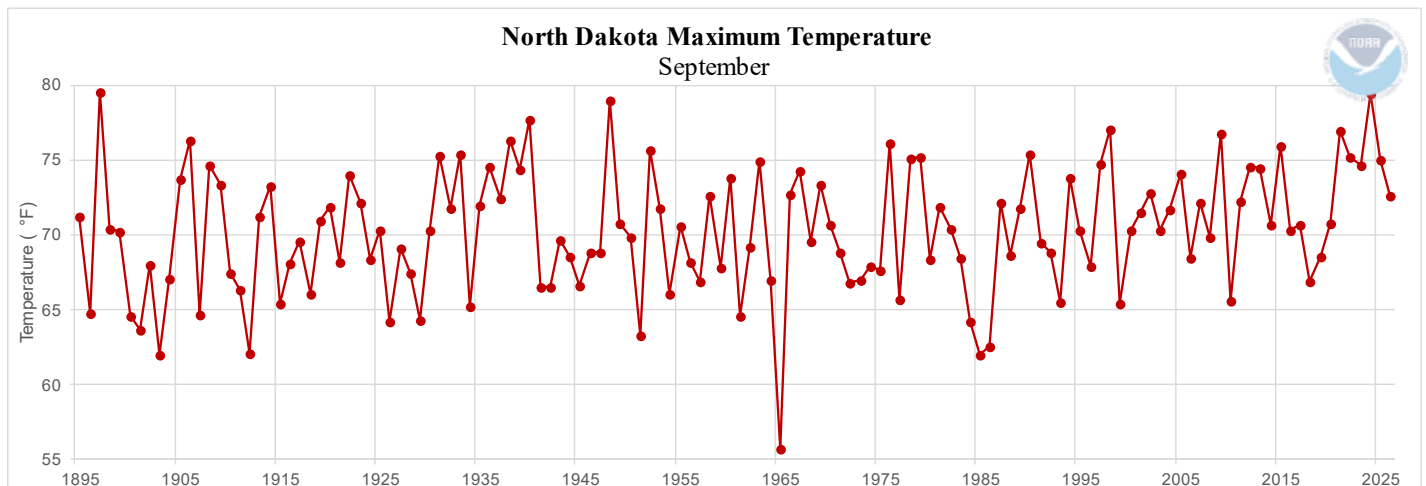
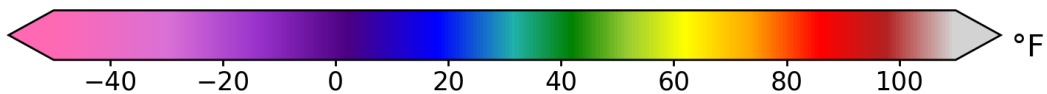


Figure 10: Average Maximum Temperature for September 2026 at NDAWN stations (top) and historically via NCEI (bottom)

09-01-2026 - 09-30-2026

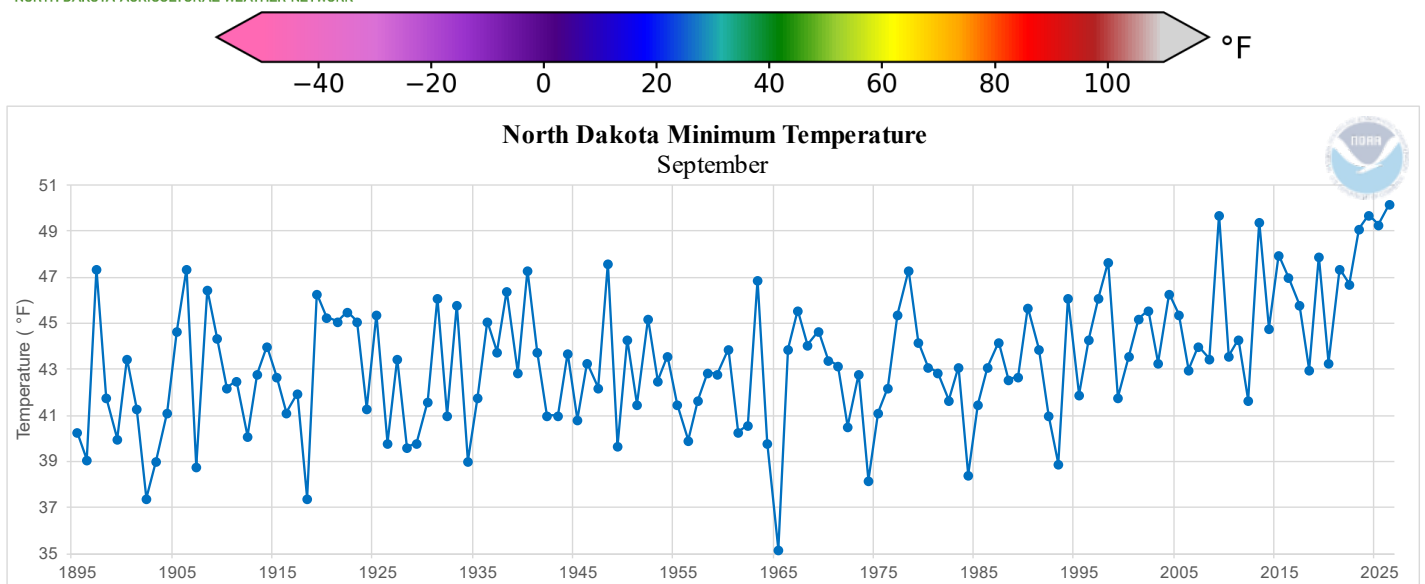
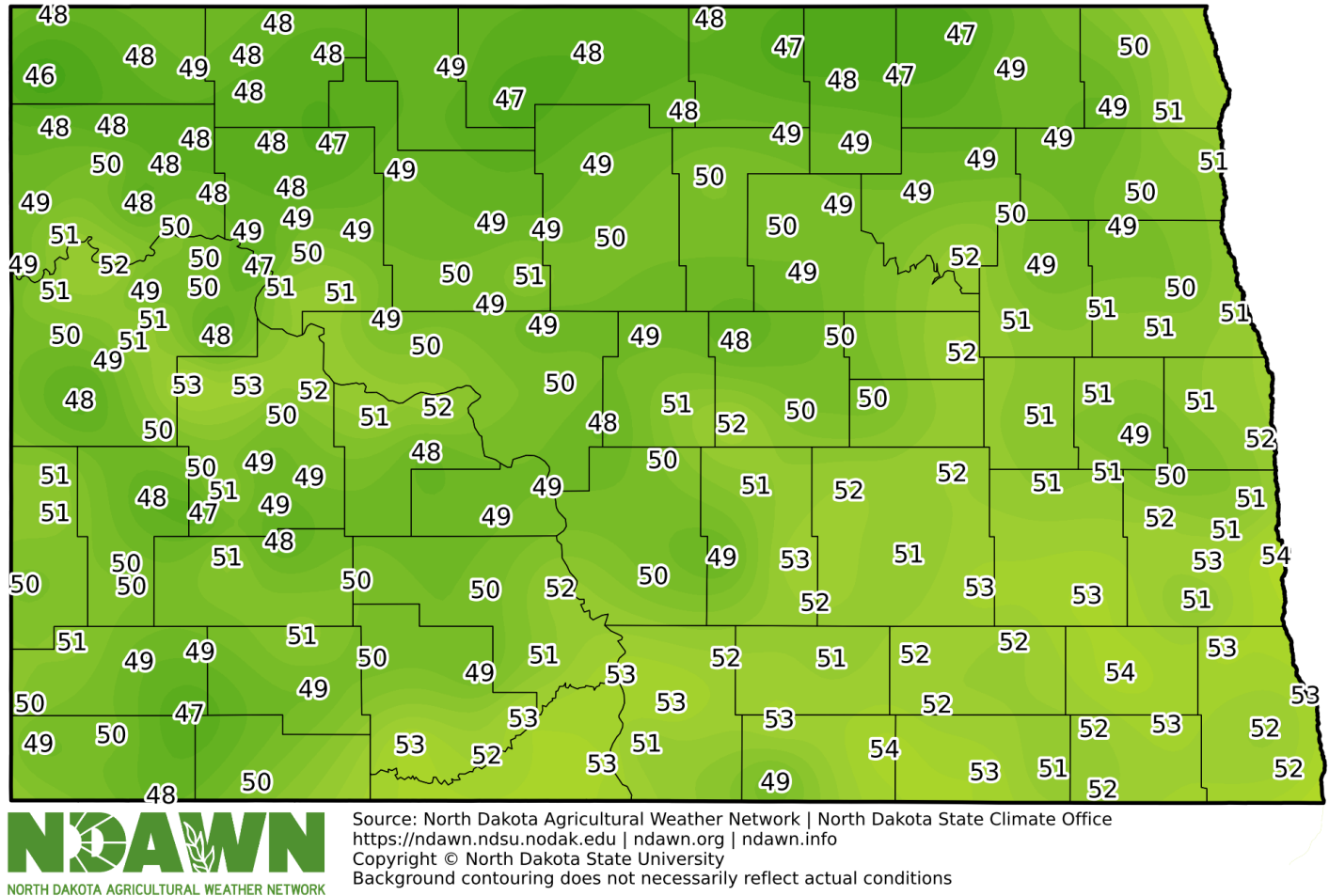


Figure 11: Average Minimum Temperature for September 2026 at NDAWN stations (top) and historically via NCEI (bottom)

September 2026 City Overview

Table 4: September Precipitation & Temperature Summary for Select North Dakota Cities

	Total // Average	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record
Bismarck					
Precipitation	2.49"	1.72"	+0.77"	21st Wettest	6.93" (1977)
				131st Driest	0.02" (1948)
Temperature	64.0°F	59.7°F	+4.3°F	9th Warmest	67.3°F (2024)
				144th Coolest	46.2°F (1965)
Fargo					
Precipitation	4.43"	2.67"	+1.76"	12th Wettest	6.50" (1999)
				135th Driest	0.08" (2024)
Temperature	64.7°F	60.3°F	+4.4°F	7th Warmest	68.2°F (2024)
				139th Coolest	48.9°F (1965)
Grand Forks					
Precipitation	5.22"	2.42"	+2.8"	6th Wettest	9.07" (2019)
				127th Driest	0.10" (1897)
Temperature	63.2°F	58.8°F	+4.4°F	8th Warmest	67.2°F (2024)
				125th Coolest	50.7°F (1918)
Williston					
Precipitation	2.31"	1.36"	+0.95"	17th Wettest	8.09" (2019)
				104th Driest	0.02" (1948)
Temperature	61.2°F	58.0°F	+3.2°F	16th Warmest	66.1°F (2024)
				104th Coolest	45.4°F (1965)

Source: NWS Climate Data (Bismarck 1875-2026; Fargo 1881-2026; Grand Forks 1893-2026; Williston 1907-2026) (NOAA)

Monthly Outlook for October 2026

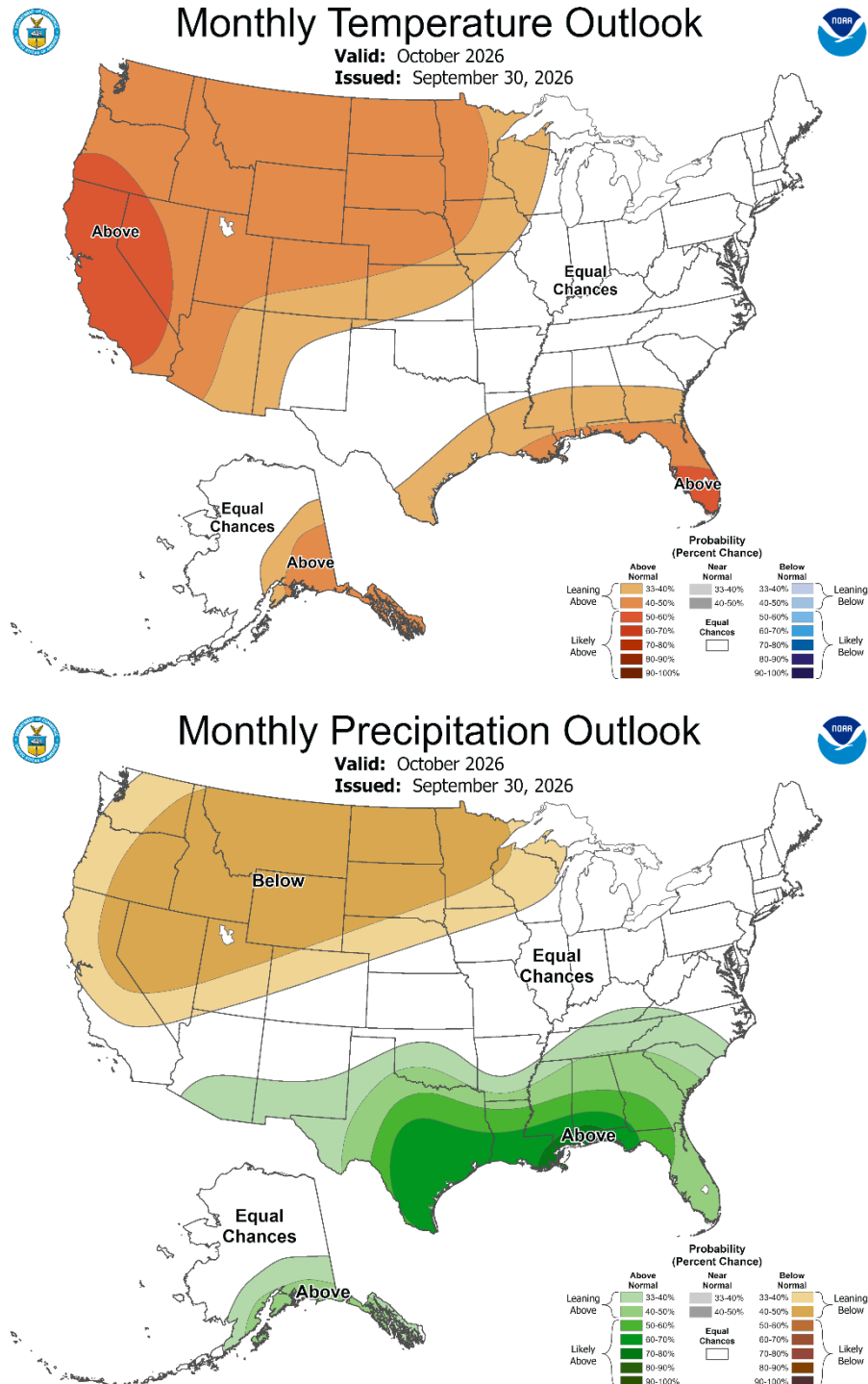


Figure 12: Temperature (top) and Precipitation (bottom) Probabilistic Outlook for October 2026 (CPC)

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

Valid for October 2026
Released September 30, 2026

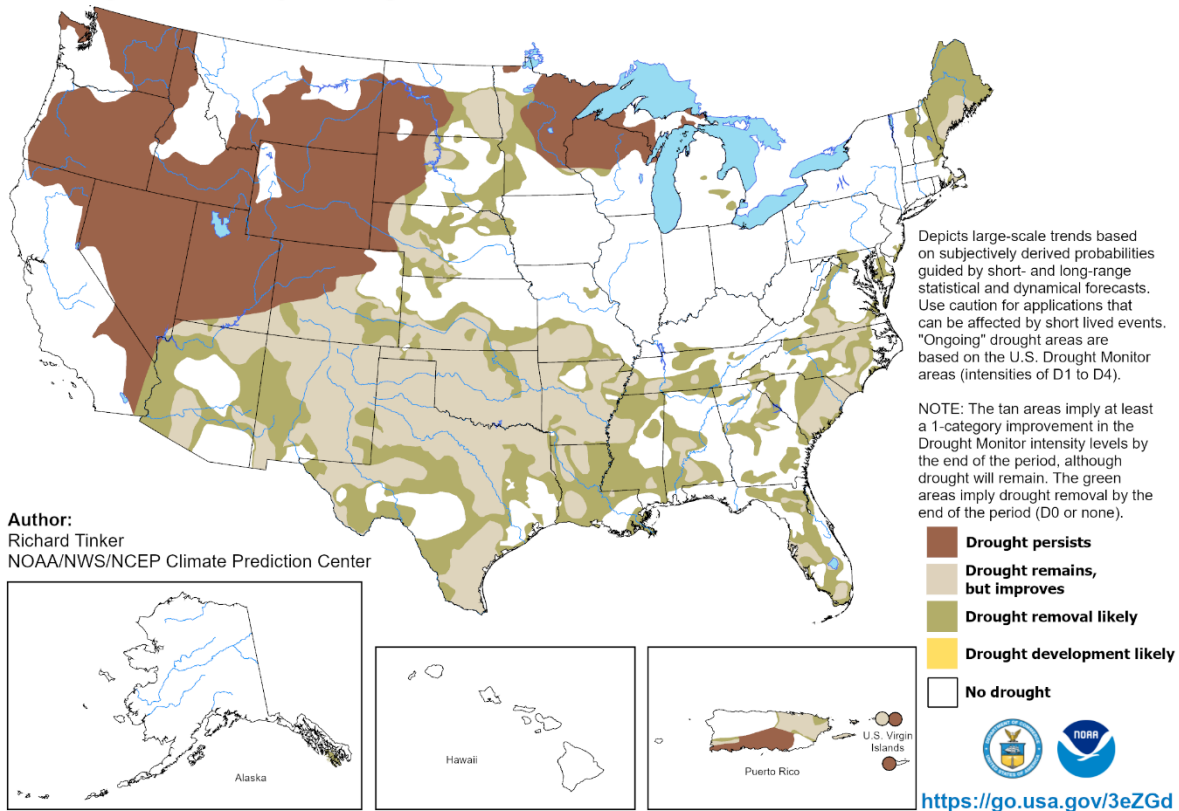


Figure 13: Drought Tendency Outlook for October 2026 (CPC)

Detailed monthly summaries and the full archive can be found at ndsu.edu/ndsc.

NDAWN monthly, seasonal, and annual climate statistic maps can be found at ndawn.info/climate_statistics.

Sources

North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network ([NDAWN](https://ndawn.info))

National Weather Service ([NWS](https://www.weather.gov))

U.S. Drought Monitor ([USDM](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu))

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([NOAA](https://www.noaa.gov)).

Climate Prediction Center ([CPC](https://climatepredictioncenter.org))

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