

June 2026

Precipitation

Kentucky experienced its second straight month of above normal precipitation, helping to improve the drought conditions that have plagued the Commonwealth the first half of the year. The wettest locations were in central and west central Kentucky, where precipitation totals were as high as 15 inches. Some locations received more precipitation during the month of June than they received from November through April. The precipitation was not evenly distributed, resulting in areas within eastern and southern Kentucky ending the month with below normal precipitation.

Preliminary data shows the Commonwealth averaged 6.79 inches of precipitation for June, 2.07 inches above normal. It was the 7th wettest June on record. For the past two months, the state has averaged 12.78 inches of precipitation, making it the 7th wettest May and June on record. This comes on the heels of the 2nd driest November through April on record.

As of the June 30th U.S. Drought Monitor, a few areas of Moderate (D1) to Severe (D2) Drought remain in southern and eastern Kentucky. However, the coverage of drought has been reduced dramatically, and all Extreme Drought (D3) has been removed.

According to the Kentucky Mesonet, Bullitt County recorded the highest monthly rainfall total for the second month in a row at 15.15 inches (24.31 inches since May 1st), while Letcher County had the lowest at 1.94 inches.

Table 1. Regional precipitation patterns.

Climate Region	Departure From Normal (inches)					Palmer Drought Severity Index*
	This Month	Past 2 Mos.	Past 3 Mos.	Past 6 Mos.	Past 12 Mos.	
Western	2.18	2.62	1.03	-5.20	-10.37	-3.15
Central	4.07	5.10	3.14	-2.46	-5.96	-1.90
Bluegrass	2.36	4.04	2.87	-1.08	-2.09	-0.82
Eastern	0.37	0.99	-0.96	-4.75	-7.20	-2.56

*4.0 and above (Extremely Moist)
3.0 to 3.9 (Very Moist Spell)
2.0 to 2.9 (Unusual Moist Spell)
-1.9 to 1.9 (Near Normal)

-2.0 to -2.9 (Moderate Drought)
-3.0 to -3.9 (Severe Drought)
-4.0 or less (Extreme Drought)

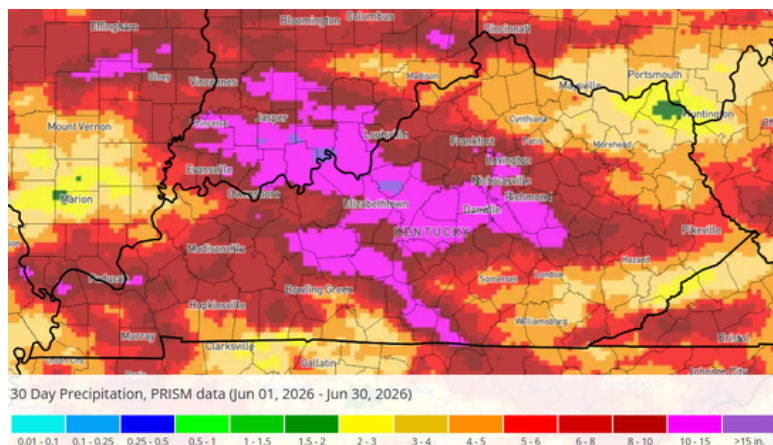


Figure 1. Monthly precipitation map.

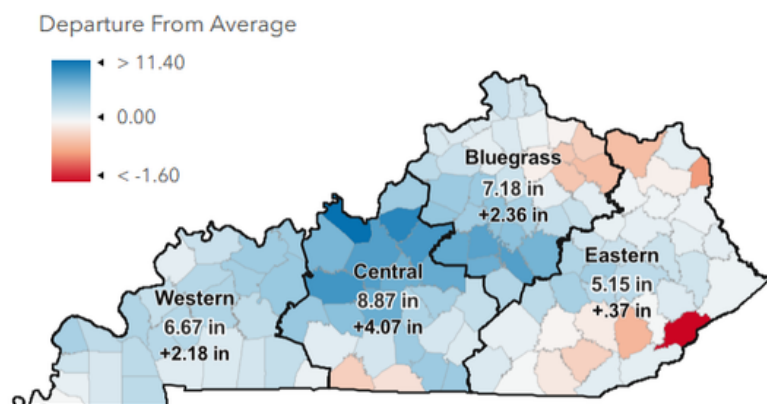
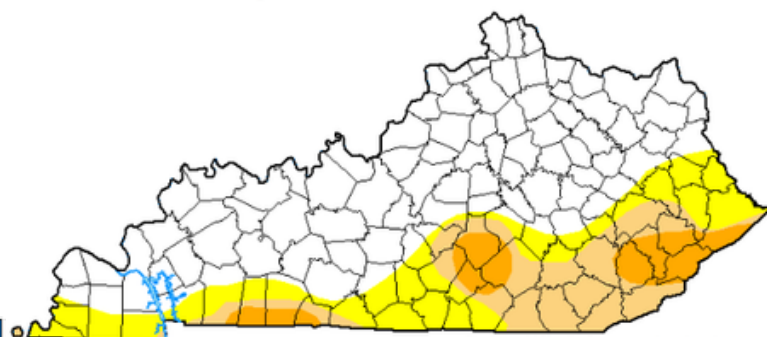


Figure 2. Departure from normal precipitation by county and climate division.

**U.S. Drought Monitor
Kentucky**

June 30, 2026
(Released Thursday, Jul. 2, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Figure 3. Current US Drought Monitor Map.

June 2026

Streamflow

Streamflow in June started the month at or above normal in most areas. Many streams and rivers experienced large spikes in flow associated with slow moving and trailing thunderstorms. Some locations experienced significant flash flooding as a result of the heavy precipitation. Given the convective nature of the precipitation, some watersheds experienced below normal precipitation. Streamflow in these areas was generally below normal, with some spikes in flow from thunderstorms.

Much of the Commonwealth is likely out of hydrologic drought thanks to the above normal precipitation. However, flows will need to be watched closely if drought conditions develop later this summer into the fall. This is especially true in the Kentucky and Big Sandy watersheds, which likely remain in hydrologic drought due to the lower precipitation amounts.

The Division of Water's Water Supply Section will continue to monitor conditions closely.

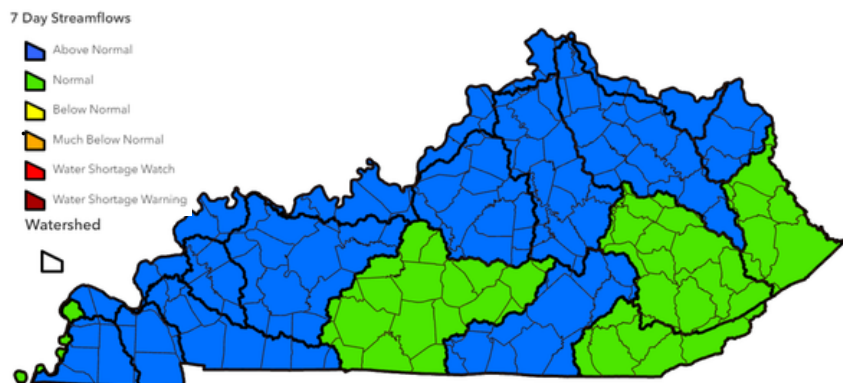


Figure 5. Average streamflow by watershed over the past 7-days (June 24-30).

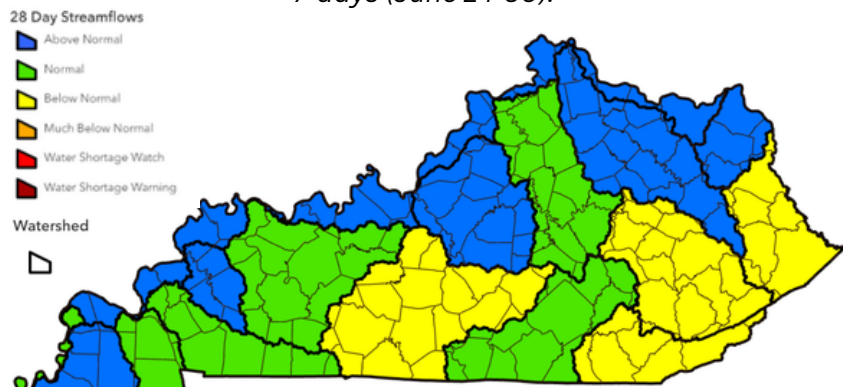


Figure 6. Average streamflow by watershed over the past 28-days (June 3-30).

Table 2. Mean Stream Discharge select stream gages.

River and Location	Drainage Area (mi ²)	7 Day		28 Day	
		Average Flow (cfs)	% of Normal*	Average Flow (cfs)	% of Normal*
Levisa Fork at Pikeville	2,144	370	48	322	40
Little Sandy River near Grayson	400	101	41	84	33
Licking River at Blue Lick Springs	1,785	1756	114	1181	75
North Fork Kentucky River at Jackson	1,101	1082	171	588	85
Kentucky River at Lock 10	2,950	9,516	369	4,059	146
Cumberland River at Cumberland Falls	1,977	1,645	89	1,268	66
Beaver Creek near Monticello	43	154	567	50	180
Beech Fork at Bardstown	669	6745	1119	3249	530
Barren River at Bowling Green	1,849	394	20	458	24
Green River at Calhoun	7,566	11,796	176	7,594	109
Tradewater River at Olney	255	428	243	462	261
Clarks River at Almo	134	111	93	106	88
Bayou De Chien near Clinton	69	44	60	48	64
Ohio River at Greenup Dam	62,000	52,713	101	44,086	82
Ohio River at Cannelton Dam	97,000	154,038	202	110,503	138
Mississippi River @ Thebes, IL	713,200	417,875	207	382,483	177

* Base Period 1980-2023

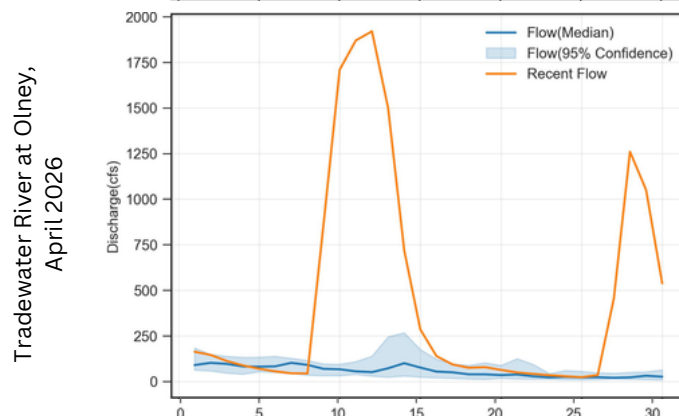
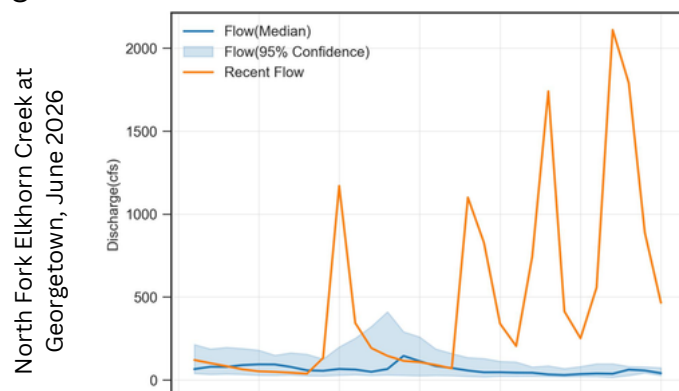
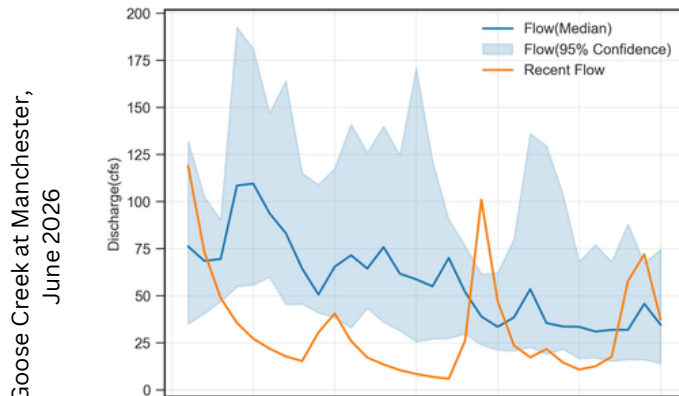


Figure 7. Streamflows compared to median flows for the month.

June 2026

Reservoir Storage

Above normal precipitation the past two months has helped all US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) reservoirs to reach summer pool. While June precipitation slowed the rate of decline, several water supply lakes remain below normal due to the below normal winter and spring precipitation.

During the summer, evaporation and evapotranspiration typically outpace precipitation, resulting in most precipitation being taken up by soils. This makes it nearly impossible for reservoirs with small drainage areas to receive enough precipitation to refill this time of year. As we move into late fall and winter and evaporative demand drops, the reservoirs will begin to refill, provided there is adequate precipitation.

Figure 8. Locations of reference reservoirs across the state. Status of reservoir levels indicated by color.

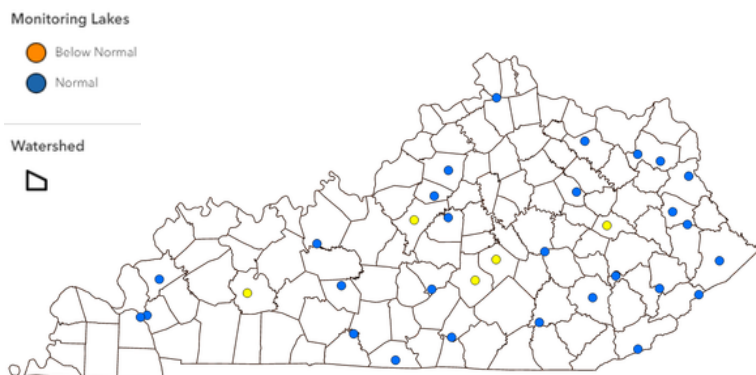


Figure 9. Groundwater observations compared to normal for the month.

Groundwater

General Statement: Kentucky is a geologically, and hydrogeologically, diverse state. Groundwater data is limited in availability and where available may only be applicable to the immediate area given regional geologic variability. Local conditions may not be accurately reflected by the reference locations selected and local rainfall and surface water conditions may provide additional or more representative information. Current data is compared to a 30-year reference period (1980 – 2010) or the longest available period of continuous data.

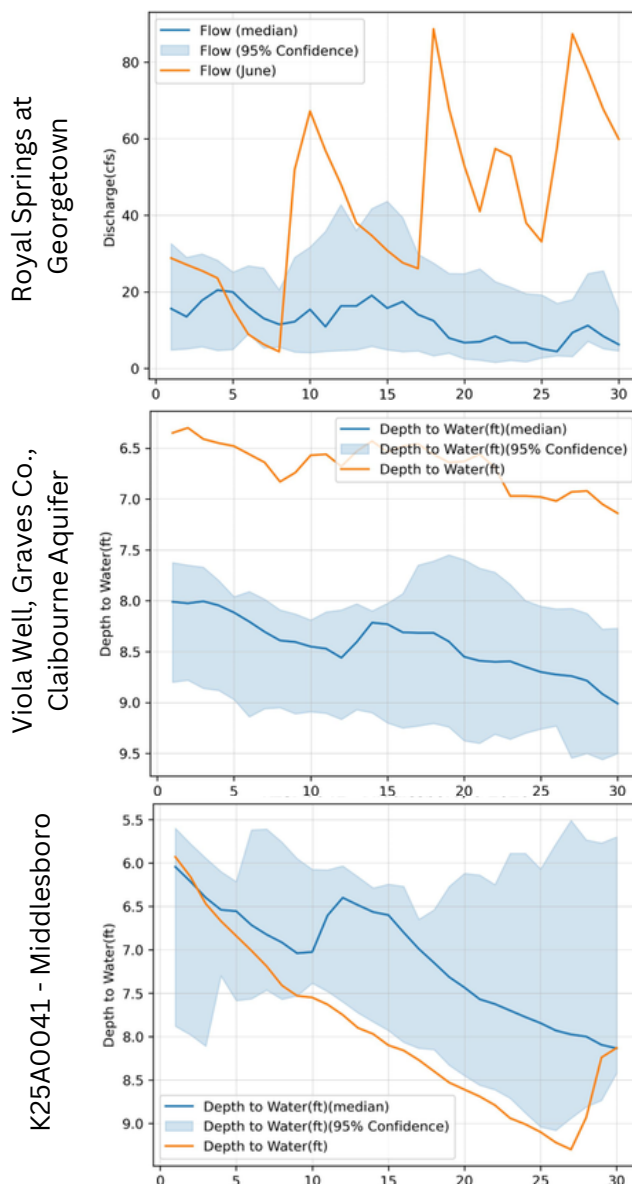
Inner Bluegrass: Flow at Royal Springs (Scott Co.) rose to a maximum discharge above 80 CFS following multiple heavy rainfall events. Flow remained well above the historical flow for June at the end of the month. June's heavy rains have brought total flow from the spring back into the reference range.

Jackson Purchase: Water levels in the Viola Well (Graves Co.) stayed above the historical median across all of June due to sustained rainfall and the increase in water levels in late May. Additional wells within the region behaved similarly ending June with lower water levels. Groundwater levels are expected to continue falling towards a seasonal low.

Middlesboro: Water levels within the Middlesboro well (Bell Co.) started within the expected range but fell across the month. While below the monthly normal for most of June, water levels followed the same trend as the reference period of decreasing across June. To date, for the year water levels have been below normal.

Additional data can be found at:

<https://www.uky.edu/KGS/water/water-groundwater-monitoring.php>



June 2026

Forecast

The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) is currently predicting equal chances for above or below normal precipitation during July and for July through September for the entire Commonwealth. Short-term forecasts are predicting above normal precipitation chances and the potential for more flash flooding.

The current U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook shows drought improvement and removal during July for Kentucky.

Note: These forecasts do not provide the quantity above or below normal, just the probability it will occur.

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

Valid for July 2026
Released June 30, 2026

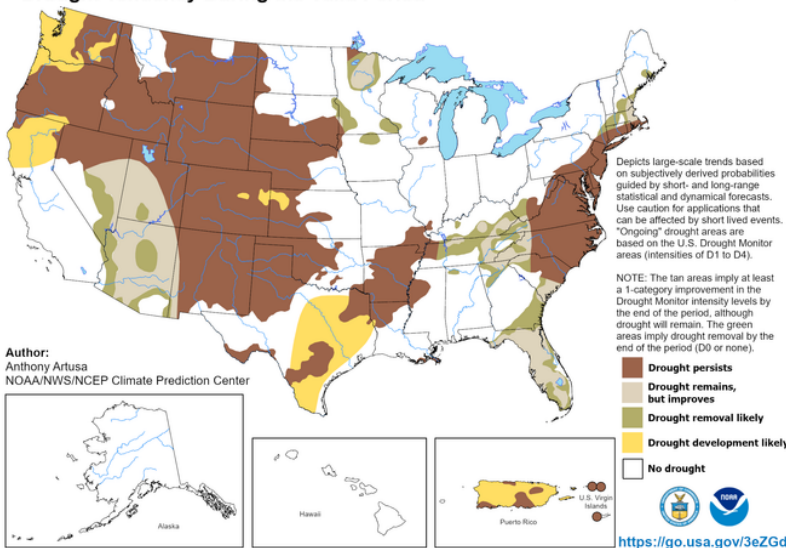
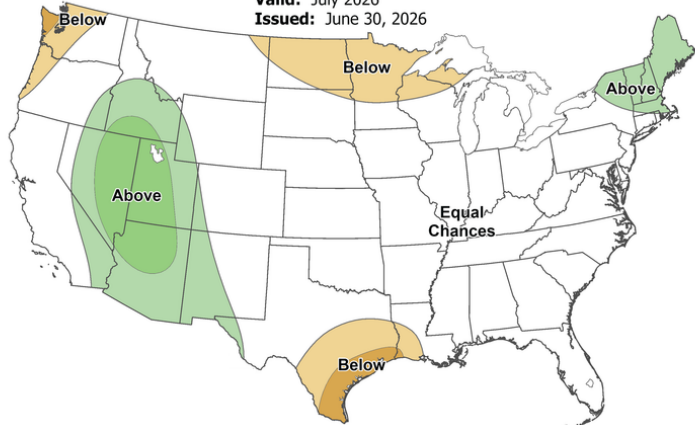


Figure 10. Monthly drought outlook.

Monthly Precipitation Outlook

Valid: July 2026
Issued: June 30, 2026



Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Jul-Aug-Sep 2026
Issued: June 18, 2026

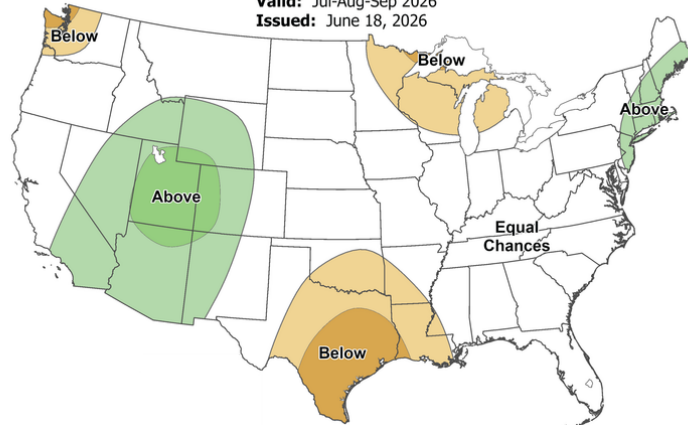


Figure 11. Monthly and seasonal precipitation outlooks.

Contact Us

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Report Drought Conditions



Acknowledgments

Precipitation Data:

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Centers for Environmental Information; Kentucky Mesonet; Midwest Regional Climate Center; Southern Regional Climate Center.

Streamflow Data:

U.S. Geological Survey, Water Resources Division.

Reservoir Data:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington, Louisville, and Nashville Districts; Kentucky Division of Water, Water Supply Section.

Forecast Data:

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Climate Prediction Center.