



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY DROUGHT ADVISORY

April 8, 2025

A Drought Advisory is in effect for the North and Central watersheds of Nooksack, Lower Skagit - Samish , Upper Skagit, Stillaguamish, Snohomish, Cedar – Sammamish, Duwamish – Green, Puyallup – White, Nisqually, Methow, Okanogan, Chelan, Entiat, and Wenatchee, or Watershed Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 45, 46, 47, 48, and 49. This includes portions of Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Okanogan, and Chelan Counties.

A Drought Advisory is intended to increase awareness for water users that drought conditions may develop and provide recommendations for voluntary actions to alleviate potential impacts, pursuant to RCW 43.83B.405(1). Water users and public entities within the advisory area are encouraged to engage with Ecology staff to discuss water supply concerns and potential projects. Early engagement can support long-term drought and climate resiliency.

The Department of Ecology continues to monitor water supply conditions and will regularly reassess the need for a formal drought declaration for these areas and any other areas of the state where drought conditions may develop. Recommendations to declare a drought emergency are made by the state Executive Water Emergency Committee to the Governor.

Water supply conditions

The Washington State Water Supply Availability Committee (WSAC) evaluated water supply conditions for the critical April through September 2025 period and determined that conditions in the following watershed resource inventory areas (WRIAs) are concerning, but did not yet meet the state statutory definition for drought condition: Nooksack, Lower Skagit - Samish , Upper Skagit, Stillaguamish, Snohomish, Cedar – Sammamish, Duwamish – Green, Puyallup – White, Methow, Okanogan, Chelan, Entiat, and Wenatchee / WRIAs 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 45, 46, 47, 48, and 49. Together, these watersheds cover seven north and central counties. As defined by RCW 43.83B.011, drought conditions mean that a geographic area is expected to receive less than 75 percent of normal water supply and there is a potential for undue hardship to water users and the environment.

Ecology uses multiple water supply indicators to evaluate hydrologic drought conditions, including current and forecasted data for snowpack, precipitation, temperature, soil moisture,

and streamflow. Ecology looked at a variety of water supply conditions to inform this advisory:

- Lower than normal snowpack levels at different elevations in the North and Central Cascades. Currently, there is a significant variation in snowpack levels compared to normal in the North and Central Cascades.
- Streamflows in the Methow Watershed are forecasted to be low 75 percent of normal for the April to September period.
- January was especially dry – much of western WA and the Cascades received less than half their normal precipitation and the state tied as the 5th driest January on record (since 1895).
- Starting in May, we're expecting higher chances of above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation through the rest of the summer for the whole state.

April 1 is the historical peak of snowpack in Washington and additional data this spring is important for these evolving conditions.

Voluntary actions can alleviate potential drought impacts

Check out Ecology's Water Conservation page to find out more small ways Washingtonians can make a difference at [Water conservation - Washington State Department of Ecology](#)

Report observations of drought conditions

Observations and photographs of drought conditions can help us assess whether to elevate state drought response. Submit observations using the Conditions Monitoring Observation System at: [Drought Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#).

Further details can be obtained by at the [Ecology Drought Response website](#) or by contacting:

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