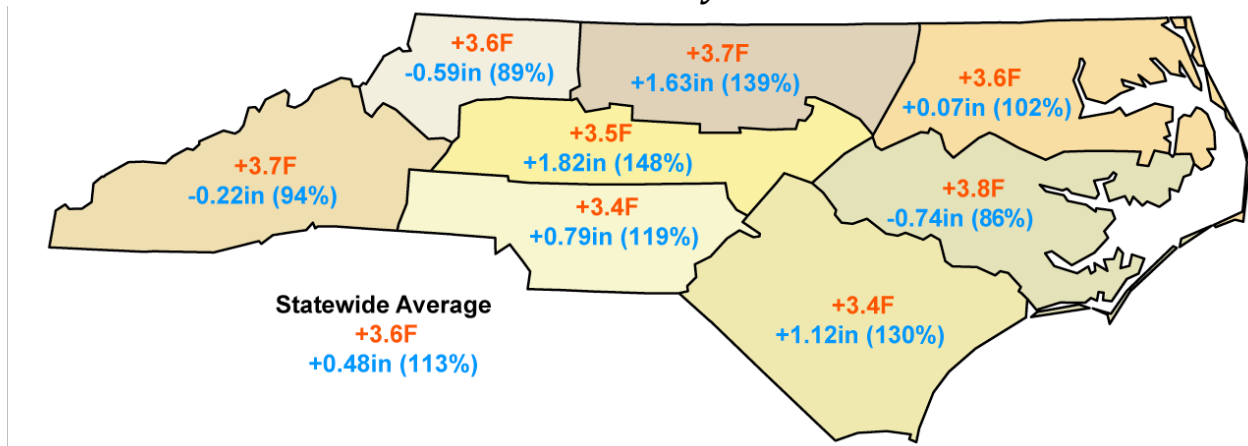


Monthly Climate Summary: North Carolina May 2010: Warm and Wet

Ryan Boyles, State Climate Office of North Carolina
June 3, 2010

Climate Summary

Temperature and Precipitation by Climate Division Departures from Normal for May 2010 Based on Preliminary Data

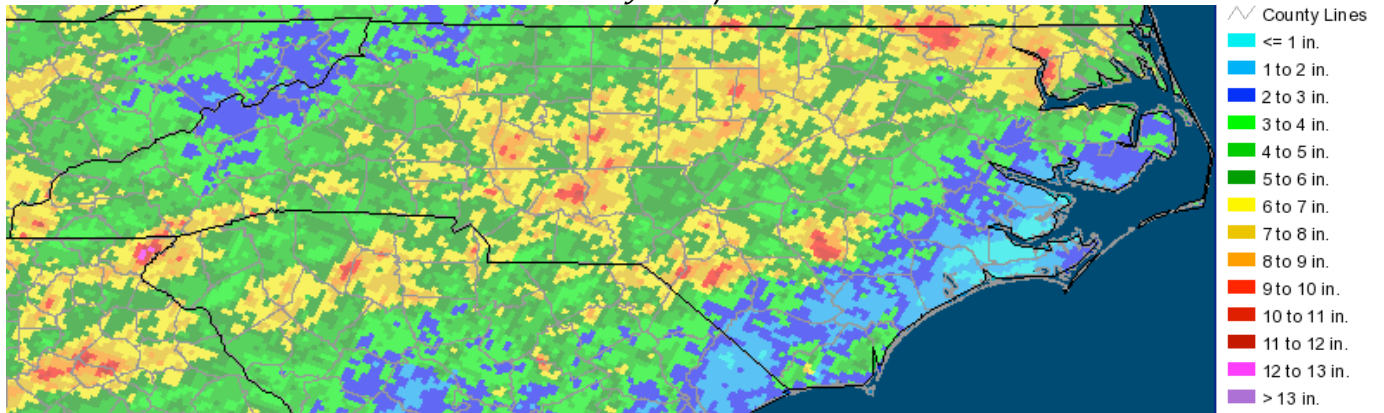


May 2010 in North Carolina was warm and wet, especially in central parts of the state. Most locations across the state were above normal for temperatures. A few locations had average maximum temperatures near record with gauges in Bladen, Pamlico, and New Hanover counties reported top 5 ranks). However all gauges across North Carolina reported average minimum temperatures that were much above normal, and 28 locations reported average minimum temperatures that rank with the 6 warmest on record. So while the days haven't been too unusually warm, the nights have been very warm.

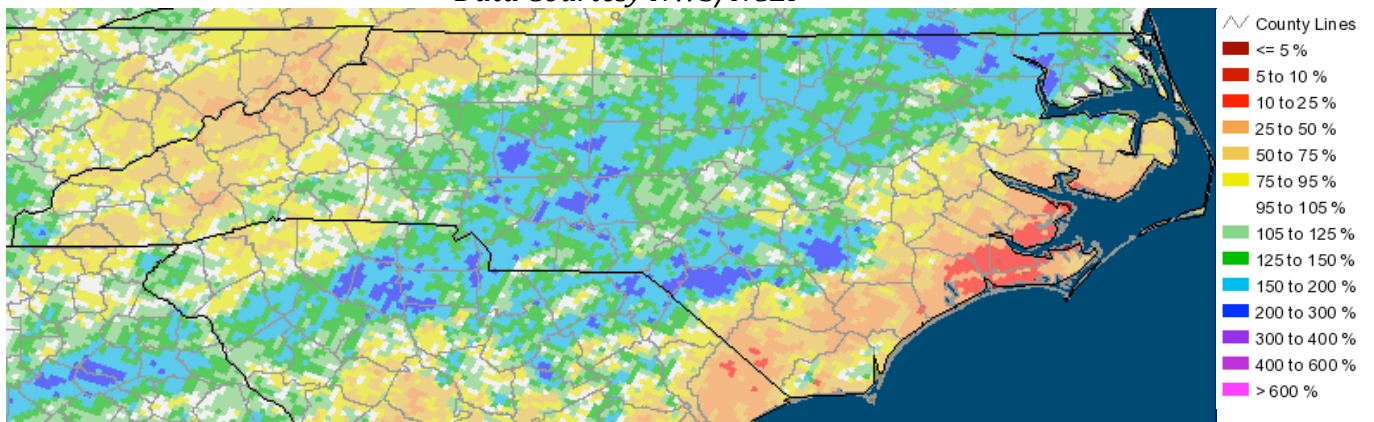
Precipitation in May is a more complicated and variable situation. In general, the heaviest rain fell across the piedmont and northern coastal plain regions. A few gauges (Salisbury, Reidsville, Fayetteville, Clayton, Wilso, Tarboro) reported heavy rainfall than ranked in the top 10. Radar-based rainfall estimates indicate many parts of central NC received in excess of 6 inches in May. However, many mountain and coastal gauges reported below normal rainfall for May 2010. Indeed, both Craven and Pamlico County gauges reported less than 1.5 inches for May. For New Bern, May 2010 was the 3rd driest on record. Just a few miles up US70 in Clayton, May 2010 ranked as the 4th wettest on record.

Statewide, May 2010 ranked as the 11th warmest and the 33rd wettest since 1895. In the piedmont region, May 2010 ranked as the 15th wettest in the past 116 years.

Precipitation for May 2010
Based on estimates from NWS Radar
Data Courtesy NWS/NCEP



Precipitation for May 2010: Percent of Normal
Based on estimates from NWS Radar
Data Courtesy NWS/NCEP



DroughtWatch 2010?

Remember last month when we wondered if we might be headed for another drought? Certainly there aren't any drought concerns right now in central NC. Repeated widespread thunderstorm activity has kept rivers and reservoirs full. But conditions along the southern coast have been dry, and there are still concerns for many growers in those areas.

Impacts to Agriculture

Rainfall in May was generally beneficial to those who received it. Reports from NC Department of Agriculture suggest corn progress is as good as any year in recent memory. But some growers, especially in the drier areas southeast of I95, are reporting low soil moisture, which could impact crops during this critical period if dry conditions persist.

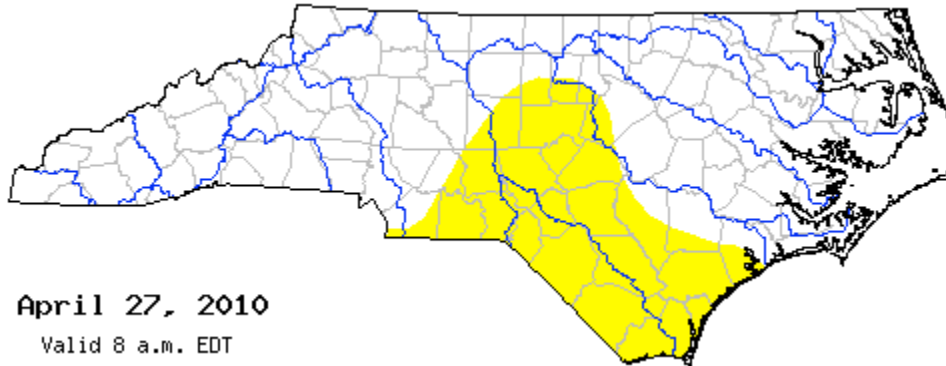
Impacts to Water Resources

In late April, D0 (Abnormally Dry) was again introduced in parts of central and eastern NC. However, after a wet May in central NC, D0 (Abnormally Dry) conditions only remain in far eastern NC and along the SE border with South Carolina. The NC Drought Management

Advisory Council is again holding weekly technical meetings to review all drought indicators and provide recommendations to local agencies and the US Drought Monitor. The depiction below emphasizes the short-term dryness that especially central and eastern NC has experienced since April 2010.

US Drought Monitor for North Carolina

Courtesy NC DENR Division of Water Resources



- Drought Classifications**
- D0 - Abnormally Dry
 - D1 - Moderate Drought
 - D2 - Severe Drought
 - D3 - Extreme Drought
 - D4 - Exceptional Drought

