

For: State and County Offices

U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) Shapefiles (SHP's)

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

USDM is a public web site used in drought analysis consisting of current and previous drought datasets that use multiple parameters, weather outlooks, and news accounts to form a professional consensus from Federal and academic scientists. It is a useful Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis tool for assisting National, State, and local offices to determine areas and levels of drought severity.

Using the weekly updated drought SHP datasets can increase productivity and reduce workload when determining drought related events.

B Purpose

This notice advises State and County Offices of:

- the availability of the USDM web site and datasets that can be used in National, State, and local drought related analysis
- instructions for accessing and saving USDM related datasets
- examples of maps prepared using USDM datasets along with other GIS datasets to determine drought severity (Exhibits 1 and 2).

C Contacts

County Office personnel shall contact their State Office GIS Coordinators/Specialists for further assistance.

State Office GIS Coordinators/Specialists shall contact Todd Anderson, National Office for further assistance by e-mail at **todd.anderson@wdc.usda.gov**.

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2 Folder Structure and File Naming Convention

A Folder Structure

USDM datasets should be saved in a subfolder created within the **f:geodata/disaster_events** directory. Each National, State, or County Office using USDM datasets **must** create the following folder structure, **f:geodata/disaster_events/USDM**.

Note: The folder name, “USDM”, represents the source of the datasets. All SHP’s and related datasets will be stored in the **f:geodata/disaster_events/USDM** folder.

B File Naming/Renaming Convention

It is recommended that during the unzipping of the USDM datasets, the files shall be renamed using the naming standards described in the most current version of the **Manual for Managing Geospatial Datasets in Service Centers**.

Example: A recommended file naming convention is **drought_a_USDM080129.shp**.

Additional file naming/renaming, such as projects and hard copy maps, will be at each State Office’s GIS Coordinator’s/Specialist’s discretion. Additional files shall:

- be stored in the **f:geodata/disaster_events/USDM** folder
- follow the naming standards described in the most current versions of the **Manual for Managing Geospatial Datasets in Service Centers**.

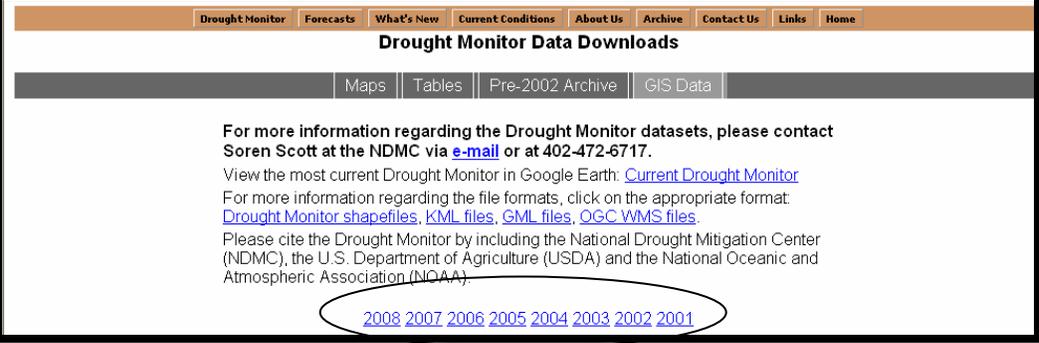
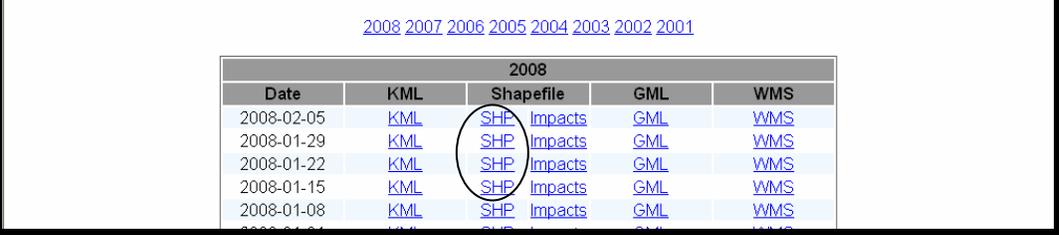
Note: Do **not** store noncritical USDM datasets on local computers or servers. Noncritical USDM datasets should be archived to a media, such as compact disk, and stored as directed by each State Office’s GIS Coordinator/Specialist.

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3 Action

A Accessing and Downloading USDM Datasets

Use the following table to access the USDM web site, locate desired datasets, and properly save datasets.

Step	Description
1	Go to http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/dmshps_archive.htm .
2	<p>Click the link for the year the drought occurred.</p> 
3	<p>In the table displayed, find the date of the event and CLICK “SHP”.</p> 
4	<p>When user clicks on SHP link, a File Download dialog box will be displayed. CLICK “Save”. The Save As dialog box will be displayed. Navigate to f:geodata/disaster_events/USDM, CLICK “Save”, and close the Internet browser. This will save the ZIP file that contains the USDM dataset.</p>
5	<p>Open Windows Explorer and navigate to f:geodata/disaster_events/USDM.</p> <p>Unzip the compressed dataset to f:geodata/disaster_events/USDM.</p> <p>Note: For assistance contact State Office GIS Coordinator/Specialist according to subparagraph C.</p>
6	<p>Rename and manage the files according to subparagraph 2 B and as recommended by State Office GIS Coordinator/Specialist.</p>

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3 Action (Continued)

B State Office Action

Each State Office GIS Coordinator/Specialist is responsible for ensuring that:

- all State and County Office employees are familiar with accessing and saving USDM datasets, as needed
- each County Office creates and maintains the correct folder structure and file naming conventions from any downloaded or locally developed datasets, according to paragraph 2.

Because of USDM's web site functionality, the following are additional responsibilities of the State Office GIS Coordinator/Specialist as they relate to State and County Office employees using USDM's web site:

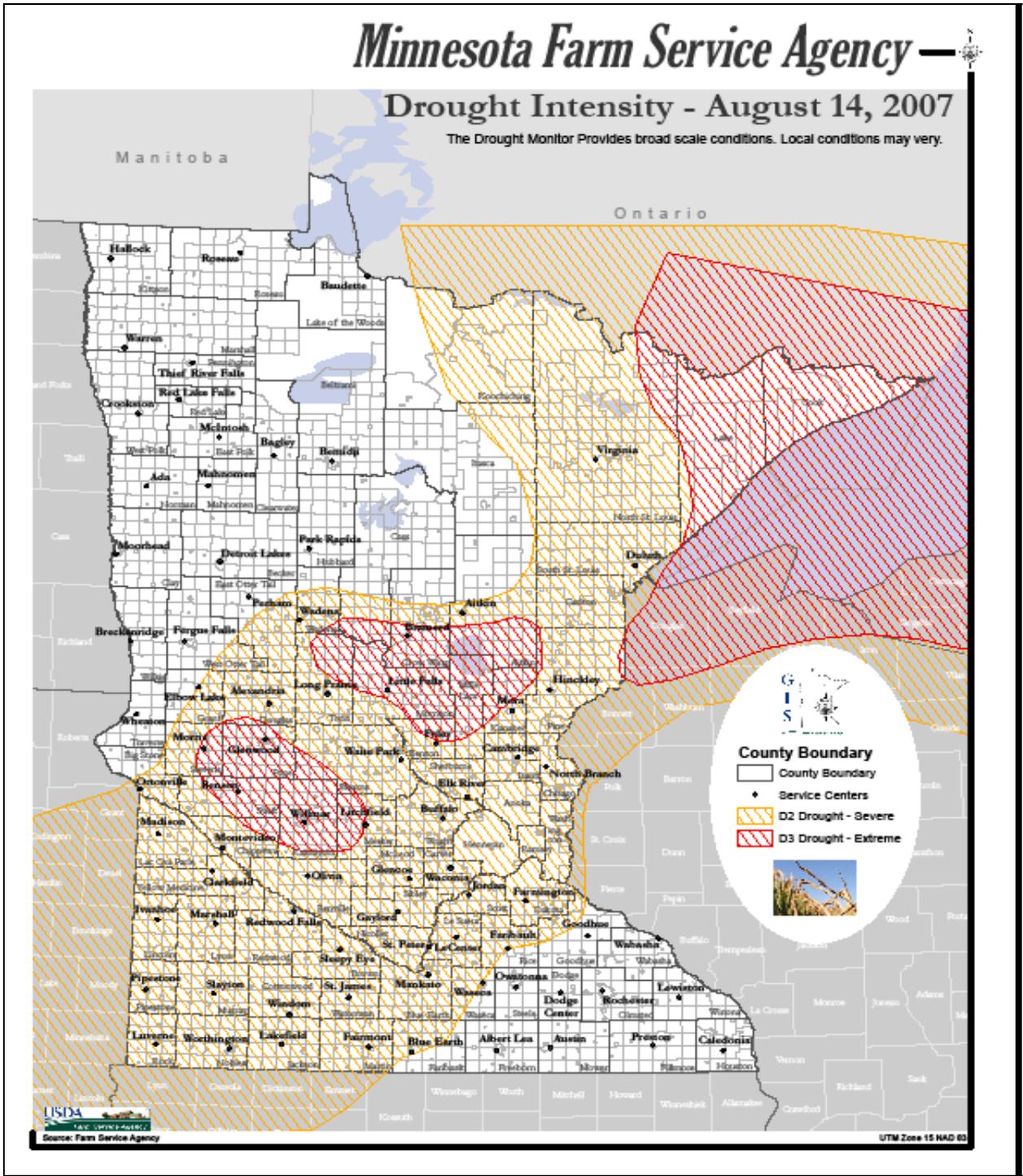
- unzipping compressed datasets using WinZip software
- areas of interest, that is clipping county drought information from the USDM dataset
- projection issues
- creating and managing USDM mapping projects and peripherals, such as map templates, labeling components, and maps (.jpg, .pdf, etc.), as applicable
- archiving USDM datasets and projects.

C County Office Action

County Office employees that use GIS shall ensure that they are familiar with accessing and saving USDM datasets as directed by their CED and/or State Office GIS Coordinator/Specialist.

State Drought Map

The following map shows the use of USDM datasets for the entire State; along with other GIS datasets.



County Drought Map

The following map shows the use of USDM datasets for the entire county; along with other GIS datasets.

