

Livable Nashua

ISSUE 7
OCTOBER 2025

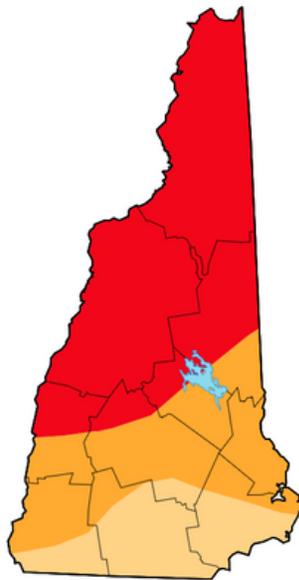
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The summer of 2025 has brought significant drought conditions to Nashua, driven by a prolonged period of below-normal rainfall and elevated temperatures since June.

While Nashua and most of Hillsborough County are in the Moderate Drought (D1) stage, the news is worse up north, where the state has reached a new record for the extent of Extreme Drought (D3). D3 conditions now impact 53.50% of New Hampshire – the highest percentage since the U.S. Drought Monitor's launch in 2000. This dryness has stressed local ecosystems, lowered streamflows and

DROUGHT PERSISTS, DESPITE RECENT RAINS



Source: [U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

groundwater levels, and significantly increased the risk of wildfires across the state.

Despite some recent rain, drought conditions have continued to worsen in Nashua and across the rest of the state. Experts say a consistent period of "soaking rain," spread out over multiple events, is necessary for deep ground infiltration and the full replenishment of groundwater and surface water sources.

While cooler weather may reduce

Map released: Thurs. October 23, 2025

Data valid: October 21, 2025 at 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

[Check Current Drought Conditions](#)

evaporation, the region needs substantial precipitation soon to mitigate the drought's potential lingering effects into the next year. If the ground freezes before groundwater levels are recharged, it won't be able to absorb rain or melting snow. This means vital moisture will run off instead of replenishing groundwater and private wells. This could be highly problematic for homeowners relying on wells, especially if they are already dry or running low, making water conservation efforts more critical than ever.

Fortin Gage's Vase Drive Blossoms: 2,250 lbs of CO₂ Saved, \$1,200 Donated



Fortin Gage, a staple downtown Nashua flower business, is celebrating a massive win for the community and the planet following its successful Vase Drive. The initiative collected over 1,200 gently used vases from residents, turning a simple recycling effort into a boost for local nonprofits and a powerful move toward sustainability.

For every vase donated, Fortin Gage pledged \$1 to local charities. That commitment has translated into a \$1,200 donation back into the community, with organizations like the Nashua Senior Center and the Nashua Public Library benefiting from the effort.

The environmental impact is just as impressive. By reusing the collected vases, Fortin Gage estimates it has saved 2,250 lbs of CO₂ emissions. This reduction is the equivalent of driving 2,500 fewer miles in an average car or the carbon absorbed by 17 mature trees in one year.

“We believe flowers should do more than brighten a room – they should help build a better world,” said Amber Morgan, owner of Fortin Gage Flowers. “This vase drive shows how small, everyday choices can have a ripple effect that benefits both people and the planet. We have the best community.”

The Vase Drive will now be an ongoing commitment for the shop, with donations benefiting various local charities throughout the year. Residents are invited to bring in gently used vases year-round to continue supporting the Greater Nashua community’s mission to give back.

Fortin Gage



In Memory of Jane Goodall

“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

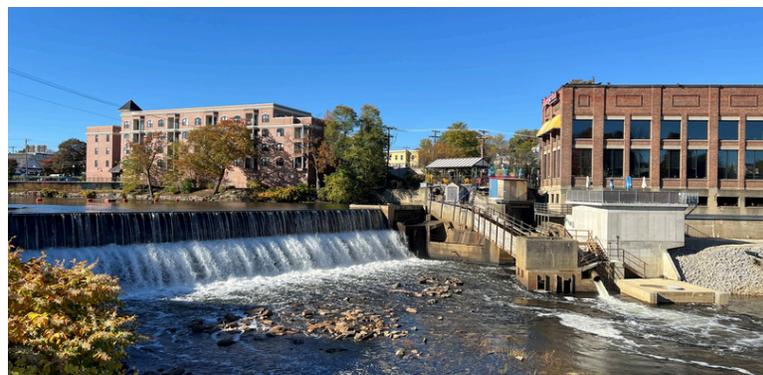
– Jane Goodall

Jackson Mills Turbine Runs on a Trickle

The Jackson Mills Hydroelectric Facility on the Nashua River is maintaining operations thanks to its recently installed, modern turbine, even as the region suffers from moderate drought and unusually low water levels.

The facility operates as a run-of-river power plant, which means it generates electricity using the natural, immediate flow of the river with little or no stored water in a large reservoir. Its power output is therefore directly dependent on the river’s current volume.

This is a concern for Nashua, because the region is experiencing a significant precipitation deficit, with some rivers at their lowest levels in nearly 80 years. However, despite these conditions – which would severely limit older, less efficient turbines – the facility’s new equipment appears to be effectively generating power from the minimal available flow. The continued operation during low water levels highlights the improved efficiency, offering a positive outlook for sustainable power generation in Nashua even in times of environmental stress.



Tracking Turtles in Nashua



On September 18th, members of the Nashua Conservation Commission, along with several volunteers, worked with Rivier University professor Shanna Demers to complete scheduled turtle population research at Fields Grove Park in Nashua. As part of an ongoing effort to document the health and distribution of turtle species in Salmon Brook – which flows through Nashua and into the Merrimack River – the team checked humane live traps set earlier in the day to collect vital data from the captured animals. For each turtle, the volunteers recorded its species, sex, and size, noting whether it was a new animal or a marked recapture from a previous study. On this particular day, 20 turtles were captured, measured, and released, bringing the season total to 650 turtles. This meticulous collection of field information is essential for state records, helping wildlife officials assess the overall health and status of the local turtle population, a key indicator for the entire freshwater ecosystem. All turtles were handled safely and released unharmed after the data was recorded.

Nashua River Health at Your Fingertips

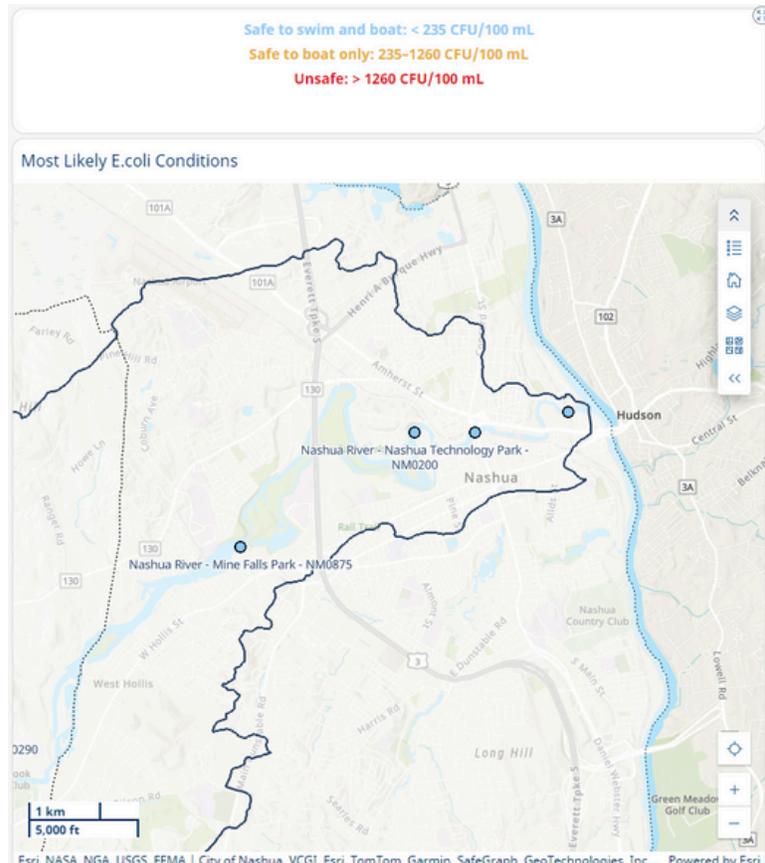
The Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA) has launched new Water Quality Monitoring Results dashboards, offering residents unprecedented access to data about the health of the Nashua River. This new online tool is a vital resource for anyone living in Nashua who uses or cares about the river.

How the Dashboard Helps You

Good water quality is essential for a healthy ecosystem, and for recreational activities like swimming, fishing, and paddling. The new dashboard makes this information transparent and easily accessible. Nashua residents can now explore site-specific testing results (including results from four Nashua specific sites) for current and previous years across several key categories, including:

- *E. coli* Levels: Tracks bacterial levels over time, helping to identify broader trends and potential pollution sources in the watershed.
- Water temperature: Provides data on this critical factor that influences the metabolism and life cycle of all aquatic organisms.
- Dissolved oxygen: Reports the level of dissolved oxygen, a vital indicator of aquatic habitat health necessary for fish and other river life.
- Conductivity: Measures the amount of dissolved solids (like salts and minerals) in the water, which can be an indicator of potential pollution or runoff.

By putting this data at your fingertips, the NRWA is empowering Nashua residents to stay informed about the state of their local environment and supporting efforts to protect and restore the Nashua River watershed.



Caption: This snapshot of the *E. coli* Dashboard shows that all four Nashua River testing sites within the city currently meet safety standards for swimming and boating.

[Explore the Data](#)

Opportunities

Nashua Transit System: 2025 Fare Engagement Survey
The Nashua Transit System (NTS) is exploring fare modifications for its transit services to help financially support its operations moving forward.

[2025 Fare Engagement Survey](#)

Mine Falls Park: Trail Days
Please join the Mine Falls Committee to help maintain this wonderful park on its final Trail Day of the season! Meet at **9am** at the **Lincoln Park entrance** on **Saturday, October 25th**.

[Trail Days](#)

The Alliance of Climate and Environmental Stewards (ACES): Merrimack River User Survey
Share your unique experiences on the Merrimack River

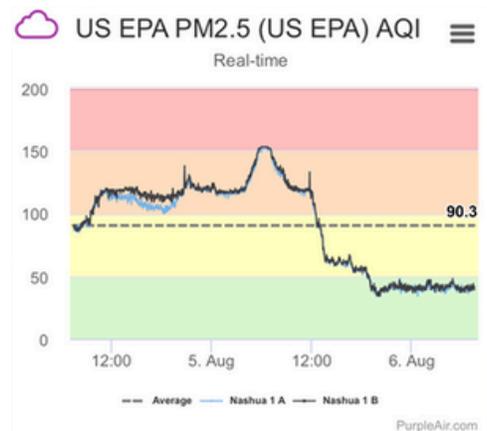
[Merrimack River User Survey](#)

Climate Change's Choking Grip on New England Air



Nashua experienced its worst air quality of the summer in early August, driven by a smoke plume from distant Canadian wildfires. The air quality deterioration was swift. On the evening of August 3rd, the Air Quality Index (AQI) plummeted from "Good" to "Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups" in a matter of hours. The event peaked on the morning of August 5th, when the AQI spiked to 153, the highest reading of the year for Nashua, landing in the "Unhealthy" category. Conditions improved later that day when a high-pressure system moved in, finally clearing the smoke by noon.

This event is part of a troubling, growing trend. Fueled by climate change, which intensifies wildfires, the frequent arrival of Canadian smoke is quickly becoming the new normal for New England summers, posing a seasonal public health challenge.



Merrimack Conservation Partnership Unveils Interactive Map Viewer



The Merrimack Conservation Partnership (MCP) has launched a powerful, interactive map viewer to showcase its updated Merrimack Conservation Plan. This new digital tool combines scientific data with community input, offering municipalities, conservation groups, and residents a clear guide for prioritizing land protection and nature-based solutions across the 2.1 million-acre Merrimack River watershed.

The map viewer identifies Conservation Focus Areas across four critical themes:

1. Wildlife Habitat and Connectivity
2. Working Lands (Forests and Farms)
3. Water Quality and Quantity
4. Community Climate Resilience

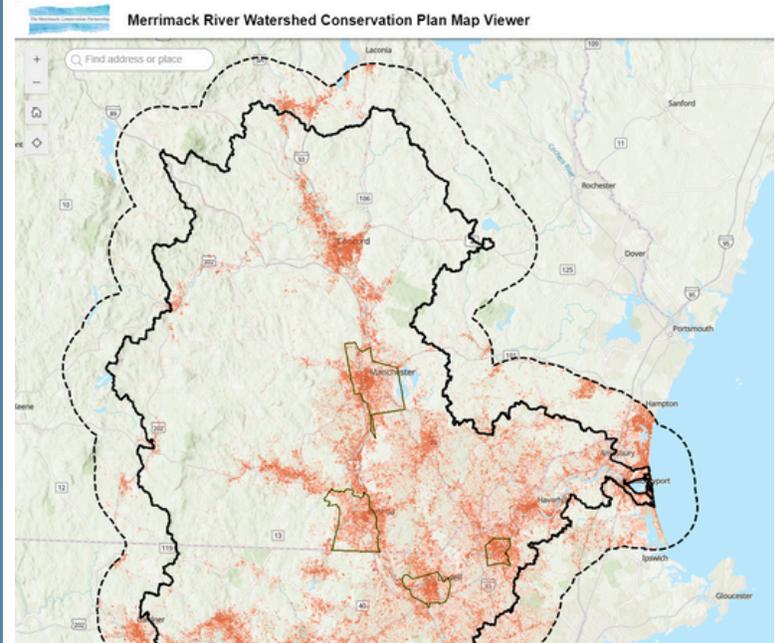
The "climate resilience" layer is especially important, integrating data on flood risk, heat vulnerability, tree cover, and access to green space. This makes it easier to pinpoint projects that deliver multiple benefits for both environmental health and human well-being.

Direct Impact on Local Communities, Including Nashua

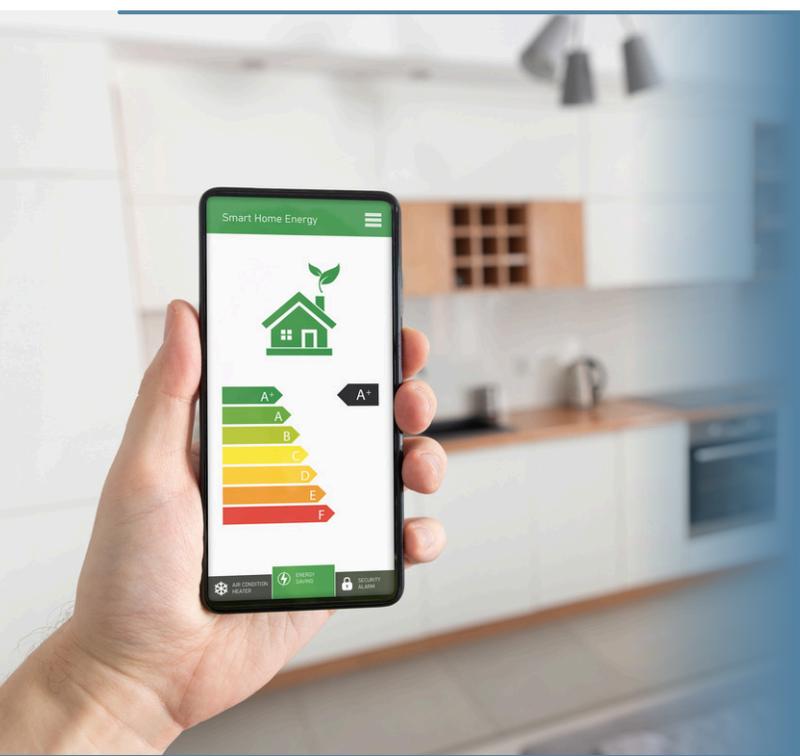
The data is an essential resource for cities like Nashua, located at the confluence of the Nashua and Merrimack Rivers. The map viewer helps local officials:

- Target Flood Mitigation: Identify high-risk areas and prioritize upstream land conservation to serve as natural flood buffers, protecting city infrastructure.
- Improve Urban Health: Pinpoint neighborhoods with low tree cover and high heat vulnerability to guide the expansion of the urban tree canopy and new green spaces, promoting climate equity.
- Protect Drinking Water: Provide clear data on areas critical for safeguarding the Merrimack River's water quality and local drinking supplies.
- Streamline Collaboration: Offer a unified, science-based platform to help local commissions and organizations align their efforts, secure funding, and advance multi-benefit conservation projects.

The MCP's new tool is designed to empower everyone in the watershed to work together toward a more resilient and sustainable future.



[Learn More and Open the Map Viewer](#)



Empower Nashua!

Coming Soon...

The City of Nashua is launching a new pilot Energy Coaching Program to help homeowners lower their energy bills, improve comfort, and take advantage of rebates and incentives. Participants will receive one-on-one support from an energy coach to identify home upgrades, connect with qualified contractors, and access available savings through NHSaves, federal programs, and New Nashua Community Power rebates.

Stay tuned for more details on how to apply and join our first group of Nashua homeowners taking the next step toward a more efficient and sustainable future!

More information will be shared in coming months.

[Check Back Here for More Information](#)