

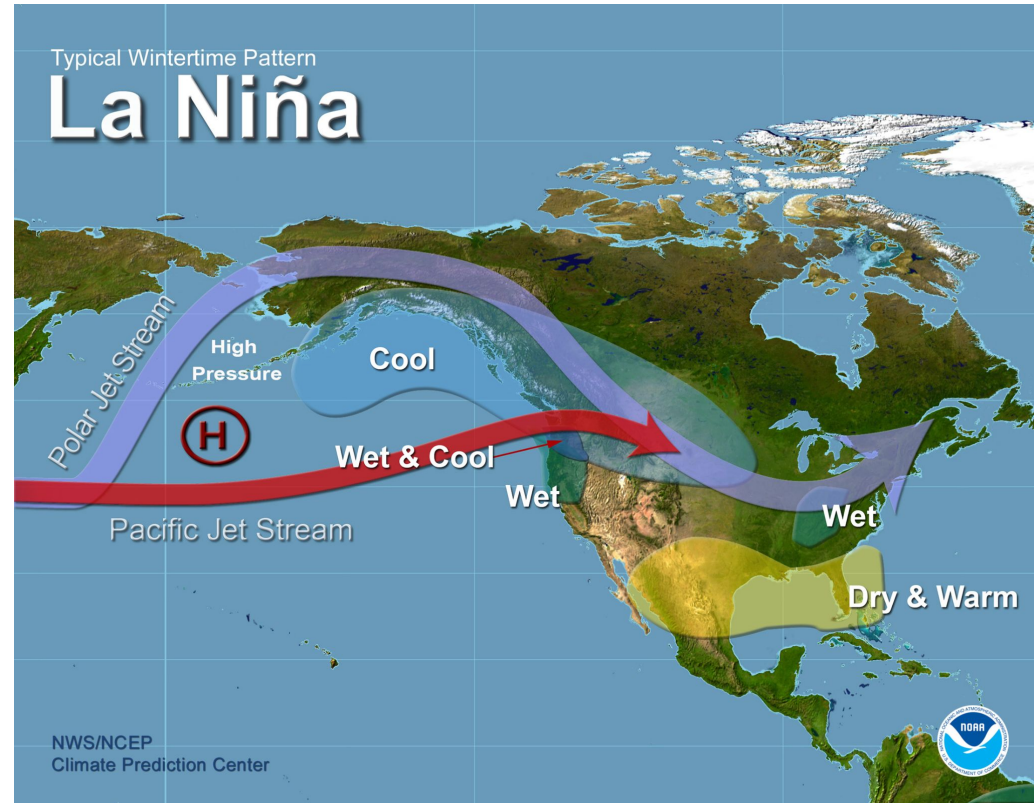


Winter Outlook 2025-26

October 16, 2025
9:00 AM

Key Messages

- **La Niña** conditions are ongoing and are favored to persist through February 2026, with a transition to ENSO-Neutral likely late in the cold season.
- There is a high probability (77% chance) that this is a weak and short-lived La Niña event. During weak events, odds are lower that the traditional La Niña pattern will dominate the winter.
- La Niña events typically favor colder and slightly wetter conditions during the winter across North Dakota. Ahead of La Niña winters, the fall season tends to be mild and dry, with an abrupt transition to winter-like temperatures in the late fall. As always, other climate features can cancel out the expected pattern.



National Oceanic and
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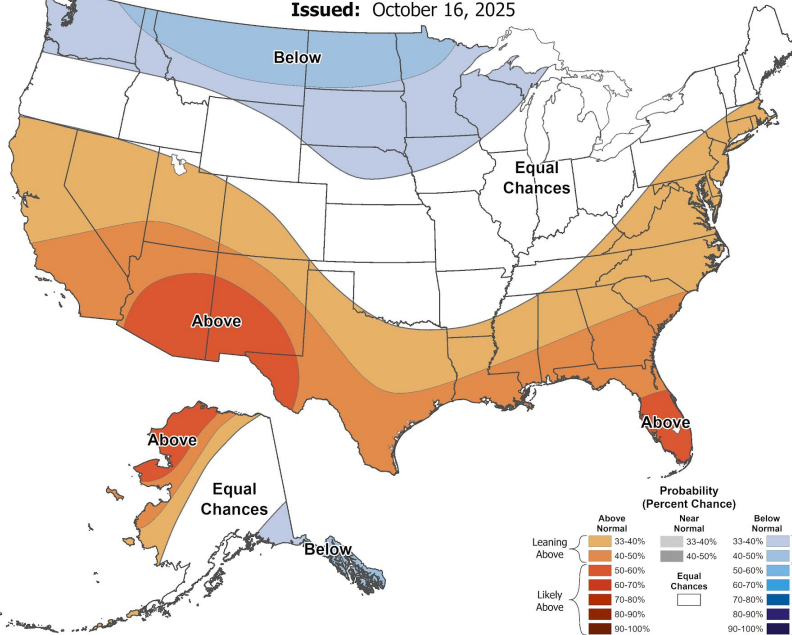


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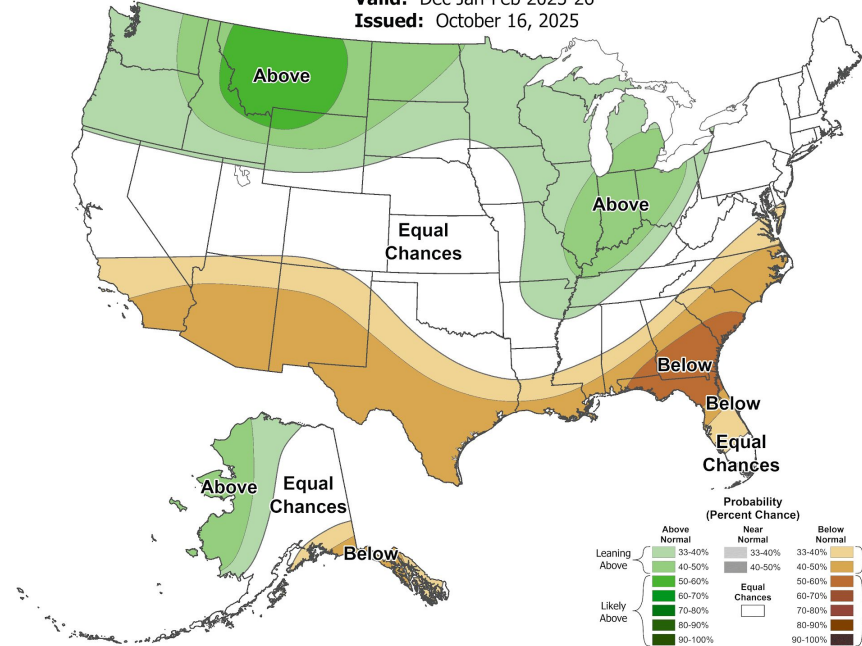
Winter Temperature Outlook

Valid: Dec-Jan-Feb 2025-26
Issued: October 16, 2025



Winter Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Dec-Jan-Feb 2025-26
Issued: October 16, 2025



Due to the expected La Niña conditions, this winter is favored to have below normal temperatures (40 to 45% chance). This does not mean there won't be any mild periods in the winter, or that winter won't end up warmer than normal overall (25% chance). There is also a tilt towards above average precipitation (~40%). Combined with colder than normal temperatures, this would favor precipitation events that are all snow, compared to some recent years where we have seen more mixed precipitation events.





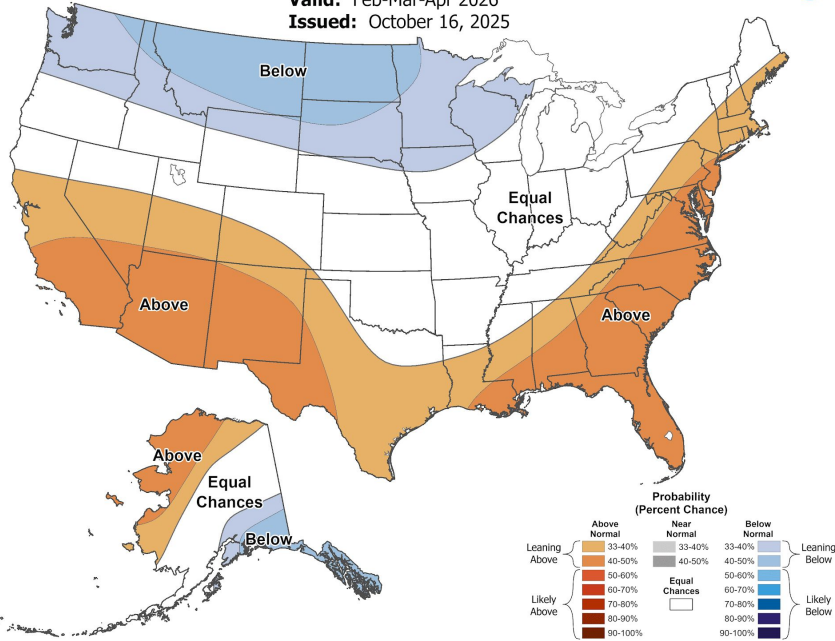
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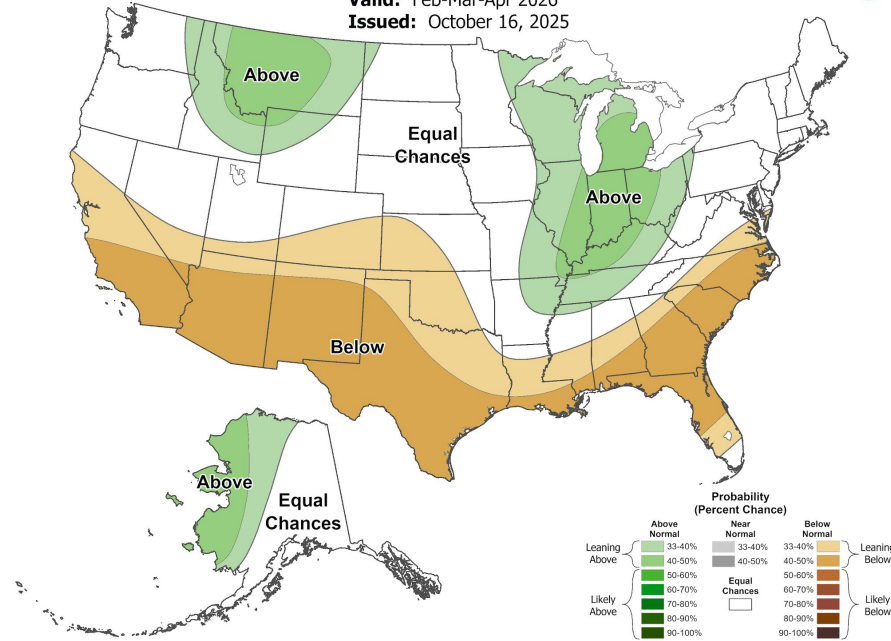
FMA Temperature Outlook

Valid: Feb-Mar-Apr 2026
Issued: October 16, 2025



FMA Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Feb-Mar-Apr 2026
Issued: October 16, 2025



The signal for below normal temperatures continues through the winter and spring (February, March, and April). Long term trends suggest spring is cooling across North Dakota, which gives additional confidence that this period is favored for colder than normal temperatures, since the long term trend and the expected La Niña signal result in the same outcome. The enhanced precipitation signal starts to weaken by this period.



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What are we expecting?

Temperature

- Near normal temperatures through the rest of fall
- Transition to winter-like temperatures sometime from late November to December
- Normal to below normal temperatures January through April, potentially lasting into May

Precipitation

- First measurable snow not likely until November, especially across southern North Dakota
- Signs of an active winter overall, with historical trends favoring a more active back half of winter. Trends also show we often get a December storm in this pattern
- Based on previous winter seasons and the forecast pattern, expect above normal seasonal snowfall