



MIAMI-SOUTH FLORIDA

National Weather Service
Forecast Office

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South Florida Winter/Dry Season Outlook 2017-2018






NOAA/NWS Predicting Warmer and Drier Than Normal Winter and Dry Season

October 27th, 2017: The likely re-emergence of La Niña this dry season is expected to play a role in South Florida’s weather, with an increased likelihood of warmer and drier than normal conditions for the period from November to April, encompassing most of the South Florida Dry Season.



South Florida 2017-2018 Dry Season Outlook



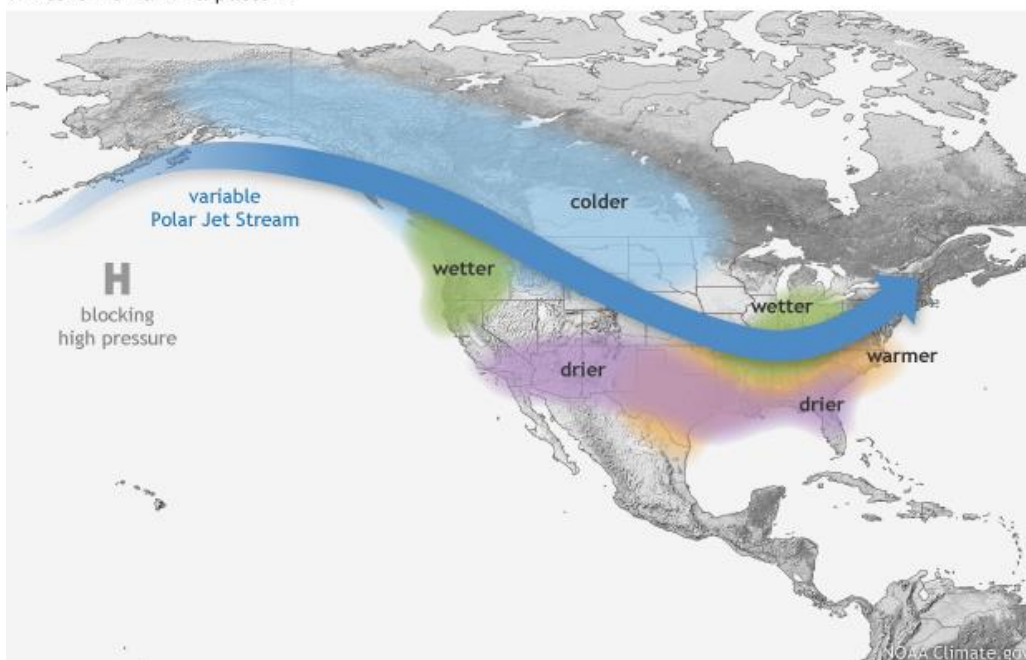
Element	Nov-Apr Outlook (most likely outcome)	Normal Values/Frequency
Temperature 	Above Normal (Probable Range 1-3F)	64-66F Interior/W 67-69F East
Precipitation 	Below Normal (Probable Range 70-85% of normal)	12-15” Interior/W 15-21” East 32-41 days with rainfall
Storminess/Severe Weather 	Below Normal (Probable Range 6-10 individual events)	~15 individual events per season (wind/hail/tornado/flood)
Freeze 	Near Normal	1-2 events per season
Drought/Wildfire 	Above Normal	Moderate drought development late in season

Confidence in drier than normal conditions and associated drought development is moderate to high. The time frame most likely to experience below normal rainfall is from January through April, which coincides with the time of year when droughts and wildfires develop. There is also a moderate to high confidence in at least one to two freeze events over the interior, mainly from December to February. Confidence is lower, mainly in the moderate range, on the above normal temperatures throughout the dry season.

Dry Season Factors

If the [likelihood of La Niña](#) materializes this winter, it will play a role in the dry season conditions across South Florida. La Niña is the cold phase of the [ENSO \(El Niño/Southern Oscillation\)](#). La Niña winters are usually characterized by a jet stream which is displaced farther north over North America, leading to most winter and spring low pressure storm tracks to be well north of Florida. This normally causes cold fronts moving into Florida to have less moisture, thereby leading to drier than normal conditions as well as less than normal “storminess” (tornado, severe thunderstorm and flood events). The jet stream being farther north also can limit the number of cold air outbreaks into Florida, although as in most winters, a few strong outbreaks of Arctic origin can still occur with freezing temperatures over interior sections of the peninsula.

Wintertime La Niña pattern



Other factors include: intra-seasonal cycles such as the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO), Pacific/North American Pattern (PNA) and Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO). The NAO in particular can influence the number of Arctic air masses that penetrate into Florida and is difficult to predict more than one to two weeks in advance.

Potential Impacts

Drought/Wildfires: the main concern of a drier and warmer than normal winter and dry season is the resulting likelihood of developing droughts. Each of the last four weak La Niña winters have led to moderate to severe drought by spring over at least parts of South Florida. Droughts in South Florida typically lead to an increased threat of wildfires such as what was experienced last spring. Everyone is encouraged to practice measures to prevent wildfires and heed advice from local officials when wildfires develop, as well as water conservations tips from water managers.

Rip Currents are also a present threat, particularly as we head into March and April which is the period when rip current-related fatalities and injuries increase in Florida. Heed warning flags posted by ocean rescue personnel and always swim at beaches with lifeguards.

A warmer and drier than normal winter and dry season decreases the likelihood and frequency of severe weather events such as tornadoes, flooding, strong winds and hail, but does not totally eliminate them. During last year's weak La Niña, 3 tornadoes were observed in SE Florida (January and March). Also, as noted previously, a few strong cold snaps and freezes typically occur during La Niña winters even though the average temperatures over an extended period may be warmer than normal.

Stay tuned to local media, NOAA Weather Radio and the National Weather Service South Florida website at [weather.gov/southflorida](https://www.weather.gov/southflorida) for the latest weather information, including outlooks and forecasts of significant storm events. You can also visit our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for the latest weather information.