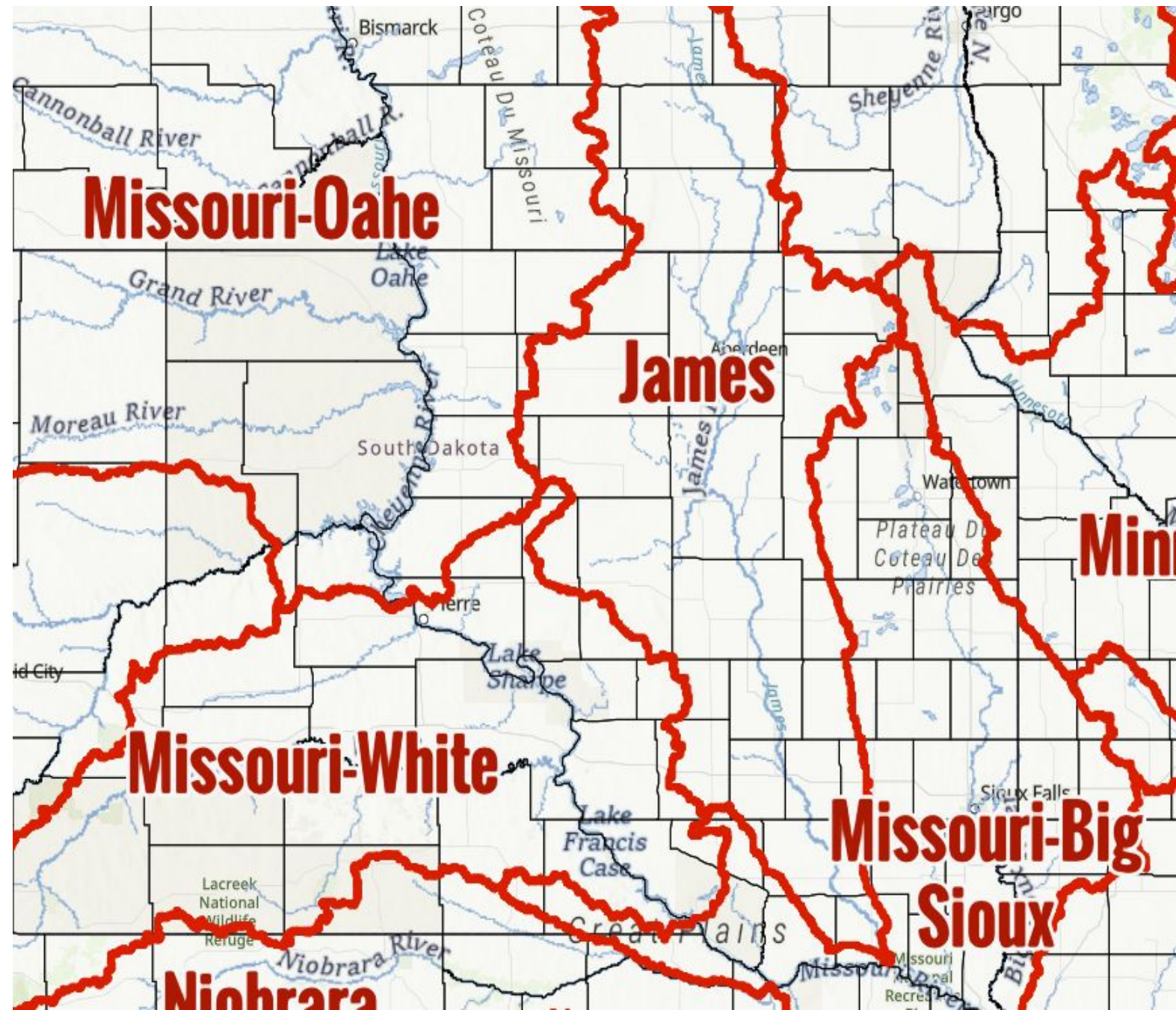


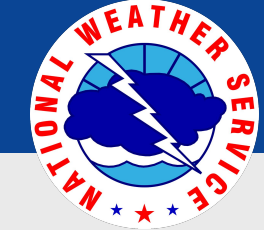
March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

2026 Spring Flood and Water Resources Outlook

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

March 12th, 2026





Spring Flood & Water Resources Outlook

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Early March 2026 Update

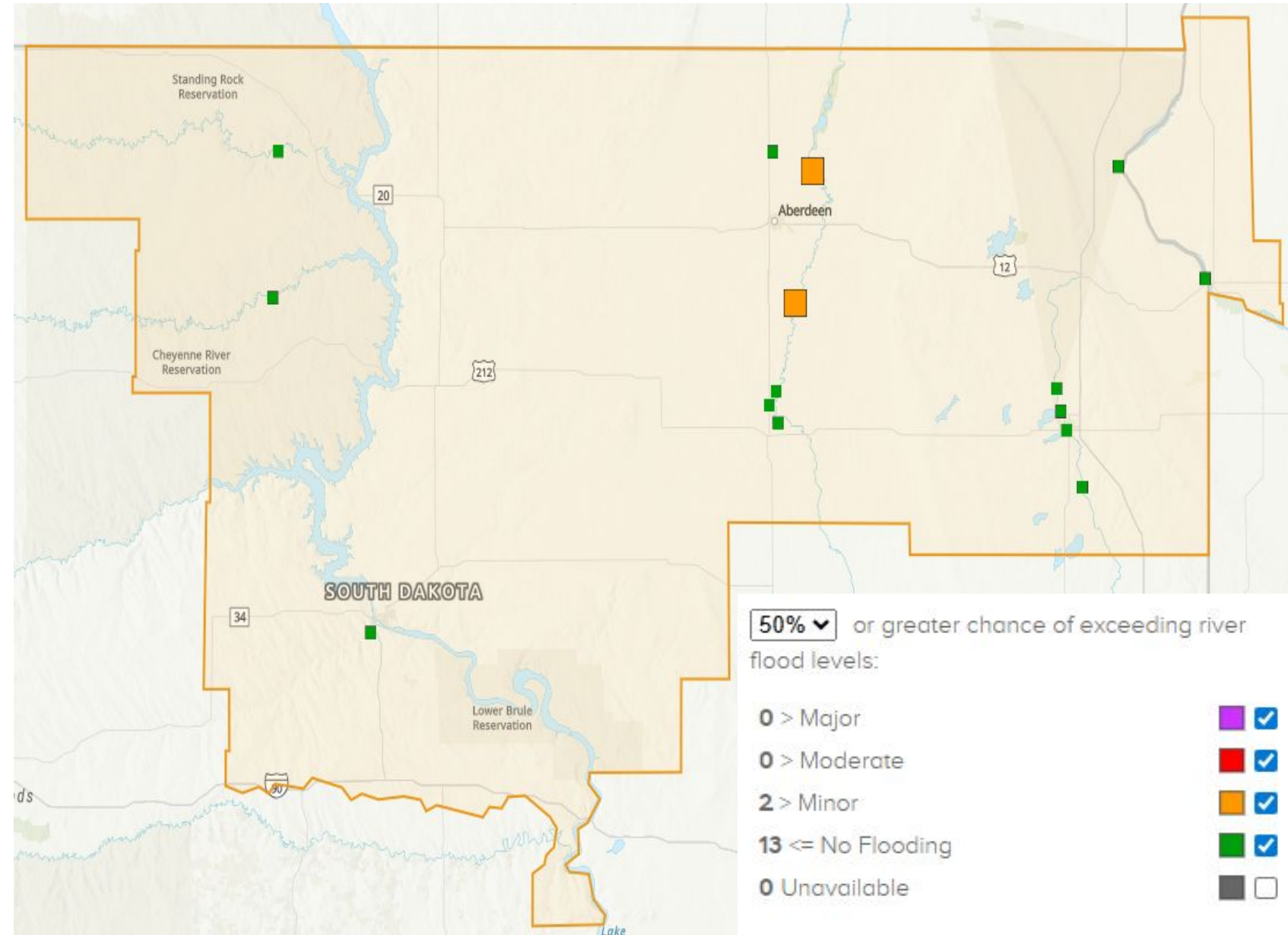
Key Messages

- Spring flood risk is near to ***below normal***.
- Lack of significant snowpack and ***below normal precipitation***. Deep frost in soils over northern portions of the region.
- ***Less than 50% chance of reaching flood stage in the next 90 days (most locations).***
- ***Deep frost could trigger rapid runoff if heavy rain occurs before thaw.***

NEW What Has Changed

- Increased chance (52-56%) for **minor flooding** on James River at Columbia and Stratford.

Spring Flood Risk (greater than 50% chance)





Spring Flood Outlook

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Key Ingredients	Antecedent Conditions	Impact to Spring Flooding
Winter Precipitation	Below Normal	Lesser Risk
River Levels	Below Normal	Lesser Risk
Soil Moisture	Normal/Above normal	Normal/Above Normal Risk
Frost Depth	Normal	Normal Risk
Snow Conditions / Water Equivalent	Below Normal	Lesser Risk
Spring Weather Outlook	TBD	TBD

Overall Risk of Spring Flooding:

Lesser Risk

- Below normal winter precipitation and lack of significant snowpack across the region.
- **Lesser risk** for spring flooding, overall. Although minor flooding possible (52-56% chance) on James River.
- Deep frost and moist soils (northern SD) could trigger rapid runoff if heavy rain occurs before thaw.

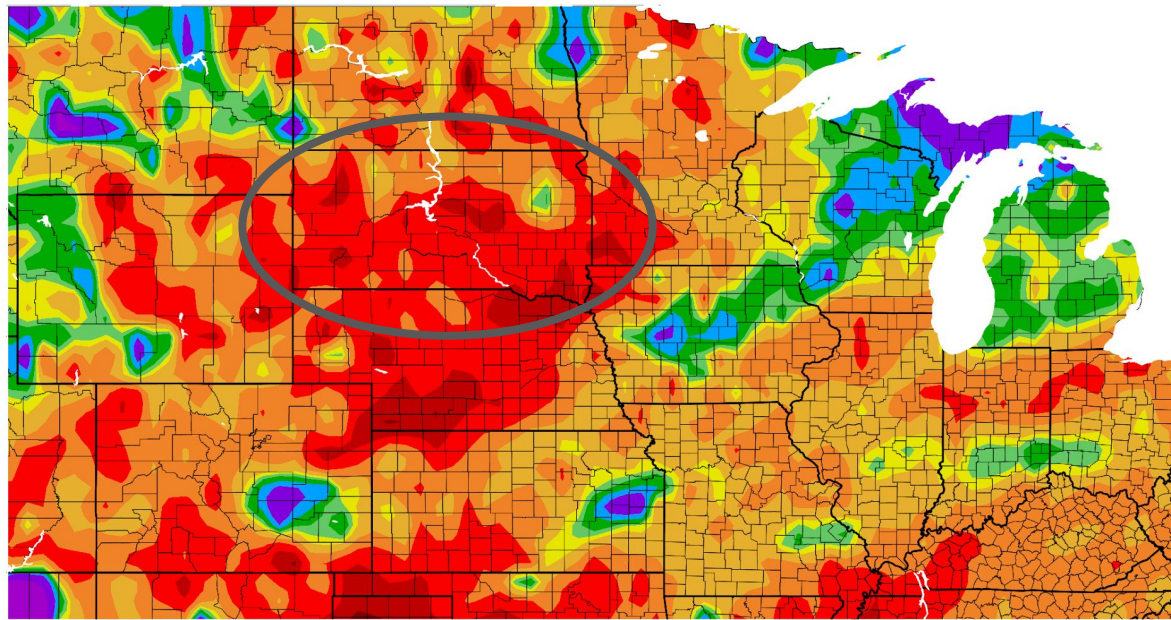


Winter Precipitation and Temperature

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Maps show precipitation and temperature compared to normal over the last 90 days

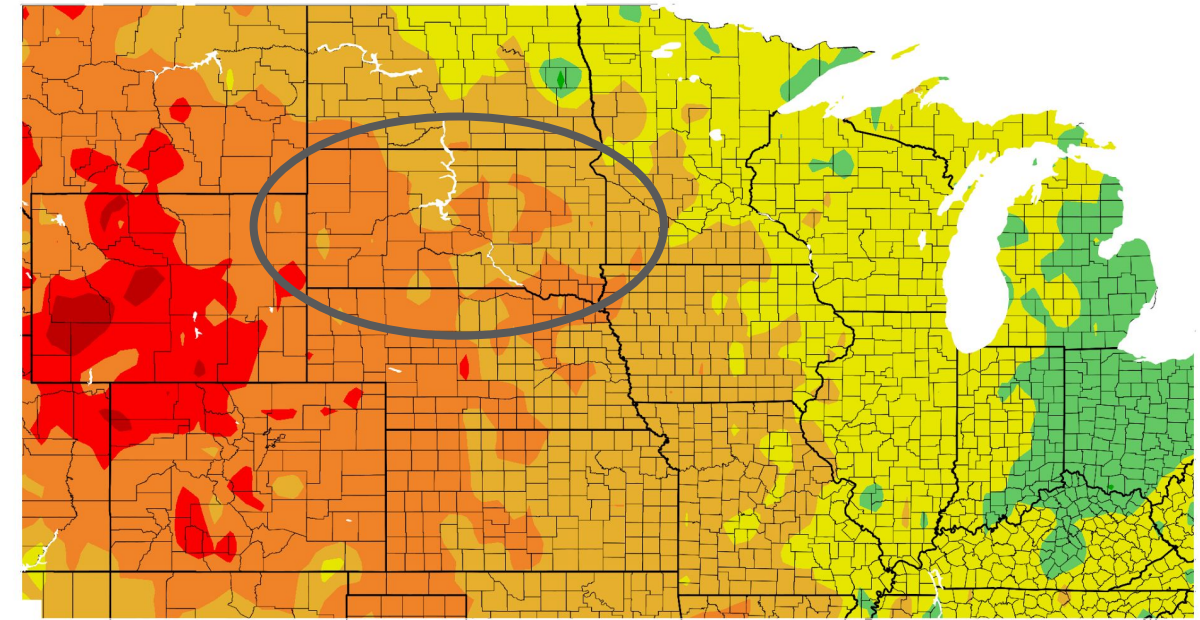
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
12/11/2025 – 3/10/2026



Generated 3/11/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
12/11/2025 – 3/10/2026



Generated 3/11/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

- Overall, widespread **drier than average** conditions. Also **warmer than average**.
- **Reduced risk of spring flooding. Medium risk** for **minor** flooding on James River.

Source: [High Plains Regional Climate Center](#)





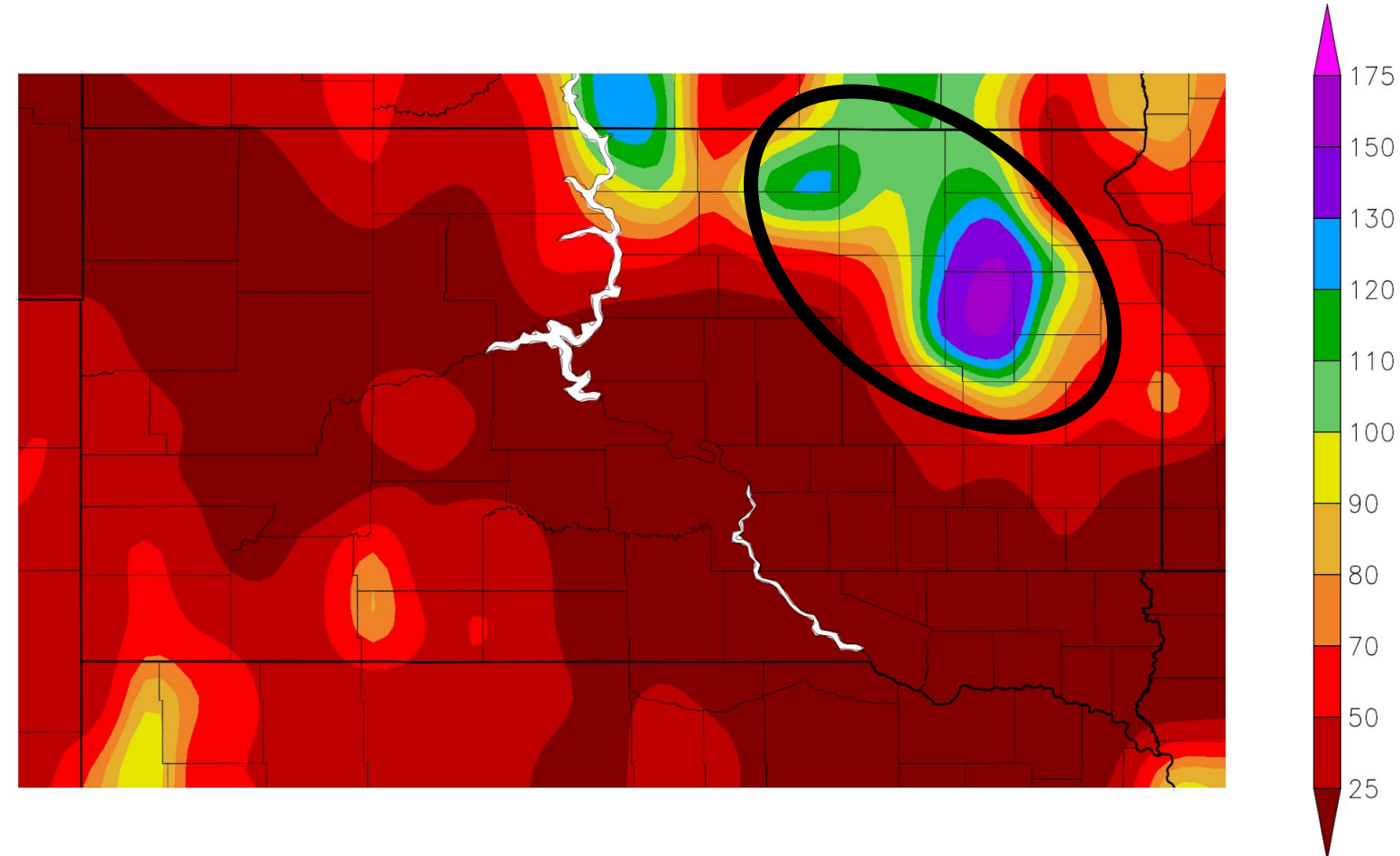
Winter Precipitation and Temperature

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Map shows 30-day percent of normal precipitation

- Small area of ***near to above normal precipitation*** past 30 days.
- Includes parts of the James River Basin in South Dakota.
- ***Small increases in minor flooding potential*** in the next 90 days.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
2/9/2026 – 3/10/2026



Source: [High Plains Regional Climate Center](#)

Generated 3/11/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

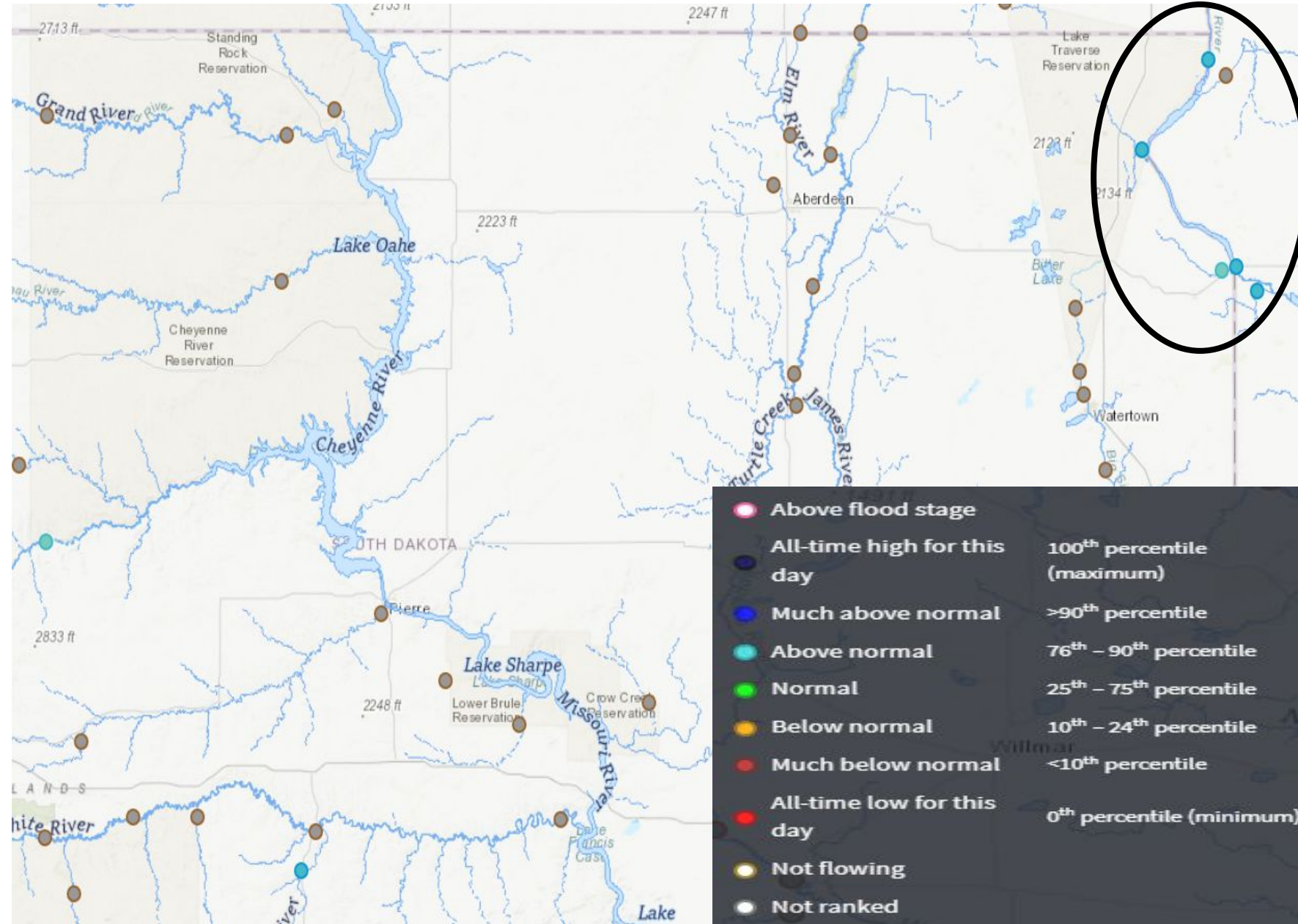


River Levels

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Map shows current streamflows

- Many rivers still affected by ice in northern areas.
- **Above normal streamflows** parts of Little Minnesota River, including Peever.
- Small chances (less than 25%) for minor flooding at Peever, SD.



Source: [USGS National Water Dashboard](https://www.water.usgs.gov/nwd/)





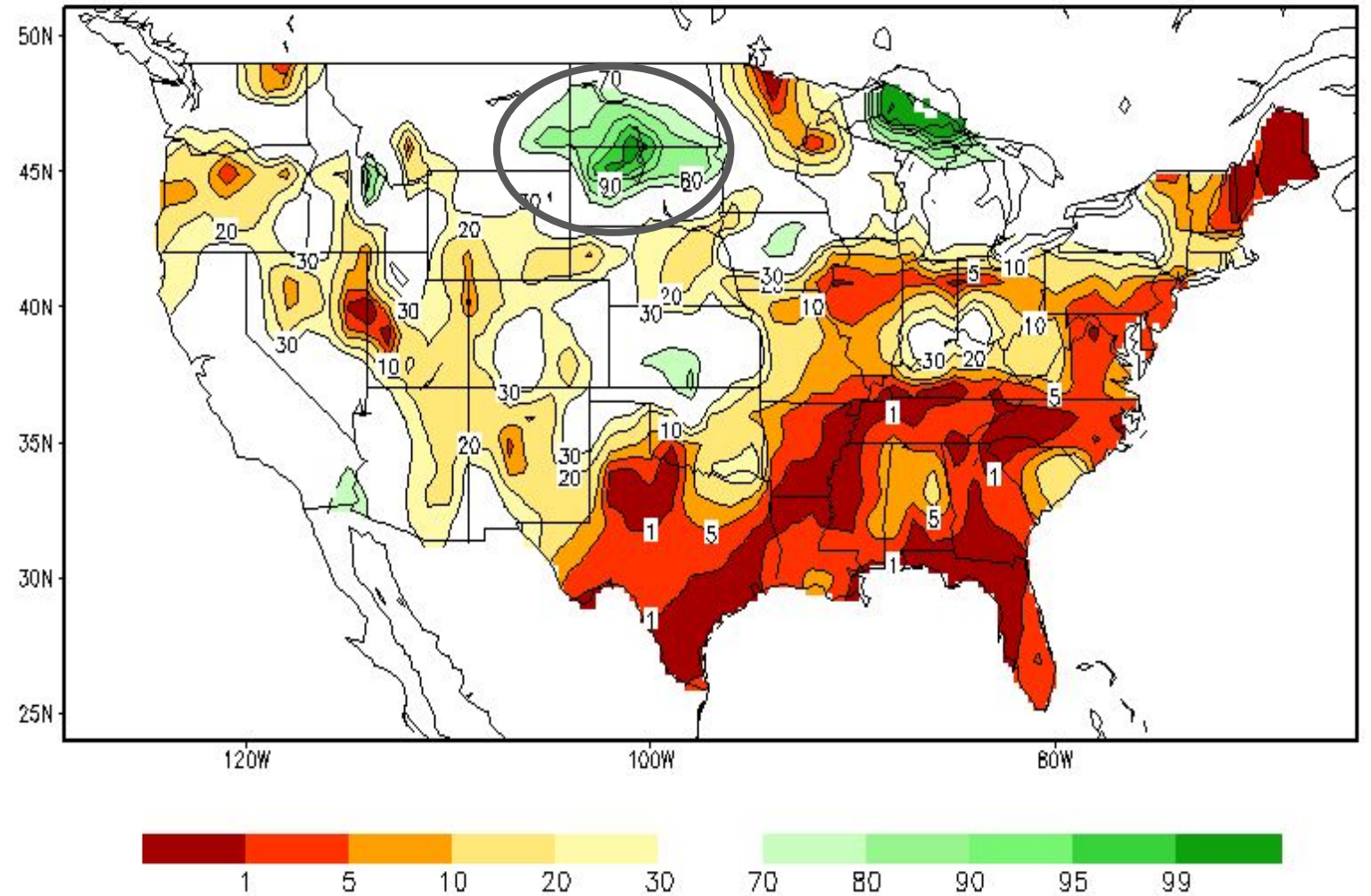
Soil Moisture and Frost Depth

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Map shows soil moisture ranking (percentile)

- ***Wetter than normal*** soils due to persistent frost and recent snowmelt (northern SD).
- Frost depths (not pictured) generally **0.5 to 2 feet** over northern SD.
- ***Frost in soils could trigger rapid runoff if heavy rain occurs before thaw.***
- ***Heavy spring rain could increase flood risk over northern SD due to wetter soils.***

Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile
MAR 10, 2026



Source: [NOAA Climate Prediction Center](https://www.noaa.gov/climate-prediction-center)



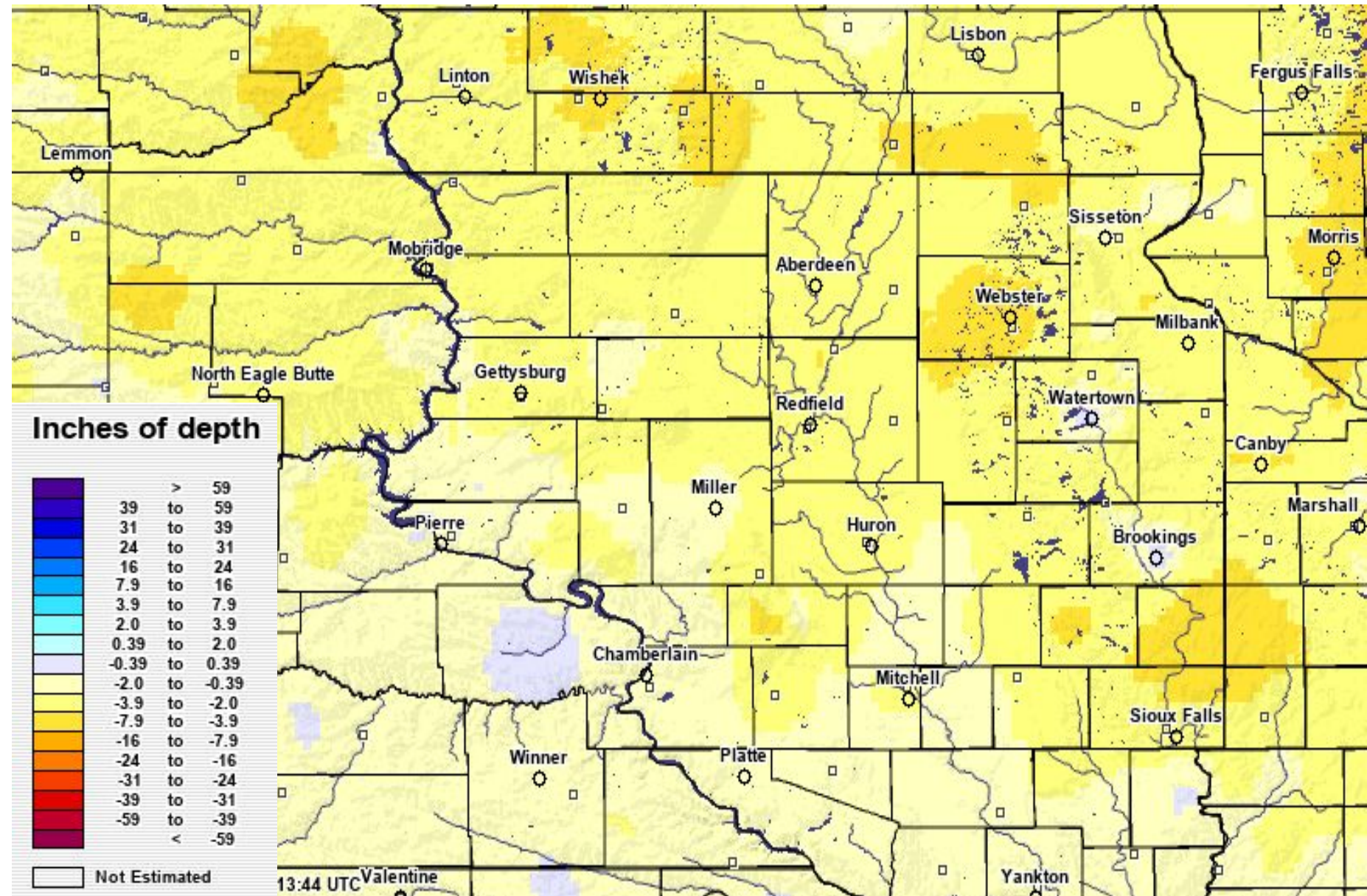


Snow Conditions

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

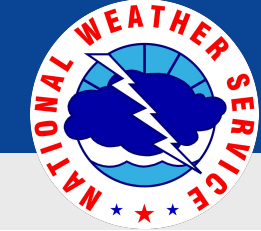
Map shows snow depth compared to average

- Lack of snowpack across the region.
- Snow depth compared to average is ***below normal***.
- ***Lowers the risk*** for Spring flooding.



Source: [National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center](#)





Latest Drought Conditions

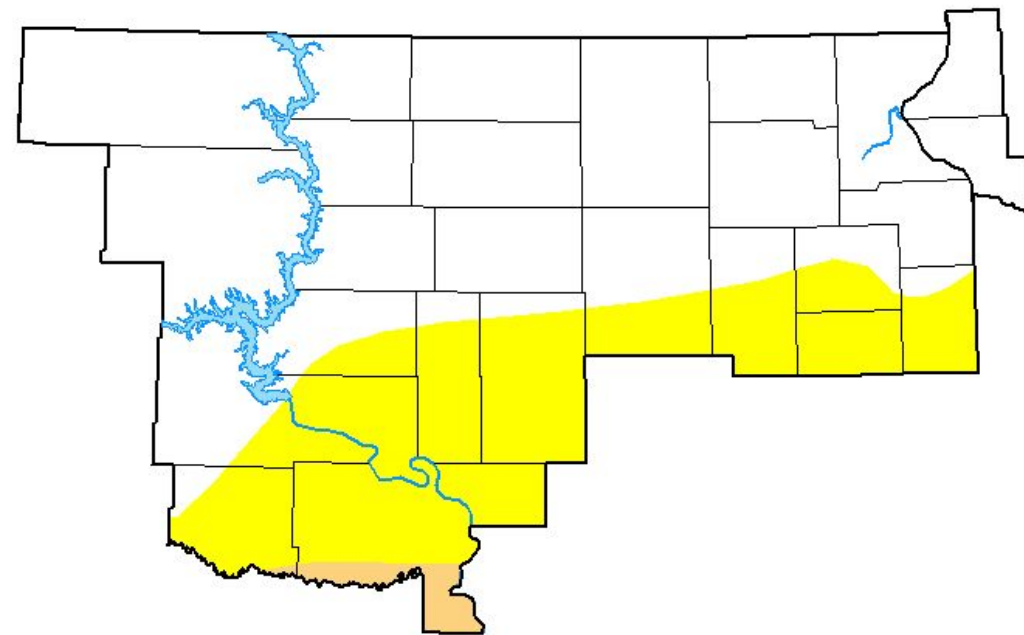
March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Map shows current drought conditions

- Moderate drought (D1) across south central SD, including the White River.
- Abnormally dry (D0) across portions of central and northeast SD.
- Minimal changes to the Drought Monitor throughout the winter.
- Lack of significant moisture in drought areas reduce the threat of Spring flooding.

U.S. Drought Monitor Aberdeen, SD WFO

March 3, 2026
(Released Thursday, Mar. 5, 2026)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Brad Pugh
CPC/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Source: [U.S. Drought Monitor](http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)



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National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD



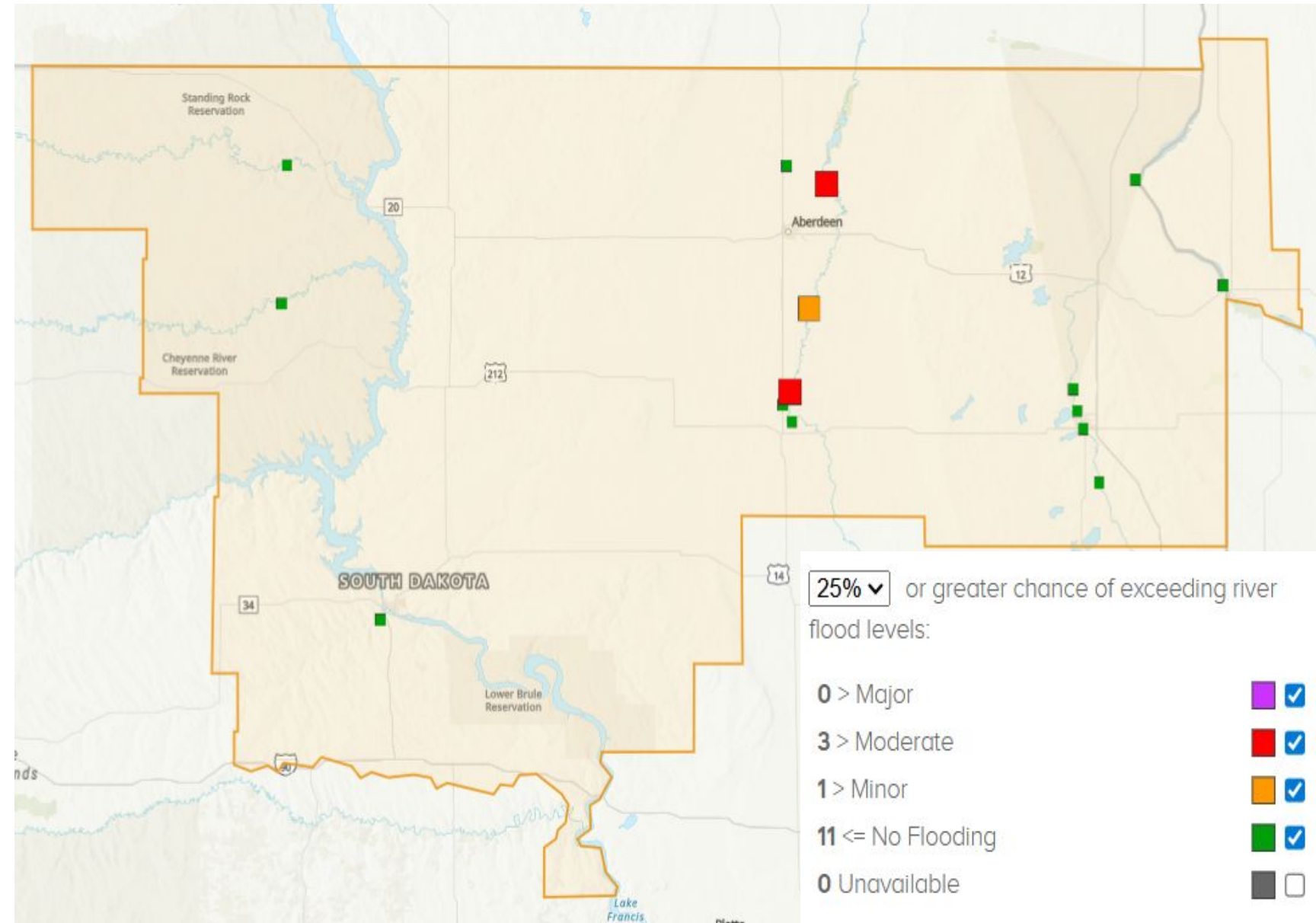
Long Range Flood Outlook

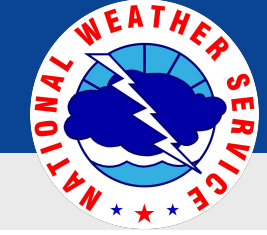
March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Probability of exceeding Moderate and Minor flood stage

Spring Flood Risk (greater than 25% chance)

- **Low risk** (25-34%) for **moderate flooding** on the James River at Columbia and Ashton.
- These lower chance outcomes mainly driven by any heavy rain events that may occur over the next 90 days (low predictability).



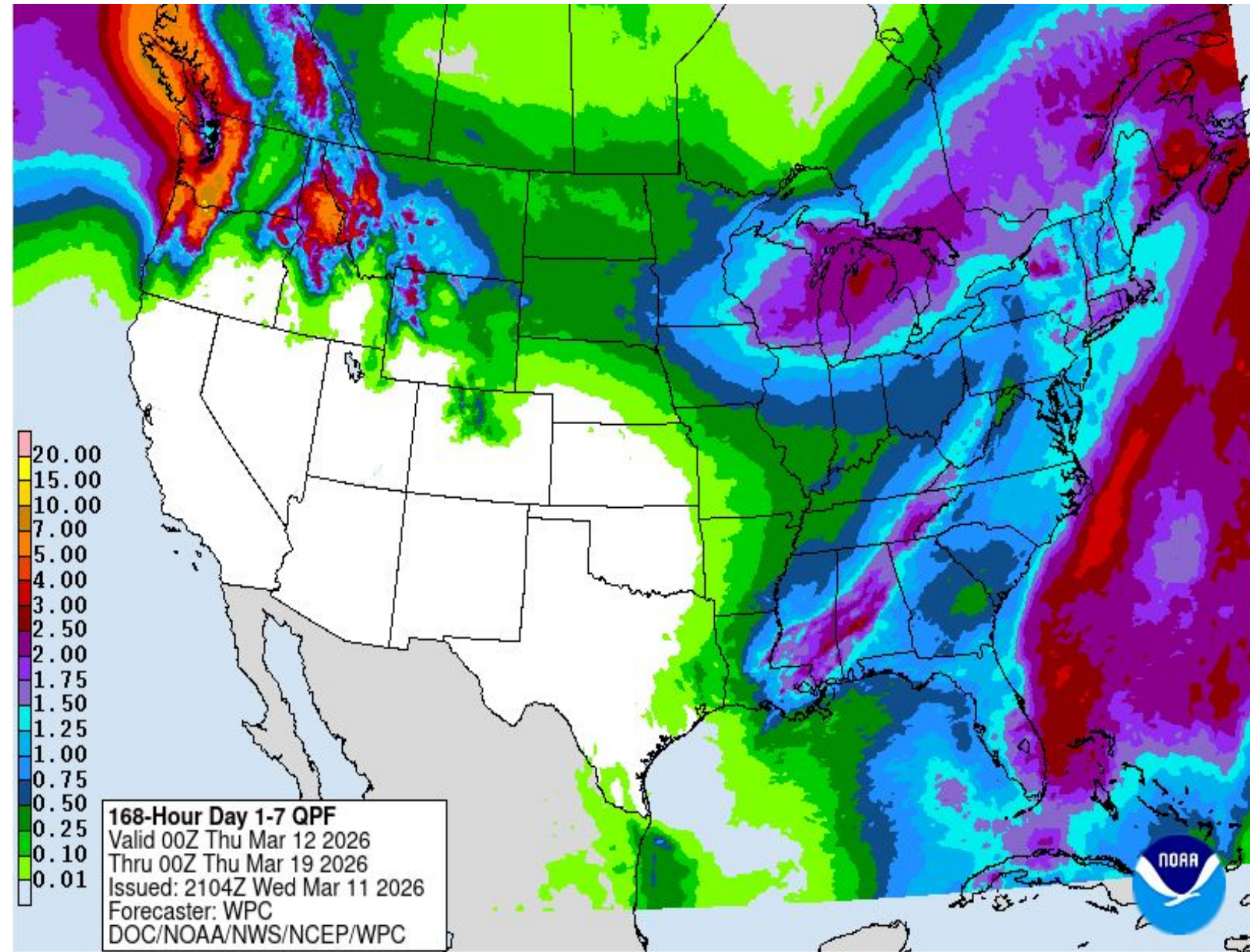


7-Day Weather Forecast

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

Additional moisture in the near-term

- **Opportunities for moisture** across the northern tier through March 18th.
- Generally between 0.50in to 1.00in liquid equivalent precipitation forecast.
- This **may slightly increase** risk for spring flooding, especially if precipitation is heavier than expected.

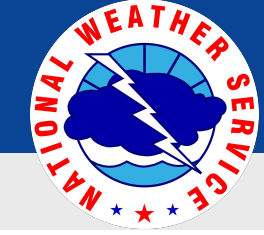


Find a detailed forecast for any location at weather.gov/forecastpoints



National Oceanic and
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National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD



Spring Weather Outlook

March 12, 2026
2:50 AM CDT

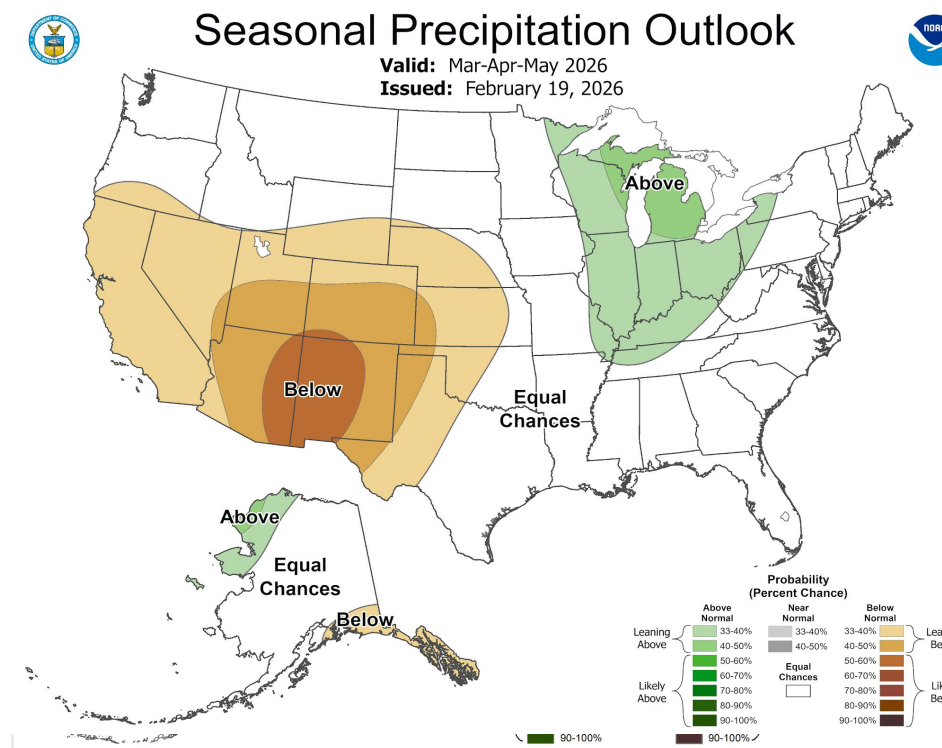
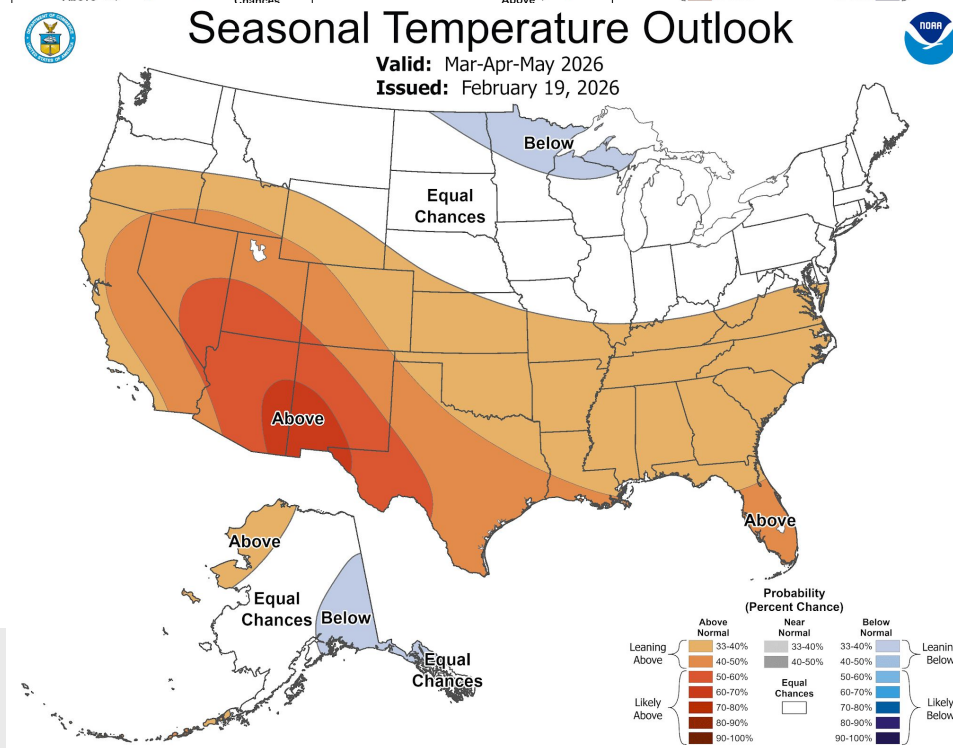
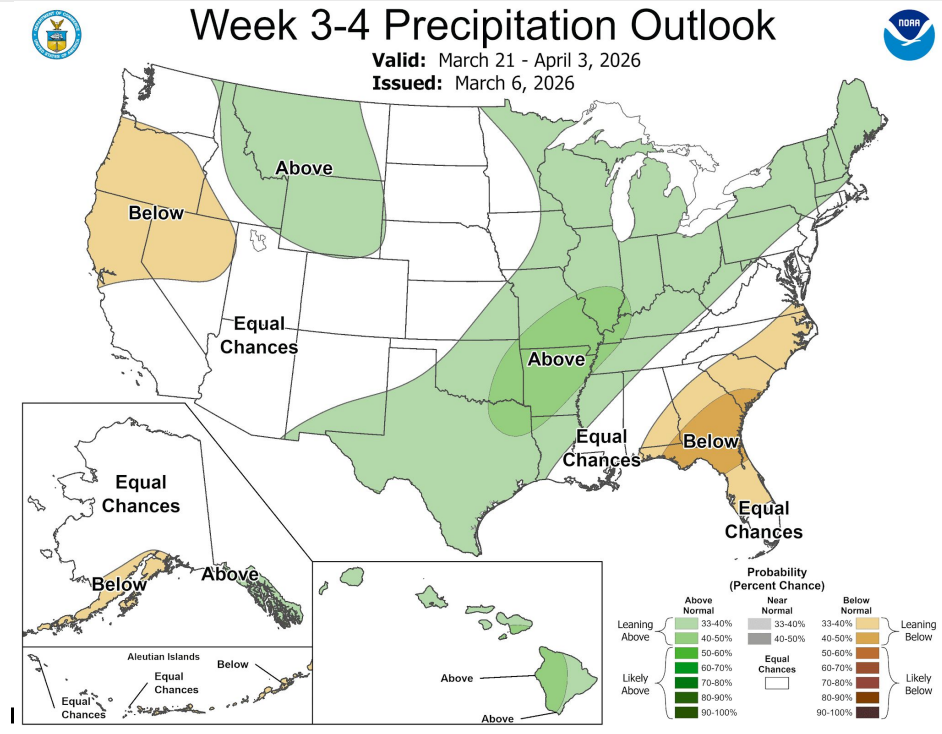
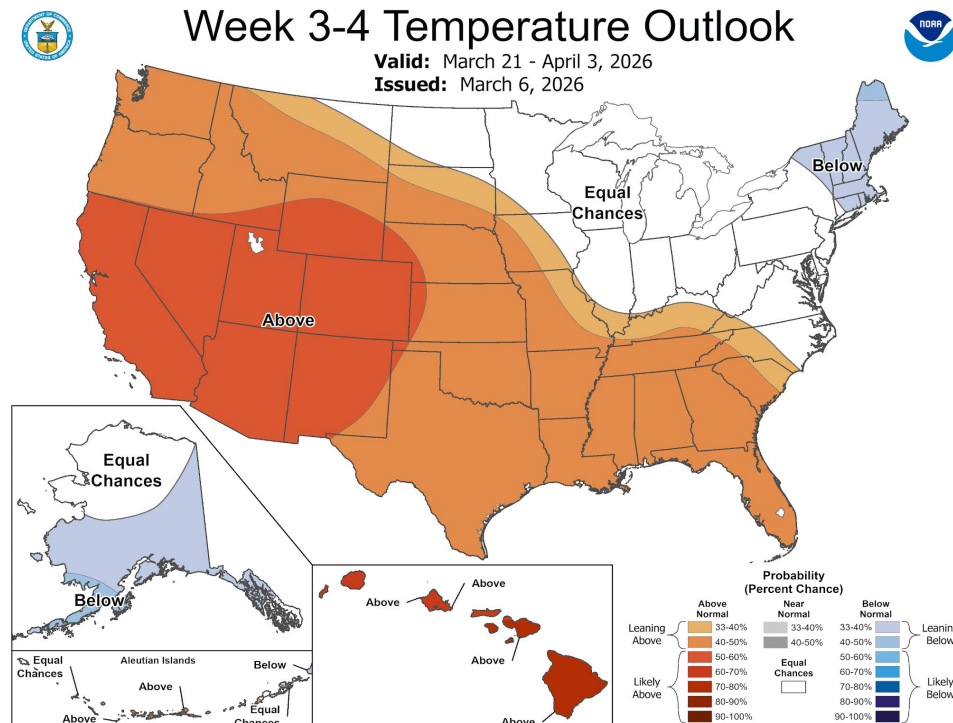
These are general outlooks that depict broad trends for the weeks and months ahead

Weeks 3-4 Outlook (Mar 21 - Apr 3)

- Leaning (33-50% chance) **above normal** for temperatures.
- Equal chances of above, below, or normal precipitation. No strong signals.

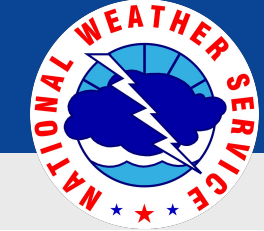
Seasonal Outlook

- Equal chances of above, below, or normal temperatures. No strong signals.
- Equal chances of above, below, or normal precipitation. No strong signals.
- **No clear signals in the 3-month outlook period how Spring flooding may be impacted.**



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce



Summary

Key Messages

- Spring flood risk is near to ***below normal***.
- Lack of significant snowpack and ***below normal precipitation***. Deep frost in soils over northern portions of the region.
- ***Less than 50% chance of reaching flood stage in the next 90 days (most locations).***
- **Deep frost could trigger rapid runoff if heavy rain occurs before thaw.**
- Increased chance (52-56%) for **minor flooding** on James River at Columbia and Stratford.

Additional Resources

[NWS Aberdeen Website](#)

[Missouri Basin River Forecast Center](#)

[North Central River Forecast Center](#)

[NWS Aberdeen on Facebook](#)

[Forecast Points \(Hourly Details\)](#)

[Flood Safety Information](#)

[USGS National Water Dashboard](#)

[River Observations and Forecasts for SD and MN](#)

[NWS Aberdeen on Twitter](#)

