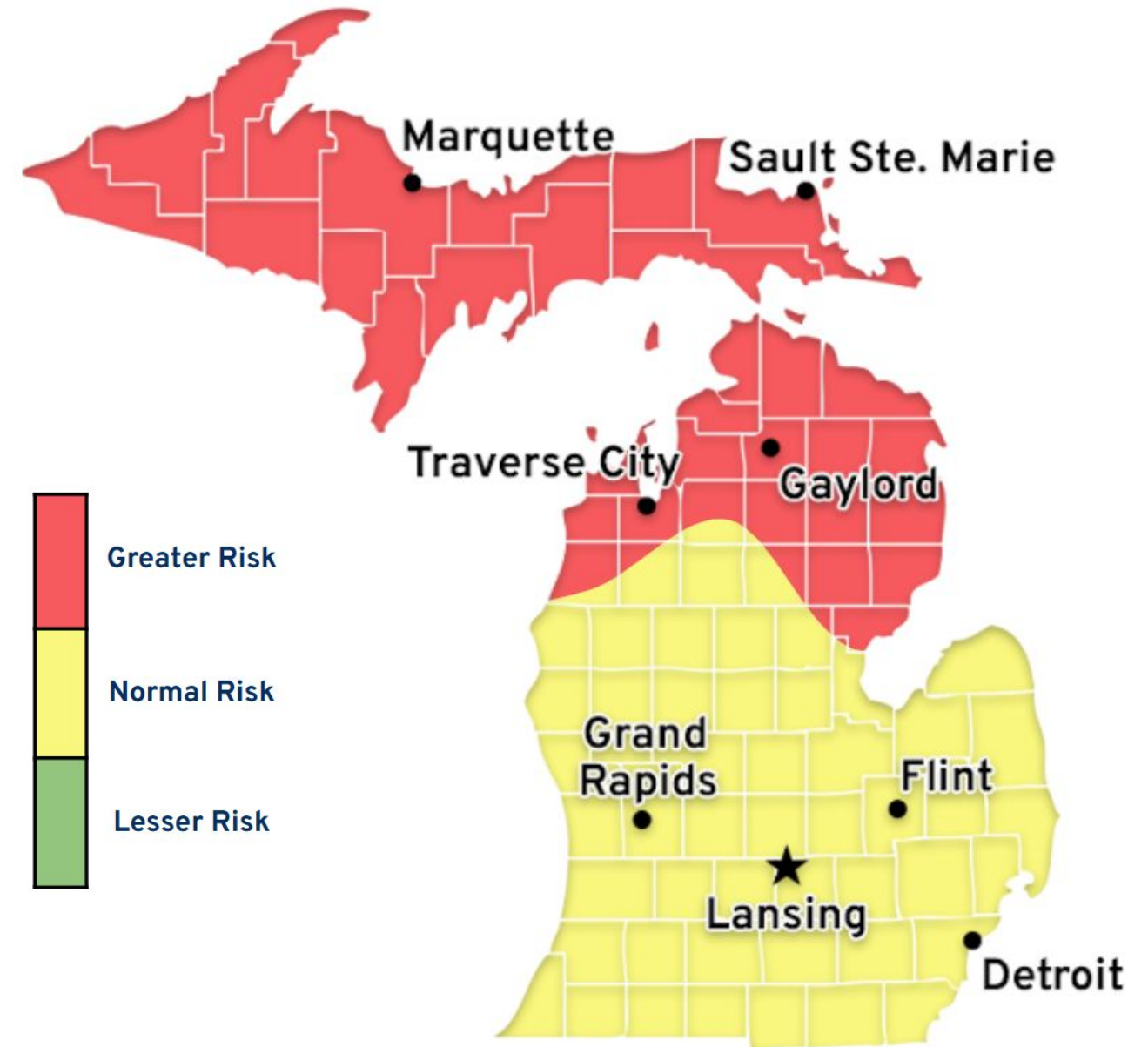


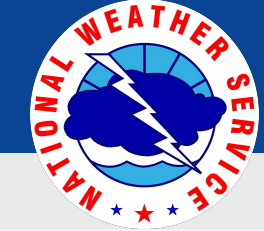


2026 Michigan Spring Flood and Water Resources Outlook

National Weather Service
Michigan Offices

March 12, 2026





Spring Flood & Water Resources Outlook

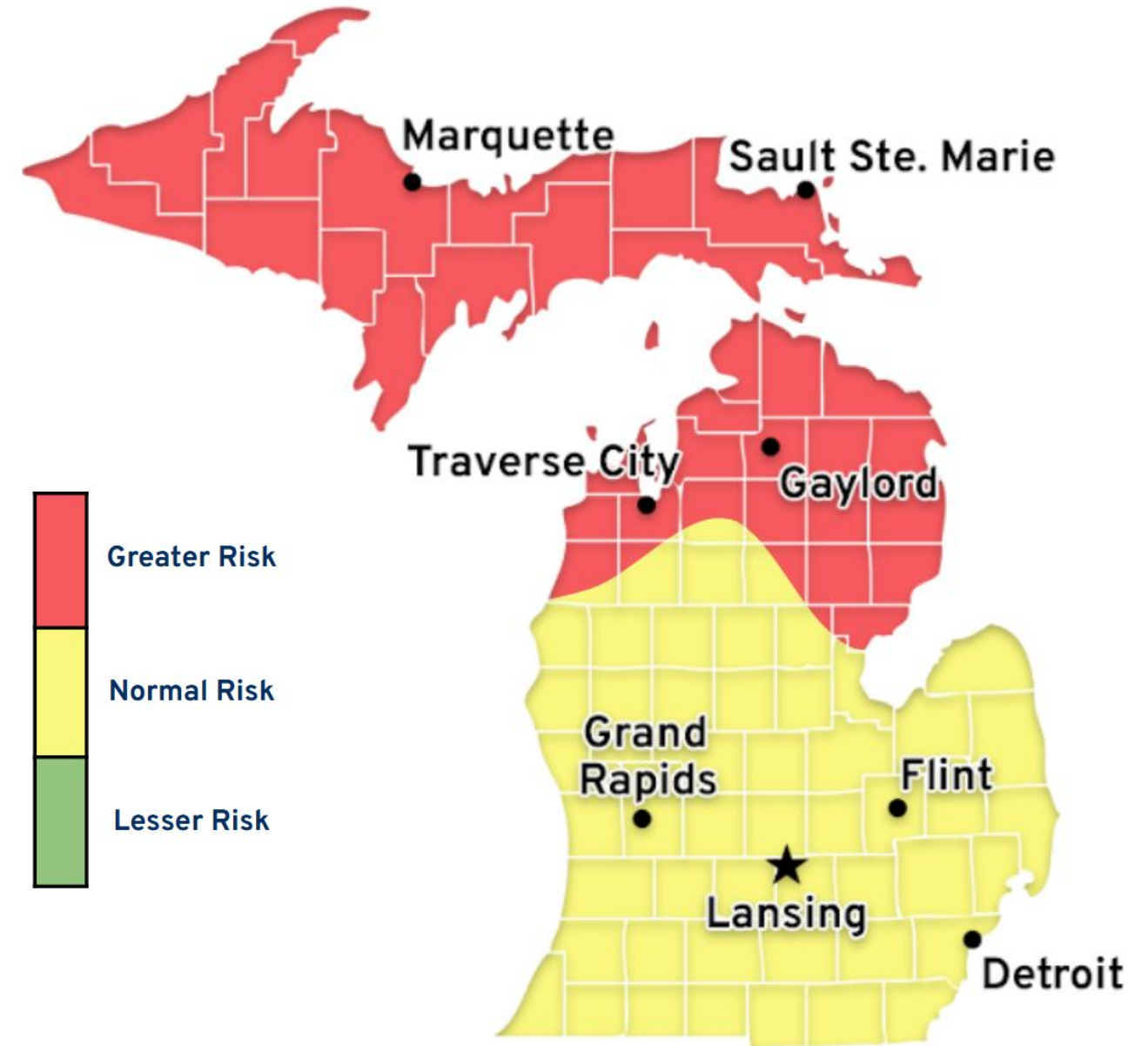
Mid-March 2026 Update

Key Messages

- Spring flood risk is *higher than normal* across the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula
- Above-Average snowpack and average amounts of frozen ground could lead to significant runoff
- Spring Flood Risk is normal across southern $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Lower Peninsula
- **Precipitation and rate of snowmelt through spring while the ground is still frozen will be one of the most important flood risk factors**

NEW What Has Changed

- Additional increased risks in the U.P.
- Lower Peninsula flood risks have increased a bit after recent heavy rains have saturated soils and increased river levels...along with the potential for heavy snowfall across Upper/Northern Lower Michigan the weekend of 13 March.





Spring Flood Outlook

Key Ingredients	Antecedent Conditions	Impact to Spring Flooding
Winter Weather	Colder and Snowier	Greater Risk
River Levels	Above Normal	Greater Risk
River Ice Conditions	Below Normal	Lesser Risk
Soil Moisture	Above Normal	Greater Risk
Frost Depth	Near/Below Normal	Lesser Risk
Snow Conditions / Water Equivalent	Near/Above Normal	Greater Risk
Spring Weather Outlook	Normal	Normal Risk

Overall Risk of Spring Flooding:

Greater Risk

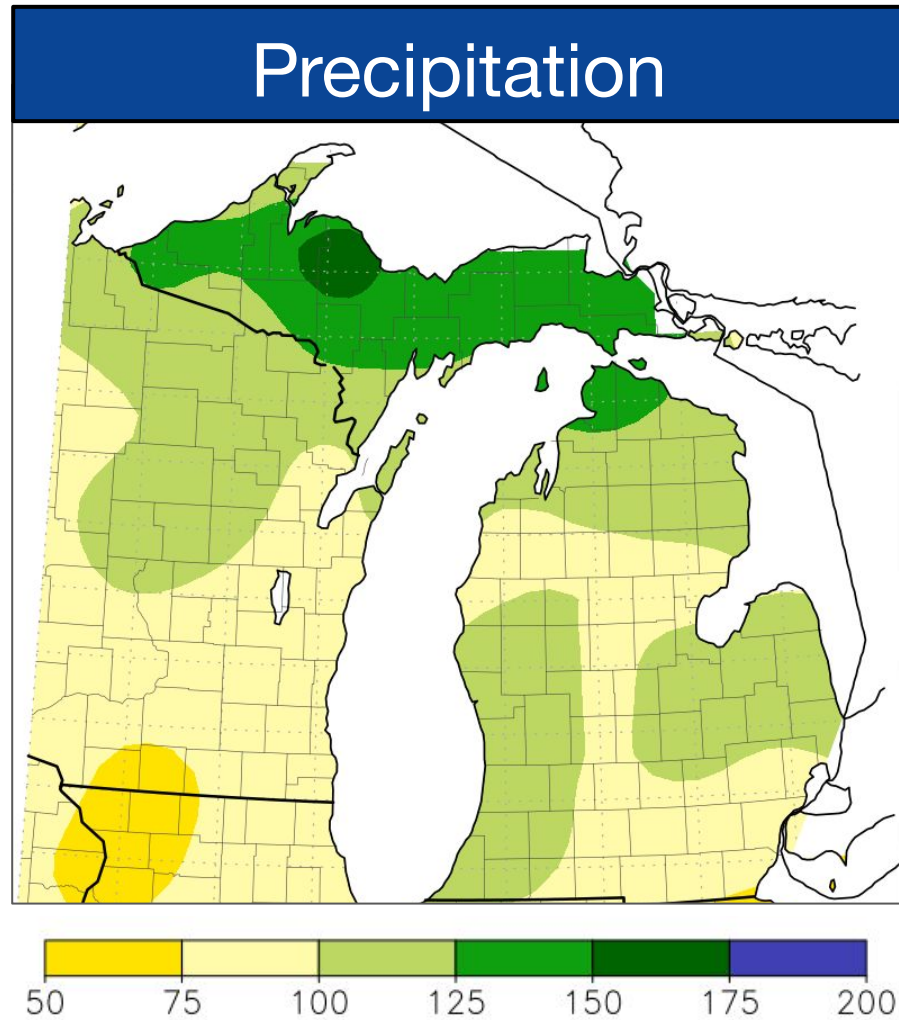
Most of the snow has melted in the Lower Peninsula, but soils are saturated and rivers are already high. Meanwhile, a huge snowpack continues to increase in the Upper Peninsula. This puts much of the state of Michigan in slightly or significantly increased flood risks over the next few weeks. As always, the single most important factor for spring flooding is the Spring Weather conditions, with heavy spring rains required to cause significant flooding.

Risk Potential:
Lesser Risk
Normal Risk
Greater Risk
To Be Determined

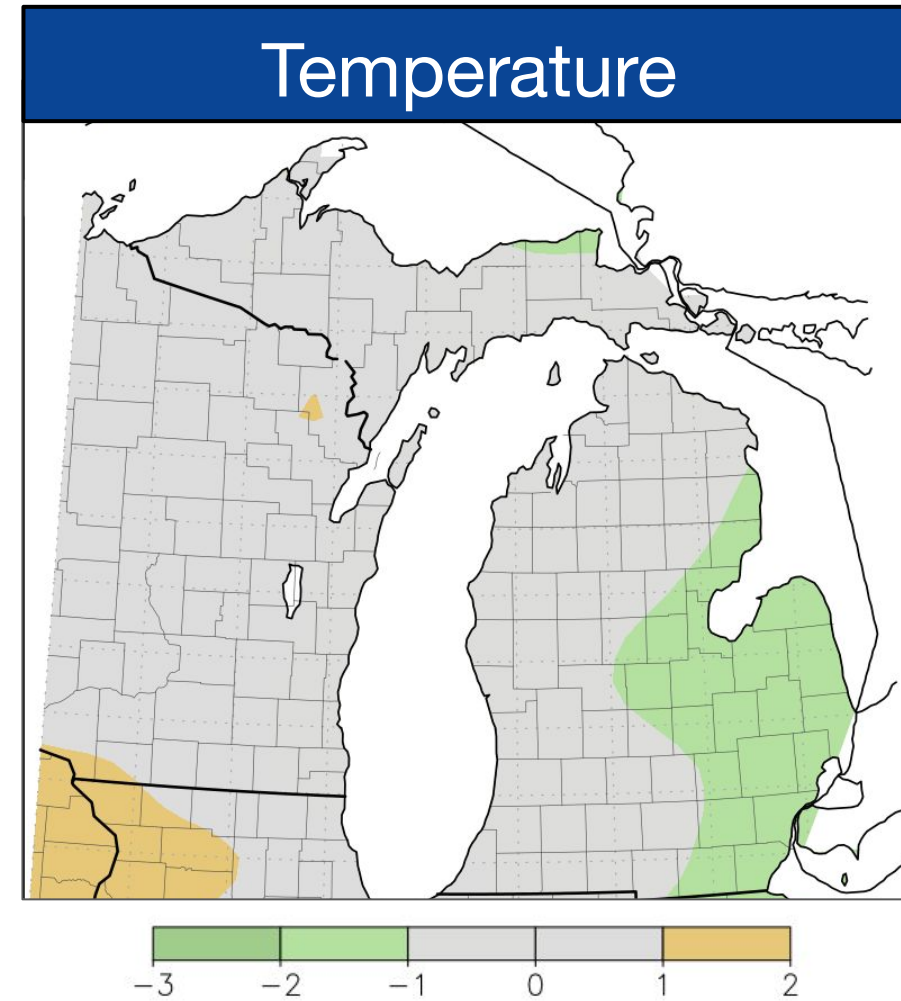


Winter Precipitation and Temperature

Conditions Compared to Normal, Nov 1 - Mar 11



- Much wetter than normal conditions in the U.P.
- Slightly wetter than normal across much of the Lower Peninsula



- Overall slightly colder than normal, especially across the Southeast Lower Peninsula



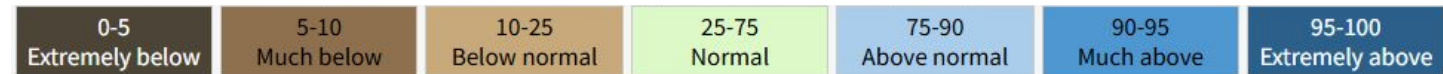
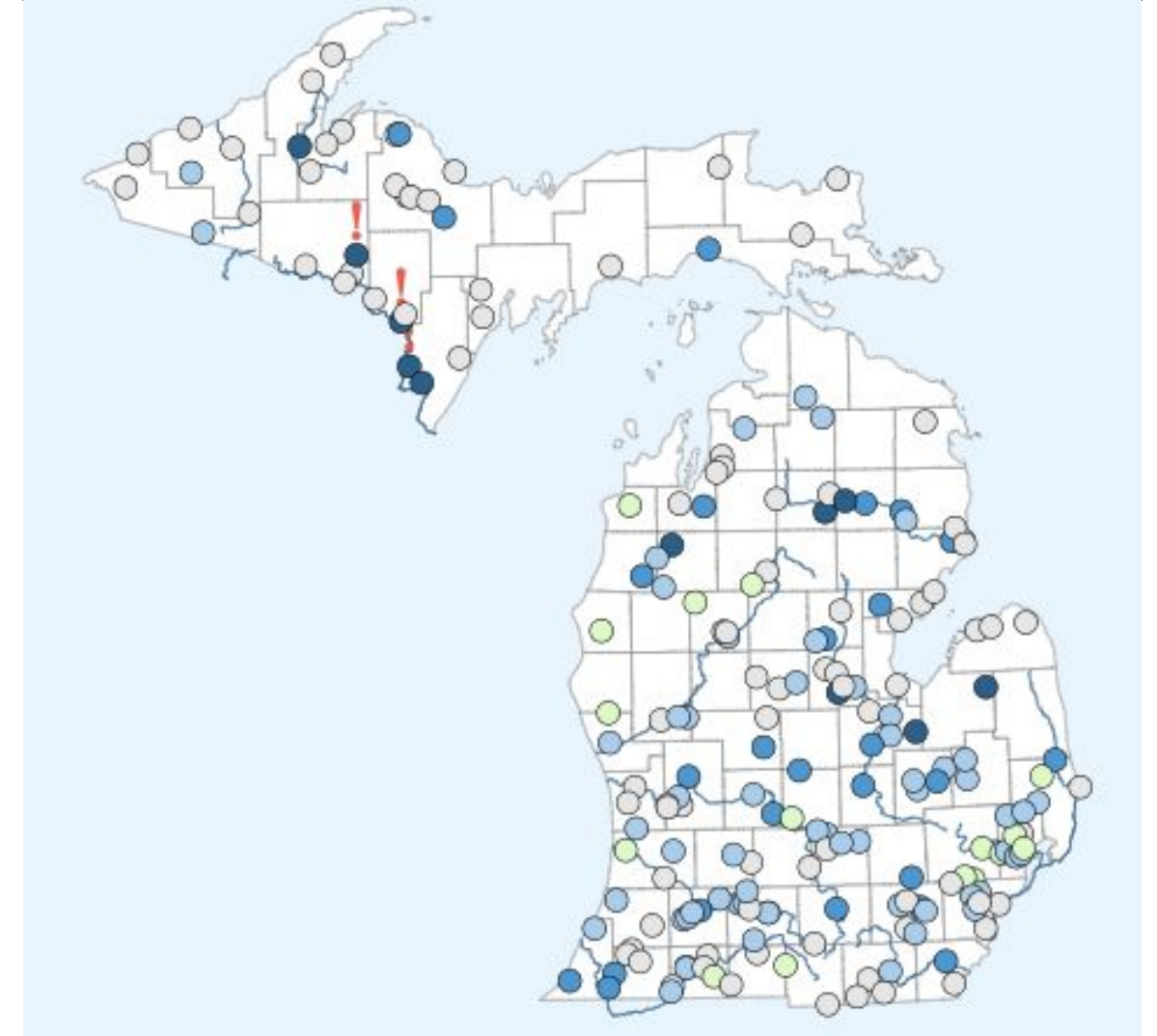


River Levels

Map shows Mar 11 river levels compared to normal

- Water levels are slightly higher than normal across much of the Upper Peninsula
- Water levels are significantly higher than normal across much of the Lower Peninsula due to recent rains and snowmelt

Current River Levels (Mar 11)

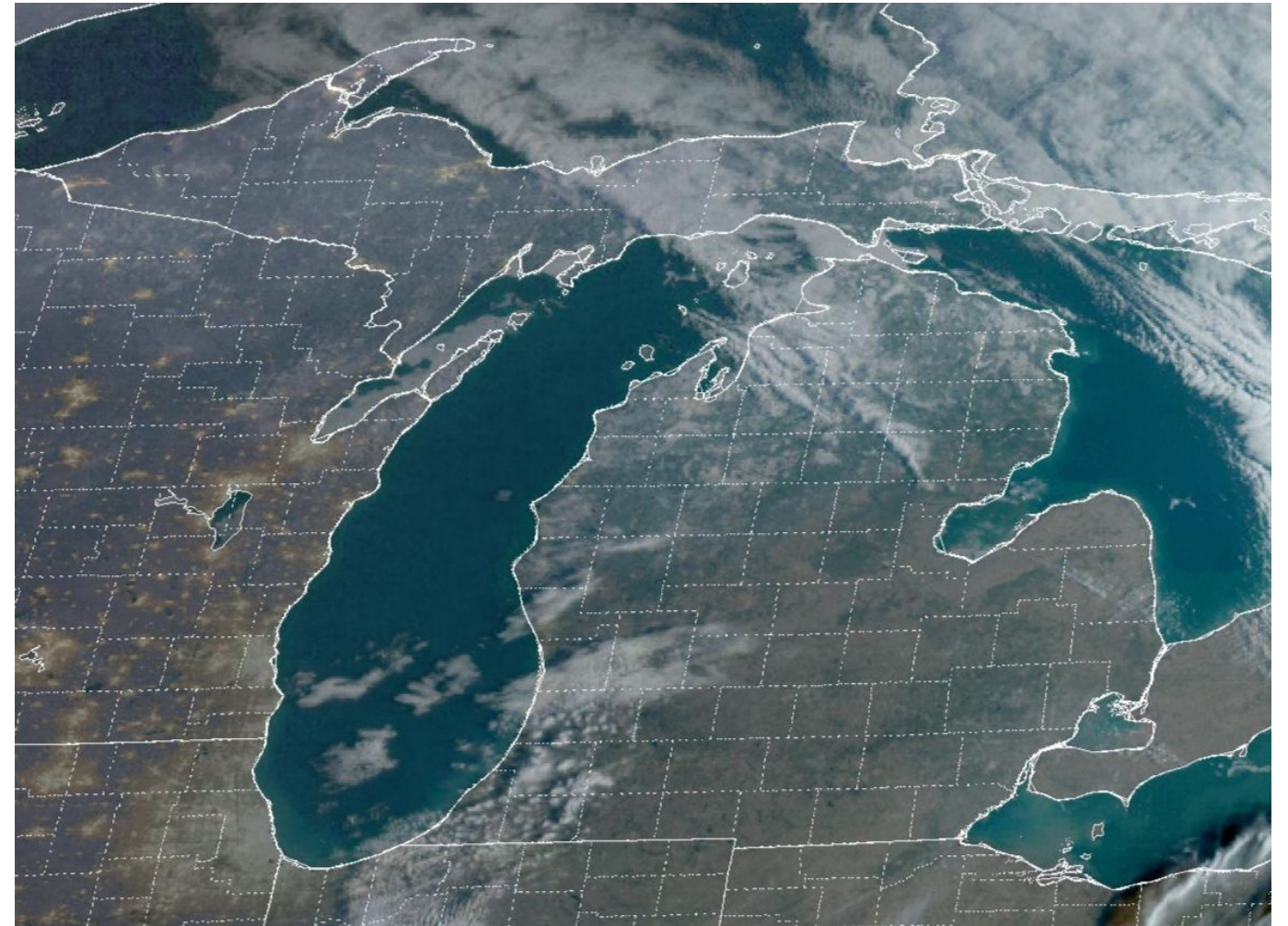




River Ice Conditions

Image shows widespread wintry conditions across northern ½ of Michigan

- Some rivers are still ice-covered in the Upper Peninsula
- Rivers in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula are largely ice-free



Satellite Image: Mar 11, 2026

Image courtesy: NOAA/NESDIS/STAR

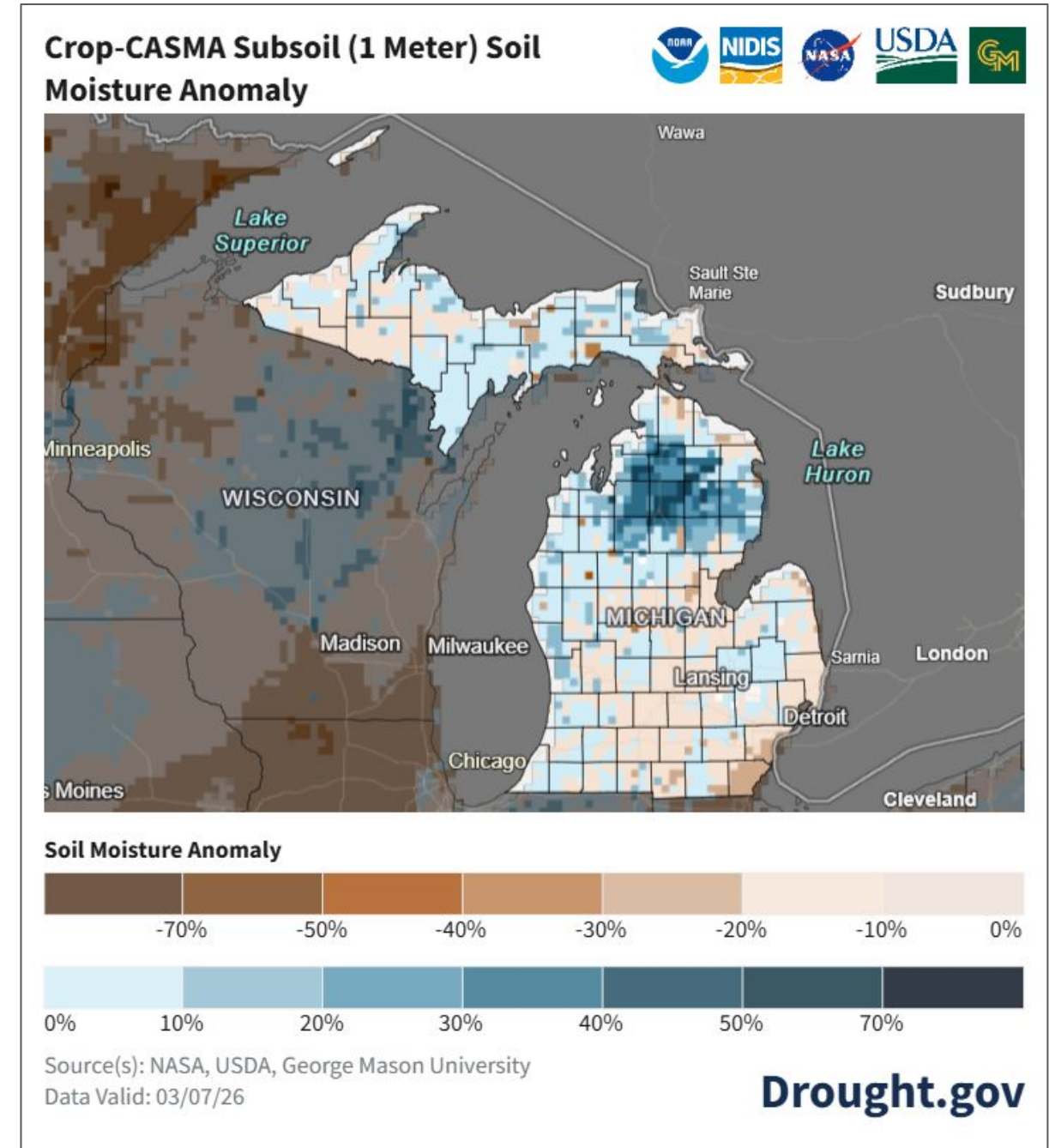




Soil Moisture and Frost Depth

Map shows soil moisture changes from normal

- A wet fall sent U.P. soils into winter more saturated than normal, and lots of snow to melt this spring will reinforce these wetter-than-normal conditions
- Recent snowmelt and heavy rains in the Lower Peninsula have left soils nearly saturated as well
- Upper Peninsula: Ground is generally frozen 5 to 10 inches thick, with lesser amounts along Lake Superior
- Lower Peninsula: Some local areas of frozen ground remain, but mostly of the frost has already come out of the ground
- Overall wetter soils increase the chances of future flooding as less water and snowmelt will be able to soak into the ground



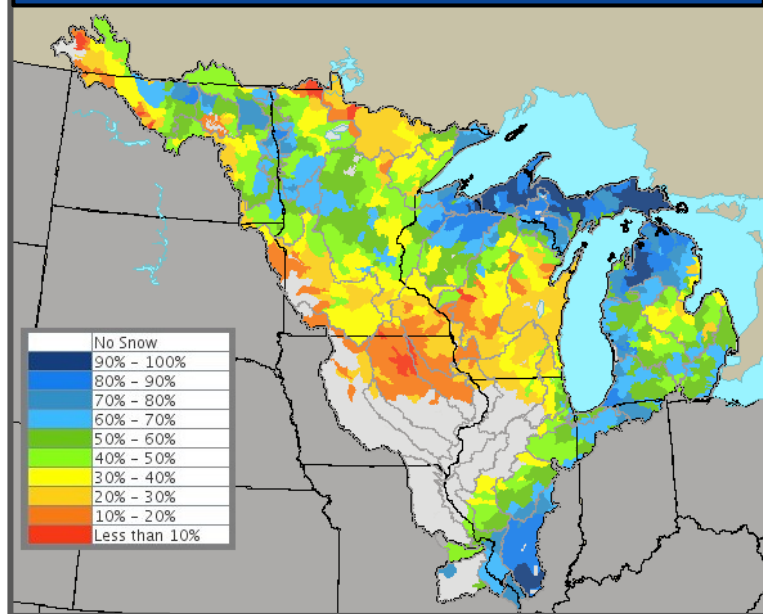


Snow Water Equivalent

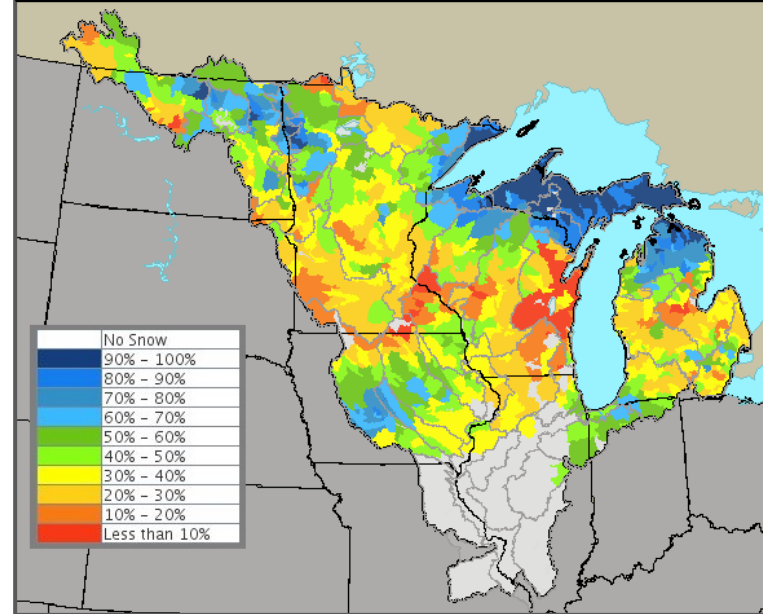
Map shows snow water amounts compared to normal

- **Upper Peninsula:** Much more snow water than normal
 - Increases Spring Flood Risk
- **Lower Peninsula:** Majority of snowpack has melted
 - Lowers Spring Flood Risk

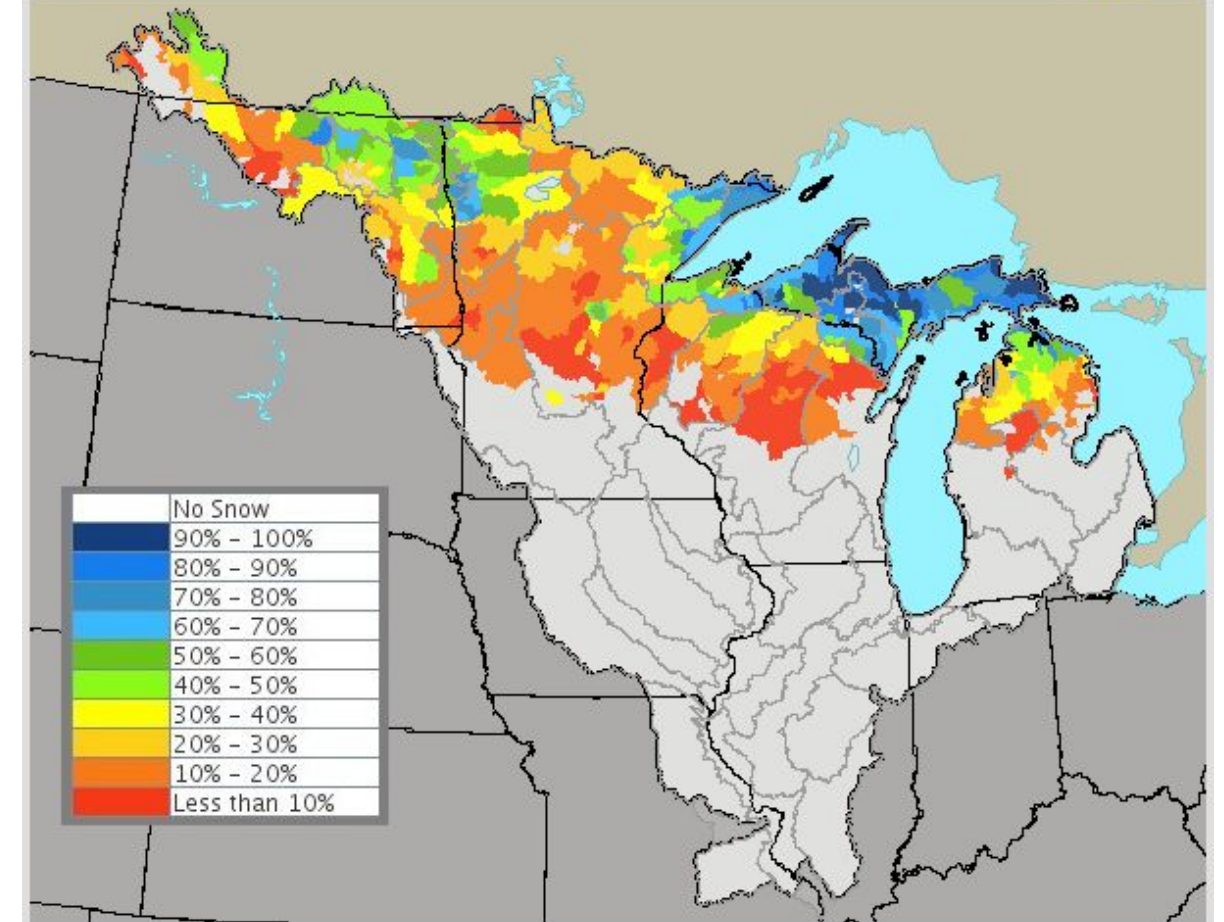
4 weeks ago (Feb 9)



2 weeks ago (Feb 23)



As of Mar 9



Note: This map compares current NCRFC Modeled SWE with the historical record of modeled SWE for each basin. An area ranked as 'Less than 10 percent' is at the lower end of the record and one ranked near 100 percent is at the higher end. A 50 percent ranking indicates current SWE is in the middle of our historical record.

Created on 03/10/2026 at 02:03:21 AM CDT



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

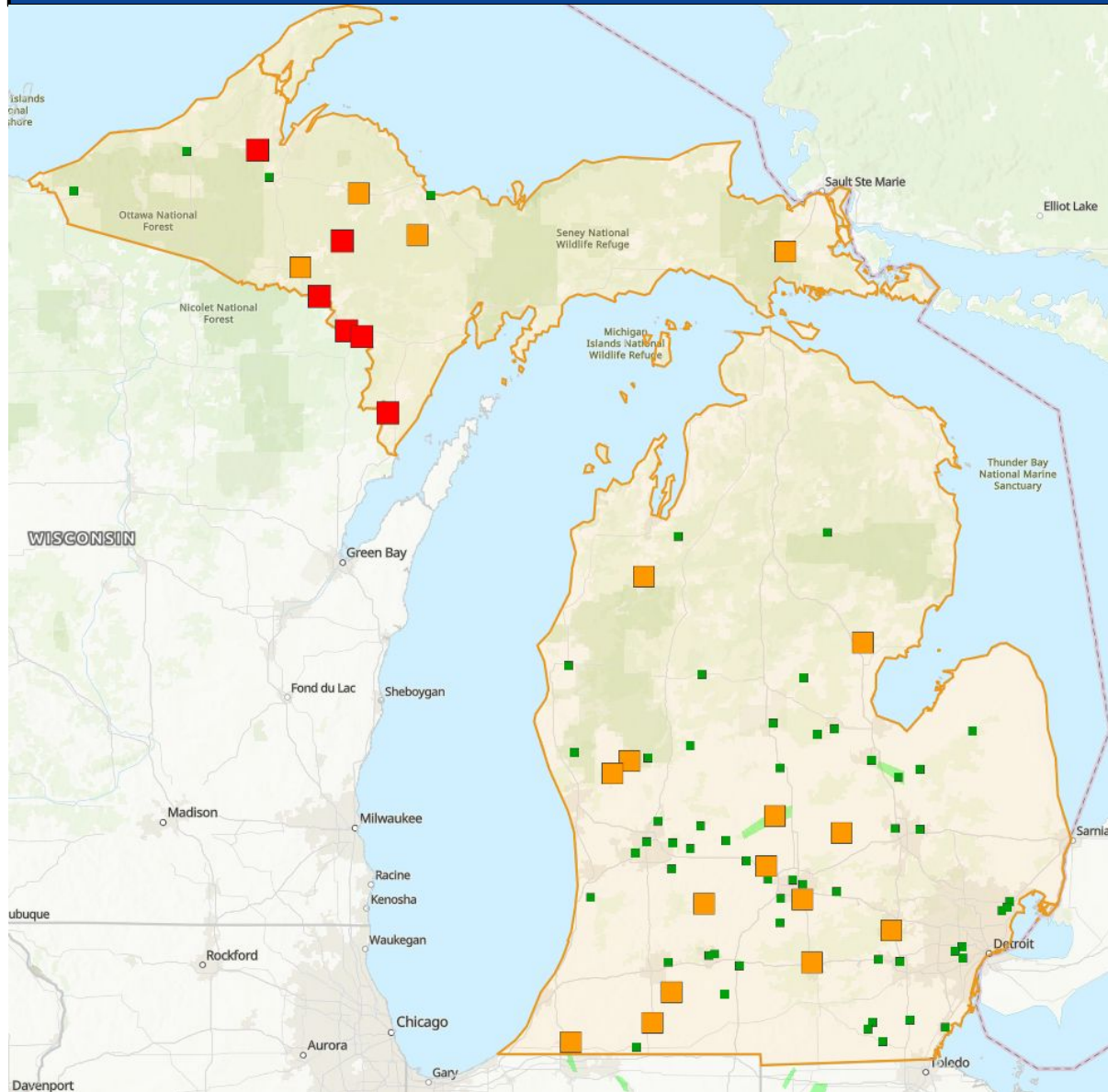
National Weather Service
Central Region



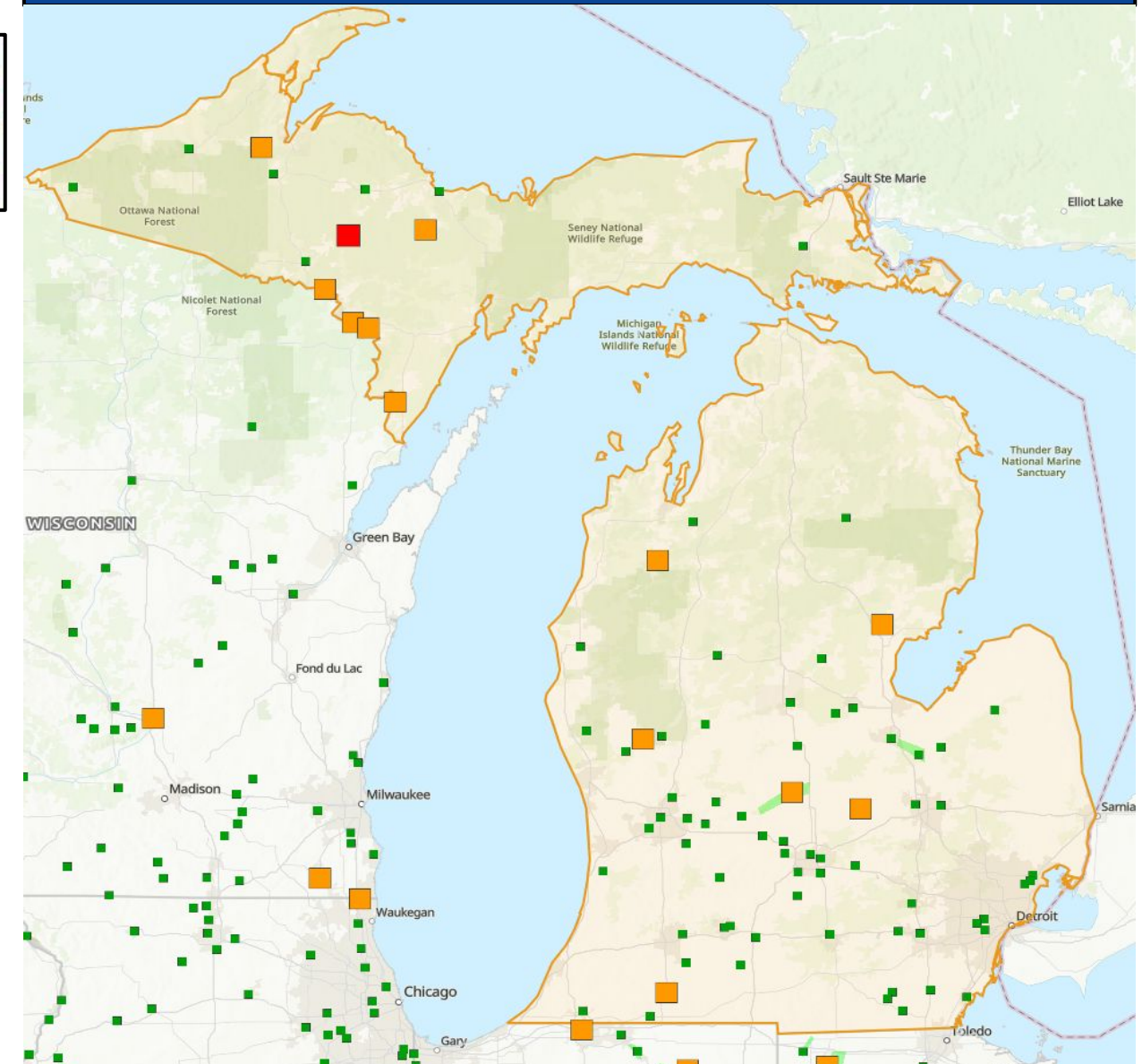
Long Range Flood Outlook

Probability of reaching/exceeding flood stages

25% Chance of Exceeding



50% Chance of Exceeding

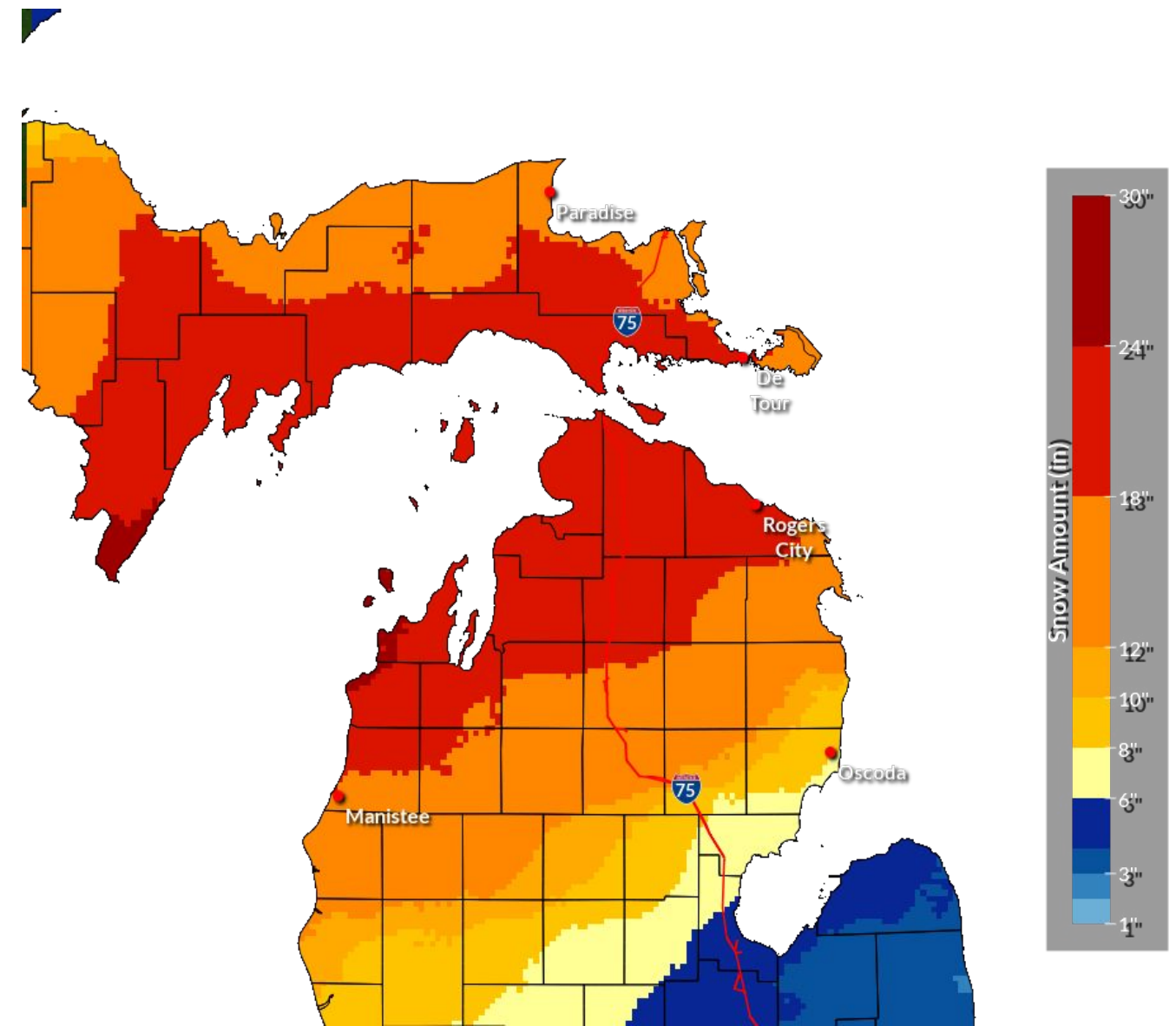




Snowfall March 14-15 2026

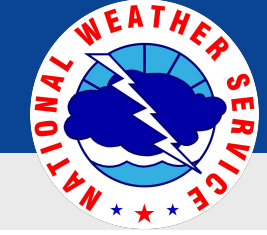
Adds a bit of a “wild card” to the snowmelt flood potential.

- After substantial snow melt during the first part of March across northern Lower Michigan... potentially heavy snowfall is forecast for the March 14-15 time frame.
- This will eventually result in another snowmelt cycle that will keep the flood threat elevated across northern portions of the state.



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



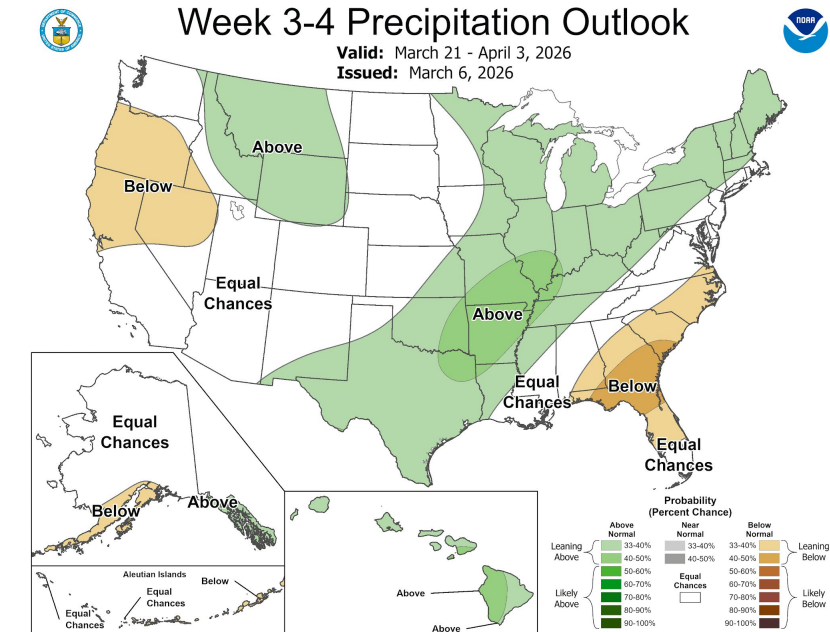
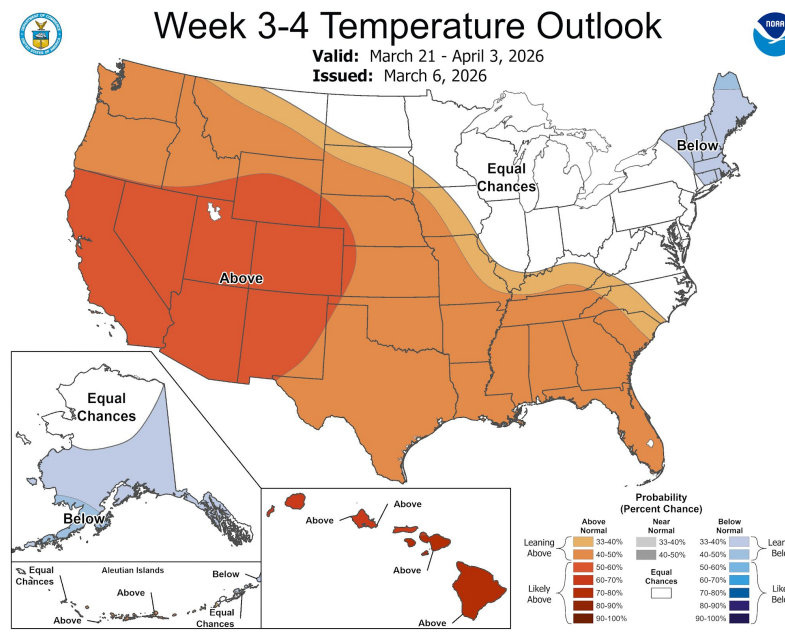


Spring Weather Outlook

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

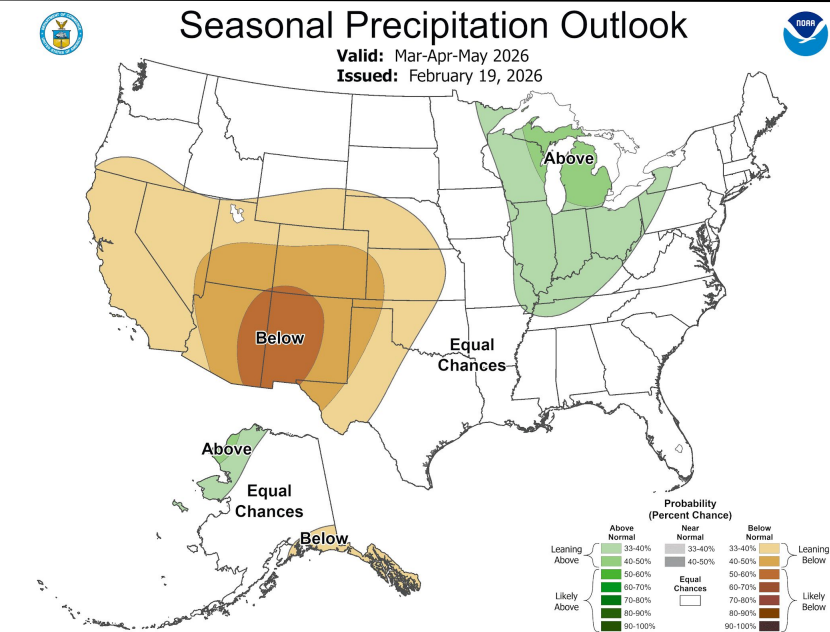
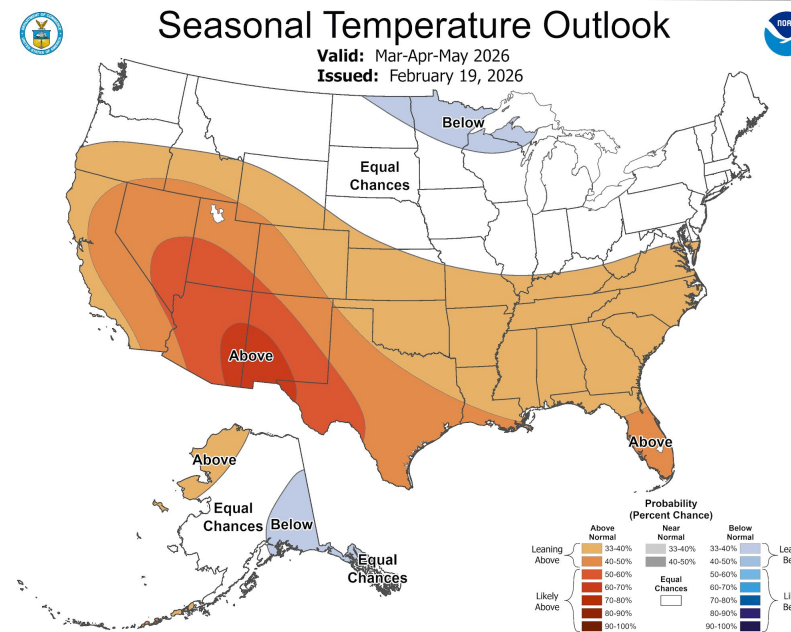
Weeks 3-4 Outlook

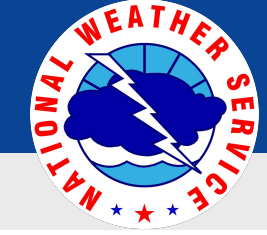
- Temperature: Equal chances for above/near/below normal
- Precip: Lean toward continued wet conditions
- Little or no melting in U.P. through end of March



Seasonal Outlook

- Temperature: Equal chances for above/near/below normal
- Precip: Wetter than normal spring
- Possibly an increased potential for more heavy spring rains (L.P.) or additional snowpack growth (U.P.)





Spring Flood & Water Resources Outlook

Key Messages

- Spring flood risk is *higher than normal* across the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula
- Above-Average snowpack and average amounts of frozen ground could lead to significant runoff
- Spring Flood Risk is normal across southern $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Lower Peninsula
- **Precipitation and rate of snowmelt through spring while the ground is still frozen will be one of the most important flood risk factors**



Next Scheduled Update

- This is the final scheduled issuance

Additional Resources

<u>NWS Grand Rapids</u>	<u>Forecast Points (Hourly Details)</u>
<u>NWS Detroit/White Lake</u>	<u>Flood Safety Information</u>
<u>NWS Gaylord</u>	<u>USGS National Water Dashboard</u>
<u>NWS Marquette</u>	<u>Michigan Drought Dashboard</u>
<u>NWS Northern Indiana</u>	
<u>North Central River Forecast Center</u>	

