April-June 2026 Outlook: Perspective for the Lower Rio Grande Valley/Deep S. Texas Region

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

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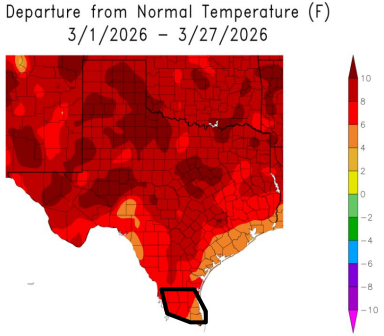
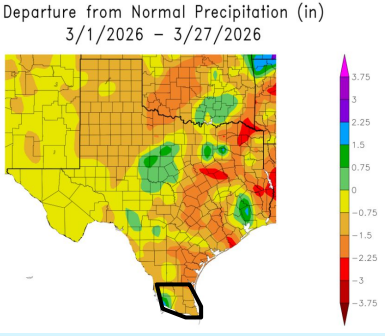
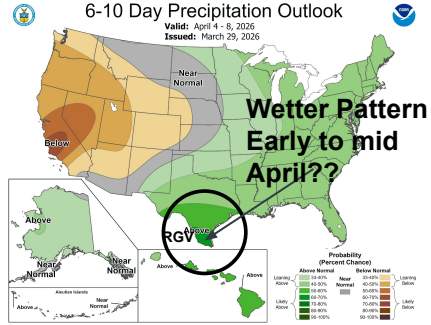
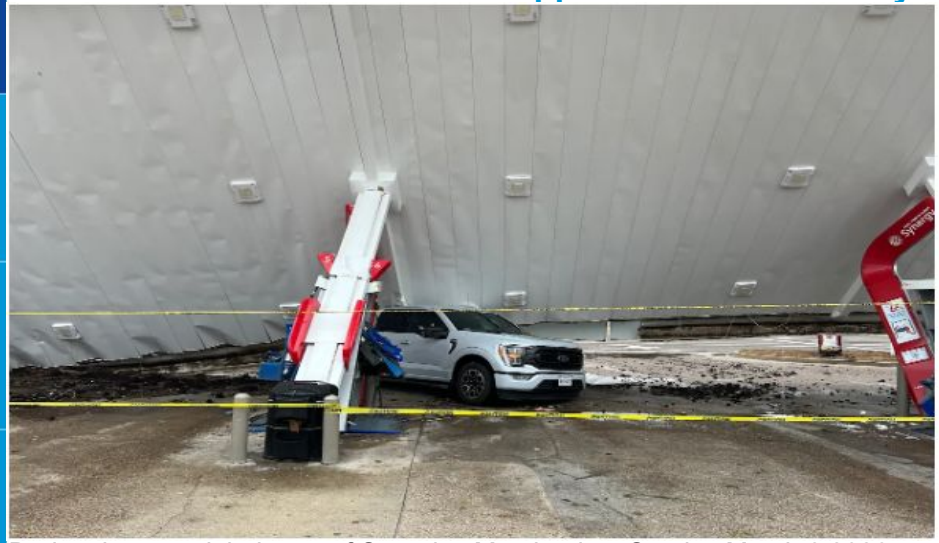
Warmer than normal conditions are favored to continue through the spring; precipitation outlook remains a toss-up; drought, heat risk increases, occasional heavy rain/flooding, & water supply issues are in focus







A Review of the March 7-8, 2026 Wind Driven Hail and Flash Flood Event Across The Upper Rio Grande Valley



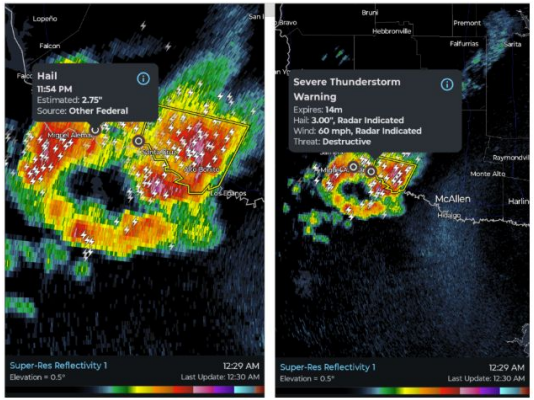
During the overnight hours of Saturday March 7 into Sunday March 8 2026, a severe thunderstorm impacted the Upper Rio Grande Valley (RGV), specifically targeting Roma and Rio Grande City, TX. Event highlights include:

- Wind: 65 to 70 mph microburst (straight-line) along the track between Roma and Rio Grande City.
- Hail: Dime to nickel size hail in Roma, increasing to golfball (1.75”) to baseball (2.75”) sized in Rio Grande City.
- Flooding: Torrential rains estimated up to 2.5” in 30 to 45 minutes in Roma filled up culverts near Arroyo Roma, and an estimated additional 1 to 2 inches following the supercell overflowed drainage, resulting in a flash flood.

Left Image: Partially flipped gas station canopy at an Exxon gas station in Rio Grande City, TX on March 8, 2026, just after midnight. (Barry Goldsmith/NWS Brownsville/Rio Grande Valley)

Top Right Image: Screenshot of lightning-illuminated flash flooding in Roma, TX early on March 8, 2026, near the intersection of Garfield Ave. and N. Rau-Con Street. (Chief Garza/Roma Fire Department).

Bottom Image: Composite image showing the 2.75 inch hail Local Storm Report (left) and the Severe Thunderstorm Warning with Destructive tag issued for parts of the upper Rio Grande Valley (right) on March 8, 2026 (RadarScope).



March 2026: March will finish as one of the warmest on record; the stretch since January 1st has also been one of our driest on record

Maximum 28-Day Mean Avg Temperature for BROWNSVILLE S PADRE ISLAND INTL AP, TX

Click column heading to sort ascending, click again to sort descending.

Rank	Value	Ending Date	Missing Days
1	76.4	2020-03-28	0
2	75.8	2026-03-28	0
3	75.8	1921-03-28	2
4	74.9	2018-03-28	0
5	74.5	1953-03-28	0
6	74.4	1945-03-28	0
7	74.0	2000-03-28	0
8	74.0	2017-03-28	0
9	74.0	1991-03-28	0
10	73.8	2023-03-28	0

Period of record: 1898-12-01 to 2026-03-28

Maximum 28-Day Mean Avg Temperature for MCALLEN MILLER INTL AP, TX

Click column heading to sort ascending, click again to sort descending.

Rank	Value	Ending Date	Missing Days
1	78.1	2026-03-28	0
2	77.7	2020-03-28	0
3	76.7	2018-03-28	0
4	76.1	2017-03-28	0
5	76.1	1991-03-28	0
6	75.5	2016-03-28	0
7	75.5	2011-03-28	0
8	75.4	2025-03-28	0
9	75.1	2023-03-28	0
10	74.8	2000-03-28	0

Period of record: 1961-01-14 to 2026-03-28

Minimum 87-Day Total Precipitation for BROWNSVILLE S PADRE ISLAND INTL AP, TX

Click column heading to sort ascending, click again to sort descending.

Rank	Value	Ending Date	Missing Days
1	0.18	2026-03-28	0
2	0.22	1996-03-28	0
-	0.22	1996-03-27	0
4	0.30	1901-03-28	0
5	0.34	1916-03-28	0
-	0.34	1916-03-27	0
7	0.42	2020-03-28	0
8	0.48	1952-03-27	0
9	0.49	1952-03-28	0
10	0.52	1971-03-28	0

Period of record: 1898-12-01 to 2026-03-28

Minimum 87-Day Total Precipitation for MCALLEN MILLER INTL AP, TX

Click column heading to sort ascending, click again to sort descending.

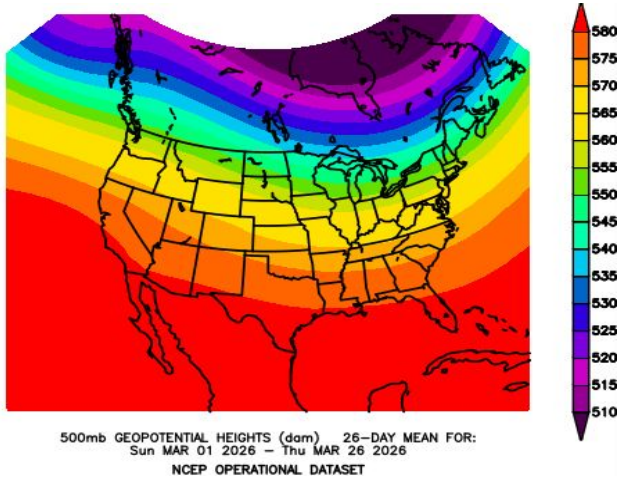
Rank	Value	Ending Date	Missing Days
1	0.06	1996-03-28	0
-	0.06	1996-03-27	0
3	0.11	2026-03-28	2
4	0.52	2002-03-28	0
5	0.66	1963-03-28	0
6	0.69	1961-03-28	13
7	0.71	2006-03-28	0
8	0.73	1971-03-28	0
9	0.88	2009-03-28	0
10	0.95	2020-03-28	0

Last value also occurred in one or more previous years.

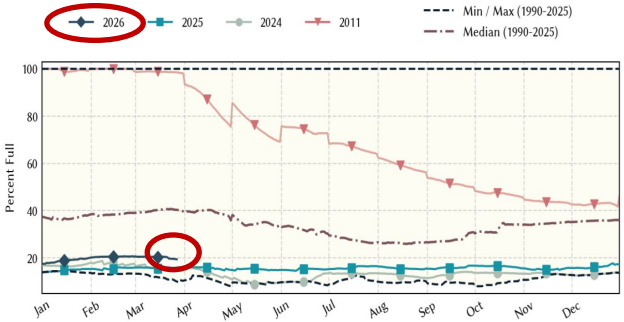
Period of record: 1961-01-14 to 2026-03-28

The **torrid start** of the new year continued in March! With the help of an **extensively long drought, a strengthening sun angle, and a couple dryline passages**, overachieving temperatures took place during the course of the month. Ultimately, March 2026 finished amongst the warmest on record. **As of March 28**, Brownsville ranked as the second warmest on record with an average temperature of 75.8F degrees. Meanwhile, McAllen ranked as the warmest on record with an average temperature of 78.1F degrees. **Again, if this is hot start is any indication for what's to come, we are in for a very hot summer and year ahead!**

As of March 28, all of Deep South Texas is under a drought ranging from D2 (Severe Drought) to D4 (Exceptional Drought). **Month-to-date**, Brownsville's rainfall is -1.32" below normal. Harlingen's rainfall is -1.02" below normal and McAllen is -1.23" below normal. **Year-to-date**, Brownsville's rainfall is -3.25" below normal. Harlingen is -2.71" below normal and McAllen is -2.61" below normal.

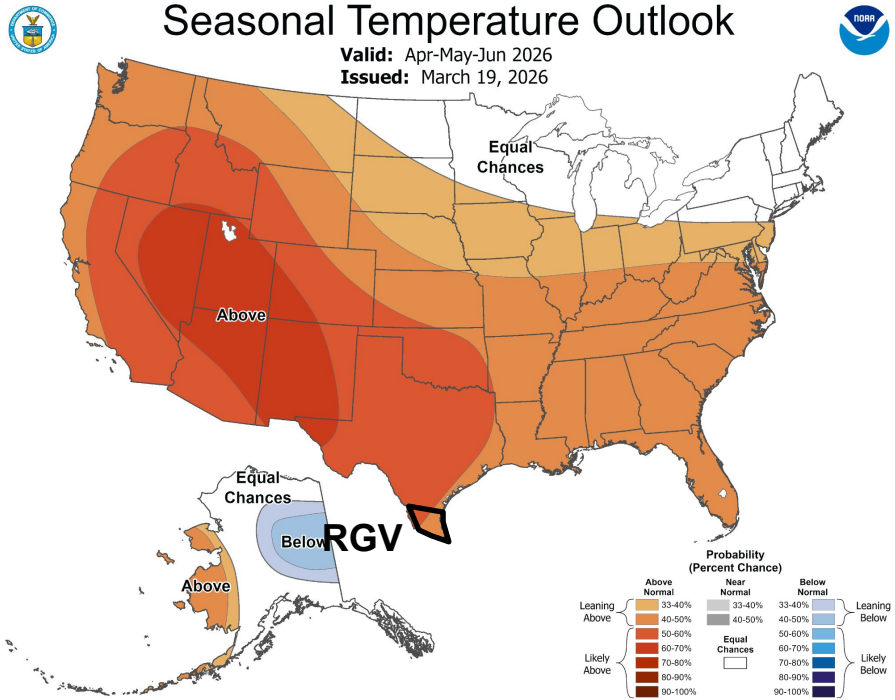


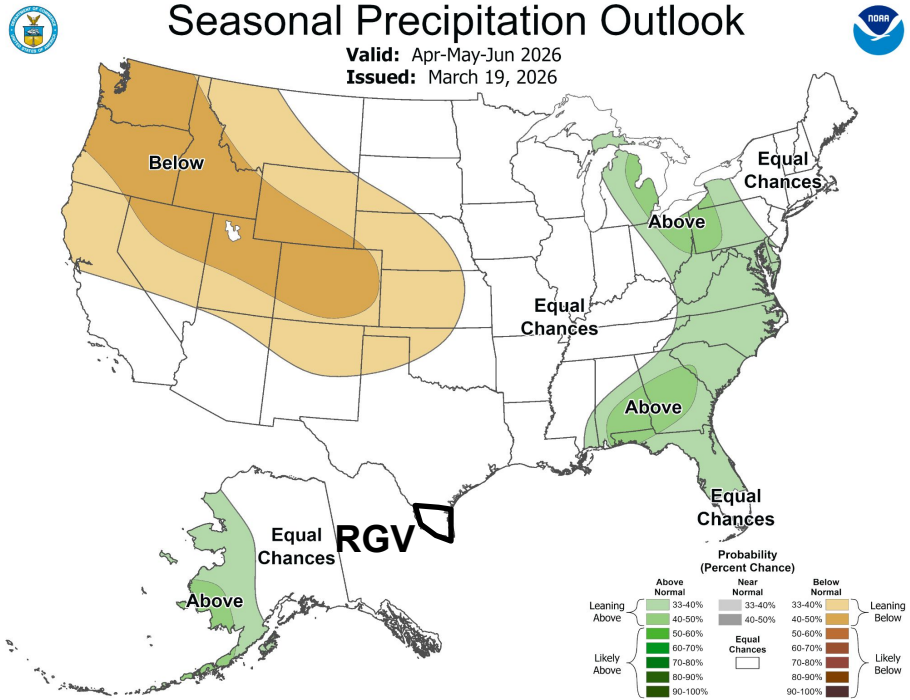
Top Image: 500 mb mean geopotential heights position from March 1-26, 2026.



Bottom Image: Latest data from the **Rio Grande Reservoirs (Texas Share)** continue to indicate Feb 2026 levels are near 30 year lows and records, but above 2025 levels. Month-over-month shares have increased from 19.7% to 20.6%. **Credit:** Texas Water Development Board

Seasonal Forecast, April-June 2026 USA



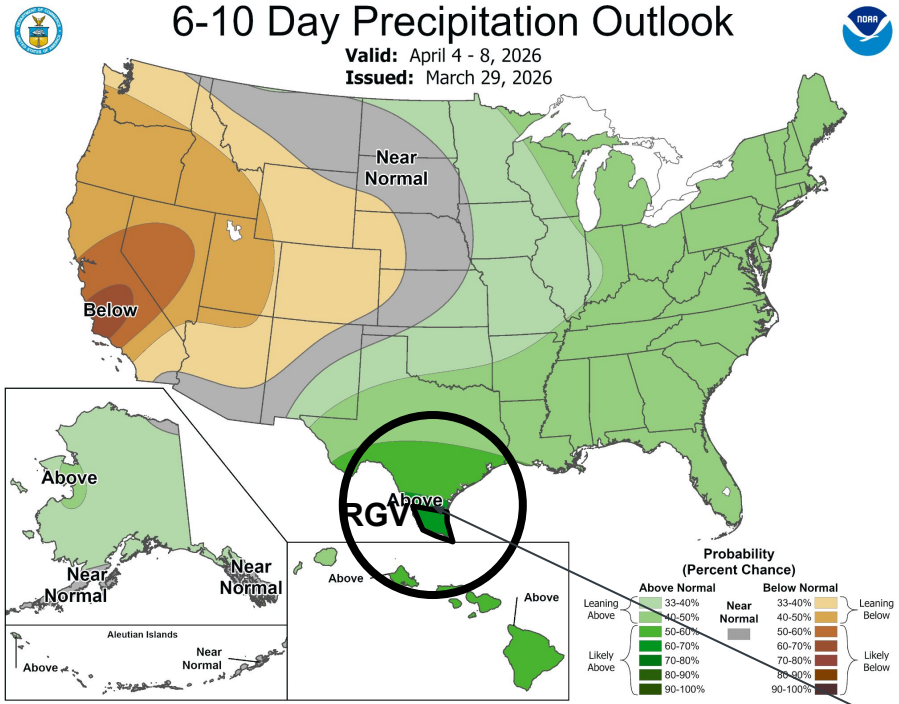


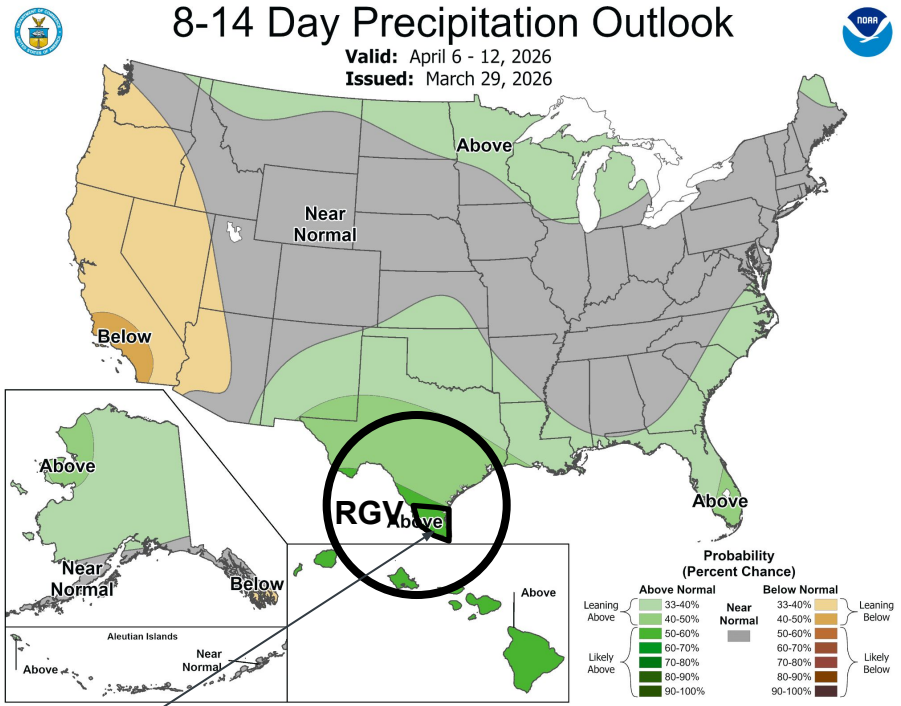
<u>Confidence:</u> Medium-High (50-70%) for warmer than normal temperatures during the April-June period. Precipitation: Equal chances for above, normal, or below normal precipitation. <u>Precipitation Confidence:</u> Low-Medium (33%).

Key Takeaways: April-June 2026 Outlook

- **A warmer than normal outlook** is anticipated through the **April-June** period for the RGV/Deep South Texas region, though the heat during the first half of April could be limited if shower and thunderstorm chances are realized**. Heat Risk** concerns could begin developing as early as May.
- **Precipitation outlook is a toss-up during the April-June timeframe**! Can seasonality and the trends towards an El Nino later this summer/fall bring us **breakthrough rains** and support a **wetter pattern**? **OR** Will a weak La Niña, negative Pacific Decadal Oscillation (-PDO), a long-standing drought keep the **drought theme in place**?
- **Peak wildfire season (March) is behind us, but if sufficient rains and humidity don't persist, wildfire spread could remain an issue from late April through June.**
- **D2 (Severe Drought)** to **D4 (Exceptional Drought)** conditions will continue into April across Deep South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley (see slide 10 for more information). Depending on how precipitation plays out through the first half of April, there could be some drought improvements over at least parts of the area.
- Falcon Int'l Reservoir remained **near historic seasonal lows at the end of March**. **Confidence remains near-certain (~100%) on total storage remaining just above record lows through June.**
- As we go through the April-June time period, **severe thunderstorms (winds, hail, tornadoes), heavy rainfall, and localized flooding** has to be taken into consideration as the prospects for showers and storms could increase. As mentioned, there are some **signs of a wetter weather pattern change** taking shape during the 1st weekend of April through the first half of April.

6-10 and 8-14 Day Outlook (April 4-12, 2026 timeframe)





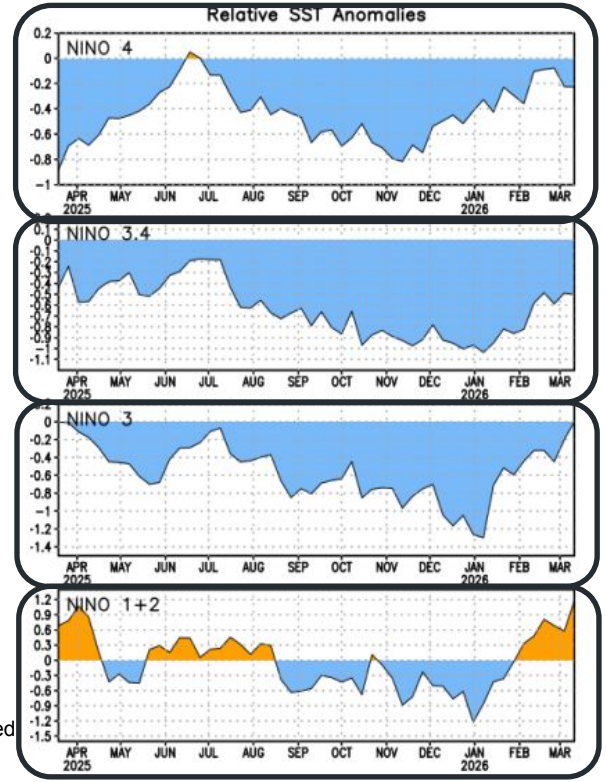
- **There are some signs that the weather pattern can turn wetter or more active during the 1st couple of weeks of April. Some much needed rainfall could be on the way!**
- **However, even double the average rainfall for the April 1-12 period is only 0.9” to 1.2”. Not a lot; still helpful.**

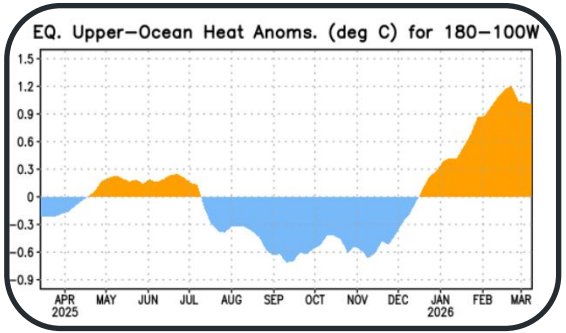
The "Why" of the Forecast: ENSO Neutral to El Niño transition, soil moisture, long-term trends, and other key climate teleconnections to play a role

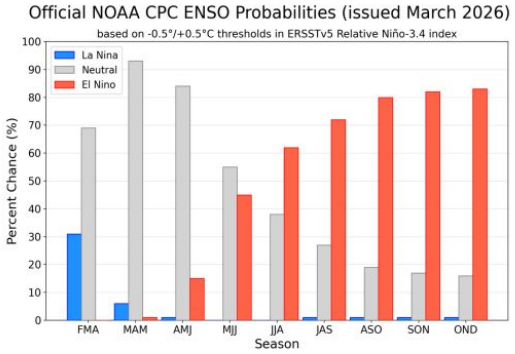
- With a weak La Niña still sighted over the equatorial Pacific, and a negative Pacific Decadal Oscillation (-PDO) in place as of this update, a **warmer** than normal pattern is favored across Deep South Texas/RGV through the April-June (AMJ) period.
- A transition towards an **El Niño** this summer is expected. This **La Niña** to **El Niño** transition, in addition to climatology, could briefly shift the weather pattern into a **wetter pattern** during this Spring Season.**This combined with the extensively long-term drought is why our precipitation outlook remains a toss-up (50/50 chance for a dry or wet pattern).**

*Above right: Oceanic Niño Index. Values between -0.5 and 0.5 (gray) indicates ENSO Neutral conditions April-June 2024. ENSO Neutral conditions transitioned to a mainly weak La Nina July 2024 has persisted to present. Values between -0.5 and -1.0 (blue) indicates a weak La Nina.

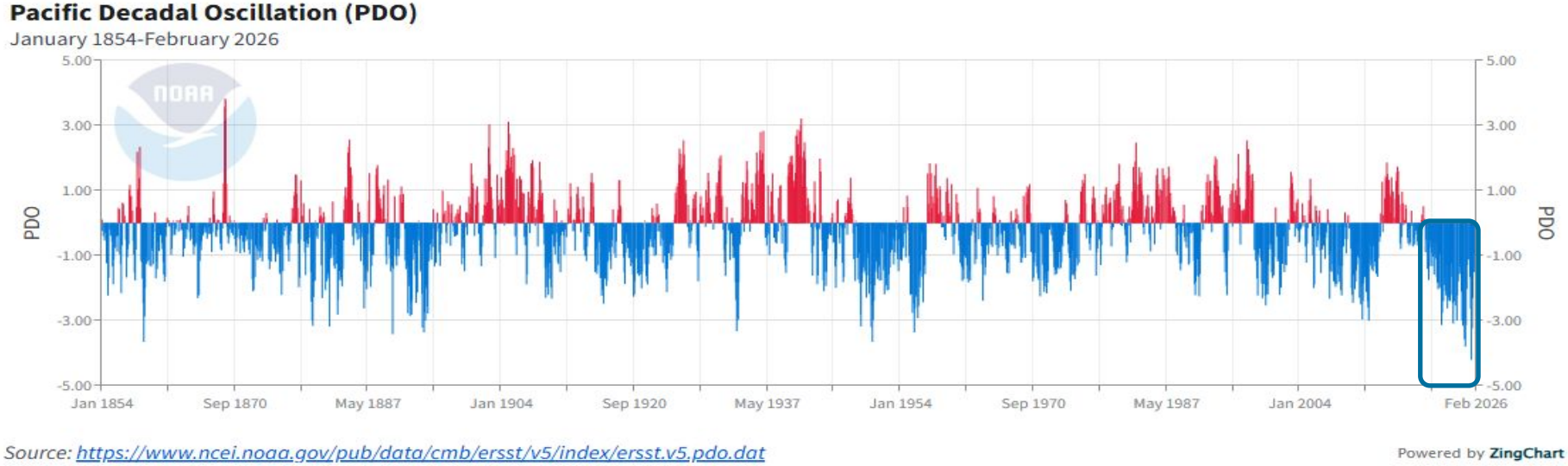
Year	DJF	JFM	FMA	MAM	AMJ	MJJ	JJA	JAS	ASO	SON	OND	NDJ
2023	-0.8	-0.6	-0.4	-0.2	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.5
2024	1.2	0.9	0.5	0.1	-0.3	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.8	-0.8	-0.9	-1.1
2025	-1.1	-0.9	-0.7	-0.5	-0.5	0.0	-0.5	-0.6	-0.8	-0.9	-0.9	-1.0
2026	-0.9											





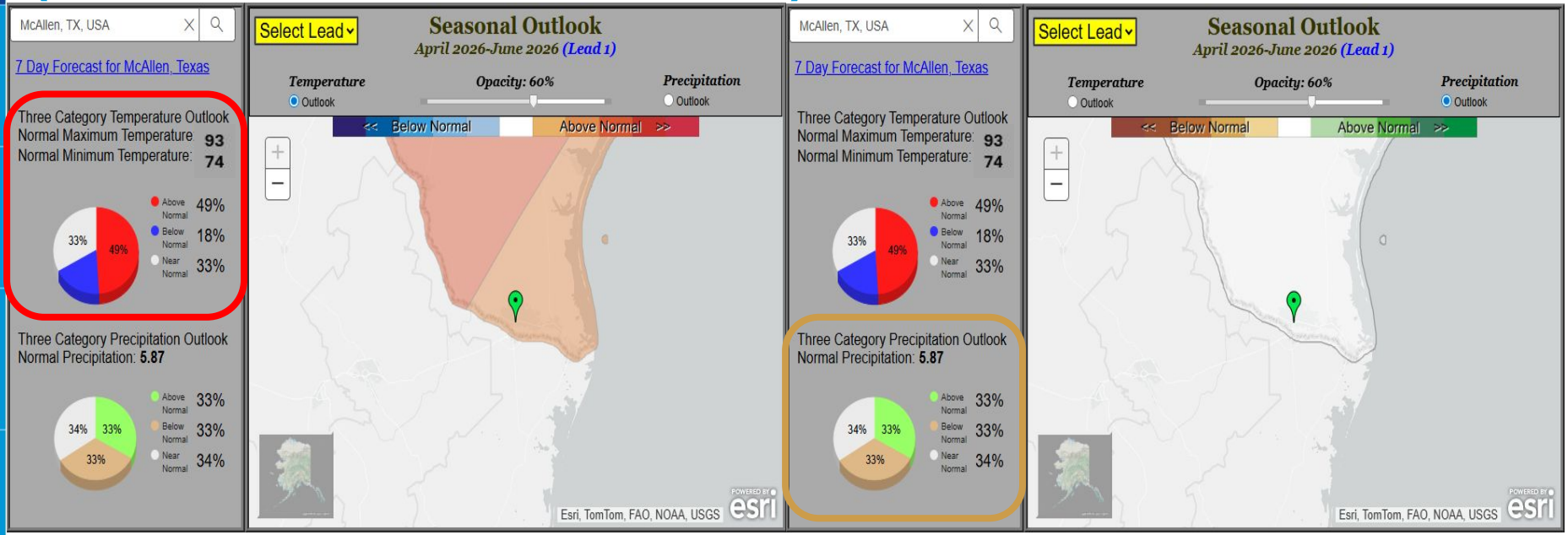


The “Why” of the Forecast: Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) remains in Sharp Negative Phase



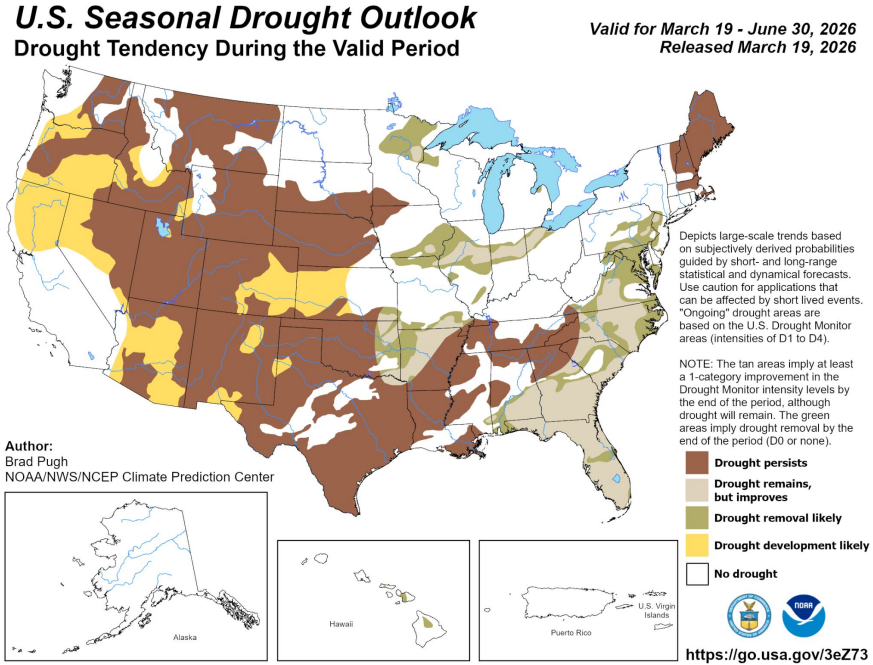
- The 2021-2026 **prolonged and strong negative PDO has persisted**, and will remain the case through mid 2026. This **continues to support confidence** for a **warmer than normal pattern to persist through mid 2026.**
- In addition to the sharply negative PDO, a **La Nina (weak)** and ongoing drought in place will support a **drier than normal precipitation theme** through the April-June (AMJ) period. However, seasonality plus a transition to an El Niño this summer supports a potential shift towards a **wetter pattern** across Deep South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley this Spring Season. Cold front interaction along with fetch of moisture (showers/thunderstorms) along a “Ring of Fire” pattern will be critical. Overall, **precipitation odds Apr-Jun remains a toss-up! Confidence remains high** for a sharply negative PDO to continue.

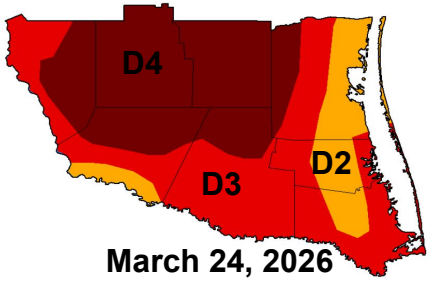
The April-June 2026 Outlook: Rio Grande Valley (McAllen as Anchor Point)

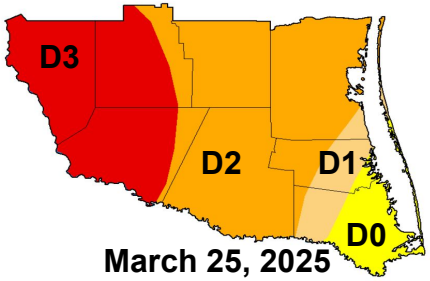


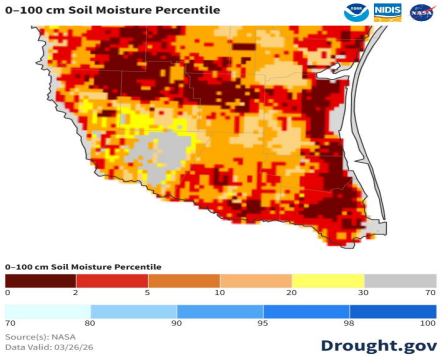
- **Temperature:** **Warmer than normal temperatures** are expected to continue. **Confidence: Medium-High (50-70%).** RGV averages: Afternoon – Mid-Upper 80s through April; Upper 80s-Lower 90s through mid-May; Lower to upper 90s late May through June. Wake-up: Mid-Upper 60s through mid-April; Low-mid 70s late April to May.; Upper 70s through June.
- **Precipitation:** **Odds remain a toss-up. Rain prospects look to increase over the first two weeks of April. Confidence: Low-medium (33% for above, normal, or below normal).** RGV averages: 6.5 to 7 inches (**most in June**).

The April-June 2026 “Droughtlook”



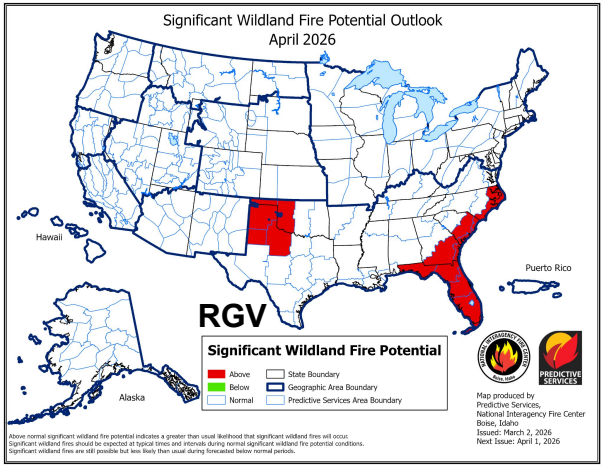


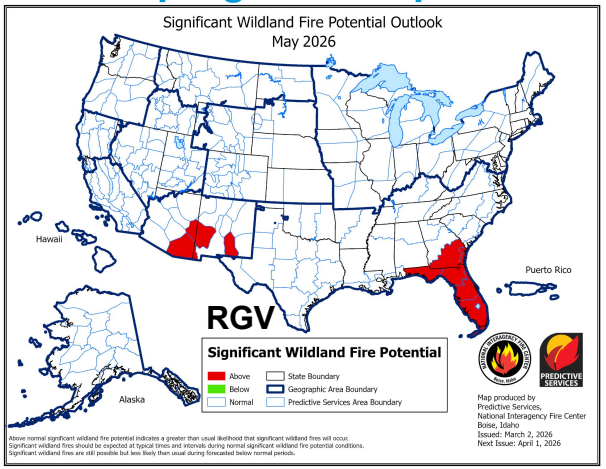


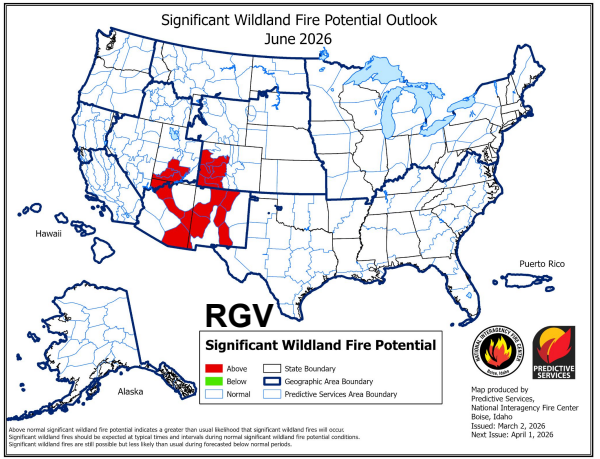


- **Year-over-Year (YoY) drought/dryness** shows much deeper drought/dryness issues across Deep South Texas this year compared to 2025.
- **Exceptional Drought (D4)** conditions are being observed across nearly 37% of Deep South Texas, including all of Jim Hogg and Brooks, most of Zapata county, western Kenedy, and northern Starr and Hidalgo counties. **Soil moisture percentages remain very low** in this area.
- **Extreme Drought (D3)** conditions are being observed across 42% of Deep South Texas, including western Zapata, most of Starr and Hidalgo, western and eastern Willacy, and western, southern, and eastern Cameron counties. **Soil moisture percentages remain very low** in this area.
- **Severe Drought (D2)** conditions are being observed over 21% of Deep South Texas, including central Cameron and Willacy counties, eastern Kenedy, and southern Starr counties.
- The seasonal drought outlook suggests **drought conditions/dryness persisting** overall over the RGV/Deep South Texas region through June.

Wildfire Concerns will Decrease as time progress in April as Moisture Values Increase







- The worst of wildfire season (Feb/Mar) is behind us Wildfire concerns should become less of a concern in April. However, uncertainty in rainfall in May/June gives pause. Climatology is the primary reason.
- This is the time of year where moisture in the form of humidity and showers/thunderstorms **increase**. Dry cool fronts will become less common, allowing relative humidity (RH) values to typically remain above wildfire weather thresholds.
- Days with a return flow out of the south boosting relative humidity (RH) values **will be greater than** days with winds out of the north.
- There are signals amongst AI/ML and legacy global forecast models/ensembles that indicate a **change in the weather pattern coming up during the first half of April that includes increased prospects for showers and thunderstorms**.
- **If** showers and thunderstorms **are realized** during the first half of April, not only will it help to put a dent in the extensive drought across the region, but it will **promote greenup** over the region.

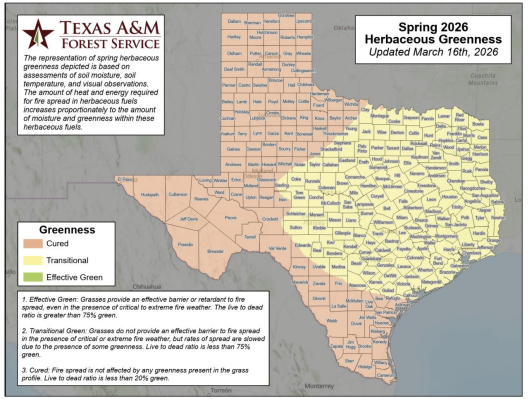
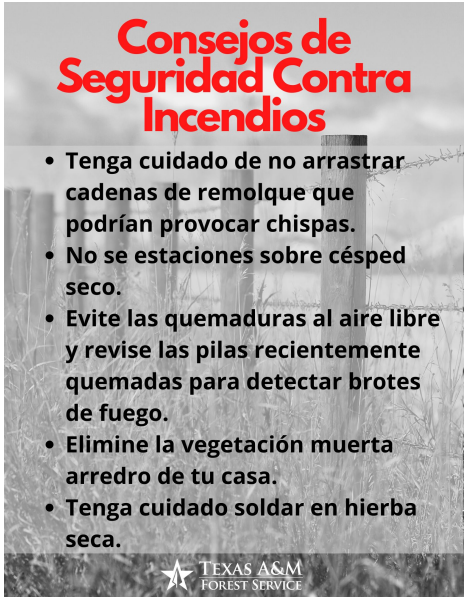


Image: Herbaceous Greenness across Texas as of March 16th. Note the southern tip remained fully cured.

Wildfire Prevention Review

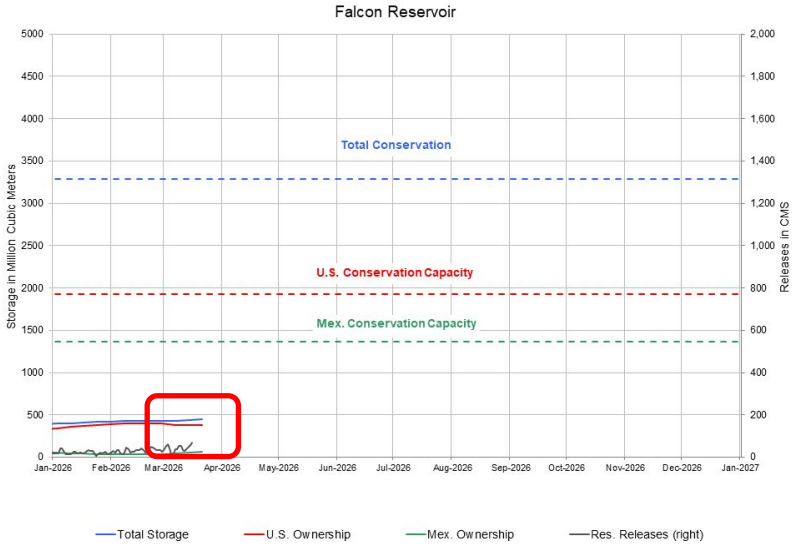
- Conditions remain dry to very dry at the end of March, with drought worsening already freeze-cured grasses and brush. Given the exceptional long-term dryness, and if no meaningful rain occurs, wildfire spread concerns will remain on the table through **April and beyond.**
- Continue to practice fire weather safety and focus on **farm, ranch workers**, and **other persons who might drive hot vehicles** on parched brush on critical/near-critical days – especially on **warm-hot, breezy days during a dry spell.**

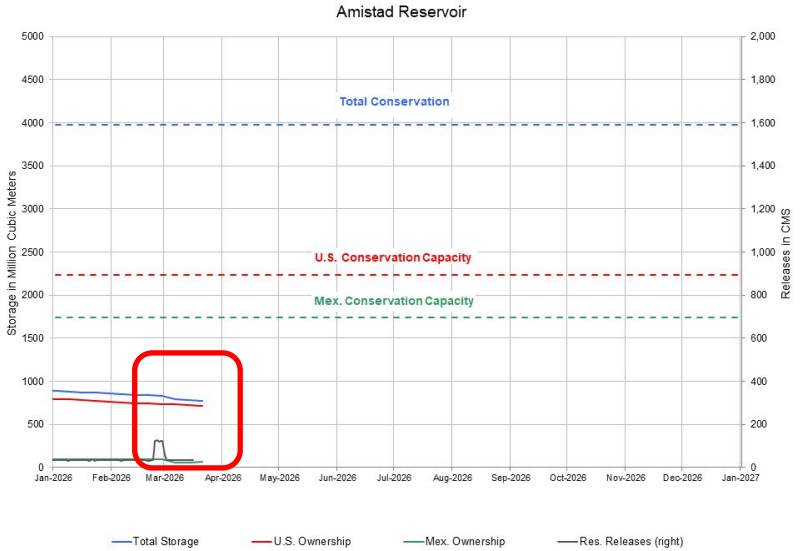
Infographics for Wildfire Prevention



- ~50 in all (20 in Spanish)! Ask us for more information.
- Thanks to **Texas A&M Forest Service** for many of these!

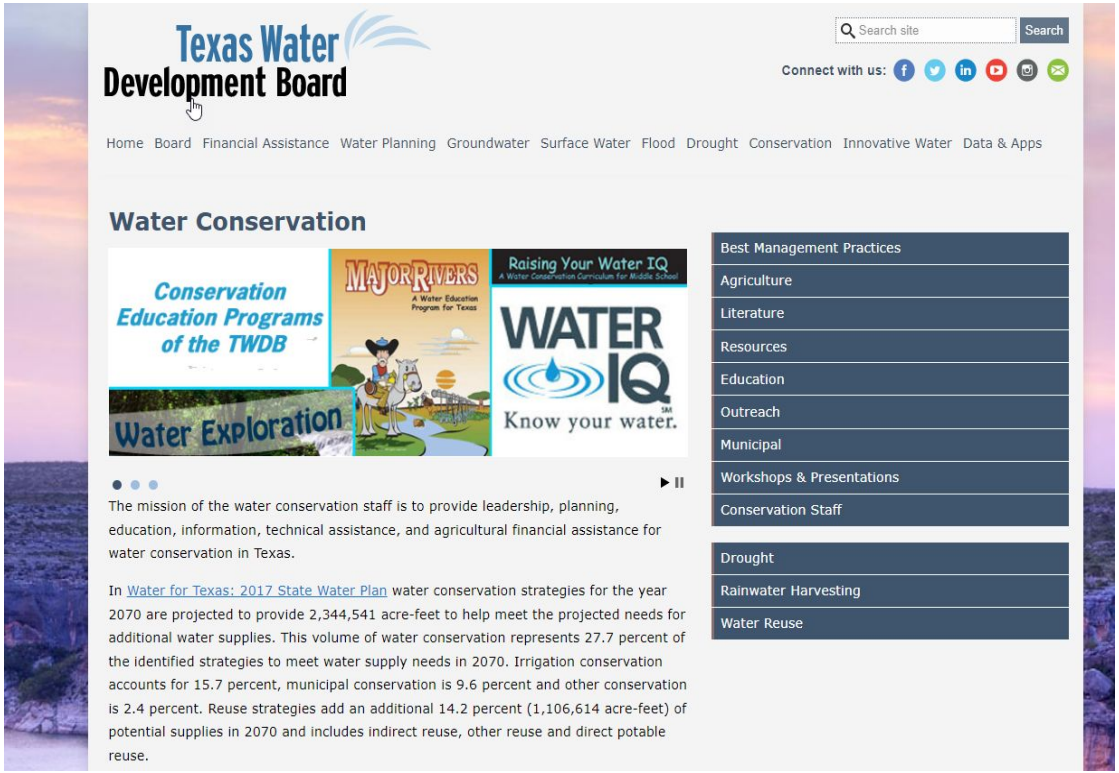
Amistad and Falcon Reservoirs have and will continue to remain just above record lows through early 2026





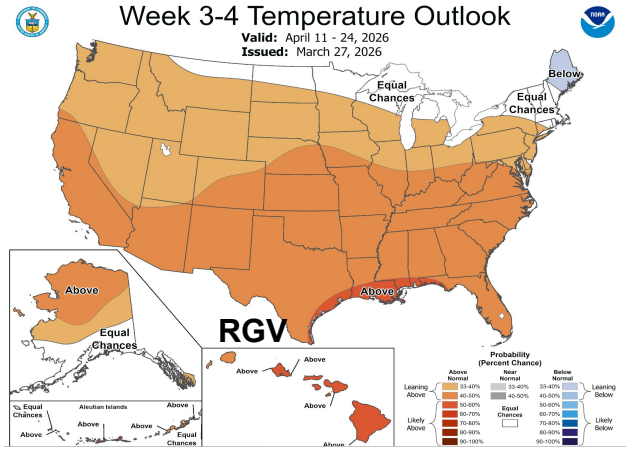
- **Falcon rose slightly, at 13.7% as of March 26th** (slightly higher than the **13.1% from late February**) due to releases from Amistad in late February/early March. Levels are likely to fall slowly through June, unless additional releases are provided from Amistad - or periodic thunderstorm systems develop.
- **Amistad fell slightly and remains just above all-time record lows as of late March.** Levels were at **19.5% on March 26th** (slightly lower than the **20.9% from late February**). Levels should change little or fall slowly through June, unless periodic thunderstorm systems develop.

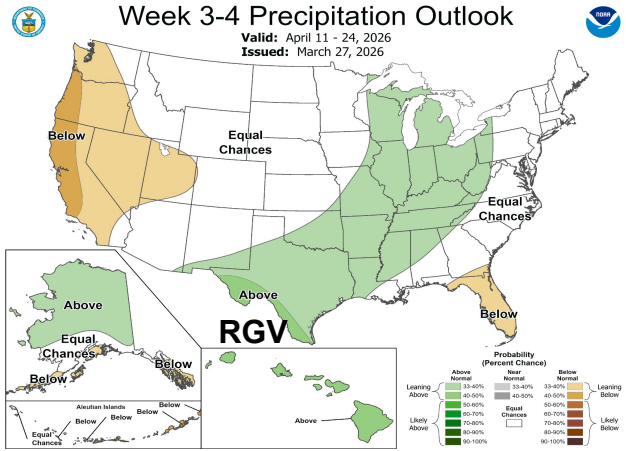
Water Conservation is Key Until Further Notice!

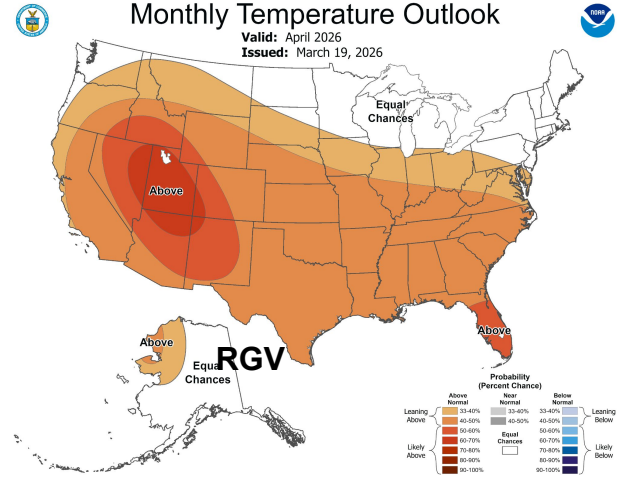


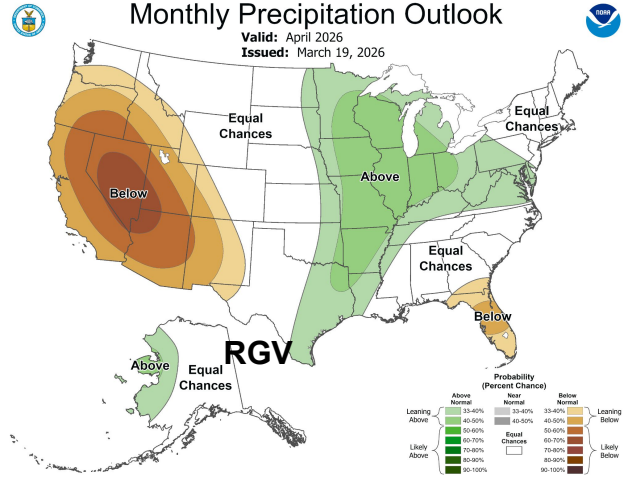
- "Stage 2/3" Restrictions will continue through early 2026 (at least) in some areas, and are likely to continue **until further notice** based on inflows from Amistad and Falcon.
- Learn more at the Texas Water Development Board's Conservation Page.

April 2026: Medium (40-50%) Confidence on Temperature; Slight Lean (30-40%) for Above Normal Precipitation









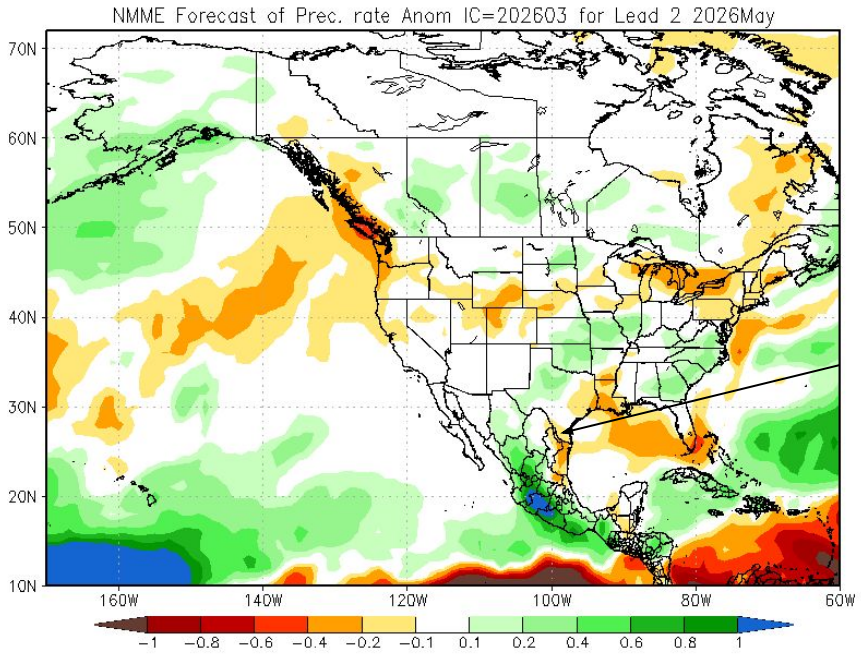
The combination of a **weak La Nina**, a **negative Pacific Decadal Oscillation (-PDO)**, and an **extensively long-term drought** should continue to support **warmer than normal temperatures prevailing through April** across Deep South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley. **Showers and thunderstorms** through the first half of April is one limiting factor. Normal to even cooler than normal temperatures are possible in instances of showers and thunderstorms during the first half of April. We're thinking that **warmer than normal temperatures** will recover during the second half of April. Overall, our **confidence is medium (40-50%) chance for a warmer than normal April. Overachieving temperatures** and some **early season heat risk** amid a strengthening sun angle and perpetual drought remains on the table (especially mid-upper valley and brush country).

Precipitation odds remain equal for above, normal, or drier than normal. Factors include a -PDO, a weak La Nina, climatology, and signs of a wetter pattern developing during the 1st half of April.

Should the weather pattern flip wetter, **showers and storms** will be capable of producing **heavy rainfall and localized flooding**. Severe storms capable of damaging winds, large hail, and/or tornadoes will also be possible in any storms that develop.

Early Look: May 2026

Potential rainfall rate anomaly, May 2026

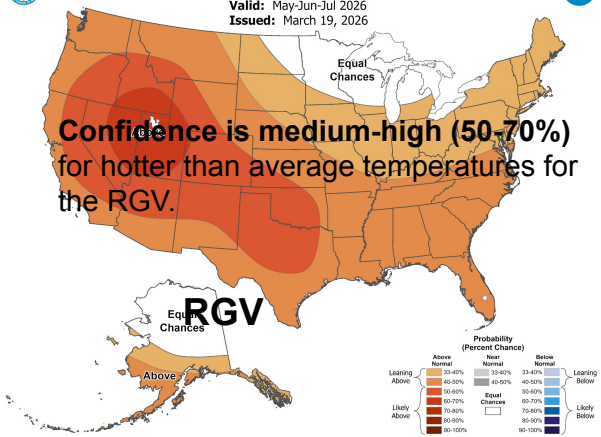


- This model's forecast for <u>May</u> favors a **slight lean to a return to a drier than normal pattern** (note the golden or light brown colors nearby) **developing**.

Late Spring 2026 through Summer 2026: Hotter than normal trends favored; Equal chances for precipitation remains (though trending drier as time wears on)

Seasonal Temperature Outlook

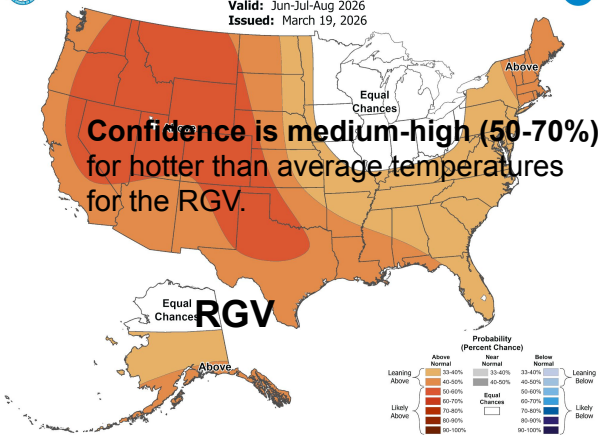
Valid: May-Jun-Jul 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026



Confidence is medium-high (50-70%) for hotter than average temperatures for the RGV.

Seasonal Temperature Outlook

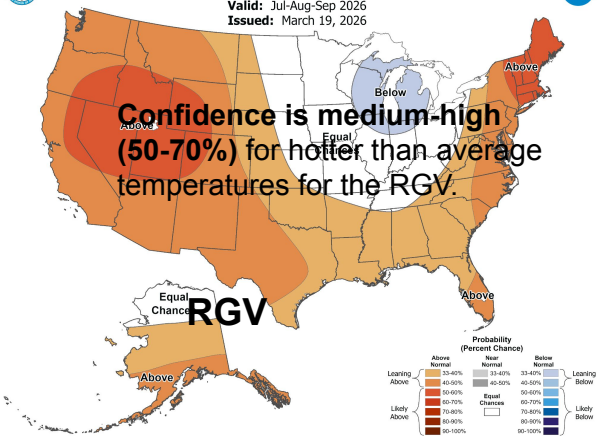
Valid: Jun-Jul-Aug 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026



Confidence is medium-high (50-70%) for hotter than average temperatures for the RGV.

Seasonal Temperature Outlook

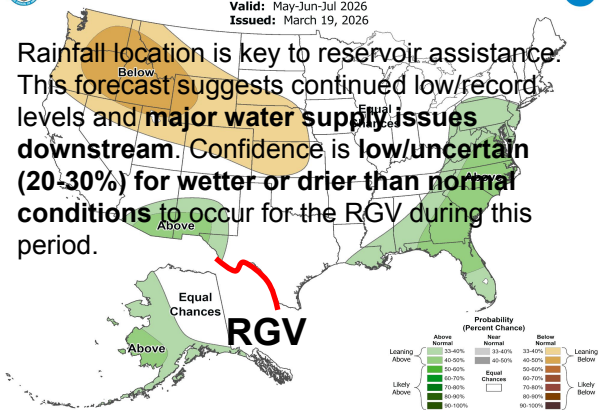
Valid: Jul-Aug-Sep 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026



Confidence is medium-high (50-70%) for hotter than average temperatures for the RGV.

Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

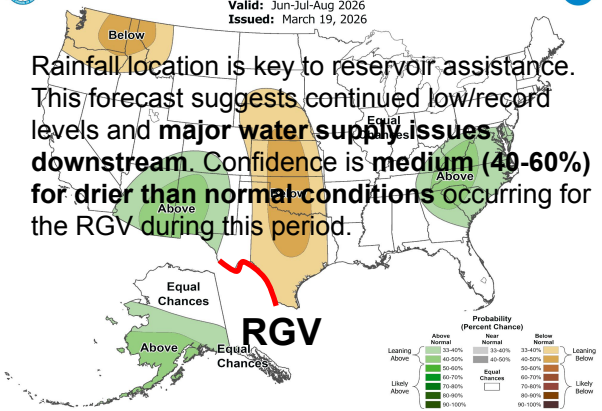
Valid: May-Jun-Jul 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026



Rainfall location is key to reservoir assistance. This forecast suggests continued low/record levels and **major water supply issues downstream**. Confidence is **low/uncertain (20-30%) for wetter or drier than normal conditions** to occur for the RGV during this period.

Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

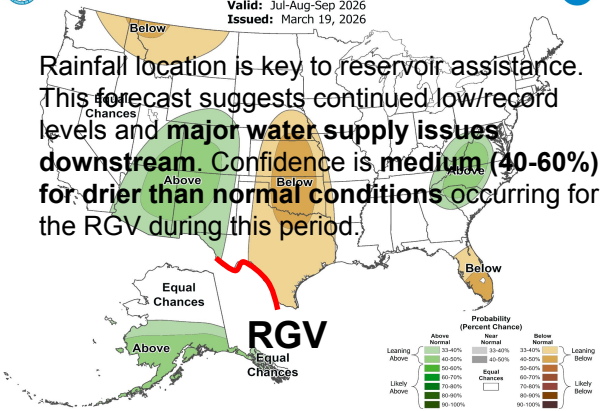
Valid: Jun-Jul-Aug 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026



Rainfall location is key to reservoir assistance. This forecast suggests continued low/record levels and **major water supply issues downstream**. Confidence is **medium (40-60%) for drier than normal conditions** occurring for the RGV during this period.

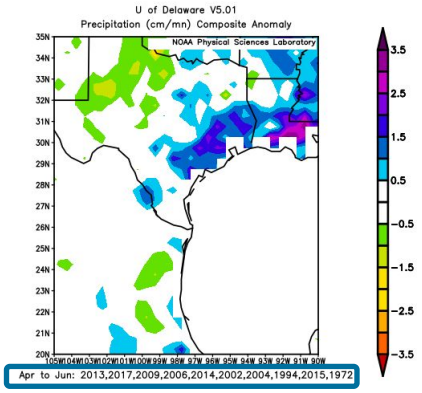
Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Jul-Aug-Sep 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026

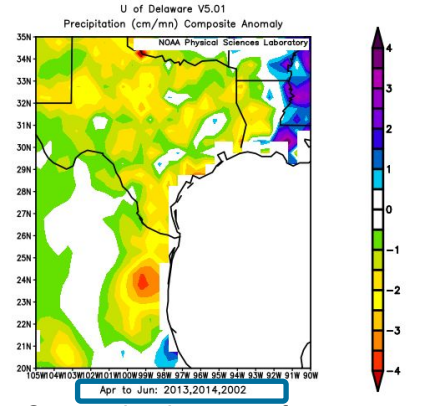


Rainfall location is key to reservoir assistance. This forecast suggests continued low/record levels and **major water supply issues downstream**. Confidence is **medium (40-60%) for drier than normal conditions** occurring for the RGV during this period.

Comparing Similar ENSO Neutral to El Nino Episodes mostly within the last 30 years; April-June Periods

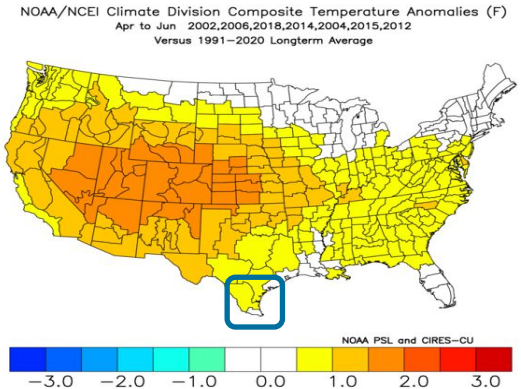


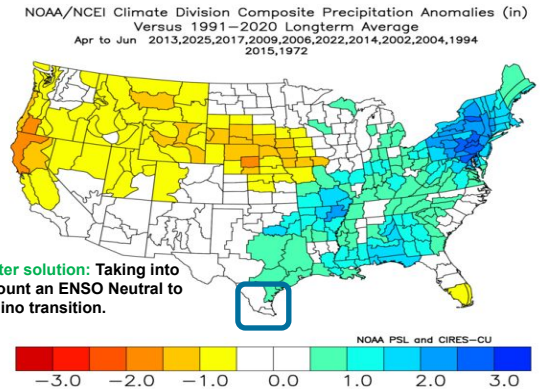
Wet Case



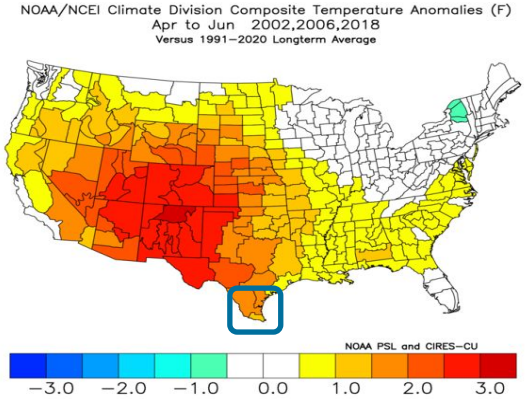
Dry Case

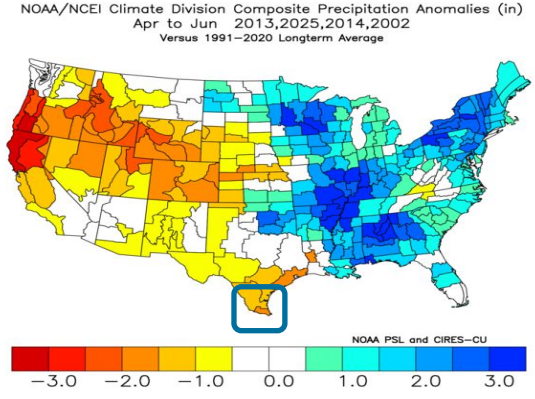
Composite departure from average rainfall for years of similar Neutral to El Nino transition episodes in the April to June window.





Wetter solution: Taking into account an ENSO Neutral to El Nino transition.





- **Top:** Composite temperature (left) and precipitation (right) anomalies for similar Neutral to El Nino transition episodes leading into April-June, since 1950.
- **Bottom Left:** Same, but took out 2014, 2004, 2015, and 2012 seasons.
- **Bottom Right:** Same, but took out 2017, 2009, 2006, 2022, 2004, 1994, 2015, and 1972 seasons.

Bottom Lines

- A **warmer than normal pattern** is anticipated during the **April-June (AMJ) time period**. Precipitation odds are a toss-up, though **wetter trends could develop in April**. **Heat Risk** could be limited in April (especially the first half) depending on how precipitation trends play out, but could really begin emerging in May and June.
- Sufficient inflows from Mexican and International reservoirs serving the Lower Rio Grande watershed remain **unlikely.** The **combined share of water in Amistad and Falcon will likely to continue at or below Stage 2/3 triggers (25% or less) until further notice.** Water conservation, smart irrigation, and rainwater harvesting are **critical actions to continue as we move through the Spring.**
- **D2 (Severe Drought)** to **D4 (Exceptional Drought)** conditions will continue into April across Deep South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley (see slide 10 for more information). Drought improvements are possible, depending on how precipitation plays out through the first half of April.
- **Peak wildfire season is behind us. However, the threat is not completely over.** Expect fire weather concerns to decrease in April as moisture (i.e. humidity and shower/thunderstorm prospects) increase. A return to hot, breezy, and low-rainfall in May-June could maintain the threat.
- Don't "sleep" on the potential for **flash flooding**, especially in **April**. While a repeat of March 26-28, 2025, is not expected, **flood safety and readiness** needs to be in back of mind. Any storms that develop could become **severe producing damaging winds, large hail, and/or tornadoes**.