

# Drought Information Statement for Southern NM/Far West TX

Valid March 6, 2026

Issued By: NWS El Paso (Santa Teresa, NM)

Contact Information: [nws.elpaso@noaa.gov](mailto:nws.elpaso@noaa.gov)

- This product will be updated April 7, 2026 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
  - Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
  - Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/EPZ/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
  - Please visit [https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/?dews\\_region=132](https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/?dews_region=132) for regional drought status updates.
- 
- Severe (D2) drought status affecting Southwest New Mexico. Drought status removed for South-Central New Mexico and Far West Texas.
  - Below normal precipitation, above normal temperatures in February.
  - Drought conditions for Southwest New Mexico expected to persist in March due to below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures.

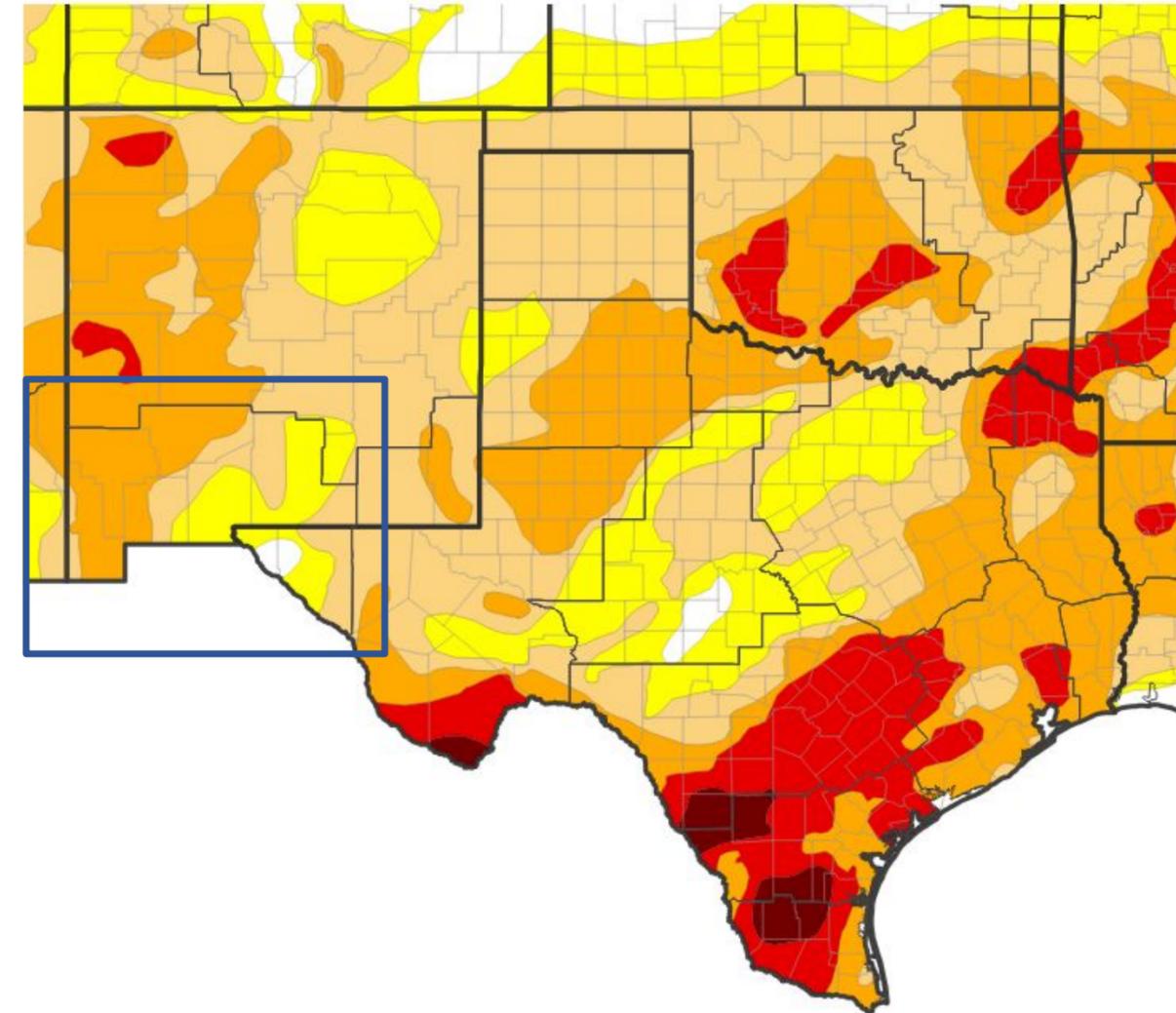


Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for southern New Mexico and far west Texas

## Drought Intensity and Extent

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**  
None
- **D3 (Extreme Drought)**  
None
- **D2 (Severe Drought)**  
Portions of Southwest New Mexico including Grant, Sierra, and Hidalgo Counties  
Gila National Forest
- **D1 (Moderate Drought)**  
Portions of South-Central New Mexico
- **D0 (Abnormally Dry)**  
Portions of South-Central New Mexico and Far West Texas  
Lincoln National Forest

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 03/03/26





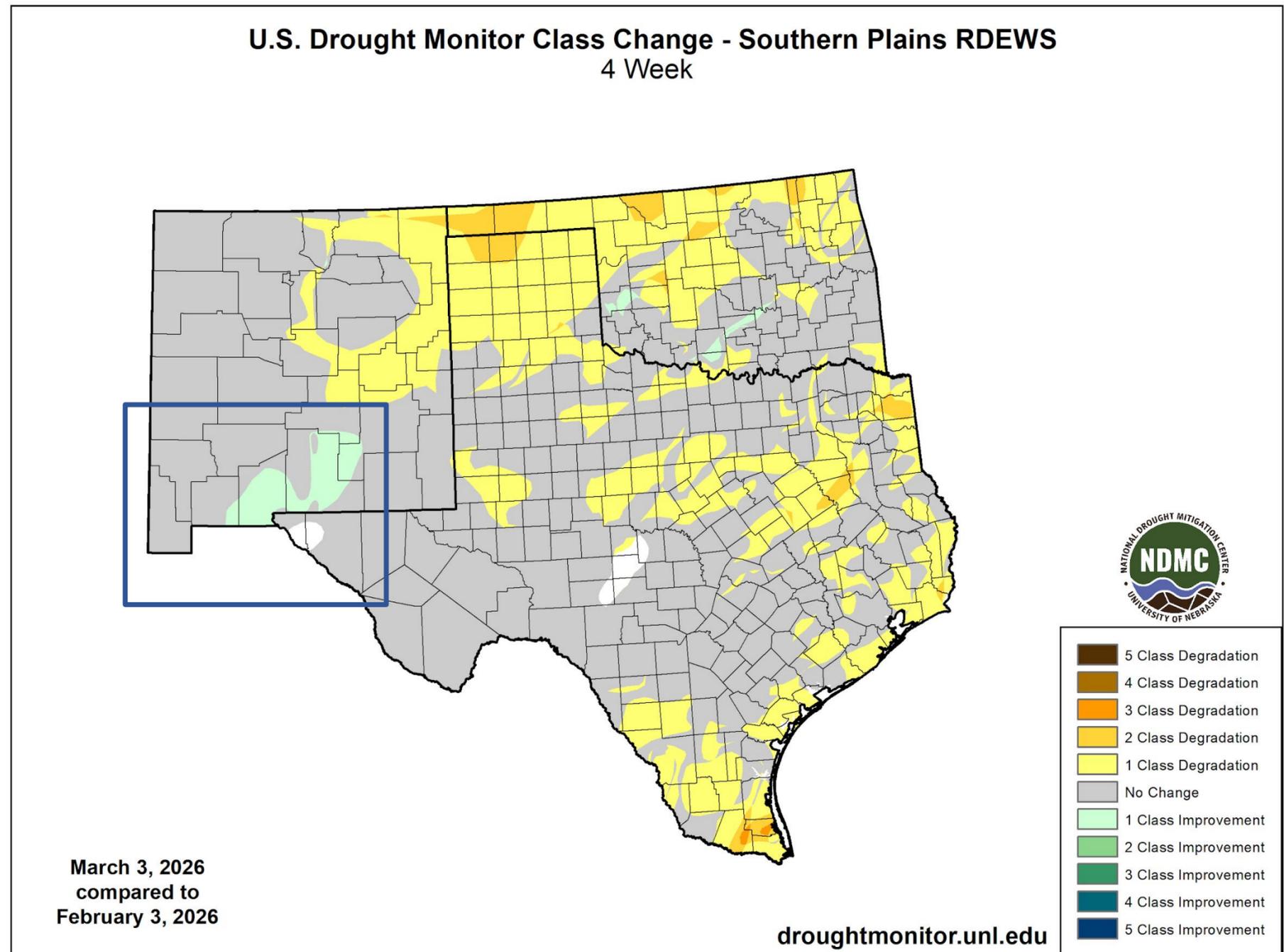
# Recent Change in Drought Intensity

March 6, 2026  
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Link to the latest [1-month change map](#) for southern New Mexico and far west Texas

## 4-Week Drought Monitor Class Change.

- **Drought Worsened:**  
None
- **Drought Improved:**  
Portions of South-Central New Mexico, Lincoln National Forest
- **No Change:**  
Portions of Southwest New Mexico, Far West Texas





# Precipitation

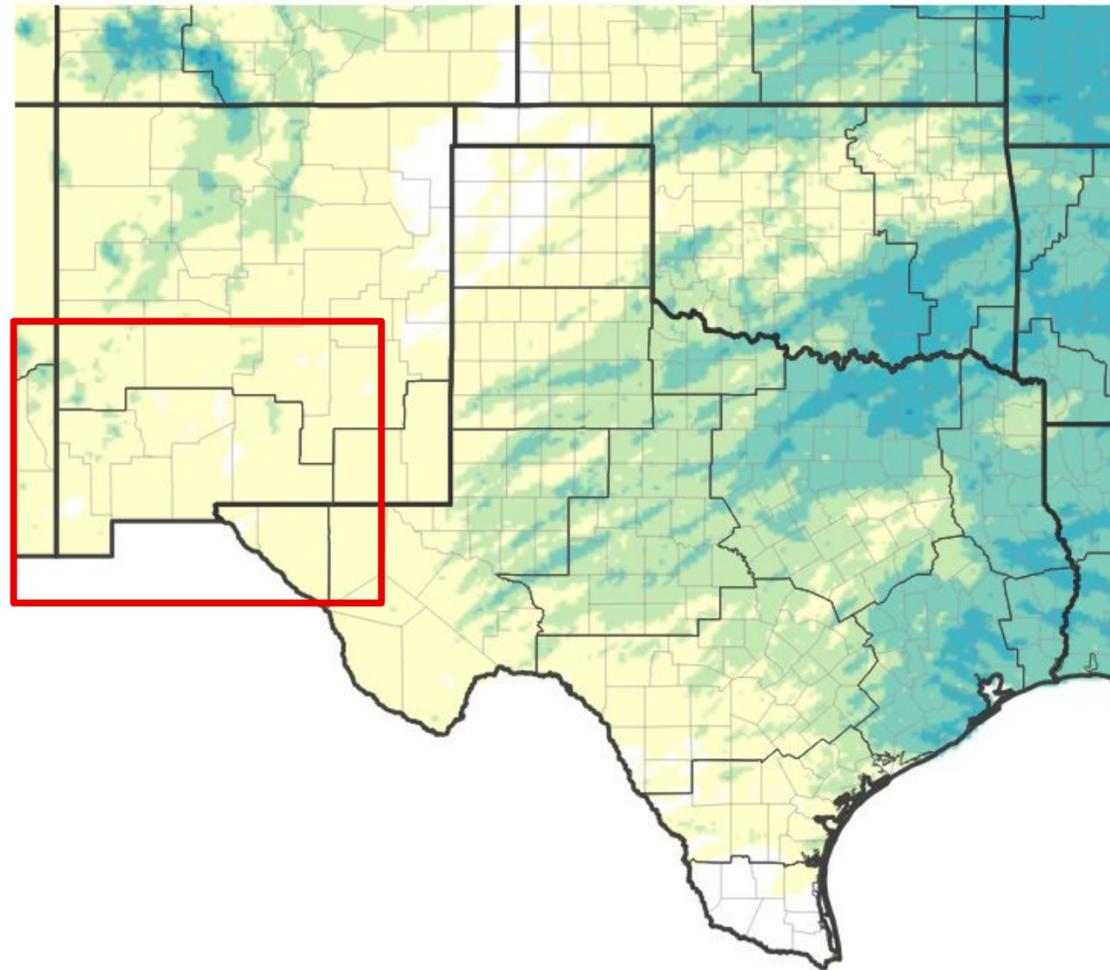
March 6, 2026  
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30-day precip totals,  
0.05-0.15" along I-10 corridor.  
0.40-0.75" over mountain  
forests.

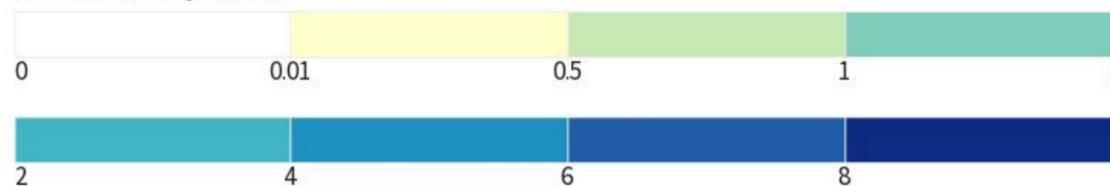
90-day precip totals,  
1.50-2.50" along I-10 corridor.  
4.00-5.00" over mountain  
forests.

Precipitation **10-40%** below  
normal in February, but late  
January precipitation keeps  
seasonal totals at or above  
normal.

NWPS 30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (inches)

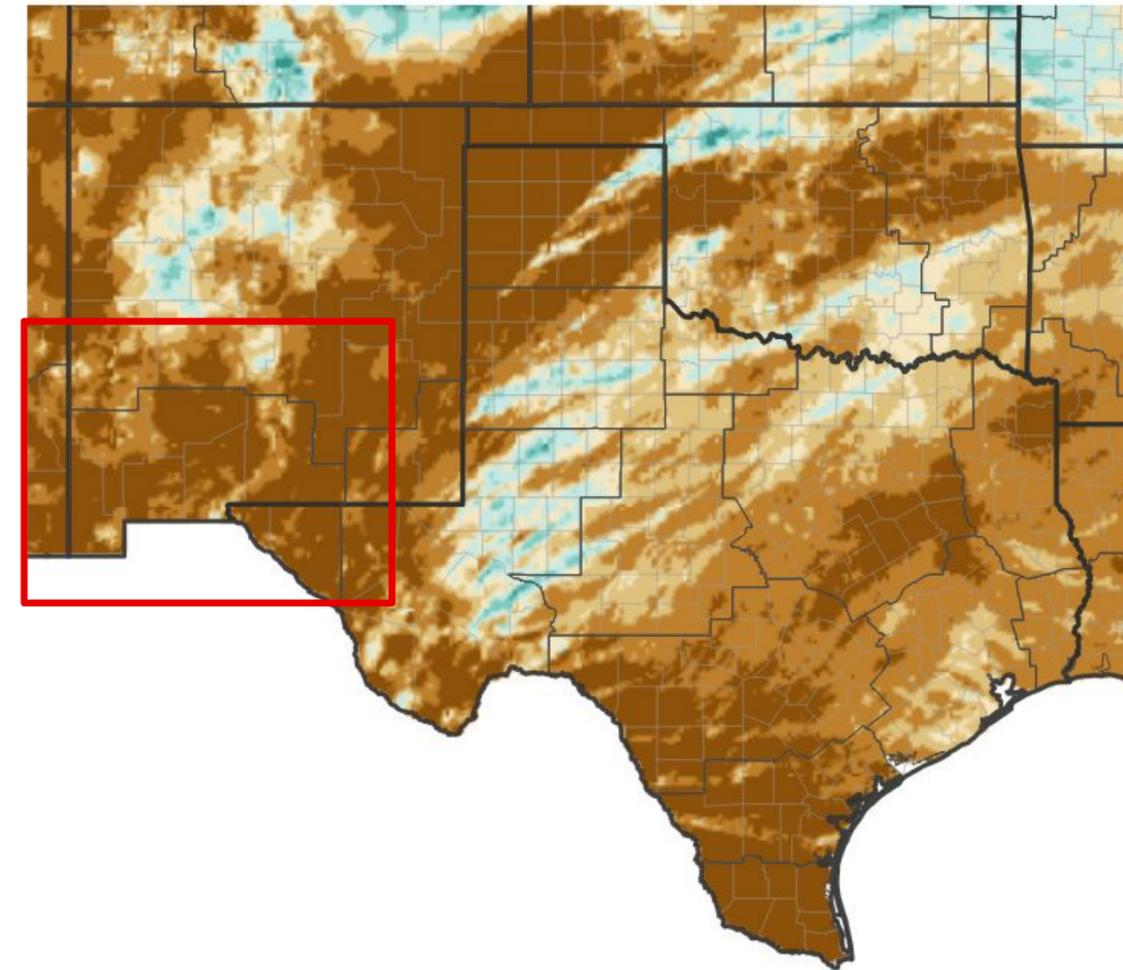


Inches of Precipitation

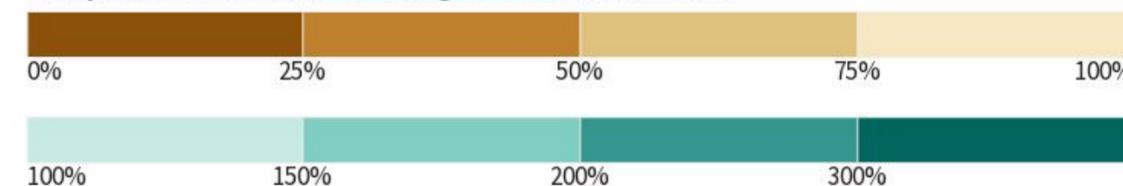


Source(s): National Weather Service National Water Prediction Service; image courtesy of Drought.gov Data Valid: 03/04/26

30-Day Precipitation: Percent of PRISM Normal



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service National Water Prediction Service; image courtesy of Drought.gov Data Valid: 03/05/26



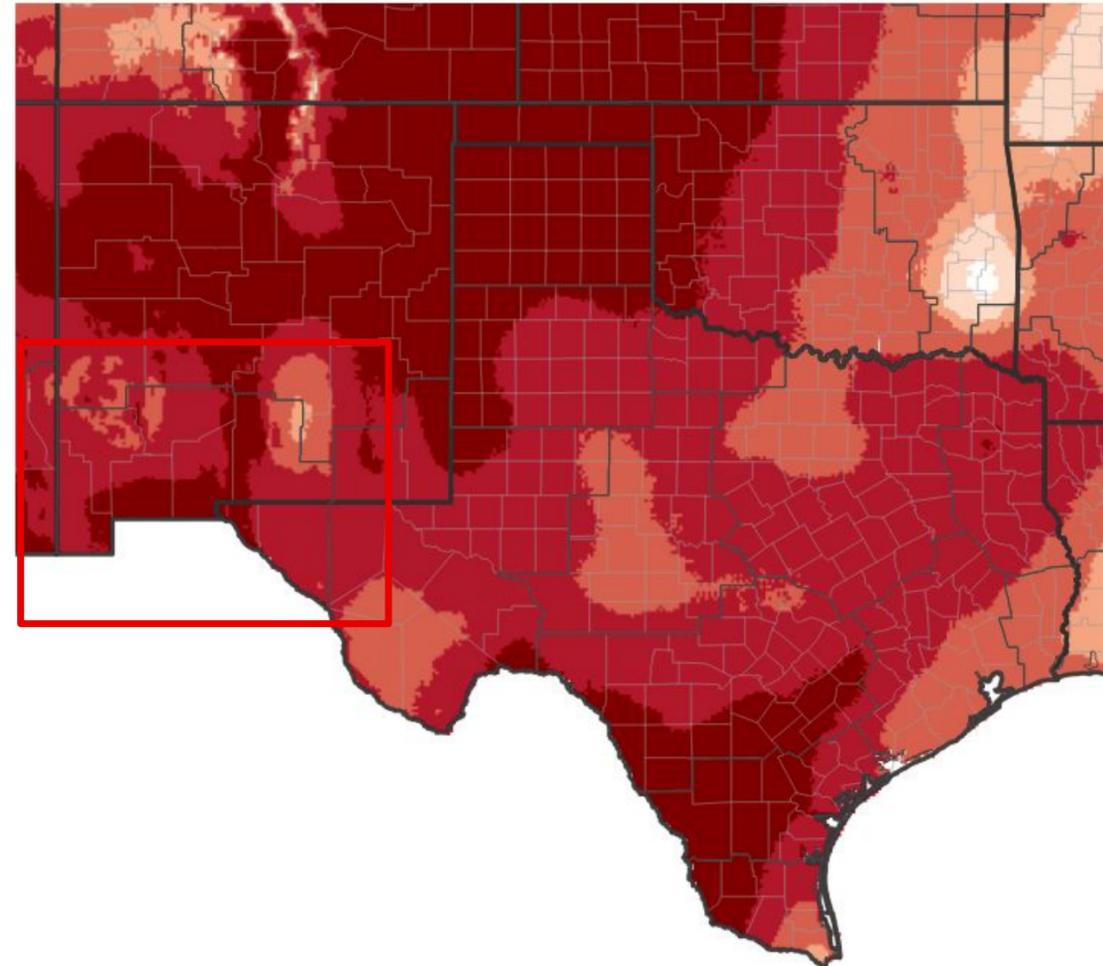


# Temperature

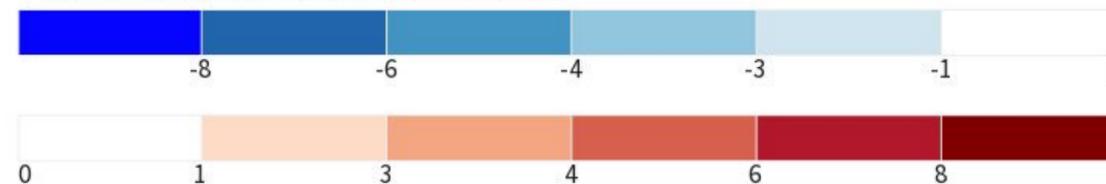
March 6, 2026  
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- Mild start to February, then above normal for Southern New Mexico and Far West Texas. Record highs set in late February.
- 30-day high temperatures 4-6 degrees above normal
- February mean average temperature 5.7°F above normal at El Paso International (KELP)

7-Day Temperature Anomaly



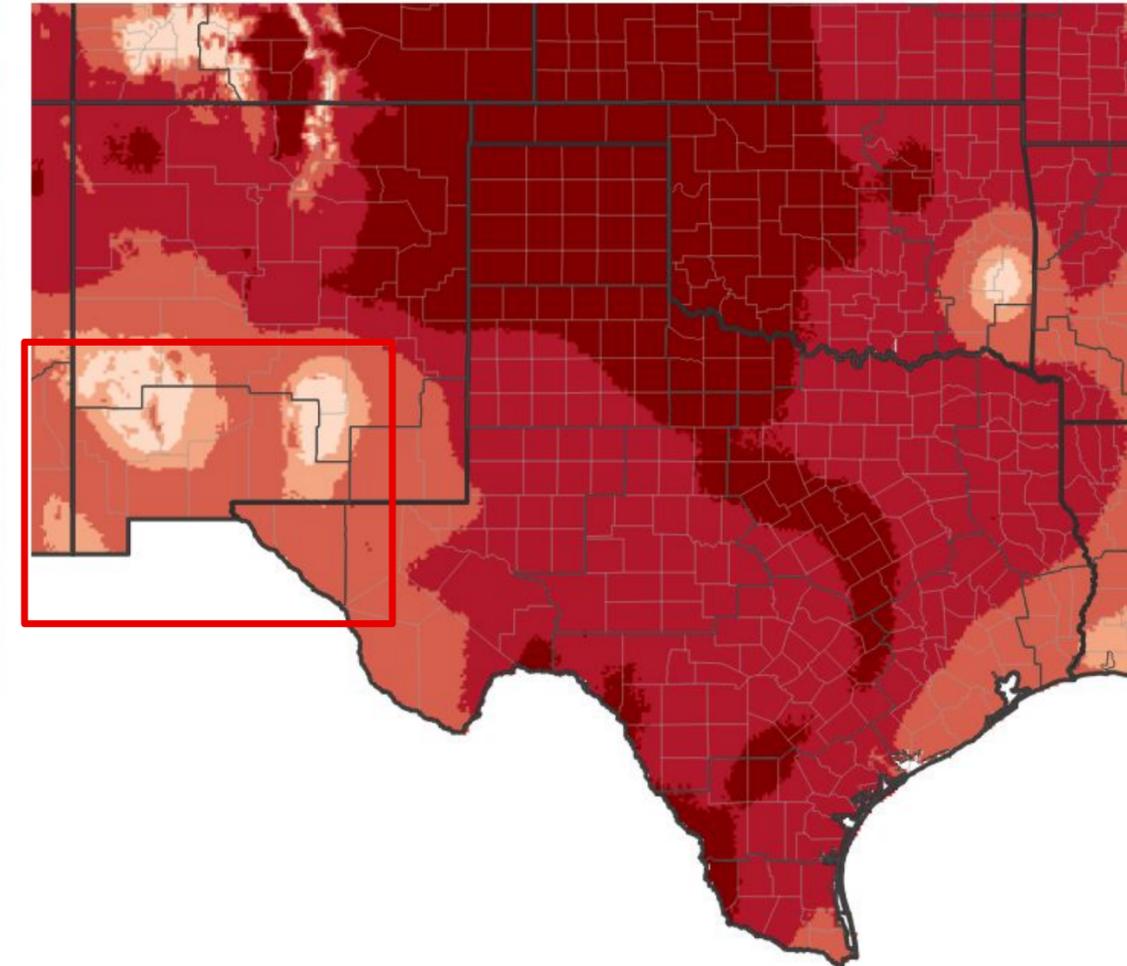
Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



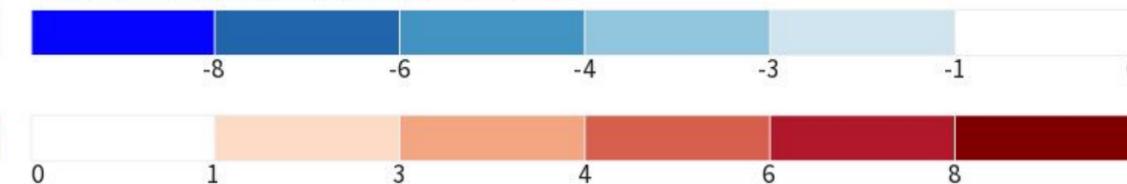
Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 03/01/26

30-Day Temperature Anomaly



Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 03/01/26





# Summary of Impacts

March 6, 2026

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Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

## Hydrologic Impacts

- Gila River running slightly below normal. Mimbres River and Rio Grande south of the Caballo Dam have both dried up and will likely remain dry through the spring and early summer seasons. Seasonal snowpack is finishing well below normal (30-50%) for the Gila and Rio Grande watersheds. Elephant Butte storage at 12.1% capacity, higher than last month but well below the historical 30-year average. ([Texas Water Development Board](#)).

## Agricultural Impacts

- Soil moisture is near normal after abnormally wet January. Outlook points to below normal precipitation in March. 2025 Rio Grande irrigation season ended with a surface water allotment of six inches (6") per acre. Please refer to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District ([EBID](#)) website or your local municipality for more information.

## Fire Hazard Impacts

- Periods of critical fire danger are expected in March due to high wind and low humidity. ERCs are near normal for March across both Gila and Lincoln National Forests. Fire risk will increase in the coming months with the spring windy season and early summer heat. Further drying and periods of strong winds could lead to large fire growth in March as mostly dry conditions prevail.





# Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

March 6, 2026  
1:15 PM

- Gila River running slightly below normal. No sudden rises occurred in February. Mimbres River, Rio Grande below Caballo Dam have both run dry for the season.

## Gila River Stages

	Latest	Flood Stage	Discharge
Gila	1.64 ft	11.00 ft	109 ft <sup>3</sup> /s
Redrock	4.62 ft	20.00 ft	97 ft <sup>3</sup> /s
Virden	5.26 ft	15.00 ft	82 ft <sup>3</sup> /s

## Rio Grande Stages

	Latest	Flood Stage	Discharge
El Paso	Low Stage	8.50 ft	None

Gauge data recorded on 3/6/2026

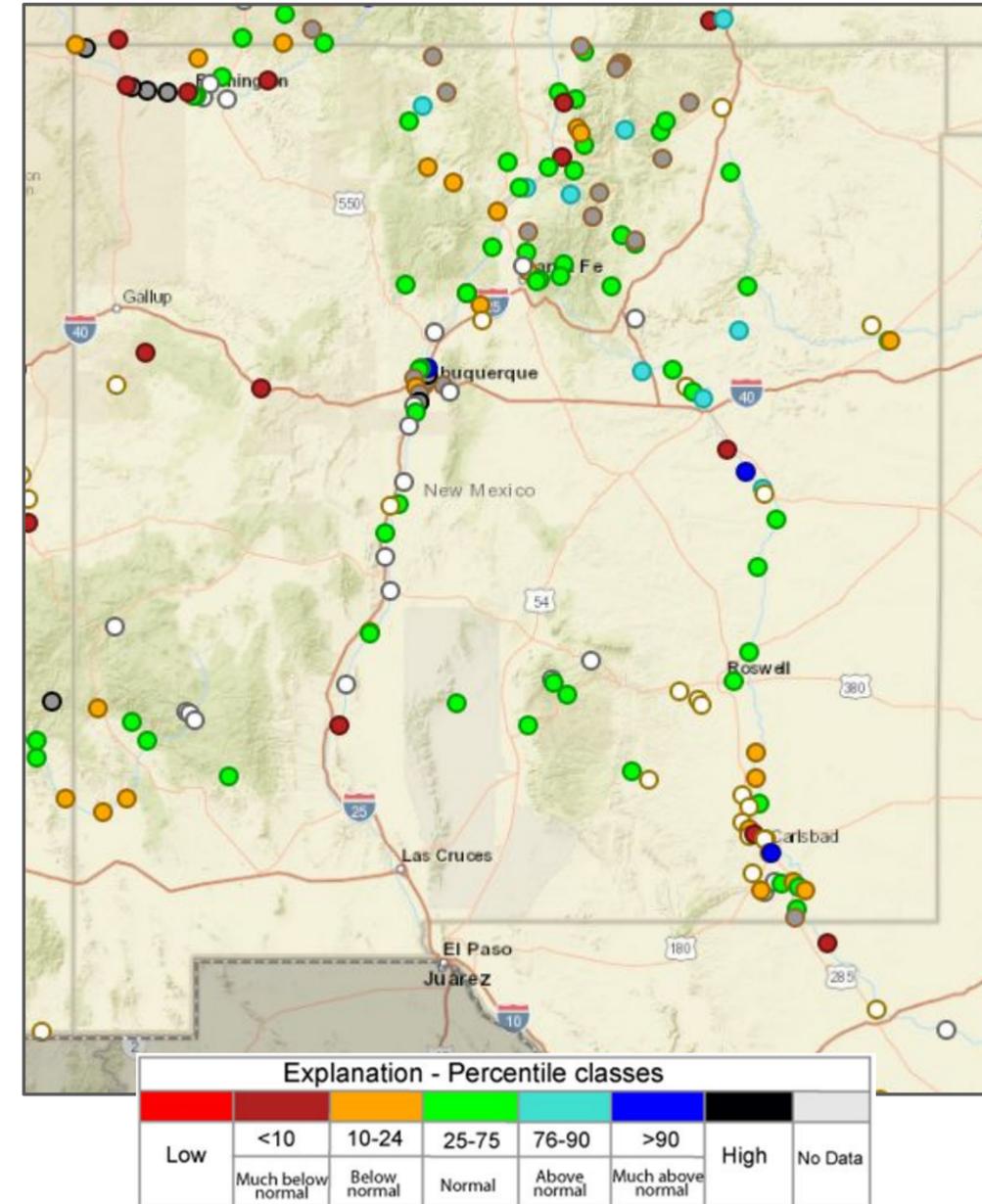


Image Caption: USGS 7 day Streamflow Status valid March 6, 2026

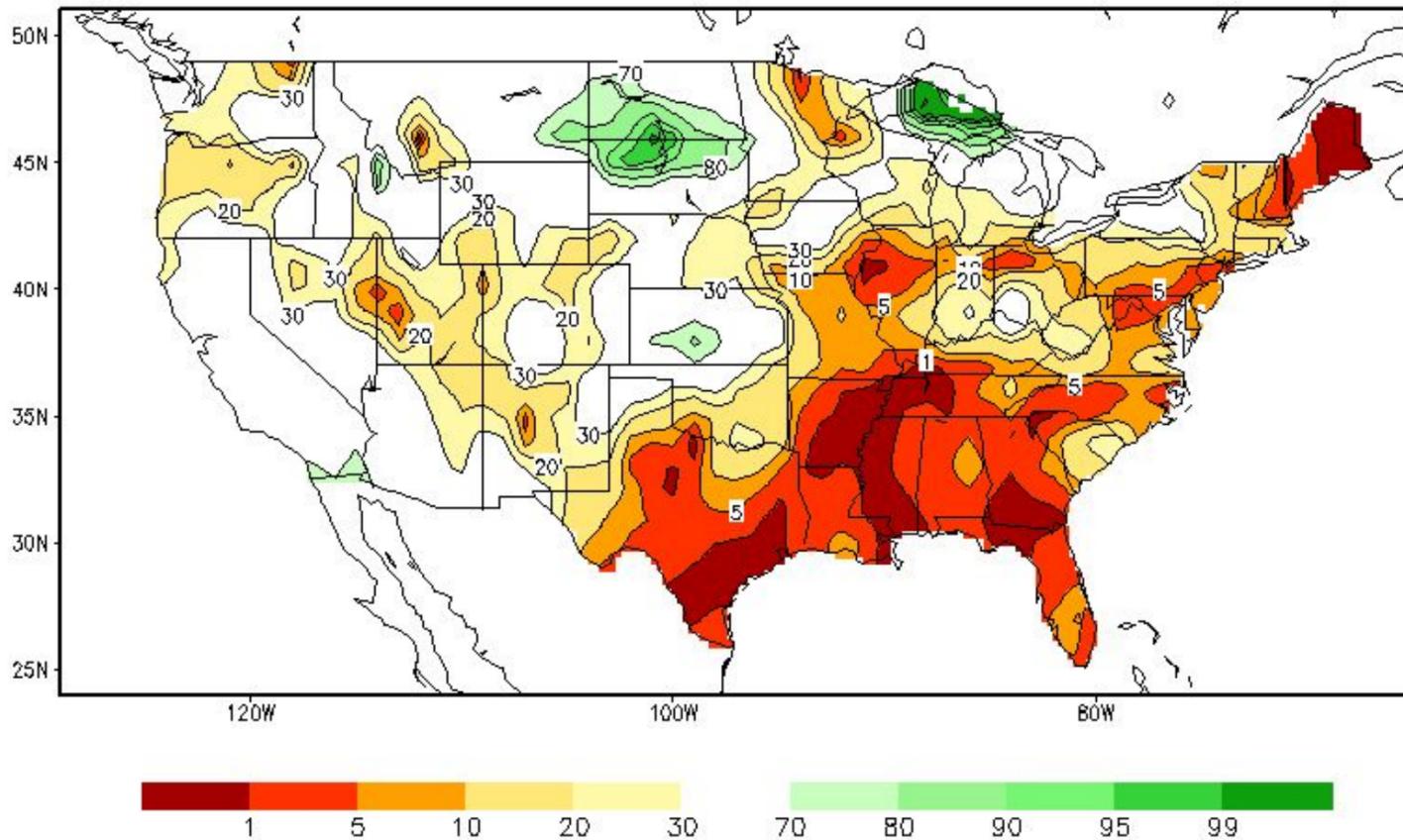




# Agricultural Impacts

March 6, 2026  
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Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile  
MAR 05, 2026



Drought Severity Index  
Value for the February 22 - 28, 2026  
Long Term Palmer

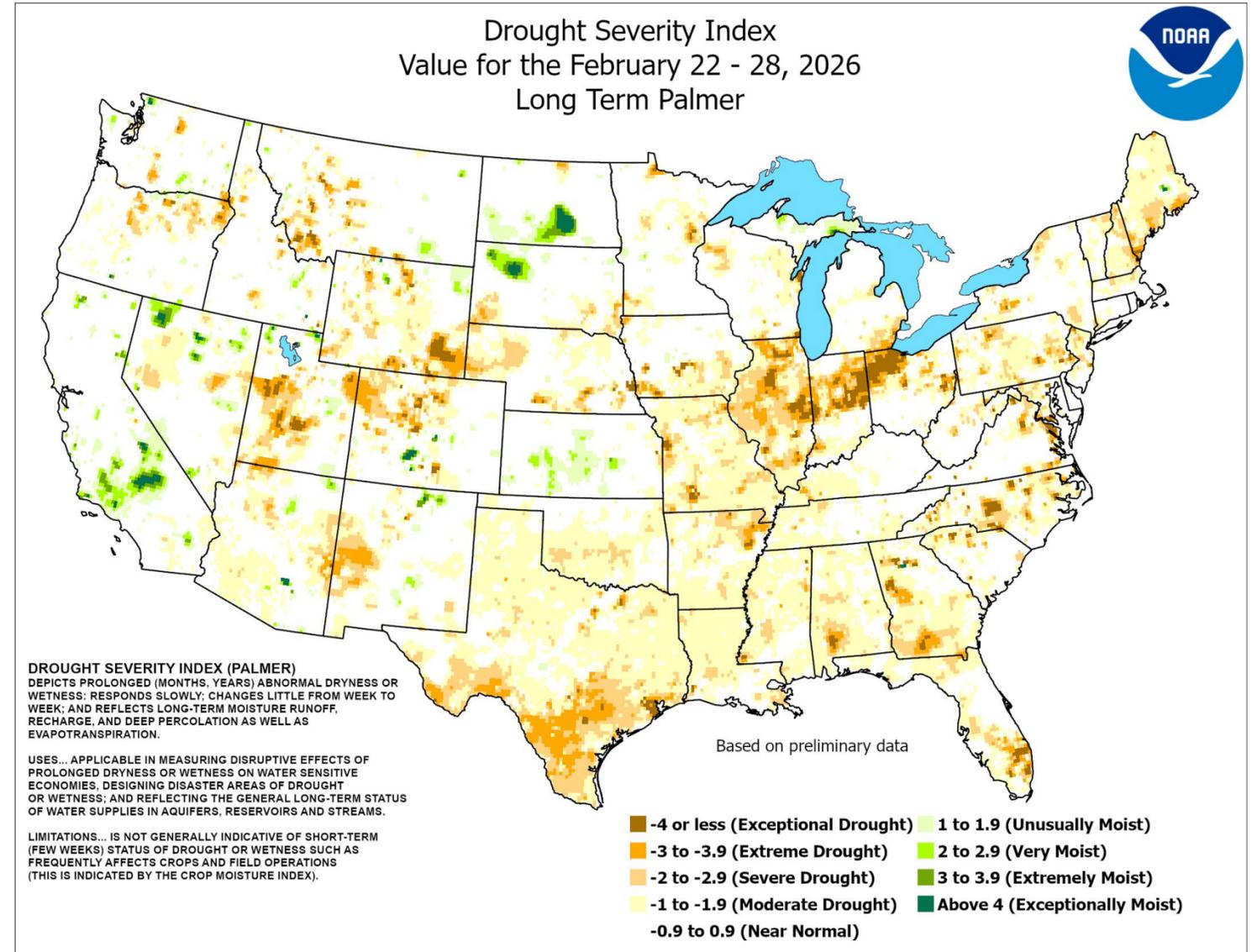


Image Captions:

Left: CPC Calculated [Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile](#) valid March 5, 2026

Right: [Palmer Drought Severity Index](#) valid February 22-28, 2026





# Fire Hazard Impacts

March 6, 2026  
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Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center](#).

Latest TX Burn Ban map available [here](#)

Latest NM Fire Restrictions available [here](#)

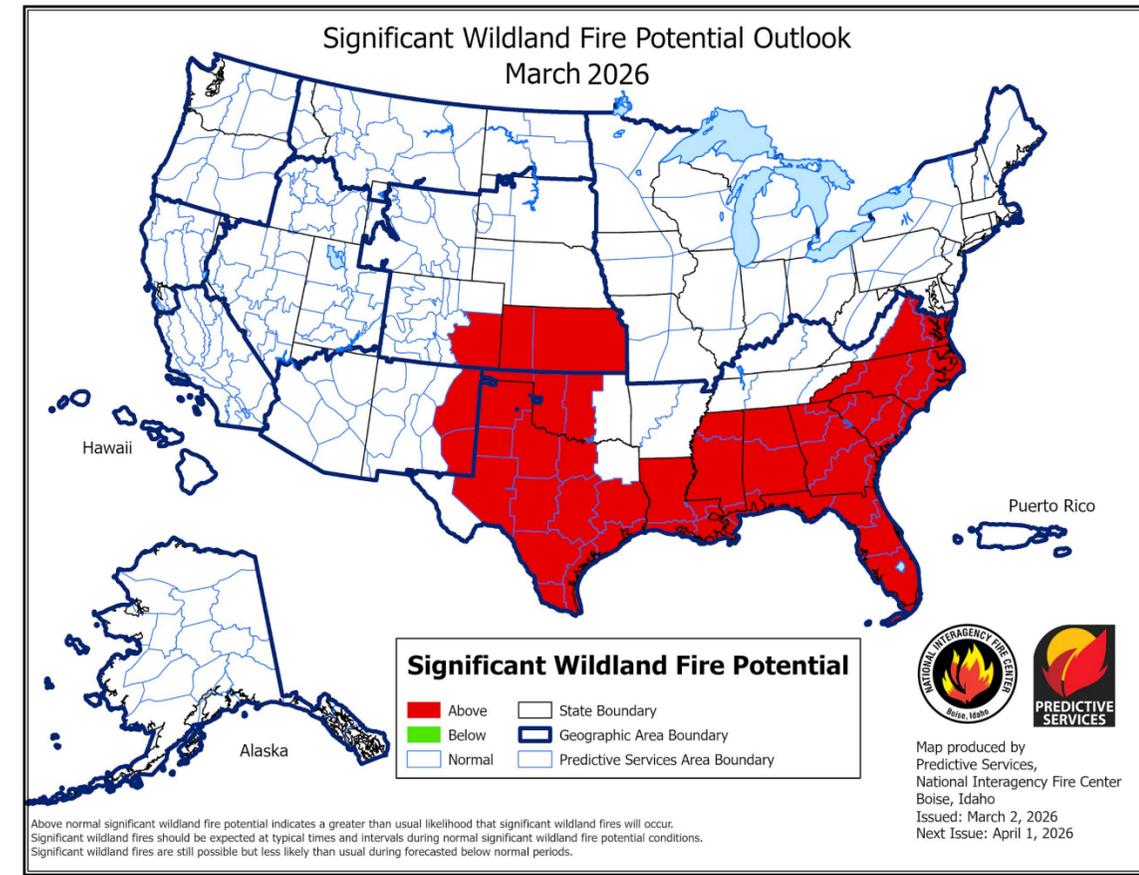
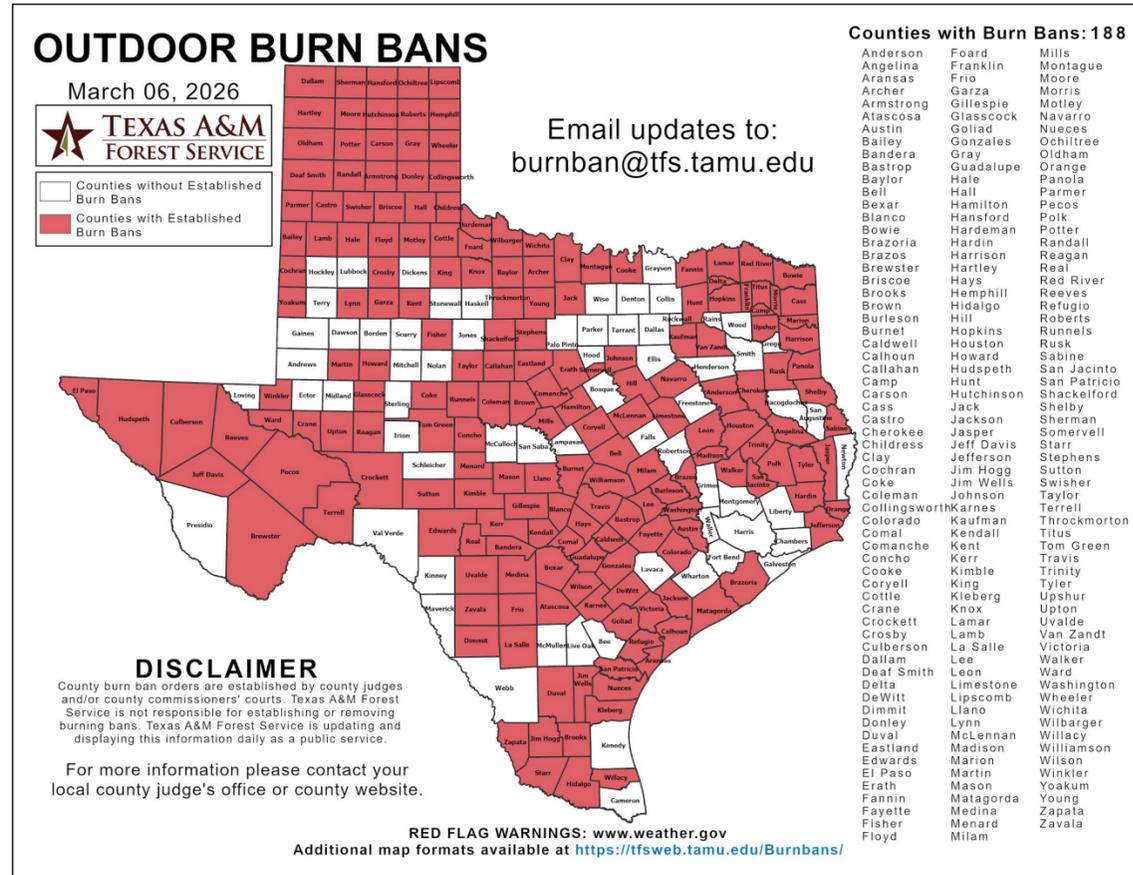


Image Caption: [Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook](#) for March 2026



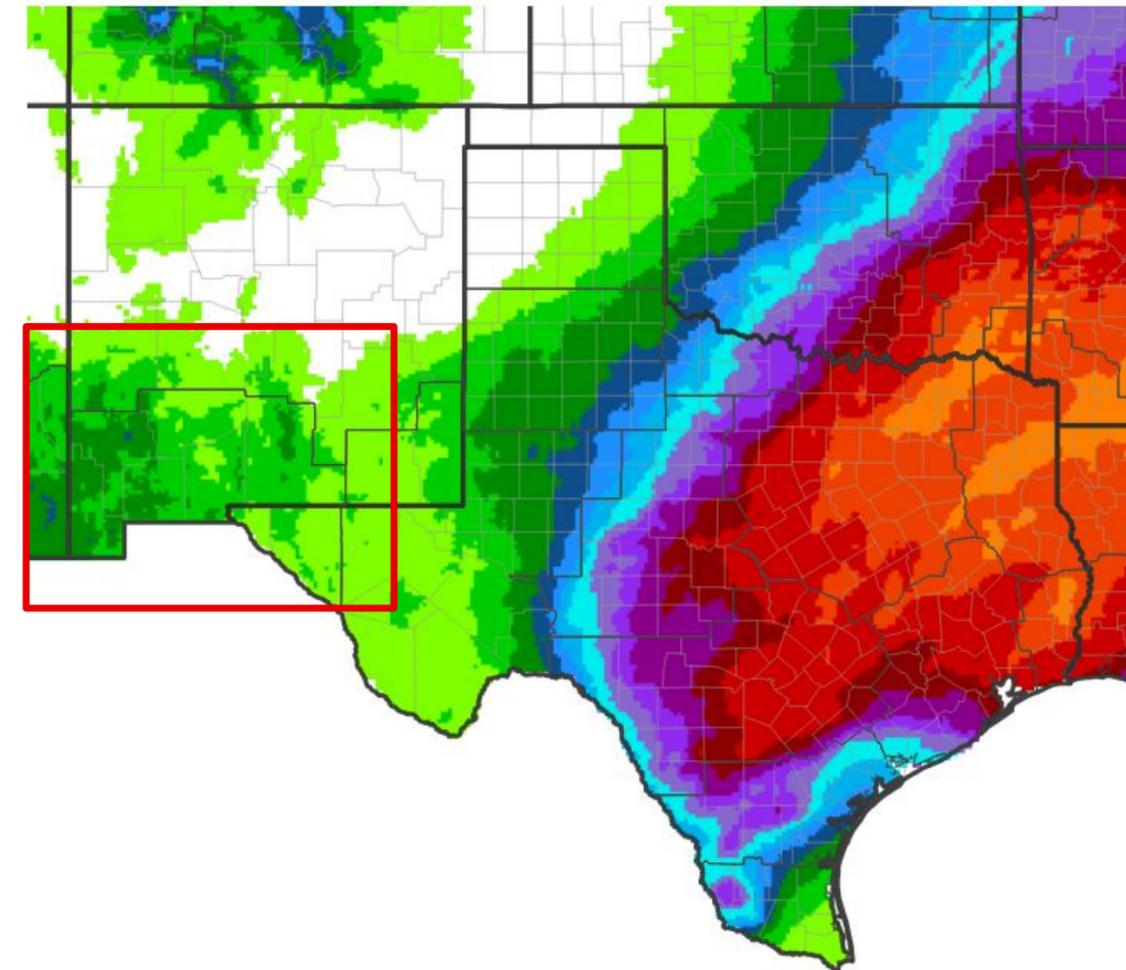


# Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

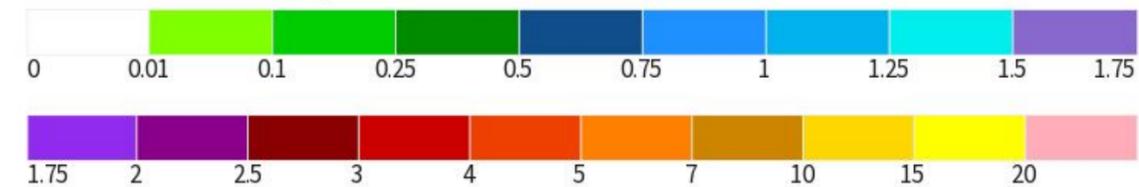
March 6, 2026  
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- First week of March was dry, with scattered rain chances possible the second week. Majority of March looks dry for New Mexico and West Texas, with below normal precipitation expected.
- 2025-26 winter season precipitation finished above normal for south-central New Mexico and far west Texas, but slightly below normal for western New Mexico. Recent precipitation has allowed drought conditions to improve over the past 6 months, but drought status will remain higher west toward AZ/NM state line.

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for March 6, 2026–March 13, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation



Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 03/06/26





# Rapid Onset Drought Outlook

March 6, 2026  
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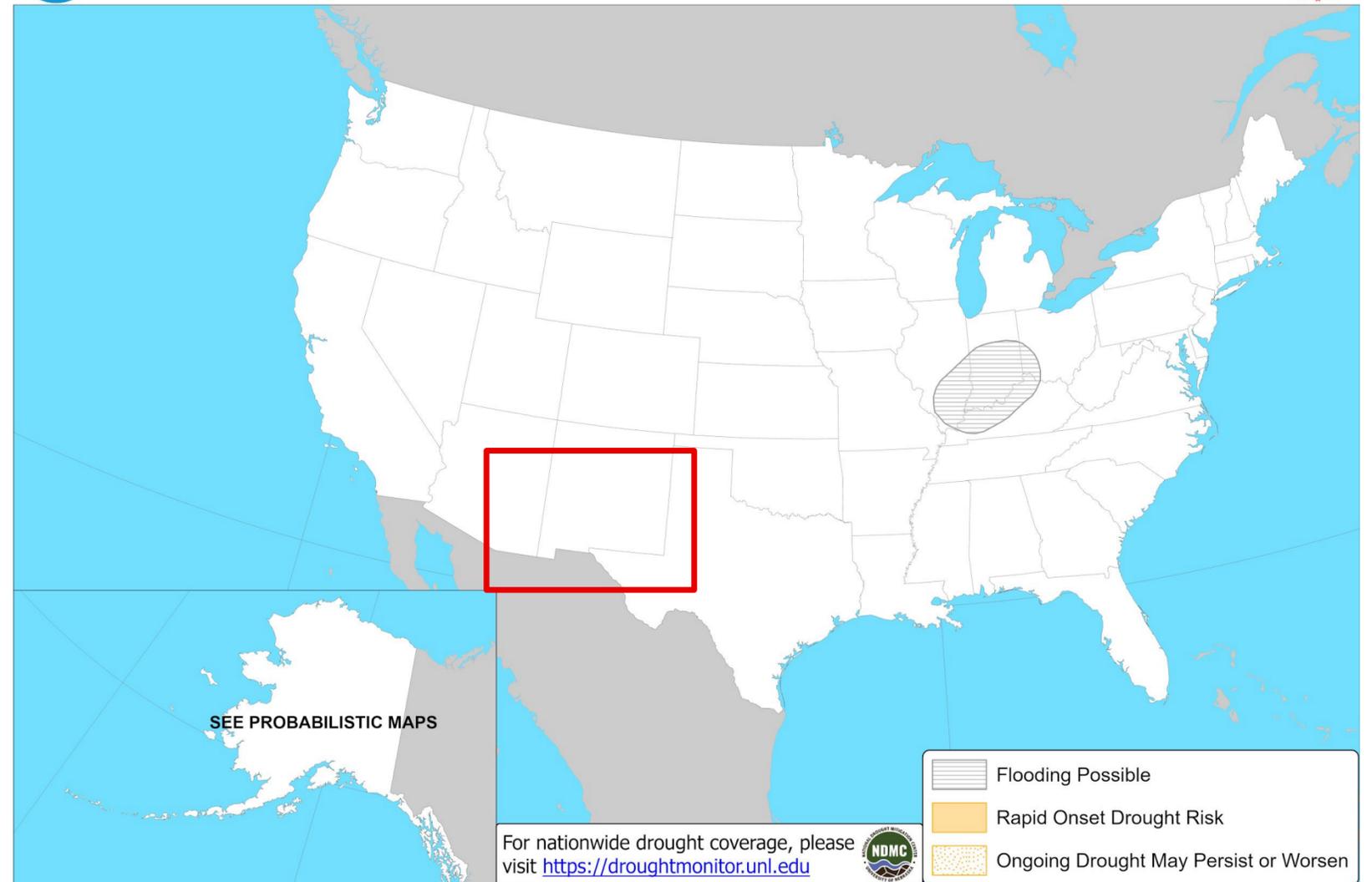
Links to the latest Climate Prediction Center 8 to 14 day [Temperature Outlook](#) and [Precipitation Outlook](#).

- Moderate to Severe Drought is already in place across Southwest New Mexico. Rapid onset drought is not expected. Drought conditions are expected to persist across Southwest New Mexico through the spring season.



## Days 8-14 U.S. Hazards Outlook

Valid: March 14 - 20, 2026



Climate Prediction Center

Released: March 6, 2026 3:00 PM EST

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Image Caption:

[Days 8 to 14 U.S. Hazards Outlook](#) Valid March 14-20





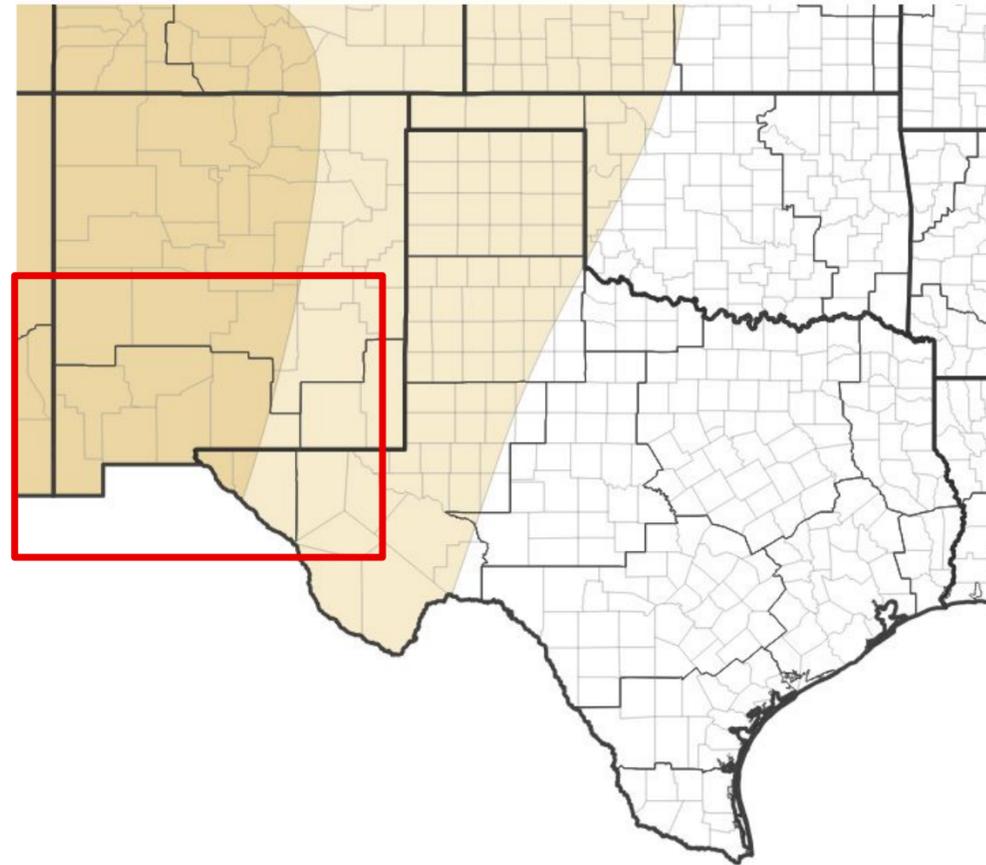
# Long-Range Outlooks

March 6, 2026  
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The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- 40-50% chance of below normal precipitation for West and Central New Mexico and Far West Texas.
- Monthly average precipitation for El Paso: 0.24”
- 40-50% chance of above normal temperatures for Southern New Mexico and Far West Texas.
- Monthly average high temperature for El Paso: 71.9°

Monthly Precipitation Outlook for March 1, 2026–March 31, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



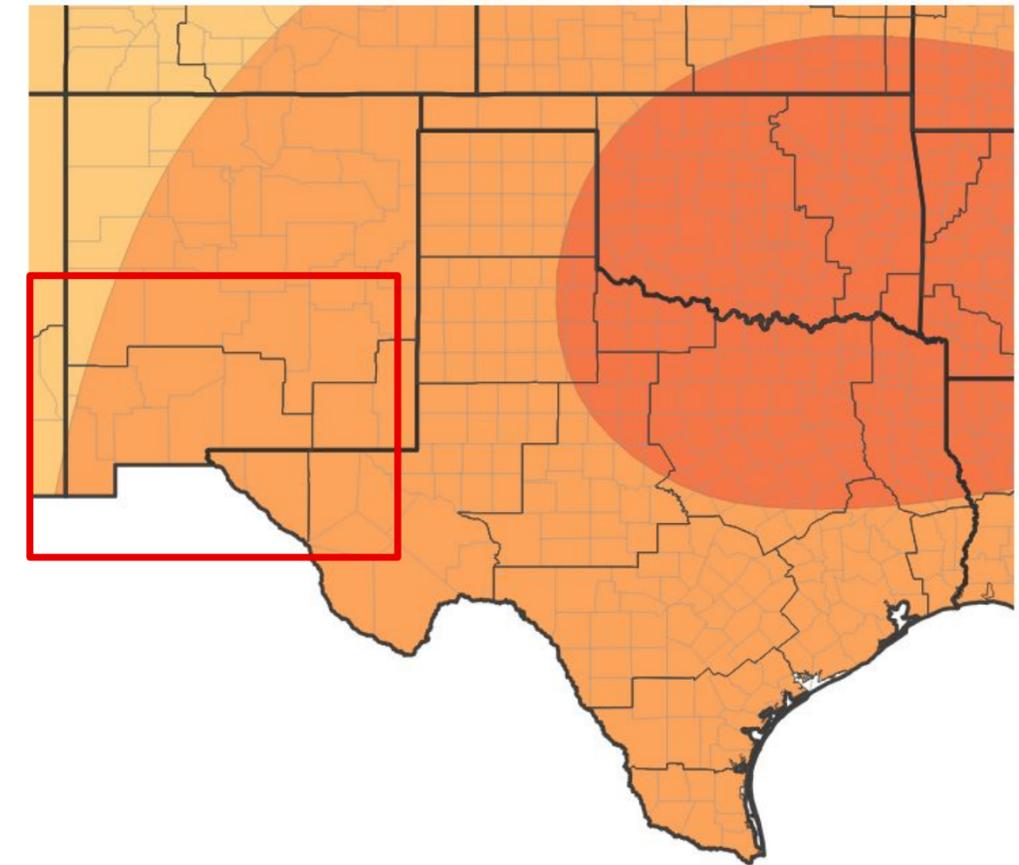
Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 02/19/26

Monthly Temperature Outlook for March 1, 2026–March 31, 2026



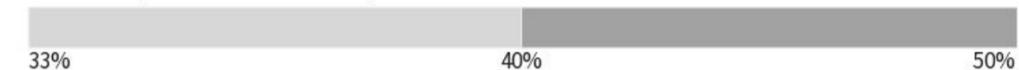
Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 02/19/26





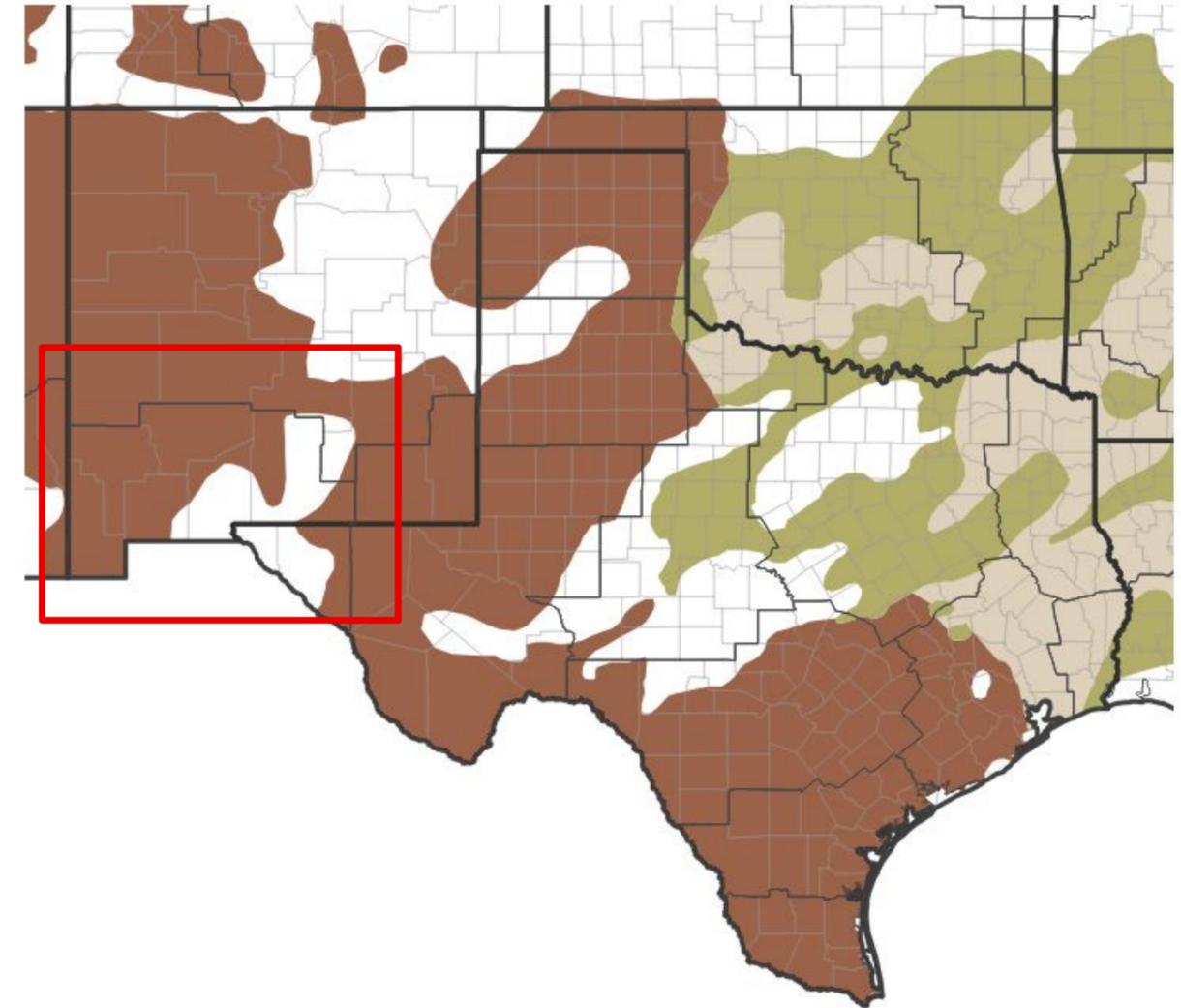
# Drought Outlook

March 6, 2026  
1:15 PM

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Drought conditions are expected to persist across Southwest New Mexico. No drought status for South-Central New Mexico and Far West Texas. Below normal March precipitation expected.

1-Month Drought Outlook for March 1, 2026–March 31, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 02/28/26

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)



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

National Weather Service  
El Paso, TX