Drought Information Statement for North and Central Georgia

Valid March 5, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Atlanta / Peachtree City, GA

Contact Information: sr-ffc.webmaster@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated March 19, 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/ffc/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates for regional drought status updates.

Extreme drought continues to expand despite recent rains.

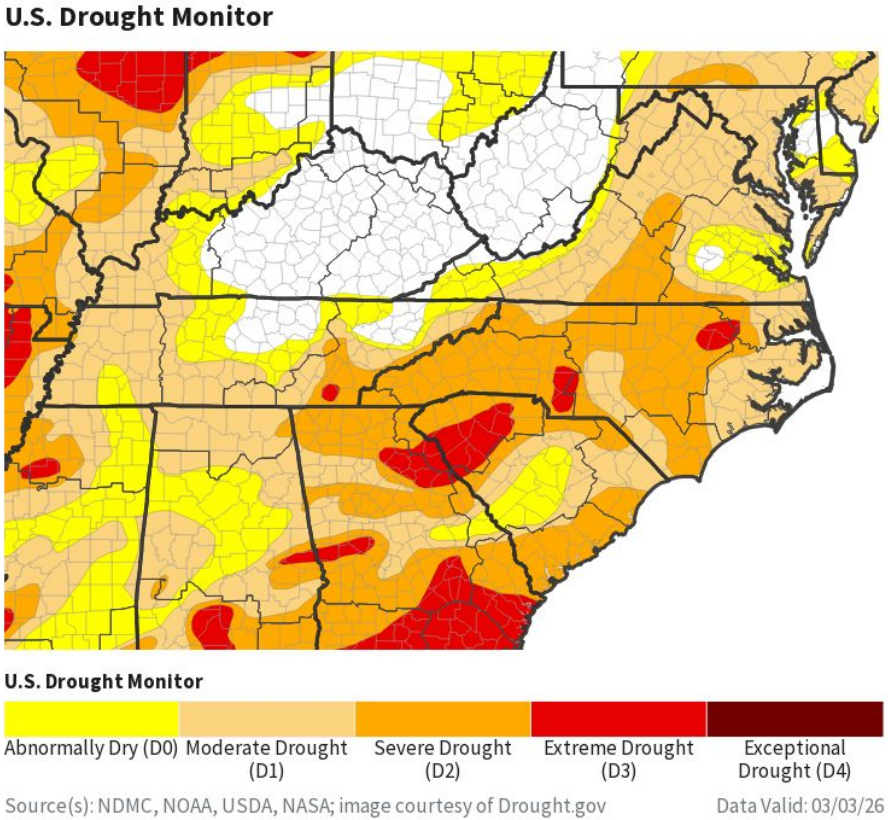
- The D2-D4 cumulative drought area has decreased since last statement.
- Hydrologic and fire weather impacts remain a concern across the state.
- Without an active weather pattern producing meaningful rainfall, expect the drought to persist through the Spring months.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for North and Central Georgia

Drought intensity and Extent

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**: None.
- **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Crawford, Dodge, Emanuel, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Harris, Jackson, Johnson, Lamar, Laurens, Madison, Meriwether, Monroe, Montgomery, Muscogee, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Talbot, Taylor, Telfair, Toombs, Treutlen, Upson, Wheeler, Wilcox, Wilkes
- **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Bartow, Bibb, Bleckley, Butts, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattahoochee, Chattooga, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Crisp, Dade, Dawson, DeKalb, Dooly, Douglas, Fannin, Fayette, Floyd, Fulton, Gilmer, Glascock, Gordon, Greene, Hancock, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Lumpkin, Macon, Marion, Morgan, Murray, Newton, Paulding, Peach, Pickens, Pike, Pulaski, Putnam, Rockdale, Schley, Spalding, Stewart, Sumter, Taliaferro, Towns, Troup, Twiggs, Union, Walker, Walton, Warren, Washington, Webster, White, Whitfield, Wilkinson
- **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Baldwin, Jones, Polk
- **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: None.



Recent Change in Drought Intensity

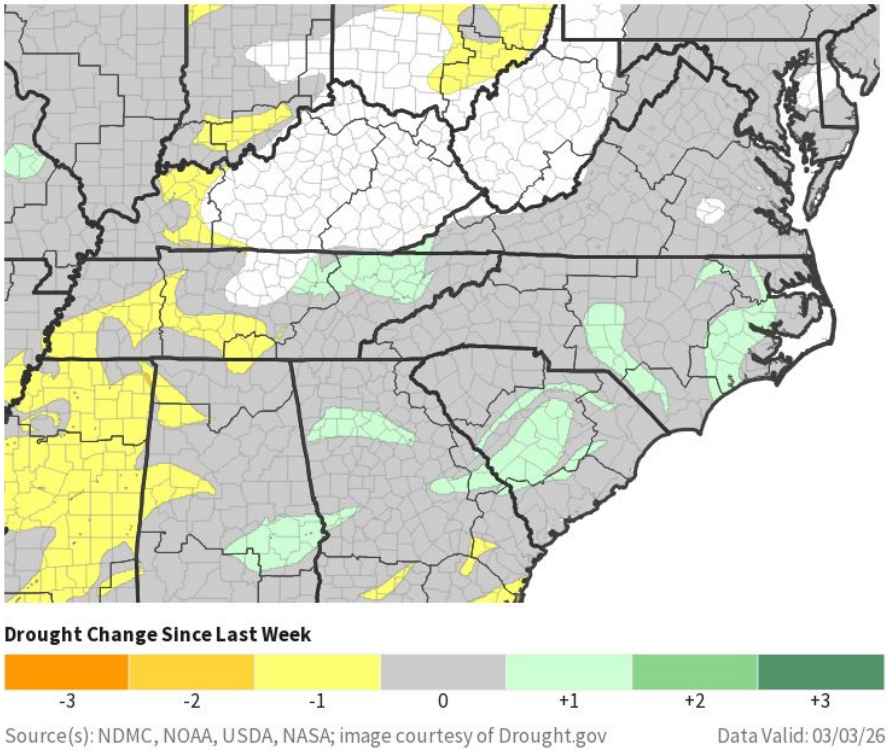
Link to the latest 2-week and 4-week change map for Georgia.

Four Week Drought Monitor Class Change

- **Drought Worsened:** Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Chattooga, Cherokee, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Crawford, Dade, Dawson, DeKalb, Dodge, Douglas, Emanuel, Fannin, Fayette, Floyd, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Glascock, Gordon, Greene, Gwinnett, Hall, Hancock, Haralson, Harris, Heard, Henry, Jackson, Jasper, Johnson, Lamar, Laurens, Lumpkin, Madison, Meriwether, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Murray, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Polk, Putnam, Rockdale, Spalding, Talbot, Taylor, Telfair, Toombs, Towns, Treutlen, Troup, Union, Upson, Walker, Warren, Wheeler, White, Whitfield, Wilcox, Wilkes
- **No Change:** Baldwin, Bleckley, Catoosa, Crisp, Dooly, Marion, Pulaski, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Taliaferro, Webster
- **Drought Improved:** Bibb, Chattahoochee, Glascock, Gwinnett, Houston, Jefferson, Jones, Macon, Muscogee, Peach, Twiggs, Walton, Washington, Wilkinson

The 4-week change map is available here. The 1-week change map is shown right.

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map

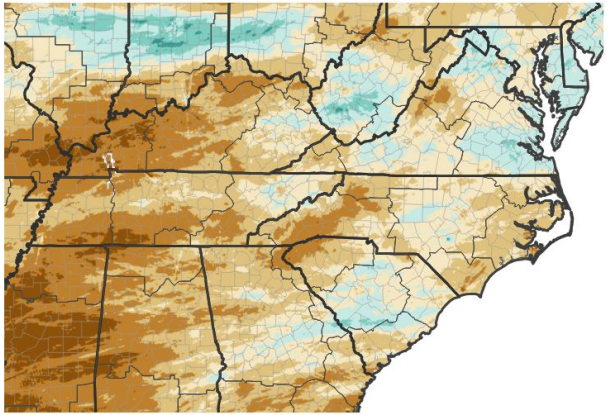


Precipitation - Past 30 Days

Through Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 7AM:

	Last 30 Days		Last 60 Days	
	Rainfall (inches)	%Normal	Rainfall (inches)	%Normal
Rome (KRMG)	2.99	57%	8.19	82%
Athens (KAHN)	4.01	86%	5.81	65%
Peachtree-DeKalb (KPDK)	5.75	120%	7.81	85%
Fulton County (KFTY)	3.14	67%	4.94	56%
Atlanta (KATL)	2.57	53%	4.74	51%
Peachtree City (KFFC)	3.12	62%	5.41	59%
Macon (KMCN)	3.60	80%	5.33	62%
Columbus (KCSG)	4.24	87%	6.47	72%

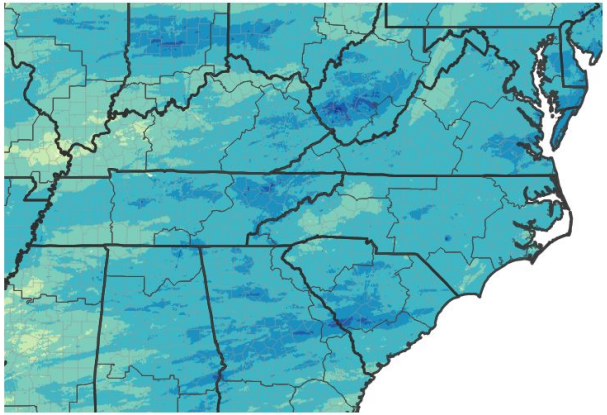
30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/05/26

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (Inches)



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 03/05/26

Over the last 30 days, rainfall over Georgia has generally ranged from 2.5 to 6.0 inches (40 to 150 percent of normal), with outliers on each side of this range. Pockets of higher amounts were observed along a line from Columbus to Macon to Augusta (4 to 7 inches, or 85 to 170 percent of normal). The lowest amounts – generally between 1.75 and 2.5 inches (40 to 70 percent of normal) – were observed over east central Georgia, near Fitzgerald, Vidalia and Statesboro.

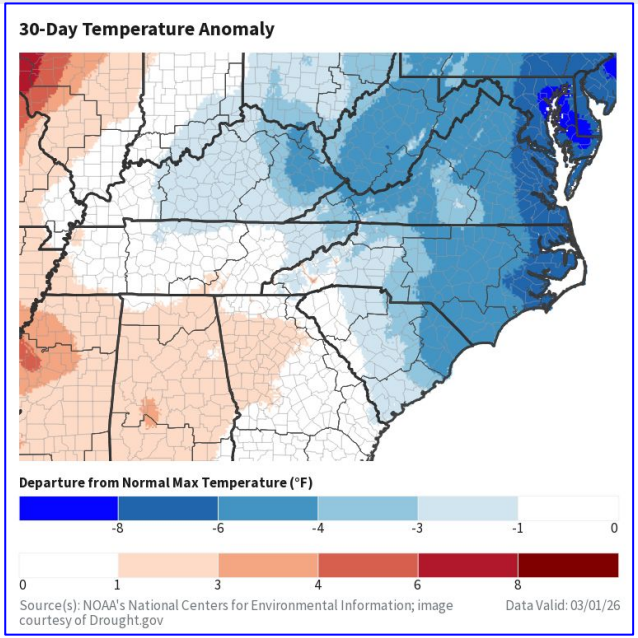
The Additional Rainfall Information product (MISATL) is available online at weather.gov/ffc.

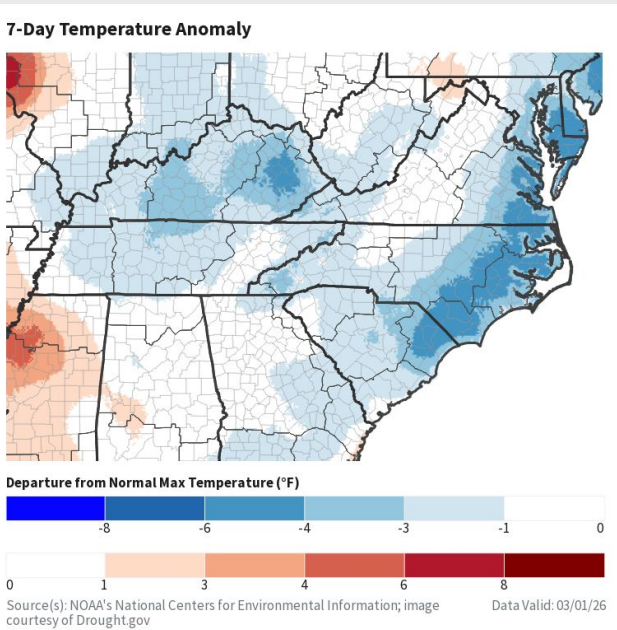
Temperatures - Past 30-, 7-Days

*Through March 1, 2026.**

	Last 30 Days	
	Average High (Departure)	Average Low (Departure)
Rome (KRMG)	64.1° (+5.8°)	39.4° (+4.0°)
Athens (KAHN)	60.7° (+1.5°)	37.7° (+0.2°)
Peachtree-DeKalb (KPDK)	61.4° (+3.7°)	37.5° (+0.6°)
Fulton County (KFTY)	60.9° (+1.7°)	36.4° (-0.5°)
Atlanta (KATL)	61.7° (+3.0°)	40.6° (+1.2°)
Peachtree City (KFFC)	61.5° (+1.6°)	36.1° (+0.3°)
Macon (KMCN)	64.5° (+1.0°)	38.3° (-0.7°)
Columbus (KCSG)	65.4° (+2.1°)	41.4° (-0.3°)

**Note, the table values are for the period January 30-March 1, 2026, matching the latency for the 30-day and 7-day max temperature anomaly images (right).*





Over the 30 day period ending March 1 (middle image), average high temperatures over north and central Georgia were generally 1 to 3 degrees above normal, a big change from the chilly January and early February. The table (left) also includes the average low temperature trends for the 30 day period, which were largely 0.5 to 1 degrees above normal for most climate locations.

For the 7 days ending March 1 (right image), a slightly cooler pattern pulled average high temperatures back below climatological normals but just slightly. A warm period is expected over the next week.

Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflow in smaller river basins, particularly in the Atlanta metro area, experienced a rise following rainfall in the last 7-days. In some cases, River Flood Warnings were in effect for gauge locations. Widespread lower flows are still present over far north Georgia. See slide 7 for additional details.

Agricultural Impacts

- Water sources (e.g., holding ponds) remain low or mostly dry in many areas. Planting season is still on schedule to begin in April, but concerns exist given the low water levels for irrigation. Most livestock producers are now out of hay, and pastures lack adequate rainfall to green up or produce cool season forages.
- The Crop Progress & Condition will begin updating again April 2026.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Wildfire risk continues to be high enough that leaf and yard waste burning has been discouraged since late 2025. Some counties have noted an uptick in fire-related emergency calls.
- The prescribed burn season has begun, and officials are collaborating with NWS to identify safe burning periods.
- See slide 9 for more details.

Mitigation Actions

- Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information.

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

Main Takeaways

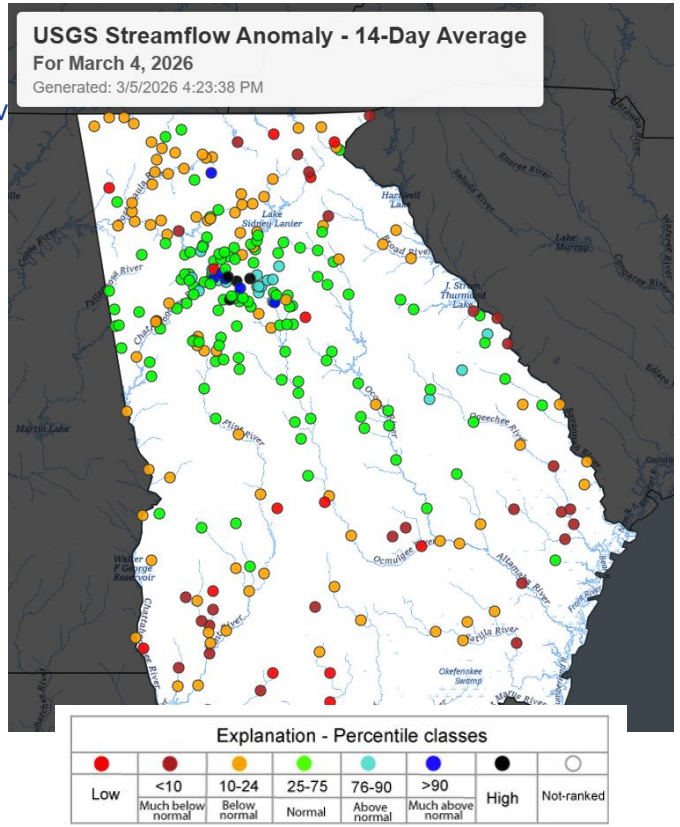
- In the last 14-days, rainfall has been sufficient enough to allow streamflow across many basins to rebound, particularly in the Atlanta metro area. Despite the rainfall in the last week, streamflows over far north and south Georgia remain particularly low. Generally speaking, most basins are ranging from *Normal* to *Much Below Normal* streamflows.

- Lake and Reservoir levels show a combination of the start of the spring recharge period and the lingering dry conditions from the last few months. The available elevation curves for USACE projects in the NWS Peachtree City area show:

	USACE Lakes	
	Current Action Zone	Forecast Action Zone
Carters	Top of Conservation	Zone 1
Lanier	Zone 3	Zone 3
Allatoona	Top of Conservation	Zone 3
West Point	Top of Conservation	Top of Conservation

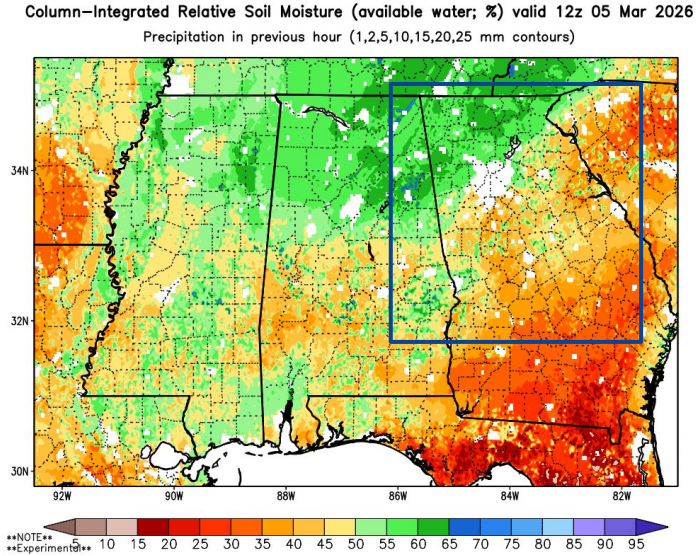
*Action zones used in some charts are defined here.

See the USGS 120-day streamflow map here.



Agricultural Impacts

- Soil moistures remain dry over much of north and central Georgia (image right).
- Far north Georgia has the highest 0-200 cm relative soil moisture in the state, despite not seeing much of a change in the last two weeks over portions of this area (image far right). East central Georgia saw the largest improvement.
- Planting season typically starts in April, but increased rainfall will be needed to balance the increasing water demand into the growing season.



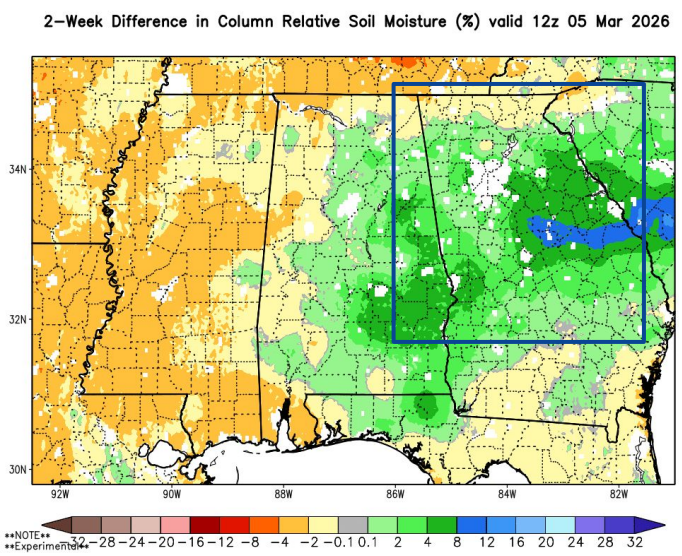
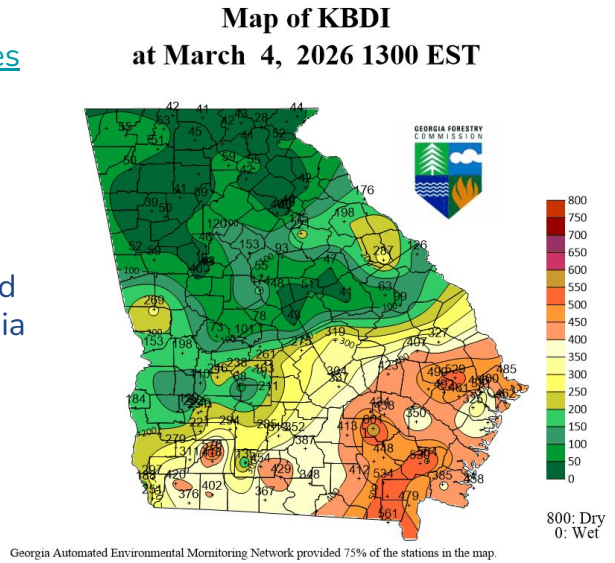


Image Captions:
Left: 0-200cm Relative Soil Moisture from NASA SPoRT valid March 5, 2026.
Right: 0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture 2-week Change from NASA SPoRT valid March 5, 2026.

Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.

- Keetch Byram Drought Index values over north and central Georgia are under 200 in most locations, with much of north Georgia showing values under 50.
- At this time, above normal wildland fire potential is expected for Georgia for March, as indicated in the Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook (far right). This above normal potential is expected to continue through Spring.
- The Wildfire Potential Outlook indicates Low Risk (level 2 of 3) for Georgia through the much of the next week.



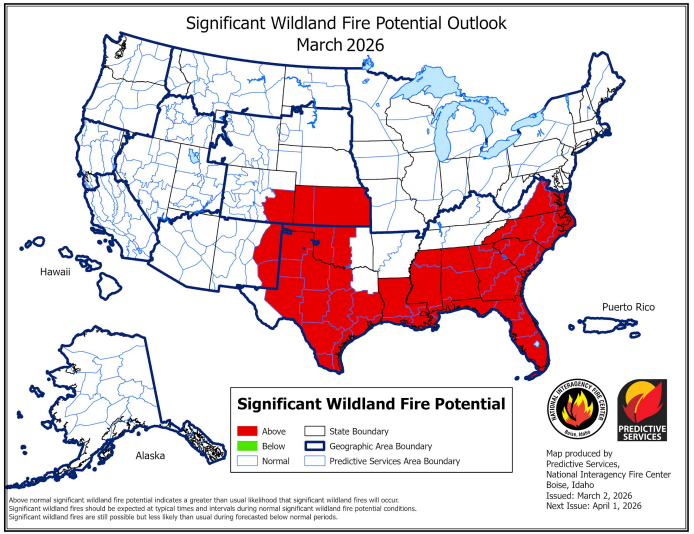
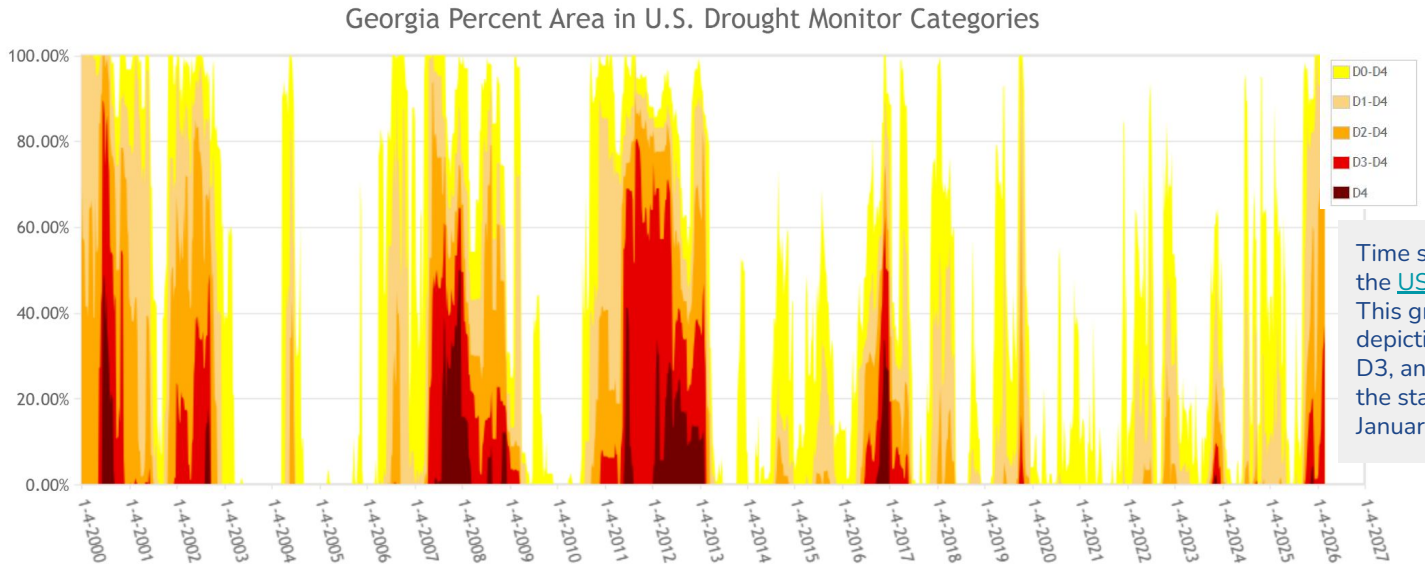


Image Captions:
Above: Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook for March 2026.
Left: Keetch Byram Drought Index for March 4, 2026.

Drought: Historical Context

Link to Drought Monitor Time Series

For the Drought Event beginning in September 2025, *for the entire state of Georgia:*



Time series is courtesy of the US Drought Monitor. This graph shows the depiction of the D0, D1, D2, D3, and D4 drought across the state of Georgia since January 2000.

First D2 (Severe) Drought in Georgia:
Sep 23, 2025

Maximum drought category so far:
D4 (Exceptional)
Nov 18, 2025

Current D2-D4 coverage in Georgia:
81.7% of GA
TODAY

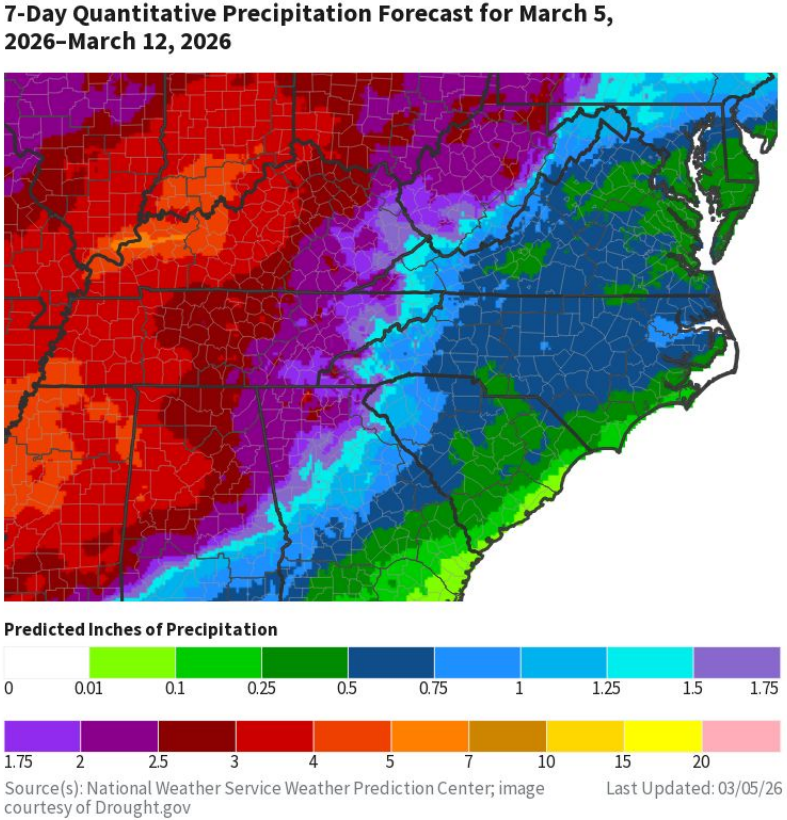
Largest D2-D4 coverage in Georgia*
87.4% of GA
Feb 17, 2026
**for this drought period*

Last time there was at least 87% of GA in D2-D4:
Oct 4, 2011
87.6% of GA

Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

The 7-day outlook (through Friday February 27):

- Over the next seven days, rainfall amounts of generally 0.5 to 2.5 inches are forecast.
- Daily rainfall chances are currently forecast through the middle of next week.



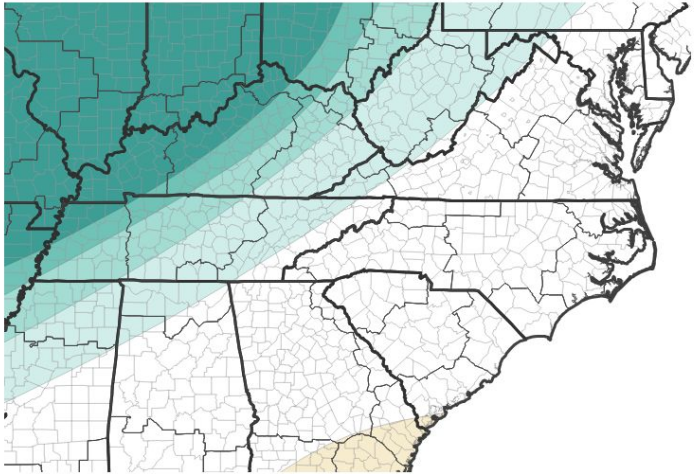
Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

For March:

- Equal chances of above or below normal precipitation is expected over most of north and central Georgia (right).
- Above normal temperatures are expected over Georgia (far right).

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



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

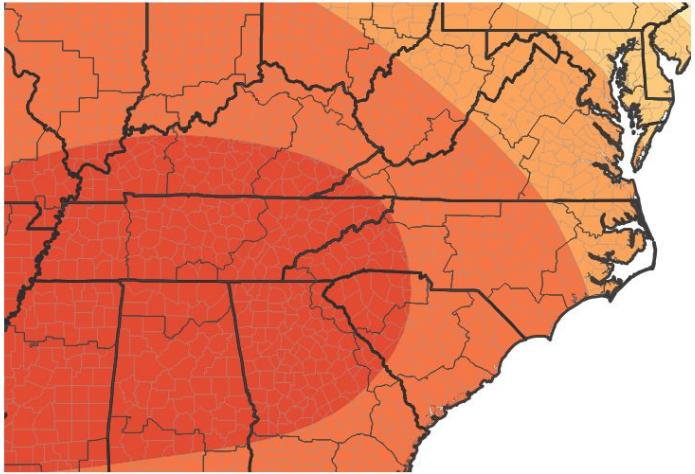
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 02/28/26

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



Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures

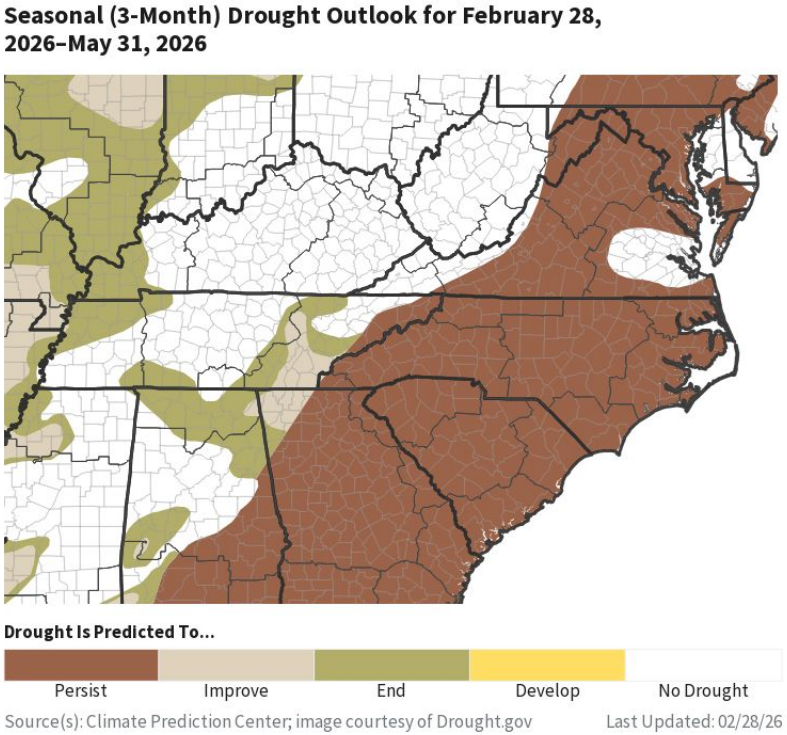
33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 02/28/26

Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- Drought is expected to persist across most of Georgia into early Spring. Over north Georgia, some improvement or ending is possible.
- Drought Information Statements will be updated every two weeks while D2 Severe Drought (or worse) continues in north and central Georgia.



Links to the latest:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook
Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook