Drought Information Statement for North and Central Georgia

Valid April 2, 2026

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

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

- This product will be updated April 16, 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 Expands Significantly in Georgia

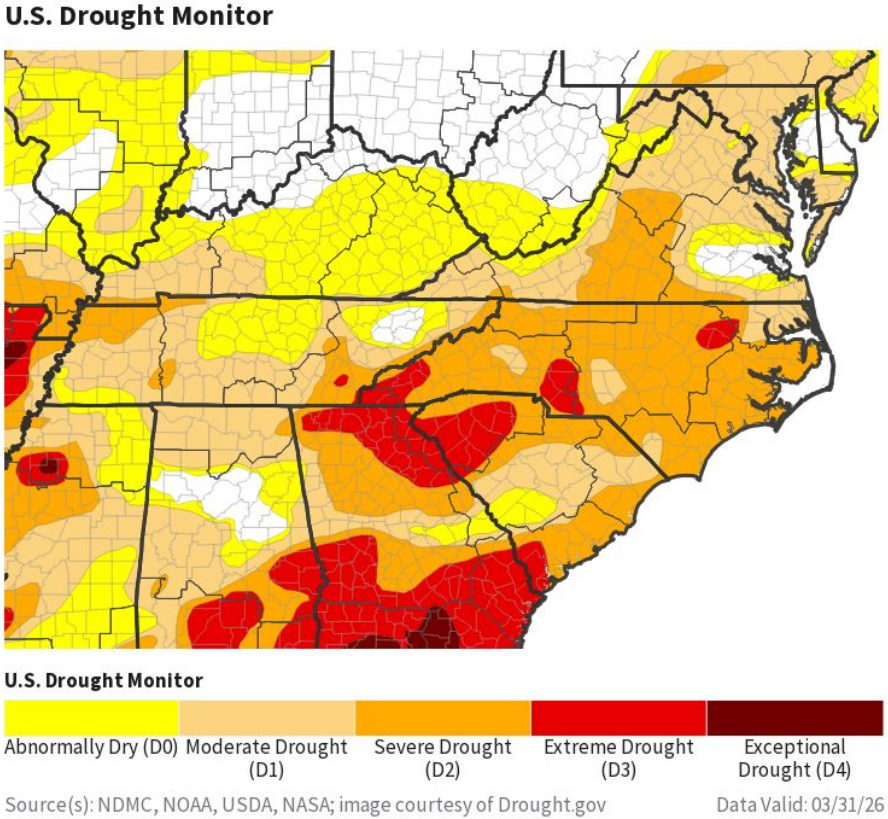
- **Peak Event Intensity:** Drought area and intensity have reached their highest levels since the Fall 2025 onset, and **D3 (Extreme Drought)** now encompasses nearly **two-thirds of Georgia**.
- **Increased Water Demand:** Rising temperatures and "spring green-up" are accelerating hydrologic stress.

U.S. Drought Monitor

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

Drought intensity and Extent:

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



Recent Change in Drought Intensity

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

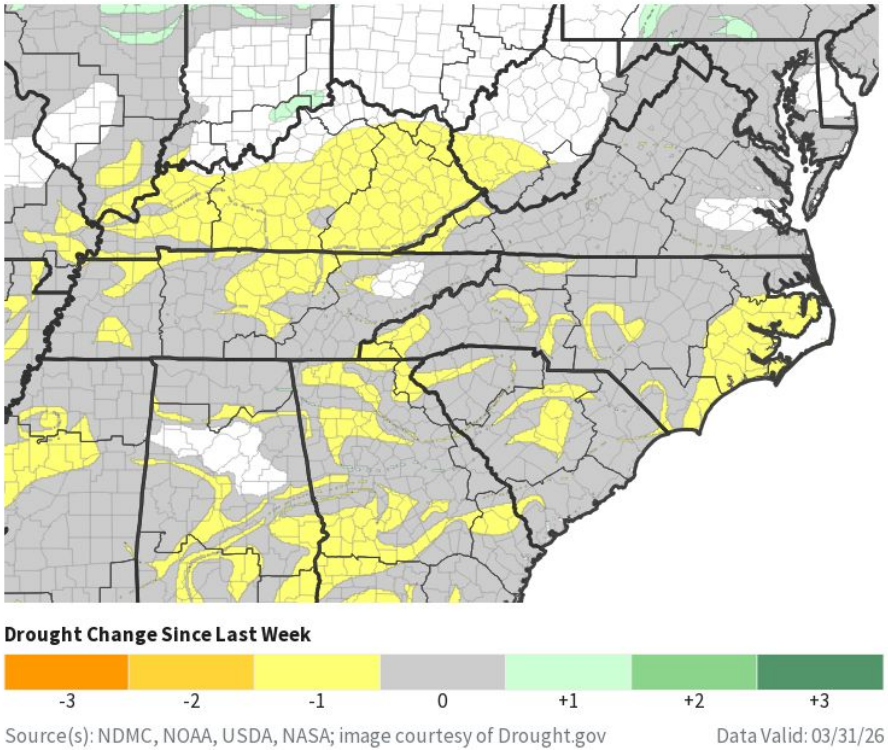
Four Week Drought Monitor Class Change

(image not shown)

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

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

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map



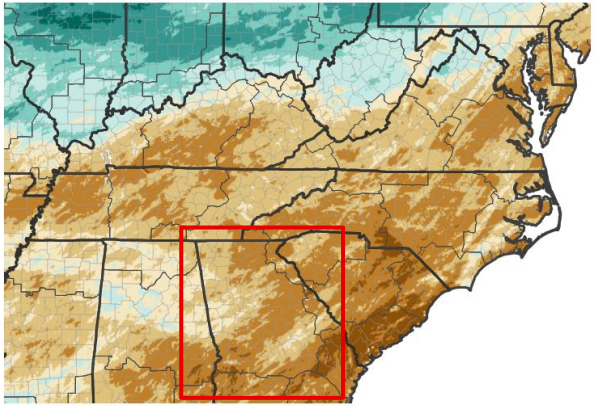
Precipitation - Past 30 Days

National Water Prediction Service link to the 30-day precipitation map for North and Central Georgia

Through Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 8AM:

	Last 30 Days		Last 60 Days	
	Rainfall (inches)	%Normal	Rainfall (inches)	%Normal
Rome (KRMG)	2.97	62%	5.96	60%
Athens (KAHN)	2.25	54%	6.26	71%
Peachtree-DeKalb (KPDK)	2.85	63%	8.60	92%
Fulton County (KFTY)	4.10	94%	7.24	80%
Atlanta (KATL)	4.03	92%	6.61	71%
Peachtree City (KFFC)	2.67	57%	5.79	60%
Macon (KMCN)	2.33	56%	5.93	69%
Columbus (KCSG)	2.13	45%	6.37	67%

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



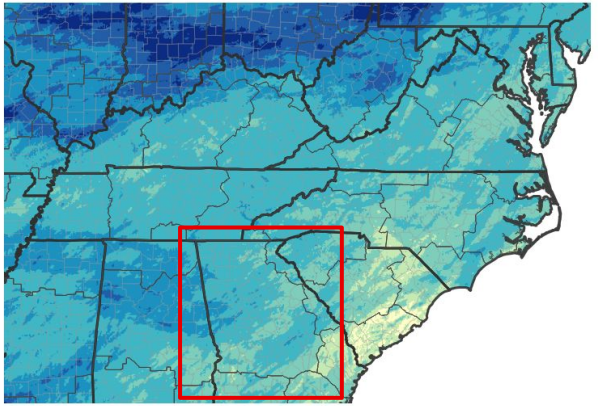
Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions

0% 25% 50% 75% 100% 100% 150% 200% 300%

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

Last Updated: 04/02/26

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (Inches)



Inches of Precipitation

0 0.01 0.5 1 2 2 4 6 8

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

Last Updated: 04/02/26

Warm temperatures have kicked off the spring green up statewide, stressing the hydrologic conditions under a new demand for water. In the last 30-days below normal rainfall has been the norm, with rainfall amounts rainfall ranging from 0.75 inches (20 percent of normal) over far east central Georgia, to 4 inches (90 percent of normal) over portions of western Georgia.

March in Georgia is traditionally one of the wettest months with a more active weather pattern providing steady waves of rainfall. Since the start of the drought in the fall, Atlanta, Macon and Columbus have now had their driest September through March periods in 100 years or more.

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

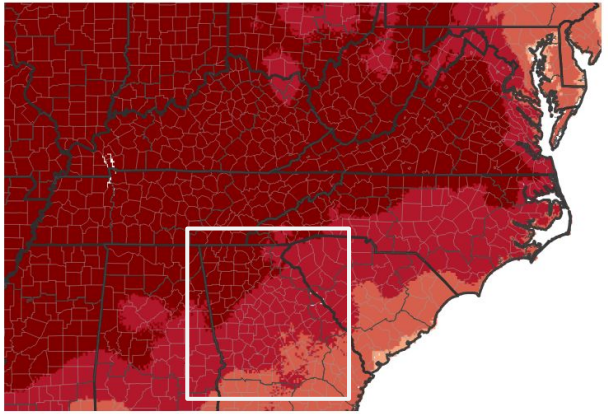
Temperatures - Past 30-, 7-Days

*Through March 29, 2026.**

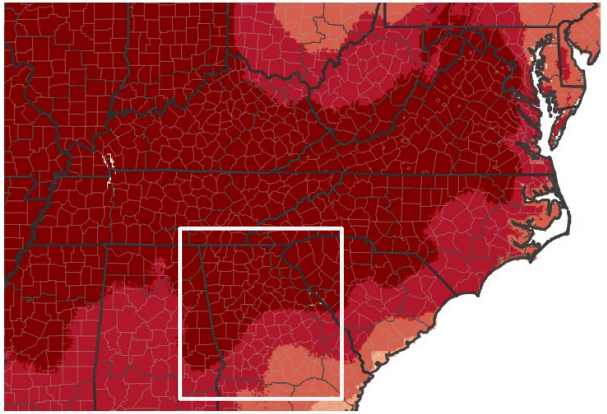
	Last 30 Days (ending Mar 29)	
	Average High (Departure)	Average Low (Departure)
Rome (KRMG)	74.5° (+8.5°)	46.9° (+5.6°)
Athens (KAHN)	72.8° (+6.3°)	47.8° (+4.9°)
Peachtree-DeKalb (KPDK)	74.8° (+9.6°)	48.7° (+5.7°)
Fulton County (KFTY)	74.1° (+7.6°)	46.6° (+3.7°)
Atlanta (KATL)	73.9° (+8.3°)	51.0° (+5.7°)
Peachtree City (KFFC)	73.9° (+6.8°)	45.8° (+4.5°)
Macon (KMCN)	75.4° (+5.4°)	46.8° (+2.5°)
Columbus (KCSG)	76.2° (+6.1°)	50.0° (+3.0°)

**Note, the table values are for the period February 27-March 29, 2026, matching the latency for the 30-day and 7-day max temperature anomaly images (right).*

30-Day Temperature Anomaly



7-Day Temperature Anomaly



Over the 30 day period ending March 29, average high temperatures (middle image) were well above normal (+4 to +10 degrees) over north and central Georgia. The table (left) also includes the average low temperature trends for the 30 day period, which were nearly as extreme (+3.0 or more degrees).

The extremely anomalous warmth is just as evident for the 7 days ending March 29 (right image), with the entire Southeast U.S. blanketed with average high temperature anomalies of 4 or more degrees.

Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflow continues to suffer under dry and warm conditions. As warming temperatures encourage the green up, higher demand on water sources and increased evapotranspiration will further stress water supplies and soil moisture. See slide 7 for additional details.

Agricultural Impacts

- Water sources (e.g., holding ponds) remain low or mostly dry in many areas. Reports continue to indicate poor pasture conditions, an inability to plant forage crops, extreme impact to harvests or planting, animal stress, etc.
- Planting season officially begins in April, but concerns exist given the low water levels for irrigation. The Crop Progress & Condition report will begin updating again April 4, 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. Red Flag Warnings have also been issued in the last 14 days to address heightened wildfire concern.
- 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.

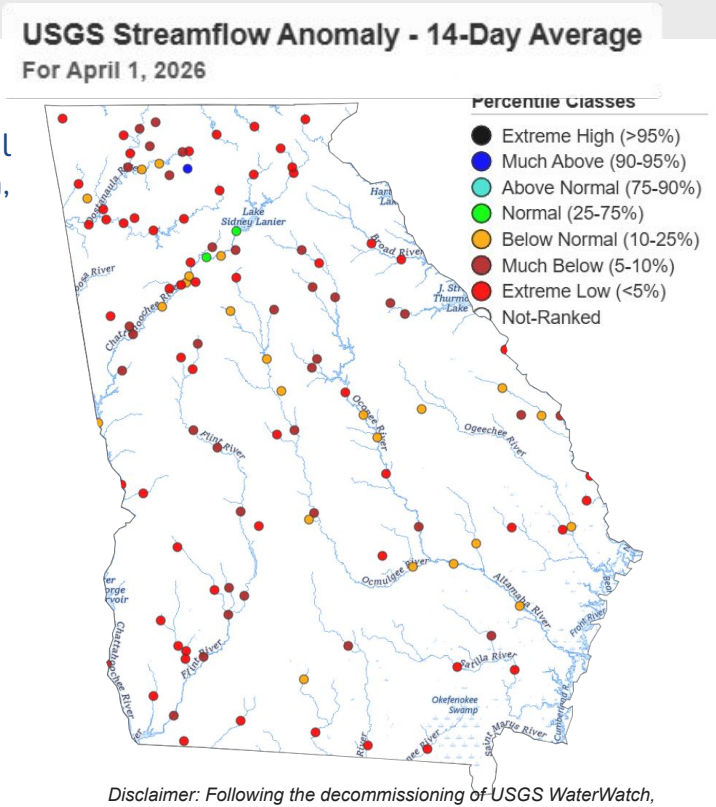
Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

See the USGS 120-day streamflow map here.

Main Takeaways

- In the last 14-days, streamflow has continued to range from Below Normal to Extremely Low at most locations, particularly the Chattahoochee, Coosa, Tennessee, Oconee, Ocmulgee and Flint River basins.
- Lake and Reservoir levels continue to show the impacts of a lacking recharge period and the lingering dry conditions from since last fall. The available elevation curves for USACE projects in the NWS Peachtree City area show:

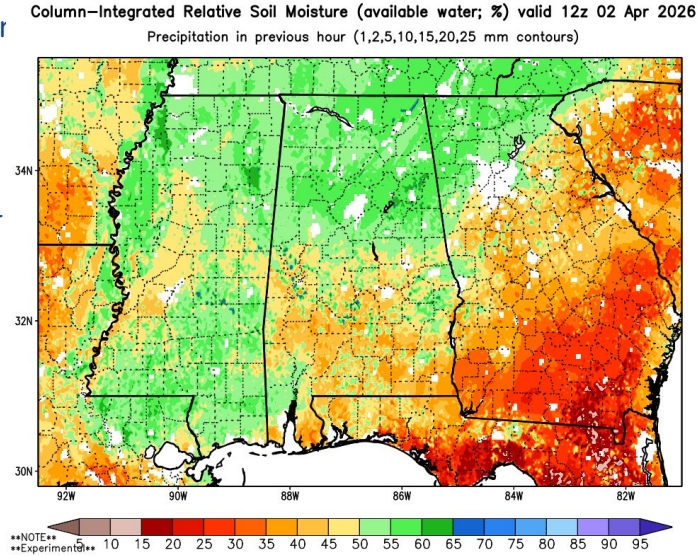
	USACE Lakes	
	Current Action Zone	Forecast Action Zone
Carters	Top of Conservation	Zone 2
Lanier	Zone 3	Zone 3
Allatoona	Top of Conservation	Zone 3
West Point	Top of Conservation	Zone 1



Disclaimer: Following the decommissioning of USGS WaterWatch, historical maps are no longer available. The above image were generated using USGS streamflow data, and the streamflow anomaly data presented here are provisional.

Agricultural Impacts

- Soil moistures remain dry over much of central and south Georgia (image right).
- Far north Georgia has the highest 0-200 cm relative soil moisture in the state, despite increased drying in the last two weeks (image far right).
- Recent warm temperatures have kicked off the spring green-up period.
- Planting season typically starts in April, but increased rainfall will be needed to balance the increasing water demand into the growing season.



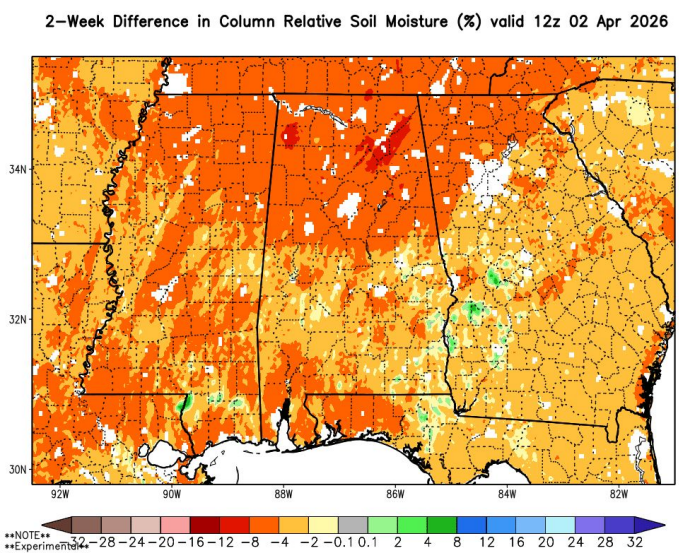
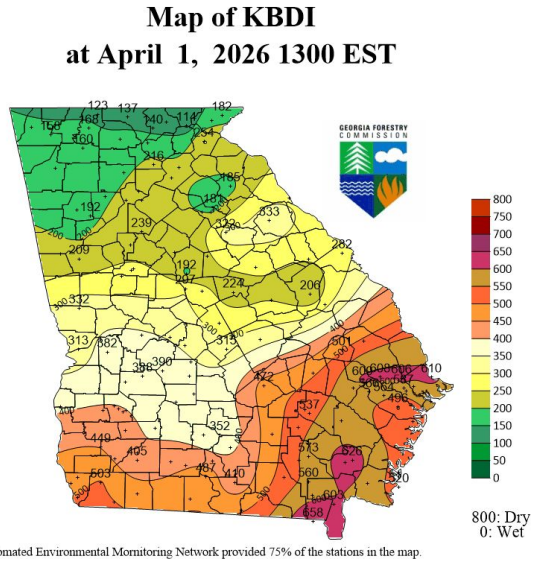


Image Captions:
Left: 0-200cm Relative Soil Moisture from NASA SPoRT valid April 2, 2026.
Right: 0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture 2-week Change from NASA SPoRT valid April 2, 2026.

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 generally 200-400 in most locations, except over north Georgia where values are generally 150-200.
- At this time, above normal wildland fire potential is expected for Georgia for April, 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 **Moderate Risk (level 3 of 3)** for Georgia this weekend and into next week.



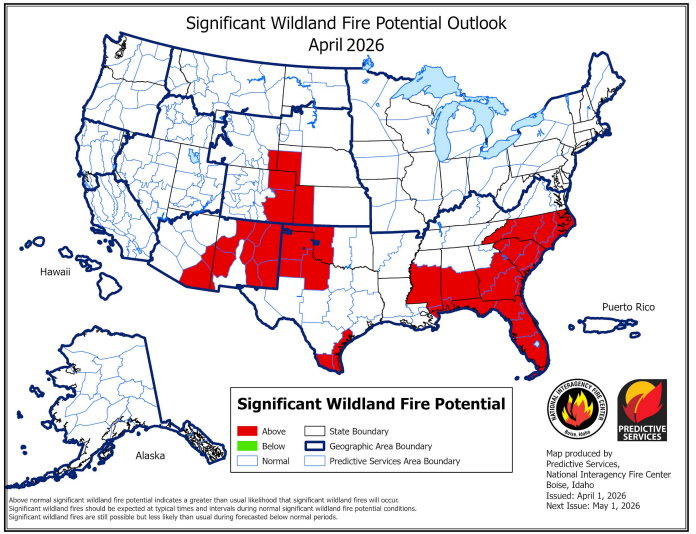
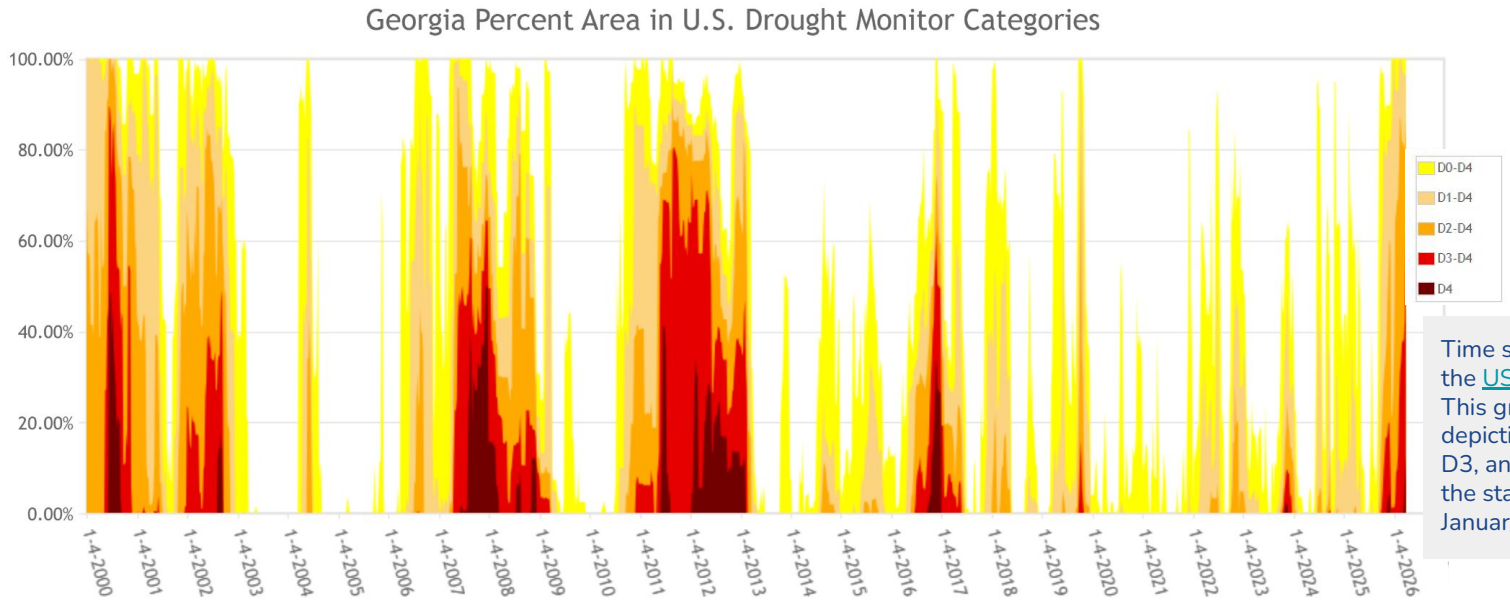


Image Captions:
Above: Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook for April 2026.
Left: Keetch Byram Drought Index for April 1, 2026.

Drought: Historical Context

Link to Drought Monitor Time Series



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.

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

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

Maximum drought category so far:
D4 (Exceptional)
March 31, 2026 (13.6%)

Current D2-D4 coverage in Georgia:
86.8% of GA
TODAY

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

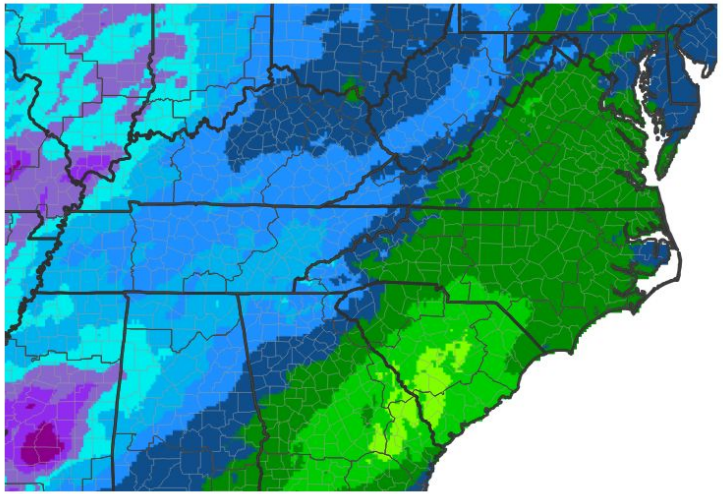
Last time there was at least 87% of GA in D2-D4:
Oct 4, 2011
87.6% of GA

Precipitation Outlook

The 7-day outlook (through April 9):

- The forecast includes 0.5 to 1.5 inches of rain over north Georgia.
- South of line from Carrollton to Atlanta to Athens, rainfall amounts will be under 0.5 inches.
- The 8-14 day outlook (April 8-14) shows lower than normal precipitation chances.
- In general it takes three consecutive months of above normal rainfall to end a drought.

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for April 2, 2026–April 9, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation

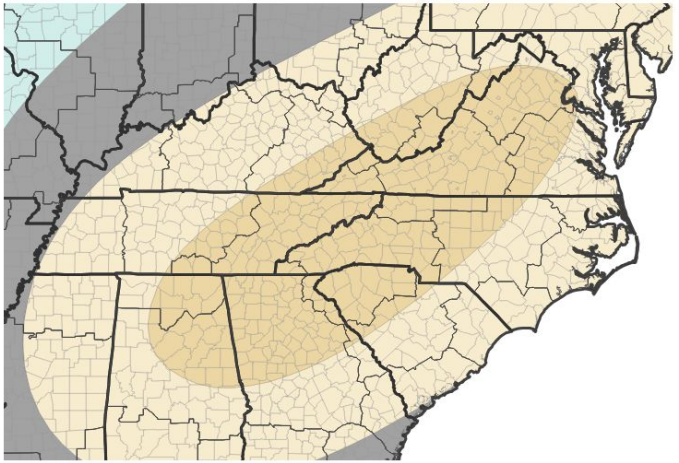
0 0.01 0.1 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 1.25 1.5 1.75

1.75 2 2.5 3 4 5 7 10 15 20

Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 04/02/26

8–14 Day Precipitation Outlook for April 8, 2026–April 14, 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%

Near-Normal Conditions

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

Last Updated: 03/31/26

Long-Range Outlooks

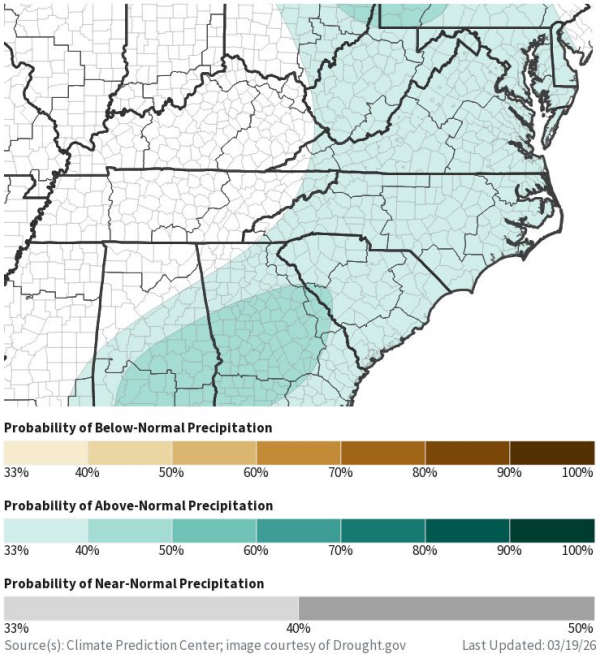
The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

For April through June:

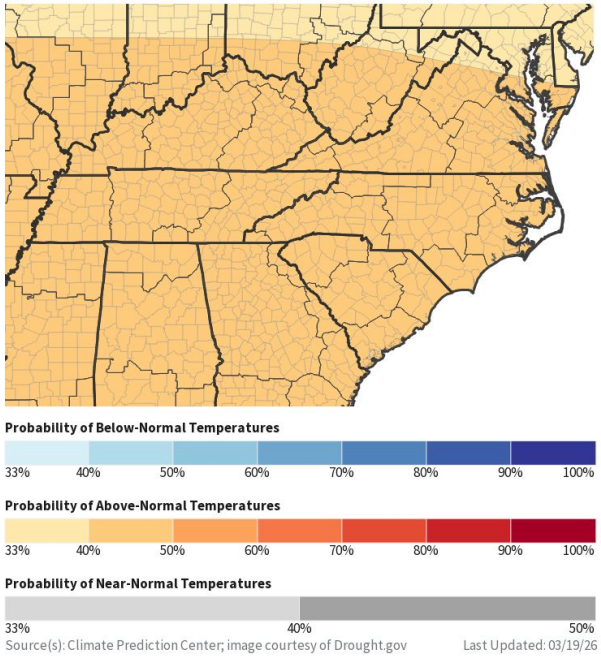
- Above normal chances of precipitation are expected across much of the state (image right).
- Above normal temperatures are expected over Georgia (far right).

	April		May		June	
Average	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain
Rome	61.4°	4.46"	69.5°	3.78"	76.9°	3.80"
Athens Area	62.3°	3.52"	70.5°	3.28"	77.7°	4.88"
Atlanta Area	63.2°	3.81"	71.2°	3.56"	77.9°	4.54"
Peachtree City	62.4°	3.77"	70.4°	3.12"	77.5°	4.45"
Macon Area	64.5°	3.62"	72.9°	2.65"	79.5°	4.44"
Columbus Area	65.8°	4.03"	74.1°	3.24"	80.4°	4.03"

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for April 1, 2026–June 30, 2026



Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for April 1, 2026–June 30, 2026

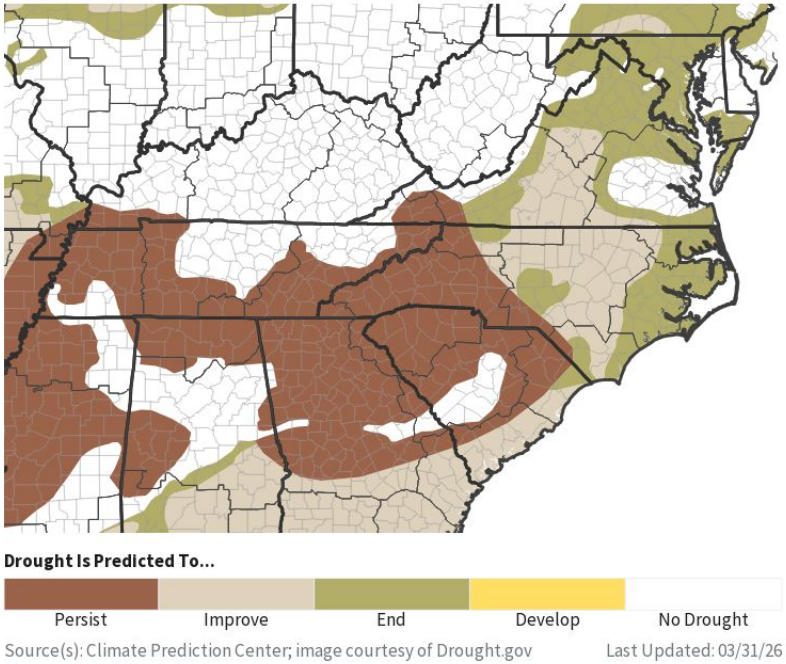


Drought Outlook

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

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

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for March 31, 2026–June 30, 2026



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