



March 2014 Climate Summary for SOUTHEAST TEXAS WFO Houston/ Galveston



March 2014 continued the drier and cooler than normal trend that began back in the autumn of 2013. Even though the month ended on the dry side, enough rainfall coupled with the cooler temperatures to lower drought conditions across Southeast Texas. The cooling trend has now extended to six months for both College Station and Houston, with the trend of five months for both Galveston and Houston Hobby Airport. This is the first time since 1983 that the City of Houston has registered six or more months in a row of below normal temperatures (Figure 1).

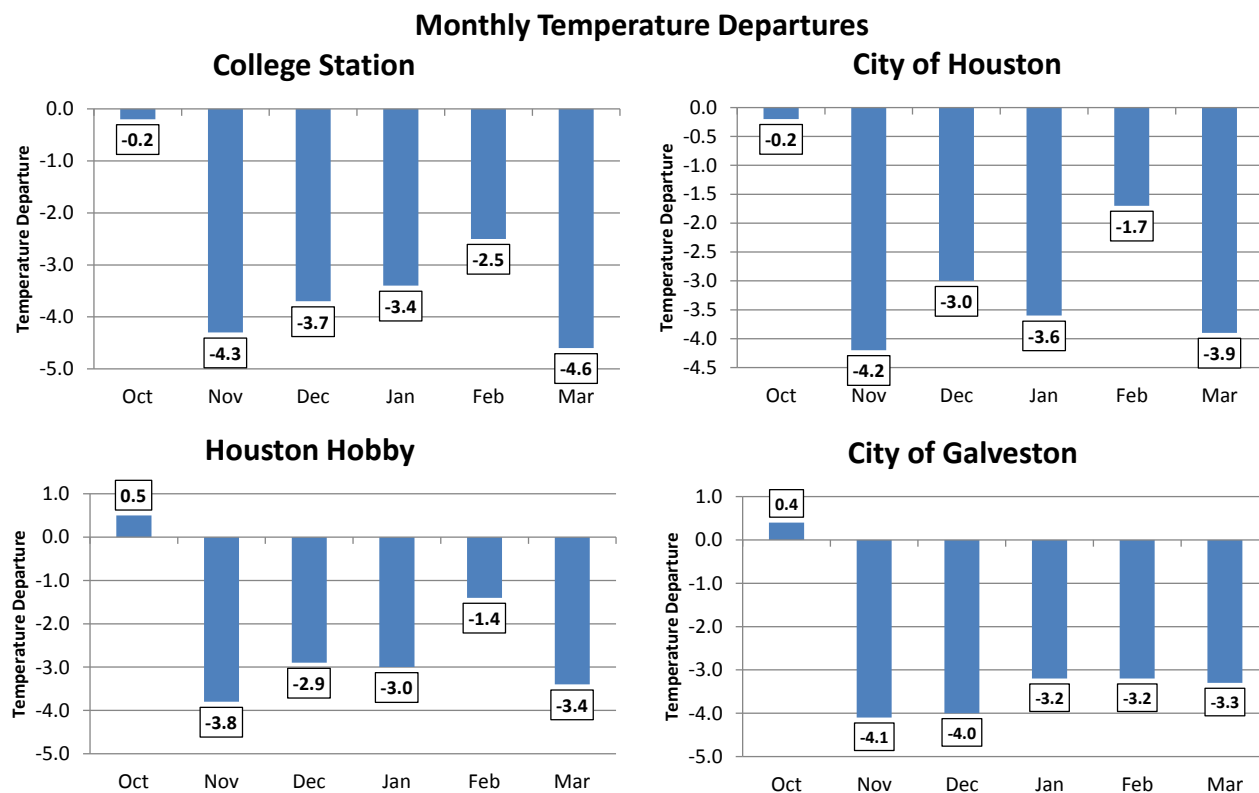


Figure 1: Monthly temperature departures for October 2013 through March 2014

Looking at some of the climate statistics, the warmest days of the month were the 1st, 22nd and 28th where the daily average temperature reached into the 70 to 75 degree range. The coldest two days of the month were the 3rd and 4th when the daily average temperature remained in either the 20s or 30s. The coldest minimum temperature for the month was 22 degrees on the 3rd in College Station. The warmest high temperature was 85 degrees on the 28th at the City of Houston. The highest rainfall total for the month was 1.18 inches which occurred on the 4th in Sugar Land.

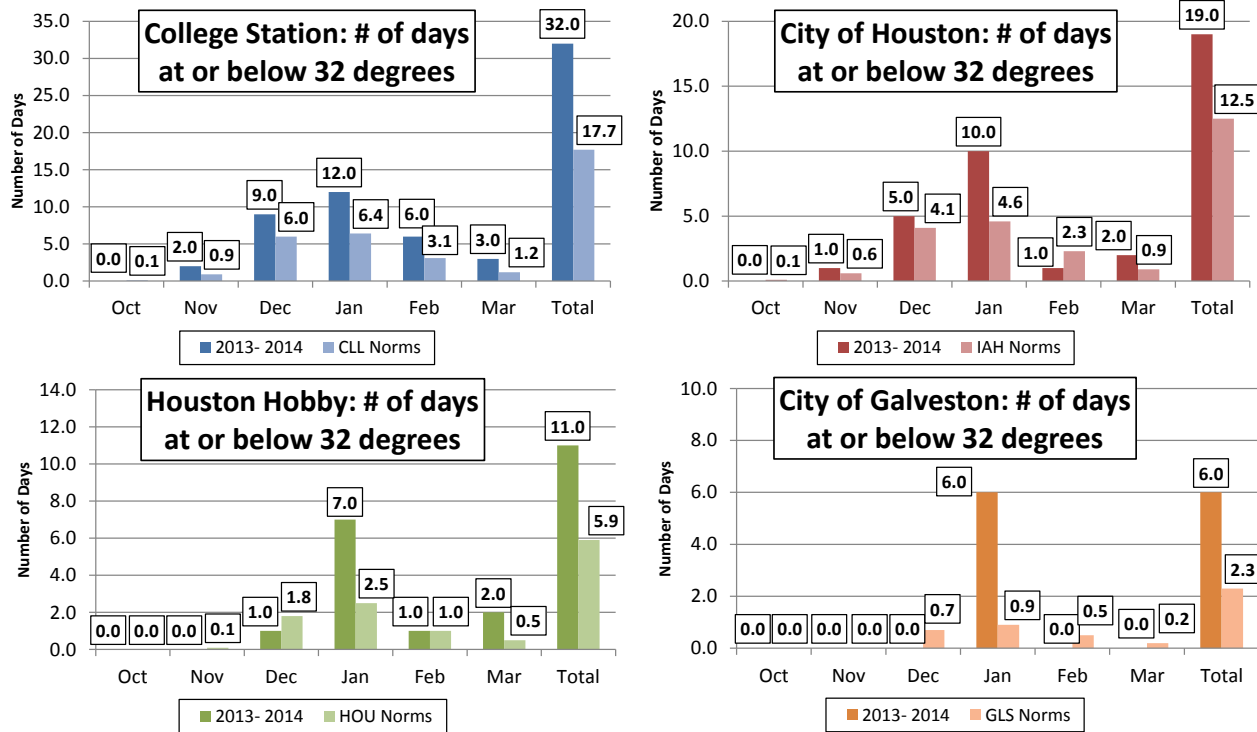
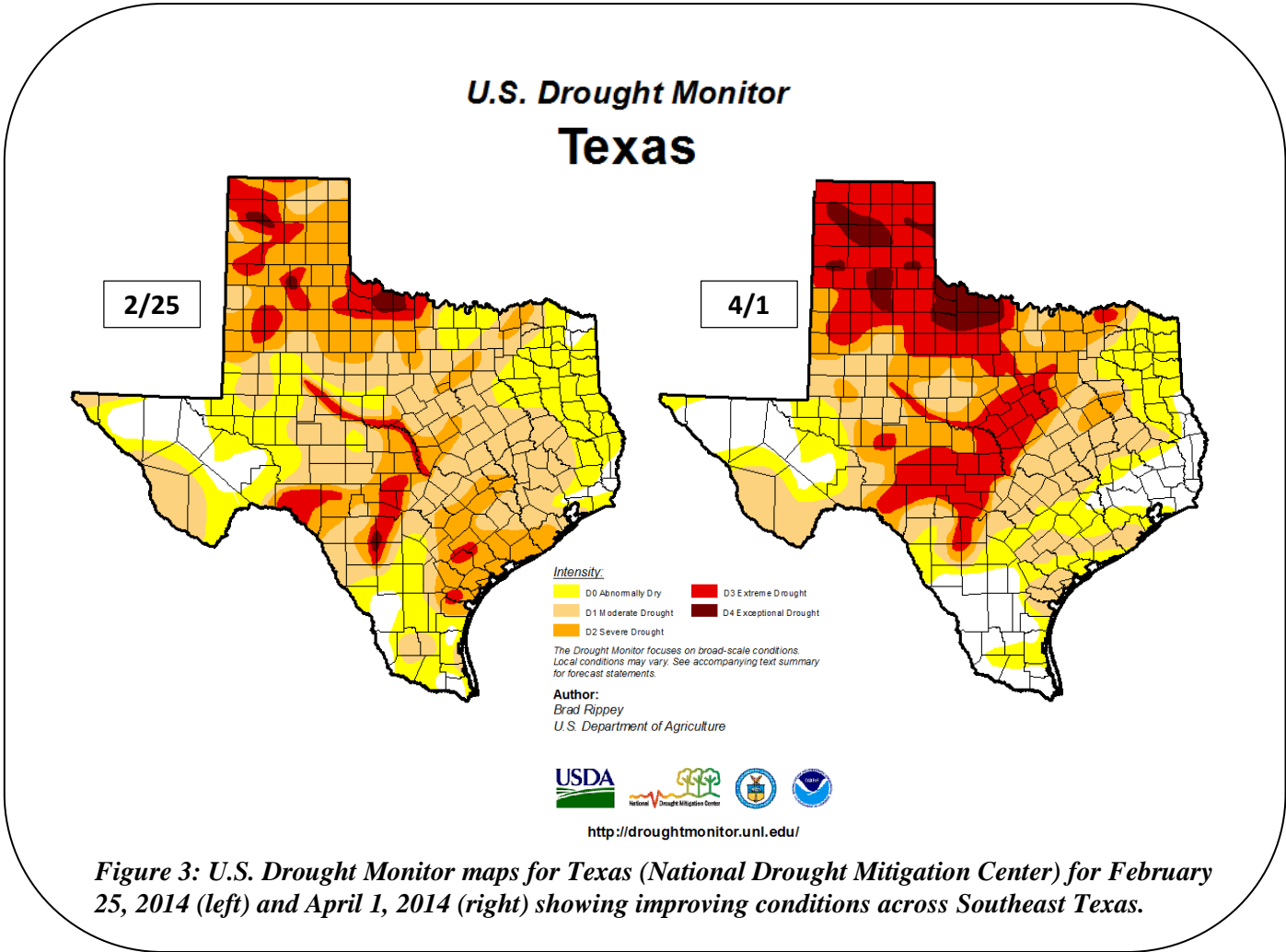


Figure 2: Number of days with low temperatures at or below 32 degrees since October 2013. The darker colors are for this past six month period with the lighter colors for the 1981 to 2010 normals.

During the six month period from October 2013 through March 2014, the number of days Southeast Texas has seen low temperatures at or below 32 degrees has been above normal. On average (1981-2010), one can expect this to occur two to three times at Galveston, around six times at Houston Hobby, 12 to 13 times in the city of Houston, and 17 to 18 times at College Station. During this six month period, these freezing temperatures were experienced at Galveston six times, at Houston Hobby 11 times, in the city of Houston 19 times, and at College Station 32 times (Figure 2).

A relatively dry February added to the much drier than normal period Southeast Texas experienced since mid-November of 2013. As a result, the U.S. Drought Monitor had drought conditions area wide, ranging from abnormally dry conditions off to the east and northeast of the Houston area to moderate to severe drought conditions from the Matagorda Bay area to the College Station area (Figure 3, left). During March, enough rain combined with cooler than normal temperatures to help ease the drought conditions area wide, with only small portions of the area from around Crockett to around Caldwell and from the Angleton area to the Edna area in moderate drought conditions (Figure 3, right).



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