



MIAMI-SOUTH FLORIDA

National Weather Service
Forecast Office

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NWS South Florida 2020-2021 Winter/Dry Season Outlook







Outlook: Warmer and Drier Than Normal Winter and Dry Season

October 28th, 2020: The re-emergence of La Niña this dry season is expected to play a role in South Florida's weather, with an increased likelihood of warmer and drier than normal conditions for the period from November to April which encompasses most of the South Florida dry season.



South Florida 2020-2021 Dry Season Outlook



Element	Nov-Apr Outlook (most likely outcome)	Normal Values/Frequency
Temperature 	Above Normal (Probable Range 1-3F)	64-66F Interior/W 67-69F East
Precipitation 	Below Normal (Probable Range 60-75% of normal)	12-15" Interior/W 15-21" East 32-41 days with rainfall
Storminess/Severe Weather  	Below Normal (Probable Range 8-12 individual events)	~15 individual events per season (wind/hail/tornado/flood)
Freeze 	Near Normal	1-2 events per season
Drought/Wildfire 	Above Normal	Moderate drought development late in season

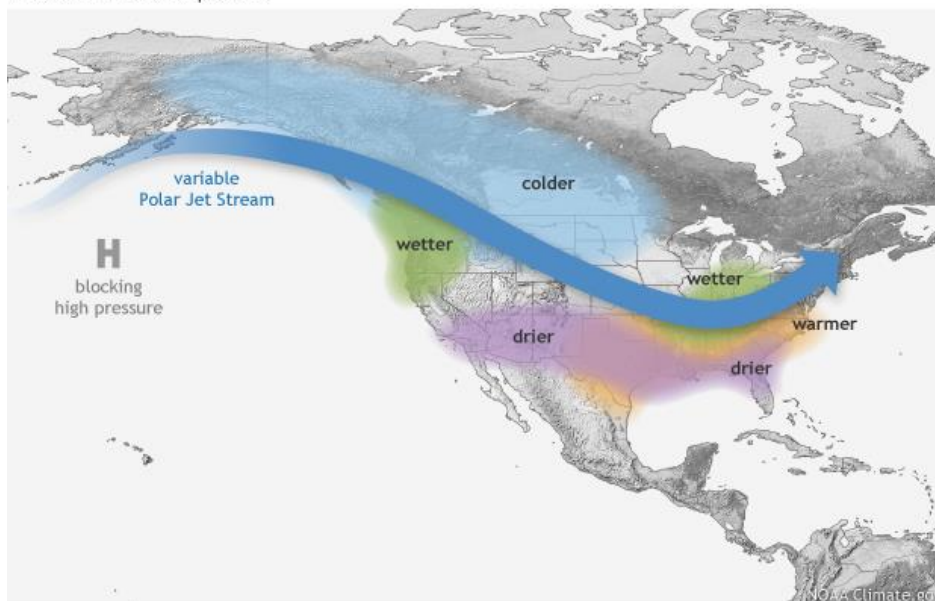
Precipitation Outlook: confidence in drier than normal conditions and associated drought development is **moderate to high**.

Temperature Outlook: there is **moderate confidence** in above normal temperatures, with the January-March time frame being slightly more favored. Confidence is also moderate in one to two freeze events this winter, mainly over the interior.

Dry Season Factors

[La Niña conditions are likely to persist](#) through the dry season. La Niña is the cold phase of the [ENSO \(El Niño/Southern Oscillation\)](#). La Niña winters are typically characterized by a jet stream which is displaced farther north over North America, leading to most winter and spring low pressure storm tracks staying north of Florida. This normally causes cold fronts moving into Florida to have less moisture, thereby leading to drier than normal conditions as well as decreased “storminess” (tornado, severe thunderstorm and flood events). The jet stream being farther north can also limit the number of cold air outbreaks into Florida, although a few strong outbreaks of Arctic origin can still occur with freezing temperatures primarily over interior sections of the peninsula. The impact of freezing temperatures and associated impacts can be magnified due to lower sensitivity to colder temperatures during an otherwise warm winter.

Wintertime La Niña pattern



Other factors include: intra-seasonal cycles such as the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO), Arctic Oscillation (AO), Pacific/North American Pattern (PNA), and Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO). The NAO and AO, in particular, often play a significant role in the week-to-week weather patterns. Strongly negative (positive) phases of the AO and NAO often lead to colder (warmer) than normal weather across the eastern half of the United States, including Florida. These cycles are not reliably predictable beyond 1-2 weeks.

Important Notes: these outlooks are associated with a large degree of uncertainty with regards to specifics. These are “average” conditions over the course of an entire season, and not representative of what is expected every day or week. Week-to-week or even month-to-month variation from the normal can be expected. Therefore, seasonal outlooks are most useful for **general planning** and overall awareness.

Potential Impacts

Drought/Wildfires: the main concern of a drier and warmer than normal winter and dry season is the increased likelihood of developing droughts. Each of the last five La Niña winters have led to moderate to severe drought by spring over at least parts of South Florida. Droughts in South Florida typically lead to an increased threat of wildfires. Everyone is encouraged to practice measures to prevent wildfires and heed advice from local officials when wildfires develop, as well as water conservations tips from water managers.

Rip Currents are also a present threat, particularly during the holiday season and during March and April which is when rip current-related fatalities and injuries increase in Florida. Heed warning flags posted by ocean rescue personnel and always swim at beaches with lifeguards.

A warmer and drier than normal winter and dry season decreases the likelihood and frequency of severe weather events such as tornadoes, flooding, strong winds and hail, but does not totally eliminate them. During the La Niña of 2016-2017, 3 tornadoes were observed in SE Florida (January and March). Also, as noted previously, a few strong cold snaps and freezes typically occur during La Niña winters even though the average temperatures over an extended period may be warmer than normal.

Stay tuned to local media, NOAA Weather Radio and the National Weather Service South Florida website at [weather.gov/southflorida](https://www.weather.gov/southflorida) for the latest weather information, including outlooks and forecasts of significant storm events. You can also visit our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for the latest weather information.