

MIAMI-SOUTH FLORIDA

National Weather Service Forecast Office

<http://www.weather.gov/miami>

South Florida 2025-2026 Winter/Dry Season Outlook

Outlook: **Warmer and Drier Than Normal**

December 3rd, 2025: The La Niña episode lasting through this winter is expected to help set the stage and favor warmer and drier than normal conditions this dry season. Below is a table with the outlook broken down by element, followed by a quick summary.

Element	Dec-Apr Outlook (most likely outcome)	Normal/Average Dry Season Conditions
Temperature	Above Normal (probable range (+1-3F))	Winter 64-67F Interior/W 68-70F East
Precipitation	Below Normal (probable range 10-30% below normal)	12-18" Interior/W 17-25" East 30-50 days with rainfall
Storminess/Severe Weather	Below Normal (Probable range 3-5 episodes)	6 episodes per season (wind/hail/tornado/flood)
Freeze	Near Normal	1-2 events per season
Drought/Wildfire	Above Normal (Ongoing drought conditions spreading/worsening. Wildfire threat increasing by January)	Moderate or worse drought conditions during the second half of the dry season

Temperature Outlook: **Moderate to High** confidence in above normal temperatures, due to agreement between past observed La Niña winter/dry season temperatures, temperature trends over the past 10 years, and latest long-range models. Confidence is **moderate** in one to two freeze events this winter, mainly over the typically favored interior areas.

Precipitation Outlook: **Moderate** confidence in below normal precipitation, due to combination of past observed La Niña winter/dry season precipitation and models. The confidence in this precipitation outlook is somewhat tempered due to the expected weak nature of the current La Niña episode, as well as relatively lower chances of drier than normal conditions in far SE Florida. **Development and spreading of drought conditions is expected, resulting in an increased wildfire threat.**

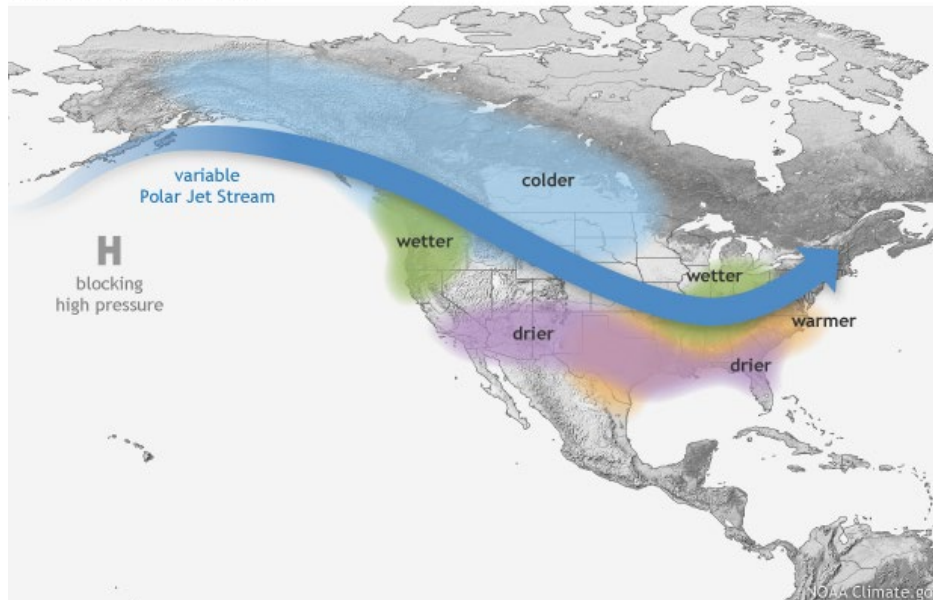
Visit the [NOAA Climate Prediction Center website](#) for more details on the seasonal outlook for the United States, including discussions and other background information.

Dry Season Factors

[La Niña conditions are expected to persist](#) through February 2026, then transition to neutral conditions for the remainder of 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 well 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 generally 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 may still occur with freezing temperatures primarily over interior sections of the peninsula. The impact of freezing temperatures and associated impacts is magnified due to higher sensitivity to sporadic cold outbreaks during an otherwise warm winter.

Wintertime La Niña pattern



This La Niña episode is expected to remain weak and of shorter duration than other historical episodes, and therefore less likely to result in conventional winter/dry season impacts in South Florida. Therefore, **other factors could come into greater play**, including: 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 about 2 weeks.

Important Notes: these outlooks are always associated with a large degree of uncertainty with regards to specifics. The conditions reflected in this outlook 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: A main concern for this winter/dry season is the increased likelihood of drought development and severity, as well as increasing wildfire threat. The development of drought conditions during the early part of the 2025-2026 dry season

means that there is more time this dry season for drought conditions to potentially spread and worsen. Each of the previous eight La Niña winters have led to moderate to severe drought over at least parts of South Florida.

The wildfire threat in South Florida is forecast to increase by January and potentially peak during the second half of the dry season. 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 as well as in March and April when rip current-related fatalities and injuries typically increase at local beaches. Heed warning flags posted by ocean rescue personnel and always swim at beaches with lifeguards.

A 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 2022-2023 a strong EF-2 tornado affected Palm Beach Gardens and North Palm Beach in April, which occurred less than 2 weeks after the historic and catastrophic Ft. Lauderdale flood event. During the 2016-2017 La Niña, 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, such as was the case in January 2022, even though the average temperatures over an extended period may be higher than normal.

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