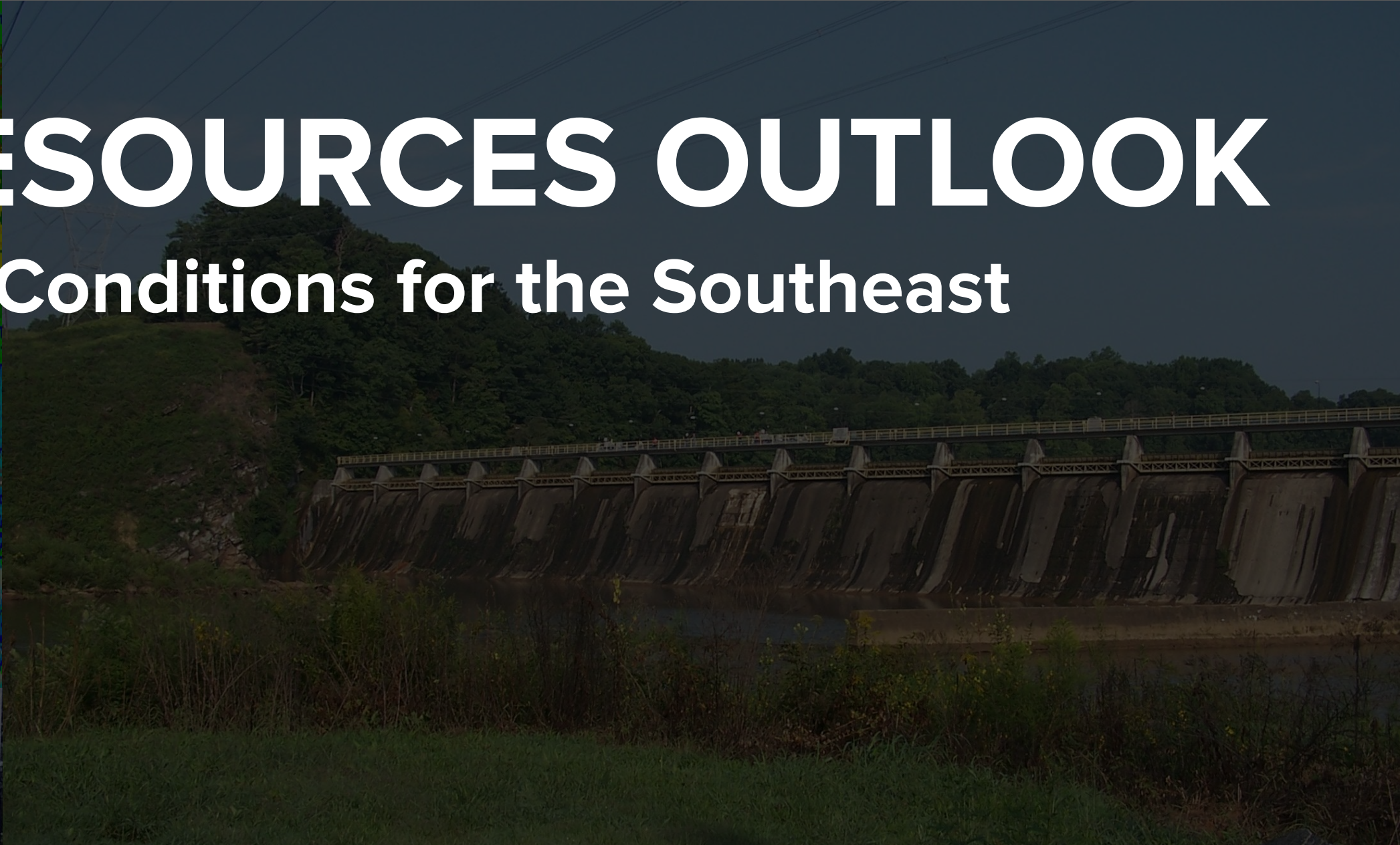
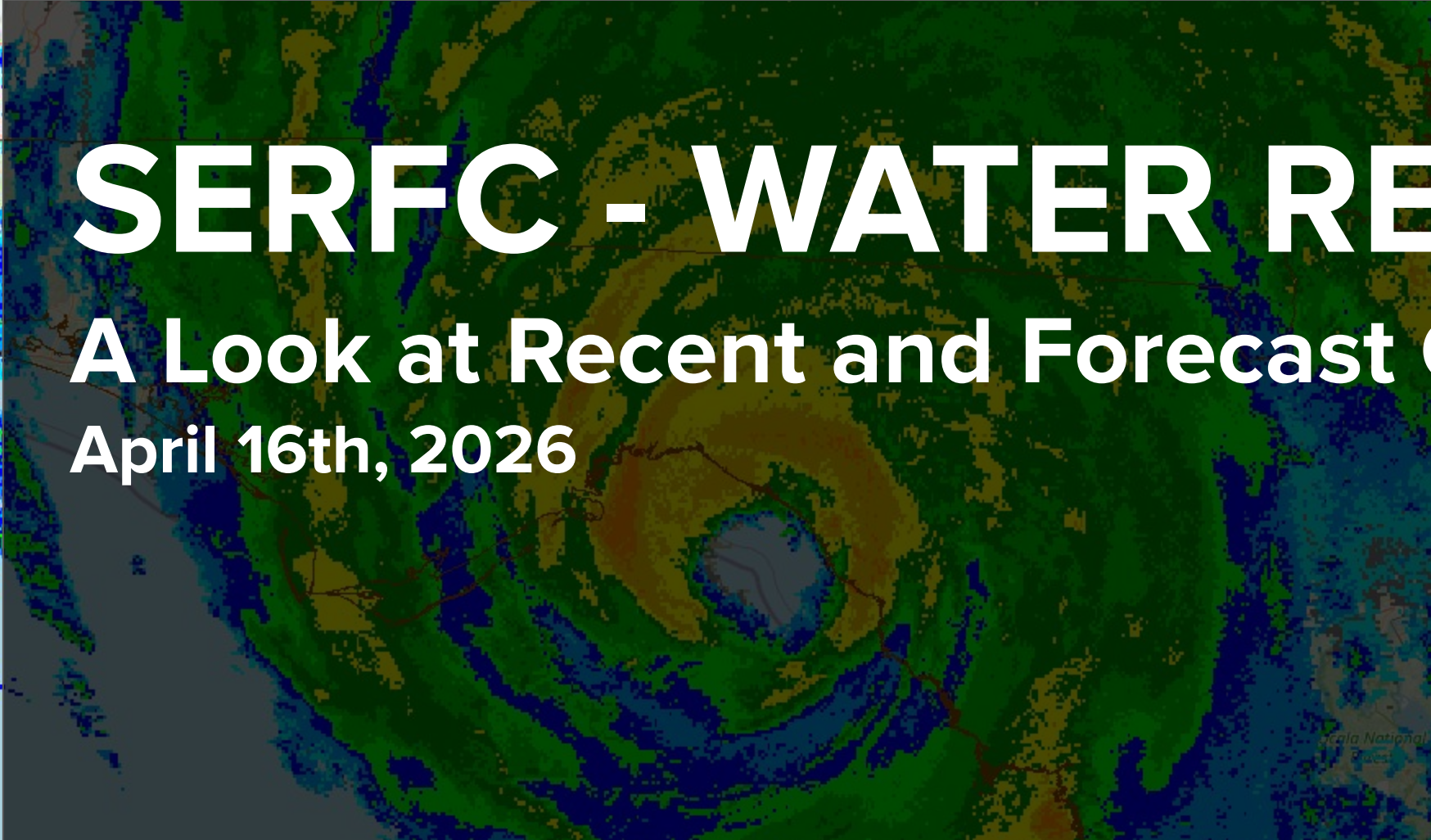


SERFC - WATER RESOURCES OUTLOOK

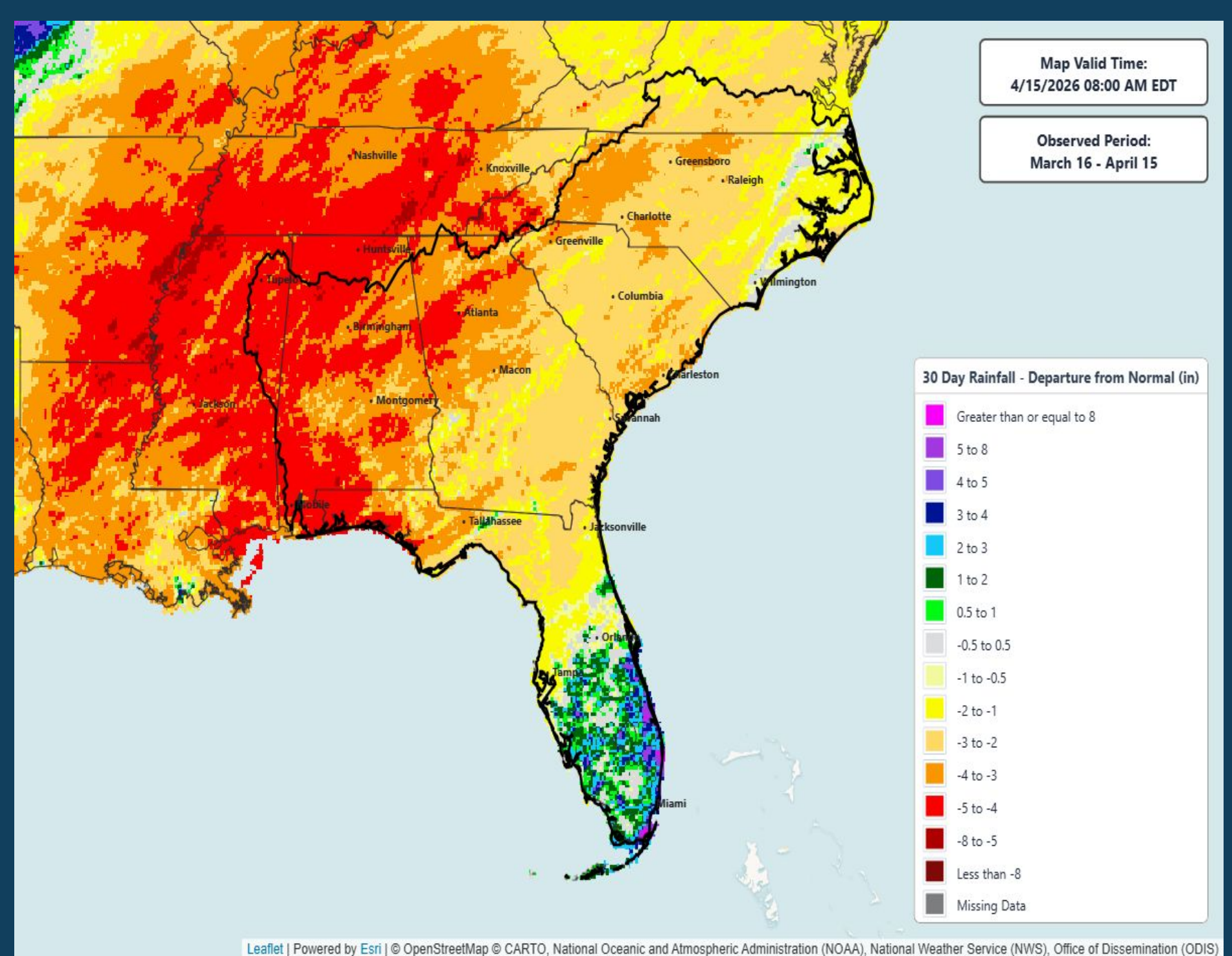
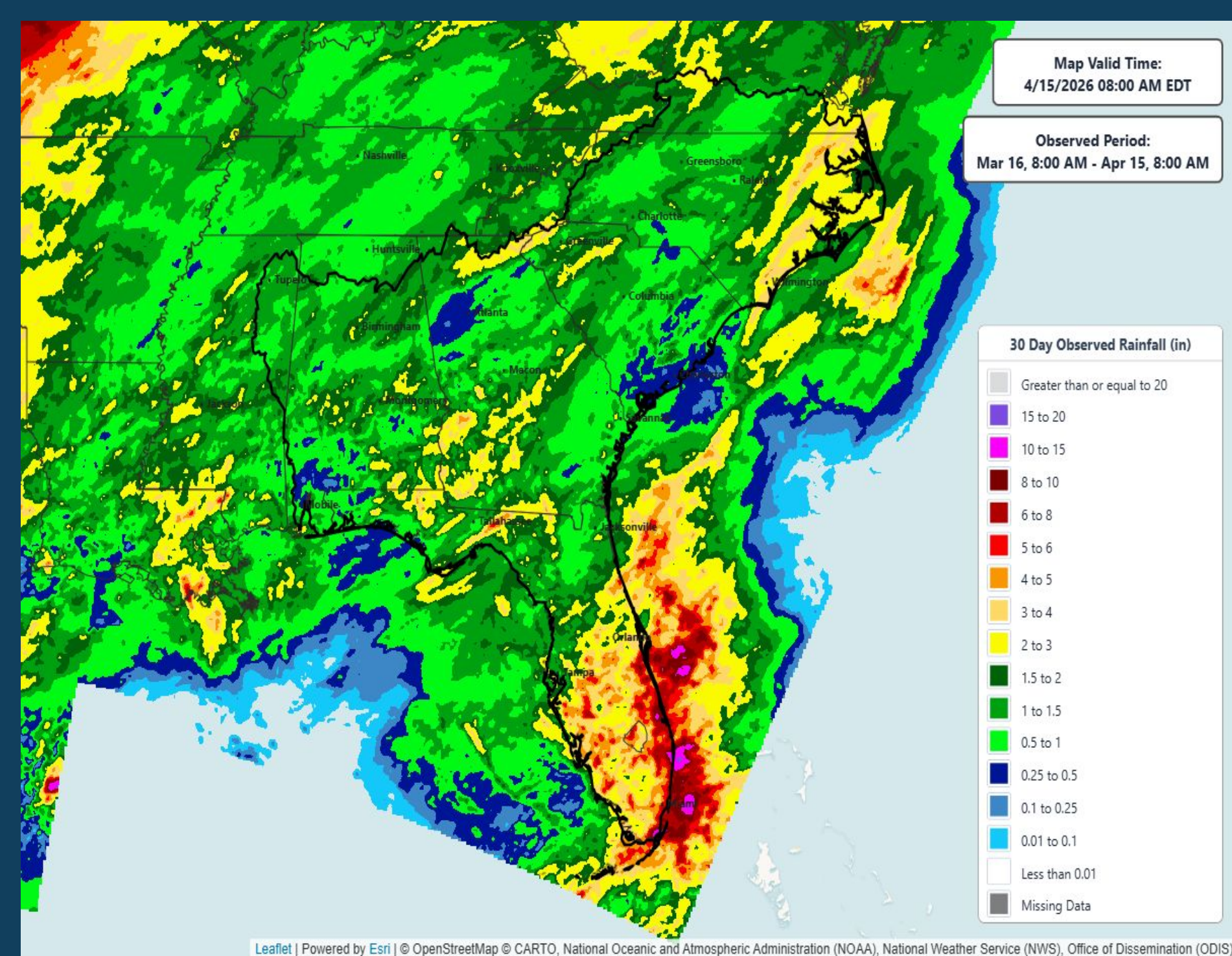
A Look at Recent and Forecast Conditions for the Southeast

April 16th, 2026



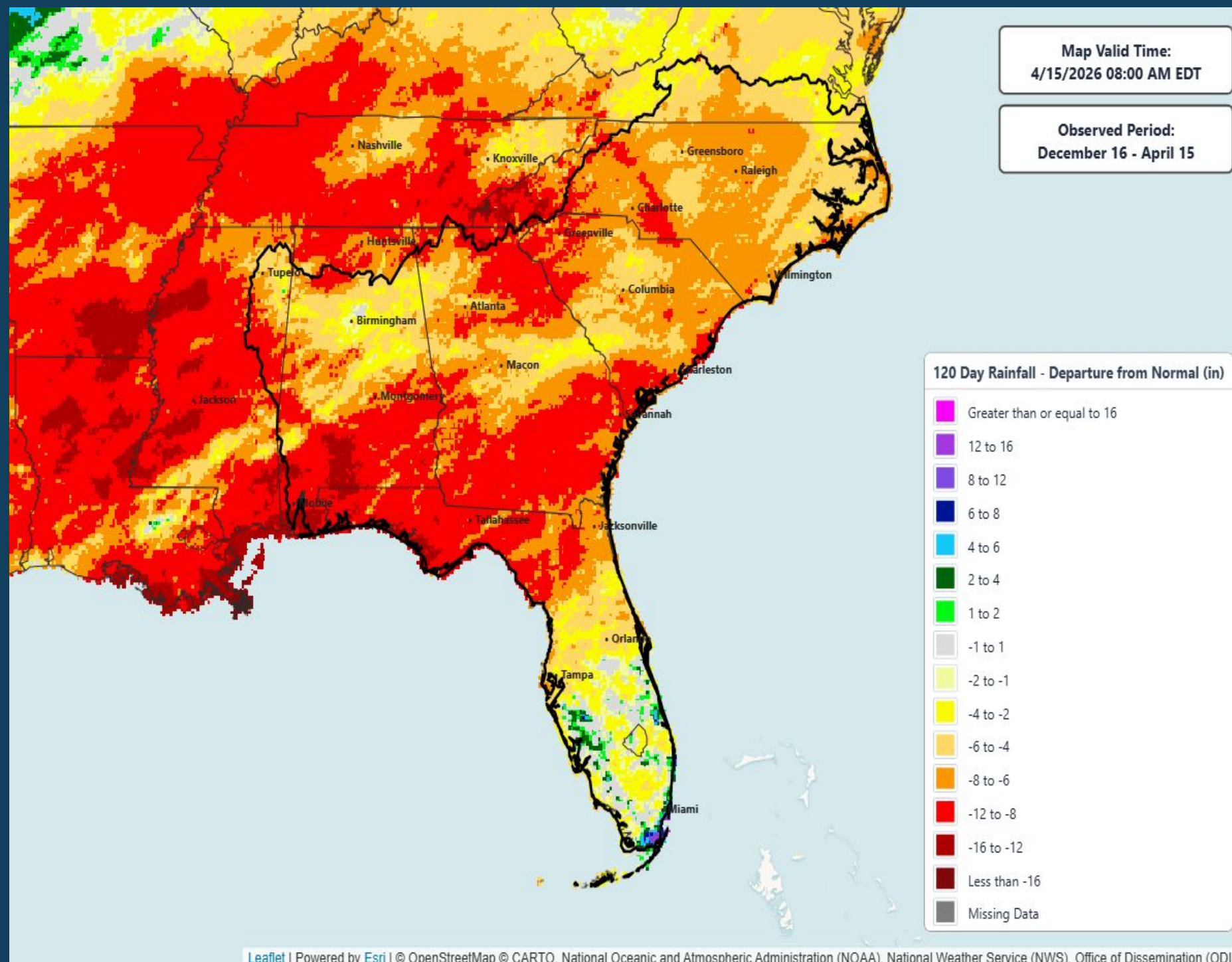
Current Conditions





Recent Rainfall

In the past 30 days, meager amounts of rain have been seen in the Southeast with amounts of roughly 1”-3” across much of the area. The vast majority of this rain fell a little over a week ago as a front moved in. This limited rainfall has led to a large deficit from normal, with most of the Southeast receiving 2”-5” less than normal. The only area to receive above normal amounts of rain over the past month was southern Florida.



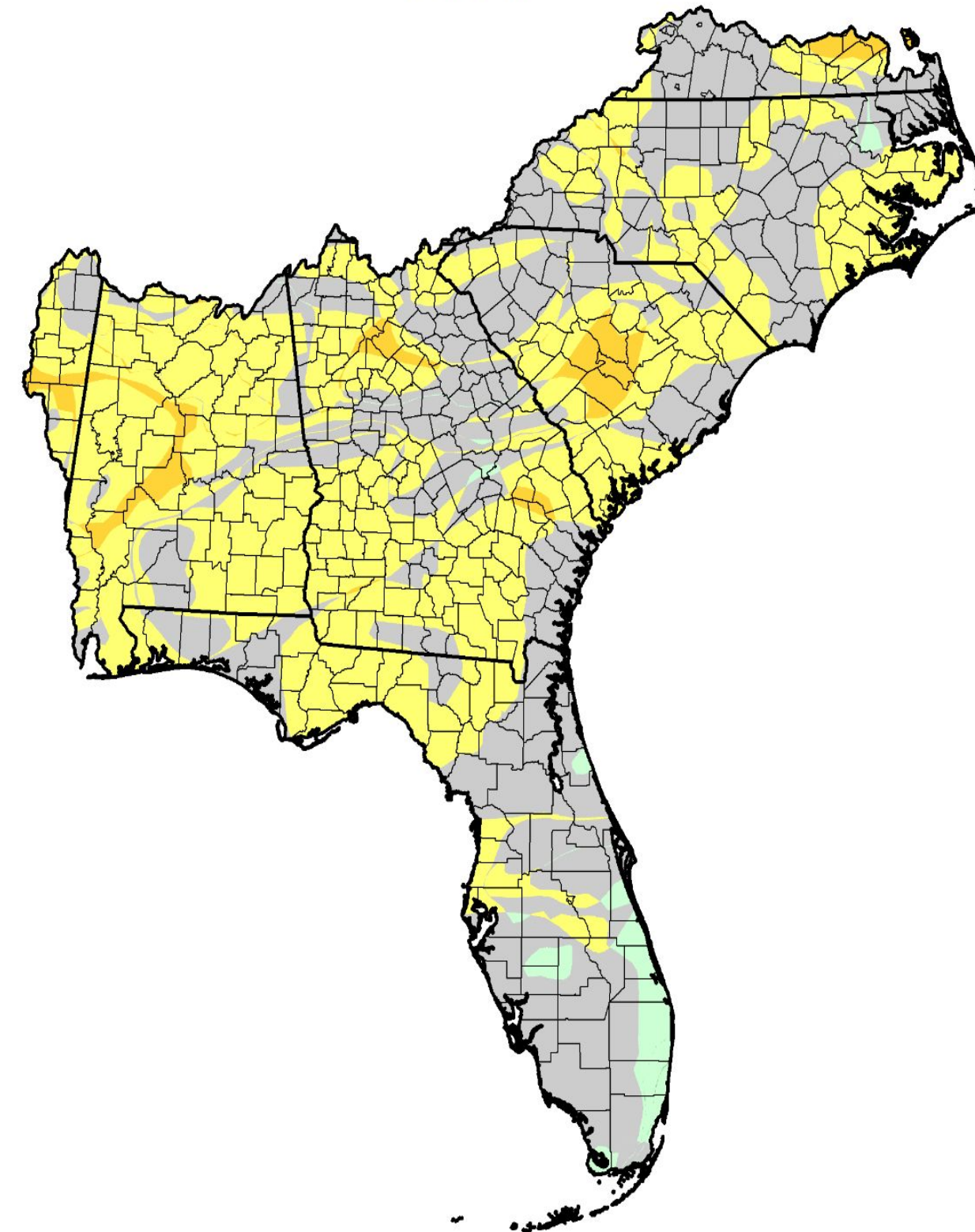
Departure from Normal Rainfall

Rainfall departure over the last 120 days shows a large deficit over the Southeast, with most of the area having a deficit of at least 6"-8". Isolated areas have a deficit greater than 16".

Drought Class Change and Conditions

In the last 4 weeks, drought conditions have worsened or remained the same across the Southeast. Some areas of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama had a 2 class degradation. Southeastern Florida received some welcome rain earlier this month, allowing for some improvement.

U.S. Drought Monitor Class Change - Southeast RFC
4 Week



April 14, 2026
compared to
March 17, 2026

droughtmonitor.unl.edu



- 5 Class Degradation
- 4 Class Degradation
- 3 Class Degradation
- 2 Class Degradation
- 1 Class Degradation
- No Change
- 1 Class Improvement
- 2 Class Improvement
- 3 Class Improvement
- 4 Class Improvement
- 5 Class Improvement

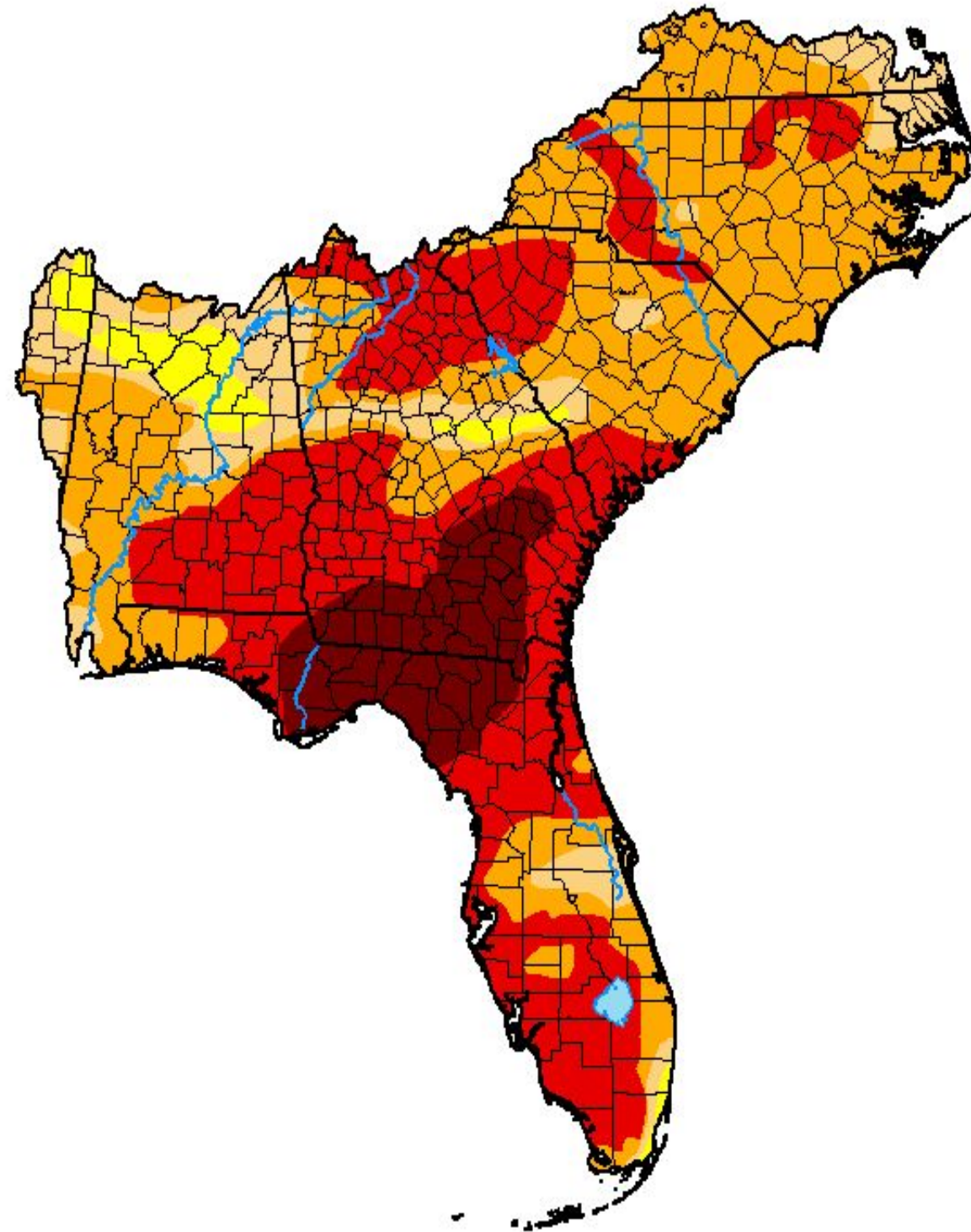
For the latest map, visit <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap.aspx>



Drought Class Change and Conditions

Dry conditions have persisted in the Southeast. D4 Exceptional Drought conditions have expanded to more parts of the Florida Panhandle and into southern Georgia; this area accounts for almost 10% of Southeast RFC's area. Furthermore, all of Southeast RFC's area is in some dry or drought status.

U.S. Drought Monitor Southeast RFC



April 14, 2026
(Released Thursday, Apr. 16, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	96.29	84.47	44.11	9.90
Last Week 04-07-2026	2.39	97.61	92.57	76.22	42.38	9.03
3 Months Ago 01-13-2026	0.00	100.00	86.13	50.93	1.64	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-06-2026	0.04	99.96	83.85	29.28	1.60	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	13.86	86.14	38.25	7.03	0.26	0.00
One Year Ago 04-15-2025	50.51	49.49	23.71	4.93	0.52	0.00

Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

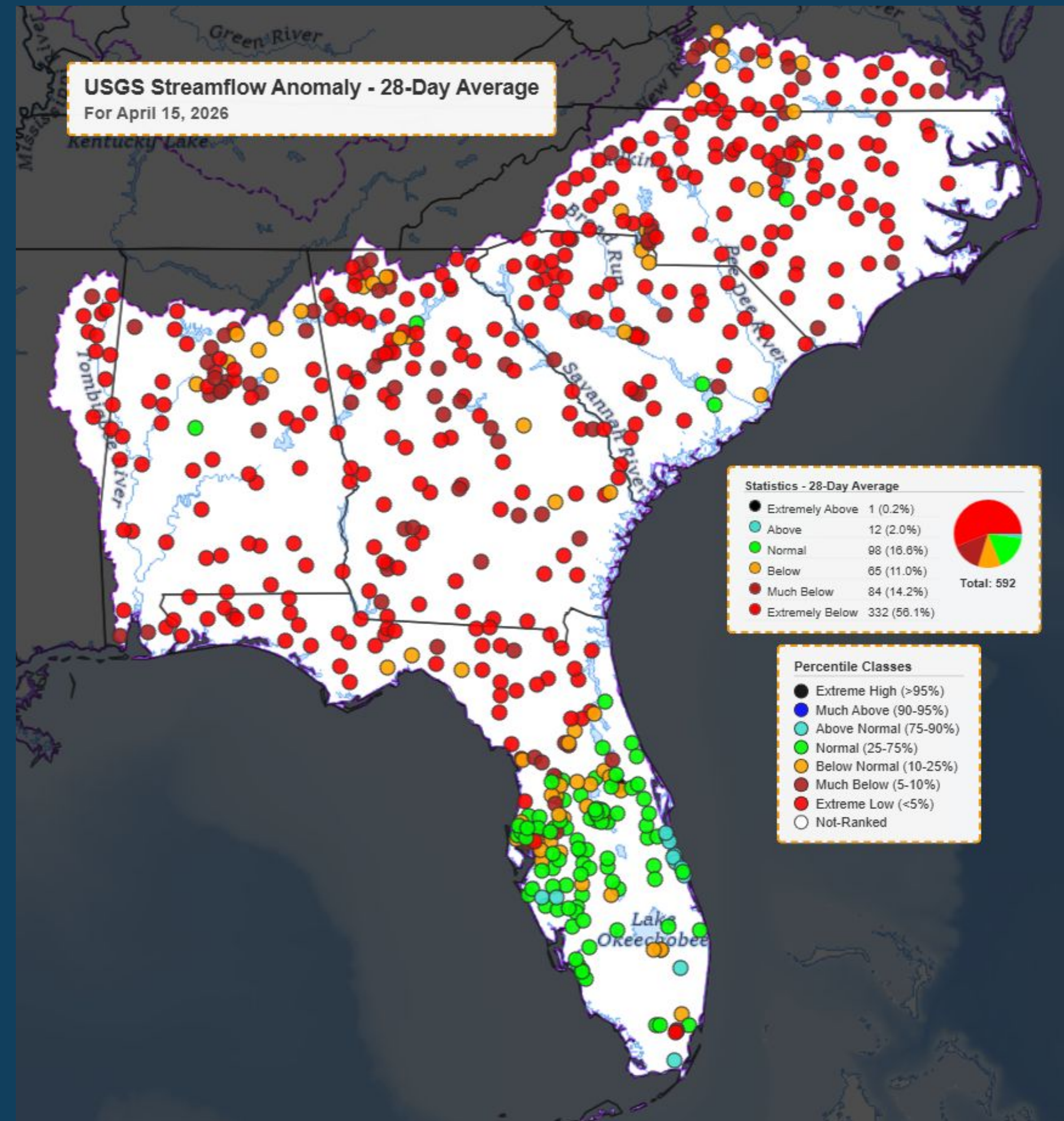
For the latest map, visit <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap.aspx>



28-Day Streamflow Compared to Historical

The current 28-day average streamflows continues to be mostly below normal (10th-25th percentile) to extremely low (<5th percentile) across the Southeast and has expanded since last month with the lack of rain. The exception to this is central and southern Florida, where streamflows continue to be normal.

Note: Following the decommissioning of USGS WaterWatch, historical maps are no longer available. This image was generated using USGS streamflow data, and the streamflow anomaly data presented here are provisional.

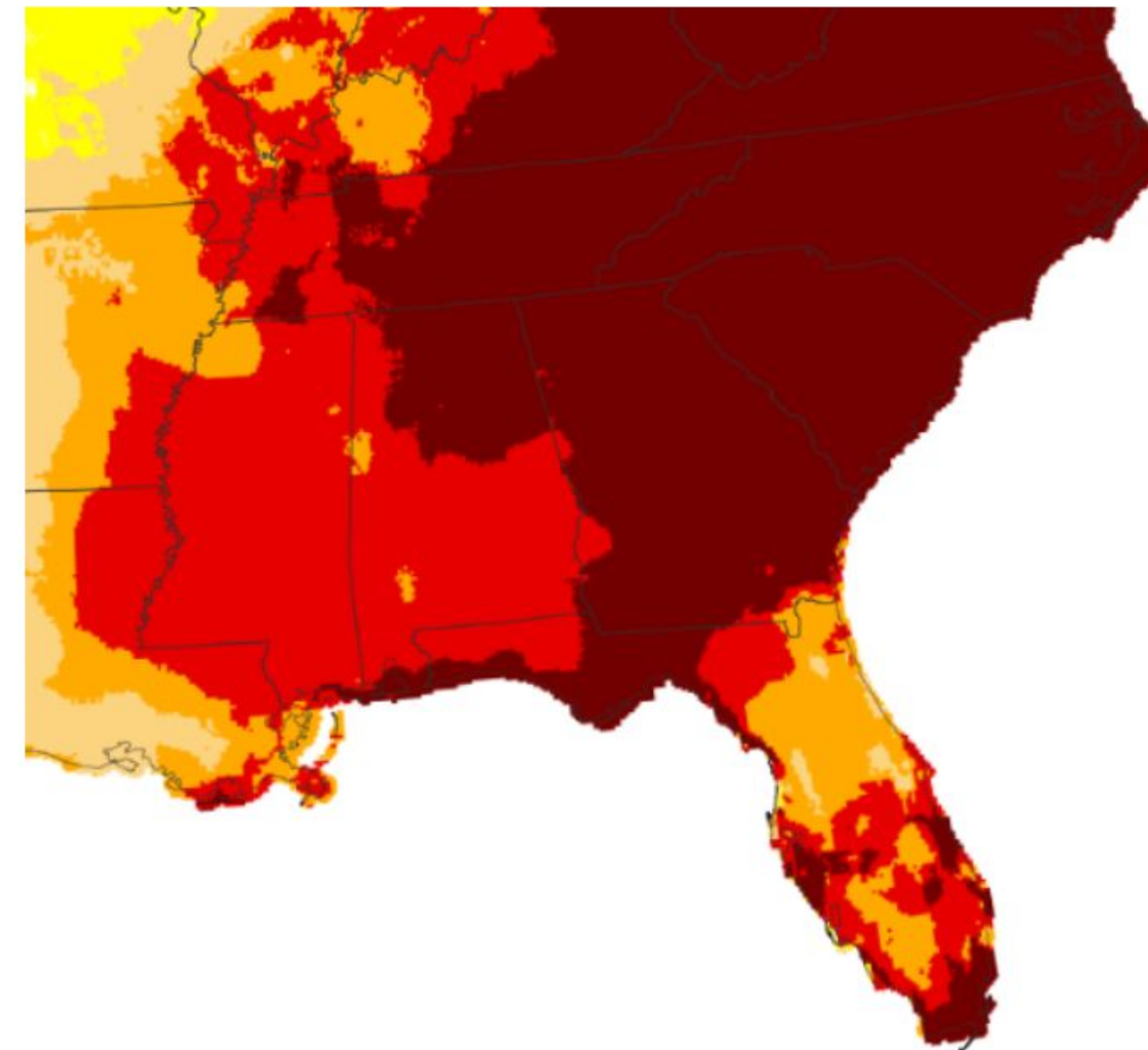


Evaporative Demand

This index provides an estimate of the evaporative demand of the atmosphere, and shows all of the Southeast with a greater, with a large portion showing much greater, evaporative demand than normal over the next four weeks.

An anomalously large atmospheric evaporative demand can put additional stress on already dry hydrologic conditions.

Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) Forecast: 4 Weeks



Dry Conditions



Wet Conditions



The Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) is an experimental drought monitoring and early warning guidance tool. It examines how anomalous the atmospheric evaporative demand (E0; also known as "the thirst of the atmosphere") is for a given location and across a time period of interest. This experimental subseasonal EDDI forecast shows projected evaporative demand for the next 28 days from the CFS-gridMET dataset at 4-km gridded resolution. Source(s): UC Merced

Source(s): UC Merced
Updates Daily: 04/15/26

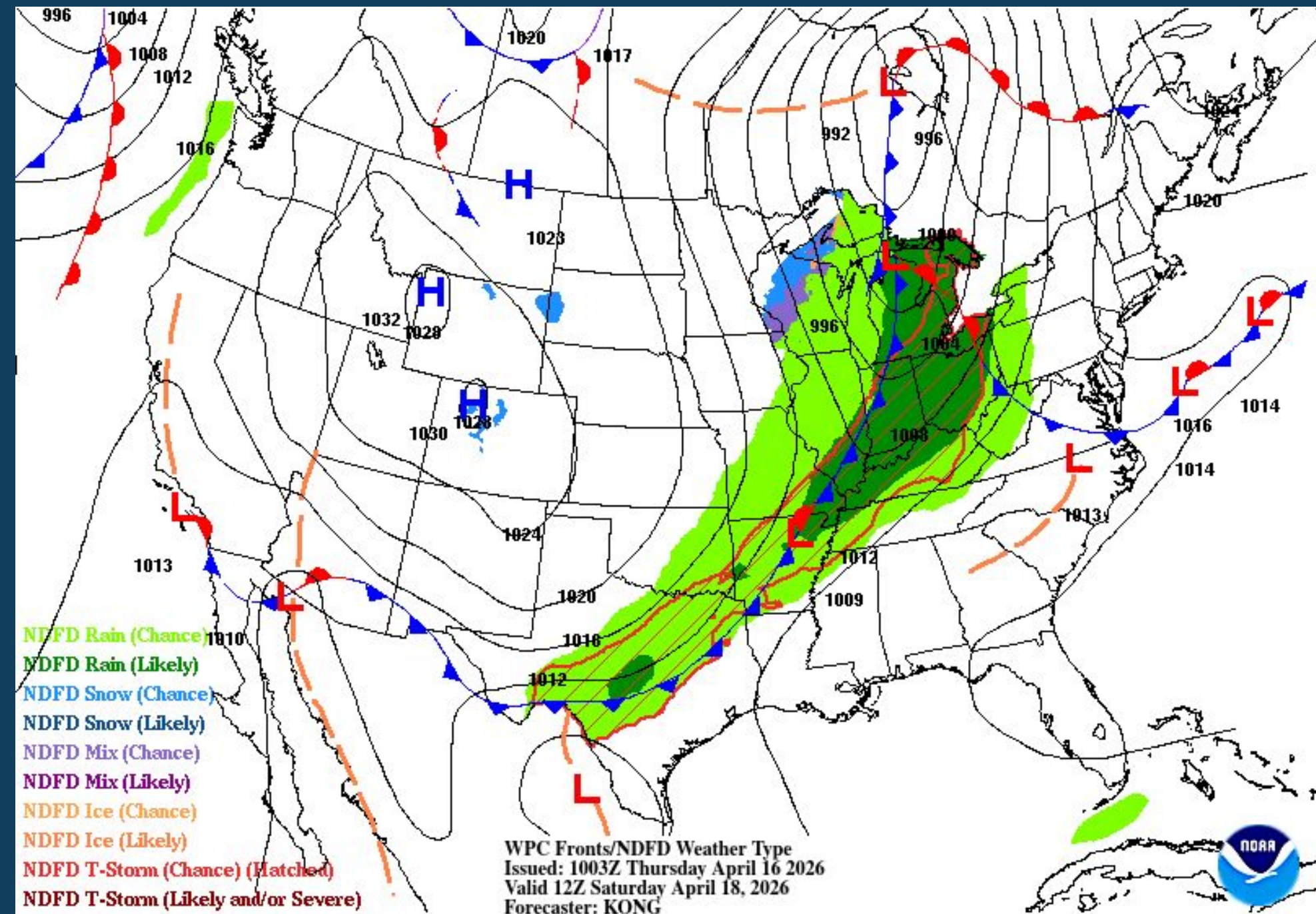
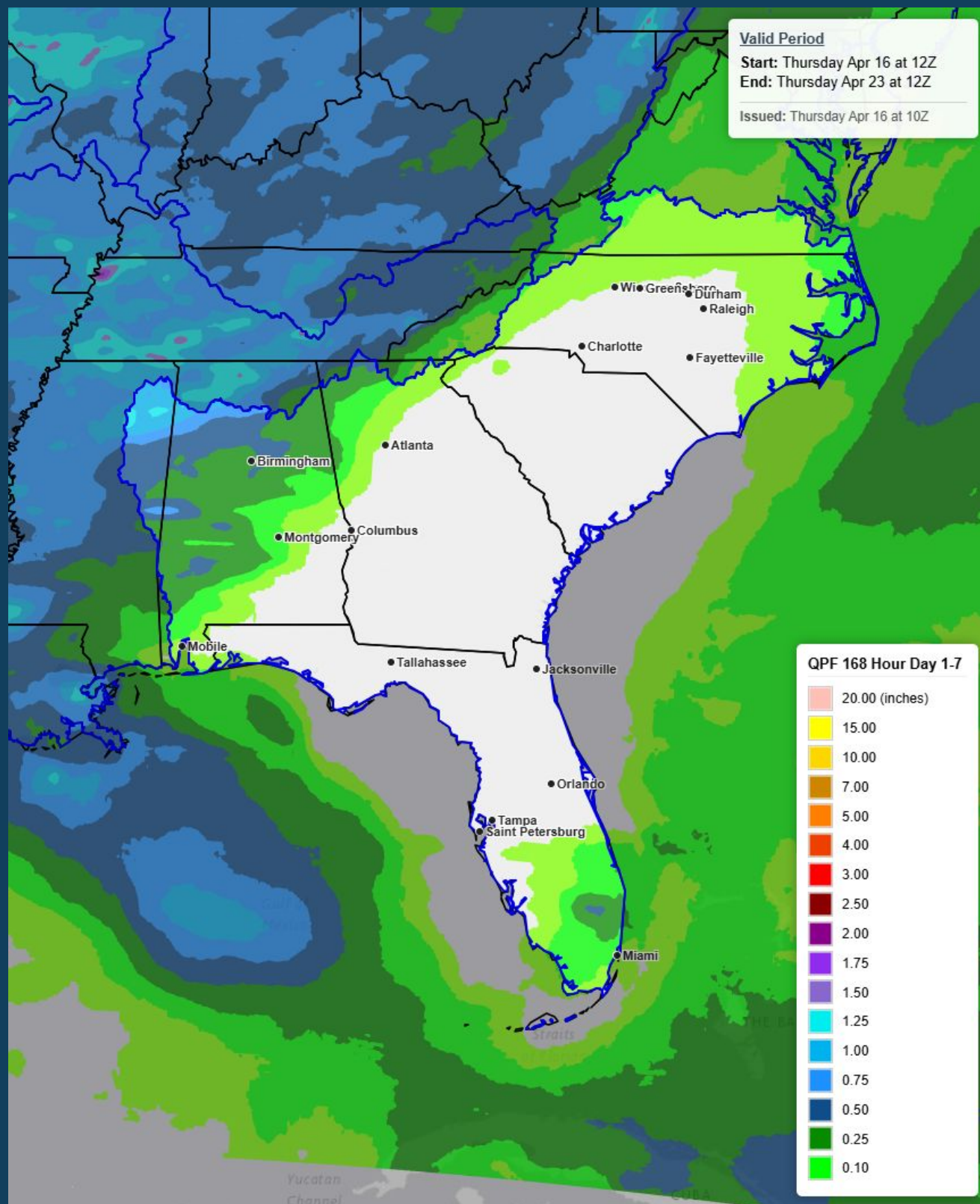
Drought.gov



Meteorology



Near Term

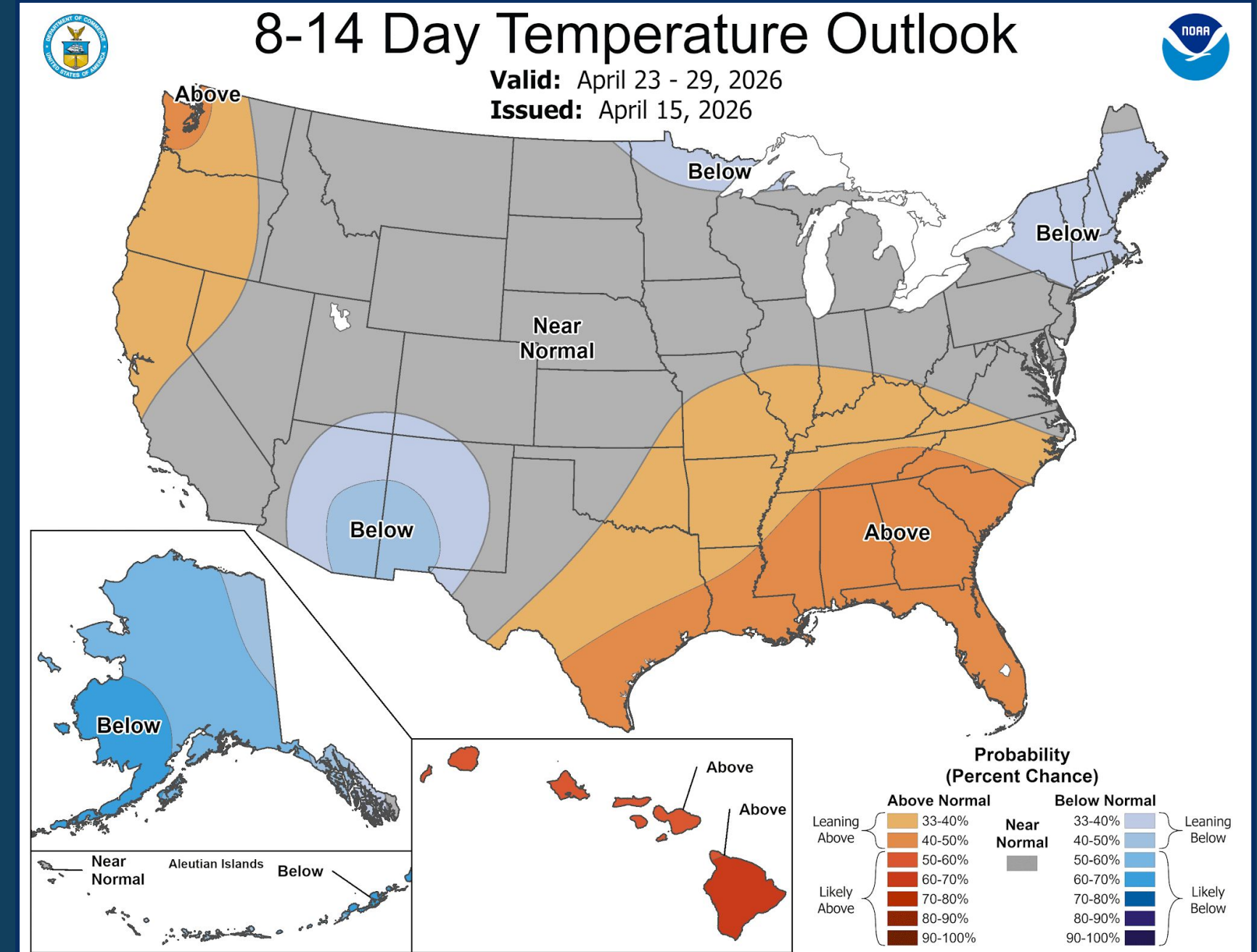
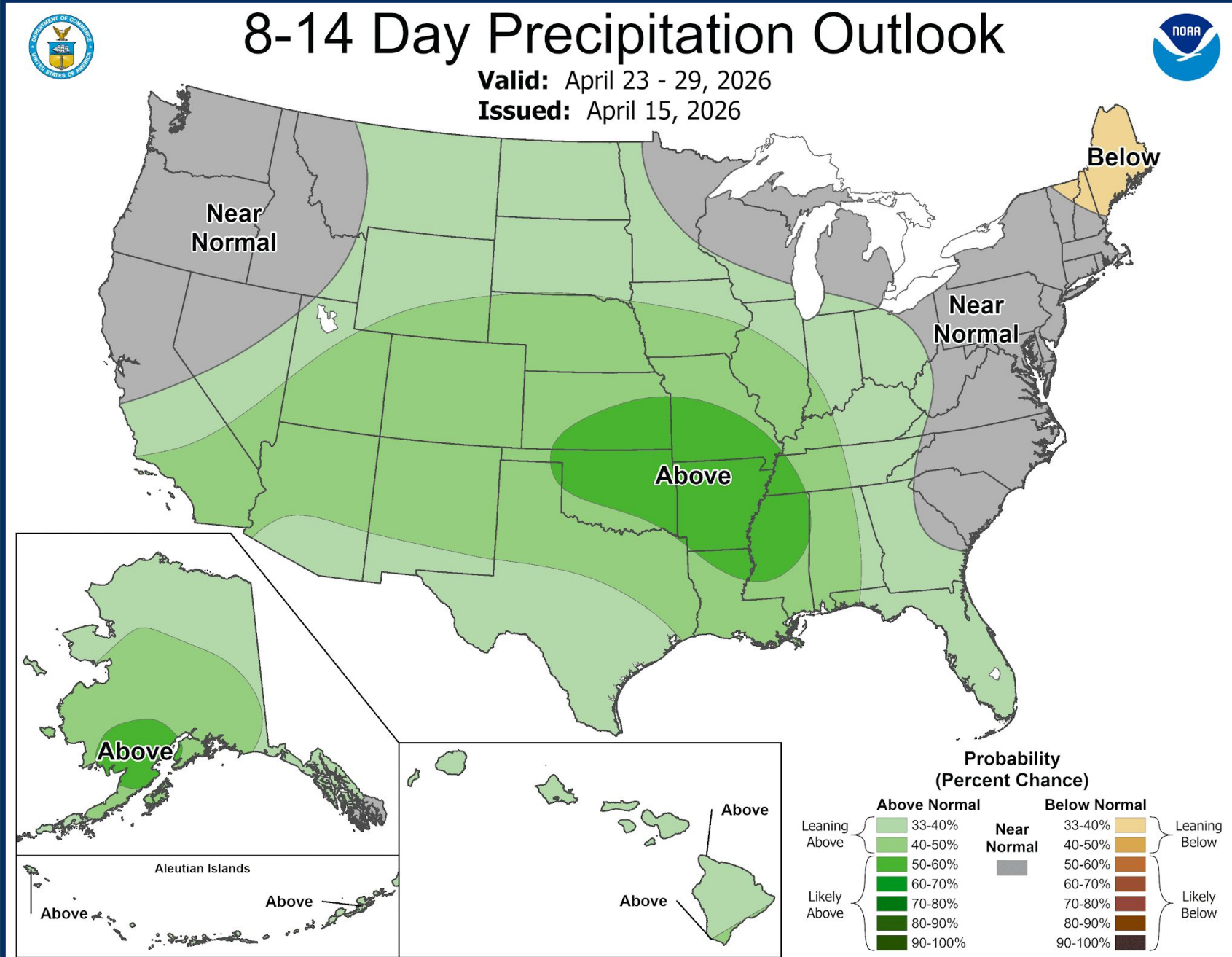


A cold front is forecast to make its way across the Southeast this weekend bringing chances of rain to the area. Parts of Mississippi and Alabama are forecast to receive as much as 1.5" of rain. However, the system is not expected to continue producing rainfall as it makes its way across the rest of the Southeast, leaving dry conditions in place.

Cooler temperatures will be in place behind the cold front.

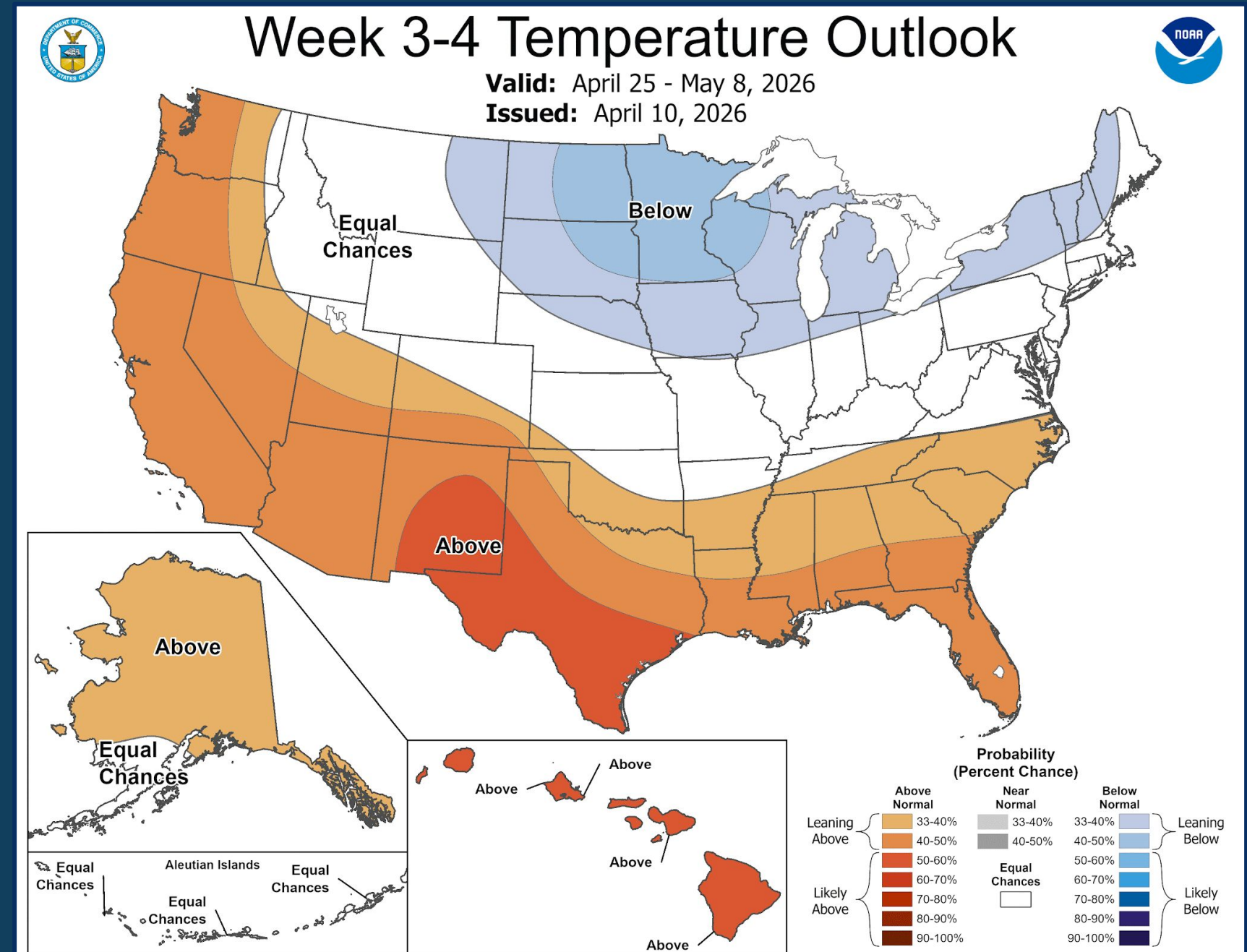
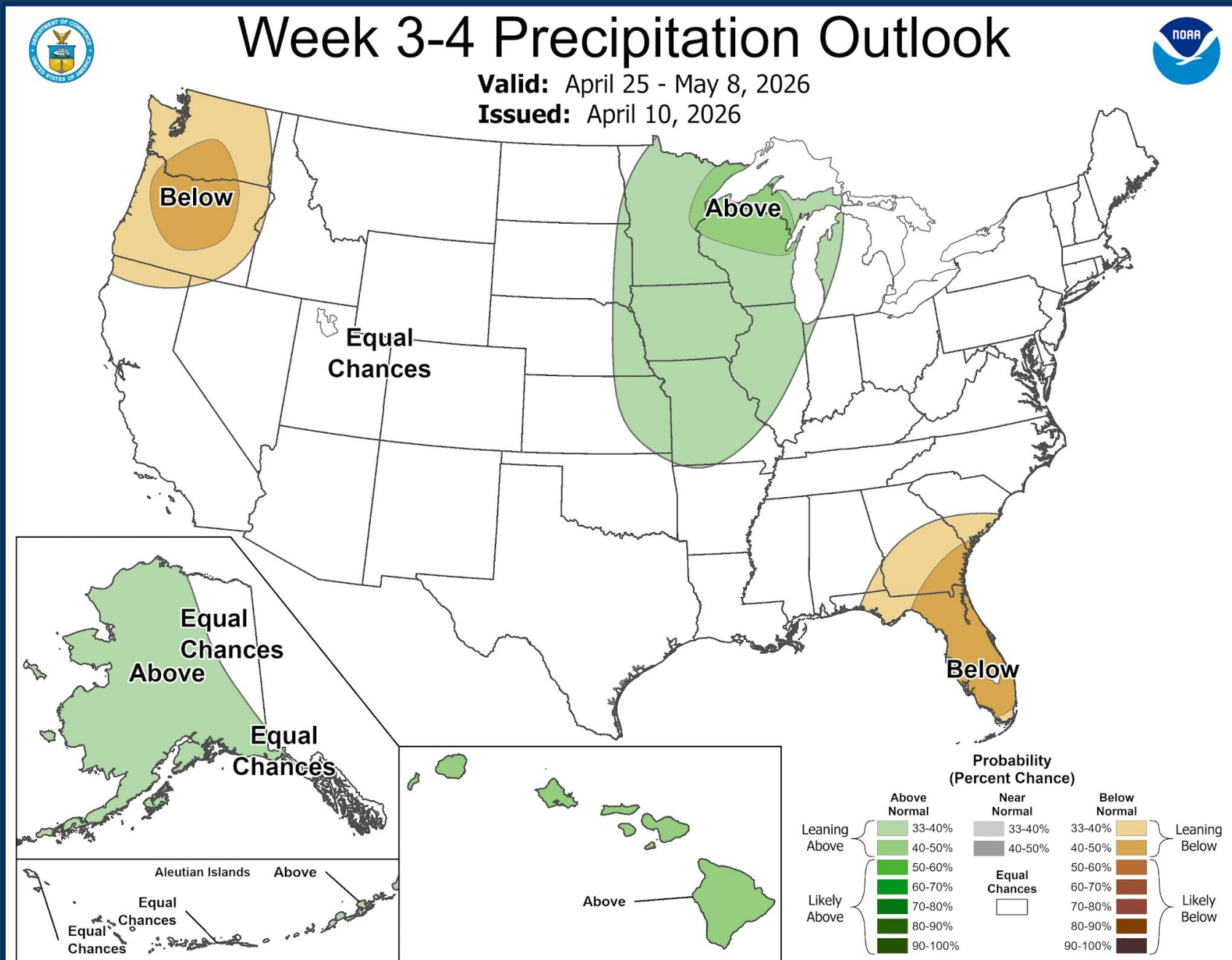


Medium Range



The high pressure that has dominated the Southeast's weather over the last month is expected to weaken toward the beginning of the 8-14 day window. This weakening has led the Climate Prediction Center's precipitation outlook to call for leaving above to above normal rainfall amounts for much of the Southeast, while the Carolinas are progged to see near normal amounts of rainfall. Meanwhile, the Southeast is forecast to have above normal temperatures for the same period.

Medium Range



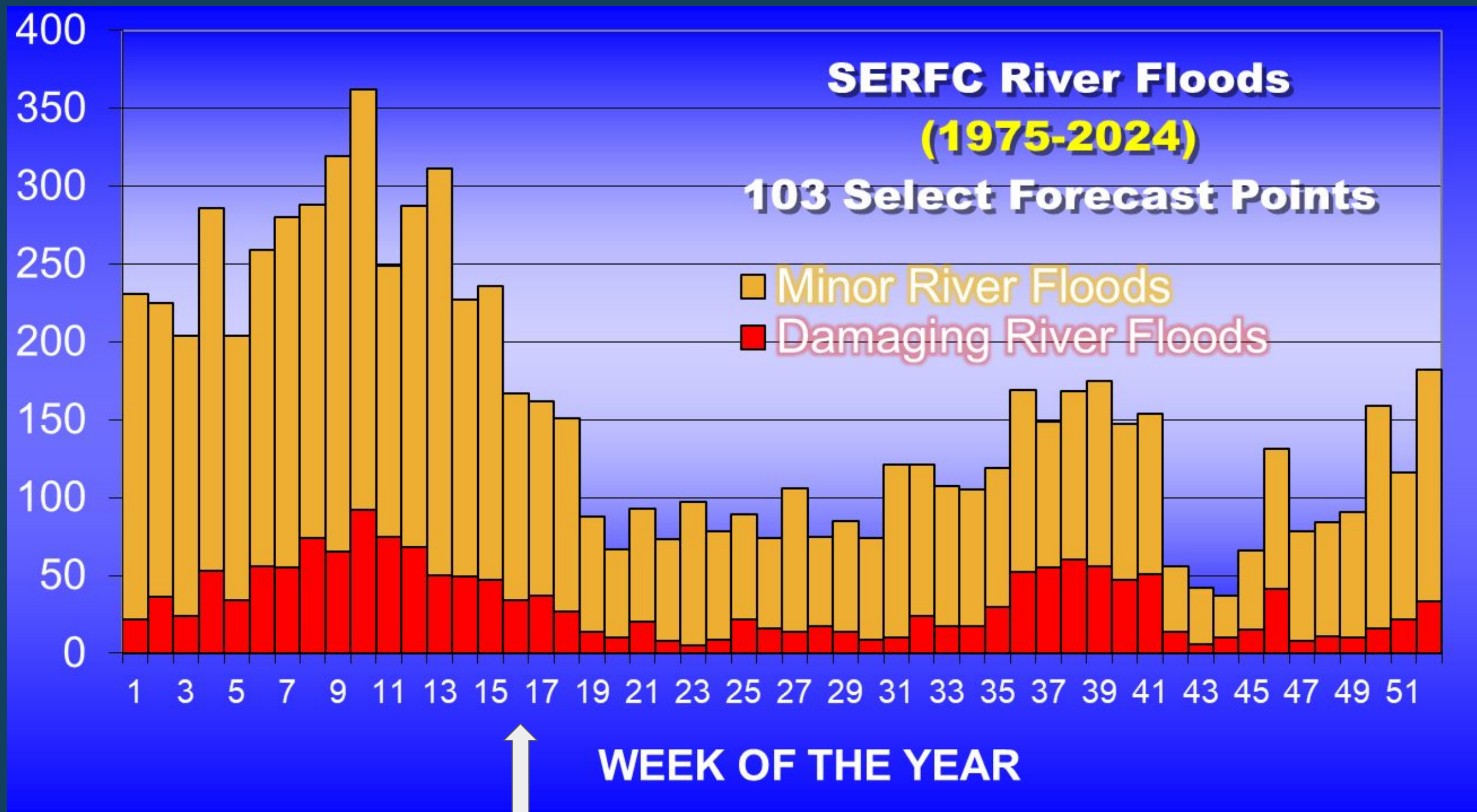
The Climate Prediction Center has nearly all of the Southeast in an area of equal chances for above normal, normal, or below normal rainfall in the week 3-4 period with the exception being SW Alabama, Georgia and nearly all of Florida. The CPC mentions that the long term models favor a wetter than normal May for the Southeast, however, given the dry soil conditions they tempered the outlook to show equal chances. Simultaneously, the drier soil conditions lead the CPC to forecast warmer than normal conditions across the area.

Long Term Outlook



Long Term Outlook

We are currently in week 16 of the year. This is still within our climatological flood season, but nearing the end. The Southeast saw little to no flooding within the peak of the season, and that continues now. Exiting the normal wet season without the recharge of streamflows that typically comes with it is less than ideal as we head into a time of year where water demand is typically higher.



ENSO Outlook



NWS/NCEP/CPC
 Last update: Mon Apr 6 2026
 Initial conditions: 27Mar2026-5Apr2026

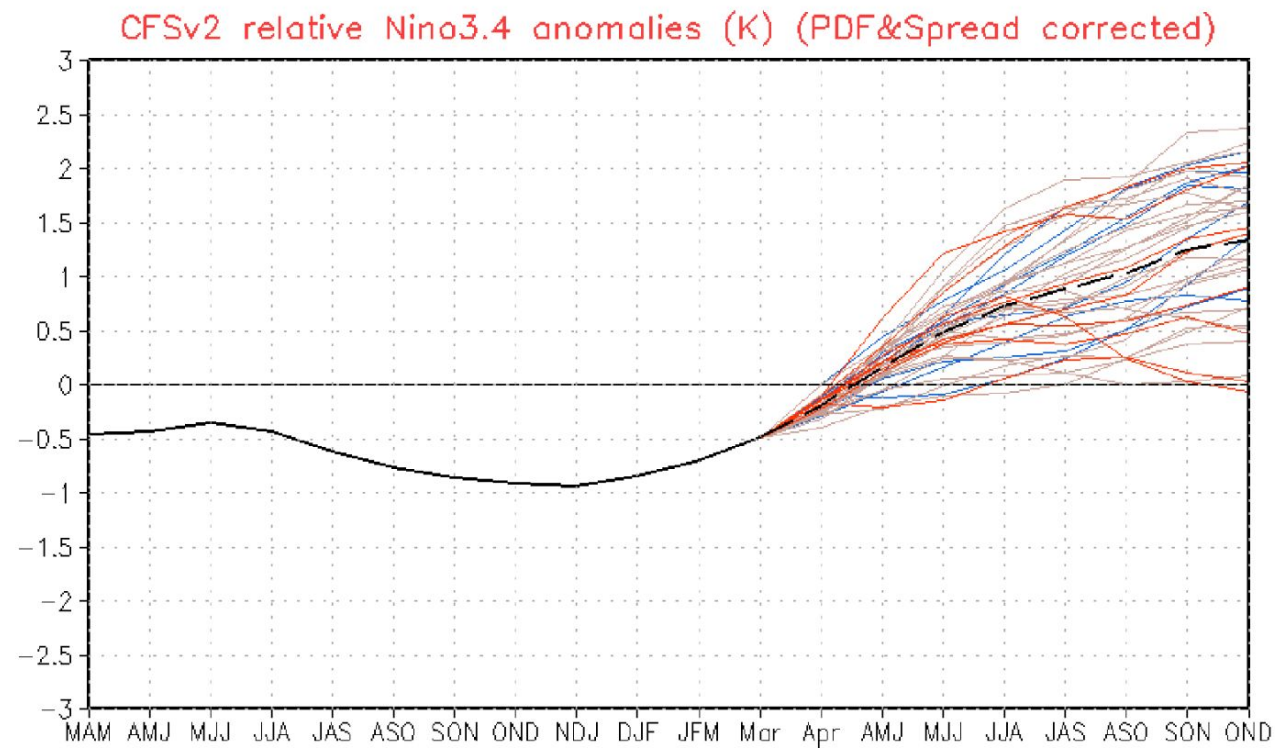
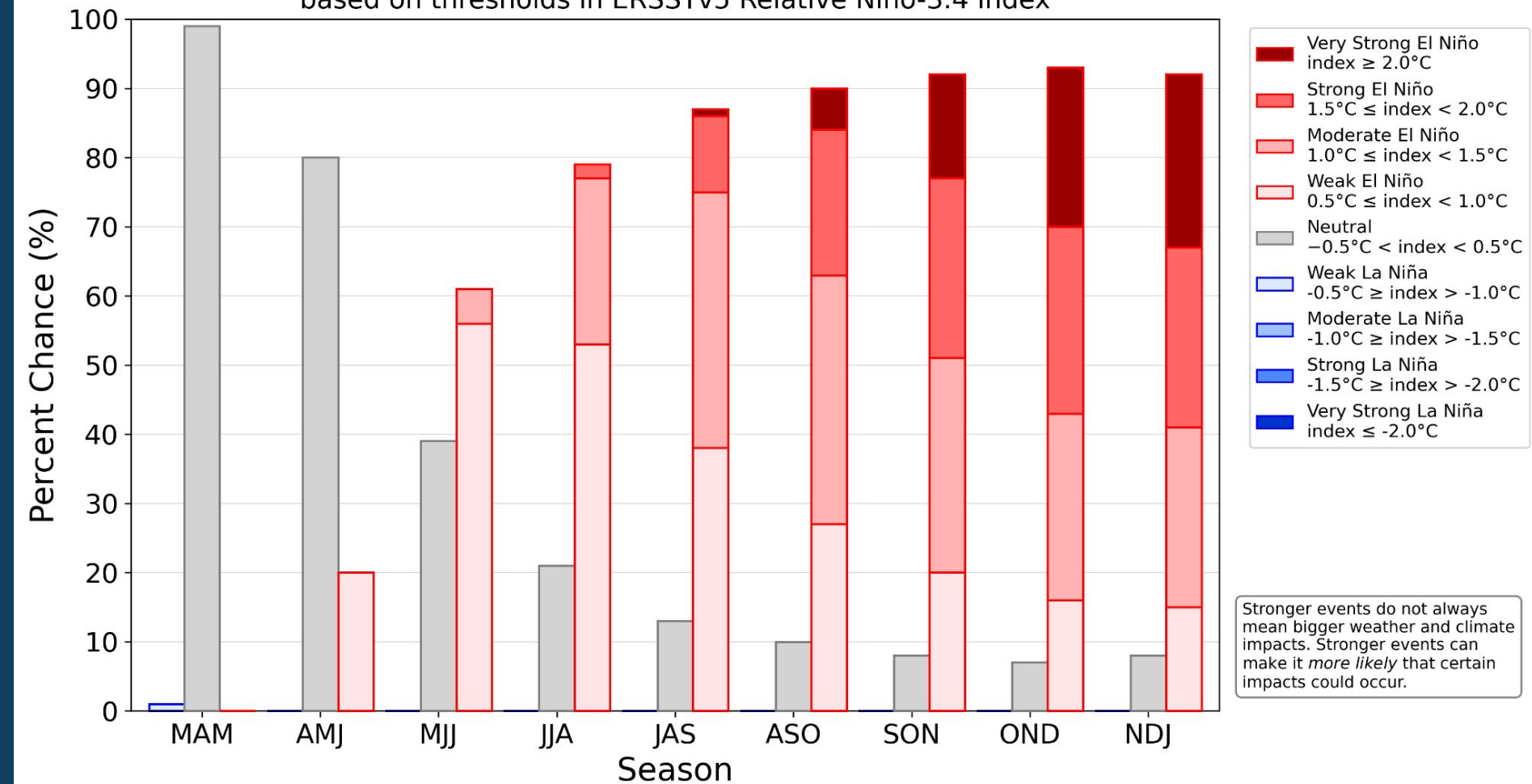


Figure 6. NCEP Climate Forecast System (CFSv2) prediction of relative sea surface temperature anomalies for the Niño 3.4 index (5°N-5°S, 170°W-120°W) minus tropical mean (20°N-20°S). The relative index is re-scaled to match the variance of the traditional index. Figure updated 6 April 2026.

NOAA CPC ENSO Strength Probabilities (issued April 2026)

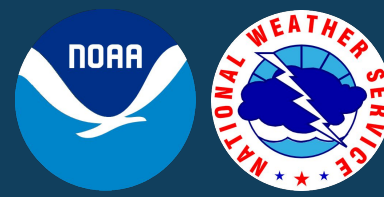
based on thresholds in ERSSTv5 Relative Niño-3.4 index



Stronger events do not always mean bigger weather and climate impacts. Stronger events can make it *more likely* that certain impacts could occur.

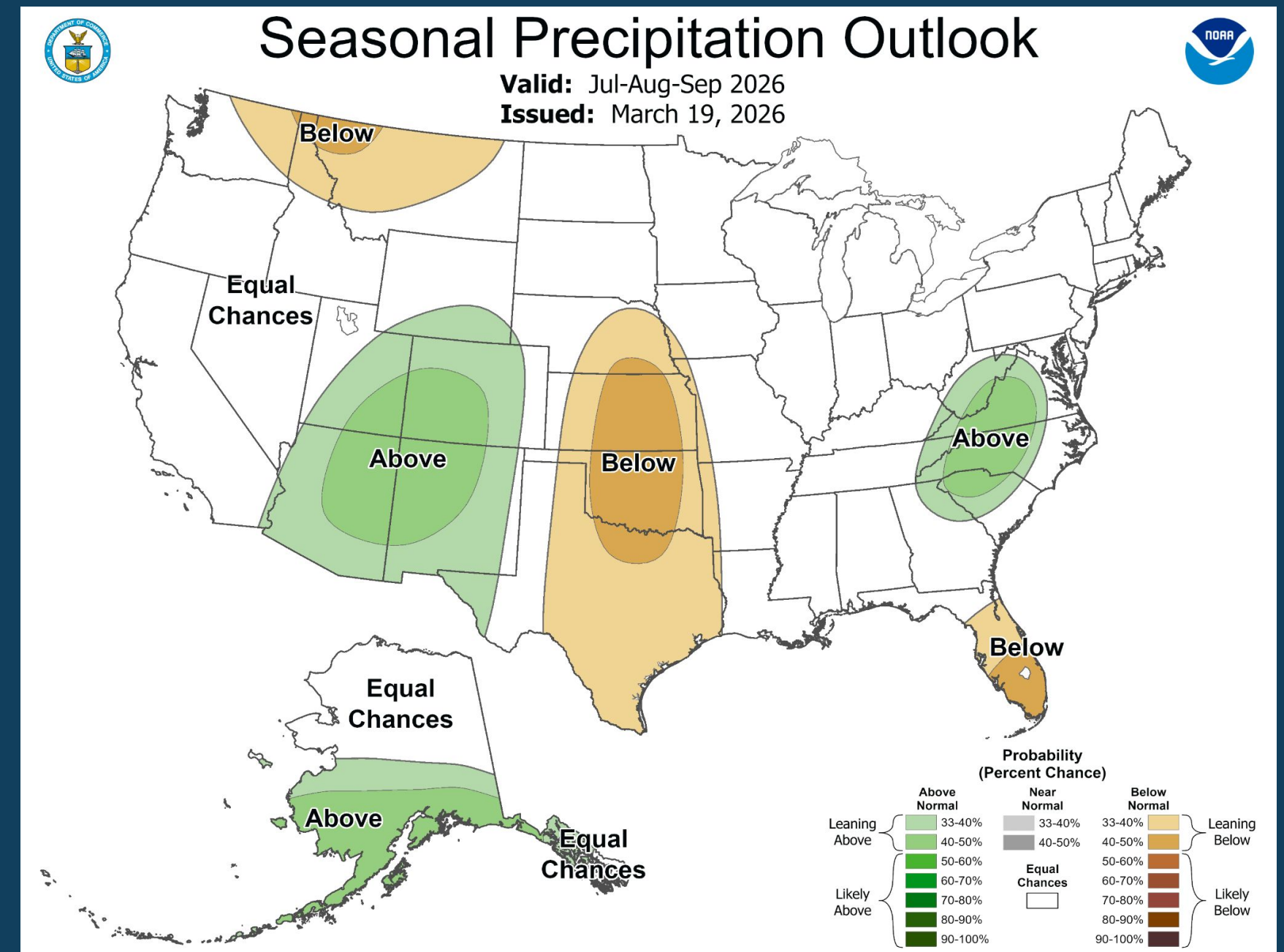
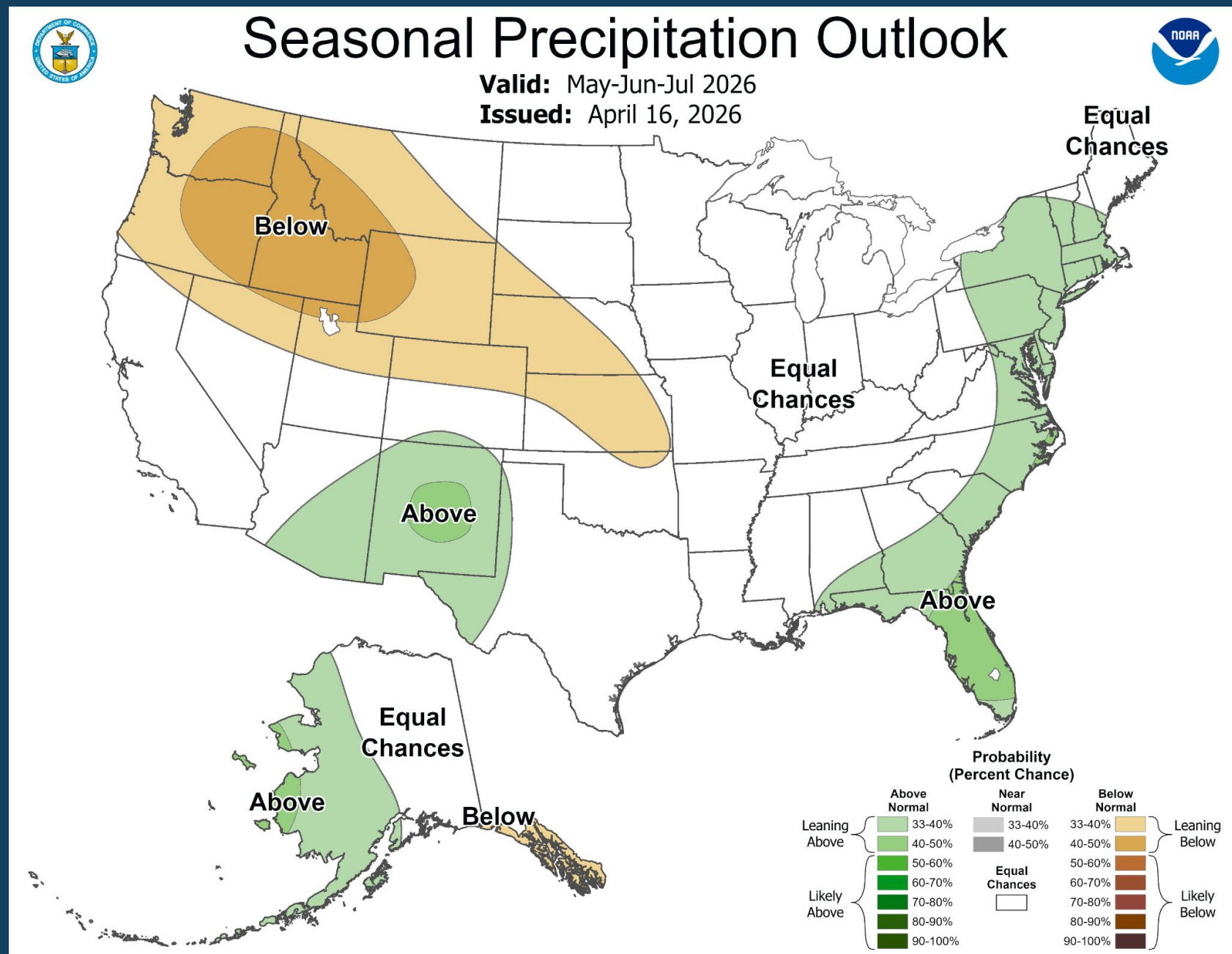
We have now transitioned to ENSO-neutral conditions, which are favored to continue April-June 2026 (80% chance). Going into the summer months, El Niño is likely to emerge (61% chance) in May-July 2026 and persist through at least the end of the year. There is a chance (1 in 4) that a very strong El Niño (SST anomaly $\geq +2.0$ °C) develops during that time.

Seasonal Average Rainfall and Forecasted Deviations



May-June-July

July-August-September

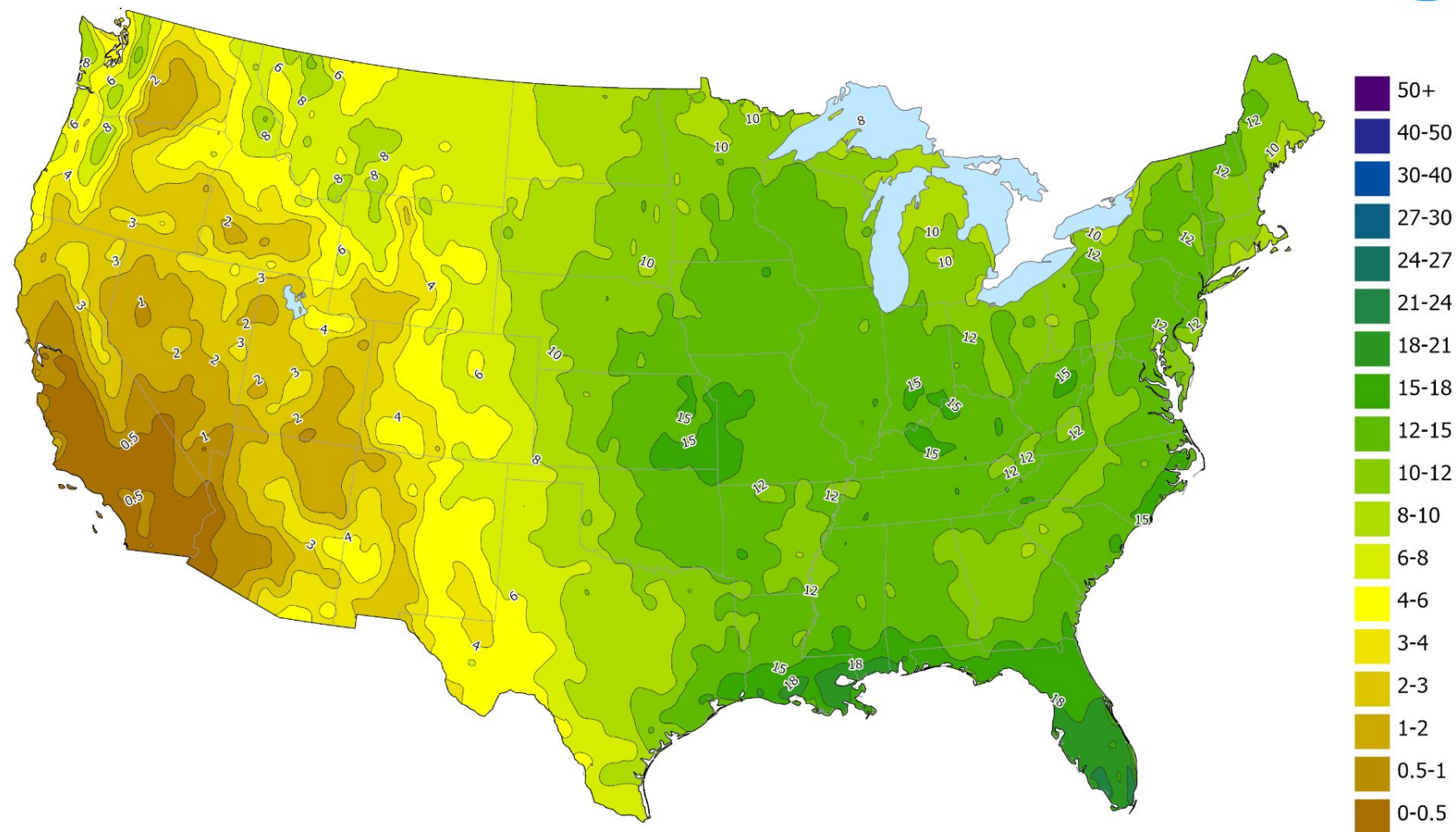


For May-July, the CPC has a large portion of the Southeast below the fall line with a 33-40% chance of above normal precipitation while much of the Florida Peninsula is sitting with a 40-50% chance. Heading into July-September, the above normal precipitation chances are more confined to the western half of the Carolinas and Virginia. The Florida Peninsula, however, is shown leaning towards below normal precipitation. It is worth noting that El Niño conditions can suppress Atlantic hurricane activity, which is usually a significant contributing factor in rainfall totals during the hurricane season.

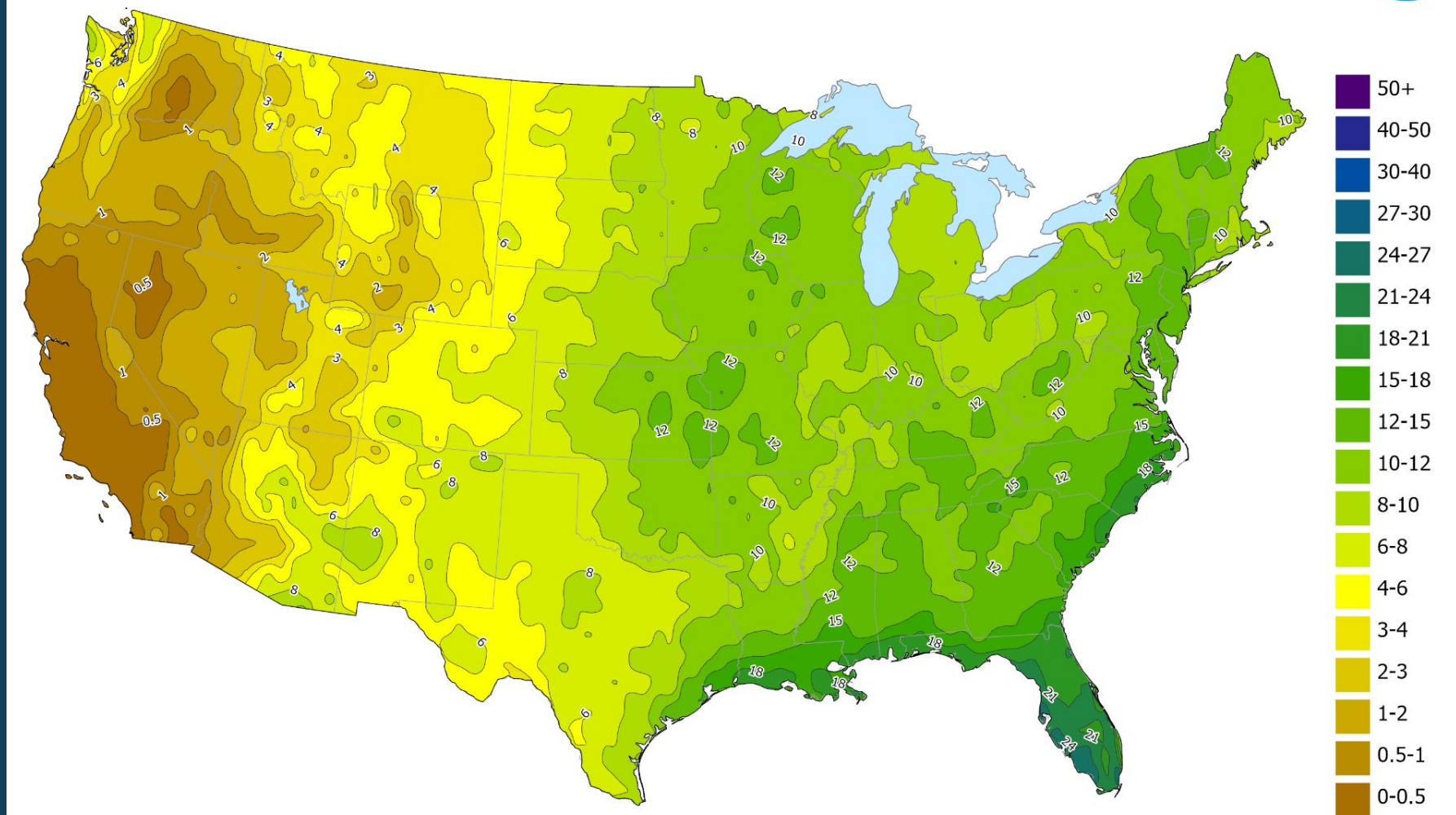
Seasonal Rainfall Averages



May to July - Median - Precipitation (in)
Contiguous United States - 1991 to 2020



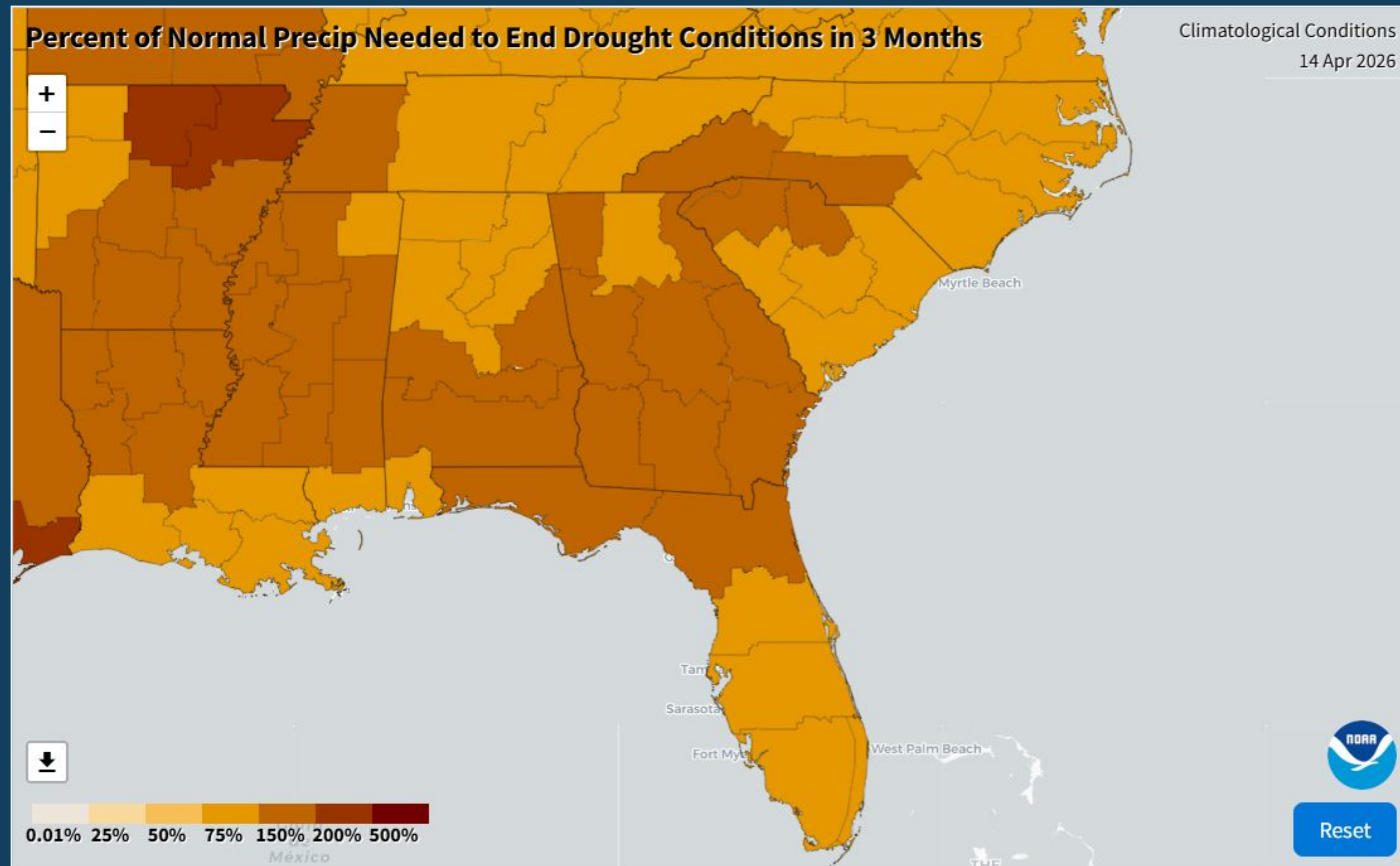
July to September - Median - Precipitation (in)
Contiguous United States - 1991 to 2020



Above are the normal rainfall amounts across the CONUS for time periods that correlate with the CPC outlooks on the previous slide

Percent of Normal Precip Needed to End Drought Conditions in 3 Months

This image (<https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/drought-recovery/current/wmp/end-perc/3>) shows what percentage of normal precipitation over a three month period would be needed to end drought conditions. Most of the Southeast would need anywhere from 140% to 170% of the normal rainfall. This means that even if the probability for above normal rain is there, it doesn't necessarily equate to total drought relief due to the existing dryness in the region.



Synopsis

- ❖ Drought conditions across the Southeast have deteriorated, with 100% of the SERFC area in some sort of dry or drought status, and almost 10% in D4, or exceptional, drought conditions.
- ❖ Meaningful rainfall is not expected in the near term, however, the Climate Prediction Center has parts of the Southeast with chances for above normal precipitation in the 8-14 day timeframe.
- ❖ Looking ahead to summer/early fall, we start to see a shift with more of the Southeast looking at chances for above normal rainfall. However, this will be subject to tropical activity, which can be influenced by the forecast transition to El Niño conditions.



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