



Drought Information Statement for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

Valid April 23, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Tallahassee, FL

Contact Information: kelly.godsey@noaa.gov; cameron.young@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated April 30, 2026
 - Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
 - Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/TAE/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
 - Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates> for regional drought status updates.
- **Exceptional Drought Continues as Extreme Drought Expands Westward through the Florida Panhandle.**
 - This drought is beginning to eclipse the intensity of the 2011/2012 drought.
 - Long term hydrologic drought impacts persist with significant impacts to rivers and streams. Lakes and ponds are at exceptionally low levels or dry.
 - The potential exists for further worsening of drought conditions. Surface and subsurface water levels are especially low for April.





U.S. Drought Monitor

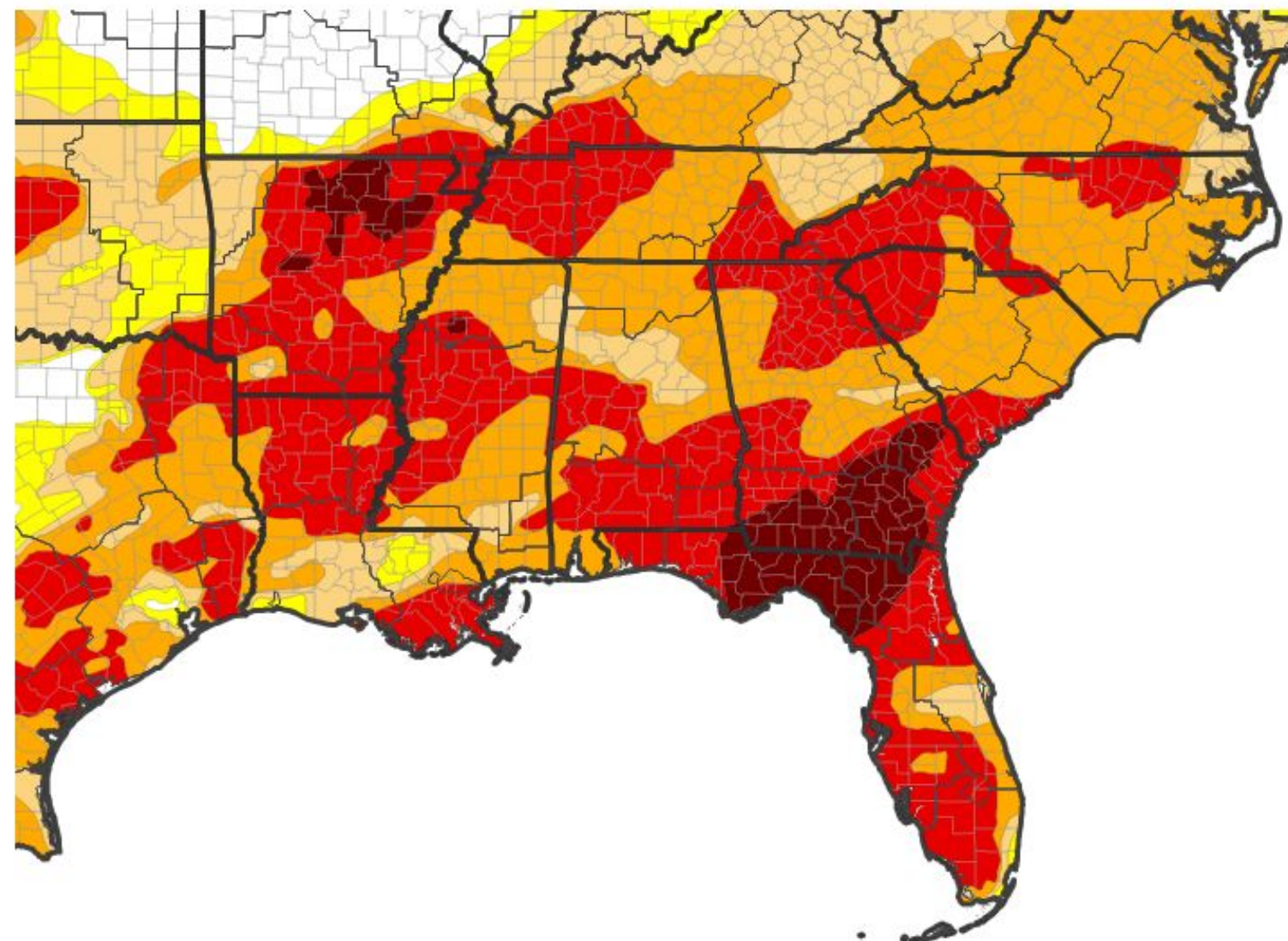
Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

- Drought intensity continued with the entire forecast area now in D3 (Extreme Drought) or worse.

Drought intensity and Extent:

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought):**
 - In Georgia: Generally south of a line from AL/GA/FL border to Fitzgerald.
 - In Florida: From the Chipola River and adjacent counties east to the Suwannee River.
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):**
 - In Florida: West of the Chipola River and adjacent counties.
 - In Georgia: The remainder of South Georgia.
 - In Alabama: All of Southeast Alabama

U.S. Drought Monitor

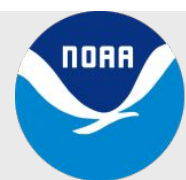


U.S. Drought Monitor



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 04/21/26



National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL

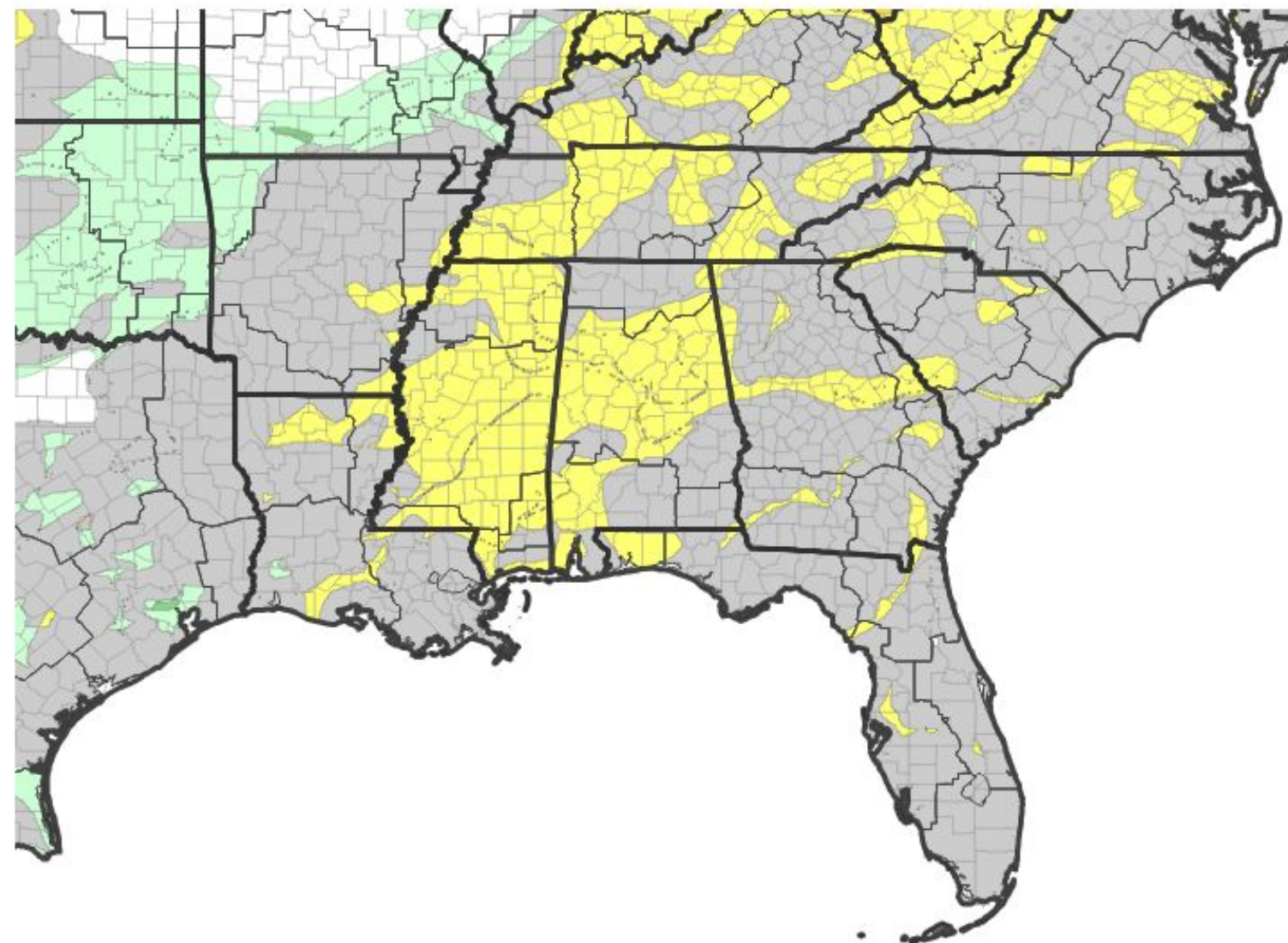


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

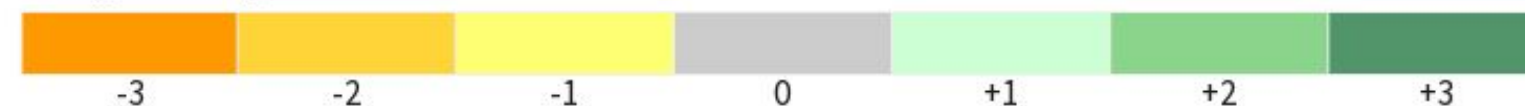
Link to the latest [4-week change map](#) for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

- Another week of no rain and a very dry airmass earlier in the week led to worsening of drought conditions.
- One-Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
 - **1 Category Degradation:**
 - Walton County, Florida
 - Worth and Tift County, Georgia
 - **No Change**
 - All other areas in the region.

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map

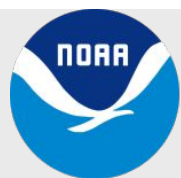


Drought Change Since Last Week



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA, NASA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 04/21/26



National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL

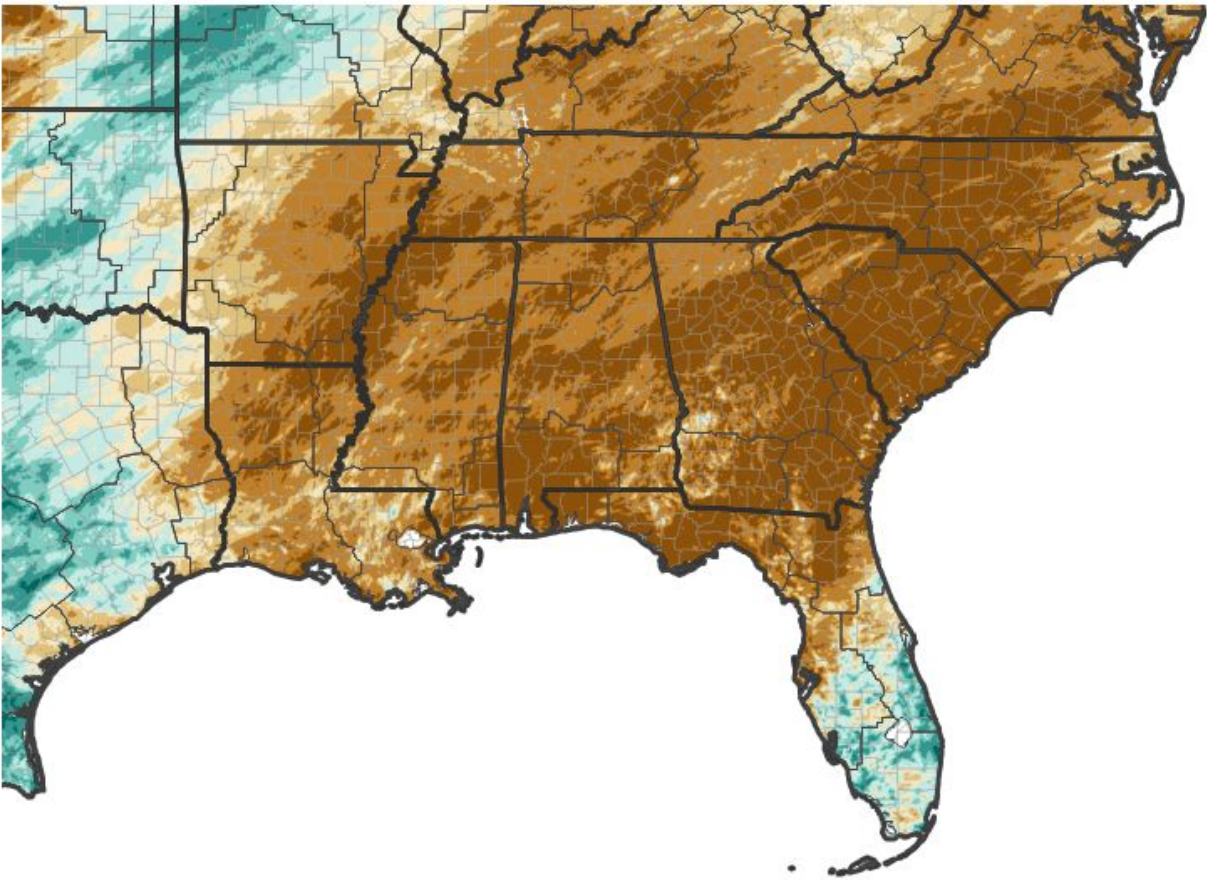


Precipitation

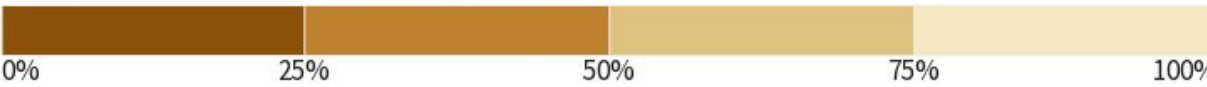
Note: Precipitation after 7 AM EST/6 AM CST Tuesday is incorporated in next week’s Drought Monitor

	Last 30 Days		Last 90 Days	
	Rainfall	Percent	Rainfall	Percent
DeFuniak Springs*	1.90"	37.7%	9.72"	62.1%
Panama City ECP	0.15"	2.9%	3.63"	24.2%
Dothan	1.23"	25.4%	8.08"	56.0%
Marianna	0.94"	23.5%	5.74"	42.9%
Georgetown**	2.88"	63.8%	9.73"	68.6%
Dawson**	0.63"	14.5%	6.82"	48.5%
Arlington**	0.98"	22.5%	6.67"	46.8%
Albany	2.75"	72.6%	9.90"	80.7%
Cairo**	0.06"	1.4%	3.72"	27.5%
Tallahassee	0.18"	4.7%	4.09"	30.6%
Moultrie**	0.57"	14.5%	3.95"	29.4%
Monticello*	0.33"	8.2%	6.12"	46.3%
Ty Ty**	0.51"	13.3%	6.31"	48.7%
Alapaha**	0.08"	2.2%	3.31"	26.3%
Valdosta	0.18"	4.9%	5.15"	47.5%
Perry***	1.24"	34.1%	4.21"	35.4%

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation

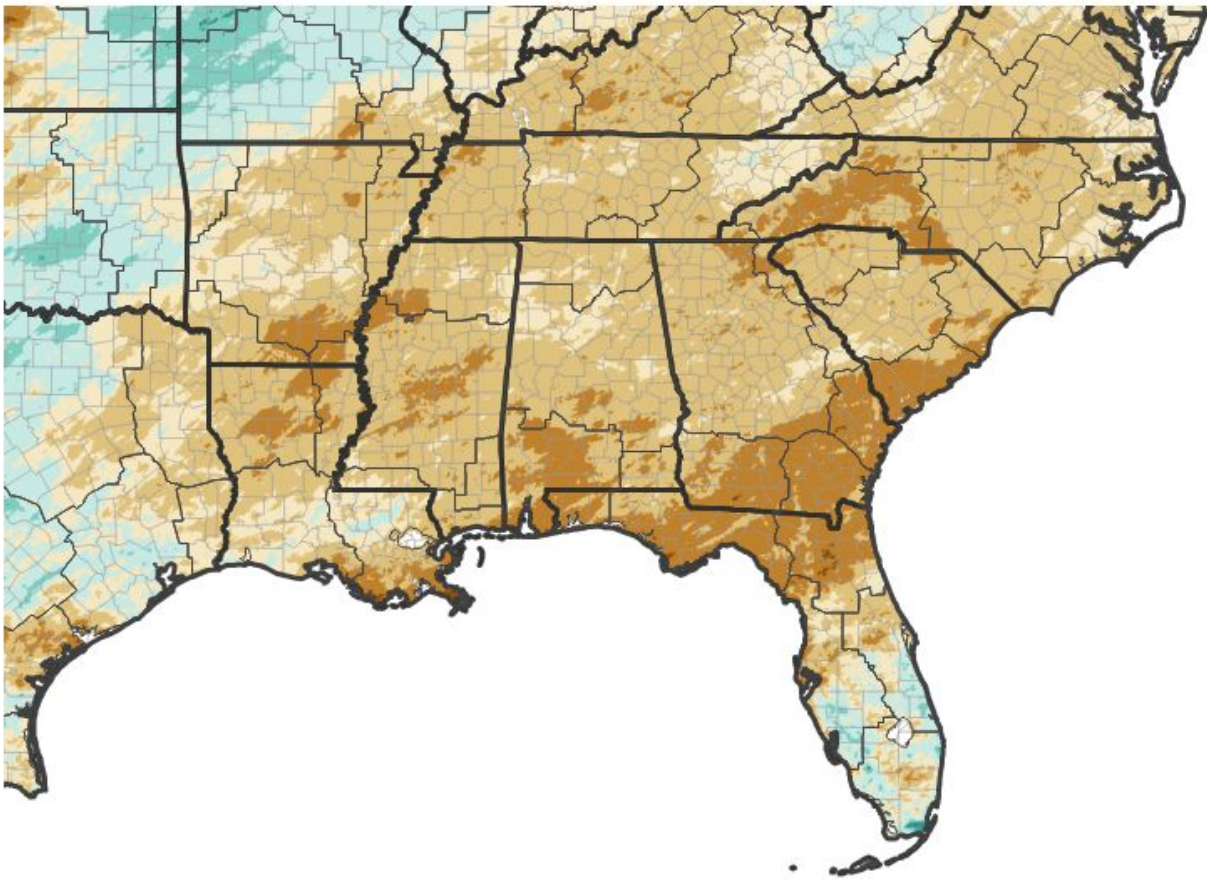


Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions

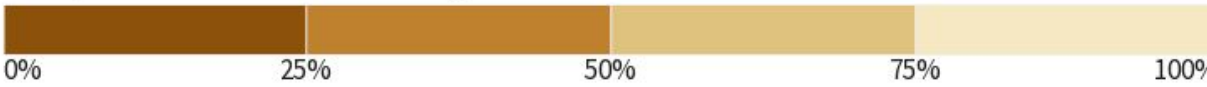


Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 04/23/26

90-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 04/23/26

Rainfall totals through April 22, 2026. Non-NWS Data Courtesy:

*University of Florida - Florida Automated Weather Network

**University of Georgia Weather Network

***Suwannee River Water Management District

Climatology for non-NWS stations is estimated using PRISM data.



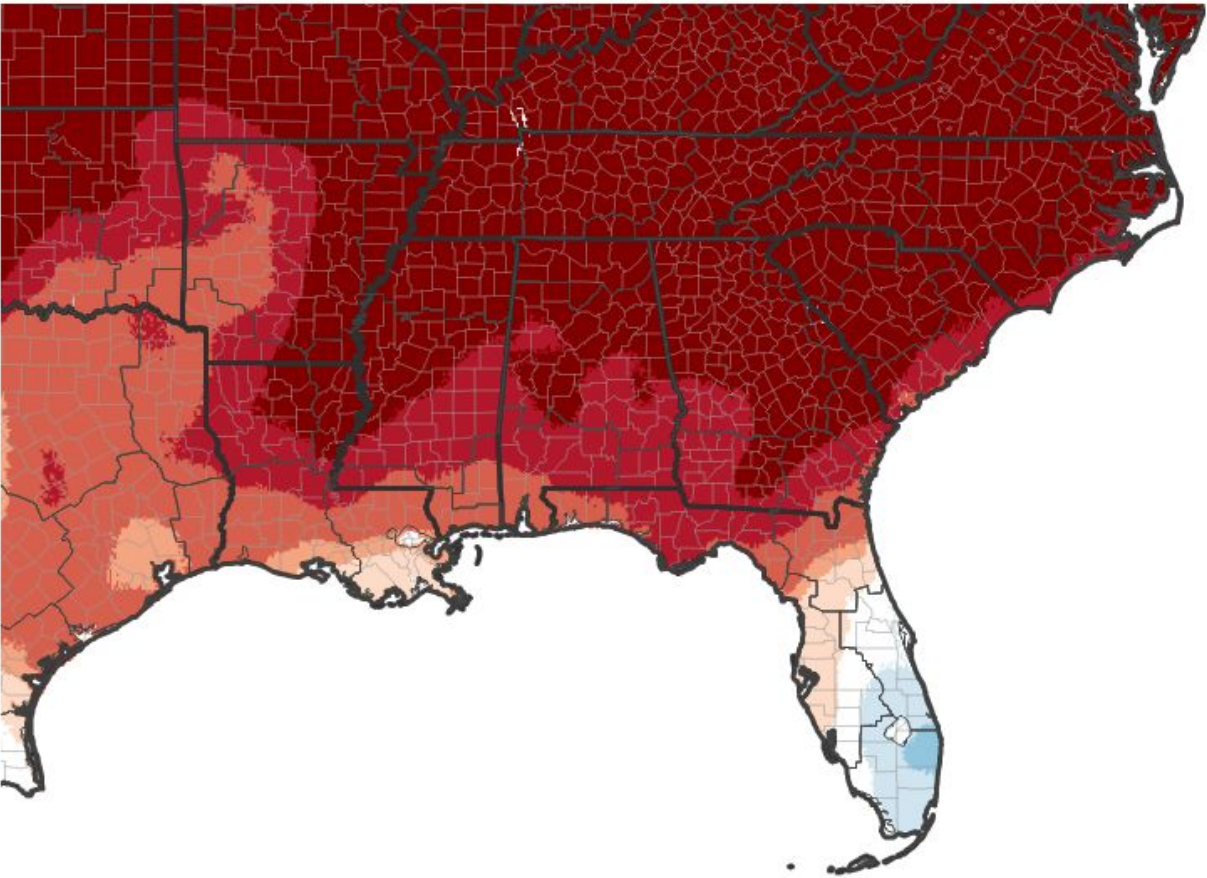


Temperature

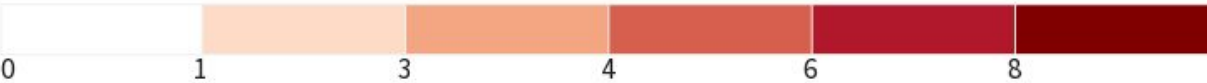
	Last 30 Days	
	Average High (Departure)	Average Low (Departure)
Tallahassee	82.7° (+4.2°)	55.9° (+3.1°)
Albany	80.7° (+3.0°)	55.0° (+2.3°)
Valdosta	82.3° (+4.5°)	54.4° (+3.1°)
Marianna	81.7° (+3.3°)	55.2° (+1.9°)
Dothan	80.1° (+2.5°)	54.7° (+1.4°)

- Temperatures continued to be above normal.
- This combined with the dry conditions has led to worsening of drought conditions.
- Daily relative humidities have also been fairly low, which has increased wildfire potential. .

7-Day Temperature Anomaly



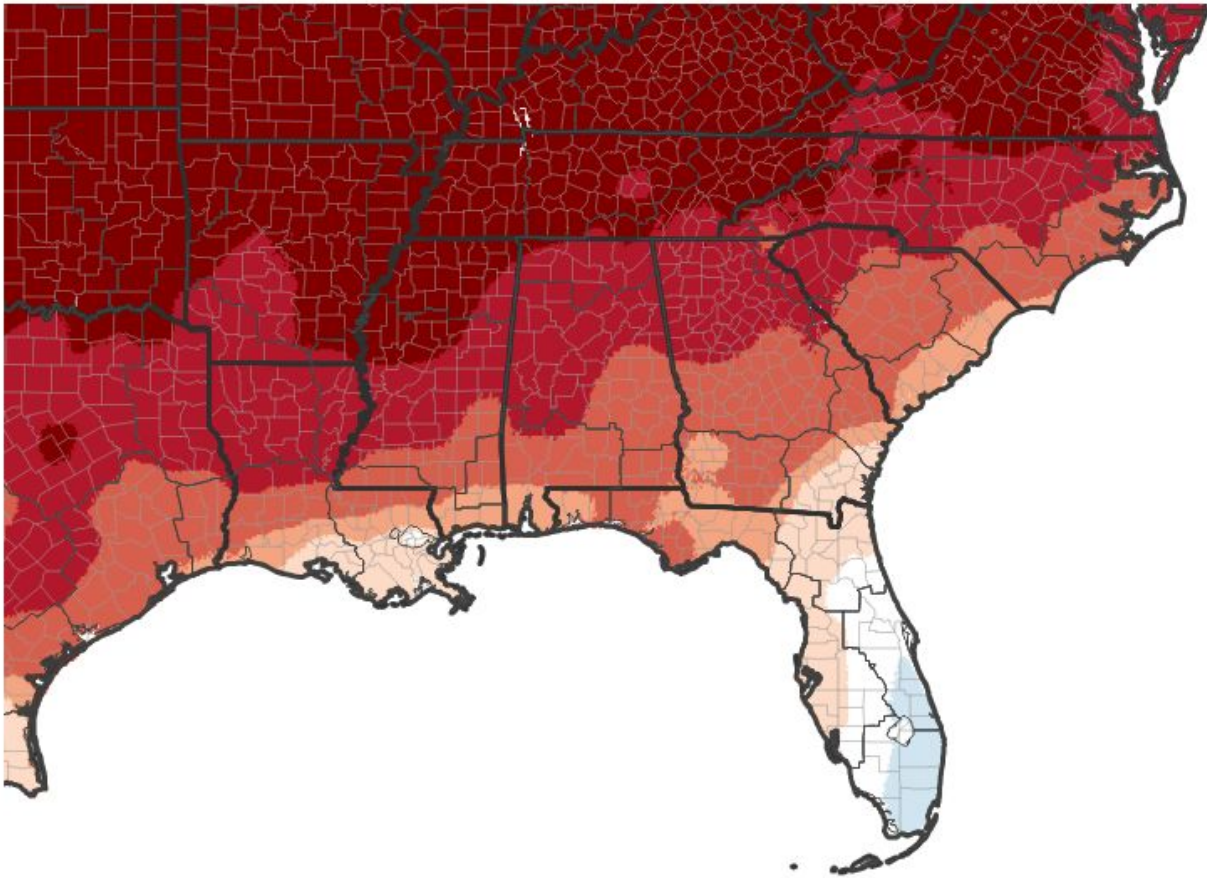
Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



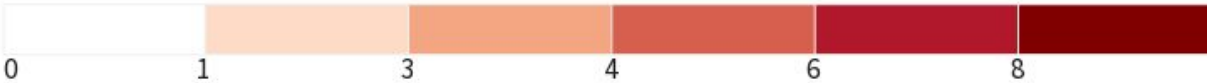
Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 04/18/26

30-Day Temperature Anomaly



Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 04/18/26





Summary of Impacts - Southeast Alabama

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows remain exceptionally low for this time of year. Daily streamflows for the Pea River are near or at all time record lows.
- Surface and groundwater levels are exceptionally low. A report from Dale County, Alabama mentioned holding ponds at low levels not seen in 20 years.

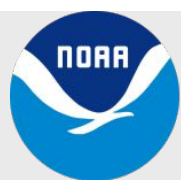
Agricultural Impacts

- Irrigation is necessary to help farmers maintain planted crops. Corn is already struggling in Dale County. In Houston County, two reports from farmers stated, "It is too dry to plant." This places farmers well behind schedule for planting.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 400-550 across the region.

Photo at right, courtesy of Coffee County, AL is the Pea River at Elba on Thursday, April 9th.



**National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration**

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL



Summary of Impacts - Southwest Georgia

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

A State of Emergency is in place for South Georgia due to wildfires

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows remain very low for this time of year. Most observation points on river throughout Southwest Georgia are near or at all time minimums.
- Surface and groundwater levels are exceptionally low. Reports indicate that holding ponds have gone dry in numerous counties. Swampy areas and small creeks are also dry.

Agricultural Impacts

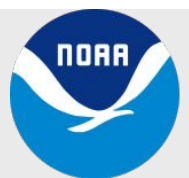
- Planting season has begun with corn where irrigation is available. Absent irrigation, some farmers are choosing not to plant crops until more soil moisture is available. Bedded fields ready for tobacco transplanting are being watered, but growers are still waiting for more moisture before starting the crop.
- Non-irrigated fields are choosing not to plant given rainfall uncertainty.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 450-650 across the region, highest close to I-75.

Mitigation Actions

- [A burn ban](#) is in effect for all Southwest Georgia counties.





Summary of Impacts - Florida Panhandle

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

The Governor of Florida has issued a [State of Emergency](#) due to drought.

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows remain exceptionally low for this time of year.
- Surface and groundwater levels are exceptionally low. Even with the recent rain, reports indicate that holding ponds and lakes remain very low or dry in some areas.

Agricultural Impacts

- Planting season is beginning, but concerns exist given exceptionally low sub-surface water levels that irrigation will further stress the water table as farmers draw water from wells.

Fire Hazard Impacts

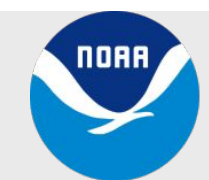
- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 456-650 across the region.
- Burn bans are in place for Walton, Holmes, Washington, Bay, Calhoun, and Gulf Counties.

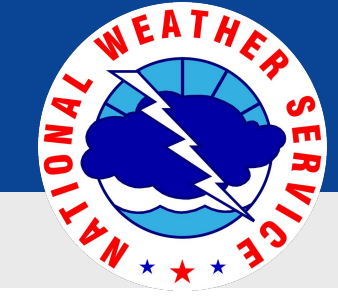
Mitigation Actions

- Northwest Florida Water Management District has issued a [water shortage warning](#) for their watershed.



Ocheesee Pond in Jackson County from late March, courtesy of Northwest Florida Water Management District. Water has receded further since this photo was taken, with even more areas now dry.





Summary of Impacts - Florida Big Bend

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

The Governor of Florida has issued a [State of Emergency](#) due to drought.

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows remain exceptionally low for this time of year even with recent rainfall. The Ochlockonee River is at a record low flow today.
- Surface and groundwater levels are exceptionally low. Numerous lakes and holding ponds are dry across the Big Bend.

Agricultural Impacts

- Planting season is underway, but concerns exist given exceptionally low sub-surface water levels that irrigation will further stress the water table.

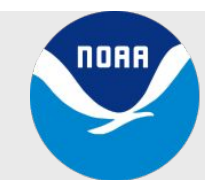
Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 450-650.
- Burn bans are in effect for Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison, Lafayette, and Dixie Counties.

Mitigation Actions

- Suwannee River Water Management District has issued a [water shortage advisory](#) for their watershed.

Photos Credits: Northwest Florida Water Management - Lake Jackson in Leon County. Photos from early March. Water levels have continued to decline with more of the lake bed exposed.



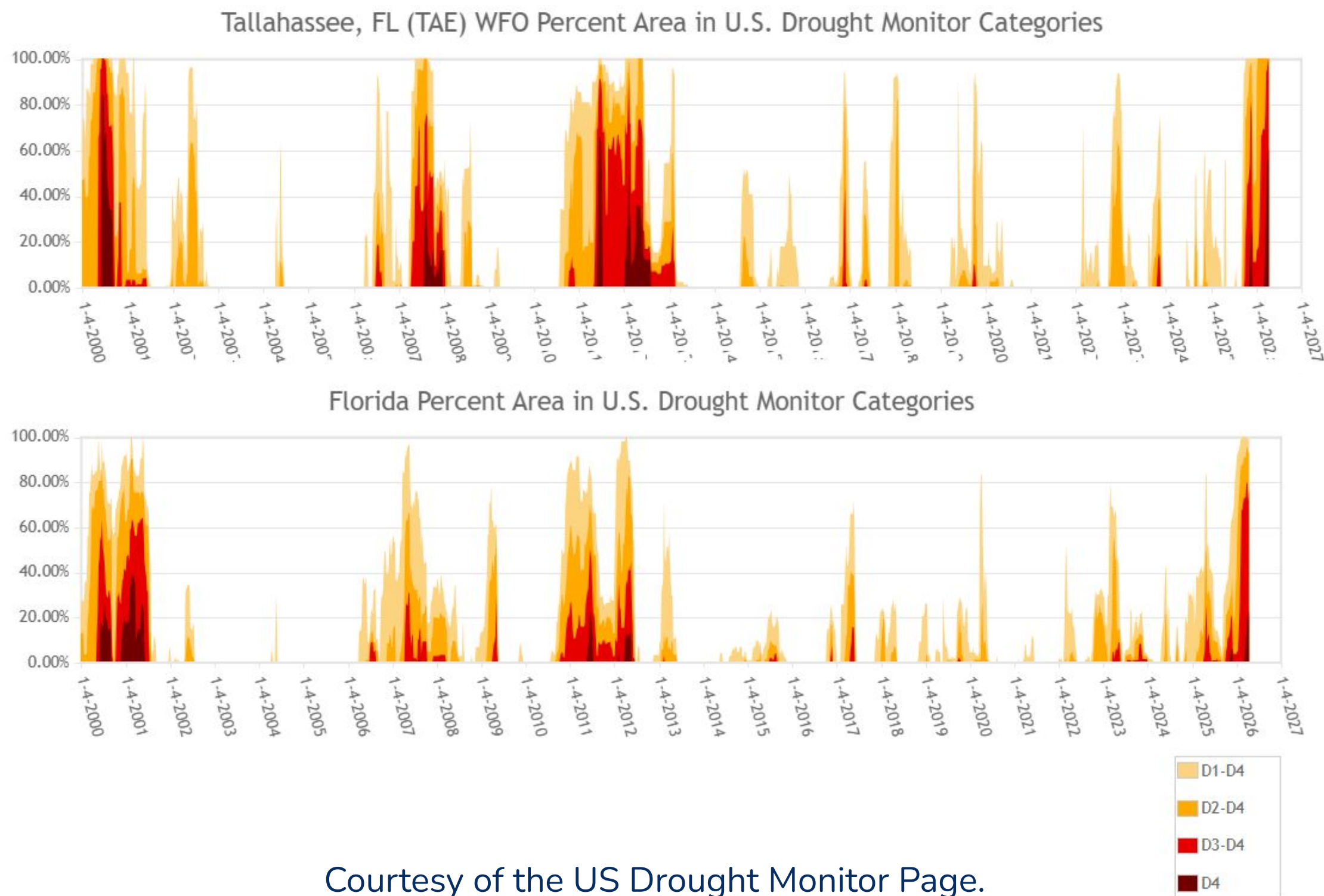


A Perspective on this Drought

Links: [Drought Monitor Time Series](#)

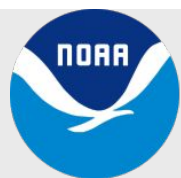
How does this drought compare to past long term droughts in the Tallahassee forecast area?

- There have been four long duration extreme droughts since 2000 in our region, including this current drought.
- This drought is not as long as the 2011/2012 drought, but the severity has now matched that of the 2000 drought.
- The entire Tallahassee forecast area is D3 (Extreme Drought) or worse. This did not occur in the 2011/2012 drought.
- In the Tallahassee forecast area this is the highest percent coverage of D3 since the 2000 drought.
- In Florida, this is the highest amount of D3 coverage since the drought monitor began in 2000.



Courtesy of the US Drought Monitor Page.

Time series depiction of D1, D2, D3, and D4 drought across the Tallahassee forecast area by percentage (top) and across Florida (bottom). Records date back to 2000.

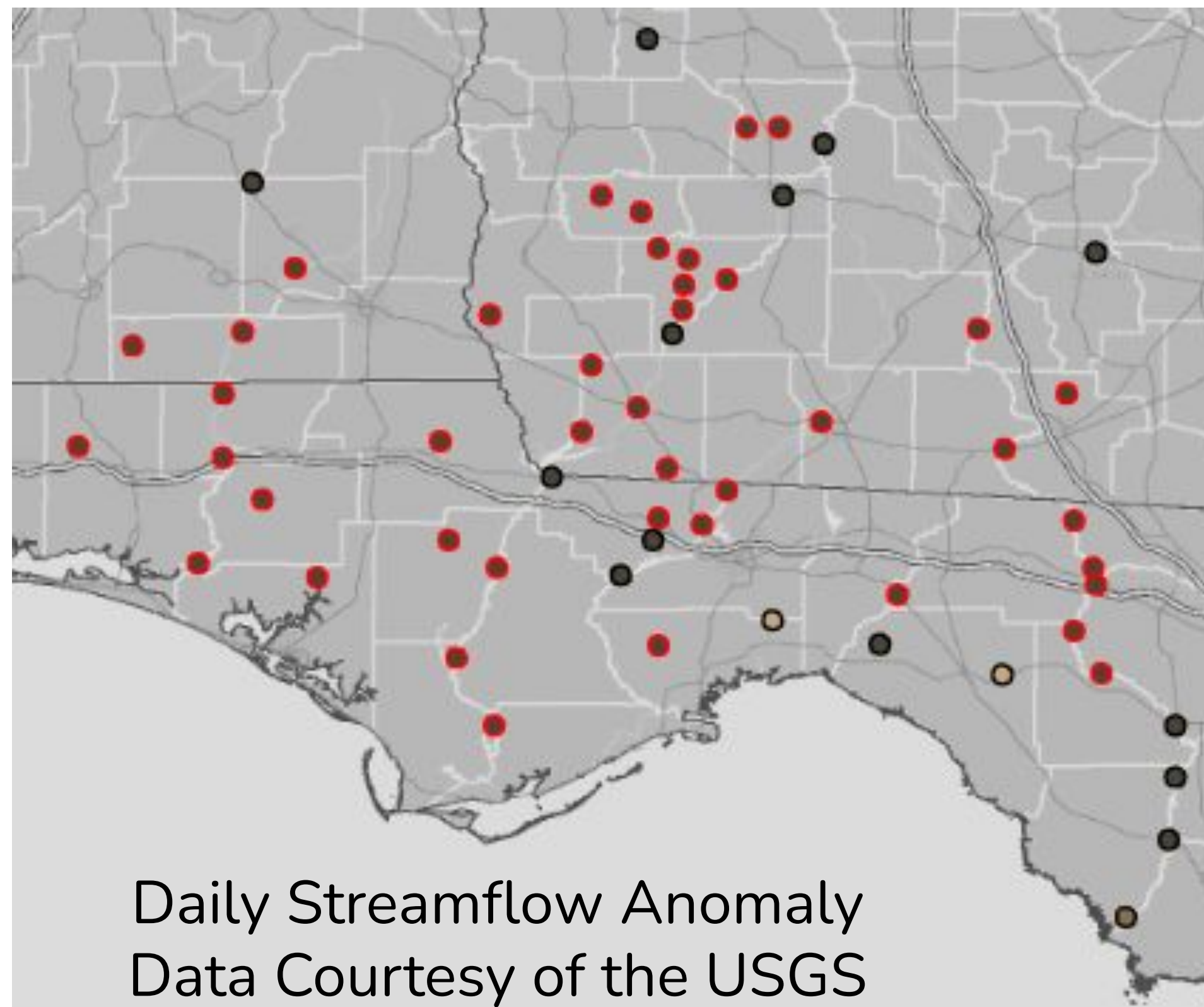




Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Streamflow conditions are exceptionally low and well below normal for this time of year, with many sites at daily record low flows.
- This is recharge season across the Southeast, and the lack of substantive rainfall will only worsen drought conditions.
- Planting season is underway. Irrigation and plant growth is pulling additional water from the soil. With no substantive rain to replace it, groundwater levels will continue to worsen.
- Recreational activities on area waterways are being impacted, with some smaller rivers and creeks not navigable to canoes and paddle boats.
- In response to declining streamflows and groundwater, Northwest Florida Water Management District has issued a [Water Shortage Warning](#), and Suwannee River Water Management District has issued a [Water Shortage Advisory](#).

Minimum
Extremely Below Normal <5th Percentile
Much Below Normal 5-10th Percentile
Below Normal 10-25th Percentile
Normal 25-75th Percentile
Above Normal 75-90th Percentile
Much Above Normal 90-95th Percentile
Extremely Above Normal 75-90th Percentile
Maximum

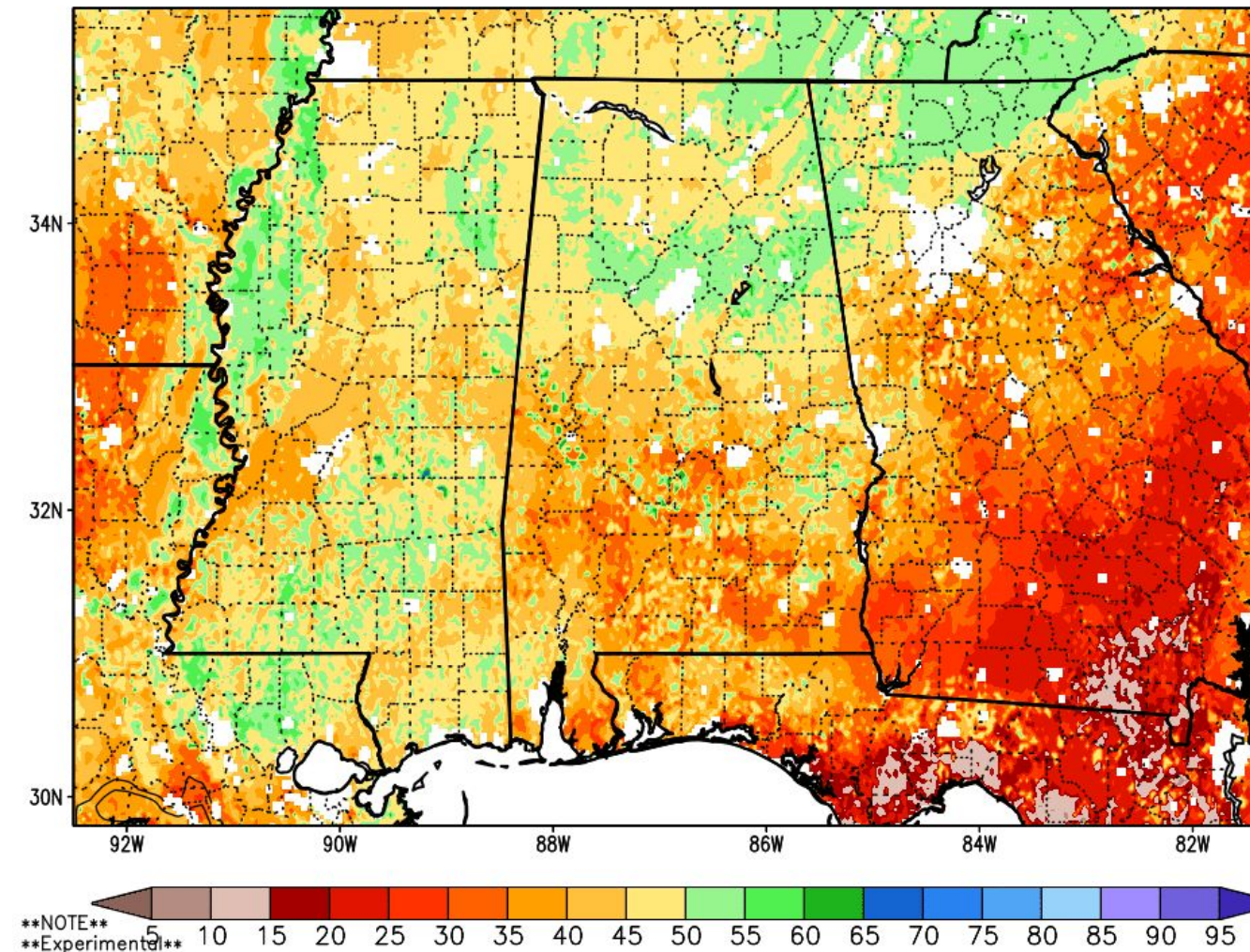




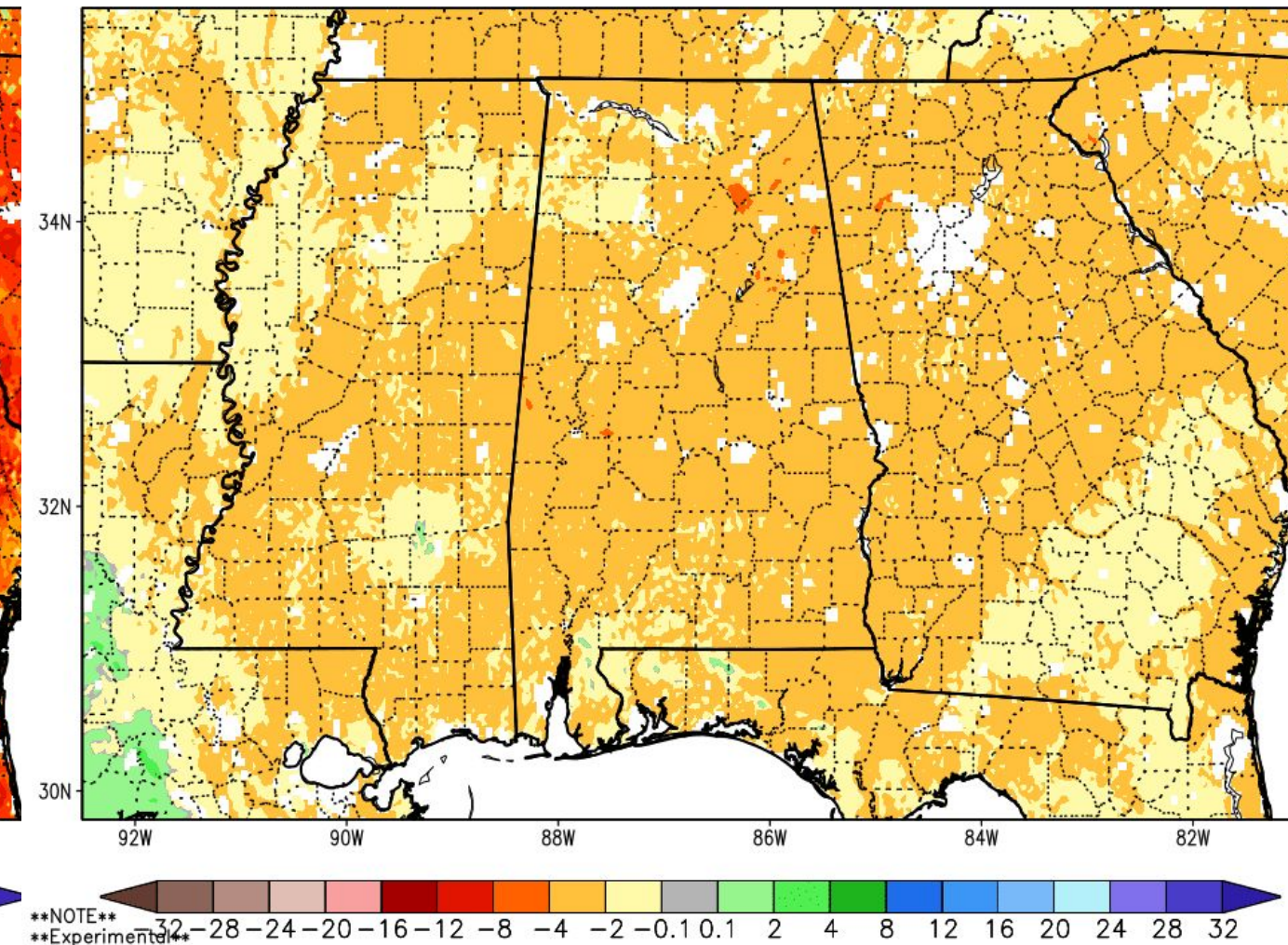
Agricultural Impacts

- Deep layer soil moisture remains drier than normal across the region, especially in our harder hit drought areas in South Georgia and North Florida.
- Planting season is underway, but we will need increased rainfall to keep up with the water demand.
- With no rain this past week, soil moisture continues to decline.

Column-Integrated Relative Soil Moisture (available water; %) valid 12z 23 Apr 2
Precipitation in previous hour (1,2,5,10,15,20,25 mm contours)

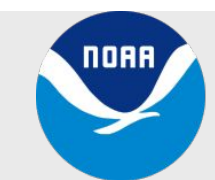


1-Week Difference in Column Relative Soil Moisture (%) valid 12z 23 Apr 2026



0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture & 1-week Change in 0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture
Data courtesy of NASA SPoRT

2026 Crop Reports
[Alabama](#) | [Florida](#) | [Georgia](#)



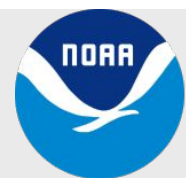
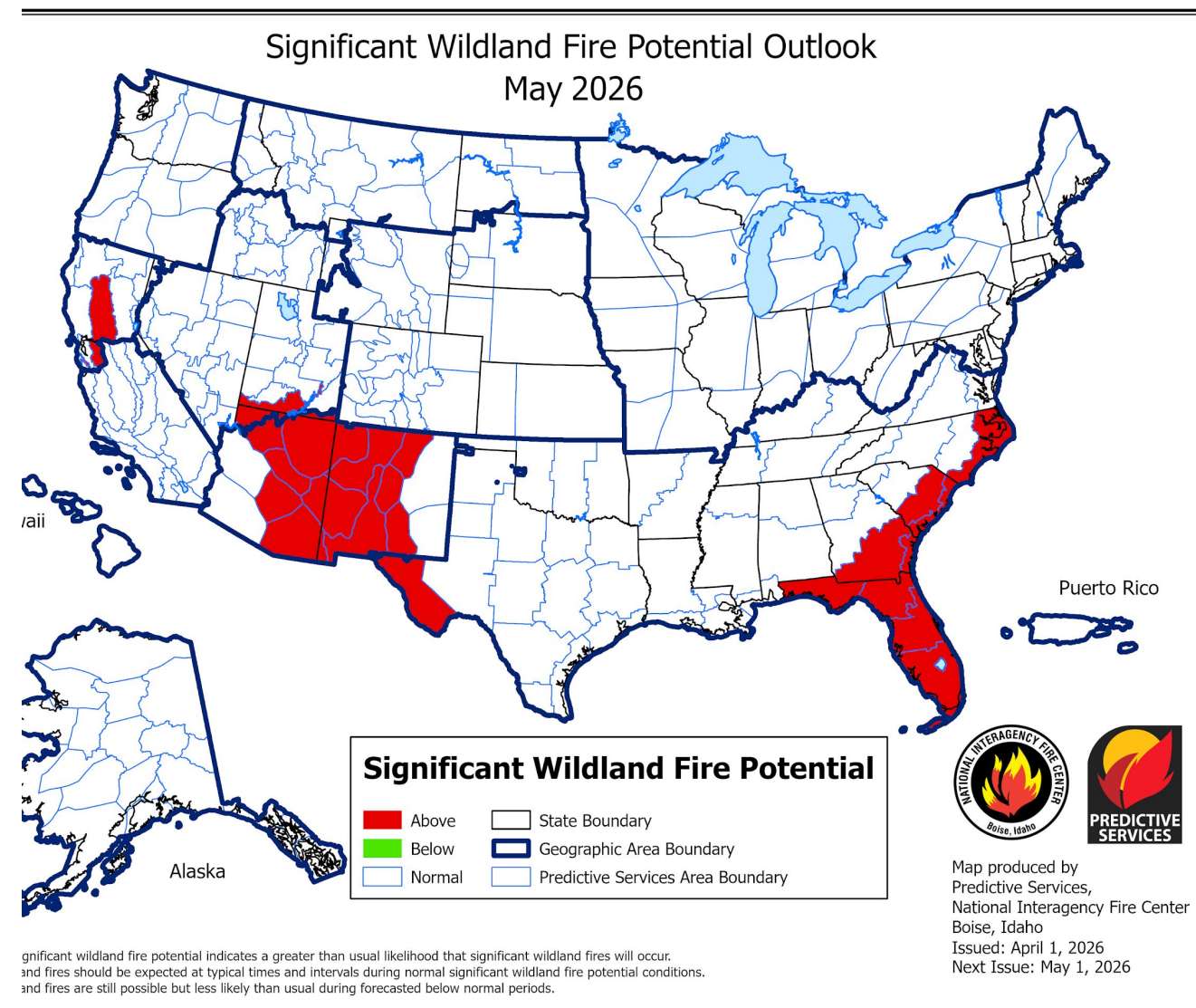
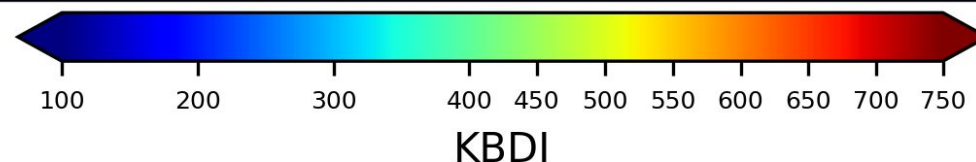
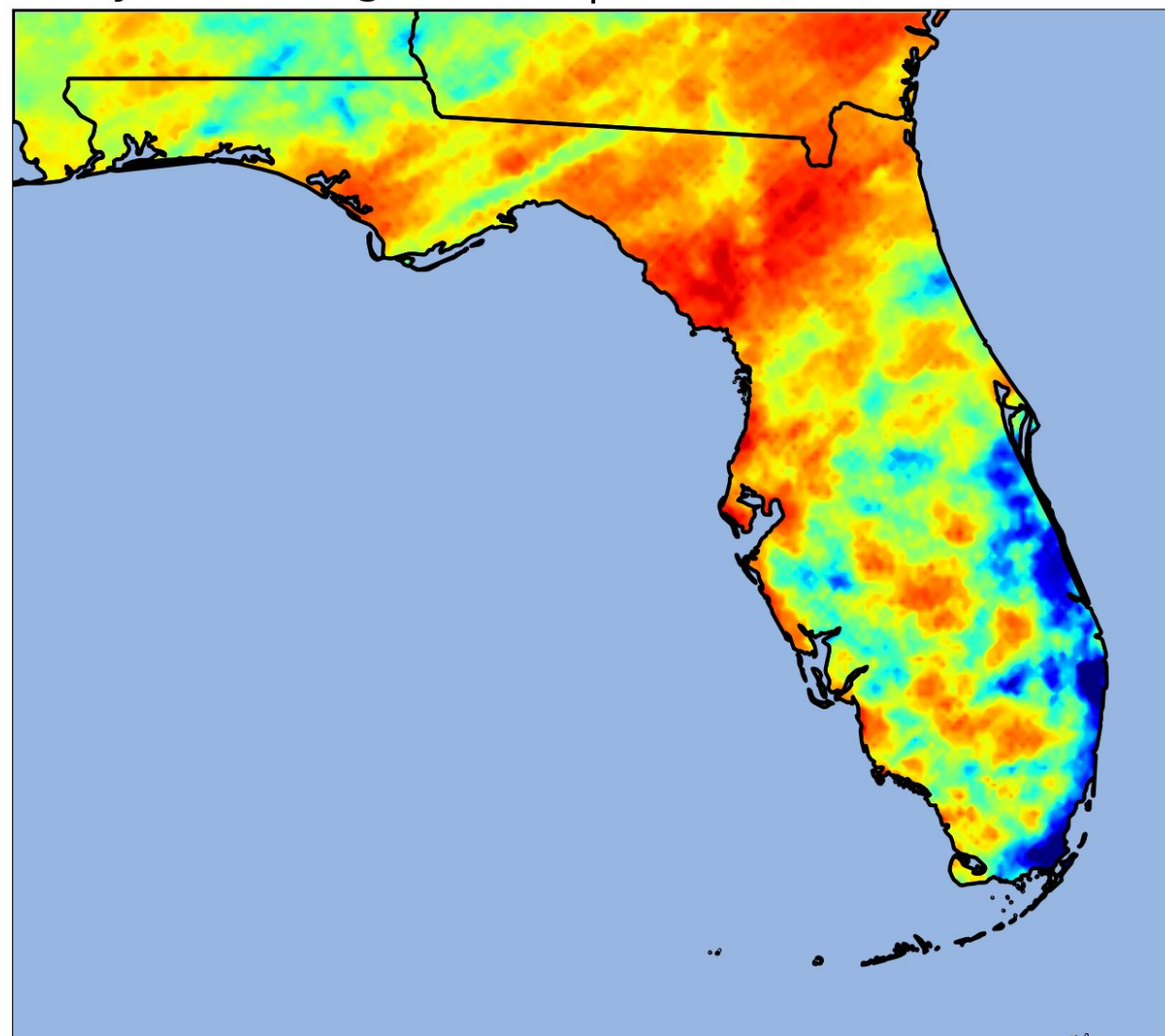


Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center](#).

- Keetch-Byram Drought Indices are rising steadily across the region.
- Burn bans are in place for all of South Georgia and most of the Florida Big Bend and Florida Panhandle.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for May calls for above normal wildfire activity across most of the region.

Keetch-Byram Drought Index | Wed 04/22/26, 02:00 PM EDT

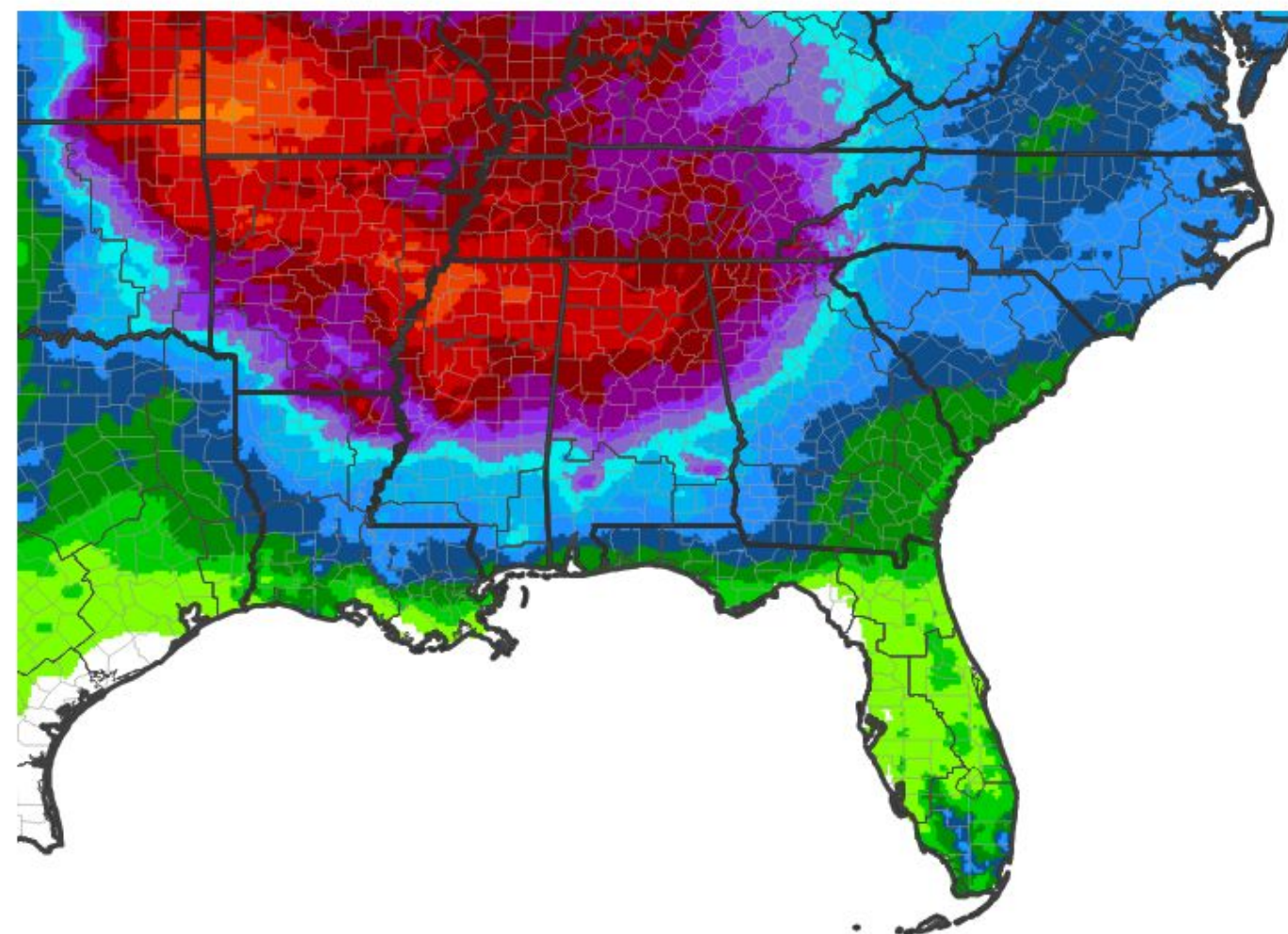




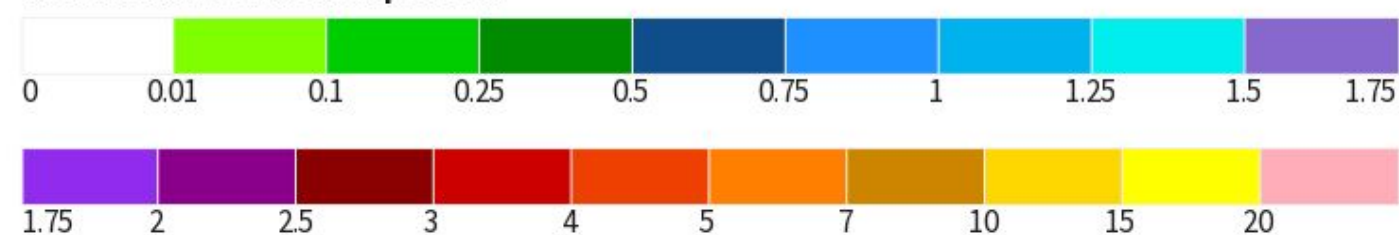
Precipitation Outlook

- The weather pattern will be more supportive for scattered showers and thunderstorms this weekend and again late next week.
- It is possible up to an inch of rainfall could occur this weekend, mainly in Southeast Alabama.
- There is no strong signal for above or below normal precipitation in the [8-14 day outlook](#) (4/30 - 5/6).

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for April 23, 2026–April 30, 2026



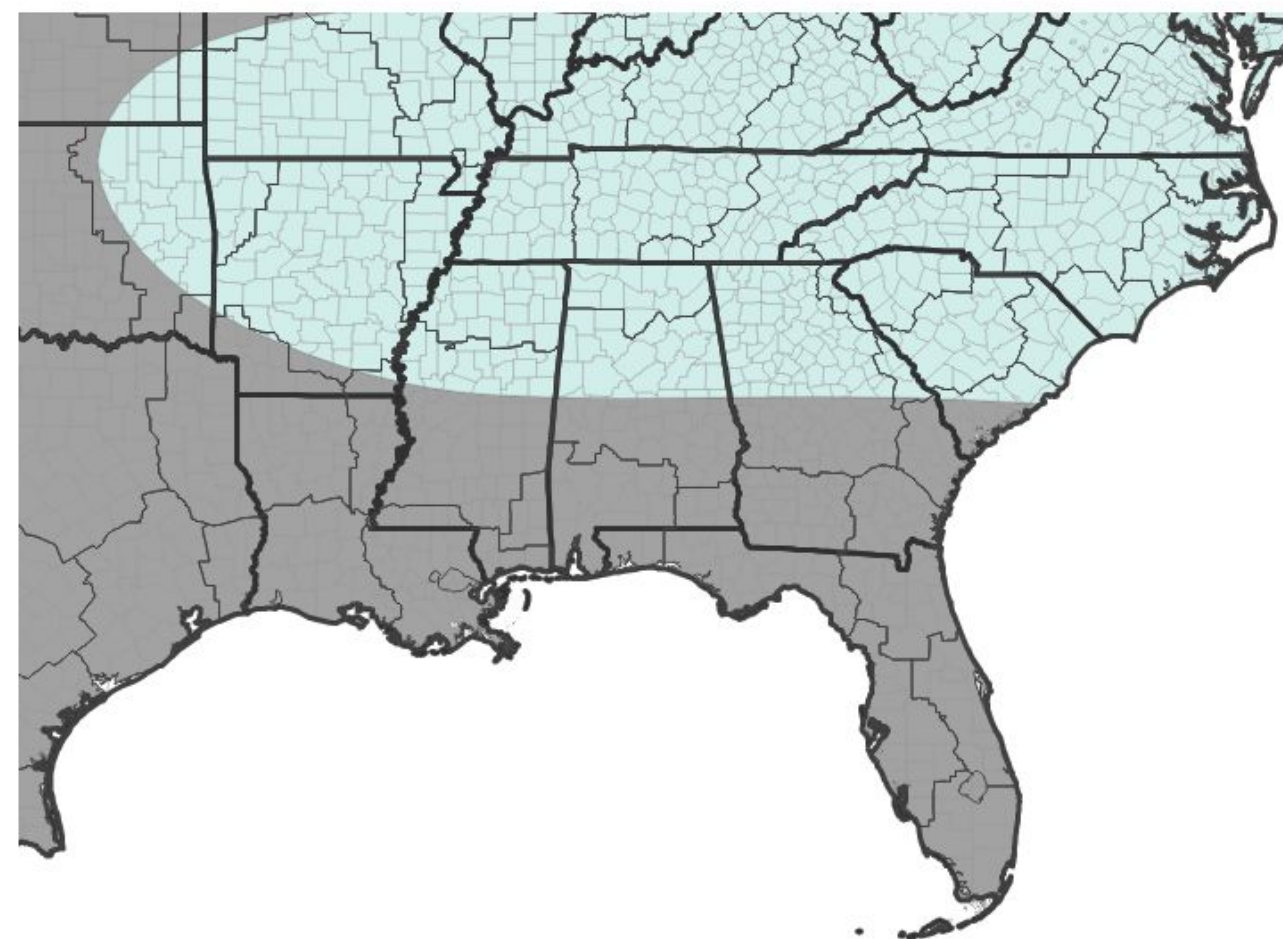
Predicted Inches of Precipitation



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

Last Updated: 04/23/26

8–14 Day Precipitation Outlook for April 30, 2026–May 6, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



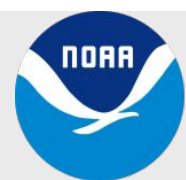
Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



■ Near-Normal Conditions

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

Last Updated: 04/22/26



National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL



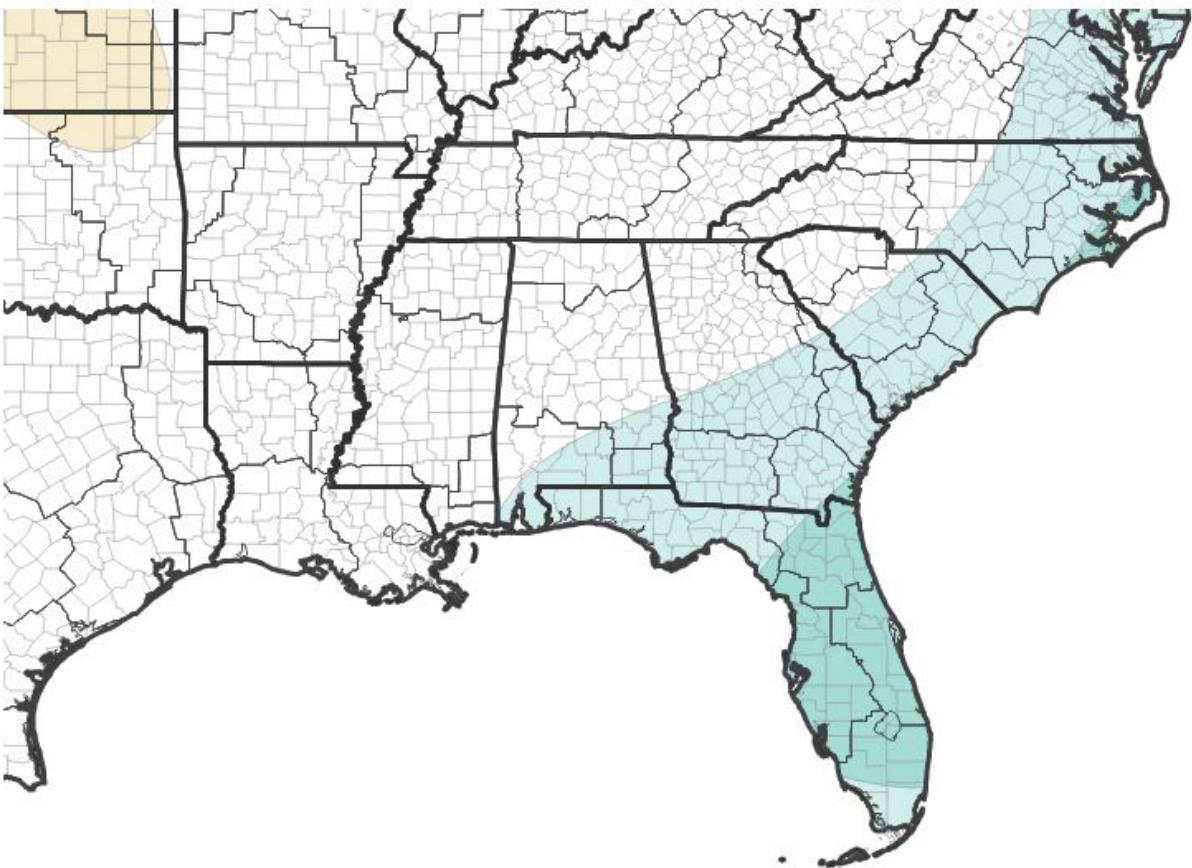
Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#).

- The next 3 months favor above normal temperatures and slightly above normal precipitation.
- As sea breeze season approaches in late May, the potential for near to slightly above normal rainfall exists. Nonetheless, significant rainfall is needed to improve the drought.

Average	May		June		July	
	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain
Tallahassee	75.2°	3.36"	80.8°	7.76"	82.5°	7.14"
Apalachicola	74.8°	1.87"	80.7°	5.86"	82.2°	5.74"
Albany	75.3°	2.41"	80.9°	5.06"	83.1°	5.12"
Valdosta	73.4°	2.84"	79.0°	7.08"	81.1°	5.33"
Marianna	75.9°	3.15"	81.1°	5.07"	82.7°	5.10"
Dothan	75.6°	2.92"	81.1°	5.08"	83.0°	5.95"

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for May 1, 2026–July 31, 2026



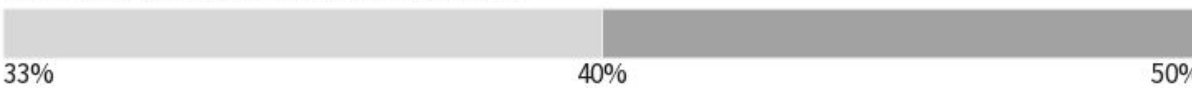
Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



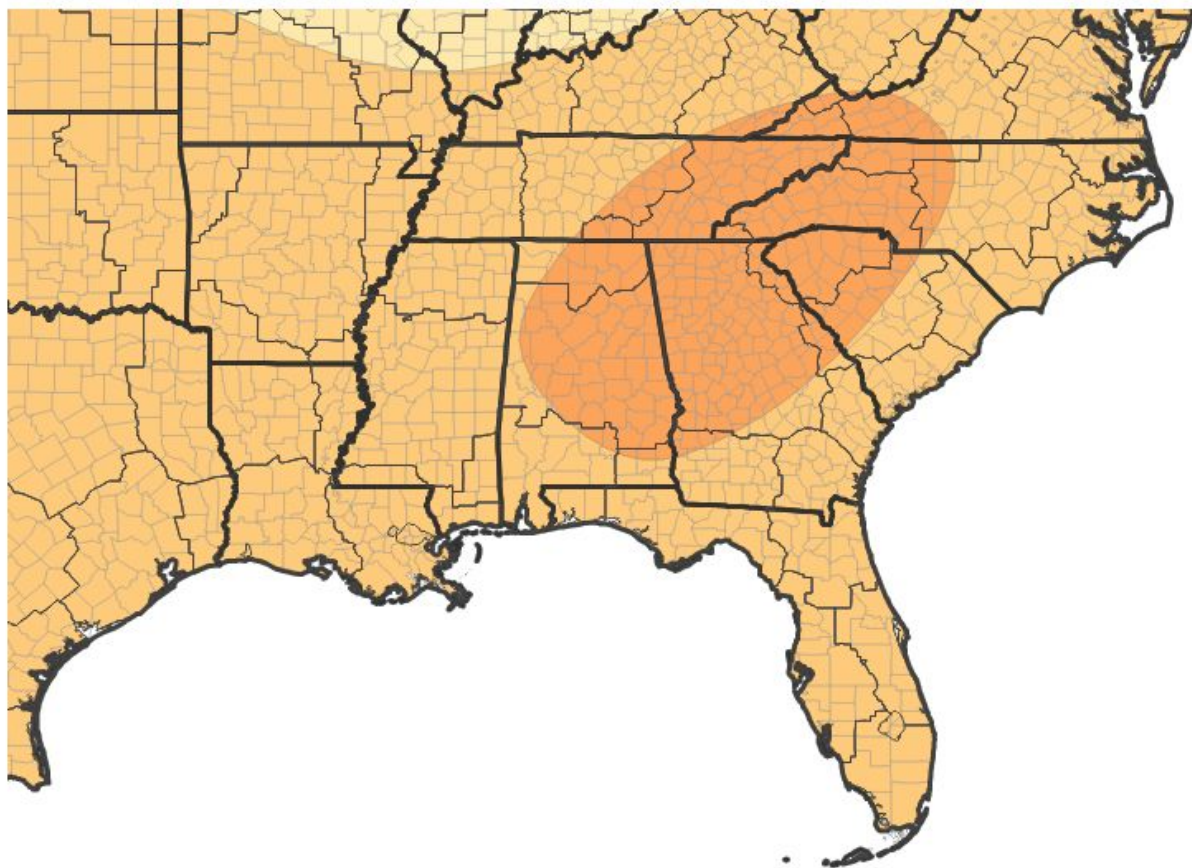
Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation



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

Last Updated: 04/16/26

Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for May 1, 2026–July 31, 2026



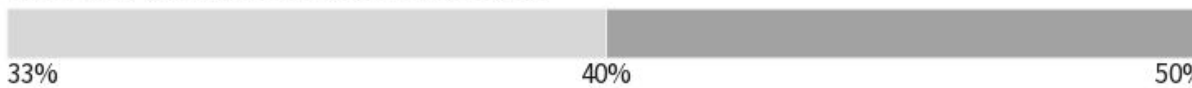
Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures



Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures



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

Last Updated: 04/16/26





Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#).

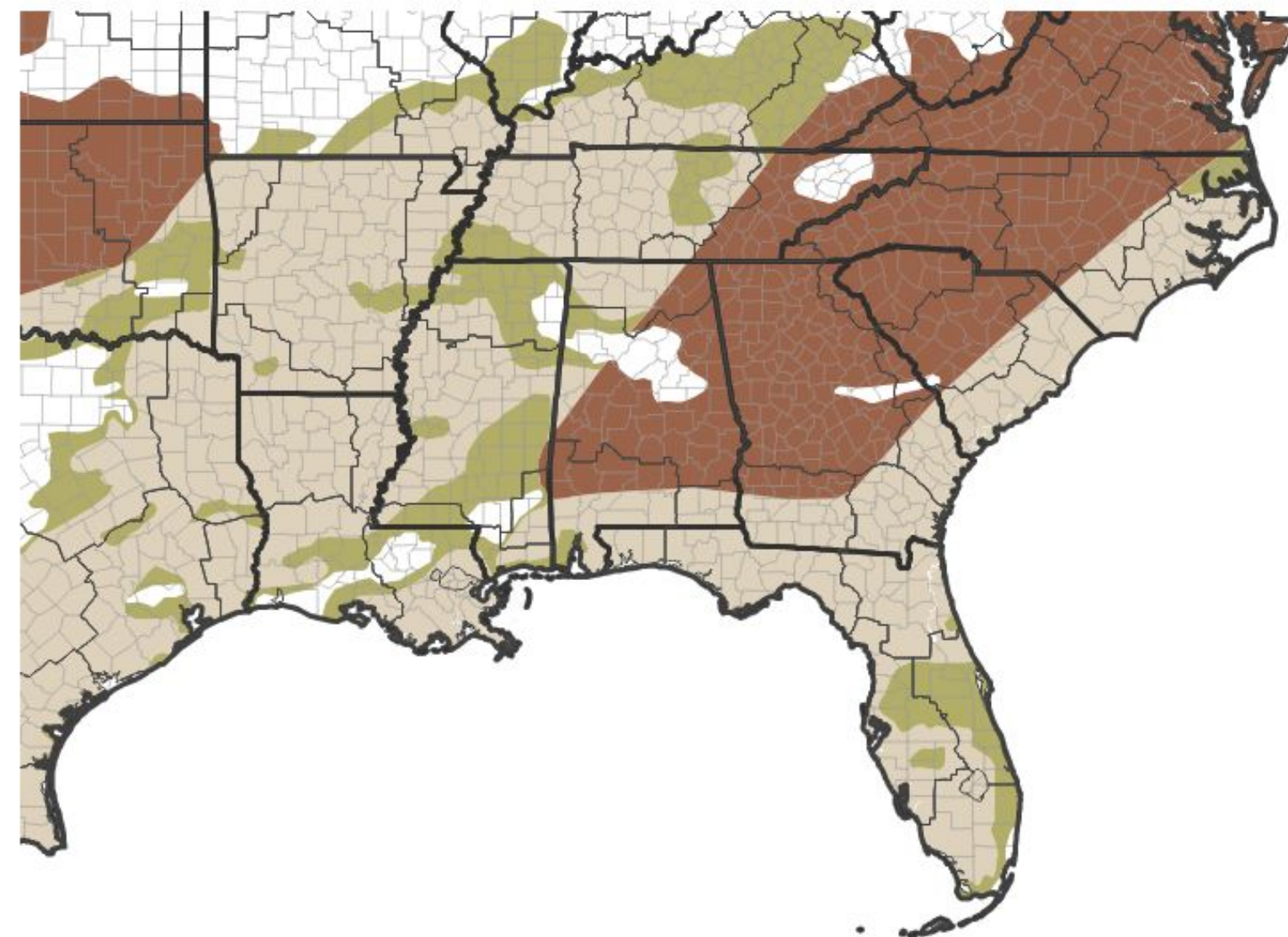
- Given the prediction that favors slightly above normal precipitation in the months ahead, drought is expected to persist, but the severity may improve across the region once the summer sea breeze season begins.
- Keep in mind, this is a 3-month outlook. Conditions will worsen into early May as below normal rainfall across our area is expected.
- Should the sea breeze season become active on schedule, late May through June could feature above normal rainfall, which will help improve drought conditions.
- If the start of the summer sea breeze season is delayed, drought conditions are could eclipse the severity of the 2000 drought.

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)

**Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for April 16,
2026–July 31, 2026**

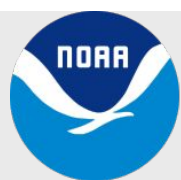


Drought Is Predicted To...



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

Last Updated: 04/16/26



**National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration**

U.S. Department of Commerce

**National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL**