



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

Valid April 30, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Tallahassee, FL

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- This product will be updated May 7, 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 and Expands Westward through more of 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.

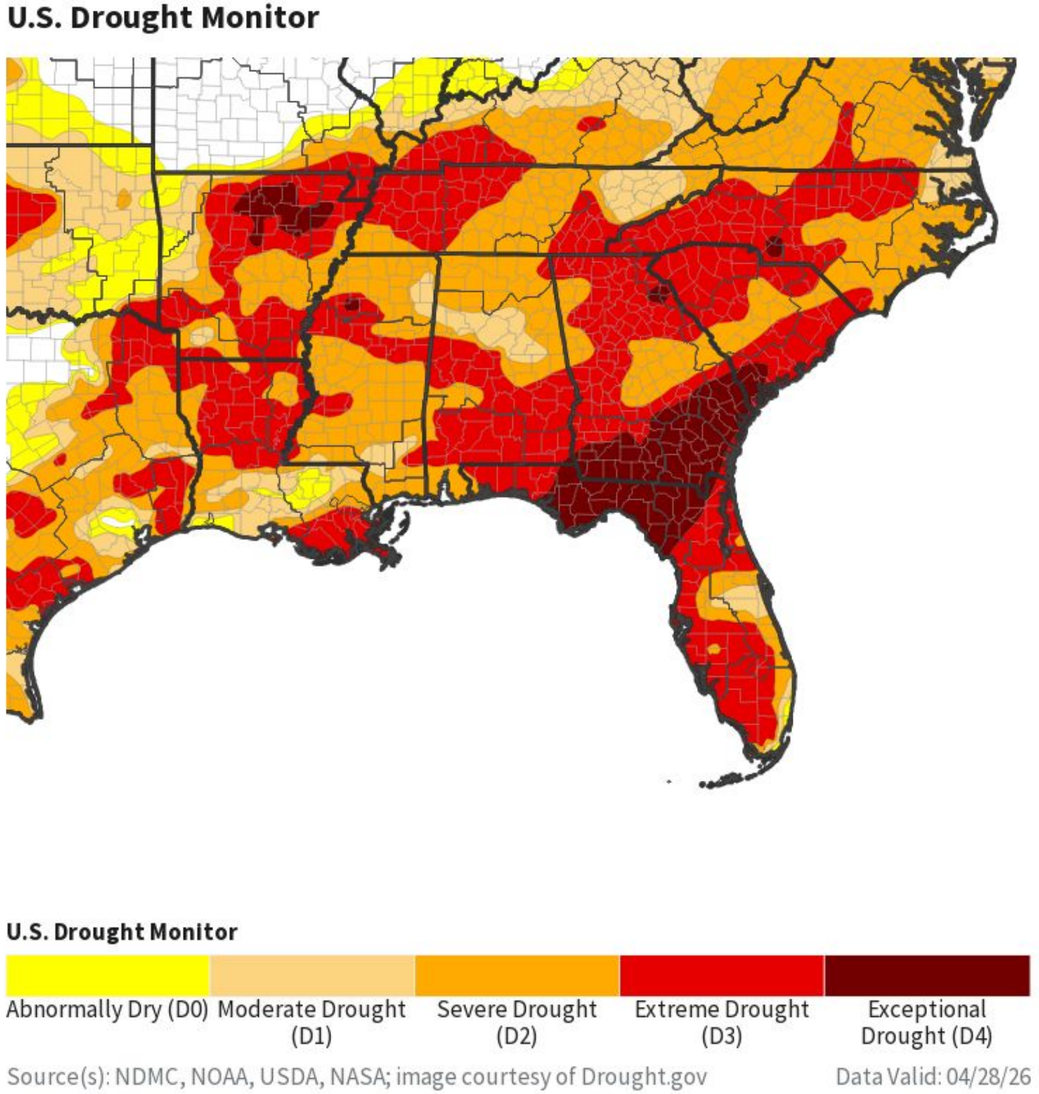
U.S. Drought Monitor

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 Bay County to Jackson County eastward to the Suwannee River.
- **D3 (Extreme Drought)**:
  - In Florida: West Bay and Jackson Counties to Walton County.
  - In Georgia: The remainder of South Georgia.
  - In Alabama: All of Southeast Alabama

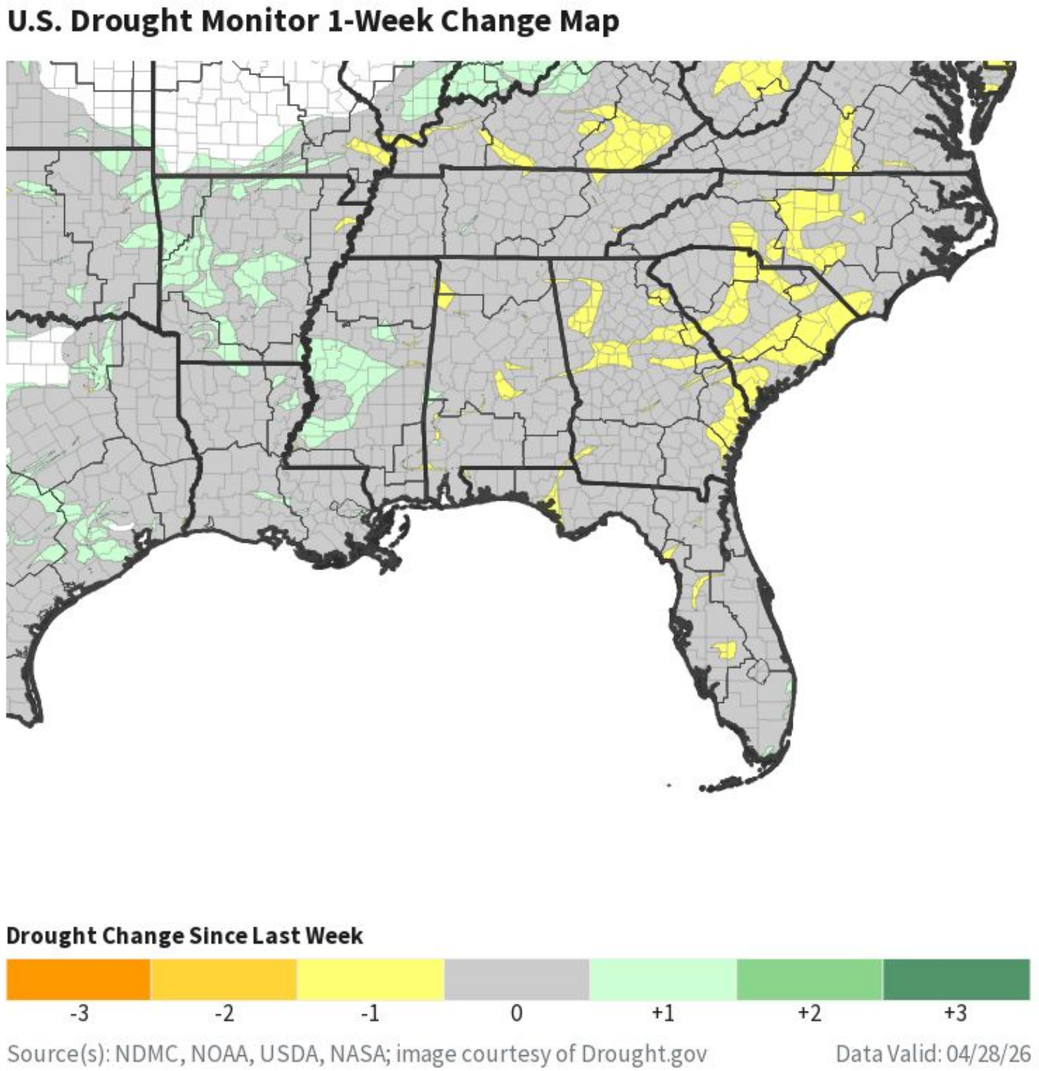


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

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

- Limited rainfall across the region this week led to small degradations across the region with areas in Southwest Georgia and the Florida Panhandle seeing worsening of drought conditions.

- One-Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
  - **1 Category Degradation:**
    - Bay, Eastern Washington, and Western Jackson Counties.
    - Miller County, Georgia
  - **No Change**
    - All other areas in the region.

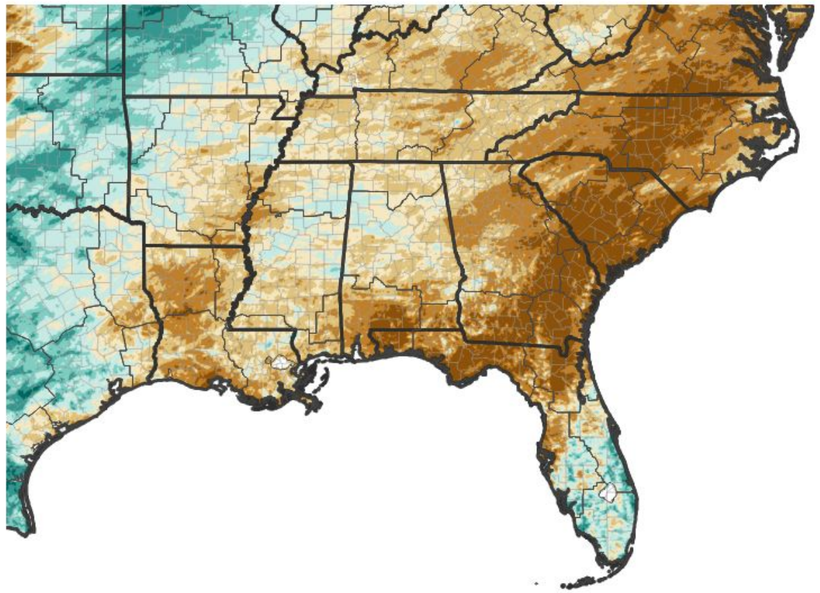


Precipitation

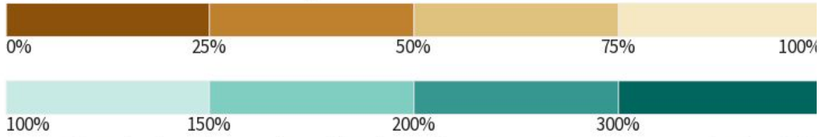
Note: Precipitation after 7 AM EST/6 AM CST Tuesday is incorporated in next week's Drought Monitor

	Last 30 Days		Last 90 Days	
	Rainfall	Percent	Rainfall	Percent
DeFuniak Springs*	1.91”	38.1%	8.44”	54.0%
Panama City ECP	0.15”	3.1%	3.01”	19.9%
Dothan	1.24”	25.8%	6.40”	44.2%
Marianna	0.94”	24.9%	4.93”	36.9%
Georgetown**	3.69”	82.4%	8.44”	59.6%
Dawson**	1.45”	33.9%	5.50”	39.3%
Arlington**	0.97”	23.0%	5.16”	36.5%
Albany	3.60”	97.9%	9.44”	77.4%
Cairo**	0.09”	2.3%	3.13”	23.4%
Tallahassee	0.42”	11.7%	4.01”	30.3%
Moultrie**	0.61”	16.9%	3.60”	27.1%
Monticello*	0.31“	8.0%	5.54”	42.4%
Ty Ty**	1.23”	34.1%	5.54”	43.3%
Alapaha**	0.10”	3.0%	2.73”	22.0%
Valdosta	0.45”	12.3%	5.16”	47.8%
Perry***	0.81”	24.0%	4.07”	34.9%

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



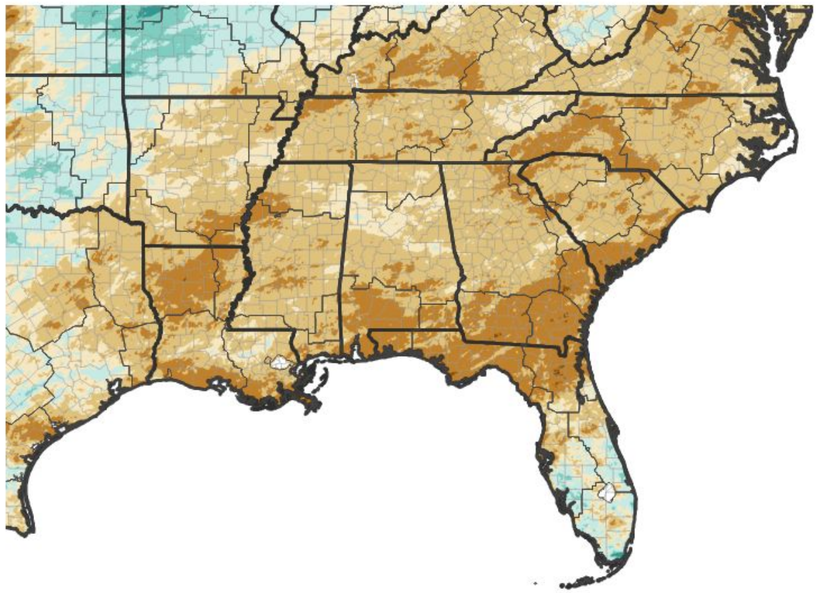
Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 04/30/2

90-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



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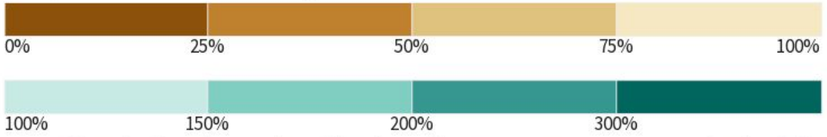


Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 04/30/26

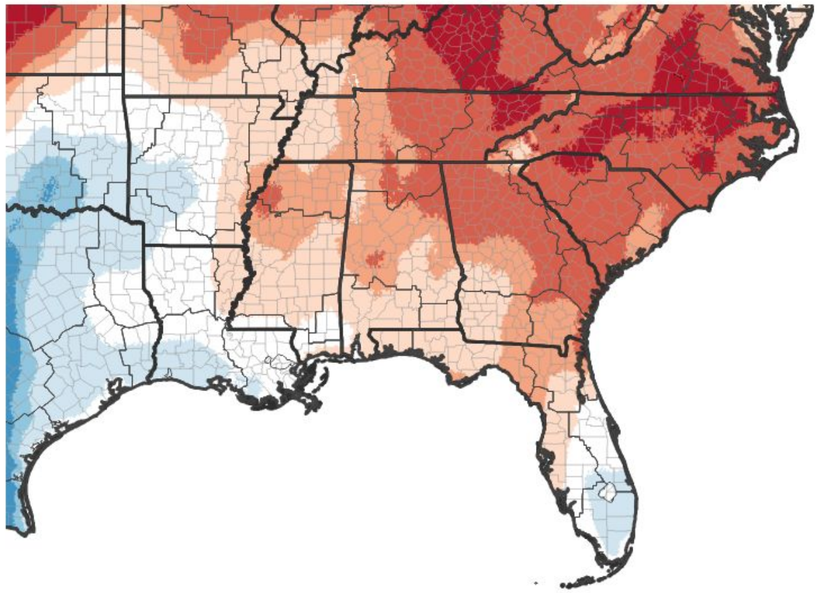
Rainfall totals through April 28, 2026. Non-NWS Data Courtesy:
*University of Florida - Florida Automated Weather Network
**University of Georgia Weather Network
***Suwannee River Water Management District
Climatology for non-NWS stations is estimated using PRISM data.

Temperature

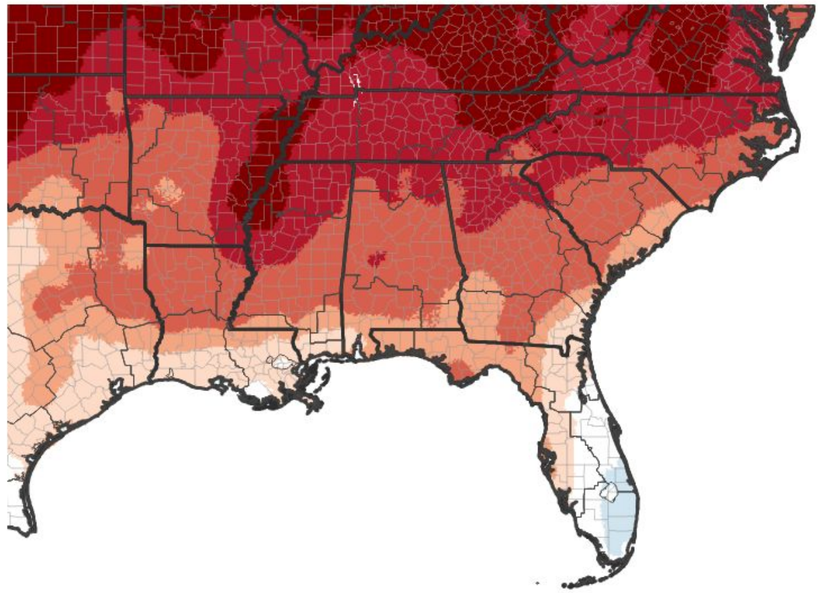
	Last 30 Days	
	Average High (Departure)	Average Low (Departure)
Tallahassee	84.3° (+4.0°)	56.0° (+1.5°)
Albany	79.7° (+2.3°)	55.9° (+1.5°)
Valdosta	83.9° (+4.2°)	55.1° (+2.2°)
Marianna	83.0° (+2.8°)	56.2° (+1.0°)
Dothan	81.4° (+2.0°)	56.0° (+0.6°)

- 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.

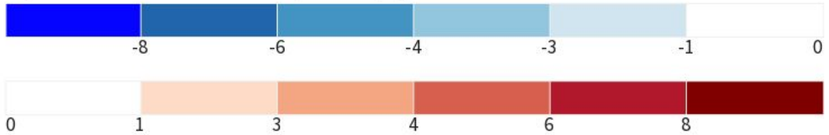
7-Day Temperature Anomaly



30-Day Temperature Anomaly



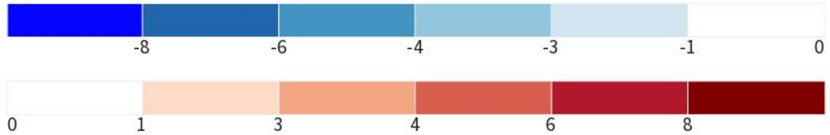
Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



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

Data Valid: 04/25/26

Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



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

Data Valid: 04/25/26

Summary of Impacts - Southeast Alabama

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

Hydrologic Impacts

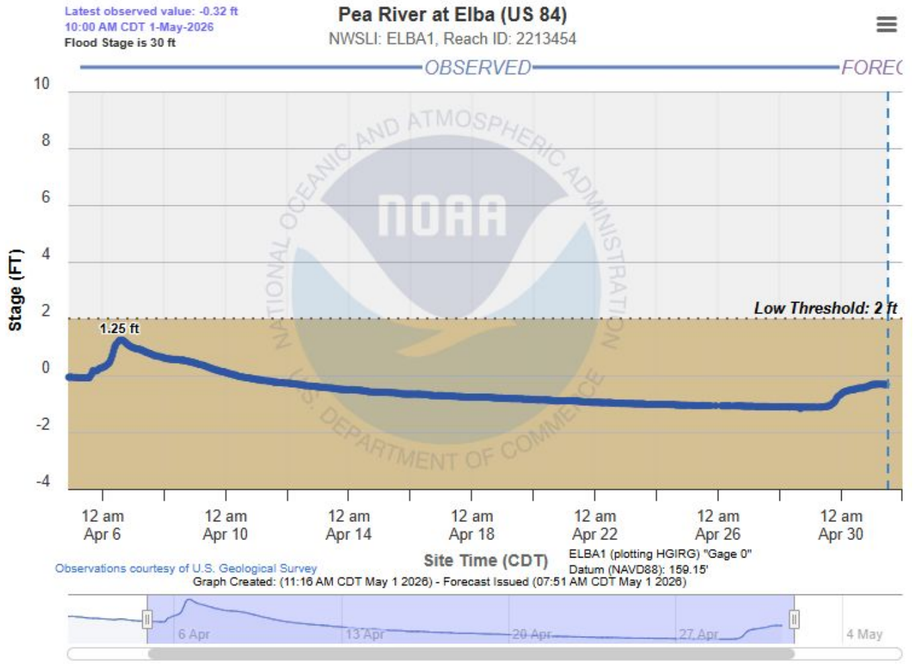
- Streamflows remain exceptionally low for this time of year. Daily streamflows for the Choctawhatchee and Pea River are near or at all time record lows.
- Surface and groundwater levels are exceptionally low. A report from Dale County, Alabama mentioned holding ponds at low levels not seen in 20 years.

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 450-600 across the region.
- Southern Area Coordination Center issued a Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory



Pea River at Elba hydrograph over the last 24 days shown. The steady decline in water levels continued through much of April until some recent rainfall led to a modest rise.

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

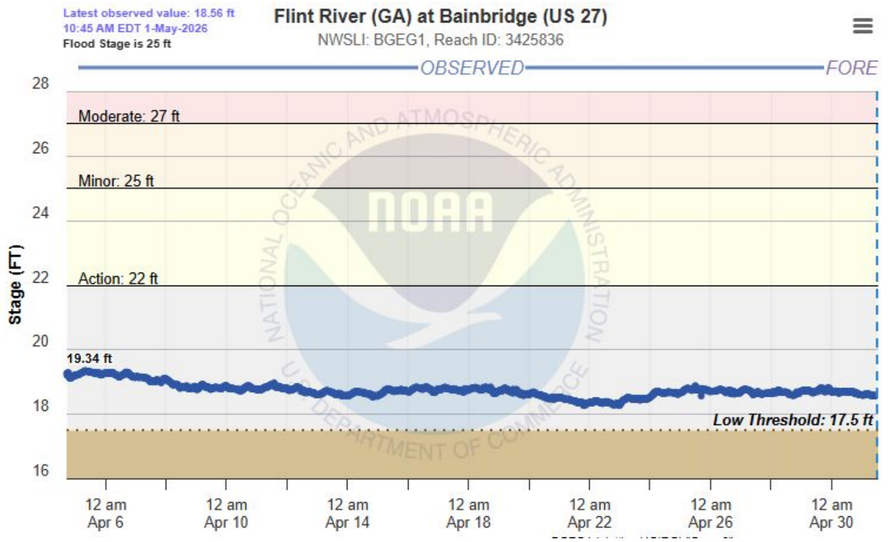
- Planting season has begun with corn where irrigation is available. Absent irrigation, some farmers are choosing not to plant crops until more soil moisture is available. Bedded fields ready for tobacco transplanting are being watered, but growers are still waiting for more moisture before starting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

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 500-650 across the region, highest close to I-75.

Mitigation Actions

- A burn ban is in effect for all Southwest Georgia counties.
- Southern Area Coordination Center issued a Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory



Hydrograph for the Flint River at Bainbridge. Generally low stages have persisted over the last month. Inflows beyond this point enter Lake Seminole and these inflows are at daily record lows for this time of year.

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 with some sites at daily record lows.
- 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

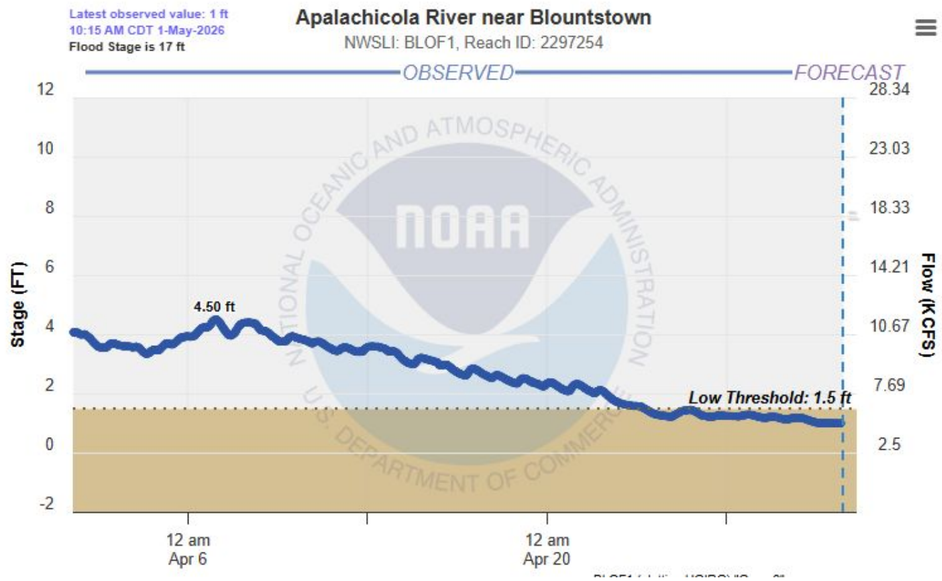
- Planting season is beginning, but concerns exist given exceptionally low sub-surface water levels that irrigation will further stress the water table as farmers draw water from wells.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 500-700 across the region.
- Burn bans are in place for Walton, Holmes, Washington, Jackson, Bay, Calhoun, and Gulf Counties.

Mitigation Actions

- Northwest Florida Water Management District has issued a water shortage warning for their watershed.
- Southern Area Coordination Center issued a Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory



Hydrograph for the Apalachicola near Blountstown. With decreasing releases from Lake Seminole, the Apalachicola River continues to decline. Tributaries into the Apalachicola, like the Chipola River are at record lows.

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

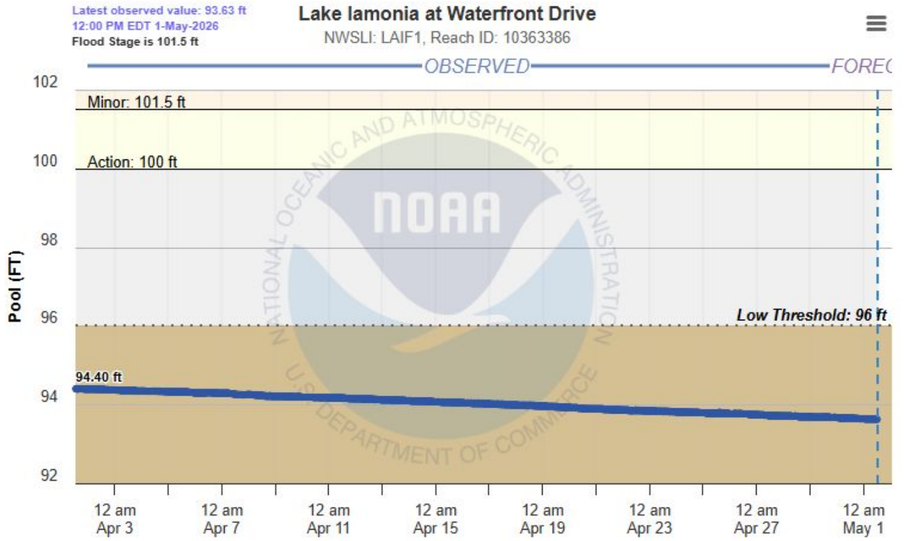
- Planting season is underway, but concerns exist given exceptionally low sub-surface water levels that irrigation will further stress the water table.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 550-725, highest in Dixie County.
- Burn bans are in effect for Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, Lafayette, and Dixie Counties.

Mitigation Actions

- Suwannee River Water Management District has issued a water shortage advisory for their watershed.
- Southern Area Coordination Center issued a Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory



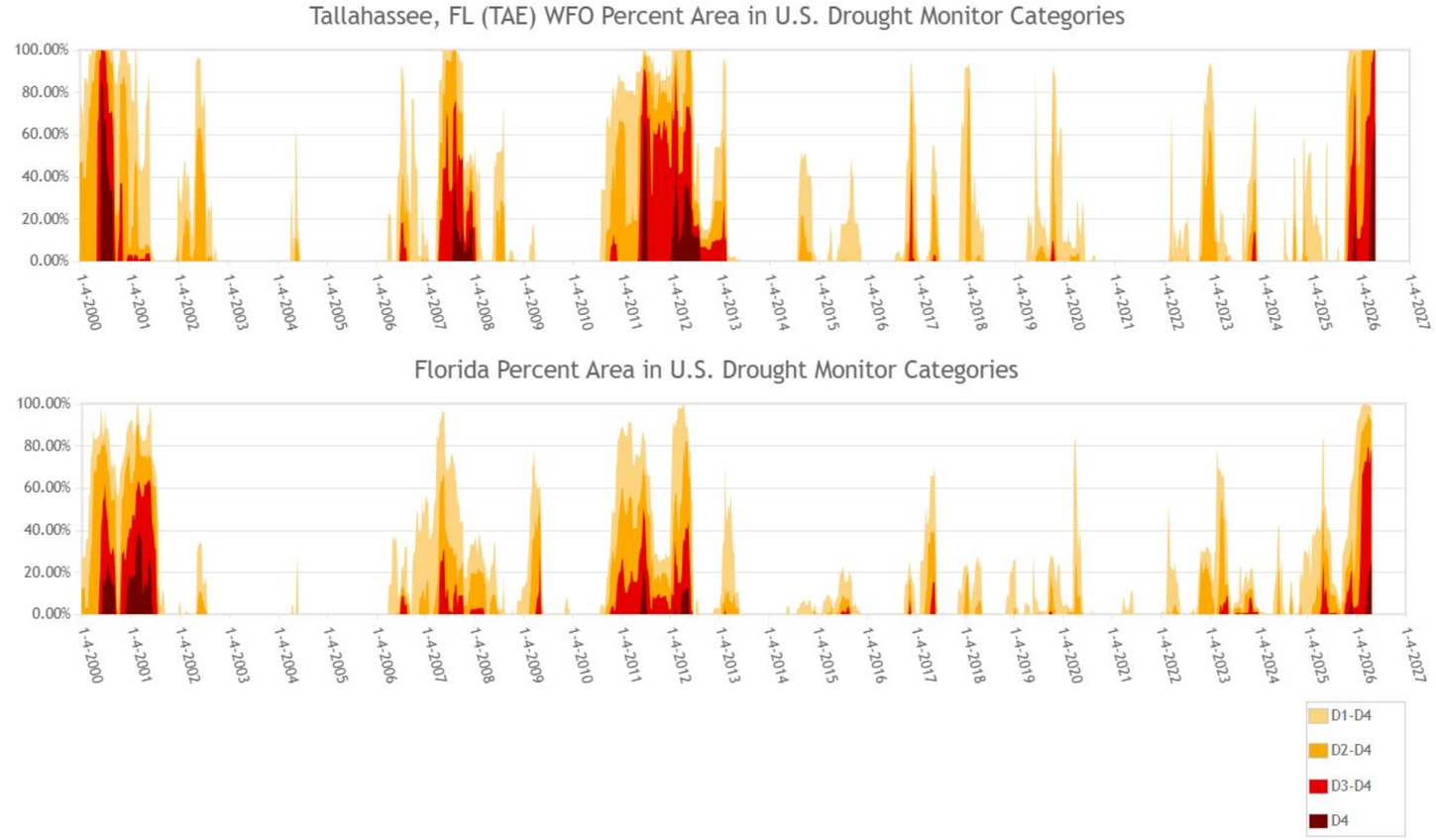
Hydrograph for Lake Iamonia. Lake Iamonia is a prairie lake in Northern Leon County. The lake has dropped 0.8 ft during the month of April. The lake often depends on high flows from the Ochlockonee River for recharge as the lake and river are connected near the southwestern edge of the lake. With the Ochlockonee River at all time lows for this time of year, the lake is at exceptionally low levels.

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 with many sites at daily record low flows.
- Recharge season is ending in the Southeast, and the lack of significant rain is setting the stage for increasing water concerns moving into the warmer months of the year.
- 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

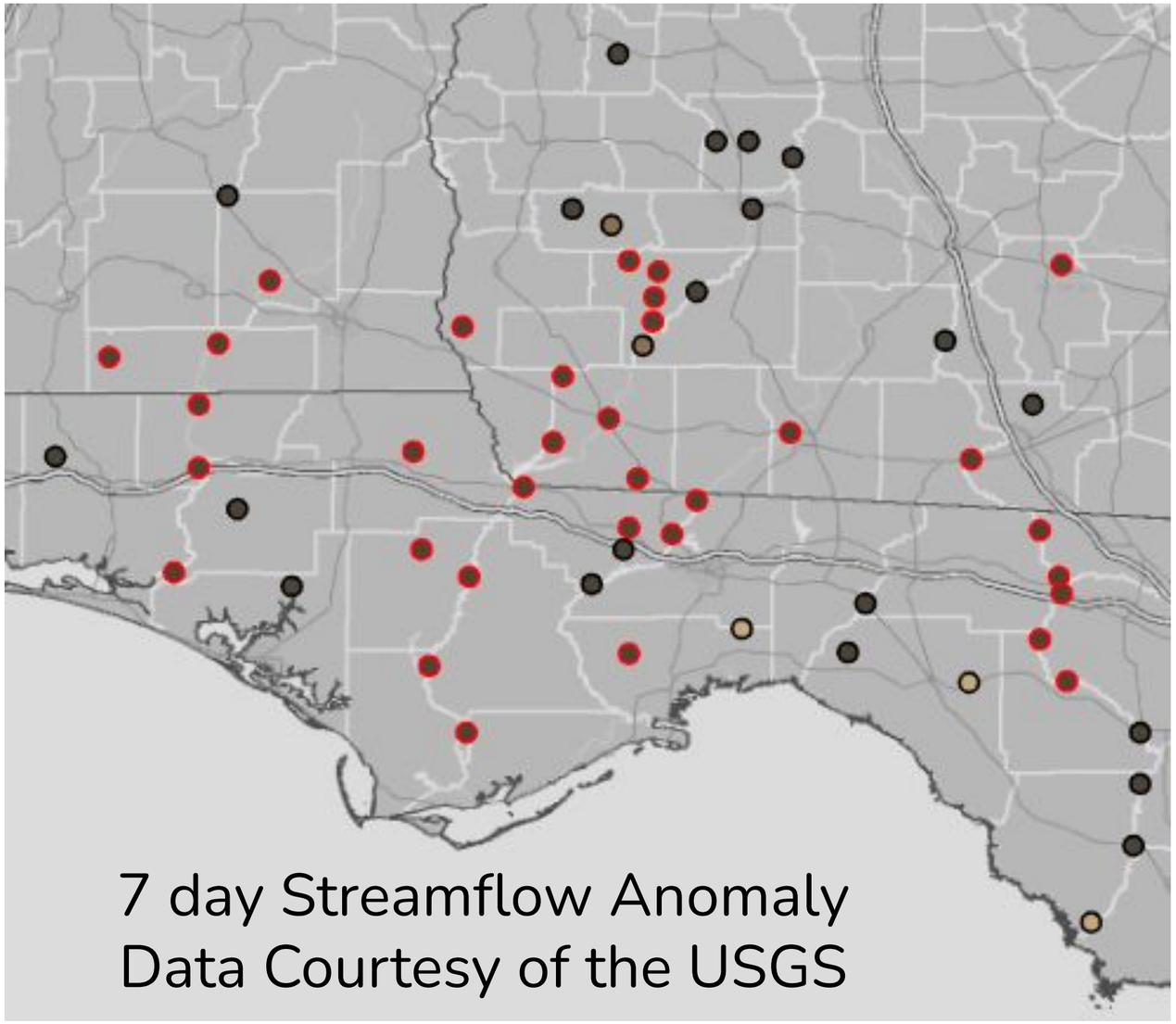
Normal
25-75th Percentile

Above Normal
75-90th Percentile

Much Above Normal
90-95th Percentile

Extremely Above Normal
75-90th Percentile

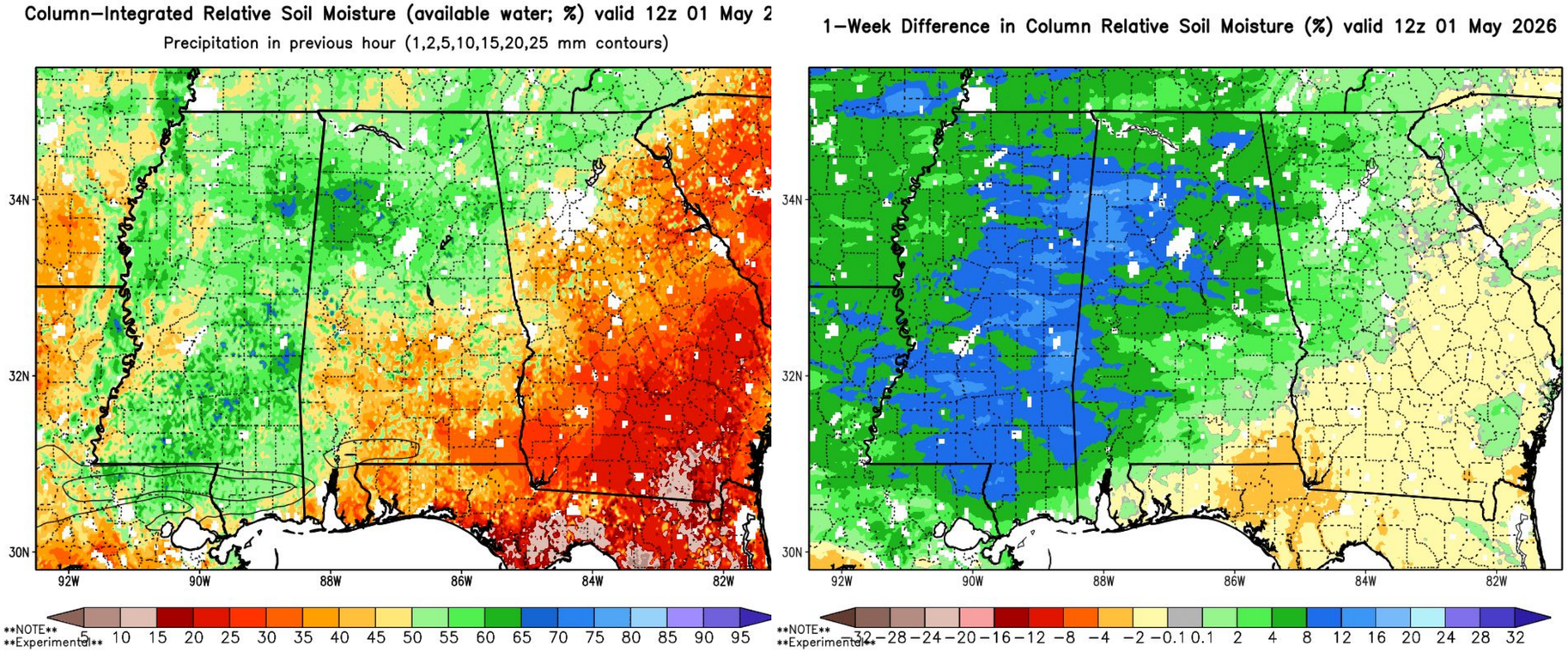
Maximum



7 day Streamflow Anomaly
Data Courtesy of the USGS

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.



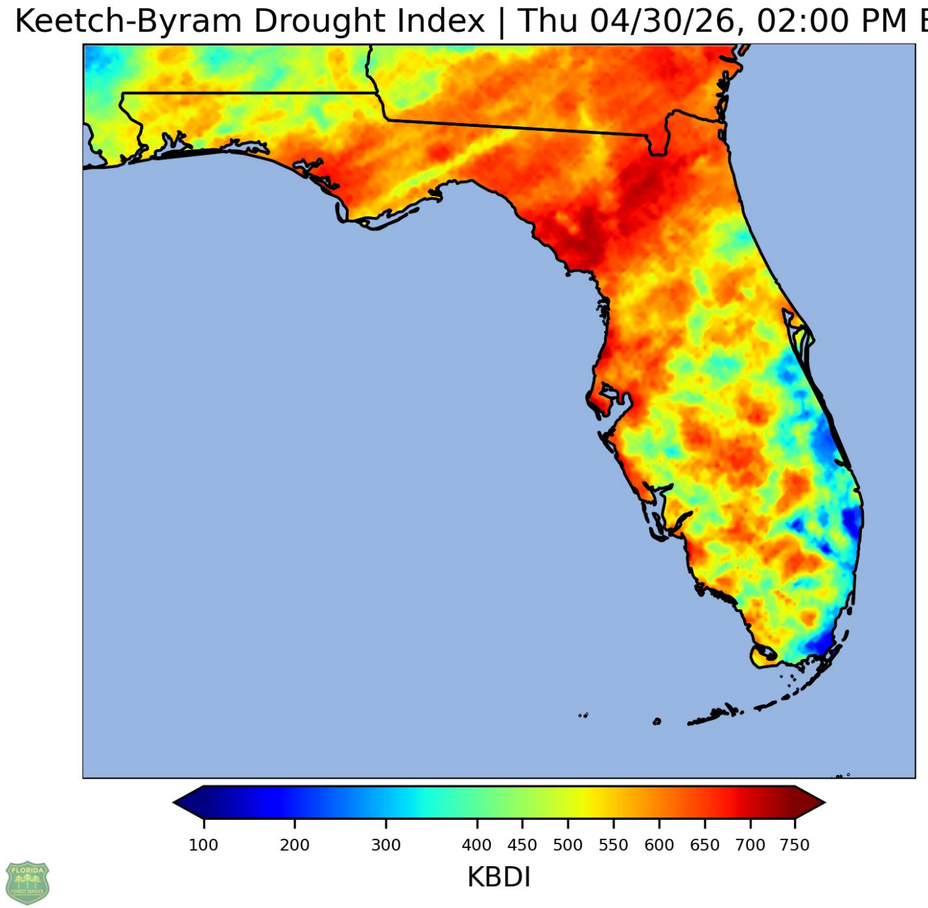
0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture & 1-week Change in 0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture
Data courtesy of NASA SPoRT

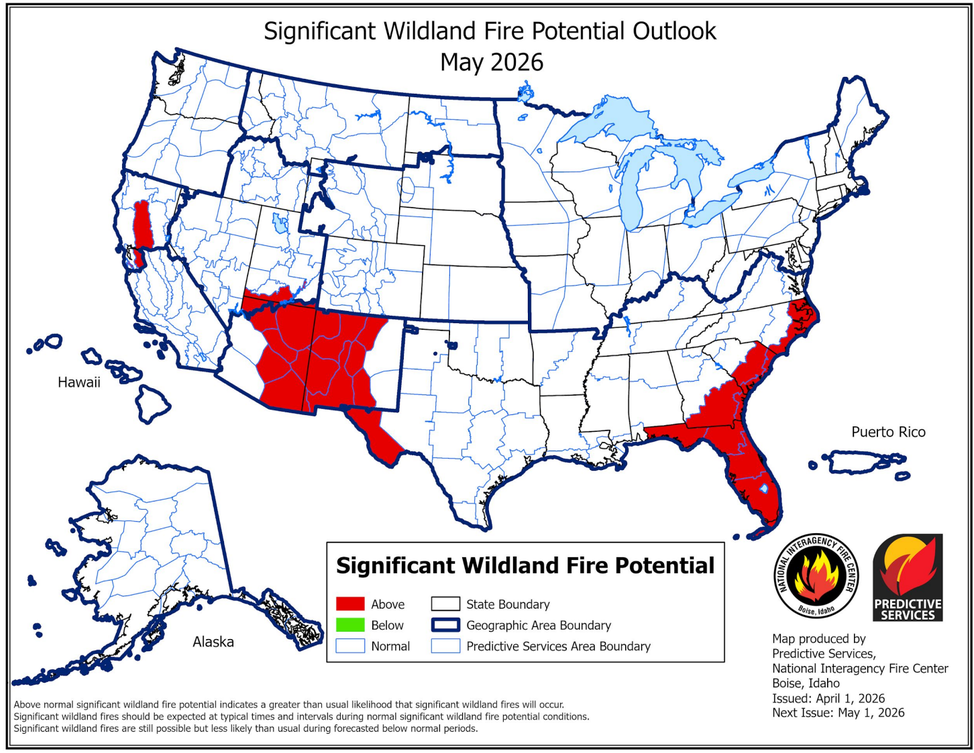
2026 Crop Reports
Alabama | Florida | Georgia

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, all of then Florida Big Bend and most of the Florida Panhandle.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for May calls for above normal wildfire activity across most of the region.

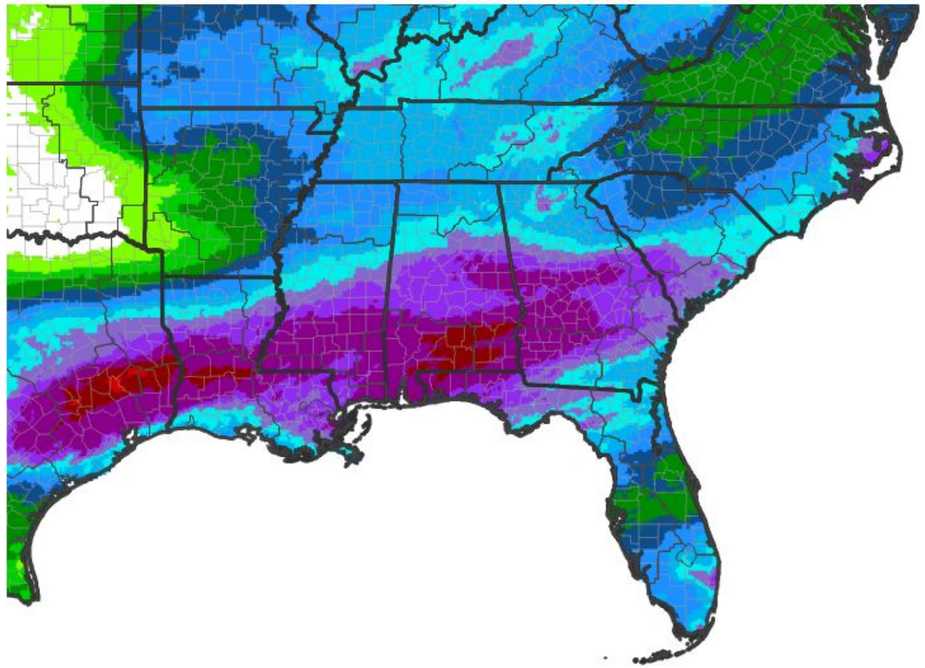




Precipitation Outlook

- Rain is expected starting Friday night (5/1) and continuing through Saturday (5/2) across much of North Florida.
- A second system bringing additional rainfall is possible by May 7th.
- There is a slight signal for above normal precipitation in the 8-14 day outlook (5/7 - 5/13).

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for May 1, 2026–May 8, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation

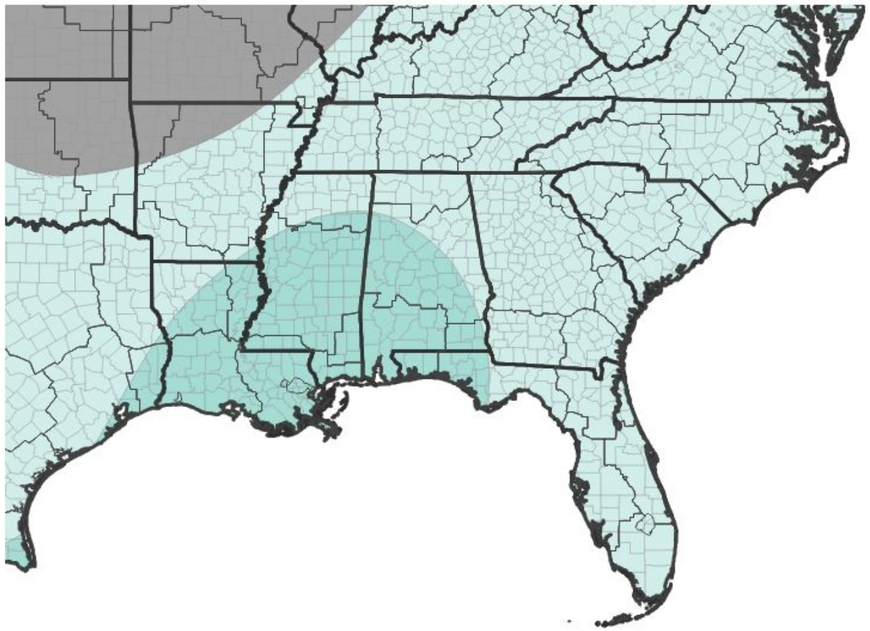
0 0.01 0.1 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 1.25 1.5 1.75

1.75 2 2.5 3 4 5 7 10 15 20

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

Last Updated: 05/01/26

8–14 Day Precipitation Outlook for May 7, 2026–May 13, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Near-Normal Conditions

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

Last Updated: 04/29/26

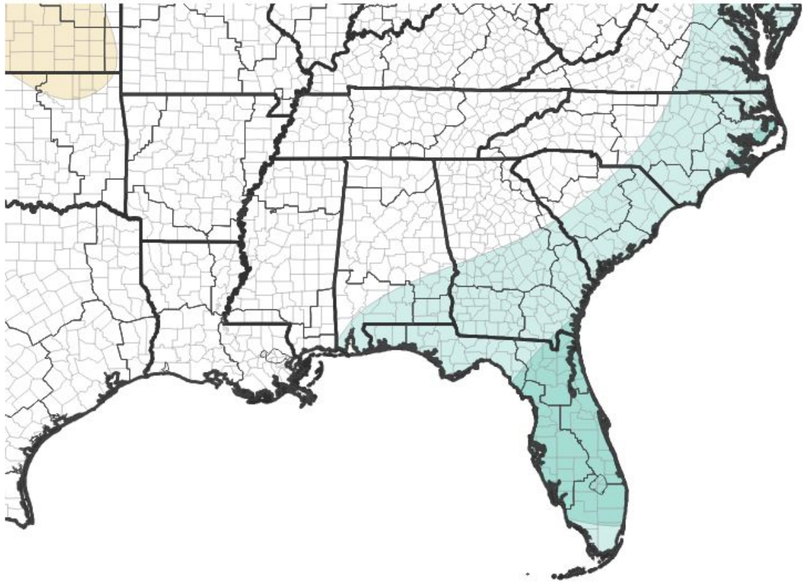
Long-Range Outlooks

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.

	May		June		July	
Average	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

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

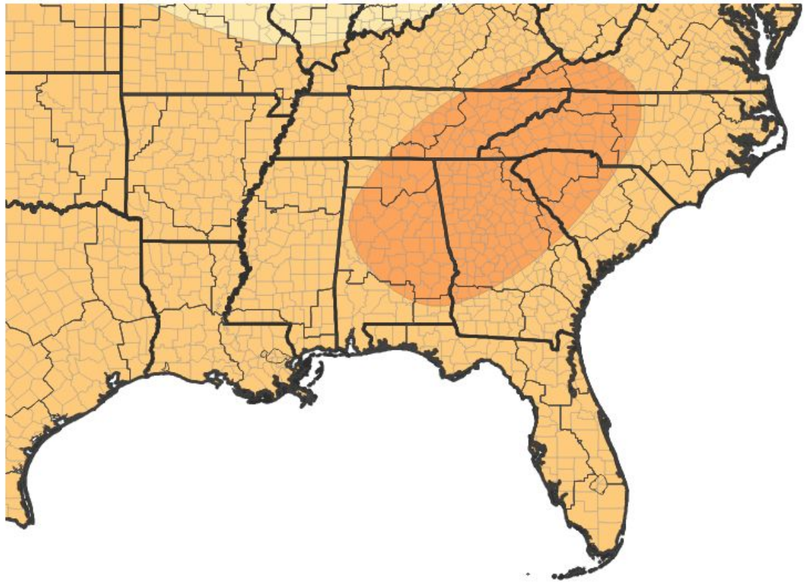
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50%

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

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures

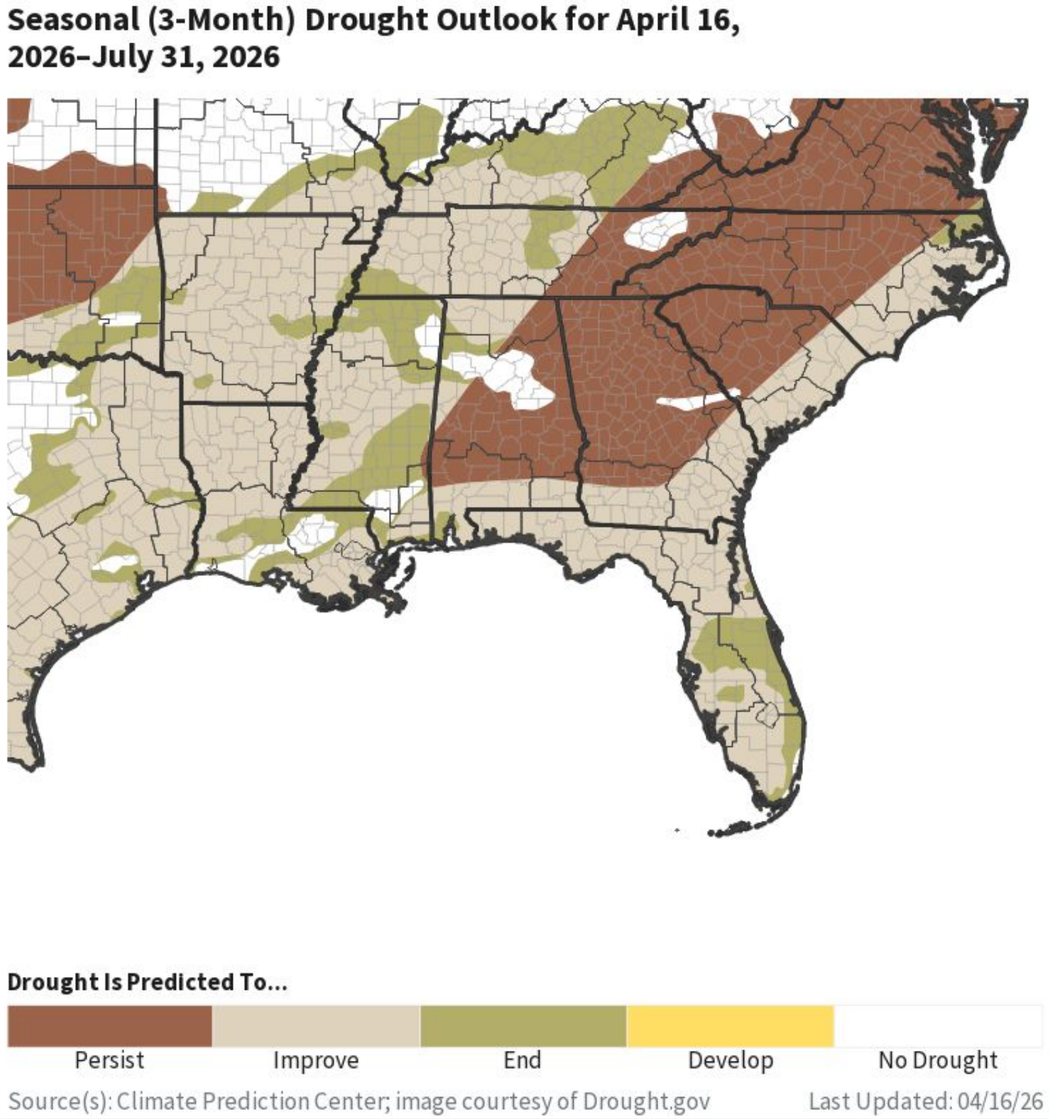
33% 40% 50%

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 could worsen throughout May as below normal monthly rainfall across our area is expected.
- Should the sea breeze season become active on schedule, early 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