



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

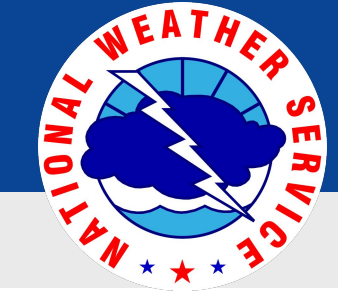
Valid May 21, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Tallahassee, FL

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

- This product will be updated May 28, 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.
- **Additional rain brings drought improvement to portions of the region.**
- **With the long duration drought, it will take much more rain to eliminate the extreme to exceptional drought areas.**
- The drought is long term in character with hydrologic impacts persisting even with recent rains. Rivers have improved, but they are still much below normal. Several lakes and ponds remain very low or dry.
- The summer rainy season is underway, so localized areas of improvement are expected in coming weeks.





U.S. Drought Monitor

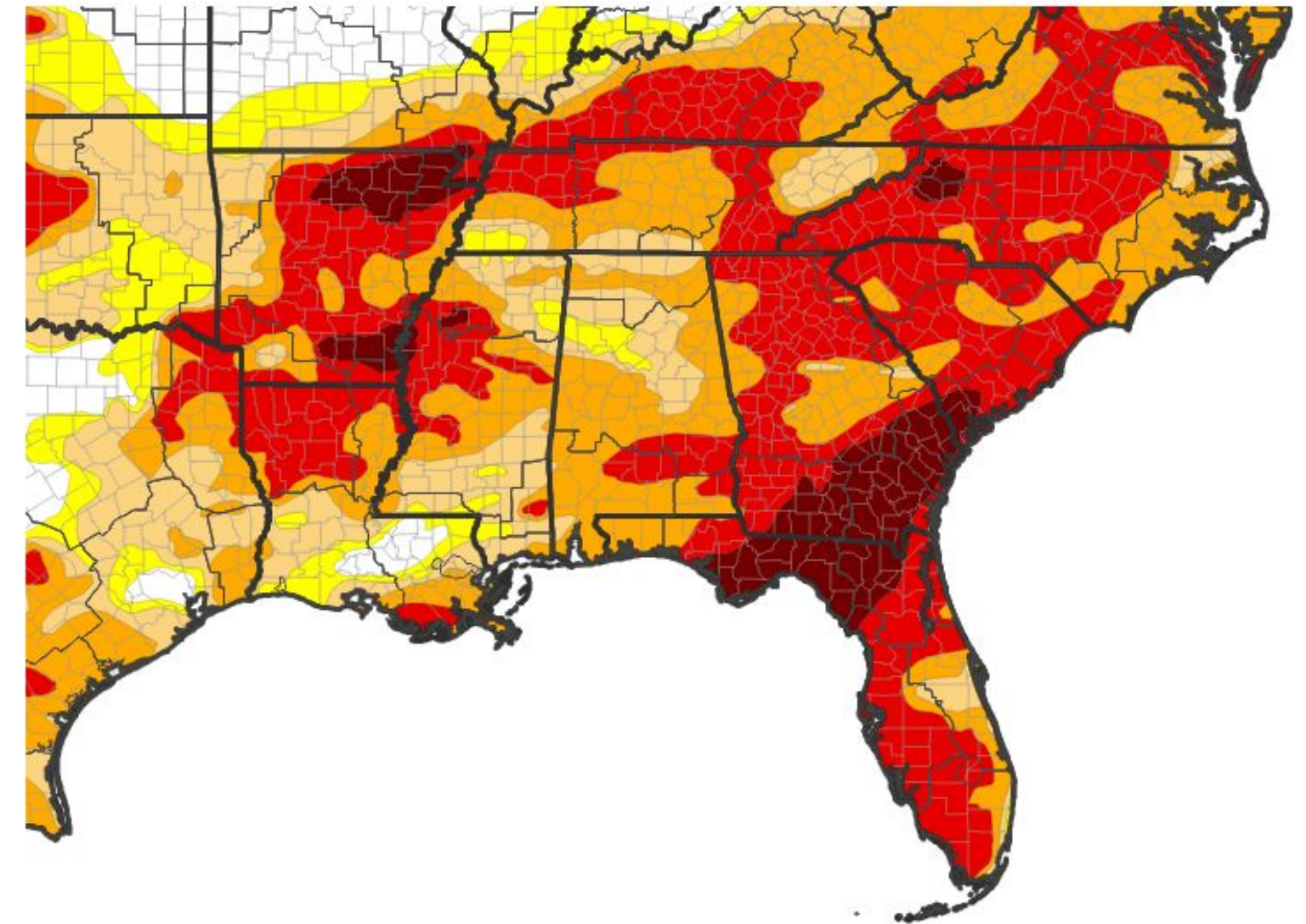
Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

- Rainfall over the last month has been above normal, especially across Southeast Alabama, portions of Southwest Georgia, and the inland Florida Panhandle. As a result, drought severity has improved this week for some areas.

Drought intensity and Extent:

- **D4 (Exceptional Drought):**
 - In Georgia: Generally south of a line from Grady County to Ben Hill County.
 - In Florida: From Bay County to Gadsden County eastward to the Suwannee River.
- **D3 (Extreme Drought):**
 - In Florida: West of Bay and Gadsden Counties to Washington County.
 - In Georgia: The remainder of South Georgia.
 - In Alabama: Henry and Dale Counties
- **D2 (Severe Drought):**
 - In Florida: Walton and Holmes Counties
 - In Alabama: Coffee, Geneva, and Houston Counties

U.S. Drought Monitor

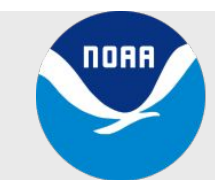


U.S. Drought Monitor



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

Data Valid: 05/19/26



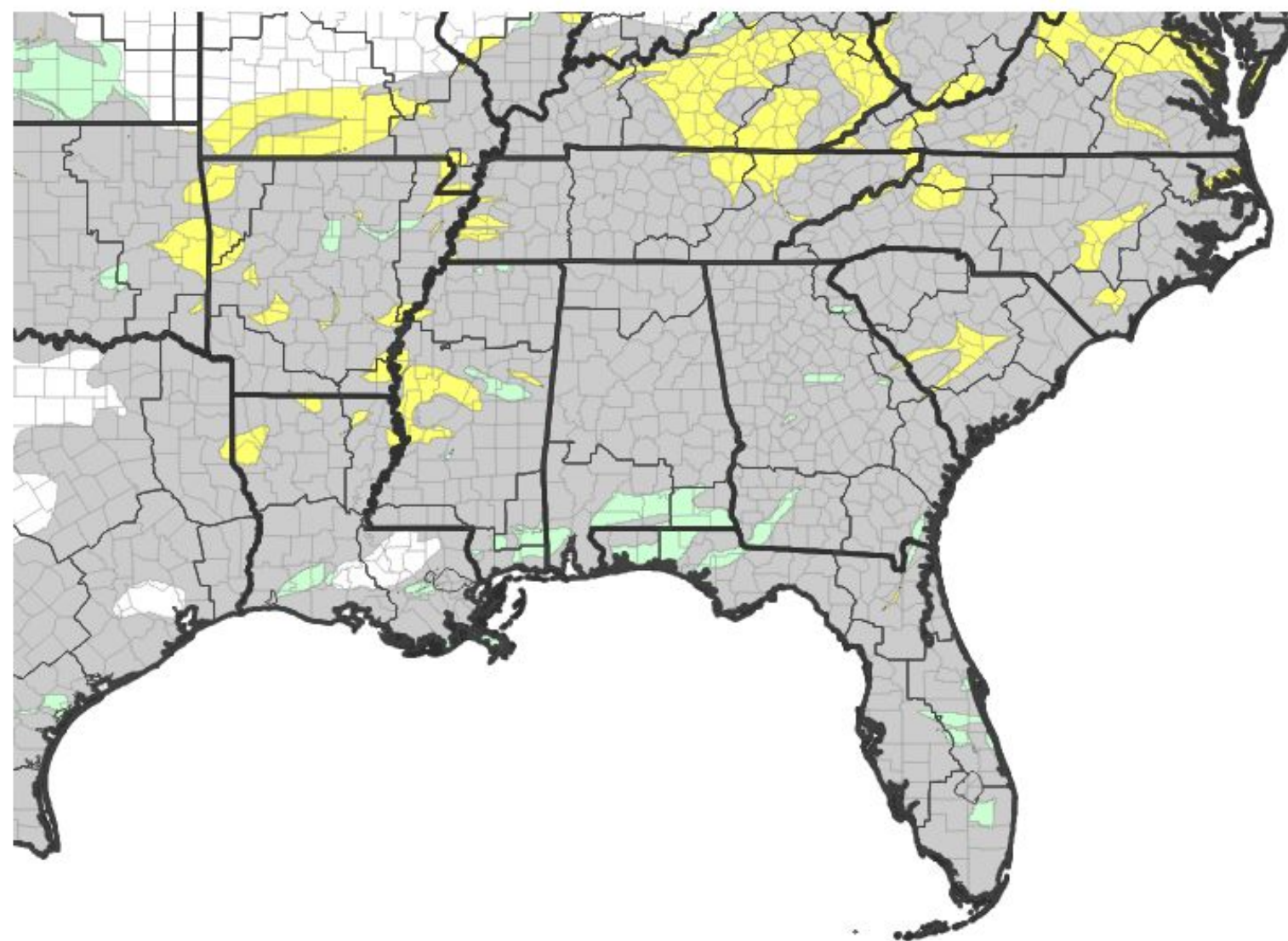


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

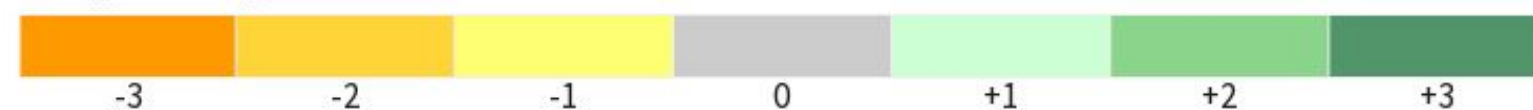
Link to the latest [4-week change map](#) for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

- Rain continues to bring improvement in drought severity across the region. This was especially noted across Southeast Alabama and in the Florida Panhandle as well as along the Flint River in Southwest Georgia. Further improvement is possible as the summer rainy season gets underway. However, groundwater levels remain quite low, indicating several rainfall events are needed to refill many lakes and ponds across the region.
- One-Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
 - **1 Category Improvement**
 - Southeast Alabama
 - Florida Panhandle
 - Southwest Georgia along the Flint River.
 - **No change**
 - Remainder of the area

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map

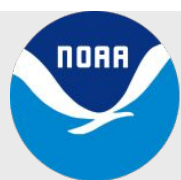


Drought Change Since Last Week



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

Data Valid: 05/19/26



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Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

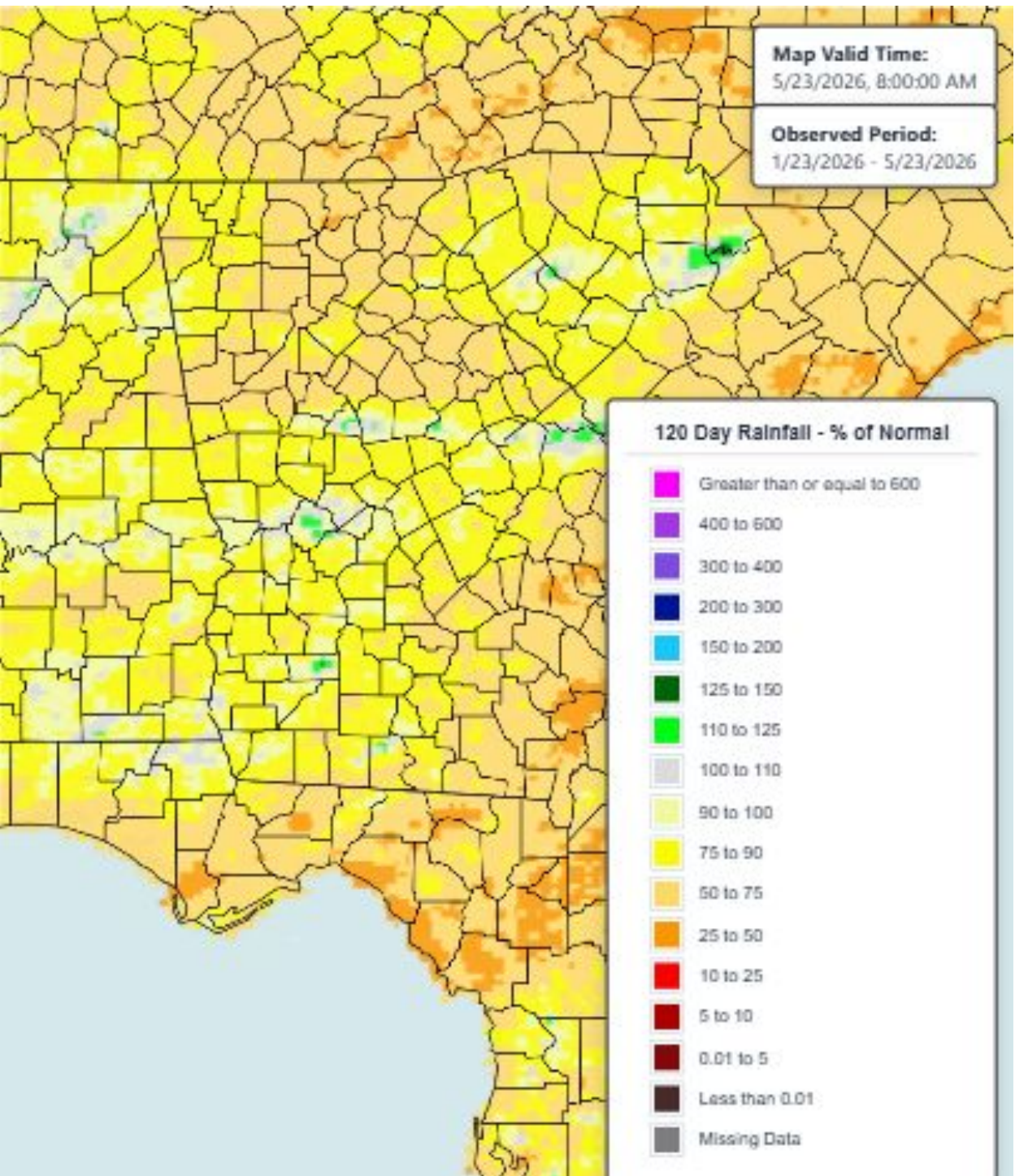
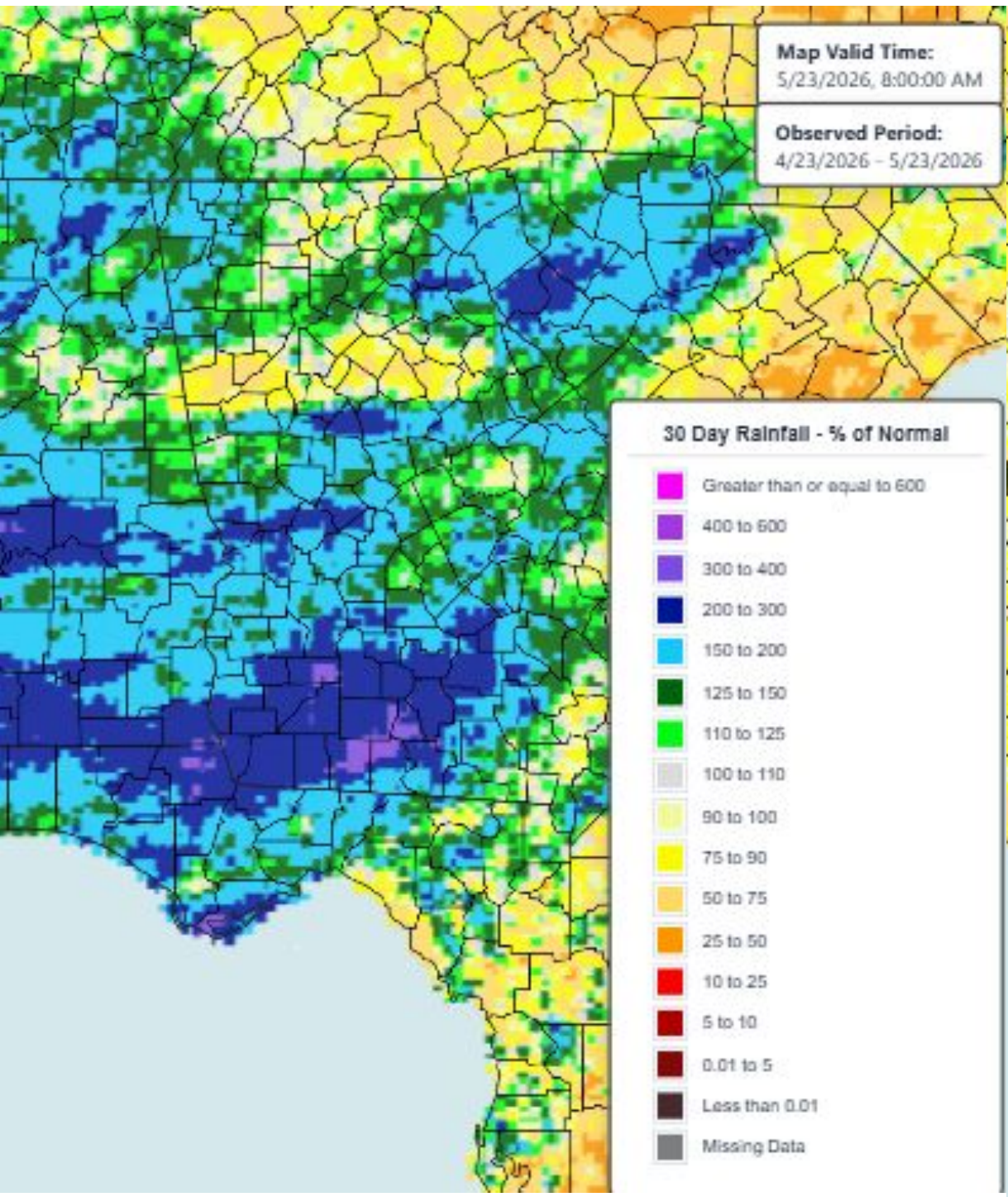
National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL



Precipitation

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

	Last 30 Days		Last 120 Days	
	Rainfall	Percent	Rainfall	Percent
DeFuniak Springs*	8.24"	197.0%	17.96"	90.5%
Panama City ECP	5.11"	151.0%	8.75"	47.6%
Dothan	4.59"	139.7%	12.66"	71.5%
Marianna	8.25"	256.5%	13.99"	84.2%
Georgetown**	5.18"	153.9%	14.91"	85.0%
Dawson**	5.08"	156.4%	11.90"	68.8%
Arlington**	6.87"	214.0%	13.53"	77.6%
Albany	9.12"	344.4%	14.88"	139.3%
Cairo**	7.66"	266.4%	11.48"	69.8%
Tallahassee	4.12"	124.4%	8.20"	49.2%
Moultrie**	8.04"	283.7%	11.99"	73.6%
Monticello*	4.54"	139.1%	10.66"	64.7%
Ty Ty**	6.55"	223.9%	12.86"	81.0%
Alapaha**	7.91"	290.3%	11.22"	73.3%
Madison Blue Spring	2.92"	98.2%	7.41"	48.3%
Perry***	2.09"	64.1%	6.30"	41.6%



30 day Percent of Normal Precipitation 120 day Percent of Normal Precipitation

Near term relief, but long term dryness persists

Rainfall totals through May 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.



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Tallahassee, FL

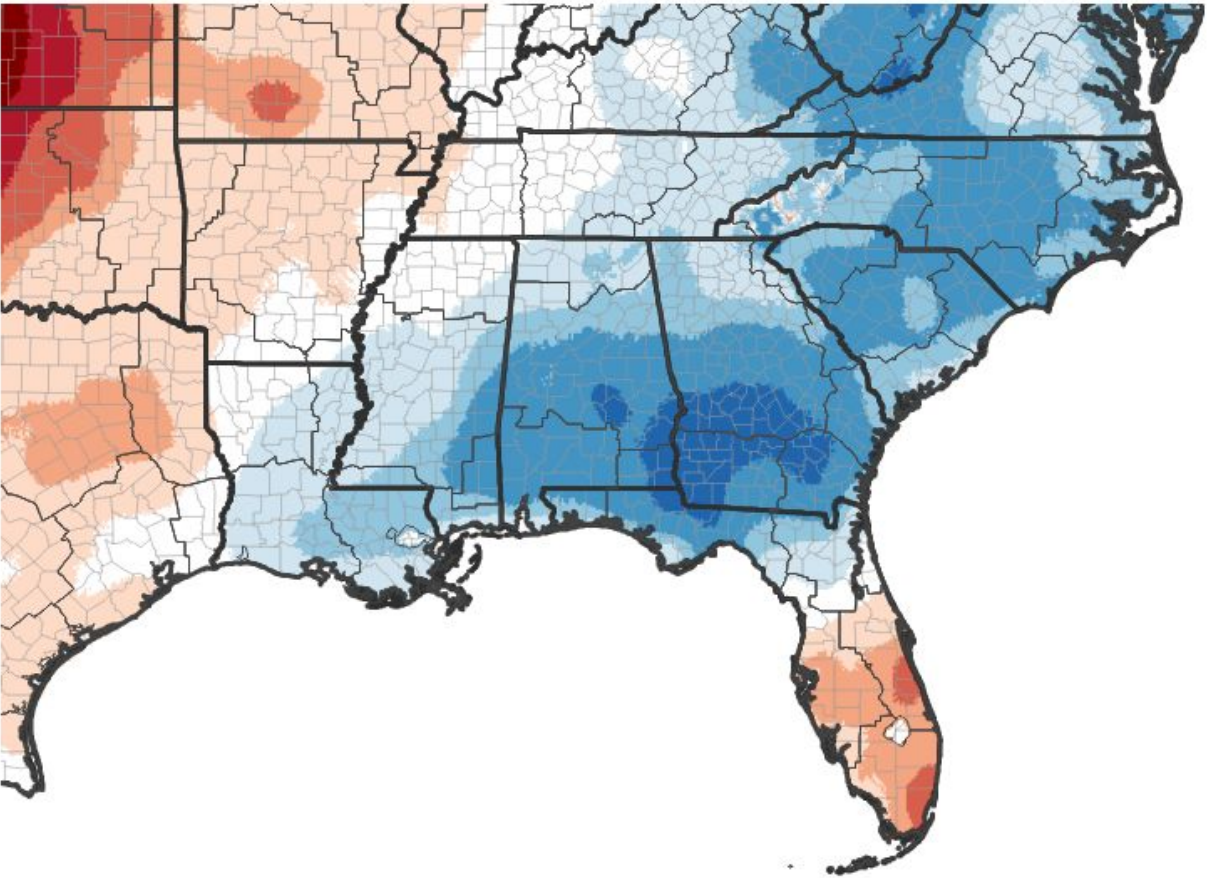


Temperature

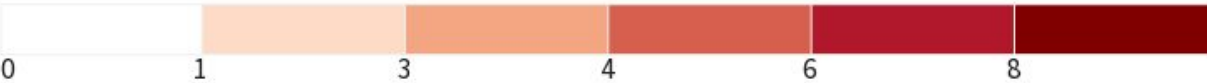
	Last 30 Days	
	Average High (Departure)	Average Low (Departure)
Tallahassee	85.6° (-0.2°)	61.6° (+1.1°)
Albany	82.5° (-3.3°)	60.5° (0.0°)
Marianna	83.7° (-2.1°)	61.4° (-0.2°)
Dothan	82.3° (-3.0°)	61.1° (-0.6°)

- With a lengthy stretch of cloudy and rainy weather two weeks ago, temperatures over the last month have trended slightly below normal.
- Rainy conditions in the next week will likely keep temperatures below normal, though warmer than normal conditions are expected by mid June.

7-Day Temperature Anomaly



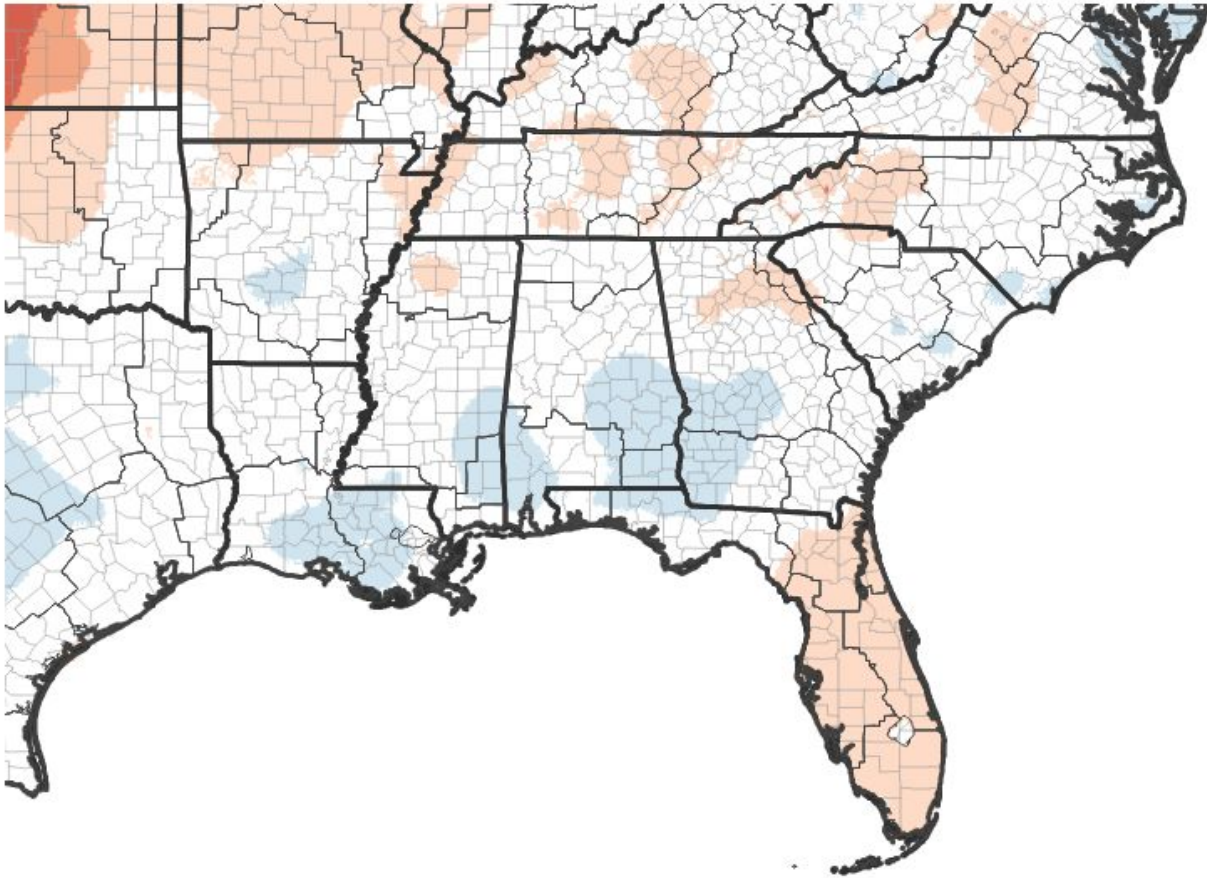
Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



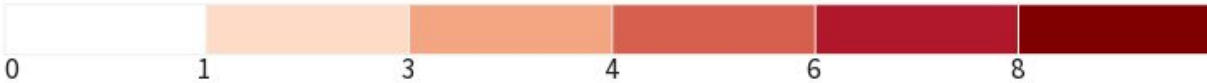
Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 05/16/26

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: 05/16/26





Summary of Impacts - Southeast Alabama

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Rainfall resulted in some improvement in streamflows but more widespread rainfall is needed to return levels to normal. The Pea and Choctawhatchee River are nearing low flow levels seen in late April.
- Only minimal improvement in ponds and lakes are reported across Southeast Alabama.

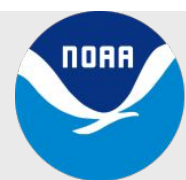
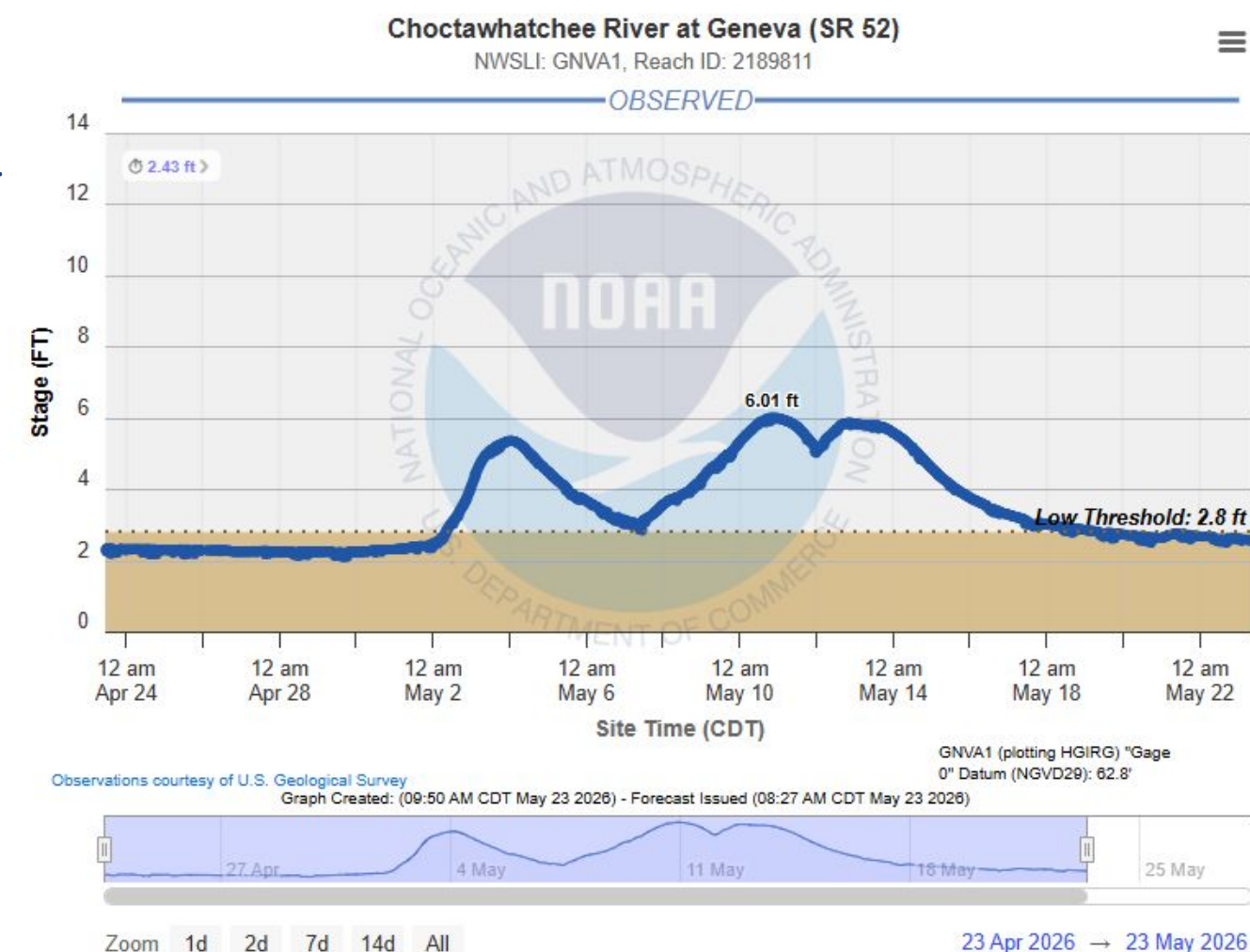
Agricultural Impacts

- Pastures have improved over the last week.
- Planting is underway of all crops, with recent rain being beneficial to moisten the soil for starting the peanut crop.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values are 200-300 across the region.
- The KBDI is very responsive to recent rainfall. Fuels dry out quickly even after heavy rainfall in very warm and dry conditions.

Choctawhatchee River at Geneva over the last month shown. While recent rainfall events resulted in rises, the river is declining again. Streamflows across the area are below normal for this time of year today, but averaged over the last month, still much below normal.





Summary of Impacts - Southwest Georgia

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

Hydrologic Impacts

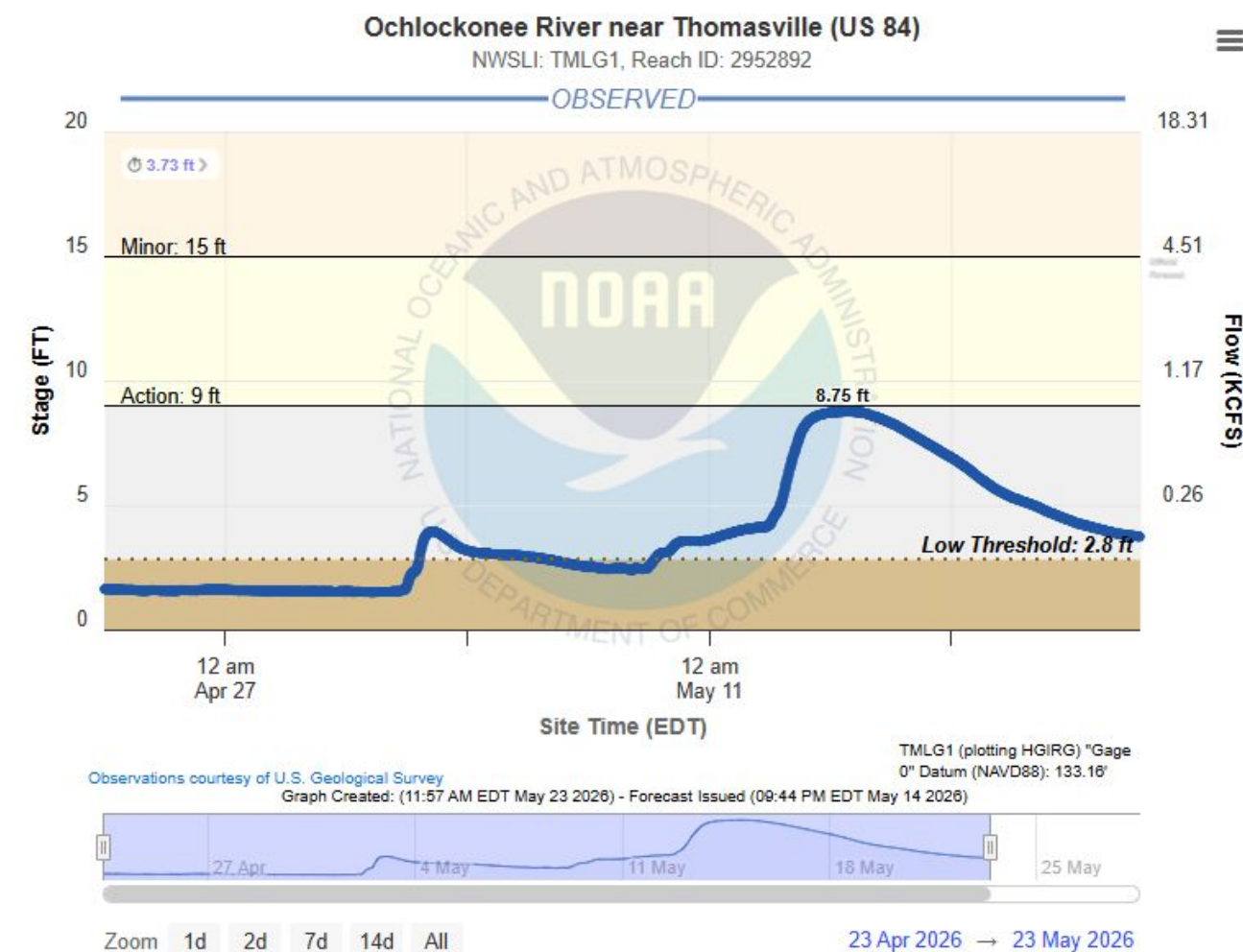
- Streamflows continue to improve over the near term, but over the last month are still generally below normal but well above the record lows seen in April.
- Surface and groundwater levels remain very low. Several reports from across the region indicate a slight rise in pond/lake levels. In Cook County, creeks and swamps that were dry several months ago now contain water after recent rains.

Agricultural Impacts

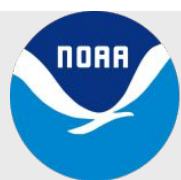
- Planting season is well underway. Corn has greatly improved west of I-75 this week from recent rains. East of I-75 conditions are largely unchanged.
- Peanuts recently were planted in Mitchell County with recent rains moistening enough of the soil.
- Non-irrigated fields delayed planting, so the growing season was impacted in these areas.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values are 200-350 west of I-75, but are 350-500 along and east of I-75
- A burn ban is in effect for Lowndes and Berrien Counties.
- Southern Area Coordination Center [issued a Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory](#)



Hydrograph for the Ochlockonee River near Thomasville. Recent rains, two to three weeks ago resulted in significant rises on the river. However, the river has been steadily falling over the last two weeks, but is still above record lows.





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 are gradually improving across the Florida Panhandle. While most locations are below normal over the last month, recent rains have moved all streamflows well above daily record lows.
- Surface and groundwater levels remain exceptionally low. Even with the recent rain, reports indicate that holding ponds and lakes remain very low or dry in some areas, most notably Ocheesee Pond.

Agricultural Impacts

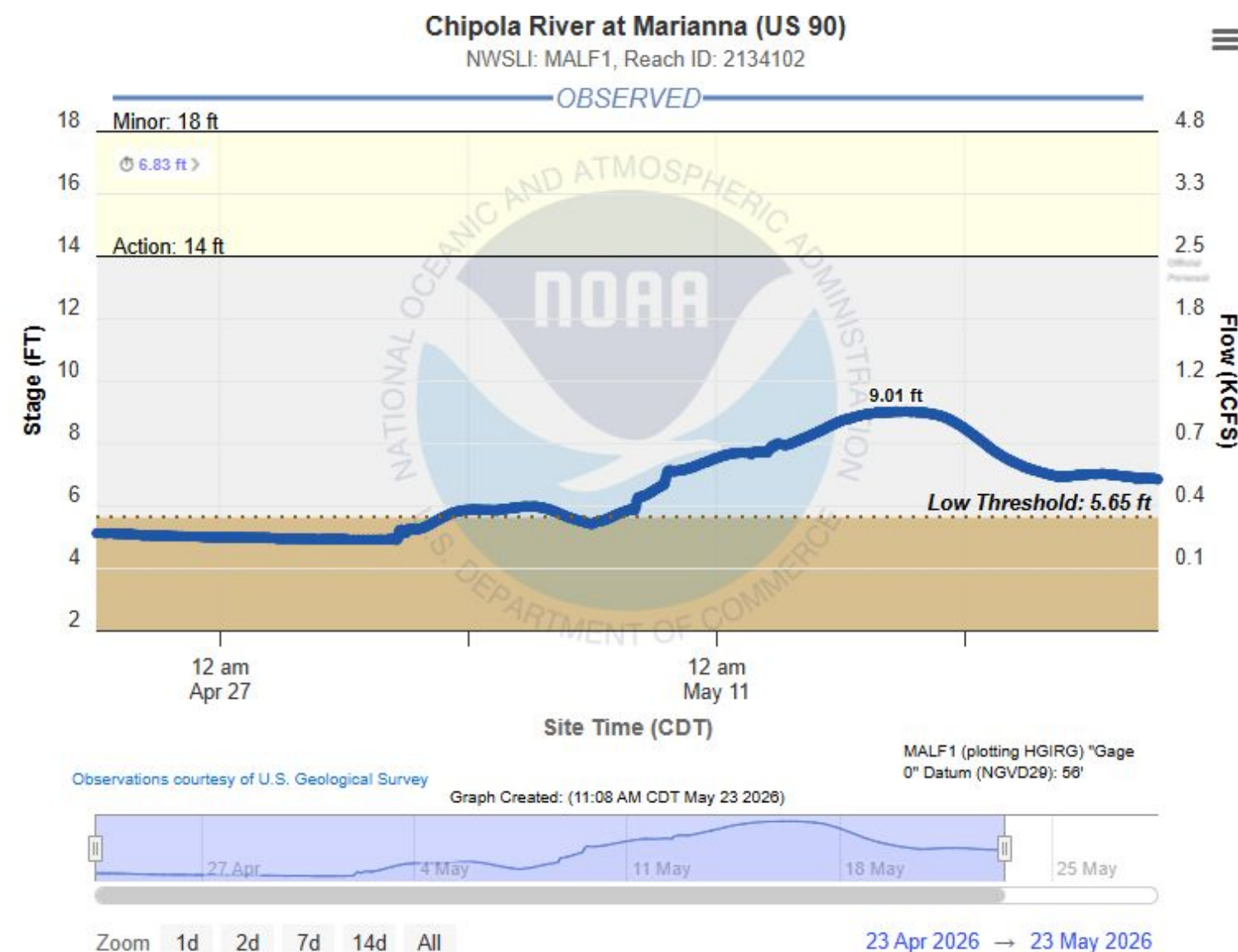
- Planting season is underway. Crops have improved given more moist soil conditions.

Fire Hazard Impacts

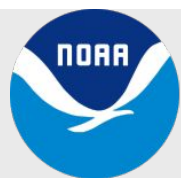
- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values are around 200 north of I-10. South of I-10 values are in the 300-500 range.
- Burn bans are in place for Gulf County.

Mitigation Actions

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



Hydrograph for the Chipola River at Marianna. Rain two weeks ago led to a noticeable increase, however drier conditions recently has led to a steady decline in river levels. Nonetheless, the river is above 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 have improved in the Ochlockonee Basin westward. However, streamflows from the Aucilla River eastward to the Suwannee remain especially low for this time of year.
- Surface and groundwater levels are exceptionally low. Numerous lakes and holding ponds are nearly dry or completely dry across the Big Bend.

Agricultural Impacts

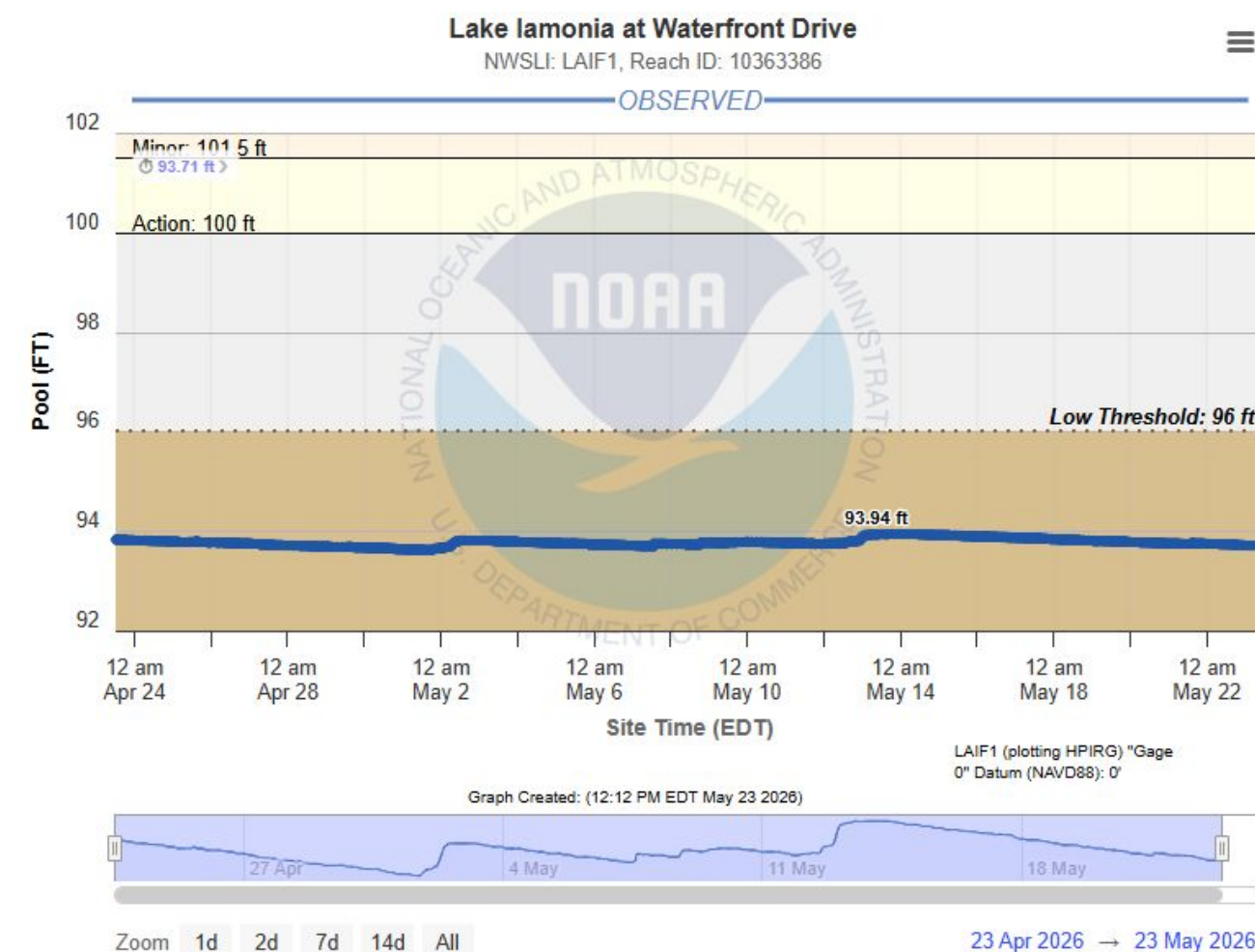
- Planting season is underway, but concerns exist given exceptionally low sub-surface water levels that irrigation will further stress the water table.

Fire Hazard Impacts

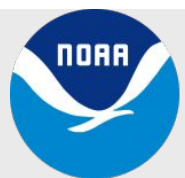
- Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values range from 200-600, highest in Dixie County.
- Burn bans are in effect for Franklin, Lafayette, and Dixie Counties.

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 at Lake Iamonia in Northern Leon County. While the pool elevation rose from rainfall two weeks ago, current pool levels are nearing the low values around the first of May.

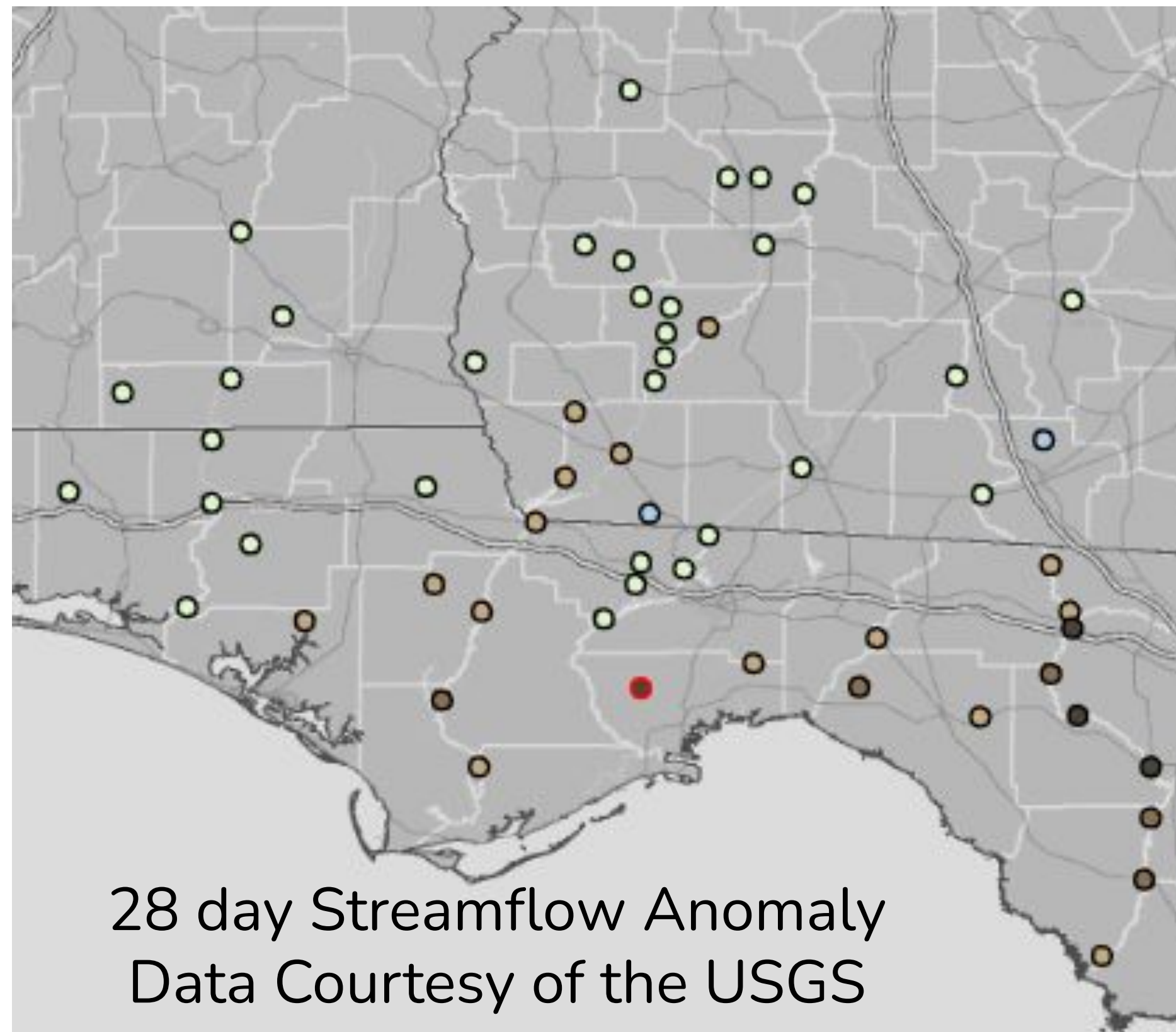




Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Streamflow conditions have improved, with some locations returning to the lower end of the normal range (at least 25th percentile).
- Recent rains have helped considerably in Southwest Georgia and Southeast Alabama. Further east, rainfall was less, and as a result, streamflows remain especially low or even near record lows for this time of year.
- In response to streamflows and groundwater conditions, 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

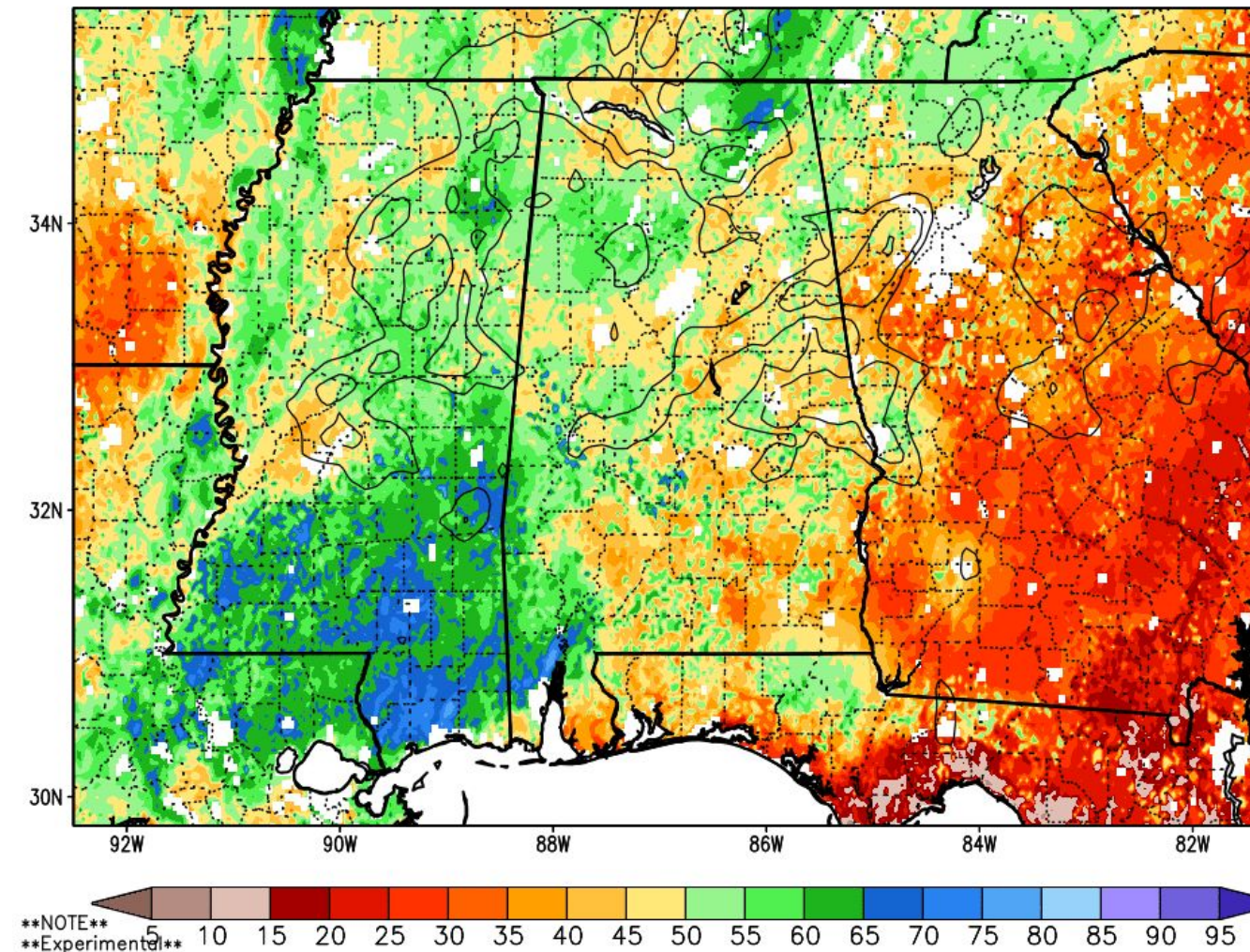




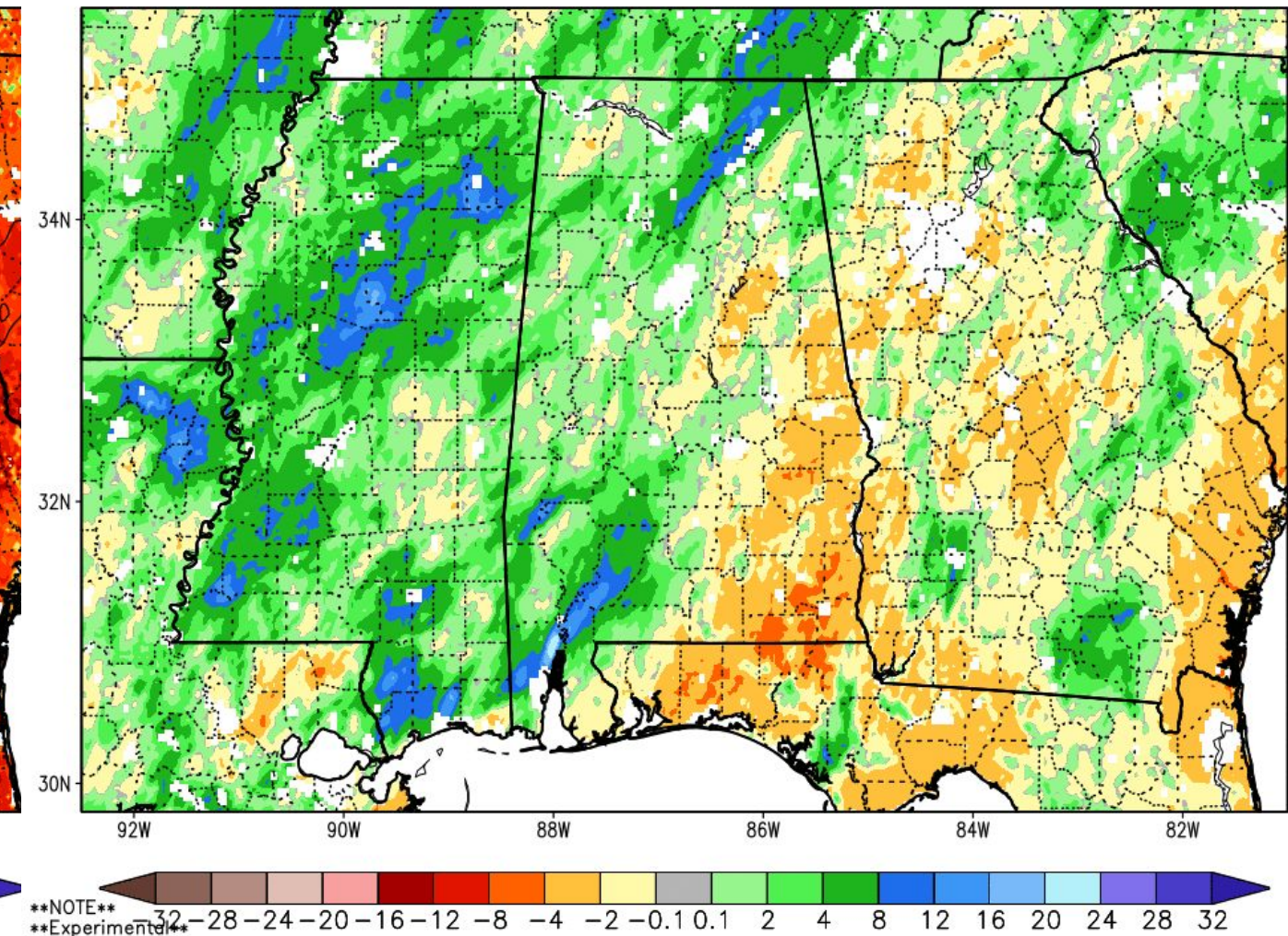
Agricultural Impacts

- Deep layer soil moisture has improved considerably across the region with recent rains, especially west of Tallahassee.
- Even so, soil moisture remains lower than normal across much of Southwest Georgia and into the Florida Big Bend.
- Recent rainfall was sufficient to help existing crops like corn and facilitate the planting of peanuts.

Column-Integrated Relative Soil Moisture (available water; %) valid 12z 23 May 2026
Precipitation in previous hour (1,2,5,10,15,20,25 mm contours)

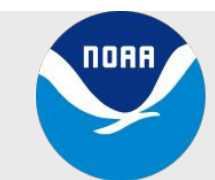


1-Week Difference in Column Relative Soil Moisture (%) valid 12z 23 May 2026



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](#)



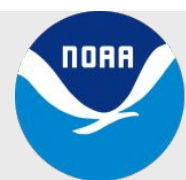
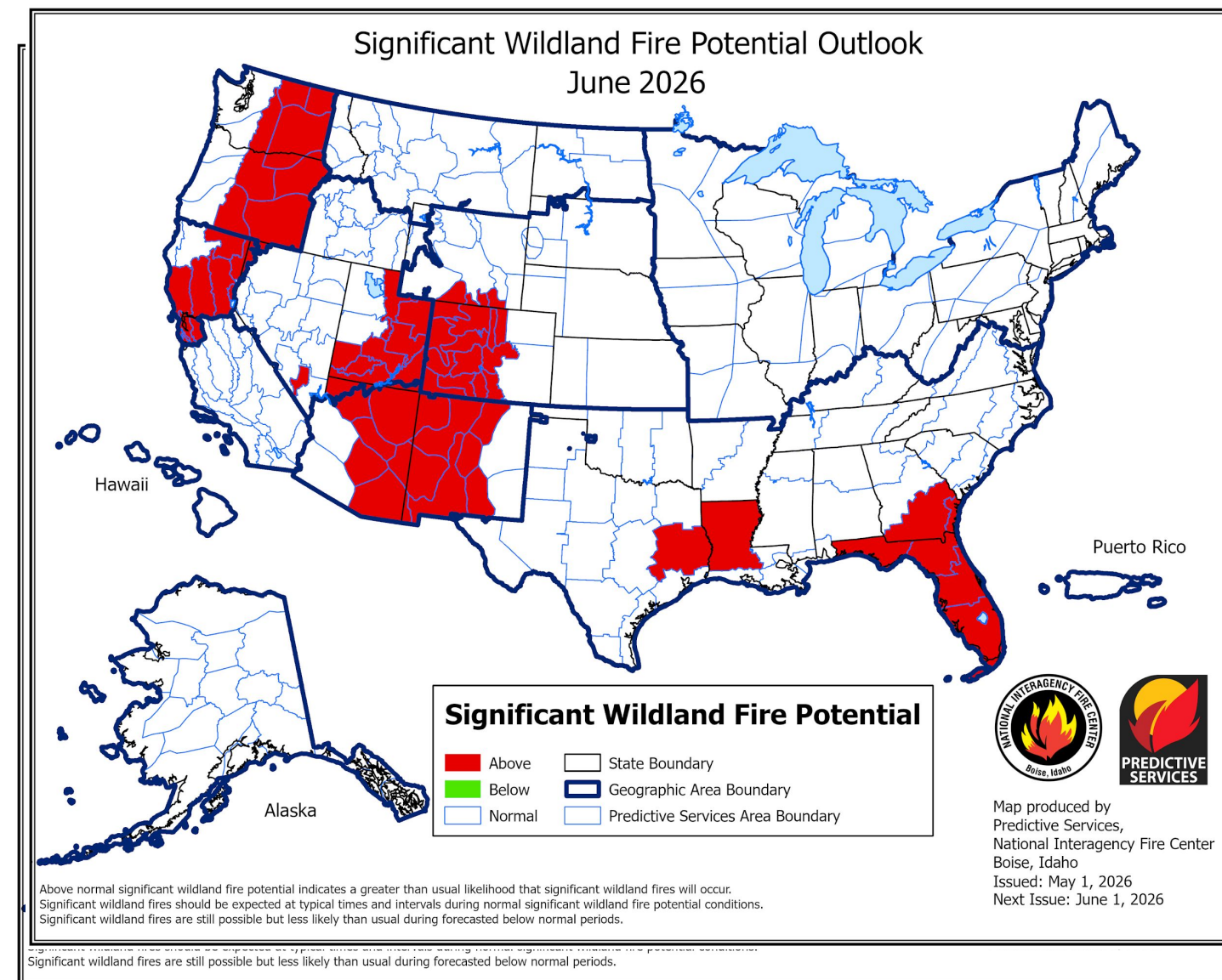
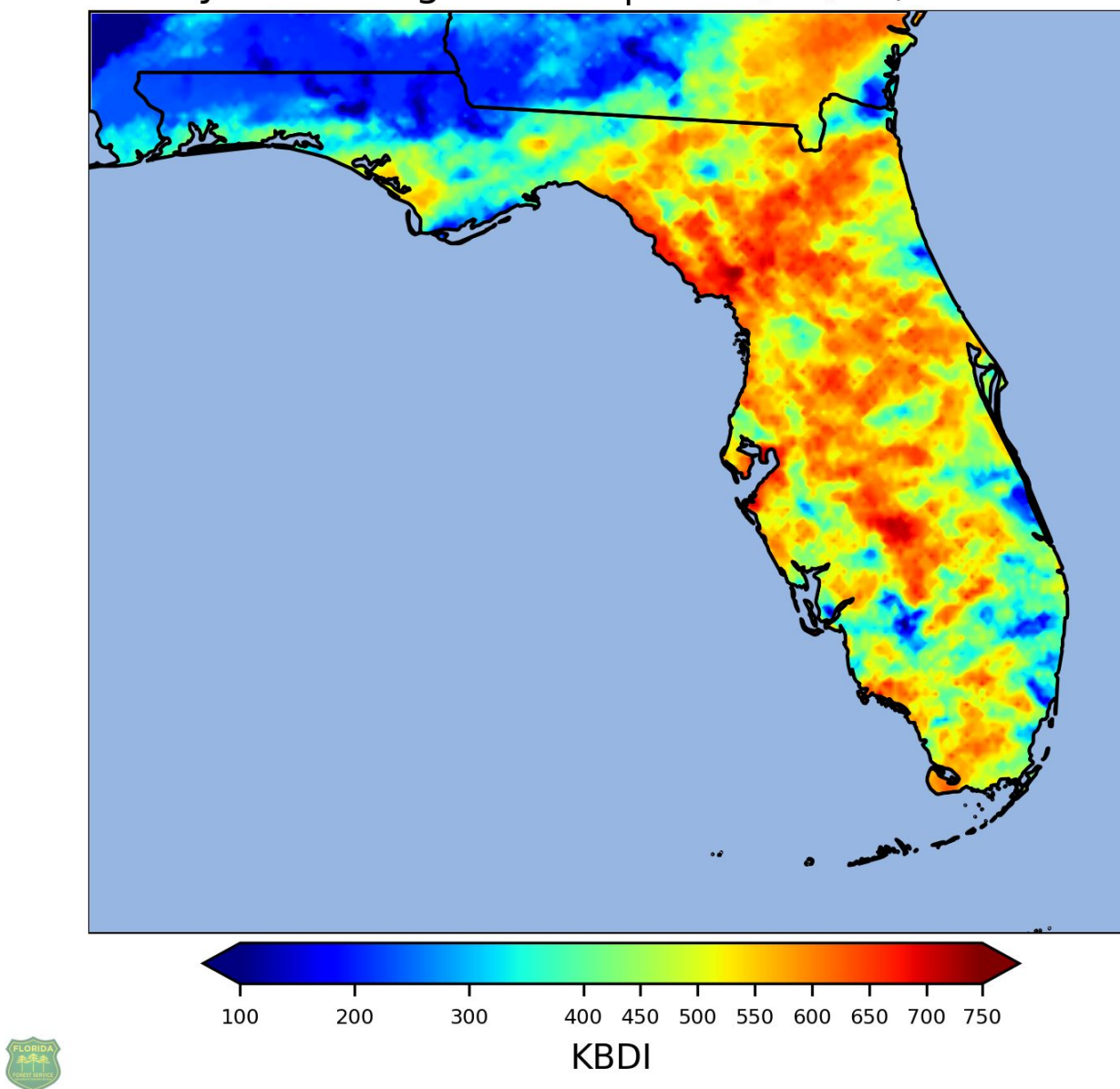


Fire Hazard Impacts

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

- Keetch-Byram Drought Indices have dropped significantly given recent rains, though this index is responsive to recent rain.
- Burn bans are in place for Lowndes and Berrien Counties in South Georgia and a few counties in the Florida Big Bend and Panhandle.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for June is for above normal wildfire activity in most of the region.

Keetch-Byram Drought Index | Fri 05/22/26, 02:00 PM EDT

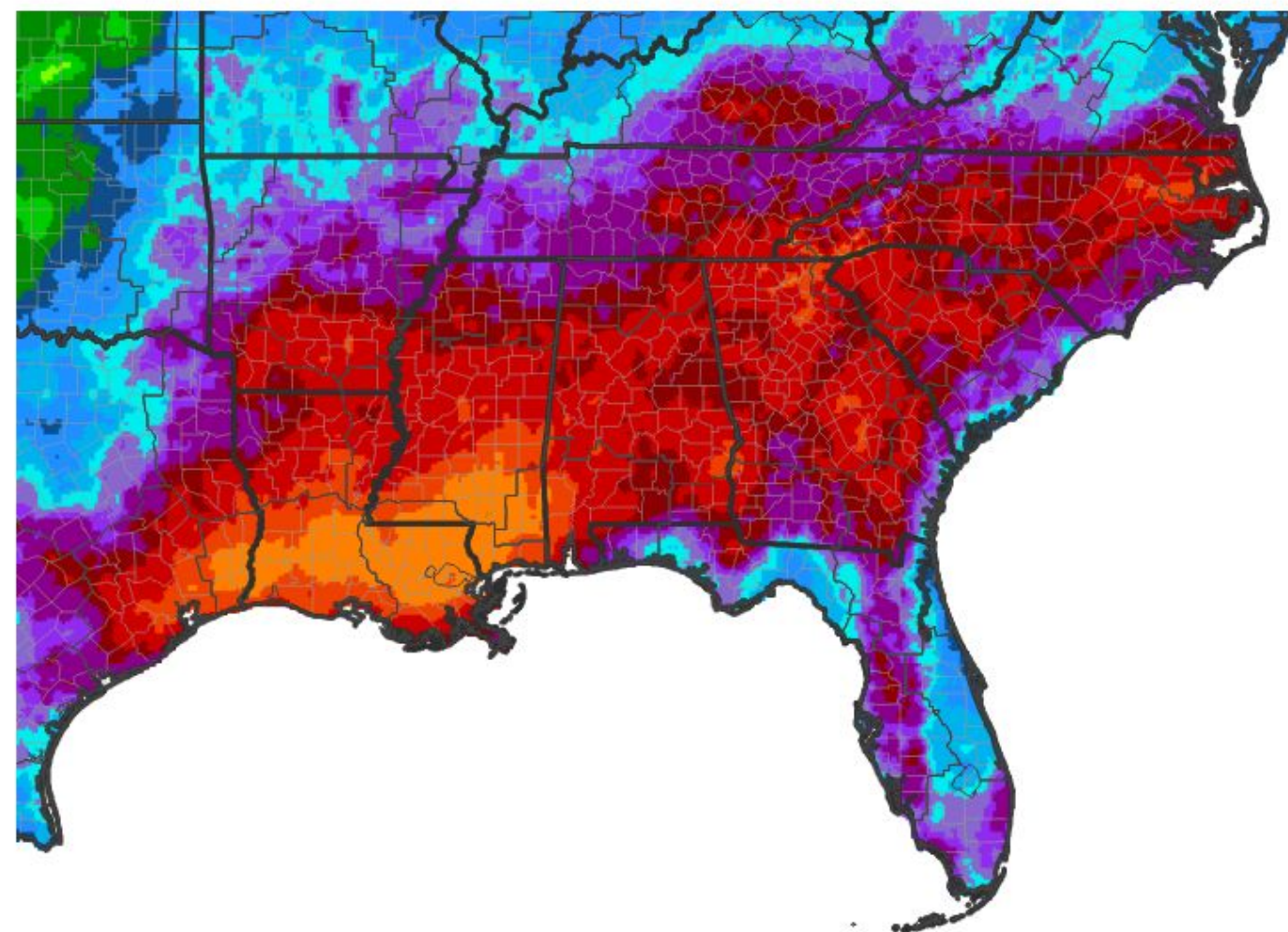




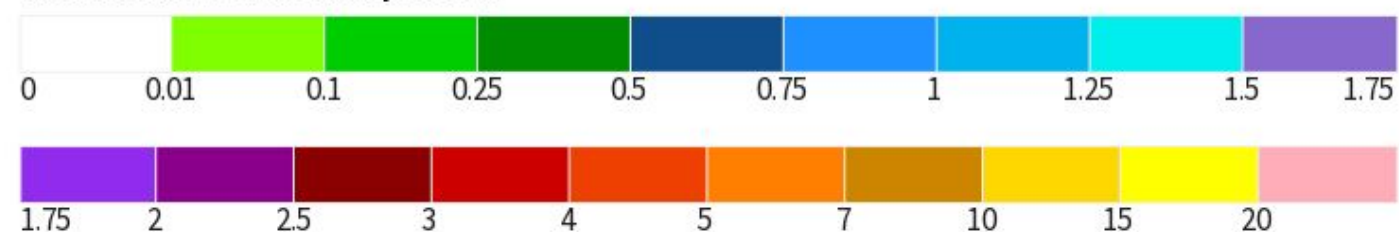
Precipitation Outlook

- The summer rainy season has begun early with assistance from an upper level disturbance. Enhanced sea breeze activity over the next few days could lead to beneficial rainfall across the region.
- There is a signal for above normal precipitation in the [8-14 day outlook](#) (5/30 - 6/5) as an active sea breeze pattern continues.

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



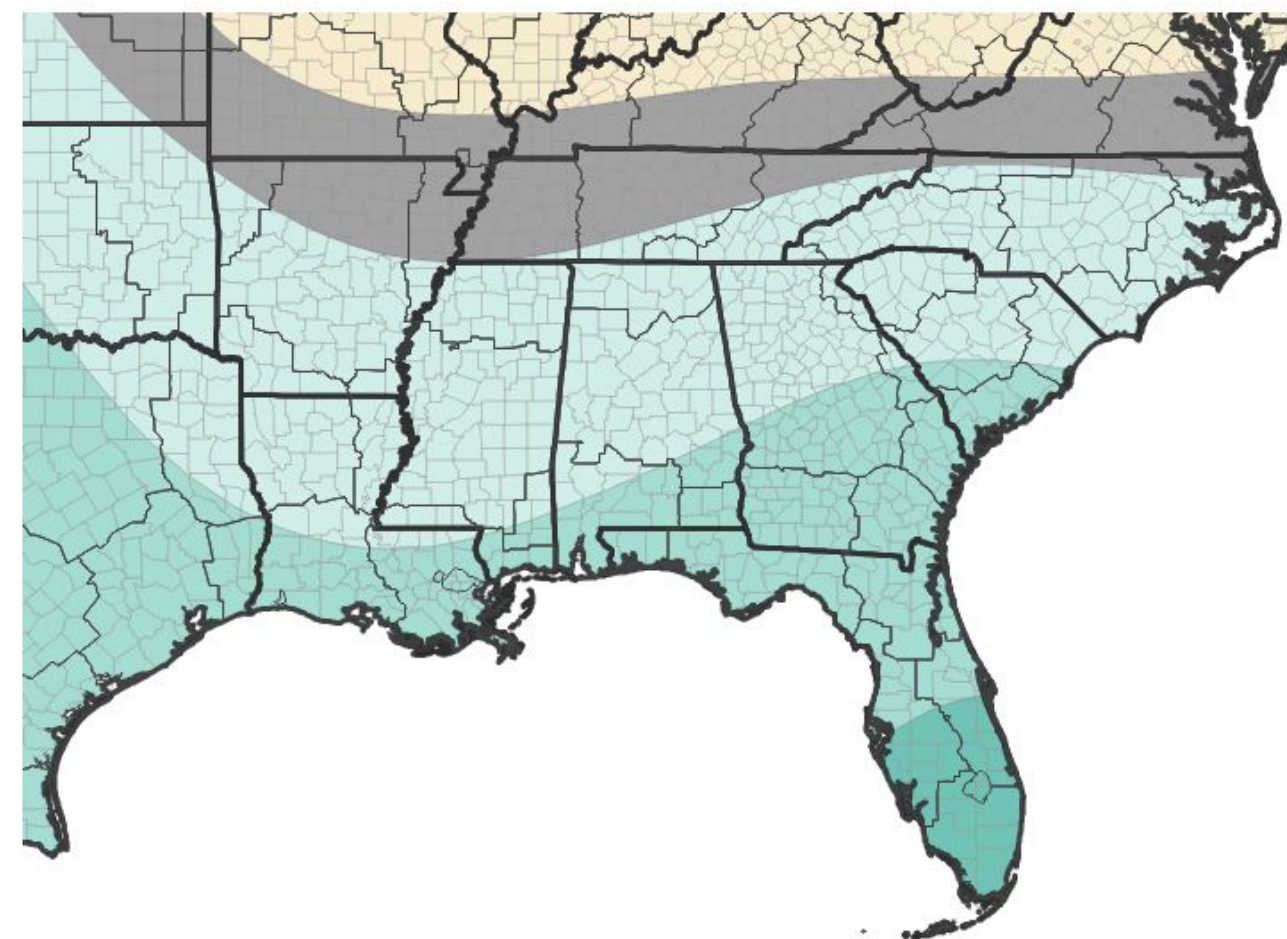
Predicted Inches of Precipitation



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

Last Updated: 05/23/26

8–14 Day Precipitation Outlook for May 30, 2026–June 5, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



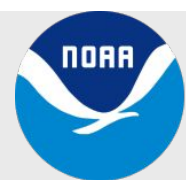
Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



■ Near-Normal Conditions

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

Last Updated: 05/22/26



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Tallahassee, FL

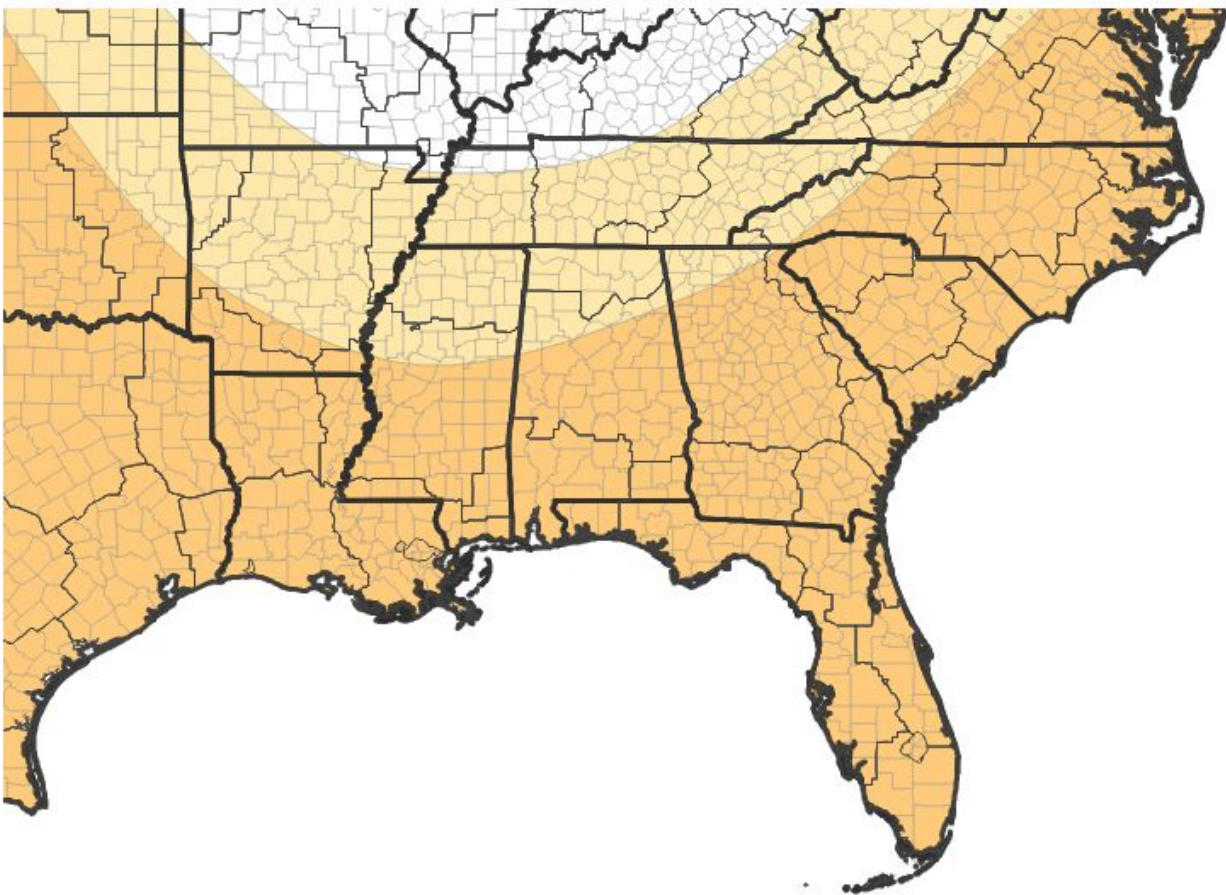


Long-Range Outlooks

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

- The next 3 months favor above normal temperatures and near normal precipitation.
- With sea breeze season underway, increased rain chances could bring improvements to the drought.

Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for June 1, 2026–August 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: 05/21/26

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for June 1, 2026–August 31, 2026



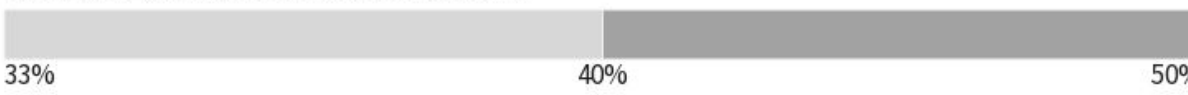
Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation



Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation



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

Last Updated: 05/21/26

Average	June		July		August	
	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain
Tallahassee	80.8°	7.76"	82.5°	7.14"	82.4°	7.60"
Apalachicola	80.7°	5.86"	82.2°	5.74"	82.2°	7.79"
Albany	80.9°	5.06"	83.1°	5.12"	82.7°	4.83"
Valdosta	79.0°	7.08"	81.1°	5.33"	81.2°	5.11"
Marianna	81.1°	5.07"	82.7°	5.10"	82.1°	4.93"
Dothan	81.1°	5.08"	83.0°	5.95"	82.0°	6.17"



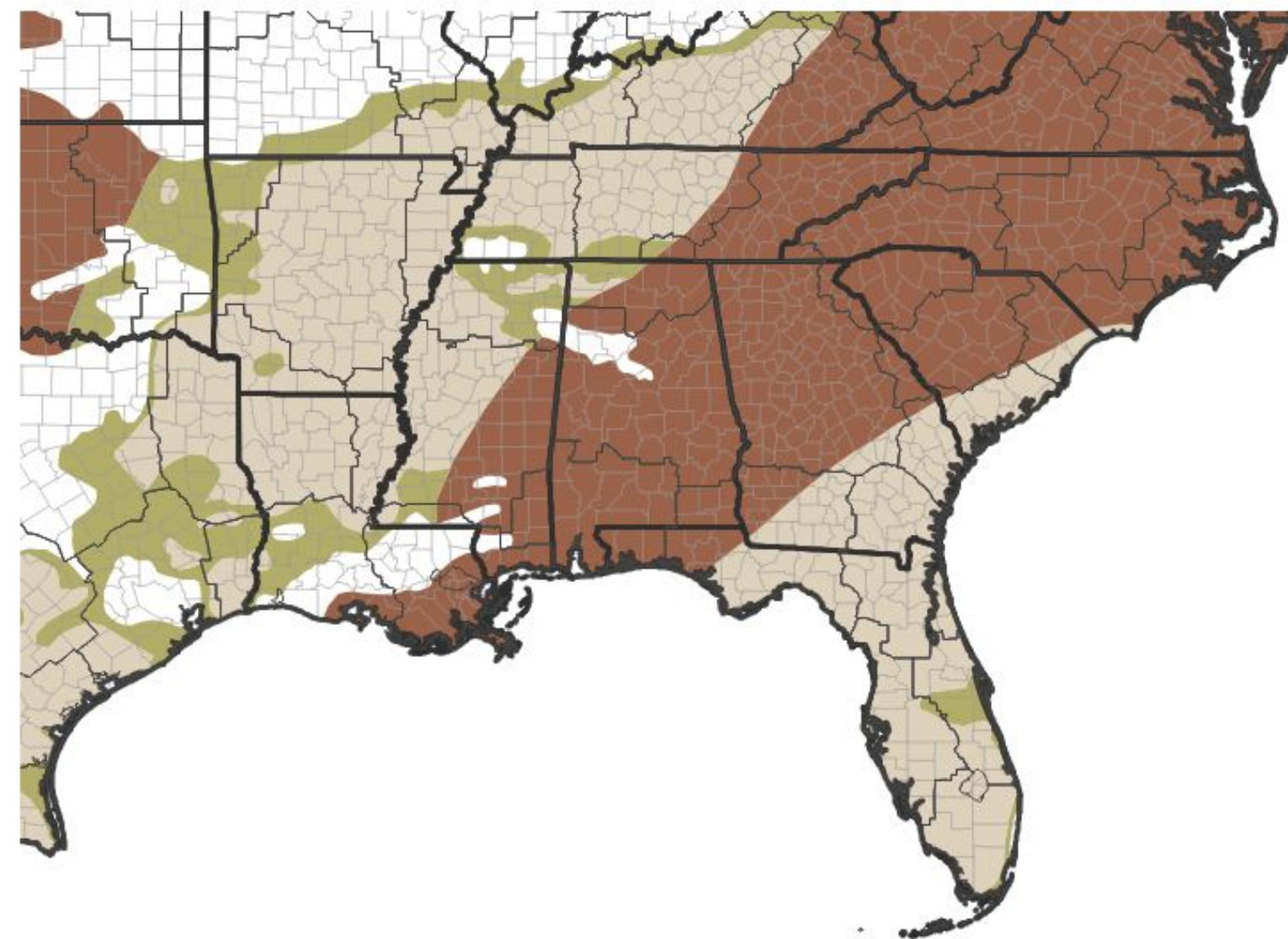


Drought Outlook

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

- With recent rainfall and expected rainy conditions over the next week, continued drought improvement is expected over the near term.
- This new three month outlook is not calling for an end of drought conditions across the region, however. Even with sea breeze season starting, it will take a considerable amount of rain over a widespread area to lead to significant improvement in the drought or even end the drought.

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for May 21, 2026–August 31, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...



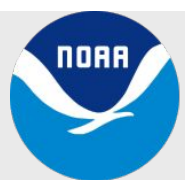
Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 05/21/26

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)



**National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration**

U.S. Department of Commerce

**National Weather Service
Tallahassee, FL**