Drought Information Statement for West Central and Southwest Florida

Valid August 8, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Tampa Bay, FL

Contact Information: sr-tbw.webmaster@noaa.gov

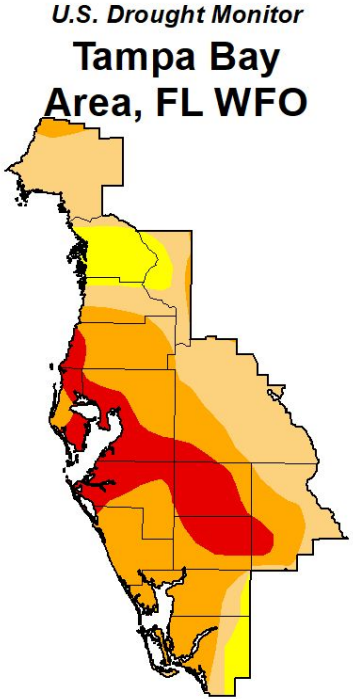
- This product will be updated August 14, 2026 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/tbw/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates for regional drought status updates.

- The Abnormally Dry to Extreme Drought conditions persist across West Central and Southwest Florida.
- There was some improvement during the last week across parts of the region thanks to the recent rainfall.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for West Central and Southwest Florida

- The extended duration of limited rainfall has continued the need for D1 (Moderate Drought) to D3 (Extreme Drought) across much of West Central and Southwest Florida.
- Drought intensity and Extent
  - **D3 (Extreme Drought):** Wrn Pasco, Nrn & Srn Pinellas, NW and Srn Hillsborough, Ext SW Polk, Wrn & Nrn Manatee, Hardee, Cent and Ern Desoto County.
  - **D2 (Severe Drought):** Nrn Levy, Srn Hernando, Cent and Ern Pasco, Cent Pinellas, NE Hillsborough, SW Polk, Srn Manatee, Sarasota, Wrn and Srn Highlands, Wrn Charlotte, and Wrn Lee County.
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought):** Citrus, Ern & Srn Sumter, Nrn & Ern Polk, Ern Highlands, Ern Charlotte, and Cent Lee County.
  - **D0 (Abnormally Dry):** Citrus, NW Sumter, Ern Lee and Ext Ern Charlotte Counties



August 4, 2026
(Released Thursday, Aug. 6, 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	91.42	57.69	18.81	0.00
Last Week 07-28-2026	0.00	100.00	97.69	78.26	28.60	0.00
3 Months Ago 05-05-2026	0.00	100.00	100.00	98.53	91.18	3.95
Start of Calendar Year 01-06-2026	0.00	100.00	89.37	62.16	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	53.01	46.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 08-05-2025	35.59	64.41	5.48	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:
None
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Moderate Drought
D2 Severe Drought
D3 Extreme Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought

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

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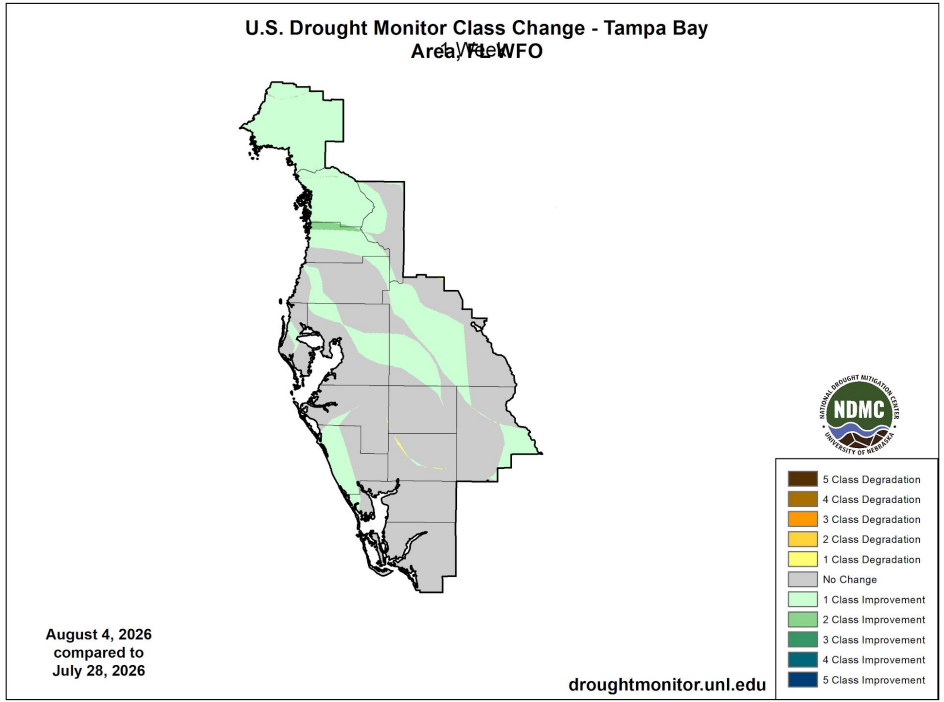
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest 1-week change map for West Central and Southwest Florida

- There have been some considerable improvements in the long-term deficits across parts of the region.
- More rainfall is still needed to allow the system to fully recover.
-
- **One Week Drought Monitor Class Change**
  - **Drought Improved**: Levy, Citrus, parts of Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Polk, Manatee, Sarasota, and Highlands Counties.
  - **No Change:** Remainder of West Central and Southwest Florida.

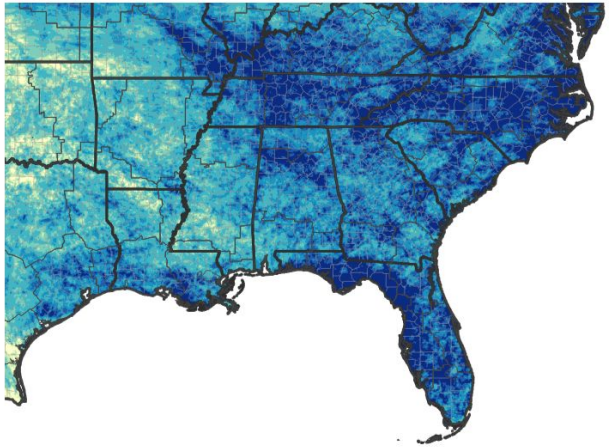


Precipitation

Last 30 Days

- Some much needed rainfall has occurred over the last month, with many areas seeing slightly above normal amounts, while parts of Levy and Citrus are running well above normal.
- However, the long term deficits continue to have an impact.

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (Inches)



Inches of Precipitation

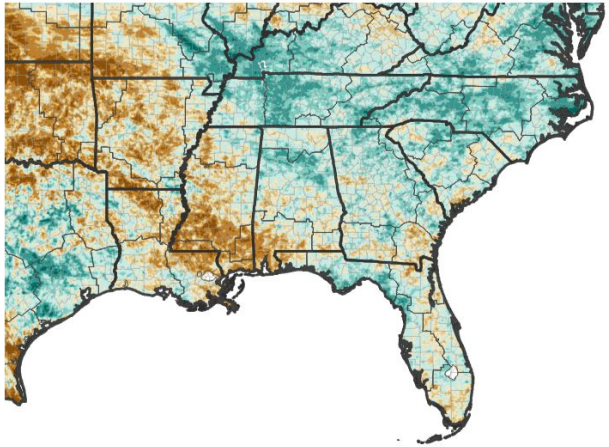
0 | 0.01 | 0.5 | 1 | 2

2 | 4 | 6 | 8

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

Last Updated: 08/06/26

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions

0% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 100%

100% | 150% | 200% | 300%

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

Last Updated: 08/06/26

Local Precipitation

Table of Accumulated Rainfall (inches) for some Official Locations - Since September 1, 2025

- Since September 1, 2025 rainfall has been well below normal across much of the area with numerous locations less than 50% of normal for this time period.
- Several locations were still the Driest on Record for the time period since September 1st.

Rainfall Sep 1, 2025 - Aug 3, 2026			Rainfall (in.) Sep 1, 2025 - Aug 3, 2026	Normal Rainfall (in.) Sep 1-Aug 3	Departure from Normal	Percent of Normal	Ranking Sep 1-Aug 3	Records Began
Site ID	Site Name	County						
BKV	Brooksville	Hernando	31.32	44.67	-13.35	70%	5th Driest	1892
FMY	Fort Myers - Page Field	Lee	33.09	47.91	-14.82	69%	8th Driest	1902
GIF	Winter Haven	Polk	34.84	40.25	-5.41	87%	14th Driest	1941
PGD	Punta Gorda	Charlotte	37.28	44.72	-7.44	83%	22nd Driest	1914
PIE	St. Pete/Clearwater	Pinellas	31.04	45.71	-14.67	68%	2nd Driest	1998
RSW	Fort Myers - SW Int'l	Lee	40.95	45.46	-4.51	90%	9th Driest	1998
SPG	St. Petersburg	Pinellas	24.33	39.05	-14.72	62%	3rd Driest	1914
TPA	Tampa Int'l	Hillsborough	29.60	41.31	-11.71	72%	19th Driest	1890
ACHF1	Archbold Bio Stn	Highlands	28.02	46.52	-18.50	60%	Driest	1969
BRAF1	Bradenton 5 ESE	Manatee	27.18	47.22	-20.04	58%	Driest	1965
FTGF1	Fort Green 12 WSW	Manatee	29.34	44.93	-15.59	65%	2nd Driest	1948
INVF1	Inverness 3 SE	Citrus	34.04	44.56	-10.52	76%	3rd Driest	1948
LLDF1	Lakeland Linder	Polk	33.84	48.68	-14.84	70%	8th Driest	1915
PLCF1	Plant City	Hillsborough	36.86	48.16	-11.30	77%	16th Driest	1892
TBW	Ruskin - NWS Tampa Bay	Hillsborough	20.16	45.71	-25.55	44%	Driest	1976
TRPF1	Tarpon Springs	Pinellas	22.42	45.55	-23.13	49%	Driest	1892
VNCF1	Venice	Sarasota	26.66	43.67	-17.01	61%	3rd Driest	1955
WAUF1	Wauchula	Hardee	26.46	44.39	-17.93	60%	Driest	1933

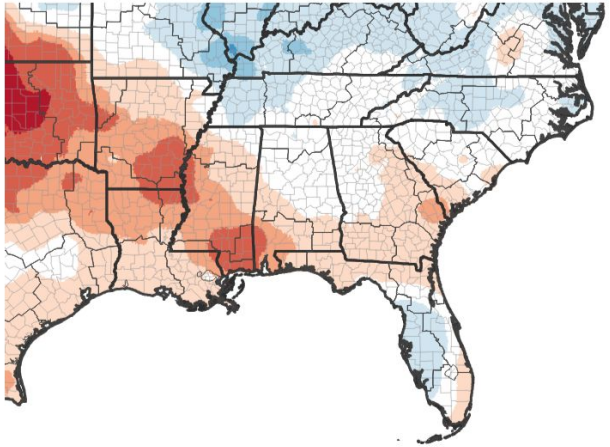
Rainfall Sep 1, 2025 - Jul 31, 2026			Rainfall (in.) Sep 1, 2025 - Jul 31, 2026	Normal Rainfall (in.) Sep 1-Jul 31	Departure from Normal	Percent of Normal	Ranking Sep 1-Jul 31	Records Began
Site ID	Site Name	County						
BARF1	Bartow	Polk	26.97	43.10	-16.13	63%	3rd Driest	1892
LWLF1	Mountain Lake	Polk	29.65	44.71	-15.06	66%	6th Driest	1935
MKCF1	Myakka River State Park	Sarasota	26.32	50.95	-24.63	52%	2nd Driest	1943

Temperature

7-Day and 30-Day Temperature Anomalies

- Temperatures have been slightly below normal over the last week thanks to more clouds and rainfall. However, over the last month they were slightly above normal.
- Vegetation uses more water this time of year.
- With depleted groundwater supplies, this means that rainfall is quickly being used by vegetation.
- Slightly above normal temperatures are expected over the next few weeks, contributing to greater evaporation of water as well.

7-Day Temperature Anomaly



Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)

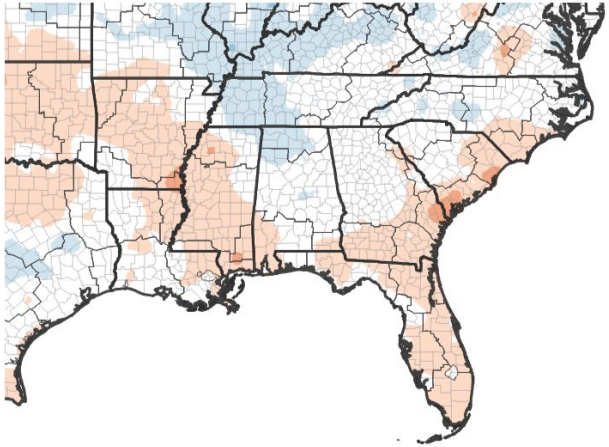
-8 -6 -4 -3 -1 0

0 1 3 4 6 8

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

Data Valid: 08/03/26

30-Day Temperature Anomaly



Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)

-8 -6 -4 -3 -1 0

0 1 3 4 6 8

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

Data Valid: 08/03/26

Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- The Southwest Florida Water Management District provided a River System Update on **August 3, 2026** for the Withlacoochee River.
- Streamflows remain exceptionally low in many spots for this time of year, and continue to decline. In some areas, there is still no water flow at all. This is leading to algae blooms along portions of some area rivers. To report an algae bloom, go to ReportAlgalBloom.com or call the hotline at 1-855-305-3903.
- River flows remain very low exiting the Green Swamp, with hardly any flow up past Hwy 48 (Bushnell).
- Further downstream from Hwy 44 past Hwy 200, water levels and flows did increase a little last month, but also remain very low for this time of year.

Dry inflow canal between the Withlacoochee River and Floral City Pool from July 2026. Courtesy of SWFWMD

Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- The C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir held 2.26 billion gallons at the end of June, about 14.6 percent of its 15.5-billion-gallon capacity.
- Areawide, surface/groundwater levels remain lower than normal for this time of year, accentuating the long term nature of this drought.
- While not necessarily seeing further decline, rainfall has not been enough yet to really replenish what has been lost.

Images of low water in area ponds across Manatee County: July 28, 2026
(Images: NWS)

Summary of Impacts

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

Agricultural Impacts

- Hernando, Polk, Hardee, and Sarasota County farmers have noted that the dryness was the worst seen in at least 15 to 20 years. Some improvement has been noted.
- Some crop plantings were delayed by farmers.
- Many plants less drought-resistant have begun to recover from drought-induced stress as summer rains continue.
- Cisterns had to be used in some areas to supplement the normal potable water supply.
- Some ponds had to be dug deeper to keep a water supply available for livestock.
- Supplemental feeding with hay and other feed has been required to sustain livestock. Report impacts here.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) remains near 500 in a few areas, but overall soils have moistened across the region thanks to the widespread rainfall we've seen lately.
- Brush fires continue to occur, with a few large, highly visible fires and some other smaller fires across the Florida peninsula. Some wildfires have caused damage to structures, temporary road closures, and have grown to thousands of acres before containment.

Summary of Impacts

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

Mitigation Actions - Southwest Florida Water Management District

- Southwest Florida Water Management District has extended a Modified Phase III "Extreme" Water Shortage until October 1, 2026. Always refer to city or county regulations first.

Mitigation Actions - Other Partners

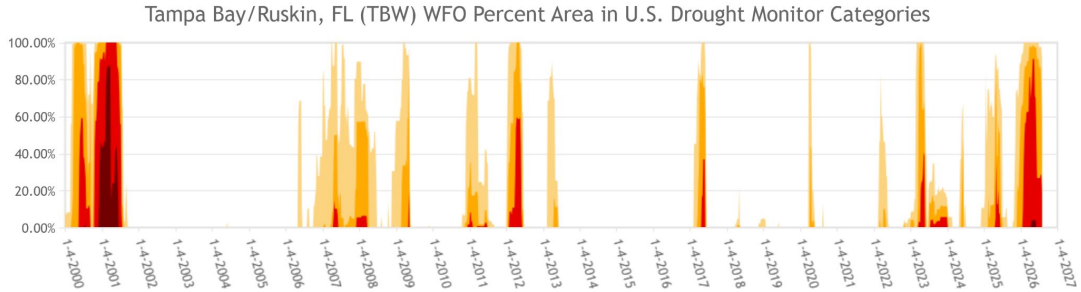
- A State of Emergency was issued for the area due to the impacts of Winter Weather, Drought, and the increased Wildfire Risks.
- A modified Phase II Water Shortage is in effect for a portion of Northeast Cape Coral in Lee County.
- Burn Bans remain in effect for a couple of counties in West Central and Southwest Florida. Please contact the county for specifics.
- Several locks on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee remain closed. More info here.

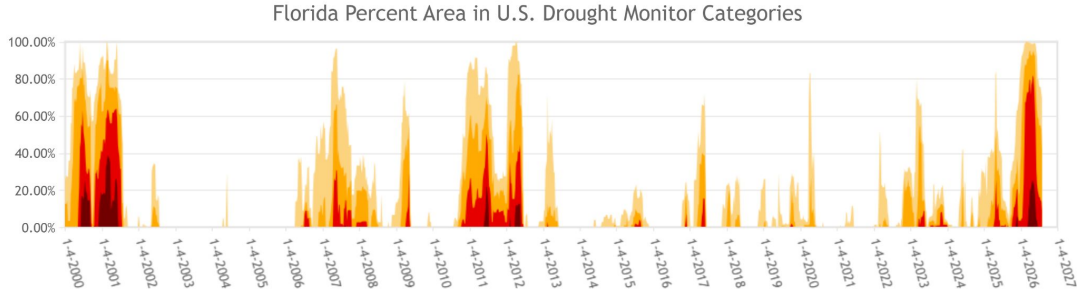
A Perspective on this Drought

Link to Drought Monitor Time Series

How does this drought compare to past long term droughts in the NWS Tampa Bay forecast area?

- There have been four long duration droughts since 2000 in West Central and Southwest Florida, including the current drought.
- While conditions are significant, they have not reached the intensity and duration experienced in the 2000/2001 drought.
- This is the most impactful drought within the NWS Tampa Bay area since 2012.
- This was the first time since the drought monitor began in 2000 that the **entire** State of Florida was D1 (Moderate drought) or worse.





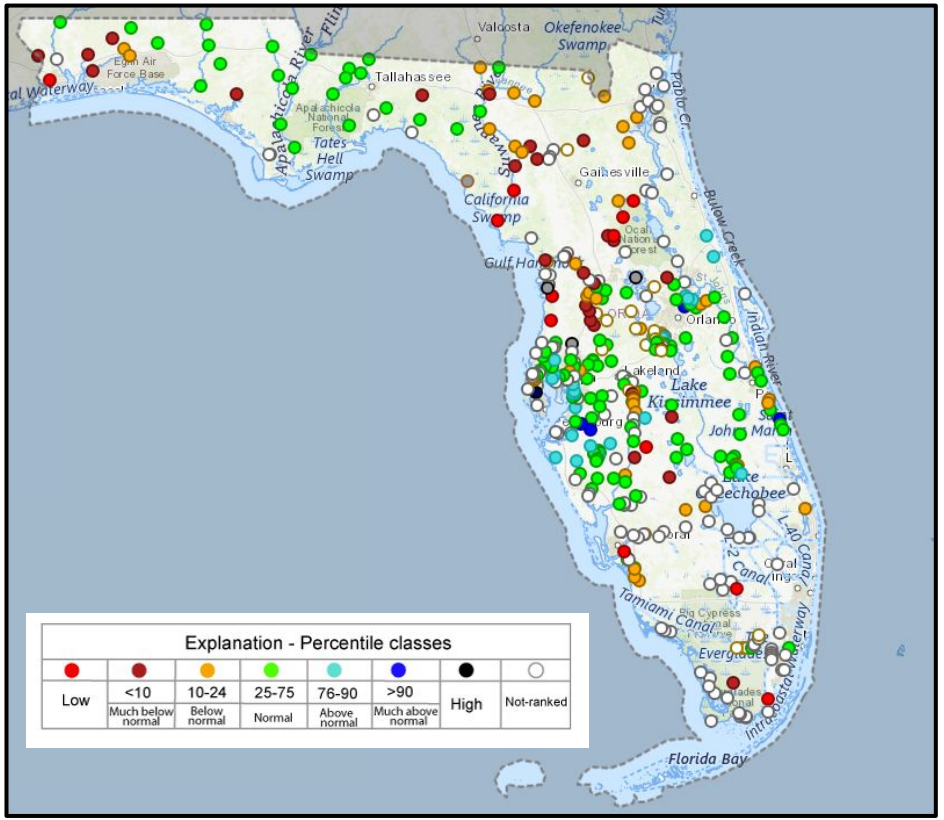
Graphs Courtesy of the U.S. Drought Monitor website
Time series depiction of D1, D2, D3, and D4 drought across the NWS Tampa Bay forecast area by percentage (top). State of Florida Time Series of D1, D2, D3, and D4 drought by percentage (bottom). Records go back to 2000.

D1 (Moderate Drought)
D2 (Severe Drought)
D3 (Extreme Drought)
D4 (Exceptional Drought)

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

USGS Streamflow Map for Florida

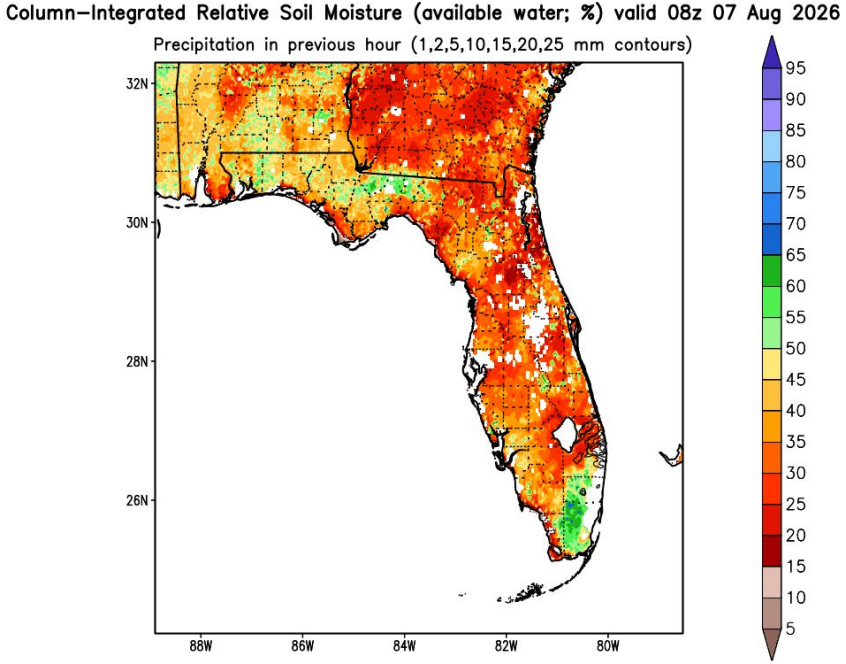
- Streamflows have improved across much of the area over the last week thanks to the widespread rainfall.
- The exception however is along the Withlacoochee River which takes much longer to respond and has not seen as much rainfall in the headwaters in the Green Swamp.
- Streamflows are likely to remain about the same as rainfall coverage next week is expected to be lower.



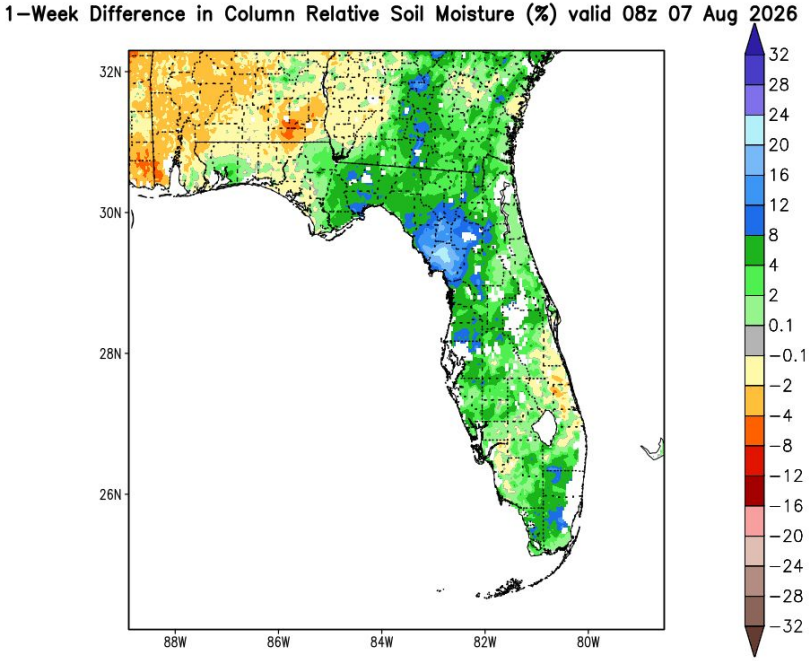
Agricultural Impacts

[2025 Florida Crop Report]

Showers and thunderstorms over the last week helped increase soil moisture across the region. However, water is being absorbed by vegetation, filtering into groundwater storage, and evaporating due to the warm weather.



NOTE
Experimental



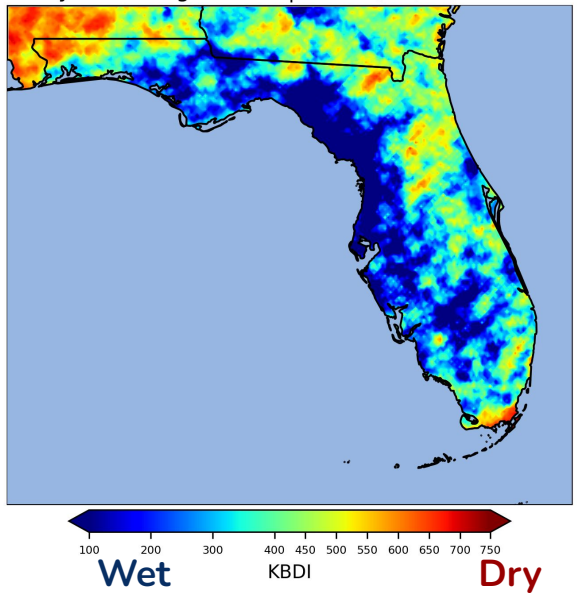
NOTE
Experimental

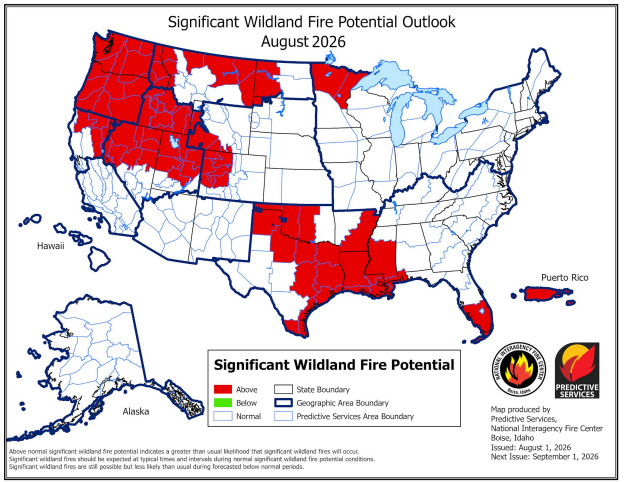
Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.

- The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) has improved across much of the area thanks to the rainfall over the last week.
- The KBDI will rise quickly when it does not rain for a few days, with antecedent conditions favoring the rapid absorption and consumption of the water that falls.
- Brush fires have continued to occur with Burn Bans in effect for a couple of counties.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for the August continues to support above normal fire activity across the southern half of the area.

Keetch-Byram Drought Index | Thu 08/06/26, 02:00 PM EDT



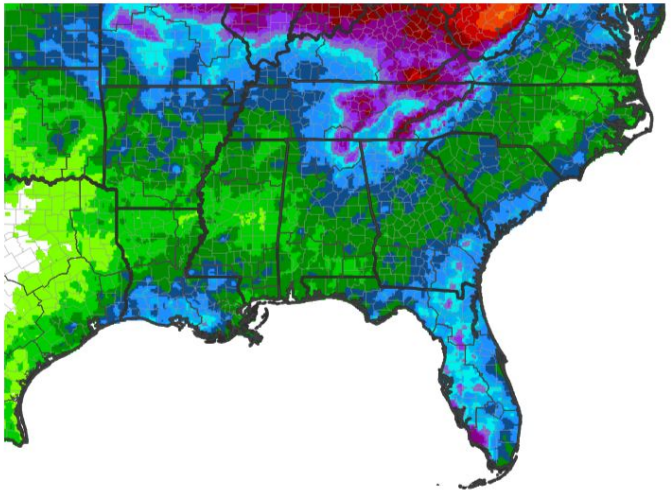


Precipitation Outlook

7-Day and 8-14 Day Precipitation Outlooks

- More scattered to numerous showers and thunderstorms are forecast each day over the next week with near normal rainfall expected across much of the area.
- Better chances for below normal rainfall is expected for week two as the pattern changes, with little overall improvement expected.
- A consistent period of regular, near daily rainfall is needed to substantially alleviate the long-term drought conditions.

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for August 6, 2026–August 13, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation

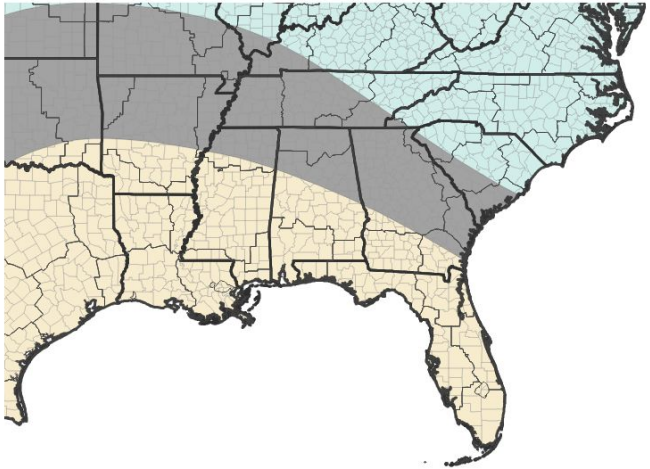
0 | 0.01 | 0.1 | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.75 | 1 | 1.25 | 1.5 | 1.75

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: 08/06/26

8–14 Day Precipitation Outlook for August 14, 2026–August 20, 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: 08/06/26

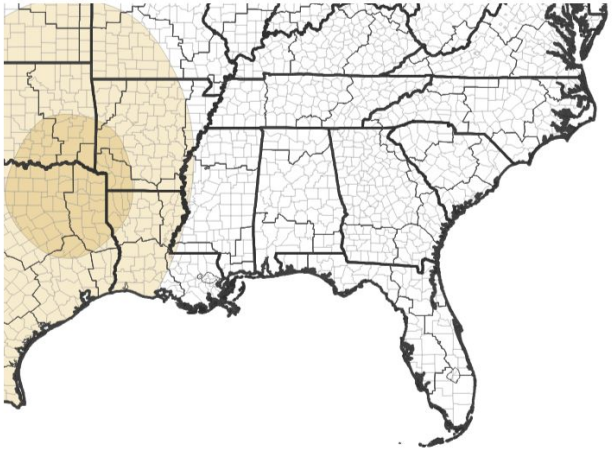
Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

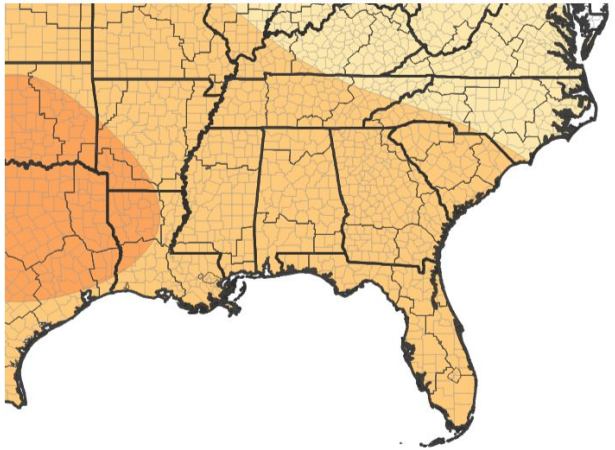
- The outlook for August suggests equal chances of above, below, and near normal rainfall, with a 40-50% chance of above normal temperatures.
- This suggests that drought conditions may hold steady.

Normals	August	
	Temp	Rain
Brooksville	81.5°	8.12"
Tampa	84.0°	9.03"
Lakeland	83.3°	9.08"
Sarasota	83.4°	9.11"
Punta Gorda	83.5°	9.11"
Fort Myers	83.4°	10.43"

Monthly Precipitation Outlook for August 1, 2026–August 31, 2026



Monthly Temperature Outlook for August 1, 2026–August 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: 07/31/26

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: 07/31/26

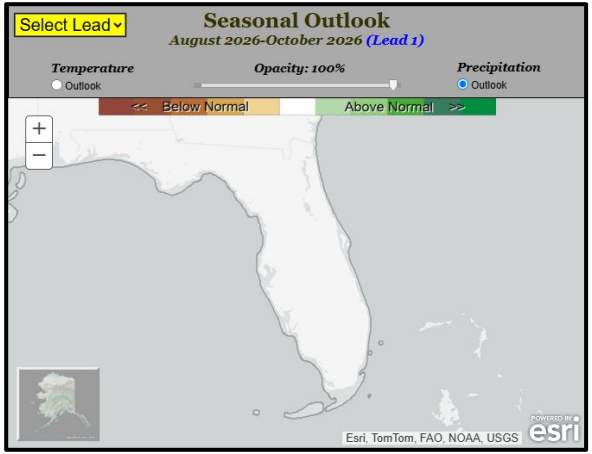
Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage]

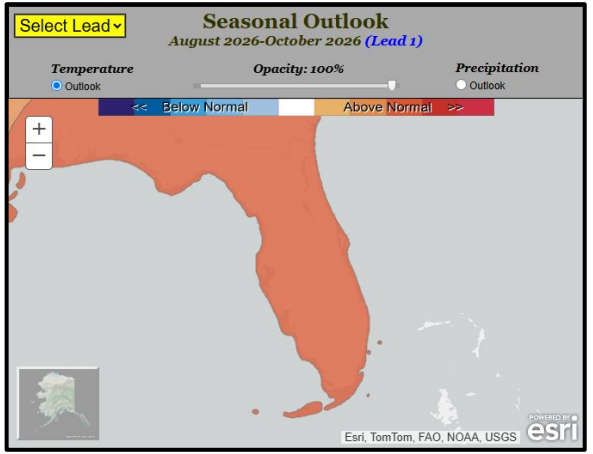
- The outlook for August through October calls for equal chances of above, below, and near normal rainfall, with a 50-60% chance of above normal temperatures.

Normals	August		September		October	
	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain
Brooksville	81.5°	8.12"	79.8°	5.79"	73.1°	2.79"
Tampa	84.0°	9.03"	82.7°	6.09"	77.4°	2.34"
Lakeland	83.3°	9.08"	81.7°	7.62"	76.4°	3.04"
Sarasota	83.4°	9.11"	82.2°	6.00"	77.3°	2.76"
Punta Gorda	83.5°	9.11"	82.1°	6.87"	77.2°	3.02"
Fort Myers	83.4°	10.43'	82.2°	9.00"	78.0°	3.08"

Precipitation



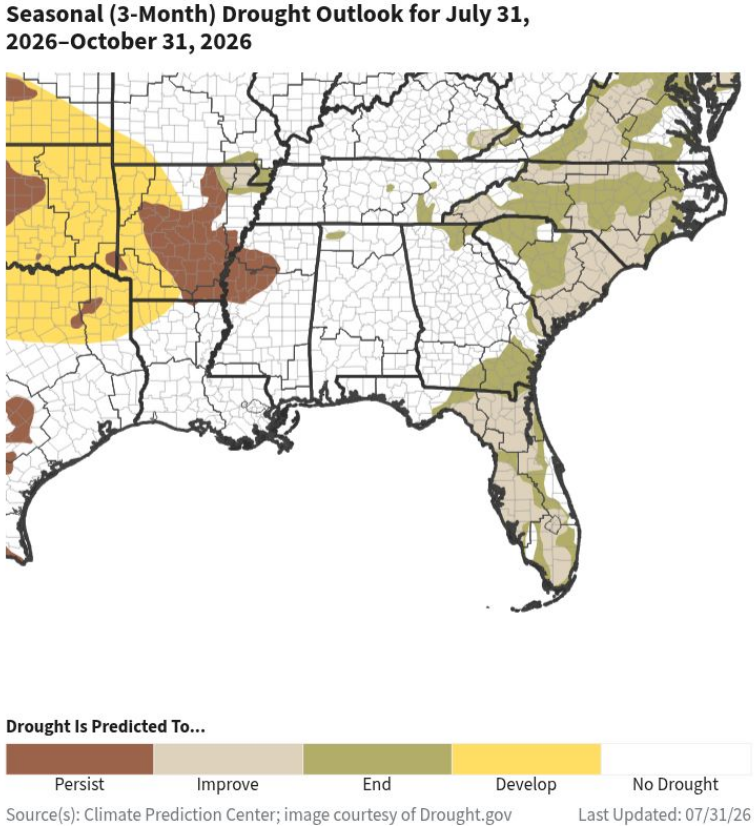
Temperature



Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- Given the prediction for near normal rainfall in the months ahead, drought is expected to improve across the region over the next three months - if not end altogether.
- Should rainfall over the next three months be below normal, drought improvement may be delayed or persist, especially now that summer is in full swing.



Links to the latest:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook
Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook