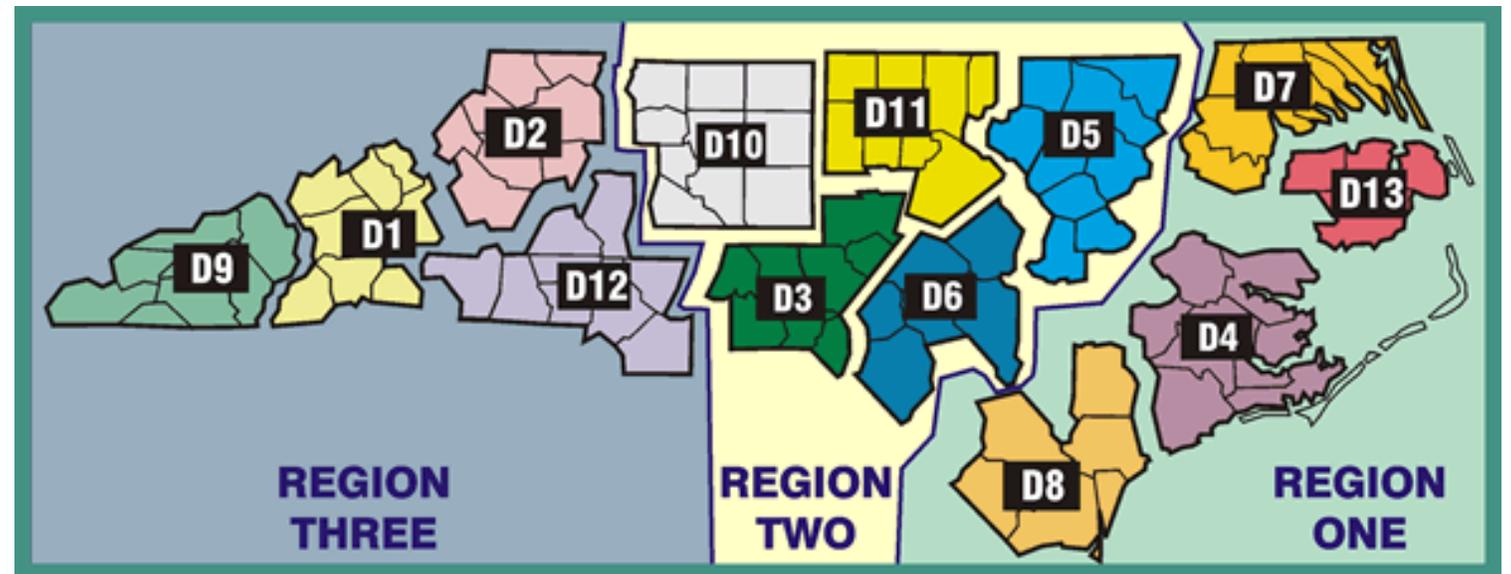
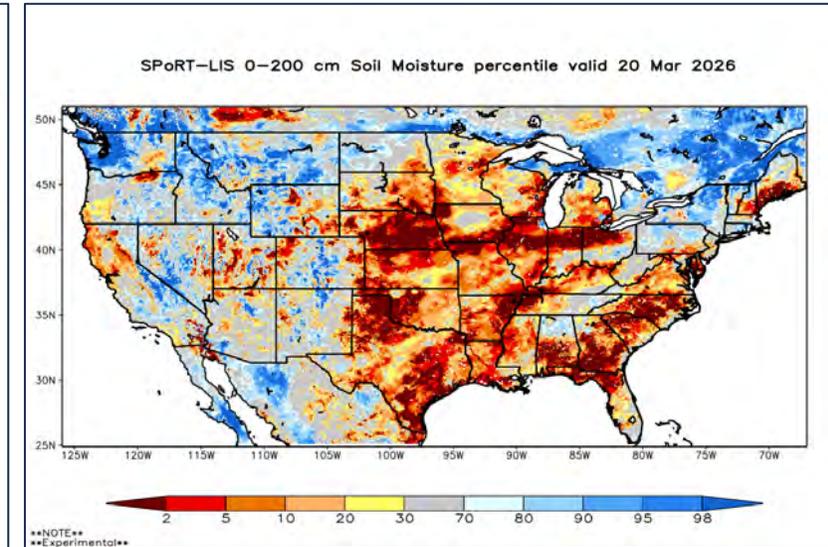
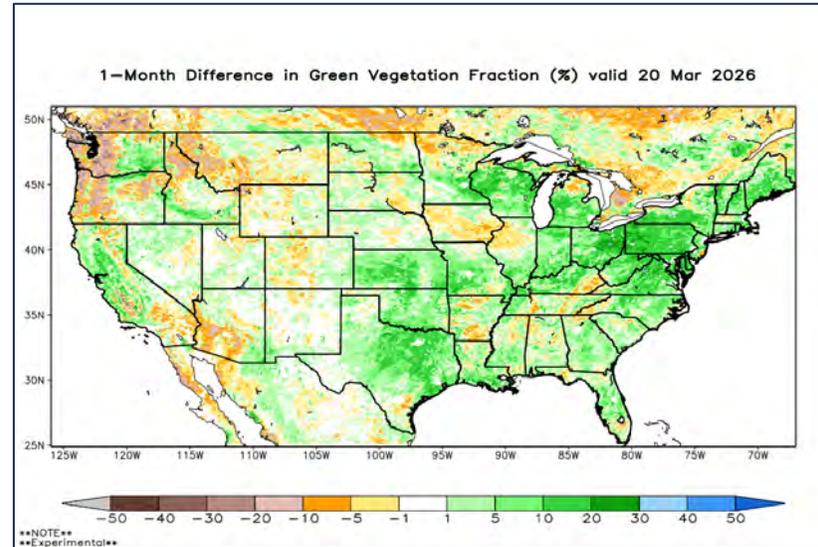


Weekly Fire Danger Assessment NCFS – All Regions



For Time Period:

Friday (3/20/26) to Thursday
(3/26/26)

Created by: Jamie Dunbar
Fire Environment Staff Forester
NC Forest Service
Created: 3/20/26

Statewide Wildfire Context

- January: 10-yr avg is 339 fires for 702 acres
- February: 10-yr avg is 639 fires for 1,683 acres
- *March: 10-yr avg is 1,009 fires for 6,401 acres**
- April: 10-yr avg is 627 fires for 6,803 acres
- May: 10-yr avg is 283 fires for 1,298 acres
- June: 10-yr avg is 231 fires for 2,383 acres
- July: 10-yr avg is 182 fires for 551 acres
- August: 10-yr avg is 126 fires for 420 acres
- September: 10-yr avg is 194 fires for 422 acres
- October: 10-yr avg is 265 fires for 1,996 acres
- November: 10-yr avg is 534 fires for 6,173 acres
- December: 10-yr avg is 372 fires for 733 acres

-
- January: 1,083 incidents for 1,964 acres
 - February: 829 incidents for 1,136 acres
 - MTD (ending 3/19): 742 incidents for 3,198 acres
 - 7-Day Activity: 179 incidents for 299 acres

All wildfire activity data is preliminary

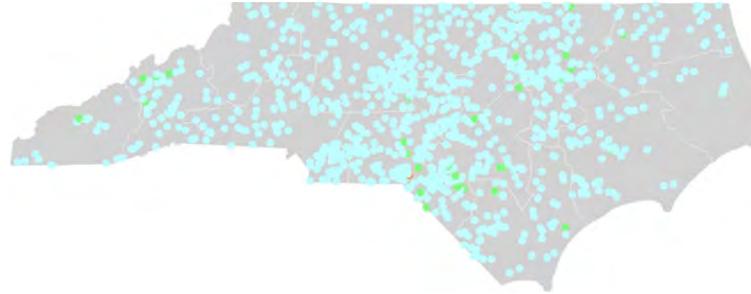
Does not include additional federal wildfires/acres

2016-2025 CY Average

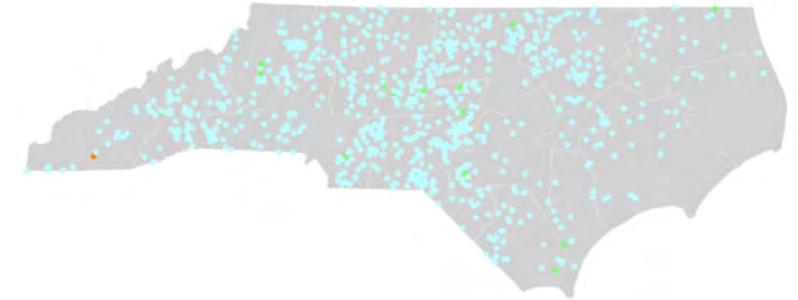
****Largest incidents by discovery date, MTD:**
from fiResponse & preliminary reporting only

| Incident Name | Discovery Date | Region | District | County | Acres |
|-------------------|----------------|----------|-------------|-------------------|---------|
| East Tower | 3/4/2026 | Region 1 | District 13 | Dare County | 1410.00 |
| TRACERS | 3/11/2026 | Region 2 | District 3 | Richmond County | 220.00 |
| Orange Skies | 3/10/2026 | Region 2 | District 6 | Robeson County | 150.63 |
| Deer pen | 3/12/2026 | Region 2 | District 11 | Granville County | 63.00 |
| Ruby Rd | 3/4/2026 | Region 2 | District 6 | Robeson County | 60.00 |
| Hines Branch | 3/14/2026 | Region 3 | District 2 | Caldwell County | 60.00 |
| Butterfly Man | 3/10/2026 | Region 2 | District 6 | Robeson County | 59.60 |
| Georges Branch | 3/7/2026 | Region 3 | District 1 | Buncombe County | 45.00 |
| Thomas Rd | 3/11/2026 | Region 2 | District 11 | Vance County | 40.00 |
| North Carolina 99 | 3/4/2026 | Region 1 | District 13 | Washington County | 35.00 |
| F3 | 3/14/2026 | Region 3 | District 2 | Watauga County | 30.00 |
| Smoky Canyon Dr | 3/16/2026 | Region 2 | District 6 | Cumberland County | 29.00 |

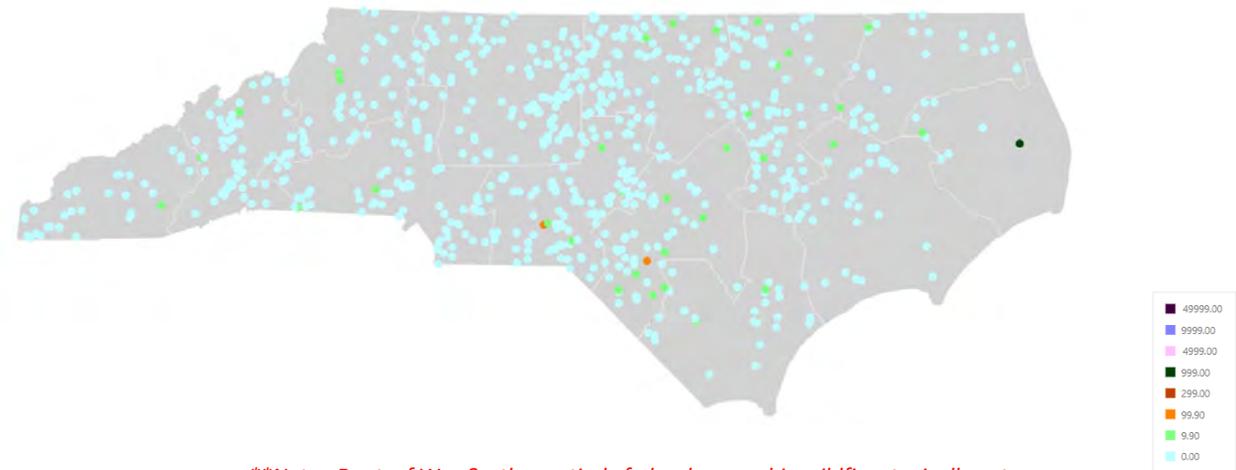
January 2026



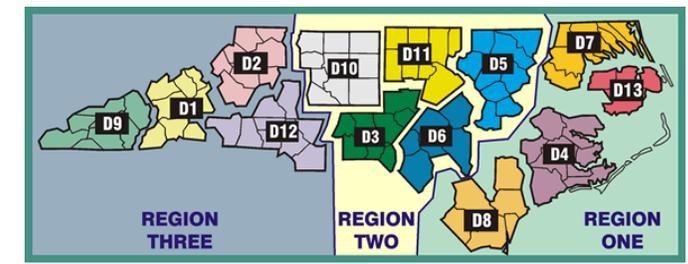
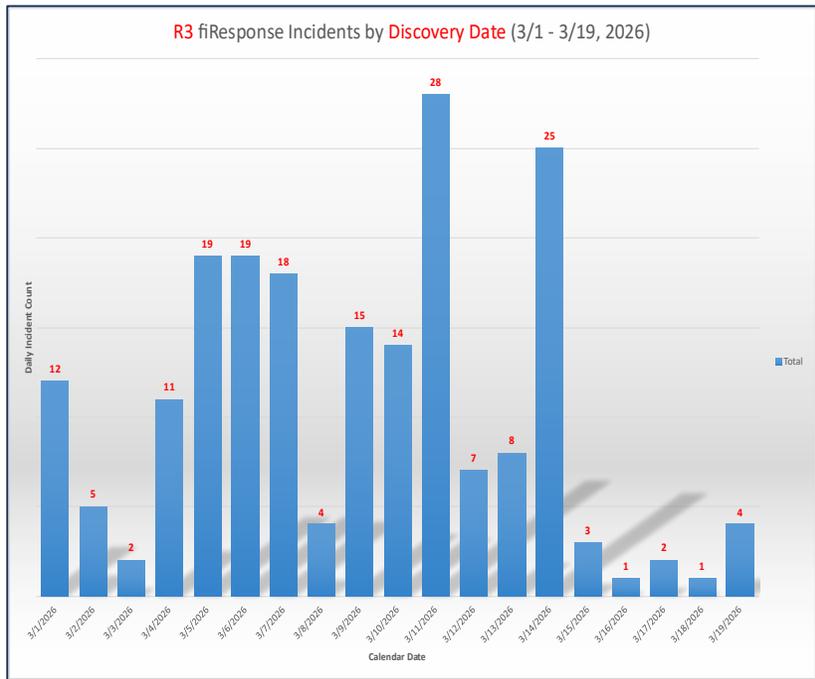
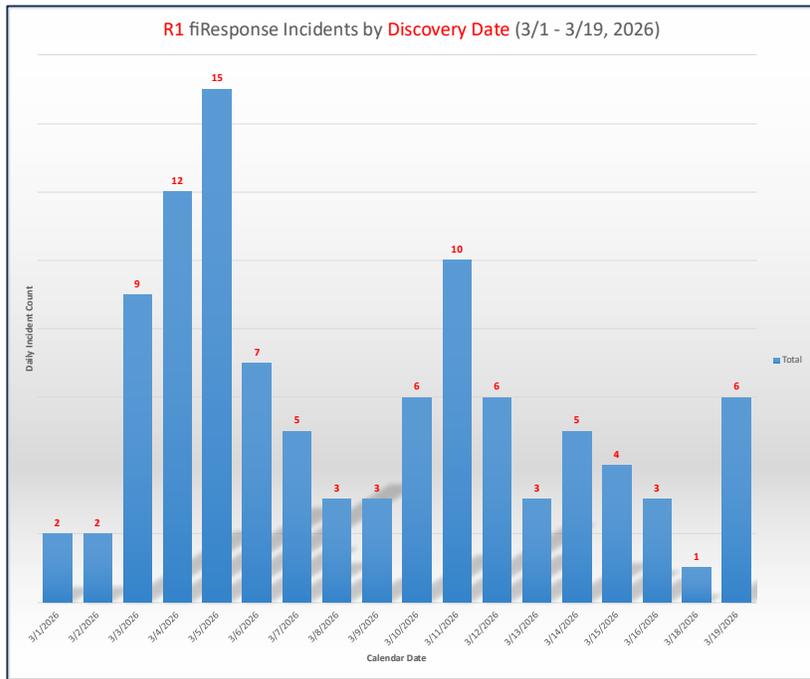
February 2026



March - MTD (3/1 – 3/19)

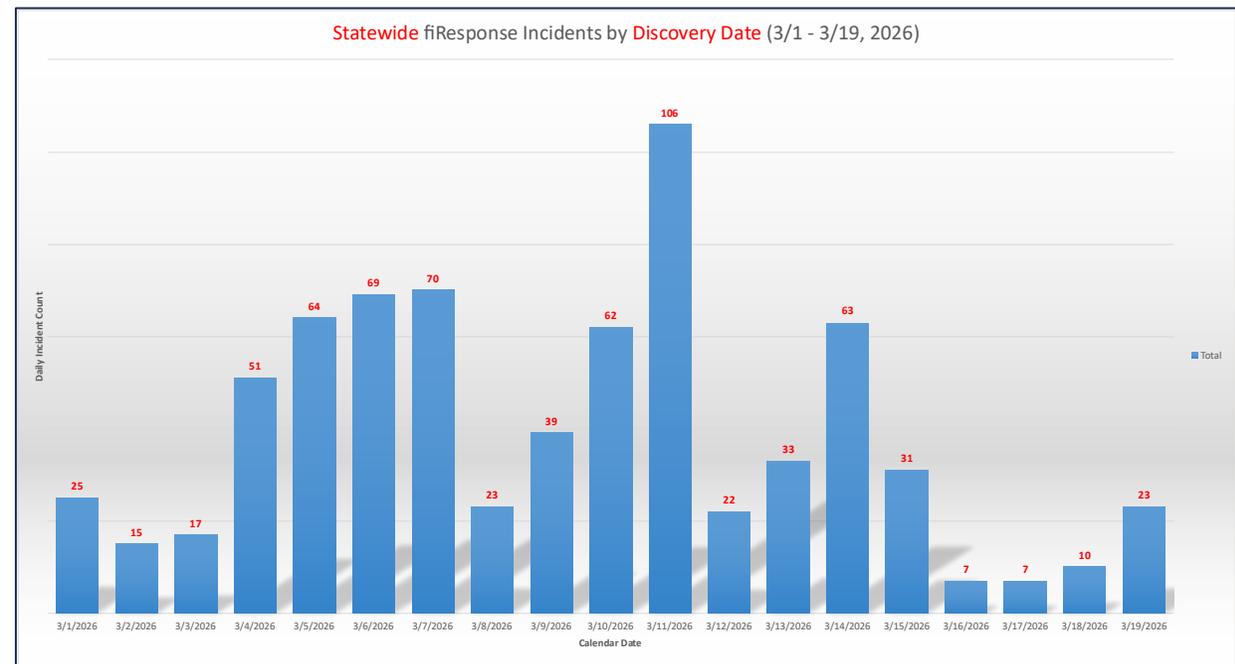
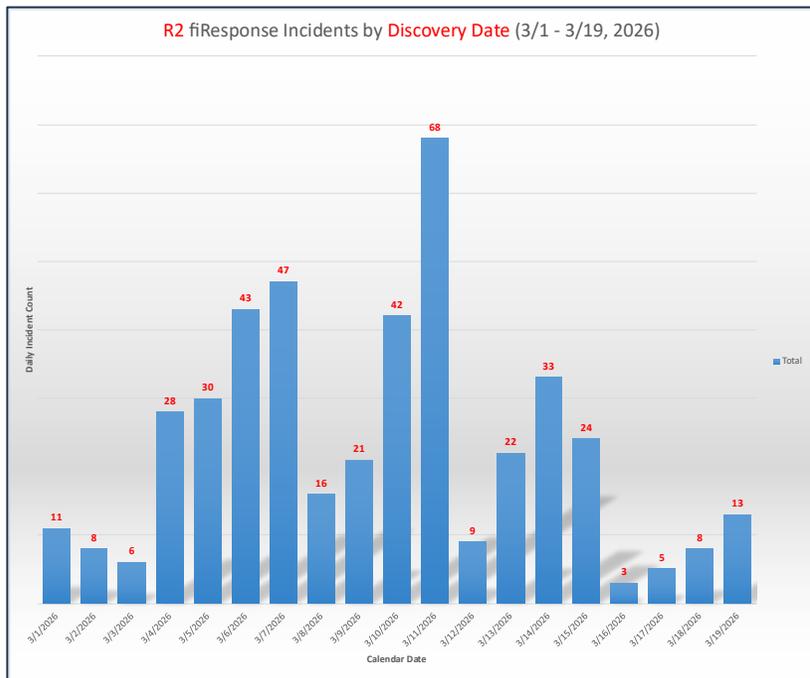


****Note:** Dept. of War & other entirely federal ownership wildfires typically not shown on fiResponse, unless NCFS integrated into response.

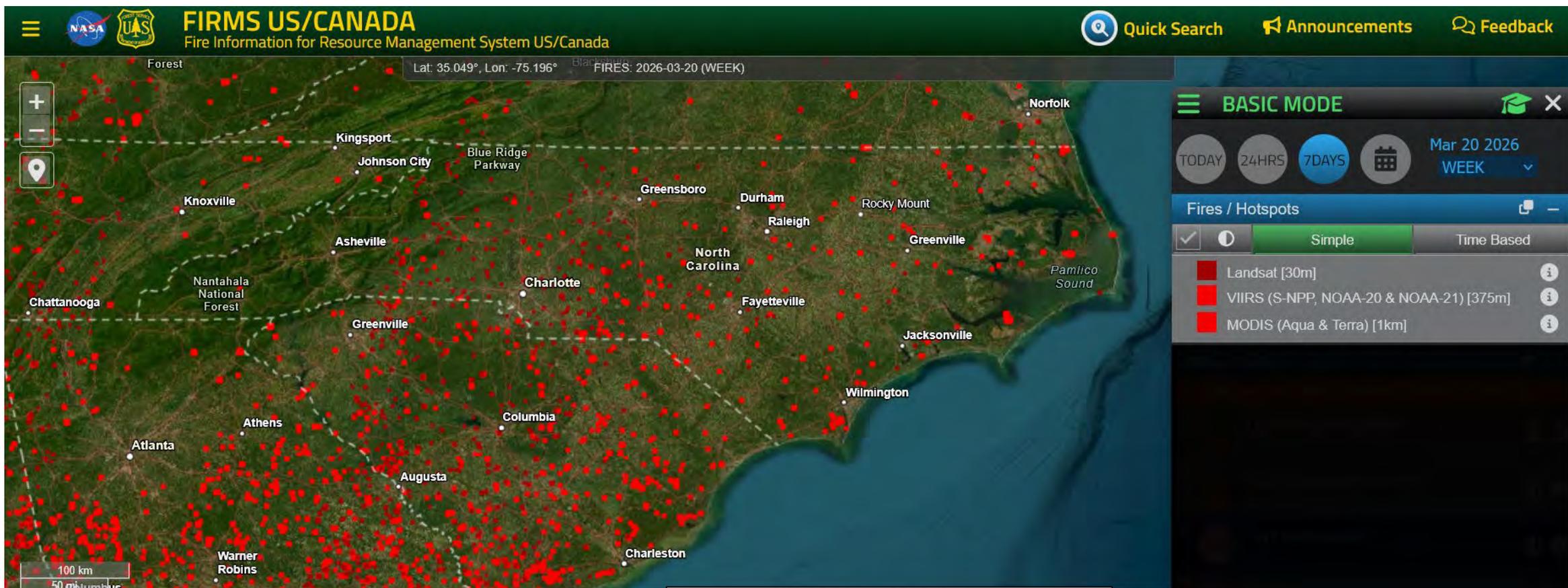


Distribution of fiResponse Incidents by **Region & Daily Count** from 3/1 to 3/19, 2026

Data is preliminary and subject to change

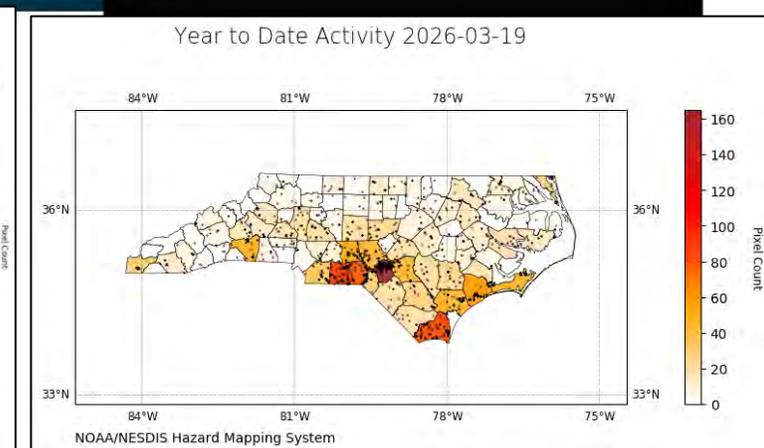
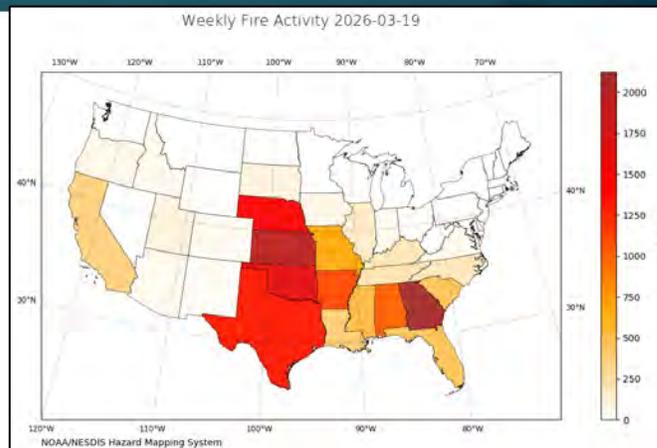


Weekly Heat Detects

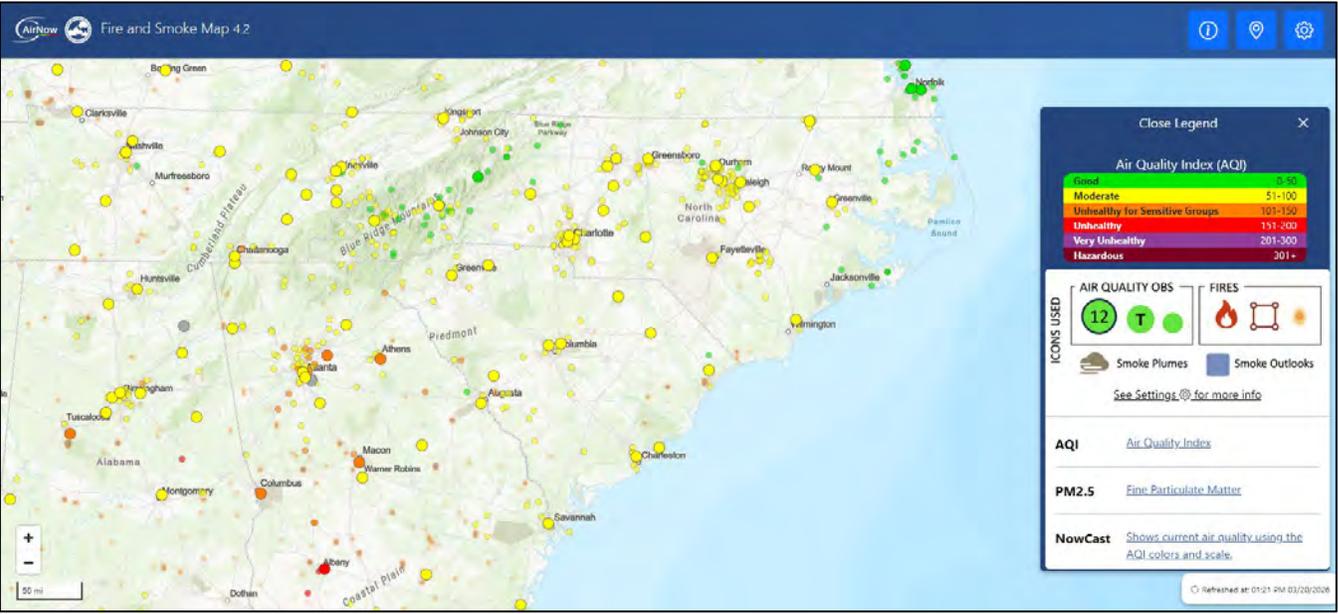


NC Map showing past week satellite detects from same source & bottom right maps display fire pixel counts. Note NC map is by CY-Year (YTD context ending on 3/19/26) . Note that cloud cover and other factors can limit detections, not all detects may be “forestry related”. Hazard Mapping System link:

<https://www.ospo.noaa.gov/products/land/hms.html#maps>

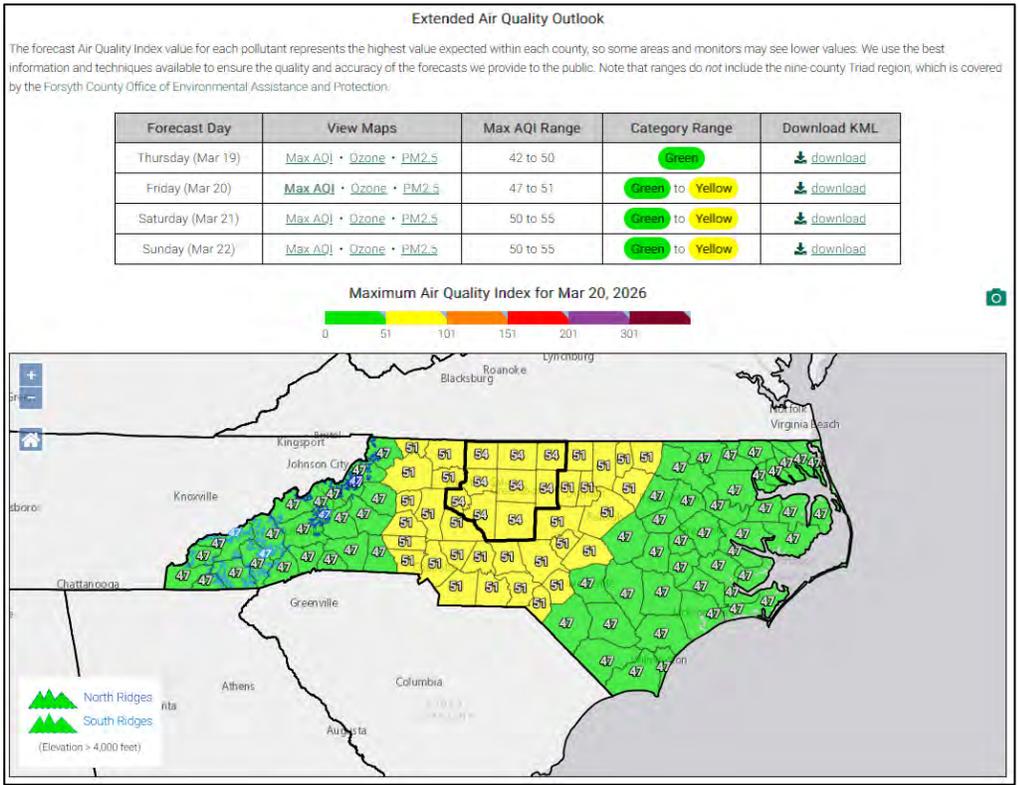


Air Quality Notes



Fire & Smoke Map heat detects from VIIRS (above). RX burning evident across the Southeast.

<https://fire.airnow.gov/#>



This forecast was issued on **Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 3:59 pm**. ✔ This forecast is currently valid.

Today's Air Quality Conditions

Fine particulates are in the upper Code Green to lower Code Yellow range in western NC, while levels remain in the Code Green range elsewhere across the state. Ozone levels are in the Code Green range statewide.

🔗 For a display of the most recent Air Quality Index (AQI) conditions throughout the day, visit the [Ambient Information Reporter \(AIR\) tool](#).

General Forecast Discussion

By Friday, lingering high pressure overhead will result in an increasingly stagnant and moistening air mass that may allow fine particulate levels to elevate into the lower Code Yellow range, while ozone levels should hold predominantly in the Code Green range.

Outlook

On Saturday on into Sunday, a weak upper level disturbance will pass to the northwest and could bring some showers, but likely won't result in a significant air mass change so expect fine particulates to remain slightly elevated with ozone levels holding in the Code Green range.

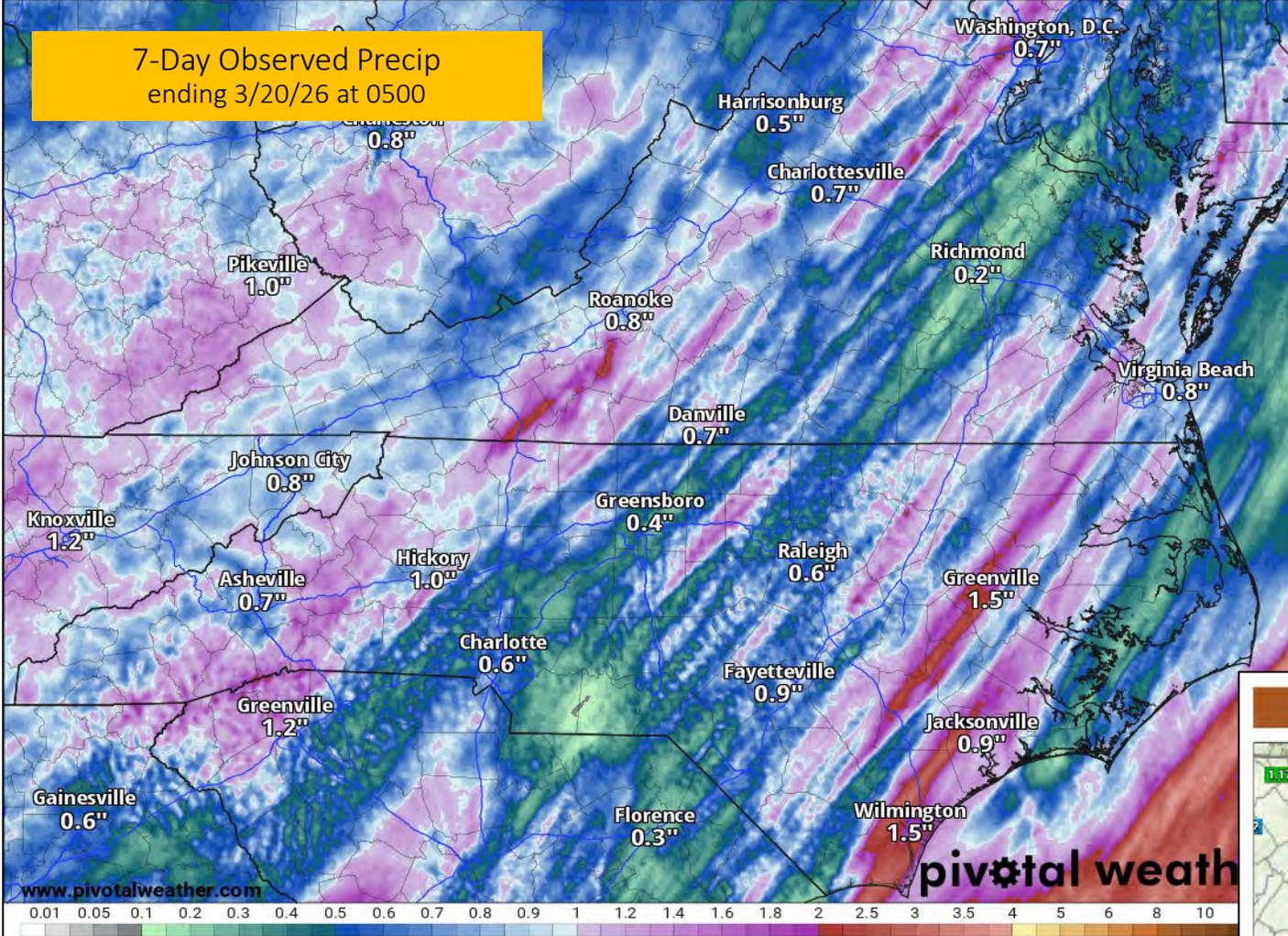
Author: [Bradley McLamb](#) (bradley.mclamb@deq.nc.gov) - NC Division of Air Quality

<https://airquality.climate.ncsu.edu/discussion/?view=latest>

168-Hour MRMS Multi-Sensor Precipitation Analysis (in)

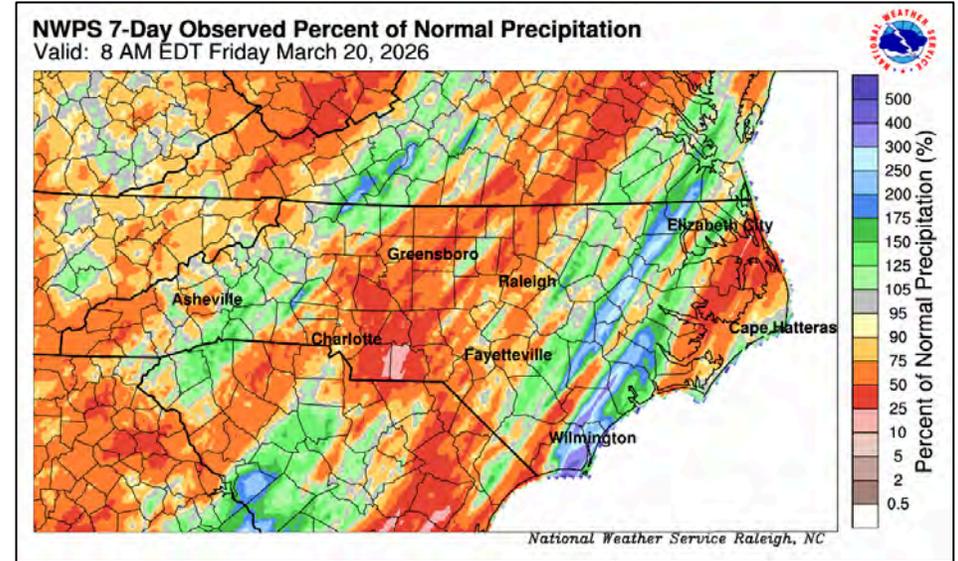
Ending Friday, Mar. 20, 2026 at 5 a.m. EDT

Init: Fri 2026-03-20 09z MRMS

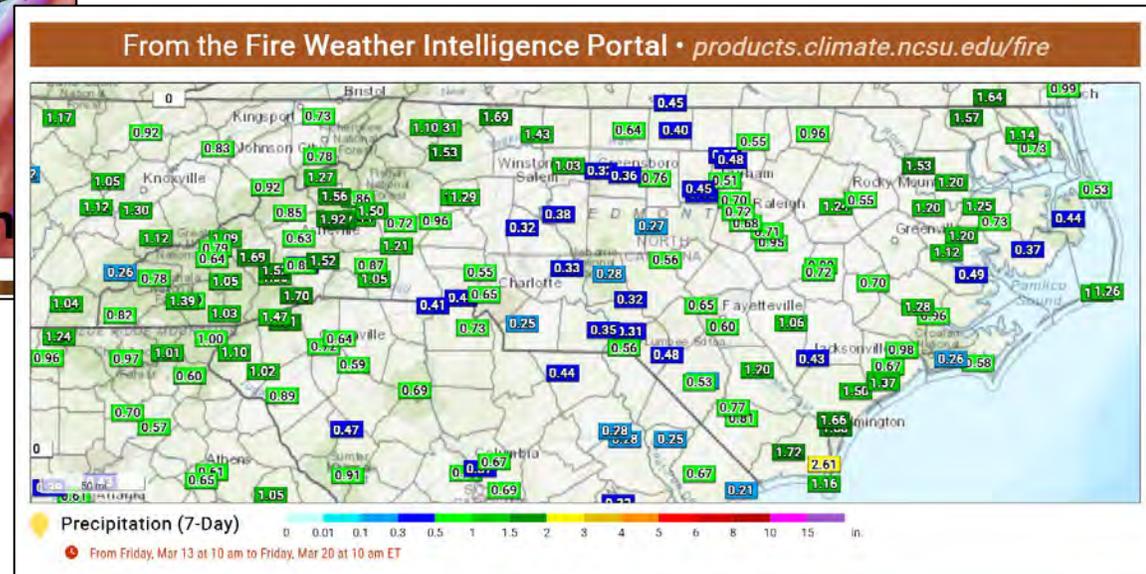


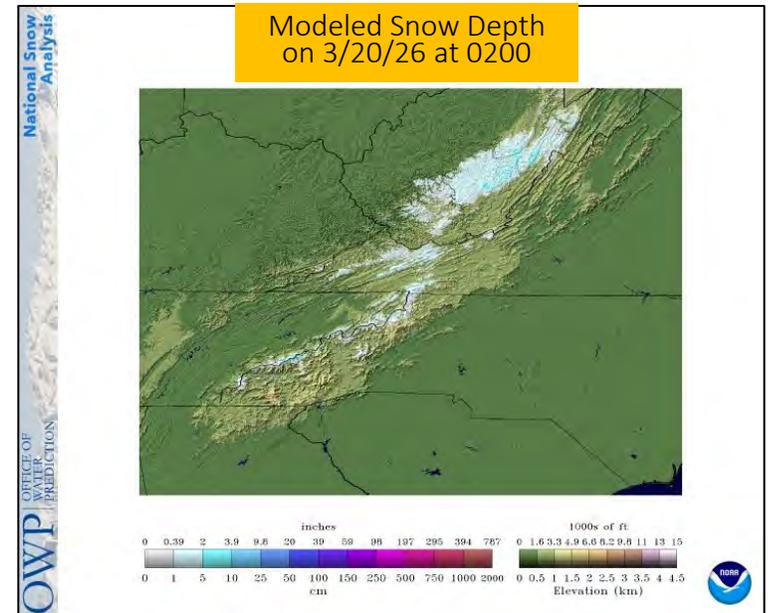
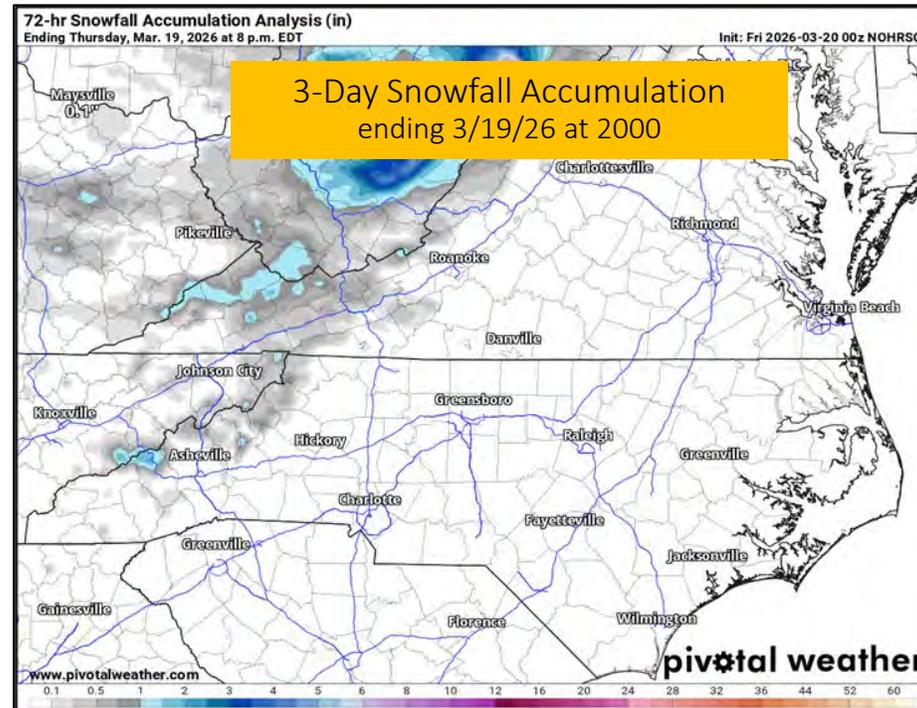
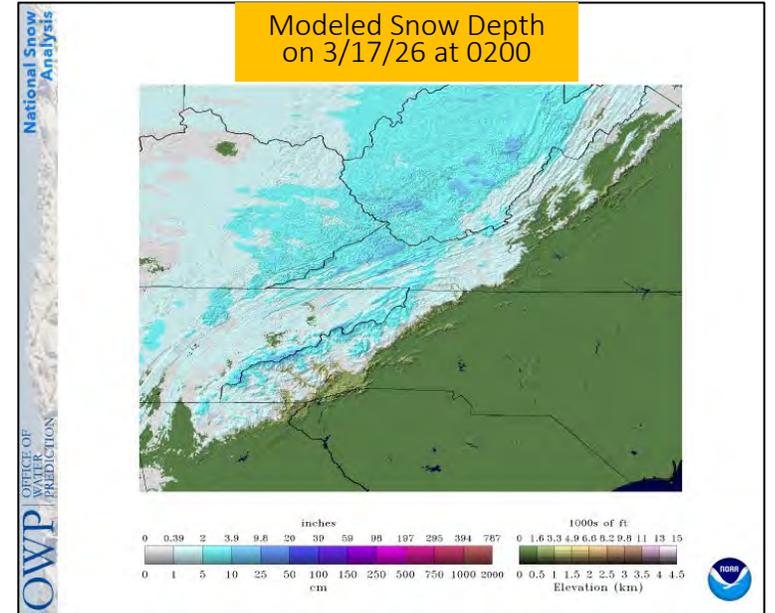
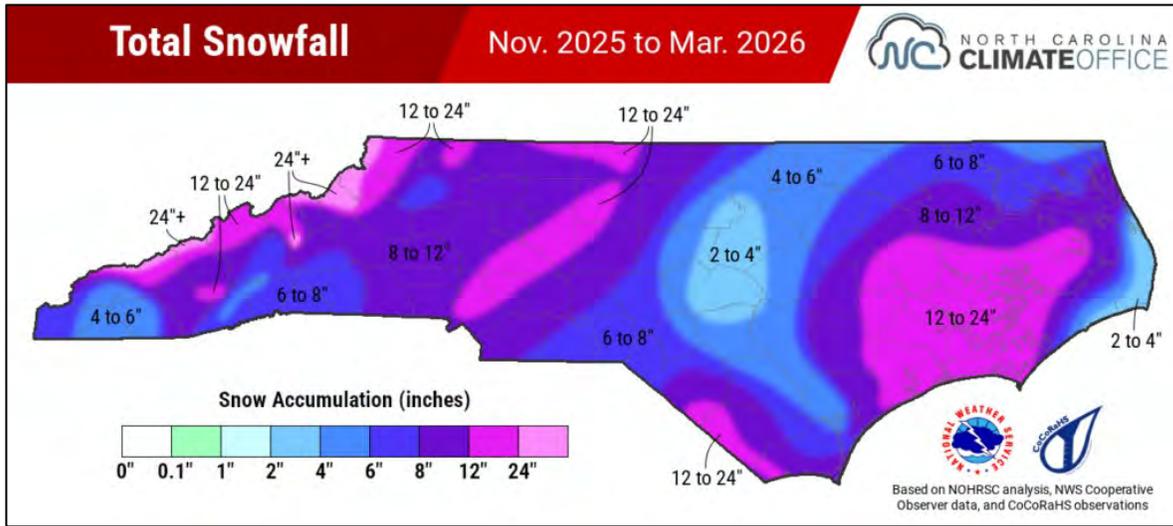
Note the distinct storm cell related nature of rainfall pattern, very abrupt transitions from 1"+ to < 0.30" across the landscape (above).

7-Day Percent of Normal Precip ending 3/20/26 at 0800



7-Day Station Precip Totals ending 3/20/26 at 1000





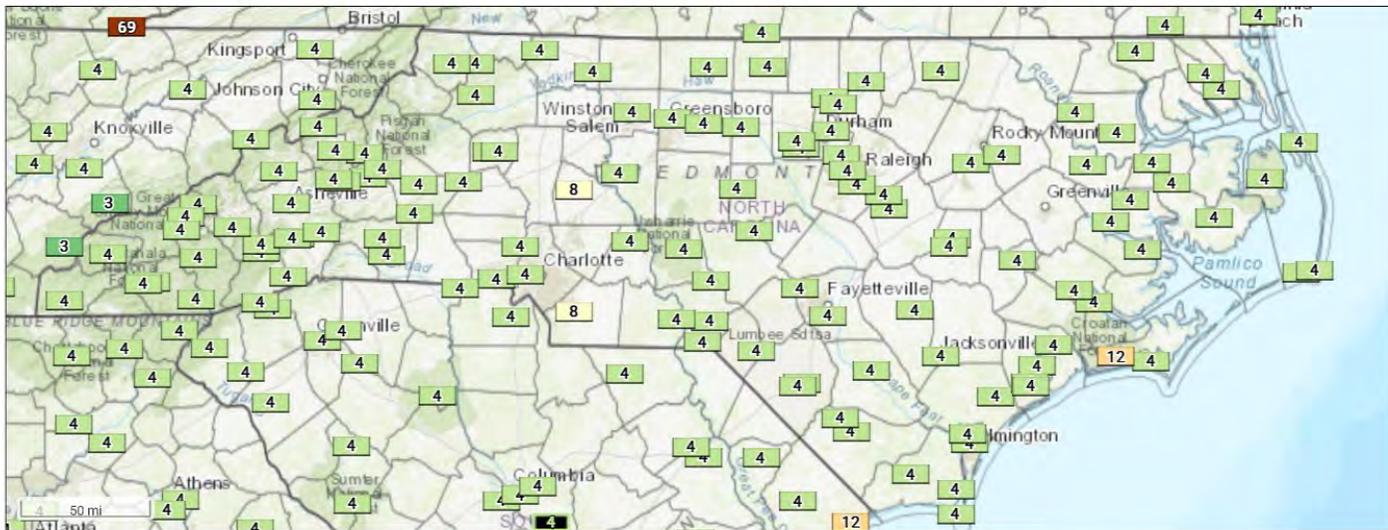
<https://www.nohrsc.noaa.gov/nsa/index.html?region=Southern Appalachia&year=2026&month=3&day=20&units=e>

Snowfall map (above) from the NC State Climate Office [Article Post on 3/19/26](#).

Map on center bottom does not capture snowfall from earlier Monday. Reminder that the nationally automated “Snow Flag” state directly impacts FEMS model outputs, muting fire danger. **Several high elevation mountain stations have been in “Yes” state since Monday’s snow event.**

Modeled snow depth on 3/17 and 3/20 maps to the right, note significant sublimation and melt has occurred for most areas since the event.

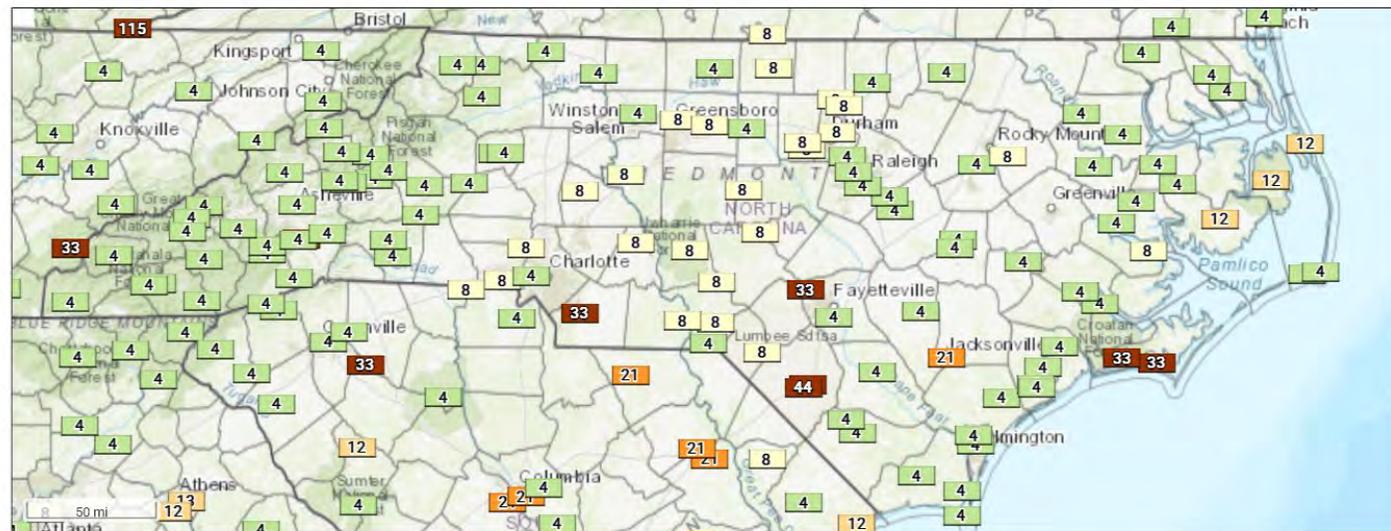
From the Fire Weather Intelligence Portal • products.climate.ncsu.edu/fire



Days since ≥ 0.50 " Precip Event ending 3/20/26 at 1000

Days since ≥ 0.25 " Precip Event ending 3/20/26 at 1000

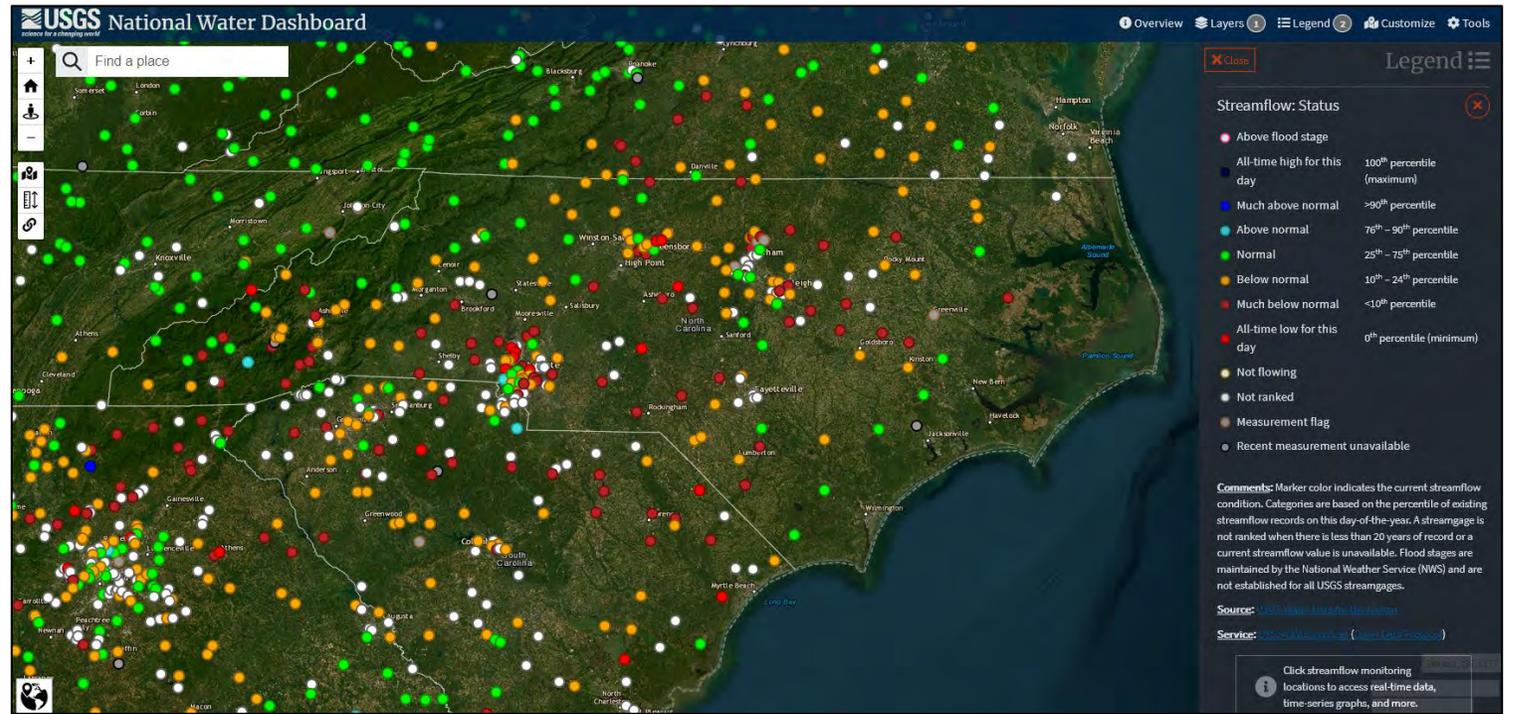
From the Fire Weather Intelligence Portal • products.climate.ncsu.edu/fire



Days Since ≥ 0.50 " Precip.

From today (Mar 20) 10 am ET

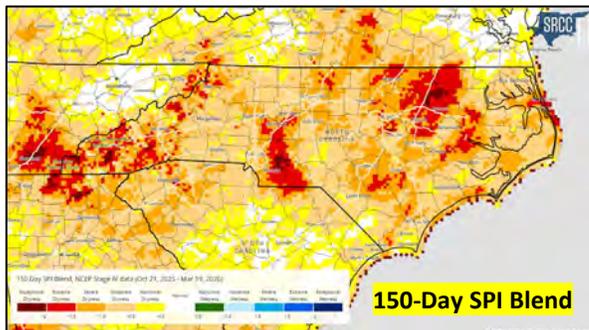
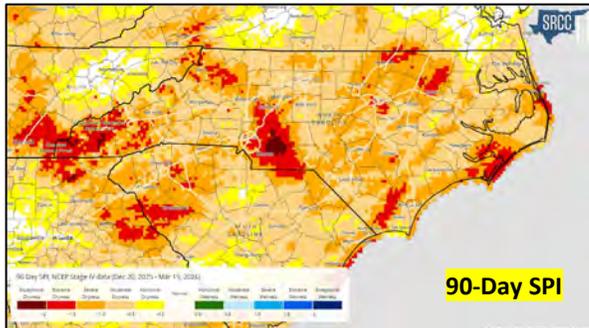
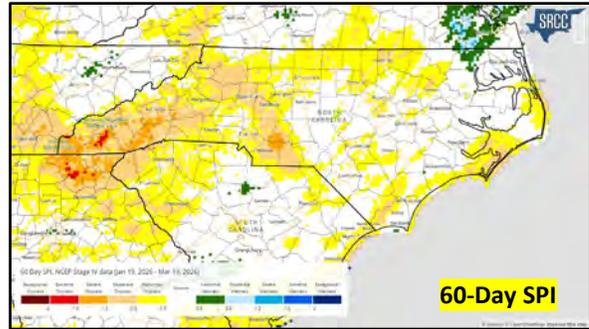
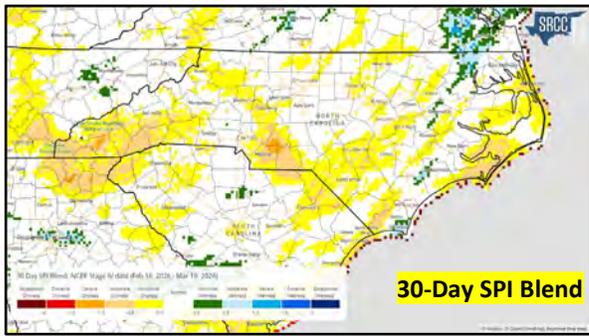
New USGS Streamflow Map: Real-time



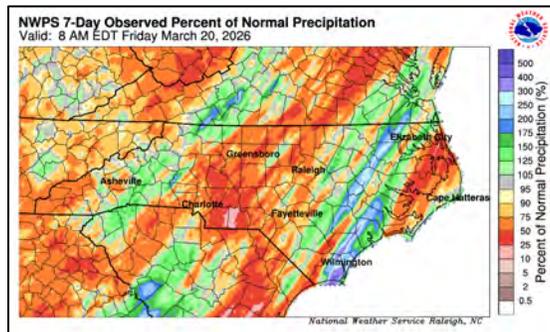
Fairly widespread rain earlier in week has helped with shorter-term SPI, but has had limited impact at longer time scales. Longer time scale SPI products generally indicate entrenched conditions. As dormancy break continues – expect further decreases in streamflow and lower duff/soil moisture.

Real-time streamflow from 3/20/26 shows return of below normal flow conditions for many gauges in NC. There was a **short-term bump in flow** from Monday's storms. The increase still evident in watersheds that had the heaviest. This low-flow (especially in context of baseflow) trend continues to be very significant as we move towards the growing season/spring. Many swamps & larger canal networks remain low, compared to seasonal "normal".

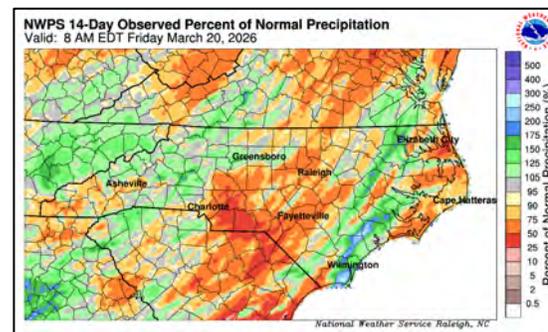
https://src.tamu.edu/water_portal/



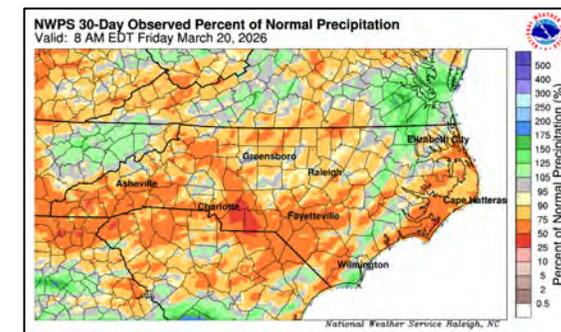
7-Day PNP



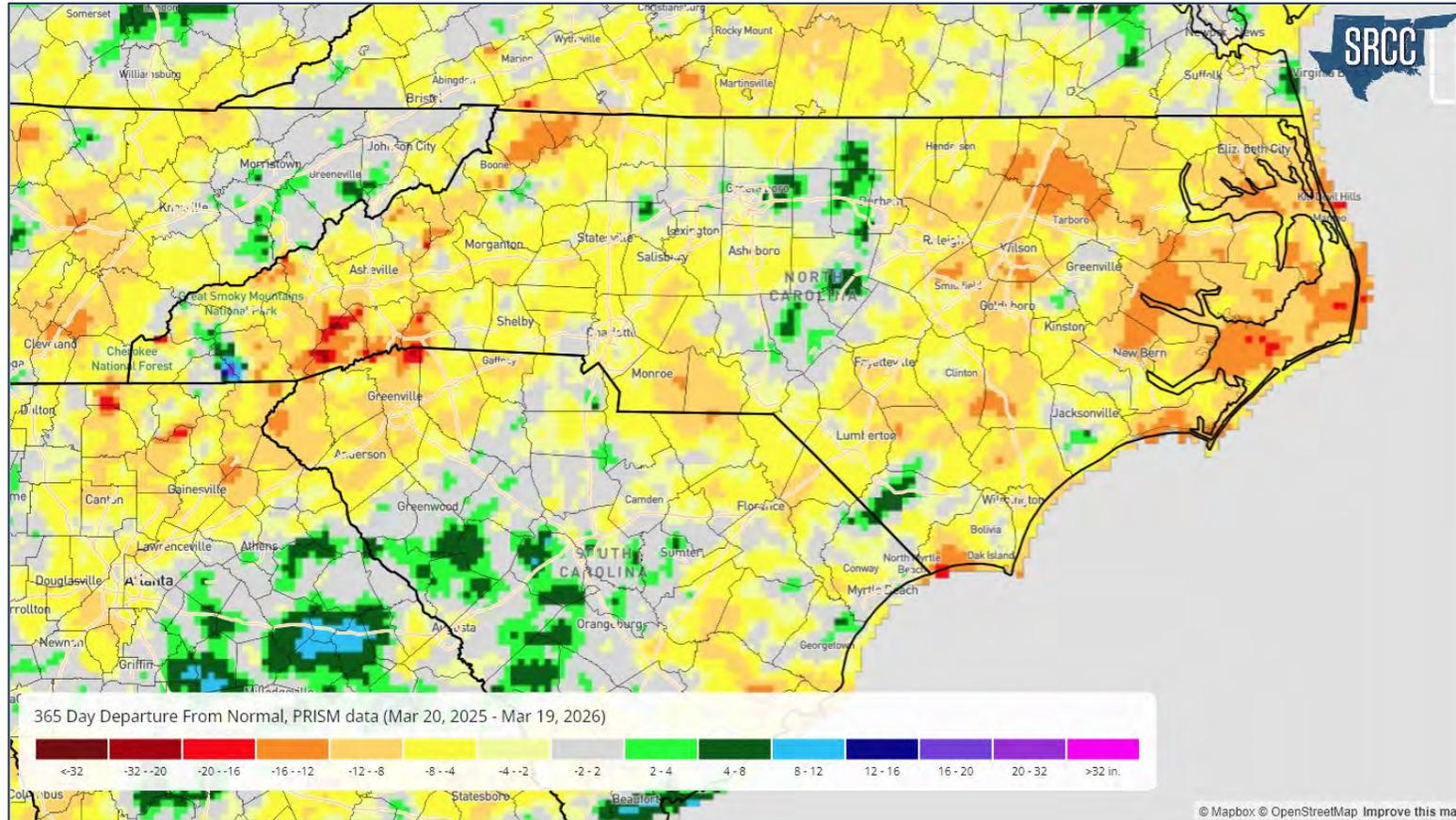
14-Day PNP



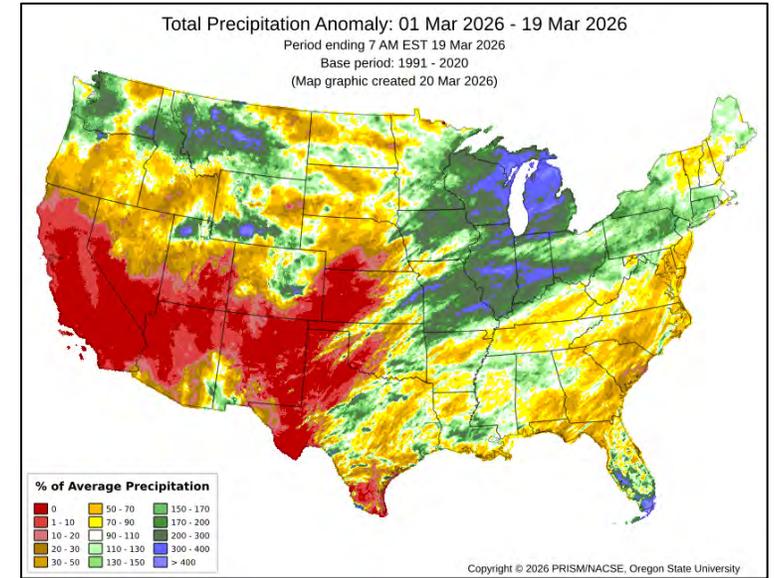
30-Day PNP



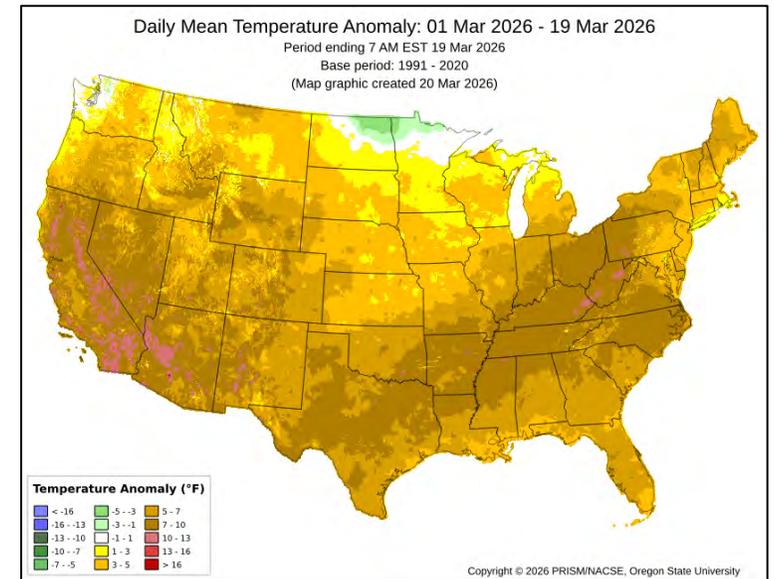
12-Month Departure From Normal (inches)



Monthly Precip Anomaly

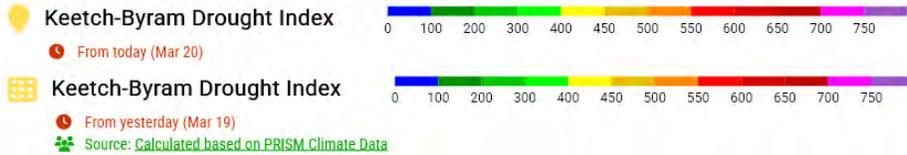
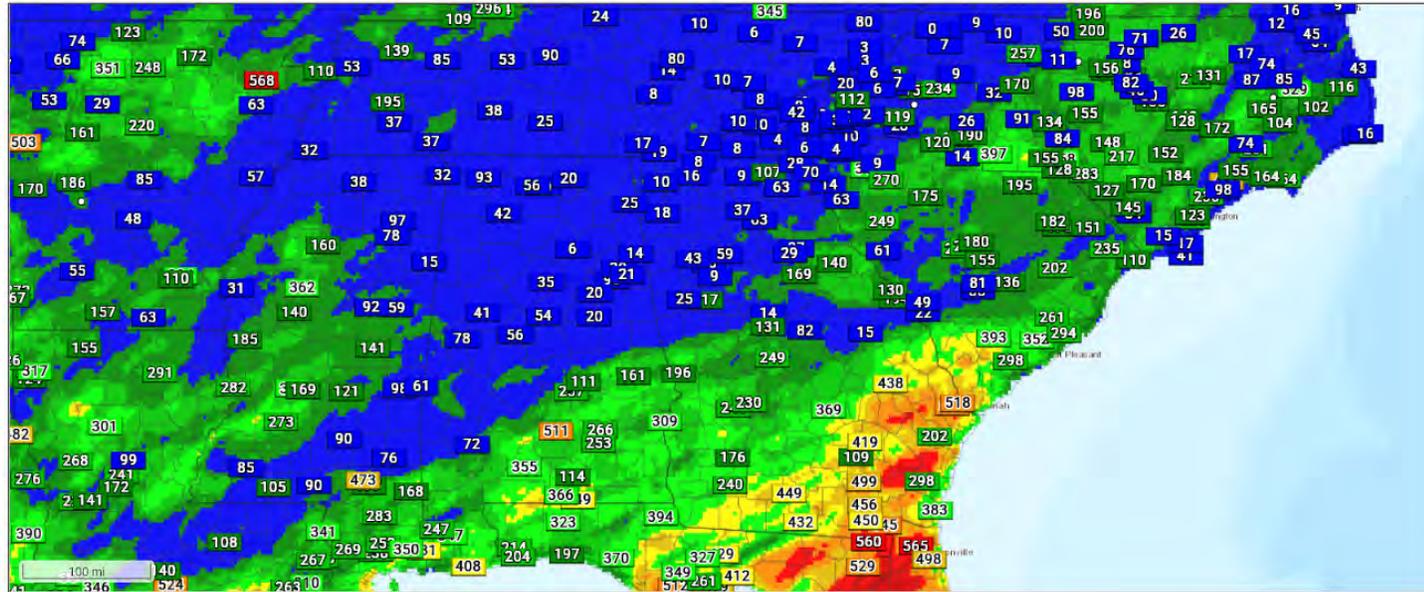


MTD Mean Temp Anomaly



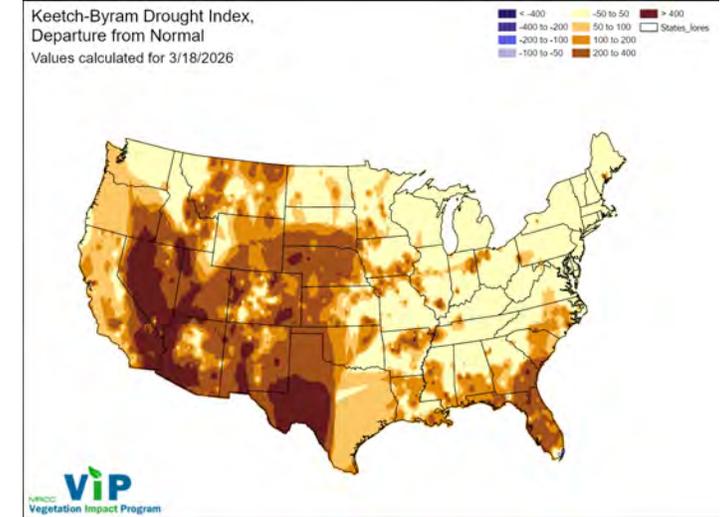
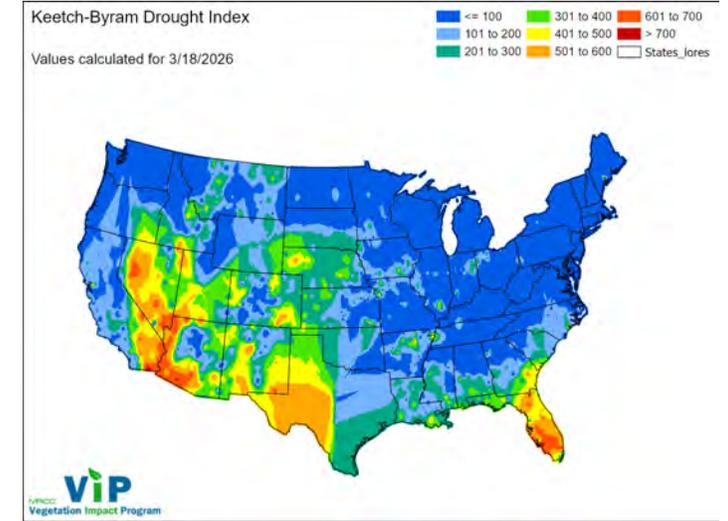
Even after recent rain events, we are in many cases 8-12+ inches behind at the 12-month time scale.

From the Fire Weather Intelligence Portal • products.climate.ncsu.edu/fire



Points from 3/20, Grid from 3/19

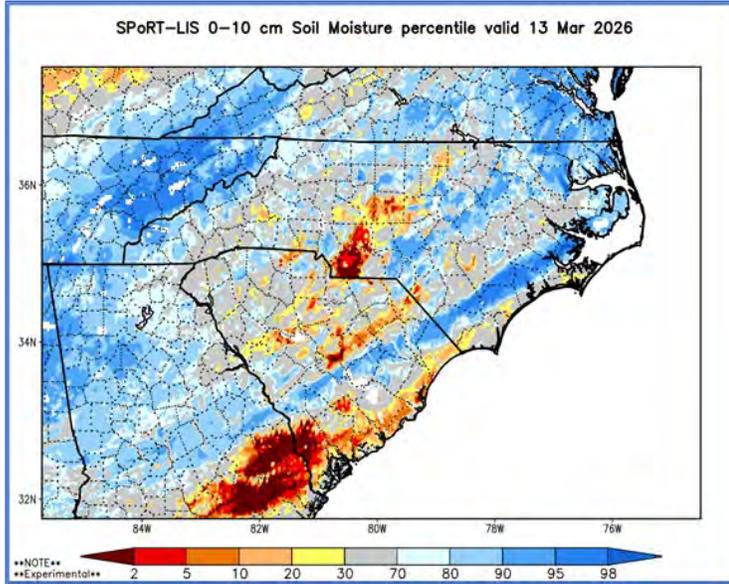
- KBDI is much less representative of the fire problem in the cold season, while max temperatures are low. A moderate rainfall can seemingly “erase” higher KBDI values, as the daily climb after the rain event is minimal (while true drought hasn’t been erased). This metric is much more useful in the growing season. The map shows the impact of recent warm weather in daily expansion of KBDI values. Expect more rapid daily climbs when daily max temps rebound.
- Intense surface fire can still occur even with low KBDI values in the dormant season. Additionally, there are multiple areas still showing values in the 300’s + on the gridded map above. The national maps to the right are calculated by MRCC, but paint a similar picture in a broader context.



<https://mrcc.purdue.edu/VIP/indexKBDI2>

SPoRT Modeled Soil Moisture Percentiles for ~4" and ~72" profile.

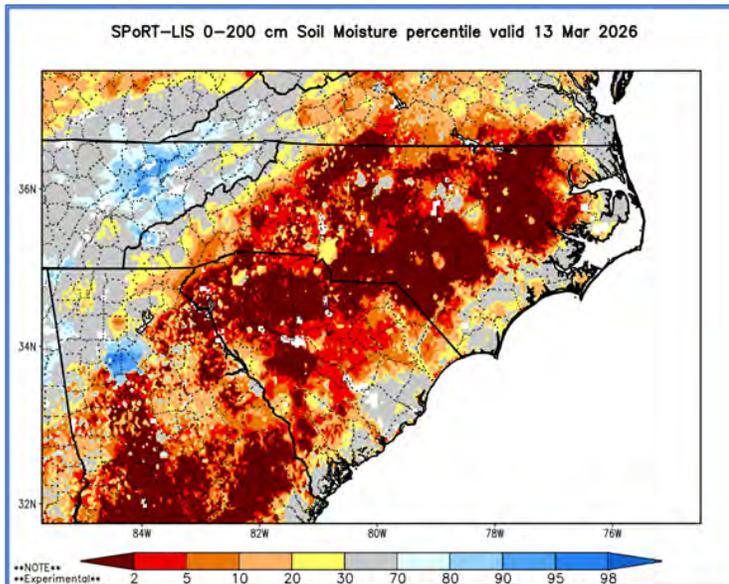
3/13/26



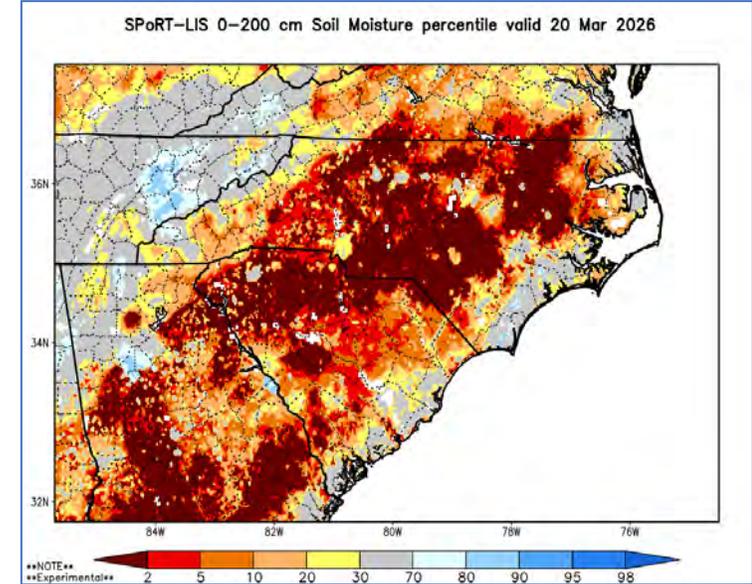
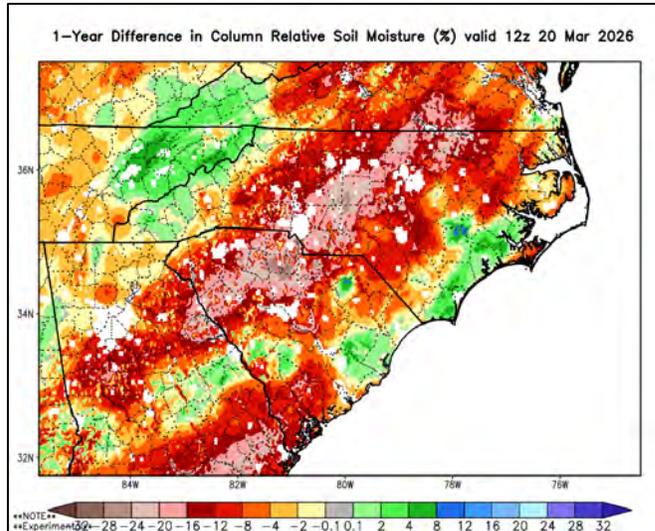
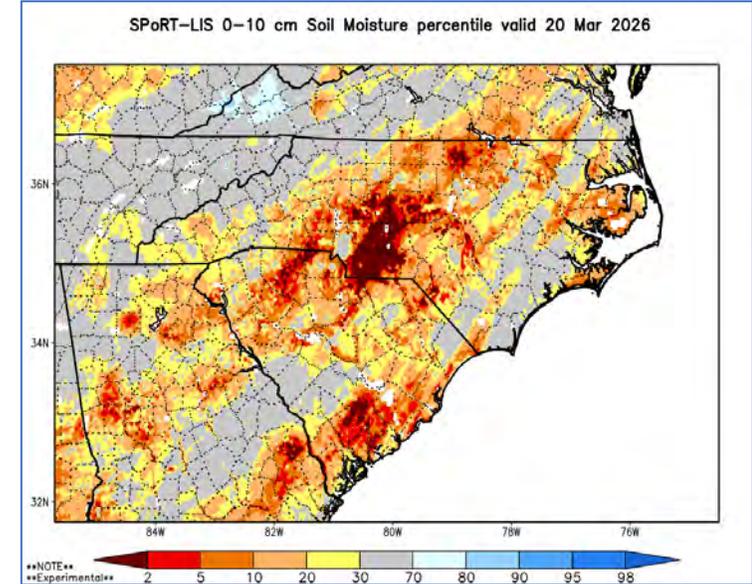
~ 1-Week ago Left, today on Right.
Just a model.

Modeled shallow-layer degradation as compared to last week, minimal improvement in context of total soil profile.

Note 1-year difference graphic below.



3/20/26



https://weather.ndc.nasa.gov/spo-rt/case_studies/lis_NC.html

North Carolina Drought Update

Created By:

North Carolina
Drought Management Advisory Council
www.ncdrought.org

CLIMATE OFFICE
climate.ncsu.edu

NC STATE
@NCSCO

For the assessment period ending **Mar. 17, 2026**
From the US Drought Monitor, with input from the NC DMAC

The Main Takeaway

This week's rainfall led to localized improvements from Severe Drought (D2) to Moderate Drought (D1) in the Foothills, northwest Piedmont, and eastern Piedmont.

This Week's Summary

Two rounds of rain along strong cold fronts brought an inch or more of total precipitation across almost the entire state last week. That moisture gave another boost to surface water conditions, and even some deeper groundwater wells have now responded. The most telling sign will be whether those water levels hold steady or quickly decline in the dry week ahead.

Next Week's Outlook

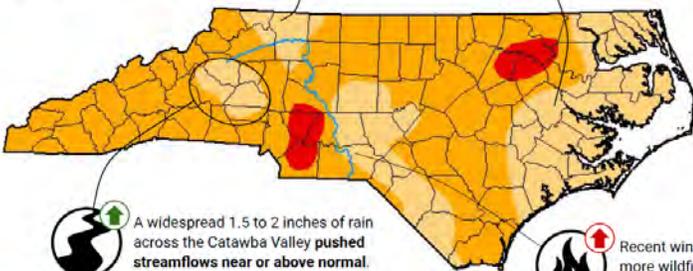
We're in for a quieter but mostly rain-free week with temperatures reaching near 80 degrees this weekend. That will lead to an increase in fire danger by Sunday.

For your local drought status, visit www.ncdrought.org

The upper Yadkin River basin received more than 2 inches of rain this week, including 2.58 inches at Raven Knob.



After declining since late February, the Simpson groundwater well spiked back to near normal following Monday's rain.



A widespread 1.5 to 2 inches of rain across the Catawba Valley pushed streamflows near or above normal.



Recent windy weather helped spread more wildfires this week, including a 220-acre fire in Richmond County.



Last Week's Drought Status

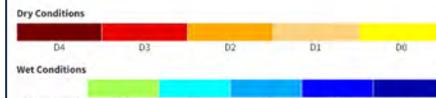
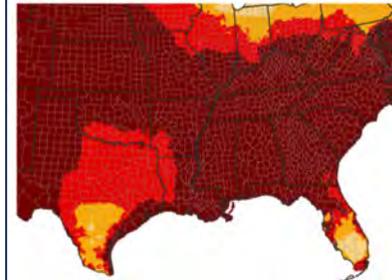


Statewide Coverage by Category

| Category | Current Coverage | Change Since Last Week |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| D0: Abnormally Dry | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| D1: Moderate Drought | 34.44% | +4.60% |
| D2: Severe Drought | 61.31% | -4.60% |
| D3: Extreme Drought | 4.25% | 0.00% |
| D4: Exceptional Drought | 0.00% | 0.00% |

<https://www.drought.gov/data-maps-tools/evaporative-demand-drought-index-eddi-subseasonal-forecasts>

Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) Forecast: 2 Weeks

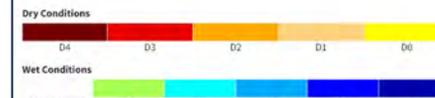
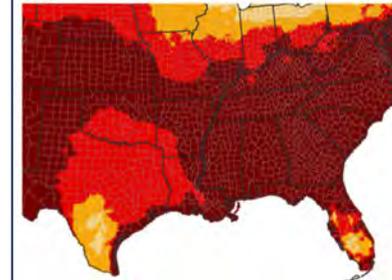


The Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) is an experimental drought monitoring and early warning guidance tool. It examines how anomalous the atmospheric evaporative demand (E0, also known as "the thirst of the atmosphere") is for a given location and across a time period of interest. This experimental subseasonal EDDI forecast shows projected evaporative demand for the next 14 days from the CFS gridMET dataset at 4-km gridded resolution. Source(s): UC Merced

Source(s): UC Merced
Updates Daily: 03/20/26

Drought.gov

Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) Forecast: 4 Weeks



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: 03/20/26

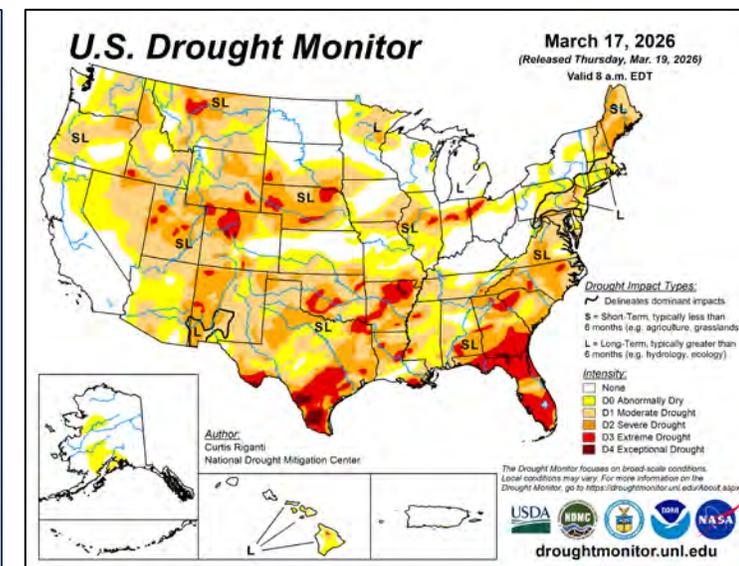
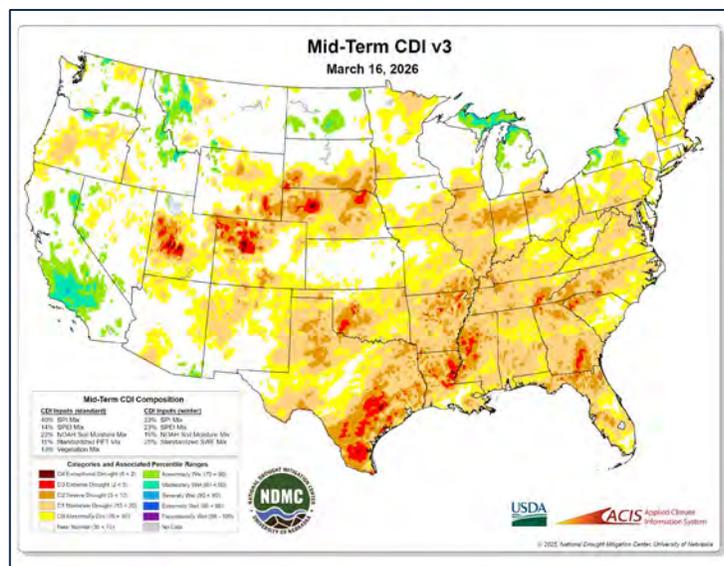
Drought.gov

EDDI & Drought

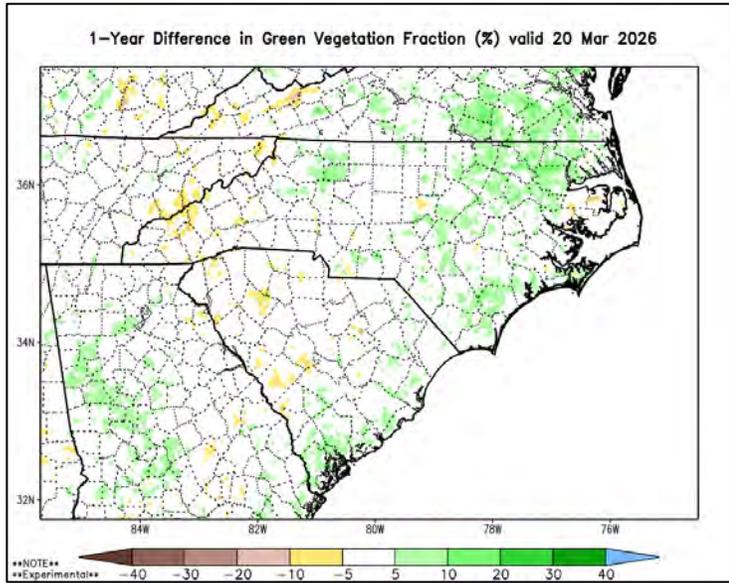
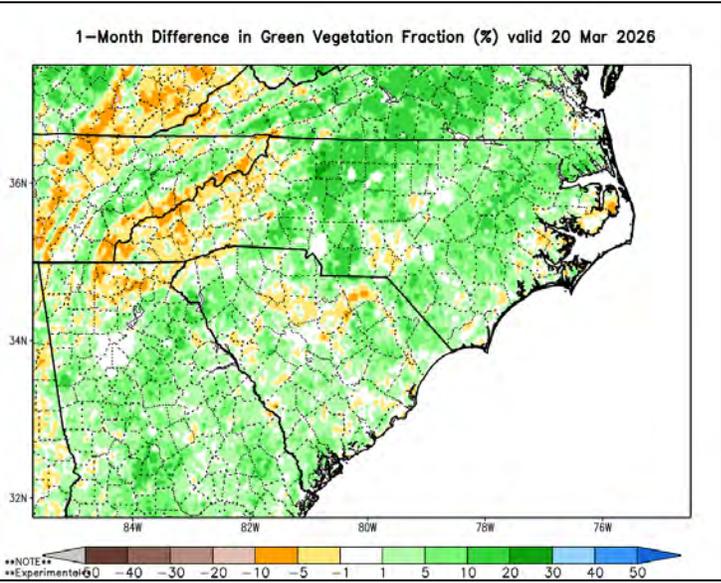
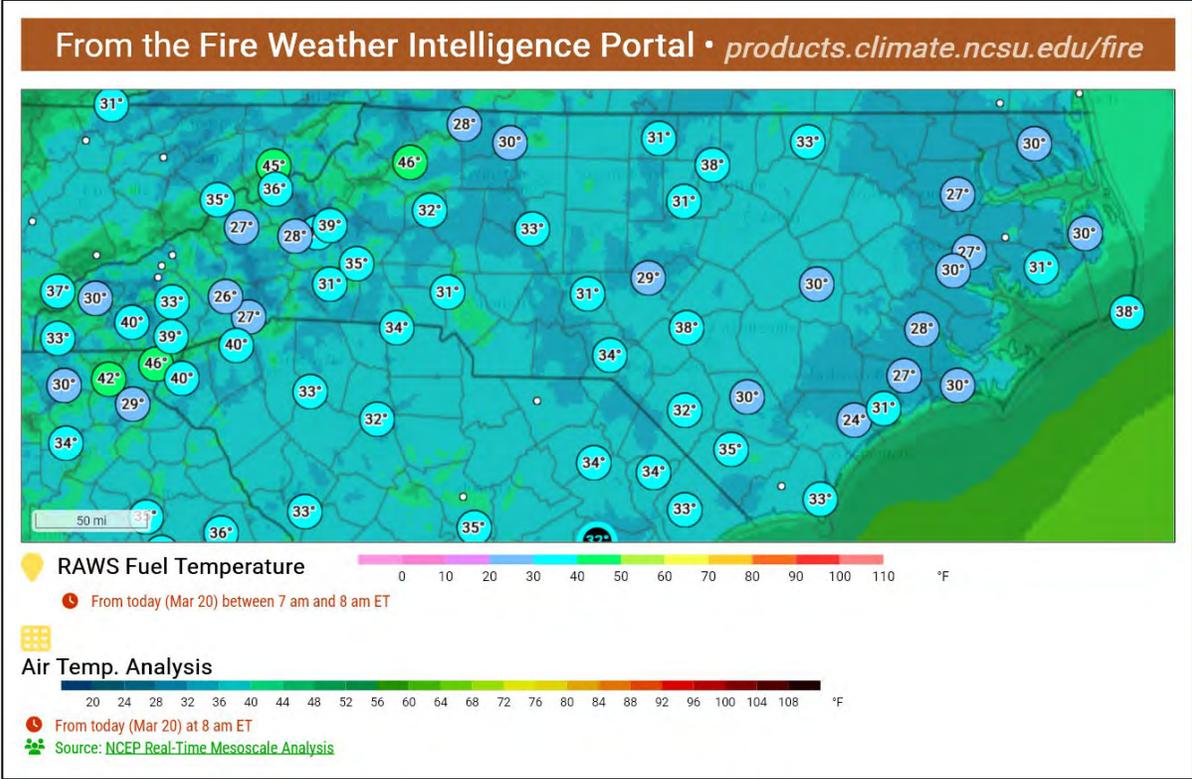
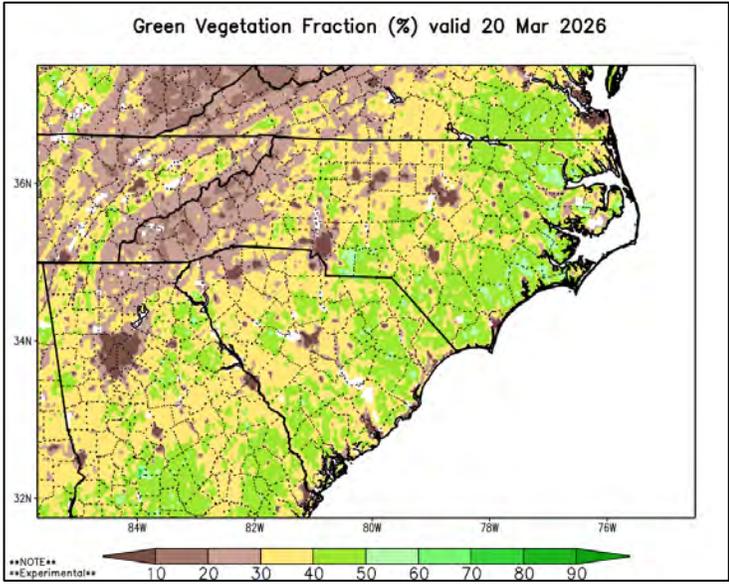
EDDI Maps - The EDDI maps at the top right illustrate modeled evaporative demand at the two-week and four-week avg level. They are trending much drier than normal for NC in the 2 & 4-week time scale. Warmth, lack of precip and dry air accelerates this index.

US Drought Monitor - Most recent USDM map release above (3/17/26). Model spread is significant with La Nina related winter pattern impacting the SE. Rapid drought intensification continues to be possible as we move into the growing season, should rainfall deficits remain significant.

Mid-Term Composite Drought Indicator Map & Seasonal Drought Outlook - shown at right. See detailed state/regional discussions [here](#). Conditions have moderated slightly in the short-term, but are still favoring dryness as we move into Spring. *All of this is dependent upon any future storm tracks and seasonal variability.*



SPoRT Modeled Green Vegetation Fraction



The daily GVF graphic show an increase in overall greenness across the state (top left). The 1-mo difference graphic shows a decrease likely due to snow cover in our mountain counties(bottom left). The 1-year difference graphic shows a mixture conditions, as late winter has had significant bouts of both above and below normal air temps, along with changes in soil temperature.

The map above displays electronic fuel stick temperatures at 0700 on 3/20 – these being about 12” above land surface. Air temperatures constitute the gridded map background. Anywhere from 2-4 nights of near or well below freezing conditions were experienced this week. Overnight winds and reasonable soil moisture may have helped mitigate some impacts.

Vegetative Greenness – Examples across the State

<https://drivenc.gov/#>



Several night of cold overnight temps in the 20's have had an impact on herbaceous and more sensitive shrub/tree species. Impact will likely stall greening for some species. Extent of damage will likely be localized based upon stage of plant development, wind, duration of freezing conditions, and any drought related stress. The timing of significant rain just prior to the cold snap may help lead to a faster rebound for sensitive yard/road shoulder grasses.

Although grasses may be greening in many areas, hardwood forest canopy is still far from being regenerated. Traffic cameras from across the state show this. Volatility of **forest fuels** will remain significant until forest canopy closes, drought conditions are abated, and waxy leaved shrubs reach maturity much later this spring. Alignment of fire effective weather with available fuels will lead to enhanced difficulty of control, especially Helene or drought impacted areas.

The anticipated lack of significant wetting rain for the next ~2+ weeks may quickly dry out shallow rooted grasses, reducing their impact as a barrier to fire spread.

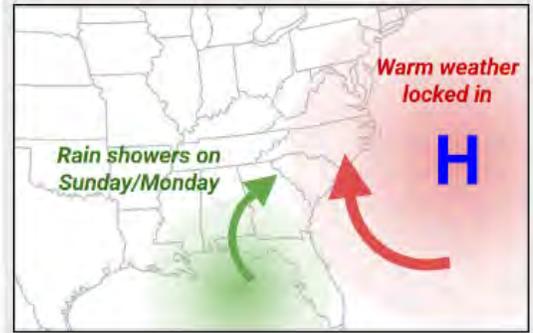


State Climate Office: Short-Range Monthly Outlook for NC

Released **3/5/26**
Location: <https://climate.ncsu.edu/fire/outlooks/>

Short-Range Outlook for North Carolina

Week 1:
March 5 to 11, 2026

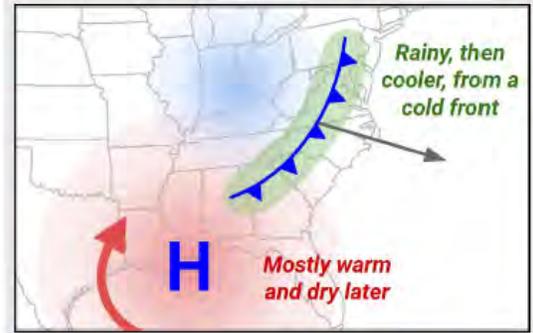


Warm All Week
A summer-like weather pattern featuring high pressure off our coastline will cause unseasonably warm temperatures, with highs in the upper 70s to low 80s and lows in the upper 50s to low 60s. Those are 15 to 20 degrees above normal for early March.

Spring Showers Begin
A warm, southerly flow around the offshore high pressure system will bring in Gulf moisture to fuel isolated showers, with the highest rain chances on Sunday and Monday. Most areas can expect rainfall totals of around half an inch over the entire week.

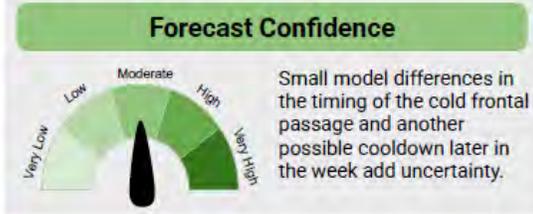


Week 2:
March 12 to 18, 2026

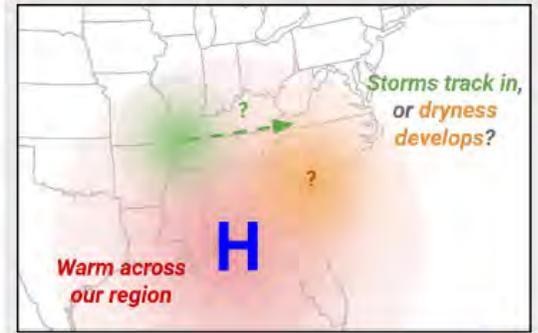


A Quick Cooldown
A cold frontal passage should usher in some cooler air by next Friday, along with drier air and wind that could increase fire danger. By later in the week, our temperatures should bounce back above normal as upper-level high pressure strengthens to our south.

Frontal Rain Likely
The best rain chances this week should come from the initial cold front, with current forecasts showing totals of a half-inch to an inch. After that, expect mostly dry weather to wrap up the weekend with a few scattered showers possible later in the week.

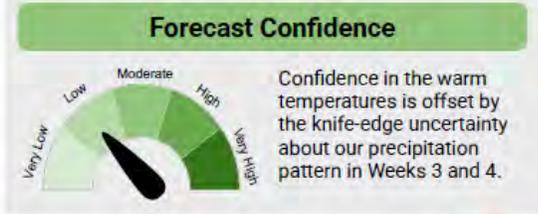


Weeks 3-4:
Mar. 19 to Apr. 1, 2026



Staying Warm
Persistent upper-level high pressure over the Southeast US and mid-Atlantic regions should keep our temperatures above normal through late March. Note that freeze events are still common through mid-April, so we're not out of winter's woods yet.

On the Edge of Rainfall
Our late-month rain chances will depend on where the storm track sets up. A lingering La Niña-like track to our north would keep us drier and encourage an active spring fire season, while a southward track could bring regular rainfall events, like in February.



This infographic is based on forecast and outlook guidance from the National Weather Service. For more information, visit www.weather.gov.



Author: Corey Davis (NCSCO)
cndavis@ncsu.edu



Supported by:

ENSO Notes from the CPC (3/12/26 Update)

ENSO Alert System Status: **La Niña Advisory / El Niño Watch**

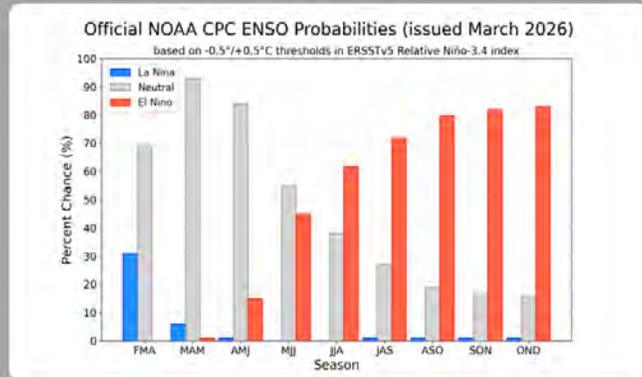
A transition from La Niña to ENSO-neutral is expected in the next month, with ENSO-neutral favored through May-July 2026 (55% chance). In June-August 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (62% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.

ENSO, or El Niño Southern Oscillation, is a fluctuation in the sea surface temperature (SST) in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Research has shown that even slight changes in the SST, particularly in area 3.4, can influence weather in North America. Generally, when SSTs are lower than normal, known as La Niña, NC has drier than normal conditions and can have more fire occurrence. However, La Niña also can lead to more tropical activity. El Niño, on the other hand, usually means wetter weather for NC, but less opportunity for tropical landfalls due to increased wind shear. Recent changes in defining either ENSO state can be found [here](#).

CPC Probabilistic ENSO Outlook

Updated: 12 March 2026

A transition from La Niña to ENSO-neutral is expected in the next month, with ENSO-neutral favored through May-July 2026 (55% chance). In June-August 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (62% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.



Historical El Niño and La Niña Episodes Based on the RONI computed using ERSST.v5

Recent Pacific warm (red) and cold (blue) periods based on a threshold of +/- 0.5 °C for the Relative Oceanic Niño Index (RONI) [ERSST.v5 SST anomalies]. For historical purposes, periods of below and above normal SSTs are colored in blue and red when the threshold is met for a minimum of 5 consecutive overlapping seasons.

The RONI is one measure of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, and other indices can confirm whether features consistent with a coupled ocean-atmosphere phenomenon accompanied these periods. The complete table going back to DJF 1950 can be found [here](#).

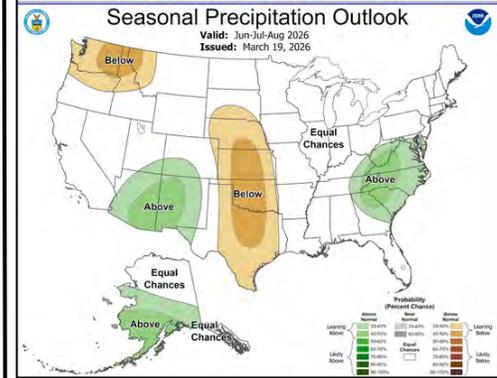
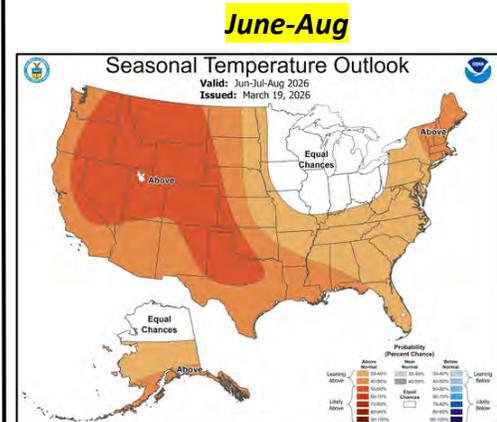
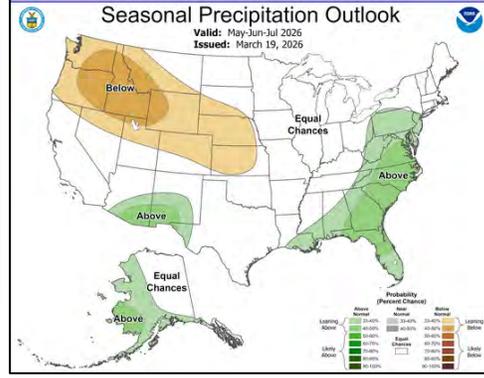
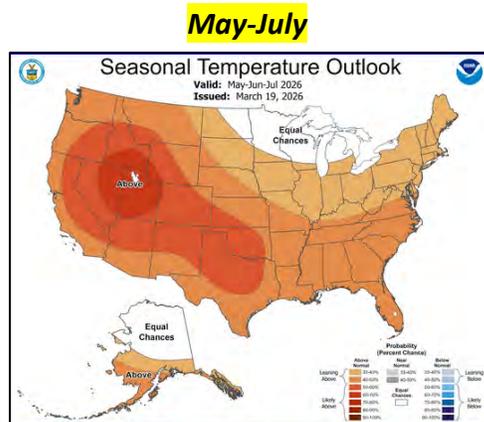
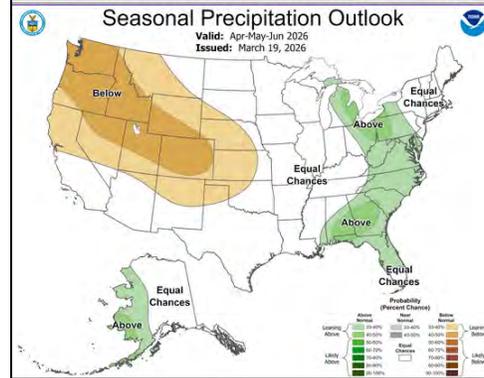
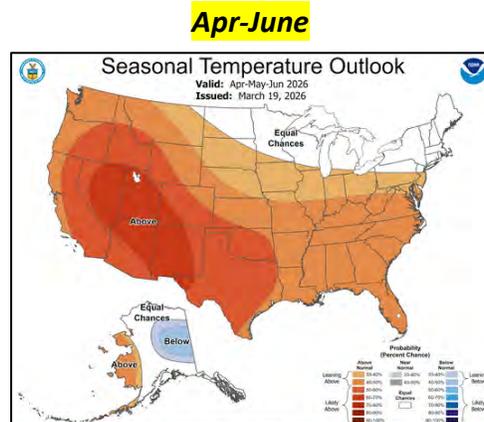
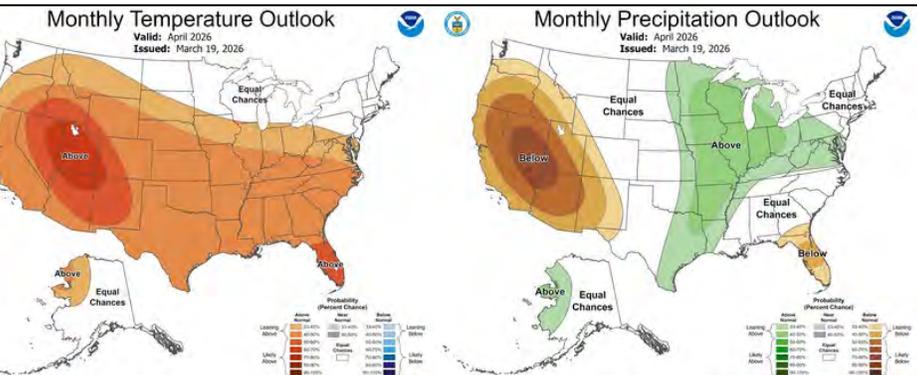
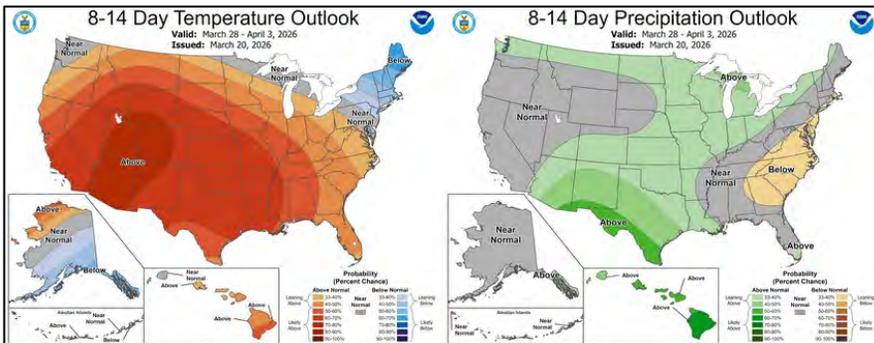
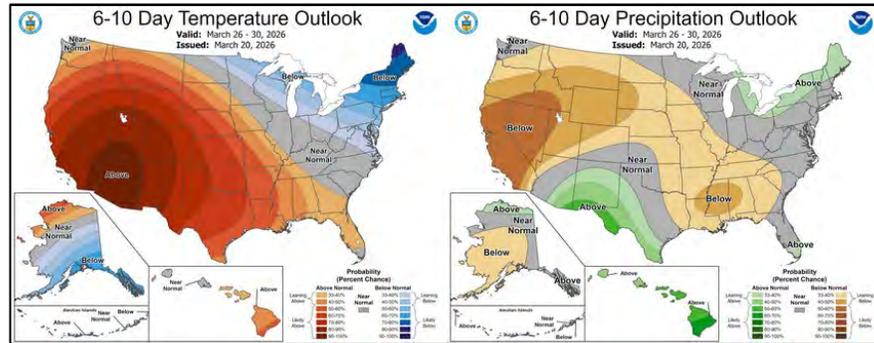
| Year | DJF | JFM | FMA | MAM | AMJ | MJJ | JJA | JAS | ASO | SON | OND | NDJ |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2014 | -0.5 | -0.5 | -0.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | -0.1 | -0.1 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| 2015 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.4 |
| 2016 | 2.2 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 0.5 | -0.1 | -0.6 | -0.9 | -1.0 | -1.1 | -1.1 | -1.1 | -1.0 |
| 2017 | -0.7 | -0.5 | -0.3 | -0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | -0.2 | -0.5 | -0.7 | -1.0 | -1.1 | -1.3 |
| 2018 | -1.1 | -1.0 | -0.9 | -0.7 | -0.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| 2019 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.0 | -0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| 2020 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.0 | -0.3 | -0.6 | -0.8 | -0.8 | -0.9 | -1.2 | -1.5 | -1.5 | -1.4 |
| 2021 | -1.2 | -1.0 | -1.0 | -0.8 | -0.6 | -0.5 | -0.6 | -0.7 | -0.9 | -1.1 | -1.2 | -1.2 |
| 2022 | -1.2 | -1.2 | -1.3 | -1.3 | -1.2 | -1.0 | -0.9 | -1.0 | -1.1 | -1.1 | -1.0 | -1.0 |
| 2023 | -0.8 | -0.6 | -0.4 | -0.2 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2024 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.1 | -0.3 | -0.5 | -0.5 | -0.6 | -0.8 | -0.8 | -0.9 | -1.1 |
| 2025 | -1.1 | -0.9 | -0.7 | -0.5 | -0.5 | 0.0 | -0.5 | -0.6 | -0.8 | -0.9 | -0.9 | -1.0 |
| 2026 | -0.9 | | | | | | | | | | | |

From the most recent CPC Diagnostic Discussion ([ENSO Diagnostics Discussion](#)):

The North American Multi-Model Ensemble (NMME) average, including the NCEP CFSv2 (Fig. 6), points toward ENSO-neutral through the late Northern Hemisphere Spring 2026, with a transition to El Niño thereafter. Even though model forecasts are relatively less accurate this time of year, the increasing odds of El Niño are supported by the large amount of heat in the subsurface ocean and the expected weakening of the low-level trade winds. If El Niño forms, the potential strength remains very uncertain, with a 1-in-3 chance that it would be “strong” during October-December 2026 (Niño-3.4 +1.5C). In summary, a transition from La Niña to ENSO-neutral is expected in the next month, with ENSO-neutral favored through May-July 2026 (55% chance). In June-August 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (62% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026 (Fig. 7).

Temp & Precip Outlook

6-10 Day, 8-14 Day, Monthly (April), Seasonal (A/M/J, M/J/J, J/J/A)



Last Updated by CPC on March 19th

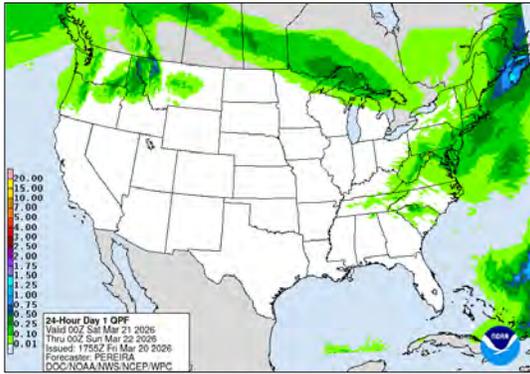
Source: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>

https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/fxus05.html

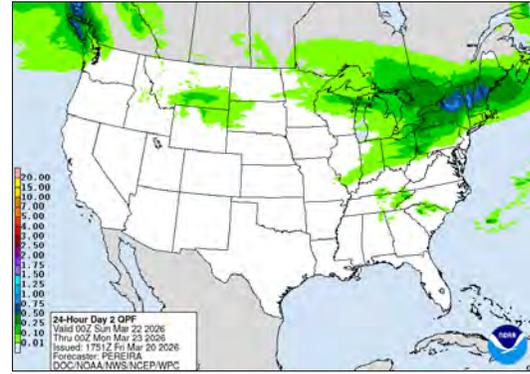
Quantitative Precipitation Forecast, 7-Day

Location: <https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/#>

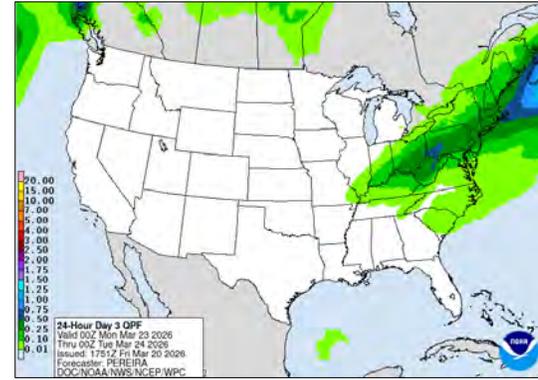
Day - 1



Day - 2



Day - 3



Zoom - Days 1 - 7 QPF



YouTube, Facebook, and X: @NWSRaleigh

weather.gov/raleigh

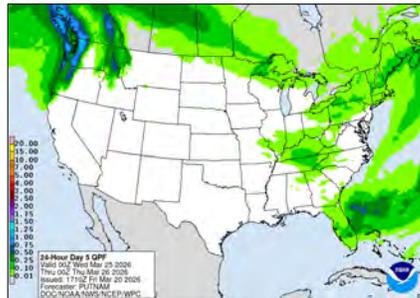
<https://www.weather.gov/rah/nc#rain>

Mostly dry (limited wetting rain, if any) frontal passages appear to be favored.

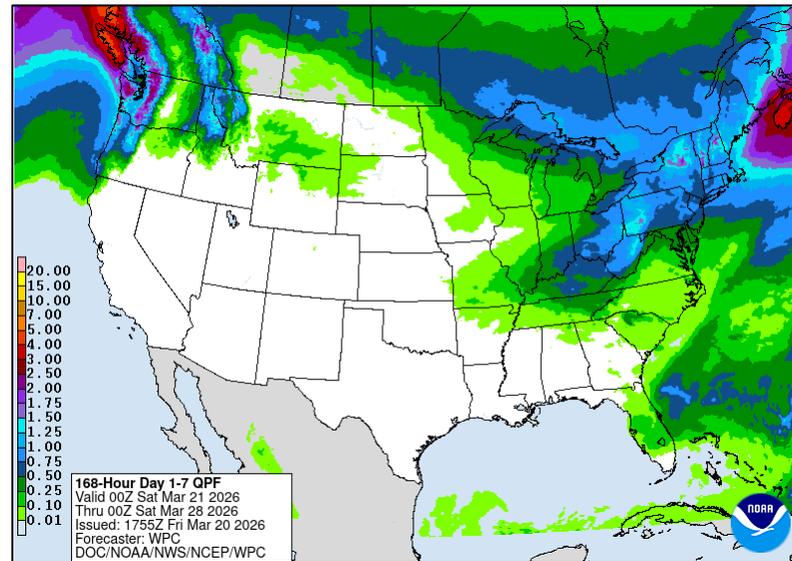
Day - 4



Day - 5



Days 1 - 7 QPF



Day - 6

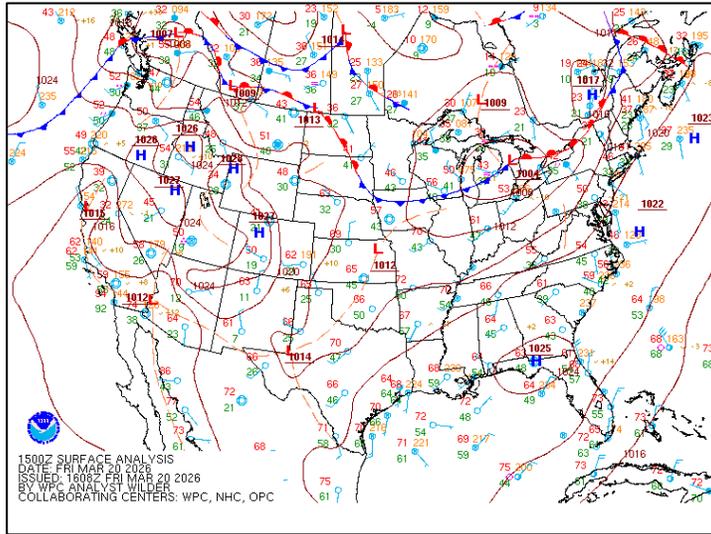


Day - 7

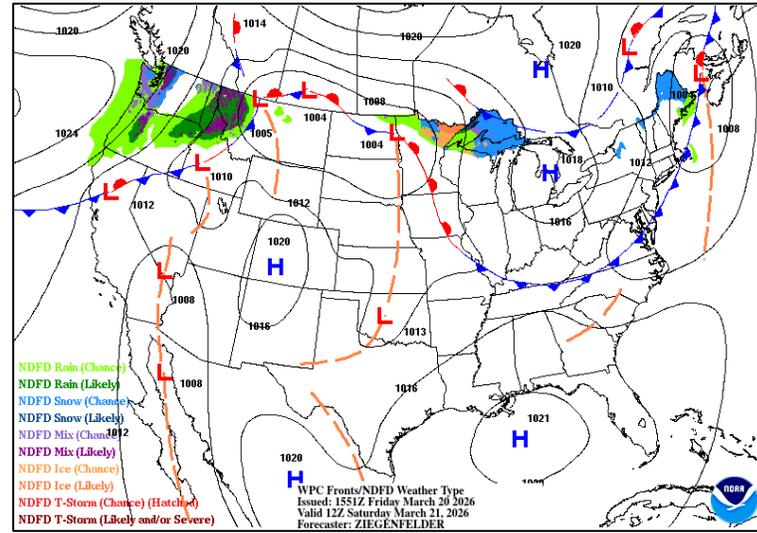


WPC Forecasted Surface Fronts & Sea-Level Pressures

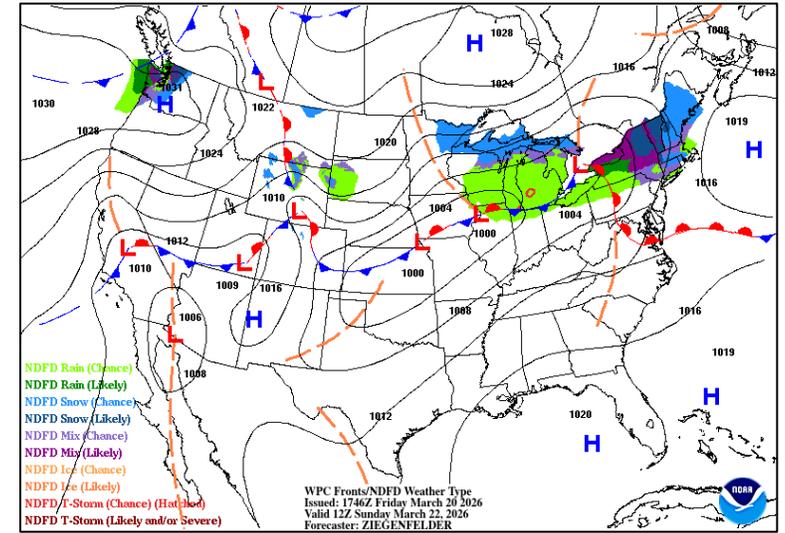
Day-1 @ 15Z Surface Analysis



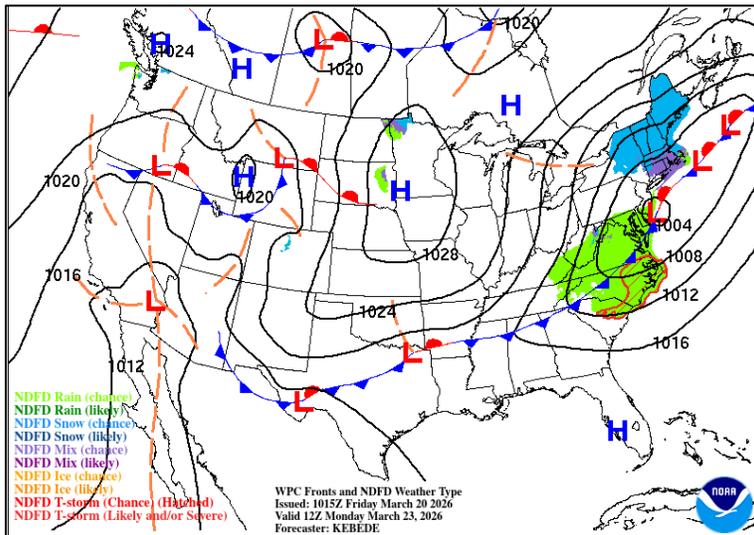
Day 2 - @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



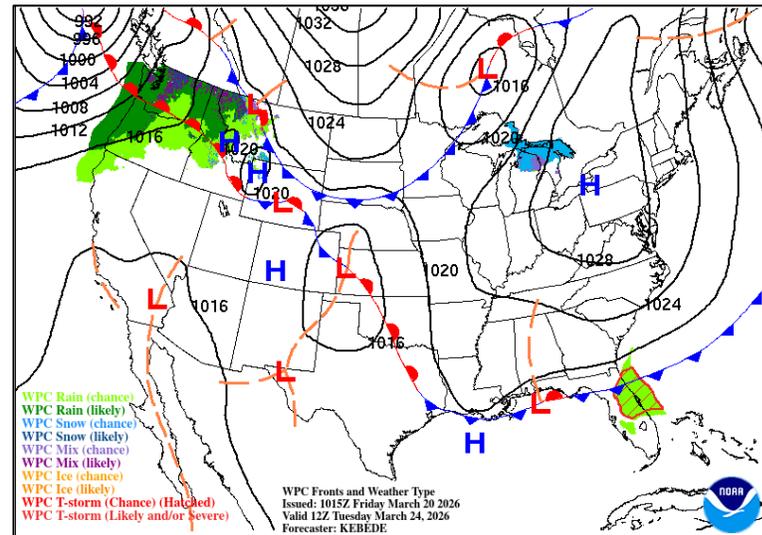
Day 3 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



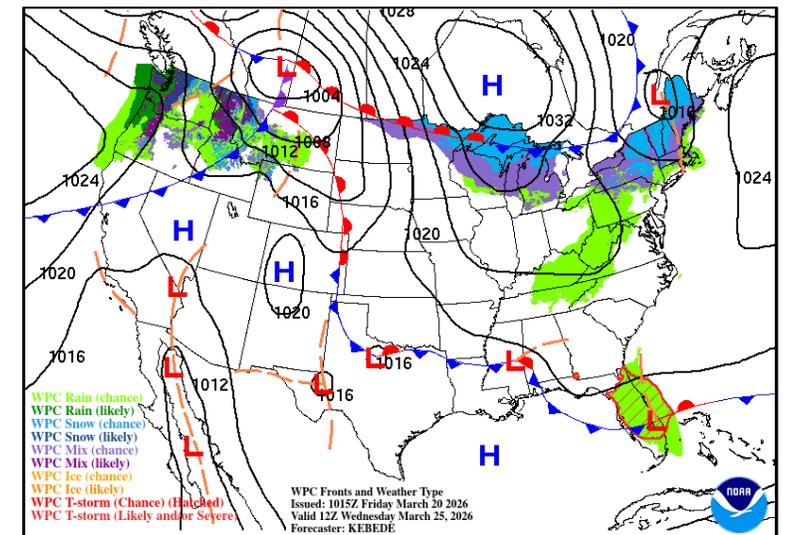
Day 4 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)



Day 5 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)

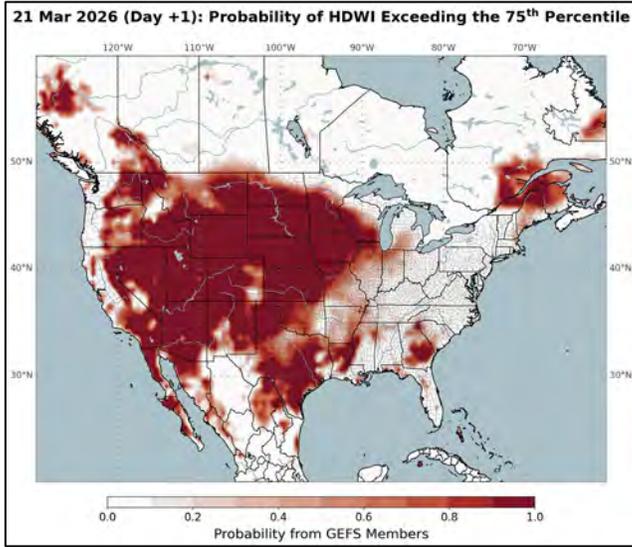


Day 6 @ 12Z (0800 EDT)

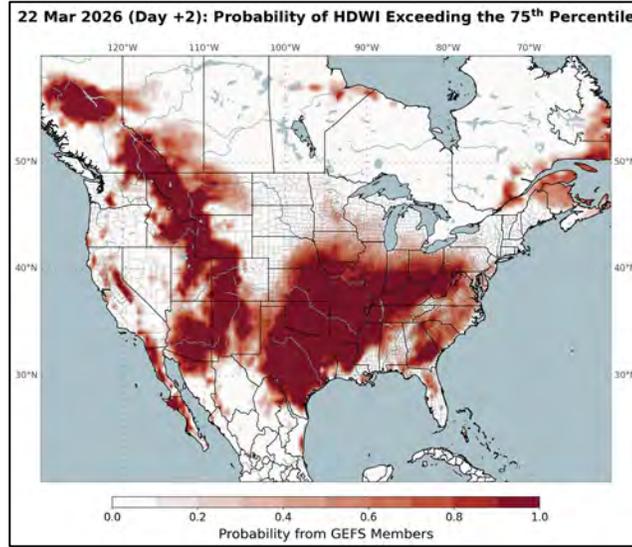


Hot-Dry-Windy Index (HDW)

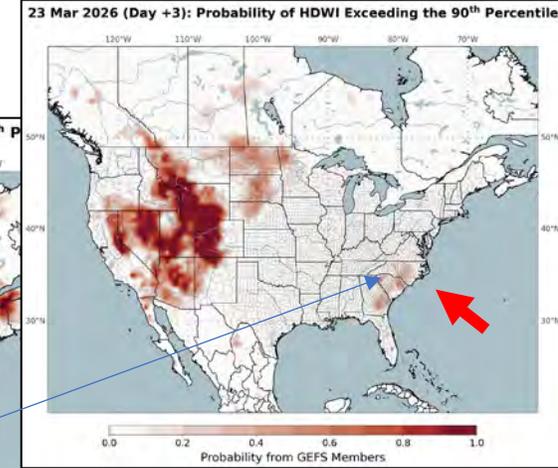
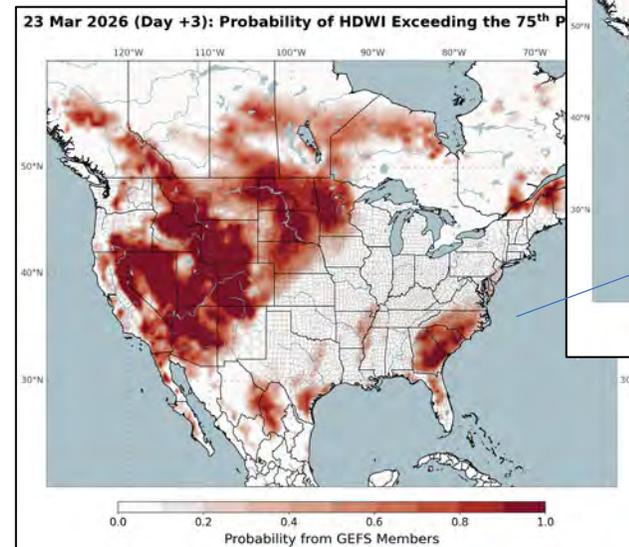
Saturday > 75th Percentile



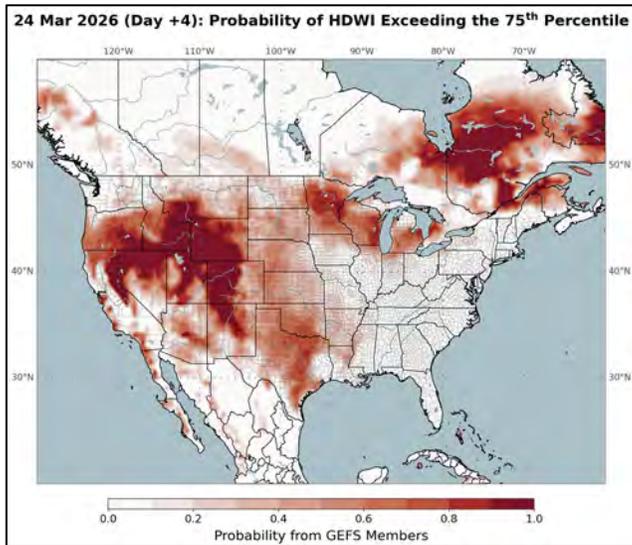
Sunday > 75th Percentile



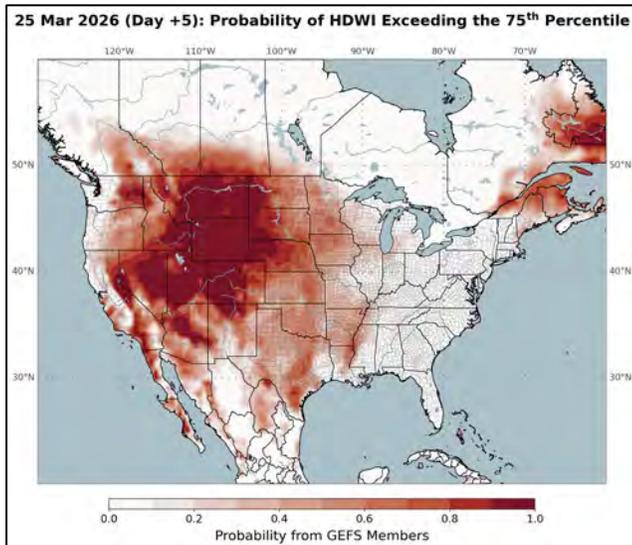
Monday > 75th Percentile



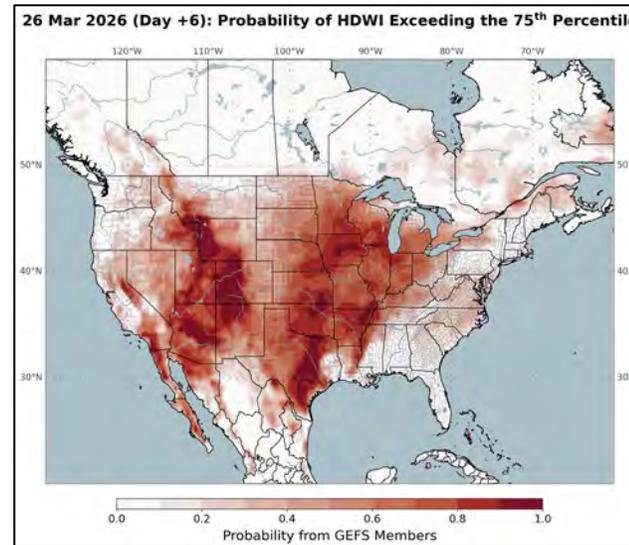
Tuesday > 75th Percentile



Wednesday > 75th Percentile



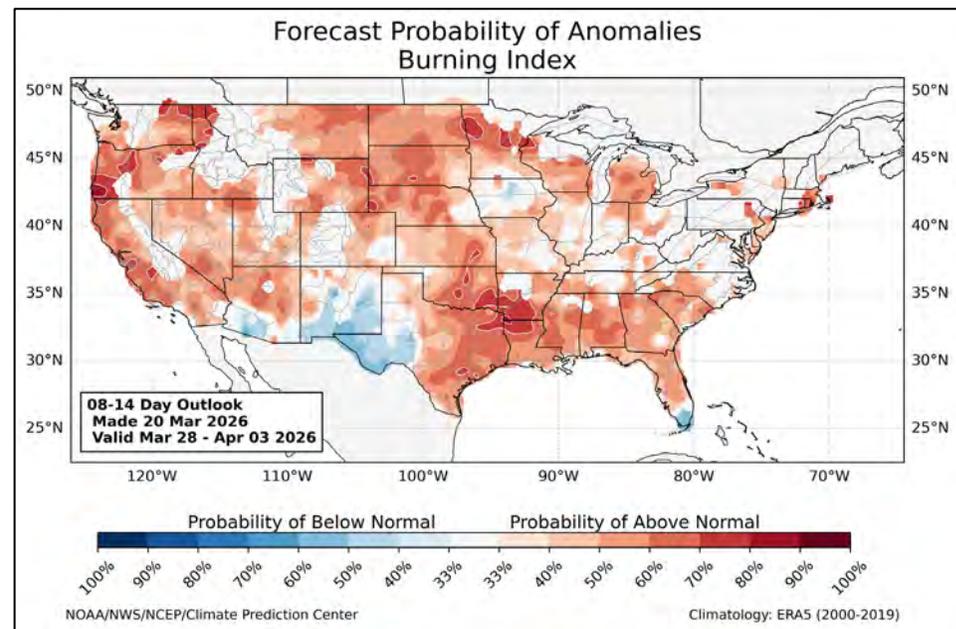
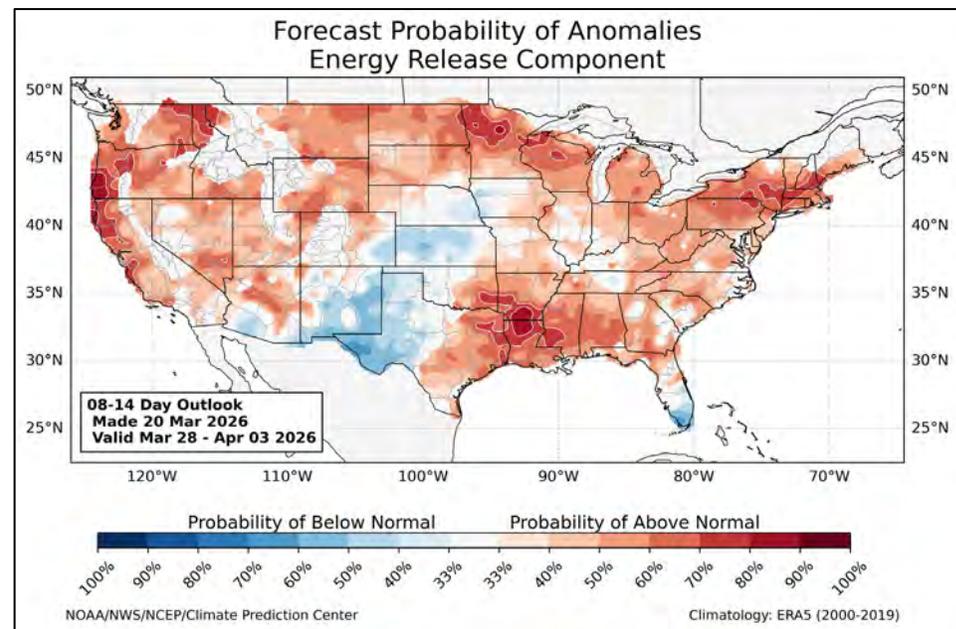
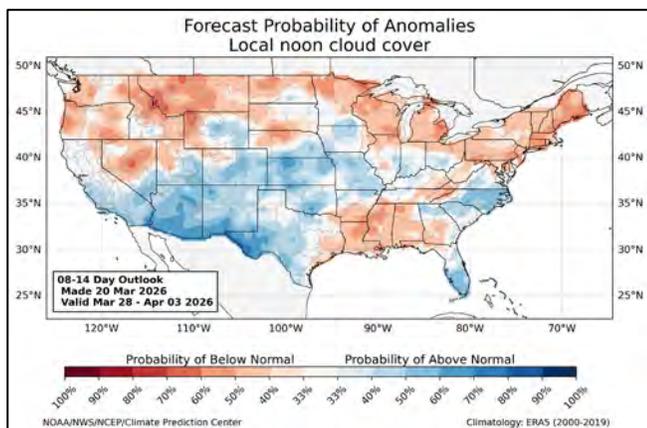
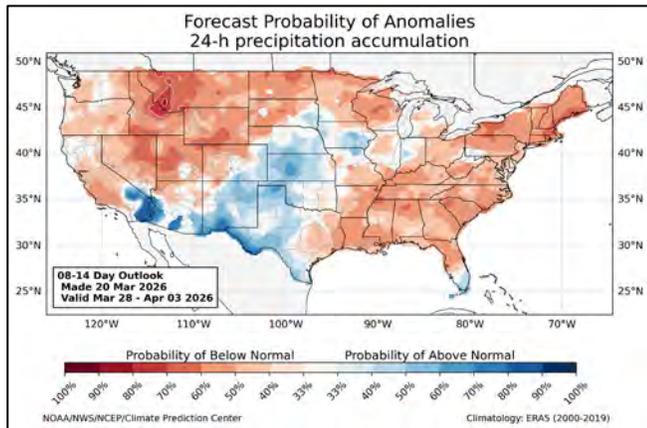
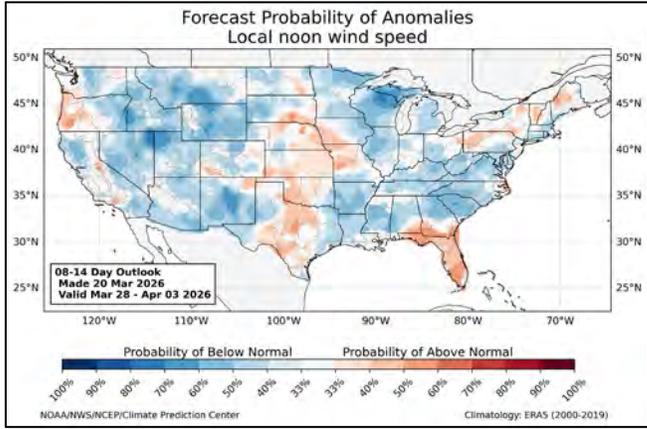
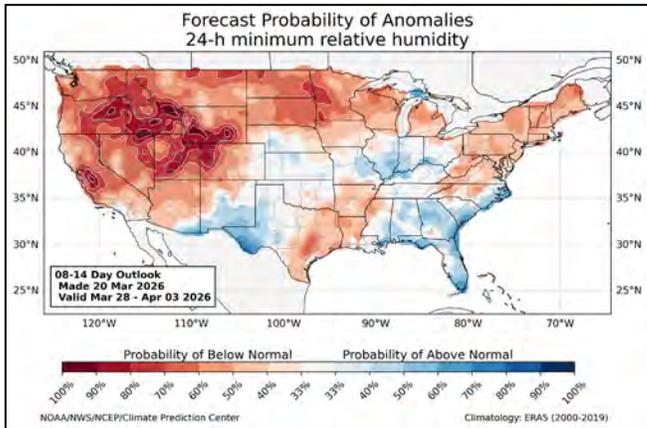
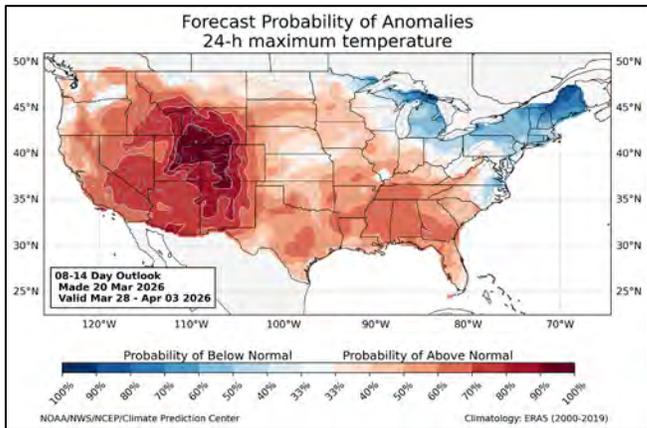
Thursday > 75th Percentile



Monday > 90th Percentile

- Another visualization tool to pick up on broader weather, but with *limitations
- Only uses Max VPD (atmospheric moisture & temp) & Max Wind Speed to generate outputs
- Coarse Resolution - 0.5 Degree Grid
- No Account of Local Fuel Conditions and Topo

Week Two Forecast Anomalies: 3/28 – 4/3



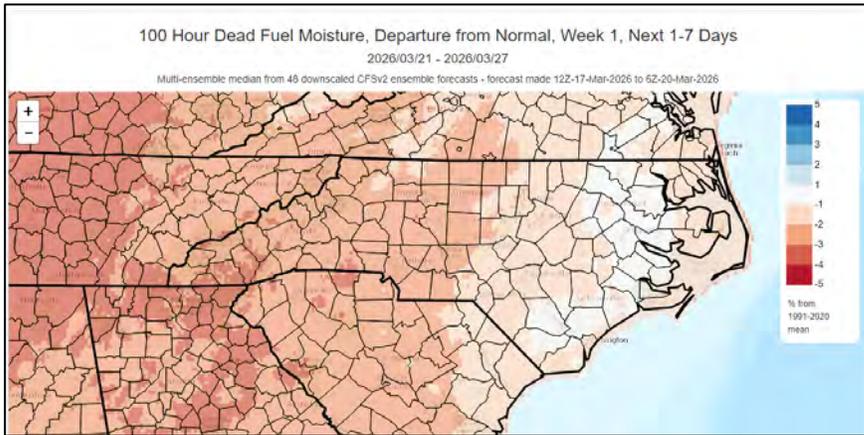
Important to note that there is significant forecast uncertainty as you go further out in time.

Generally favoring warmer than normal temps, and less precip. Model then applies those weather variables to show potential for elevated BI & ERC at week two for much of the SE. Remember to apply this in seasonal context.

Modeled Departure from Normal by Week: 100-hr Fuels

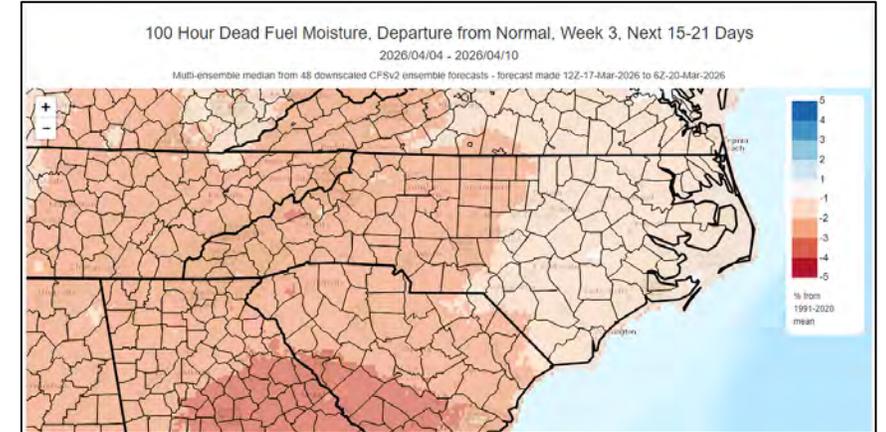
Output relies on experimental forecast outputs and is subject to change

Week-1



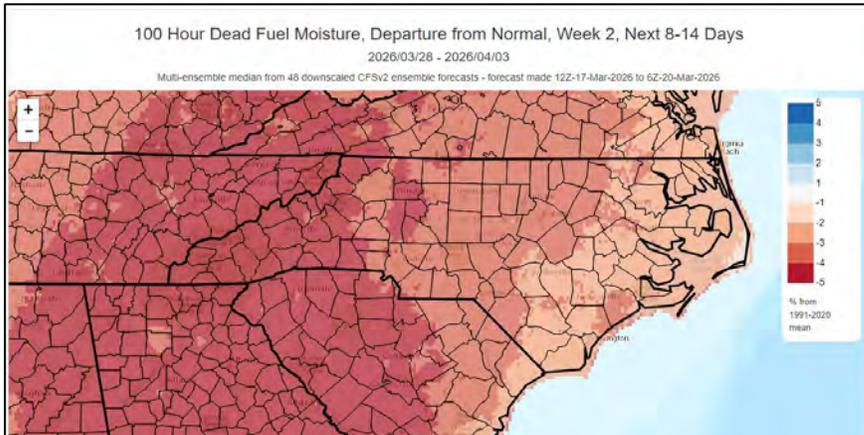
This output can provide insight into general drying trends and potential impacts to overall fire danger, especially prior to full green-up or in drought conditions. Outputs relate to interactions of warmer/colder temps, moist/dry air masses, precip amt/duration, wind and overnight RH recovery trends.

Week-3



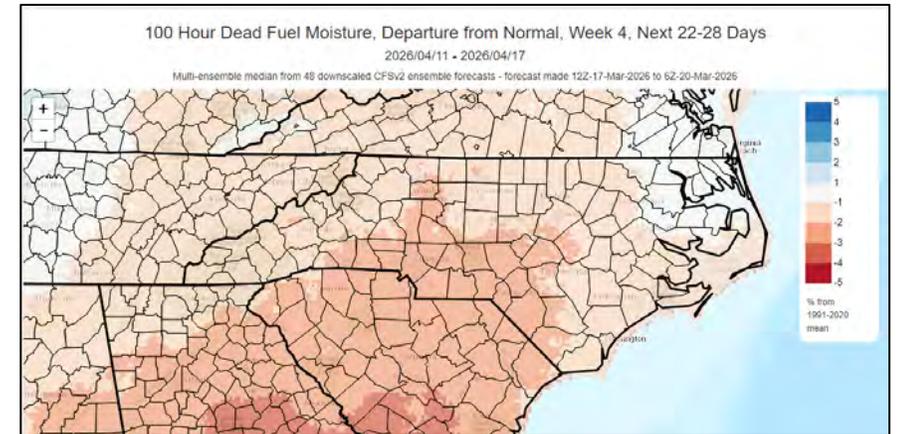
Note that modeled impacts of warmer/drier conditions (lower % mc or “worse”) are focused west, most intensely on Week-2.

Week-2



Important to note that there is significant forecast uncertainty as you go further out in time, especially relating to any potential storm tracks.

Week-4



SACC Daily Outlook, Selected Snips from Friday, 3/20/26

<https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/resources/predictive/sacc-daily-outlook.pdf>



SACC Daily Outlook



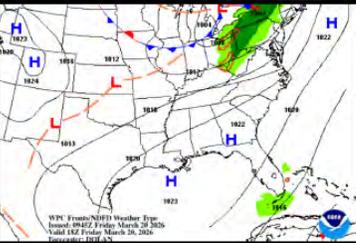
Friday, March 20, 2026

Watches, Warnings and Advisories



- **Fire Weather Watches** Saturday and Sunday in TX and OK
- **Fire Danger Statements** today in east TX, southeast LA, southern AR and LA
- **Dense Fog Advisory** this morning in TX, LA

Today's Weather Outlook



- Record heat will intensify further across the Plains today, with highs well into the 90s and low 100s; light winds in the hottest areas will mitigate fire risks somewhat, but fuels will be extremely dry
- Look for a slight increase in humidity over the Mississippi Valley states, with otherwise very warm and breezy conditions expected; most areas will be dry outside of isolated storms in northeastern KY
- High pressure will maintain poor dispersion and air quality this morning, along with very dry conditions this afternoon over the Southeast; look for a repeat of smoky conditions overnight and tomorrow morning, along with the potential for some super fog in the coastal plain and Appalachians
- Dry and breezy weather will continue over the FL peninsula, but a few light showers are possible in far southern areas

Summer-Like Pattern the Next Few Days



- Average temperature anomalies through Tuesday are depicted
- An upper-level high pressure ridge aloft over the West has reached record intensity for this time of year, conditions that are more common in July or August
- All-time March temperatures records have been set throughout the West the last few days, and the Plains will see March highs challenged today into the weekend, with some of the earliest 100-degree readings ever on tap for north TX into OK
- Record temperatures will expand east this weekend, covering large parts of the geographic area ahead of a cold front on Sunday, continuing in parts of the coastal Southeast Monday
- Dry air over FL will result in well below average low temperatures but near to above average high temperatures
- Fuels will rapidly reach critical dryness thresholds in much of the region in this warm and dry pattern

Please contact your local National Weather Service office for spot forecasts and the latest watches and warnings.

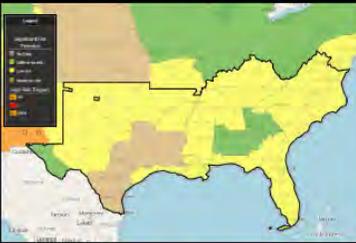


SACC Daily Outlook



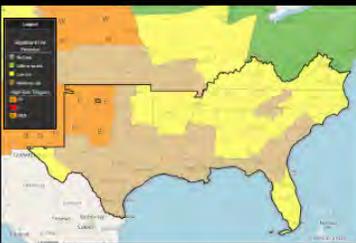
Friday, March 20, 2026

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Today



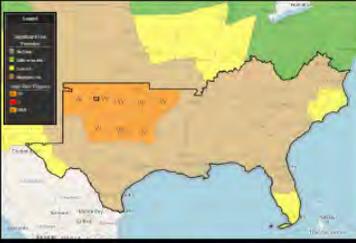
- Hot, dry and breezy conditions will result in moderate SFP across south and east TX and LA today; look for RH as low as 15-25% in TX and 25-35% in east TX and LA; most areas will see wind gusts of 15-25 mph, but sea breeze gusts near 30 mph are expected near the coast, including for the Armstrong Oaks Fire
- Very hot and dry conditions will be the rule farther west and north in TX and OK, with RH ranging from 3-8% in western areas to 15-25% farther east; wind gusts in most areas will remain below 20 mph, but summer-like instability could lead to escaped burns and increased fire behavior compared to the last few days
- Breezy conditions will affect the Mississippi Valley and Appalachian states as a warm front lifts north of the region; look for SW wind gusts from 20-30 mph, locally near 40 mph in VA and KY, where isolated storms are possible; RH will range from 30-45% but will be lower south and east of the mountains
- The rest of the Southeast will see persistent dry air, with RH from 15-30% this afternoon; light winds will affect most of the region, but coastal sea breezes will bring wind shifts and gusts as high as 15-25 mph to the Gulf Coast and East Coast, potentially impacting the ongoing Burnt Rock Creek and Mill Pond Fires, in addition to any new starts, emerging holdovers or intentional burns

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Saturday



- Record highs in the 90s to mid-100s will be accompanied by RH as low as 3-15%, S wind gusts from 15-30 mph and historically dry fuels across western OK into northwest TX; HIGH RISK SFP is likely in the areas with above normal to exceptional grass loads as summer-like heat and instability develop
- Fire danger will increase throughout most of the rest of the region due to persistent dry and increasingly warm to hot conditions
- Moderate SFP in the rest of TX, OK and the Mississippi Valley will be associated with near-record to record temperatures, RH as low as 3-10% in TX and 25-35% farther east, along with SW wind gusts from 15-30 mph
- The southern Appalachians will see isolated thunderstorms capable of producing lightning ignitions and erratic outflow wind gusts over 35 mph; escaped intentional burns are possible
- The coastal Southeast will see critically dry fuels along with sea breeze wind gusts up to 25 mph in the afternoon

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Sunday



- Poor recoveries in the morning will be followed by record hot, dry and windy conditions and then a dry cold front in TX, OK and northwest AR Sunday; HIGH RISK SFP is likely due to widespread historically dry fuels being exposed to wind gusts of 30-40 mph ahead of the front and a wind shift with gusts of 35-50 mph behind it; fires will be likely to escape containment, with powerline ignitions possible along the surging cold front
- Widespread moderate SFP is likely elsewhere in the region due to hot, dry and breezy conditions ahead of the front and critically dry fuels; SW wind gusts will range from 20-35 mph in the rest of TX and the Mississippi Valley to the Appalachians and 15-25 mph in the rest of the Southeast
- Winds will generally be lighter over the FL peninsula, with RH from 15-30% inland; sea breezes will bring wind shifts and gusts of 15-25 mph in the afternoon or evening

National 7-Day Significant Fire Potential Outlook High Risk Trigger Definitions



SACC Daily Outlook



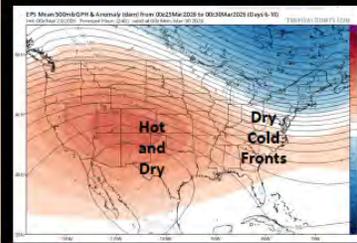
Friday, March 20, 2026

Forecast Precipitation the Next Week



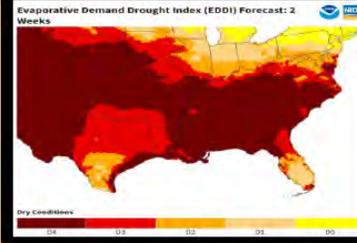
- Isolated thunderstorms today in KY and tomorrow in the southern Appalachians could produce localized rain amounts over a quarter inch, but most areas will not see precipitation
- Isolated storms are possible over FL early to mid-next week, with most areas there also likely to stay dry
- Otherwise, no rainfall is forecast for the majority of the region through the end of next week

Persistent Pattern through Late March



- Hot and dry weather is likely to prevail over much of the western U.S. with occasional dry cold fronts bringing temporarily cooler conditions to the Southern Area through the rest of March
- Record heat is likely to return to TX and OK around the middle of next week, ahead of another dry cold front that will pass through on or around Thursday
- A dry cold front Wednesday and another late next week could bring high impact fire weather to portions of the Appalachians and Southeast, as well
- Heading into early April, the persistent western ridge is likely break down and shift into the eastern U.S. in a pattern similar to early March
- This may result in increasing severe thunderstorm risks and rainfall from eastern TX and OK into the Mississippi Valley, with dry and windy conditions in the western Plains and hot and dry weather over the Southeast

Drought Likely to Intensify



- The forecasted evaporative demand drought index (EDDI) over the next two weeks is depicted
- With minimal rainfall expected during this period, the overall above average temperatures, influxes of dry air, sunshine and periods of windy conditions will result in well above normal evaporative demand for this time of year, especially in the two darkest shades of red
- This will likely result in flash drought impacts as green-up accelerates, with low live and dead fuel moistures and near-record to record low streamflow becoming more common
- The potential exists for multiple parts of the geographic area to experience record fire danger and significant fire activity heading into early April as a result
- The western U.S. will see similar conditions amid unusually low snowpack, likely maintaining unusually high fire risks for this time of year

Please contact your local National Weather Service office for spot forecasts and the latest watches and warnings.

Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook: *Updated 3/2/26*

March



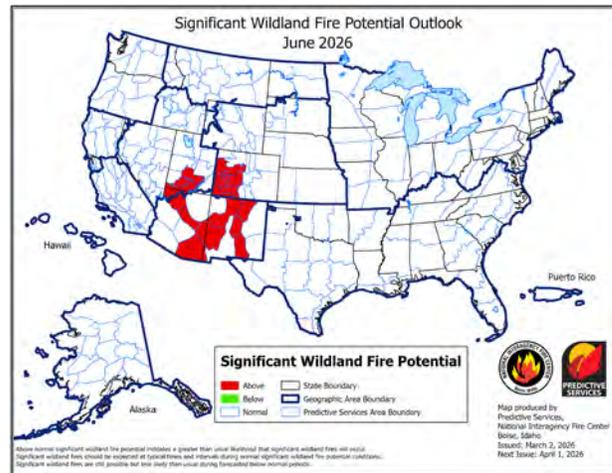
April



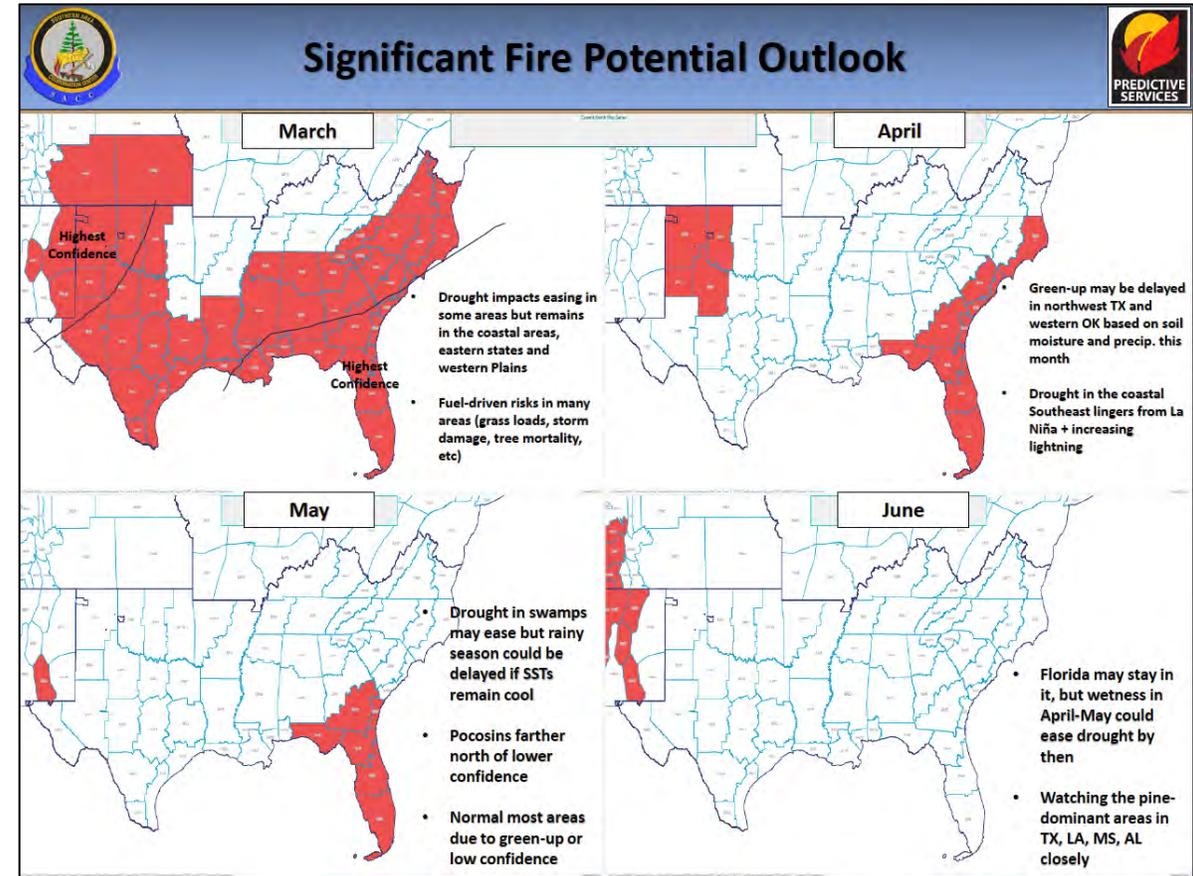
May



June



From SA Fire Environment Briefing 3/6/26



**A significant fire is one that requires resources from outside the district (other than aviation). IA potential is based more on shorter term weather factors. Just a few days of dry weather can increase IA activity considerably as we have consistently seen from year to year.*

Southern Area – Spring 2026 Wildfire Risk Assessment

Southern Area Wildfire Risk Assessment

Spring 2026

Southern Area Decision Support Group

Issued: March 2, 2026



Please review the SA Wildfire Risk Assessment for Spring 2026 – it discusses overall regional concerns as well as fire effective weather patterns.

Take special note of “Appendix B – Critical Fire Weather and Environmental Conditions” starting on page 27. This is useful for anytime of year.



1

https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/resources/predictive/SASpringRiskAssessment_2026_final.pdf

Southern Area – Mountain Wave Wind Event Note

MOUNTAIN WAVE WIND EVENTS

Mountain waves occur amid stable air masses with strong temperature inversions near mountainous terrain and are most common through late fall and winter in the Appalachians. They may occur near any elevated terrain in the geographic area, as long as the wind direction

aloft lies within 30 degrees of being perpendicular to a ridge line. The southern Appalachians traditionally experience them in pre-frontal environments, often at night, as warm and moist Atlantic or Gulf air surges northwards or northwestwards ahead of an approaching low pressure system and its cold front. The most common weather pattern associated with them features a strong low pressure system moving through the Ohio Valley or Great Lakes.

Indicators and Watchouts:

- Roll clouds aligned with ridgeline topography
- National Weather Service high wind warnings associated with pre-frontal (southeast) or post-frontal (northwest) winds
- Highly localized
- Not possible to forecast due to model and data limitations
- Higher winds often accompanied by much drier air mass
- Expect erratic fire behavior and rapid fire growth

Although their footprint is often quite narrow, **extreme winds in excess of hurricane-force (80 – 100 mph) can occur on the lee or downwind side of ridges**, with a rapid and unexpected shift in wind direction also a distinct possibility. Humid and cool conditions may be suddenly interrupted as drier air aloft accelerates towards the ground, resulting in **extreme winds and a sudden decrease in relative humidity.** Areas downwind of steep gradients in terrain are most susceptible. The east side of the Appalachians can see mountain wave events that lead to enhanced winds and subsidence in post-frontal environments as well. In addition to enhancing fire weather and potentially leading to extreme fire behavior, mountain waves can contribute to new ignitions from downed power lines and restrict air ops due to potential IFR conditions and severe to extreme turbulence.



CHIMNEY TOPS 2 FIRE

- Date: November 28, 2016
- Location: GSMNP, Sevier County, TN
- Persistent severe drought conditions
- 87 mph wind gusts due to Mountain Wave Wind Event recorded
- Fire growth from 35 acres to 17,000 acres in 24 hours
- 14 deaths
- 2,501 structures impacted

<https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/predictive/outlooks/MountainWavesFactSheet.pdf>

Helene Fuels Note:

- Remember the [“Fuels and Fire Management Considerations for Hurricane Damaged Areas”](#) document is available as a potential aid.

Fuels and Fire Management Considerations for Hurricane Helene Damaged Areas

Executive Summary

Hurricane Helene has caused significant disruption to forested landscapes, resulting in widespread debris accumulation and altered fuel structure across the southeast particularly in the Southern Appalachians of southwest Virginia, western North Carolina, northeast Tennessee, northeast Georgia as well as the Piedmont of South Carolina, central Georgia and north Florida. The storm's high winds broke or toppled trees, and created extensive blowdown zones, transitioning fuel conditions from lighter models, such as grass and leaf litter, to heavy slash and debris typical of Fuel Models 12, 13, SB2, and SB3. This shift in fuel types presents substantial challenges for wildfire suppression efforts. The increased resistance to control, difficult access, and elevated potential for extreme fire behavior necessitates strategic adaptation of suppression tactics. The storm's aftermath has also introduced the need to reconcile older fire line production rates with the Scott and Burgan 40 fuel models used for modern fire behavior predictions, as the line production data for these newer models remains undeveloped. This report explores these challenges, provides practical insights for resource deployment, and outlines strategies for managing this complex landscape. The effects of Helene will be felt for some time. In a 2005 risk assessment for Hurricane Katrina, it was reported by the Mississippi Forestry Commission that debris from Hurricane Camille which struck in 1969 was still preventing access to certain areas.

This document provides fuel loading and modeling guidance, fire behavior expectations, and fire management considerations for both wildfire response and prescribed fire implementation for each of the hurricane damage severity categories described below:

| Damage Severity | % of overstory altered/damaged |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Catastrophic | >50% |
| Severe | 34-50% |
| Moderate | 26-33% |
| Light | <25% |



Seasonal Fog Risk:

- Recent weather conditions have been favoring development of dense fog in many locations. These conditions can also enhance risk of smoke induced fog.
- Potential for “Smoke Induced Fog” or “Superfog” should be considered, along with mitigation measures, during both wildfire and prescribed fire incidents as we move towards Spring Greenup and soil moisture drawdown. Especially those areas with heavy duff, organic soils, and atypical amounts of heavy down & dead materials within drought impacted areas.
- Refer to the following links:
 - [Southern Fire Exchange Superfog Publication](#)
 - [NWCG - Smoke and Roadway Safety Pocket Card](#)
 - [NWCG – Smoke and Roadway Safety Guide](#)



FEMS Reminders

Weather Stations

- State Mesonet Stations (e.g., NC ECONet) have been added as of 1/29/26, but lack a historical period of record.
 - Several North Carolina FDRAs rely on stations from our SCO mesonet (ECONet).
 - Fire Danger Outputs from these newly added stations have stabilized & are included in FWIP
 - ASOS stations have been removed from SIG groups & previous ECONet Stations have been added back to SIG groups.

Live Fuel Moisture (LFM) Model

- Currently set to a national preliminary standard in FEMS.
- Four main drivers are used: Day Length, Minimum Temperature, Vapor Pressure Deficit, and Running Total Precipitation.
- The GSI-derived LFM Model standard settings create fundamental limitations that directly affect FM-V, FM-W, and FM-X.
- National standard settings do not allow regional adjustments for local growing conditions. This will evolve over time as bugs are addressed, stations are added, and further analysis is completed. **Not an issue as we are still in dormancy, values default to minimum until Spring – will be addressed as soon as regional adjustments go online.**

Data and Modeling Updates

- FF+ Databases have been recalculated to align with new FEMS standards (see earlier documentation).
- For this interim update of the NC FDOP's data, Fuel Model - Z has been used, due to the known LFM limitations in the initial FEMS rollout.
- A reevaluation will be necessary as additional alternate gateway station types are integrated & regional GSI calibrations are carried out.

FDOP Revision Status

- NC FDOP updates were started but then paused to allow time for FEMS development through early summer 2025.
- This pause has been recommended nationwide to ensure consistency as development progresses.
- Interim breakpoints and model combinations have been established, with a complete revision needed once FEMS is adjusted further (earlier topics).

Overall

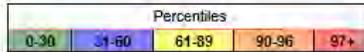
- Weather and fire occurrence data (2010–2024) have been processed to establish initial working breakpoints for FEMS/V4 outputs for North Carolina.
- Interim analysis has been completed – now driving fire danger products (e.g., adjective ratings and hazard levels) utilizing FM-Z and the 2010-2024 period of record.
- **Remember to discontinue use of old NC Forest Service generated Pocket Cards from prior to the FEMS transition on 10/1/25.**
- Replacement guidance material has been previously released (11/13/25).

Work at the national, regional, state, and FDRA levels will continue as FEMS is updated following rollout. [FEMS link](#)

Firefighter's Guide to Percentiles and Thresholds

Percentiles and thresholds are used to help us measure the significance of National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) outputs as they relate to levels of fire risk, fuel conditions and fire danger. Have you ever asked a firefighter the question "How are your fires burning?" and you get a response something like "Real hot"? The definition of "Real hot" will vary depending upon whom you ask. One objective of this guide is to define the NFDRS and fire weather thresholds that relate to problematic fire behavior.

Percentiles are based on a scale of 0-100. We use percentiles to sort and rank a collection of data. *Thresholds* are the actual values of NFDRS indices (ERC, BI, KBDI), weather observations (RH, windspeed) or fuel moistures (1-hr, 1000-hr) that mark the change from one category to another. As an example, the North Cove Pinnacle RAWS has calculated the burning index (BI) every day over 14 years for a total of 5169 observations. In sorting through these 5169 BI observations, we find that only 10% of these BI observations have a BI value of 122 or greater. The BI of 122 is the threshold. BI values greater than or equal to the threshold of 122 exceed the 90th percentile. We found that only 3% of the observations occur above the BI value of 153. Crossing the threshold of a 153 BI ranks in the 97th percentile.



Whether we are looking at fuel moistures, BI, KBDI or ERC, we generally make the same associations when rating the percentiles. At the low end of the scale in the green and blues we see normal to below normal conditions. Initial attack should be successful with few complexities. At the upper end of the scale in the orange and reds we see unusual or rare conditions, and we would expect to see complex fires where initial attack may often fail. So, the difficult category to describe and thus maybe the most important category for initial attack is the middle or transition zone in the yellow. Somewhere in the yellow, fires transition from normal to problematic.

Fire Danger Rating Areas

The underlying philosophy for determination of our Fire Danger Rating Areas (FDRAs) is that they represent areas where the weather reporting stations (RAWS) tend to react similarly to daily weather regimes

and exhibit similar fluctuations in fire danger and climate. Nine FDRAs were delineated in North Carolina. Fire weather thresholds, fuel moisture thresholds and NFDRS thresholds have been developed for each FDRA and are unique to the designated FDRA. Threshold values developed from one FDRA should not be used in another FDRA.



Interim GUIDANCE Documents

-NCFS- NFDRS PRIMER & FIRE DANGER RATING AREA CRITICAL THRESHOLDS

11/7/25 Update

Analysis Notes

CY 2010-2024 Weather Obs and Fires.
Based upon FEMS National Standards as of 10/1/25 & Use of Daily Extremes.

FEMS - Fire Danger Rating Area Summaries:

Updated 3/12/26

| Analysis Settings | | | | Matrix Combinations | |
|------------------------|------------|----------------|----|-----------------------|------------------|
| FDRA | Time Range | Daily Extremes | FM | Staffing/Hazard Level | Adjective Rating |
| Northern Coastal Plain | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/BI | ERC |
| Southern Coastal Plain | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/BI | ERC |
| Eastern Piedmont | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/BI | ERC |
| Sand Hills | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/BI | ERC |
| Western Piedmont | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/BI | ERC |
| Blue Ridge Escarpment | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/IC | ERC |
| Central Mountains | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/IC | ERC |
| Northern Highlands | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/BI | ERC |
| Southern Highlands | 2010-2024 | Y | Z | ERC/IC | ERC |

| FDRA | Special Interest Group Stations (SIG Stations) | Missing SIG Stations |
|------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Northern Coastal Plain | Dare Bomb Range, Elizabeth City, Fairfield, Greens Cross, Pocosin Lakes NWR | 0 |
| Southern Coastal Plain | Beaufort, CL1 Sandy Run, New Bern, Turnbull Creek, Hofmann, Whiteville, Sunny Point, Finch's Station | 0 |
| Eastern Piedmont | Central Crops RS**, Lake Wheeler**, Oxford Tob RS**, Upper Coastal RS**, Warrenton | 0 |
| Sand Hills | Fort Bragg, Horseshoe House, Rockingham, Sandhills RS** | 0 |
| Western Piedmont | Caswell Game Land, Duke Forest, Lexington, Mt Island Lake | 0 |
| Blue Ridge Escarpment | North Cove Pinnacle, Raven Knob, Redezvous Mtn, Rutherford Co Hq, Taylorsville (Lenior) | 0 |
| Central Mountains | Davidson River, Guion Farms, Mtn Hort RS**, Seven Mile Ridge | 0 |
| Northern Highlands | Busick, Jessen Station, Upper Mtn RS** | 0 |
| Southern Highlands | Highlands, Jackson County, Locust Gap, Tusquitee | 0 |

- Period of Record Issues remain with all ECONet Stations and some Satellite RAWS.
- **ECONet Stations have been added to FEMS & are now back in SIG groups, as noted above.**
- **Red Colored Stations** = Added Satellite RAWS, ** Denoted Stations = ECONet Stations added back to SIG on 3/12/26,

Fire Weather Intelligence Portal – Current Links & Notes

The interim breakpoints and percentiles based on FEMS implementation have been applied to the FWIP for North Carolina FDRAs. Content continues to be added and tools updated. Updated versions of the Hazard Assessment Tool, Adjective Fire Danger Rating Tool, and Daily Forecast/Observed Indices by Station have been implemented effective 3/12/26. The new versions automatically replaced the older versions.

- [Public Facing Fire Danger Page & Fire Danger Digest Table](#)
(NC ratings based on ERC-Z analysis)
- [Station Viewer Portal](#)
(Past, Current, Forecast Conditions Tab)
*HOURLY Station Fire Danger Observations have been added on the PAST and CURRENT Conditions Tabs, as of 3/6/26
- [Hazard Assessment Tool](#)
(based on ERC-Z/BI-Z or ERC-Z/IC-Z depending on FDRA)
- [FEMS Forecast NFDRS Indices by Station](#)
- [FEMS Observed NFDRS Indices by Station](#)
- [Quality Control Viewer Tool](#)
- [Summary Site – Supplemental Tools](#)

The [Weekly Outlook Tool](#) is still offline – being revised to conform to new analysis/FEMS integration.

Examples of Changes to FWIP – [Daily Summary Tool](#) (Observed and Forecasts)

Daily Summary Tool

State:

North Carolina

Data Type:

Observations
 Forecasts

Station Grouping:

By District
 By FDRA

Forecast Date:

Daily Summary for North Carolina: Forecasts for March 24, 2026

The tables below include this day's summary of fire danger and weather forecasts, grouped by Fire Danger Rating Area.

Data Notes

- Time Period:** All forecasts cover the period from midnight to midnight local time on the selected date.
- Fuel Model:** Fire danger data uses the default fuel model for each station's Fire Danger Rating Area.
- Percentiles:** For SIG stations in this state's Fire Danger Rating Areas, fire danger and fuel moisture data points are labeled and color-coded with the corresponding percentile, based on all historical days between 2010 and 2024.
- Statistics:** For SIG stations in this state's Fire Danger Rating Areas, fire danger data is labeled with corresponding historical percentiles and KBDI departures from monthly normals. This is based on FDRA-averaged data between 2010 and 2024.
- Weather Forecasts:** Updated daily weather forecasts are retrieved from FEMS each night. This data does *not* include an occurrence time for the extreme values.

Jump to FDRA:

Blue Ridge Escarpment

Permalink
Download Data
Screenshot

| Station Details | | | Fire Danger and Fuel Moisture Data | | | | | | | | Weather Data | | | | |
|-----------------|--|-----|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| FEMS ID | NAME/NETWORK | MOD | MAX BI | MAX ERC | MAX IC | MAX SC | KBDI | MIN 1HR | MIN 10HR | MIN 100HR | MIN 1000H | MAX TEMP | MIN RHUM | MAX GUST | TOTAL PRCP |
| 314214 | North Cove Pinn ▲ RAWS ★ SIG Station Last FEMS Ob: 1 pm | Z | 55.7 95% (12 AM) | 67.6 96% (7 PM) | 14.0 72% (6 PM) | 9.4 87% (12 AM) | 46 +2 | 8.2 25% (6 PM) | 9.0 7% (10 PM) | 13.8 7% (11 PM) | 17.1 15% (11 PM) | 55°F | 35% | 15 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| 316302 | Rutherford Coun ▲ RAWS ★ SIG Station Last FEMS Ob: 1 pm | Z | 44.5 79% (7 AM) | 68.6 97% (8 PM) | 16.1 79% (6 PM) | 5.5 66% (2 PM) | 162 +110 | 7.7 25% (6 PM) | 9.0 7% (10 PM) | 14.0 7% (11 PM) | 17.3 15% (11 PM) | 57°F | 35% | 12 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| 312001 | Rendezvous Mtn ▲ RAWS ★ SIG Station Last FEMS Ob: 1 pm | Z | 44.9 79% (2 PM) | 69.6 97% (7 PM) | 13.2 68% (4 PM) | 5.5 66% (2 PM) | 50 +6 | 8.3 25% (6 PM) | 9.0 7% (10 PM) | 13.5 2% (10 PM) | 16.5 5% (11 PM) | 54°F | 32% | 15 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| 313601 | Taylorville (L... ▲ RAWS ★ SIG Station Last FEMS Ob: 1 pm | Z | 39.6 67% (6 PM) | 65.3 93% (7 PM) | 13.4 68% (6 PM) | 4.6 55% (12 AM) | 55 +11 | 8.1 25% (6 PM) | 9.2 7% (9 PM) | 14.8 17% (11 PM) | 17.4 15% (11 PM) | 56°F | 32% | 9 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| 310301 | Raven Knob (sur... ▲ RAWS ★ SIG Station Last FEMS Ob: 1 pm | Z | 39.1 64% (12 AM) | 58.8 84% (7 PM) | 11.2 59% (6 PM) | 5.1 55% (12 AM) | 47 +3 | 8.8 38% (6 PM) | 9.7 16% (10 PM) | 15.6 32% (11 PM) | 18.9 51% (11 PM) | 52°F | 38% | 11 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| 55522342 | Pilot Mountain ▲ RAWS Last FEMS Ob: 1 pm | Z | 47.4 (12 AM) | 63.2 (6 PM) | 13.5 (6 PM) | 7.2 (12 AM) | 51 | 8.4 (6 PM) | 9.4 (10 PM) | 15.3 (11 PM) | 17.6 (11 PM) | 55°F | 34% | 14 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| 55522637 | Hickory Regiona... → ASOS | Z | 51.8 (12 AM) | 70.5 (6 PM) | 16.0 (5 PM) | 7.5 (12 AM) | 266 | 7.9 (6 PM) | 8.9 (10 PM) | 13.7 (11 PM) | 16.3 (11 PM) | 56°F | 37% | 12 MPH | 0.00 IN. |

- Summary at Bottom of Page (either by FDRA or by District)
- Make sure to read descriptions at top of page, as there are slight differences between forecast, observed, etc.
- This example is forecast for Tuesday 3/24/26

Summary by Region

Permalink
Download Data
Screenshot

Note: FDRA averages include **only the SIG stations** in each region with data available today

| Region Details | | | Fire Danger and Fuel Moisture Averages | | | | | | | | Weather Averages | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-----|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| FDRA | NUM STN | MOD | MAX BI | MAX ERC | MAX IC | MAX SC | KBDI | MIN 1HR | MIN 10HR | MIN 100HR | MIN 1000H | MAX TEMP | MIN RHUM | MAX GUST | TOTAL PRCP |
| Southern Highlands | 4 | Z | 40.0 70% (12 AM) | 58.0 91% (7 PM) | 12.8 76% (6 PM) | 5.3 47% (12 AM) | 51 +28 | 8.8 26% (6 PM) | 9.9 10% (10 PM) | 15.8 20% (11 PM) | 19.1 39% (11 PM) | 58°F | 43% | 14 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Central Mountains | 4 | Z | 46.1 90% (12 AM) | 58.9 93% (7 PM) | 14.5 81% (6 PM) | 7.3 88% (12 AM) | 64 +33 | 8.5 28% (6 PM) | 9.7 9% (10 PM) | 15.8 21% (11 PM) | 19.1 40% (11 PM) | 57°F | 39% | 13 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Northern Highlands | 3 | Z | 51.7 98% (12 AM) | 54.7 90% (7 PM) | 14.7 88% (6 PM) | 10.1 98% (12 AM) | 38 +22 | 8.9 19% (6 PM) | 10.2 6% (10 PM) | 16.5 30% (11 PM) | 19.9 49% (11 PM) | 52°F | 40% | 16 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Blue Ridge Escarpment | 5 | Z | 44.8 79% (12 AM) | 66.0 94% (7 PM) | 13.6 72% (6 PM) | 6.0 66% (12 AM) | 72 +20 | 8.2 25% (6 PM) | 9.2 7% (10 PM) | 14.3 7% (11 PM) | 17.4 15% (11 PM) | 55°F | 34% | 12 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Western Piedmont | 4 | Z | 47.6 79% (12 AM) | 67.5 97% (7 PM) | 14.5 62% (6 PM) | 6.7 66% (12 AM) | 175 -128 | 8.0 29% (6 PM) | 9.1 5% (10 PM) | 14.0 5% (11 PM) | 17.1 17% (11 PM) | 56°F | 38% | 12 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Sandhills | 4 | Z | 50.1 79% (12 AM) | 66.3 92% (7 PM) | 15.9 64% (6 PM) | 7.7 72% (12 AM) | 225 +137 | 8.0 35% (6 PM) | 9.2 8% (10 PM) | 14.3 8% (11 PM) | 17.5 19% (11 PM) | 57°F | 40% | 13 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Eastern Piedmont | 5 | Z | 47.4 71% (12 AM) | 61.9 92% (7 PM) | 13.7 64% (6 PM) | 7.4 52% (12 AM) | 111 +67 | 8.6 38% (6 PM) | 9.6 13% (10 PM) | 14.9 12% (11 PM) | 18.0 31% (11 PM) | 54°F | 42% | 12 MPH | 0.00 IN. |
| Southern Coast | 8 | Z | 49.2 91% (12 AM) | 58.2 92% (7 PM) | 14.5 73% (6 PM) | 8.4 83% (12 AM) | 154 +45 | 9.1 31% (6 PM) | 9.9 6% (10 PM) | 15.6 21% (11 PM) | 18.5 21% (11 PM) | 58°F | 45% | 14 MPH | 0.04 IN. |
| Northern Coast | 5 | Z | 46.5 72% (12 AM) | 52.1 80% (7 PM) | 11.6 62% (6 PM) | 8.5 75% (12 AM) | 168 +100 | 10.0 41% (6 PM) | 11.2 18% (10 PM) | 16.9 37% (11 PM) | 18.6 38% (11 PM) | 55°F | 47% | 16 MPH | 0.01 IN. |

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory issued for Central & Southern Great Plains

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Central and Southern Great Plains

Date Advisory Effective - March 18, 2026

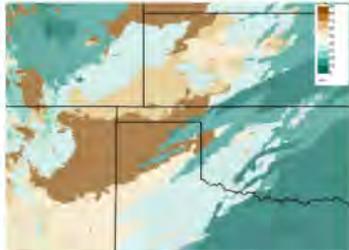
Subject: Above normal to exceptional grass loads are widespread across the central and southern Great Plains. Dry and unusually hot weather expected most of the rest of March will result in these abundant fuels becoming historically dry for this time of year.

Discussion: Abundant, freeze-cured grasses dominate the landscape across the advisory area, while drought has been expanding and intensifying since late winter. A highly anomalous weather pattern is affecting the western and central U.S. this week, with a summer-like heat dome contributing to record high temperatures and accelerated drying of the landscape. As the upper-level high pressure ridge responsible begins to break down during late March, the potential for wind-driven wildfire outbreaks may increase. Otherwise, as the fire environment warms and dries, summer-like fire behavior and increased resistance to control will occur.

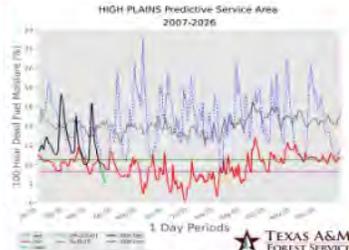


Example of freeze-cured, above normal grass loads in the Texas panhandle (Texas A&M Forest Service).

Differences from Normal Conditions: Well above normal rainfall during the 2025 growing season left widespread above normal to locally exceptional grass loading across the advisory area. While spotty rainfall and irrigated fields have led to areas of green-up, most of the landscape is dominated by freeze-cured grasses. A record warm winter has been followed by persistently warm and dry conditions, resulting in above normal fire occurrence. High temperatures well into the 80s and 90s will be common this week, with triple-digit readings expected locally on the hottest days. These conditions are more typical of summer than early spring. Dead fuel moisture is forecast to reach historical lows for this time of year as a result, with the energy release component forecasted to exceed the 97th percentile at times. Oklahoma Forestry Services recently reported a re-emergence of heat on the month-old Ranger Road incident in the panhandle – a likely sign of underlying dryness that will increasingly factor into resistance to control as drought intensifies further.



Wetting precipitation amounts of at least a quarter inch have not occurred in most of the advisory area in 30-100+ days (Climate Toolbox)



100-hour dead fuel moisture across the Texas panhandle is forecast to reach historical levels of dryness for March and April (Texas A&M Forest Service)

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Central and Southern Great Plains

Date Advisory Effective - March 18, 2026

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- The fire environment across the advisory area is primed for a continuation of above normal fire occurrence and fire intensity, especially during periods of elevated or higher fire weather. Rates of spread of 2-5 miles per hour have been observed in February and March in the advisory area.
- Critical fire weather patterns may occur with dryline passages, downslope wind events, dry cold fronts and dry return flow associated with quick warming trends.
- Fire spread will change dramatically with any increase in wind speed or change in direction. Firefighters should expect extreme rates of spread in fine fuels, along with increased fireline intensity on all portions of the fire. Frontal assault of wind driven fires should not be considered.
- Continuity of grass fuels may limit the potential for firebreaks, especially in canyons and other areas of complex terrain. Killing freezes on March 16th and 17th also damaged wheat fields that were greening up quickly and would normally be used in limiting fire spread.
- The dry conditions and pattern of lower-than-normal mean humidity may increase burn periods and promote active burning during nighttime hours.
- Expect longer duration and more complex initial attack, along with an increasing occurrence of extended attack.
- The public should avoid areas in the vicinity of ongoing fires and heed evacuation notices if fires occur near their communities.

Area of Concern: The advisory area covers the grass-dominant landscapes of southeast Colorado, western and central Kansas, northern and western Oklahoma, northwest Texas and eastern New Mexico.



Issued By: The Southern Area Decision Support group in coordination with state and federal partners in the Southern, Southwest and Rocky Mountain Geographic Areas.

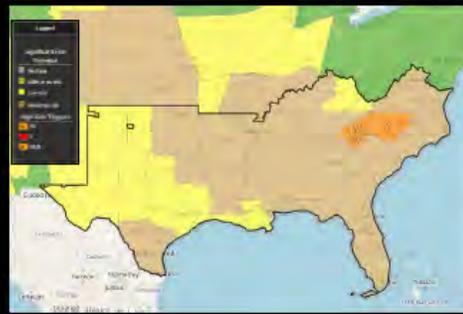


SACC Daily Outlook

Friday, March 20, 2026



Significant Fire Potential Outlook Monday



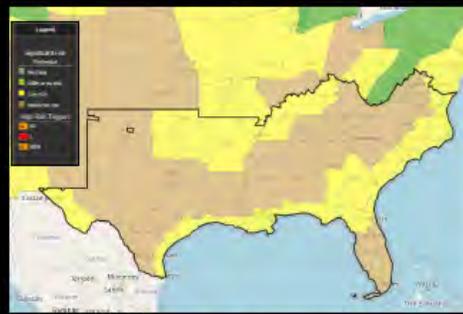
- A dry cold front passing through the Appalachians Monday morning will result in **HIGH RISK SFP** across the Carolinas, with an expansion possible into VA, GA and coastal areas farther east; downslope NW wind gusts from 30-50 mph will be possible, highest in western NC, while RH will abruptly fall to 15-25%; escaped Helene debris burns and powerline ignitions could occur
- Though temperatures will be cooler behind the front farther north and west, very dry air will maintain critically to extremely dry fuels from the Mid-Mississippi Valley to the Plains; winds will be gusty from the E/NE from eastern OK and northeast TX into AR, north MS/AL/GA, TN and KY, with RH falling to 15-30%
- South TX will continue to see hot, dry and breezy conditions, with gusts near 30 mph as sea breezes move inland
- Areas ahead of the front in the Southeast will see near-record to record heat, RH from 15-35% and gusty W/SW winds; isolated storms are possible in southeast GA and the coastal Carolinas

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Tuesday

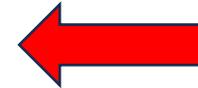


- Confidence is somewhat lower in the placement of a front and dry air to its north on Tuesday for central and eastern parts of the region
- The Appalachians have the potential to see poor recoveries and RH as low as 8-20% in the afternoon; some wind gusts of 15-25 mph will be possible
- Dry fuels and breezy conditions will likely overlap over FL into the eastern Gulf coastal plain, but scattered thunderstorms are possible in south GA and north FL, which could lead to new ignitions and gusty outflow winds
- Temperatures will rebound in the Plains as fuels remain extremely dry; areas with moderate SFP will see RH from 5-20%, highs in the 80s and 90s and S wind gusts from 15-30 mph

Significant Fire Potential Outlook Wednesday



- There is the potential for another dry cold front to bring near-critical fire weather to the Carolinas, GA and VA on Wednesday, but models are in poor agreement
- The FL peninsula will see mostly dry and hot conditions followed by gusty sea breeze winds
- Morning fog will affect the Gulf Coast, while inland areas will remain critically dry as warmer temperatures return
- Record hot, dry and breezy conditions will likely affect western OK into much of TX, and **HIGH RISK SFP** can not be ruled out



Overall Trends & Notes

- We've had several rounds of wetting rains across most of the state but are still 6-10+ inches behind in overall 12-mo context – implications for soil moisture drawdown, duff/organic drying as greenup continues to advance.
 - Overall, IA & Difficulty of Control is likely to **increase significantly over the next week**, related to expected dead fuel drying and alignment of more significant fire effective weather, including the potential for mostly dry frontal passages. See Hazard Level and Adjective Rating Forecasts (right).
 - The past several weeks have provided good overnight fuel moisture recovery, keeping the 100's and 1000's in a reasonable state. This upcoming week expect lower daily min RH's, warmer conditions, better fuel preheating and more active mixing. Overnight recoveries next week are likely to trend lower, along with increasing evaporative demand & lack of wetting rain. All leading to a more rapid/progressive decline in duff moisture, and 100-hr & 1,000-hr fuel moistures.
 - The CPC outlook is still favoring an extended period of warmer temperatures, and generally below normal precip at both the 6-10/8-14-day periods for most of the state. Weeks 3-4 are favoring above average temps with a lean toward slightly above normal precip for western NC.
 - We are still gaining ~1-2 minutes a day of extra daylight, increasing sun angle and additional heating/drying potential as we move towards Summer. Extra warmth will aid in better atmospheric mixing, preheating & drying of dead fuels, initiation of greenup, extend burn periods, etc. (in context of typical Spring Fire Season timing).
 - Although dormancy is beginning to break in the typical early species, we are **still many weeks away** from effective canopy closure/wind interception/temperature/fuel volatility moderation. Road shoulder/yard greening of cool season grasses is occurring in many areas, but may be negatively impacted by the last 3-4 nights of freezing/near-freezing conditions.
 - Machine use & Debris burn fire escape risk likely to increase, but be somewhat modified by yard greening in some locations. We will also see the first warm & generally sunny weather event aligning with daylight savings time & recent severe storm debris accumulations across the state.
-
- As previously noted, the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) is less reflective of actual fuel and moisture conditions during the cold season due to model limitations. This can create a perception of reduced concern following modest Fall/Winter rain events.
-
- Careful monitoring of post-burn prescribed fire units and wildfire footprints overlapping areas of abnormal dryness and low soil moisture will be critical as we move through the dormant burn season, particularly if drying conditions reinvigorate fire behavior when aligned with favorable fire weather.

Daily Adjective Rating Outputs for each FDRA (ERC from FM-Z) (Observed on Left, Forecast on Right)

| FDRA | Recent Data Calculated from hourly estimates | | | | | | | Forecast Data Calculated using hourly forecasts | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | FRI MAR 13 | SAT MAR 14 | SUN MAR 15 | MON MAR 16 | TUE MAR 17 | WED MAR 18 | THU MAR 19 | FRI MAR 20 | SAT MAR 21 | SUN MAR 22 | MON MAR 23 | TUE MAR 24 | WED MAR 25 | THU MAR 26 |
| | Low | Moderate | High | Very High | Extreme | Very High | Extreme | Low | Moderate | High | Very High | Extreme | Very High | Extreme |
| Southern Highlands | M | H | M | L | L | L | L | M | M | H | H | H | H | M |
| Central Mountains | M | H | M | L | L | L | M | M | M | H | H | V | H | H |
| Northern Highlands | M | H | M | L | L | L | M | M | L | M | M | H | H | H |
| Blue Ridge | M | H | M | L | M | M | M | H | H | H | H | V | H | H |
| Western Piedmont | M | H | M | L | M | M | H | H | H | H | V | V | H | H |
| Sandhills | M | H | M | L | M | M | M | H | H | H | H | V | H | M |
| Eastern Piedmont | M | M | M | L | M | M | M | M | M | M | H | H | H | M |
| Southern Coast | M | H | M | L | M | M | M | H | H | M | H | H | H | M |
| Northern Coast | M | H | M | L | M | M | M | H | H | M | M | H | M | M |

Hazard Matrix Outputs for each FDRA (FM-Z)

Current Statewide Hazard Summary for NC
Click on any daily Hazard Level to view the calculation details for that FDRA.

| FDRA | Recent Hazard Levels Based on the final forecasts for each date | | | | | | | Forecasted Hazard Levels Based on the latest forecasts | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | FRI MAR 13 | SAT MAR 14 | SUN MAR 15 | MON MAR 16 | TUE MAR 17 | WED MAR 18 | THU MAR 19 | FRI MAR 20 | SAT MAR 21 | SUN MAR 22 | MON MAR 23 | TUE MAR 24 | WED MAR 25 | THU MAR 26 |
| | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Southern Highlands | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Central Mountains | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Northern Highlands | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Blue Ridge | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Western Piedmont | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Sandhills | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Eastern Piedmont | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Southern Coast | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Northern Coast | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |

***Planned intermittent interruptions to FEMS data feed for all services from 3/23-3/29, they note daily fire danger calculations will continue during maintenance periods. These interruptions may impact display of observed hourly fire danger records in FWIP.**

*Changes in actual precipitation amounts, min/max rh's and other weather variables have significant impact on the model as you go further out in forecast period.