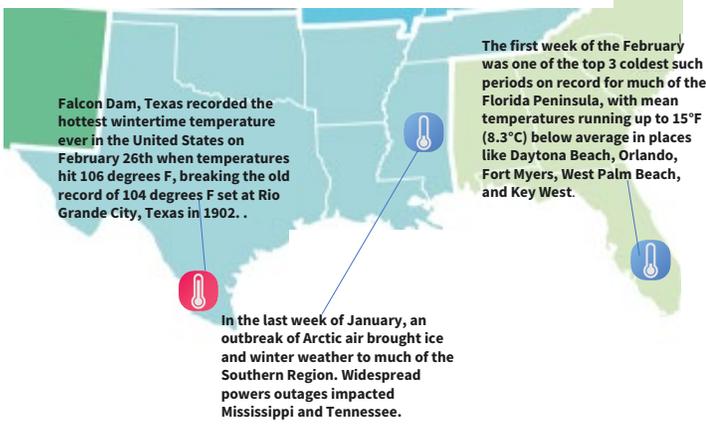


Gulf Coast Region Significant Events — Winter 2025-2026



Overview

Winter began with above normal temperatures in the west of the Gulf Region, with most stations running two to eight degrees F above normal. Temperatures were more moderate to the east. Dry conditions dominated the Region.

January saw more moderate temperatures on average, with several outbreaks of Arctic air impacting the Gulf Region. Much of the Gulf Region was dry in January except for a streak of wet conditions from southcentral Louisiana northeast across Mississippi and central Alabama.

February saw well above average temperatures across the entire Gulf Region, except for Florida where temperatures ranged from normal to six degrees F below normal. Dry conditions again dominated in February, with many stations receiving less than 50 percent of normal.

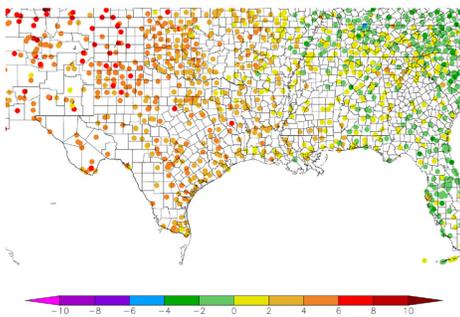
Hot and dry conditions were the theme of Winter 2025-2026 in the Gulf Region, though several pulses of Arctic air to the Region brought winter weather as far south as the Gulf Coast.

Regional Climate Overview — Winter 2025-2026

Temperature and Precipitation

Departure from Normal Temperature °F

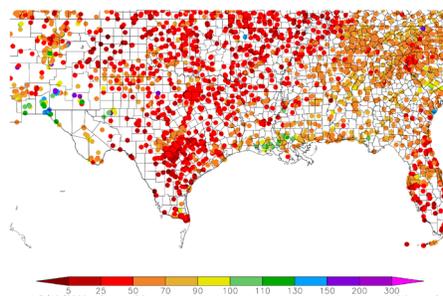
12/1/2025 – 2/28/2026



Winter 2025-2026 temperatures were mixed for the Gulf Coast Region with temperatures well above normal in the west and below normal in the East. Texas and Louisiana were the hotspots in the Region, with temperatures running two to 8 degrees F above normal. Temperatures in Mississippi and Alabama were generally near-normal and Florida was mostly normal to two degrees F below normal.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)

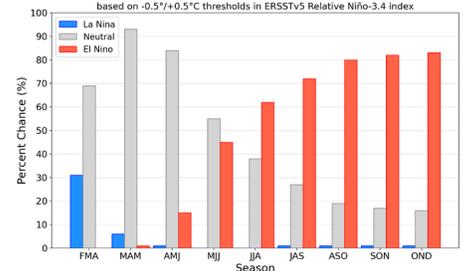
12/1/2025 – 2/28/2026



Winter 2025-2026 was dry across a large majority of stations in the Gulf Region. Stations across Texas, southern Florida, and northern Louisiana saw less than 50 percent of normal precipitation. Most of Mississippi and Alabama saw less than 70 percent of normal precipitation. An isolated area along the eastern Louisiana Gulf Coast saw up to 130 percent of normal precipitation.

Shift from La Niña to El Niño

Official NOAA CPC ENSO Probabilities (issued March 2026)
based on -0.5/+0.5°C thresholds in ERSSTv5 Relative Niño-3.4 index



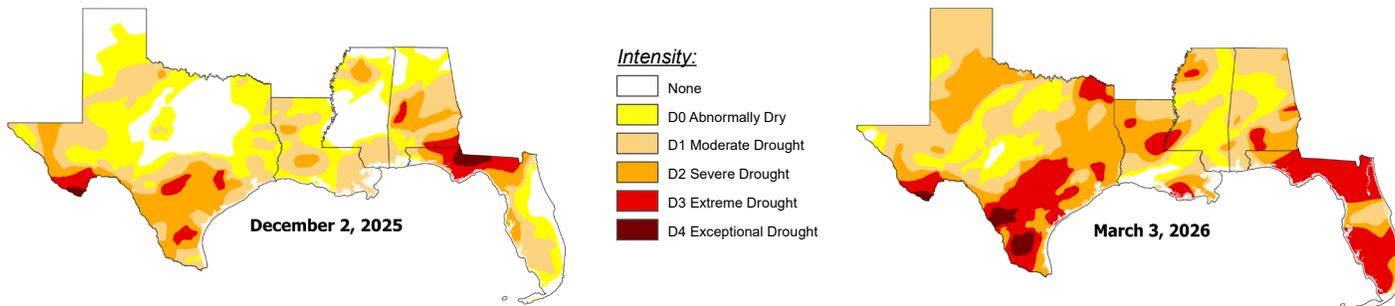
Forecasts for the upcoming months indicate a shift from La Niña conditions to neutral conditions with El Niño conditions emerging by late summer. El Niño conditions in the summer tend to reduce tropical activity in the Gulf of America. While good for avoiding damage from tropical cyclones, drought conditions will not likely be improved by El Niño during the summer months.

Gulf Coast Regional Impacts

Drought, Agriculture, and Water Supply

Winter 2025-2026 saw the extent of drought-free area in the Gulf Coast states fall from 53 percent drought-free on December 2nd to 23 percent drought-free on March 3rd. All drought categories (D1-D4) expanded in most of the Gulf Coast states. Abnormal dryness (D0) decreased from 28 percent to 17 percent, Moderate Drought (D1) increased from 27 to 31 percent, Severe Drought (D2) increased from 14 to 25 percent, Extreme Drought (D3) increased 5 to 19 percent, and Exceptional Drought (D4) increased from 1 to 2 percent.

Despite the widespread drought degradation, there was some improvements in interior locations of several Gulf states. Improvements were observed in several locations across the Southern Region: south central Louisiana saw up to three classes of improvement, Central Alabama saw up to two classes, and isolated portions of Mississippi saw 1 class improvement, as did the central Florida Panhandle.

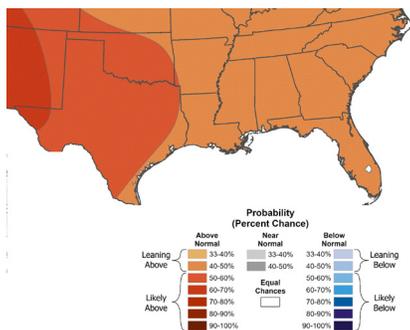


US Drought Monitor depiction of the Southern Region. The US Drought Monitor is produced by the National Drought Mitigation Center, the USDA, and NOAA.

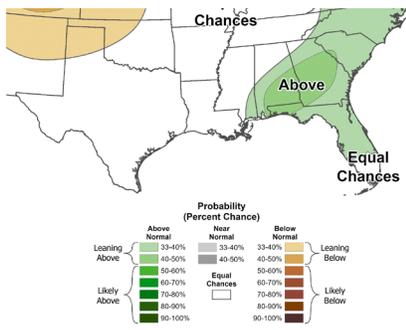
Seasonal Outlook

Temperature

Outlook for April-June 2026



Precipitation



ENSO Outlook

Currently, conditions in the Tropical Pacific indicate we are in a weak La Niña and this event is currently weakening. Neutral conditions are expected to emerge in the coming weeks. Longer range forecasts predict the emergence of an El Niño event by late summer 2026.

Gulf Coast Partners

The seasonal temperature outlooks from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for enhanced probabilities of above normal temperatures for the entirety of the Gulf Coast Region for April through June. The greatest probabilities of above normal temperatures are located in Texas, inland from the Coast, where there is a 50 to 60 percent chance of well above normal temperatures. Looking east across the Region, including the Texas Gulf Coast, the probabilities fall to 40 to 50 percent probability of well above normal temperatures for the Gulf Region over the coming season.

The precipitation outlooks for April through June 2026 calls for enhanced probabilities of above normal precipitation for the eastern portions of the Region, from coastal Mississippi to Florida, except for the tip of the Florida Peninsula where there are equal chances for above or below normal precipitation. The greatest probabilities of well above normal precipitation (40 to 50 percent) are present in southeastern Alabama and the western Florida Panhandle. Equal chances of above or below normal precipitation are called for west of southeast Mississippi.

NOAA/NWS Climate Prediction Center
(cpc.ncep.noaa.gov)

NOAA National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science
(coastalscience.noaa.gov)

NOAA Gulf of America Collaboration Team
(noaa.gov/regional-collaboration-network/regions-gulf-of-america)

NOAA/NESDIS National Centers for Environmental Information
(ncei.noaa.gov)

Southeast Regional Climate Center
(sercc.com)

Southern Regional Climate Center
(srcc.tamu.edu)

