Drought Information Statement for southeast MS, southwest AL, and the western FL Panhandle

Valid 10/31/2024

Issued By: WFO Mobile/Pensacola

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

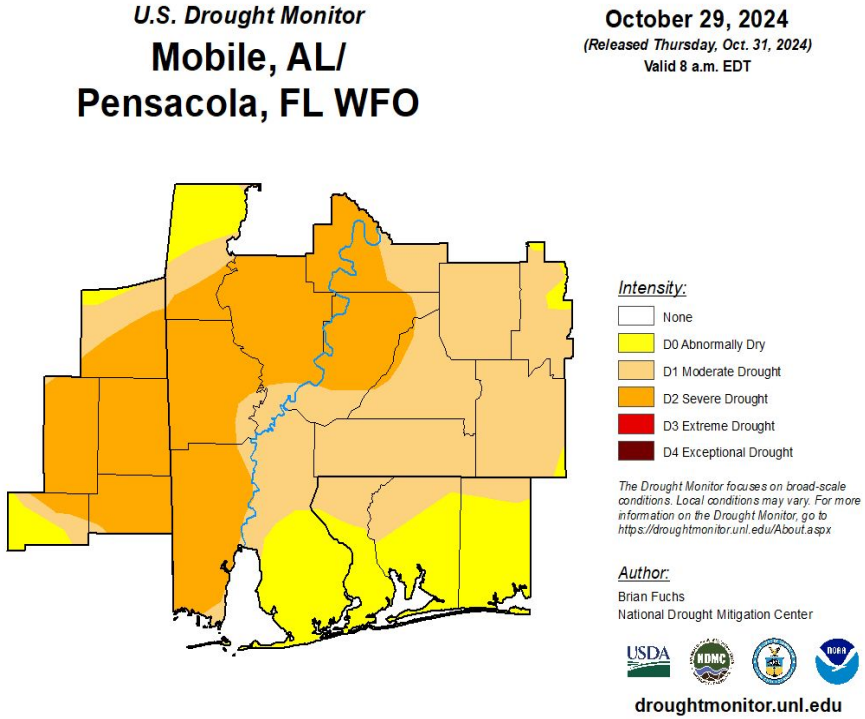
- This product will be updated November 28, 2024 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit weather.gov/mob/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit Drought Status Updates for regional drought status updates.

- DROUGHT INTENSITY INCREASES AND EXPANDS ACROSS THE CENTRAL GULF COAST
  - *Severe drought expands generally along the Alabama River and points west.*
  - *Moderate drought for much of the remainder of the local area, generally along and east of the I-65 corridor over south central AL and north of I-10 over the western FL Panhandle.*

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for the SE US and central Gulf Coast

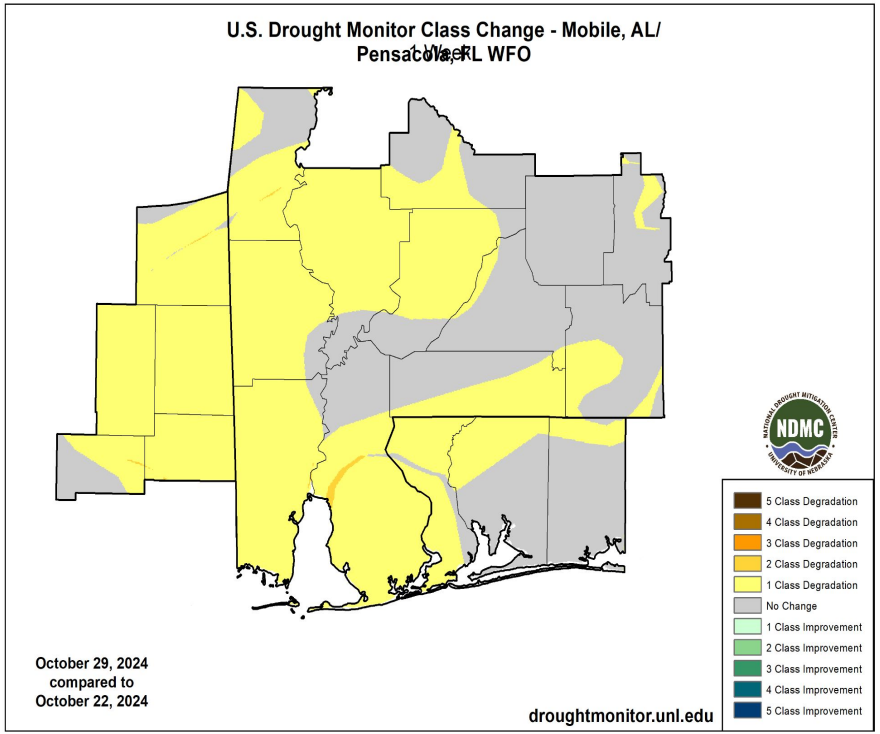
- Drought intensity and Extent
  - **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Along the AL River, southward to Mobile Co. and points west into Wayne, Perry, Greene, and George Co's. in MS.
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: In areas mainly east of I-65 over the interior of south central AL and north of I-10 over the interior of the western FL Panhandle.
  - **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: Generally along and south of I-10 over Baldwin Co. AL, eastward across the western FL Panhandle.



Recent Change in Drought Intensity

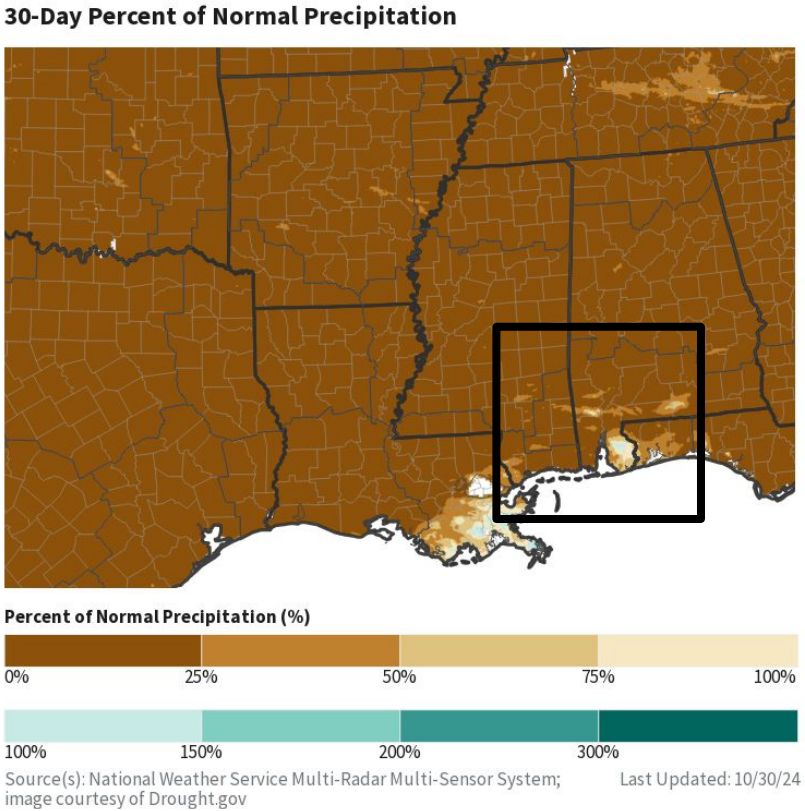
Link to the latest 1-week change map for the SE US and central Gulf Coast

- One Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
  - **Drought Worsened:** The AL River to Mobile Co. AL and points west into much of interior southeast MS saw a one class degradation in drought the past week. Much of Baldwin Co. AL northeast to near Andalusia AL in Covington Co. AL saw a one class degradation.
  - **No Change:** The remainder of the local area did not see a change in drought intensity over the past week.



Precipitation

- Over the month of October, much of the central Gulf coast saw less than 25% of normal rainfall.
- The exception was the southern half of Baldwin county AL which showed a bit more rainfall, in excess of 50% of normal October amounts as Gulf moisture interacted with a trough of low pressure near the central Gulf coast on the 4th and 5th.



Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- The US Geological Survey (USGS) indicates that flow and stage on many local area river and stream points remain below to much below normal. Rivers and streams that are experiencing below normal stages, may result in typically deeply submerged objects being likely closer to the water's surface or in some cases exposed, presenting a waterway hazard for safe recreational boating and commercial navigation.

Agricultural Impacts

- The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) indicates that topsoil moisture in the states of MS and AL has degraded to very dry levels against the 5 and 10 year means for this time of year. The longer term drought conditions though have contributed to Alabama's worst pine beetle outbreak since 2001, leading to widespread damage (Source: AL Political Reporter, Montgomery AL). Supplemental feeding initiatives are required to maintain livestock condition.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- The Alabama Forestry Commission has issued a Fire Danger Advisory for ALL counties in AL - October 30th, 2024. This advisory is effective immediately and will remain in place until enough precipitation is received to improve drought impacts. Dead pines in area forests which have been devastated by southern pine beetles over the summer are adding to the increased wildfire potential, as well as challenges to containment efforts. Over the month of October, 246 wildfires in AL have burned nearly 3000 acres. For the remainder of the local area, decayed timber and very dry underbrush in area forests along with dry grasslands will promote favorable conditions for fire growth and spread. It's also important to note that in the event of strong cold frontal passages, periods of critically low daytime humidity in combination with gusty northerly winds will bring periods of increased wildfire potential. Outdoor burning is strongly discouraged until conditions improve.

Mitigation Actions

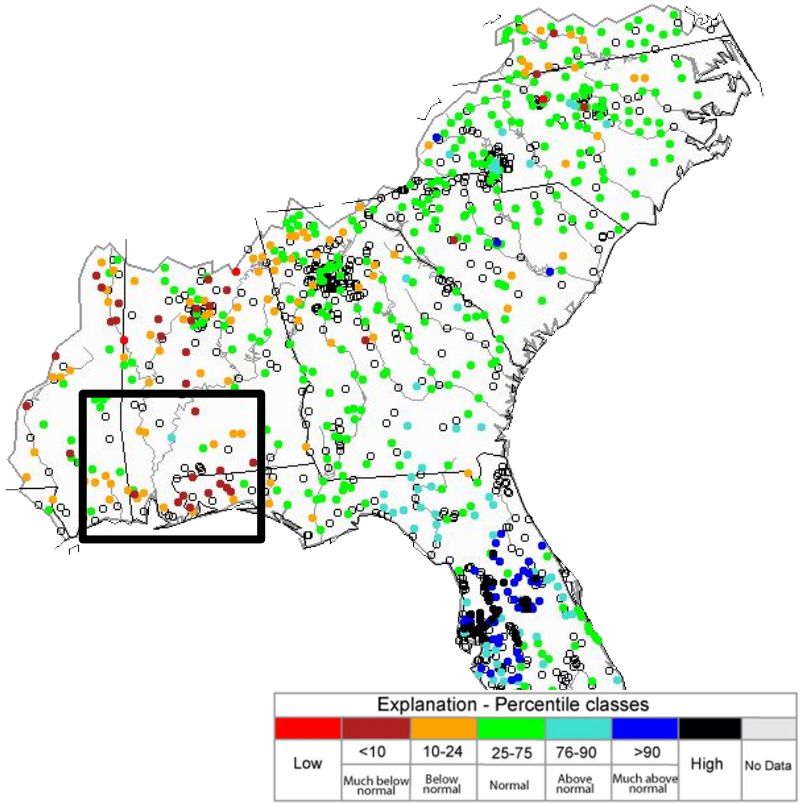
- Water conservation techniques are strongly encouraged in drought areas. Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information. Local water restriction ordinances may be in place.

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

- Several local area rivers and streams are running below to much below normal in flow and stage.
- To view the most current stages and flow for each state's, stream and river points, please visit:

MS: https://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?r=ms&m=real
AL: https://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?r=al&m=real
FL: https://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?r=fl&m=real



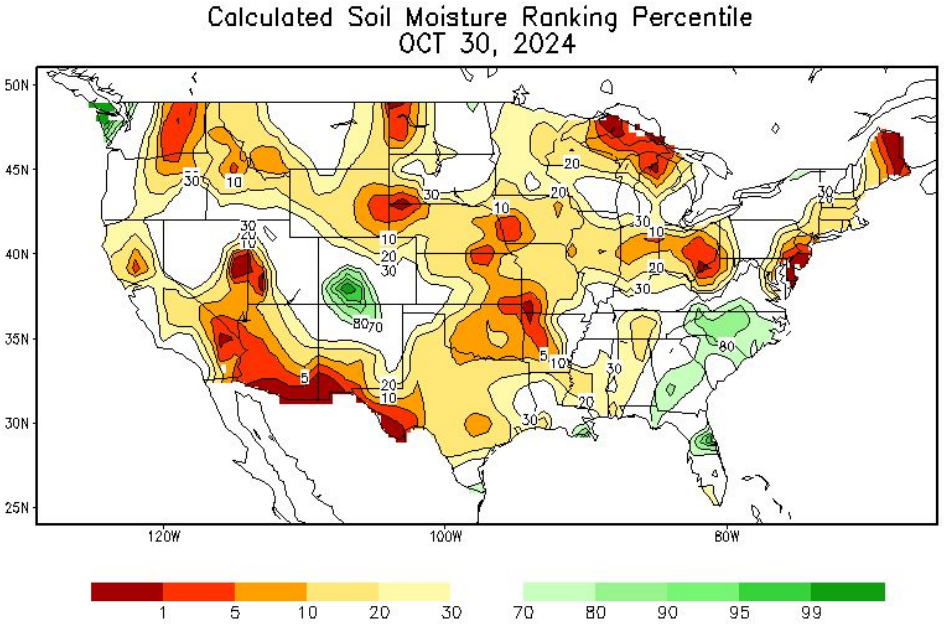
Agricultural Impacts

- Crop condition in the driest of areas is very poor. Crop disease and insect damage elevated. Pasture lands provide little to no livestock feed. Supplemental feeding is required to maintain livestock condition.

- Considering the state-wide top soil moisture metrics, the states of MS and AL are very dry versus the 5 year means:

  (Upper 6” Moisture Depth, courtesy of USDA 10/27/24).
  - MS: 83% Short to Very Short (Avg: 34.6%).
  - AL: 63% Short to Very Short (Avg: 40.0%).
  - FL: 28% Short to Very Short (Avg: 22.0%).

- **It is recommended that farmers reach out to local USDA office for details on available funding assistance.**

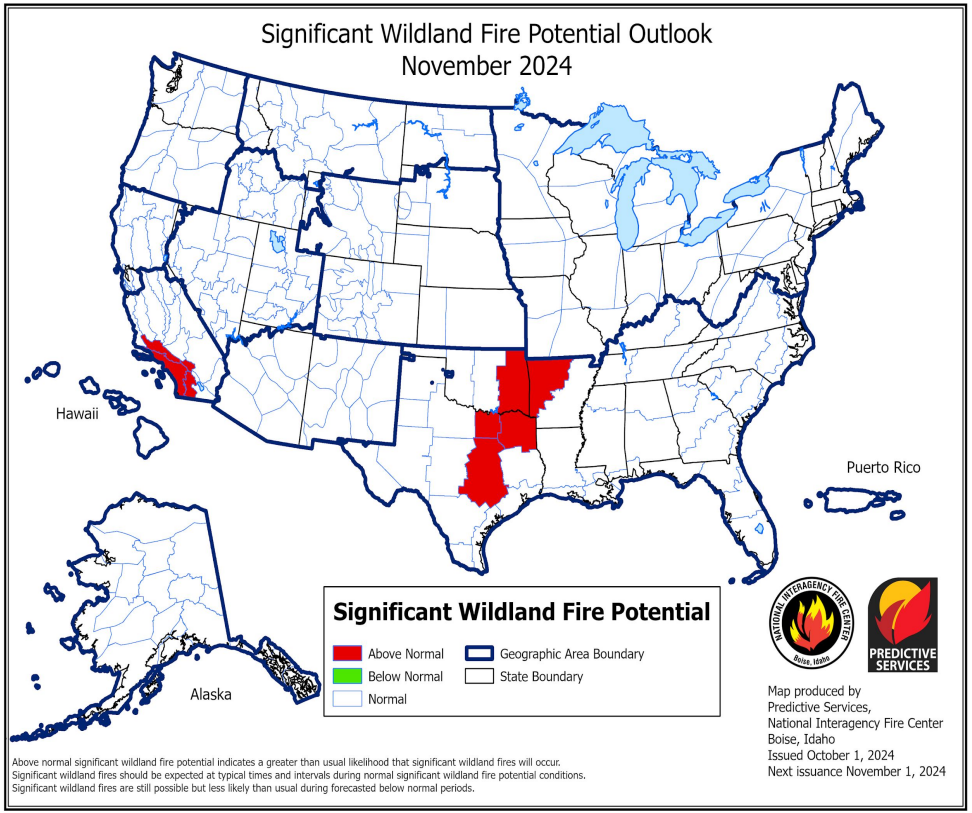


Fire Hazard Impacts

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

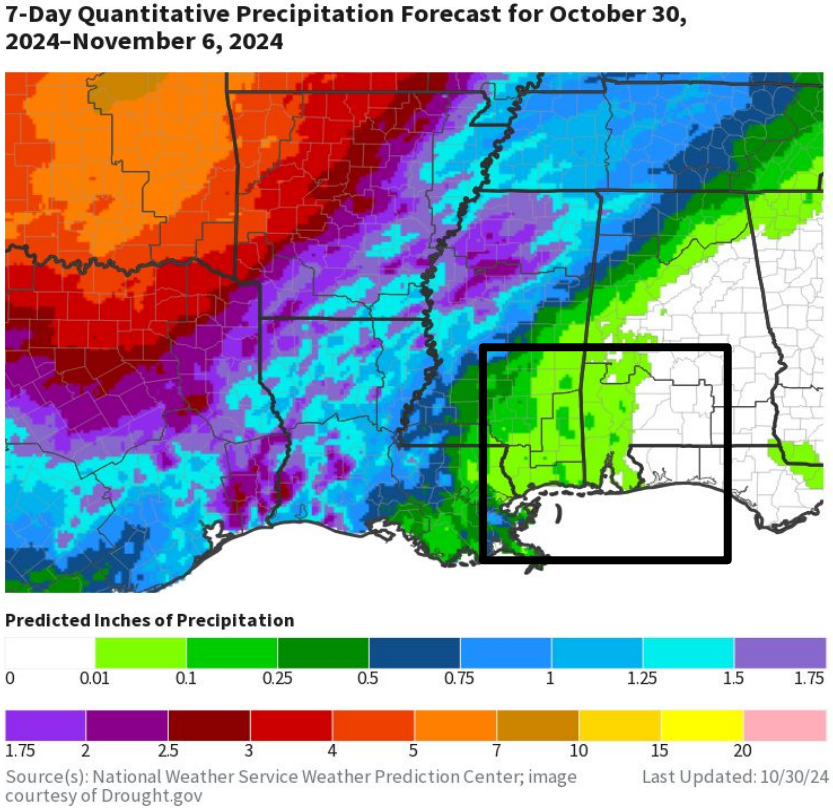
- The Alabama Forestry Commission has placed all Alabama counties are under a Fire Danger Advisory.
- Decayed timber and very dry underbrush in area forests along with dry grasslands pose an above normal risk for development and spread of fire.
- It's also important to note that in the event of strong cold frontal passages, periods of critically low daytime humidity in combination with gusty northerly winds will bring periods of increased wildfire potential.
- To view the seven day significant fire potential maps, please refer to the link above.

Latest Burn Bans and/or Advisories By State:
Mississippi and Alabama and Florida



Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

- The focus for higher rainfall amounts looks to be over the southern Plains to across the Red River Valley of TX and OK to open up the month of November.
- Only light precipitation amounts, at less than a quarter inch, are expected over the western portions of the central Gulf coast.

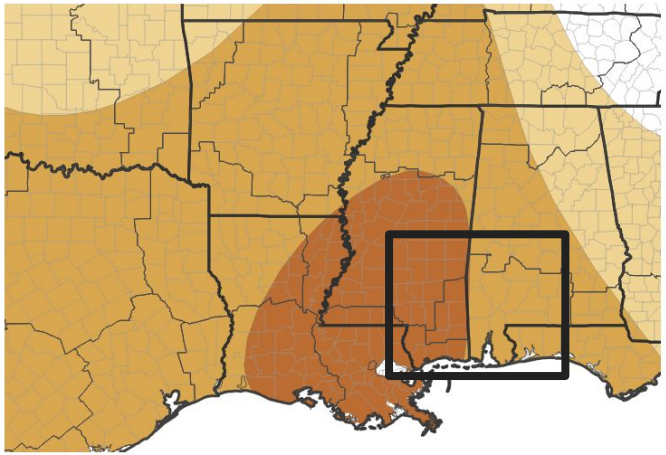


Long-Range Outlooks

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

- Above normal temperatures are favored over the deep south for November.
- News does not look good from a precipitation standpoint as there is a modest probability, 40 to 50%, that November's monthly rainfall is favored to be below normal for the central Gulf coast.

Monthly Precipitation Outlook for November 1, 2024–November 30, 2024



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

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

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

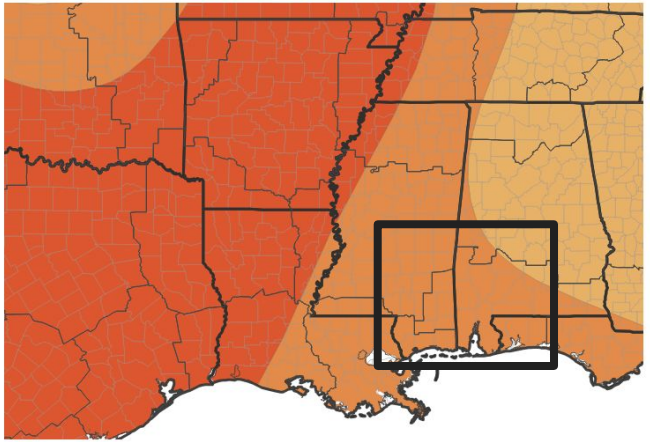
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 10/17/24

Monthly Temperature Outlook for November 1, 2024–November 30, 2024



Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures

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

Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures

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

Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures

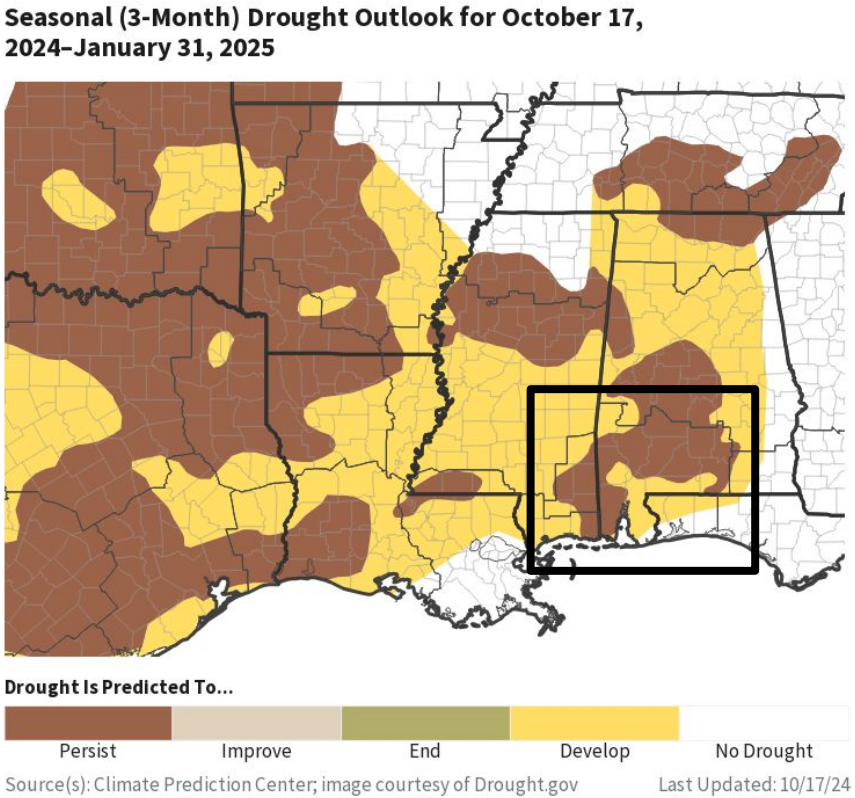
33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 10/17/24

Drought Outlook

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

- The seasonal drought outlook to close out 2024 and opening up the new year 2025 favors drought to persist over a large portion of the central Gulf coast.



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