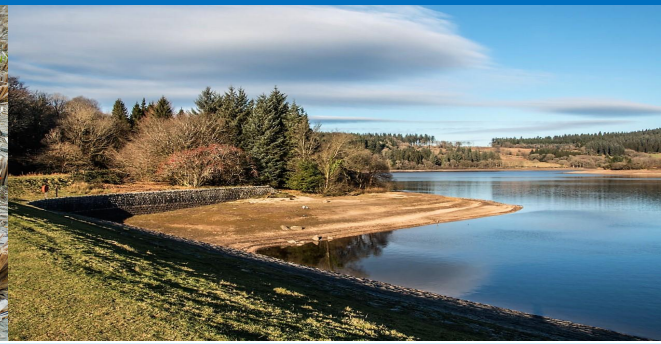
Drought Information Statement for North and Central Georgia

Valid December 14, 2023

Issued By: NWS Atlanta / Peachtree City, GA

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

- This product will be updated on/around December 28, or sooner if conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/ffc/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.

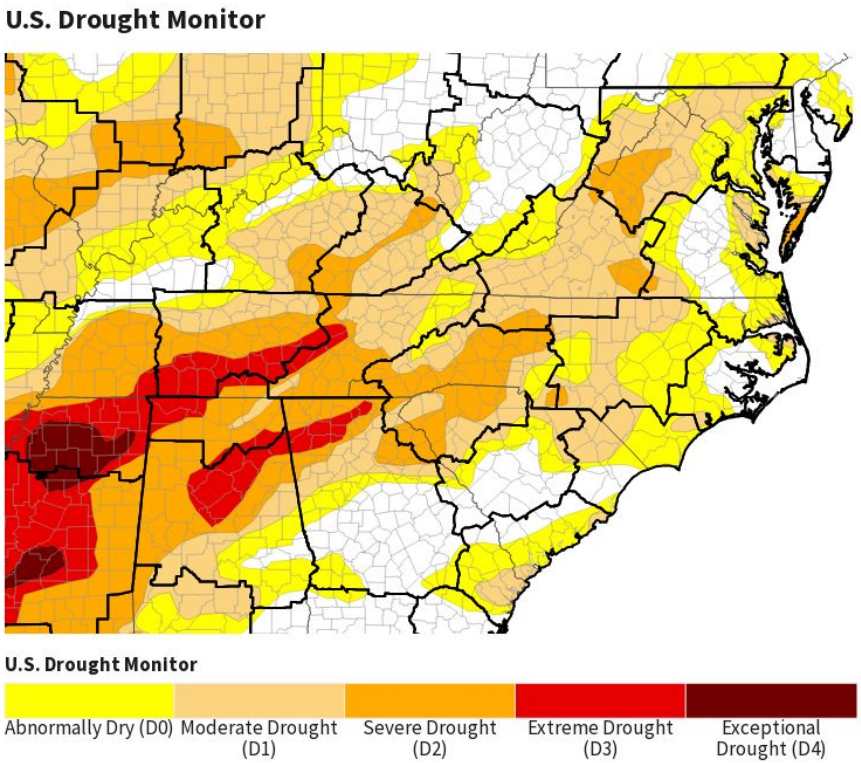


U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for Georgia

- Short-Term Extreme Drought over north Georgia improved in the last two weeks, dropping from 15.0% of the area to 6.3%.

- Drought intensity and extent for north and central GA
  Counties listed under most significant drought category.
  - **D4 (Exceptional Drought)**: None
  - **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Murray, Fannin, Gilmer, Union, Chattooga, Floyd, Gordon, Pickens, Bartow, and Cherokee counties
  - **D2 (Severe Drought)**: Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Towns, Dawson, Lumpkin, White, Polk, Paulding, Cobb, Hall, Banks, Barrow, Jackson, Madison, Haralson, Oconee, Clarke, Oglethorpe and Wilkes counties
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Forsyth, Gwinnett, Carroll, Douglas, Fulton, DeKalb, Walton, and Heard counties
  - **D0: (Abnormally Dry):** Coweta, Fayette, Clayton, Spalding, Henry, Rockdale, Newton, Morgan, Greene, Taliaferro, Troup, Meriwether, Chattahoochee, Marion, Schley, Stewart, Webster, Sumter, Telfair, Wheeler, Montgomery, Toombs and Emanuel counties

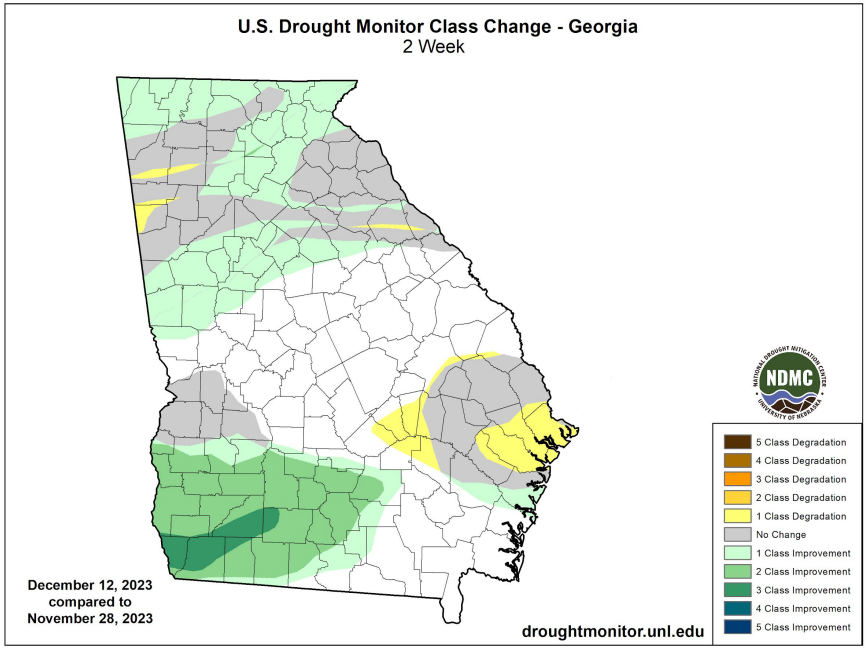


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest 2-week change map for Georgia

Two-Week Drought Monitor Class Change for North and Central Georgia

- **Drought Worsened**
  - Despite recent rainfall, some isolated pockets of the area saw degradations, including near Rome, Buchanan, Washington and Lumber City.
- **Drought Improved** or Remained Steady
  - Sufficient rainfall over north Georgia led to a one category improvement or steady drought conditions over a majority of north Georgia and along the western state border.

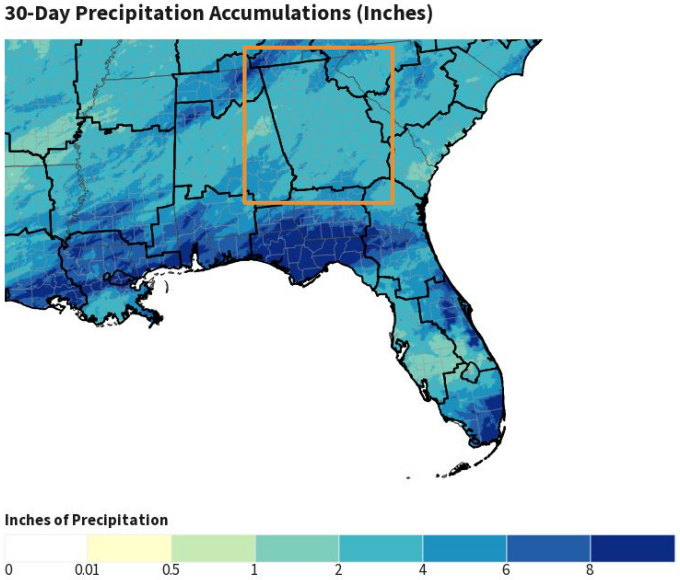


Precipitation - Past 30 Days

Although meaningful precipitation has occurred in the last week, generally below normal precipitation has occurred over over north and central Georgia in the last 30 days. Widespread rainfall amounts of 2 to 4 inches were common (50 to 90 percent of normal precipitation), except over far northwest and east central Georgia where rainfall amounts of 2 to 6 inches occurred (100-200 percent of normal).

30-day rainfall totals
(compared to normal):

Rome (**RMG**): 3.29” (71%)
Atlanta (**ATL**): 1.78” (44%)
Gainesville (**GVL**): 3.37” (79%)
Athens (**AHN**): 2.17” (56%)
Peachtree-DeKalb (**PDK**): 2.45” (60%)



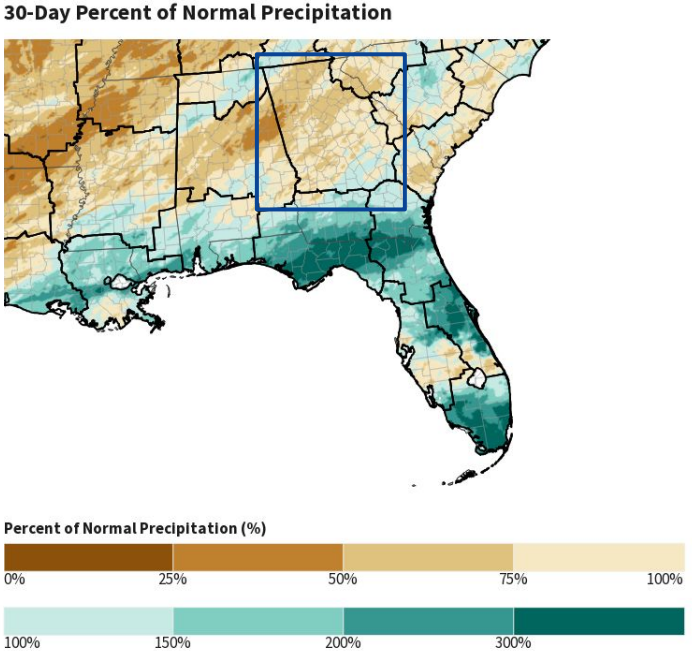


Image Captions:
Left - Precipitation Amount for Georgia
Right - Percent of Normal Precipitation for Georgia
Data Courtesy High Plains Regional Climate Center.
Data over the past 30 days ending December 13, 2023

Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Recent rainfall has allowed streamflows to rebound, with 7-day averages below normal to normal. Reservoirs remain below normal, but have seen improvements in the last week and are largely on target for this time of year (Lake Lanier is one exception, currently down about seven feet from seasonal guide). See next slide for more details.

Agricultural Impacts

- Please see the latest Georgia Crop Progress and Condition Report (Next update not until the end of December.)
- Good rainfall amounts in the last week helped replenish and improve water resources and soil moisture over the state. At last update, farmers were reporting fair pasture conditions, supplemental feeding of livestock, but some green up of fields with the recent rain. Although soil moisture has been slow to show much recovery, the recent Lawn and Garden Index is showing an improving trend.

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Wildfire activity has subsided somewhat, but several counties and park areas continue their burn bans. See slide 9 for more details.

Other Impacts

- There are no known impacts at this time

Mitigation Actions

- Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information.

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

Main Takeaways

- An active weather pattern last weekend produced 1 to 3.5 inches of rain over the area, with the heaviest amounts largely in the driest (*most-needed*) areas of the state. This rainfall produced improved streamflows in the upper Coosa, Chattahoochee and Savannah River basins. The 7-day average streamflow (right) for these areas are now *normal*.

- Below normal conditions persist in the Coosa, central Flint, and lower Savannah River Basins, with normal conditions elsewhere.

- Lake and Reservoir levels have improved, with many reservoirs now at or above seasonal targets. Lake Lanier, although one foot higher than this time last week, is still approximately seven feet lower than typical for December.

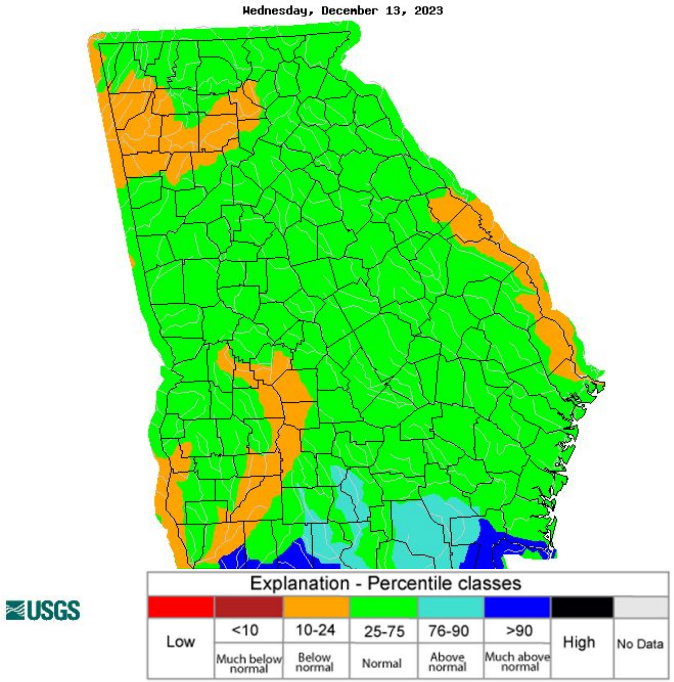
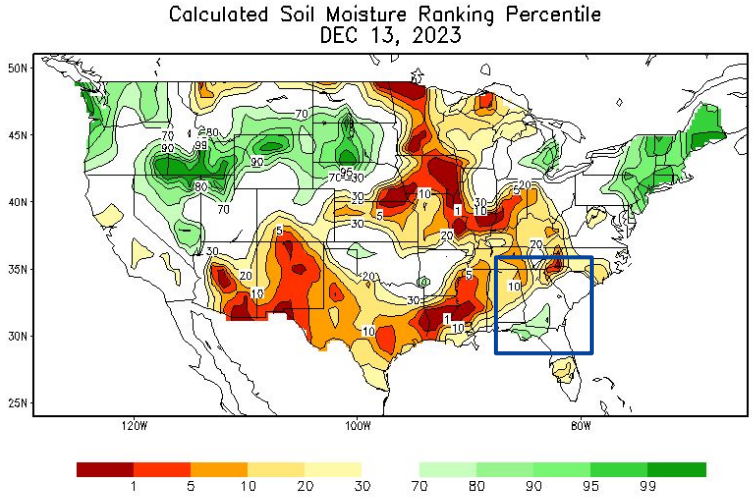


Image Caption: USGS 7 day average streamflow HUC map valid December 13, 2023.

Agricultural Impacts

- The Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile (below) shows dry to near-normal rankings as of December 13, 2023.
- Of the nine crop divisions (right), the northeast Georgia Crop Moisture Index is Abnormally Dry. North central Georgia is Abnormally Wet, and the remainder of the state is near normal – an improvement over the last two weeks. This index focuses on the shallow soil profile and responds more quickly to recent rainfall.



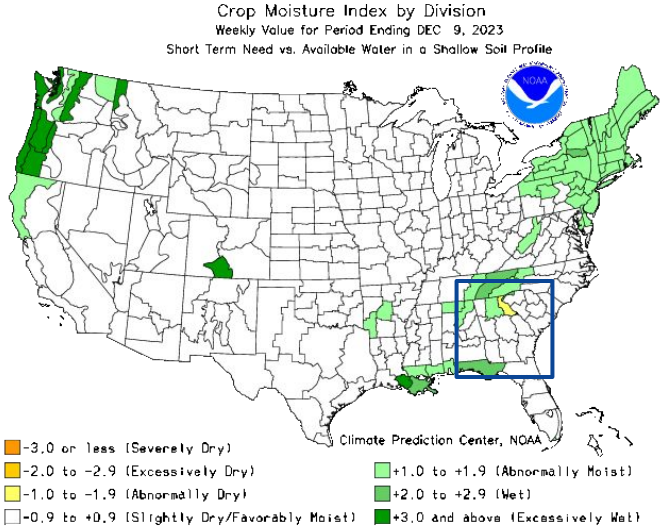
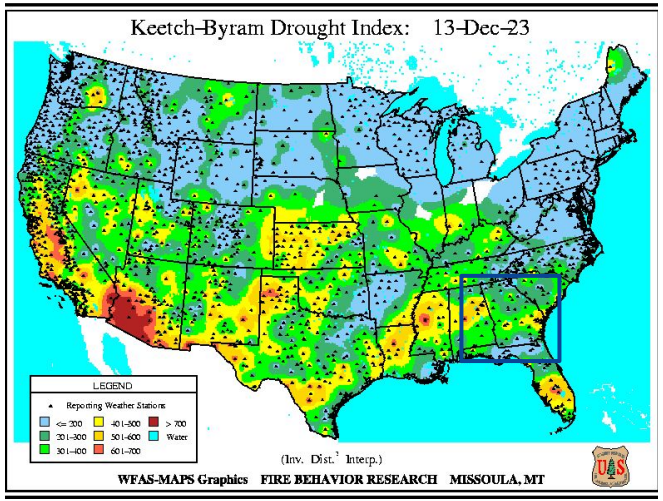


Image Captions:
Left: CPC Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile (data 1932-2000) valid December 13, 2023
Right: Crop Moisture Index by Division. Weekly value for period ending December 9, 2023

Fire Hazard Impacts

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

- Keetch Byram Drought Index values have remained dropped below 400 nearly statewide, with a few pockets of less than 300 over far north Georgia.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for Georgia is normal for December (far right).
- The NWS Atlanta office is wrapping up the routine fire season support, but continues to provide weather information for more-than-typical requests for wildfire events. Many north Georgia localities continue burn bans and increased outreach efforts.



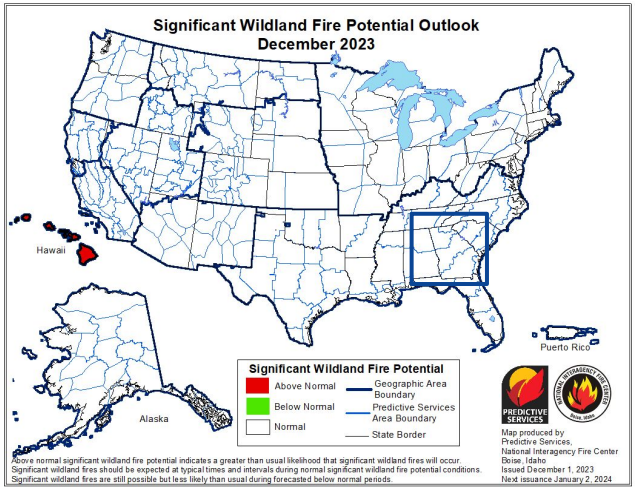
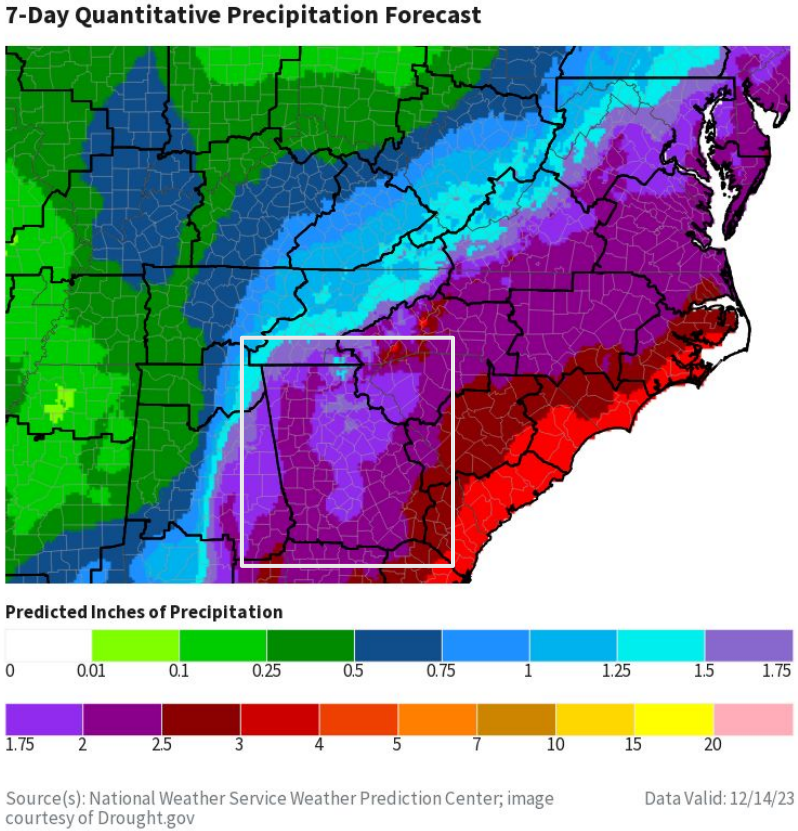


Image Captions:
Above: Significant Wildland Fire Potential Monthly Outlook for December 2023
Left: Keetch Byram Drought Index for December 13, 2023

Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

The 7-day outlook (through 7am Thu, Dec 21):

- A low pressure system will produce a tight gradient of rainfall over Georgia Sunday into early Monday.
  - Amounts of 1.5 to 3 inches are expected at this time.
  - There is still some uncertainty in the western extent of the heaviest rainfall amounts.
- Otherwise, dry conditions are expected Tuesday through Thursday.

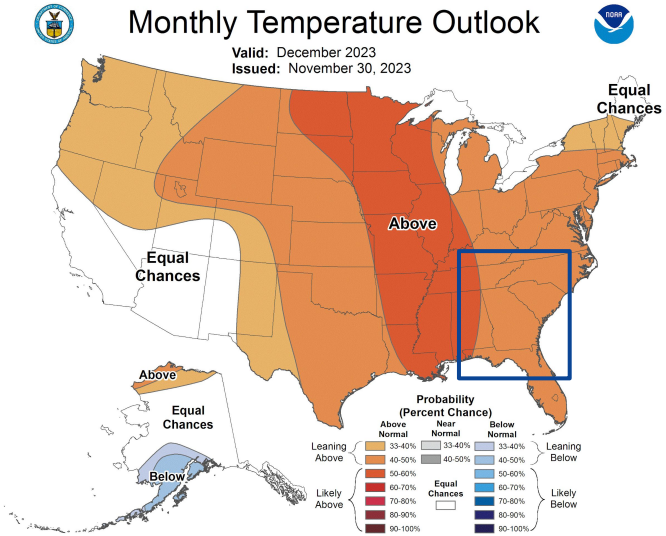


Long-Range Outlooks

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

For **December**:

- Above normal temperatures are expected
- Above normal rainfall is expected



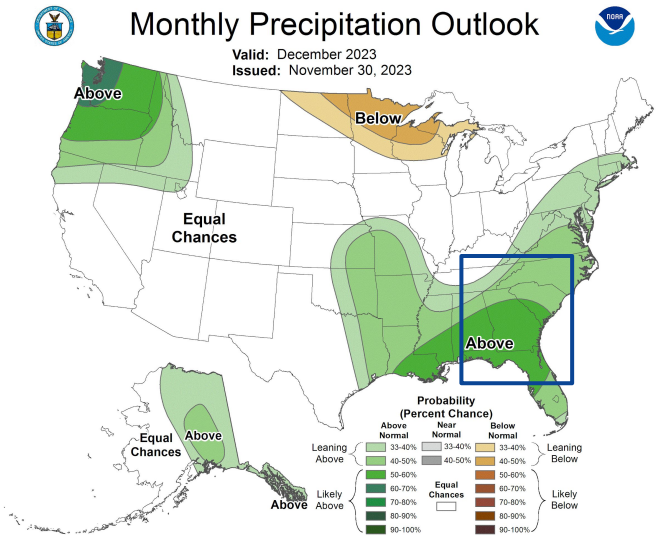
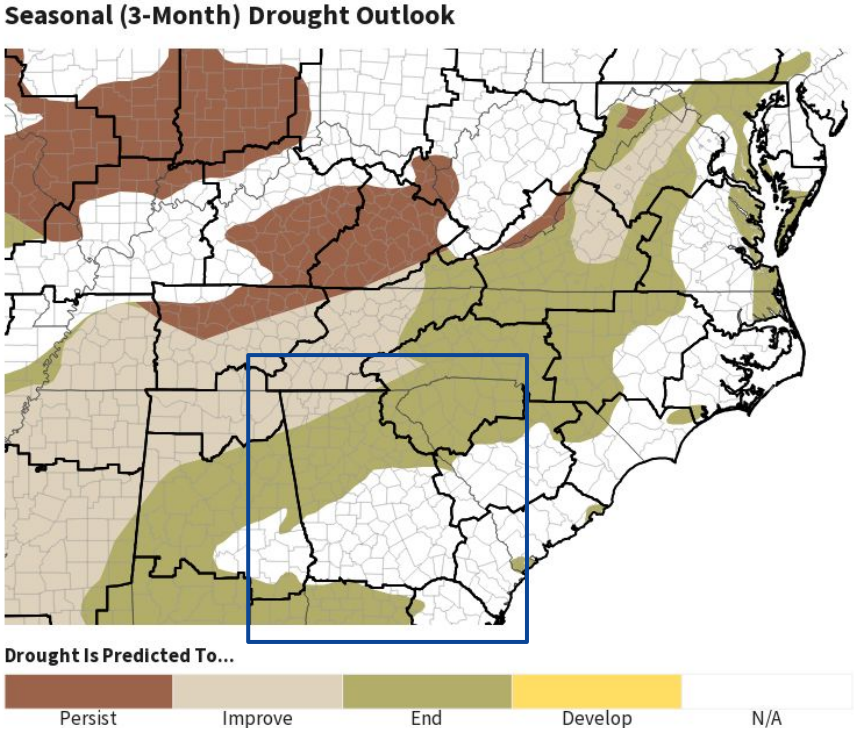


Image Captions:
Left - [Climate Prediction Center Monthly Temperature Outlook.]
Right - [Climate Prediction Center Monthly Precipitation Outlook.]
Valid December 2023, issued November 30, 2023

Drought Outlook

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

- Drought is expected to end over much of the state through the winter months.
- In this same time, drought will improve over far north and northwest Georgia, although it may not be entirely eliminated.



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