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

Valid 09/19/2024

Issued By: WFO Mobile/Pensacola

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

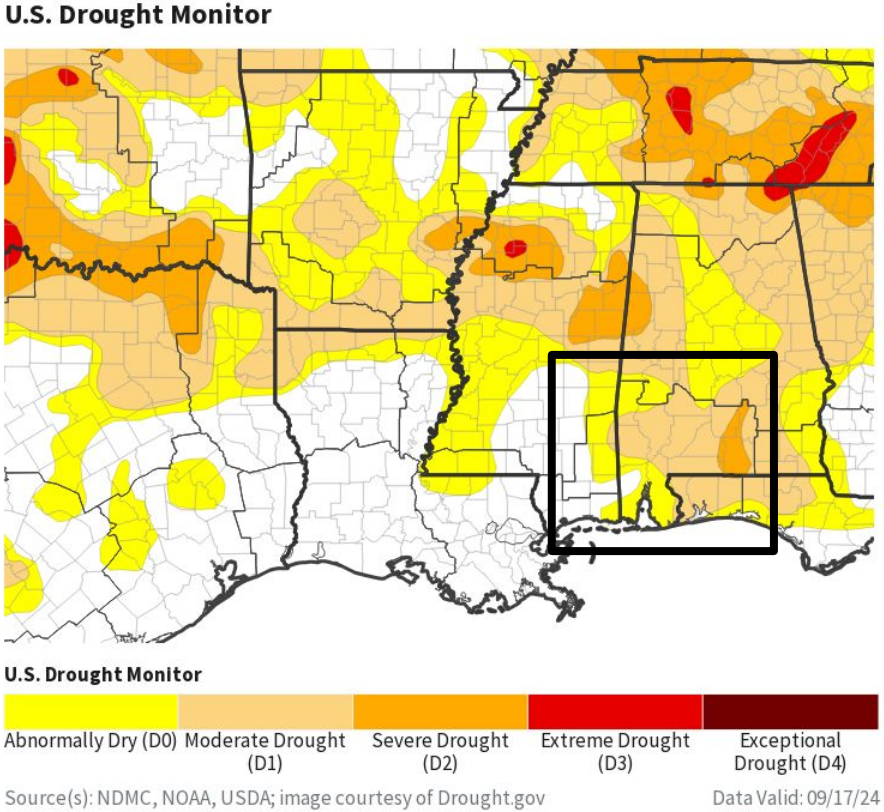
- This product will be updated September 26, 2024 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit weather.gov/mob/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit Drought Status Updates for regional drought status updates.

- GRIP OF DROUGHT LESSENS OVER CENTRAL GULF COAST
  - *Severe drought has decreased in areal coverage, but remains in place over a small portion of southwest AL.*
  - *Moderate drought has decreased in areal coverage, moving out of much of the interior of southeast MS, coastal southwest AL and portions of the interior of extreme southwest AL. Moderate drought remains in place elsewhere.*

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)**: Much of Covington AL. County border areas of Escambia, Conecuh, Butler and Crenshaw Co's. in AL.
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought)**: Much of the remainder of southwest AL and the western FL Panhandle.
  - **D0: (Abnormally Dry)**: Northern Choctaw Co., much of Mobile and Baldwin Co's in AL. Portions of interior southeast MS and a small portion of coastal Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Co's in FL.

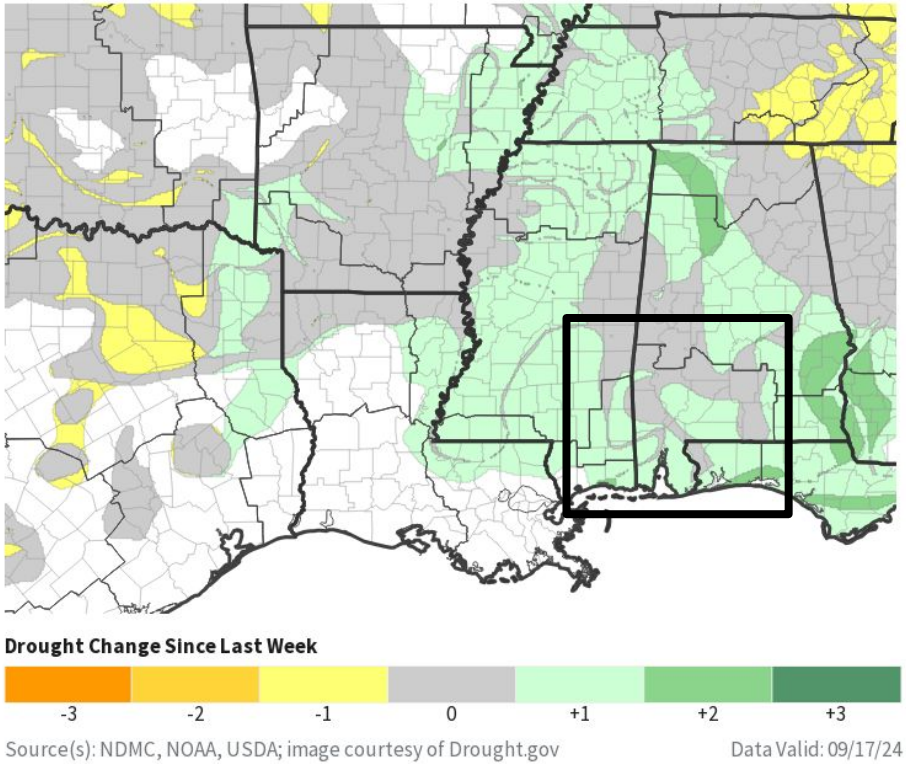


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

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

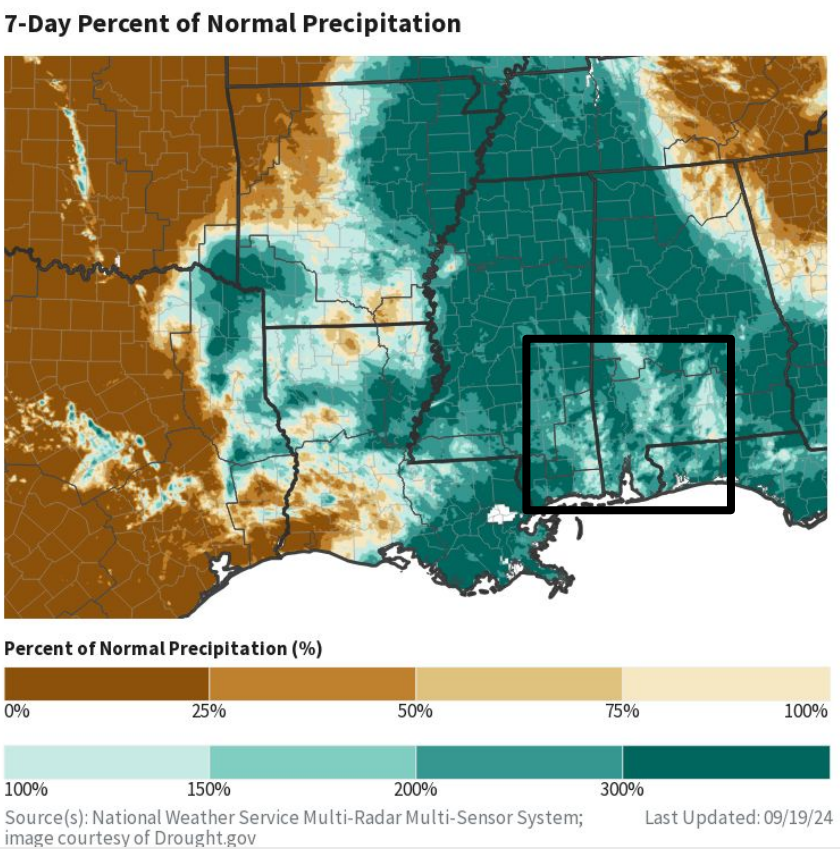
- One Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
  - **Drought Improved:** A one class improvement has occurred over much of the central Gulf coast area. Coastal Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Co's in FL experienced a two class improvement.

U.S. Drought Monitor 1-Week Change Map



Precipitation

- Over the past week, much of the local area has received from 100 to 300% of normal rain for the September 12th to 19th time frame.



Summary of Impacts

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

Hydrologic Impacts

- Due to recent above to well above normal rainfall over the past week, the US Geological Survey (USGS) indicates that flow and stage on much of the local area river and stream points are at normal, or in some cases at much above normal levels.

Agricultural Impacts

- The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) indicates that topsoil moisture in the state of AL remains short. Although AL did see a statewide improvement over the past week, the state remains drier than the 5 and 10 year means for this time of year. Drought conditions 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

- Data from the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) Predictive Services Unit indicates the most significant wildland fire potential will be focused over the Mid-South to across northern AL into the upcoming month of October. 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.

Mitigation Actions

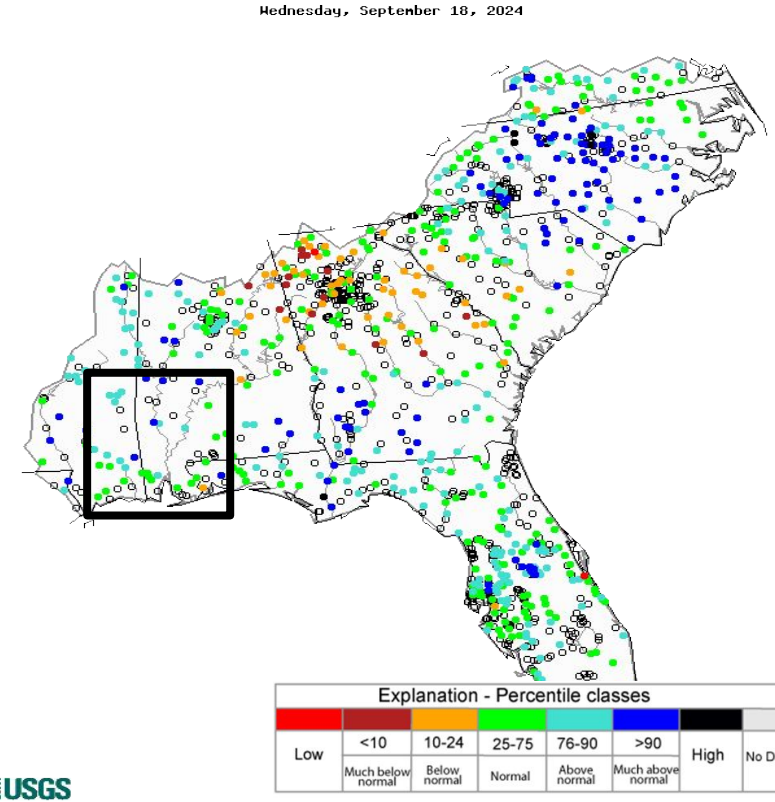
- Water conservation techniques are strongly encouraged in drought areas. Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information. Local water restriction ordinances may be in place.

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

- Much of the local area rivers and streams are seeing normal, to in some cases much above normal flow and stages.

- 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

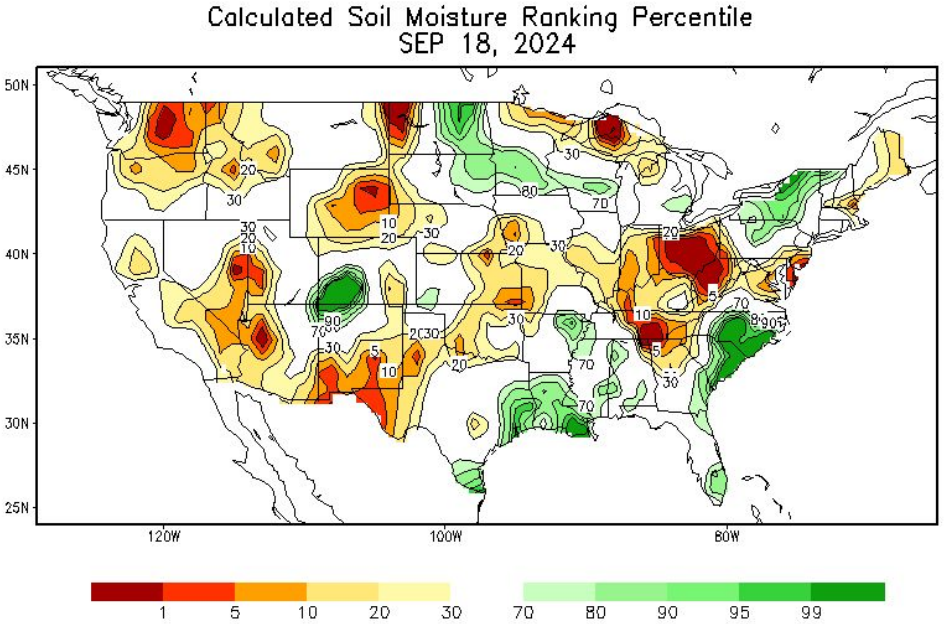
- Crop condition in the driest of areas is very poor. Crop disease and insect damage elevated. Pasture lands provide little to no livestock feed. Supplemental feeding is required to maintain livestock condition.

- Leading to very poor crop condition is the short to very short subsoil moisture being drier than normal.

- The latest state-wide top soil moisture metrics vs 5 year means:

  (Upper 6” Moisture Depth, courtesy of USDA 09/15/24).
  - MS: 18% Wetter than Normal (Avg: 51.6%).
  - AL: 52% Very Dry (Avg: 30.0%).
  - FL: 9% Wetter than Normal (Avg: 13.6%).

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

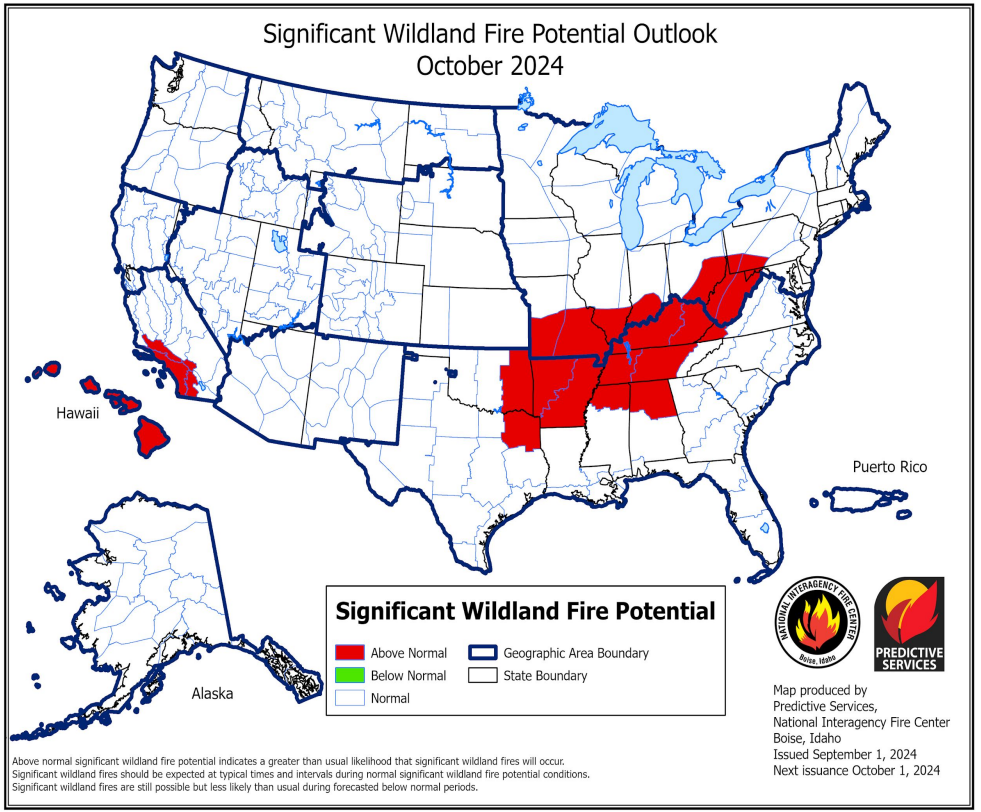


Fire Hazard Impacts

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

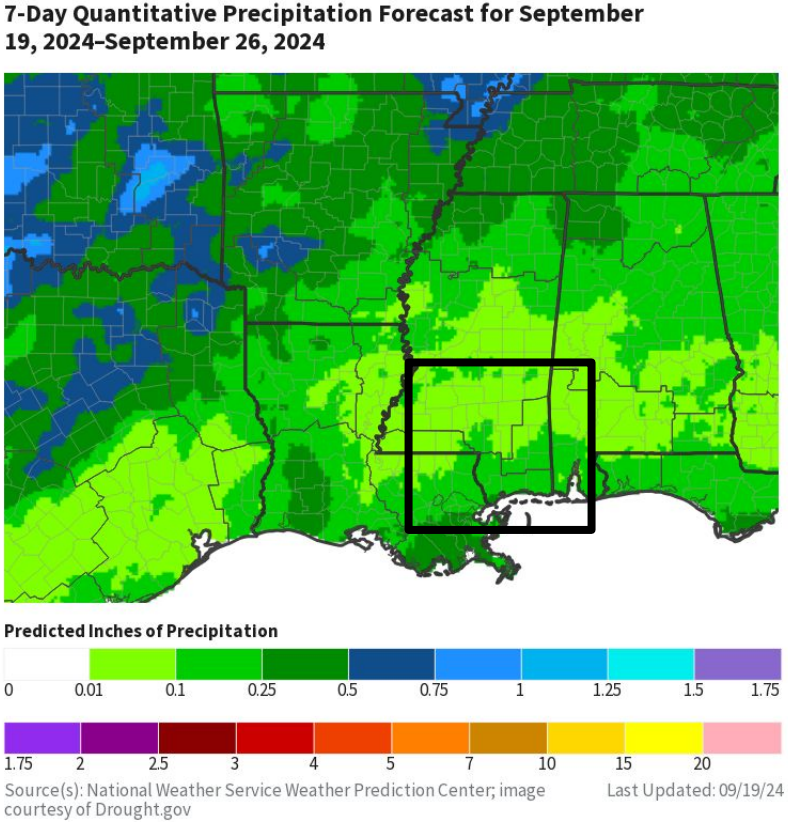
- Decayed timber and very dry underbrush in area forests along with dry grasslands pose an above normal risk for development and spread of fire.
- It's also important to note that in the event of strong cold frontal passages, periods of critically low daytime humidity in combination with gusty northerly 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

- Central Gulf Coast rainfall over the next week is anticipated to be light, at generally less than a quarter inch.

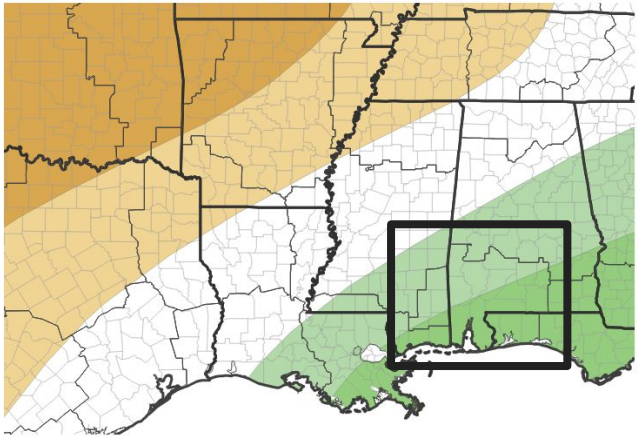


Long-Range Outlooks

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

- A look at the October outlook for temperature is favored to see equal chances of above or below normal numbers. In the precipitation department, amounts are favored to lean above normal for the central Gulf Coast.

Monthly Precipitation Outlook for October 1, 2024–October 31, 2024



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

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

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

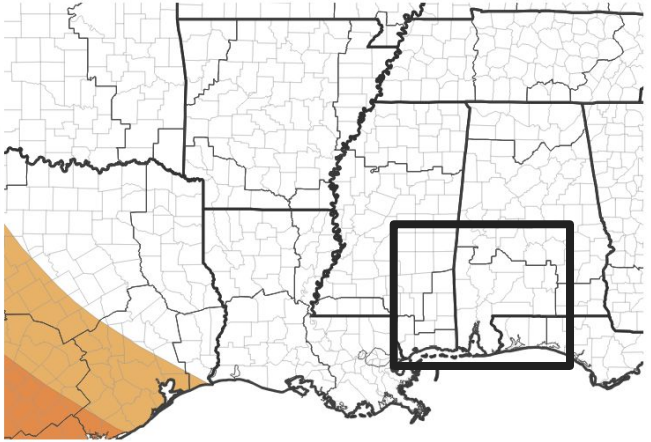
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 09/19/24

Monthly Temperature Outlook for October 1, 2024–October 31, 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%

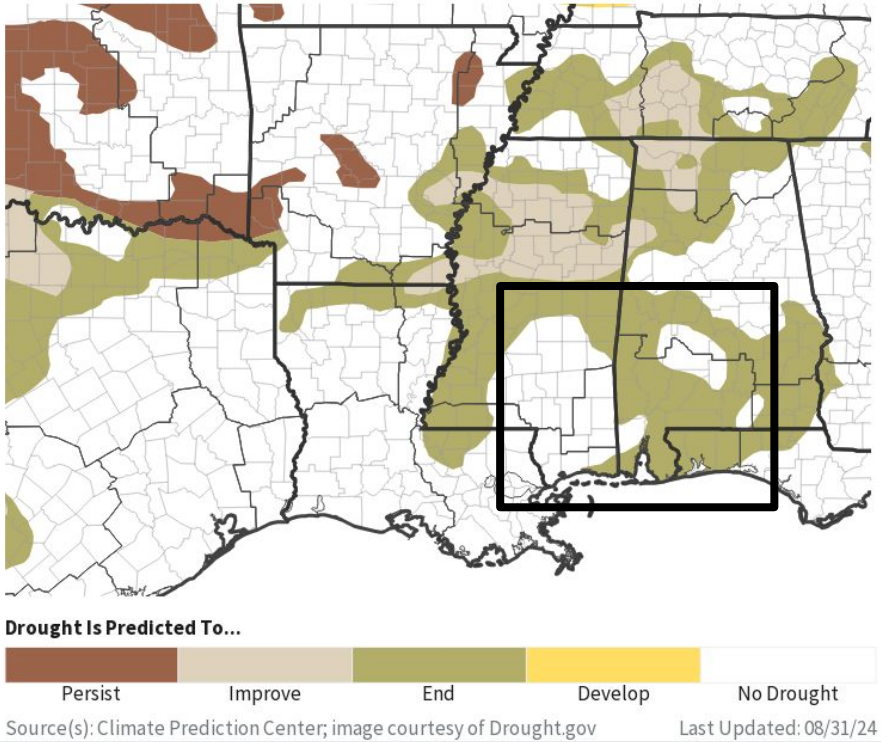
Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 09/19/24

Drought Outlook

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

- The expectation of above normal rainfall suggests that this occurrence of drought will be of short duration.

1-Month Drought Outlook for September 1, 2024–September 30, 2024



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