

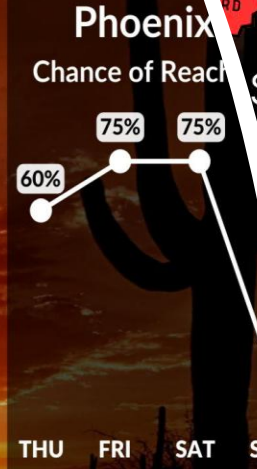
Record-breaking heat wave

March 2026

# Record Setting March Heat

Record shattering high temperatures continue into the weekend

	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
Phoenix	105°	106°	106°	102°	101°	102°
Scottsdale	96°	96°	97°	94°	93°	96°
Mesa	105°	107°	105°	101°	97°	99°
Tempe	98°	99°	102°	98°	96°	97°
Glendale	106°	107°	106°	102°	102°	101°
Peoria	96°	98°	100°	96°	93°	96°
Chandler	105°	107°	106°	101°	101°	102°
Avondale	95°	97°	95°	93°	91°	93°

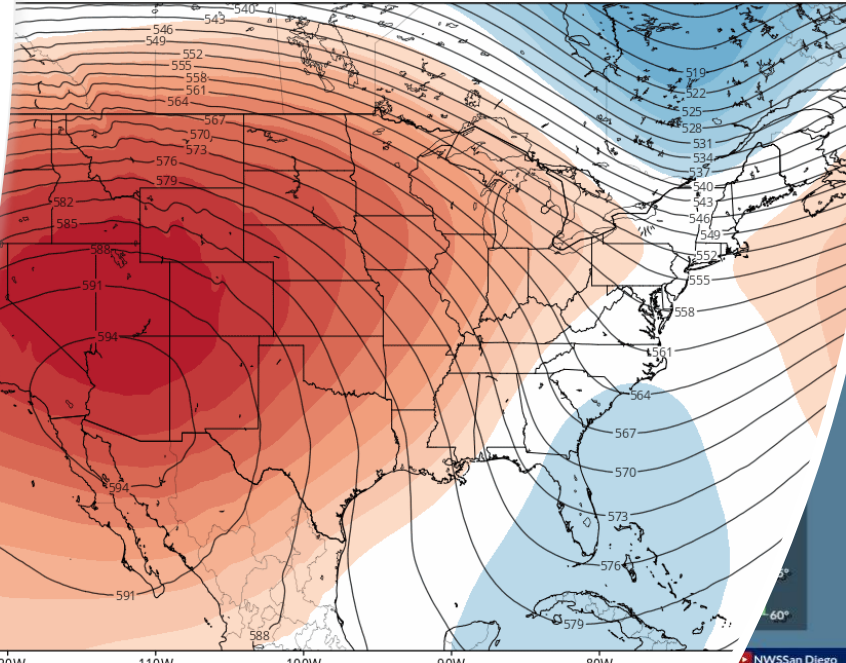


March 18, 2026

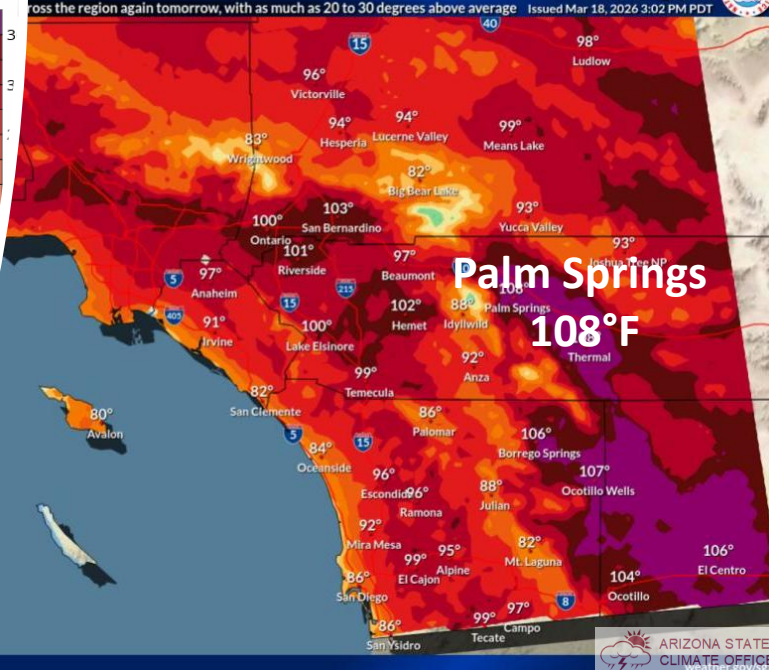
Phoenix	102°F	Casa Grande	99°F
Scottsdale	100°F	Gila Bend	101°F
Mesa	100°F	Globe	94°F
Super Valley	100°F	Yuma	103°F
Goodyear	100°F	El Centro	103°F

NWS PHOENIX

potential Height & Anomaly (dam) (based on CFSR 1981-2010 Climatology)

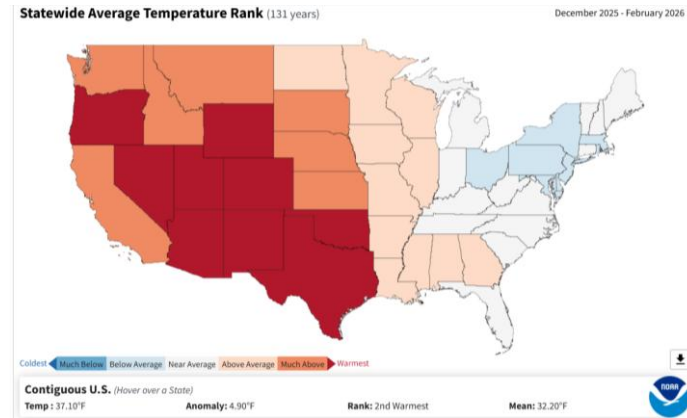


Temperatures for Thursday



# Arizona hottest winter on record

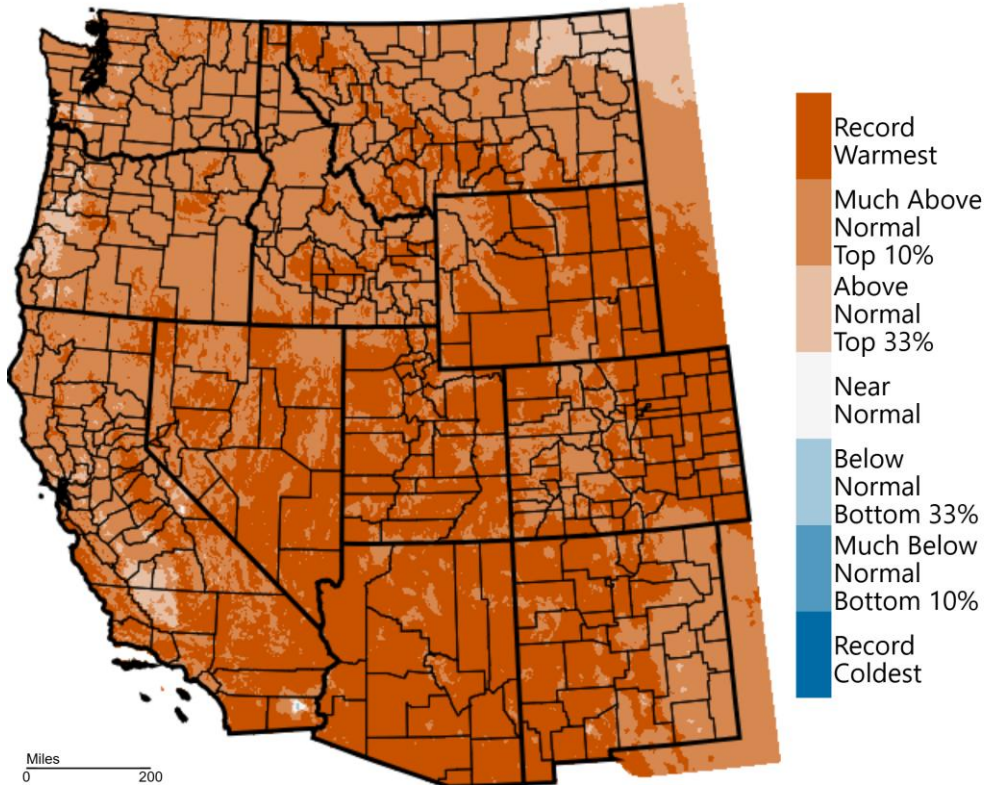
preliminary NOAA data as of 3/9/2026



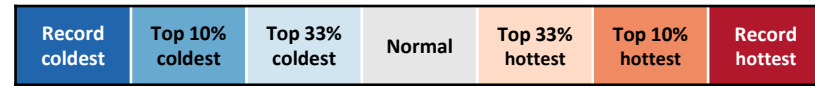
Some stations w/  
hottest winter on  
record (2025-26)

Las Vegas  
Phoenix  
Palm Springs  
Salt Lake City  
preliminary NOAA data as  
of 3/10/2026

## Western United States - Mean Temperature December 2025 - February 2026, Percentile

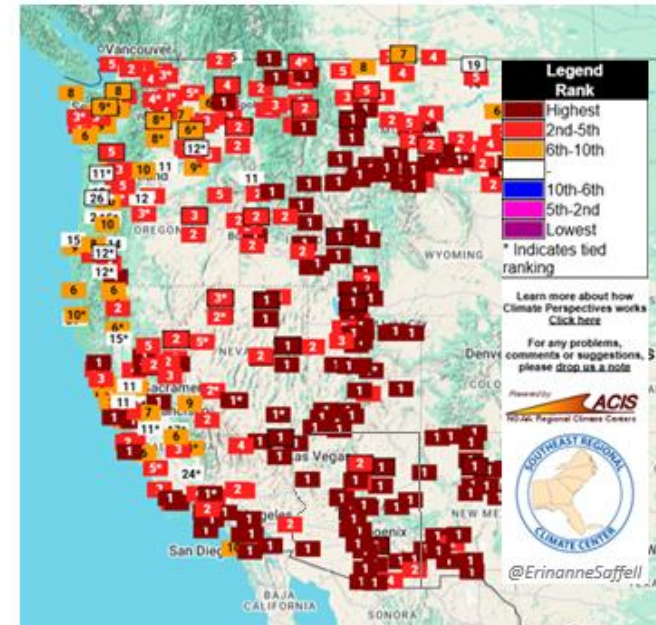


Rankings (1895-2026)



## Average Mean Temperature

December 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026



Miles  
0 200

WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Mar 2026

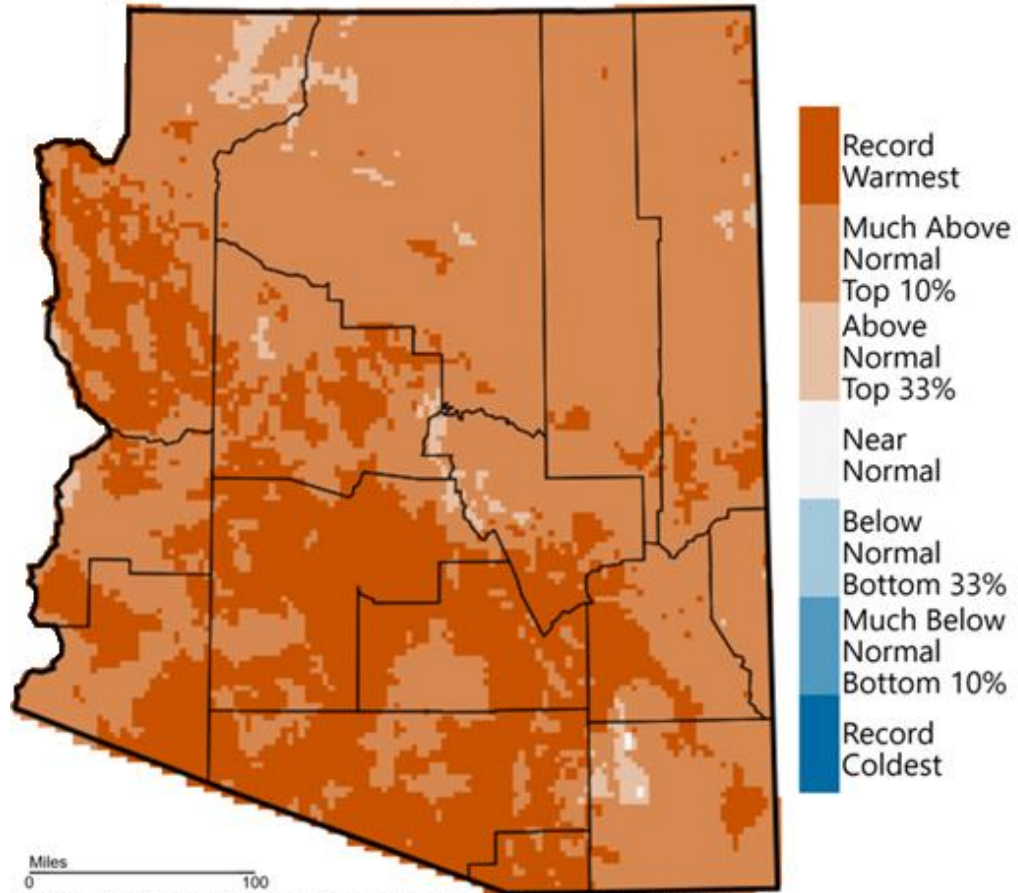
## Every AZ county had their hottest winter on record

preliminary NOAA data as of 3/9/2026

# February 2026: hottest

Temp: 52.1°F Rank: hottest Anomaly: +7.1°F

## Arizona - Mean Temperature February 2026, Percentile



WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine. Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Mar 2026

Rankings (1895-2026)

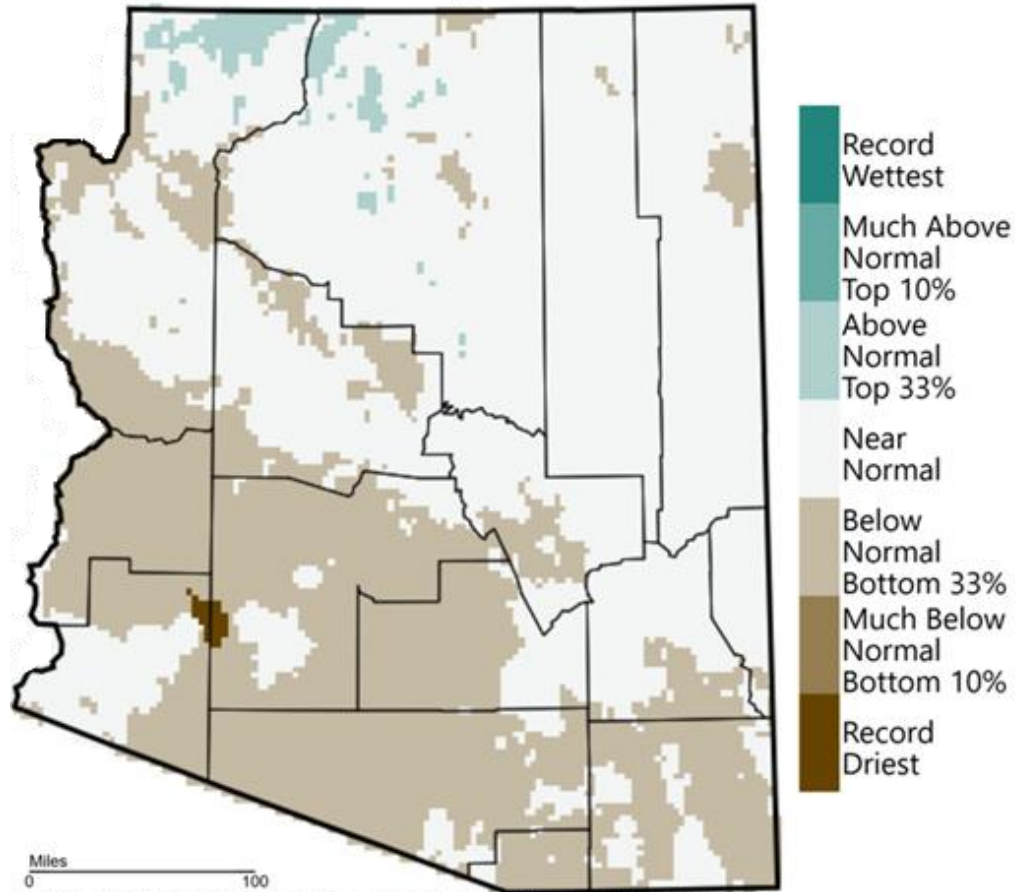
Flagstaff 5<sup>th</sup> hottest (tie) February  
Phoenix hottest February  
Tucson hottest February

Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/16/26

# February 2026: drier

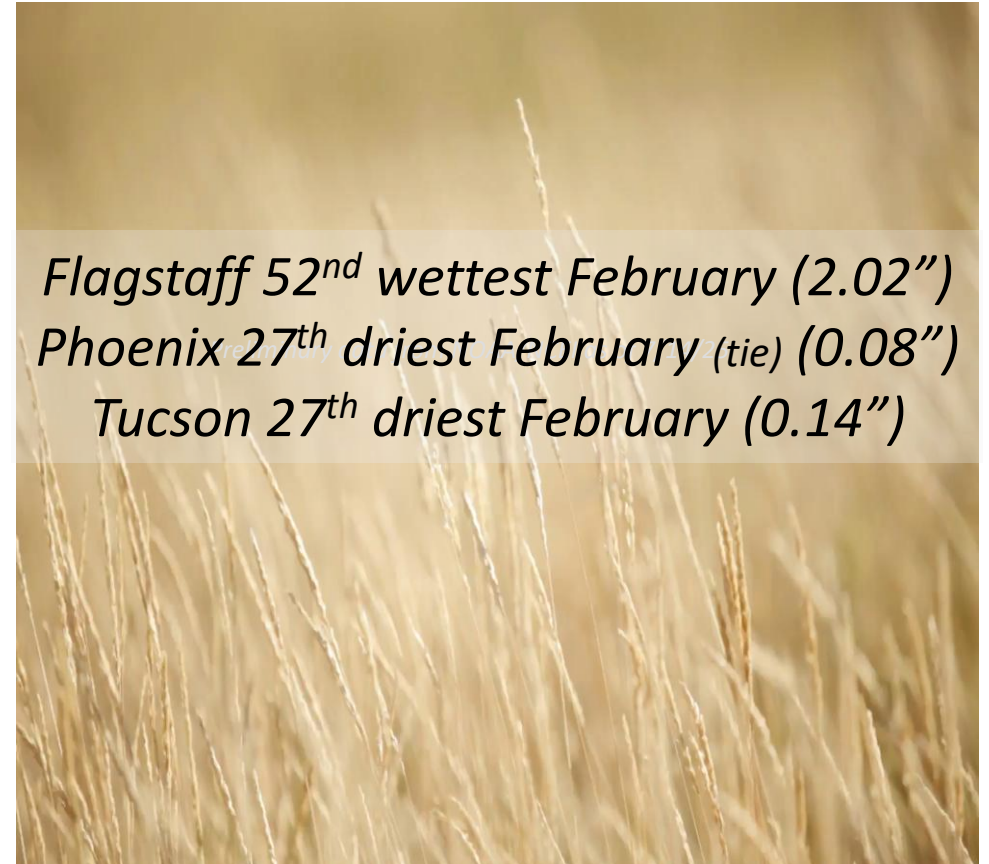
Total: 0.68" Rank: 52<sup>nd</sup> driest Anomaly: -0.40"

## Arizona - Precipitation February 2026, Percentile



WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine. Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Mar 2026

Rankings (1895-2026)



Flagstaff 52<sup>nd</sup> wettest February (2.02")  
Phoenix 27<sup>th</sup> driest February (tie) (0.08")  
Tucson 27<sup>th</sup> driest February (0.14")

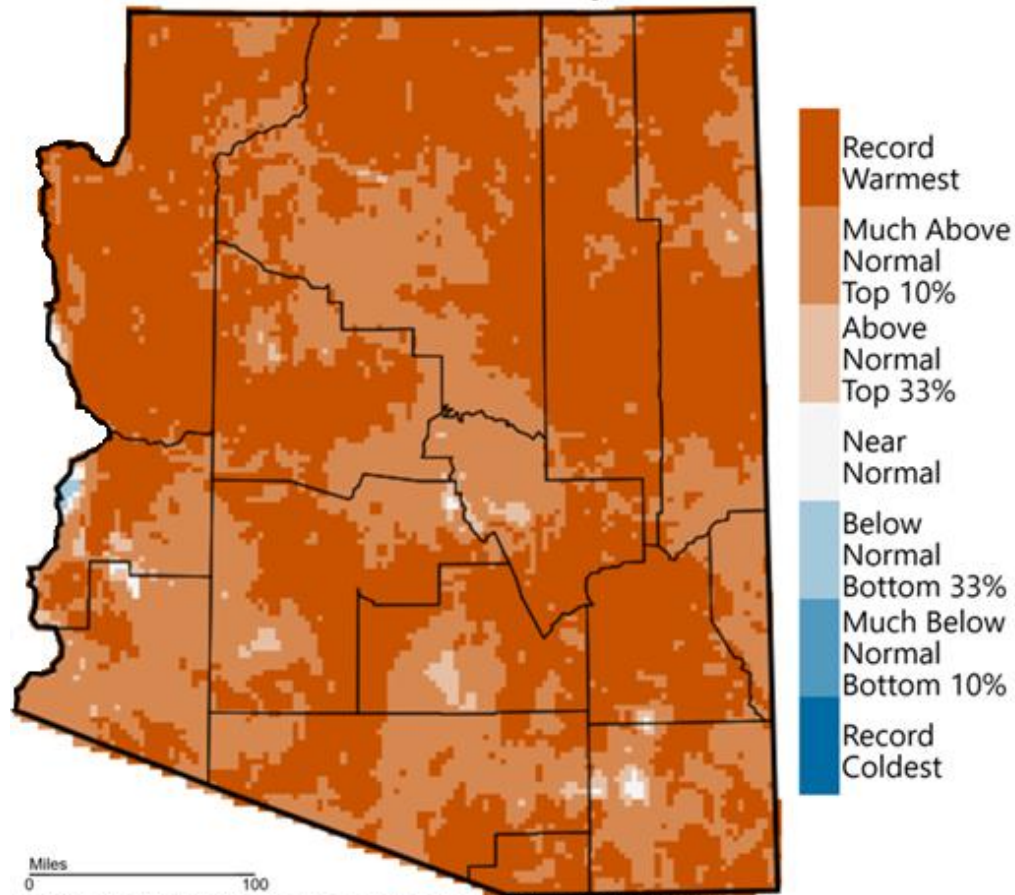
Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/16/26

2<sup>nd</sup> hottest? Mar 2017-Feb 2018

# Last 12 months: hottest

Temp: 63.4°F Rank: hottest Anomaly: +4.1°F

**Arizona - Mean Temperature**  
March 2025 - February 2026, Percentile



Rankings (1895-2026)

## Monthly Average Temperature March 2025 – February 2026

Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/9/26

Month	Rank
March 2025	31 <sup>st</sup> hottest (tie)
April 2025	38 <sup>th</sup> hottest (tie)
May 2025	32 <sup>nd</sup> hottest (tie)
June 2025	17 <sup>th</sup> hottest
July 2025	24 <sup>th</sup> hottest (tie)
August 2025	2 <sup>nd</sup> hottest
September 2025	27 <sup>th</sup> hottest
October 2025	20 <sup>th</sup> hottest (tie)
November 2025	4 <sup>th</sup> hottest (tie)
December 2025	Hottest
January 2026	7 <sup>th</sup> hottest (tie)
February 2026	Hottest

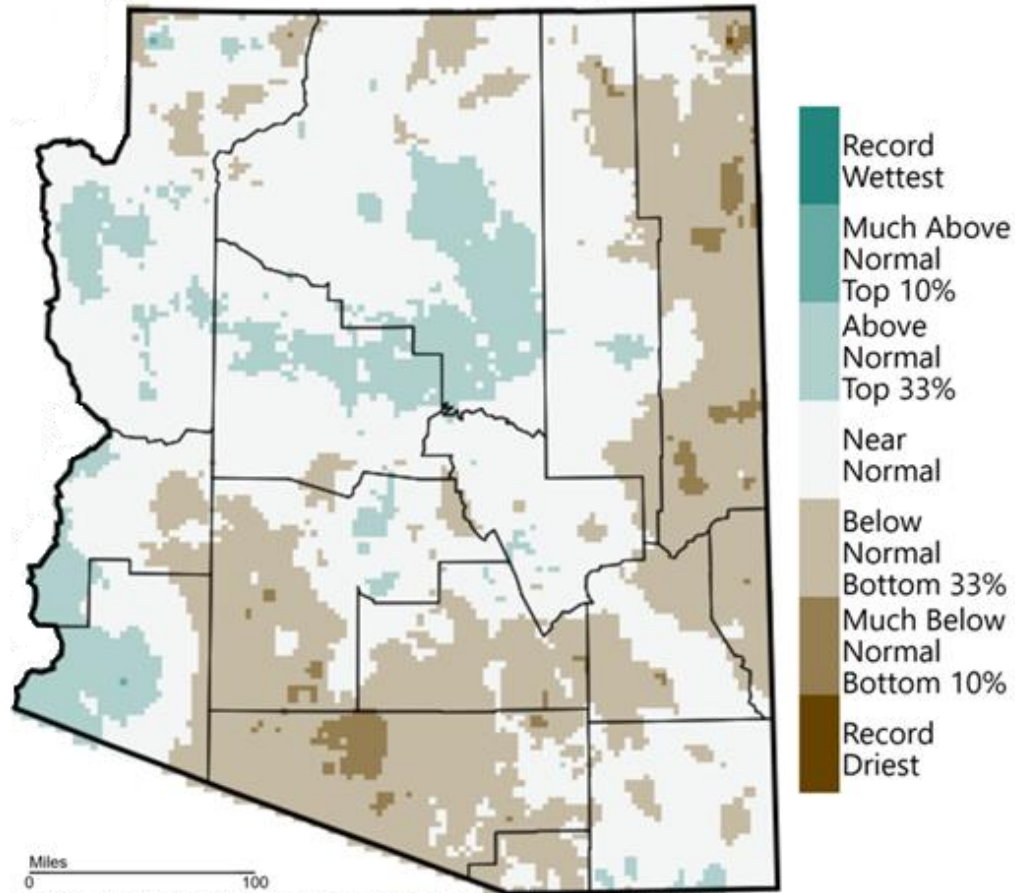
Record coldest	Top 10% coldest	Top 33% coldest	Normal	Top 33% hottest	Top 10% hottest	Record hottest
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WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine. Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Mar 2026

# Last 12 months: drier

Total: 11.12" Rank: 56<sup>th</sup> driest Anomaly: -1.48"

## Arizona - Precipitation March 2025 - February 2026, Percentile



Rankings (1895-2026)

### Monthly Precipitation

March 2025 – February 2026

Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/9/26

Month	Rank
March 2025	57 <sup>th</sup> wettest
April 2025	54 <sup>th</sup> driest (tie)
May 2025	38 <sup>th</sup> wettest
June 2025	20 <sup>th</sup> wettest (tie)
July 2025	14 <sup>th</sup> driest
August 2025	11 <sup>th</sup> driest
September 2025	24 <sup>th</sup> wettest (tie)
October 2025	20 <sup>th</sup> wettest
November 2025	21 <sup>st</sup> wettest
December 2025	30 <sup>th</sup> driest
January 2026	66 <sup>th</sup> wettest
February 2026	52 <sup>nd</sup> driest

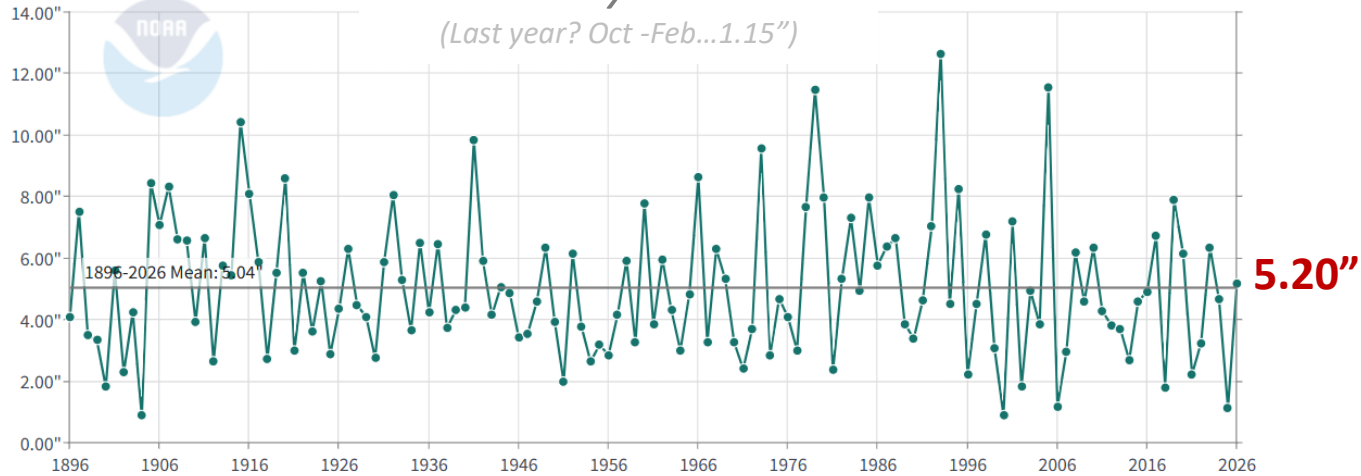
WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine. Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Mar 2026

# Wet Fall 2025 started Water Year 2026

Water Year runs from Oct 1- Sep 30 and is how US and Canada manage water supply

**WY2026 Oct-Feb:**  
**Statewide Total: 5.20"**  
**Rank: 56<sup>th</sup> wettest**  
**Anomaly: +0.16"**  
*(Last year? Oct -Feb...1.15")*

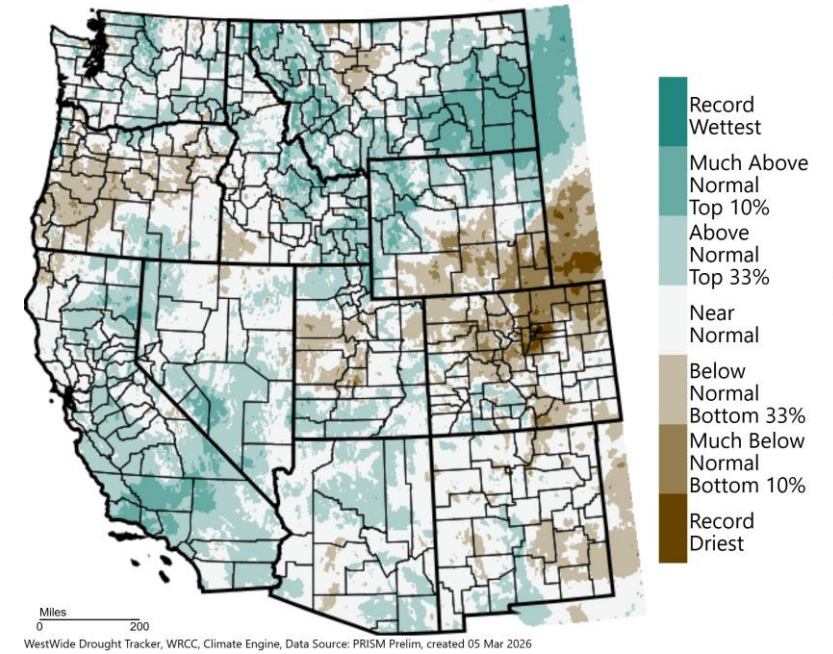
**Arizona Precipitation**  
 October-February



*Long-term average Oct-Feb: 5.04"*  
*1994-2026 average Oct-Feb: 4.57"*  
*Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/10/26*

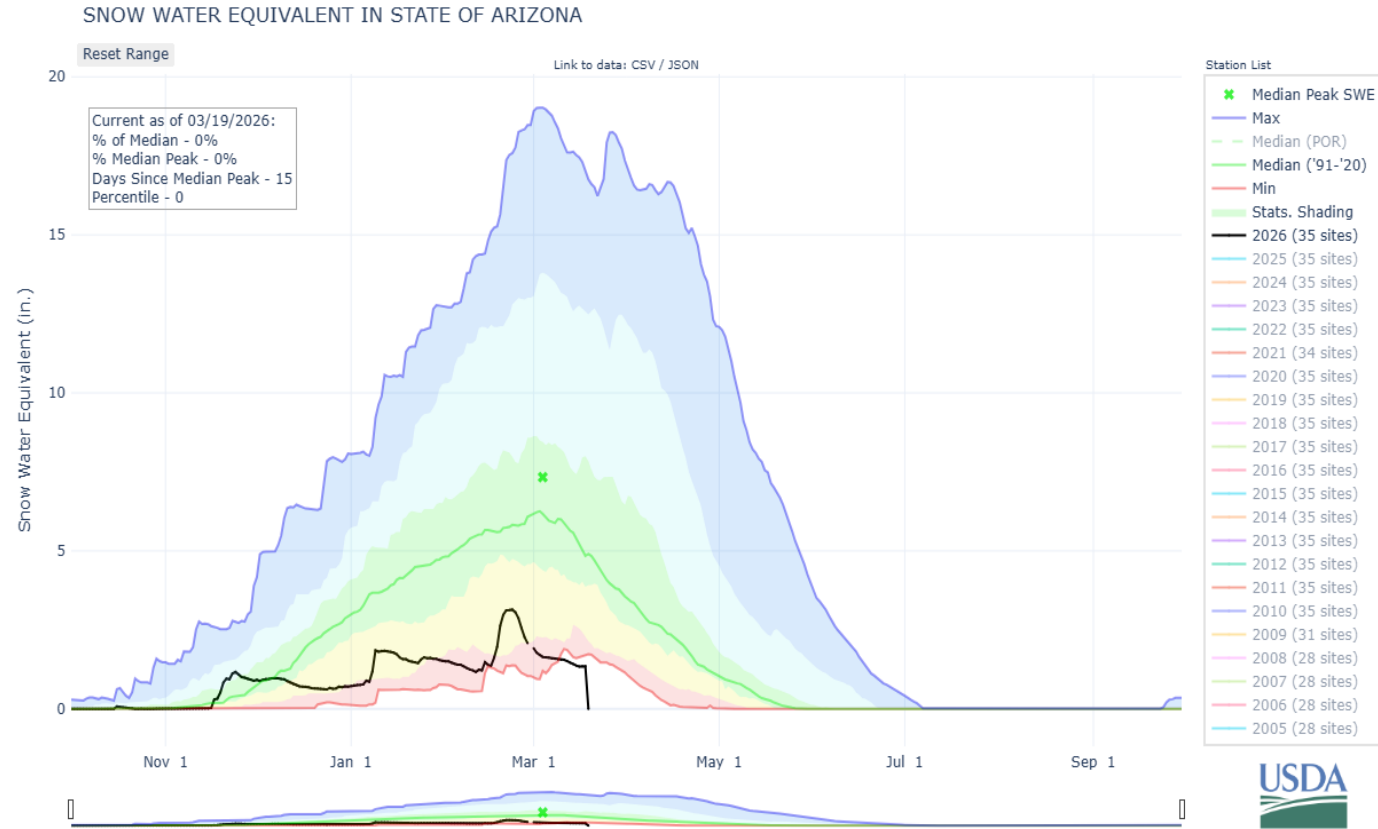
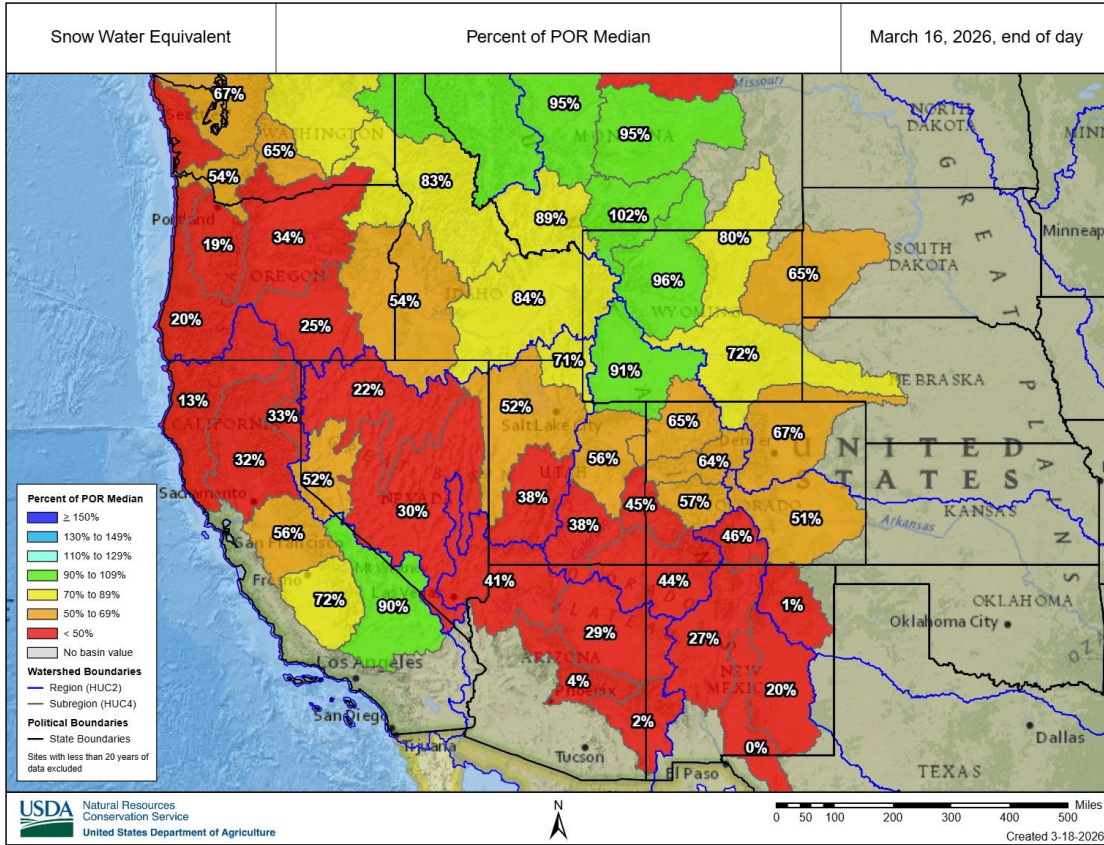
**Western United States - Precipitation**

October 2025 - February 2026, Percentile



Rankings (1895-2026)

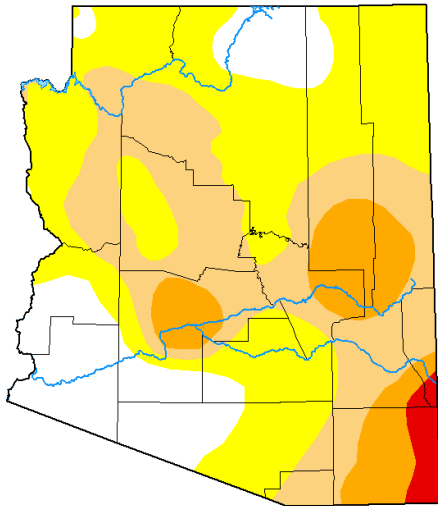
# Snow drought in AZ and the Colorado Basin



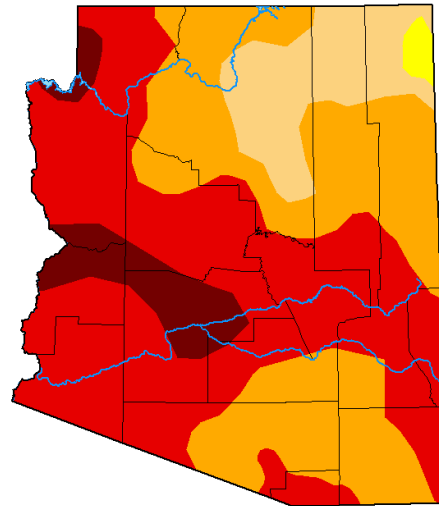
# After improvement, short-term drought advancing

## U.S. Drought Monitor Arizona

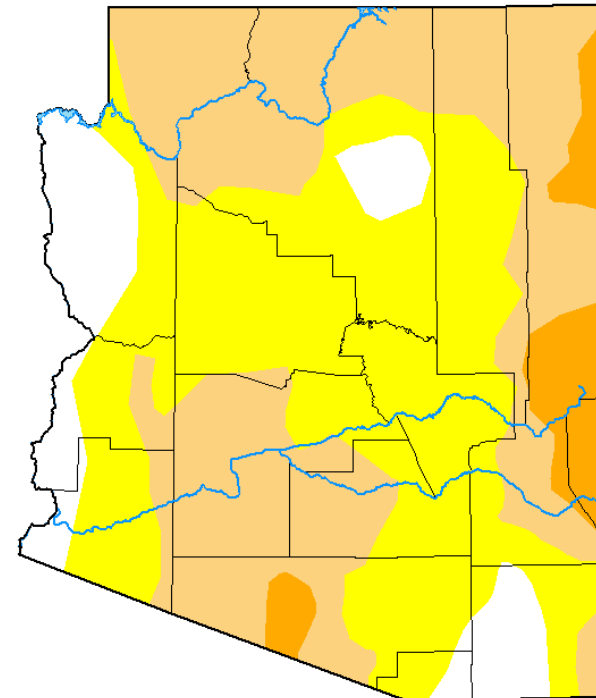
**March 17, 2026**  
(Released Thursday, Mar. 19, 2026)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



**March 19, 2024**  
Dry monsoon 2023  
Wet winter 2024



**March 18, 2025**  
Dry monsoon 2024  
Dry winter 2025



Wet May, early June 2025 helped slightly improve  
Dry monsoon 2025, very wet fall 2025, dry winter 2026

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
<b>Current</b>	10.91	42.74	39.73	6.63	0.00	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> 03-10-2026	32.01	33.57	28.24	6.18	0.00	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> 12-16-2025	10.55	19.37	41.10	27.94	1.03	0.00
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> 01-06-2026	27.93	24.39	33.93	12.73	1.03	0.00
<b>Start of Water Year</b> 09-30-2025	0.00	0.00	20.79	54.15	23.57	1.49
<b>One Year Ago</b> 03-18-2025	0.00	0.87	11.11	33.37	47.45	7.21

**Intensity:**  
 None (White)  
 D0 Abnormally Dry (Yellow)  
 D1 Moderate Drought (Light Orange)  
 D2 Severe Drought (Orange)  
 D3 Extreme Drought (Red)  
 D4 Exceptional Drought (Dark Red)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

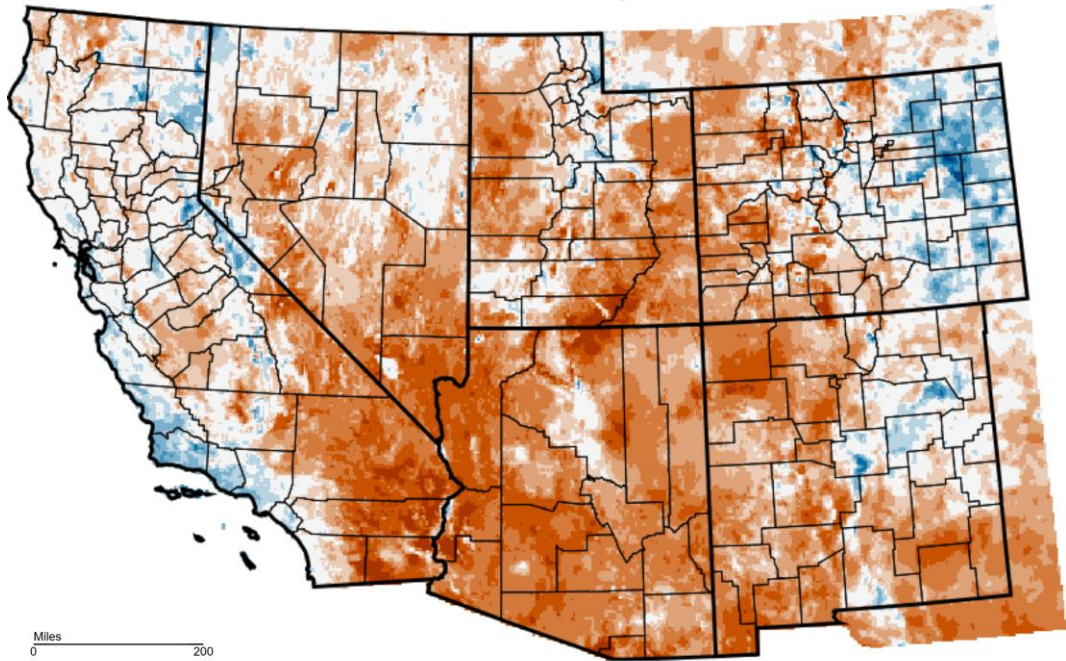
**Author:**  
Curtis Riganti  
National Drought Mitigation Center



# Long-term deficits continue across Arizona

*Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index shows hot temperatures and dry conditions*

**Southwest - 60 Month SPEI**  
February 2026



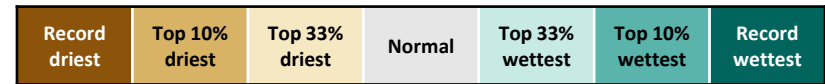
WestWide Drought Tracker, WRCC, Climate Engine, Data Source: PRISM Prelim, created 05 Mar 2026

Arizona  
**Mar 2021 to Feb 2026**  
3<sup>rd</sup> hottest (tie 2016-21, 2017-22)



*Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/10/26*

Arizona  
**Mar 2021 to Feb 2026**  
32<sup>nd</sup> driest

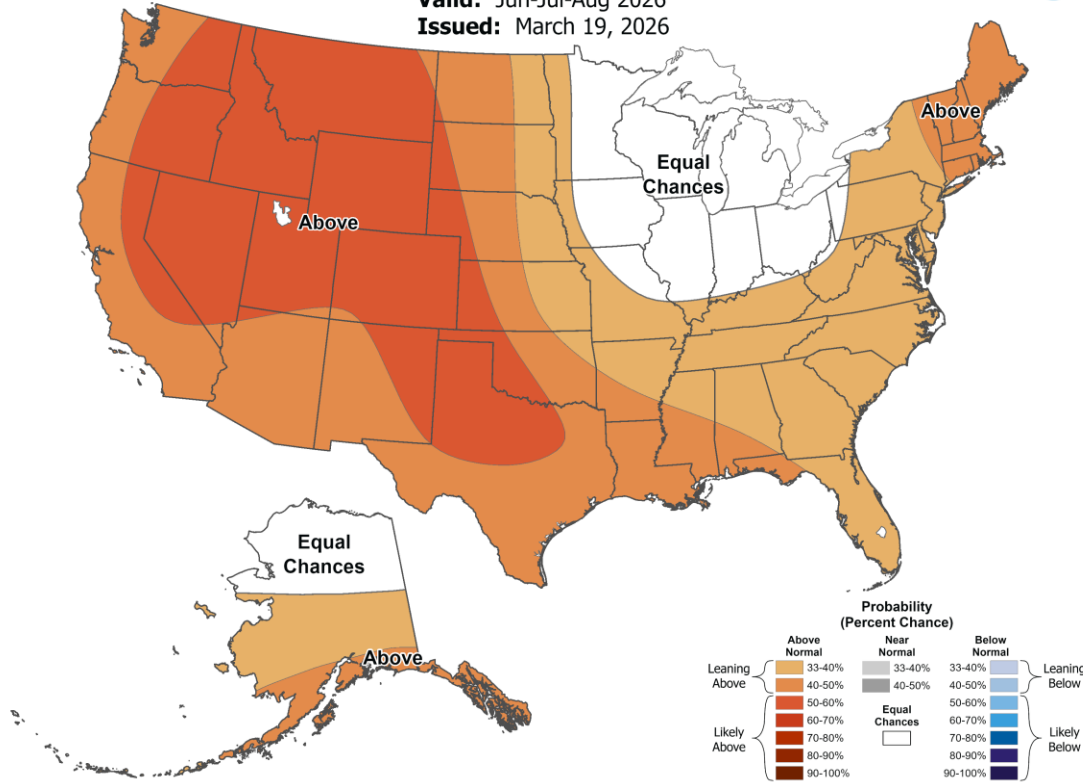


*Preliminary data from NOAA/NCEI as of 3/10/26*



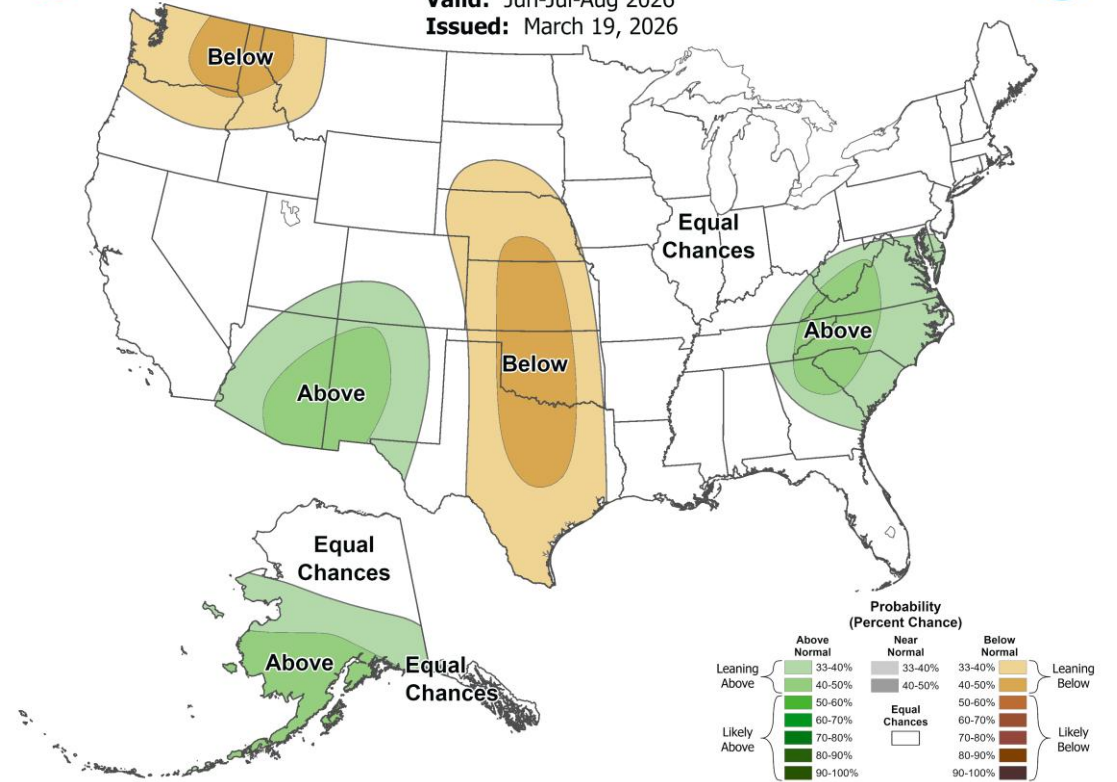
# Seasonal Temperature Outlook

Valid: Jun-Jul-Aug 2026  
Issued: March 19, 2026



# Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

Valid: Jun-Jul-Aug 2026  
Issued: March 19, 2026



# La Nina Advisory then transition to El Nino Watch

55% chance transition to ENSO neutral May-Jul 2026  
 62% chance El Nino emerges Jun-Aug 2026  
 then persists through end of 2026  
*Preliminary data from NOAA/CPC as of 3/12/26*

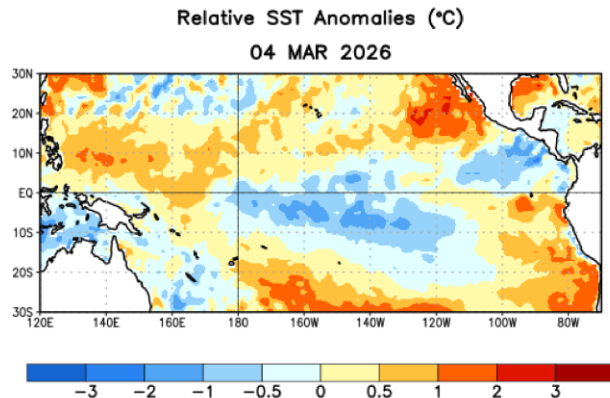
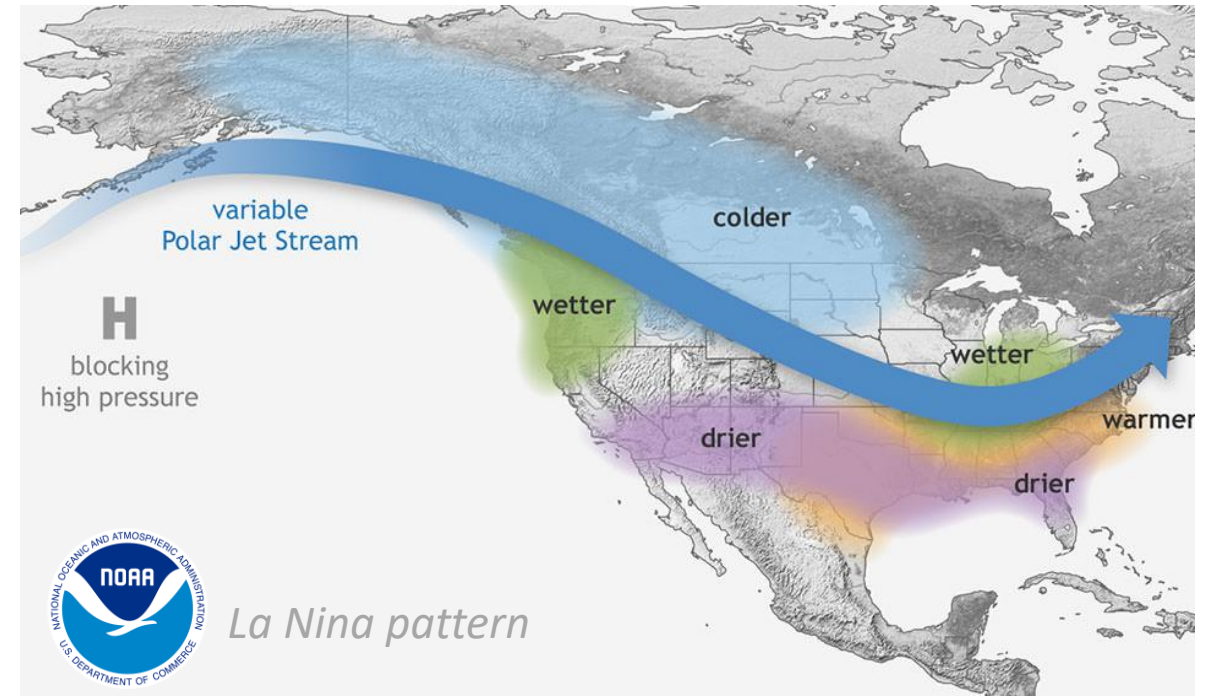
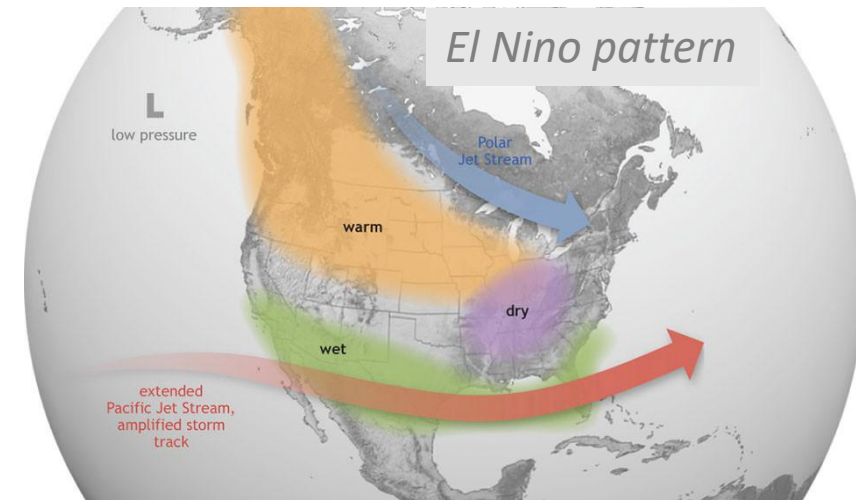


Figure 1. Average relative sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (°C) for the week centered on 4 March 2026. Anomalies are computed with respect to the 1991-2020 base period weekly means.



# Thank you!

Erinanne Saffell, Ph.D.

Arizona State Climatologist

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