



# Hydrologic Conditions Report

## January 2026

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## Summary

January 2026 was characterized by below-normal precipitation and near-normal average temperatures (averaging around 51.7 degrees Fahrenheit). For the second year in a row, the District received measurable snowfall. The ongoing cumulative rainfall deficit continued to contribute to below-normal hydrologic conditions across the Panhandle. Drought conditions slowly worsened during January 2026.

## Rainfall

In January 2026, an average of 3.11 inches of precipitation was recorded across the Panhandle. This amount was 2.04 inches (49%) below the District normal precipitation for the month of January, which is 5.15 inches (**Table 1; Figures 1 – 7**). Normal precipitation is defined as average monthly precipitation for the 1991-2020 30-year reference period.

All precipitation received in the Panhandle during January 2026 was the result of frontal systems. Spatial precipitation patterns were fairly uniform across the District (**Figures 1 & 2**).

The District received wintry mix precipitation in the form of snow and sleet on two separate instances. This is the first time that measurable snow has fallen for two consecutive years in the Panhandle. On January 18, 2026, a winter storm system brought snowfall to the western and central Panhandle. The heaviest snowfall occurred in Holmes, Jackson, and Walton counties, with Marianna reporting 1.30 inches of snow. The second instance of snowfall was on January 31, 2026, when a strong cold front passed through the Panhandle and light snow flurries were seen in Tallahassee.



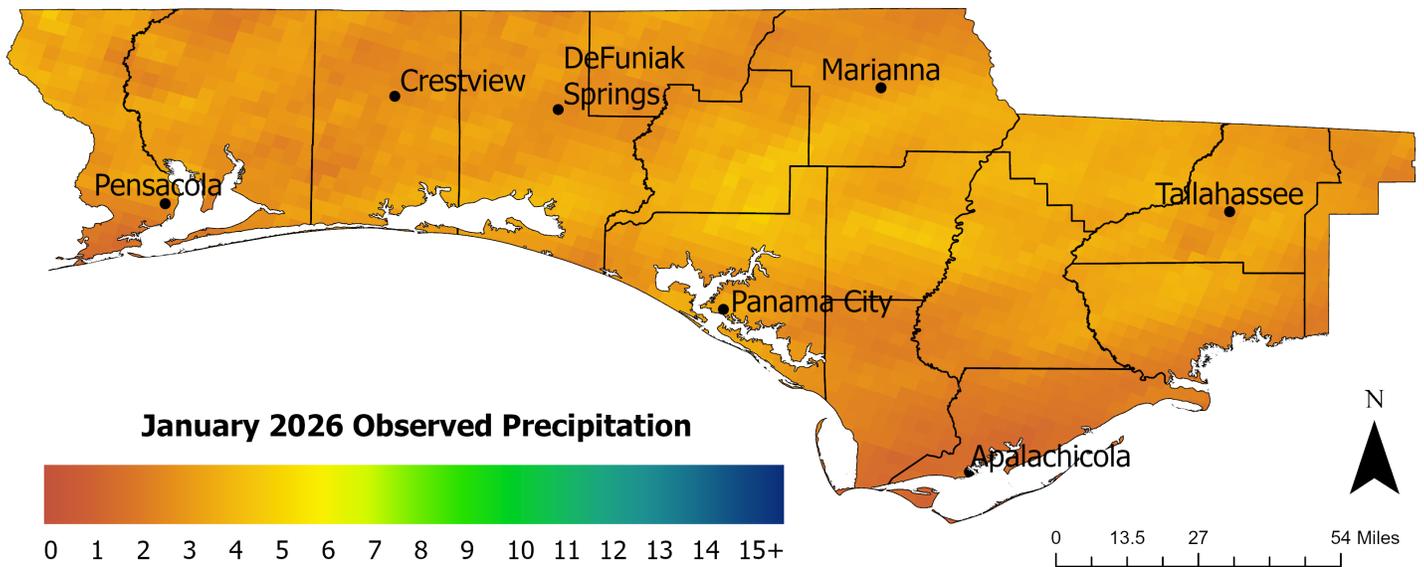
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81 Water Management Drive  
Havana, FL 32333-4712  
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[www.nwfwater.com](http://www.nwfwater.com)

**Table 1: January 2026 rainfall compared to 30-year normal monthly rainfall for Tallahassee, Marianna, Niceville, and Pensacola**

Station	January Normal Rainfall (1991 to 2020)	January 2026 Observed Rainfall	Percent Difference
Tallahassee Regional Airport	4.41	3.01	-37.7%
Marianna Regional Airport	4.04	2.68	-40.5%
Niceville, FL	5.86	4.19	-33.2%
Pensacola Regional Airport	5.03	2.60	-63.7%

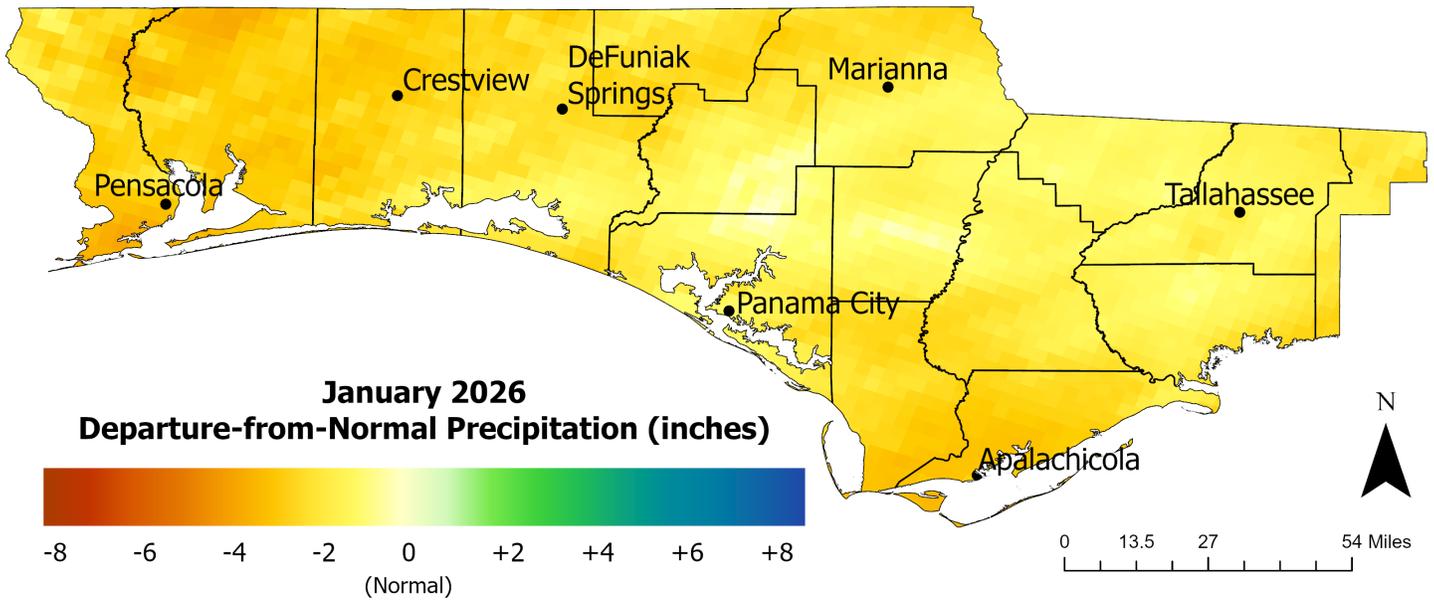
Source: <https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=tae>  
<https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=mob>

**Figure 1: District-wide January 2026 observed rainfall**



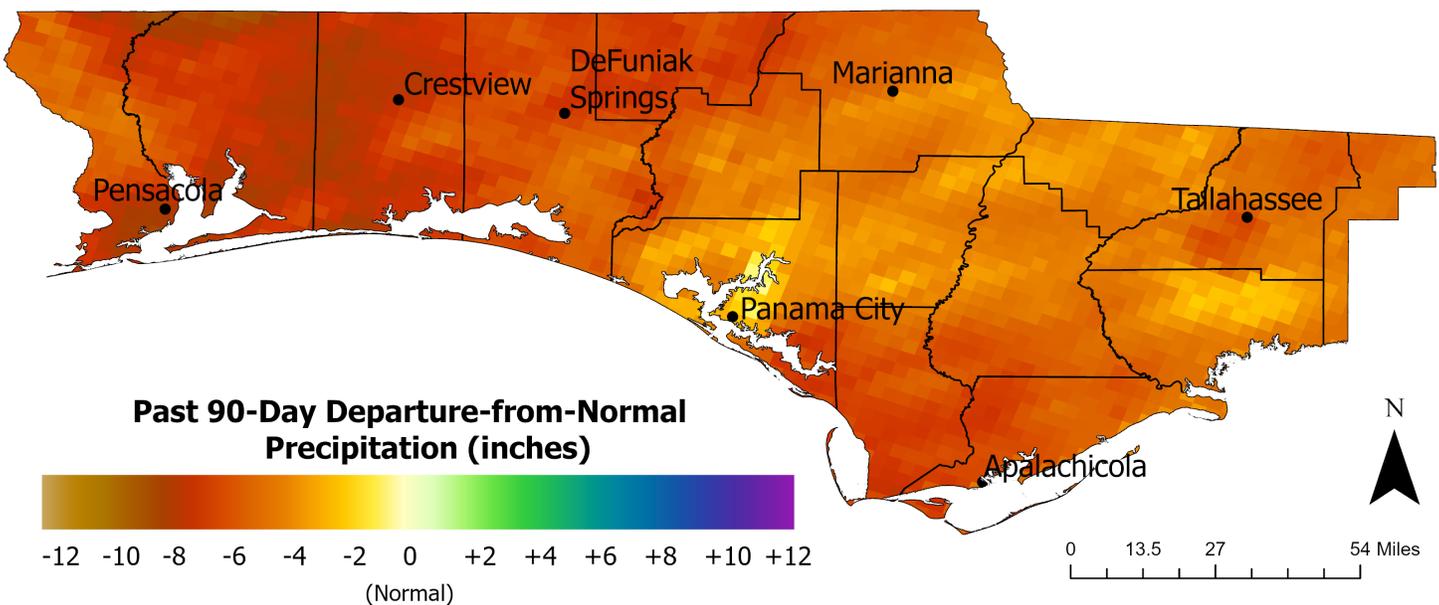
Source: <https://water.noaa.gov/resources/downloads/precip/stageIV/>

Figure 2: District-wide January 2026 precipitation departure from normal



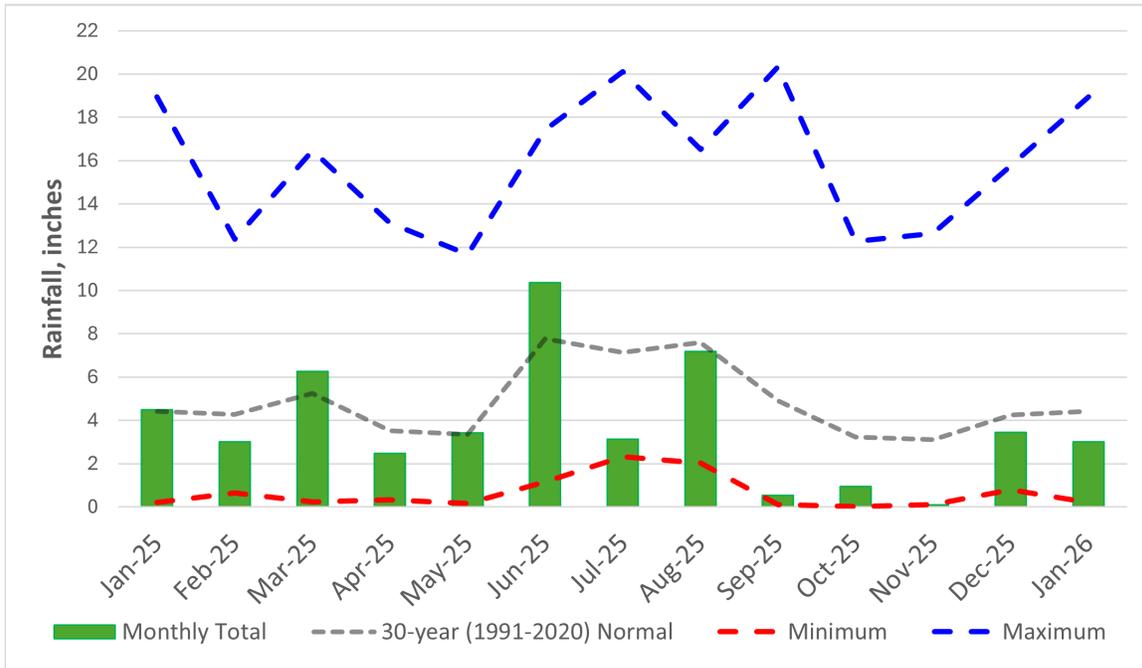
Source: <https://water.noaa.gov/resources/downloads/precip/stageIV/>

Figure 3: District-wide precipitation departure from normal for the previous 90 days



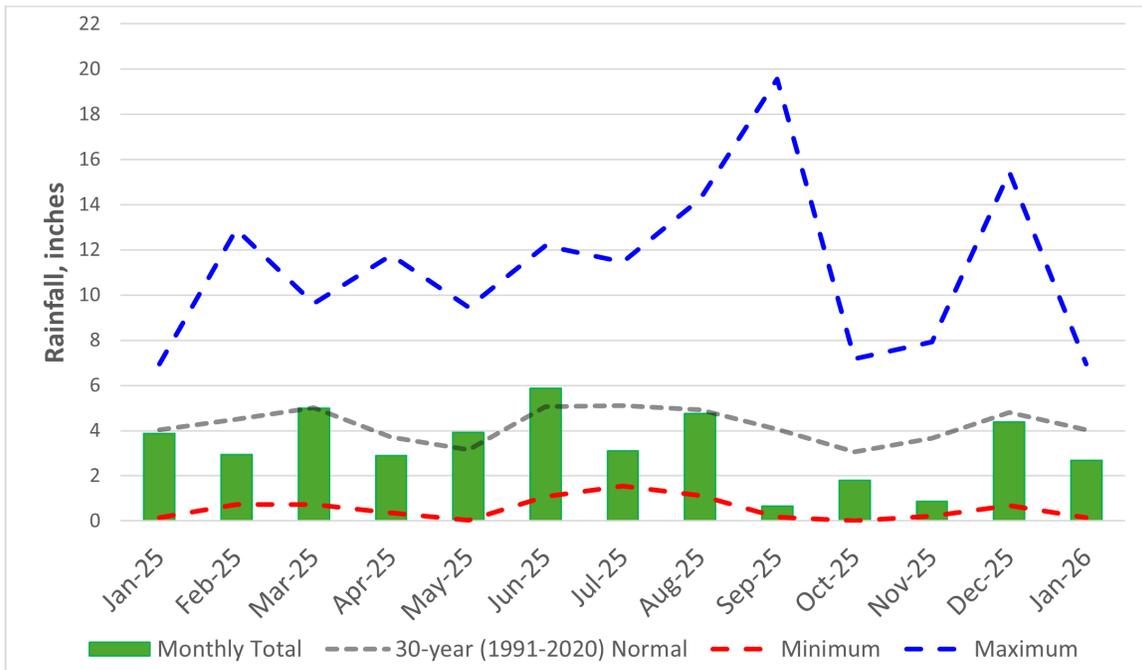
Source: <https://water.noaa.gov/resources/downloads/precip/stageIV/>

**Figure 4: Observed rainfall at Tallahassee Regional Airport for the past 13 months compared to the 30-year normal, minimum, and maximum precipitation for each month**



Source: <https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=tae>

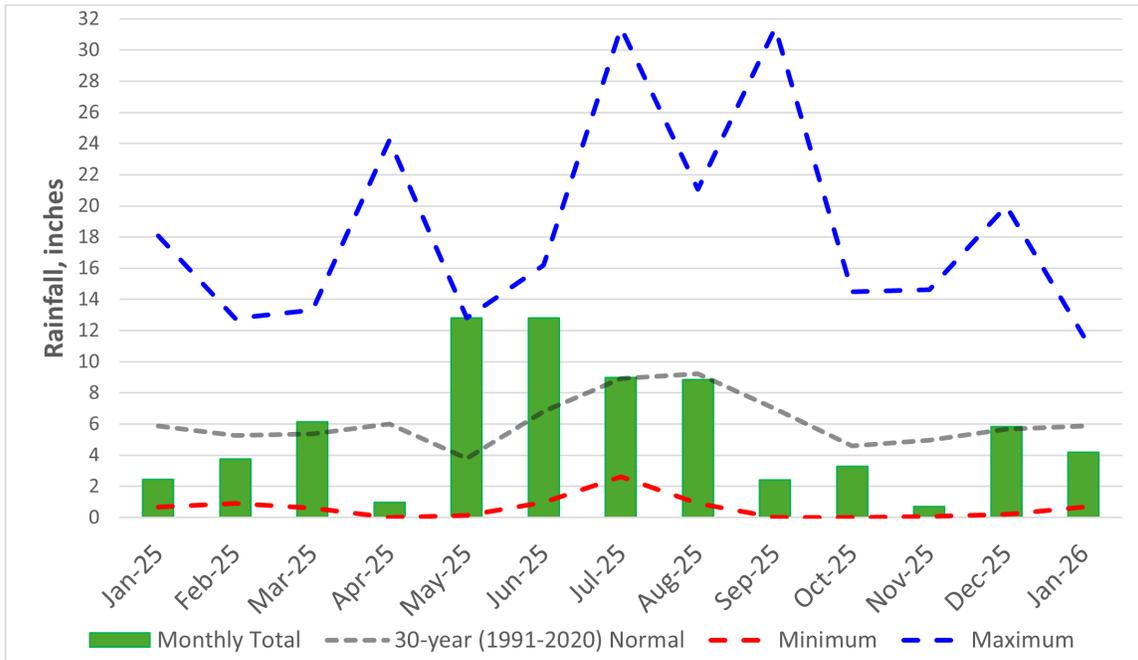
**Figure 5: Observed rainfall at Marianna Regional Airport for the past 13 months compared to the 30-year normal, minimum, and maximum precipitation for each month**



Source: <https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=tae>

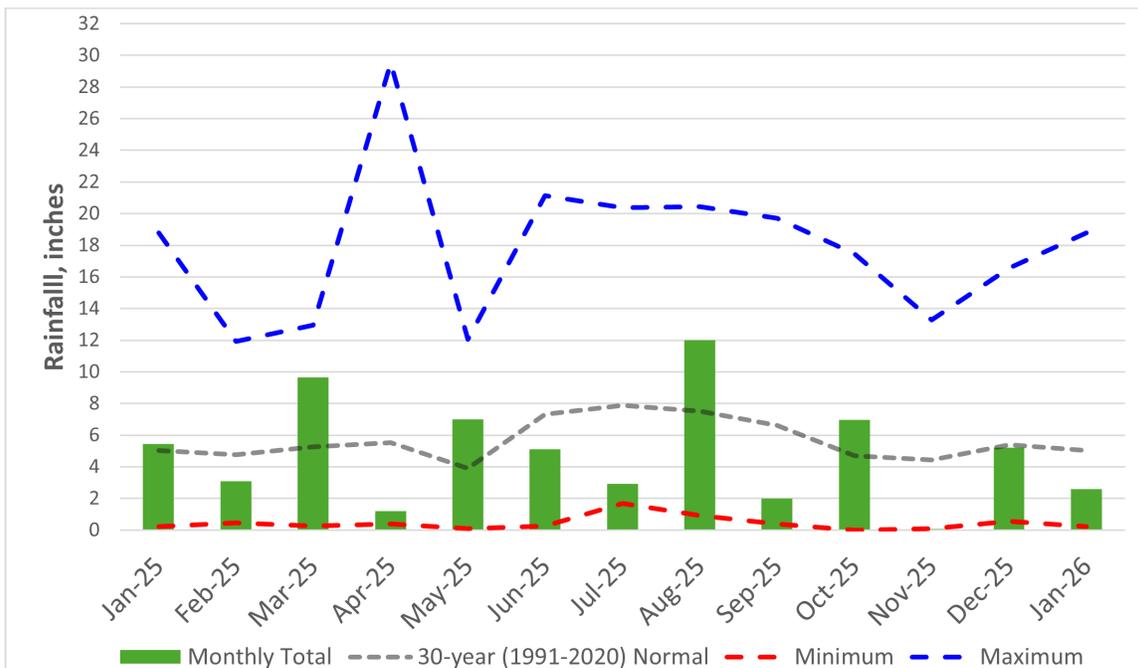


**Figure 6: Observed rainfall in Niceville for the past 13 months compared to the 30-year normal, minimum, and maximum precipitation for each month**



Source: <https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=mob>

**Figure 7: Observed rainfall at Pensacola Regional Airport for the past 13 months compared to the 30-year normal, minimum, and maximum precipitation for each month**



Source: <https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=mob>



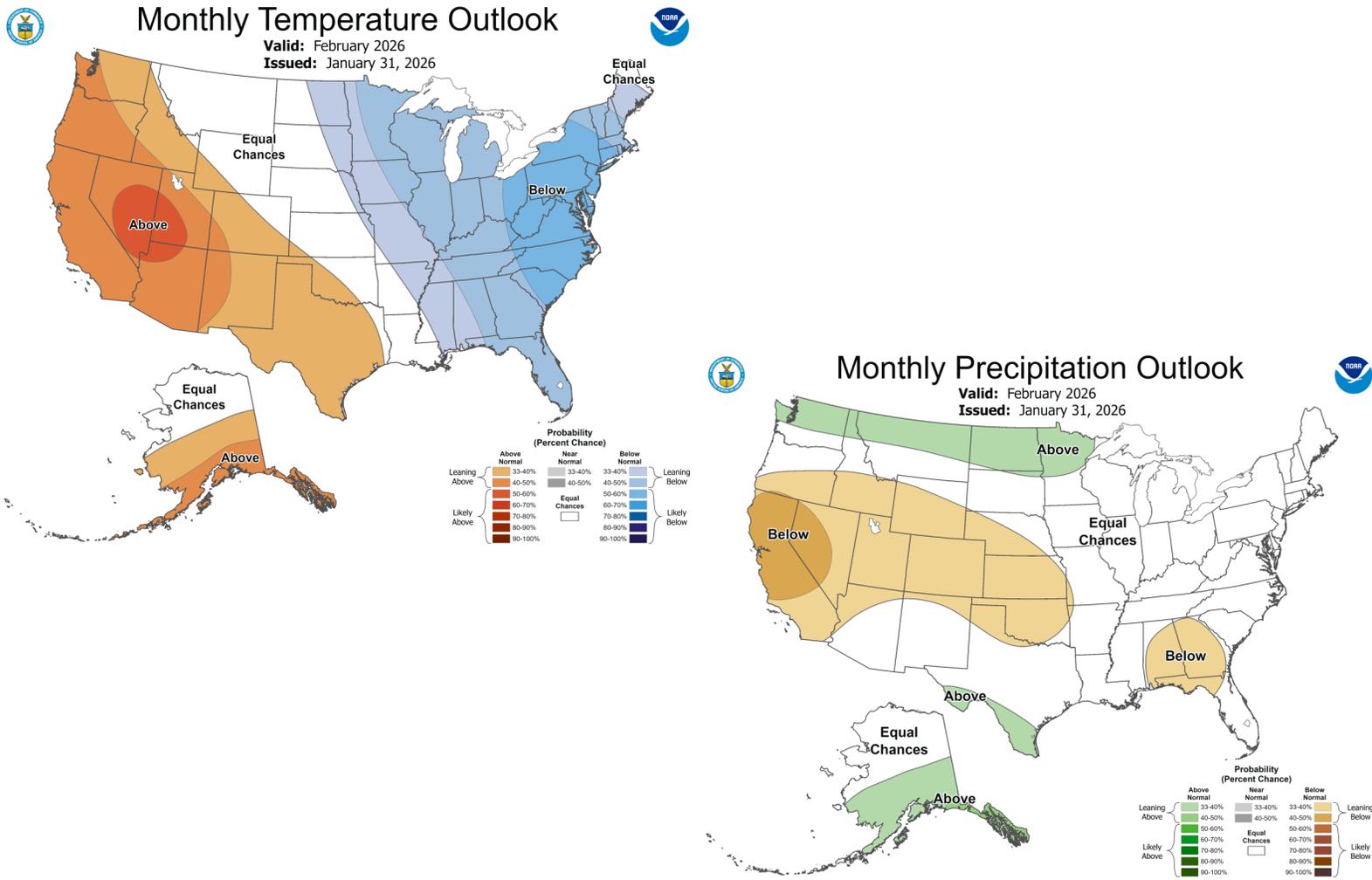
## Climate Outlook

According to NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center, the forecast issued January 31, 2026, for February 2026 showed a slight chance for below-normal temperatures and a slight chance of below-normal rainfall in the District (Figure 8).

As of February 17, 2026, La Niña conditions were present and favored to persist through the Northern Hemisphere winter. La Niña conditions typically lead to warmer temperatures and below-normal precipitation during winter in northern Florida. A transition to ENSO-neutral conditions was forecast to occur sometime between February and April 2026 (60% chance).

Source: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/30day/>  
[https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/lanina/enso\\_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/lanina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf)

**Figure 8: February 2026 Temperature and Precipitation Outlooks for the United States**

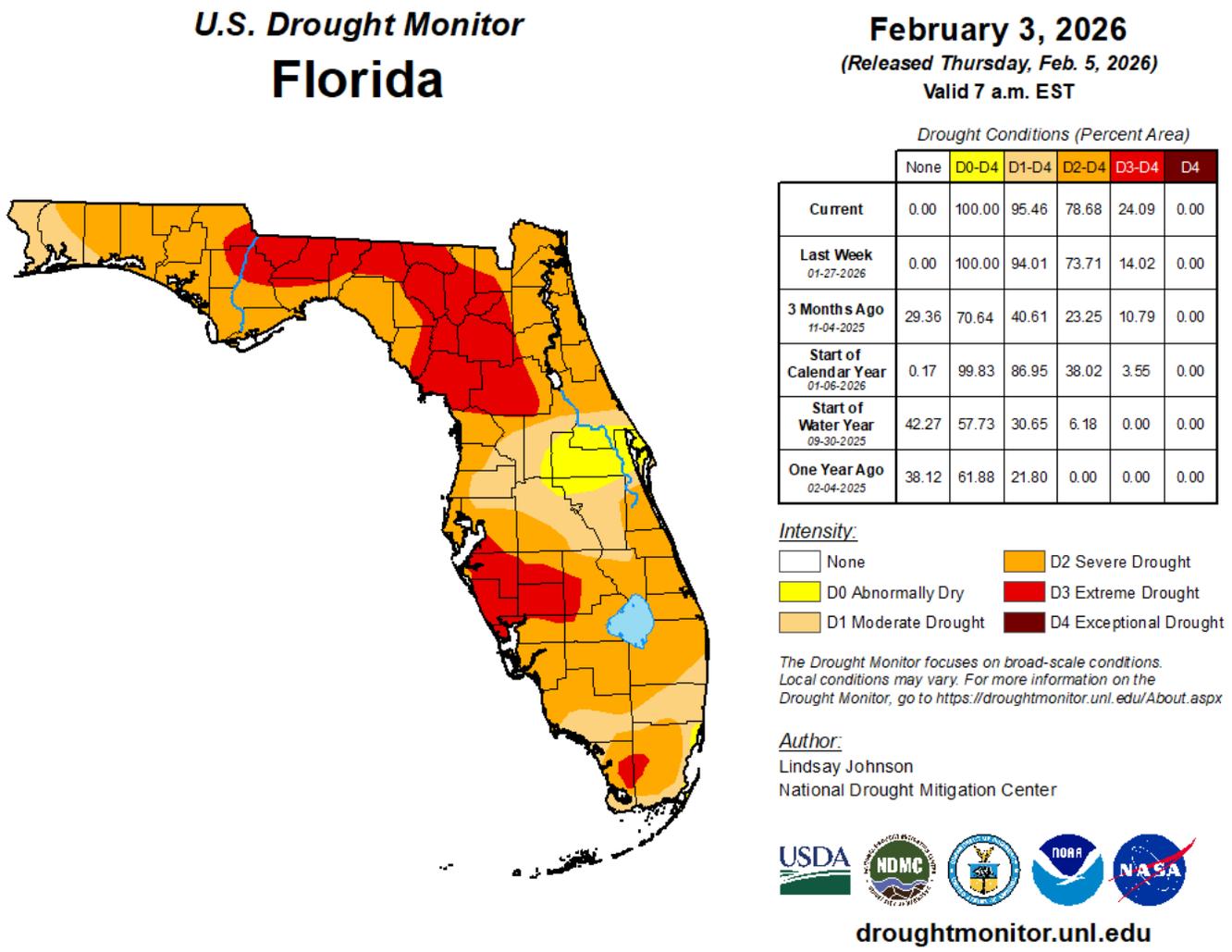


## Drought Conditions

The U.S. Drought Monitor report released for February 3, 2026, showed most of the District under at least moderate drought conditions with the majority of the Panhandle under severe or extreme drought conditions (Figure 9). This is due to the District receiving below-normal rainfall for every month since September 2025 except for December 2025 when near-normal precipitation was received.

According to the U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook for February 2026, existing drought conditions are expected to persist. This is likely a result of the slight chance for below-normal rainfall according to the Climate Prediction Center’s outlooks for February 2026 (Figure 8).

Figure 9: Florida Drought Conditions on February 3, 2026



Source: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?FL>

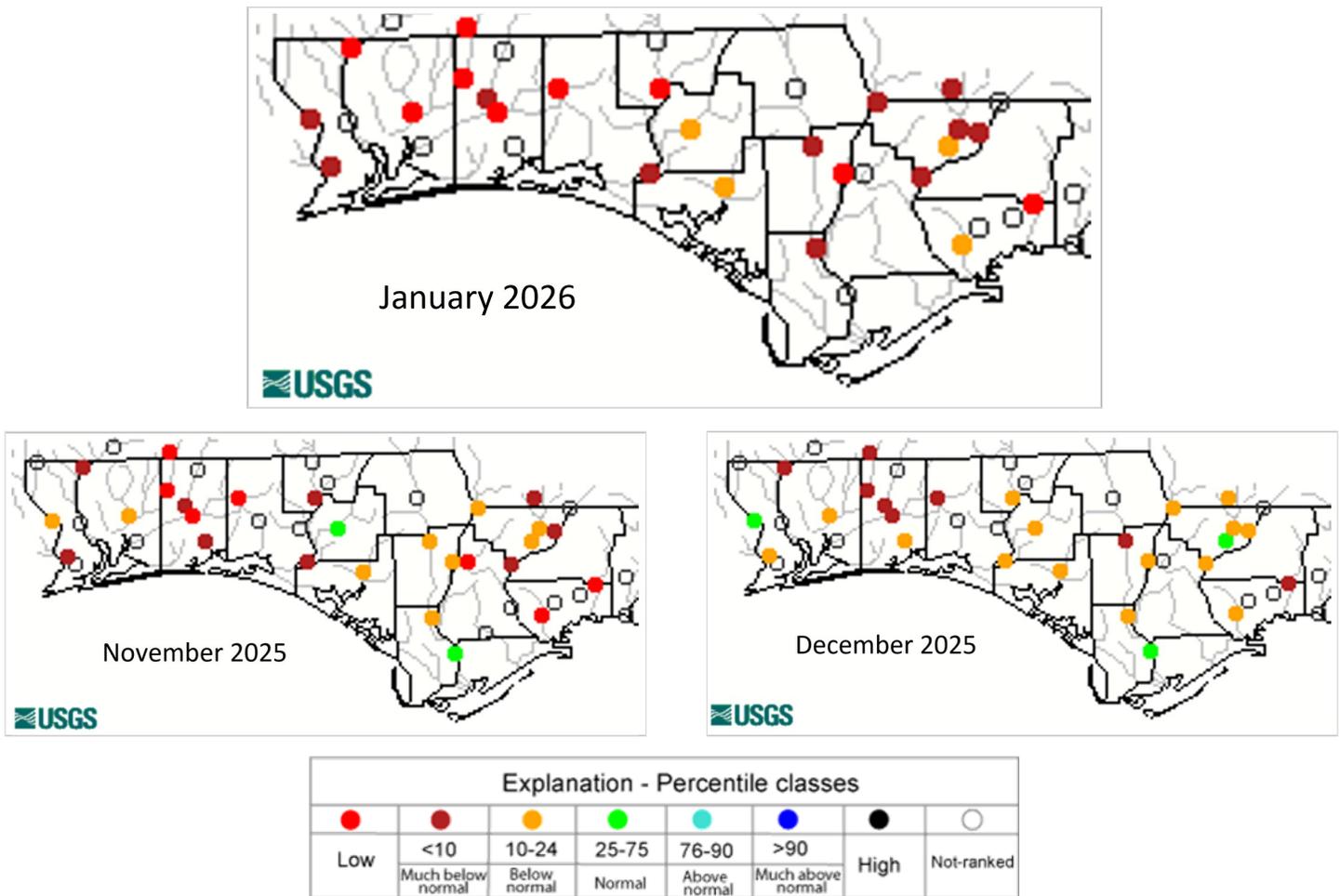


## Surface Water

**Streamflows.** During January 2026, four streamflow stations recorded below-normal flows, nine stations recorded much-below-normal flows, and eight stations recorded flows considered the lowest ever recorded for January. No stations recorded flows within normal ranges for a majority of time during January 2026 (Figures 10 – 16). Stations along the Apalachicola River were not included in the analysis because its flows are more indicative of conditions in Georgia and Alabama due to it being dam-controlled at its headwaters.

Streamflow stations with depicted time-series plots recorded generally stable or decreasing flows that were much-below-normal or low for the month of January 2026. Stations to the west of the Apalachicola River and including the stations on the Apalachicola River recorded increases in flow following a significant rain event toward the end of January 2026 (Figures 11 – 16).

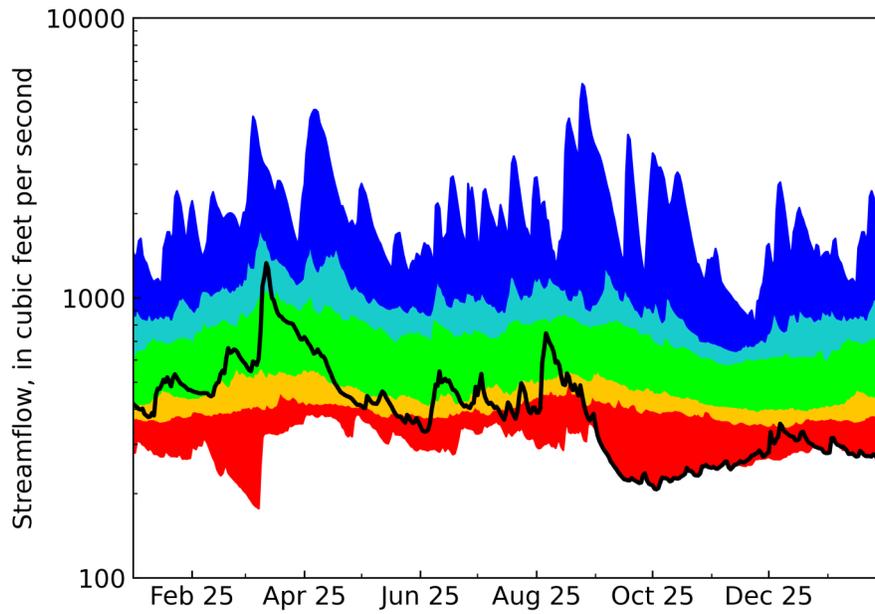
**Figure 10: Northwest Florida November 2025 to January 2026 monthly streamflow percentiles**



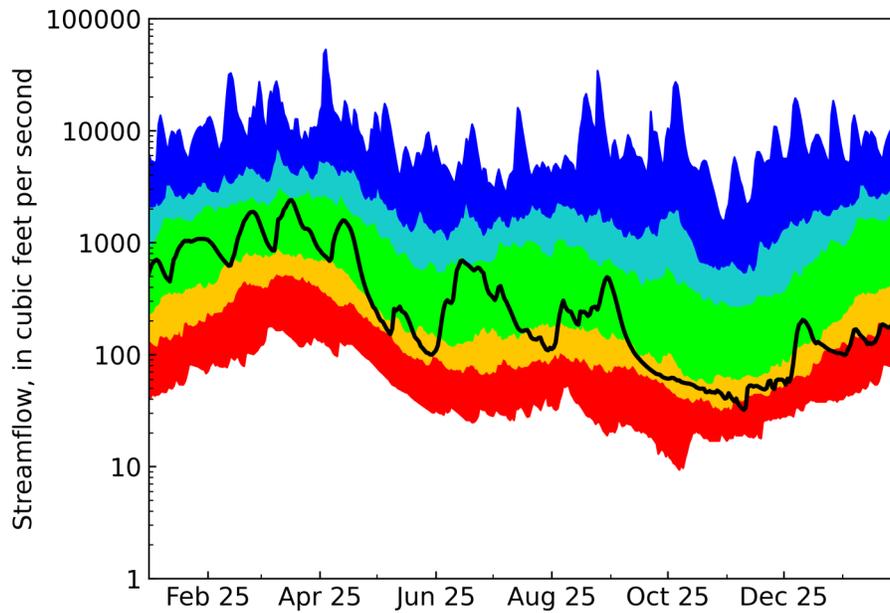
Source: <http://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php>



**Figure 11: Daily streamflows and percentile ranges for USGS station 02326900 St. Marks River Near Newport, Florida**



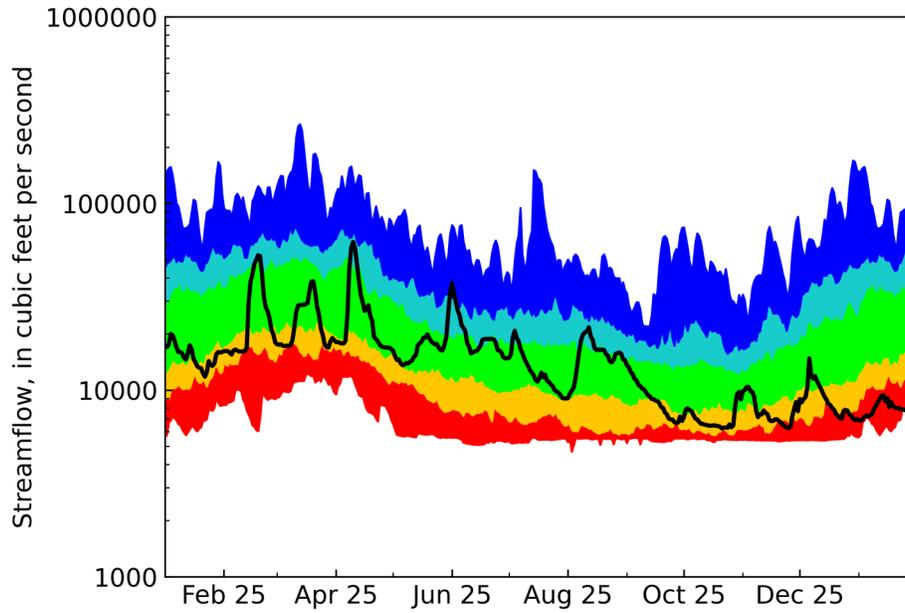
**Figure 12: Daily streamflows and percentile ranges for USGS Station 02329000 Ochlockonee River Near Havana, Florida**



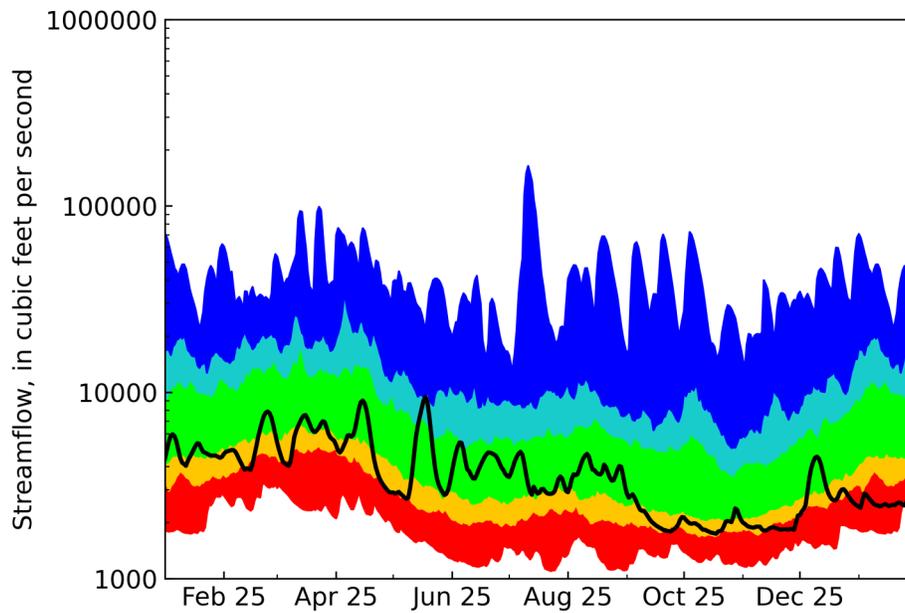
Explanation - Percentile classes				
< 10	10-24	25-75	76-90	> 90
Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal



**Figure 13: Daily streamflows and percentile ranges for USGS Station 02358700 Apalachicola River Near Blountstown, Florida**



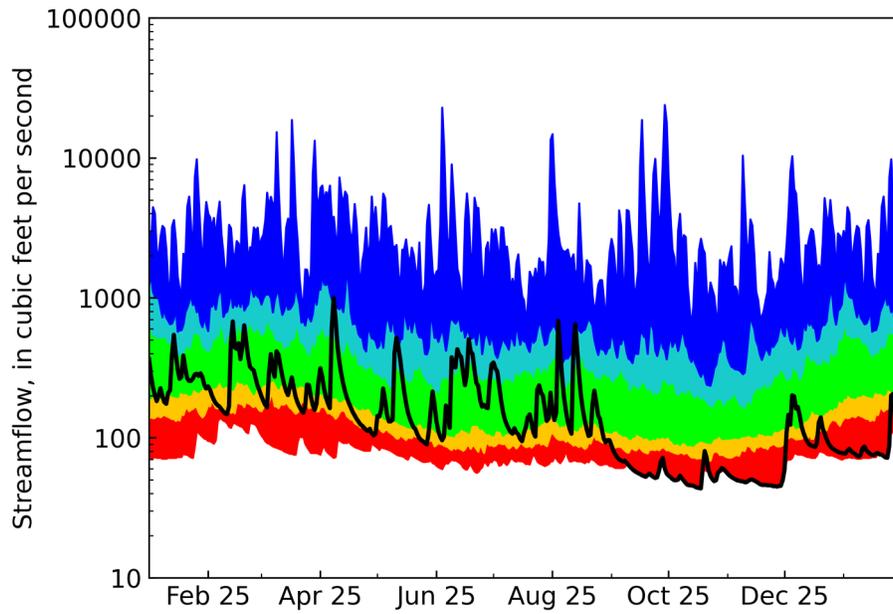
**Figure 14: Daily streamflows and percentile ranges for USGS Station 02366500 Choctawhatchee River Near Bruce, Florida**



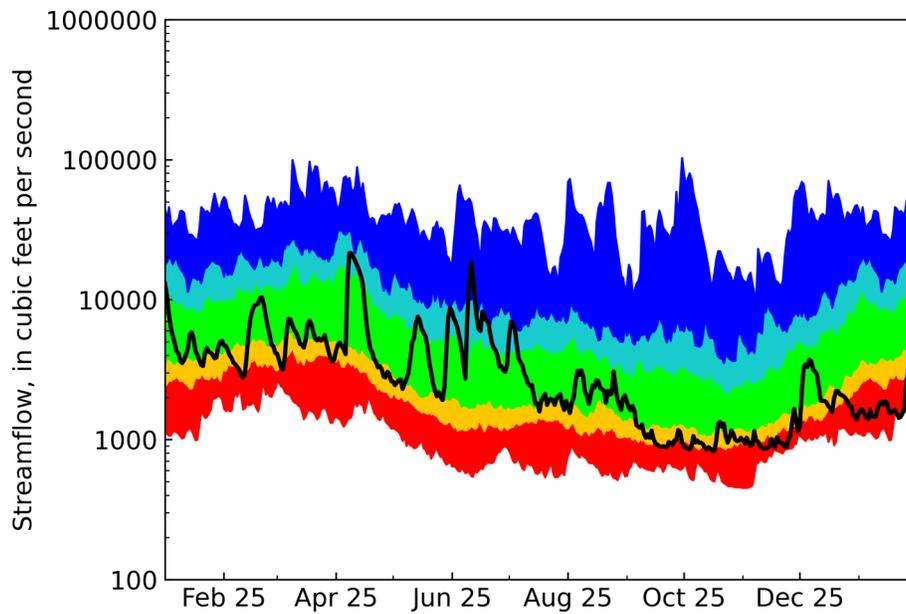
Explanation - Percentile classes				
< 10	10-24	25-75	76-90	> 90
Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal



**Figure 15: Daily streamflows and percentile ranges for USGS Station 02370000 Blackwater River Near Baker, Florida**



**Figure 16: Daily streamflows and percentile ranges for USGS Station 02375500 Escambia River Near Century, Florida**

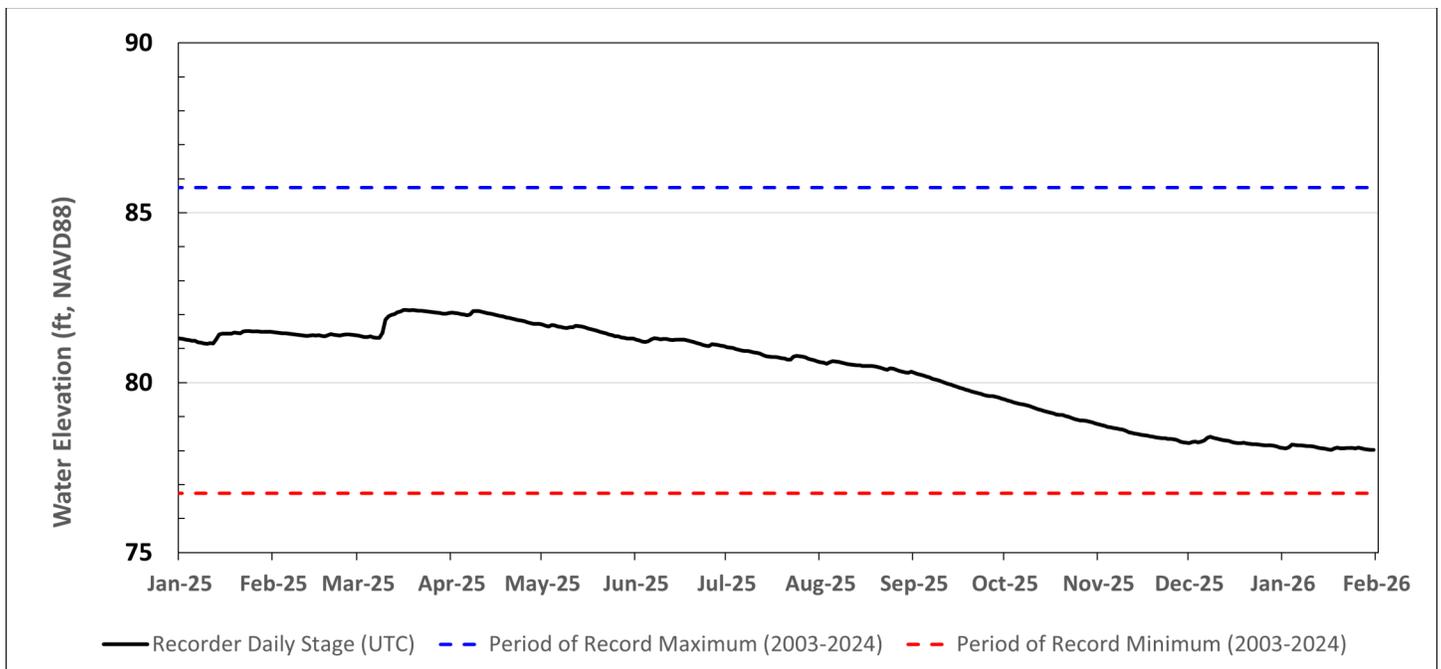


Explanation - Percentile classes				
< 10	10-24	25-75	76-90	> 90
Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal



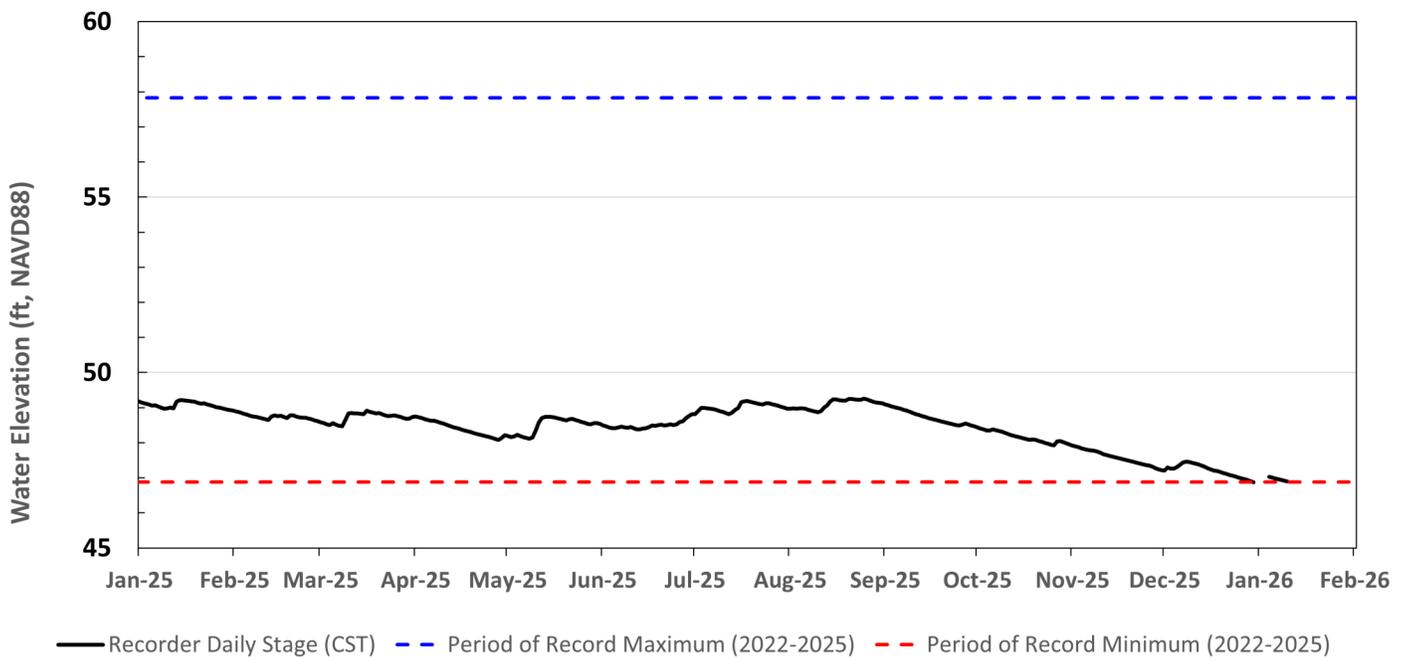
**Lake Levels.** Water levels at Lake Jackson in Leon County remained stable around 78.09 feet, NAVD 1988, for the month of January 2026. Late in November 2025, much of Lake Jackson drained into Porter Sink for the first time since 2021 (Figure 17). Porter Sink stops draining and will be covered in water again when there is enough rainfall to fill the aquifer below the lake. The long-term (January 29, 2003, to December 31, 2025) average stage level for Lake Jackson is 80.87 feet, NAVD 1988, and the full pool level is 85.74 feet, NAVD 1988.

**Figure 17: Daily water levels at Lake Jackson at Miller Landing, Leon County**



At Piney Lake in southern Washington County, water levels were below the elevation of the water level sensor for most of January 2026. The water level sensor is out of the water when the lake drops below 46.88 feet, NAVD 1988 (**Figure 18**). When the water levels at Piney Lake drop below 51.42 feet, NAVD 1988, the lake separates into two distinct “lobes”. Based on the lake level data being collected at Piney Lake since 2022, the lake has likely been continuously separated since December 15, 2023.

**Figure 18: Daily water levels at Piney Lake, Washington County**



## Spring Flows

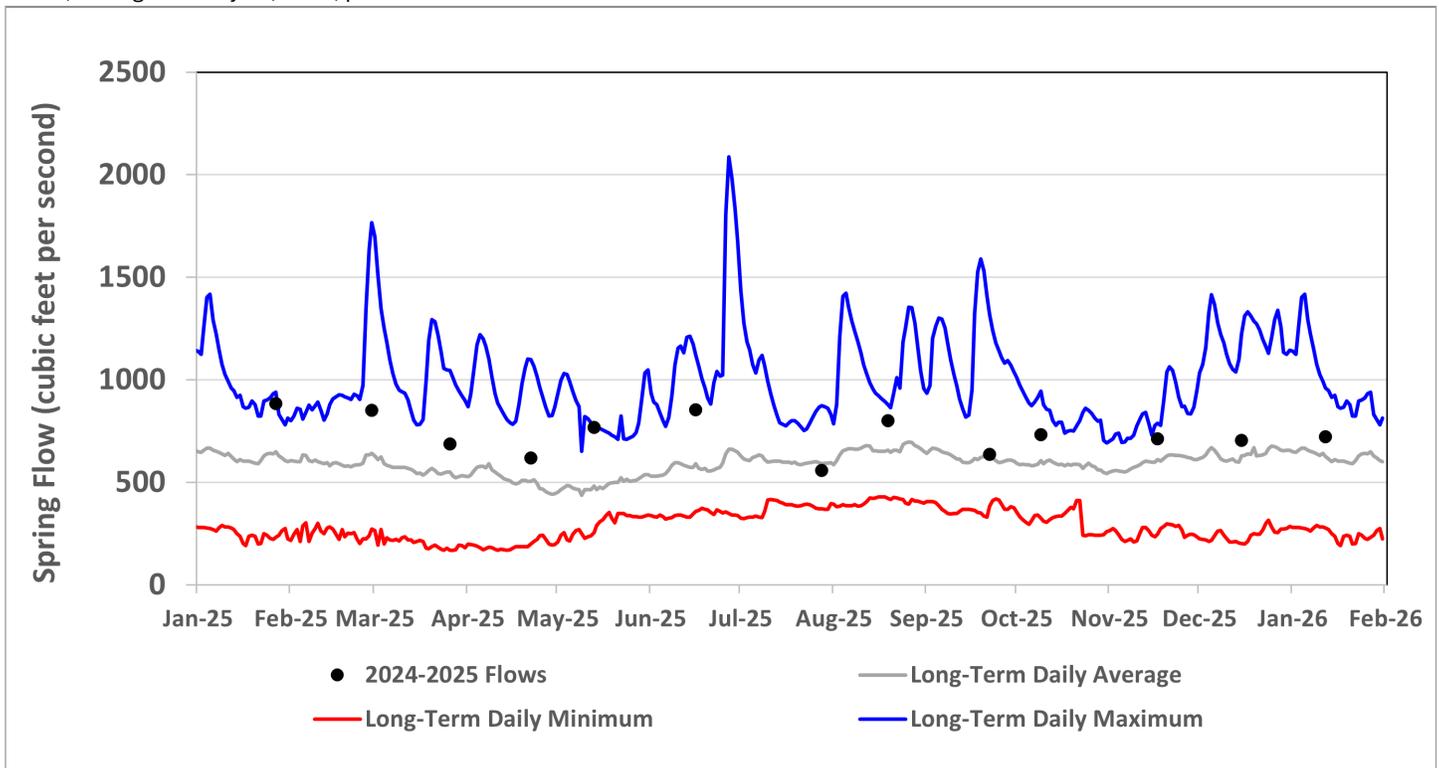
**Wakulla and Sally Ward Spring System.** Flow from Wakulla Spring remained generally stable between the three measurements taken November 2025 to January 2026. The most recent flow measurement for Wakulla Spring was 723 cubic feet per second (cfs), which was conducted on January 12, 2026 (**Figure 19**). This measurement was 96 cfs higher than the long-term (October 23, 2004, to January 12, 2026) average flow for the month of January of 627 cfs.

Flow at Sally Ward Spring increased by 0.8 cfs between the measurements taken in December 2025 and January 2026. The most recent flow measurement for Sally Ward was 23.0 cfs on January 12, 2026. This measurement was 2.5 cfs lower than the long-term (November 1, 2004, to January 12, 2025) average flow for the month of January of 25.5 cfs.

The minimum flow established for the combined Wakulla and Sally Ward Spring System under Florida Administrative Code chapter 40A-8.041 continues to be met. The long-term (October 23, 2004, through October 9, 2025) average flows for Wakulla and Sally Ward springs are 589 cfs and 24.2 cfs, respectively. The combined long-term spring flow for both systems is 613.2 cfs, which exceeds the established minimum flow of 538 cfs by 75.2 cfs.

**Figure 19: Wakulla Spring flows**

Data from October 1, 2023, through January 12, 2026, represent discrete measurements. Daily statistics are based on the October 23, 2004, through January 12, 2026, period of record.

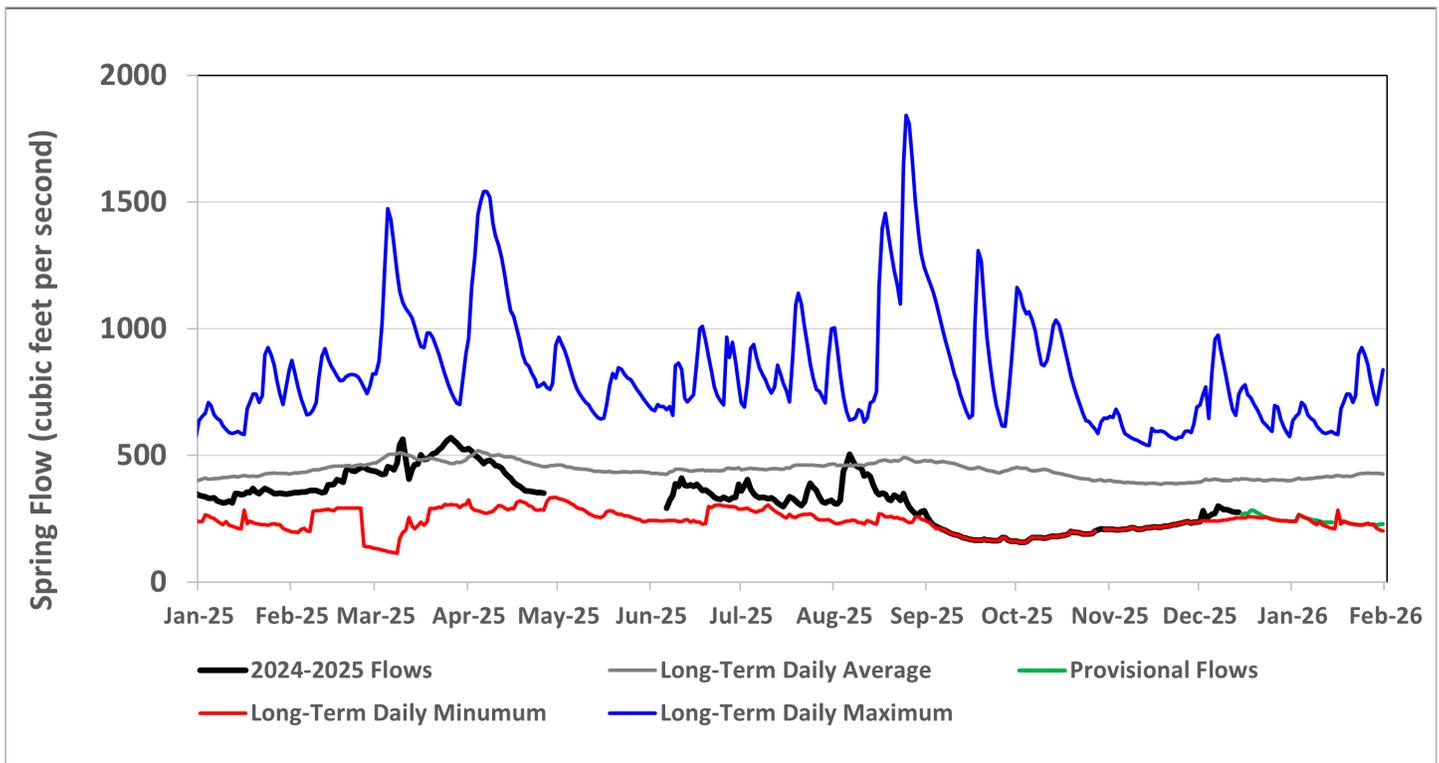


**St. Marks River Rise.** The mean daily spring flow for January 2026 at the St. Marks River Rise was 237 cfs, based on the available USGS provisional data which extends through January 31, 2026 (Figure 20). This was much below the long-term (October 1, 1956, through January 31, 2026) average flow for the month of January of 418 cfs. Flows this month were so low that there was a new long-term minimum flow for nearly every day in January.

The current 30-year moving average spring flow for the St. Marks River Rise based on the most recent approved USGS data (November 15, 1993, through December 3, 2024) is 423 cfs. If the provisional data from December 4, 2024, through January 31, 2026, are included, the 30-year moving average spring flow for the St. Marks River Rise is 419 cfs.

The established minimum flow for the St. Marks River Rise is 419 cfs. Whether using the approved or provisional data, the 30-year moving average flow exceeded or met the established minimum flow for the St. Marks River Rise by 4 cfs and 0 cfs, respectively.

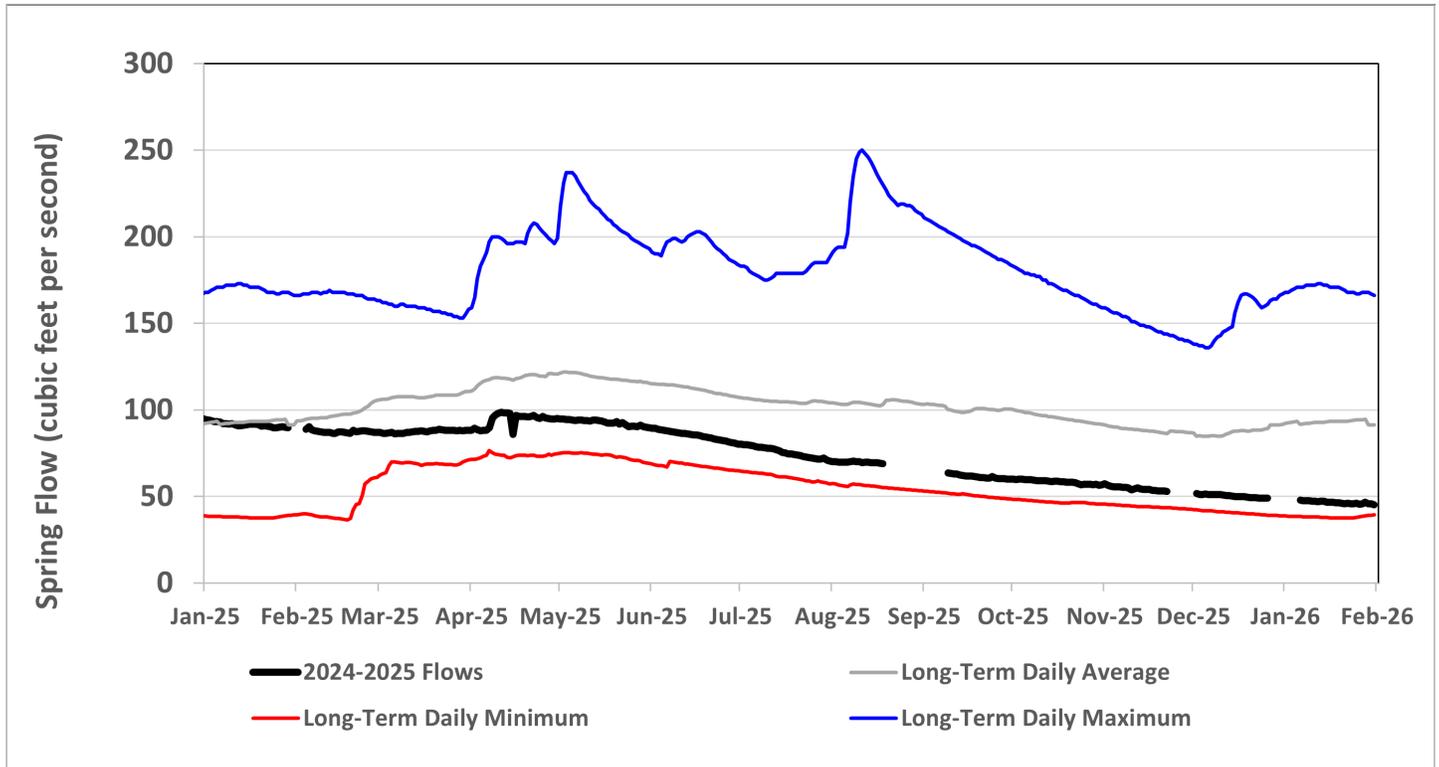
**Figure 20: Spring flows for the St. Marks River Rise**



**Jackson Blue Spring.** Daily flows at Jackson Blue Spring for the month of December 2025 (December 2 through 26, 2025) averaged 50.0 cfs. This was below the long-term average flow of 87.4 cfs for the month of December, based on the December 21, 2004, through December 26, 2025, period of record (**Figure 21**). Flows from Jackson Blue Spring have been below the long-term average flow since January 2025.

**Figure 21: Spring flows for Jackson Blue Spring**

Data represents daily averages. Long-term flows represent the daily average between December 21, 2004, and January 31, 2026.

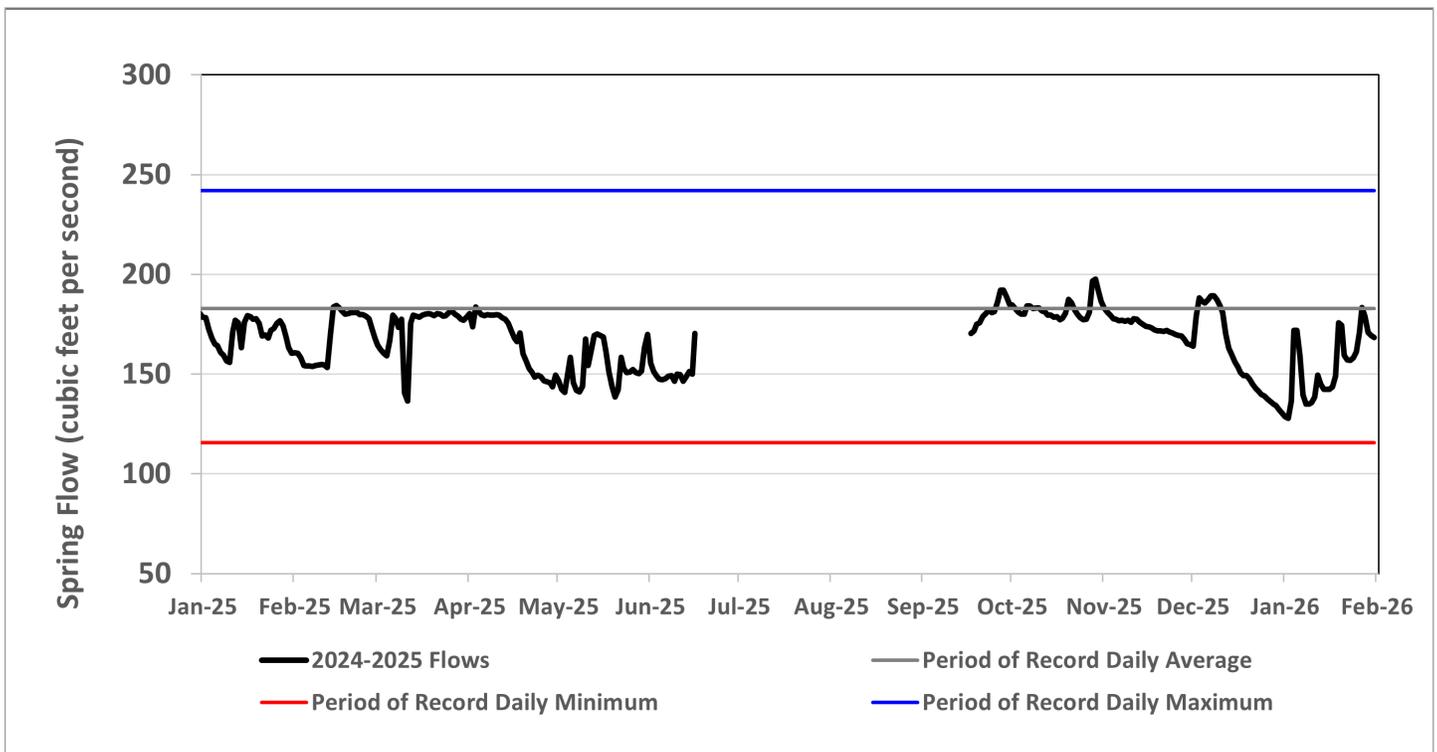


**Gainer Spring Group.** During January 2026, the average flow at the Gainer Spring Group was 154 cfs (**Figure 22**). The record period (October 28, 2019, through January 31, 2026) average monthly spring flow for the month of January is 176 cfs. It should be noted that there is a relatively brief period of record for this system, and spring flows among the highest and lowest on record are to be expected.

Throughout the time-series, there are several drops and recoveries in the spring flow. This is caused by Econfinia Creek spiking in stage adjacent to the spring group after rain events. The extra pressure exerted on the groundwater by the higher surface water in the stream slows flow from the spring group. Since Econfinia Creek does not tend to stay high for long after the conclusion of a rain event as the stage level quickly drops, the flow from the spring group recovers since there is less head pressure from the stream.

**Figure 22: Gainer Spring Group flows**

Data represents daily averages. Streamflow statistics are not shown due to the relatively short period of daily data.

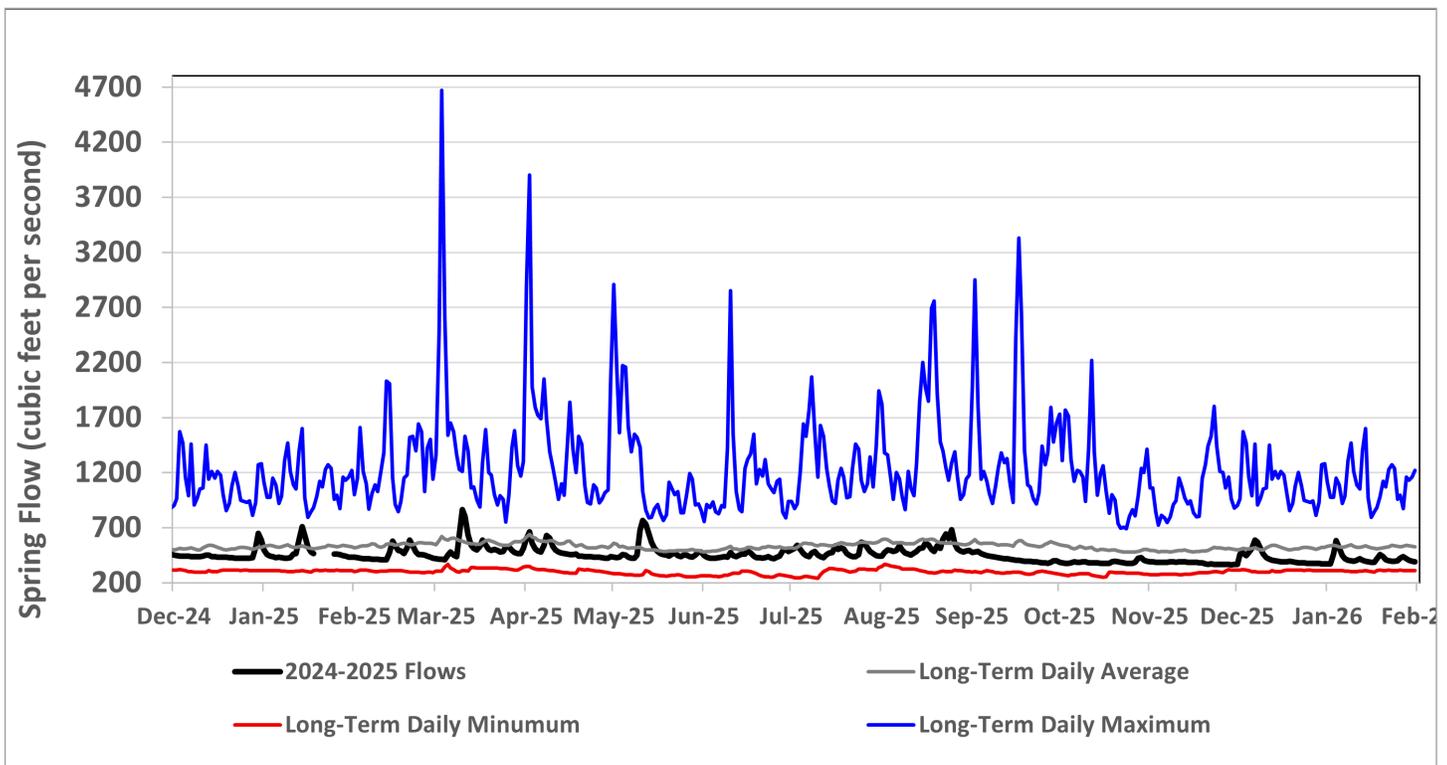


**Middle Econfina Creek.** The mean daily flow for January 2026 at Middle Econfina Creek was 417 cfs, based on the available USGS provisional data which extends through January 31, 2026 (Figure 23). This was below the long-term (October 1, 1935, through January 31, 2026) average flow for the month of January of 529 cfs.

The current 30-year moving average flow for Middle Econfina Creek based on the most recent approved USGS data (October 1, 1935, through December 15, 2025) is 517 cfs. If the provisional data from December 4, 2024, through January 31, 2026 is used, the 30-year moving average flow for Middle Econfina Creek is 516 cfs.

A minimum flow of 486 cfs was formally adopted on June 29, 2025, for Middle Econfina Creek, which includes the Gainer, Sylvan, and Williford spring groups. Whether using the approved or provisional data, the 30-year moving average flow exceeded the established minimum flow for Middle Econfina Creek by 31 cfs and 30 cfs, respectively.

**Figure 23: Spring flows for Middle Econfina Creek (Econfina @ Bennett)**



## Aquifer Levels

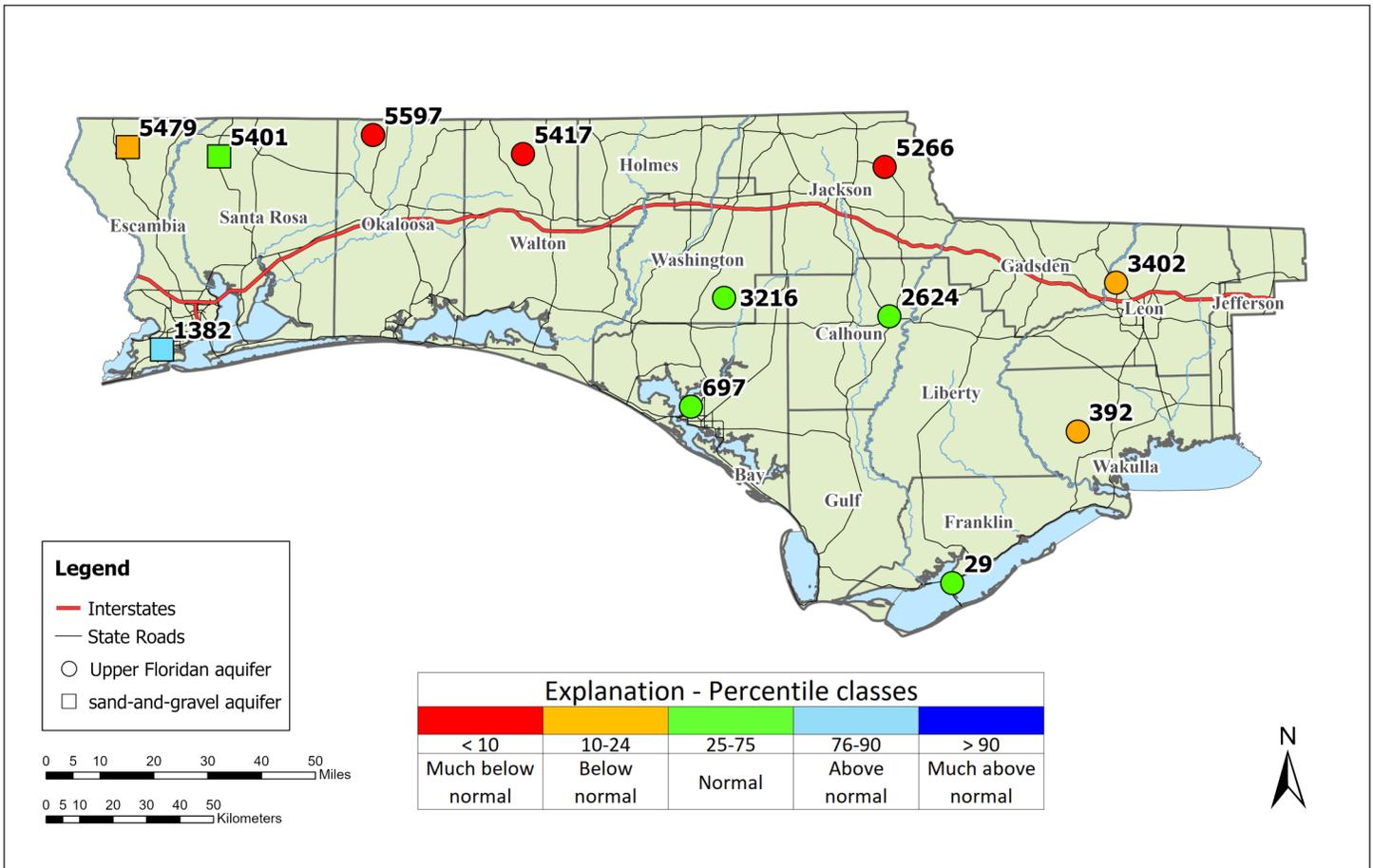
In the middle of January 2026, of a total of nine Floridan aquifer monitor wells, four were classified as having groundwater levels within normal ranges, two were classified as below-normal, and three were classified as much-below-normal (**Figures 24 - 30**). Most Floridan monitor wells with sufficient long-term data to calculate percentiles continued to decline through January 2026 except for Fannin Airport monitor well (NWFID 697), which continued to increase throughout the month (**Figure 29**). Pittman VISA Floridan monitor well (NWFID 5266) in eastern Jackson County remained classified as much-below-normal as groundwaters continued to decline (**Figure 27**). At USGS-422A Near Greenhead Floridan monitor well (NWFID 3216) in southeastern Washington County, groundwater levels declined enough to be considered below-normal by the end of January 2026 for the first time since June 2013. Groundwater levels at Still upper Floridan monitor well (NWFID 5417) in northern Walton County and Sand Hill upper Floridan monitor well (NWFID 5597) in northwestern Okaloosa County continued to decline and remained classified as much-below-normal.

Of three sand-and-gravel aquifer monitor wells, one well, Allen Tower Deep monitor well (NWFID 5401), had water levels classified as within normal ranges in mid-December 2025. Water levels at Weller Ave Deep monitor well (NWFID 1382) in southern Escambia County remained generally stable in above-normal ranges (**Figure 30**). The Oak Grove Deep monitor well (NWFID 5479) continued to record below normal groundwater levels, as it has for several months (**Figure 24**).



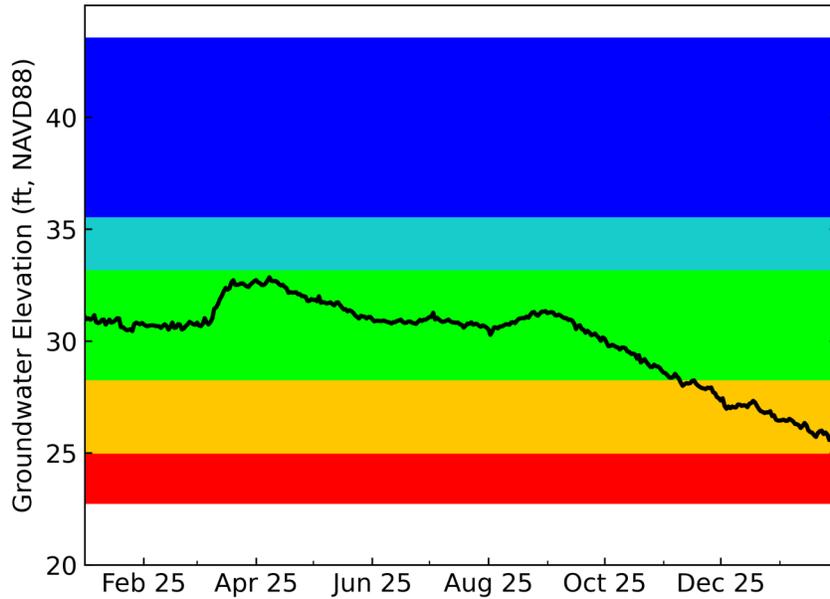
**Figure 24: Monitor wells and aquifer level percentiles for mid-January 2025**

Percentile class rankings are based on each well's period of record. All wells have a minimum of 20 years of data.



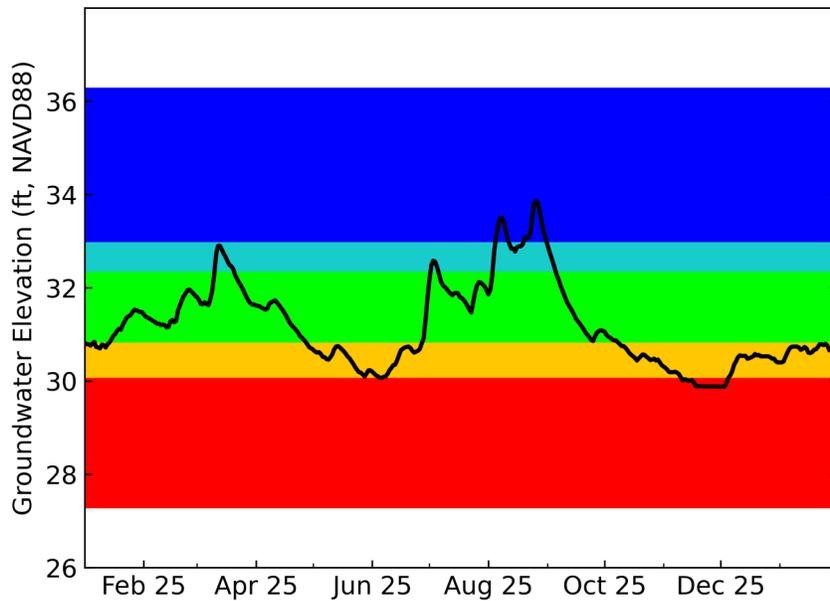
**Figure 25: Daily upper Floridan aquifer levels at USGS-Lake Jackson well (NWFID 3402), Leon County**

Land surface elevation is 121.40 ft, NAVD 88



**Figure 26: Daily upper Floridan aquifer levels at USGS Benchmark well (NWFID 392), Wakulla County**

Land surface elevation is 46.27 ft, NAVD 88

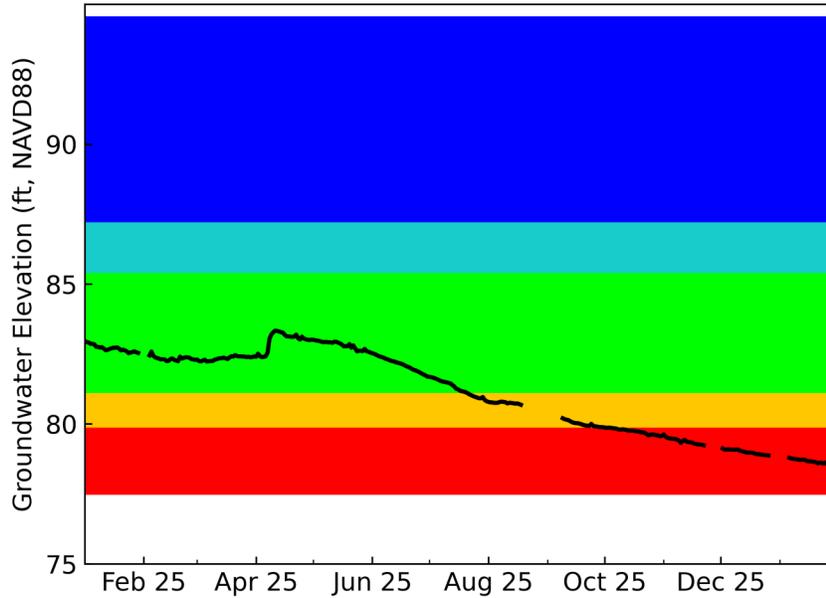


Explanation - Percentile classes				
< 10	10-24	25-75	76-90	> 90
Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal



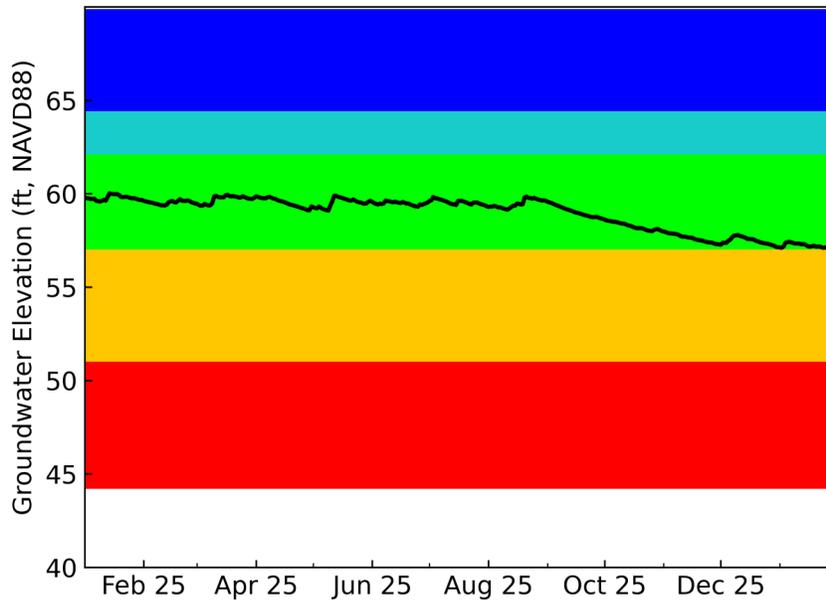
**Figure 27: Daily upper Floridan aquifer levels at NFWMD Pittman Visa well (NWFID 5266), Jackson County**

Land surface elevation is 127.31 ft, NAVD 88



**Figure 28: Daily upper Floridan aquifer levels at USGS-422A Near Greenhead well (NWFID 3216), Washington County**

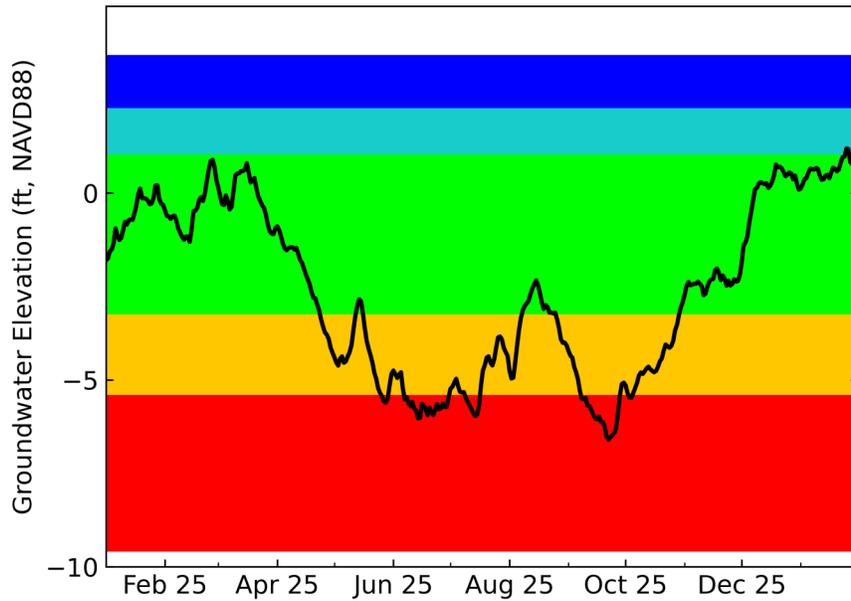
Land surface elevation is 66.75 ft, NAVD 88



Explanation - Percentile classes				
< 10	10-24	25-75	76-90	> 90
Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal

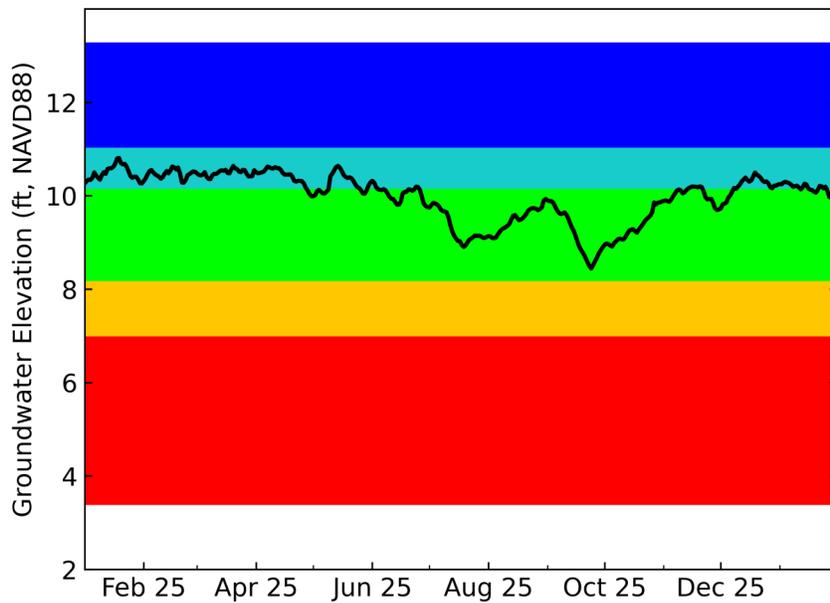
**Figure 29: Daily upper Floridan aquifer levels at Fannin Airport well (NWFID 697), Washington County**

Land surface elevation is 4.05 ft, NAVD 88



**Figure 30: Daily sand-and-gravel aquifer levels at NFWMD Weller Ave Deep well (NWFID 1382), Escambia County**

Land surface elevation is 25.09 ft, NAVD 88



Explanation - Percentile classes				
< 10	10-24	25-75	76-90	> 90
Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal

