

# Drought Indicators Report

Georgia Environmental Protection Division

April 2025

# Background

Pursuant to the Rules for Drought Management, Section 391-3-3-.04 Drought Indicators and Triggers, the Director of EPD monitors climatic indicators and water supply conditions to assess drought occurrence and severity, and its impact upon the ability of public water systems to provide adequate supplies of water. These indicators and conditions January include, but not be limited, to the following:

- U.S. Drought Monitor;
- Precipitation;
- Streamflow;
- Groundwater;
- Reservoir levels;
- Short term climate predictions;
- Soil moisture; and
- Water supply conditions.

# Background

- The Rules require EPD to report on current climatic indicators at least semi-annually or monthly when any part of the state has experienced at least two consecutive months of severe drought.
- This reports compare current conditions to historical levels (and/or reservoir rule curves) for each of the following indicators:
  - Precipitation during the prior 3, 6, and 12 months;
  - Streamflow at the select United States Geological Survey gages;
  - Groundwater levels at select United States Geological Survey monitoring wells; and
  - Reservoir levels at Allatoona Lake, Lake Hartwell, Clarks Hill Lake, and Lake Lanier.
- The following sections of this presentation provide the data and information sources analyzed by EPD in developing this drought indicators report for conditions as of April 10, 2025.

# Drought Indicator Analysis Summary (slide 1 of 2)

- U.S. Drought Monitor – Abnormally Dry (D0, the least intense level) exists in about half areas of GA. Moderate drought (D1) exists in Northeast Corner of GA, Savannah Basin and part of Coastal area. Severe drought (D2) exists in five Counties (Elbert, Lincoln, Wilkes, Columbia and McDuffie).
- Precipitation – Three-month precipitation and six-month precipitation are below normal in all areas of GA. Twelve-month precipitation is below normal in North GA and other two Counties (Bleckley and Pulaski).
- Soil Moisture – Soil moisture conditions are below normal in southeast corner of GA.



# Drought Indicator Analysis Summary (slide 2 of 2)

- **Streamflow** – Stream flows at five selected USGS gages (5 out of 34) are near or above normal. 15 gages are between the lowest 20<sup>th</sup> percentile and median. 10 gages are between the lowest 20<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> percentiles. Two gages (in Coosa and Savannah Basins) are between the lowest 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> percentiles. Two gages (in Tennessee and Oconee Basins) are below the lowest 5<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- **Groundwater Level** – Groundwater levels are above or near normal in two selected wells (2 out of 17). Eight well levels are between the lowest 20<sup>th</sup> percentile and median. Four well levels are between the lowest 20<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> percentiles. Two well levels are below the lowest 5<sup>th</sup> percentile (one in Crystalline Rocks Aquifer in Chattahoochee Basin, the other in Valley and Ridge Aquifer in Tennessee Basin). One well data is missing.
- **Reservoir Levels** – At the end of March, all federal reservoirs in GA are at levels above or near their respective top of conservation (normal) pools. ACF composite storage is full.
- **Short-term Climate Prediction** – National Climatic Prediction Center projects above normal temperature statewide and equal chance of precipitation statewide in April-June 2025. U.S. Drought Outlook predicts drought removal likely in North GA and Flint Basin, and drought persists in Savannah Basin and part of Coastal area in April-June 2025.
- **Water Supplies** – No issues with water availability to water supply providers were reported.

# US Drought Monitor

Data Source:

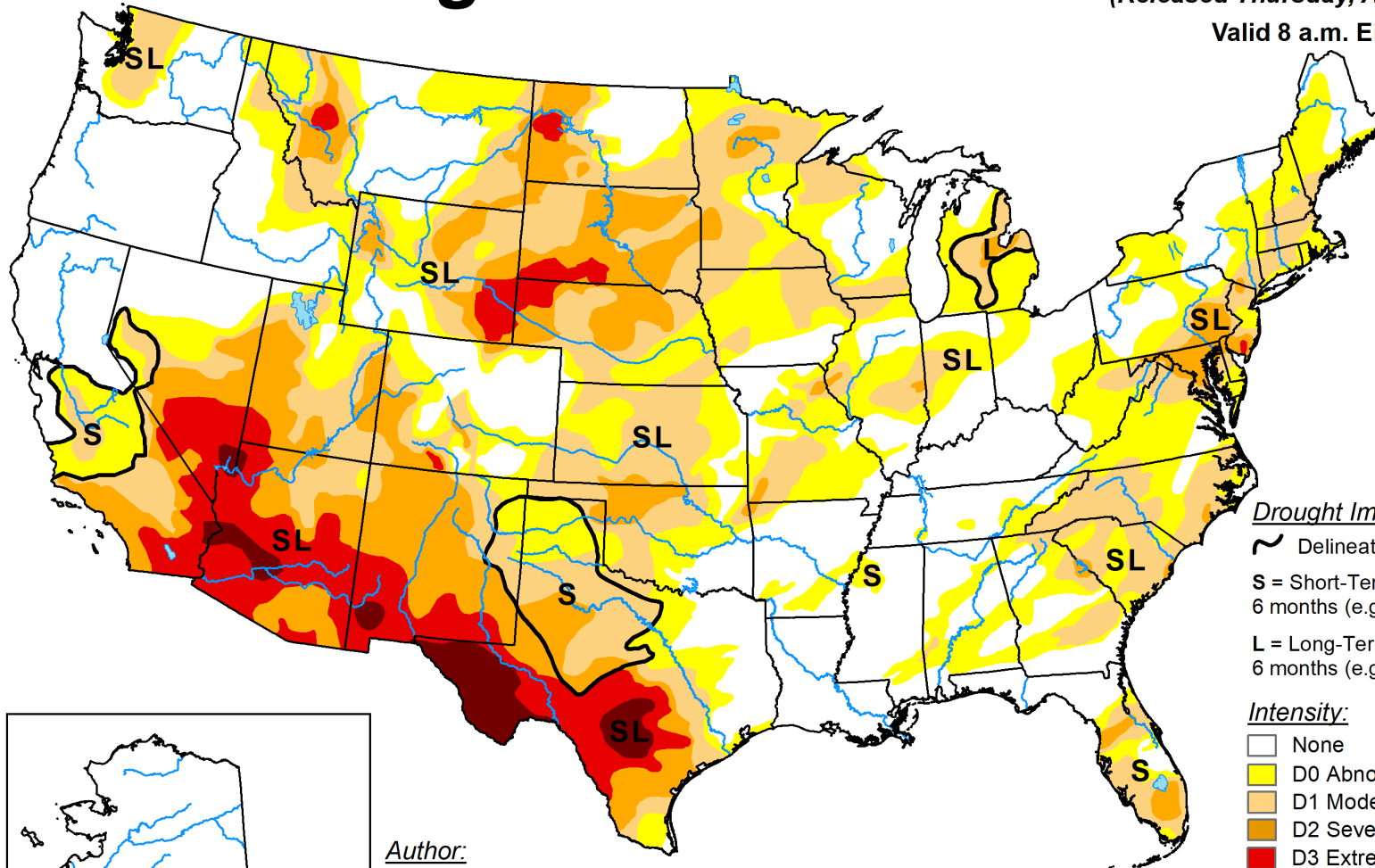
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

# U.S. Drought Monitor

April 1, 2025

(Released Thursday, Apr. 3, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT



## Drought Impact Types:

~ Delineates dominant impacts

**S** = Short-Term, typically less than 6 months (e.g. agriculture, grasslands)

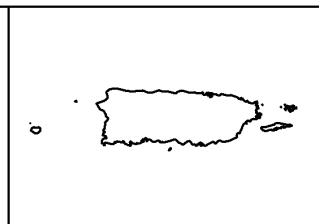
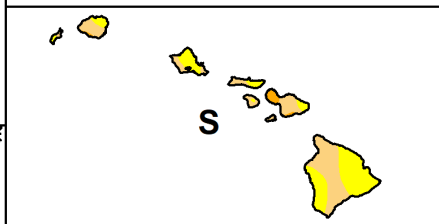
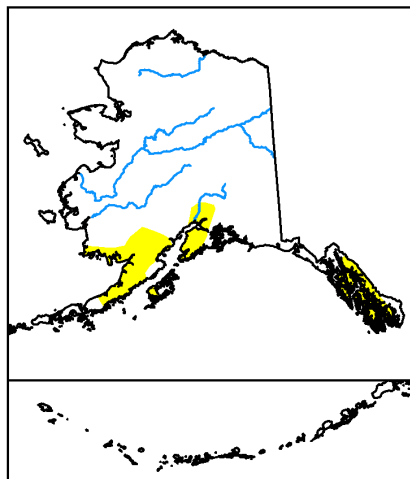
**L** = Long-Term, typically greater than 6 months (e.g. hydrology, ecology)

## Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

## Author:

David Simeral  
Western Regional Climate Center



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>



[droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

# U.S. Drought Monitor

## Georgia

**April 1, 2025**

(Released Thursday, Apr. 3, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

*Drought Conditions (Percent Area)*

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	46.34	53.66	23.04	1.48	0.00	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> 03-25-2025	39.45	60.55	26.76	1.35	0.00	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> 12-31-2024	67.60	32.40	9.35	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> 01-07-2025	56.32	43.68	11.40	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Water Year</b> 10-01-2024	98.35	1.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>One Year Ago</b> 04-02-2024	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

### Intensity:

 None	 D2 Severe Drought
 D0 Abnormally Dry	 D3 Extreme Drought
 D1 Moderate Drought	 D4 Exceptional Drought

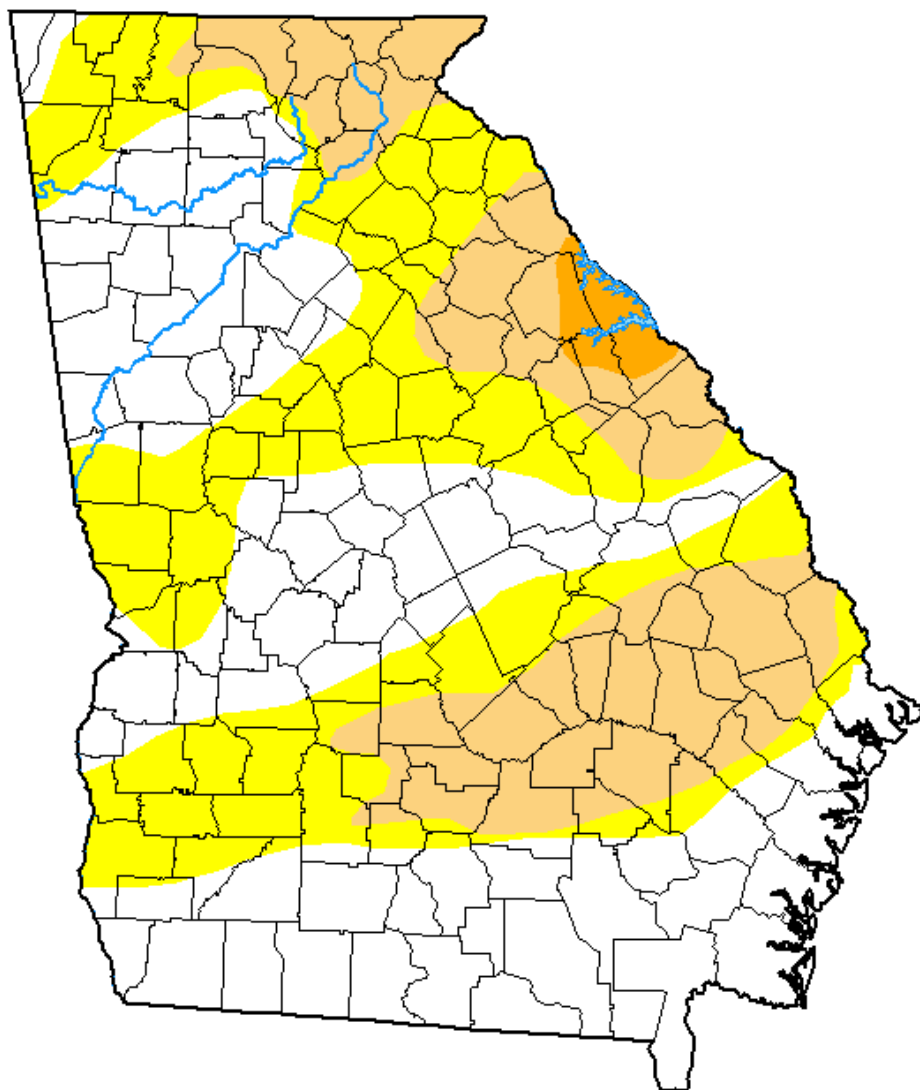
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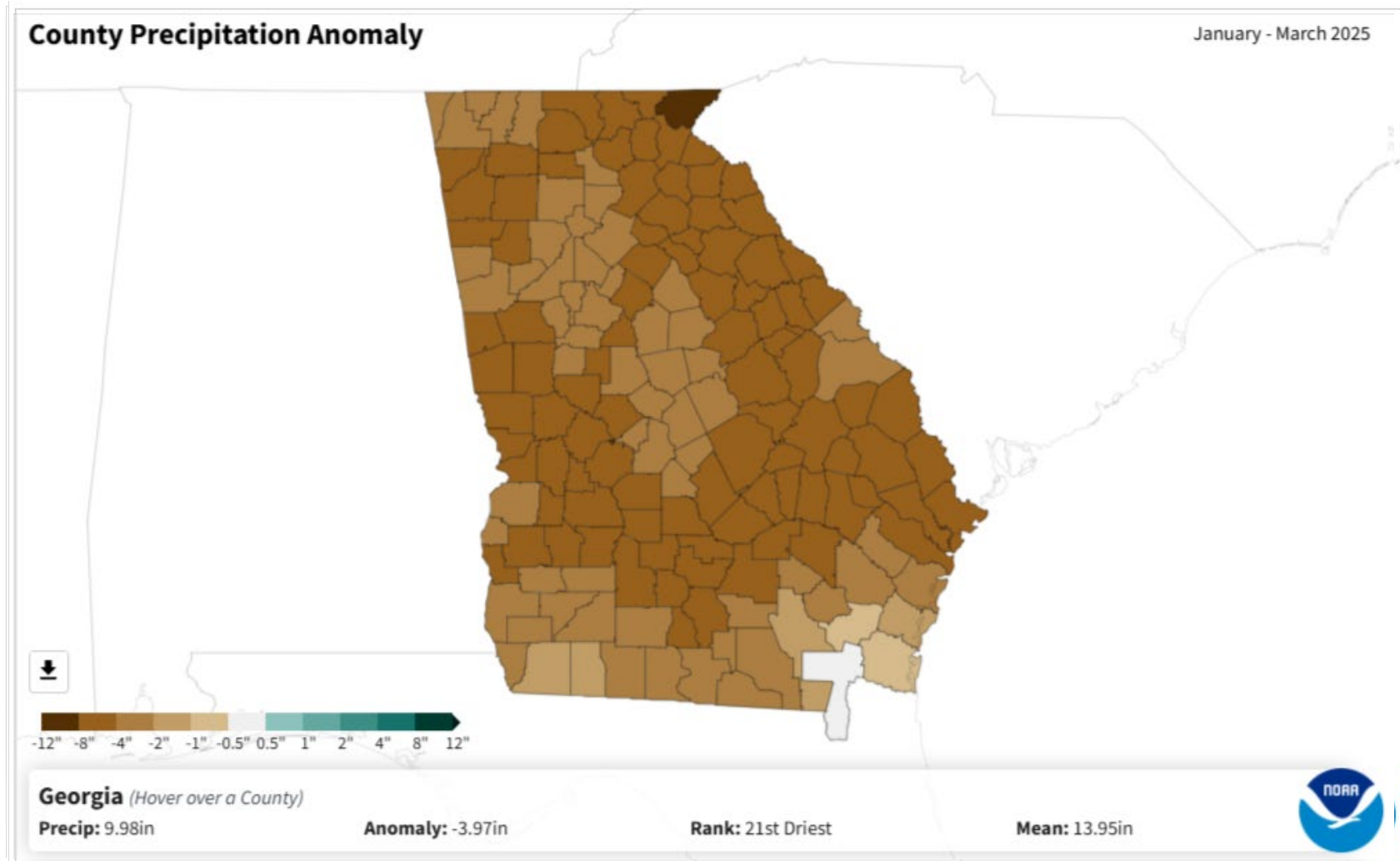


# 3, 6, and 12 Month Precipitation Anomaly

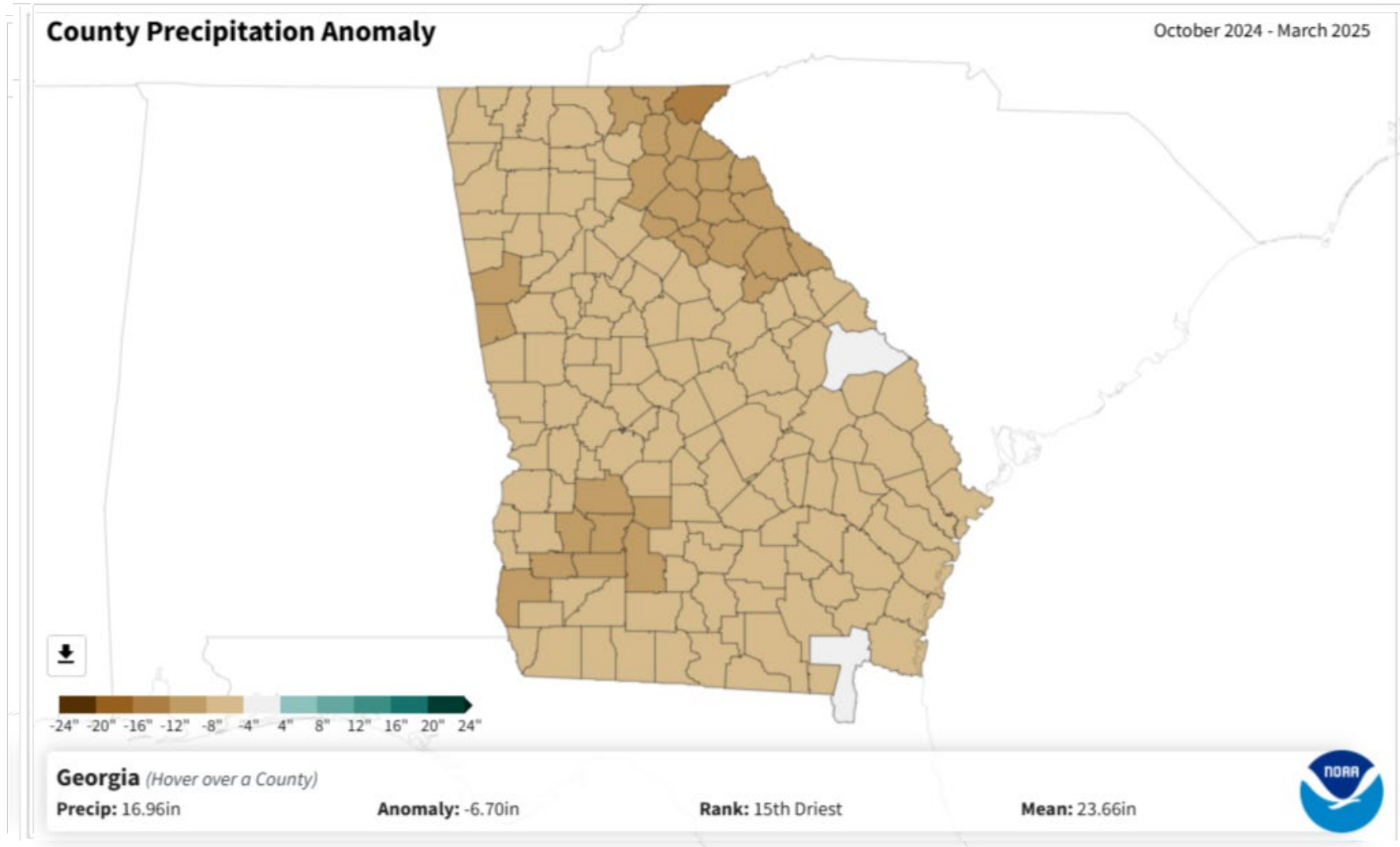
Data Source:

<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/county/mapping/>

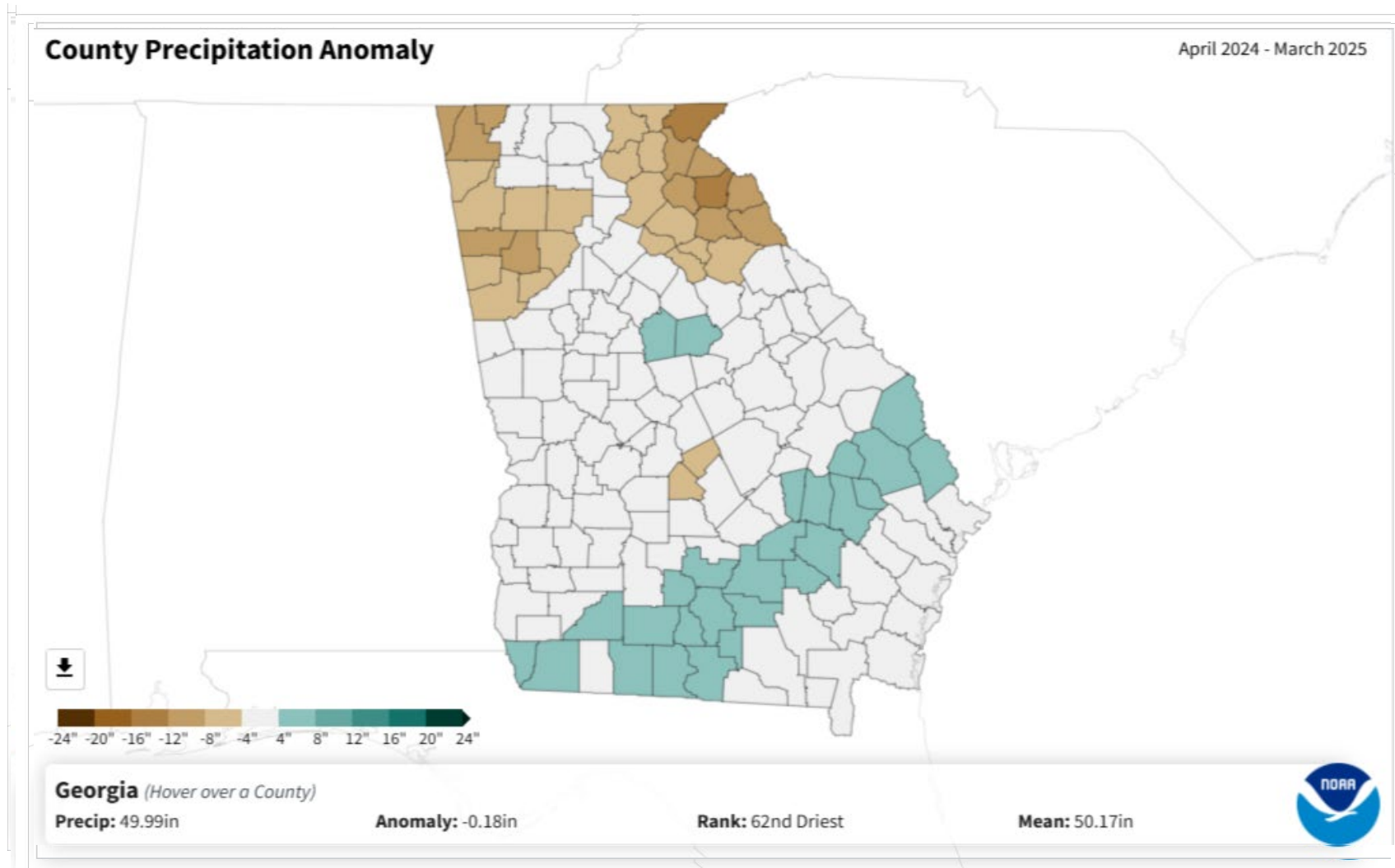
# 3 Month Precipitation Anomaly



# 6 Month Precipitation Anomaly



# 12 Month Precipitation Anomaly



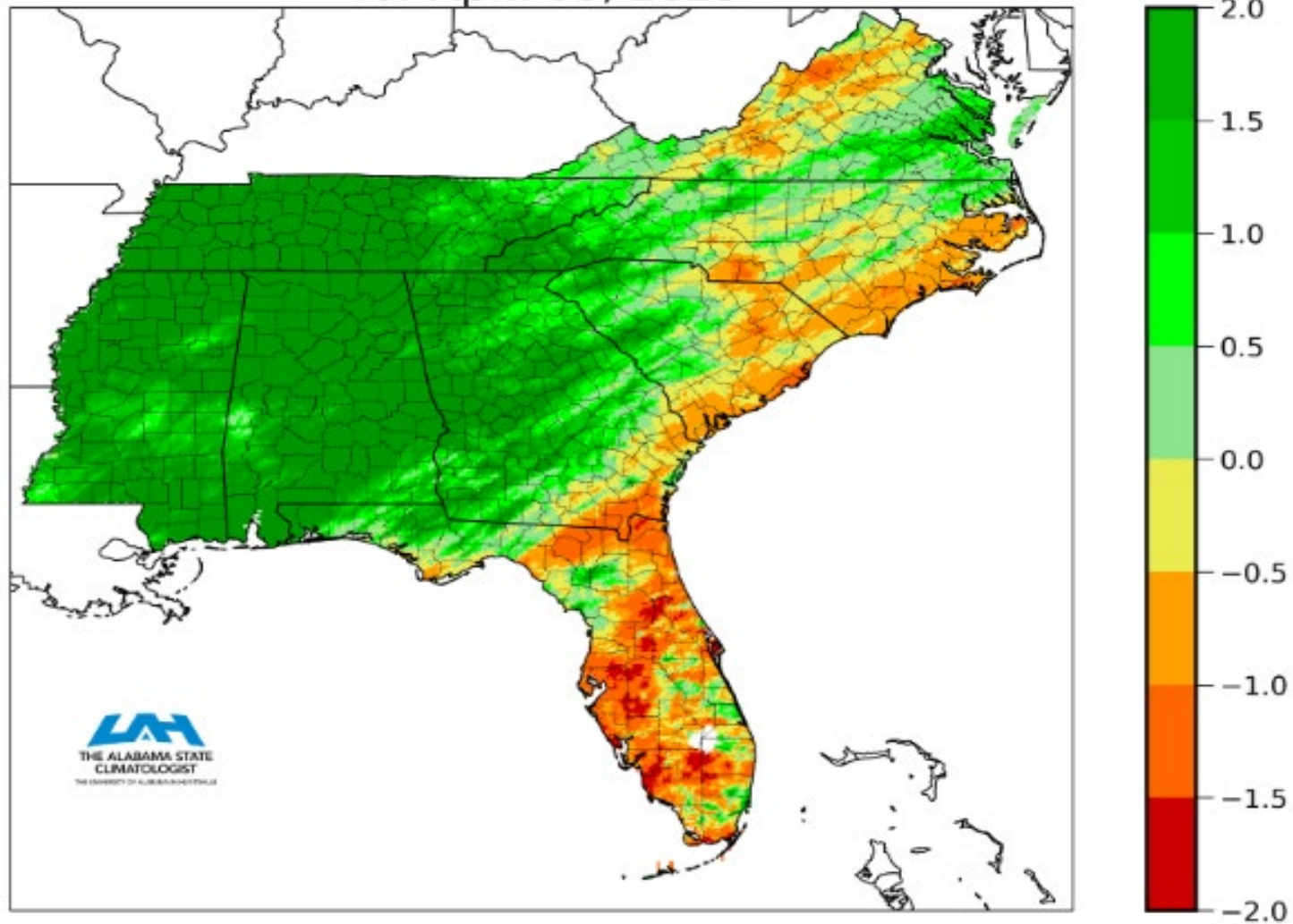


# Soil Moisture Conditions

Data Source:

[http://www.hydro.ucla.edu/SurfaceWaterGroup/forecast/monitor/curr/conus.mexico/east.vic.sm\\_qnt.gif](http://www.hydro.ucla.edu/SurfaceWaterGroup/forecast/monitor/curr/conus.mexico/east.vic.sm_qnt.gif)

## Lawn-and-Garden Moisture Index for April 08, 2025



Current (Daily updated) percentiles for soil moisture (SWE) with respect to the climatological period (1916-2004).

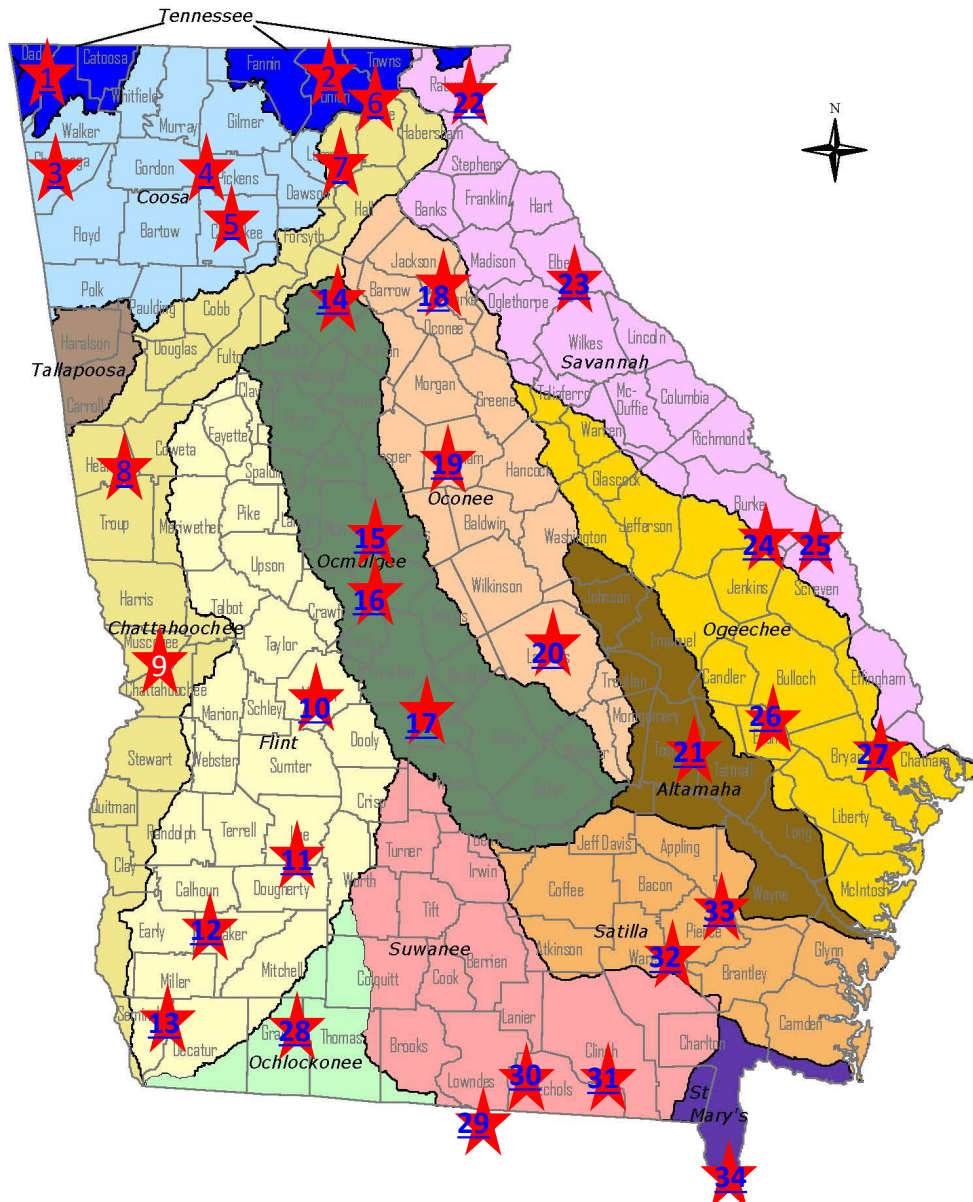
# Streamflow Conditions

Data Source: USGS

# Streamflow Monitoring

- As shown on the following slide, EPD Monitors 34 USGS stream gages in 13 of the State's major river basins to assess drought conditions.
- These gages were selected because each has:
  - Long-term and relatively complete records for recent decades; and
  - Relatively low consumptive water use implications and streamflows are not heavily influenced by dams.
- Note: Hydrologic conditions of major rivers with streamflows that are heavily influenced by dams can be assessed by reviewing status of major storage reservoirs

# Georgia's 14 River Basins



## USGS Stream Gages Monitored by EPD to Assess Drought Conditions

<u>GAGE#</u>	<u>BASIN</u>	<u>GAGE NAME</u>
1	TENNESSEE	LOOKOUT CREEK NEAR NEW ENGLAND
2	TENNESSEE	NOTTELY RIVER NEAR BLAIRSVILLE
3	COOSA	CHATTOOGA RIVER AT SUMMERVILLE
4	COOSA	TALKING ROCK CREEK NEAR HINTON
5	COOSA	ETOWAH RIVER AT CANTON
6	CHATTAHOOCHEE	CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER AT CORNELIA
7	CHATTAHOOCHEE	CHESTATEE RIVER NEAR DAHLONEGA
8	CHATTAHOOCHEE	NEW RIVER AT GA 100 NEAR CORINTH
9	CHATTAHOOCHEE	UPATOI CREEK AT COLUMBUS
10	FLINT	FLINT RIVER AT GA26 NEAR MONTEZUMA
11	FLINT	FLINT RIVER AT ALBANY
12	FLINT	ICHAWAYNOCHAWAY CREEK AT MILFORD
13	FLINT	SPRING CREEK NEAR IRON CITY
14	OCMULGEE	ALCOVY RIVER ABOVE COVINGTON
15	OCMULGEE	OCMULGEE RIVER AT MACON
16	OCMULGEE	TUBESOFKEE CREEK NEAR MACON
17	OCMULGEE	TUCSAWHATCHEE CREEK NEAR HAWKINSVILLE
18	OCONEE	MIDDLE OCONEE RIVER NEAR ATHENS
19	OCONEE	LITTLE RIVER NEAR EATONTON
20	OCONEE	OCONEE RIVER AT DUBLIN
21	ALTAMAHA	OHOOPEE RIVER NEAR REIDSVILLE
22	SAVANNAH	CHATTOOGA RIVER NEAR CLAYTON
23	SAVANNAH	BROAD RIVER NEAR BELL
24	SAVANNAH	BEAVERDAM CREEK NEAR SARDIS
25	SAVANNAH	BRIER CREEK AT MILLHAVEN
26	OGEECHEE	CANOOCHEE RIVER NEAR CLAXTON
27	OGEECHEE	OGEECHEE RIVER NEAR EDEN
28	OCHLOCKONEE	OCHLOCKONEE RIVER NEAR THOMASVILLE
29	SUWANEE	WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER NEAR PINETTA FL
30	SUWANEE	ALAPAHA RIVER AT STATENVILLE
31	SUWANEE	SUWANNEE RIVER AT US 441, AT FARGO
32	SATILLA	SATILLA RIVER NEAR WAYCROSS
33	SATILLA	LITTLE SATILLA RIVER NEAR OFFERMAN
34	ST MARY	ST MARYS RIVER NEAR MACCLENNY FL

# Streamflow Graphs

- For each of the 34 gages, EPD has prepared a graph that shows monthly average streamflow from January 2025 through March 2025;
- To help put these streamflow conditions into perspective, for comparison purposes, each graph also shows:
  - Monthly average streamflows for the years 2007 and 2011 when streamflows were at or near recorded low levels across much of the state; and
  - A statistical composite of historical conditions showing the “driest” 50, 20, 10, and 5 percent of all recorded monthly average stream flows at the same gage.

# How to Read the Streamflow Graphs

## Example #1: [Etowah River at Canton](#)

The streamflow graph for Gage #5, [USGS Etowah River gage at Canton](#) shows :

- Average stream flow in March 2025 was 1183 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in March has historically been lower than March 2025 about 18% of the time; 82% of the time in March it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in March 2011 was 1869 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in March has historically been lower than March 2011 about 50-60% of the time; 40-50% of the time in March it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in March 2007 was 1073 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in March has historically been lower than March 2007 about 10~20 % of the time; 80~90 % of the time in March it has been higher.

# How to Read the Streamflow Graphs

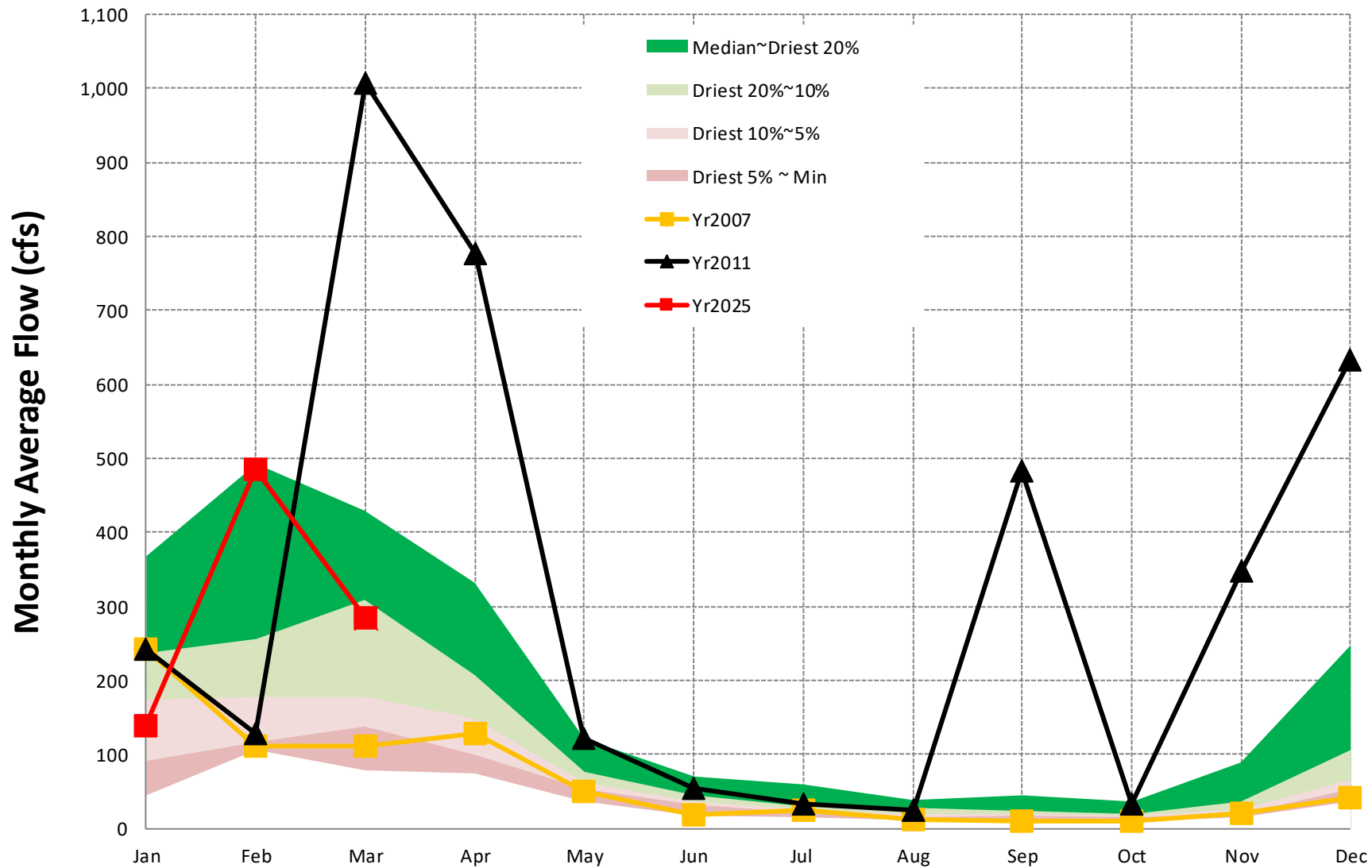
## Example #2: [Flint River at Albany](#)

The streamflow graph for Gage #11, [USGS Flint River gage at Albany](#) shows:

- Average stream flow in March 2025 was 6893 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in March has historically been lower than March 2025 about 27% of the time; about 73% of the time in January it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in March 2011 was 5466 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in March has historically been lower than March 2011 about 10~20 % of the time; about 80~90% of the time in March it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in March 2007 was 5568 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in March has historically been lower than March 2007 about 10~20% of the time; about 80~90% of the time in March it has been higher.

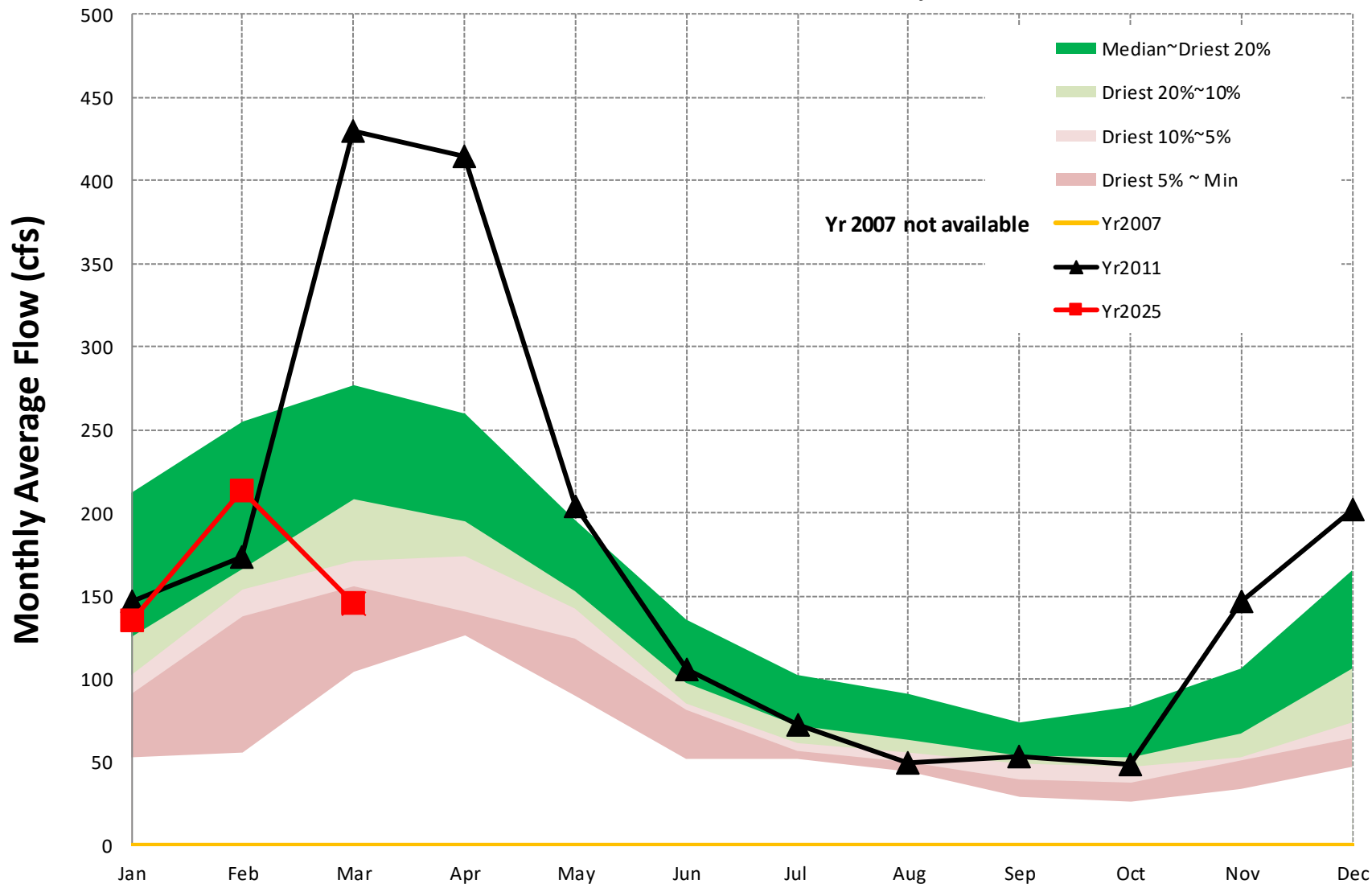


## Gage #1. USGS #03568933, Tennessee Basin, LOOKOUT CREEK NEAR NEW ENGLAND, GA



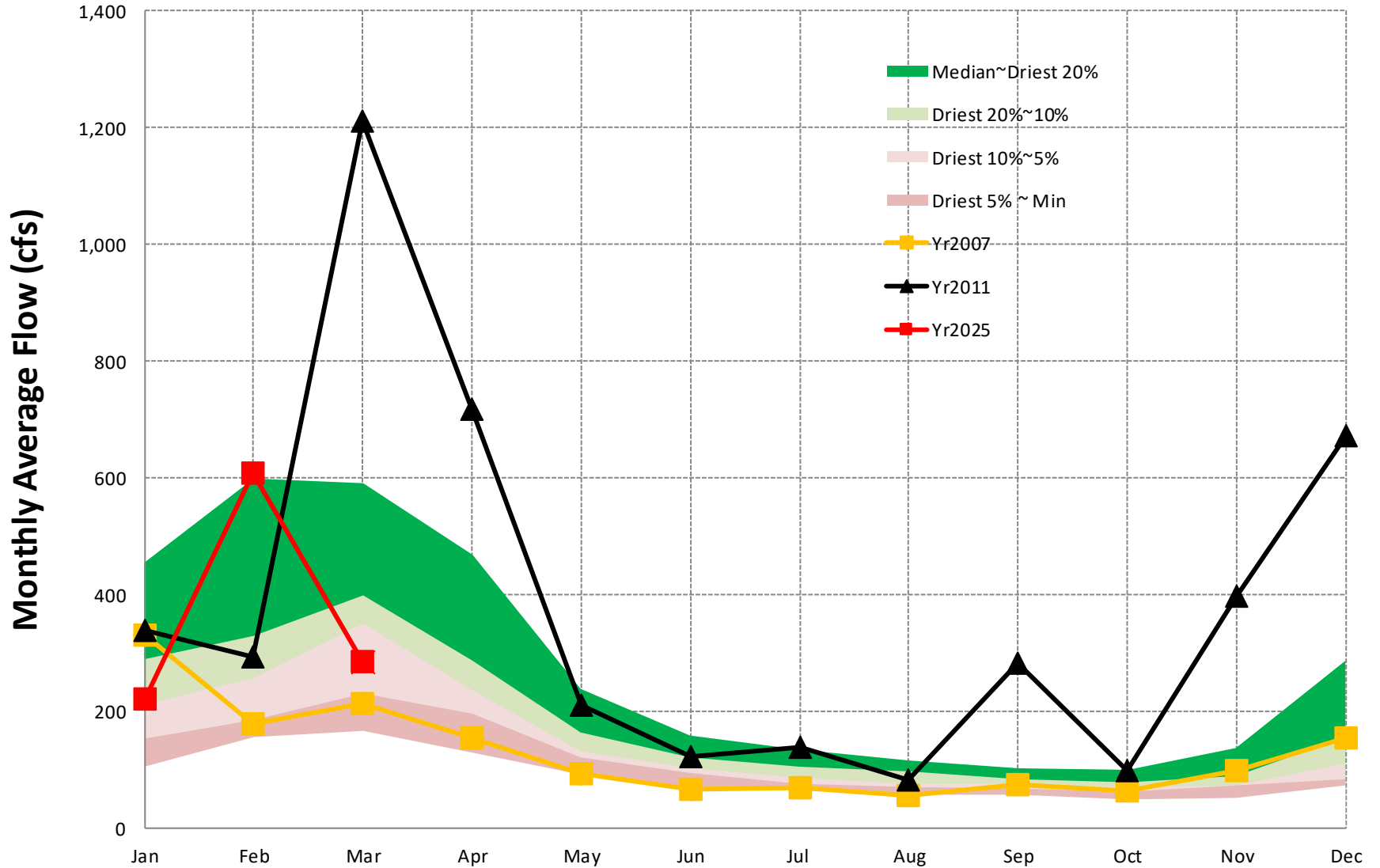
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## Gage #2, USGS #03550500, Tennessee Basin, NOTTELY RIVER NEAR BLAIRSVILLE, GA



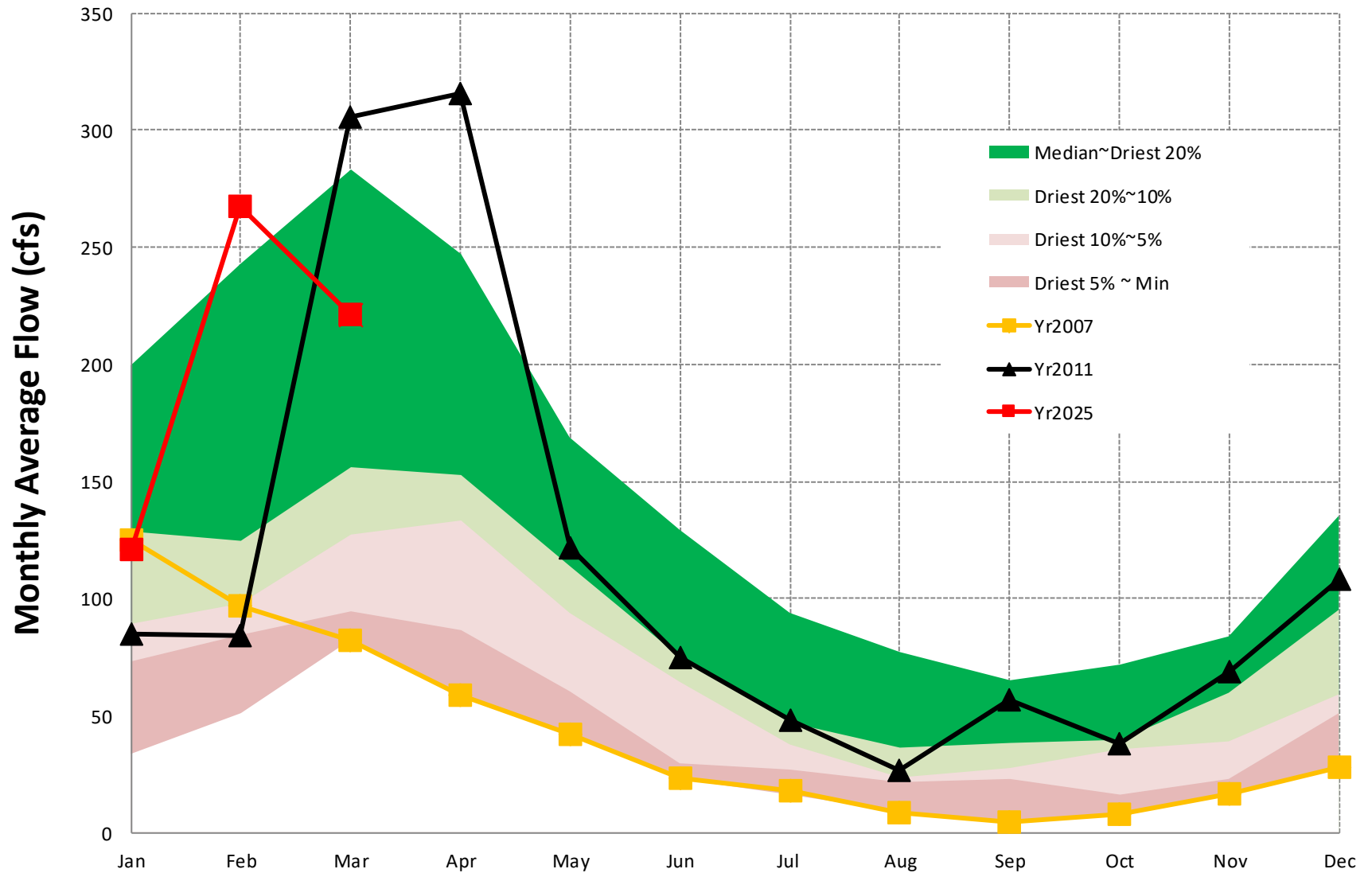
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### Gage #3. USGS #02398000, Coosa Basin, Chattooga River at Summerville, GA



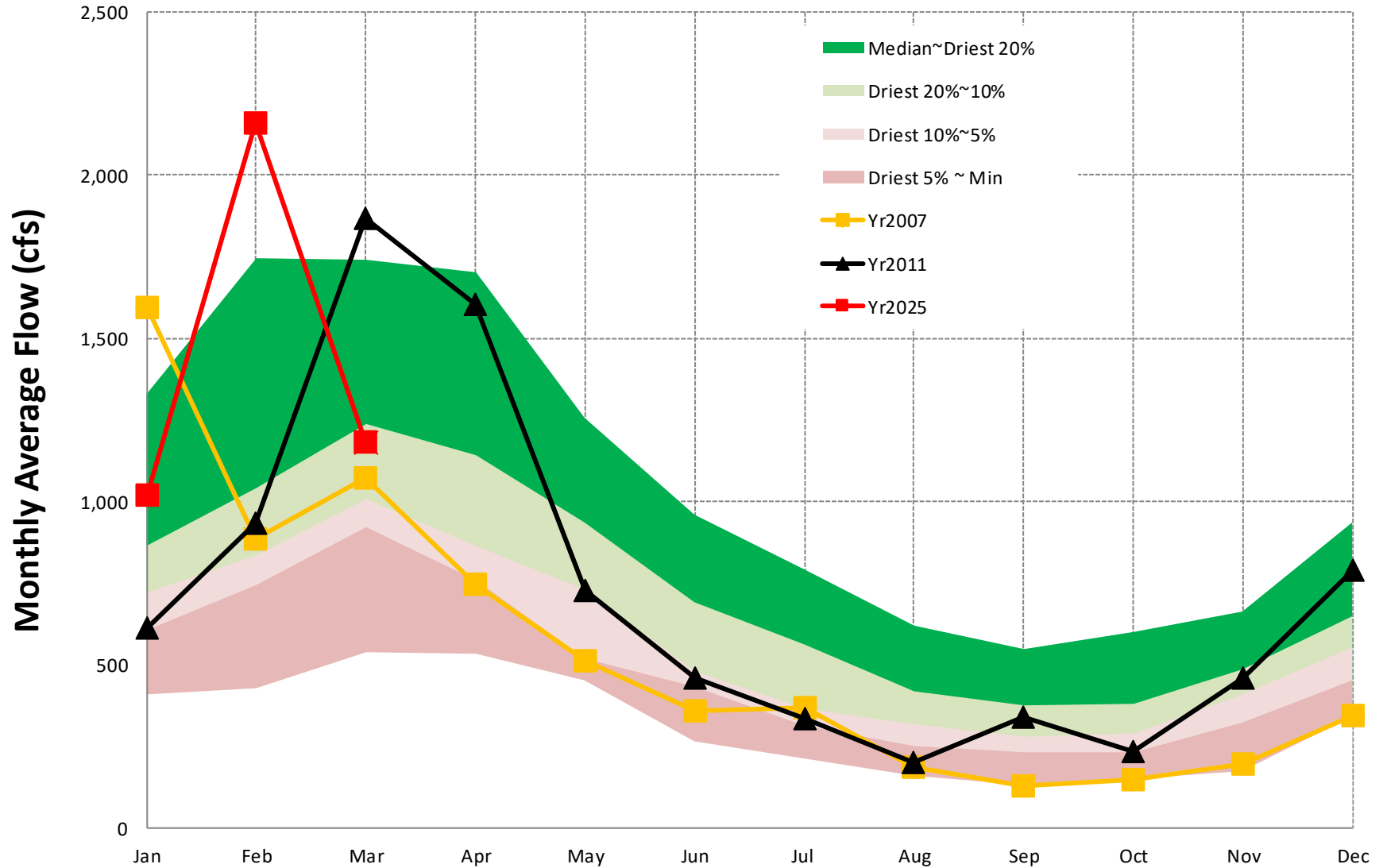
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# Gage #4, USGS #02382200, Coosa Basin, TALKING ROCK CREEK NEAR HINTON, GA



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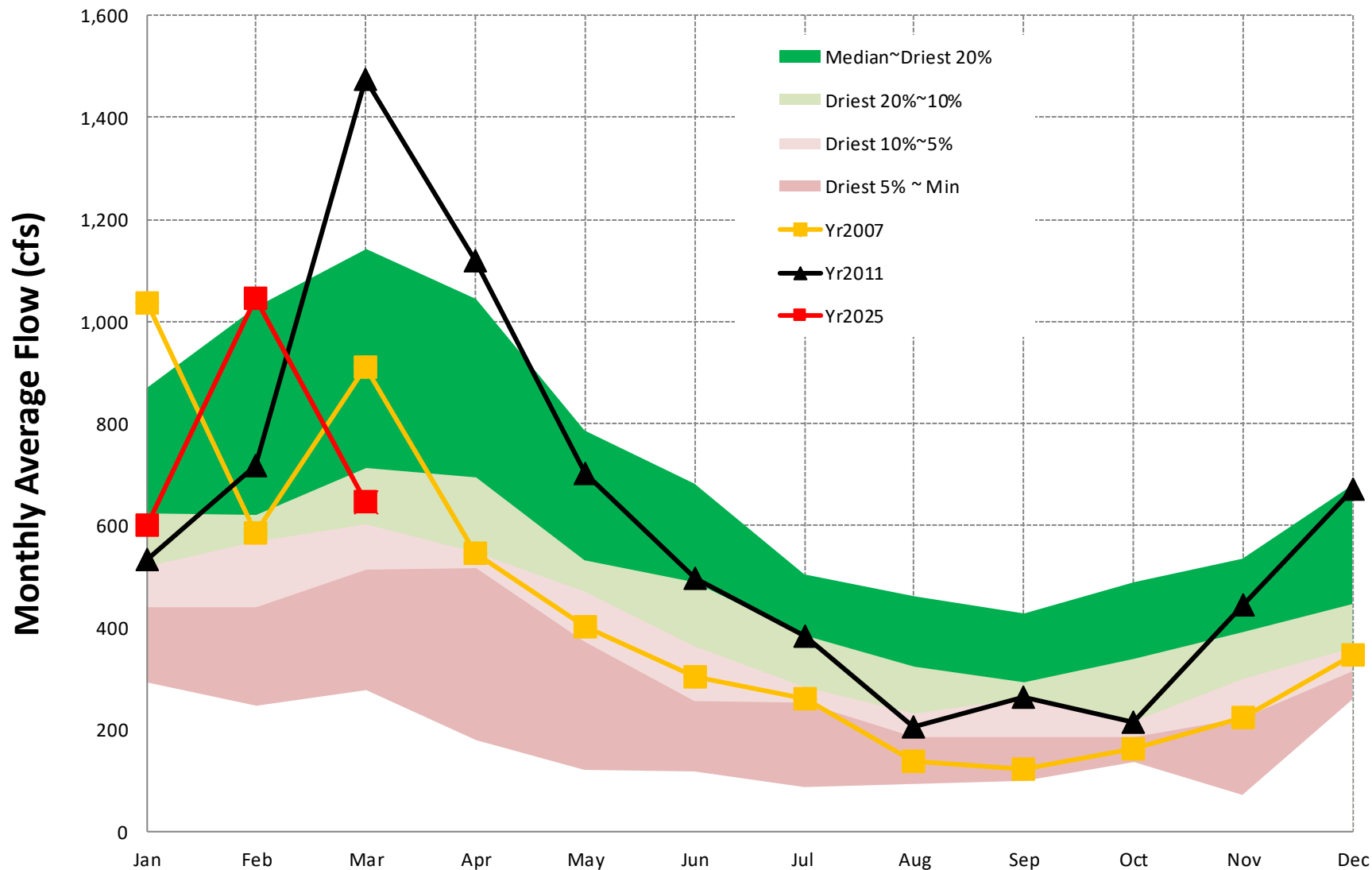
## Gage #5, USGS #02392000, Coosa Basin, Etowah River at Canton, GA



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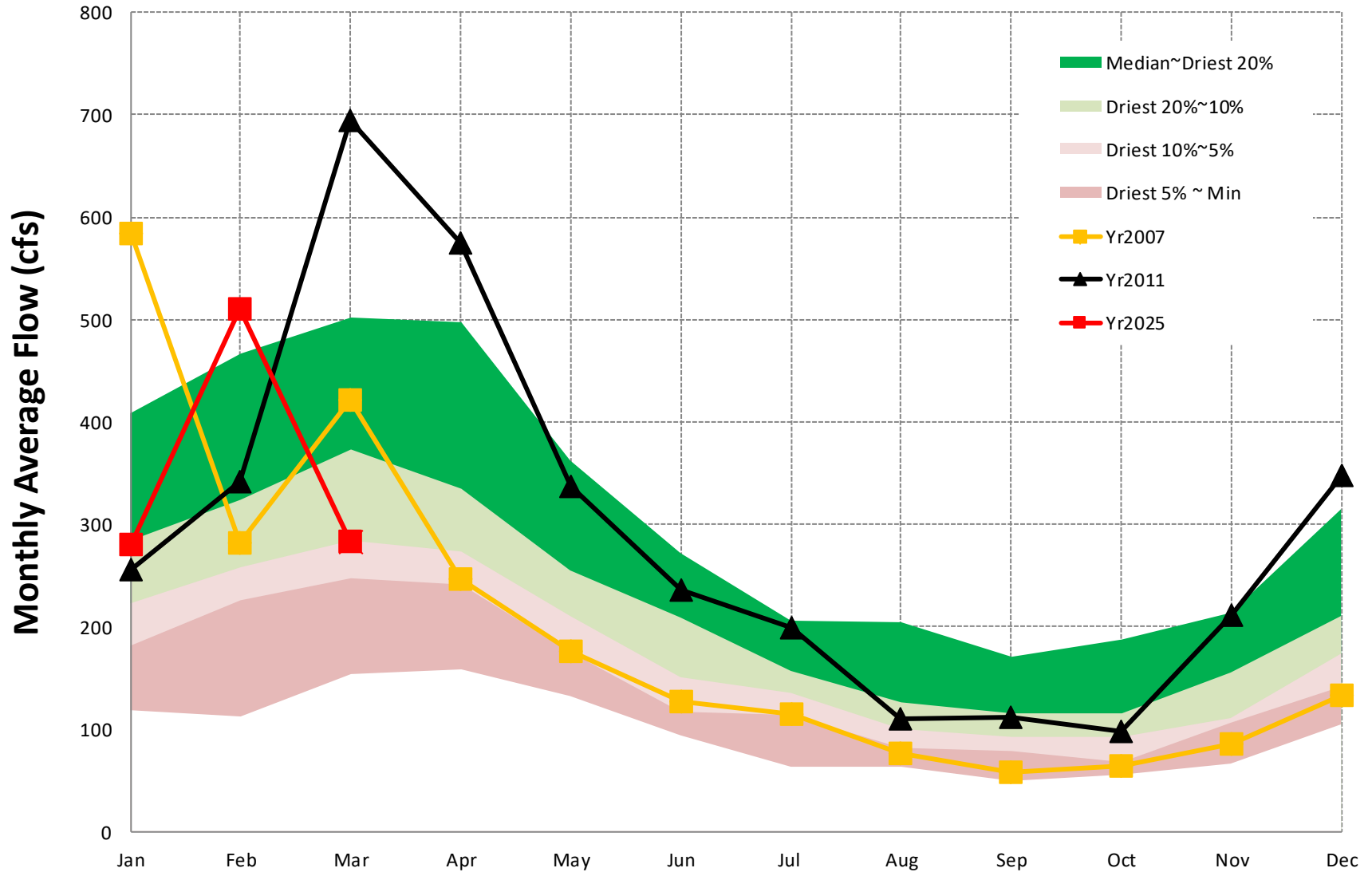
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## Gage #6, USGS #02331600, Chatthoochee Basin, CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER AT CORNELIA, GA



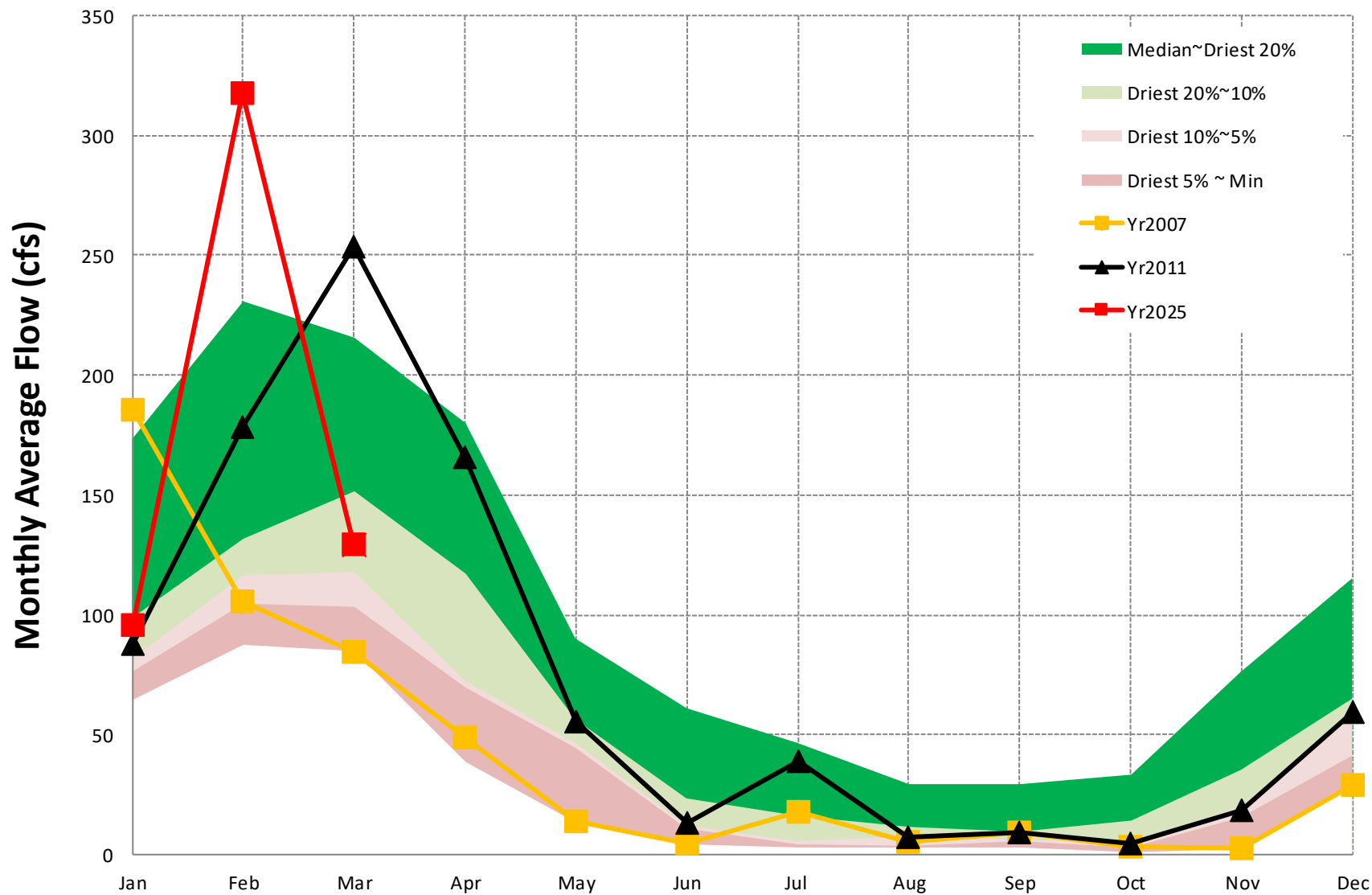
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# Gage #7, USGS #02333500, Chatahoochee Basin, CHESTATEE RIVER NEAR DAHLONEGA, GA



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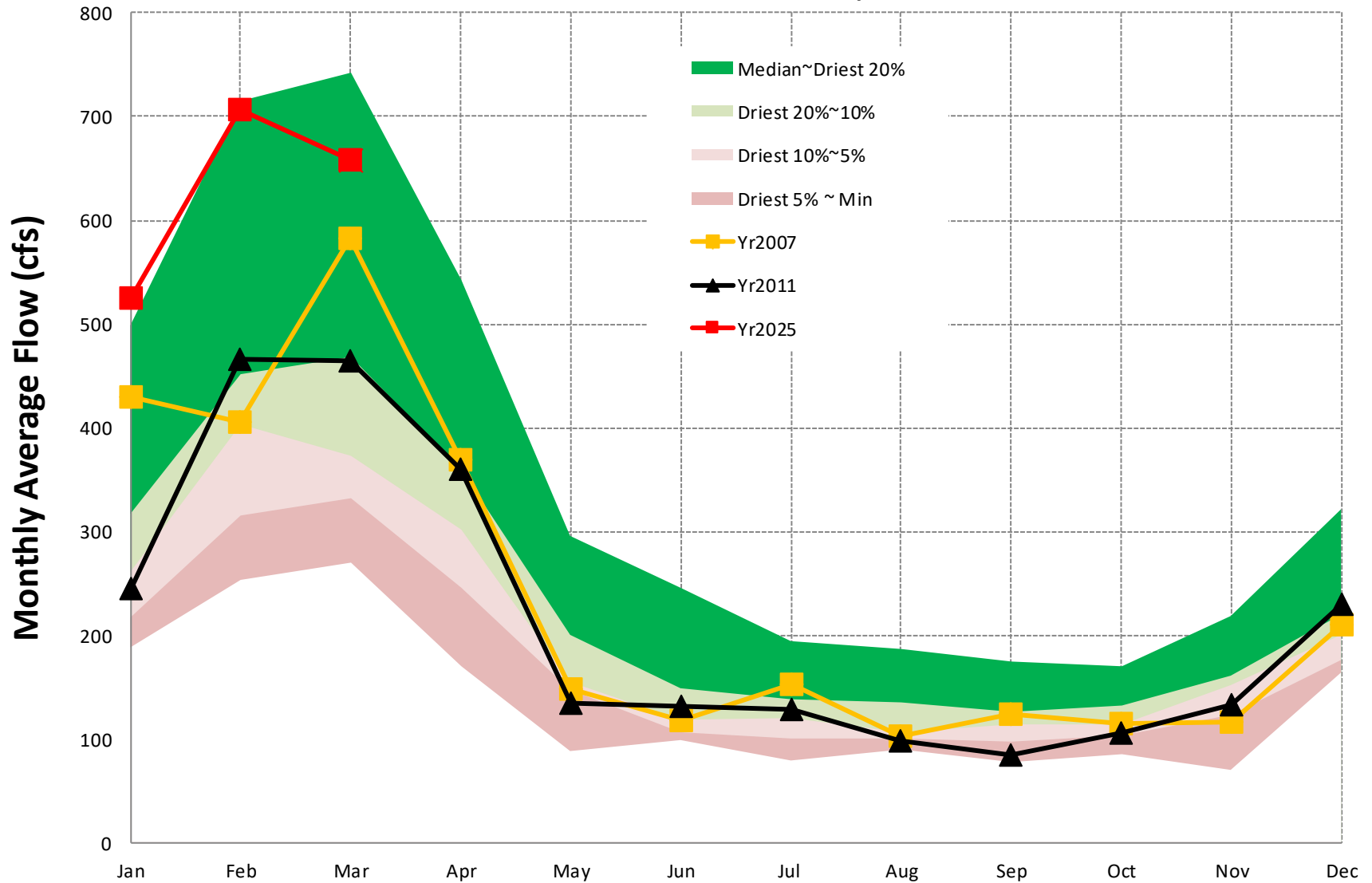
**Gage #8, USGS #02338660, Chattahoochee Basin,  
NEW RIVER AT GA 100, NEAR CORINTH**



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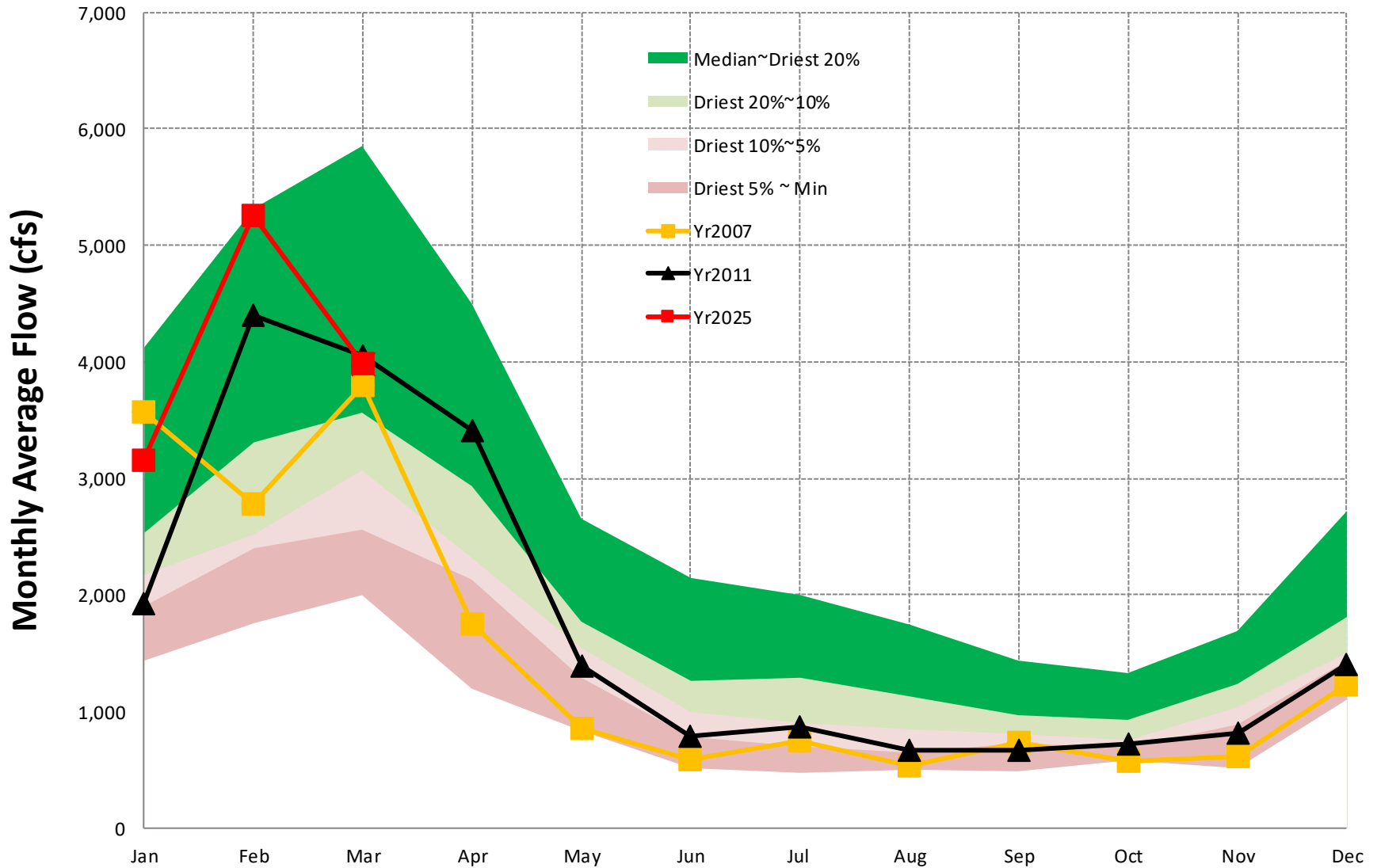


# Gage #9, USGS #02341800, Chattahoochee Basin, UPatoi CREEK NEAR COLUMBUS, GA



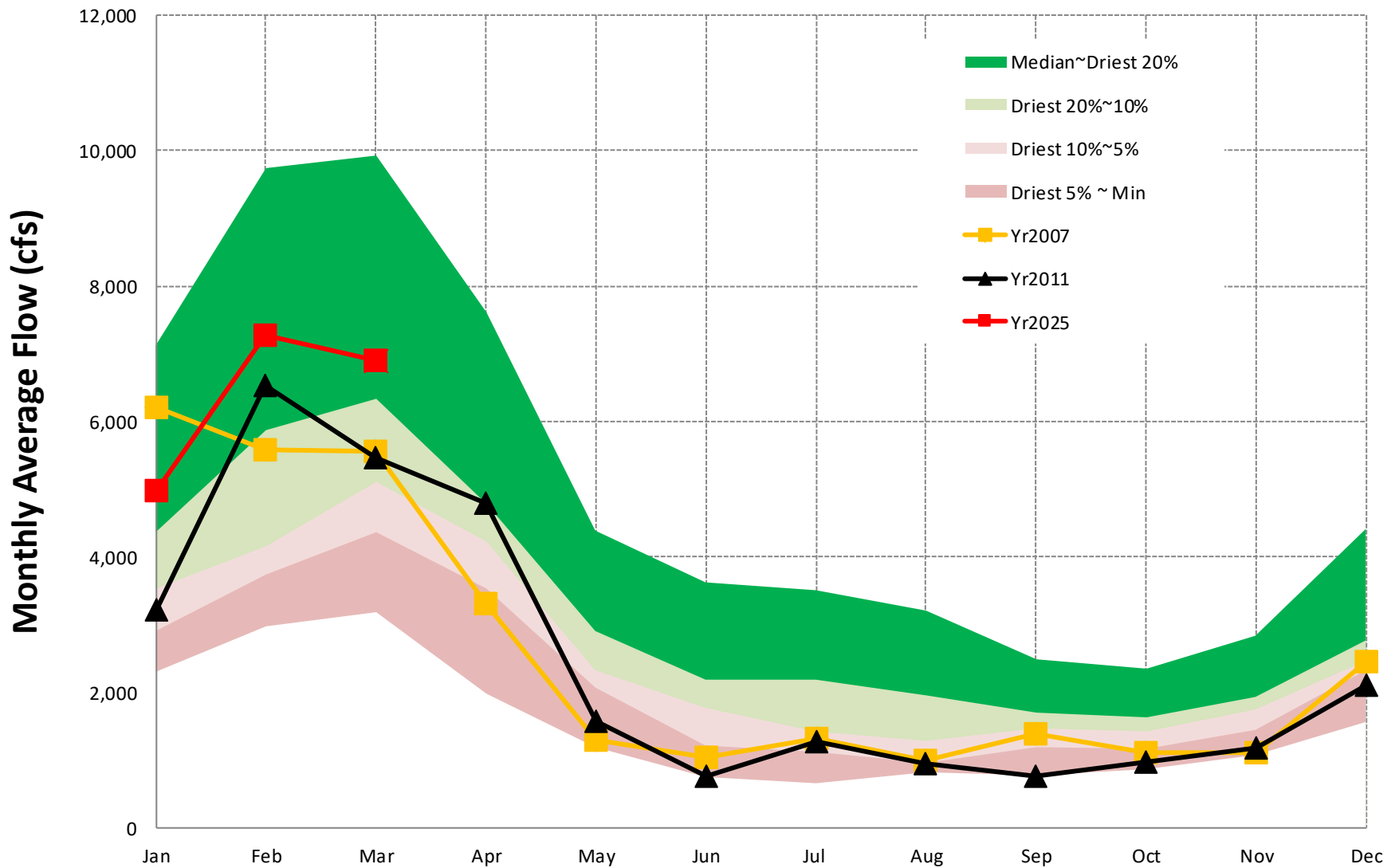
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**Gage #10. USGS #02349605, Flint Basin,  
FLINT RIVER AT GA26 NEAR MONTEZUMA, GA**



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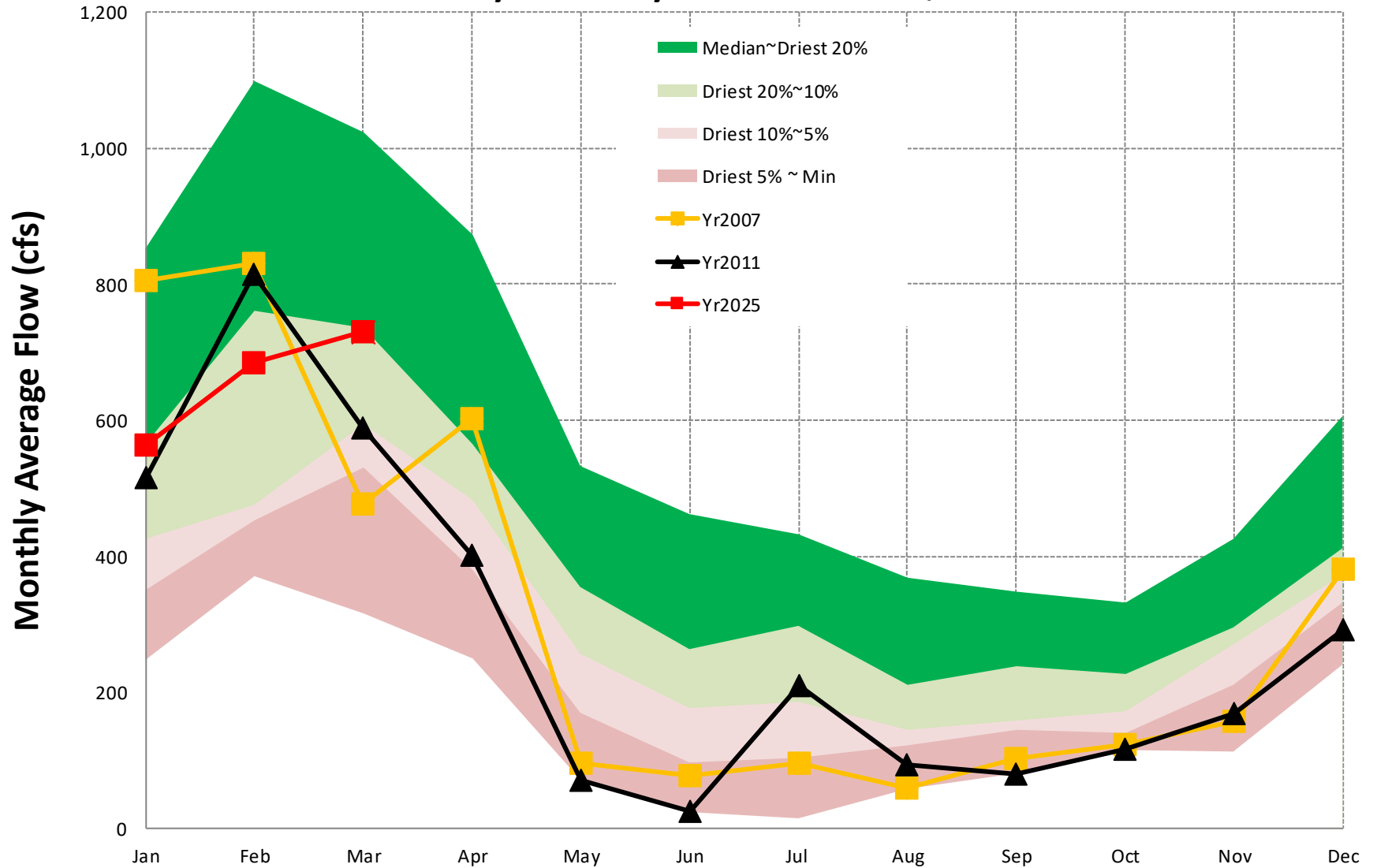
# Gage #11, USGS #02352500, Flint Basin, FLINT RIVER AT ALBANY, GA



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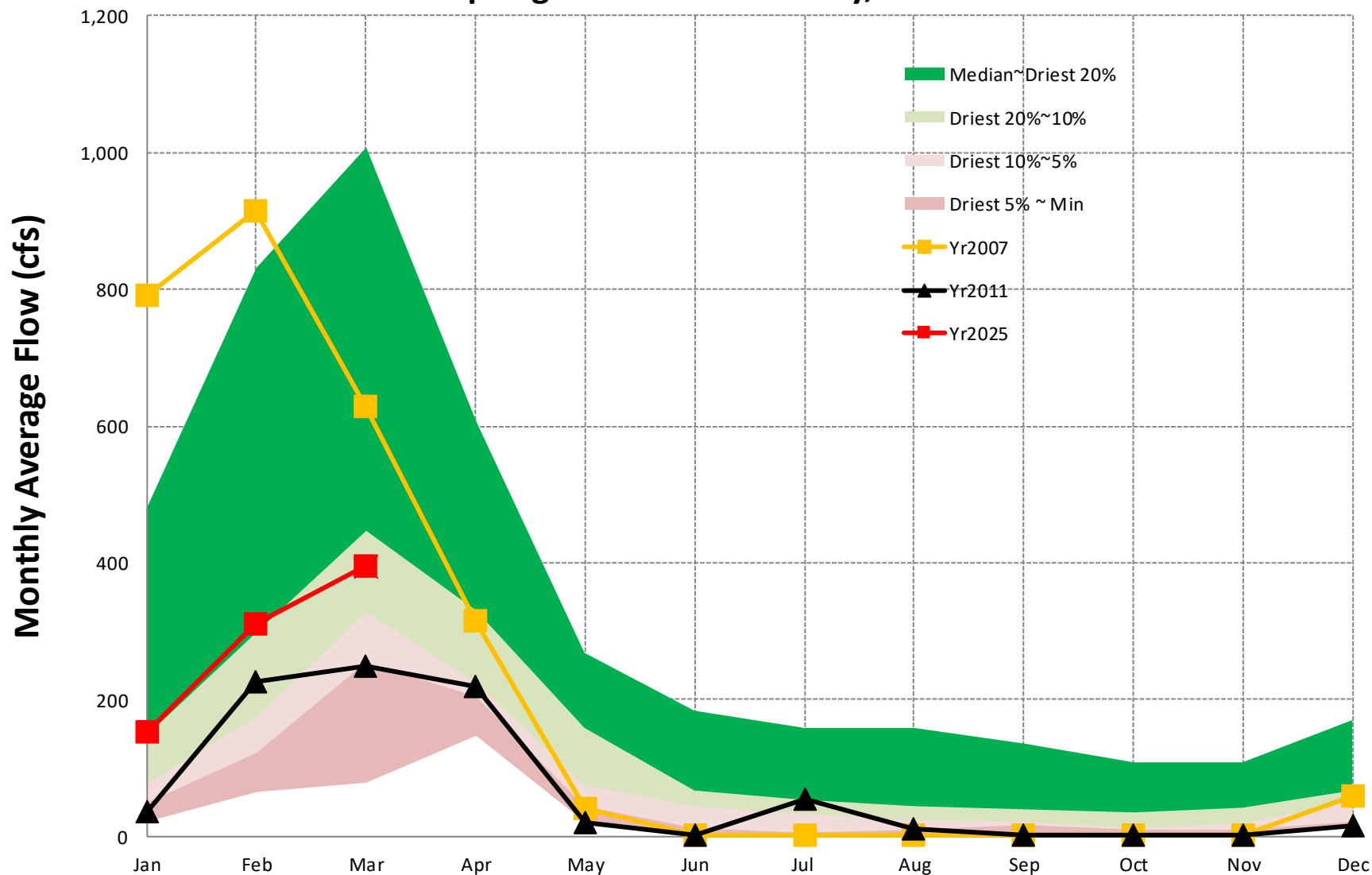
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## Gage #12. USGS #02353500, Flint Basin, Ichawaynochaway Creek at Milford, GA



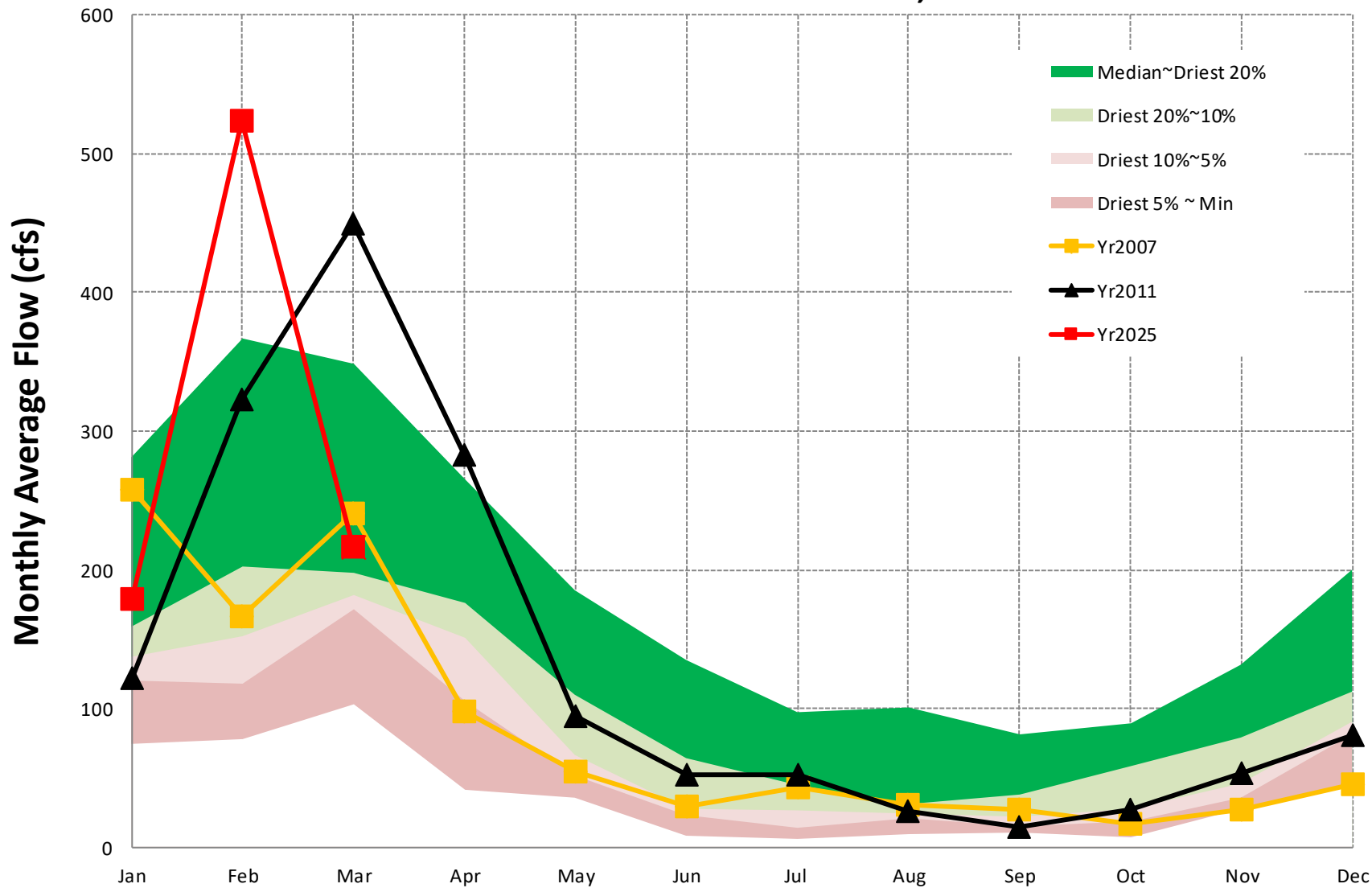
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# Gage #13. USGS #02357000, Flint River, Spring Creek near Iron City, GA



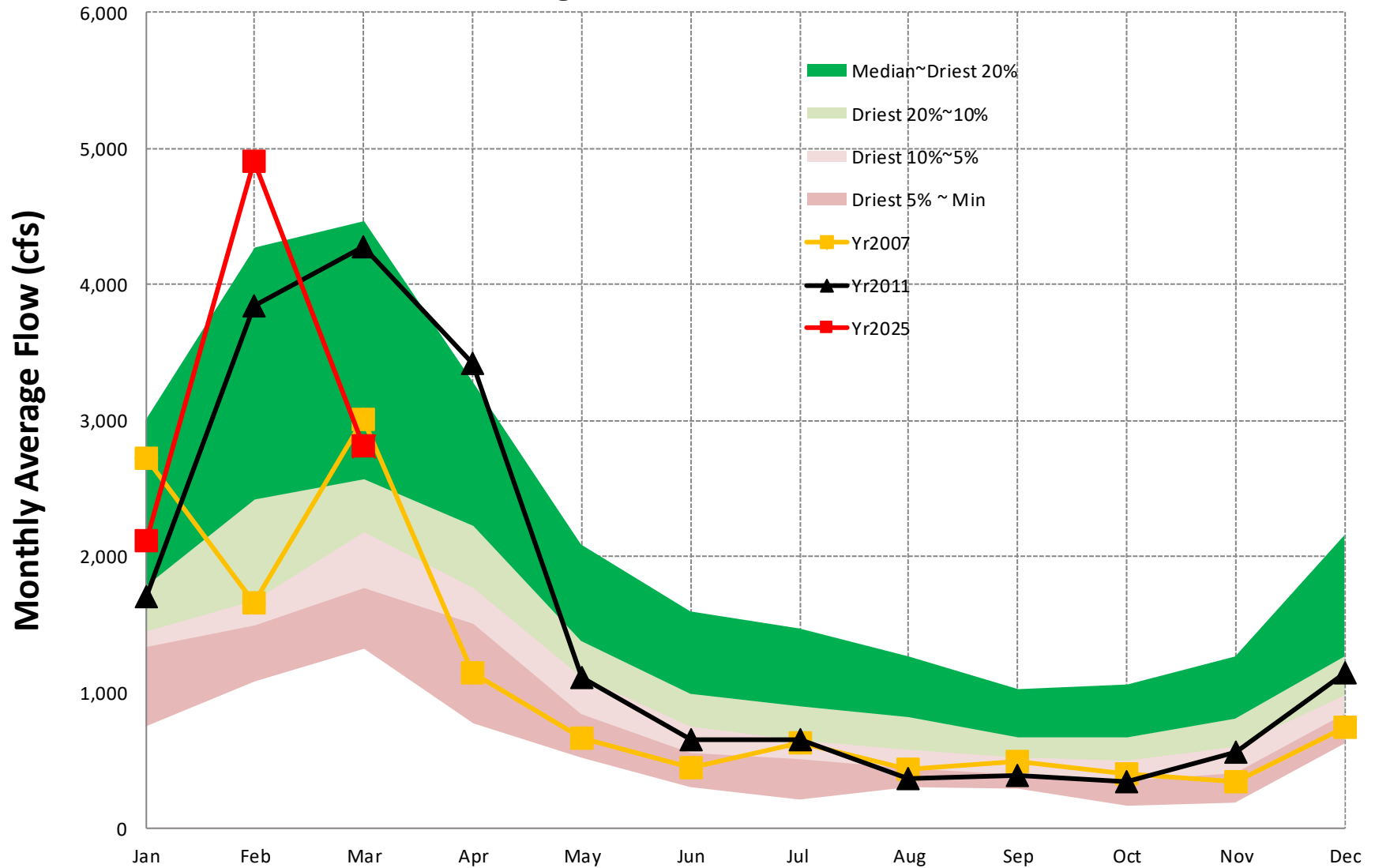
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**Gage #14. USGS #02208450, Ocumulgee Basin,  
ALCOVY RIVER above COVINGTON, GA**



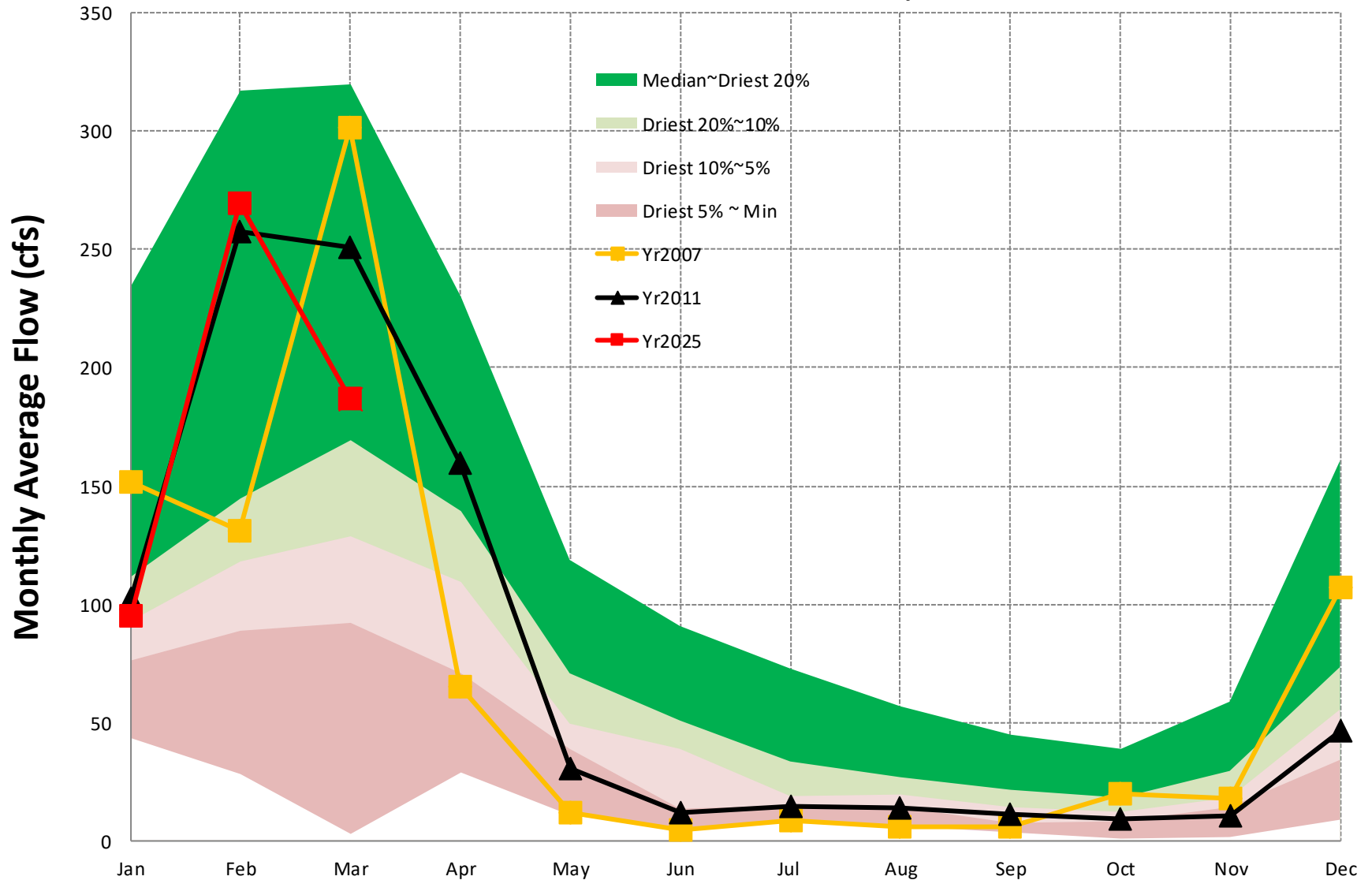
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## Gage #15. USGS #02213000, Ocmulgee Basin, Ocmulgee River at Macon, GA



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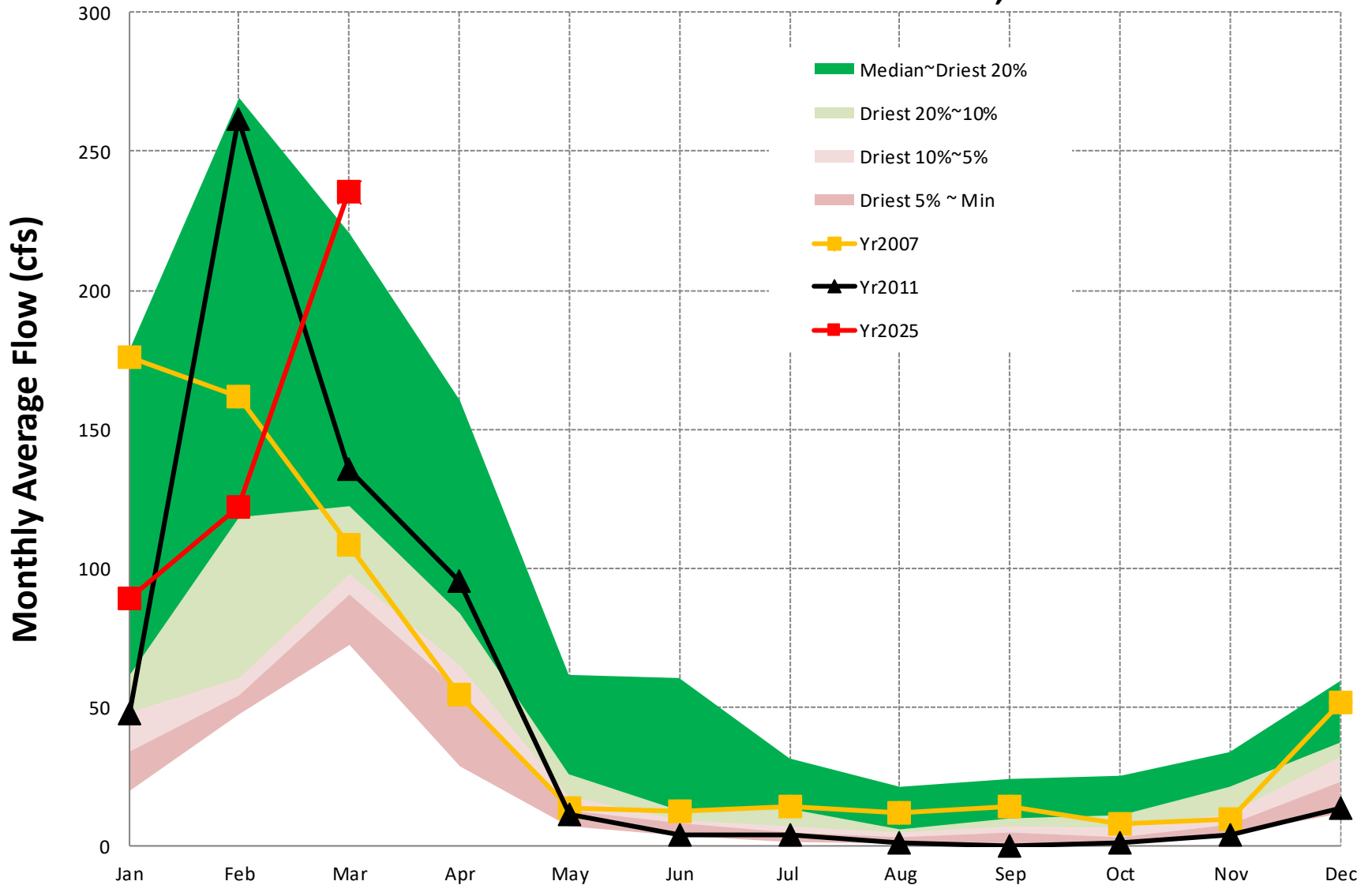
# Gage #16. USGS #02213500, Ocmulgee Basin, TOBESOFKEE CREEK near MACON, GA



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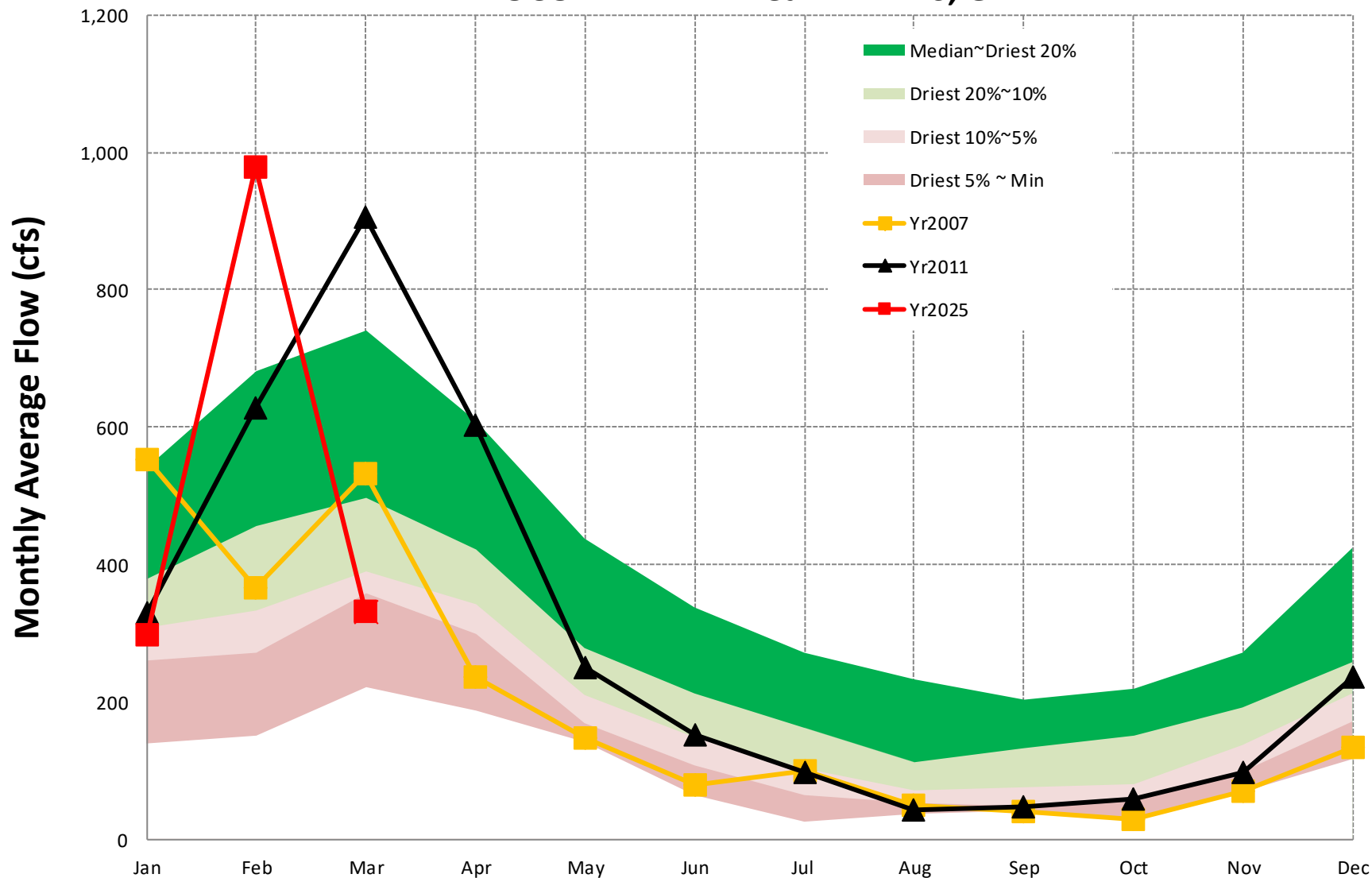


**Gage #17. USGS #02215100, Ocmulgee Basin,  
TUCSAWHATCHEE CREEK near HAWKINSVILLE, GA**



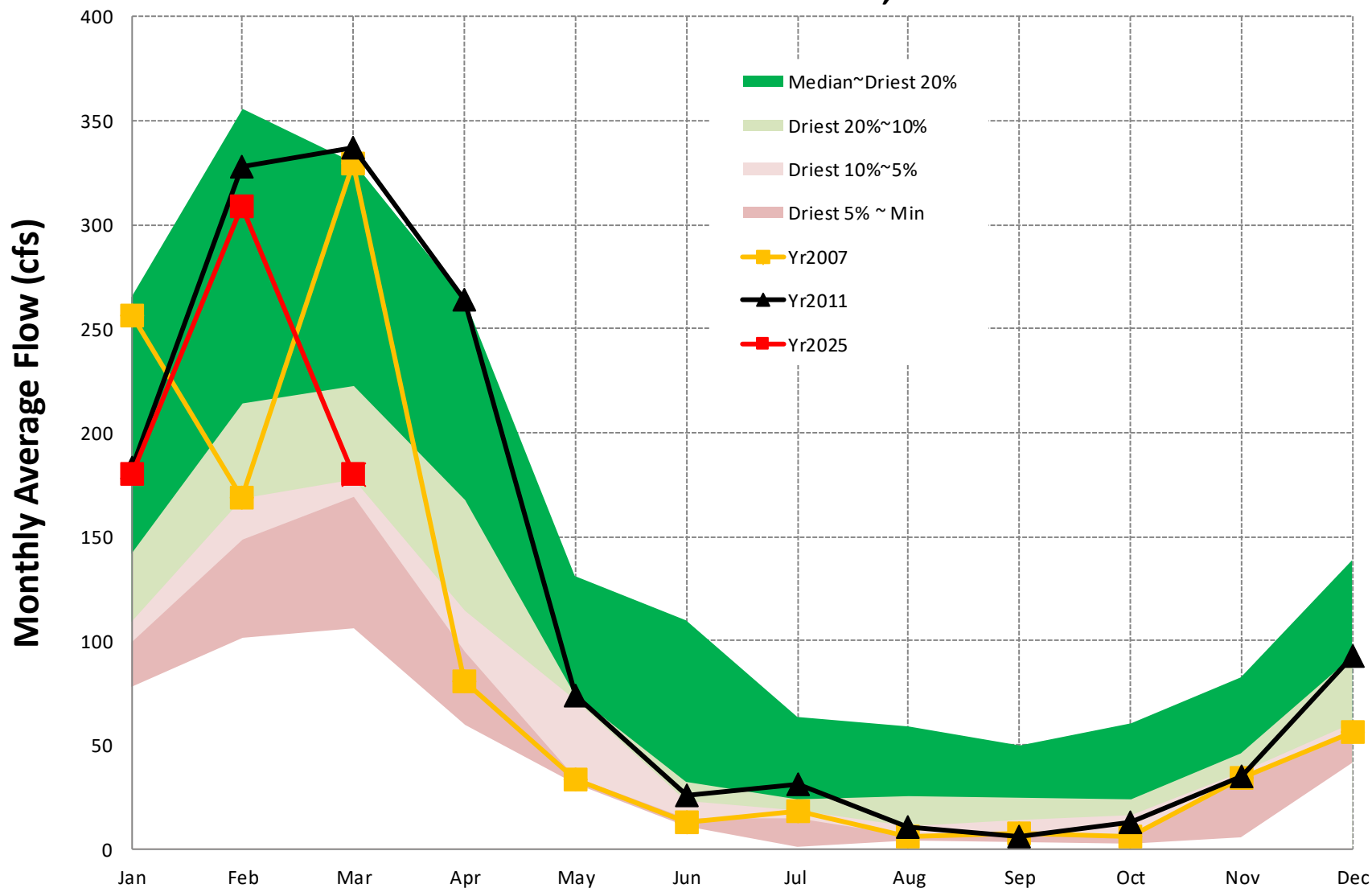
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# Gage #18. USGS #02217500, Oconee Basin, MIDDLE OCONEE RIVER near ATHENS, GA

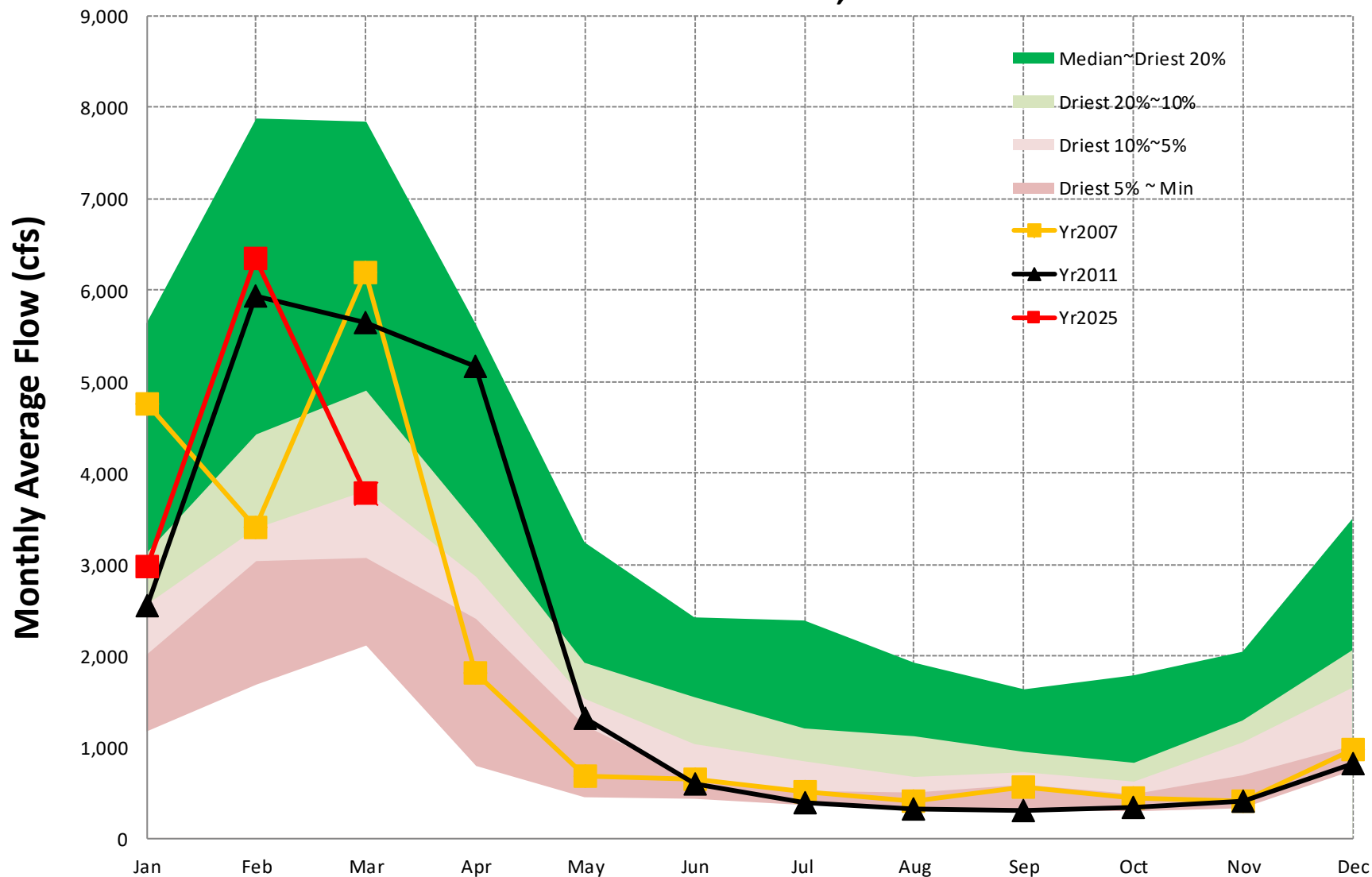


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# Gage #19. USGS #02220900, Oconee Basin, LITTLE RIVER near EATONTON, GA

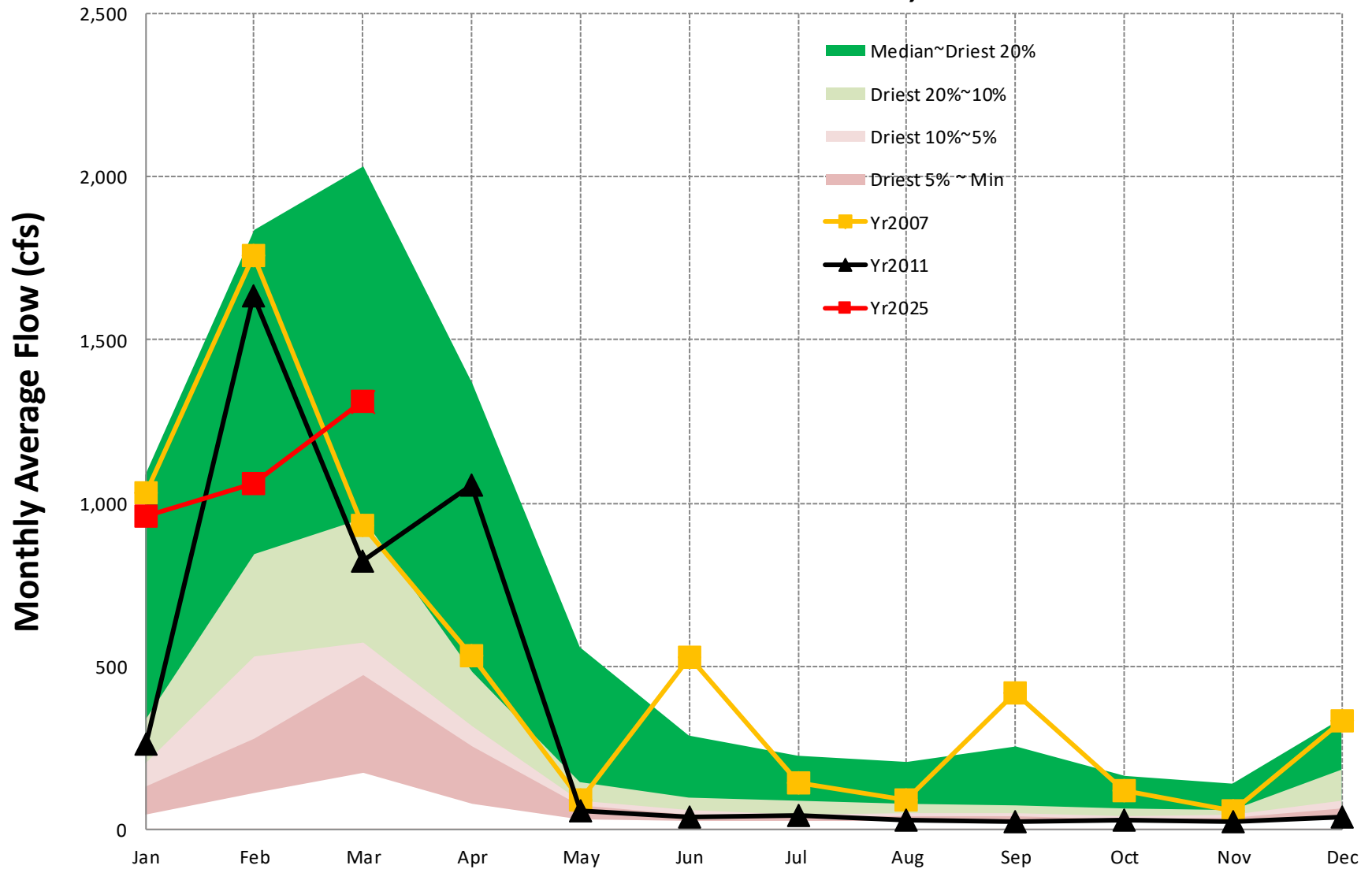


## Gage #20. USGS #02223500, Oconee Basin, Oconee River at Dublin, GA



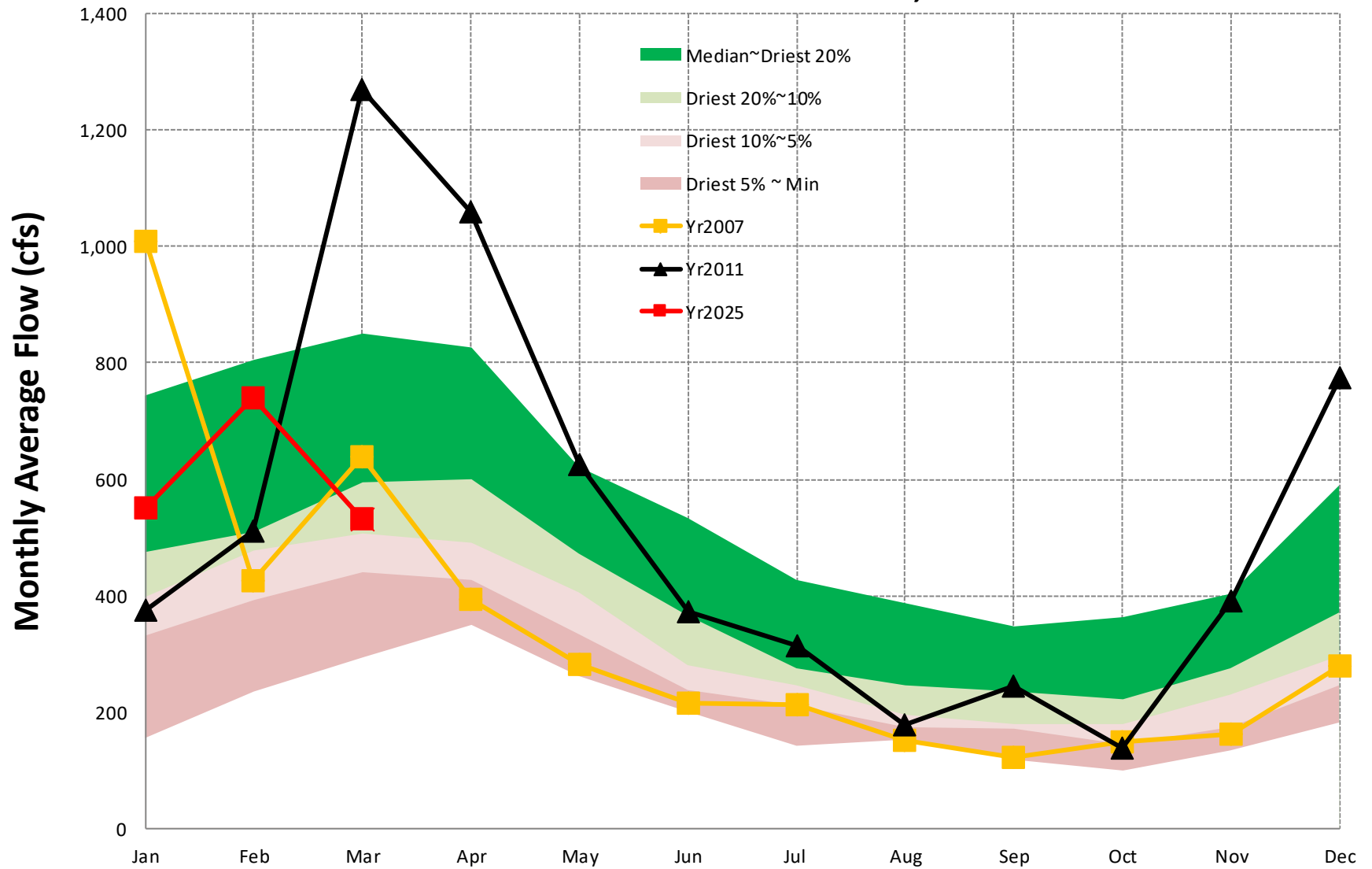
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# Gage #21. USGS #02225500, Altamaha Basin, OHOOPEE RIVER near REIDSVILLE, GA

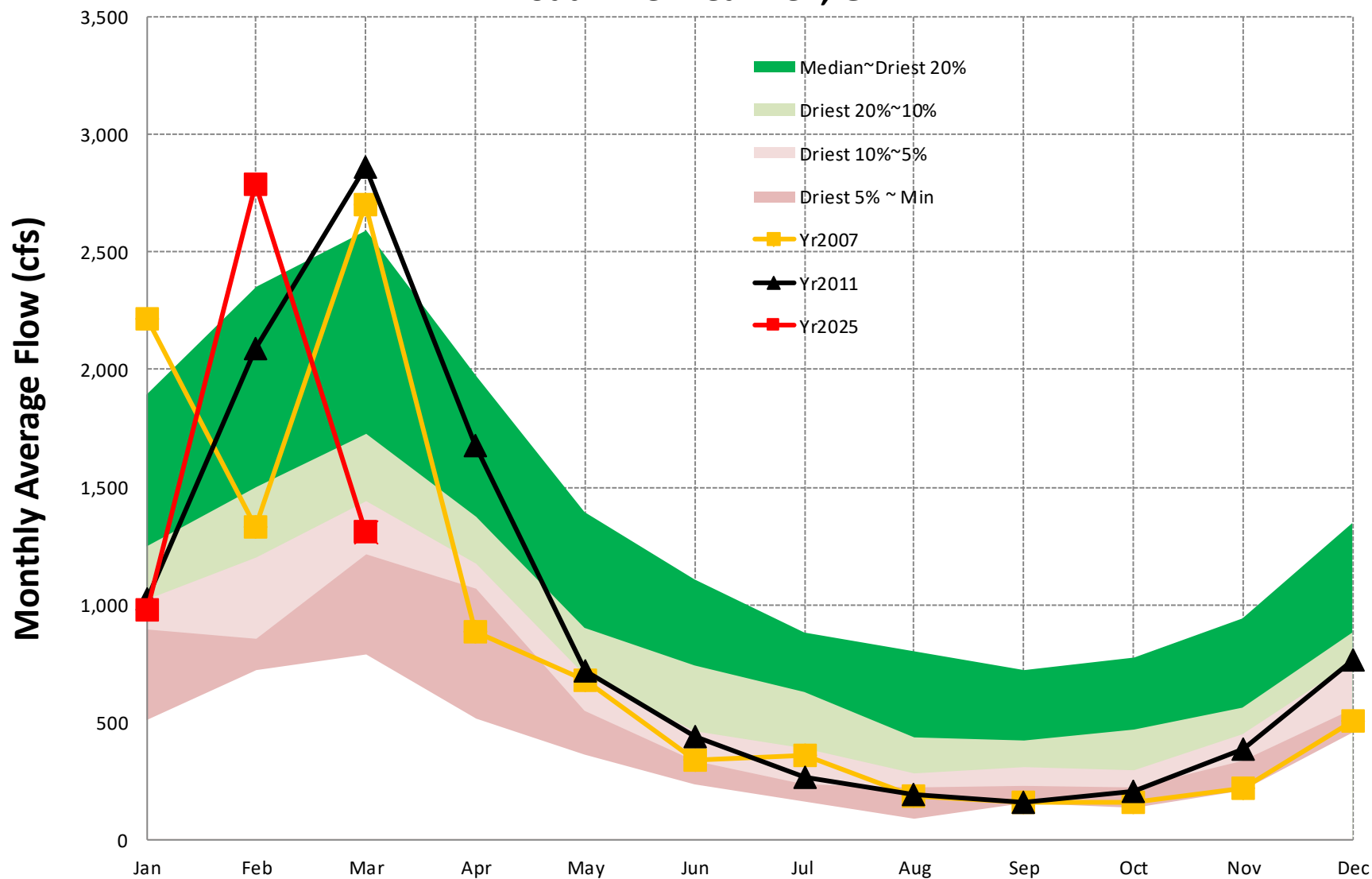


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## Gage #22. USGS #02177000, Savannah Basin, CHATTOOGA RIVER near CLAYTON, GA

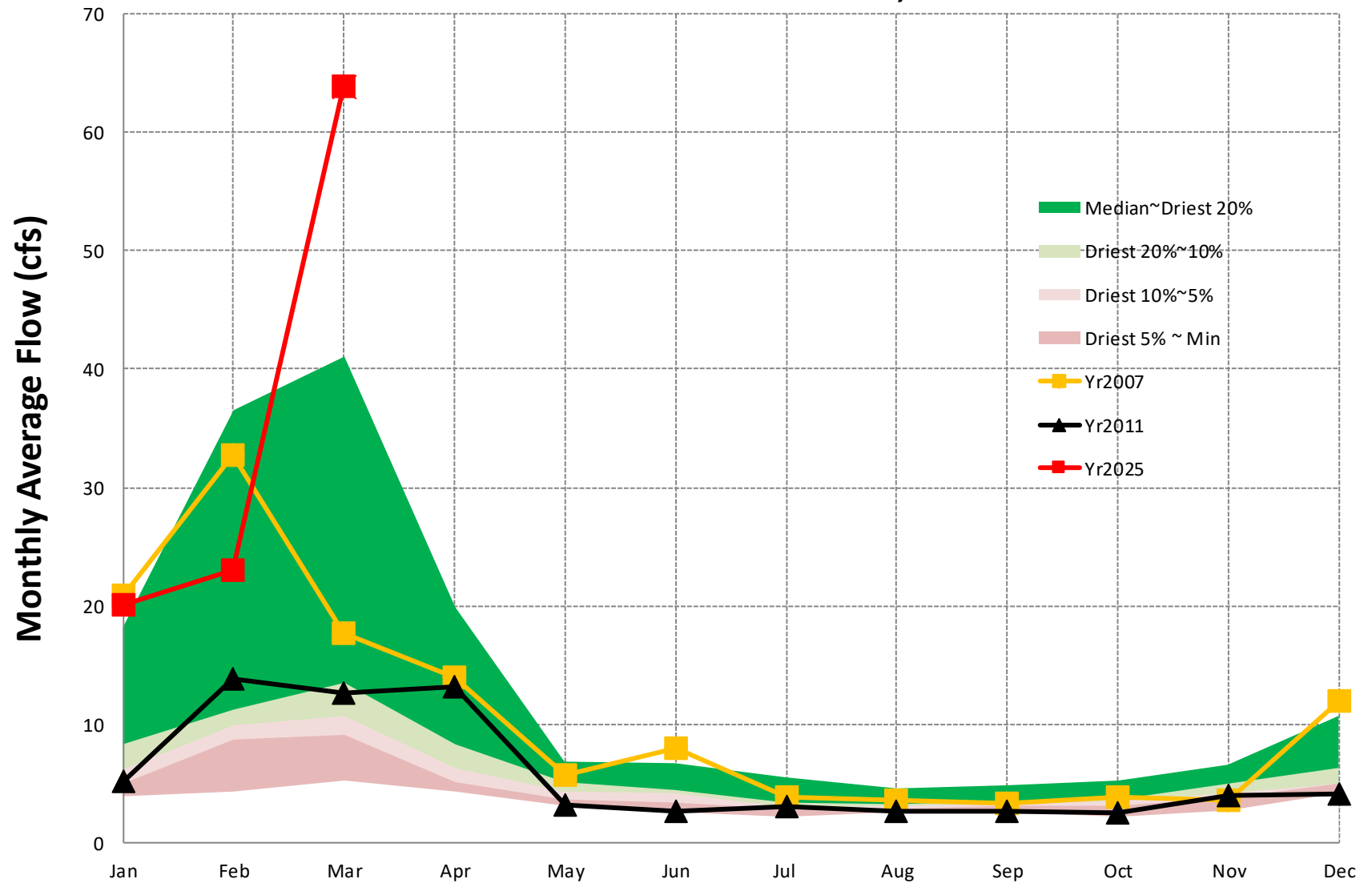


## Gage #23. USGS #02192000, Savannah Basin Broad River near Bell, GA



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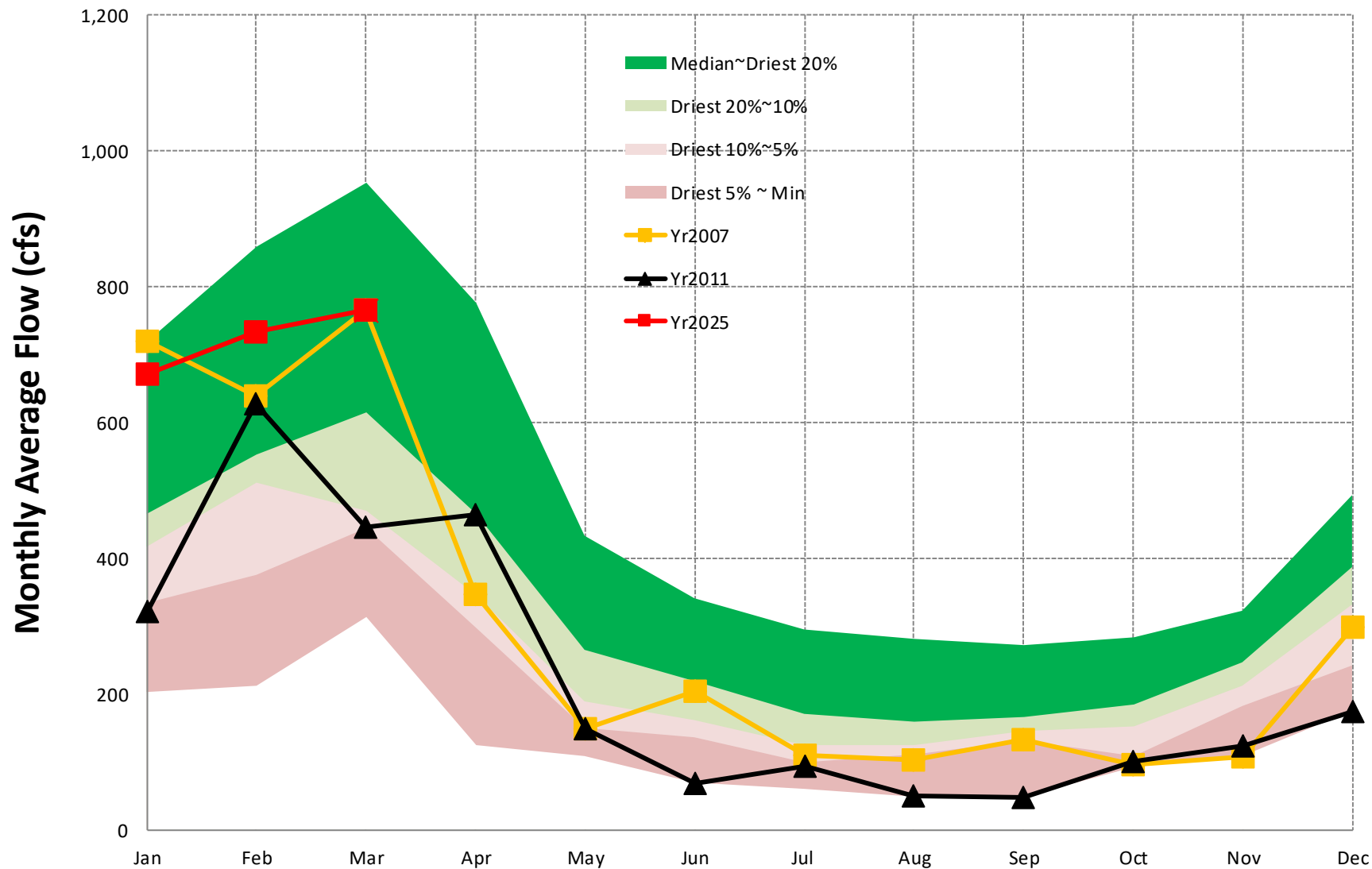
**Gage #24. USGS #02198100, Savannah Basin,  
BEAVERDAM CREEK near SARDIS, GA**



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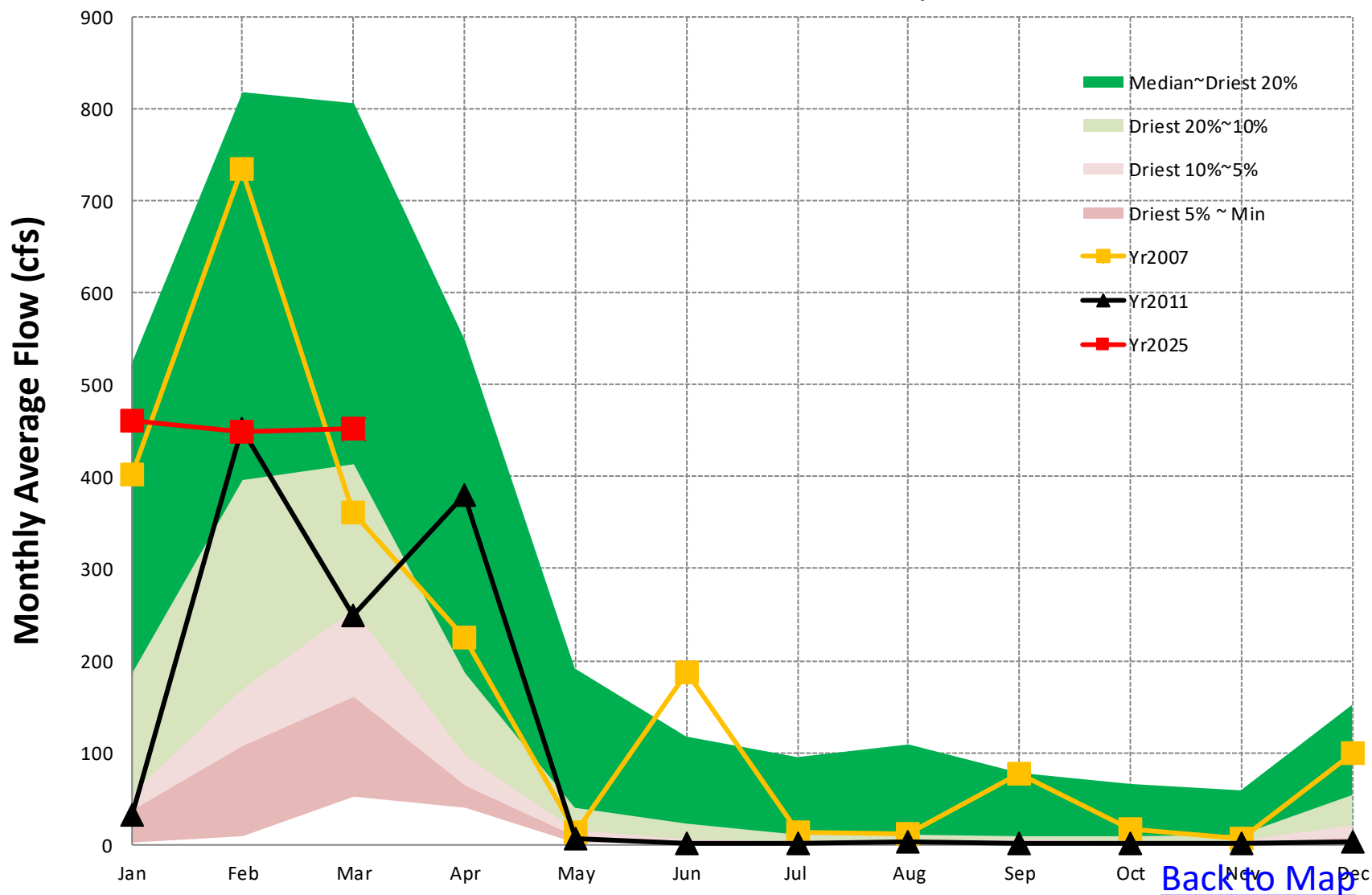


## Gage #25. USGS #02198000, Savannah Basin, BRIER CREEK at MILLHAVEN, GA



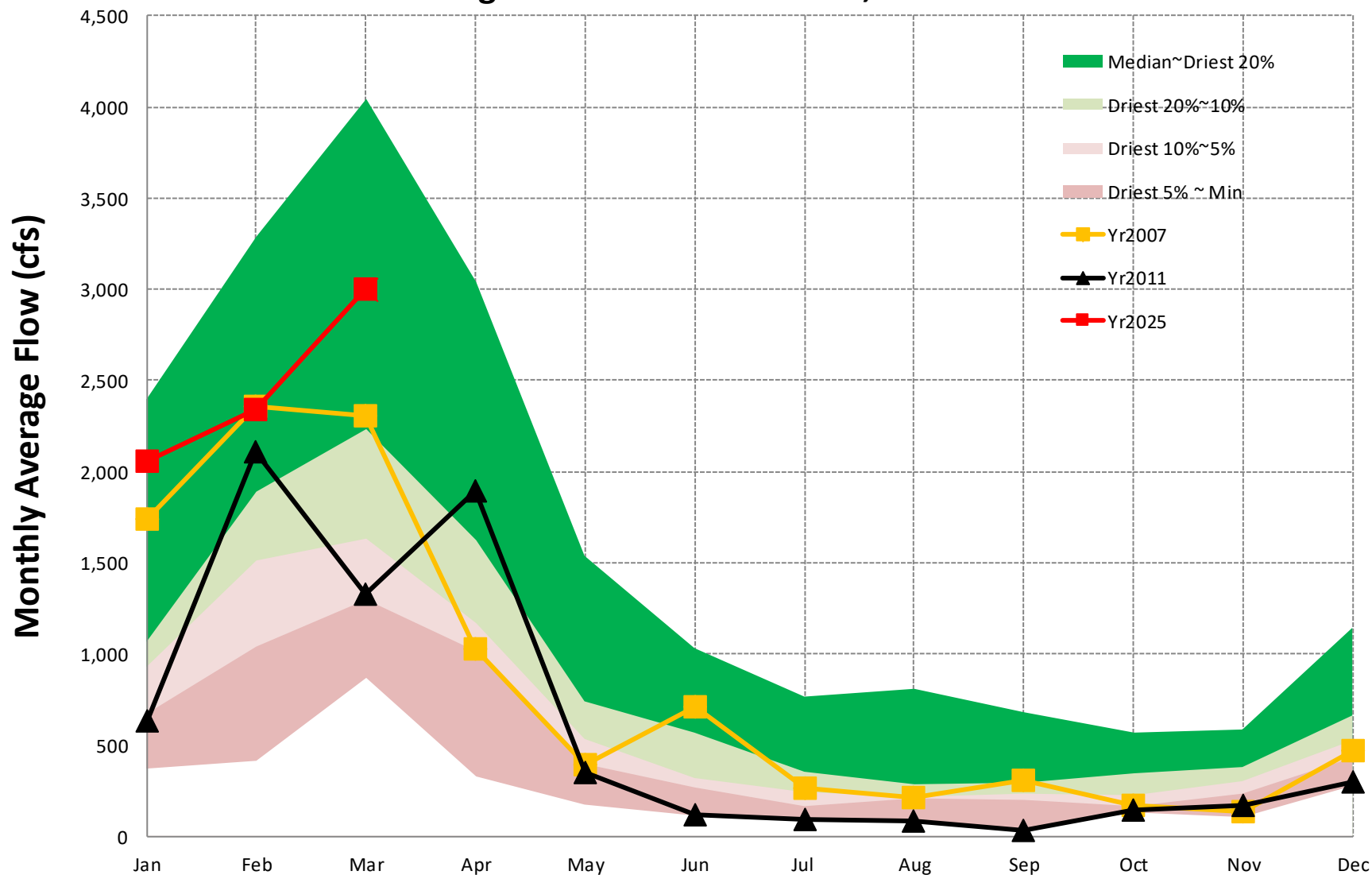
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# Gage #26. USGS #02203000, Ogeechee Basin, CANOOCHEE RIVER near CLAXTON, GA



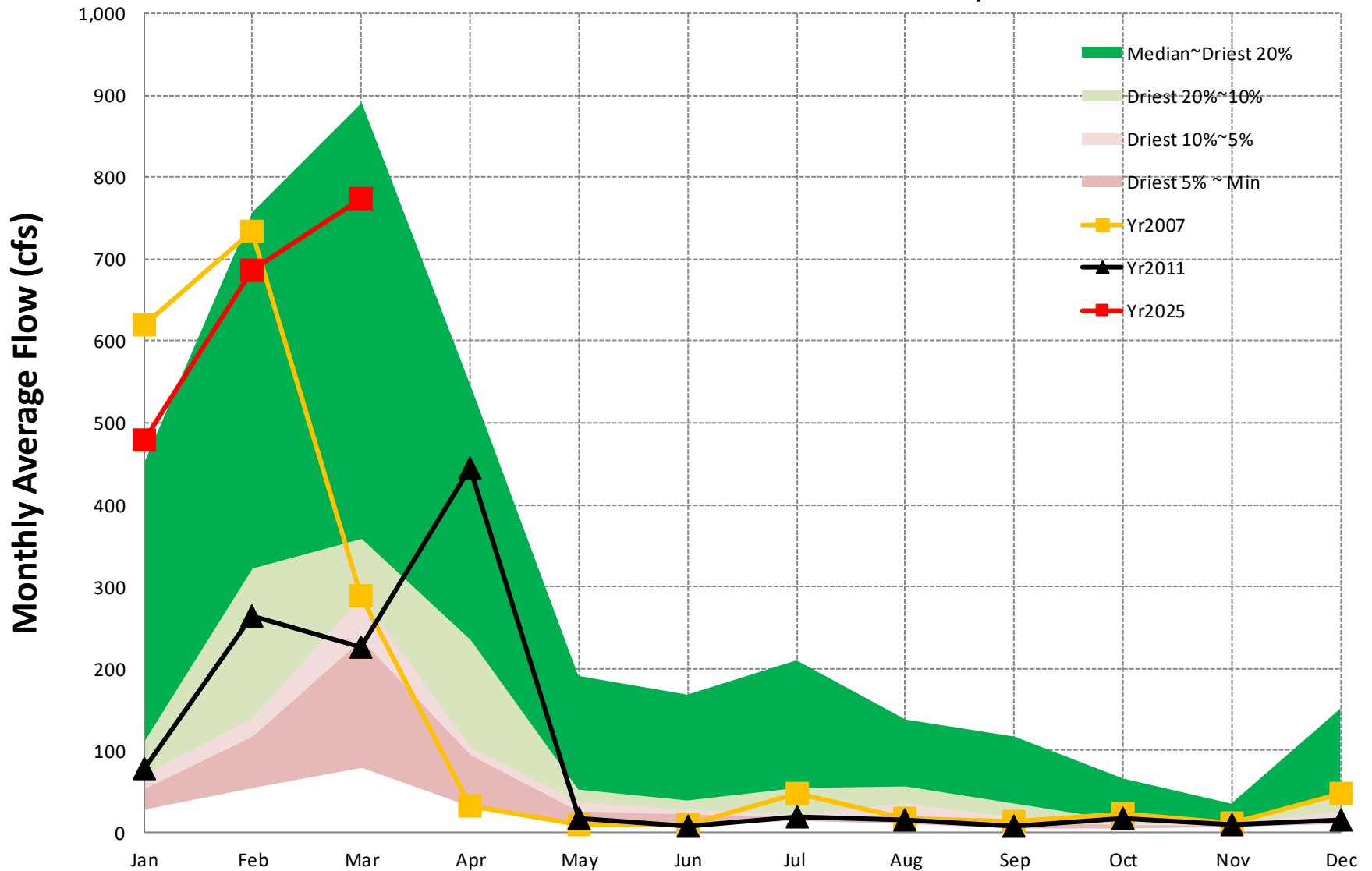
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## Gage #27. USGS #02202500, Ogeechee Basin, Ogeechee River near Eden, GA

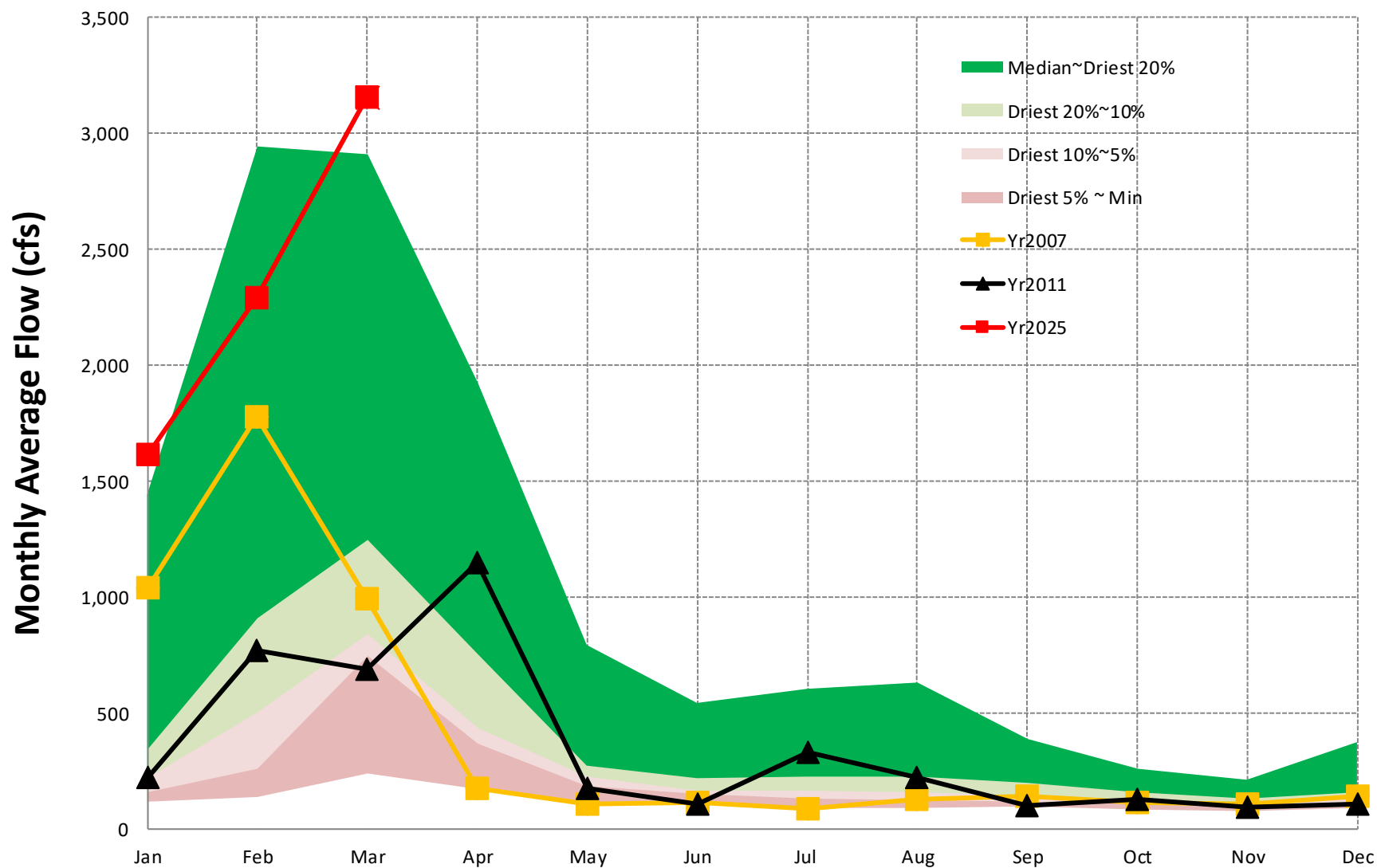


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# Gage #28. USGS #02327500, Ochlockonee Basin, OCHLOCKONEE RIVER near THOMASVILLE, GA

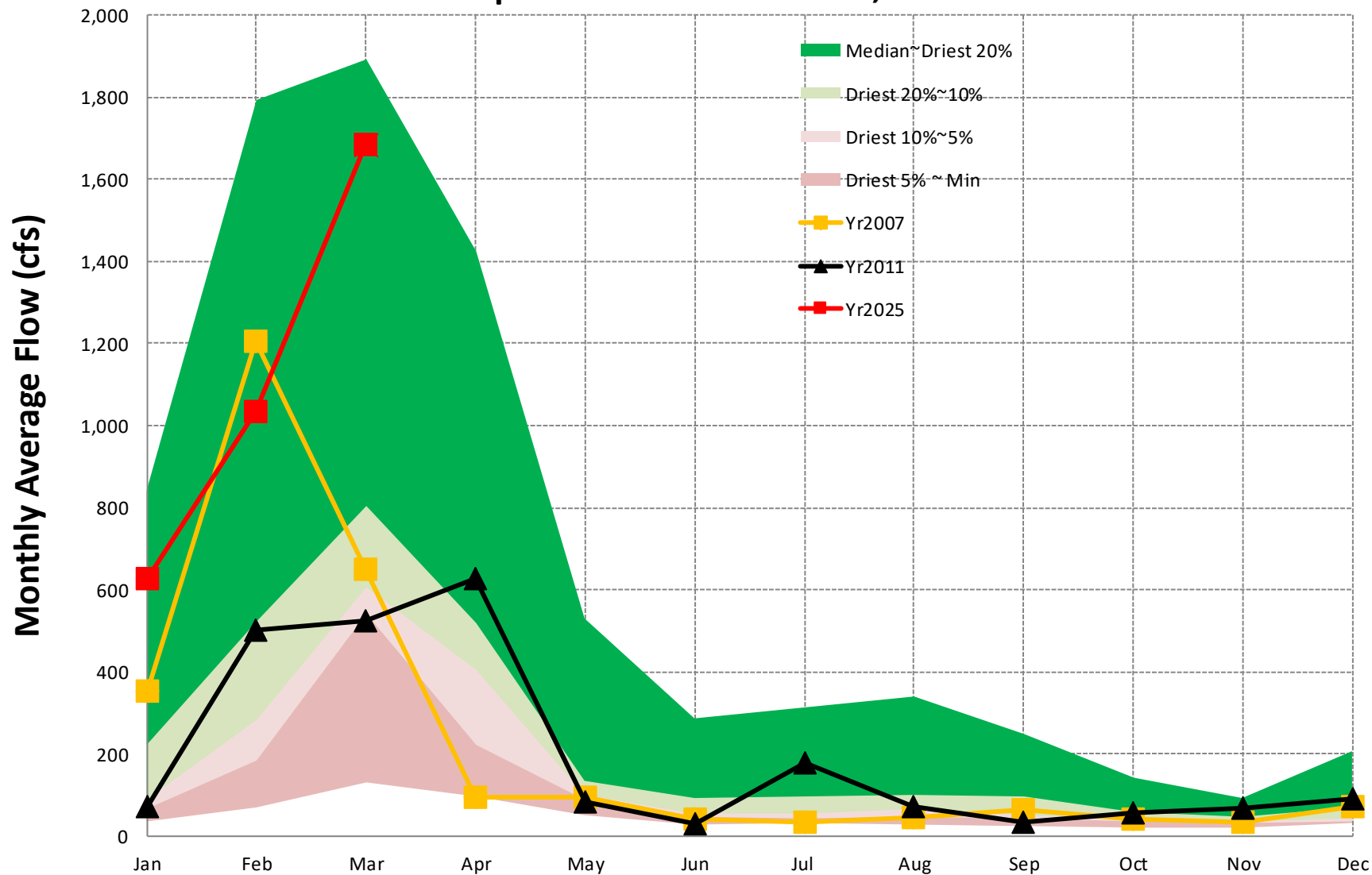


## Gage #29. USGS #02319000, Suwannee Basin, WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER near PINETTA, FL



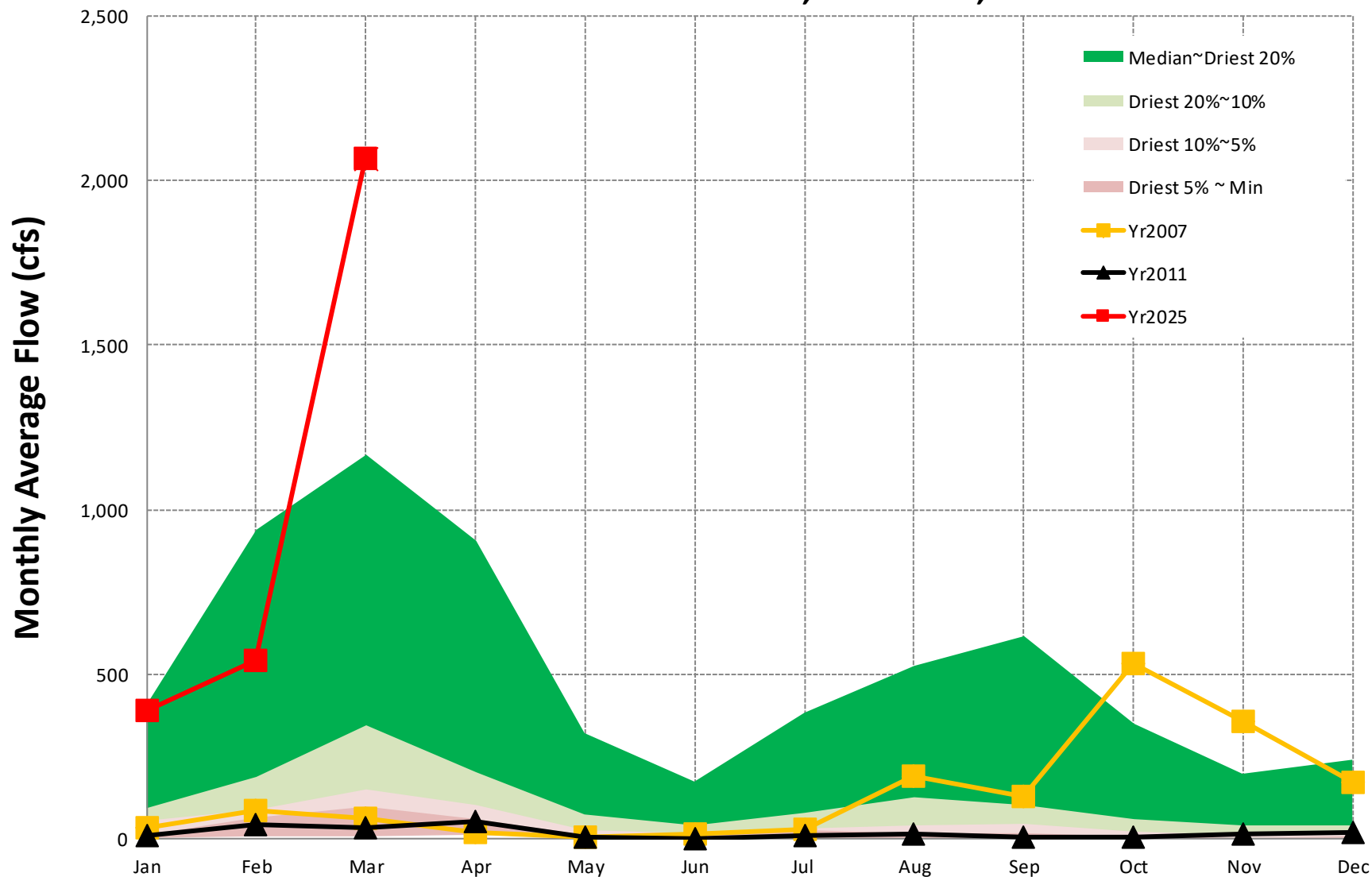
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## Gage #30. USGS #02317500, Suwannee Basin, Alapaha River at Statenville, GA



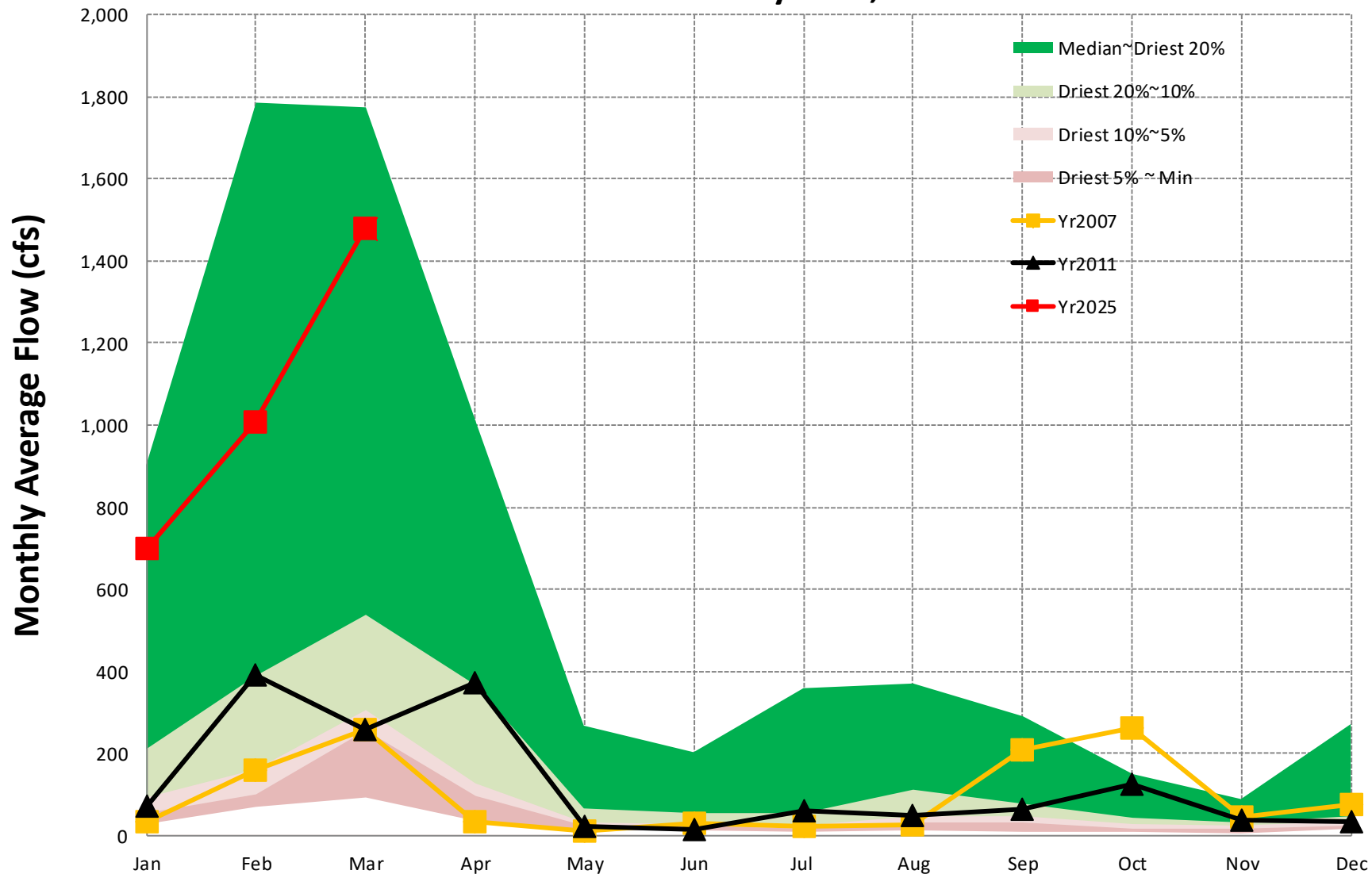
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# Gage #31. USGS #02314500, Suwannee Basin, SUWANNEE RIVER AT US 441, AT FARGO, GA



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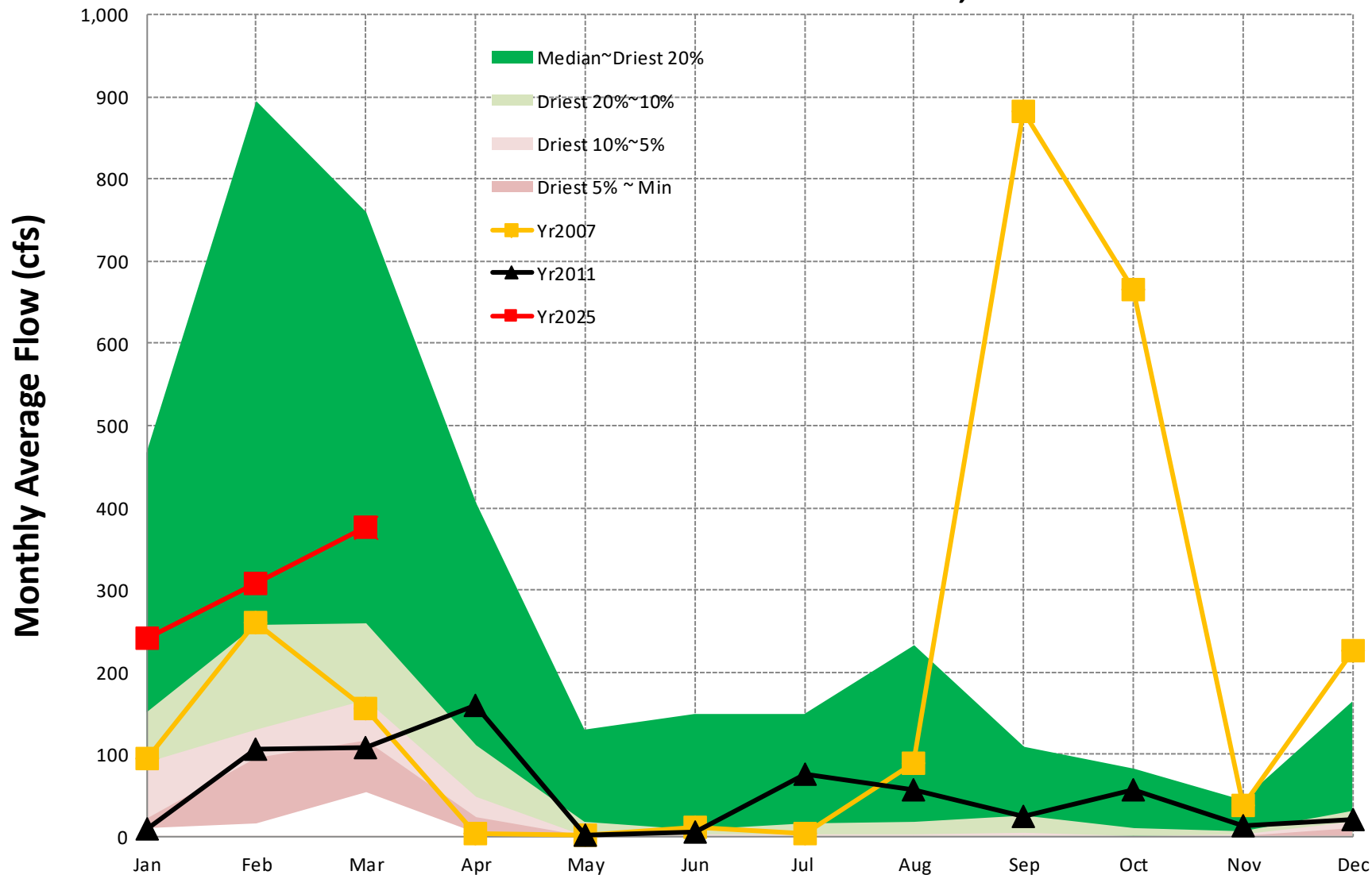
## Gage #32. USGS #02226500, Satilla Basin, Satilla River near Waycross, GA



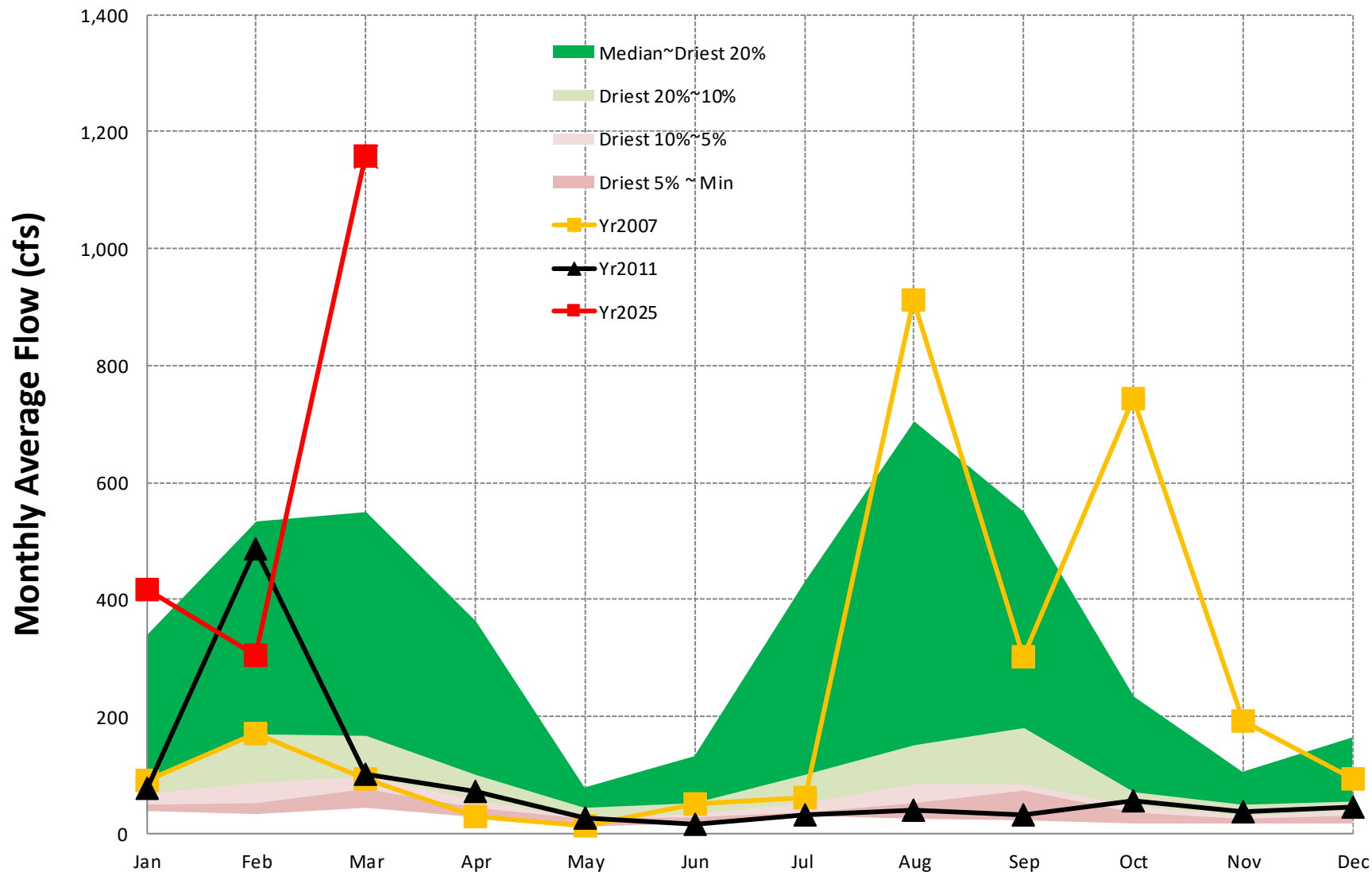
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# Gage #33. USGS #02227500, Satilla Basin, LITTLE SATILLA RIVER near OFFERMAN, GA



# Gage #34. USGS #02231000, St Mary Basin, ST. MARYS RIVER near MACCLENNY, FL



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# Groundwater Levels

Data Source: USGS

## Rationale for Choosing USGS Monitoring Wells

EPD monitors 17 groundwater USGS monitoring wells shown on the following slide to assess drought conditions. These wells were selected for monitoring because they have:

- Long-term monitoring records consisting of three decades or more of data; and
- Real-time monitoring that represents the most up-to-date conditions.

## USGS Wells Monitored

### Chattahoochee Basin

1. 16MM03

### Flint Basin

2. 11AA01
3. 13L180
4. 12M017
5. 08K001
6. 11K003
7. 12K014
8. 13J004
9. 08G001
10. 10G313
11. 09F520
16. 11J011

### Oconee Basin

12. 21T001

### Tennessee Basin

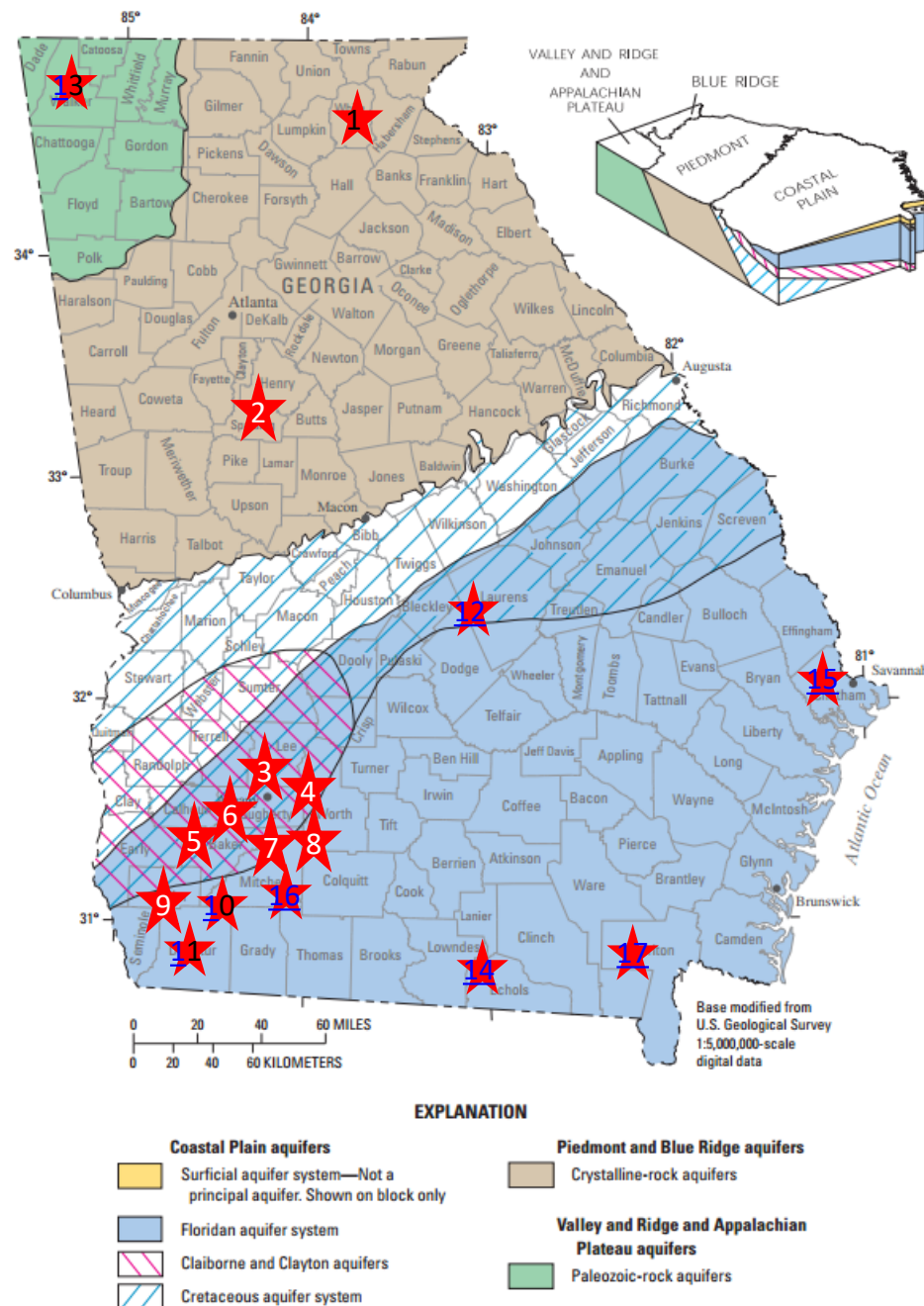
13. 03PP01

### Suwanee Basin

14. 19E009
17. 27E004

### Ogeechee Basin

15. 35P094



**Figure 2.** Area of use of principal aquifers and physiographic provinces in Georgia (modified from U.S. Geological Survey, 2006).

# Groundwater Level Graphs

- For each of the 17 groundwater wells, EPD has prepared a graph that shows monthly average groundwater levels from January 2025 through March 2025;
- To help put these levels into perspective, for comparison purposes, each graph also shows:
  - Monthly average levels at that same well for the years 2007 and 2011 when groundwater levels were at or near recorded low levels across much of the state; and
  - And a statistical composite of historical conditions at that same gage showing the “lowest” 50, 20, 10, and 5 percent of all recorded monthly average levels at the same well.

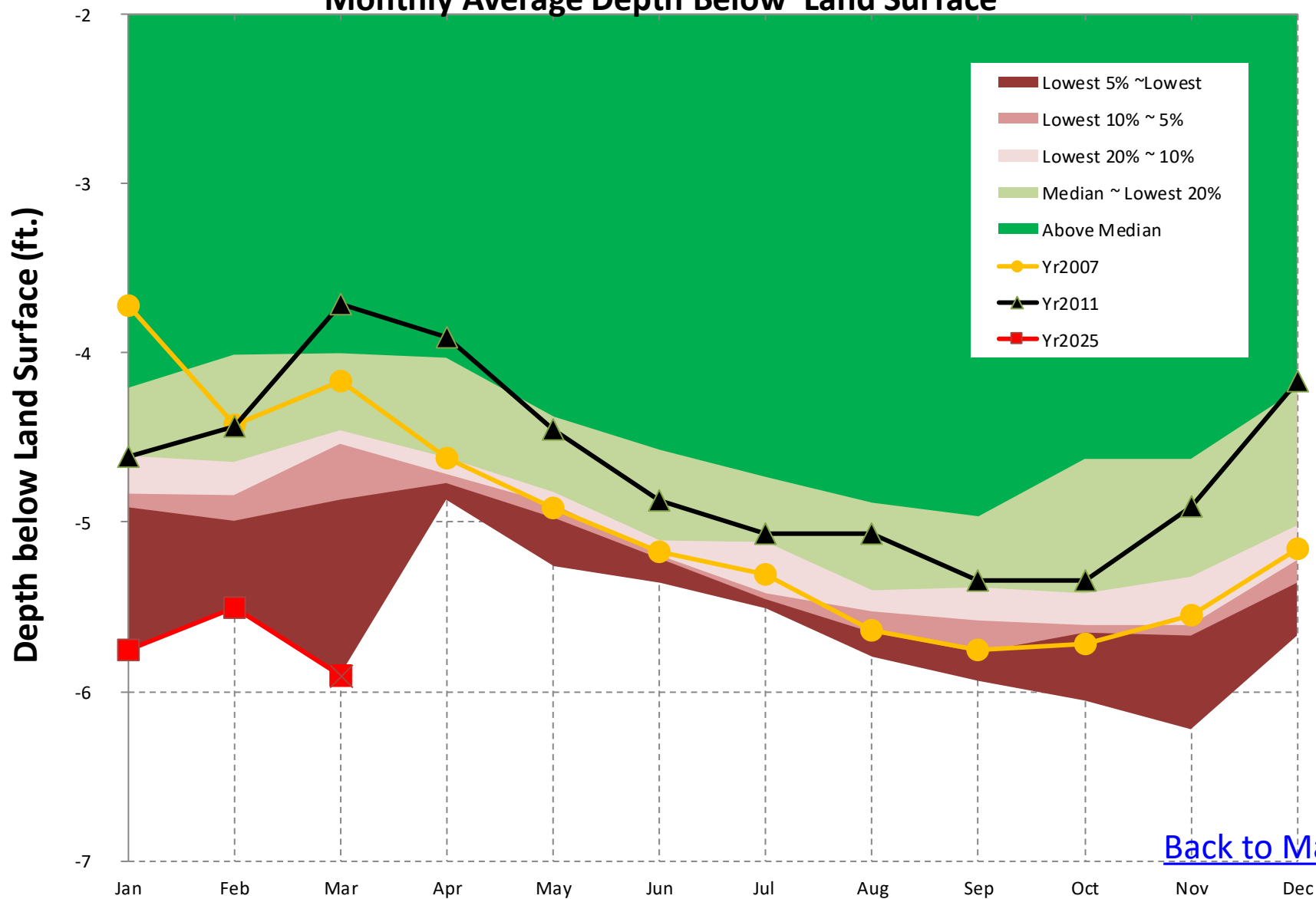
# How to Read the Groundwater Level Graphs

## Example: [Well #11, 09F520, Flint River Basin](#)

The groundwater level graph for Well #11, USGS 09F520 shows:

- The average monthly groundwater level in March 2025 was 47.8 ft below land surface. The statistical composite of all historical data for this well shows that monthly average groundwater levels in March have historically been lower than March 2025 about 10~20% of the time; about 80~90% of the time in March they have been higher.
- The average monthly groundwater level in March 2011 was 49.2 ft below land surface. The statistical composite of all historical data for this well shows that monthly average groundwater levels in March have historically been lower than March 2011 about 5% of the time; about 95% of the time in March they have been higher.
- The average monthly groundwater level in March 2007 was 47.4 ft below land surface. The statistical composite of all historical data for this well shows that monthly average groundwater levels in March have historically been lower than March 2007 about 10-20% of the time; about 80-90% of the time in March they have been higher.

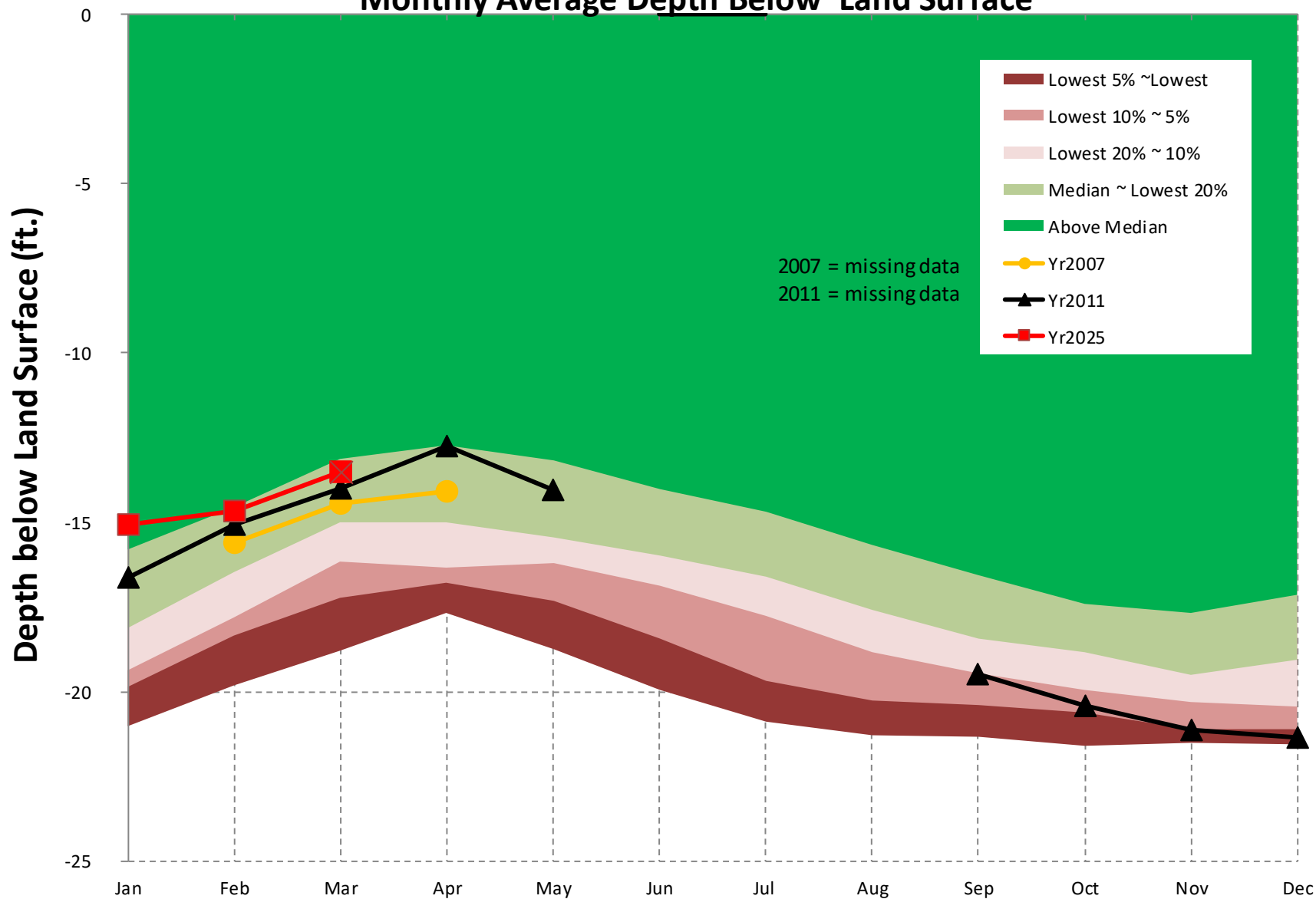
## Well #1, 16MM03, Crystalline Rocks Aquifer in Chattahoochee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



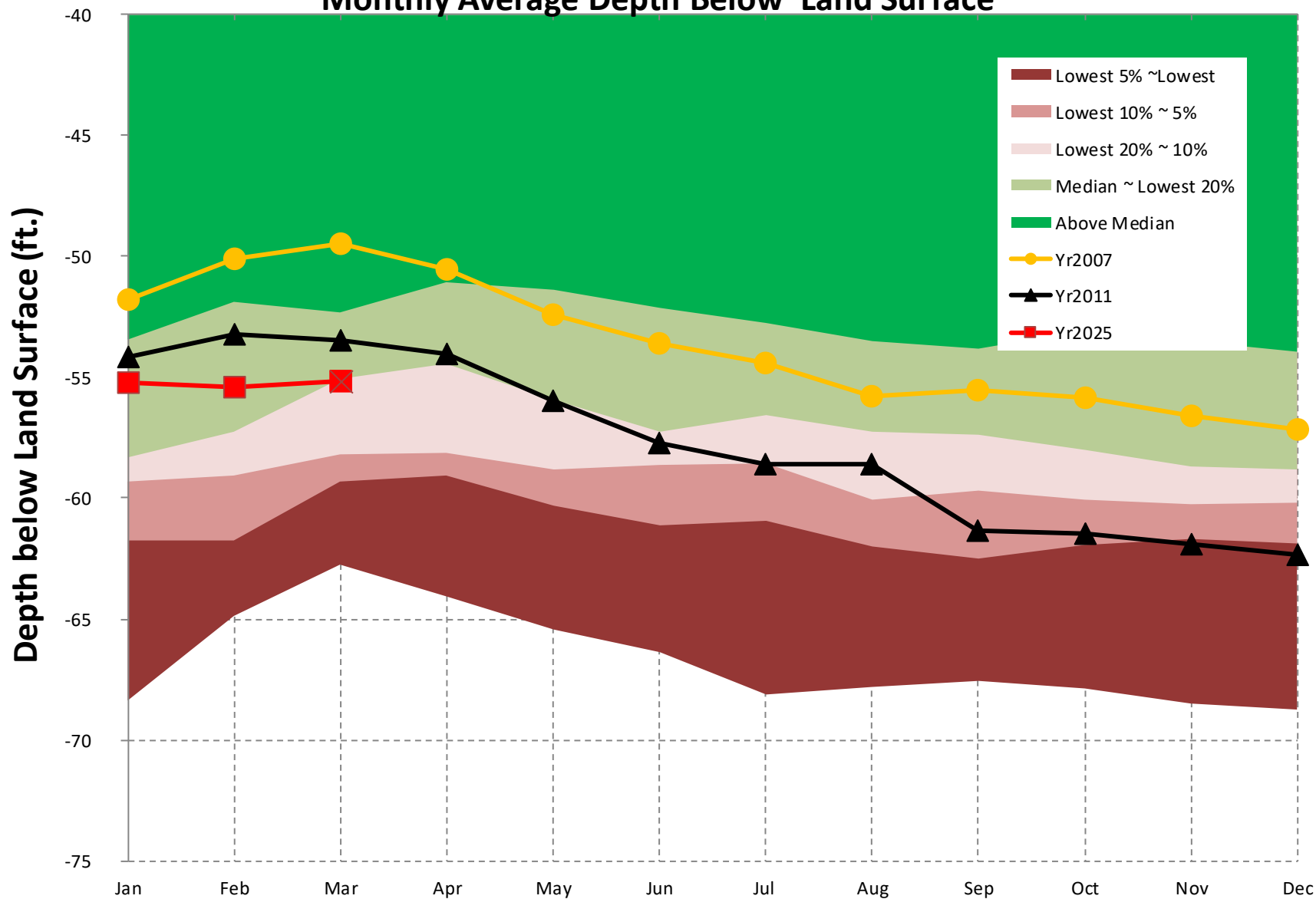
[Back to Map](#)



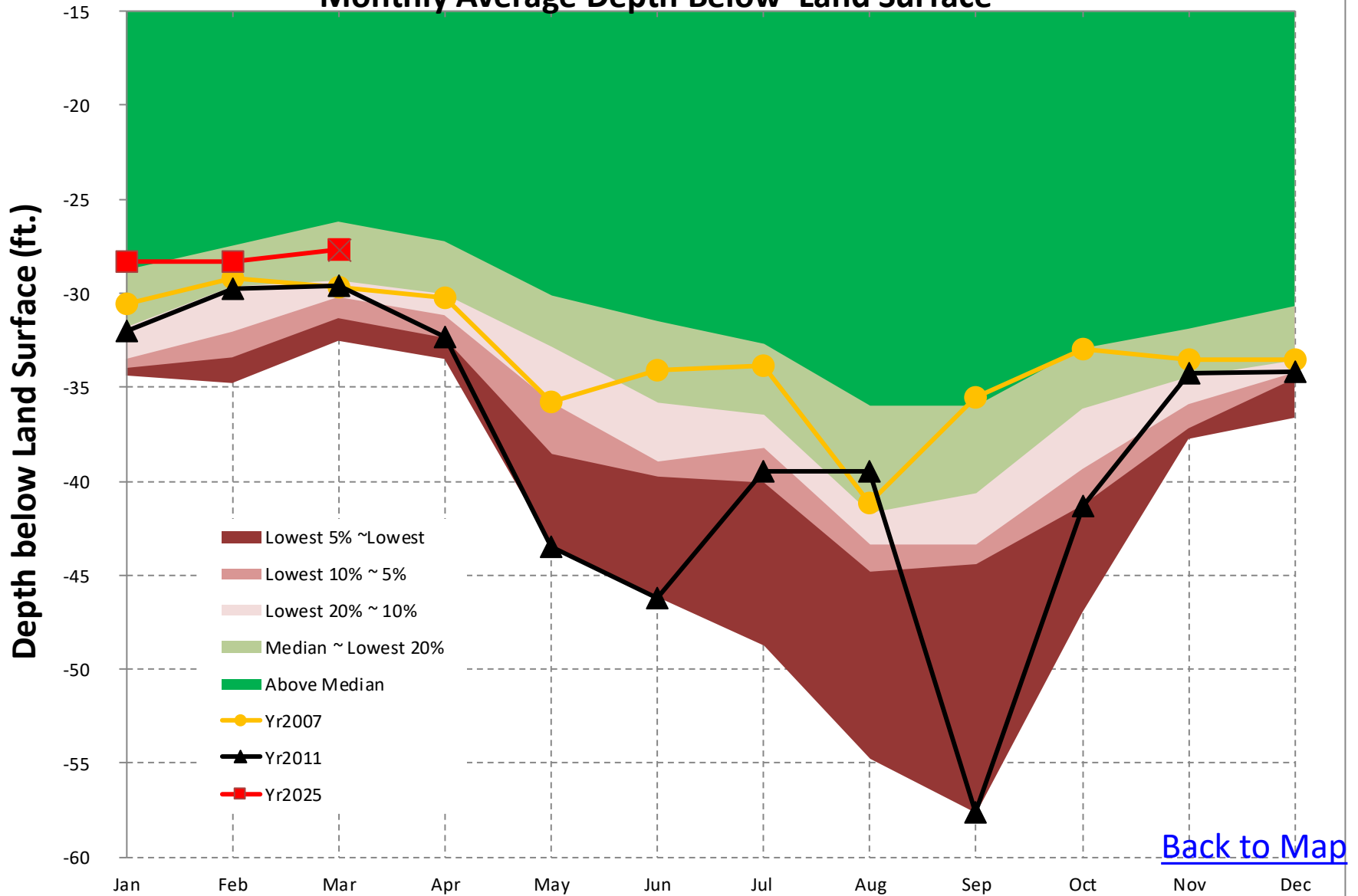
## Well #2, 11AA01, Surficial Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



## Well #3, 13L180, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface

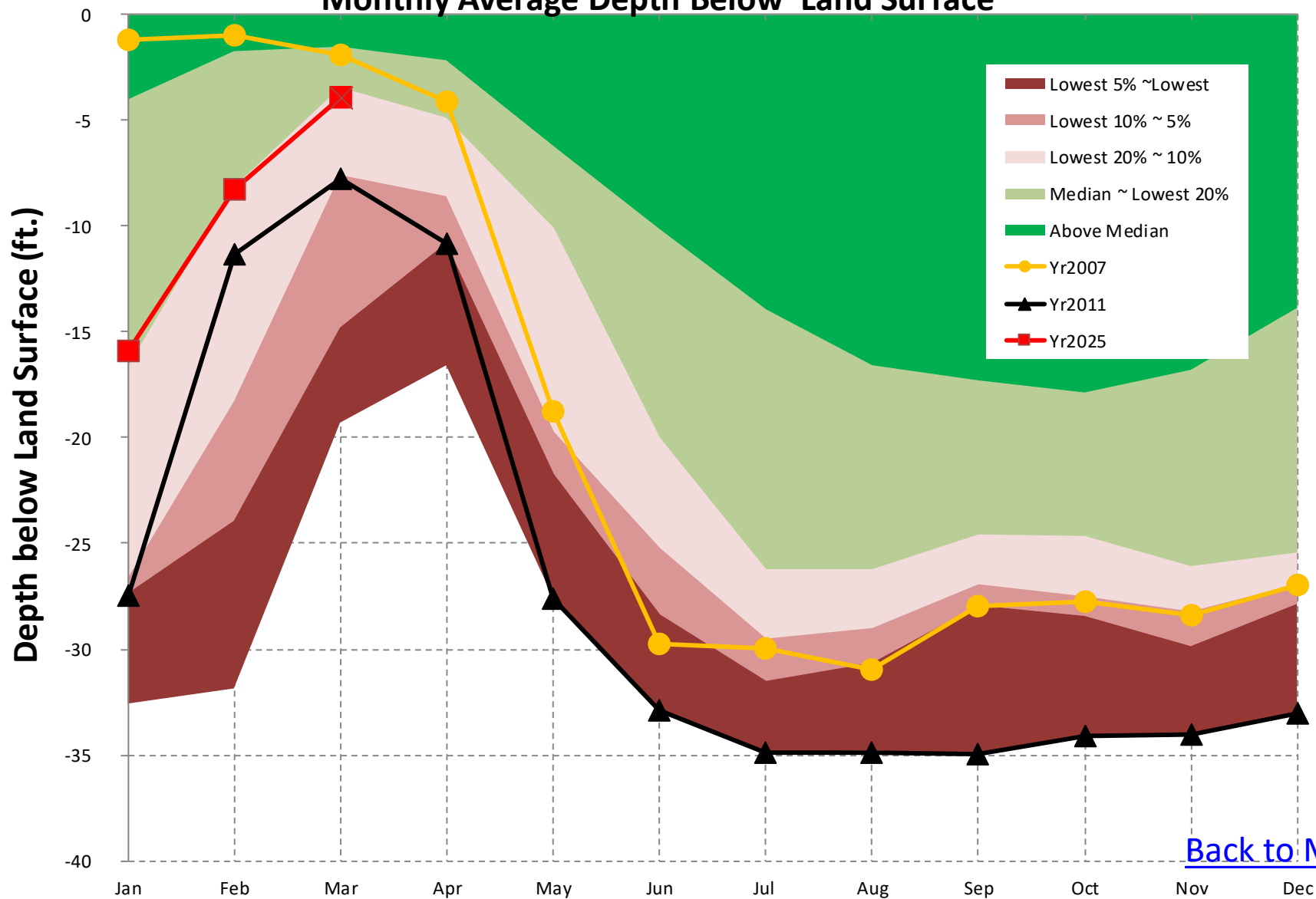


# Well #4, 12M017, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



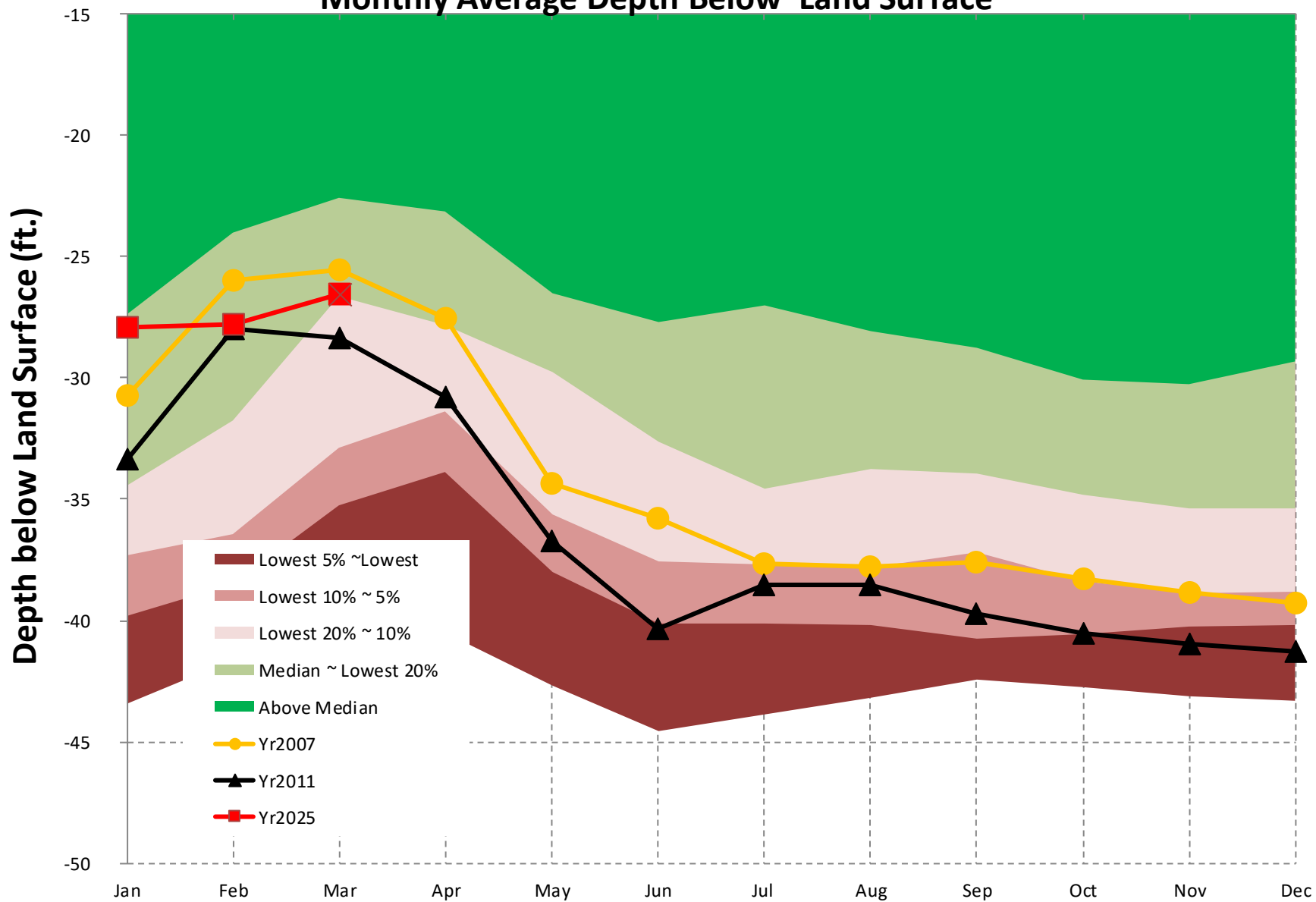
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## Well #5, 08K001, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



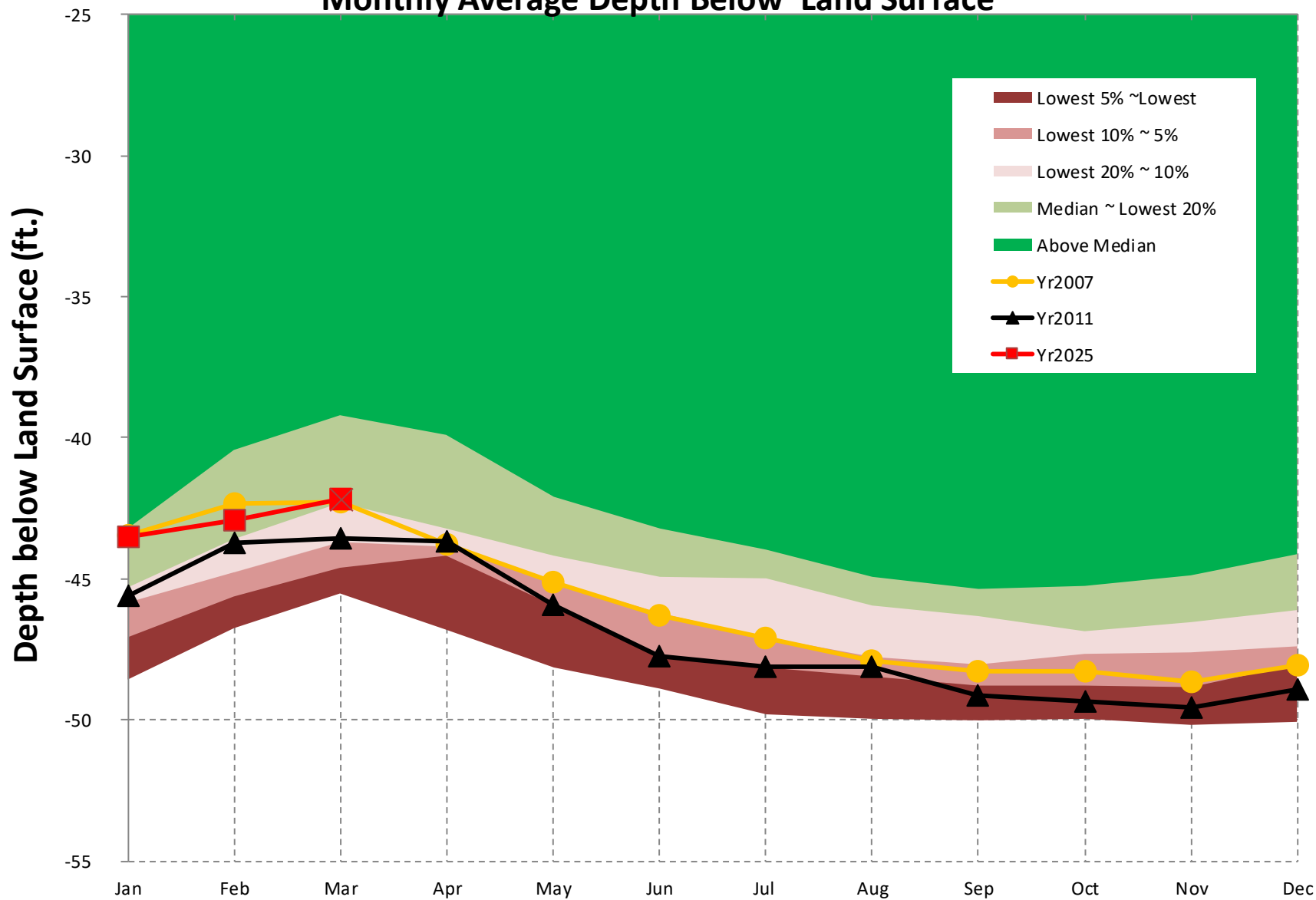
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# Well #6, 11K003, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface

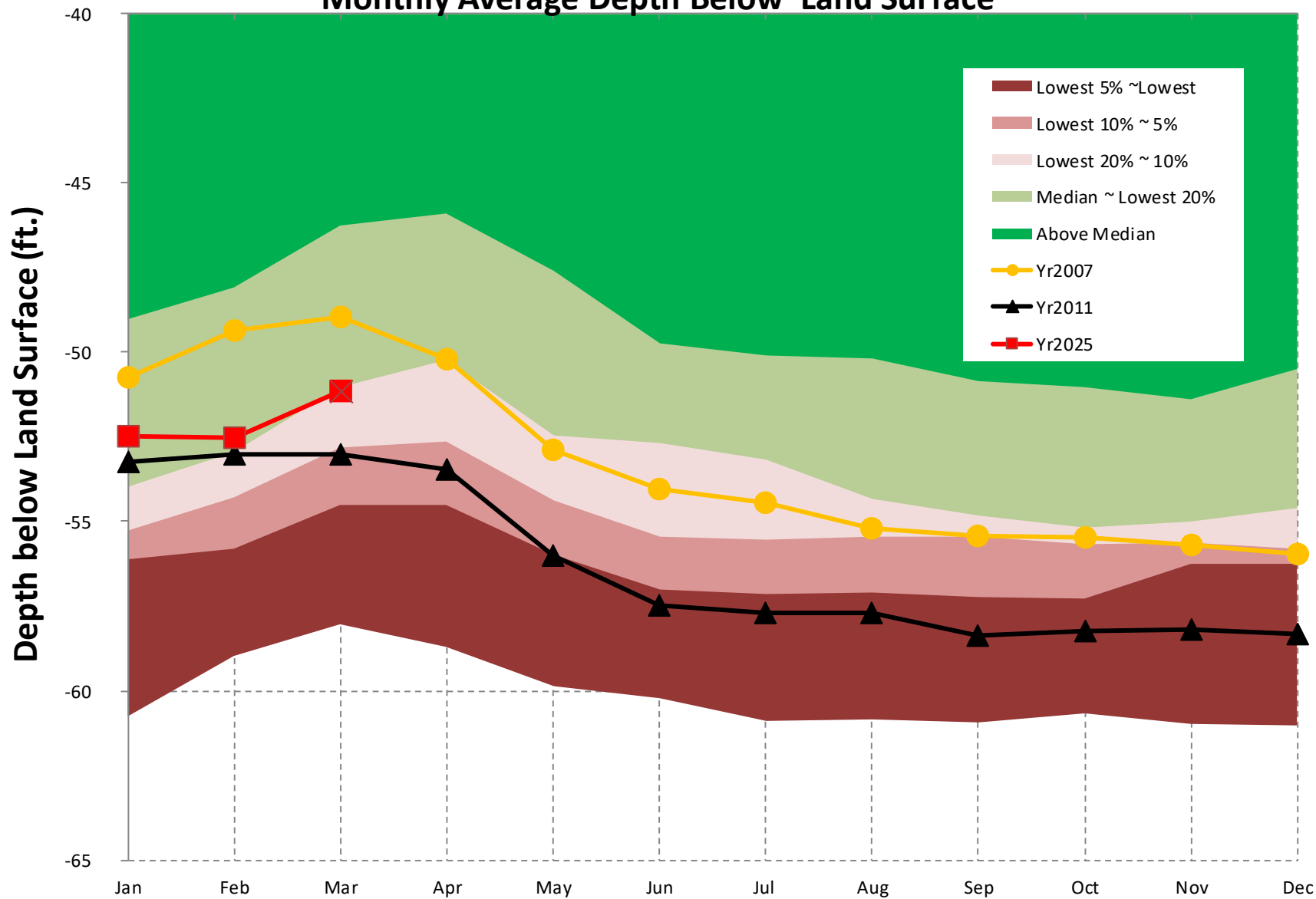


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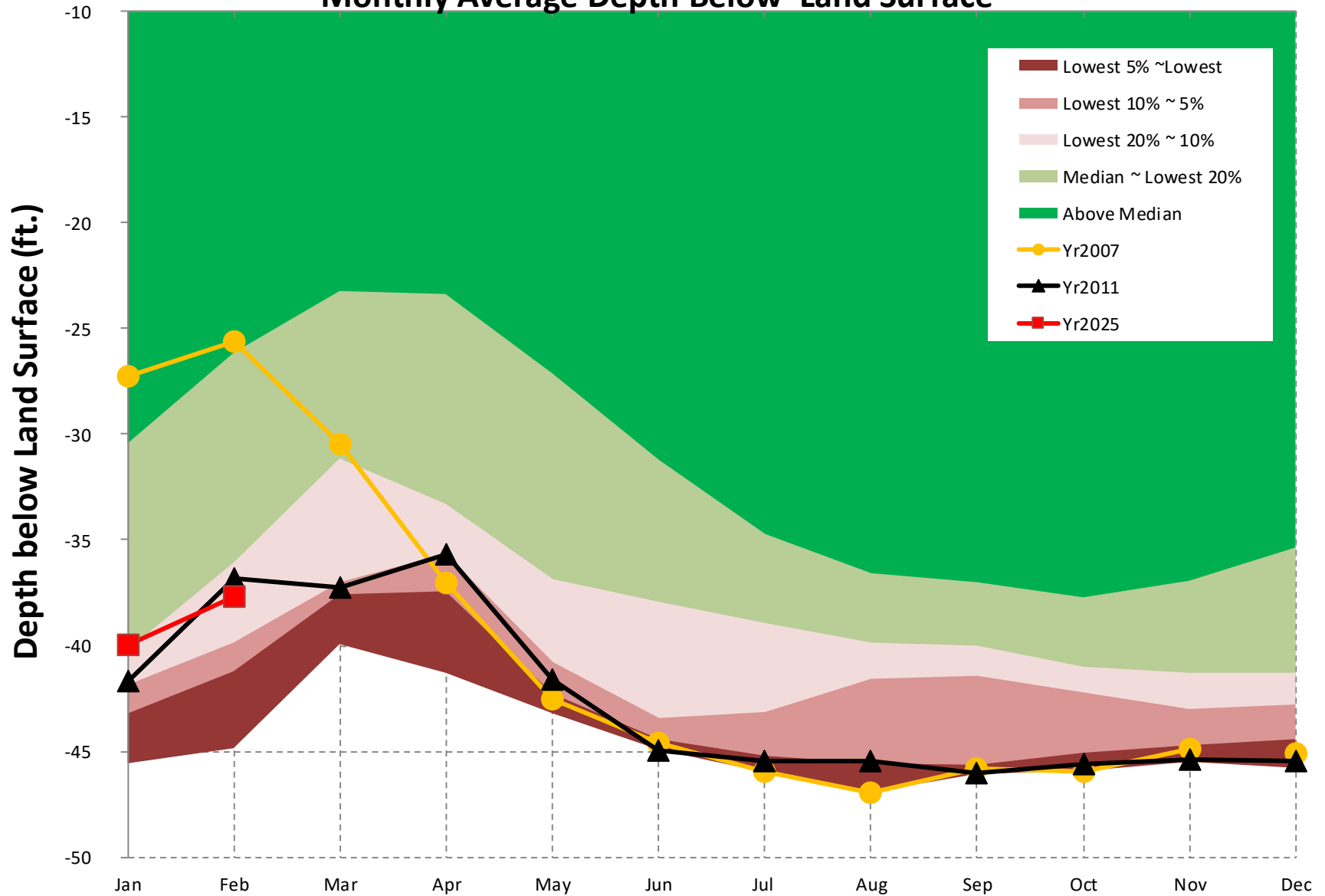
## Well #7, 12K014, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



## Well #8, 13J004, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface

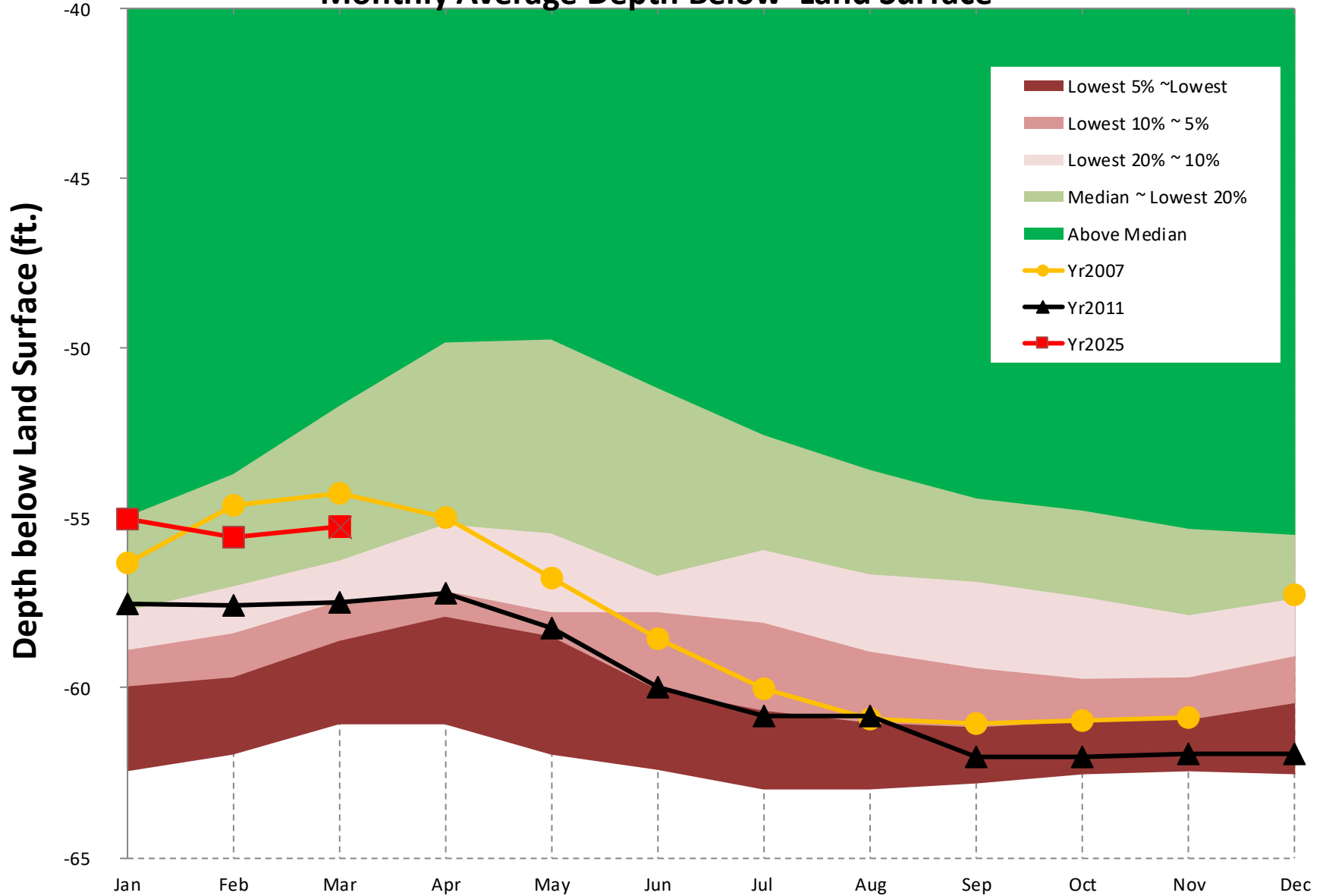


## Well #9, 08G001, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



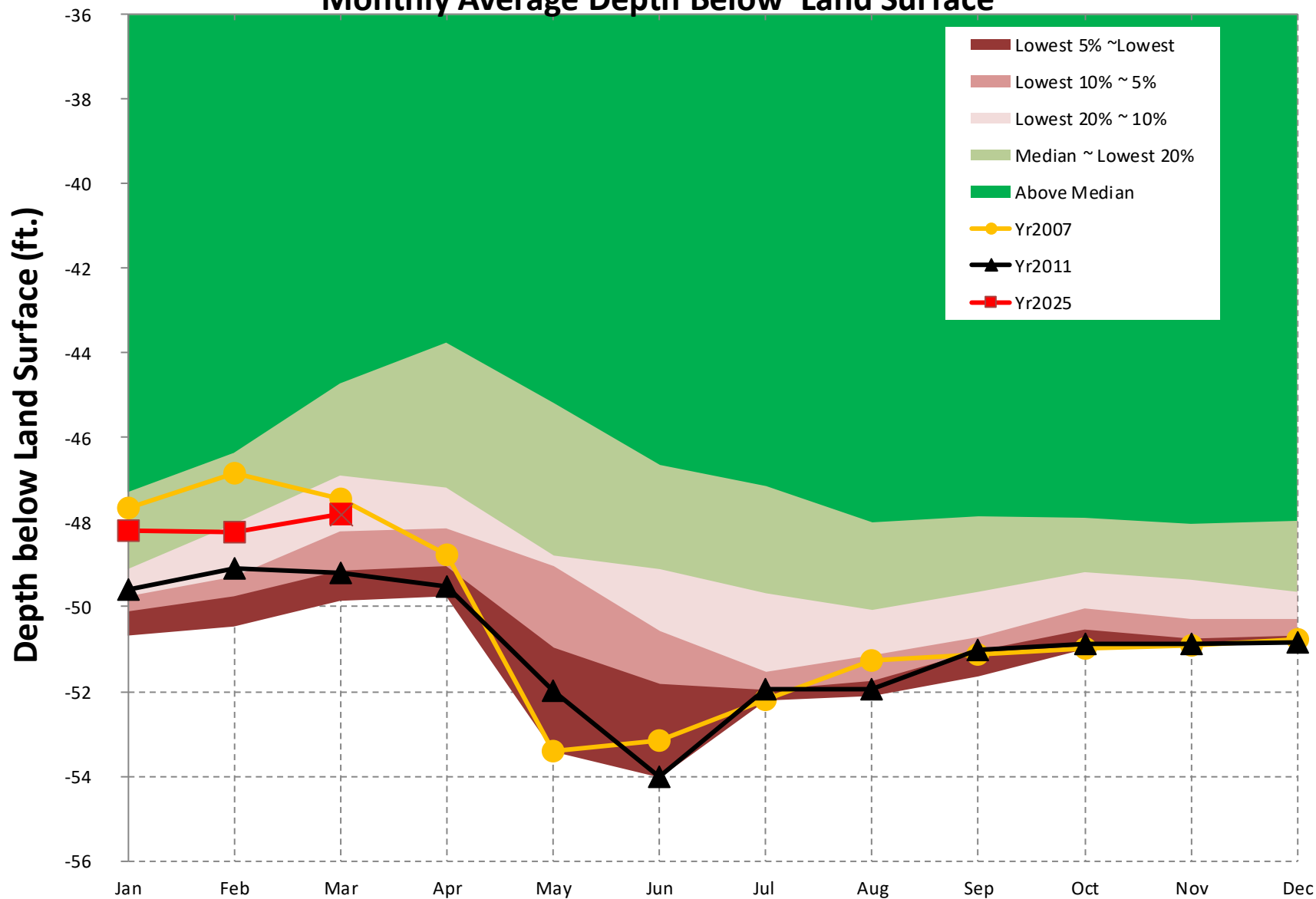


# Well #10, 10G313, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface

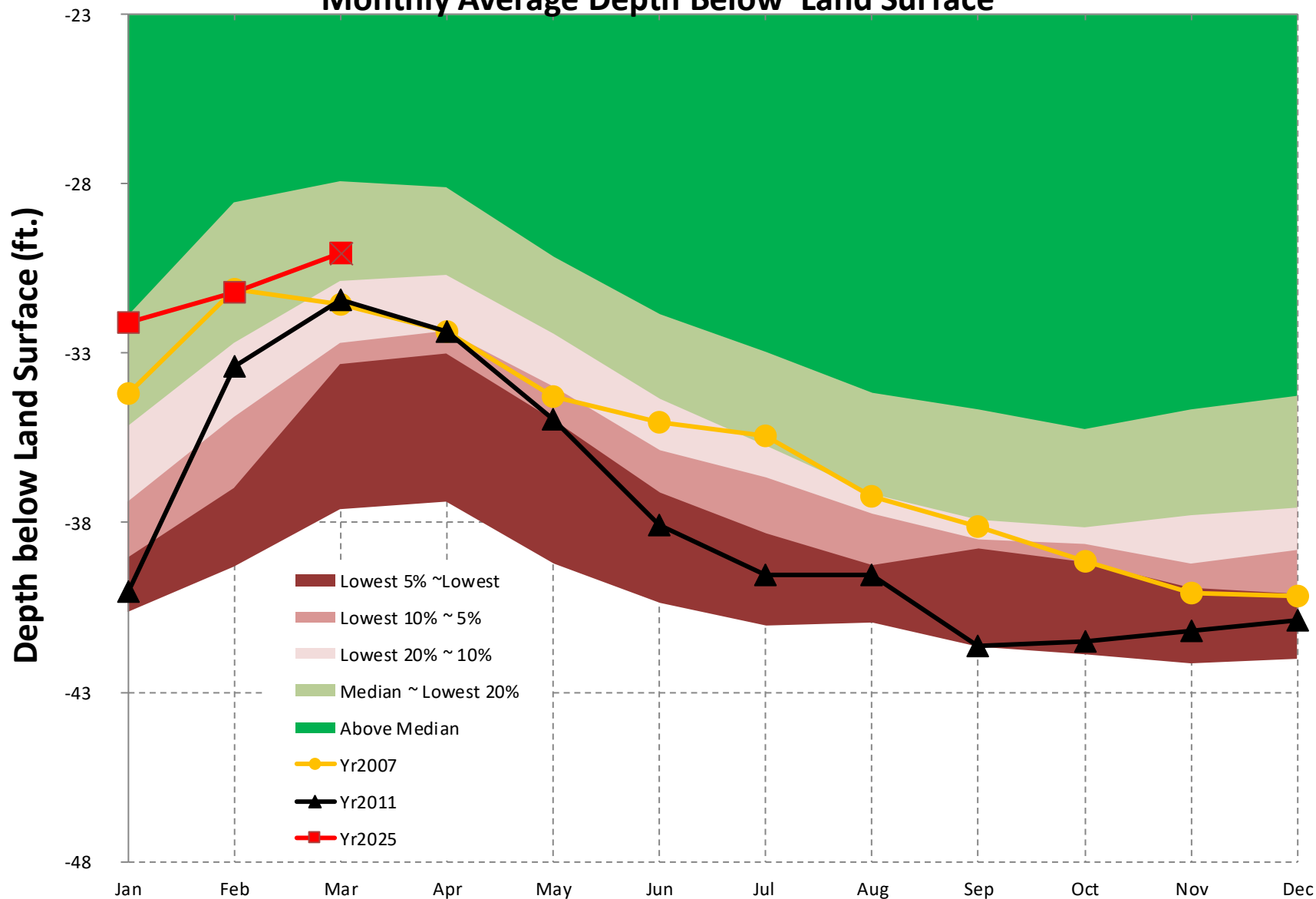


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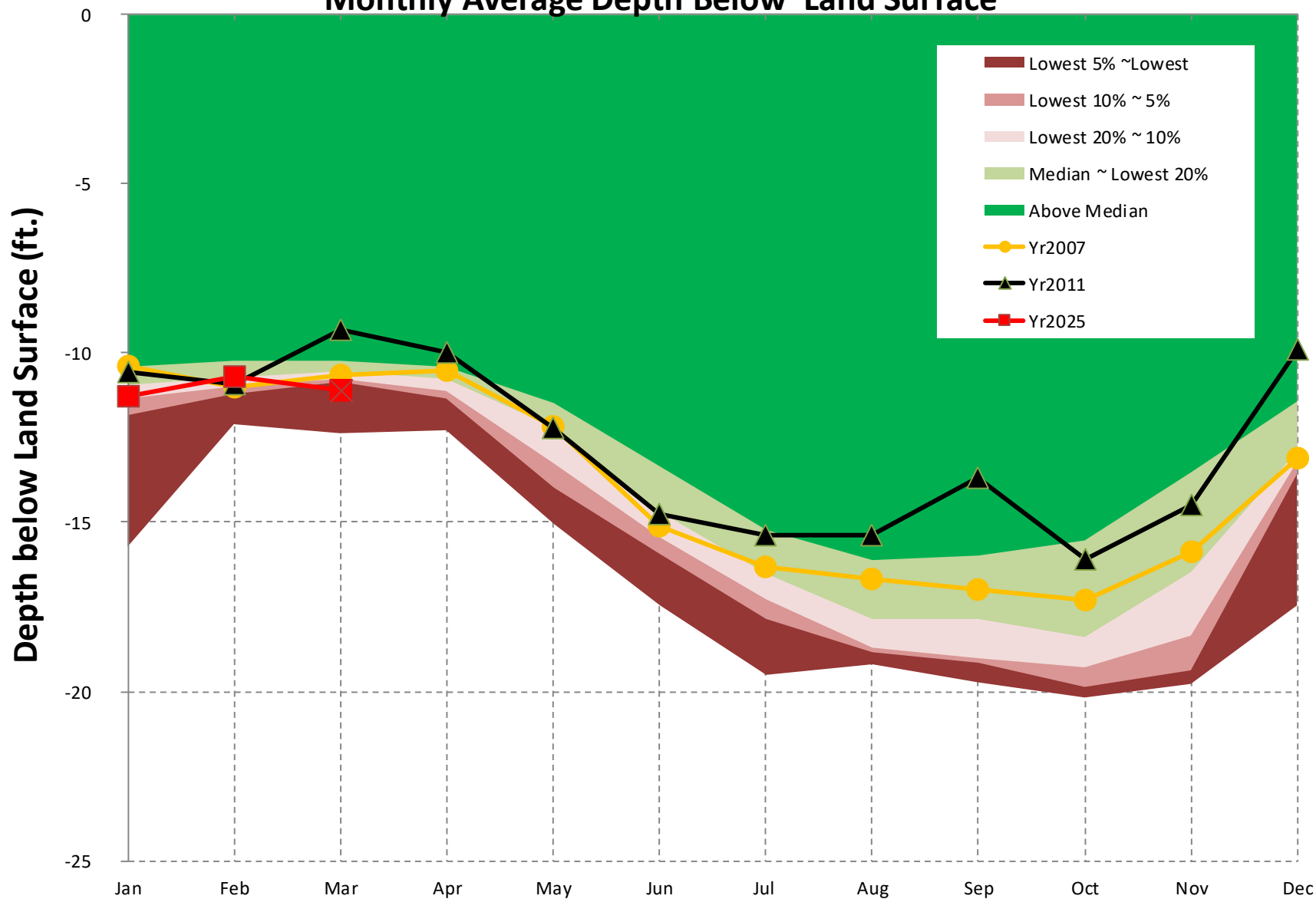
## Well #11, 09F520, Floridan Aquifer in Flint Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



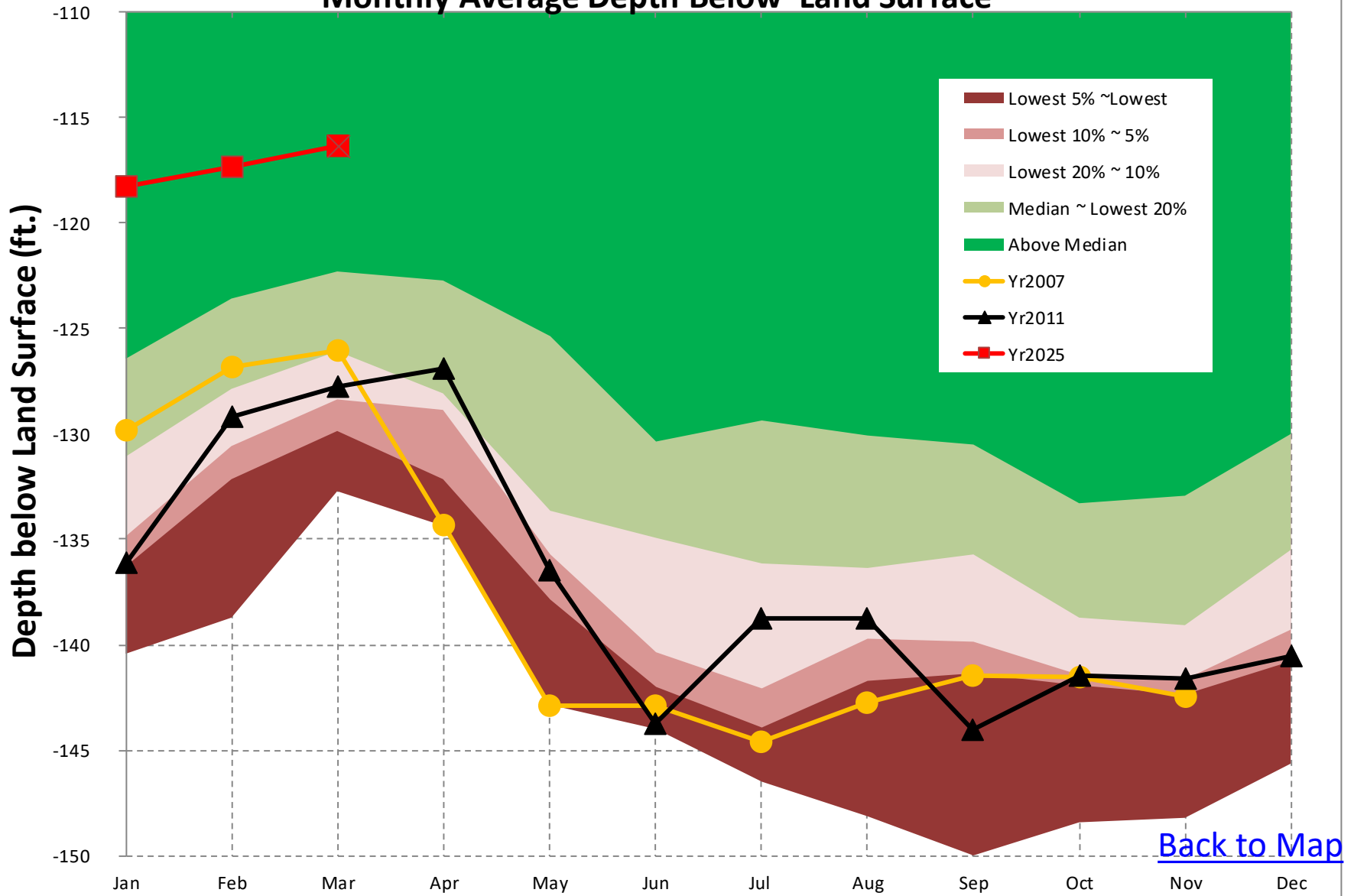
# Well #12, 21T001, Floridan Aquifer in Oconee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



## Well #13, 03PP01, Valley and Ridge Aquifer in Tennessee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface

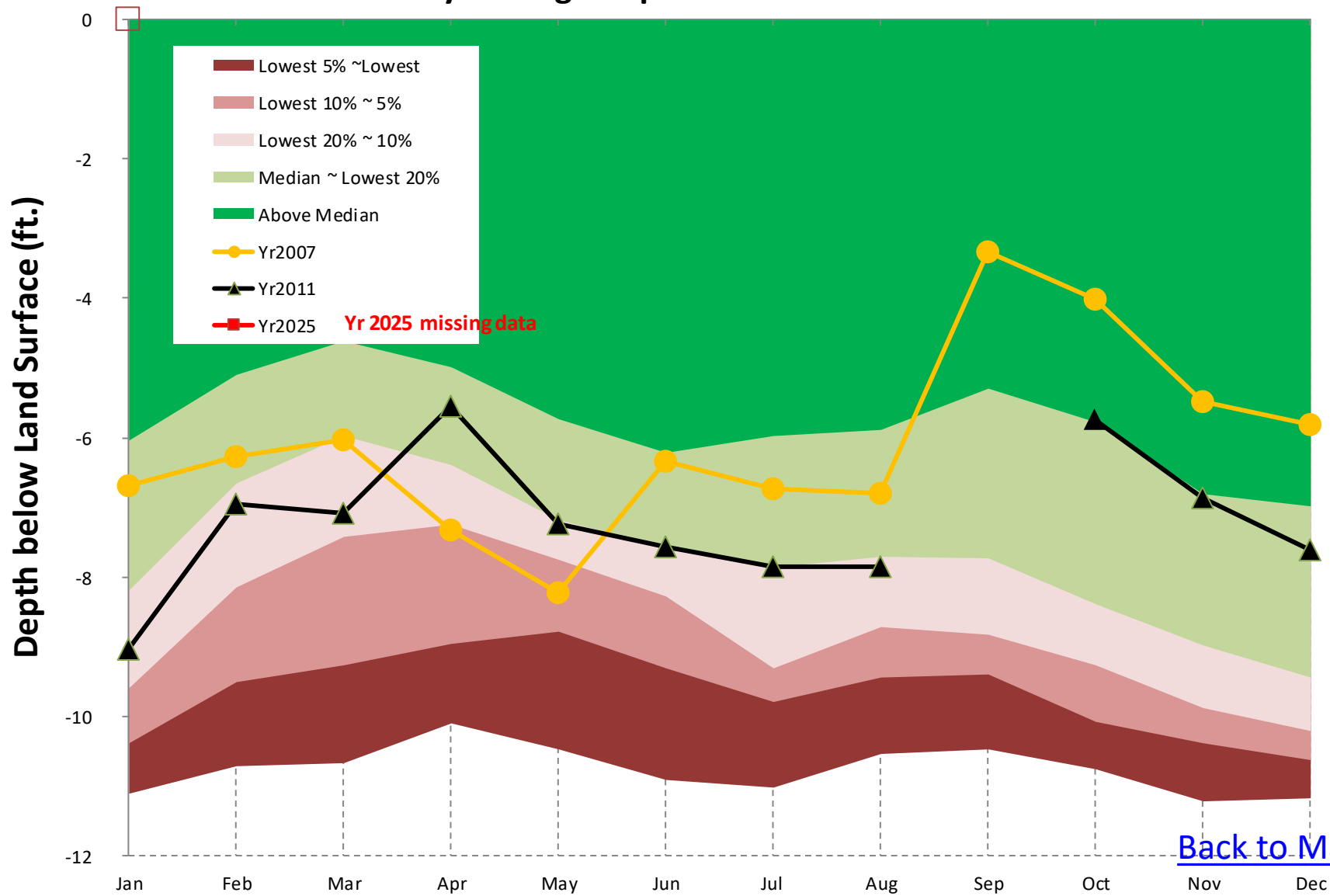


## Well #14, 19E009, Floridan Aquifer in Suwannee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



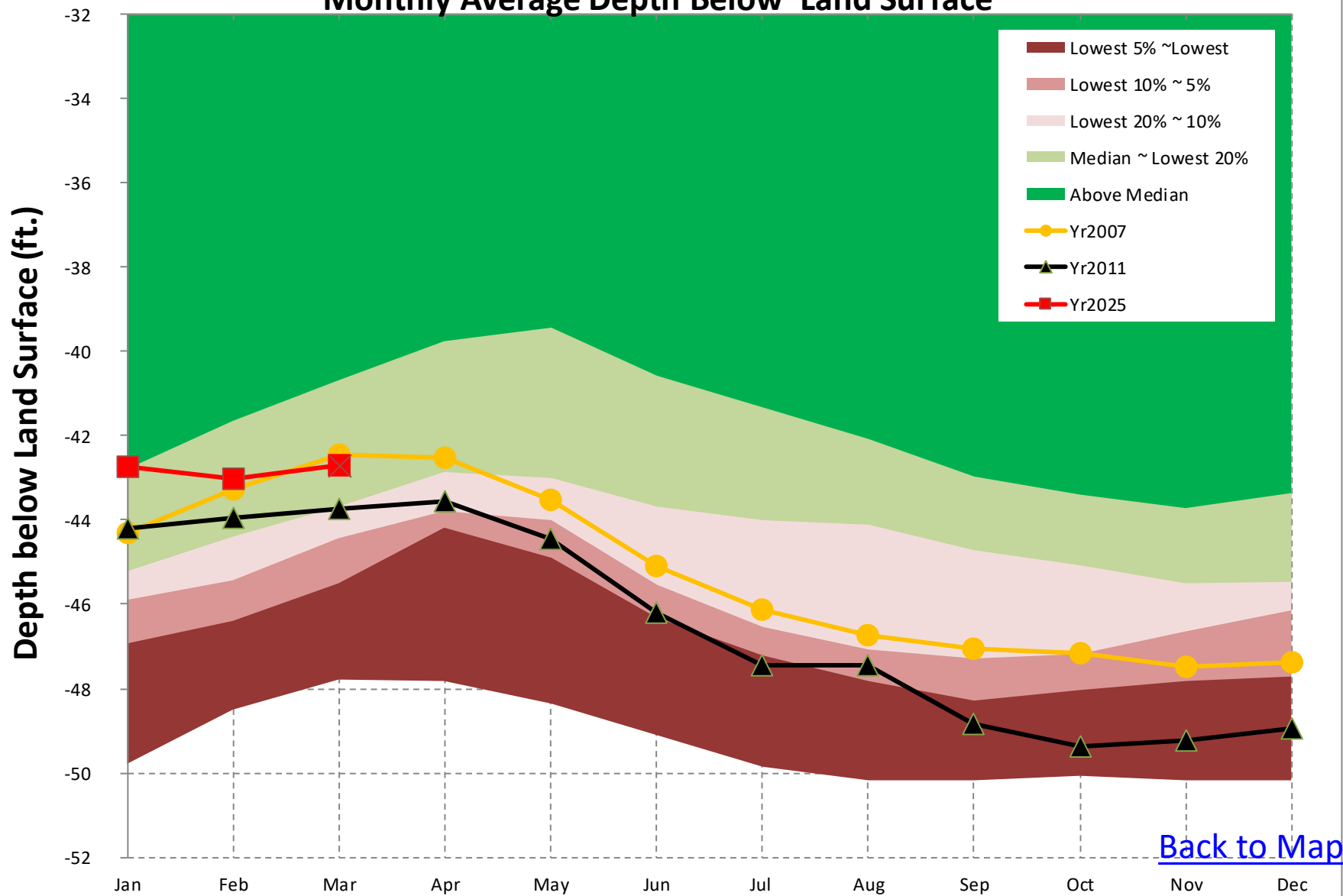
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## Well #15, 35P094, Surficial Aquifer in Ogeechee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



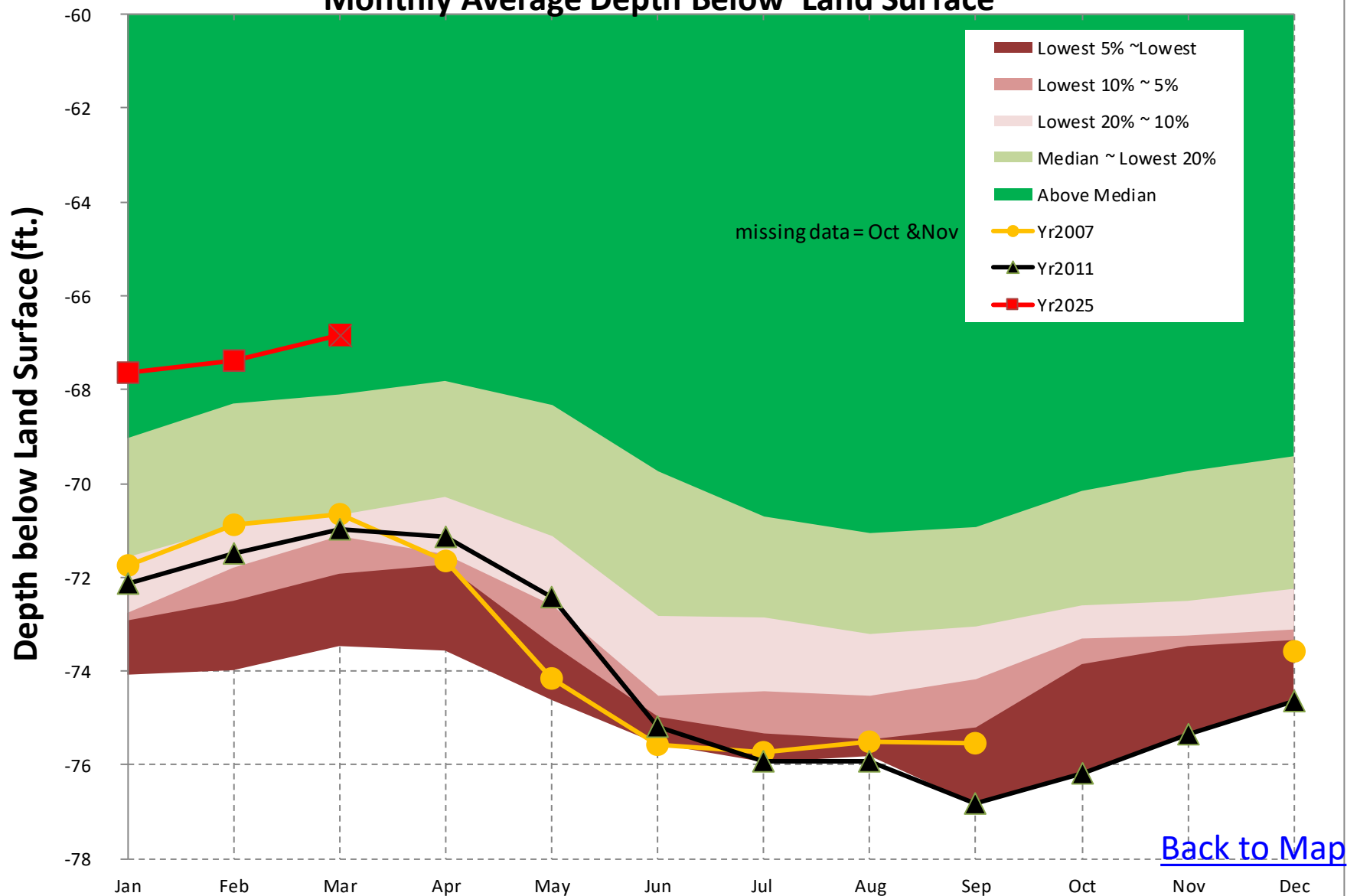
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## Well #16, 11J011, Floridan Aquifer in Suwannee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



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# Well #17, 27E004, Floridan Aquifer in Suwannee Basin, Monthly Average Depth Below Land Surface



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# Reservoir Levels

Data Source:  
US Army Corps of Engineers

### Coosa Basin

1. Carters
2. Allatoona

### Chattahoochee Basin

3. Lanier
4. West Point
5. W.F. George

### Savannah Basin

6. Hartwell
7. Thurmond

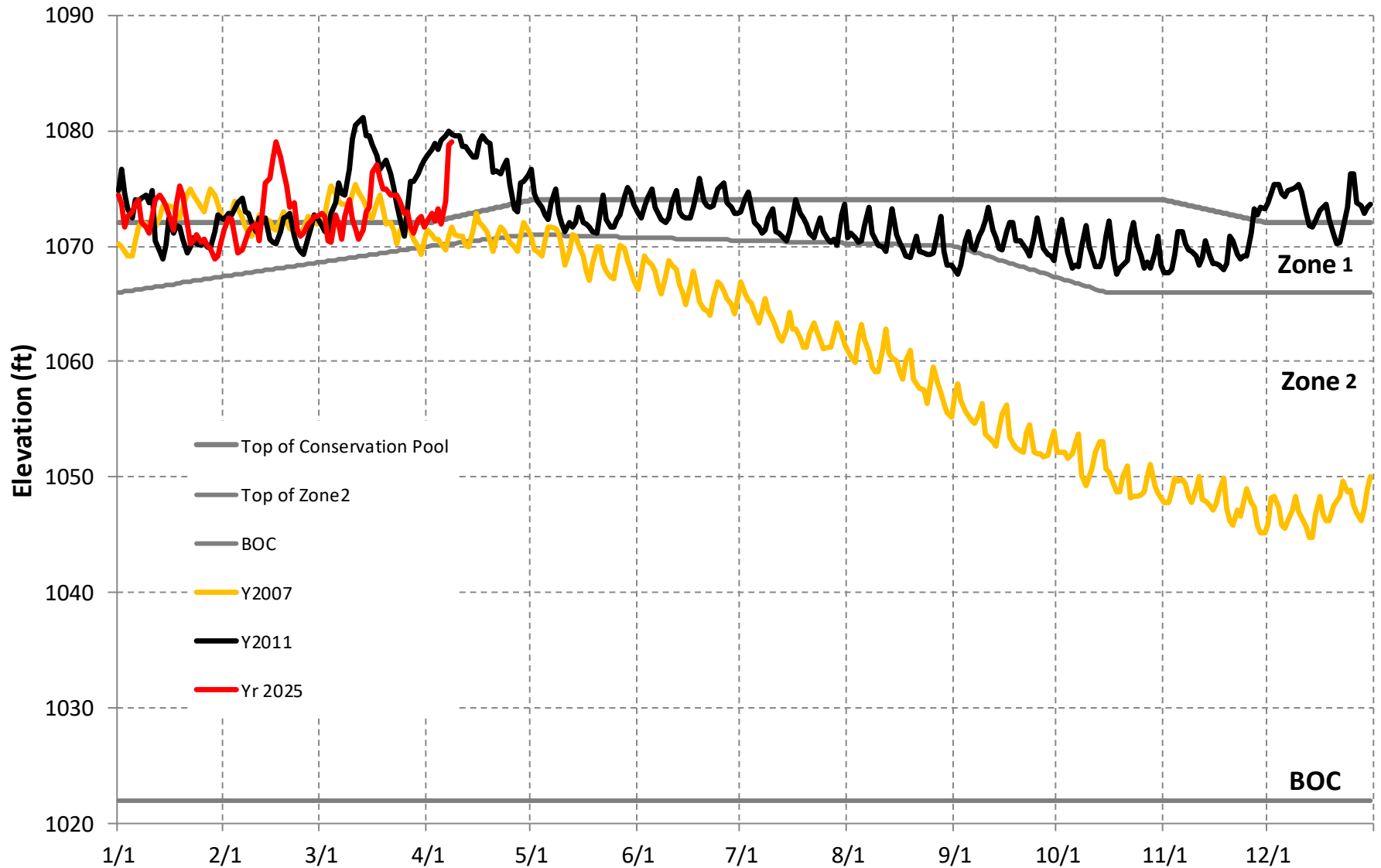


EPD monitors the water levels of seven reservoirs to assess drought conditions.

# Reservoir Elevation Graphs

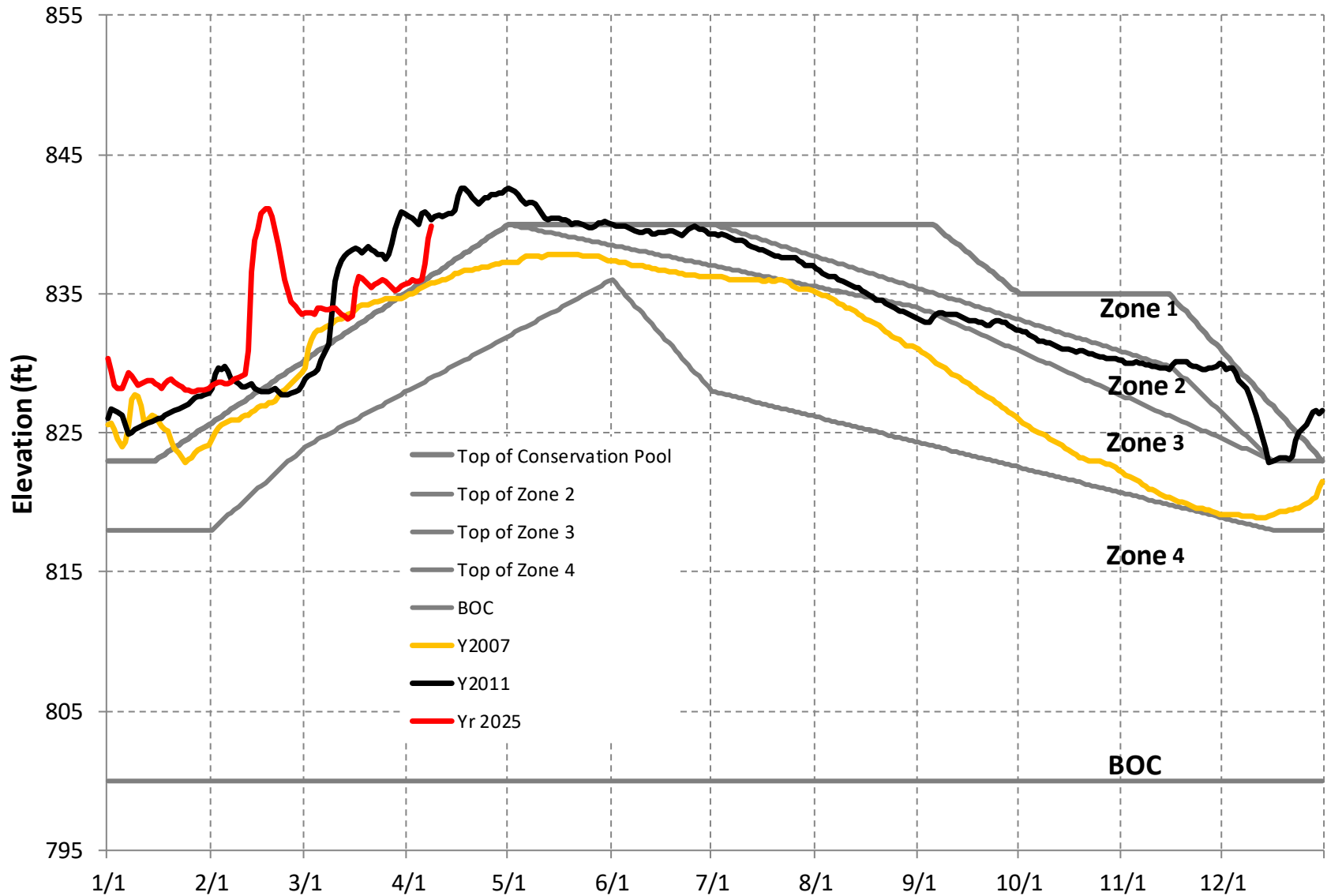
- The following graphs show the reservoir elevation curves for January 2025 through March 2025.
- Each graph also shows the Action Zone Divides (or Levels) for each reservoir
  - Zone 1 is the top layer of the conservation pool
  - Zone 2 is the layer below Zone 1
  - Zone 4 is the lowest layer in the conservation pool
  - There is no conservation storage below the bottom of Zone 4
- To put 2025 reservoir elevations into perspective, elevations for 2007 and 2011 are also shown.

# CARTERS ELEVATION

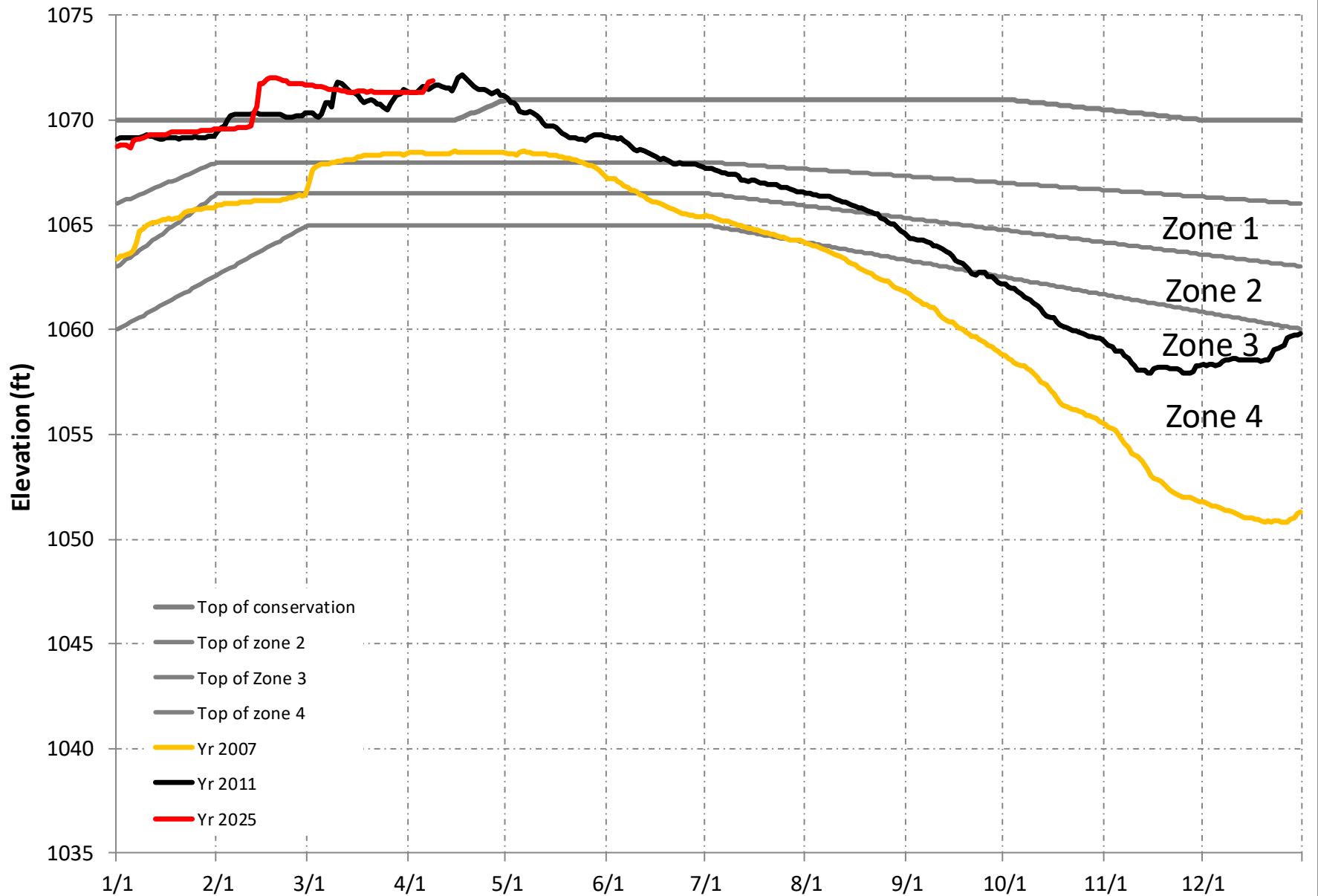


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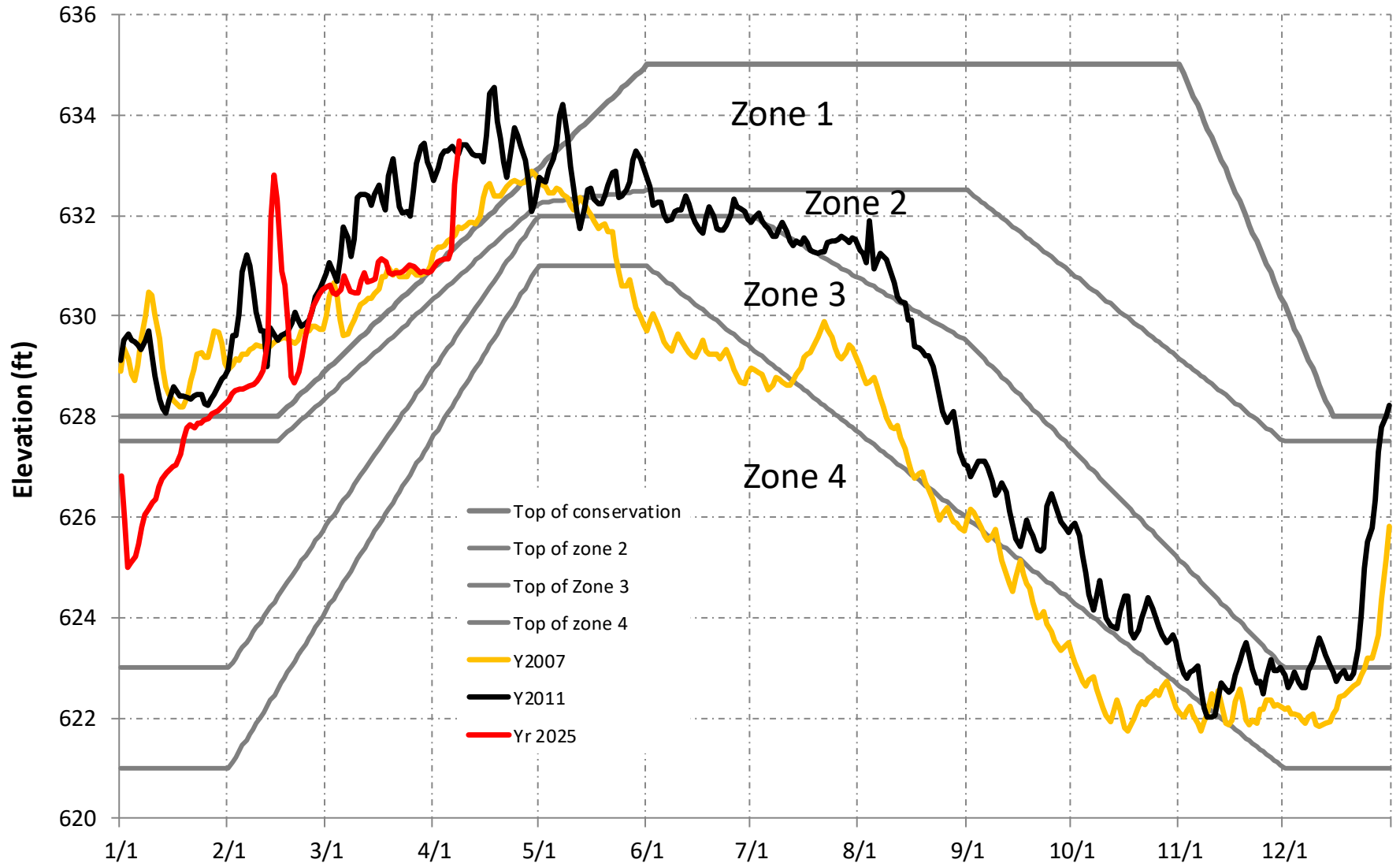
# ALLATOONA ELEVATION



# LAKE LANIER ELEVATION

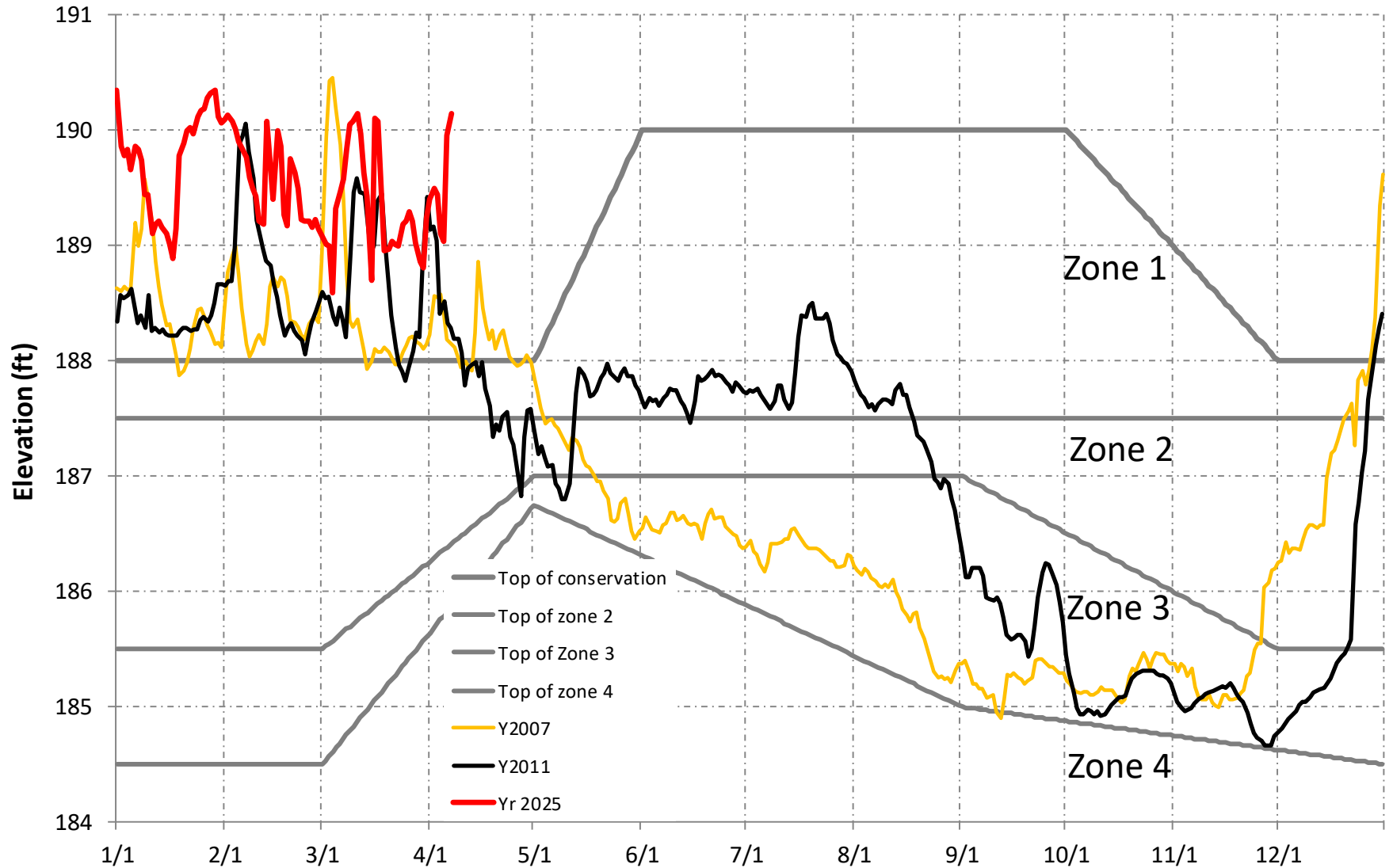


## WEST POINT ELEVATION



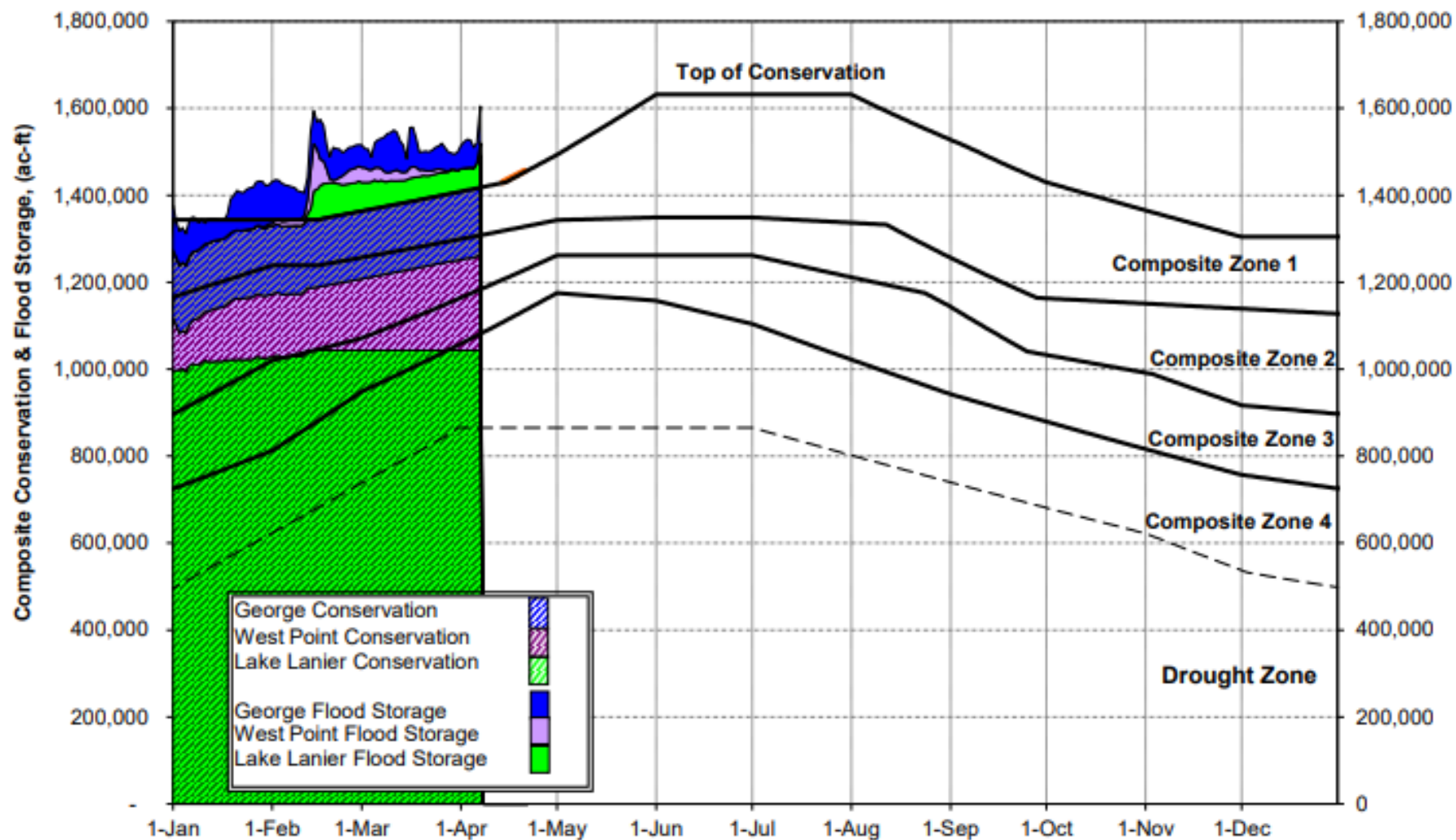
[Back to Map](#)

## W.F.GEORGE ELEVATION





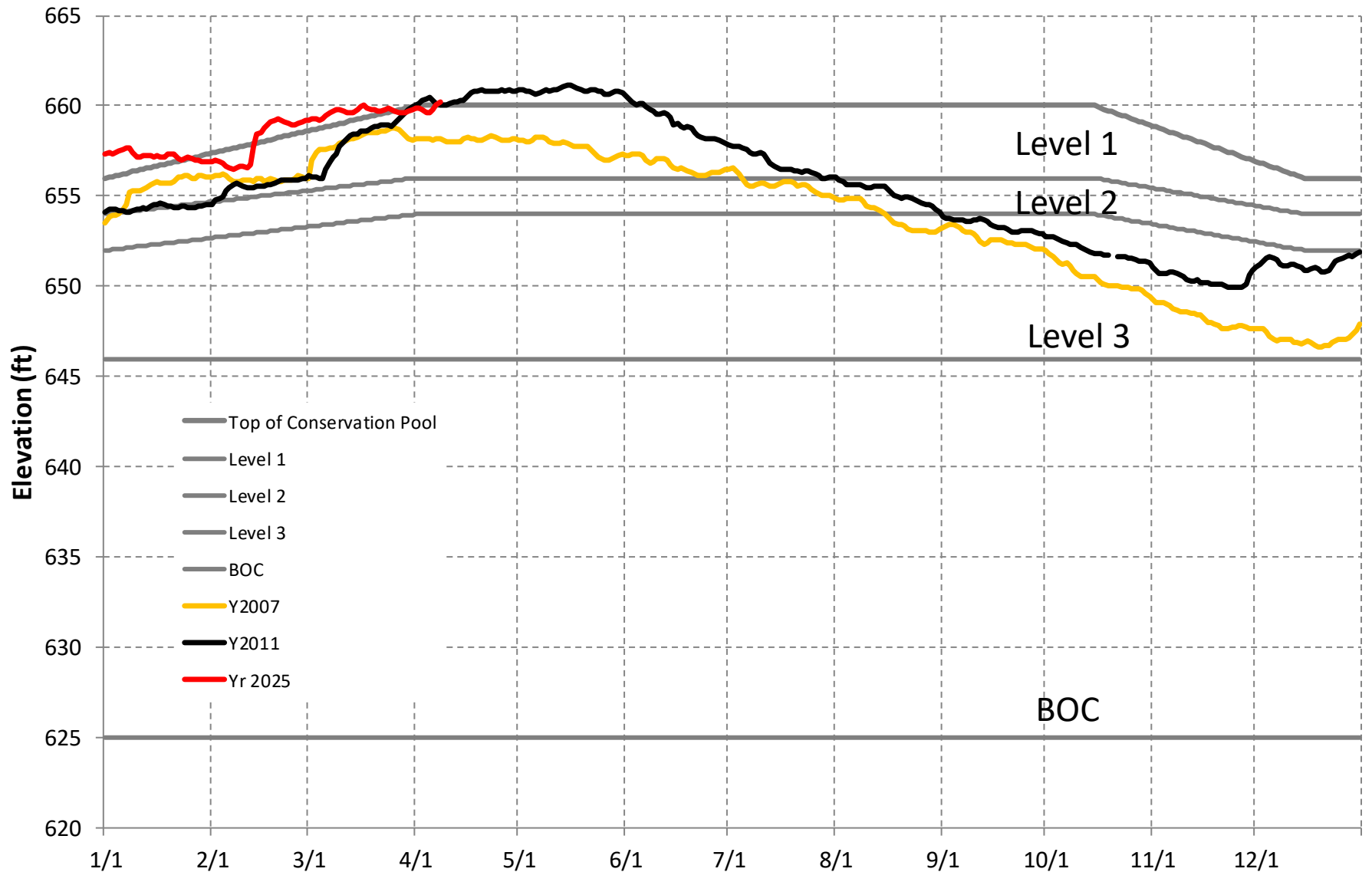
## 2025 ACF Basin Composite Conservation and Flood Storage



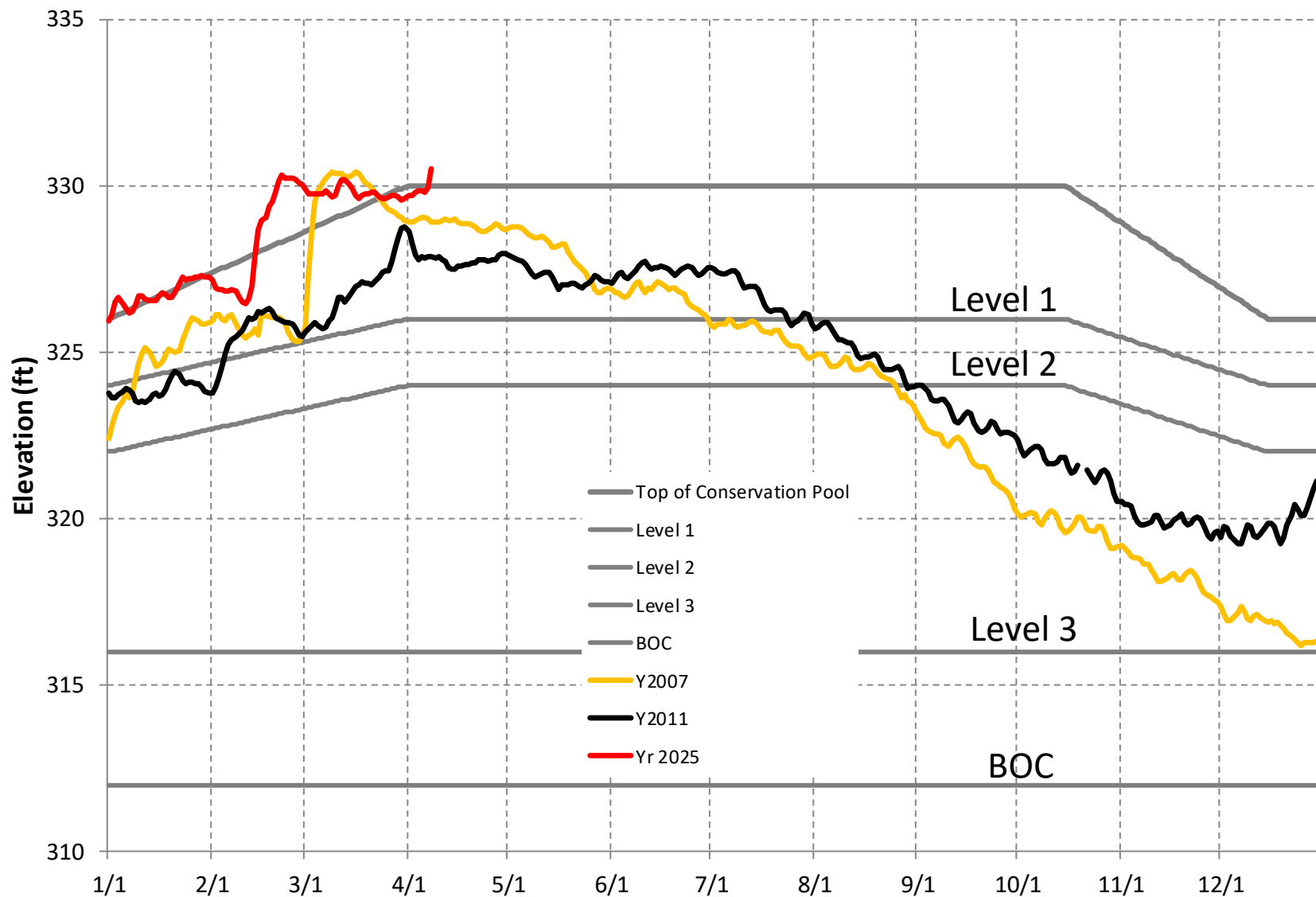
Actual data thru 4/08/2025

Add value of 1,856,000 acre-ft to include inactive storage.

# LAKE HARTWELL ELEVATION



## LAKE CLARKS HILL (THURMOND) ELEVATION



# Climate Prediction Center 3-month Temperature and Precipitation Probability Outlook and Seasonal Drought Outlook

Data Source:

<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>





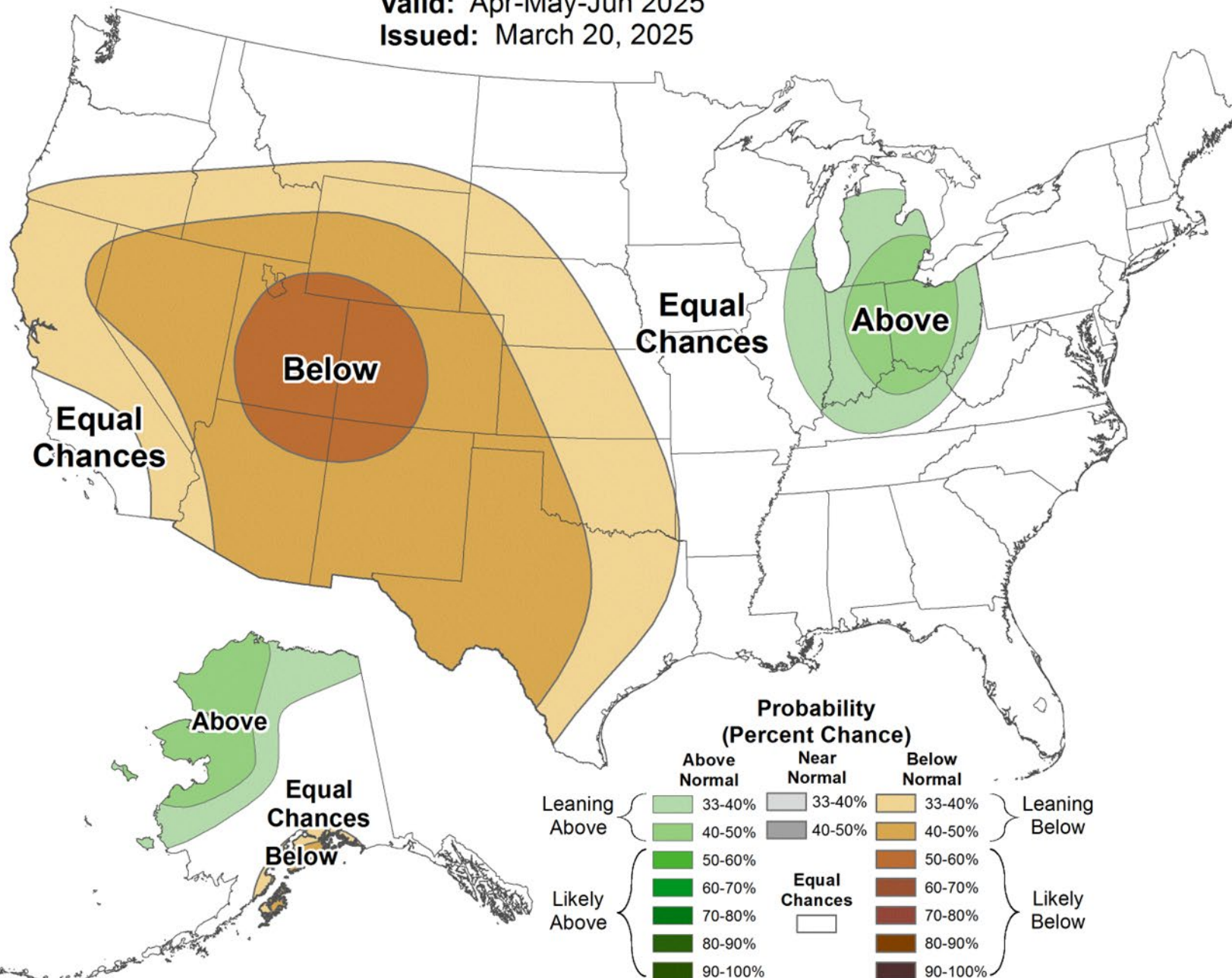


# Seasonal Precipitation Outlook



Valid: Apr-May-Jun 2025

Issued: March 20, 2025

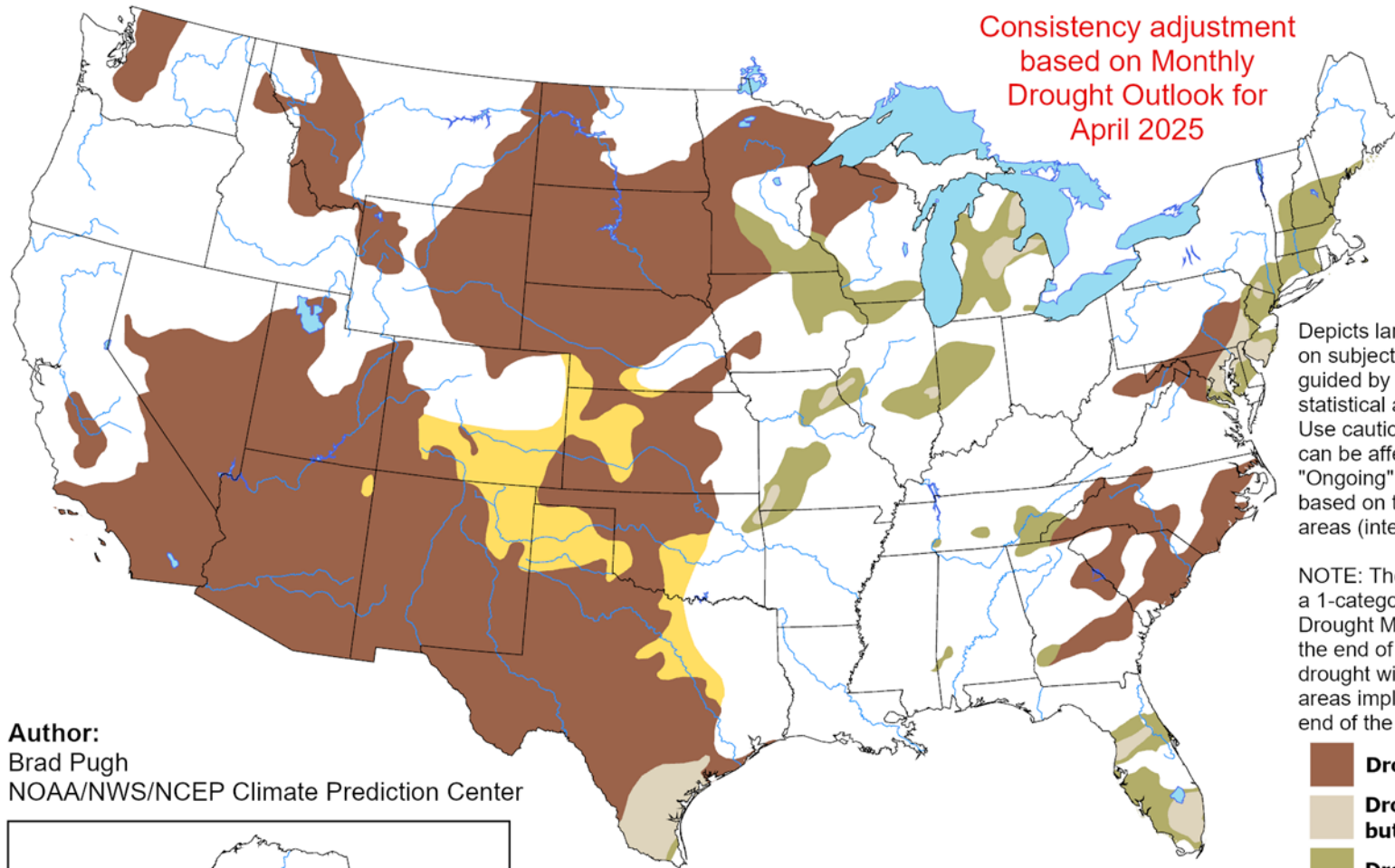


# U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

## Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for April 1 - June 30, 2025  
Released March 31, 2025

Consistency adjustment  
based on Monthly  
Drought Outlook for  
April 2025

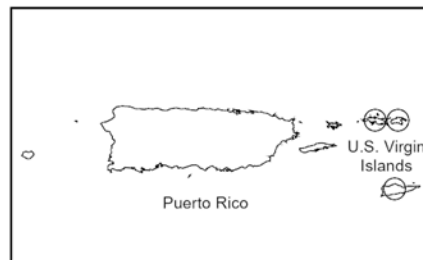
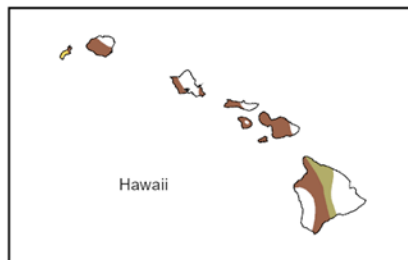


Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).

**Author:**  
Brad Pugh  
NOAA/NWS/NCEP Climate Prediction Center

-  **Drought persists**
-  **Drought remains, but improves**
-  **Drought removal likely**
-  **Drought development likely**
-  **No drought**



<https://go.usa.gov/3eZ73>