

January 2017 Climate Summary – Georgia

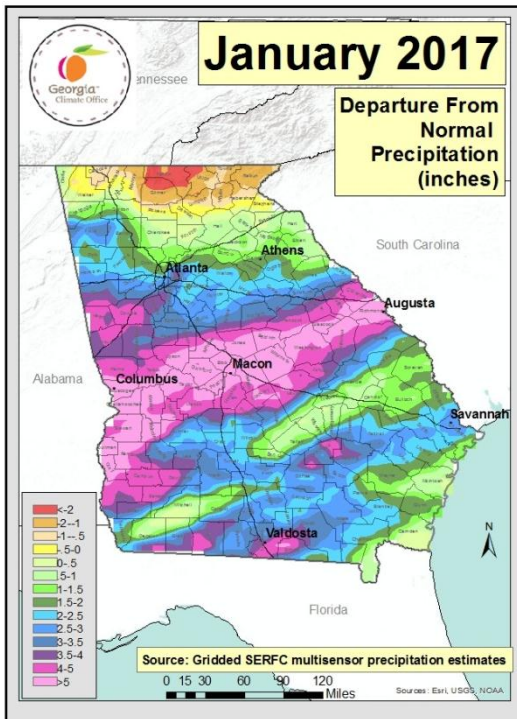
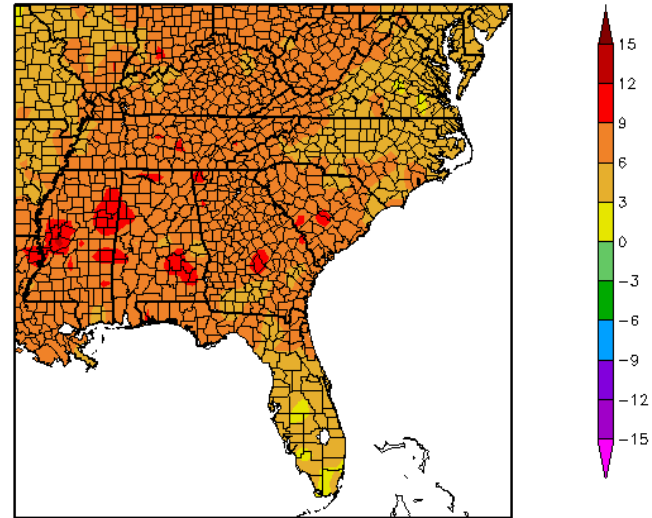
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The first month of 2017 saw much above seasonal temperatures throughout Georgia, making January the 12th consecutive month the vast majority of the state has recorded warmer than normal temperatures. Many sites were ranked in the top ten for their average monthly temperatures. An active weather pattern allowed beneficial rain to fall throughout Georgia during the month, helping to ease drought conditions and allowing many areas to see a rainfall surplus in shorter-term time periods. Only parts of north central and northeast Georgia recorded slightly below normal precipitation in January.

Atlanta's average January temperature was 52.0° (+8.7°), making it the 6th warmest on record. Athens also saw its 6th warmest January on record with 51.5° (+8.0°). Augusta's monthly average temperature was 55.5° (+10.1°) and had its 8th warmest January on record. Macon and Savannah recorded 53.9° (+7.6°) and 58.1° (+8.6°), ranking it as those sites' 9th warmest and 10th warmest January on record, respectively. Columbus recorded an above normal average January temperature of 53.7° (+6.5°), Rome recorded 51.3° (+10.2°), Valdosta's monthly average temperature was 57.3° (+6.9°), and St. Simons Island recorded 59.0° (+7.5°). Many sites also broke multiple daily temperature records during the month (see table 1).

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
1/1/2017 – 1/31/2017



In addition to the very warm average monthly temperatures, the state saw a record-breaking number of days with temperatures of 70° and greater. Atlanta ranked number one with 11 days total in January with a maximum temperature greater than or equal to 70°. Athens tied for first place with 10 days of temperatures greater than or equal to 70° this month. Augusta saw 15 days (ranked second), Savannah saw 18 (ranked fourth), Macon saw 13 (ranked fifth), and Columbus saw 12 days (ranked sixth) of temperatures greater than or equal to 70°. Atlanta had 9 straight days of temperatures greater than or equal to 70°, Augusta and Columbus had 10, and Macon had 11 straight days, ranking them all as number one for consecutive days of temperatures greater than or equal to 70° for their respective periods of record.

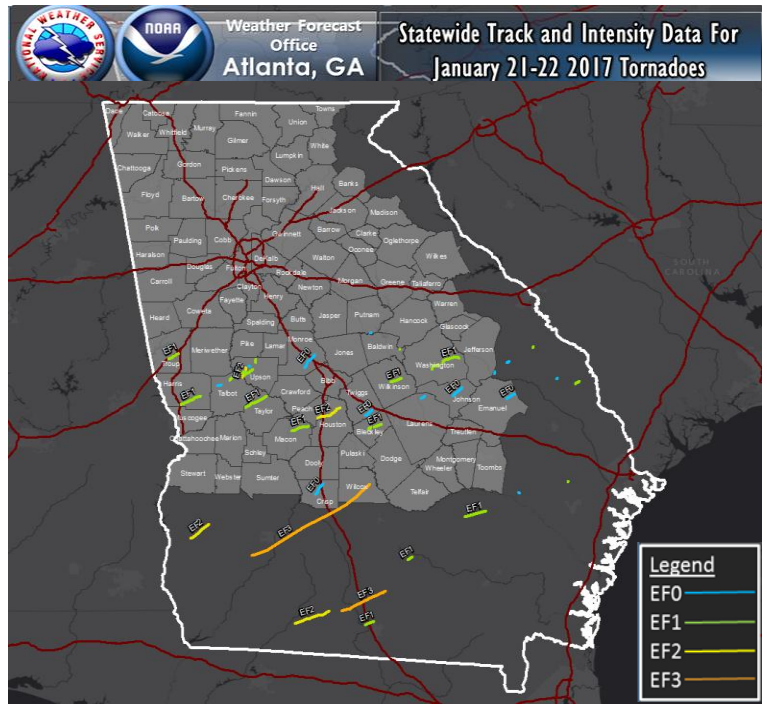
The majority of Georgia recorded above normal precipitation in January, with most locations receiving 5" or more during the month. Both Macon and Augusta had their 2nd wettest January on record with 11.26" (+7.02") and 10.13" (+6.22"). Columbus received 11.48" (+7.63") during the month, ranking it as the 3rd wettest January on record. Atlanta's January precipitation totaled 8.18" (+3.98"), Athens received 6.51" (+2.46"), and Savannah recorded 6.61" (+2.92").

Abundant rain fell in the first two days of the month, causing many sites to break daily rainfall records. Macon received 2.55" on

January 1st and 4.05" on January 2nd, breaking both days' daily maximum rainfall records. Columbus and Augusta also broke daily rainfall records on January 2nd with 4.59" and 2.92", respectively. Later in the month, even more rain caused more records to be broken. On January 21st, Atlanta received 3.12" and Athens received

2.18", shattering their previous records. Augusta recorded 2.74" and Savannah received 4.19" on January 22nd, causing both sites to break their daily maximum rainfall records.

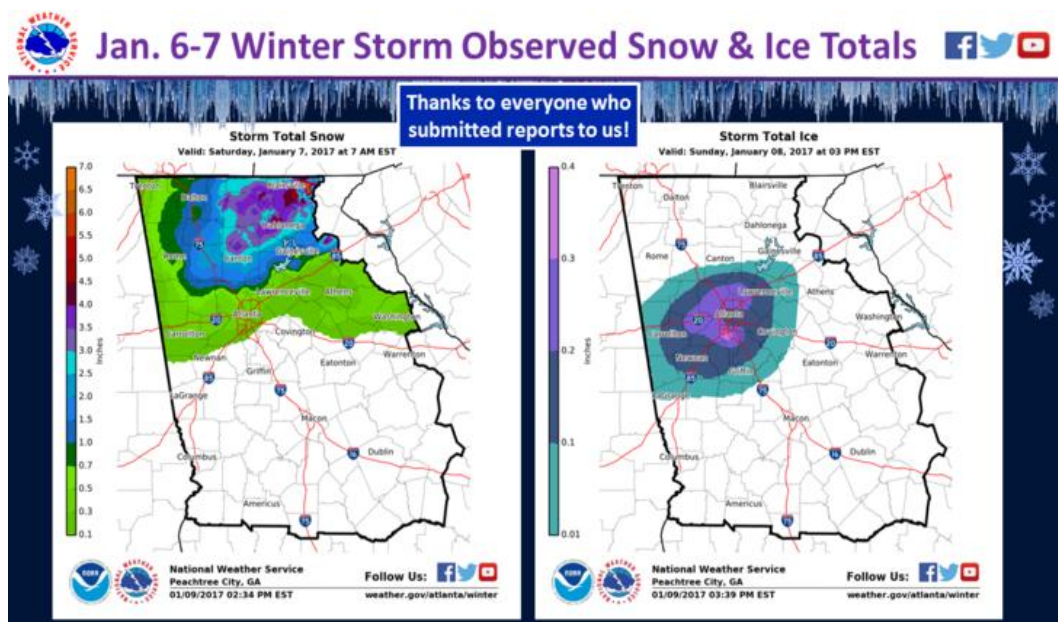
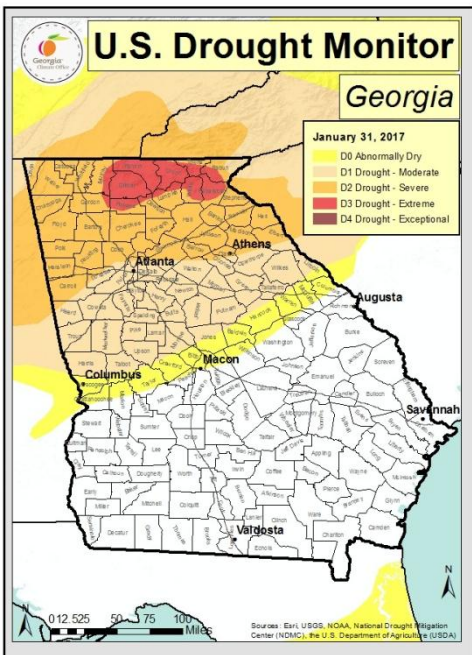
January was quite an active month in terms of severe weather. On January 2nd, a strong storm system produced tornadoes in parts of southwest Georgia. There was also extensive straight-line wind damage throughout the Albany area. Another powerful system moved through on January 21st and 22nd. A line of strong storms produced numerous tornadoes and caused extensive damage in central and southern Georgia. A total of 41 tornadoes were confirmed, which set the record for greatest number of tornadoes to affect the state in a two-day period. The intensity ranged from EF-0 to EF-3. One of two EF-3 tornadoes affected Dougherty to Wilcox County, including the same area of Albany that had seen damage earlier in the month. The other EF-3 traveled through Brooks, Cook, and Berrien counties.



A winter storm impacted much of north Georgia on January 6th through January 7th. Arctic high pressure allowed cold air to filter in the state before a low pressure system developed in the Gulf of Mexico and progressed northeast. The moisture from the system resulted in several inches of snow across north Georgia along with significant freezing rain accumulations. There were reports of scattered power outages, tree damage, and difficult travel conditions.

The United States Drought Monitor for Georgia showed that drought was significantly reduced during January. D4 (exceptional drought) conditions in Georgia were reduced from 26% to 0% in the first week of January, and steady improvement continued through the month thanks to the much-needed rainfall. Drought conditions of all levels were eliminated in the southern half of the state, and D3 (extreme drought) conditions in north Georgia were reduced to less than 4% of the state by the end of the month.

According to the Climate Prediction Center, there is currently a La Niña Advisory and La Niña conditions are present. Equatorial sea surface temperatures are near-to-below average in the central Pacific Ocean, and they are above-average in the eastern Pacific Ocean. A transition to ENSO-neutral is expected to occur by February 2017, with ENSO-neutral then continuing through the first half of 2017. The CPC's three-month seasonal outlook forecasts chances for above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation for the entire state during February, March, and April.



Seasonal Temperature and Precipitation Outlooks

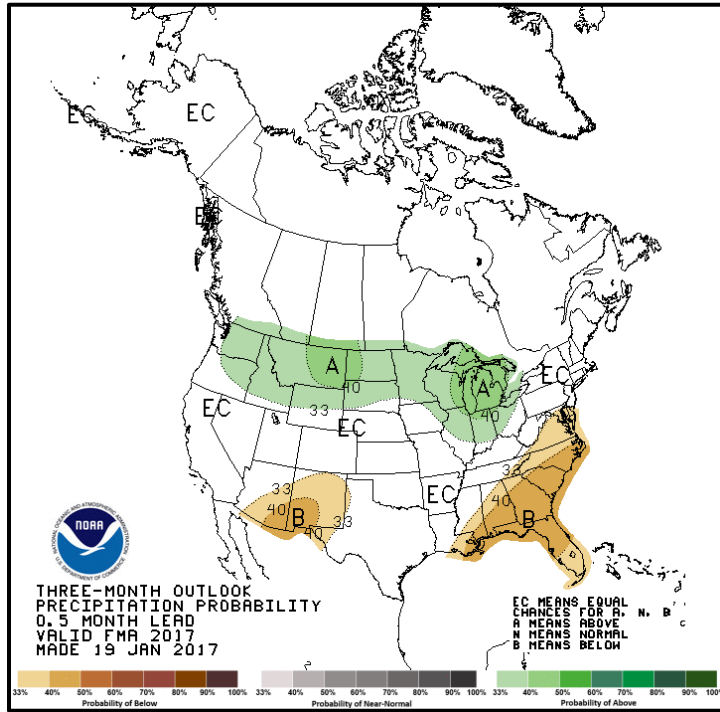
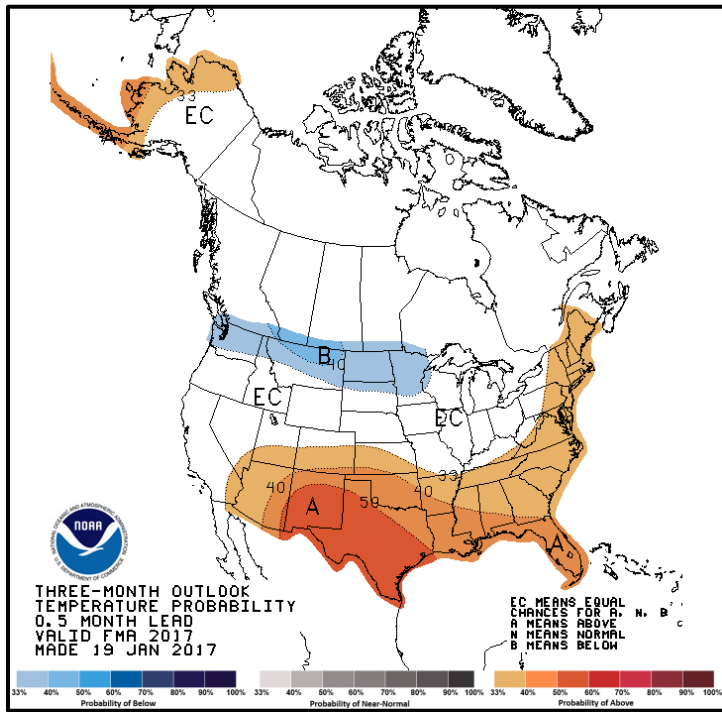


Table 1

Date	City	Temperature	Previous Record
1/2	Savannah	79°	1952 (tie)
1/3	Augusta	60° (high minimum temp)	57° in 1997
1/13	Athens	79°	76° in 1932
1/13	Macon	78°	77° in 2013
1/13	Augusta	82°	79° in 2013
1/14	Atlanta	77°	73° in 1937
1/15	Atlanta	73°	2007 (tie)
1/15	Athens	76°	75° in 1932
1/15	Augusta	79°	78° in 2013
1/17	Atlanta	75°	1943 (tie)
1/17	Augusta	80°	1943 (tie)
1/18	Athens	77°	76° in 1928
1/18	Augusta	81°	80° in 1928
1/19	Atlanta	75°	69° in 1950
1/19	Savannah	79°	1990 (tie)
1/20	Atlanta	74°	1927 (tie)
1/20	Augusta	81°	78° in 1929