



NWS Wilmington, NC

2026 NWS Tropical Program: Updates & Reminders

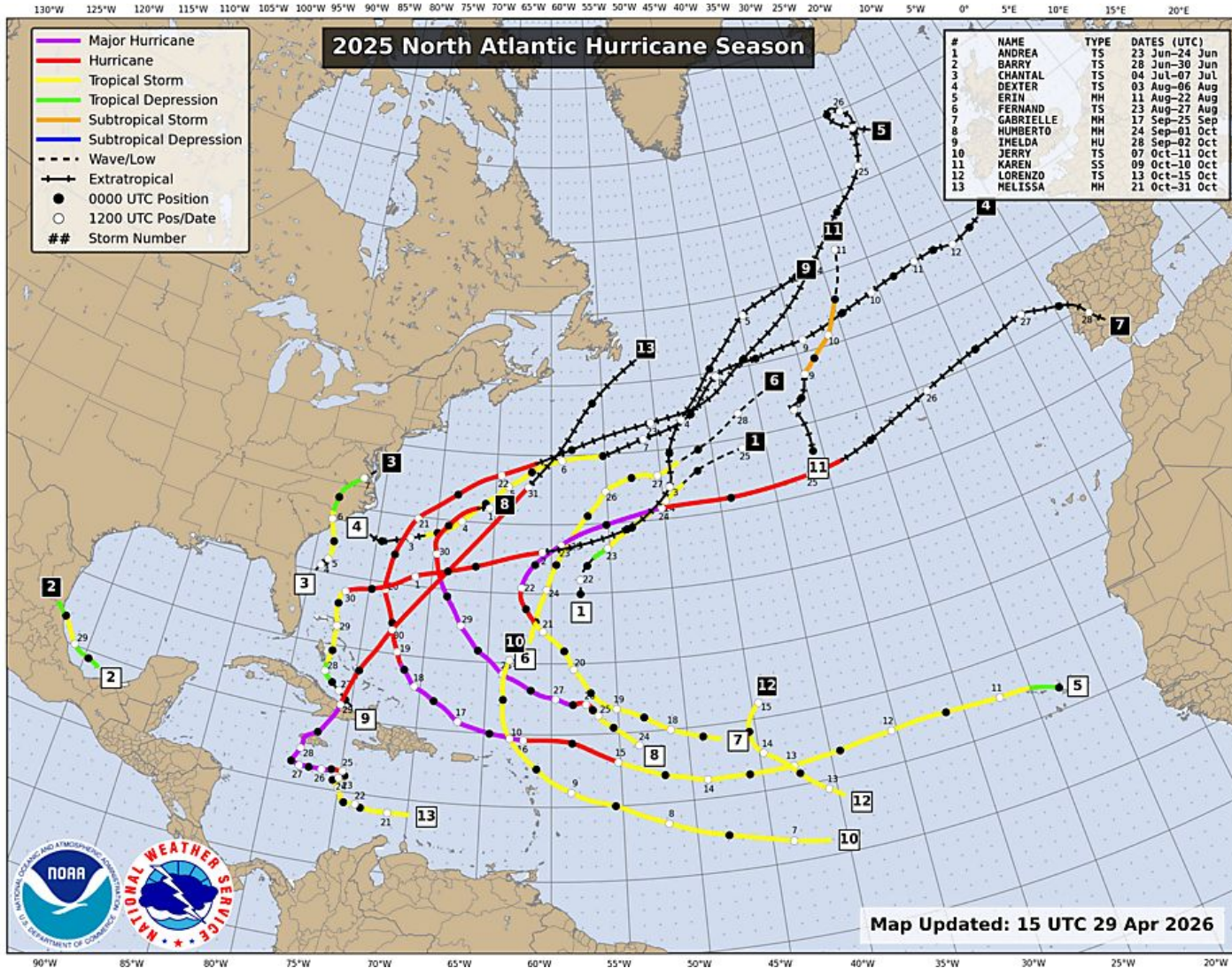


U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service



2025 Hurricane Season Review

2025 Hurricane Season Review



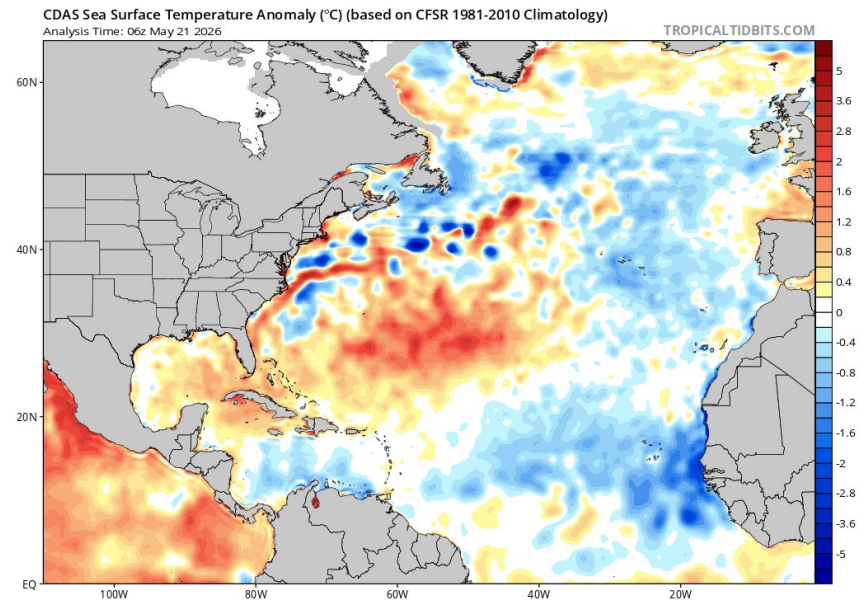
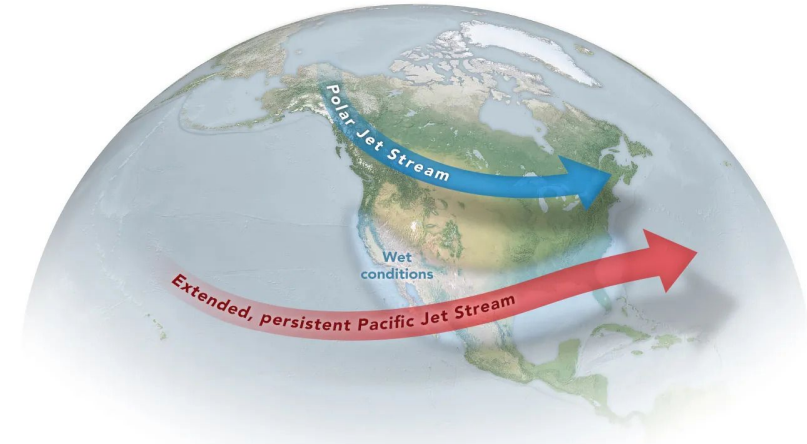
- Neutral ENSO conditions transitioned toward La Nina later in season
- Near to below average season:
 - ◆ 13 tropical storms (avg: 14)
 - ◆ 5 hurricanes (avg: 7)
 - ◆ 4 major hurricanes (avg: 3)
 - 3 Cat 5s for only the 2nd time on record!!
- 1st time since 2015 w/ no hurricane landfalls in U.S. due to “Bermuda” high being a bit farther east
- Only landfall in U.S. was TS Chantal in July in SC
- Hurricane Erin stayed offshore but still produced a lot of rip currents on East Coast, including several deaths

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the Americas and the Atlantic Ocean. The text "2026 Hurricane Season Outlook" is overlaid in white, bold font.

2026 Hurricane Season Outlook

2026 NOAA Hurricane Season Outlook

- Strong El Nino is likely to develop later this summer which typically causes less tropical cyclones in the Atlantic basin due to increased wind shear, especially over the Main Development Region (MDR) in the south-central/eastern Atlantic
- Water temperatures are warmer than average over much of the Atlantic close to the U.S. which increases the potential for “homegrown” storms

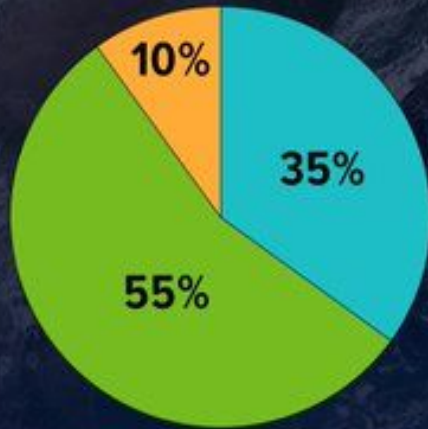


2026 NOAA Hurricane Season Outlook



2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook

Season Probability



■ Above Normal ■ Near Normal ■ Below Normal

Named Storms

8 - 14

Hurricanes

3 - 6

Major Hurricanes

1 - 3

Be prepared: visit hurricanes.gov and follow NOAA's @NWS and @NHC_Atlantic on X.

May 2026

- Strong El Nino conditions likely likely to develop later this summer
- High chance of near to below normal number of tropical storms
- We have seen significant tropical cyclone impacts even during El Nino years
- Do NOT base your level of preparedness on the seasonal outlook

◆ **It only takes 1 storm in your area to make it a bad year!**

NOAA Hurricane Season Outlook:

noaa.gov/news-release/noaa-predicts-below-normal-2026-atlantic-hurricane-season



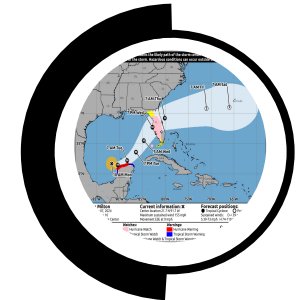
2026 Product/Service Changes

2026 Main Tropical Product/Service Changes



Inclusion of inland tropical wind watches/warnings on the forecast cone graphic

An experimental version of the forecast cone graphic will be available showing the an experimental version of the forecast cone that more accurately depicts direction/speed track forecast errors



NHC Product/Service Changes: [hurricanes.gov/pdf/2026NHCNewProductsAndServices.pdf](https://www.hurricanes.gov/pdf/2026NHCNewProductsAndServices.pdf)

Operational Track Forecast Cone Graphic Changes

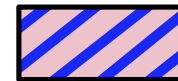
Key Changes



Inland Tropical Storm and Hurricane Watches/Warnings included for U.S.

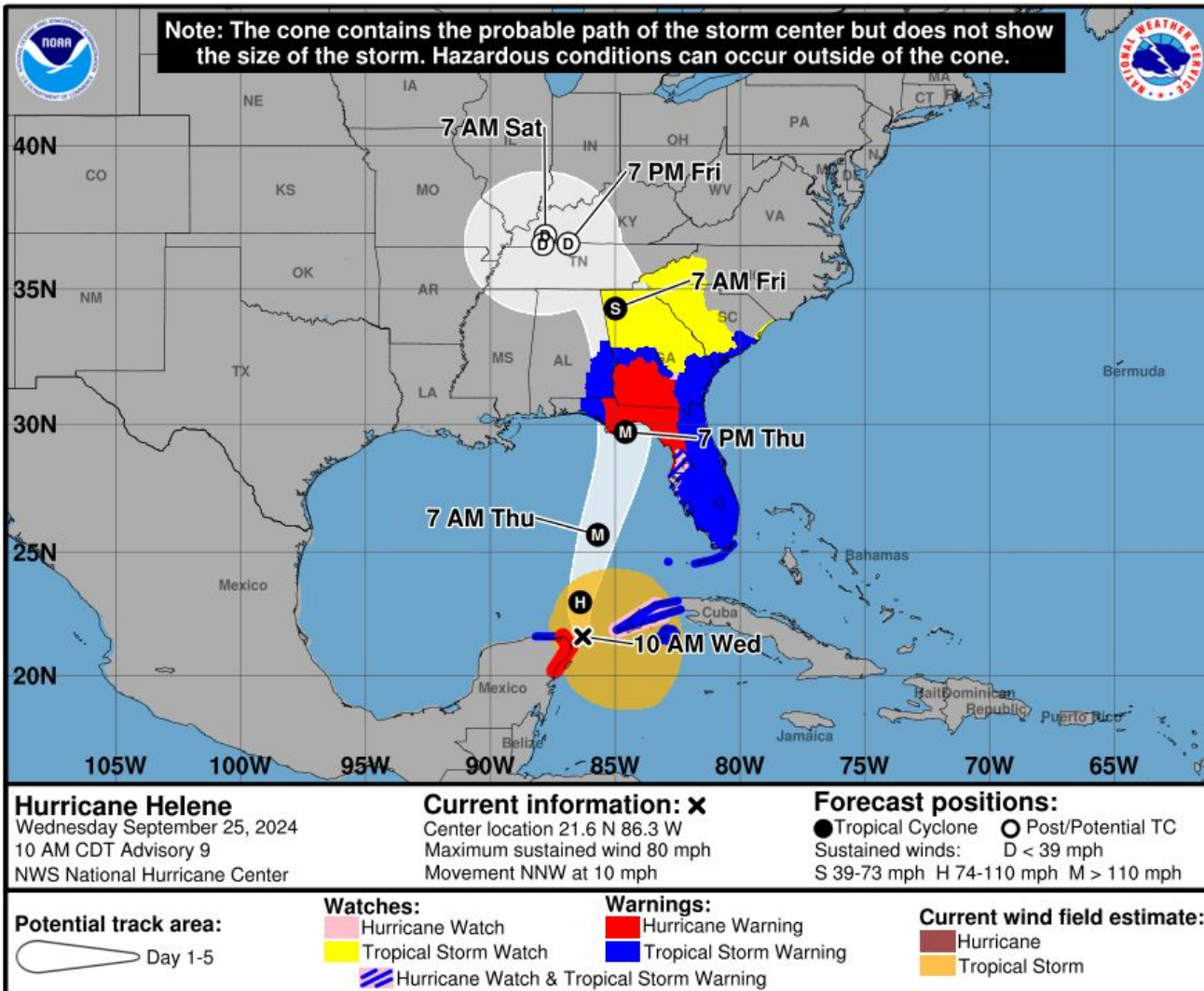


Cone depicted in white for days 1-5

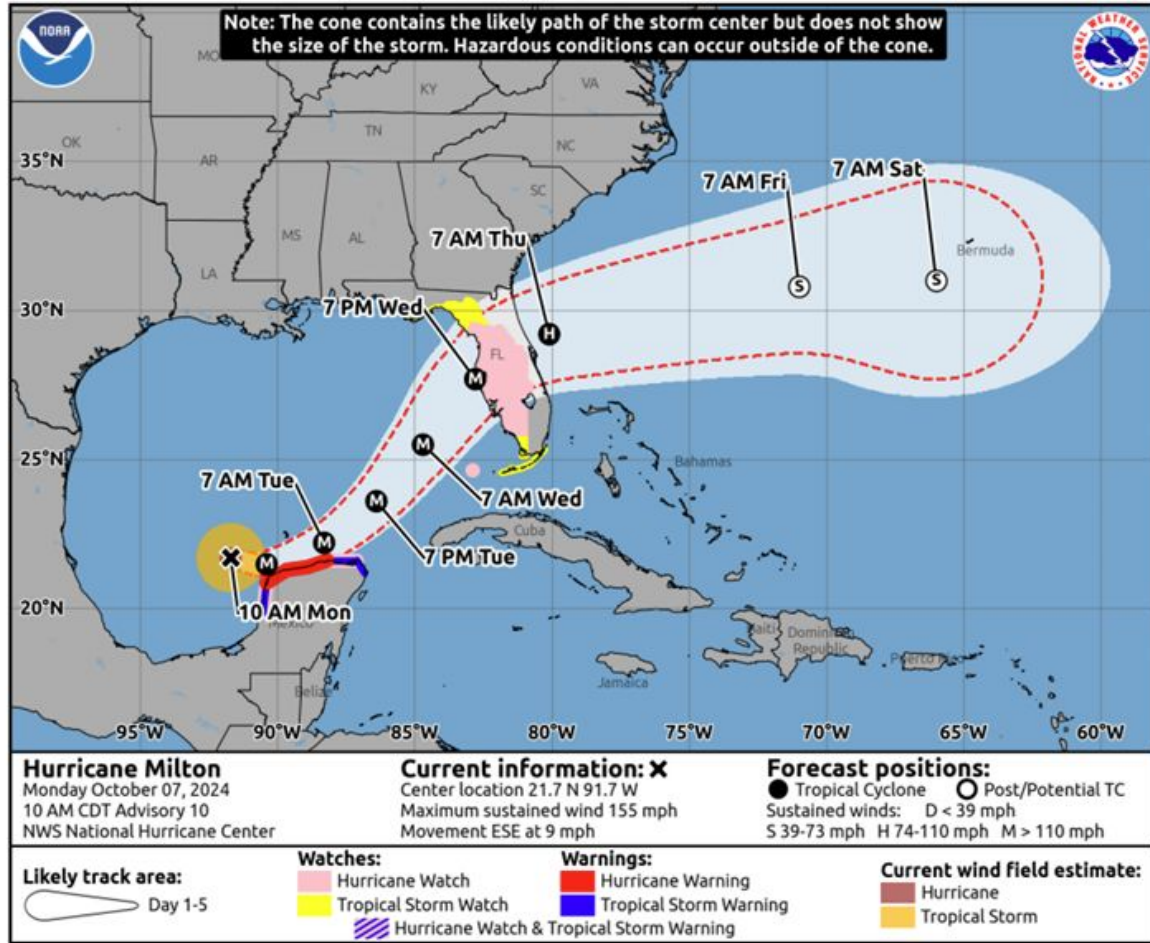


Tropical Storm Warning with Hurricane Watch plotted in blue and pink hatching

In rare circumstances, a “preliminary” cone with only coastal U.S. watches and warnings may be posted until a final version with inland U.S. watches and warnings is available



New Experimental Version of the Forecast Cone Graphic



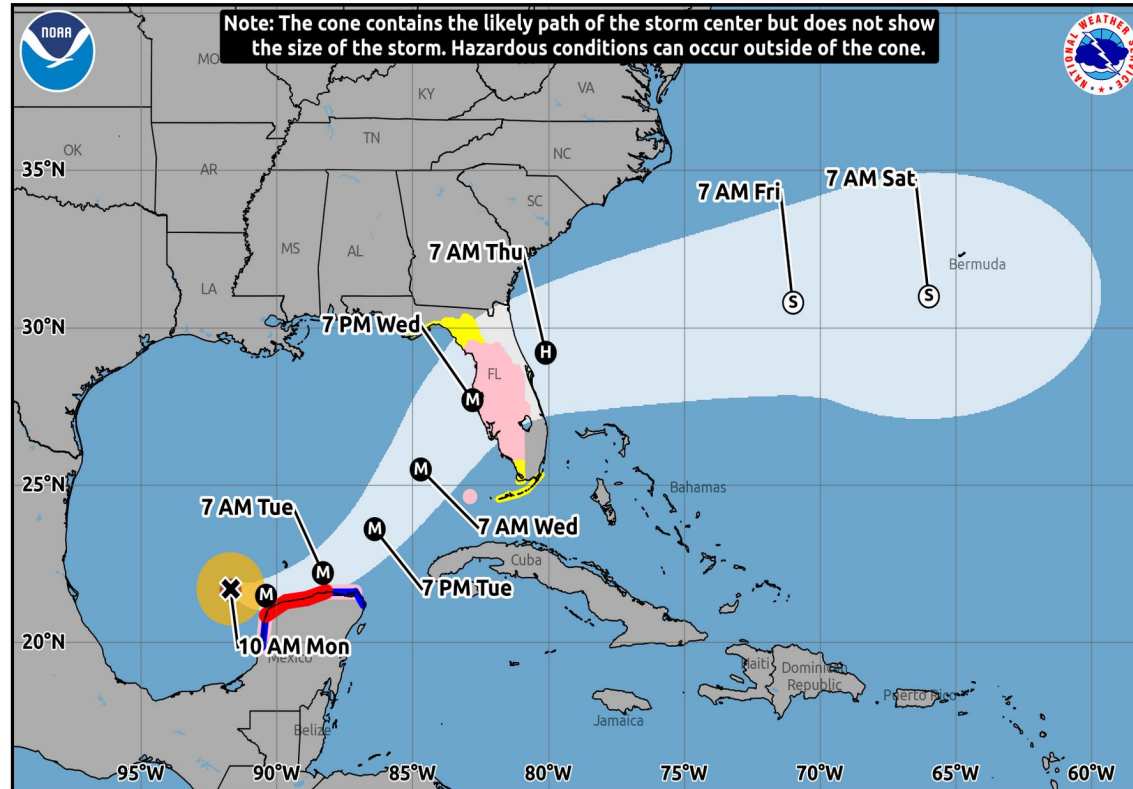
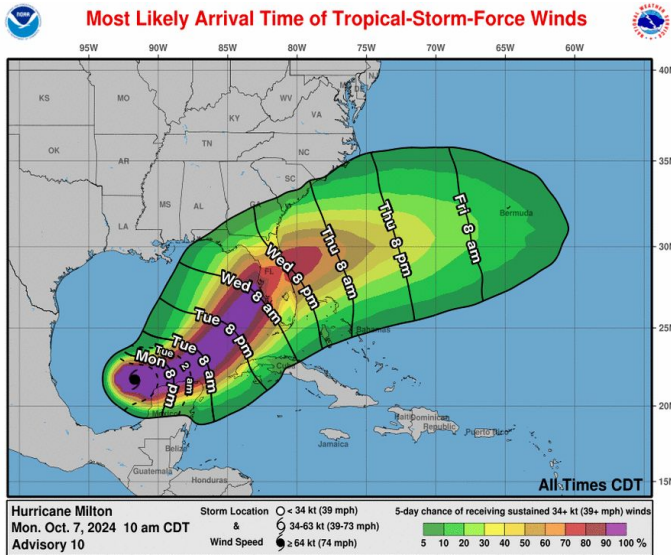
Example cone graphics for Hurricane Milton showing the current operational cone based on absolute errors (dashed red line) and the experimental cone based on along- and cross-track errors (white shading). Note that the red dashed line on this graphic is for illustration purposes only and will not be included on the experimental cone graphic.

- Will be a separate graphic available alongside the operational graphic
- New forecast cone is designed to provide a more accurate depiction of the likely path of the storm's center by accounting for forecast uncertainty in the storm's direction/speed
- Easier to communicate as a "likely" track area instead of a "potential" track area
- Partially mitigates the problem of the cone getting smaller and smaller, which has led to misunderstanding of expected hazards
- **REMEMBER: Cone does NOT represent the potential IMPACT area!**



Product/Service Reminders

NHC Advisory Product Suite



Hurricane Milton
Monday October 07, 2024
10 AM CDT Advisory 10
NWS National Hurricane Center

Current information: X
Center location 21.7 N 91.7 W
Maximum sustained wind 155 mph
Movement ESE at 9 mph

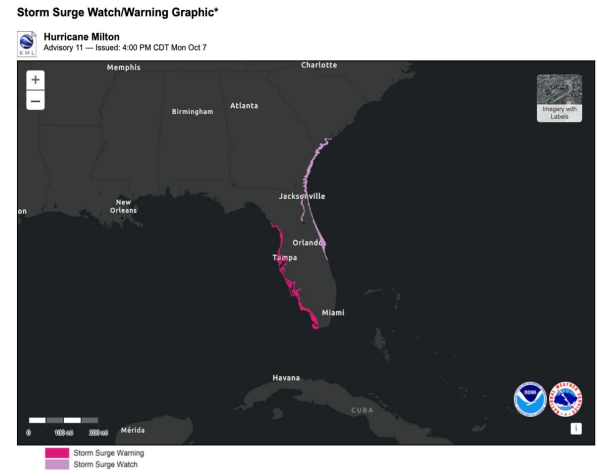
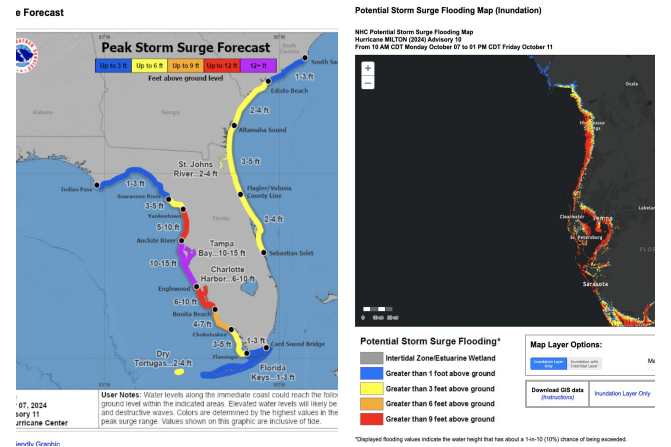
Forecast positions:
● Tropical Cyclone ○ Post/Potential TC
Sustained winds: D < 39 mph
S 39-73 mph H 74-110 mph M > 110 mph

Likely track area:
Day 1-5

Watches:
Hurricane Watch
Tropical Storm Watch
Hurricane Watch & Tropical Storm Warning

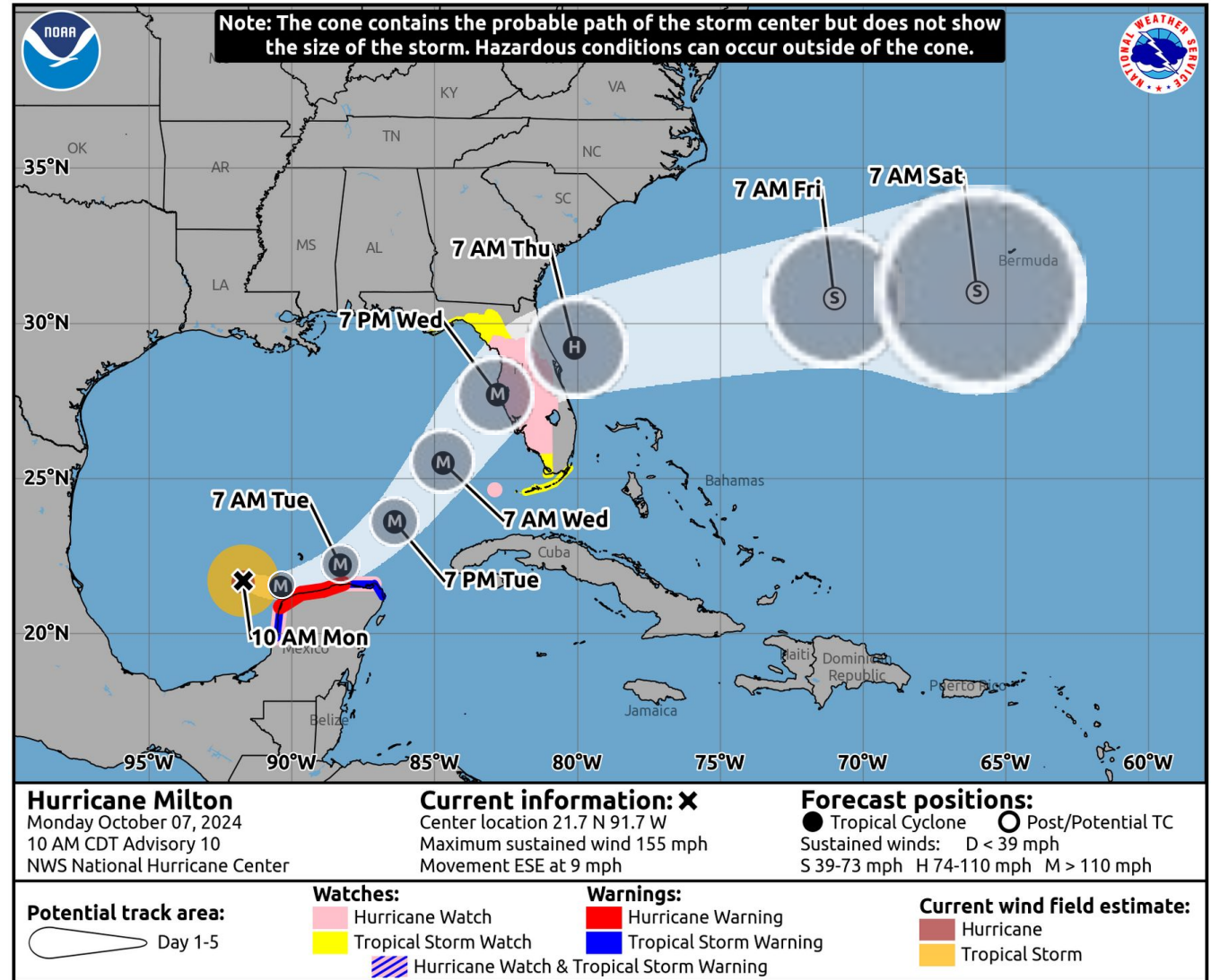
Warnings:
Hurricane Warning
Tropical Storm Warning

Current wind field estimate:
Hurricane
Tropical Storm



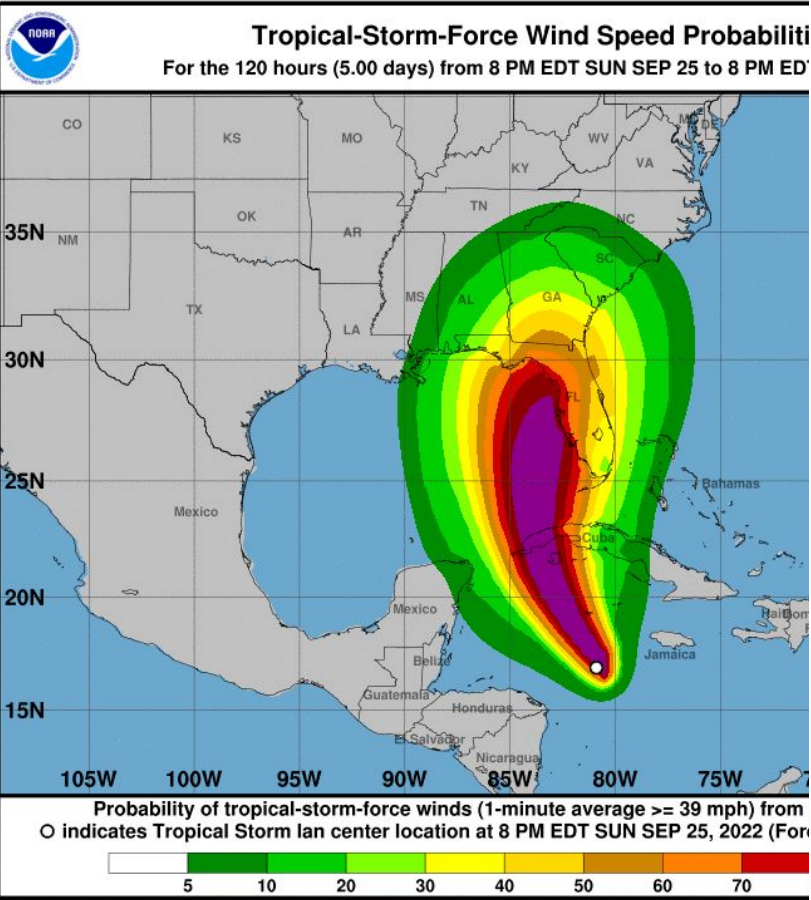
Operational Track Forecast Cone Graphic

- Conveys the “most likely” track of the center of the storm
 - ◆ Based on $\frac{2}{3}$ of the avg track errors from the past 5 years at various forecast times
- Does NOT convey extent of impacts
- Cone size does not change through the season so is the same for each forecast for every storm

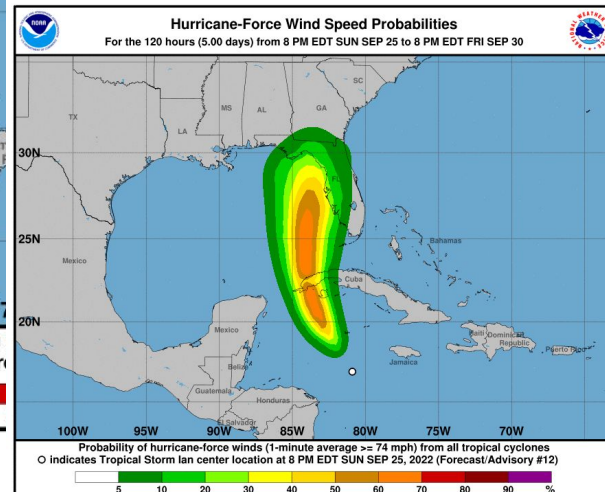
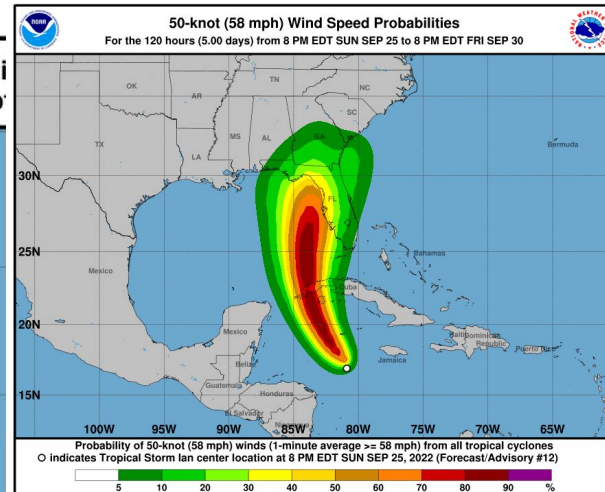


Wind Speed Probability Graphics

Strong Tropical Storm Force



Tropical Storm Force

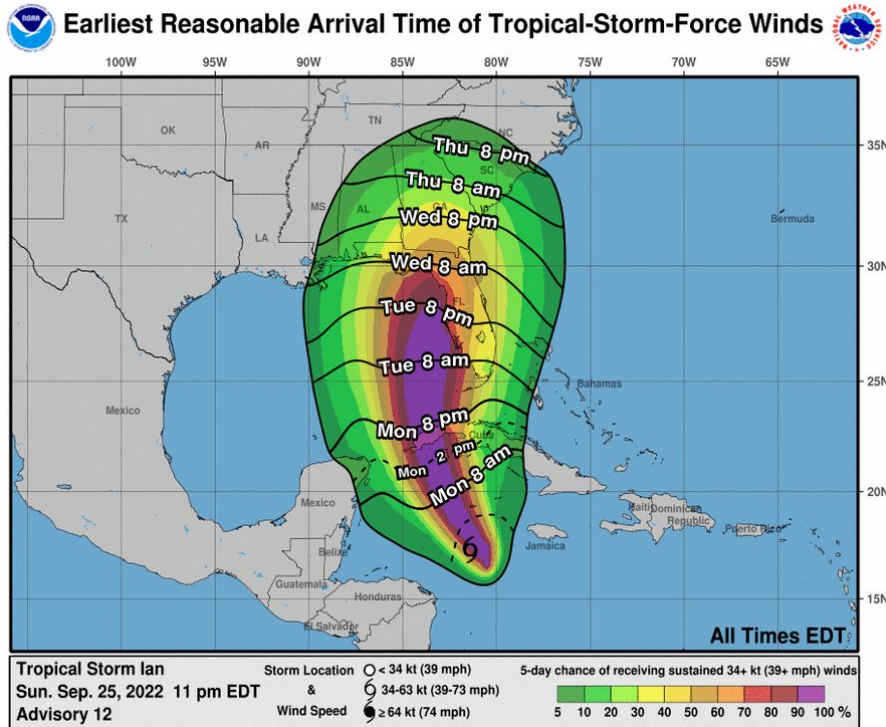


Hurricane Force

- Depict point-based cumulative probabilities of tropical storm force ($39+$ mph), strong tropical storm force ($58+$ mph), and hurricane force ($74+$ mph) winds over the next 5 days
- Take into account typical track, intensity, and size errors
- Text version (PWS) available showing *cumulative* and *incremental* probabilities for certain locations

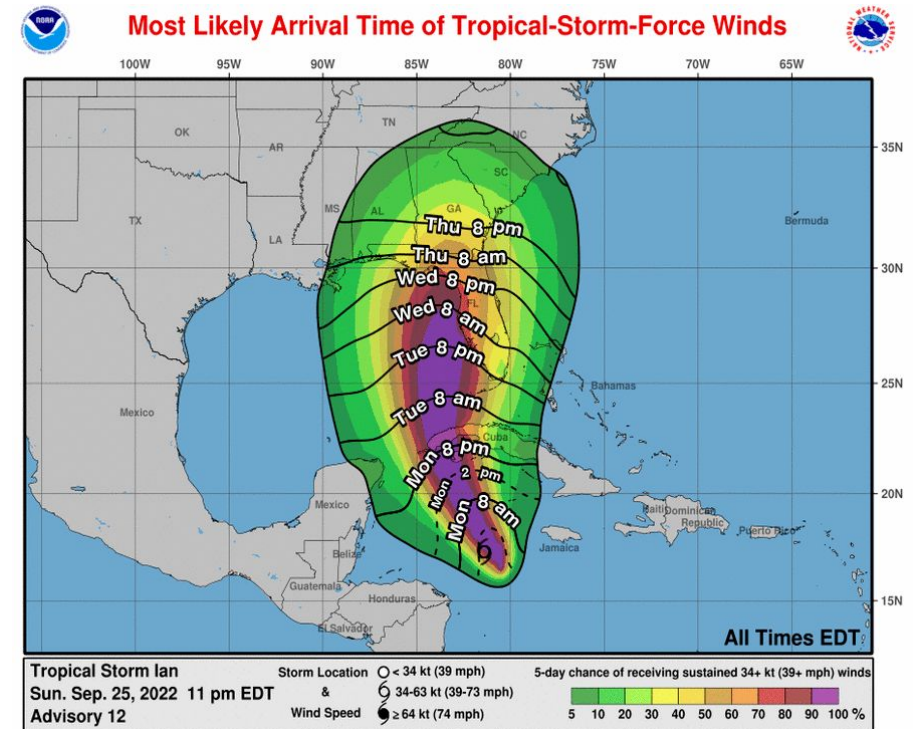
Tropical Storm Wind Time of Arrival Graphics

Earliest Reasonable Times



- Only 1 in 10 chance of tropical storm force winds arriving earlier than shown
- Best for users with a low risk tolerance

Most Likely Times

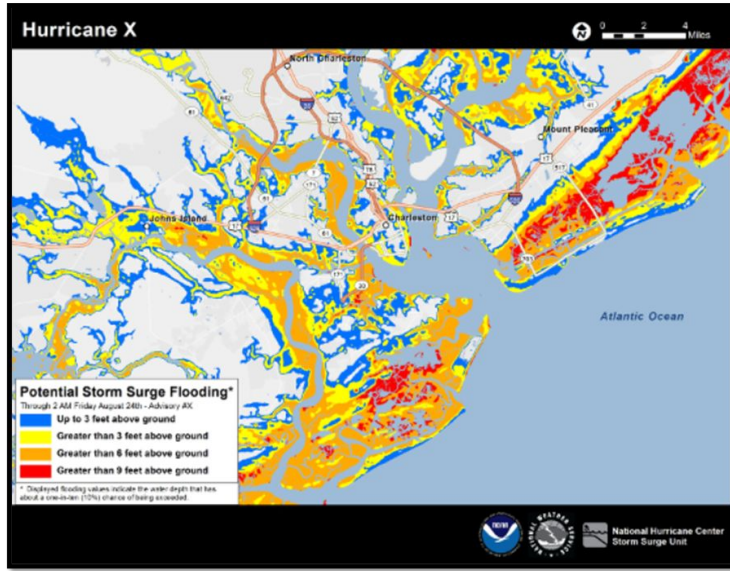


- Equal chances of tropical storm force winds arriving before or after the time shown
- Best for users with a high risk tolerance
- Preparations should be completed by these times

Storm Surge (Inundation) Products

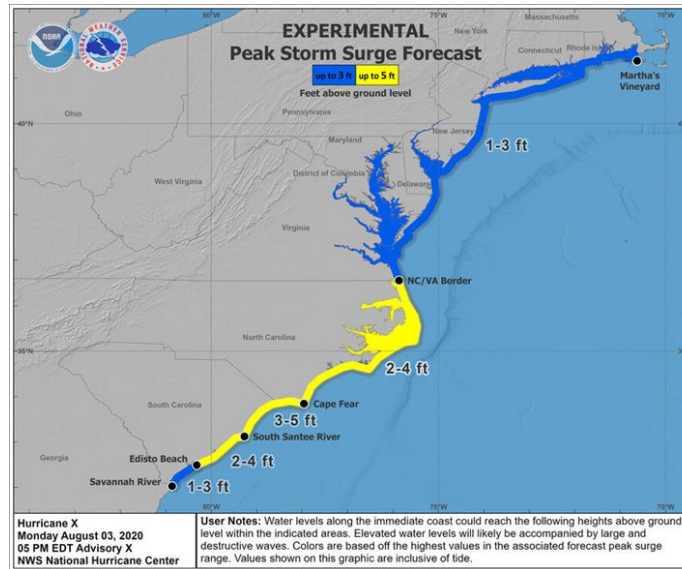
Inundation = Water above ground level (AGL)

Potential Storm Surge Flooding Map



- Always represents the reasonable worst case scenario for any location (i.e., only 10% chance storm surge inundation will be deeper than shown) so should be used for planning only!
- Does NOT represent the expected extent of surge flooding

Peak Storm Surge Forecast



- Peak depths above normally dry ground (i.e., inundation) that saltwater could reach along immediate tidal areas

Storm Surge Watch/Warning



- Storm Surge Watch**
possibility of life-threatening inundation within ~48 hours
- Storm Surge Warning**
danger of life-threatening inundation within ~36 hours

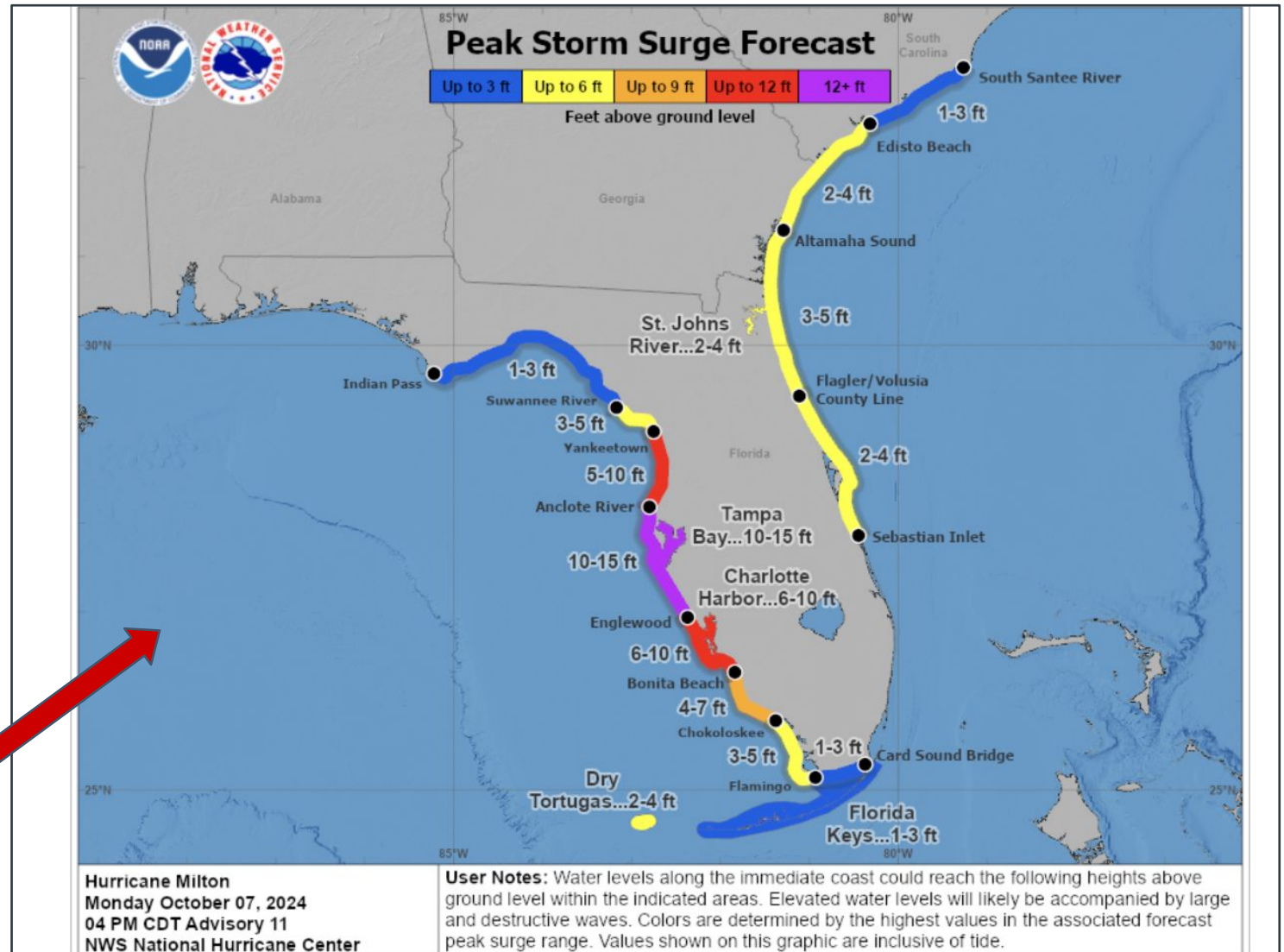
Storm Surge (Inundation) Forecast

→ **Public Advisory (TCP) focuses on the most significant or impactful storm surge forecast values with a link to the Peak Storm Surge Forecast graphic for additional information**

Public Advisory (TCP)

Anclote River, FL to Englewood, FL...10-15 ft
Tampa Bay...10-15 ft
Englewood, FL to Bonita Beach, FL...6-10 ft
Charlotte Harbor...6-10 ft
Yankeetown, FL to Anclote River, FL...5-10 ft
Bonita Beach, FL to Chokoloskee, FL...4-7 ft
Suwannee River, FL to Yankeetown, FL...3-5 ft
Chokoloskee, FL to Flamingo, FL...3-5 ft

For a complete depiction of areas at risk of inundation, please see the National Weather Service Peak Storm Surge Graphic, available at hurricanes.gov/graphics_at4.shtml?peakSurge.



Local NWS Office Tropical Products

Hurricane Local Statement (HLS)

- Provides an **overview** of the “big picture” highlights across the office’s entire forecast area

Local Watch Warning Statement (TCV)

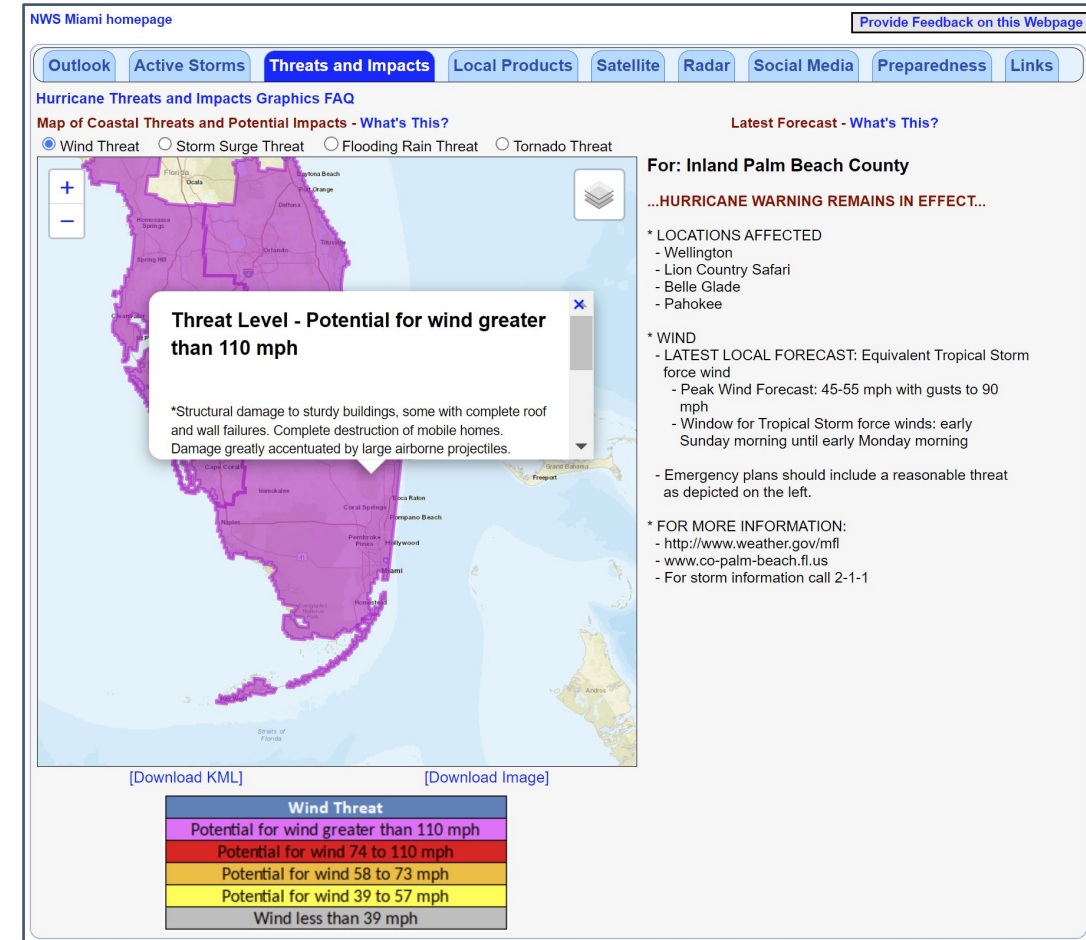
- Provides **specific** deterministic and probabilistic wind, surge, flooding rain and tornado forecast information for each county (or each portion of a county)
- Includes current tropical watches & warnings in effect

Hurricane Threats and Impacts (HTI) Graphics

- Graphics depicting the potential impacts from wind, surge, flooding rain and tornadoes that people should prepare for
- Incorporates forecast uncertainty (usually a reasonable worst case scenario)

Hurricane Threats & Impacts Graphics

- “Threats and Impacts” tab is active once there is a tropical threat to land areas within ~3 days (possibly longer for more significant threats)
- Incorporate a safety margin to help depict what you should prepare for in terms of wind, storm surge, inland flooding and tornadoes
- Click on the map to see the appropriate portion of the county-based threats/impacts from the TCV product



NWS Wilmington, NC Tropical Webpage

weather.gov/ilm/tropical

- “One-stop shop” page for tropical forecast/preparedness information
- “Active Storms” and “Local Products” tabs appear when NHC Advisories are being issued

Tropical Weather

[Weather.gov](#) > [NWS Wilmington, NC](#) > Tropical Weather

NWS Wilmington, NC
Weather Forecast Office

[Current Hazards](#) [Current Conditions](#) [Radar](#) [Forecasts](#) [Rivers and Lakes](#) [Climate and Past Weather](#) [Local Programs](#)

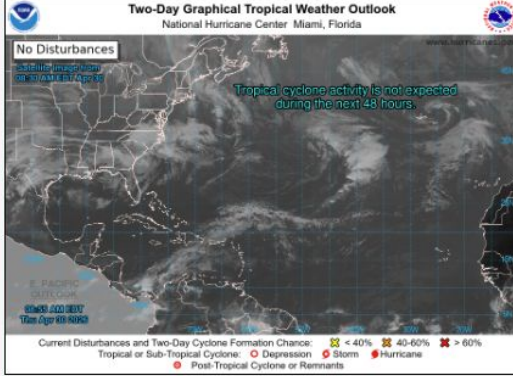
[Local Briefing from NWS Wilmington](#)

[NWS Wilmington homepage](#)

[Outlook](#) [Threats and Impacts](#) [Satellite](#) [Radar](#) [Social Media](#) [Preparedness](#) [Links](#)

There are currently no active storms in the North Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, or Gulf of America.

Two-Day Graphical Tropical Weather Outlook
National Hurricane Center Miami, Florida

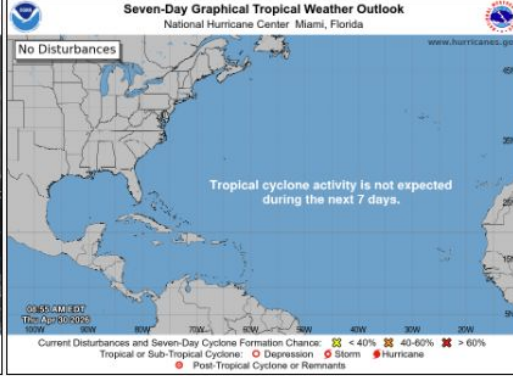


No Disturbances
Tropical cyclone activity is not expected during the next 48 hours.

Current Disturbances and Two-Day Cyclone Formation Chance: ☹️ < 40% ☹️ 40-60% ☹️ > 60%
Tropical or Sub-Tropical Cyclone: ○ Depression ● Storm ● Hurricane
● Post-Tropical Cyclone or Remnants

[Product Description](#)

Seven-Day Graphical Tropical Weather Outlook
National Hurricane Center Miami, Florida



No Disturbances
Tropical cyclone activity is not expected during the next 7 days.

Current Disturbances and Seven-Day Cyclone Formation Chance: ☹️ < 40% ☹️ 40-60% ☹️ > 60%
Tropical or Sub-Tropical Cyclone: ○ Depression ● Storm ● Hurricane
● Post-Tropical Cyclone or Remnants

[Product Description](#)

Click each image above to view the full-size image.

Tropical Weather Outlook
NWS National Hurricane Center Miami FL
7:00 PM EST Sun Nov 30 2025

For the North Atlantic...Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of America:

Tropical cyclone formation is not expected during the next 7 days.

This is the last regularly scheduled Tropical Weather Outlook of the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Routine issuance of the Tropical Weather Outlook will resume on May 15, 2026. During the off-season, Special Tropical Weather Outlooks will be issued as conditions warrant.

\$\$
Forecaster Bucci

Stay Informed: @NWSWilmingtonNC

→ [NWS Wilmington, NC Tropical Page:](#)

◆ weather.gov/ilm/tropical



→ [National Hurricane Center:](#)

◆ hurricanes.gov

◆ hurricanes.gov/mobile



Tropical Preparedness Info



→ Local tropical preparedness resources for SE NC & NE SC:

weather.gov/ilm/hurricaneprep

◆ [New Story Map version of our local hurricane guide](#)

◆ [“Hurricanes 101” Webinar - June 4, 2026 @ 730 PM EDT \(click to register\)](#)

Hurricane Preparedness Information for Southeast North Carolina & Northeast South Carolina

NWS Wilmington, NC
Weather Forecast Office

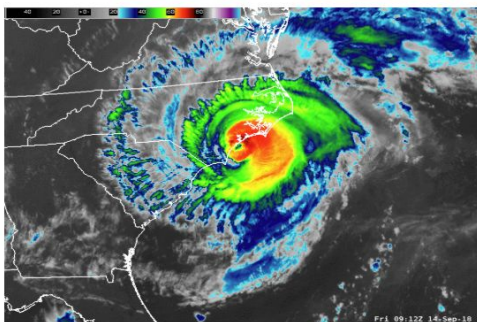
[Weather.gov](#) > [NWS Wilmington, NC](#) > Hurricane Preparedness Information for Southeast North Carolina & Northeast South Carolina

[Current Hazards](#) [Current Conditions](#) [Radar](#) [Forecasts](#) [Rivers and Lakes](#) [Climate and Past Weather](#) [Local Programs](#)

2026 National Hurricane Preparedness Week: May 3-9

2026 SC Hurricane Preparedness Month: May

[REGISTER HERE](#) for our “Hurricanes 101” webinar on June 4, 2026 @ 730 PM EDT



Satellite loop of Hurricane Florence making landfall in southeast NC on September 14, 2018

During National Hurricane Preparedness Week and SC Hurricane Preparedness Month the National Weather Service, NC Department of Public Safety (NCDPS), and SC Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) are teaming up to bring this hurricane preparedness campaign to all of North and South Carolina to encourage everyone to prepare BEFORE the official start of the hurricane season on June 1. The NWS asks emergency management and public safety officials, local media and [Weather-Ready Nation Ambassadors](#) to help join forces in improving the nation's readiness, responsiveness, and overall resilience against not only hurricanes but tropical storms and tropical depressions as well. **Remember, you should prepare EACH and EVERY YEAR as it only takes ONE storm in your area to make it a bad year!**

Check out our [Local Hurricane Guide for Southeast NC and Northeast SC](#) and [“Hurricanes 101” webinar recording from 2024](#) for additional information on tropical cyclone hazards, forecasts, climatology, safety/preparedness and more, with a focus on southeast NC and northeast SC.

Hurricane Guide for Southeast NC & Northeast SC

Plan, Act, Survive!

NWS Wilmington, NC
April 20, 2026

Key Takeaways

- **Think WATER!**
 - ◆ Storm surge/rainfall/river flooding and dangerous surf/rip currents
- **Remember: every storm is unique**
- **Focus on potential impacts (not just on storm category)**
- **Be aware of misinfo - get forecast from official sources**
 - ◆ NOAA/NWS/NHC
 - ◆ local/state gov't officials
 - ◆ local media
- **Don't base your level of preparedness on the seasonal outlook**
 - ◆ Prepare the same every year since it only takes 1 storm to make it a bad year!



We hope you have a safe hurricane season!!

[*weather.gov/ilm*](https://weather.gov/ilm)

[*@NWSWilmingtonNC*](https://twitter.com/NWSWilmingtonNC)