



Tropical Update



7:00 PM EDT

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

Tropical Storm Helene & Florida Outlook

**Hurricane Warnings For Florida Big Bend and Gulf Coast;
Tropical Storm Warnings Along Far Eastern Panhandle, West-
Central and Coastal Southwest Florida**

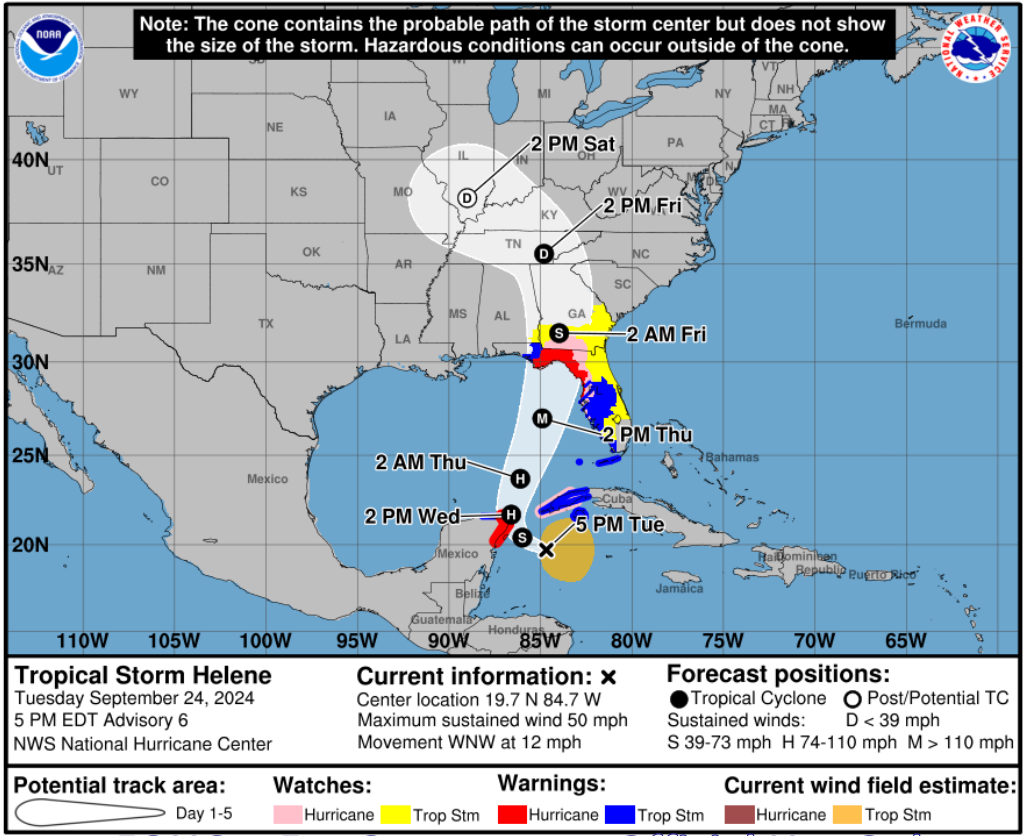
This update is intended for government and emergency response officials, and is provided for informational and situational awareness purposes only. Forecast conditions are subject to change based on a variety of environmental factors. For additional information, or for any life safety concerns with an active weather event please contact your County Emergency Management or Public Safety Office, local National Weather Service forecast office, or visit the National Hurricane Center website at www.hurricanes.gov.



Tropical Storm Helene

5:00 PM EDT Tuesday: Florida Threats & Changes Since Last Packet

	MINIMAL	Low	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME
WINDS					
STORM SURGE					
FLASH FLOODING					
TORNADOES					
	Low	MODERATE	HIGH		
RIP CURRENTS					



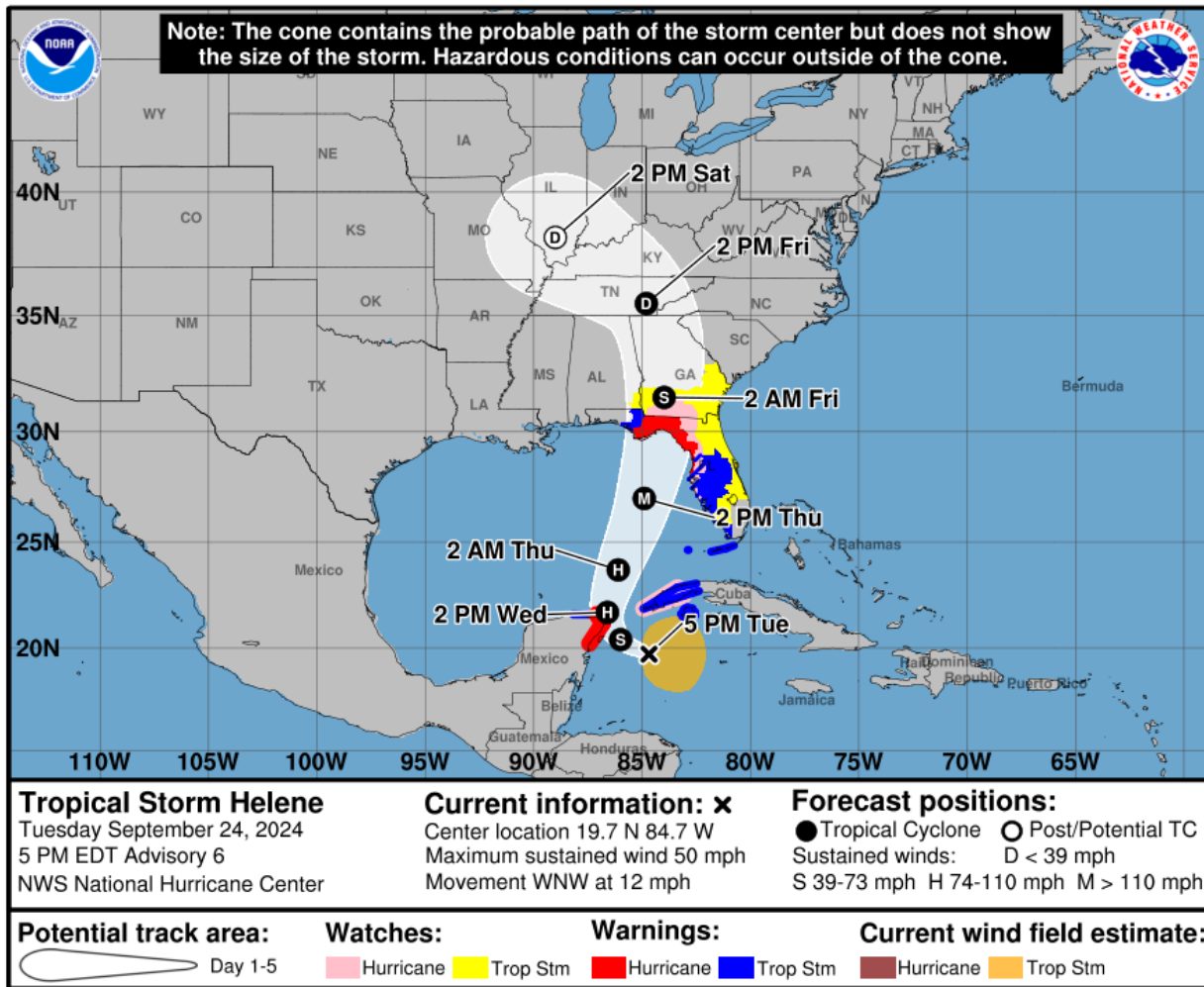
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Overview/Recent Changes: As of 5:00 PM EDT, Tropical Storm Helene is located about 155 miles east-southeast of Cozumel, Mexico and about 150 miles south of the western tip of Cuba and moving west-northwestward at 12 mph. A turn toward the northwest is expected tonight, followed by a general northward motion beginning on Wednesday and continuing through Friday. On the forecast track, the center of Helene will pass near the northeastern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula on Wednesday, move across the eastern Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday and Thursday and reach the Big Bend coast of Florida late Thursday. Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 50 mph with higher gusts. Additional strengthening is forecast, and Helene is expected to become a hurricane on Wednesday. The storm is forecast to rapidly strengthen over the eastern Gulf of Mexico and become a major hurricane on Thursday. Hurricane Warnings are now in effect from the Anclote River to Mexico Beach, Florida, with Tropical Storm Warnings raised for the Middle Keys, Flamingo northward to the Anclote River (including Tampa Bay) and west of Mexico Beach to the Walton/Bay County line. Tropical Storm Watches are now in effect for the Florida East Coast north of Palm Beach/Martin County line.



Tropical Storm Helene

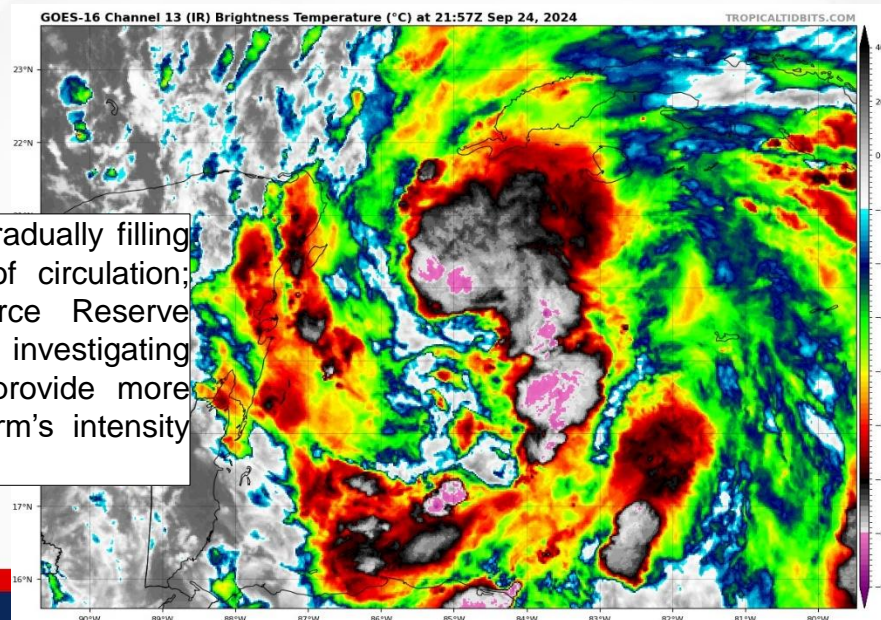
From the National Hurricane Center (NHC)



- **Location:** 155 miles ESE of Cozumel, Mexico; 370 miles SSW Key West, Florida
- **Maximum Sustained Winds:** 50 mph
- **Current Movement:** WNW at 12 mph

A turn toward the northwest is expected tonight, followed by a general northward motion beginning on Wednesday and continuing through Friday. On the forecast track, the center of Helene will pass near the northeastern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula on Wednesday, move across the eastern Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday and Thursday, and reach the Florida Big Bend late Thursday. Additional strengthening is forecast, and Helene is expected to become a hurricane on Wednesday. The storm is forecast to rapidly strengthen over the eastern Gulf of Mexico and become a major hurricane on Thursday.

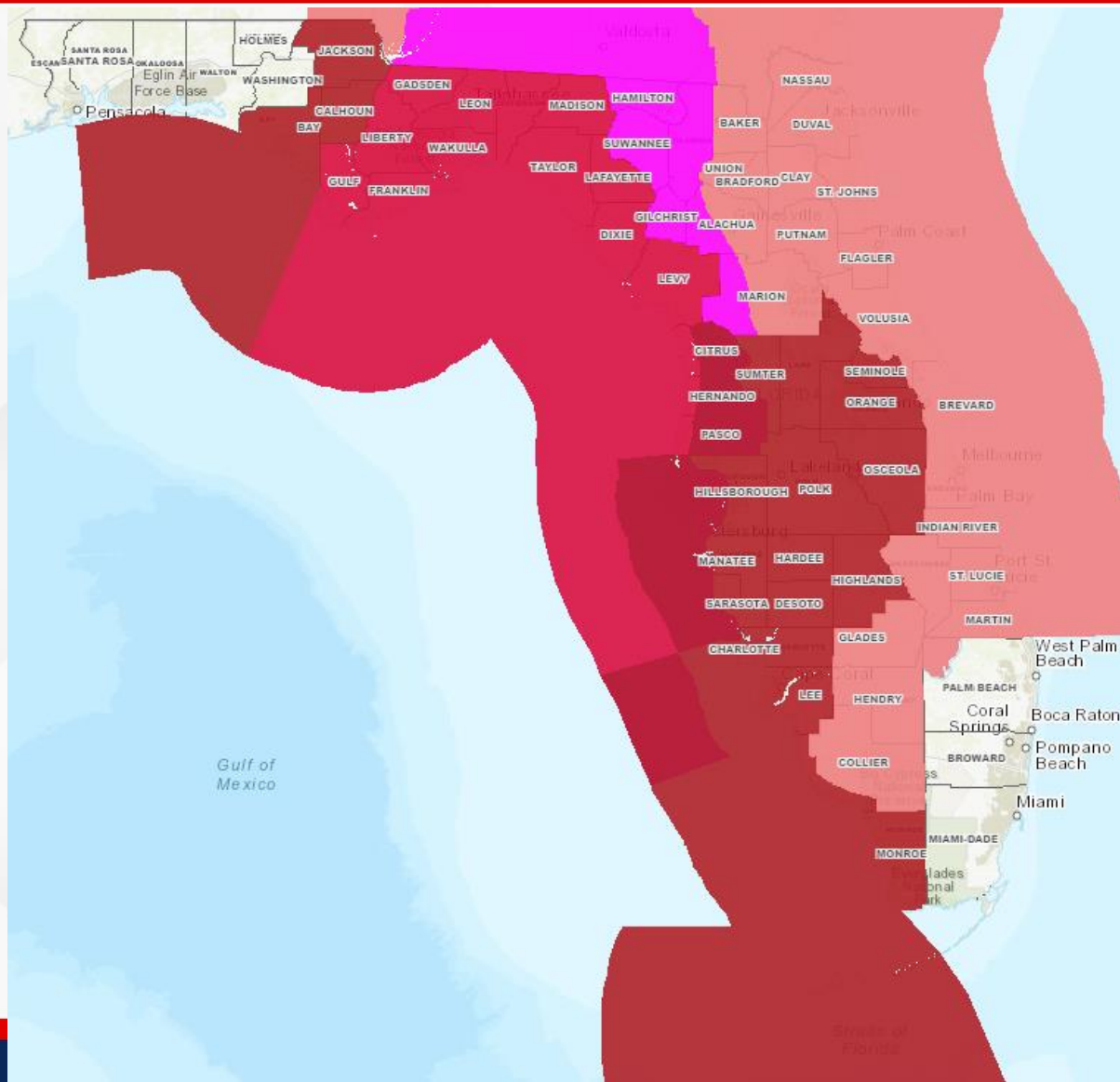
Thunderstorm activity is gradually filling in with Helene's center of circulation; NOAA and the Air Force Reserve Hurricane Hunters will be investigating Helene this evening to provide more information about the storm's intensity and structure.





Current Tropical Wind Watches/Warnings

As of 5:00 PM EDT Tuesday



- **Hurricane Warning:**

Gulf, Liberty, Gadsden, Franklin, Wakulla, Leon, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, Lafayette, Dixie, Levy, coastal Citrus, coastal Hernando, coastal Pasco

- **Tropical Storm Warning:**

Lower Florida Keys & Dry Tortugas (Monroe County)

- **Tropical Storm Watches:**

Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, eastern Marion, Sumter, Lake, Seminole, Orange, Osceola, Polk, inland Hillsborough, inland Manatee, Hardee, DeSoto, inland Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, Coastal Collier, Mainland Monroe and Middle Keys (Monroe County)

- **Hurricane Watches:**

Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Taylor, Suwannee, eastern Columbia, Gilchrist, Dixie, Levy, western Marion, Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Coastal Hillsborough, Coastal Manatee, Coastal Sarasota



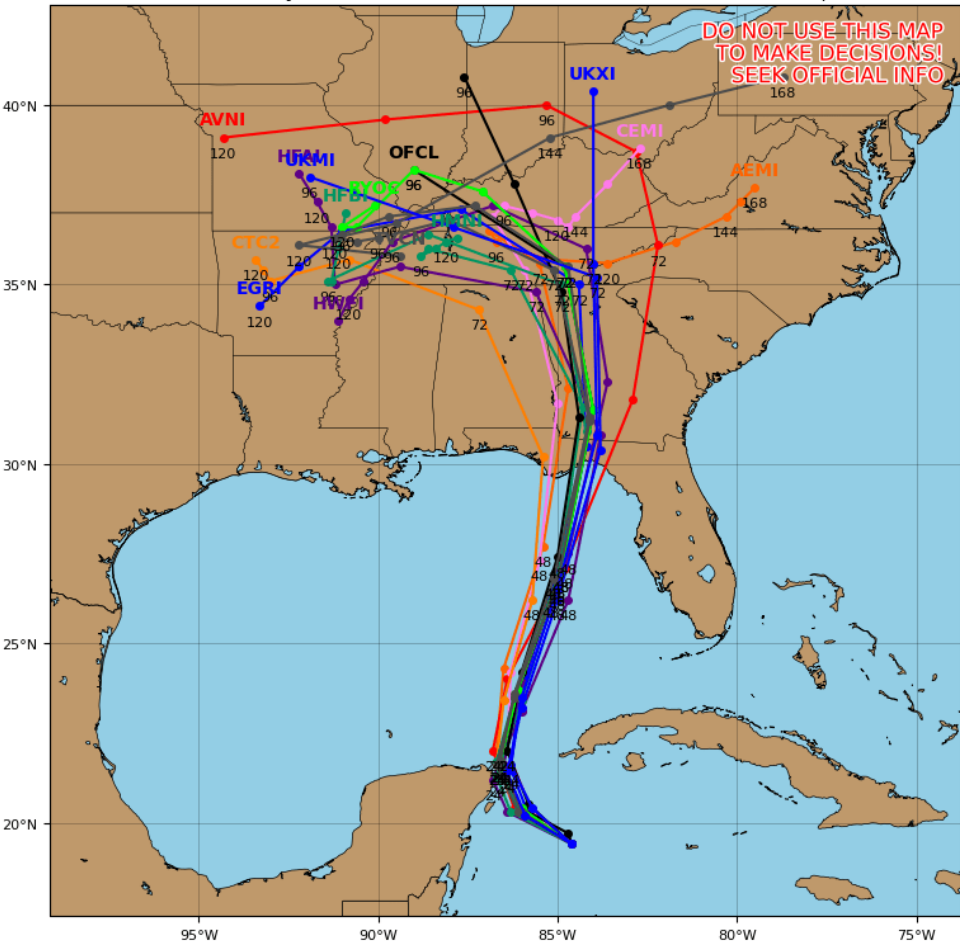
Model Forecasts – Next 5 Days

Tropical Storm Helene

Tropical Storm HELENE Model Track Guidance

Initialized at 18z Sep 24 2024

Levi Cowan - tropicaltidbits.com



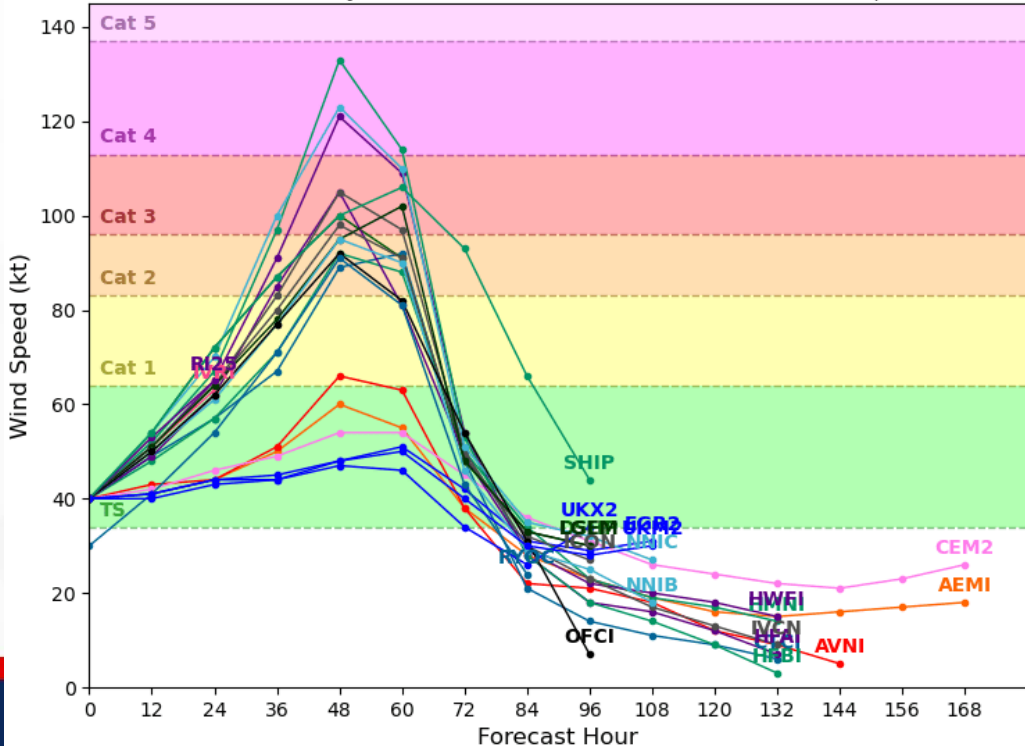
Computer models remain in very good agreement that Helene is expected to turn northwestward by tonight and then northward on Wednesday as high pressure over Florida shifts east; a slight shift westward has been noted on the latest update during the first 24 hours of motion. Helene is still expected to accelerate while it moves northward over the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Computer forecast models remain in good agreement that Helene will traverse areas of warm sea surface temperatures and decreasing upper-level winds while it moves across the northwestern Caribbean Sea and eastern Gulf of Mexico. Helene is forecast to become a major hurricane prior to landfall and could maintain that level of intensity through landfall.

Potential Tropical Cyclone NINE Model Intensity Guidanc

Initialized at 12z Sep 24 2024

Levi Cowan - tropicaltidbits.com





Key Messages

From the National Hurricane Center (NHC)



Key Messages for Tropical Storm Helene Advisory 6: 5:00 PM EDT Tue Sep 24, 2024

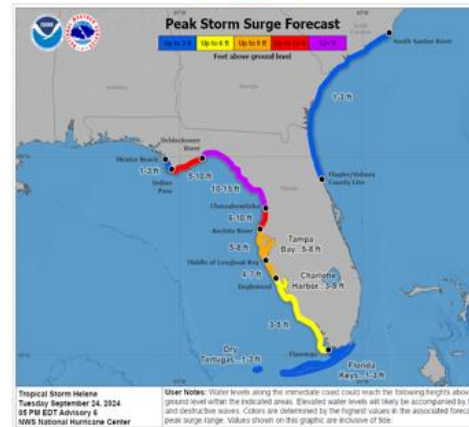
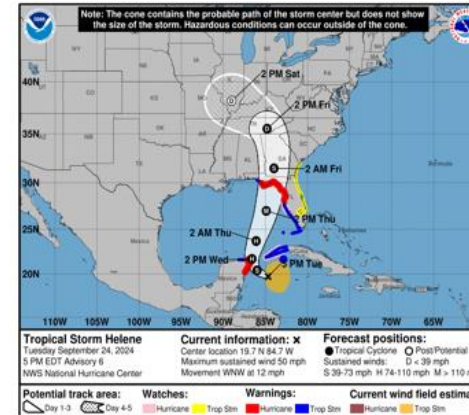


1. Helene is forecast to intensify and be near hurricane strength when it passes near the northeastern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula on Wednesday, where a Hurricane Warning is in effect.

2. Helene is expected to rapidly intensify and grow in size over the eastern Gulf of Mexico. There is a danger of life-threatening storm surge along the entire west coast of the Florida Peninsula and Florida Big Bend. The highest inundation levels are expected along the coast of the Florida Big Bend. Residents in those areas should follow advice given by local officials and evacuate if told to do so.

3. Damaging hurricane-force winds are expected along portions of coast of the Florida Big Bend, where a Hurricane Warning is now in effect. Preparations to protect life and property should be complete by early Thursday since tropical storm conditions are expected to begin within this area on Thursday.

4. Helene will bring heavy rain to portions of the western Caribbean with potentially significant flooding and mudslides across western Cuba. Considerable flash and urban flooding is expected across portions of Florida, the Southeast, southern Appalachians, and the Tennessee Valley Wednesday through Friday. This includes the risk of landslides across the southern Appalachians. Widespread minor to moderate river flooding is likely, and isolated major river flooding is possible.



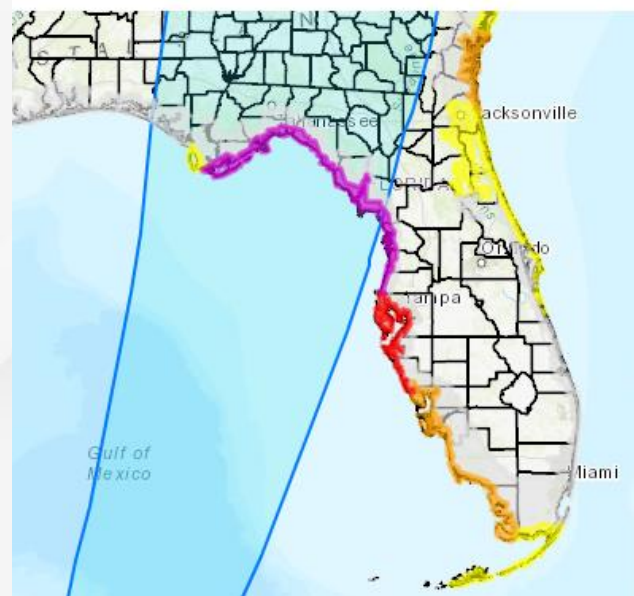
For more information go to hurricanes.gov



Threats & Impacts

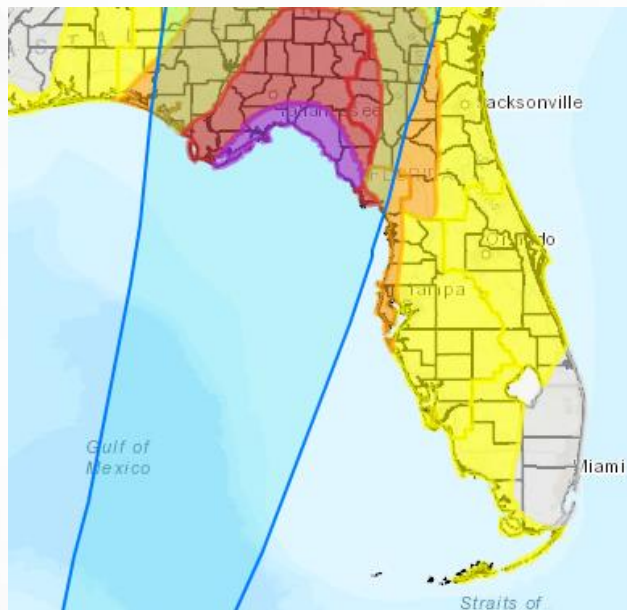
From the National Weather Service

Storm Surge



- Areas of inundation with storm surge flooding accentuated by waves. Damage to several buildings, mainly near the coast.
- Sections of near-shore escape routes and secondary roads become weakened or washed out, especially in usually vulnerable low spots. - Major beach erosion with heavy surf breaching dunes. Strong and numerous rip currents.
- Moderate damage to marinas, docks, boardwalks, and piers. Several small craft broken away from moorings, especially in unprotected anchorages.

Wind



- Some damage to roofing and siding materials, along with damage to porches, awnings, carports, and sheds. A few buildings experiencing window, door, and garage door failures. Mobile homes damaged, especially if unanchored. Unsecured lightweight objects become dangerous projectiles.
- Several large trees snapped or uprooted, but with greater numbers in places where trees are shallow rooted. Several fences and roadway signs blown over.
- Some roads impassable from large debris, and more within urban or heavily wooded places. A few bridges, causeways, and access routes impassable.
- Scattered power and communications outages, but more prevalent in areas with above ground lines.

Flooding



- Moderate rainfall flooding may prompt several evacuations and rescues.
- Rivers and tributaries may quickly become swollen with swifter currents and overspill their banks in a few places, especially in usually vulnerable spots. Small streams, creeks, and ditches overflow.
- Flood waters can enter some structures or weaken foundations. Several places may experience expanded areas of rapid inundation at underpasses, low-lying spots, and poor drainage areas. Some streets and parking lots take on moving water as storm drains and retention ponds overflow.
- Driving conditions become hazardous. Some road and bridge closures.

Tornadoes

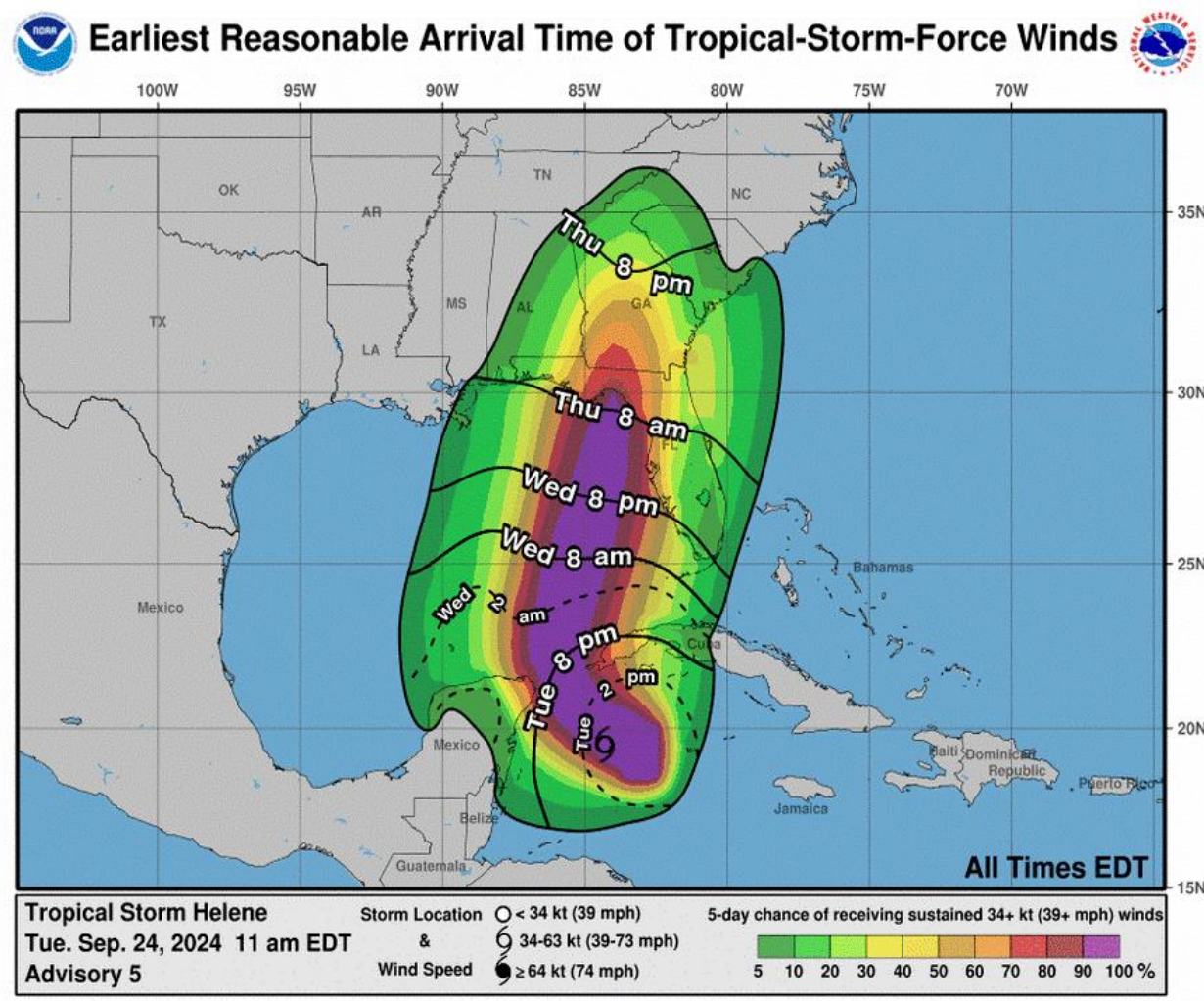


- The occurrence of isolated tornadoes can hinder the execution of emergency plans during tropical events.
- A few places may experience tornado damage, along with power and communications disruptions.
- Locations could realize roofs peeled off buildings, chimneys toppled, mobile homes pushed off foundations or overturned, large tree tops and branches snapped off, shallow-rooted trees knocked over, moving vehicles blown off roads, and small boats pulled from moorings.



Tropical Storm-Force Wind Probabilities

Tropical Storm Helene



As Tropical Storm Helene moves through the northwestern Caribbean Sea and into the eastern Gulf of Mexico, tropical storm-force conditions are likely to arrive along the Florida Keys and South Florida overnight Wednesday and the pre-dawn hours on Thursday. The forecast quick forward motion will allow for tropical storm-force winds to likely arrive across Central Florida and across the Big Bend late Thursday morning and throughout the afternoon. Tropical storm-force winds are likely to reach the Capital City and the I-10 corridor by late Thursday afternoon and early Thursday evening.

However, tropical-storm force conditions may begin as early as the early morning hours on Wednesday for the Lower Keys and Wednesday morning and into midday across Southwest Florida. As Tropical Storm Helene moves northward to north-northeastward along the eastern Gulf of Mexico, tropical storm-force winds could arrive as early as the late evening and overnight hours on Wednesday along the West Coast, then reach the Nature Coast and Florida Big Bend during the early to mid-morning hours on Thursday.

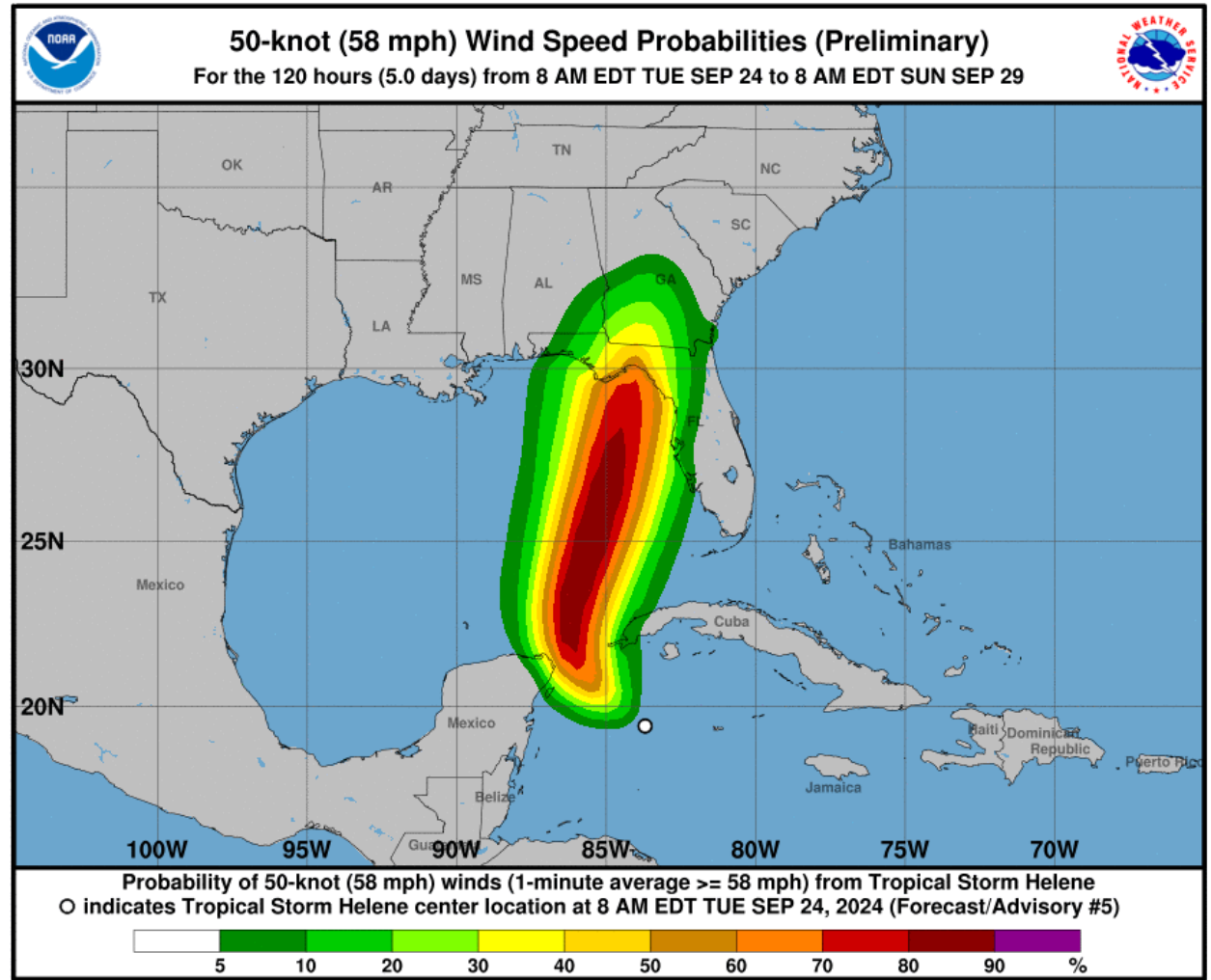
Wind speed probabilities will likely continue to increase in future packets as the eventual forecast track and intensity forecast become realized.

City	Tropical Storm-Force Wind Probability
Key West	27% (+/- 0)
Naples	41% (+4%)
Miami	6% (+/- 0)
Fort Myers	23% (+3%)
Tampa	70% (+12%)
Cedar Key	79% (+12%)
Cocoa Beach	31% (+3%)
Orlando	21% (+2%)
Gainesville	46% (+6%)
Tallahassee	56% (+/- 0)
Jacksonville	33% (+7%)
Apalachicola	69% (-6%)
Panama City	54% (-10%)
Pensacola	12% (-6%)



Strong Tropical Storm-Force Wind Probabilities

Tropical Storm Helene



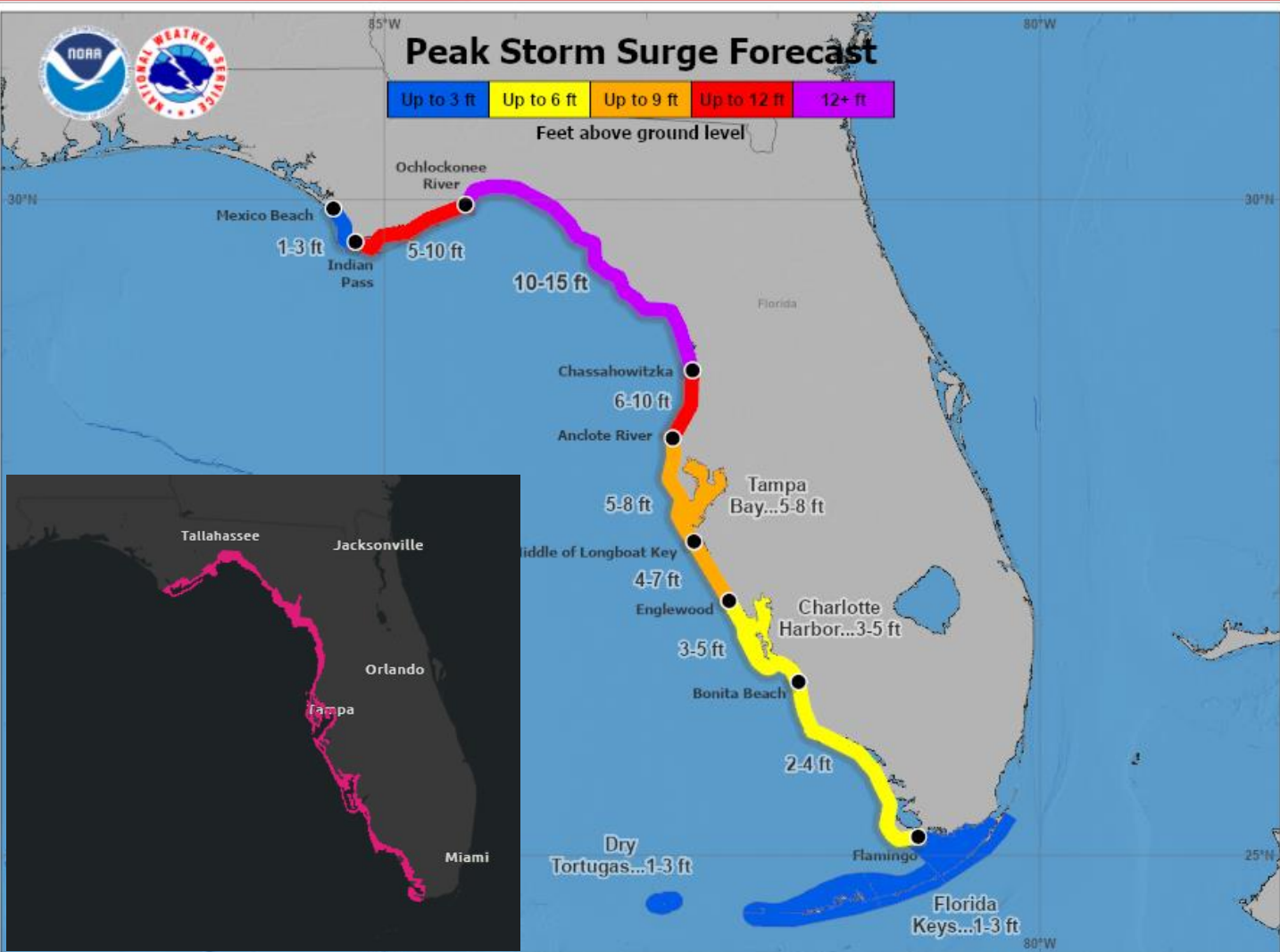
Additional strengthening of Tropical Storm Helene will also allow for strong tropical storm-force winds to extend from the Florida Panhandle, across the Big Bend and towards the I-75 corridor.

City	Strong Tropical Storm-Force Wind Probability
Key West	0% (-3%)
Naples	6% (+/- 0)
Miami	0% (+/- 0)
Fort Myers	4% (+/- 0)
Tampa	31% (+8%)
Cedar Key	46% (+12%)
Cocoa Beach	3% (+/- 0)
Orlando	3% (+3%)
Gainesville	13% (+3%)
Tallahassee	23% (+/- 0)
Jacksonville	8% (+1%)
Apalachicola	41% (-5%)
Panama City	26% (-8%)
Pensacola	3% (-3%)



Current Storm Surge Watch

As of 5:00 PM EDT Monday



Tropical Storm Helene
Tuesday September 24, 2024
11 AM EDT Advisory 5
NWS National Hurricane Center

User Notes: Water levels along the immediate coast could reach the following heights above ground level within the indicated areas. Elevated water levels will likely be accompanied by large and destructive waves. Colors are determined by the highest values in the associated forecast peak surge range. Values shown on this graphic are inclusive of tide.

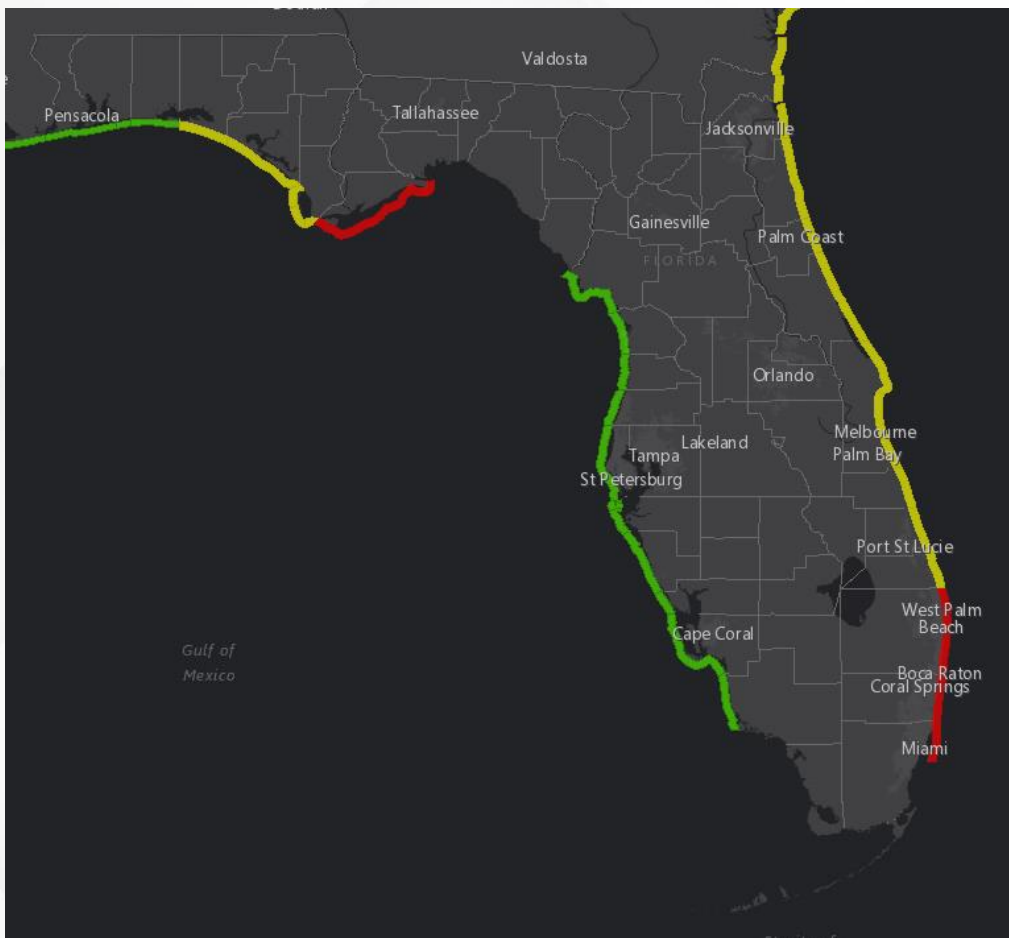
Based on the forecast size, forward motion and intensity of Tropical Storm Helene, **peak storm surge of 10-15'** is possible for much of the Florida Big Bend and extending towards the northern Nature Coast. Throughout the rest of the Big Bend from Indian Pass to the Anclote River, **storm surge of 5-10'** is possible. Across the West-Central, including Tampa Bay, **storm surge of 4-8'** is possible, with 2-5' possible storm surge along the Southwest Florida Coast.

A **Storm Surge Warning** is in effect along the entire Florida Big Bend and West Coast through Southwest Florida.



Rip Current Risk - Today

From the Weather Prediction Center (WPC)



Onshore winds and increasing surf will create a **moderate to high risk for rip currents** along the Florida East Coast. Numerous beaches along the Panhandle can be expect a **moderate to high risk rip currents** as hazardous conditions will continue to develop over the next couple of days as Tropical Storm Helene moves into the eastern Gulf of Mexico. By midweek, an **elevated risk for rip currents** can be expected to extend along the entire Gulf Coast. A **high risk for rip currents** can be expected nearly statewide by middle to latter portions of the week.

FL Panhandle



Rip Current

Today



Wed



Thu



Fri



Sat



Sun



Mon



Marine Hazard





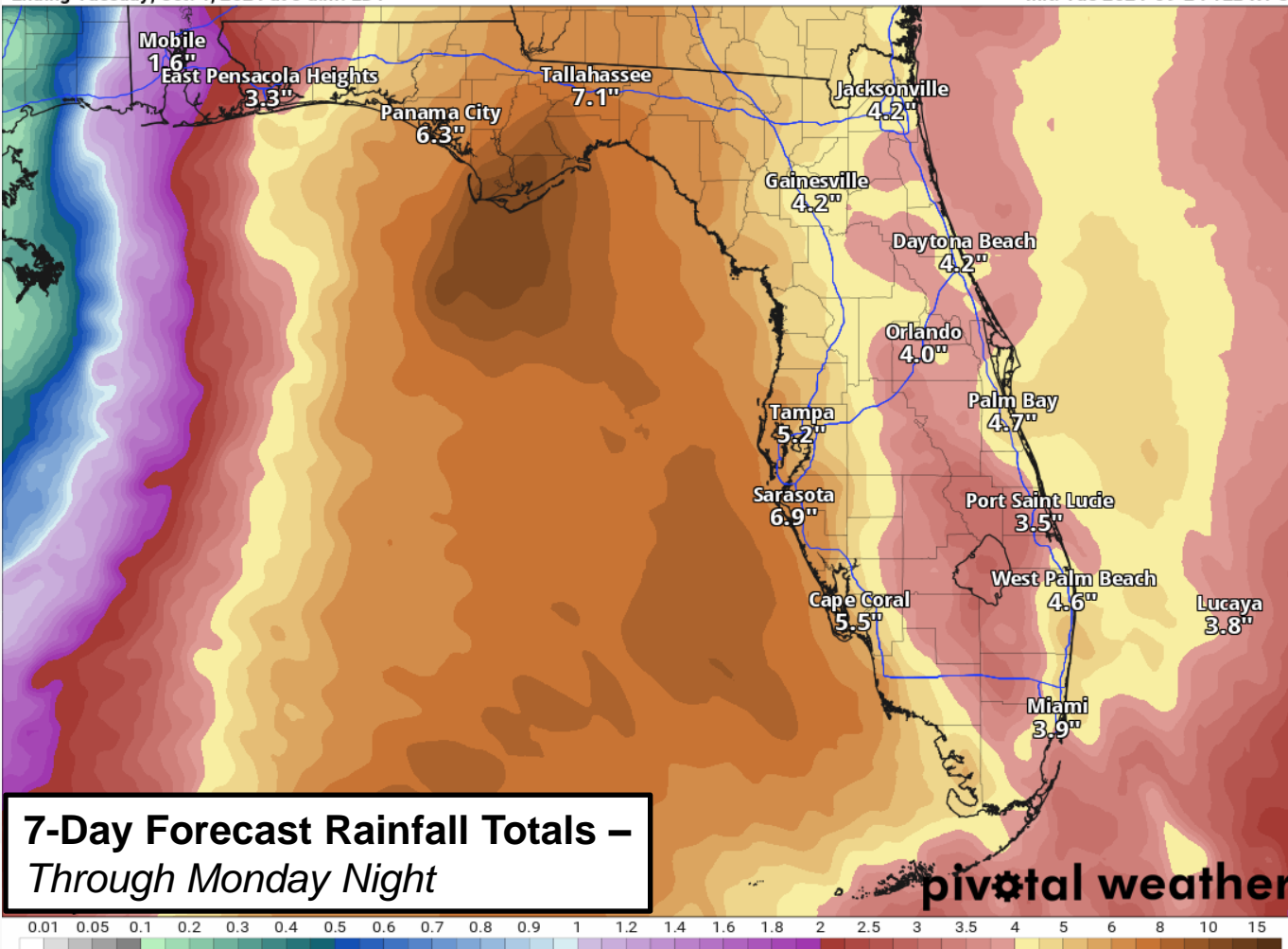
Rainfall Totals – Next 7 Days

From the Weather Prediction Center (WPC)

7-Day Precipitation (in)

Ending Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024 at 8 a.m. EDT

Init: Tue 2024-09-24 12z WPC



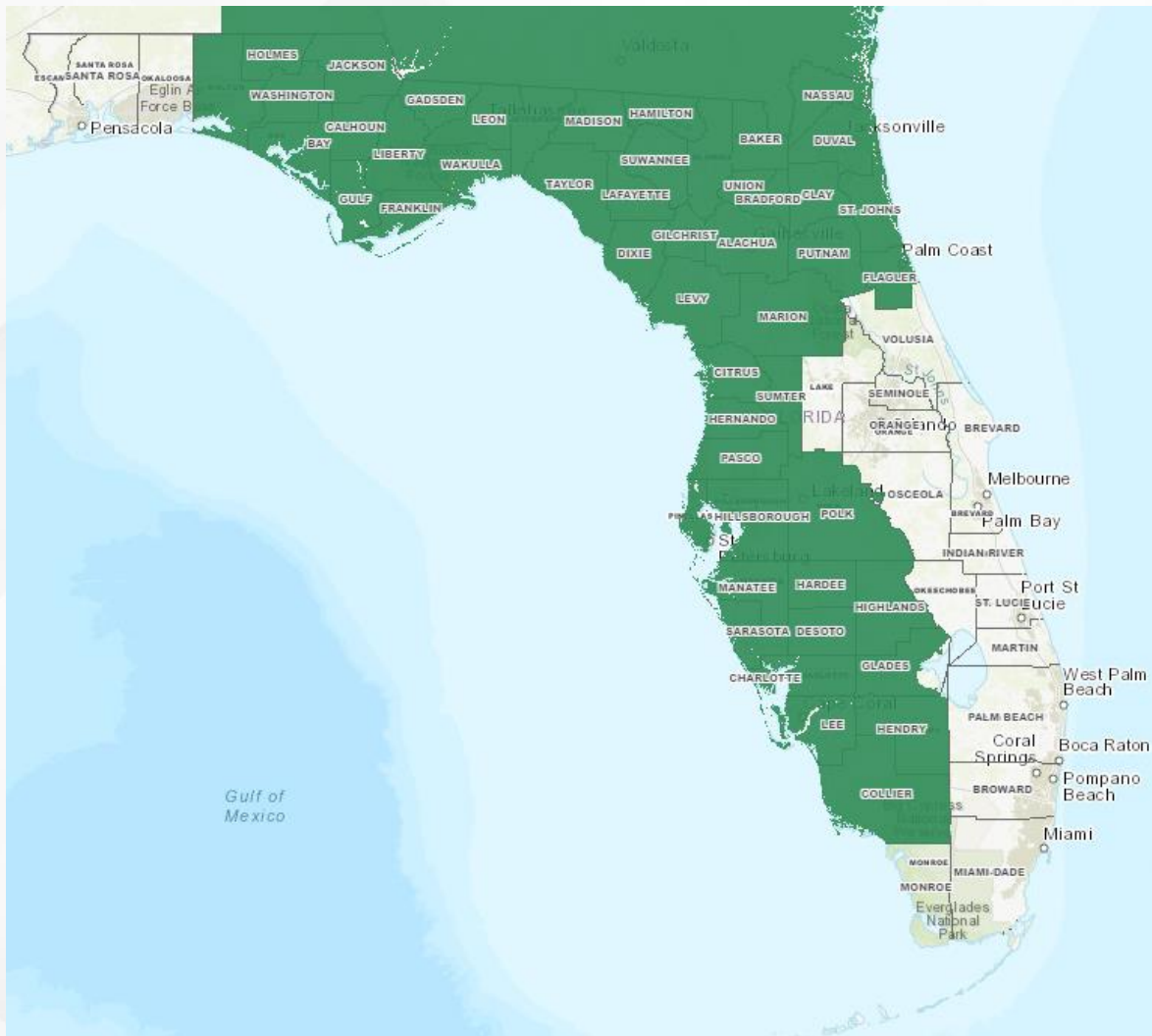
7-Day Forecast Rainfall Totals –
Through Monday Night

- Drier conditions and high pressure shifting eastward today will continue to bring mostly dry conditions across North Florida and southward towards the I-4 corridor. Isolated to widely scattered showers and thunderstorms will develop this afternoon and evening along the sea breeze, mainly south of the I-4 corridor and throughout South Florida and the Keys.
- As Tropical Storm Helene moves through the northwestern Caribbean and towards the southern Gulf of Mexico, tropical moisture will push northward towards the Florida Keys and immediate southern Peninsula later tonight and into the morning hours on Wednesday.
- Increasing rain chances can be expected along to increase from south to north along the western Peninsula, then extend into northeastern Gulf of Mexico.
- *Rainfall totals heavily tied to the eventual track and forward speed of the system. With computer model guidance uncertainty regarding the exact track, there remains uncertainty as to where the heaviest rainfall can be expected.*
- Widespread rainfall totals of 2-4" can be expected across the state through the next 7 days, with locally higher totals upwards of 6-10" along the Panhandle and immediate Gulf Coast. Localized instances upwards of 12-15" cannot be ruled out along portions of the western coastal Big Bend.



Flood Watch

From the National Weather Service (NWS)



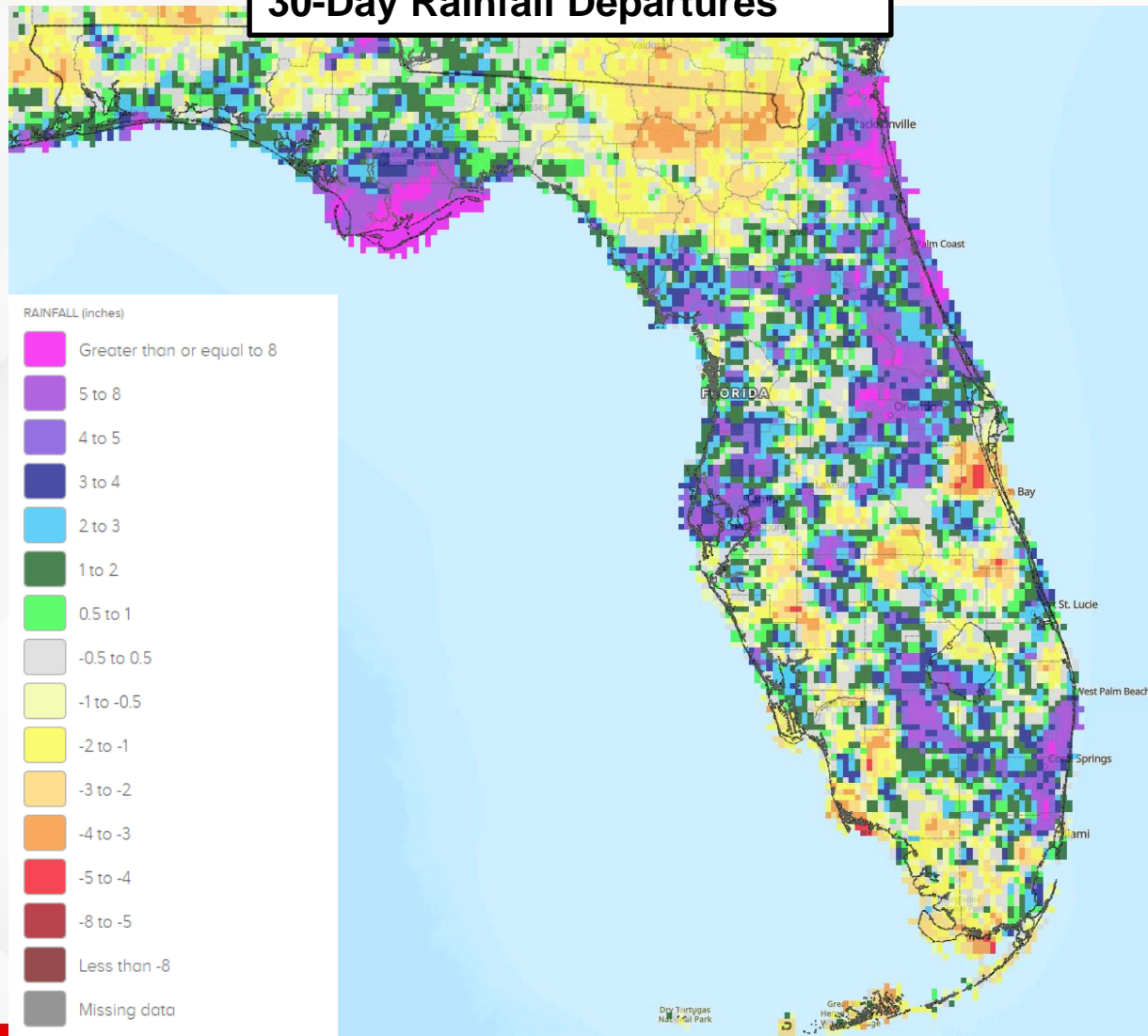
- **Flood Watches** have been issued across nearly all of North Florida, Big Bend and West Coast as tropical downpours associated with Tropical Storm Helene could bring instances of **localized flooding** beginning Wednesday.
- **Moderate to heavy rainfall** is expected with this system, which could lead to instances of localized flash flooding.
- With recently saturated grounds and soils, additional heavy rainfall across low-lying/poor drainage areas could **exacerbate the potential for localized flooding**.
- As well, with elevated water levels along the coast and extending into rivers and creeks along the coast due to storm surge, heavy rainfall over surrounding areas could **slow the rate of heavy rainfall depositing into system and running off** towards the gulf waters. This may also exacerbate potential flooding concerns.



Rainfall Departures – 30 Days

How Saturated Are Our Soils?

30-Day Rainfall Departures

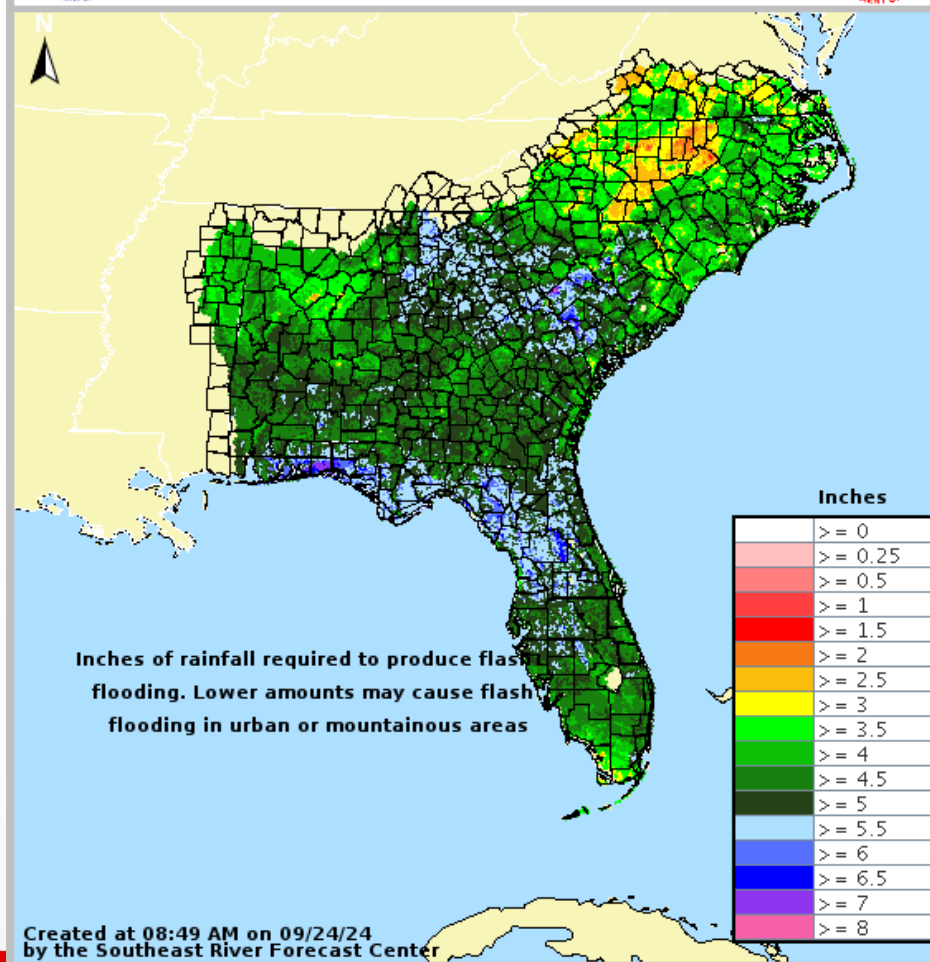
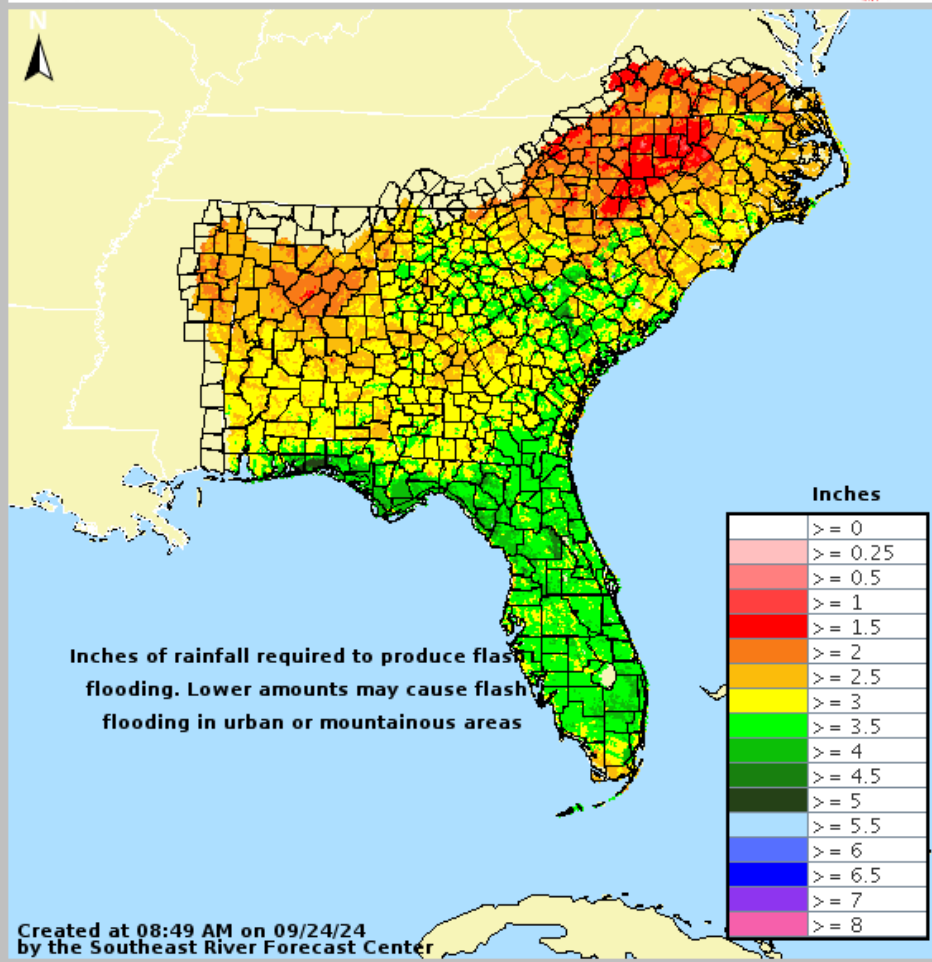


- Coastal portions of the Panhandle and south of the I-10 corridor are 5-8" above normal for rainfall from the last 30-days. This would increase the potential for onset flooding with additional heavy rainfall over the region.
- *Recent heavy rainfall over the Panhandle has allow for rises within water levels, but all rivers, creeks and waterways are currently below flood stage.*
- Interior portions of the Panhandle and Big Bend have seen below normal rainfall totals of 2-4" over the last 30-days.



Flash Flood Guidance

How Much Rain is Needed to Create Flash Flooding?

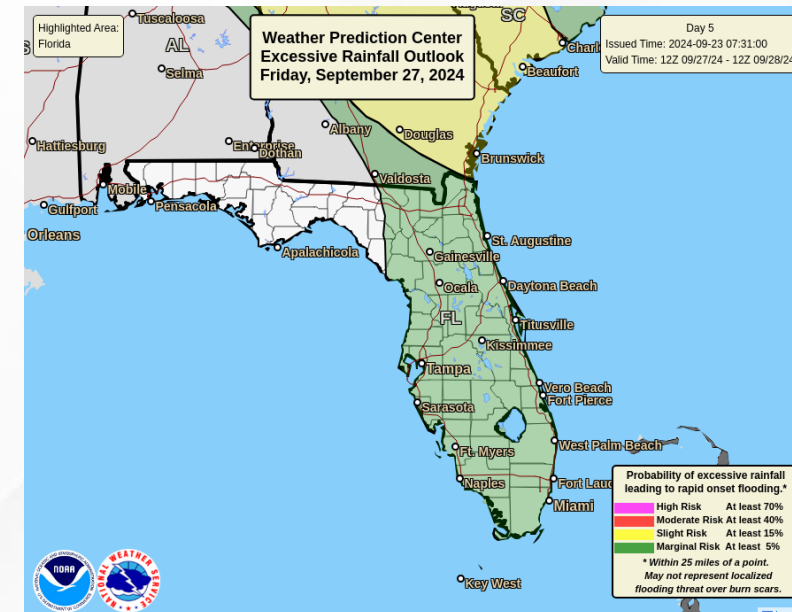
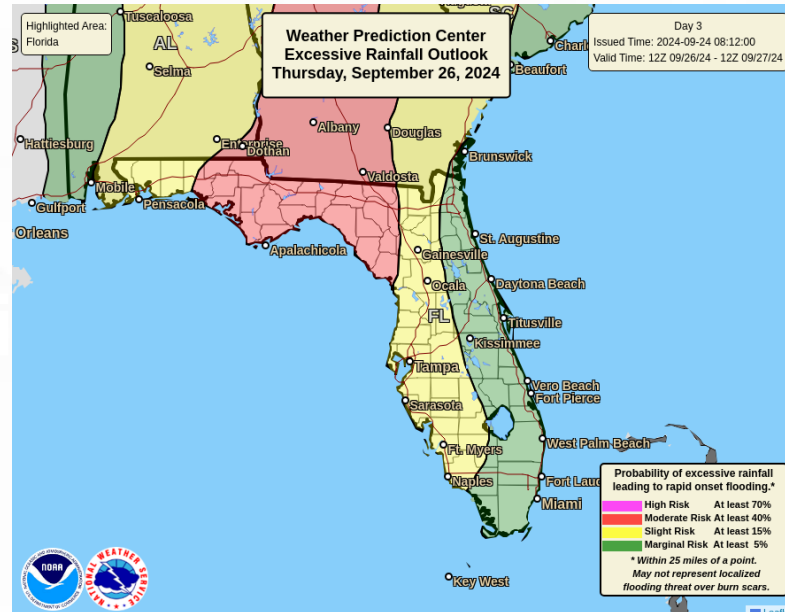
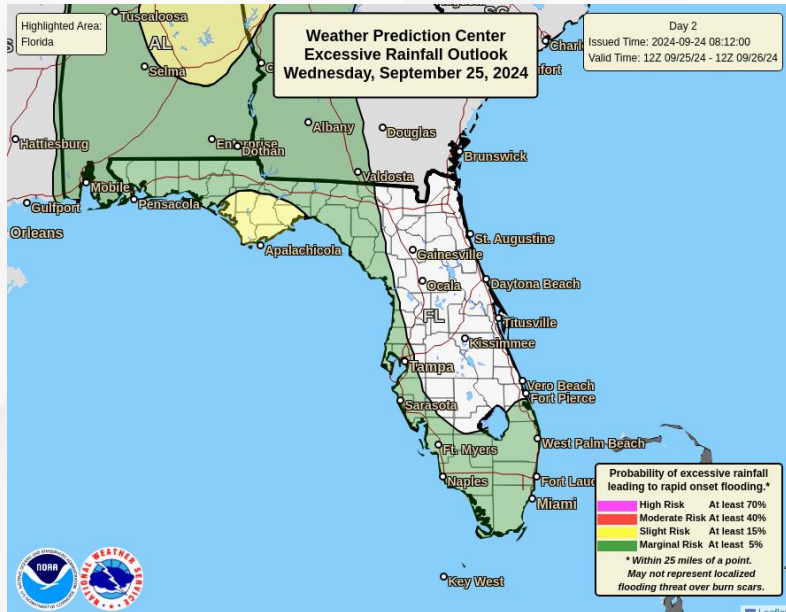


- Along the coastal Panhandle and Big Bend and into the interior Suwannee Valley, it would take 3-4" within an hours or 4-6" within 6 hours to cause flash flooding with some of the already saturated grounds and soils.
- Similarly, along the western Peninsula and, it would take about 3-4" within an hour or 4-6" within 6 hours.



Flash Flood Outlook

From the Weather Prediction Center (WPC)



The Weather Prediction Center (WPC) is outlooking a **Slight Risk (level 2 of 4) for Flash Flooding** along the southern Apalachicola River and towards the coast, with **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 4) for Flash Flooding** on Wednesday across the Florida Panhandle extending along the West Coast and through South Florida as outer rainbands from this system will begin to bring heavy rainfall as Tropical Storm Helene moves over the eastern Gulf of Mexico. As Tropical Storm Helene approaches the northeastern Gulf of Mexico and towards the Florida Big Bend on Thursday, tropical downpours can be expected nearly statewide due to the large size of this system. The Weather Prediction Center (WPC) is outlooking a **Moderate Risk (level 3 of 4) for Flash Flooding** across the Florida Big Bend and extending into the eastern Florida Panhandle on Thursday, with a **Slight Risk (level 2 of 4)** across the rest of the Panhandle and along the I-75 corridor along the West Coast. A **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 4)** extends statewide on Thursday as hazards will likely extend well away from the center. Regardless, tropical downpours and multiple rounds of rainfall may be possible that lead to **instances of flash flooding** as the system moves into the southeastern Gulf of Mexico, especially with potentially training showers and thunderstorms over the same areas and moving onshore. There is a **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 4) for Flash Flooding** on Friday as well from the I-75 corridor and eastward and throughout the Peninsula.

Understanding WPC Excessive Rainfall Risk Categories

No Area/Label	MARGINAL (MRGL)	SLIGHT (SLGT)	MODERATE (MDT)	HIGH (HIGH)
Flash floods are generally not expected.	Isolated flash floods possible	Scattered flash floods possible	Numerous flash floods likely	Widespread flash floods expected
www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov @NWSWPC	Localized and primarily affecting places that can experience rapid runoff with heavy rainfall.	Mainly localized. Most vulnerable are urban areas, roads, small streams and washes. Isolated significant flash floods possible.	Numerous flash flooding events with significant events possible. Many streams may flood, potentially affecting larger rivers.	Severe, widespread flash flooding. Areas that don't normally experience flash flooding, could. Lives and property in greater danger.



Coastal Flooding Continues

From the National Weather Service (NWS)



Coastal Flood Warning
Coastal Flood Advisory
Coastal Flood Statement

A **Coastal Flood Warning** has been issued for the Florida Keys from Wednesday evening until Thursday afternoon as **major saltwater flooding of 1-3'** above normally dry ground is possible, especially near and during times of high tide.

Due to compounding effects of lingering runoff from recent heavy rainfall, onshore flow, and recent high astronomical tides (King tides) courtesy of the recent Full Moon, **minor coastal flooding** can be expected along the St. Johns River through the middle of the week. A **Coastal Flood Advisory** remains in effect throughout the basin and along the Intracoastal Waterway and Atlantic Coast.

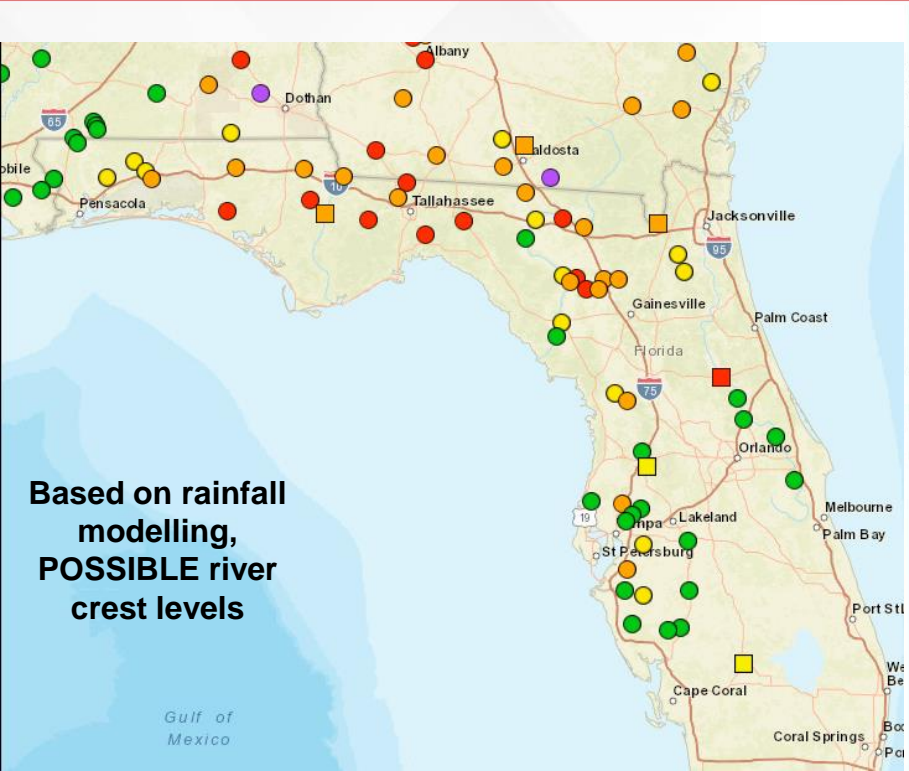
Coastal Flood Statements extend across Southeast Florida and the Middle and Lower Keys as **minor coastal flooding and saltwater flooding** is possible near and during times of high tide.

Minor beach erosion cannot be ruled out at times near and during times of high tide along the East Coast, especially for vulnerable beaches.

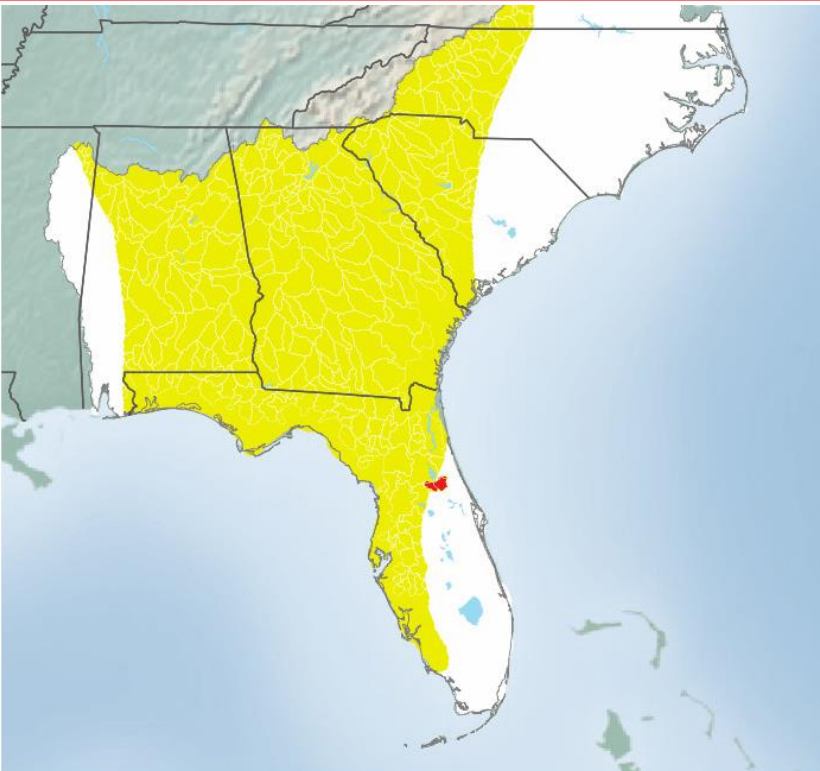


Riverine Flooding

Chance of River Flooding Based on Range of Forecast Rainfall



Based on rainfall modelling, POSSIBLE river crest levels



Rivers, creeks/streams, and waterways across North Florida are already running above normal for this time of year. Computer forecast models are indicating the potential for **minor to moderate flooding** along several mainstems and branches including the Apalachicola, Ochlockonee, Santa Fe, Myakka, Manatee, and Alafia by next week.

Riverine flooding will be closely tied to which basin receives the greatest swath of rainfall. Trends will continue to be monitored.

Chance of Exceedance		
30%	Level	70%
	Action	
	Minor Flood	
	Moderate Flood	
	Major Flood	
= less than 30% chance of reaching Action level		

National Weather Service
Peachtree City, GA
09/24/2024 11:43 AM EDT

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Significant River Flooding Not Expected

Significant River Flooding Possible
Weather conditions indicate, without certainty that significant river flooding could occur

Significant River Flooding Likely
Weather conditions indicate that significant river flood conditions can be expected

Significant River Flooding Occurring
Significant river flooding is occurring at this time



River Flood Warnings

From the National Weather Service

River Guage	County(ies) Affected	Current Level	Crest Level	Record Level	Status	Crest Date	Warning Expires
Alafia River at Riverview near US 301	Hillsborough	Below: 1.19 ft	Major: 7.00 ft	6.60 ft	Steady	26-Sep	9/27 @ 0948 EDT
St. Johns River at Astor	Volusia, Lake	Moderate: 3.14 ft	Moderate: 3.14 ft	4.70 ft	Steady	Crested	Until Further Notice

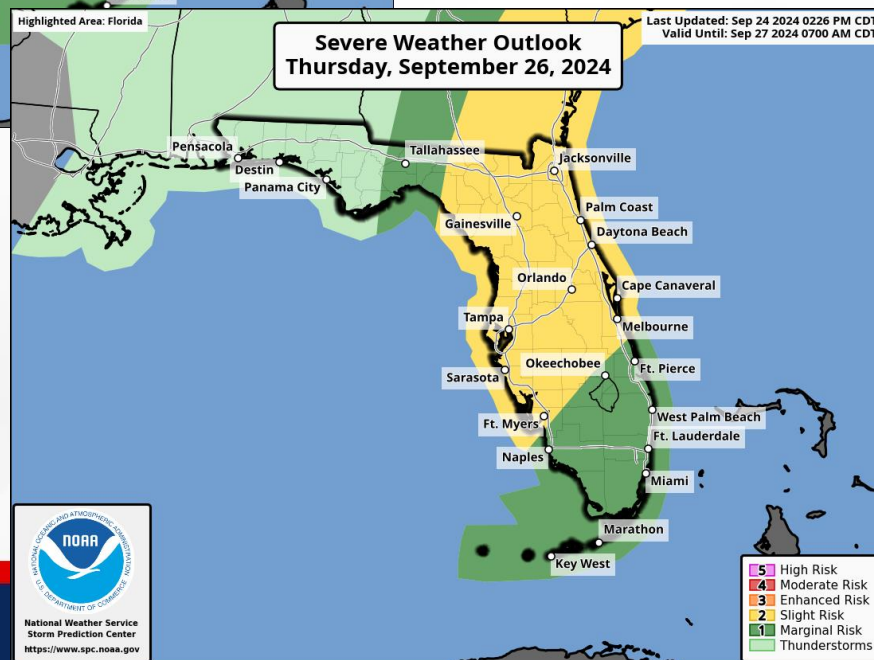
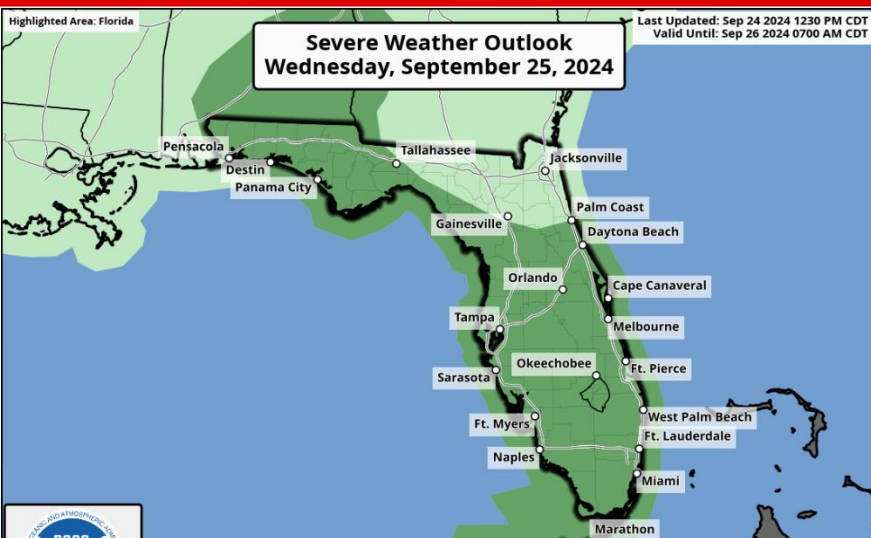
A **River Flood Warning** remain in effect in the [St. Johns River at Astor](#) as water levels remain within **moderate flood stage** due to trapped tides within the river basin. Additional forecast points along the St. Johns River are forecast to remain near or within Action Stage (bank-full) due to recent heavy rainfall over the area; however, river flooding is not anticipated at this time. Tidal portions of the lower St. Johns River could fluctuate in between Action and **minor flood stage** due to tide fluctuations. A **River Flood Warning** has been issued for the [Alafia River at Riverview near US 301](#) as **major flooding** is forecast due to tidal fluctuations and anticipated storm surge associated with Tropical Storm Helene. Additional **River Flood Warnings** will likely be issued later this week and this weekend as heavy rainfall expected from Tropical Storm Helene is observed across the state; however, Riverine flooding will be closely tied to which basin receives the greatest swath of rainfall. Trends will continue to be monitored.

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Tropical Tornadoes

From the Storm Prediction Center (SPC)



- The Storm Prediction Center (SPC) is outlooking a **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 5) for Severe Weather** across the Florida Panhandle, coastal Big Bend and throughout the Peninsula as on Wednesday.
- A **Slight Risk (level 2 of 5) for Severe Weather** is being outlooked on Thursday from the Big Bend, across Northeast and Central Florida towards Lake Okeechobee. A **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 4)** extends from the Capital City through the Florida Keys.
- **Isolated tropical tornadoes** are possible within outer bands of Tropical Storm Helene on Wednesday and Thursday as outer rainbands from extend along the Peninsula and Big Bend Coast.
- The greatest tropical tornado threat will exist along and to the east of the eventual path.
- *Tornado Watches and Warnings will be issued as conditions warrant.*

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Summary

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Tropical Storm Helene:

- As of 5:00 PM EDT, Tropical Storm Helene was located about 155 miles east-southeast of Cozumel, Mexico and about 150 miles south of the western tip of Cuba and moving west-northwestward at 12 mph.
- A turn toward the northwest is expected tonight, followed by a general northward motion beginning on Wednesday and continuing through Friday.
- On the forecast track, the center of Helene will pass near the northeastern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula on Wednesday, move across the eastern Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday and Thursday, and reach the Big Bend coast late Thursday.
- Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 50 mph with higher gusts.
- Additional strengthening is forecast, and Helene is expected to become a hurricane on Wednesday. The storm is forecast rapidly strengthen over the eastern Gulf of Mexico and become a major hurricane on Thursday.

The next briefing packet will be issued on Tuesday Night. For the latest information, please visit the National Hurricane Center website.



Summary

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Florida Outlook:

- **Hurricane Warnings** have been issued for the Florida Big Bend and portions of Nature Coast including the following counties: Gulf, Liberty, Gadsden, Franklin, Wakulla, Leon, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, Lafayette, Dixie, Levy, coastal Citrus, coastal Hernando, coastal Pasco.
- **Hurricane Watches** have been issued for the portions of the western Suwannee Valley, inland Nature Coast and coastal West-Central Florida including the following counties: Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Taylor, Suwannee, eastern Columbia, Gilchrist, Dixie, Levy, western Marion, Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Coastal Hillsborough, Coastal Manatee, Coastal Sarasota.
- **Tropical Storm Warnings** remain in effect for the Lower Florida Keys & Dry Tortugas (Monroe County).
- **Tropical Storm Watches** extend inland into the Florida Peninsula and eastern Florida Panhandle including: Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, eastern Marion, Sumter, Lake, Seminole, Orange, Osceola, Polk, inland Hillsborough, inland Manatee, Hardee, DeSoto, inland Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, Coastal Collier, Mainland Monroe and Middle Keys (Monroe County)
- Tropical Storm Helene will be a significant multi-hazardous event, bringing the risk for life-threatening storm surge, dangerous winds, heavy rainfall, and isolated tropical tornadoes to the Florida Gulf Coast.
- The large wind field and fast forward approach of this system will not only increase the threat of water above normally dry ground along the coastline, but also the inland extent of storm surge.
 - Storm surge values of 10-15' above normally dry ground will be possible from the Ochlockonee River through the Nature Coast, with 5-10' possible along to the central Florida Panhandle and north of Tampa Bay.
 - Even despite Helene's distance from Tampa Bay, the broad wind field will also be able to yield storm surge values of 5-8' during times of onshore flow.
 - A **Storm Surge Warning** extends along the entire Florida Big Bend and Gulf Coast from Indian Pass (Franklin/Gulf County-line) southward to Flamingo (Mainland Monroe) and including Tampa Bay and Charlotte Harbor.
- Tropical storm-force winds could arrive as early as Wednesday morning along the Florida Keys, Wednesday afternoon and evening across the southern Florida Peninsula, and Wednesday night along the central Florida Peninsula.
 - While tropical storm-force winds are not forecast to arrive until the later Thursday morning and early Thursday afternoon hours along the Nature Coast and Florida Big Bend, conditions could begin to deteriorate as early as Thursday morning.
- Helene affecting the eastern Florida Panhandle, Florida Big Bend, and West Florida Coast could quickly cause trees and powerlines to become more susceptible to downing from gusty winds, especially given the vulnerability of local vegetation and infrastructure across these regions still recovering from Hurricane Debby.
- Localized areal, urban, and small stream flooding impacts are possible for portions of North and West Florida and locations that experience intense rainfall rates will likely experience rapid onset flash flooding (**Slight to Moderate Risk for Flash Flooding – level 2/3 of 4**).
 - **Flood Watches** have been raised for nearly all North Florida, except the far western Panhandle, along the Nature Coast and the western Peninsula through Collier County.
- As with any tropical system, isolated tornadoes will be possible even prior to landfall particularly for areas to the east of the center of circulation later in the day on Wednesday and into Thursday (**Marginal to Slight Risk for Severe Weather – level 1-2 of 5**).

The next briefing packet will be issued on Tuesday Night. For the latest information, please visit the National Hurricane Center website.



Tropical Update

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Created by:

Caitlyn Gillespie, Deputy State Meteorologist

Caitlyn.Gillespie@em.myflorida.com

Kennedy Tartt, Assistant State Meteorologist

Kennedy.Tartt@em.myflorida.com

State Meteorological Support Unit

Florida Division of Emergency Management

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