



# Tropical Update



6:00 AM EDT

Friday, September 27, 2024

**Helene Weakens to A Tropical Storm As It Moves Further  
Inland Over Georgia**

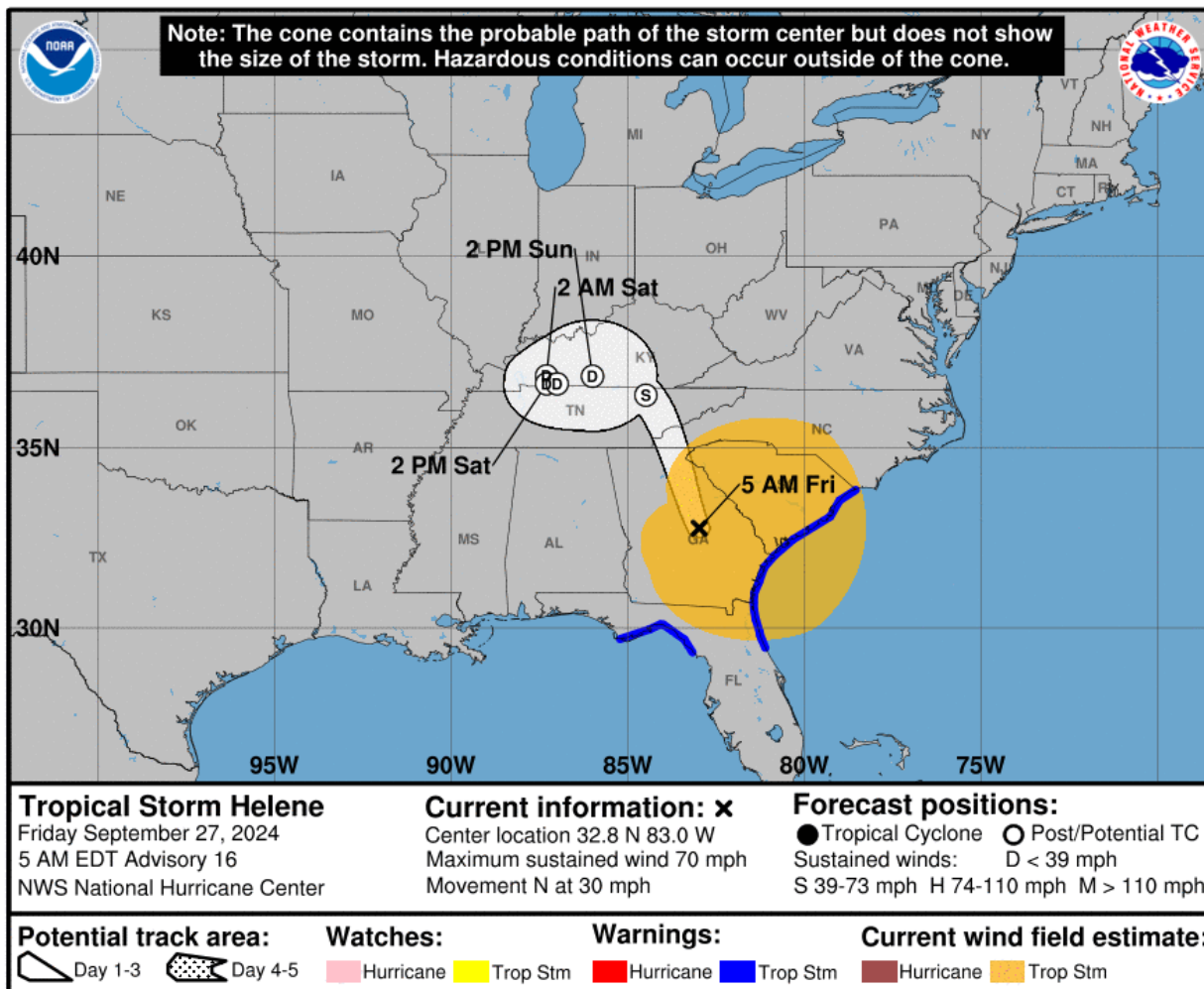
**Significant Storm Surge, Tropical-Storm-Force Winds, and  
Locally Heavy Rains Continue**

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](http://www.hurricanes.gov).



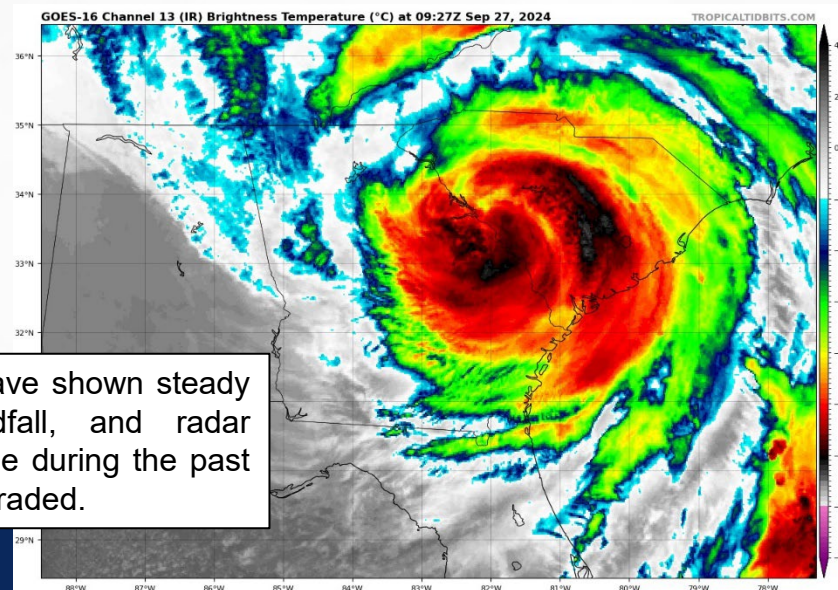
# Tropical Storm Helene

## From the National Hurricane Center (NHC)



- **Location:** 40 miles E of Macon, Georgia; 100 miles SE of Atlanta, Georgia
- **Maximum Sustained Winds:** 70 mph
- **Current Movement:** N at 30 mph

A turn toward the north is expected this morning, taking the center over central and northeastern Georgia. After that, Helene is expected to turn northwestward and slow down over the Tennessee Valley later today and Saturday. Continued weakening is expected, and Helene is expected to become a post-tropical low this afternoon or tonight. However, the fast forward speed will allow strong, damaging winds, especially in gusts, to penetrate well inland across the southeastern United States.

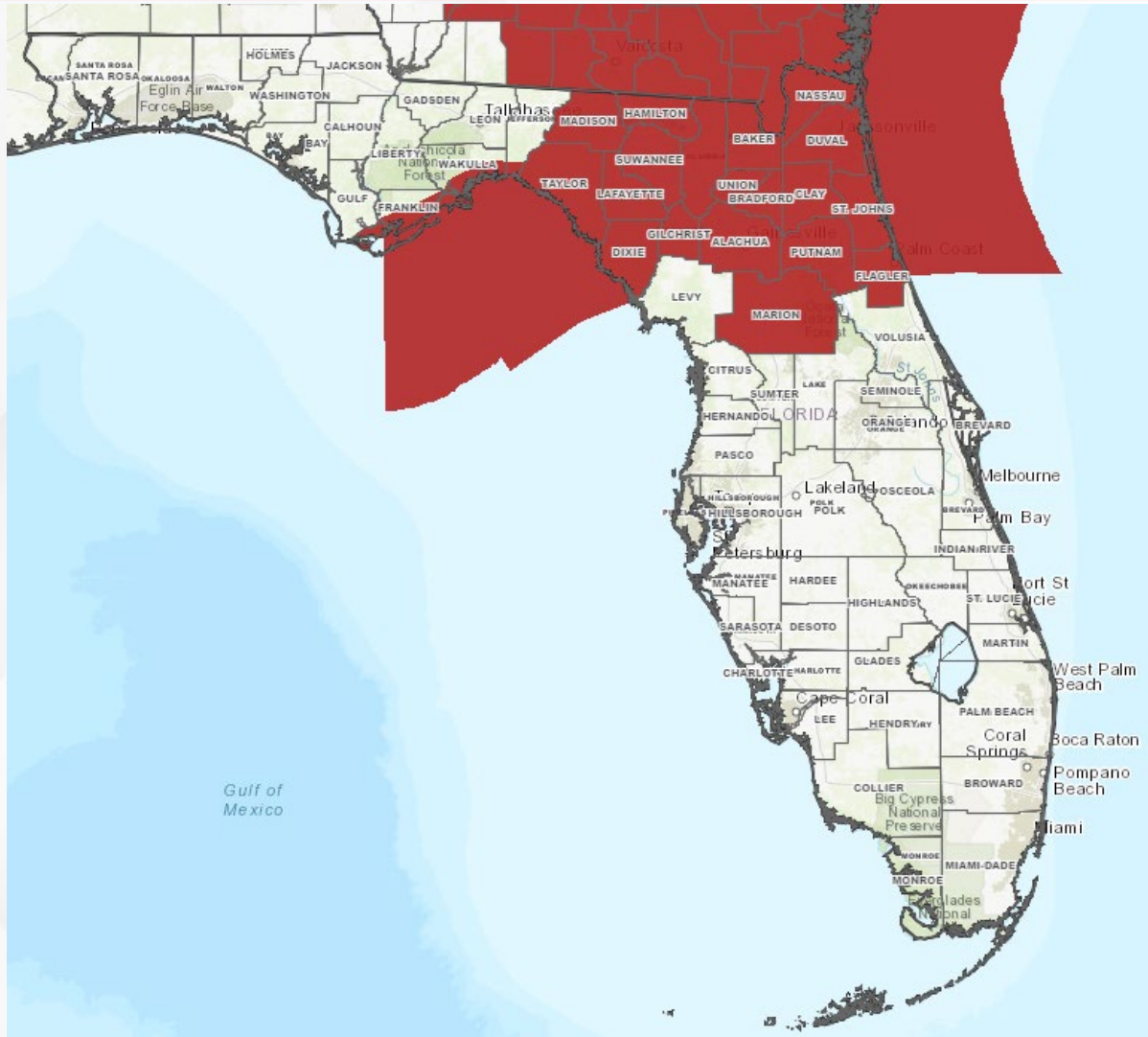


Surface observations have shown steady weakening since landfall, and radar signatures of the cyclone during the past couple of hours has degraded.



# Current Tropical Wind Watches/Warnings

As of 5:00 AM EDT Friday



## • Tropical Storm Warning:

Coastal Franklin, Coastal Wakulla, Coastal Jefferson, Taylor, Dixie, Madison, Lafayette, Hamilton, Suwannee, Gilchrist, Columbia, Alachua, Marion, Baker, Union, Bradford, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler.





# Key Messages

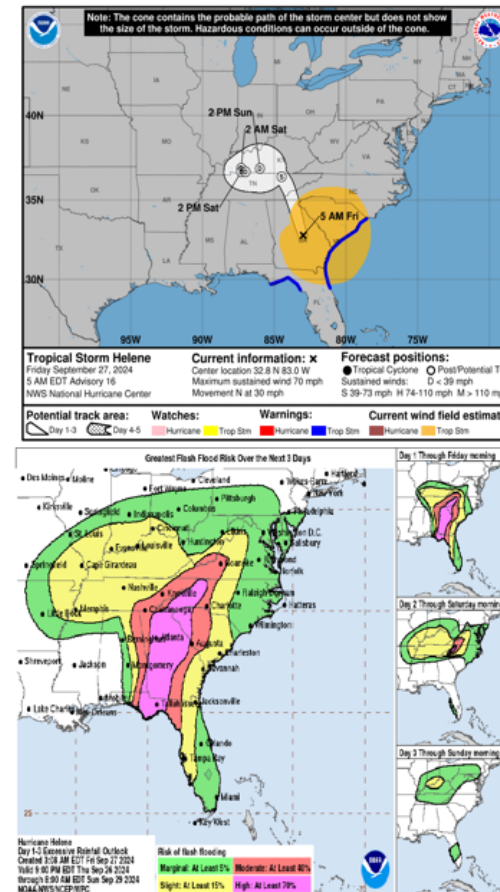
## From the National Hurricane Center (NHC)



### Key Messages for Tropical Storm Helene Advisory 16: 5:00 AM EDT Fri Sep 27, 2024



1. The storm surge along portions of the Florida Big Bend coast and other portions of the west coast of Florida should subside today.
2. Damaging wind gusts will continue to penetrate well inland over portions of Georgia and the Carolinas today, particularly over the higher terrain of the southern Appalachians. Residents in these areas should be prepared for the possibility of long-duration power outages. If you use a generator after the storm, be sure it is placed outside at least 20 feet away from doors, windows, and garages to avoid deadly carbon monoxide poisoning.
3. Catastrophic and life-threatening flash and urban flooding, including numerous significant landslides, is expected across portions of the southern Appalachians through Friday. Considerable to locally catastrophic flash and urban flooding is likely for northwestern and northern Florida and the Southeast through Friday. Widespread significant river flooding is likely, some of which will be major to record breaking.

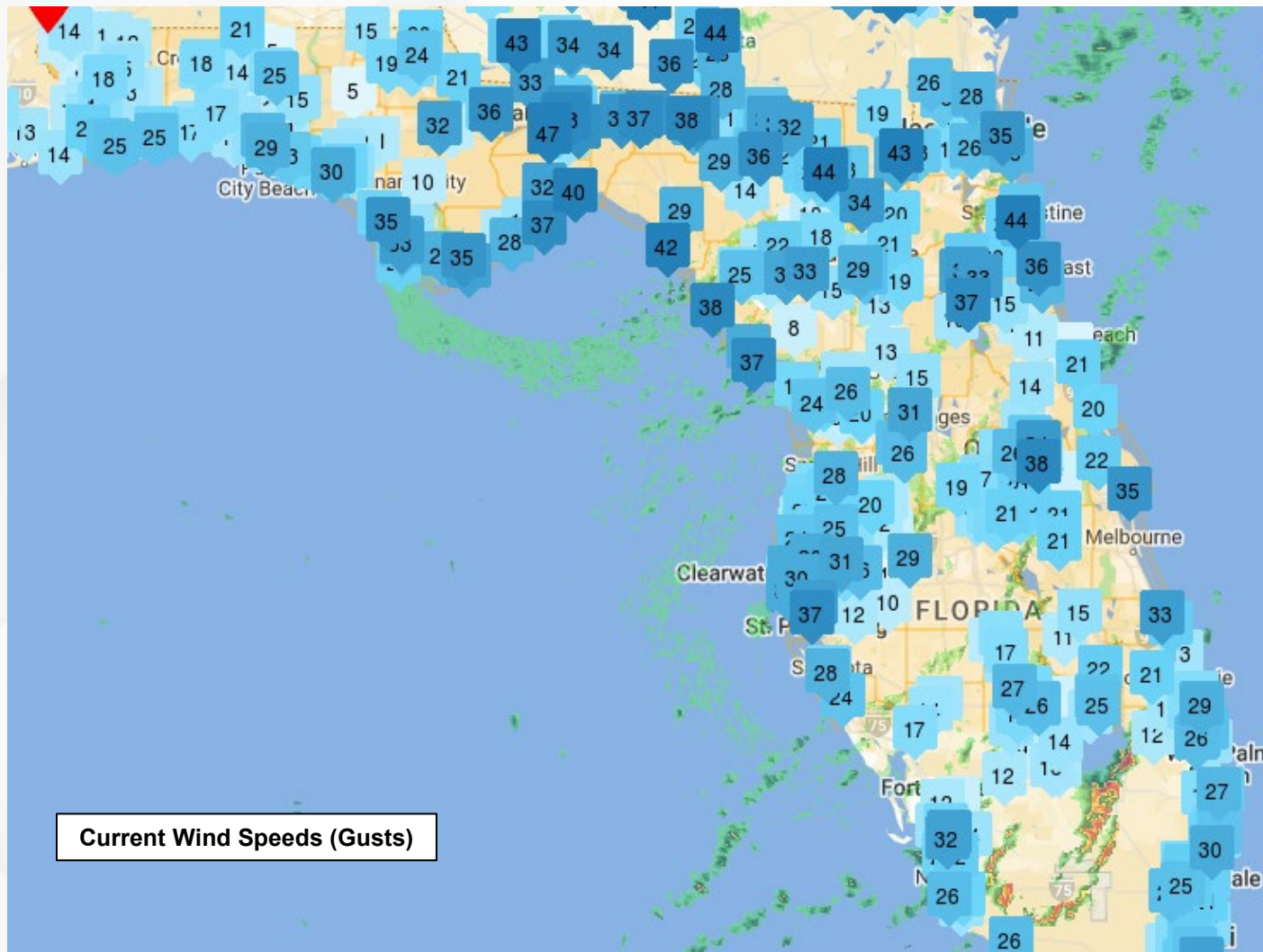


For more information go to [hurricanes.gov](https://hurricanes.gov)



# Current Wind Speeds (Gusts)

## Tropical Storm Helene



Helene produced catastrophic winds that spread onshore in the Florida Big Bend region overnight. Winds have since begun to gradually weaken across much of the state as Helene weakens and moves further north-northeastward.

Wind gusts of 115 mph were reported near the time of landfall from WeatherSTEM stations at the Ochlockonee Boat Ramp in Franklin County and in Fish Creek in Taylor County.

Sustained winds upwards of 15-25 mph persist nearly statewide with locally higher sustained winds upwards of 25-35 mph across portions of the Big Bend.

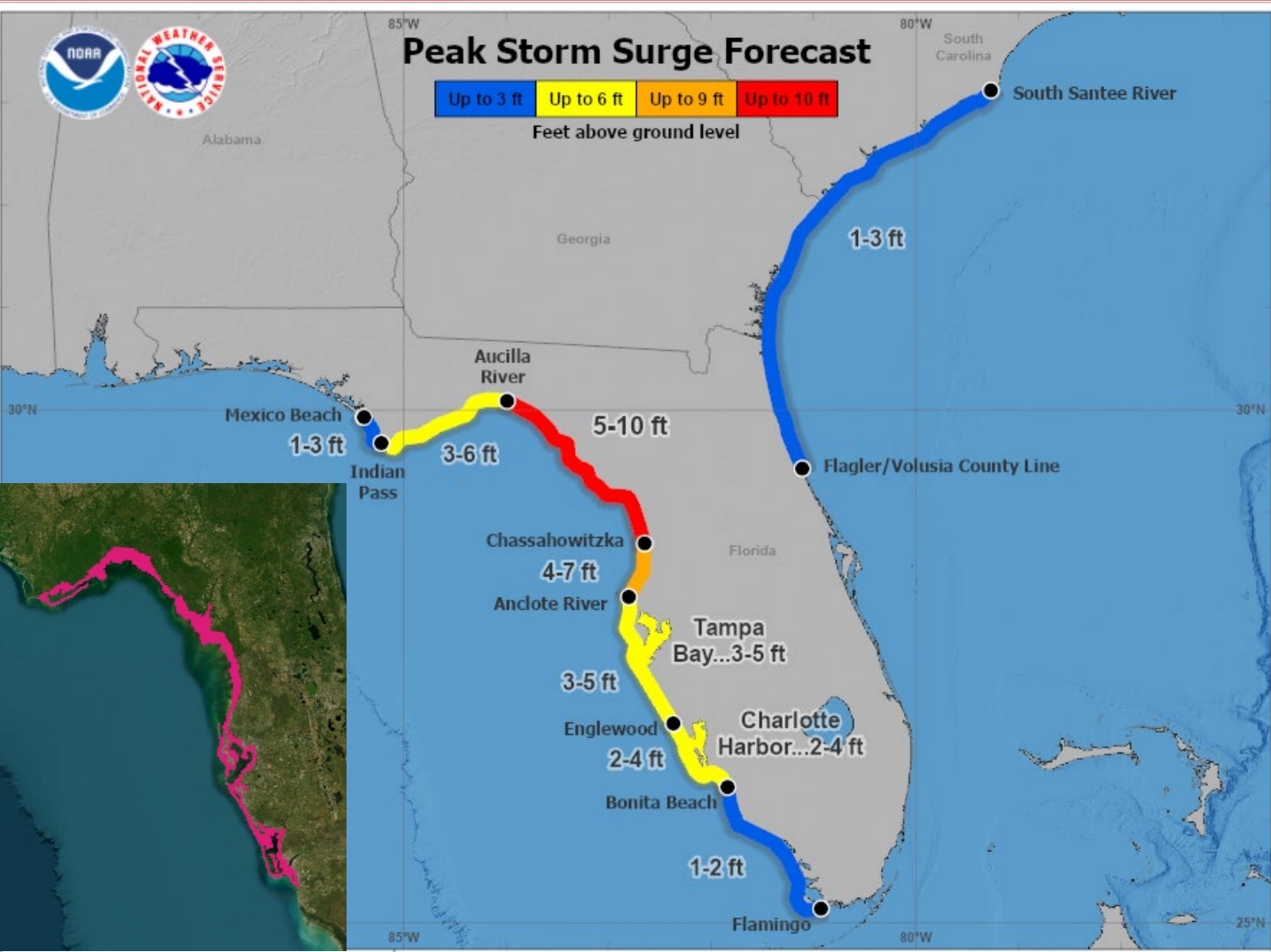
Wind gusts upwards of 25-35 mph continue to be observed nearly statewide this morning with stronger wind gusts upwards of 35-45 mph still being observed across the Big Bend, Northern Peninsula, and southward toward the I-4 corridor.





# Current Storm Surge Watch

As of 5:00 AM EDT Friday



Tropical Storm Helene  
Friday September 27, 2024  
05 AM EDT Advisory 16  
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.

**Storm Surge Warnings** extend from Indian Pass to Bonita Beach.

- **5-10' of storm surge** can be expected from the Aucilla River to Chassahowitska; **3-7'** from Chassahowitska to Anclote and Aucilla River south to Indian Pass.
- **2-5' of storm surge** is forecast from the Anclote River south to Bonita Beach, including Tampa Bay and Charlotte Harbor.

A NOAA National Ocean Service tide gauge located at Clearwater Beach recently reported a water level of **6.18 feet above mean higher high water** (a new record for that location), which is an approximation of inundation in that area. A National Ocean Service tide gauge at Cedar Key is reporting a water level 5.76 feet above mean higher high water.

Gradually improving conditions have allowed many of these water levels to crest and begin receding; however, storm surge along portions of the eastern Forgotten Coast and Nature Coast continue to increase. Tidal gauges at Crystal River and a at Suwanee River above Gopher River Confluence have recorded water levels 4-7' above MHHW and appear to still be increasing.

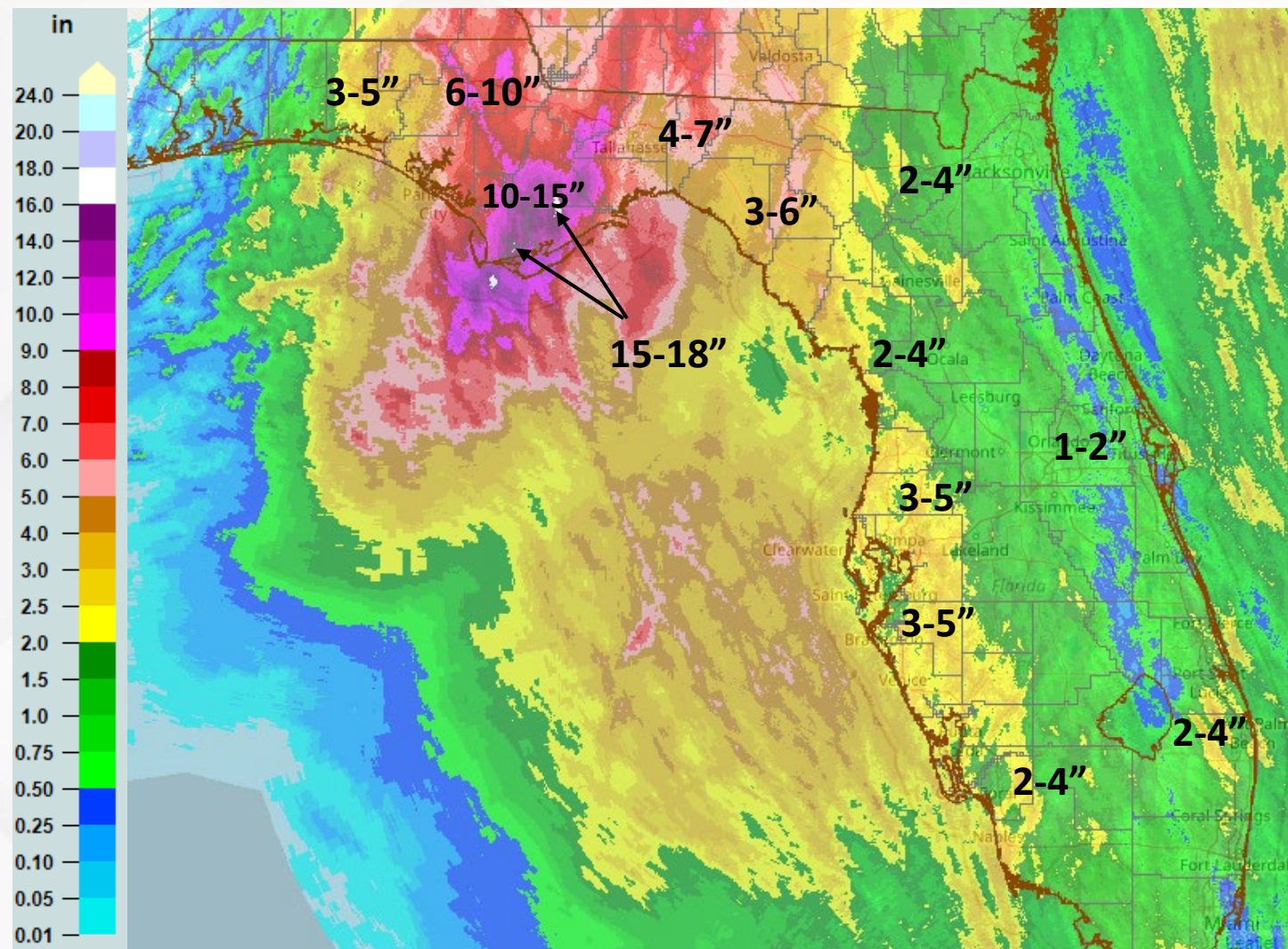
The storm surge along portions of the Florida Big Bend coast and other portions of the west coast of Florida should subside today.





# 48-Hour Observed Rainfall Totals

From the Weather Prediction Center (WPC)



- Over the past 48-hours, widespread rainfall totals near 2-4" were observed across the Central Panhandle, Suwannee Valley, and Western Peninsula with locally higher totals near 3-6".
- Higher rainfall totals were observed across the Eastern Panhandle and Big Bend with a widespread 4-8" observed and locally higher totals upwards of 6-12".
- The highest rainfall totals of 10-15" were observed across Apalachicola through the Apalachicola National Forest and along southern portions of the Apalachicola River.
- Isolated pockets of 15-18" were observed near Apalachicola and in the Apalachicola National Forest.



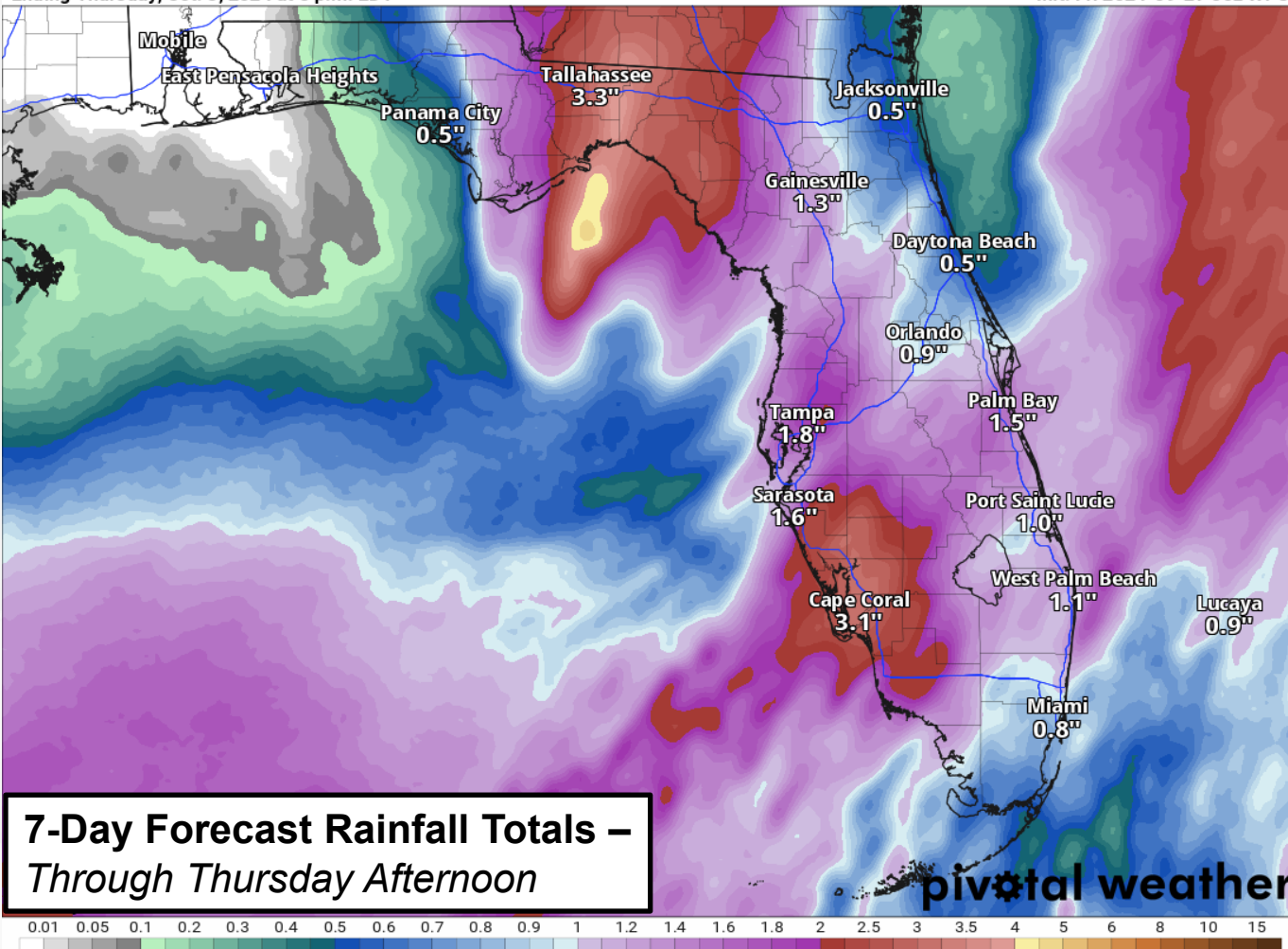
# Rainfall Totals – Next 7 Days

## From the Weather Prediction Center (WPC)

### 7-Day Precipitation (in)

Ending Thursday, Oct. 3, 2024 at 8 p.m. EDT

Init: Fri 2024-09-27 00z WPC



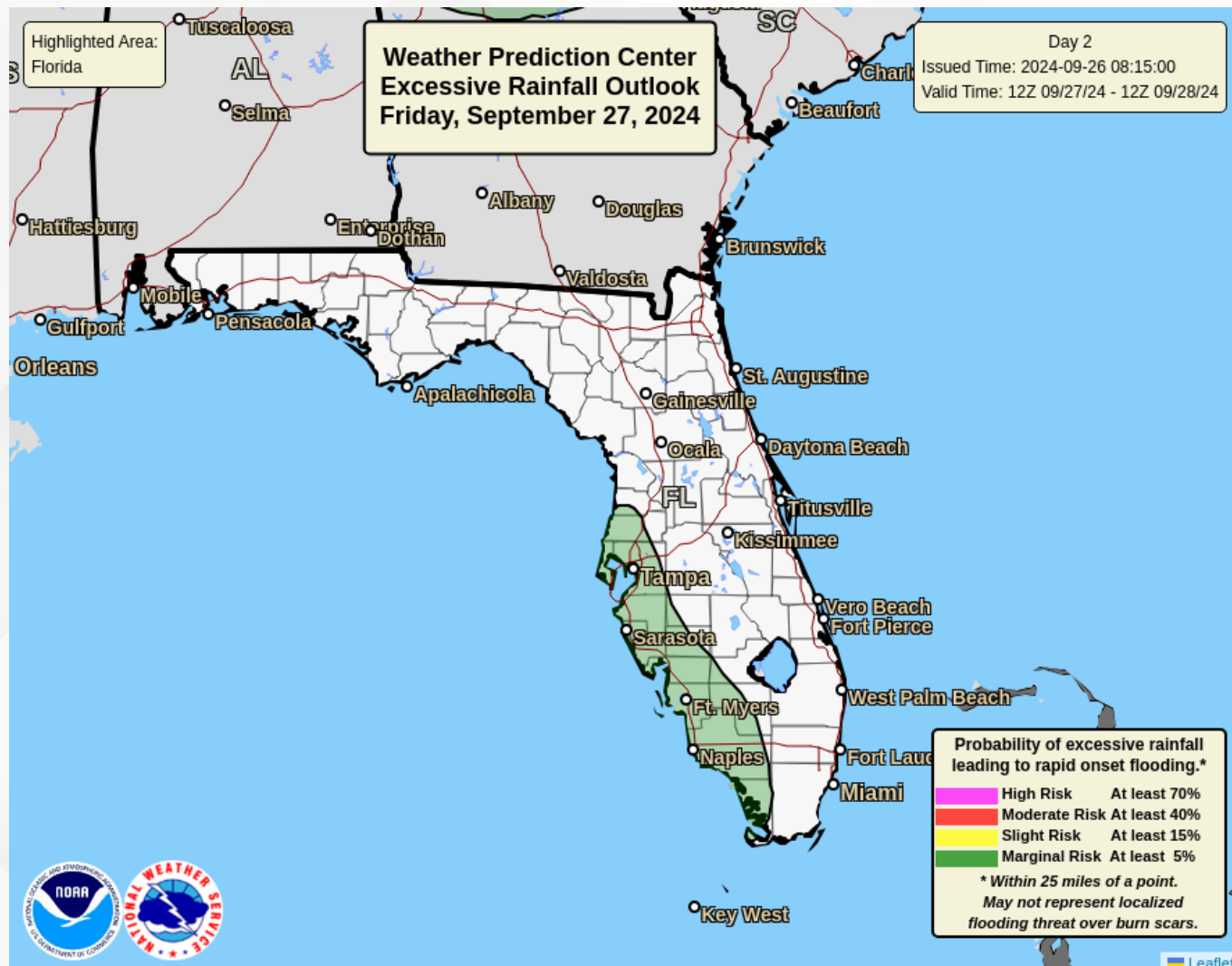
- Helene will move well to the north-northwest of the state during the day today with a cold front extending from it down the Florida East Coast and across Central Florida. This frontal boundary will linger across the state through the next 7 days, serving as a focus for isolated to scattered shower and thunderstorm activity.
- High pressure and abundant tropical moisture across Central and South Florida will continue to give way to scattered to numerous showers and thunderstorms over the next few days.
- Drier air along the Florida Panhandle will promote warm and dry conditions through the weekend and into early next week.
- Widespread rainfall totals near 1-3" can be expected over the next 7 days with locally higher totals upwards of 3-6" possible.





# Flash Flood Outlooks

From the Weather Prediction Center (WPC)



Abundant tropical moisture remaining in place across portions of South and Central Florida will continue to allow for scattered to numerous showers and thunderstorms in the afternoons and evenings. The Weather Prediction Center (WPC) is outlooking a **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 4) for Flash Flooding** along West-Central and Southwest Florida today and across Central Florida Saturday. Abundant tropical moisture giving way to locally heavy downpours may give way to instances of **flooding** along urban corridors and over saturated grounds.

## Understanding WPC Excessive Rainfall Risk Categories

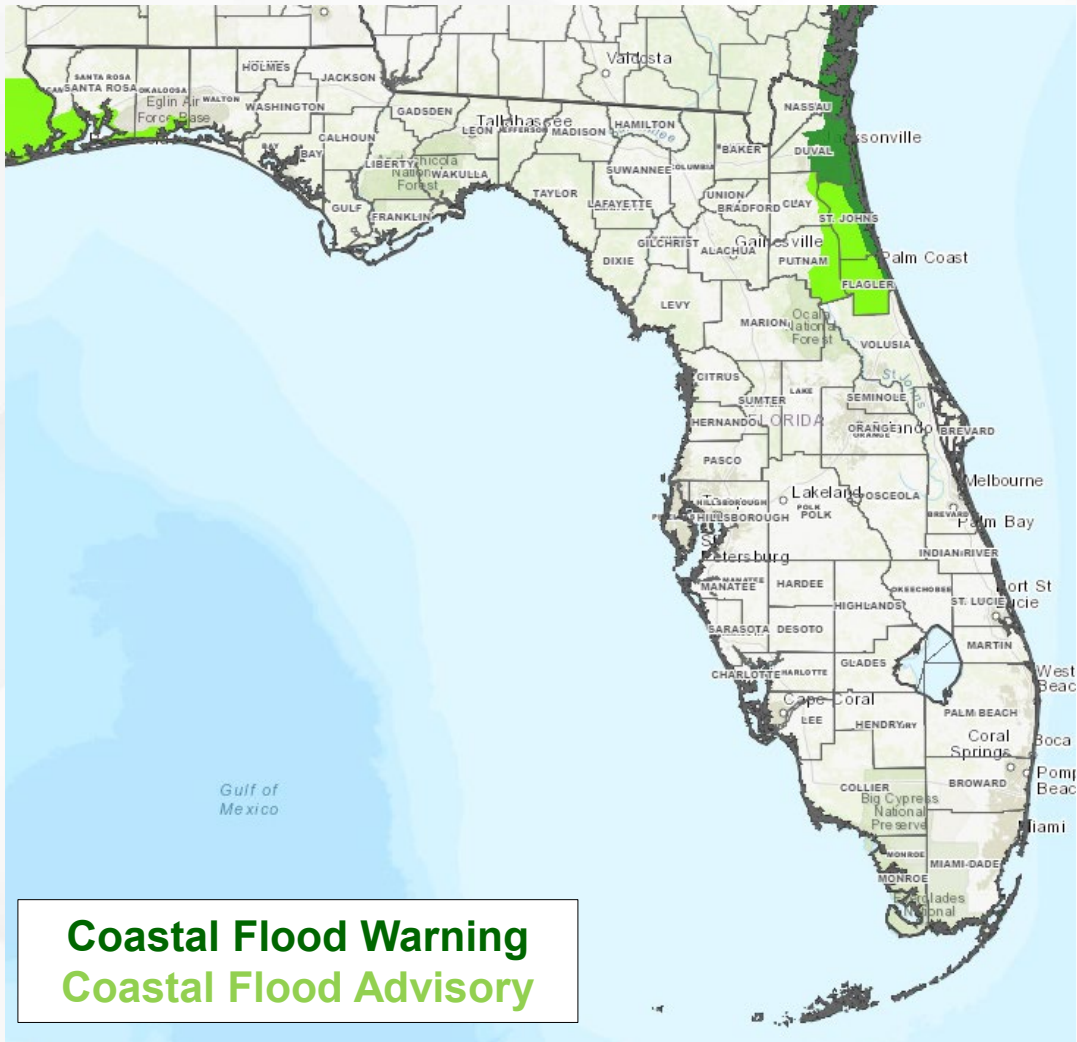
No Area/Label	MARGINAL (MRGL)	SLIGHT (SLGT)	MODERATE (MDT)	HIGH (HIGH)
Flash floods are generally not expected.	Isolated flash floods possible	Scattered flash floods possible	Numerous flash floods likely	Widespread flash floods expected
	Localized and primarily affecting places that can experience rapid 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.

[www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov](http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov)  
@NWSWPC



# Coastal Flooding Continues

From the National Weather Service (NWS)



A **Coastal Flood Warning** is in effect along the Northeast Coast until later this morning as **major saltwater flooding of 1-3'** above normally dry ground with **isolated locations up to 4'** are possible, especially near and during times of high tide from Helene.

**Coastal Flood Warnings** are in effect along the Upper Florida Keys with Coastal Flood Statements along the Middle and Lower Keys as **minor to locally moderate saltwater flooding** continues to be possible.

**Coastal Flood Advisories** are in place along the western Panhandle as **minor coastal flooding** near and during times of high tide from Helene.

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.

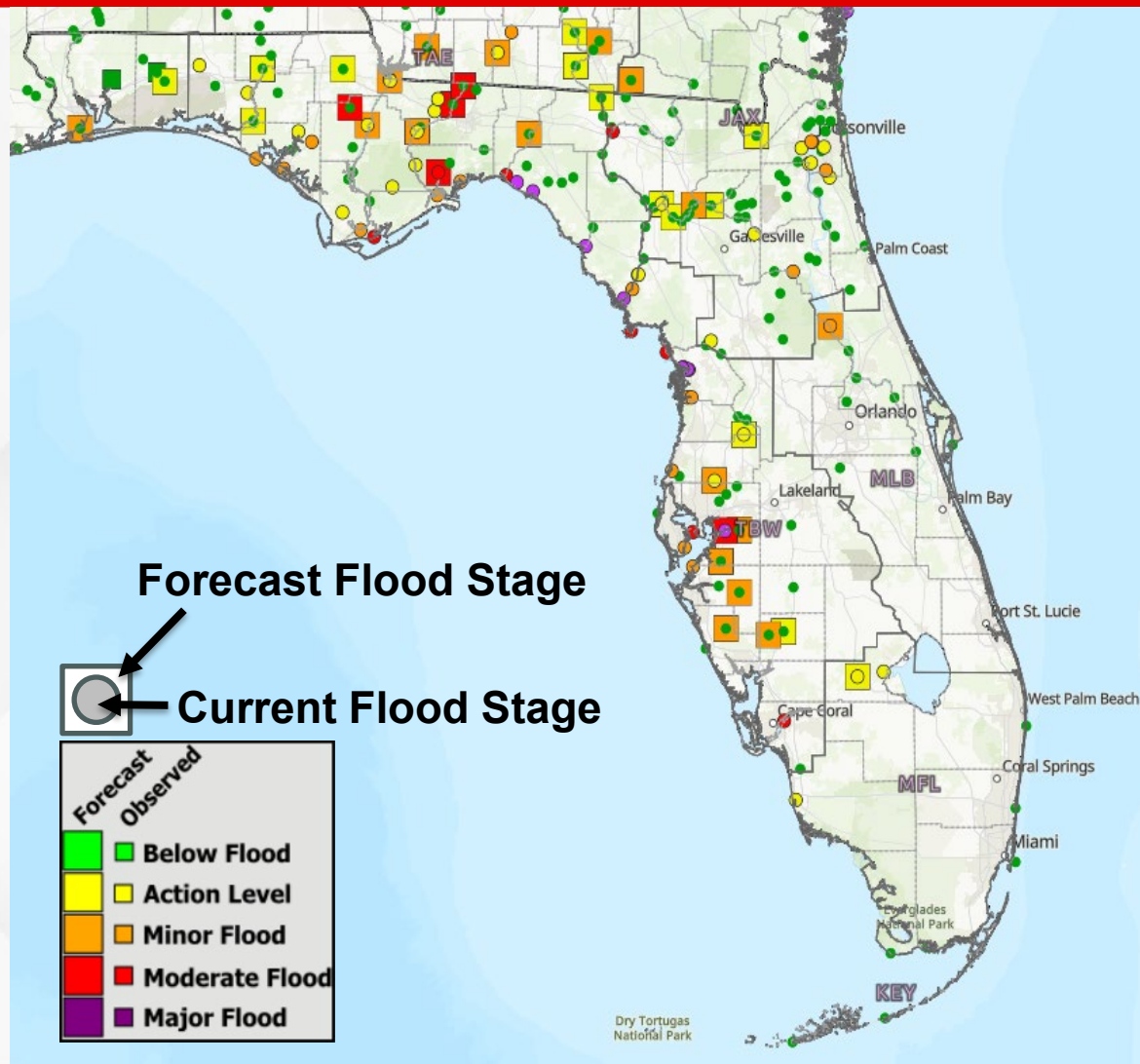
**Minor beach erosion** cannot be ruled out at times near and during times of high tide along the East Coast, especially for vulnerable beaches.





# Current & Forecast River Conditions

From the National Weather Service



**River Flood Warnings** remain in effect along the [St. Johns River at Astor](#) as water levels very slowly decline but remain within **minor 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 **moderate flood stage** due 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 Hurricane Helene. Numerous **River Flood Warnings** have been issued across the Big Bend, Northern Peninsula, and West-Central Florida as water level rises begin to rise from widespread heavy rainfall observed from Helene. **Moderate riverine flooding** is likely on larger rivers across the Eastern Panhandle and Big Bend while smaller creeks and streams more susceptible to heavy rainfall, and **major flooding** cannot be ruled out on the flashier rivers. **Minor flooding** is anticipated for numerous West-Central Florida rivers and creeks. For more details, please visit the [River Forecast Center](#).

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# River Flood Warnings

From the National Weather Service

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River Gauge	County(ies) Affected	Current Level	Crest Level	Record Level	Status	Crest Date	Warning Expires
<a href="#">Alafia River at Lithia Pinecrest Road at Lithia</a>	Hillsborough	Below: 8.78 ft	Minor: 13.80 ft	28.50 ft	Rising	28-Sep	0800 EDT 30-Sep
<a href="#">Alafia River at Riverview near US 301</a>	Hillsborough	Major: 6.18 ft	Major: 9.37 ft	6.60 ft	Falling	Crested	1308 EDT 27-Sep
<a href="#">Apalachicola River near Blountstown</a>	Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Liberty	Action: 14.29 ft	Minor: 21.90 ft	28.60 ft	Rising	1-Oct	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Chipola River near Altha (CR-274)</a>	Calhoun	Below: 16.66 ft	Moderate: 26.80 ft	33.50 ft	Rising	28-Sep	0324 EDT 1-Oct
<a href="#">Cypress Creek at SR-54 Worthington Gardens</a>	Pasco	Action: 7.28 ft	Minor: 8.30 ft	13.80 ft	Rising	30-Sep	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Little Manatee River near Wimauma at US-301</a>	Hillsborough	Below: 7.43 ft	Minor: 14.40 ft	20.10 ft	Rising	28-Sep	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Manatee River near Myakka Head at SR-64</a>	Manatee	Below: 7.61 ft	Minor: 12.20 ft	20.90 ft	Rising	28-Sep	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Ochlockonee River near Concord (CR-12)</a>	Gadsden, Leon	Below: 30.28 ft	Moderate: 42.60 ft	45.70 ft	Rising	30-Sep	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Ochlockonee River near Havana (US-27)</a>	Gadsden, Leon	Below: 18.53 ft	Moderate: 31.00 ft	35.10 ft	Rising	30-Sep	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Ochlockonee River near Bloxham (SR-20)</a>	Leon, Liberty, Wakulla	Action: 18.25 ft	Minor: 21.30 ft	32.60 ft	Rising	1-Oct	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">Sopchoppy River near Sopchoppy</a>	Wakulla	Moderate: 32.03 ft	Moderate: 33.15 ft	36.80 ft	Rising	27-Sep	Until Further Notice
<a href="#">St. Johns River at Astor</a>	Volusia, Lake	Minor: 2.60 ft	Minor: 2.70 ft	4.70 ft	Rising	27-Sep	Until Further Notice

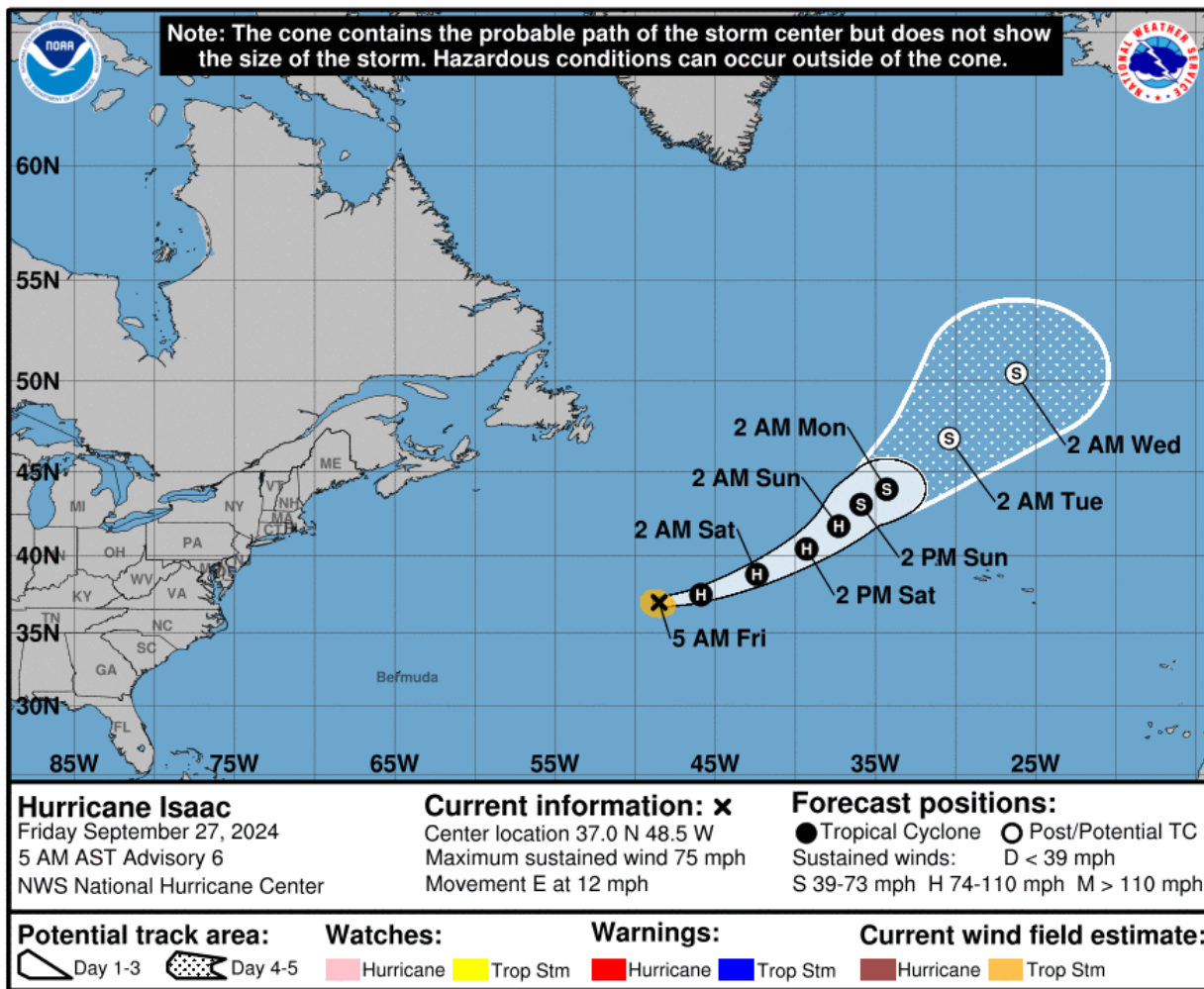
For more details on the hydrographs as well as impact statements, click the links for each river gauge.





# Hurricane Isacc

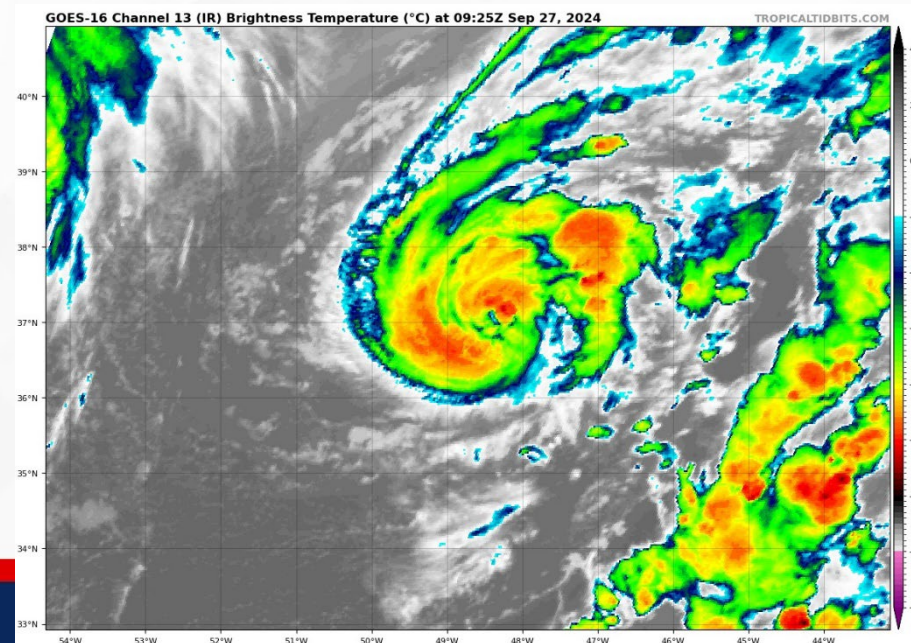
## From the National Hurricane Center (NHC)



- **Location:** 1175 miles W of the Azores; 980 miles ENE of Bermuda
- **Maximum Sustained Winds:** 75 mph
- **Current Movement:** E at 12 mph

This motion with a gradual turn to the east-northeast is expected over the next several days. Additional strengthening is expected during the next day or so followed by gradual weakening by the end of this weekend.

*Isaac poses no threat to Florida.*





# Summary

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## Tropical Storm Helene:

- As of 5:00 AM EDT this morning, Helene has weakened to a Tropical Storm with maximum sustained winds near 70 mph.
- Tropical Storm Helene is located 40 miles east of Macon, Georgia and 100 miles southeast of Atlanta, GA and moving northward at 30 mph.
- A turn toward the north is expected this morning, taking the center over central and northeastern Georgia.
- After that, Helene is expected to turn northwestward and slow down over the Tennessee Valley later today and Saturday.
- Continued weakening is expected, and Helene is expected to become a post-tropical low this afternoon or tonight.
- However, the fast forward speed will allow strong, damaging winds, especially in gusts, to penetrate well inland across the southeastern United States.
- **Tropical Storm Warnings** remain in effect for the following counties: Coastal Franklin, Coastal Wakulla, Coastal Jefferson, Taylor, Dixie, Madison, Lafayette, Hamilton, Suwannee, Gilchrist, Columbia, Alachua, Marion, Baker, Union, Bradford, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Putnam, and Flagler.
- There is a danger of life-threatening storm surge along portions of the Forgotten Coast and West Coast of Florida.
  - **Storm Surge Warnings** remain in effect from Indian Pass to Bonita Beach.
  - **5-10'** of storm surge can be expected from the Aucilla River to Chassahowitska; **3-7'** from Chassahowitska to Anclote and Aucilla River south to Indian Pass.
  - **2-5'** of storm surge is forecast from the Anclote River south to Bonita Beach, including Tampa Bay and Charlotte Harbor.

The next briefing packet will be issued on Friday morning. For the latest information, please visit the [National Hurricane Center website](#).





# Summary

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## Florida Outlook:

- Significant, life-threatening impacts from Helene were felt across portions of the state over the last 24 hours and life-threatening storm surge, winds, and heavy rains continue across portions of North and Central Florida.
  - Wind gusts of 115 mph were reported near the time of landfall from WeatherSTEM stations at the Ochlockonee Boat Ramp in Franklin County and in Fish Creek in Taylor County; Winds have since begun to gradually weaken across much of the state as Helene weakens and moves further north-northeastward.
  - A NOAA National Ocean Service tide gauge located at Clearwater Beach reported a water level of 6.67 feet above mean higher high water (MHHW), which is an approximation of inundation in that area.
  - A National Ocean Service tide gauge at Cedar Key reported a water level of 9.31 feet above MHHW.
  - Gradually improving conditions have allowed many of these water levels to crest and begin receding; however, storm surge along portions of the eastern Forgotten Coast and Nature Coast continue to increase.
  - Tidal gauges at Crystal River and a at Suwannee River above Gopher River Confluence have recorded water levels 4-7' above MHHW and appear to still be increasing; however, they should recede later today.
- Over the past 48-hours, widespread rainfall totals near 2-4" were observed across the Central Panhandle, Suwannee Valley, and Western Peninsula with locally higher totals near 3-6".
  - Higher rainfall totals were observed across the Eastern Panhandle and Big Bend with a widespread 4-8" observed and locally higher totals upwards of 6-12".
  - The highest rainfall totals of 10-15" were observed across Apalachicola through the Apalachicola National Forest and along southern portions of the Apalachicola River; Isolated pockets of 15-18" were observed near Apalachicola and in the Apalachicola National Forest.
- Numerous **River Flood Warnings** have been issued across the Big Bend, Northern Peninsula, and West-Central Florida as water level rises begin to rise from widespread heavy rainfall observed from Helene.
  - **Moderate riverine flooding** is likely on larger rivers across the Eastern Panhandle and Big Bend while smaller creeks and streams more susceptible to heavy rainfall, and **major flooding** cannot be ruled out on the flashier rivers; **Minor flooding** is anticipated for numerous West-Central Florida rivers and creeks.
- Abundant tropical moisture remaining in place across portions of South and Central Florida will continue to allow for scattered to numerous showers and thunderstorms today and Saturday.
  - There is a **Marginal Risk (level 1 of 4) for Flash Flooding** along West-Central and Southwest Florida today and across Central Florida Saturday.
  - Abundant tropical moisture giving way to locally heavy downpours may give way to instances of **flooding** along urban corridors and over saturated grounds.
- An isolated tornado or two cannot be ruled out through the pre-dawn hours with any trailing activity from Helene.

The next briefing packet will be issued on Friday morning. For the latest information, please visit the [National Hurricane Center website](#).



# Tropical Update

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**State Meteorological Support Unit**

**Florida Division of Emergency Management**

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