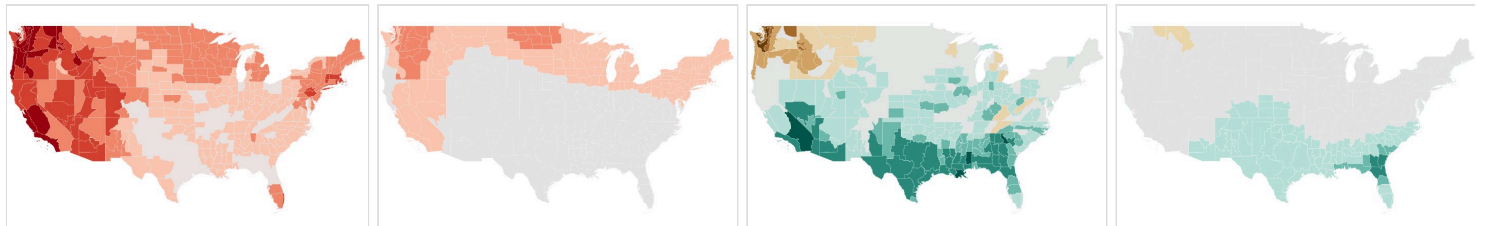




Winter 2026-27: mild north, wet south

Sample issue · from the September 2026
outlook
Oct–Dec and Nov–Jan

The Pacific is in a strong El Niño, and the pattern that usually goes with one is on the map: warmth across the northern half of the country and a storm track pushed south. Below, our outlook and NOAA's Climate Prediction Center outlook for the same months, side by side, so you can compare them yourself. The two agree on direction nearly everywhere; the clearest gaps are Northern Plains temperature for Nov–Jan (ours 69% above normal, CPC 42%) and Southern Plains precipitation for Oct–Dec (ours 56% above, CPC 44%). Probabilities are averaged by area across each region's NOAA climate divisions; "favored" means the most likely of three categories, not a promise.

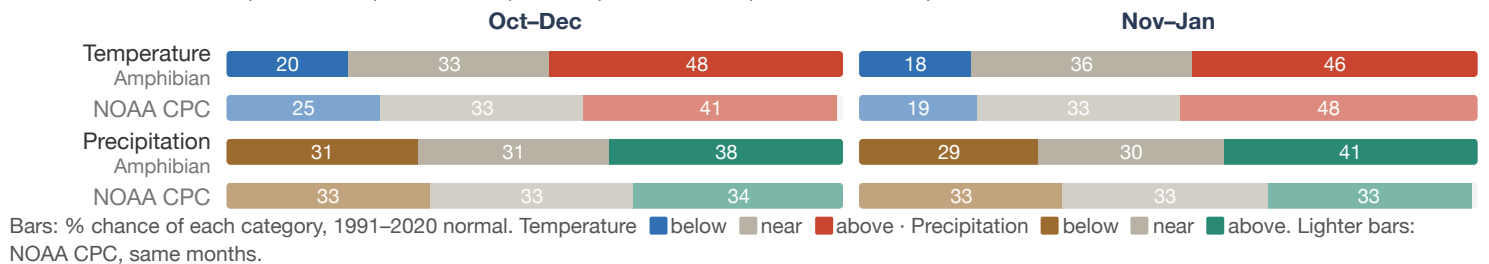


Temperature, Oct–Dec: Amphibian Temperature, Oct–Dec: NOAA CPC Precipitation, Oct–Dec: Amphibian Precipitation, Oct–Dec: NOAA CPC

70%+ 60 50 40 near 40 50 60 70%+ 70%+ 60 50 40 near 40 50 60 70%+

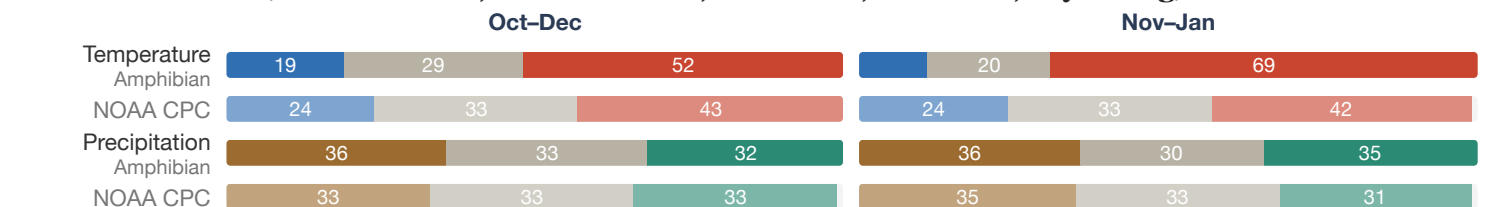
Below normal Temperature: chance of the favored category Above normal Below normal Precipitation: chance of the favored category Above normal

Corn Belt (Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin)



What it means on the ground: A mild, open early winter is the lean, with precipitation near normal to slightly above. Fall fieldwork and late harvest get more open days than usual. Anhydrous and fall manure wait on 4-inch soil temperatures below 50°F and falling, normally late October in the north and early November in the south; a warm fall pushes that later. Soil-moisture recharge looks ordinary rather than generous.

Northern Plains (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, Wyoming)



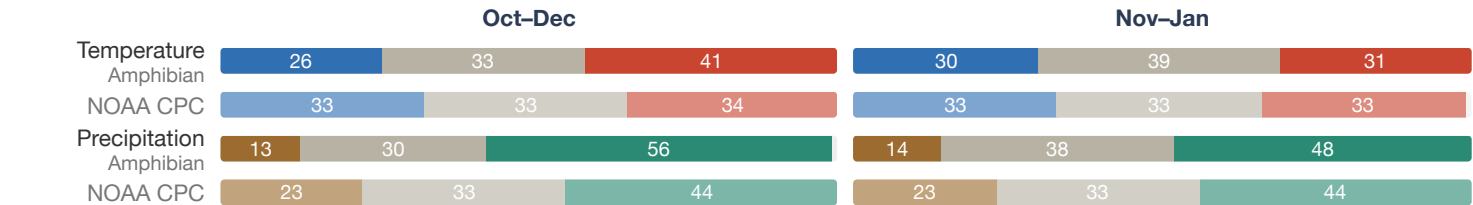
What it means on the ground: The strongest signal in the country: nearly a 7-in-10 chance of a warmer-than-normal November through January, with no clear precipitation lean. Lower heating demand and fewer cold-stress days for cattle; thinner, less reliable snow cover for winter wheat, and with a drier lean on top, less runoff for stock dams and a slower start to the moisture year.

NORMAL FIRST FREEZE (32°F), NOAA 1991–2020 NORMALS

Corn Belt	Northern Plains	Southern Plains
Des Moines Oct 18 (Oct 1–30) Minneapolis Oct 18 (Oct 1–31) Peoria Oct 23 (Oct 9–Nov 3) Columbus Oct 23 (Oct 9–Nov 4) Indianapolis Oct 26 (Oct 13–Nov 7) Columbia, MO Oct 29 (Oct 16–Nov 11)	Fargo Sep 30 (Sep 18–Oct 15) Billings Oct 3 (Sep 20–Oct 17) Sioux Falls Oct 6 (Sep 23–Oct 20) Grand Island Oct 15 (Sep 29–Oct 27) Most of the region normally freezes by mid-October.	Wichita Oct 27 (Oct 13–Nov 9) Amarillo Oct 27 (Oct 14–Nov 8) Oklahoma City Nov 2 (Oct 21–Nov 17) Lubbock Nov 2 (Oct 19–Nov 14) Waco Nov 15 (Nov 1–Dec 4) Dallas–Fort Worth Nov 24 (Nov 6–Dec 12)

Median date; in parentheses, the 1-in-10 early and 1-in-10 late dates. A warm lean shifts the odds toward the late end of each range; it does not rule out an early freeze. Any location: amphibianpublishing.com/frost

Southern Plains (Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas)



What it means on the ground: The wettest lean on the map, with temperature close to normal. Over half the region shows a strong wet signal for October through December, easing a little by midwinter. With most of Oklahoma and Texas in drought, this is good news for winter wheat establishment, wheat pasture and stock ponds; the trade-off is a slow cotton and sorghum harvest on the High Plains, feedlot mud, and a wet start to spring tillage.

WHERE THE MOISTURE STANDS NOW

Corn Belt	Northern Plains	Southern Plains
Moderate drought or worse covers about 30% of the region, mostly Minnesota, Wisconsin and Missouri.	About 58%: all of Wyoming, most of the Dakotas and Nebraska.	About 84%: all of Oklahoma and most of Texas, with a quarter of Oklahoma in exceptional drought. The wet lean matters most here.

U.S. Drought Monitor, Sep 29 map; area-weighted from state figures. Updated with each issue.

OUR RECORD, NEXT TO NOAA'S (173 SEASONS, 2012 TO 2026, SCORED THE SAME WAY)

	Temperature	Precipitation
Skill score (vs. climatology)	Amphibian 19.8 · NOAA CPC 13.3	Amphibian 6.3 · NOAA CPC 2.4
How often we commit to a category	84% vs 50%	68% vs 21%
Accuracy when a category is favored	60% vs 65%	49% vs 49%

Our outlooks carry a higher skill score than NOAA's over 2012 to 2026, scored the same way. Most of the difference comes from committing to a call far more often; when NOAA does favor a category it is about as accurate as we are on precipitation and a few points more on temperature. Every season is scored publicly, and each forecast file is fingerprinted before NOAA's release: amphibianpublishing.com/outlook/verification

HOW TO READ A PROBABILITY OUTLOOK

- Three categories against the 1991–2020 normal: below, near, above.
- A 50% lean still leaves a coin flip for the other two combined.
- Skill is real to about three months out and fades after that.
- Where the signal is weak we say near normal rather than guess.

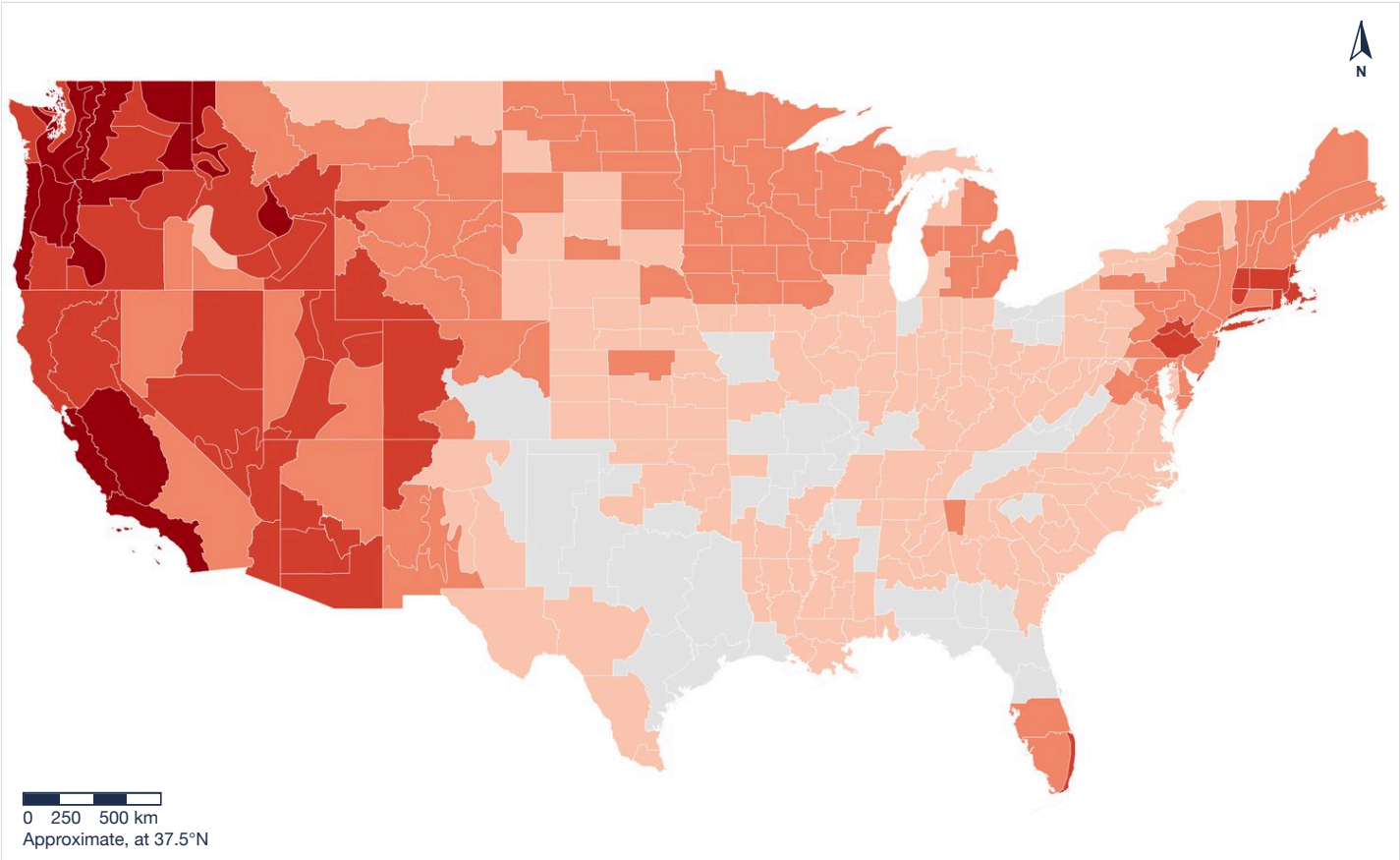
WHAT THIS IS, AND IS NOT

An independent seasonal outlook from Amphibian Publishing, written by a meteorologist with a PhD. Not affiliated with or endorsed by NOAA or the National Weather Service; not a substitute for short-range forecasts or warnings (weather.gov). NOAA CPC maps and probabilities are U.S. government products, shown for comparison.

For publishers. This two-page outlook is available monthly, cut to your states or crop regions, under your banner with an Amphibian Publishing credit, timed to each NOAA release (next: Nov 19 and Dec 17). Division-level data for all 344 divisions is available to subscribers. Contact: outlook@amphibianpublishing.com

Temperature outlook

October, November and December 2026 · Temperature · contiguous United States



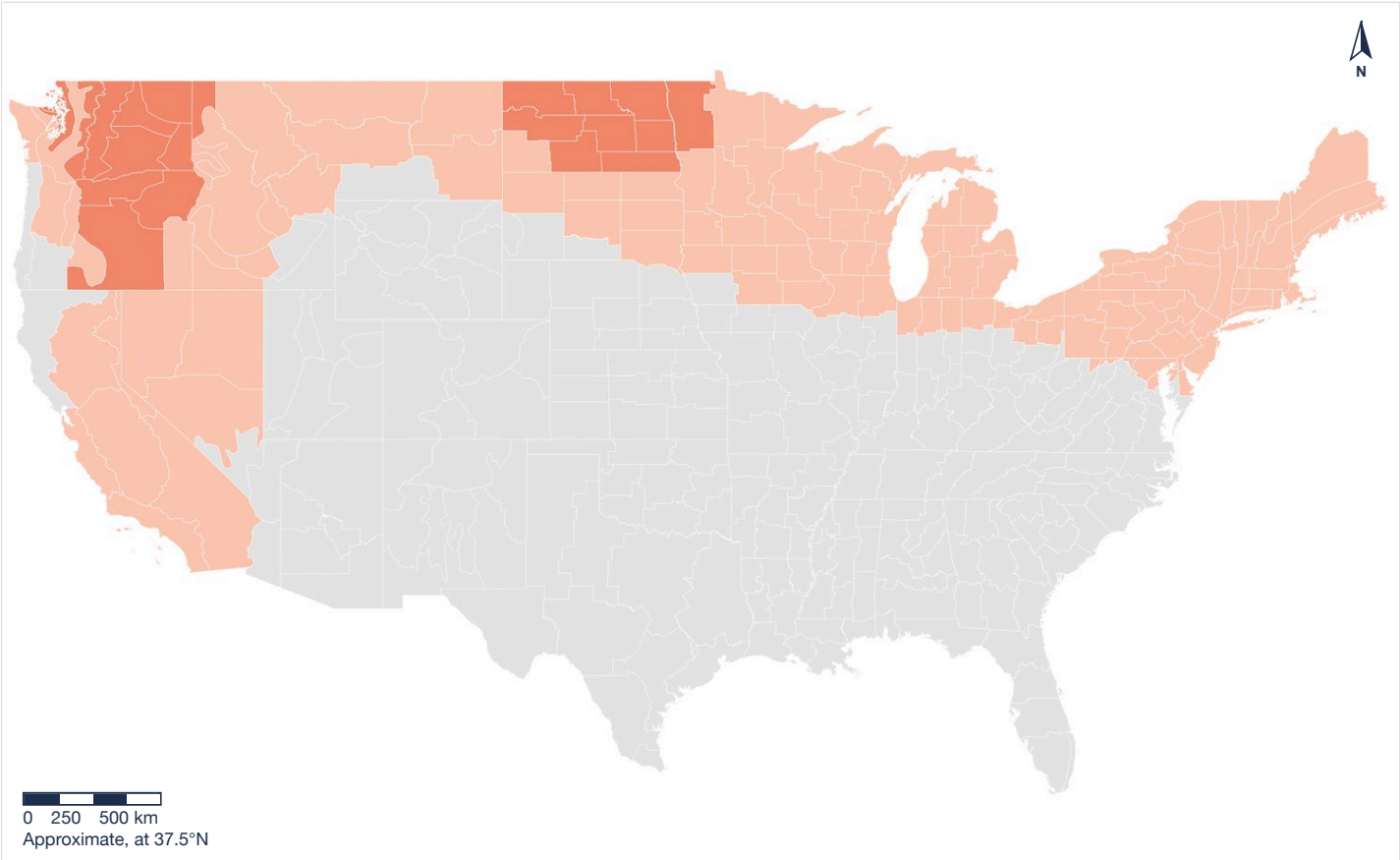
LEGEND: PROBABILITY OF THE FAVORED CATEGORY

- Below normal, 70% or more
- Below normal, 60–69%
- Below normal, 50–59%
- Below normal, 40–49%
- Near normal favored, or no clear lean
- Above normal, 40–49%
- Above normal, 50–59%
- Above normal, 60–69%
- Above normal, 70% or more

Source	Amphibian Seasonal Outlook, September 2026 issue
Date	Issued September 2026
Units	Probability of the favored tercile, 1991–2020 base period, by NOAA nClimDiv climate division (344 divisions)
Coordinates	NAD83 geographic coordinates (longitude, latitude), equirectangular display; 125°W to 66.5°W, 24.5°N to 50°N. Scale approximate; varies with latitude (1° longitude ≈ 89 km at 37°N, 80 km at 45°N).
Credit	Amphibian Publishing, amphibianpublishing.com/outlook. Division boundaries: NOAA NCEI. Independent product, not affiliated with or endorsed by NOAA or the National Weather Service.

Temperature outlook

October, November and December 2026 · Temperature · contiguous United States



LEGEND: PROBABILITY OF THE FAVORED CATEGORY

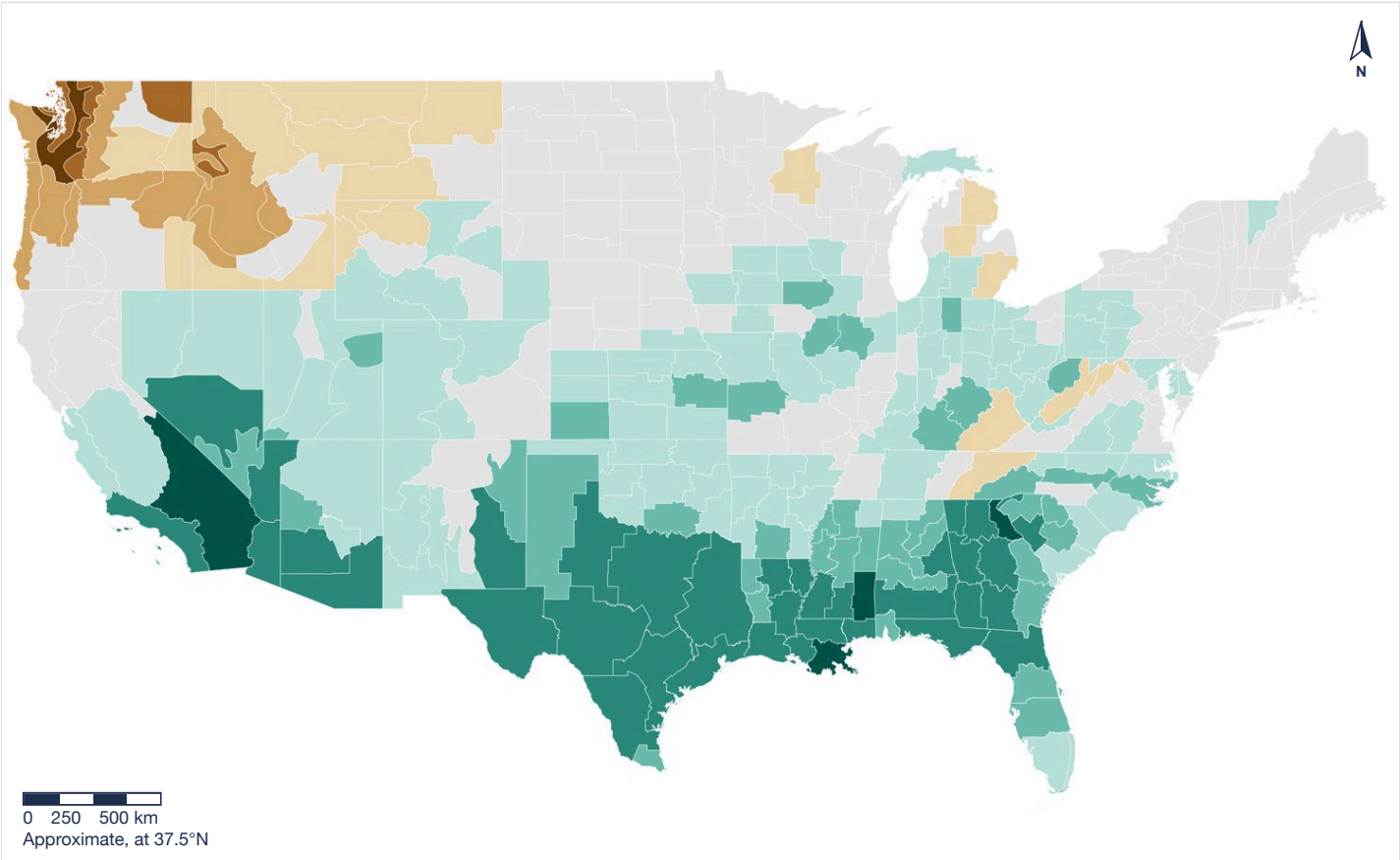
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- Above normal, 40–49%
- Above normal, 50–59%
- Above normal, 60–69%
- Above normal, 70% or more

Source	NOAA Climate Prediction Center, outlook released September 18, 2026, redrawn by climate division
Date	Released September 18, 2026
Units	Probability of the favored tercile, 1991–2020 base period, by NOAA nClimDiv climate division (344 divisions)
Coordinates	NAD83 geographic coordinates (longitude, latitude), equirectangular display; 125°W to 66.5°W, 24.5°N to 50°N. Scale approximate; varies with latitude (1° longitude ≈ 89 km at 37°N, 80 km at 45°N).
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THE AMPHIBIAN SEASONAL OUTLOOK

Precipitation outlook

October, November and December 2026 · Precipitation · contiguous United States



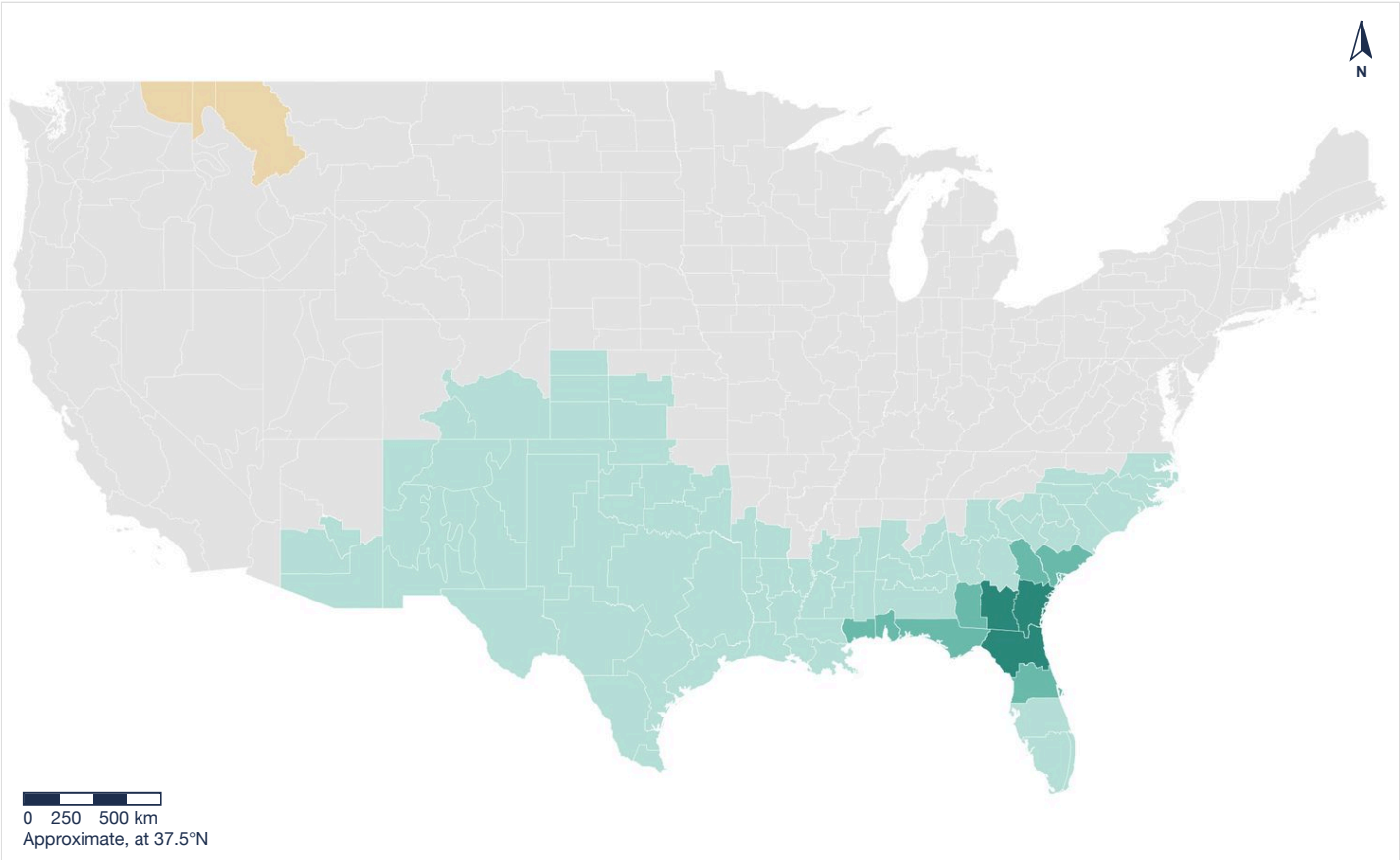
LEGEND: PROBABILITY OF THE FAVORED CATEGORY

- Below normal (drier), 70% or more
- Below normal, 60–69%
- Below normal, 50–59%
- Below normal, 40–49%
- Near normal favored, or no clear lean
- Above normal (wetter), 40–49%
- Above normal, 50–59%
- Above normal, 60–69%
- Above normal, 70% or more

Source	Amphibian Seasonal Outlook, September 2026 issue
Date	Issued September 2026
Units	Probability of the favored tercile, 1991–2020 base period, by NOAA nClimDiv climate division (344 divisions)
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Precipitation outlook

October, November and December 2026 · Precipitation · contiguous United States



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