

THE BULLETIN

The Official Newsletter of the FDEM Mitigation Bureau










Mitigation Mondays are Back!

The Florida Division of Emergency Management’s weekly Mitigation Monday posts are back to remind you of all the ways that mitigation matters! Every Monday, you can find new posts on a variety of mitigation-related topics from interesting facts about hazards to DIY tips and tricks on mitigating your home. Mitigation Monday infographics will

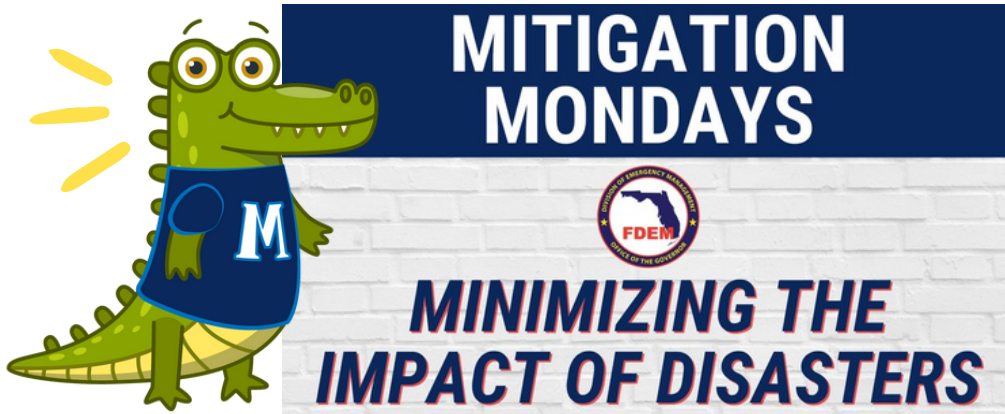
be posted on all FDEM social media accounts, such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Nextdoor, and X (formerly Twitter). Additionally, posts may contain links to external websites to direct audiences toward further helpful resources. See the image to the left for an example of a recent Mitigation Monday post about wildfires.

PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM WILDFIRES

 Regularly remove debris from roof and gutters	 Use multi-pane, tempered glass windows and close them when a wildfire threatens
 Use noncombustible materials like gravel, brick or concrete in landscaping	 Remove shrubs under trees, prune branches near your roof and remove dead vegetation
 Reduce fence risks by using noncombustible fences and gates	 Maintain defensible space. 0-5 FT from your home, use noncombustible materials

FLORIDADISASTER.ORG/HAZARDS/WILDFIRE 

Every Mitigation Monday post is available for download and encouraged to be shared! These weekly posts were created by FDEM’s Communications Department in collaboration with the Mitigation Planning team to promote a better understanding of mitigation measures you can take to make your community more resilient. All Mitigation Monday posts can be found in the “Mitigation Matters” section of the Florida Disaster Mitigation homepage at floridadisaster.org/dem/mitigation/mitigation-matters/.



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Mitigation: A Year In Review

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Unit

- In 2023, over \$55 million has been obligated under HMGP
 - Closed 2 legacy disasters, including the final '04-05 season storm, Hurricane Wilma, and 2012 Tropical Storm Debby
 - 2 application periods were held for HMGP in 2023, including Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole
 - Hurricane Ian received 528 sub-applications and was allocated a historic amount of HMGP funding at \$1.17 billion
 - Hurricane Nicole received 125 sub-applications in total

Non-Disaster Grants Unit

- Received the most projects selected for further review for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022
 - BRIC: 14 projects, totaling \$133,105,305 | FMA: 32 projects, totaling \$34,347,281
- Received a record 171 of Notice of Interest forms for FY 2023 BRIC and FMA opportunities
- 11 FMA projects and 2 PDM projects were closed out



Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program Unit

- Awarded 15 projects for FY 2022, of which 7 have been closed out (46%)
- Received 26 proposals for FY 2023 and awarded 15 projects
 - The Shelter Retrofit program had 16 active projects throughout 2023, of which 3 have been closed out (18%)
- Held 2 sessions of an online webinar prior to the Request for Proposal for FY 2023/2024

Happy Holidays from the Mitigation Bureau



Finance and Non-Disaster Teams



Technical and HMGP Programmatic Staff from the SLRC



Mitigation Planning Team



Mitigation Leadership



Floodplain Management Team



HLMP Team



Programmatic Team SLRC



Technical and HMGP Programmatic Staff in Tallahassee

Mighty Mitigator of the Quarter

Big congratulations are in order for the Mitigation Bureau's Office of Floodplain Management! Over the last five years, the Floodplain team has completed their first cycle of the State Coordinating Office Regional Engagement - Community Assistance Visit (SCORE-CAV) process. Using this process, the OFM team was able to visit 468 NFIP participating communities during 22 meetings - this has never been done in Florida or in FEMA Region 4!

So, what is SCORE-CAV? Community Assistance Visits are a major component of FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, which consist of a tour of the community's floodplain by the state and a consultation to discuss any compliance issues or potential violations. In 2018, OFM developed a unique approach to CAVs in which the team would do field tours and consultations on a regional basis to visit communities more often. The traditional CAV process would take 5-7 years to revisit a community while the SCORE-CAV process would take 3-5 years. The SCORE-CAV process consists of a floodplain field tour of each regional community, a regional plenary interactive session, and an individual meeting with community representatives to discuss their floodplain management programs. During the field tours, OFM staff observe development activities and determine if there are areas that are non-conforming or non-compliant. Following the tours, state staff can discuss challenges with the communities and provide support, best practices, and discuss strategies for resolution of compliance issues.

Congratulations to the OFM team for continuing to improve support for our local communities and completing this first-of-its-kind approach to Community Assistance Visits!

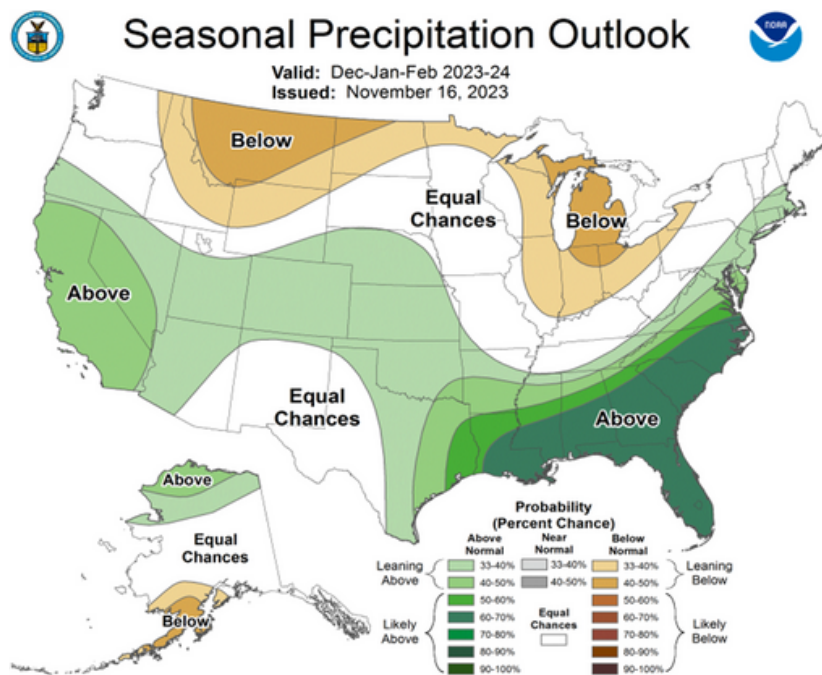


El Niño's Effect on Florida Winters

By: Caitlyn Gillespie

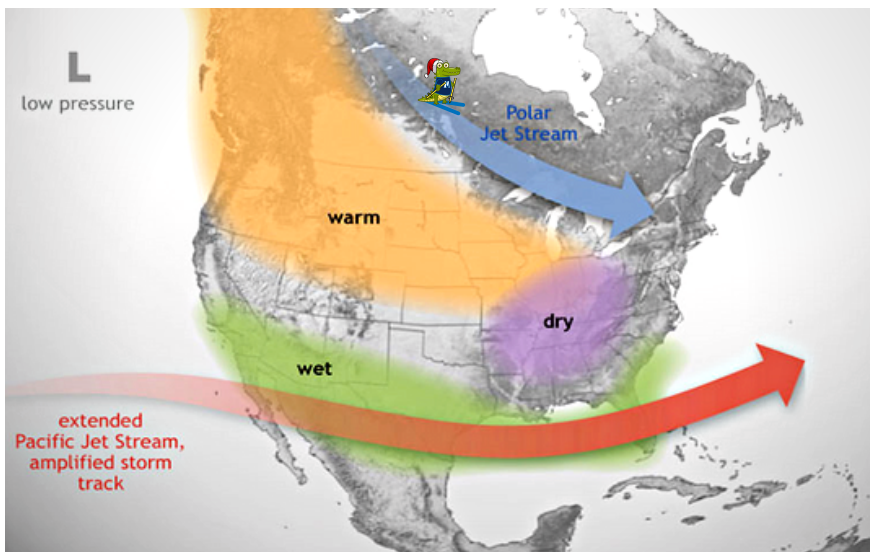
Several global-scale patterns can impact Florida's weather and climate throughout the year. One of the more dominant and commonly acknowledged patterns is called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). Large-scale changes in wind direction trigger either above or below normal sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean. The El Niño (warmer Pacific waters) and La Niña (cooler Pacific waters) phases of ENSO are one of the most important climate features on Earth due to its ability to influence temperature and precipitation across the globe. Current climate forecasts indicate that El Niño will continue and strengthen this winter, bringing above normal rainfall to Florida (see right).

ENSO has the strongest influence on the United States' seasonal climate during the wintertime due to the extension of the Pacific Jet Stream, a narrow channel of fast-moving air, over the southern United States. This extension of the jet stream transports more periods of rainy and stormy weather across Florida during the winter months compared to a typical year. Increased storminess leads to above normal rainfall during Florida's usual dry season that runs from November to April. The increase in rainfall can be beneficial as it may lead to a reduced risk of wildfires and drought across Florida, however, it may also be harmful by yielding an increased risk for flooding. El Niño has also typically been found to bring below normal temperatures across Florida during the winter season.



Climate Prediction Center's current winter precipitation outlook for 2023-2024

El Niño's most dangerous impact on Florida is an increased potential for severe weather. During El Niño events, a greater number of storm systems move across the region during the winter and early spring, bringing a greater than normal risk of thunderstorms that can produce large hail, damaging winds, and tornadoes. As shown by the red arrow in the image below, the extended Pacific Jet Stream can influence winter storm system tracks, resulting in increased rainy and stormy conditions across Florida.



Map of winter El Niño pattern from climate.gov

The deadliest tornado event to affect Florida occurred during an El Niño (1997-1998). During this event, several EF-3 tornadoes with peak winds of 165 mph moved across Central Florida during the night of February 22-23, 1998, tragically killing 42 people. It is important to remember that no two El Niño events are exactly alike, so the best course of action is to have a plan in place for you and your family. To remain safe, you need to know where to shelter in the event of severe weather, you must have multiple methods to receive weather alerts day or night, and you must react immediately by moving to your place of safety when it becomes necessary. For more information on the current weather outlook in Florida, visit our website at www.floridadisaster.org/weather/.

What's the Buzz? A Silver Jackets Update

By: Jantzen Heberle

The Florida Silver Jackets team is proud to announce the completion of their latest project, Beaches to Bioswales: Nature's Toolbox for Resilience, which seeks to inform local governments, community members, engineers, and planners on types of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) used in Florida. In 2021, Engineering With Nature published the International Guidelines on Natural and Nature-Based Features for Flood Risk Management. While these guidelines provide substantial details on NBS, the Florida Silver Jackets team saw an opportunity to adapt the broad guidelines to the Florida landscape. In October 2022, the Florida Silver Jackets team received funding to collaboratively develop Florida-centric educational materials, which were determined best suited for an online platform.

The Florida Silver Jackets team collaborated with many partners including Federal, State, and local agencies, Universities, and Regional Planning Councils to create a StoryMap, an interactive and narrative-driven web application hosted by ArcGIS. The overall goals of the project were to increase awareness and knowledge of NBS, showcase examples of NBS projects in Florida communities, and encourage public and private sectors to incorporate NBS into flood mitigation strategies. Additionally, the team proposed to include methods of implementation, funding opportunities, and community level guidance to promote NBS in planning and flood risk management.

Nature-Based Solutions help protect our coasts and inland communities by utilizing engineered landscapes to mimic processes that aid communities in preparing for, resisting, recovering from, and adapting to increasing impacts from climate change. The Beaches to Bioswales StoryMap features interactive infographics, embedded content, and specific examples of NBS projects in Florida. Want to learn more about NBS and how you can incorporate them into your community? Contact [Warner Buchman](#) or [Brigette Carrillo](#) to attend the upcoming Silver Jackets Quarterly Meeting in March which will showcase the brand new StoryMap. The "Beaches to Bioswales: Nature's Toolbox for Resilience" StoryMap will soon be available to the public.




Stormwater Wetland Park in Gainesville




New Employee Spotlight




If you see these new faces in the halls, help us welcome our new Mitigation staff to the team!




Joseph Adorno
Environmental Specialist



Milton Tigie
EHP Planner



Frank the Flamingo
Resident Flamingo

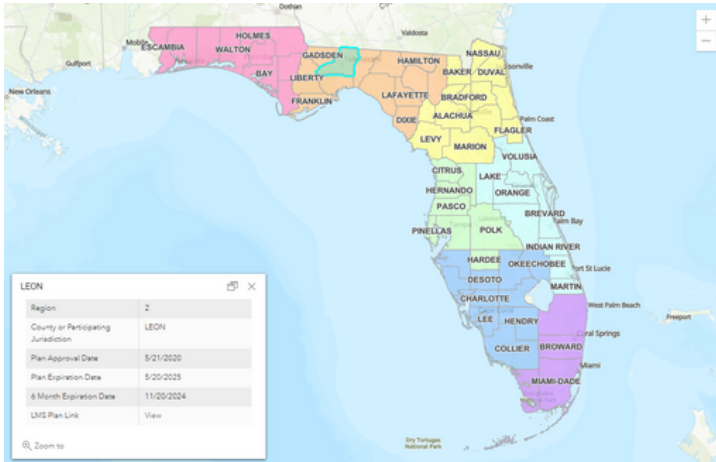


Fannie the Flamingo
Resident Flamingo

Florida SHMP's Guide to Local Planning

The Local Government Resources page of the SHMP site contains a variety of resources to help local governments and local mitigation strategy (LMS) work groups when developing and updating LMS plans. The most prominent feature on this page is the LMS Plan Status Map, an interactive map designed to inform stakeholders of local plans.

The LMS Plan Status Map offers access to county mitigation strategy plans throughout the state. To view the status of each county's plan, simply click on the county you wish to learn more about and a pop-up will appear (see right). Here, you can find more information about a county's LMS Plan and a link to the plan, if available.



Screenshot of the interactive LMS Plan Status Map

All 67 Florida counties are required to have a FEMA-approved Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Plan. Each plan includes a hazard risk assessment, mitigation strategy, and mitigation action plan, along with other required components. As such, the LMS has become the foundation of Florida's pre- and post-disaster mitigation planning activities.

This section of the SHMP site also includes an assortment of links to tools and resources for requirements and policy, risk assessment development, project development, plan integration, post disaster redevelopment planning, and other planning efforts. To learn more about local mitigation plans and view the LMS Plan Status Map, visit our [website](#).



Miss me? See if you can find all five of the holiday Mitty Gators hidden throughout the Bulletin!

Need More Information?

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The Bureau of Mitigation

Mitigation is an integral part of the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Mitigation actions reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Due to Florida's weather, geography, and miles of coastline, the state is highly vulnerable to disasters. Disasters can be very costly to both the citizens and government.

Under the direction of Division Executive Director Kevin Guthrie and State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Laura Dhuwe, the Bureau of Mitigation administers several federal mitigation grant programs including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program. The Bureau also administers a state funded mitigation program called the Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program.

If you would like to know more about mitigation in Florida, visit www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation.

