

Jan 28, 2026

U.S. RIVER CONDITIONS

Weather was moderate during December and throughout most of January temps have been mild with below average precipitation.

Rivers, although low, particularly on the Lower Miss, have been operating unimpeded.

However, last weekend a major blast of extremely cold air rolled in and penetrated as far South as the Gulf Coast. Ice storms and freezing temps occurred, temps in Northern States dipped below zero in many areas. The cold has held a grip and will continue with a second wave of extreme cold to occur this weekend.

The cold and icy conditions have led to operational slowdowns everywhere. Ice has now formed on some of the rivers causing slowdowns and in some areas the ice is so thick that total stoppages have occurred because tow boats and barges are iced in.

Forecasts call for the extreme cold through next week, then temps to moderate and warm.

UPPER MISSISSIPPI (Above St Louis to Minneapolis)

Closed since December for annual winter closure. Expected to reopen on schedule starting in phases in March.

ILLINOIS RIVER

Heavy ice formation with only limited tow movements. Currently need to add 2- 3 weeks to barge transit times depending on location.



UPPER MISSISSIPPI (St Louis to Cairo)

Some floating ice but currently moving slowly. Need to add 10 days to transit time.

OHIO RIVER

Some ice areas near Cairo Junction otherwise boats are moving. Minimal additional transit days.

ARKANSAS RIVER

No ice to report and boat traffic moving.

LOWER MISSISSIPPI (Cairo to Nola)

No ice to report and normal transit times. Low water has been a concern since September but traffic has and is moving with only limited restrictions from time to time.

MEMPHIS gauge reading with projections throughout Feb. Low with slight improvement and operational.

DATE	1/29	1/30	1/31	2/1	2/2	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/6	2/7	2/8	2/9	2/10	2/11	2/12	2/13	2/14	2
MEMT1	-5	-3.2	-0.8	0.5	0.8	0.4	-0.4	-1.2	-2.2	-3.2	-4.1	-4.7	-4.9	-4.9	-4.6	-4	-3.3	-

NEW ORLEANS and BATON ROUGH HARBORS

Barge and vessel traffic moving under normal conditions. Water is low which may cause issues along some docks.

Bar Pilots: Recommended maximum loading draft: 50 Feet.

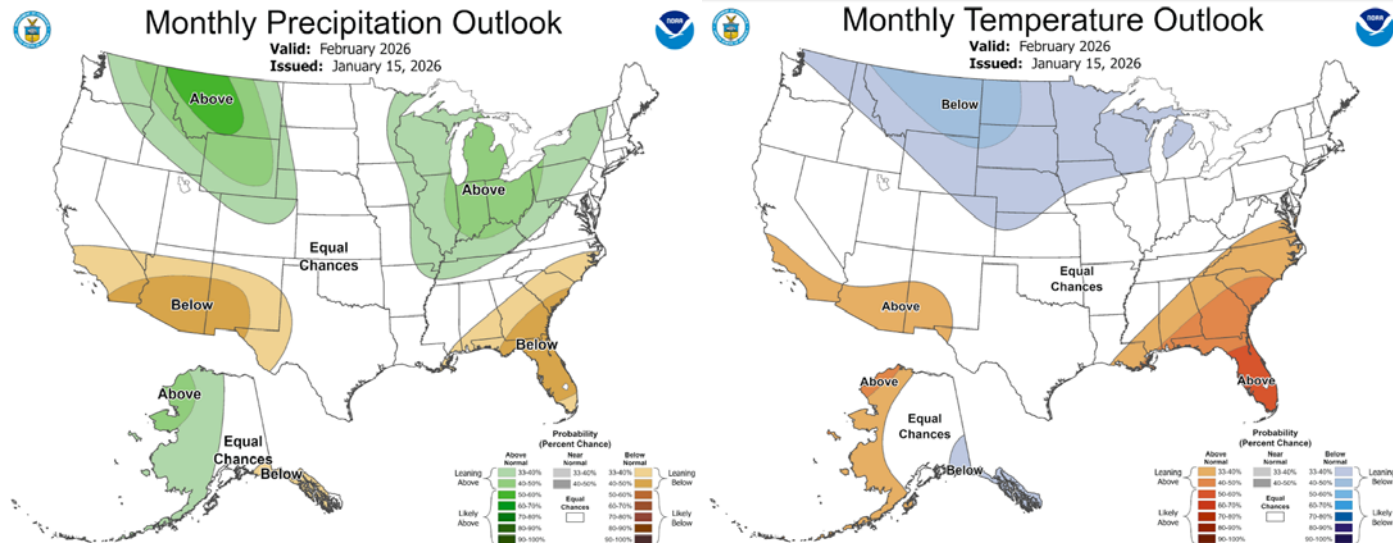
Crescent Pilots: Recommended maximum loading draft: 50 Feet.

NOBRA Pilots: Recommended loading draft is as follows: 50 feet from New Orleans to Mile 175 ; 47 Feet from Mile 175 - Mile 180; 45 feet from Mile 180 to Mile 234. Vessels with a draft of 41 feet or greater are required to transit the Baton Rouge Harbor (Mile 180 - Mile 234) during daylight hours only.

SUMMARY

We will have to work around pending extreme cold and tow stoppages in the North. Once the ice has abated, the system will be out of balance with boats out of position. It will take some time to reestablish normal traffic flow. Longer term, sustained rain is needed to recharge the entire river system.

February Precipitation and Temp Forecast.



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