

Short-Range Outlook for North Carolina

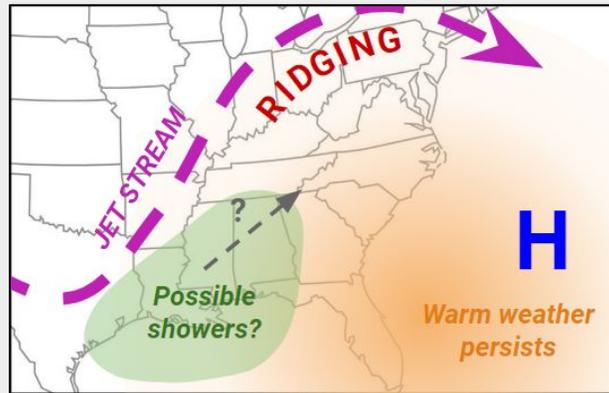
Week 1:

March 4 to 10, 2021



Week 2:

March 11 to 17, 2021



Weeks 3-4:

March 18 to 31, 2021



A Rain-Free Week



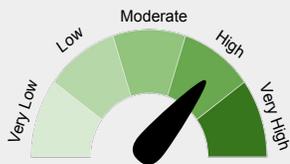
High pressure moving in from the northwest will keep storm systems and precipitation away from NC. Clouds will build on Saturday associated with an offshore low pressure system, but mostly sunny conditions are expected for the rest of the week.

Coolest This Weekend



As cooler air arrives from the north, daytime highs will fall from the upper 60s on Thursday to the low 50s from Friday through Sunday. Once high pressure shifts off to our south and east, high temperatures should rebound into the 60s early next week.

Forecast Confidence



Amid a clear, dry week, one small uncertainty is how much of the state falls below freezing overnight through Monday morning.

Warming Up by Mid-Month



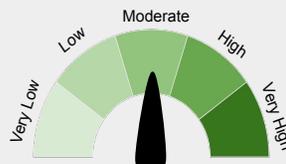
Jet stream ridging, or upper-level high pressure, will build over the eastern US, bringing in a warmer air mass from the south. Expect greenup to accelerate beginning in the south and east, where highs may hit the 70s, or 5 to 10 degrees above normal for March.

Drier Weather Expected



Under that ridging and with surface high pressure just offshore, we should see a drier pattern continue. However, with prevailing southwesterly winds, any moisture moving out of the Gulf of Mexico could fuel rain showers especially in the Mountains.

Forecast Confidence



Some forecasts show stronger or weaker ridging, and that will ultimately determine how warm we are during the week.

Warmer Weather Continues



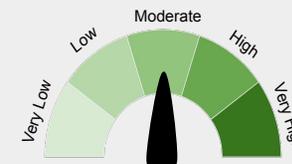
Ridging is expected to expand across the eastern half of the US, which favors ongoing above-normal temperatures in NC. As evaporation rates increase, fine fuels may dry out more quickly, especially in areas that consistently miss out on rainfall.

A Dry End to March?



The large-scale pattern should continue to favor drier conditions, especially if the storm track shifts to the west. Southerly flow from the Gulf could generate our best rain chances as we move into a more spring-like pattern of pop-up showers and storms.

Forecast Confidence



Models generally agree about the overall pattern, with small differences in the strength of the ridging over the Southeast US.