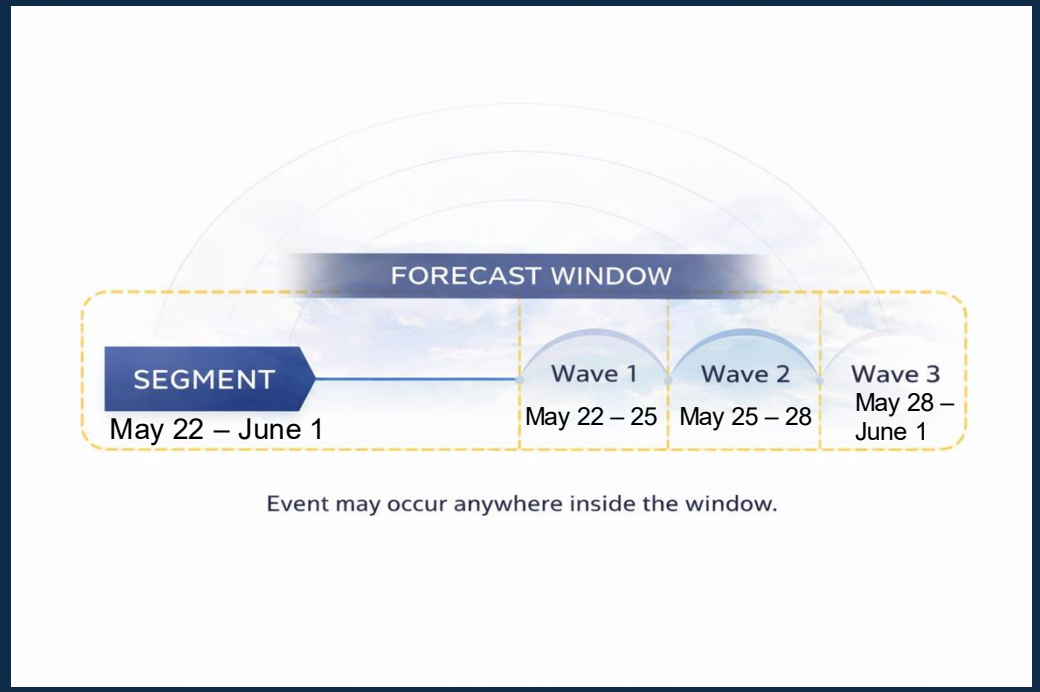
2026 Severe Weather Guide

Updated March 26, 2026

Understanding Forecast Windows

Forecasts For When Each Segment Will Produce Tornadoes, Flooding, & Damage



What Is A Segment?
A recurring segment of the cycling pattern (usually around 7 to 14 days long) that cycles at every ~11 weeks in this year's LRC.

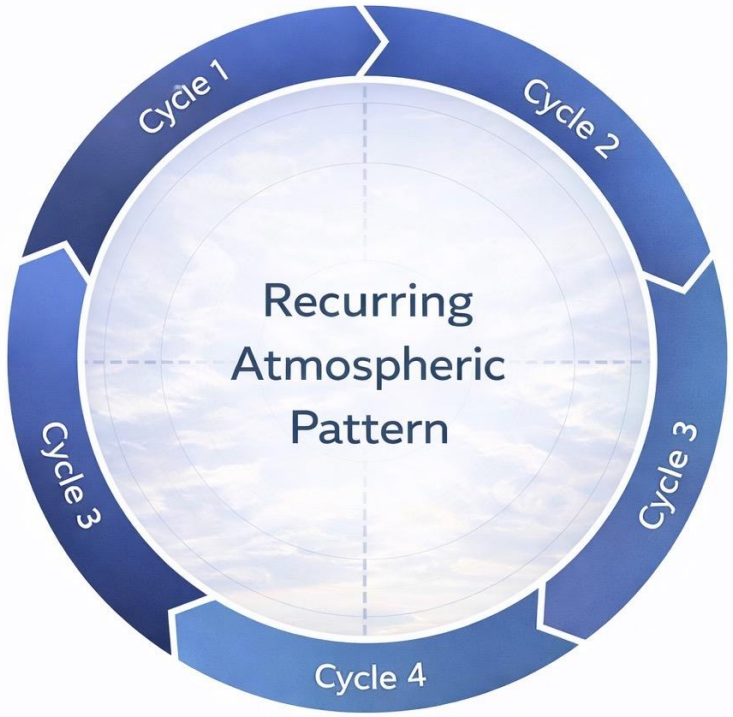
What is a Forecast Window?
A narrower time-period inside the segment when the atmosphere is most likely to create severe weather conditions.

Why Windows Are Not Single Dates
Each segment contains around 2-4 upper-level waves of energy. Severe weather may occur during any wave inside the window.

This guide identifies when the atmosphere is primed – not the exact hour thunderstorms will form!

The 2025-2026 Recurring Pattern

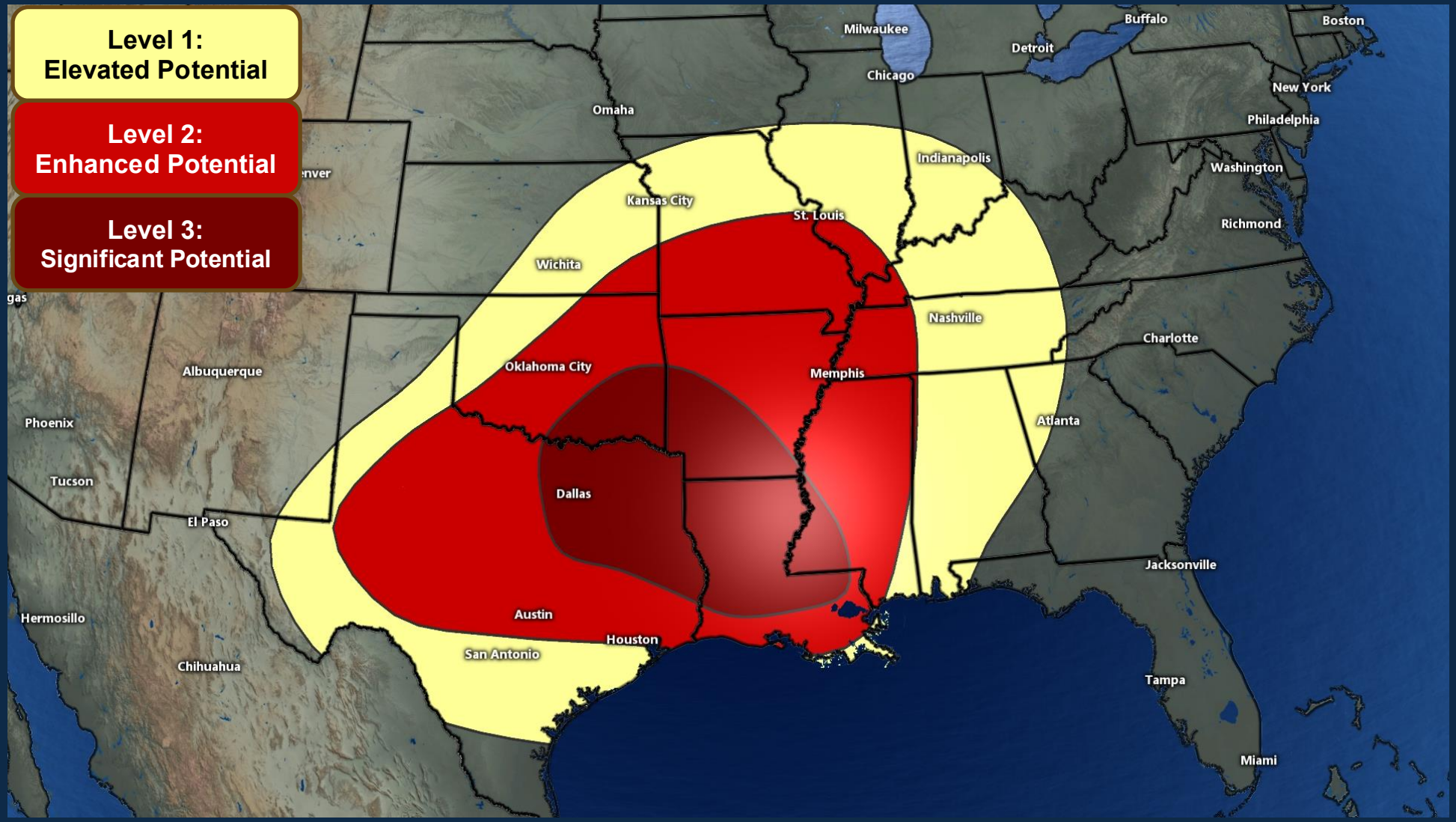
A Long-Cycle Year



- The 2025-2026 atmospheric pattern is operating on a longer recurring rhythm
- Severe weather segments have already repeated and produced in the first 3-cycles of this year's pattern
- Each segment is projected forward into spring and summer
- Windows will be refined as each return approaches

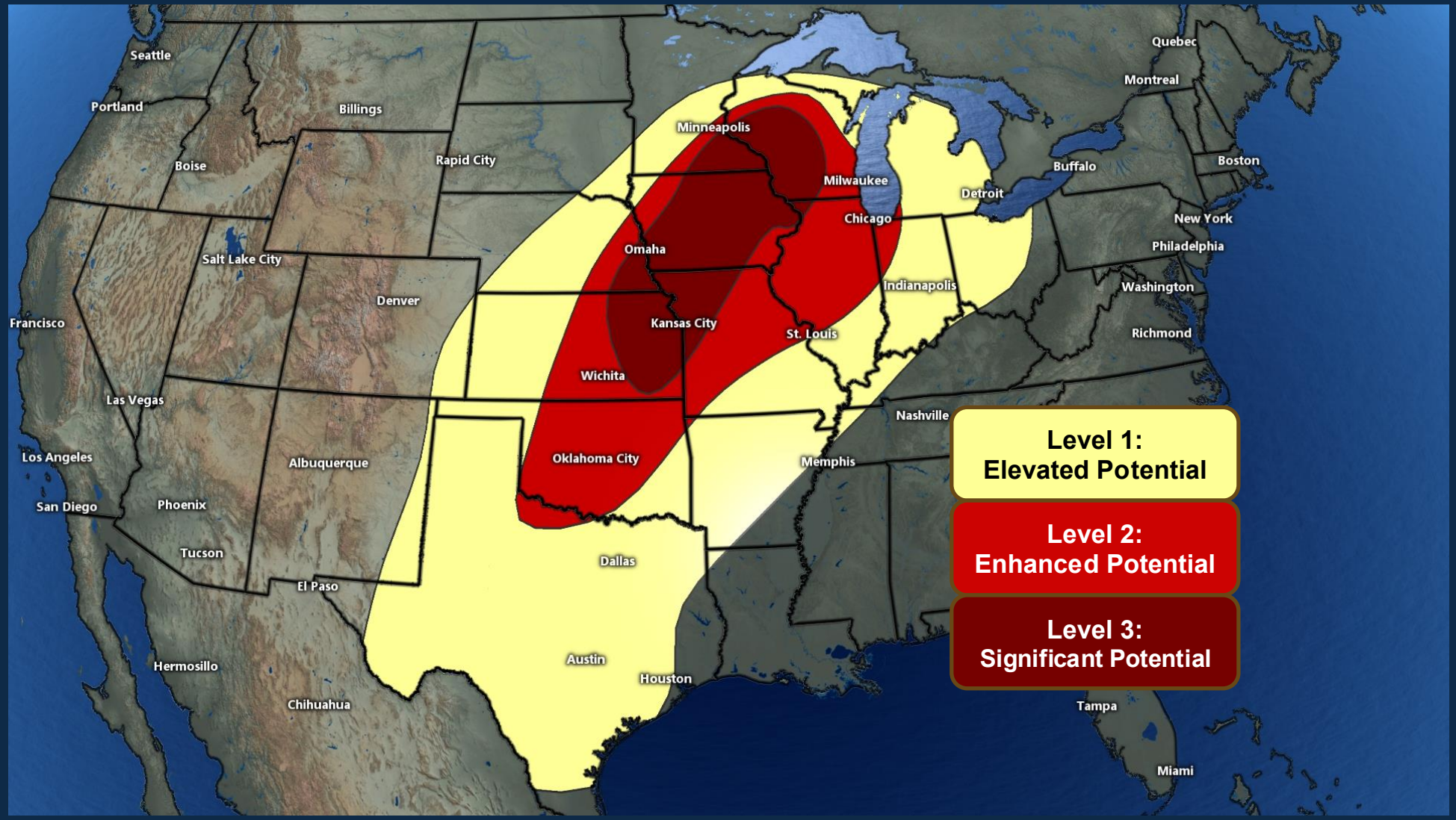
The 2026 Severe Weather Setups & Risk Windows

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
March 31 – April 4



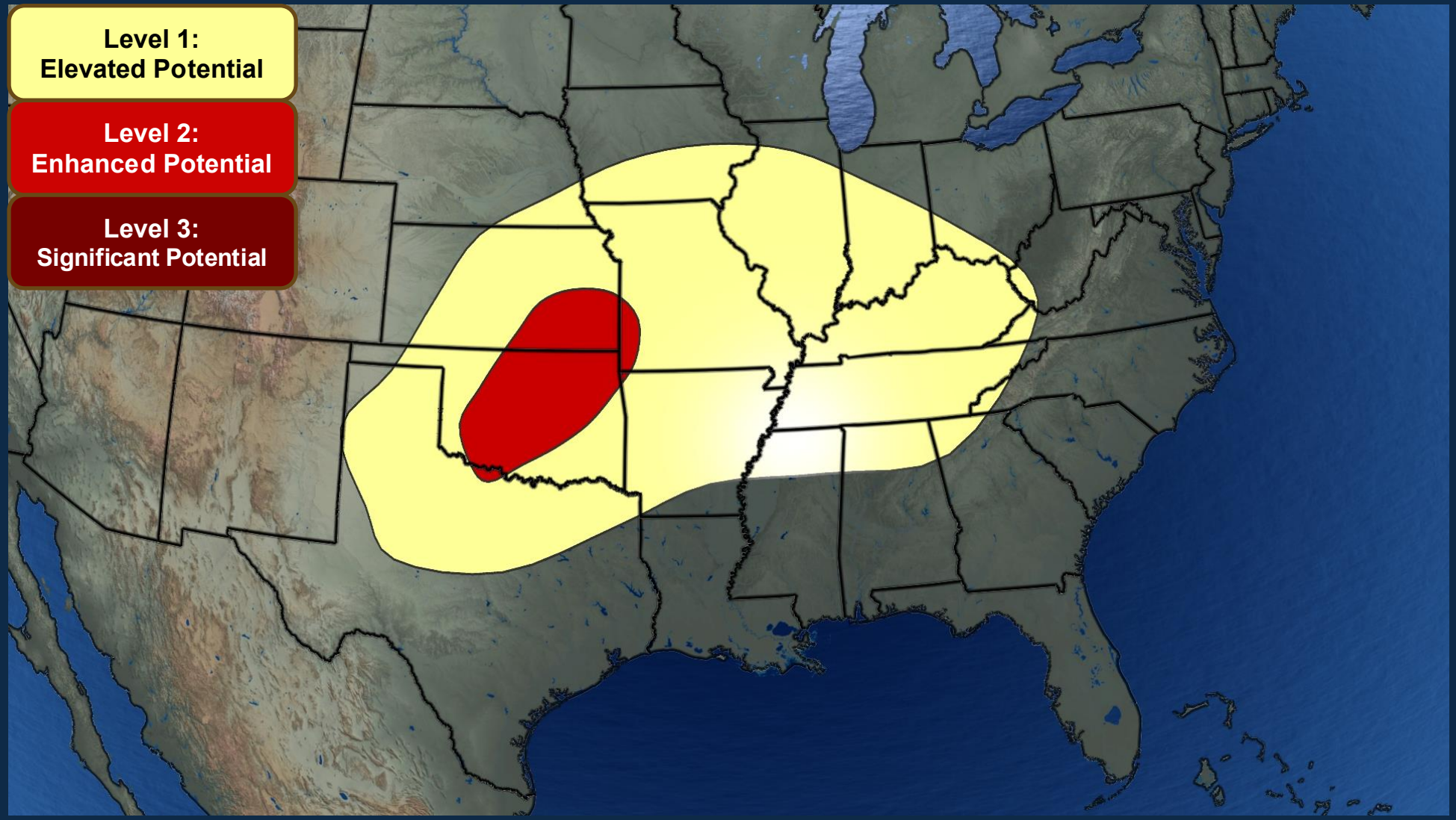
- This risk window has shifted by a few days due to a slightly longer cycle length in late March
- Two to three waves of severe weather between March 31 – April 4
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
April 11 - 16



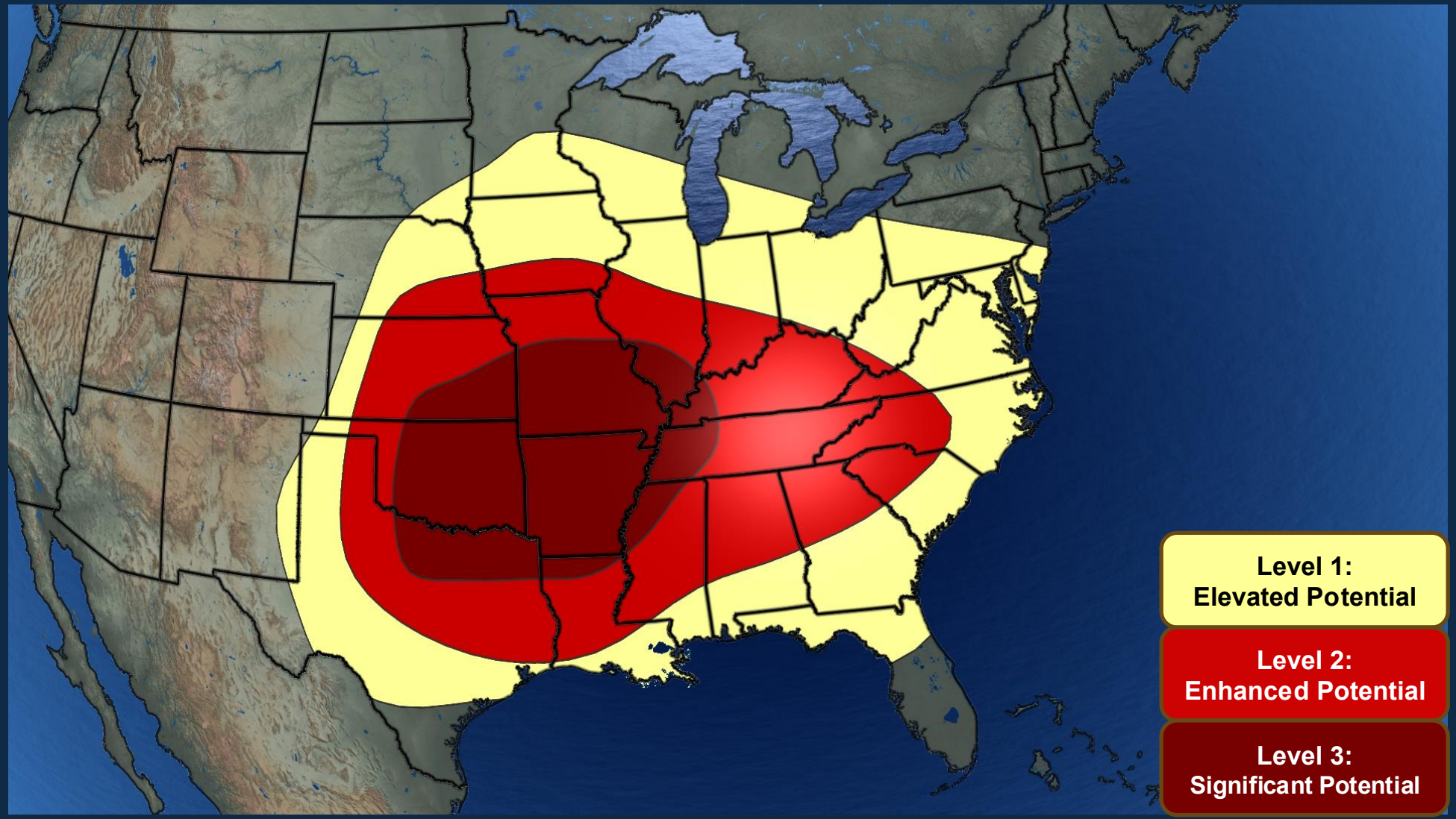
- This risk produced severe weather in mid-November & the blizzard during the New England/Denver playoff game January 25
- Two to three waves of severe weather between April 11-16
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
April 17 - 23



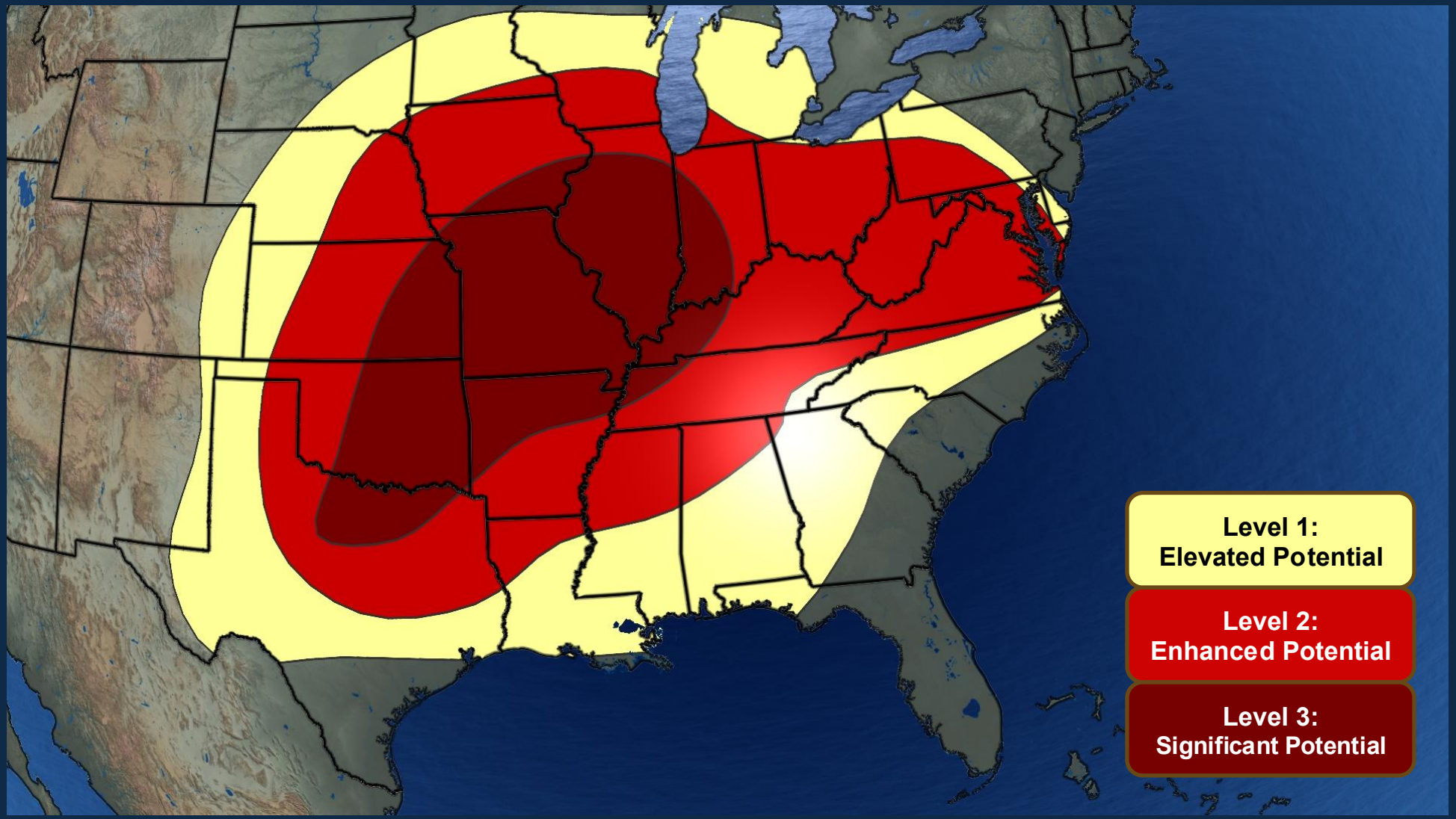
- This has been a minimally producing severe weather segment of the LRC
- We will monitor closely to see if the spring version lights up or not
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
April 28 – May 7



- This risk is based on a part of the cycling pattern that produced tornadoes in the first two cycles of the 2025-2026 season
- This is like a Storm Prediction Center Outlook, but instead of just 1 to 3 days before, we are providing weeks to months of preparation time.
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

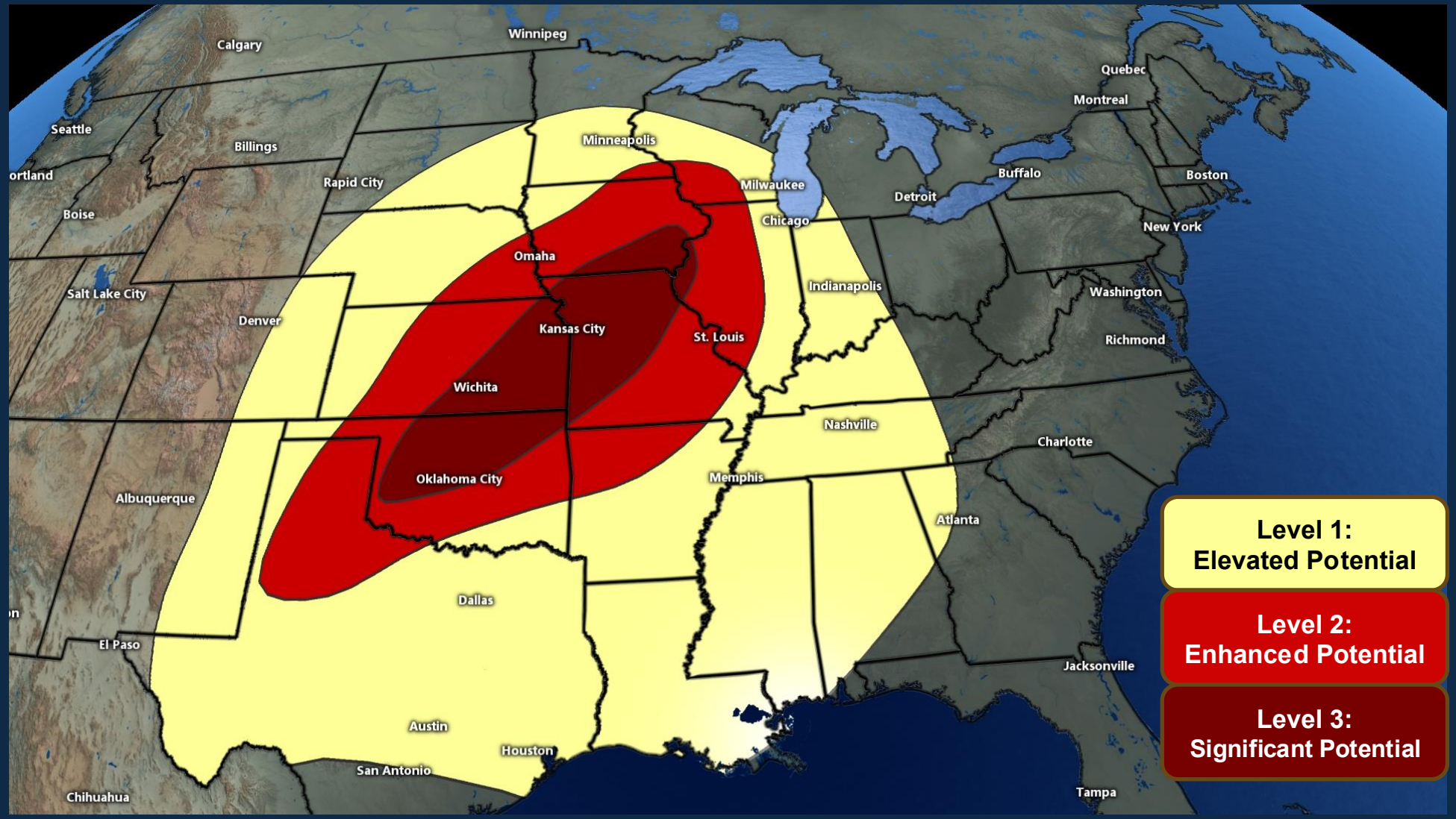
Severe/Flooding Risk Window
May 22 – June 3



- This segment previously produced tornadoes in Illinois and Indiana December 28, 2025
- Two to three severe waves between May 22-June 3
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

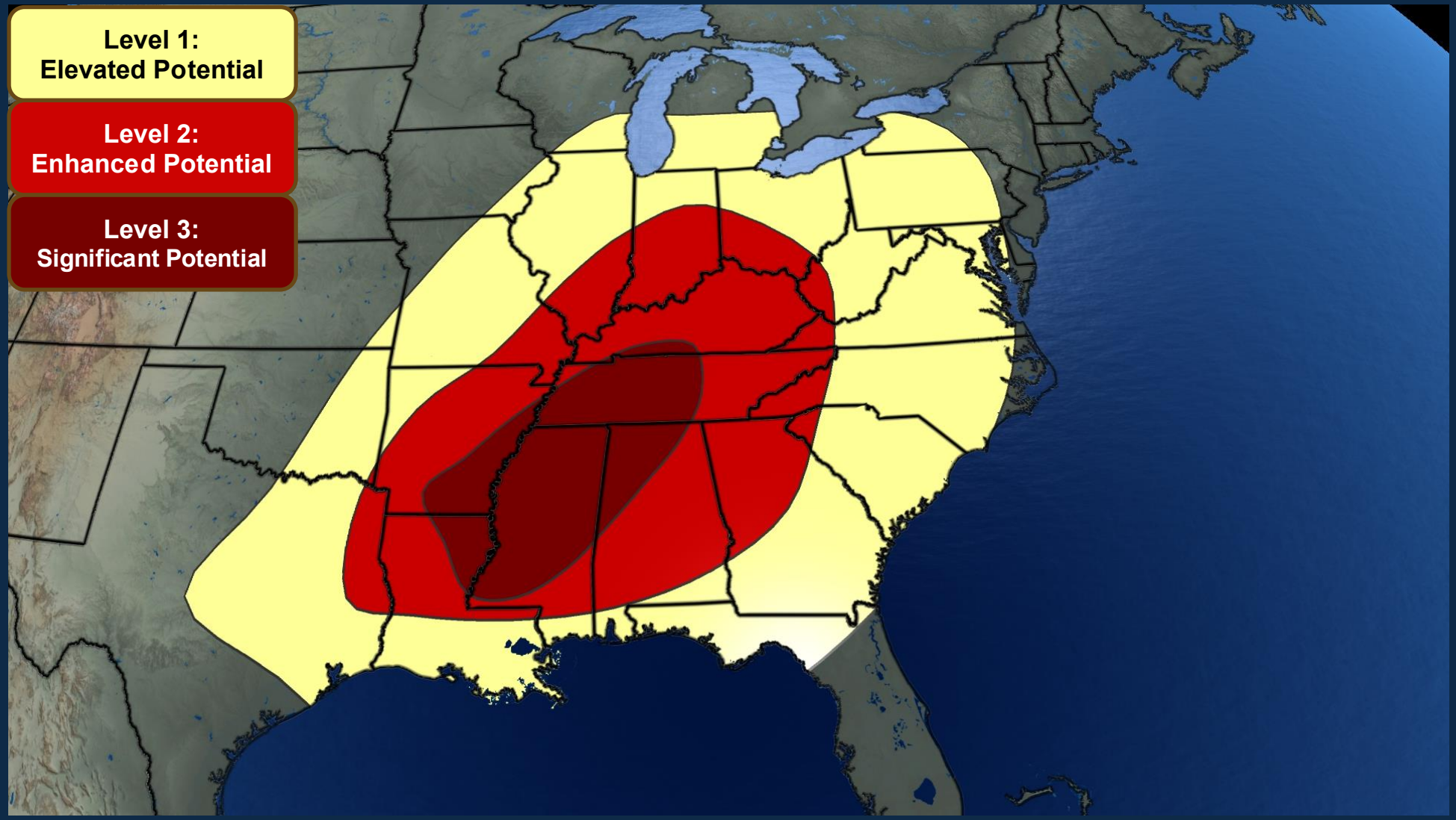
➢ Timing will be refined as the atmospheric setup approaches

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
June 5 - 18



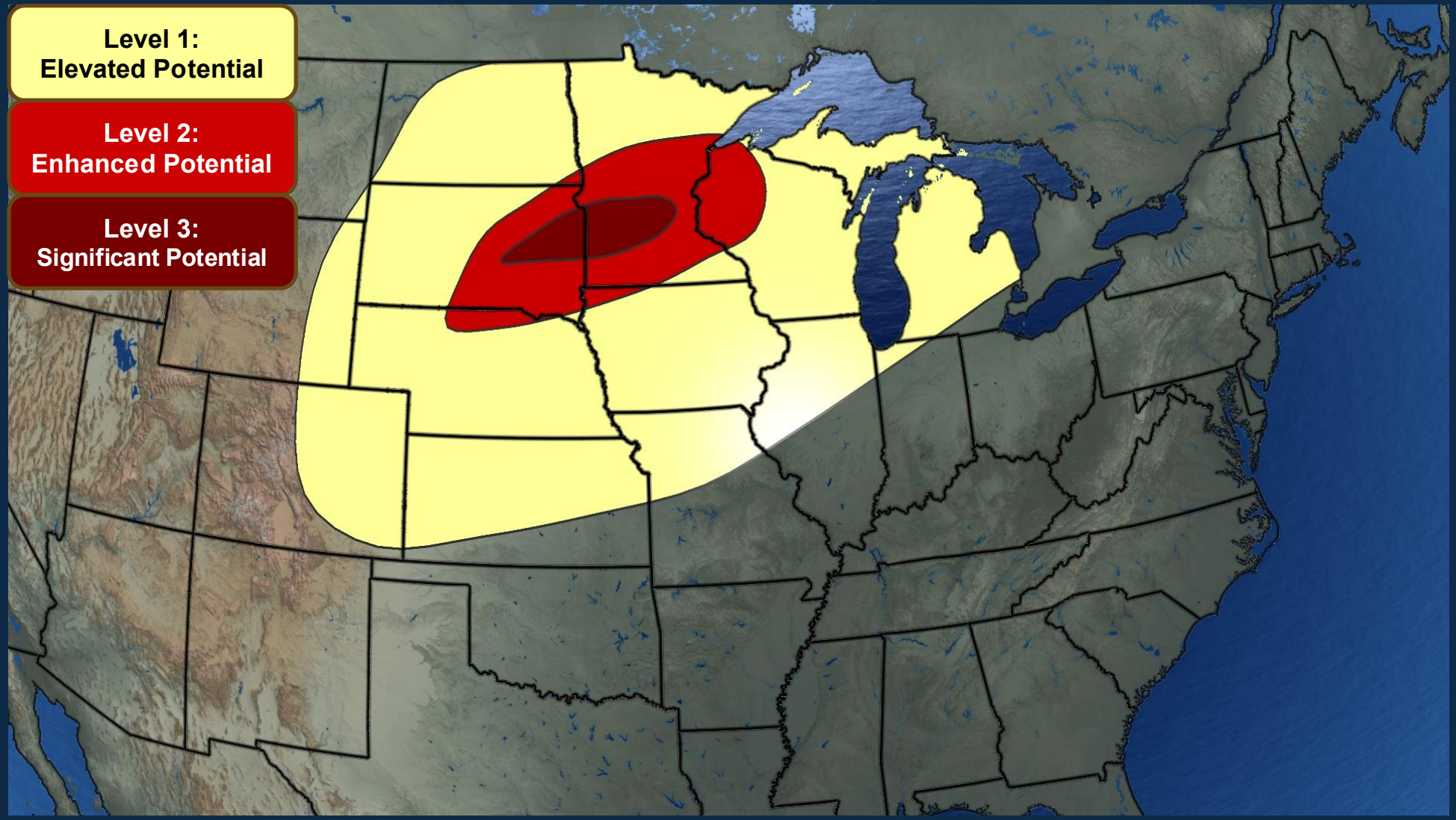
- This is one of the risks we presented at the National Storm Chaser Conference in Denver
- Two to three waves of severe weather between June 5-18
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
June 5 - 18



- This is one of the risks we presented at the National Storm Chaser Conference in Denver
- Two to three waves of severe weather between June 5-18
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Severe/Flooding Risk Window
June 22 – July 1



- This risk did produce over the southeastern states in previous cycles.
- The summer version shifts the risk farther north and west shown here.
- Tornadoes, large hail, damaging winds, and flooding possible
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What do the colors represent on the Weather 20/20 Forecasts**

  - ✓ The color levels indicate the relative likelihood of organized severe weather within the forecast window
    - ✓ Level 1 (Yellow) – Elevated potential (25-40% confidence)
    - ✓ Level 2 (Red) – Enhanced potential (40-60% confidence)
    - ✓ Level 3 (Dark Red) – Significant potential (60-70% confidence)

  Thes levels are conceptually similar to SPC outlook categories and are likely to be accurate weeks to months in advance, as accurate as a day 3 SPC outlook

- **Why are forecast windows shown as date ranges?**

  - ✓ The LRC operates within a recurring atmospheric rhythm.
  - ✓ Each segment contains multiple waves of energy and severe weather may occur during any of those waves.
  - ✓ Windows represent when the atmosphere is most supportive for severe weather and the exact timing is refined as each setup approaches.

- **What if severe weather occurs outside the window?**

  - ✓ The atmospheric pattern “breathes”, meaning return timing can shift slightly
  - ✓ Minor adjustments of a few days are normal within a recurring system and do not change the segment alignment

- **How accurate are these forecasts?**

  - ✓ Over the past four seasons, severe weather segments have verified the projected windows, intensity, and location exceeding 90%

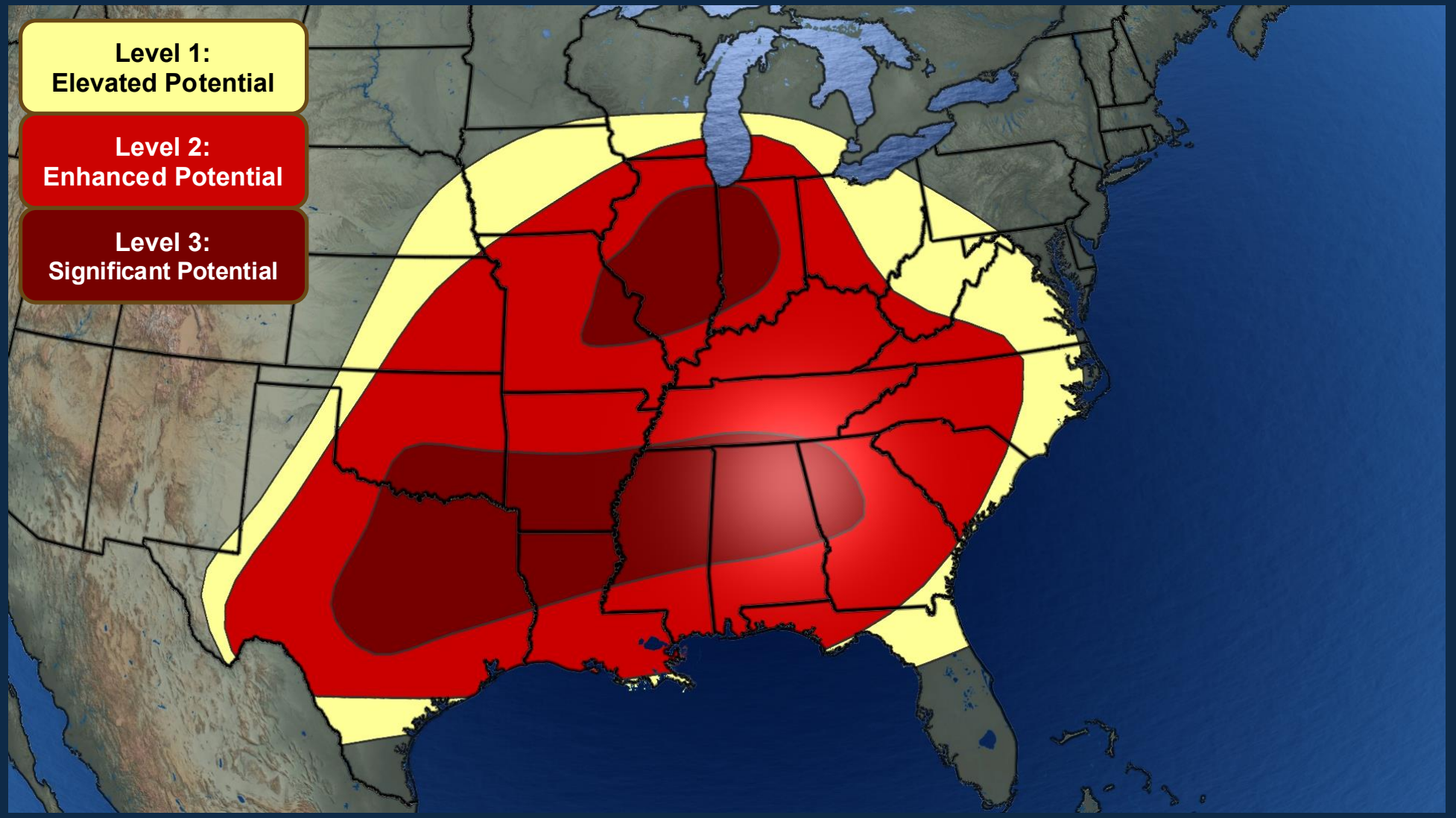
- **Will forecasts be updated?**

  - ✓ Yes
  - ✓ Forecast windows are refined as each LRC cycle completes, so every few weeks.

2026 Accuracy Analysis Of The Most Recent Severe Events

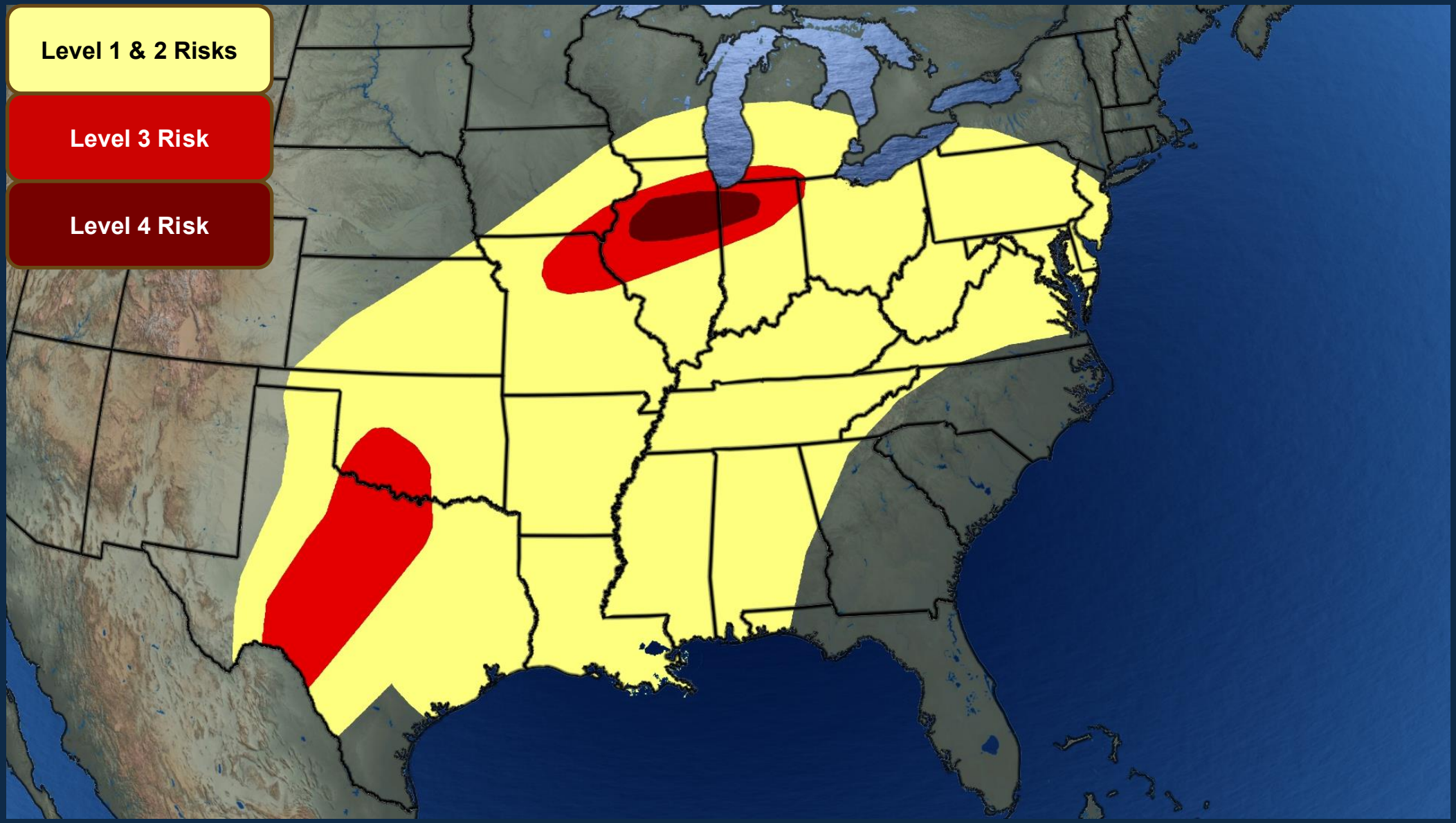
March 8-17 Verification

This Was Our Severe/Flooding Risk Window For The Date Range Of March 8-17 (From 75 Days Before)



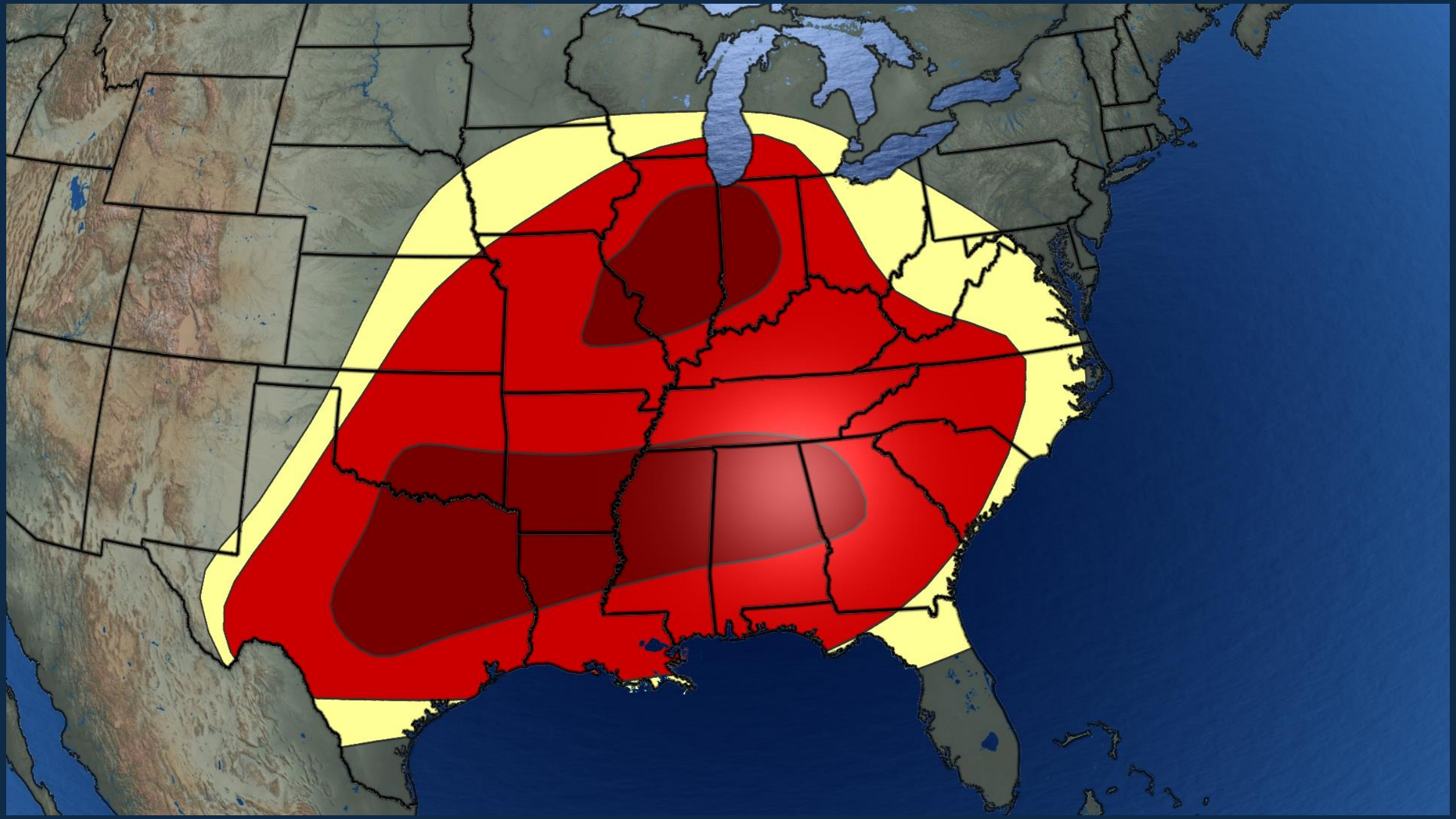
- There were active severe weather events on in October & December that helped us make this predictions weeks in advance
- This is the prediction that was published and in our severe weather guide for this season for the March 8-17 Forecast Period
- Level 3: 60-70% likelihood of organized severe
- Level 2: 40-60%
- Level 1: 25-40%

Storm Prediction Center (SPC) Outlooks For March 10-11

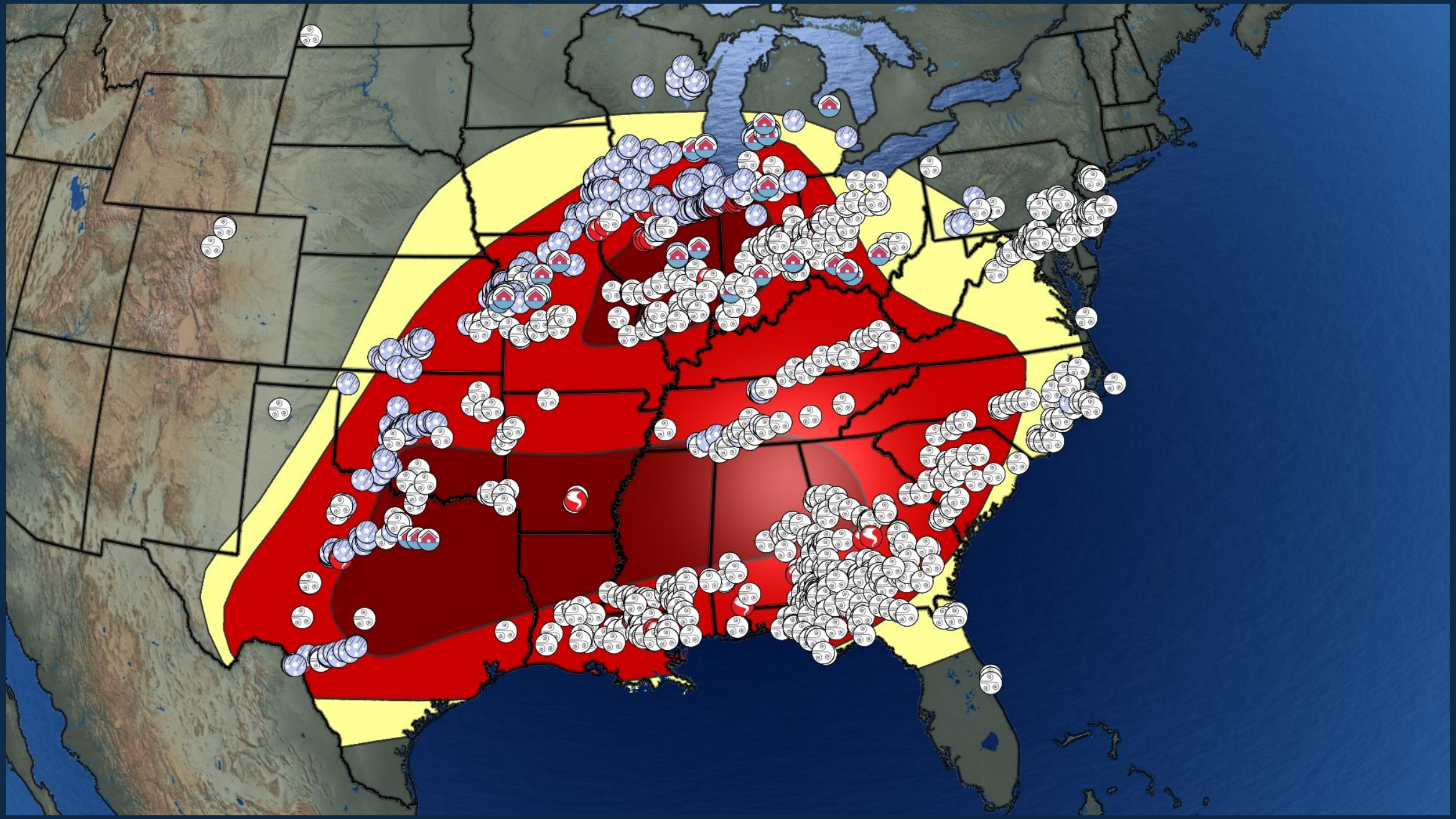


- The severe weather risks from the SPC issued March 10th
- This is for the March 10 – 11 two-day severe weather risk
- This segment of the LRC had two major waves that produced severe weather, and this was the first one.

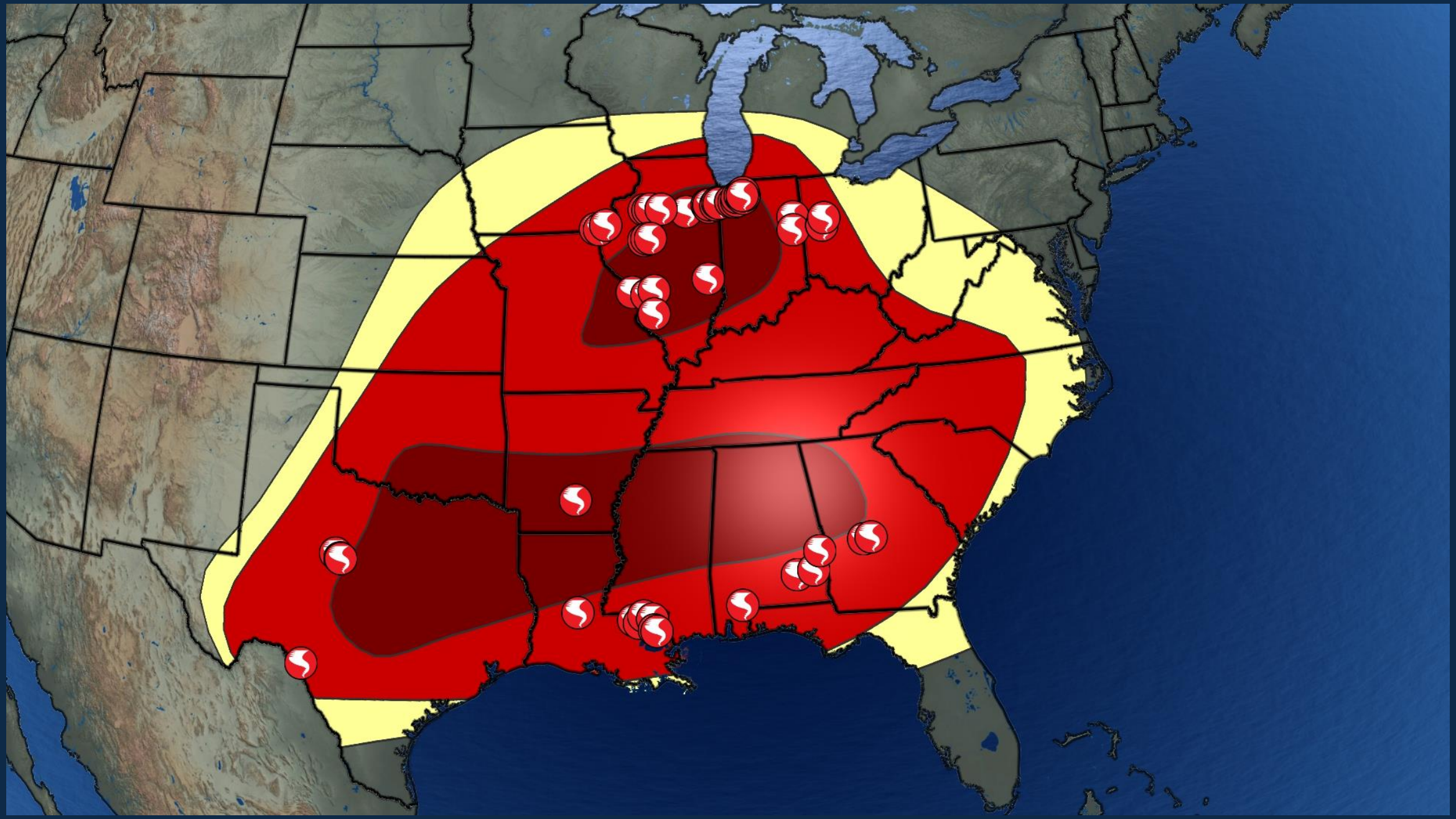
75-Day Severe/Flooding Risk Window For March 8-17



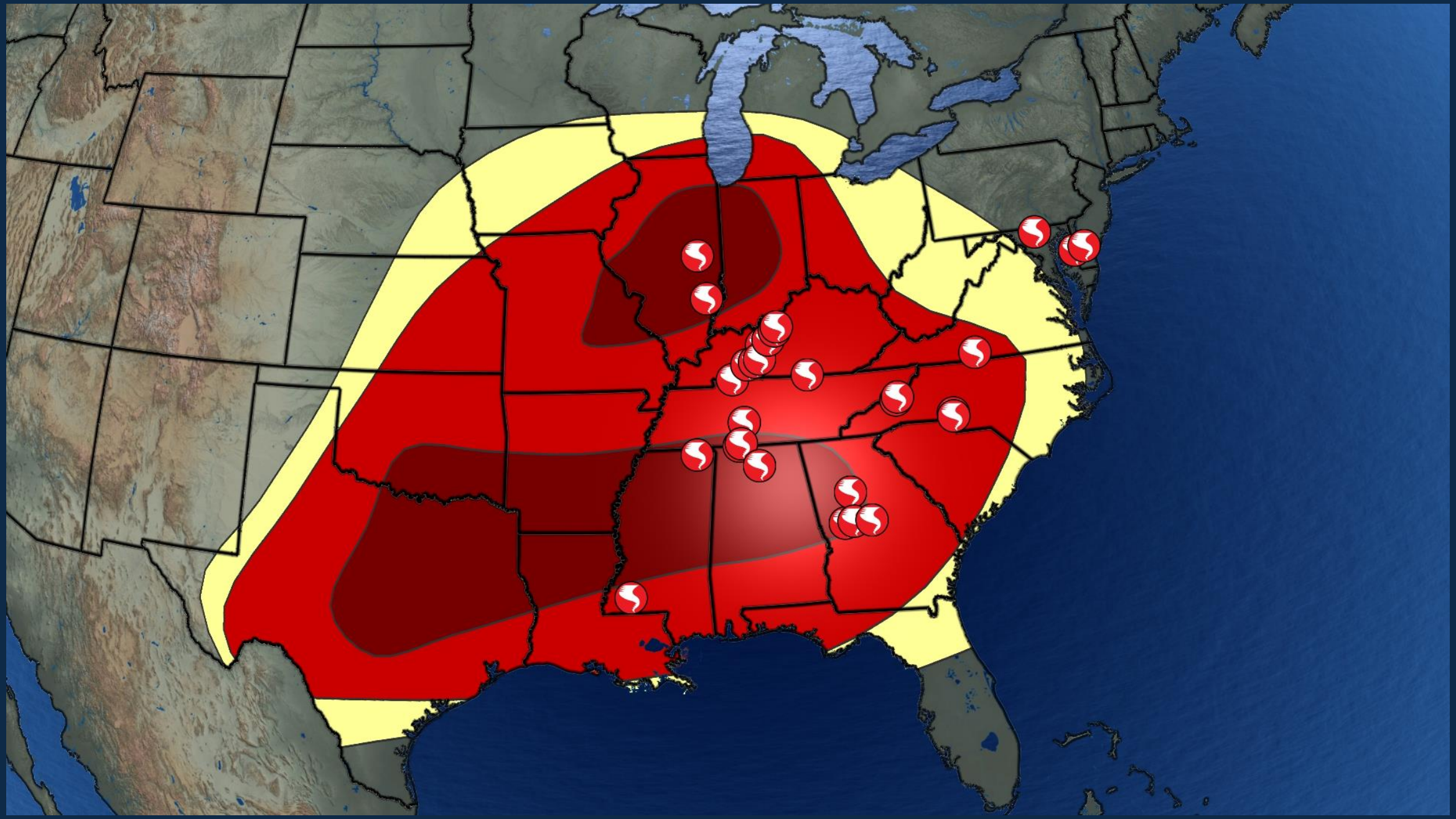
March 9th – 12th Severe Reports (Hail, Wind, Flooding, & Tornadoes)



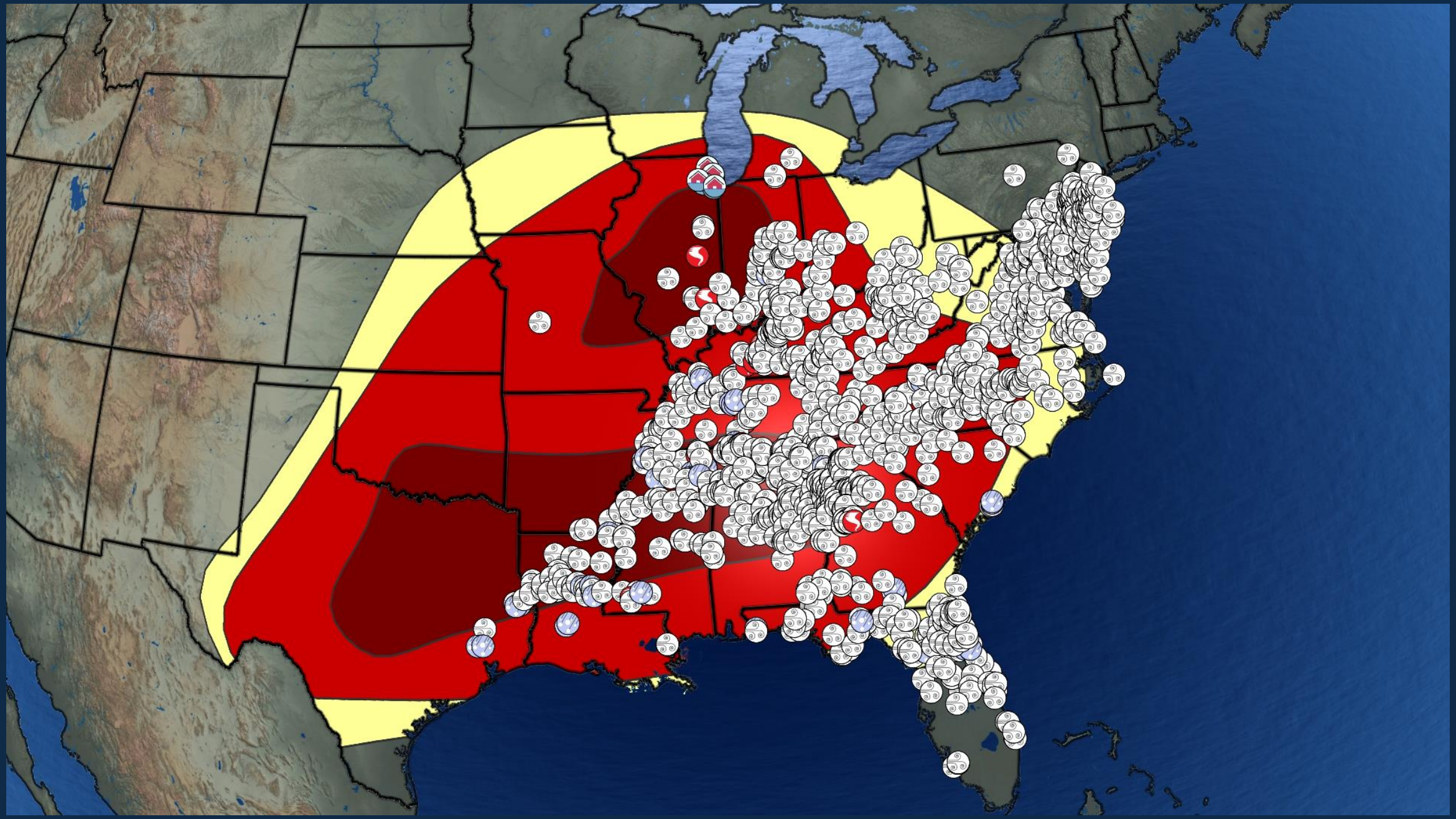
March 9th – 12th Tornado Reports



LRC Wave 2 in this Segment: March 15th – 16th Tornado Reports



LRC Wave 2 in this Segment: March 15th – 16th All Severe Reports



A Look Back At The Accuracy Of Last Year's Severe Weather Season

2025 Severe Weather Season – Update & Verified Accurate Predictions

Overview:

- By February 8th, 2025, Weather 20/20 had identified **five primary severe weather segments** in the 2024–2025 Lezak Recurring Cycle (LRC). These segments have repeated every **38–44 days (~41-day central cycle)**, producing severe weather in predictable time windows.
- We have updated this with three more risks identified.

Results of the 2024-2025 Severe Weather Year:

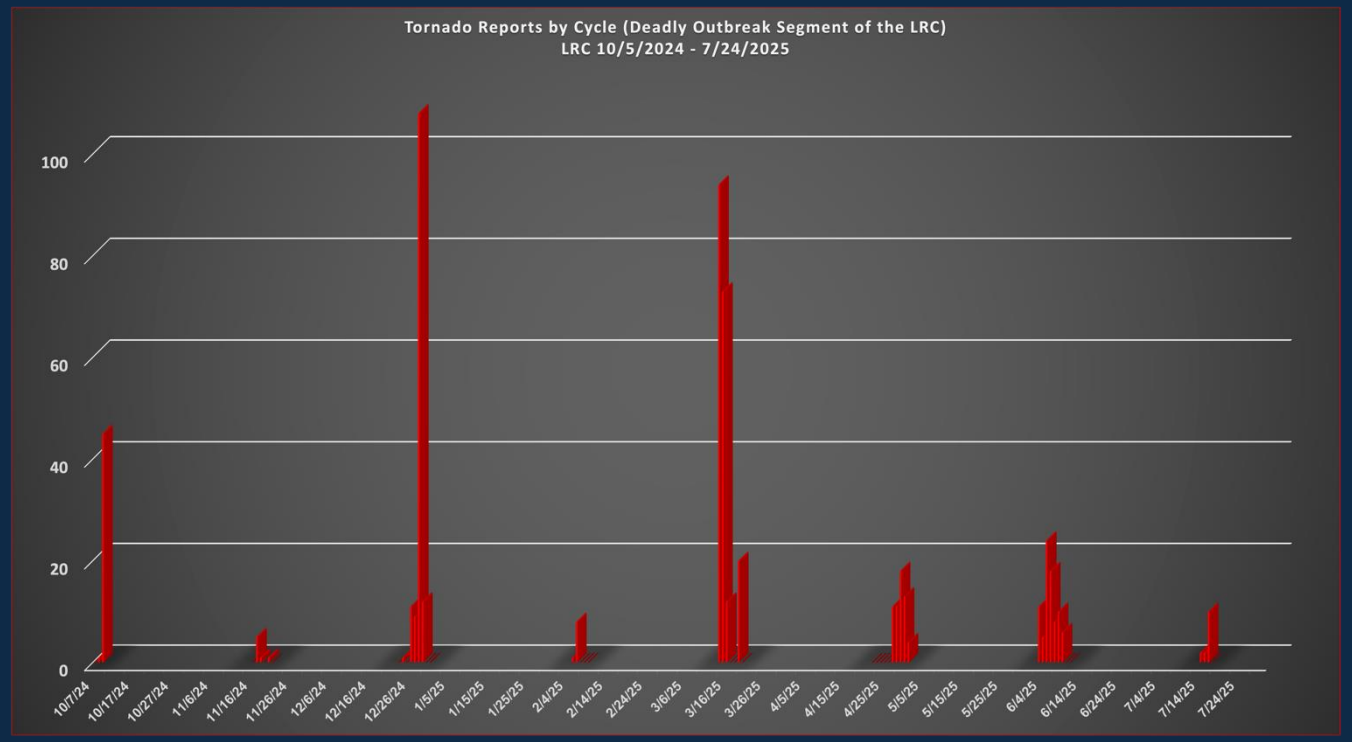
- **Over 90% of tornadoes in 2025** occurred in our predicted windows.
- **Less than 10%** occurred outside predicted dates.
- Each segment has verified in multiple cycles, often with deadly or high-impact events.

Segment A – Major Severe Weather Outbreak Segment Of The Cycling Pattern

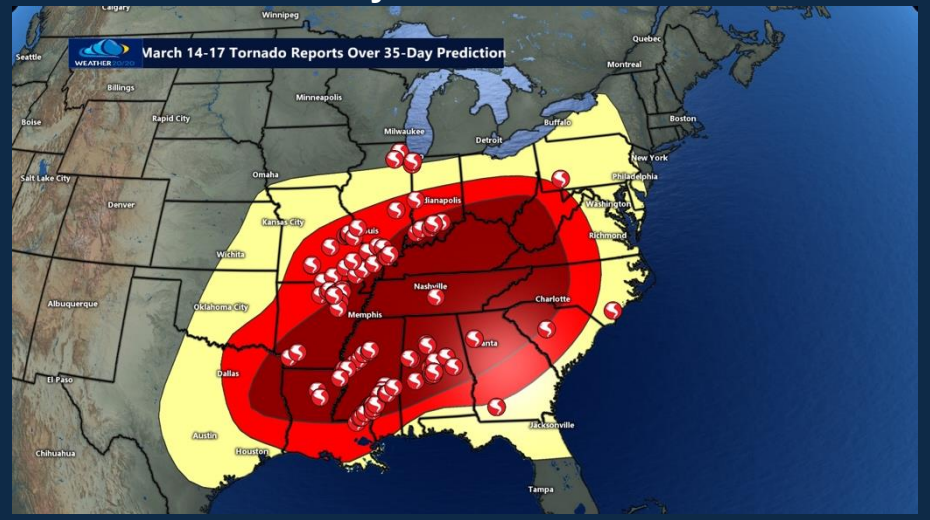
- **Origin:** Early Weather Seed (October 6-9) – Severe Weather & Hurricane Milton

- **Key Verifications:**
  - Dec 28, 2024 – Winter severe outbreak
  - Feb 5–6, 2025 – Moderate outbreak
  - Mar 14–17, 2025 – *150+ tornado reports, 30+ fatalities*
  - Apr 27–May 3 – Severe weather
  - June 3–9 – Multiple systems, tornadoes
  - July 10–18 – Severe storms, damaging winds

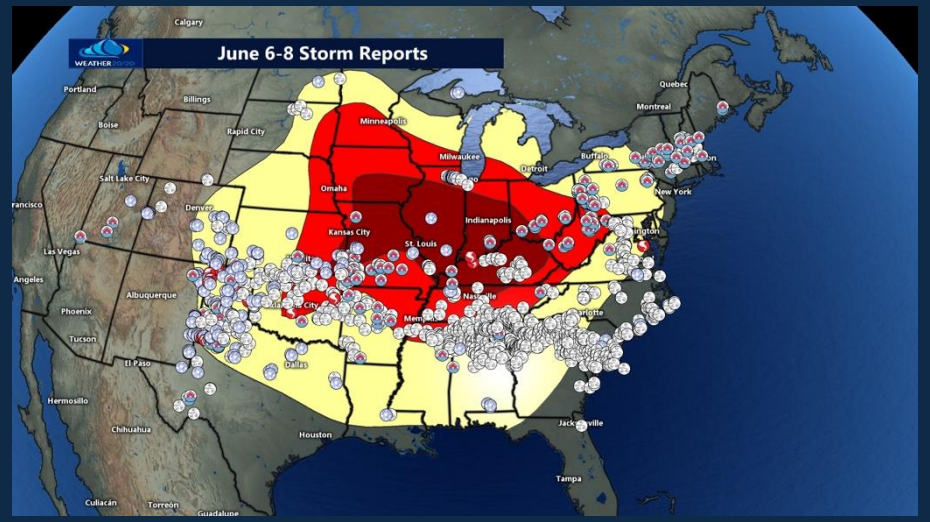
Next Due: Aug 21–28 & September 30 – October 4 Before New LRC Sets Up



- **Mid-March Deadly Tornado Outbreak Verified**



- **June 6-8 Tornadoes Over 120-Day Prediction**

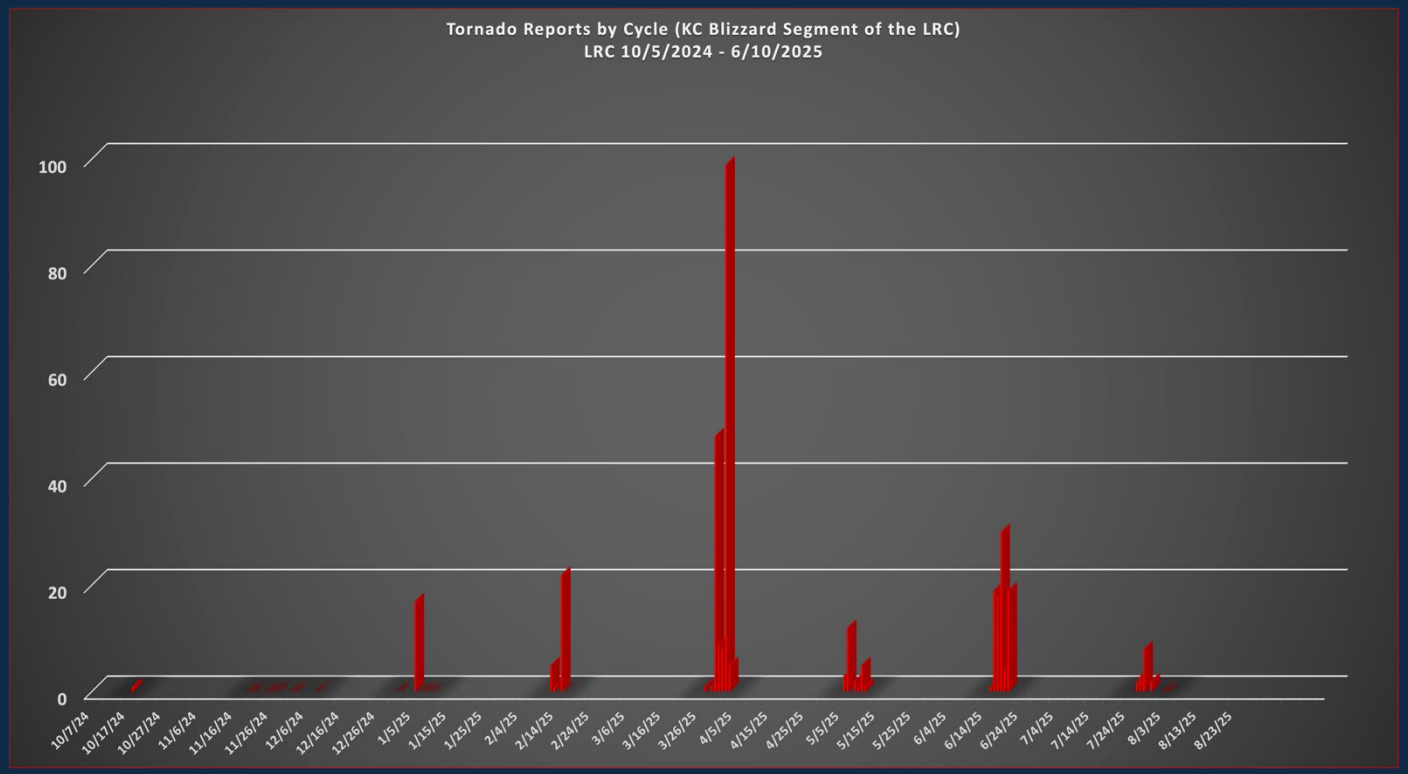


Segment B – The KC Blizzard Segment With Severe Weather In Each Cycle

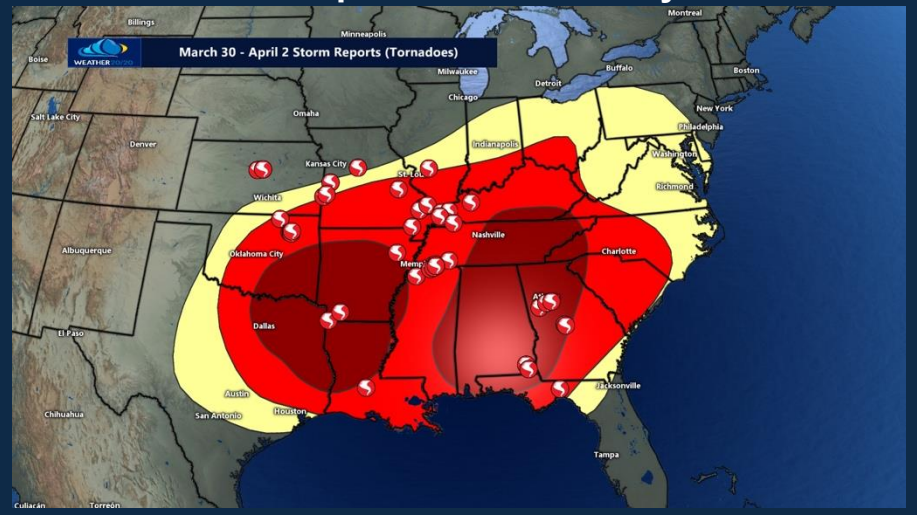
- **Origin:** Cycle 3 Weather Seed – January 5th Blizzard & Severe Weather Outbreak

- **Key Verifications:**
  - Jan 5, 2025 – Blizzard in KC + severe weather south
  - Feb 14–15 – Severe + snow
  - Mar 29–April 3 – Severe storms
  - May 5-12 – Severe weather
  - June 15–20 – Multiple severe events – Derecho/Tornadoes/Fatalities
  - July 28–Aug 5 – Level 4 risk, multiple severe reports – Return of Derecho

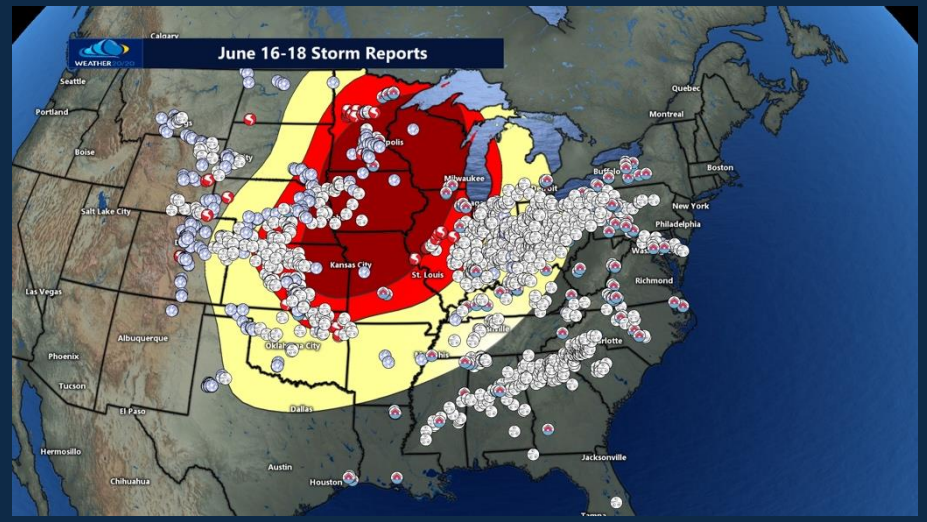
Next Due: September 5-10



- **Tornadoes Reported Over 50-Day Forecast**



- **June 16-18 Reports Over 130-Day Forecast**

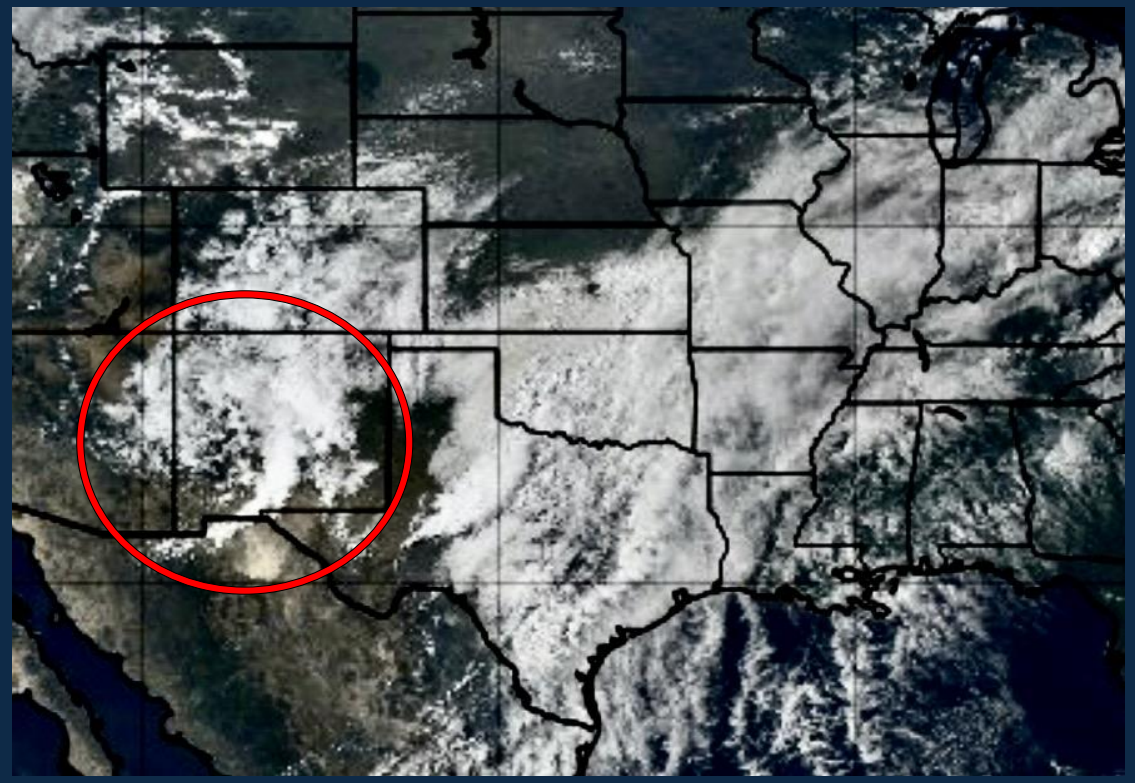


Segment C – The Part Of The LRC Related To The Texas Flood Disaster

•**Origin:** Cycle 1 Weather Seed – October 30, 2024, Severe Weather

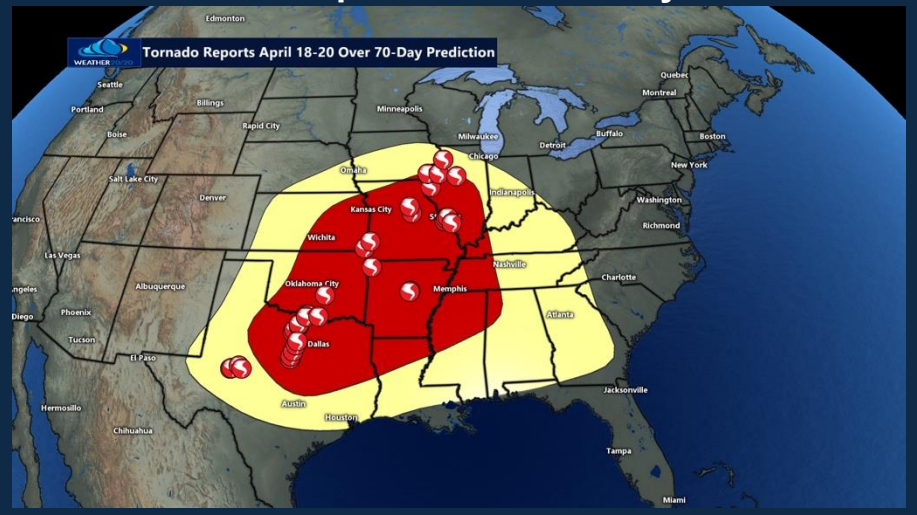
- **Key Verifications:**
- March 3 - 7– Severe weather
- April 14–20 – Multi-day severe event
- May 24–30 – Severe weather
- July 4–9 – Severe storms – Texas Flood Disaster Around The Same Time

Next Due: August 15-20 & September 26-30

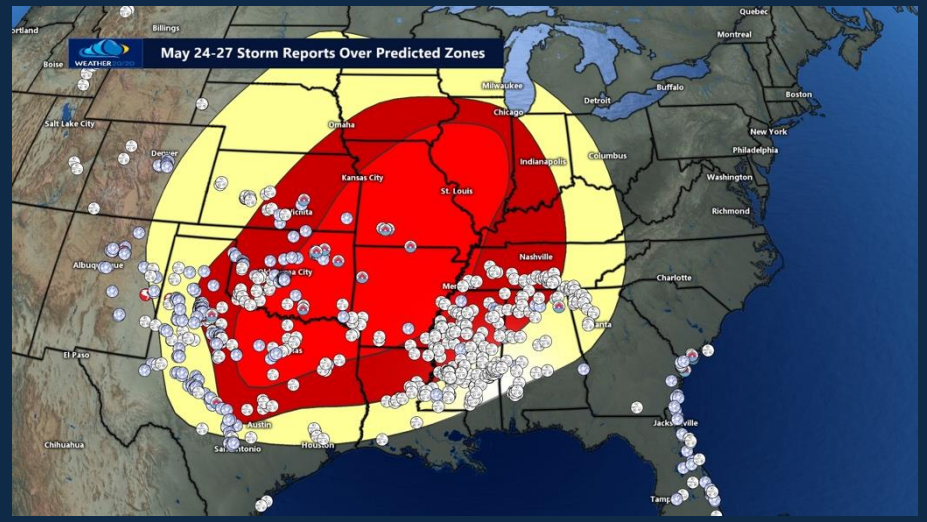


The Storm Approaching On April 19th

•**Tornadoes Reported Over 70-Day Forecast**



•**May 24-27 Reports Over 105-Day Forecast**



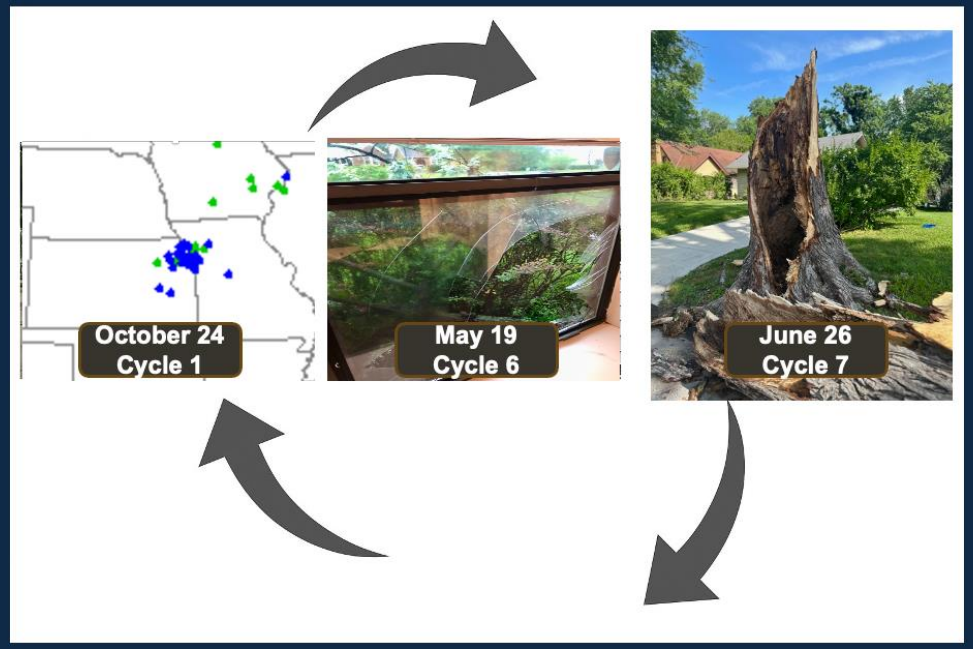
Segment D – Severe Weather In Each Cycle – Trees Down In KC Several Times

•**Origin:** October 24, 2024, Localized Plains severe event

- **Key Verifications:**
- April 4-7 Severe Outbreak over several days
- May 16-21 – Deadly outbreak St. Louis to Kentucky
- June 25-27 – Severe Weather Trees Down
- August 5-8 – Summer Severe Weather

Next Due: September 15-18

KC Hit In Three Cycles – The Same Tree Causes Damage In Two Different LRC Cycles



•**100-Day Prediction Verified**