

Current Watches and Warnings

A **Hurricane Warning** is in effect for the Cuban provinces of Pinar del Rio and Artemisa, and the Isle of Youth

A **Storm Surge Watch** is in effect from Sabine Pass to Alabama/Florida border; Vermilion Bay, Lake Borgne, Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Maurepas, and Mobile Bay

A **Hurricane Watch** is in effect from Cameron, Louisiana to the Mississippi/Alabama border; Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Maurepas, and Metropolitan New Orleans

A **Tropical Storm Warning** is in effect for Little Cayman and Cayman Brac; Cuban provinces of Matanzas, Mayabeque, and Havana

A **Tropical Storm Watch** is in effect from the Mississippi/Alabama border to the Alabama/Florida border

Current Details from the National Hurricane Center (NHC)

COORDINATES: 20.7° north, 82.1° west

LOCATION: 200 miles (320 kilometers) east-southwest of the western tip of Cuba

MOVEMENT: northwest at 15 mph (24 kph)

WINDS: 65 mph (100 kph) with gusts to 75 mph (120 kph)

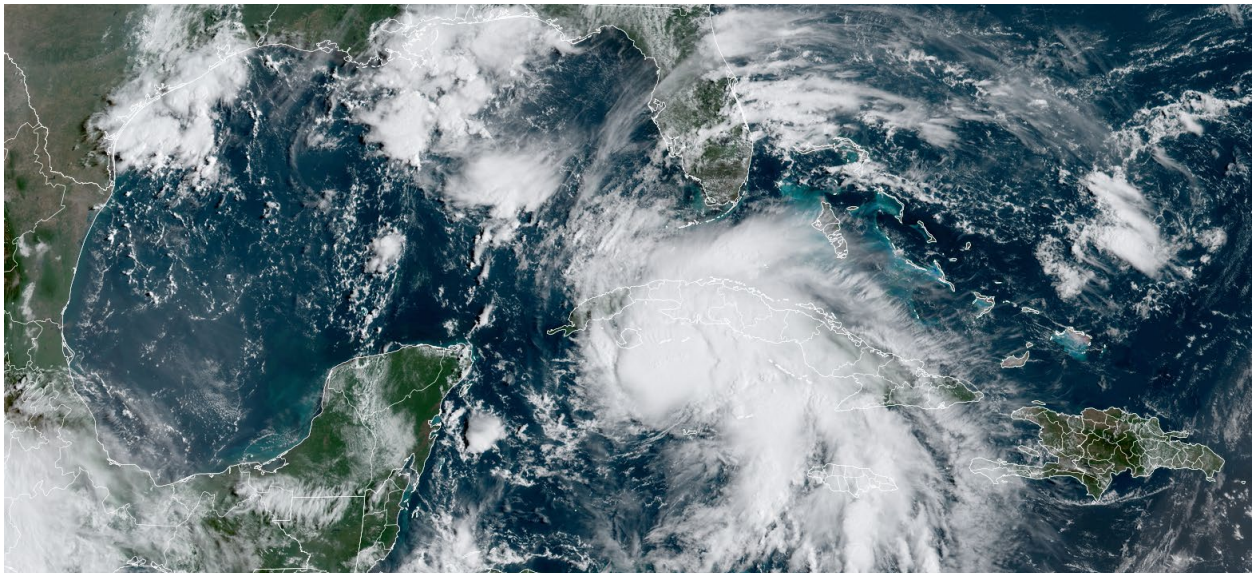
RADIUS OF TROPICAL STORM-FORCE WINDS: 90 miles (150 kilometers)

MINIMUM CENTRAL PRESSURE: 996 millibars

SAFFIR-SIMPSON SCALE RANKING: Tropical Storm

24-HOUR LANDFALL POTENTIAL: HIGH (Cuba)

Latest Satellite Picture



Source: NOAA / NASA / Colorado State University (RAAMB)

Discussion

Tropical Storm Ida, located approximately 200 miles (320 kilometers) east-southwest of the western tip of Cuba, is currently tracking northwest at 15 mph (24 kph). Radar imagery from Grand Cayman and Cuba as well as satellite data continue to show that Ida is an intensifying storm this morning. The increase in convective banding and the development of a small central dense overcast feature (signifying a strengthening center), and more recently an improved inner-core feature. Both the NOAA and Air Force reconnaissance aircraft reported that the pressure has fallen 996 millibars. Measured wind speeds support the NHC increasing the initial intensity to 65 mph (100 kph) – a strong tropical storm.

Although there is still some southwesterly wind shear over Ida, the outflow has begun to expand over the northeastern and southeastern portions of the circulation. The upper-level trough near the Yucatan peninsula that has been causing the wind shear is forecast to weaken and move westward during the next 12 to 24 hours. This will result in more favorable upper-level conditions. The combination of lower wind shear, a trajectory over very warm sea surface temperatures, and a moist environment along the forecast track of the storm are expected to result in steady to rapid strengthening.

Ida is now forecast to become a hurricane when it is near western Cuba and once it moves over the southeastern Gulf of Mexico a period of rapid intensification is likely to begin. The NHC intensity forecast now explicitly calls for rapid intensification to major hurricane strength (at least Category 3 intensity on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale) between 24 and 48 hours. The official intensity forecast is on the higher side of the intensity guidance but not quite as high as a few other models. In addition to the increase in strength, the model guidance indicates that Ida's wind field will grow larger as it moves over the Gulf of Mexico. The NHC notes there is higher-than-normal confidence that a significant hurricane will impact a large portion of the northern Gulf Coast by late this weekend and early next week.

Ida is moving northwestward. A steering mid-level ridge of high pressure located over the western Atlantic is forecast to move westward and this should keep Ida on a general northwestward heading during the next 48 to 60 hours. This track will bring the storm across western Cuba later today, over the southeastern and central Gulf of Mexico on Saturday and Saturday night, to the coast of Louisiana by late Sunday. The model track guidance is in remarkably good agreement with very little spread during the first 60 hours of the forecast period. After that time, Ida is forecast to reach the western portion of the ridge, which is expected to cause the storm to slow down and turn northward and then northeastward over the southeastern United States. The NHC track forecast is near or just east of the various guidance.

As always, the NHC reminds users to not focus on the exact details of the forecast track as storm surge, wind, and rainfall impacts will extend far from the center.

Key Messages from the National Hurricane Center

1. Life-threatening storm surge and hurricane conditions are expected later today and tonight in portions of western Cuba, including the Isle of Youth, where a Hurricane Warning is in effect. Life-threatening heavy rains, flash flooding and mudslides are expected across Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and western Cuba, including the Isle of Youth.
2. The risk of life-threatening storm surge inundation is increasing along the coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Inundation of 7 to 11 feet above ground level is possible within the area from Morgan City, Louisiana, to Ocean Springs, Mississippi, including Lake Borgne. Interests in these areas should follow any advice given by local officials.
3. Ida is expected to be a dangerous major hurricane when it reaches the northern Gulf Coast on Sunday, and the risk of hurricane-force winds continues to increase, especially along portions of the Louisiana coast, including metropolitan New Orleans. Potentially devastating wind damage could occur where the core of Ida moves onshore.
4. Ida is likely to produce heavy rainfall later Sunday into Monday across the central Gulf Coast from southeast Louisiana to coastal Mississippi and Alabama, as well as the Lower Mississippi Valley, resulting in considerable flash, urban, small stream, and riverine flooding.

Additional Information

STORM SURGE: A dangerous storm surge will raise water levels by as much as 4 to 6 feet above normal tide levels in areas of onshore winds along the immediate coast of the Isle of Youth and near and to the east of where the center crosses the coast of western Cuba. Near the coast, the surge will be accompanied by large and destructive waves.

The combination of a dangerous storm surge and the tide will cause normally dry areas near the coast to be flooded by rising waters moving inland from the shoreline. The water could reach the following heights above ground somewhere in the indicated areas if the peak surge occurs at the time of high tide:

Morgan City, LA to Ocean Springs, MS, including Lake Borgne: 7-11 feet
Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, LA to Morgan City, LA, including Vermilion Bay: 4-7 feet
Ocean Springs, MS to MS/AL border: 4-7 feet
MS/AL border to AL/FL border including Mobile Bay: 3-5 feet
Lake Pontchartrain: 4-6 feet
Lake Maurepas: 3-5 feet
Sabine Pass to Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, LA: 2-4 feet

Overtopping of local levees outside of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System is possible where local inundation values may be higher than those shown above.

The deepest water will occur along the immediate coast near and to the east of the landfall location, where the surge will be accompanied by large and dangerous waves. Surge-related flooding depends on the relative timing of the surge and the tidal cycle and can vary greatly over short distances.

WIND: Tropical storm conditions are expected on Little Cayman and Cayman Brac through early this afternoon. Hurricane conditions are expected to reach the Isle of Youth and portions of western Cuba in the Hurricane Warning area by later this afternoon and evening, with tropical storm conditions beginning within the next couple of hours on the Isle of Youth.

Hurricane conditions are possible in the hurricane watch area along the northern Gulf coast late Saturday night or Sunday and tropical storm conditions are possible in the watch area late Saturday night or Sunday.

RAINFALL: Ida is expected to produce total rainfall accumulations of 6 to 10 inches with maximum totals of 15 inches across Jamaica. Rainfall totals of 8 to 12 inches with isolated maximum amounts of 20 inches are expected across the Cayman Islands and western Cuba, including the Isle of Youth. These rainfall amounts may produce life-threatening flash floods and mudslides.

As Ida approaches the central Gulf Coast Sunday afternoon, total rainfall accumulations of 8 to 16 inches with isolated maximum amounts of 20 inches are possible from southeast Louisiana to coastal Mississippi and Alabama through Monday morning. Ida is forecast to turn northeast as it moves inland later Monday with rainfall totals of 4 to 8 inches possible across southern and central Mississippi. This is likely to result in considerable flash, urban, small stream, and riverine flooding.

SURF: Swells generated by this system will affect the Cayman Islands and Cuba through tonight. Swells will begin reaching portions of the northern Gulf coast Saturday night or early Sunday. These swells are likely to cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.

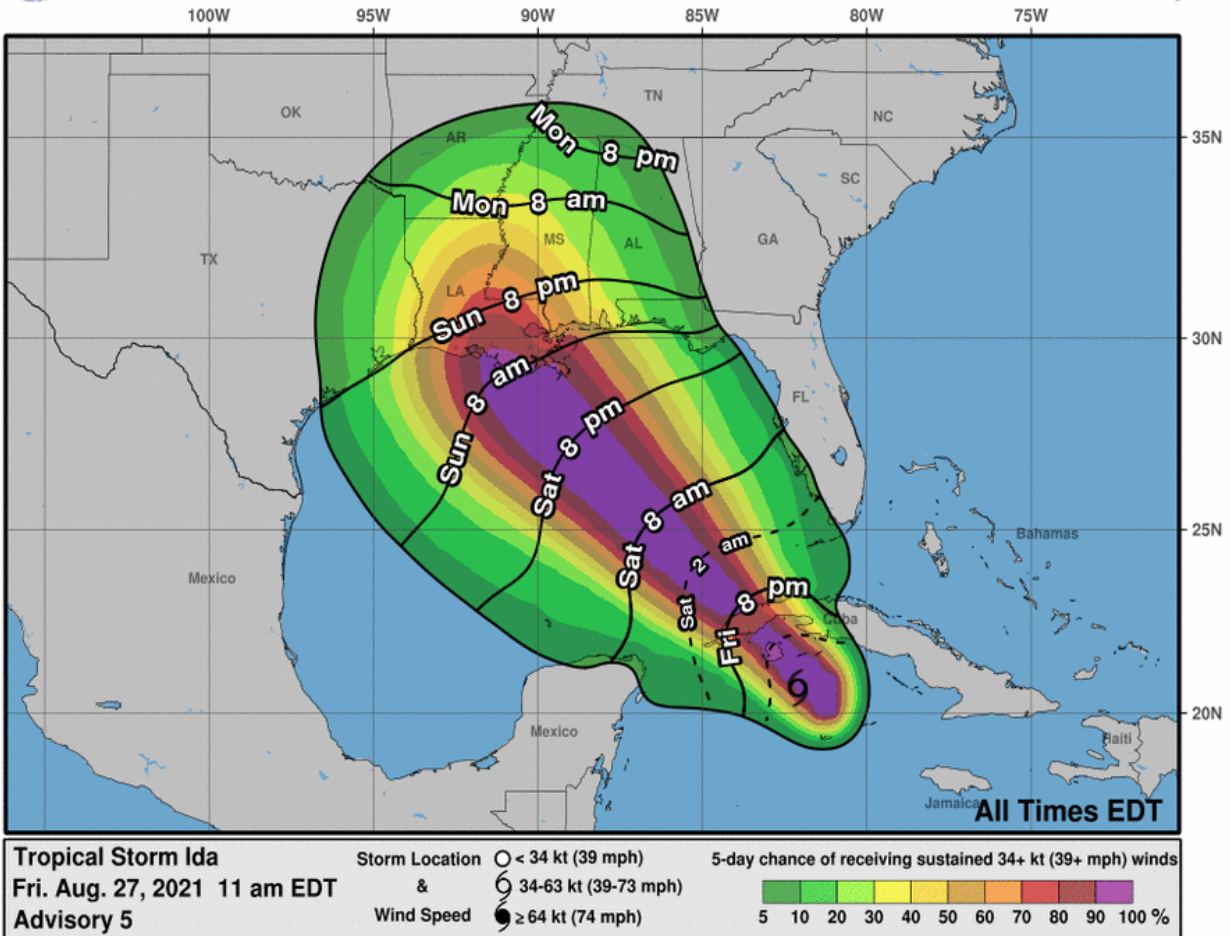
National Hurricane Center (NHC) Forecast



Most Likely Arrival Time of Tropical Storm-Force Winds

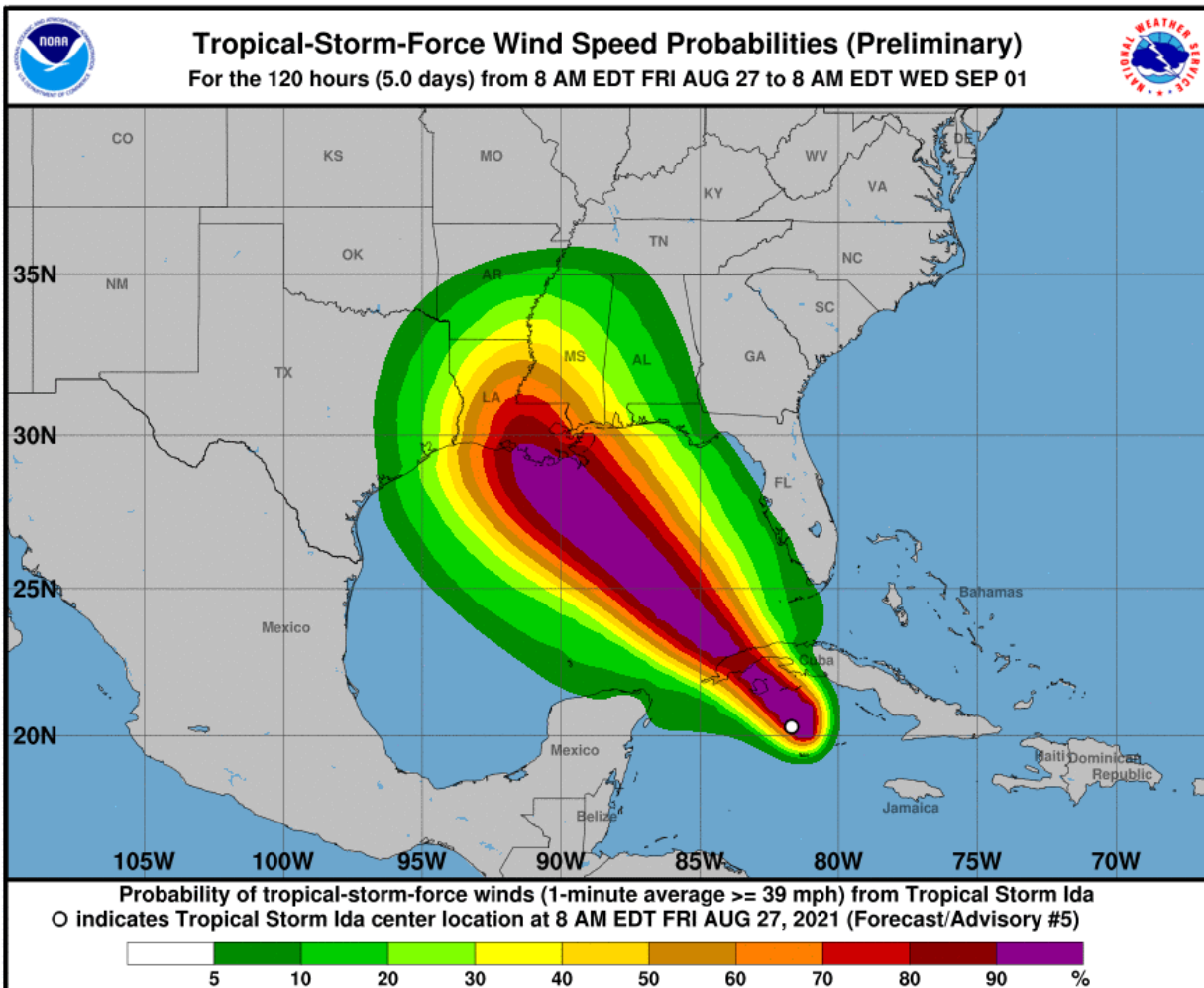


Most Likely Arrival Time of Tropical-Storm-Force Winds

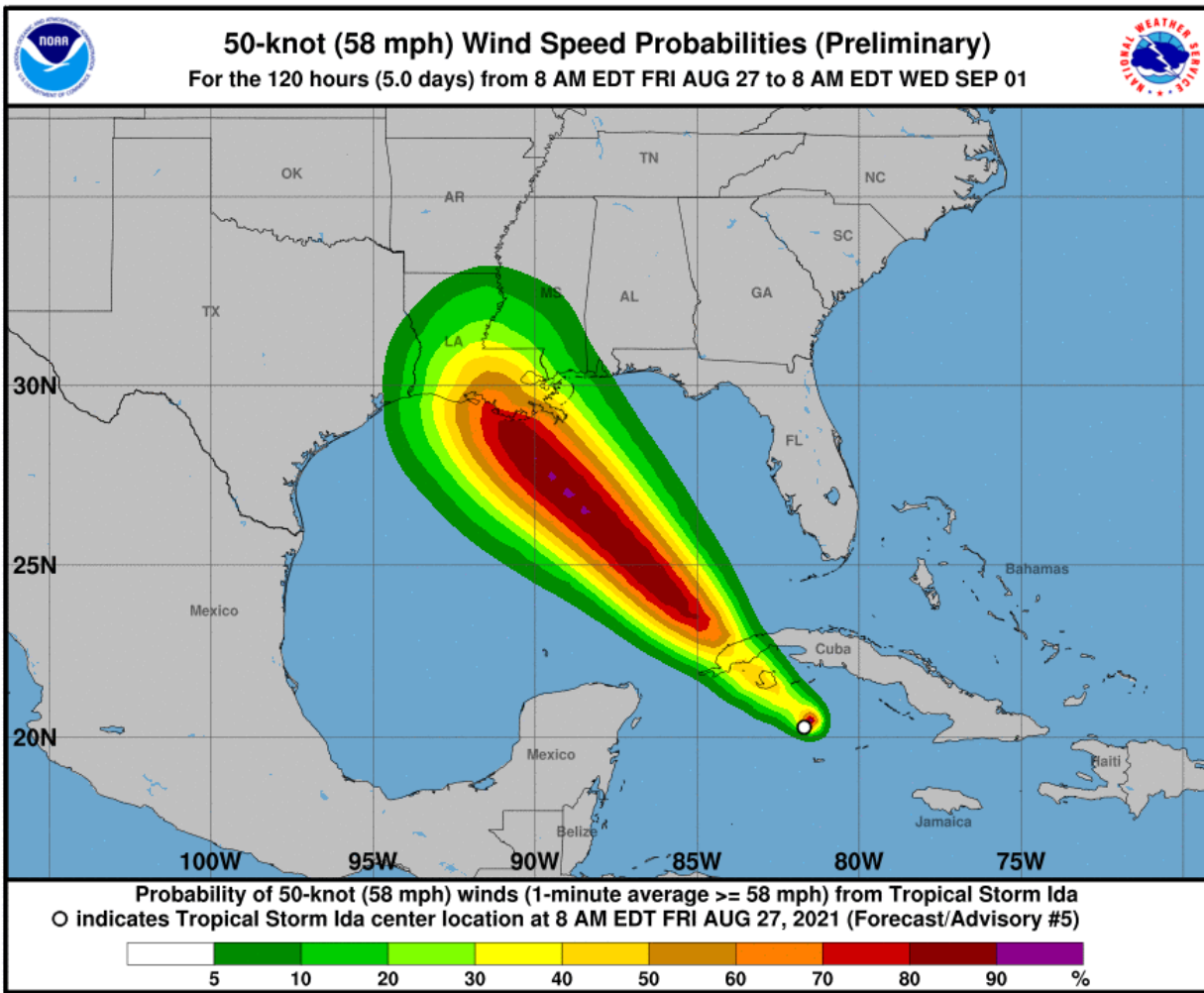


National Hurricane Center: Wind Speed Probabilities

Tropical Storm-Force Wind Probabilities (≥ 40 mph (65 kph))



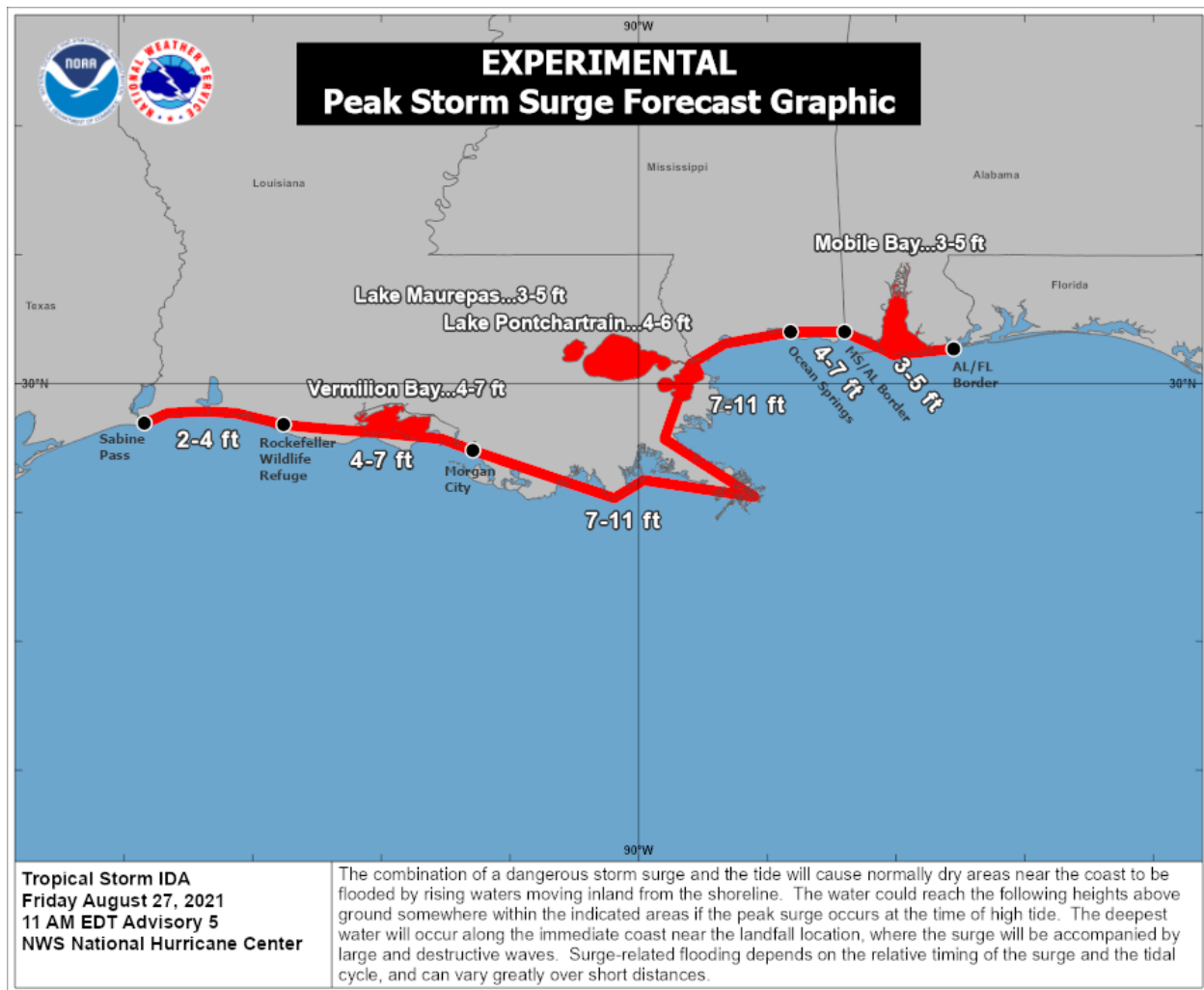
Wind Probabilities (≥ 60 mph (95 kph))



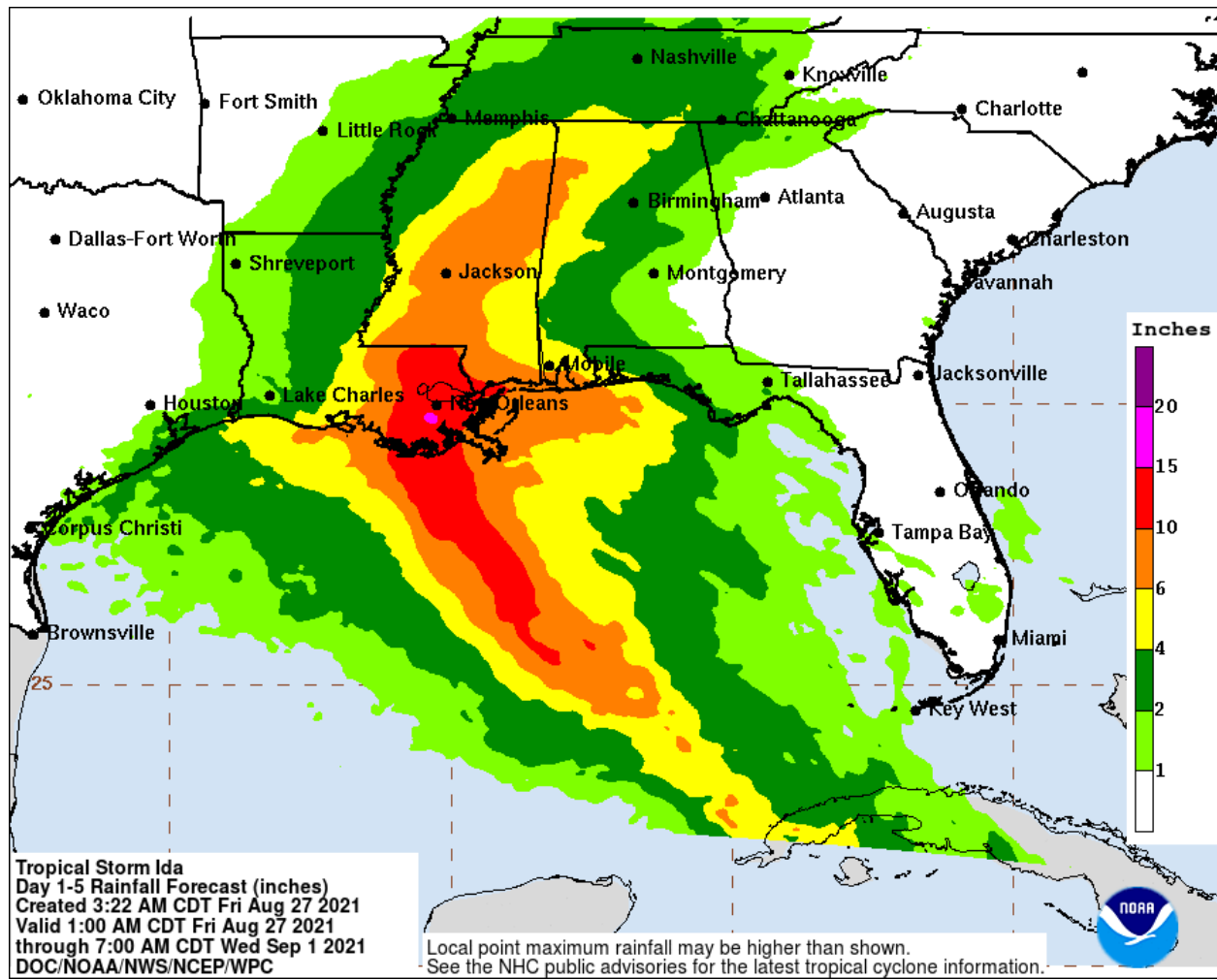
Hurricane-Force Wind Probabilities (≥ 75 mph (120 kph))



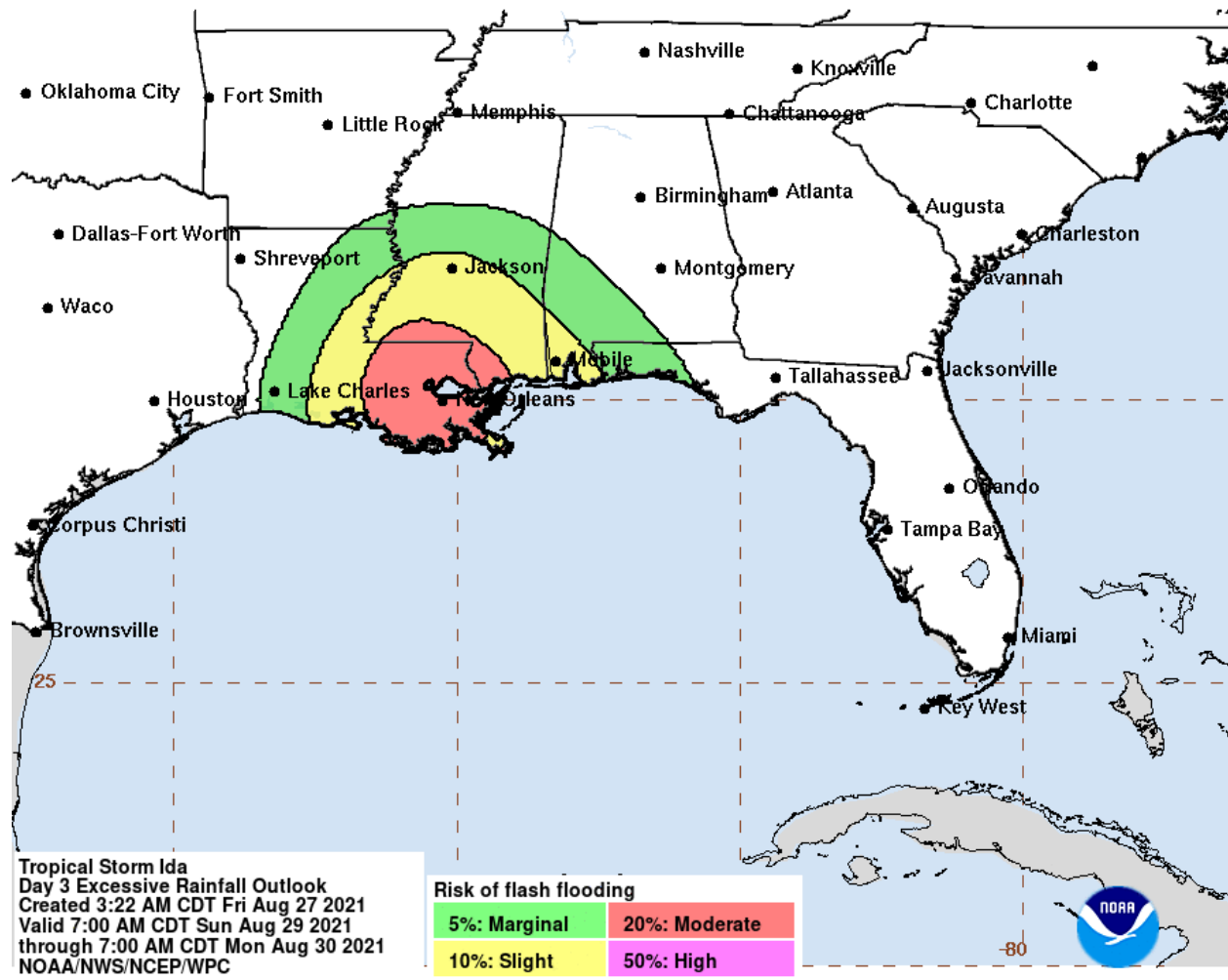
NHC: Storm Surge Inundation Graphic



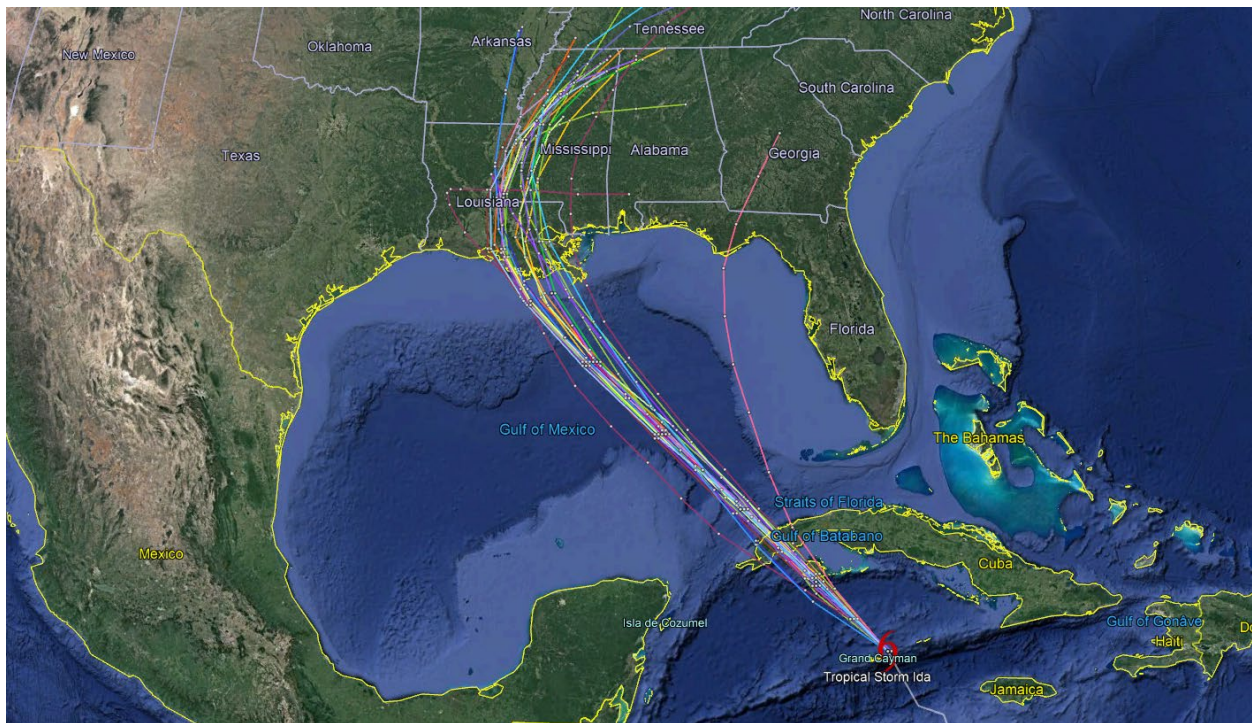
Weather Prediction Center: Rainfall Potential



Weather Prediction Center: Flash Flood Potential



Current 'Spaghetti' Model Output Data



Source: NHC

Additional Information and Update Schedule

Wind intensity forecasts and forecast track information can be found via the National Hurricane Center at www.nhc.noaa.gov

NEXT CAT ALERT: Saturday morning after 10:00 AM Central Time (15:00 UTC).

Tropical Cyclone Intensity Classifications for Global Basins

WIND SPEED			BASINS AND MONITORING BUREAU								
KT	MPH	KPH	NE Pacific, Atlantic	NW Pacific	NW Pacific	SW Pacific	Australia	SW Indian	North Indian		
			National Hurricane Center (NHC)	Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC)	Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA)	Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS)	Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)	Meteo-France (MF)	India Meteorological Department (IMD)		
30	35	55	Tropical Depression	Tropical Depression	Tropical Depression	Tropical Depression	Tropical Low	Tropical Depression	Deep Depression		
35	40	65	Tropical Storm	Tropical Storm	Tropical Storm	Cat. 1 Tropical Cyclone	Cat. 1 Tropical Cyclone	Moderate Tropical Storm	Cyclonic Storm		
40	45	75									
45	50	85			Severe Tropical Storm	Cat. 2 Tropical Cyclone	Cat. 2 Tropical Cyclone	Severe Tropical Storm	Severe Cyclonic Storm		
50	60	95									
55	65	100									
60	70	110									
65	75	120	Cat. 1 Hurricane	Typhoon	Typhoon	Cat. 3 Severe Tropical Cyclone	Cat. 3 Severe Tropical Cyclone	Tropical Cyclone	Very Severe Cyclonic Storm		
70	80	130									
75	85	140									
80	90	150									
85	100	160	Cat. 2 Hurricane			Cat. 4 Severe Tropical Cyclone	Cat. 4 Severe Tropical Cyclone	Intense Tropical Cyclone			
90	105	170									
95	110	175									
100	115	185	Cat. 3 Major Hurricane			Cat. 5 Severe Tropical Cyclone	Cat. 5 Severe Tropical Cyclone			Very Intense Tropical Cyclone	Super Cyclonic Storm
105	120	195									
110	125	205									
115	130	210									
120	140	220	Cat. 4 Major Hurricane			Super Typhoon					
125	145	230									
130	150	240									
135	155	250									
140	160	260	Cat. 5 Major Hurricane								
>140	>160	>260									

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