

Rare November Hurricane Pounds Florida Coast

Read Time: 2 Minutes 6 Seconds

Hurricane Nicole made landfall along the east coast of Florida early Thursday as it continued to batter a large area of the state with strong winds, dangerous storm surge and heavy rain, officials said.

The rare November hurricane had already led officials to shut down airports and theme parks and order evacuations that included former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago club.

Authorities warned that Nicole's storm surge could further erode many beaches hit by Hurricane Ian in September. The sprawling storm is then forecast to head into Georgia and the Carolinas later Thursday and Friday, dumping heavy rain across the region.

Nicole was a Category 1 storm, with maximum sustained winds of 75 mph (120 kph) early Thursday, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said. It was centered about 30 miles (25 kilometers) east-southeast of Fort Pierce and was moving toward the west-northwest near 14 mph (22 km/h).

Tropical storm force winds extended as far as 485 miles (780 kilometers) from the center in some directions. Nicole's center is expected to move across central and northern Florida into southern Georgia on Thursday and into the evening, and into the Carolinas on Friday.

A few tornadoes will be possible through early Thursday across east-central to northeast Florida, the weather service said. Flash and urban flooding will be possible, along with renewed river rises on the St. Johns River, across the Florida Peninsula on Thursday. Heavy rainfall from this system will

spread northward across portions of the southeast, eastern Ohio Valley, Mid-Atlantic and New England through Saturday.

Large swells generated by Nicole will affect the northwestern Bahamas, the east coast of Florida and much of the southeastern United States coast over the next few days.

Nicole is expected to weaken while moving across Florida and the southeastern United States through Friday, and it is likely to become a post-tropical cyclone by Friday afternoon.

Nicole became a hurricane Wednesday evening as it slammed into Grand Bahama Island, having made landfall just hours earlier on Great Abaco island as a tropical storm with maximum sustained winds of 70 mph. It is the first storm to hit the Bahamas since Hurricane Dorian, a Category 5 storm that devastated the archipelago in 2019.

For storm-weary Floridians, it is only the third November hurricane to hit their shores since recordkeeping began in 1853. The previous ones were the 1935 Yankee Hurricane and Hurricane Kate in 1985.

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