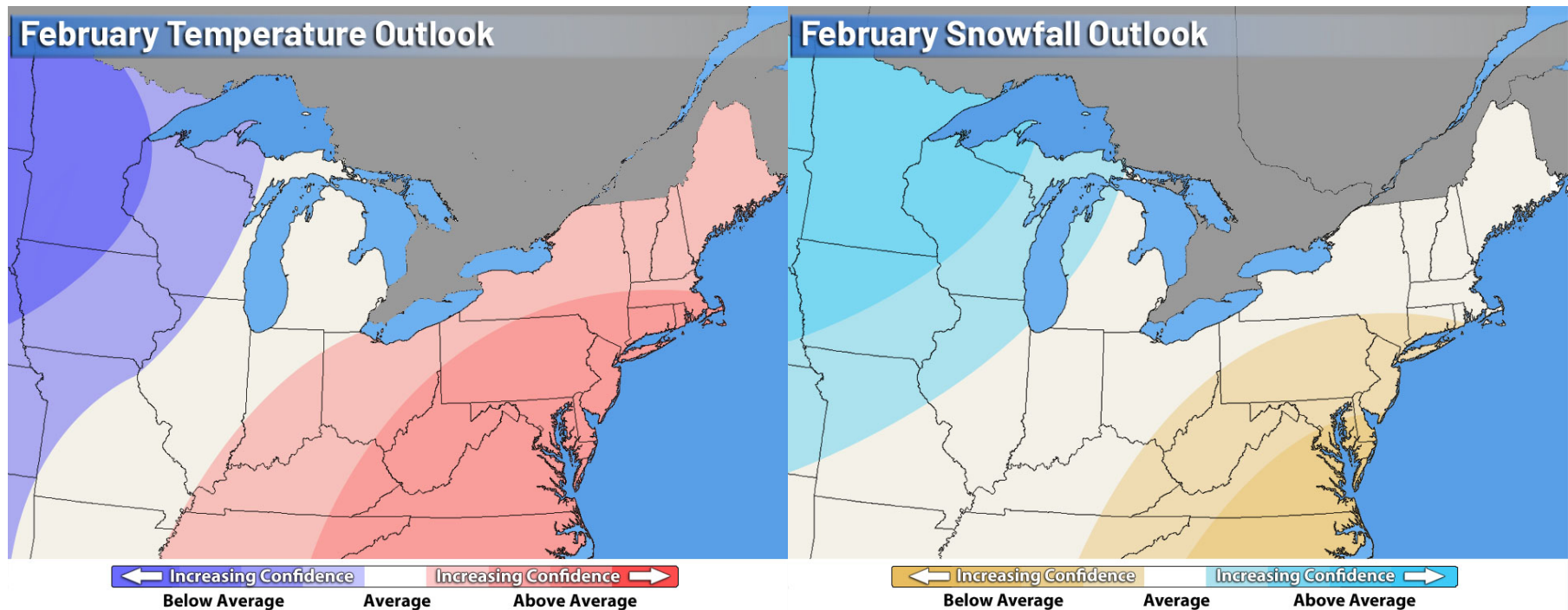


# Jan 2026 : Milder Overall, But Not Necessarily Snowless



Even if not as cold as parts of the last 10 days of January, a chilly pattern is likely to be lingering around at the start of February. In a La Niña winter, February is often the warmest month of the winter relative to normal. The ridge of high pressure that typically sets up around Alaska early on in the winter tends to shift westward and set up more over the Aleutians later on in the season. So while it may be a chillier start, milder air will likely take over at times, especially in the southern Mid-Atlantic. That being said, the polar vortex has been weak and unstable so far this winter, and our seasonal analogs point to the potential of another stratospheric warming event/disruption of the polar vortex later on in the season. This is not something that can be predicted this far in advance, so for now, it's only a wildcard that could allow the February forecast to trend colder as we get closer. If we were to see more sustained cold weather set up in February, it would probably spill into the central part of the country first, hence why we are forecasting colder than normal temperatures for the far western parts of our forecast region.

Regarding snowfall, the outlook does not look super favorable for snowfall in our mid-Atlantic zones. The Southeast ridge will often flex its muscles in a La Niña February and cause the storm track to set up well to the west over the Ohio Valley, and even closer to the central Plains. This alone favors a lot more rain than snow for much of the Northeast, especially for I-95 and points eastward. Even interior portions of the mid-Atlantic and southern New England are favored to see more wintry mix events than all snow in this type of setup. Even though temperatures should average above normal in the entire Northeast, New England's

climatology is still good enough for it to snow even in a warmer than normal pattern. Hence, we believe snowfall can reach normal levels for the month even if the storm track isn't the most favorable. Should a more significant winter weather event occur in the Northeast, it would probably be later on in the month, especially if we get any help from the stratosphere.

- February looks solidly warmer than normal right now, especially for New York City and points south
- Cold shots look to be limited, but the polar vortex is a wildcard that we will need to keep an eye on
- Snow will be the most favored in New England, and the least favored in the southern mid-Atlantic and East Coast
- Wintry mix events are favored over all snow events in interior parts of the northern mid-Atlantic