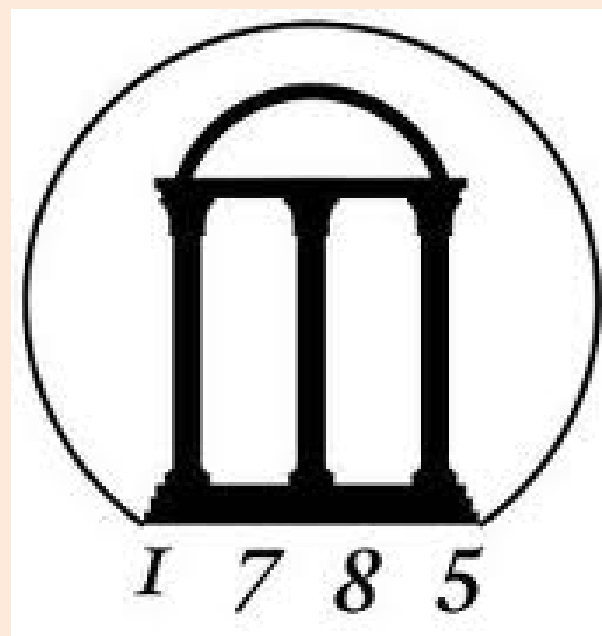




The Tornado Outbreaks of April 2011 in the Southeast U.S.: A Case Study



Anthony P Bedel • Victor A Gensini

Climate Research Laboratory

Department of Geography

The University of Georgia

April 2011 produced some of the most historic severe weather outbreaks in recent memory. Along with parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions, the Southeast especially suffered from the most active tornado month on record. According to the Storm Prediction Center (SPC), the 753 tornadoes reported in April 2011 shattered the previous monthly record of 542 tornadoes in May 2003 (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2011). In fact, the average number of tornadoes for April over the past ten years in the U.S. is about 160, over 4.5 times less than the 2011 figure. Furthermore, the National Weather Service (NWS) states that 364 people lost their lives to severe weather in April 2011, with 321 of those deaths occurring during the April 25-28, 2011 tornado outbreak in the Southeast. An improved understanding of an event such as this is vital to the improvement in safety measures in the future for forecasting and alerting the general public on the potential impacts of such severe weather events.

April 2011 in the Continental U.S.

➤ 753 tornadoes

April 2000-2010 average: 161 tornadoes

Previous monthly record: 542 tornadoes (May 2003)

➤ 364 fatalities from tornadoes

April 2008-2010: 17 fatalities from tornadoes

Through May 2011, 4th deadliest tornado year in U.S. history (549 fatalities [157 in Joplin, MO])

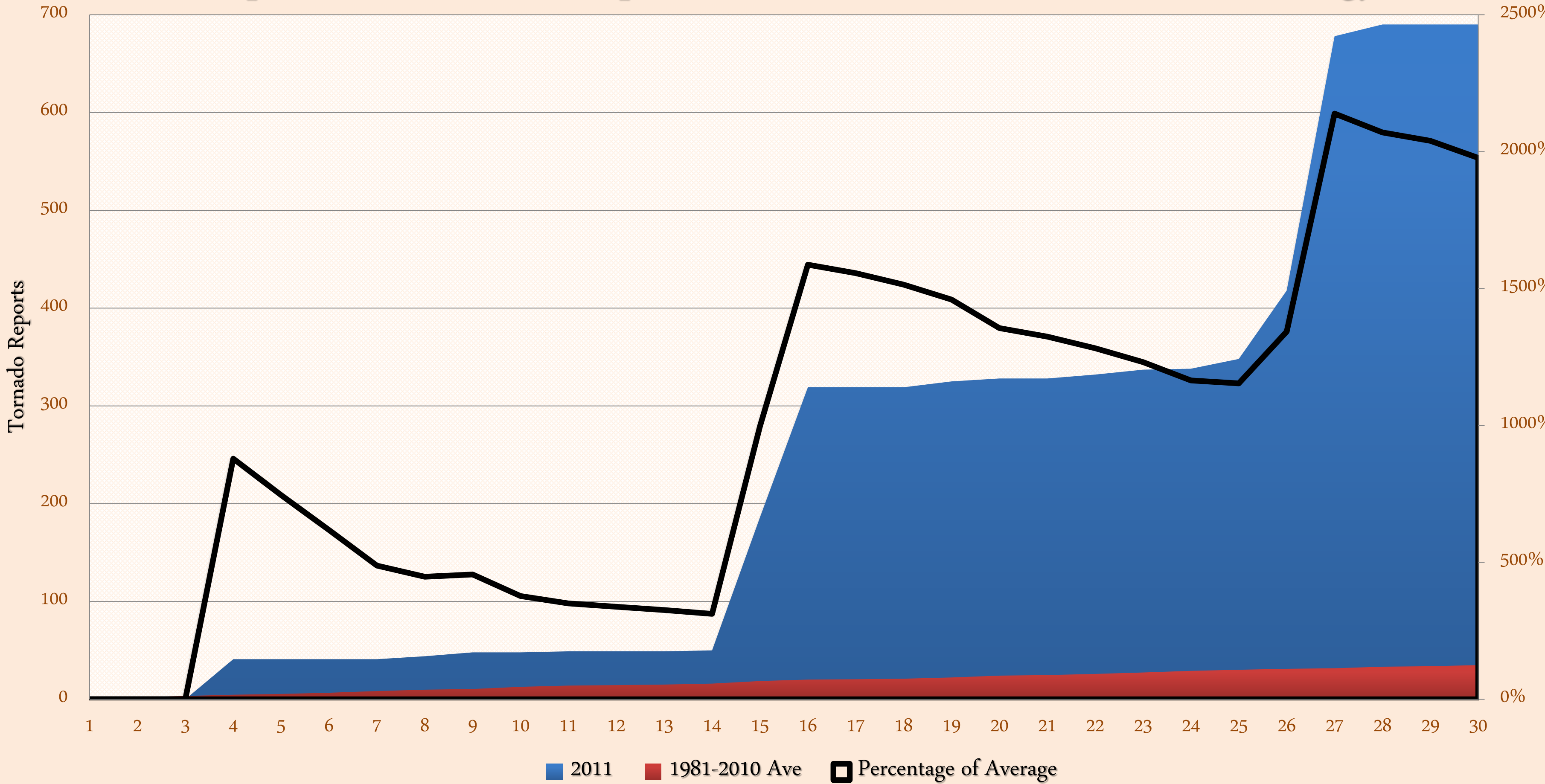
April 2011 in the Southeast U.S.

➤ 690 tornadoes

April 1981-2010 average: 34.9 tornadoes

➤ 321 fatalities during the tornado outbreak of 25-28 April

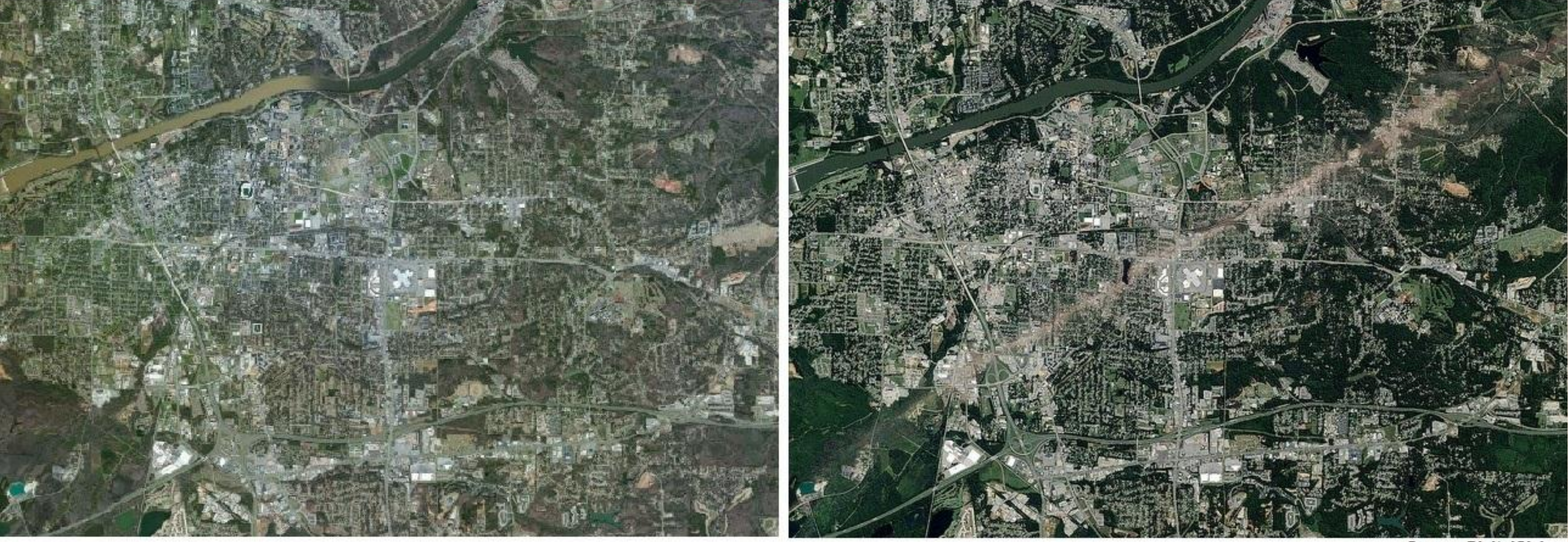
April 2011 Tornado Reports in the Southeast U.S. vs. Climatology



Before

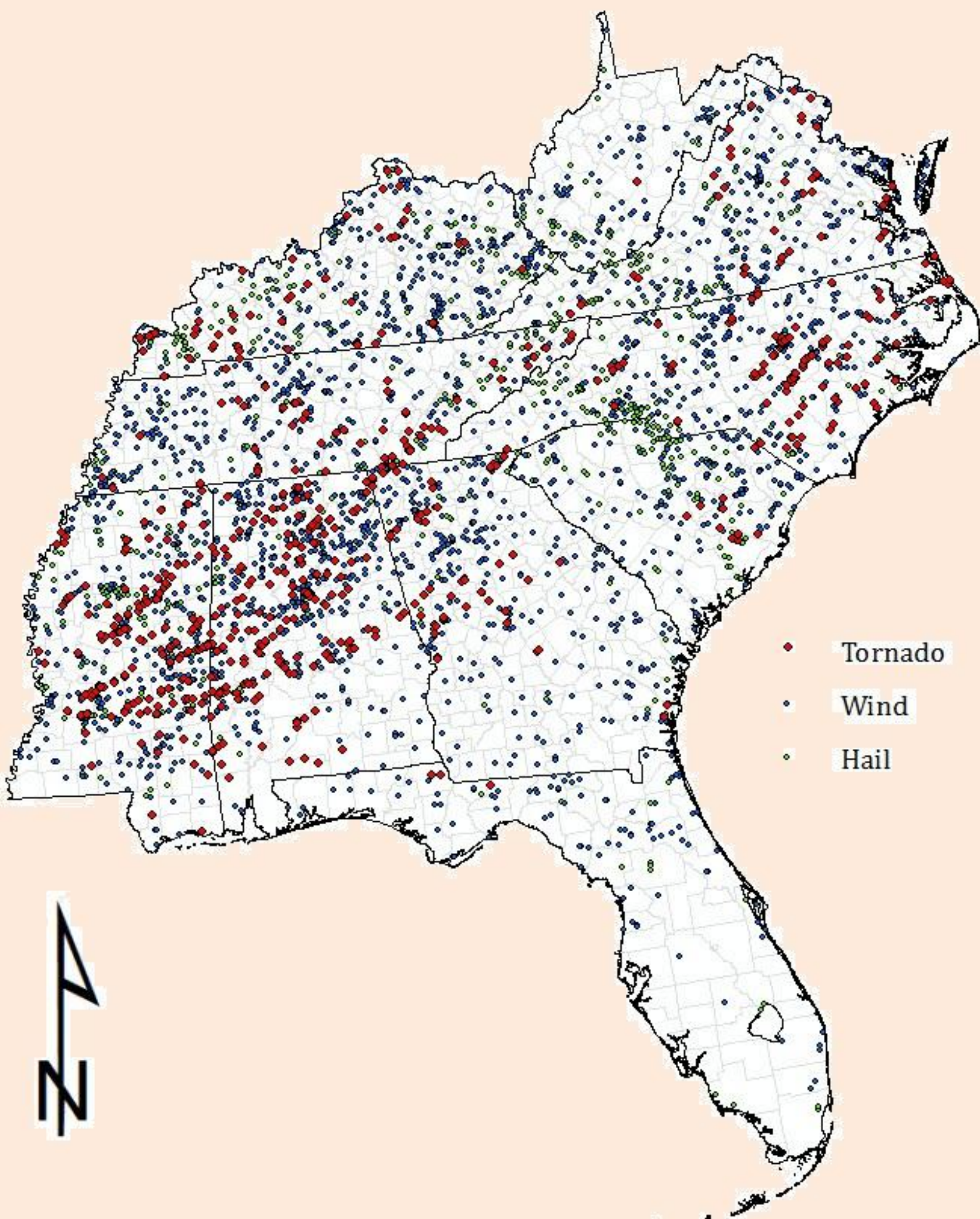
Tornado Damage to Tuscaloosa, AL
April 26-27, 2011

After

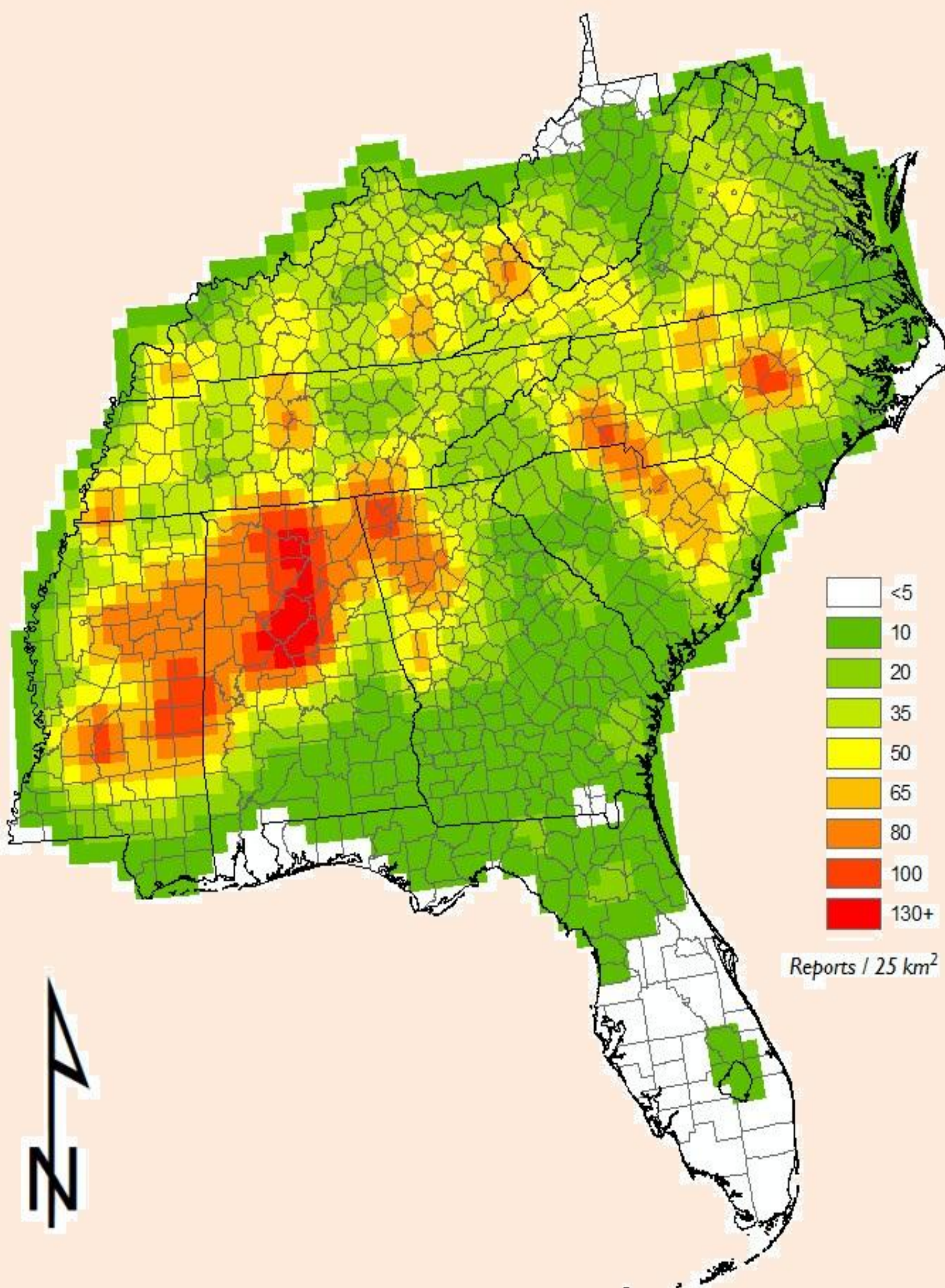


Source: DigitalGlobe

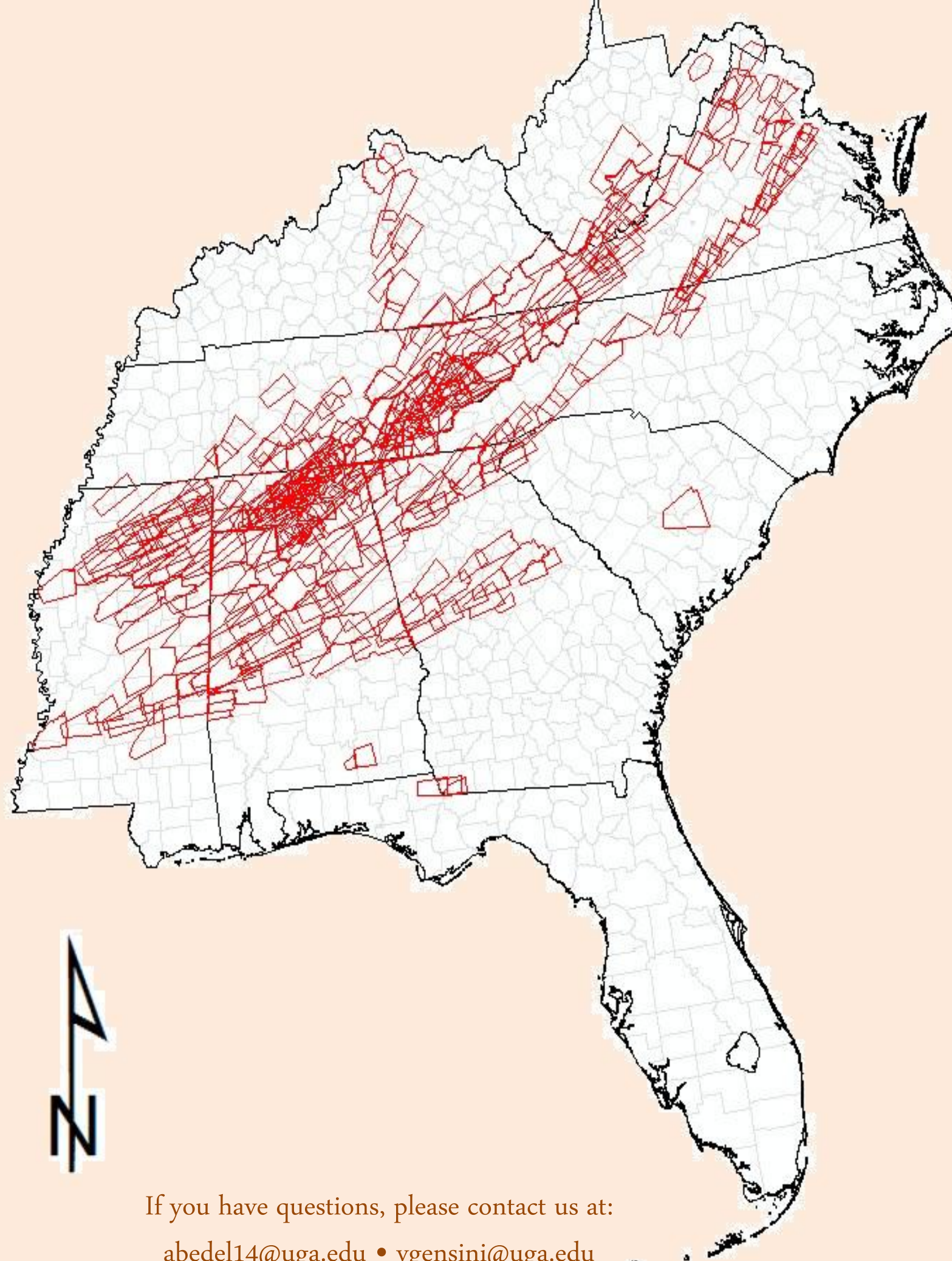
April 2011 Severe Reports for the Southeast U.S.



April 2011 Tornado Heat Map for the Southeast U.S.



12Z 27 - 12Z 28 April 2011 Tornado Warnings



If you have questions, please contact us at:
abedel14@uga.edu • vgensini@uga.edu

