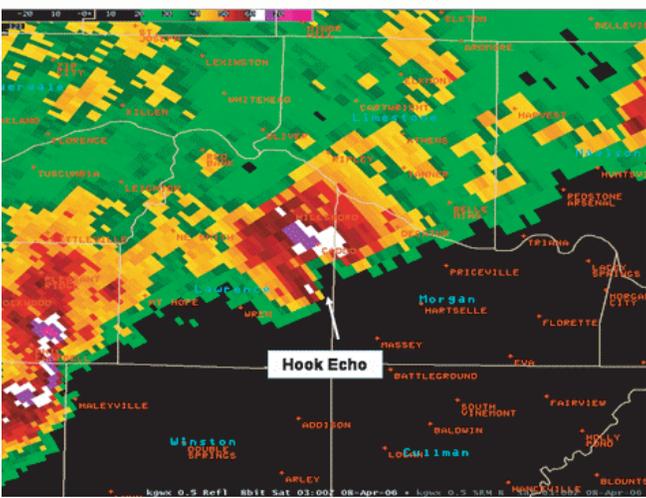
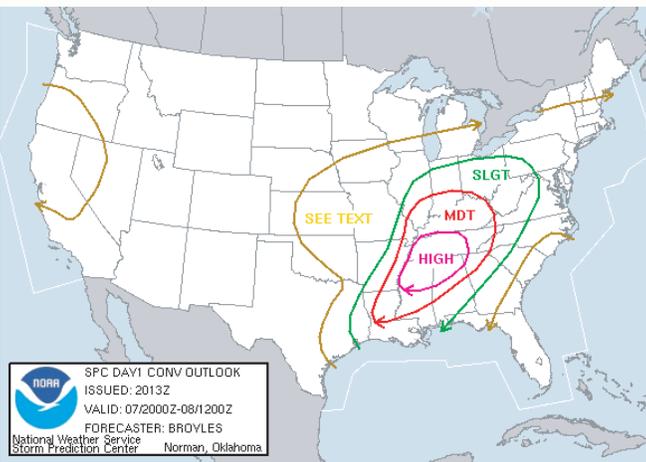


April 2006 Alabama Outbreak

April 2006 began as a very active weather period across the Midwest and the southeastern United States, as severe weather plagued the area almost daily with hundreds of reports of tornadoes, large hail, and damaging winds. Fortunately, these events had remained to the north of Alabama, until Friday, April 7th.

On April 6th, the Storm Prediction Center issued a High Risk for severe weather for the northern half of Alabama for the next day. Although severe weather outbreaks are not unusual during the spring months, High Risk days are rare. As with any potentially hazardous weather event, National Weather Service offices prepared in advance by increasing staffing, providing briefings to emergency management and the media, and double checking all equipment to ensure it was working properly. This event was expected to impact Alabama at the worst possible time, overnight.



Ingredients came together on April 7th for a classic spring severe weather outbreak. A strong upper level storm system across the Central Plains approached the mid Mississippi and Tennessee Valleys Friday evening. A strong surface low over Kansas also pushed southeast and tracked across northwest Tennessee. The upper level storm system and surface low created a favorable wind shear environment for supercell thunderstorm and tornado development. Ahead of the storm system, moisture from the Gulf of Mexico surged northward into the southeastern United States. The combination of these features, coupled with temperatures in the 80s across much of the area, made Alabama well suited for severe weather.



Haleyville (Winston Co.) Photo Courtesy of Winston Co. EMA



Pleasant Grove (Cullman Co.)