

Weekly Update: October 4, 2006



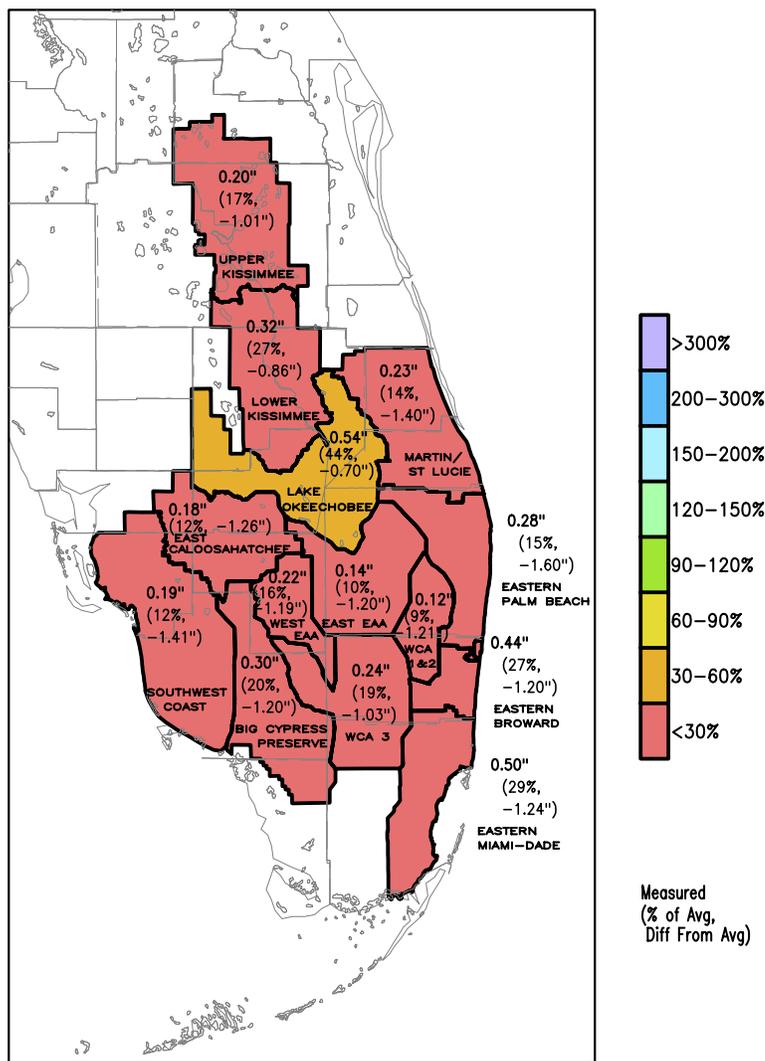
# just the FACTs

This fact sheet is provided as a reference to encourage a greater understanding of the various issues related to managing water in south Florida.

## State of the Water Management System

To underscore our commitment to keep you informed, we will send this update weekly. We encourage you to share this water resources information with your constituents.

SFWM District Rainfall  
27-SEP-2006 to 03-OCT-2006



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.28" (20%, -1.14")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

2006-10-03-14:02



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### Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was approximately 0.28 inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

## State of the Water Management System

**Weekly Update:** October 4, 2006 (page 2)

### System-wide overview:

District-wide rainfall for June, July, August and September averaged 28.37 inches, which is 96% of normal. Rainfall is predicted to be below average for the next 12-15 days. The Climate Prediction Center October Outlook calls for increased chances for above average rainfall. However, the recent persistent dry conditions the District has been experiencing, along with additional short-term outlooks, indicate drier than normal conditions are more likely, especially north of Lake Okeechobee.

**Lake Okeechobee** — The lake stage is estimated to be approximately 13.35 feet NGVD 29 (12.05 feet NAVD 88), down 0.07 feet since this date last week. Surface inflows continue to fall off this week and are currently reported as 734 cubic feet per second. Surface outflows are 242 cubic feet per second. Monthly submerged aquatic vegetation monitoring and the first October bloom monitoring are underway and preliminary results should be available by next week. Researchers at Florida Atlantic University report that due to good recession rates and relatively low lake stages, 2006 was an exceptional year for wading birds on Lake Okeechobee with a peak nesting effort of nearly 11,000 nests.

**Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin** — During the last seven days, the upper basin received 0.20 inches of rain to bring the 30-day total to 2.83 inches, which is 47 percent of the long-term average. The lower basin received 0.32 inches of rain to bring the 30-day total to 3.90 inches, which is 66 percent of the long-term average. In the upper basin, lake stages have stabilized. Lake Kissimmee is more than 2 feet below schedule. Releases of approximately 150 cubic feet per second continue to be made from Lake Toho and passed through Lake Kissimmee for the Kissimmee River Restoration Project. In the last week, the stage at Weir 1 has fallen 0.46 feet to 36.25 feet. At this stage, flow is confined to the river channel, but there is still water on the floodplain along the length of the reconnected river channel.

**St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries** — In the St. Lucie Estuary, releases were made at S-80 on two days in the amounts of 488 cubic feet per second and 252 cubic feet per second. No releases were made from Lake Okeechobee at S-308. Salinity conditions are good. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, discharge at S-79 declined over the past week averaging 835 cubic feet per second with 100% percent being accounted for by basin runoff. The 30-day average discharge is 4,964 cubic feet per second. Fresh water extends down to Fort Myers. Salinity conditions remain poor in the lower estuary and San Carlos Bay because of heavy rainfall.

**Water Conservation Areas (WCAs)** — Rainfall accumulations for the week were slight across the WCAs. The WCA-1 weekly total was 0.23 inches, WCA-2 received 0.11 inches, WCA-2B received 0.35 inches, WCA-3A received 0.30 inches and WCA-3B received the most rain at 1 inch. Due to the low amount of rain, the Everglades water levels decreased almost everywhere. Water levels declined significantly in WCA-2A (0.37 feet), which had been above regulation for many weeks and is now at regulation with a depth of 1.89 feet. WCA-1 decreased by 0.08 feet for an average depth of 1.8 feet. WCA-2B increased by 0.12 feet and WCA-3B increased by 0.09 feet, both due to localized rainfall and basin inflows. WCA-3A decreased, on average, by 0.14 feet. However, WCA-3A is above regulation and water levels remain high. Environmental conditions are typical for this time of year.

**Everglades National Park** — The Park received approximately 0.86 inches of rain last week. Water levels across the Park wetlands similarly displayed mixed trends for the week. A modest increase of nearly 0.25 inches occurred in Shark River Slough and in the Park panhandle. Taylor Slough Bridge saw a marked decrease in water level of 6 inches over the week. Such fluctuations are not unusual.

*Note: This rainfall information is based on rain gauges within the Park. The map on page one captures District rain gauge data only.*

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\* SFWMD water managers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers work together to manage Lake Okeechobee. Water releases from the lake are made in accordance with a federally authorized regulation schedule based on many factors such as time of year, current water conditions, predicted rainfall and lake level.

## State of the Water Management System

Weekly Update: October 20, 2006 (page 3)

**Florida Bay** — Rainfall was patchy last week in Florida Bay, with very light accumulations. Salinity concentrations in Florida Bay showed little change this week. Salinity at Trout Creek held steady over much of the week. Weekly discharge from Trout Creek into Florida Bay was slightly below the seasonal average. Highest flows through the creeks are typically seen during this latter period of the wet season. Salinity concentrations in Terrapin Bay and in McCormick Creek were low again this week. Last week's flow through McCormick Creek was just above the seasonal weekly average. Downstream from McCormick Creek, salinity in Terrapin Bay continued to drop last week. Similar to the Taylor River ponds, low salinity conditions remain entrenched in the Shark River Slough outflow at Tarpon Bay.

### Other District News and Happenings —

- A very successful peer review of the South Florida Ecosystem Report (SFER) was held last week. In addition to review of the SFER, the panel provided peer review of several special topic areas including the climate outlook report and Loxahatchee River vegetation trends. The panel's report will be presented at the November Governing Board meeting.
- The District continues to conduct a series of regional workshops to introduce and roll out the new Small Business Program. Workshops in Miami and Palm Beach counties produced 200 attendees.
- The District's Martin/St. Lucie Service Center is moving to a new location at 780 S.E. Indian Street in Stuart effective October 9.

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### Special editions of the State of the Water Management System

During a declared emergency, the South Florida Water Management District has established times and systems for distributing important information to the South Florida community. Weather events of the past several years have made it apparent that there are times outside of declared emergencies when it is also important to distribute information regarding the status of the District's flood control system and actions being taken by the District. In the future, when severe conditions develop in our region—such as a heavy rainfall, drought or other water-related emergencies—look for special editions of this “State of the Water Management System” report to provide you with timely and relevant briefings on the situation. This information will be distributed frequently throughout the event to make sure you are kept up to date on current conditions and have the latest information about what the District is doing to prepare and respond to severe weather events.

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**Did you know?** The South Florida Water Management District manages and protects the water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. Want to hear more? It would be our pleasure to meet with your organization to give a presentation and answer your questions. If interested, please contact Doris Urban at 800-432-2045 or 561-686-8800, ext. 6202.