

Weekly Update: October 5, 2005



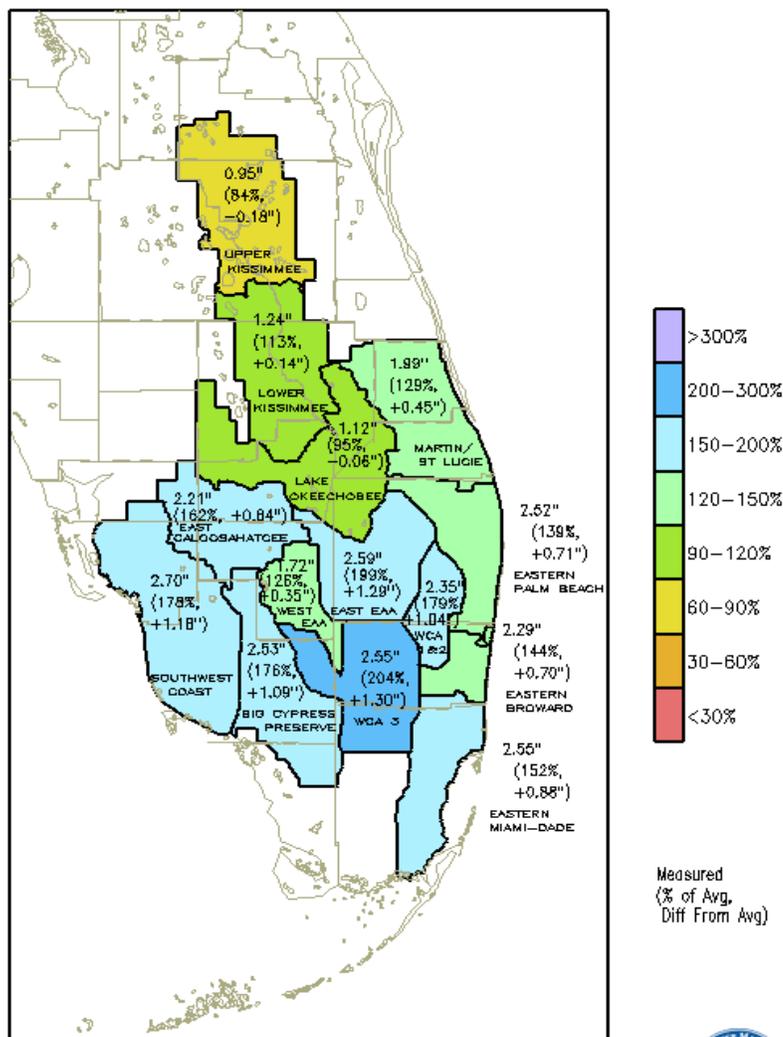
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FACTs

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.

SFWMD Rainfall
27-SEP-2005 to 03-OCT-2005



DISTRICT-WIDE: 2.04" (150%, +0.68")

GRADS: COLA/IGES

2005--



Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was approximately 2".
- Rainfall for the next 7 days is forecast to be above average.
- Outlook for the remainder of the wet season is for an increased likelihood of above average rainfall.



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System-wide overview:

Monthly rainfall for September was 5.35" or 80% of average. Wet season rainfall to date (June 1 through September 30) is approximately 33.19" or 114% of average. The forecasted above average rainfall for the coming week is associated with the weather disturbance that is projected to cross the state in the next two to three days.

Lake Okeechobee — Lake level is at 15.41 ft NGVD, down 0.12 ft since last week. Last year on this date, the lake was 2.33 ft higher as a result of rains from hurricanes Frances and Jeanne. Interagency staff estimate that there are currently more than 2,000 acres of floating vegetation on the lake. Maintenance control goals are 300-500 acres. Moderate to dense algae blooms were noted in the southern and southwestern littoral zone of the lake.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — The Kissimmee Basin received 1" to 2" of rain during the past seven days. Stage for upper basin lakes are at regulation schedule except for lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha, which are approximately 1 ft below regulation schedule. The stage in Lake Kissimmee appears to have stabilized. Aerial surveys on Sept. 30 found that the extent of inundation on the restored floodplain has decreased, but most of the floodplain still has water on it. There are large numbers of wading birds in the restored area, with most of the activity focused in shallow areas near the northern end of the Phase I restoration area.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — Salinity in the St. Lucie continued to decrease over the past week at the A1A Bridge. The Florida Oceanographic Society reports that water clarity ranges from fair to poor in the St. Lucie Estuary and is good in the Lower Caloosahatchee Estuary and San Carlos Bay. Overall environmental conditions in both estuaries are poor.

Water Conservation Areas — All stage and depths increased slightly. As such, WCA-1 remains below regulation, WCA-2A is right at schedule and WCA-3A remains above its regulation schedule. Since little has changed in the Everglades, water depths continue to be deep everywhere except in WCA-1. Prolonged deep water may stress trees in these areas.

Everglades National Park — Data from the park is still interrupted and patchy; therefore, it is only current through Thurs., Sept. 29. Rainfall during the past week ranged from 1" to 4". Water levels dropped approximately 0.1 ft.

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

* 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

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Florida Bay — Despite slight declines in water level, salinity continues to decline in all areas of Florida Bay. Concentrations are nearly fresh from the Taylor ponds down to the mouth of Taylor River. Salinity in the interior region of Florida Bay continues to slowly decline.

Algae Update — Monitoring continues on blue-green algae in Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie River/Estuary, Caloosahatchee River, Kissimmee River/Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and the District's eastern canals at 41 fixed monitoring sites. Field reports indicate that light to moderate blooms continue in the Caloosahatchee, St. Lucie and Lake Okeechobee. The District lab is now capable of the water quality analysis and started performing microcystin determinations in water on Oct. 3.

Toxicity results, which are updated regularly, as well as frequently asked questions and related links, can be found on the District's blue-green algae web site at <http://www.sfwmd.gov/site/index.php?id=611>.