

Weekly Update: October 11, 2006



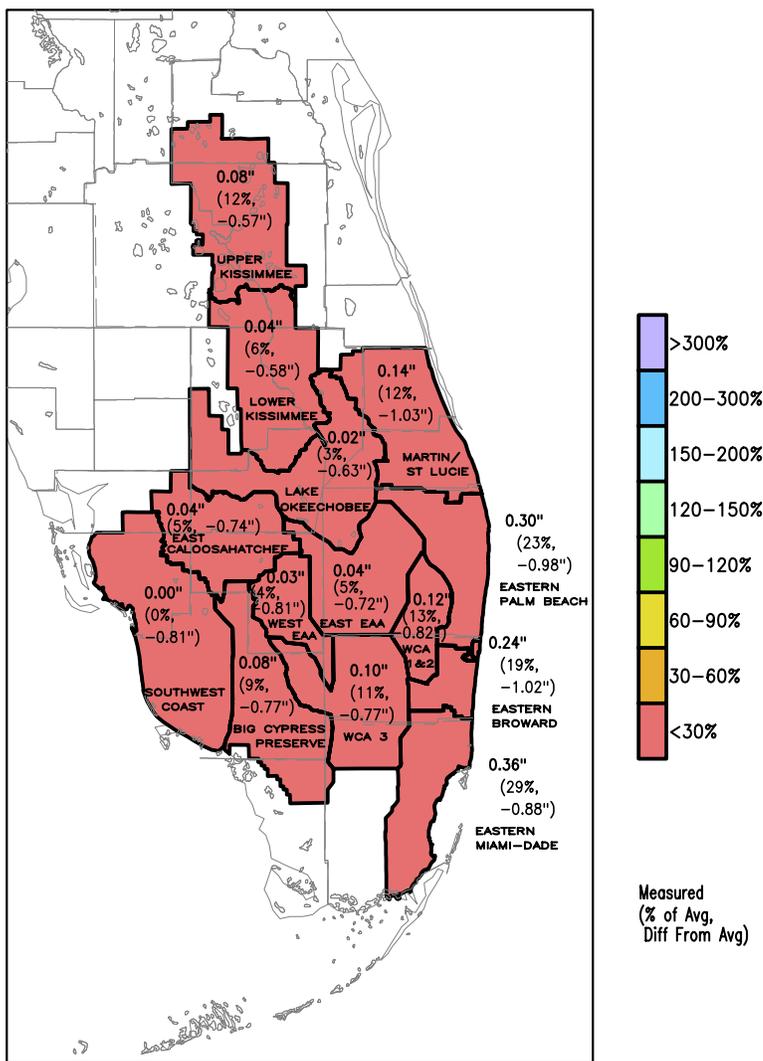
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FACTs

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.

SFWM District Rainfall
04-OCT-2006 to 10-OCT-2006



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.10" (12%, -0.75")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

2006-10-10-13:02

Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was approximately .10 inch.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.



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South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406
561-686-8800 FL WATS 1-800-432-2045
www.sfwmd.gov

MAILING ADDRESS P.O. Box 24680
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680

State of the Water Management System

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System-wide overview:

District-wide rainfall for the past week was 0.10-0.13 inch, which was below-average. District-wide average rainfall for the last 30 days was approximately 3.0 inches (50% of normal), and the first nine days of October were 11% of normal. Minor rain is expected through Thursday and Friday, but mainly dry through the weekend.

Lake Okeechobee — The lake stage is estimated to be approximately 13.20 feet NGVD 29 (11.9 feet NAVD 88), down 0.15 foot since this date last week. Surface inflows are 209 cubic feet per second. Surface outflows are 115 cubic feet per second. Results of the October submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) survey found plants at 15 of the transect sites, as compared to 13 sites in September. More vascular plants (tape grass and Hydrilla) relative to non-vascular species (musk grass) were also noted this month. As recovery progresses, a shift from non-vascular to vascular plants is expected. However, sites with adequate light reaching the bottom to support plant growth have decreased, possibly in response to recent windy weather. Bloom monitoring was delayed because of poor weather conditions last week. Continued low lake levels are anticipated to maximize the potential for the persistence, or continued recovery, of SAV in the lake.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — During the last seven days, the upper basin received 0.08 inch of rain to bring the 30-day total to 1.58 inches, which is 30 percent of the long-term average. The lower basin received 0.04 inch of rain to bring the 30-day total to 1.91 inches, which is 37 percent of the long-term average. In the upper basin, lake stages appear stable but are likely to begin dropping without more rain. 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. Lake Toho stage has begun dropping. Concentration of dissolved oxygen in the restored river channel is showing slight improvement for the second week after several weeks of extremely low values.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — In the St. Lucie Estuary, no releases were made at S-80 in the last week. Salinities at all monitoring sites have increased and are within the preferred range. Salinity conditions are good. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, small discharges at S-79 occurred on two days last week for a weekly average of 94 cubic feet per second. The 30-day average stands at 2,224 cubic feet per second and is within the preferred range. Salinity conditions are good throughout the Caloosahatchee Estuary and San Carlos Bay.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) — Rainfall was light throughout the WCAs, with slightly higher accumulations, up to 0.5 inch, in the south. Water levels decreased slightly in most of the WCAs. Water stages declined less than 0.1 foot in WCA-1 and WCA-2A, and were virtually unchanged in WCA-2B. Stages are below regulation in WCA-1 and slightly above regulation in WCA-2A. Because the WCA-3A stages were high, regulation schedules required maximum releases into Shark River Slough, reducing WCA-3A stages an average of 0.22 - 10.94 feet and increasing Shark River Slough water levels to 7.1 feet. WCA-3B water stages increased slightly over the last week. Environmental conditions are typical for this time of year.

* 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.

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Everglades National Park — The Park received approximately 0.1 inch of rain last week. Park data from the stage stations and one marine platform were available only through Friday. Continued dry conditions over the weekend mean weekly trends for water levels through Friday were likely to continue. Shark River Slough showed little change for the five-day period. Water levels in the panhandle dropped by nearly 1.5 inches over this same period. Taylor Slough Bridge saw the most pronounced decline in water level, but such fluctuations are not unusual for this part of the Rocky Glades.

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

Florida Bay — Salinity concentrations in Florida Bay showed mixed trends over the past week. Strong southerly winds pushed bay water up into the creeks. Salinity at Trout Creek increased dramatically. This event drove down the weekly cumulative discharge from Trout Creek into Florida Bay, well below the seasonal average. Cumulative flow through Taylor River last week was also below the seasonal weekly average for this station. Salinity at Taylor River mouth responded in a similar fashion to Trout Creek. Salinity at the Little Madeira Bay mouth platform was headed down when higher salinity bay water drove concentrations back up. This wind event did not push bay water up into the Taylor River ponds, however, allowing salinity there to remain low for another week. Salinity concentrations in McCormick Creek increased, but bay water reversed the flow through McCormick since Friday, dropping last week's cumulative flow below the seasonal weekly average. Salinity concentrations in the Shark River Slough outflow at Tarpon Bay were up for the first time in several weeks, probably in part a result of these water flow reversals.

Other District News and Happenings —

- The District is holding an Acceler8 Construction Symposium at Florida Gulf Coast University this Friday, October 13 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. The all-day event for construction contractors, specialty contractors, vendors and work-force development agencies will provide information on the \$1.8 billion construction program for *Acceler8*, a group of eight fast-tracked projects needed for Everglades restoration.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the District will offer tours for the media this Friday to showcase the backfilling of the next phase of Kissimmee River Restoration.

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.