

Weekly Update: December 28, 2005



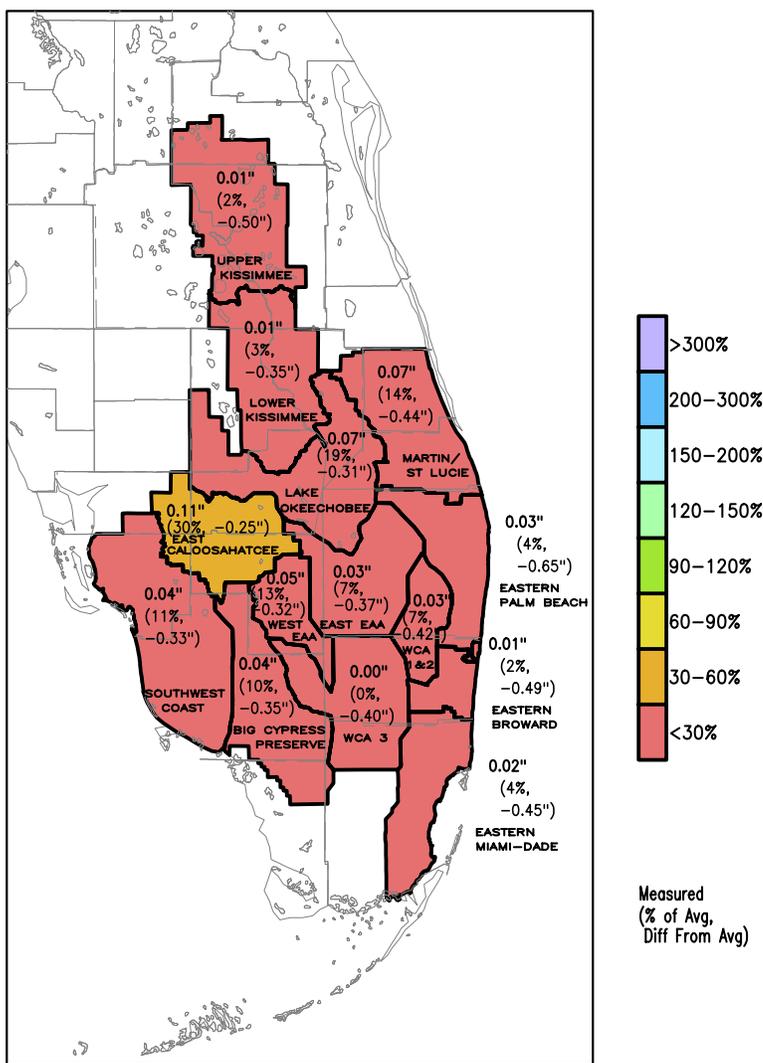
just the
FACTs

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.

SFWMD Rainfall
21-DEC-2005 to 27-DEC-2005



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.04" (9%, -0.39")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

2005-12-27-16:02



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Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was negligible.
- The rainfall outlook for the next 7 days is for below average conditions.

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System-wide overview:

Rainfall last week was estimated to be about 0.02 to 0.03" District-wide. Rainfall for the month to date is 0.67", or 40% of normal; rainfall for the last 30 days was approximately 65% of normal. Based on continuing discussions regarding the status of Lake Okeechobee, the estuaries and predicted drier-than-normal dry season, District staff have developed a transitional pulse release schedule to recommend to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Lake Okeechobee — Lake level is at 15.77 ft NGVD, down 0.21 ft since last week. Coincidentally, the lake is 0.21 ft higher today than it was on this date last year. No new ecological information is available this week.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — Levels in the upper basin lakes are at their respective regulation schedules. Many wading birds and ducks have been observed on the restored sections of the river.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — Level 2 pulse releases from Lake Okeechobee to both estuaries began on Dec. 22. Salinity increased slightly throughout the St. Lucie Estuary last week. Surface waters in the Caloosahatchee are fresh down to the Cape Coral Bridge. Conditions in the estuaries remain poor.

Water Conservation Areas — During the past week, rainfall was sparse in the Water Conservation Areas, generally under 0.1". Water depths in the Conservation Areas continued to decrease through both managed releases and evaporation. WCA-1 water depths declined slightly and remain below regulation schedule. An error in the stage data for WCA-2A precludes an accurate update, but depths still exceed the regulation schedule. WCA-3A water depths have declined by 0.12 ft and, at 10.52 ft, have reached regulation schedule. Continued water releases have dropped water levels in southern WCA-3A to 2.86 ft, which has improved conditions for tree islands. Continued declines in water levels will improve conditions for healthy tree growth at the beginning of the growing season.

Everglades National Park — Rainfall was light across the region, less than 0.25", except in the Taylor ponds and in Shark River Slough, which received higher amounts. Water levels continue to decline slowly across the Park's wetlands. Water depths at Taylor River station have dropped slightly to 0.55 ft, which is a decline typical of this time of year.

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.

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Florida Bay — Salinity remains seasonably low across Florida Bay. Wind appears to be causing short-term salinity fluctuations in this area.

Other District News and Happenings — During the past week, the District negotiated a new deal on the Pearce acquisition, 4,726 acres in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed, which will be presented to the Governing Board in January. Additionally, staff conducted an Acceler8 issues meeting in Hendry County and also developed a conceptual plan for restoring Stormwater Treatment Area 1-W Cell 5.