

STATE OF THE WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



Weekly Update

February 28, 2007



Mission Statement:

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.

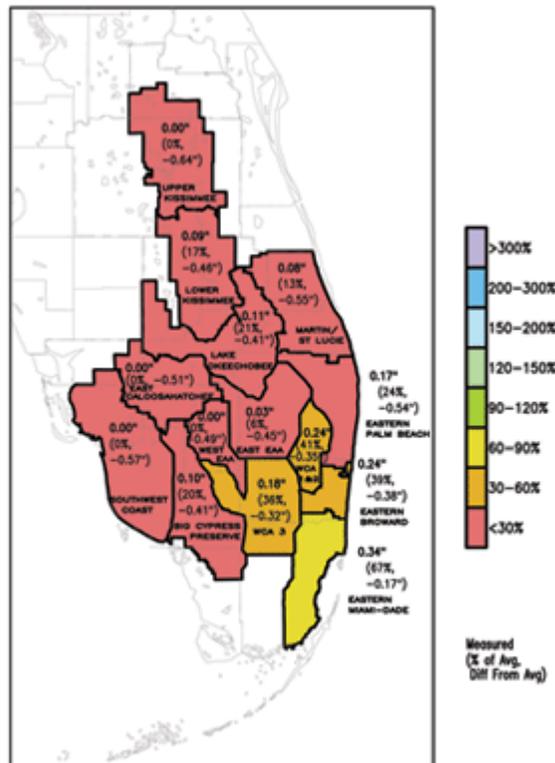
District News and Happenings

- Phase I (15 percent cutbacks) water restrictions are still in effect in the Lake Okeechobee Service Area, which primarily affects agricultural users. The currently authorized Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule calls for a move to Phase II (30 percent cutbacks) restrictions when lake levels decline to 11 feet NGVD 29. At this time, the lake is projected to reach that level in early March.
- The 2007 South Florida Environmental Report is hot off the press and can be viewed at <http://www.sfwmd.gov/sfer>. The next edition of Water Matters, the District's quarterly newsletter, will highlight the 2007 South Florida Environmental Report findings and outcomes.
- The District's Big Cypress Basin Service Center has relocated to Poinciana Professional Park, 2640 Golden Gate Parkway, Suite 205, Naples, Florida 34105. The phone number is 239-263-7615.

District Rainfall



South Florida Water Management District
www.sfwmd.gov



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.10" (18%, -0.45")

Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 0.10 inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

System-wide overview:

A cold front from earlier this week is forecast to move north on Wednesday, generating scattered showers mainly in the eastern portion of the District. The front is then expected to move back south, bringing scattered shower activity Friday and Saturday. The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

Lake Okeechobee:

Lake Okeechobee continues to decline and is 11.27 feet NGVD 29 (9.97 feet NAVD 88), 0.05 feet lower since this date last week and 0.5 feet lower than one month ago. The lower lake levels are providing the opportunity to conduct environmental enhancement and restoration efforts that are not possible during high lake stages. The District is working in cooperation with other agencies to remove hurricane accumulated sediment from the Belle Glade Marina, to remove the organic berm at Cody's Cove, and to plant bulrush, pond apple and other native vegetation in protected areas of the littoral region. No algal blooms were observed during the February sampling efforts.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin:

The upper and lower basins received no rain during the past seven days. In most lakes, water levels have been fairly stable and remain below schedule for this time of year. Water releases continue at structure S-57 to lower lakes Myrtle, Preston and Joel according to the spring recession of the regulation schedule, but no other releases are being made in the system. No flow conditions in the Kissimmee River have existed for 111 days.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries:

In the St. Lucie Estuary, salinities readings were near or within the preferred range at all monitoring sites, and salinity conditions are good. The February sampling of seagrasses near the St. Lucie Inlet indicated that north of the Inlet, canopy heights appear to have increased over the past month, which is a positive sign toward recovery. Salinity conditions are fair in the upper Caloosahatchee Estuary and good in the Lower Estuary and San Carlos Bay.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs):

Rainfall was similar to last week in the WCAs and ranged from 0.15 to 0.23 inches. Bird surveys indicate that most foraging is taking place in both WCA-2A and the northeast section of WCA-3A. Since November, WCA-1 and WCA-3 continue to be below the regulation schedule, while WCA-2A remains above the regulation schedule.

Everglades National Park:

Rainfall amounts averaged 0.24 inches in the Park, but virtually no rain was measured at the marine platforms. Water levels decreased across the Park in response to these dry conditions.

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

Florida Bay:

For the third week, the heaviest rainfall across the Everglades this week was received in Florida Bay. Salinity concentrations were up slightly across Florida Bay last week.

Area Water Restrictions:

Mandatory Phase 1 water restrictions remain in force for the Lake Okeechobee Service Area as well as the Northern Indian Prairie Basin, which comprise the

Everglades Agricultural Area, portions of Hendry, Glades, Lee, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and Martin Counties, as well as agricultural areas to the south of Lake Istokpoga in Highlands County.

A formal water shortage warning remains in place for the District's Lower East Coast Service Area, which comprises Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward and eastern Palm Beach Counties.

For additional information, area residents are encouraged to call the District's toll-free Water Conservation Hotline at 1-800-662-8876 or contact their regional service center. Helpful water conservation tips are available at <http://www.sfwmd.gov/site/index.php?id=52>

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 Niki Spencer at 800-432-2045 or 561-686-8800, ext. 6004.

** 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.*