



Weekly Update

April 23 - 27, 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.

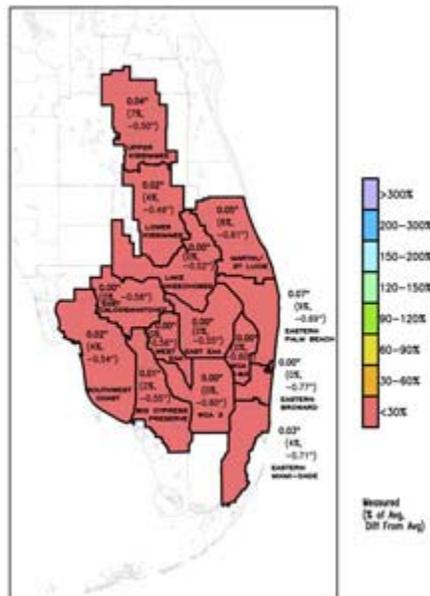
District News and Happenings

- The District's Emergency Operations Center remains activated full time to monitor, manage and track water shortage conditions. We continue to coordinate and communicate with state and local officials and provide information to local municipalities and media. To date, the District's Citizen's Information Line has fielded more than 7,000 calls.
- The District executed an emergency order on April 26 that provided for the analysis of alternative water supplies to meet the potable water needs for the City of West Palm Beach. This action enabled the city to enter into Phase III water restrictions for its utility customers.
- The District continues to take advantage of the low water levels to remove accrued sediments and perform rehabilitation work at Stormwater Treatment Area-1 West.

System-Wide Overview



South Florida Water Management District
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Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 0.02 inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

System-wide overview:

Water level conditions rebounded somewhat over the past week throughout the District in response to rainfall events over the past two weeks. Wells in the Upper East Coast and Lower West Coast continue to remain near low levels for their periods of record. Rainfall received last week was well below normal. The District

has received only 49.33 inches of rain District-wide in the last 18 months. The forecast for the next 10-15 days is for slightly below average rainfall. There is a chance of sea breeze thunderstorms this Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

U.S. Drought Monitor:

The [Drought Monitor](#) focuses on broad-scale conditions and identifies general drought areas, labeling droughts by intensity. This week, areas of the District fall into three areas of intensity - abnormally dry, moderate drought and severe drought.

Lake Okeechobee:

Lake Okeechobee continues to decline and is at 9.89 feet NGVD 29 (8.59 feet NAVD 88), 0.17 feet lower since this day last week and 0.75 feet lower than one month ago. Recent rainfall had minimal impacts on lake levels. Although low lake levels are creating abundant shorebird habitat, snail kite foraging conditions are poor. No snail kites or nests were observed on Lake Okeechobee during the most recent snail kite surveys. As lake levels continue to decline, sampling programs are being scaled back or even suspended because sites are no longer accessible by boat or boat ramps are no longer usable for launching.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin:

The upper Kissimmee Basin received 0.54 inches of rain over the last seven days, and the lower basin received 0.38 inches. Lake stages have remained fairly stable over the last week. Snail kites continue to nest on Lake Tohopekaliga and Lake Kissimmee. Small releases from Lake Tohopekaliga continue to allow a more gradual recession for snail kites. Concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Phase I restored river channel has been above thresholds of concern.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries:

In the St. Lucie Estuary, no releases occurred at S-80 over the past week. Average salinities at the Roosevelt Bridge exceed the upper limit of the preferred range. Salinity conditions remain conducive for recovery of seagrasses near the St. Lucie Inlet. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, no discharge occurred at S-79 over the past week. Salinity conditions are good for seagrasses in the lower estuary and San Carlos Bay.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs):

After last week's reversals and this week's lack of rain, the WCAs have returned to their usual downward slope. Where there was water, this decline has once again improved feeding conditions for wading birds, but in WCA-2B and northern areas of WCA-3A, water tables are now down to half to almost a foot below the peat surface, increasing the risks of peat fires. The southern end of WCA-3A is still deep at 1.25 feet.

Everglades National Park:

Very little rain fell again last week in Everglades National Park. Park wetlands experienced seasonal water level recessions last week, though these levels still remain considerably higher than they were before the rain event from two weeks ago. The drop in water levels ranged from 0.4 to more than 4 inches for the week.

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

Florida Bay:

Salinity trends in Florida Bay were mixed for the week. Many areas saw declining concentrations early in the week, spiking to a peak by Friday, and then dropping again by the weekend.

Area Water Restrictions:



Click map for larger image

Everglades Agricultural Area

Modified Phase Three or extreme water shortage conditions have been declared for Everglades Agricultural Area farmers who rely on Lake Okeechobee for irrigation water. This requires a 45 percent cutback in their weekly allocations.

Lake Okeechobee Service Area

(Includes portions of Hendry, Glades, Lee, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, Martin counties) Phase Two restrictions remain in place for other Lake Okeechobee Service Area water users. This requires a 30 percent reduction for agricultural and other District permitted users and limits lawn watering to no more than two days a week for residents and businesses using surface water sources.

Lower East Coast

(Includes eastern Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Monroe counties, as well as residents and business in Martin County served by the Tequesta Water Utility) Phase Two restrictions require a 30 percent reduction for agricultural and other District permitted users and limits lawn watering to no more than two days a week for residents and businesses using surface water sources. These restrictions apply to all traditional surface and groundwater sources - including water from public utilities, private wells, lakes, canals and ponds.

Lower West Coast

(Includes Hendry, Glades, Lee and Collier counties and a portion of Charlotte County) Phase Two restrictions require a 30 percent reduction for agricultural and other District permitted users and limits lawn watering to no more than two days a week for residents and businesses using surface water sources. These restrictions apply to all traditional surface and groundwater sources - including water from public utilities, private wells, lakes, canals and ponds.

Upper East Coast

(Includes Martin and St. Lucie counties) Phase 1 or moderate restrictions are now in effect for residents and businesses in Martin and St. Lucie counties, except those as residents and business in Martin County served by the Tequesta Water Utility who are under Phase Two restrictions. Lawn watering is allowed up to three-days-a-week and, again, these restrictions apply to all traditional surface and groundwater sources.

Agricultural users in the Lake Istokpoga area and in St. Lucie and Martin counties continue to have limits on withdrawals from area canals.

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.*