

Weekly Update: September 14, 2005



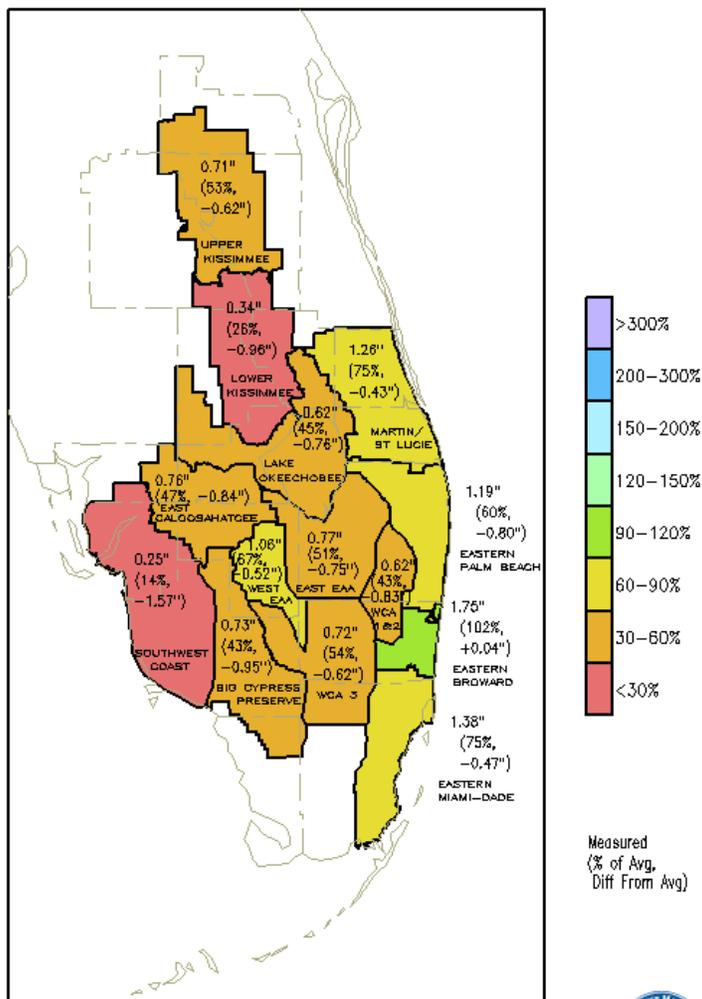
just the
FACTs

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
06-SEP-2005 to 12-SEP-2005



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.77" (49%, -0.79")

GRADS: COLA/IGES

Measured
(% of Avg,
Diff From Avg)



Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was less than 1".
- Rainfall total for September (to date) was 2.24", which is 84 % of average.
- The outlook for the next 14 days is for below normal rainfall.
- The outlook for the remainder of the wet season (through October) is for an increased likelihood of above average rainfall.



sfwmd.gov

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

Weekly Update: September 14, 2005 (page 2)

System-wide overview:

Low rainfall amounts did not do much to change conditions across the District. Tropical Storm Ophelia's presence and the interruption of the daily sea breeze process, especially in the Kissimmee Valley, will likely keep rainfall below normal for the next week. Pulse releases continue from Lake Okeechobee.

Lake Okeechobee — Lake level is at 15.80 ft NGVD, down slightly (0.02 ft) since last week.* Moderate algae blooms were observed at Pahokee and Harney Pond, with light blooms at Clewiston, the mouth of the Kissimmee River and several other locations. Monthly vegetation monitoring has been completed in the northern portion of the lake. Of the 15 sites surveyed, only one was vegetated. Water clarity is improving, but lake depths are now high enough that no light is reaching the bottom, even at the sites with greatest transparency.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — Stages in the upper basin lakes continue to be at or near regulation schedule. River temperature is still seasonally high, with a low concentration of dissolved oxygen.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — More than half of the flow into both estuaries is from Lake Okeechobee. The Florida Oceanographic Society reports that dissolved oxygen concentrations in the St. Lucie Estuary are fair to good, while water clarity ranges from fair to poor. Salinity conditions in both estuaries remain poor.

Water Conservation Areas — Water depths continue to be high except in WCA-1, which is slightly below regulation schedule. Levels are above regulation schedule in WCA-2A and WCA-3A, where water depths have been over 3 ft in the southern regions. Prolonged deep water may start to cause stress on trees in these areas.

Everglades National Park — Rainfall ranged from no rain to 0.5". Despite the lack of rain, stage and depth have changed very little across the system. Hurricane Katrina may have damaged many of the stage recorders in the park, so data are limited.

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 — After the steep post-Katrina decline, salinity has moderated across much of Florida Bay. Concentrations remain near where they were last week.

* 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

Weekly Update: September 14, 2005 (page 3)

Algae Update — Increased monitoring continues on blue-green algae in Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie River/Estuary, Caloosahatchee River and Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes. This species (*Mycrocystis*) is not typically toxic but can form toxic strains. The Blue-Green Algae Task Force continues to meet weekly to coordinate activities and response. Toxicity results from 28 samples taken Aug. 15-30 are reported below, in parts per billion (ppb):

Caloosahatchee	0.96 – 7.0 ppb
Kissimmee	0.20 – 12.4 ppb
St. Lucie	2.25 – 24.6 ppb
Lake Okeechobee	1.53 – 65.5 ppb

The World Health Organization guidance level for drinking water is 1.0 ppb; no recreational exposure standards exist. Current drinking water treatment plants have the capability to treat for these algae. For additional monitoring information, frequently asked questions and related links, visit the District's new blue-green algae web site:

<http://www.sfwmd.gov/site/index.php?id=611>