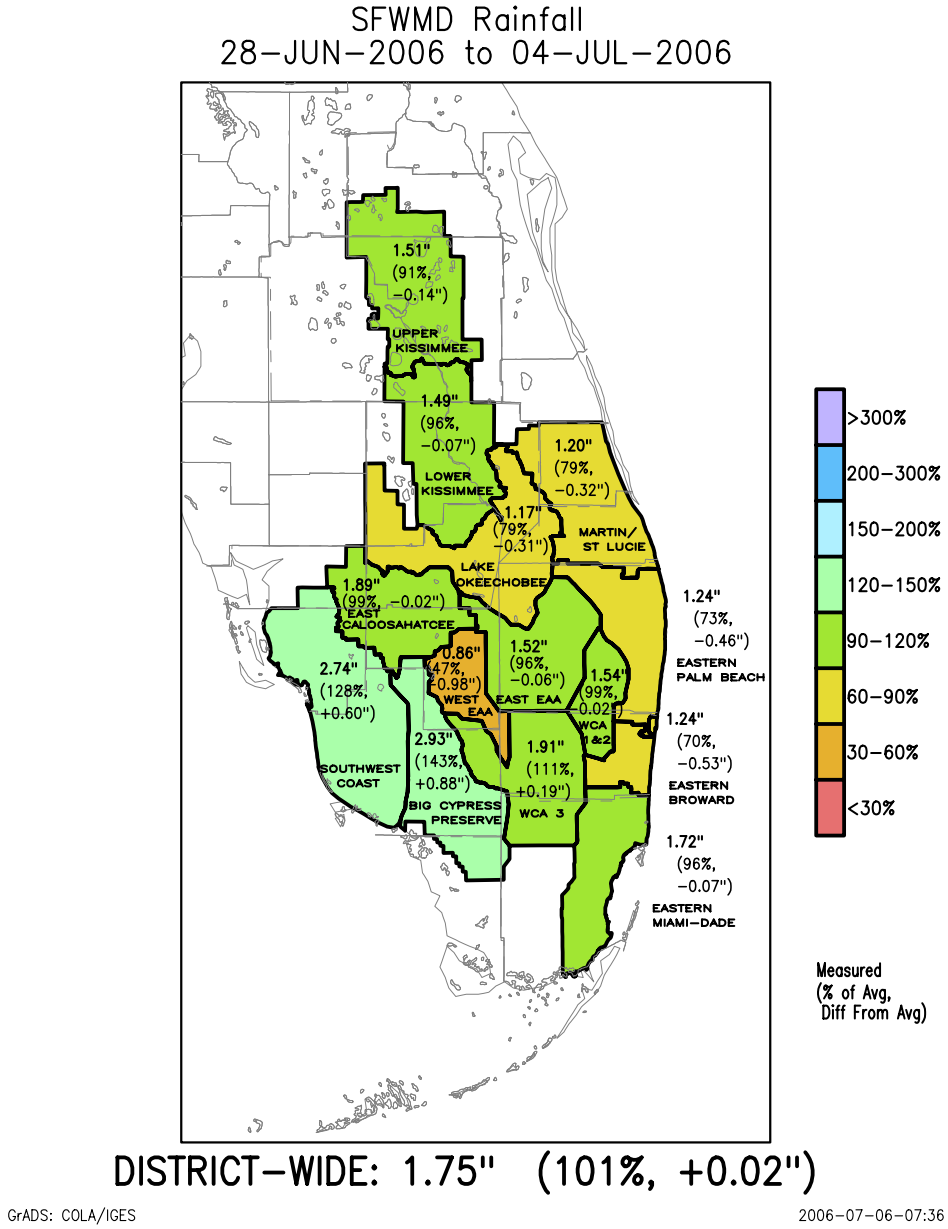
Weekly Update: July 5, 2006

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.



Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was approximately 1 ¾ inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

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State of the Water Management System

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System-wide overview:

June rainfall measured approximately 5.75 inches. The period from January to date has been the driest on record since 1956 and the third driest since 1932. Rainfall is expected to be below average for the next 10 days.

Lake Okeechobee — The Lake stage is approximately 12.04 feet NGVD 29 (10.74 feet NAVD 88), up 0.07 feet since this day last week and 4.22 feet lower than on this date last year.* The lake remains at what is considered to be the ideal stage for regeneration of the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) community. Based on previous experience on Lake Okeechobee, SAV re-growth is expected in about 10 weeks and then only if lake stages remain low. Routine bloom monitoring is being conducted, and monthly SAV transect monitoring will be conducted during the next week.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — In the last seven days, the Kissimmee upper basin received 0.47 – 0.82 inches and the lower basin received 0.66 – 0.90 inches. While stages have started to increase in most lakes in the upper basin, stages are still well-below regulation schedule. Snail kite nesting continues on Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) and East Lake Toho. Discharges at S-65 were approximately 400 cubic feet per second, and concentration of dissolved oxygen in the restored river channel remains well above thresholds of concern.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — One day of discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary occurred at S-80 over the past week (weekly average =17 cubic feet per second). In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, discharge at S-79 averaged 1,017 cubic feet per second over the past week. The 30-day average discharge at S-79 is 715 cubic feet per second and within the preferred range. Tape grass beds in the upper estuary between Ft. Myers and the I-75 Bridge have experienced weekly average salinities within established tolerance limits. Salinity conditions in both estuaries are good.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) — WCA-1 and WCA-2 received approximately 0.75 inches of rain for the week. Precipitation did not keep pace with evapotranspiration in 2A and 2B, and as a result, depths are now low in both locations. Depths are either good or fair for foraging in all other locations, except in the southern region of WCA-3A where depths have been too high for the entire dry season. WCA-1 and 2 are at regulation. Wading bird foraging in support of fledglings continues, especially in WCA-2B. Unfortunately, WCA-2B is quickly drying out and, if possible, we may soon need to consider rehydration of 2B with water from WCA-2A.

Everglades National Park — Datasets from the Park were incomplete for the week; however, there was a detectable upswing in water level in the eastern stations. Rainfall accumulations were approximately 3 inches in northeast Shark River Slough and Taylor Slough of the Park. At Taylor Slough Bridge, the stage increased nearly 4 feet in only four days. In Shark River Slough, the water level increase has been slower.

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 concentrations in Florida Bay dropped for much of last week at nearly all stations. The exceptions to these declines came at Long Sound and Tarpon Bay where salinity held steady.

Keetch-Byram drought index — This is used by the Florida Division of Forestry to indicate soil dryness. The scale ranges from zero (no moisture deficit) to 800, which means eight inches of water has been depleted from the soil. It is based on daily rainfall and temperature measurements, and increases for each day without rainfall. High values of the KBDI are an indication that conditions are favorable for the occurrence and spread of wildfires. The index can be viewed at http://flame.fl-dof.com/fire_weather/KBDI/index.html. The July 6 KBDI average for the District's 16 counties is 359, with a minimum of 122 in Lee County and a maximum of 538 in St. Lucie County.

Other District News and Happenings —

- The District anticipates receiving the 404 permit for the construction of the Acceler8 Everglades Agricultural Reservoir in July.

- The District has now received all of the permits needed for construction to proceed on the first phase of the Water Preserve Area/Site 1 Impoundment in Southern Palm Beach County. Construction is expected to commence in August, which is ahead of the project's original schedule.

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.