

Weekly Update: January 10, 2007



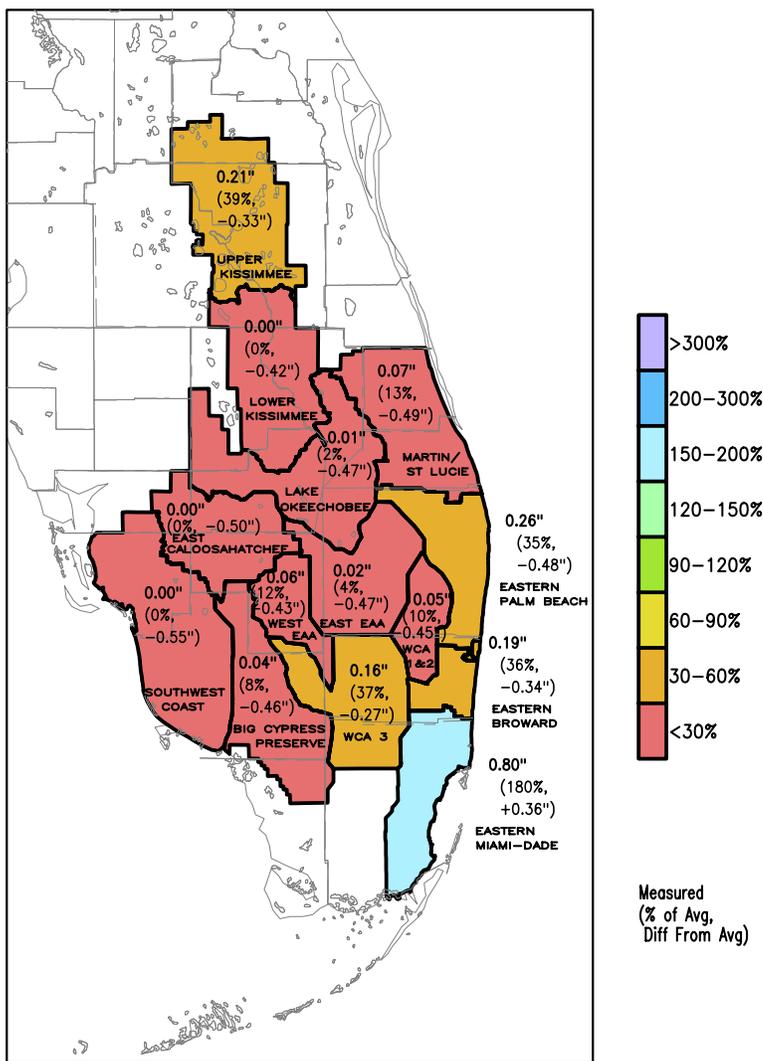
just the
FACTs

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.

SFWM District Rainfall
03-JAN-2007 to 09-JAN-2007



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.10" (20%, -0.40")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

2007-01-09-15:02



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Rainfall overview:

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

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System-wide overview:

Some showers will return on the east coast through the remainder of the week, but these will be inconsequential to water management. High pressure will dominate through the weekend. The next chance for significant rain is at least a week away. The outlook for the next ten days is below average precipitation.

Lake Okeechobee — The lake stage is approximately 12.09 feet NGVD 29 (10.79 feet NAVD 88), and is 0.03 feet lower than it was on this date last week. Surface inflows are 135 cubic feet per second (cfs). Surface outflows are 154 cfs. Two thirds of the monthly submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) sampling has been completed and the preliminary results indicate an increase in density and distribution of SAV from last month. Seventeen of the 26 sites had adequate light reaching the bottom to support plant growth, which is also an increase from last month. Crews also observed flourishing patches of SAV. The lower water levels are providing favorable conditions for bulrush growth and expansion.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — During the last seven days, the upper basin received 0.30 inches of rainfall to bring the 30-day total to 3.25 inches, which is 130 percent of the long-term average. The lower basin received 0.03 inches to bring the 30-day total to 1.68 inches, which is 95 percent of the long-term average. Stages for the upper basin lakes remain below their respective regulation schedules. Water levels within the area of Phase I of Kissimmee River Restoration Project have been fairly stable over the last week.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — In the St. Lucie Estuary, no discharges occurred at S-80 during the past week. All salinity readings are within the preferred range, and salinity conditions in the estuary are good. The environmental releases to the Caloosahatchee Estuary that began on Dec. 16 continue with a goal of maintaining a discharge of 250 cfs at S-79 from a combination of releases from Lake Okeechobee and runoff from the C-43 Basin. During the past week, discharge at S-79 has averaged 287 cfs with 95 percent supplied by releases from Lake Okeechobee. Salinity conditions in the lower estuary and San Carlos Bay are good.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) — Rainfall accumulations for the last seven days varied, but generally went from low to high as you moved south through the system. Stages within the WCAs continue to recede. Water depths remained relatively consistent in WCA-1, WCA-2A, WCA-2B, WCA-3A and WCA-3B with depths of 1.45 feet, 0.96 feet, 2.58 feet, 1.41 feet and 1.20 feet, respectively. WCA-1 and WCA-3 continue to be below the regulation schedule. WCA-2A remains above regulation.

Everglades National Park —

Rainfall conditions within the Park were patchy, with most of the rain falling over wetland stations in eastern sections. Water levels displayed mixed trends across the Park wetlands for the week, due in part to the patchy distribution of the rainfall.

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 continued to be stable across Florida Bay this past week, although water flow reversals were more prominent this week than last week.

Area Water Restrictions — Coupled with irregular 2006 rain patterns that disproportionately favored southern and southwestern portions of the District, SFWMD meteorologists recorded District-wide rainfall of 40.75 inches for 2006, marking the sixth-driest year on record in South Florida dating back to 1932. The total is nearly a foot, or 22 percent, below the historical average rainfall of 52.25 inches per year District-wide.

All of the District's major basins experienced below average rainfall for the year. Most notably, the Upper Kissimmee Basin, comprised of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, received a record low of 32.20 inches of rain in 2006, nearly an inch below the previous record of 33.00 inches set in 1961 and nearly 18 inches below the basin's historical average of approximately 50 inches. Similarly, the Martin/St. Lucie Basin, along the District's northeastern border, received 33.70 inches of rain, approximately 61 percent of that basin's historical average and the second-lowest annual rain total on record here dating back to 1915.

At present, the water level of Lake Okeechobee, a bellwether measurement of the District's water supply, is more than three feet – or 21 percent – below its historical average for this time of year. This, too, is a concern because the lake serves as the region's primary back-up water supply.

Other District News and Happenings —

- The Keys Eco-Discovery Center opening is scheduled for this Saturday at 11 a.m. The District is a sponsor of the center, which features 6,000 square feet of interactive state-of-the-art dynamic exhibits showcasing the underwater and upland habitats of the Keys. Exhibits focus on the local ecosystems, human interactions with the environment, and the maritime culture and history of the area.
- The District will hold Water Resource Advisory Commission Issues Workshop meetings on Jan. 23 and 25. The purpose of these meetings will be to discuss the concepts presented in the Broward County Water Preserve Areas (a component of the Acceler8 Program) Basis of Design Report and encourage and provide an opportunity for public participation. The Basis of Design Report is available for review on the Acceler8 website.
- The District re-opened equestrian areas at the DuPuis Management Area and Hickory Hammock Wildlife Management Area on Jan. 11. The DuPuis Management Area is located in western Martin County; Hickory Hammock is in Highlands County. The areas had been temporarily closed on Dec. 22, 2006 after the recent equine herpes outbreak. The trail riding, off-trail riding and overnight boarding is available for use.

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.