

Weekly Update: April 12, 2006



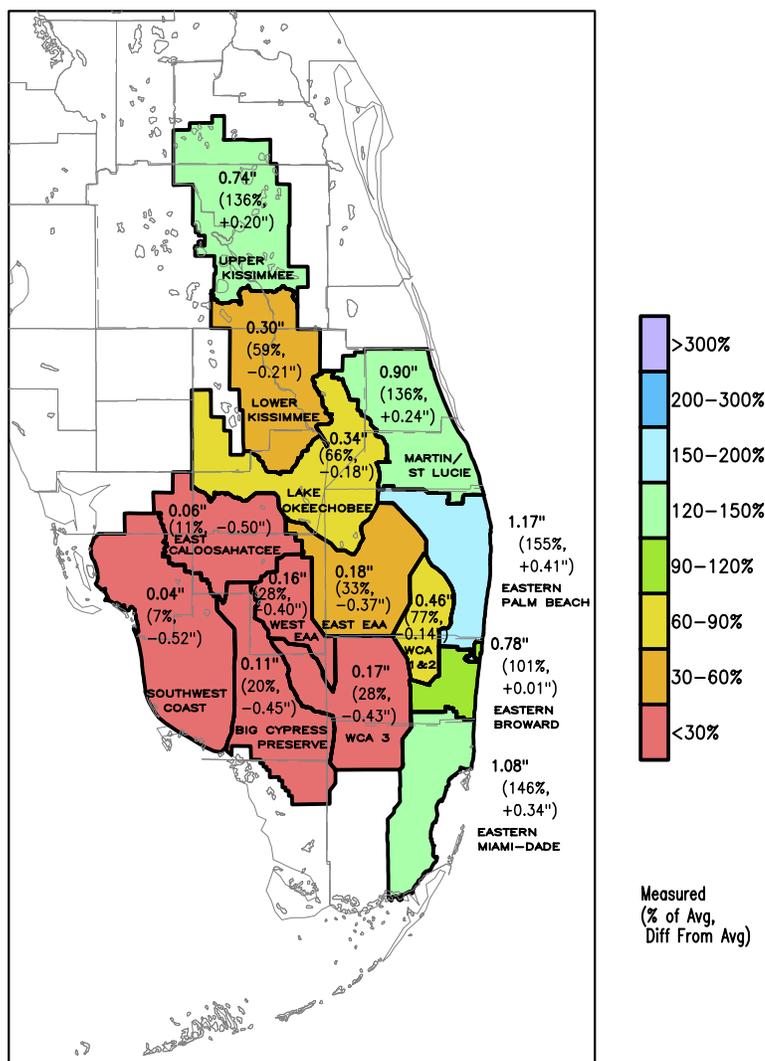
*just the*  
**FACTs**

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.*

SFWM District Rainfall  
05-APR-2006 to 11-APR-2006



**DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.42" (72%, -0.16")**

GRADS: COLA/IGES

2006-04-11-19:02



[sfwmd.gov](http://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

**Rainfall overview:**

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was less than half an inch.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

## State of the Water Management System

Weekly Update: April 12, 2006 (page 2)

### System-wide overview:

There has been an average 0.42 inches of rainfall District-wide with a range of 0.04 -1.12 inches observed in west coast and eastern Palm Beach County, respectively. Few showers and windy conditions are expected over the next couple days, though Friday and Saturday are expected to be dry. Below average rainfall is anticipated over the next 15 days District-wide.

**Lake Okeechobee** — The Lake stage is approximately 14.18 feet NGVD 29 (12.88 ft NAVD 88), down 0.29 feet since this day last week and 1.17 feet lower than on this date last year.\* Improvements in routine bulrush stem counts in test plots, the finding of sparse *Ceratophyllum* at one shallow submerged aquatic vegetation site and water clarity measurements that indicate that turbidity is abating are all signs that if lake levels continue to fall, improvement in the ecological health of the lake may occur.

**Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin** — In the last seven days, the upper basin received 0.74 inches resulting in a 30-day total of 0.92 inches, which is 31% of normal. The lower basin received 0.30 inches of rainfall during this same period, which resulted in a 30-day total of 0.74 inches or 28% of normal. The spring recession for the upper basin lakes continues. In the upper reaches of the restoration project, flow is confined to the restored river channel, and the floodplain is drying out. In the lower reaches, water levels are higher relative to the channel banks and inundate most of the floodplain. Aerial surveys for wading birds began on April 5. Some large foraging flocks of wading birds, primarily white ibis and great egret, were noted in the Phase I area. Also, three of the four active wading bird colonies along the Kissimmee River (outside the 100-year floodplain) that were reported last month are still active.

**St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries** — Pulse releases to both estuaries ended on April 10. Salinity conditions in both estuaries are good.

**Water Conservation Areas (WCAs)** — WCA-1 increased in depth due to the rain on Sunday. WCA-2A continues to decline after the high rains from two weeks ago, and wading birds have returned to the area to feed. WCA-3A and 3B recession rates continue to be good. The WCA-2B recessions were actually too high; however, this is not a problem because water levels are relatively deep (2.46 ft). All the WCAs are near regulation schedule. Wading birds are now foraging throughout the Everglades, and the numbers of nests have more than doubled since last month.

**Everglades National Park** — It was another dry week, but water levels in the Park dropped less this week than in previous weeks.

*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** — Salinity continued to increase across Florida Bay over the past week, and bay water continues to push upstream into the Taylor River ponds.

\* 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: April 12, 2006 (page 3)

**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 moisture is not found for eight inches below 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://www.fl-dof.com/fire\\_weather/KBDI/](http://www.fl-dof.com/fire_weather/KBDI/). The April 12 KBDI average for the District's 16 counties is 535 with a minimum of 14 in Orange and Osceola counties and a maximum of 734 in Palm Beach county.

### Other District News and Happenings —

- Massive bones of what experts believe belonged to one or several ancient giant sloths, which measured up to 20 feet tall when standing and that became extinct at least 4,000 years ago, have been unearthed by District crews and contractors during the construction of a 2000-acre stormwater treatment area. Recovery of the bones already unearthed and an initial official inspection of the site by archeologists took place on April 11. Construction in that section was stopped and moved to other ongoing construction sites in the project, thus keeping it on schedule.
- A milestone – completion of land acquisition for the Kissimmee River Restoration –was celebrated at the Governing Board meeting in Okeechobee on April 12.
- Later this month, the District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold two ribbon cutting ceremonies:
  - Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough on Thursday, April 27 at 1:00 pm.
  - Ten Mile Creek on Friday, April 28 at 12:30 p.m., adjacent to Structure 382.

---

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.