

Weekly Update: June 7, 2006



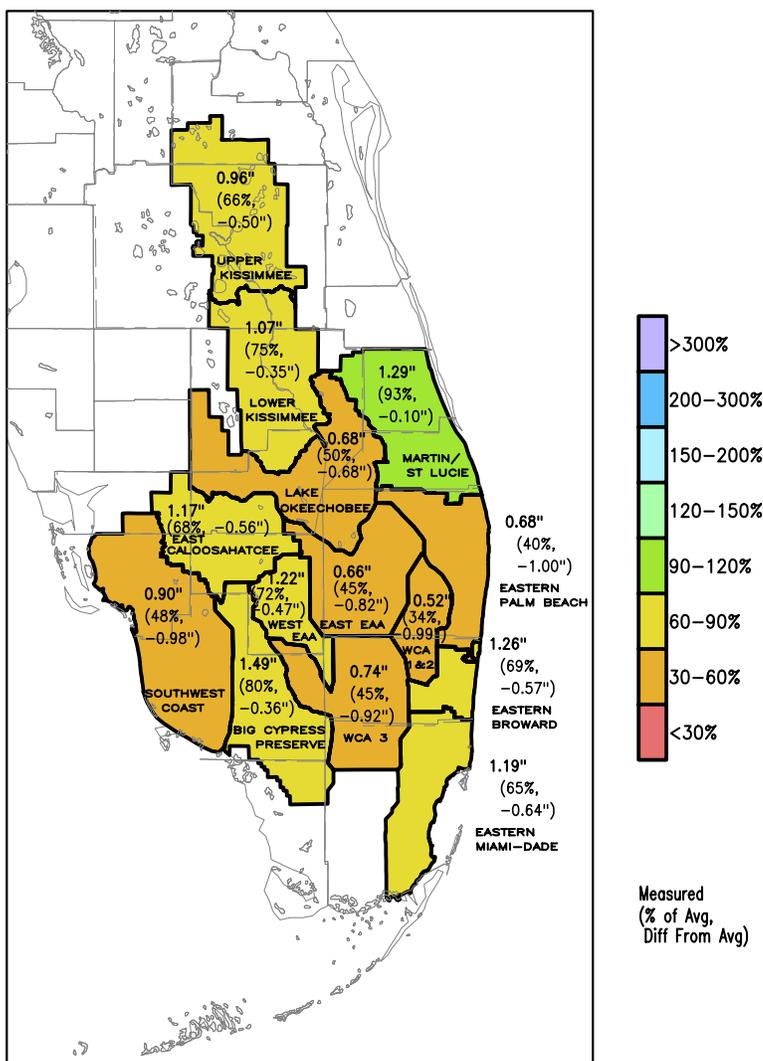
## State of the Water Management System

*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.*

### 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.

SFWM District Rainfall  
31-MAY-2006 to 06-JUN-2006



**DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.99" (62%, -0.62")**

GRADS: COLA/IGES

2006-06-06-16:02

#### Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was approximately 1 inch.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for near average rainfall.



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## State of the Water Management System

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### System-wide overview:

Dry season rainfall was approximately 62% of normal, which is well below average. For the past week, rainfall was 1.1-1.3 inches District-wide, which is also below average. Rainfall is expected to be below average through the weekend and then increase to above average for the remainder of the next 12 day period.

**Lake Okeechobee** — The Lake stage is approximately 12.59 feet NGVD 29 (11.29 feet NAVD 88), down 0.11 feet since this day last week and 2.06 feet lower than on this date last year.\* Overall, water quality in Lake Okeechobee appears to be improving and light is reaching the bottom at many of the shallower sites in the zone of potential submerged aquatic vegetation growth.

**Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin** — In the last seven days, most of the upper basin received 0.5-1.1 inches of rainfall and the lower basin received 1-1.5 inches of rainfall. Discharges continued from East Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) at S-59 and from Lake Toho at S-61. Most of the lakes are well below regulation schedule. Stage recession rates increased slightly to 0.01 feet/day in East Lake Toho and 0.05 feet/day in Lake Toho. Snail kite nesting continues on Lake Toho. Concentration of dissolved oxygen in the restored river channel remains well above thresholds of concern, which is good for aquatic organisms.

**St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries** — There was no discharge from S-80 during the past week. Salinity conditions in the St. Lucie Estuary are good. Seagrass monitoring in the Indian River Lagoon was conducted at two sites in mid-May. At the site north of the inlet, seagrass coverage continues to increase. While *Syringodium* shoot counts and canopy heights remain extremely low compared to previous years, an upward trend is apparent. At the site south of the inlet, seagrass coverage remains extremely low. However, *Halophila* species are beginning to expand at the site in areas that have not supported seagrasses since the 2004 hurricanes. The shoreline fringe of *Halodule wrightii* is expanding, and dense patches of *Halodule wrightii* and *Halophila johnsonii* are present along the offshore shoal.

A pulse release to the Caloosahatchee Estuary began on June 3. Over the past week, discharge at S-79 averaged 431 cubic feet per second. Salinity has increased in the estuary over the past week, and salinity conditions are good. Some water quality measurements were made at selected stations on May 22. Dissolved oxygen was well above levels of concern and water clarity measurements were good.

**Water Conservation Areas (WCAs)** — Rainfall over the Everglades averaged from 0.5 to 1.7 inches over the last week, with up to 5 or 6 inches locally in WCA-3A. Water levels are now declining, and the current rate of decline and water depths are providing suitable conditions for wading bird foraging throughout much of the WCAs. Stages are at regulation in WCA-1, slightly above regulation in WCA-2 and below in WCA-3. Large numbers of breeding wading birds remain in the system.

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\* 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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**Everglades National Park** — Much of the Park received between 1 to 2 inches of rain for the week, with a local maximum accumulation of nearly 3 inches at Shark River Slough. Water levels increased or remained the same across Park wetlands for the week. In Shark River Slough and at Taylor Slough Bridge, water levels rose by nearly 1.5 inches for the week. Water levels barely increased (just over 0.1 inches) in the panhandle.

*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** — Weekly rainfall totals were close to 0.5 inches in the bay proper. Salinity concentrations in the bay remained nearly the same as last week or declined slightly in some areas. It is common for the seasonal drop in salinity to lag behind the start of the rains by at least 1 month (and in the case of some of the more isolated central Florida Bay basins, by several months) as the Everglades is recharged and flow begins moving toward the bay.

**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 June 6 KBDI average for the District's 16 counties is 536 – a decrease of 10 points since last week – with a minimum of 32 in Osceola and Miami-Dade counties and a maximum of 721 in Lee County.

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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.