

Weekly Update: August 23, 2006



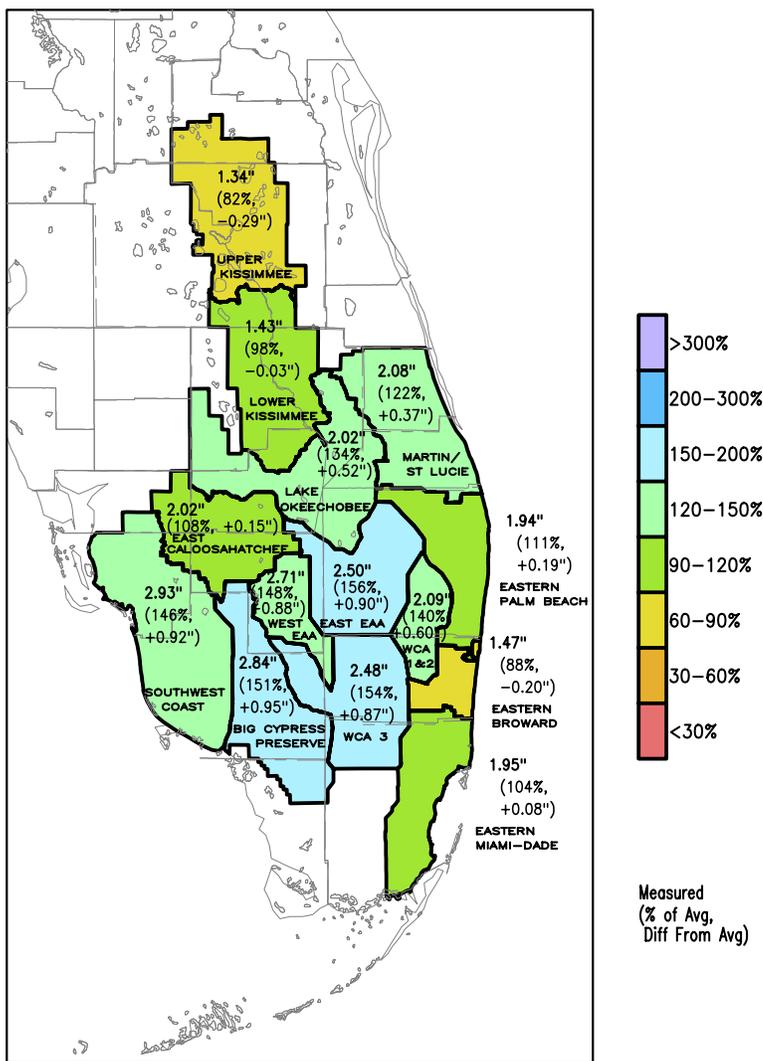
just the
FACTs

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
16-AUG-2006 to 22-AUG-2006



DISTRICT-WIDE: 2.16" (127%, +0.46")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

2006-08-22-15:02

Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 2.25 inches.
- The forecast is average to above average through Friday, below average over the weekend, then average next week.



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State of the Water Management System

Weekly Update: August 23, 2006 (page 2)

System-wide overview:

District-wide rainfall was approximately 2.25 inches, which is below average. For the past month, District-wide rainfall has been about 64 percent of normal. The forecast is average to above average through Friday, below average over the weekend, then average next week.

Lake Okeechobee — The lake stage is approximately 11.99 feet NGVD 29 (10.69 feet NAVD 88), and has remained essentially unchanged since last week.* The lake remains at a good level for regeneration of the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) community, and recent evidence indicates that active plant growth is occurring at various sites around the lake.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — During the last seven days, the upper basin received 0.6 – 0.75 inches of rain, and the lower basin received about 1 inch. In the upper basin lakes, stages remain below the respective regulation schedules. Stages have either stabilized or continue to fall. Releases from Lake Toho and Lake Kissimmee continue to be matched, so that water from Lake Toho can be passed through Lake Kissimmee for the Kissimmee River Restoration Project. Discharge has been approximately 150 cubic feet per second. At this rate, the stage in Lake Toho was continuing to decrease by approximately 0.02 feet per day earlier in the week. Rainfall received during the weekend appears to have temporarily stabilized water levels in Lake Toho. The concentration of dissolved oxygen in the restored river channel remains above thresholds of concern. Water levels in the Kissimmee River have risen slightly in the last week primarily due to rainfall.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — In the St. Lucie Estuary, discharge for the week at S-80 was negligible. Flow at S-308 was primarily from the C-44 Canal back into Lake Okeechobee. Average salinity at both monitoring sites was within the preferred range. The Florida Oceanographic Society reports that water clarity ranges from poor to good and dissolved oxygen from fair to good. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, discharge at S-79 averaged 1,143 cubic feet per second over the past week because of rainfall. The 30-day average discharge at S-79 is 857 cubic feet per second and within the preferred range. Salinity conditions in the Caloosahatchee Estuary and San Carlos Bay are good.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) — Rainfall accumulations for the week across the Everglades have been increasing over the last few weeks. WCA 1 received about 1.2 inches, WCA-2 received about 1.9 inches, WCA-2B received 3.1 inches, and WCA-3A and 3B received 2.8 inches. Rehydration rates have significantly improved for most of the system (see attached spreadsheet). WCA-1 is holding steady with 1.1 feet of water depth and is below regulation. WCA-2A is holding steady at 0.6 feet of water depth and is below regulation. Most of WCA-3A, except for the northeast region, had good rehydration rates. Like last week, WCA-3B and northeast Shark River Slough had about 2 inches of rainfall and fair recession rates.

Everglades National Park — There were significant gaps in the data from Everglades National Park this week as one of their communication servers was down for repair. The Park received about 1.9 inches of rain. Water levels at Taylor Slough Bridge remained just above the ground surface. In Shark River Slough, water level increased by 0.5 inches. Stage showed the greatest increase in the panhandle where water level was up by nearly 1.7 inches for the week.

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.

State of the Water Management System

Weekly Update: August 23, 2006 (page 3)

Florida Bay — Trout Creek's salinity level fluctuated throughout the week. Weekly flow was significantly higher than last week's cumulative discharge and was above the seasonal average. A similar pattern in both salinity and flow was seen this week at the Taylor River mouth platform, where salinity fluctuated while flows remained just above normal for this time of year. Salinity in the Taylor River ponds was stable. Salinity concentrations in Terrapin Bay and just upstream in McCormick Creek decreased.

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.flof.com/fire_weather/KBDI/. The Aug. 23 KBDI average for the District's 16 counties is 293 – a decrease of 86 points since last week – with a minimum of 1 in Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Lee, Glades, Hendry, Highlands, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach and Monroe counties and a maximum of 745 in Orange County.

Other District News and Happenings —

- The Ten Mile Canal Filter Marsh and Linear Park Phase I ribbon cutting was held last Wednesday. The roughly \$2 million marsh project was funded by a public/private partnership with the South Florida Water Management District, Lee County, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Water Enhancement Restoration Coalition. The marsh will be an important key to protecting the Estero Bay watershed. It is intended to filter pollutants from the 8-square mile watershed that drains into the canal, which empties into Estero Bay. In a year, the marsh is expected to remove 4,200 pounds of nitrogen, 221 pounds of phosphorous and 48,800 pounds of suspended solids. The Linear Park will provide additional residents with a recreational trail that can be enjoyed by cyclist, runners and walkers.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the agency responsible for managing the waters Lake Okeechobee, has opened the official public comment period on the proposed revisions to the lake's regulation schedule. There are a number of meetings throughout the area and interested parties are encouraged to attend. The proposed schedule will be discussed at the South Florida Water Management District's regular Governing Board meeting on September 12 in West Palm Beach.

September 12, 6:30 p.m.
Indian River Community College - Chastain Campus
2400 SE Salerno Road
Stuart, FL 34997

September 14, 6:30 p.m.
Lee County Commission Chambers
2120 Main Street
Ft. Myers, FL 33901

September 13, 6:30 p.m.
Okeechobee Civic Center
1750 Highway 98 North
Okeechobee, FL 34972

September 18, 6:30 p.m.
John Boy Auditorium
1200 WC Owen Avenue
Clewiston, FL 33440

- A ceremony designating the Site 1 Impoundment Project as the Fran Reich Preserve, as authorized by 2006 Florida Legislature, is scheduled for August 30 at 10 a.m. in west Boca Raton.

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 Jessica Morales at 800-432-2045 or 561-686-8800, ext. 6883.