

Weekly Update: September 6, 2006



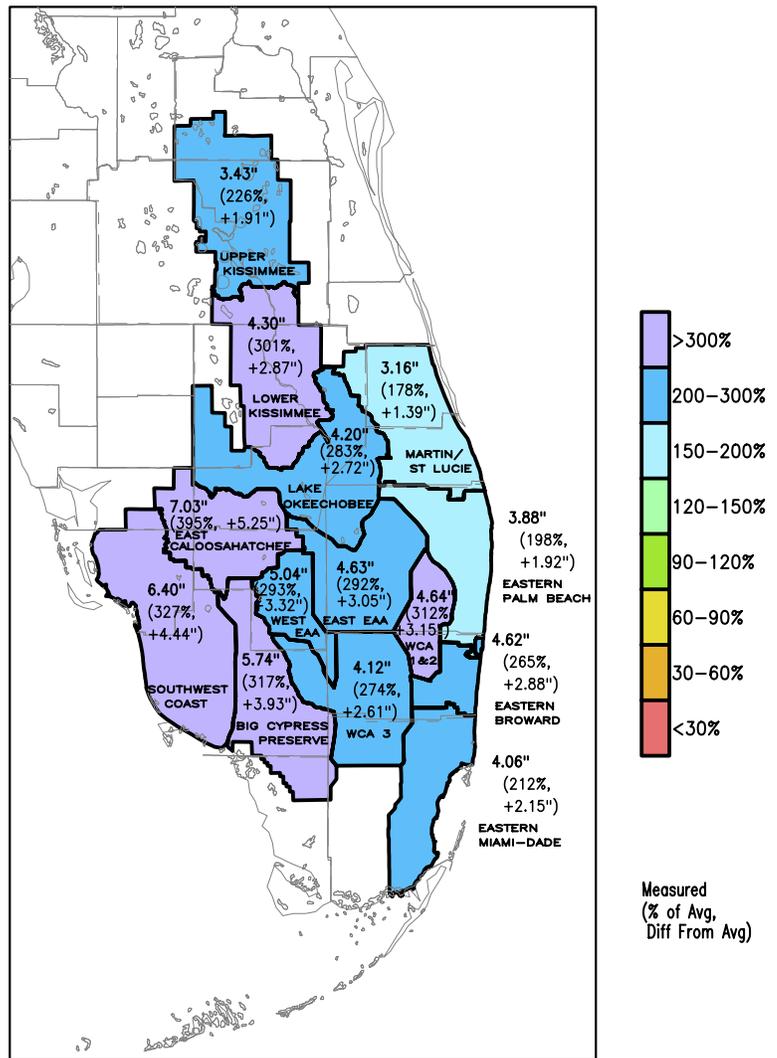
just the
FACTs

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
30-AUG-2006 to 05-SEP-2006



DISTRICT-WIDE: 4.69" (281%, +3.02")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

2006-09-05-19:02

Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 4.69 inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for below average rainfall.

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



State of the Water Management System

Weekly Update: September 6, 2006 (page 2)

System-wide overview:

District-wide rainfall from June through August was 22.5 inches, which is about 100 percent of normal. Rainfall for the month of August averaged 8.92 inches, approximately 118 percent of normal. Some areas on the west coast received up to 17 inches of rain in the past seven days. While the District and Collier County had opened gates and lowered structures in anticipation of Tropical Storm Ernesto, the rain that directly fell, as well as that from the watershed, overwhelmed portions of the system. The drainage system in Collier County is gravity based, has limited conveyance capacity and, thus, drains slowly. Additionally, during high tides, less water can exit the system. More rain is expected on Friday, and at least 3 more days of heavy sheetflow are expected. District staff worked throughout most of the weekend clearing debris from canals to ensure maximum flow. Our Citizen Information Line remains open to take calls about flooding from the public.

Lake Okeechobee — The lake stage is estimated to be approximately 12.8 feet NGVD 29 (11.5 feet NAVD 88), up 0.6 feet since this date last week. Data on turbidities and submerged aquatic vegetation conditions will be available in next week's conditions report.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — During the last seven days, the upper basin received 3.43 inches of rain to bring the 30-day total to 6.99 inches, which is 102 percent of the long-term average. The lower basin received 4.03 inches of rain to bring the 30-day total to 9.86 inches, which is 158 percent of the long-term average. With the additional rainfall last week, lake stages continue to rise in the upper basin although most lakes are still below regulation schedule. Releases of approximately 150 cubic feet per second continue to be made from Lake Toho and passed through Lake Kissimmee for the Kissimmee River Restoration Project. The concentration of dissolved oxygen in the restored river channel continued to drop. Because of rainfall over the lower basin, water levels continue to increase in the Kissimmee River.

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. Salinity conditions are fair to poor due to the heavy rainfall. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, discharge at S-79 averaged 16,000 cubic feet per second since August 31 with 100 percent being accounted for by basin runoff. The 30-day average discharge at S-79 is 4,290 cubic feet per second and outside the preferred range. Freshwater extends at least to the Cape Coral Bridge. Salinity conditions in the lower estuary and San Carlos Bay are poor.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) — Rehydration rates this past week have been very rapid. WCA-2A, the northern region of WCA-3A and the northern region of the Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge all increased by almost one foot in only one week. Despite this rapid rise, water depths are excellent for this time of year in the wet season. The only region of concern might be at gauge 65 in the southern region of WCA-3A where depths are 2.6 feet. If this trend continues, it could present a problem for tree islands later in the season. WCA-1 is at regulation, WCA-2A is above regulation and WCA-3 is above regulation.

Everglades National Park — Water levels were again up this week across the Park wetlands. An increase of just over 5.75 feet was seen at Taylor Slough Bridge, and an amount of 1.4 inches was seen in Shark River Slough. The water stage was up by 2.2 inches in the Park panhandle.

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: September 6, 2006 (page 3)

Florida Bay — Salinity in the bay decreased for the week. However, water moving up from Florida Bay during Tropical Storm Ernesto brought a temporary increase in concentrations at many stations.

Other District News and Happenings —

- The 2007 South Florida Environmental Report has been released on the District's web site for peer and public review.

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 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 Governing Board Workshop on Sept. 12 in West Palm Beach.

Sept. 12, 6:30 p.m.

Indian River Community College - Chastain Campus
2400 SE Salerno Road
Stuart, FL 34997

Sept. 14, 6:30 p.m.

Lee County Commission Chambers
2120 Main Street
Ft. Myers, FL 33901

Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.

Okeechobee Civic Center
1750 Highway 98 North
Okeechobee, FL 34972

Sept. 18, 6:30 p.m.

John Boy Auditorium
1200 WC Owen Avenue
Clewiston, FL 33440

- One of the agenda items for the Governing Board meeting on Sept. 13 is an item that will authorize the construction start for the Picayune Strand Restoration Acceler8 Project. This important project will improve water quality and volume of water delivered to coastal estuaries, significantly increase the size of wetlands and improve major wetland ecosystems benefiting threatened and endangered species, restore and enhance the wetlands in Picayune Strand and in adjacent public lands, and restore a natural and beneficial sheetflow of water to the Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

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.