

Weekly Update: July 27, 2005



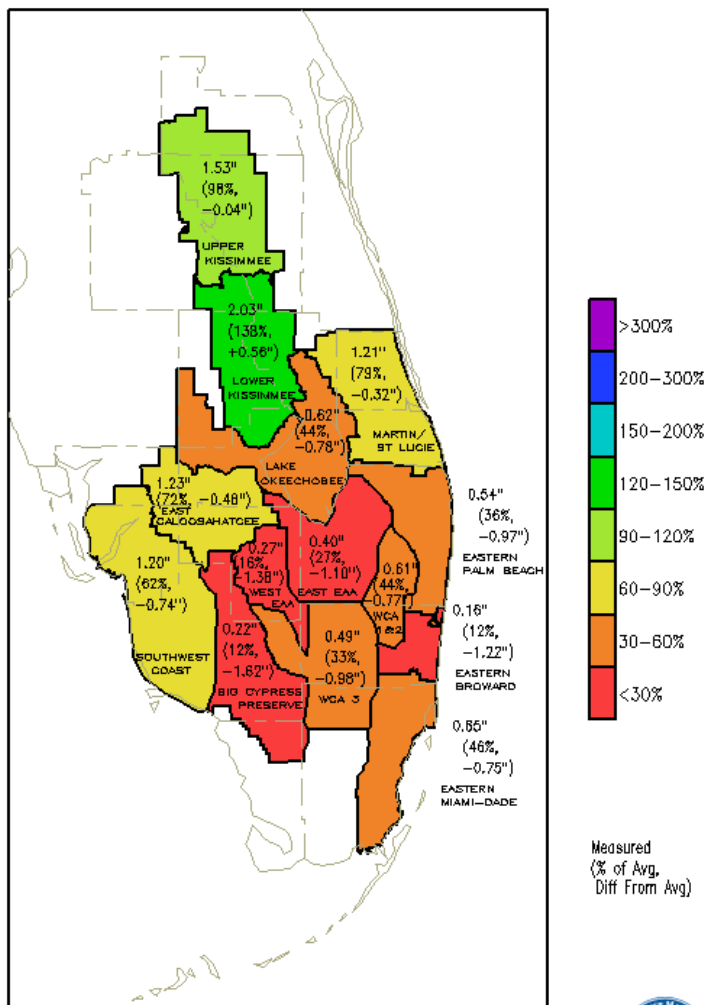
*just the*  
**FACTs**

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.*

SFWMD Rainfall  
19-JUL-2005 to 25-JUL-2005



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.91" (58%, -0.67")

GRADS: COLA/IGES



**Rainfall overview:**

- District-wide rainfall for the last week again averaged about 1"
- A few areas of the District received well below average rainfall.
- Monthly rainfall to-date for July is 5.07", which is about normal.
- The 7-10 day forecast is for average rainfall.

(more)



[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](http://www.sfwmd.gov)  
 MAILING ADDRESS P.O. Box 24680  
 West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680

## State of the Water Management System

Weekly Update: July 27, 2005 (page 2)

### System-wide overview:

The level of Lake Okeechobee stopped rising this week, although the entire system remains saturated. Releases to the ocean continue to be made from most coastal structures around the District. The long-term forecast for the wet season continues to be for an increased chance of above average rainfall.

**Lake Okeechobee** — Lake level declined slightly in the past week and is currently at 16.46 ft NGVD. This is down 0.16 ft from last week's level. Lake level is still high—currently 4.19 ft higher than this time last year.

Large releases continue from the lake, per the temporary deviation from the regulation schedule issued by the Corps of Engineers\*. As a result of these releases and receding inflows from the Kissimmee River, a slight downward trend in lake level took place this week. Preemptive releases are scheduled to continue until the lake level reaches 16.25 ft and continues to show a downward trend.

Windy conditions last week had broken up most of the large algal blooms, but some reports indicate that algal blooms are reoccurring. Annual mapping for biomass in the lake will begin soon, with official plant counts to be released in August. This information will be used to assess long-term damage to plant communities as a result of last year's hurricanes as well as more immediate impacts from current high water levels.

**Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin** — Rain over the upper and lower Kissimmee basins was slightly above normal during the past week. All of the upper basin lakes are at or near their regulation schedules. The exception is Lake Kissimmee, which is 0.25 ft below schedule. The Kissimmee River floodplain decreased 2 ft in the last week. As a result, releases were decreased significantly. Snail kites are nesting on Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho).

Beginning July 27, the Kissimmee River reopened to boaters between Lake Kissimmee and Lake Okeechobee. Public boat ramps that had been closed due to high flow conditions in the river also reopened.

**St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries** — Freshwater continues to flow into the estuaries from Lake Okeechobee releases. Salinity remains below the preferred range. Basin runoff is still contributing a large volume of flow into the Caloosahatchee. Conditions in both estuaries are poor.

(more)

---

\* *SFWMD water managers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers work together to manage the lake. 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:** July 27, 2005 (page 3)

**Water Conservation Areas** — Water levels throughout most of the Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) dropped slightly in the past week. In WCAs 2A and 3A, water levels are still significantly above schedule and are expected to recede slowly. As a result, WCAs 2B and 3 remain closed to the public, per the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

**Everglades National Park** — Rainfall ranged from ½ - 1” during the past week. Water levels remain high for this time of year but are not excessive. Depths are less than 2 ft in the park. Salinity concentrations continue to drop upstream (Taylor River ponds) but unexpectedly have risen downstream at the mouths of Taylor River and Little Madeira Bay, perhaps due to strong southerly winds during the week.

*Note: Rainfall information in the park is based on radar estimates, not rain gauge data. As a result, the map on page one does not always include rainfall information for the park.*

**Florida Bay** — Salinity has increased somewhat at several monitoring sites, despite rainfall throughout the area. Strong southerly winds may be impacting this reversal in trend.



[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](http://www.sfwmd.gov)

MAILING ADDRESS P.O. Box 24680  
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680