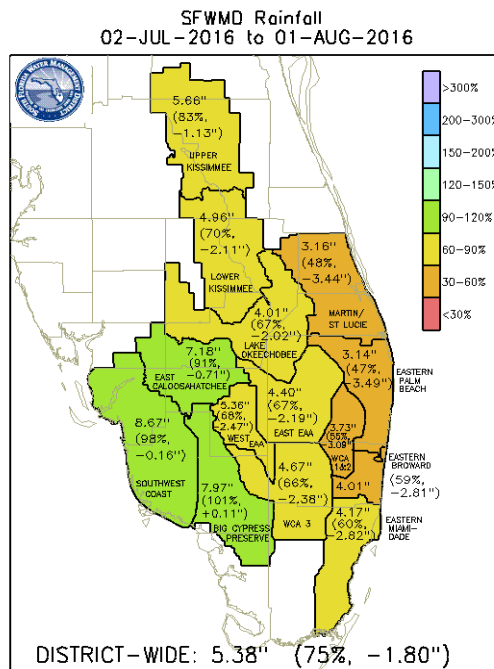




Aug. 2, 2016

July Rainfall Well Below Average for South Florida Still One of Wettest Years on Record Due to Unprecedented Rainfall in Earlier Months



GWD: COLA/ICES

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(Click on the map to enlarge and view SFWMD rainfall totals.)

West Palm Beach, FL - Rainfall across South Florida was well below average in July, leading to the 10th driest July on record, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) meteorologists reported. A total of 5.38 inches of rain fell District-wide, representing 75 percent of average, or 1.8 inches below average.

The driest parts of the District's 16-county region were in the eastern coastal areas of Palm Beach and Broward counties. Those basins received between 47 percent and 60 percent of their average rainfall for July. The eastern area of Palm Beach County was the driest with a 3.49-inch rainfall shortfall.

Easterly steering winds pushed storms that did develop across the state during the early part of July, accounting for the much drier conditions along the eastern coastal areas and average rainfall experienced in the western basins. The Southwest Coast, East Caloosahatchee and Big Cypress Preserve basins received close to the average amount of rainfall for July due to these steering winds.

Because of unprecedented rainfall for the first half of 2016 prior to July, it has still been the 10th wettest year on record, according to District meteorologists.

The below average rainfall proved to be beneficial to the SFWMD's ongoing efforts to treat and move more water south from Lake Okeechobee to Everglades National Park.

All of that unprecedented rainfall filled stormwater treatment areas and water conservation areas with local rainfall, creating a bottleneck that hindered the movement of more water south through the treatment system and hindered the ability to take more water from Lake Okeechobee south. The dry July created opportunity, particularly in the last week, to discharge water from treatment areas into the water conservation areas. This, in turn, created capacity to take more water into the stormwater treatment areas and the A-1 Flow Equalization Basin, which is storing water to eventually send to the treatment areas. In all, the District moved 33,300 acre-feet of water from Lake Okeechobee south to the treatment areas and flow equalization basins in July, far more than the 22,600 moved in May and June combined during heavier local rainfall.

Other rainfall totals included:

- Lake Okeechobee recorded 4.01 inches of direct rainfall, representing 67 percent of average, or 2.02 inches below average.
- Martin and St. Lucie counties received 3.16 inches of rain, representing 48 percent of average, or 3.44 inches below average.
- Rainfall totals in the Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) were below average. WCAs 1 and 2 received 3.73 inches of rain, representing 55 percent of average, or 3.09 inches below average. WCA 3 received 4.67 inches of rain, representing 67 percent of average, or 2.38 inches below average.
- The Upper and Lower Kissimmee basins were below their averages for the month. The Upper Kissimmee basin received 5.66 inches of rain, representing 83 percent of average, or 1.13 inches below average. The Lower Kissimmee basin received 4.96 inches of rain, representing 70 percent of average, or 2.11 inches below average.

South Florida Wet Season Facts

On average, South Florida's wet season begins around May 20 and ends around Oct. 13, lasting for about 21 weeks.

- Typically, about two-thirds of annual rains fall during the wet season, or approximately 35 inches out of 52 inches.
- June is usually South Florida's wettest month.
- The wet season has three general phases:
 - Memorial Day weekend through July 4 weekend, which are typically the wettest six weeks of the year.
 - Early July through mid-August, which are hotter and often drier.
 - Late August through October, which are characterized by highly variable rainfall mainly due to tropical activity and cold fronts.

More information is available at:

- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)

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The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

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