

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

JULY 2026

BIG CYPRESS BASIN HYDROLOGIC REPORT

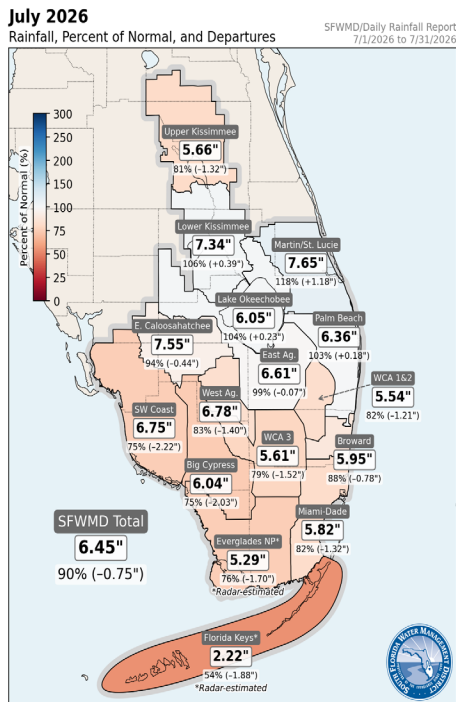
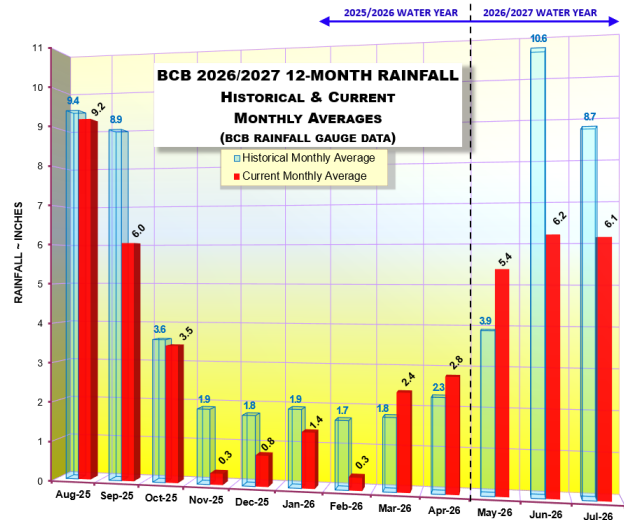


SUMMARY OF HYDROLOGIC CONDITIONS IN THE BIG CYPRESS BASIN

JULY 2026

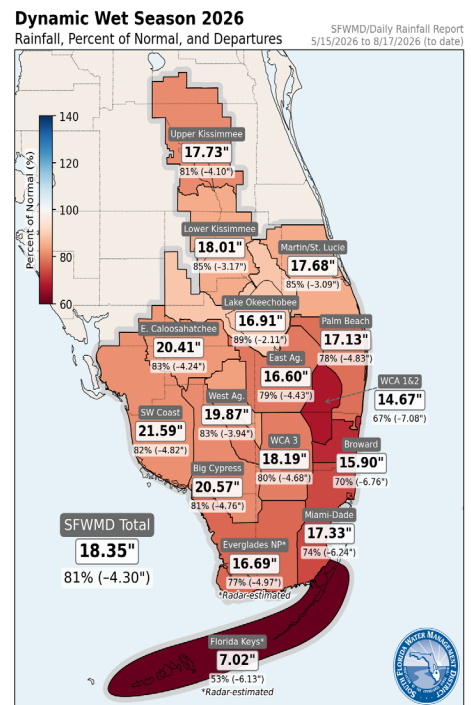
SUMMARY

July marked the second consecutive month of significantly below-normal precipitation in the Big Cypress Basin (BCB), with basin-wide gauges averaging just **6.14 inches** of rainfall (70% of normal). July's low total continued this year's summertime trend of sub-normal rainfall. The BCB thus remains in significant rainfall deficit for the current water year, which began on May 1, 2026. The below normal wet season rainfall – in conjunction with the exceptionally dry prior winter – has prevented the full implementation of flood control operations, as canal levels in several locations remain below desired levels.



During July, the Southwest Coast Forecast Area (SWCFA) received an average of 6.75 inches of rainfall, more than the BCB gauge-based average of 6.14 inches. Rainfall total differences between the two areas are common, however, as their boundaries differ, most notably in the Lee County area.

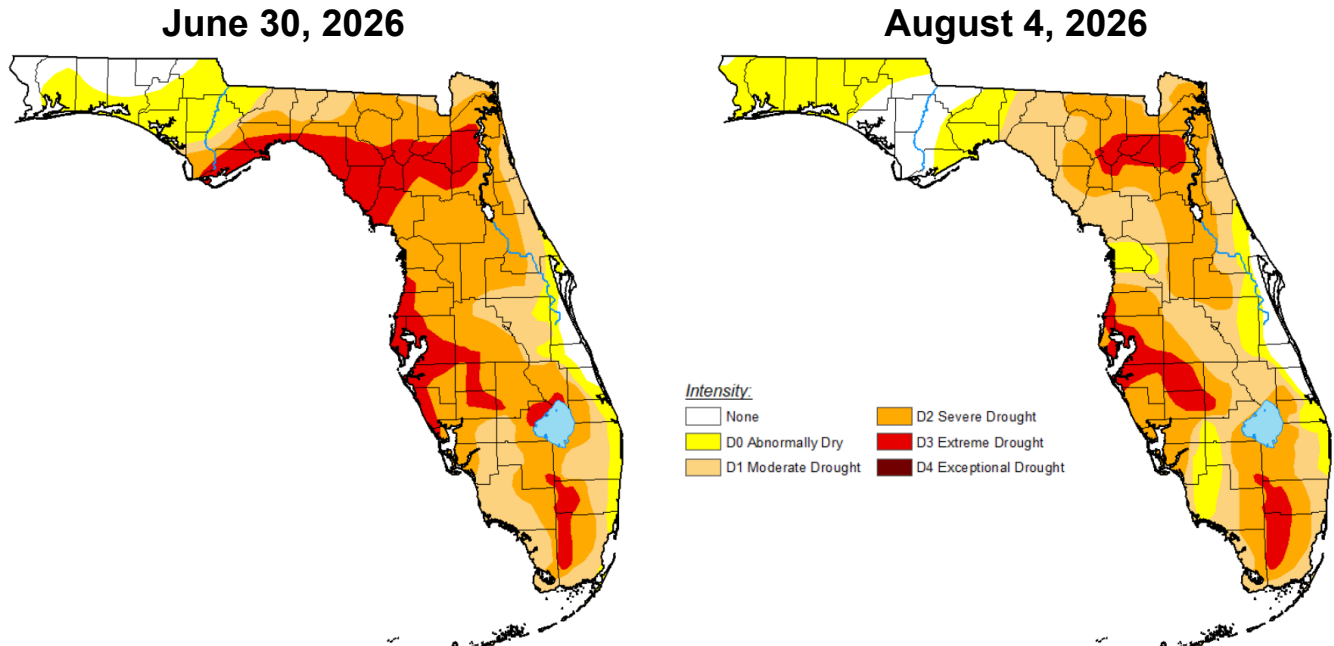
As a result of this below-normal rainfall, the SWCFA is running a 4.82-inch deficit for the 2026–2027 wet season as of mid-August.



Drought Conditions

Despite July's below-normal precipitation, the lower and middle Golden Gate Main Canal recovered to normal wet season water levels due to the District's water conservation efforts. However, efforts to conserve water were not enough to prevent water levels from declining in some segments of the upper Golden Gate Main, the upper Cocohatchee and the Corkscrew Canal. Though below normal,

July's rainfall was sufficient to ease drought conditions in portions of Collier County. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, as of August 4, 2026, drought conditions in much of the BCB area improved from "D1 Moderate Drought" to "D0 Abnormally Dry". The eastern half of Collier County did not show a similar drought condition improvement, however, and remained classified as a mixture of "D1 Moderate Drought" and "D2 Severe Drought."



El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

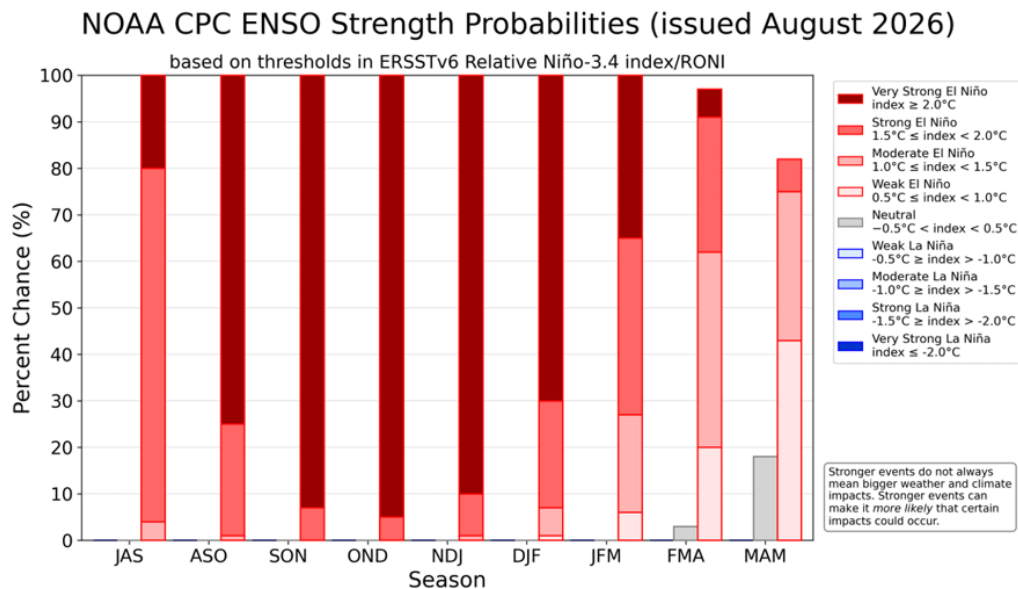
The August 13, 2026 ENSO update prepared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center (CPC), summarizes ENSO conditions as follows:

- El Niño is present.*
- Equatorial sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are above average across the central and eastern Pacific Ocean.
- The atmospheric circulation anomalies over the equatorial Pacific Ocean are consistent with El Niño.
- El Niño is strengthening, with a greater than 90% chance of a very strong event during the Northern Hemisphere fall and winter 2026-27.*

**Note: These statements are updated once a month (2nd Thursday of each month) in association with the ENSO Diagnostics Discussion, which can be found at:*

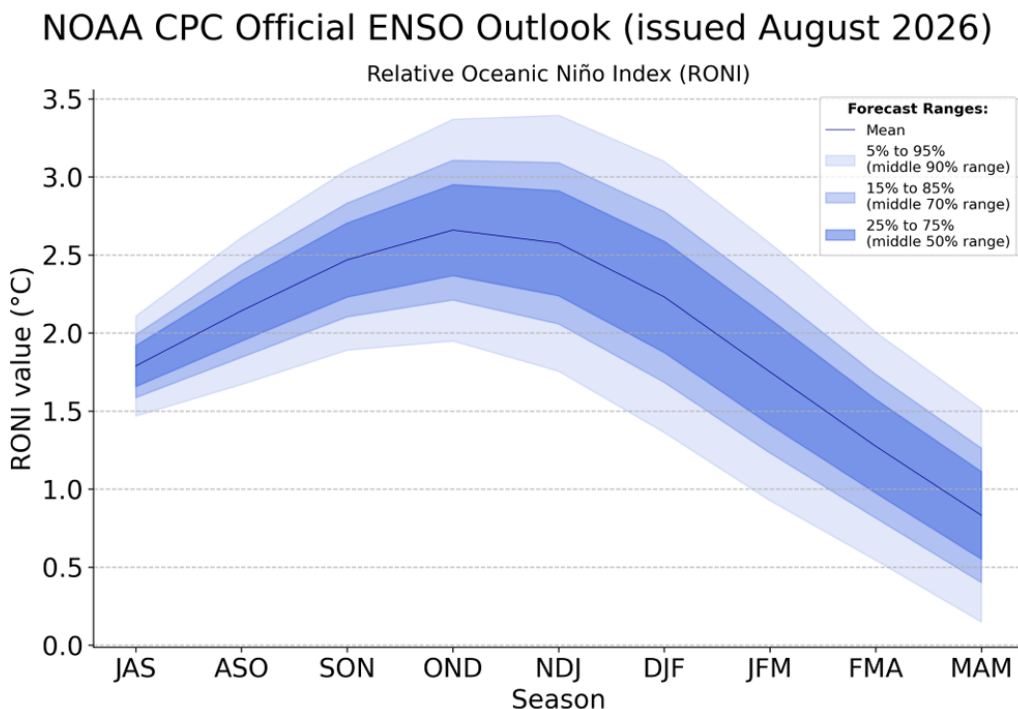
https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/

This forecast intensity and duration of the El Niño is shown graphically on the below bar chart, predicting ENSO strength probabilities through May 2027. The dark red portion of the bars represent the high probability of a very strong El Niño from now through February, with a decreasing of El Niño conditions thereafter.



Per the CPC August 13, 2026 ENSO Outlook:

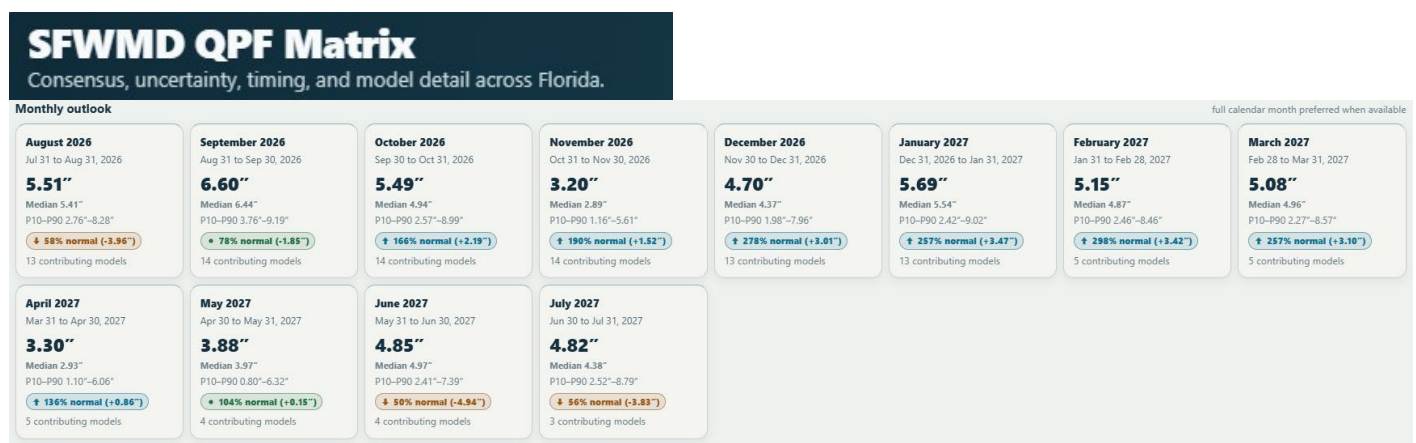
During September-November through November-January 2026-27, there is a greater than 90% chance of a very strong El Niño. During the October-December 2026 season, there is a 69% chance of a historic event that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño events dating back to 1950.



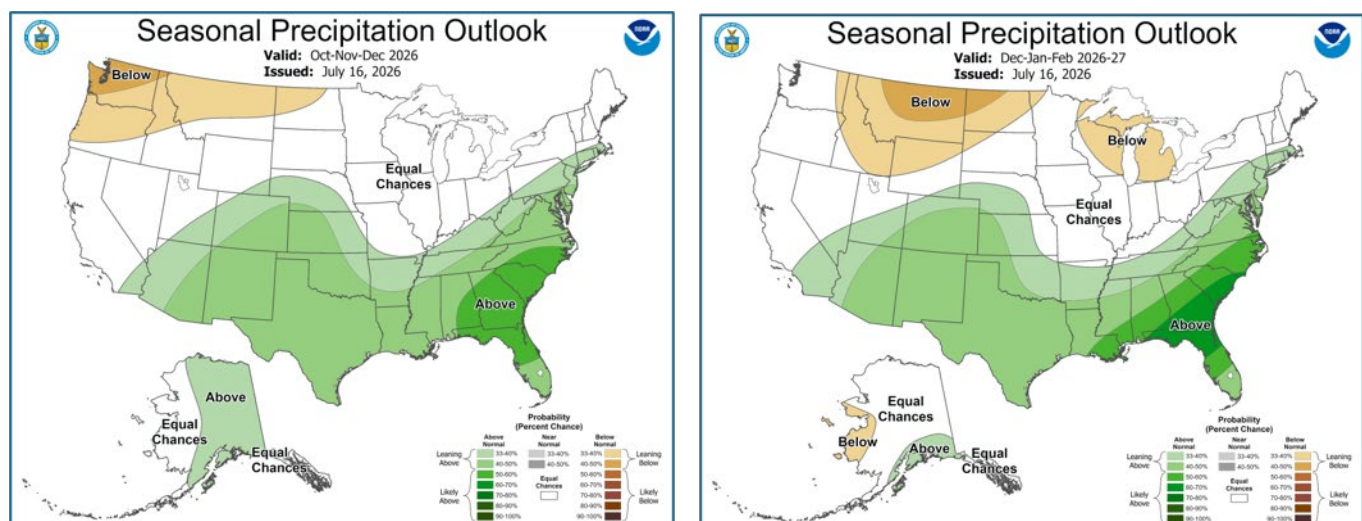
As indicated by CPC, there is an increasing probability that the current El Niño will be the strongest on record dating back to at least 1950. The presence of El Niño conditions historically influence climatological patterns across Florida. Though summer El Niño impacts are typically less pronounced for South Florida, the current drier than normal wet season may be linked to El Niño's tendency to create conditions leading to a more stable atmospheric environment, helping suppress deep convection and increasing vertical wind shear across the tropical Atlantic Ocean.

During autumn, El Niño impacts to South Florida become more pronounced as winter circulation patterns develop. El Niño conditions through winter can strengthen the subtropical jet stream across the southern United States, leading to more frequent storm systems along the Gulf Coast. These storms can draw Arctic air southward behind their cold fronts, increasing the likelihood of cold-air outbreaks and cold extremes. El Niño winters typically produce rainfall totals above normal dry season levels. Due to the strength and classical nature of the current El Niño, the upcoming winter months are predicted to follow a similar pattern, with above normal precipitation in South Florida.

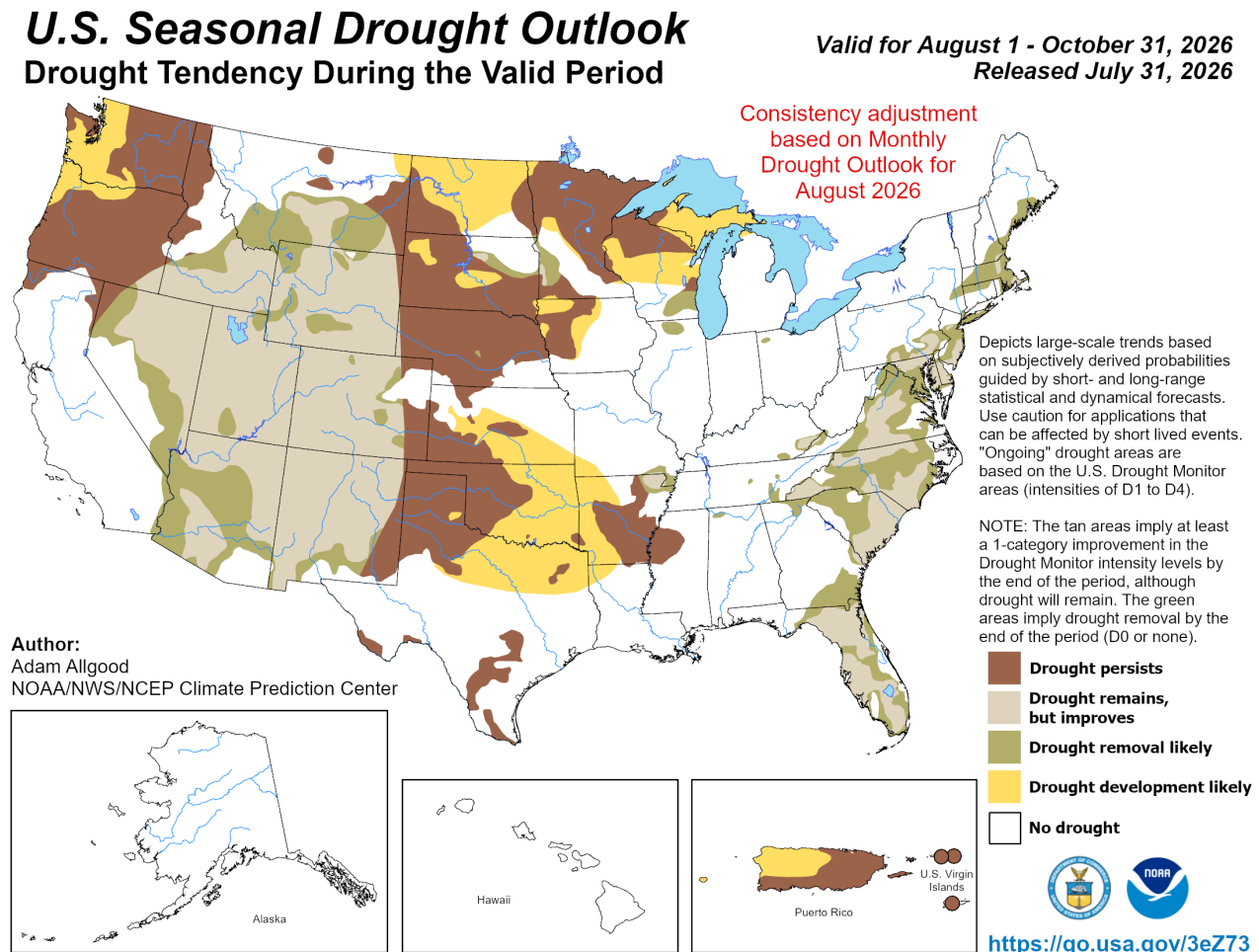
Due to the climatological conditions associated with the current El Niño, the SFWMD QPF Matrix for the Southwest Coast indicates a high probability of above normal rainfall for coming months, with November through March potentially seeing rainfall totals well in excess of historic averages.



The above model-based predictions are consistent with the CPCs long range precipitation forecasts which show an increased probability of above normal rainfall in the coming autumn and winter.



The U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook predicts that the areas in the BCB currently shown as “D0 Abnormally Dry” will not see a return to drought conditions by October 31, 2026. Additionally, areas within Collier County currently under drought conditions will likely see a lessening or removal of drought conditions in the coming months.



JULY 2026 BCB RAINFALL

The Basin-wide averaged, gauge-measured, monthly rainfall was 6.14 inches in July 2026. This measured rainfall amounted to just 70% of the historic BCB July average of 8.71 inches (**see Figures 1, 2, 3A and Table 1**). July rainfall was highly variable by location. The rain gauge with the highest measured precipitation was R-11 COLLIER SEMNOLE STATE PARK which recorded 13.74 inches. R-14 IFAS received the lowest rain gauge monthly total with just 2.32 inches. This is the second straight month that R-14 IFAS recorded the lowest rainfall total of BCB monitored rain gauges.

Figure 3B shows July's calculated average rainfall estimates for each of the Basin's watersheds, based on gauge adjusted radar (Raindar). The Faka Union watershed saw the highest Raindar average of 7.34 inches and the Trafford watershed saw the lowest Raindar average of 3.99 inches. The BCB's overall calculated areal weighted average Raindar rainfall (by watershed) was 6.09 inches for the month, very close to the basin-wide rain gauge average of 6.14 inches. The Raindar totals and their locality distribution across the BCB/Lower West Coast are shown on **Figure 3C**.

JULY 2026 BCB OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS

During July, BCB structures continued to operate in a mixture of flood control and water conservation regimens depending upon location, respective water levels and precipitation forecasts. An uneven distribution of rainfall has led to upstream areas failing to rise to normal seasonal water levels, while downstream areas are generally operating within normal ranges. As a result of this uneven hydrologic distribution, upstream water control structures are largely operating in water conservation while downstream structures continue to operate in flood control and water conservation modes as conditions warrant. BCB canal conditions as of July 31, 2026 are shown on **Figure 4**.

GOLDEN GATE SYSTEM

Water levels in the Golden Gate Main Canal varied by location due to the afore-mentioned uneven distribution of rainfall over the watershed. Structures closest to the coast (e.g. GG1, GG2 and GG3) generally operated in flood control modes in July, while structures further upstream operated in a mixture of flood control and water conservation modes as warranted. The canal segment immediately upstream of GG1 (to AR1 and GG2) finished July at the 90th percentile. Discharge to tide at GG1 began July at 500 cubic feet per second (cfs), but tapered off to 50 cfs by month's end due to the dry conditions. Canals in the middle reaches of the Golden Gate Main system also finished July at normal levels, reaching the 75th percentile. Due to water conservation operations, areas upstream of GG4 remained between the 25th and 75th percentile, despite the July rainfall deficit. The canal segment immediately west and upstream of GG7, however, remained below the 25th percentile. The stage and percentile difference between the lower (GG1) water level and middle/upper (GG4) Golden Gate Mail Canal water level is shown on **Figure 5** and illustrates the percentile differences between the lower and upper Golden Gate Main Canal system.

COCOHATCHEE SYSTEM

As with the Golden Gate Main system, Cocohatchee Canal water levels varied by location, with the downstream segments (up to COCO2) finishing the month at the 75th percentile. Upstream of COCO3, however, conditions were notably drier, finishing the month at the 25th percentile. Due to the slow rate of upstream canal water level increase, the Cocohatchee system remained in water conservation operations for the majority of July, with minimal and infrequent discharges over the fixed crest weir in response to rainfall. (**Figures 6A, 6B, & 6C**).

FAKA UNION SYSTEM

Similar to other systems, canal water levels were variable across the length of the Faka Union Canal. The upstream most water control structure (FU5) operated in minimal flood control mode for much of the month, gradually releasing water downstream to the canal segment north of FU4S. By the end of July, the canal upstream of FU5 remained at the 90th percentile. Despite the releases from FU5, the water level between FU4S and FU5 finished below the 25th percentile due to its extremely low beginning level and the lack of direct rainfall. FU4S has not yet operated this wet season and remains in water conservation mode. (**Figures 7A & 7B**).

Downstream of FU4S, the canal reach between FU4S and S487 (Faka Pump Station) ended the month above the 75th percentile. Periodic pumping at the Faka Pump Station (S487) continued in July but is currently limited to electric low-flow pumps. The high-flow diesel pumps remain secured until flows increase sufficiently to warrant their operation. Pumping at the Merritt Pump Station (S488) also continued in July. As with S487, Merritt pumping is currently limited to low flow electric pumps. Monitoring wells downstream of S487 – within the Picayune Strand Restoration Project (PSRP) – finished the month generally above the 50th percentile in the eastern half of PSRP, and at or above the 75th percentile in the western half. The remaining segment of the Faka Union Canal north of FU1 finished the month below the 25th percentile.

HENDERSON CREEK SYSTEM

The Henderson Creek system water level percentile dropped from last month to end July below the 75th percentile. A flow of approximately 50 cfs over the fixed crest and variable weirs occurred mid-month in response to rainfall in the watershed. Smaller flows over the fixed crest weir occurred and tapered off to zero in the second half of the month. The HC1 structure, as with other structures, is being operated in a combination of flood control and water conservation modes, as warranted by existing and forecast conditions. **(Figure 8A & 8B).**

BIG CYPRESS BASIN & LOWER WEST COAST GROUNDWATER LEVELS

For the Lower West Coast [LWC], water level trends in the groundwater monitoring stations were mixed during July **(Table 2 and Figures 9A and 9B)**. Due to a lack of rainfall in the region, **C-462** (north of Lake Trafford) continued to see a month-to-month decline, finishing July below the 25th percentile. **C-1224** (near Henderson Creek), saw a slight month-to-month decline in level and finished the month just below the 75th percentile. **C-1004R** (a Tidally influenced well near Cocohatchee Canal) remained generally level in July with a slight a month-to-month increase, however, still finished the month just below the 25th percentile, as historic levels typically increase in July.

L-738 (a Tamiami Aquifer well in Bonita Springs) maintained a steady month-to-month increase in level, continuing its rebound from the second half of June. Though its level is increasing, Its trend is substantially below normal and it finished the month well below the 25th percentile. **L-2194** (a Sandstone Aquifer well in Bonita Springs) also continued its positive trend, increasing its level above the level of low concern, but remaining just above record low territory for July 31st. **L-2195** (a surficial aquifer well in Bonita Springs) also saw an increase in July – though much more slowly than seen in historical trends – finishing above the level of low concern but below the 25th percentile.

CORKSCREW SWAMP

Figure 10 shows the historical trends for Corkscrew Swamp (CRKSWPS), Bird Rookery (BRDROOK), and the Cork 3 (CORK3) structure, and their 2026 corresponding levels. CRKSWPS sharply increased in levels in the first half of July, however, dropped in the second half of the month to trend closely with the record daily lows for the second half of July. During the month of July both BRDROOK and CORK3 remained at stages below the detection levels of their water level sensors,

resulting in the continued “flatline” appearance of their graphs in Figure 10. **Figure 11** shows that Lake Trafford continued its recession through most of July, dropping to just above the 10th percentile.

Figures 12 and Figure 13 show the locations for Southern Corkscrew (SOCREW) Sites 1 through 6, all of which are combination surface and groundwater monitoring wells. Also shown are the historical trends for SOCREW1 and SOCREW2, which have been monitored since 2016. Both SOCREW1 and SOCREW2 both saw significant drops in water level in July and finished below the 25th percentile. SOCREW sites 3, 4, 5 and 6 are newer sites with a period of record of less than 4 years, therefore, they do not have adequate data to generate meaningful statistical cyclic analysis.

FIGURE 1
RAIN GAUGE LOCATIONS

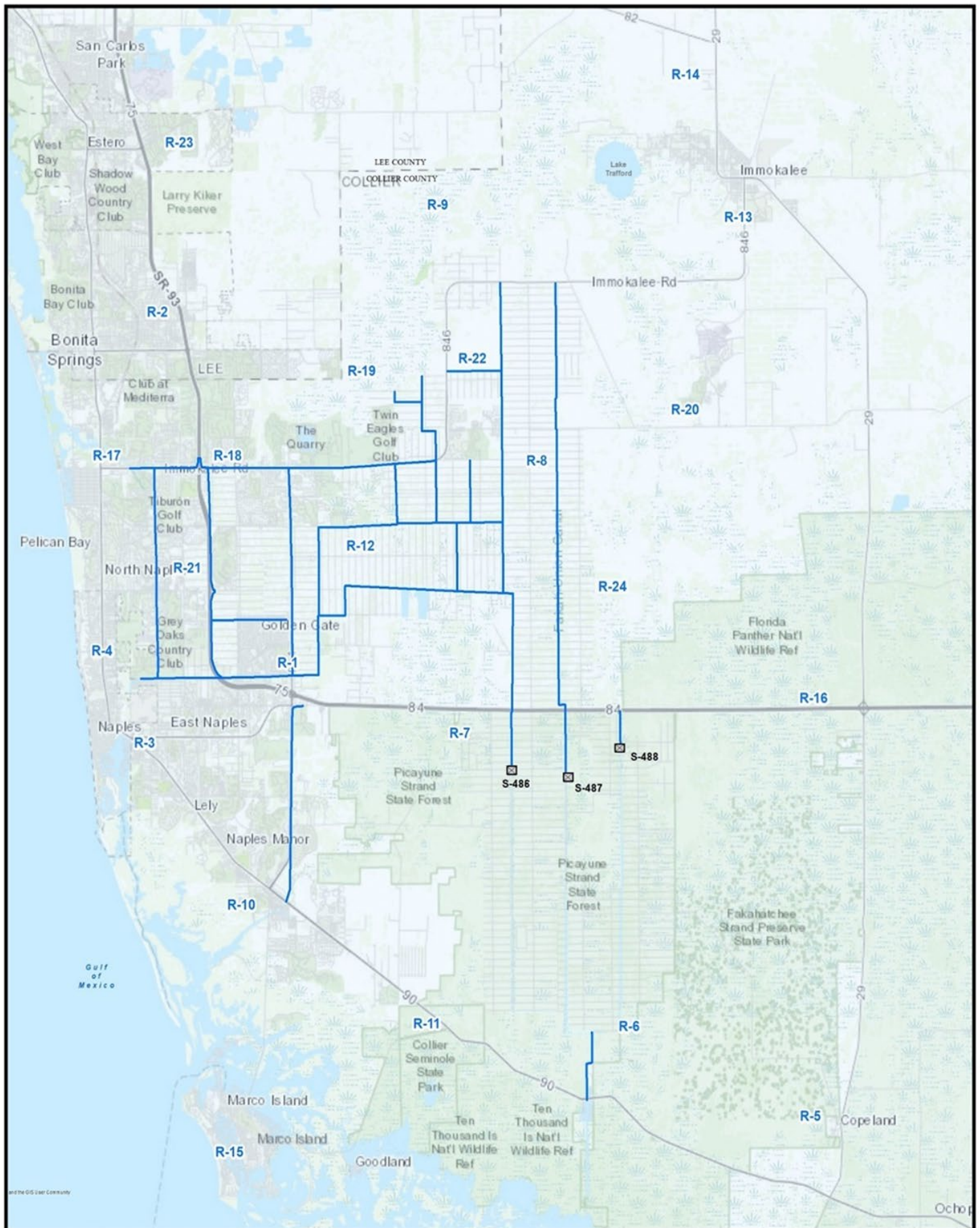


FIGURE 2
BCB GAUGE MEASURED RAINFALL MONTHLY AVERAGES
CALENDAR YEAR 2026

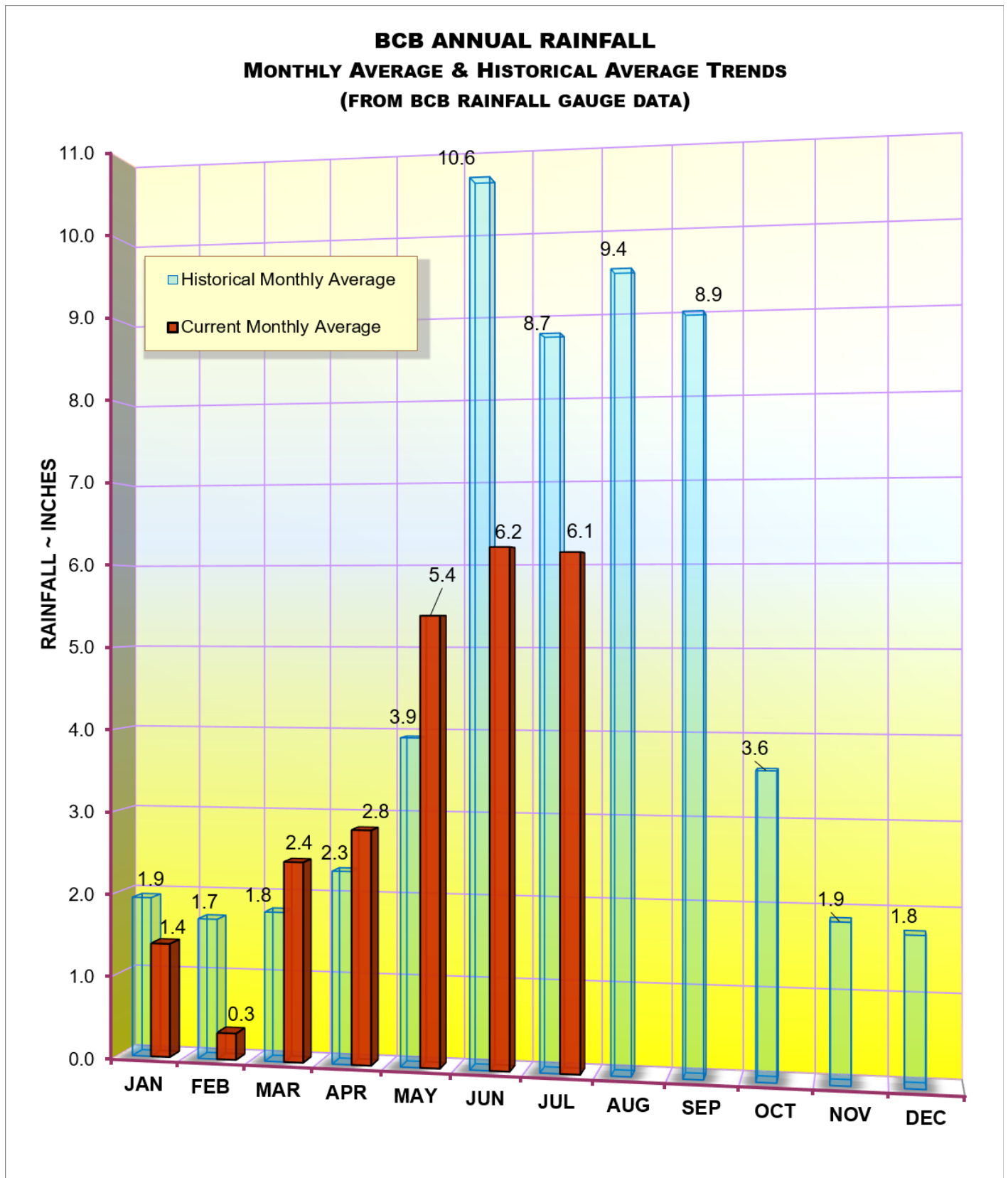


TABLE 1
RAINFALL REPORT - JULY 2026
DISTRICT/BASIN RAINFALL STATIONS
 (ALL NUMBERS ARE IN INCHES)

STATION INDEX NO.	STATION NAME	Jul-26	LONG TERM MONTHLY AVERAGE	MONTHLY DIFFERENCE	CALENDAR YEAR 2026 CUMULATIVE TOTAL	AVERAGE CALENDAR YEAR TO DATE	YEAR TO DATE DIFFERENCE
R-1	GG#3	7.34	9.24	-1.90	30.69	33.91	-3.22
R-2	BONITA SPRINGS WATER PLANT	6.87	8.10	-1.23	24.49	28.26	-3.77
R-3	COLLIER COUNTY COURTHOUSE	5.54	8.44	-2.90	24.09	28.78	-4.69
R-4	FREEDOM PARK	3.93	9.00	-5.07	18.40	30.49	-12.09
R-5	FAKAHATCHEE STRAND HQ	7.97	8.96	-0.99	26.64	32.70	-6.06
R-6	DAN HOUSE PRAIRIE	11.35	8.08	3.27	28.73	28.02	0.71
R-7	SGGE WEATHER STATION	4.64	9.09	-4.45	28.98	33.25	-4.28
R-8	FAKA UNION #5	7.18	9.53	-2.35	31.88	35.35	-3.47
R-9	CORKSCREW SWAMP NORTH END	5.67	7.86	-2.19	25.97	30.26	-4.29
R-10	ROOKERY BAY HQ	7.16	8.66	-1.50	26.14	29.44	-3.30
R-11	COLLIER SEMINOLE STATE PARK	13.74	8.74	5.00	26.58	30.34	-3.76
R-12	G.G. FIRE STATION	8.17	10.10	-1.93	29.82	32.77	-2.95
R-13	IMMOKALEE LANDFILL	2.71	7.77	-5.06	20.99	29.58	-8.59
R-14	IFAS	2.32	7.20	-4.88	17.14	29.19	-12.05
R-15	MARCO R.O. PLANT	4.00	7.43	-3.43	18.72	28.43	-9.71
R-16	FAKAHATCHEE STRAND NORTH END	5.82	9.21	-3.39	24.29	34.54	-10.25
R-17	COCO#1	4.78	7.73	-2.95	21.10	26.43	-5.33
R-18	COCO#3	5.61	9.67	-4.06	23.66	29.53	-5.87
R-19	BIRD ROOKERY	6.90	9.83	-2.93	23.02	33.79	-10.77
R-20	AVE MARIA	5.73	7.98	-2.25	22.68	29.61	-6.93
R-21	I75W2	4.46	9.12	-4.66	25.51	31.11	-5.60
R-22	GG#7	3.72	10.16	-6.44	22.45	31.88	-9.43
R-23	FPWX	6.86	8.39	-1.53	25.22	29.04	-3.82
R-24	DSOTO10	4.79	8.79	-4.00	24.40	36.83	-12.43

AVERAGES	6.14	8.71	-2.58	24.65	30.98	-6.33
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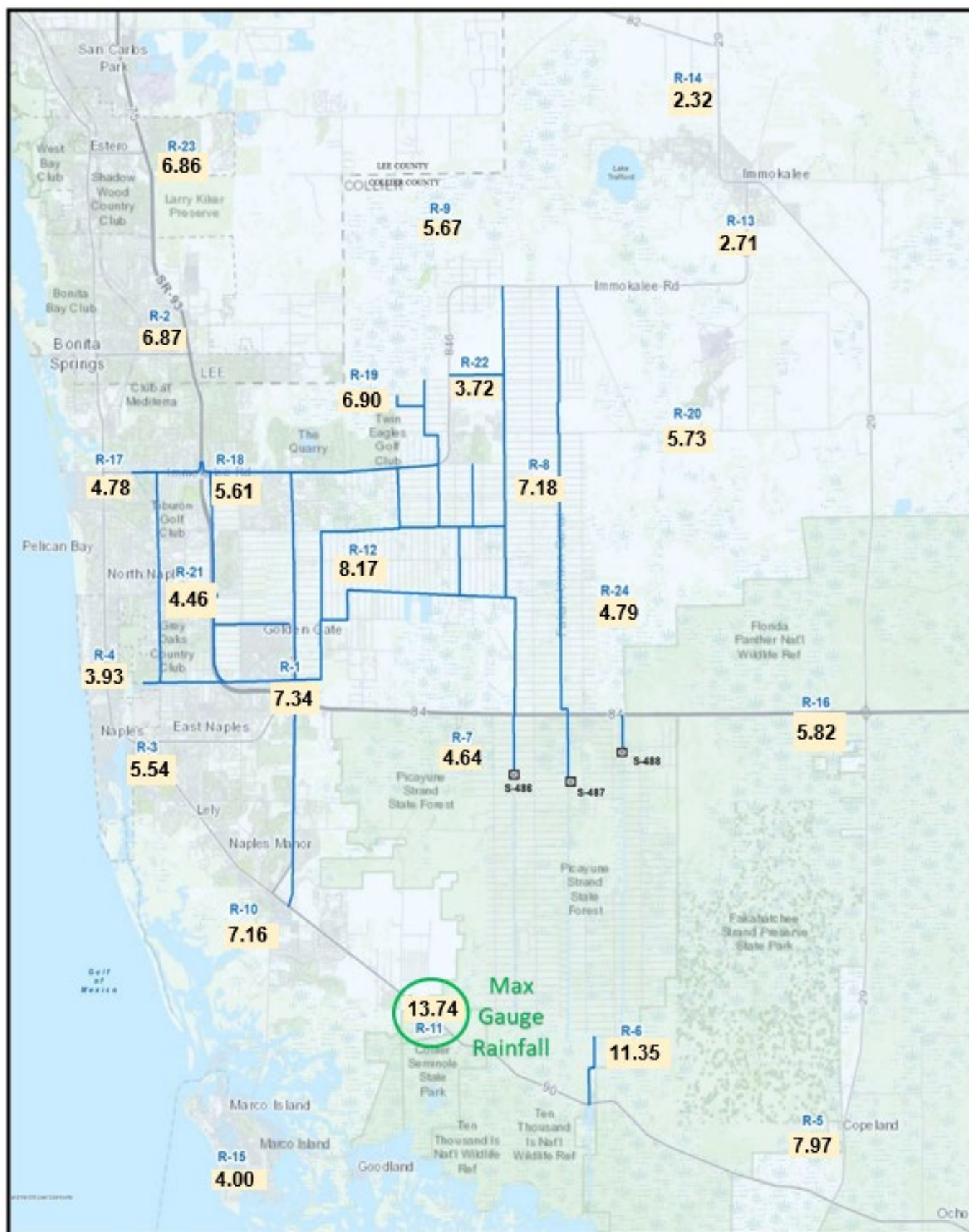
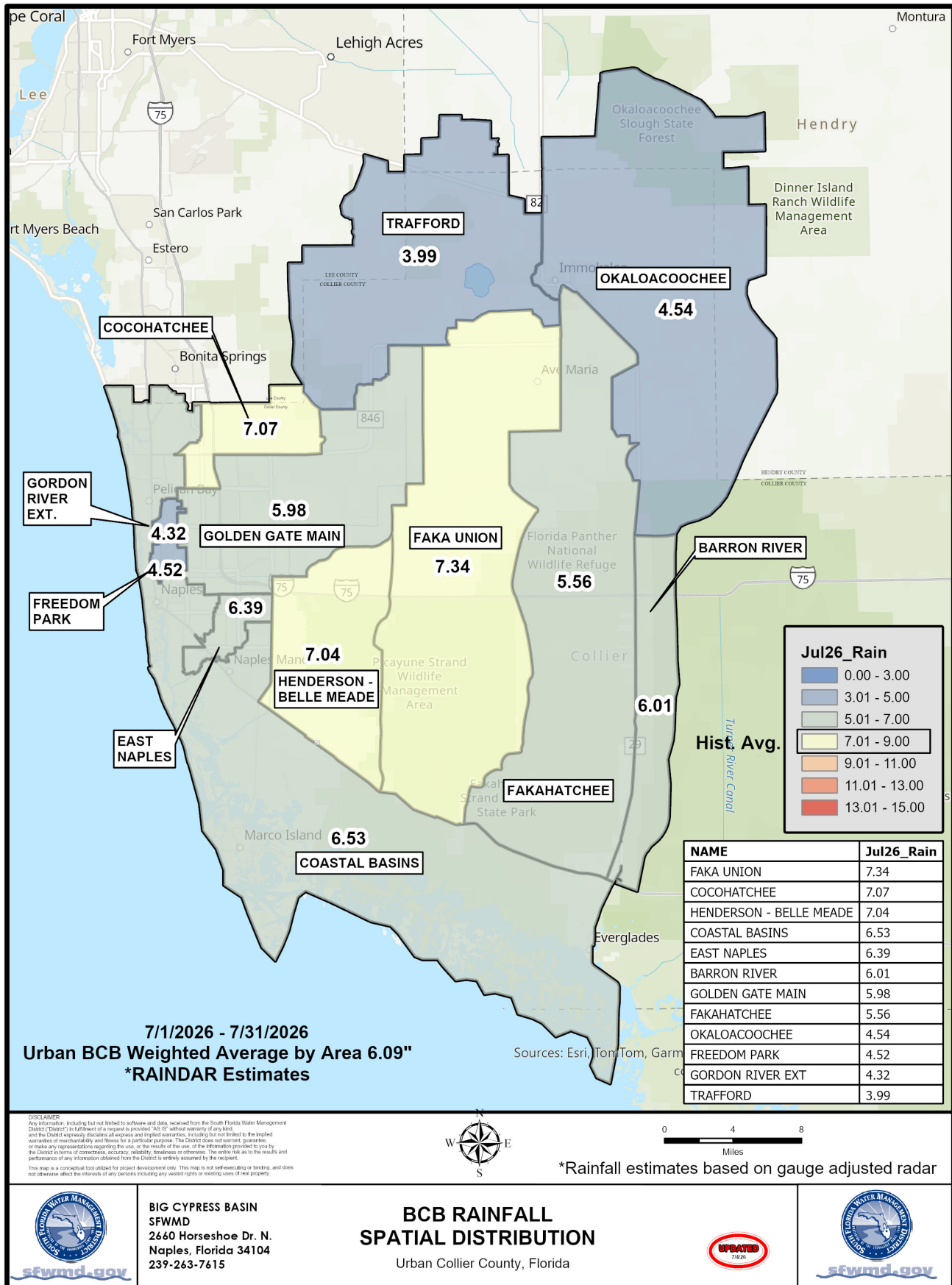
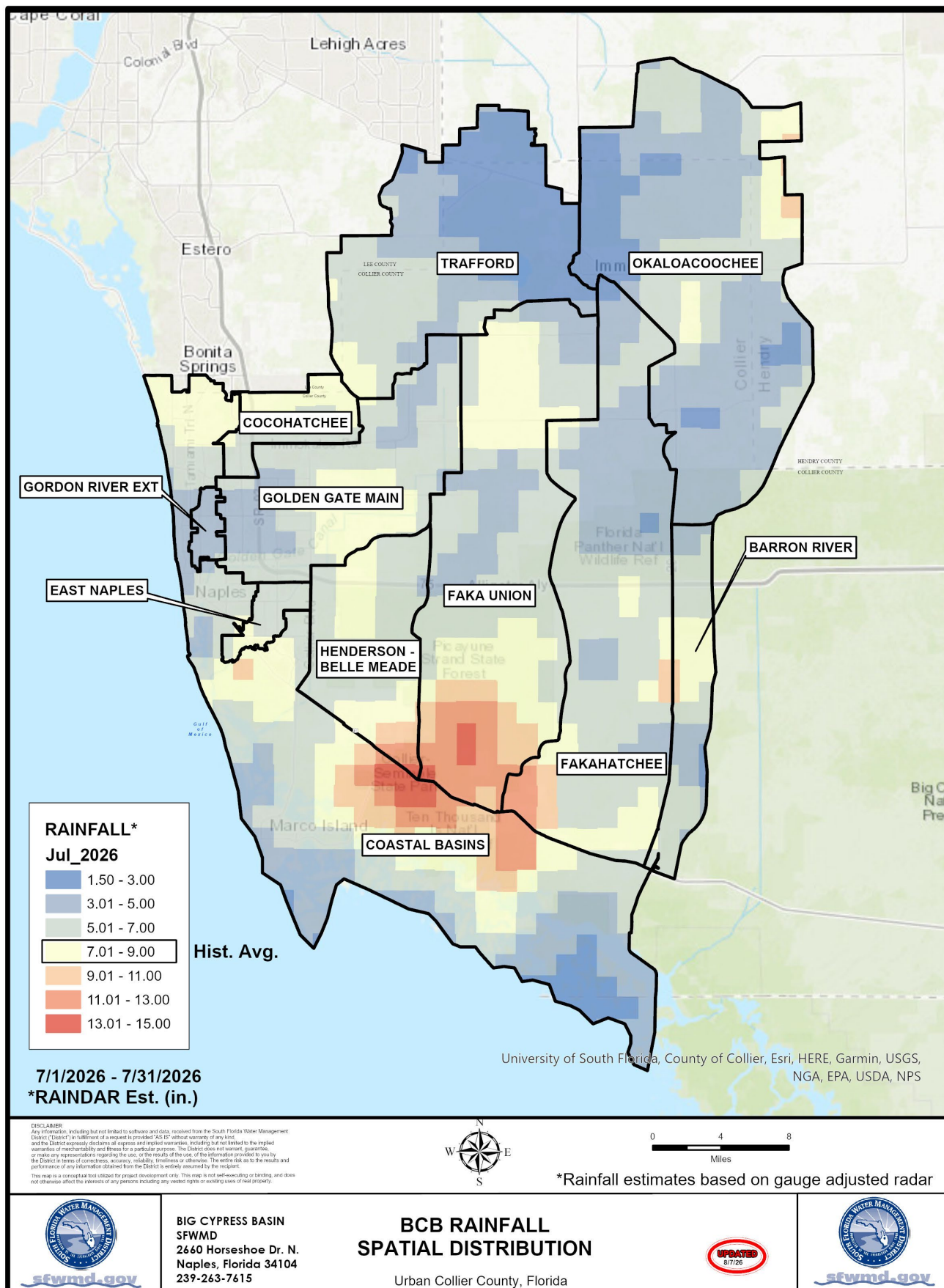


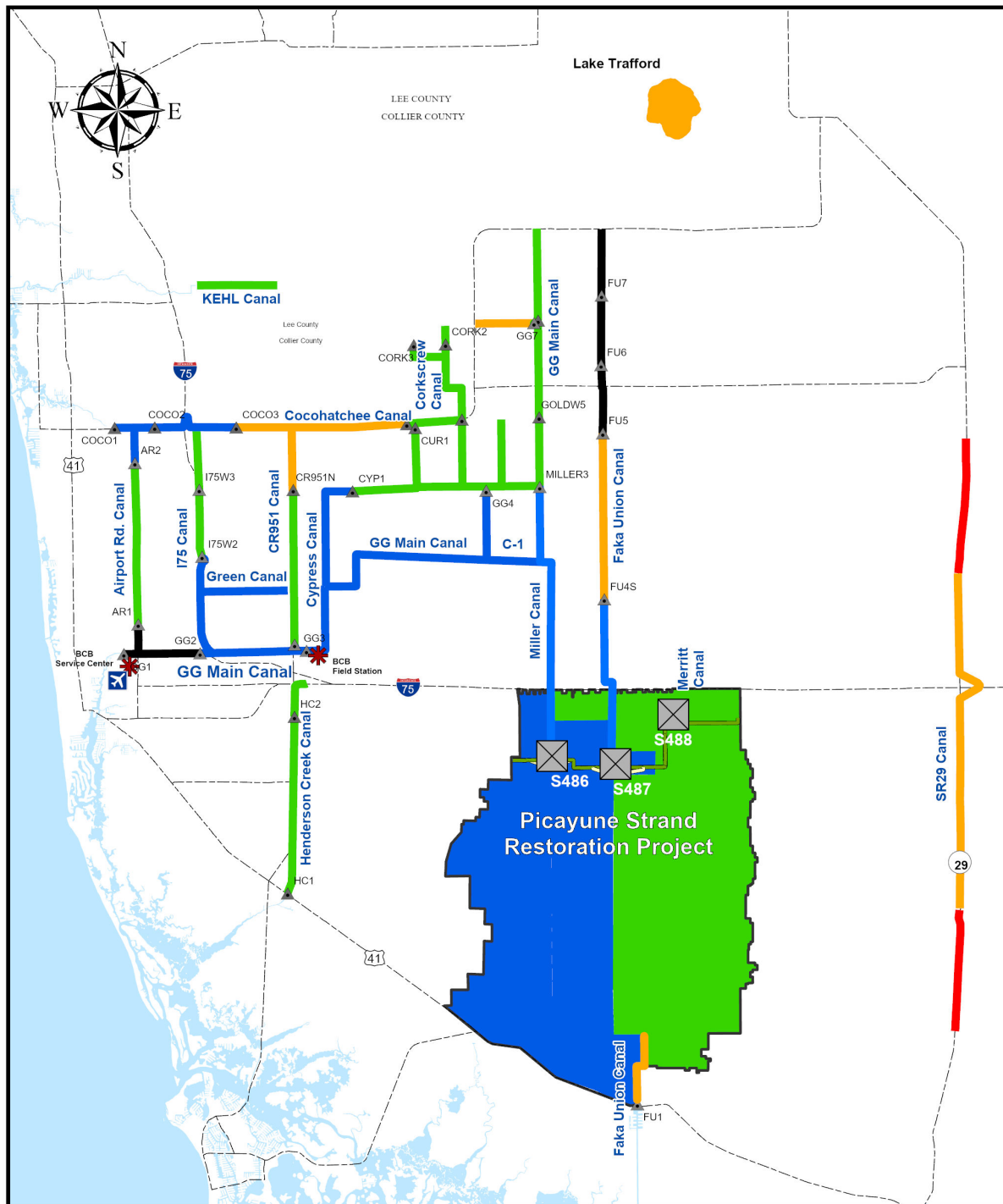
FIGURE 3A
BCB RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION
JULY 2026



JULY 2026 — FIGURE 3B

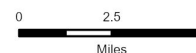


JULY 2026 —FIGURE 3C



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This map is a conceptual tool utilized for project development only. This map is not self-executing or binding, and does not otherwise affect the interests of any persons including any vested rights or existing uses of real property.



* Based on period of record for each canal reach



BIG CYPRESS BASIN
SFWMD
2660 Horseshoe Dr. N.
Naples, Florida 34104
239-263-7615

BCB Conditions Index 7/31/26

Urban Collier County, Florida



FIGURE 4
BCB WATER CONDITIONS

Figure 5 Golden Gate Canal Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

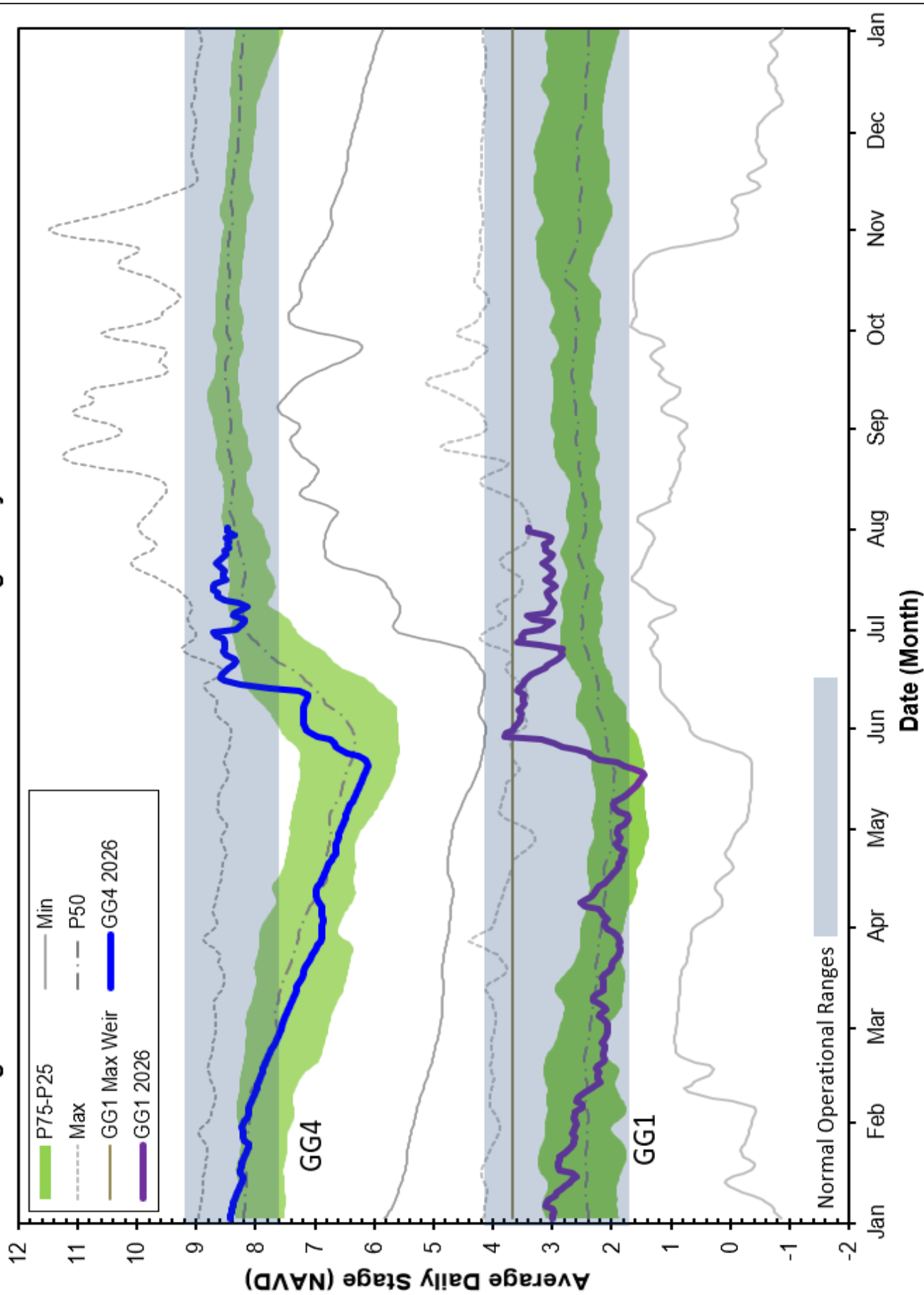


Figure 6A Ccohatchee Canal Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

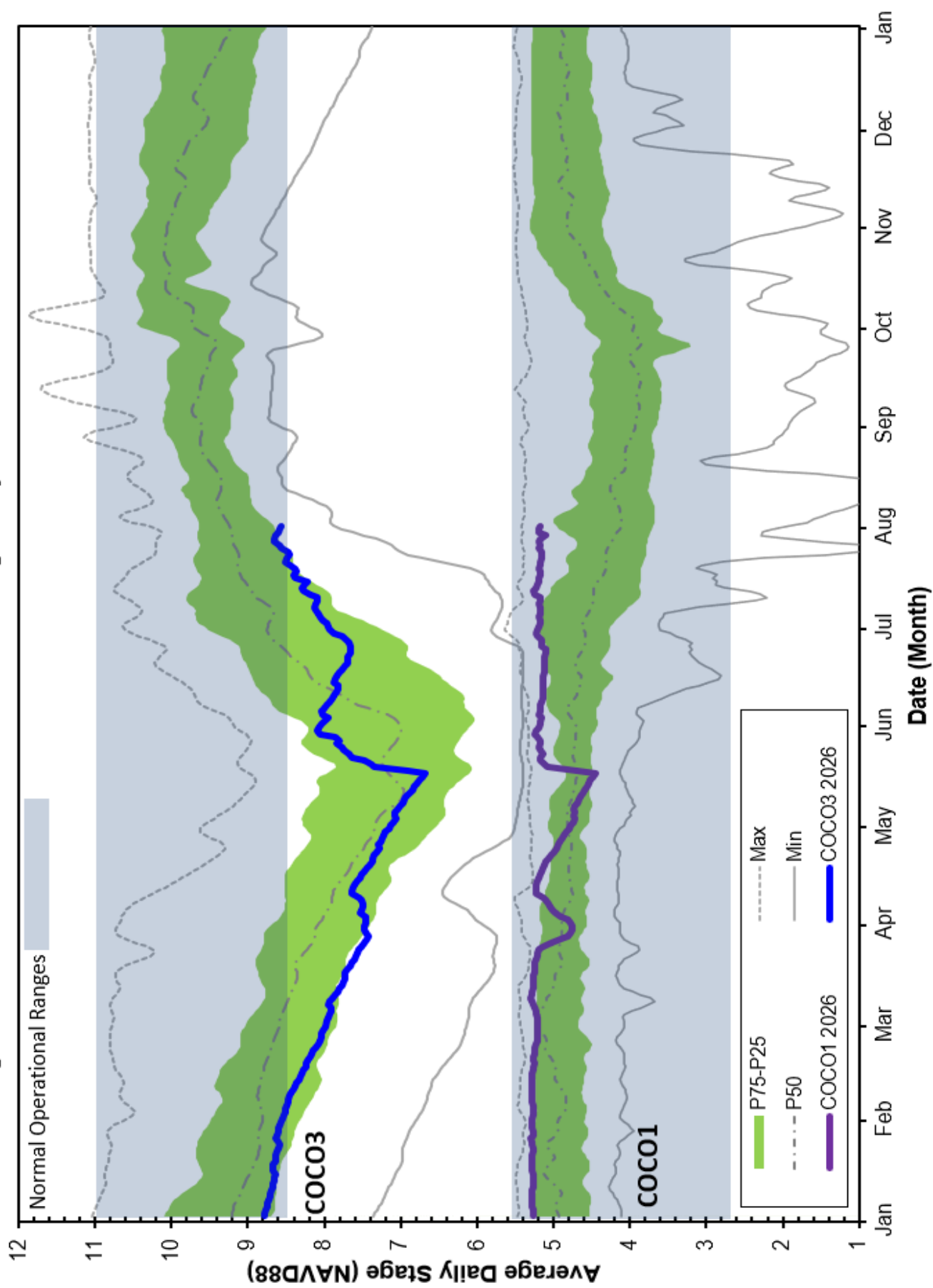


Figure 6B CORK1 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

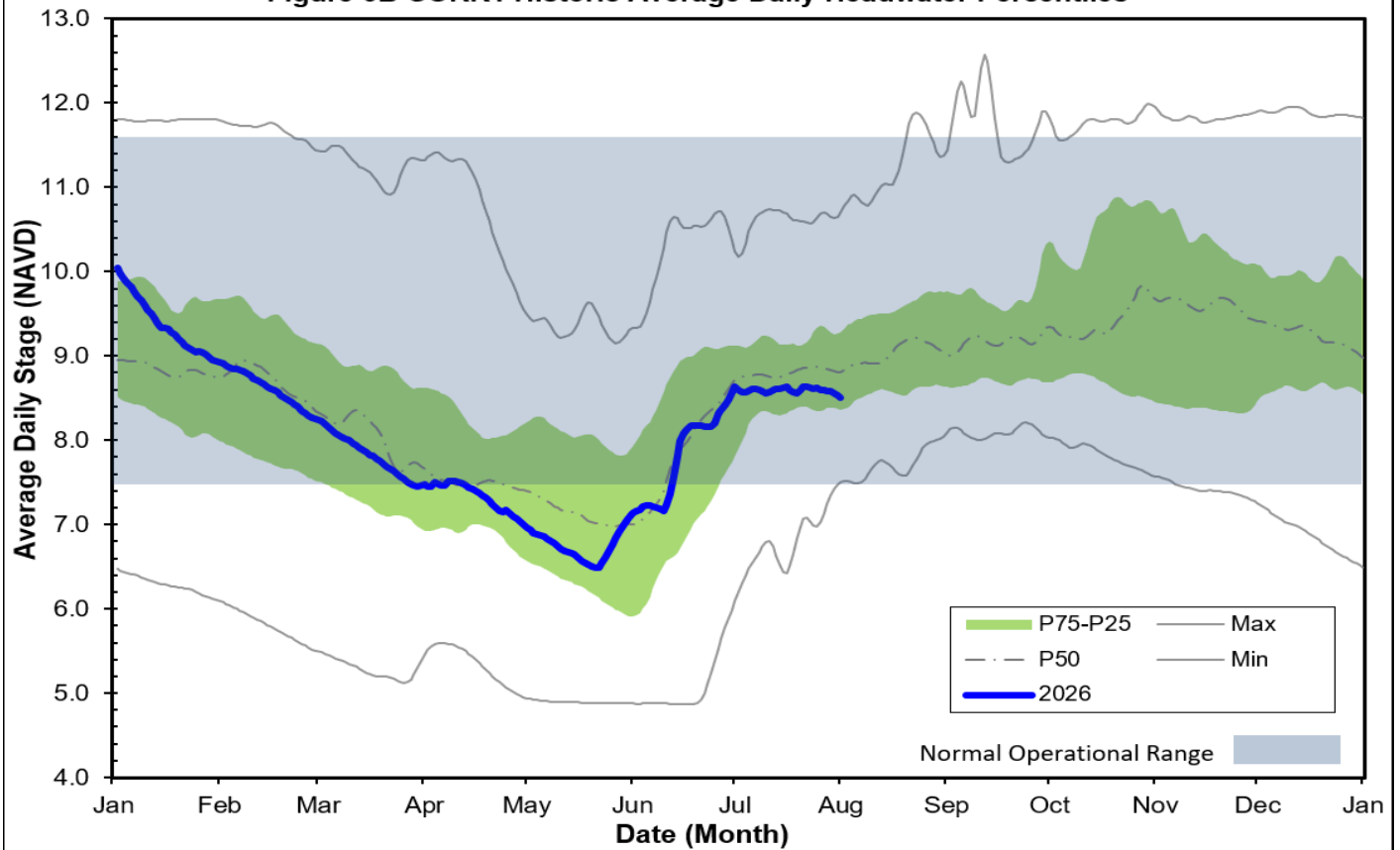


Figure 6C - CORK2 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

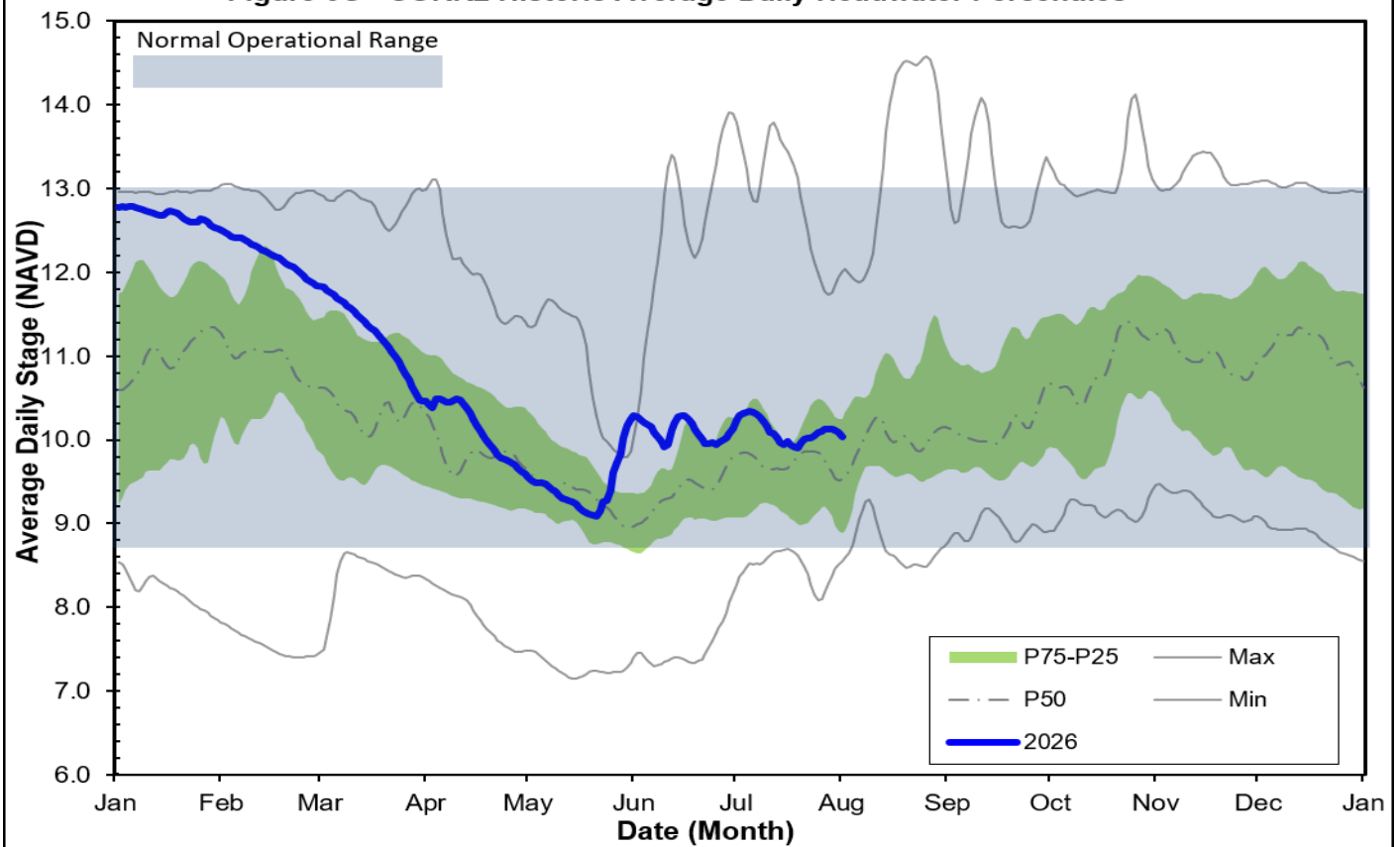


Figure 7A Faka Union Canal Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

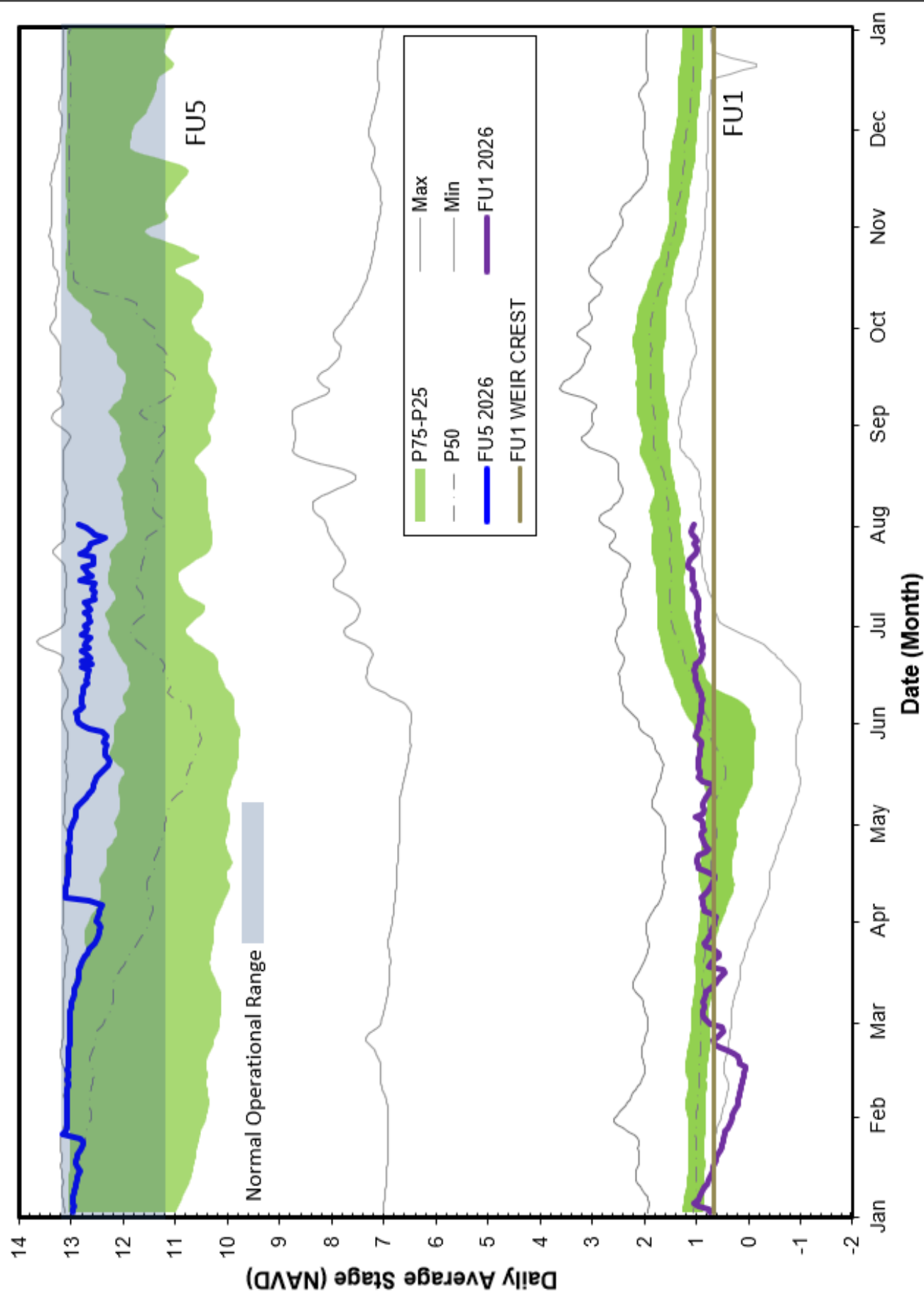


Figure 7B FU4S Historic Average Daily Water Percentiles

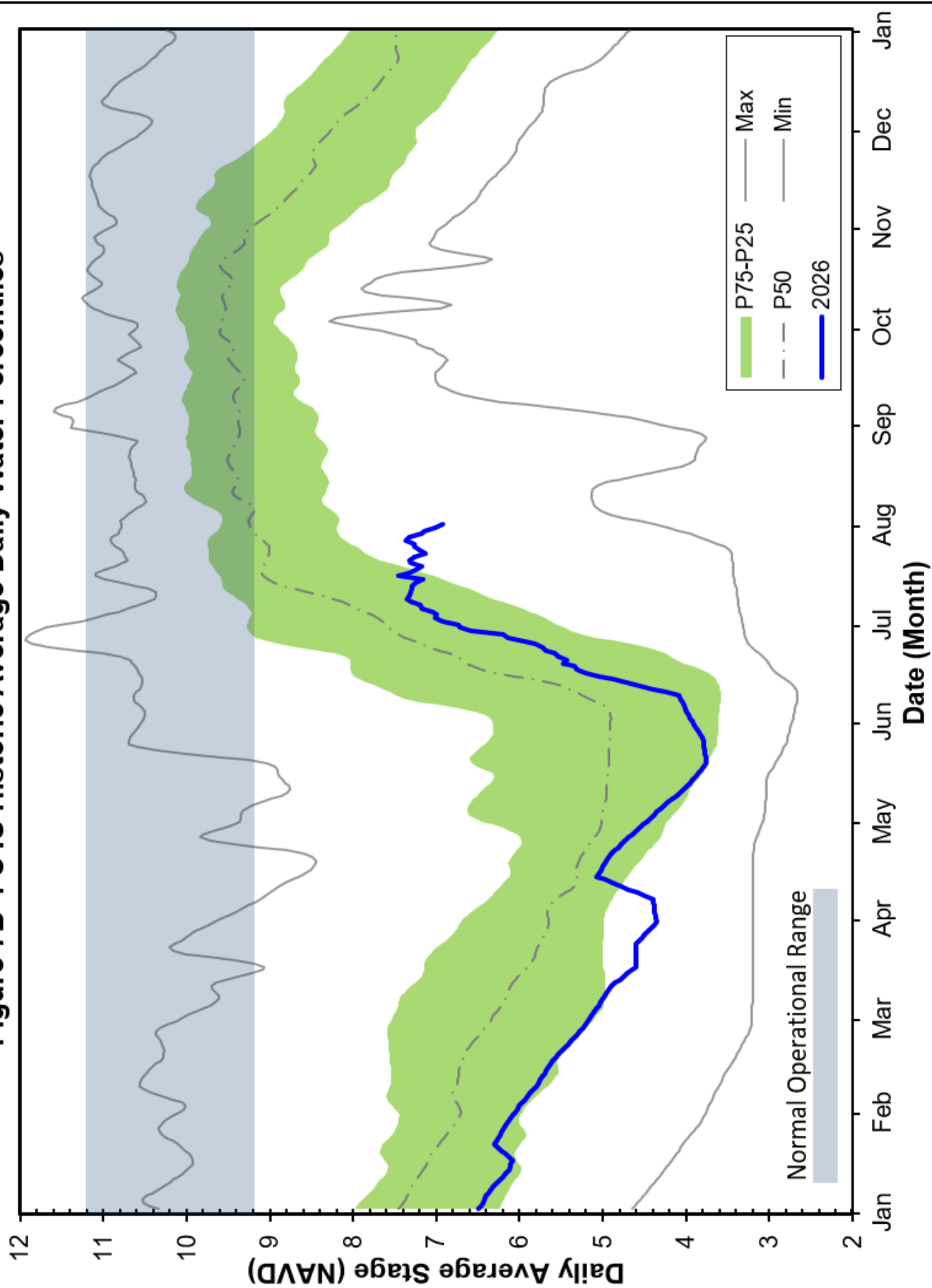


Figure 8A - HC1 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

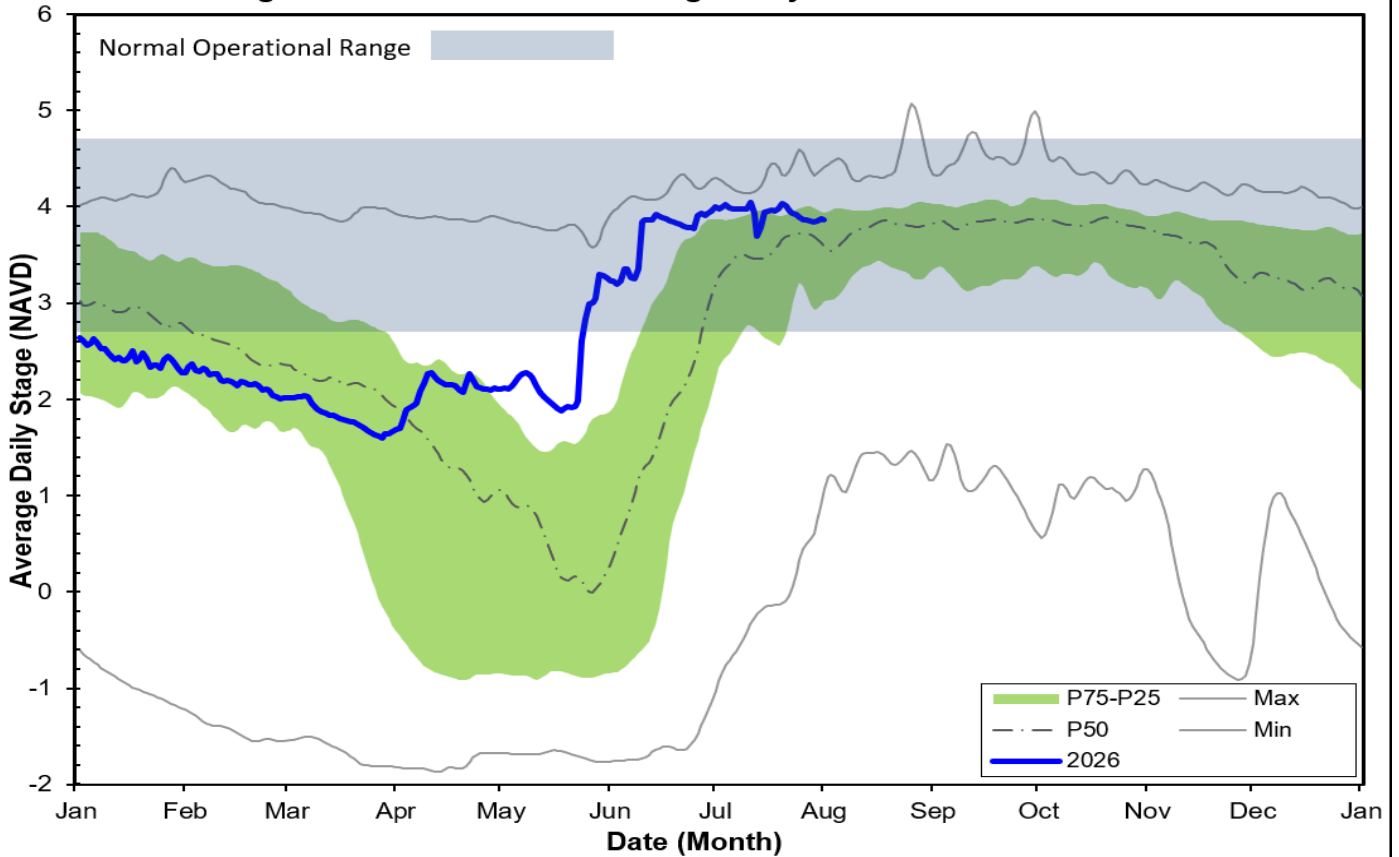


Figure 8B HC2 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

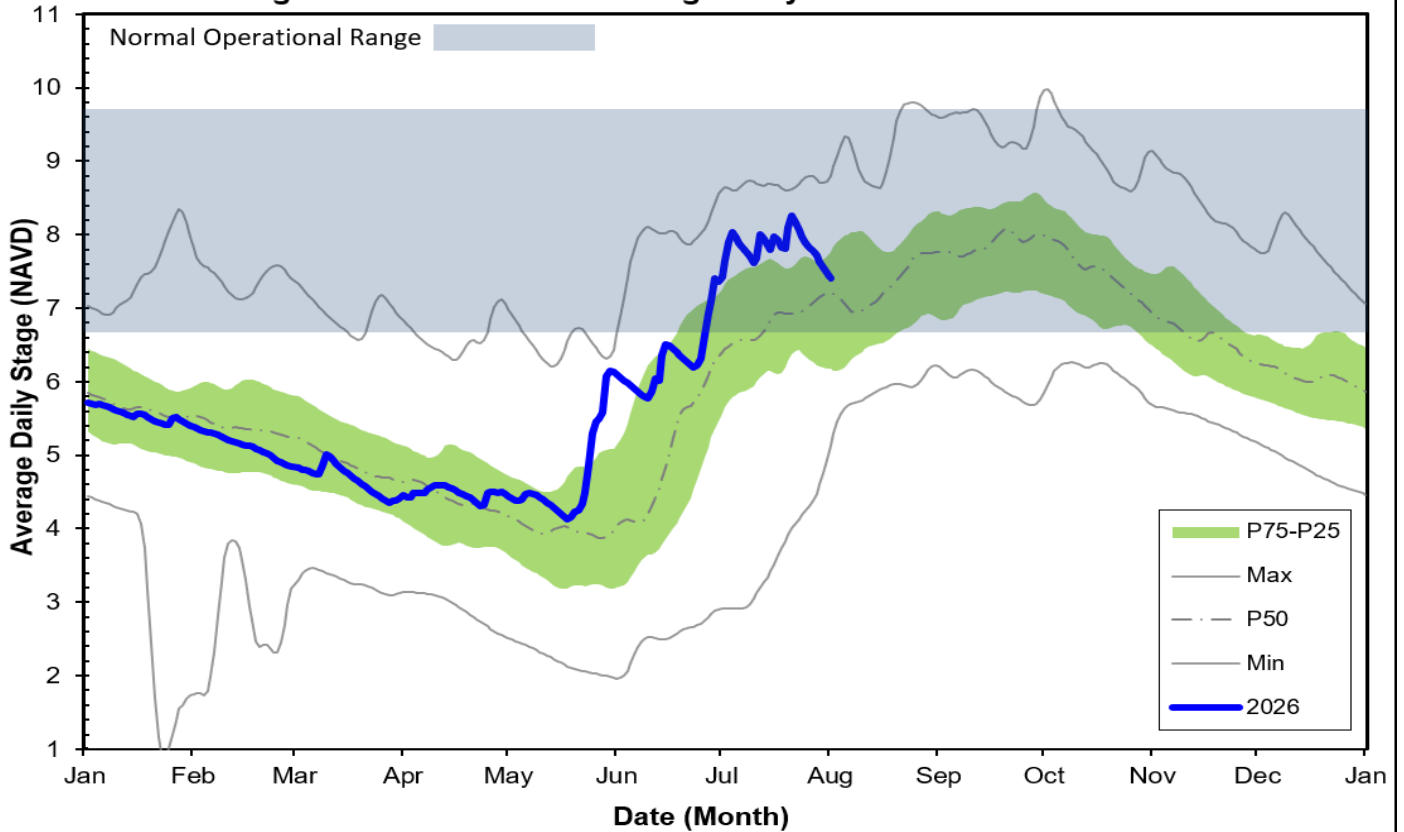


TABLE 2
WATER CONDITIONS SUMMARY - JULY 2026
SELECTED STATIONS for BCB AREA / SW FLORIDA

Last Reading Date :		July 31, 2026					
Previous Period Reading Date:		June 30, 2026					
STATION INDEX NO.	WELL LOCATION	WELL / AQUIFER - TYPE	CHANGE (from previous date)	PREVIOUS LEVEL	CURRENT LEVEL (ft)	DIRECTION OF CHANGE	CONCERN INDICATOR
ALL INDICATOR LEVELS SHOWN IN FT-NAVD88							
C-462	Immokalee	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	-0.73	27.97	27.24	↓	GREEN
C-1004R	Naples	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	0.29	0.77	1.06	↑	GREEN
C-1224	Marco Lakes	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	-0.08	3.45	3.37	↓	GREEN
C-948R	Golden Gate	Mid Hawthorn Aquifer	2.16	26.46	28.62	↑	
C-951R	Golden Gate	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	-0.30	2.56	2.26	↓	
L-2194	Bonita Springs	Sandstone Aquifer	1.35	0.09	1.44	↑	GREEN
L-2195	Bonita Springs	Surficial Aquifer System	0.86	7.38	8.24	↑	GREEN
L-738	Bonita Springs	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	1.85	-3.47	-1.62	↑	GREEN

BIG CYPRESS BASIN

JULY 31, 2026

GROUNDWATER LEVEL DAILY TRENDS COMPARED TO HISTORICAL AVERAGE

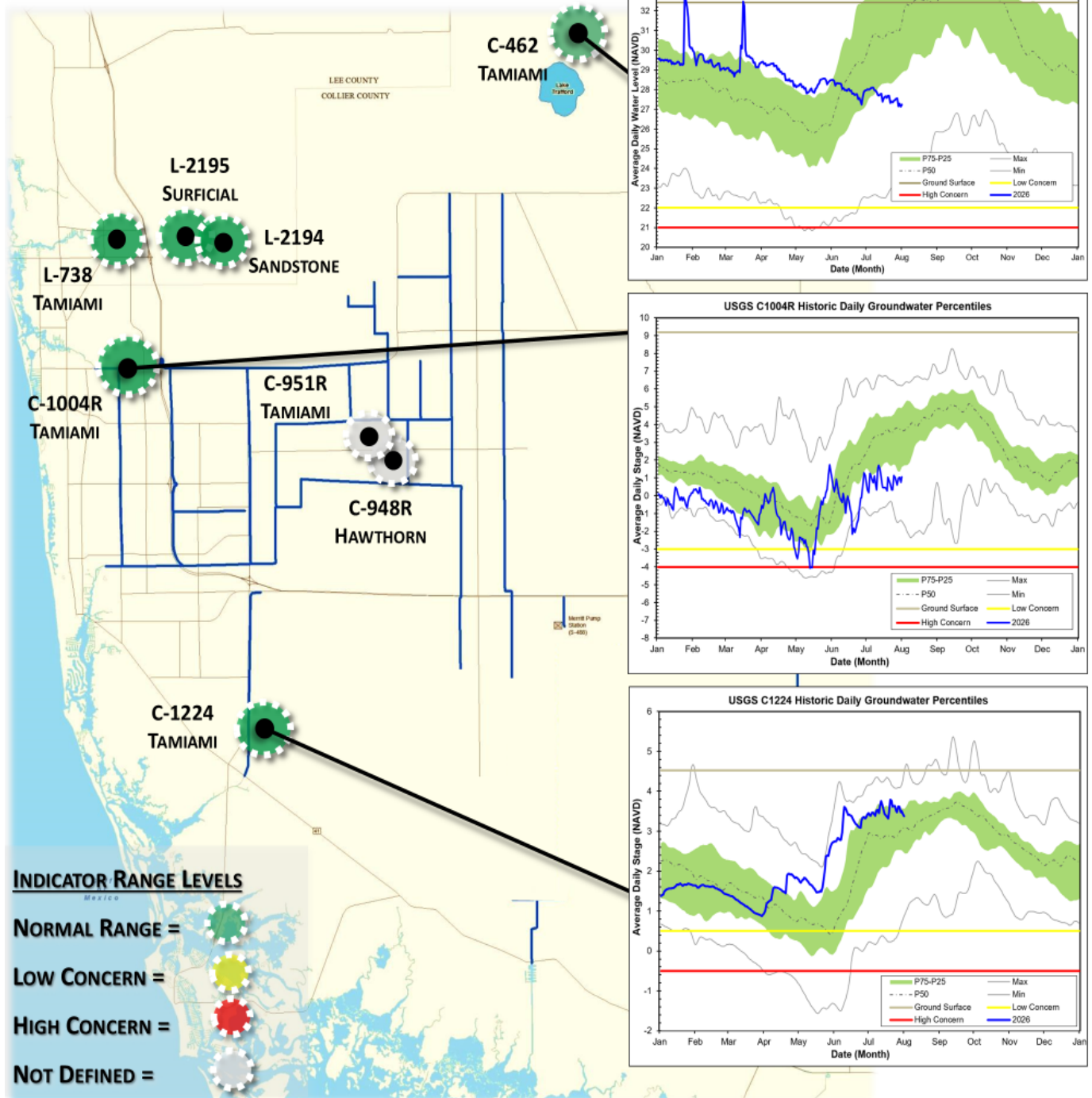


FIGURE 9A

BIG CYPRESS BASIN

JULY 31, 2026

GROUNDWATER LEVEL DAILY TRENDS
COMPARED TO HISTORICAL AVERAGE

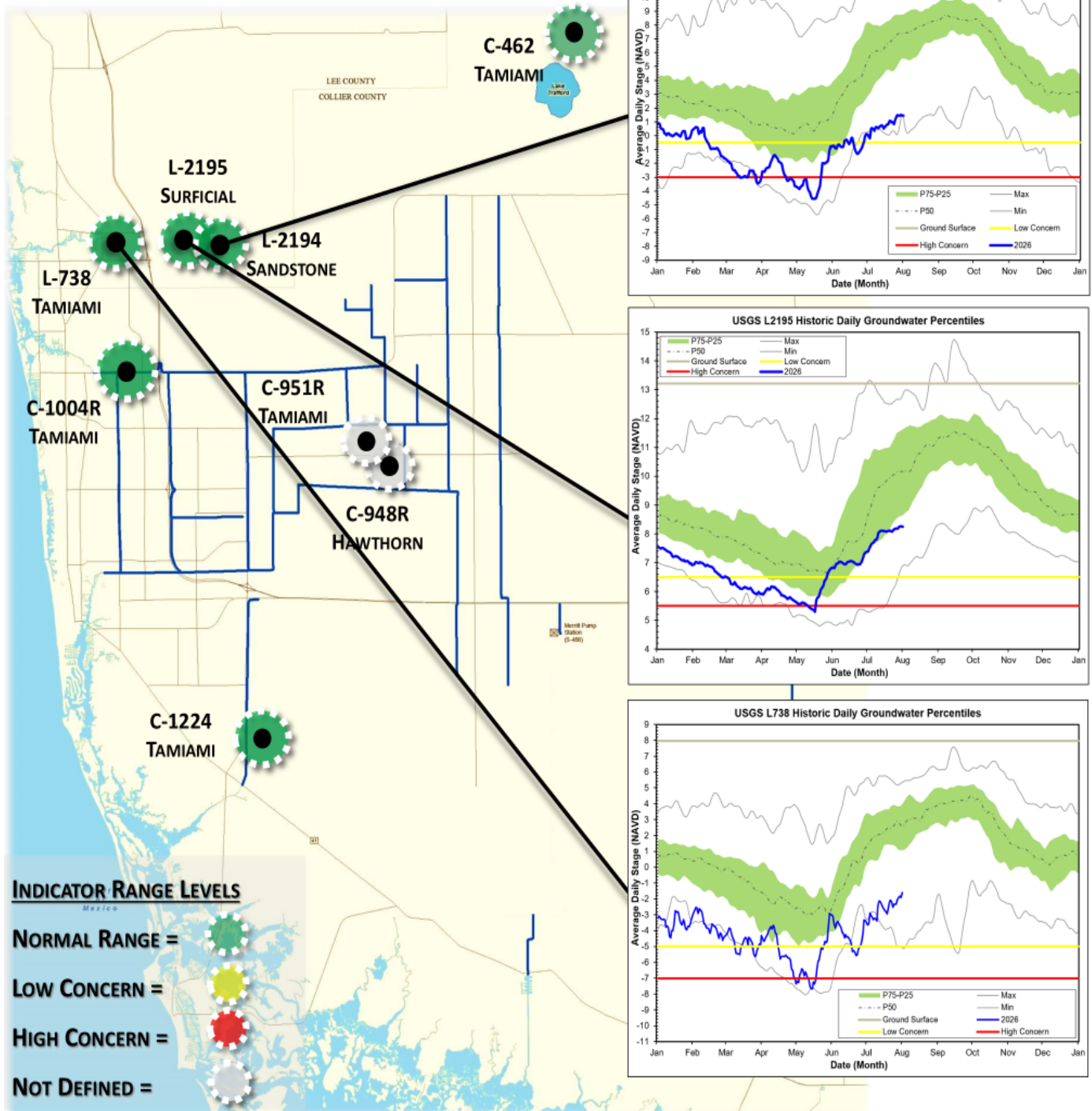


FIGURE 9B

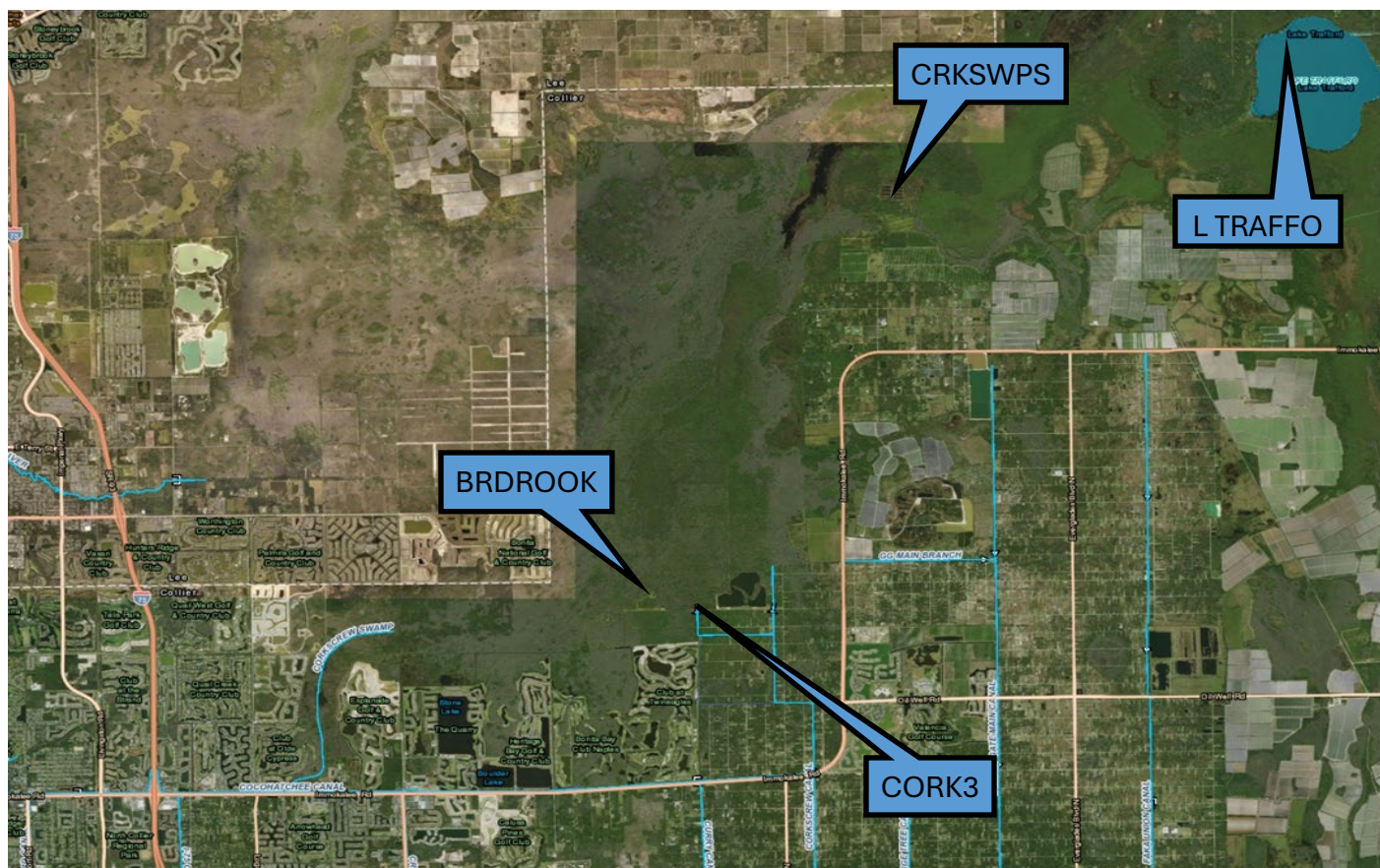


Figure 10-Corkscrew Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles (1984-2025)

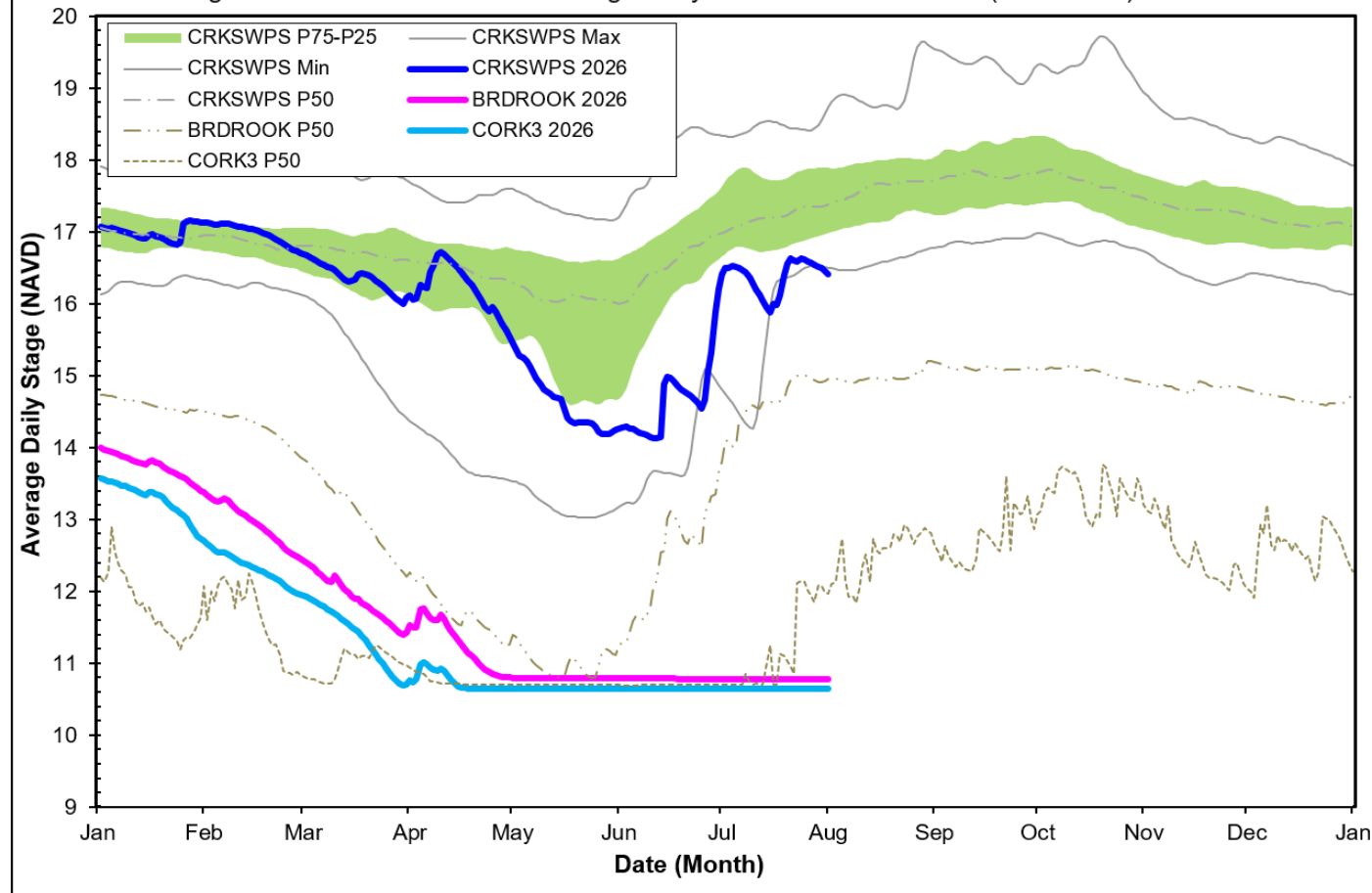
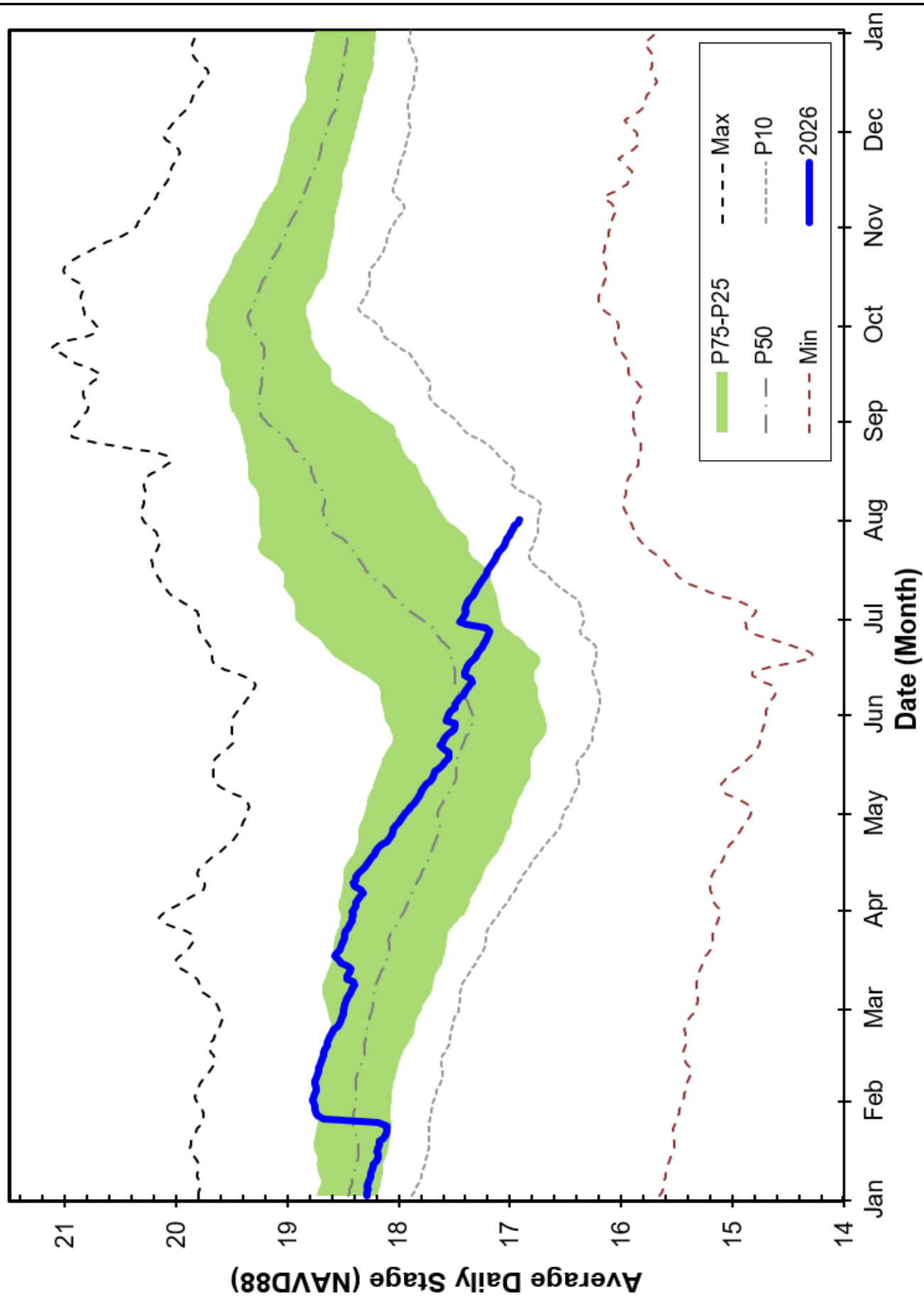


Figure 11 Lake Trafford Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles (1941-2024)



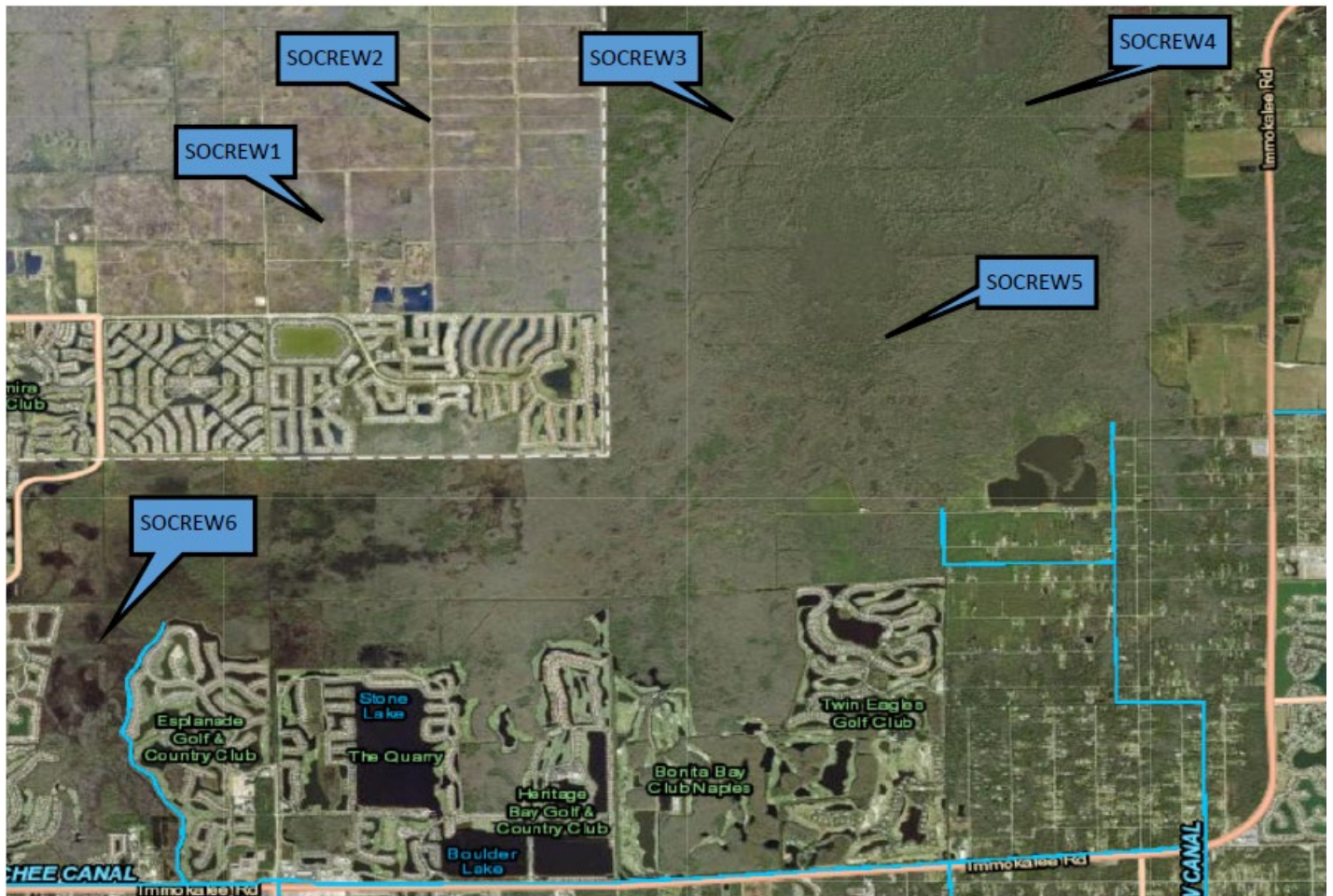
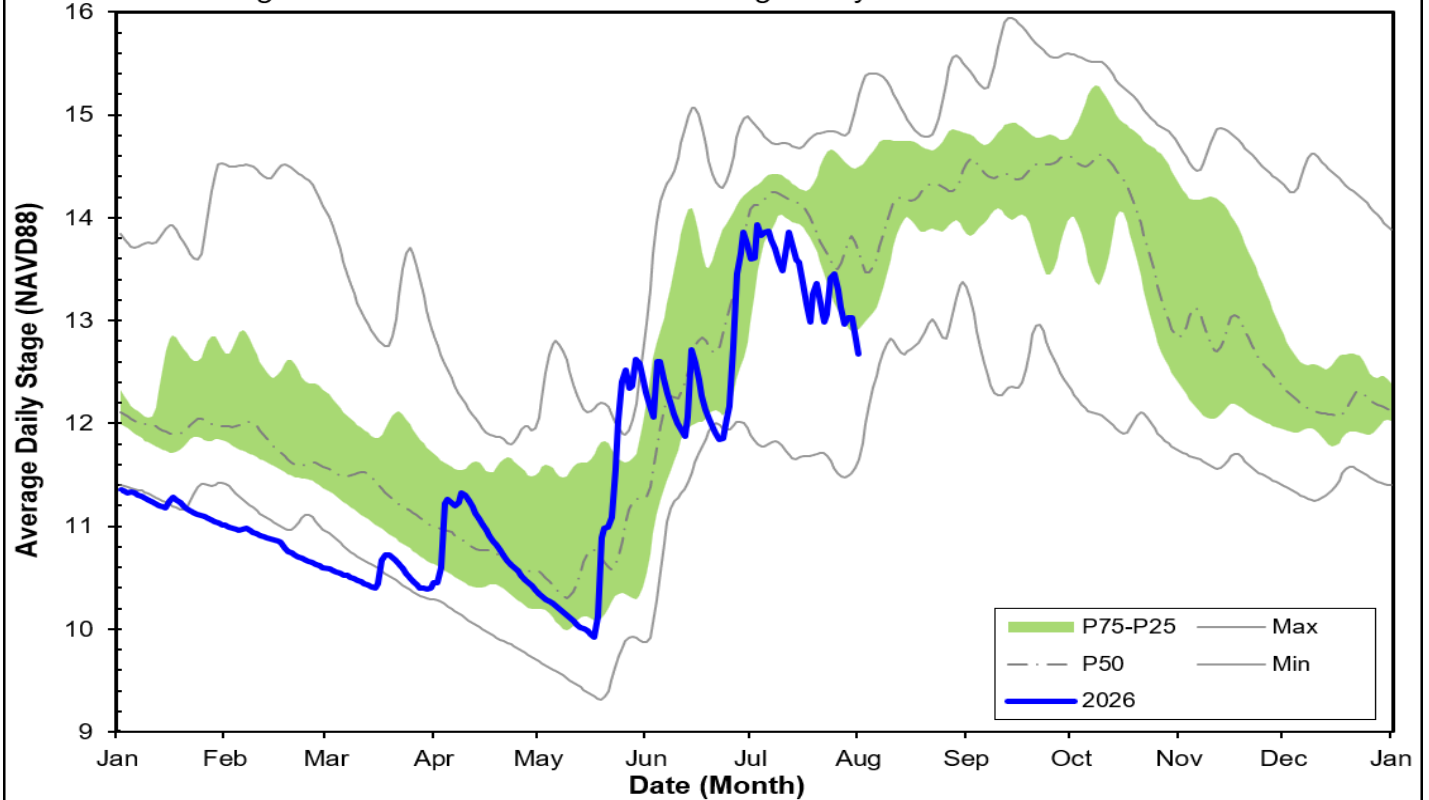


Figure 12 - SOCREW1 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles



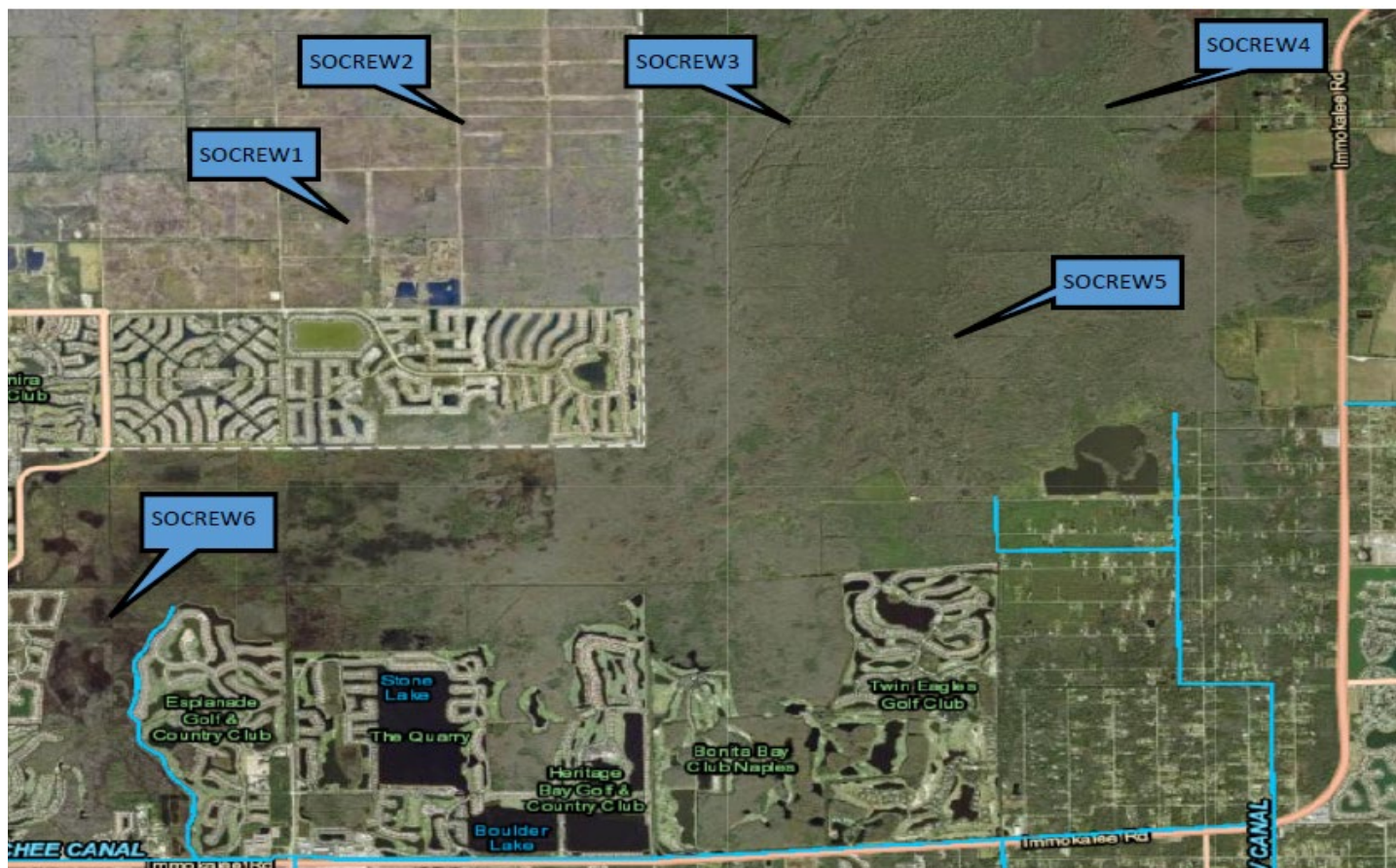


Figure 13 - SOCREW2 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

