

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MAY 2026
BIG CYPRESS BASIN
HYDROLOGIC REPORT

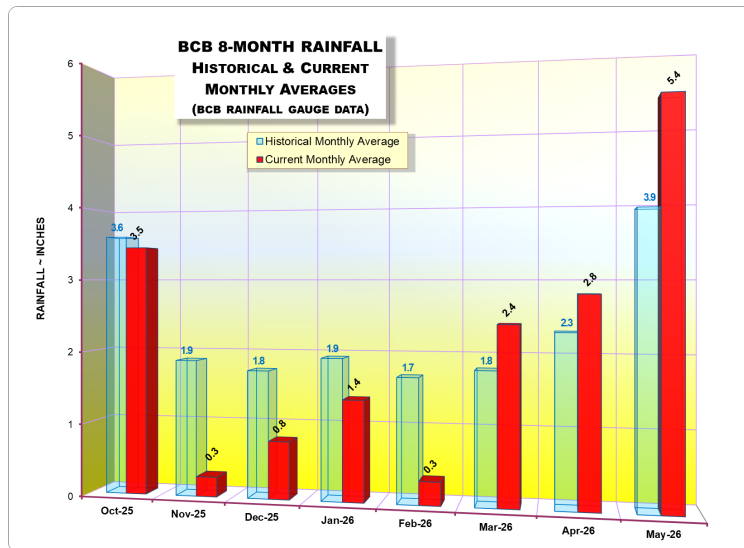


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SUMMARY OF HYDROLOGIC CONDITIONS IN THE BIG CYPRESS BASIN

MAY 2026

SUMMARY



May brought above normal rainfall to the Big Cypress Basin (BCB), marking the third consecutive month where precipitation exceeded the historical average. Rain gauges across BCB recorded an average of **5.39 inches** of rainfall in May (137% of normal) and brought an end to the 2025/2026 Dry Season on May 14th.

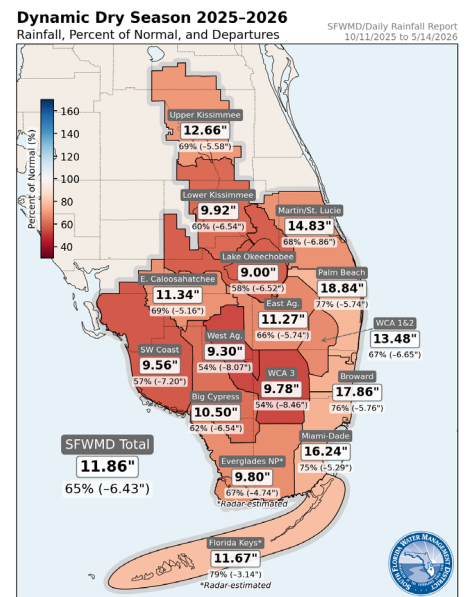
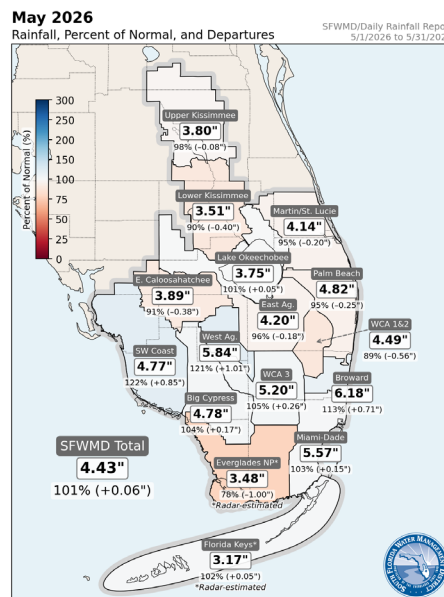
When reviewing the 8-Month Rainfall chart to the left, it is important to note that though the entire month's rain is shown for the months of October 2025 and May 2026, the 2025/2026

Dry Season ran from October 11, 2025 through May 14, 2026. 80% (2.8 inches) of October's 3.5 inches of rainfall occurred in the prior wet season, while 85% (4.6 inches) of May's 5.4 inches fell in new 2026 Wet Season, which commenced on May 15, 2026.

The above normal May rainfall brought an end to the dry season and stopped the seasonal water level recession in the BCB. Wet season recovery of canal and groundwater levels is underway across the basin

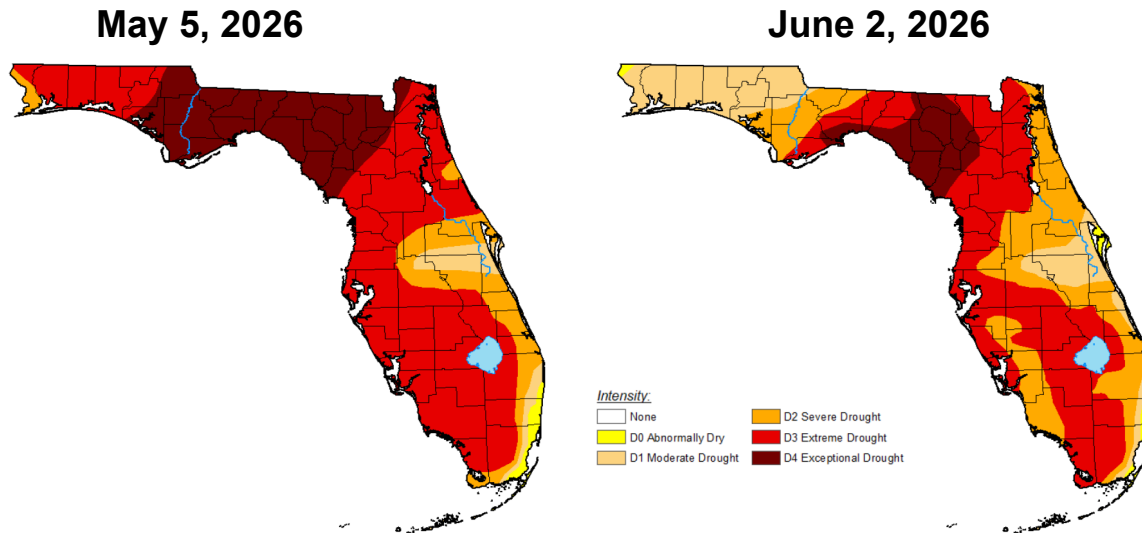
During the month of May, the Southwest Coast Forecast Area saw an average of 4.77 inches of rainfall, slightly less than, but similar to, the BCB's gauged based average. The difference between the two areas' rainfall average is to be expected as their boundaries do not match exactly. Both areas, however, received similar above average rainfall during the month of May.

May's above normal rainfall was beneficial, however, the 2025 / 2026 Dry Season saw only 9.56" of rainfall across the Southwest Coast Forecast Area, representing a 7.2" dry season rainfall deficit. Recovery from this long-term deficit will require additional above normal precipitation in the coming months.



Drought Conditions

Though May's above normal precipitation ushered in the 2026 Wet Season and halted the seasonal decline in canal and groundwater levels in the BCB, it was insufficient to fully remove drought conditions across the region. Per the U.S. Drought Monitor, as of June 2, 2026, the western half of Collier County saw drought conditions ease from "D3 Extreme Drought" to "D2 Severe Drought", while the eastern half of the county remained listed as "D3 Extreme Drought." This easing of drought conditions is a welcome development and allowed the South Florida Water Management District to lift its water shortage warning for Collier County on June 4, 2026.

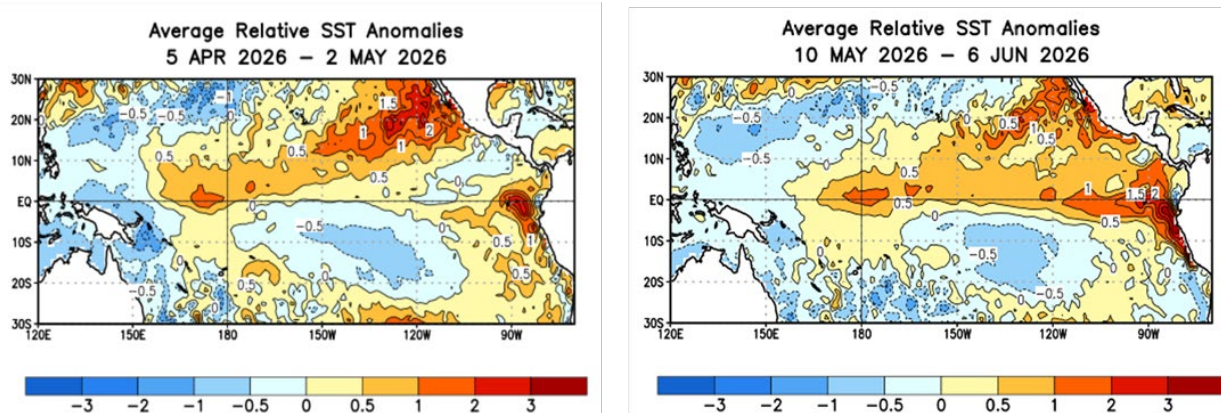


El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

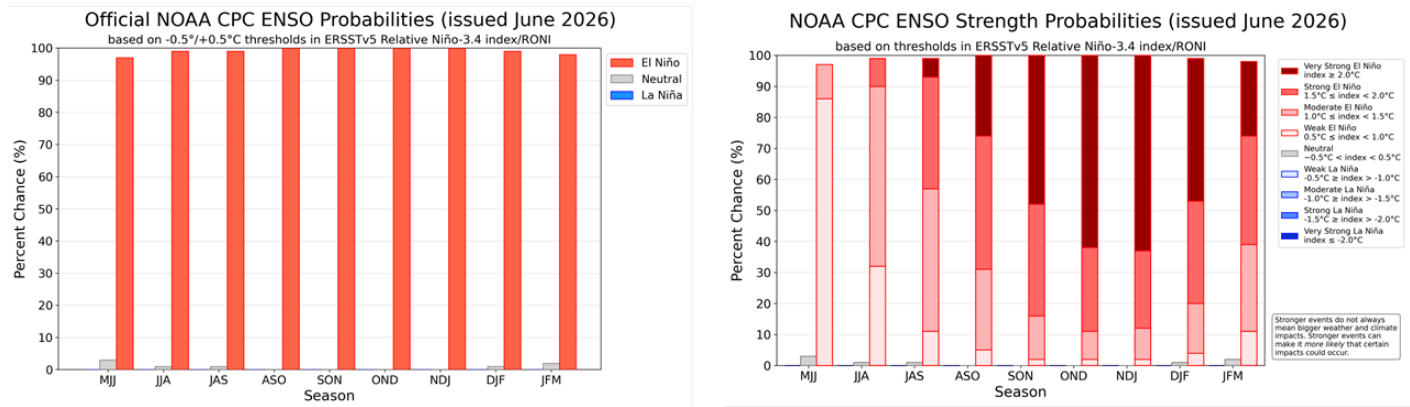
The June 11, 2026 ENSO update prepared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center (CPC), summarizes ENSO conditions as follows:

- El Niño conditions developed over the past month and are present.
- Equatorial sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are above average across the central to eastern Pacific Ocean.
- El Niño is forecast to intensify into the Northern Hemisphere winter 2026-27.

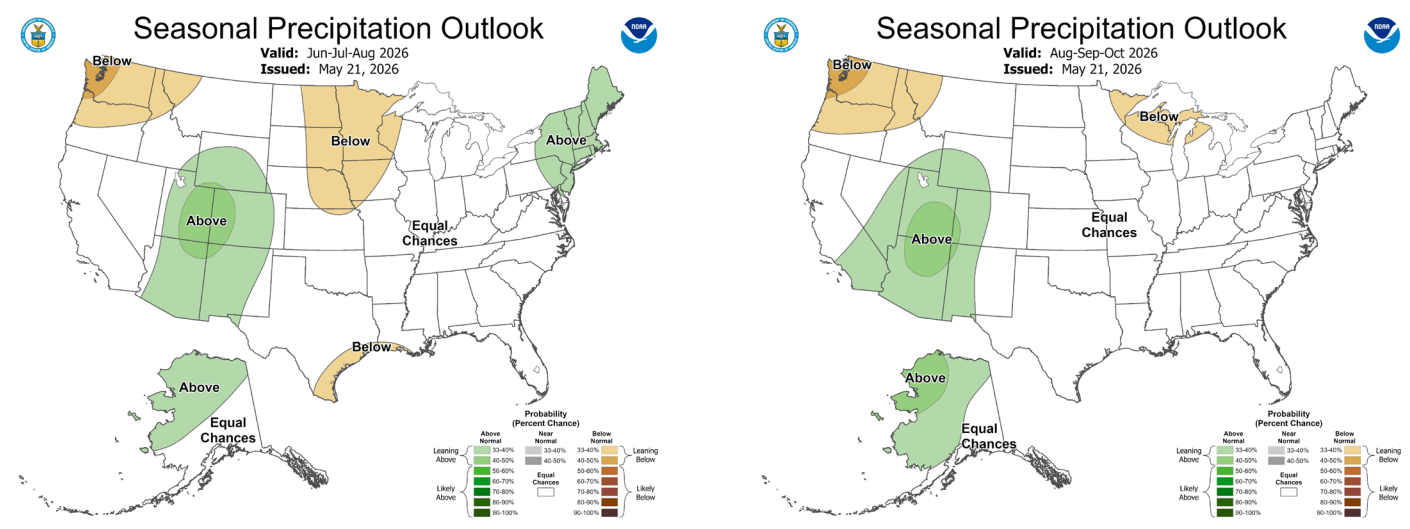
Comparison of sea surface temperature anomalies for the months of April and May clearly shows the continued warming of surface water in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.



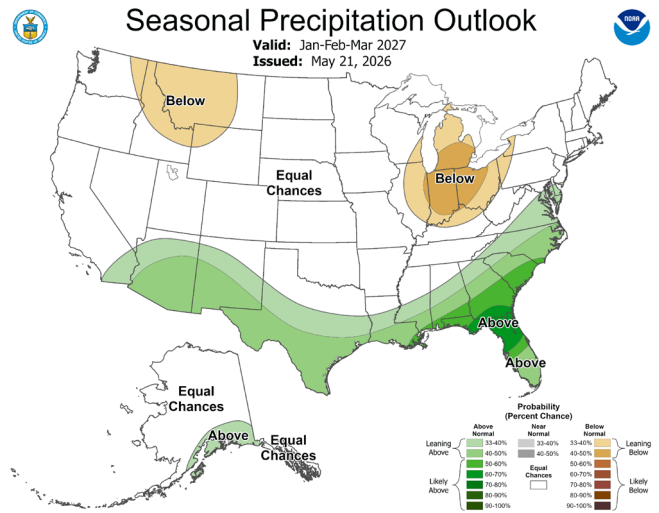
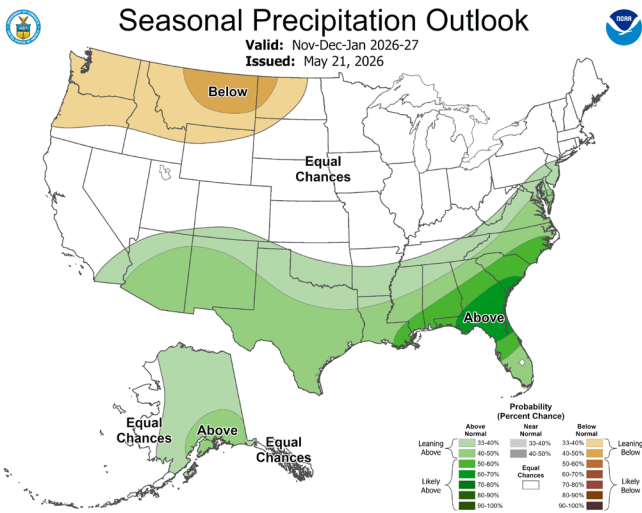
As shown on the charts below, the CPC is currently forecasting over a 95% chance that El Niño conditions will persist through the upcoming winter. In addition to the forecast of a persistent El Niño, the CPC currently predicts almost a 63% chance of a very strong El Niño during November 2026 through January 2027, which would rank among the largest El Niño events in the historical record going back to 1950. The CPC predicts only about a 1-in-10 chance of the current El Niño being moderate or weaker during this same November–January period.



During the first half of the wet season (June–August), rainfall in the BCB is driven primarily by local weather conditions, including afternoon thunderstorms, sea-breeze interactions, and atmospheric moisture levels. As a result, the influence of El Niño on rainfall during this period is less consistent and more variable than during other times of the year. As such, as of May 21, 2026 the CPC predicted equal chances of above or below normal precipitation during the 2026 Wet Season.



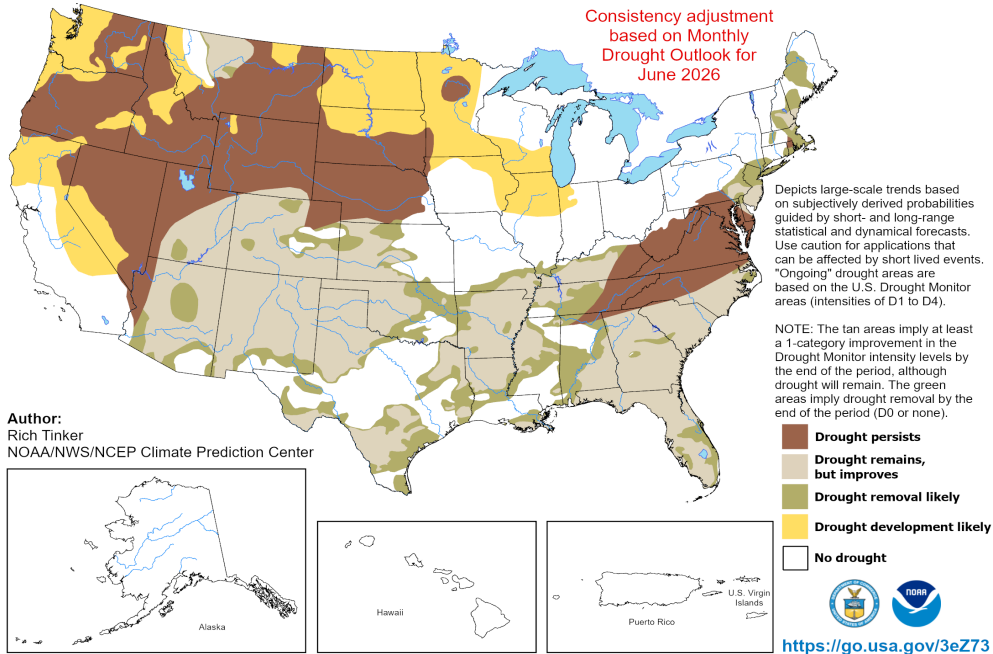
The effects of El Niño on South Florida precipitation generally become more pronounced during the fall and winter months. Consistent with this precedent, the CPC predicts an increasing probability of wetter than normal conditions in the upcoming fall and winter.



Due to the current drought conditions associated with the current rainfall deficit – in conjunction with the projected equal probabilities of wetter or drier than normal conditions this summer – the U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook predicts that drought conditions will remain, but improve, throughout most of the BCB.

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook
Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for June 1 - August 31, 2026
Released May 31, 2026



Due to the increased rainfall, canal water levels across the BCB improved in May, but remained below normal operational levels in most areas. BCB water managers began transitioning to flood control operations in May at locations where canal levels had recovered sufficiently. This transition will strategically continue in June based upon canal and groundwater levels and precipitation forecasts. As water levels remain low in most areas and wet season precipitation remains uncertain, caution will be exercised in the transition to flood control to prevent unnecessary loss of water should dry conditions return.

MAY 2026 BCB RAINFALL

The Basin-wide averaged, gauge-measured, monthly rainfall was 5.39 inches in May 2026. This measured rainfall amounted to 137% of the historic BCB May average of 3.93 inches (**see Figures 1, 2, 3A and Table 1**). In May, the rain gauge with the highest measured precipitation was R-21 I75W2 which recorded 8.86 inches. R-11 COLLIER SEMINOLE STATE PARK received the lowest rain gauge monthly total with just 2.86 inches.

Figure 3B shows May's calculated average rainfall estimates for each of the Basin's watersheds, based on gauge adjusted radar (Raindar). The Gordon River Extension watershed saw the highest Raindar average of 7.74 inches and the Barron River watershed saw the lowest Raindar average of 3.92 inches. The BCB's overall calculated areal weighted average Raindar rainfall (by watershed) was 5.02 inches for the month, slightly below the basin-wide rain gauge average of 5.39 inches. The Raindar totals and their locality distribution across the BCB/Lower West Coast are shown on **Figure 3C**.

MAY 2026 BCB OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS

During May, most BCB structures were kept in water conservation operations as water levels remained low due to the abnormally dry winter. May's above normal rainfall, however, brought an end to the dry season recession of groundwater and canal water levels, and the wet season recovery began in most areas. Water levels and their percentiles related to historic values varied highly by location in May due to an uneven rainfall distribution across the BCB. Some areas rose to the 75th percentile or higher, while others remained below the 50th percentile. The transition to flood control operations began in May and is currently underway in as water levels rise sufficiently to warrant operational adjustment. Completion of the transition to flood control operations is anticipated in June, however, actual timing of the transition is dependent upon canal stages, groundwater levels and forecasted precipitation. BCB canal conditions as of May 31, 2026 are shown on **Figure 4**.

GOLDEN GATE SYSTEM

Water levels in the Golden Gate Main Canal varied heavily by location due to an uneven distribution of rainfall over the watershed. Areas closest to the coast rose to the 90th percentile and began their transition to flood control operations. As a result of this transition, GG1 began discharging on May 28th. Discharges remain minimal in volume, however, as upstream water levels remained low and water is not yet passing over the GG3 weir. Upstream of GG3, though canal water levels are slowly increasing, they remain too low to transition into flood control operations. Upstream of GG4, water levels are also slowly increasing, but remain between the 25th and 75th 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 stage recovery remaining in the upper Golden Gate Main Canal system.

COCOHATCHEE SYSTEM

As with the Golden Gate Main system, the Cocohatchee Canal water levels varied by location, with the downstream segment (between COCO1 and COCO2) at the 75th percentile, while the upper reaches of the canal remained lower. Though the COCO1 stage rose in response to rainfall,

the rise was insufficient to trigger gate operations. COCO1 stands ready to quickly begin flood control operations when necessary. Upstream of COCO2, canal water levels remain lower and require additional recovery prior to transition into flood control operations. By the end of May, the Cocohatchee Canal upstream of GG2 – as well as the upstream Corkscrew Canal – remained between the 25th and 50th percentile, with the exception of CORK 2 (north of Shady Hollow Boulevard), which remained at the 90th percentile (**Figures 6A, 6B, & 6C**).

FAKA UNION SYSTEM

The Faka Union Canal remained in water conservation operations during May. The FU4S and FU5 gates stayed closed throughout the month as rainfall was insufficient to raise water levels to operational thresholds. As a result of water conservation operations, the Faka Union Canal upstream of FU5 was well above the 75th percentile by the end of May. Just downstream at FU4S, the canal continued to recede for most of May, finishing the month near the 25th percentile (**Figures 7A & 7B**). Downstream of FU4S, the canal reach between FU4S and S487 (Faka Pump Station) ended the month at the 75th percentile, but not high enough to resume pumping at S487. Monitoring wells downstream of S487 – within the Picayune Strand Restoration Project (PSRP) – finished the month above the 75th percentile of historic levels. The remaining segment of the Faka Union Canal north of FU1 finished the month between the 50th and 75th percentile.

HENDERSON CREEK SYSTEM

The Henderson Creek system continued its recovery in May due to localized rainfall over the watershed. By the end of the month the water level upstream of HC1 had risen to above the 75th percentile of historical daily values, while the portion upstream of HC2 had risen to the 90th percentile. While these increases are significant and notable for May, water levels remained below those necessary to trigger gate operations and no discharge to tide occurred. Water levels at HC1 are being closely monitored and the structure is anticipated to transition to flood control operations in early June. (**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 recovered during May (**Table 2 and Figures 9A and 9B**). **C-462** (north of Lake Trafford) had modest recovery and finished the month of May at the 75th percentile. **C-1224** (near Henderson Creek) saw a significant increase in water level due to heavy, and finished the month at the 90th percentile. **C-1004R** (a Tidally influenced well near Cocohatchee Canal) receded to the level of high concern by the middle of May, then rose almost 6 feet in the second half of the month, finishing above the 75th percentile, 4.4 feet above the level at the end of April.

L-738 a Tamiami Aquifer well in Bonita Springs also dropped below the level of high concern by mid-May, then quickly climbed 4 feet to finish the month at the 50th percentile. Water levels in **L-2194**, a Sandstone Aquifer well in Bonita Springs, followed a similar pattern by dropping to almost 2 feet below the level of high concern, then rising 4 feet in the second half of the month, finishing above the 25th percentile. **L-2195**, a surficial aquifer well in Bonita Springs, also climbed to the 50th percentile after receding to below the level of high concern in the middle of May.

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 continued its recession in May before leveling off late in the month. By the end of May CRKSWPS was below the 25th percentile. By the end of the month both BRDROOK and CORK3 remained below their ability to measure water levels and thus show as flat lines on Figure 10. **Figure 11** shows that Lake Trafford also continued its dry season recession in the first half of May, then leveled off after the beginning of the wet season, finishing just above the 50th 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 received more rainfall than the eastern portions of Corkscrew Swamp, and saw significant increases in water levels beginning with the onset of the wet season, even briefly exceeding their daily record stages for late May. SOCREW1 finished the month at the 75th percentile. SOCREW2 finished the month at the daily record for the date of May 31st. 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

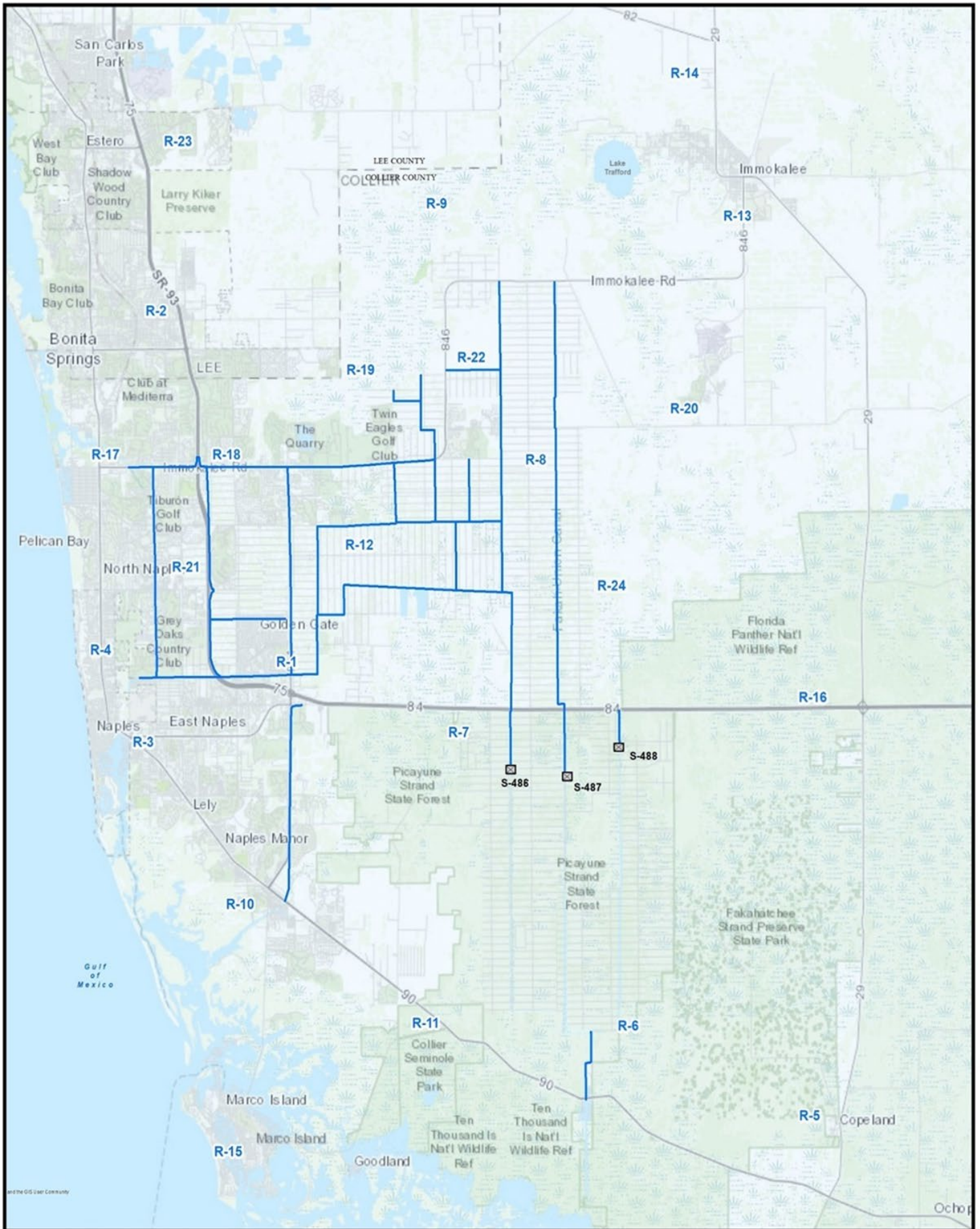
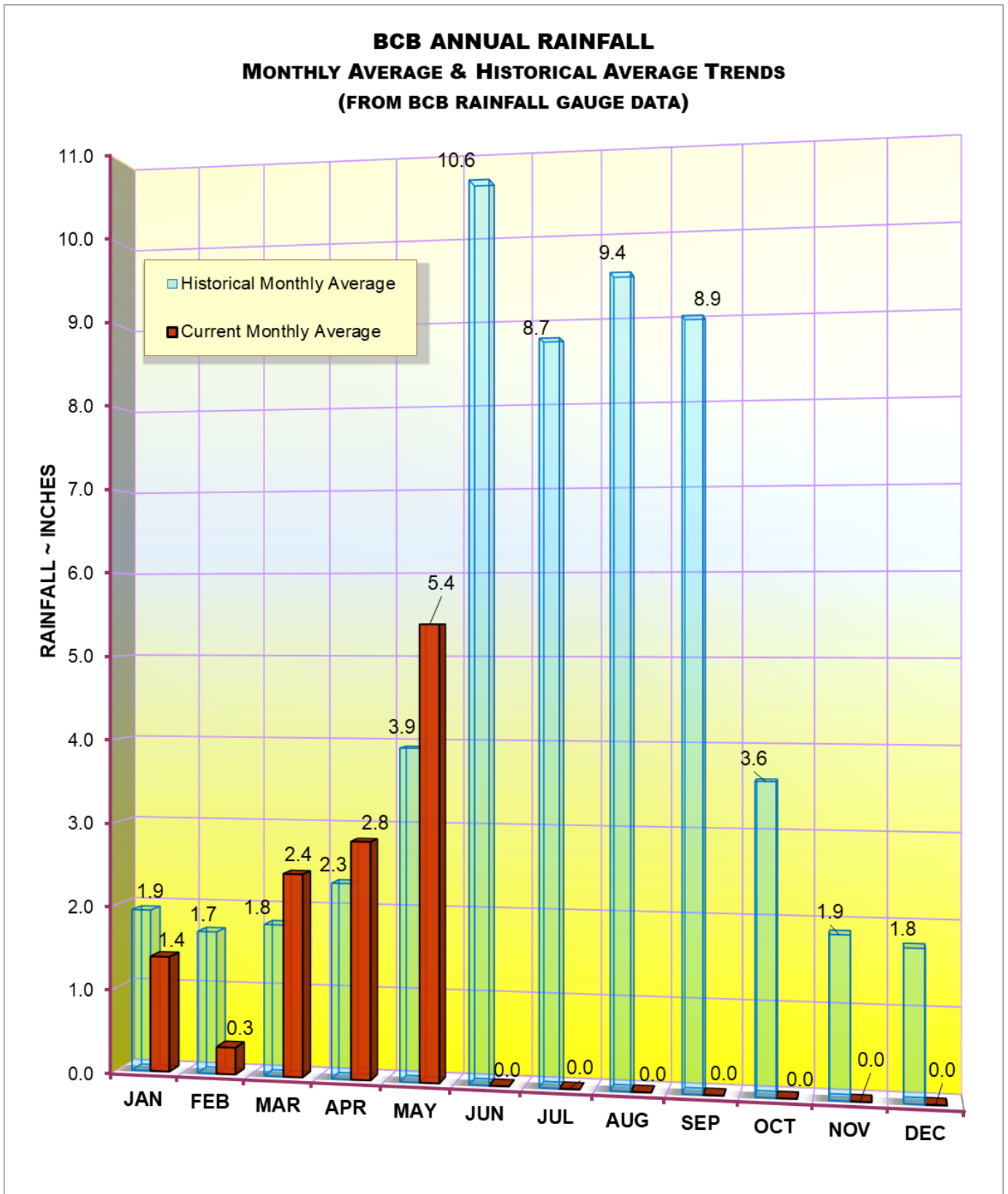


FIGURE 2
BCB GAUGE MEASURED RAINFALL MONTHLY AVERAGES
CALENDAR YEAR 2026



RAINFALL REPORT - MAY 2026
DISTRICT/BASIN RAINFALL STATIONS
 (ALL NUMBERS ARE IN INCHES)

STATION INDEX NO.	STATION NAME	May-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	7.74	4.94	2.80	14.17	12.07	2.10
R-2	BONITA SPRINGS WATER PLANT	5.20	3.42	1.78	9.84	11.45	-1.61
R-3	COLLIER COUNTY COURTHOUSE	6.15	3.55	2.60	14.48	11.54	2.94
R-4	FREEDOM PARK	5.49	3.82	1.67	11.56	10.76	0.80
R-5	FAKAHATCHEE STRAND HQ	5.13	4.59	0.54	12.80	12.65	0.15
R-6	DAN HOUSE PRAIRIE	6.24	3.55	2.69	11.31	10.38	0.93
R-7	SGGE WEATHER STATION	8.71	4.60	4.11	15.21	12.06	3.14
R-8	FAKA UNION #5	3.50	4.71	-1.21	11.16	13.07	-1.91
R-9	CORKSCREW SWAMP NORTH END	2.94	3.43	-0.49	10.73	10.64	0.09
R-10	ROOKERY BAY HQ	6.31	3.32	2.99	12.77	10.63	2.14
R-11	COLLIER SEMINOLE STATE PARK	2.86	3.47	-0.61	9.49	11.31	-1.82
R-12	G.G. FIRE STATION	7.90	4.06	3.84	13.16	12.38	0.78
R-13	IMMOKALEE LANDFILL	3.53	4.19	-0.66	13.47	12.79	0.68
R-14	IFAS	4.94	4.03	0.91	12.58	12.92	-0.34
R-15	MARCO R.O. PLANT	3.75	3.08	0.67	9.22	11.61	-2.39
R-16	FAKAHATCHEE STRAND NORTH END	4.46	4.91	-0.45	12.24	14.75	-2.51
R-17	COCO#1	7.83	2.85	4.98	12.49	10.40	2.09
R-18	COCO#3	6.07	3.26	2.81	12.55	10.55	2.00
R-19	BIRD ROOKERY	5.59	4.18	1.41	10.78	10.32	0.46
R-20	AVE MARIA	2.93	4.28	-1.35	14.28	12.94	1.34
R-21	I75W2	8.86	3.94	4.92	14.83	10.02	4.81
R-22	GG#7	5.62	3.90	1.72	12.57	10.51	2.06
R-23	FPWX	3.69	2.73	0.96	12.01	10.54	1.47
R-24	DSOTO10	3.82	5.49	-1.67	11.83	14.23	-2.40
AVERAGES		5.39	3.93	1.46	12.31	11.69	0.63

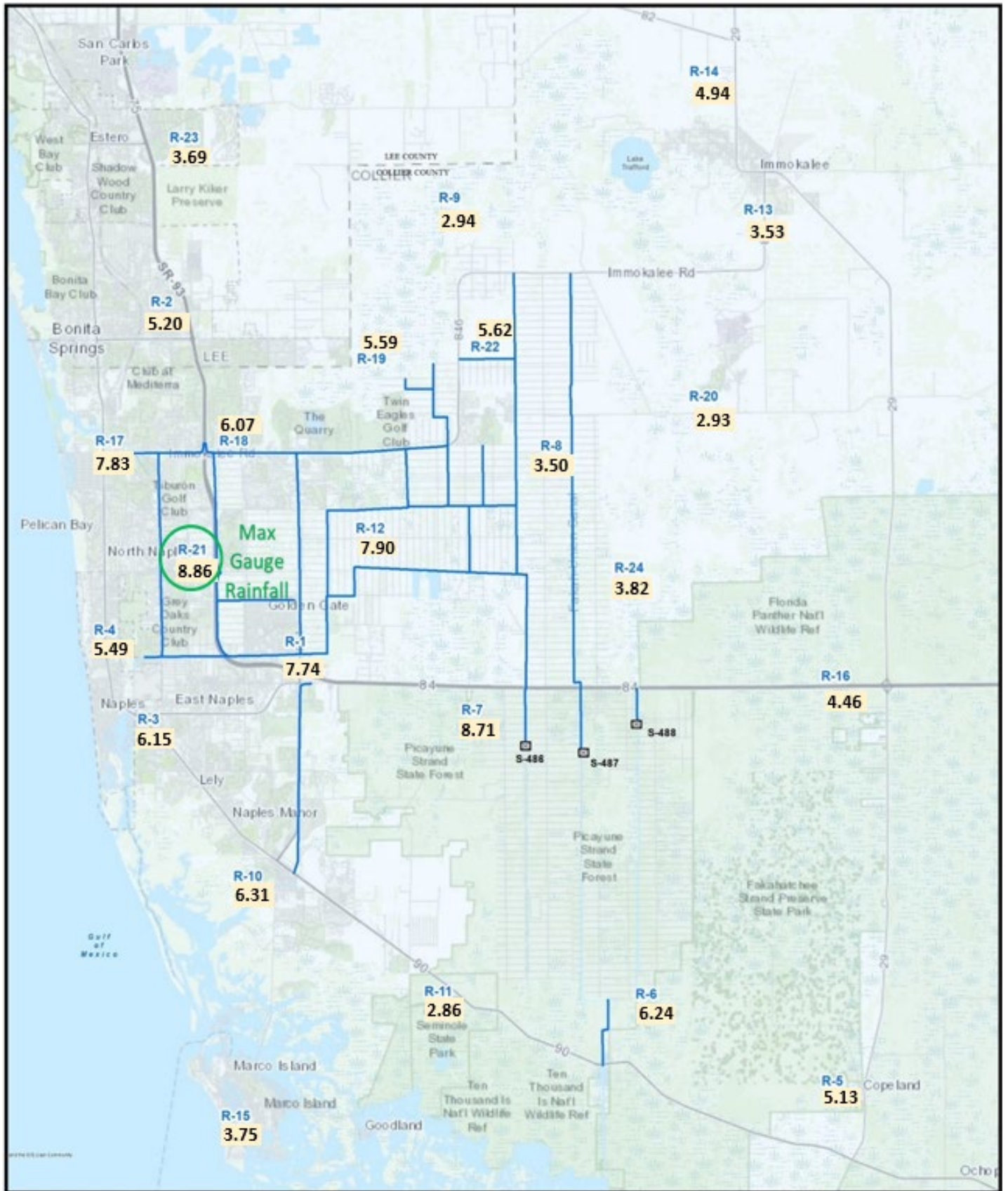
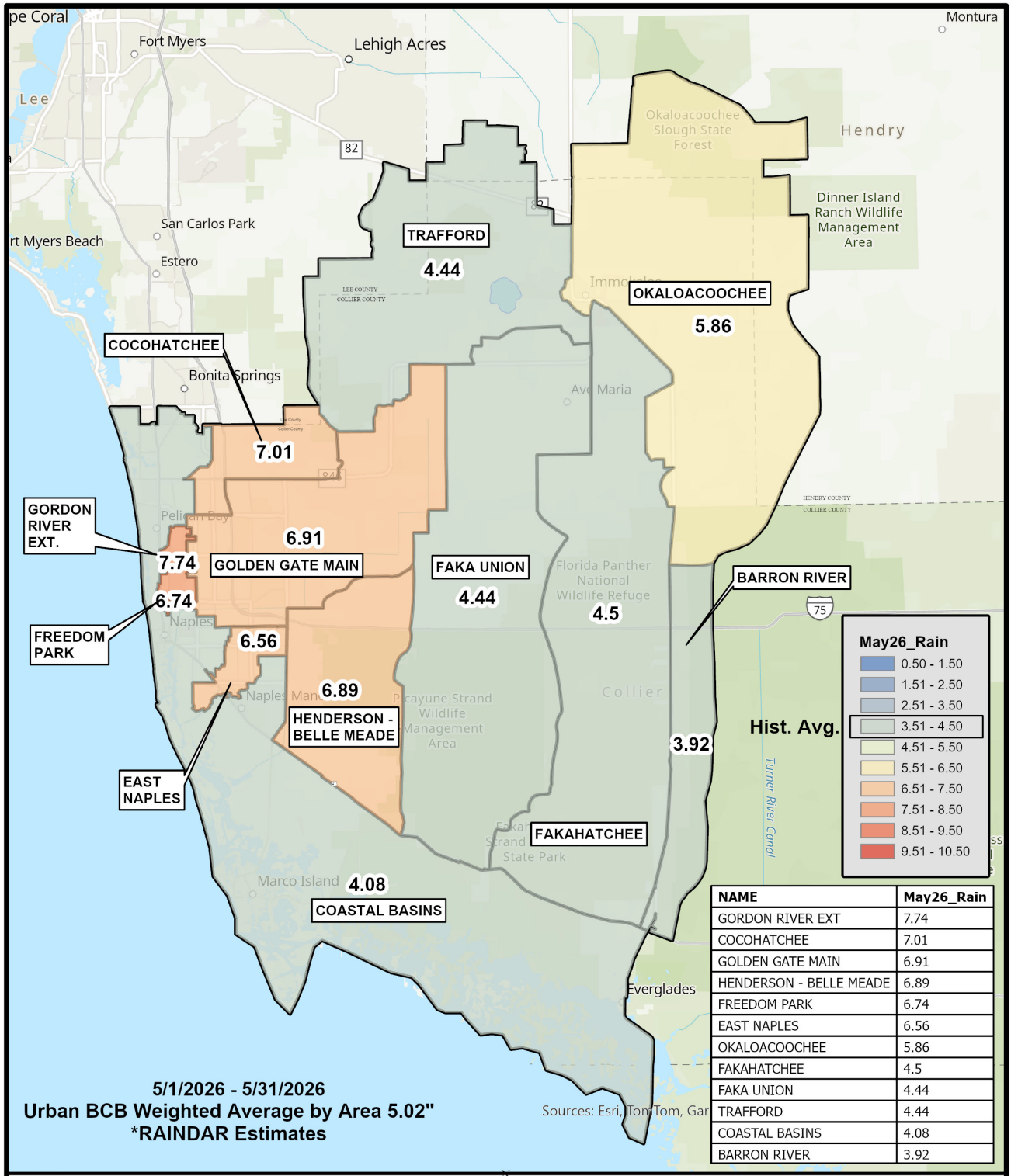


FIGURE 3A
BCB RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION
MAY 2026



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*Rainfall estimates based on gauge adjusted radar

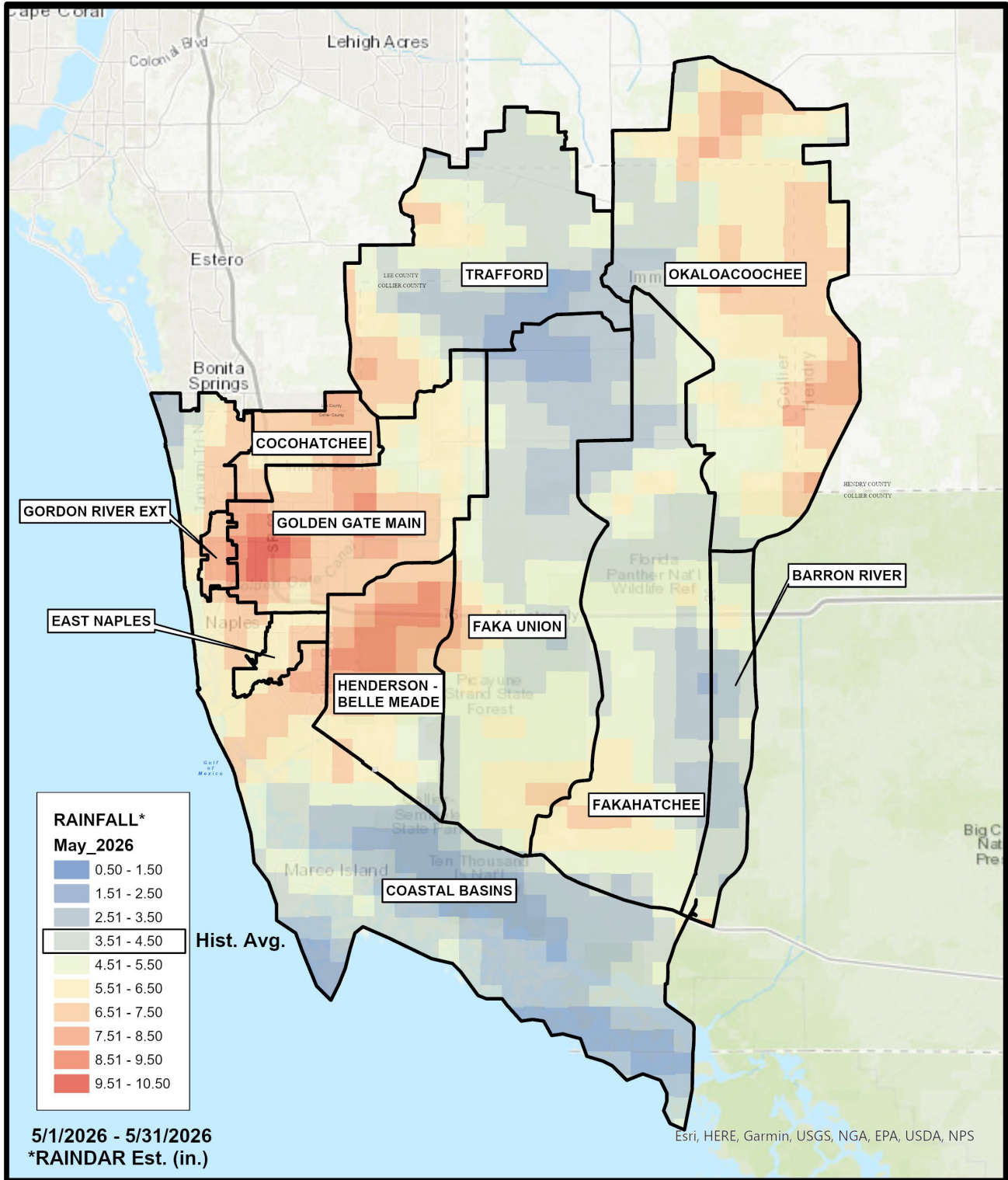


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BCB RAINFALL
SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION
 Urban Collier County, Florida



MAY 2026 — FIGURE 3B



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*Rainfall estimates based on gauge adjusted radar

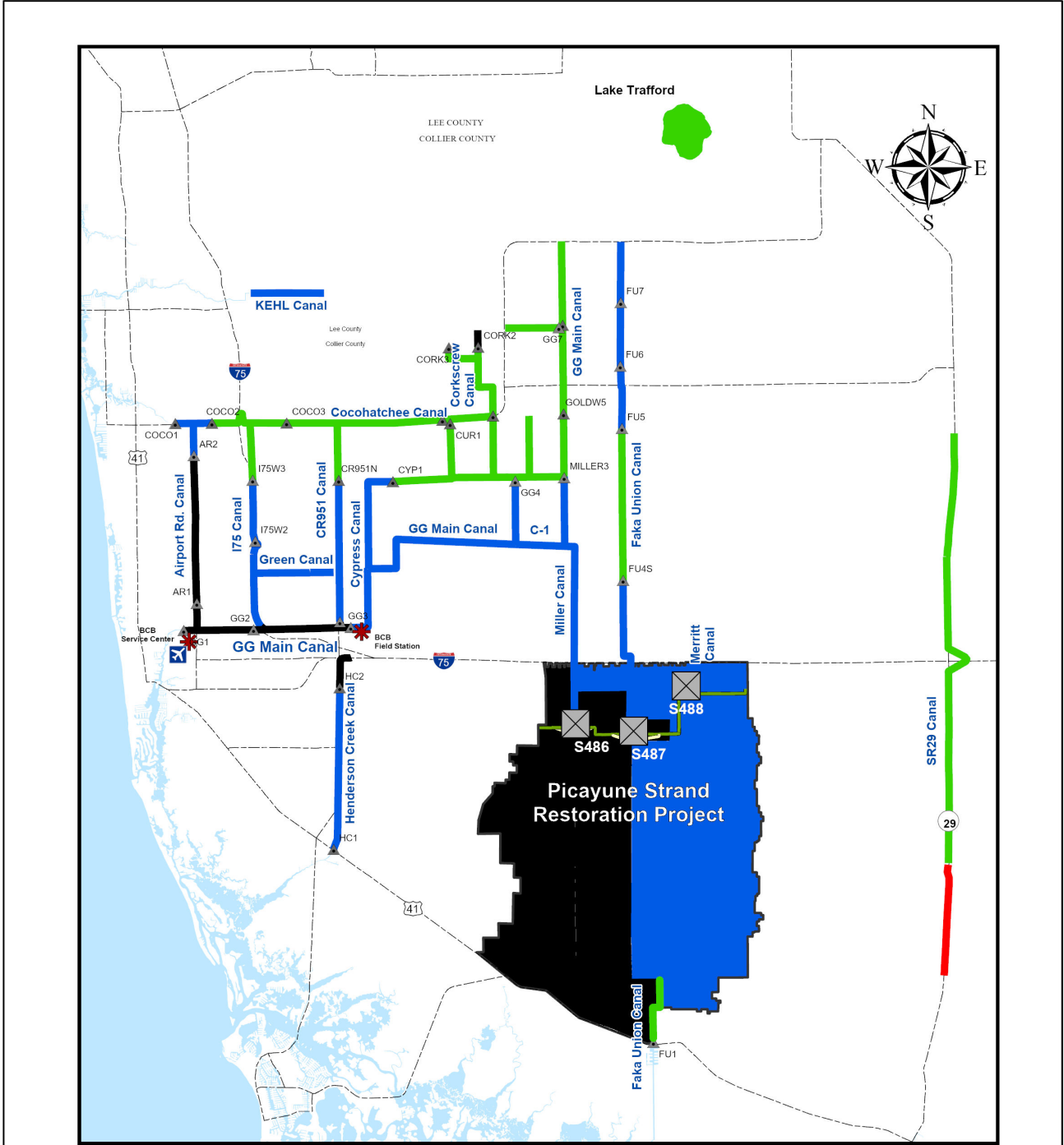


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BCB RAINFALL
SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION
 Urban Collier County, Florida

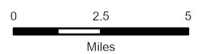
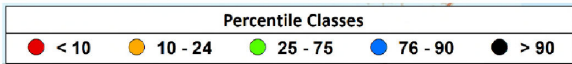


MAY 2026 —FIGURE 3C



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* Based on period of record for each canal reach



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BCB Conditions Index 5/31/26

Urban Collier County, Florida



FIGURE 4
BCB WATER CONDITIONS

Figure 5 Golden Gate Canal Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

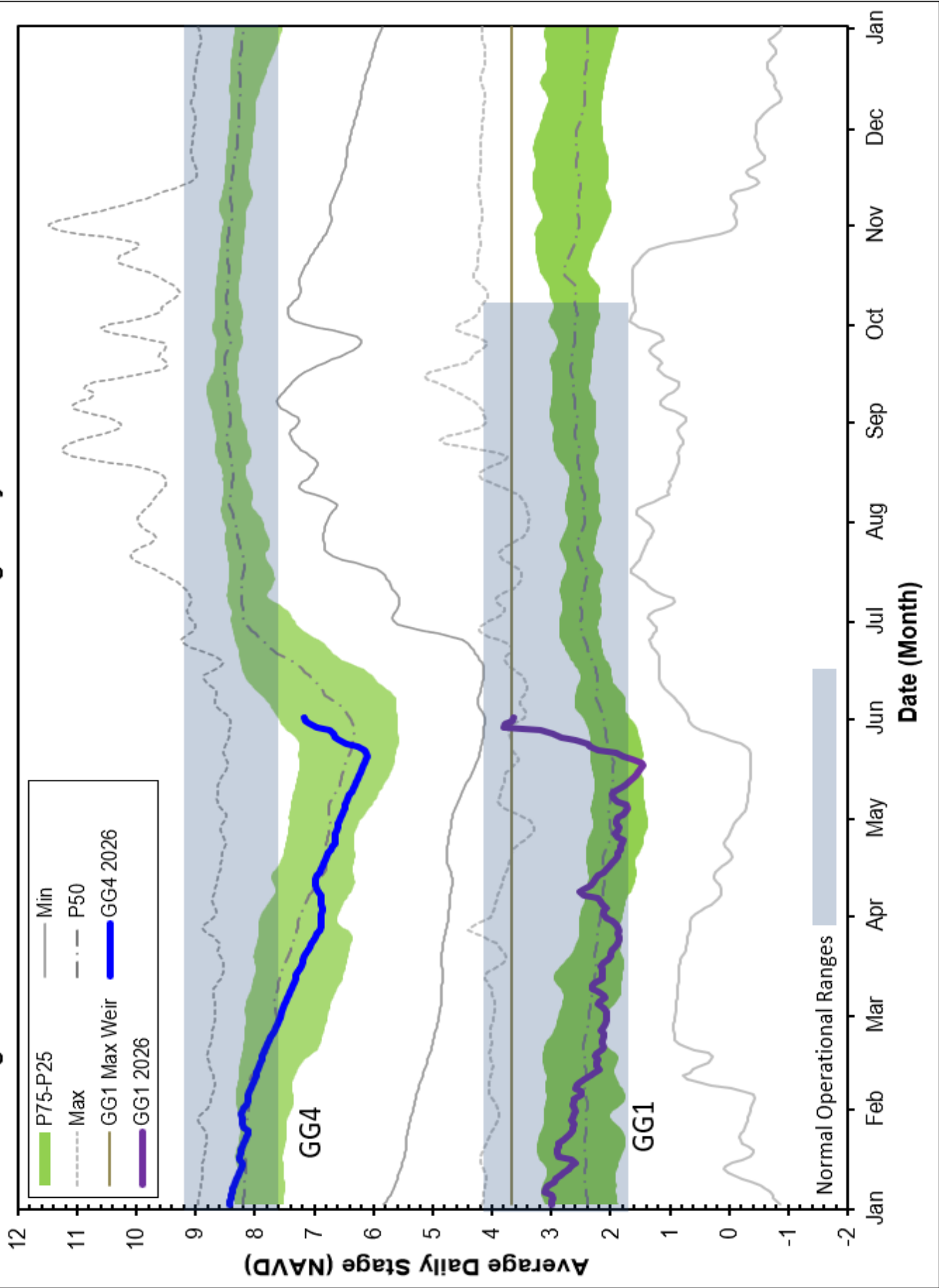


Figure 6A Cochatchee Canal Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

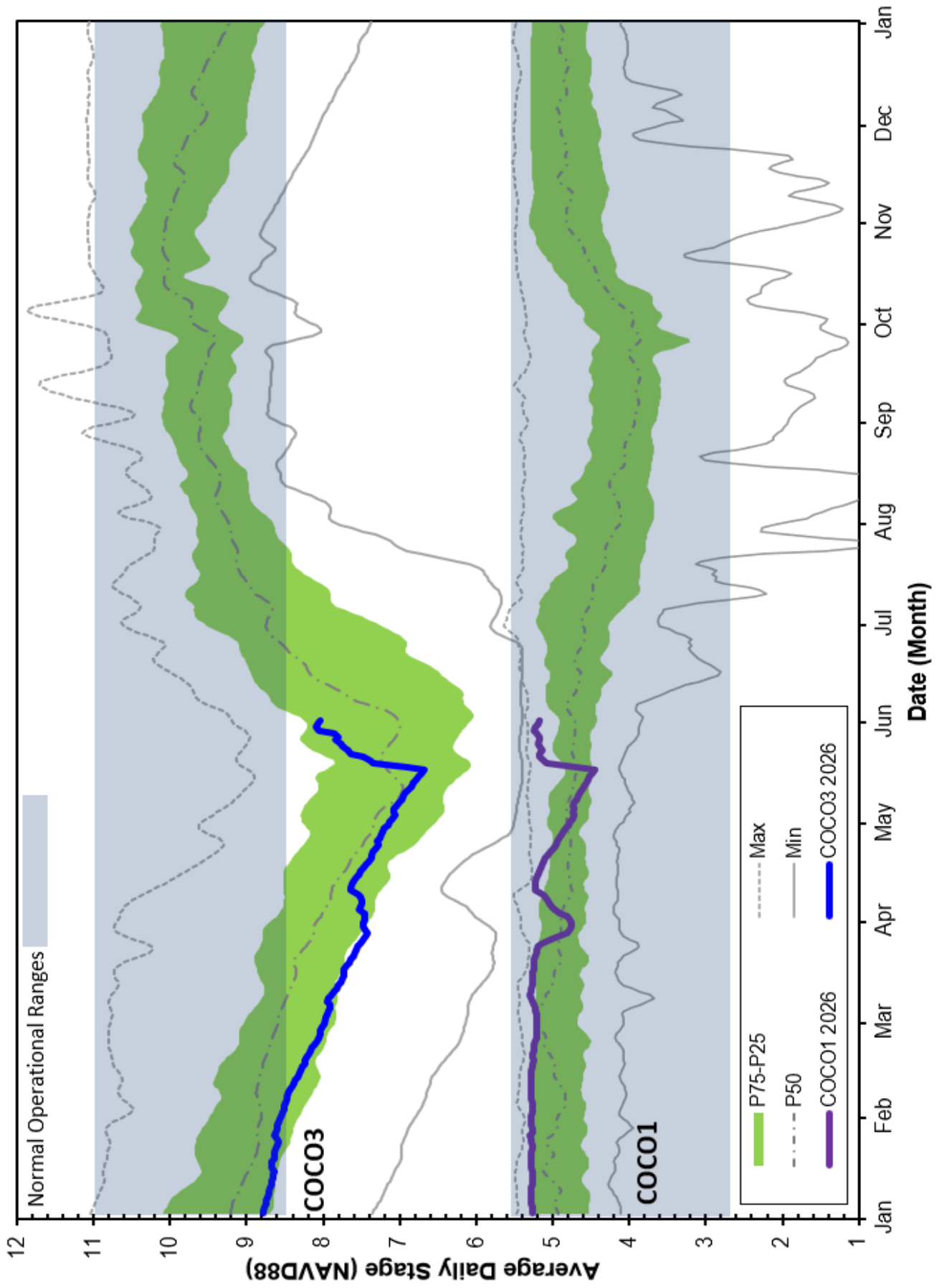


Figure 6B CORK1 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

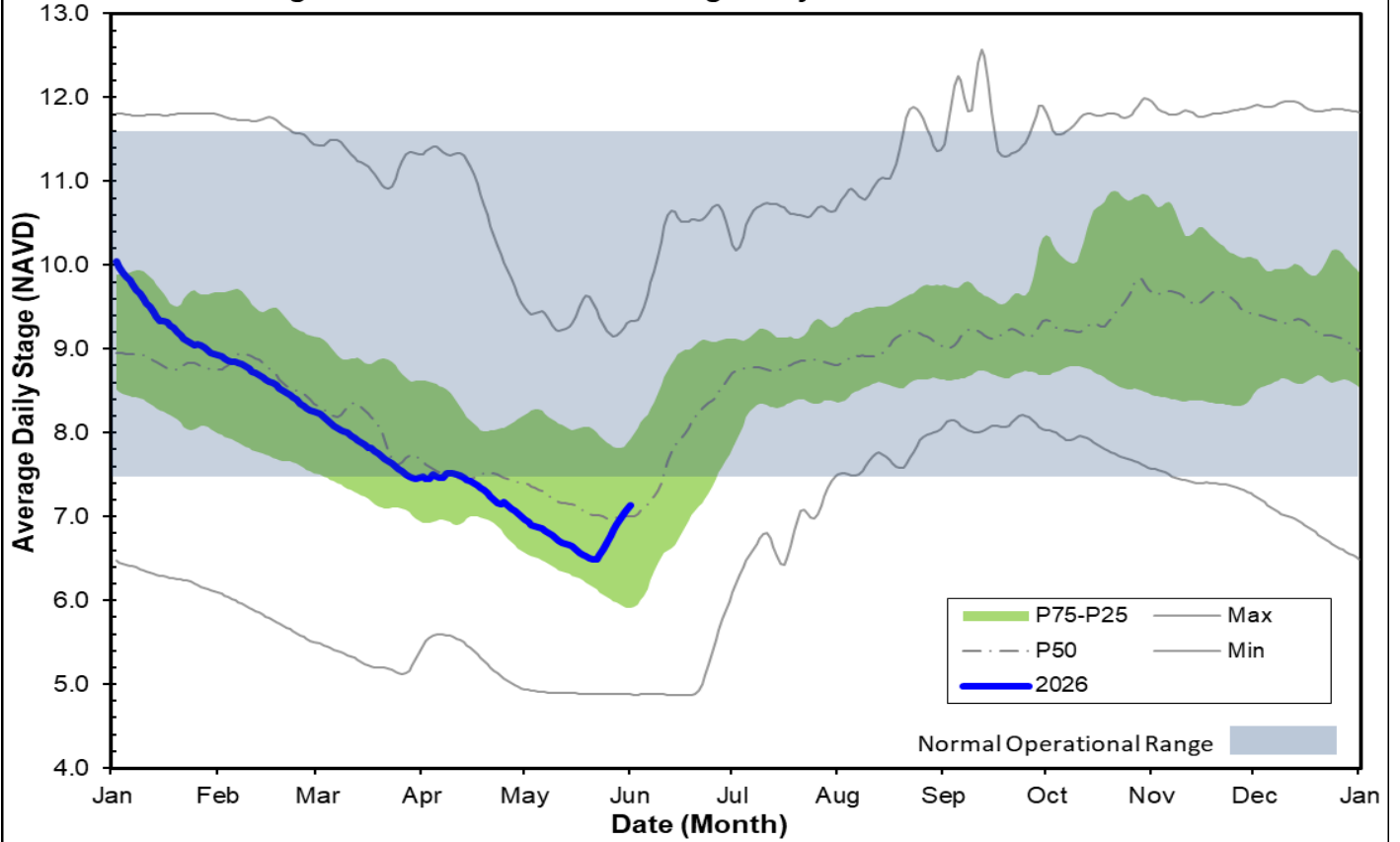


Figure 6C - CORK2 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

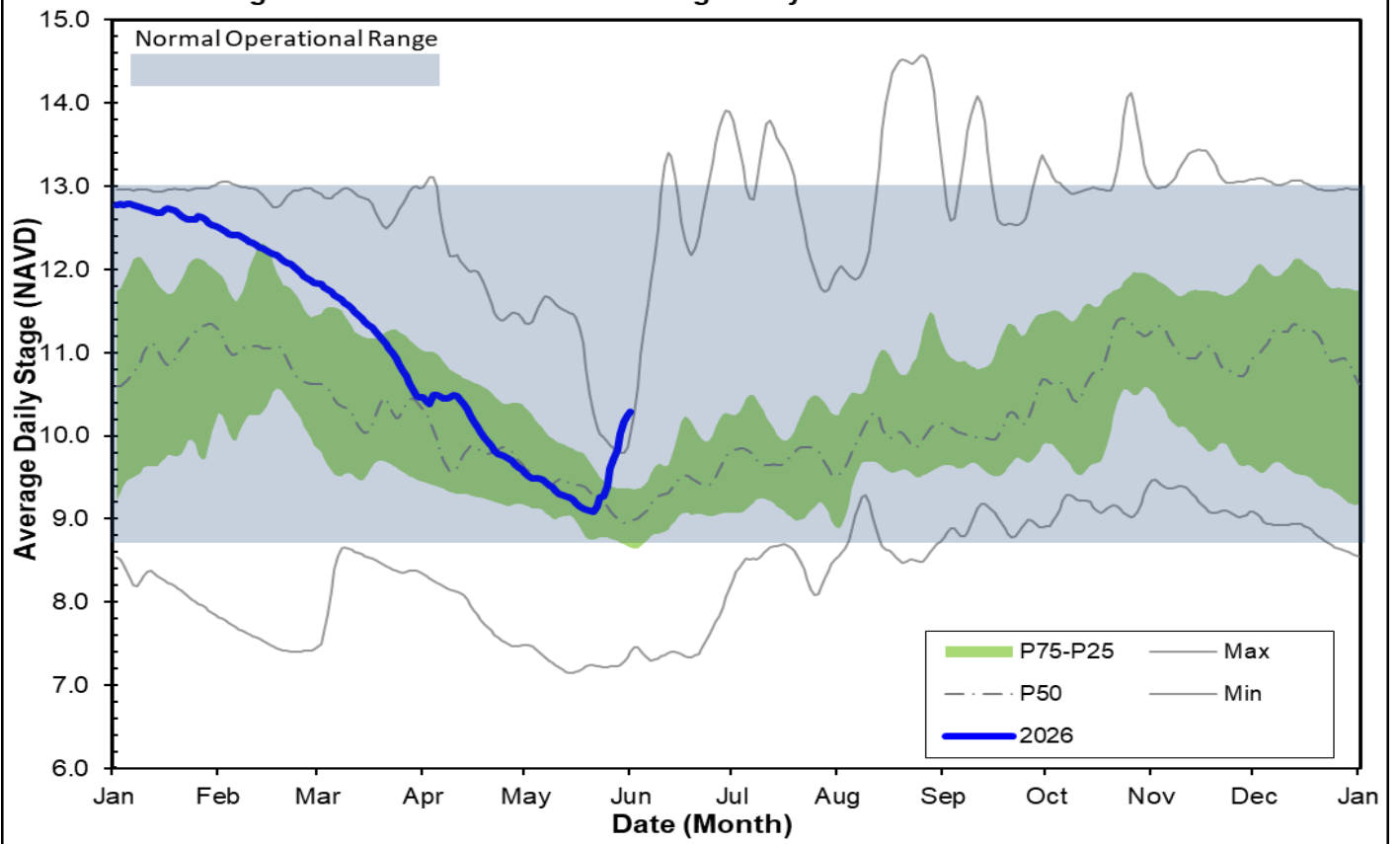


Figure 7A Faka Union Canal Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

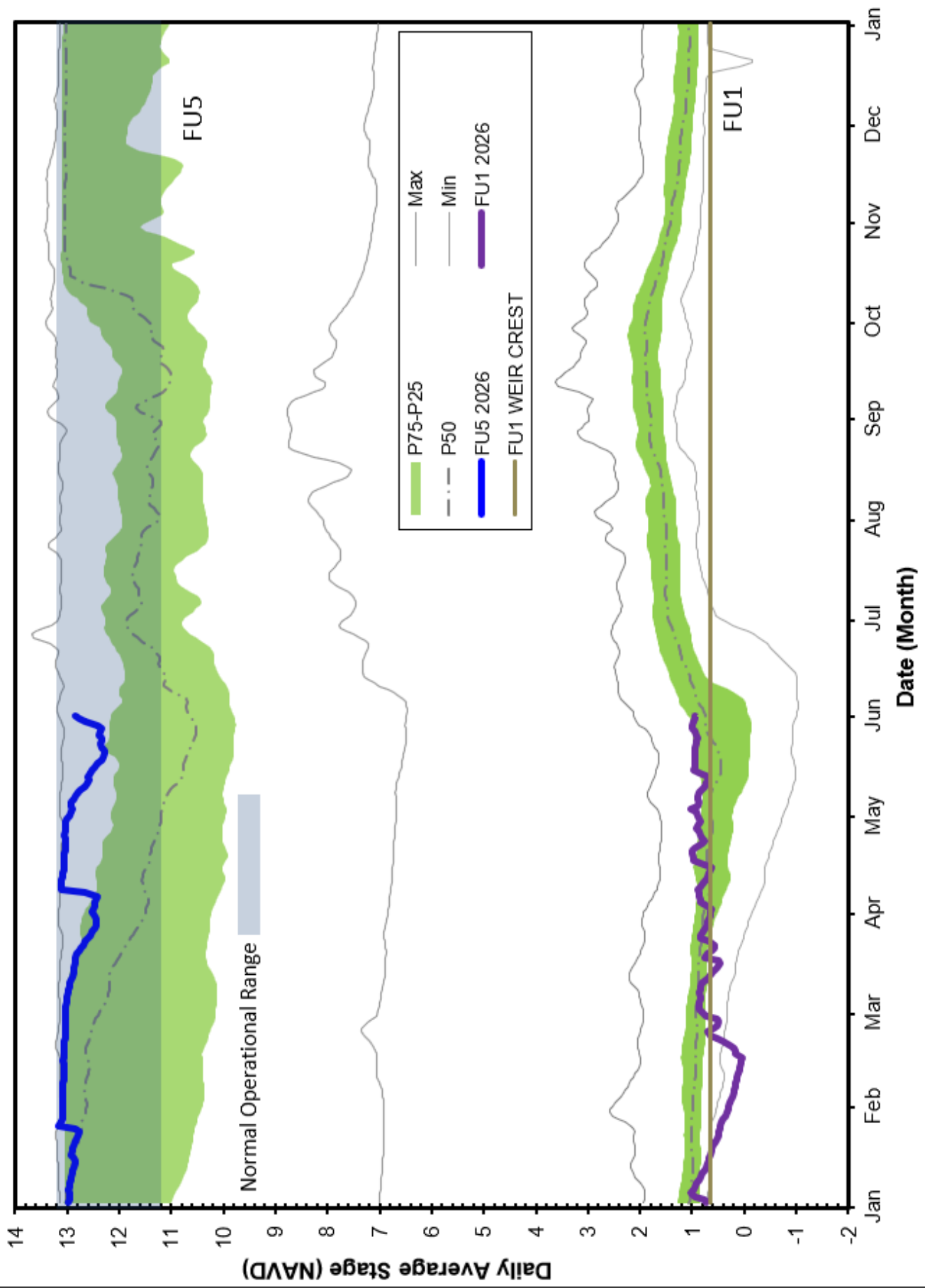


Figure 7B FU4S Historic Average Daily Water Percentiles

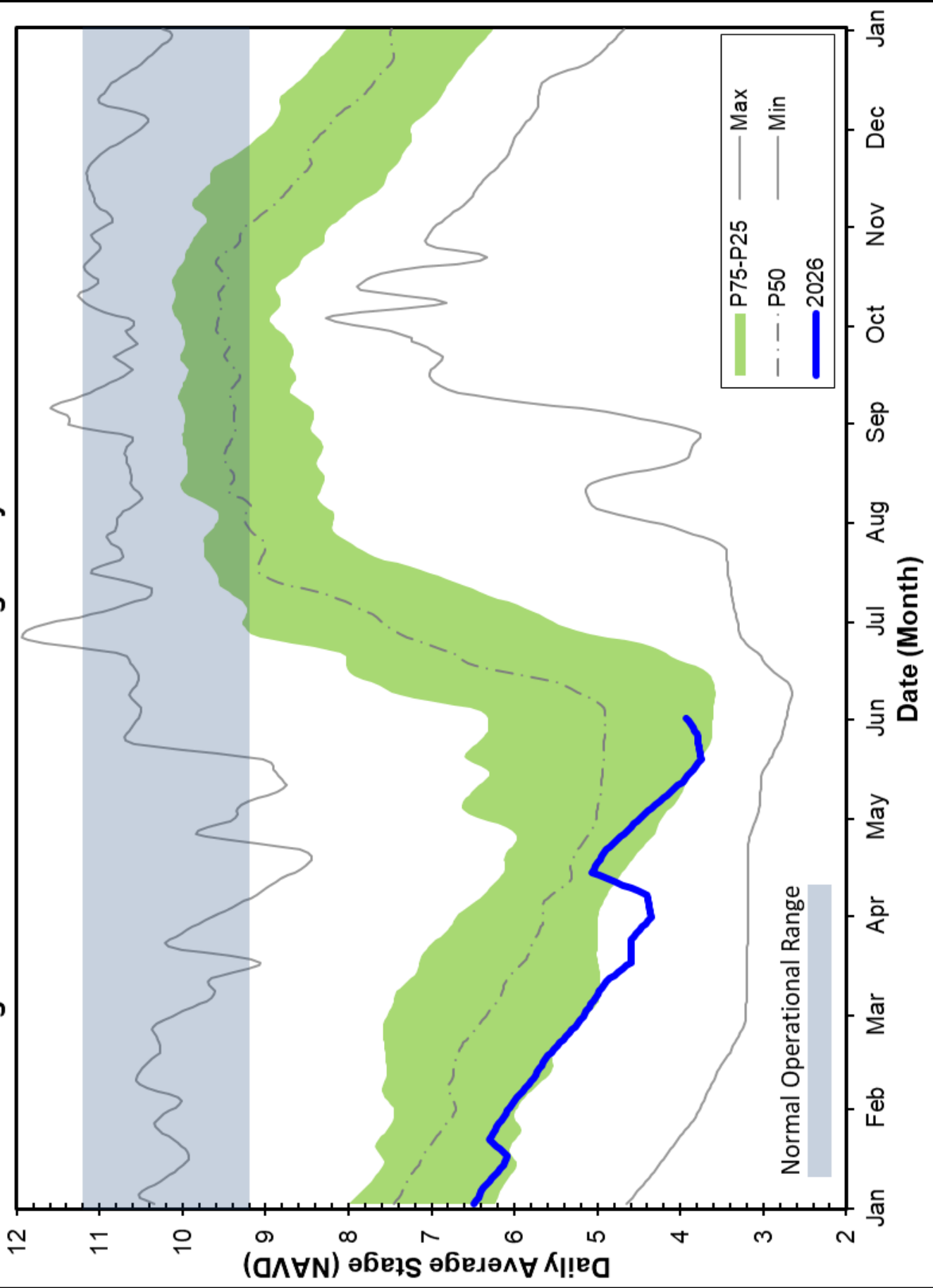


Figure 8A - HC1 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

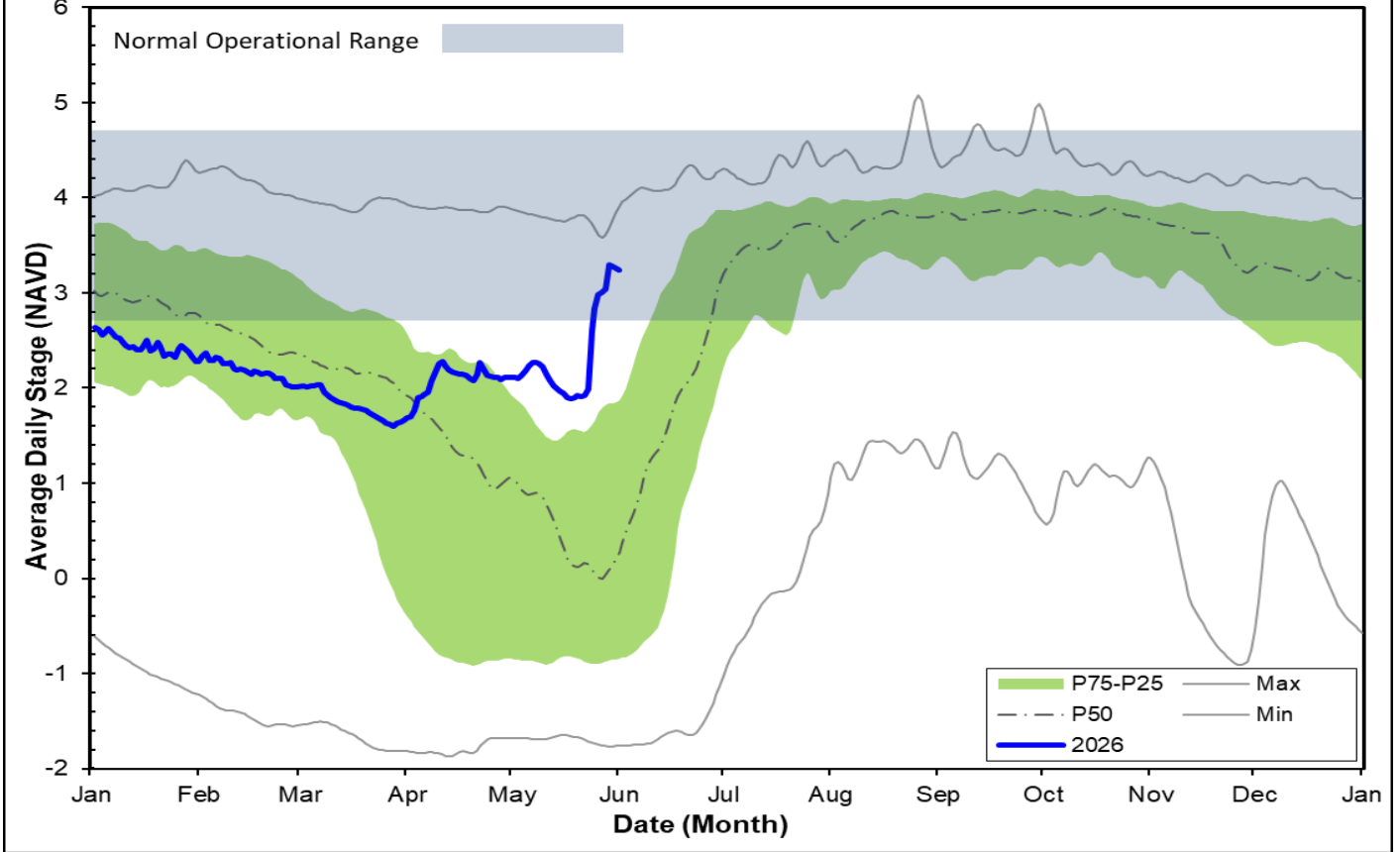


Figure 8B HC2 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

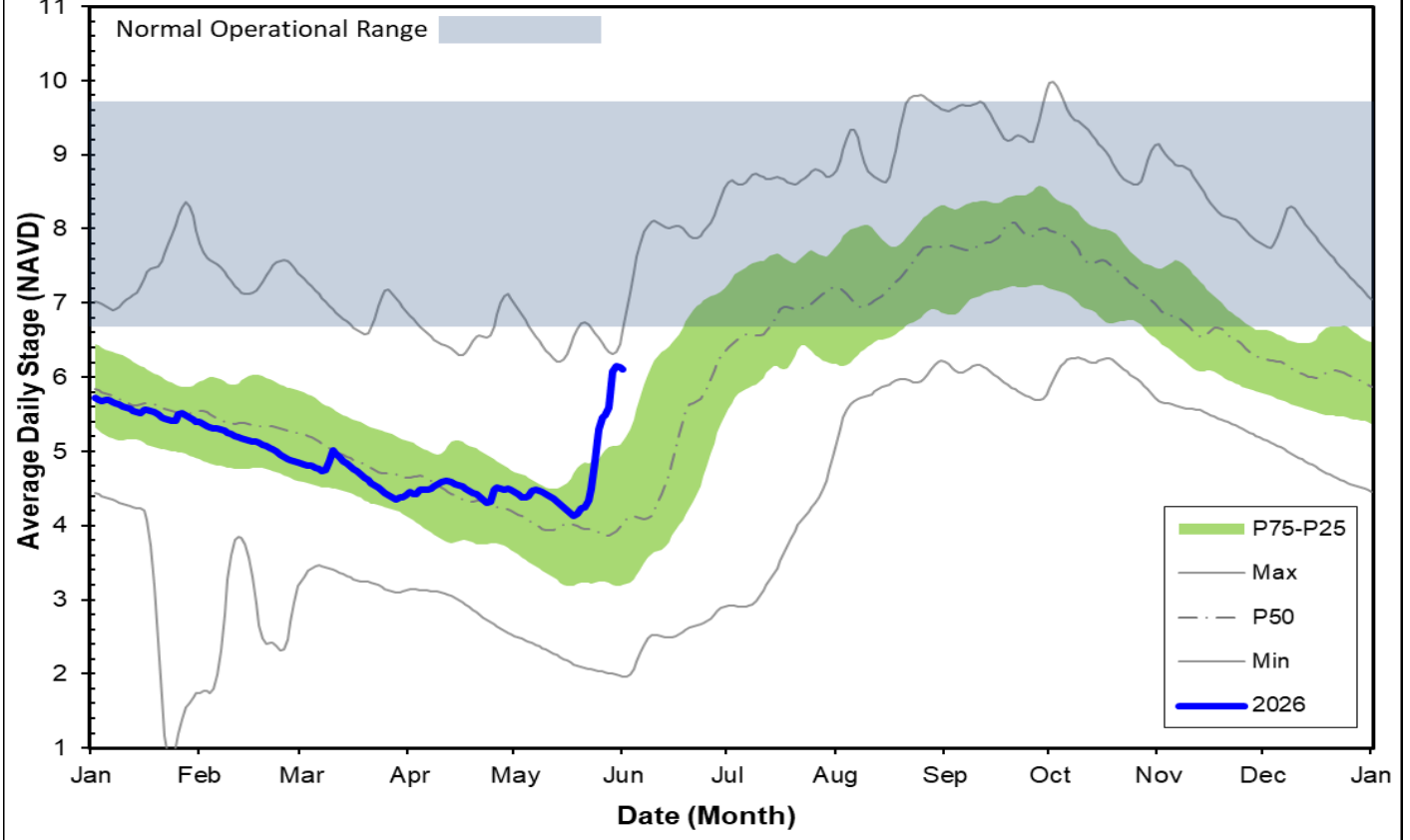


TABLE 2

WATER CONDITIONS SUMMARY - MAY 2026

SELECTED STATIONS for BCB AREA / SW FLORIDA

Last Reading Date :		May 31, 2026					
Previous Period Reading Date:		April 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	0.38	28.12	28.50	↑	GREEN
C-1004R	Naples	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	4.40	-3.31	1.09	↑	GREEN
C-1224	Marco Lakes	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	0.95	1.79	2.74	↑	GREEN
C-948R	Golden Gate	Mid Hawthorn Aquifer	0.79	24.41	25.20	↑	
C-951R	Golden Gate	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	0.55	-0.25	0.30	↑	
L-2194	Bonita Springs	Sandstone Aquifer	2.97	-3.73	-0.76	↑	YELLOW
L-2195	Bonita Springs	Surficial Aquifer System	1.20	5.62	6.82	↑	GREEN
L-738	Bonita Springs	Lower Tamiami Aquifer	4.32	-7.39	-3.07	↑	GREEN

BIG CYPRESS BASIN

MAY 31, 2026

**GROUNDWATER LEVEL DAILY TRENDS
COMPARED TO HISTORICAL AVERAGE**

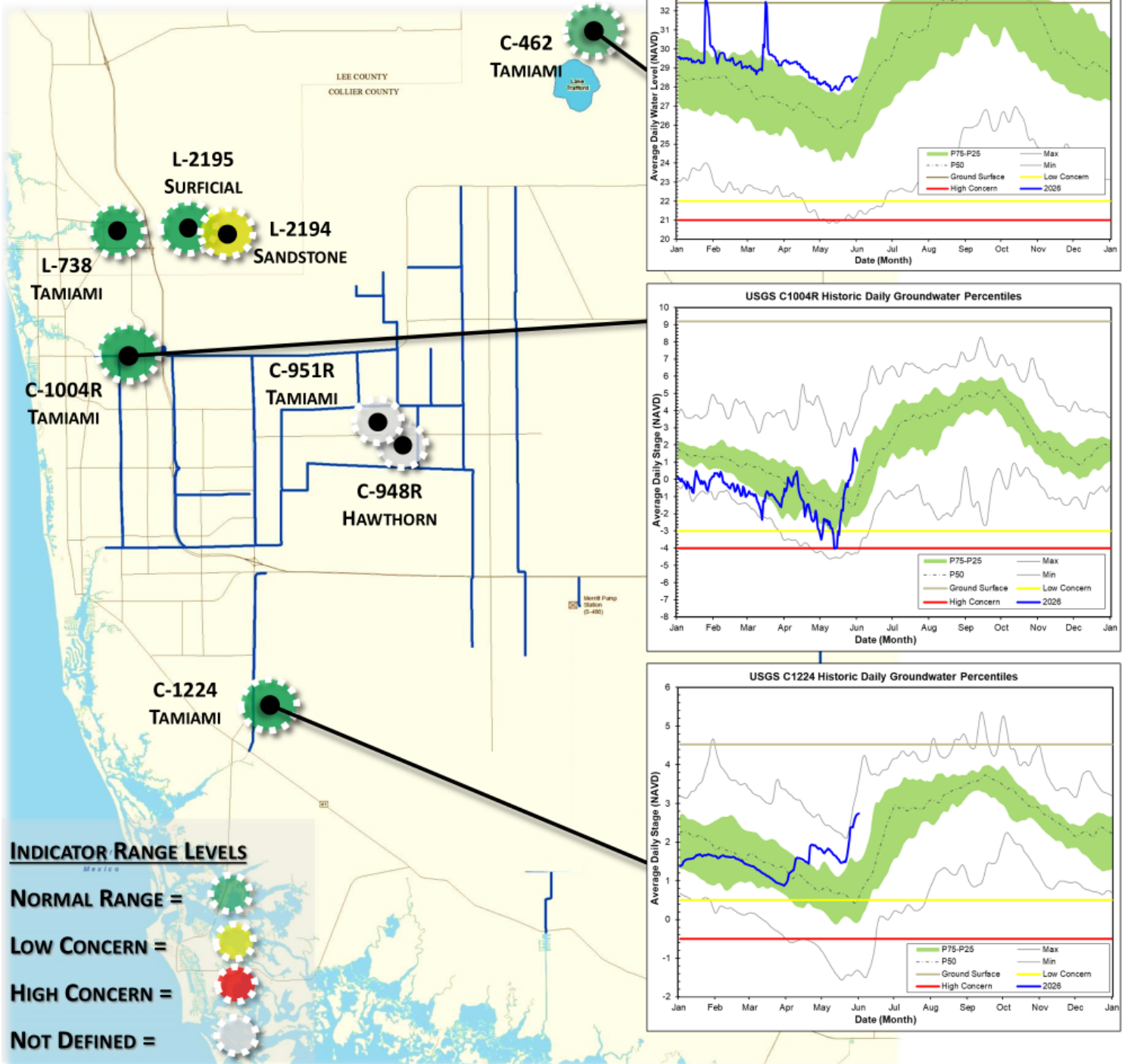


FIGURE 9A

BIG CYPRESS BASIN

MAY 31, 2026

GROUNDWATER LEVEL DAILY TRENDS COMPARED TO HISTORICAL AVERAGE

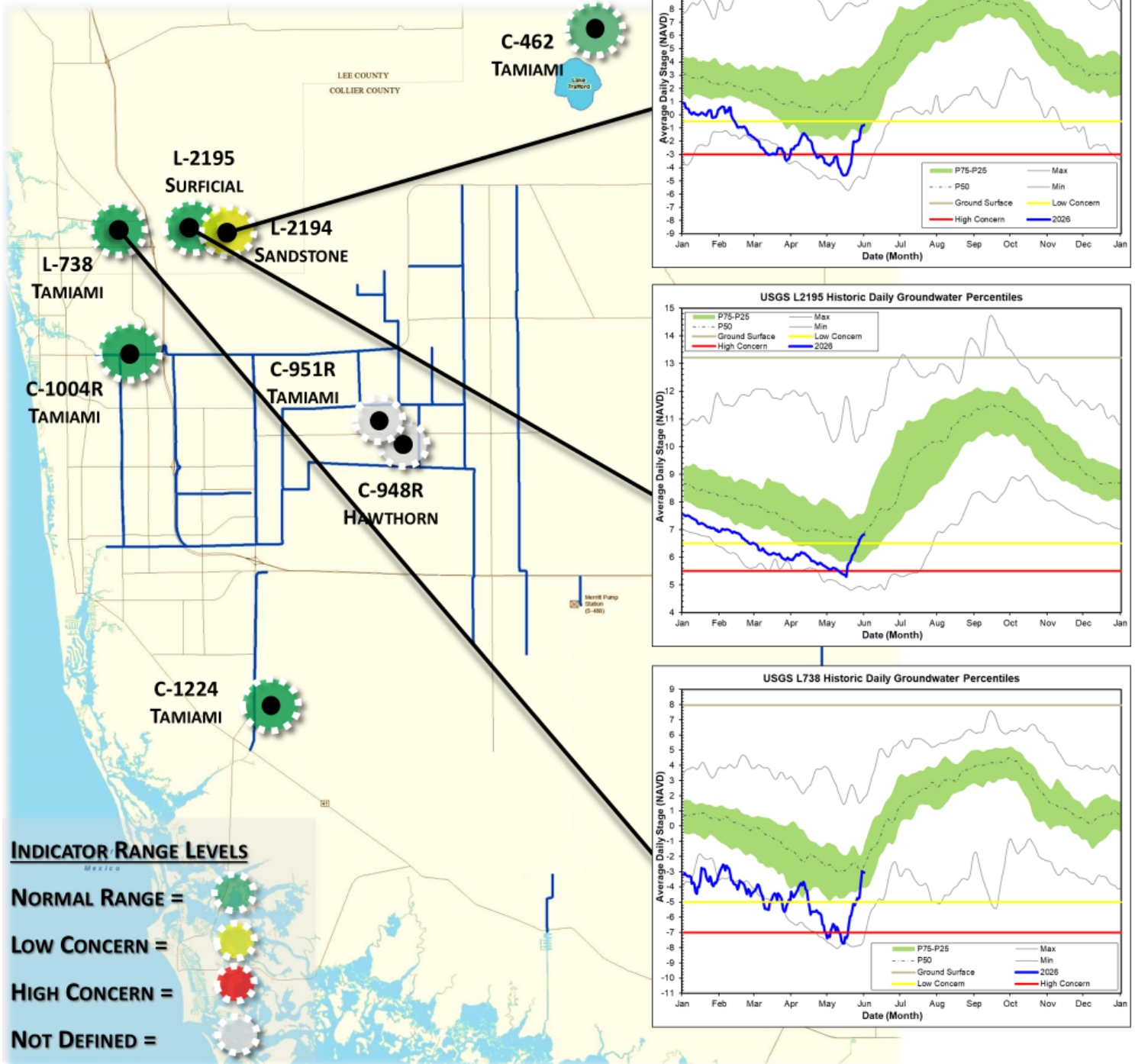


FIGURE 9B

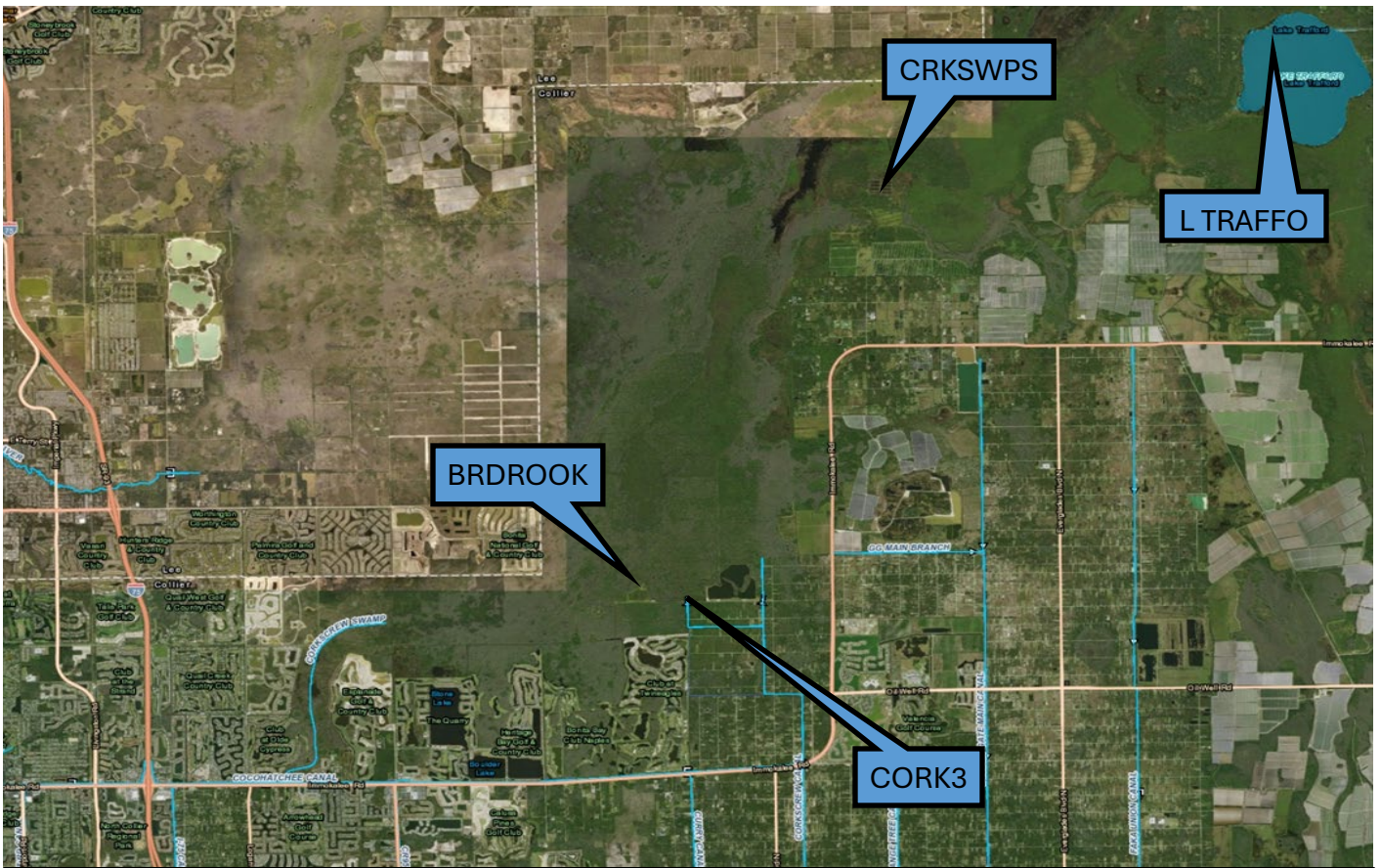


Figure 10-Corkscrew Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles (1984-2025)

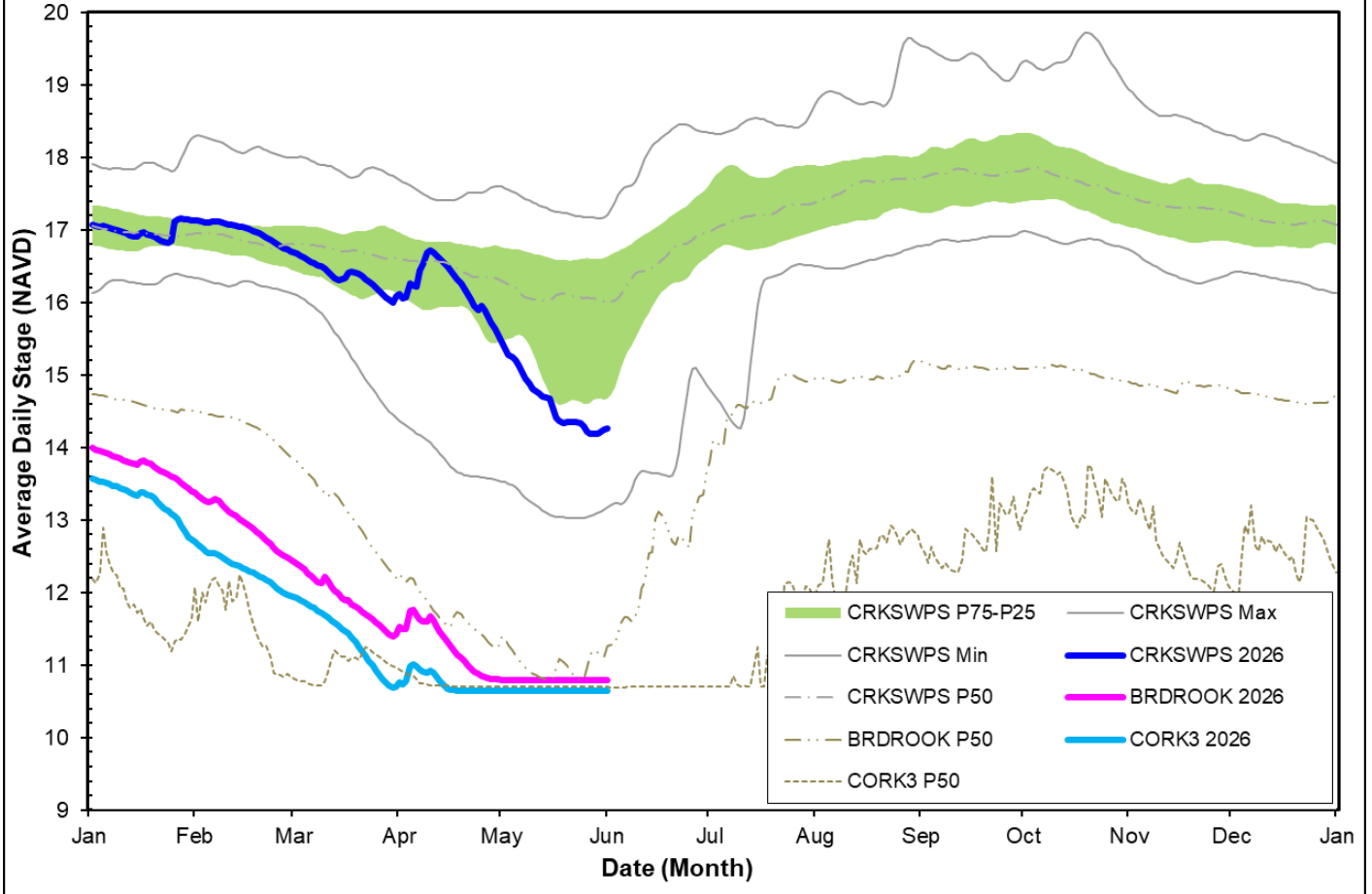
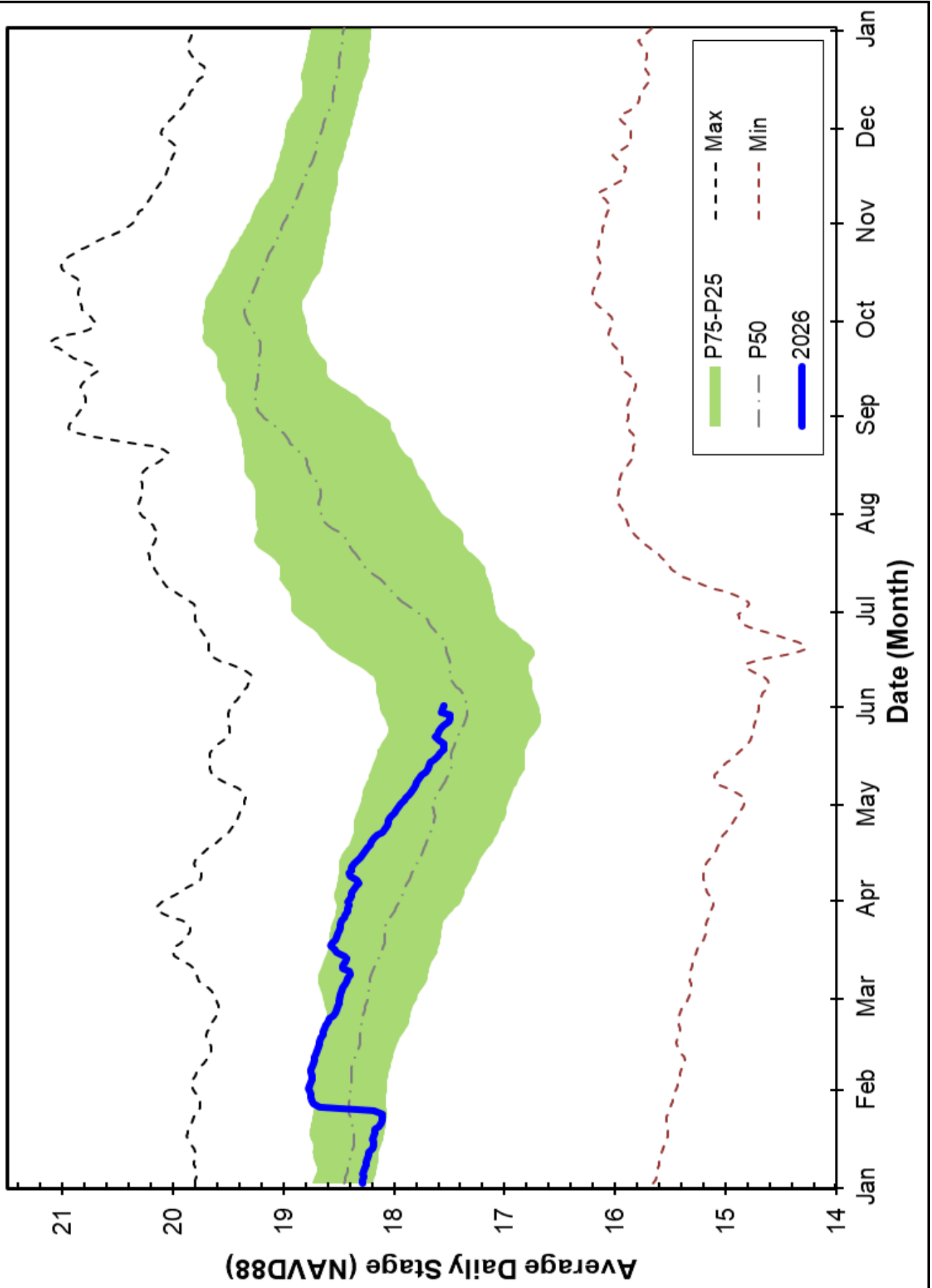


Figure 11 Lake Trafford Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles (1941-2024)



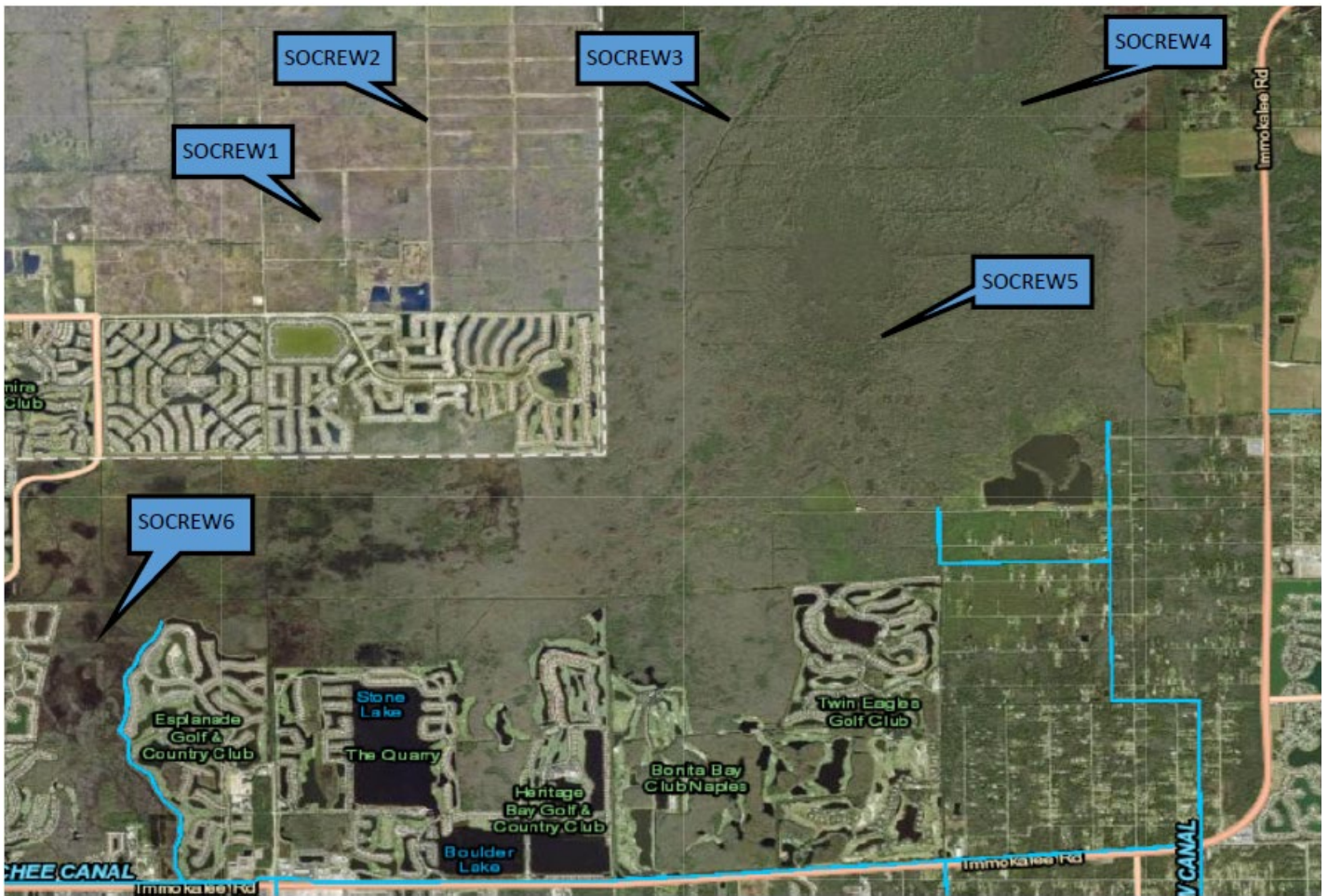


Figure 12 - SOCREW1 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

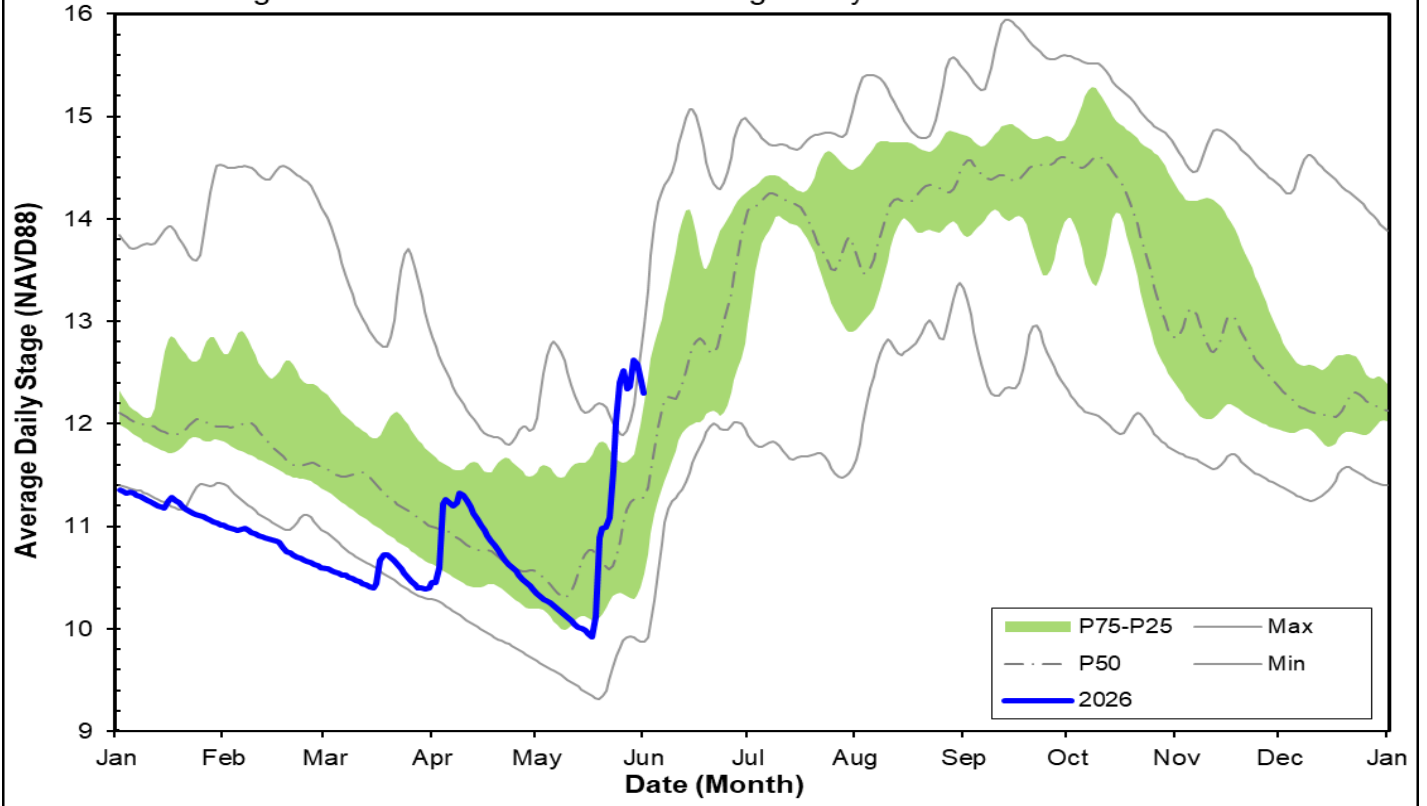




Figure 13 - SOCREW2 Historic Average Daily Headwater Percentiles

