



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE



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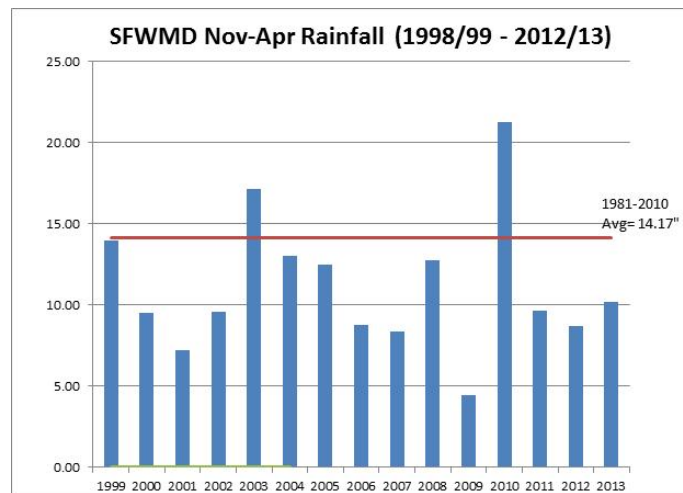
South Florida Water Management District

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### **South Florida Water Levels Are Well Positioned for the Dry Season Start** *National Weather Service outlook is for drier-than-normal conditions*



*Few dry seasons in the past 15 years were close to the historic average. (Click graphic for a larger version.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** – Following an above-average wet season, South Florida water levels are positioned to handle a drier-than-average start to the dry season, officials announced today at a joint briefing by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the National Weather Service (NWS).

“Above-average wet season rainfall provided South Florida with some insurance going into the driest months of the year,” said Susan Sylvester, SFWMD Chief of the Water Control Operations Bureau. “We remain mindful, however, that a sustained period of below-average dry season rainfall can have a significant impact on water levels.”

Released this week, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Climate Prediction Center forecast calls for drier-than-normal conditions. The absence of an El Niño or La Niña, however, creates a higher level of uncertainty in the forecast, according to the NWS.

Among the official forecast highlights for the 2013-2014 South Florida dry season:

- Below-normal precipitation
- A possibility of near to slightly above-normal temperatures
- Precipitation in an average dry season: 12 to 15 inches in the interior/west to 15 to 21 inches in the east

<b><i>South Florida's Dry Season</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>November – May</i></li><li>• <i>About 18 inches of rain is the average</i></li><li>• <i>May and October are important transition months</i></li><li>• <i>March, April and May have the highest evaporation rates and lowest rainfall</i></li></ul>

Entering the dry season, Water Conservation Areas 2 and 3 in Broward and Miami-Dade counties remain above normal, while Water Conservation Area 1 in Palm Beach County is slightly below normal. Overall, water levels across South Florida are at or near their targets for this time of year, with regulation schedules designed to reflect that the hurricane season does not officially end until Nov. 30.

### **Wet Season Update**

South Florida's 2013 wet season produced above-average rainfall in the entire 16-county District, from Orlando to the Florida Keys. District-wide, an average of 39.03 inches of rain, or 6.42 inches above the average, fell between May 19 and Oct. 9. This time period reflects the start and end of the daily sea breeze cycle that characterizes the wet season.

This year's summer season produced several notable numbers:

- Wettest July since 2001
- Wettest June since 2005
- Combination of late May through July months led to the wettest start to the wet season since 1968
- Wettest April-through-July period on record in South Florida since 1932
- Wettest April-through-September period District-wide since 1960
- Tropical Storm Andrea in June produced 3.1 inches of rain District-wide – about as much rain as the District receives in an average year from tropical activity

The Kissimmee and Southwest Coast regions experienced the largest rainfall totals, ranging from 9.63 inches above-average in Lee and Collier counties to 18.61 inches above-average in Highlands and Okeechobee counties. Florida's east coast ranged from 3.82 inches above-average in Martin and St. Lucie counties to 4.34 inches and 5.88 inches above average in Palm Beach and Broward counties, respectively.

Miami-Dade County received the least amount of rainfall in populated areas during the wet season, with 1.44 inches above average.

Lake Okeechobee, which stood at 15.57 feet today, received 34.65 inches of rain during the wet season, representing 126 percent of average or 7.14 inches above average. The

Everglades Agricultural Area received 36.30 inches of rainfall, representing 120 percent of average or 6.01 inches above average.

### **Highlights of South Florida's Weather Roller Coaster:**

- **Normal:** Florida receives an average of 52 inches of rainfall a year, with 70 percent falling during the five-month wet season from approximately June through October.
- **Wet Conditions:** The 2013 wet season produced the wettest start to the wet season since 1968 and the wettest April-through-July period on record in South Florida since 1932.
- **Record Wet Conditions:** Tropical Storm Isaac in late August 2012 proved to be a 1-in-100 year storm event.
- **Record Dry Conditions:** January 2012 was the driest January in the agency's 16-county region since recordkeeping began in 1932.
- **Record Dry Conditions:** The 2011 wet season saw one of its latest starts in 20 years following the driest October-to-mid-June period on record.
- **Record Wet Conditions:** In 2009, the sea breeze cycle ushered in the wet season in May. With 9.04 inches of rain falling across the District, May 2009 became the wettest May on record, according to District records dating back to 1932.

### **For more information:**

- [NWS and SFWMD Presentations from Joint Dry Season Briefing \[PDF\]](#)
- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [2013 Wet Season Rainfall](#)
- [National Weather Service Dry Season Forecast](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Precipitation Forecast](#)

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### **About the South Florida Water Management District**

*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.*