



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE



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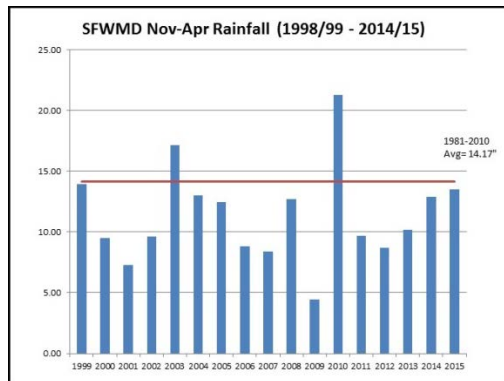
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South Florida Water Levels Near Average for Dry Season Start *National Weather Service outlook calls for El Niño-influenced above-normal rainfall*



During the past 17 years, South Florida's dry season period of November-April produced above-average rainfall twice and near normal rainfall 6 times.

(Click on the graphic for a larger version.)

Miami, FL – A significant El Niño weather pattern is forecast to bring above-average rainfall to South Florida this upcoming dry season, officials announced today at a joint briefing by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the National Weather Service (NWS).

“Our focus will be moving water south through the regional system to moderate the potential increase of water levels in Lake Okeechobee and other key areas,” said Paul Linton, SFWMD Water Management Section Administrator. “South Florida’s weather and water conditions can change rapidly. Therefore, we always prepare for the challenge of balancing flood control with water supply.”

With water levels currently near average across much of the 16-county District, water managers continue to move wet season rainfall through South Florida’s Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs), where it is cleaned, and then into three Water Conservation Areas, which currently have some storage capacity.

This water movement is being coordinated closely with SFWMD science teams so that appropriate volumes are moving through the STAs without overloading these wetland systems.

Water shortage conditions are not expected this dry season, and residents may see lush greenery and standing water in swales, culverts and streets during heavy rainfall events.

Dry Season Forecast

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Climate Prediction Center forecast calls for above-normal rainfall conditions.

Among the forecast highlights for the 2015-2016 South Florida dry season:

- Above-normal rainfall associated with El Niño.
- Above-normal storminess/severe weather
- Below-normal temperatures and below-normal freeze of at least one per season
- Average of 5-10 more days with measurable precipitation

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

Wet Season Update

A District-wide average of 29.39 inches of rain fell from Orlando to the Florida Keys between June 2 and Oct. 6. This represents 96 percent of average, or 1.12 inches below average. The time period reflects the approximate start and end of the daily sea breeze cycle that characterizes the wet season.

The Kissimmee basins, Lake Okeechobee and the Southwest Coast all experienced above average rainfall for the wet season. The Upper Kissimmee Basin received the most wet season rainfall with 31.03 inches, representing 110 percent of average, or 2.92 inches above average.

All other District basins experienced below-average rainfall, with the lower east coast and Everglades Agricultural Area experiencing the largest deficits. Eastern Broward County received the least wet season rainfall, with 22.69 inches, representing 72 percent of average, or 8.92 below average.

SFWMD meteorologists reported several factors contributed to below-average rain south and east of Lake Okeechobee, including:

- Lack of moisture from the Caribbean
- Dominant high pressure over the southeast United States yielding drier easterly steering winds

- Lack of westerly winds in the upper levels of the atmosphere

The lake, which stood at 14.82 feet NGVD today, received 28.59 inches of rain during the wet season, representing about 100 percent of average.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which manages the lake, federal water managers prefer to maintain water levels between 12.5 feet and 15.5 feet to help balance competing demands such as public safety, water supply and environmental health.

For More Information:

- [NWS and SFWMD Presentations from Joint Dry Season Briefing \[PDF\]](#)
- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [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 flood control, water quality, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.