



**Drought Status and Climate Outlook for Upcoming 12 Months
FWS SFESO – Vero Beach, FL
January 4, 2012**

Short Term Drought Map:

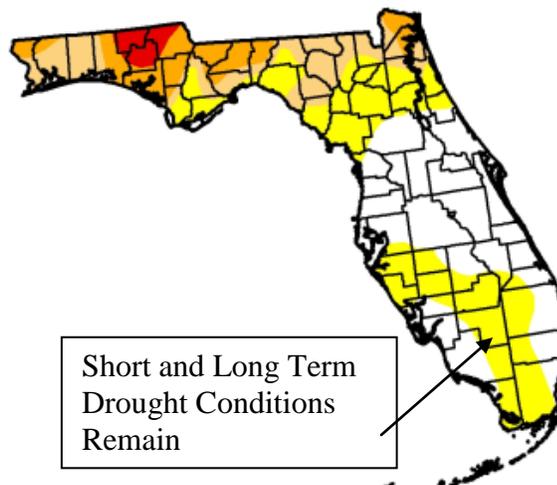
U.S. Drought Monitor
Florida

December 27, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	38.81	61.19	27.41	12.84	2.61	0.00
Last Week (12/20/2011 map)	46.66	53.34	27.41	17.16	6.33	0.00
3 Months Ago (09/27/2011 map)	43.12	56.88	28.83	16.85	7.85	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	0.18	99.82	86.04	50.84	20.21	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	43.12	56.88	28.83	16.85	7.85	0.00
One Year Ago (12/21/2010 map)	0.18	99.82	83.75	47.25	20.12	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



*Released Thursday, December 29, 2011
Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture*

Figure 1 – U.S. Drought Monitor for the State of Florida.

Synopsis: A slow moving cold front and an upper level trough of low pressure moved across the state mid-December bringing significant rain to central and southern Florida. The rain event occurred from December 9 through December 12 where up to 10 inches of rain fell in some areas (see more details below). Since that time, conditions from Lake Okeechobee through the EAA, WCA-3A and ENP have become unusually dry. These unusually dry conditions are making worse the already existing long term drought conditions across central and southern Florida. These areas continue to be 7-14 inches below normal for 2011.

Everglades

South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT)

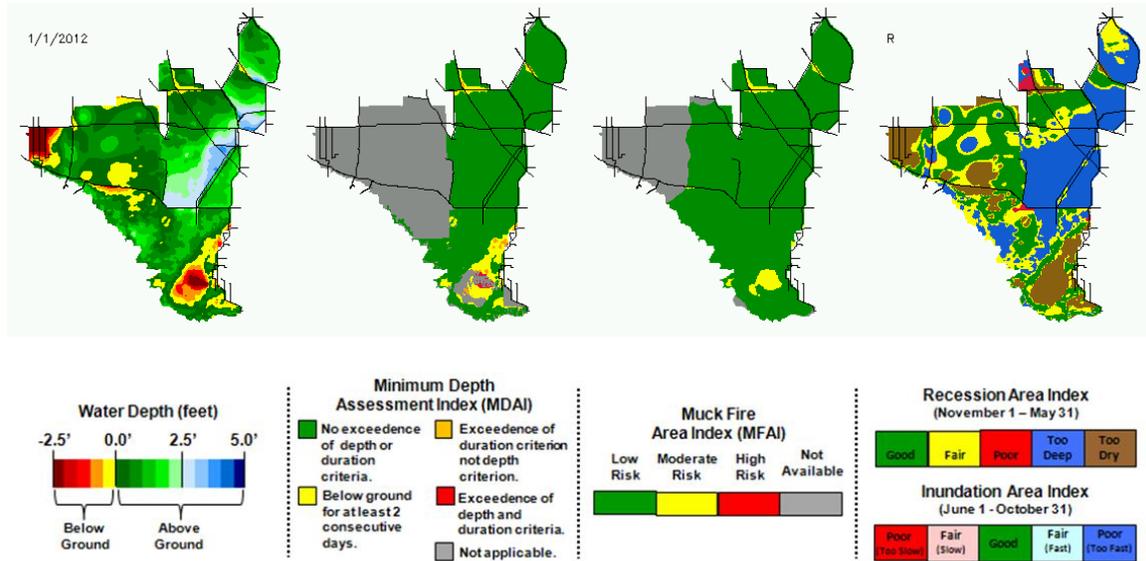
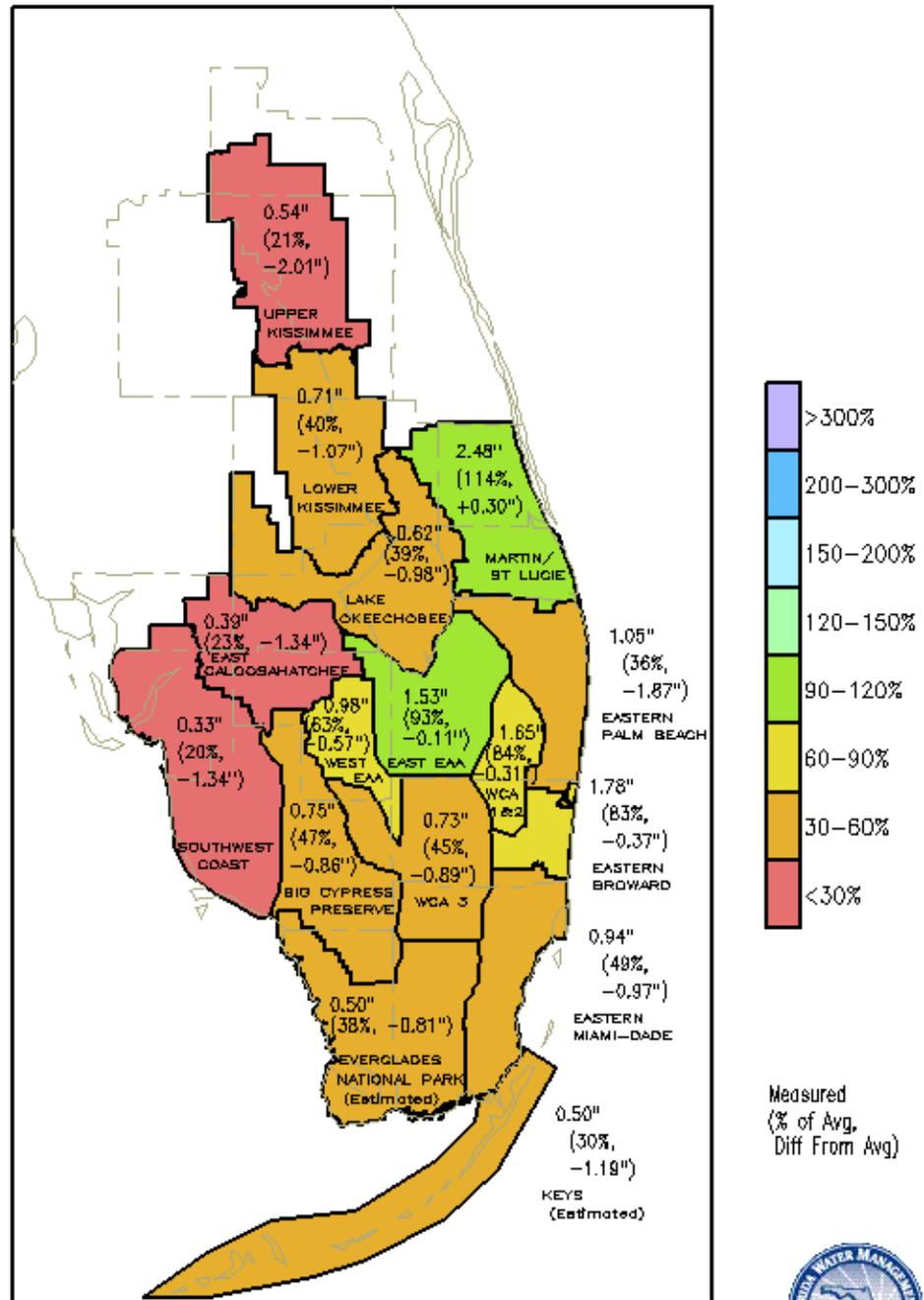


Figure 2 – Current water depths, muck fire hazards, and recession rates for the Everglades.

Water continues to pond in WCA-2B, along the L-67 in WCA-3A, and southern WCA-3A. Conditions are dry for the eastern marl prairie in ENP and things are beginning to dry for a small section of the western marl prairie.

SFWMD Rainfall 02-dec-2011 to 01-jan-2012



DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.90" (48%, -0.99")

GRADS: COLA/IGES

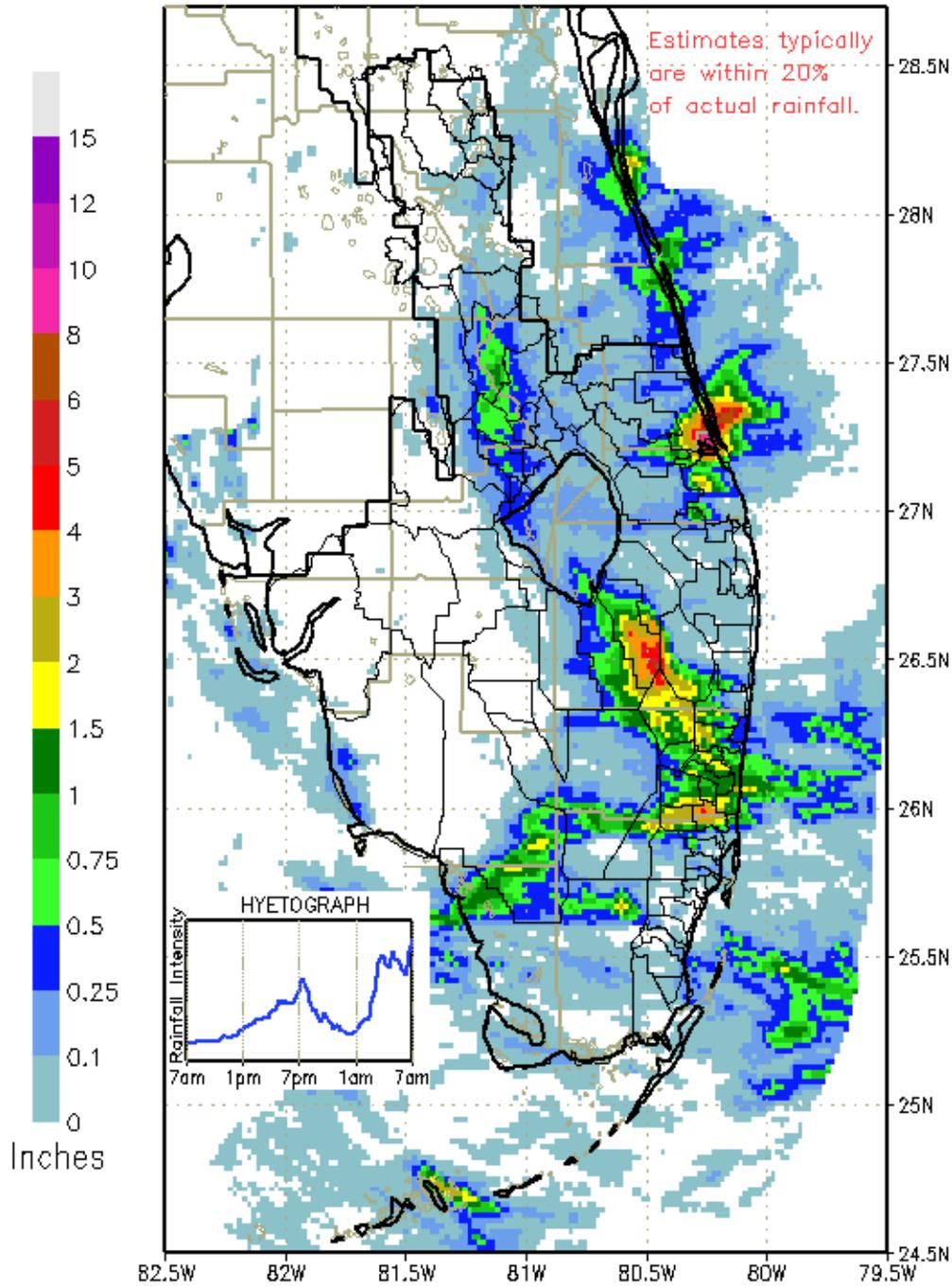
Figure 3 - Rain totals for the month of December 2011. For most areas, December was a dry month, even with the pockets of heavy rainfall during mid-December.



The month of December 2011 was below normal in rainfall in spite of the heavy rains in mid-December. From December 9-12, heavy rains fell across portions of central and southern Florida due to a slow moving cold front and an associated upper level trough of low pressure. On December 9, 4-6 inches of rain fell across Indian River County in east-central Florida. The eastern EAA received 3-5 inches of rain, with 2-4 inches in western Loxahatchee refuge, Miami and WCA-2A. Lesser amounts of 1-2 inches fell across the lower Kissimmee basin, central EAA, central WCA-3A, northern ENP, Ft. Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach. Another round of very heavy rain (5-10 inches) fell east of Lake O across the JW Corbett WMA and the Loxahatchee Slough on December 10. On December 11 and 12, 1 inch of rain fell along the immediate coast of east-central and southeast Florida (see Figures 4 and 5 below).

SFWMD RAINDAR EOD DAILY RAINFALL ESTIMATES

FROM: 0700 EST, 12/09/2011 THROUGH: 0700 EST, 12/10/2011

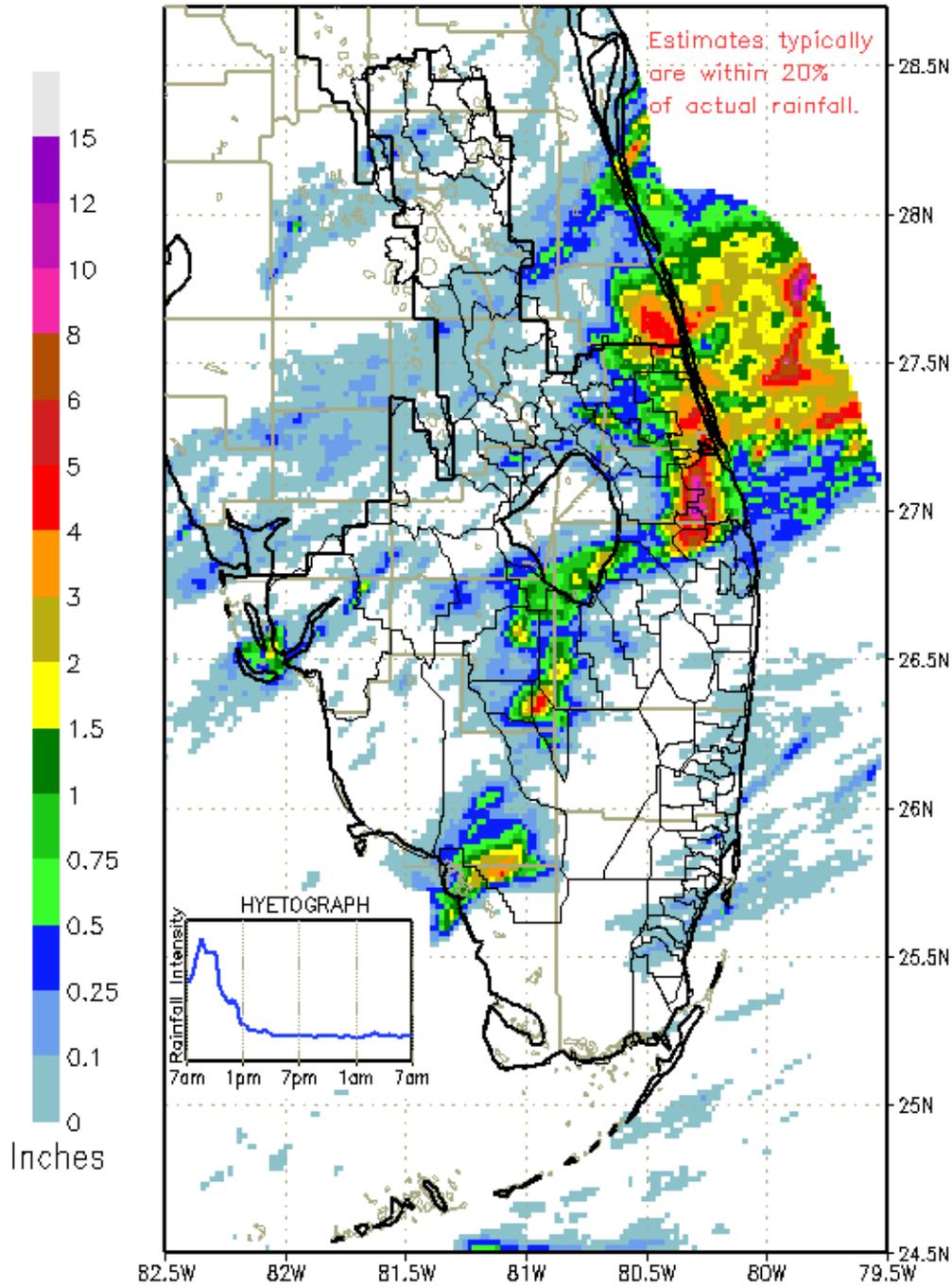


GRADS: COLA/IGES

Figure 4 – Rainfall totals for December 9, 2011.

SFWMD RAINDAR EOD DAILY RAINFALL ESTIMATES

FROM: 0700 EST, 12/10/2011 THROUGH: 0700 EST, 12/11/2011



DISTRICT-WIDE RAINFALL ESTIMATE: 0.267"

GRADS: COLA/IGES

Figure 5 – Rainfall totals for December 10, 2011.

Drought Impacts in the News:

Water releases from Lake Okeechobee were curtailed for a few months due to low lake levels after South Florida endured the driest October to June time period since records were kept. Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel & SouthFlorida.com (Fla.), Dec. 15, 2011

2011-2012 Dry Season Totals (since November 1):

Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 1.1" (-3.7" below normal rain)
Lower Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 1.2" (-2.5" below normal rain)
Lake "O": 1.1" (-2.4" below normal rain)
St. Lucie basin: 3.7" (-1.6" below normal)
Caloosahatchee basin: .90" (-3.0" below normal rain)
EAA: 1.8" (-2" below normal)
Southwest Florida: .80" (-2.9" below normal rain)
Coastal Palm County: 2.3" (-4.7" below normal rain)
Coastal Broward County: 3.3" (-2.2" below normal rain)
Lox & WCA-2: 2.7" (-2.0" below normal rain)
WCA-3: 1.7" (-2.3" below normal)
Coastal Dade County: 2.7" (-2.1" below normal rain)
Big Cypress: 1.2" (-2.4" below normal rain)
ENP: 1.5" (-1.2" below normal rain)
The Keys: 1.0" (-3.5" below normal rain)

2011 Yearly Totals (Final):

Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 55.3" (+6" above normal rain)
Lower Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 47.6" (+1.6" above normal rain)
Lake "O": 38.7" (-5.5" below normal rain)
St. Lucie basin: 49.7" (-4.5" below normal rain)
Caloosahatchee basin: 48.7" (-4.3" below normal rain)
EAA: 46" (-1.9" below normal rain)
Southwest Florida: 54.1" (-2.6" below normal rain)
Coastal Palm County: 47.7" (-14.1" below normal rain)
Coastal Broward County: 53.3" (-4.4" below normal rain)
Lox & WCA-2: 47.2" (-3.2" below normal rain)
WCA-3: 50.6" (+.15" above normal rain)
Coastal Dade County: 53.7" (-3.8" below normal rain)
Big Cypress: 51" (-3.6" below normal rain)
ENP: 46" (-8.6" below normal rain)
The Keys: 39.5" (-.50" below normal rain)

Drought Outlook for the Next 3 Months:

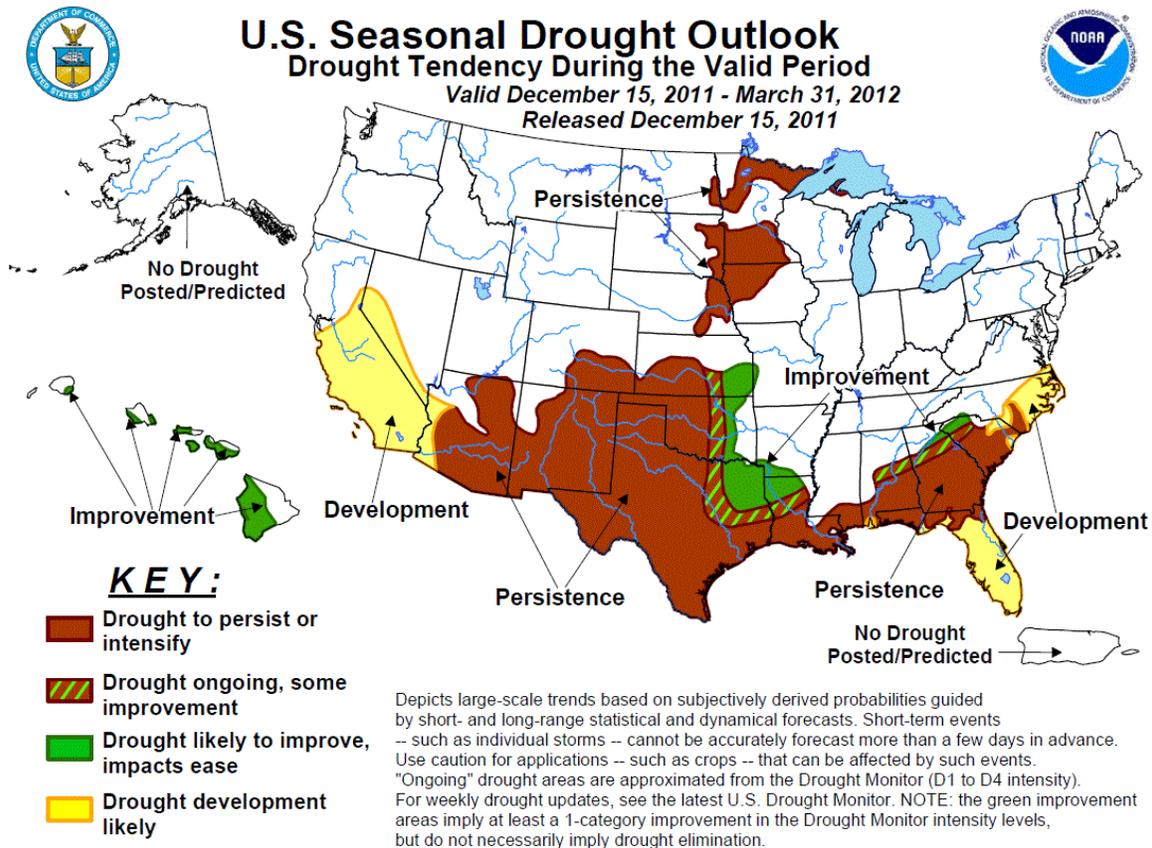


Figure 6 – Very dry conditions are expected with the return of La Nina for the 2011-2012 dry season.

El Nino / La Nina (ENSO) Status – **La Nina Advisory is in effect** (Climate Prediction Center)

During November, cooler than normal sea surface temperatures associated with La Niña continued across the eastern and central equatorial Pacific Ocean. The recent weekly sea surface temperatures in these areas maintained levels near -1.0°C , which is indicative of a weak to moderate La Niña. Also reflecting a current La Niña, the atmospheric circulation over the Pacific tropics featured low-level easterly and upper-level westerly winds. Collectively, these oceanic and atmospheric patterns are consistent with the continuation of La Niña conditions. A majority of the climate forecast models predict a weak or moderate strength La Niña to continue through the Northern Hemisphere winter and then gradually weaken after January. The models are roughly split 50:50 between those that predict La Niña to remain weak and those that predict a

stronger episode. Over the last half-century, La Niña events that were preceded by ENSO-neutral conditions (like this past summer) were less likely to become a strong La Niña the following winter. This observation, in combination with the model forecasts, favors a weak-to-moderate strength La Niña to continue during the Northern Hemisphere winter, likely weakening with the onset of spring.

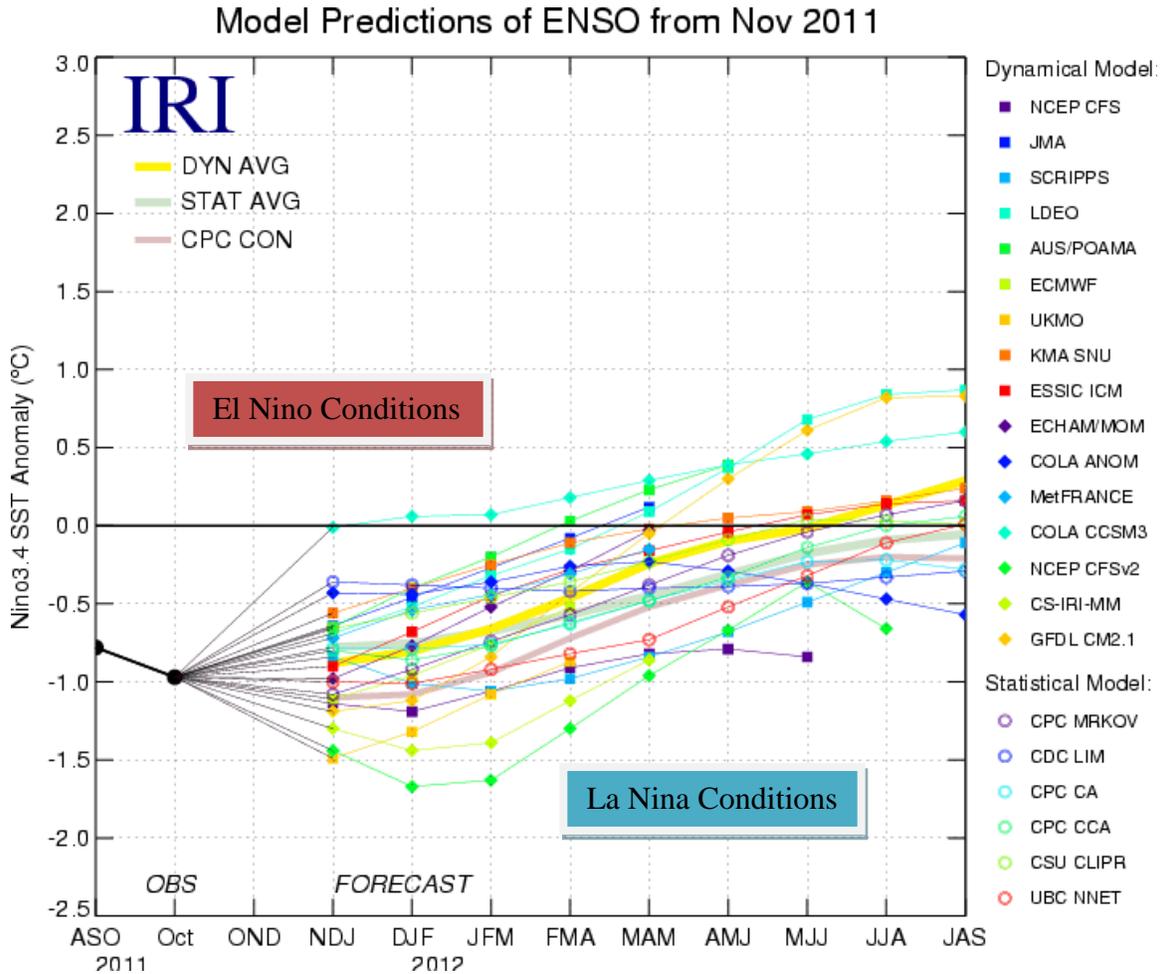


Figure 7 - All climate model runs from November 2011.

Central & South Florida Temperature Outlook:

- January thru April – Normal
- May thru June – Warmer than normal
- July thru September – Much warmer than normal
- October – Warmer than normal
- November thru December - Normal

Central & South Florida Rainfall Outlook:

- January thru March – Extremely drier than normal
- April thru May – Much drier than normal
- June – Drier than normal

July – Normal

August thru October – Wetter than normal

November thru December - Normal

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