



**Drought Status and Climate Outlook for Upcoming Year
FWS SFESO – Vero Beach, FL
March 4, 2011**

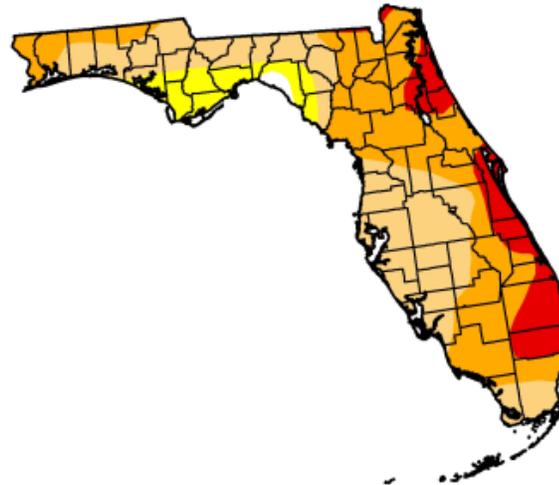
Short Term Drought Map:

U.S. Drought Monitor

March 1, 2011
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Florida

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.87	99.13	91.30	53.50	13.06	0.00
Last Week (02/22/2011 map)	0.87	99.13	84.98	48.42	10.64	0.00
3 Months Ago (11/30/2010 map)	4.08	95.92	69.13	30.22	7.91	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 (09/28/2010 map)	54.97	45.03	18.02	4.22	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (02/23/2010 map)	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	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://drought.unl.edu/dm>



*Released Thursday, March 3, 2011
L. Edwards, Western Regional Climate Center*

Synopsis: Drought has been intensifying in Florida with conditions worsening for South Florida. Severe Drought (D2) conditions are expanding and reflect significant rainfall deficits for the state since October 1. For the last 90 days, a large portion of south Florida has received just 25 to 50 percent of normal precipitation making this the driest in nearly 80 years dating back to 1932 (SFWMD in the Naples News). Since October, SFWMD has recorded rainfall at about half the average amount, while February received only about one-third of an inch of rain.

Fire danger is high for this time of year. Soil moisture is at or below 20 percent of capacity, with some exceptions in the Miami-Dade and surrounding areas where it is a bit higher. The Keetch-Byram drought index, which is an indicator of soil dryness, shows moderate to severe dryness over most of Florida. Conditions are expected to worsen in these areas over the next couple of weeks with warm temperatures and limited rainfall. Data from USGS indicates groundwater is less than 25 percent normal in many areas, and even below 10 percent in spots. A few areas are still running in the normal range, due mainly to January rains. However, these areas have been trending back downward toward below normal. Central Florida watersheds, including the middle St. Johns River are reporting streamflows that are less than 25 percent of normal in many areas. The potential for river flooding this spring in east central Florida will be below normal. Hence, a hydrological impact label is given to this newly expanded Severe and Extreme drought (D2 and D3) area. Moderate drought (D1) conditions now also cover the area from Tampa to Fort Myers along the Gulf coast.

Drought Impacts in the News:

Polk County - A brush fire in Indian Lake Estates consumed roughly 600 acres on February 26. Fifty-four firefighters and three aircraft managed to contain the fire about five hours after it was reported. Lakeland firefighters stated that dry conditions and winds made the fire more intense than it otherwise would have been. Lakeland Ledger (Fla.), Feb. 27, 2011.

Palm Beach County - The canals in Loxahatchee Groves are becoming very low from the lack of rainfall, causing town leaders to worry about having adequate water supplies for fire fighting. The Loxahatchee Groves Town Council received a variance that allowed them to pump water from the C-51 Canal to supplement the town's canals, but does not anticipate being able to get another variance. Town-Crier (FL), Feb. 4

Dade County - The utility director of Plantation reminded residents to conserve water and abide by the water restrictions since the area has received below normal amounts of rainfall for a year. Lake Okeechobee is more than 12 inches lower presently than it was in February 2010, according to records kept by the South Florida Water Management District. Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel & SouthFlorida.com, Feb. 14, 2011.

2010-2011 Dry Season Totals:

Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 7.6" (-2" below normal rain)

Lower Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 6" (-2" below normal rain)

Lake "O": 4.6" (-3" below normal rain)

St. Lucie basin: 5" (-5.4" below normal rain)

Caloosahatchee basin: 5.5" (-2.6" below normal rain)

EAA: 4.4" (-3.5" below normal rain)

Southwest Florida: 6" (-2.4" below normal rain)

Coastal Palm Beach County: 5.0" (-8.2" below normal rain)

Coastal Broward County: 4.8" (-5.7" below normal rain)

Lox & WCA-2: 4.7" (-4.4" below normal rain)
WCA-3: 4.1" (-4" below normal rain)
Coastal Dade County: 6.7" (-2.3" below normal rain)
(Red = >50% below normal rainfall)

2011 Yearly Total:

Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 5.2" (+.3" above normal rain)
Lower Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 3.2" (-1.1" below normal rain)
Lake "O": 2.7" (-1.4" below normal rain)
St. Lucie basin: 3.2" (-1.8" below normal rain)
Caloosahatchee basin: 3" (-1.3" below normal rain)
EAA: 2.7" (-1.4" below normal rain)
Southwest Florida: 2.8" (-2" below normal rain)
Coastal Palm County: 3" (-3.3" below normal rain)
Coastal Broward County: 1.8" (-3.3" below normal rain)
Lox & WCA-2: 2" (-2.6" below normal rain)
WCA-3: 1.8" (-2.3 below normal rain)
Coastal Dade County: 3.4" (-.8 below normal rain)
Upper Keys: 2.4" (-1.3" below normal rain)
Lower Keys: 2.6" (-.4" below normal rain)

Green = >100% above normal rainfall

Black = near normal

Red = >50% below normal rainfall

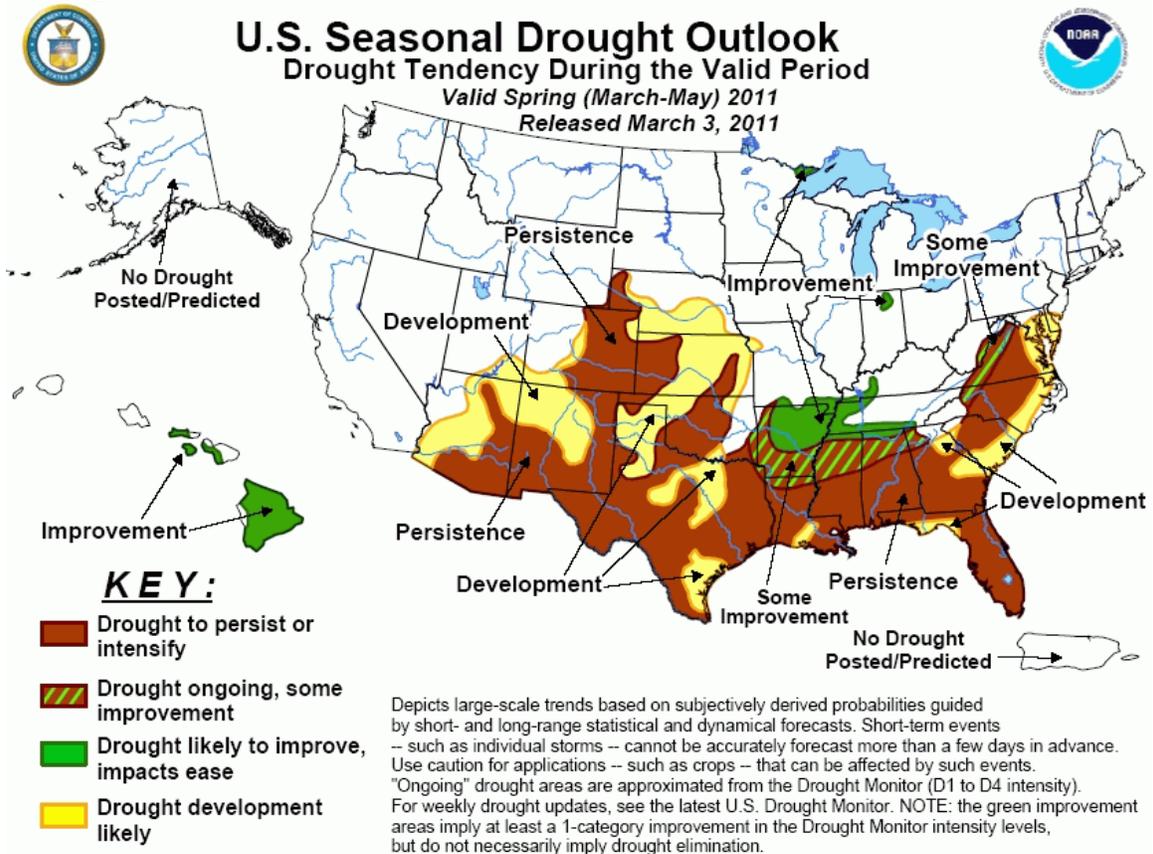
Records:

KEY WEST EXPERIENCES ITS DRIEST FEBRUARY IN OVER 65 YEARS DRIEST FEBRUARY ON RECORD FOR MARATHON AREA – SINCE 1982

(NWS Key West)

"FEBRUARY 2011 TIED 1911 FOR THE 2ND DRIEST FEBRUARY ON RECORD AND DATA GOES BACK 140 YEARS TO 1871. LAST MONTH WAS THE DRIEST FEBRUARY IN OVER 65 YEARS, AND THE DRIEST MONTH OVERALL SINCE APRIL 2006 WHEN ONE HUNDREDTH OF AN INCH WAS ALSO RECORDED. THE DRIEST FEBRUARY ON RECORD REMAINS 1944, WHEN ONLY A TRACE OF RAINFALL WAS RECORDED. A TRACE INDICATES THAT RAIN FELL, JUST NOT ENOUGH TO MEASURE."

Drought Outlook for the Next 3 Months:



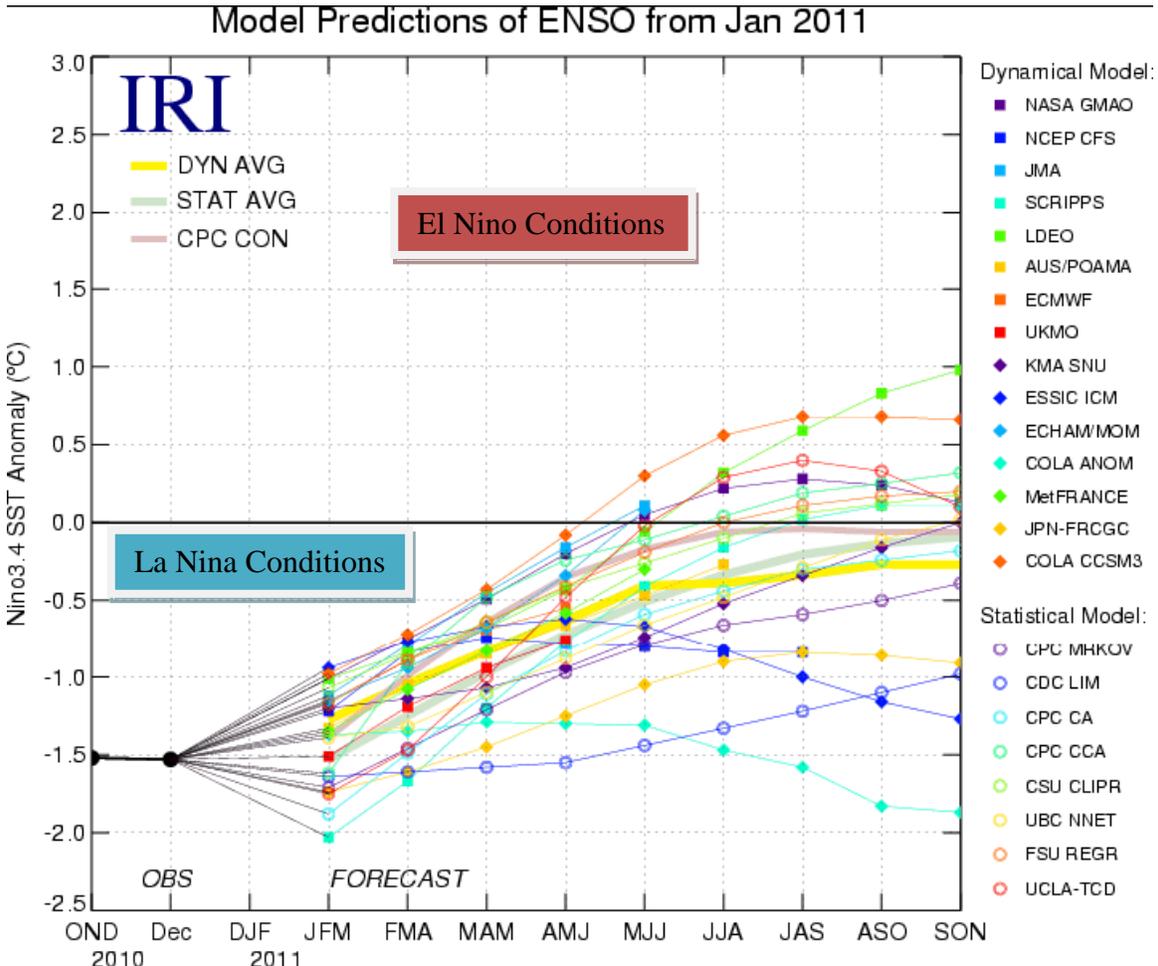
2011 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook:

		12/8/2010 Issued Forecast							
Cyclone	Normal								
Named Storms	10	17							
Hurricanes	6	9							
Major Hurricanes	2	5							

Probability of a Major Hurricane landfall on the U.S east coast (inc. Florida)	Normal = 31%	2011 Prediction = 49%
Probability of a Major Hurricane landfall on the Gulf coast (inc. Florida)	Normal = 30%	2011 Prediction = 48%

El Nino / La Nina (ENSO) Status (Climate Prediction Center)

La Nina will continue to weaken through spring 2011. A majority of climate models predict a return to ENSO “neutral” conditions during the upcoming summer, with some models predicting a persistence of a weaker La Nina.



Likely La Nina impacts in Florida Winter 2010 – spring 2011

- Dry or drought conditions.
- Below average surface water levels.
- Normal to slightly above normal temperatures (the stronger the La Nina event, the warmer our winter will be).
- More fires with larger burn areas.

Central & South Florida Temperature Outlook:

March – Above Normal

April - Normal

May – Above

June thru August – Much Above

September – Above

October thru February 2012 – Normal

Central & South Florida Rainfall Outlook:

March – Much Below Normal

April thru May – Below Normal

June thru July – Normal

August thru October – Above Normal

November thru February 2012 - Normal

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