



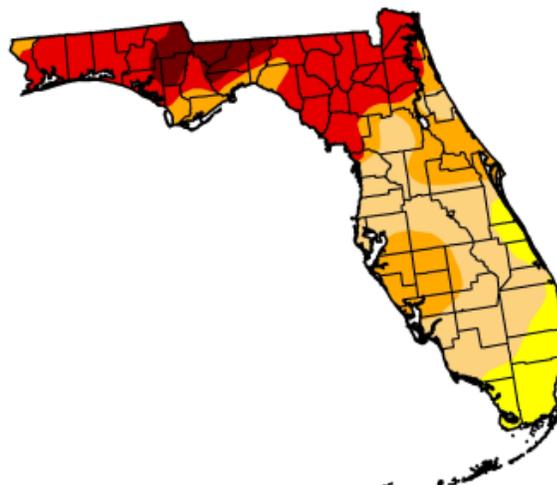
**Drought Status and Climate Outlook for Upcoming 12 Months
FWS SFESO – Vero Beach, FL
February 21, 2012**

Short Term Drought Map:

U.S. Drought Monitor
Florida

February 14, 2012
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	88.60	57.29	35.33	5.57
Last Week (02/07/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	90.50	52.79	25.08	0.00
3 Months Ago (11/15/2011 map)	63.01	36.99	26.19	19.98	8.71	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	38.81	61.19	27.41	12.84	2.61	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 (02/08/2011 map)	0.87	99.13	84.98	47.58	10.58	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.



Released Thursday, February 16, 2012

Rich Tinker, NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Climate Prediction Center

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

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

Synopsis: A series of cold fronts moved through the state during the month of January. But, these cold fronts did little to improve the current drought conditions. January rainfall totals for central and southern Florida are 0-10% of normal rainfall. Thus, dry conditions are worsening across the state. Some long-term drought conditions continue in southern Florida including the southeastern coastal areas where cities ended 2011 at 7-14 inches below normal rainfall.

Everglades

South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT)

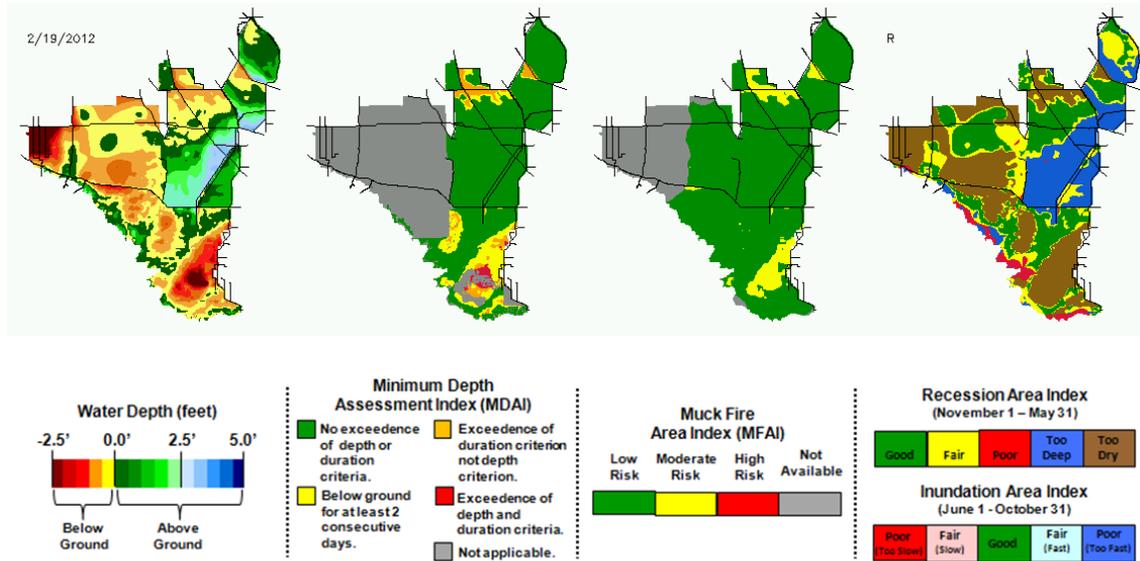


Figure 2 – Current water depths, muck fire hazards, and recession rates for the Everglades.

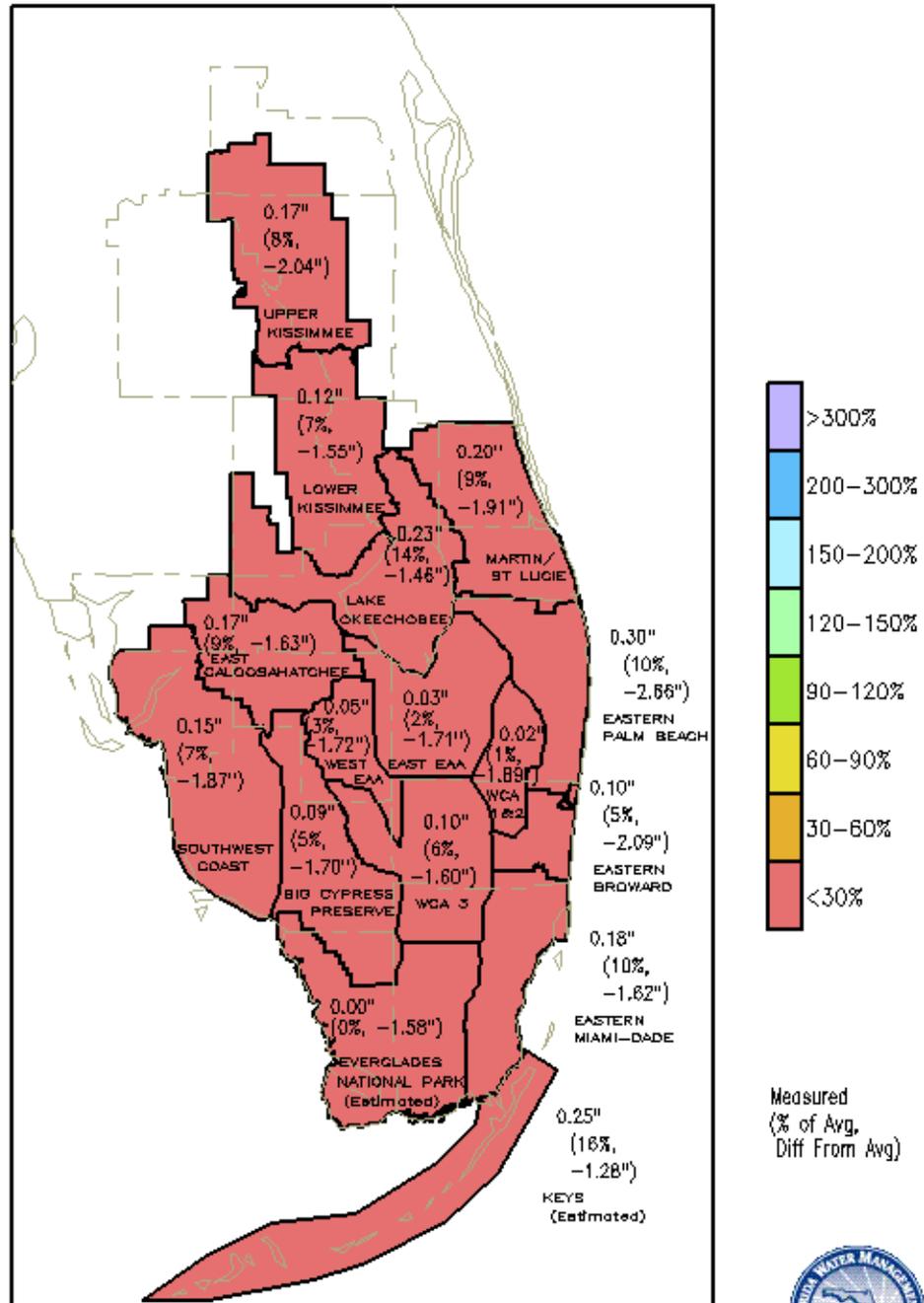
Northern sections of Loxahatchee NWR, WCA-2A, and WCA-3A have become dry. The marl prairies are also dry in Everglades National Park, while some water exists in the sloughs. Water is deep and is ponding in WCA-2B, along the L-67 levee, and in southern WCA-3A. Moderate muck fire conditions have developed in dry areas of the Everglades.

Drought Impacts in the News:

Wildfires - There were 512 wildfires that scorched 6,759 acres reported across Florida since the start of 2012, according to the Florida Forest Service. Forty-three of the fires continue to burn. Three of the active fires were in Clay County. Jacksonville Times-Union & Jacksonville.com (Fla.), Feb. 9, 2012

Firefighters in the vicinity of Jacksonville responded to 30 fires since the start of the year, according to a spokeswoman for the Florida Forest Service. Last year during this time period there were just 20 fires while the area experienced severe to extreme drought. Jacksonville Times-Union & Jacksonville.com (Fla.), Feb. 9, 2012

SFWMD Rainfall 02-jan-2012 to 01-feb-2012



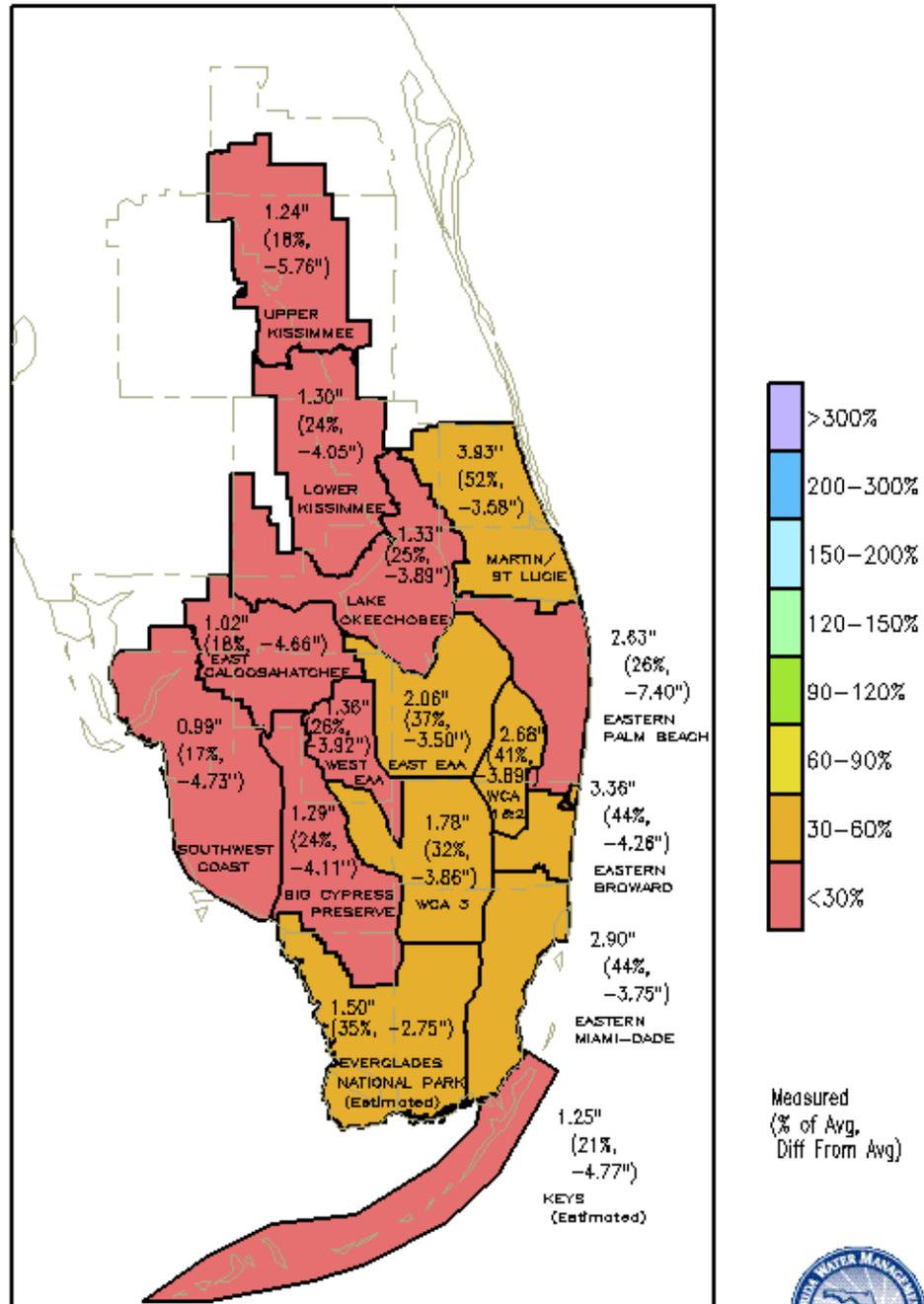
DISTRICT-WIDE: 0.16" (8%, -1.77")

GrADS: COLA/IGES

Figure 3 - Rain totals for the month of January 2012. For most areas 0-10% of normal rainfall has occurred this month.



SFWMD Rainfall 02-nov-2011 to 01-feb-2012



DISTRICT-WIDE: 1.81" (29%, -4.37")



GrADS: COLA/IGES

Figure 4 – Seasonal rainfall totals from November 1, 2011 through January 2012. Central and southwest Florida has received only 15-25% of normal rainfall, while the EAA, the Everglades, and coastal southeast Florida have received 30-40%.

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

- Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 1.2" (-5.8" below normal rain)
- Lower Kissimmee Chain of Lakes: 1.3" (-4.0" below normal rain)
- Lake "O": 1.3" (-3.9" below normal rain)
- St. Lucie basin: 3.9" (-3.6" below normal)
- Caloosahatchee basin: 1.0" (-4.7" below normal rain)
- EAA: 1.7" (-3.7" below normal)
- Southwest Florida: 1.0" (-4.7" below normal rain)
- Coastal Palm County: 2.8" (-7.4" below normal rain)
- Coastal Broward County: 3.4" (-4.3" below normal rain)
- Lox & WCA-2: 2.7" (-4.0" below normal rain)
- WCA-3: 1.8" (-3.9" below normal)
- Coastal Dade County: 2.9" (-3.8" below normal rain)
- Big Cypress: 1.3" (-4.1" below normal rain)
- ENP: 1.5" (-2.8" below normal rain)
- The Keys: 1.3" (-4.8" below normal rain)

Drought Outlook for the Next 3 Months:

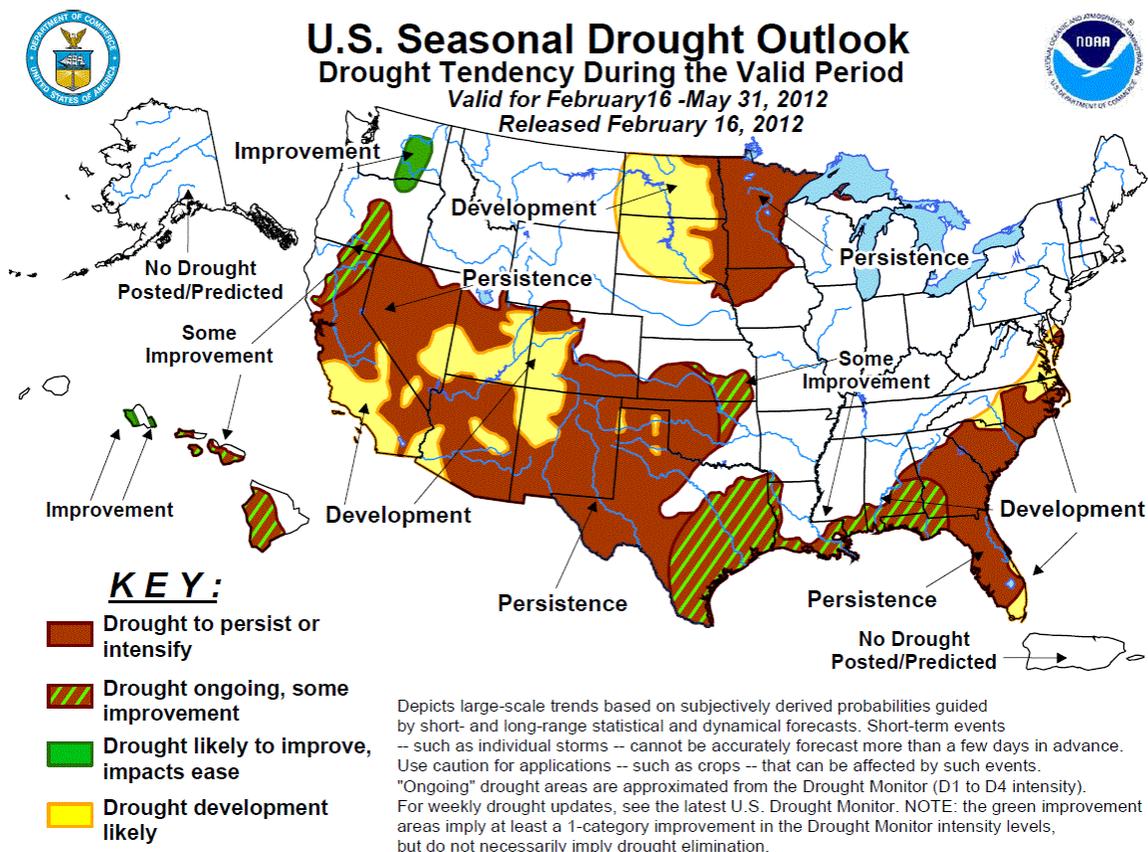


Figure 5 – Drought conditions persist across most of Florida with drought worsening expected as La Nina peaks.

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

La Niña is likely to transition to ENSO-neutral conditions during March-May 2012. Cooler than normal sea surface temperatures (SST) continue over the western and central Pacific Ocean while SST have begun to warm in the far eastern Pacific. This is a sign that La Niña has peaked for 2012. Low-level easterly and upper-level westerly winds persisted over the central and west-central Pacific. Convection remained suppressed in the western and central Pacific, and enhanced over Indonesia. Collectively, the oceanic and atmospheric patterns reflect a weak-to-moderate strength La Niña has peaked. A majority of models predict La Niña to weaken through the rest of winter, and then to dissipate during the spring 2012. Also, La Niña conditions are expected to return to ENSO-neutral conditions during the spring and are likely to continue into the summer. Because the strength of impacts in the United States is not necessarily related to the exact strength of La Niña in the tropical Pacific, La Niña impacts are expected to continue even as the episode weakens. Over the U.S. during February - April 2012, there is an increased chance of above-average temperatures across Florida and the southeastern U.S., and with drier-than-average conditions.

Mid-Month Plume of Model ENSO Predictions from Jan 2012

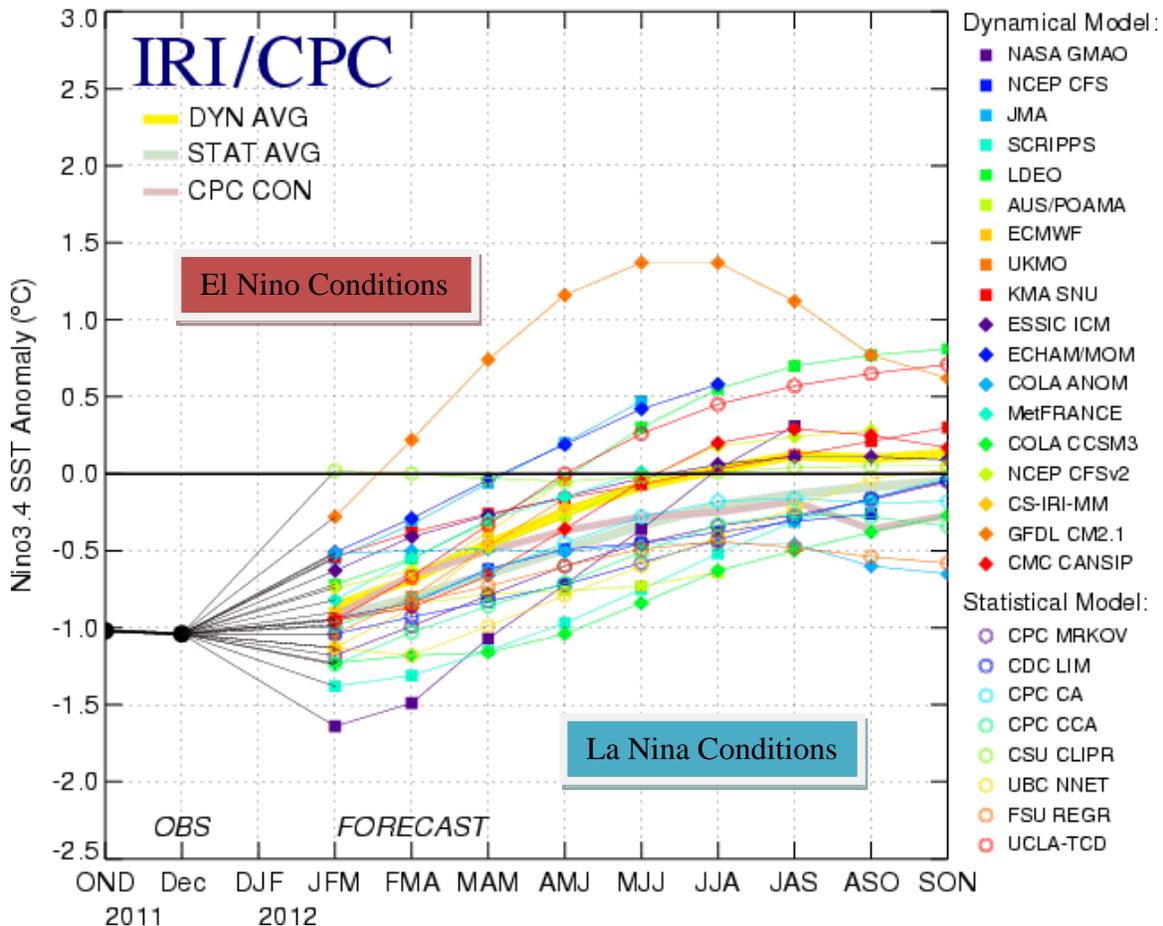


Figure 6 - All climate model runs from January 2011. The yellow line is climate forecaster's preferred dynamical model average indicating a return to ENSO-Neutral conditions this spring.

Central & South Florida Temperature Outlook:

February thru May – Warmer than normal
 May thru September – Much warmer than normal
 October – Warmer than normal
 November thru January 2013 - Normal

Central & South Florida Rainfall Outlook:

February thru May – Much drier than normal
 June – Drier than normal
 July – Normal
 August thru September – Wetter than normal
 November thru January 2013 - Normal

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