



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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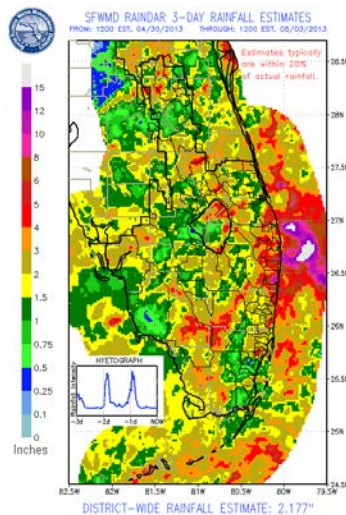
South Florida Water Management District

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SFWMD Continues to Move Water From 'Mesoscale Convective Vortex' *Localized areas received torrential rain due to the unusual weather phenomenon*



(Click on the image for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL — In response to an intense, three-day rain event that continues to impact parts of the region, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is effectively moving water through the regional flood control system. Forecasters expect another 2.5 inches of rain north and east of Lake Okeechobee through this evening.

This week's weather event included an unusual "mesoscale convective vortex," which pulls local winds into a circular pattern as it unleashes torrents of rain for hours. The vortex, which has moved offshore, was responsible for Thursday's estimated maximums of up to 12 inches of rain that produced localized flooding in southeastern Palm Beach County.

"There was a lot of energy with this system that resulted in a deluge over a small area," said Susan Sylvester, SFWMD Chief of the Water Control Operations Bureau. "We have water managers working 24 hours a day looking at where we need to move water and our canal system is responding very well. Gates were opened and the water levels are coming down after the initial surge."

Today's rainfall is continuing as part of an upper-level trough over the region during what is typically a dry time of the year. It is too early to tell whether this is an indication of an early start to the wet season, which historically starts by late May. Last year, the District experienced a drier-than-average start to the dry season, but most areas of the District have received above average rainfall since mid-February.

The challenge of water management in South Florida is to strike a balance between providing for water supply, the environment and flood control. The timing and distribution of water is being cautiously managed because large or rapid fluctuations can impact nesting wading birds and other wildlife.

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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.