



Northwest Florida Water Management District

DROUGHT CONDITIONS SUMMARY

November 27, 2007

Overview of Hydrologic Conditions

Two cold fronts moved across the panhandle in the last week bringing much needed rainfall to the area. The first front moved across the panhandle on November 21st -22nd with the second system moving through on November 26th. The rainfall for this period was generally about 1 – 3 inches in the eastern counties of the District and about 3 – 6 inches in the western counties with higher amounts reported in some areas. The rainfall from these systems continued improvement in drought conditions.

In early October the U.S. Drought Monitor designated conditions across the panhandle as moderate to extreme drought. There was a significant improvement in overall conditions during the latter half of October from above normal rainfall. The Drought Monitor has indicated abnormally dry to normal conditions across the panhandle during the last month. The U.S Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions and includes many factors including hydrologic conditions, agricultural metrics, basin storage and other indices.

Levels and flows for many of the major rivers in the western panhandle (Yellow River, Shoal River, Blackwater River, Escambia River and Perdido River) are above normal from recent rainfall. Flows are lower on rivers and streams in the eastern half of the District reflecting the lower rainfall amounts experienced in this area. The flow on the Apalachicola River continues to slowly decline and set a new daily instantaneous low flow for November 27th of 4720 cubic feet per second. The watershed for the Apalachicola River extends into north Georgia and this area has been experiencing historic drought conditions and has not received significant rainfall to improve conditions.

Groundwater levels in the Sand-and-Gravel aquifer have generally increased in response to recent rainfall events. In the parts of the District where the Floridan aquifer is near the surface, water level declines have stabilized in response to recent recharge events but the downward trend in water levels continues where the Floridan is deeper.

Current Conditions and Actions

- The Executive Director, with the concurrence of the Governing Board and after considering recommendations of District staff, issued Order No. 07-001, *Issuance of a Water Shortage Warning Within the Northwest Florida Water Management District*, on June 5, 2007. It is anticipated that the water shortage warning will

remain in place until improvement is observed in the ground water and surface water resources across the District.

- As a result of the Water Shortage Warning issued by the District and increased demand, nine water utilities issued voluntary water use restrictions to ensure system pressure and availability: Auburn Water System in Okaloosa County, the City of Tallahassee Utility, Emerald Coast Utilities Authority in Escambia County, the City of Crestview Utility, the City of DeFuniak Springs Utility, the City of Niceville, the City of Fort Walton Beach, Gonzales Utilities in Escambia County and Bagdad-Garcon Point Water System in Santa Rosa County. Water utilities have been notified of the Water Shortage Warning Order issued by the District and were requested to advise customers of the need to conserve water. No mandatory restrictions have been implemented by water supply utilities in the District.
- No water supply shortages have been reported. The District will continue to monitor water resources and will work with water utilities and other users to implement conservation measures.