SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Robbie McKinney, Hydrologic Program Manager, Office of Water Resources

THRU: Hugh Thomas, Executive Director

DATE: June 30, 2022

RE: June 2022 Hydrologic Conditions Report

RAINFALL

- Districtwide average rainfall for the month was 4.57", which was about 32% less than the 1932-2021 average of 6.76" (Table 1, Figure 1). The 12-month period ending June 30 reflected a Districtwide rainfall surplus of 3.78", which was much lower than the 9.12" surplus at the end of May. Most District counties received between 2" and 5" of rainfall on average with portions of Suwannee, Columbia, Union, Dixie, Taylor, Lafayette, and Levy counties receiving more than 8" (Figure 2).

- A 12-month rainfall surplus was present for most basins, with the Coastal Basin showing the highest surplus at 9.5" (Figure 3). The Aucilla Basin, however, switched from a surplus in May to a deficit in June. A large portion of the Coastal Basin still retained a surplus greater than 14" by month's end. Conversely, areas of the Aucilla Basin experienced a rainfall deficit of greater than 6" by the end of the month. All river basins exhibited a 3-month rainfall deficit at the end of June, with each shifting from a surplus to a deficit (Figure 4). Despite this, however, parts of both the Waccasassa and Suwannee basins showed surpluses of greater than 3 inches.

SURFACE WATER

- **Rivers:** Most river stations shown in Figure 5 finished the month in either the normal (25^{th} – 75^{th} percentile) or below normal (10^{th} – 25^{th} percentile) flow ranges except the Ichetucknee River, which ended June in the above normal (75^{th} – 100^{th} percentile) category. Many river gages in North Florida and South Georgia were in either the normal or below normal flow categories at the end of the month (Figure 6). Within the District, both the Fenholloway and Steinhatchee rivers dropped from the normal to the below normal flow range due to rainfall deficits within the Coastal Basin during the last few months.

- **Lakes**: Water levels decreased at all of the monitored lakes in the District this month (Figure 7). The median decrease in stage across all measured lakes was around 0.4'. Sneads Smokehouse Lake showed the largest overall decrease in stage of around 1.8'. Only Alligator Lake, Lake Alto, Ocean Pond, Santa Fe Lake, and Waters Lake ended June above their respective long-term averages.

- **Springs**: Flow measurements were made during June at 6 springs by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), District staff, and contractors. Blue Hole entered June in the normal flow range, where it remained throughout the rest of the month (Figure 8). Madison Blue Spring, however, began the month in the above normal category but decreased in flow around mid-month into the normal range, where it continued throughout the rest of the month (Figure 9).

GROUNDWATER

Upper Floridan Aquifer (UFA) levels across the District exhibited either extremely low (<10th percentile), low (10th – 25th percentile), normal (25th – 75th percentile), high (75th – 90th percentile), or extremely high (> 90th percentile) ranges at the end of June (Figure 10). The southeastern portion of the District showed a small area with extremely high aquifer levels by month's end, while southern parts of the District had areas with low and extremely low aquifer levels. Overall, groundwater levels decreased by a median of about 1' since the end of May and ended June with a Districtwide average around the 60th percentile.

Most county index wells remained higher than the historical monthly average levels at the end of June except for Lafayette County near Mayo (Figure 11). The long-term District UFA well levels ended the month either within the extremely low, normal, high, or very high (> 90th percentile) ranges (Figure 12a). Overall, water levels at long-term wells with records that extend back to at least 1964 mostly decreased this month (Figure 12b).

CLIMATE AND DROUGHT OUTLOOK

The Climate Prediction Center forecasts a continuation of La Niña conditions from July to September (52% chance) with around a 58-59% chance of continuation through the fall and early winter of 2022.

The NOAA three-month seasonal outlook favors above normal temperatures along with above normal rainfall chances throughout the District from July through September. The U.S. Drought Monitor report released on July 7, 2022, still showed abnormally dry (D0) conditions in either all or portions of each county within the District.

CONSERVATION

Water conservation continues to be necessary to sustain healthy groundwater levels and flows in District springs and rivers. All users are urged to eliminate unnecessary uses. Landscape irrigation during Daylight Saving Time (March 13, 2022, to November 6, 2022) is limited to twice per week based on a District water conservation rule that applies to residential landscaping, public or commercial recreation areas, and businesses that are not regulated by a District-issued water use permit. Information about SRWMD's year-round conservation measures is available at http://www.srwmd.org/index.aspx?NID=337.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Hydrologic Conditions Report is a monthly combined effort between the Offices of Water Resources and Hydrologic Data Services data collection and review programs. Acknowledgment is made to the following staff for their contributions to the timely production of this report:

- Data Collection: Jamie Gaylord, Matthew Jordan, Gene Page, Vince Robinson, and Brandi Sistrunk
- QA/QC and Reporting: Stephanie Armstrong, Alejandro Garcia, Susie Hetrick, and Robbie McKinney
- Administrative Support/Document Preparation/IT: Paul Buchanan, Pennie Flickinger, Tyler Jordan, Andrew Neel, and Kelly Wooley

This report is compiled in compliance with Chapter 40B-21.211, Florida Administrative Code, using rainfall (gage-adjusted radar-derived estimates), groundwater (121 wells), surface water (35 stations), and general information such as drought indices and forecasts. Data are provisional and updated as revised data become available. Data are available at http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com/507/Water-Data-Portal or upon request.

Table 1: Nexrad Monthly Rainfall Totals by County (inches)

County	June 2022	June Average*	Month % of Normal	Total Last 12 Months	Annual % of Normal
Alachua	3.71	6.96	53%	56.03	107%
Baker	2.71	6.82	40%	55.10	104%
Bradford	3.37	6.62	51%	52.08	101%
Columbia	4.60	6.89	67%	57.19	108%
Dixie	4.94	7.28	68%	67.47	116%
Gilchrist	5.53	7.16	77%	59.04	108%
Hamilton	3.93	6.38	62%	56.88	110%
Jefferson	3.76	6.17	61%	50.17	90%
Lafayette	4.96	6.65	75%	62.29	113%
Levy	5.50	7.48	73%	59.49	106%
Madison	3.41	6.21	55%	55.20	103%
Suwannee	5.65	6.48	87%	57.04	107%
Taylor	4.61	6.62	70%	61.70	109%
Union	4.02	6.87	59%	50.84	97%

*Based on PRISM LT81 rainfall averages by county (1927-2020)

June 2022 District Average	4.57
June Long-Term Average (1932-2021)	6.76
Historical 12-month Average (1932-2021)	54.73
Past 12-Month Total	58.51
12-Month Rainfall **Surplus**/Deficit	**3.78**

Figure 1: Comparison of District-wide Monthly Rainfall

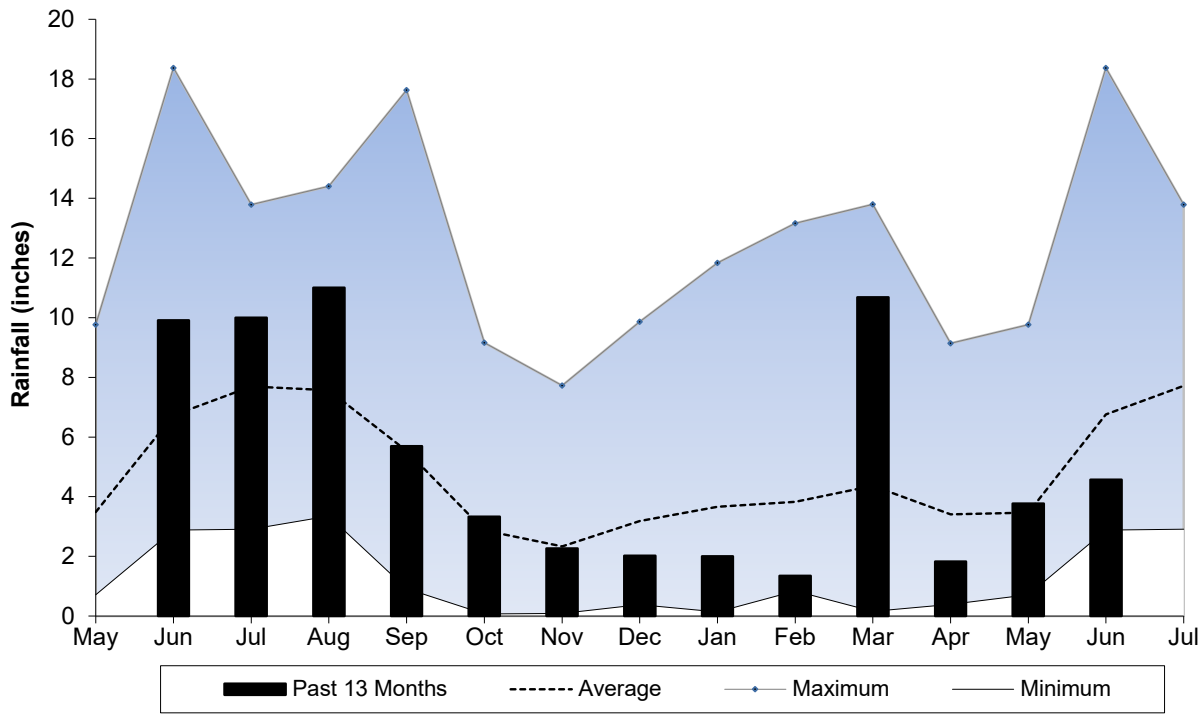


Figure 2: June 2022 SRWMD Gage-adjusted Radar Rainfall

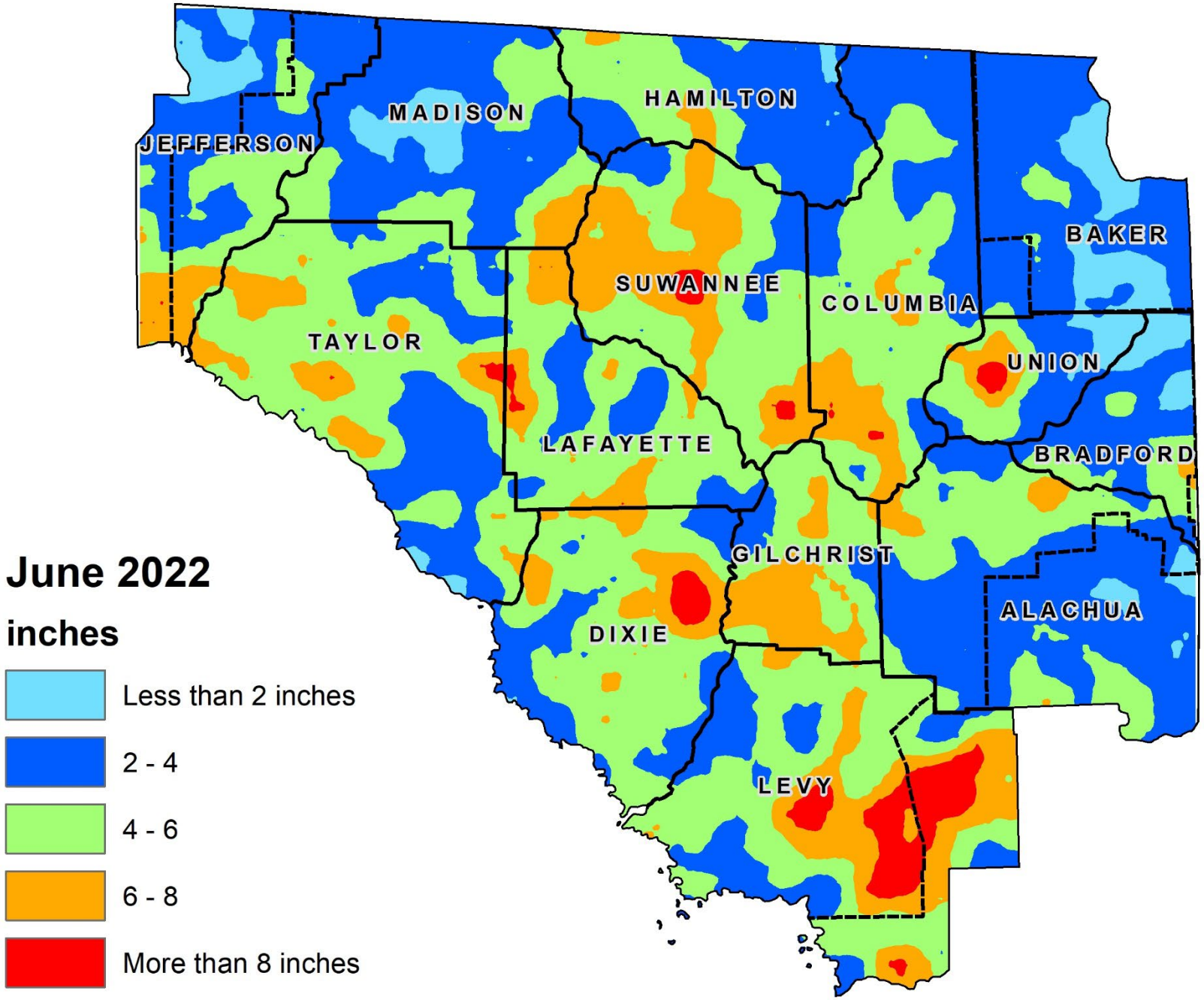


Figure 3: 12 - Month Rainfall Surplus/Deficit by River Basin through June 30, 2022

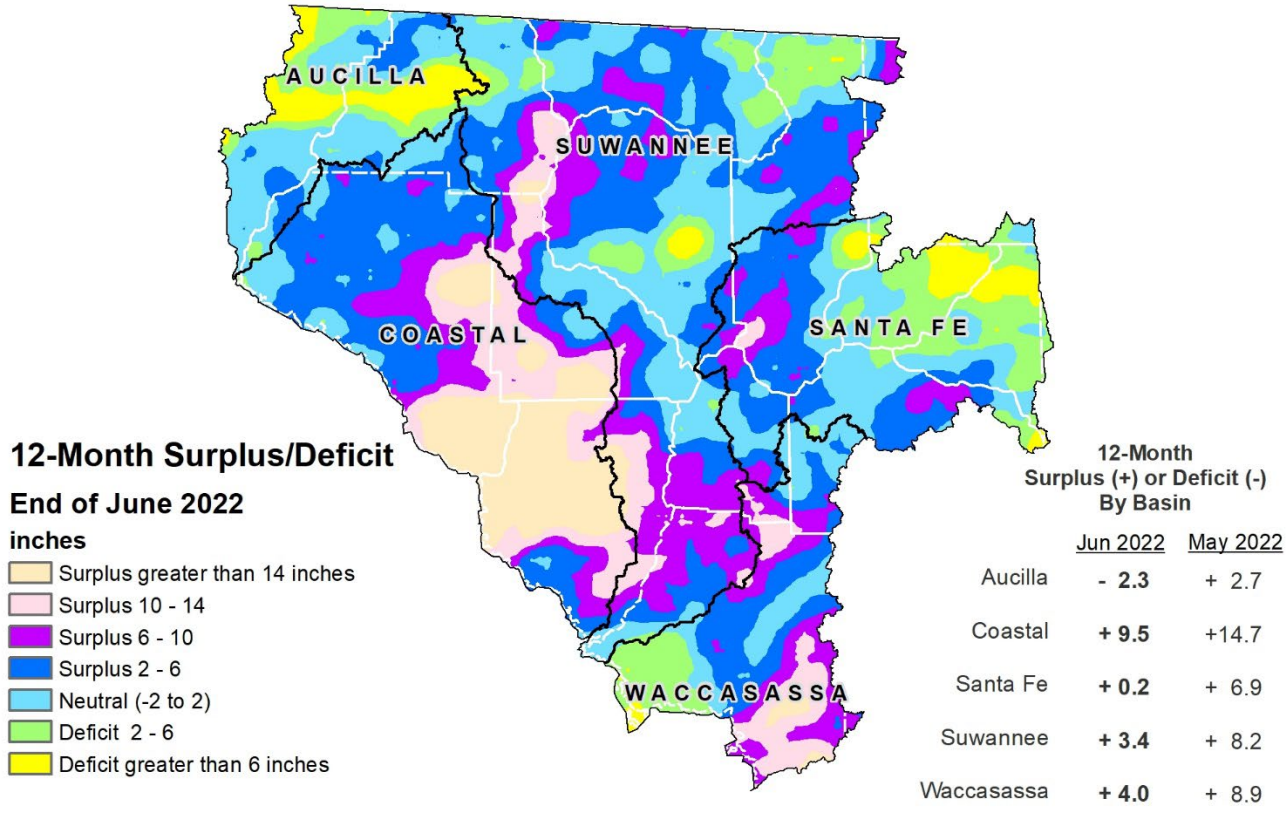


Figure 4: 3 - Month Rainfall Surplus/Deficit by River Basin through June 30, 2022

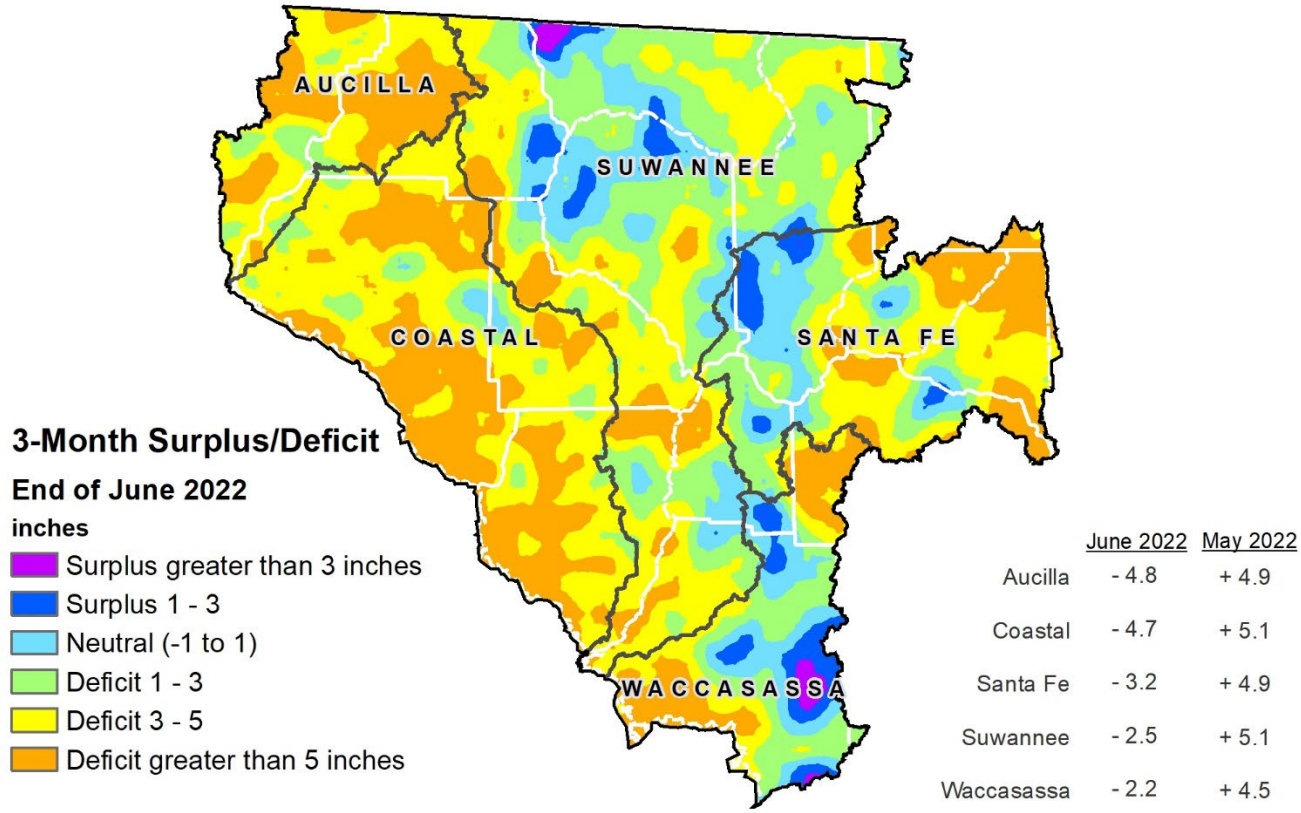
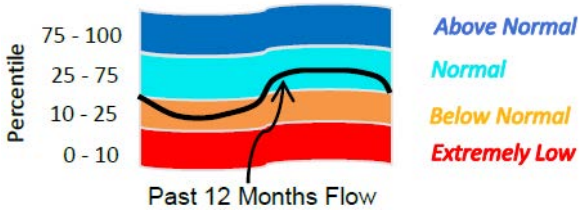
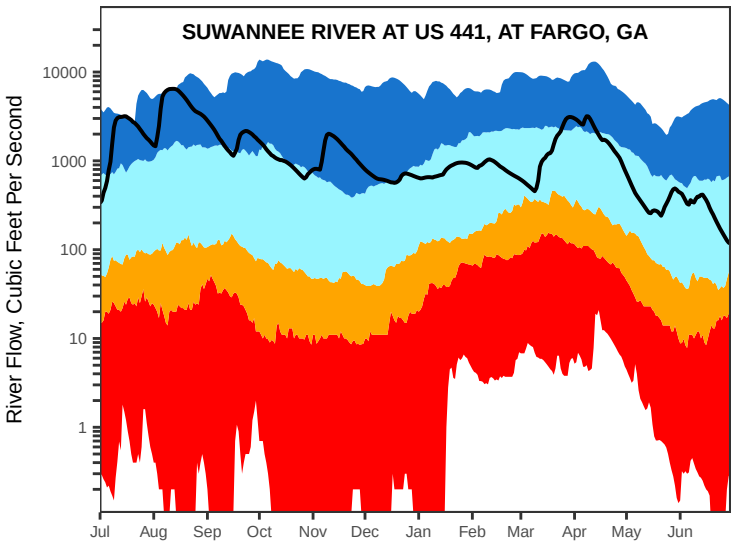
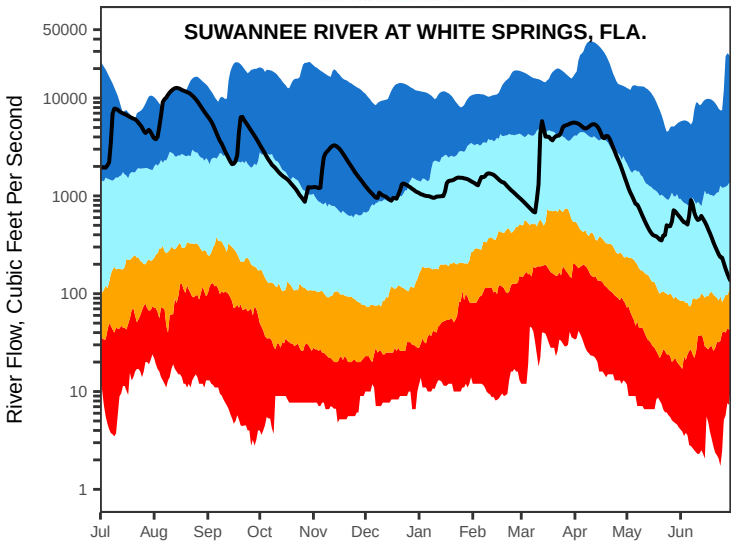


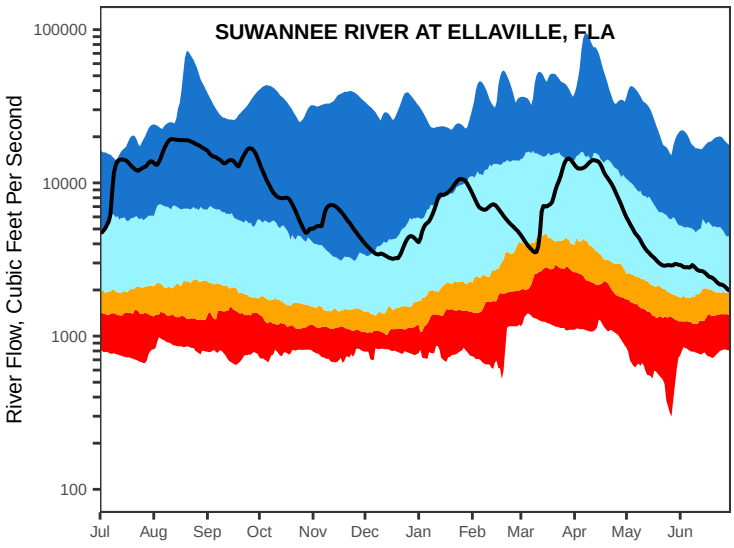
Figure 5: Daily River Flow Statistics

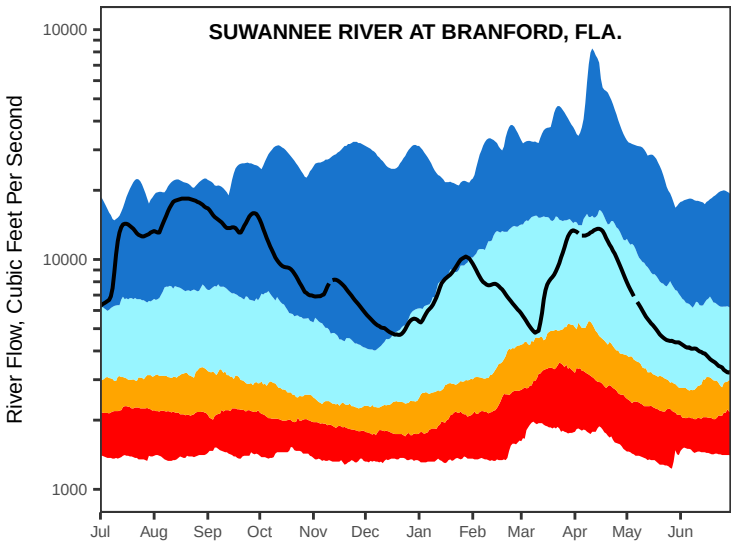
July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

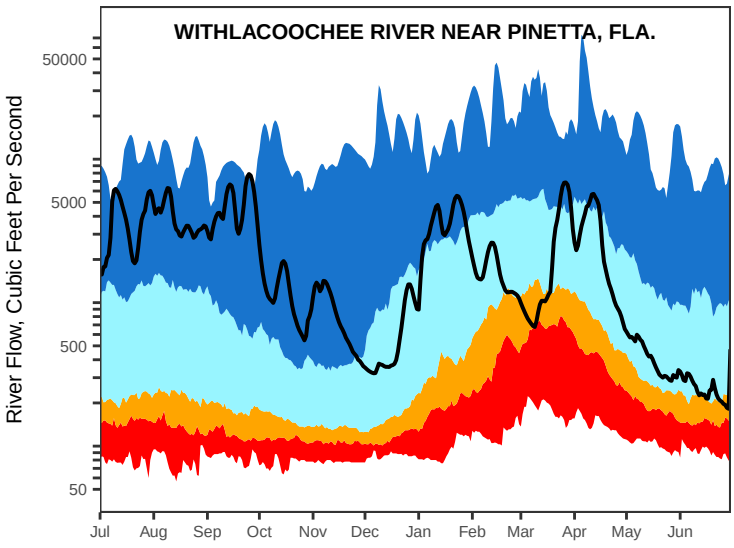












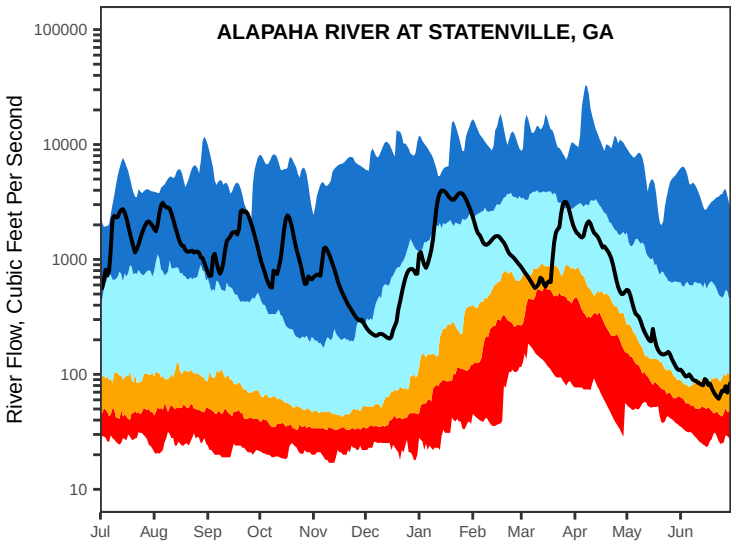
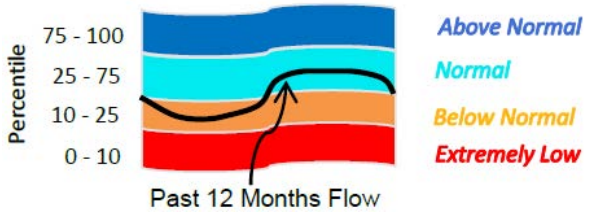
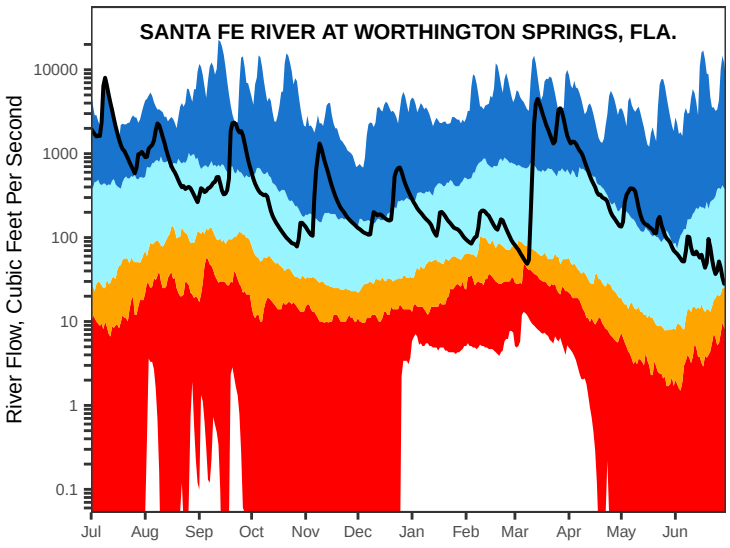
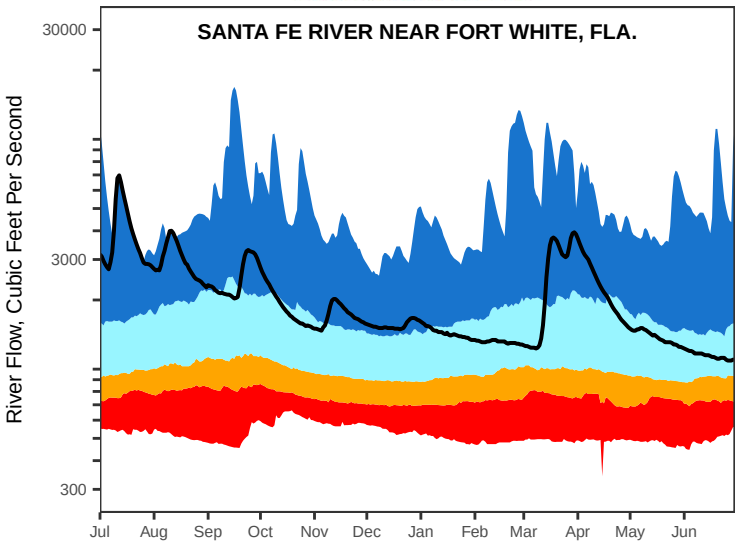


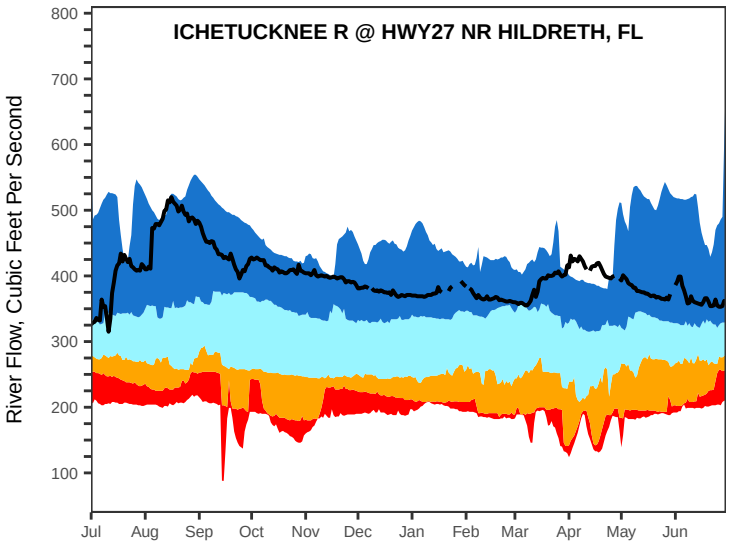
Figure 5, cont.: Daily River Flow Statistics

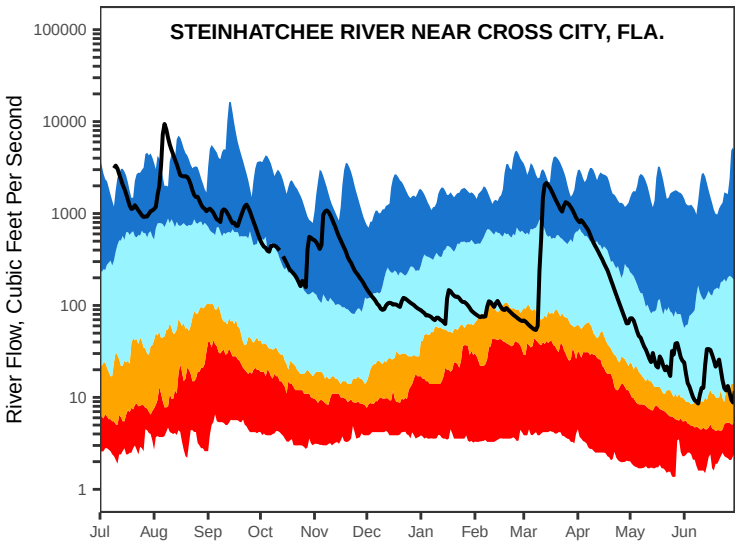
July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

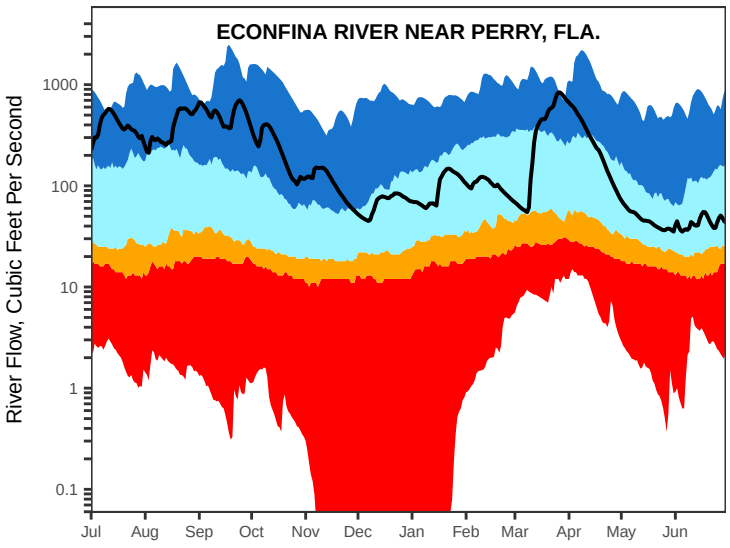












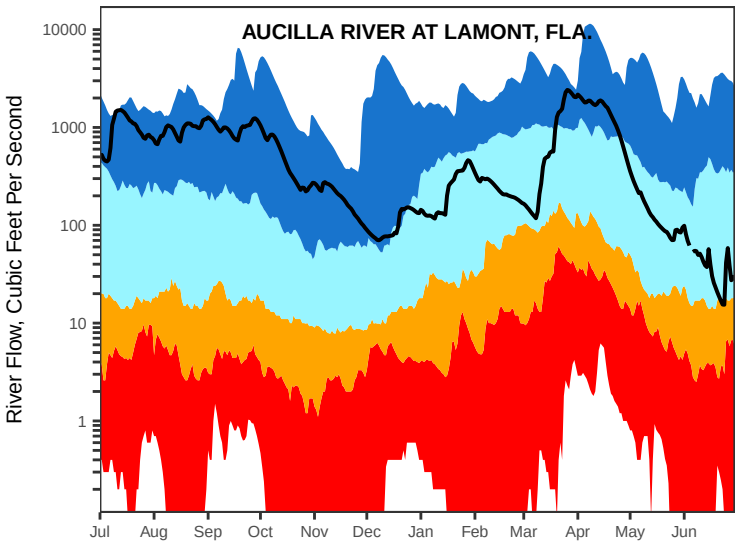
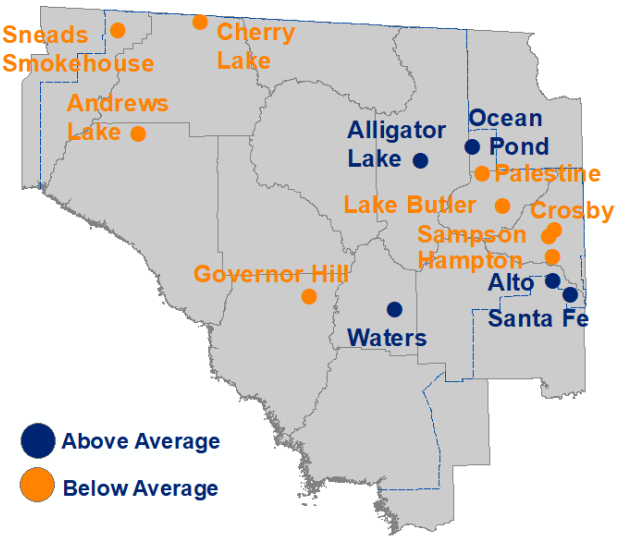



Figure 6:
Streamflow Conditions
June 2022
The Cody Scarp (or Escarpment) is an area of relatively steep topographical change that runs across north Florida. The geology above the Scarp consists of sandy soils over thick layers of mostly impermeable sediments such as clay. Streams are well-developed with dendritic (tree-like) drainage patterns. Because of the impermeable sediments, rainfall is collected in ever-growing surface streams as the land elevation falls. Below the Scarp, sandy soils overlay porous limestone. These areas are internally drained, meaning rainfall runs directly into the ground or into sinkholes instead of forming streams. In these areas, rainfall directly recharges the aquifer, which in turn discharges into rivers via springs and river bed seepage. The Scarp is important to the area's hydrology because it demarcates areas where streamflow is dependent almost entirely on recent rainfall and areas where streamflow is heavily influenced by groundwater.
Alapaha
Alapaha/
Alapaha
Little
Little River
Withla-
coochee
Ochlocknee/
Thomasville
Withla-
coochee
Upper
Suwannee
Withlacoochee/
Quitman
Alapaha/
Statenville
Fargo
Withlacoochee/
Pinetta
North Prong
St. Marys
St.Mark's
Aucilla
Alapaha/
Jennings
St.Marys
White
Springs
Aucilla/
Lamont
Ellaville
St.Marys/
Macclenny
Lower
Suwannee
Econfina
Fenholloway
Branford
Santa Fe
New River
Ft.White
Coastal
Steinhatchee
Worth-
ington
Springs
Graham
Rock Bluff
St.Johns
Wacca-
sassa
The Suwannee River basin encompasses 9,973 square miles, 59 percent of which lies in Georgia. Gage records in the Suwannee basin go back as far as 1906 in the case of White Springs. Many gages have continuous records back to the 1920s. This figure compares streamflow at long-term monitoring gages on the first and last day of the month with past flows on the same dates.
June 1
June 30
Much Below Normal (<10th Percentile)
Below Normal (10 - 25)
Normal (25 - 75)
Above Normal (75 - 90)
High (>90th Percentile)
Cody Scarp
Basin Boundary
Aucilla River Basin
Coastal Rivers Basin
Waccasassa River Basin
Suwannee River Basin
These gages are operated by the USGS and funded by a number of private and public entities, including the SRWMD, SJRWMD, FDEP, Nestle Waters North America, Packaging Corporation of America, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (EPD).

Figure 7: June 2022 Lake Levels



SRWMD lakes react differently to climatic changes depending on their location in the landscape. Some lakes, in particular in the eastern part of the District, are embedded in a surficial or intermediate aquifer over relatively impermeable clay deposits. These lakes rise and fall according to local rainfall and surface runoff. They retain water during severe droughts since most losses occur from evaporation. Other lakes, such as Governor Hill and Waters Lake, have porous or "leaky" bottoms that interact with the Floridan aquifer. These lakes depend on groundwater levels to stay high. If aquifer levels are low, these lakes go dry even if rainfall is normal.

The District currently monitors 14 lakes on a long-term basis; much of the data was originally provided by volunteer observers. Monitoring records began in the 1970s, except for Lakes Butler, Sampson, and Santa Fe, which started in 1957.

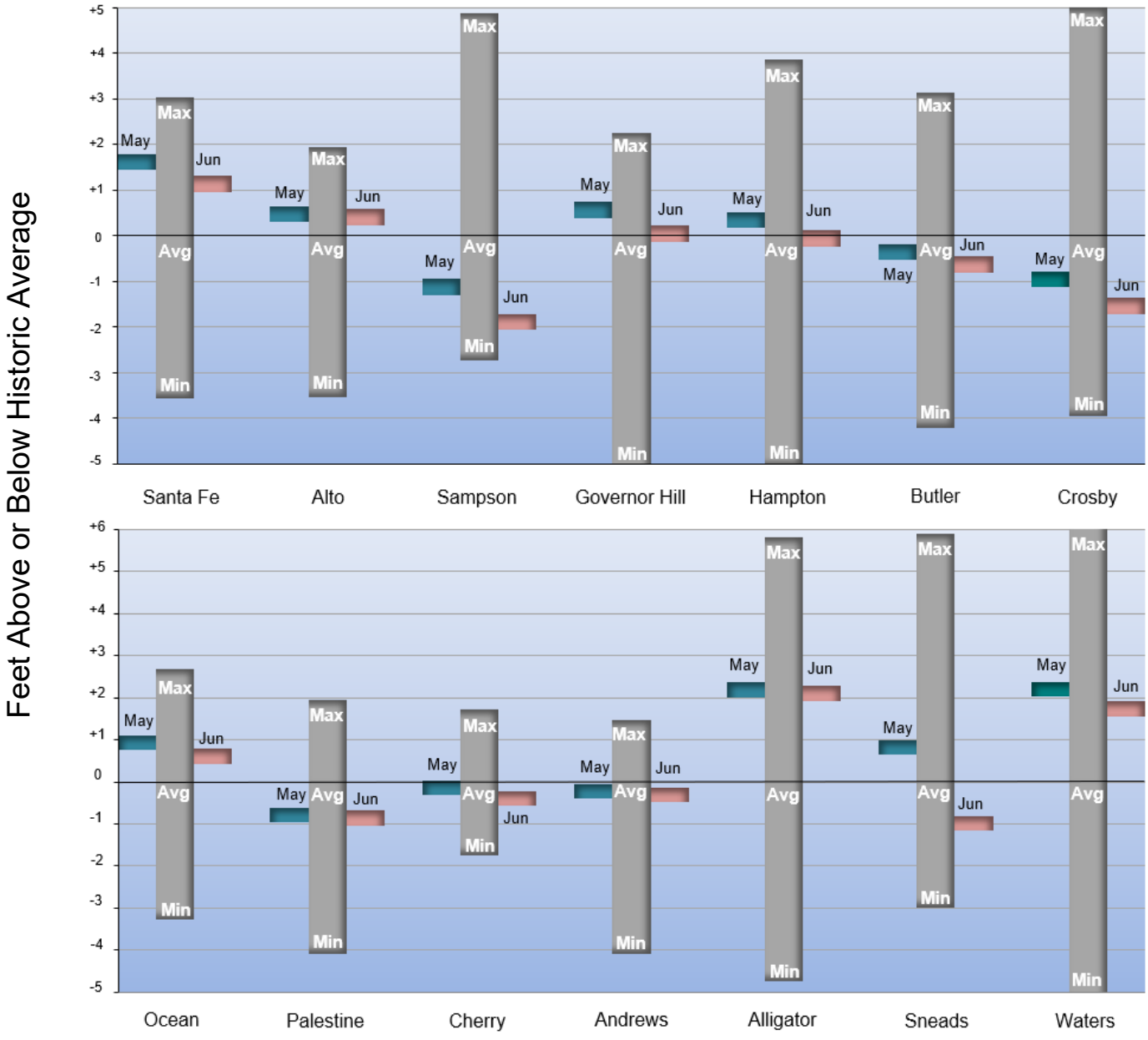


Figure 8: Flow Over the Past 12 Months, Blue Hole (cubic feet per second)

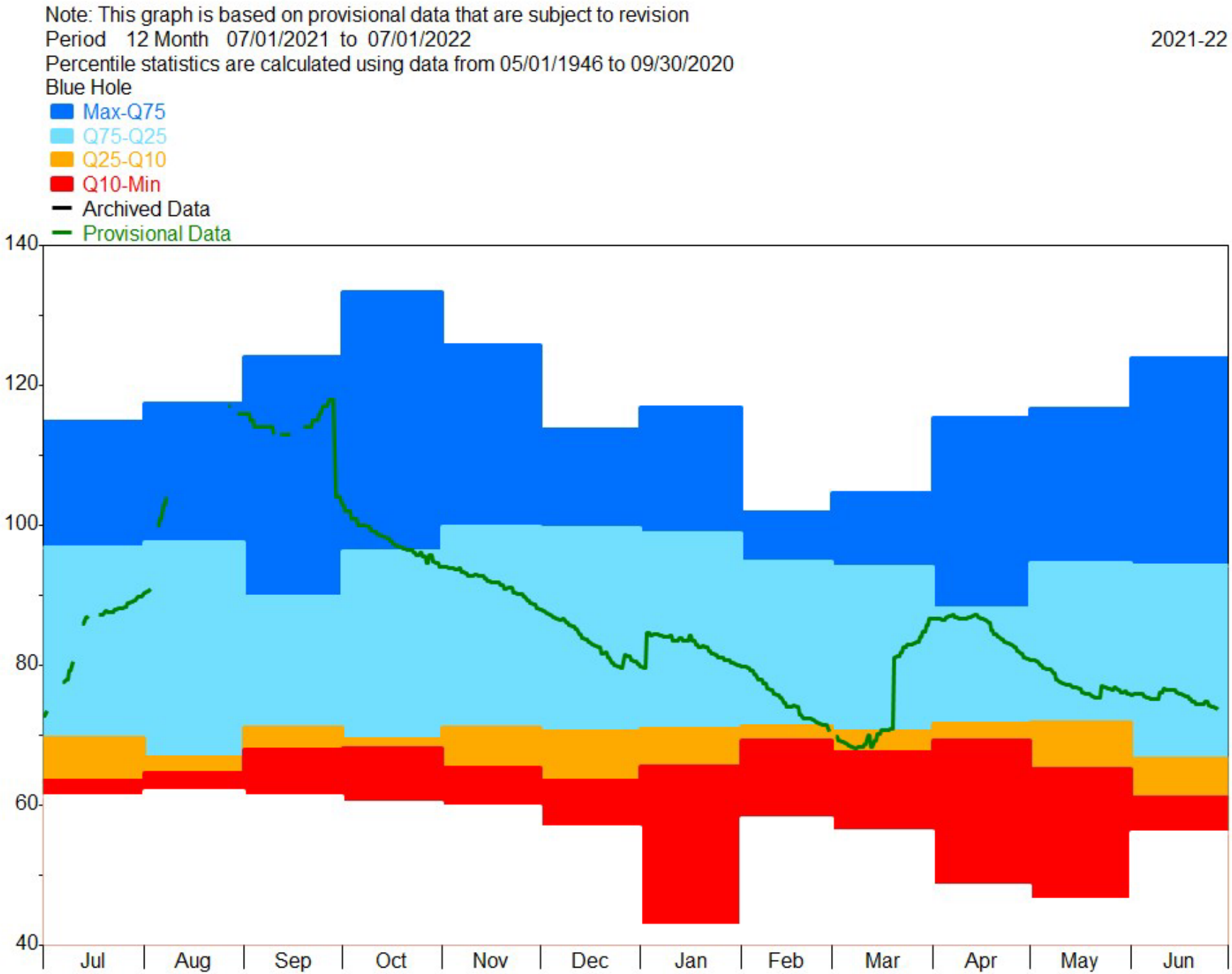
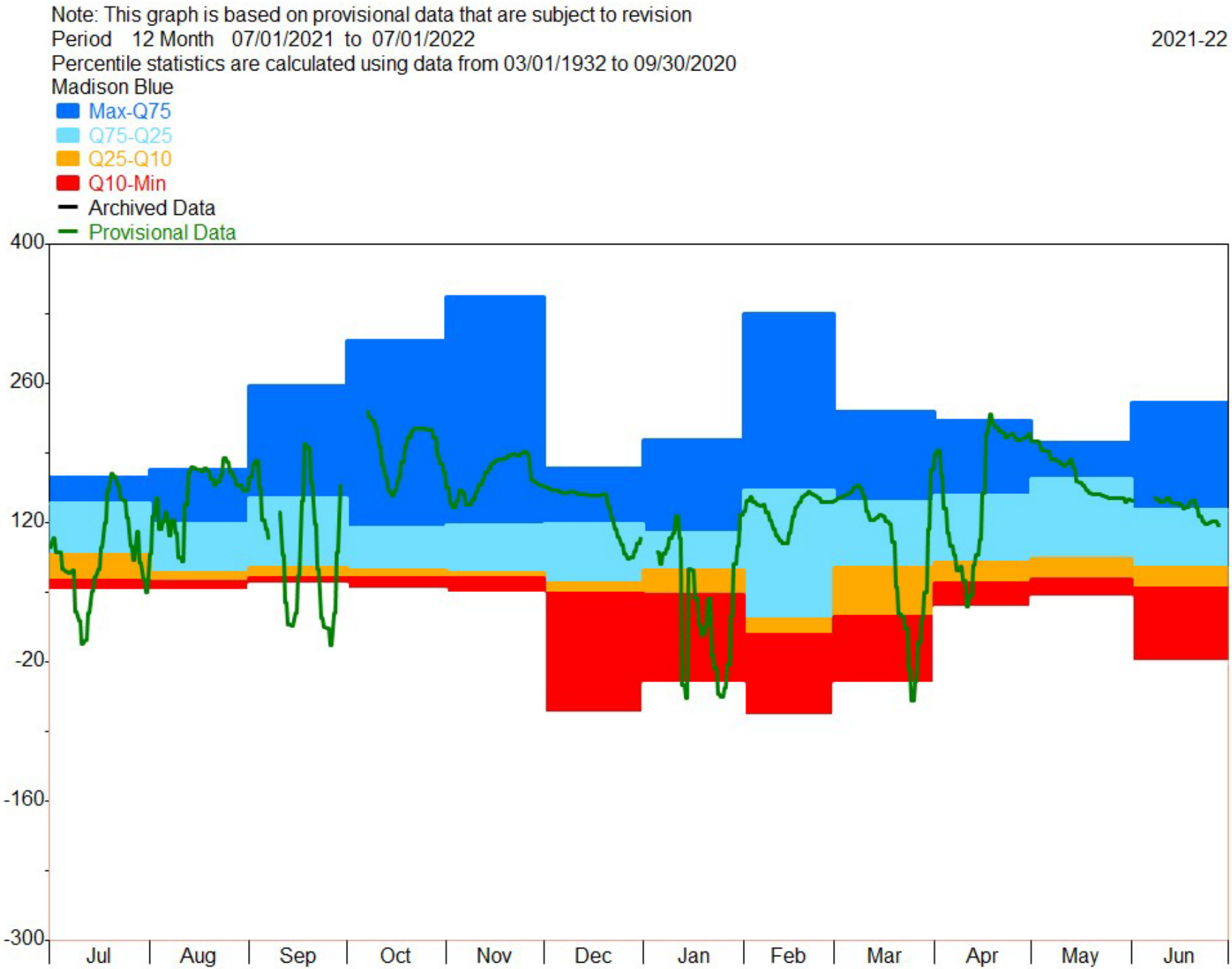


Figure 9: Flow Over the Past 12 Months, Madison Blue (cubic feet per second)



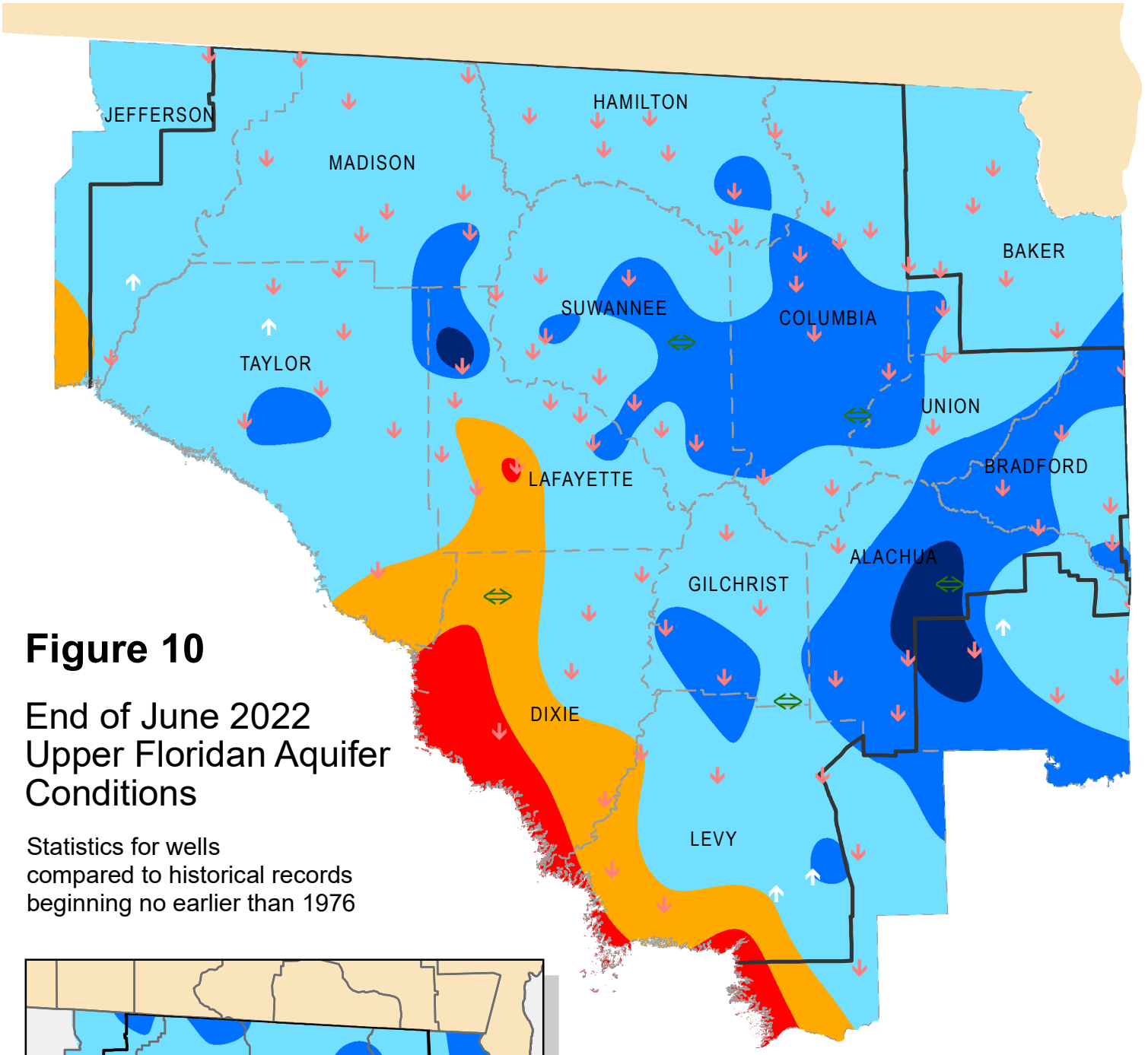
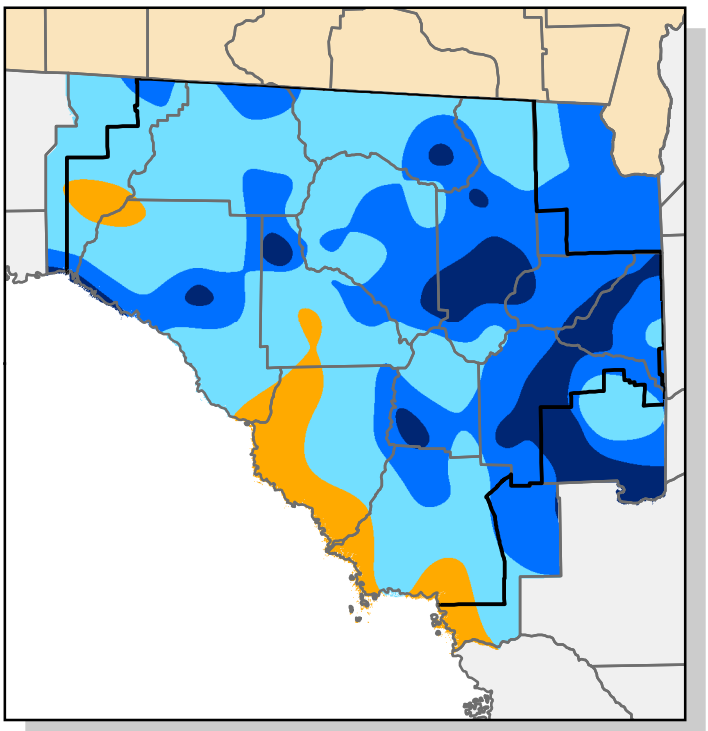


Figure 10

End of June 2022 Upper Floridan Aquifer Conditions

Statistics for wells compared to historical records beginning no earlier than 1976



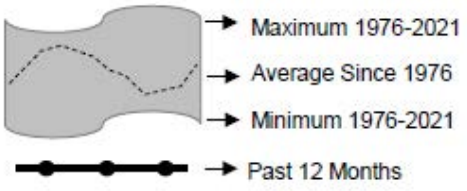
Inset: May Groundwater Percentiles

Additional wells courtesy of SJRWMD, SWFWMD and USGS

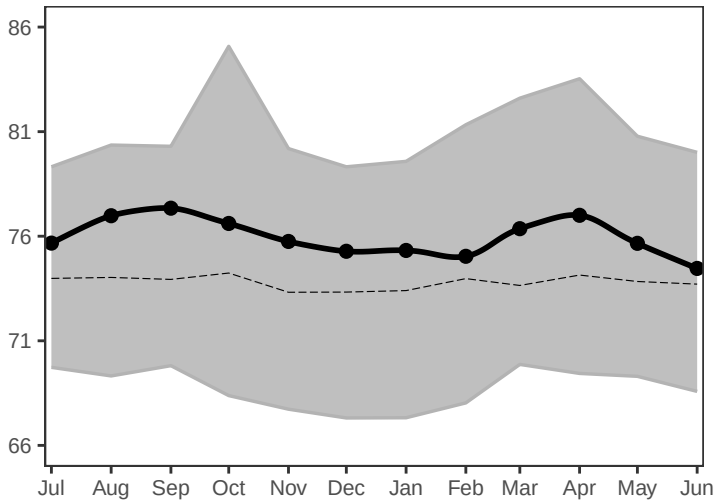
- Extremely High (Greater than 90th Percentile)
- High (75th to 90th Percentile)
- Normal (25th to 75th Percentile)
- Low (10th to 25th Percentile)
- Extremely Low (Less than 10th Percentile)
- Increase/decrease in level since last month
- Increase/decrease since last month less than one percent of historic range
- District Boundary

Figure 11: Monthly Groundwater Statistics

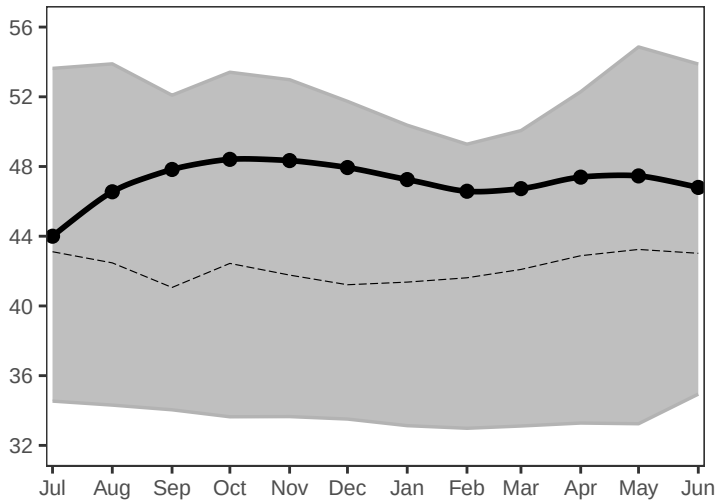
Levels July 2021 through June 2022
Period of Record Beginning 1976



Madison County N010719001
near Greenville

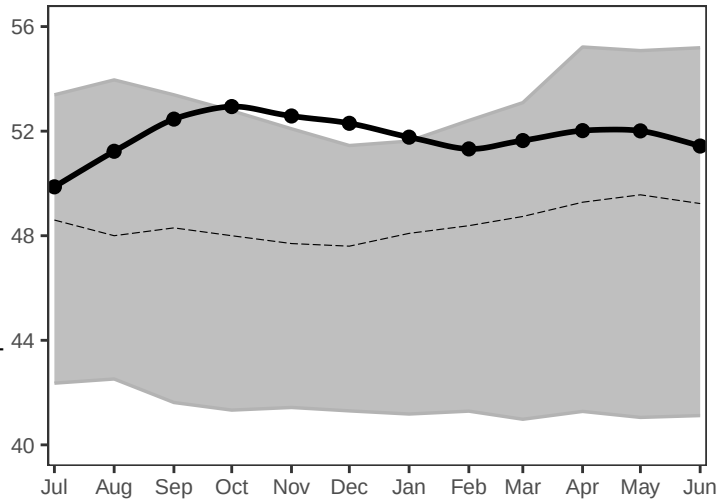


Suwannee County S021335001
near Live Oak

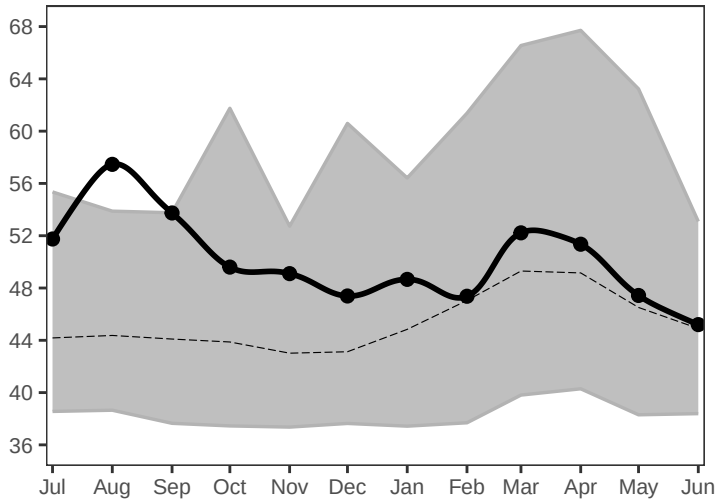


Upper Floridan Aquifer Elevation above NGVD 1929, Feet

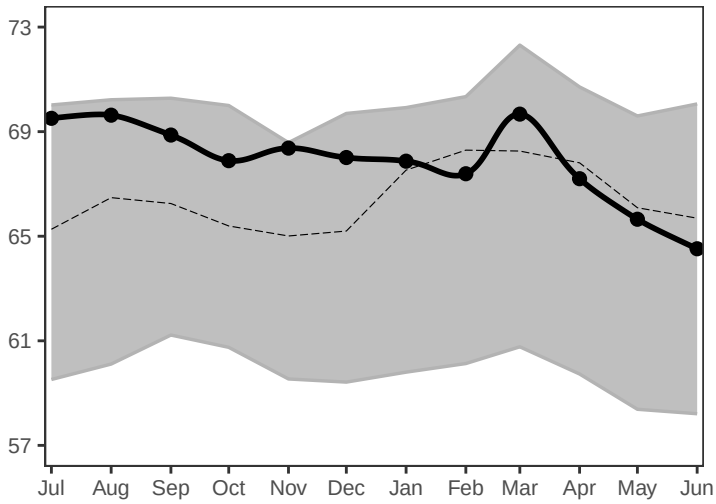
Columbia County S041705001
Lake City



Hamilton County N011422007
near Jasper



Lafayette County S061114001
near Mayo



Taylor County S040736005
Perry

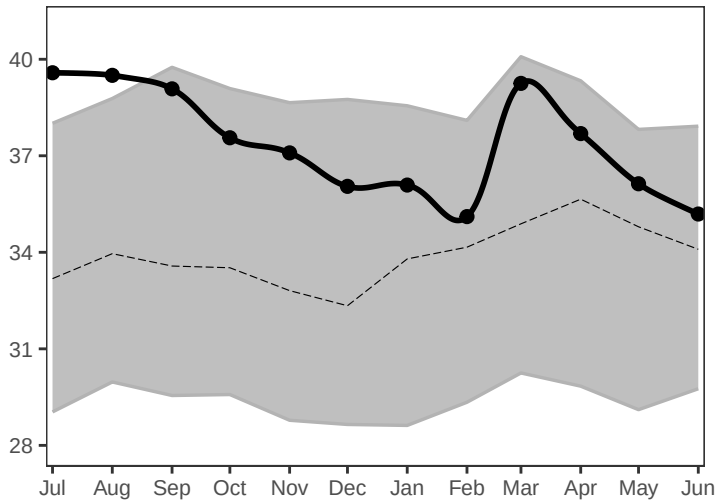
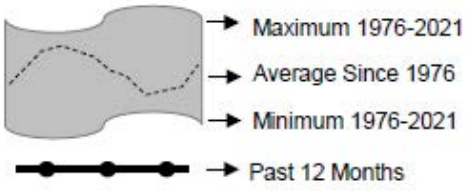
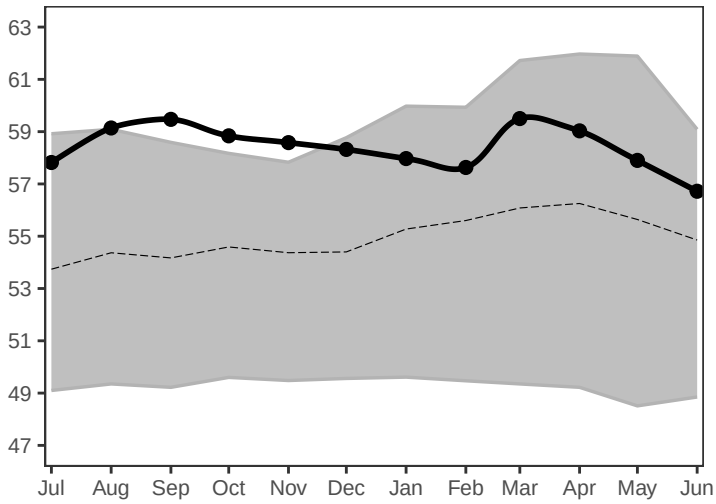


Figure 11, cont.: Monthly Groundwater Statistics

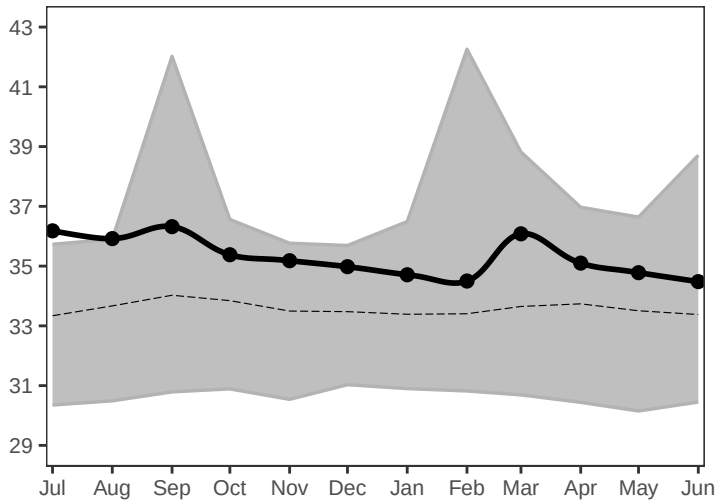
Levels July 2021 through June 2022
Period of Record Beginning 1976



Union County S051933001
near Lake Butler

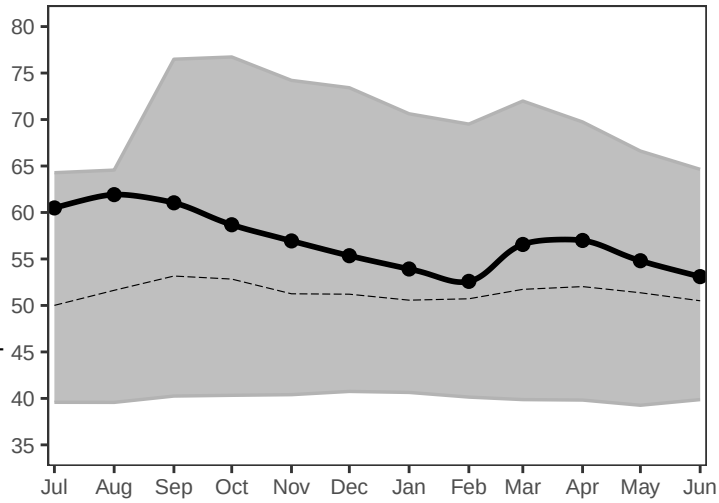


Alachua County S081703001
at High Springs

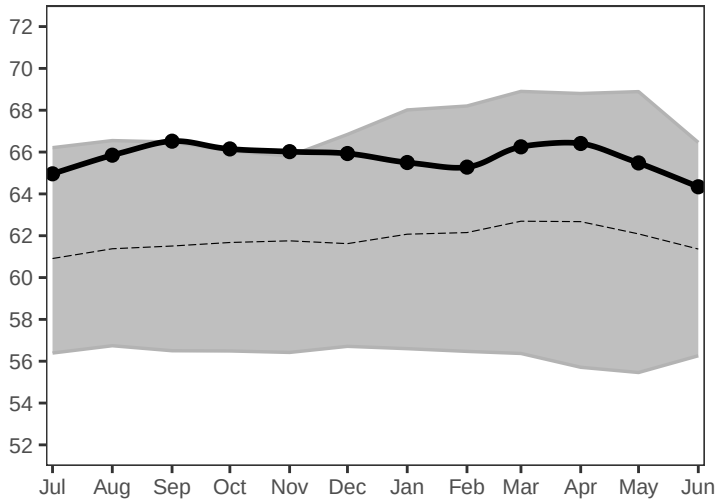


Upper Floridan Aquifer Elevation above NGVD 1929, Feet

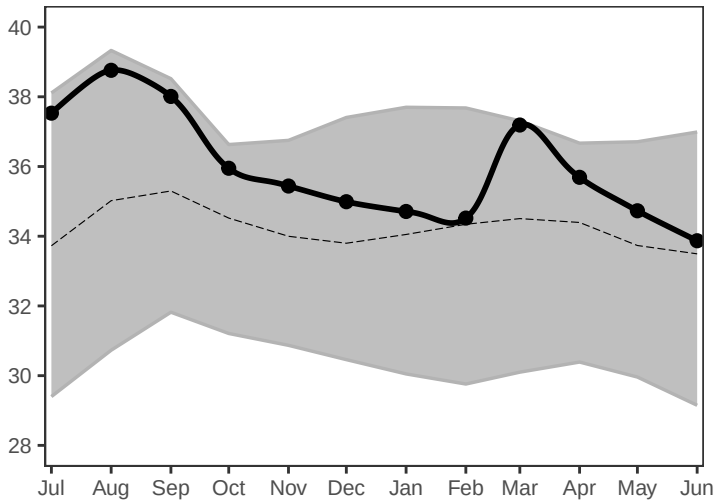
Gilchrist County S091607001
near Trenton



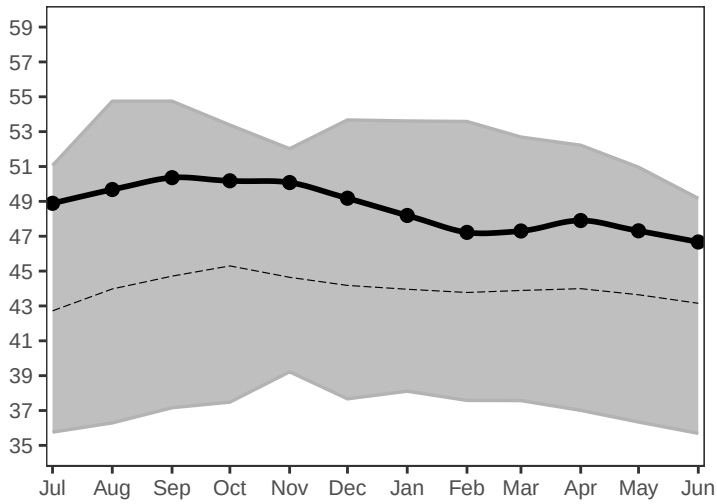
Bradford County S072132001
near Graham



Dixie County S101210001
at Cross City



Levy County S131736001
near Bronson



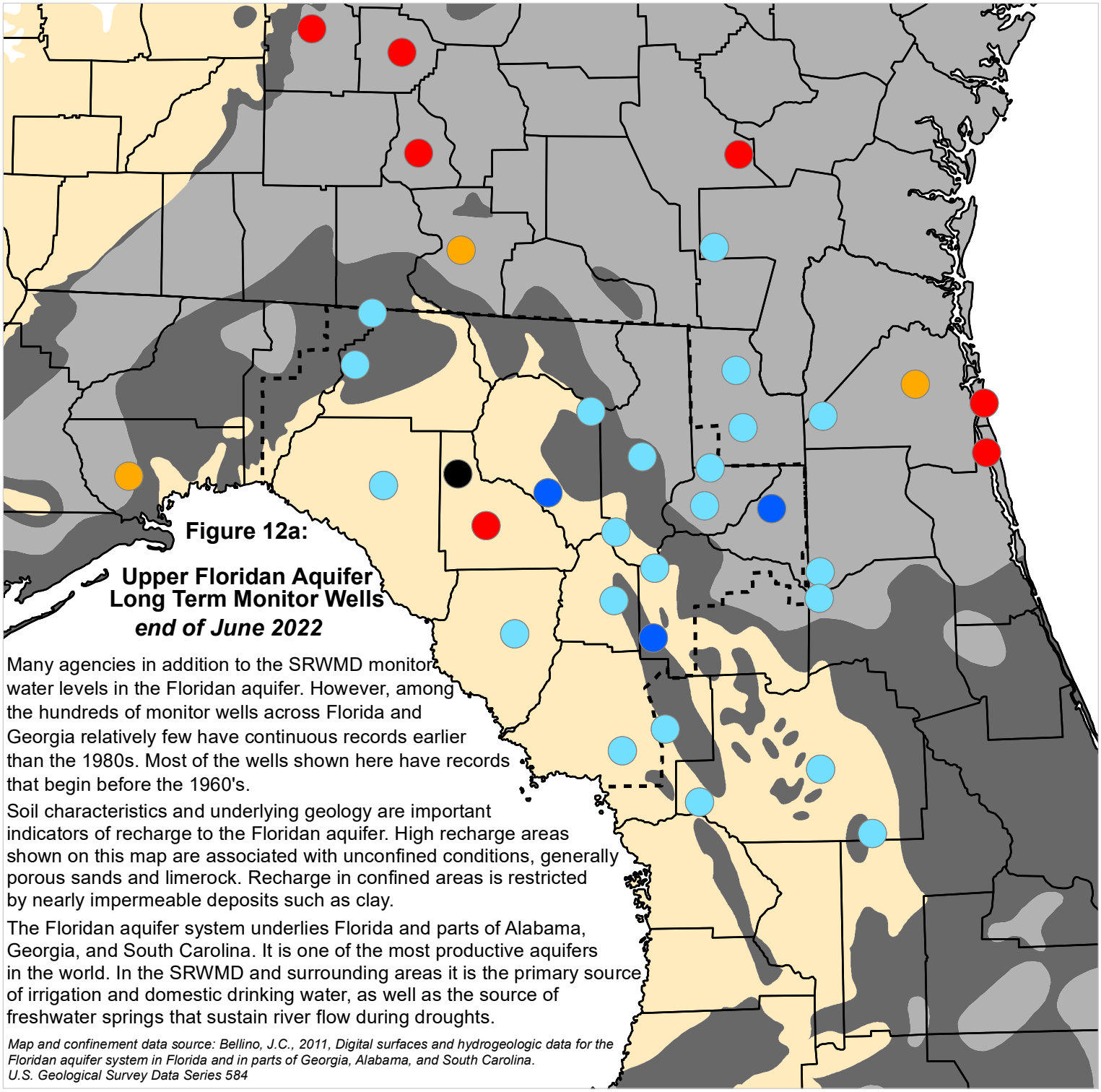


Figure 12a:

Upper Floridan Aquifer Long Term Monitor Wells

end of June 2022

Many agencies in addition to the SRWMD monitor water levels in the Floridan aquifer. However, among the hundreds of monitor wells across Florida and Georgia relatively few have continuous records earlier than the 1980s. Most of the wells shown here have records that begin before the 1960's.

Soil characteristics and underlying geology are important indicators of recharge to the Floridan aquifer. High recharge areas shown on this map are associated with unconfined conditions, generally porous sands and limerock. Recharge in confined areas is restricted by nearly impermeable deposits such as clay.

The Floridan aquifer system underlies Florida and parts of Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. It is one of the most productive aquifers in the world. In the SRWMD and surrounding areas it is the primary source of irrigation and domestic drinking water, as well as the source of freshwater springs that sustain river flow during droughts.

Map and confinement data source: Bellino, J.C., 2011, Digital surfaces and hydrogeologic data for the Floridan aquifer system in Florida and in parts of Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina. U.S. Geological Survey Data Series 584

Occurrence of Confined and Unconfined Conditions in the Upper Floridan Aquifer

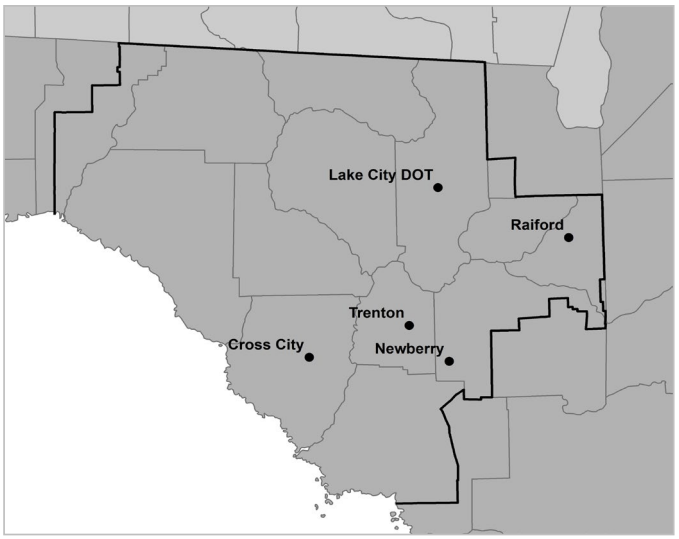
- Confined: Upper confining unit is generally greater than 100 feet thick and unbreached. Recharge is low.
- Semi-confined: Upper confining unit is generally less than 100 feet thick, breached, or both. Recharge is moderate.
- Unconfined: Upper confining unit is absent or very thin. Recharge is high.
- SRWMD Boundary

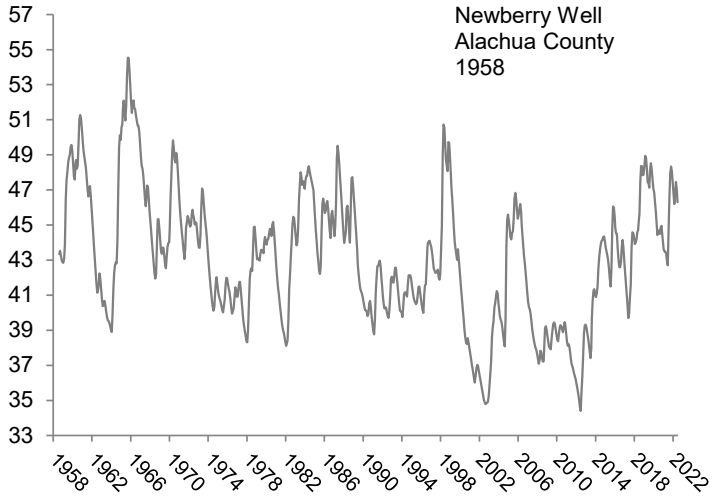
Percentile of Most Recent Water Level Relative to Entire Record

- Very High (Greater than 90th Percentile)
- High (75th to 90th Percentile)
- Normal (25th to 75th Percentile)
- Low (10th to 25th Percentile)
- Very Low (Less than 10th Percentile)
- Data Not Available

Figure 12b: Regional Long Term Upper Floridan Aquifer Levels

Data through June 2022





Upper Floridan Aquifer Elevation above NGVD 1929, Feet