

October 2010



Water Resource
Fact Sheet Series

Available Fact Sheets

- *Florida's Water Resource Management System*
- *Minimum Flows and Levels*
- *Water Use Trends in Florida*
- *Water Conservation*
- *Alternative Water Supplies*
- *Regional Water Supply Planning*
- *Water Reservations*
- *Drought and Water Management*
- *Climate Change/Water Management Connections*
- *Local Sources First*
- *Per Capita Water Use*
- *Desalination*
- *Reclaimed Water*

For More Information

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<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/waterpolicy/index.htm>

Climate Change/ Water Management Connections

Climate change is underway in Florida. In this century, climate change will have profound effects on and pose new challenges to Florida's water management system.

How Does Climate Change Affect Water Management?

Water managers must consider the effects of climate change on the reliability of Florida's water supply, the state's economy, the health of the population, and natural resources in the state. Because of climate change, Florida likely will face:

- changed rainfall patterns,
- more intense tropical storms,
- more frequent or more severe droughts,
- higher sea levels,
- greater saltwater intrusion into aquifers,
- saltier estuaries,
- increased demand for water,
- more severe water shortages, and
- ecosystem changes.

How Does Water Management Affect Climate Change?

The withdrawal, treatment, and distribution of water consume energy and create greenhouse gases. Florida's water managers must consider how greenhouse gas emissions from these water management activities contribute to global climate change, and seek to minimize emissions from these sources.

What Is Florida Doing about Climate Change?

Florida has initiated the following climate change efforts:

- **Governor's Action Team on Energy and Climate Change (2007-2008)**
The purpose of this team was to develop a comprehensive Energy and Climate Change Action Plan. The team identified the following water resource management objectives:
 - Pursue conservation of all water uses and alternative water sources.
 - Develop methods to quantify/plan for uncertainties and risks related to population growth and climate change.

- Use differing climate change scenarios to evaluate effects on reliability of existing water supplies, emphasizing source water availability and quality.

Information on the Action Team can be found at:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/climatechange/team/default.htm>

- **Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida**

The Commission's purpose is to plan for effects of continued population increases on natural resources and public infrastructure for 25-year and 50-year horizons. They have taken the following actions:

- The Commission hosted the *2008 Water Congress: Planning for Florida's Water Future*. Delegates developed five priority and thirteen other recommendations, including a recommendation to incorporate climate change considerations into water resource management. The *2008 Water Congress* recommendations can be found at: <http://www.collinscenter.org/?WaterCongressHome>
- The Commission's 3rd and 4th Annual Reports (January 2009 and January 2010) recommended follow-through on 2008 Water Congress' priority recommendations. The annual reports can be found at: <http://www.collinscenter.org/?page=CenturyComHome>

- **Department of Environmental Protection**

In 2009, DEP published a report entitled *Framework for Action: Water Management and Climate Change in Florida*. This report:

- Summarizes scientific evidence of how climate change will affect Florida water resources.
- Presents an inventory of climate change actions already taken throughout the state and nation.
- Recommends 18 actions based upon the Governor's Action Team recommendations.

The report can be obtained from DEP's Office of Water Policy. In addition, DEP has asked the water management districts to address climate change in their upcoming regional water supply plans, due in 2010 - 2011. DEP representatives also serve on the US Environmental Protection Agency's State and Tribal Climate Change Council.

What Can I Do to Reduce Climate Change Effects On Water Resources?

Residents and businesses can reduce their water-related greenhouse gas emissions by installing WaterSense labeled fixtures (e.g., toilets, showerheads, and faucets) and high efficiency appliances (e.g., dishwashers, washing machines, and hot water heaters). Local utilities may offer rebates for these installations. When irrigating yards and common areas, citizens can conserve water by watering only when needed, installing soil moisture sensors on automatic irrigation systems, and using Florida-Friendly landscaping (see <http://www.floridayards.org/>). Check with your local water management district for watering guidelines appropriate for your area.