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WINTER MONTHS CALLING FOR HIGHER THAN AVERAGE RAINFALL



The Suwannee River water levels are higher than normal in, resulting in White Sulphur Springs to be partly underwater on December 17, 2018. The bathhouse was built in 1908 and attracted people from all over the United States because it was believed to have healing powers.

LIVE OAK, FLA., Dec. 19, 2018 –

Above average rainfall is expected this winter across North Florida as warm winds from the eastern Pacific move across the region. Coming on the heels of a wetter-than-average fall, the Suwannee River Water Management District (District) is encouraging residents, business owners and visitors within the District to prepare for higher river levels and increased rainfall throughout the winter.

Increased rainfall impacts river levels and ground saturation. River levels are anticipated to rise and fall constantly throughout the winter as the rainfall is more frequent than usual. Minor and moderate flooding along rivers, tributaries and in low-lying areas is expected. Areas along the Suwannee, Withlacoochee, Alapaha, Aucilla and

Santa Fe are anticipated to flood within the next few months.

“We are experiencing the impacts of an El Niño weather pattern this year,” said Fay Baird, senior hydrologist at the District. “Those residing in North Florida should expect higher rainfall, cooler temperatures and more severe weather because of El Niño.”

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Seasonal Outlook from November 15 shows that there is a greater than 50 percent chance for higher than normal rainfall this winter in most of North Florida. This outlook considers long-term weather trends and existing soil moisture conditions.

The District recommends planning early to be prepared for possible flooding and standing water. Residents and businesses along the impacted rivers and in low-lying areas should:

- actively monitor conditions using the District's River and Lake Levels webpage,
- identify alternate routes to their homes/businesses in the event the main route is inaccessible,
- prepare to move valuables and animals in low-lying areas to higher elevations,
- subscribe to the District's Aquifer Alert notification and alert system at www.mysuwanneeriver.com/notifyme, and
- always evacuate if instructed to do so.

The District and its partners continuously monitor river and lake levels on an hourly and bi-hourly basis. The information is available online at www.MySuwanneeRiver.org/RealTime/Rain-Levels or by phone at 386.362.6626.

The mission of the Suwannee River Water Management District is to protect and manage water resources using science-based solutions to support natural systems and the needs of the public. The District holds true to the belief of water for nature, water for people. Headquartered in Live Oak, Florida, the District serves 15 surrounding north-central Florida counties.

For more information about the District, visit www.mysuwanneeriver.com or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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