October Lake Conway Data Analysis

Rainfall / Lake Level

NOAA predicted substantially above average rainfall last month and we got 0.59 inches. This was only 24% of the 2.4" long term average so that is likely to mean there is a lot more to come. At the end of the month the lake level was at 86.22 or a stage of 74% (a decrease of 14% from last month). The lake is still in the "high" range and is still about 0.6 feet above the average for the beginning of November. On November 2 the level was exactly the same as it was last year at 86.20. NOAA is predicting significantly above normal rainfall conditions for the next 3 months again. November is considered out of the rainy season so we should expect the lake level to be stable or have a slight increase this month. The prospect of increased rain balanced against the start of the dry season will result in little change.
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/lead01/off01_prcp.gif

This year's accumulated annual rainfall is 52.89 inches which is 4.53 inches more than we had by this time last year. Given the current NOAA heavy rainfall prediction and the end of the rainy season we should expect the lake to remain above about the same this month. [Lake levels reported here and previously are based on NGVD 29 and will be revised to conform with NGVD 88 starting in 2016.]

El Nino / Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

NOAA's October 8th ENSO: Diagnostic Discussion reports an El Nino Advisory which is 95% likely to continue through the end of the year and into spring. This indicates a possibility of increased winter rainfall. There is little if any link between ENSO and Florida's rainy season.

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.pdf

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/lanina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf

Lake Temperature

The swimmers are still out but the temperature is starting to fall. Starting at 83 degrees the lake temperature has started its fall drop ending the month at 77. The average water temperature was essentially the same as this time last year. Let's call it normal. The Amoeba season is coming to a close but caution is still due. More amoeba information may be found at:
http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chd/volusia/eh/lab/pdf/amoeba.pdf

Hurricanes

The October 13th report, by the University of Colorado's Philip J. Klotzbach and William M. Gray, indicates below-average probability of hurricanes in late October due to the combination of a strong El Niño event and vertical wind shear in the Caribbean. It predicts the likelihood of hurricane events to be about 70% lower than the long term average. Joaquin was the only activity last month and it fizzled while running offshore.
http://tropical.atmos.colostate.edu/Includes/Documents/Two_Week_Forecasts/october_13_2015.pdf

If you would like to see an estimate of the probability of tropical storms hitting where you live check out this site. It is also produced by William Gray of the Colorado State University.
http://landfalldisplay.geolabvirtualmaps.com/ It is showing 0.4% chance of a named storm entering

Orange County this year. Please bear in mind that it takes only one event to wipe out everything so be prepared.

Planting and Weed Control

If you are doing aquatic planting now it should be off shore in 6 to 12" of water. With the lake level at the 98% stage we will assume this is a fairly long term trend. We should still plant low to prevent the plants from being high and dry if the lake level drops next year. If planted too far out in the water they will not root well and could be washed out by wave action. When planting in the water it helps to have an offshore barrier of some sort to break up the waves to prevent them from being washed out by wave action before they root. Duck potato in less than 10" of water are easy meals for ducks. Yes, ducks do like duck potato for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

To help us all enjoy a clear lake make sure you have maximized the number of aquatic plants on your shoreline. These plants help consume nutrients which run off from your yard and they provide habitat and food for fish and fowl. A sandy beach = a cloudy lake.

You might be inspired to attack some of that torpedo grass with a weed wacker. **DON'T DO IT!** That is about the worst way to control the weeds on your beach. It does not kill them. If you are doing any lakeshore cleaning, please capture **all** of your cuttings. Sprigs of torpedo grass are very hardy and easily survive an excursion across the lake while growing a new set of roots. Once on the beach they immediately start to take over and choke out the beneficial plants. A single sprig will take root and in three months it will be a circle of healthy torpedo grass 10 feet in diameter. Considering it is likely over a hundred of these sprigs could float away from a weed wacking job, your efforts could easily seed another 1000 square feet of torpedo grass all around the lake. Respect your neighbors and capture weed bits.

[As an example on the weekend of 8/3/13 someone on the west to south west side of the middle lake wacked their torpedo grass and on 8/5 I fished out nearly a bushel of torpedo grass sprigs which had just floated in. Probably a half mile of shoreline is now planted with new torpedo grass. These get caught in our good weeds so we cannot see them then choke out the good plants in about a year. As long as people do not collect their trimmings it will be impossible to control torpedo grass.]

The best approach for controlling torpedo grass is with lake friendly herbicides. These may only be applied with the proper permit from Orange County Environmental Protection Division 407-836-1400 and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 407-858-6170. These permits are not expensive nor difficult to obtain. The County allowed weed free area on any lot is a maximum of 30 and there is no grandfathering of larger cleared areas. In any event make sure you collect any and all weeds you remove from your beach.

Orange County Lakeshore Vegitation Removal Permit:

http://www.orangecountyfl.net/PermitsLicenses/Permits/LakeshoreVegetationRemovalPermit.aspx

County Lakefront Clearing Regulations

Orange County Code of Ordinances - Section 15-251 through Section 15-256

http://www.orangecountyfl.net/Portals/0/Library/Permitting-Licensing/docs/ArticleVIILakeshoreProtectionCode.pdf

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Permit page including links to the permit and regulations:

http://myfwc.com/license/aquatic-plants/

NOAA current La Nina - El Nino Synopsis (with discussion):

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.pdf

Orlando Weather Averages by month

http://countrystudies.us/united-states/weather/florida/orlando.htm

Live weather data on the north shore of the middle lake, updated by the minute, can be viewed at:

http://www.wunderground.com/swf/Rapid_Fire.swf?units=english&station=KFLORLAN51

Thank you for your help maintaining our lakes.

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