Drought Indicators Report

Georgia Environmental Protection Division
October 2019

Background

Pursuant to the Rules for Drought Management, <u>Section 391-3-3-.04 Drought Indicators and Triggers</u>, the Director of EPD monitors climatic indicators and water supply conditions to assess drought occurrence and severity, and its impact upon the ability of public water systems to provide adequate supplies of water. These indicators and conditions September include, but not be limited, to the following:

- U.S. Drought Monitor;
- Precipitation;
- Streamflow;
- Groundwater;
- Reservoir levels;
- Short term climate predictions;
- Soil moisture; and
- Water supply conditions.

Background

- The Rules require EPD to report on current climatic indicators at least semi-annually or monthly when any part of the state has experienced at least two consecutive months of severe drought.
- This reports compare current conditions to historical levels (and/or reservoir rule curves) for each of the following indicators:
 - Precipitation during the prior 3, 6, and 12 months;
 - Streamflow at the select United States Geological Survey gages;
 - Groundwater levels at select United States Geological Survey monitoring wells; and
 - Reservoir levels at Allatoona Lake, Lake Hartwell, Clarks Hill Lake, and Lake Lanier.
- The following sections of this presentation provide the data and information sources analyzed by EPD in developing this drought indicators report for conditions as of October 3, 2019.

Drought Indicator Analysis Summary (slide 1 of 2)

- **U.S. Drought Monitor** Drought has progressed to different levels statewide. Extreme Drought (D3) exists in part or entirety of Bartow, Pickens, Cherokee, Forsyth, Hall, Coweta, Fulton, Fayette, Clayton, Wilkinson counties and their surrounding areas. Severe Drought (D2) exists in the vicinity of D3 areas and isolated areas in central and southeastern GA. Moderate Drought (D1) exists in the periphery of D2 and D3 areas. Abnormally dry (D0, the least intense level) covers the rest of the state.
- **Precipitation** Three-month precipitation is below normal statewide with 25% to 50% of normal precipitation in south metro and surrounding area. Sixmonth precipitation is below normal statewide with some isolated area being slightly above normal. Twelve-month precipitation is normal or above normal in northwest half of the state and below normal in southeast half of the state.
- **Soil Moisture** Soil moisture conditions show different levels of dryness statewide. Some extreme dryness (2th 5th percentiles) exists in upper Chattahoochee basin, mid Flint-Ocmulgee basin, and a large area in southeast GA. Some severe dryness (5th 10th percentiles) exists in the vicinity of the extreme dry area. Less severe dryness (10th 30th percentiles) exists in the rest of the state.

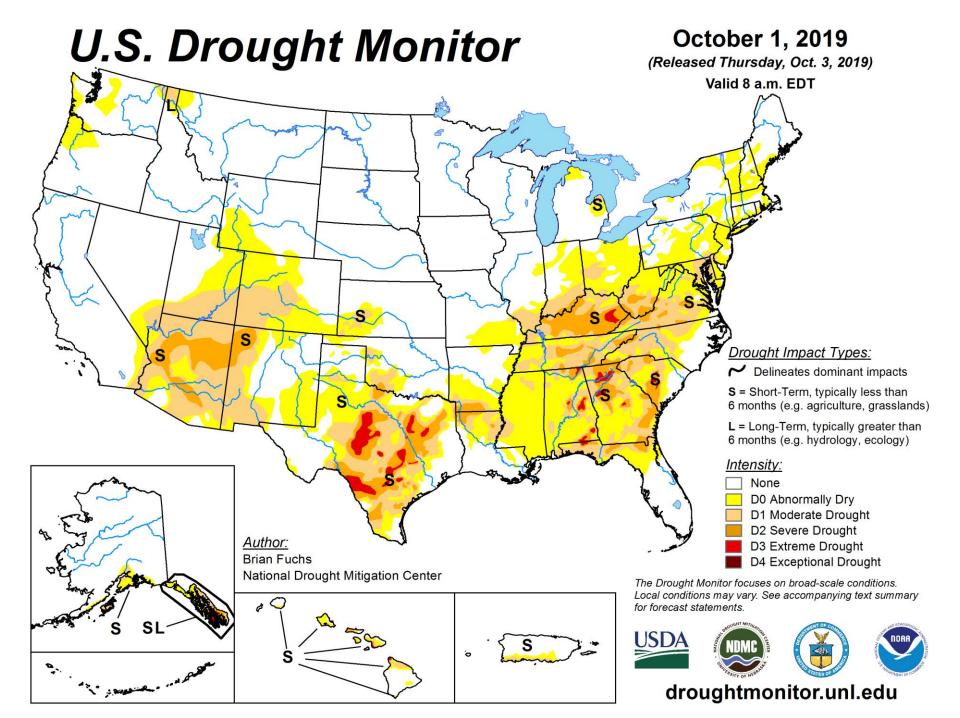
Drought Indicator Analysis Summary (slide 2 of 2)

- **Streamflow** Stream flows observed at all selected USGS gages have been below normal. Most of gage flows are between driest 10th and 20th percentiles. Four gages flows are between driest 5th and 10th percentiles (each in mid Flint, mid Oconee, lower Savannah and Satilla basins). Six gages flows are below driest 5th percentile (one in Tennessee, one in middle Flint, two in upper Ocmulgee, one in lower Oconee, and one in lower Suwanee basins).
- **Groundwater Level** One third of the groundwater levels observed at selected wells are above normal and the other two thirds are below normal, with three being below driest 20th percentiles (one in Crystalline Rock Aquifer in Chattahoochee basin, two in Floridan Aquifer in Flint and Oconee basins), and rest being between lowest 20th percentile and median.
- **Reservoir Levels** In September 2019, all federal reservoir levels in Georgia (ACF, ACT, and Savannah River Basins) are below their respective top of conservation (normal) pools but above the Zone 1, except Lake Hartwell being near the bottom of its Level 1, Lake Allatoona and Lake Clark Hill being below their respective Zone1\Level 1 since the late September 2019.
- Short-term Climate Prediction National Climatic Prediction Center projects above normal temperature statewide and above normal precipitation in southeast half of the state in October December 2019. U.S. Drought Outlook predicts drought persists in current D3 and D2 areas, and drought development likely in northwest half of the state in October December 2019.
- Water Supplies _ EPD has granted a Drought Level 1 Variance to City of Griffin and a Drought Level 2 Variance to Coweta County.

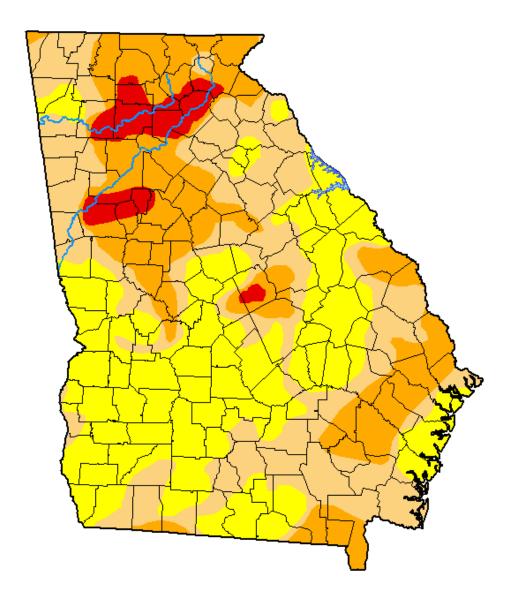
US Drought Monitor

Data Source:

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/



U.S. Drought Monitor Georgia



October 1, 2019

(Released Thursday, Oct. 3, 2019) Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	61.58	28.35	4.49	0.00
Last Week 09-24-2019	0.72	99.28	56.20	16.11	0.00	0.00
3 Month's Ago 07-02-2019	63.35	36.65	6.89	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2019	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2019	0.00	100.00	61.58	28.35	4.49	0.00
One Year Ago 10-02-2018	54.52	45.48	8.27	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

None D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:

Brian Fuchs National Drought Mitigation Center



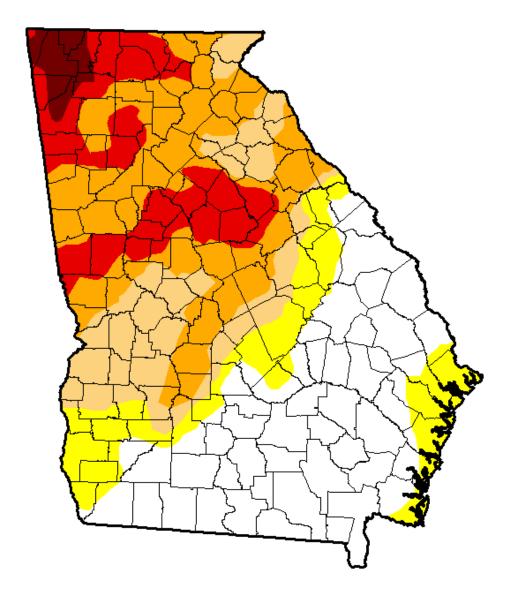






droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor Georgia



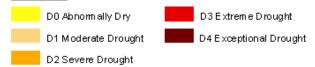
October 4, 2016

(Released Thursday, Oct. 6, 2016) Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Сиггепт	35.32	64.68	51.86	37.46	15.01	2.29
Last Week 9/27/2016	35.37	64.63	45.84	34.50	14.67	1.58
3 Month's Ago 7/5/2016	51.69	48.31	33.76	28.12	6.77	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12/29/2015	87.36	12.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 9/27/2016	35.37	64.63	45.84	34.50	14.67	1.58
One Year Ago	71.24	28.76	12.93	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:

Brian Fuchs National Drought Mitigation Center









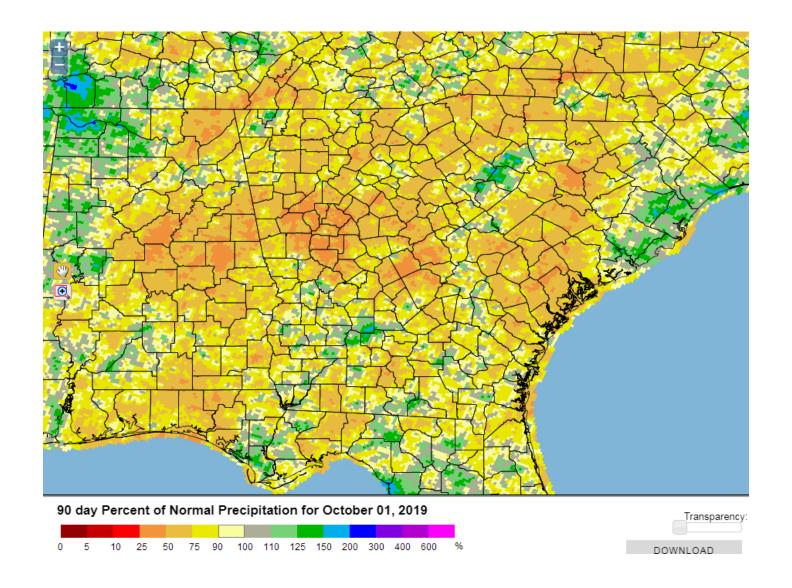
http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

3, 6, and 12 Month Percent of Normal Precipitation

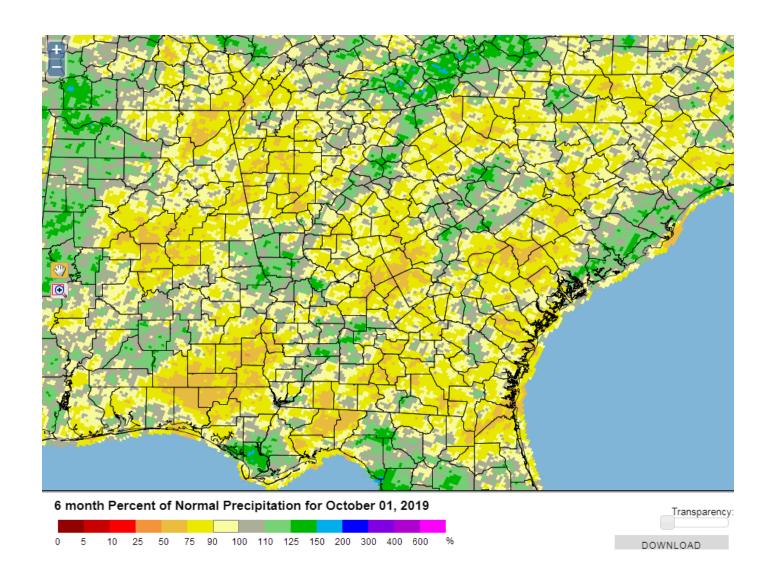
Data Source:

http://climate.ncsu.edu/drought/map

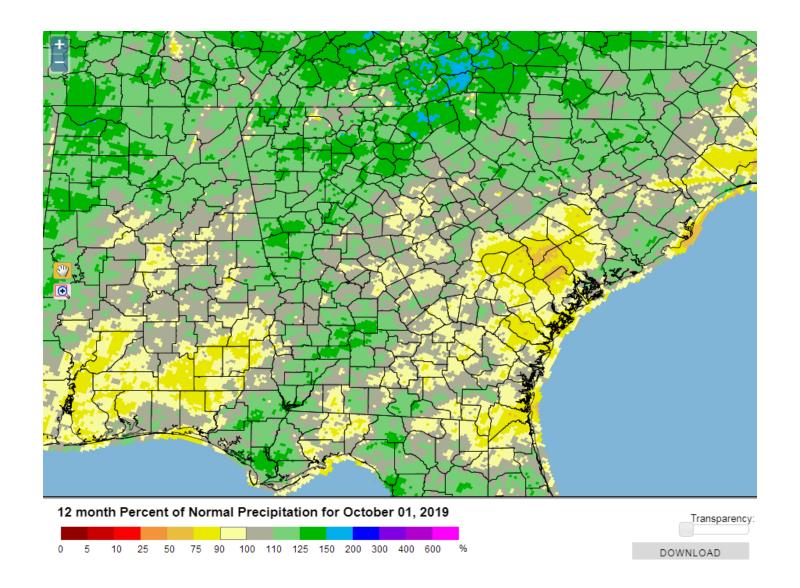
3 Month Percent of Normal Precipitation



6 Month Percent of Normal Precipitation



12 Month Percent of Normal Precipitation

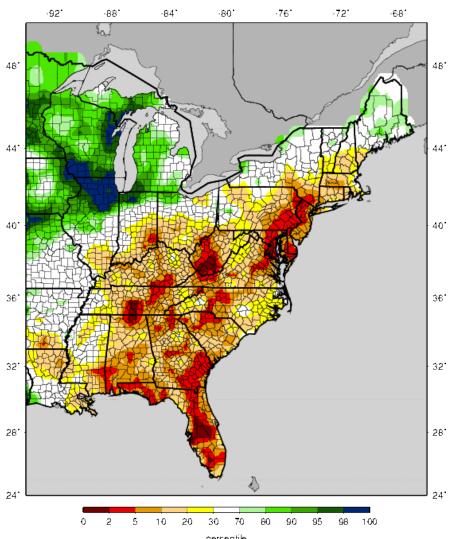


Soil Moisture Conditions

Data Source:

http://www.hydro.ucla.edu/SurfaceWaterGroup/forecast/monitor/curr/conus.mexico/east.vic.sm_qnt.gif

VIC Soil Moisture Percentiles (wrt/1916-2004) Eastern United States - 20191001



Current (daily updated) percentiles for soil moisture (SWE) with respect to the climatological period (1916-2004).

Streamflow Conditions

Data Source: USGS

Streamflow Monitoring

- As shown on the following slide, EPD Monitors 34 USGS stream gages in 13 of the State's major river basins to assess drought conditions.
- These gages were selected because each has:
 - Long-term and relatively complete records for recent decades; and
 - Relatively low consumptive water use implications and streamflows are not heavily influenced by dams.
- Note: Hydrologic conditions of major rivers with streamflows that are heavily influenced by dams can be assessed by reviewing status of major storage reservoirs

Georgia's 14 River Basins Tallapoosa, Chattahoochee Suwanee

USGS Stream Gages Monitored by EPD to Assess Drought Conditions

GAGE#	BASIN	GAGE NAME
1	TENNESSEE	LOOKOUT CREEK NEAR NEW ENGLAND
2	TENNESSEE	NOTTELY RIVER NEAR BLAIRSVILLE
3	COOSA	CHATTOOGA RIVER AT SUMMERVILLE
4	COOSA	TALKING ROCK CREEK NEAR HINTON
5	COOSA	ETOWAH RIVER AT CANTON
6	CHATTAHOOCHEE	CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER AT CORNELIA
7	CHATTAHOOCHEE	CHESTATEE RIVER NEAR DAHLONEGA
8	CHATTAHOOCHEE	NEW RIVER AT GA 100 NEAR CORINTH
9	CHATTAHOOCHEE	UPATOI CREEK AT COLUMBUS
10	FLINT	FLINT RIVER AT GA26 NEAR MONTEZUMA
11	FLINT	FLINT RIVER AT ALBANY
12	FLINT	ICHAWAYNOCHAWAY CREEK AT MILFORD
13	FLINT	SPRING CREEK NEAR IRON CITY
14	OCMULGEE	ALCOVY RIVER ABOVE COVINGTON
15	OCMULGEE	OCMULGEE RIVER AT MACON
16	OCMULGEE	TOBESOFKEE CREEK NEAR MACON
17	OCMULGEE	TUCSAWHATCHEE CREEK NEAR
		HAWKINSVILLE
18	OCONEE	MIDDLE OCONEE RIVER NEAR ATHENS
19	OCONEE	LITTLE RIVER NEAR EATONTON
20	OCONEE	OCONEE RIVER AT DUBLIN
21	ALTAMAHA	OHOOPEE RIVER NEAR REIDSVILLE
22	SAVANNAH	CHATTOOGA RIVER NEAR CLAYTON
23	SAVANNAH	BROAD RIVER NEAR BELL
24	SAVANNAH	BEAVERDAM CREEK NEAR SARDIS
25	SAVANNAH	BRIER CREEK AT MILLHAVEN
26	OGEECHEE	CANOOCHEE RIVER NEAR CLAXTON
27	OGEECHEE	OGEECHEE RIVER NEAR EDEN
28	OCHLOCKONEE	OCHLOCKONEE RIVER NEAR THOMASVILLE
29	SUWANEE	WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER NEAR PINETTA FL
30	SUWANEE	ALAPAHA RIVER AT STATENVILLE
31	SUWANEE	SUWANNEE RIVER AT US 441, AT FARGO
32	SATILLA	SATILLA RIVER NEAR WAYCROSS
33	SATILLA	LITTLE SATILLA RIVER NEAR OFFERMAN
34	ST MARY	ST MARYS RIVER NEAR MACCLENNY FL

Streamflow Graphs

- For each of the 34 gages, EPD has prepared a graph that shows monthly average streamflow from January 2019 through September 2019;
- To help put these streamflow conditions into perspective, for comparison purposes, each graph also shows:
 - Monthly average streamflows for the years 2007 and 2011 when streamflows were at or near recorded low levels across much of the state; and
 - A statistical composite of historical conditions showing the "driest" 50, 20, 10, and 5 percent of all recorded monthly average stream flows at the same gage.

How to Read the Streamflow Graphs Example #1: Etowah River at Canton

The streamflow graph for Gage #5, <u>USGS Etowah River gage at Canton</u> shows:

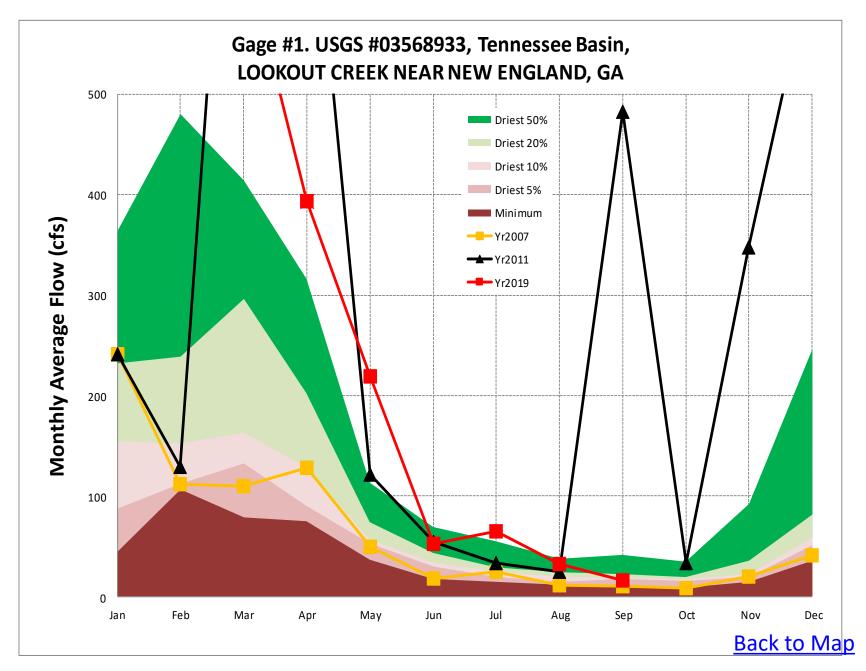
- Average stream flow for September 2019 was 350 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in September has historically been lower than September 2019 about 10-20% of the time; about 80-90% of the time in September it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in September 2011 was 341 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in September has historically been lower than September 2011 only 10-20% of the time; 80-90% of the time in September it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in September 2007 was 130 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in September has historically been lower than September 2007 only 0.1% of the time; 99.9% of the time in September it has been higher.

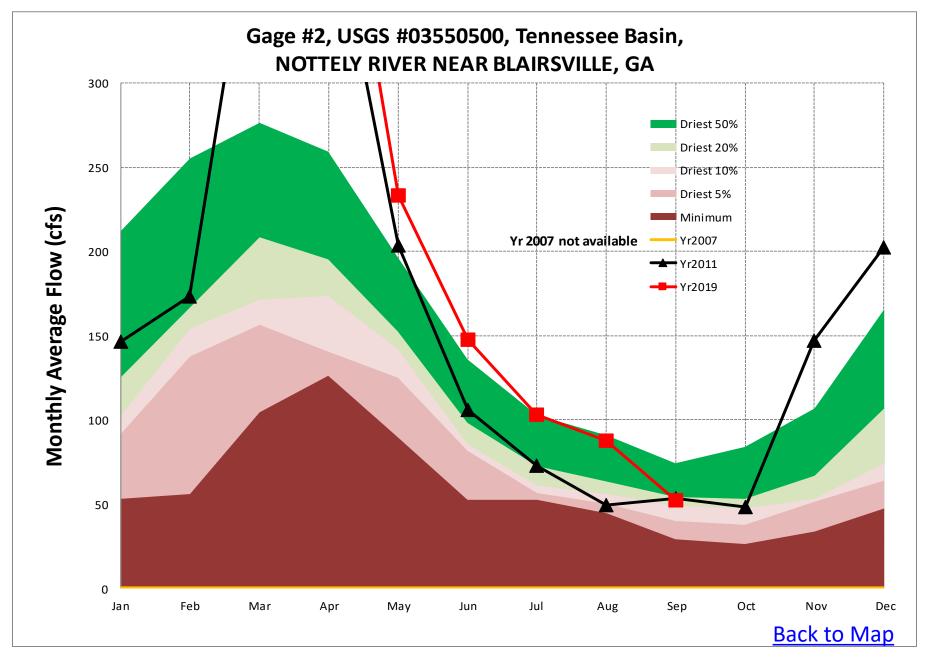
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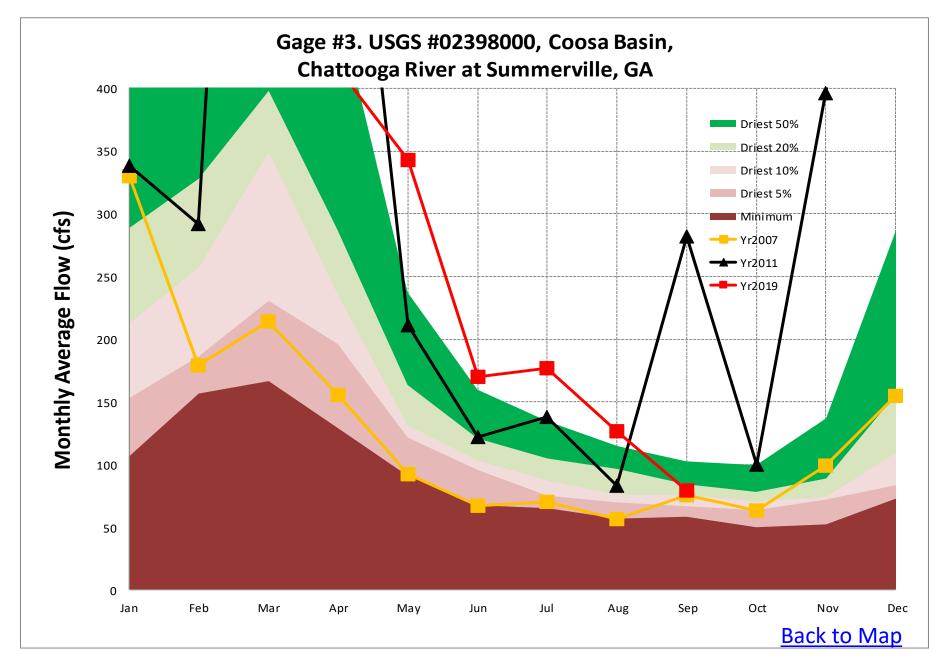
How to Read the Streamflow Graphs Example #2: Flint River at Albany

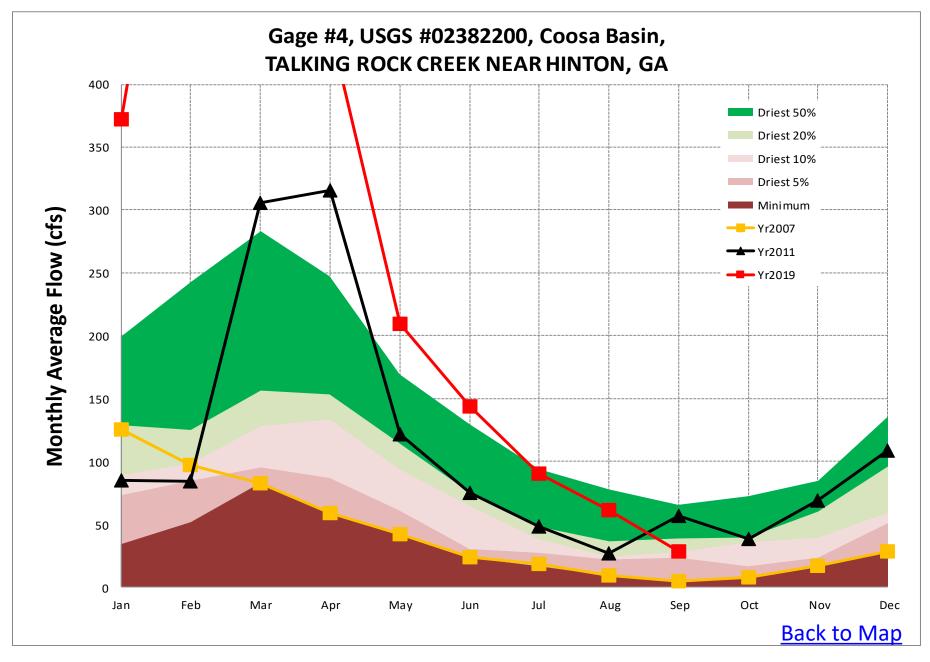
The streamflow graph for Gage #11, <u>USGS Flint River gage at Albany</u> shows:

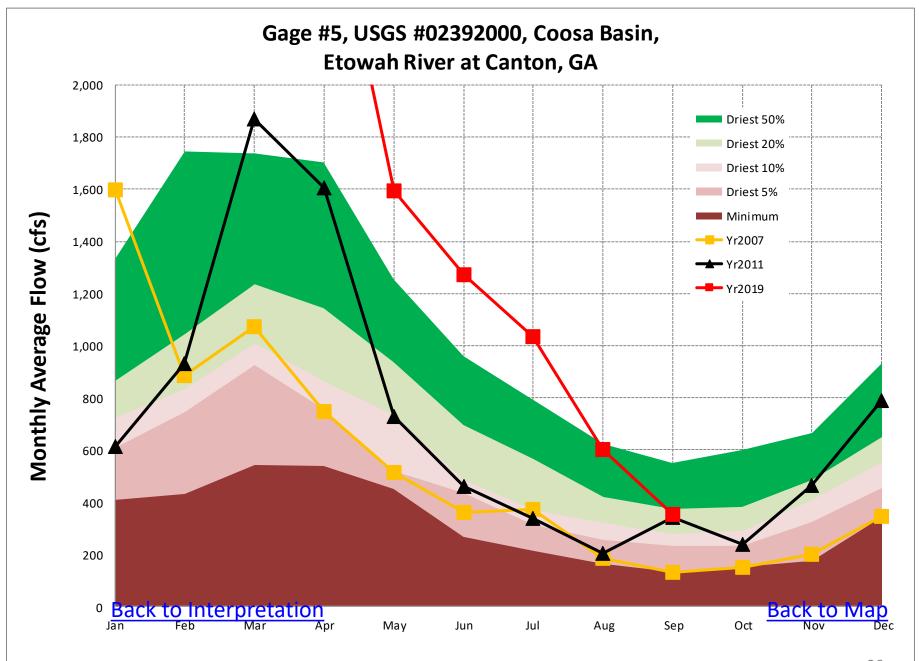
- Average stream flow for September 2019 was 1,268 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in September has historically been lower than September 2019 about 5~10% of the time; about 90-95% of the time in September it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in September 2011 was 764 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in September has historically been lower than September 2011 about 0.01% of the time; about 99.99% of the time in September it has been higher.
- Average stream flow in September 2007 was 1,385 cfs. The statistical composite of all historical data for this gage shows that average streamflow in September has historically been lower than September 2007 about 5~10% of the time; about 90~95% of the time in September it has been higher.

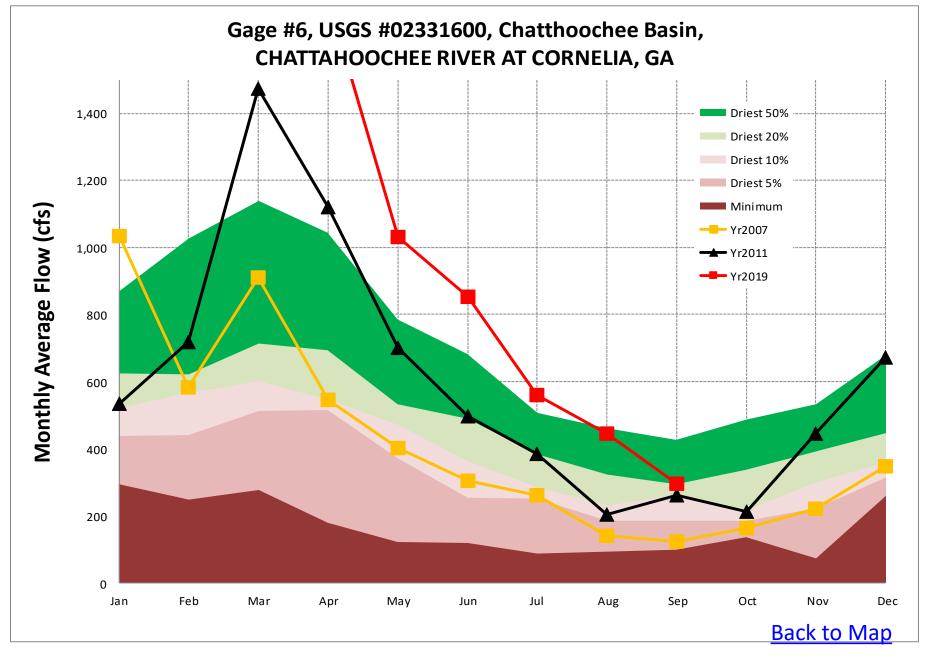


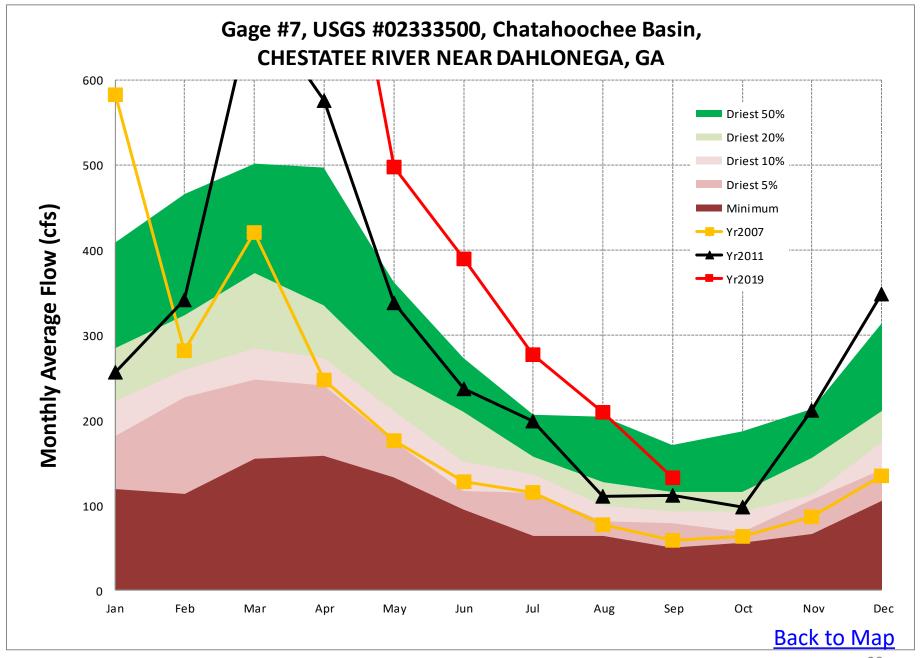


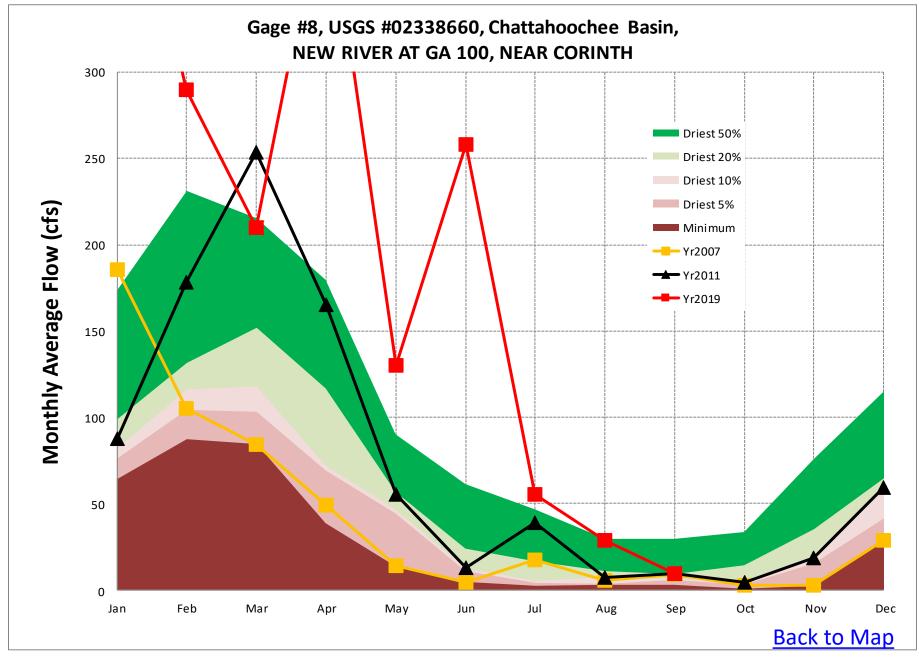


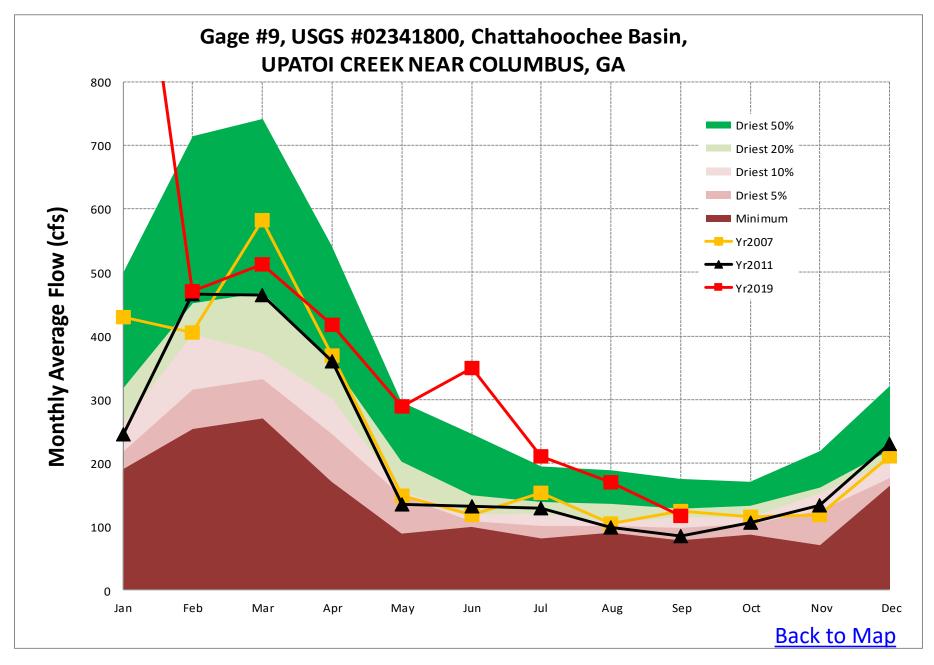


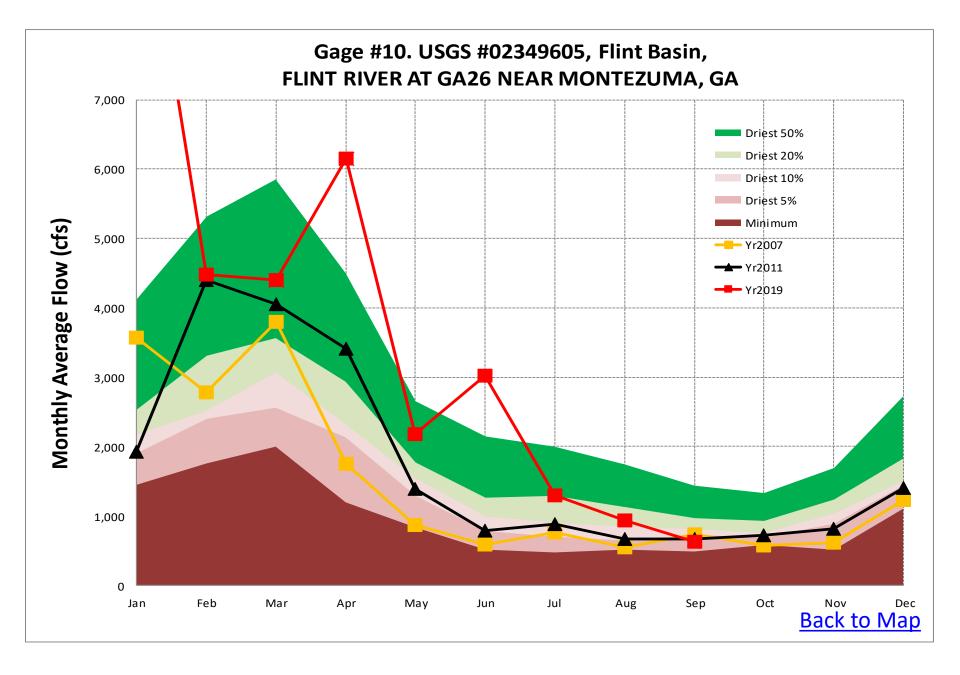


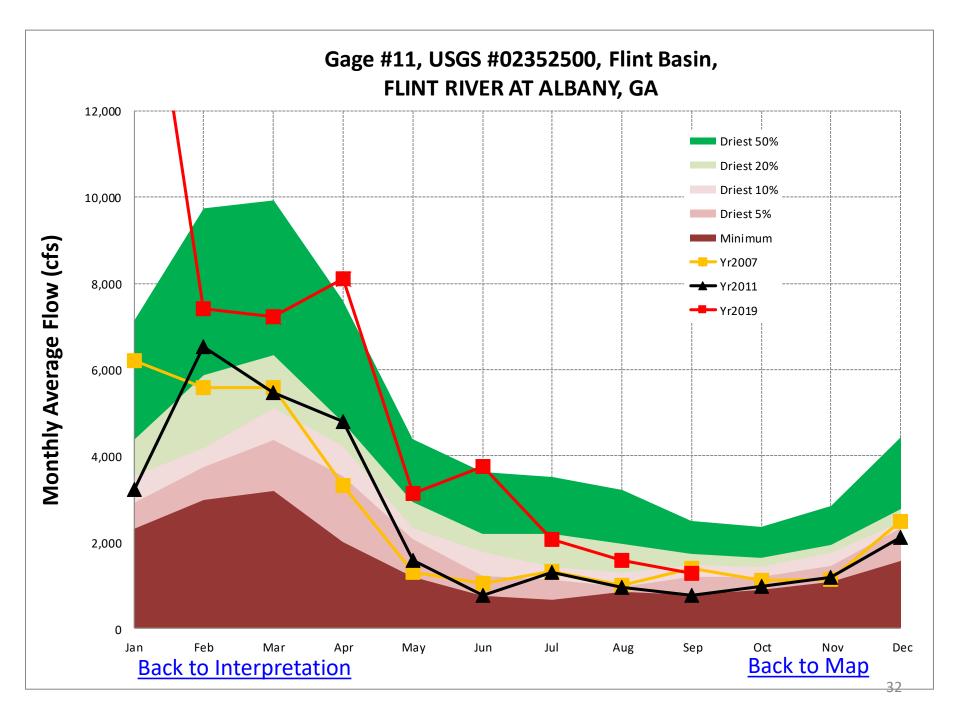


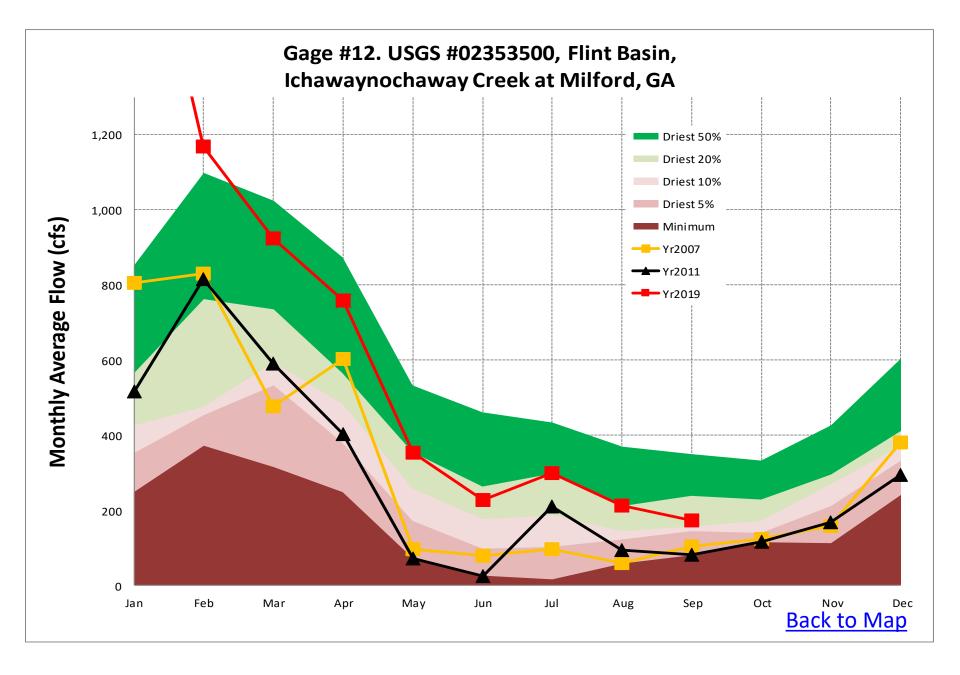


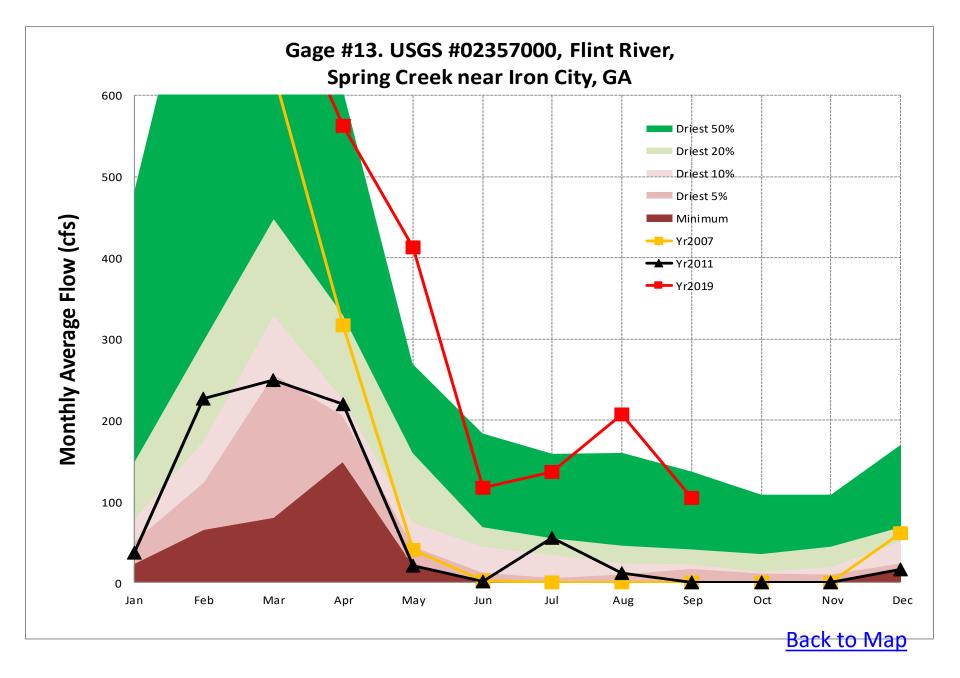


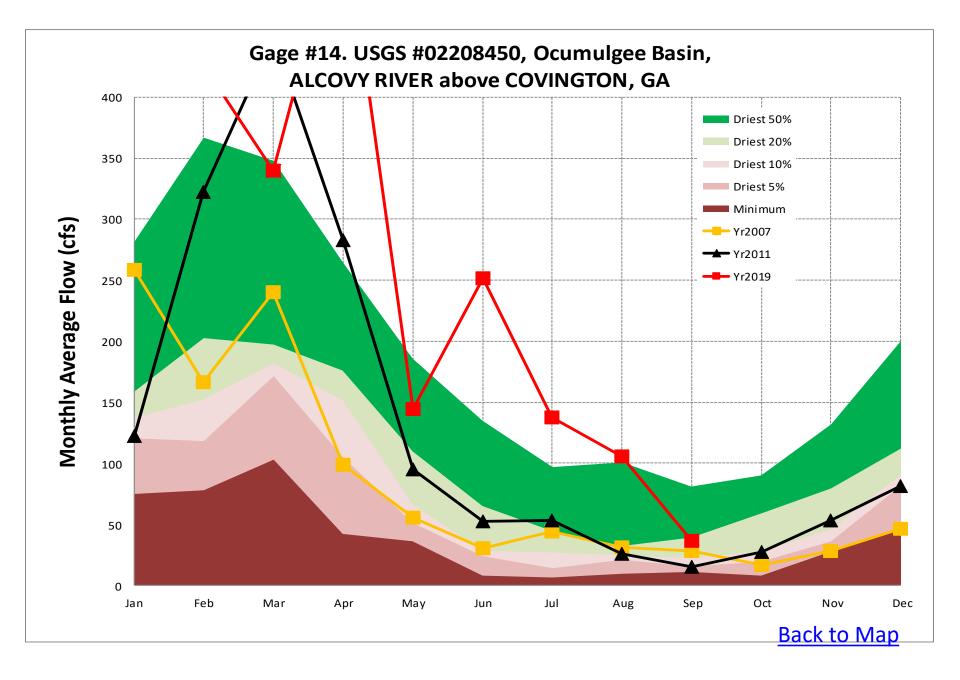


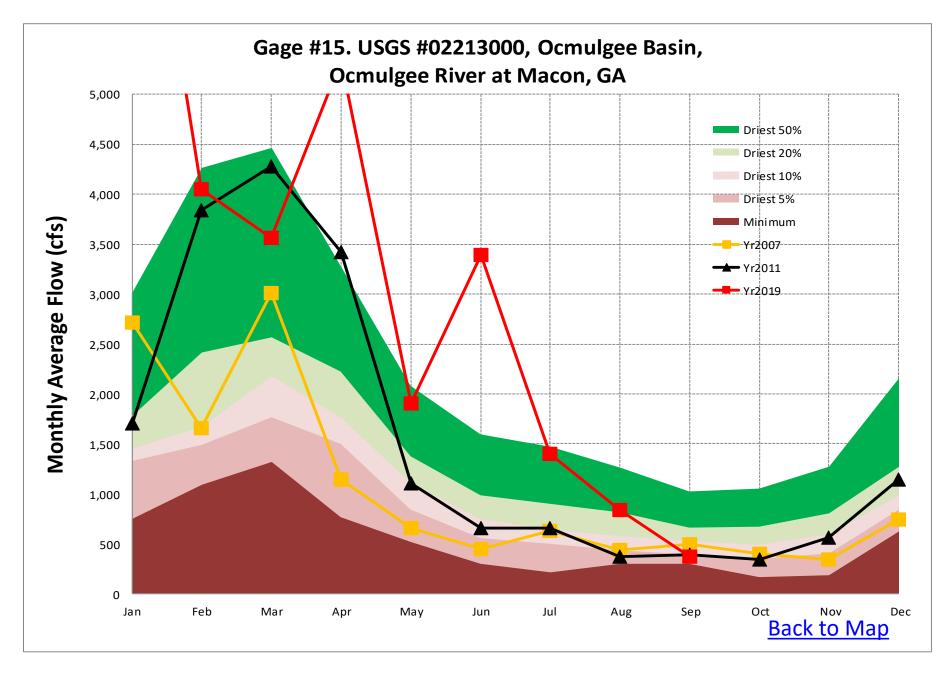


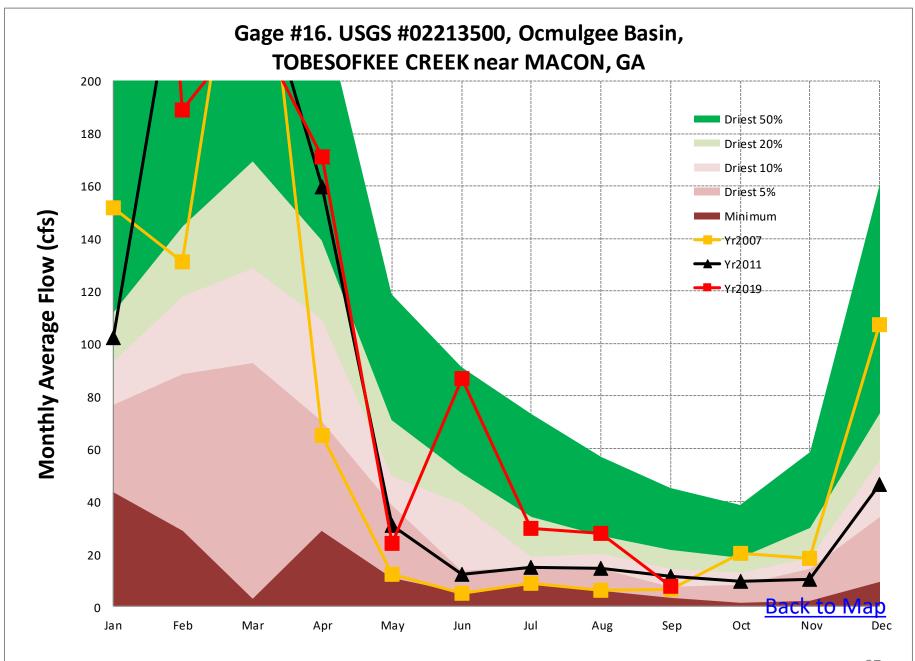


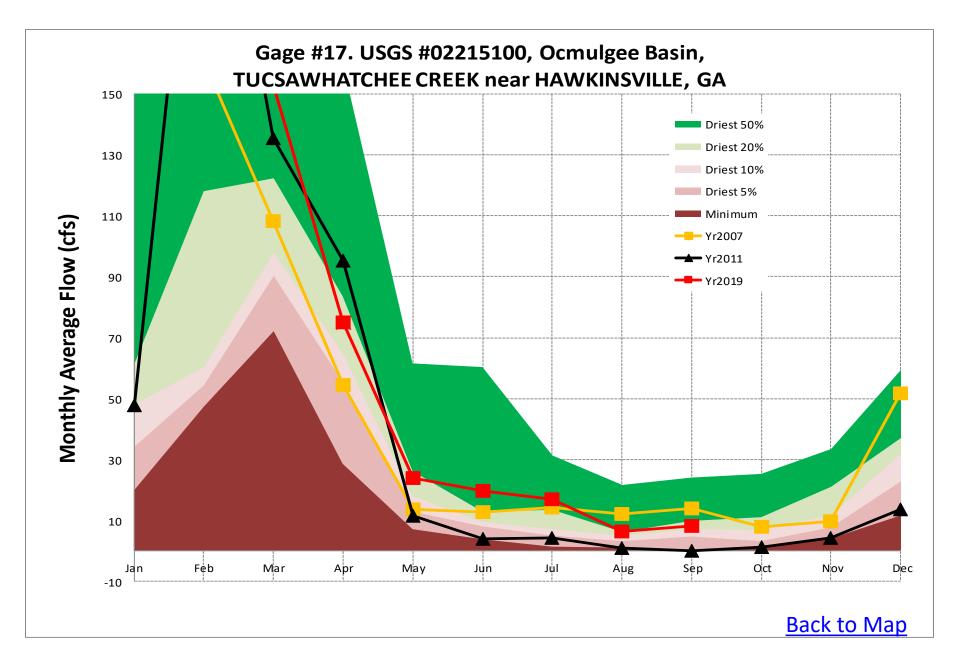


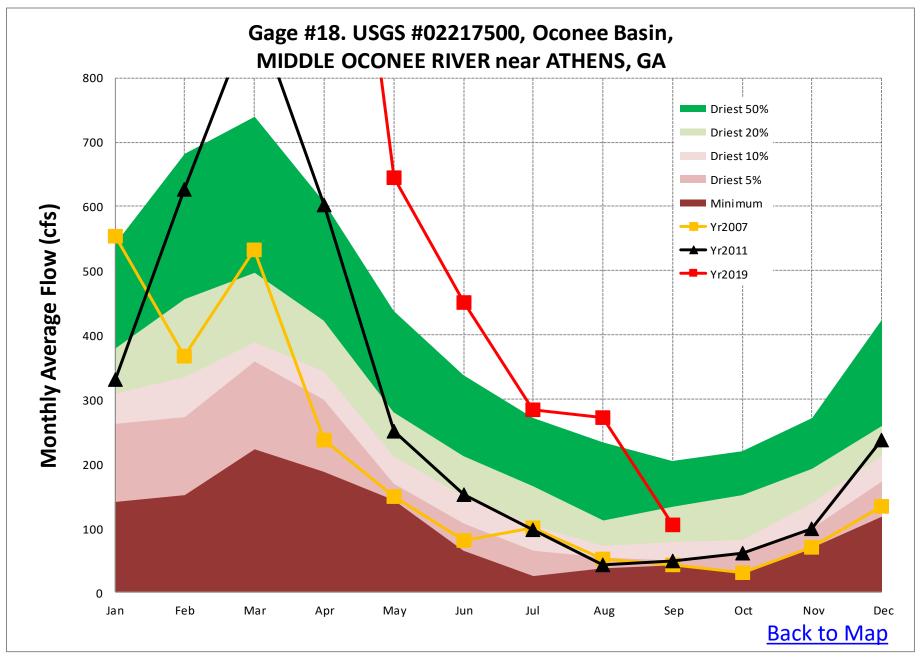


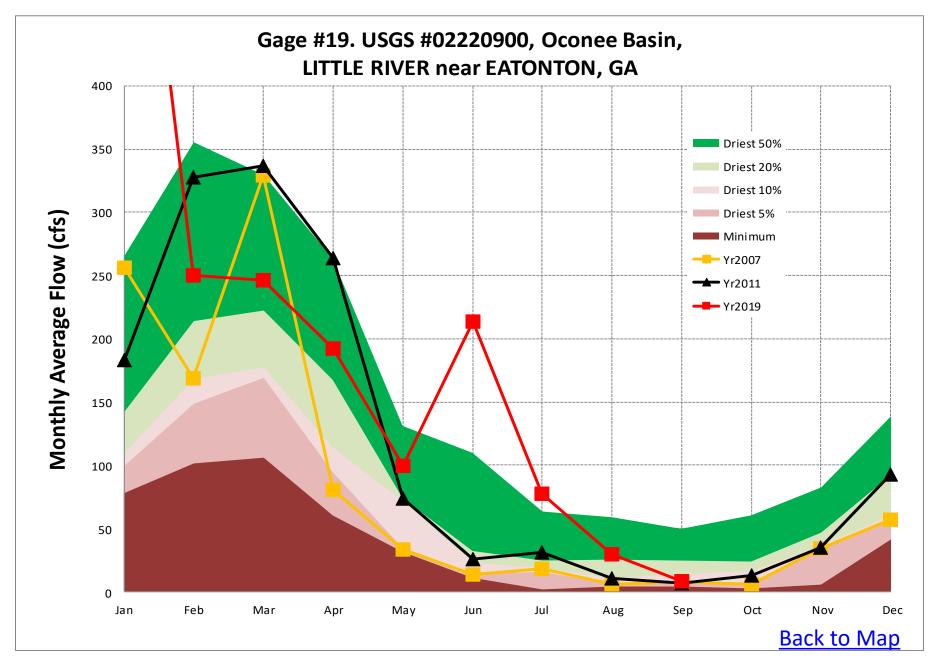


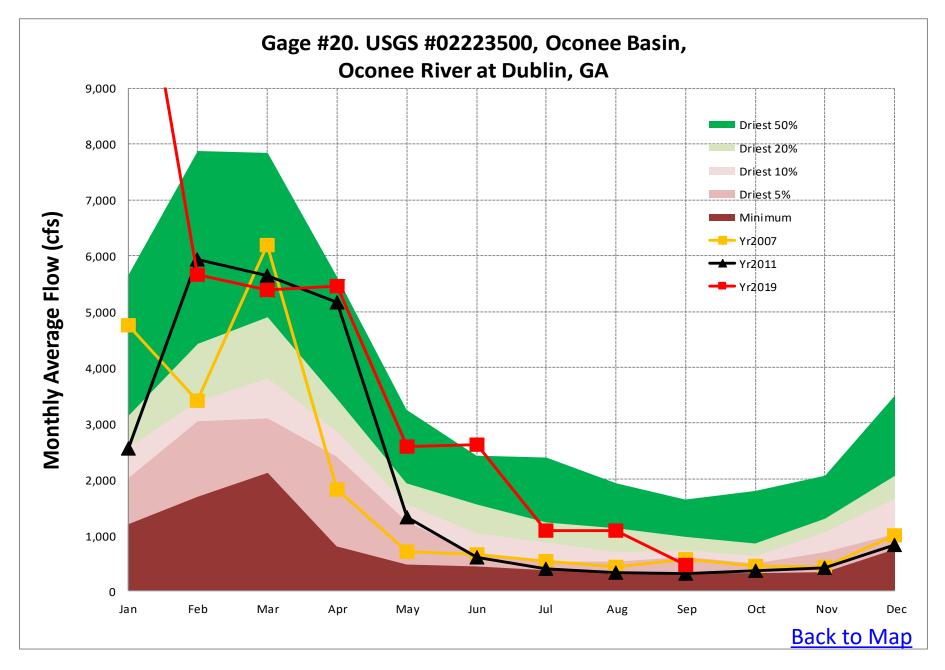


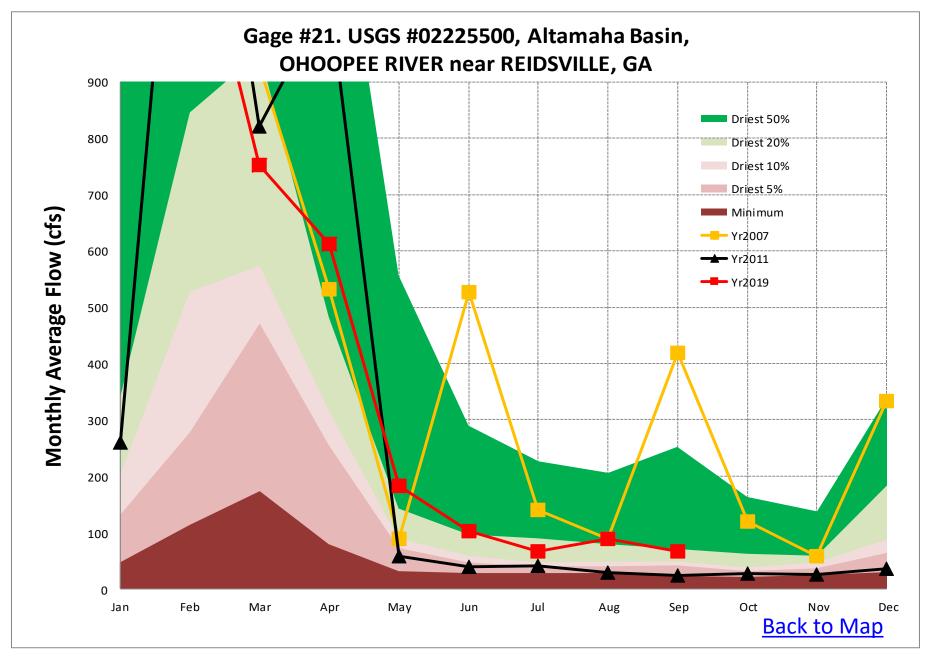


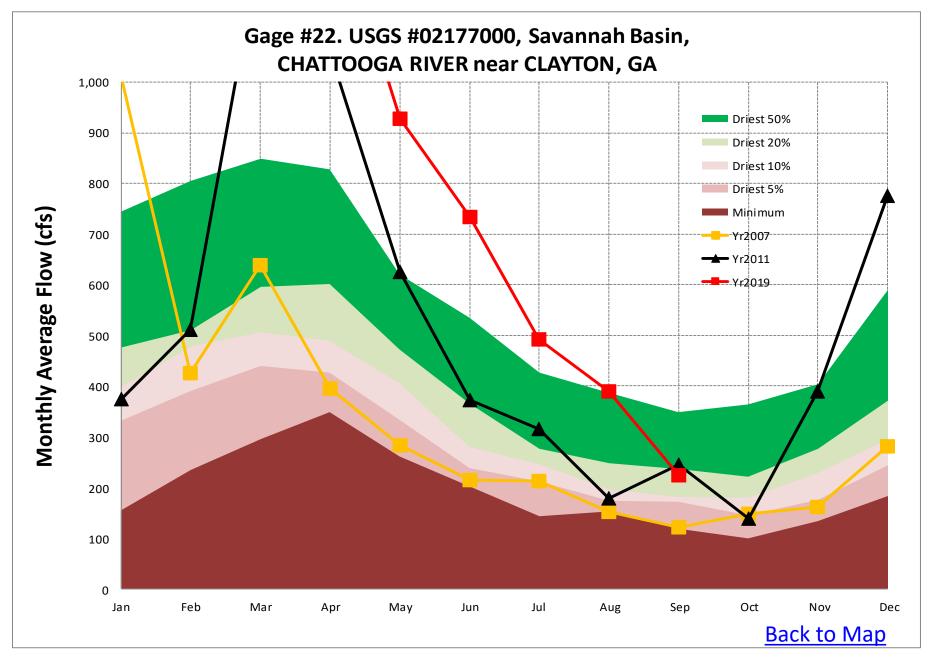


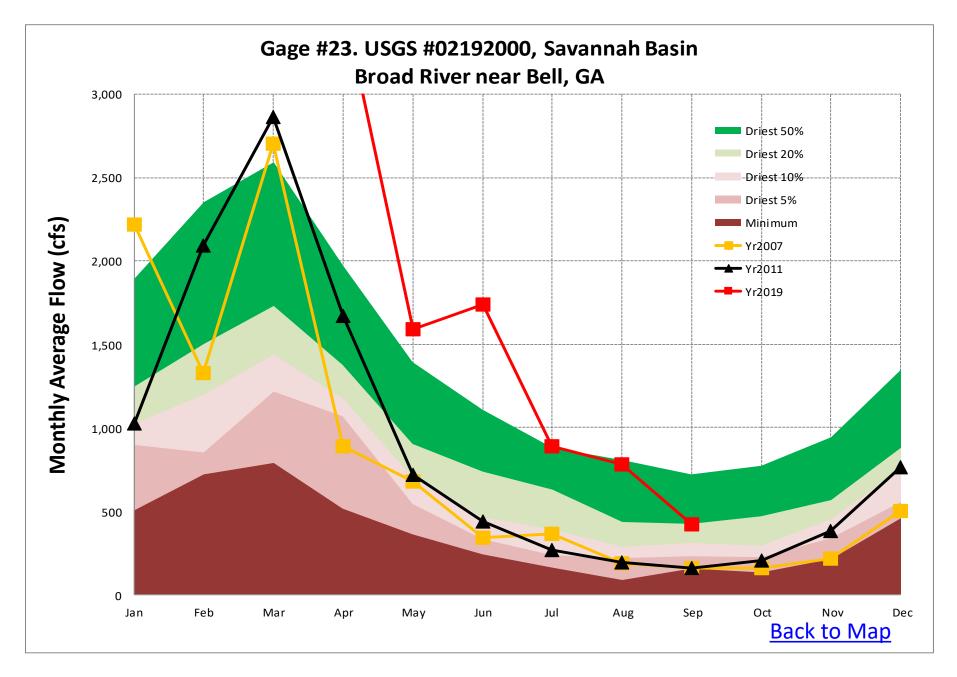


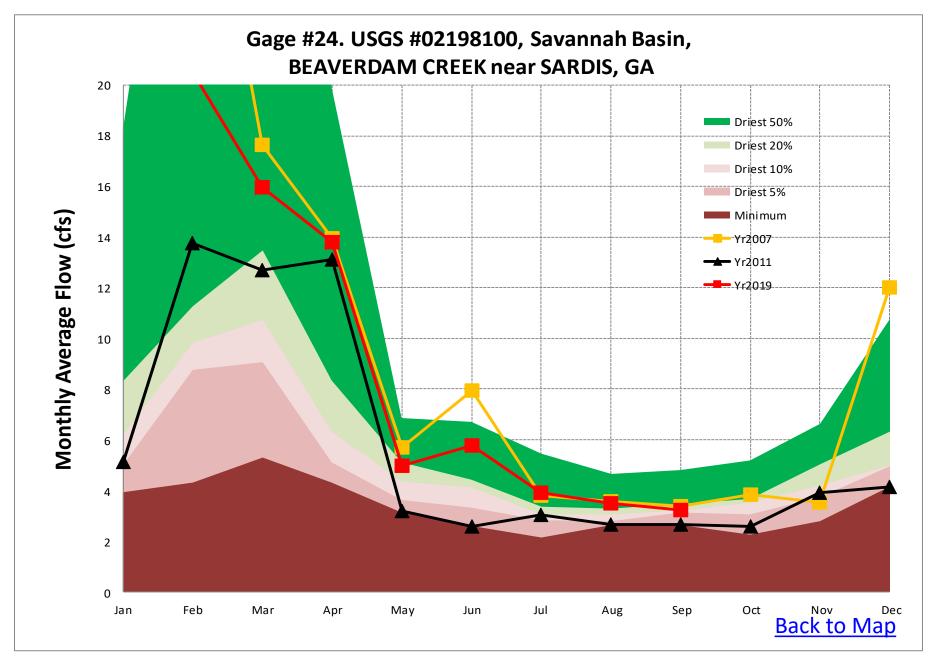


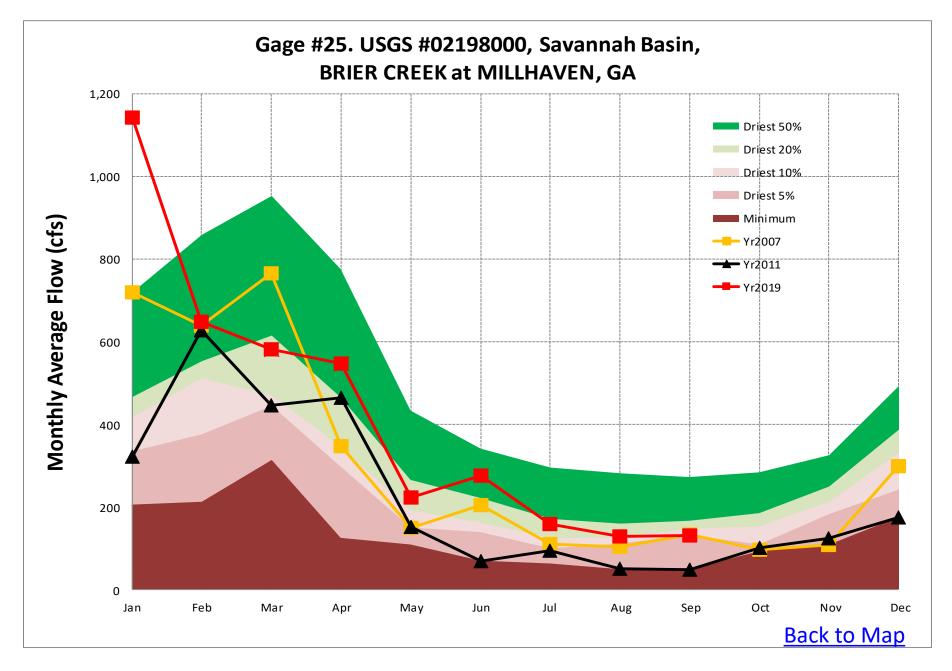


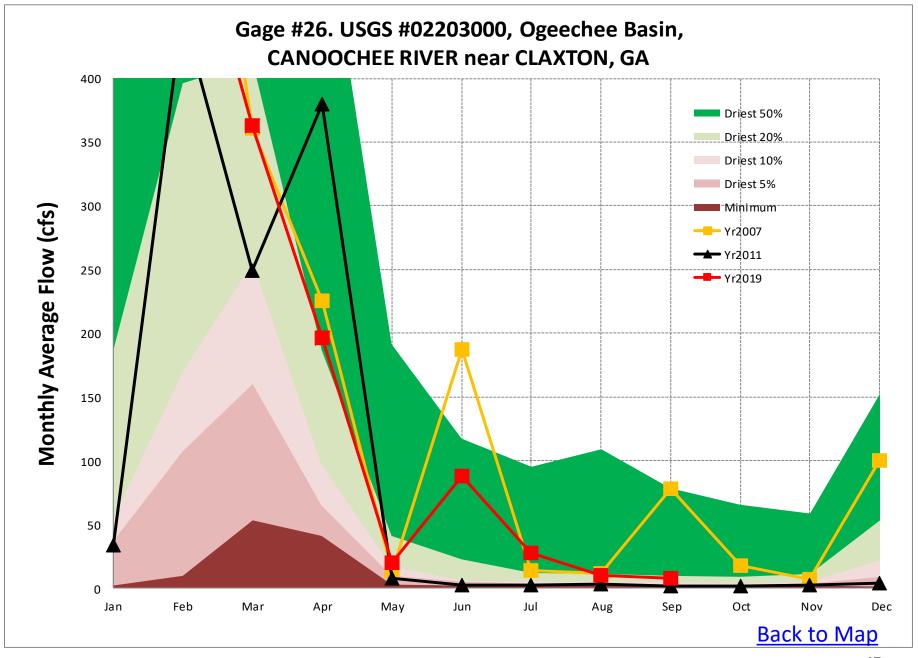


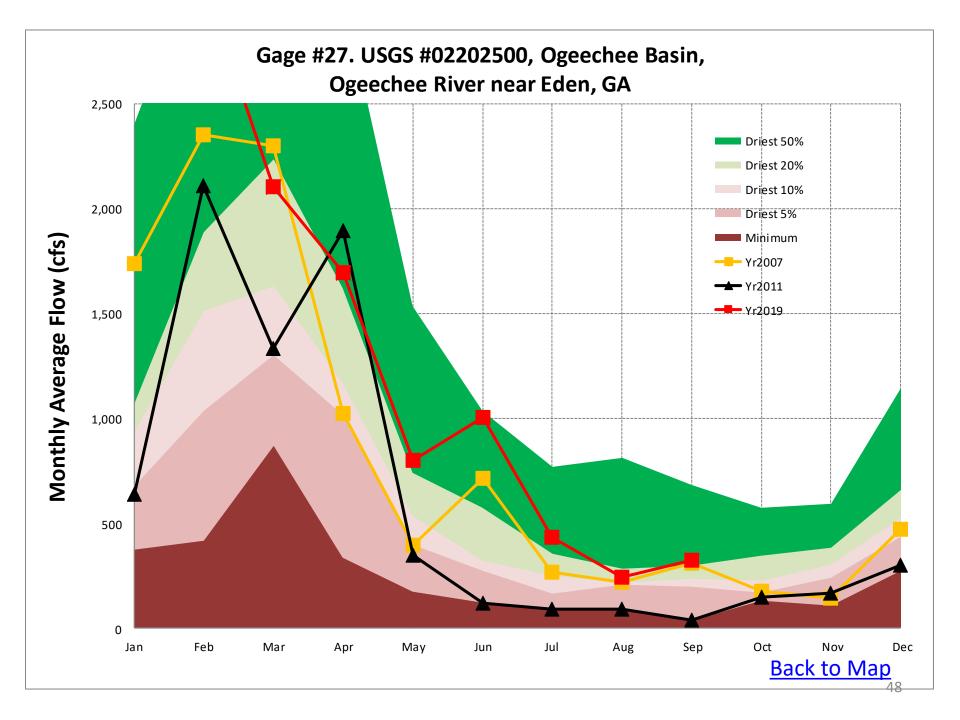


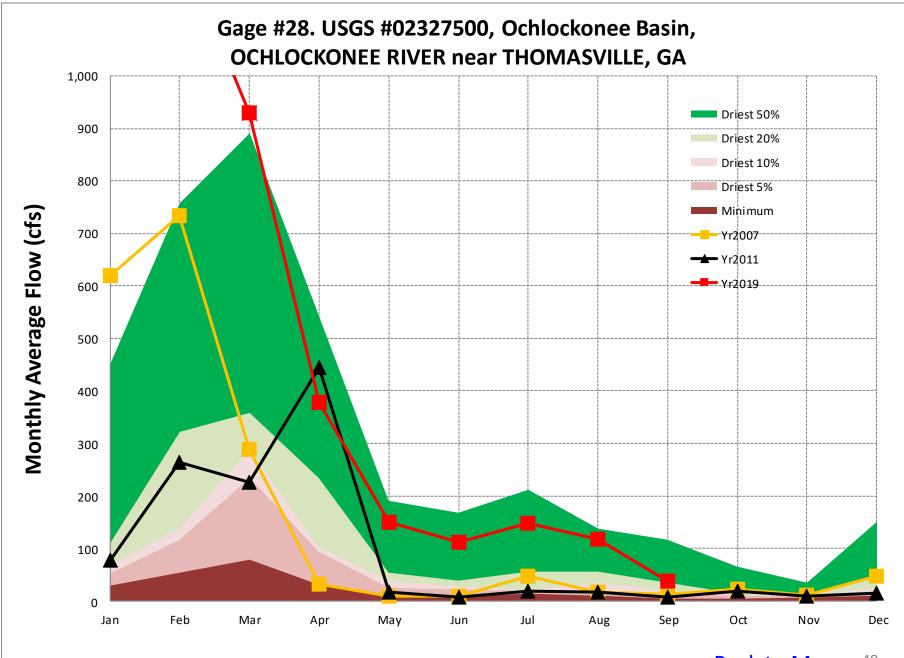


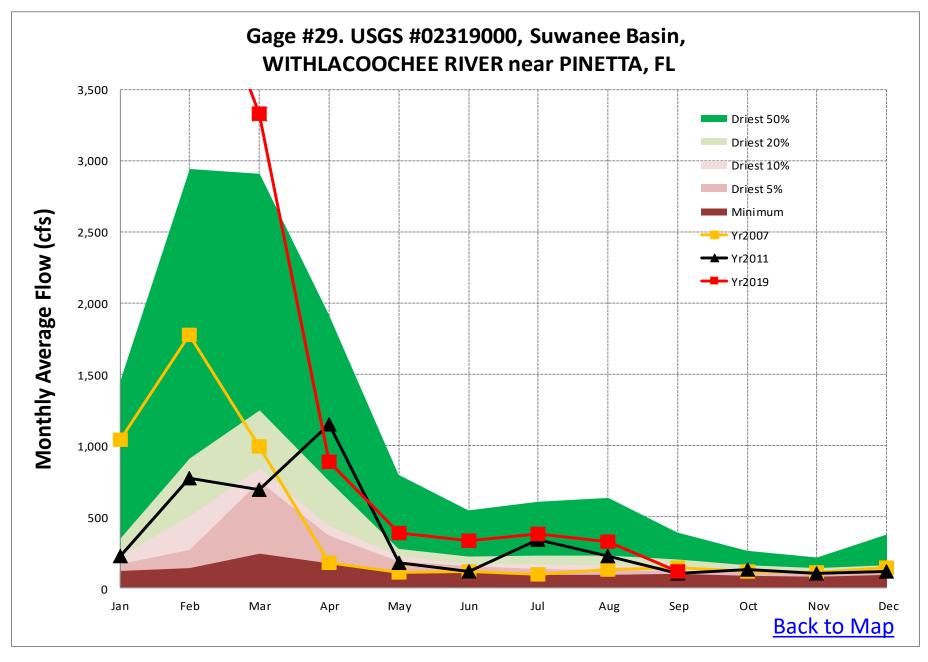


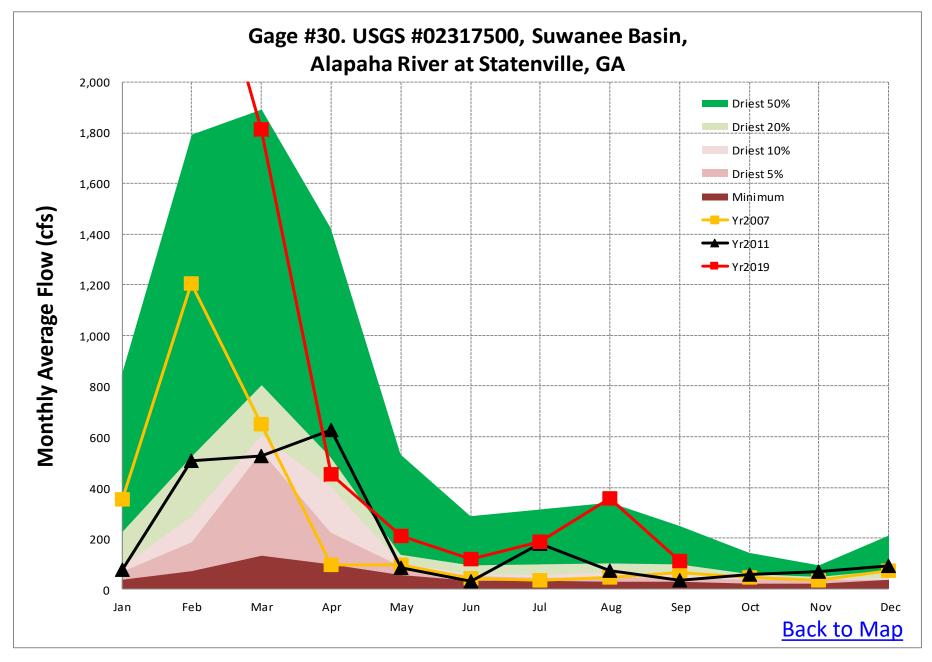


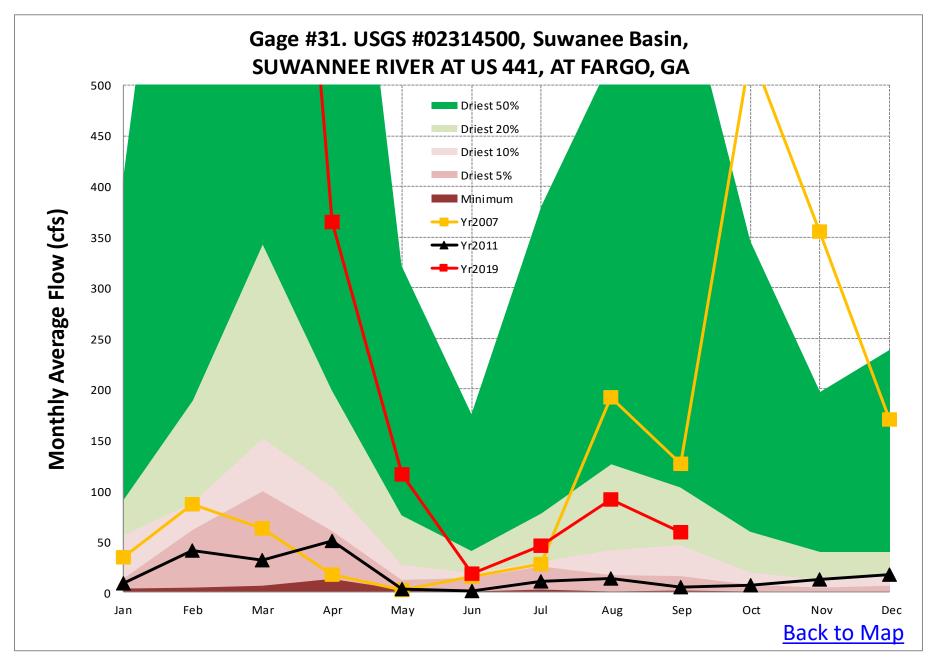


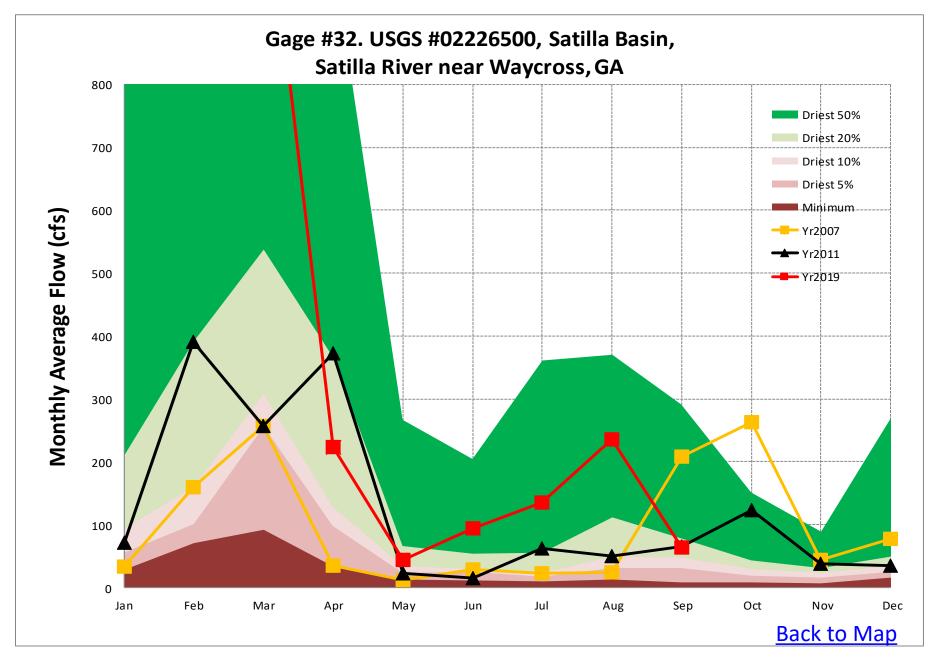


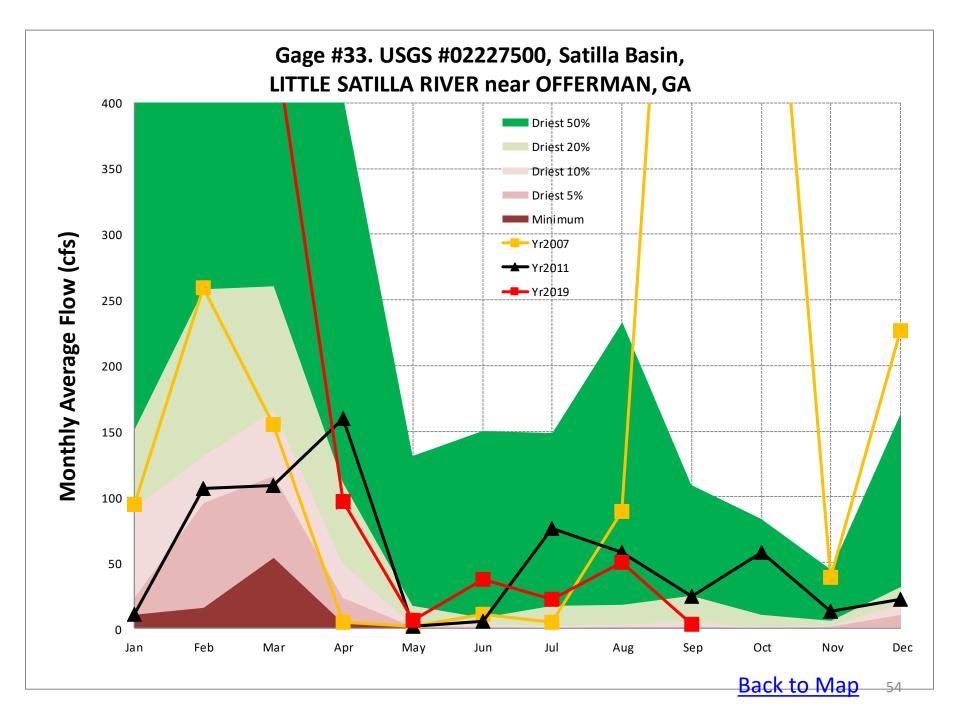


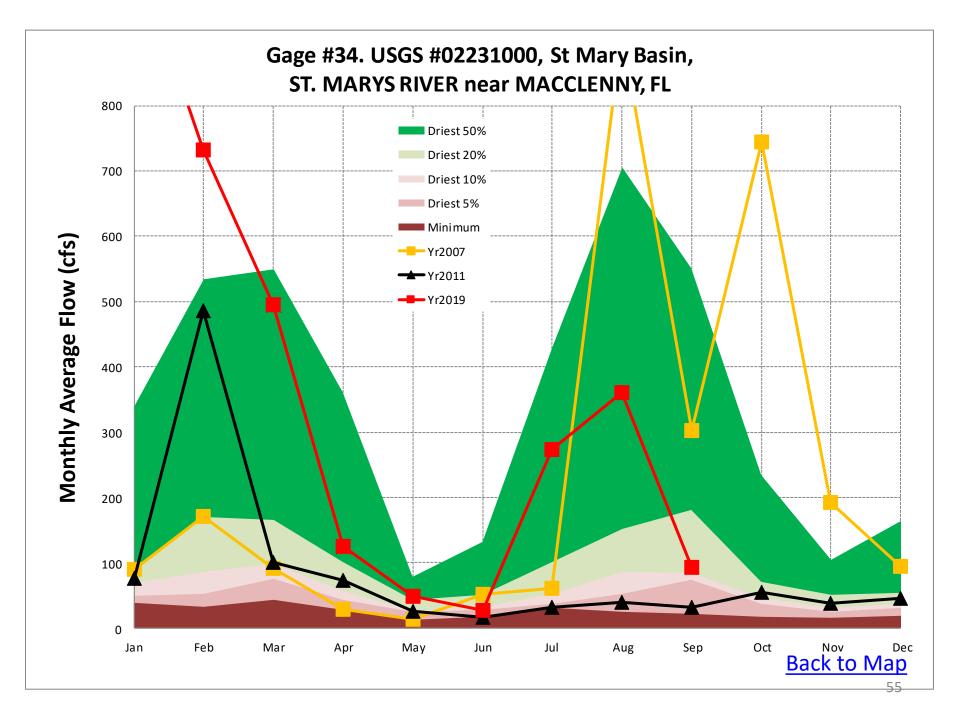












Groundwater Levels

Data Source: USGS

Rationale for Choosing USGS Monitoring Wells

EPD monitors 17 groundwater USGS monitoring wells shown on the following slide to assess drought conditions. These wells were selected for monitoring because they have:

- Long-term monitoring records consisting of three decades or more of data; and
- Real-time monitoring that represents the most up-to-date conditions.

USGS Wells Monitored

Chattahoochee Basin

1. 16MM03

Flint Basin

- 2. 11AA01
- 3. 13L180
- 4. 12M017
- 5. 08K001
- 6. 11K003
- 7. 12K014
- 8. 13J004
- 9. 08G001
- 10. 10G313
- 11. 09F520
- 16. 11J011

Oconee Basin

12. 21T001

Tennessee Basin

13.03PP01

Suwanee Basin

- 14. 19E009
- 17. 27E004

Ogeechee Basin

15. 35P094

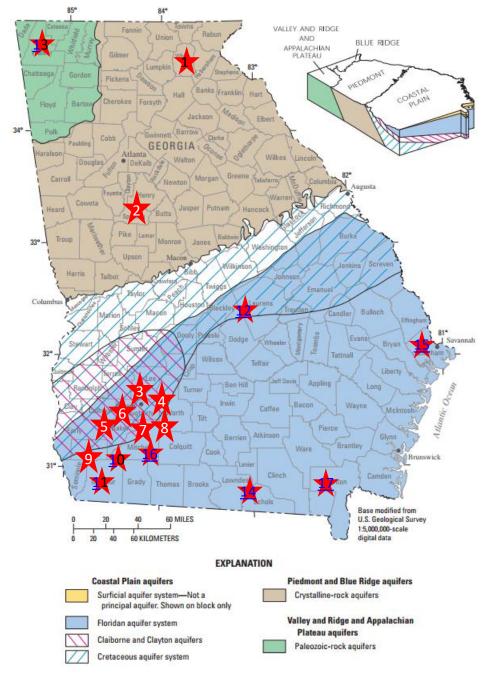


Figure 2. Area of use of principal aquifers and physiographic provinces in Georgia (modified from U.S. Geological Survey, 2006).

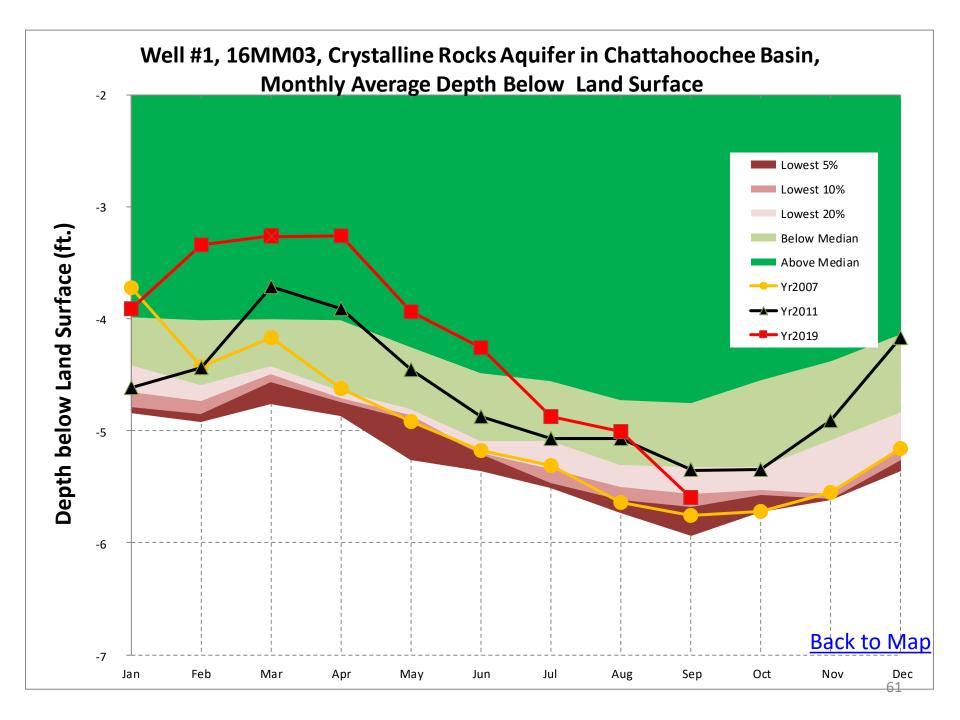
Groundwater Level Graphs

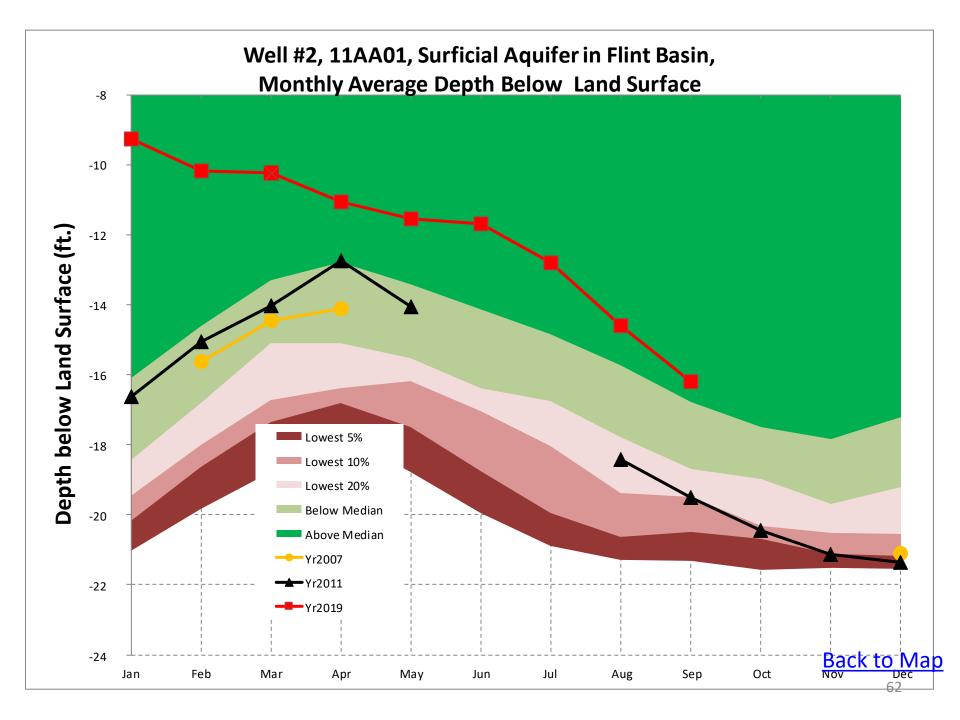
- For each of the 17 groundwater wells, EPD has prepared a graph that shows monthly average groundwater levels from January 2019 through September 2019;
- To help put these levels into perspective, for comparison purposes, each graph also shows:
 - Monthly average levels at that same well for the years 2007 and 2011 when groundwater levels were at or near recorded low levels across much of the state; and
 - And a statistical composite of historical conditions at that same gage showing the "lowest" 50, 20, 10, and 5 percent of all recorded monthly average levels at the same well.

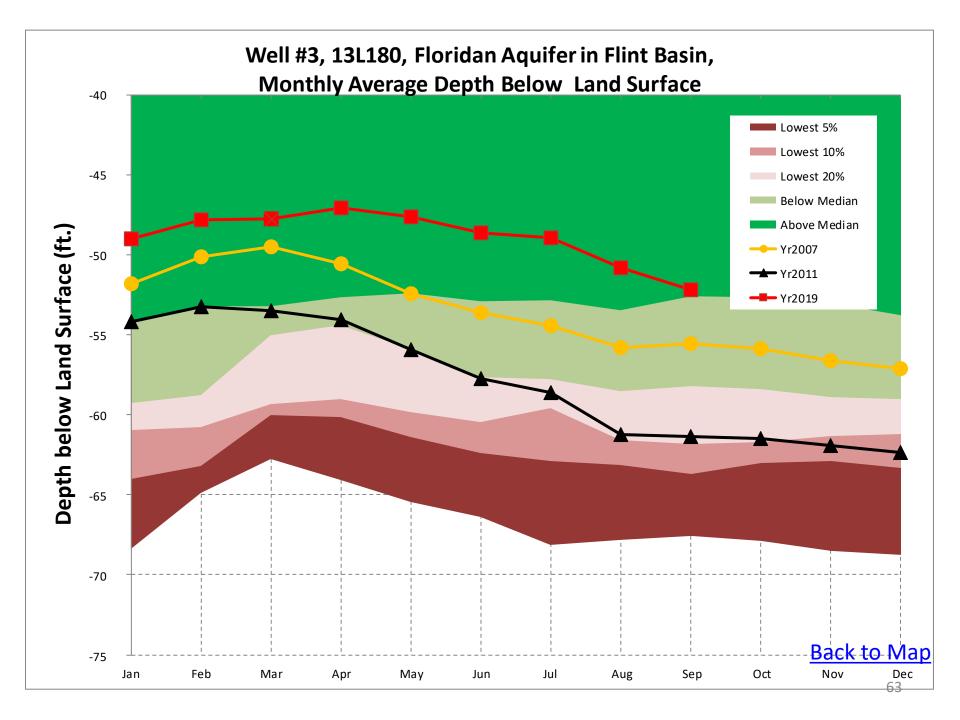
How to Read the Groundwater Level Graphs Example: Well #11, 09F520, Flint River Basin

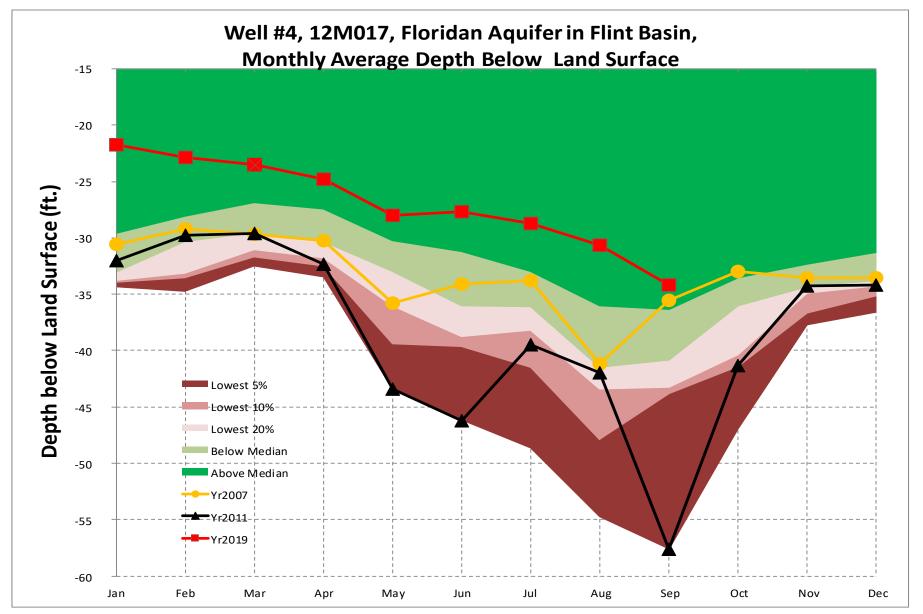
The groundwater level graph for Well #11, USGS 09F520 shows:

- The average monthly groundwater level for September 2019 was 48.7ft below land surface. The statistical composite of all historical data for this well shows that monthly average groundwater levels in September have historically been lower than September 2019 about 30% of the time; about 70% of the time in September they have been higher.
- The average monthly groundwater level in September 2011 was 51ft below land surface. The statistical composite of all historical data for this well shows that monthly average groundwater levels in September have historically been lower than September 2011 about 5% of the time; about 95% of the time in September they have been higher.
- The average monthly groundwater level in September 2007 was 51.1ft below land surface. The statistical composite of all historical data for this well shows that monthly average groundwater levels in September have historically been lower than September 2007 about 2~5% of the time; about 95~98% of the time in September they have been higher.

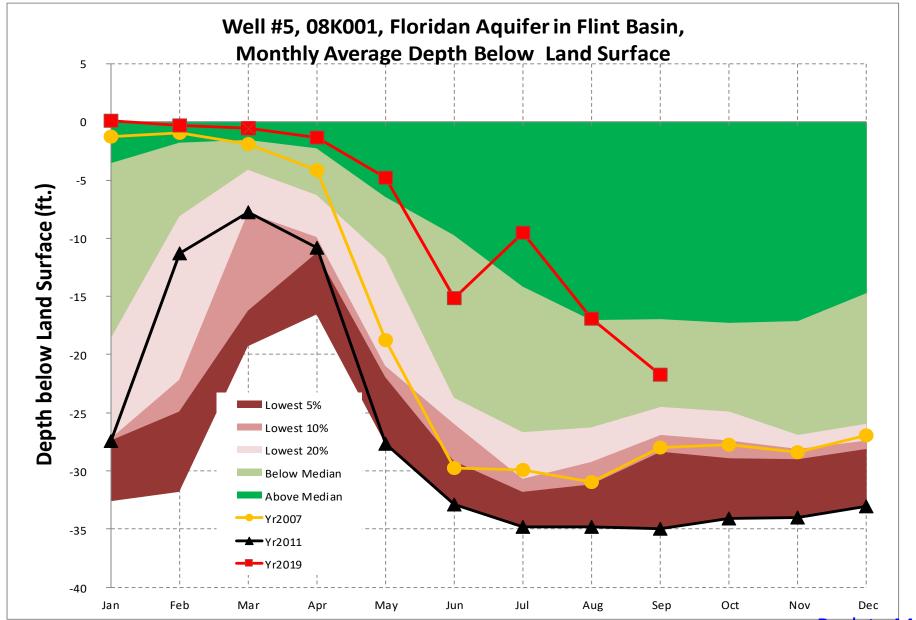


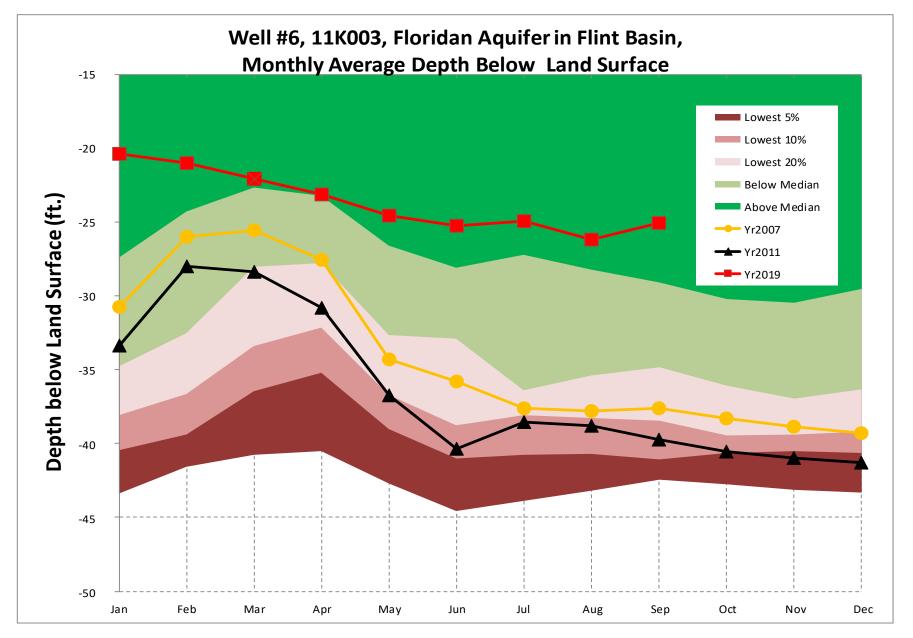


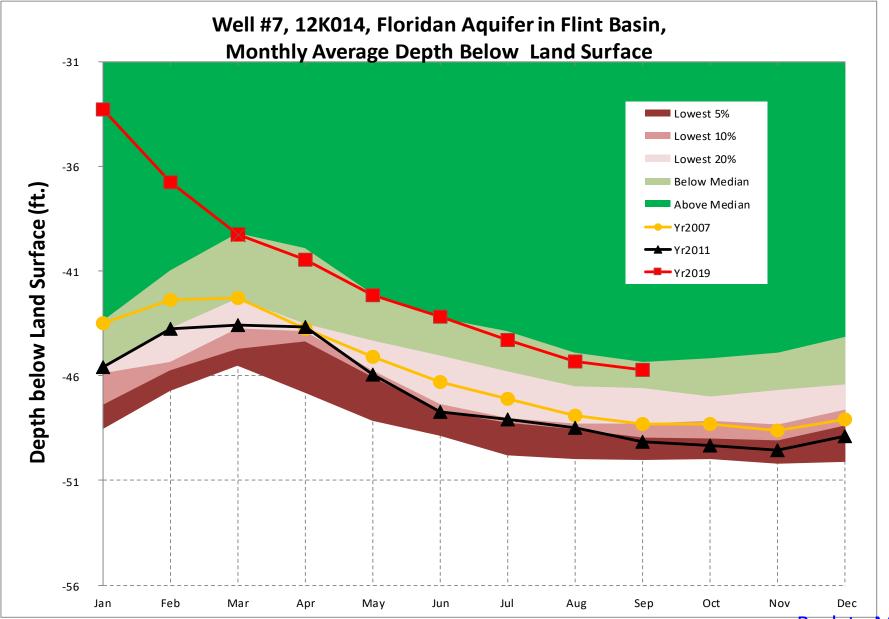


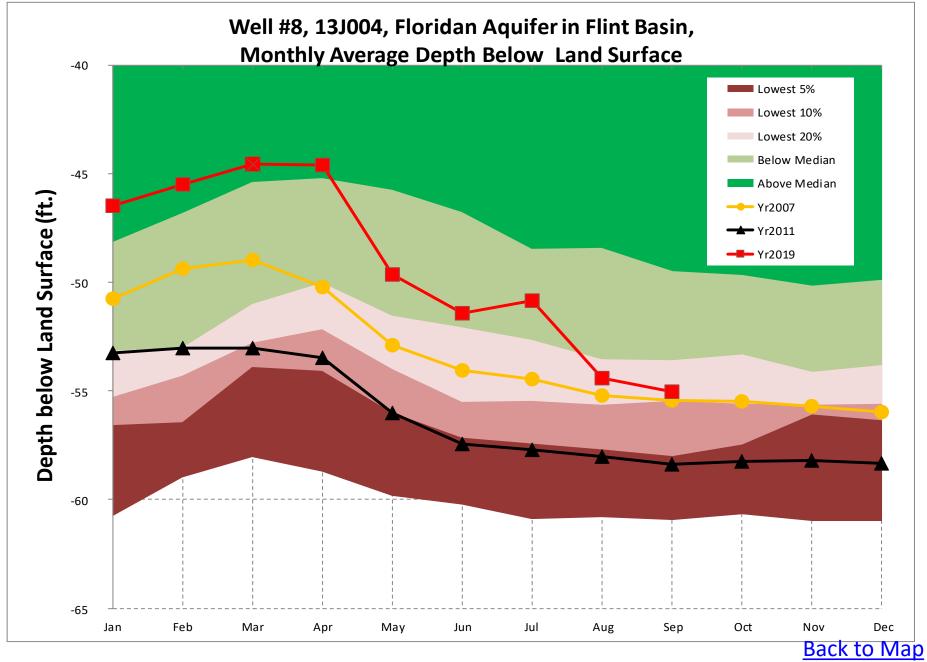


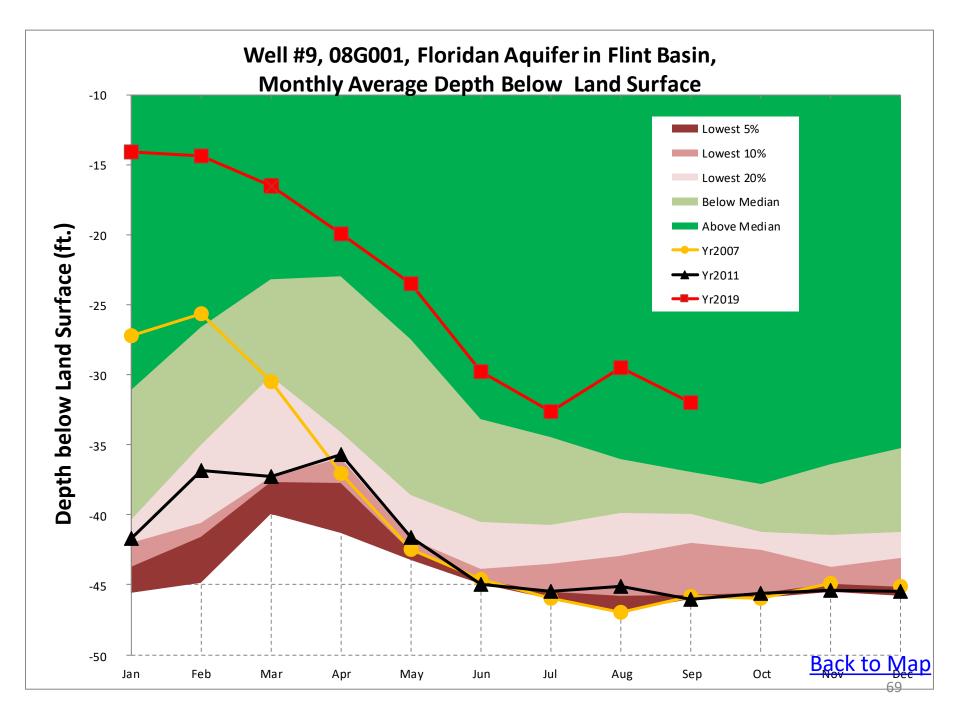
Back to Map

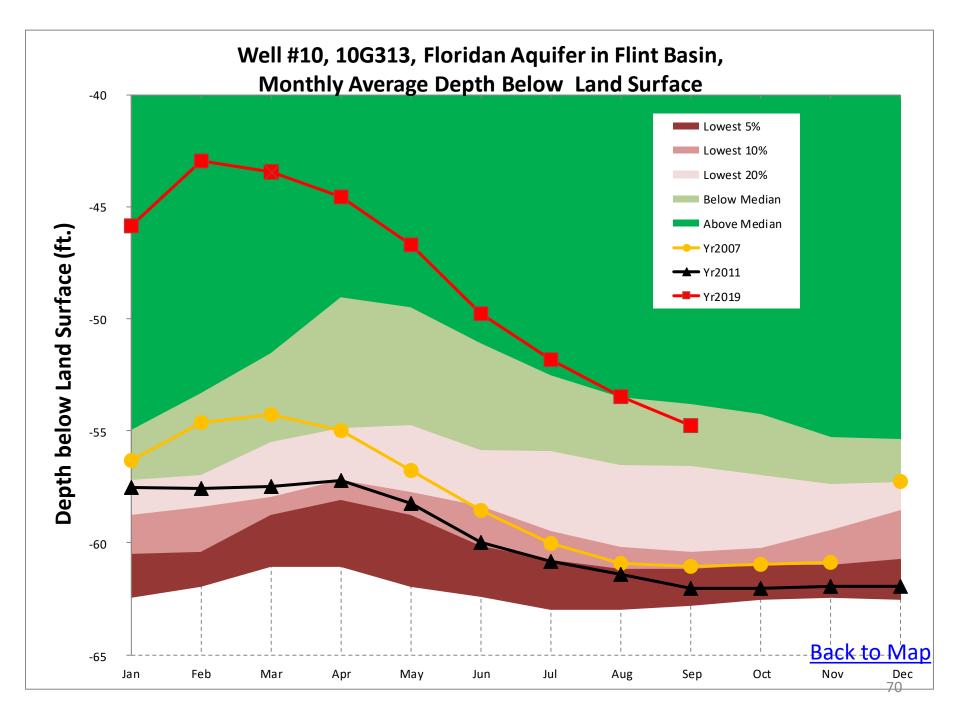


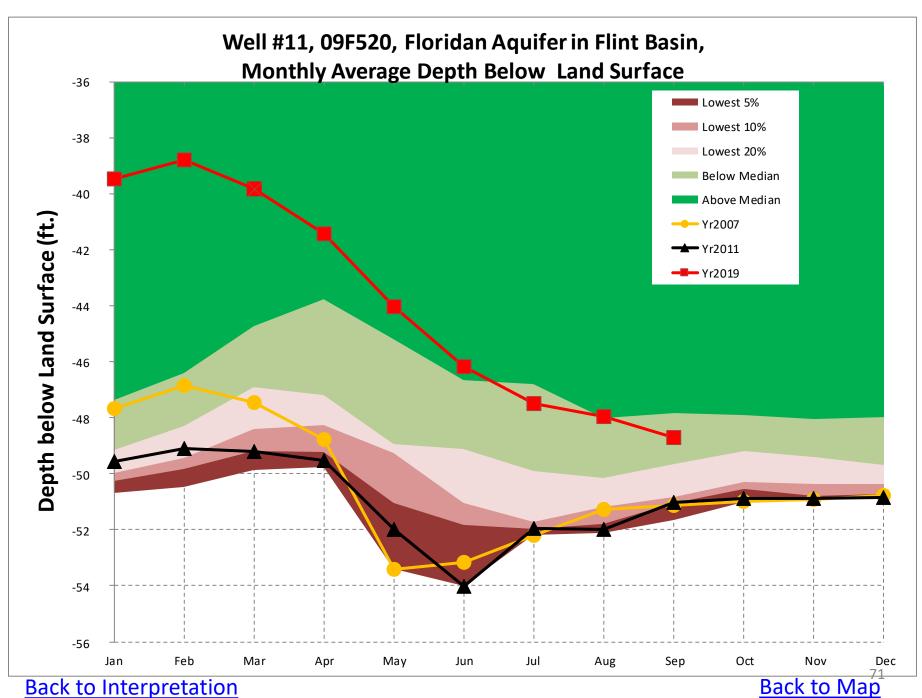




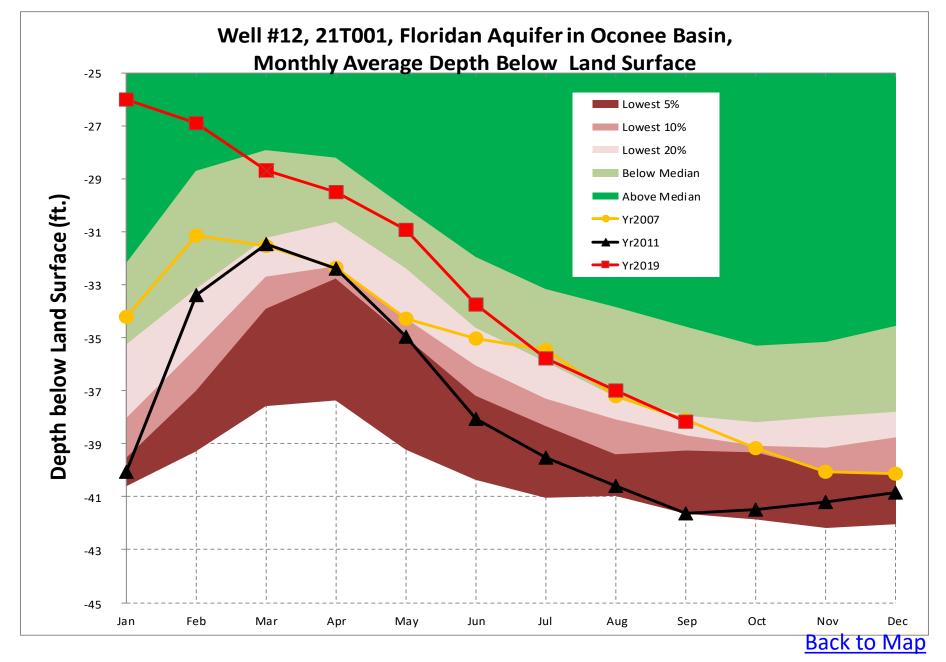


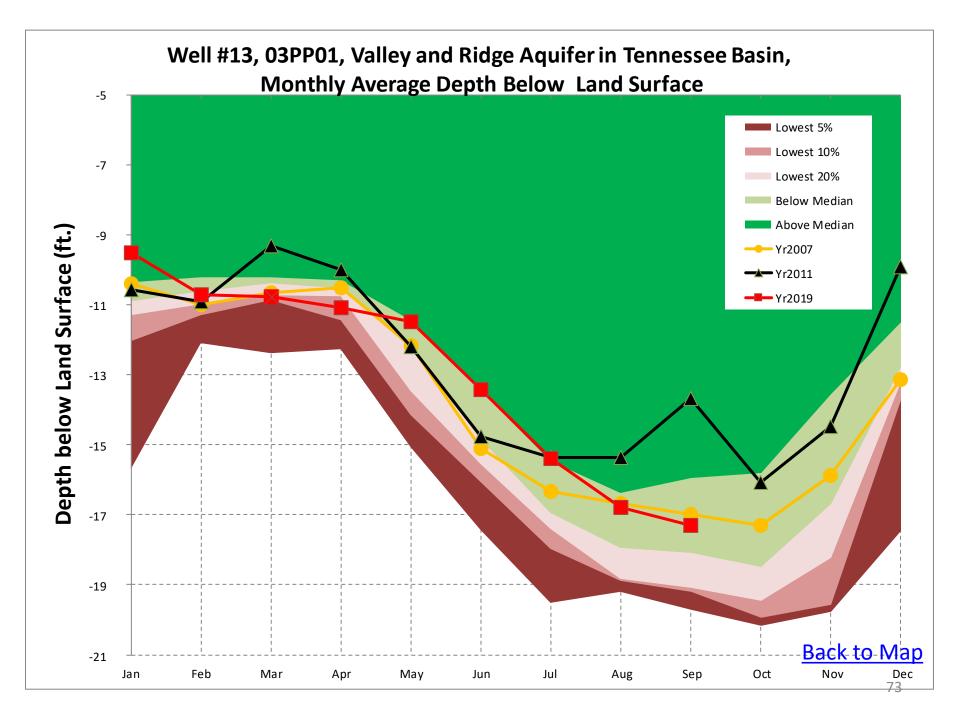


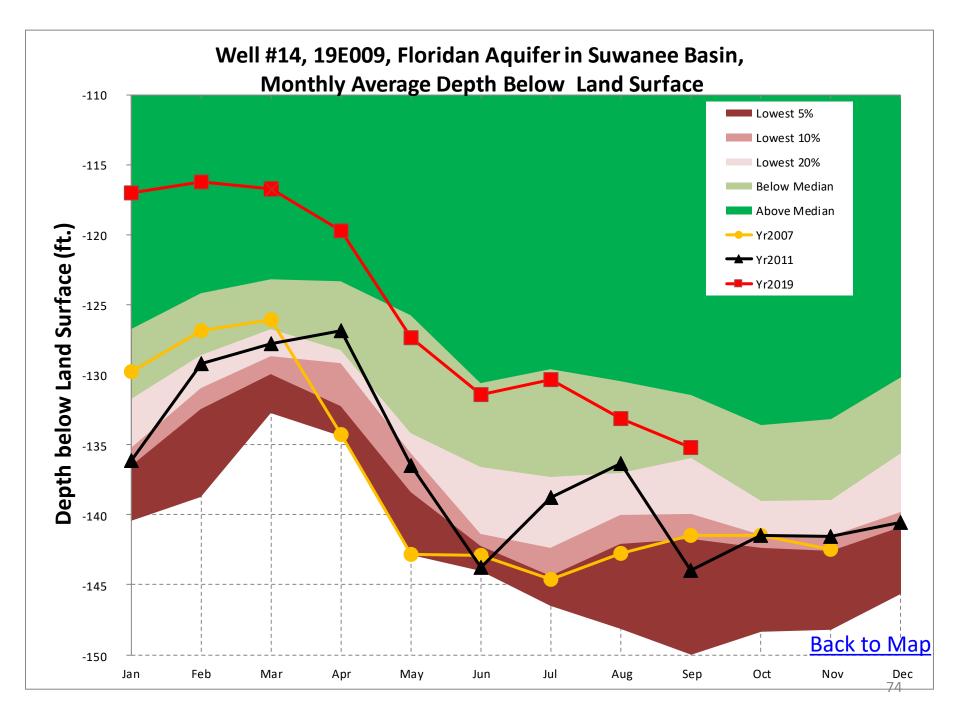


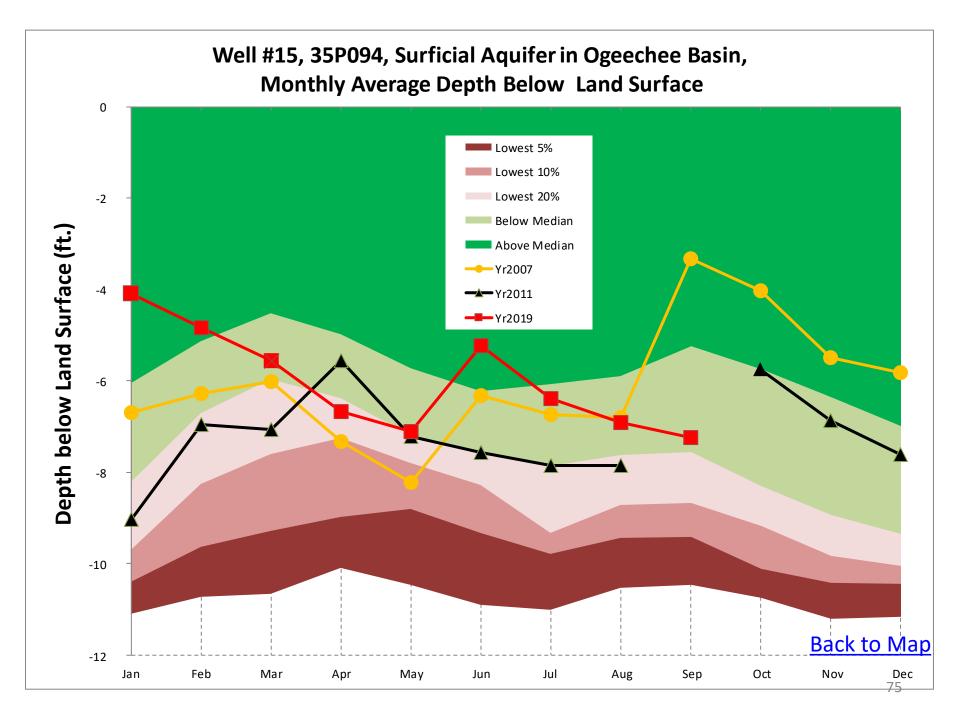


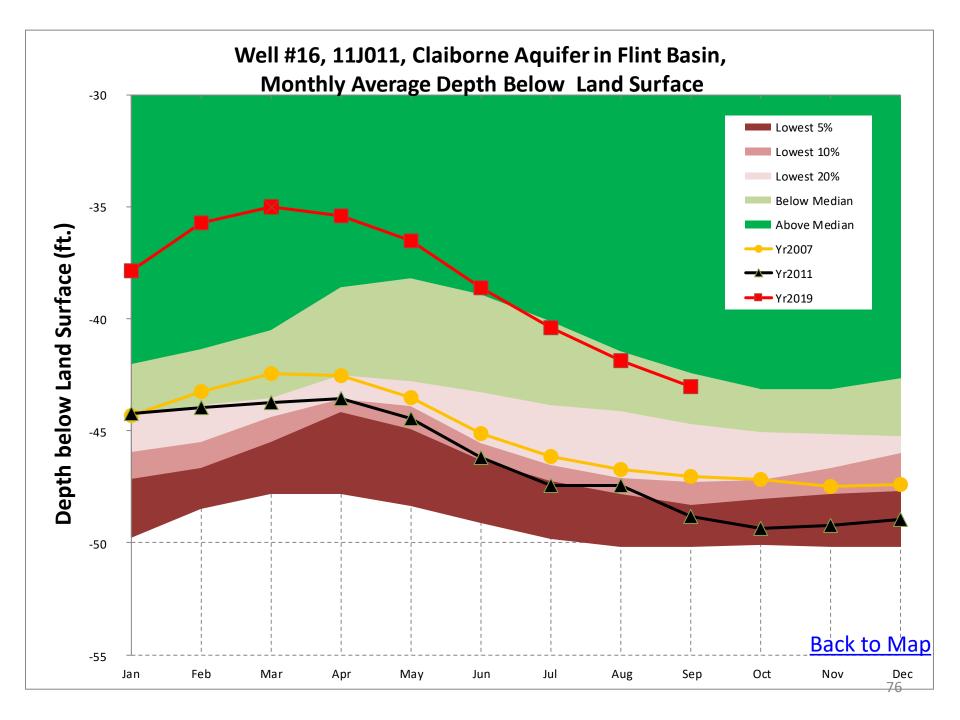
Back to Interpretation

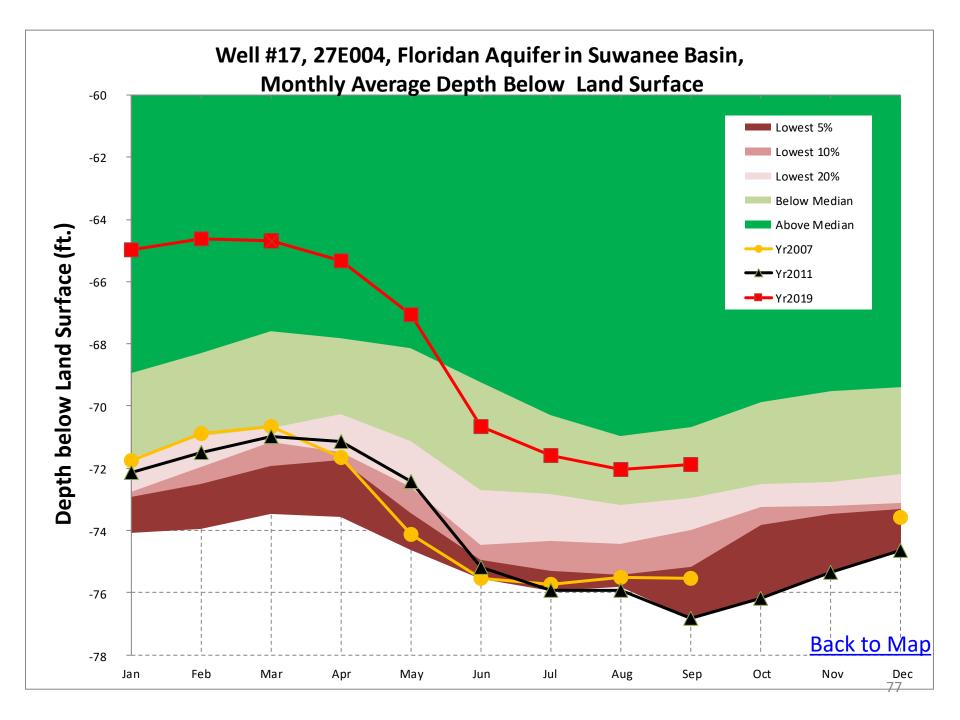












Reservoir Levels

Data Source: US Army Corps of Engineers

Coosa Basin

- 1. Carters
- 2. Allatoona

Chattahoochee Basin

- 3. Lanier
- 4. West Point
- 5. W.F. George

Savannah Basin

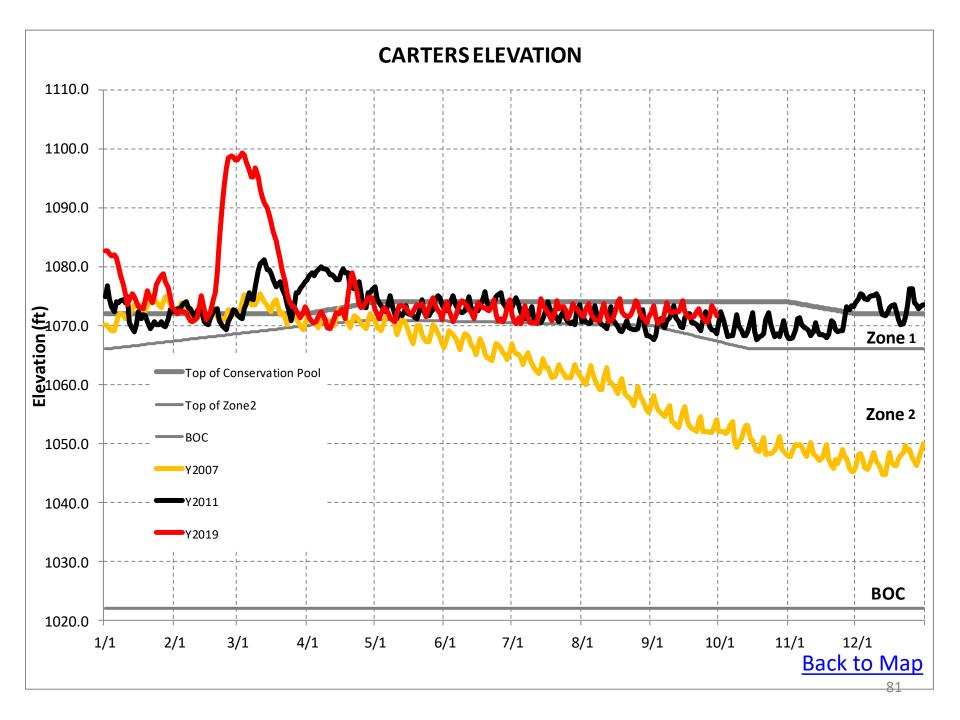
- 6. Hartwell
- 7. Thurmond

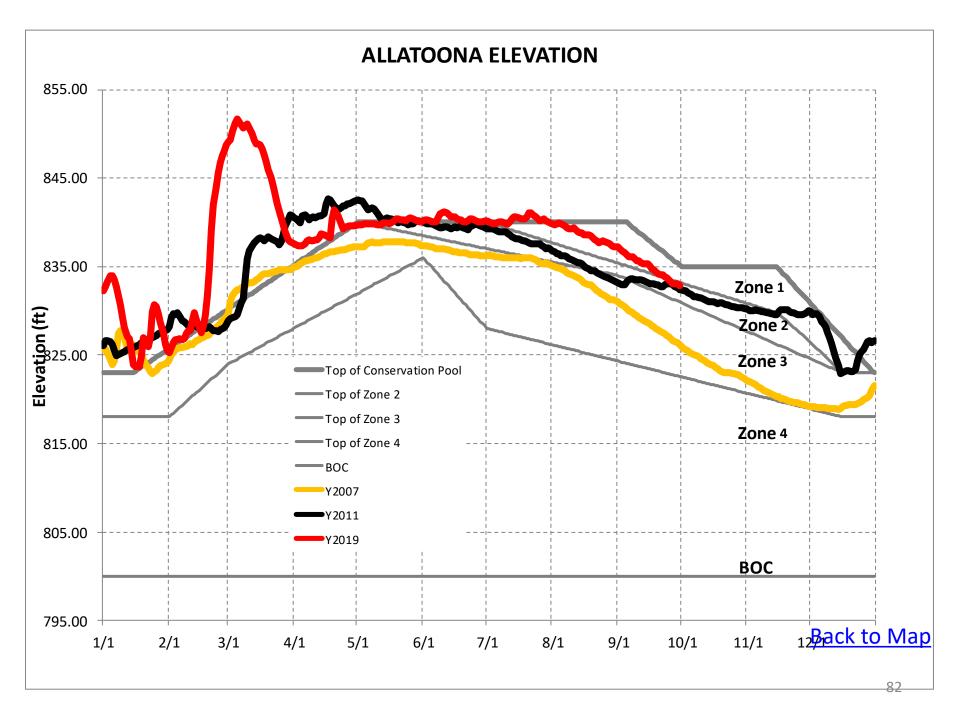


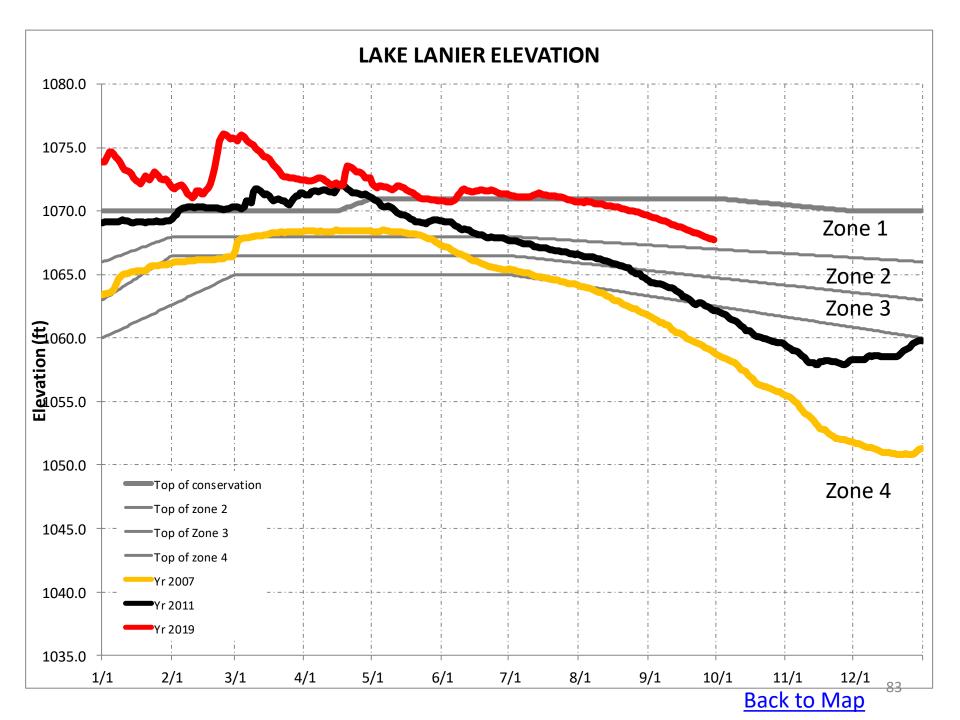
EPD monitors the water levels of seven reservoirs to assess drought conditions.

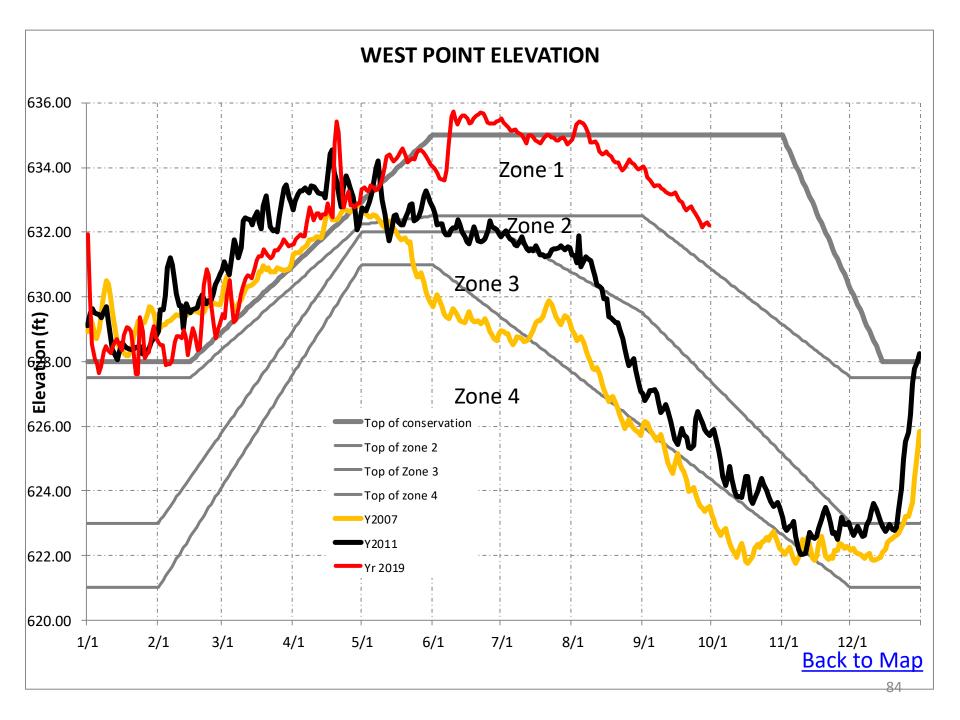
Reservoir Elevation Graphs

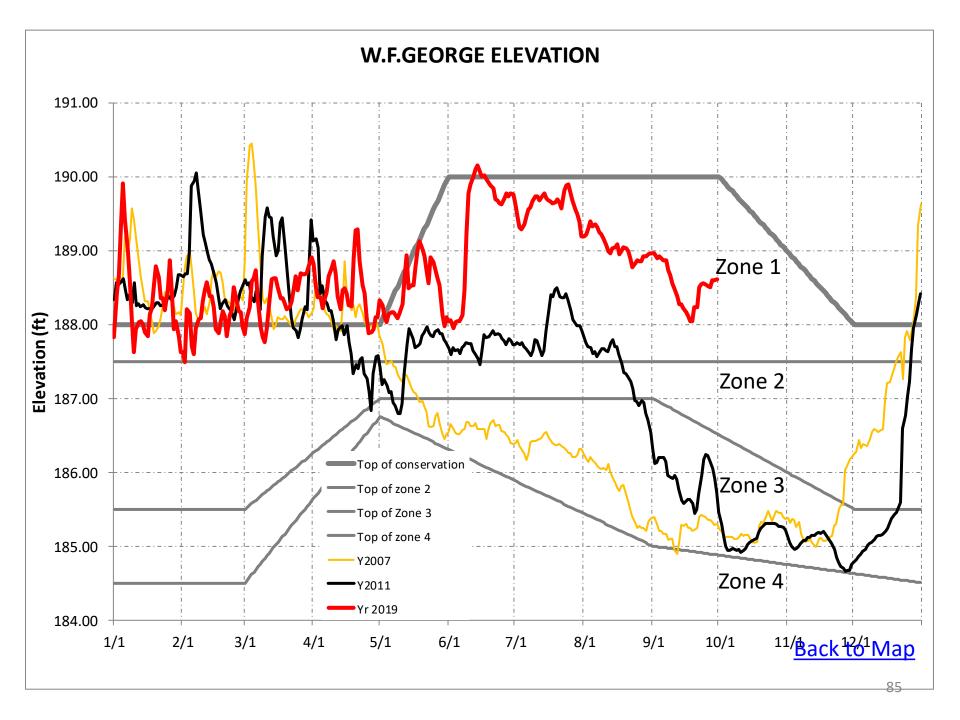
- The following graphs show the reservoir elevation curves for January 2019 through September 2019.
- Each graph also shows the Action Zone Divides (or Levels) for each reservoir
 - Zone 1 is the top layer of the conservation pool
 - Zone 2 is the layer below Zone 1
 - Zone 4 is the lowest layer in the conservation pool
 - There is no conservation storage below the bottom of Zone 4
- To put 2019 reservoir elevations into perspective, elevations for 2007 and 2011 are also shown.



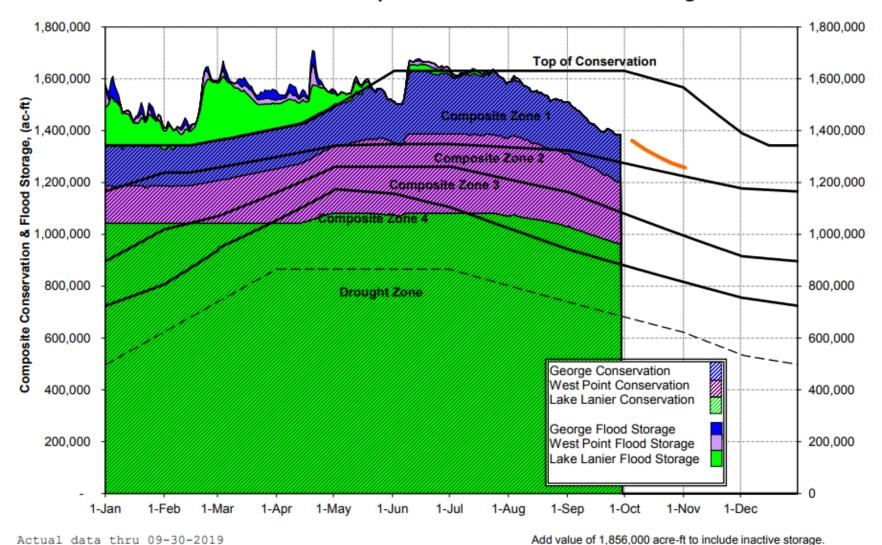




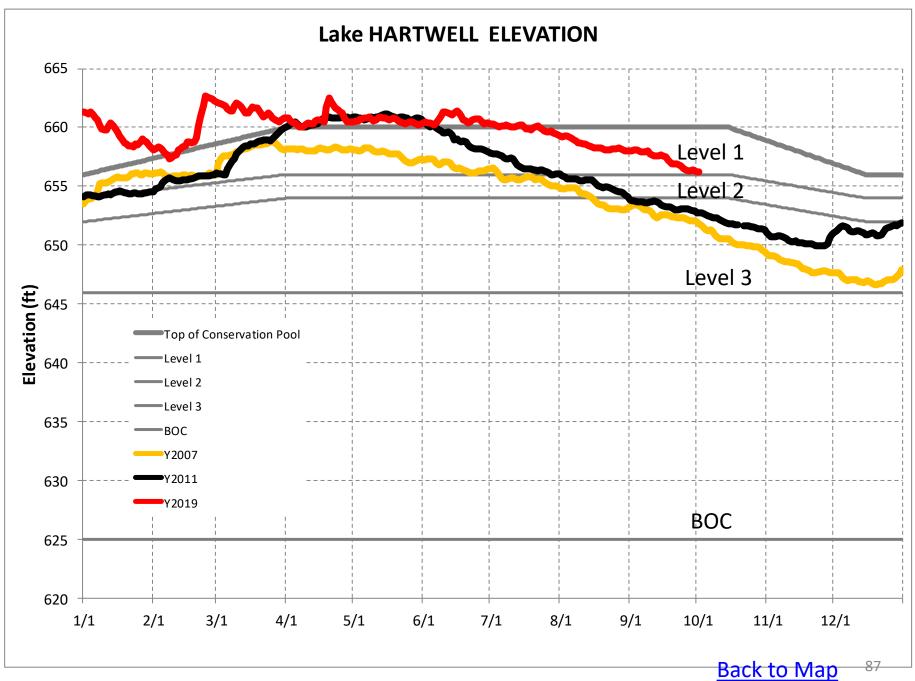


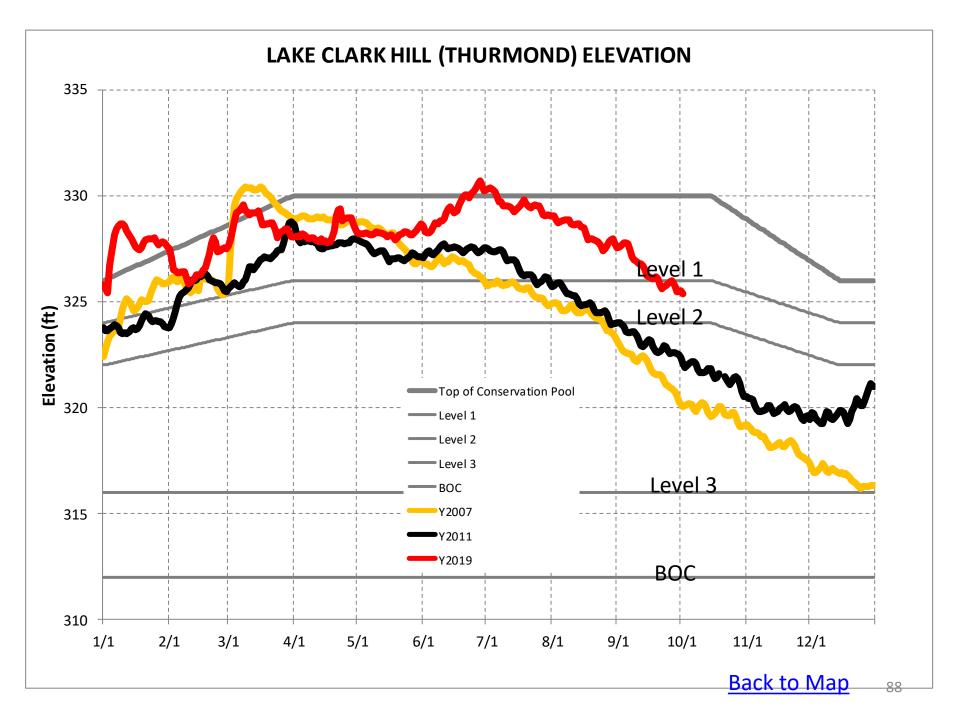


2019 ACF Basin Composite Conservation and Flood Storage



Compiled by USACE.



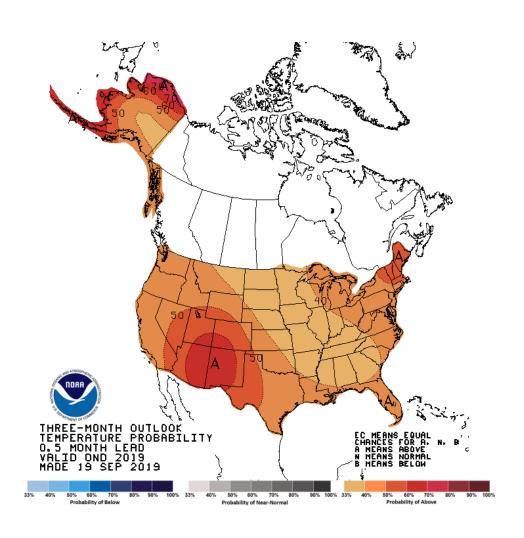


Climate Prediction Center 3-month Temperature and Precipitation Probability Outlook and Seasonal Drought Outlook

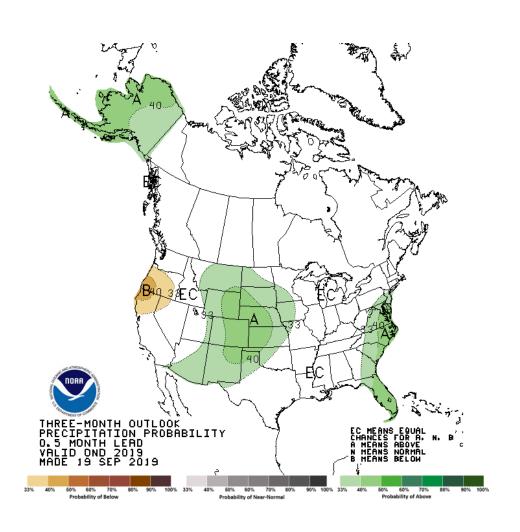
Data Source:

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

Temperature Outlook



Precipitation Outlook



U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for September 19 - December 31, 2019 Released September 19

