
MONTHLY REPORT OF RIVER AND FLOOD CONDITIONS

MONTH: **APRIL** YEAR :**2002**

...April Dry Spell Indicates Late Spring Drought Possibilities...

The extended dry spell over south Louisiana and south Mississippi re-emerged during April following a wetter than normal March. With an average of only three rain days in the month, rainfall totals averaged about three inches below the April normal. There was a small area of five to six inches of monthly rain across the middle of the Amite Basin, but the bulk of that monthly rain occurred during an intense two-day rain early in the month.

South Louisiana and South Mississippi rainfall is averaging 50 to 80 percent of normal rainfall during the first four months of this year. Should the below normal rainfall continue into early summer, the area could relapse into the drought conditions that occurred in 1999 and 2000.

Stages on the major rivers in the lower Mississippi Valley peaked early in April but fell off steadily to monthly low stages by April 30. The Mississippi experienced a near normal spring rise from Red River Landing to Donaldsonville being in minor flood for most of the month. The Atchafalaya ran near bank full along its course from Simmesport to just above Morgan City and remained in minor flood at Morgan City from early March into May.

The Tickfaw and Bogue Chitto rivers responding to two-day four inch rains rose into brief minor flood during the first week of April. The Lower Pearl reached its spring rise peak around April 20 falling to near normal stages by month's end..