



Fig. 2. Typical rainfall distributions for three locations in Florida (from NOAA, 1978).

heaviest rainfall in the peninsula usually occurs during June through September or October, when rainfall exceeds evapotranspiration. Most runoff also occurs during this period. The drier months typically include October or November through May. Much of the rest of the southeast has a winter wet season of December through March when rainfall exceeds evapotranspiration and most of the groundwater recharge and runoff occurs.

Second, Florida has sandy soils with high infiltration rates. About one-third of these soils are upland with deep water tables (below approximately 180 cm) and the remaining two-thirds are on flat topography with shallow water tables (surface to about 180 cm). In the flatwoods topography, runoff from storms is low until the soil is saturated. This factor makes years of low precipitation particularly severe for wetlands and for lakes such as Lake Okechobee (Allen et al., 1982). The major rivers of the Florida peninsula (the Kissimmee, the Caloosahatchee, the St. Johns,