

MEMORANDUM

TO: Luis Alejandro, Chief, Water Management Section (USACE)

FROM: John Mitnik, Director, Operations, Engineering & Construction Division (SFWMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)

DATE: October 20, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for October 18, 2016 to October 24, 2016

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from October 18, 2016 to October 24, 2016. On October 17, Lake Okeechobee stage was 15.91 feet NGVD, in the upper third of the Low Sub-band and within one foot of the Intermediate Sub-band of the 2008 LORS. During last week the lake stage decreased 0.13 feet.

District rainfall for October up to date has been above average. Rainfall forecast for the next two weeks is for below-average rainfall.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent Climate Prediction Center (CPC) outlook for Central and South Florida indicates equal chances of above-normal, normal, or below-normal rainfall for October, a slight increase in the likelihood of below-normal rainfall for areas north of the lake for the 3-month window October-December. The CPC outlook for the remainder of the 2016-17 dry season is for slight to moderate chances of below-normal rainfall, as the dry season progresses.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the Low Sub-band, Part C of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends “Up to Maximum Practicable to the WCAs if desirable or with minimum Everglades Impacts. Otherwise no releases to the WCAs”.

Over the 7-day period from October 10, 2016 to October 16, 2016, no Lake Okeechobee regulatory releases were sent to any of the STAs or the A-1 FEB. The A-1 FEB continued to receive EAA runoff and discharged to STA-2 and STA-3/4. Releases from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 amounted to about 500 acre-feet. There were no southward releases from the Lake for water supply purposes.

WCA-1 stages (marsh and canal) are in the lower half of Zone A-2 of its regulation schedule. The USACE continues to request the SFWMD send Lake regulatory releases to WCA-1. These releases will be implemented if conveyance capacity in the canals and treatment capacity in the STAs are available, and if lake turbidity around structure S-352 is not an issue. At this time, the USACE is not requesting the SFWMD to send Lake Okeechobee releases to WCA-2A and WCA-3A. Discharges from STA-2 and STA-3/4 will continue into WCA-2A and WCA-3A; using S-7, S-8, G-404 and G-335/G-436. Pump Stations S-8 and G-404 are also passing releases from STA 5/6 and from the Rotenberger Area. Releases from STA-1E and STA-1W into WCA-1 continue but are expected to decrease with time.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the Low Sub-band, less than one foot from the Intermediate Sub-band, with tributary hydrologic conditions within the Very Wet classification, and with the lake net inflow seasonal outlook in the wet category, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance suggests “S-79 up to 3,000 and S-80 up to 1,170 cfs”. The District recommends that the USACE follows LORS 2008.

Salinity at the US 1 Bridge location in the St. Lucie Estuary is still in the poor range for adult oysters with an increase toward the fair range. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinity conditions remain favorable for tape grass in the upper estuary, but remained in the poor range for oysters at the Cape Coral Bridge. Salinity remained in the good range for oysters at the Sanibel Causeway. Salinity at Shell Point increased from the fair range to the good range.