MEMORANDUM

TO: Jason Engle, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)

FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)

DATE: July 9, 2026

SUBJECT: System Operational Position Statement July 7, 2026 to July 13, 2026

This Position Statement is to provide operational input for the one-week period from July 7, 2026 to July 13, 2026 based on system conditions and data observed during the previous Monday to Sunday 7-day period.

Current climate conditions: District July rainfall to date is much above normal (128% normal). The rainfall forecast (issued July 8) calls for near to below normal rainfall for the coming 7-day period and the following one.

Climate and weather forecasts: The most recent CPC precipitation outlook for Jul 2026 is equal chances of below, normal and above normal rainfall (EC) for the entire District. El Niño conditions are present, and expected to strengthen into the Northern Hemisphere winter 2026-27. The 3-month windows from Aug 2026 – Oct 2026 to Sep 2026 – Nov 2026 are equal chances of below, normal and above normal rainfall (EC) for the entire District. The transition into the 2026 – 2027 Dry Season goes through the 3-month window Oct 2026 – Dec 2026 shows increased chances (40-50%) of above normal for south Florida. The 3-month windows of Nov 2026 – Jan 2027, Dec 2026 – Feb 2027, Jan 2027 – Mar 2027, and Feb 2027 – Apr 2027 show outlooks for substantial increased chances (50-60%) of above normal rainfall for the Kissimmee River and north, and increased chances (40-50%) of above normal for the respective remainder areas of the District. The transition into the 2027 wet season shows slightly increased chances (33-40%) to increased chances (40-50%) of above normal rainfall for the state of Florida.

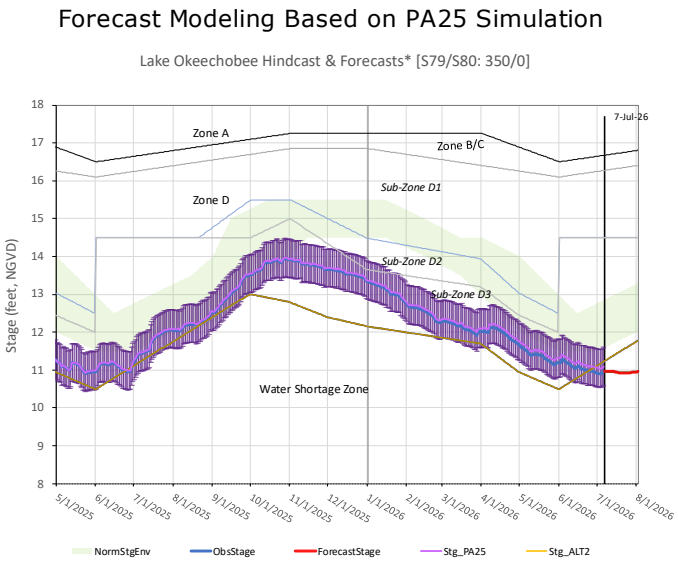
Hydrologic and tropical outlooks: Current climatological conditions are Normal. Current hydrological conditions are Normal. The lake stage is in the Water Shortage Management Zone (WSMZ) and is projected to stay within the WSMZ for next two months as per LOSOM modeling assumptions.

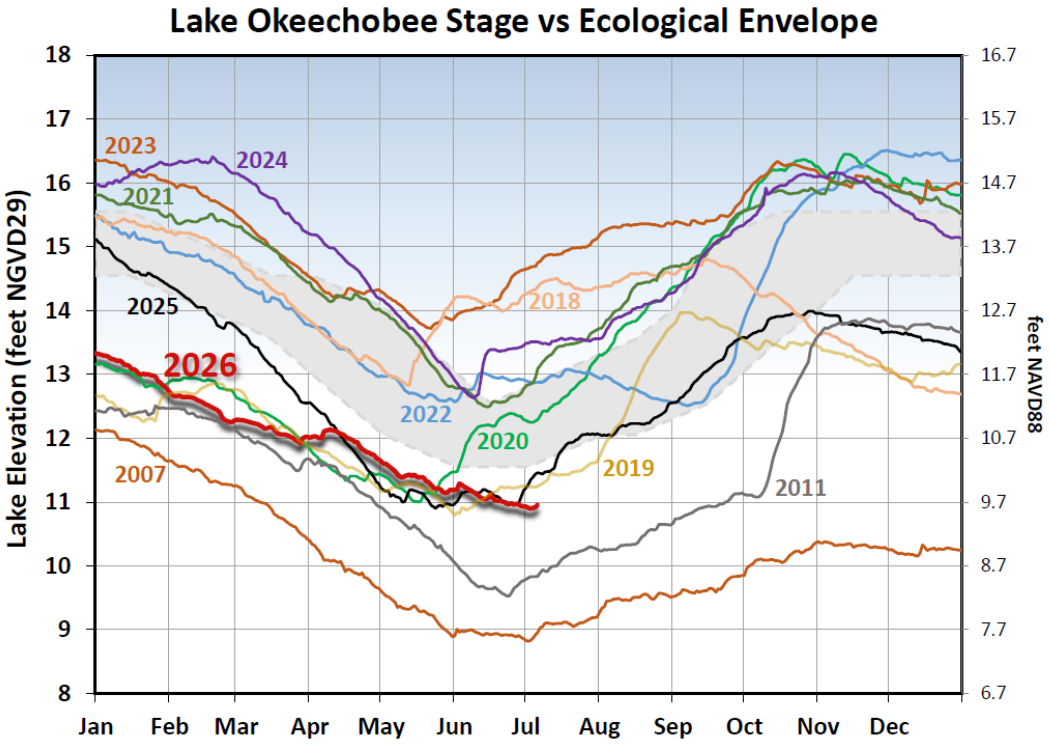
Water-supply conditions: The Lake Okeechobee seasonal net inflow outlook is Normal and at Low risk for water supply. The multi-seasonal net inflow outlook is Wet and at Low risk for water supply.

Estuary conditions: For the two 7-day periods, June 22 to June 28, 2026 and June 29 to July 5, 2026, total inflow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged approximately 550 cfs and 900 cfs, with about 200 cfs and 50 cfs coming from Lake Okeechobee through S-77, respectively. Water column salinities in the upper estuary were within the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass at S-79 and Val I-75, and in the damaging range (>15) at Ft. Myers during both 7-day periods. Salinities were in the optimal range (10-25) for adult eastern oysters at Cape Coral, and in the upper stressed range (>25) at Shell Point and Sanibel during both 7-day periods. For the first 7-day period, total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was about 300 cfs with 200 cfs from the Tidal Basin, 50 cfs from the C-24 Basin, 50 cfs from Ten Mile Creek, and no flow from Lake Okeechobee, the C-44 Basin, or the C-23 Basin. For the most recent 7-day period, total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was about 700 cfs with 600 cfs from the Tidal Basin, 50 cfs from the C-24 Basin, 50 cfs from Ten Mile Creek, and no flow from Lake Okeechobee, the C-44 Basin, or the C-23 Basin. The average salinity in the middle estuary was within the optimal range (10-25) for adult eastern oysters during both 7-day periods.

Lake Okeechobee stage and ecological conditions:

On July 5, the daily average Lake Okeechobee stage was 9.63 feet NAVD88 (10.93 feet NGVD29), which placed it within the Water Shortage Management Zone (WSMZ) of the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM). Lake stage decreased by 0.07 feet over the preceding 14-day period. El Niño conditions are present, and expected to strengthen into the Northern Hemisphere winter 2026-27. The District will continue to monitor conditions in the estuaries, as well as the systemwide conditions. Normal Lake Operations continue pursuant to the considerations in LOSOM as informed by PA25. It is recommended that flow targets for the Caloosahatchee Estuary should rely on basin flows to ensure the delivery of the Minimum Flow and Level, but use Lake Okeechobee flows from S-77 to ensure S-79 flows remain above a targeted steady release of 350 cfs; flow targets for the St. Lucie Estuary and Lake Worth Lagoon should remain at 0 cfs consistent with Normal Operations within WSMZ. The District will continue to monitor salinity conditions in the estuaries and water supply conditions within the Lake Okeechobee Service Area. The USACE typically implements the releases to the estuaries over a 7-day period starting on Saturday and ending on Friday.





The current and seven prior years' annual stage hydrographs for Lake Okeechobee in comparison to the ecological envelope (light grey).

Navigation and recreation conditions: Multiple navigational locks on Lake Okeechobee's north shore are temporarily closed for safety purposes. S-135/G-36/S-127/S-131/S-193 Boat Locks are completely closed to navigation. Boaters are encouraged to exercise caution on the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). Public access along the L-29, L-67A and L-67C Canals near Tamiami Trail in Miami-Dade County is closed for maintenance activities.

STOF water supply conditions: Current Lake Okeechobee stage is sufficiently high that water supply deliveries to the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) Brighton Reservation, if needed, will not be impacted. When Lake Okeechobee stage recedes below 8.75 feet NAVD88 (10 feet NGVD29) and 6.75 feet NAVD88 (8 feet NGVD29), water supply delivery is not achievable via Pump Station G-207 on the Harney Pond Canal and Pump Station G-208 on the Indian Prairie Canal, respectively, as the respective canals become disconnected from Lake Okeechobee.

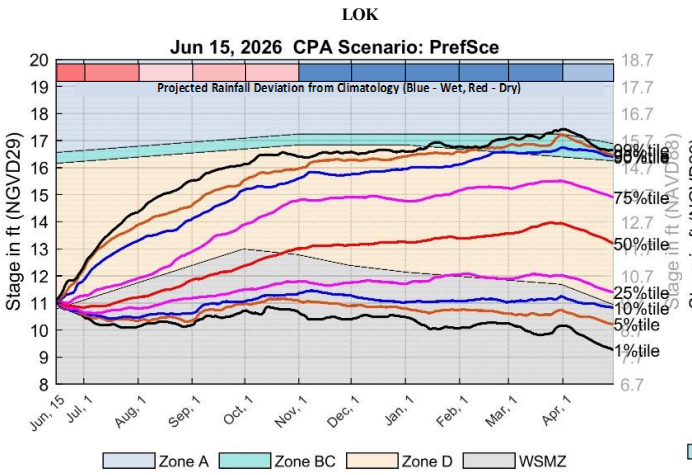
Algal Bloom conditions: The Fish and Wildlife Research Institute reported on July 1, 2026, that *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide dinoflagellate, was not observed at bloom concentrations in any samples collected within the District region. In the most recent non-obscured satellite image from July 3, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests moderate to high cyanobacteria activity in most shallow nearshore regions and in large portions of the central and northern areas of the lake.

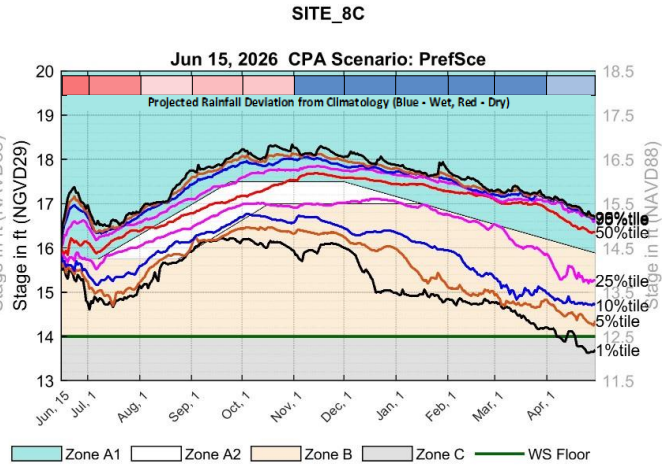
STA conditions: In STA-1E, Central Flow-way is offline for construction activities. An operational restriction is in place in the Western Flow-way for post-construction vegetation grow-in. Online treatment cells are at or near target stage. In STA-1W, Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. Treatment cells are at or slightly above target stage. The Eastern Flow-way contains nests of Migratory Bird Treaty Act protected species. Vegetation in the Western and Eastern Flow-ways is highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs for the Northern and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 $g/m^2/yr$. In STA-2, treatment cells are at or slightly above target stage. An operational restriction is in place in Flow way 2 for vegetation management activities. The 365-day PLRs for all Flow-ways are below 1.0 $g/m^2/yr$. In STA-3/4, an operational restriction is in place in the Eastern Flow-way for vegetation management activities. Most treatment cells are at or slightly above target stage. Vegetation in the Central Flow-way is highly stressed. The 365-day PLR for the Eastern, Central, and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 $g/m^2/yr$. For the current operational period, USACE is not requesting flows south from Lake Okeechobee towards the WCAs. The District will continue to work with the USACE to manage Lake Okeechobee levels in an effort to curtail harmful discharges over this year. To help with this objective the District will move as much water south through the Stormwater Treatment Areas as possible under the current permits as regional conditions allow.

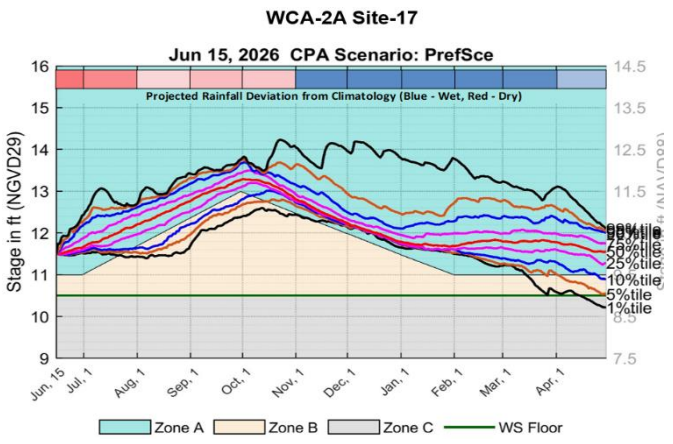
WCA conditions: On July 5, the daily average stage in WCA-1 was at 14.56 feet NAVD88 (16.16 feet NGVD29), in Zone A1 and 0.41 feet above regulation schedule. The daily average stage in WCA-2A was at 10.33 feet NAVD88 (11.84 feet NGVD29), in Zone A and 0.73 feet above regulation schedule. The daily average stage in WCA-3A was at 6.95 feet NAVD88 (8.47 feet NGVD29), in Zone B and 1.25 feet below regulation schedule. Over the 14-day periods, June 22, 2026 to July 5, 2026, no regulatory releases were sent from Lake Okeechobee south to the STAs. No Lake regulatory releases reached Lake Worth Lagoon through the C-51 canal during this period.

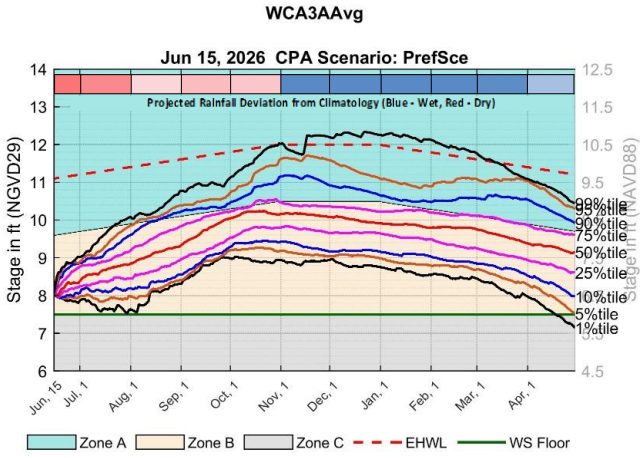
ENP conditions: Releases from WCA-3A to the ENP continue through the S12D and the S333N structures. In Everglades National Park, both Taylor Slough and Shark River Slough show more connection from north to south and to the coast compared to a month ago. WCA-1 is slightly drier throughout the basin compared to one month ago. Both WCA-3A and -3B have remained dry, although water levels are showing an increase across WCA-3A. The Big Cypress Basin is also showing a wetting trend although below ground conditions remain the same. Depths remain low across Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP), WCA-3A and -3B and now are below average across the majority of WCA-1 and WCA-2A with impacts to soil, flora and fauna. Salinity increased on average in Florida Bay compared to last week and remains above the estimated historical average and within the WY2001-2016 Interquartile Range (IQR) for all three regions. The Tamiami Trail Flow Formula (TTFF) recommends 402 cfs of daily target releases from WCA-3A to ENP. The District recommends continuing with the current operations for the releases from WCA-3A in accordance with the Combined Operating Plan.

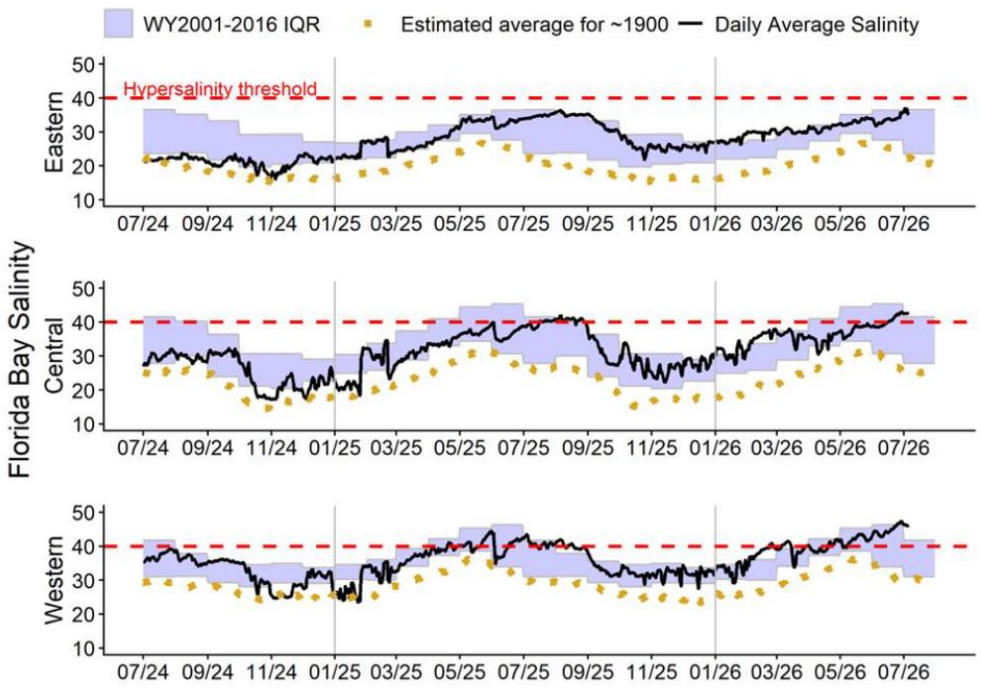
June 15, 2026 Conditional Position Analysis (CPA) results for Lake Okeechobee, WCA-1, WCA-2A and WCA-3A under LOSOM Recovery Operations.











Eastern (top panel), Central (middle panel) and Western (bottom panel) Florida Bay daily average salinities with WY2001-2016 interquartile (25-75 percentile) ranges (IQR) and estimated historical daily average salinities. The hyper salinity threshold indicates the level at which salinities start to become harmful to seagrass.