MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)

DATE: November 12, 2026

SUBJECT: System Operational Position Statement November 10, 2026 to November 16, 2026

This Position Statement is to provide operational input for the one-week period from November 10, 2026 to November 16 based on system conditions and data observed during the previous Monday to Sunday 7-day period.

Current climate conditions: District November rainfall to date is much above normal (670% normal). The rainfall forecast (issued November 10) calls for near normal rainfall for the coming 7-day period and near to above normal for the following one.

Climate and weather forecasts: The most recent CPC precipitation outlook for Nov 2026 is increased chances (40-50%) of above normal rainfall for the entire the District. El Niño is present and continues to strengthen, with a strong-to-very strong El Niño likely through January-March 2027. The 3-month windows of Nov 2026 – Jan 2027 and Dec 2027 – Feb 2027 are substantial increased chances (50-60%) to significant increased chances (60-70%) of above normal rainfall for the entire District. The 3-month windows of Jan 2026 – Mar 2027 and Feb 2027 – April 2027 are significant increased chances (60-70%) to considerable increased chances (70-80%) of above normal rainfall for the entire District. The 3-month window of Mar 2027 – May 2027 indicates increased chances (40-50%) of above normal rainfall for the Lake Okeechobee and south, and substantial increased chances (50-60%) of above normal for the respective remainder areas of the District. The outlooks for the 3-month windows from Apr 2027 – Jun 2027 to Nov 2027 – Jan 2028 signal equal chances of below, normal and above normal rainfall (EC) for south Florida.

Hydrologic and tropical outlooks: Current climatological conditions are wet, and hydrological conditions are Normal. The lake stage is in Zone D and is projected to remain until December.

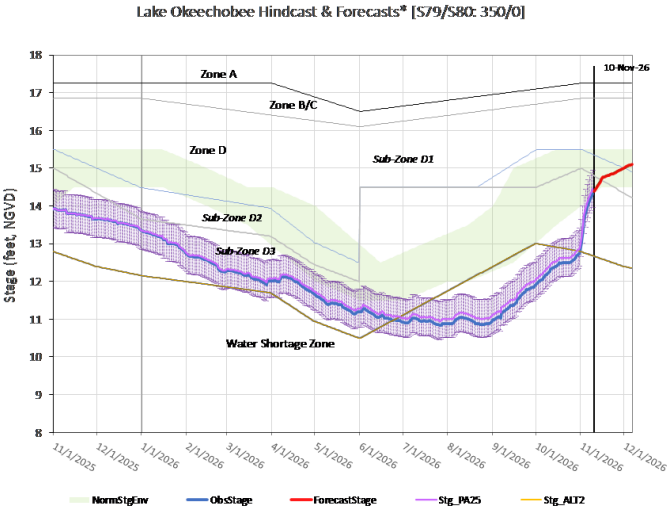
Water-supply conditions: The Lake Okeechobee seasonal net inflow outlook is Normal to Extremely Wet and at Low risk for water supply. The multi-seasonal net inflow outlook is Wet and at Low risk for water supply.

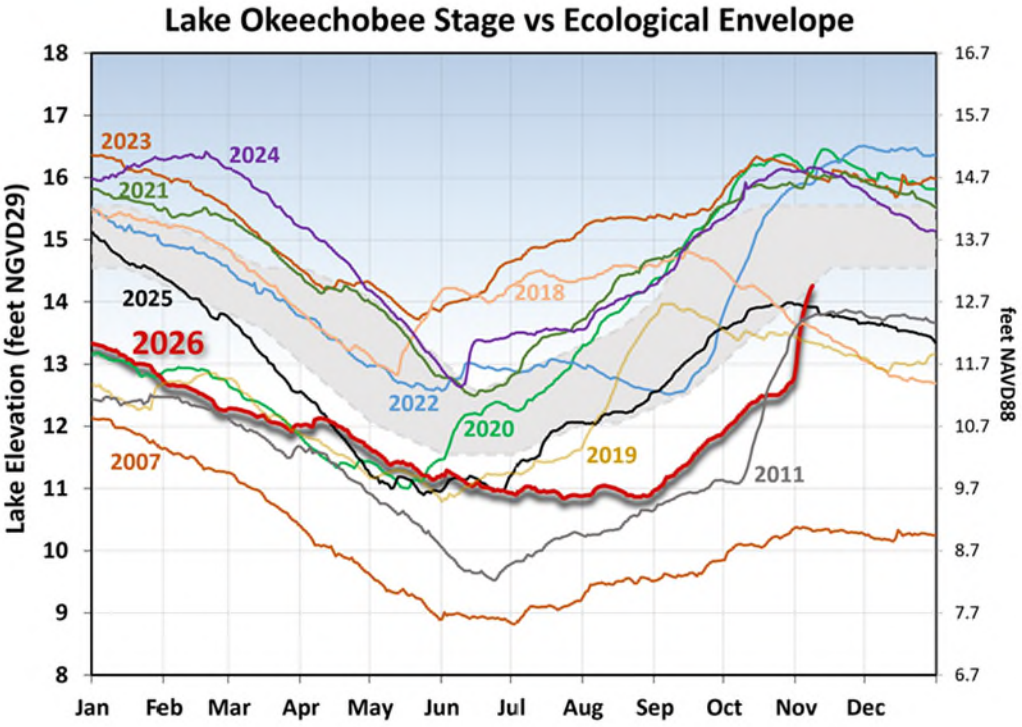
Estuary conditions: For the past 7-day periods, November 2 to November 8, 2026, total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary averaged approximately 11,900 cfs with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee through S-77. Salinities were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass the upper estuary. Salinities were in the lower stressed range (5-10) for adult oysters at Cape Coral, and in the optimal range (10-25) at Shell Point and in the upper stressed range (>25) Sanibel. Total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was about 16,100 cfs with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee, about 3,850 cfs coming from C-44 Basin, about 1,500 cfs coming from Ten Mile Creek, about 3,250 cfs coming from C-23 Basin, about 4,500 cfs coming from C-24 Basin and about 3,050 cfs coming from Tidal Basin. The average salinity in the middle estuary was within the damaging range (=<5) for adult eastern oysters.

Lake Okeechobee stage and ecological conditions:

On November 8, the daily average Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.95 feet NAVD88 (14.26 feet NGVD29), which placed it within Zone D of the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM). Lake stage increased by 1.28 feet over the preceding 7-day period. El Niño is present and continues to strengthen, with a strong-to-very strong El Niño likely through January-March 2027. The District will continue to monitor conditions in Lake Okeechobee and 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 utilize Lake Okeechobee flows from S-77 to ensure S-79 flows remain above a targeted steady release of 350 cfs while in Zone D3 of PA25 and then switch to 750 cfs after transitioning into Zone D2 of PA25; flow targets for the St. Lucie Estuary and Lake Worth Lagoon should remain at 0 cfs consistent with Normal Operations within Zone D. 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.

Net Inflow Forecast Modeling Based on PA25 Simulation





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

Navigation and recreation conditions: There are four navigational boat locks (S-135/G-36/S-127/S-131) that are open and S-193 boat lock is closed to boat traffic effective from November 1, 2026. 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.

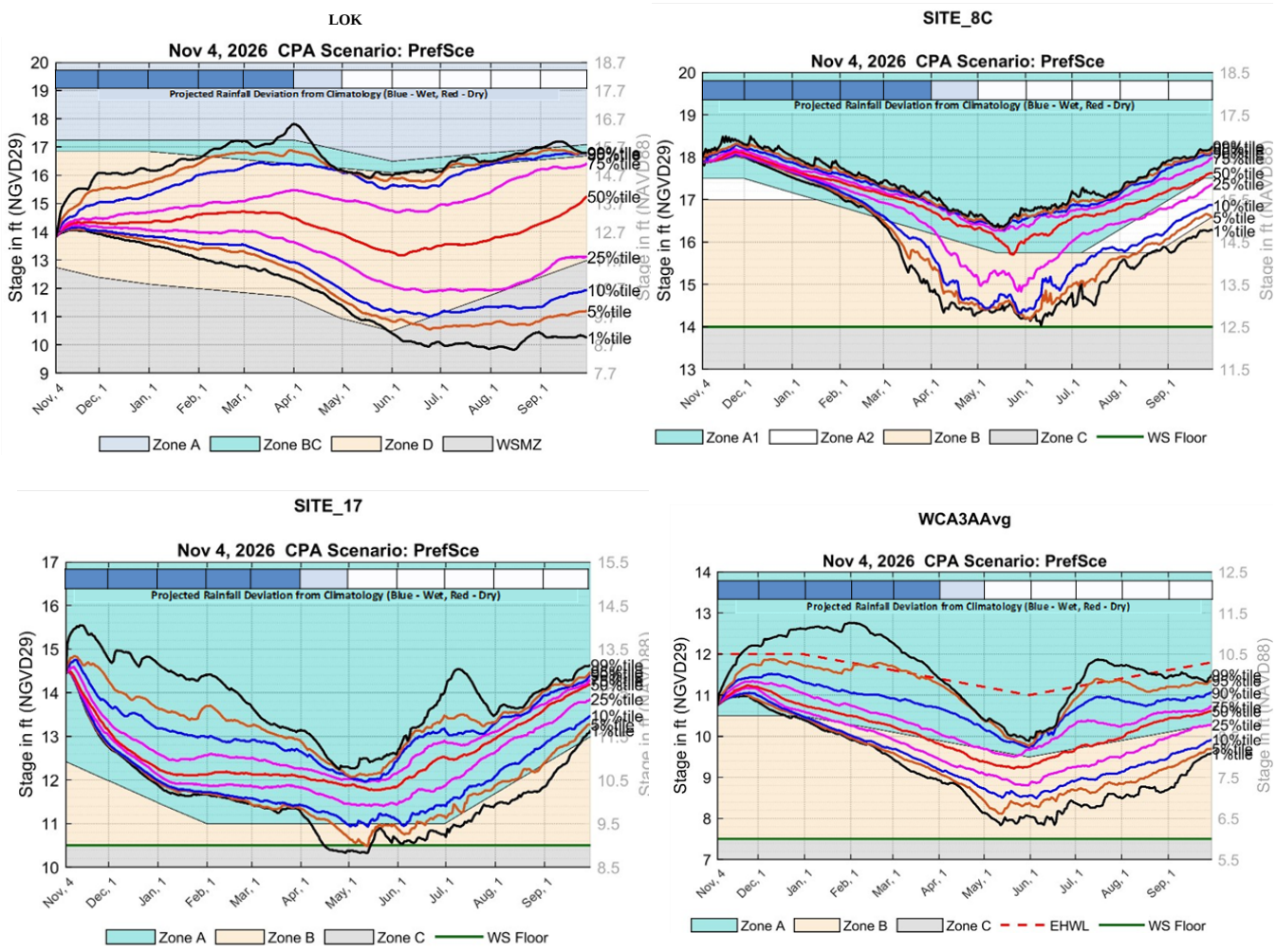
Algal Bloom conditions: The Fish and Wildlife Research Institute reported on November 6, 2026, that *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide dinoflagellate, was not observed at bloom concentrations within the District region. In the most recent non-obscured satellite image from November 8, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests low to moderate cyanobacteria potential across the southwestern shoreline of the Lake.

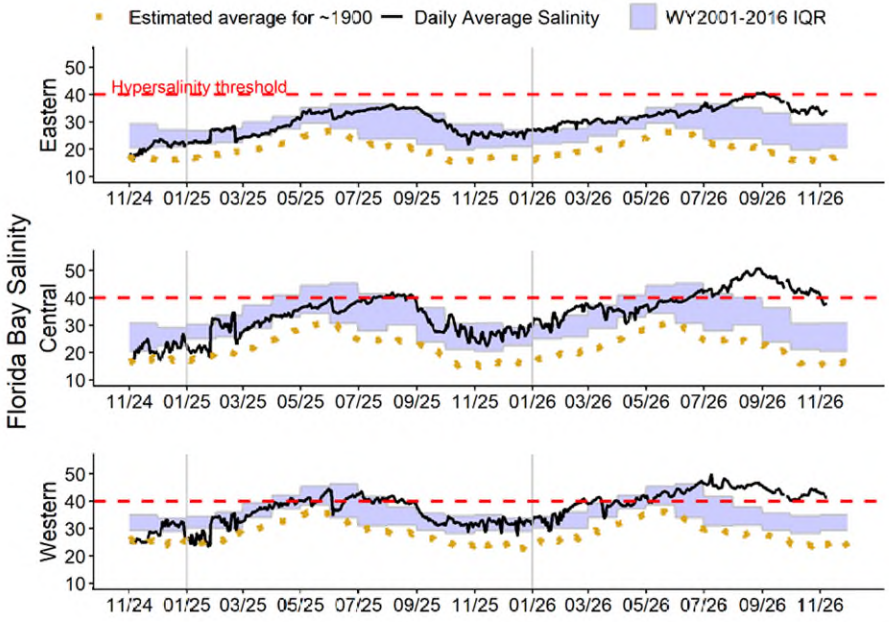
STA conditions: In STA-1E, Central Flow-way is offline for construction activities. An operational restriction is in place in the Western Flow-way for post-construction vegetation grow-in. Online treatment cells are above target stage. In STA-1W, Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. Treatment cells are above target stage. 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 above target stage. An operational restriction is in place in Flow ways 1, 2, 3, and 4 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. Treatment cells are above target stage. Vegetation in the Central Flow-way is highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs 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 November 8, the daily average stage in WCA-1 was at 15.98 feet NAVD88 (17.58 feet NGVD29), in Zone A1 and 0.1 feet above regulation schedule. The daily average stage in WCA-2A was at 13.05 feet NAVD88 (14.64 feet NGVD29), in Zone A and 2.28 feet above regulation schedule. The daily average stage in WCA-3A was at 9.21 feet NAVD88 (10.94 feet NGVD29), in Zone A and 0.44 feet above regulation schedule. Over the 7-day periods, November 2, 2026 to November 8, 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 S12s, S333, and S333N structures. The water depths have increased across the Everglades Protection Area (EPA), particularly in already unseasonably wet WCA-1 and WCA-2A compared to one and two months ago. Water levels have risen in northern WCA 3A. The Big Cypress basin is also showing a stable wetting trend. Stages increased in Taylor Slough over the past week and are above the recent average. Salinity decreased on average in Florida Bay compared to last week and remains above the estimated historical average and above the WY2001-2016 Interquartile Range (IQR) 75th percentile in all regions. The Tamiami Trail Flow Formula (TTFF) recommends maximum practicable 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.

November 4, 2026 Conditional Position Analysis (CPA) results for Lake Okeechobee, WCA-1, WCA-2A and WCA-3A under LOSOM 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.