Disclaimer: Information contained in the report addresses environmental conditions only and is not the official South Florida Water Management District operations recommendation or decision.

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: John Mitnik, Assistant Executive Director, Executive Office Staff

FROM: SFWMD Staff Environmental Advisory Team

DATE: April 8, 2026

SUBJECT: Weekly Environmental Conditions for Systems Operations

Summary

Weather Conditions and Forecast

Wednesday morning, a surface low is expected to form near the southeast coast of the SFWMD and move quickly eastward as a frontal wave later Wednesday. As this occurs, a cold front will move through the remainder of the SFWMD during the afternoon before it stalls over the Florida Straits by Thursday morning. This pattern will support moderately heavy to heavy rainfall. Moreover, a tightening pressure gradient will generate brisk northeasterly to east-northeasterly winds. These winds will enhance moisture fluxes from the Atlantic and Gulf Stream, providing additional fuel for rainfall. Separately, the passage of cooler air behind the front will promote enhanced instability, particularly along the coastal zone of the east coast of the SFWMD, further supporting efficient rainfall production. Consequently, numerous showers and scattered thunderstorms are likely along and near the east coast, particularly along the Middle and Upper East Coast, where area-averaged rainfall exceeding one-half inch is likely. Amounts should decrease westward, with substantially lower values across the far western SFWMD, with little rain in the lake ‘shadow’ on the southwest or west-southwest side of Lake Okeechobee. On Thursday, a similar pattern will persist, though with somewhat reduced intensity as a result of the frontal wave exiting the scene. The focus will remain along and near the east coast. By Friday, there will be a marked reduction in rainfall. Some shallow moisture will still support lighter-intensity rain early in the day, particularly along the east coast of the SFWMD, but with drying conditions becoming more established by afternoon and evening. This pattern is expected to persist through the weekend and into early next week. Forecast confidence during this period is high regarding this transition to drier weather. For the week ending next Tuesday morning, total SFWMD rainfall is expected to be above or much above the long-term average. By Saturday morning, as much as two-thirds to three-quarters of a typical April’s rainfall will likely have occurred within the first ten days of the month, with the majority concentrated early this week. Additionally, a noteworthy 38 of the past 43 days since February 27 have recorded measurable rainfall, a remarkable shift from the much drier conditions associated with a moderately strong La Niña during the heart of the dry season, which has since transitioned to neutral conditions across the equatorial central and eastern Pacific.

Kissimmee

In the past week, releases were made as needed from East Lake Toho and Lake Toho to continue snail kite nesting season stage recessions to reach low pool by June 1, 2026. Releases from Lakes Kissimmee-Cypress-Hatchineha followed the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan. Weekly average discharge on April 5, 2026, was 380 cfs at S-65 and 340 cfs at S-65A. Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain was unchanged from 0.33 feet the previous week. The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River decreased from 8.6 mg/L the previous week to 8.1 mg/L, which is above both the potentially lethal level of 1.0 mg/L and the stressful level of 2.0 mg/L for Florida bass and other species.

Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee stage was 10.69 feet NAVD88 (12.00 ft NGVD29) on April 5, 2026, which was the same as the previous week and 0.26 feet lower than a month ago. Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) increased from 320 cfs the previous week to 750 cfs. Average daily outflows (excluding evapotranspiration) decreased from 1,900 cfs the previous week to 10 cfs. The most recent non-obscured satellite image from April 3, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests moderate to high cyanobacteria potential in Fisheating Bay, and low to moderate potential along much of the western and northern shorelines. The April 3 wading bird survey counted approximately 7,400 birds across 13 flocks actively foraging around the lake.

Estuaries

Total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged 188 cfs over the past week with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee. Mean surface salinities stayed the same at HR1, decreased slightly at the US1 Bridge, and increased slightly at the A1A Bridge over the past week. Salinity in the middle estuary was just within the upper stressed range (>25) for adult eastern oysters.

Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary averaged 707 cfs over the past week with 9 cfs coming from Lake Okeechobee. Over the past week, surface salinities decreased at Cape Coral and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary. Surface salinities were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass in the upper estuary at S-79 and Val-75, and in the damaging range (>15) at Ft. Myers. Salinities were in the optimal range (10-25) for adult oysters at Cape Coral, and in the upper stressed range (>25) at Shell Point and Sanibel.

Stormwater Treatment Areas

For the week ending Sunday, April 5th, 2026, no Lake Okeechobee water was delivered to the FEBs/STAs. The total amount of Lake releases sent to the FEBs/STAs in WY2026 is approximately 97,400 ac-feet. The total amount of inflows to the STAs in WY2026 is approximately 644,000 ac-feet. Most online STA treatment cells are at or above target stage. STA-1E Central Flow-way is offline for construction activities. STA-1W Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. STA-3/4 Central Flow-way is off-line for vegetation rehabilitation. Operational restrictions are in effect in STA-1E Western Flow-way and STA-3/4 Eastern Flow-way for vegetation management activities.

This week, if LOSOM recommends Lake releases to the WCAs and conditions allow, releases will be sent to STA-2.

Everglades

Rainfall amounts returned to below average across most of the Everglades Protection Area (EPA) last week, especially in WCA-3A where recession rates increased the most. The trend in rainfall was reflected by the increase in recession rates throughout the EPA; the average recession at monitored sites was 0.08 feet/week. Rainfall over the past few weeks has increased depths in southeastern Everglades National Park (ENP) compared to the past 20 years. In contrast, southern Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP), WCA-3A and WCA-3B continue to exhibit well below-average depths which have ecological effects including reducing the population sizes of already reduced prey populations, increasing the risk of damaging wildfire, promoting peat oxidation, and potential ridge/slough degradation. Wading bird activity remains very limited with nesting in numbers only occurring in WCA-1, some foraging occurring along the drying front in WCA-2A and there is very little foraging or nesting occurring in WCA-3A. Wood storks have abandoned nests system wide. This nesting season will likely be the lowest nesting effort observed in the Everglades in decades. Taylor Slough stages decreased last week but the rate of decline slowed, and stage remained above the recent averages for this time of year. Average Florida Bay salinity decreased slightly again last week, and the central and western regions fell into the interquartile range.

Supporting Information

Kissimmee Basin

Upper Kissimmee

On April 5, 2026, mean daily lake stages were 55.1 feet NAVD88 (1.1 feet below schedule) in East Lake Toho, 52.1 feet NAVD88 (1.1 feet below schedule) in Lake Toho, and 48.6 feet NAVD88 (2.3 feet below the Increment 1 Temporary Deviation schedule) in Lakes Kissimmee-Cypress-Hatchineha (KCH) (**Table KB-1**, **Figures KB-1-3**).

Lower Kissimmee

For the week ending April 5, 2026, mean weekly discharge was 380 cfs at S-65 and 340 cfs at S-65A. Mean weekly discharge from the Kissimmee River was 420 cfs at S-65D and 340 cfs at S-65E (**Table KB-2**). Mean weekly headwater stages were 45.3 feet NAVD88 at S-65A and 28.8 feet NAVD88 at S-65D. Mean weekly river channel stage increased from the previous week's value of 31.3 feet to 31.4 feet NAVD88 (**Figure KB-4**). Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain was unchanged from 0.33 feet the previous week (**Table KB-2**, **Figure KB-5**). The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River decreased from 8.6 mg/L the previous week to 8.1 mg/L (**Table KB-2**, **Figure KB-6**).

Water Management Recommendations

Continue the stage recessions in East Lake Toho and Lake Toho to reach their low pools on June 1, 2026. In KCH, follow the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A (**Figure KB-7**). With KCH stage in Zone B3, target flows between 300 and 1,400 cfs at S-65A, using the Increment 1 Interpolation Tool to determine discharge relative to stage in KCH; if stage decreases into Zone B4, target flows of 300 cfs.

Table KB-1. Average discharge for the preceding seven days, Sunday's average daily stage and Sunday's average daily departure from Kissimmee Chain of Lakes (KCOL) flood regulation lines or temporary schedules. All data are provisional.

Water Body	Structure	Stage Monitoring Site	Weekly (7-Day) Average Discharge (cfs)	Sunday Lake Stage (feet NAVD88)[a]	Schedule Type[b]	Sunday Schedule Stage (feet NAVD88)	Sunday Departure from Regulation (feet)	
							4/5/26	*3/29/26*
Lakes Hart and Mary Jane	S-62	LKMJ	11	59.3	R	59.5	-0.2	-0.4
Lakes Myrtle, Preston and Joel	S-57	S-57	4	59.5	R	59.5	0.0	0.0
Alligator Chain	S-60	ALLI	76	62.4	R	62.4	0.0	0.0
Lake Gentry	S-63	LKGT	130	59.8	R	59.9	-0.1	0.1
East Lake Toho	S-59	TOHOE	110	55.1	R	56.2	-1.1	-1.2
Lake Toho	S-61	TOHOW S-61	330	52.1	R	53.2	-1.1	-1.3
Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha	S-65	KUB011 LKIS5B	380	48.6	T	50.9	-2.3	-2.3

a. Names of in-lake monitoring sites and structures used to determine lake stage. If more than one site is listed, an average is reported.

b. A: projected recession line; R: USACE regulation schedule; S: temporary recession target line; T: temporary schedule; NA: not applicable or not available.

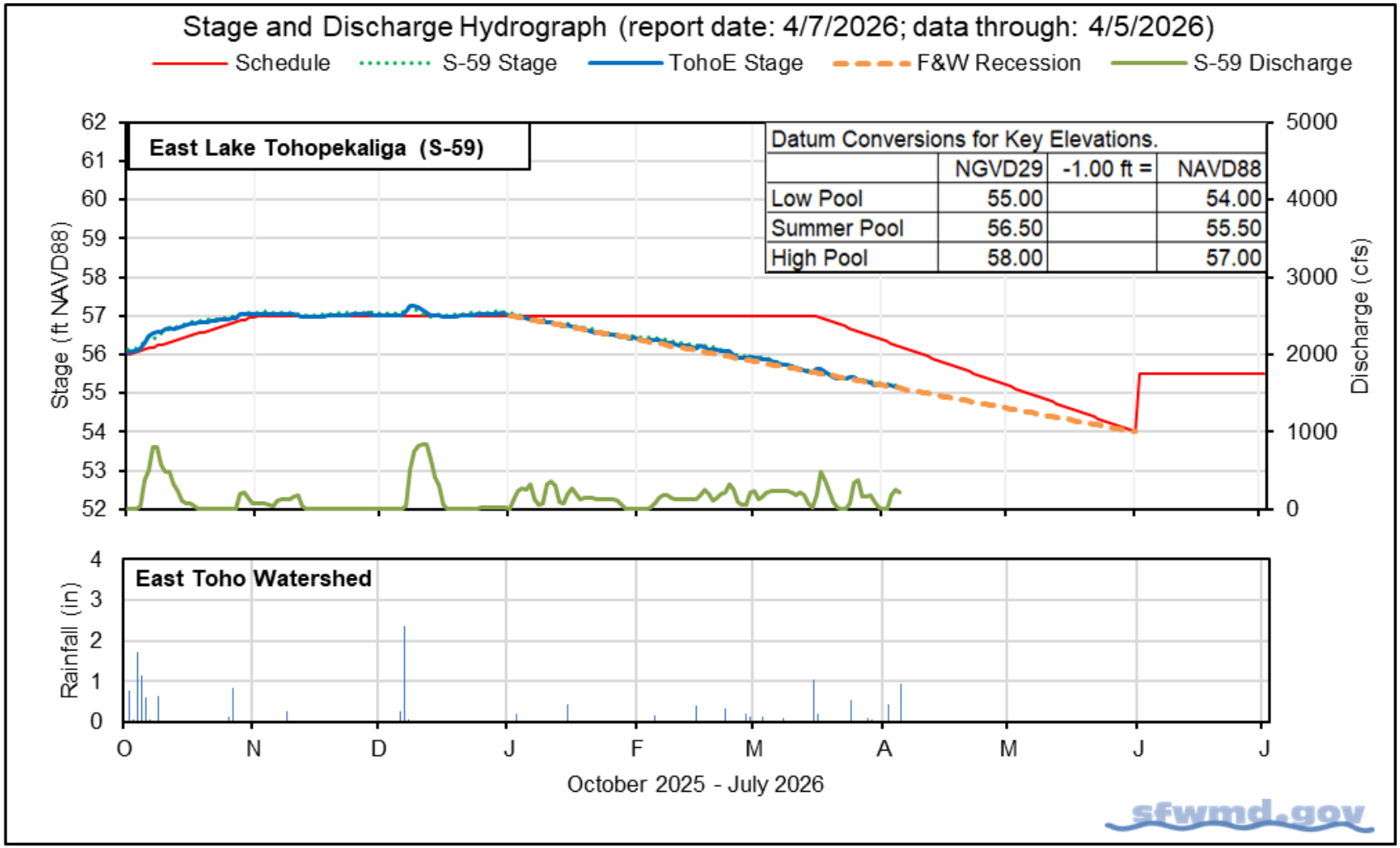


Figure KB-1. East Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

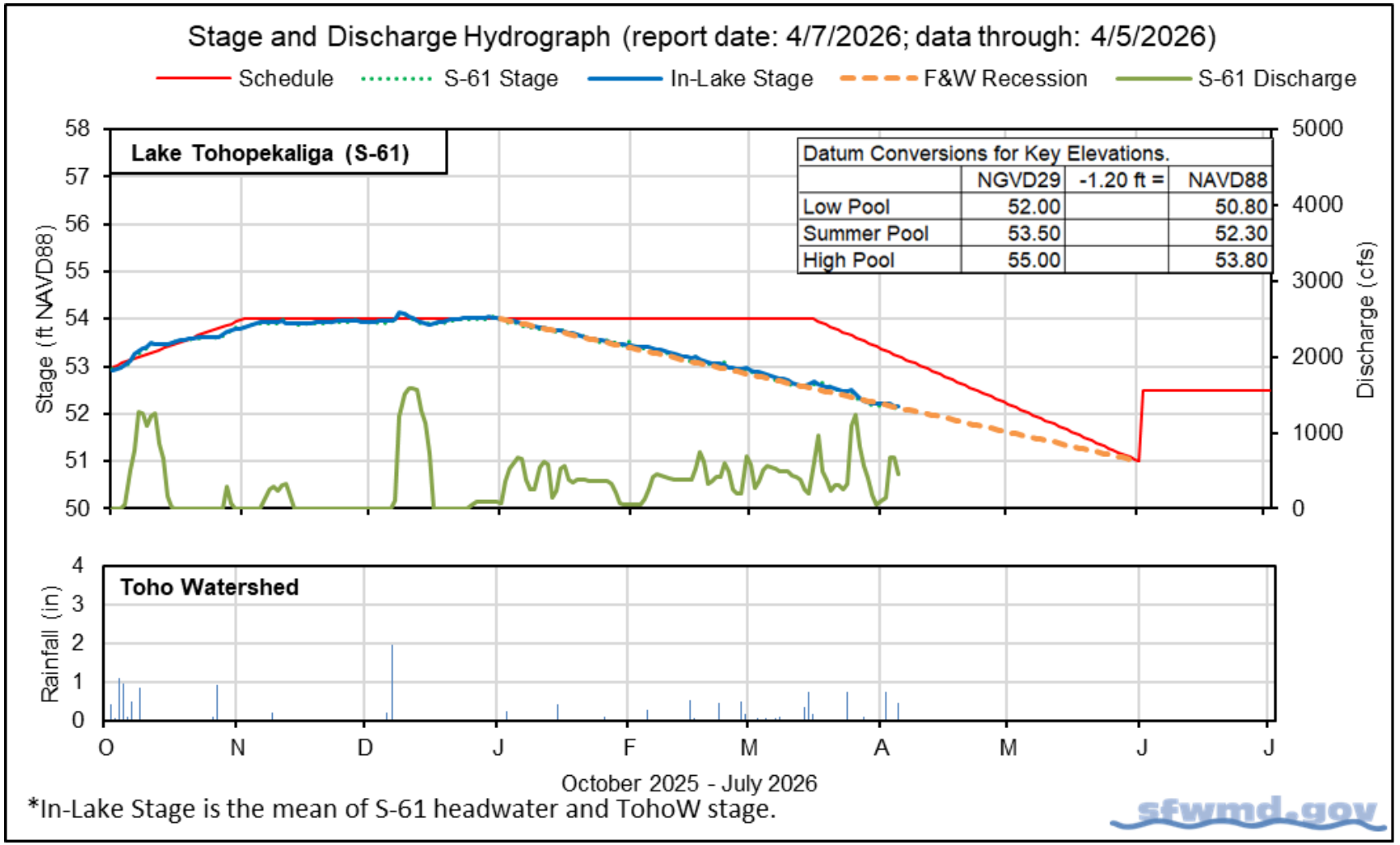


Figure KB-2. Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

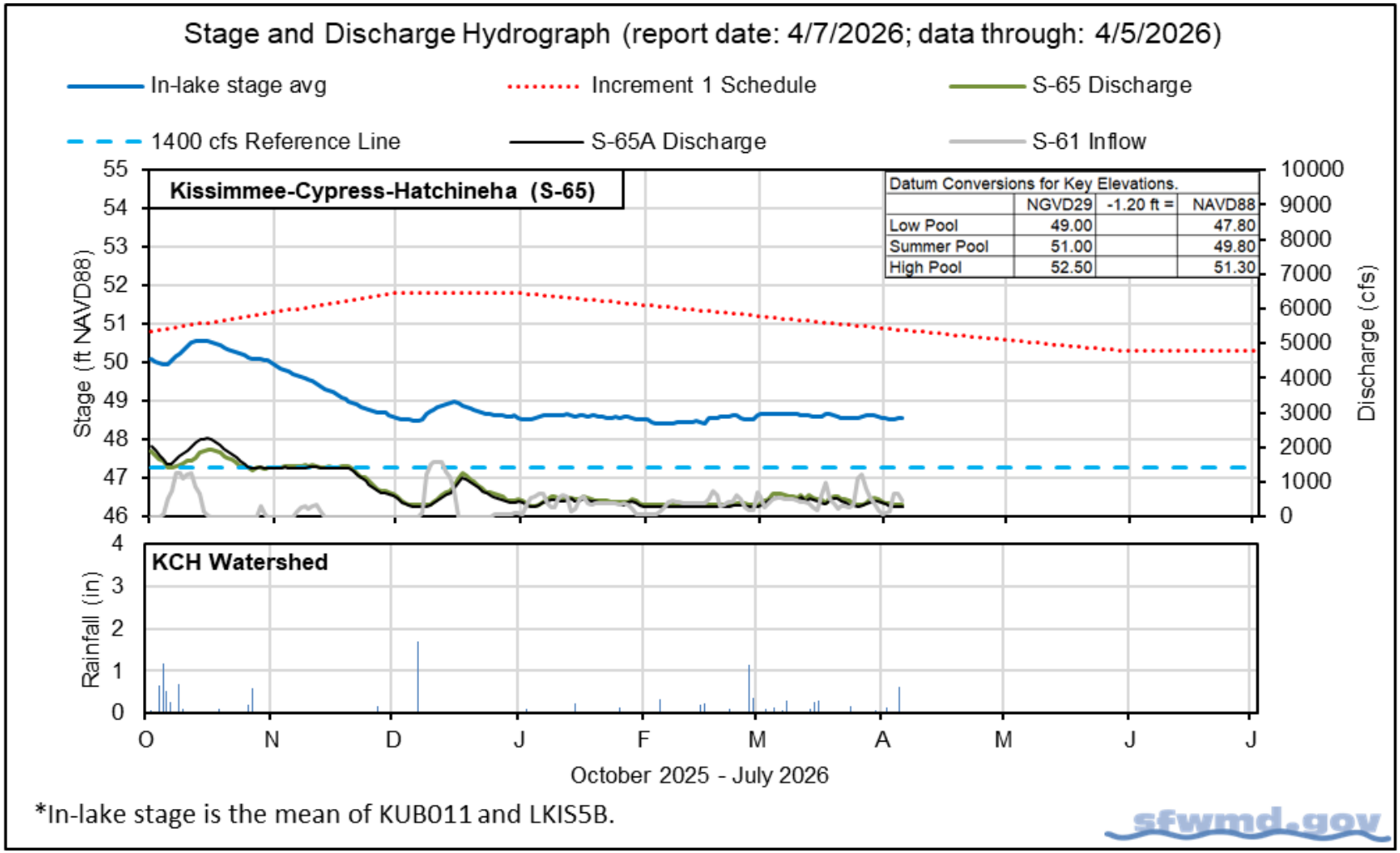


Figure KB-3. Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

Table KB-2. One- and seven-day average discharge and stage at Lower Kissimmee basin structures, river channel dissolved oxygen concentrations and water depths in the Phase I area floodplain. All data are provisional.

Metric	Location	Sunday Daily Average	Weekly Average for Previous Seven Day Periods			
		4/5/26	4/5/26	3/29/26	3/22/26	3/15/26
Discharge	S-65	340	380	420	510	570
Discharge	S-65A[a]	300	340	360	450	500
Headwater Stage (feet NAVD88)	S-65A	45.3	45.3	45.4	45.2	45.2
Discharge	S-65D[b]	350	420	410	560	600
Headwater Stage (feet NAVD88)	S-65D[c]	24.6	28.8	28.8	29.4	29.7
Discharge (cfs)	S-65E[d]	300	340	320	420	450
Discharge (cfs)	S-67	0	0	0	0	0
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)[e]	Phase I, II/III river channel	7.5	8.1	8.6	8.5	7.6
River channel mean stage (feet NAVD88)[f]	Phase I river channel	31.0	31.4	31.3	32.0	32.3
Mean depth (feet)[g]	Phase I & II/III floodplain	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33

a. Combined discharge from main and auxiliary structures.

b. Combined discharge from S-65D, S-65DX1, and S-65DX2.

c. Average stage from S-65D and S-65DX1.

d. Combined discharge from S-65E and S-65EX1.

e. Dissolved oxygen is the average of values from sondes KRBN, PC62, PC33, PD62R, and PD42R.

f. Mean of five river channel stations (PC62, KRDR02, KRBN, PC33, PC11) in the Phase I area.

g. One-day spatial average obtained from the South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT).

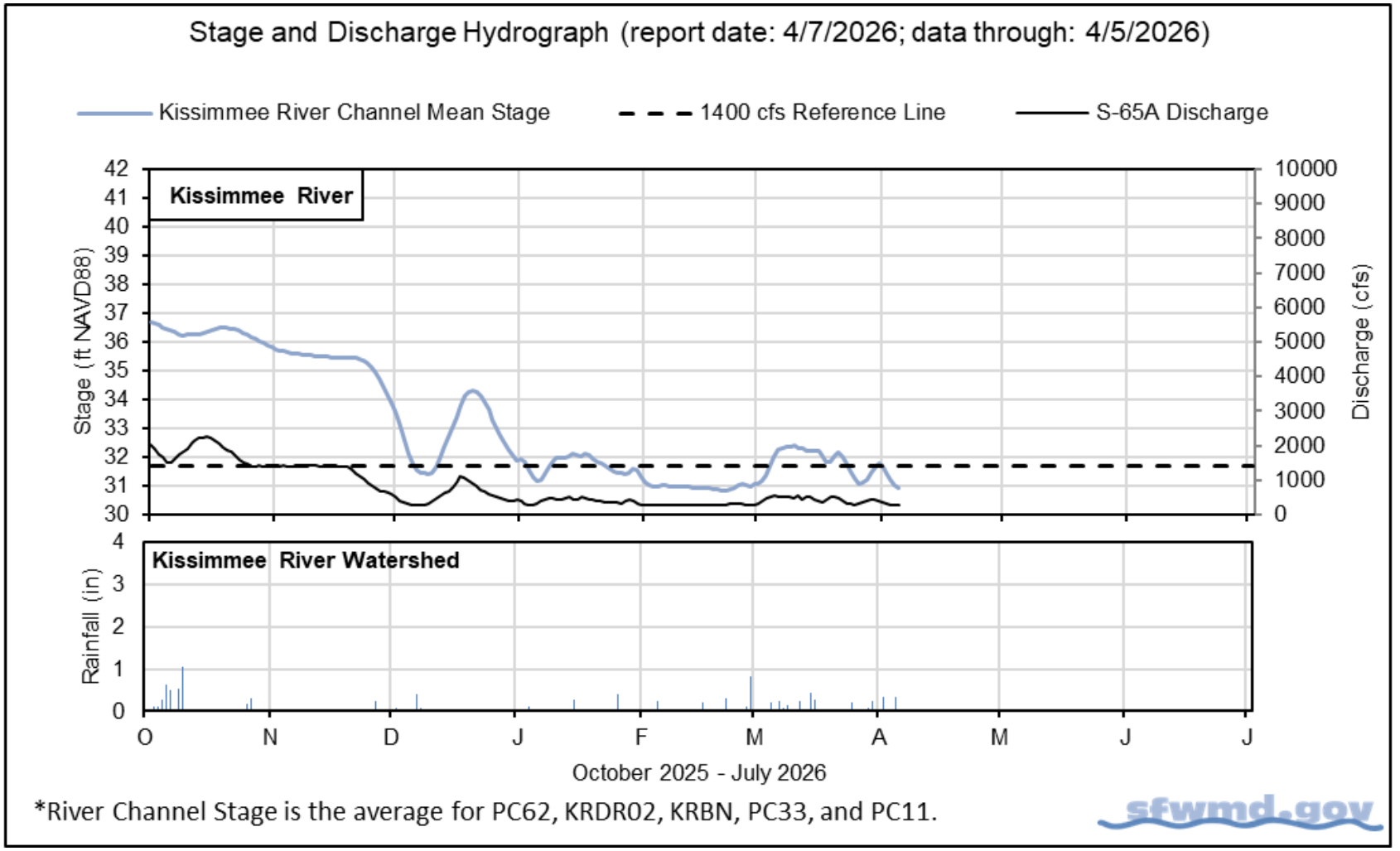


Figure KB-4. Kissimmee River stage, discharge, and rainfall.

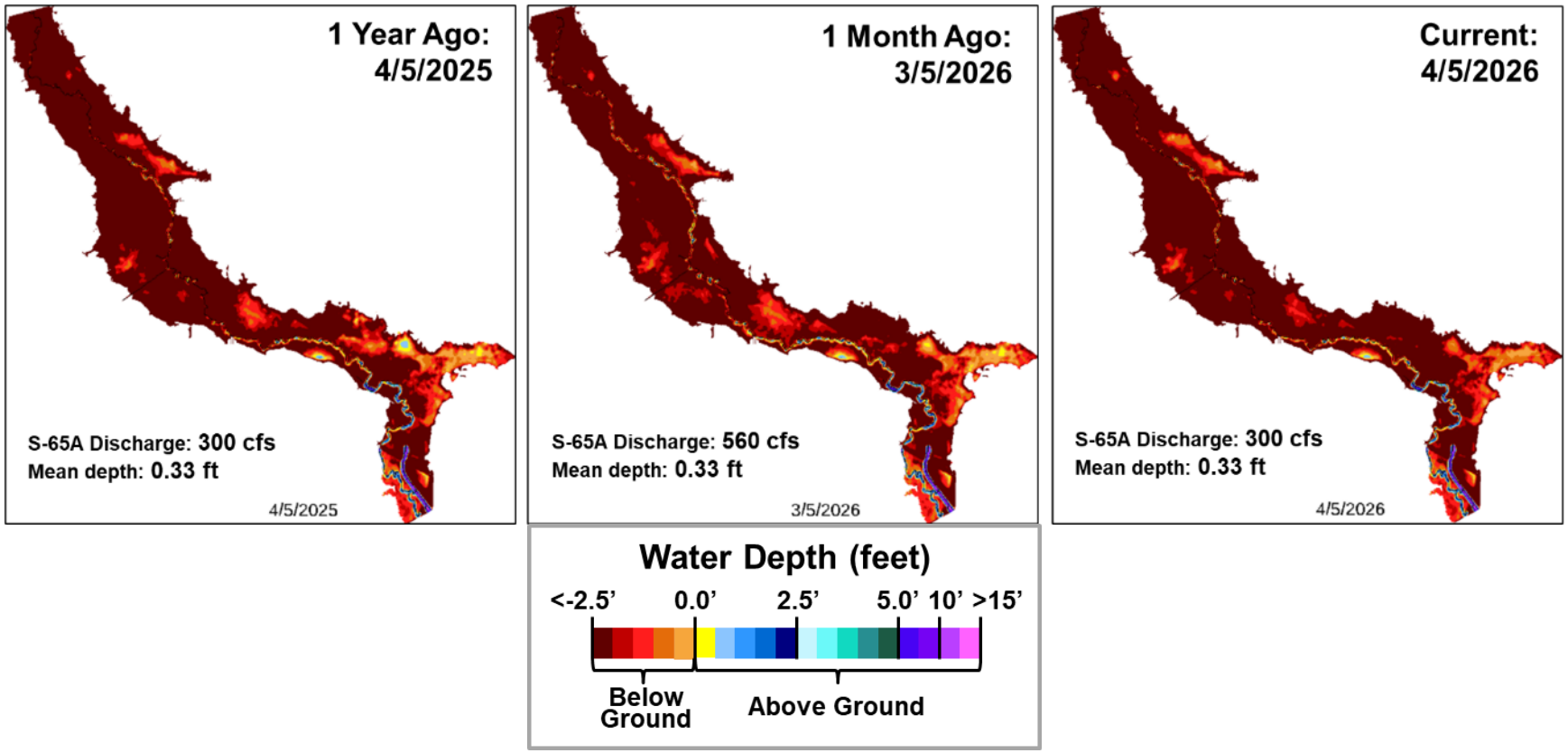


Figure KB-5. Phase I-II-III area Kissimmee River floodplain water depths (from left to right) one year ago, one month ago, and current.

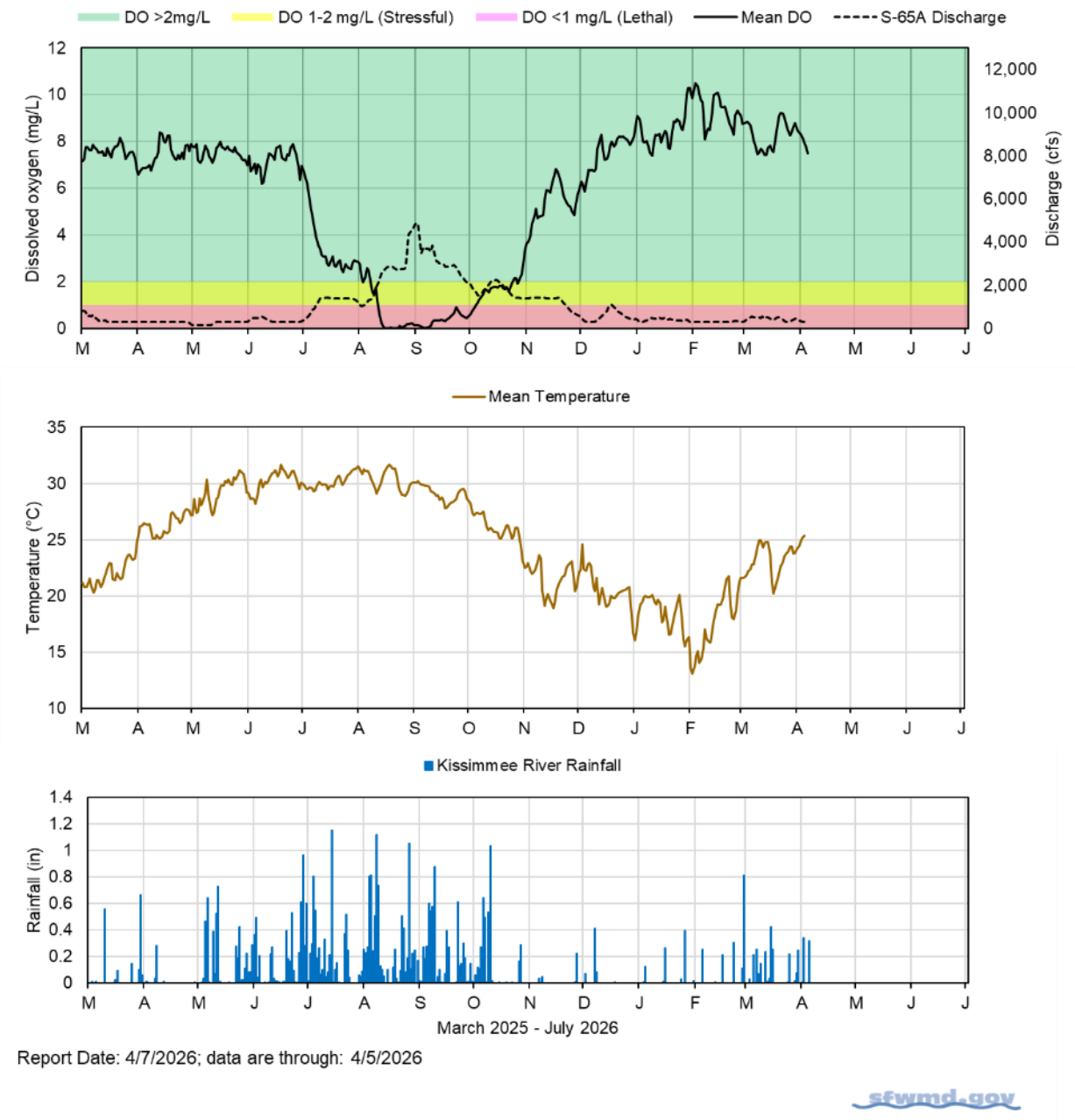


Figure KB-6. Kissimmee River channel mean daily dissolved oxygen concentration (mg/L), S-65A discharge (cfs), temperature (°C) and rainfall (inches). Dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature are mean daily values averaged for PC62, KRDR02, KRBN, PC33, PC11, PD62R, and PD42R with an average of five stations reporting this week. Rainfall values are daily totals for Kissimmee River (Pool BCD) AHED watershed.

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

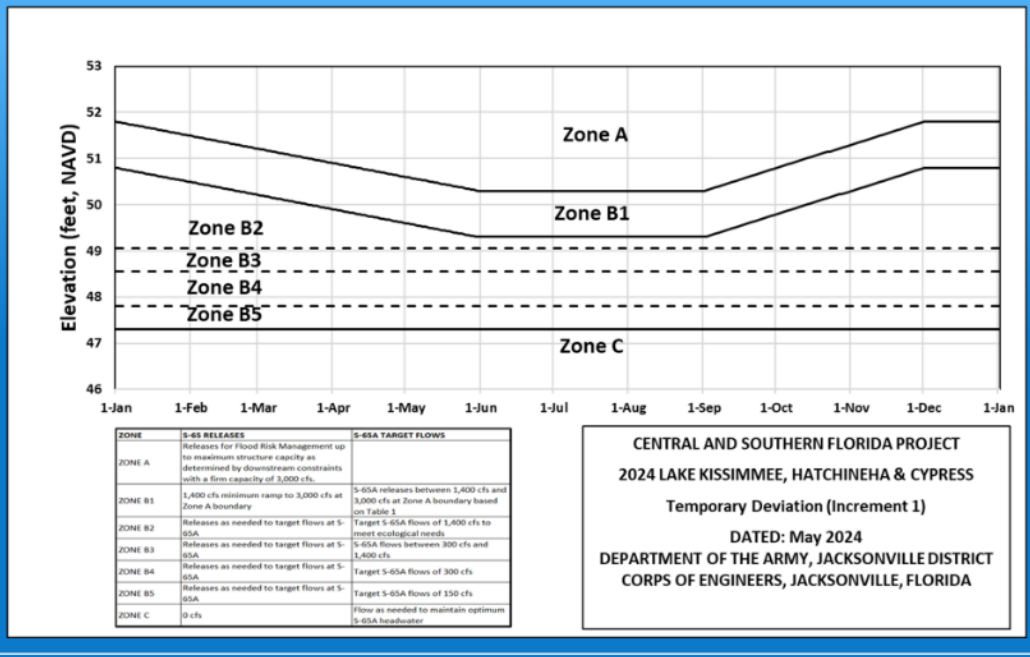
HRS Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A

Discharge Guidance for Increment I Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan		
ZONE	**S-65 RELEASES**	**S-65A TARGET FLOWS**
ZONE A	Releases for Flood Risk Management up to maximum structure capcity as determined by downstream constraints with a firm capacity of 3,000 cfs.	
ZONE B1	1,400 cfs minimum ramp to 3,000 cfs at Zone A boundary	S-65A releases between 1,400 cfs and 3,000 cfs at Zone A boundary based on Table 1
ZONE B2	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 1,400 cfs to meet ecological needs
ZONE B3	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	S-65A flows between 300 cfs and 1,400 cfs
ZONE B4	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 300 cfs
ZONE B5	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 150 cfs
ZONE C	0 cfs	Flow as needed to maintain optimum S-65A headwater

Table KB-3. Maximum Rate of Change Limits for S-65A

MAXIMUM Release Rate of Chane Limits for S-65A. **In general recommended rates of change will be slower than shown in this table.**

Q (cfs)	Maximum rate of INCREASE (cfs/day)	Maximum rate of DECREASE (cfs/day)
0-300	50	-50
301-650	75	-75
651-1400	150	-150
1401-3000	300	-600
>3000	1000	-2000



ZONE	S-65 RELEASES	S-65A TARGET FLOWS
ZONE A	Releases for Flood Risk Management up to maximum structure capcity as determined by downstream constraints with a firm capacity of 3,000 cfs.	
ZONE B1	1,400 cfs minimum ramp to 3,000 cfs at Zone A boundary	S-65A releases between 1,400 cfs and 3,000 cfs at Zone A boundary based on Table 1
ZONE B2	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 1,400 cfs to meet ecological needs
ZONE B3	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	S-65A flows between 300 cfs and 1,400 cfs
ZONE B4	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 300 cfs
ZONE B5	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 150 cfs
ZONE C	0 cfs	Flow as needed to maintain optimum S-65A headwater

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FLORIDA PROJECT

2024 LAKE KISSIMMEE, HATCHINEHA & CYPRESS

Temporary Deviation (Increment 1)

DATED: May 2024

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

Other Considerations

- When possible, limit lake ascension rate in the Jun 1 - Aug 15 window to 0.25 ft per 7 days in Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, Hatchineha (S-65), East Toho (S-59) and Toho (S-61).
- If outlook is for extreme dry conditions meet with KB staff to discuss modifications to this plan.

sfwmd.gov

Slide Revised 7/29/2024

10

Figure KB-7. Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A.

Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee stage was 10.69 feet NAVD88 (12.00 ft NGVD29) on April 5, 2026, which was the same as the previous week and 0.26 feet lower than a month ago (**Figure LO-1**). Lake stage is in Zone D of the regulation schedule, is 0.43 feet above the water shortage management band (**Figure LO-2**), and 0.82 feet below the ecological envelope (**Figure LO-3**). According to NEXRAD, 0.37 inches of rain fell directly over the Lake during the previous week, and 1.03 inches were lost to evapotranspiration.

Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) increased from 320 cfs the previous week to 750 cfs. The highest average inflow came from the Kissimmee River (340 cfs via S-65E(X1)); however, for 2 days (March 30-31) an average of 1,280 cfs were backpumped from south of the lake through the S-2/S-351 structure. Average daily outflows (excluding evapotranspiration) decreased from 1,900 cfs the previous week to 10 cfs. The only release was to the west through the S-77 structure (10 cfs). **Figures LO-4 and LO-5** show the combined average daily inflows and outflows for the lake over the past eight weeks, and the average inflows and outflows last week, respectively.

In the most recent non-obscured satellite image from April 6, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests moderate to high cyanobacteria potential in Fisheating Bay, and low to moderate potential along much of the western and northern shorelines. (**Figure LO-6**).

The seventh wading bird survey of the 2026 season occurred on April 3. Approximately 7,400 birds across 13 flocks were seen actively foraging around the lake (**Figure LO-7**). This is less than half the number of birds seen on March 19, but still higher than the 10-year running average for April. The decrease is likely due to recent rains mildly and temporarily improving the poor foraging conditions outside of the lake.

Note: All data presented in this report are provisional and are subject to change.

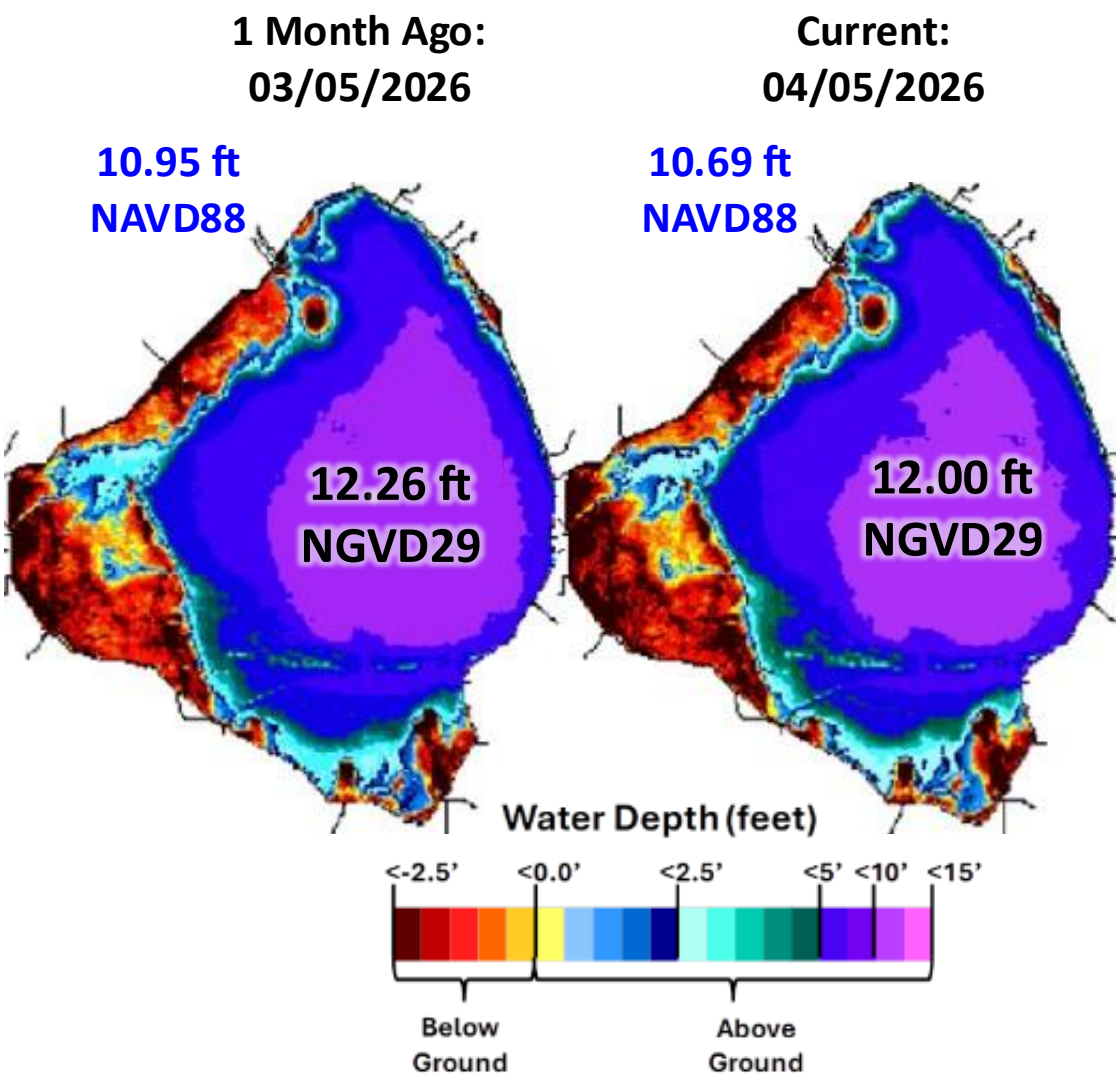


Figure LO-1. Lake Okeechobee water depth estimates based on South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT).

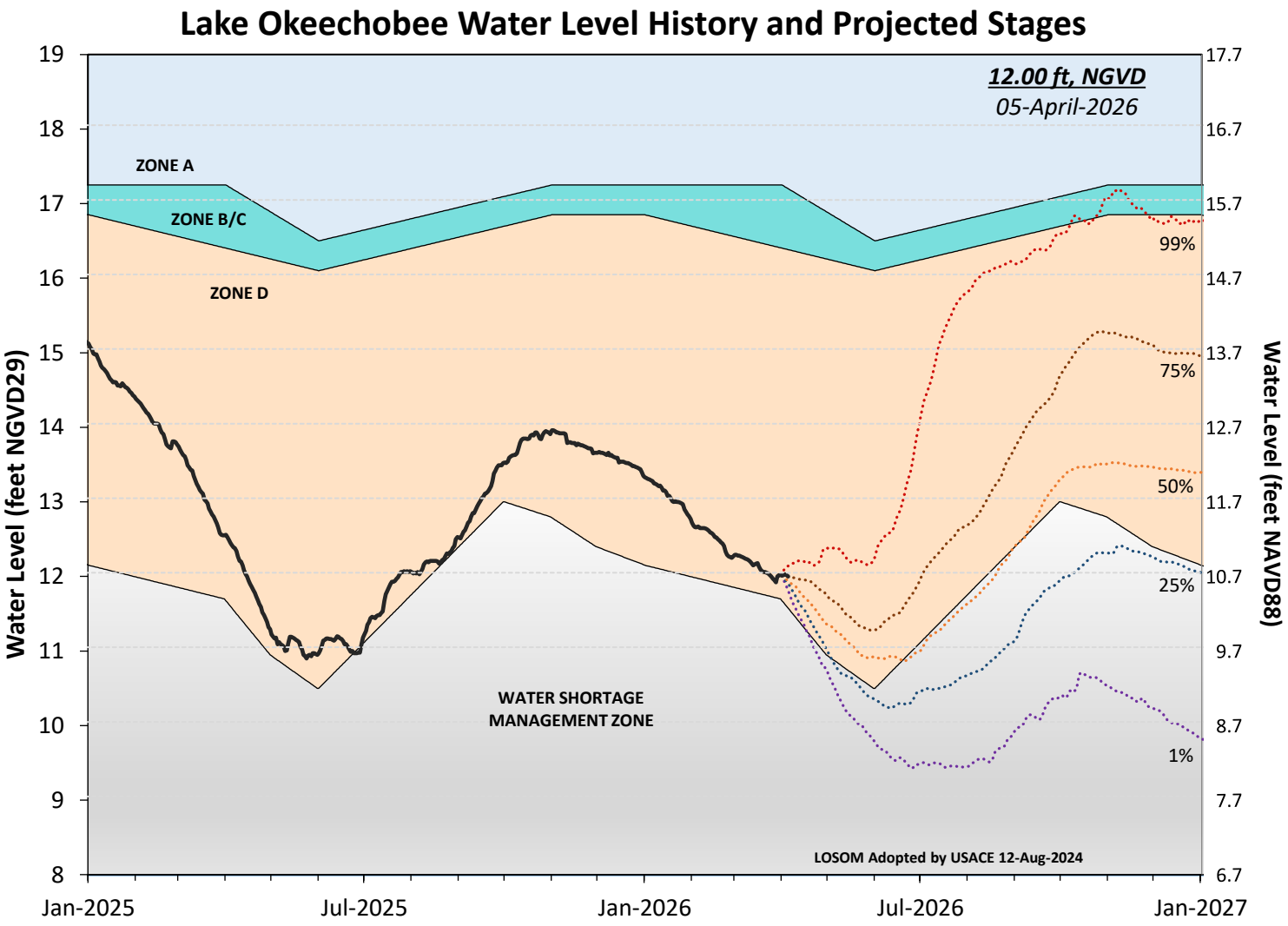


Figure LO-2. Recent Lake Okeechobee stages with projected stages based on a conditional position analysis. Note: stages are in NGVD29, approximate NAVD88 values are shown for reference.

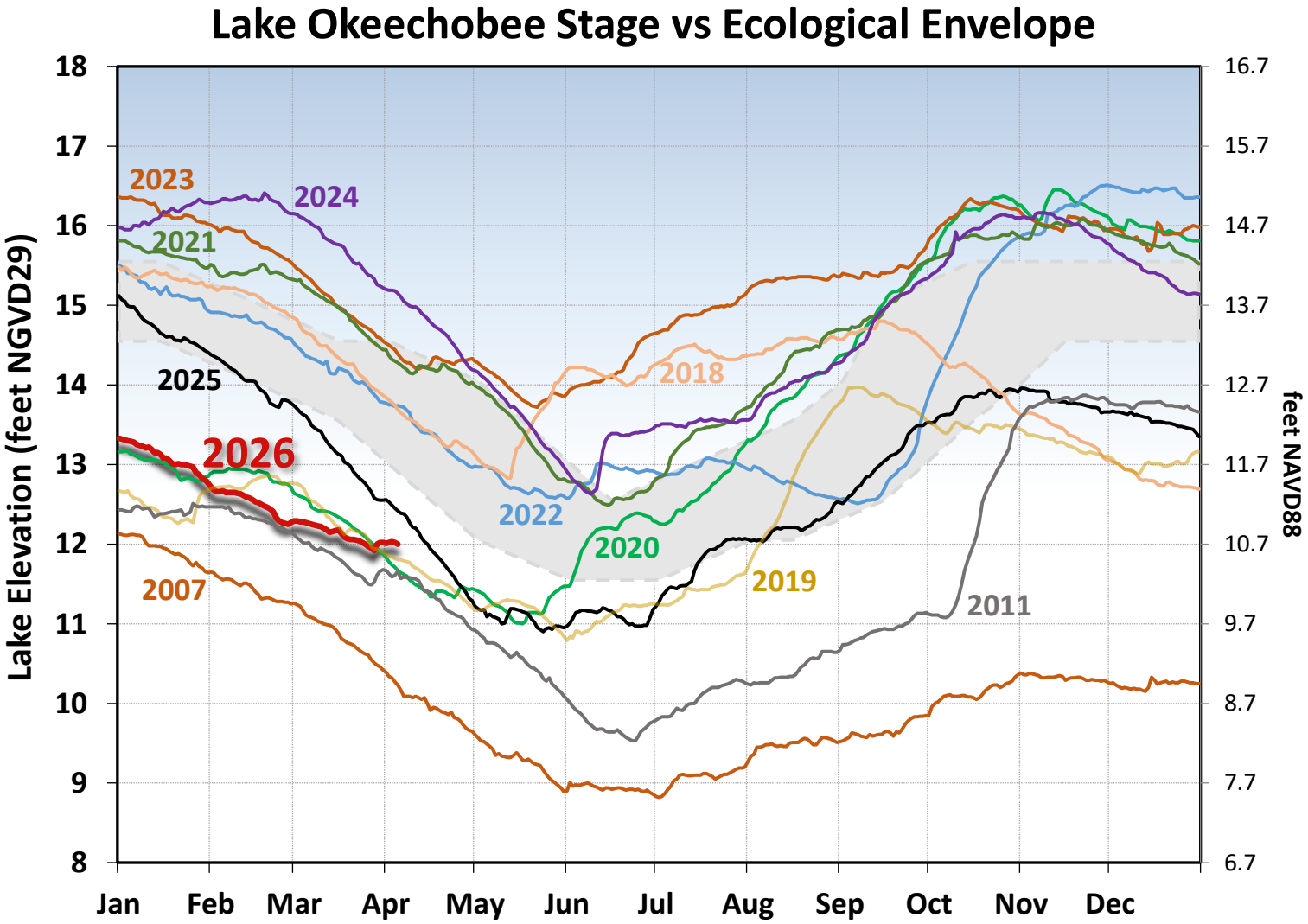


Figure LO-3. The current and select prior year's annual lake stage hydrographs in comparison to the Lake Okeechobee ecological envelope (light grey).

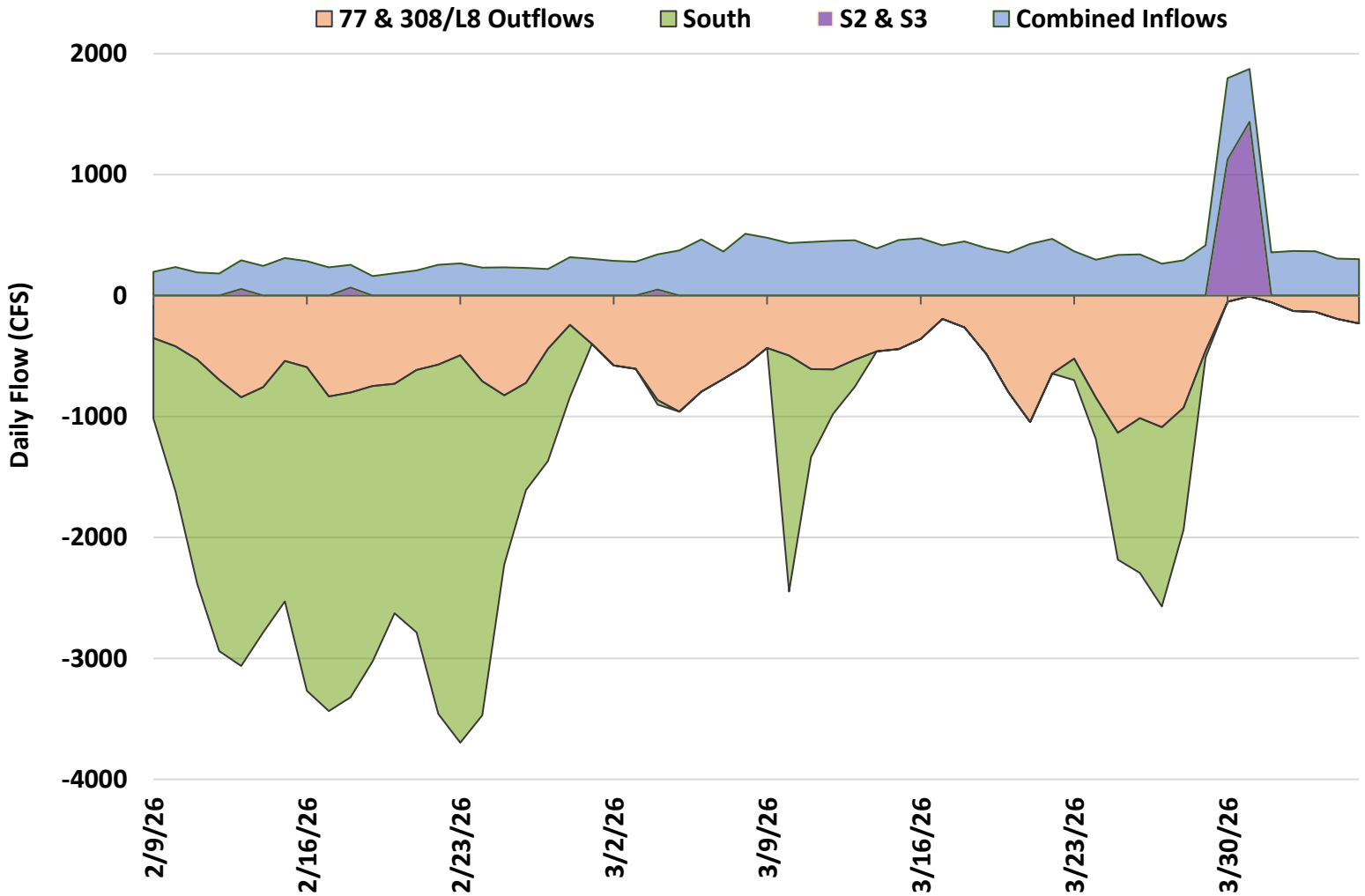


Figure LO-4. Major inflows (orange) to and outflows east and west (blue) from Lake Okeechobee. Outflows south are shown in green. Flows into Lake Okeechobee from the L-8 canal through S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) or from the C-44 canal through the S-308 are included as inflows. Conversely, flows from Lake Okeechobee into the L-8 or C-44 canals are included with outflows. Inflows are shown as positive values; outflows are negative. Outflows through the S-77 (Caloosahatchee) and S-308 (C-44 Canal) structures are based on downstream gauges to include flows to lock openings for navigation.

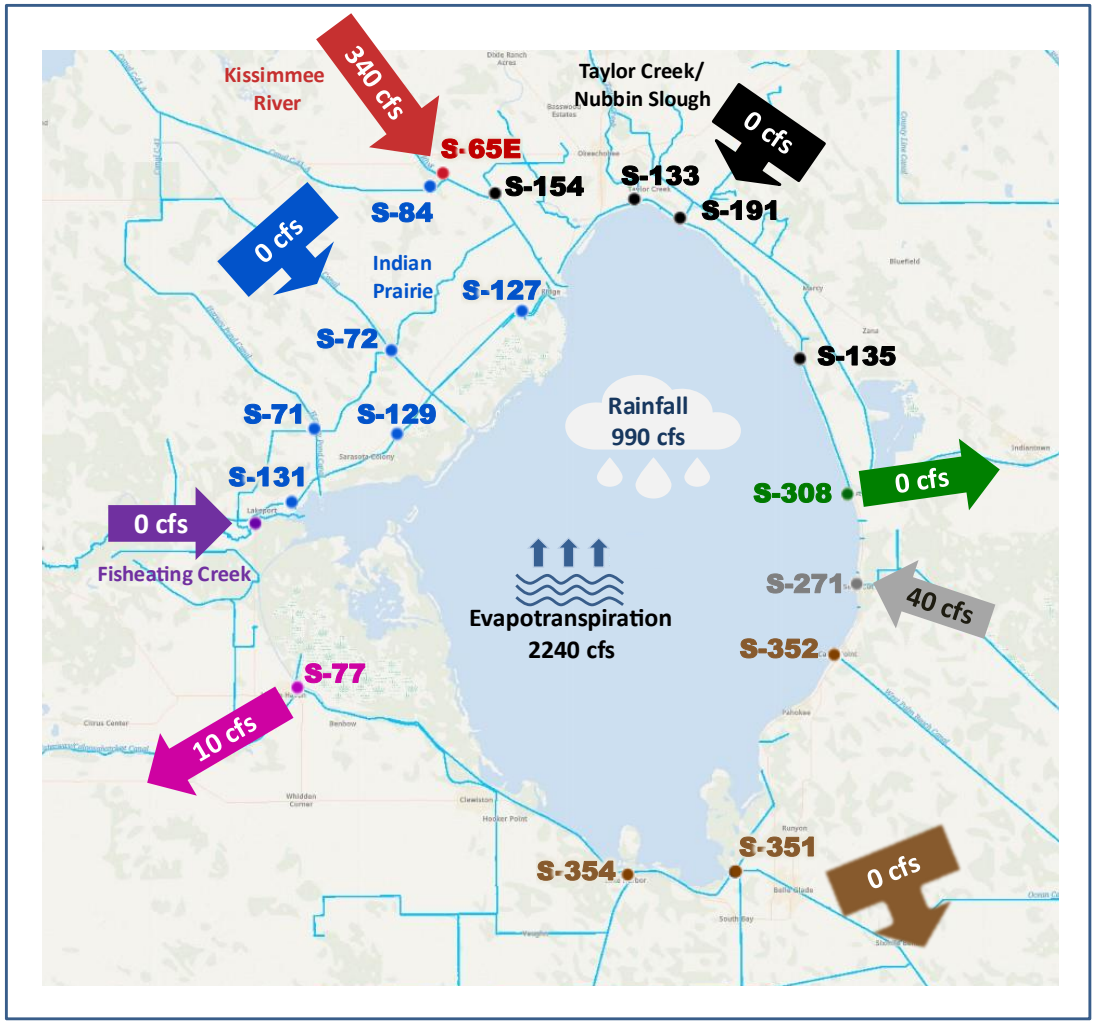


Figure LO-5. Inflows into Lake Okeechobee from Indian Prairie basins, Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough, Kissimmee River and Fisheating Creek (currently no flow data available for FECR), and outflows to the west via S-77, to the east via S-308, to the south via S-351, S-352, S-354, and to southeast via S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) for the week of Mar 30 – Apr 5, 2026.

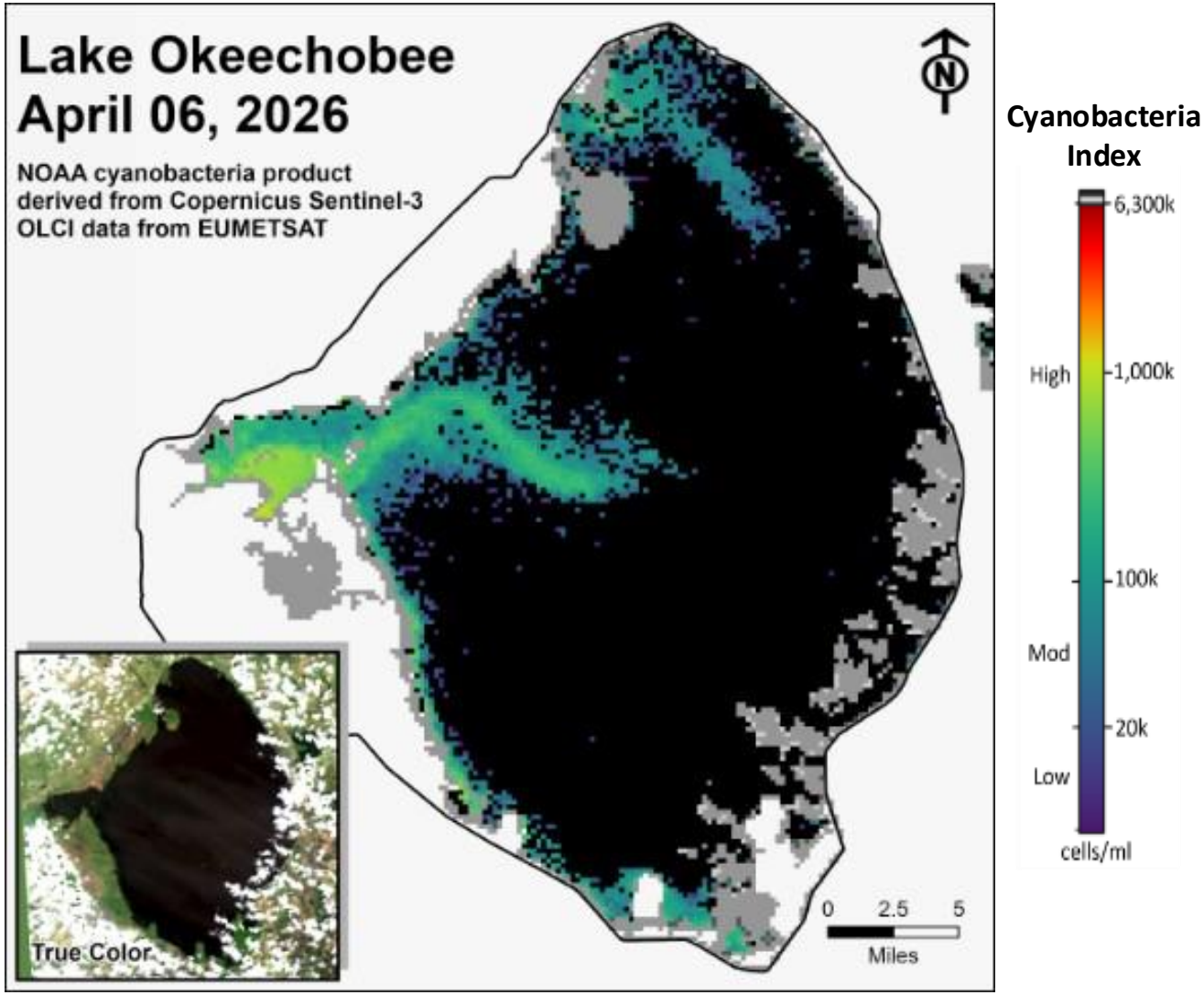


Figure LO-6. Cyanobacteria bloom index level on Lake Okeechobee, based on NOAA's harmful algal bloom monitoring system. Gray color indicates cloud cover. *Provisional NOAA image, subject to change*.

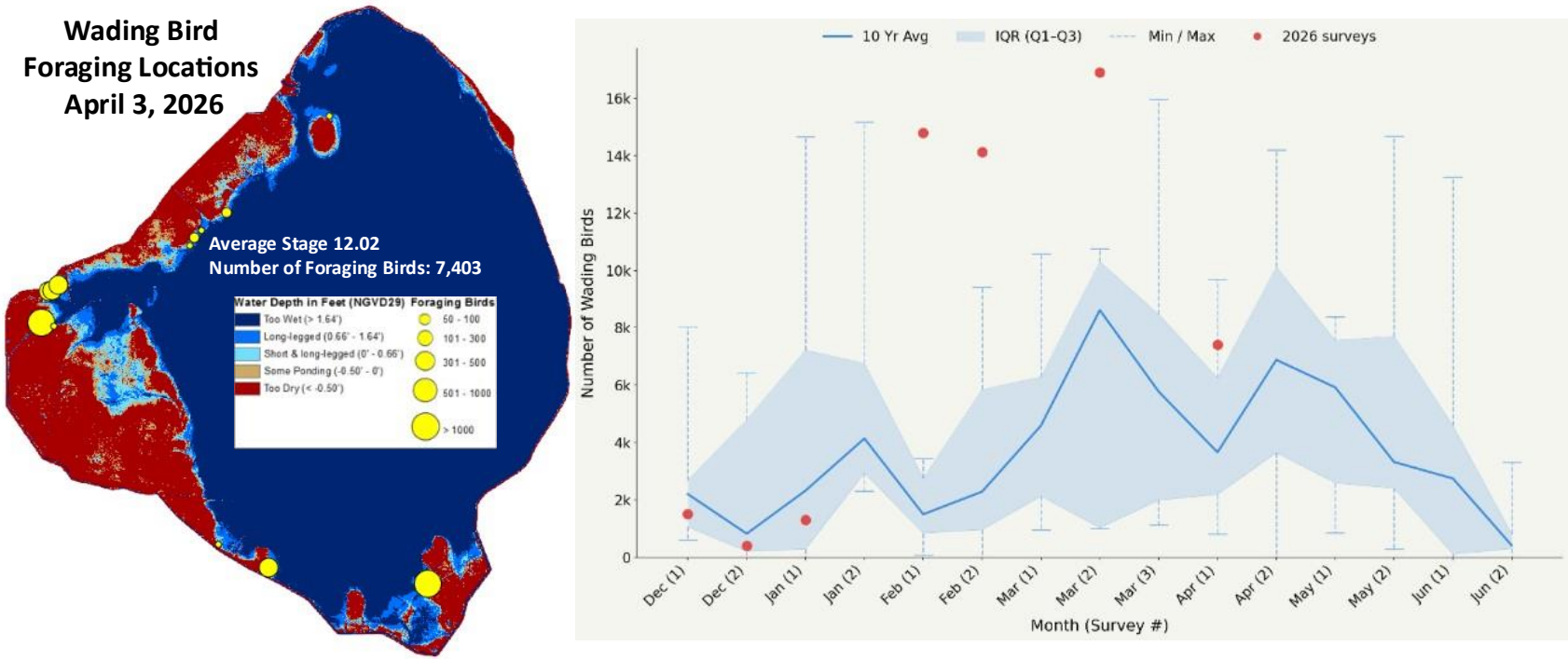


Figure LO-7. Results from the wading bird survey flight conducted on April 3, 2026. Map graphic indicates location of the 13 flocks and approximate abundance of actively foraging wading birds on Lake Okeechobee. Graph compares the current seasons wading bird counts (red dots) to the mean, min, max, and interquartile ranges from the preceding 10 years of surveys.

Estuaries

St. Lucie Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was 188 cfs (**Figures ES-1** and **ES-2**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 169 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-2**.

Over the past week, surface salinities stayed the same at HR1, decreased slightly at the US1 Bridge, and increased slightly at the A1A Bridge (**Table ES-1** and **Figure ES-3**). The seven-day moving average of the surface and bottom salinities at the US1 Bridge was 25.5. Salinity conditions in the middle estuary were estimated to be within the upper stressed range for adult eastern oysters (**Figure ES-4**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rate reported by the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) for March was 0 spat/shell at Rio, which is equal to the previous month (**Figure ES-5**). Oyster density at Rio was 464 oysters/m^2, which is slightly lower than the previous survey in December.

Caloosahatchee River Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary was 707 cfs (**Figures ES-6** and **ES-7**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 471 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from the contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-7**.

Over the past week, surface salinities decreased at Cape Coral and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary (**Table ES-2** and **Figures ES-8** and **ES-9**). The seven-day mean salinities (**Table ES-2**) were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass at S-79 and Val I-75 and were in the damaging range (>15) at Fort Myers. The seven-day mean salinity values were within the optimal range for adult eastern oysters at Cape Coral and in the upper stressed range at Shell Point and at Sanibel (**Figure ES-10**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rates reported by the FWRI in March were 0.03 spat/shell at Iona Cove and 2.9 spat/shell at Bird Island, which is an increase at both sites from the previous month (**Figures ES-11 and ES-12**). Oyster density at Iona Cove was 784 oysters/m^2, and 1,310 oysters/m^2, which are both slightly lower than the previous surveys in December.

Surface salinity at Val I-75 was forecast for the next two weeks using an autoregression model (Qiu and Wan, 2013[1]) coupled with a linear reservoir model for the tidal basin. Model scenarios included pulse releases at S-79 ranging from 450 to 2,000 cfs, with estimated tidal basin inflows of 33 cfs. Model results from all scenarios predict daily salinity to be 7.8 or lower and the 30-day moving average surface salinity to be 8.0 or lower at Val I-75 at the end of the two-week period (**Table ES-3** and **Figure ES-13**). This keeps predicted salinities in the upper estuary within the optimal salinity range (0-10) for tape grass.

---

[1] Qui, C., and Y. Wan. 2013. Time series modeling and prediction of salinity in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary. *Water Resources Research* 49:5804-5816.

Red Tide

The FWRI reported on April 2, 2026, that *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide dinoflagellate, was not observed in any samples collected within the District region.

Water Management Recommendations

Lake stage is in Zone D. Current climatological and hydrological conditions are normal. The LOSOM release guidance suggests up to 2,000 cfs release at S-79 to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary and no releases at S-80 to the St. Lucie Estuary.

Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels

The minimum flows and levels (MFL) for the Caloosahatchee River Estuary is a 30-day moving average flow of 457 cfs at S-79. The current 30-day average flow at S-79 is 535 cfs (**Figure ES-14)**.

The MFL for the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River is a) flows at Lainhart Dam maintained at 35 cfs and b) the 20-day moving average salinity of 2 or less at River Mile (RM) 9.2. An exceedance occurs when flows decline below 35 cfs for more than 20 consecutive days or when the 20-day moving average salinity at River Mile 9.2 exceeds 2. The current daily average flow at Lainhart Dam is 36 cfs **(Figure ES-15),** and the 20-day average salinity at RM 9.2 is 0.7 **(Figure ES-16)**.

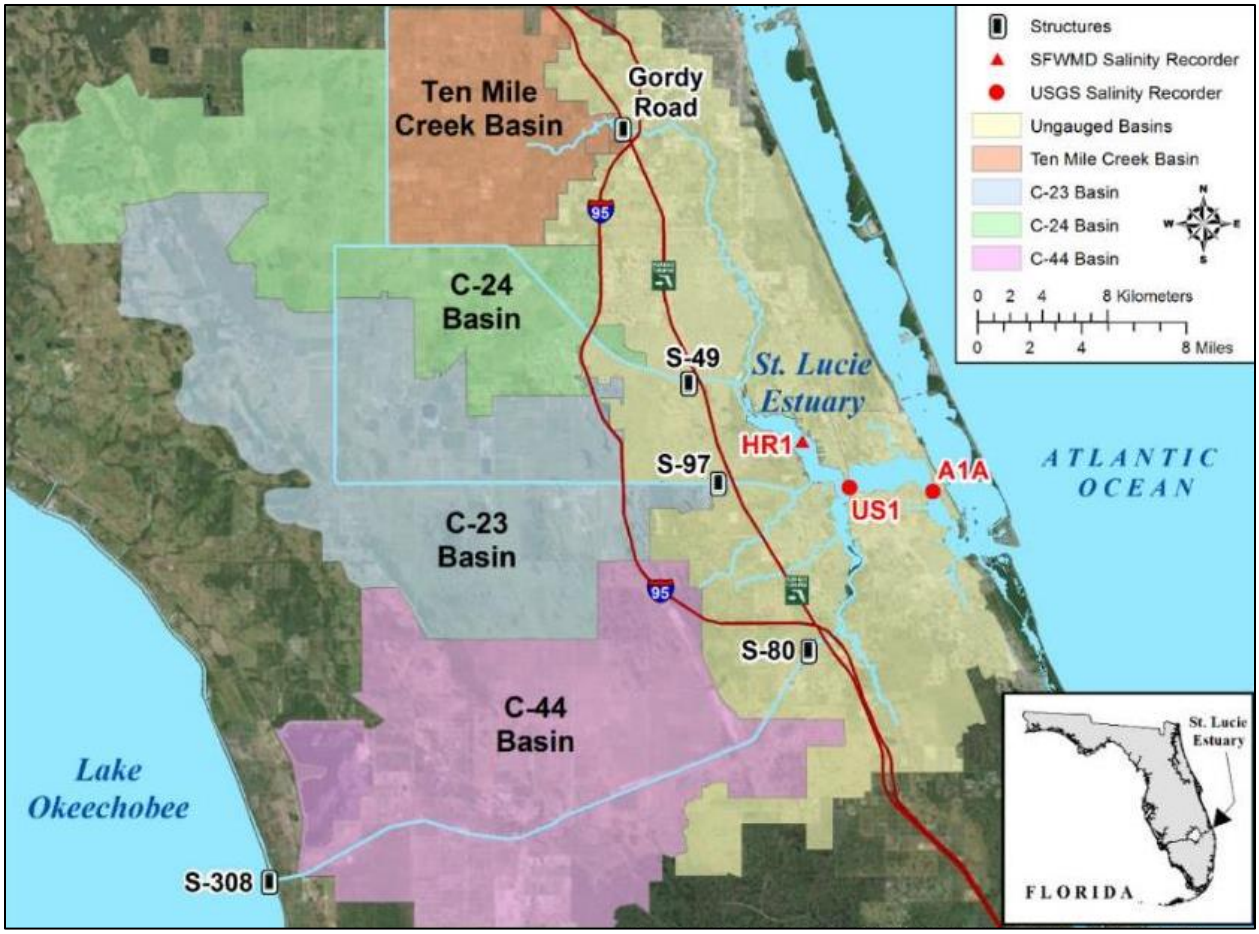


Figure ES-1. Basins, water control structures and salinity monitoring sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

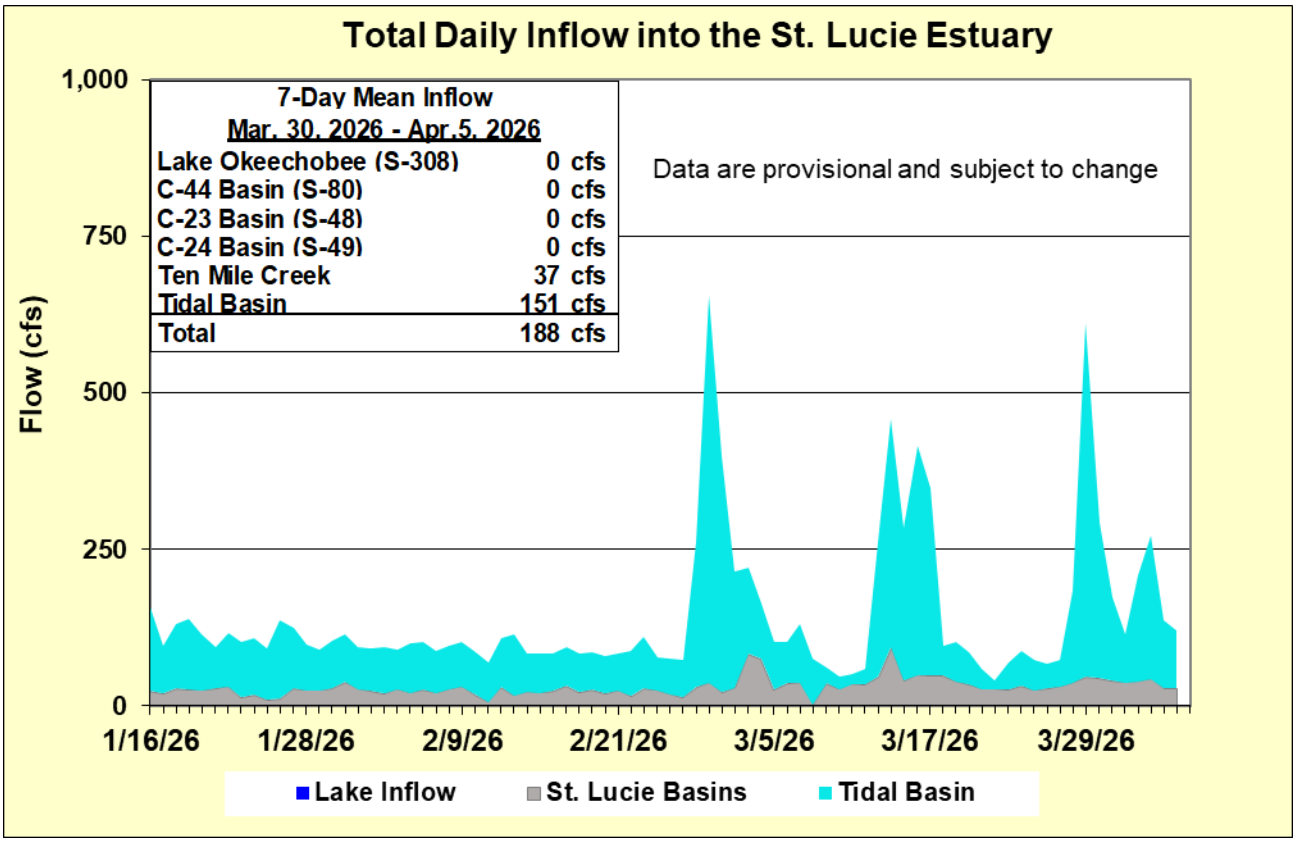


Figure ES-2. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee and runoff from the C-44, C-23, C-24, Ten Mile Creek, and Tidal Basins into the St. Lucie Estuary.

Table ES-1. Seven-day mean salinity at oyster monitoring sites in the St. Lucie Estuary. Current means are in bold font; previous week's means are in parentheses. The envelope reflects the optimum salinity range for adult eastern oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) in the estuary. Data are provisional.

Sampling Site	Surface	Bottom	Optimum Envelope
HR1 (North Fork)	**21.4** (21.4)	**22.3** (23.2)	10.0 – 25.0
US1 Bridge	**25.3** (25.6)	**25.7** (26.0)	10.0 – 25.0
A1A Bridge	**31.4** (31.3)	**31.7** (32.0)	10.0 – 25.0

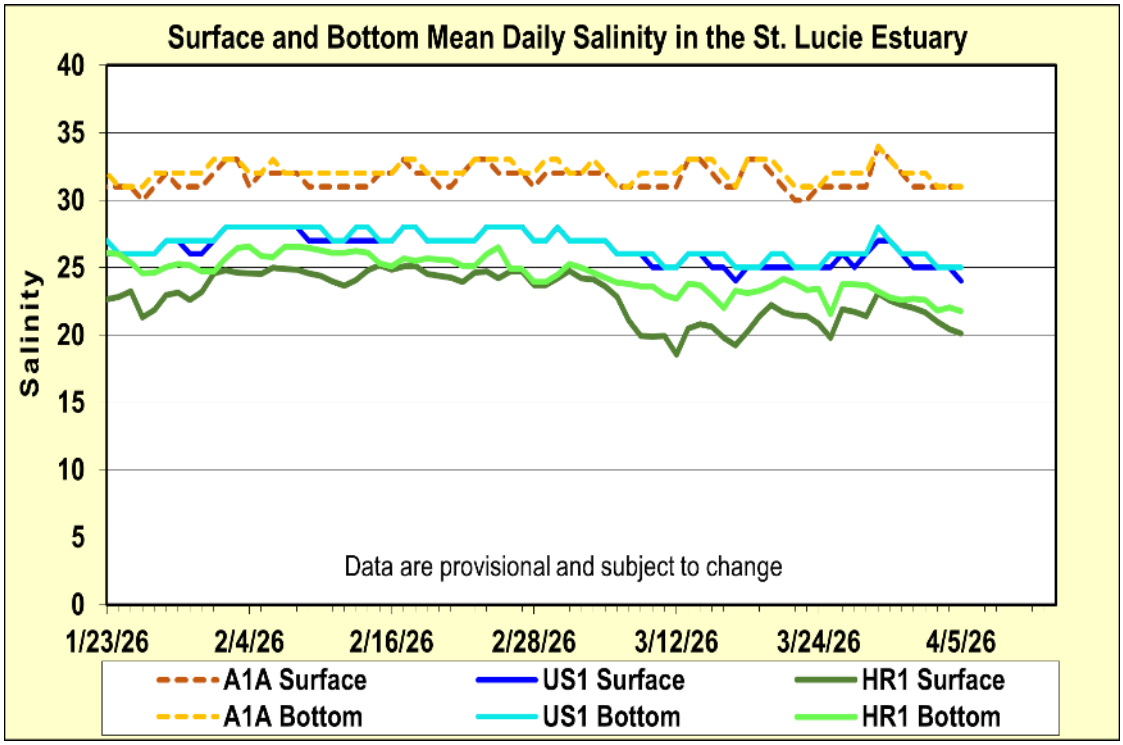


Figure ES-3. Mean daily salinity at the A1A, US1, and HR1 sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

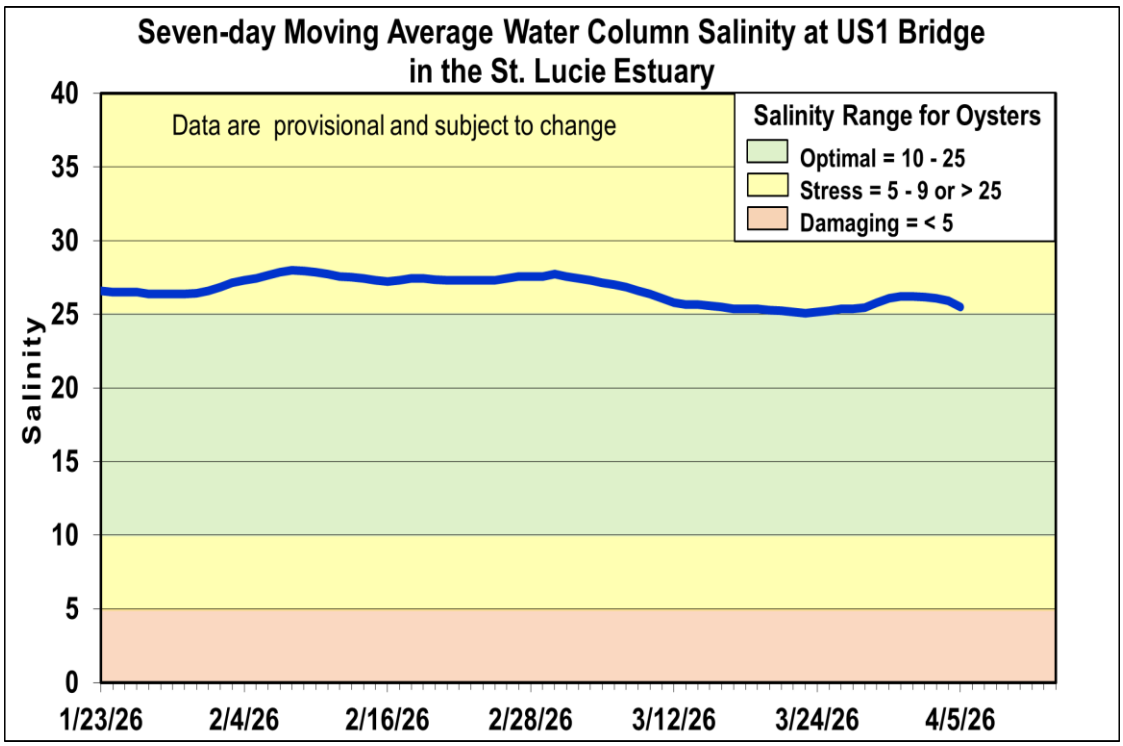


Figure ES-4. Seven-day moving average of the surface and bottom salinities at the US1 Bridge in the St. Lucie Estuary.

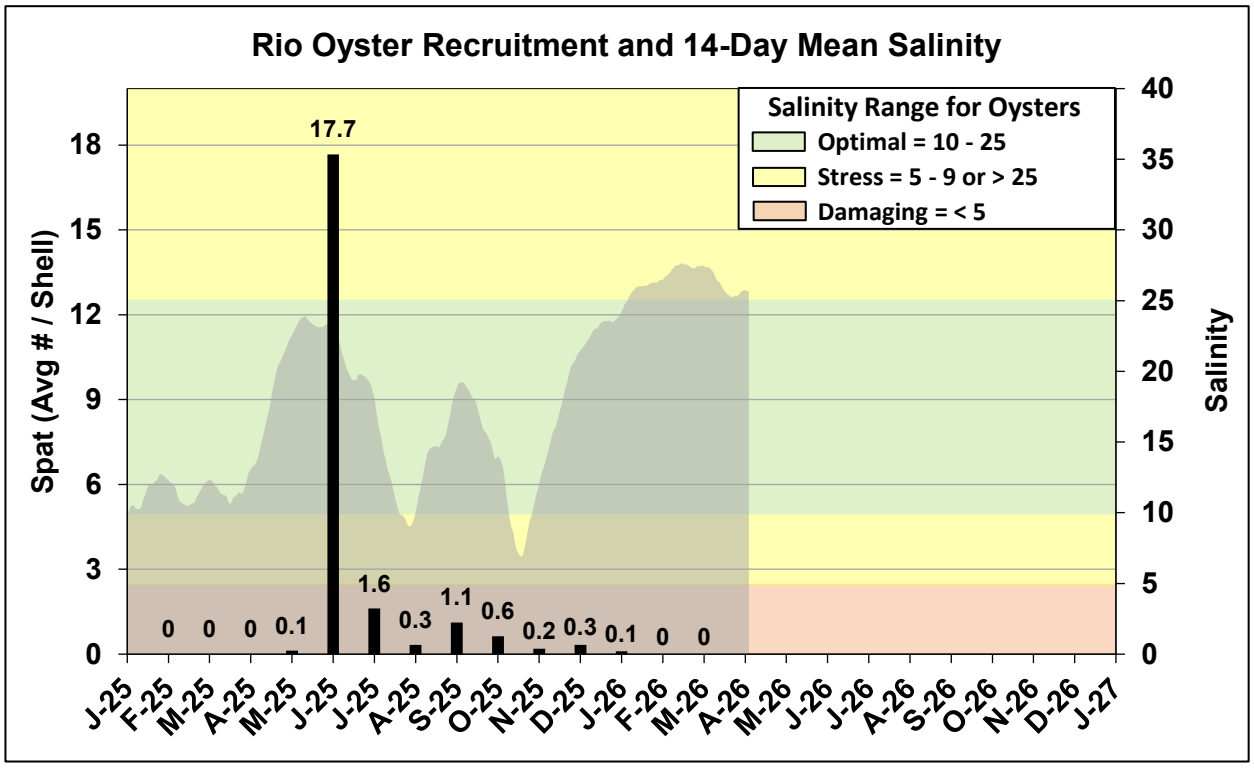


Figure ES-5. Mean oyster recruitment at the Rio oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at US1 Bridge.

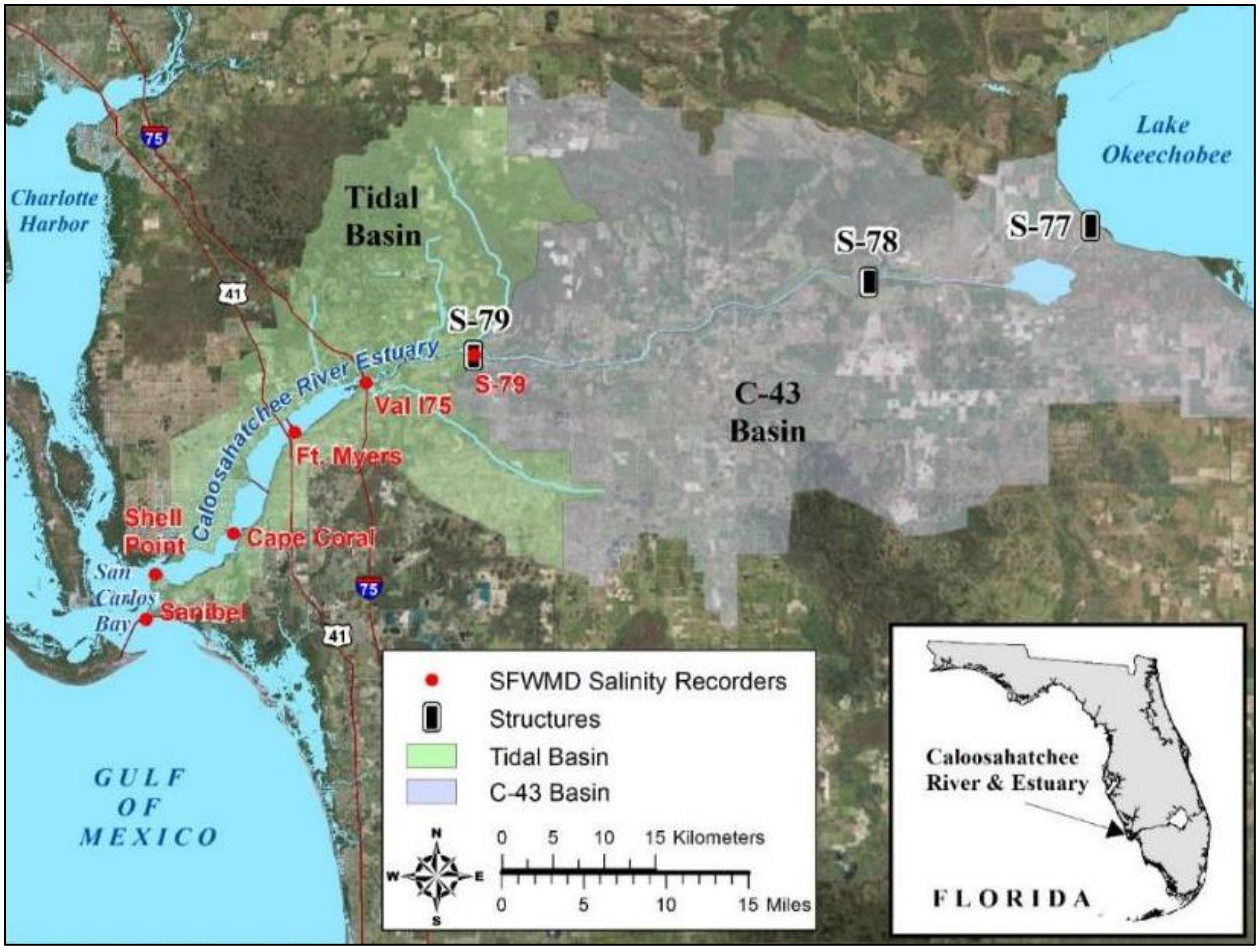


Figure ES-6. Basins, water control structures, and salinity monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

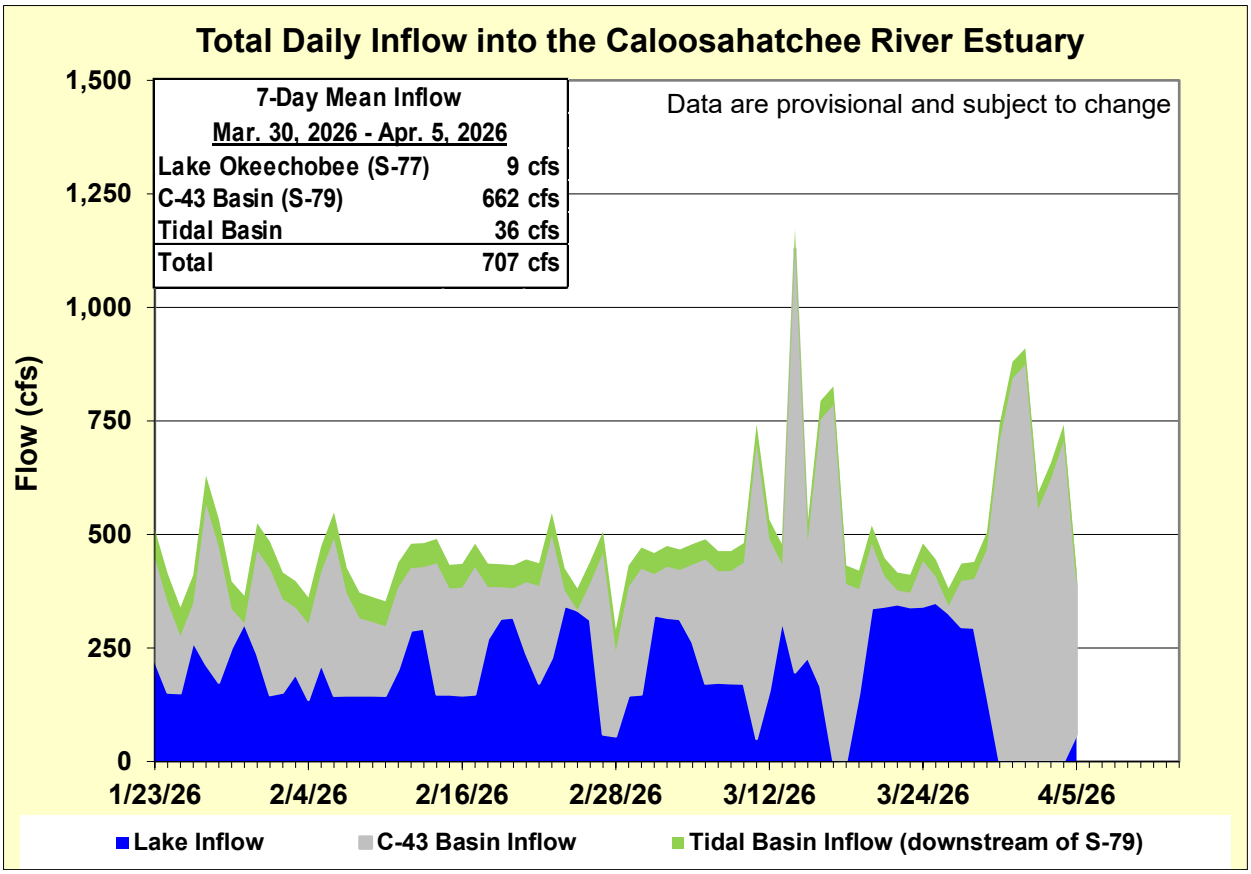


Figure ES-7. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee, and runoff from the C-43 and Tidal basins into the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

Table ES-2. Seven-day mean salinity at six monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary. Current means are in bold font; previous week's means are in parentheses. The envelope in the upper estuary sites is for the protection of tape grass and the envelope in the lower estuary is the optimum salinity range for adult eastern oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*). Data are provisional.

Sampling Site	Surface	Bottom	Optimum Envelope
S-79 (Franklin Lock)	**7.0** (6.7)	**7.2** (7.0)	0.0 – 10.0
Val I-75	**8.3** (6.7)	**10.2** (10.5)	0.0 – 10.0
Fort Myers Yacht Basin	**16.5** (15.7)	**18.4** (19.6)	0.0 – 10.0
Cape Coral	**22.6** (23.4)	**24.3** (24.6)	10.0 – 25.0
Shell Point	**32.7** (32.2)	**33.8** (32.9)	10.0 – 25.0
Sanibel	**35.0** (34.0)	**36.8** (35.8)	10.0 – 25.0

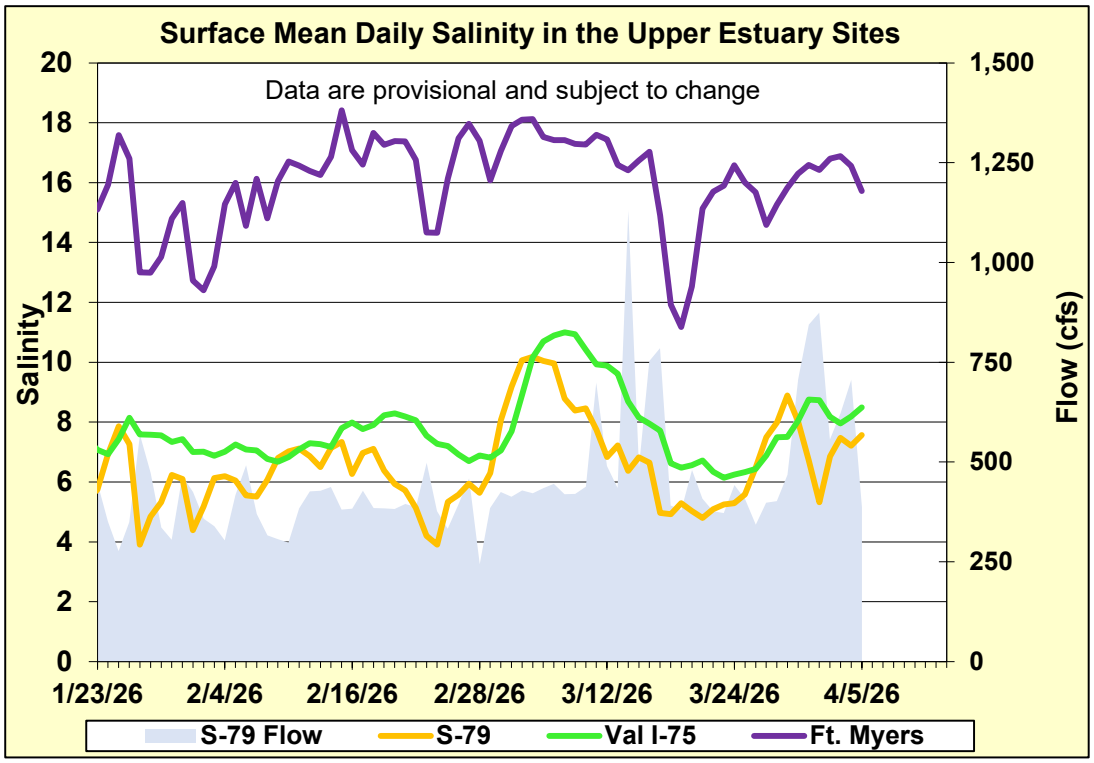


Figure ES-8. Mean daily salinity at upper Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

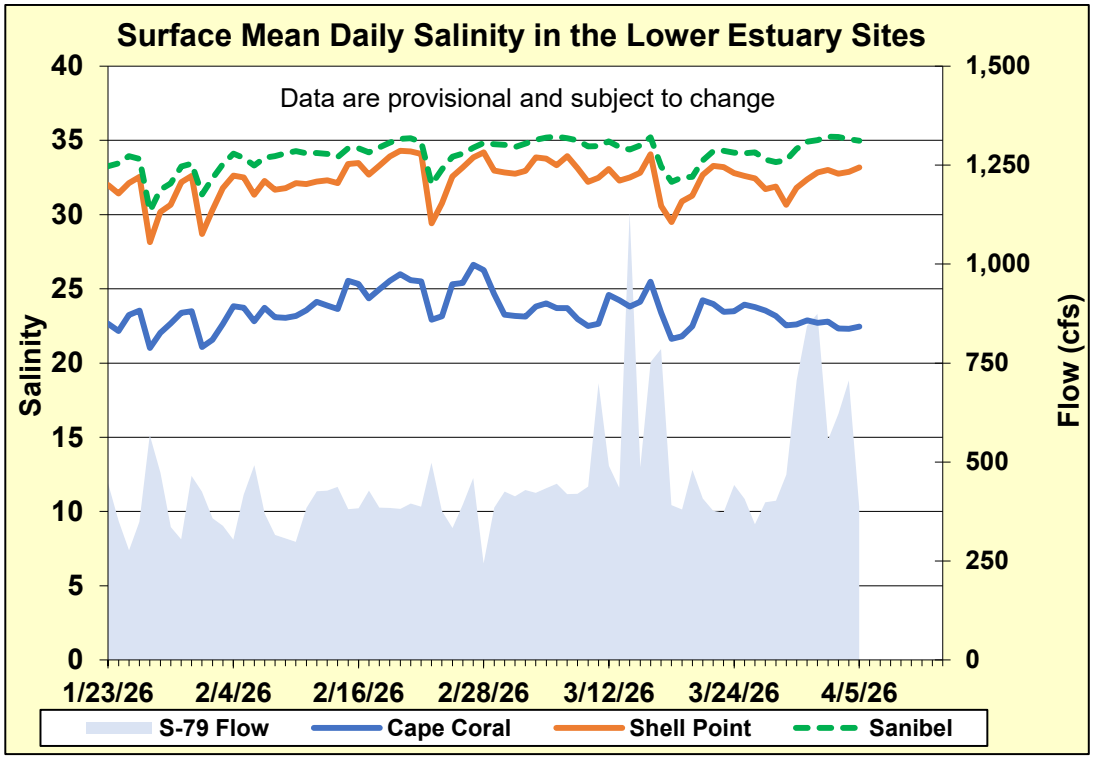


Figure ES-9. Mean daily surface salinity at lower Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

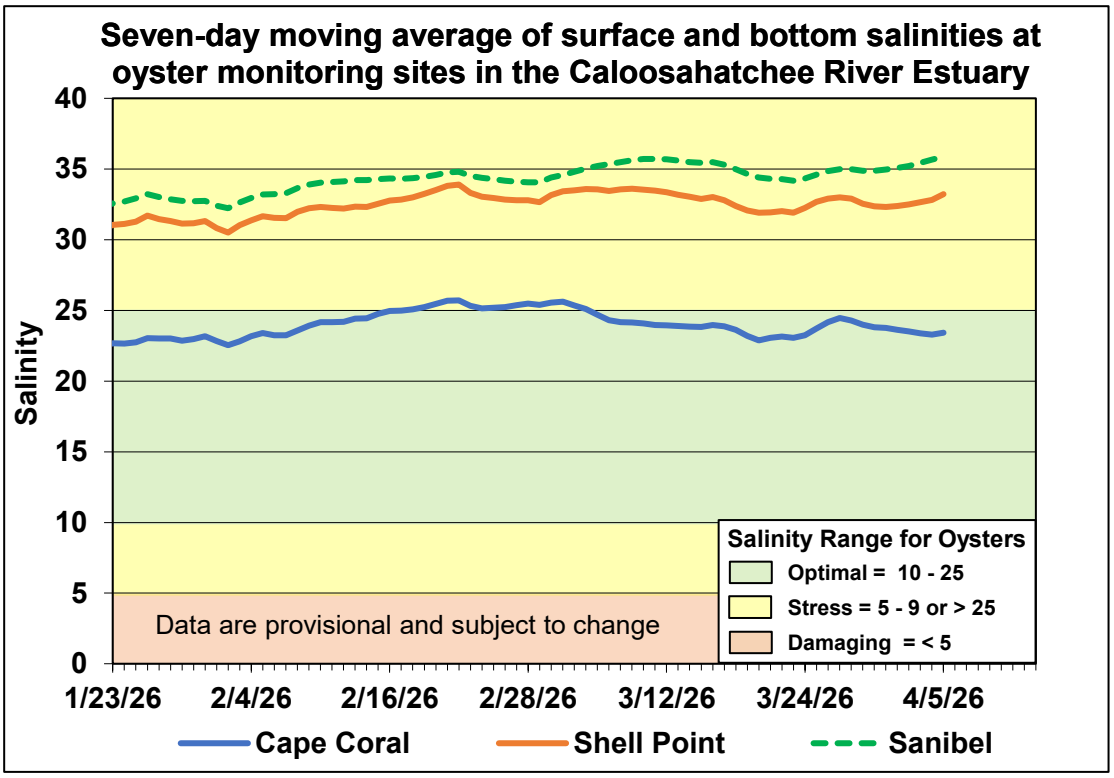


Figure ES-10. Seven-day moving average of surface and bottom salinities at Cape Coral, Shell Point, and Sanibel monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

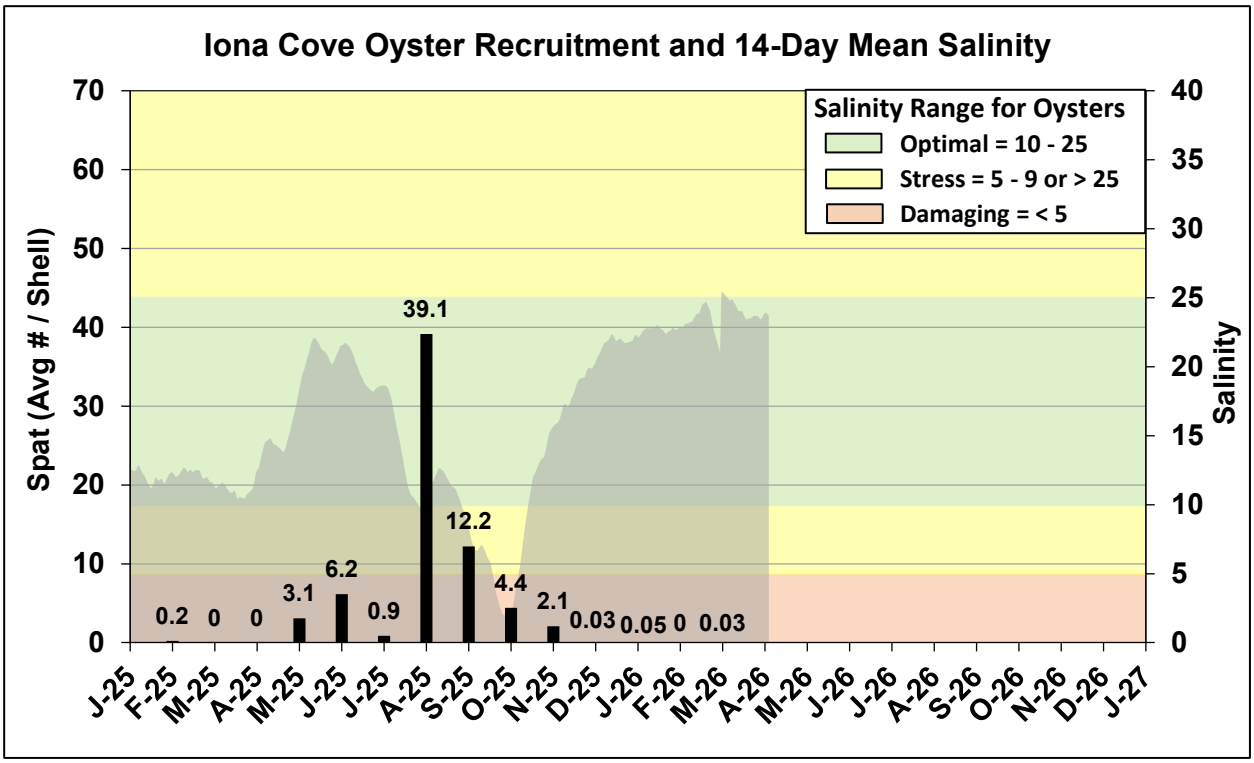


Figure ES-11. Mean oyster recruitment at the Iona Cove oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Cape Coral.

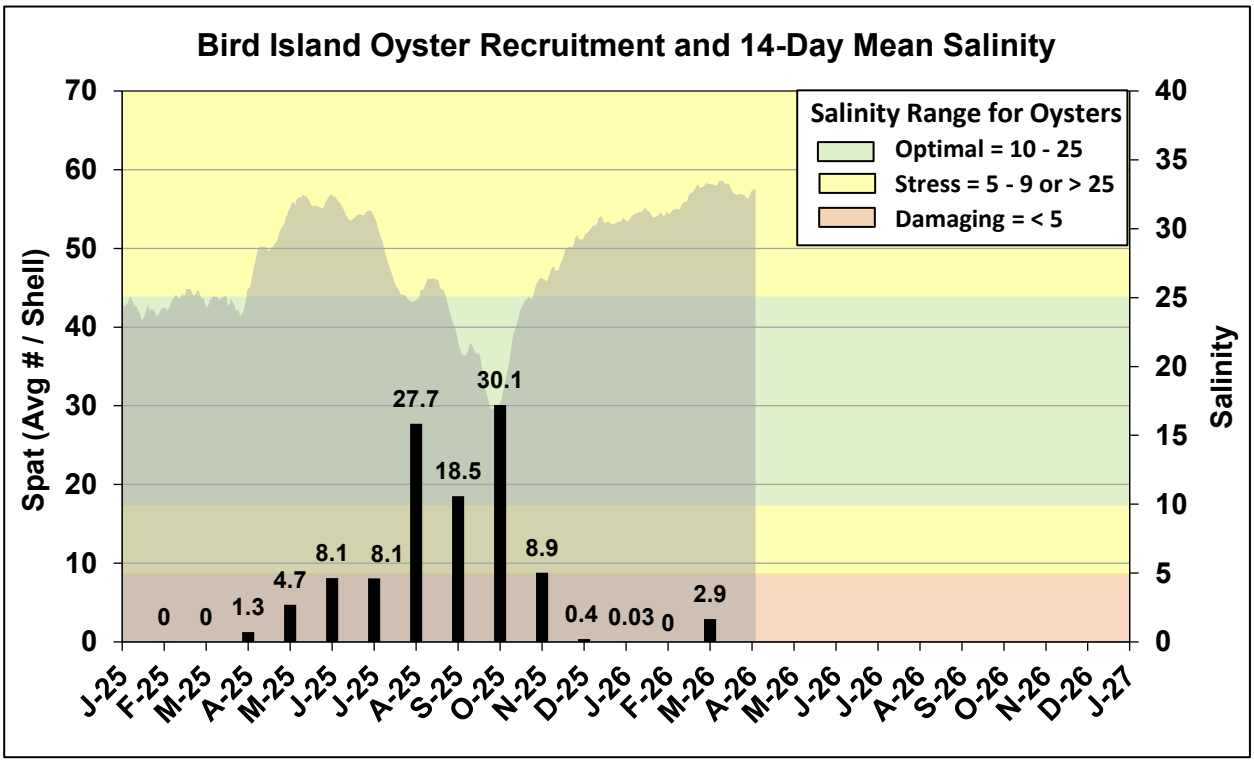


Figure ES-12. Mean oyster recruitment at the Bird Island oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Shell Point.

Table ES-3. Predicted salinity at Val I-75 in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary at the end of the forecast period for various S-79 flow release scenarios.

Scenario	Simulated S-79 Flow (cfs)	Tidal Basin Runoff (cfs)	Daily Salinity	30-Day Mean Salinity
A	450	33	7.8	8.0
B	750	33	6.2	7.3
C	1,000	33	4.7	6.9
D	1,500	33	2.6	6.2
E	2,000	33	1.4	5.7

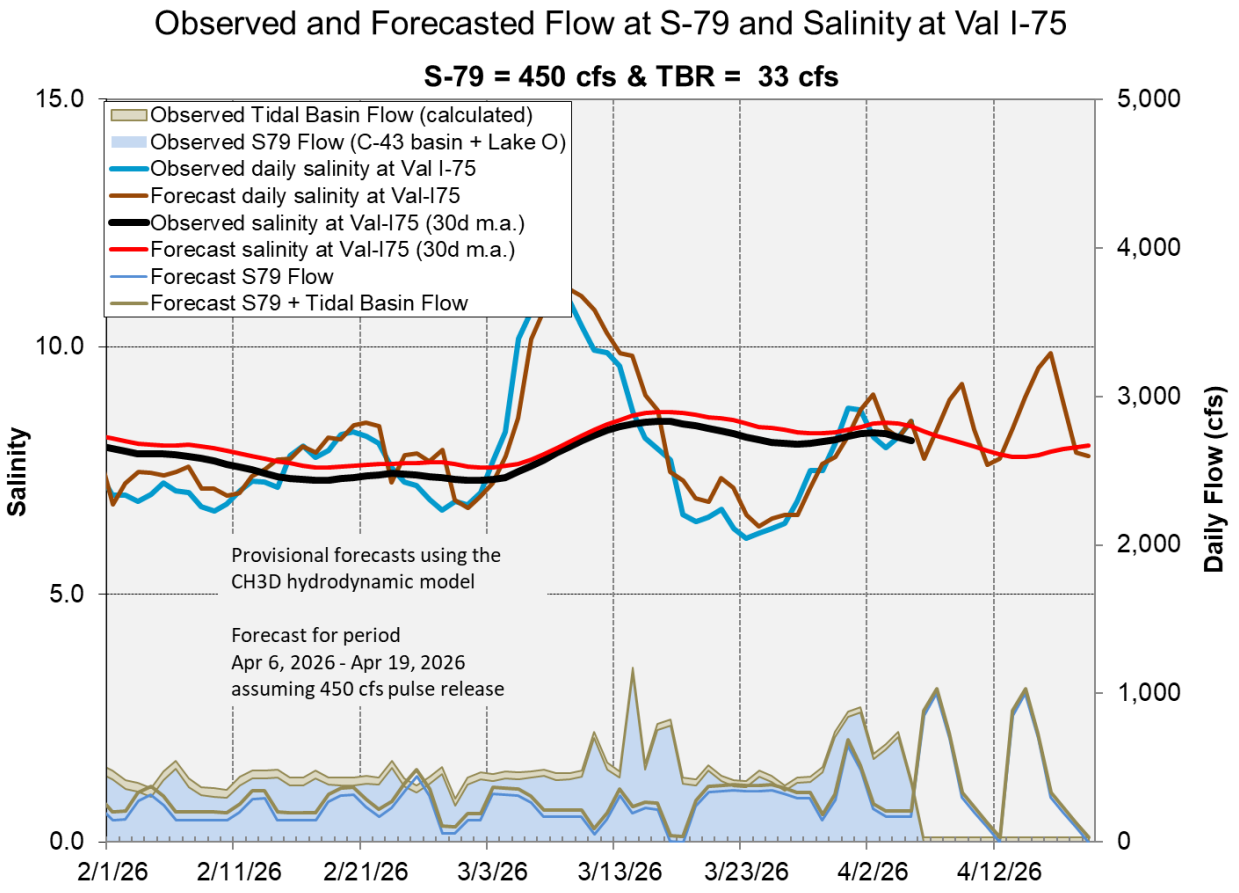


Figure ES-13. Surface salinity forecast at the Val I-75 site assuming a 450 cfs pulse release at S-79.

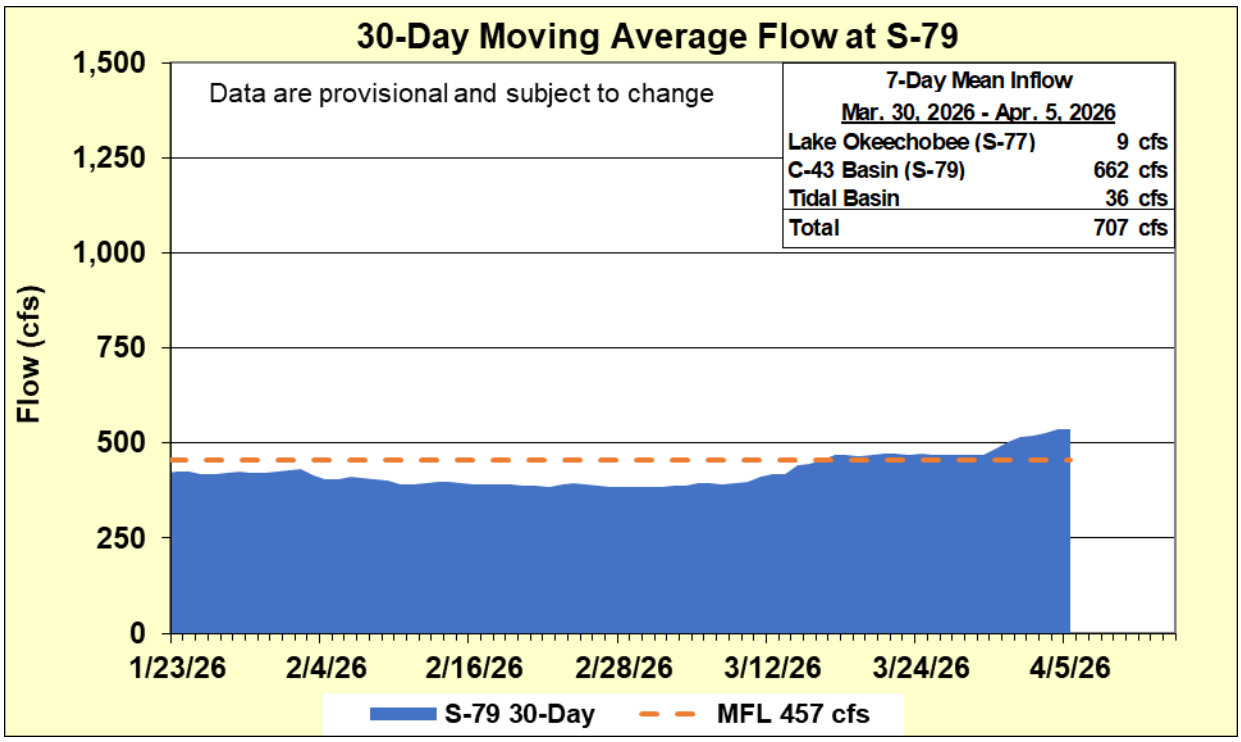


Figure ES-14. 30-day moving average flow at S-79 for the Caloosahatchee River Estuary Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels (MFL).

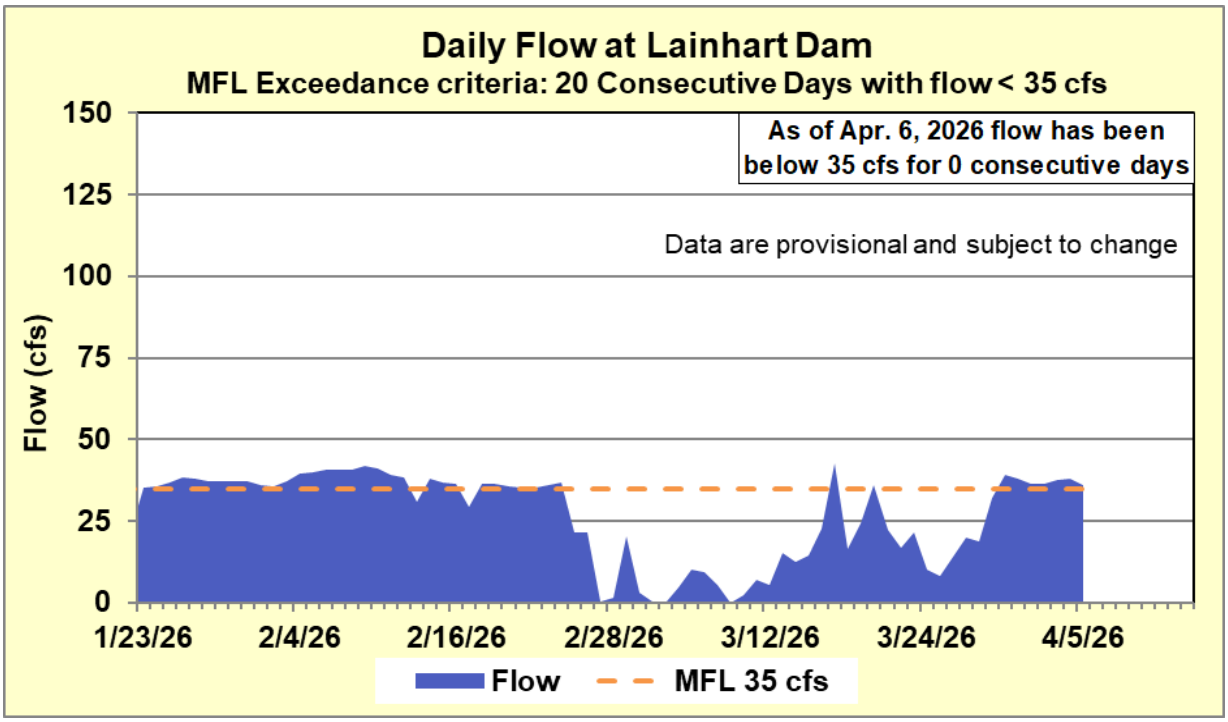


Figure ES-15. Average daily flow (cfs) at Lainhart Dam for the Loxahatchee River Estuary Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels (MFL).

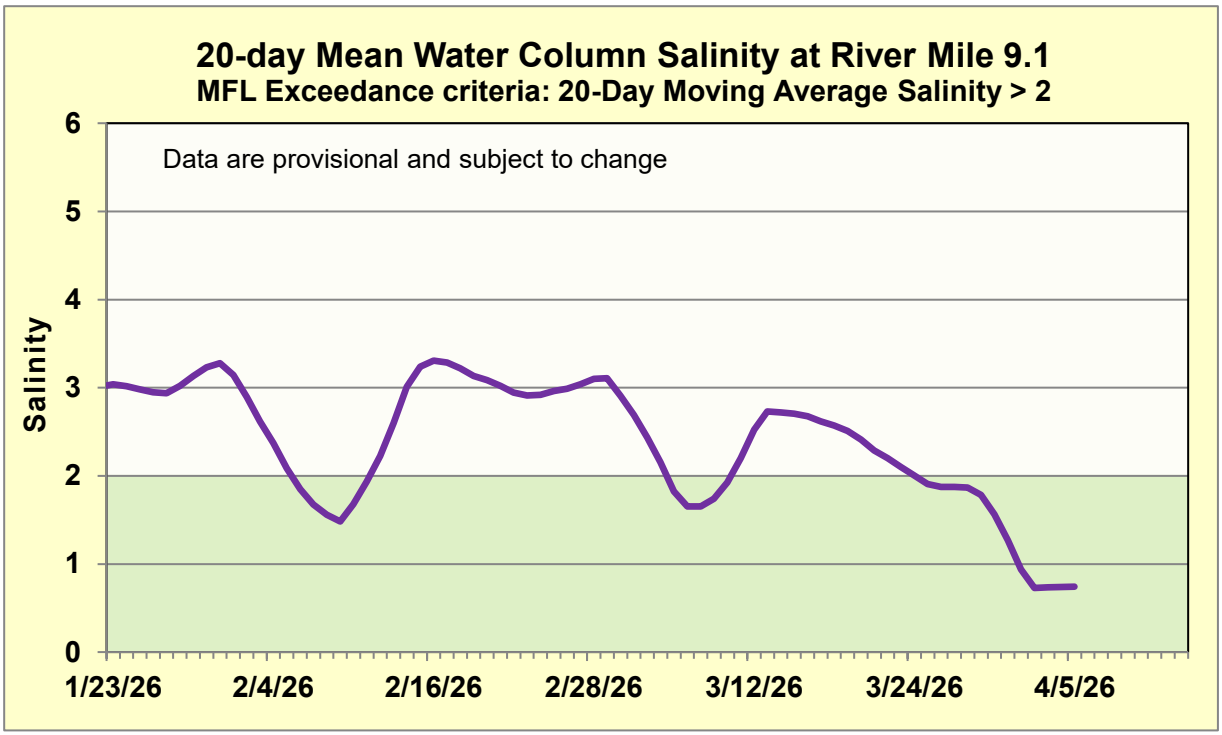


Figure ES-16. 20-day moving average salinity at Lainhart Dam for the Loxahatchee River Estuary Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels (MFL).

Stormwater Treatment Areas

STA-1E: 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 slightly above target stage. The 365-day PLR for the Western and Eastern Flow-way is below 1.0 g/m^2/year (**Figure S-2**).

STA-1W: STA-1W Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. Most treatment cells are slightly 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/year (**Figure S-2**).

STA-2: Treatment cells are at or slightly above target stage. The 365-day PLRs for all Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m^2/year (**Figure S-3).**

STA-3/4: An operational restriction is in place in the Eastern Flow-way for vegetation management activities and the Central Flow-way is off-line for vegetation rehabilitation. 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/year (**Figure S-3**).

STA-5/6: Treatment cells are at or below target stage. All treatment cells have highly stressed vegetation conditions. The 365-day PLRs for all Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m^2/year. (**Figure S-4**).

For definitions on STA operational language see glossary following figures

Everglades Stormwater Treatment Areas - STAs

- Total WY2026 inflows to STAs (5/1/2025 to 4/5/2026): ~644,000 ac-ft
- Lake Okeechobee releases to FEBs/STAs
  - 3/30/2026 to 4/5/2026: 0 ac-ft
  - WY 2026: ~ 97,400 ac-ft
- Extensive vegetation management activities underway to address stressed and highly stressed vegetation in EAV cells
- All treatment cells are at or near target water depth

Estimated Inflow and Outflow Volumes

Mar. 30th, 2026 - Apr. 5th, 2026 *Includes preliminary data*

	Total Inflow (acre-feet)	Total Outflow (acre-feet)
STA-1E	4,500	4,800
STA-1W	4,200	6,300
STA-2	15,000	13,000
STA-3/4	2,700	1,800
STA-5/6	0	0

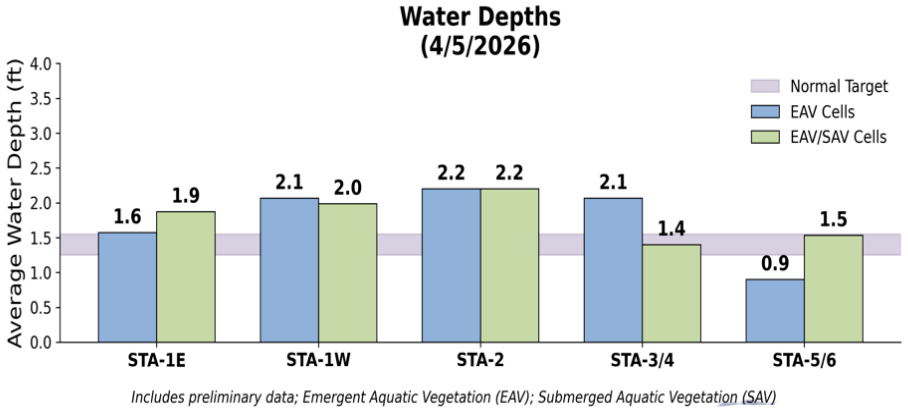


Figure S-1. STA depths and flow volumes

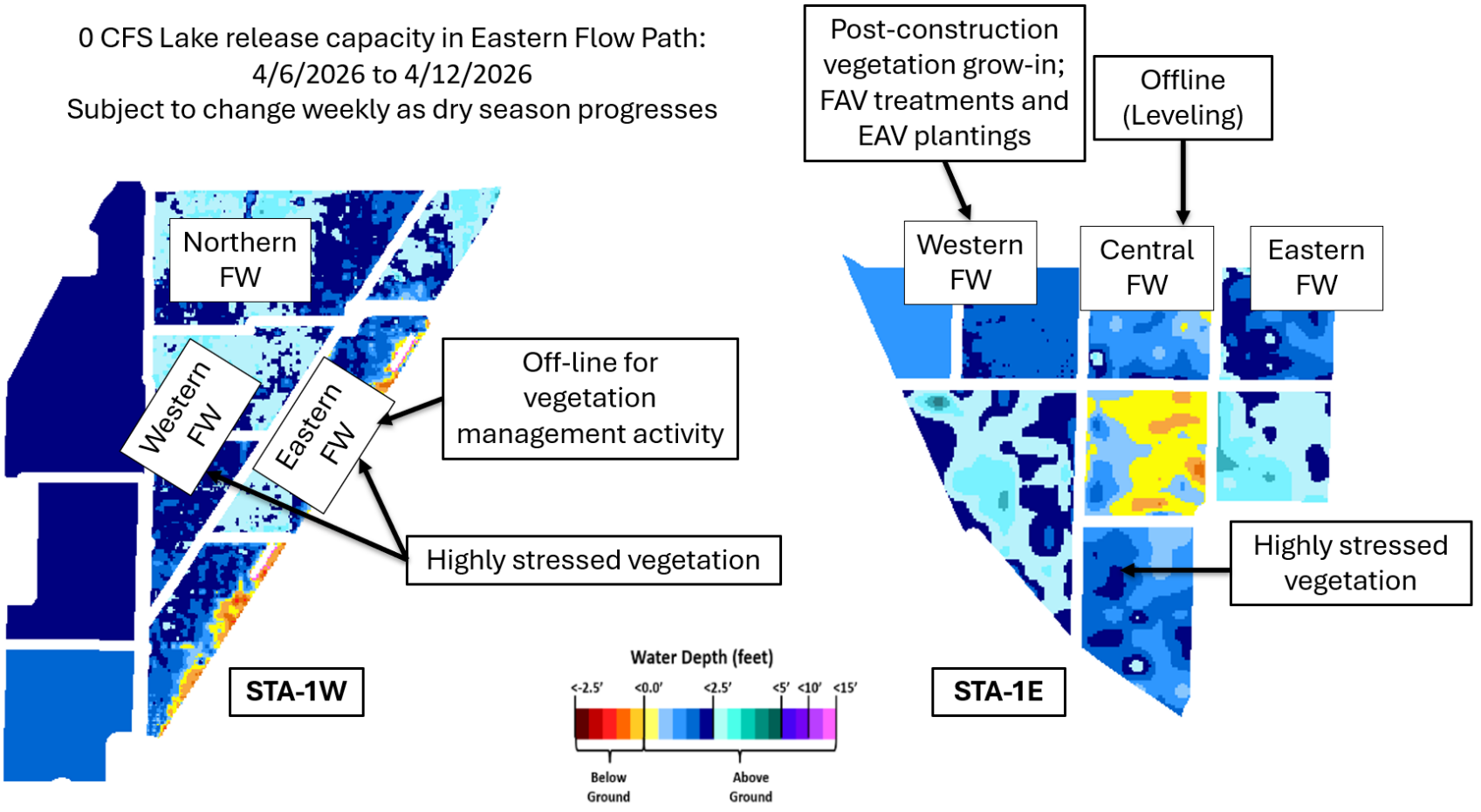


Figure S-2. Eastern Flow Path Weekly Status Report

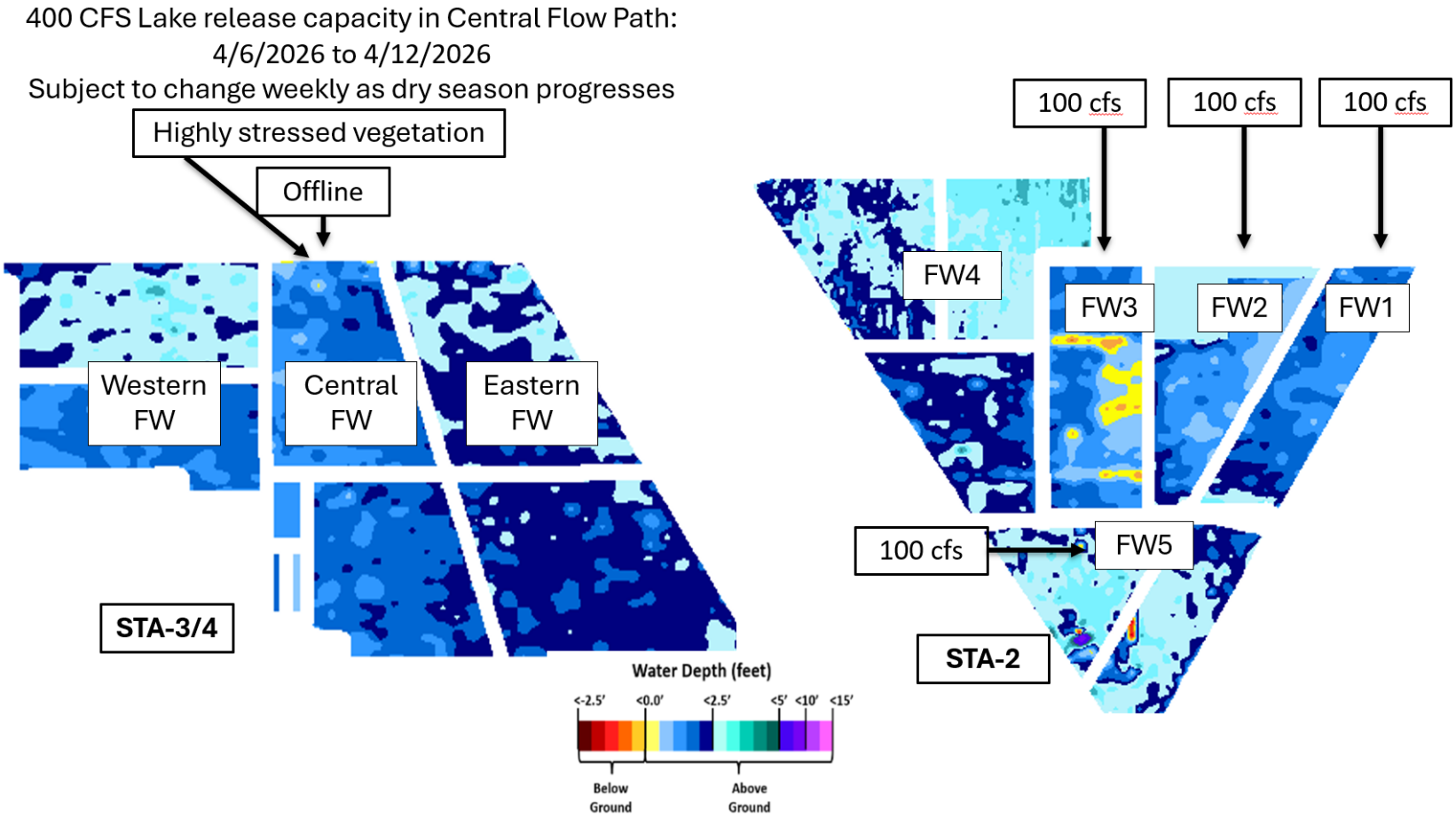


Figure S-3. Central Flow Path Weekly Status Report

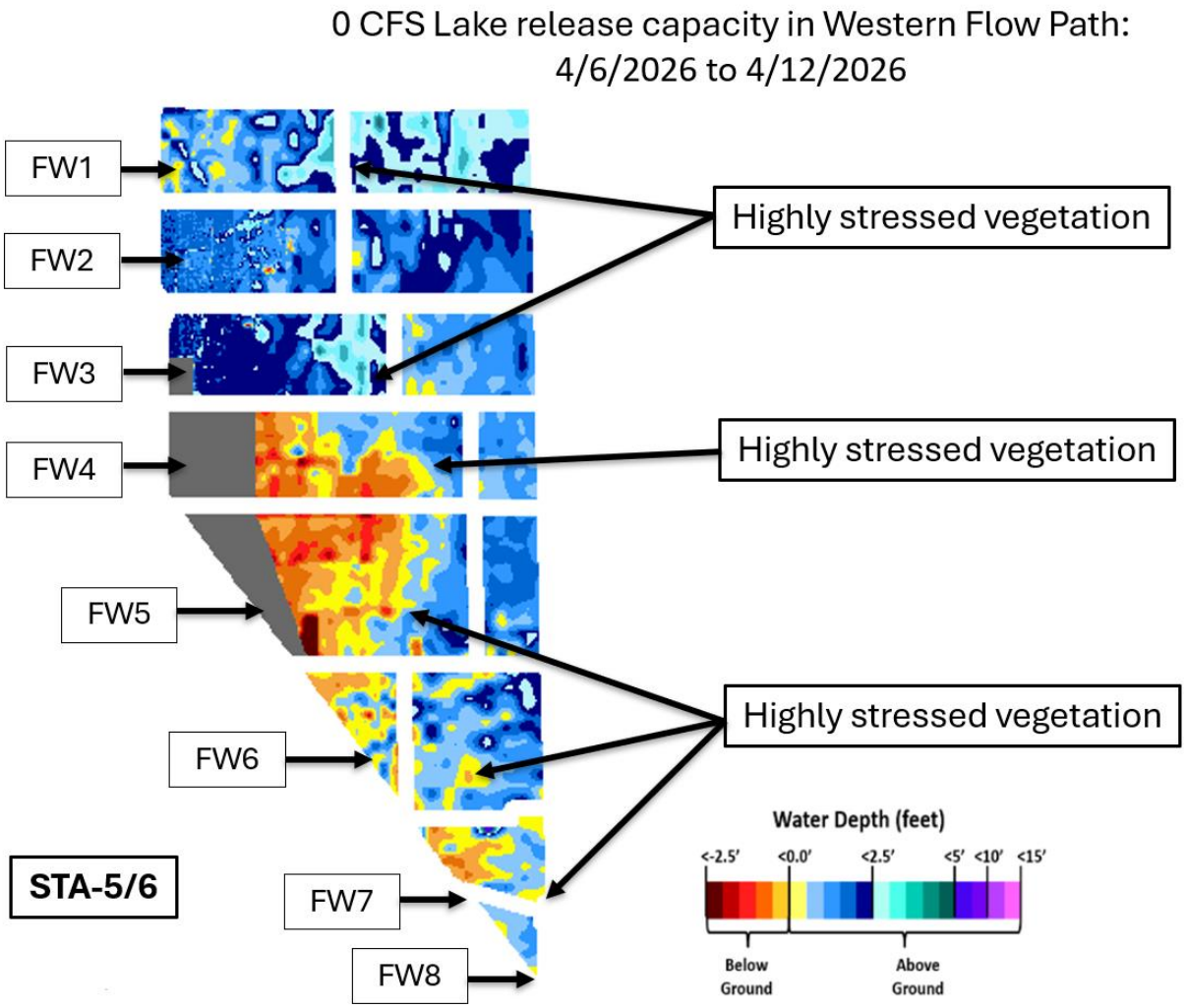


Figure S-4. Western Flow Path Weekly Status Report

Basic Concepts and Definitions for STA Weekly Status Report

- **Inflow**: Sum of flow volume at all inflow structures to an STA.
- **Lake Inflow**: Portion of the STA total inflow volume that originates from Lake Okeechobee.
- **Outflow**: Sum of flow volume at outflow structures from an STA.
- **Total Phosphorus** (TP): Total mass of phosphorus in all its forms; including particulate, dissolved, etc.
- **Inflow Concentration**: TP concentration is the mass of TP in micrograms per liter of water, µg/L or ppb. Inflow concentration refers to the flow-weighted mean TP from all inflow structures over a period of time.
- **Outflow Concentration**: The flow-weighted mean TP from all outflow structures over a period of time. The outflow concentration represents the reduction of inflow TP achieved by STA treatment of the inflow water.
- **WQBEL**: The STA outflow concentration that is required upon completion of the Restoration Strategies projects by December 2025. The outflow concentration shall not exceed 13 ppb as an annual flow weighted mean in more than 3 out of 5 water years on a rolling basis and shall not exceed 19 ppb as an annual flow weighted in any water year.
- **Flow-Way** (FW): One or more treatment cells connected in series. Cells typically have emergent aquatic vegetation (EAV) in the front portion of the flow-way followed by a mix of EAV and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV)
- **Vegetation Status**: Healthy means the vegetation condition is good and will allow the STA to perform as designed. Stressed means the vegetation is showing signs of poor health, such as browning or areas of vegetation die-off, or the cell contains undesirable vegetation such as floating exotic vegetation requiring treatment. The TP reduction capability of the STA is affected when the vegetation condition is poor.
- **Phosphorus Loading Rate** (PLR): Mass of inflow TP in grams, divided by total treatment area of STA in square meters, per year. In general, a 365-day value of less than 1.0 is needed for an STA to perform optimally. A PLR of 2.0 is considered very high and a PLR of 3.0 is considered extremely high. The TP reduction capability of the STA is affected when the PLR is high, very high and extremely high.
- **Online**: Online status means the FW can receive and treat inflow.
- **Online with Restriction**: The FW can receive and treat inflow, but the amount of flow or water level may be limited temporarily. For example, a vegetation rehabilitation effort may require reduced flows through an area while the new plants are establishing, or nesting by protected species may require a certain water level not to be exceeded.
- **Offline**: The FW is unable to receive and treat inflow due to repairs, construction, or other prohibitive reasons.
- **Depth**: Difference between the average surface water level in a cell and the average ground elevation in that cell. Target depths, or depths between flow events, are between 1.25 ft to 1.5 ft. As depth approaches or drops below zero, an increasing percentage of the cell is considered dry and STA conditions deteriorate. An increase in depth above target depth is expected with increasing flow. However, as depth increases much above the target depth and is sustained over a period of time, it can be detrimental to vegetation health and overall STA treatment performance.
- **Note**: The data provided in this summary report were developed using a combination of provisional and quality-assured flow and water quality data. In some cases, best professional judgment was used to estimate missing data and revise questionable data. Values provided are not considered final but are appropriate for use in STA operational decision-making.

Everglades

Water Conservation Area Regulation Schedules

WCA-1: Stage at the 1-8C gauge rose to near the regulation line last week. It was 0.12 feet below the A1 Zone regulation line on Sunday, April 5, 2026 (**Figure EV-1**).

WCA-2A: Last week's depths at the 2-17 gauge remained on a steady downward trend. Stages were 1.05 feet above the regulation line on Sunday (**Figure EV-2**).

WCA-3A: The 3-gauge average remains well within Zone B, resuming a steady downward trend last week. On Sunday, stages were 1.68 feet NGVD29 below the Zone A regulation line. Stage at Gauge 62 (NW corner) resumed a downward trend away from the regulation line. It was below the Upper Schedule line by 1.86 feet on Sunday (**Figures EV-3 and EV-4)**.

Water Depths

The SFWDAT model output for April 5, 2026, illustrates the drying front moving into central WCA-2A. WCA-1 remains low in the north, but depths have recovered slightly in that region over the last month. WCA-2A remains slightly ponded in the southeast, while in the central area, near the site 2-17 gauge, it is drier than one month ago. Wading birds are foraging along the drying front in that basin. WCA-3A remains very dry, having received the least amount of rainfall in the system over the last month. In Everglades National Park (ENP), Taylor Slough, and potentially Shark River Slough more connection from north to south is helping with flows going into Florida Bay. Comparing current conditions to water depths over the last twenty years, WCA-1 depths are now primarily above the 20th percentile and near the 50th percentile across most of the basin. Southern 2A water depths have fallen to near average. BCNP water depths have recovered to average or above average in the center of the preserve, but average depths for this time of year are below ground along Tamiami trail. Within WCA-3A and -3B, water depths remain low, below the 10th percentile. Conditions in Southeastern ENP, responding to recent rainfall, have risen above average. See figures **EV-5** through **EV-6**.

Taylor Slough and Florida Bay

Stages decreased across Taylor Slough over the past week, with an average decrease of 0.08 feet for the week. Changes ranged from −0.16 feet at E112 in the northern slough to −0.03 feet at EPSW in the C-111 area (**Figure EV-7 and Figure EV-8**). Taylor Slough water levels are above the recent average (WY1993-2016) for this time of year by 10.2 inches compared to before the Florida Bay Initiative (starting in 2017), an increase of 0.3 inches relative to last week. The stages at Craighead Pond (CP) and Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB) are below the estimated historical average by 0.17 and 0.32 feet, respectively.

Average salinity in Florida Bay was 32.6, a decrease of 0.1 from last week. Salinity changes ranged from −2.2 at Joe Bay (JB) to +3.2 at Little Madeira Bay (LM), both in the eastern nearshore region (**Figure EV-7**). Salinity remains above the estimated historical average for all three regions, at the WY2001-2016 Interquartile Range (IQR) 75th percentile in the eastern region, but is in the lower half of the IQR in the central and

western regions (**Figure EV-9**). Salinity in the western region remains near the hypersalinity threshold. Bay-wide salinity is above its recent average (WY1993-2016) for this time of year by 1.9, a decrease of 0.8 from last week.

Salinity at the Taylor River (TR) station in the mangrove zone (tracked for the Florida Bay MFL) was 2.4, a decrease of 1.0 from last week (**Figure EV-10**). The 365-day moving sum of flow from the five major creeks (McCormick Creek, Taylor River, Mud Creek, Trout Creek, West Highway Creek) was unable to be assessed due to missing data.

Average rainfall across Taylor Slough and Florida Bay was 0.20 inches over the past week, based on the 18 gauges used for this report. Rainfall ranged 0.02 inches at Garfield Bight (GB) in the western nearshore region and Trout Creek (TC) in the eastern nearshore region, to 1.26 inches at TSB (**Figure EV-11**). Wind directions and speeds in Florida Bay ranged from 12.9 mph NE on April 2nd to 25.3 mph E on March 31st (**Figure EV-11**).

The Taylor River, Mud Creek, and West Highway Creek flow stations are currently offline until further notice, so data from all five major creeks are unable to be assessed. Based on the available data from Trout and McCormick Creeks, average daily flow totaled 468 ac-feet, with net positive flows for the week. Total daily creek flow ranged from −496 ac-feet on April 2nd to 1,015 ac-feet on April 4th (**Figure EV-12**). Average daily flow from Alligator Creek was −32 ac-feet, with net negative flows for the week (**Figure EV-12**).

Implications/considerations for water management.

- Due to current drought conditions, slower recessions in WCA-3A can help to protect the wetland ecology from damaging dry downs as the dry season continues.
    - Dry conditions will further extend the recent 4 consecutive poor wading bird nesting years into the 2026 nesting season.
    - Conserving water within the WCAs, especially WCA-3A, will continue to be ecologically beneficial.

- Shallower conditions in southern WCA-2A are needed to recover ridge and slough habitat. However, holding water high in the north of the system, as further dry conditions are predicted, may prove ecologically beneficial as the Everglades dry down begins to accelerate due to increasing evapotranspiration. Input of water into areas prone to wildfire and peat oxidation may help to buffer the worst of the ecological stress.

- There is now more potential for slough connectivity extending down to Florida Bay and higher creek flows from previous rain that are likely to help maintain consistent Florida Bay salinities.

    - Freshwater input into Taylor Slough and the C-111 basin could help moderate salinities and support recovery of estuarine conditions in Florida Bay.

- Conserving water in the WCAs while providing freshwater input to the sloughs of ENP will require careful consideration of a balance between the upstream and downstream ecological needs of the system. Individual regional recommendations can be found in **Table EV-2**.

Table EV-2. Previous week's rainfall and water depth changes in Everglades basins.

Everglades Region	Rainfall (inches)	Stage change (feet)
WCA-1	0.33	+0.05
WCA-2A	0.23	−0.05
WCA-2B	0.46	−0.13
WCA-3A	0.23	−0.15
WCA-3B	0.51	−0.11
ENP	0.46	−0.05

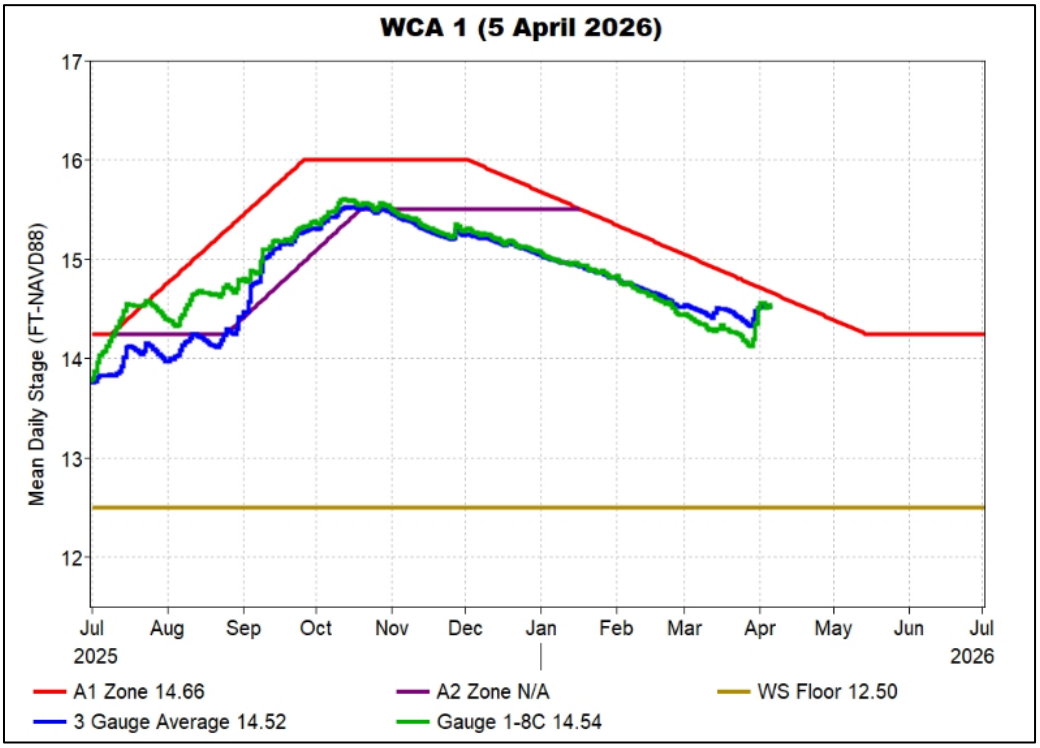


Figure EV-1. WCA-1 stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

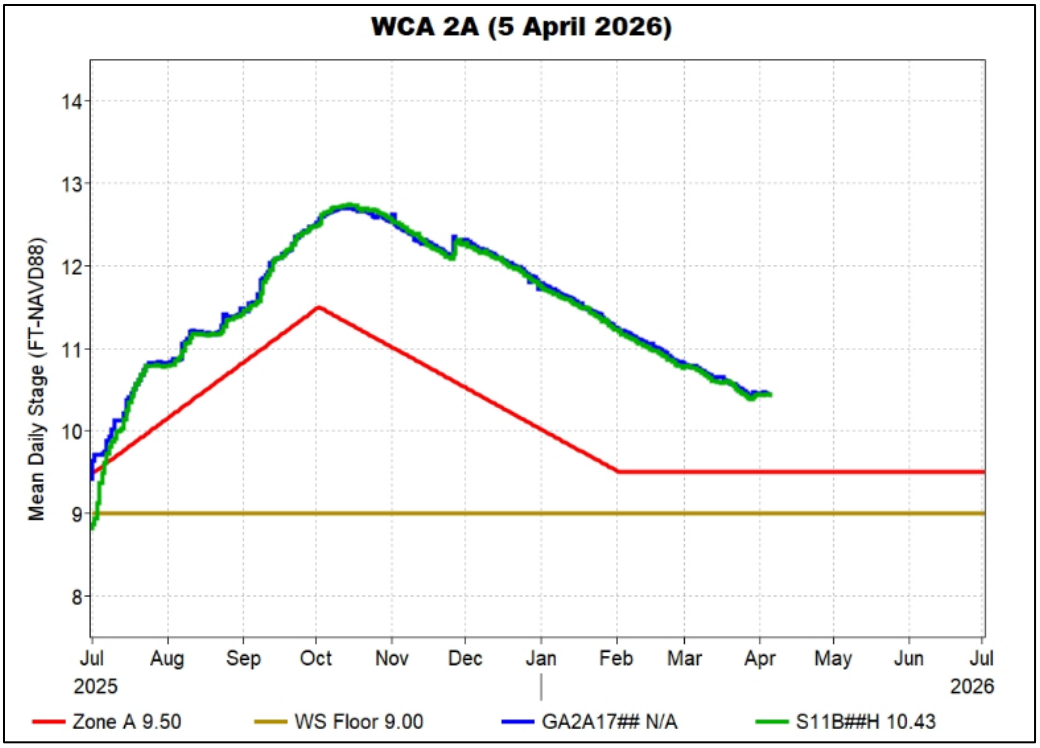


Figure EV-2. WCA-2A stage hydrographs and regulation schedule. 11.94 – 1.49 = 10.45, 1.05

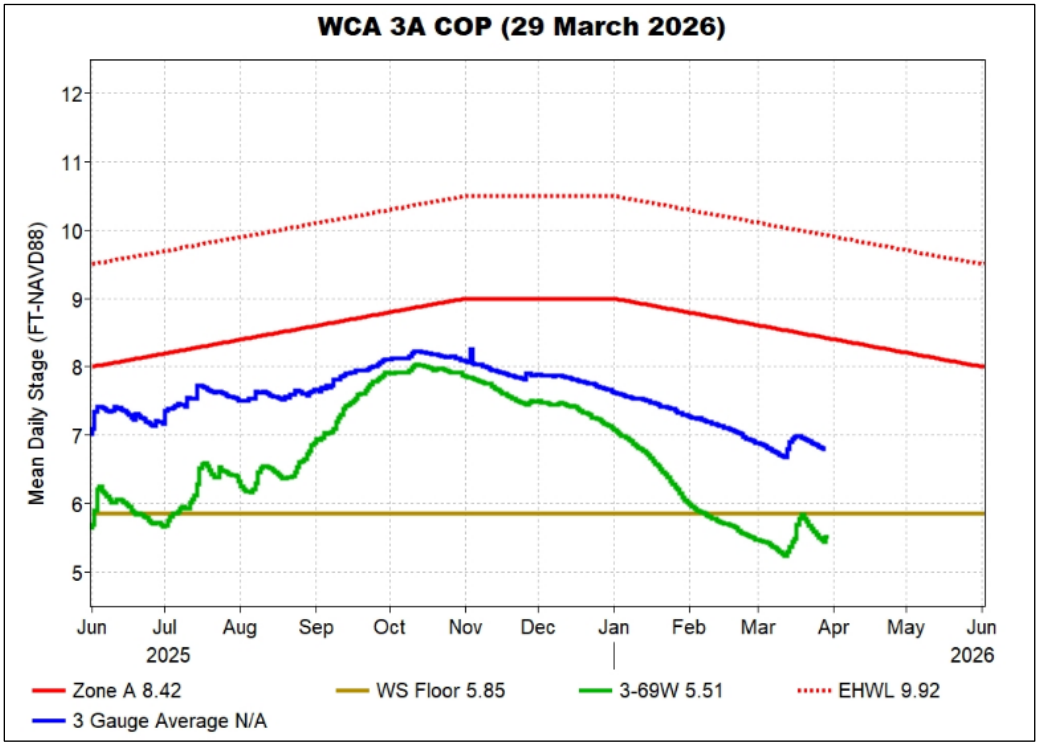


Figure EV-3. WCA-3A stage hydrographs (three-gauge average, 3-69W) and regulation schedule. 8.24 – 1.5 = 6.74, 1.68

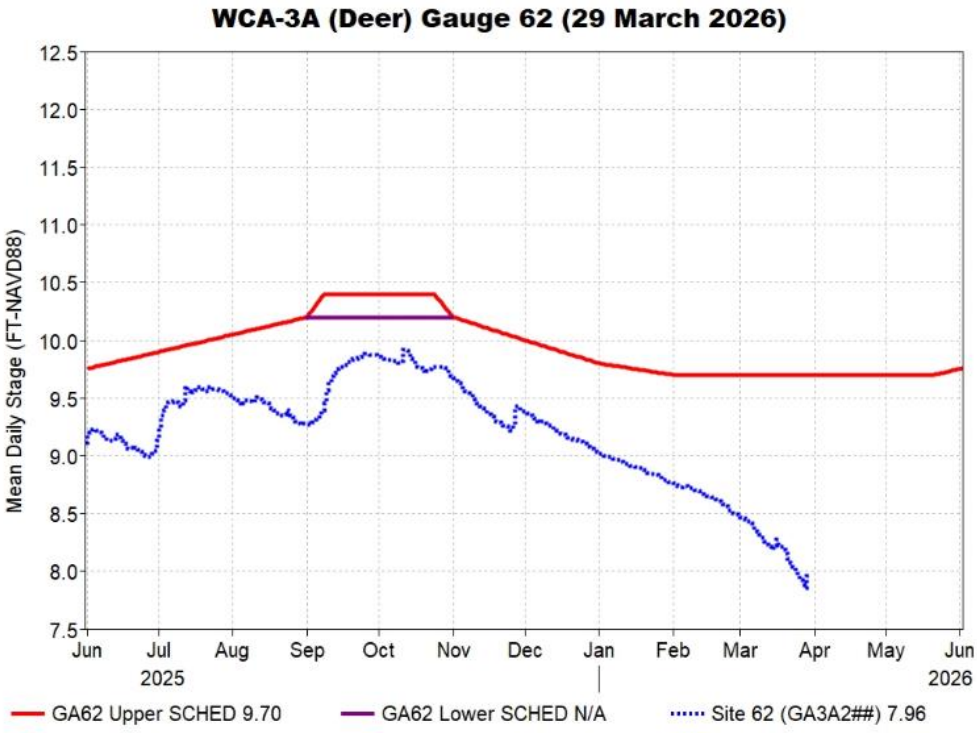


Figure EV-4. WCA-3A stage hydrograph (Deer gauge; Site 62) and regulation schedule.

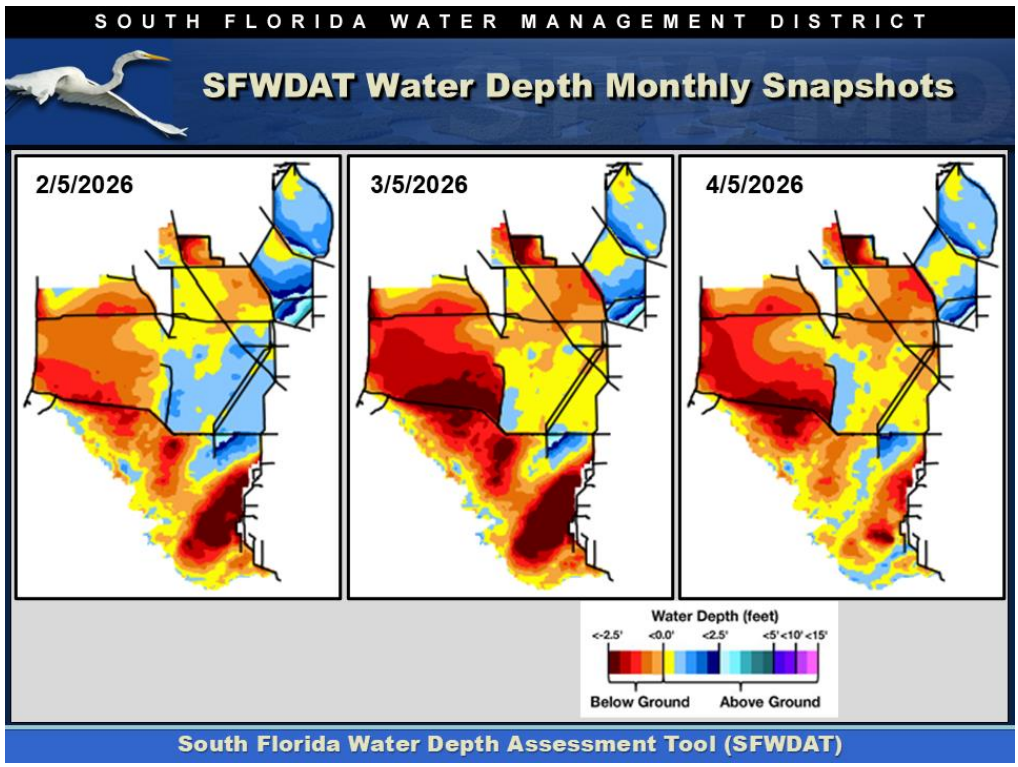


Figure EV-5. Everglades water depths from two months ago (left), one month ago (center) and present (right), based on SFWDAT.

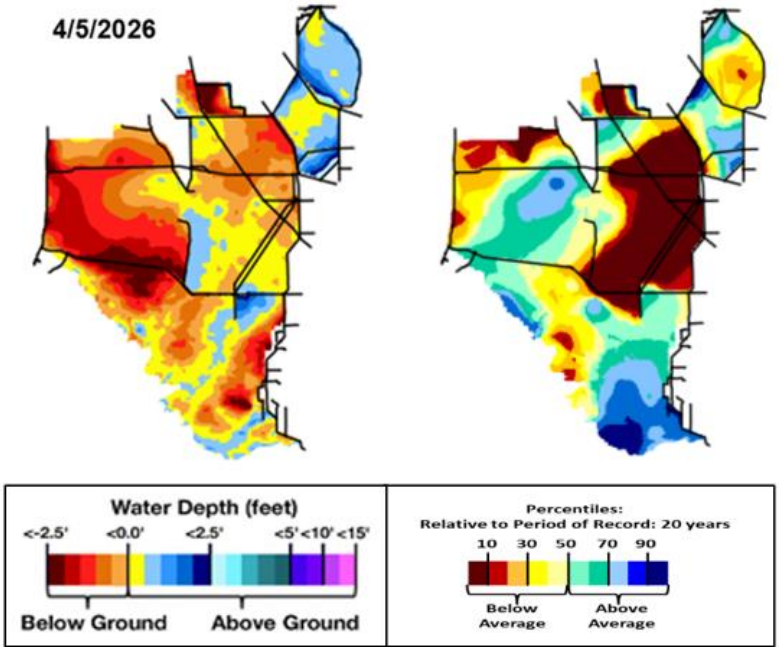


Figure EV-6. Present water depths April 5, 2026) compared to the day of year relative to average (percentile) over the previous 20 years.

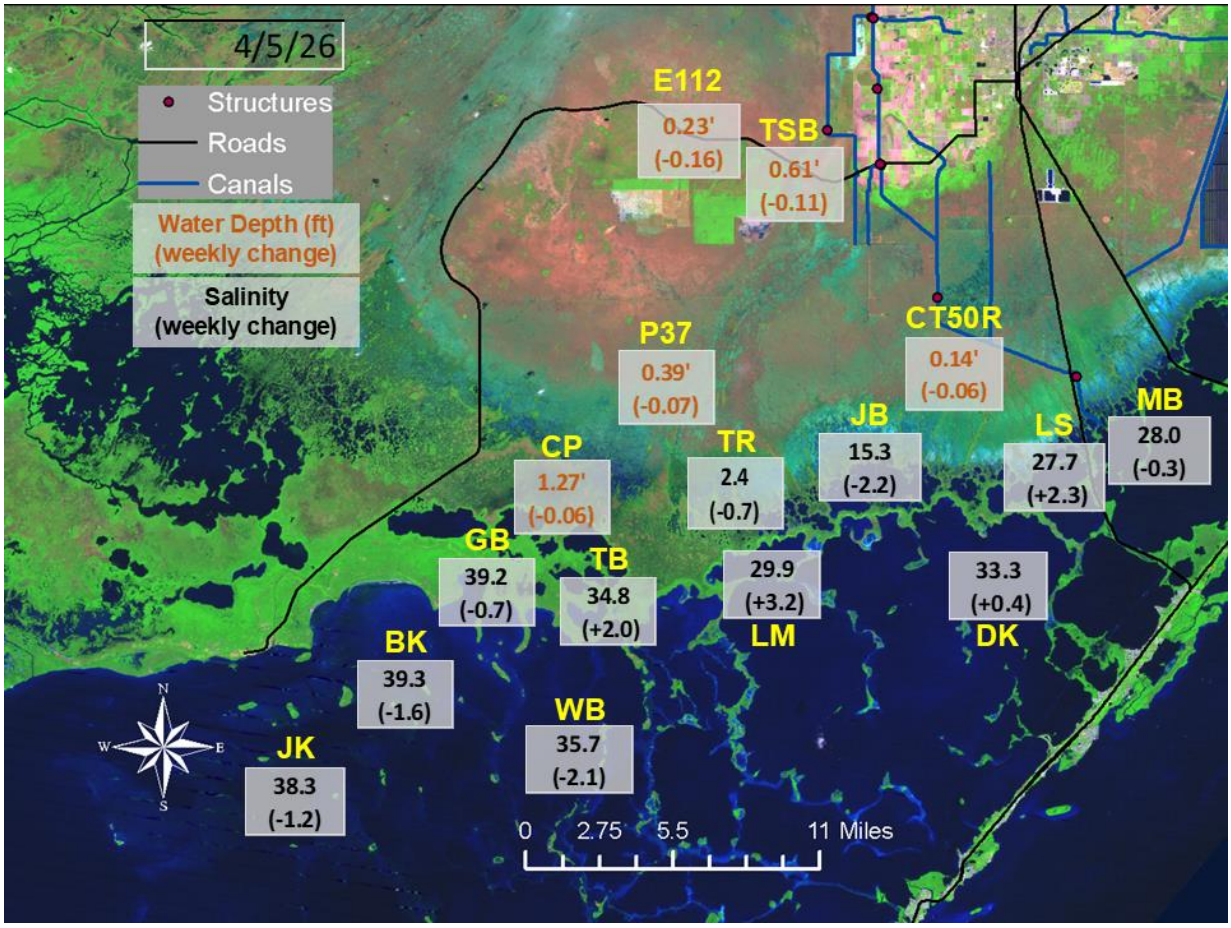


Figure EV-7. Taylor Slough water depths and Florida Bay salinities with changes since a week ago.

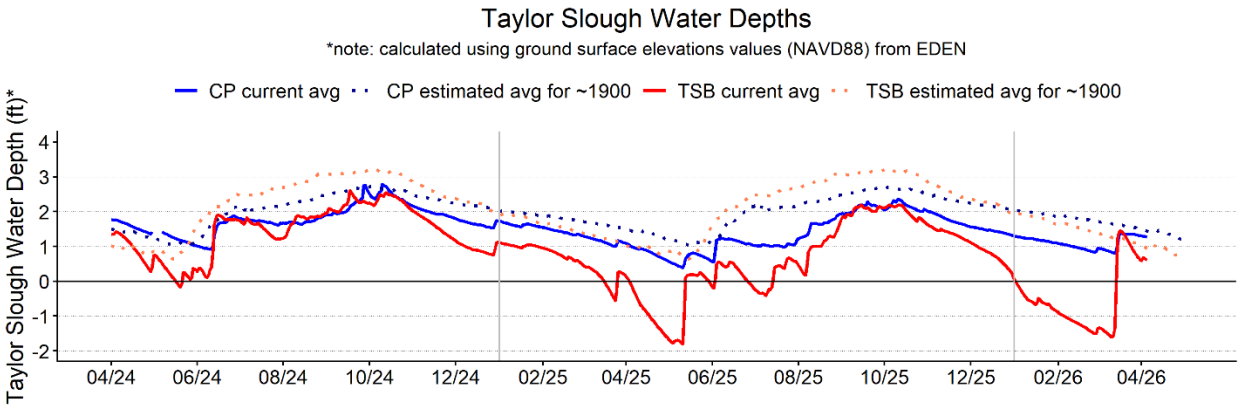


Figure EV-8. Taylor Slough water depth time series for Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB; northern slough) and Craighead Pond (CP; southern slough).

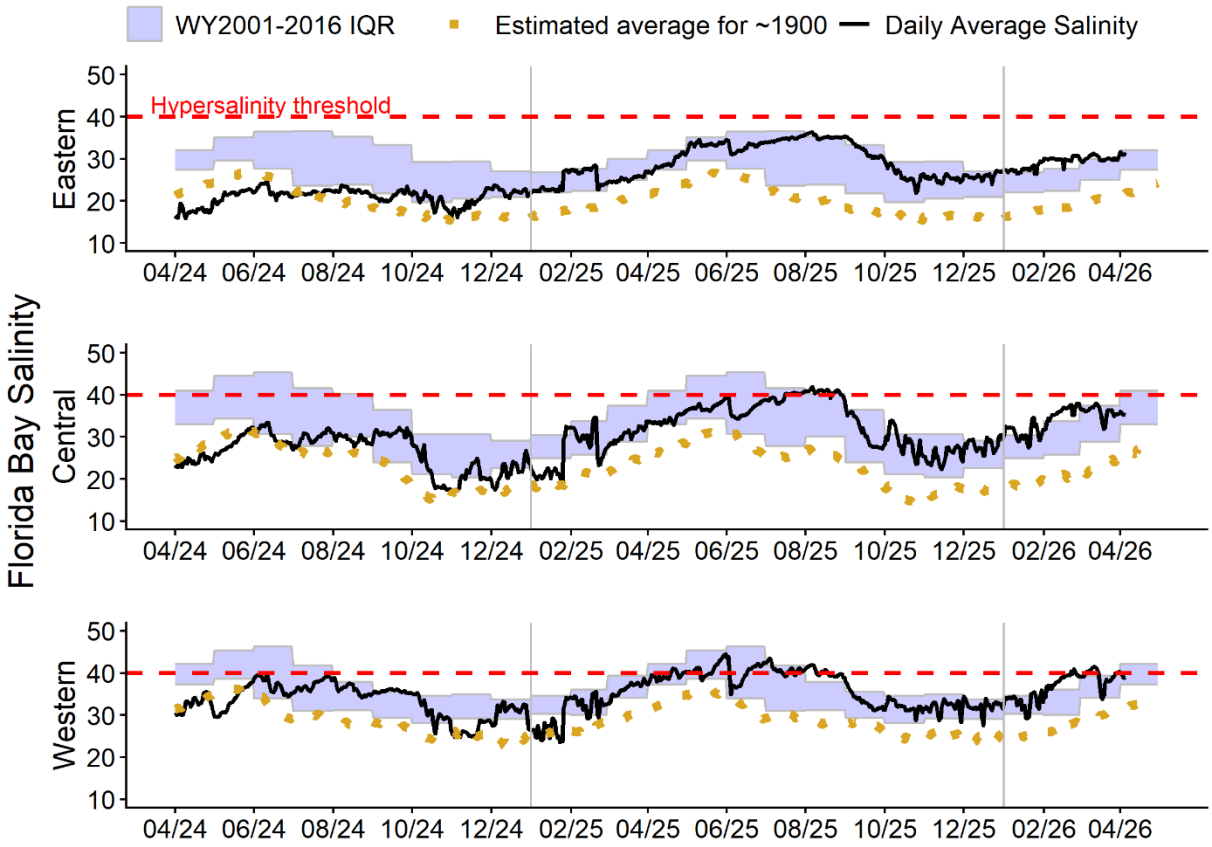


Figure EV-9. Eastern (top panel), Central (middle panel) and Western (bottom panel) Florida Bay daily average salinities with WY2001-2016 interquartile (25-75 percentile) ranges (IQR) and estimated historical daily average salinities. The hypersalinity threshold indicates the level at which salinities start to become harmful to seagrass.

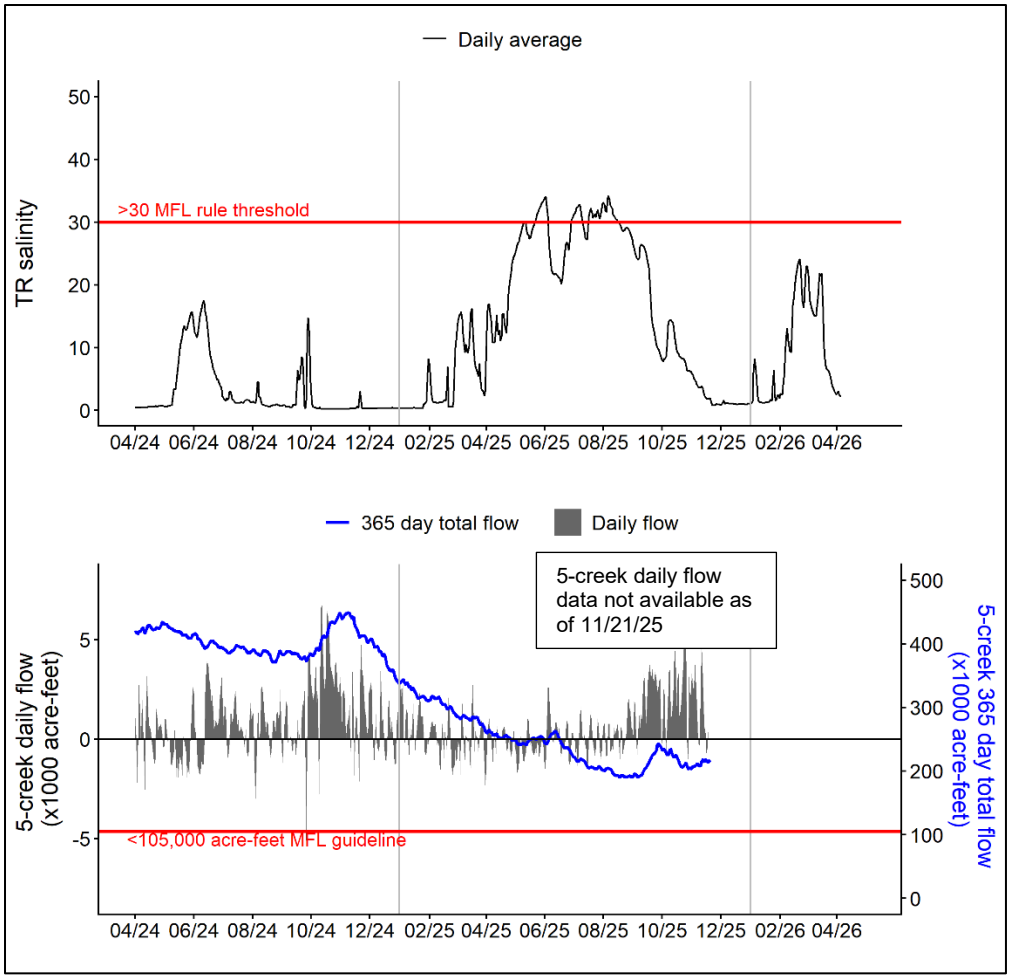


Figure EV-10. Daily average salinity at Taylor River (TR) tracked for the Florida Bay MFL criteria. The 365-day total creek flow MFL metric is not currently available due to missing creek flow data.

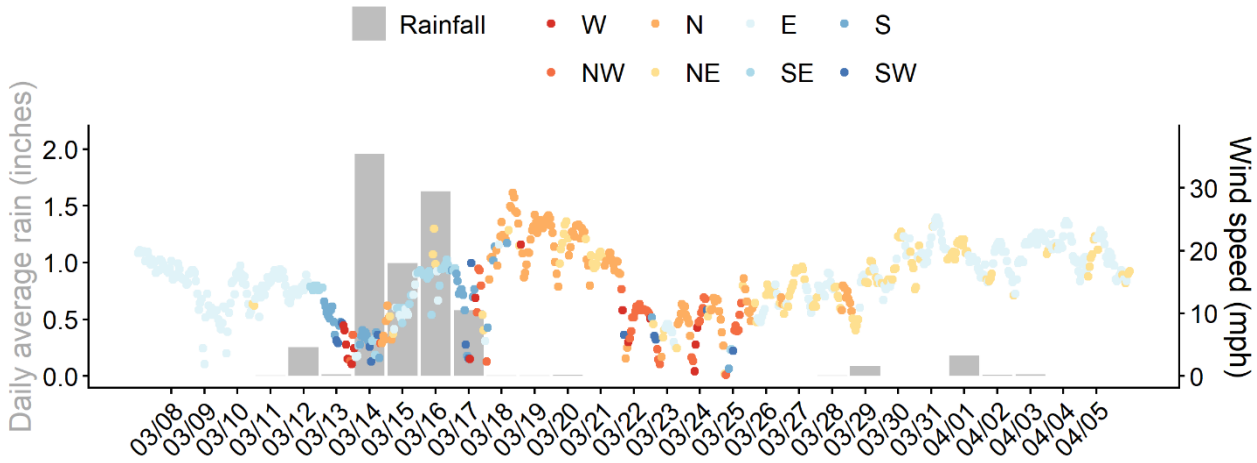


Figure EV-11. Daily average rain across Taylor Slough and Florida Bay, along with hourly average wind speed and direction (measured at Long Key) in Florida Bay over the past four weeks.

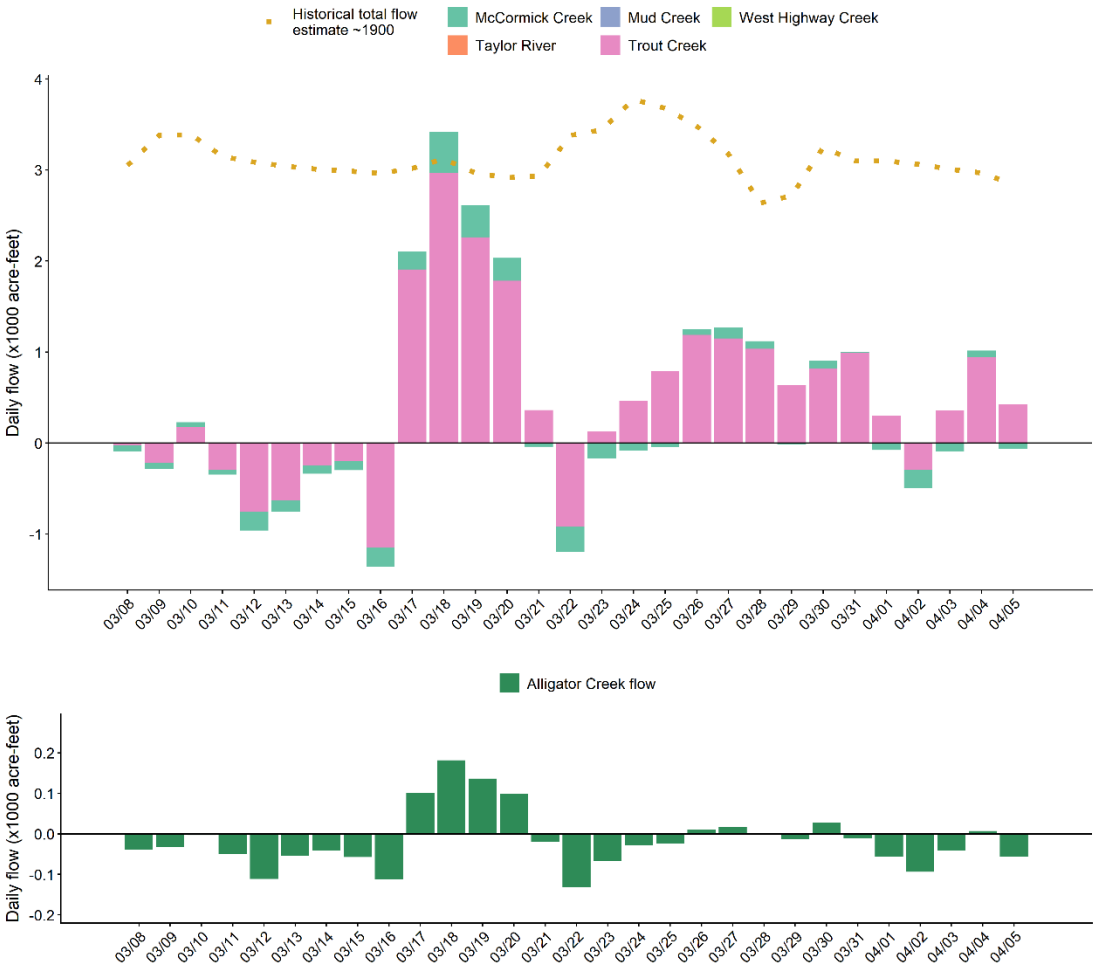


Figure EV-12. Top: daily average creek flow summed between the five major creeks with estimated historical daily flow over the past four weeks (**note**: data from Taylor River, Mud Creek and West Highway Creek are currently unavailable since November 21st, 2025). Bottom: Daily average Alligator Creek flow data. N/A indicates missing data.

Table EV-2. Weekly water depth changes and water management recommendations

SFWMD Everglades Ecological Recommendations, April 6, 2026 (red is new)			
	Weekly change	Recommendation	Reasons
WCA-1	Stage increased by 0.05 feet.	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Conserve water, maintain within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife. Maintain maintenance access for vegetation management.
WCA-2A	Stage decreased by 0.05 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Maintain within basin (north versus south) and downstream habitat and wildlife.
WCA-2B	Stage decreased by 0.13 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.12 feet per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife.
WCA-3A NE	Stage decreased by 0.01 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Conserve water, maintain within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife. Provide suitable depths for aquatic prey and protect against peat soil loss during the dry season.
WCA-3A NW	Stage increased by 0.27 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	
Central WCA-3A S	Stage decreased by 0.19 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Conserve water, maintain within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife. Provide suitable depths for aquatic prey and protect against peat soil loss during the dry season.
Southern WCA-3A S	Stage decreased by 0.13 feet		
WCA-3B	Stage decreased by 0.11 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.12 feet per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife.
ENP-SRS	Stage decreased by 0.05 feet.	Make discharges to ENP according to COP protocol, considering up/down stream ecological conditions.	Protect within basin and upstream habitat and wildlife.
Taylor Slough	Stage changes ranged from -0.16 feet to -0.03 feet	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.
FB- Salinity	Salinity changes ranged from -2.2 to +3.2	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.