



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Two Lake Okeechobee Navigation Locks to Close

Okeechobee, FL – In response to continuing drier-than-normal weather conditions, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is set to close two navigation locks on the western shore of Lake Okeechobee to all boat traffic.

The affected locks are:

- The S-131 navigation lock at Lakeport is expected to close March 3.
- The S-127 navigation lock at Buckhead Ridge is anticipated to close when the lake level hits 12.50 NGVD.

Currently, the forecast calls for continuing dry weather, with little to no significant rainfall predicted to recharge local drainage basins along the rim canals that flow into Lake Okeechobee.

During the 2006-2007 drought, the District took similar action – at the request of residents – after low water levels rendered the canals impassible and led to them becoming overgrown with vegetation. The lock closures helped preserve the remaining water in the canals. The locks will remain closed until rainfall recharges the lake.

For more information about the navigation locks, water levels or District projects, please contact the SFWMD Okeechobee Service Center at (863) 462-5260 or (800) 250-4200.

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About the South Florida Water Management District – Celebrating 60 Years (1949-2009)

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.