



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Taylor Creek Navigation Lock Returns to Service on Lake Okeechobee

With the lake reaching 11 feet NGVD, the S-193 lock reopens this weekend

Okeechobee, FL – Water levels in Lake Okeechobee reached 11 feet NGVD this past week, allowing the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to restore weekend service for the S-193 lock at Taylor Creek.

Starting October 1, the lock will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 5:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. It will remain closed on weekdays until Lake Okeechobee reaches 12 feet NGVD or higher.

The lock had been completely closed to boat traffic since May 2 after Lake Okeechobee's water level fell below 11 feet NGVD.

Lake Okeechobee's water level has not recovered from a significant rainfall deficit that lasted from October until June. The lake is currently at 11.13 feet NGVD, which is more than 3.5 feet below its average elevation this time of year.

The SFWMD operates navigation locks to provide the greatest access possible for the boating public while maintaining flood control and water supply for the region.

The following four navigation locks remain closed:

- **S-135** at J&S Fish Camp, Martin County
- **S-127** at Buckhead Ridge, Glades County
- **S-131** at Lakeport, Glades County
- **G-36** at Henry Creek, Okeechobee County

When the lake level drops to 12 feet NGVD and lower, the SFWMD closes these locks to maintain water levels in adjacent canals and protect groundwater availability. This operational decision also ensures that boats do not attempt to navigate when water levels are insufficient to support safe travel and helps to prevent damage to manatee protection devices inside the lock chambers.

The S-310 navigation lock at Clewiston is secured in the open position to allow boat traffic to pass.

Navigation locks on the Okeechobee Waterway, which includes the Caloosahatchee River and St. Lucie Canal, are operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Information for those navigation locks may be obtained by calling the USACE South Florida Operations Office at 863-983-8101.

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About the South Florida Water Management District

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.