



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

June 2, 2011

CONTACT:

Missie Barletto

[Okeechobee Service Center](#)

South Florida Water Management District

Office: (863) 462-5260, ext. 3006 or Cellular: (863) 634-0774

www.sfwmd.gov/news

follow us on [twitter](#)

Lower Lake Okeechobee Level Triggers S-65E Navigation Lock Closure *Connection between Lake Okeechobee and Kissimmee River closed to boat traffic*

Okeechobee, FL – Beginning on Monday, June 6, the S-65E navigation lock at the Kissimmee River and Lake Okeechobee will be closed with no locktender on duty due to low water levels in Lake Okeechobee.

When Lake Okeechobee's water level decreases to 10.0 feet NGVD and lower, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) closes the S-65E navigation lock to boat traffic because of shoaling on the Lake Okeechobee side of the navigation lock and low water levels inside the lock chamber. The Lake Okeechobee water level today is 10.09 feet NGVD and has been decreasing rapidly due to evapotranspiration and below-normal rainfall.

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. Other navigation locks on the Kissimmee River will remain in operation.

North shore Lake Okeechobee navigation locks at J&S Fish Camp, Henry Creek, Taylor Creek, Buckhead Ridge and Lakeport all are closed with no locktender on duty at this time because of low water levels. The S-310 navigation lock at Clewiston is secured in the open position to allow boat traffic to pass.

The District will place the S-65E navigation lock back into service once the level of Lake Okeechobee has stabilized at 10.5 feet NGVD. Other District-operated navigation locks on Lake Okeechobee will be placed back into operation at lake level 12.5 feet NGVD.

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.

Access to Lake Okeechobee remains possible at boat ramps located inside the Herbert Hoover Dike. For a guide to recreation sites on Lake Okeechobee, including boat ramps and public parks, please visit the District website at www.sfwmd.gov. It is also available at your favorite bait and tackle shop or the SFWMD Okeechobee or Orlando service centers. For more information, please call the SFWMD Okeechobee Service Center at 863-462-5260 or the SFWMD Orlando Service Center at 407-858-6100.

#

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.