

Natalie:

**Page ES-3** Paragraph at the bottom states that LOSA RAA will limit surface water withdrawals with additional demands to be met by the use of groundwater.

Groundwater is much harder to replace with recovery of use of this resource takes a long time. Excess surface water (and there is some) is “lost” to tide. Surface water is also easily replenished with rainfall. The direction implied – use groundwater, not surface water – may not be the best choice.

**Page ES-4** At the top of the alternative water supply options are not required at this time. However, under Future Direction, use of alternative water supply options will be required. Why not initiate some use now.

**Page ES-5** With the headlines, media and political actions out there today, Lake O water is a hot topic. While I understand that Lake O water is included in LEC Plan, Lake O is still a part of the LKB Plan. A study update in 2018 could not have imagined what is going on now. I would suggest water use, discharge and quality could and should be discussed now.

**Page 28** Not sure why agricultural use goes up by 16% during drought, but, PWS/DSS only goes up 6%. Also, check Table 2-13 values with Table 2-11 (pg 27) values.

**Page 34** Per capita consumption for the OUA based upon monthly use and number of connections is difficult. The number of meters is small ( $\pm 9,200$ ), inclusive of residential & non-residential accounts. The problem arises when winter visitors are not accounted for in the per capita calculation. Of the  $\pm 7,900$  estimated residential accounts, it is estimated 2,500 are absent for 6-9 months of the year. Utilizing all of the accounts in the calculation tends to drive the per capita number lower.

**Page 77-79** This section is problematic more so with the Applicant’s Handbook for Water Use Permit Applications 3.2.1 F that limits new withdrawals from Lake O and pushes those new demands on groundwater or other alternative sources. Groundwater is of the highest priority since it is harder to replace. I would suggest allocating Lake O for public consumption a better use of this water than releasing it to tide. I understand that agriculture has other options available for irrigation (storm water, brackish, reclaimed, etc.). However, water available for public use (potable) is limited. Additionally, limiting future additional surface water withdrawals to a time period (April 2001 – January 2008) without consideration for growth is problematic.

There is a significant amount of information contained in these +200 pages. I am sure that I am missing some important elements. SFWMD staff have put forth a very good document. Best of luck with the comments.

Should you have any questions, please call or e-mail.

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HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT RESOURCES OFFICE

November 4, 2019

Armando Ramirez (via email at: aramire@sfwmd.gov)  
South Florida Water Management District  
3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Subject: Seminole Tribe of Florida Comments Regarding the Lower Kissimmee Water Supply Plan

Dear Armando,

The Seminole Tribe is providing the following comments regarding the draft of the *2019 Lower Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Plan Update* ("LKWSP"). As you are aware, the LKWSP supports the water supply needs and entitlements of the Seminole Tribe's Brighton Reservation. The Seminole Tribe of Florida ("Seminole Tribe") and the South Florida Water Management District ("District") have a long history of working together in panning for water supply, and the Seminole Tribe appreciates the District's continued efforts in that regard.

The Seminole Tribe is providing these comments for the District's consideration and asks that prior to the finalization of the 2019 Plan Update, the District incorporate these comments, provide a revised draft for review, and continue to work with the Seminole Tribe as needed.

## 1. General Comments

In general, it was discussed with and acknowledged by the District staff that the LKWSP, like all water supply plans, is a planning tool not a regulatory tool, and that no one, including the Seminole Tribe, is bound by it. This should be clarified both in the Executive Summary and Chapter 1 of the LKWSP by including language similar to what District staff included in its October

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10, 2019 presentation to the Governing Board. Specifically, that the LKWSP is a planning tool and road map and does not authorize consumptive use permits, establish minimum flows and levels, adopt rules, or require water users to implement specific projects.

## **2. Characterization and References within the report to the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Brighton Reservation Entitlements**

In regards to characterization and reference to the Seminole Tribe throughout the document, please see recommended language changes below which help clarify the Seminole Tribe's distinctive status and rights.

- Executive Summary, page ES-1, third paragraph, please reword the first sentence as follows to better indicate that the Seminole Tribe's Brighton Reservation is a separate entity, not part of any County:

*"LKB Planning Area covers approximately 1,805 square miles, including portions of Glades, Hendry, and Okeechobee Counties, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Brighton Reservation. ~~The Seminole Tribe of Florida's Brighton Reservation is within this planning area and the Tribe's~~ The Seminole Tribe's surface water entitlement pursuant to the 1987 *Water Rights Compact Among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the State of Florida and the SFWMD* is discussed in this plan update."*

- Executive Summary, Page ES-4, please reword the last bullet point relative to the anticipated benefits of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Project ("LOWRP"):  
*"Finalize and implement the components identified in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project Tentatively Selected Plan. Part of CERP, it is anticipated the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Project will increase the watershed's storage capacity and improve the quantity and timing of water deliveries to Lake Okeechobee."*

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- Chapter 5, page 69, please reword the second sentence regarding the purposes of Lake Okeechobee:

“It serves multiple purposes, including flood protection; urban, agricultural, and environmental water supply; navigation; commercial and recreational fisheries; fish and wildlife habitat; supports the Seminole Tribe’s entitlement and other important cultural and environmental resources for the Seminole Tribe.”

- Chapter 1, page 1, please include reference to the Seminole Tribe’s Brighton Reservation in the second sentence:

“This . . . Plan Update . . . assesses existing and projected water needs as well as water sources to meet those needs through 2040 for the portions of Glades, Okeechobee, and Highlands counties and the Seminole Tribe of Florida Brighton Reservation generally northwest of Lake Okeechobee.”

- Chapter 1, page 4, please clarify at the beginning of the paragraph entitled “Seminole Tribe of Florida Brighton Reservation”, that the Seminole Tribe of Florida is a federally-recognized Indian Tribe organized pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, and reference the Seminole Tribe’s status as a sovereign Indian Tribe.
- To the extent the following Tables throughout the document include reference to the Seminole Tribe, please add a footnote or otherwise indicate that the Seminole Tribe is not part of Glades County, but rather an independent Tribal Government and clarify that for discussion purposes only, information relative to the Seminole Tribe is included in the calculations for Glades County:
  - Chapter 2, Tables 2-2; 2-3; 2-4; 2-5; 2-7; 2-8; and 2-10.

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- Appendix A, Table A-1.
- Appendix B, Tables B-1; B-2; B-3; B-4; B-5; B-6; B-7; B-8; B-9; B-25; B-26; B-27; B-28; B-29; and B-30.
- Appendix E, Table E-1.
- Chapter 4, Page 43, “Resource Protection Tools” table – under “water use permitting”, please indicate the Seminole Tribe does not have to obtain water use permits from the District, but obtains its water rights through the Compact.
- Please change references to “Local Government” to “Local or Tribal Government,” or add a footnote clarifying that the Seminole Tribe is a federally-recognized Indian Tribe organized pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, or otherwise referencing the Seminole Tribe’s status as a sovereign Indian Tribe, rather than as a local government.

### **3. Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project**

The LKWSP references and discusses the LOWRP throughout. In regards to the LOWRP, the Seminole Tribe recommends that the LKWSP contain the most up to date information possible. For that reason, District staff should review the Governing Board discussions and recommendations specifically regarding the LOWRP and include relevant provisions in the LKWSP. Specifically, the Governing Board recommended District staff move forward with ASR (subject to review of necessary studies) utilizing the \$50 million allocated for components of the LOWRP without the Wetland Attenuation Feature (“WAF”). The District Executive Director has reached out to Tribe HERO staff regarding the WAF and has further acknowledged the need to meet with the Seminole Tribe to discuss their concerns regarding this component. In regards to the ASR portion of the project, District staff has been directed by one Governing Board member to complete the necessary studies on an existing ASR well on the Kissimmee River. The District has also recommended the development of an ASR Task Team or Working Group to resolve remaining impacts associated with ASR. The Seminole Tribe heartily supports that effort. The

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Seminole Tribe also supports wetland restoration independent of the WAF and the associated land acquisition necessary for wetland restoration outside of the WAF. Furthermore, it should be noted that the District Project Manager for this project has acknowledged that the ASR component of this project can be completed independent of the WAF.

#### **4. Dispersed Water Management Projects**

The LKWSP references and discusses Dispersed Water Management Projects (“DWM”) throughout. The Seminole Tribe has at various times, and in regards to various projects, submitted comments to the District regarding DWM projects, specifically expressing concern with the impact of DWM projects on Seminole Tribe water supply and entitlements. The Seminole Tribe reiterates those concerns and requests that references to DWM projects throughout the LKWSP specifically indicate these projects are not designed to contribute to water supply, and that the Seminole Tribe has expressed its concern over the impact of DWM projects to their water supply and entitlement.

#### **5. Water Resource Protections**

The LKWSP discusses reservations for the Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes, and indicates this is under development. The Seminole Tribe requests to be notified of all relevant rulemaking or other public meetings, and that the Seminole Tribe’s entitlement be included in this undertaking.

The Seminole Tribe appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the *2019 Lower Kissimmee Water Supply Update* Planning Document and Appendices. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

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Sincerely,



Paul Backhouse, PhD, RPA, Snr. Director, Heritage and Environment Resources Office and THPO  
Seminole Tribe of Florida

cc: Jim Shore  
Andrew Bowers  
Kevin Cunniff  
Stacy Myers  
Whitney Sapienza  
Mark Elsner (via email @ melsner@sfwmd.gov)  
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DATE: November 5, 2017

TO: Natalie Kraft, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)

FROM: Rebecca Elliott, Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

RE: 2019 Lower Kissimmee Basin (LKB) Water Supply Plan (WSP) Update  
Staff Comments for September 2019 DRAFT 2019 LKB WSP Update

### **General Comments**

The SFWMD staff's efforts to gather information and stakeholder input during the development of the 2019 Lower Kissimmee Basin (LKB) Water Supply Plan (WSP) Update is appreciated. Water Supply Plan Updates are substantial informational projects and the amount of time and attention to detail the water supply staff have given to this document is acknowledged. Below are comments on the September 2019 Draft 2019 LKB WSP Update. Suggested edits and comments have been identified by Chapter, section and page. The edits and comments are numbered sequentially. Document text with suggested edits for consideration are provided with tracked changes and comment text is identified by "Comment:" preceding the text.

#### Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule 2008 (LORS2008), Lake Okeechobee MFL Recovery Strategy and Lake Okeechobee Service Area Restricted Allocation Area Relationships:

Lake Okeechobee is currently in an MFL recovery status until the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) rehabilitation allows for the replacement of LORS2008 by the revised schedule now under development known as the Lake Okeechobee System Operations Manual (LOSOM).

The use of the LEC WSP references to address the entire LOSA is appreciated and avoids inconsistency between water supply plans. However, the Draft 2019 LKB WSP Update does not consistently provide a description of the potential for change between the 2019 LKB WSP effort and the future 2024 LKB WSP Update. It is anticipated that HHD rehabilitation will be completed and the implementation of LOSOM underway. Below is an excerpt from the 2013 LEC WSP Update, Chapter 3 – Water Resources Analyses-Current and Future Conditions. This excerpt contains the background information on the regulatory context for Lake Okeechobee's temporary MFL recovery status, the LOSA RAA, and expectations for the lake's future MFL prevention status.

“In October 2008, SFWMD's Governing Board adopted restricted allocation area criteria for LOSA (Section 3.2.1.G, Basis of Review). These criteria limit surface water withdrawals from Lake Okeechobee and all surface water hydraulically connected to the lake. The change in permit criteria was necessitated by the impacts to water supply and increased exceedances of the

lake MFL criteria from implementation of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (2008 LORS), which reduced stages in Lake Okeechobee by approximately one foot. When repairs by USACE to the Herbert Hoover Dike are complete and the lake's regulation schedule is revised through a National Environmental Policy Act analysis, the expectation is that the resulting schedule will raise lake levels. The additional water held in the lake is expected to return the lake from MFL recovery status to MFL prevention status, enhance the level of certainty to existing permitted users now receiving less than 1-in-10 level of certainty, and support environmental objectives. In the meantime, these criteria are part of the MFL recovery strategy for the lake."

Suggested edits below reflect the dynamic relationship between LORS2008, the LO MFL Recovery Strategy, the LOSA RAA and LOSOM. The LOSA RAA serves a regulatory purpose in support of the LO MFL Recovery Strategy until such time as the LO MFL is returned to a Prevention Strategy.

FDACS appreciates the opportunity to provide comments for the LKB WSP 2019 Update and looks forward to our continued collaboration in water supply planning.

## Executive Summary

### 1) ES-3 Water Source Options – First Paragraph

... Total water use in the planning area is projected to rise only moderately over the planning period (Chapter 2). However, the Lake Istokpoga/Indian Prairie Canal System RAA limits surface water from this source and the LOSA Restricted Allocation Area is limited at this time due to the rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD), LORS2008, protection of existing legal users, limited storage and environmental needs. surface water availability from these sources (Chapter 4). Therefore, additional demands are expected to be met with groundwater from the FAS until additional surface water availability is identified in the future.;

### 2) ES-4 Future Direction – First Drop

Agricultural users should are encouraged to -reduce or augment use of surface water with projects such as stormwater and tailwater recovery ..... where appropriate.

## Chapter 2: Demand Estimates and Projections

3) Comment: The incorporation of the 1 in 10 Year Demands in the Tables works well and provides easily accessible information on the difference between the average year and the 1 in 10 Year planning condition.

### Chapter 3: Demand Management

#### Conservation Strategies

##### 4) Agricultural Irrigation – page 32 – last paragraph

AGR efficiency can be improved by replacing outdated or inefficient irrigation systems with newer, more efficient ones. The selection of a more efficient system depends on the crop type, soil composition, water source, and water availability. In 2040, the LKB Planning Area is projected to contain approximately 70,122 acres of crops irrigated using flood seepage and 1,288 acres of nursery irrigated using methods other than low-volume systems (e.g., drip systems). Substantial efficiency gains, resulting in lower water use, could be made by converting less efficient systems, where economically and technically feasible, to more efficient ones.

##### 5) Agricultural Irrigation – page 33 – second paragraph

Because the costs associated with moving water affects profitability, most agricultural operations presumably are as efficient as practical with their existing irrigation systems and growing methods. Also, profit margins may limit growers' ability to transition to new irrigation systems or methods. Growers are encouraged should to investigate the feasibility of self-funding and/or seek financial assistance through cost-share programs or other sources of funding, which are discussed later in this chapter.

#### Conservation Programs

##### 6) Agricultural Best Management Practices Program Page 36 First Paragraph

..... The Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan, which covers much of the LKB Planning Area, requires some agriculture producers to implement FDACS-adopted BMPs or conduct water quality monitoring. All agricultural water users are encouraged to enroll in the FDACS BMP program (FDACS 2019a).

#### Potential for Water Conservation Savings

##### 7) Agricultural Water Conservation Potential – pages 38 & 39

Comment: See suggested edits below. The 2019 conservation estimates are significantly different from 2018 for this planning region and suggest that this plan use those numbers. Other suggested revisions are to clarify that this is based on statewide average per FSAID – current language in RWSP tends to imply the savings are just for the LKB planning region – and to be consistent with conservation projection language in the 2018 Update of the Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan.

The FSAID statewide methodology for calculating the amount of potential agricultural conservation savings is more fully described in Appendix E of the FSAID V report (FDACS 20189), but generally is based on the United States Department of Agriculture's Farm and Ranch Irrigation Surveys. Agricultural water use is based on several site-specific parameters, including crop type, acreage, soil type, evapotranspiration, and rainfall. Some parameters cannot be modified easily or at all. Conservation savings can be achieved through controllable parameters (e.g., irrigation method, planting method, irrigation management strategy) to increase irrigation efficiency. The selection of new systems and management methods depends on crop type, water source, food safety requirements, and water availability. Generally, these changes are expensive and require logistical and economic planning. Financial incentives may be necessary to help farmers transition to more efficient irrigation systems or growing methods. The volume of water that could be conserved for any individual project varies depending on the number and magnitude of the parameters targeted for change. The accuracy of the projected conservation savings for a specific water supply region, using this statewide average approach, depends on the region's similarities to the statewide Farm and ranch Irrigation Survey data (e.g., crop mix, existing irrigation systems, soil types, economic feasibility, financial incentives). Survey data from 1978 to 2013 indicates that the average farmer in Florida has reduced the amount of water used by a decrease in water use of 5,500 gallons per acre per year, primarily based on irrigation system changes. From 2003 to 2013, the survey data show efficiency improvements a lower reduction of approximately 2,800 gallons per acre per year, due primarily to changes in scheduling and sensor-based automation. Recognizing lower savings in the more recent survey data, FDACS estimates the average water savings through 2040 to be 2,600 gallons per acre per year for currently irrigated operations not using drip or micro-sprinkler irrigation systems, and 2,300 gallons per acre per year for newly irrigated fields or those irrigating with drip or micro-sprinkler systems.

The estimated conservation potential for the LKB Planning Area in 2040 is ~~16.73~~ 8.99 mgd (~~8.70~~ 3.61 mgd in Glades County, ~~6.83~~ 3.58 mgd in Highlands Count, and ~~1.19~~ 1.80 mgd in Okeechobee County).

#### Chapter 4 – Water Resource Protection

8) Page 41 – Third Paragraph

RAAs were established for the Lake Istokpoga/Indian Prairie Canal System in 1981 and, due to the USACE's implementation of the 2008 LORS regulation schedule, the Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA) in 2008.

9) Page 44 – Changes to Water Use Permitting

First Paragraph: A series of rulemaking efforts ~~was~~ were completed in ...

Comment: There may be more recent changes to the water use permitting than those described. It appears this section ends with changes in the 2014/2015 time period more in keeping with the 2014 Update of the LKB WSP. Recommend that this section be double checked for complete updates.

10) Page 49 – Water Reservations – First Paragraph

Comment: The three introductory paragraphs provide a good overview of the statutory direction for water reservations and their place in the water supply plan. Recommend the language in the statute be used regarding the use of a reservation as “quantity, timing, location” rather than a “volume” of water to be consistent with the statutory language.

11) Page 50 – Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes Water Reservation Development

Comment: The first two paragraphs of this section provide good background information on the Kissimmee and UCOL system. Recommend that the additional information on the pending reservation rule development be substantially reduced to minimize the potential for inconsistencies in the WSP regarding the rule development process. The SFWMD website explains how this rule development effort has been postponed multiple times, most recently in 2016. A brief explanation of the reservation status as shown on the website is sufficient and appropriate for a WSP. Additional information may not be current for rule development that has lacked public input since 2015.

Recommend consider the following paragraph to replace pages 52 & 53:

The District is in the process of developing water reservation rules for the Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes which identify and reserve from increased consumptive use water needed to protect fish and wildlife in the Upper Chain of Lakes, Headwater Revitalization Lakes, and the Kissimmee River and floodplain. Development of the water reservations has been an ongoing process since first authorized in 2008. After being postponed in 2009 and again in 2016, the project was reinitiated in 2018 and is ongoing. The March 2015 supporting technical document and December 2014 draft water reservation rules are currently being revised and will be available when the revisions are complete. Rule adoption is expected by 2020.

12) Lake Okeechobee Service Area RAA – Page 55 – Sections first and second paragraph:

In October 2008, the District Governing Board adopted RAA criteria for LOSA (Subsection 3.2.1.F of the Applicant's Handbook [SFWMD 2015a]; **Figure 4-2**) necessitated by the impacts to water supply and increased exceedances of the MFL criteria from implementation of the 2008 LORS which reduced stages in Lake Okkechobee by approximately 1 foot due to HHD concerns. . The RAA covers more than 1.8 million acres, including Lake Okeechobee and the integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to and receive water from Lake Okeechobee such as the C-43 Canal, the C-44 Canal, and secondary canal systems that receive Lake Okeechobee water for water supply purposes via gravity flow or pump. Net increases in the volume of surface water withdrawn from the RAA are prohibited over that resulting from base condition water uses occurring from April 1, 2001 to January 1, 2008. Allocations over the base condition water use are only allowed through sources detailed in Subsection 3.2.1.F.3.c of the Applicant's Handbook (SFWMD 2015a), such as certified project water, implementation of offsets, alternative water supply, available and unassigned base condition water use, or base condition water use that was terminated or reduced after January 1, 2008.

~~The RAA criteria were necessitated by the impacts to water supply and increased exceedances of the MFL criteria from implementation of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule, which reduced stages in Lake Okeechobee by approximately 1 foot due to Herbert Hoover Dike concerns.~~ The RAA is part of the MFL recovery strategy for Lake Okeechobee described in the 2008 Amendment to Appendix H of the *2005-2006 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update* (SFWMD 2008). The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from operational changes and the revised regulation schedule effort expected to be completed by 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update.

13) CFWI Planning Area Constraints – Page 57

When the Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes Water Reservations are adopted, they will ~~prohibit and/or~~ establish limits on future additional water allocations from the reservation water bodies and thereby protect water levels in the Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes and adjacent areas.

14) Summary of Water Resource Protection – page 62 - Third Drop

The LOSA RAA currently prohibits net increases in the volume of surface water withdrawn from Lake Okeechobee and the integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to and receive water from Lake Okeechobee over that resulting from base condition water uses. The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from operational changes and the revised regulation schedule expected to be completed by 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update.

## Chapter 5 – Water Source Options

### 15) Surface Water – Page 65 – last sentences

RAA criteria also have been established for the Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA) that currently prohibit net increases in the volume of surface water withdrawn from Lake Okeechobee and the integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to and receive water from Lake Okeechobee over that resulting from base condition water uses. Additional demands are expected to be met with groundwater from the FAS. The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from operational changes and a revised regulation schedule expected to be completed in 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update.

### 16) Kissimmee River – page 68 – top paragraph, last sentences

The Water Reservations rule is scheduled to be adopted in 2020. The Water Reservations will reserve ~~the volume of~~ water needed for the protection of fish and wildlife from increased consumptive uses. Further information about the Water Reservations is provided in **Chapter 4**.

### 17) Lake Okeechobee – page 69 second paragraph

Lake Okeechobee has multiple inflows, including the Kissimmee River, and receives water from a watershed in excess of 4,600 square miles. The lake's watershed consists of several agricultural irrigation basins surrounding Lake Okeechobee and includes areas southeast of the L-59, L-60, and L-61 canals within the LKB Planning Area. Since 2008, net increases in the volume of surface water withdrawn from Lake Okeechobee and the integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to and receive water from Lake Okeechobee over ~~that resulting from~~ base condition water uses are currently have been restricted due to Lake Okeechobee Service Area RAA criteria (**Chapter 4**). RAA criteria also have been established for the Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA) that prohibit due to the implementation of the 2008 LORS interim regulation schedule. The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from the operational changes and the revised regulation schedule expected to be completed by 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update.

### 18) Summary of Water Source Options – page 74 – second paragraph in section

Use of the FAS likely will continue to increase to meet future water demands in the region as it is a practical solution to meet some of the region's AGR needs when surface water availability is limited. Existing and proposed regulatory measures (e.g., Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels, RAAs, Water Reservations) currently limit surface water availability from Lake Istokpoga, the Kissimmee River, and Lake Okeechobee. The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from operational changes and a revised regulation schedule expected to be completed in 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update.

## Chapter 6 – Water Resource Issues and Analyses

### 19) Summary of Issues Identified for 2040 – Page 77 -Third Drop

Regulatory limitations that currently prohibit net increases in the volume of surface water withdrawn from Lake Okeechobee and the integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to and receive water from Lake Okeechobee over that resulting from base condition water uses. The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from operational changes and the revised regulation schedule expected to be completed in 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update;

### 20) Kissimmee River – Page 79

Water availability from the Kissimmee River to meet ~~human~~ water supply needs ~~may be is very~~ Limited by upcoming Water Reservations. The river is undergoing restoration to return the lake to its pre-channelization state. Once complete, the Kissimmee River Restoration Project will create additional water storage north of the LKB Planning Area, improve the quantity and timing of the river's inflows, and restore floodplain wetlands. Further information about the Kissimmee River Restoration Project is provided in **Chapter 7**. The SFWMD is developing Water Reservations for the Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes that will identify prevent water needed for the protection of fish and wildlife and reserve it from increased consumptive uses. from being allocated to consumptive uses. Adoption of the Water Reservations rule is expected by December 2020, however, an updated rule is pending and issues like water availability (both quantity and timing) have not been finalized. Further information about the Water Reservations rule is provided in

## Chapter 4.

### 21) Lake Okeechobee – page 79 – last section sentence

Further information about the Lake Okeechobee MFL and recovery strategy and the potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee can be found in the *2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update* (SFWMD 2018) and Chapter 40E-8, Florida Administrative Code.

### 22) Summary of Water Resource Analyses – page 92

Surface water withdrawals from Lake Okeechobee and the integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to and receive water from Lake Okeechobee are currently restricted due to Lake Okeechobee Service Area RAA criteria. The potential for additional water from Lake Okeechobee resulting from operational changes and the revised regulation schedule expected to be completed in 2022 is discussed in the 2018 Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update.

## Chapter 7 – Water Resource and Supply Development Projects

23) Summary of Water Resource and Supply Development Projects -page 106 – fourth drop

Comment: It is not clear what the “water retention” projects are or how they would be efficient in expanding the current water supply. Water retention is usually a way to reduce high water impacts with very limited, if any, ability to provide water during dry season or dry year events. Recommend the projects that would have a quantifiable water supply benefit be identified or deletion of this drop/bullet.

## Chapter 8 – Future Direction

Demand Management: Water Conservation- page 110 – sixth drop

24) Local governments should consider developing or enhanceing existing ordinances to be consistent with Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ provisions [Section 373.185, Florida Statutes].

Natural Systems and Resource Protection

25) page 111 second paragraph in section

Water supply needs for natural systems are addressed by water resource development projects such as CERP (**Chapter 7**). CERP includes regional projects to improve the quality, timing, volume, distribution, and delivery of water to the natural system and other water related needs. Ongoing environmental restoration and water resource protection efforts include the following:

26) page 111 – sixth drop

Complete the Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes Water Reservations to reserve water for the protection of fish and wildlife from increased consumptive uses.

Surface Water pages 112 – 113

27) page 113 – last drop in section

AGR users are encouraged to should-reduce or augment use of surface water when technically and economically feasible with projects such as stormwater and tailwater recovery, the blending of brackish groundwater with fresh water where available, and more efficient water conservation practices.

28) Coordination – page 115 – fifth drop

The SFWMD should continue collaboration with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services through the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan, including stormwater, water quality, and water storage in the LKB Planning Area.