

MEMORANDUM

TO: Luis Alejandro, Chief, Water Management Section (USACE)

FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)

DATE: April 6, 2017

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for April 4, 2017 to April 10, 2017

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from April 4, 2017 to April 10, 2017. On April 3, Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.46 feet NGVD, in the Beneficial Use Sub-band. During last week the lake stage decreased 0.22 feet.

District total rainfall for March was well below average (~34%). For the next two weeks, District rainfall is expected to be below average.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent Climate Prediction Center (CPC) precipitation outlook indicates equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall for south Florida, for April 2017 and for the three-month windows April to June and May to July. The CPC precipitation outlook for the 2017 wet season is for equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within Beneficial Use Sub-band, Part C of the 2008 LORS does not suggest releases to the WCAs to manage lake stages.

Over the 7-day period from March 27, 2017 to April 2, 2017, a total of 39,500 acre-feet were released south from Lake Okeechobee through EAA canals and the L-8 canal. Of this volume, inflows into STAs were as follows: 100 acre-feet to STA-1E, 1,000 acre-feet to STA-1W, 1,000 acre-feet to STA-2 and 3,400 acre-feet to STA-3/4. No releases were made from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51.

At this time, the USACE is not requesting the SFWMD implement lake regulatory releases to WCA-1, WCA-2A or WCA-3A. There will be no releases from the lake into the A-1 FEB for this operational period. STA-3/4 releases into north WCA-2A via S-7 will occur in the range of 100 to 200 cfs.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the Beneficial Use Sub-band, Part D of the 2008 LORS does not suggest releases to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries to manage lake stages.

The Lake Okeechobee Adaptive Protocols (AP) recommend no releases through S-77 to supplement flows entering the Caloosahatchee Estuary at S-79, based on Lake Okeechobee stage and the 30-day moving average salinity forecast. This week, recent rainfall within the Caloosahatchee Basin is currently generating runoff sufficient to meet and exceed S-79 discharge targets without supplemental releases from S-77. Therefore, the District recommends that the USACE maintain the current operations with a target of 450 cfs, 7-day average, measured at S-79. In addition, the District recommends that the USACE implement operations at S-78 and S-79 so as to conserve basin runoff and further extend the period of time that basin runoff can supply water to the Caloosahatchee Estuary without the need to deliver water through S-77. Should local runoff fall below S-79 targets, District recommends supplemental pulse releases at S-77 to achieve the target release at S-79.

Salinity at the US 1 Bridge location in the St. Lucie Estuary increased slightly and remains within the fair range for adult oysters. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinity conditions between Val I-75 and Ft. Myers are deteriorating for tape grass. Salinity conditions are in the good range for adult oysters at the Cape Coral Bridge, while in the fair range at Shellpoint and the Sanibel Causeway.