

## MEMORANDUM

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

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

**DATE:** January 19, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Operational Position Statement for January 16, 2018 to January 22, 2018

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from January 16, 2018 to January 22, 2018. On January 15, 2018, Lake Okeechobee stage was 15.41 feet NGVD, in the Low Sub-band. Lake stage increased by 0.07 feet during the preceding 7 days.

District wide rainfall for January up-to-date is near average (95%), with the spatial distribution skewed with the largest rainfall in the East Coast. District forecast (issued January 16) indicates below-average rainfall for the coming week and near-average for the following week.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent Climate Prediction Center (CPC) precipitation outlook for January indicates slightly increased chances of below-normal for the area south of Lake Okeechobee, and equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall for the remainder of the District. The outlooks for the three-month windows January-March and February-April increase to a more severe condition, both windows with ~55% chance of below-normal for the entire District. The March-May window shows ~ 45% below-normal for the area north of the lake and slight chances of below-normal for the area south of the lake. The forecast transitions to equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall for the April-June window.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the Low Sub-band, the Tributary Hydrologic conditions in the Normal category and the Multi-seasonal outlook in the Normal category, Part C of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends "Up to Maximum Practicable to the WCAs if desirable or with minimum Everglades impacts. Otherwise no releases to the WCAs".

Over the 7-day period from January 8 to January 14, 2018, a total volume of 1,600 acre-feet regulatory releases was sent from Lake Okeechobee to STA 3/4. There were no regulatory releases south through the other EAA canals to the STAs/WCAs neither from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51. Stage in WCA-1 remains above regulation schedule. Stage in WCA-2A remains above regulation schedule, but below the temporary deviation schedule. Stage in WCA-3A is in Zone E1 of the regulation schedule. For the coming operational period, the USACE is requesting the SFWMD to implement maximum practicable releases from the lake south to all the WCAs.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the Low Sub-band, the Tributary Hydrologic Conditions in the Normal category, and with the lake net inflow seasonal outlook in the Dry category, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance suggests Base Flow releases: "S-79 Up to 450 cfs and S-80 up to 200 cfs".

Total discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged 780 cfs over the past week with no releases coming from Lake Okeechobee. The 7-day average salinity at the US1 Bridge is in the good range for adult oysters. Total inflow to Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged 700 cfs over the past week with 170 cfs (24%) coming from the Lake. Salinity conditions between Val I-75 and Ft. Myers remain good for tape grass. Salinity is in the good range for adult oysters at Shell Point and at Cape Coral.

The District has considered the application of the SFWMD's Lake Okeechobee Adaptive Protocols (AP) this week since the lake stage is in the Low Sub-band and the LORS release guidance is recommending Base Flow releases. Given that the estuary does not need water, the AP recommendation is for "No S-77 releases to the Caloosahatchee Estuary ...". The District recognizes the USACE desire to manage the lake stage by making Base Flow releases per the LORS release guidance and therefore recommends continuation of releases at S-77 to supplement the target release at S-79.