

MEMORANDUM

TO: Laureen Borocharner, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)
FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)
DATE: January 31, 2019
SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for January 29, 2019 to February 4, 2019

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from January 29, 2019 to February 4, 2019. As of the writing of this document, the Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.65 feet NGVD, which places it within the Base Flow Sub-band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS). The Lake stage increased by 0.36 feet during the preceding 7 days.

SFWMD (District) January rainfall to date went from below-average to well-above-average (219%). During the preceding 7 days, District wide rainfall was in excess of 3.5 inches, with local maxima accumulation above 3 inches for a good portion of the District. District forecast (issued January 28) predicts below-average rainfall for this week and the following week.

Precipitation Outlook: The CPC precipitation outlook for February is for equal chances of above-normal, normal, or below normal rainfall for south Florida. The outlook for the 3-month windows from Feb-Apr to May-Jul is for increased chances (45%) of above-normal precipitation. All periods starting with the Jun-Aug window show equal chances of above-normal, normal, or below normal rainfall for south Florida.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the Base Flow Sub-band, the Tributary Hydrologic Conditions in the Normal category and the Multi-Seasonal Lake Okeechobee Net Inflow Outlook in the Wet, Part C of the 2008 LORS suggests "Up to Maximum Practicable Releases to the WCAs if Desirable or wit Minimum Everglades Impact".

Over the 7-day period from January 21, 2019, to January 27, 2019, L-8 FEB received 100 acre-feet of Lake Okeechobee releases, STA-1E received 300 acre-feet and STA-1W received 400 acre-feet. The A-1 FEB and STA 3/4 complex did not receive any lake releases. No Lake Okeechobee releases were discharged to tide through the C-51 canal. Stage in WCA-1 is below regulation schedule. Stage in WCA-2A is above regulation schedule. WCA-3A stage is below Zone E1 of the regulation schedule. **For the coming operational period, the USACE is directing the District to send Lake Okeechobee regulatory releases south to WCA-1 and WCA-3A.**

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the Base Flow Sub-band, Part D of the 2008 LORS suggests "S-79 Up to 450cfs and S-80 Up to 200 cfs".

Total discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged approximately 1,200 cfs over the past week with no releases from Lake Okeechobee. The 7-day average salinity at the US1 Bridge is in the fair range for adult oysters. Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged approximately 2,150 cfs over the past week with 170 cfs (8%) coming from Lake Okeechobee. Salinity conditions between Val I-75 and Ft. Myers remain good for tape grass. Salinity conditions are 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 Base Flow Use Sub-band and LORS 2008 suggests Base Flow releases to the Estuaries. Given that the estuary does not need water, the AP recommendation is for "No S-77 releases to the Caloosahatchee Estuary unless the Governing Board recommends otherwise". The District recognizes the USACE's stated desire to further lower the lake stage. Therefore, the SFWMD recommends the USACE follow LORS 2008.