

## MEMORANDUM

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

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

**DATE:** March 29, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Operational Position Statement for March 27, 2018 to April 1, 2018

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from March 27, 2018 to April 1, 2018. On March 26, 2018, Lake Okeechobee stage was 14.07 feet NGVD, in the Low Sub-band. Lake stage decreased by 0.21 feet during the preceding 7 days.

District rainfall to date for March is well below average (30% of normal). District forecast (issued March 27) predicts well 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 indicates increased chances of below-normal rainfall (~55%) for the District for the month of April. The outlook for all the future 3-month windows is for equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall.

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 March 19, 2018 to March 25, 2018, STA 2 received 3,300 acre-feet of Lake Okeechobee regulatory releases, STA 3/4 received 3,100 acre-feet and the A-1 FEB received 2,200 acre-feet. There were 2,000 acre-feet regulatory releases from the lake to tide through the C-51 canal. For STA maintenance purposes, STA 1E received 100 acre-feet and STA 1W received 400 acre-feet from Lake Okeechobee. Stage in WCA-1 is slightly below regulation schedule. Marsh stage in WCA-2A remains above regulation schedule, but below the temporary deviation schedule, while canal stage (S11B-HW) is below the floor elevation. Stage in WCA-3A is below Zone E1 of the regulation schedule. For the coming operational period, the USACE is requesting the SFWMD 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 the lake net inflow seasonal outlook in the Normal 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 around 150 cfs over the past week with no releases coming from Lake Okeechobee. The 7-day average salinity at the US1 Bridge is in the fair range for adult oysters. Total inflow to Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged approximately 700 cfs over the past week with approximately 350 cfs (50%) 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 Cape Coral and at Shell Point.

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.