MEMORANDUM

TO: Jason Engle, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)

FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)

DATE: October 29, 2026

SUBJECT: System Operational Position Statement October 27, 2026 to November 2, 2026

This Position Statement is to provide operational input for the one-week period from October 27, 2026 to November 2 based on system conditions and data observed during the previous Monday to Sunday 7-day period.

Current climate conditions: District October rainfall to date is much above normal (146% normal). The rainfall forecast (issued October 27) calls for above to much above normal rainfall for the coming 7-day period and near to below normal for the following one.

Climate and weather forecasts: The most recent CPC precipitation outlook for Nov 2026 is significantly increased chances (60-70%) of above normal rainfall for the Kissimmee River and north, and substantial increased chances (50-60%) to increased chances (40-50%) of above normal rainfall for the remainder of the District. El Niño is present and continues to strengthen, with a strong-to-very strong El Niño likely through January-March 2027. The 3-month windows of Nov 2026 – Jan 2027 to Feb 2027 – Apr 2027 are significant increased chances (60-70%) to substantial increased chances (50-60%) of above normal rainfall for the entire District. The 3-month window of Mar 2027 – May 2027 indicates increased chances (40-50%) of above normal rainfall for the Lake Okeechobee and south, and substantial increased chances (50-60%) of above normal for the respective remainder areas of the District. The outlooks for the 3-month windows from Apr 2027 – Jun 2027 to Nov 2027 – Jan 2028 signal equal chances of below, normal and above normal rainfall (EC) for south Florida.

Hydrologic and tropical outlooks: Current climatological and hydrological conditions are Normal. The lake stage is in the Water Shortage Management Zone (WSMZ) and is projected to remain within the WSMZ until entering Zone D in late November.

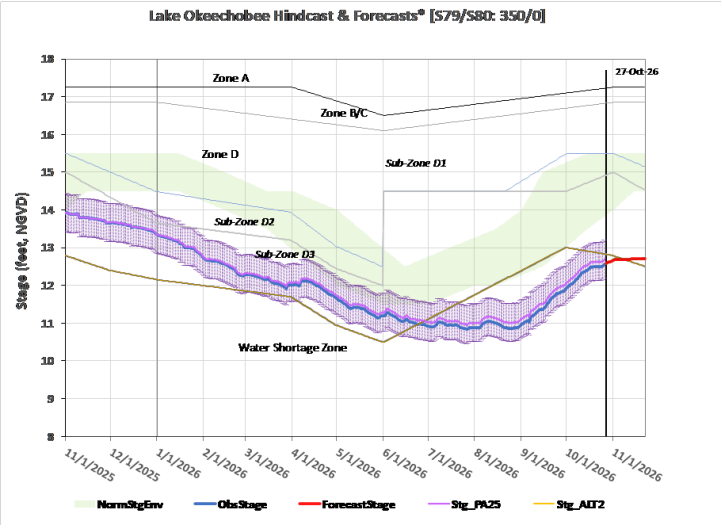
Water-supply conditions: The Lake Okeechobee seasonal net inflow outlook is Normal to Extremely Wet and at Low risk for water supply. The multi-seasonal net inflow outlook is Normal and at Moderate risk for water supply.

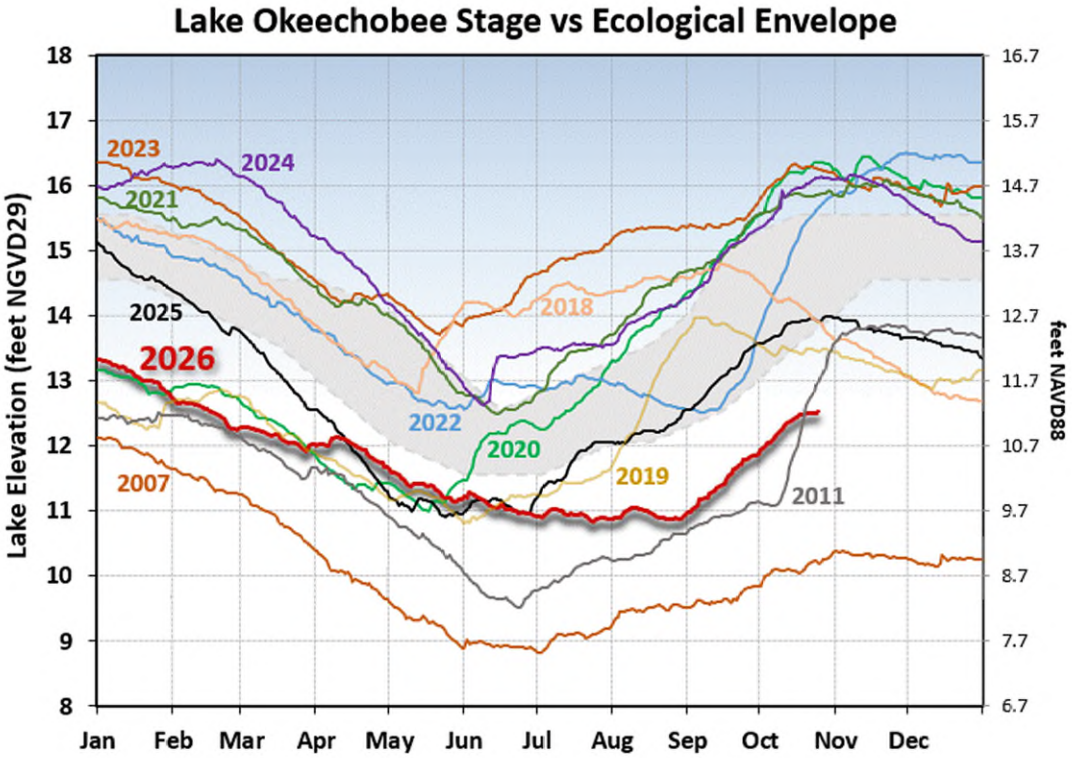
Estuary conditions: For the past 7-day periods, October 19 to October 25, 2026, total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary averaged approximately 1,100 cfs with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee through S-77. Salinities were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass in the upper estuary. Salinities were in the optimal range (10-25) for adult oysters at Cape Coral, and in the upper stressed range (>25) at Shell Point and Sanibel. Total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was about 1,350 cfs with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee and C-44 Basin, about 50 cfs coming from Ten Mile Creek, about 100 cfs coming from C-23 Basin, about 350 cfs coming from C-24 Basin and about 800 cfs coming from Tidal Basin. The average salinity in the middle estuary was within the optimal range (10-25) for adult eastern oysters.

Lake Okeechobee stage and ecological conditions:

On October 25, the daily average Lake Okeechobee stage was 11.21 feet NAVD88 (12.52 feet NGVD29), which placed it within the Water Shortage Management Zone (WSMZ) of the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM). Lake stage increased by 0.04 feet over the preceding 7-day period. El Niño is present and continues to strengthen, with a strong-to-very strong El Niño likely through January-March 2027. The District will continue to monitor conditions in the estuaries, as well as the systemwide conditions. Normal Lake Operations continue pursuant to the considerations in LOSOM as informed by PA25. Given the estuary salinity conditions, it is recommended that flow targets for the Caloosahatchee Estuary should rely on basin flows only, and not be supplemented with Lake Okeechobee water; flow targets for the St. Lucie Estuary and Lake Worth Lagoon should remain at 0 cfs. The District will continue to monitor salinity conditions in the estuaries and water supply conditions within the Lake Okeechobee Service Area. The USACE typically implements the releases to the estuaries over a 7-day period starting on Saturday and ending on Friday.

Net Inflow Forecast Modeling Based on PA25 Simulation





The current and seven prior years' annual stage hydrographs for Lake Okeechobee in comparison to the ecological envelope (light grey).

Navigation and recreation conditions: Multiple boat locks will re-open on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee beginning Wednesday, October 28, 2026. Boaters are encouraged to exercise caution on the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). Public access along the L-29, L-67A and L-67C Canals near Tamiami Trail in Miami-Dade County is closed for maintenance activities.

STOF water supply conditions: Current Lake Okeechobee stage is sufficiently high that water supply deliveries to the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) Brighton Reservation, if needed, will not be impacted. When Lake Okeechobee stage recedes below 8.75 feet NAVD88 (10 feet NGVD29) and 6.75 feet NAVD88 (8 feet NGVD29), water supply delivery is not achievable via Pump Station G-207 on the Harney Pond Canal and Pump Station G-208 on the Indian Prairie Canal, respectively, as the respective canals become disconnected from Lake Okeechobee.

Algal Bloom conditions: The Fish and Wildlife Research Institute reported on October 23, 2026, that *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide dinoflagellate, was not observed above background concentrations in any samples collected within the District region. In the most recent non-obscured satellite image from October 24, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests low to moderate cyanobacteria potential across the western shoreline of the Lake.

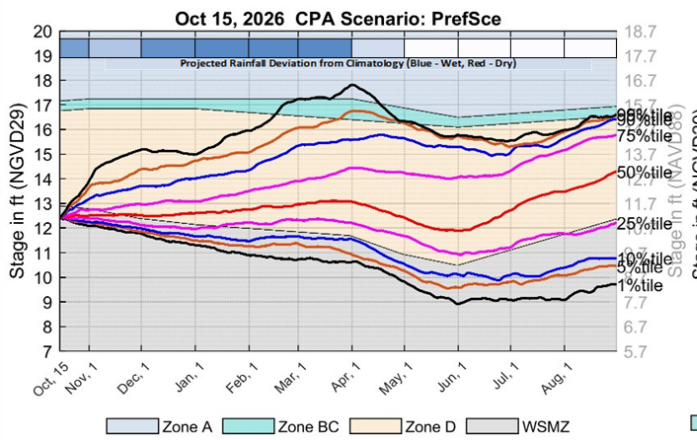
STA conditions: In STA-1E, Central Flow-way is offline for construction activities. An operational restriction is in place in the Western Flow-way for post-construction vegetation grow-in. Online treatment cells are above target stage. In STA-1W, Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. Treatment cells are above target stage. Vegetation in the Western and Eastern Flow-ways is highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs for the Northern and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 $g/m^2/yr$. In STA-2, treatment cells are above target stage. An operational restriction is in place in Flow way 2 for vegetation management activities. The 365-day PLRs for all Flow-ways are below 1.0 $g/m^2/yr$. In STA-3/4, an operational restriction is in place in the Eastern Flow-way for vegetation management activities. Treatment cells are above target stage. Vegetation in the Central Flow-way is highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs for the Eastern, Central, and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 $g/m^2/yr$. For the current operational period, USACE is not requesting flows south from Lake Okeechobee towards the WCAs. The District will continue to work with the USACE to manage Lake Okeechobee levels in an effort to curtail harmful discharges over this year. To help with this objective the District will move as much water south through the Stormwater Treatment Areas as possible under the current permits as regional conditions allow.

WCA conditions: On October 25, the daily average stage in WCA-1 was at 15.96 feet NAVD88 (17.56 feet NGVD29), in Zone A1 and 0.06 feet above regulation schedule. The daily average stage in WCA-2A was at 12.44 feet NAVD88 (14.03 feet NGVD29), in Zone A and 1.43 feet above regulation schedule. The daily average stage in WCA-3A was at 8.72 feet NAVD88 (10.24 feet NGVD29), in Zone B and 0.22 feet below regulation schedule. Over the 7-day periods, October 19, 2026 to October 25, 2026, no regulatory releases were sent from Lake Okeechobee south to the STAs. No Lake regulatory releases reached Lake Worth Lagoon through the C-51 canal during this period.

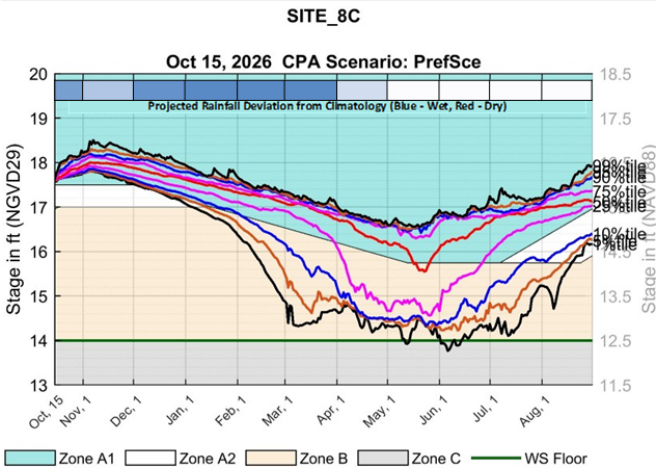
ENP conditions: Releases from WCA-3A to the ENP continue through the S12C, S12D, S333, and S333N structures. Connectivity in the major sloughs remained stable compared to last month. Depths across WCA-1 and WCA-2A have significantly increased compared to two months ago. Water levels have risen in northern WCA-3A but remain within the 10th to 20th percentile in southern WCA-3A and WCA-3B. The Big Cypress basin is also showing a stable wetting trend. Stages decreased in Taylor Slough over the past week and are now just below the recent average. Salinity increased on average in Florida Bay compared to last week and remains above the estimated historical average and above the WY2001-2016 Interquartile Range (IQR) 75th percentile in all regions. The Tamiami Trail Flow Formula (TTFF) recommends 1,187 cfs of daily target releases from WCA-3A to ENP. The District recommends continuing with the current operations for the releases from WCA-3A in accordance with the Combined Operating Plan.

October 15, 2026 Conditional Position Analysis (CPA) results for Lake Okeechobee, WCA-1, WCA-2A and WCA-3A under LOSOM Operations.

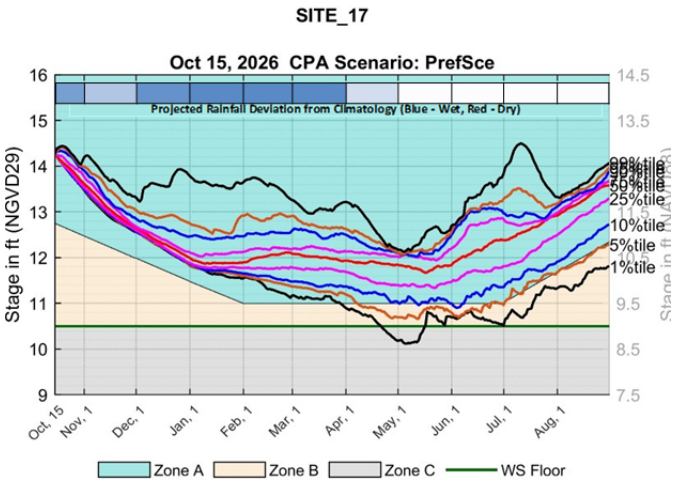
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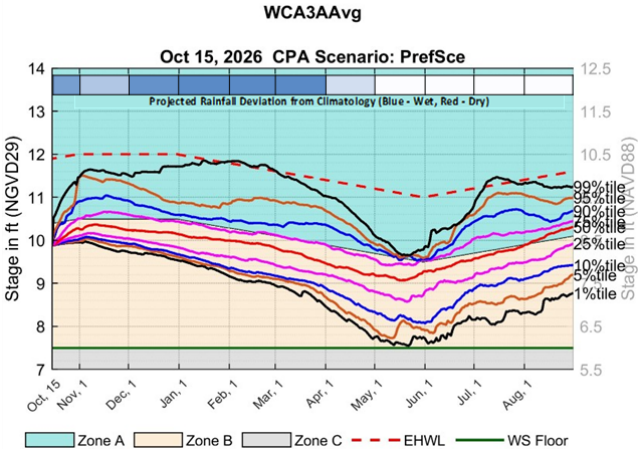
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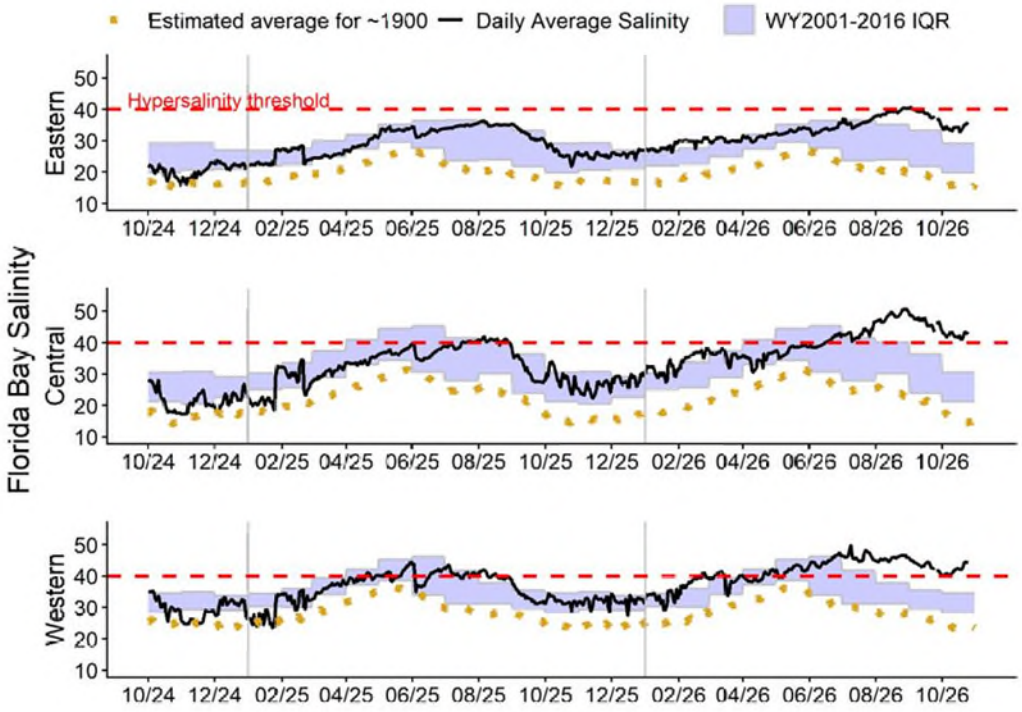


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WCA3AAvg





Eastern (top panel), Central (middle panel) and Western (bottom panel) Florida Bay daily average salinities with WY2001-2016 interquartile (25-75 percentile) ranges (IQR) and estimated historical daily average salinities. The hyper salinity threshold indicates the level at which salinities start to become harmful to seagrass.