

MEMORANDUM

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

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

DATE: October 5, 2017

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for October 3, 2017 to October 9, 2017

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from October 3, 2017 to October 9, 2017. On October 2, 2017, Lake Okeechobee stage was 16.44 feet NGVD, in the High Sub-band. Lake stage increased by 0.29 feet during the preceding 7 days.

Rainfall for the month of September was well above-average. District current forecast indicates above-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 (~55%) of above-normal rainfall for south Florida for October. The outlook for the three-month windows from December-February to February-April is for an increased chance (~45%) of below normal rainfall. The outlook for the remainder three-month windows in the period October 2017 to May 2018 is for equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the High Sub-band and stages in WCA-2A and WCA-3A higher than the maximum of their respective schedules plus 0.25 feet, Part C of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends “No Releases to the WCAs”.

There were no releases south from Lake Okeechobee through the EAA canals over the 7-day period from September 25 to October 1, 2017. No releases were made from Lake Okeechobee to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 either.

For the coming operational period, the USACE is requesting the SFWM send maximum practicable releases from the lake south to WCA-1, but not to WCA-2A or WCA-3A. The District will continue to evaluate the capacity to send water to WCA-1 given the current storm event and regional water levels.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the High Sub-band, the Tributary Hydrologic Conditions in the Very Wet category and Lake Okeechobee stage projected to rise to the High Lake Management Band, the release guidance for Part D of the 2008 LORS is “Up to maximum Discharge Capacity to Tidewater”

Total discharge to the St. Lucie estuary averaged 6,250 cfs over the past week with about 2,930 cfs (47%) coming from Lake Okeechobee. Over the past week, salinities remained about the same at most sites in the St. Lucie Estuary. Bottom salinity at A1A Bridge was slightly higher compared to the week before. The 7-day average salinity at the US1 Bridge is in the poor range for adult oysters.

Total inflow to Caloosahatchee estuary averaged 11,900 cfs over the past week with 6,340cfs (53%) coming from the Lake. Salinity conditions between Val I-75 and Ft. Myers are good for tape grass. Salinity conditions are estimated to be in the good range for adult oysters at Sanibel, in the fair range at Shell Point and in the poor range at Cape Coral.

Lake Okeechobee stages continue to increase from runoff entering the lake. The District recommends that USACE follows the LORS 2008 Regulation Schedule.