

MEMORANDUM

TO: Laureen Borochaner, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)
FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)
DATE: February 6, 2020
SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for February 4, 2020 to February 10, 2020

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from February 4, 2020 to February 10, 2020. On February 3, Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.91 feet NGVD, which places it within the Base Flow Sub-band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS). Lake stage increased by 0.10 feet during the preceding 7 days.

District January rainfall was below average (72% of normal), after enhanced activity increased total rainfall the last day of January. District February rainfall to date is above average (146% of average), with individual areas showing high variability (8 to 267% of normal). District rainfall forecast (issued February 4) predicts near average rainfall for this 7-day period and below average for the following period.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent CPC precipitation outlook for February 2020 calls for slightly increased chances of above-normal rainfall for south Florida. The outlook for the 3-month window Feb-Apr is for equal chances of above-normal, normal, or below-normal rainfall. The outlook for the 3-month windows Apr-Jun and May-Jul is for slightly increased chances of above-normal rainfall. All the other 3-month windows to the end of the 2020 wet season call for equal chances of above-normal, normal, or below-normal rainfall.

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 category, Part C of the 2008 LORS suggests "Up to Maximum Practicable to the WCAs if desirable or with minimum Everglades impact; otherwise no releases to WCAs".

Over the 7-day period from January 27 to February 2, 2020, Lake Regulatory releases in the amount of 100 acre-feet went into STA 2 and 2,900 acre-feet were sent to the A-1 FEB/STA 34 complex. A volume of 300 acre-feet was sent to STA 1W for maintenance purposes. No Lake Regulatory releases were sent to the Lake Worth Lagoon through the C-51 canal. Stage in WCA-1 is in Zone B of the regulation schedule. Stage in WCA-2A is in Zone A of the regulation schedule. WCA-3A stage is in Zone E of the regulation schedule. For the coming operational period, the USACE is requesting the SFWMD implement maximum practicable regulatory releases south from the lake to the WCAs. In accordance with this request the District will continue moving water south from the lake to the WCAs.

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 450 cfs and S-80 Up to 200 cfs".

Total discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged approximately 1,150 cfs over the past week with no releases from Lake Okeechobee. The 7-day average salinity at the US1 Bridge is in the good range for adult oysters. Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged approximately 1,125 cfs over the past week with about 175 cfs coming from Lake Okeechobee. Salinity conditions are in the good range for Tape Grass at Val I-75 and in the fair range at Ft. Myers. Salinity conditions for adult eastern oysters are in the good range at Cape Coral and Shell Point, and in the fair range at the Sanibel location.

The District, in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), has considered the current system conditions and the application of the SFWMD's Lake Okeechobee Adaptive Protocols (AP) because the lake stage is in the Base Flow Sub-band and LORS 2008 suggests Base Flow releases to the Estuaries. The SFWMD recommends the USACE continue to monitor salinity conditions in the Caloosahatchee Estuary with a mind towards releases that support a healthy estuarine environment while the District continues to make environmental deliveries to WCA-3 where water levels are low.