

MEMORANDUM

TO: Laureen Borocharner, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)
FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)
DATE: July 23, 2020
SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for July 21, 2020 to July 27, 2020

This Position Statement is to provide operational recommendations for the one-week period from July 21, 2020 to July 27, 2020, based on system conditions and data observed during the last 7 days. On July 20, Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.69 feet NGVD, which places it within the Base Flow Sub-band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS). Lake stage increased by 0.19 feet during the preceding 7 days.

Rainfall over the District for the month of July to date is slightly above average. District rainfall forecast (issued July 21) for the next 7 days predicts average rainfall, and below average for the following 7-day period.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent CPC precipitation outlooks for August 2020 and for the 3-month windows of Aug-Oct and Sep-Nov are for increased chances of above-normal rainfall for the District. Outlook for the 3-month window of Oct-Dec calls for equal chances of above-normal, normal, and below-normal rainfall. For the first half of the 2020-2021 dry season, the forecast indicates increased chances of below normal rainfall. The outlook corresponding to the transition months from dry to wet season in 2021 shows increased chances of above normal rainfall.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the Base Flow Sub-band, the Tributary Hydrologic Conditions in the Wet 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 July 13 to July 19, 2020, no Lake Okeechobee releases were sent to any of the STAs. No Lake releases were sent to the Lake Worth Lagoon through the C-51 canal. Stage in WCA-1 is above schedule (Zone A1), stage in WCA-2A is above schedule (Zone A), and WCA-3A stage is above schedule (Zone A). For the coming operational period, the USACE is not requesting the SFWMD to implement maximum practicable regulatory releases 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".

For the 7-day period July 14 to July 20, 2020, total discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged approximately 1,950 cfs 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 1,150 cfs over the past week with about 150 cfs coming from Lake Okeechobee. Salinity conditions are in the good range for Tape Grass at Val I-75 and at Ft. Myers. Salinity conditions for adult eastern oysters are in the good range at Shell Point and at Cape Coral and in the fair range at Sanibel.

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 AP recommendation is for "No S-77 release to the Caloosahatchee Estuary unless the Governing Board recommends otherwise". At this time, the District recommends to follow LORS 2008 and implement releases through S-77 only if necessary to achieve a 7-day pulse release (650 cfs average) to the Caloosahatchee Estuary as measured at S-79, and if needed to maintain favorable salinity conditions in the Caloosahatchee Estuary. With recent rains and current wet conditions, the generated runoff within the basin may be sufficient to achieve the target flow at S-79. The USACE typically implements the releases to the estuaries over a 7-day period starting on Saturday and ending on Friday.