

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Laureen Borocharner, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)  
**FROM:** John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMD)  
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)  
**DATE:** July 30, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Operational Position Statement for July 28, 2020 to August 3, 2020

This Position Statement is to provide operational recommendations for the one-week period from July 28, 2020 to August 3, 2020, based on system conditions and data observed during the last 7 days. On July 27, Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.93 feet NGVD, which places it within the Base Flow Sub-band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS). Lake stage increased by 0.24 feet during the preceding 7 days.

Rainfall over the District for the month of July to date is above average. District rainfall forecast (issued July 28) for the next 7 days predicts above average rainfall associated with Tropical Storm Isaias.

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 20 to July 26, 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 as all three WCAs are above schedule.

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 21 to July 27, 2020, total discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged approximately 1,550 cfs with no releases from Lake Okeechobee. The 7-day average salinity at the US1 Bridge is in the fair range for adult oysters. Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged approximately 2,000 cfs over the past week with about 70 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". Given the potential impacts of approaching Tropical Storm Isaias and current system conditions, the District recommends the USACE take the necessary steps to manage lake stage, as allowed within LORS 2008, while maintaining favorable salinity conditions in the Caloosahatchee Estuary. The USACE typically implements the releases to the estuaries over a 7-day period starting on Saturday and ending on Friday.