MEMORANDUM

TO: Laureen Borochaner, Chief, Engineering Division (USACE)

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

DATE: June 25, 2020

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for June 23, 2020 to June 29, 2020

This Position Statement is to provide operational recommendations for the one-week period from June 23, 2020 to June 29, 2020, based on system conditions and data observed during the last 7 days. On June 22, Lake Okeechobee stage was 12.34 feet NGVD, which places it within the Beneficial Use Sub-band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS). Lake stage increased by 0.14 feet during the preceding 7 days.

Overall for the month of June District rainfall is above average (116% of average). District rainfall forecast (issued June 24) predicts well below average rainfall for this 7-day period, and below average for the next period.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent CPC precipitation outlooks for July 2020 and for the 3-month windows of Jul-Sep and Aug-Oct are for increased chances of above-normal rainfall. Outlook for the 3-month window of Sep-Nov call for increased chances of above-normal rainfall for most of the District, but with areas north of the Lake showing a slightly increased chances of above normal rainfall. The 3-month window of Nov 2020-Jan 2021 shows slightly increased chances of below normal rainfall. The outlook months corresponding to the transition months from dry to wet season in 2021 show slightly increased chances of above normal rainfall.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within Beneficial Use Sub-band, Part C of the 2008 LORS does not suggest releases to the WCAs to manage lake stages.

Over the 7-day period from June 15 to June 21, 2020 no Lake releases were sent to the STAs or FEBs. 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).

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the Beneficial Use Sub-band, Part D of the 2008 LORS does not suggest releases to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries to manage lake stages.

For the 7-day period June 16 to June 22, 2020, total discharge to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged approximately 1,500 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 2,100 cfs over the past week with about 60 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, Cape Coral and 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 Beneficial Use Sub-band and above the Lake Okeechobee Water Shortage Management zone. Salinity has decreased in the northern estuaries, due to significant rainfall and basin runoff. Conditions for ecological indicators in the Caloosahatchee Estuary have improved. 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 a 7-day pulse release (650 cfs average) to the Caloosahatchee Estuary as measured at S-79, 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, and S-77 supplemental releases may not be needed to achieve the target pulse at S-79. The USACE typically implements the releases to the estuaries over a 7-day period starting on Saturday and ending on Friday.