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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: John Mitnik, Assistant Executive Director, Executive Office Staff

FROM: SFWMD Staff Environmental Advisory Team

DATE: August 23, 2023

SUBJECT: Weekly Environmental Conditions for Systems Operations

Summary

Weather Conditions and Forecast

A strong upper-air low pressure system is forecast to slide south and southwest of Florida by Wednesday resulting in a drying of the mid- to upper-levels of the atmosphere and much greater atmospheric stability. For the remainder of this week, continued subsidence is expected across the SFWMD, with much reduced moisture and instability. Consequently, much below to below normal rainfall is predicted on a daily basis through at least Saturday and possibly the entire weekend. However, the southern interior of the SFWMD and the eastern part of the area could see on Thursday a greater coverage of shower and isolated thunderstorm activity. Late this week, a developing system has some potential to develop further while moving towards the northern Gulf coast of Florida. The broad envelope of moisture surrounding this system, if it forms at all, could overspread the SFWMD and cause an increase of rainfall Monday next week. However, this is considered a low-probability scenario. For the week ending next Tuesday morning, total SFWMD rainfall is likely to be much below normal. The greatest weekly rainfall is most likely to be over the southern and eastern parts of the SFWMD while areas north and west of Lake Okeechobee are very dry.

Kissimmee

Releases were made from East Lake Toho and Lake Toho as needed to slow the rate of stage rise. Weekly average discharge on August 20, 2023 was 91 cfs and 310 at S-65 and S-65A. Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain decreased by 0.11 ft to 0.21 feet over the week ending August 20, 2023. The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River increased from 4.0 mg/L last week to 4.6 mg/L for the week ending August 20, 2023, which is above both the potentially lethal level and the level that is physiologically stressful for largemouth bass and other sensitive species.

Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee stage was 15.36 feet NGVD on August 20, 2023, which was similar to the previous week and 0.38 feet higher than a month ago. Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) were similar to the previous week as well, going from 3,352 cfs to

3,397 cfs. Average daily outflows (excluding rainfall) decreased from the previous week, going from 525 cfs to 71 cfs. The cyanobacteria index level decreased across the Lake compared to the previous week, and was low to moderate along the northeastern, northwestern, and western shorelines according to the August 19, 2023 satellite image from NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System.

Estuaries

Total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged 1,887 cfs over the past week with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee. Mean surface salinities decreased at HR1 and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary over the past week. Salinity in the middle estuary was in the lower stressed range (5-10) for adult eastern oysters.

Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged 1,892 cfs over the past week with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee. Mean salinities remained the same at S-79 and Val I-75 and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary over the past week. Salinities were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass in the upper estuary. Salinities were in the lower stressed range (5-10) for adult eastern oysters at Cape Coral and in the upper stressed range (>25) at Shell Point and Sanibel.

Stormwater Treatment Areas

For the week ending Sunday, August 20, 2023, no Lake Okeechobee water was delivered to the FEBs/STAs. The total amount of Lake releases sent to the FEBs/STAs in WY2024 (since May 1, 2023) is approximately 2,000 ac-feet. The total amount of inflows to the STAs in WY2024 is approximately 598,000 ac-feet. Most STA cells are above target stage. STA-1E Western Flow-way is offline for post-construction vegetation grow in and STA-3/4 Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation rehabilitation/drawdown. Operational restrictions are in effect in STA-1W Northern Flow-way and STA-2 Flow-ways 1, 2, and 4 for vegetation management activities, and in STA-2 Flow-way 3 for canal plug refurbishments. This week, if 2008 LORS recommends Lake releases to the WCAs and conditions allow, releases will be sent to STA-2.

Everglades

Most regions of the WCAs experienced a good rate of stage change last week as ascension rates slowed. Depths are above average for this time of year across most of the WCAs and ENP, except for northwestern WCA-3A. Stages decreased across Taylor Slough but remain above the historical average. Average salinity decreased last week across most sites in Florida Bay, but conditions are now above average for this time of year.

Biscayne Bay

Total inflow to Biscayne Bay averaged 1,562 cfs and the previous 30-day mean inflow averaged 1,196 cfs. The seven-day mean salinity was 24.6 at BBCW8 and 23.8 at BBCW10, both within the ideal salinity range for estuarine organisms in this region (salinity less than 35). Data provided by Biscayne National Park.

Supporting Information

Kissimmee Basin

Upper Kissimmee

On August 20, 2023, mean daily lake stages were 56.2 feet NGVD (0.3 feet below schedule) in East Lake Toho, 53.4 feet NGVD (0.1 feet below schedule) in Lake Toho, and 50.0 feet NGVD (1.0 feet below schedule) in Lakes Kissimmee-Cypress-Hatchineha (KCH) (**Table KB-1, Figures KB-1-3**).

Lower Kissimmee

For the week ending August 20, 2023, mean weekly discharge was 91 cfs and 310 at S-65 and S-65A. Mean weekly discharge from the Kissimmee River was 800 cfs at S-65D and 1,100 cfs at S-65E (**Table KB-2**). Mean weekly headwater stages were 46.0 feet NGVD at S-65A and 27.8 feet NGVD at S-65D on August 20, 2023. Mean weekly river channel stage decreased by 0.8 feet to 33.4 ft NGVD over the week ending on August 20, 2023 (**Figure KB-4**). Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain decreased by 0.11 ft to 0.21 feet over the week ending August 20, 2023 (**Table KB-2, Figure KB-5**). The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River increased from 4.0 mg/L the previous week to 4.6 mg/L for the week ending August 20, 2023 (**Table KB-2, Figure KB-6**).

Water Management Recommendations

Follow the IS-14-50 discharge plan for S-65/S-65A, including limiting lake stage ascension rates to 0.25 ft/week to the extent possible in East Lake Toho, Lake Toho, and KCH. Maintain at least minimum flow (250-300 cfs) at S-65A. Maintain current headwater stage at S-65D for the time being.

Table KB-1. Average discharge for the preceding seven days, Sunday’s average daily stage and Sunday’s average daily departure from KCOL flood regulation lines or temporary schedules. All data are provisional.

Water Body	Structure	Stage Monitoring Site	Weekly (7-Day) Average Discharge (cfs)	Sunday Lake Stage (feet NGVD) ^a	Schedule Type ^b	Sunday Schedule Stage (feet NGVD)	Sunday Departure from Regulation (feet)	
							8/20/23	8/13/23
Lakes Hart and Mary Jane	S-62	LKMJ	0	59.8	R	60.0	-0.2	-0.2
Lakes Myrtle, Preston and Joel	S-57	S-57	0	60.4	R	61.0	-0.6	-0.6
Alligator Chain	S-60	ALLI	0	62.8	R	63.2	-0.4	-0.5
Lake Gentry	S-63	LKGT	0	60.3	R	61.0	-0.7	-0.6
East Lake Toho	S-59	TOHOE	0	56.2	R	56.5	-0.3	-0.4
Lake Toho	S-61	TOHOW S-61	190	53.4	R	53.5	-0.1	-0.2
Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha	S-65	KUB011 LKIS5B	91	50.0	R	51.0	-1.0	-1.1

a. Names of in-lake monitoring sites and structures used to determine lake stage. If more than one site is listed, an average is reported.

b. A: projected recession line; R: USACE regulation schedule; S: temporary recession target line; T: temporary schedule; NA: not applicable or not available.

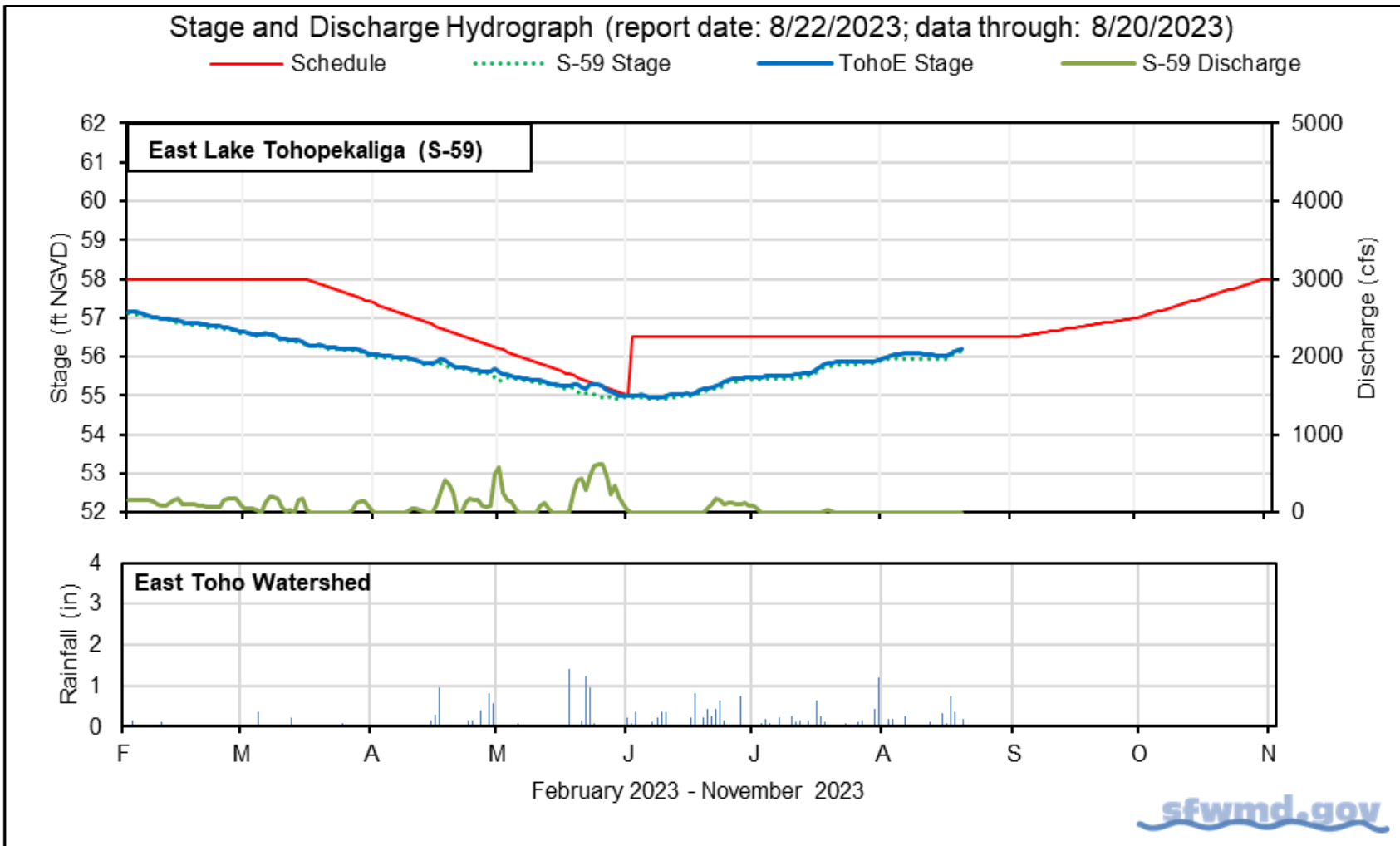


Figure KB-1. East Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

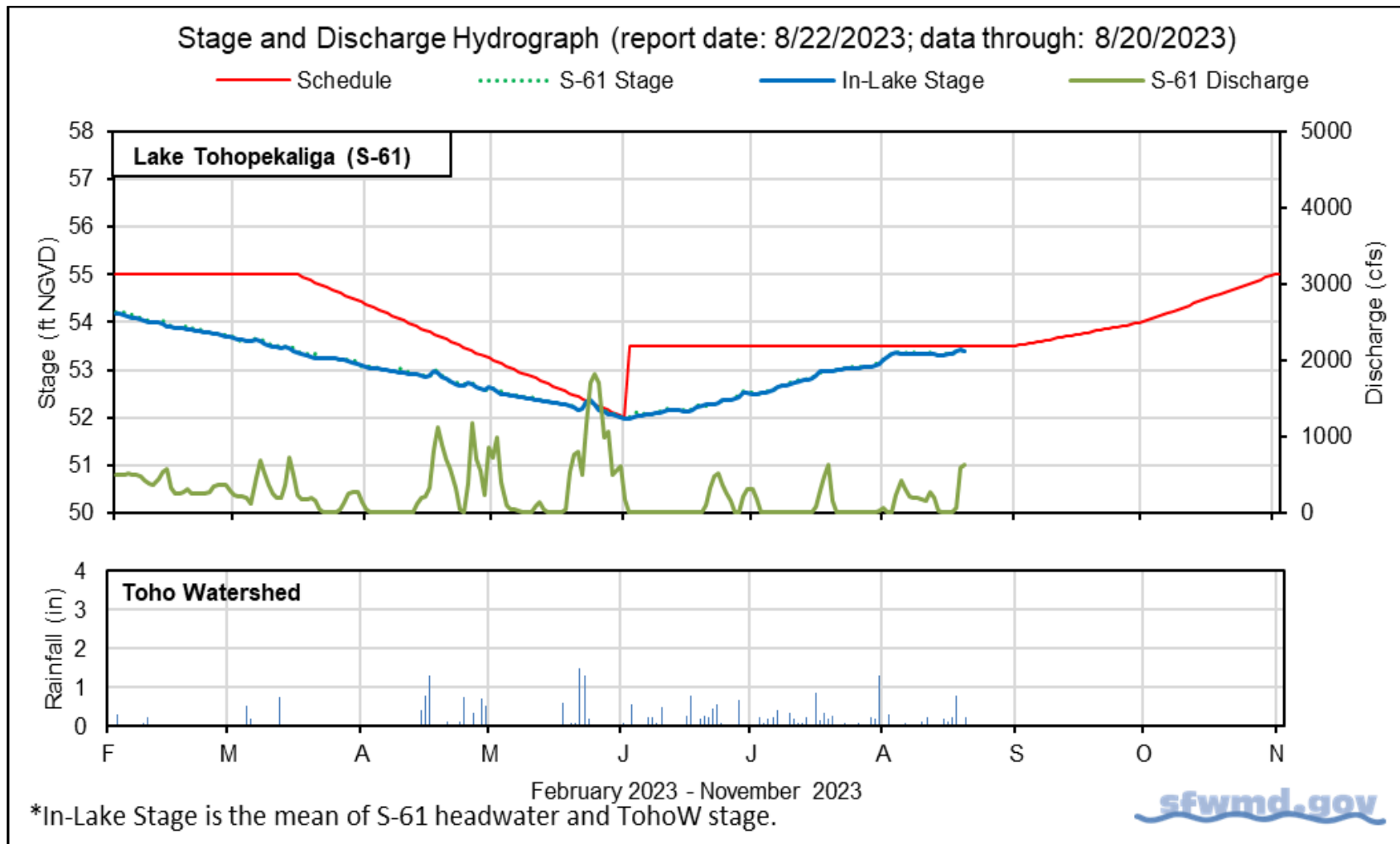


Figure KB-2. Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

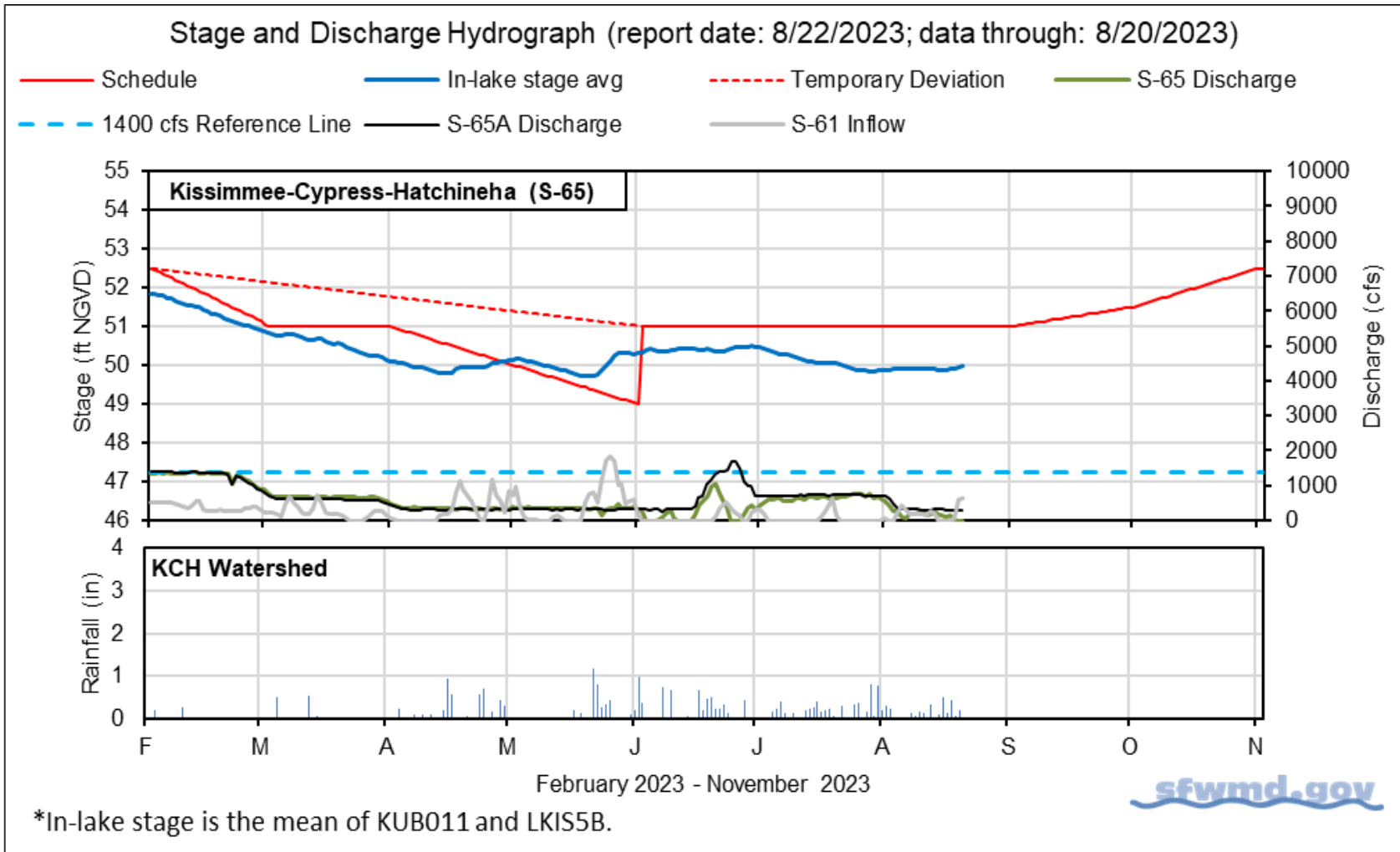


Figure KB-3. Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

Table KB-2. One- and seven-day average discharge and stage at Lower Kissimmee basin structures, river channel dissolved oxygen concentrations and water depths in the Phase I area floodplain. All data are provisional.

Metric	Location	Sunday Daily Average	Weekly Average for Previous Seven Day Periods			
		8/20/23	8/20/23	8/13/23	8/6/23	7/30/23
Discharge	S-65	0	91	200	330	720
Discharge	S-65A ^a	310	310	310	500	720
Headwater Stage (feet NGVD)	S-65A	45.9	46.0	46.3	46.4	46.4
Discharge	S-65D ^b	790	800	1,100	1,400	1,200
Headwater Stage (feet NGVD)	S-65D ^c	27.7	27.8	27.8	27.8	27.8
Discharge (cfs)	S-65E ^d	1,000	1,100	1,200	1,600	1,300
Discharge (cfs)	S-67	0	0	0	0	0
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L) ^e	Phase I, II/III river channel	5.1	4.6	4.0	4.4	4.5
River channel mean stage ^f	Phase I river channel	33.3	33.4	34.2	35.8	36.1
Mean depth (feet) ^g	Phase I floodplain	0.20	0.21	0.32	0.37	0.31

a. Combined discharge from main and auxiliary structures.

b. Combined discharge from S-65D, S-65DX1 and S-65DX2.

c. Average stage from S-65D and S-65DX1.

d. Combined discharge from S-65E and S-65EX1.

e. Dissolved oxygen is the average of values from sondes KRBN, PC62, PC33, PD62R and PD42R.

f. Mean of five river channel stations (PC62, KRDR02, KRBN, PC33, PC11) in the Phase I area.

g. One-day spatial average obtained from the South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT).

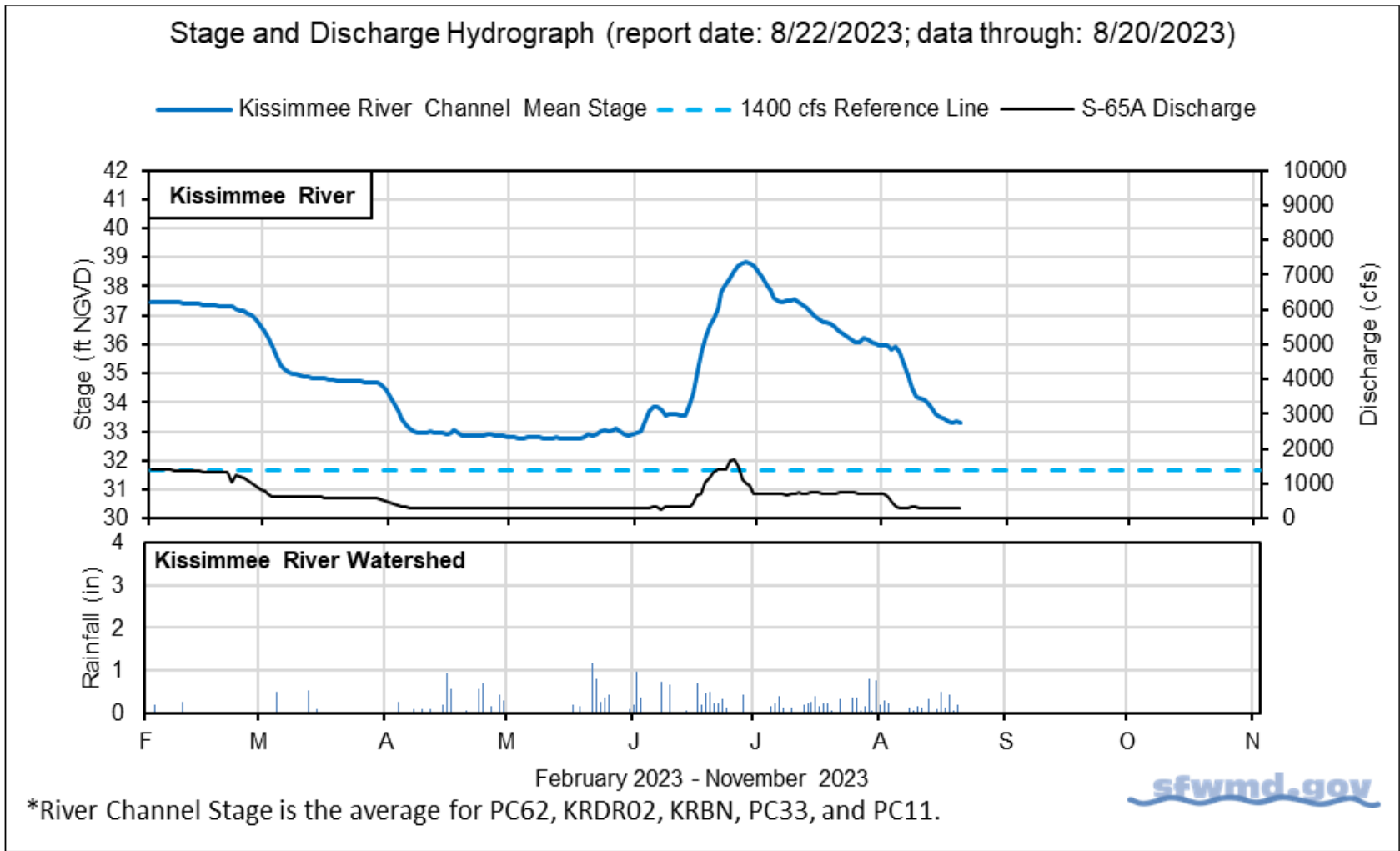


Figure KB-4. Kissimmee River stage, discharge, and rainfall.

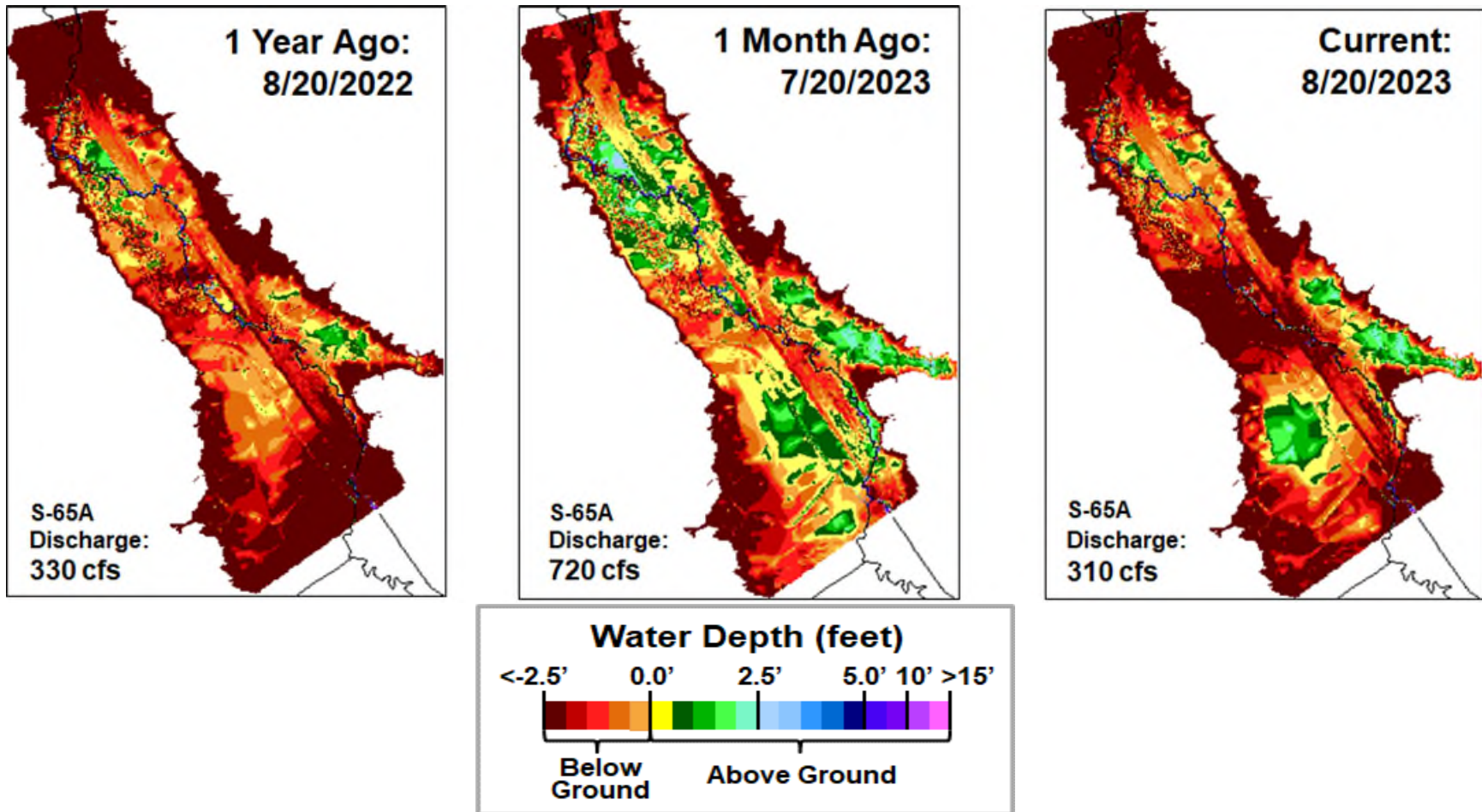
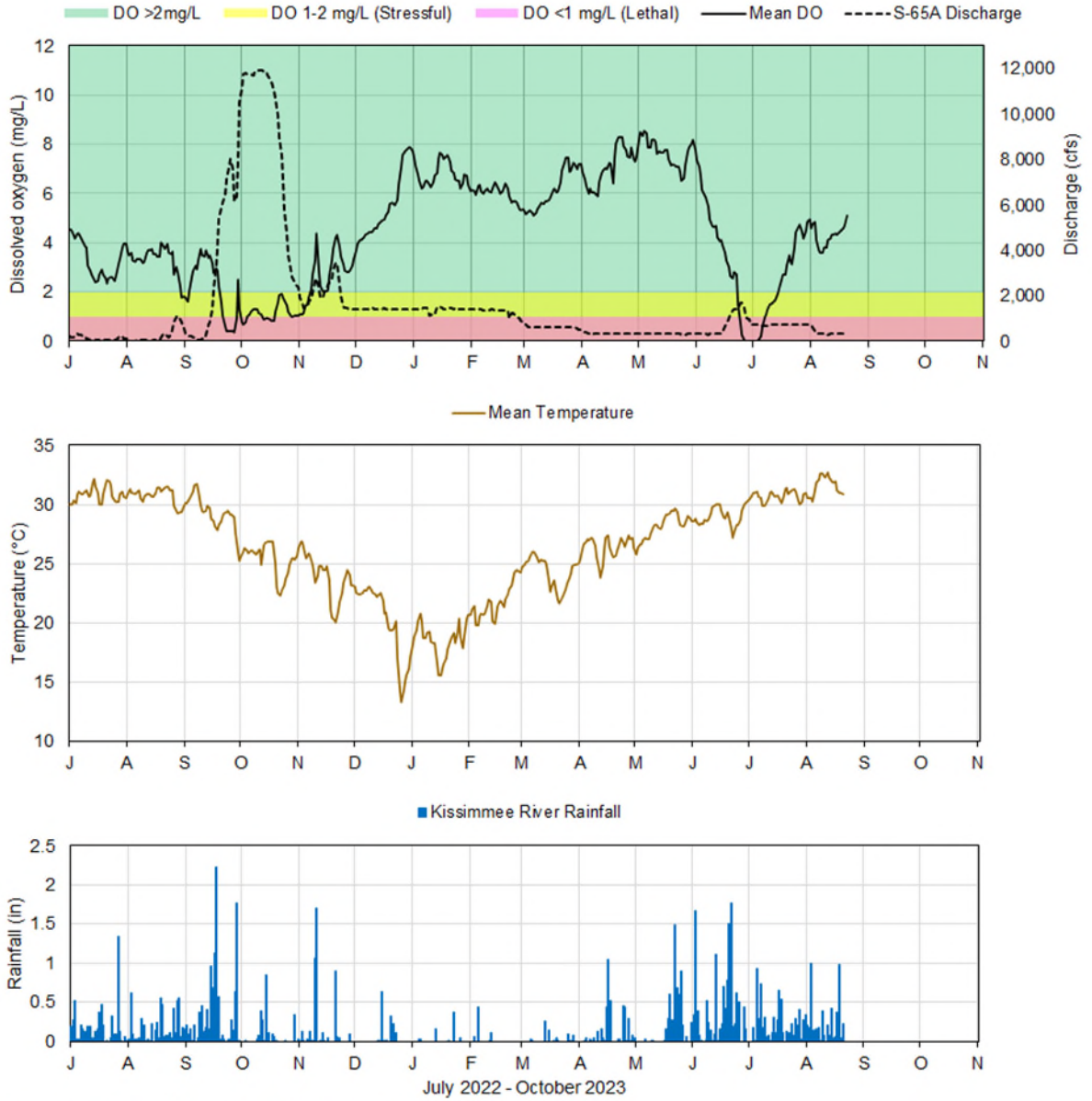


Figure KB-5. Phase I area Kissimmee River floodplain water depths (from left to right) one year ago, one month ago, and current.



Report Date: 8/22/2023; data are through: 8/20/2023



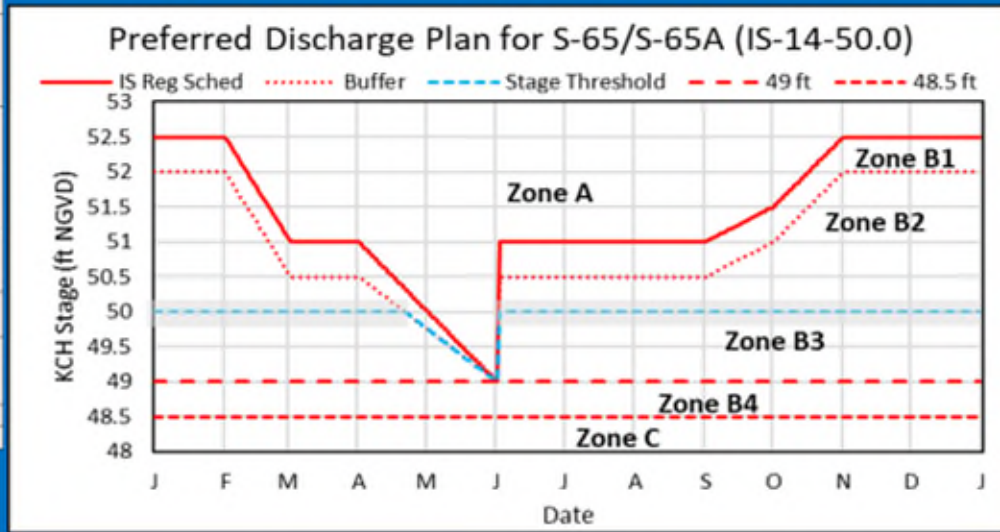
Figure KB-6. Restored Kissimmee river channel mean daily dissolved oxygen concentration (mg/L), S-65A discharge (cfs), temperature (°C) and rainfall (inches). Dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature are mean daily values averaged for PC62, KRDR02, KRBN, PC33, PC11, PD62R, and PD42R with an average of five stations reporting this week. Rainfall values are daily totals for Kissimmee River (Pool BCD) AHED watershed.

Stage and Discharge Guidance for 2021-2023.		
Zone	KCH Stage (ft NGVD)	S-65/S-65A Discharge*
A	Above regulation schedule line.	Flood control releases as needed with no limits on the rate of discharge change.
B1	In flood control buffer zone (0.5 ft below the schedule line).	Adjust S-65 discharge so that S-65A discharge is between 1400 cfs at the buffer zone line and 3000 cfs at the schedule line.
B2	Between the Flood Control Buffer and the 50.0 ft line.	Adjust S-65 discharge to maintain at least 1400 cfs at S-65A. Use ± 0.2 ft buffer (gray band) above and below the 50.0 ft line to decide when to begin ramping up to 1400 cfs or down to 300 cfs; do not continue reducing discharge if stage rises back to or above the threshold stage line.
B3	Between the 50.0 ft line and 49 ft.	Adjust S-65 discharge to maintain at least 300 cfs at S-65A.
B4	Between 48.5 ft to 49 ft.	Adjust S-65 discharge to maintain S-65A discharge between 0 cfs at 48.5 ft and 300 cfs at 49 ft.
C	Below 48.5 ft.	0 cfs.

*Changes in discharge should not exceed limits in inset table below.

Q (cfs)	Maximum rate of INCREASE (cfs/day)	Maximum rate of DECREASE (cfs/day)
0-300	100	-50
301-650	150	-75
651-1400	300	-150
1401-3000	600	-600
>3000	1000	-2000

2021-2023 Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A



- Other Considerations**
- When possible, limit lake ascension rate in the Jun 1 - Aug 15 window to 0.25 ft per 7 days in Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, Hatchineha (S-65), East Toho (S-59) and Toho (S-61).
 - If outlook is for extreme dry conditions meet with KB staff to discuss modifications to this plan.

Slide Revised 1/3/2022

Figure KB-7. IS-14-50 Discharge Plan for S65/S65A with discharge rate of change limits (revised 1/14/19).

Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee stage was 15.36 feet NGVD on August 20, 2023, which was similar to the previous week and 0.38 feet higher than a month ago (**Figure LO-1**). Lake stage remained in the Low sub-band (**Figure LO-2**) and was 1.71 feet above the upper limit of the ecological envelope (**Figure LO-3**). According to NEXRAD, 0.93 inches of rain fell directly on the Lake last week.

Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) were similar to the previous week, going from 3,352 cfs to 3,397 cfs. The highest average single structure inflow came from the C-38 Canal via the S-65E/EX1 structure (1,077 cfs). Average daily outflows (excluding rainfall) decreased from the previous week, going from 525 cfs to 71 cfs. Outflows were only recorded at the S-308 structure into the C-44 canal (71 cfs). There were no outflows to the west via the S-77 structure or to the south via the S-350 structures. **Figures LO-4 and LO-5** show the combined average daily inflows and outflows for the Lake over the past eight weeks, and average inflows and outflows last week, respectively. These data are provisional and are subject to change.

The cyanobacteria index level decreased across the Lake compared to the previous week, and was low to moderate along the northeastern, northwestern, and western shorelines according to the August 19, 2023 satellite image from NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System (**Figure LO-6**).

Changes in Water Depth

1 Month Ago:
07/21/2023

Current:
08/20/2023

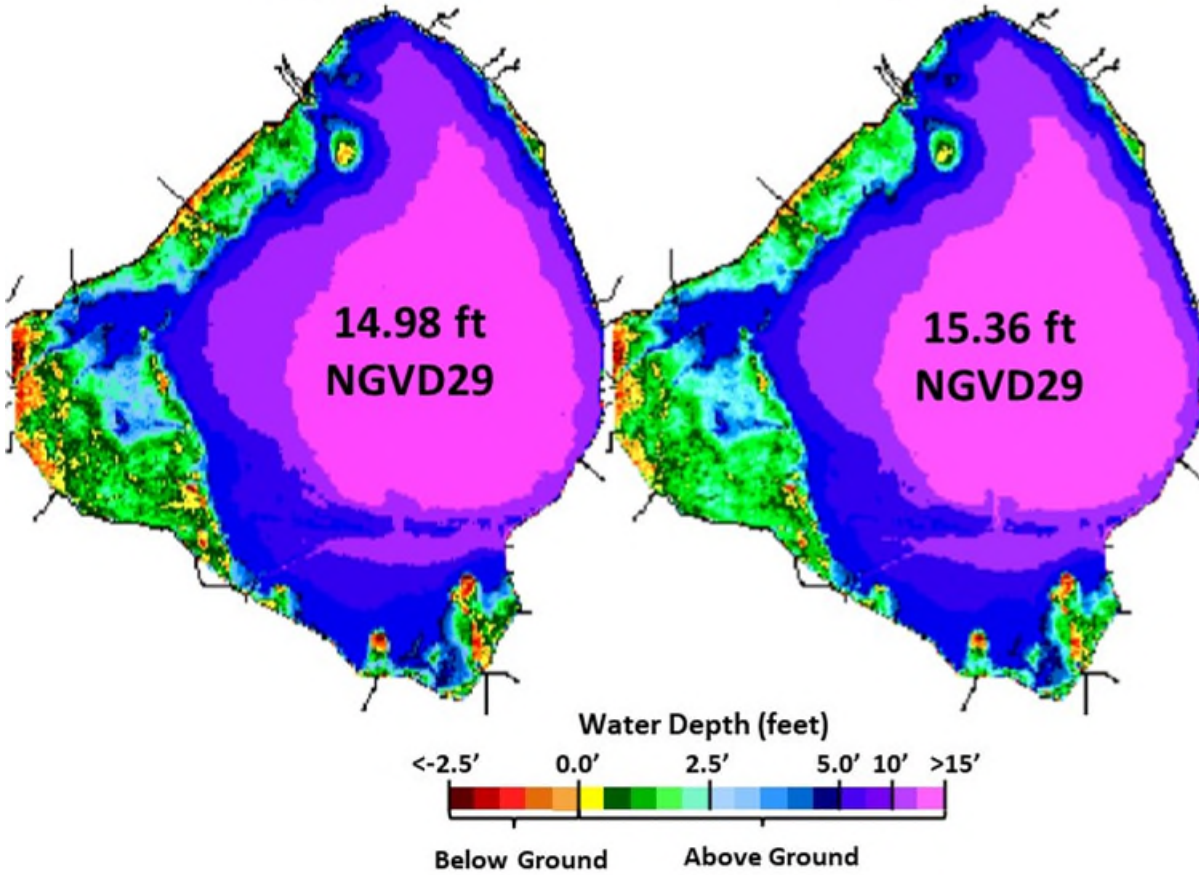


Figure LO-1. Lake Okeechobee water depth estimates based on South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT).

Lake Okeechobee Water Level History and Projected Stages

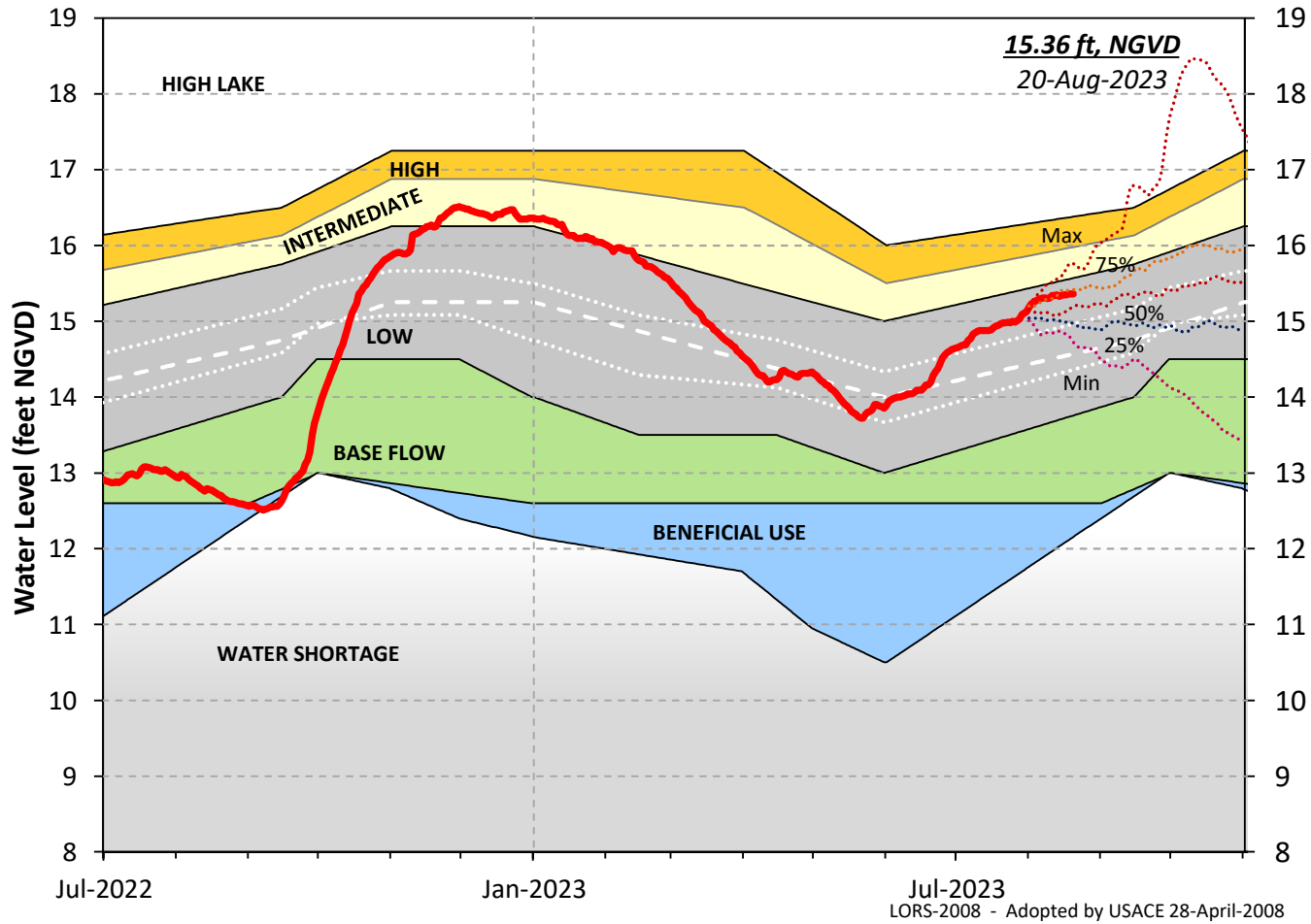


Figure LO-2. Recent Lake Okeechobee stages with projected stages based on a dynamic position analysis.

Lake Okeechobee Stage vs Ecological Envelope

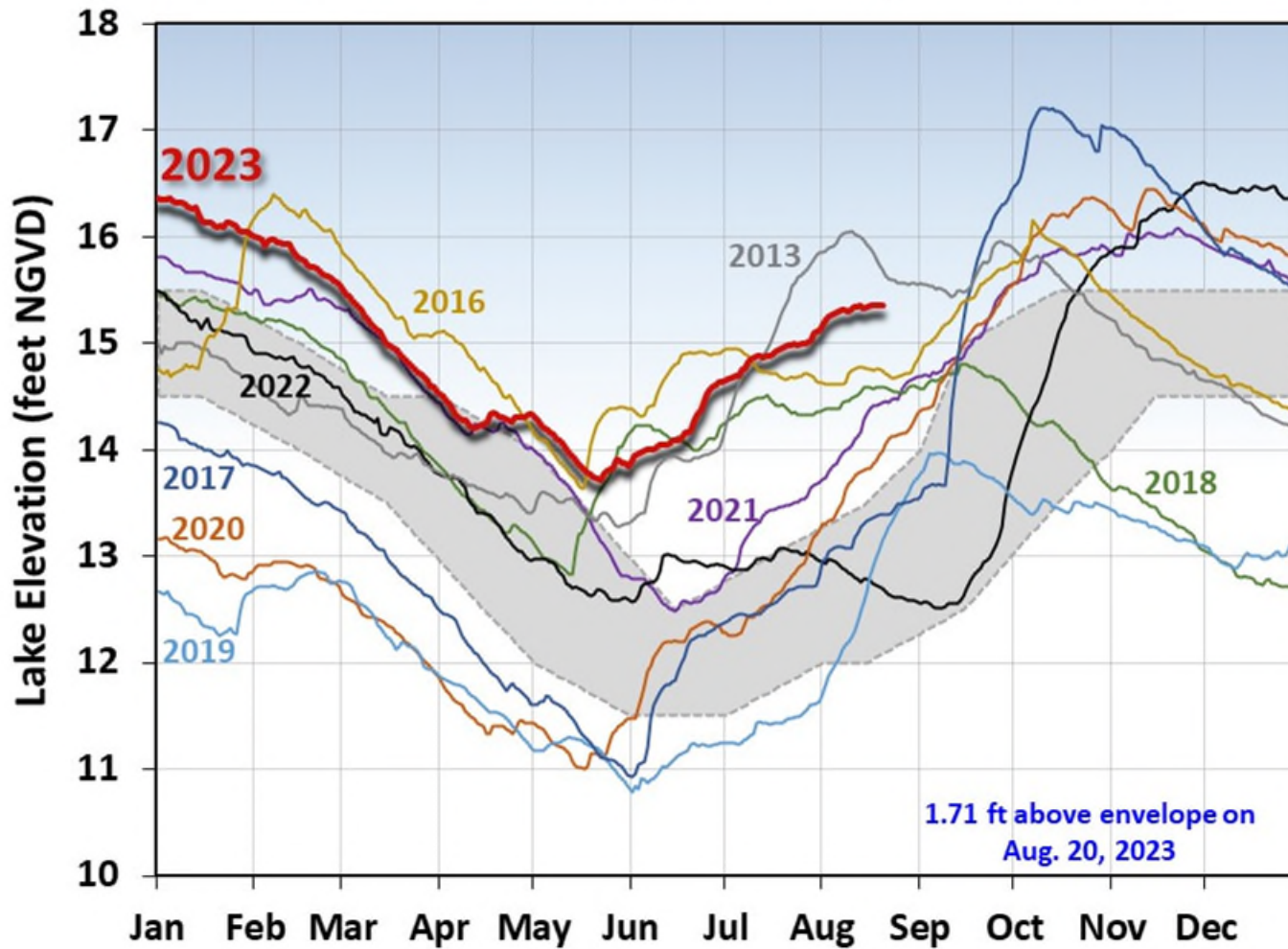


Figure LO-3. The prior seven years (and 2013, the last time stages exceeded current levels) of annual stage hydrographs for Lake Okeechobee in comparison to the ecological envelope.

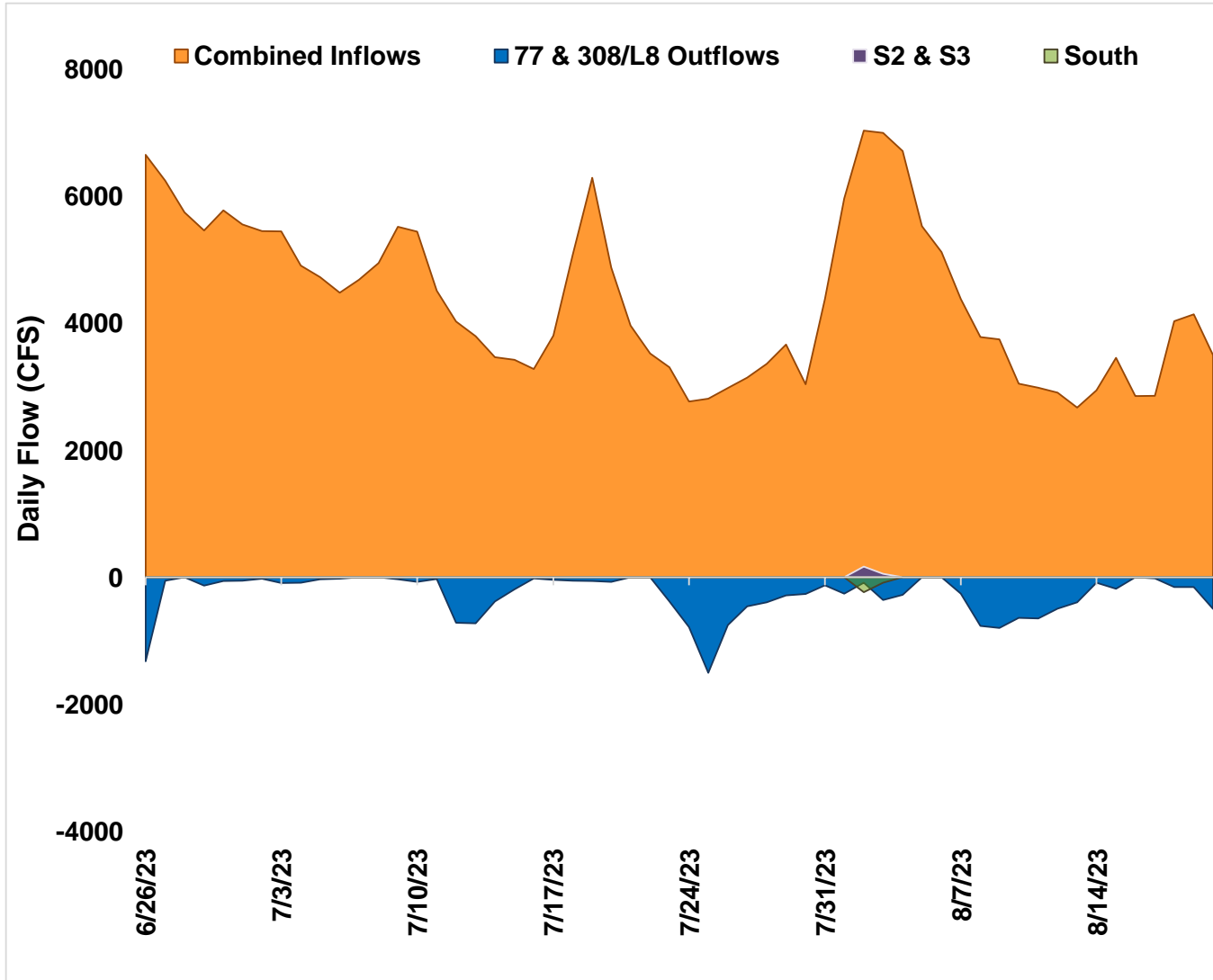


Figure LO-4. Major inflows (orange) to and outflows east and west (blue) from Lake Okeechobee. Outflows south are shown in green. Flows into Lake Okeechobee from the L-8 canal through S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) or from the C-44 canal through the S-308 are included as inflows. Conversely, flows from Lake Okeechobee into the L-8 or C-44 canals are included with outflows. Inflows are shown as positive values; outflows are negative. Outflows through the S-77 (Caloosahatchee) and S-308 (C-44 Canal) structures are based on downstream gauges to include flows to lock openings for navigation.

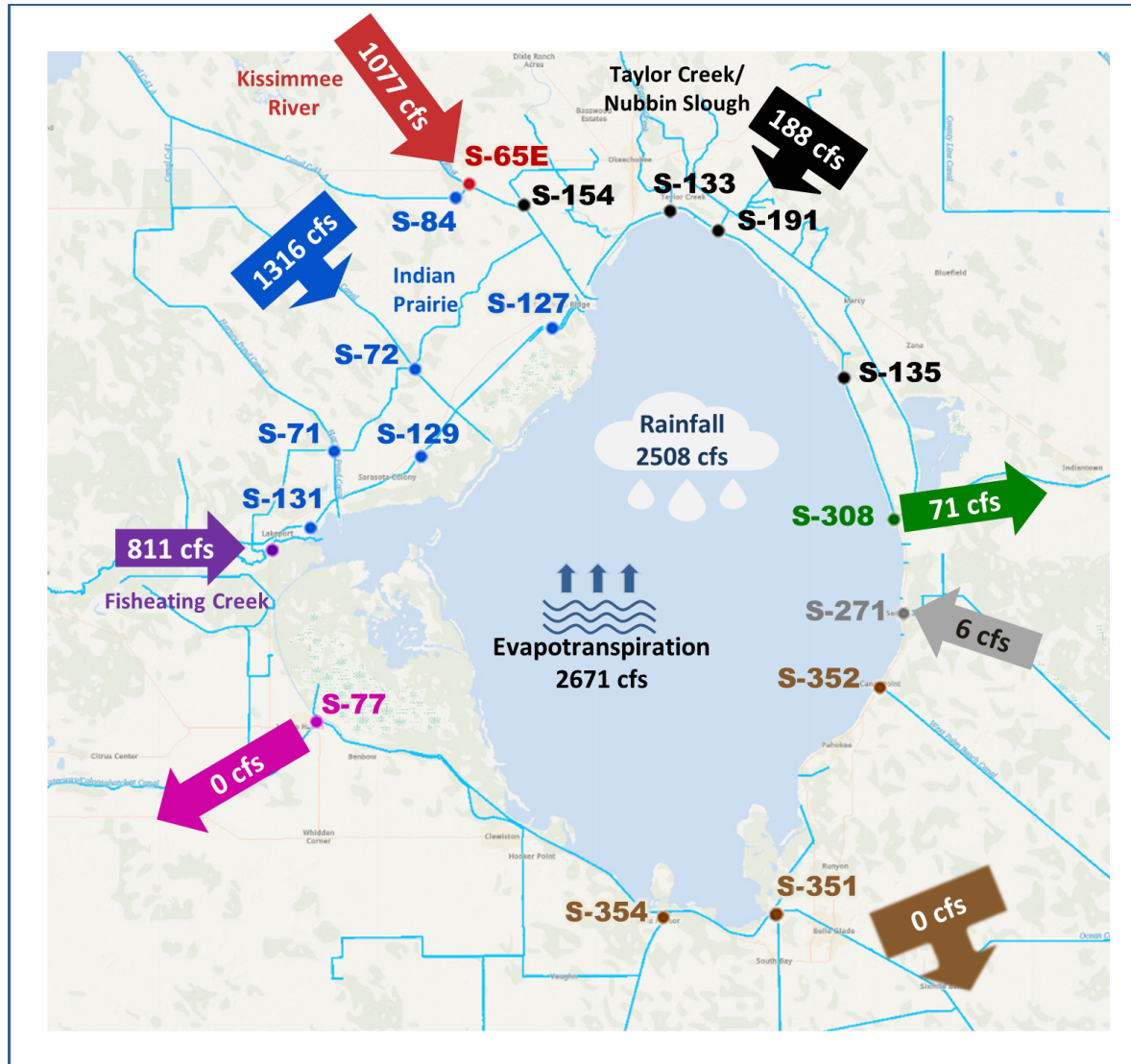


Figure LO-5. Inflows into Lake Okeechobee from Indian Prairie basins, Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough, Kissimmee River and Fisheating Creek, and outflows to the west via S-77, to the east via S-308, to the south via S-351, S-352, S-354, and to southeast via S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) for the week of August 14 - 20, 2023.

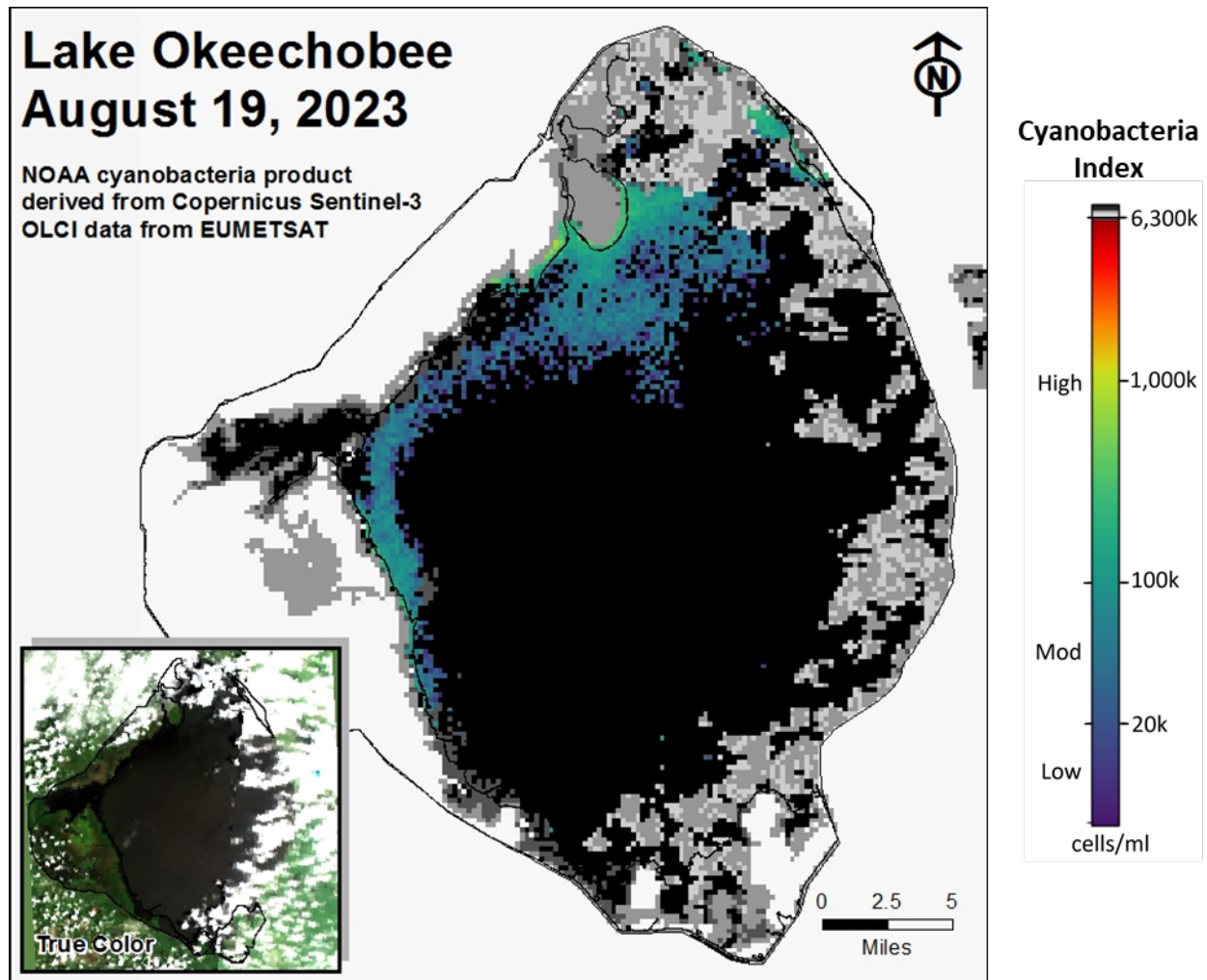


Figure LO-6. Cyanobacteria bloom index level on August 19, 2023, based on NOAA's harmful algal bloom monitoring system. Gray color indicates cloud cover.

Estuaries

St. Lucie Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was 1,887 cfs (**Figures ES-1 and ES-2**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 1,826 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from the contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-2**.

Over the past week, surface salinities decreased at the HR1 site and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary (**Table ES-1 and Figure ES-3**). The seven-day moving average of the surface and bottom salinities at the US1 Bridge was 8.9. Salinity conditions in the middle estuary were estimated to be within the lower stressed range for adult eastern oysters (**Figure ES-4**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rate reported by the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) was 0.2 spat/shell for July, which is a slight decrease from the recruitment rate recorded in June (**Figure ES-5**).

Caloosahatchee River Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary was 1,892 cfs (**Figures ES-6 and ES-7**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 2,878 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from the contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-7**.

Over the past week, salinities remained the same at S-79 and Val I-75 and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary (**Table ES-2 and Figures ES-8 and ES-9**). The seven-day mean salinities (**Table ES-2**) were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass in the upper estuary. The seven-day mean salinity values were within the lower stressed range for adult eastern oysters at Cape Coral and in the upper stressed range at Shell Point and Sanibel (**Figure ES-10**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rate reported by the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute was 7.3 spat/shell at Iona Cove and 10.1 spat/shell at Bird Island for July, which was a large increase from recruitment rates recorded in June (**Figures ES-11 and ES-12**).

Surface salinity at Val I-75 was forecasted for the next two weeks using an autoregression model (Qiu and Wan, 2013¹) coupled with a linear reservoir model for the tidal basin. Model scenarios included pulse releases at S-79 ranging from 0 to 1,500 cfs, and a steady release at 2,000 cfs with estimated tidal basin inflows of 149 cfs. Model results from all scenarios predict daily salinity to be 1.2 or lower and the 30-day moving average surface salinity to be 0.4 or lower at Val I-75 at the end of the two-week period (**Table ES-3 and Figure ES-13**). This keeps predicted salinities in the upper estuary within the optimal salinity range (0-10) for tape grass.

¹ Qiu, C., and Y. Wan. 2013. Time series modeling and prediction of salinity in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary. *Water Resources Research* 49:5804-5816.

Red Tide

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute reported on August 18, 2023, that *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide dinoflagellate, was not observed in any samples collected within the District region.

Water Management Recommendations

Lake stage is in the Low Sub-Band. Tributary conditions are normal. The LORS2008 release guidance suggests up to 3,000 cfs release at S-79 to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary and up to 1,170 cfs release at S-80 to the St. Lucie Estuary.

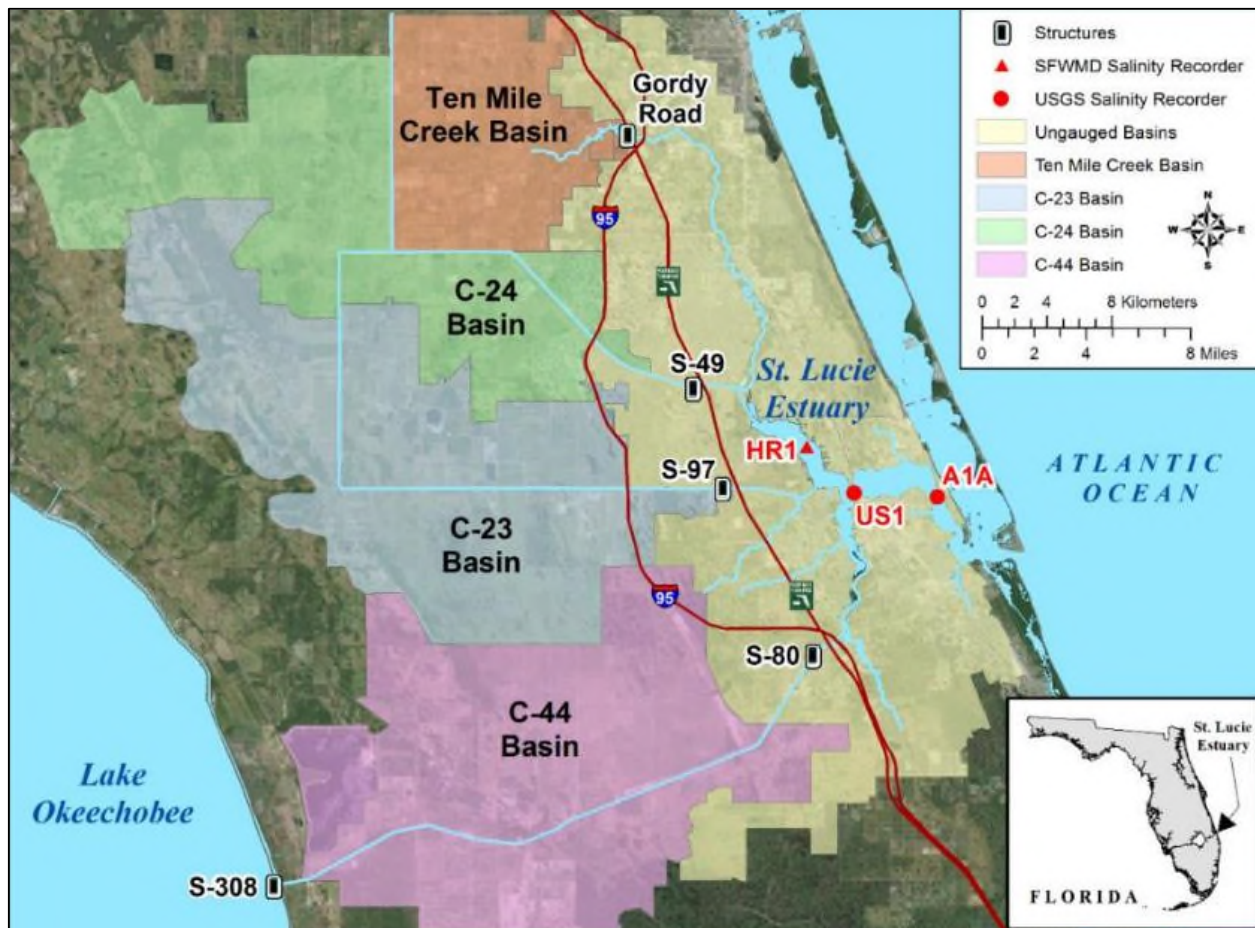


Figure ES-1. Basins, water control structures and salinity monitoring sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

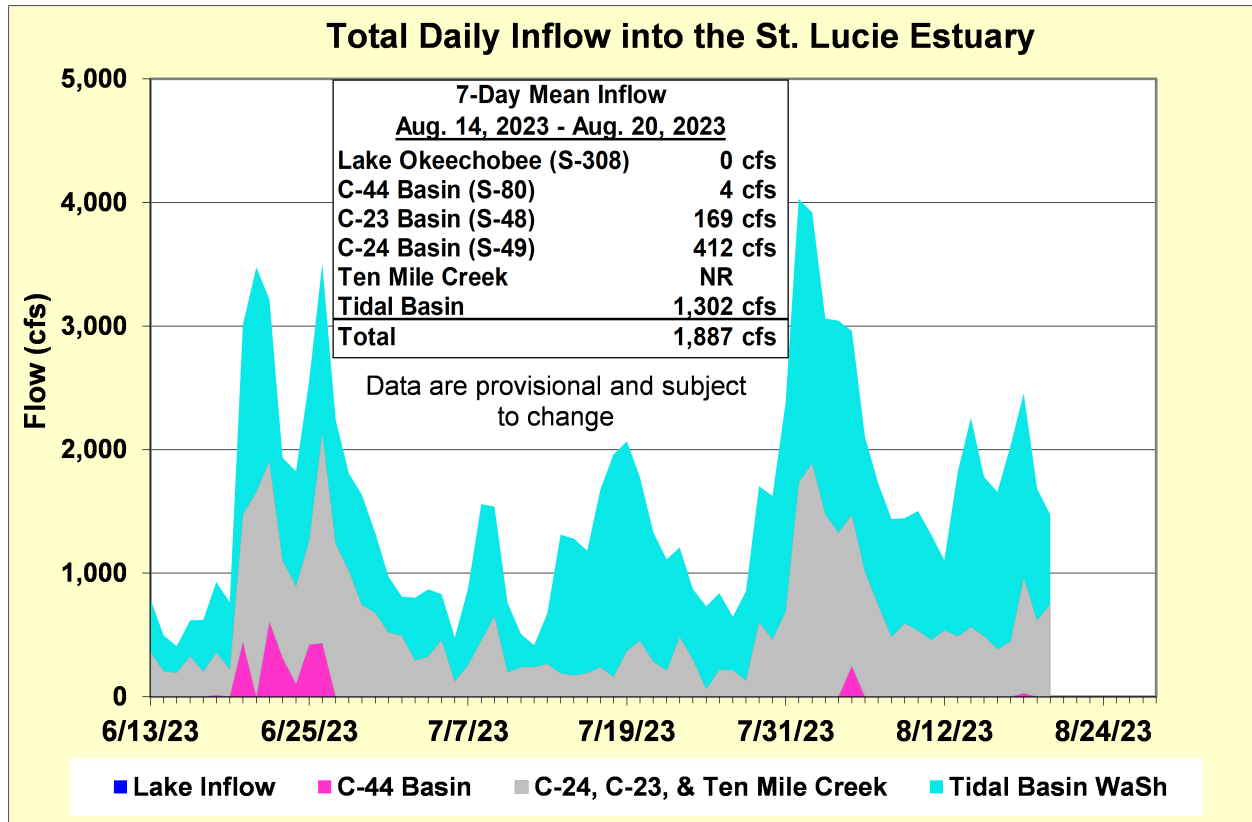


Figure ES-2. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee and runoff from the C-44, C-23, C-24, Ten Mile Creek, and Tidal Basins into the St. Lucie Estuary.

Table ES-1. Seven-day mean salinity at oyster monitoring sites in the St. Lucie Estuary. Current means are in bold font; previous week's means are in parentheses. The envelope reflects the optimum salinity range for adult eastern oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) in the estuary. Data are provisional.

Sampling Site	Surface	Bottom	Optimum Envelope
HR1 (North Fork)	2.0 (3.0)	6.1 (5.6)	10.0 – 25.0
US1 Bridge	7.6 (7.3)	10.2 (10.0)	10.0 – 25.0
A1A Bridge	15.7 (14.7)	22.7 (23.4)	10.0 – 25.0

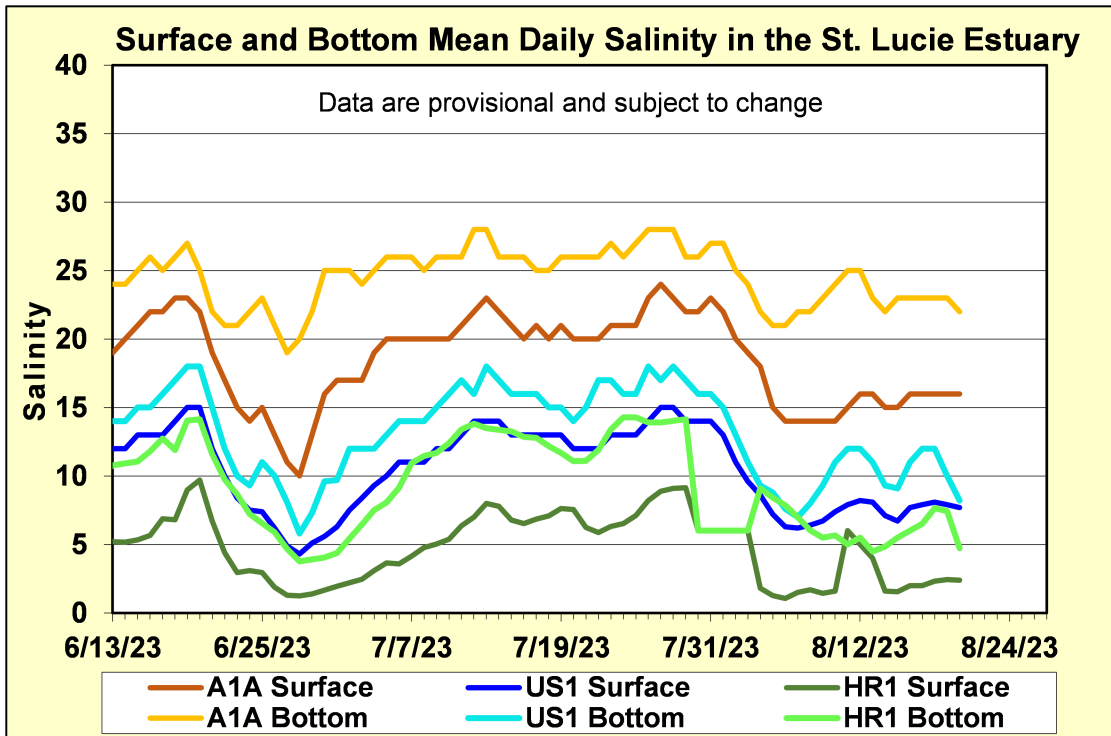


Figure ES-3. Mean daily salinity at the A1A, US1, and HR1 sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

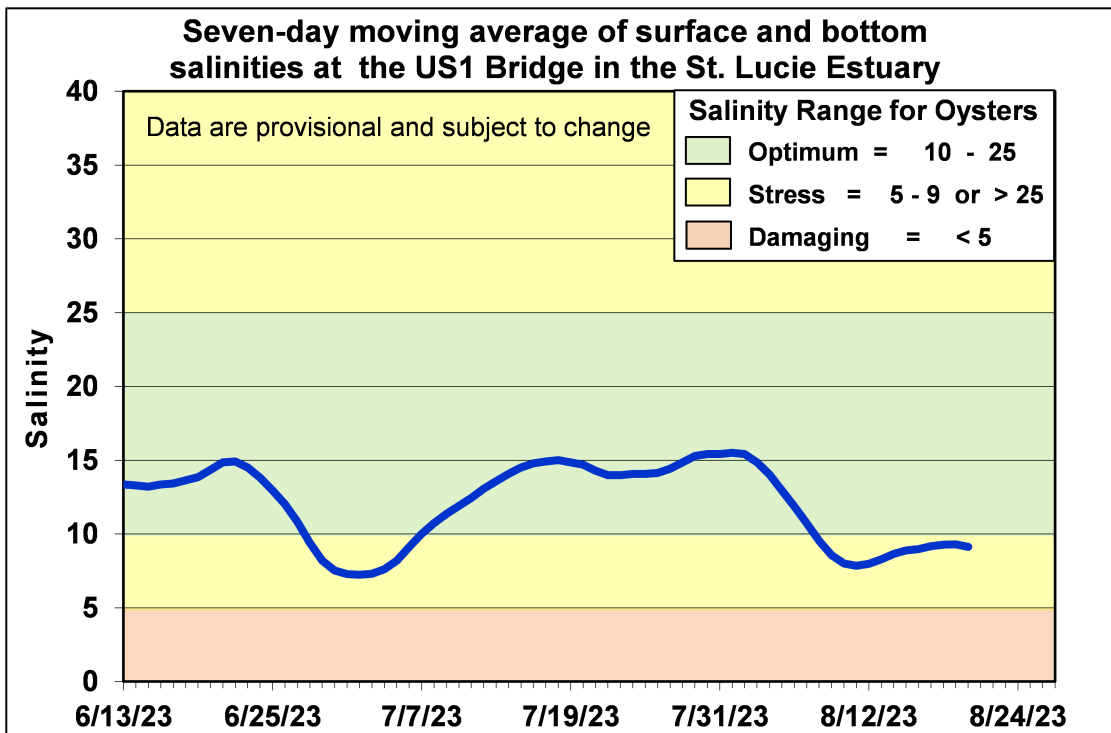


Figure ES-4. Seven-day moving average of the surface and bottom salinities at the US1 Bridge in the St. Lucie Estuary.

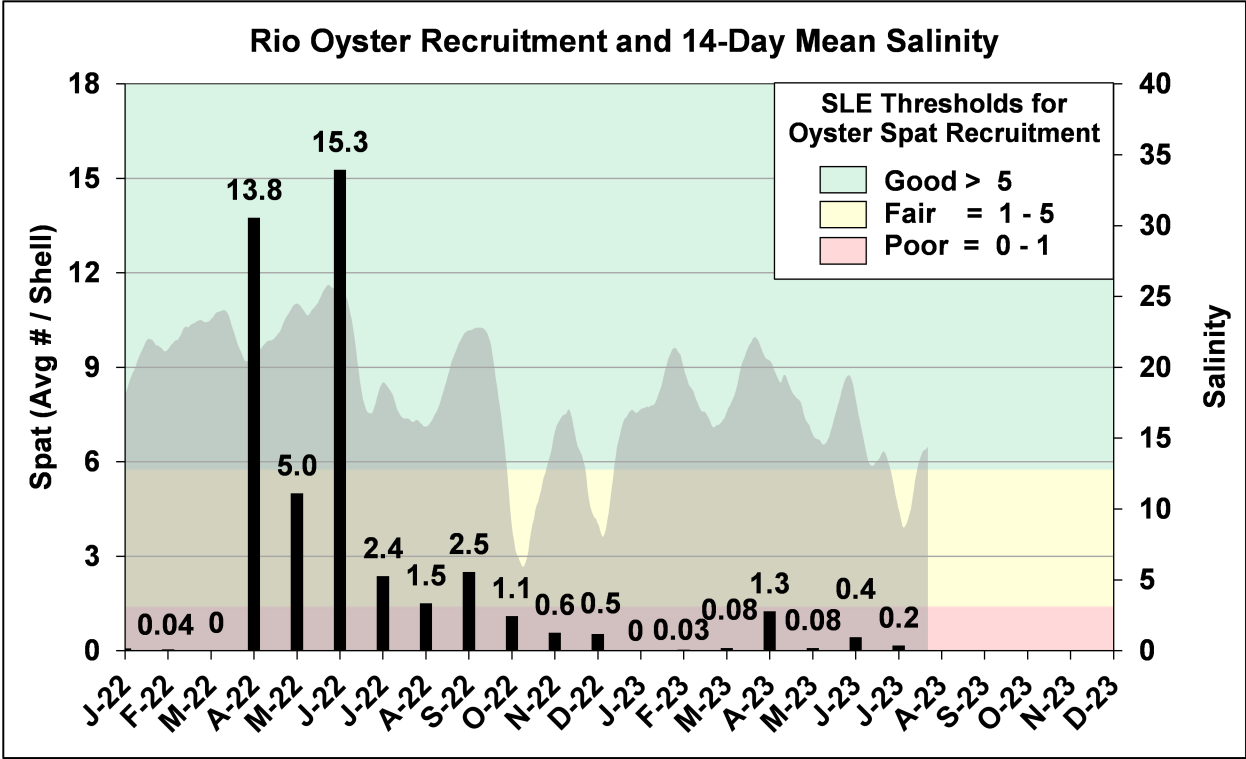


Figure ES-5. Mean oyster recruitment at the Rio oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at US1 Bridge.

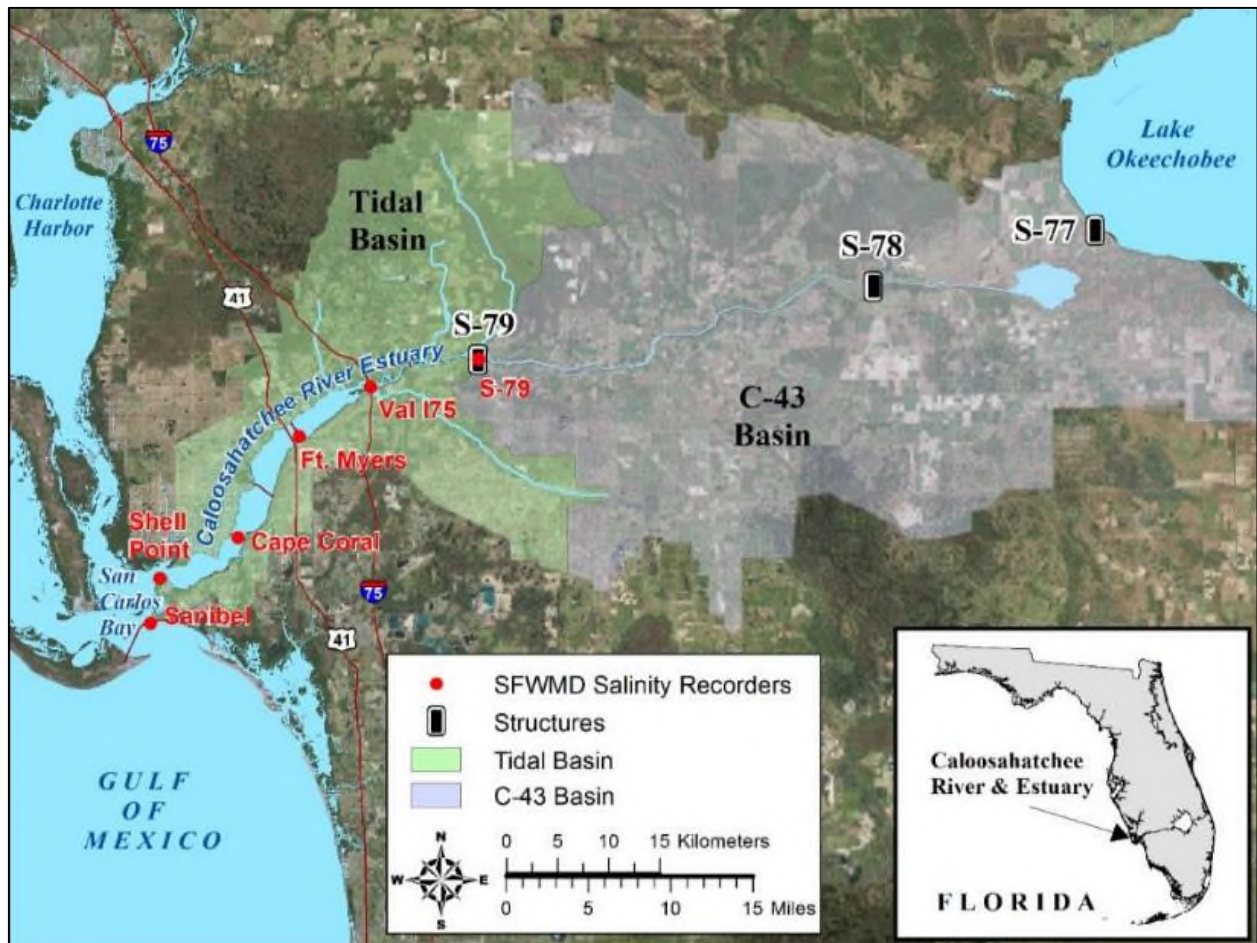


Figure ES-6. Basins, water control structures, and salinity monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

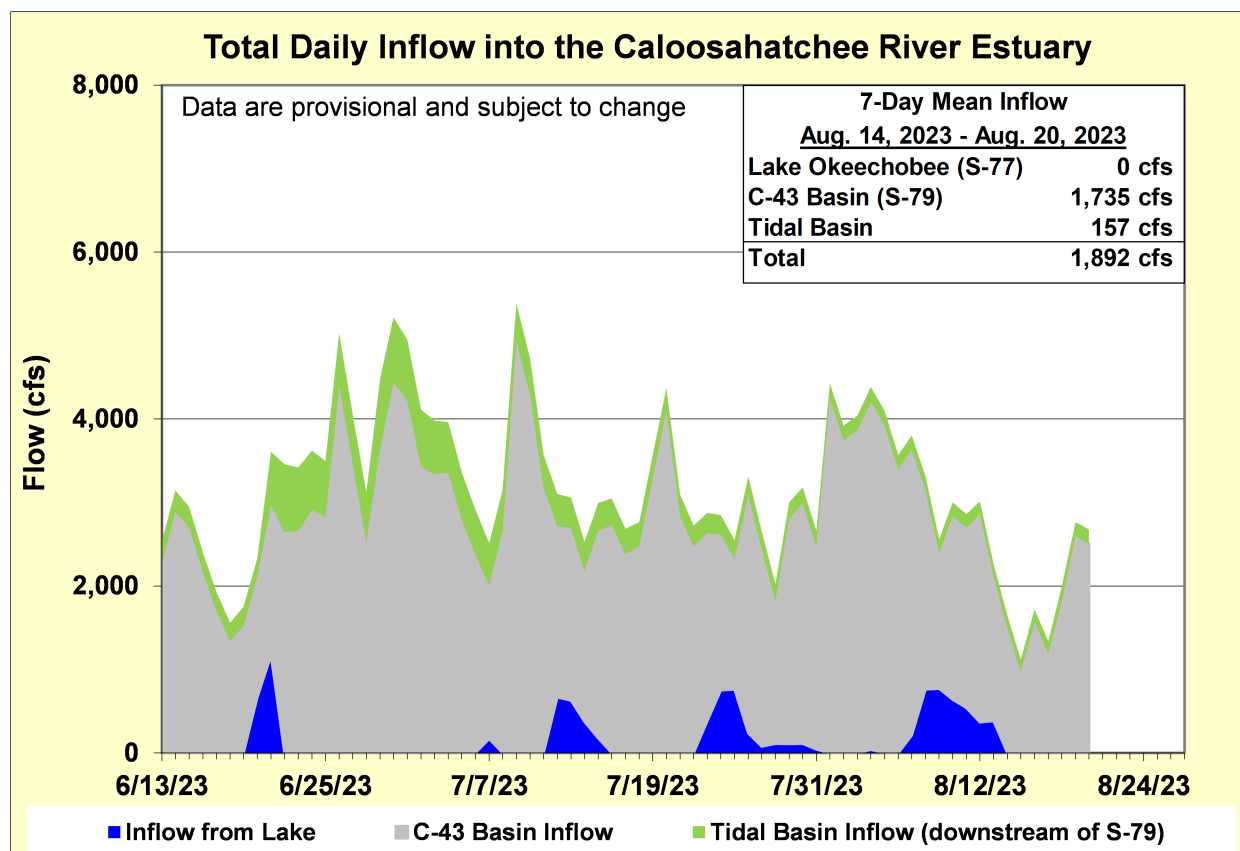


Figure ES-7. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee, and runoff from the C-43 and Tidal basins into the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

Table ES-2. Seven-day mean salinity at six monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary. Current means are in bold font; previous week's means are in parentheses. The envelope in the upper estuary sites is for the protection of tape grass and the envelope in the lower estuary is the optimum salinity range for adult eastern oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*). Data are provisional.

Sampling Site	Surface	Bottom	Optimum Envelope
S-79 (Franklin Lock)	0.2 (0.2)	0.2 (0.2)	0.0 – 10.0
Val I-75	0.2 (0.2)	0.2 (0.2)	0.0 – 10.0
Fort Myers Yacht Basin	0.6 (0.2)	0.8 (0.2)	0.0 – 10.0
Cape Coral	7.1 (4.4)	8.8 (6.2)	10.0 – 25.0
Shell Point	24.3 (20.5)	26.0 (23.4)	10.0 – 25.0
Sanibel	31.0 (28.9)	30.6 (29.9)	10.0 – 25.0

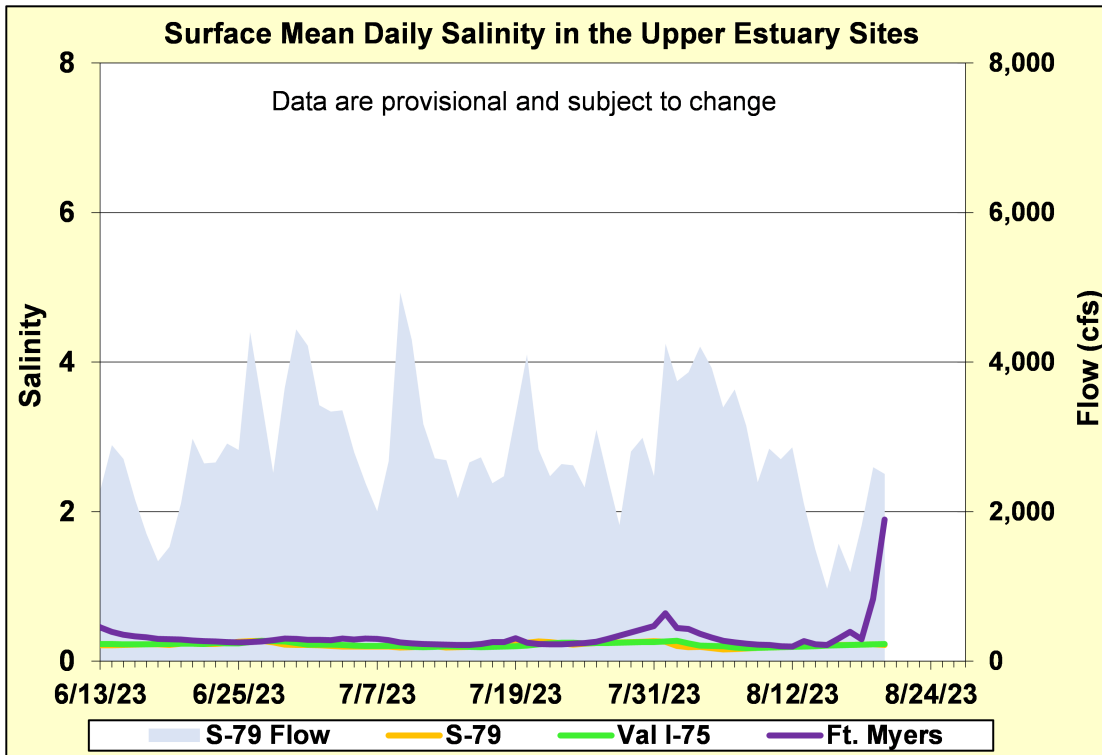


Figure ES-8. Mean daily salinity at upper Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

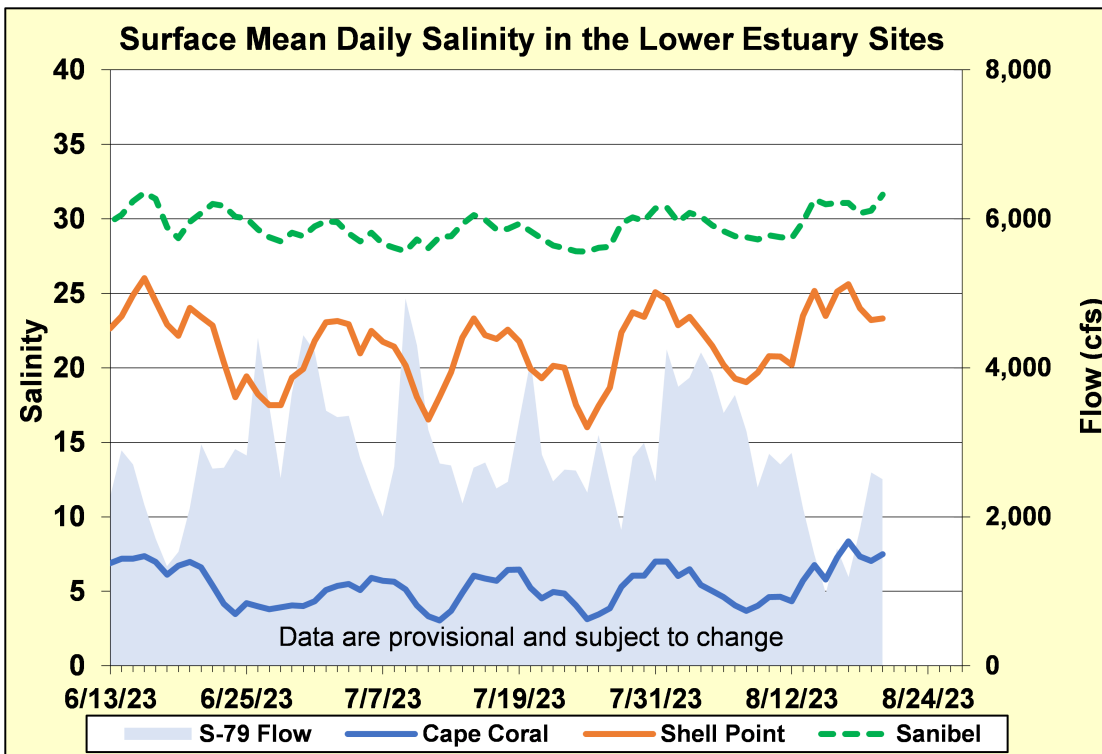


Figure ES-9. Mean daily surface salinity at lower Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

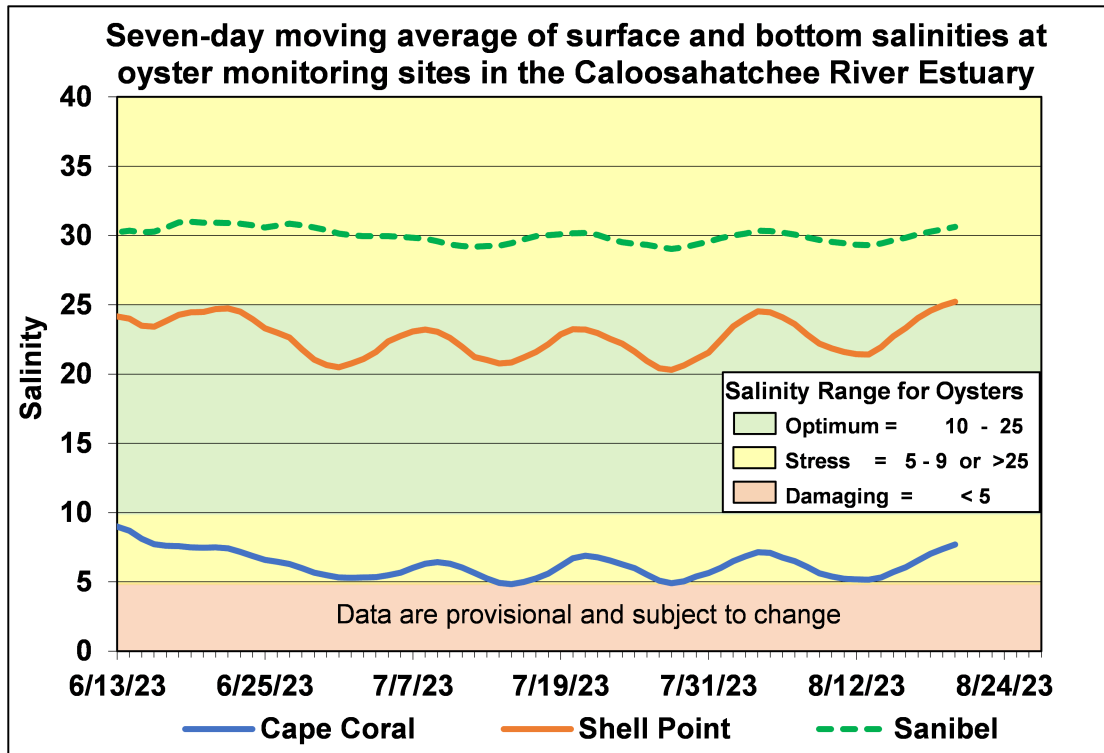


Figure ES-10. Seven-day moving average of surface and bottom salinities at Cape Coral, Shell Point and Sanibel monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

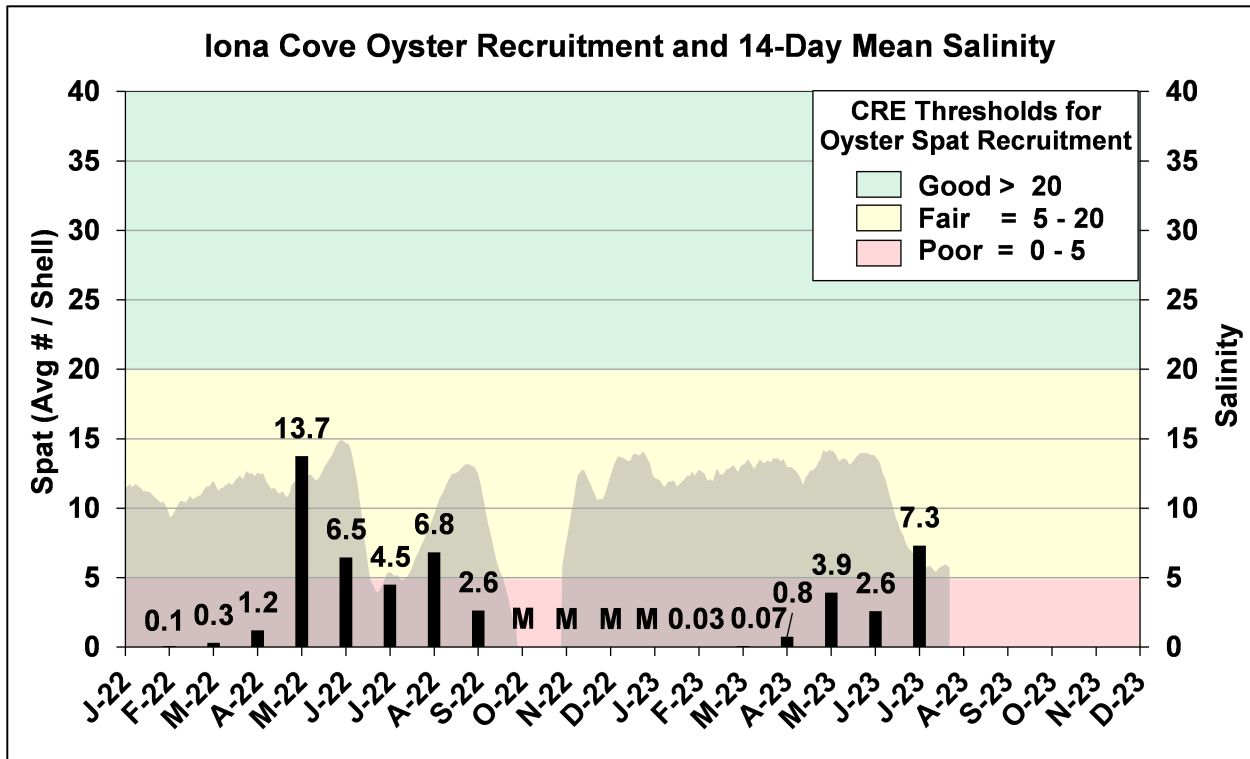


Figure ES-11. Mean oyster recruitment at the Iona Cove oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Cape Coral.

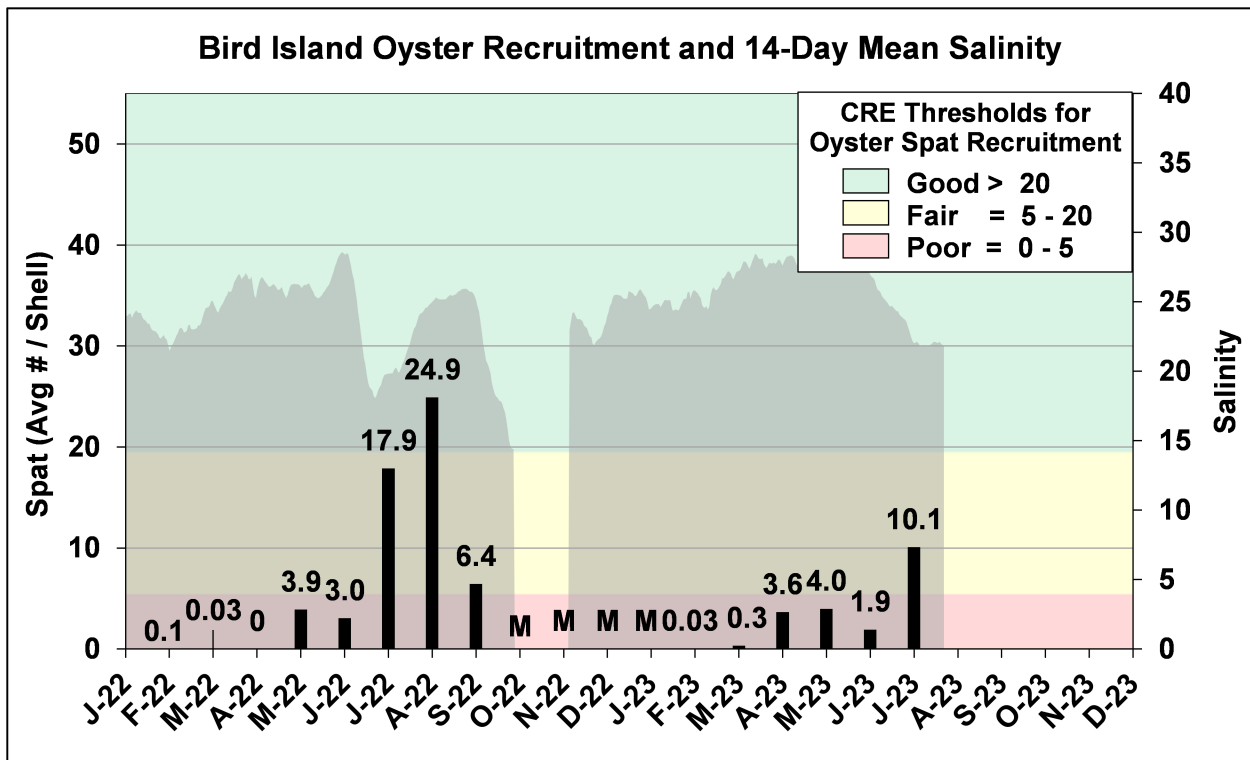


Figure ES-12. Mean oyster recruitment at the Bird Island oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Shell Point.

Table ES-3. Predicted salinity at Val I-75 in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary at the end of the forecast period for various S-79 flow release scenarios.

Scenario	Simulated S-79 Flow (cfs)	Tidal Basin Runoff (cfs)	Daily Salinity	30-Day Mean Salinity
A	0	149	1.2	0.4
B	450	149	0.6	0.3
C	750	149	0.4	0.3
D	1,000	149	0.3	0.2
E	1,500	149	0.3	0.2
F	2,000	149	0.3	0.2

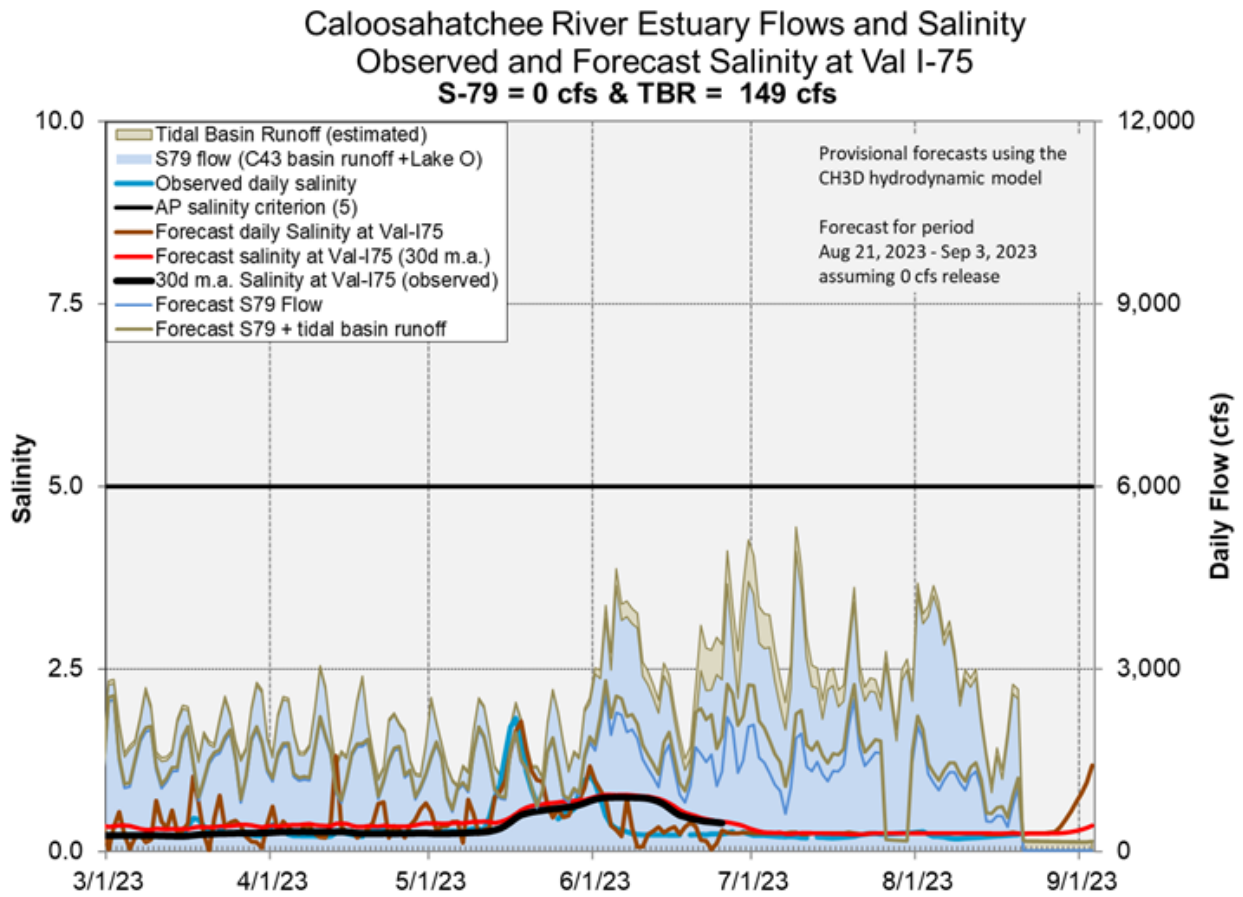


Figure ES-13. Forecasted Val I-75 site surface salinity assuming no pulse release at S-79.

Stormwater Treatment Areas

STA-1E: STA-1E Western Flow-way is offline for post-construction vegetation grow in. Online treatment cells are at or above target stage. Vegetation in the flow-ways is stressed and highly stressed. The 365-day phosphorus loading rate (PLRs) for the Central Flow-way and Eastern Flow-ways are high (**Figure S-1**).

STA-1W: An operational restriction is in place in STA-1W Northern Flow-way for vegetation management activities. Treatment cells are above target stage. Vegetation in the flow-ways is stressed and highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs for the Eastern, Western, and Northern Flow-ways are high (**Figure S-1**).

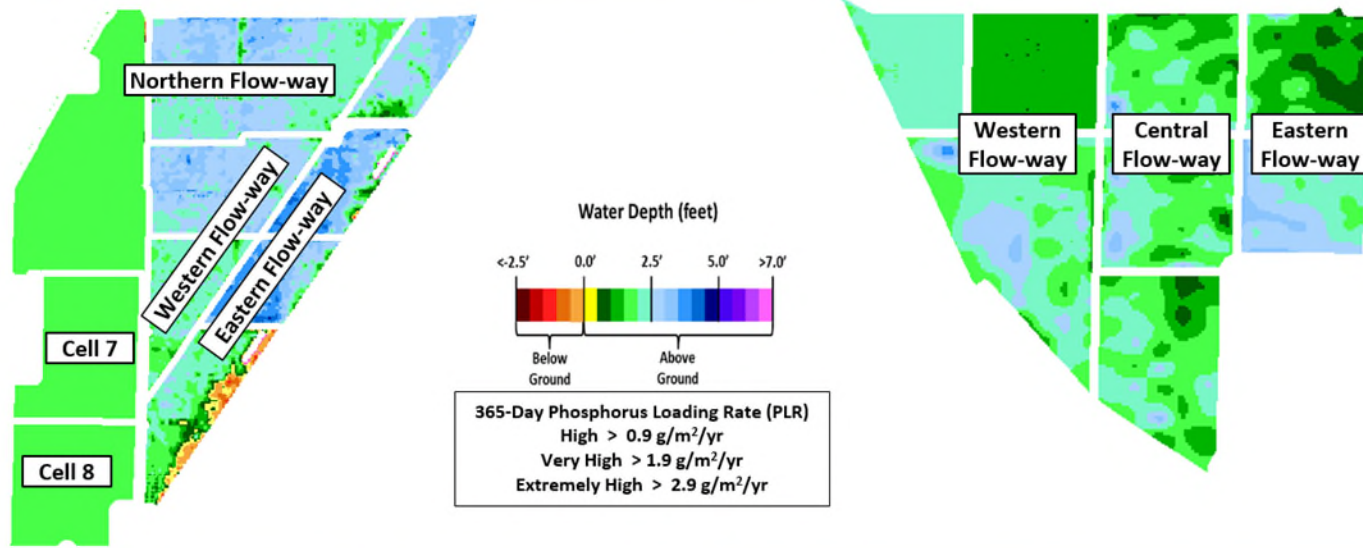
STA-2: Operational restrictions are in place in Flow-ways 1, 2, and 4 for vegetation management activities, and in STA-2 Flow-way 3 for canal plug refurbishments. Most online treatment cells are above target stage. Vegetation in Flow-ways 1 and 3 is stressed, and in Flow-ways 4 and 5 is highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs for Flow-ways 3, 4, and 5 are below 1.0 g/m²/year. The 365-day PLR for Flow-way 1 is high (**Figure S-2**).

STA-3/4: STA-3/4 Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation rehabilitation. Online treatment cells are above target stage. Vegetation in the Central Flow-way is highly stressed and in the Western Flow-way is stressed. The 365-day PLRs for the Central and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m²/year (**Figure S-2**).

STA-5/6: All flow-ways in STA-5/6 are online. Most treatment cells are at or above target stage. All treatment cells have highly stressed or stressed vegetation conditions except Flow-ways 7 which is healthy. The 365-day PLRs for Flow-ways 1, 6, 7, and 8 are below 1.0 g/m²/year, and the 365-day PLRs for Flow-ways 2, 3, 4, and 5 are high. (**Figure S-3**).

For definitions on STA operational language see glossary following figures.

Eastern Flow Path Weekly Status Report – 8/14/2023 through 8/20/2023

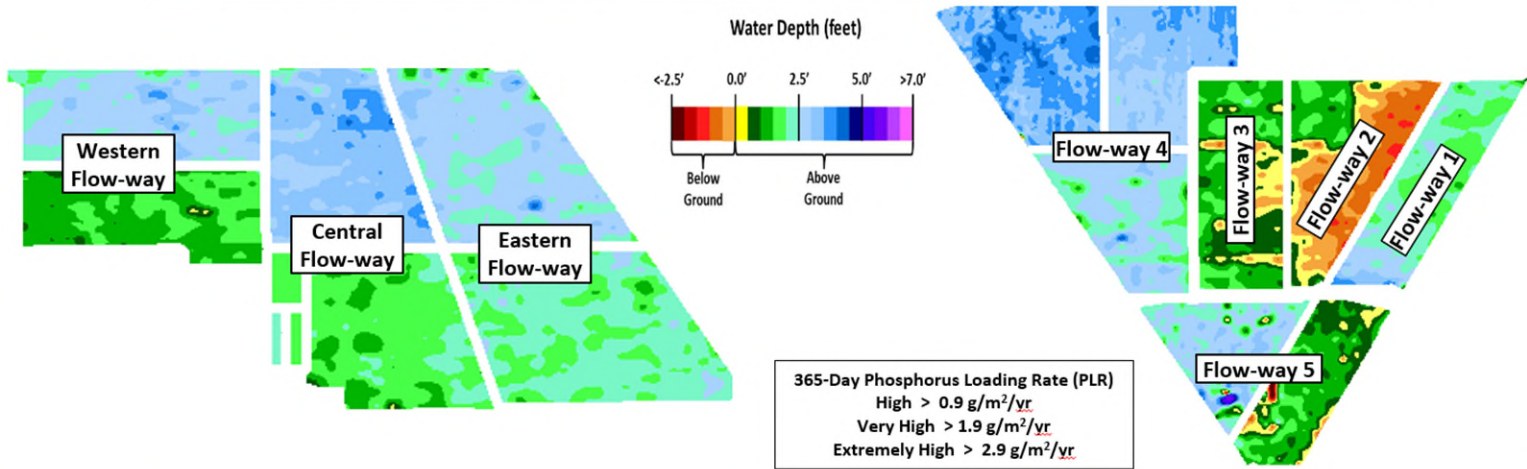


STA-1W	Flow-way Status
Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 365-day PLR Highly stressed vegetation conditions
Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 365-day PLR Highly stressed vegetation conditions
Northern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 365-day PLR Highly stressed vegetation conditions Planting emergent vegetation
Cell 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stressed vegetation conditions
Cell 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction activities

STA-1E	Flow-way Status
Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offline for post-construction vegetation grow-in
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 365-day PLR Highly stressed vegetation conditions
Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 365-day PLR Stressed vegetation conditions

Figure S-1. Eastern Flow Path Weekly Status Report

Central Flow Path Weekly Status Report – 8/14/2023 through 8/20/2023



STA-3/4	Flow-way Status
Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressed vegetation conditions • Nuisance vegetation control within inflow canal
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly stressed vegetation conditions • Removal of floating tussocks • Nuisance vegetation control within inflow canal
Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offline for post-drawdown vegetation establishment • Nuisance vegetation control within inflow canal

STA-2	Flow-way Status
Flow-way 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High 365-day PLR • Stressed vegetation conditions • Short circuit repair
Flow-way 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-construction vegetation grow-in • Planting emergent vegetation
Flow-way 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishments project - plug construction • Stressed vegetation conditions
Flow-way 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting emergent vegetation • Nuisance vegetation control • Highly stressed vegetation conditions
Flow-way 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly stressed vegetation conditions

Figure S-2. Central Flow Path Weekly Status Report

Western Flow Path Weekly Status Report – 8/14/2023 through 8/20/2023

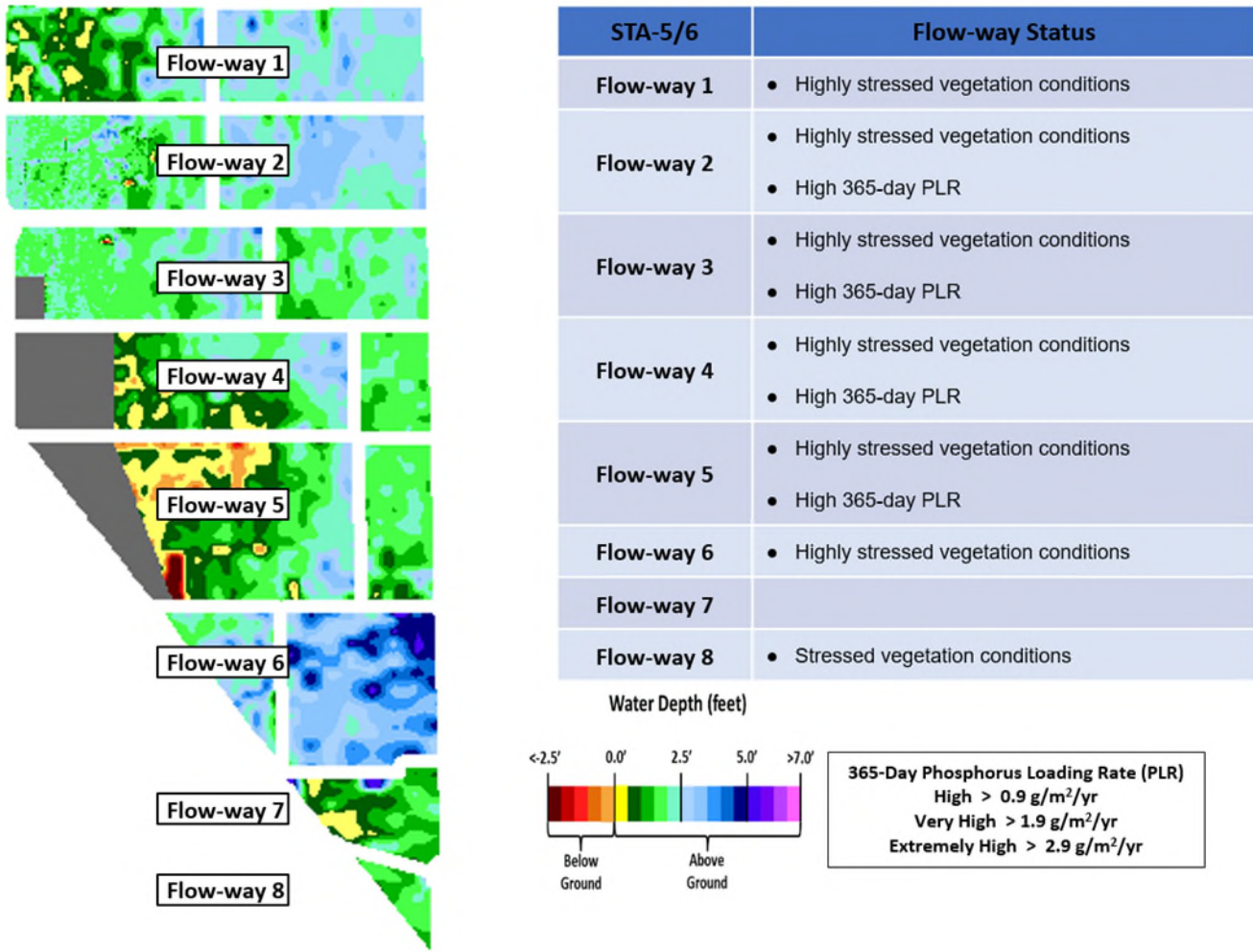


Figure S-3. Western Flow Path Weekly Status Report

Basic Concepts and Definitions for STA Weekly Status Report

- **Inflow:** Sum of flow volume at all inflow structures to an STA.
- **Lake Inflow:** Portion of the STA total inflow volume that originates from Lake Okeechobee.
- **Outflow:** Sum of flow volume at outflow structures from an STA.
- **Total Phosphorus (TP):** Total mass of phosphorus in all its forms; including particulate, dissolved, etc.
- **Inflow Concentration:** TP concentration is the mass of TP in micrograms per liter of water, $\mu\text{g/L}$ or ppb. Inflow concentration refers to the flow-weighted mean TP from all inflow structures over a period of time.
- **Outflow Concentration:** The flow-weighted mean TP from all outflow structures over a period of time. The outflow concentration represents the reduction of inflow TP achieved by STA treatment of the inflow water.
- **WQBEL:** The STA outflow concentration that is required upon completion of the Restoration Strategies projects by December 2025. The outflow concentration shall not exceed 13 ppb as an annual flow weighted mean in more than 3 out of 5 water years on a rolling basis and shall not exceed 19 ppb as an annual flow weighted in any water year.
- **Flow-Way (FW):** One or more treatment cells connected in series. Cells typically have emergent aquatic vegetation (EAV) in the front portion of the flow-way followed by a mix of EAV and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV)
- **Vegetation Status:** Healthy means the vegetation condition is good and will allow the STA to perform as designed. Stressed means the vegetation is showing signs of poor health, such as browning or areas of vegetation die-off, or the cell contains undesirable vegetation such as floating exotic vegetation requiring treatment. The TP reduction capability of the STA is affected when the vegetation condition is poor.
- **Phosphorus Loading Rate (PLR):** Mass of inflow TP in grams, divided by total treatment area of STA in square meters, per year. In general, a 365-day value of less than 1.0 is needed for an STA to perform optimally. A PLR of 2.0 is considered very high and a PLR of 3.0 is considered extremely high. The TP reduction capability of the STA is affected when the PLR is high, very high and extremely high.
- **Online:** Online status means the FW can receive and treat inflow.
- **Online with Restriction:** The FW can receive and treat inflow, but the amount of flow or water level may be limited temporarily. For example, a vegetation rehabilitation effort may require reduced flows through an area while the new plants are establishing, or nesting by protected species may require a certain water level not to be exceeded.
- **Offline:** The FW is unable to receive and treat inflow due to repairs, construction, or other prohibitive reasons.
- **Depth:** Difference between the average surface water level in a cell and the average ground elevation in that cell. Target depths, or depths between flow events, are between 1.25 ft to 1.5 ft. As depth approaches or drops below zero, an increasing percentage of the cell is considered dry and STA conditions deteriorate. An increase in depth above target depth is expected with increasing flow. However, as depth increases much above the target depth and is sustained over a period of time, it can be detrimental to vegetation health and overall STA treatment performance.
- **Note:** The data provided in this summary report were developed using a combination of provisional and quality-assured flow and water quality data. In some cases, best professional judgment was used to estimate missing data and revise questionable data. Values provided are not considered final but are appropriate for use in STA operational decision-making.

Everglades

Water Conservation Area Regulation Schedules

Last week the EPA received near average rainfall, heaviest at mid-week. WCA-1: Last week stage within the Refuge continued to ascend in parallel with the regulation line. The 3 Gauge average on Sunday was 0.08 feet above the Zone A1 regulation line. WCA-2A: Stage at the 2-17 continues to trend towards the regulation schedule line. The average on Sunday was 0.71 feet above the rising regulation line. WCA-3A: The 3-Gauge average continues to ascend above but generally in parallel with Zone A regulation line. The average stage on Sunday was 0.83 feet above the rising line and 0.67 feet below the EHWL. WCA-3A North: Gauge 62 (NW corner) rose above schedule last week, averaging 0.07 feet above the Upper Schedule on Sunday. See figures **EV-1** through **EV-4**.

Water Depths

The SFWDAT illustrates water depths continuing to build in all EPA basins, with only a small region in southern BCNP and eastern ENP (Rocky Glades) with the potential for stages below ground. Pondered conditions are lessening in eastern WCA-2A yet gaining depth in the upper reaches of the L-67s in WCA-3A and within 3B. Hydrologic connectivity is strong across ENP.

Comparing current WDAT water depths to one month ago conditions across the EPA are slightly deeper, with only northern WCA-2A and portions of WCA-1 lower in depth. Looking back a year ago, conditions are significantly wetter in eastern WCA-3A (**Figure EV-5** and **Figure EV-6**).

Comparing current conditions to the 20-year average on August 20th: Well above average depths continue across most of the EPA. Only portions of BCNP and northwestern WCA-3A at or below the 50th percentile. Conditions remain above the 90th percentile in WCA-3B and are above the 70th percentile across southern WCA-3A. ENP remains deeper than average with depths building in the west (**Figure EV-7**).

Taylor Slough and Florida Bay

Total weekly rainfall averaged 3.2 inches in Taylor Slough and Florida Bay over the past week (Monday-Sunday) based on the 17 gauges used for this report. Total weekly rainfall ranged from 1.3 inches at Trout Creek (TC) in the eastern nearshore region to 6.0 inches at Garfield Bight (GB) in the western nearshore region. All stages increased across Taylor Slough, with an average increase of +0.09 feet. Stage changes ranged from +0.02 feet at Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB) in the northern slough to +0.22 feet at EVER6 in the southeastern slough (**Figure EV-8** and **Figure EV-9**). Taylor Slough water levels are above the historical average for this time of year by +2.1 inches compared to before the Florida Bay initiative (starting in 2017), an increase of +0.8 inches from last week.

Average Florida Bay salinity was 25.4, -2.9 lower than the previous week. Salinity decreased across most sites and changes ranged from a decrease of -9.4 at Terrapin Bay (TB) in the central nearshore region to an increase of +1.0 at Duck Key (DK) in the eastern region (**Figure EV-8**). With large amounts of rainfall in the western and central regions of the bay, salinities in the western region are now back within the IQR and central salinities are now just below the 25th percentile (**Figure EV-10**). Average Florida Bay

salinity has now dropped below its historical average for this time of year by -2.44 , a decrease of -1.8 relative to last week.

Water Management Recommendations

Keeping water within the system and flowing south has long term ecological benefits; however, operations that elevate the ascension rates above 0.18 feet per week have detrimental ecological impacts on sensitive regions of the EPA. Avoiding extreme shifts in hydrologic trends and depths can be protective of the ecology of the WCAs. The ecology of Northern WCA-3A would benefit from a balanced distribution of flows into the northern perimeter, building depths in that region has been shown to increase the likelihood of successful wading bird nesting (perhaps more important this year after two successive years of below average nesting). A distribution of flows into northwestern WCA-3A that slowly builds water depths in that region is ecologically desirable. As conditions remain above the 90th percentile in NESRS, continuing strong positive Taylor Slough creek flows to avoid salinity swings in the nearshore areas is ecologically beneficial. Individual regional recommendations can be found in **Table EV-2**.

Table EV-2. Previous week’s rainfall and water depth changes in Everglades basins.

Everglades Region	Rainfall (inches)	Stage change (feet)
WCA-1	1.47	+0.05
WCA-2A	1.96	+0.10
WCA-2B	4.00	+0.18
WCA-3A	1.72	+0.09
WCA-3B	2.28	+0.12
ENP	2.86	+0.09

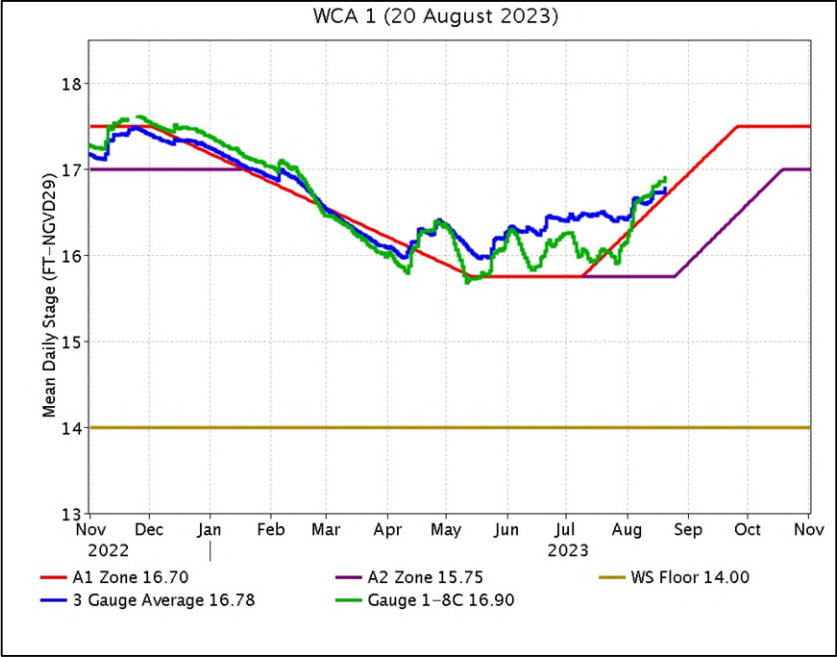


Figure EV-1. WCA-1 stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

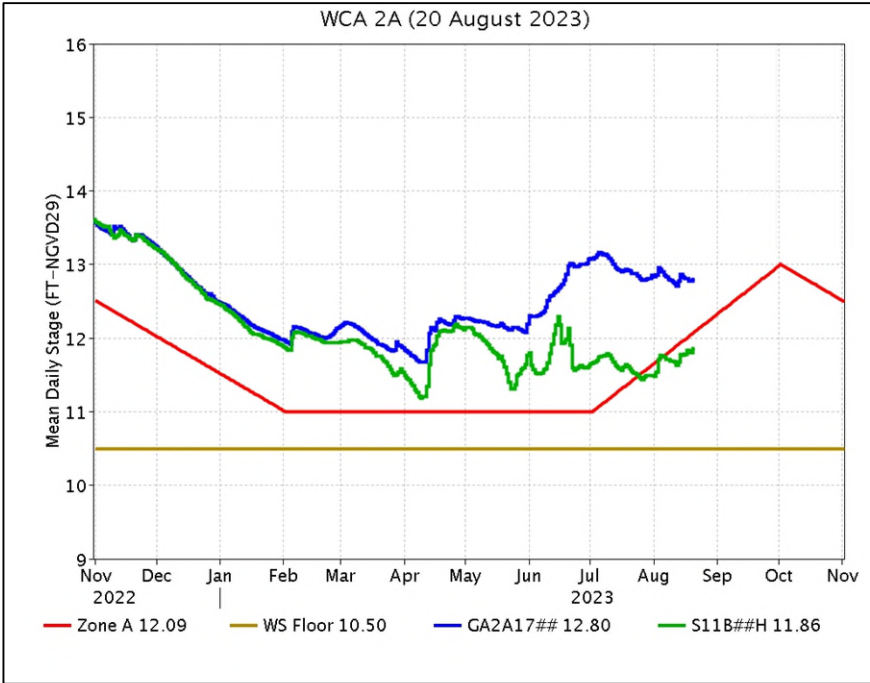


Figure EV-2. WCA-2A stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

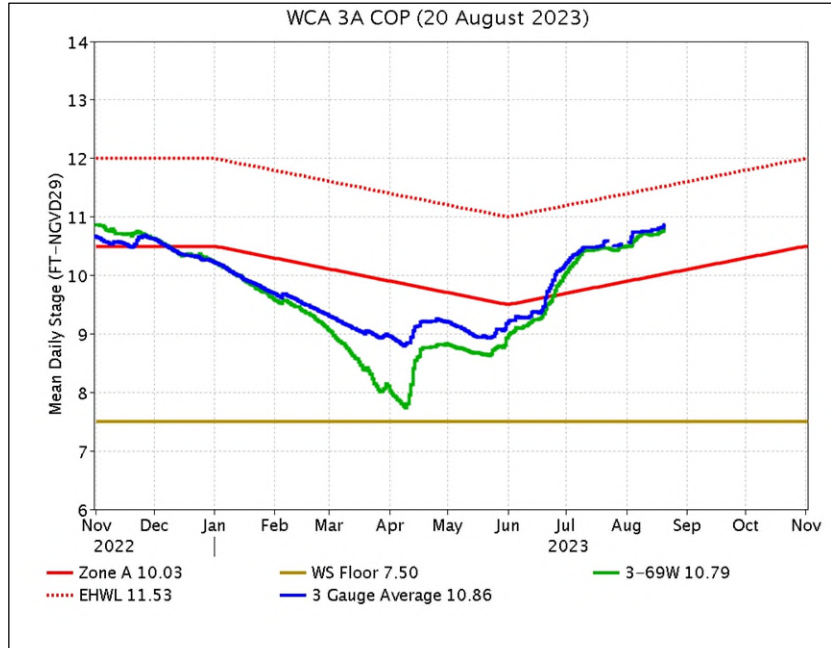


Figure EV-3. WCA-3A stage hydrographs (three-gauge average, 3-69W) and regulation schedule.

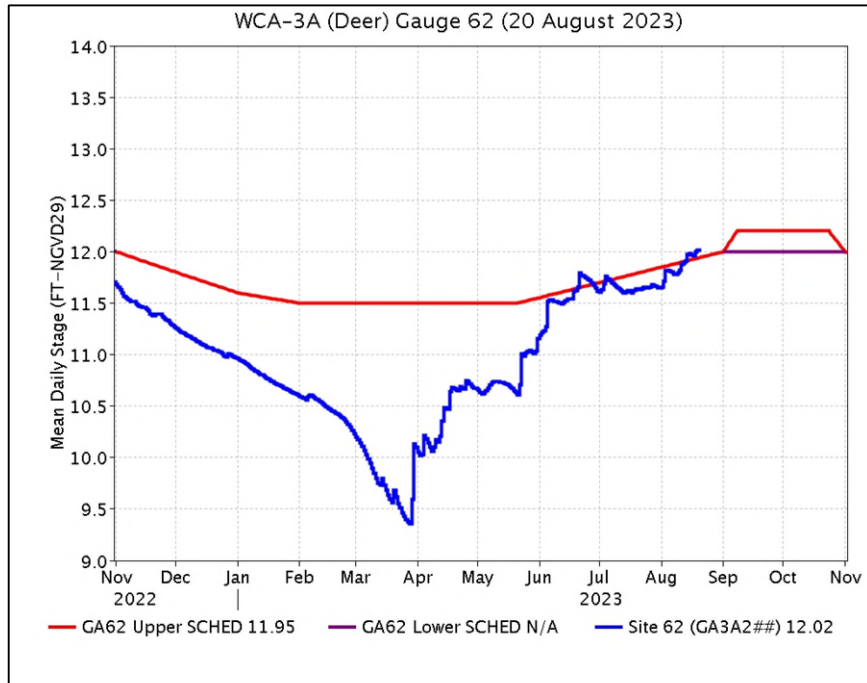


Figure EV-4. WCA-3A stage hydrograph (Deer gauge; Site 62) and CA62 regulation schedule.

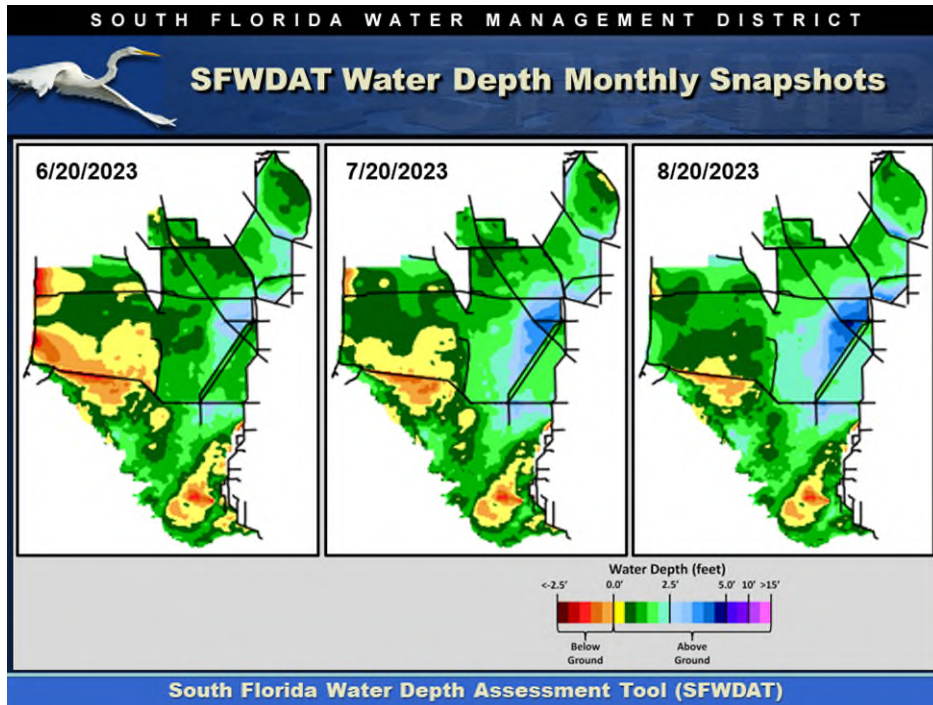


Figure EV-5. Everglades water depths from two months ago (left), one month ago (center) and present (right), based on SFWDAT.

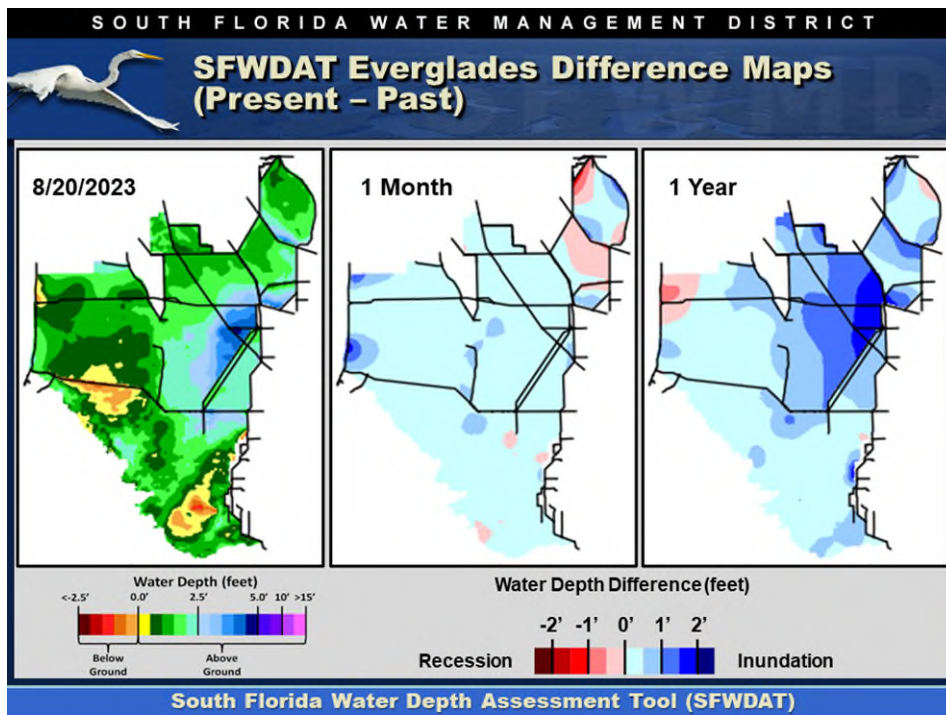


Figure EV-6. Present Everglades water depths (left) and water depth changes from one month (center) and one year (right) ago, based on SFWDAT.

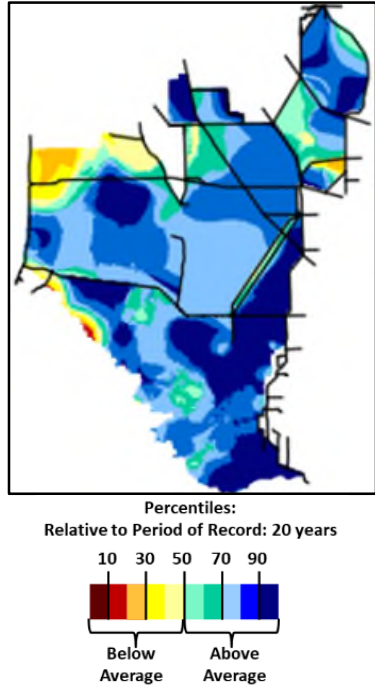


Figure EV-7. Present water depths (8/20/2023) compared to the day of year average over the previous 20 years.

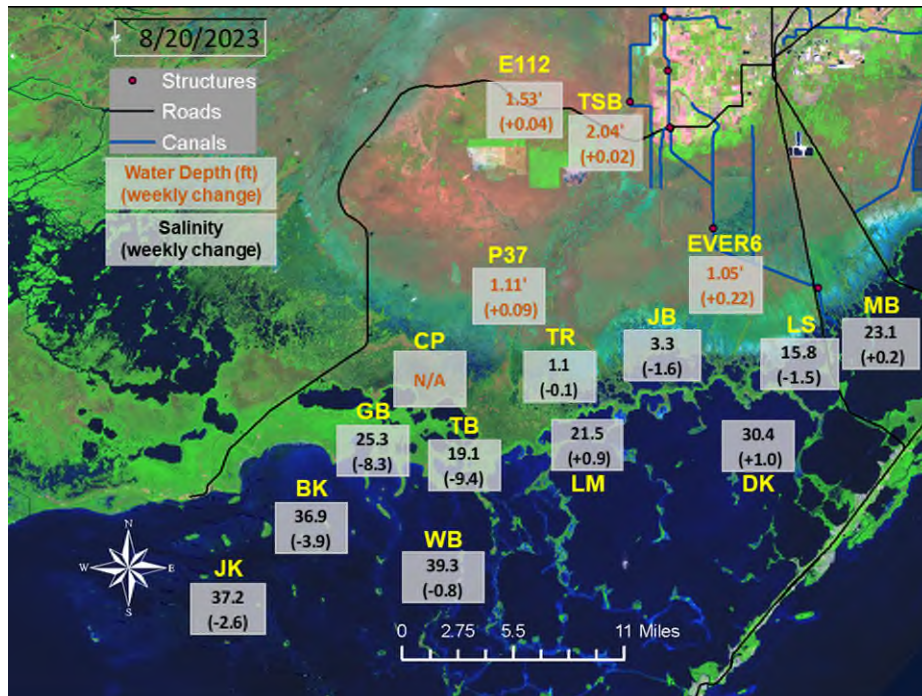


Figure EV-8. Taylor Slough water depths with changes since a week ago and Florida Bay salinities with changes since a week ago.

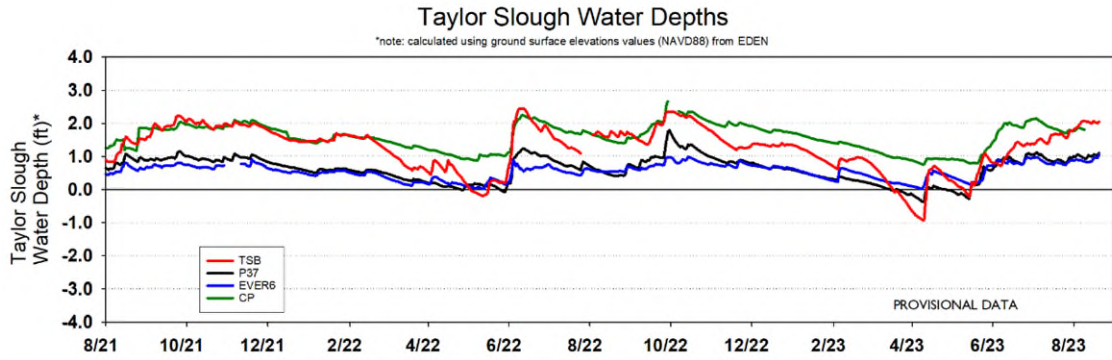


Figure EV-9. Taylor Slough water depth time series.

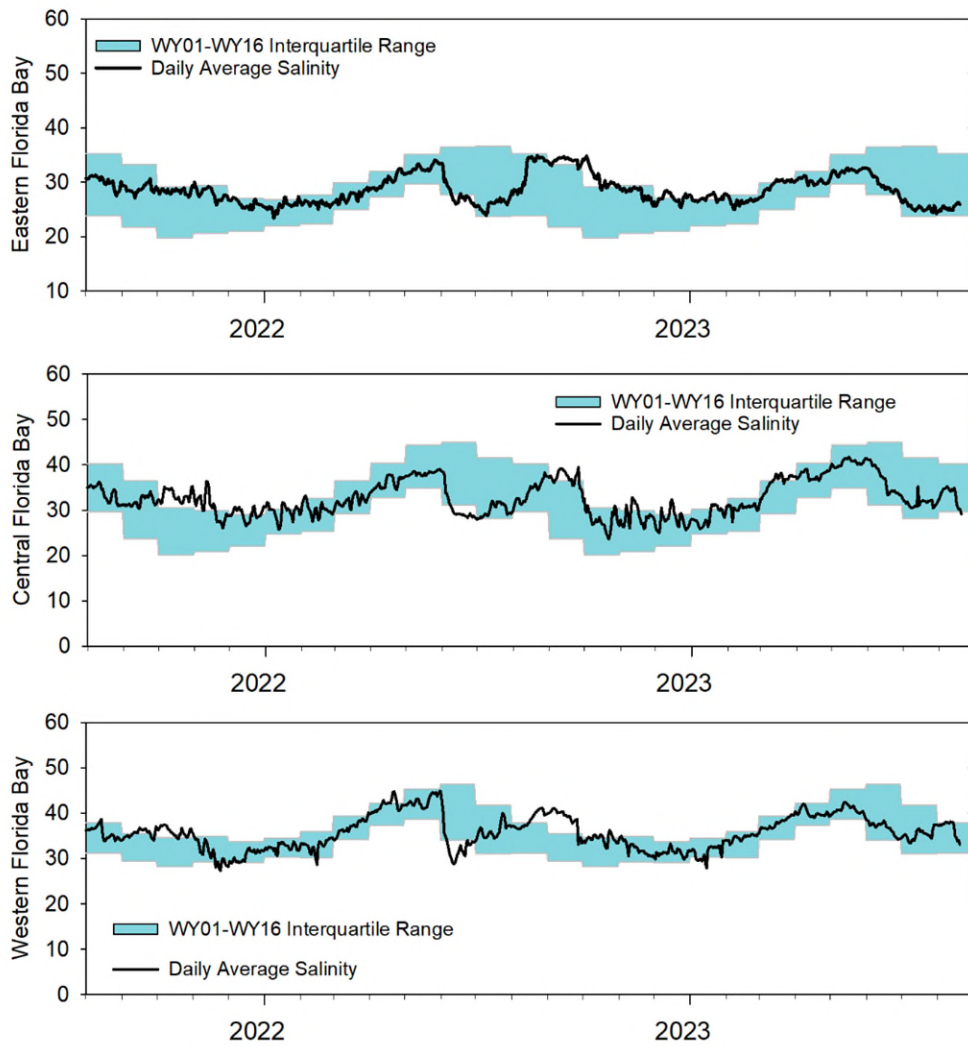


Figure EV-10. Eastern (top panel), Central (middle panel) and Western (bottom panel) Florida Bay daily average salinities with interquartile (25-75 percentile) ranges.

Table EV-2. Weekly water depth changes and water management recommendations

SFWMD Everglades Ecological Recommendations, August 22, 2023 (red is new)			
	Weekly change	Recommendation	Reasons
WCA-1	Stage increased by 0.05'	Ascension rate of less than +0.18' per week. If discharge from this basin is necessary via the s10 structures, using S10 Charlie has a downstream ecological advantage.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife (apple snail reproduction).
WCA-2A	Stage decreased by 0.04'	Minimal ascension rate. Move water from this basin to tide as necessary.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife (apple snail reproduction).
WCA-2B	Stage increased by 0.18'	Ascension rate of less than +0.18' per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife (apple snail reproduction).
WCA-3A NE	Stage increased by 0.09'	Ascension rate of less than +0.18' per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat (peat soils) and wildlife (fish/crayfish reproduction).
WCA-3A NW	Stage increased by 0.04'	Ascension rate of less than +0.18' per week.	
Central WCA-3A S	Stage increased by 0.10'	Ascension rate of less than +0.18' per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife (apple snail reproduction).
Southern WCA-3A S	Stage increased by 0.14'		
WCA-3B	Stage increased by 0.12'	Minimal ascension rate.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife (apple snail reproduction). Allow for flow through.
ENP-SRS	Stage increased by 0.09'	Make discharges to ENP according to COP and TTF protocol while adaptively considering upstream and downstream ecological conditions.	Protect within basin and upstream habitat and wildlife (apple snail reproduction).
Taylor Slough	Stage changes ranged from +0.02' to +0.22'	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.
FB- Salinity	Salinity changes ranged from -9.4 to +1.0	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.

Biscayne Bay

As shown in **Figure BB-1**, mean total inflow to Biscayne Bay was 1,562 cfs, and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 1,196 cfs. The seven-day mean salinity was 24.6 at BBCW8 and 23.8 at BBCW10, both within the ideal salinity range for estuarine organisms in this region (salinity less than 35). Data were provided by Biscayne National Park.

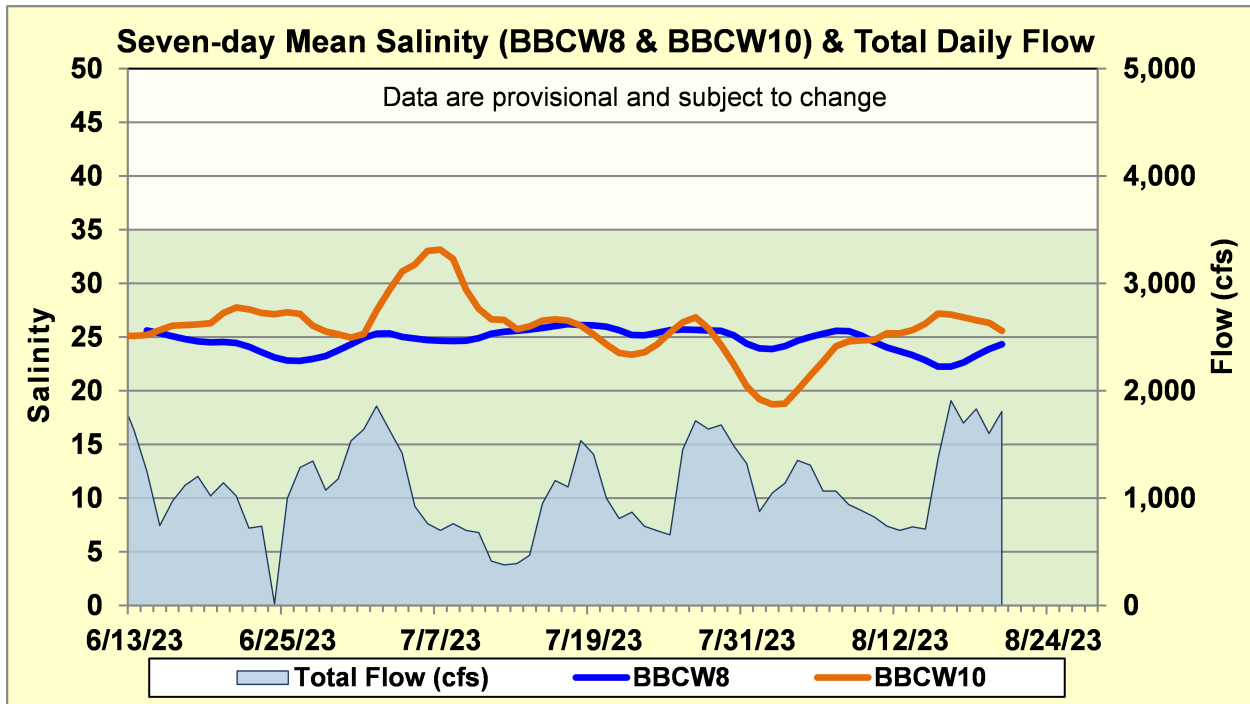


Figure BB-1. Seven-day mean salinity at BBCW8 and BBCW10 and total daily flow in Biscayne Bay. Total daily flow was calculated using flow from structures S20G, S20F, S21, S21A, S123, and S700P.