Disclaimer: Information contained in the report addresses environmental conditions only and is not the official South Florida Water Management District operations recommendation or decision.

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: January 7, 2026

SUBJECT: Weekly Environmental Conditions for Systems Operations

Summary

Weather Conditions and Forecast

Temperatures across the SFWMD will rise to above-normal levels. Persistent subsidence will maintain a stable atmosphere, effectively opposing the development of any rain. The only limited opportunity for rain will be confined to the east coast and parts of the Everglades, where pockets of shallow moisture could support brief, light shower activity. Late this week, strong subsidence will prevail across the SFWMD, continuing to suppress rainfall. That said, another pocket of enhanced shallow moisture is forecast to overspread much of the region, which could cause another round of limited shower activity. The most likely region to experience this light shower activity will be along and near the middle and upper east coast on Friday, with some activity possibly extending into portions of the Kissimmee Valley on Saturday during the afternoon. Even so, area-averaged rainfall is expected to remain minimal. A cold front could move into north Florida by Sunday morning, with the boundary gradually moving through the SFWMD later Sunday or early Monday. Because the strongest forcing remains well to the north, little rain is anticipated ahead of the front. However, near and just after frontal passage, an influx of moisture could support scattered rain along the east coast and into the eastern interior, especially if the front slows down, however the forecast has significant uncertainties. For the week ending Tuesday morning, area-averaged rainfall across the SFWMD is expected to be well below the long-term average.

Kissimmee

In the past week, releases were made from East Lake Toho and Lake Toho to keep lake stage at the regulation schedule line. Releases from Lakes Kissimmee-Cypress-Hatchineha followed the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan. Weekly average discharge on January 4, 2026, was 420 cfs at S-65 and 370 cfs at S-65A. Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain decreased by 0.03 feet to 0.36 feet. The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River increased from 8.1 mg/L the previous week to 8.6 mg/L, which is above both the potentially lethal level of 1.0 mg/L and the stressful level of 2.0 mg/L for Florida bass and other species.

Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee stage was 11.99 feet NAVD88 (13.30 ft NGVD29) on January 4, 2026, which was 0.15 feet lower than the previous week and 0.35 feet lower than a month ago. Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) declined from 700 cfs the previous week to 370 cfs. Average daily outflows (excluding evapotranspiration) increased from 1,270 cfs the previous week to 1,780 cfs. The most recent non-obscured satellite image from January 3, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests continued moderate cyanobacteria potential in the southern and western regions of the lake.

Estuaries

Total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged 121 cfs over the past week with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee. Mean salinities increased at all sites over the past week. Salinity in the middle estuary was in the upper stressed range (> 25) for adult oysters.

Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary averaged 500 cfs over the past week with 218 cfs coming from Lake Okeechobee. Over the past week, surface salinities decreased at S-79 and Sanibel and increased at the remaining sites within the estuary. Mean salinities were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass at S-79 and Val I-75 and in the stressed range (10-15) at Fort Myers in the upper estuary. Salinities were in the optimal range (10-25) for adult oysters at Cape Coral and in the upper stressed range (>25) at Shell Point and Sanibel.

Stormwater Treatment Areas

For the week ending January 4th, 2026, no Lake Okeechobee water was delivered to the FEBs/STAs. The total amount of Lake releases sent to the FEBs/STAs in WY2026 is approximately 32,700 ac-feet. The total amount of inflows to the STAs in WY2026 is approximately 536,000 ac-feet. Online STA treatment cells are at or above target stage. STA-1E Central Flow-way is offline for construction activities. STA-1W Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. Operational restrictions are in effect in STA-1E Western Flow-way, STA-2 Flow-ways 2, 3, and 4, and STA-3/4 Eastern Flow-way for vegetation management activities. This week, if LOSOM recommends Lake releases to the WCAs and conditions allow, releases will be sent to STA-2 and STA-3/4.

Everglades

The Everglades Protection Area received no precipitation last week. Water depths decreased across most basins, except WCA-2B which continues to gradually increase. Recession rates averaged ~0.06 feet/week last week, slightly faster than the previous two-week average. Slow recessions are beneficial for conserving water within the Everglades. Southern WCA-2A remains unseasonably deep, while most of WCA-3A continues to be below the 10th percentile. Below-average depths in the central Everglades limit aquatic prey production and the predators that depend on them, including wading birds and herpetofauna. Wading bird nesting will very likely be below average for the fifth consecutive year. Prolonged dry conditions increase the risk of damaging wildfire, peat oxidation, and ridge/slough degradation, especially if the forecasted La Niña climate conditions continue. Taylor Slough stages decreased rapidly last week and are now well below the recent average for this time of year. Average Florida Bay salinities increased last week and remained above average for this time of year.

Supporting Information

Kissimmee Basin

Upper Kissimmee

On January 4, 2026, mean daily lake stages were 57.0 feet NAVD88 (at schedule) in East Lake Toho, 54.0 feet NAVD88 (at schedule) in Lake Toho, and 48.6 feet NAVD88 (3.2 feet below the Increment 1 Temporary Deviation schedule) in Lakes Kissimmee-Cypress-Hatchineha (KCH) (**Table KB-1**, **Figures KB-1-3**).

Lower Kissimmee

For the week ending January 4, 2026, mean weekly discharge was 420 cfs at S-65 and 370 cfs at S-65A. Mean weekly discharge from the Kissimmee River was 470 cfs at S-65D and 370 at S-65E (**Table KB-2**). Mean weekly headwater stages were 45.2 feet NAVD88 at S-65A and 29.3 feet NAVD88 at S-65D. Mean weekly river channel stage decreased by 1.5 feet from 33.3 feet the previous week to 31.8 feet NAVD88 (**Figure KB-4**). Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain decreased by 0.03 feet to 0.36 feet (**Table KB-2**, **Figure KB-5**). The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River increased from 8.1 mg/L the previous week to 8.6 mg/L (**Table KB-2**, **Figure KB-6**).

Water Management Recommendations

In KCH, follow the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A (**Figure KB-7**). With KCH stage in Zone B3, target flows between 300 cfs and 1,400 cfs at S-65A using the Increment 1 Interpolation Tool to determine discharge relative to stage in KCH. When stage increases into Zone B2, target flows of 1,400 cfs.

Table KB-1. Average discharge for the preceding seven days, Sunday's average daily stage and Sunday's average daily departure from Kissimmee Chain of Lakes (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 NAVD88)[a]	Schedule Type[b]	Sunday Schedule Stage (feet NAVD88)	Sunday Departure from Regulation (feet)	
							1/4/26	*12/28/25*
Lakes Hart and Mary Jane	S-62	LKMJ	11	60.1	R	59.9	0.2	0.2
Lakes Myrtle, Preston and Joel	S-57	S-57	13	60.6	R	60.6	0.0	-0.1
Alligator Chain	S-60	ALLI	5	63.0	R	63.0	0.0	0.0
Lake Gentry	S-63	LKGT	14	60.5	R	60.4	0.1	0.1
East Lake Toho	S-59	TOHOE	110	57.0	R	57.0	0.0	0.1
Lake Toho	S-61	TOHOW S-61	260	54.0	R	54.0	0.0	0.0
Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha	S-65	KUB011 LKIS5B	420	48.6	T	51.8	-3.2	-3.2

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.

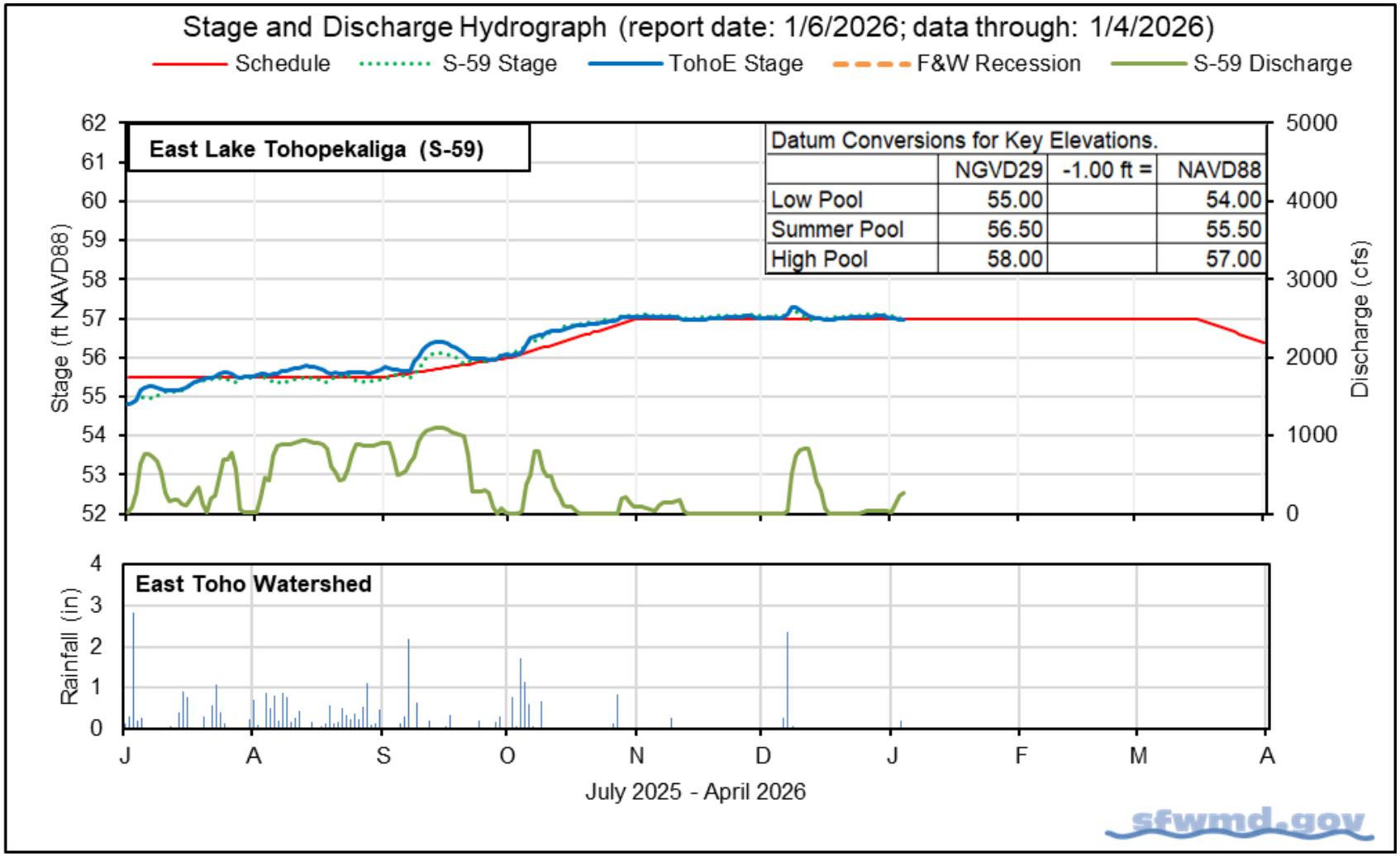


Figure KB-1. East Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

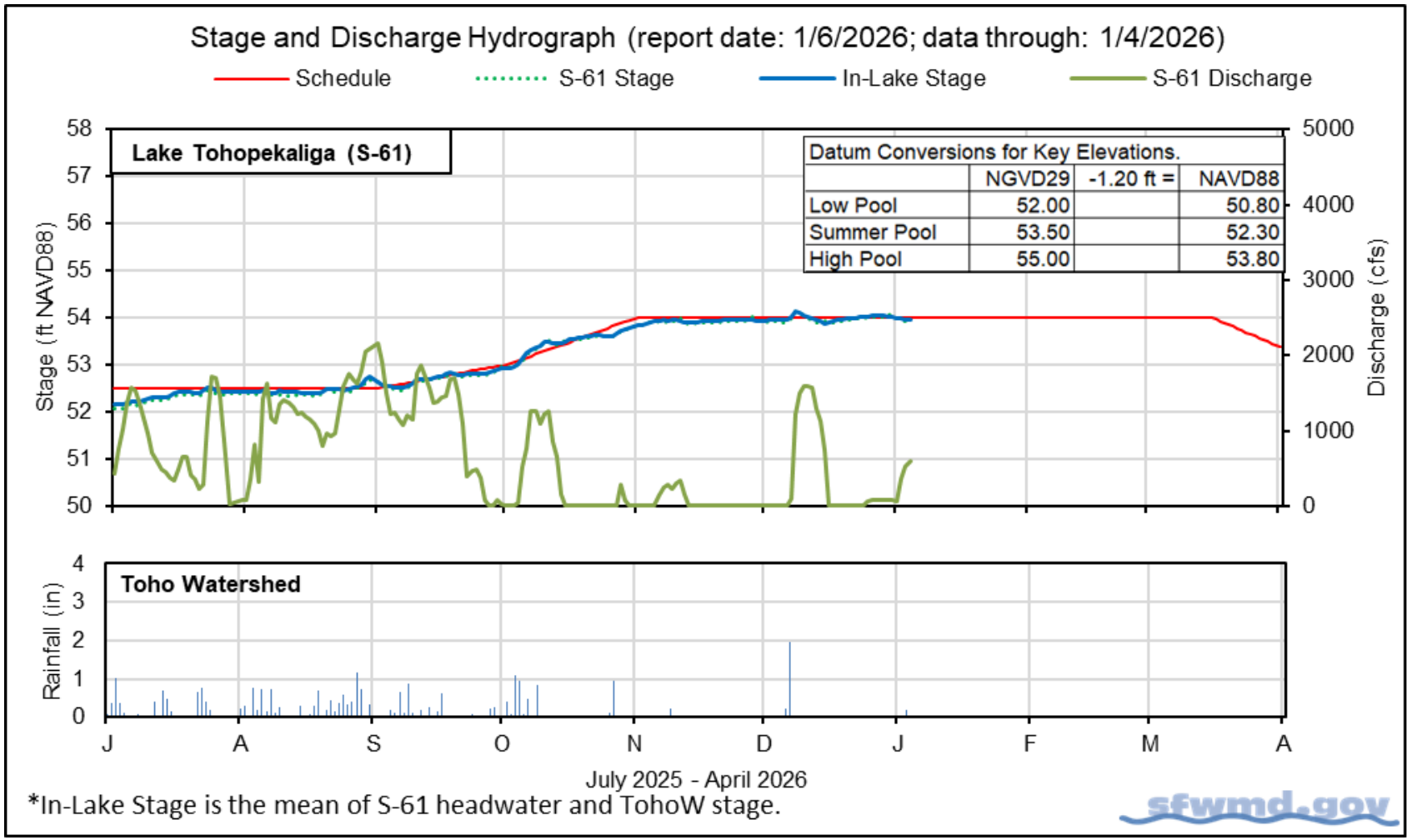


Figure KB-2. Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

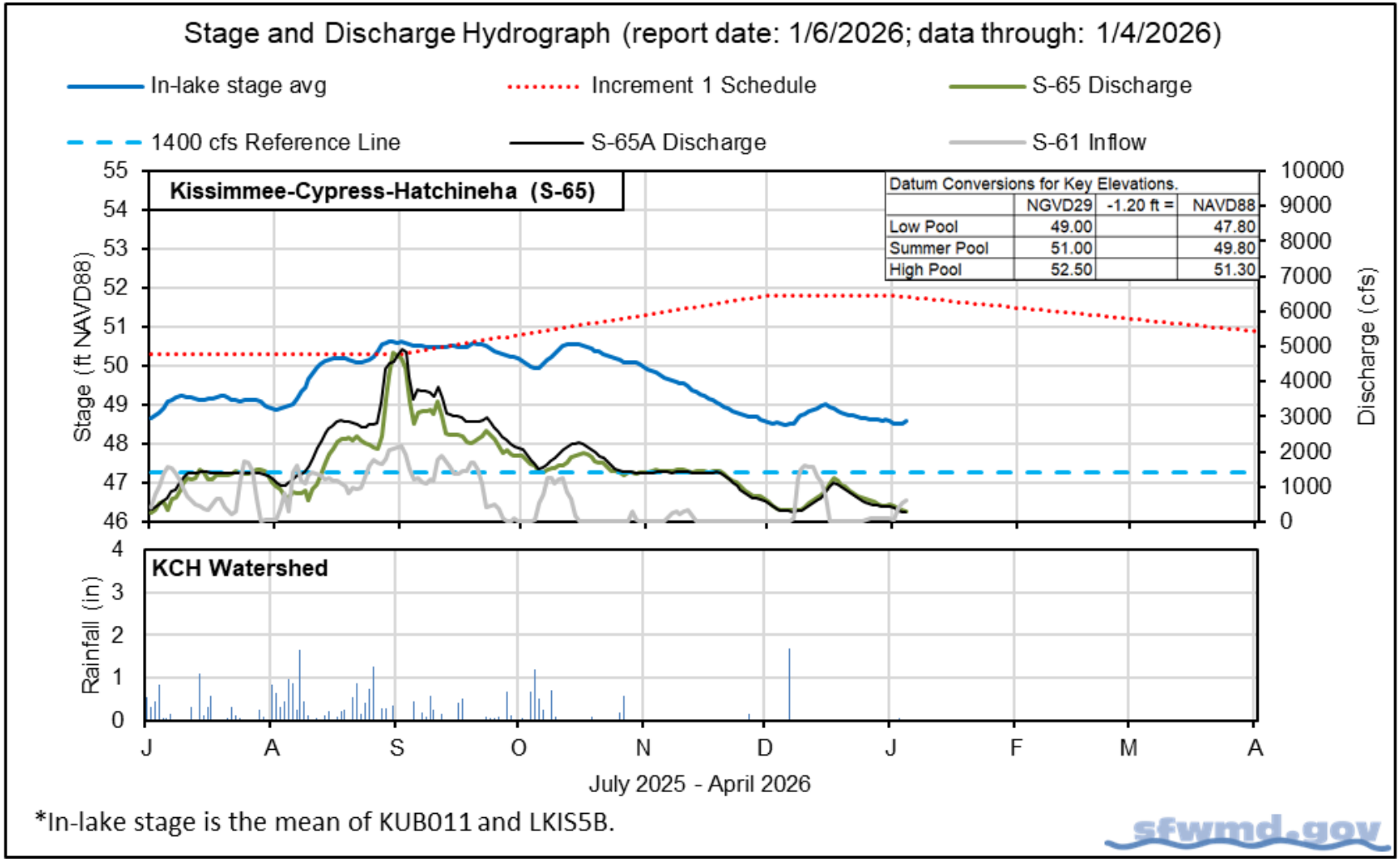


Figure KB-3. Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

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			
		1/4/26	1/4/26	12/28/25	12/21/25	12/14/25
Discharge	S-65	310	420	650	1,100	530
Discharge	S-65A[a]	290	370	580	960	480
Headwater Stage (feet NAVD88)	S-65A	45.3	45.2	45.2	45.2	45.2
Discharge	S-65D[b]	370	470	810	850	480
Headwater Stage (feet NAVD88)	S-65D[c]	24.8	29.3	30.7	31.0	29.2
Discharge (cfs)	S-65E[d]	280	370	680	730	350
Discharge (cfs)	S-67	0	0	0	0	0
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)[e]	Phase I, II/III river channel	8.4	8.6	8.1	7.8	7.5
River channel mean stage (feet NAVD88)[f]	Phase I river channel	31.3	31.8	33.3	33.9	31.9
Mean depth (feet)[g]	Phase I & II/III floodplain	0.35	0.36	0.39	0.41	0.37

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).

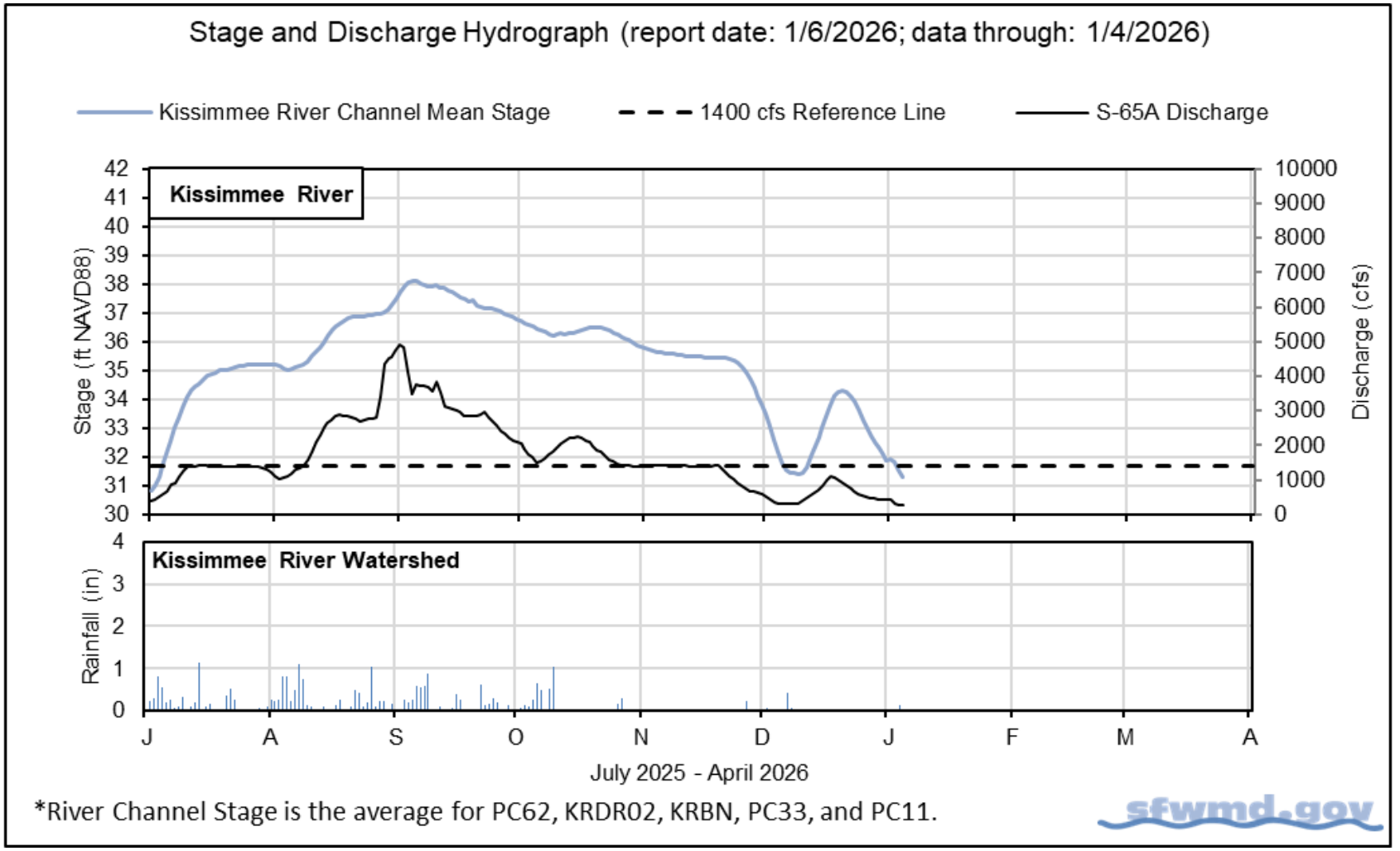


Figure KB-4. Kissimmee River stage, discharge, and rainfall.

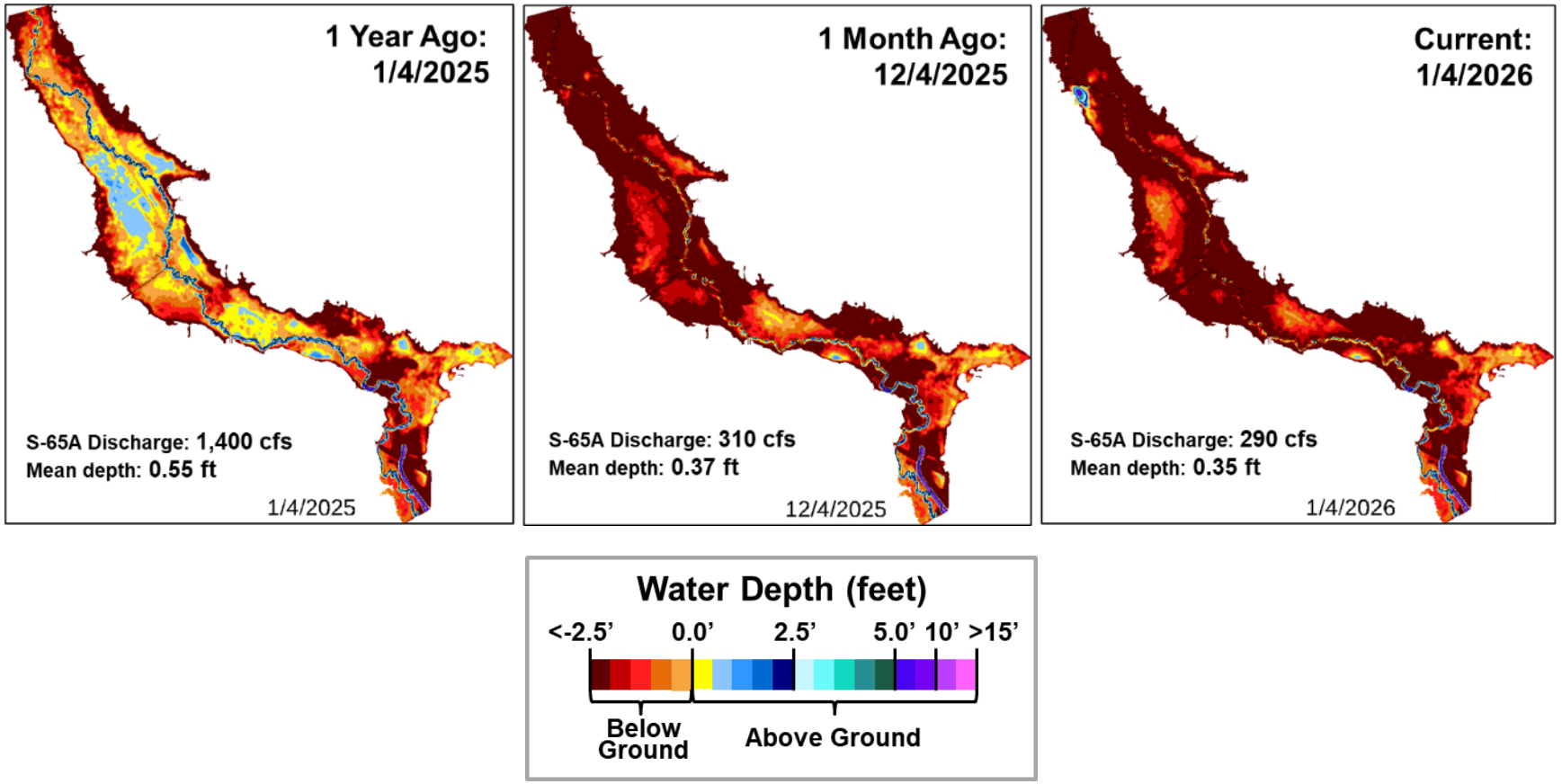


Figure KB-5. Phase I-II-III area Kissimmee River floodplain water depths (from left to right) one year ago, one month ago, and current.

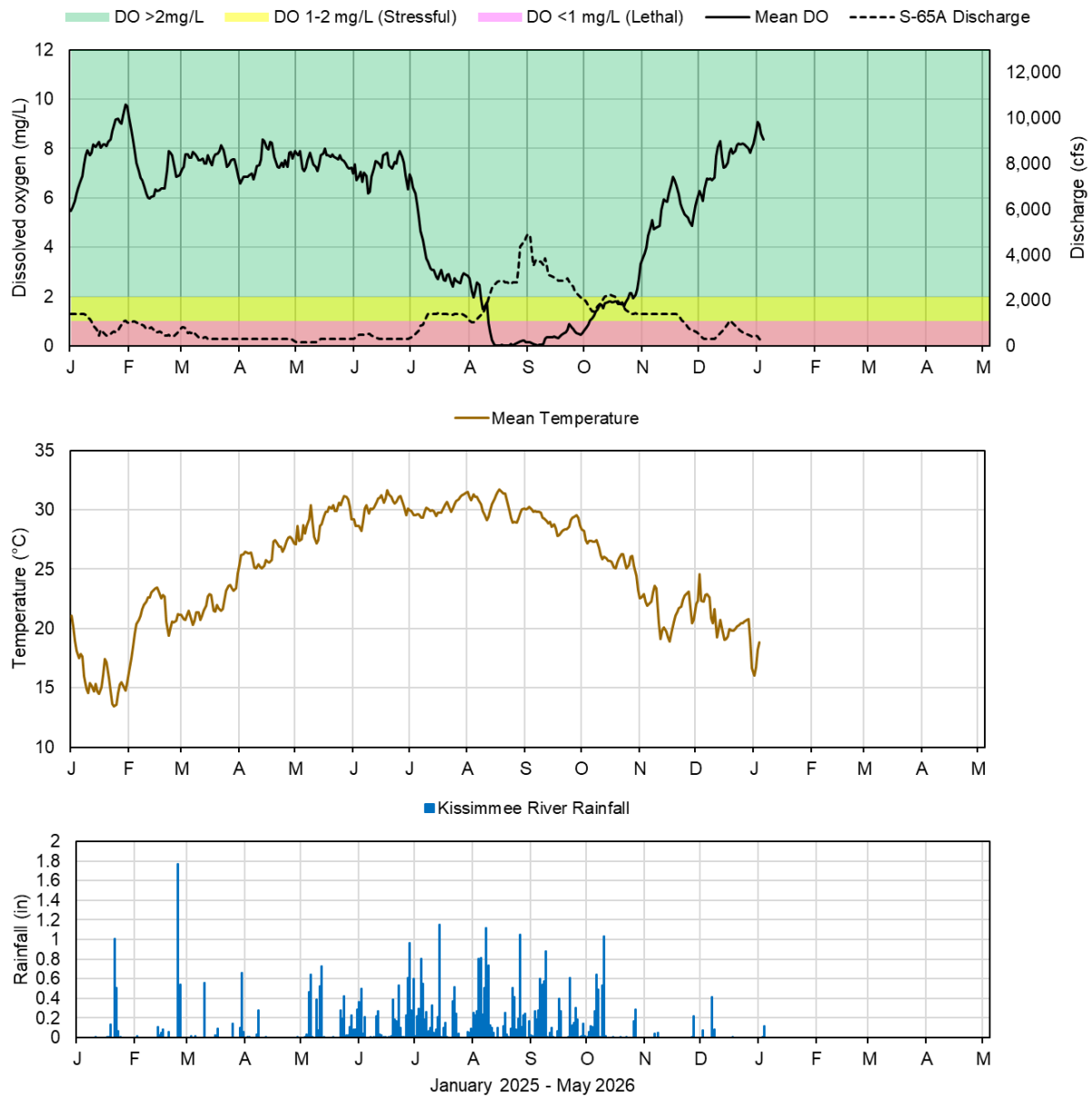


Figure KB-6. Kissimmee River channel mean daily dissolved oxygen concentration (mg/L), S-65A discharge (cfs), temperature (°C) and rainfall (inches). Dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature are mean daily values averaged for PC62, KRDR02, KRBN, PC33, PC11, PD62R, and PD42R with an average of five stations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

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

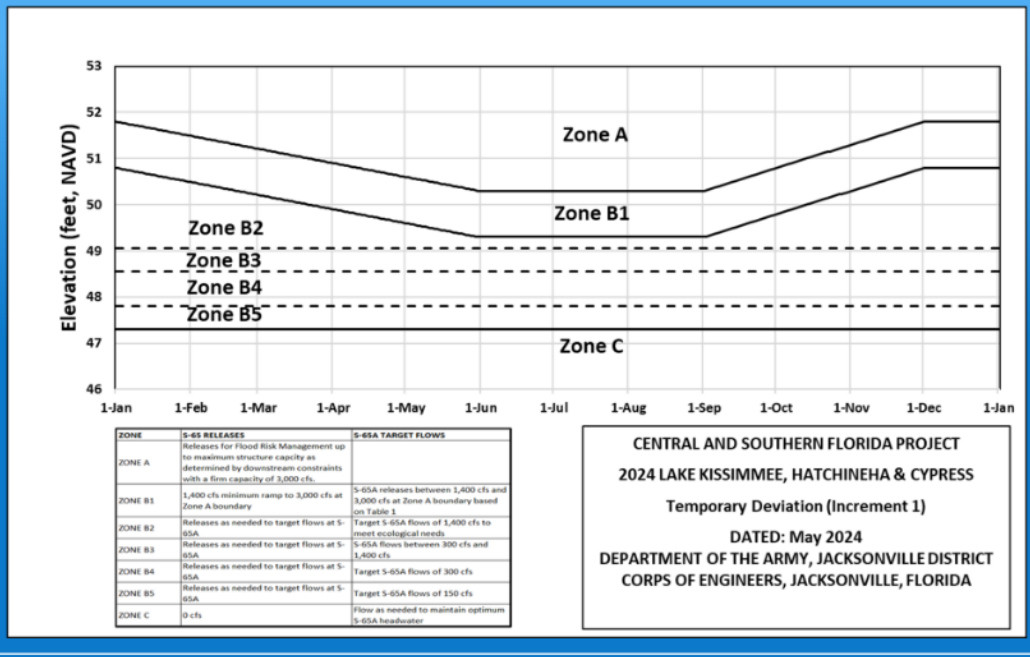
HRS Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A

Discharge Guidance for Increment I Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan		
ZONE	**S-65 RELEASES**	**S-65A TARGET FLOWS**
ZONE A	Releases for Flood Risk Management up to maximum structure capcity as determined by downstream constraints with a firm capacity of 3,000 cfs.	
ZONE B1	1,400 cfs minimum ramp to 3,000 cfs at Zone A boundary	S-65A releases between 1,400 cfs and 3,000 cfs at Zone A boundary based on Table 1
ZONE B2	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 1,400 cfs to meet ecological needs
ZONE B3	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	S-65A flows between 300 cfs and 1,400 cfs
ZONE B4	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 300 cfs
ZONE B5	Releases as needed to target flows at S-65A	Target S-65A flows of 150 cfs
ZONE C	0 cfs	Flow as needed to maintain optimum S-65A headwater

Table KB-3. Maximum Rate of Change Limits for S-65A

MAXIMUM Release Rate of Chane Limits for S-65A. **In general recommended rates of change will be slower than shown in this table.**

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



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.

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Figure KB-7. Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A.

Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee stage was 11.99 feet NAVD88 (13.30 ft NGVD29) on January 4, 2026, which was 0.15 feet lower than the previous week and 0.35 feet lower than a month ago (**Figure LO-1**). Lake stage is in Zone D of the regulation schedule (**Figure LO-2**) and is 1.2 feet below the ecological envelope (**Figure LO-3**). According to NEXRAD, 0.02 inches of rain fell directly over the lake during the previous week, and 0.9 inches were lost to evapotranspiration.

Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) decreased from 700 cfs the previous week to 370 cfs. The only notable inflows came from the Kissimmee River (370 cfs via S-65E(X1)). Average daily outflows (excluding evapotranspiration) increased from 1,270 cfs the previous week to 1,780 cfs. The highest single structure release was west to the C-43 Canal through the S-77 structure (660 cfs). **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.

In the most recent non-obscured satellite image from January 3, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests continued moderate cyanobacteria potential in the southern and western regions of the lake (**Figure LO-6**).

Note: All data presented in this report are provisional and are subject to change.

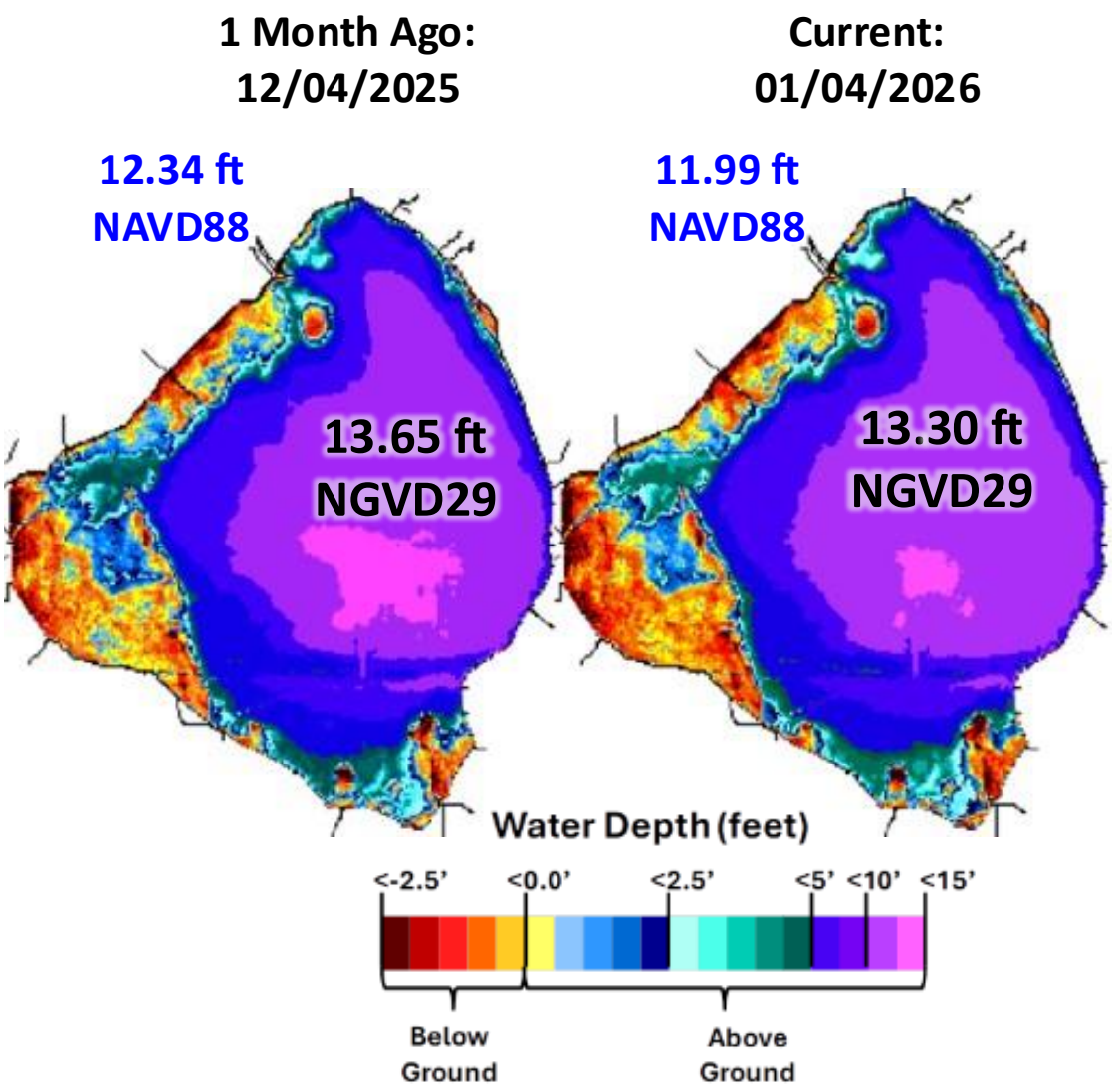

Figure LO-1. Lake Okeechobee water depth estimates based on South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT).

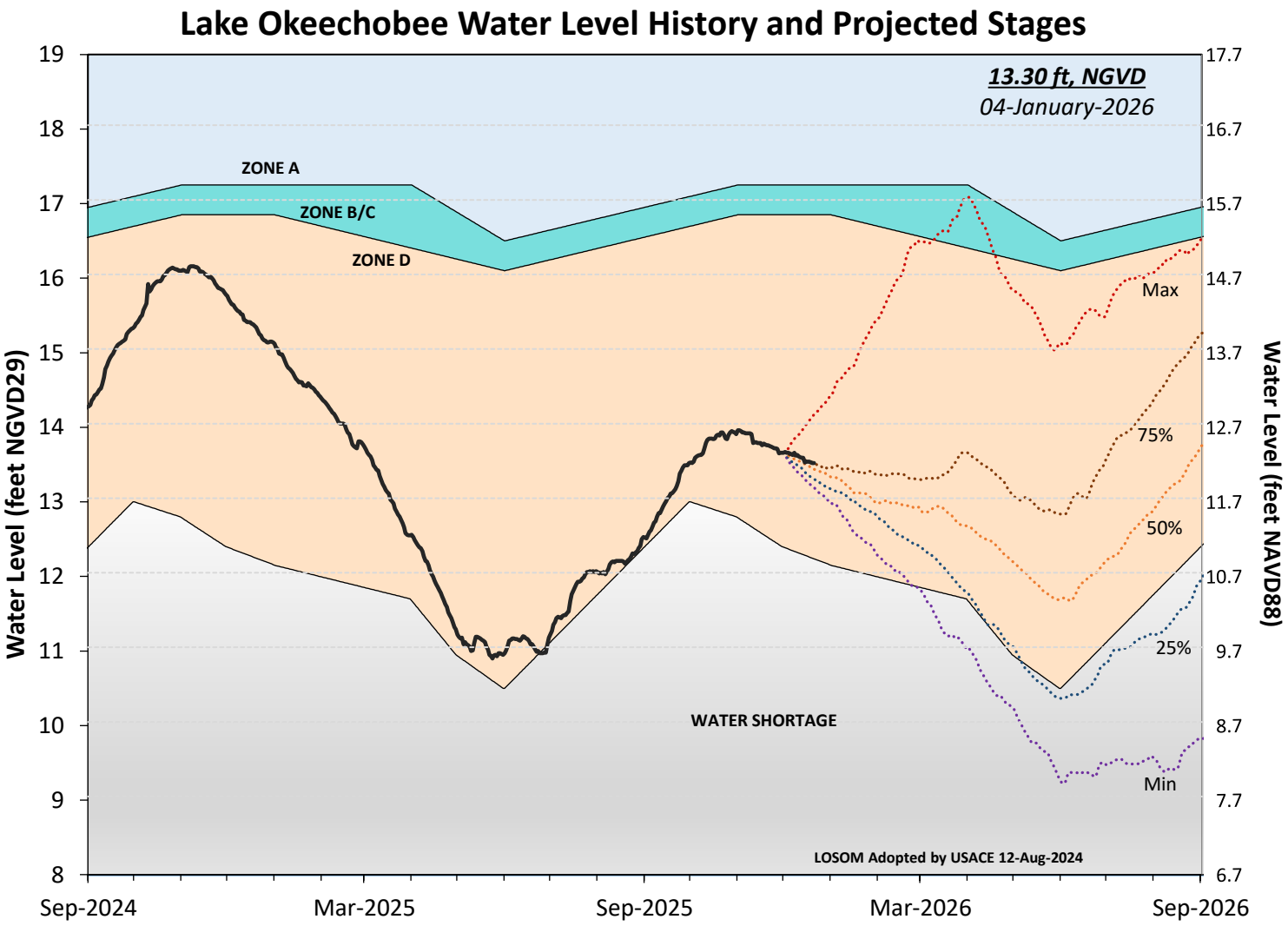

Figure LO-2. Recent Lake Okeechobee stages with projected stages based on a dynamic position analysis. Note: stages are in NGVD29, approximate NAVD88 values are shown for reference.

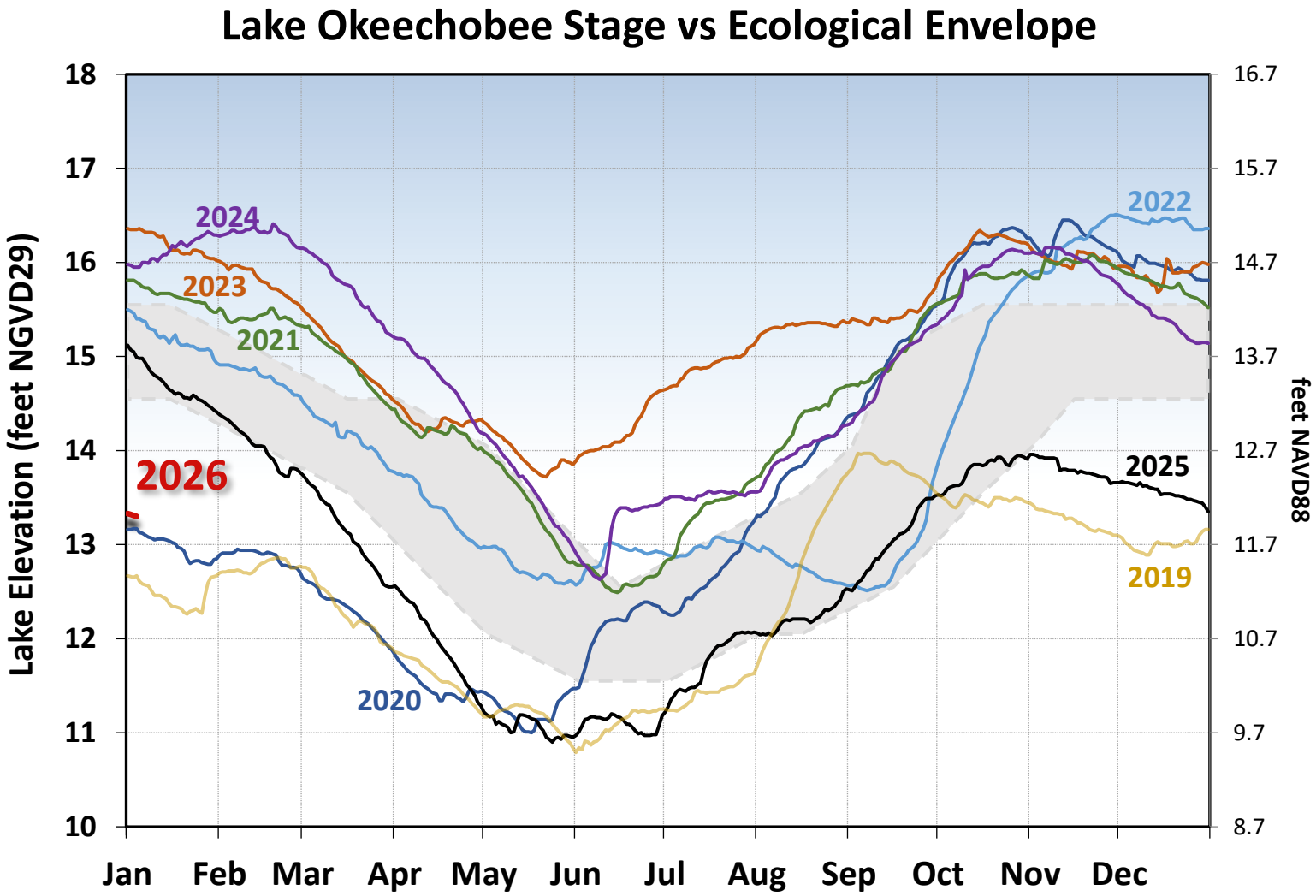

Figure LO-3. The current and seven prior year's annual stage hydrographs for Lake Okeechobee in comparison to the ecological envelope (light grey).

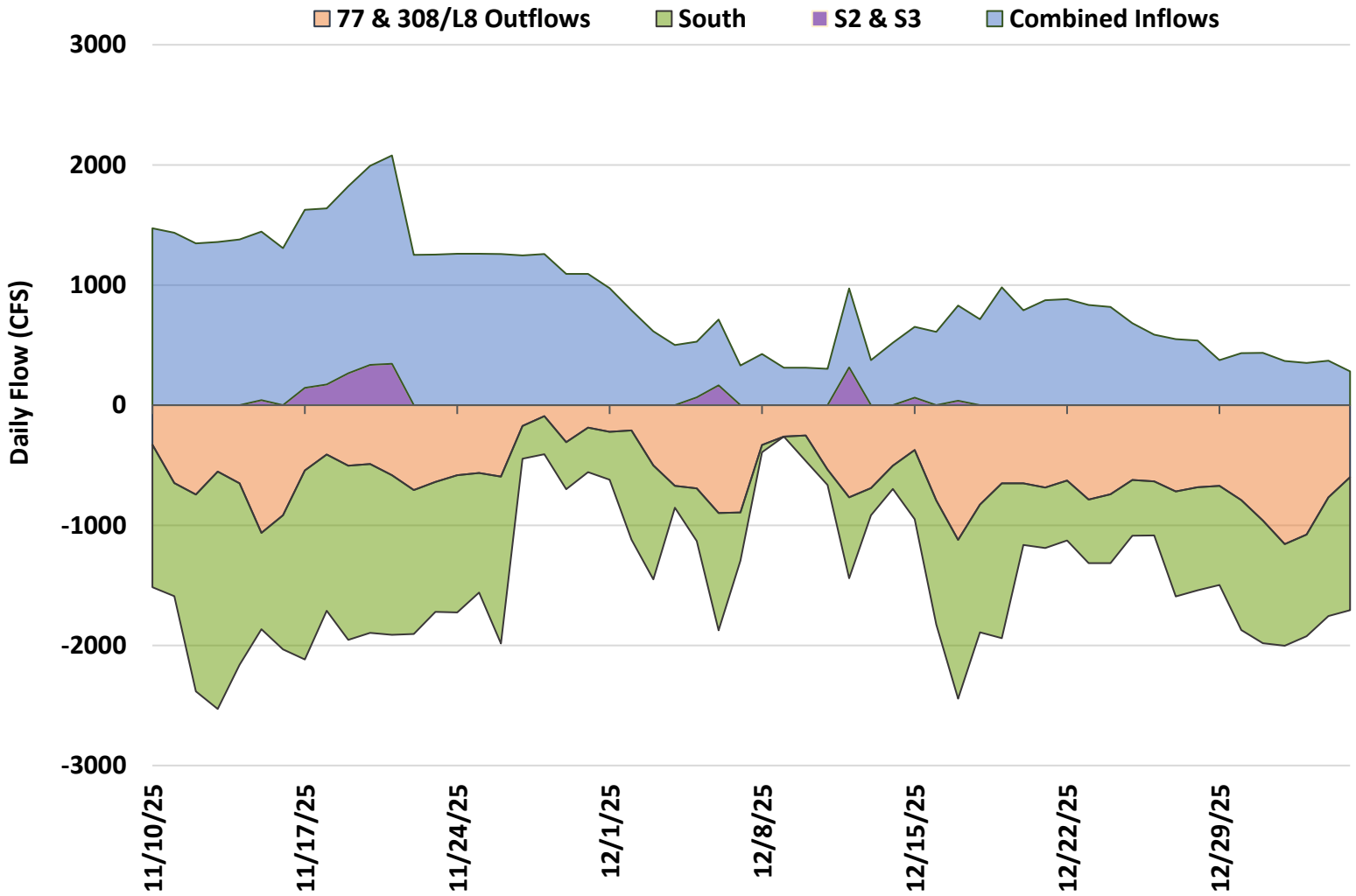

Figure LO-4. Major inflows (orange) to and outflows east and west (blue) from Lake Okeechobee. Outflows south are shown in green. Flows into Lake Okeechobee from the L-8 canal through S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) or from the C-44 canal through the S-308 are included as inflows. Conversely, flows from 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.

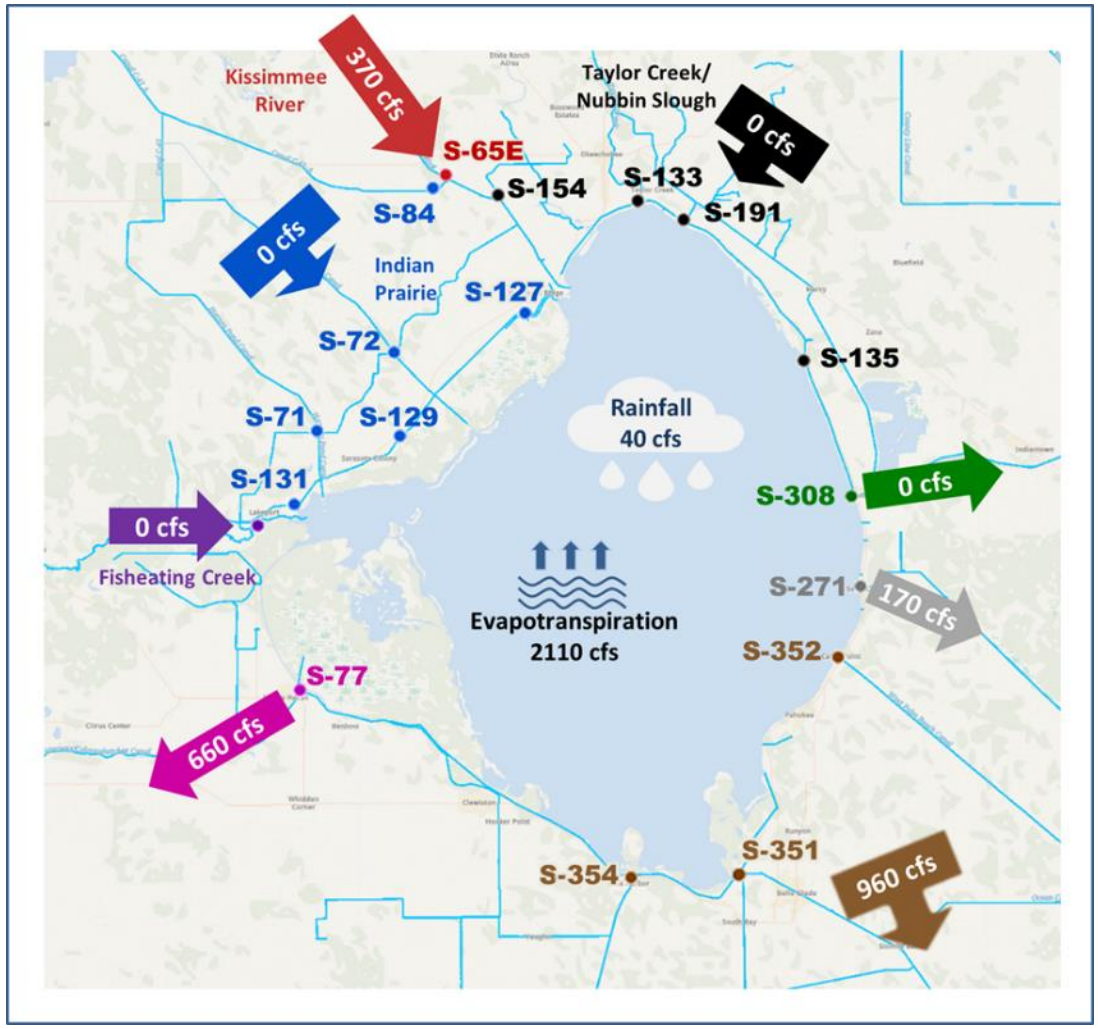

Figure LO-5. Inflows into Lake Okeechobee from Indian Prairie basins, Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough, Kissimmee River and Fisheating Creek (currently no flow data available for FECR), and outflows to the west via S-77, to the east via S-308, to the south via S-351, S-352, S-354, and to southeast via S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) for the week of Dec 29 -Jan 4, 2025.

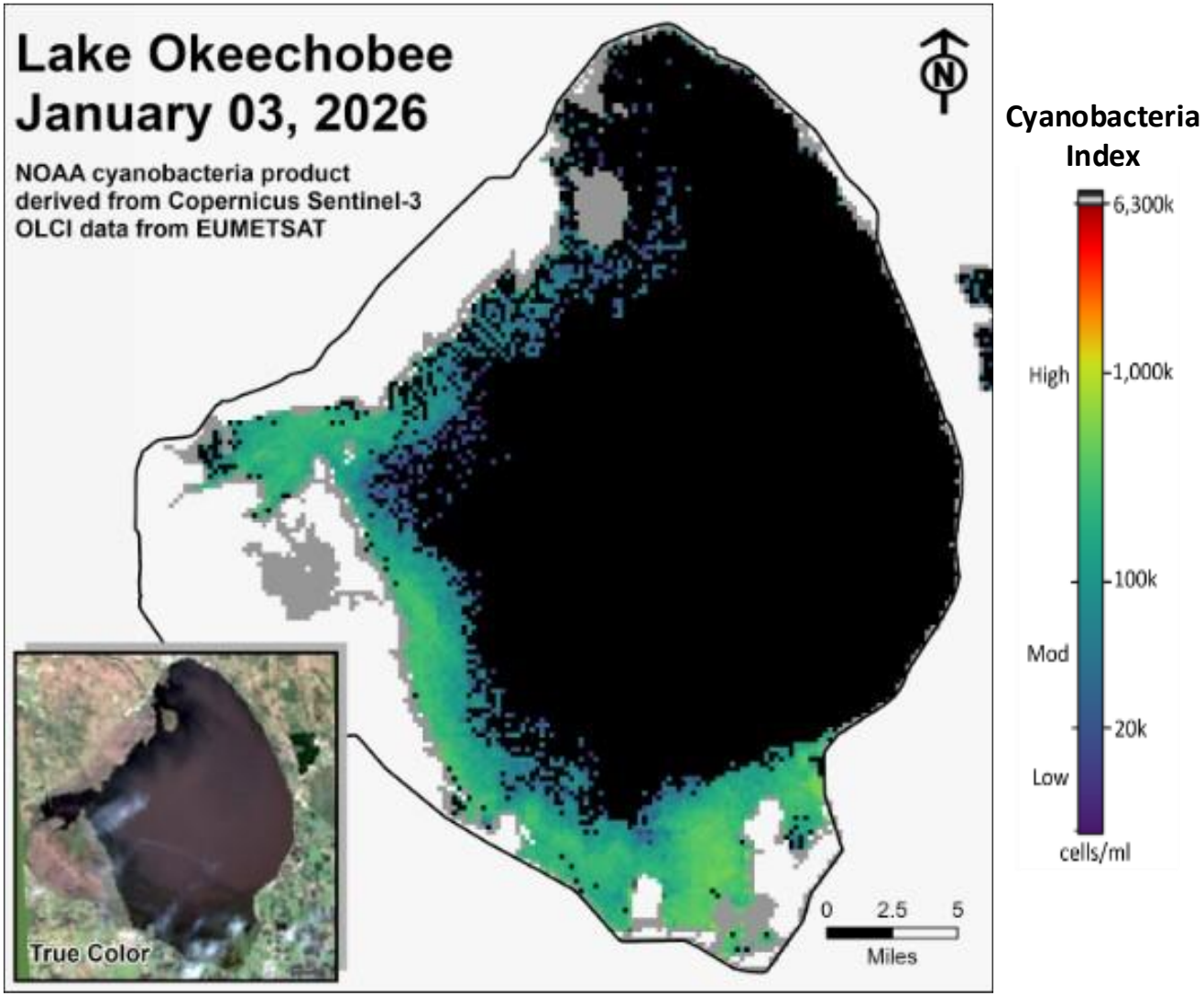

Figure LO-6. Cyanobacteria bloom index level on Lake Okeechobee, based on NOAA's harmful algal bloom monitoring system. Gray color indicates cloud cover. *Provisional NOAA image, subject to change*.

Estuaries

St. Lucie Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was 121 cfs (**Figures ES-1** and **ES-2**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 163 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-2**.

Over the past week, salinities increased at all 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 25.6. Salinity conditions in the middle estuary were estimated to be in the upper stressful range (>25) for adult eastern oysters (**Figure ES-4**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rate reported by the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) for December was 0.3 spat/shell at Rio, which is a slight increase from the previous month (**Figure ES-5**).

Caloosahatchee River Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary was 500 cfs (**Figures ES-6** and **ES-7**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 501 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from the contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-7**.

Over the past week, surface salinities decreased at S-79 and Sanibel 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 at S-79 and Val I-75 and in the stressed range at Ft. Myers. The seven-day mean salinity values were within the optimal range for adult eastern oysters at Cape Coral and in the stressed range at Shell Point and Sanibel (**Figure ES-10**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rates reported by the FWRI in December were 0.3 spat/shell at Iona Cove and 0.4 spat/shell at Bird Island, which is a decrease from the previous month (**Figures ES-11 and ES-12**).

Surface salinity at Val I-75 was forecast for the next two weeks using an autoregression model (Qiu and Wan, 2013[1]) coupled with a linear reservoir model for the tidal basin. Model scenarios included pulse releases at S-79 ranging from 450 to 2,000 cfs, with estimated tidal basin inflows of 70 cfs. Model results from all scenarios predict daily salinity to be 6.9 or lower and the 30-day moving average surface salinity to be 8.0 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] Qui, 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 FWRI reported on December 31, 2025, that *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide dinoflagellate, was not observed in any samples collected within the District region over the past week.

Water Management Recommendations

Lake stage is in Zone D. Current climatological and hydrological conditions are normal. The LOSOM release guidance suggests up to 2,000 cfs release at S-79 to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary and no releases at S-80 to the St. Lucie Estuary.

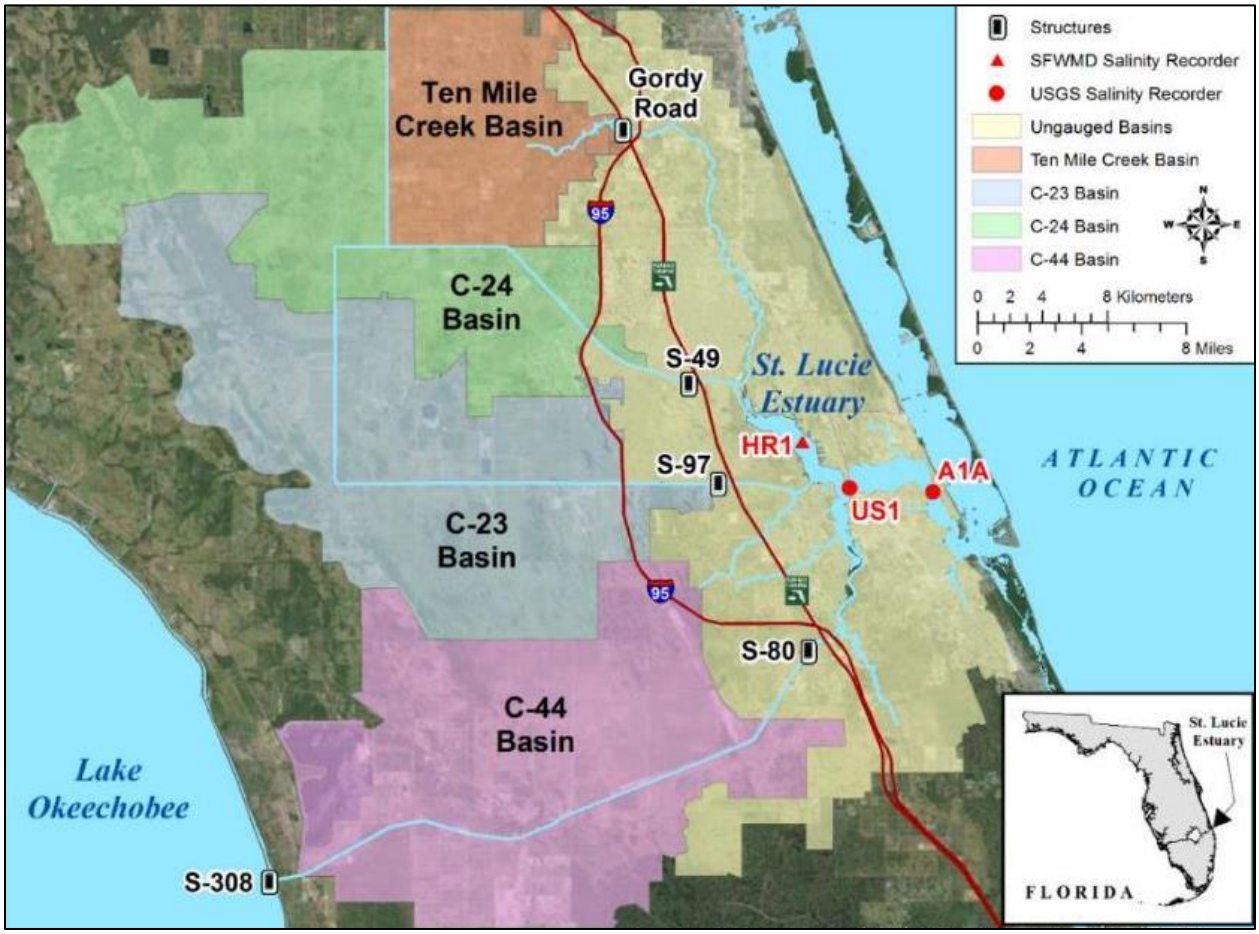

Figure ES-1. Basins, water control structures and salinity monitoring sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

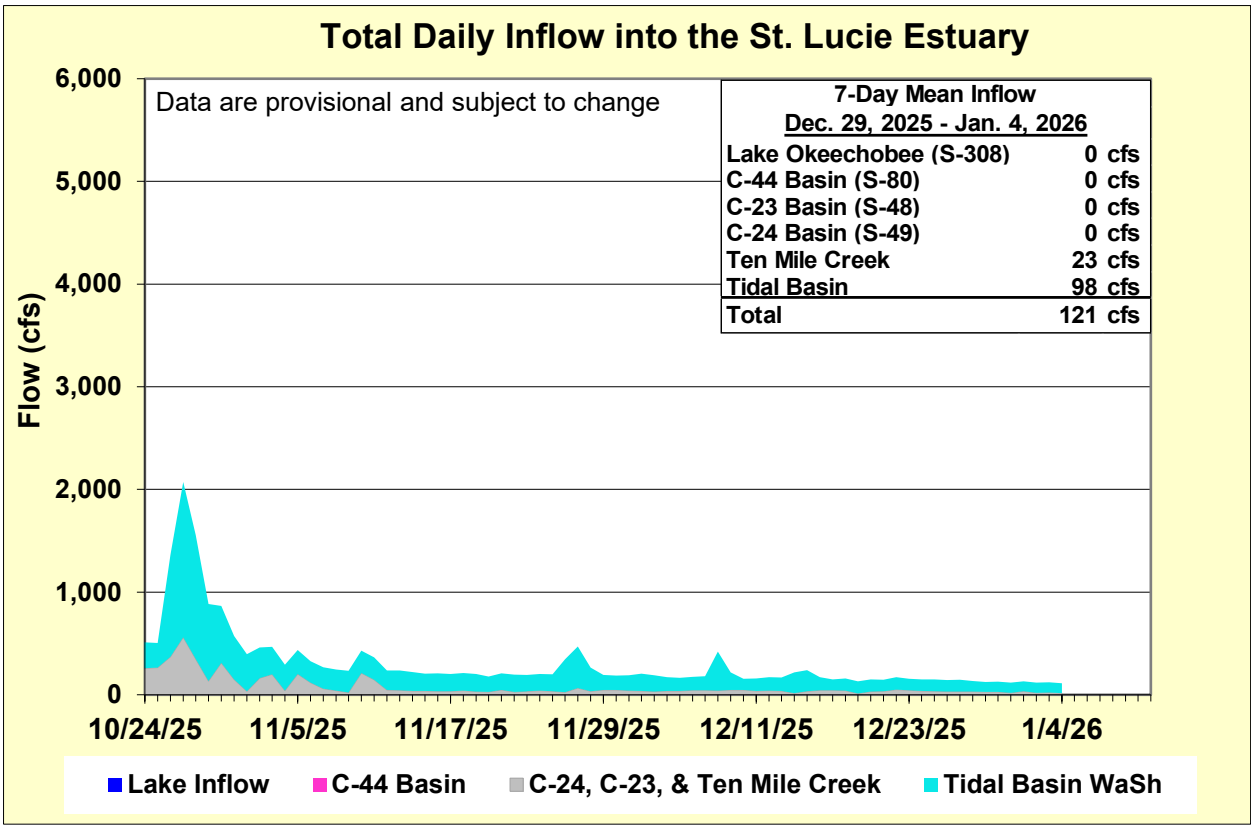

Figure ES-2. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee and runoff from the C-44, C-23, C-24, Ten Mile Creek, and Tidal Basins into the St. Lucie Estuary.

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)	**21.8** (19.7)	**24.7** (22.0)	10.0 – 25.0
US1 Bridge	**25.6** (23.6)	**25.7** (24.4)	10.0 – 25.0
A1A Bridge	**30.4** (30.0)	**31.3** (31.0)	10.0 – 25.0

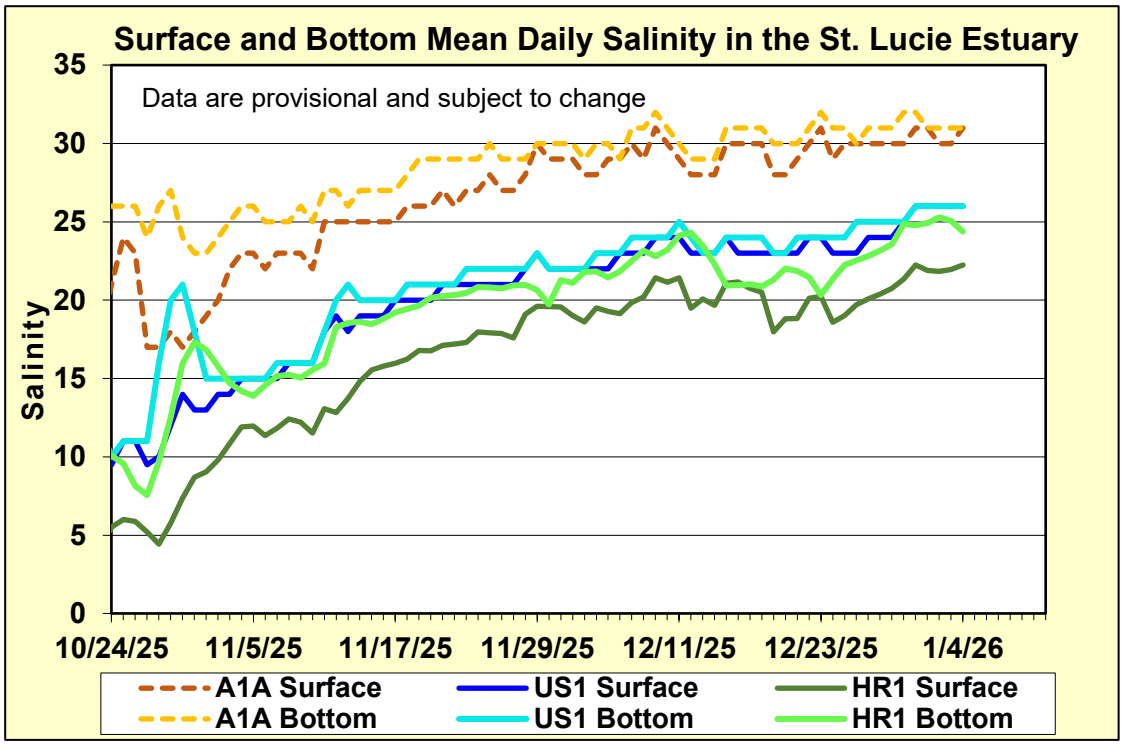

Figure ES-3. Mean daily salinity at the A1A, US1, and HR1 sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

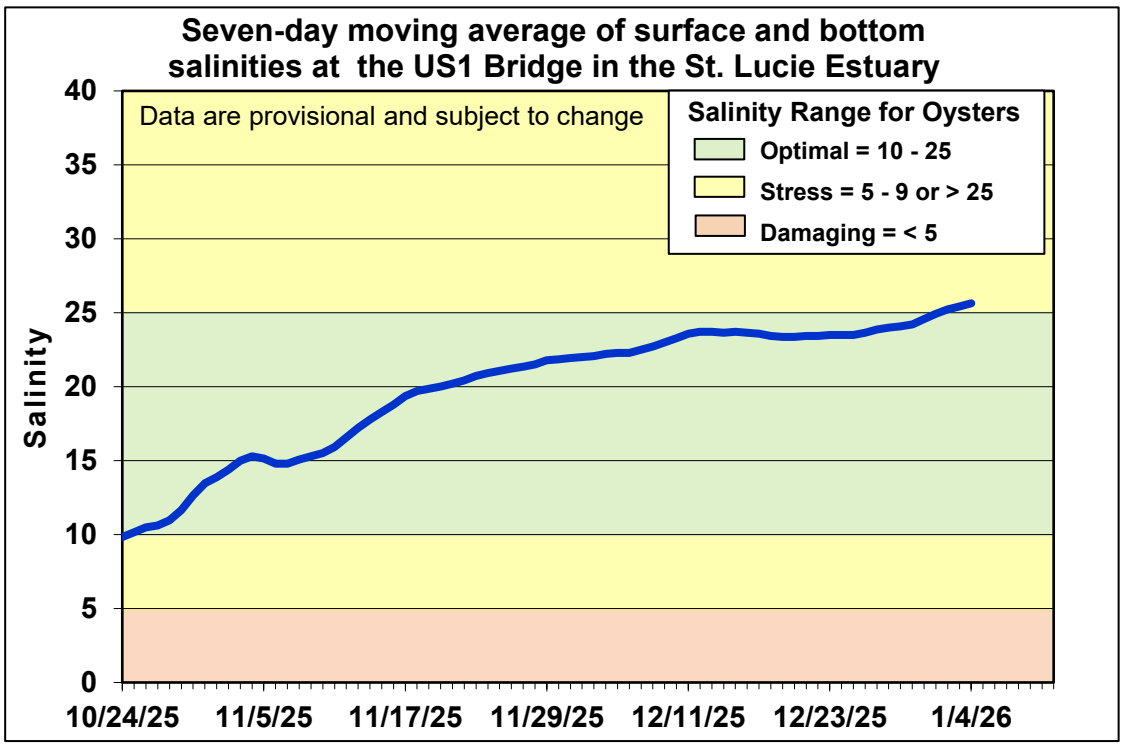

Figure ES-4. Seven-day moving average of the surface and bottom salinities at the US1 Bridge in the St. Lucie Estuary.

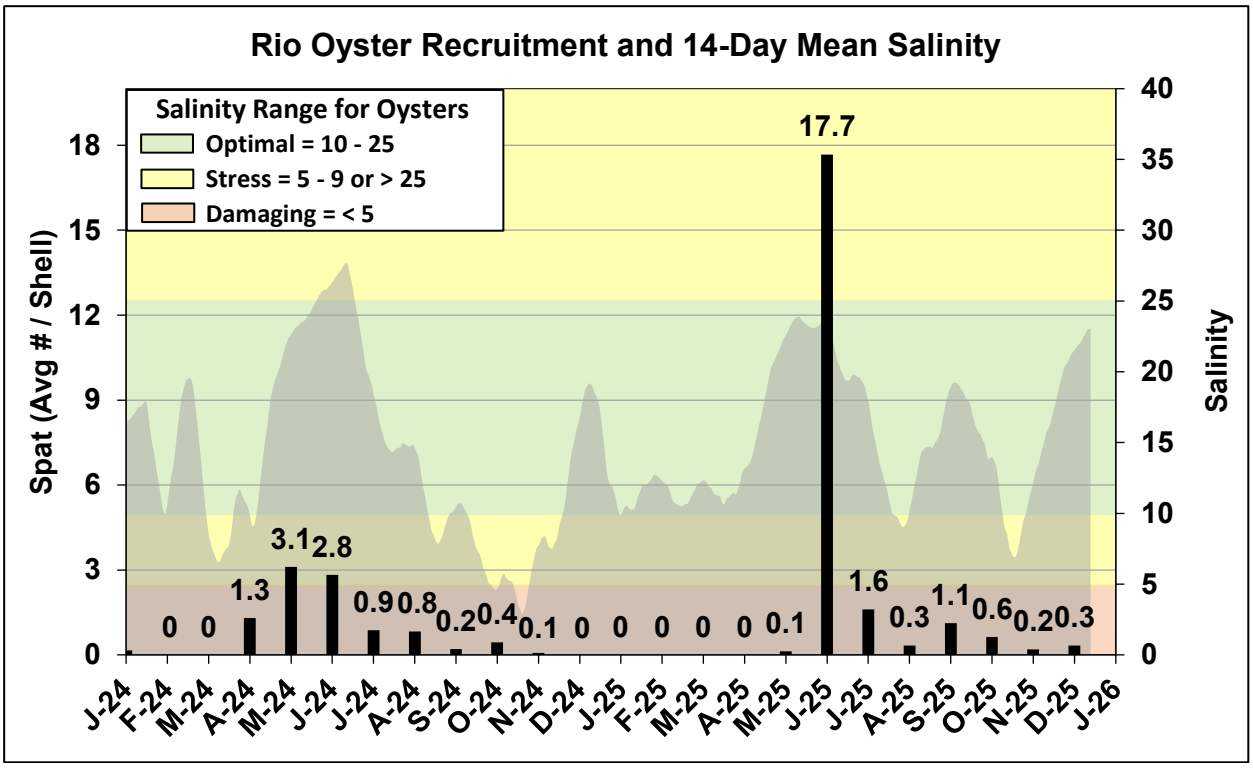

Figure ES-5. Mean oyster recruitment at the Rio oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at US1 Bridge.

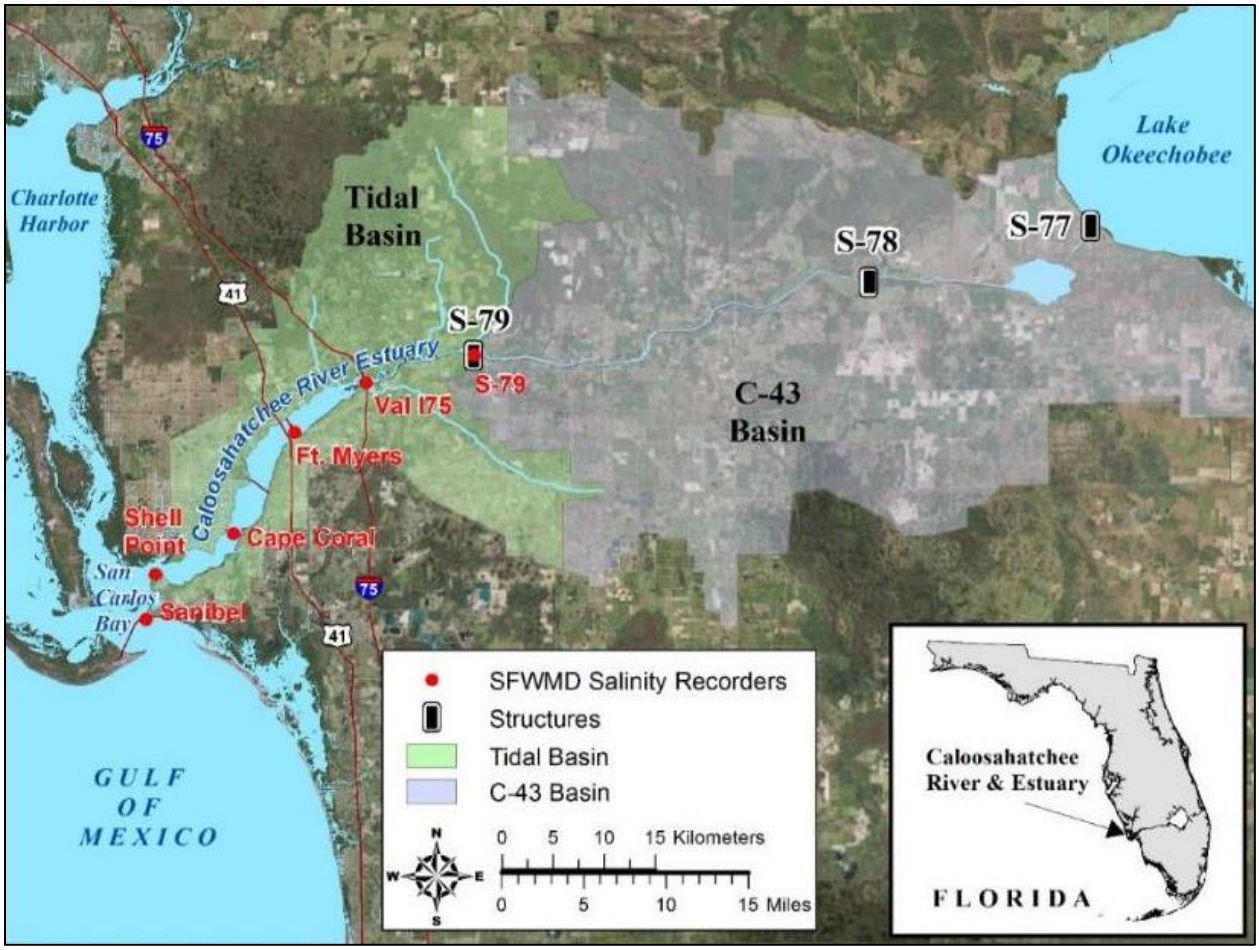

Figure ES-6. Basins, water control structures, and salinity monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

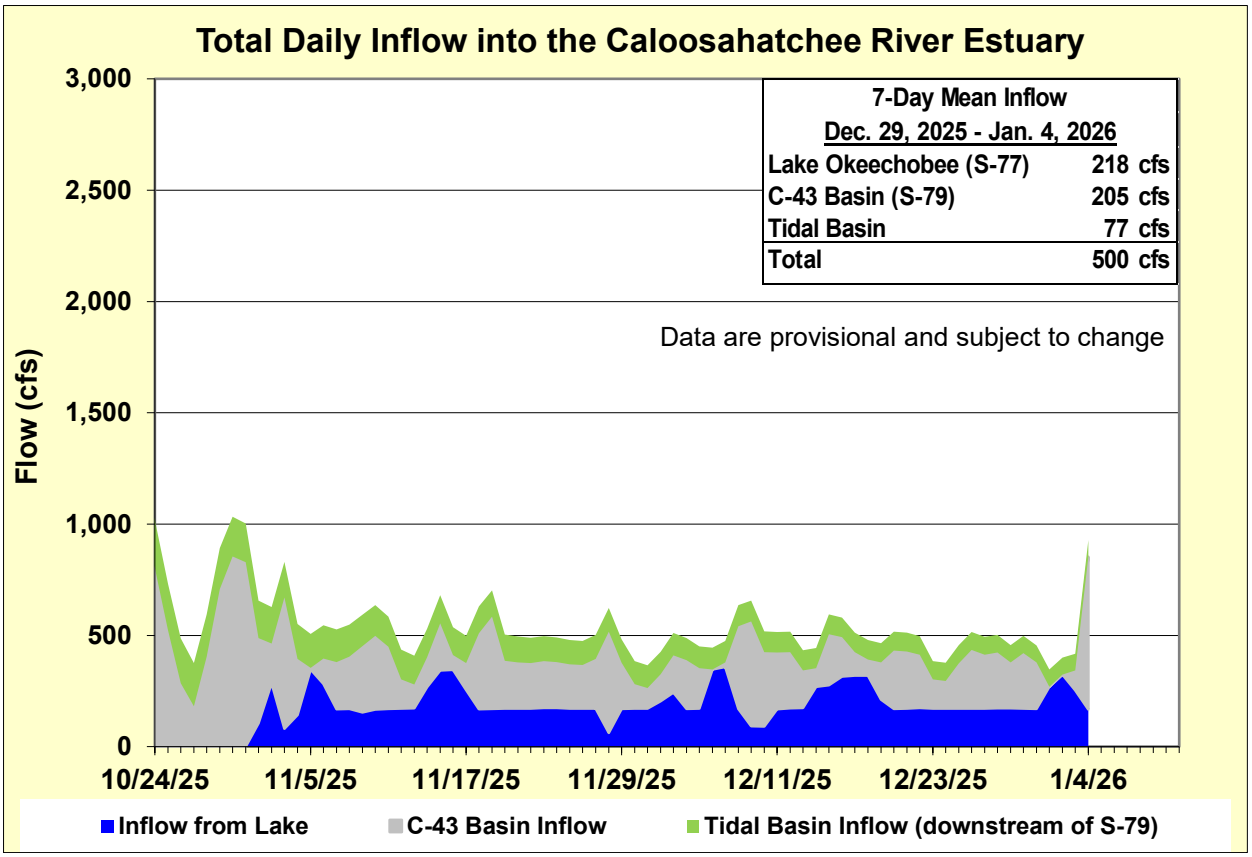

Figure ES-7. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee, and runoff from the C-43 and Tidal basins into the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

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)	**6.9** (7.7)	**7.3** (8.1)	0.0 – 10.0
Val I-75	**8.4** (8.1)	**10.1** (10.5)	0.0 – 10.0
Fort Myers Yacht Basin	**16.2** (15.3)	**16.8** (17.3)	0.0 – 10.0
Cape Coral	**22.6** (21.4)	**23.4** (22.6)	10.0 – 25.0
Shell Point	**30.9** (30.6)	**30.9** (30.6)	10.0 – 25.0
Sanibel	**32.4** (32.7)	**32.2** (32.5)	10.0 – 25.0

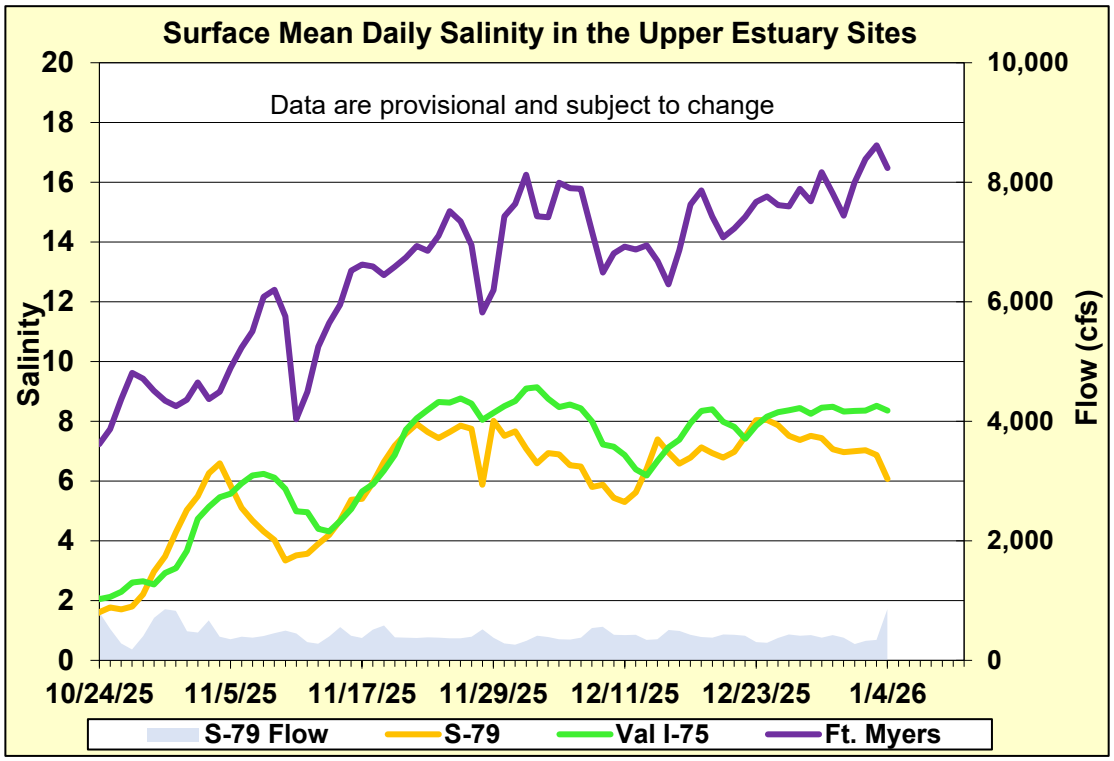

Figure ES-8. Mean daily salinity at upper Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

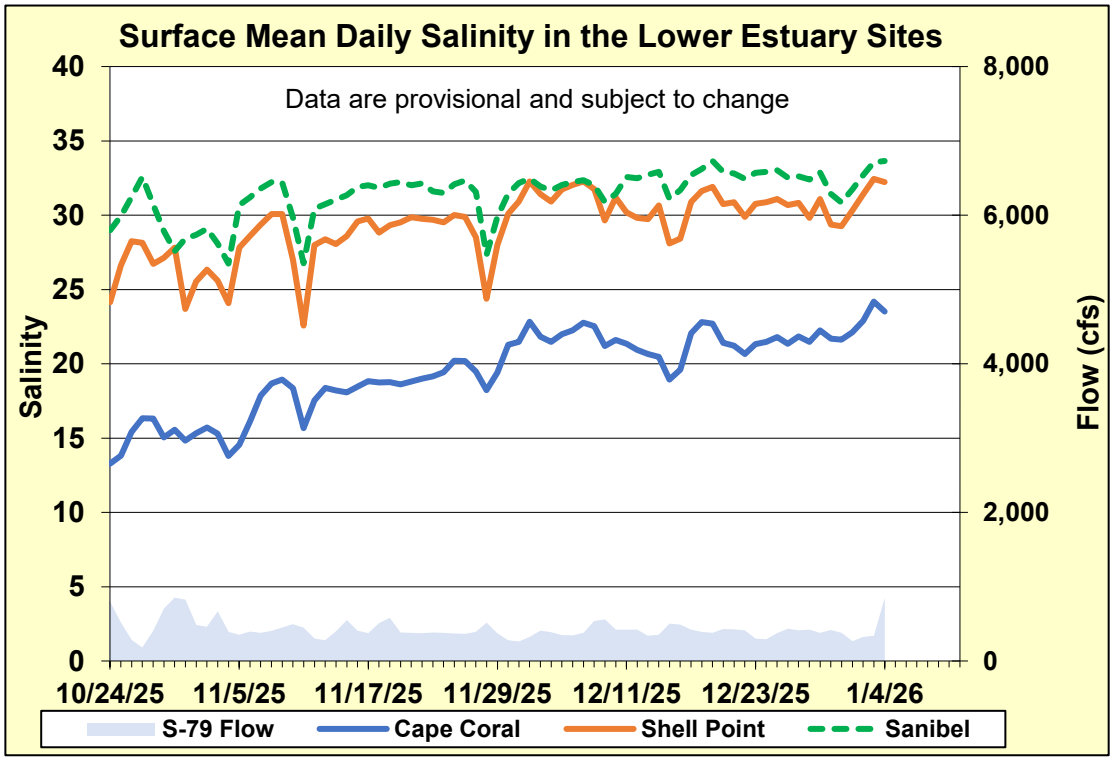

Figure ES-9. Mean daily surface salinity at lower Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

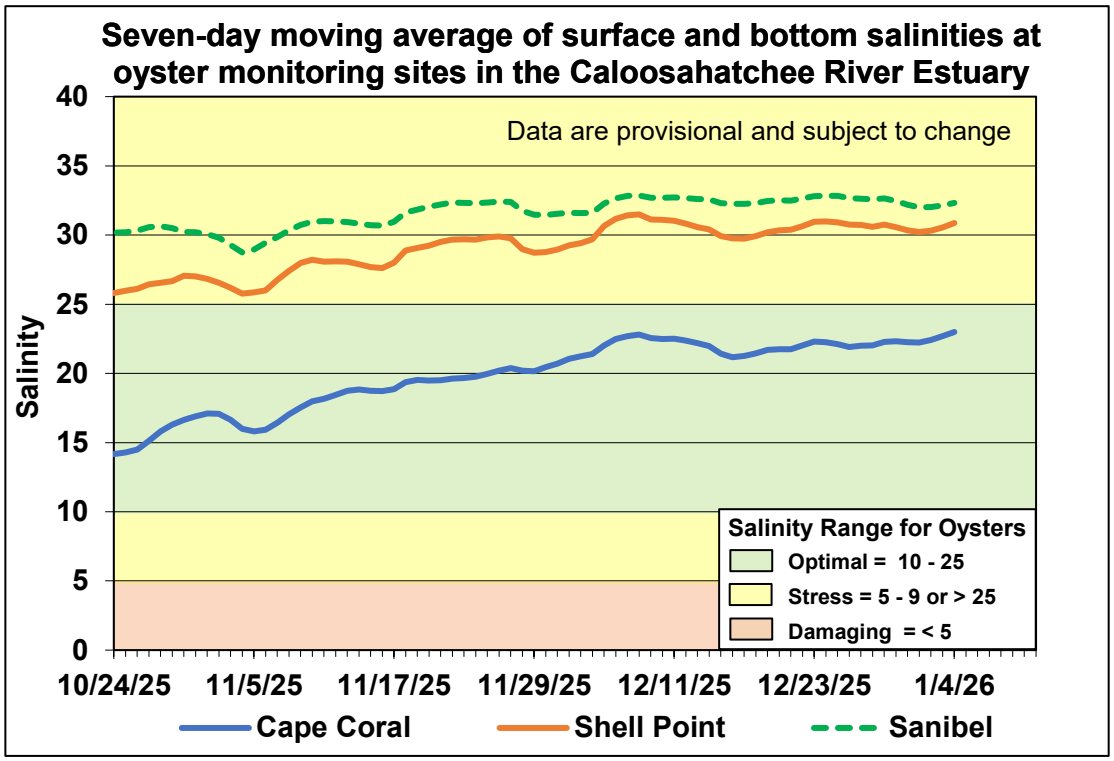

Figure ES-10. Seven-day moving average of surface and bottom salinities at Cape Coral, Shell Point, and Sanibel monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

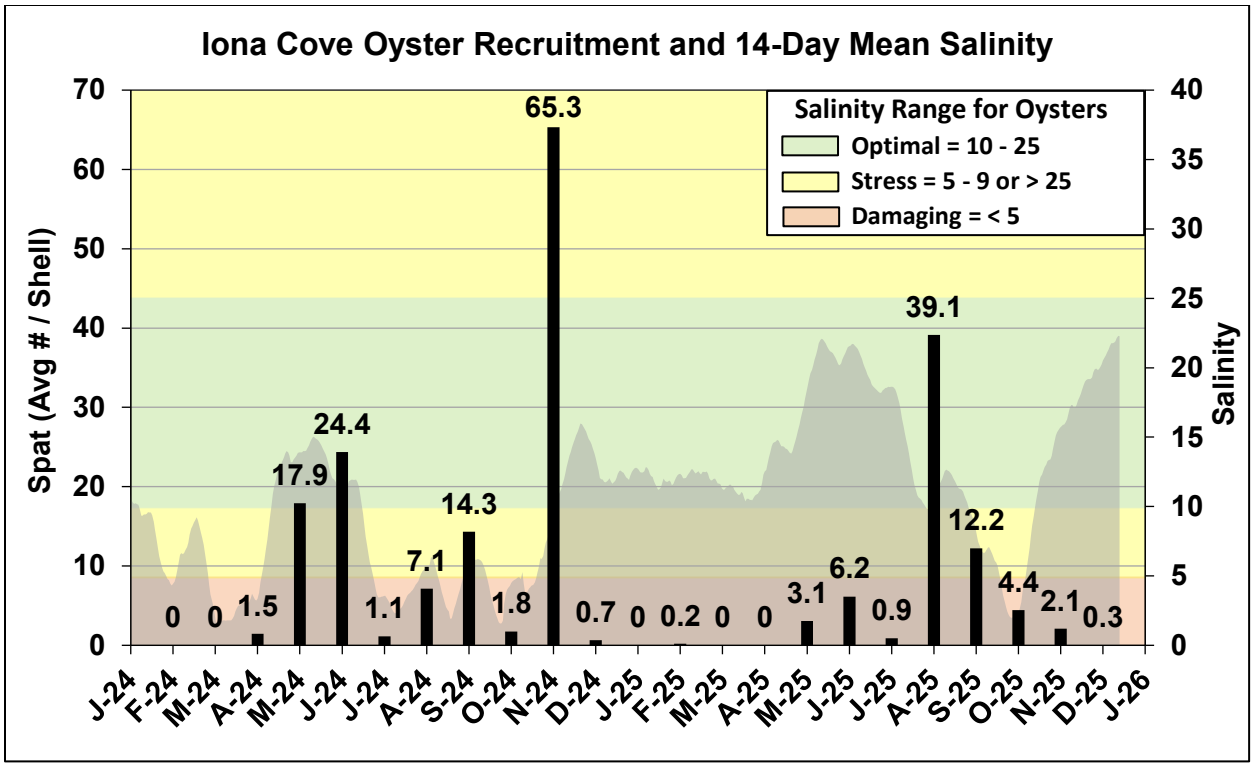

Figure ES-11. Mean oyster recruitment at the Iona Cove oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Cape Coral.

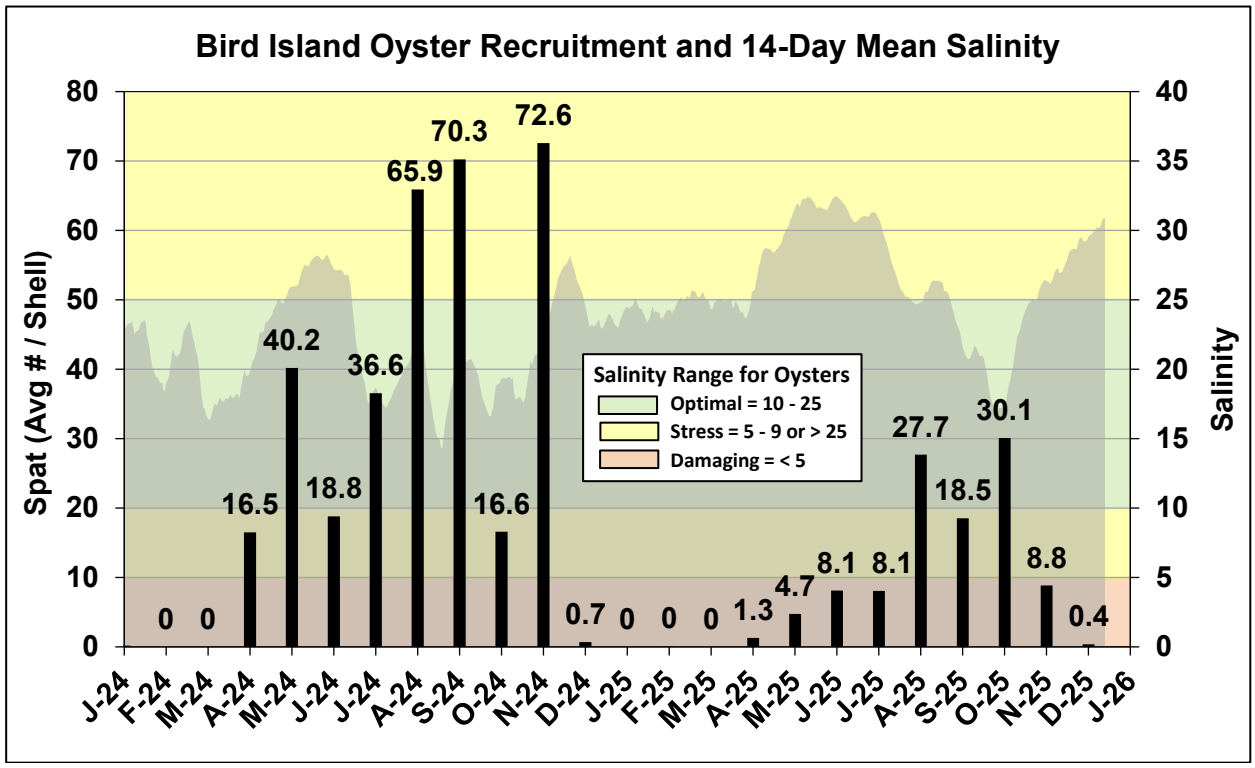

Figure ES-12. Mean oyster recruitment at the Bird Island oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Shell Point.

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	450	70	6.9	8.0
B	750	70	4.9	7.4
C	1,000	70	4.0	6.9
D	1,500	70	2.2	6.3
E	2,000	70	1.1	5.8

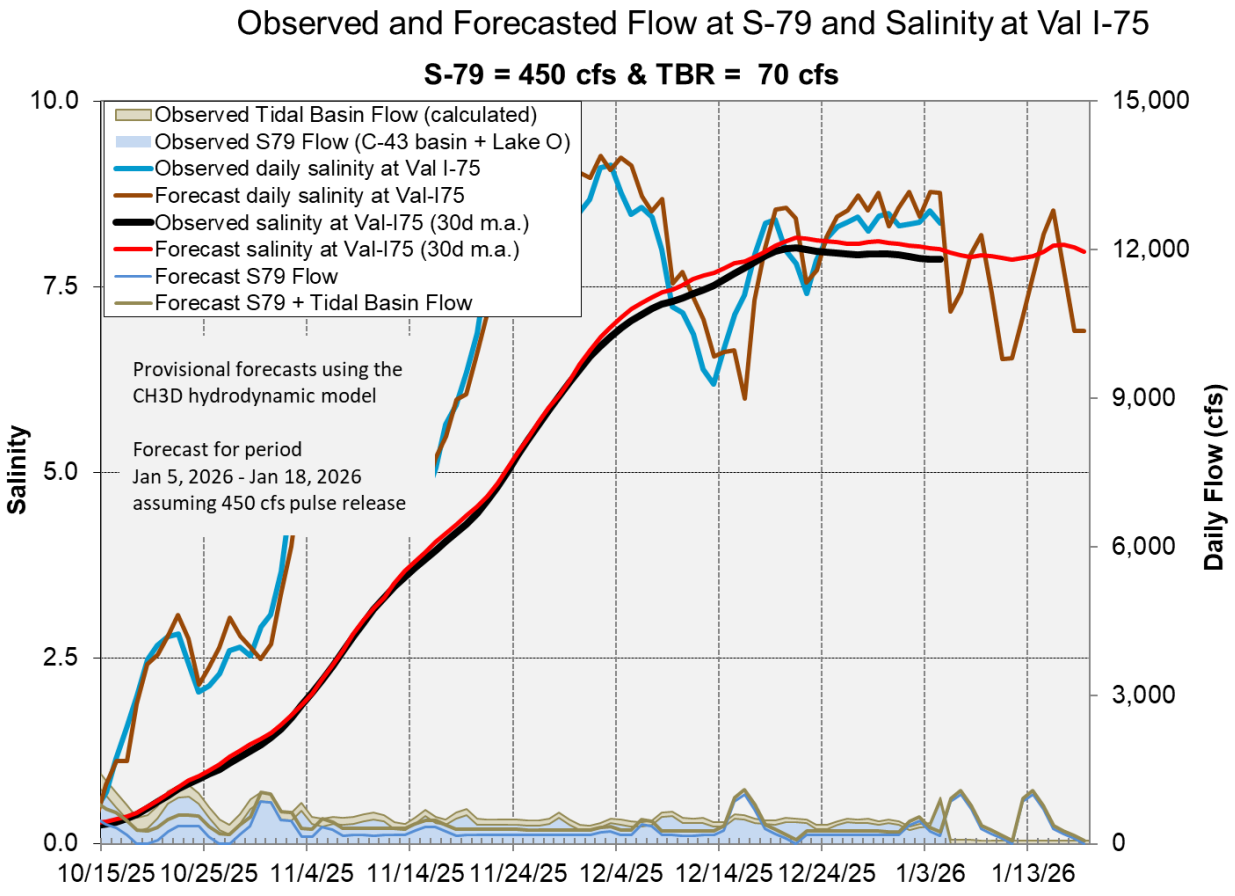

Figure ES-13. Surface salinity forecast at the Val I-75 site assuming a 450 cfs pulse release at S-79.

Stormwater Treatment Areas

STA-1E: STA-1E Central Flow-way is offline for construction activities. An operational restriction is in place in the Western Flow-way for post-construction vegetation grow-in. Online treatment cells are at or slightly above target stage. The 365-day PLR for the Western and Eastern Flow-way is below 1.0 g/m^2/year (**Figure S-2**).

STA-1W: STA-1W Eastern Flow-way is offline for vegetation management activities. Most treatment cells are at target stage. Vegetation in the Western and Eastern Flow-ways is highly stressed. The 365-day PLRs for the Northern and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m^2/year (**Figure S-2**).

STA-2: Operational restrictions are in place in Flow-ways 2, 3, and 4 for vegetation management activities. Treatment cells are at target stage or slightly below target stage. The 365-day PLRs for all Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m^2/year (**Figure S-3).**

STA-3/4: An operational restriction is in place in the Eastern Flow-way for vegetation management activities. Most treatment cells are slightly above target stage. Vegetation in the Central Flow-way is highly stressed. The 365-day PLR for the Eastern, Central, and Western Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m^2/year (**Figure S-3**).

STA-5/6: Treatment cells are at or above target stage. All treatment cells have highly stressed vegetation conditions. The 365-day PLRs for all Flow-ways are below 1.0 g/m^2/year. (**Figure S-4**).

For definitions on STA operational language see glossary following figures

Everglades Stormwater Treatment Areas - STAs

- Total WY2026 inflows to STAs (5/1/2025 to 1/4/2026): ~536,000 ac-ft
- Lake Okeechobee releases to FEBs/STAs
  - 12/29/2025 to 1/4/2026: 0 ac-ft
  - WY2026: ~ 32,700 ac-ft
- Extensive vegetation management activities underway to address stressed and highly stressed vegetation in EAV cells
- All treatment cells are at or near target water depth

Estimated Inflow and Outflow Volumes
Dec. 29th , 2025 - Jan 4th, 2026 *Includes preliminary data*

	Total Inflow (acre-feet)	Total Outflow (acre-feet)
STA-1E	300	60
STA-1W	600	50
STA-2	0	160
STA-3/4	400	0
STA-5/6	0	5

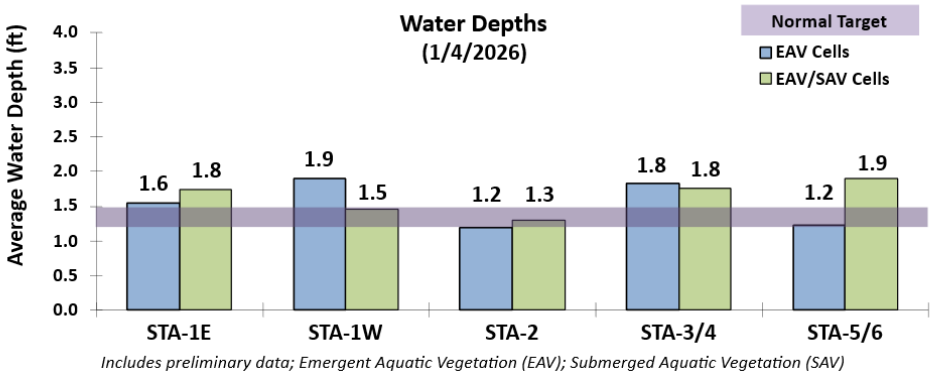

Figure S-1. STA depths and flow volumes

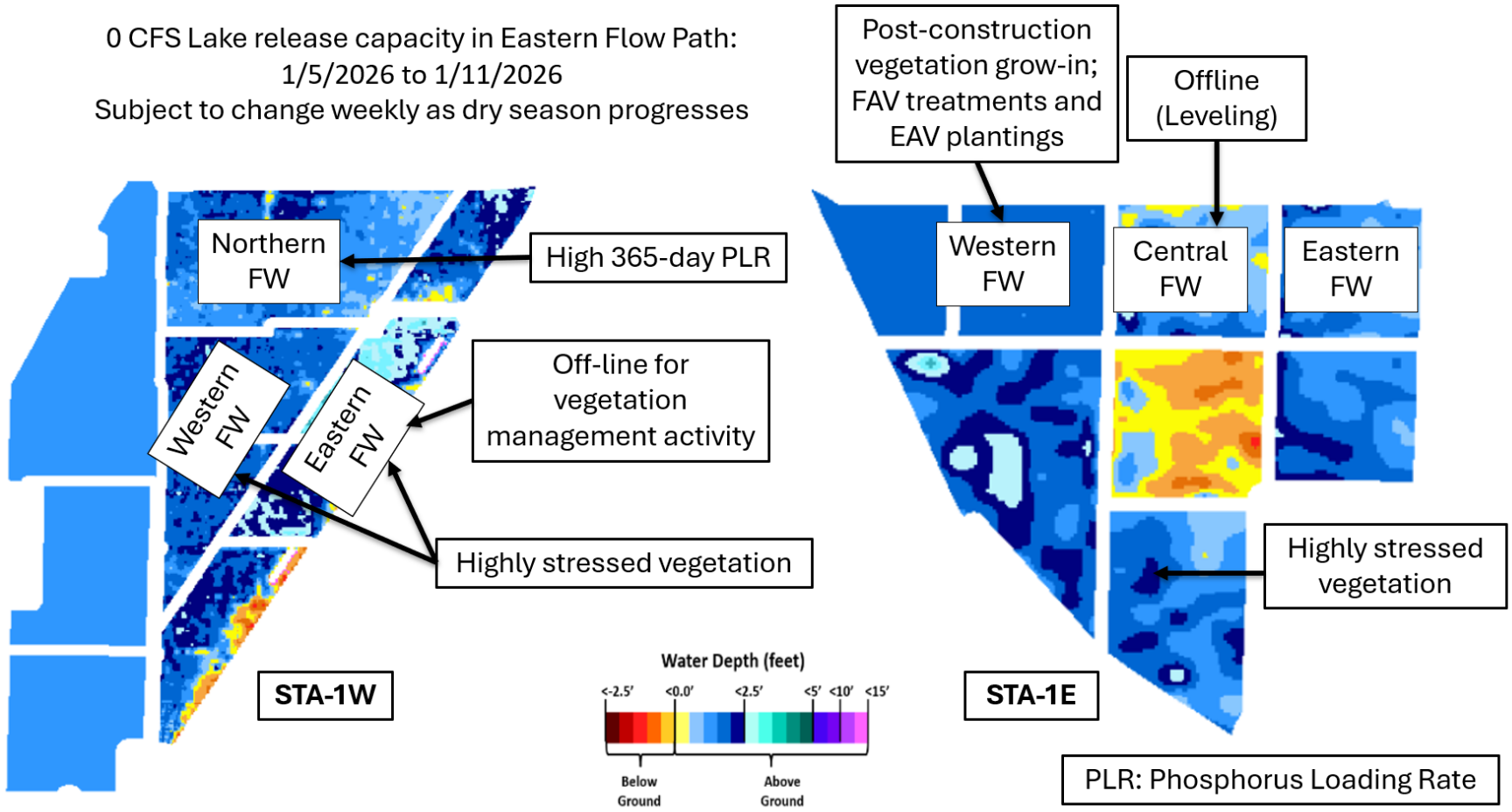

Figure S-2. Eastern Flow Path Weekly Status Report

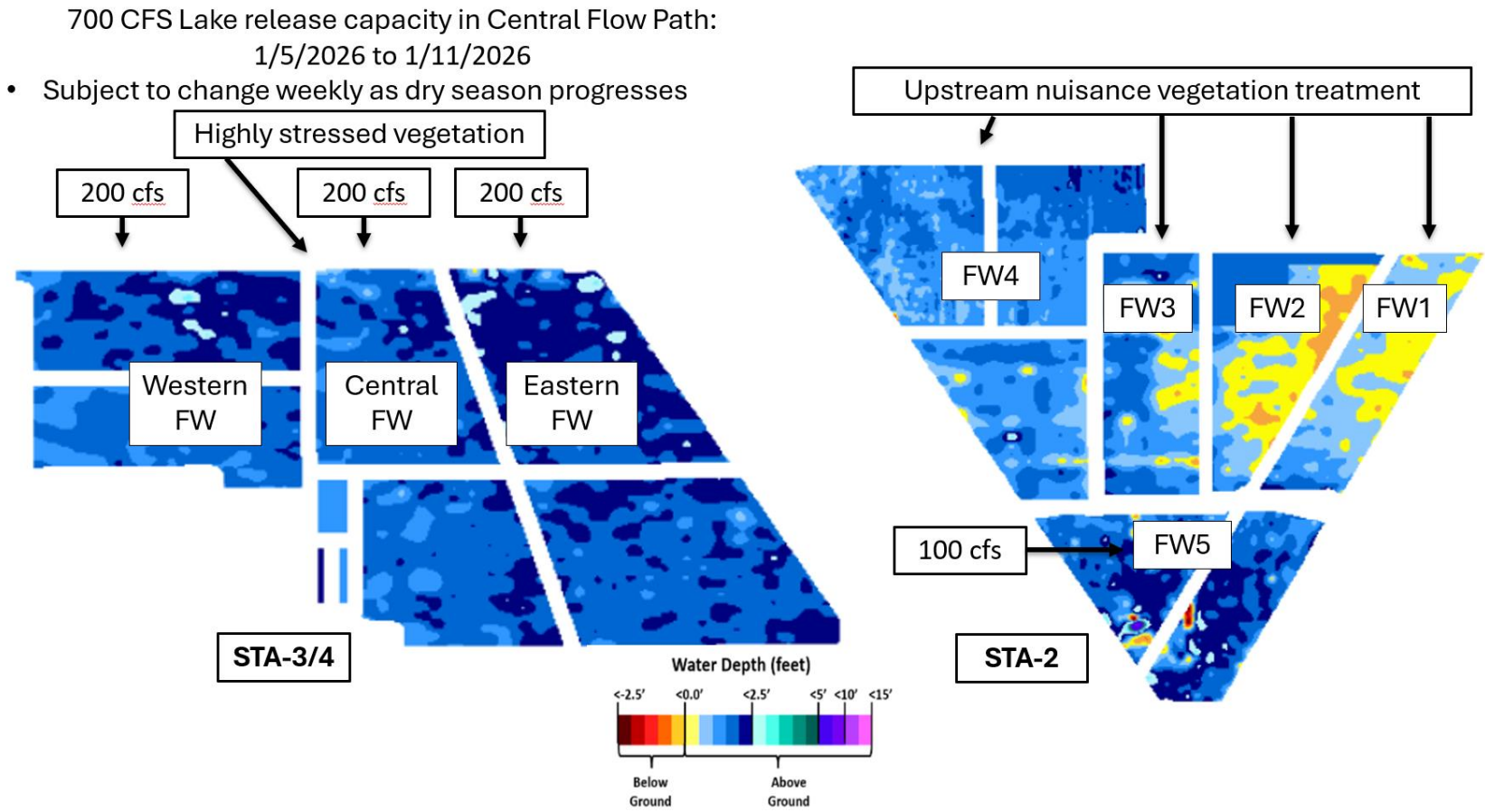

Figure S-3. Central Flow Path Weekly Status Report

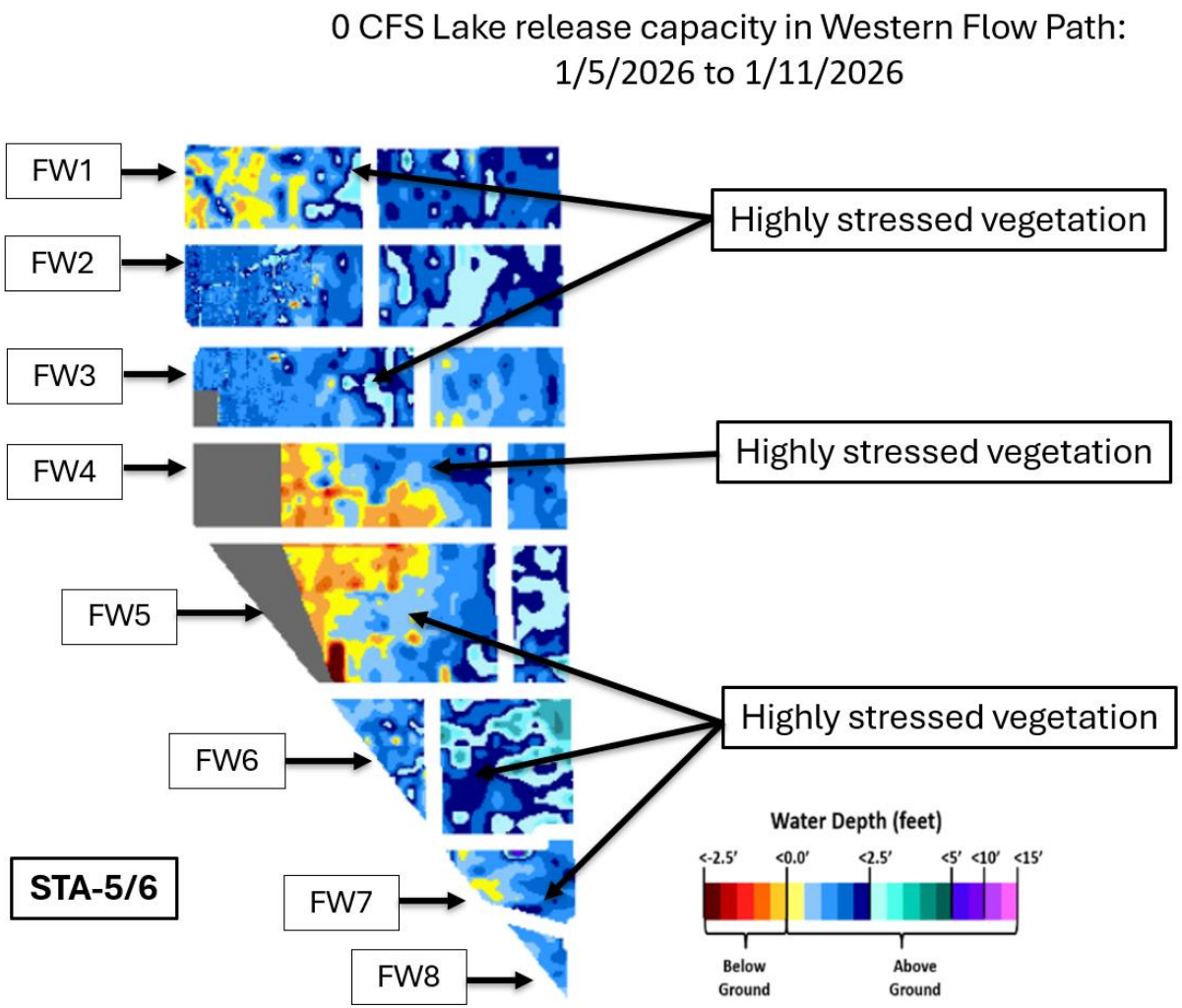

Figure S-4. Western Flow Path Weekly Status Report

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, µg/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

WCA-1: At the 1-8C gauge a steady recession occurred last week, and stages were 0.62 feet below the falling A1 Zone regulation line on Sunday, January 4th, 2026 (**Figure EV-1**).

WCA-2A: Last week, stage at the 2-17 gauge fell quickly but remained well above the falling Zone A regulation line and was 1.8 feet above the line on Sunday (**Figure EV-2**).

WCA-3A: The 3-gauge average remained in Zone B and is receding faster than the slope of the regulation line. On Sunday, stages were 1.38 feet below the Zone A regulation line. Stage at Gauge 62 (NW corner) declined steadily last week to 0.8 feet below the Upper Schedule regulation line by Sunday (**Figure EV-3 and EV-4**).

Water Depths

The SFWDAT model output for January 4, 2026, illustrates a slow recession in WCA-1, drying down to near soil surface in the north. The southern half of WCA-2A remains very deep for this time of year. Drier than normal conditions expand across Northern WCA-3A. Depths are decreasing in WCA-3A and -3B and remain very low for this time of year with potential impacts to system-wide ecology. Hydrologic connectivity within the major sloughs of Everglades National Park has been declining with some potential remaining in Shark River and Taylor Sloughs (**Figure EV-5**). A majority of WCA-3A and WCA-3B are below the 10th percentiles (as they have for most of the last six months), while in southern WCA-2A depths remain above the 90th percentile of the 20-year average (**Figure EV-6**). Depths throughout most of Everglades National Park (ENP) have fallen to the 20th percentiles, and WCA-1 depths have fallen into the 30th percentile.

Taylor Slough and Florida Bay

The previous report was presented on 12/9/25. Changes reported here reflect differences over the last week (12/29/25-1/04/26), unless otherwise noted.

All stages across Taylor Slough continued to decrease over the past week (12/29/25-1/04/26), with an average decrease of 0.25 feet for the week. Changes ranged from −0.84 feet at E112 in northern Taylor Slough to −0.05 feet at EPSW in the C-111 area (**Figure EV-7 and Figure EV-8**). Taylor Slough water levels are now below the recent average (WY1993-2016) for this time of year by 4.88 inches compared to before the Florida Bay Initiative (starting in 2017). This difference has become especially notable in the northern slough with the lack of precipitation and following the closure of S332D on 12/23/25 and S200 on 12/25/25 in upper Taylor Slough (**Figure EV-8)**. The Craighead Pond (CP) and Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB) stages remain below the estimated historical (~1900) average by 0.75 and 2.02 feet, respectively.

Average Florida Bay salinity was 29.3, an increase of 1.4 from last week. Salinity changes ranged from −0.5 in Duck Key (DK) eastern region to +3.0 at Garfield Bight (GB) in the western nearshore region (**Figure EV-7**). Salinity is above the estimated historical

(~1900) average and at or above the WY2001-2016 Interquartile Range (IQR) 75th percentile in the eastern and central regions of the bay. Salinity is just under the 75th percentile in the western region (**Figure EV-9**). Average Florida Bay salinity is above its recent average (WY1993-2016) for this time of year by 4.5.

Salinity at the Taylor River (TR) station in the mangrove zone (tracked for the Florida Bay MFL) was 1.5, an increase of 0.5 from last week (**Figure EV-10**). The 365-day moving sum of flow from the five major creeks (McCormick Creek, Taylor River, Mud Creek, Trout Creek, West Highway Creek) was unable to be assessed due to missing data.

Average rainfall across Taylor Slough and Florida Bay was approximately 0.02 inches over the past week, based on the 18 gauges used for this report. Rainfall ranged from 0.00 inches at most stations to 0.33 inches at CP in southern Taylor Slough (**Figure EV-11**). Wind directions and speeds in Florida Bay ranged from 0.19 mph NW on January 2nd to 26.0 mph NW on December 30th (**Figure EV-11**).

Based on the available data from Trout and McCormick Creeks, average daily flow totaled –270 acre-feet, with net negative flows for the week. Total daily creek flow ranged from −1,069 acre-feet on January 4th to 1,211 acre-feet on December 31st (**Figure EV-13**). Average daily flow from Alligator creek was –6.4 acre-feet, with net negative flows for the week (**Figure EV-13**).

Implications/considerations for water management.

- Slow recessions (around 0.05 feet per week) are needed to protect the wetland ecology from damaging dry downs expected by the end of the dry season in most regions.
  - Populations of prey are unlikely to recover for another year or even longer if water levels do not return to more average conditions further extending the 4 consecutive poor wading bird nesting years into the 2026 nesting seasons.
  - With the potential for La Nina conditions this dry season, conserving water within the WCAs in the early dry season may prove ecologically beneficial, especially in regions prone to dry out (e.g. WCA-3A North).

- Depths are too deep (<2.5 feet) in south-central WCA-2A where shallower conditions are needed to recover ridge and slough habitat.

- Freshwater input through the S332 Detention Area, Frog Pond, and C-111 inflow structures into Taylor Slough and the C-111 basin would help moderate salinities and support recovery of estuarine conditions in Florida Bay.

- Conserving water in the WCAs while providing freshwater input to the sloughs of ENP will require careful consideration of a balance between the upstream and downstream ecological needs of the system. 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	<0.01	−0.07
WCA-2A	0.01	−0.14
WCA-2B	0.02	+0.02
WCA-3A	0.01	−0.09
WCA-3B	0.00	−0.05
ENP	0.02	−0.05

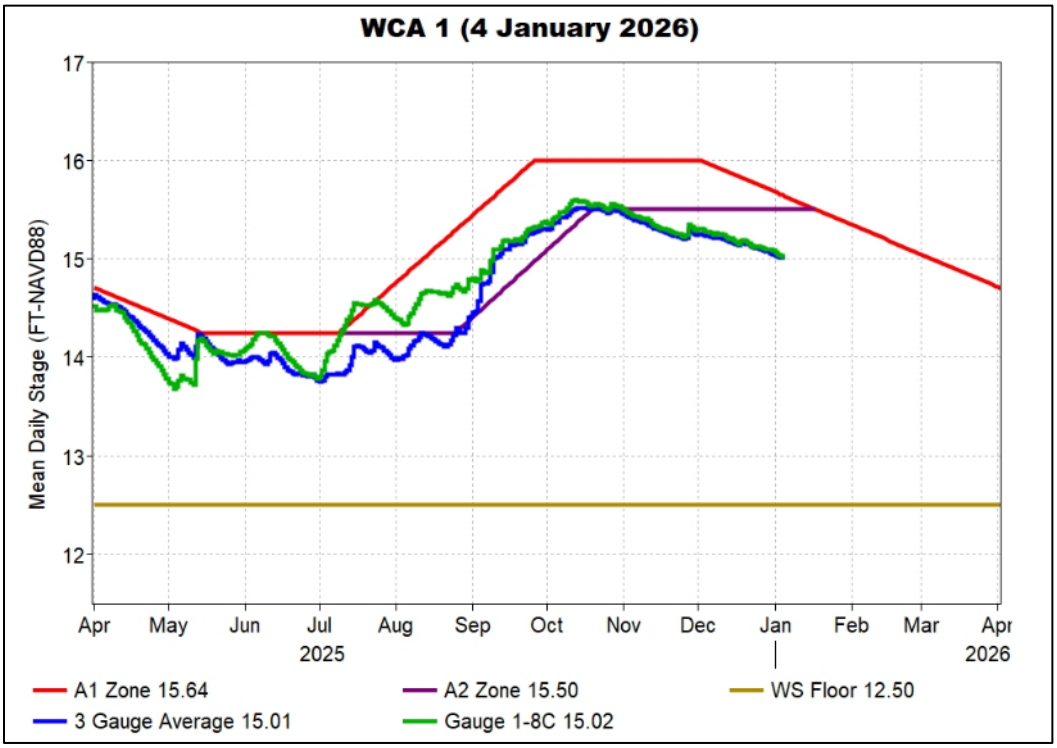

Figure EV-1. WCA-1 stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

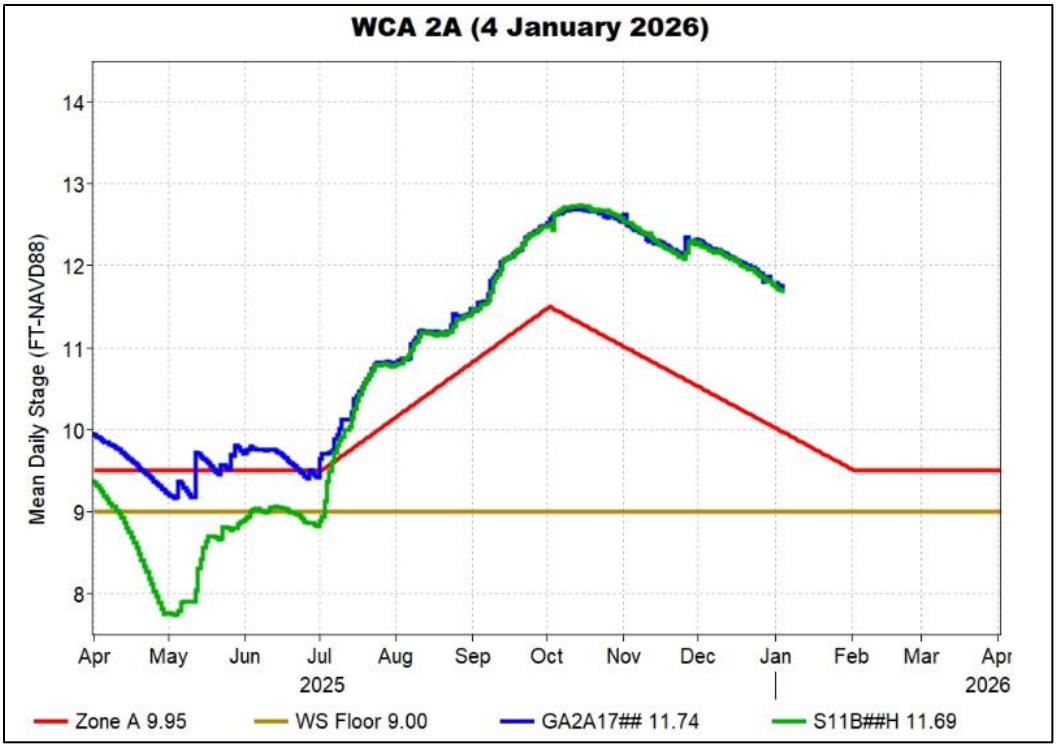

Figure EV-2. WCA-2A stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

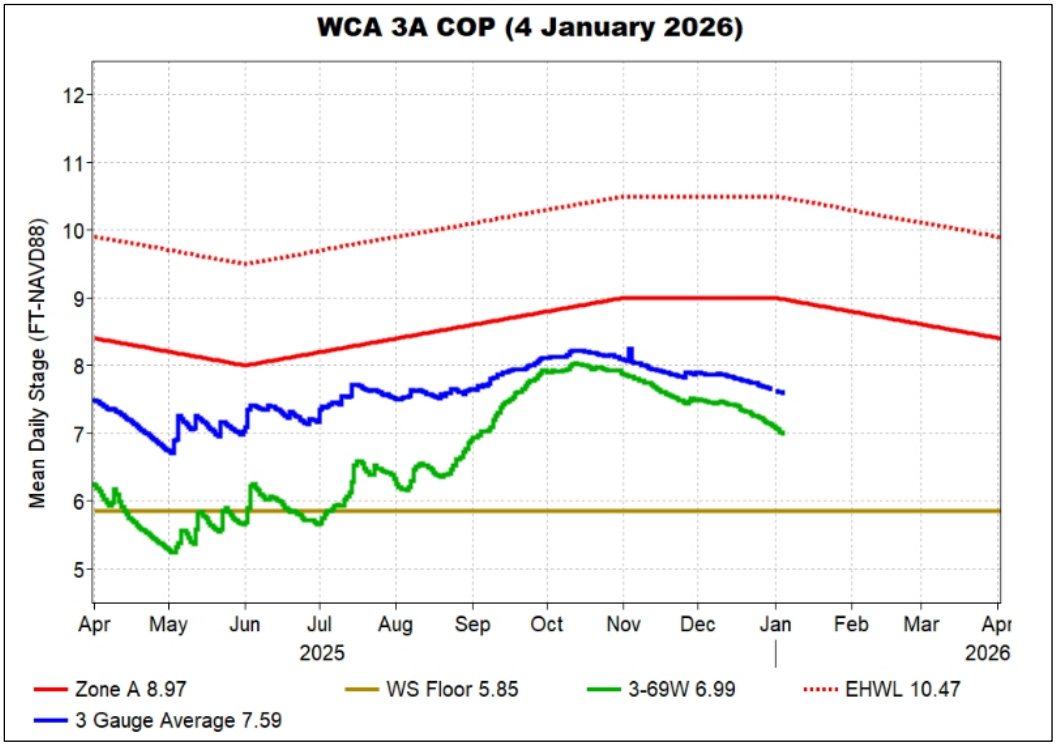

Figure EV-3. WCA-3A stage hydrographs (three-gauge average, 3-69W) and regulation schedule.

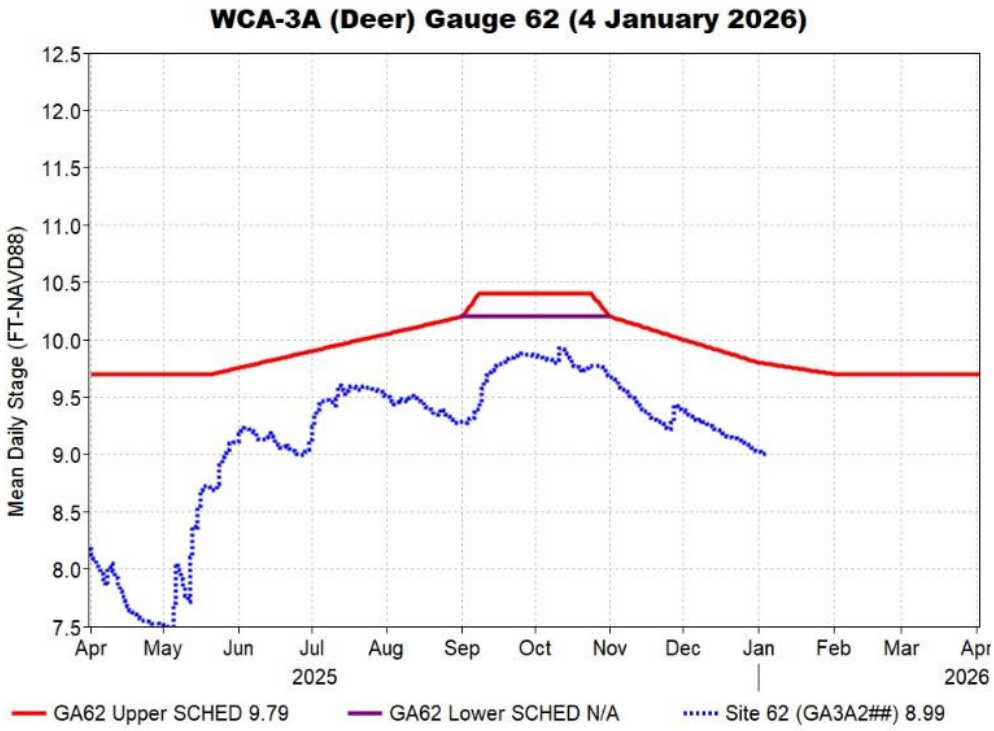

Figure EV-4. WCA-3A stage hydrograph (Deer gauge; Site 62) and regulation schedule.

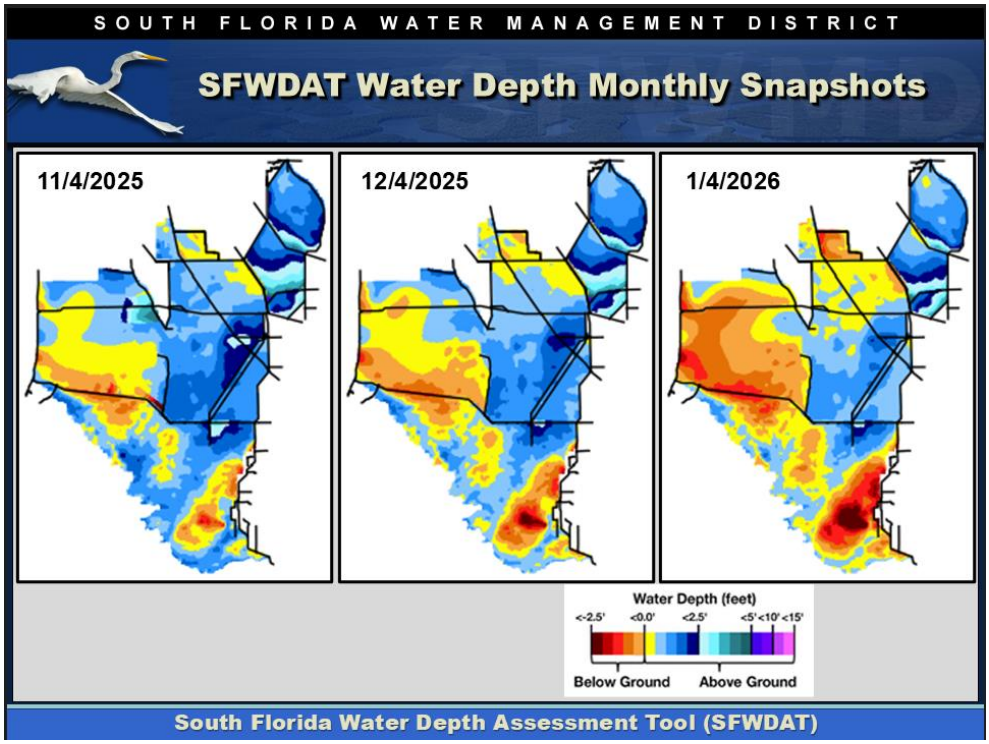

Figure EV-5. Everglades water depths from two months ago (left), one month ago (center) and present (right), based on SFWDAT.

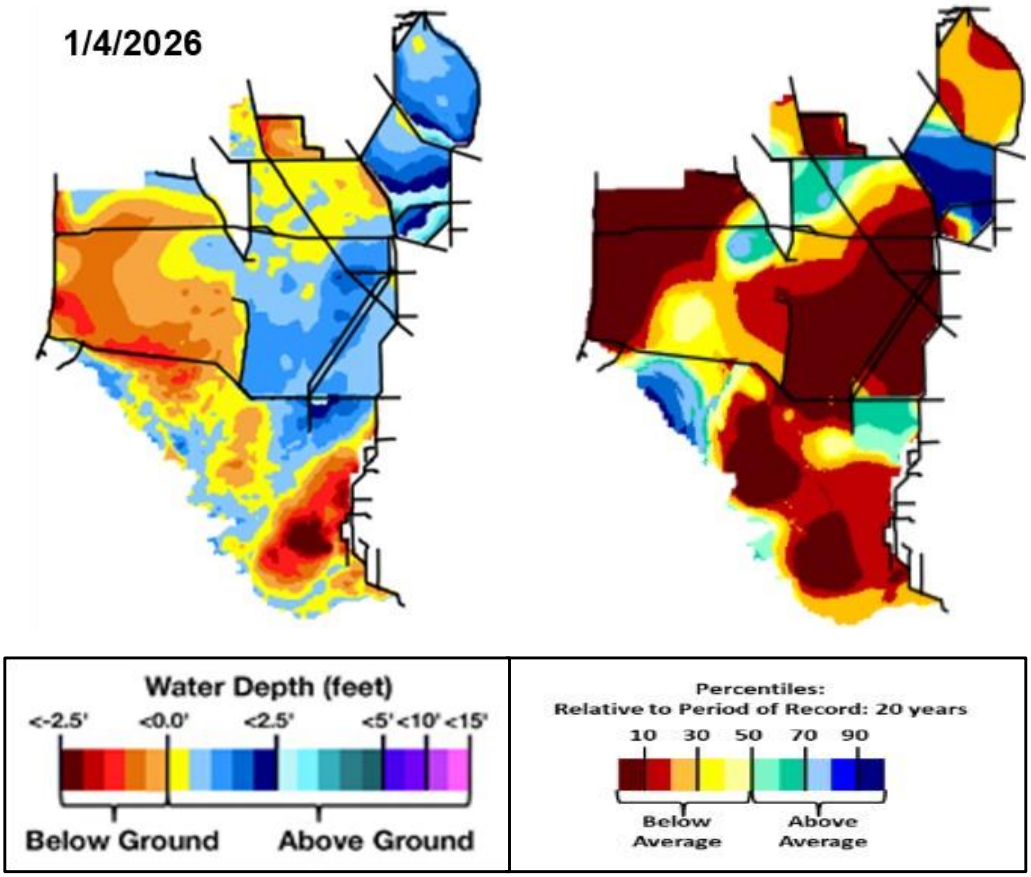

Figure EV-6. Present water depths (January 4, 2025) compared to the day of year relative to average (percentile) over the previous 20 years.

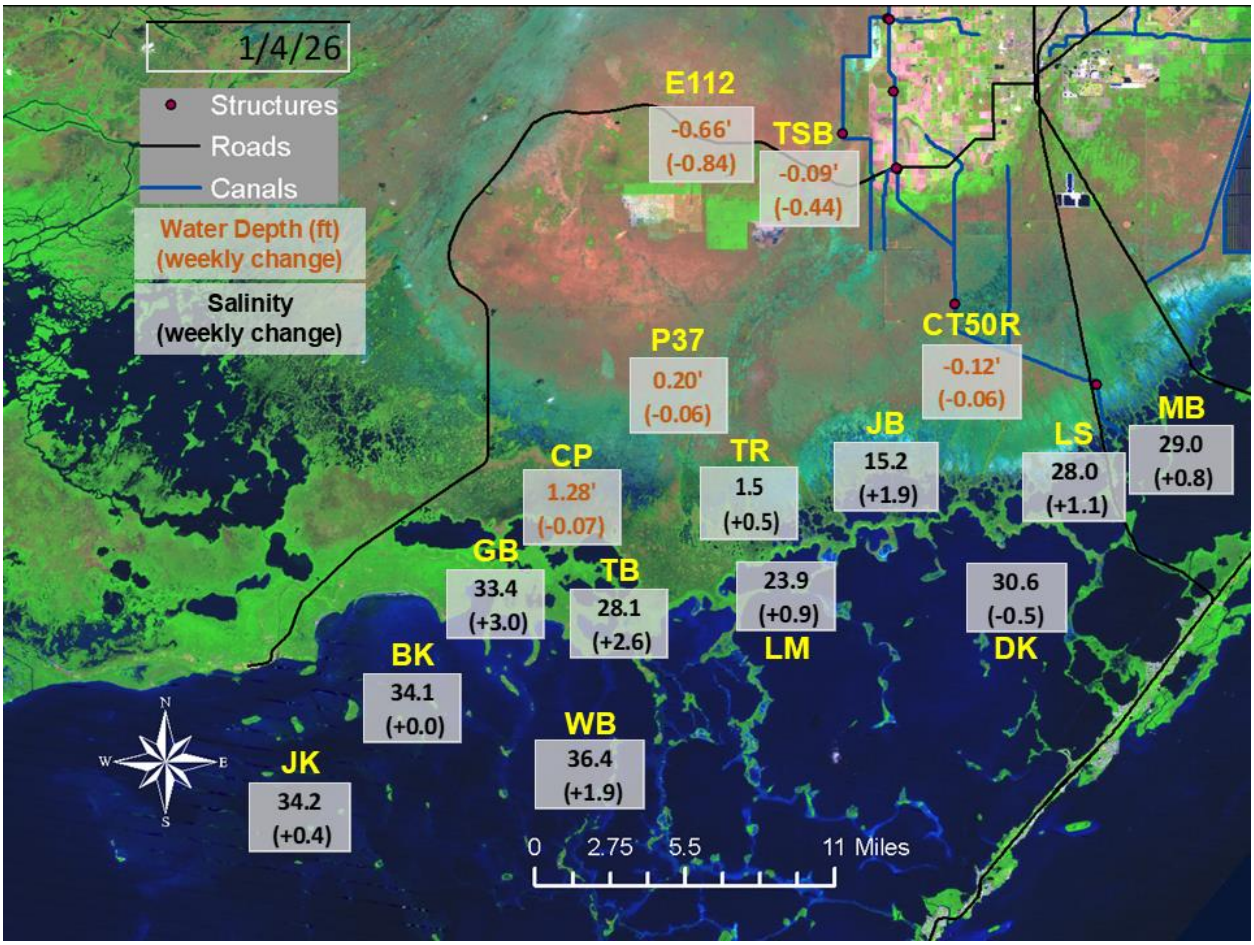

Figure EV-7. Taylor Slough water depths and Florida Bay salinities with changes since one week ago.

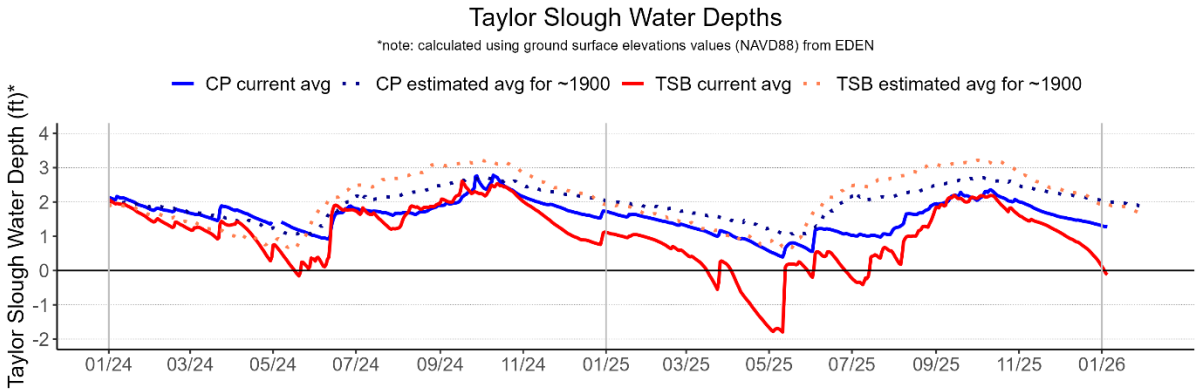

Figure EV-8. Taylor Slough water depth time series for Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB; northern slough) and Craighead Pond (CP; southern slough).

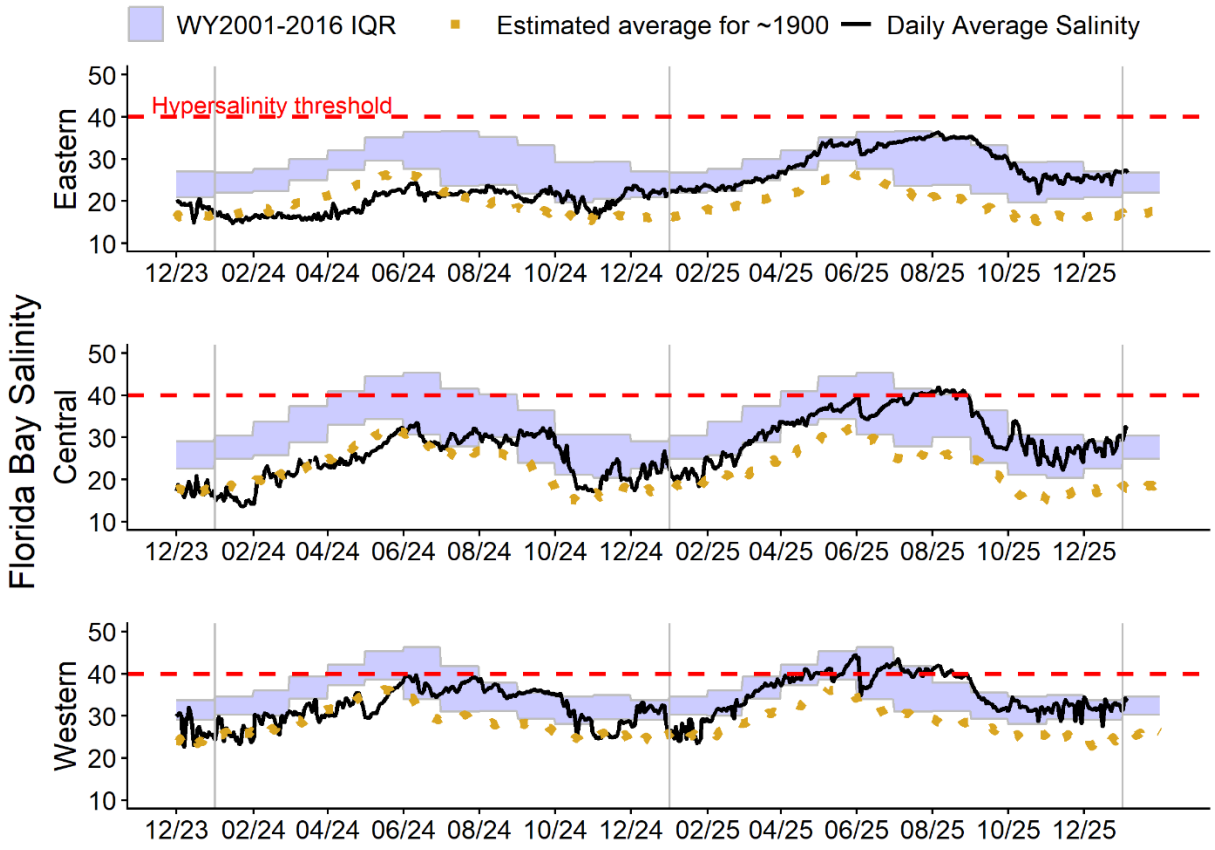

Figure EV-9. Eastern (top panel), Central (middle panel) and Western (bottom panel) Florida Bay daily average salinities with WY2001-2016 interquartile (25-75 percentile) ranges (IQR) and estimated historical daily average salinities. The hypersalinity threshold indicates the level at which salinities start to become harmful to seagrass.

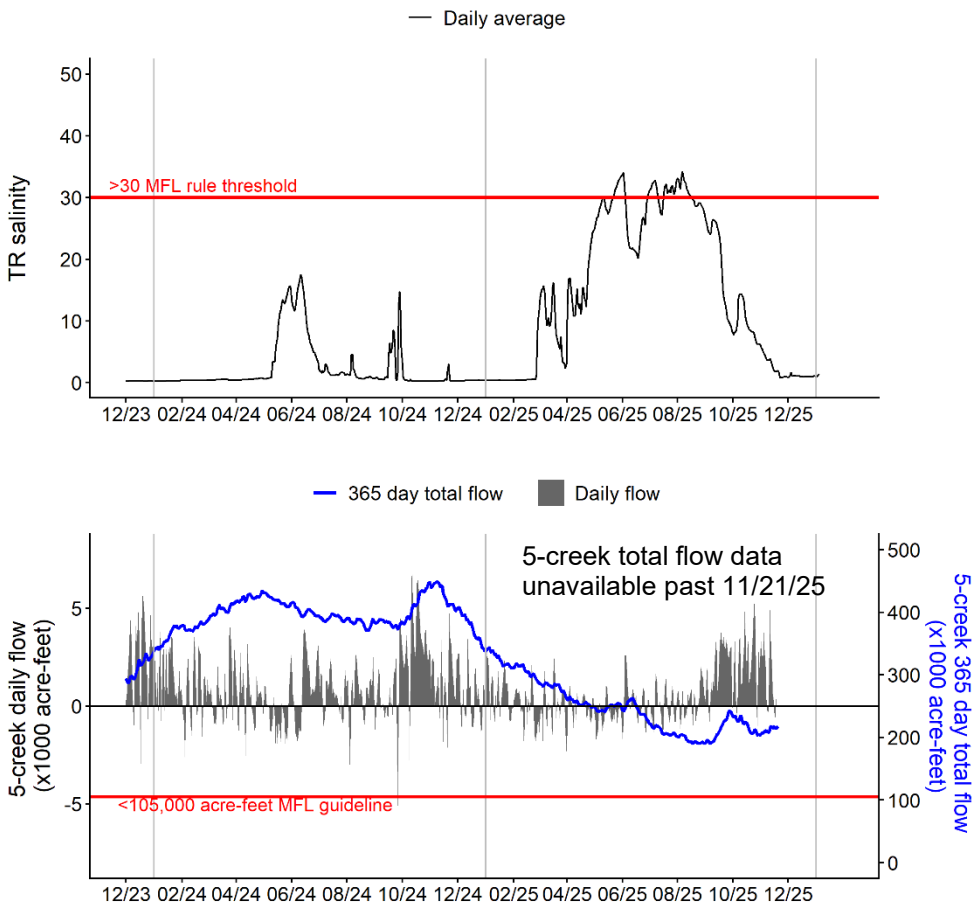

Figure EV-10. Salinity at Taylor River (TR; top) and creek inflow to Florida Bay (bottom) from the five major creeks (McCormick Creek, Taylor River, Mud Creek, Trout Creek, and West Highway Creek). The daily average salinity and 365-day total creek flow are tracked for the Florida Bay MFL criteria.

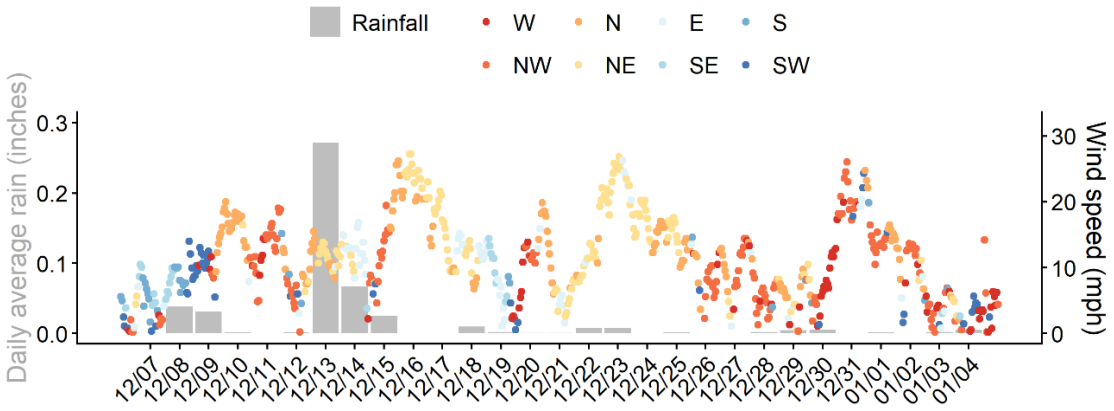

Figure EV-11. Daily average rain across Taylor Slough and Florida Bay, along with hourly average wind speed and direction (measured at Long Key) in Florida Bay over the past four weeks.

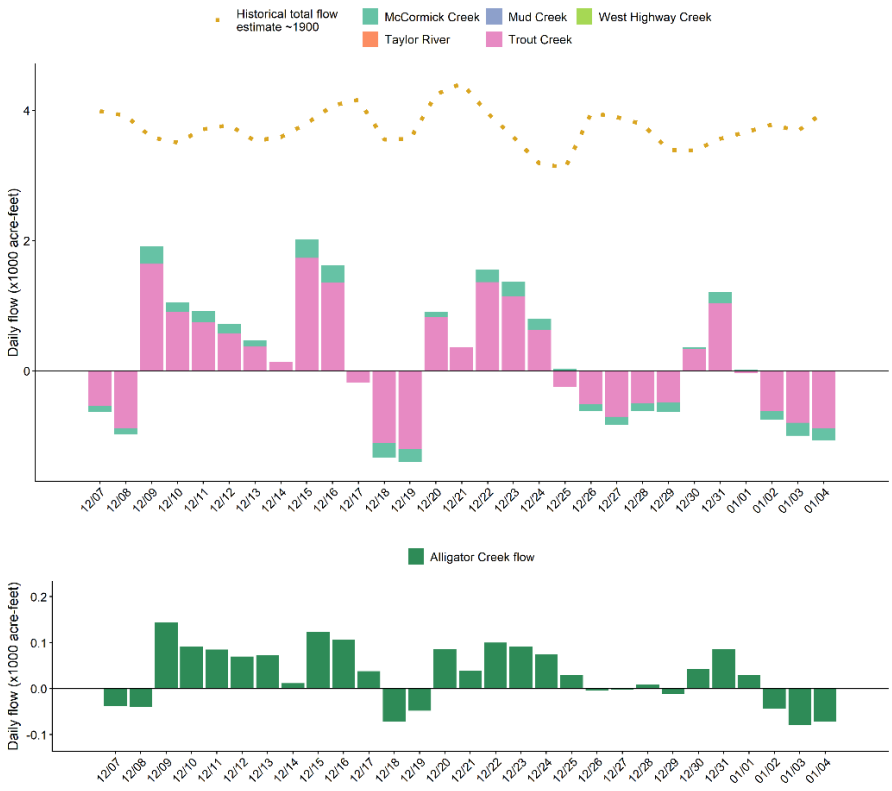

Figure EV-12. Top: daily average creek flow summed between the five major creeks with estimated historical daily flow over the past four weeks (note: data from Taylor River, Mud Creek and West Highway Creek are currently unavailable since November 21st, 2025). Bottom: Daily average Alligator Creek flow data. N/A indicates missing data.

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

SFWMD Everglades Ecological Recommendations, January 6, 2026 (red is new)			
	Weekly change	Recommendation	Reasons
WCA-1	Stage decreased by 0.07 feet.	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Conserve water, maintain within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife. Maintain maintenance access for vegetation management.
WCA-2A	Stage decreased by 0.14 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.12 feet per week.	Maintain within basin (north versus south) and downstream habitat and wildlife.
WCA-2B	Stage increased by 0.02 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.12 feet per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife.
WCA-3A NE	Stage decreased by 0.10 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Conserve water, maintain within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife. Provide suitable depths for aquatic prey and protect against peat soil loss during the dry season.
WCA-3A NW	Stage decreased by 0.07 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	
Central WCA-3A S	Stage decreased by 0.09 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Conserve water, maintain within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife. Provide suitable depths for aquatic prey and protect against peat soil loss during the dry season.
Southern WCA-3A S	Stage decreased by 0.08 feet		
WCA-3B	Stage decreased by 0.05 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.12 feet per week.	Protect within basin and downstream habitat and wildlife.
ENP-SRS	Stage decreased by 0.05 feet.	Make discharges to ENP according to COP protocol, considering up/down stream ecological conditions.	Protect within basin and upstream habitat and wildlife.
Taylor Slough	Stage changes ranged from -0.84 feet to -0.05 feet	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.
FB- Salinity	Salinity changes ranged from -0.5 to +3.0	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.