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: March 11, 2026

SUBJECT: Weekly Environmental Conditions for Systems Operations

Summary

Weather Conditions and Forecast

A ridge of high pressure is forecast to amplify across Florida Wednesday leading to a drier and more stable mid-level atmosphere. This pattern will effectively suppress most precipitation across the region, with only a few brief and light coastal showers possible Wednesday afternoon. Temperatures will rise into the mid-80s to lower 90s across portions of the central interior Wednesday. By Thursday, the ridge over Florida will shift eastward transporting deeper tropical moisture northward into Florida. As the upper-level trough continues eastward, an associated cold front is expected to move southward into central Florida late Thursday night into Friday morning. The frontal passage will end the streak of warm weather and may produce scattered showers and thunderstorms, primarily across the Kissimmee Valley and areas north of Lake Okeechobee. Beyond Thursday, forecast confidence decreases. Current model guidance suggests stalled frontal boundaries. The exact placement will play a major role in determining the rainfall distribution across the region. If this pattern develops as currently suggested, deep tropical moisture will be transported into central and southern Florida supporting multiple rounds of showers and thunderstorms during the afternoons beginning on Friday and continuing through the weekend. Under this pattern, the heaviest rainfall will be along portions of the east coast. By Sunday, another upper-level disturbance could further enhance rainfall potential across the region supporting another period of widespread showers and thunderstorms across much of the SFWMD. Similar conditions for heavy rainfall may persist into Monday. By Tuesday, a cold front may push southward into Florida, ending the rainfall north and west of Lake Okeechobee. For the 7-day period ending next Tuesday morning, much above-average total SFWMD weekly rainfall is possible under this pattern, although the exact distribution and magnitude of rainfall remain uncertain due to the complex and evolving synoptic setup expected from Friday through the weekend.

Kissimmee

In the past week, releases were made as needed from East Lake Toho and Lake Toho to continue snail kite nesting season stage recessions to reach low pool by June 1, 2026. Releases from Lakes Kissimmee-Cypress-Hatchineha followed the Headwaters

Revitalization Schedule (HRS) Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan. Weekly average discharge on March 8, 2026, was 590 cfs at S-65 and 510 cfs at S-65A. Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain was unchanged from 0.33 feet the previous week. The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River decreased from 8.9 mg/L the previous week to 8.3 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 10.93 feet NAVD88 (12.24 ft NGVD29) on March 8, 2026, which was 0.05 feet lower than the previous week and 0.41 feet lower than a month ago. Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) increased from 250 cfs the previous week to 360 cfs. Average daily outflows (excluding evapotranspiration) decreased from 2,010 cfs the previous week to 720 cfs. The most recent non-obscured satellite image from March 8, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests moderate cyanobacteria potential in Fisheating Bay. The results of the February 17-18 routine water quality and phytoplankton monitoring sampling trip were 1 of 9 phytoplankton samples had detectable levels of microcystins (0.6 µg/L), and 2 of the 32 water quality samples had chlorophyll *a* > 40 µg/L, indicating bloom level concentrations.

Estuaries

Total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary averaged 144 cfs over the past week with no flow coming from Lake Okeechobee. Mean surface salinities decreased at all sites within the estuary over the past week. Salinity in the middle estuary was in the upper stressed range (>25) for adult eastern oysters.

Total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary averaged 471 cfs over the past week with 244 cfs coming from Lake Okeechobee. Over the past week, surface salinities decreased at Cape Coral and Sanibel and increased at the remaining sites in the estuary. Surface salinities were in the optimal range (0-10) for tape grass in the upper estuary at S-79 and Val-75, and in the damaging range (>15) at Ft. Myers. 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 Sunday, March 8, 2026, 100 ac ft of Lake Okeechobee water was delivered to the FEBs/STAs. The total amount of Lake releases sent to the FEBs/STAs in WY2026 is approximately 93,100 ac-feet. The total amount of inflows to the STAs in WY2026 is approximately 596,800 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. STA 3/4 Central Flow-way is off-line for vegetation rehabilitation. 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, STA-3/4, and STA-5/6.

Everglades

The Everglades Protection Area received little rainfall and recessions increased. Recessions at monitored sites was approximately 0.12 ft/week. WCA-2A stages are receding and remain somewhat deeper in the south while now dry in the north. In contrast, most areas within WCA-3, Everglades National Park (ENP), and WCA-1 continue to be very dry (below the 10th percentile). Below-average depths in WCA-3A and ENP have ecological effects including reducing the population sizes of already reduced prey populations, increasing the risk of damaging wildfire, promoting peat oxidation, and ridge/slough degradation. Wading bird activity remains limited, with most major colonies across ENP and the WCAs remaining inactive or have low nest numbers. Taylor Slough stages decreased last week and remained well below the recent averages for this time of year. Average Florida Bay salinity increased last week and remains at or above the 75th percentile for this time of year in all regions.

Supporting Information

Kissimmee Basin

Upper Kissimmee

On March 8, 2026, mean daily lake stages were 55.8 feet NAVD88 (1.2 feet below schedule) in East Lake Toho, 52.8 feet NAVD88 (1.2 feet below schedule) in Lake Toho, and 48.7 feet NAVD88 (2.4 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 March 8, 2026, mean weekly discharge was 590 cfs at S-65 and 510 cfs at S-65A. Mean weekly discharge from the Kissimmee River was 520 cfs at S-65D and 360 cfs at S-65E (**Table KB-2**). Mean weekly headwater stages were 45.3 feet NAVD88 at S-65A and 29.3 feet NAVD88 at S-65D. Mean weekly river channel stage increased from 31.0 feet the previous week to 31.9 feet NAVD88 (**Figure KB-4**). Mean weekly water depth on the Kissimmee River floodplain was unchanged from 0.33 feet the previous week (**Table KB-2**, **Figure KB-5**). The weekly average concentration of dissolved oxygen in the Kissimmee River decreased from 8.9 mg/L the previous week to 8.3 mg/L (**Table KB-2**, **Figure KB-6**).

Water Management Recommendations

Continue the stage recessions in East Lake Toho and Lake Toho to reach their low pools on June 1, 2026. 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 and 1,400 cfs at S-65A, using the Increment 1 Interpolation Tool to determine discharge relative to stage in KCH; if stage decreases into Zone B4, target flows of 300 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)	
							3/8/26	*3/1/26*
Lakes Hart and Mary Jane	S-62	LKMJ	34	59.6	R	59.9	-0.3	-0.2
Lakes Myrtle, Preston and Joel	S-57	S-57	21	59.8	R	59.8	0.0	0.1
Alligator Chain	S-60	ALLI	7	63.0	R	62.9	0.1	0.1
Lake Gentry	S-63	LKGT	32	60.4	R	60.4	0.0	0.1
East Lake Toho	S-59	TOHOE	210	55.8	R	57.0	-1.2	-1.1
Lake Toho	S-61	TOHOW S-61	470	52.8	R	54.0	-1.2	-1.1
Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha	S-65	KUB011 LKIS5B	590	48.7	T	51.1	-2.4	-2.5

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.

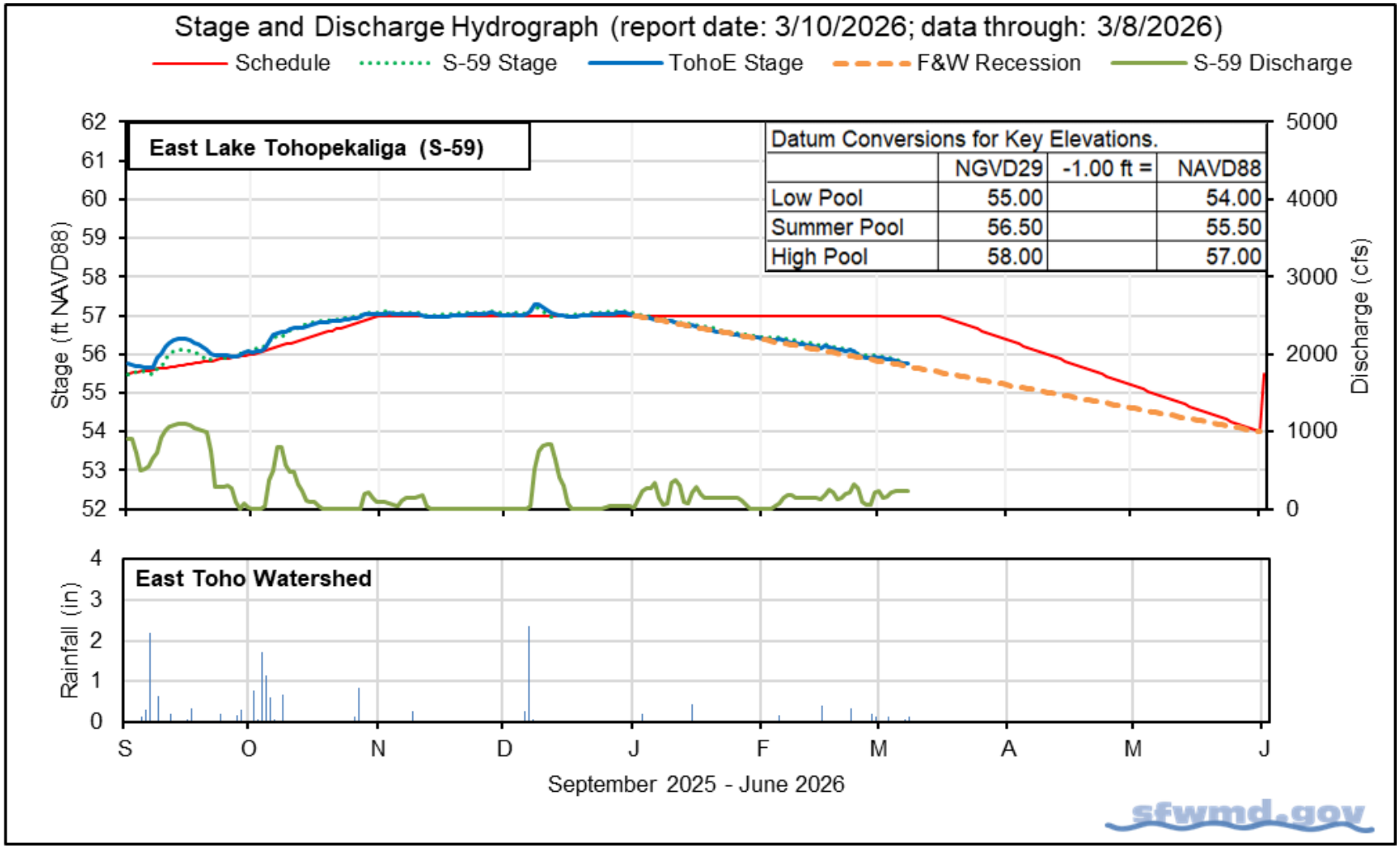


Figure KB-1. East Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

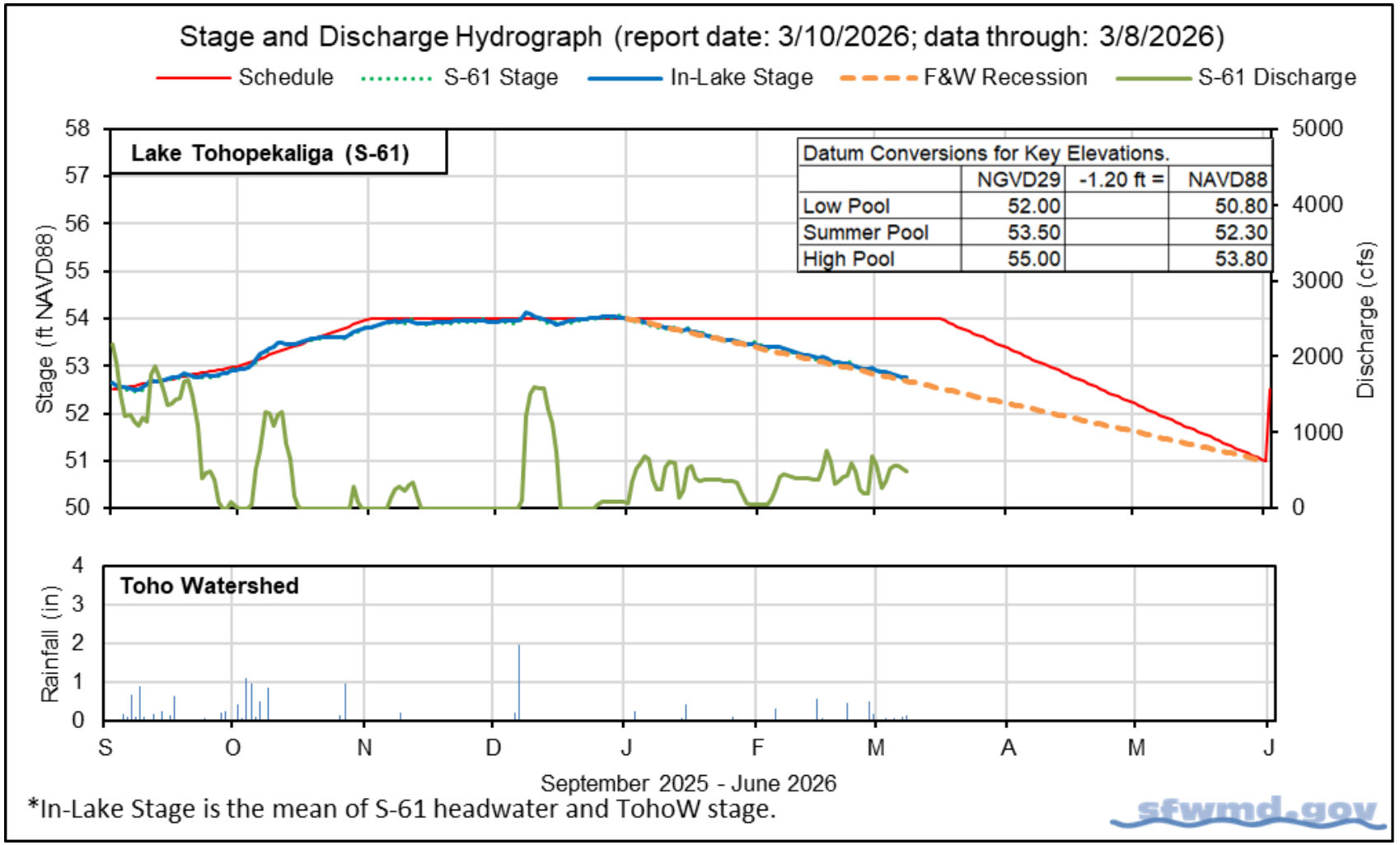


Figure KB-2. Lake Toho regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

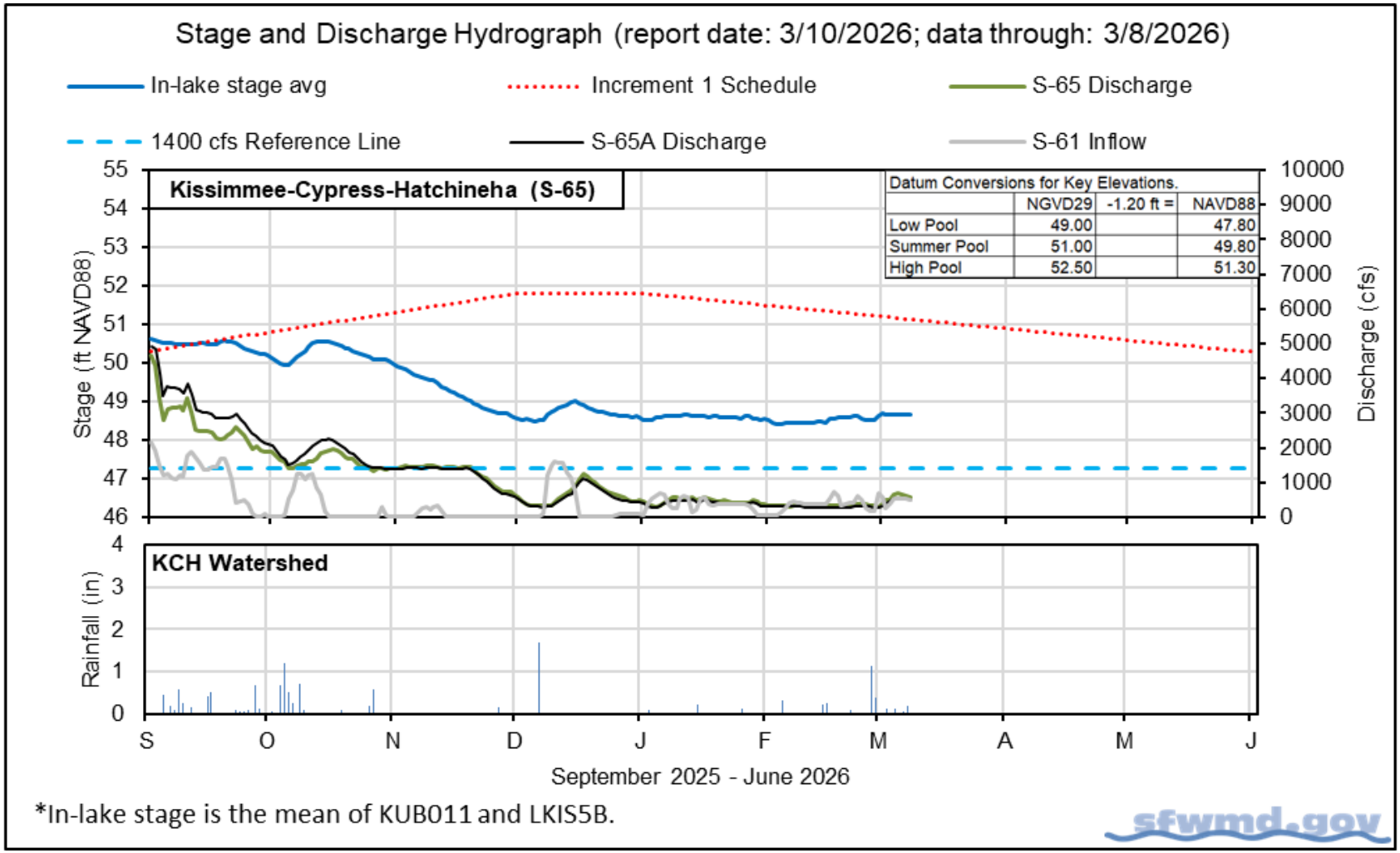


Figure KB-3. Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha regulation schedule, stage, discharge, and rainfall.

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			
		3/8/26	3/8/26	3/1/26	2/22/26	2/15/26
Discharge	S-65	590	590	360	350	340
Discharge	S-65A[a]	520	510	320	290	300
Headwater Stage (feet NAVD88)	S-65A	45.4	45.3	45.2	45.2	45.2
Discharge	S-65D[b]	640	520	360	310	330
Headwater Stage (feet NAVD88)	S-65D[c]	24.6	29.3	28.5	28.4	28.4
Discharge (cfs)	S-65E[d]	510	360	250	210	220
Discharge (cfs)	S-67	0	0	0	0	0
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)[e]	Phase I, II/III river channel	7.5	8.3	8.9	9.1	9.5
River channel mean stage (feet NAVD88)[f]	Phase I river channel	32.4	31.9	31.0	30.9	31.0
Mean depth (feet)[g]	Phase I & II/III floodplain	0.34	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33

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).

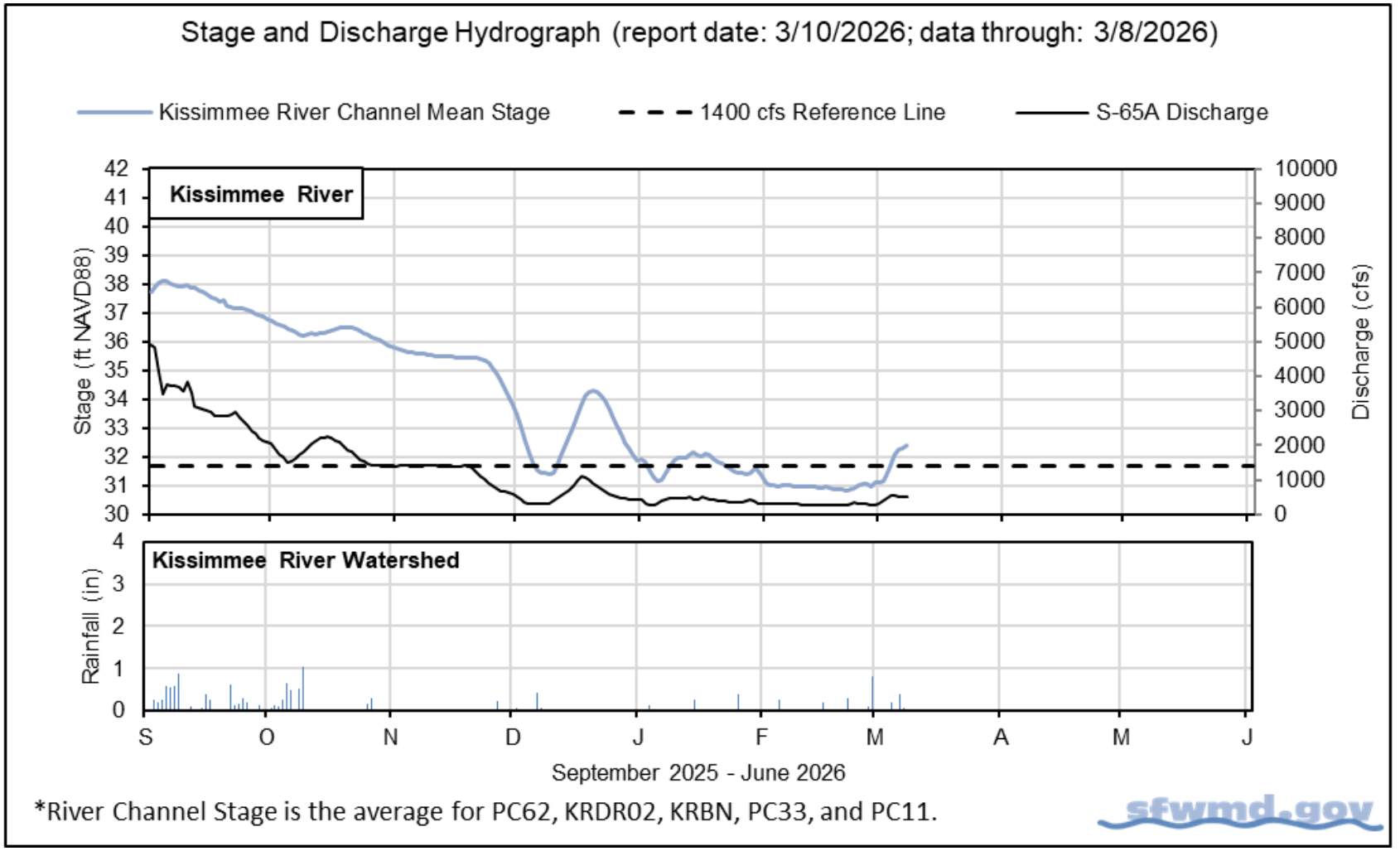


Figure KB-4. Kissimmee River stage, discharge, and rainfall.

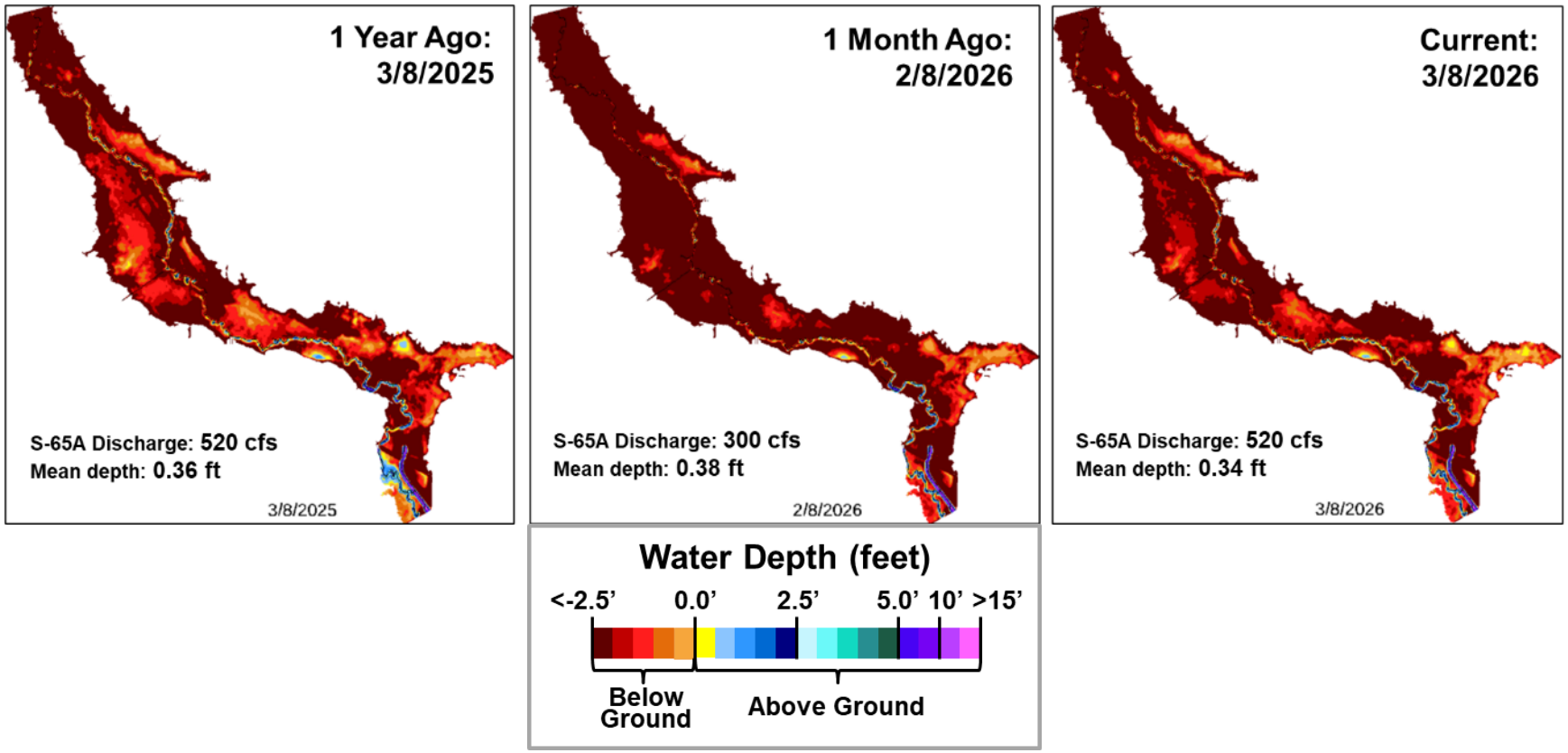


Figure KB-5. Phase I-II-III area Kissimmee River floodplain water depths (from left to right) one year ago, one month ago, and current.

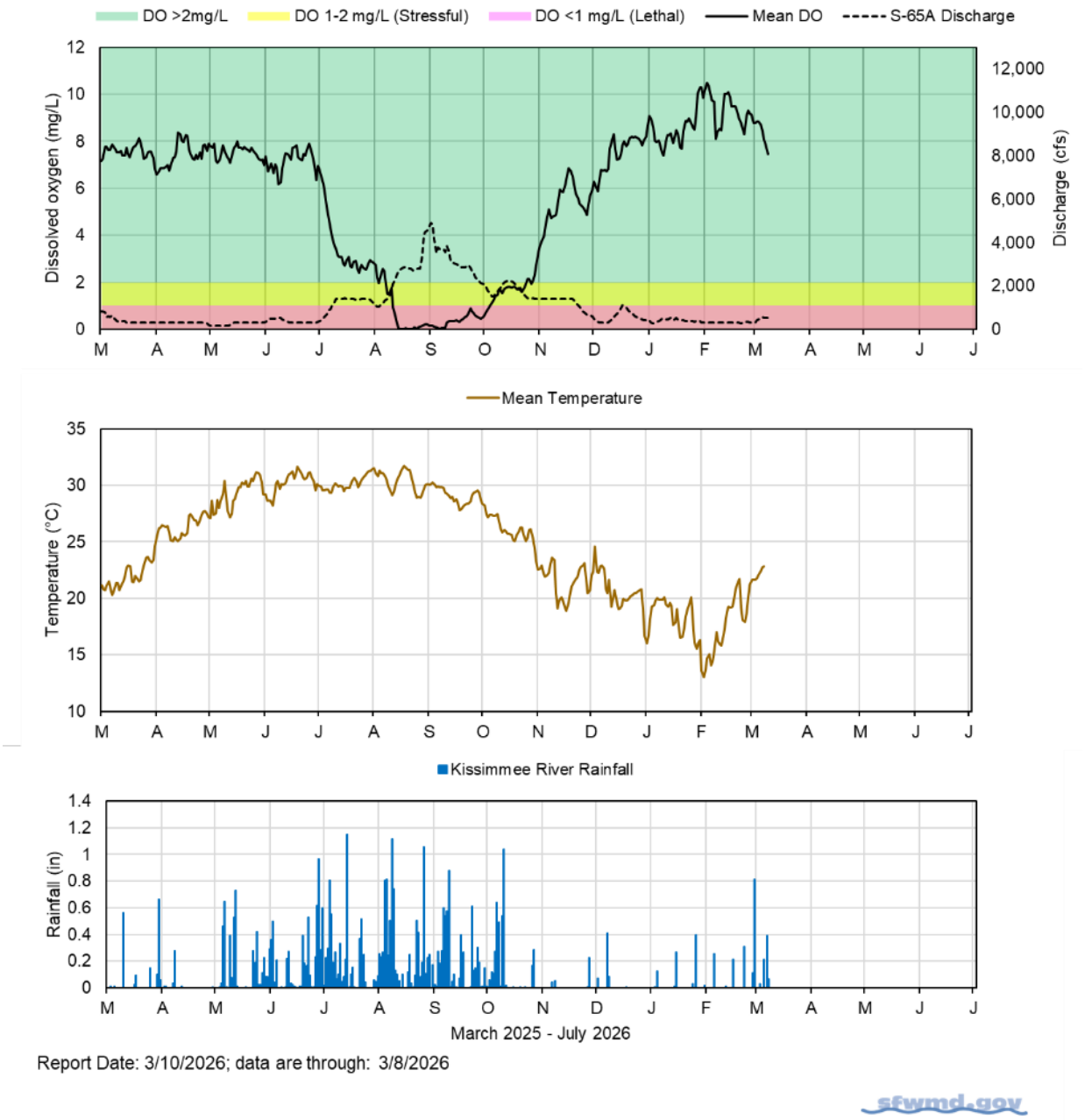


Figure KB-6. Kissimmee River channel mean daily dissolved oxygen concentration (mg/L), S-65A discharge (cfs), temperature (°C) and rainfall (inches). Dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature are mean daily values averaged for PC62, KRDR02, KRBN, PC33, PC11, PD62R, and PD42R with an average of five stations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

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

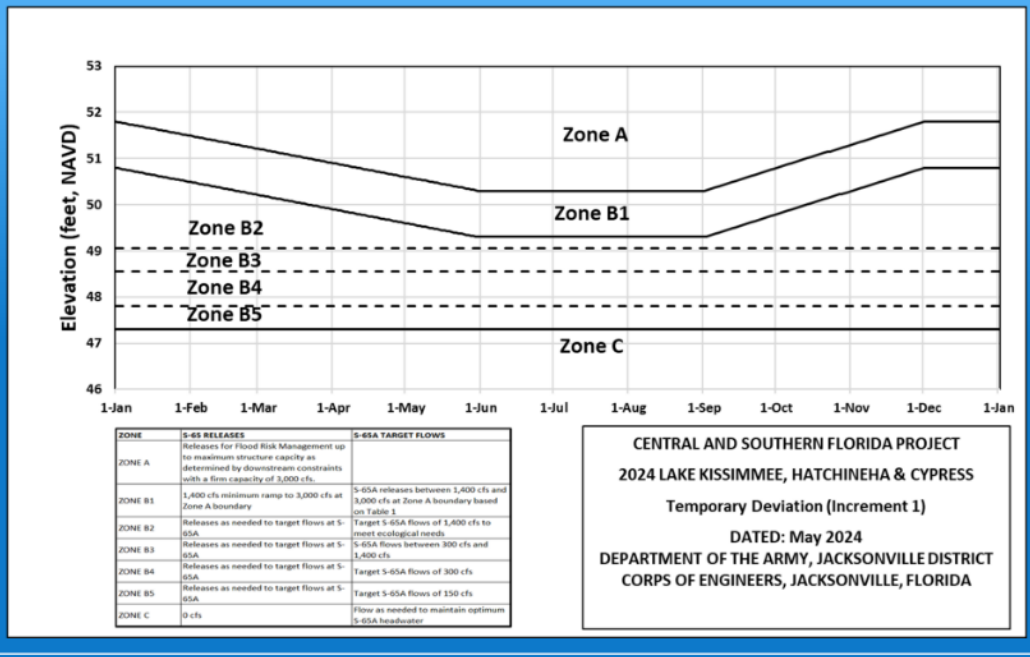
HRS Increment 1 Temporary Deviation Discharge Plan for S-65/S-65A

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



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

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FLORIDA PROJECT

2024 LAKE KISSIMMEE, HATCHINEHA & CYPRESS

Temporary Deviation (Increment 1)

DATED: May 2024

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

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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Slide Revised 7/29/2024

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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 10.93 feet NAVD88 (12.24 ft NGVD29) on March 8, 2026, which was 0.05 feet lower than the previous week and 0.41 feet lower than a month ago (**Figure LO-1**). Lake stage is in Zone D of the regulation schedule, is 0.42 feet above the water shortage management band (**Figure LO-2**), and is 1.39 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 1.12 inches were lost to evapotranspiration.

Average daily inflows (excluding rainfall) increased from 250 cfs the previous week to 360 cfs. The only notable inflows came from the Kissimmee River (360 cfs via S-65E(X1)). Average daily outflows (excluding evapotranspiration) decreased from 2,010 cfs the previous week to 720 cfs. The highest single structure release was to the west through the S-77 structure (500 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 March 8, 2026, NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring System suggests moderate cyanobacteria potential in Fisheating Bay. (**Figure LO-6**).

The routine water quality and phytoplankton monitoring sampling trips are on the non-bloom season (Nov-Apr) once per month sampling schedule. Provisional phytoplankton results from the February 17-18 sampling were 1 of 9 phytoplankton samples had detectable levels of microcystins, though it was well below the USEPA recreational standard of 8 µg/L (**Figure LO-7**), and 2 of the 32 water quality samples had chlorophyll *a* > 40 µg/L, indicating bloom level concentrations, while 8 samples had values between 20 and 40 µg/L (**Figure LO-7**).

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

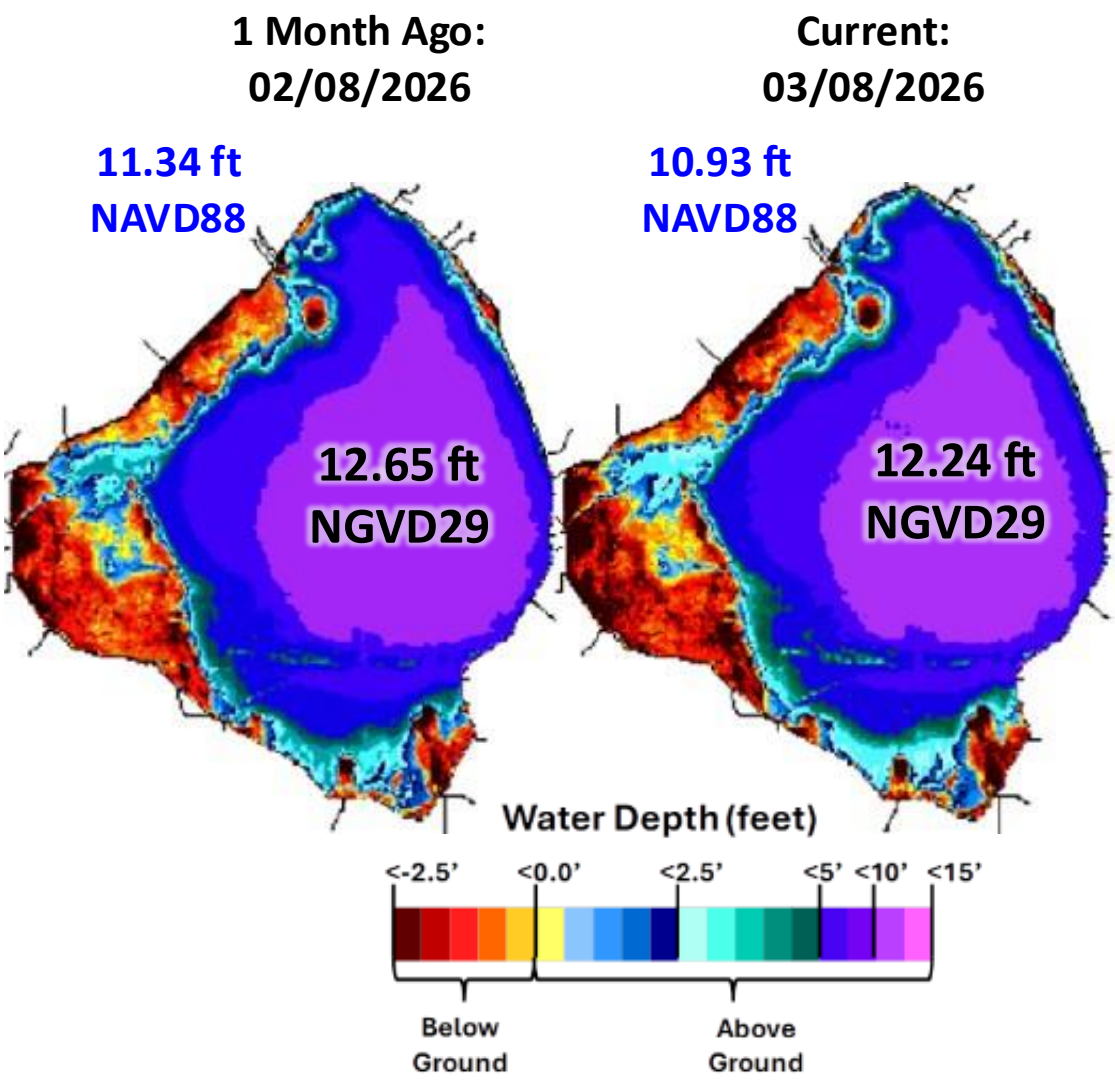

Figure LO-1. Lake Okeechobee water depth estimates based on South Florida Water Depth Assessment Tool (SFWDAT).

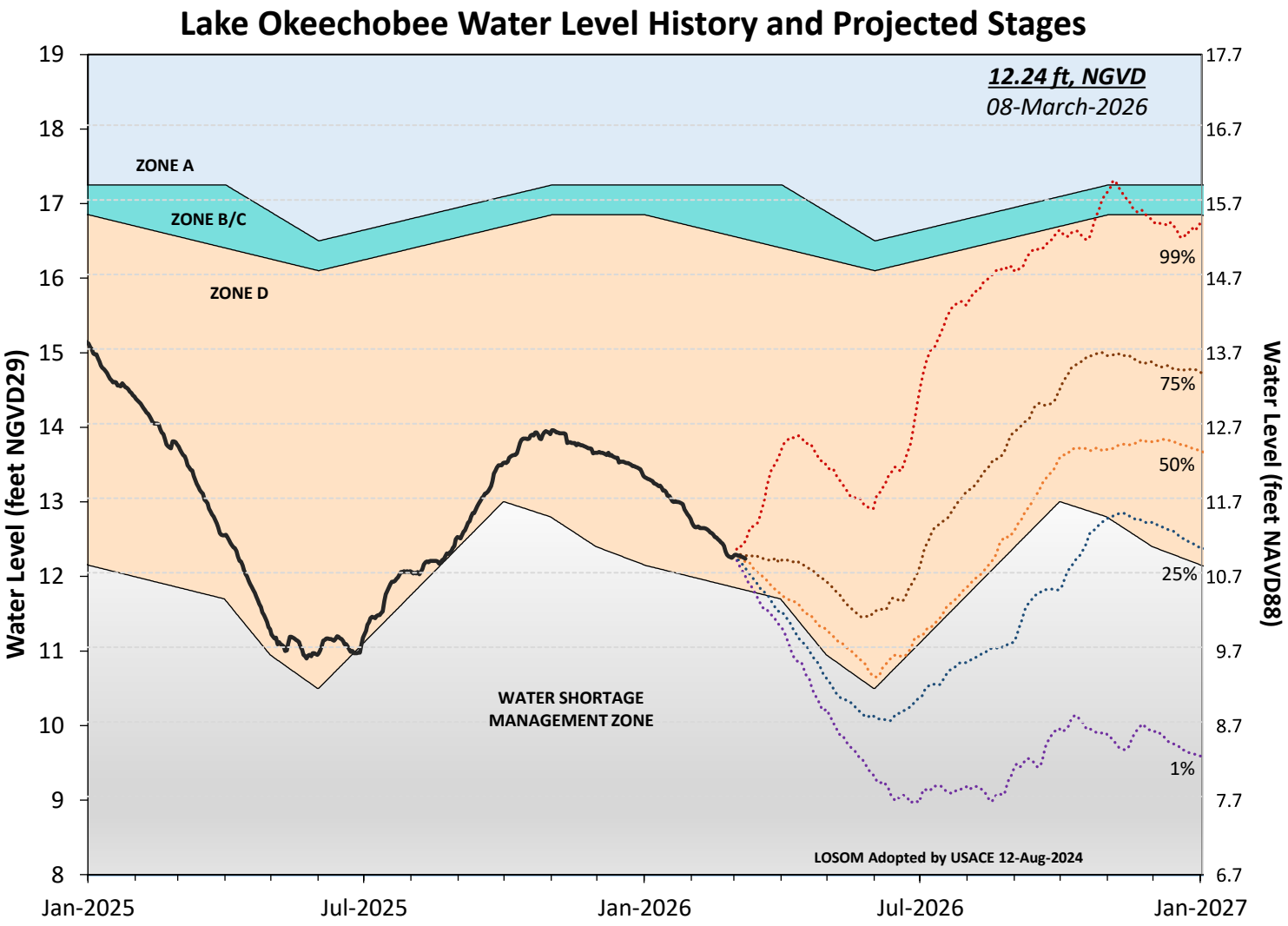

Figure LO-2. Recent Lake Okeechobee stages with projected stages based on a conditional position analysis. Note: stages are in NGVD29, approximate NAVD88 values are shown for reference.

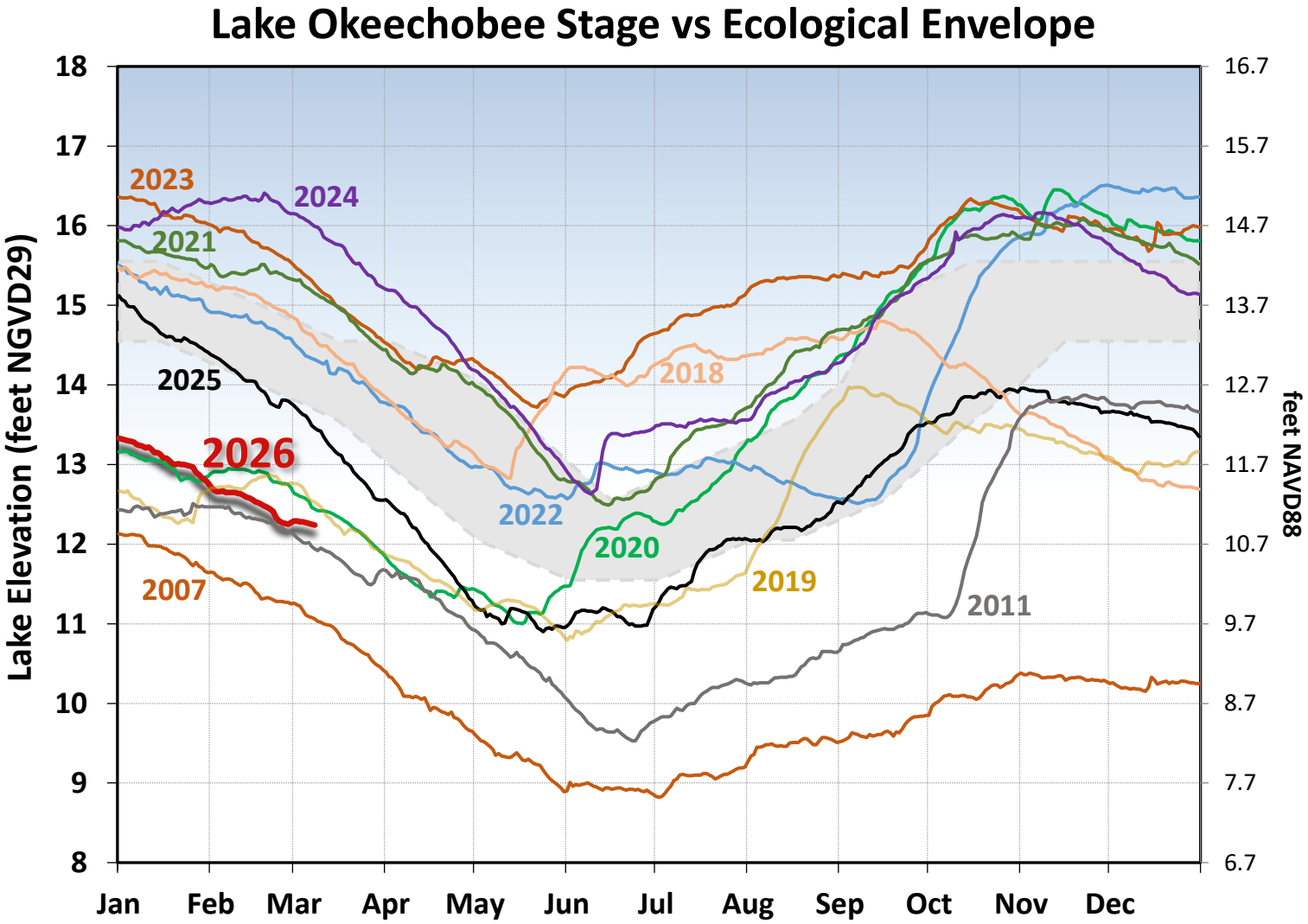

Figure LO-3. The current and select prior year's annual lake stage hydrographs in comparison to the Lake Okeechobee ecological envelope (light grey).

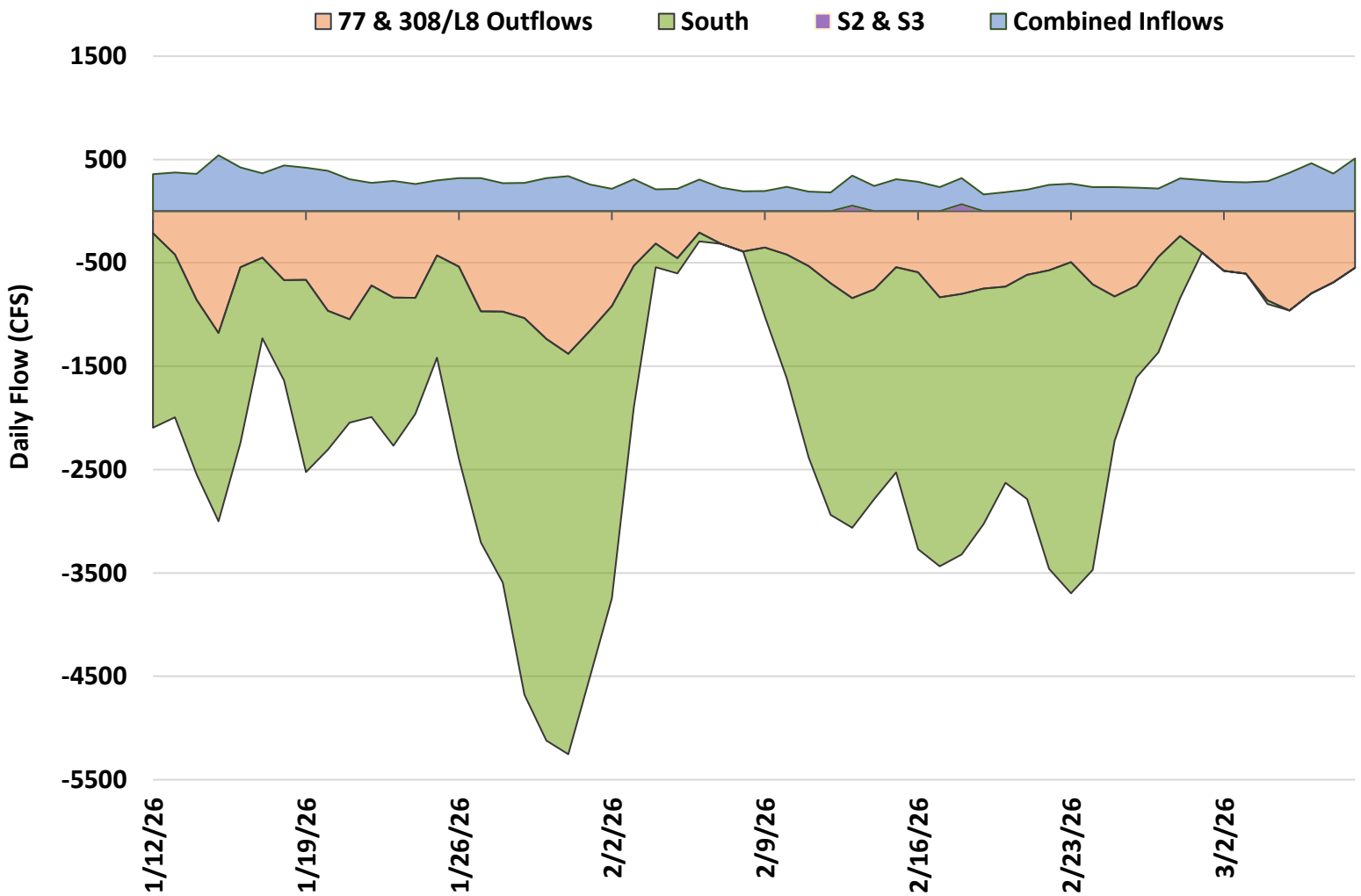

Figure LO-4. Major inflows (orange) to and outflows east and west (blue) from Lake Okeechobee. Outflows south are shown in green. Flows into Lake Okeechobee from the L-8 canal through S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) or from the C-44 canal through the S-308 are included as inflows. Conversely, flows from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

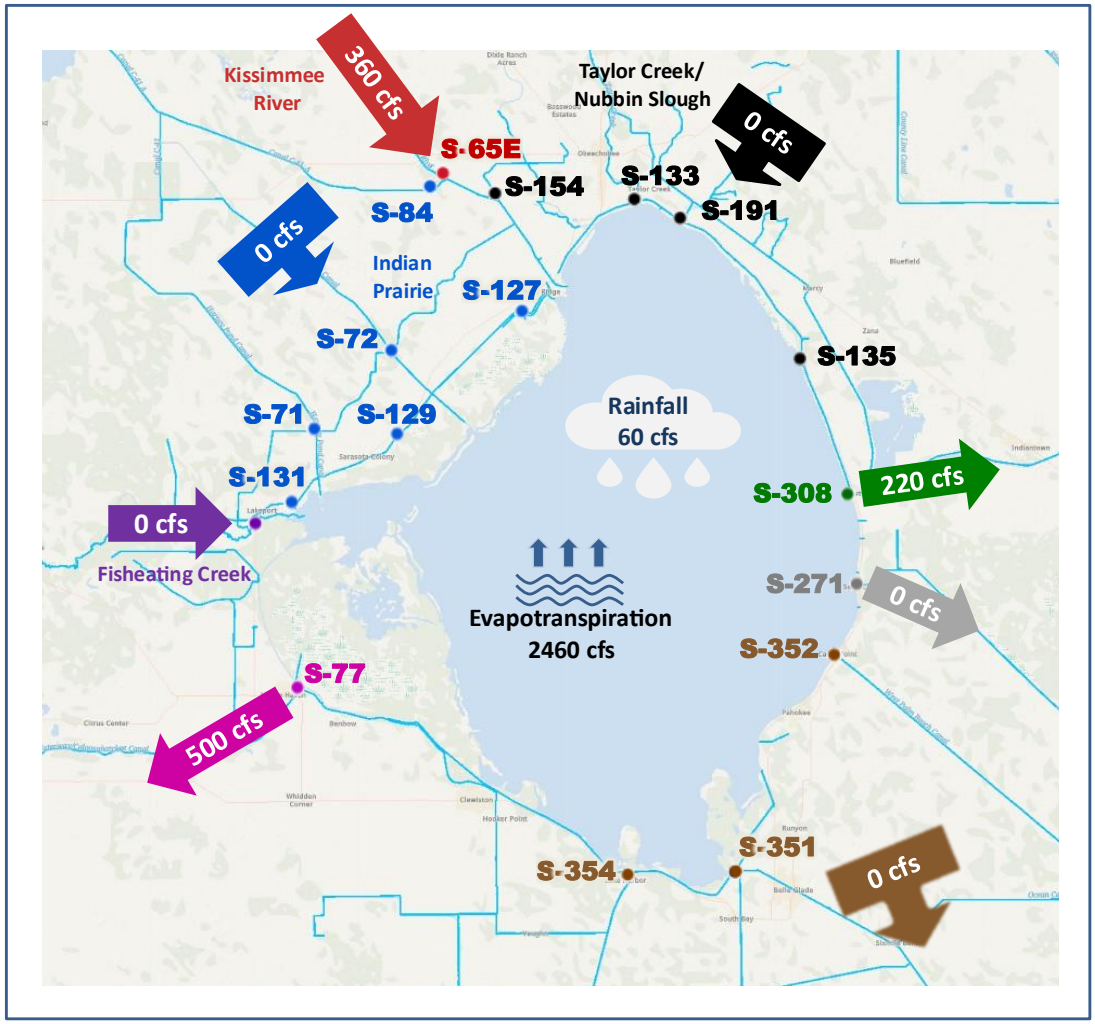

Figure LO-5. Inflows into Lake Okeechobee from Indian Prairie basins, Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough, Kissimmee River and Fisheating Creek (currently no flow data available for FECR), and outflows to the west via S-77, to the east via S-308, to the south via S-351, S-352, S-354, and to southeast via S-271 (formerly Culvert 10A) for the week of Mar 2 - 8, 2026.

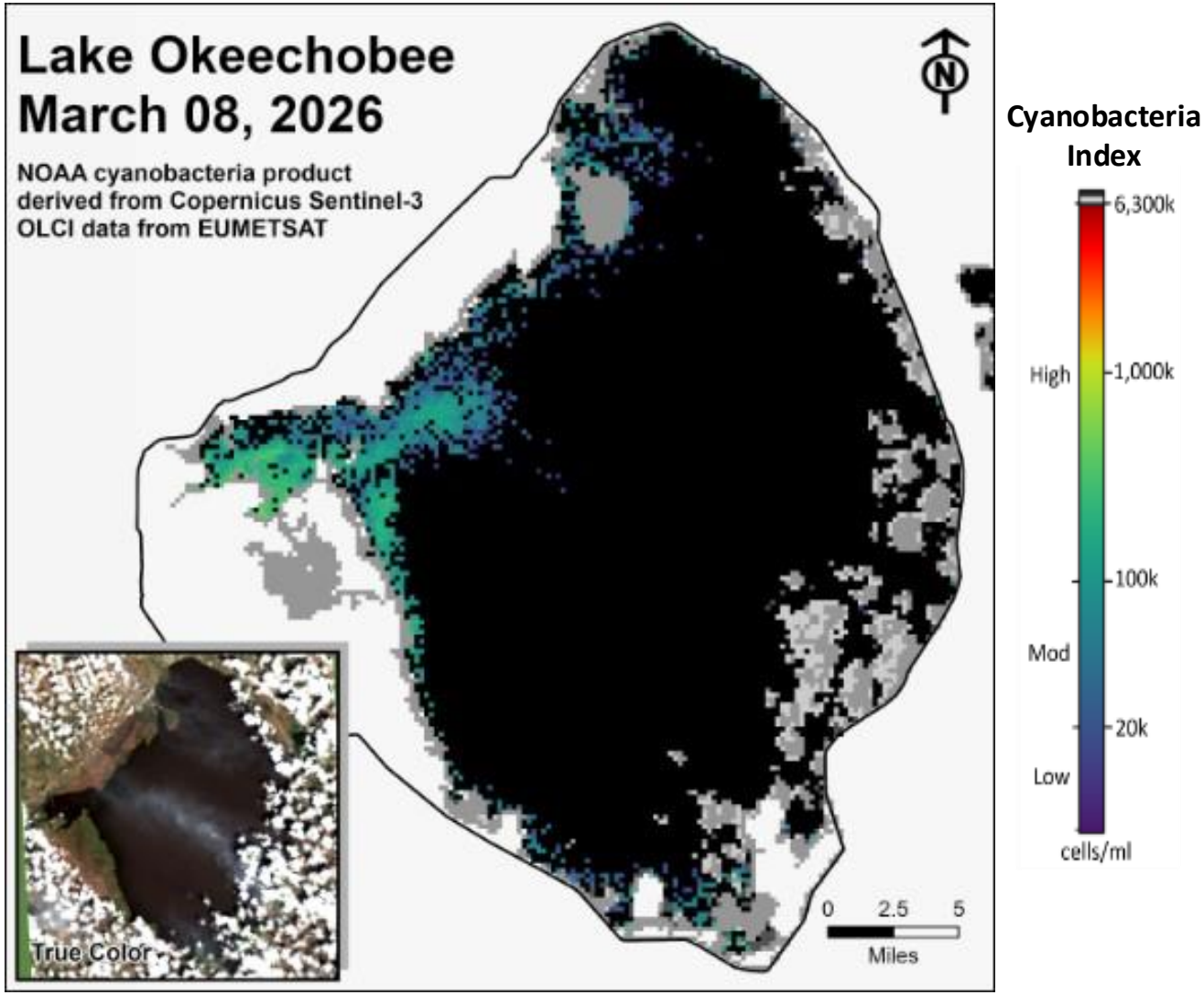

Figure LO-6. Cyanobacteria bloom index level on Lake Okeechobee, based on NOAA's harmful algal bloom monitoring system. Gray color indicates cloud cover. *Provisional NOAA image, subject to change*.

Collection Date: February 17-18, 2026

Station	CHL*a* (ug/L)	TOXIN (ug/L)	TAXA
FEBIN	18.6		*2/3/2026*
FEBOUT	33.2		*2/3/2026*
KISSR0.0	21.5	BDL	*mixed*
L005	19.4	BDL	*mixed*
LZ2	14.5	BDL	*mixed*
KBARSE	21.5		
RITTAE2	38.5	BDL	*Microcys*
PELBAY3	17.3		
POLE3S	19.6		
LZ25A	18.5		
PALMOUT	18.9	BDL	*Microcys*
PALMOUT1	16.0		
PALMOUT2	8.6		
PALMOUT3	15.0		
POLESOUT	44.9	BDL	*mixed*
POLESOUT1	24.6		
POLESOUT2	16.1		
POLESOUT3	13.1		
EASTSHORE	7.7		
NES135	11.3		
NES191	13.1		

Station	CHL*a* (ug/L)	TOXIN (ug/L)	TAXA
L001	22.2		
L004	18.3		
L006	16.5		
L007	5.8		
L008	36.1		
LZ30	9.7	BDL	*Microcys*
LZ40	16.1		
CLV10A	20.8	0.6	*Microcys*
NCENTER	15.4		
S308C	9.0	BDL	*mixed*
S77	43.3		

- SFWMD considers >40 µg/L Chlorophyll *a* (Chl*a*) an algal bloom
- BDL – Below Detectable Limit of **0.2** µg/L (Cyl = 0.1 µg/L)
- ND – No Dominant taxa
- F – Flagged Sample
- NS – Not Sampled
- Station bold font – crew observed possible BGA
- Chlorophyll *a* analyzed by SFWMD
- Toxin & Taxa analyzed by FDEP:
  Microcys = Microcystis; Raphi = Raphidiopsis; Planktol = Planktolyngbya; Dolicho = Dolichospermum; Pseud = Pseudanabaena; Woron = Woronichinia

Toxins include cylindrospermopsin and/or microcsytins

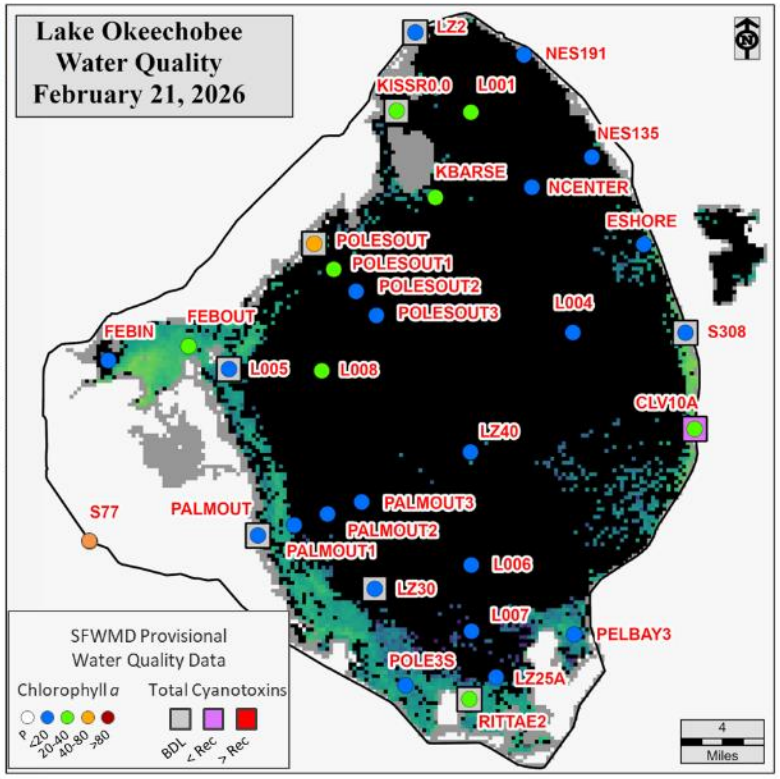

Figure LO-7. Dominant taxa, cyanotoxins (µg/L) and chlorophyll *a* (µg/L) concentration data from February 17 - 18, 2026. Sampling locations, chlorophyll *a*, and total toxin concentrations are overlaid on the February 21, 2026, image from NOAA's harmful algal bloom monitoring system. Gray color indicates cloud cover.

Estuaries

St. Lucie Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the St. Lucie Estuary was 144 cfs (**Figures ES-1** and **ES-2**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 137 cfs. For comparison, the historical provisional mean inflows from contributing areas are shown in **Figure ES-2**.

Over the past week, salinities decreased 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 26.9. Salinity conditions in the middle estuary were estimated to be in the upper stressed range for adult eastern oysters (**Figure ES-4**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rate reported by the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) for February was 0 spat/shell at Rio, which is a decrease from the previous month (**Figure ES-5**).

Caloosahatchee River Estuary

Over the past week, mean total inflow to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary was 471 cfs (**Figures ES-6** and **ES-7**), and the previous 30-day mean inflow was 392 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 Cape Coral 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 surface salinities (**Table ES-2**) were in the optimal range (0-10) at S-79 and Val I-75 and in the damaging range (>15) at Fort Myers for tape grass in the upper estuary. The seven-day mean salinity values were within the optimal range for adult eastern oysters at Cape Coral and in the upper stressed range at Sanibel and Shell Point (**Figure ES-10**). The mean larval oyster recruitment rates reported by the FWRI in February were 0 spat/shell at Iona Cove and 0 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 42 cfs. Model results from all scenarios predict daily salinity to be 8.1 or lower and the 30-day moving average surface salinity to be 8.7 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 March 6, 2026, 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 Zone D. Current climatological conditions are normal and hydrological conditions are dry. 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.

Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels

The minimum flows and levels (MFL) for the Caloosahatchee River Estuary is a 30-day moving average flow of 457 cfs or greater at S-79. The current 30-day average flow at S-79 is 392.2 cfs (**Figure ES-14),** which is an exceedance.

The MFL for the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River is a) flows at Lainhart Dam maintained at 35 cfs or greater, and b) the 20-day moving average salinity of 2 or less at River Mile (RM) 9.2. An exceedance occurs when flows decline below 35 cfs for more than 20 consecutive days or when the 20-day moving average salinity at River Mile 9.2 exceeds 2. The current daily average flow at Lainhart Dam is 5 cfs, and flow has been below 35 cfs for 12 consecutive days **(Figure ES-15).** The 20-day average salinity at RM 9.2 is 1.7 **(Figure ES-16)**.

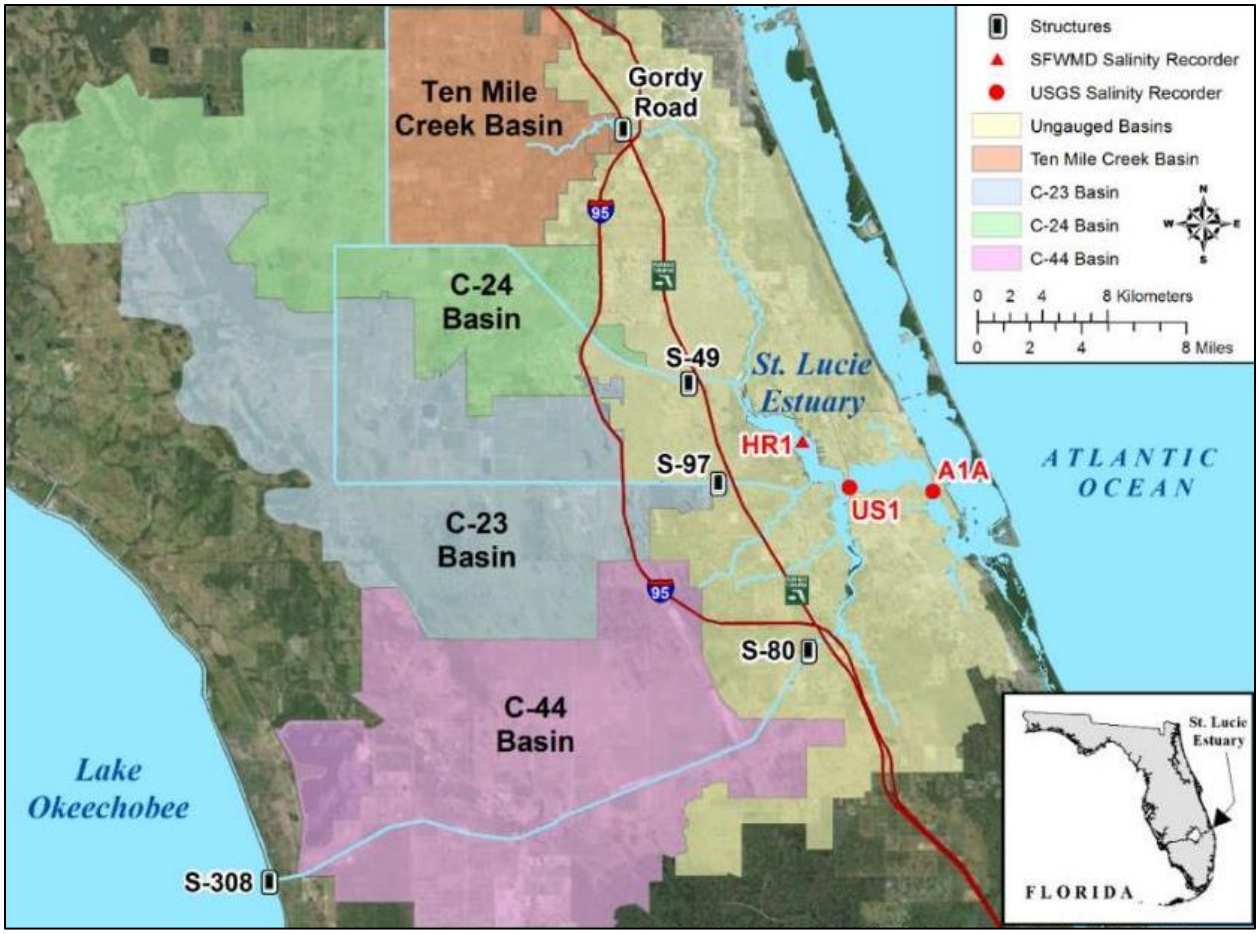

Figure ES-1. Basins, water control structures and salinity monitoring sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

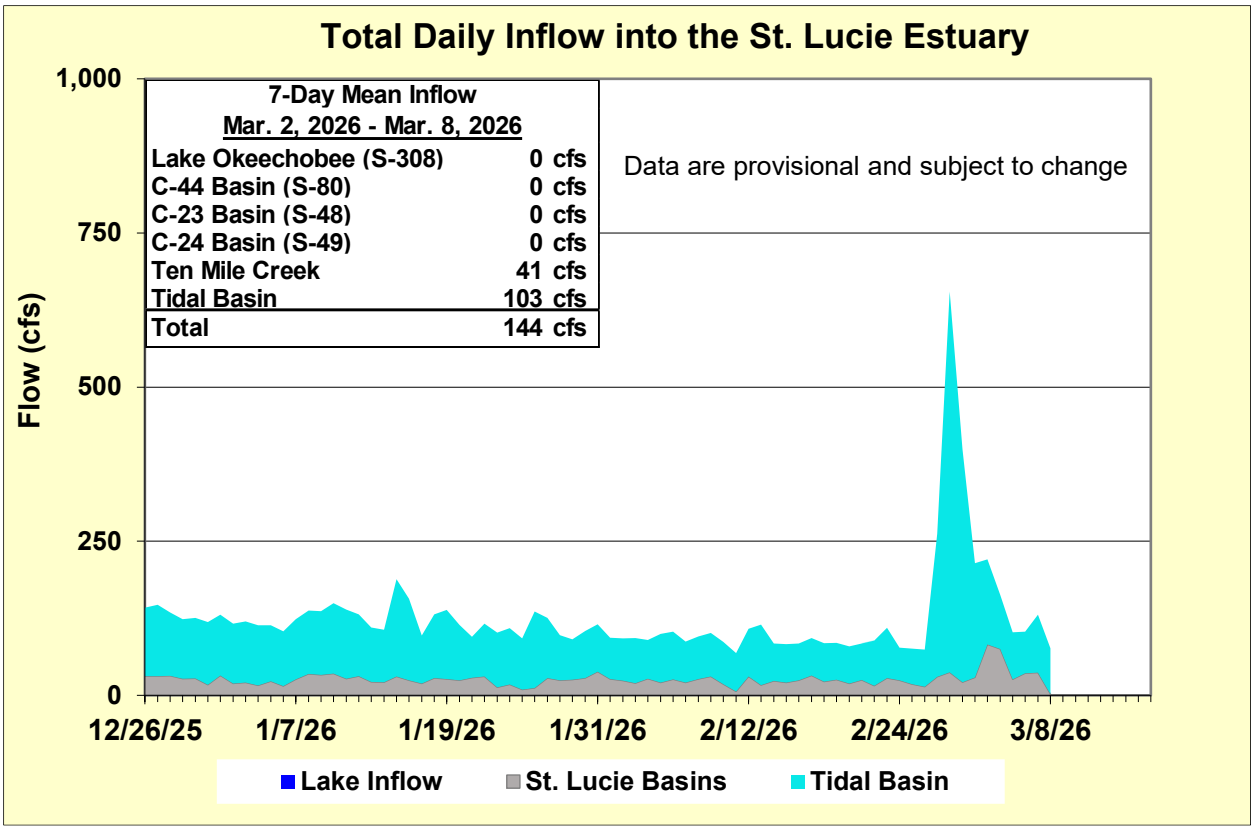

Figure ES-2. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee and runoff from the C-44, C-23, C-24, Ten Mile Creek, and Tidal Basins into the St. Lucie Estuary.

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)	**23.5** (24.3)	**24.5** (25.1)	10.0 – 25.0
US1 Bridge	**26.9** (27.6)	**26.9** (27.6)	10.0 – 25.0
A1A Bridge	**31.7** (32.1)	**32.0** (32.7)	10.0 – 25.0

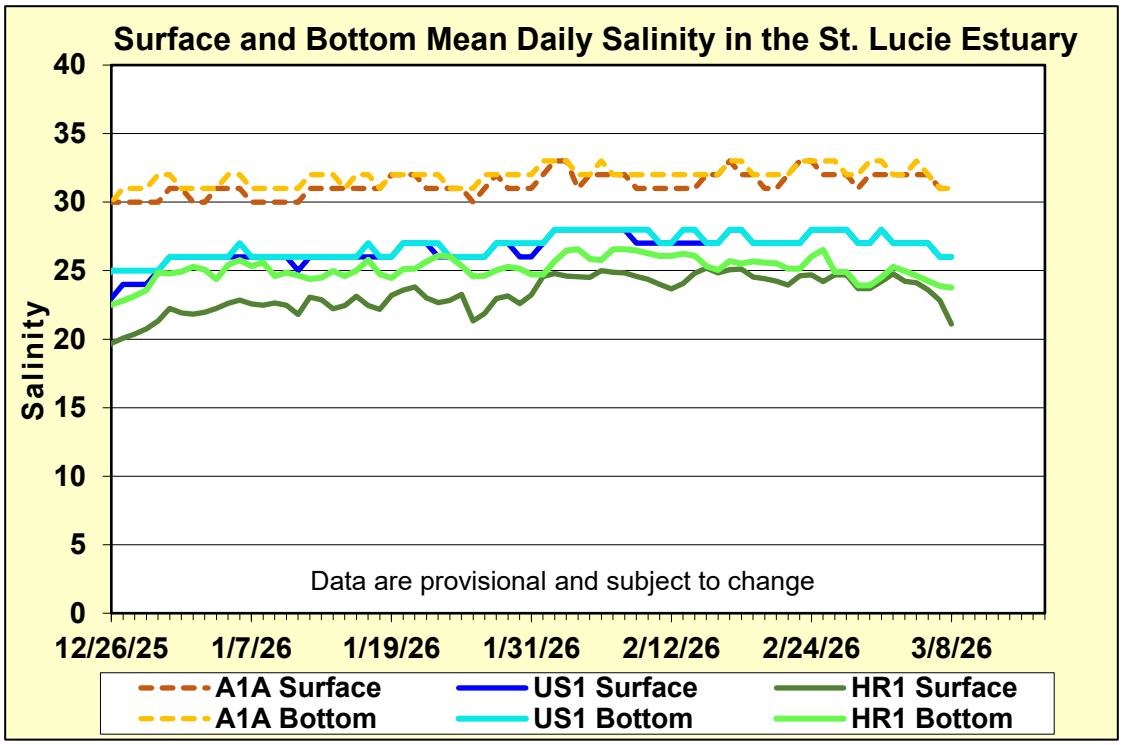

Figure ES-3. Mean daily salinity at the A1A, US1, and HR1 sites in the St. Lucie Estuary.

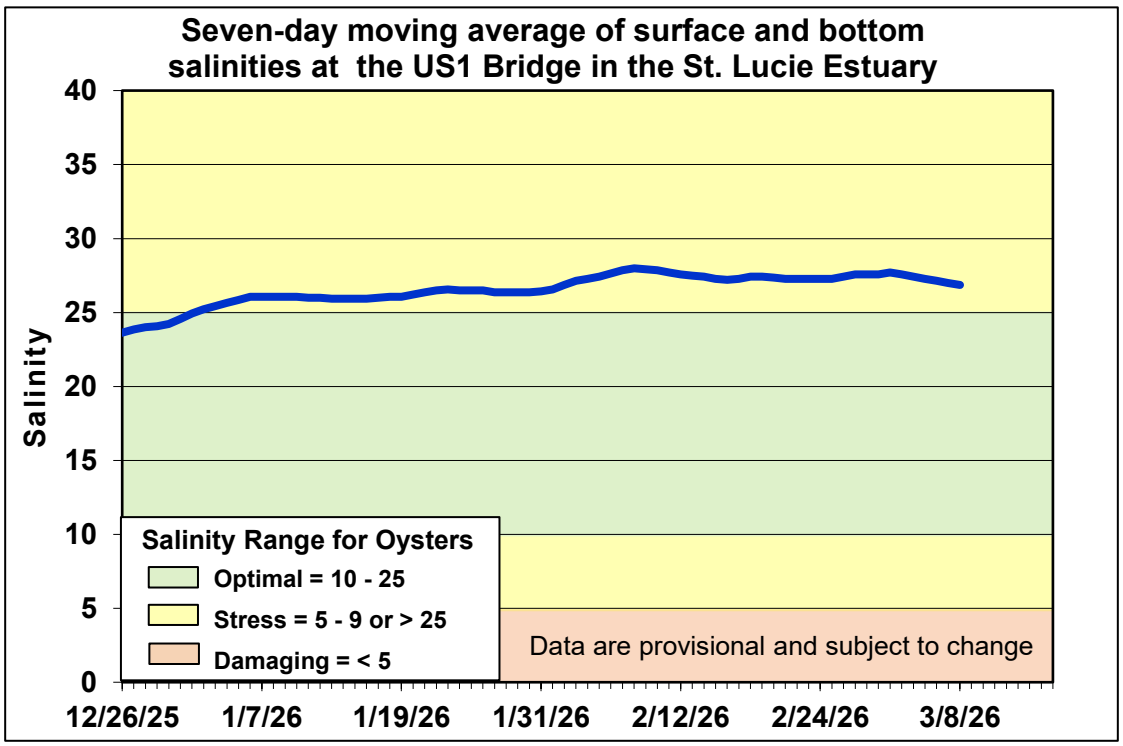

Figure ES-4. Seven-day moving average of the surface and bottom salinities at the US1 Bridge in the St. Lucie Estuary.

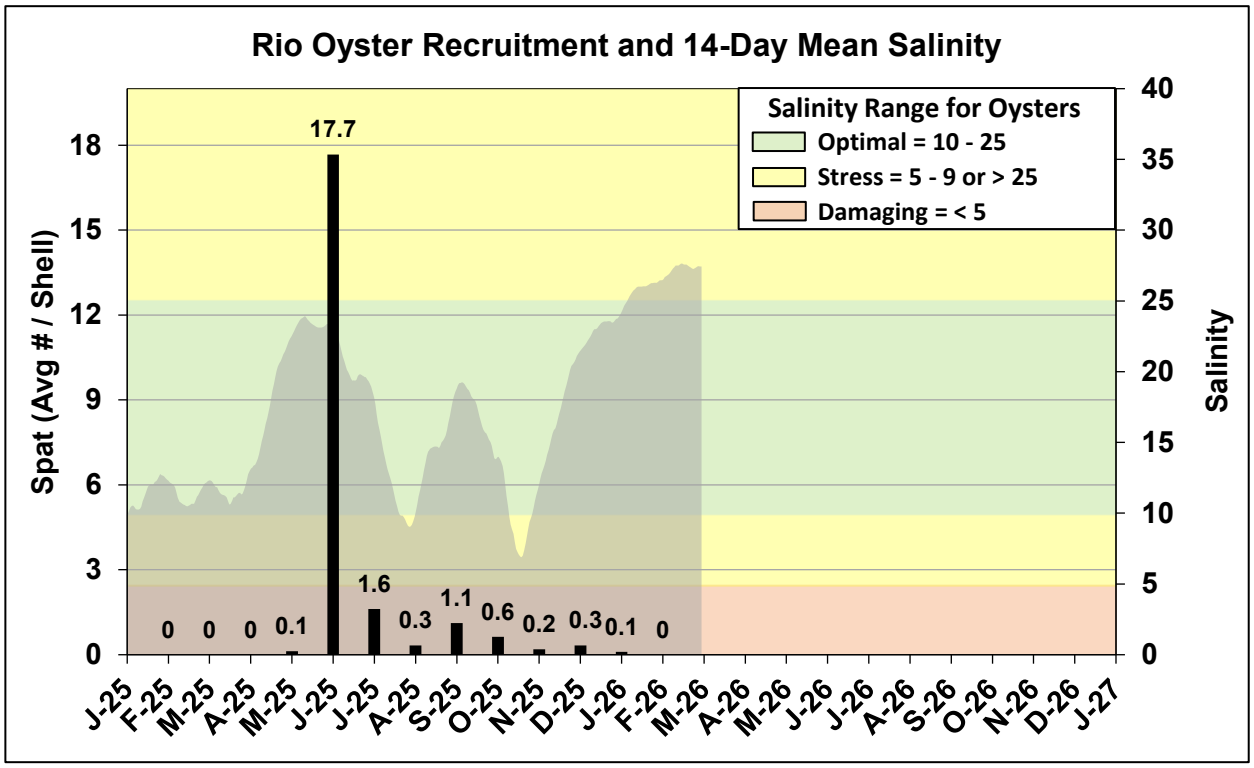

Figure ES-5. Mean oyster recruitment at the Rio oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at US1 Bridge.

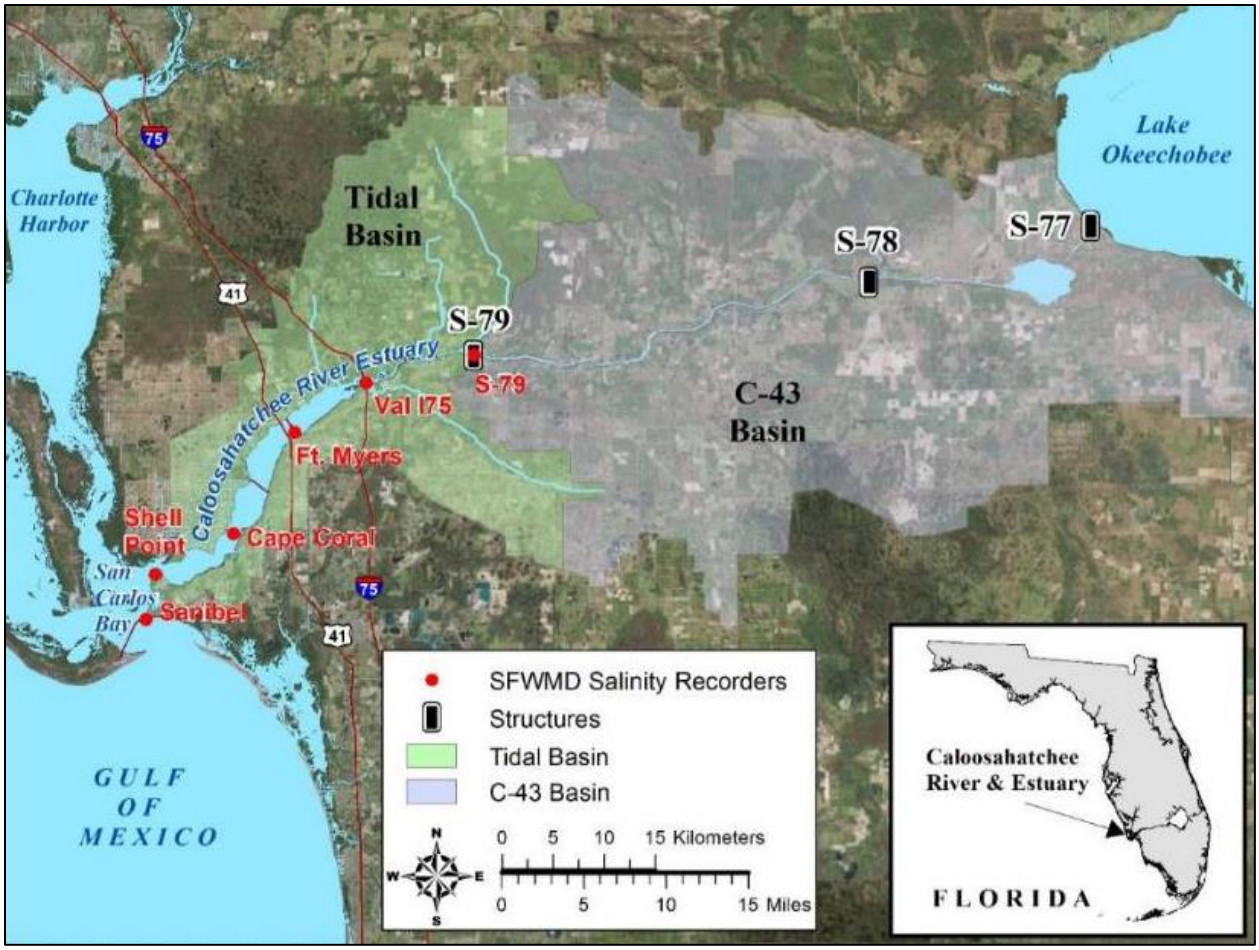

Figure ES-6. Basins, water control structures, and salinity monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

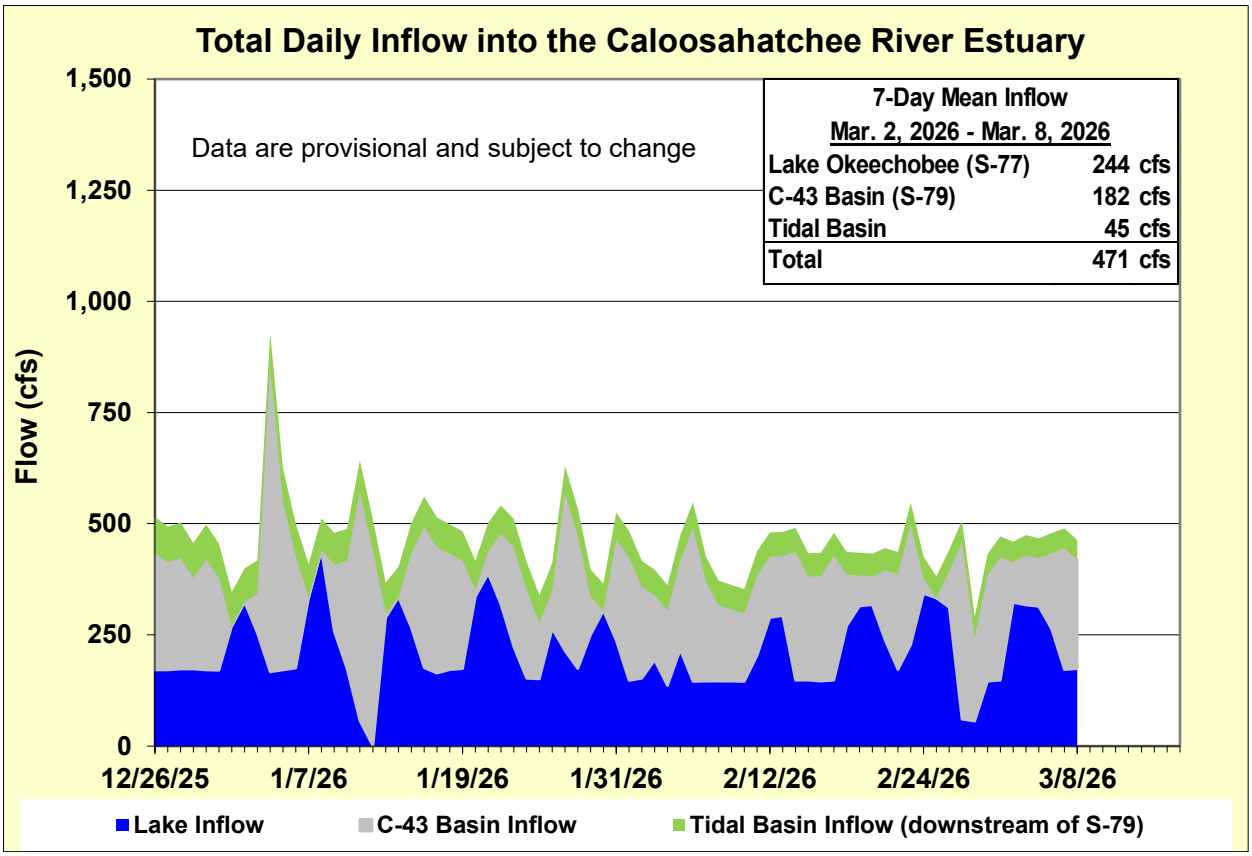

Figure ES-7. Total daily inflows from Lake Okeechobee, and runoff from the C-43 and Tidal basins into the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

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)	**9.5** (5.3)	**9.8** (5.6)	0.0 – 10.0
Val I-75	**9.5** (7.0)	**12.3** (9.0)	0.0 – 10.0
Fort Myers Yacht Basin	**17.6** (16.2)	**19.1** (18.3)	0.0 – 10.0
Cape Coral	**23.5** (24.9)	**24.8** (25.9)	10.0 – 25.0
Shell Point	**33.3** (32.4)	**33.8** (32.9)	10.0 – 25.0
Sanibel	**34.7** (34.9)	**36.1** (34.9)	10.0 – 25.0

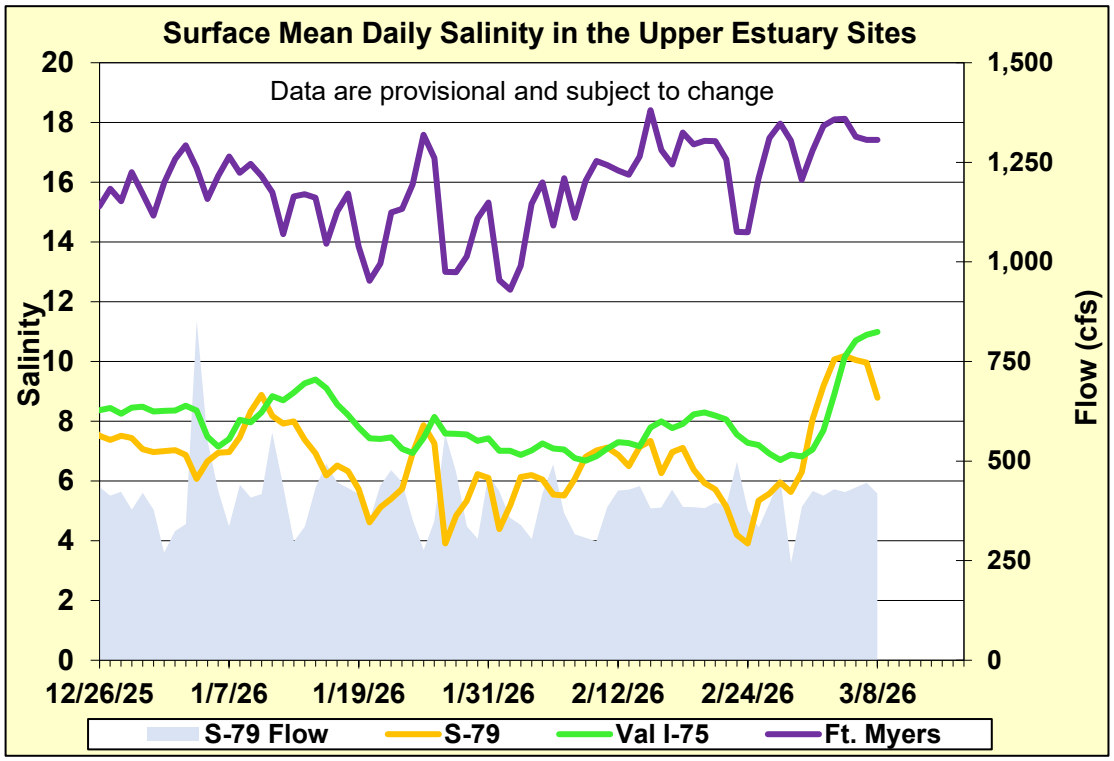

Figure ES-8. Mean daily salinity at upper Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

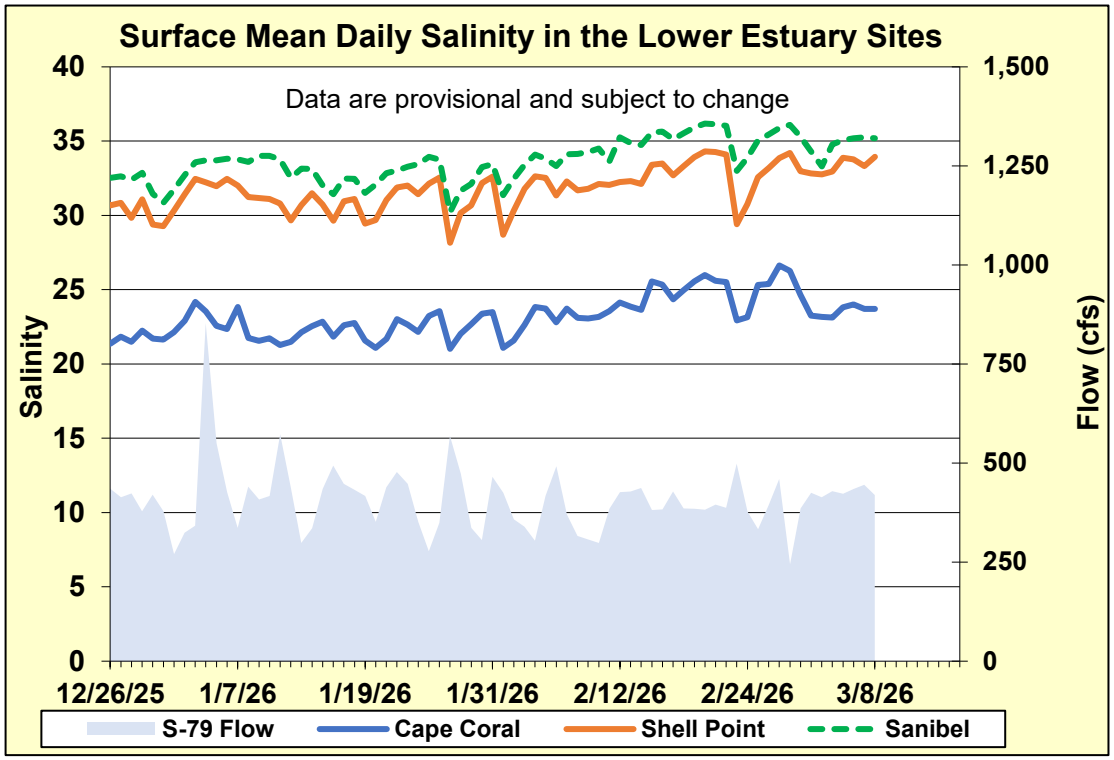

Figure ES-9. Mean daily surface salinity at lower Caloosahatchee River Estuary monitoring sites and mean daily flow at S-79.

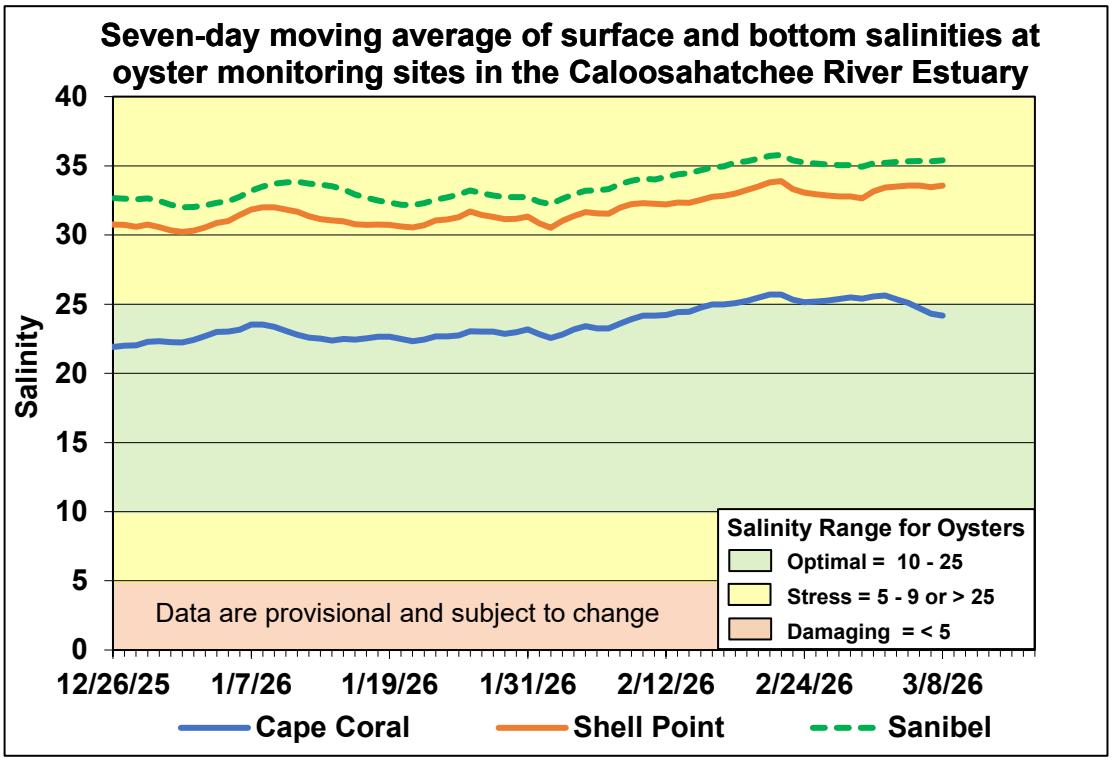

Figure ES-10. Seven-day moving average of surface and bottom salinities at Cape Coral, Shell Point, and Sanibel monitoring sites in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary.

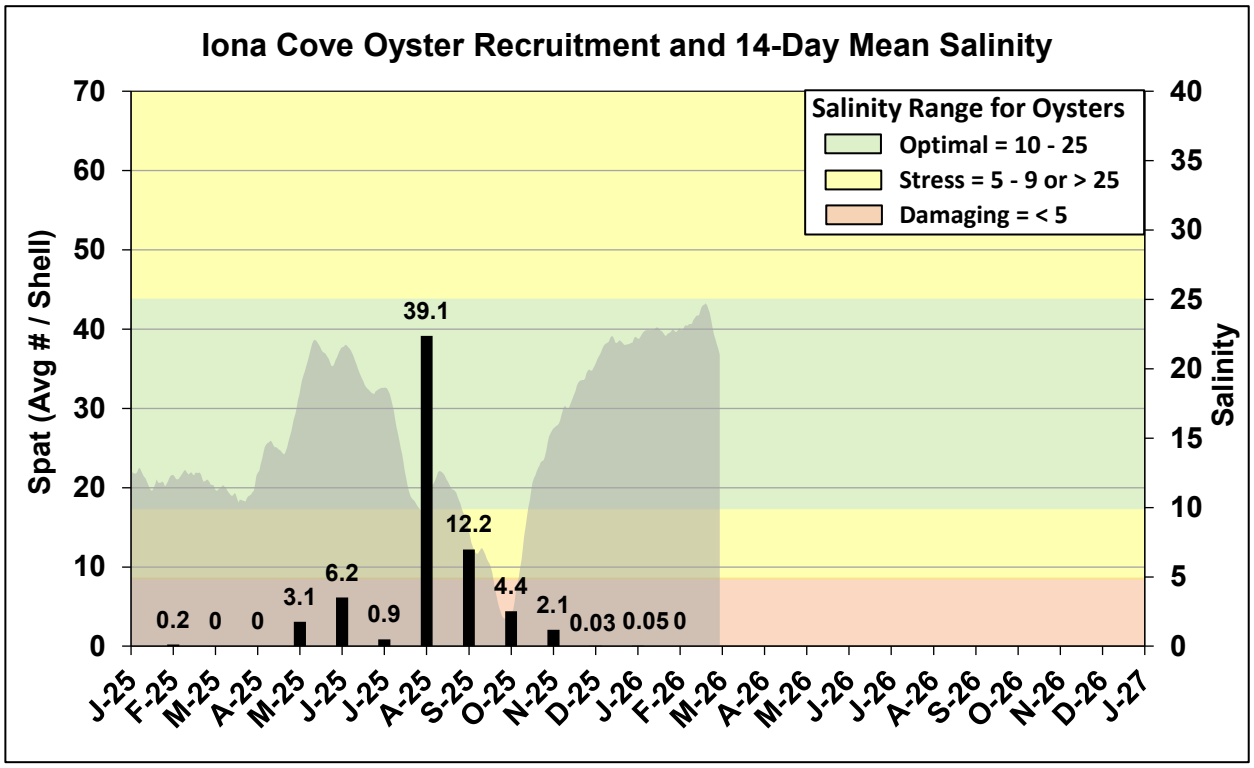

Figure ES-11. Mean oyster recruitment at the Iona Cove oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Cape Coral.

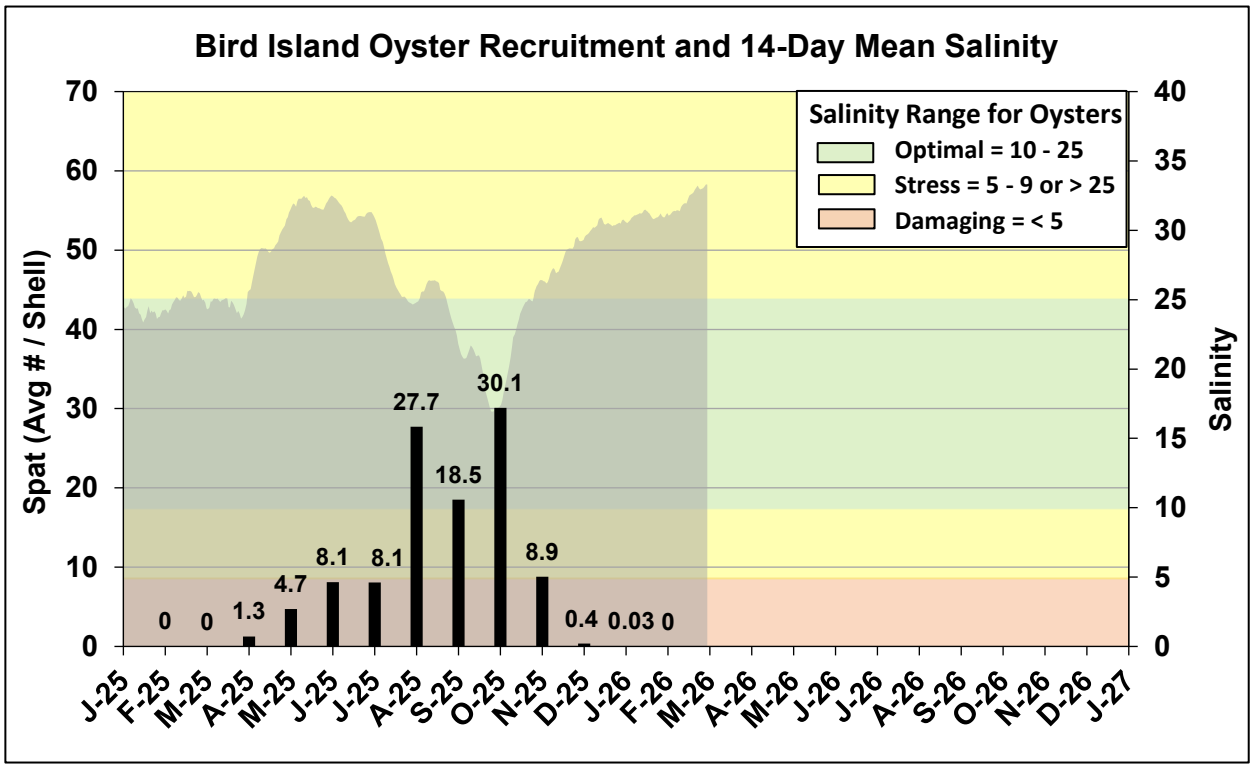

Figure ES-12. Mean oyster recruitment at the Bird Island oyster monitoring station and 14-day mean salinity at Shell Point.

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	450	42	8.1	8.7
B	750	42	6.4	7.9
C	1,000	42	4.8	7.5
D	1,500	42	2.6	6.7
E	2,000	42	1.4	6.2

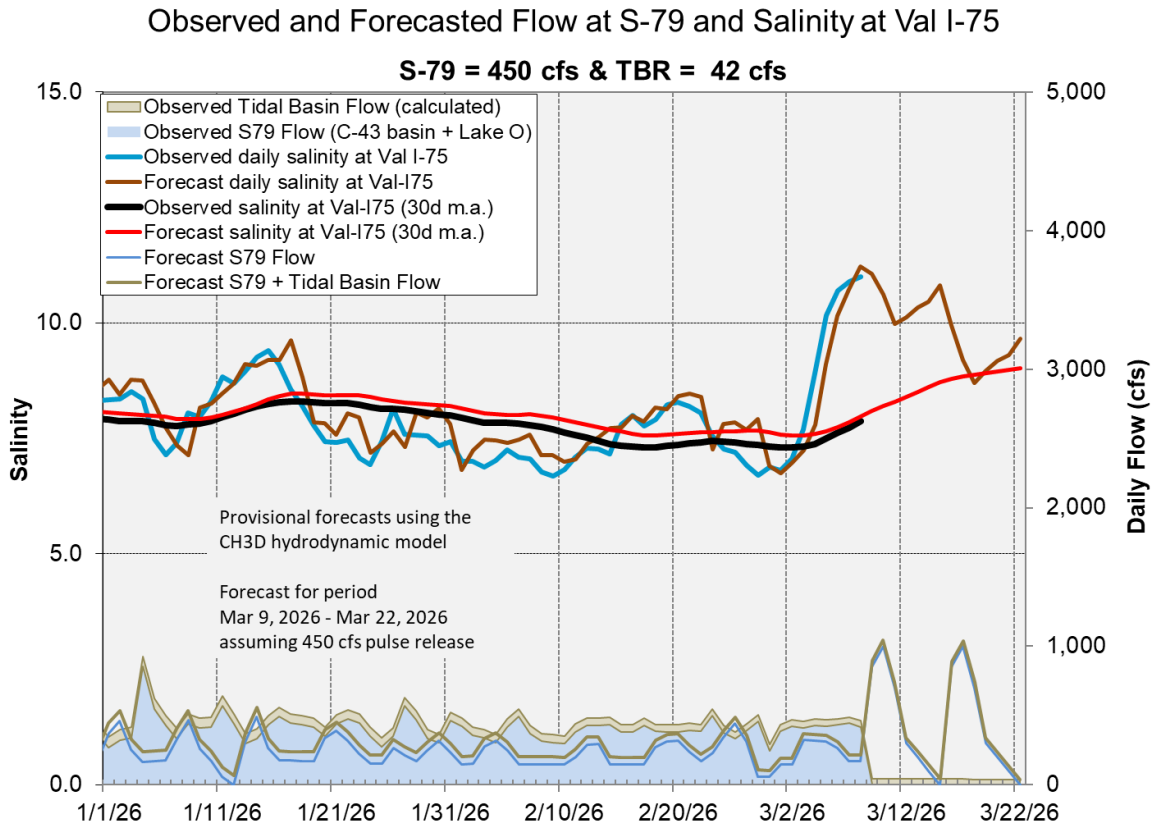

Figure ES-13. Surface salinity forecast at the Val I-75 site assuming a 450 cfs pulse release at S-79.

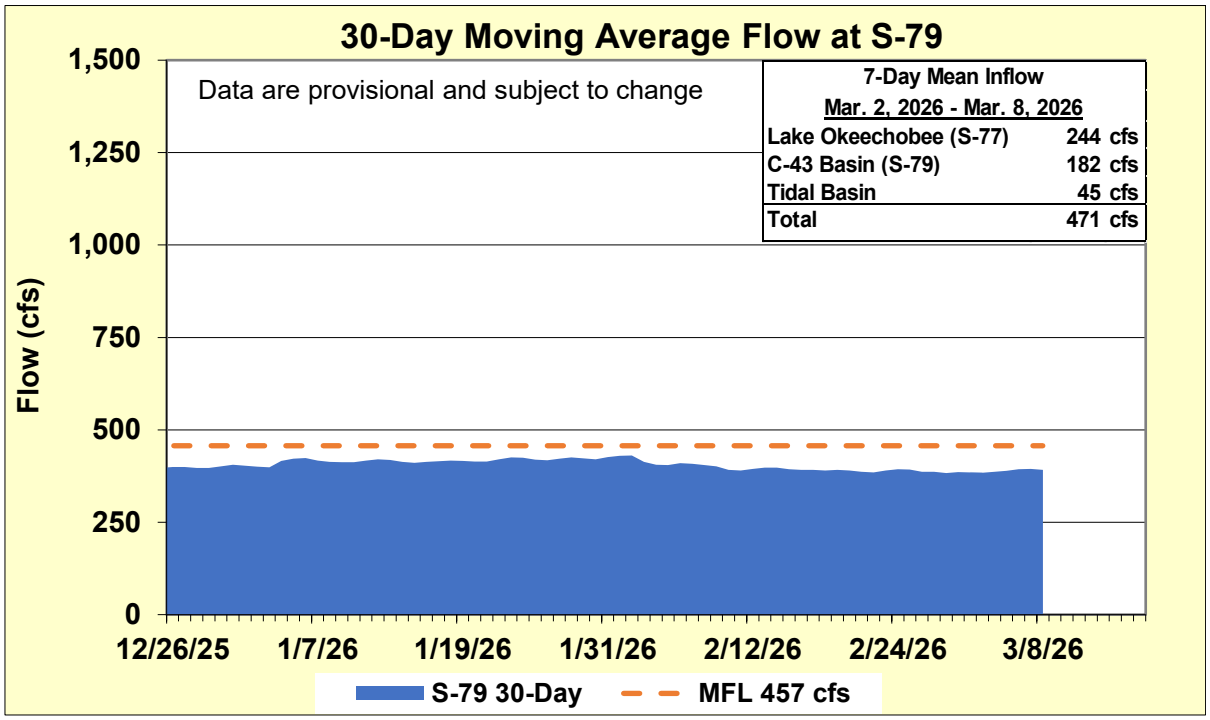

Figure ES-14. 30-day moving average flow at S-79 for the Caloosahatchee River Estuary Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels (MFL).

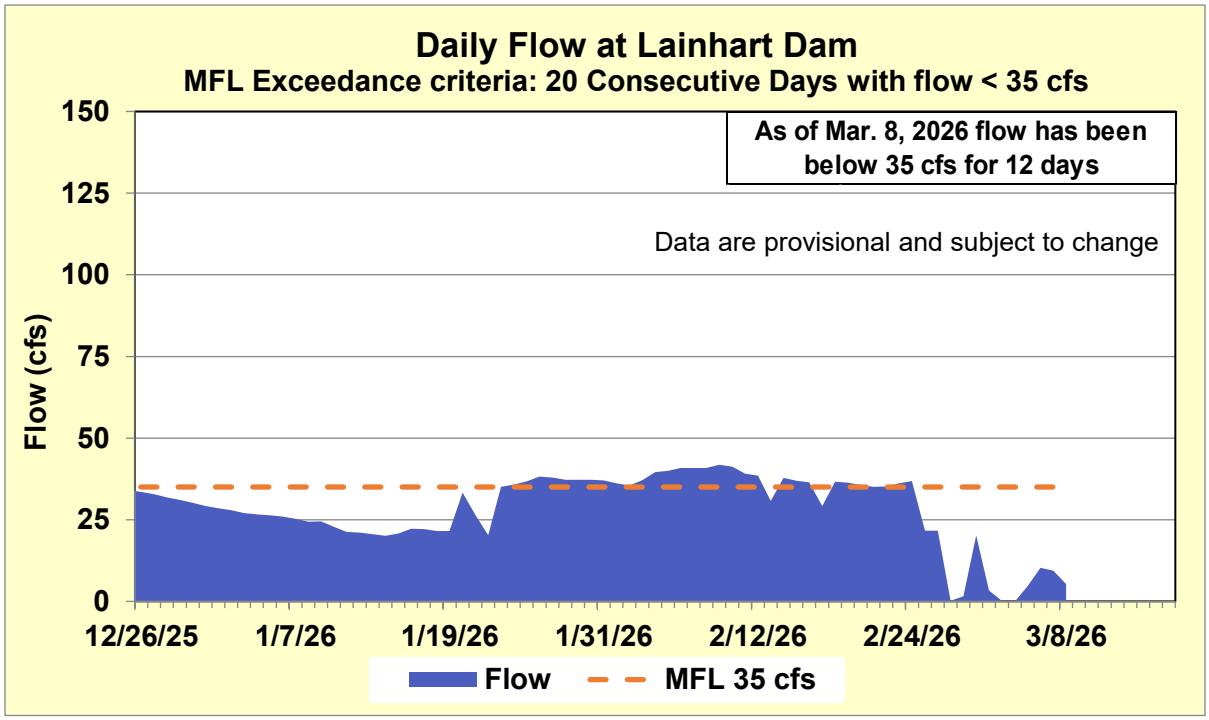

Figure ES-15. Average daily flow (cfs) at Lainhart Dam for the Loxahatchee River Estuary Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels (MFL).

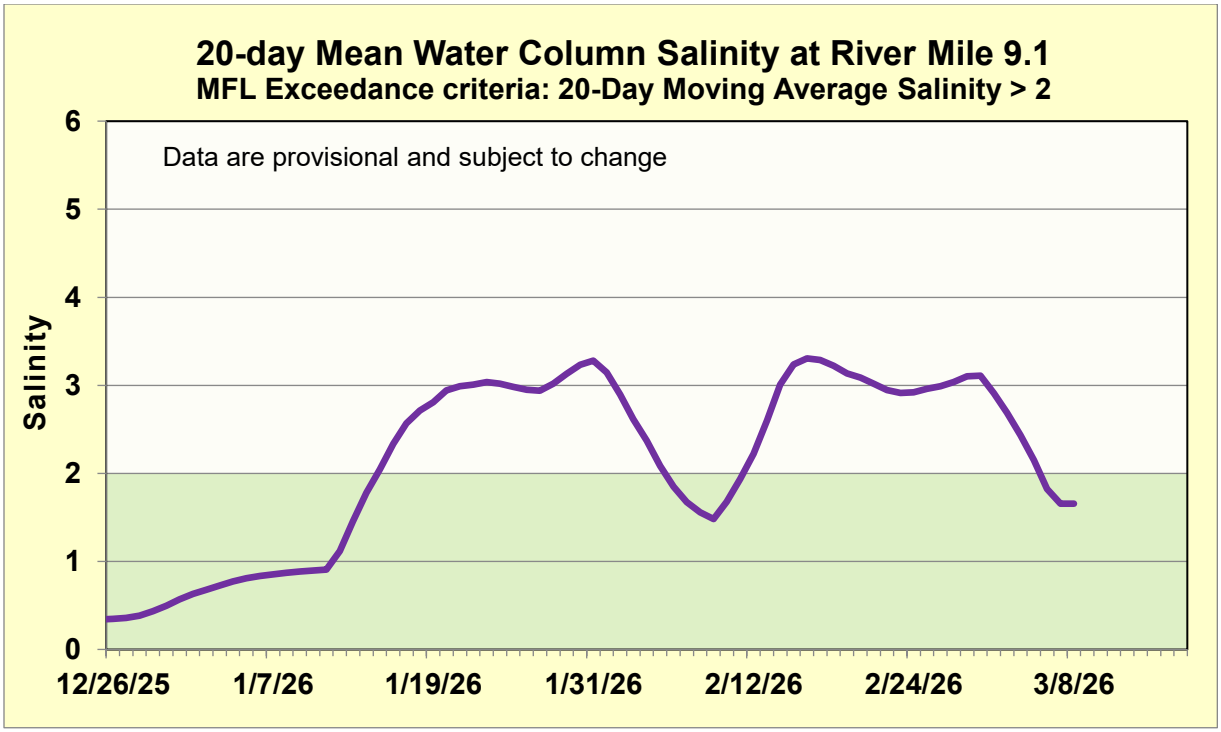

Figure ES-16. 20-day moving average salinity at Lainhart Dam for the Loxahatchee River Estuary Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels (MFL).

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 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 slightly above 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 or slightly above 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 and the Central Flow-way is off-line for vegetation rehabilitation. Most treatment cells are at 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 below 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 3/8/2026): ~596,800 ac-ft
- Lake Okeechobee releases to FEBs/STAs
  - 3/2/2026 to 3/8/2026: 100 ac-ft
  - WY 2026: ~ 93,100 ac-ft
- Vegetation management activities continue; planting emergents and treating exotics in various STA cells
- Most treatment cells are at or above target water depth

Estimated Inflow and Outflow Volumes
Mar. 2nd, 2026 - Mar. 8th, 2026 *Includes preliminary data*

	Total Inflow (acre-feet)	Total Outflow (acre-feet)
STA-1E	900	30
STA-1W	1,800	50
STA-2	2,800	1,300
STA-3/4	2,500	2,000
STA-5/6	0	0

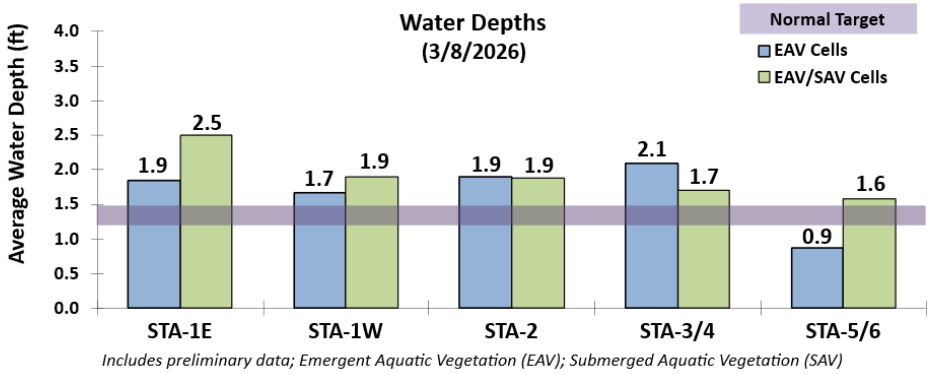

Figure S-1. STA depths and flow volumes

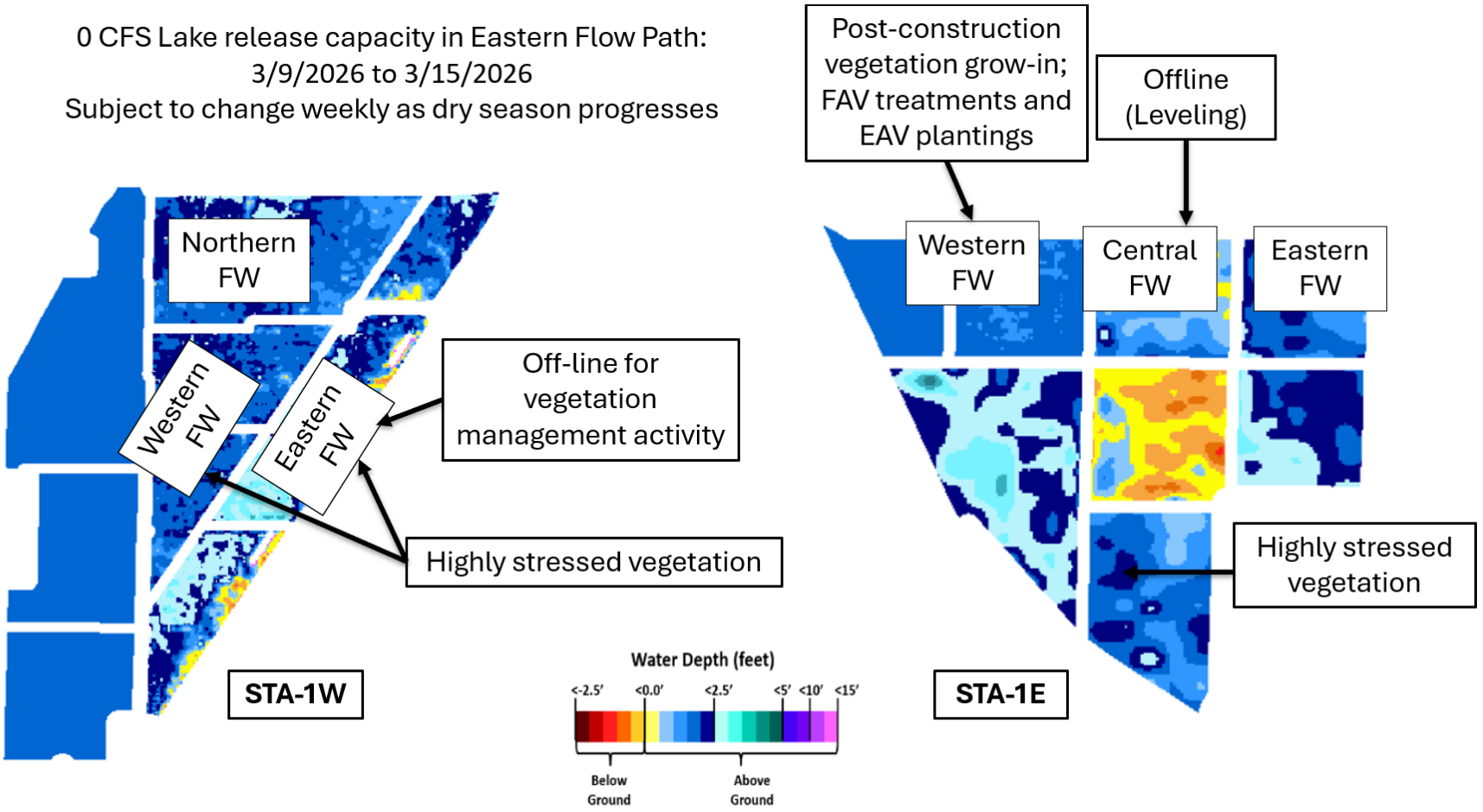

Figure S-2. Eastern Flow Path Weekly Status Report

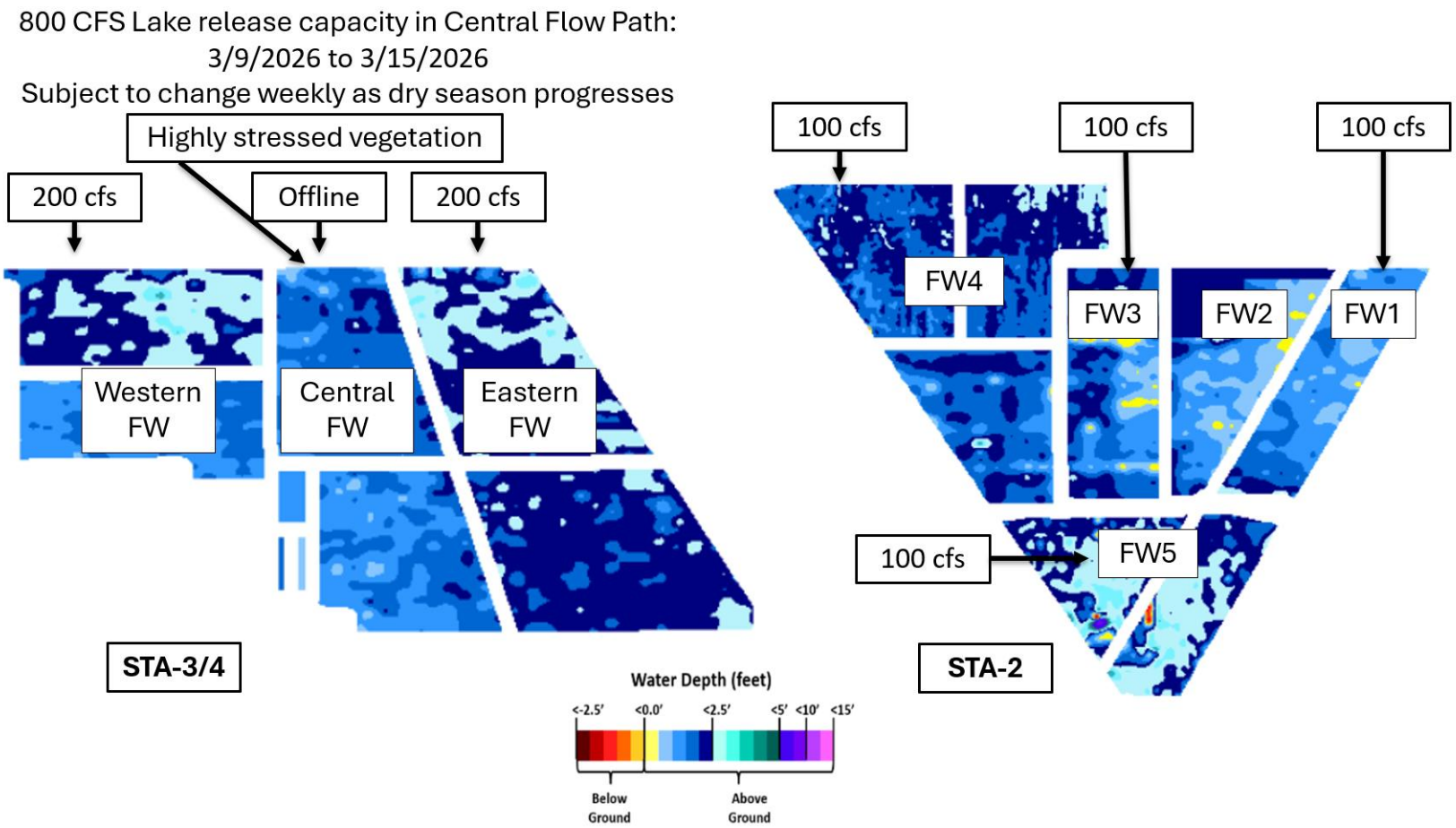

Figure S-3. Central Flow Path Weekly Status Report

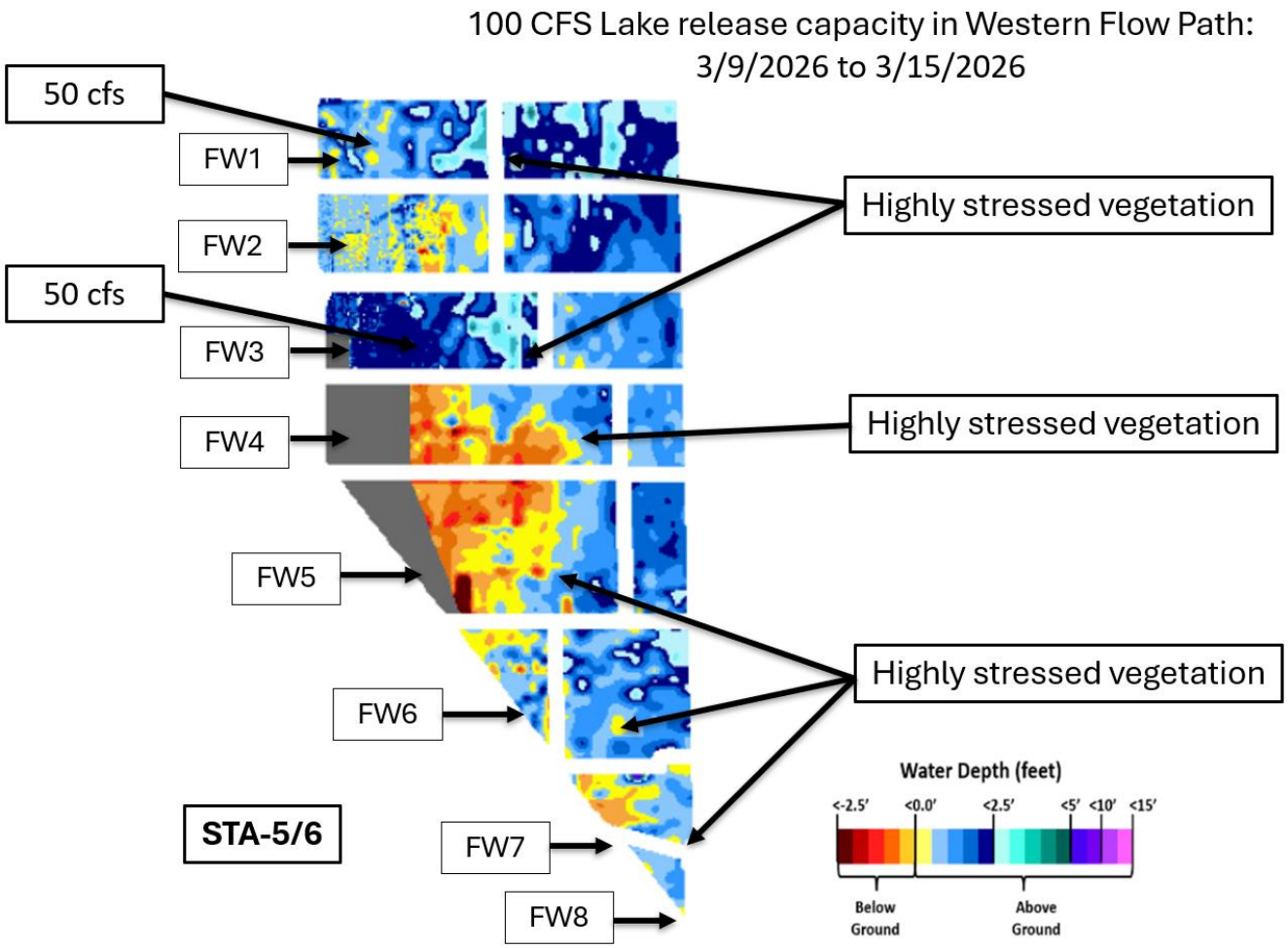

Figure S-4. Western Flow Path Weekly Status Report

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: Stage at the 1-8C gauge last week remained steady, with stage 0.61 feet below the A1 Zone regulation line on Monday, March 8, 2026 (**Figure EV-1**).

WCA-2A: Last week's depth change at the 2-17 gauge remained on a steady downward trend. Stages were 1.23 feet above the regulation line on Monday (**Figure EV-2**).

WCA-3A: The 3-gauge average remains well within Zone B and continues to fall faster than the slope of the regulation line. On Monday, stages were 1.81 feet below the Zone A regulation line (**Figure EV-3**). Stage at Gauge 62 (NW corner) dropped sharply at the end of last week and was below the Upper Schedule regulation line by 1.36 feet on Monday (**Figure EV-4**).

Water Depths

The SFWDAT model output for March 8, 2026, illustrates progressive recessions throughout the Everglades Protection Area (EPA). Dry conditions in northern WCA-1 continue to expand. Southern WCA-2A remains deep for this time of year (90th percentile), but dry in the north. Very dry conditions continued across the extent of Northern WCA-3A with stage in that sub-basin belowground; stage in central WCA-3A near gauge 64 is now belowground as well. Depths continue to decline steadily in WCA-3A South and -3B and remain very low for this time of year with potential impacts to system-wide ecology. Big Cypress National Preserve is also very low; below ground across most of the preserve with wildfire suppression continuing last week. Northeastern Shark River Slough remains hydrated, however hydrologic connectivity within the major sloughs of Everglades National Park (ENP) has declined. Comparing current conditions to depths over the last twenty years, a majority of Big Cypress, WCA-3A, WCA-3B, and ENP remain below the 10th percentiles. Depths throughout most of WCA-1 remain around the 10th percentile. Southeastern WCA-2A remains near the 90th percentile, but the spatial extent of that ponded region is decreasing quickly. See **Figures EV-5** and **EV-6**.

Taylor Slough and Florida Bay

Stages decreased across Taylor Slough over the past week, with an average decrease of 0.13 feet for the week. Changes ranged from −0.22 feet at E112 in the northern slough to −0.06 feet at Craighead Pond (CP) in the southern slough (**Figure EV-7** and **Figure EV-8**). Taylor Slough water levels remain below the recent average (WY1993-2016) for this time of year by 8.6 inches compared to before the Florida Bay Initiative (starting in 2017), an increase of 0.1 inches relative to last week. Stage at Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB) remains below ground, indicating a lack of water at the head of the slough (**Figure EV-8)**. The CP and TSB stages remain below the estimated historical average by 0.79 and 2.81 feet, respectively.

Average Florida Bay salinity was 35.0, an increase of 0.3 from last week. Salinity changes ranged from −2.0 at Terrapin Bay (TB) in the central nearshore region to +2.8 at Buoy Key (BK) in the western region (**Figure EV-7**). Salinity is above the estimated historical

average and at or near the WY2001-2016 Interquartile Range (IQR) 75th percentile in all three regions (**Figure EV-9**). Salinity in the western region is also at the hypersalinity threshold. Bay-wide salinity is above its recent average (WY1993-2016) for this time of year by 6.0, with no change from last week.

Salinity at the Taylor River (TR) station in the mangrove zone (tracked for the Florida Bay MFL) was 15.4, a decrease of 7.9 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 0.06 inches over the past week, based on the 18 gauges used for this report. Rainfall ranged from 0.00 inches at six stations to 0.38 inches at Johnson Key (JK) in the western region (**Figure EV-11**). Wind directions and speeds in Florida Bay ranged from 4.4 mph E on March 8th to 24.0 mph NE on March 5th (**Figure EV-11**).

The Taylor River, Mud Creek, and West Highway Creek flow stations are currently offline until further notice, so data from all five major creeks are unable to be assessed. Based on the available data from Trout and McCormick Creeks, average daily flow totaled 544 acre-feet, with net positive flows for the week. Total daily creek flow ranged from −89 acre-feet on March 8th to 1,288 acre-feet on March 3rd (**Figure EV-12**). Average daily flow from Alligator Creek was −24 acre-feet, with net negative flows for the week (**Figure EV-12**).

Implications/considerations for water management.

- Average stage recessions need to slow (around 0.05 feet per week) in order to protect the wetland ecology from damaging dry downs expected by the end of the dry season in most regions.
    - Dry conditions in WCA-3A and ENP will further extend the recent run of 4 consecutive poor wading bird nesting years into the 2026 nesting season.
    - With dry season La Niña conditions, conserving water within the WCAs will continue to be ecologically beneficial, especially in regions prone to dry out (e.g. WCA-3A North).

- Shallower conditions in south-central WCA-2A are needed to recover ridge and slough habitat. However, holding water high in the northern part of the system, as further dry conditions are predicted, may prove ecologically beneficial as the Everglades dry down begins to accelerate due to increasing evapotranspiration. Input of water into areas prone to wildfire and peat oxidation may help to buffer the worst of the ecological stress.

- Freshwater input into Taylor Slough and the C-111 basin could help moderate salinities and support recovery of estuarine conditions in Florida Bay.

- With flows from north to south within Shark River Slough now restricted, conserving water within WCA-3A and prioritizing southern deliveries through

Taylor Slough may provide greater ecological benefits at the broader ecosystem scale. Conserving water in the WCAs while providing limited 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	0.06	−0.08
WCA-2A	0.18	−0.07
WCA-2B	0.27	−0.12
WCA-3A	0.02	−0.14
WCA-3B	0.06	−0.16
ENP	0.09	−0.12

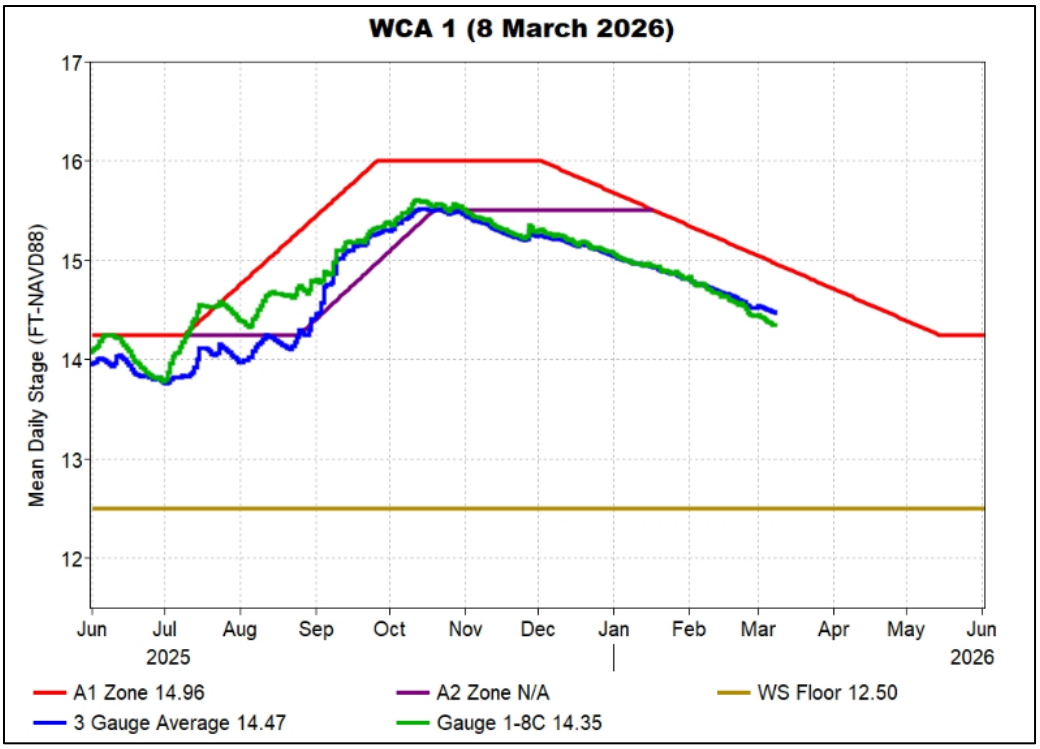

Figure EV-1. WCA-1 stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

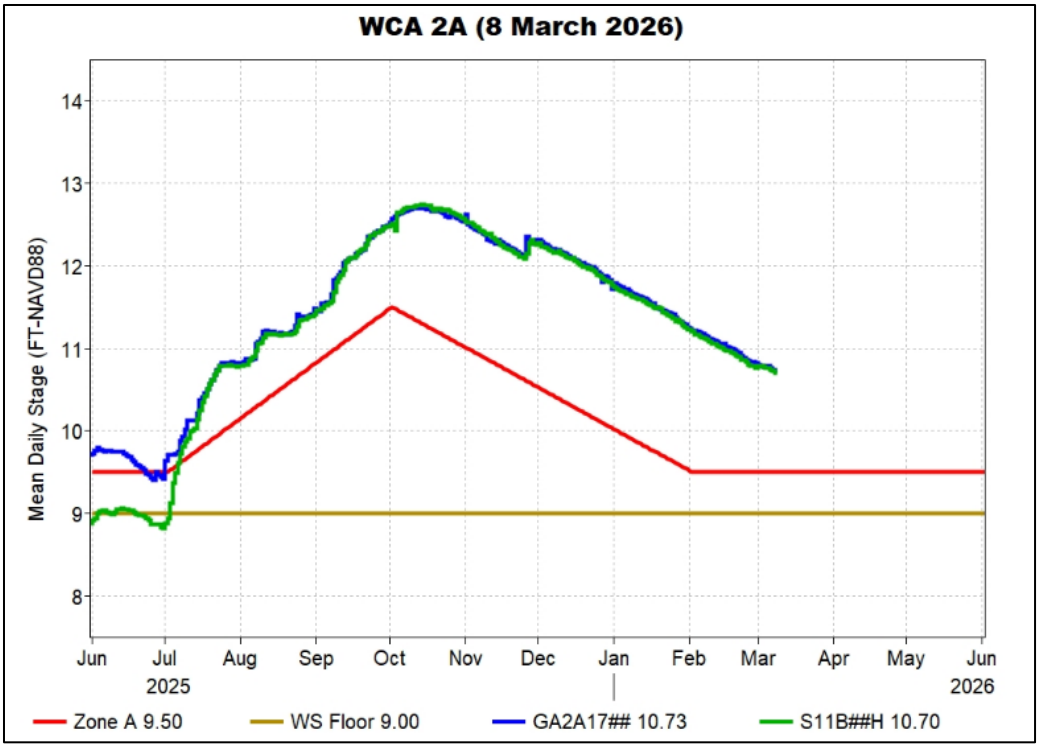

Figure EV-2. WCA-2A stage hydrographs and regulation schedule.

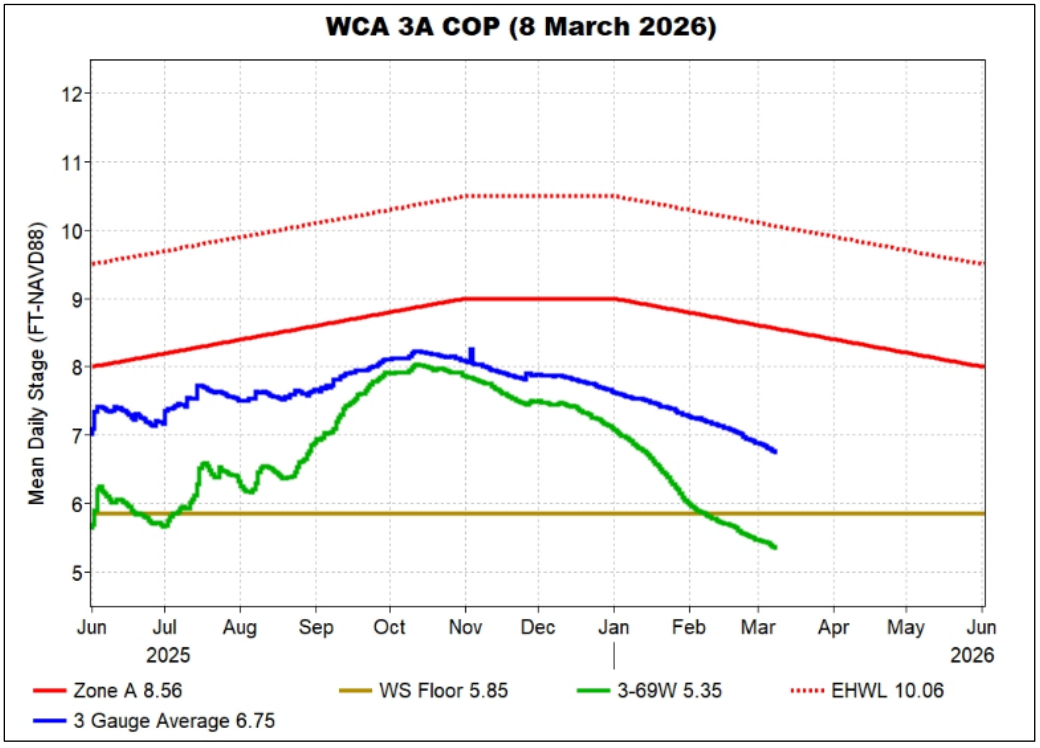

Figure EV-3. WCA-3A stage hydrographs (three-gauge average, 3-69W) and regulation schedule.

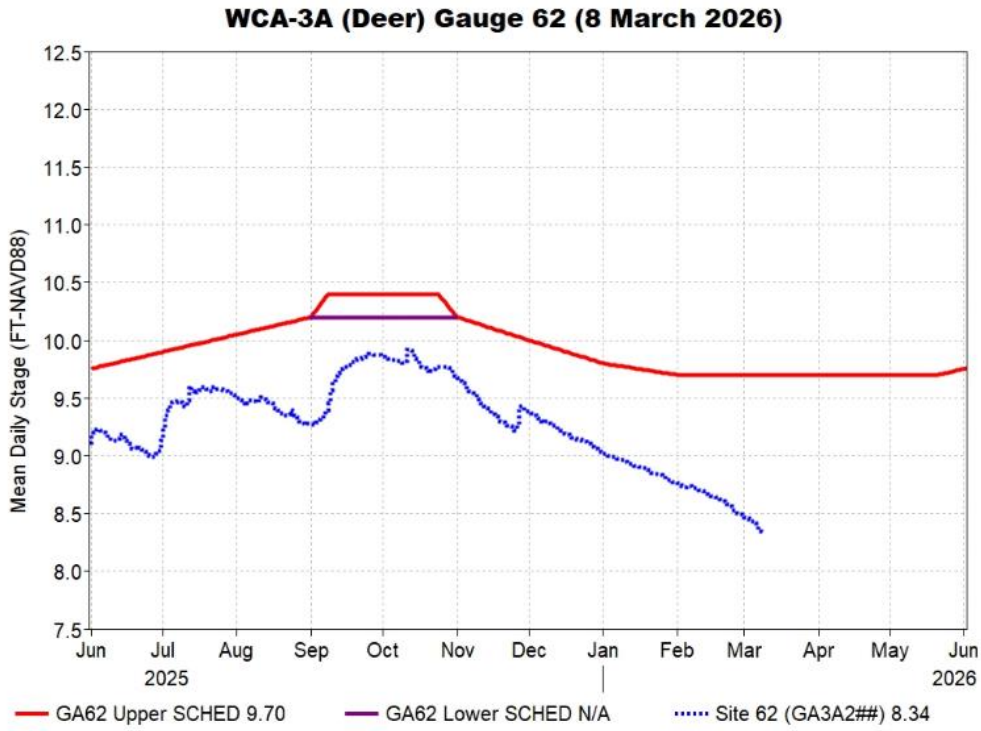

Figure EV-4. WCA-3A stage hydrograph (Deer gauge; Site 62) and regulation schedule.

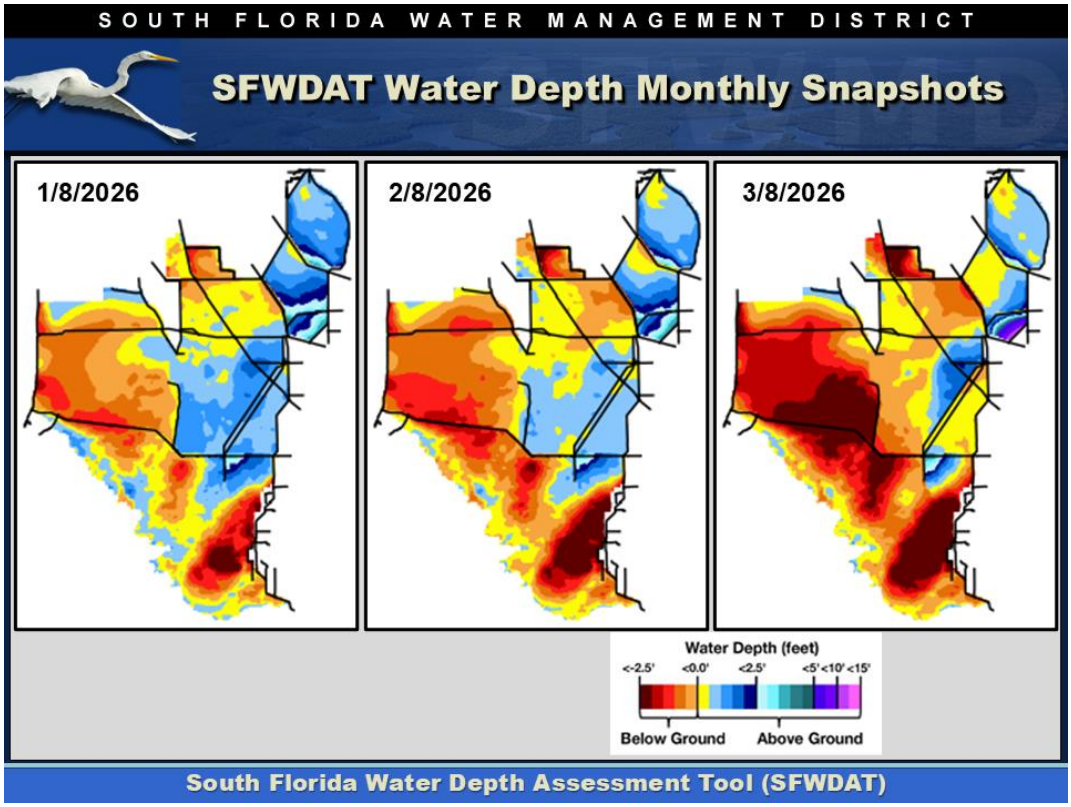

Figure EV-5. Everglades water depths from two months ago (left), one month ago (center) and present (right), based on SFWDAT.

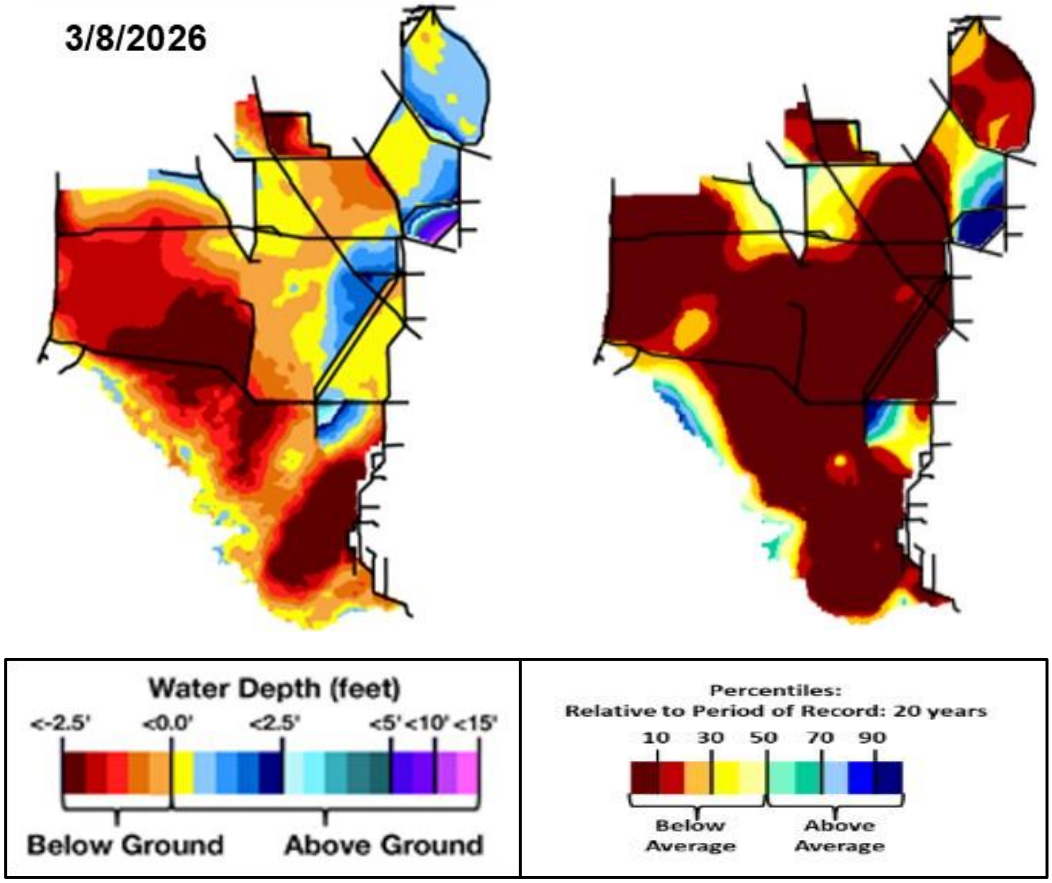

Figure EV-6. Present water depths (March 8, 2026) compared to the day of year relative to average (percentile) over the previous 20 years.

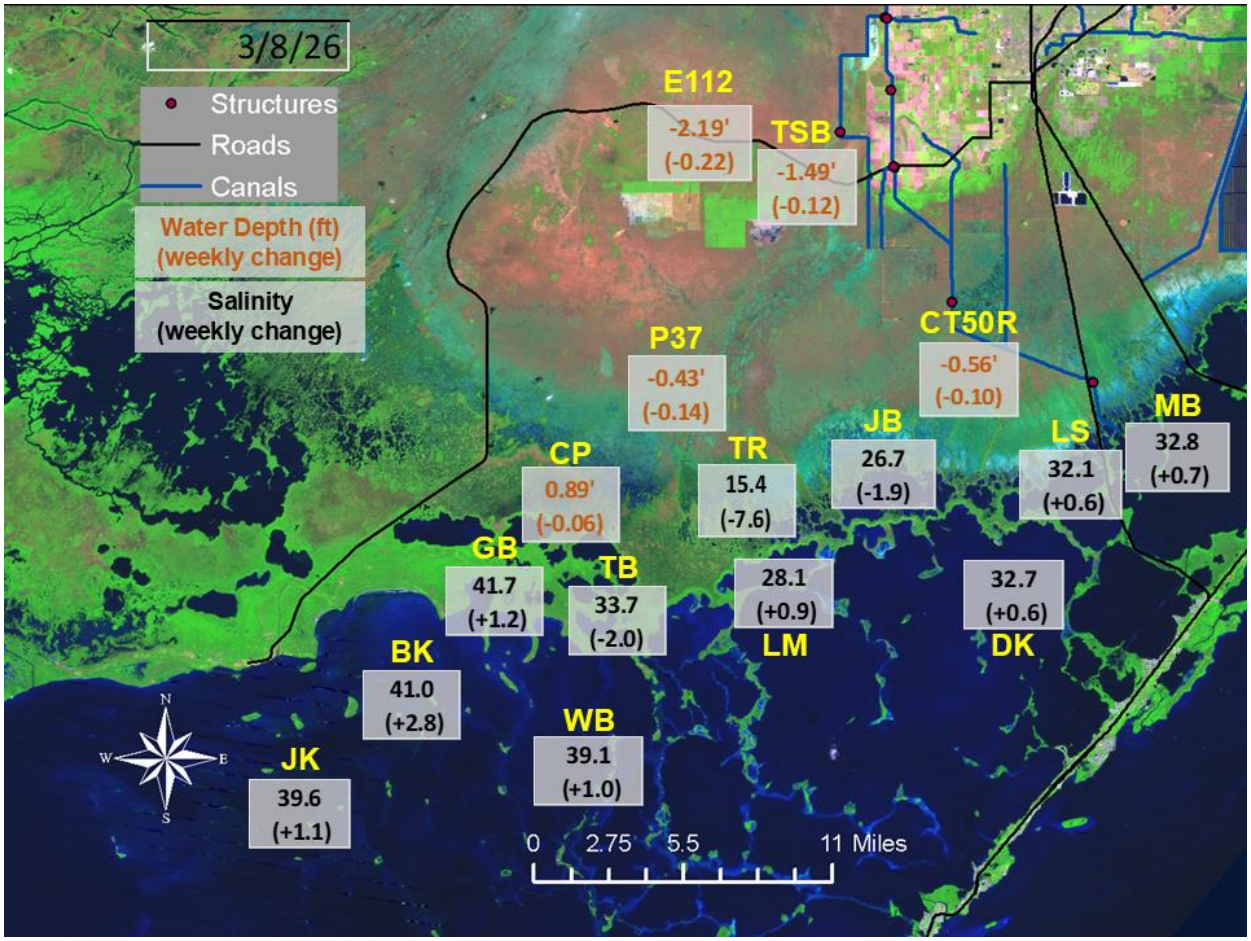

Figure EV-7. Taylor Slough water depths and Florida Bay salinities with changes since a week ago.

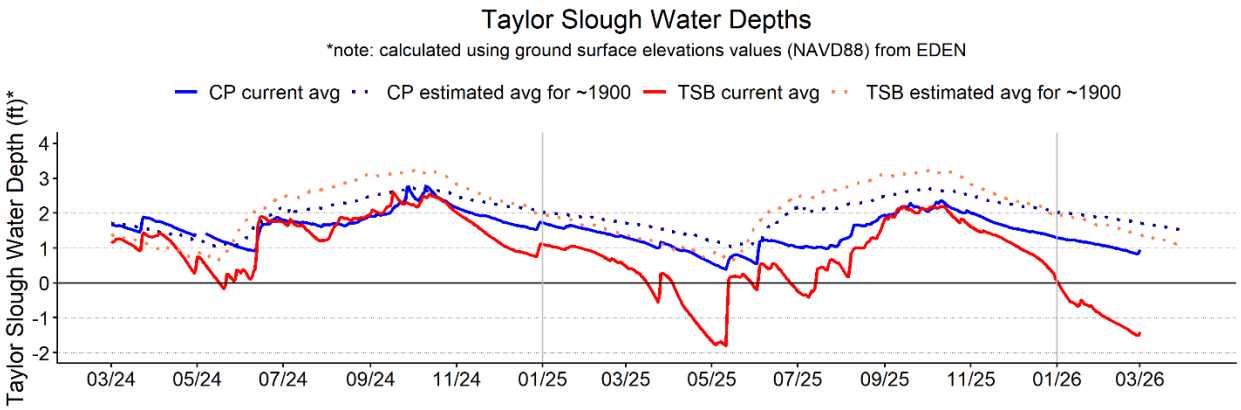

Figure EV-8. Taylor Slough water depth time series for Taylor Slough Bridge (TSB; northern slough) and Craighead Pond (CP; southern slough).

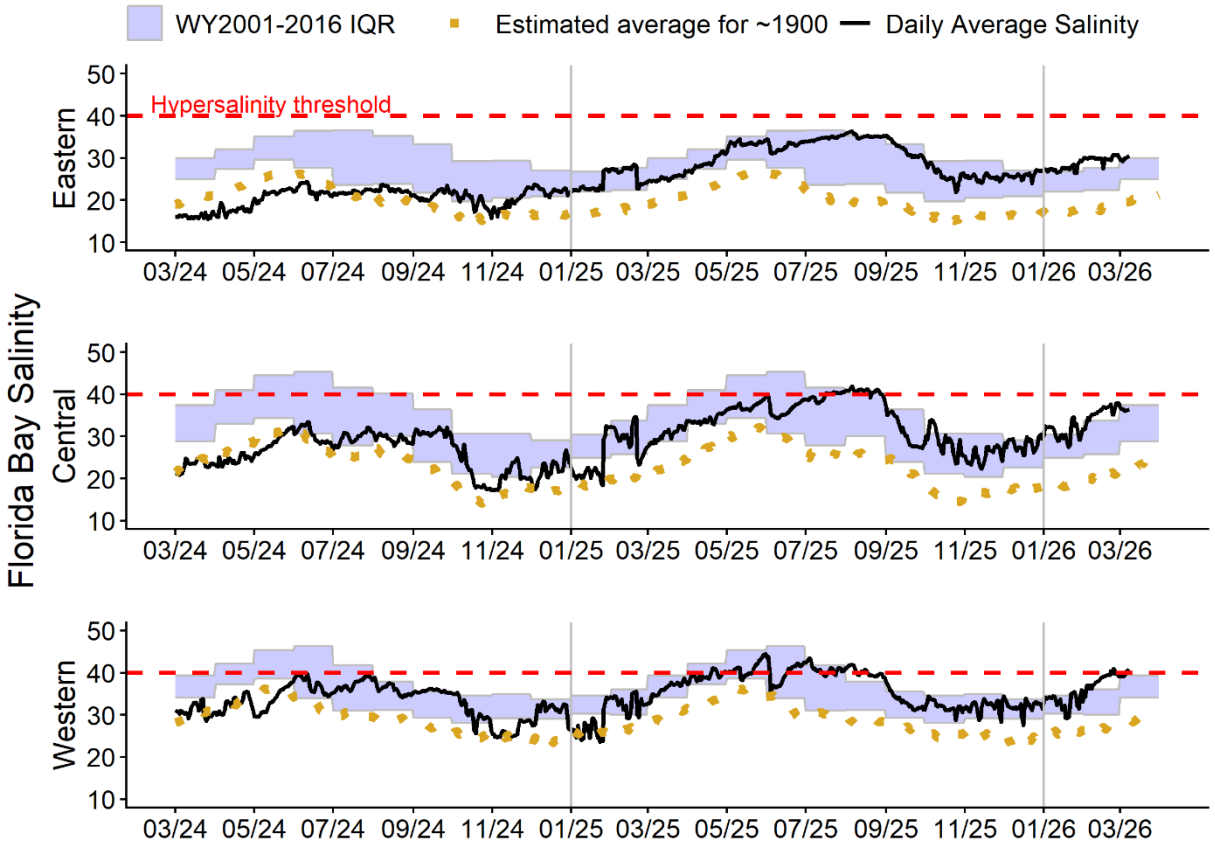

Figure EV-9. Eastern (top panel), Central (middle panel) and Western (bottom panel) Florida Bay daily average salinities with WY2001-2016 interquartile (25-75 percentile) ranges (IQR) and estimated historical daily average salinities. The hypersalinity threshold indicates the level at which salinities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

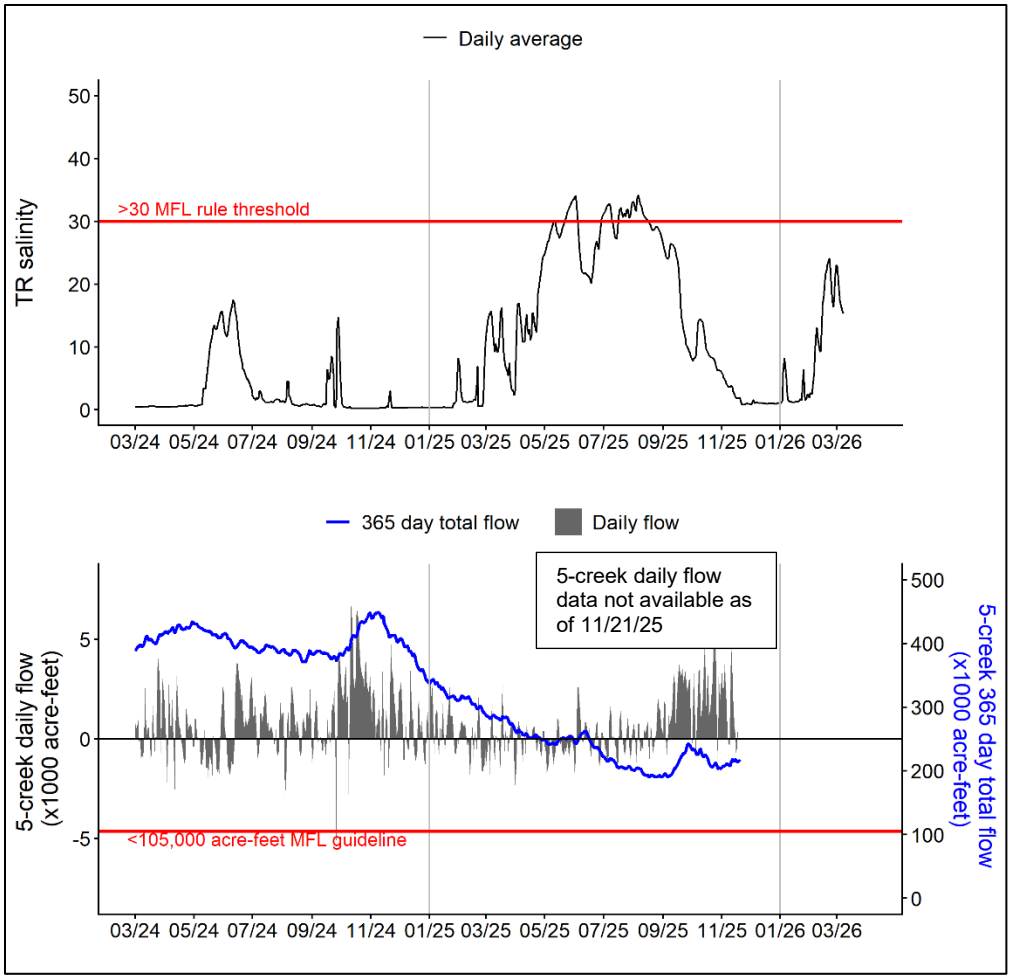

Figure EV-10. Daily average salinity at Taylor River (TR) tracked for the Florida Bay MFL criteria. The 365-day total creek flow MFL metric is not currently available due to missing creek flow data.

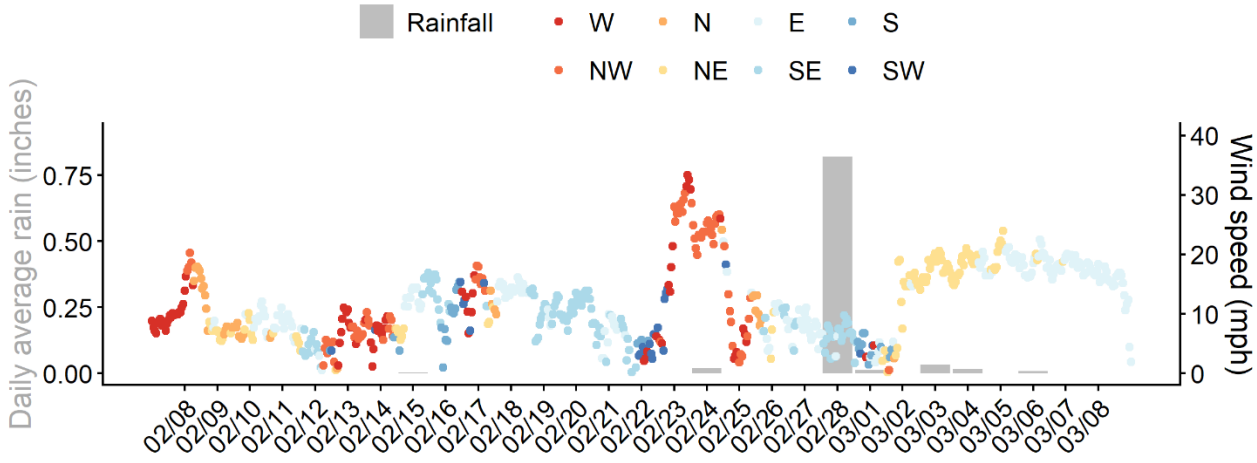

Figure EV-11. Daily average rain across Taylor Slough and Florida Bay, along with hourly average wind speed and direction (measured at Long Key) in Florida Bay over the past four weeks.

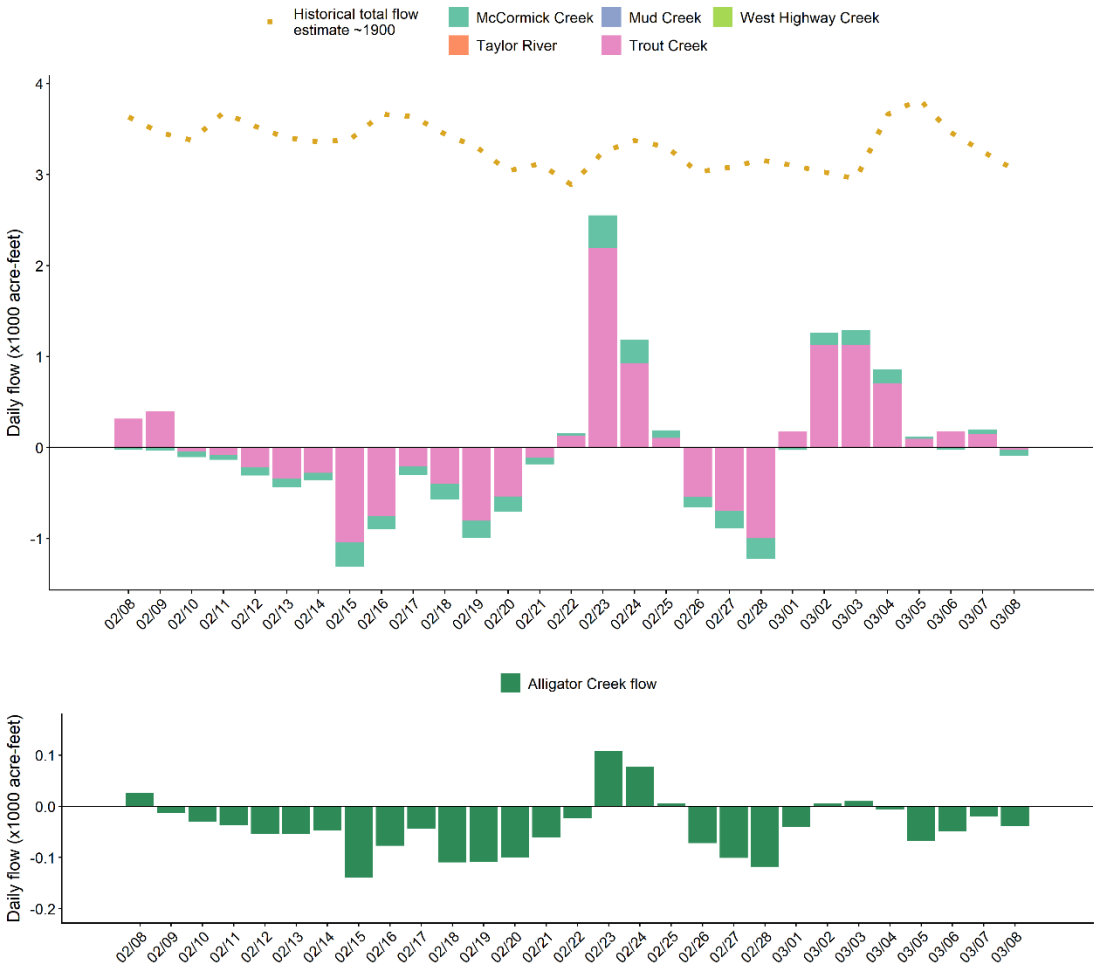

Figure EV-12. Top: daily average creek flow summed between the five major creeks with estimated historical daily flow over the past four weeks (**note**: data from Taylor River, Mud Creek and West Highway Creek are currently unavailable since November 21st, 2025). Bottom: Daily average Alligator Creek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

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

SFWMD Everglades Ecological Recommendations, March 10, 2026 (red is new)			
	Weekly change	Recommendation	Reasons
WCA-1	Stage decreased by 0.08 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 0.07 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	Maintain within basin (north versus south) and downstream habitat and wildlife.
WCA-2B	Stage decreased by 0.12 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 0.10 feet	A recession of no faster than 0.05 feet per week.	
Central WCA-3A S	Stage decreased by 0.14 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 0.12 feet		
WCA-3B	Stage decreased by 0.16 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 0.12 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 -0.22 feet to -0.06 feet	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.
FB- Salinity	Salinity changes ranged from -2.0 to +2.8	Move water southward as possible.	When available, provide freshwater to promote water movement.