

MEMORANDUM

TO: Luis Alejandro, Chief, Water Management Section (USACE)

FROM: John Mitnik, Director, Operations, Engineering & Construction Division (SFWMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMD)

DATE: August 25, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for August 23, 2016 to August 29, 2016

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from August 23, 2016 to August 29, 2016. On August 22 the Lake Okeechobee stage was 14.72 feet, NGVD, in the middle third of the Low Sub-band, and within one foot of the Intermediate Sub-band of the 2008 LORS. During last week the lake stage decreased 0.05 feet.

District wide total rainfall for August up to date is 6% below average. There is a possibility for south Florida to receive large amounts of rainfall by the end of this operational period due to tropical storm activity.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent Climate Prediction Center (CPC) outlook for Central and South Florida indicates equal chances of above-normal, normal, or below-normal rainfall for September and for the 3-month window September to November 2016. The long-range CPC outlook for the 2016-17 dry season is for increased chances of below-normal rainfall.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With the Lake Okeechobee stage within the Low Sub-band, Part C of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends "Up to Maximum Practicable to the WCAs if desirable or with minimum Everglades Impacts. Otherwise no releases to the WCAs".

Over the 7-day period from August 15, 2016 to August 21, 2016, Lake Okeechobee regulatory releases south through the three major EAA canals were not implemented. The A-1 FEB received EAA runoff, but the outflows to STA 2 and STA 3/4 were much larger. Releases from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 amounted to about 2,400 ac-feet. There were no southward releases from the Lake for water supply.

WCA-1 stage is in the middle of Zone A-2 of its regulation schedule and steady. The USACE continues to request the SFWMD send Lake regulatory releases to WCA-1. These releases will be implemented if conveyance capacity is available in the canals and treatment capacity in the STAs. The USACE also requests the SFWMD not send Lake Okeechobee releases to WCA-2A and WCA-3A. A-1 FEB has about one half of its capacity available, but it is being reserved for rainfall in the next few days. Substantial discharges from STA-2 and STA-3/4 will continue into WCA-2A and 3A, using S-7, G-335/G-436 and S-8.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the Low Sub-band, less than one foot from the Intermediate Sub-band, and with tributary hydrologic conditions within the Wet classification, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance suggests a change in the release limits this week to Base Flow: "S-79 up to 450 cfs and S-80 up to 200 cfs", due to the switch in the Multi-seasonal Lake Okeechobee Net Inflow classification from the Wet to the Normal category. Considering the State of Emergency declared by Governor Rick Scott and the possible extreme rainfall by the end of this operational period, the District recommends that the USACE use operational flexibility in the LORS 2008 Water Control Plan to maintain release targets not to exceed the values for last week, S-79 at 2,800 cfs and S-80 at 650 cfs. This will allow USACE to implement a decrease in releases should the extremely wet forecast not materialize, or maintain sizeable releases prior to, and/or after the storm.

Salinities at the US 1 Bridge location in the St. Lucie Estuary remained in the fair range. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinity conditions remain favorable for tape grass in the upper estuary, and poor for oysters at the Cape Coral Bridge, but showing some increase. At Shell Point salinity remained in the good range for adult oysters.