

MEMORANDUM

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

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

DATE: August 4, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for August 2, 2016 to August 8, 2016

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from August 2, 2016 to August 8, 2016. On August 1 the Lake Okeechobee stage was 14.63 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 receded 0.05 feet.

District wide total rainfall for July was 25% below average. Rainfall for the upcoming first and second weeks is forecast by the SFWMD to be average and below-average respectively.

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 August 2016. The CPC rainfall outlooks for the 3-month window August to October shows slightly increased chances of above-normal rainfall for the entire District area. 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 July 25, 2016 to July 31, 2016, Lake Okeechobee releases south totaled 25,300 acre-feet. Lake releases to STA-1E and 1W were 4,300 ac-feet and 11,600 ac-feet to the A-1 FEB. STA 3/4 and STA-2 received 8,600 ac-feet from the A-1 FEB. Releases from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 amounted to about 4,900 ac-feet. Southward releases from the Lake for water supply were 9,400 ac-feet.

The WCA-1 stage remains near the top of Zone B of its regulation schedule this week, and the USACE continues to request the SFWMD to send Lake regulatory releases to WCA-1. The USACE also requests the SFWMD send Lake Okeechobee releases to WCA-2A as there is now sufficient capacity to tide to moderate the stages in WCA-2A with these inflows. The SFWMD will continue to send Lake Okeechobee releases through S-354 and G-372 to the A-1 FEB and then pass through most of this water to STA-2 and STA-3/4. Most of the discharge from STA-2 and STA-3/4 will be sent to WCA-2A using S-7 and G-335/G-436 with some water sent to NE WCA-3A through S-150 and NW WCA-3A using G-404 if additional capacity is needed now that the deer gage is more than 0.25 feet below schedule. If substantial rainfall occurs, these operations may be interrupted to remove runoff from the EAA, but will re-start once the system returns to normal conditions.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With the Lake Okeechobee stage in the Low Sub-band, less than one foot from the Intermediate Sub-band, and tributary hydrologic conditions within the Normal classification, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance suggests no change in the release limits this week: “S-79 up to 3,000 cfs and S-80 up to 1,170 cfs.” In light of the State of Emergency declared by Governor Rick Scott, the USACE utilized the flexibility of LORS 2008 during the past three weeks to reduce discharges to the St. Lucie River and Caloosahatchee River. Release targets last week for S-79 and S-80 were 2,800 cfs and 650 cfs, respectively. The District recommends to continue to utilize the flexibility of LORS 2008 to make reduced releases.

Salinities at the US 1 Bridge location in the St. Lucie Estuary increased during the past week and moved into the good range. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinity conditions increased and remain favorable for tape grass in the upper estuary, and poor for oysters at the Cape Coral Bridge. At Shell Point salinity remained in the good range for adult oysters.