

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Jeff Kivett, Director, Operations, Engineering & Construction Division  
Terrie Bates, Director, Water Resources Division

**FROM:** Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydraulics & Hydrology Bureau  
John Mitnik, Chief, Engineering & Construction Bureau  
Susan Gray, Chief, Applied Science Bureau  
Dean Powell, Chief, Water Supply Bureau

**DATE:** December 3, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Operational Position Statement for December 1 to December 7, 2015

This Position Statement is for the week period from December 1 through December 7, 2015. According to USACE the Lake Okeechobee stage is in the Low Sub-band of the 2008 LORS.

Consistent with the forecast for strong El Niño conditions, the most recent Climate Prediction Center (CPC) outlook for Central and South Florida indicates an increased likelihood of above-normal rainfall (53%) for the month of December 2015 and increased chances of above normal rainfall (75%) for the three-month window December 2015 to February 2016. The CPC rainfall outlook for the remainder of the 2015-2016 dry season is for a substantial increase in the likelihood (up to 75%) for above-normal precipitation. SFWMD rainfall for the month of November is above average. Rainfall for this week is forecast to be above average with heavy rains Thursday and Friday caused by a front moving south through Florida.

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”.

Over the 14-day period from November 16 to November 30, 2015, a total of 2,200 ac-ft were released from the lake south to the STAs, distributed as follows:

STA-1 E	1,800 ac-ft	STA 3/4	0 ac-ft
STA- 1W	200 ac-ft	A-1 FEB	100 ac-ft
STA2	100 ac-ft		

Releases from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 were in the amount of 300 ac-ft.

Consistent with the LORS release guidance, the USACE is requesting the SFWMD to continue Lake Okeechobee regulatory releases to the WCAs. For the next week, limited lake releases south will be implemented in response to specific STA needs (such as stage management, vegetation management, etc.) to allow water levels to recede to target elevations. Release south will be highly limited if the expected rainfall over the next week materializes.

District Everglades scientists have indicated that additional releases south would be beneficial or have minimal impact to the WCAs. WCA-2A is currently discharging around 1,600 cfs to WCA-3A. S-333 and the S-12s structures are open to deliver the ERTTP and SRS Rainfall Plan prescribed releases from WCA-3A to ENP. Increased releases into northern (east and west) WCA-3A and ENP are being recommended by District Everglades scientists. The G-3273 constraint relaxation and S-356 field test (Increment 1) continues. South Miami-Dade agricultural drawdown for the C-102 and C-103 canals is progressing normally.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With the Lake Okeechobee stage in the Low Sub-band, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends “S-79 up to 3,000 cfs and S-80 up to 1,170 cfs”. The SFWMD recommendation to USACE is to follow the 2008 LORS.

On Friday November 20 (0700 hours) and Friday November 27, 2015 (0700 hours), USACE started 7-day pulse regulatory releases from Lake Okeechobee to the Caloosahatchee Estuary, averaging 650 cfs measured at S-79 and no regulatory release through S-80. The second cycle of this operation will end on Friday December 5, 2015 (0700 hours). Over the past week, flows at S-79 averaged approximately 810 cfs, with about 310 cfs directly from the lake through S-77. There were practically no flows through S-80. In the St. Lucie Estuary, salinity declined for the last two weeks but remained in the good range for adult oysters. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinity continued to be in the good range for adult oysters at Shell Point and Cape Coral, and dropped back into the good range at Sanibel.

After a reversal of about 0.25 feet, Lake Okeechobee stage shows a very slow recession. From an ecological point of view a stage recession not to exceed 0.3 feet/month will be beneficial to the lake.

Conditions in Florida Bay continue to be hypersaline; salinities remain 7 to 16 psu above average for this time of the year. The 30-day moving average salinity at the Taylor Slough (MFL sentinel) site has decreased to 5.3 psu, still above the 1 psu MFL typical for this time of year. High salinities are a result of below average wet season rainfall for the Everglades and the southern portion of the District, high evaporation, and low freshwater inflows into the Bay (currently 49% of their annual average). Large increases in rainfall and inflow are required to approach seasonally normal conditions in the ENP and Florida Bay.

Detailed reports are available at the [SFWMD Operational Planning Portal](#).