

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: February 18, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for February 16, 2016 to February 22, 2016

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from February 16 through February 22, 2016. On February 15 the Lake Okeechobee stage was 16.21 feet, NGVD, in the Intermediate Sub-band of the 2008 LORS. During last week the Lake stage experienced a decrease of 0.19 feet.

District wide rainfall for the month of February to date is above average. Rainfall for the upcoming week is forecast to be below average and above average for the following week.

Forecasts: Consistent with the forecast associated with 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 (65%) for the month of February 2016, and increased chances of above-normal rainfall (65%) for the three-month window February to April 2016. The CPC rainfall outlook for the March to May period also shows an increased likelihood (55%) for above-normal precipitation.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With the Lake Okeechobee stage within the Intermediate Sub-band and stages in WCA-2A and WCA-3A higher than the maximum of their respective schedules plus 0.25 feet, Part C of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends "No Releases to the WCAs".

Over the 7-day period from February 8, 2016 to February 14, 2016, no releases from the lake south to the STAs were made. Releases from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 did not take place either.

Given the outcome of Part C, no Lake Okeechobee releases to the WCAs will be implemented during this week. In addition to the high stages in the WCAs, other factors contributing to this outcome are runoff using the EAA canals' capacity and continued high stages in the STAs (above target stages).

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With the Lake Okeechobee stage in the Intermediate Sub-band, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends "S-77 up to 6,500 cfs and S-80 up to 2,800 cfs". The SFWMD strongly recommends following the 2008 LORS and reducing discharges to the Caloosahatchee Estuary to 6,500 cfs (an approximate 10% reduction), and reducing discharges to the St. Lucie Estuary to 2,800 cfs (up to an approximate 50% reduction).

In the St. Lucie Estuary, salinity during the past week remained in the poor range for adult oysters. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinities at Sanibel remained in the good range for adult oysters. Salinity at Shell Point increased slightly but remained in the fair range. Salinity at Cape Coral remained in the poor range.

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