

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: John Mitnik, Chief District Engineer (SFWMMD)
Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics Bureau (SFWMMD)

DATE: February 23, 2017

SUBJECT: Operational Position Statement for February 21, 2017 to February 27, 2017

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from February 21, 2017 to February 27, 2017. On February 20, Lake Okeechobee stage was 13.51 feet NGVD, in the lower third of the Low Sub-band. During last week the lake stage decreased 0.20 feet.

District rainfall for February up to date is well below average (13%) low. For next week, District rainfall is expected to be above average. District rainfall for the second week is also expected to be below average.

Precipitation Outlook: The most recent Climate Prediction Center (CPC) precipitation outlook indicates equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall for south Florida, for March 2017 and for the three-month windows March to May and April to June. The CPC precipitation outlook for the remainder of the 2017 calendar year is for equal chances of below-normal, normal and above-normal rainfall.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part C): With Lake Okeechobee stage within the Low Sub-band and the tributary hydrologic conditions falling into the Dry classification, Part C of the 2008 LORS release guidance recommends "No Releases to the WCAs".

Over the 7-day period from February 13, 2017 to February 19, 2017, a total of 27,400 acre-feet were released south from Lake Okeechobee through EAA canals and the L-8 canal. Of this volume, inflows into STAs were as follows: 500 acre-feet to STA-1E and no inflows to STA-1W, 1,900 ac-feet to STA-2 and 3,200 acre-feet to STA-3/4. No releases were made from the lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51.

At this time, the USACE is not requesting the SFWMMD to implement lake regulatory releases to WCA-1, WCA-2A or WCA-3A. There will be no releases from the lake into the A-1 FEB for this operational period. Small outflows from A-1 FEB to lower stages for construction purposes are being directed to STA 3/4. STA-2 releases into north WCA-2A will occur in the range of 200-250 cfs. STA 3/4 releases into north WCA-3A will continue in the range of 250 to 300 cfs on average.

2008 LORS Release Guidance (Part D): With Lake Okeechobee stage in the Low Sub-band and the tributary hydrologic conditions within the Dry classification, Part D of the 2008 LORS release guidance suggests Base Flow releases: "S-79 Up to 450 and S-80 Up to 200 cfs". Consistent with previous Governing Board direction, District staff evaluated SFWMMD's Lake Okeechobee Adaptive Protocols (AP) this week since the lake stage is in the Low Sub-band and the LORS release guidance is recommending Base Flow releases. The 30-day moving average salinity at I-75 bridge is projected to be below 5 p.s.u. over the next two weeks. .

The District recognizes the competing needs of the Caloosahatchee Estuary and therefore recommends following the 2008 LORS release guidance and releasing 450 cfs at S-79.

Salinity at the US 1 Bridge location in the St. Lucie Estuary remains in the upper fair range for adult oysters. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinity conditions in the upper estuary are improving. However, Tape Grass in the upper estuary is likely continuing to deteriorate. Salinity conditions are good for adult oysters at the Cape Coral Bridge and Shellpoint, while in the fair range at the Sanibel Causeway.