

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Akin Owosina, Chief, Hydraulics & Hydrology Bureau (SFWMMD)
John Mitnik, Chief, Engineering & Construction Bureau (SFWMMD)

DATE: February 4, 2016

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

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from February 2 through February 8, 2016. On February 1 the Lake Okeechobee stage was 16.14 feet, NGVD. Lake stage rose from the Low Sub-band into the Intermediate Sub-band of the 2008 LORS on January 30, 2016. During last week the Lake stage experienced an increase of 0.83 feet.

District wide rainfall for the month of January was 476% of average, with a rainfall surplus of 7.25 inches. Rainfall for the upcoming week is forecast to be above average and 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 January 25, 2016 to January 31, 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. Other factors contributing to this outcome are runoff using the EAA canals’ capacity, continued high stages in the STAs (above target stages), lack of storage in the A-1 FEB and current wet conditions.

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”. Recognizing the unprecedented rainfall this past week and the rapid ascension in Lake stages, the SFWMMD recognizes USACE’s desire to move to High Lake Management Band discharge’s this week to curtail future stage increases should predicted above-average rainfall occur throughout the remaining dry season. As forecasted rainfall decreases or above-average rainfall does not occur, SFWMMD anticipates seeing prompt return to more measured discharges to tide consistent with the Intermediate Band.

In the St. Lucie Estuary, salinity during the past week remained in the fair range for adult oysters. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, salinities at Sanibel and Shell Point remained in the good range for adult oysters, although salinity at Shell Point continued to decrease and approach the fair range. Salinity at Cape Coral remained in the poor range.

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