

## 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:** March 17, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Operational Position Statement for March 15, 2016 to March 21, 2016

This Position Statement is for the one-week period from March 15, 2016 to March 21, 2016. On March 14 the Lake Okeechobee stage was 15.44 feet, NGVD, in the Low Sub-band of the 2008 LORS. During last week the Lake stage experienced a decrease of 0.24 feet.

There has been very little rain recorded at the District for the month of March up to date. Rainfall for the upcoming week is forecast to be above average, and average for the second week. The current forecast is for another El Niño enhanced rainfall event to go through south Florida on March 18 to 20, 2016.

Forecasts: Consistent with the forecast 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 March 2016, and increased chances of above-normal rainfall (55%) for the three-month window March to May 2016. The CPC rainfall outlooks for the April to June and into the 2016 wet season are for equal chances of above, below and 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 March 07, 2016 to March 13, 2016, about 400 ac-ft were sent from Lake Okeechobee to STA-1E for maintenance purposes. No regulatory releases from the Lake south to the remaining STAs were made. Releases from the Lake into the A-1 FEB were about 8,200 ac-ft. Releases from the Lake to tide via C-10A, L-8 and C-51 were approximately 200 ac-ft.

USACE has requested the District to implement Lake regulatory releases into WCA-1, in such a way that inflows and outflows are balanced and the current stage recession continues. The District will continue to implement releases from the lake to the A-1 FEB. These two operations will be contingent on the amount of rain the District receives on March 18 to 20 and on the ground conditions after the rainfall event.

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 recommends following the 2008 LORS.

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 and Shell Point remained in the good range for adult oysters. Salinity at Cape Coral remained in the poor range.

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