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of Engineers**

Jacksonville District

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS MAKES RELEASES FROM LAKE OKEECHOBEE

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District began a 10-day Level 1 pulse release today from Lake Okeechobee to both the Caloosahatchee River and the St. Lucie Canal.

Pulse releases are designed to mimic nature and provide discharges from the lake to the estuaries via the St. Lucie Canal to the east and the Caloosahatchee River to the west. The last two days of the 10-day, Level 1 pulse release consists of an average daily flow of 500 cfs to the Caloosahatchee and no releases to the St. Lucie. The goal is to strike a balance between the health of the lake's littoral zone and the health of the estuaries.

Typically, in 10 days, a Level 1 pulse release to the Caloosahatchee River and the St. Lucie canal can lower the lake 0.10 ft.; a Level 2 release can lower it by 0.14 ft.; and a Level 3 by 0.18 ft. Today's lake level is 14.64 feet-NGVD, which is 0.12 feet lower than last week.

In the future, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) will provide storage for much of this water and reduce the need for these types of releases.

Jacksonville District has begun an in-depth study of the decision-making process for Lake Okeechobee freshwater releases. Issues being scrutinized include weather patterns, hurricane season predictions, impacts on the estuarine ecosystem, water

supply, lake ecology, and input from Kissimmee River Basin regulatory discharges.

Water level data and flows for Lake Okeechobee and the Central and Southern Florida Project can be found on the Jacksonville District web site, water management page, at <http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/h2o/index.htm>.

For further information, please call the Jacksonville District Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236 or (cell) 904-614-4976.

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