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Jacksonville District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers anticipates minimal rise on Lake Okeechobee following Ernesto

Jacksonville, Fla. – Water managers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, said today that water levels on Lake Okeechobee will likely rise no more than three inches as a result of rainfall from Tropical Storm Ernesto. “This news is very good because, while the central part of Florida received much needed rain, Ernesto did not cause a significant increase in Lake Okeechobee’s water level,” said Col. Paul L. Grosskruger, district commander. “With about half of the 2006 hurricane season still before us, we remain confident in the continuing protection provided by Herbert Hoover Dike.”

The Corps’ South Florida Operations Office in Clewiston performed a “windshield inspection” of the Herbert Hoover Dike between Clewiston and Port Mayaca earlier this afternoon. “We did not foresee any problems and we found none,” said Jim Jeffords, operations manager. “Our intent was to accomplish the inspection before nightfall.” A full inspection of all reaches of the dike will be completed tomorrow.

Latest reports show that the storm is centered over Lake Okeechobee, with heaviest rainfall occurring between the lake's shore and the gulf shores of Lee and Collier Counties.

For further information on Lake Okeechobee and the Herbert Hoover Dike, please visit our web site at www.saj.usace.army.mil or call the Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236.

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