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Jacksonville District

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers extends public comment period for Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule Study

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, has extended to Oct. 16, 2006 the public comment period for the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, which supports revisions to the Lake Okeechobee and Everglades Agricultural Area Water Control Plan.

The extension was granted in response to a request from the public. It will have no impact on the timing of the plan's final draft.

Public meetings were held last month in Stuart, Okeechobee, Fort Myers and Clewiston, to discuss the draft SEIS and to present the proposed revisions to the existing plan.

The proposed revisions include a new regulation schedule to replace the existing Water Supply Environment (WSE) regulation schedule and associated operational guidance, revised as a result of findings of the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule Study and a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, released for public review and comment on Aug. 18.

Following the closing of the comment period, the Corps will consider public input received at the above meetings and by mail and e-mail, and will prepare a new plan for management of Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades Agricultural Area. If the SEIS leads to a Record of Decision, a request for approval of the new water control plan for Lake Okeechobee and Everglades Agricultural Area will be sent to the Corps' South Atlantic Division Office in Atlanta. It is anticipated that an interim regulation schedule may be implemented by January 2007, and would remain in effect until additional water storage projects associated with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan are constructed and operational in 2010.

For further information on the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule Study, please visit the Jacksonville District web site at <http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/> or call Mr. Barry Vorse of the Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236.

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