



**US Army Corps  
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Jacksonville District

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Corps rehabilitation of Herbert Hoover Dike progresses as Lake Okeechobee elevation ties record**

CLEWISTON, Fla. – Lake Okeechobee reached a record-tying 8.97 feet today, as the drought in South Florida continues. “Although we share the concerns of the community in terms of water supply, which is so vital to this area, there is more than one silver lining in the current situation,” said Alan Bugg, chief of Construction Operations and leader of the Herbert Hoover Dike Task Force for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District. “We’ve all applauded the state’s efforts to remove truckloads of muck from areas that are usually underwater while the opportunity exists. The Corps has continued to focus on the rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike, and in fact, this enormous project is being enhanced and made easier during drought and low lake levels,” he explained.

The Corps is expediting rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD), a 144-mile long structure that surrounds Lake Okeechobee and averages about 35 feet in height and 300 feet in width. Work includes prioritizing and initiating design and construction in areas that are in greatest need of repair and easily accessible within the Corps' right-of-way. The rehabilitation design concept includes filling the existing toe ditch, constructing a seepage berm and installing a cutoff wall.

The toe ditch is the ditch that is located on the landside of the HHD for the purpose of collecting water that seeps through the dike's earthen materials. Filling the toe ditch will reduce seepage and erosion. The seepage berm will be a landside embankment that decreases internal erosion, or piping, and strengthens the dike by providing additional weight and pressure on the ground. The cutoff wall will be constructed vertically through the center of the existing dike and will reduce seepage and increase stability.

“Filling the toe ditch along the southeastern portion of the dike has progressed rapidly, thanks in part to the dry conditions,” Bugg said. “This work is vitally important. When the lake levels begin to rise, this protective measure will minimize the potential for internal erosion that could occur during and after high water events.”



“Of course, rainfall is desperately needed and we are concerned for both the environment and the people of south Florida. At the same time, as public safety is our priority, we are taking advantage of this opportunity to work expeditiously. Except in the case of extreme weather events, our progress should remain accelerated for quite some time.”

Bugg also announced that on June 5, another contract for seepage berm filling will be opened and work on a new portion of the rehabilitation project will begin shortly thereafter.

For further information, please call the Jacksonville District Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236.

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