



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

Release No.: NR0838

For Release: June 6, 2008

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO CLOSE TWO LOCKS FOR MANATEE PROTECTION SYSTEM INSTALLATION

CLEWISTON, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District's South Florida Operations Office will close two locks on the Okeechobee Waterway for portions of July and August while manatee safeguards are installed.

The Port Mayaca Lock is scheduled to be closed from July 7 through Aug. 28 and the St. Lucie Lock is scheduled to be closed from July 14 through Aug. 28. Every effort will be made to finish the work and reopen the locks to navigation at earlier dates if possible.

Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute of Fort Pierce developed the Manatee Protection System (MPS) for the Corps, designed to protect manatees from being harmed by lock gates as they close. The non-contact, acoustic detection device is installed on one lock gate and emits sound at twenty-centimeter intervals, generating signals that are detected by receivers on the opposite gates. If these sensors detect a manatee, audio and visual alarms are activated and the gates automatically reopen.

Other protection measures include the installation of screens on lock gates to prevent manatees from entering confined spaces, which could cause injury.



For further information on this project, visit the Corps' Web site at www.saj.usace.army.mil and select Navigation Projects, then Navigation Bulletins and Lock Closure Information or call the South Florida Operations Office at 863-983-8101.

Media representatives may call the Jacksonville District Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236.

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