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Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WATER RELEASES CONTINUE FROM LAKE OKEECHOBEE

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District will continue with pulsed water releases from Lake Okeechobee to the Caloosahatchee River and the St. Lucie Canal beginning Tuesday, September 30. The planned release is necessary to slow the expected rise in the lake levels with projected rainfall in the near future and two months left in the hurricane season.

A release to the St. Lucie Canal and Caloosahatchee River will be for a period of 12 days. The goal is to achieve an average flow over the 12-day period not to exceed 2,200 cubic feet per second (cfs) and 1,000 cfs to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuary, respectively. The target flows to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuary will be measured at the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam and the St. Lucie Lock and Dam. If there is rainfall in the Caloosahatchee Basin and the measured flow in the river at the lock and dam equals or exceeds the amount of the scheduled release, then no water will be released from the lake.

Today, the lake level is 14.95 feet NGVD and is at the upper end of the preferred operational level of 12.5 to 15.5 feet. The lake has been hovering at the 15 foot level since the beginning of the first of two pulsed releases on Sept. 4. On Sept. 4 the lake level was 14.68 feet. It is expected that with the near term forecast, the lake will rise and the upcoming releases will slow the amount of rise.

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 goal is to strike a balance between the health of the lake's littoral zone and the health of the estuaries.



For further information, please call the Jacksonville District's Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-1628 or 904-232-1004.

Water level data and flows for Lake Okeechobee and the Central and Southern Florida Project can be found on the Army Corps of Engineers' web site at <http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/h2o/index.htm>.

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