

FACT SHEET  
**Okeechobee Waterway (O&M)**  
 Operations & Maintenance  
 Congressional Districts: 17, 18, 19, 20, 25

**1. DESCRIPTION**

The project provides a 155-mile long channel across the state from Ft. Myers to Stuart. Maintained depth ranges from eight to ten feet. The waterway runs through Lake Okeechobee and consists of the Caloosahatchee River on the west side of the lake and the St. Lucie Canal on the east side. Included in the project are navigation locks at Ortona, Moore Haven, and St. Lucie. Additional locks at W.P. Franklin and Port Myaka are authorized under the Central and Southern Florida project are also located within the waterway. Each lock provides recreational and public access facilities for year round use. The waterway serves navigation, recreation as well as flood risk management as regulatory releases of water from Lake Okeechobee can be made into the St. Lucie Canal and the Caloosahatchee River.

The Okeechobee Waterway is a popular and heavily used waterway. The lake is primarily used for recreation, but it is also used for commercial navigation, including tug/barge combinations and commercial fishing vessels. Over 6.6 million visitors use the waterway and recreation areas annually and approximately 26,000 tons of manufactured goods, equipment, machinery and crude materials are moved on the waterway each year.

**2. FUNDING**

Allocation for FY16	\$2,750,000
President's Budget FY17	\$2,790,000

**3. SPONSORS**

West of and including the St. Lucie Lock:

South Florida Water Management District  
 P.O. Box V  
 West Palm Beach, Florida 33402

East of the St. Lucie Lock:

Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND)  
 1314 Marcinski Road  
 Jupiter, Florida 33477

#### **4. STATUS**

The O&M funding allocated in FY 2016 will be expended for the annual operation and routine maintenance of the Ortona, Moore Haven and St. Lucie navigation locks. Funds will be expended for sustainability activities, and for the operation and maintenance of visitor and recreation areas and facilities. Also, funds will be expended to manage habitat, fire, wildlife, fisheries, aquatic plants, endangered and protected species, control encroachments, provide shoreline management, boundary line surveillance, and cultural resources protection on OWW project lands and waters. FY 2017 funding will also be expended for the annual operation and routine maintenance of OWW recreation areas as the project ranks nationally in the Top 10 in recreation visitation and customer satisfaction. Level of funding represents base line requirements.

Additional major maintenance is needed. Designs are in place for the repair of the lower sector gates at Moore Haven Lock, which will cost approximately \$3.5 Million. Also, needed are funds for the sand blasting and painting of Ortona and St. Lucie locks, which will cost an estimated \$13 Million.