

**Florida Oceanographic Society
Resolution
Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual
(DRAFT-3-22-21)**

WHEREAS The Florida Oceanographic Society has consistently advocated controlling and/or eliminating the discharge of water from Lake Okeechobee (the Lake) into the St. Lucie River Estuary and the adjacent southern portion of the Indian River Lagoon (the Estuary) because the Lake never naturally linked to the Estuary and such discharges to the Estuary only brought adverse impacts to the ecology of the brackish water in the form of unneeded, unwanted fresh water, nutrient and sediment pollution to its inhabitants, including toxic algae blooms affecting public health and safety and the economy; and

WHEREAS The operating schedule describing water releases and discharges from the Lake to one or more of the six principal discharge structures out of the Lake to the east, west and south of the Lake [three controlled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and three jointly controlled by it and the South Florida Water Management District (“SFWMD”)] is being revised and is referred to as the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (“LOSOM”); and

WHEREAS LOSOM is being developed by the USACE in close cooperation with its state partner, SFWMD, subjected to an abbreviated public comment period and then adopted and put into effect to govern discharges from the Lake for long periods of time, perhaps in excess of 10 years; and

WHEREAS The USACE is currently conducting this process by developing elaborate computer models of decision trees showing the results of Lake releases and discharging water from the Lake through the discharge structures using multiple variables, thus far publishing several iterations to evaluate each possible objective and strategy; and

WHEREAS Part D of one of these objective options expressly contemplates having **NO** discharges and releases from the Lake east to the St. Lucie River Estuary meeting the Objective 4C1_3307 (22448), St. Lucie Ecology;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Florida Oceanographic Society requests that the USACE incorporate a Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule in the final LOSOM that has NO Lake releases to the St. Lucie Estuary, which has already been demonstrated as feasible in the LOSOM Planning as objective 4C1-3307 (22448) for Part D of a planned schedule.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the Board Chair of Florida Oceanographic Society authorizes and forwards this Resolution on behalf of Florida Oceanographic Society by signature below:

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THE ____ DAY OF March 2021.

Allen Herskowitz, Chair, Board of Directors

Florida Oceanographic Society

Mark Perry, Executive Director

Florida Oceanographic Society