



Florida Oceanographic Society

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Resolution

WHEREAS, for almost 100 years the State of Florida and the United States government have collaborated in diverting the natural historic flow of Lake Okeechobee away from the Everglades and to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries through regulatory releases for the benefit of the region directly south of the lake. These regulatory releases have resulted in severe detrimental impacts to the water quality, fish and wildlife, and economies in these coastal estuaries; and

WHEREAS, public health within the estuaries' regions is adversely impacted by Lake discharges containing toxic blue-green algae, and by red tide which is exacerbated by Lake discharges, and

WHEREAS, the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS) is operated by the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in cooperation with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD); and

WHEREAS, the LORS2008 is an interim schedule to regulate discharges and regulatory releases of water to the coastal estuaries and south to the Everglades; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) called for the accelerating the revision of LORS and also authorized a project south of Lake Okeechobee known as the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Storage Reservoir; and

WHEREAS, the revision of LORS is to begin in 2019 and should provide better management of the regulatory releases from Lake Okeechobee; and

WHEREAS, the EAA Storage Reservoir Project is part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and will receive a majority of Lake Okeechobee regulatory releases that would now go to the coastal estuaries and store, treat and convey these waters south to the Everglades; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Florida Oceanographic Society supports an accelerated revision of LORS, and supports state and federal legislation that elevates to a primary consideration the following factors addressing regulatory releases: 1- the health and safety of the public in the communities surrounding the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries; 2 -the impacts to water quality, fish and wildlife and economies in these coastal estuaries.

Further, the Florida Oceanographic Society supports state and federal measures to accelerate, including fully funding, implementation of the EAA Reservoir authorized by the 2018 WRDA.

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 19TH DAY OF December, 2018.


Allen Herskowitz, Chair, Board of Directors
Florida Oceanographic Society


Mark Perry, Executive Director
Florida Oceanographic Society

To inspire environmental stewardship of Florida's coastal ecosystems through education, research and advocacy.

