

Martin County Projects Update



Rivers Coalition Meeting

January 27, 2016 at 11 a.m., City of Stuart Commission Chambers
(Update provided by Deborah Drum, Ecosystem Restoration & Management Division)

- **Lake Okeechobee Levels and Water Conditions:**

- 15.78 feet
- On Monday, Jan. 25, the Lake level was 15.32 feet, so the Lake has risen by .46 feet in the past 4 days.
- 14.85 feet (1 year ago)
- 13.80 feet (2 years ago)
- Current inflows to Lake O = 11,575 cfs
- Current outflows from Lake O = 15 cfs
- Of note, there have been no releases from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie since May 2015.
- Current flows through S-80 from the C-44 basin are 4526 cfs. (Caloosahatchee is getting 10,978 cfs from their basin flows).
- The ACOE confirmed this morning that the release decision for this week is 1170 cfs to the St. Lucie, and 2800 cfs to the Caloosahatchee to begin on Friday morning at 7 a.m.
- The ACOE also reported that they are maximizing discharges to the coastal structures, to the STAs, and to the Water Conservation Areas, although these areas are reaching high water levels. Water levels are high everywhere at this point.
- The ACOE is considering a deviation at S-197 (which is in south Miami-Dade County) to release more water through it to help put more water south in an attempt to share adversity throughout the state. This operation would result in ecosystem / salinity impacts in Manatee Bay.
- Of important note, the SFWMD is backpumping at the S-2, S-3 and S-4 structures which takes water from the EAA and puts it back into the Lake, thereby bringing concerns with water quality as well as increasing Lake levels which increases our risk for additional Lake discharges.
- Our salinities in the estuary are already trending to 0 parts per thousand, which is considered in "poor" condition. This is as a result of our current basin runoff from C-44. The Lake releases will result in further deteriorated conditions for salinity.

- **Martin County Water Projects Status:**

- Manatee Pocket SW Prong Baffle Box Project: Completed Jan '16 - \$228,000
- Martin County Gold Course WQ Project: Completed Jan '16 - \$138,000
- Willoughby Creek Stormwater Quality Retrofit: Design Summer 2016 - \$200,000
- Savanna Road Exfiltration Project: Design Summer 2016 - \$125,000
- Manatee Creek Technology Assessment: 1-Yr WQ Monitoring – Summer 2016 - \$200,000
- Martin County is continuing to aggressively pursuing future grants with applications either already submitted or will be submitting for the following projects:
 - Willoughby Creek – Section 319 grant for \$594,000 – May 2016 and SLRIT grant for \$418,000 – Aug 2015
 - All American Ditch – FDEP TMDL grant for \$800,000 – Nov 2015
 - Manatee Creek Technology (de-nitrification): TMDL grant for \$100,000 – Nov 2015 and IRL NEP grant for \$100,000 – Jan 2016
 - Cypress Creek Weir – LRPI grant for \$85,000 – Aug 2015
 - Savanna's Regional Restoration Project Phase I– IRL NEP grant for \$125,000 – Jan 2016
 - Ecosystem Restoration and Management Division will be advertising for construction of the All American Ditch Stormwater Quality Retrofit project in February 2016 and anticipates being under construction starting April 2016. The Project is expected to take 15-18 months to construct. It consists of the installation of nearly 1 mile of stormpipe, control structures and the construction of a 6-acre lake and 11.5-acre STA.

- **Legislative Update:**

The MCBOCC SUPPORTS the Governor's proposal of \$5 billion in funding for Everglades restoration and land acquisition and management. The Board SUPPORTS increasing funding for land acquisition and restoration to provide additional storage north and south of Lake Okeechobee. Much of the debate surrounding Amendment 1 will be held later in the session when appropriations discussions begin. Senator Negrón and Representative Harrell have filed SB 1168/HB 989 Relating to Implementation of the Water and Land Conservation Constitutional Amendment – also known as “Legacy Florida,” directing that the lesser of 25% or \$200 million of Amendment 1 dollars be spent annually on Everglades Projects, which Martin County strongly supports. A dedicated funding source to support Everglades restoration is among Martin County's top priorities, and was also made a top state priority at the annual 16 County Ecosystem Summit. In addition, Governor Scott's Florida First budget creates a dedicated source of funding for the Everglades that will ensure that more than \$5 billion will be invested over the 20 year period that Amendment 1 is in effect, with a \$151 million appropriation in this year's budget. The Governor stated more must be done to complete projects including specific reference to the C-43 and C-44 reservoirs which will provide almost 100 billion gallons of water storage to protect Florida's estuaries. Proviso in the Governor's proposed budget provides that \$119,000,000 is for the planning, design, engineering and construction of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan, the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan components, and water quality enhancement projects identified in the state's long-term plan. All of these funds are allocated from Amendment 1 revenues, and the total represents an increase of approximately \$70,000,000 over last year's budget.

- **Water Ambassador Program:**

Martin County in coordination with University of Florida/IFAS Extension will be conducting 10 Water Ambassador workshops this year. Participants will learn about the Indian River Lagoon and St. Lucie River watersheds, the history of drainage in Florida, stormwater runoff, and the things we can all do to protect water quality.