

LAKE OKEECHOBEE SYSTEM OPERATING MANUAL (LOSOM)

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
Joint Working Group and Science Coordination Group Meeting

September 1, 2022

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District



US Army Corps
of Engineers®



AGENDA

LAKE OKEECHOBEE SYSTEM OPERATING MANUAL (LOSOM)

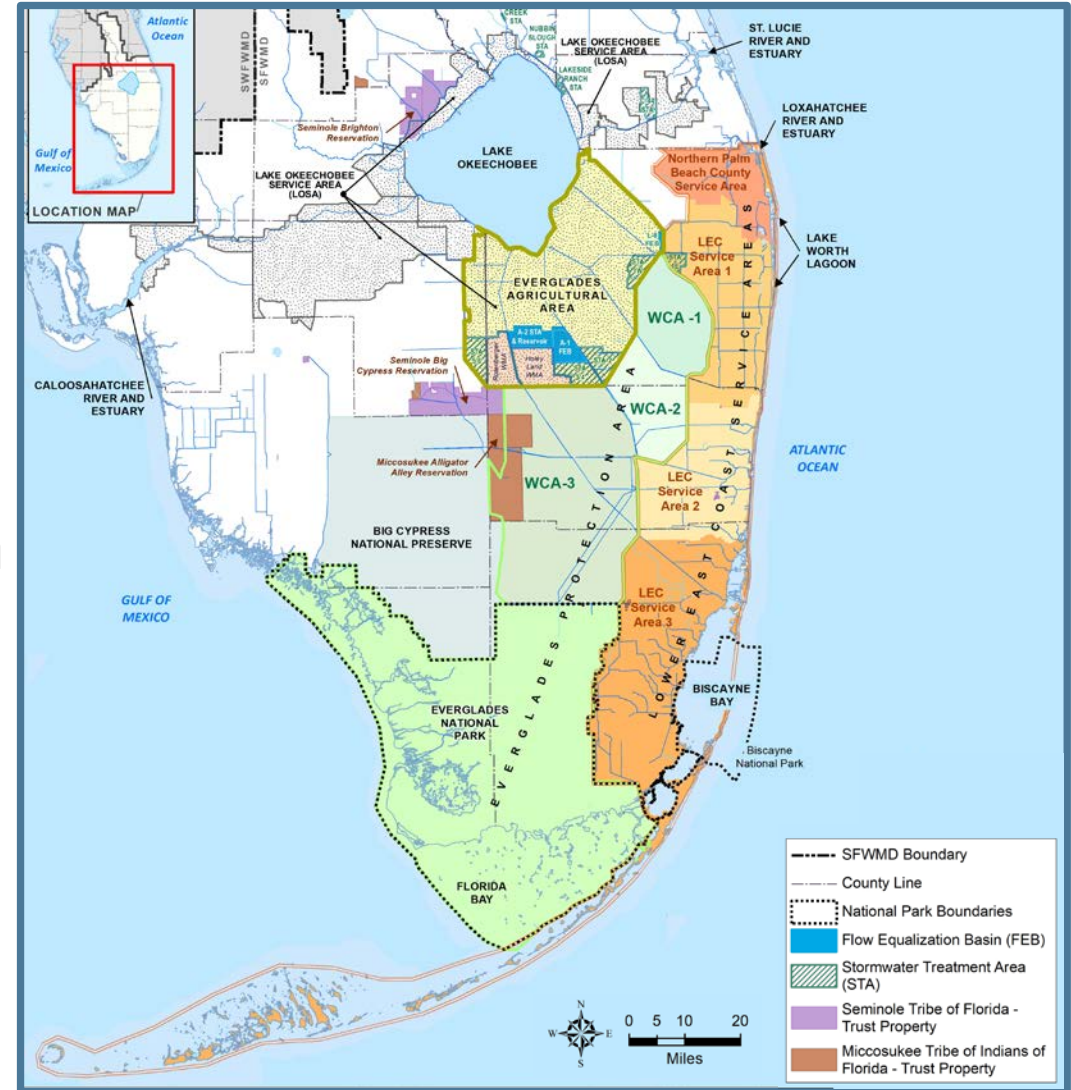


AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process/ LOSOM Planning Process Overview
- LOSOM Benefits and Effects
- Water Control Plan and LOSOM Regulation Schedule
- Next Steps and Comment Period

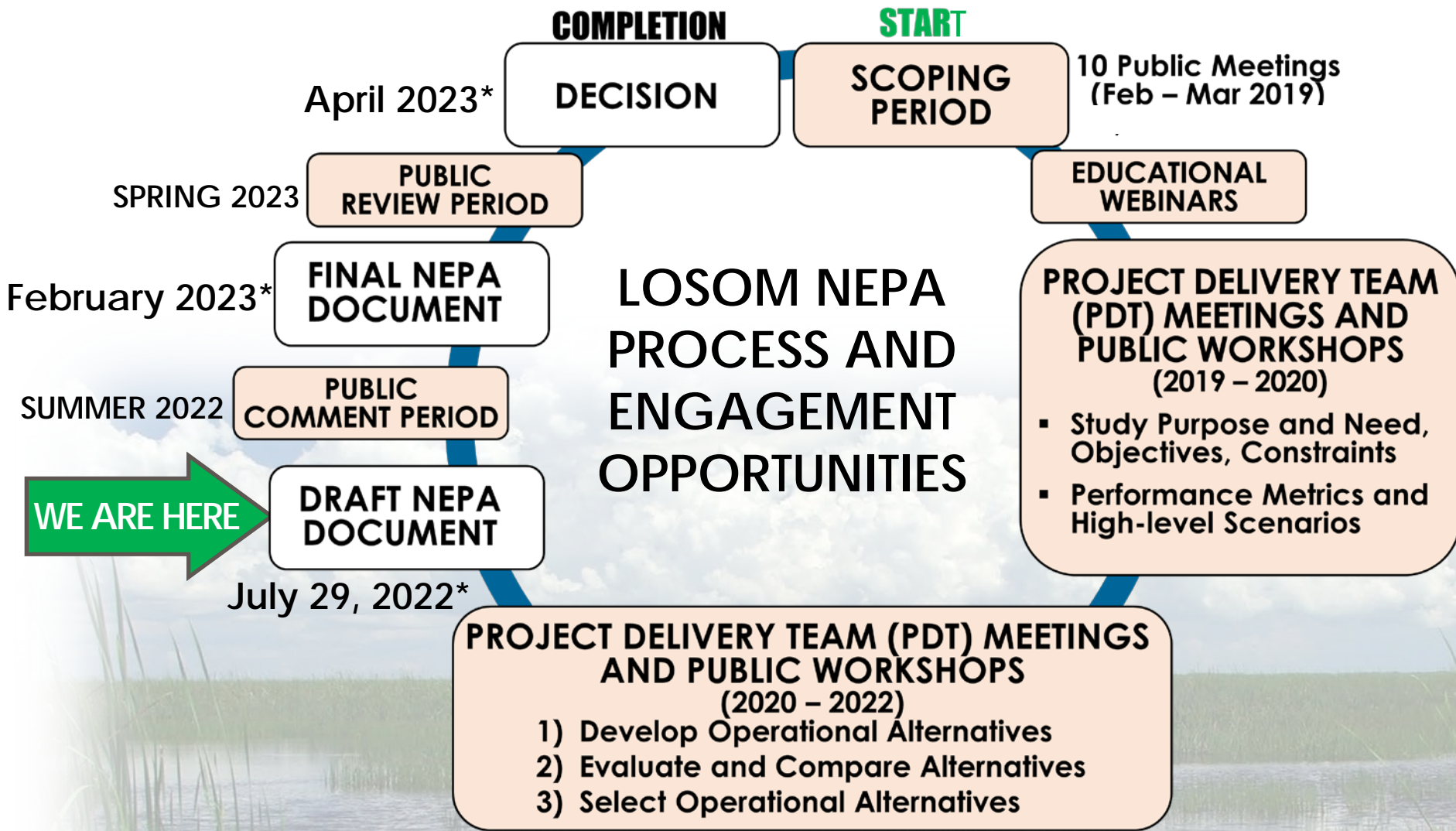
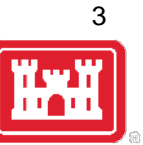
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

Federal agencies evaluate the potential effects that a future project or action may have on the human/natural environment and make the assessment available for public review and comment before any decisions or actions are taken.





LOSOM PROCESS OVERVIEW

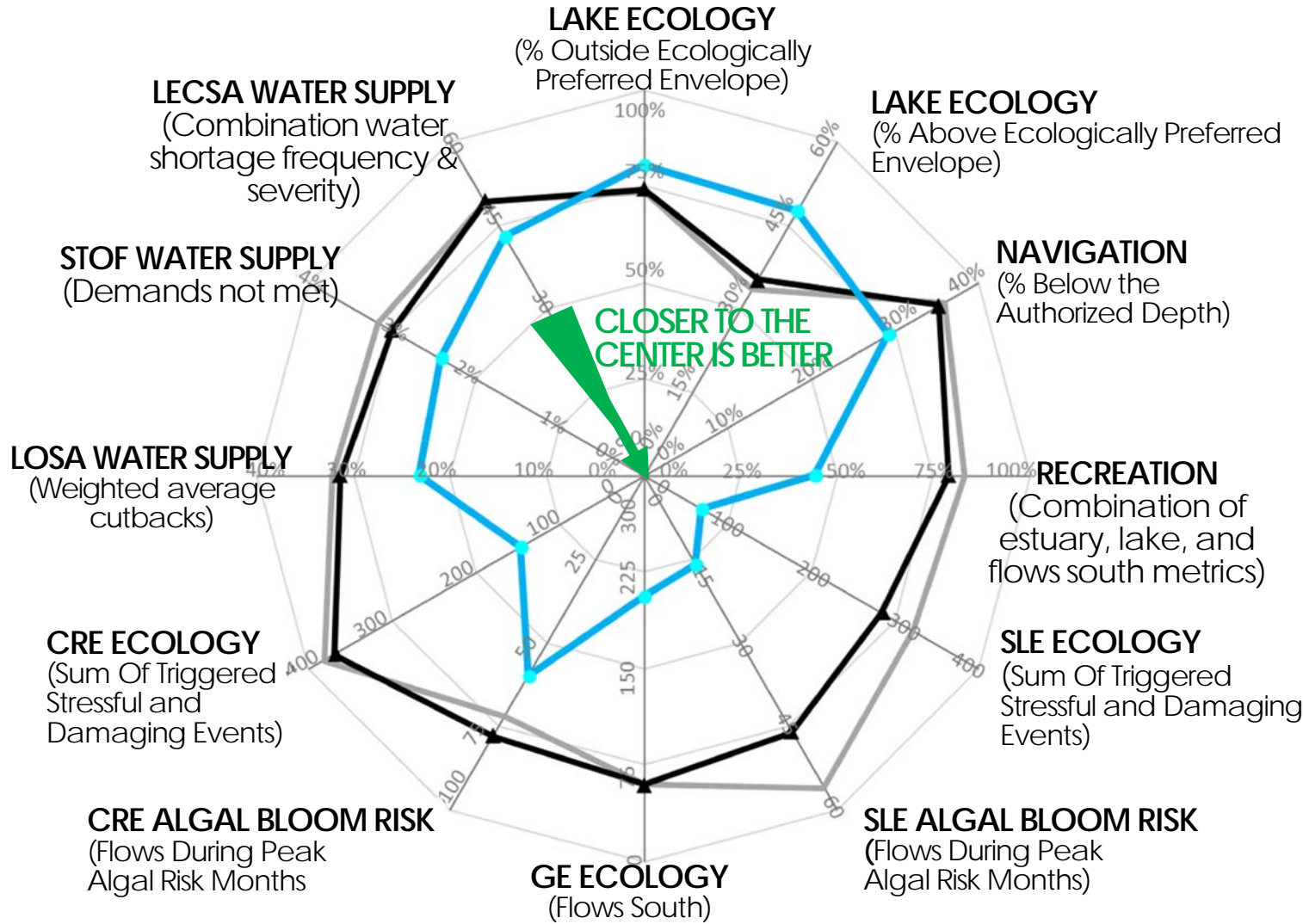


- 10 NEPA Scoping meetings in 2019 (> 22,000 total comments received)
- 6 educational webinars and two water management workshops in 2019
- 24 full PDT meetings held since August 2019; dozens more sub-team and technical meetings
- Formal Government to Government coordination with the Seminole Tribe of Florida; consultation and coordination with the Seminole Tribe of Florida staff and Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida beginning in Feb 2019; monthly water supply meetings with Seminole Tribe of Florida staff beginning in May 2020



LOSOM BENEFITS AND EFFECTS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

MULTI-OBJECTIVE PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

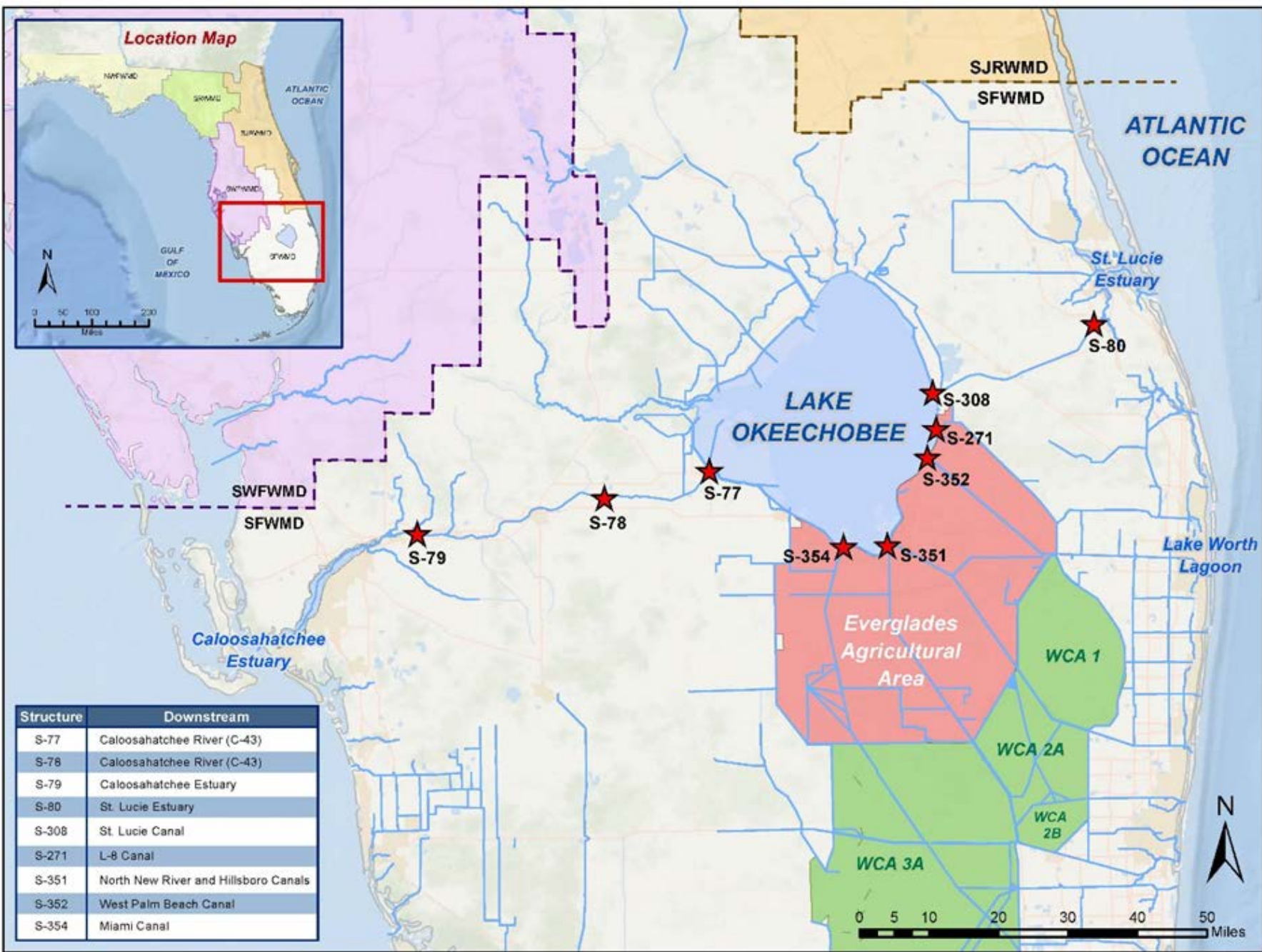


LEGEND:

- █ LOSOM PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
- █ NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE (LORS08 in 2025)
- █ EXISTING CONDITION BASELINE (LORS08 in 2019)

- CRE: Caloosahatchee River Estuary
- SLE: St. Lucie River Estuary
- GE: Greater Everglades
- LOSA: Lake Okeechobee Service Area
- STOF: Seminole Tribe of Florida
- LECSA: Lower East Coast Service Area

For more information, see Section 5 and Appendix C in LOSOM Draft EIS



WATER CONTROL PLAN APPENDIX A KEY STRUCTURES

PLEASE SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: LAKEOCOMMENTS@USACE.ARMY.MIL



WATER CONTROL PLAN AND LOSOM REGULATION SCHEDULE

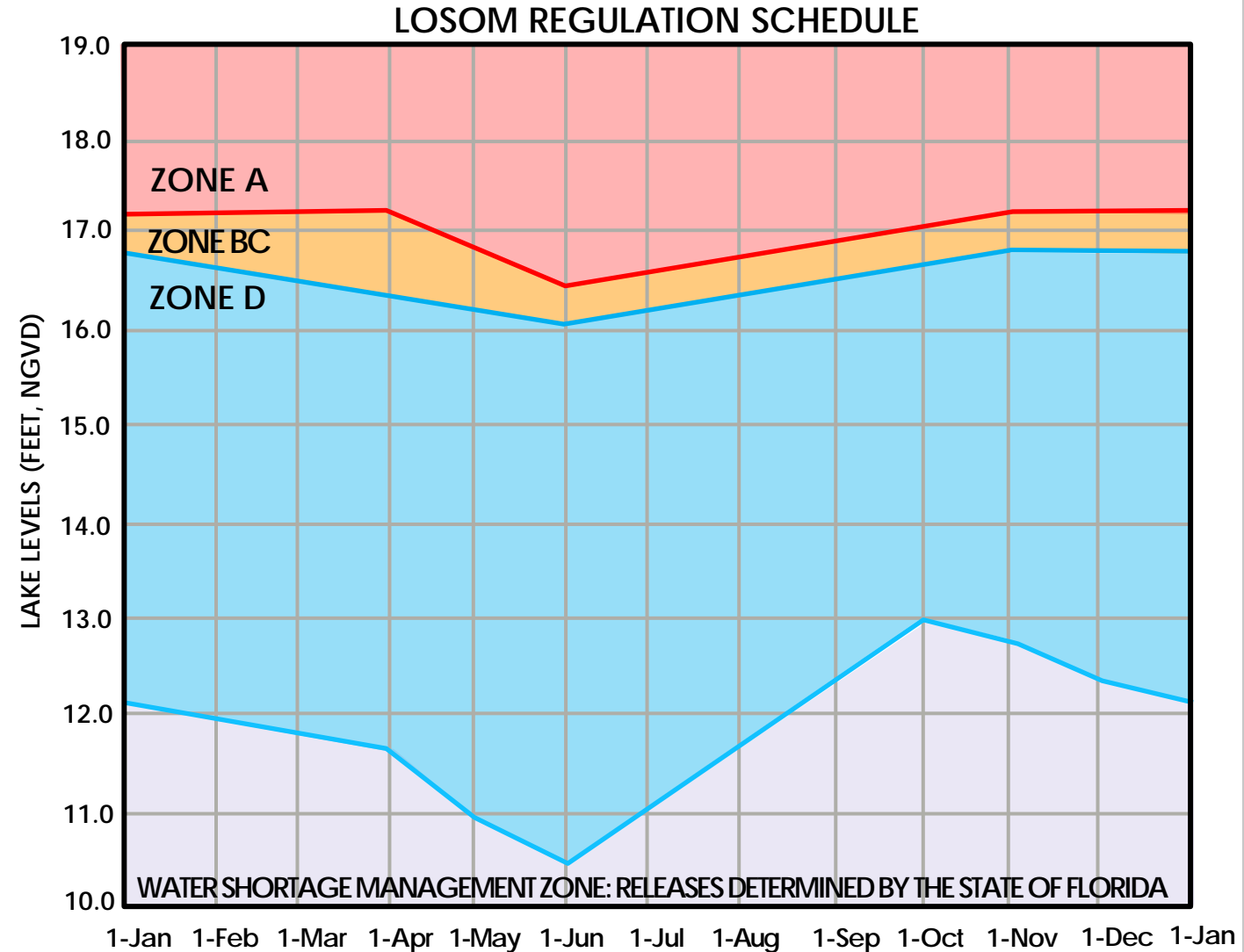
OVERALL PLAN FOR WATER MANAGEMENT



Intent: Balance of LOSOM aims to achieve synergy with project purposes and maximize system-wide benefits with available water with flexible water management operations.

Utilize all available information to make informed decisions.

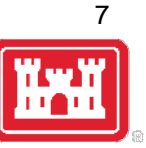
- Current climate conditions
- Climate and weather forecasts
- Hydrologic and tropical outlooks
- Water-supply conditions
- Estuary conditions
- Lake Okeechobee stage and ecological conditions
- Navigation and recreation conditions
- Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) water supply conditions
- HAB conditions
- Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) conditions
- Water Conservation Area (WCA) conditions
- Everglades National Park (ENP) conditions
- Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs)





WATER CONTROL PLAN AND REGULATION SCHEDULE

OVERALL PLAN FOR FLOWS SOUTH



- **OPERATIONAL INTENT:** Promoting water south during the dry season creates synergy between lake management objectives, notably water supply, and beneficial timing of water release to the Everglades and to the Caloosahatchee River Estuary (CRE).
- **DRY SEASON:** Most opportunity to send water south based on downstream constraints. Typically, there is more desire for flows from the lake to the Everglades and CRE.
- **WET SEASON:** During the wet season, local rainfall along the C-43 and within the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), as well as Stormwater Treatment Area (STA)/Water Conservation Area (WCA) conditions and water levels will often limit the ability to make releases from the lake.



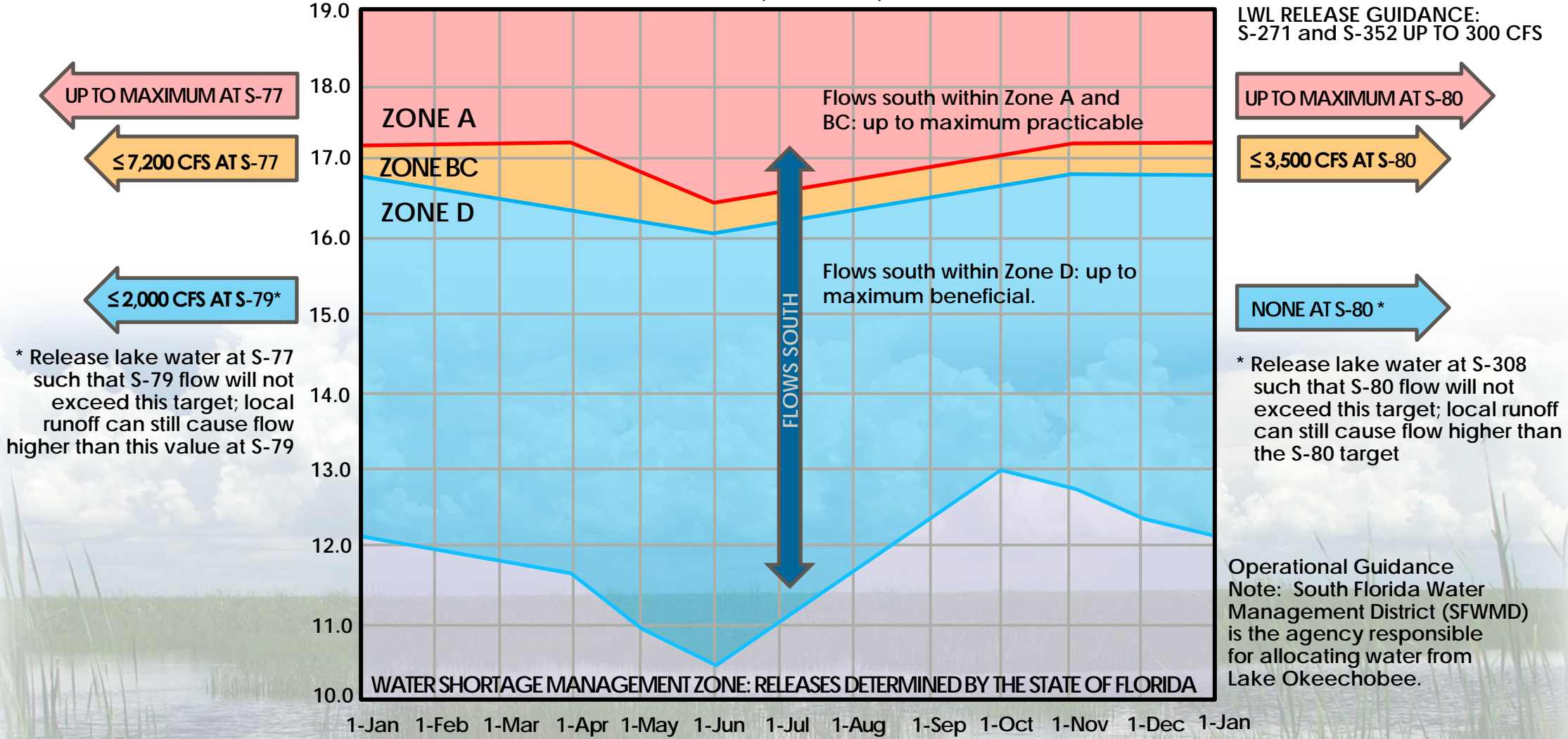


THE LOSOM REGULATION SCHEDULE

TO THE CALOOSAATCHEE RIVER ESTUARY (CRE)

TO THE ST. LUCIE ESTUARY (SLE) AND LAKE WORTH LAGOON (LWL)

LAKE LEVELS (FEET, NGVD)



TO THE GREATER EVERGLADES



THE WATER CONTROL PLAN AND REGULATION SCHEDULE

ADDITIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT TOOLS



HAB Operations

- USACE may pause or delay releases in Zone D or BC out of the lake due to risk posed by algal blooms, but this decision will be evaluated against all Congressionally authorized project purposes
- Looking at all available data, resources, and observations from federal, state, and local agencies
- Agency and stakeholder recommendations for mitigation action and risk levels

Lake Recovery Operations

- Intent: Recover Lake Okeechobee ecology after harmfully high lake stages or prolonged moderately high lake stages which can damage vegetation in the lake.
- How: Moderate releases to the estuaries in the winter and spring to accomplish a draw down by early summer (flows east/west within optimal flow ranges defined by RECOVER 2020 northern estuaries performance metric).



NEPA COMMENT SUBMITTAL

To Submit Comments:

Email: LakeOComments@usace.army.mil

Mail: Jessica Menichino
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Comments Period Ends: September 12, 2022

Additional Information:

<https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/LOSOM/>