



Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 329 • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-357-6612 • FAX 954-357-8655

July 6, 2021

Colonel Andrew D. Kelly
Commander, Jacksonville District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
701 San Marco Blvd
Jacksonville, FL 32207-8175

Drew Bartlett
Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Dear Colonel Kelly and Mr. Bartlett,

I am writing to offer Broward County's comments on pending management updates to the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM) and the proposed balanced operating schedules (Iteration 2) released on June 9, 2021.

Broward County has appreciated the opportunity to engage as an active stakeholder in this process, attending scoping meetings, providing review of plans and alternatives, and benefiting from presentations made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to our Water Advisory Board and Technical Advisory Committee. In previous communications, we have emphasized the need for the development of a balanced plan that provides equitable environmental and societal benefits, consistent with past presentations of a balanced LOSOM plan (such as the Governing Board presentation on April 8, 2021). We are pleased to see that the last round of alternative models maintains this balance.

As Lake Okeechobee management decisions are made, Broward County urges the USACE and SFWMD to account for the year-round water demands that exist south of Lake Okeechobee, inclusive of natural system, urban, and agricultural needs, and the recharge necessary for management of saltwater intrusion impacting the Biscayne Aquifer (the primary source of drinking water for southeast Florida). We are particularly interested in the refinement of option CC, as it appears to provide the greatest balance between environmental and societal benefits but suggest modification to the beneficial use band to increase in water deliveries to the south of Lake Okeechobee during the dry season, as achieved in option AA.

It appears that this adjustment will help to increase the delivery of water to the south in a manner that improves South Florida ecology, recharge of the aquifer, and mitigation of saltwater intrusion by maintaining or enhancing water levels in the canals located within Lower East Coast Service Areas 2 and 3.

We look forward to continued engagement and the opportunity to provide support as decisions are made in the LOSOM update. As always, thank you for your efforts and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Geller", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Steve Geller
Mayor

cc: Broward County Board of County Commissioners
Bertha Henry, County Administrator
Monica Cepero, Deputy County Administrator
Leonardo Vialpando, Director, Environmental Protection and Growth Management Dept.
(EPGMD)
Dr. Jennifer Jurado, Deputy Director, EPGMD
Alan Garcia, Director, Water and Wastewater Services
Walter Wilcox, Section Administrator, SFWMD