



FEBRUARY 2019

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is re-evaluating Lake Okeechobee operations to coincide with the completion of Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) rehabilitation in 2022. This study will re-examine the opportunities to balance the project purposes for flood control, water supply, recreation, navigation, environmental effects to fish and wildlife, and cultural and recreational resources. The result will be the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM). The LOSOM study will also consider the future Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) infrastructure that will provide additional flexibility for lake operation.

### PROJECT AUTHORITY

Section 1106 of the 2018 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) directs, “The Secretary shall expedite completion of the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule to coincide with completion of the Herbert Hoover Dike project, and may include all relevant aspects of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan described in section 601 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (114 Stat. 2680).”

### STUDY SCOPE

The result of the LOSOM effort will be a new system operating manual (SOM) for Lake Okeechobee and the accompanying National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation. Incremental regulation schedules will be developed to account for future infrastructure construction. Each increment will have NEPA documentation to allow for immediate implementation when the infrastructure is available.

The study will not propose water quality improvement features, nor propose new infrastructure beyond evaluation of already authorized projects.

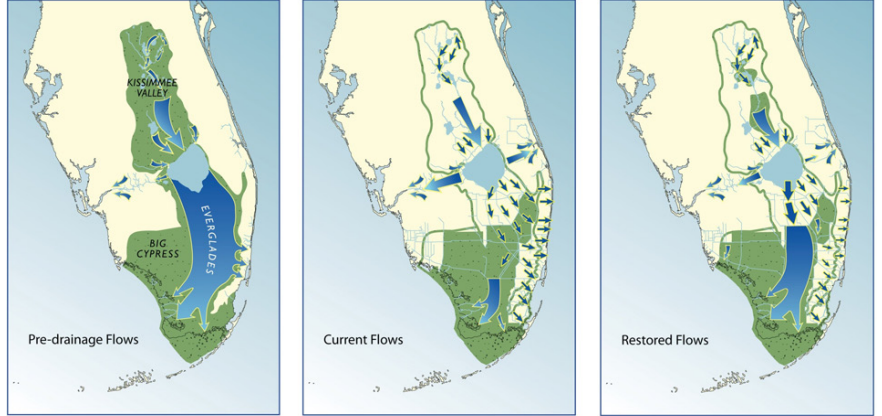
### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The LOSOM stakeholder engagement begins with the NEPA scoping meetings that will be conducted throughout February 2019. Around Lake Okeechobee and on both coasts, meetings are scheduled in communities influenced by lake operations. Stakeholder feedback will inform priorities and scope of the new operational plan. Beginning in May 2019, planned workshops will allow specific stakeholder input during the alternative development and evaluation process.

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY FIRST**

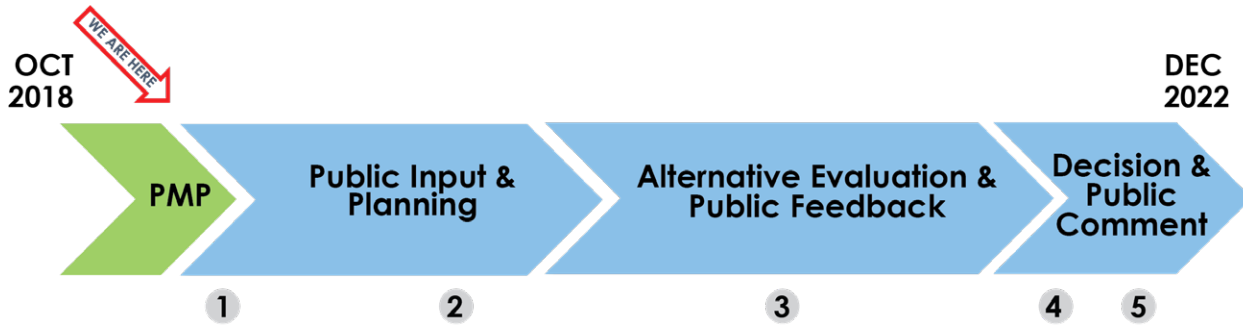
*To ensure that the congressionally authorized project purposes are met, the Corps evaluates public health and safety and flood control first. Other authorized project purposes evaluated include water supply, local basin runoff, current and forecasted weather conditions, ecological conditions of Lake Okeechobee and its surrounding areas, navigation, salinity and groundwater control, and recreation.*

Lake Okeechobee is the heart of the Everglades, supplying the natural system with water that is the life blood for the River of Grass. With the construction of the vast water management system throughout central and south Florida, Lake Okeechobee is also the keystone in the flood protection and water supply system. Regulation of Lake Okeechobee is an integral part of the restoration effort on-going in central and south Florida, working with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan to better manage the hydrology of the regional system and meet the many-faceted needs of the urban and natural environments.



## KEY MILESTONES

Approved PMP and Review Plan.....	January 2019
Public Scoping/Plan Formulation.....	February – September 2019
Public Workshops/Alternative Evaluation.....	October 2019 – September 2021
Prepare Draft LOSOM/Environmental Impact Statement .....	October 2021 – January 2022
Public Comment/Draft LOSOM/Environmental Impact Statement.....	February – March 2022
Prepare Final LOSOM/Environmental Impact Statement.....	April – May 2022
Final LOSOM Environmental Impact Statement .....	September 2022
Signed Record of Decision (ROD).....	December 2022



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- |                                     |                       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Scoping Meetings                 | February 2019         |
| 2. Planning Workshops               | May & August 2019     |
| 3. Alternative Evaluation Workshops | Multiple in 2019–2022 |
| 4. Draft Report — Public Comment    | April–May 2022        |
| 5. Final Report — Public Comment    | September 2022        |

## FOR MORE INFORMATION



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