



## RESOLUTION

Whereas: the water resources of Southwest Florida are of great economic, recreational, ecological and historic significance to the people of the region; and

Whereas: the Caloosahatchee River and estuary have been subject to extensive impacts in recent decades from changes to the watershed and other management activities that have diminished their ecological health; and

Whereas: the influences of releases from Lake Okeechobee have a direct and lasting effect on the health of the Caloosahatchee and the estuary; and

Whereas: the South Florida Water Management District is the State agency charged with managing and protecting the water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Southwest Florida Watershed Council calls upon the South Florida Water Management District to take the following actions:

- A. Work with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to revise the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule at an accelerated pace to place greater emphasis on protection of the lake's environmental resources, as well as those of its downstream estuaries and on water quality.
- B. With regard to high (wet season) flows from Lake Okeechobee:
  1. In a public forum, explore all possibilities for the routing of Lake Okeechobee flows, including allowing water from Lake Okeechobee to be routed into Water Conservation Areas through the suspension of Environmental Resource Permits active in the Everglades Agricultural Area and establishing recyclable water containment areas.
  2. Allocate resources to study the effects of the recent and ongoing sediment-laden discharges from Lake Okeechobee and set aside funds to provide for the recovery of natural resources that have been negatively impacted by the releases.
- C. With regard to low (dry season) flows from Lake Okeechobee:
  1. Amend the Caloosahatchee Minimum Flows and Levels Rule, in Section 40E-8.011(3), F.A.C., to incorporate forward pumping from Lake Okeechobee in the recovery and prevention strategy, thereby adding another method to supply water necessary to achieve the minimum flow criteria for the river.
  2. Establish a reservation of water for the Caloosahatchee that will ensure the long-term health of the river and estuary by November of 2006.
  3. Work with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to incorporate water quality components into the C-43 West Reservoir to ensure that no impairments will exist in the water released into the Caloosahatchee from the reservoir.

This Resolution was adopted by the Southwest Florida Watershed Council on this 15th day of September, 2005.