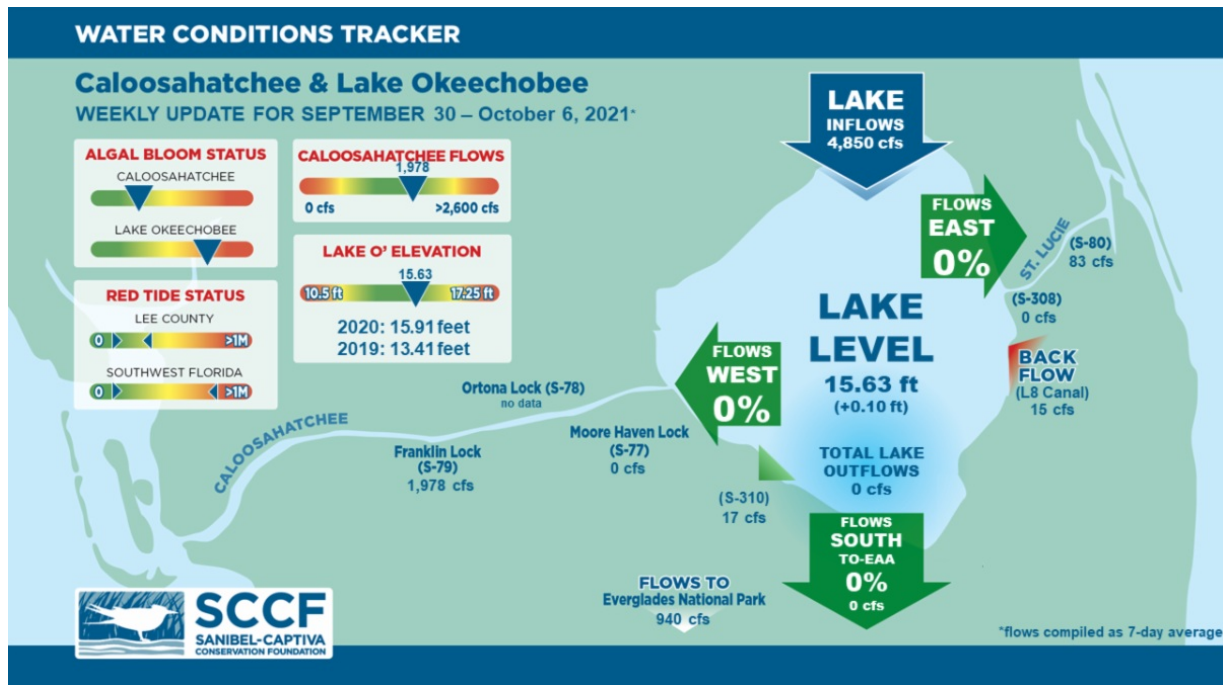




## This Week's Water Conditions Update

October 8, 2021

### Water Conditions Tracker



### Lake Okeechobee Levels & Caloosahatchee Flow Impacts

On 10/6/21 Lake Okeechobee was at 15.63 feet (+0.10 feet in the past week). As the dry season weather pattern is developing, the average flow at S-79 decreased to 1,978 cfs (cubic feet per second) this week. The 14-day average flow on 10/6/21 was 4,803 cfs and has been in the **damaging flow envelope** for 20 days. We are still not receiving any flows from Lake Okeechobee. Damaging flows from S-79 for prolonged periods can have negative impacts to seagrass and oysters, which are important indicator species in the Caloosahatchee Estuary.

For more information on Lake Okeechobee and estuary conditions go to the latest [Caloosahatchee Conditions Report](#)

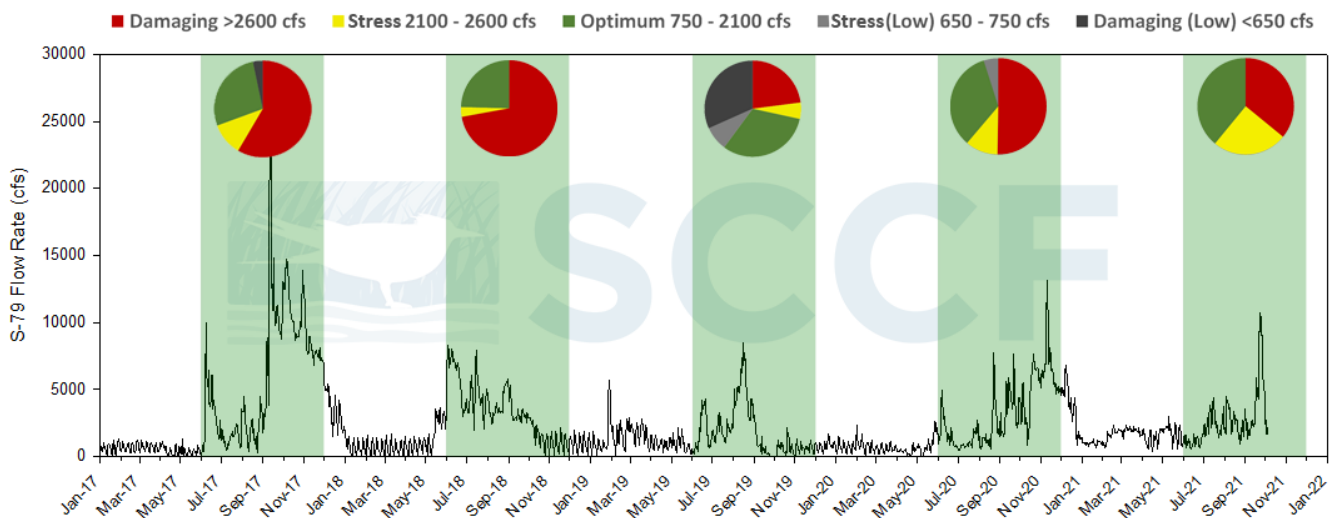


## Virtual Water Quality Tour from Lighthouse Beach

[Click here](#) or on the image above to take a virtual tour from above Lighthouse Beach Park to see how the water looked this week.

With no flows from Lake Okeechobee, water clarity and quality is only being affected by the watershed and stormwater runoff from rain. Decreased rainfall and runoff is resulting in an improvement in water clarity. Photo was taken on 10/5/21 at 2:07 PM on falling tide (high tide @ 12:17 PM (3.1ft)).

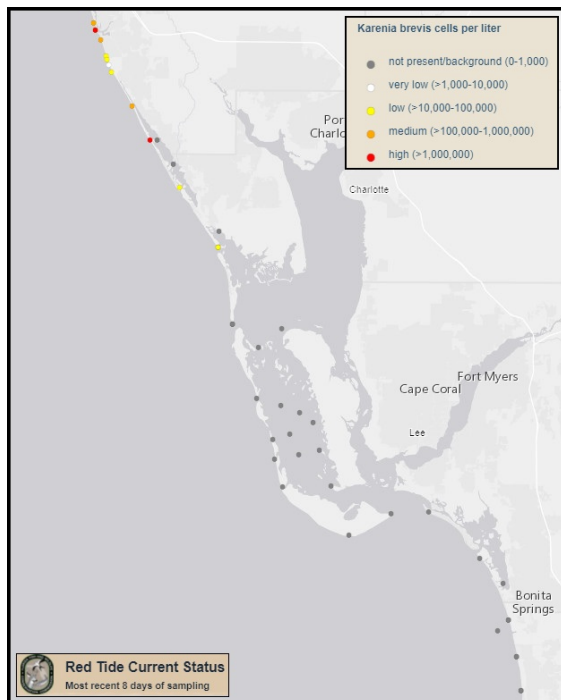
## Dry Season 2021



The graph above shows the past 5 years of flow at the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam (S-79) in Alva. The shaded green areas represent the 6 months of the year that are typically associated with the wet season and are the official Atlantic hurricane season. The pie charts in each section represent the percentage of time spent in the [RECOVER 2020 flow envelopes](#) for the Caloosahatchee Estuary. The optimum flow envelope represents the range of flows that provide salinity regimes that are beneficial to the biology and ecology of the

estuary.

So far this year, the percentage of time spent inside the optimum flow envelope (39%) was greater than the previous four years with 2018 being the least (28%). The 2021 wet season also had the least amount of time spent outside of the optimum flow envelope (61%) compared to the worst year, 2018 at 75%. There are still about 7 weeks left of the hurricane season, but barring any tropical storm or hurricanes, the flow patterns from this years wet season have been marginally better that previous recent years. There is still a lot of room for improvement for water management throughout the Greater Everglades, including sending less water to the Northern estuaries in the wet season, sending more water to the Everglades, creating more water storage throughout the watershed to reduce flows in the wet season and to provide beneficial flows in the dry season, and to optimize the Lake Okeechobee Systems Operation Plan (LOSOM) to reduce the burden on the Caloosahatchee Estuary.



## Red Tide

[Satellite imagery](#) over the past week has shown medium to high levels of chlorophyll off the coast of Southwest Florida, with a large patch of high chlorophyll patches off the coast of Sarasota and Charlotte County and in Charlotte Harbor. *Karenia brevis* and/or other algal species may be contributing to the high chlorophyll concentrations.

In Lee County, FWC reported background to low levels of *Karenia brevis* in Boca Grande Pass and Captiva Pass. The Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (CROW) on Sanibel received 5 patients with toxicosis symptoms (from red tide or blue-green algae) from 9/26/21 - 10/04/21.

The [FWC fish kill hotline](#) continues to receive

reports of red tide related fish kills ranging from Dixie to Manatee County and in Lee county (2 reports).

## Blue-Green Algae

No cyanobacteria was present in the Caloosahatchee over the past week. On 10/6/21 algal blooms covered about 180 square miles of Lake Okeechobee. There is presently a 50% bloom-potential on Lake Okeechobee based on the most recent satellite imagery.

## Resources To Follow:

To learn more about our current water conditions, click on the following links:

### [Caloosahatchee Conditions Report](#)

A collaborative, weekly analysis, including recommendations for water managers regarding Lake Okeechobee flows.

### [RECON](#)

SCCF's River, Estuary, and Coastal Observing Network is a network of eight optical water quality sensors deployed throughout the Caloosahatchee and the Pine Island Sound estuary

to provide real-time water quality data.

**[Red Tide Resources](#)**

**[NOAA HAB Monitoring System - Lake Okeechobee](#)**

**[Algae Reporting App.](#)**

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