

10-6-2020

Lake Okeechobee Aquatic Plant Management Interagency Task Force Meeting



Policy Guidelines 1986

2. The Corps of Engineers shall chair, and actively solicit participation in, the Lake Okeechobee Aquatic Plant Management Interagency Task Force. The Task Force members will represent State of Florida agencies (including the South Florida Water Management District), State Universities, the Corps of Engineers, and other Federal agencies. The Task Force will serve in an advisory capacity, providing multi-disciplinary technical and scientific data from which the Corps' aquatic plant management strategy, methodology, and research planning and operational efforts will evolve. The focus of the aquatic plant effort will be to benefit the overall ecological health of Lake Okeechobee.

Introduction

- ▶ Meeting rules
 - ▶ PLEASE stay on mute.
 - ▶ During meeting- Use “Chat” feature for questions.
 - ▶ Public comment via “Chat” will occur at end of meeting.
 - ▶ *Reminder for public members this is an interagency board meeting with an addition of a public comment section. Please wait to comment/ ask questions during the public comment section at the end.
- ▶ Roll call

FISHING BOATING

FWC: Lake Okeechobee bass population lagging, but stable, years after Hurricane Irma

Ed Killer Treasure Coast Newspapers

Published 9:43 a.m. ET Dec. 24, 2020

[View Comments](#)



In a recent report titled Lake Okeechobee: 2019-20 Fisheries Update, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission supported what some anglers have been lucky enough to learn firsthand — the bass fishery and other fisheries on Lake O are in good shape.

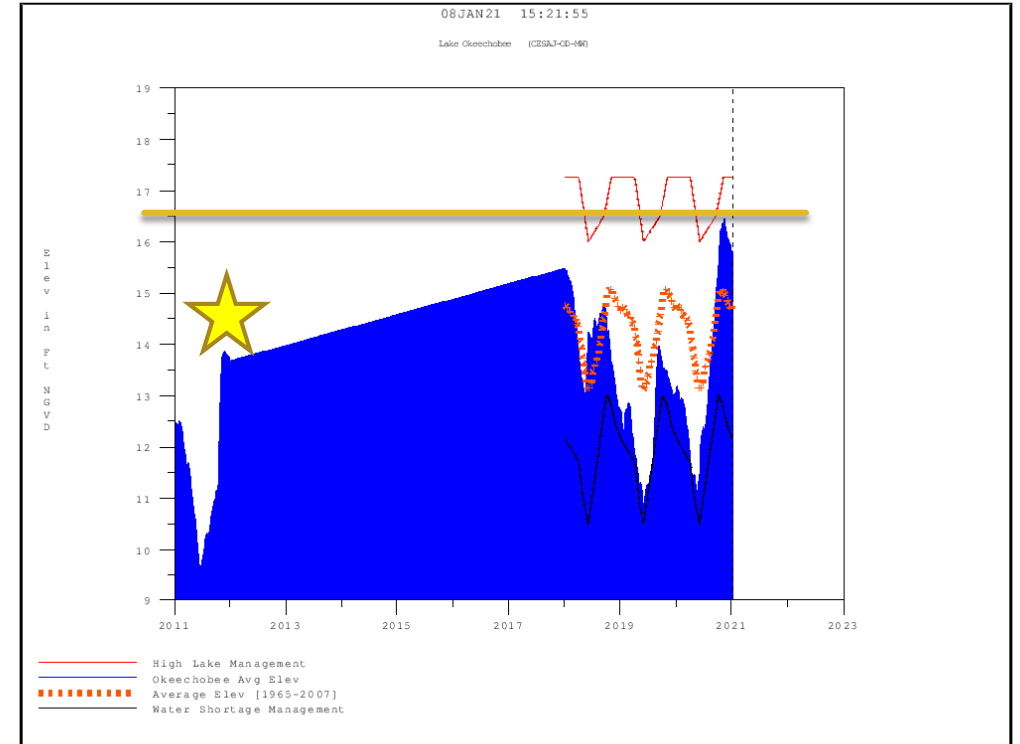
According to the report:

Largemouth bass abundance is tied to submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV)
Bass populations recover within 2-3 years of SAV improvements
Hurricane Irma in 2017 damaged SAV, causing a decline in bass abundance
Weights and numbers of bass sampled this spring show a healthy population is rebounding

The lake's current level, 15.92 feet above sea level, is probably helping the bass, he said.

"The fishing has been better than it has been **since before Irma because the lake level is higher than it has been since before then. That allows the vegetation in the lake to grow** and give the fish more areas to feed in that are unmolested. They can spawn on the moon phases with much less fishing pressure," he texted.

DISCUSSION



The best level for the lake, Shellen thinks, is in the 14- to 16-foot range because the fish have more cover. By contrast, when the lake is low, the bass are along the edges of the grass. They can get back into the marsh areas, where they can feed on grass shrimp, shiners, bluegill, frogs and whatever else they can catch.



Interagency Flight reports

FLIGHT DATES

July- 07/02/20

August- 8/06/20

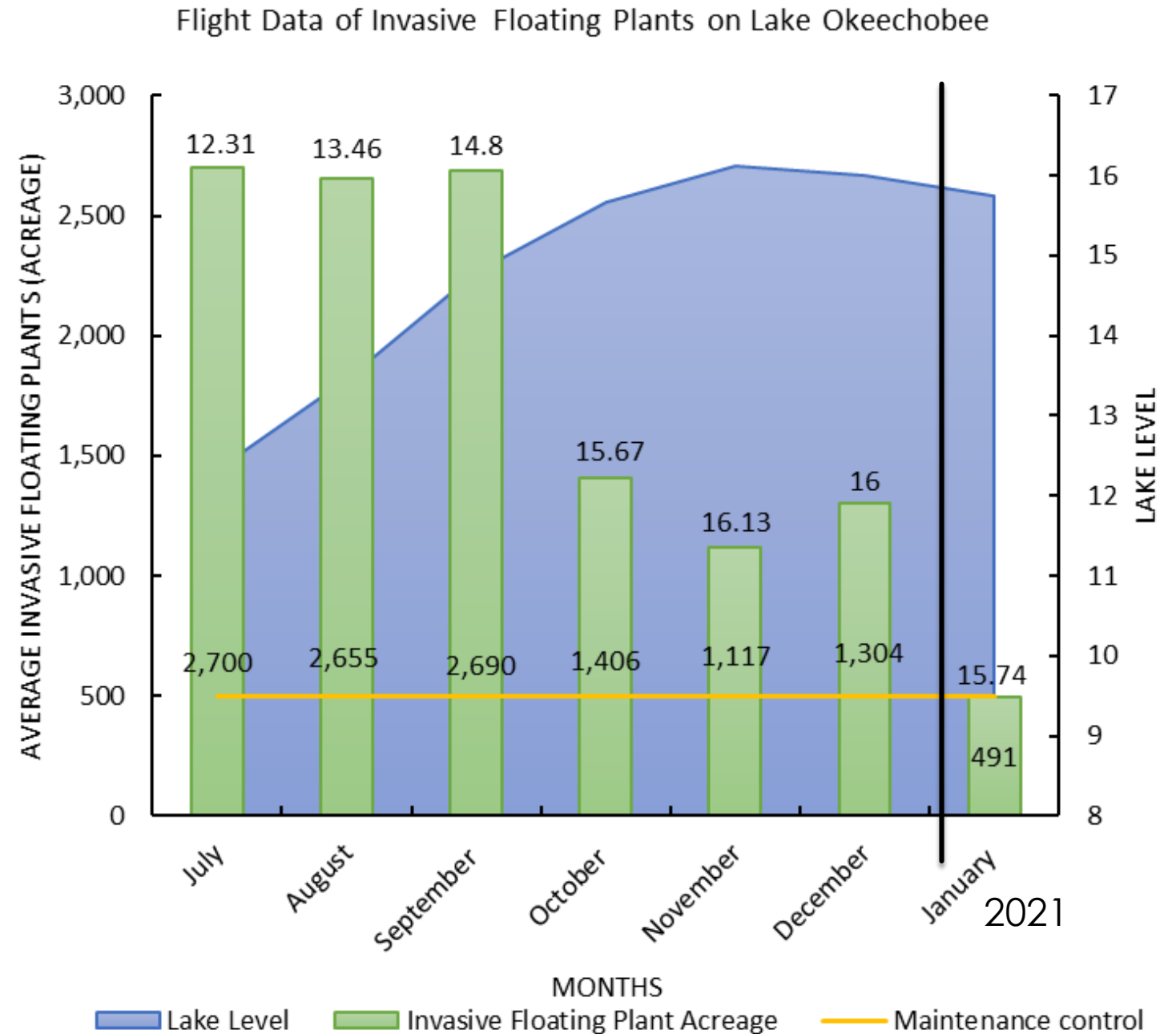
September- 9/03/20

October- 10/01/20

November- 11/05/20

December- 12/03/20

January- 01/07/21



FWC (IPM)

Agenda items

- ▶ Scleria
- ▶ Luziola
- ▶ Wild Sugar cane



FWC (AHRE)

Agenda items

- ▶ Island Fireline Shredding
- ▶ Cattail Management
- ▶ Woody plant management

FWC (Snail Kite Conservation)

► Updates

USACE (ISM)

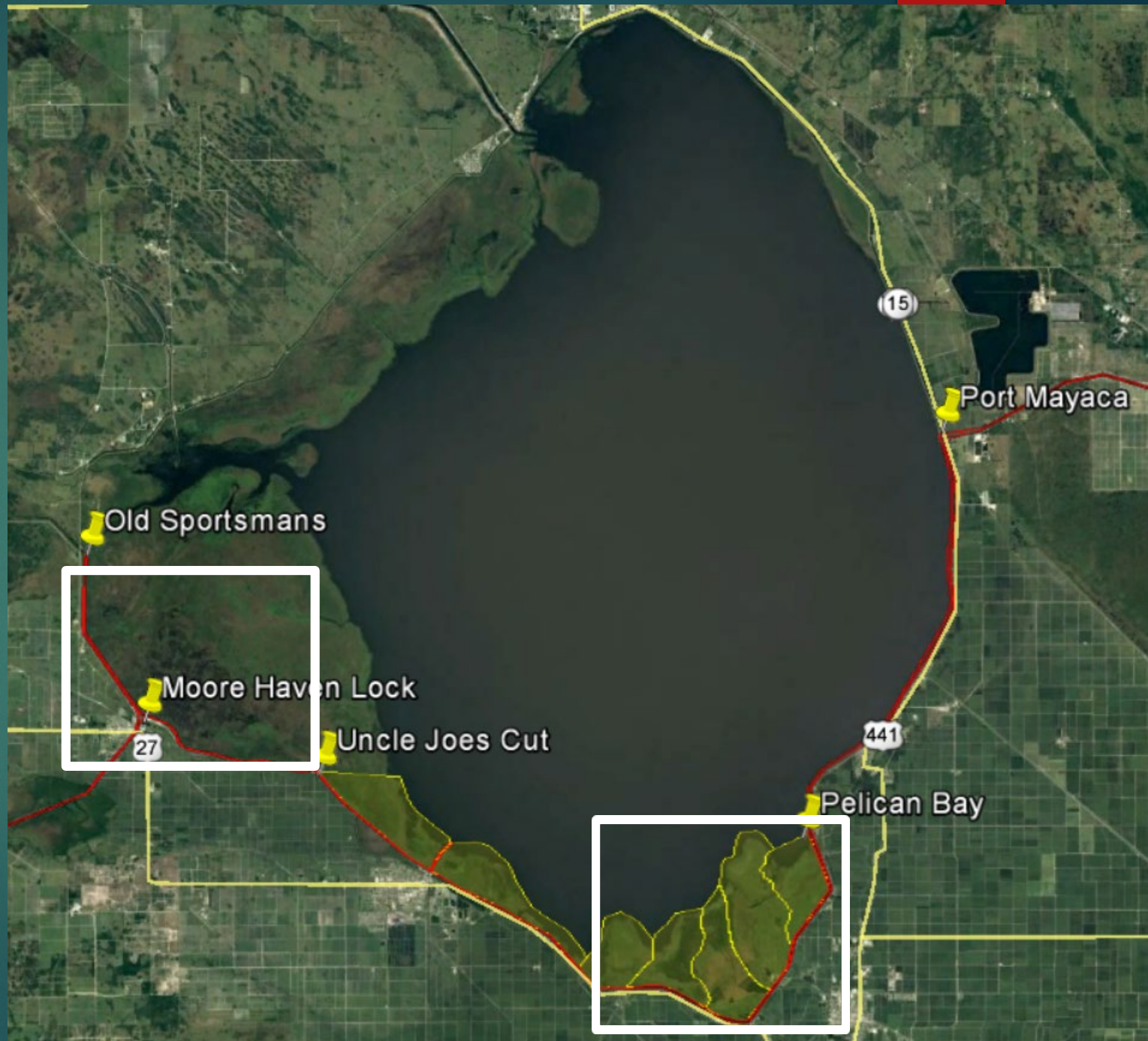
Agenda items

- ▶ Aquatic Plant Management Treatments

USACE AOR

Treatments:

- Rim canal from old Sportsman's to Clewiston
- Southern end from Pelican Bay to Rita Island
- Acreage treated= 625 acres



PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- ▶ If you would like to make comments/ ask questions during the Public Comment section, please type your name in the chat and I will call on you.
 - ▶ This will make sure we do not forget anyone who would like to speak.
- ▶ Other questions can be asked via the CHAT feature and I will go over each question at the end once everyone on the phone has had a chance to speak.
- ▶ EACH speaker has a max of 2 minutes to speak*
 - ▶ This will make sure everyone that would like to speak will have enough time.
 - ▶ A timer will go off once your time is up.

THANK YOU
and BE SAFE!

