



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
701 SAN MARCO BLVD
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207-8915

Planning and Policy Division
Environmental Branch

AUG 06 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Regulation (33 CFR 230.11), this letter constitutes the Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact from the Phase 2 Decompartmentalization Physical Model (DECOMP Physical Model) operational strategy for a planned temporary deviation in Water Conservation Area (WCA) 3B. A series of mid-May storms have caused conditions to rapidly change from very dry conditions to very wet in South Florida. This record area-wide rainfall has caused water levels in the three WCAs' to rise above their maximum regulation schedule and the maximum exceedance elevations per the 2012 Water Control Plan. If the rate of rising water levels is not mitigated to limit the prolonged duration of high water conditions, there is potential for high water levels to pose greater risks to valuable natural resources, public health, safety or welfare as the wet season and hurricane season continue due to reduced flood storage.

Water management operations at Structure 152 (S-152), are currently governed by Phase 2 of the DECOMP Physical Model operational strategy. The DECOMP Physical Model is a limited duration, fully controlled field test being conducted pursuant to that agreement as a design effort to gather information to formulate decompartmentalization of WCA 3 and to use for the design of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan features. Under current operations, S-152 may discharge up to 750 cubic feet per second (cfs) until either objective(s) are met or S-152 is closed subject to operational constraints. When WCA 3B stages (at gages SRS-1 and/or Site_71) equal or exceed 8.5 feet (ft.) National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD), S-152 releases are reduced or discontinued. In order to provide relief from high water stages within WCA 3A, the Corps is initiating a planned temporary deviation to raise the stage at gages SRS-1 and/or Site_71 from 8.5 ft. NGVD to 8.7 ft. NGVD from the beginning of this deviation through September 15, 2018, and then up to 9.0 ft. NGVD from September 16, 2018 through November 30, 2018 allowing approximately 18,000 acre-feet per month discharges out of WCA 3A, based on 300 cubic cfs flow rate through S-152. The planned temporary deviation will extend no later than November 30, 2018. The proposed action is expected to increase water stages within WCA 3B temporarily; however, water elevations due to the deviation operations will not exceed those historically experienced as a result of periodic rain events.

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/About/DivisionsOffices/Planning/EnvironmentalBranch/EnvironmentalDocuments.aspx>

Any comments you may have must be submitted in writing to the letterhead address within 15 days of the date of this letter. Questions concerning the WCA 3B planned temporary deviation can be submitted to Ms. Melissa Nasuti at melissa.a.nasuti@usace.army.mil or by telephone at 904-232-1368.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gina Paduano Ralph', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gina Paduano Ralph, Ph.D.
Chief, Environmental Branch