



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
701 SAN MARCO BOULEVARD  
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32207-0019

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

Planning and Policy Division  
Environmental Branch

SEP 06 2017

Mr. Donald Progulske  
Everglades Program Supervisor  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1339 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Subject: Operations of S-12A, S-12B, S-343A, S-343B, S-344, and S-322D Planned Temporary Deviation

Dear Mr. Progulske:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District (Corps) acknowledges receipt of your letter dated August 8, 2017 pertaining to the Corps request for Emergency Endangered Species Act consultation on the 2017 S-12A, S-12B, S-343A, S-343B, S-344, and S-322D Planned Temporary Deviation. In your letter, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) provided comments and requested additional information pursuant to our July 6, 2017 Biological Assessment (BA) in support of the Planned Temporary Deviation.

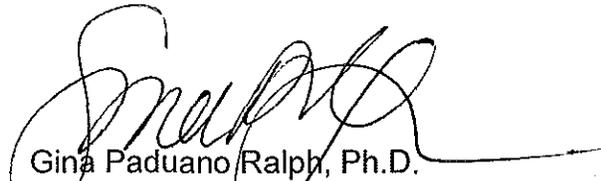
In our BA, as well as in our 2017 Planned Temporary Deviation Environmental Assessment, the Corps stated that the 2017 Planned Temporary Deviation will be in effect until the Water Conservation Area 3A (WCA 3A), 3-station gauge average falls below Zone A of the WCA 3A Regulation Schedule. The Corps anticipates that the deviation will be in effect until at least January 2017 and an After Action Report completed 60-90 days post conclusion. In the absence of further water management deviation actions during the remainder of the 2017 wet season, the Corps anticipates adhering to the seasonal closure criteria for S-12A, S-12B, S-343A, S-343B, and S-344 identified in both the 2016 FWS Biological Opinion and the Corps' Increment 1 Plus Supplemental Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact dated February 7, 2017, including consideration of the WCA 3A high water strategy criteria. According to these criteria:

- S-343A, S-343B, and S-344 will close on October 1, 2017;
- S-12A and S-12B will each close on October 1, 2017 if the WCA 3A, 3-station gauge average has receded below 10.5 feet NGVD;
- S-12A will unconditionally close on November 1, 2017; S-12B will close on November 1, 2017 if the WCA 3A, 3-station gauge average has receded below 11.0 feet NGVD; and
- S-12B will unconditionally close on December 1, 2017.

Full responses to the FWS commentary on the BA may be found in Attachment 1.

Should you have any questions regarding our responses in Attachment 1 or on status of water management operations, please contact me or have your staff contact Dr. Gina Paduano Ralph, Chief, Environmental Branch at (904) 232-2336 or Mr. Luis Alejandro, Chief, Water Management Section at (904) 232-3034.

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure