



## City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road  
Sanibel, Florida 33957-4096

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AREA CODE - 239

ADMINISTRATION/LEGISLATIVE	472-3700
CITY COUNCIL	472-4135
COMMUNITY SERVICES	
BUILDING	472-4555
PLANNING	472-4136
PUBLIC WORKS	472-6937
UTILITIES	472-3179
FINANCE	472-9615
IT SUPPORT	472-3700
LEGAL	472-4359
NATURAL RESOURCES	472-3700
POLICE	472-3111
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	472-3111
RECREATION	472-0345
CENTER4LIFE	472-5743

January 26, 2023

Colonel James L. Booth  
Jacksonville District Commander  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
701 San Marco Boulevard  
Jacksonville, FL 32207  
[James.L.Booth@usace.army.mil](mailto:James.L.Booth@usace.army.mil)

Dear Colonel Booth,

On behalf of the Sanibel City Council and the citizens of Sanibel, thank you for your commitment to the equitable distribution of freshwater releases from Lake Okeechobee. As our community is still in the early stages of our recovery from the devastating impacts of Hurricane Ian and red tide persists in our coastal waters, the Corps' decision announced last Friday to maintain flows to the Caloosahatchee in the optimal RECOVER range is a welcome one. While we fully appreciate that the continued high water in the Lake is harmful to the ecology of Lake Okeechobee and increases our risk of high-volume releases during the wet season, we thank you for sparing the Caloosahatchee from damaging releases.

We continue to urge the Corps to utilize every outlet available to minimize harm to the northern estuaries and lower lake levels prior to the upcoming rainy season by maintaining optimal flows to the estuaries, maximizing the volume of water sent south, and full utilization of dispersed water management projects and other structures south of the lake. In addition to these short-term strategies, we encourage continued momentum to complete projects that will provide much needed storage north, south, east, & west of Lake Okeechobee.

We know that balancing the needs of all stakeholders is a tremendously complex task. We thank you for your continued dedication to manage Lake Okeechobee in a science-based manner that aims to protect the citizens, economy, and ecology of south Florida and we look forward to our continued collaboration and partnership.

Sincerely,

  
Holly D. Smith, Mayor

CC: Sanibel City Council  
Dana Souza, City Manager  
John Agnew, City Attorney  
Scotty Lynn Kelly, City Clerk  
Holly Milbrandt, Natural Resources Director