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Lake Okeechobee

everything in harmony | restoration 2007

Solutions Exist. To heal Lake Okeechobee, the Estuaries and the Everglades, Audubon of Florida recommends:

Eight for the Lake

1. Re-examine scope of challenges – New data on climate patterns and a much-lower phosphorus goal, require formal re-calculation of restoration needs.
2. Stop Damaging Flows to the Estuary - Create about 1.2 million acre feet of storage and treatment capacity upstream of Lake Okeechobee to stop deep levels and destructive discharges to the estuaries.
3. An Everglades Agricultural Area compatible with restoration – Significantly increase storage, cleansing marshes, and water conveyance features in the EAA to move water flows to the south.
4. Development Planning and Permitting - Keep development compact and require land conservation in exchange for new density. Retain 100 percent of natural water storage on-site in new developments, and retrofit old developments to capture more stormwater.
5. Fertilizer – Eliminate imports of phosphorous fertilizer in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed.
6. Water levels – Restore historic water level patterns in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and Istokpoga, and maintain Lake Okeechobee water levels between 12-15 feet.
7. Farmland Conservation – Use federal and state farm programs to encourage sustainable, profitable ranching and other agriculture.
8. Regional restoration projects -- Aggressively pursue restoring key waterways (such as Reedy, Arbuckle, Fisheating and other creeks) in Okeechobee's watershed to improve its function, while improving habitat and recreation.