

# Memo

Date: Thursday, May 11, 2017

Project: Lake Charlene Area Drainage Improvements

To: Joy Blackmon

From: Allen Vinson

Subject: Lake Charlene Water Surface Iterations

At the request of the Lake Charlene HOA and Escambia County District 2, this memo seeks to analyze the results of increased water surface elevations for the Lake Charlene design. The goal of the project is to reduce the frequency of flooding in areas surrounding Lake Charlene, minimize impacts downstream of Lake Charlene, and successfully fund the project through a FEMA HMGP Grant. In order to accomplish these goals, the current design proposes to lower the water surface elevation in Lake Charlene to the bottom of the existing outfall pipe while providing additional outfall capacity. This results in an 18" lowering of the lake water surface elevation, when the lake is full. The existing outfall pipe currently contains a sluice gate, which keeps the Lake Charlene water surface elevation approximately 18" higher than the proposed condition when the lake is full. Average lake level conditions fall somewhere between the top and bottom of the sluice gate depending on the amount of rainfall.

In order to analyze the affects of incremental increases in the water surface elevation, the project drainage model utilized the proposed outfall design as a starting point. The starting water surface was increased by 3" increments until the 18" sluice gate elevation was reached. The primary goal of each 3" increase is to keep the Lake Charlene 100-year flood stage below the warning stage. The warning stage is the point at which surrounding areas begin to flood. In order to keep the modeled stages below the warning stage for each iteration, modifications to the design included the lengthening of the outfall weir located at the outfall structure. Lengthening of the outfall weir allows more flow to leave the lake as stages increase. With each iterative increase in water surface elevation, the weir was lengthened so that more flow could outfall from the lake in order to keep flood stages below the warning stage. Increases in outflow causes stages to increase downstream in Jones Swamp, which is the final project outfall.

The proposed design, which lowers the lake approximately 18" when full, minimizes the stage increases downstream since there is water staging capacity available in the lake. This is an important component with regards to the FEMA Grant because the goal is to design and construct a project that has minimal affect on the surrounding environment. The proposed design already results in minor downstream stage increases. By increasing the stage of the lake, more water has to be let out of the lake through the weir structure. Letting more water out of the lake will further increase stages downstream. Since the lake is part of the drainage system from upstream to downstream, and there is no feasible way to

increase the water-holding capacity upstream or within the lake, the best justification for minor stage increases downstream is for the lake to be part of the solution. The best solution to minimize downstream stages while keeping lake stages below the warning stage is to lower the lake level.

In analyzing the iterative results (see following page), increasing the stage of the lake by 3" increments and increasing the weir lengths for each iteration does increase the stages downstream as expected. The stage increases are not substantial though. In order to justify any stage increases downstream to FEMA, no matter how small, the best argument is that the lowering of Lake Charlene to some extent should be a part of the scenario. If the lake is held at the sluice gate elevation, then the project simply becomes building a bigger outfall with no consideration for downstream impacts as part of the solution.

Taking a further look at the iterative results, it appears that the most significant jump in modeled stage increases takes place between the 6" and 12" water surface increases from the design condition. By taking the 9" water surface increase as the new design condition, it is still arguable that reducing the water surface elevation in the lake is part of a justifiable solution.

It should be noted that drainage modeling is not an exact science since many factors can affect the results such as precedent rainfall conditions and distribution of rainfall during a storm event. The original recommendation of lowering the lake by 18" provides the most buffer with respect to stormwater stages reaching private property. Lowering the lake level by only 9" inches will provide less buffer, but still provides over 4.1 million gallons of extra stage capacity in the lake. This is equivalent to approximately 200 average size swimming pools. Increasing stage capacity in the lake by reducing the starting water surface elevation is an important component to reducing downstream stages and increasing chances of project funding approval.

