

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) today joined Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-Fla.), Rep. Bill Posey (R-Fla.), Senators Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) and Senator George Lemieux (R-Fla.) in sending a letter to the Jacksonville District Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers urging the Corps to consider the environmental and economic ramifications of fresh water discharges from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie Estuary.

“We write in order to express our concern with the recent fresh water discharges from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie Estuary,” the members from the Florida Delegation wrote. “As you know, the estuary and Indian River Lagoon are sensitive coastal areas and a crucial environmental and economic resource for Martin County and surrounding areas. Therefore, we urge you to consider the environmental and economic ramifications of the large releases from Lake Okeechobee.

“The fresh water from the lake desalinates the water of the estuary, killing much of the flora and fauna, including fish and oysters crucial for many area businesses. The tourist and fishing charter businesses suffer when the St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon become so polluted that signs are posted to avoid contact with the water. Martin County is within one of the most bio-diverse areas of North America. There is a limit to how much of these releases the estuary can tolerate.”

To read the full letter, [click here](#):