Palm Beach county, known for its beaches and luxury lifestyle, has a rich history dating back to the 1930s when a trip to West Palm Beach was a popular destination among locals, the lake has been the central gathering place for social events, cultural activities, and outdoor recreation. In the late 1830s, with the end of the Seminole Wars, the area was mostly open land, and cattle on lands that were dry enough, and hunted local game, would come together each year for the traditional Green Corn Dance, which is a tradition still carried on to this day. They would dance, sing, and celebrate the bounty of the season, a ritual that is deeply rooted in the culture and history of the Seminole people.

Lake Okeechobee, the second largest lake in the state, is a vast body of water that covers 730 square miles, stretching 55 miles from north to south and 25 miles from east to west. It is the largest lake entirely within the state of Florida and the 15th largest freshwater lake in the United States. Historically, Lake Okeechobee once stretched unbounded from the historic Caloosahatchee River to the historic St. Lucie River, but due to historical damming and drainage efforts, the lake is now contained within the boundaries of Lake Okeechobee, Hendry County, and Martin County.

Historically, Lake Okeechobee has been a vital resource for the region, providing water storage, recreation, and a host of other beneficial values. It is a daily challenge for the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to balance the needs of water management with the needs of the environment, as the lake has been impacted by various factors such as land drainage, agriculture, and urban development.

You can visit the Big Water Heritage Trail, which offers a unique perspective on the history and culture of the area. The trail allows visitors to explore the natural and cultural heritage of the region, including the Seminole people who have called the area home for centuries. The trail also offers opportunities for birdwatching, as the lake is home to a variety of birds such as Sandhill Cranes, Ospreys, and Bald Eagles. The Big Water Heritage Trail is a great place to experience the natural beauty of the area and learn about its rich history.

In summary, Lake Okeechobee is not only a beautiful body of water but also a vital resource for the region, providing water storage, recreation, and a host of other beneficial values. It is a daily challenge for the South Florida Water Management District to balance the needs of water management with the needs of the environment, as the lake has been impacted by various factors such as land drainage, agriculture, and urban development. The Big Water Heritage Trail is a great place to experience the natural beauty of the area and learn about its rich history.