



# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monthly News Release

OMAHA – Dry conditions persist across most of the Missouri River basin. July’s runoff above Sioux City, Iowa, was 1.8 million acre-feet (MAF). The current runoff forecast for 2003 is 19.5 MAF, compared to a normal of 25.2 MAF.

“July’s runoff was only 54 percent of normal, with parts of the basin receiving little or no rain. Kansas City had its driest July on record,” said Brig. Gen. William Grisoli, Northwestern Division Engineer.

Steady releases of 26,000 cfs were set in late April, as part of the 2003 Supplemental Biological Opinion agreed to by the Corps and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding operation of the reservoirs during the nesting season of the protected interior least terns and piping plovers. “The terns and plovers enjoyed a fantastic nesting season along the Missouri River under this plan,” said General Grisoli.

The operation this summer resulted in the fourth straight year of record numbers of adult piping plovers and the second highest number of least terns, he added. Both species exceeded the individual year short-term goal and the longer-term 3-year goal for fledged birds set by the Service. This is the sixth consecutive year that the fledge goal has been met for the interior least tern. The fledge goal for the piping plover has been met for 5 of the last 6 years.

Recent court action required a cut in releases from Gavins Point to 21,000 cfs on Aug. 12. They were gradually increased to 23,000 cfs on Aug. 15 and to 25,000 cfs on Aug. 16. This action complied with the court order and the Biological Opinion published by the Service in November 2000.

Beginning Sept. 1, when the biological opinion's flow restrictions end, the dams and reservoirs will be again operated in accordance with the 2003 Annual Operating Plan. Releases will be maintained at the level necessary to provide minimum service for the remainder of the commercial navigation season. The season will be shortened 6 days to make up for the additional water released last winter for downstream water intakes. It will end at the river's mouth on Nov. 25.

System storage ended July at 44.4 MAF. Last year at this time it was 48.3 MAF. The amount of water currently stored in the reservoirs is nearly 17 MAF below average.

Gavins Point releases averaged 25,500 cfs in July, compared to the historical average of 33,900 cfs. Lewis and Clark Lake will remain near elevation 1206.5 feet msl during August.

Fort Randall releases averaged 24,300 cfs in July. In August, they will range from 20,000 to 25,000 cfs as needed to maintain the level of Lewis and Clark Lake. Lake Francis Case ended the month at 1353.9 feet msl. It will remain near that level through the summer before dropping to elevation 1353 feet msl by the end of September.

Lake Oahe dropped nearly a foot during July, ending the month at elevation 1586.5 feet msl. Because of diminished inflow, it will drop more than one foot during August, ending the month 20 feet below normal. The reservoir is 4 feet lower than last year at this time.

Big Bend will remain in its normal range of 1420 to 1421 feet msl during August.

Garrison releases averaged 21,400 cfs during July. They will be gradually reduced to 10,000 cfs around mid-September. Lake Sakakawea fell nearly one foot in July, ending the month at 1826.5

feet msl. It will drop nearly two feet in August, ending the month nearly 17 feet below normal. The lake is 5 feet lower than last year at this time.

Fort Peck releases were cut from 8,000 cfs to 7,000 cfs on Aug. 2. They will remain at that rate during the summer, before dropping to 4,000 cfs in mid-September. The lake dropped more than one foot in July, ending the month at elevation 2212.3 feet msl. It will fall less than two feet in August, ending the month 25 feet below normal. Last year at this time it was 6 feet higher.

The six main stem powerplants generated 780 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in July, 78 percent of normal. The forecast for 2003 energy production is 7.4 billion kWh compared to a normal of 10 billion kWh.

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**Daily and forecasted reservoir and river information is available on the water management section of the Northwestern Division homepage at [www.nwd.usace.army.mil](http://www.nwd.usace.army.mil).**

MISSOURI RIVER MAIN STEM RESERVOIR DATA

	Pool Elevation (ft msl)		Water in Storage - 1,000 acre-feet		
	On July 31	Change in Jul	On July 31	% of 1967-2002 Average	Change in Jul
Fort Peck	2212.3	-1.3	10,950	69	-209
Garrison	1826.1	-0.9	14,857	74	-244
Oahe	1586.5	-0.9	13,137	68	-300
Big Bend	1419.8	-0.5	1,682	98	-23
Fort Randall	1353.9	+1.1	3,434	90	+75
Gavins Point	1206.4	-0.2	368	90	-6
			44,428	73	-707

WATER RELEASES AND ENERGY GENERATION FOR JULY

	Average Release in 1,000 cfs	Releases in 1,000 af	Generation in 1,000 MWh
Fort Peck	8.1	497	75
Garrison	21.4	1319	184
Oahe	25.4	1560	211
Big Bend	23.8	1462	87
Fort Randall	24.3	1494	155
Gavins Point	25.5	1566	69
			780