



News Release

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Water Management Monthly News Release

OMAHA – Releases from the Missouri River system of dams and reservoirs were reduced beginning Oct. 5 to bring to the end the shortest navigation season since the reservoirs were filled in 1967. Depending on downstream tributary contributions, Missouri River stages will drop 4 to 5 feet from Sioux City to the mouth near St. Louis.

Despite rain storms in the latter part of September, drought conditions persist over much of the upper basin with only 78 percent of normal runoff recorded so far this year.

Runoff above Sioux City, Iowa, in September was 56 percent of normal. “There has been enough rain downstream to allow us to maintain lower releases from the reservoirs, but the dry conditions upstream have kept Oahe and Fort Peck level while second lowest runoff into Garrison contributed to it falling a foot last month,” said Larry Cieslik, Chief of the Water Management office in Omaha.

Releases from Gavins Point Dam will be gradually reduced in October from the current 24,000 cfs to 9,000 cfs with the closing of the commercial navigation season.

The current runoff forecast for 2005 is 19.5 million acre feet (MAF), 77 percent of normal, compared to the normal of 25.2 MAF.

The 2005 commercial navigation season is being shortened 48 days due to the low reservoirs levels caused by the protected drought. Flow support will end as follows:

Sioux City, Iowa	October 5
Omaha, Nebraska	October 7
Nebraska City, Nebraska	October 8
Kansas City, Missouri	October 10
Mouth near St. Louis, Missouri	October 14

System storage ended September at 36.2 MAF, an increase from the 35.8 MAF recorded last year at this time. The amount of water currently stored in the reservoirs is nearly 21 MAF below average.

The draft 2005-2006 Annual Operating Plan is slated for release late this month for public review and comment. A series of public meetings at various locations along the river will be conducted in November. Dates and locations are:

Nov. 14	1 p.m.	Omaha, Neb.	Northwestern Division HQ, 12565 West Center Road
Nov. 14	7 p.m.	Nebraska City	Steinhart Lodge, Steinhart Park Road
Nov. 15	7 p.m.	Kansas City, Mo.	Embassy Suites, 7640 NW Tiffany Springs Pkwy
Nov. 16	7 p.m.	Jefferson City, Mo.	Capitol Plaza Hotel, 415 West McCarty Street
Nov. 17	1 p.m.	Pierre, S.D.	Best Western Ramkota, 920 West Sioux Ave.
Nov. 17	7 p.m.	Bismarck, N.D.	Best Western Doublewood Inn, 1400 E. Interchange Ave
Nov.18	1 p.m.	Glasgow, Mont.	Cottonwood Inn, Highway 2 East

Gavins Point reservoir will remain near elevation 1207 feet above mean sea level (msl) during October. Releases averaged only 25,400 cfs in September compared to the normal 36,600 cfs. They are being gradually reduced from 24,000 cfs to 9,000 cfs by Oct. 19, where they will be held until late November or early December.

Fort Randall releases averaged 24,200 cfs in September. They will range from 19,000 cfs to 7,000 cfs in October as needed to maintain Gavins Point reservoir near its desired elevation. Fort Randall reservoir ended September at 1345 feet msl. The reservoir will end October near 1340 feet its way to the normal Fall elevation of 1337.5 feet msl.

Big Bend reservoir will remain in its normal elevation range of 1420 to 1421 feet. Releases will be adjusted to meet hydropower needs.

Oahe reservoir remained steady during September, ending the month at elevation 1572.9 feet msl. It will rise two feet in October, ending the month 26 feet below average. The reservoir is at the same elevation it was last year at this time.

Garrison releases averaged 14,100 cfs during September, compared to the normal 21,200 cfs. They will average 12,500 cfs through October. Garrison reservoir dropped 1.5 feet during September, ending the month at elevation 1814 feet msl. It will drop 1.5 feet in October, ending the month 25 feet below average. The reservoir is a foot higher than last year at this time.

Fort Peck releases averaged 5,600 cfs in September, compared to the normal 9,200 cfs. They will remain near the current 4,000 cfs through October. The reservoir remained essentially level in September, ending the month at elevation 2202 feet msl. It will remain level in October, ending the month 31 feet below average. It is currently 2 feet higher than last year at this time.

The six main stem power plants generated 523 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in September, 56 percent of normal because of reduced releases from the dams. The forecast for 2005 energy production is 5.5 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.

MISSOURI RIVER MAIN STEM RESERVOIR DATA

	Pool Elevation (ft msl)		Water in Storage - 1,000 acre-feet		
	On Sep 30	Change in Sep	On Sep 30	% of 1967-2003 Average	Change in Sep
Fort Peck	2201.9	-0.3	9,286	61	-39
Garrison	1814.1	-1.5	11,861	63	-355
Oahe	1572.8	-0.5	10,267	58	-96
Big Bend	1420.4	-0.0	1,644	96	-3
Fort Randall	1345.0	-8.4	2,760	81	-640
Gavins Point	1207.6	+0.3	399	92	+6
			36,217	63	-1,127

WATER RELEASES AND ENERGY GENERATION FOR SEPTEMBER

	Average Release in 1,000 cfs	Releases in 1,000 af	Generation in 1,000 MWh
Fort Peck	5.6	333	43
Garrison	14.1	839	110
Oahe	14.9	887	109
Big Bend	13.4	798	49
Fort Randall	24.2	1,440	140
Gavins Point	25.4	1,512	72
			523

