



News Release

**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Northwestern Division
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Corps to hold meetings on 2005 dam operations

Omaha – The Army Corps of Engineers will be conducting six public meetings in April to discuss and answer questions on the 2005 Annual Operating Plan for the Missouri River.

The meeting will provide updates to the AOP published last fall. This updated information takes into account continued drought conditions in most of the basin. The mountain snowpack is running at less than 70 percent of normal above Fort Peck and less than 75 percent in the reach between Fort Peck and Garrison dams.

The plan anticipates that there will be only minimum flows for the 2005 navigation season. Again this year, these navigation target flows will not be supported in April in reaches where there is no traffic. The season length is anticipated to be shortened 50 to 61 days, depending on runoff this spring and early summer. A final determination on season length will be made on July 1.

The current forecast for annual runoff is 16.7 million acre feet (MAF). It may be possible to keep Oahe reservoir levels steady and Fort Peck levels nearly steady during their respective fish spawn periods if actual runoff occurs at the magnitude and distribution assumed in the forecast computer studies. However, if drought conditions worsen, regulation of the dams and reservoirs would focus on keeping water supply intakes at Oahe and Garrison reservoirs operational for as long as possible. As a result, Oahe and Fort Peck would likely decline during the fish spawn periods.

The public meetings will be held:

- Monday, Apr. 11, at 7 p.m., in Glasgow, Mont., at the Cottonwood Inn, 45 1st Ave, NE
- Tuesday, Apr. 12, at 1 p.m., Bismarck, N.D., at the Doublewood Inn, 1400 E. Interchange
- Tuesday, Apr. 12, at 7 p.m., in Pierre, S.D., at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 920 West Sioux Ave.
- Wednesday, Apr. 13, at 1 p.m., in St. Louis, Mo., at the Marriott St. Louis Airport Hotel, 10700 Peartree Ave.
- Wednesday, Apr. 13, at 7 p.m. in Kansas City, Mo., at the Hilton Kansas City Airport, 8801 NW 112th St.
- Thursday, Apr. 14, at 5 p.m., in Omaha, at the Northwestern Division offices, 12565 West Center Road

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Corps to hold meetings – 2.2.2.

These meetings are held each spring to review the plan for regulating the dams and reservoirs based on current runoff and storage conditions. Meetings to describe the draft AOP and take comments were held last October in Glasgow, Williston, Pierre, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis and New Orleans. The meetings will open with presentations on this year's runoff and reservoir storage, and descriptions of the planned regulation for flood control, hydropower, navigation, irrigation, recreation, water supply, water quality, fish and wildlife and endangered species for a wide variety of runoff and storage conditions.

Members of the public will be invited to ask questions, comment, and discuss the plan. The AOP is available at the "Reports and Publications" link on our website at: www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc or by calling (402) 697-2675.