



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NORTHWESTERN DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
12565 WEST CENTER ROAD
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68144-3869

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

October 2005

This Draft Annual Operating Plan (AOP) presents pertinent information regarding water management in the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System (System) for the remainder of 2005 through February 2007. The information provided in this Draft AOP is based upon water management guidelines designed to meet the reservoir regulation objectives of the existing Missouri River Master Water Control Manual (Master Manual). This AOP also includes the implementation of a spring pulse, as required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) 2003 Amended Biological Opinion on the Operation of the System. The water control plan (WCP) in the Master Manual currently does not contain any technical criteria for a spring pulse. Therefore, if the final Corps of Engineers' (Corps) decision is to include spring pulse elements in the 2006 System regulation, the Master Manual will be supplemented prior to implementation of a spring pulse. A full description of the proposed spring pulse technical criteria, including its potential flexibility, has been provided as a separate document accompanying this Draft AOP.

Comments on the spring pulse technical criteria and its proposed flexibility will be accepted, along with any comments on this Draft AOP. All comments will be fully considered prior to the final decision on the AOP and the supplement to the Master Manual for the spring pulse. The Corps will also prepare appropriate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation.

The guidelines included in the existing Master Manual and the proposed spring pulse WCP technical criteria are applied to computer simulations of System regulation assuming five statistically derived inflow scenarios based on an analysis of water supply records from 1898 to 1997. This approach provides a good range of water management simulations for dry, average, and wet conditions. Computer simulation data with and without the spring pulse components are also presented to allow comparison. The AOP information provides a framework for the development of detailed monthly, weekly, and daily regulation schedules for the System's six individual dams during the upcoming year to serve its Congressionally authorized project purposes. System water management is provided by my staff at the Missouri River Basin Water Management Division, Northwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, located in Omaha, Nebraska.

Two additional documents will also be available by mid-2006 entitled, "System Description and Operation" and "Summary of Actual 2005 Regulation." To receive copies of those documents, you may contact the Missouri River Basin Water Management Division at 12565 West Center Road, Omaha, Nebraska 68144-3869, phone (402) 697-2676. Both reports will also be available at the "Reports and Publications" link on our web site at: www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc.

Eight public meetings to discuss both this Draft AOP and the supplement to the Master Manual are scheduled as follows: November 14 in Omaha and Nebraska City, Nebraska; November 15 in Kansas City, Missouri; November 16 in St Louis and Jefferson City, Missouri; November 17 in Pierre, South Dakota and Bismarck, North Dakota; and November 18 in Glasgow, Montana. We ask that any comments be provided by December 1, 2005. The Final AOP is scheduled for publication in December 2005. Copies of the written comments and a report summarizing the comments received at the eight public meetings will be available upon request.

I thank you for your interest in the regulation of the System and look forward to your participation in this process.

(signed)

Gregg F. Martin
Colonel (Promotable), US Army
Division Engineer