NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS **BUILDING STRONG®**

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Contact:
Billy Birdwell, Public Affairs Officer, 912.652.5014/5279
After hours: 912-677-6039, billy.e.birdwell@usace.army.mil
Joyce McDonald, Corporate Communications Officer, 912.652.5777
joyce.a.mcdonald@usace.army.mil

Corps of Engineers to reduce Savannah River flow for salinity test

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA – Water managers with the Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will temporarily reduce outflows from the J. Strom Thurmond Dam on the Savannah River beginning Nov. 6 for seven days to assist with a salt intrusion test on the lower end of the river.

The test requires a low flow at the City of Savannah municipal water intake on Abercorn Creek that will coincide with higher than average tides to determine how much, if any, salt water may reach the intakes if the Corps of Engineers deepens the Savannah Harbor. Outflows from the Thurmond Dam will be limited to 3,800 cubic feet per second (cfs) daily average for a week then will increase to approximately 13,000 cfs for the following week. The higher flow will be needed to reduce the reservoir to the winter target level of 326 feet above mean sea level (ft-msl) by Dec. 1. The level of Thurmond Lake on Nov. 5 was 328.1 ft-msl with current outflows of approximately 8,500 cfs daily average.

It takes approximately seven days for water to move from the Thurmond Dam to the estuary of the Savannah River. Officials expect to return to normal winter operations and levels by December.

The test is needed to determine the movement of salinity and chlorides in the Savannah River's estuary as they go up the river from the ocean in high tides. The test is part of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project's (SHEP) environmental studies. The Savannah District is responsible for the Savannah Harbor and its associated shipping channel. The Corps of Engineers is researching a proposal to deepen the harbor by as much as an additional six feet.

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