



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Savannah District

News Release

Release No: 07-24

June 27, 2007

Upper Savannah reservoirs expected to enter Drought Level 1 this week

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAVANNAH, Ga. – Hydrologists with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Savannah District predict that water levels at Lakes Hartwell and Thurmond on the Upper Savannah River will continue to fall. Both Hartwell and Thurmond Lakes are expected to reach the first drought trigger level later this week. Currently Hartwell averages only 20 percent of normal inflow while; Thurmond's inflow is about 44 percent of normal. Precipitation forecasts show little rain for the region in the upcoming weeks.

"The drought has continued to impact the reservoir levels and we still have the summer months to get through," said Jason Ward, Water Control Manager with the Army Corps of Engineers. "Unless we receive significant rainfall in the next few weeks, we can expect to reach Drought Contingency Level 2 by mid-August."

In Drought Contingency Level 1, Corps workers limit outflow from Thurmond Dam to 4,200 cubic feet per second, averaged over a week. Already the Corps, in coordination with other resource agencies, has voluntarily limited some flow and has increased the pump-back operation of the Russell Dam to conserve water in the three-lake system.

Corps officials urge the public to use extreme caution when boating, swimming or fishing during the next weeks. As the reservoir levels decline, underwater obstructions will be closer to the surface. This is particularly dangerous for boaters and skiers. Swimmers should not venture outside designated swimming areas. All visitors should wear a life jacket when swimming, boating or fishing. Dock owners may need to adjust their docks.

The pool elevation on June 26 was 656.3 feet above mean sea level (ft-msl) at Hartwell Lake, and 326.2 ft-msl at Thurmond Lake. Trigger Level 1 is 656 ft-msl for Hartwell and 326 ft-msl for Thurmond.

Reducing outflow decreases the amount of hydropower that can be generated through the dams while conserving more water in the reservoirs.

For more information on current lake levels and projections, contact the Savannah District Public Affairs office at 912-652-5014, or visit the District's lake-level website at <http://water.sas.usace.army.mil>

– 30 –

Contact:

Billy Birdwell
G. Jeanne Hodge
District Website

912-652-5014 (24 hours: 912-677-6039)
912- 652-5770

billy.birdwell@us.army.mil
jeanne.hodge@sas02.usace.army.mil
www.sas.usace.army.mil