



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
MOBILE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 2288
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36628-0001

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

CESAM-PD-EI
PUBLIC NOTICE NO. FP07-JW01-15

28 March 2007

**PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
MODIFICATIONS TO THE INTERIM OPERATIONS PLAN
FOR SUPPORT OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES
JIM WOODRUFF DAM
GADSDEN AND JACKSON COUNTIES, FLORIDA
AND DECATUR COUNTY, GEORGIA**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for modifications to the Interim Operations Plan (IOP) for Jim Woodruff Dam, Gadsden and Jackson Counties, Florida, and Decatur County, Georgia. The IOP describes minimum releases and maximum fall rates for releases from the dam to the Apalachicola River in order to minimize or avoid adverse impacts or provide support to endangered and threatened species and critical habitat which occur on the Apalachicola River. The IOP is not a new water control plan for Woodruff Dam; rather, it defines discretionary operations conducted within the limits and rule curves established by the existing water control plan. The modifications incorporated into the IOP are the result of consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as required in the Biological Opinion (BO) and Conference Report issued by the USFWS on 5 September 2006.

The BO included five reasonable and prudent measures (RPMs) for further limiting the amount of incidental take associated with water management operations at Jim Woodruff Dam. For each of the five RPMs, the BO also included specific terms and conditions which must be met in order to assure compliance with the RPMs. The modifications to the IOP were developed in accordance with RPM3 of the BO, which requires modifying the IOP to provide a higher desired minimum flow to the Apalachicola River when reservoir storage and hydrologic conditions permit, and drought provisions for releasing the lower required minimum flow of 5,000 cfs when the more conservative operations would be prudent during sustained dry or drought periods. By letter dated 28 February 2007, the USFWS approved immediate implementation of the modified IOP in accordance with the provisions of RPM3 of the BO.

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No significant impacts are anticipated to occur through implementation of the modified IOP. Implementation of the modified IOP is consistent with the reasonable and prudent measures described in the incidental take statement of the BO. State and Federal agencies were consulted during development of the modifications to the IOP and throughout the consultation process. Comments received during the development process were considered and are documented in the Final EA and FONSI. In compliance with ER 200-2-2, 33 CFR 230, paragraph 11, this notice of availability of the FONSI is being sent to concerned agencies, organizations, and the interested public. Copies of the EA and FONSI are available on the Mobile District web page at <http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/ACF.htm> for review.

For additional information, please contact Mr. Brian Zettle at (251) 690-2115, email brian.a.zettle@sam.usace.army.mil, or at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Attention: CESAM-PD-EI, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama, 36628-0001.



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Mobile District