



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

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Contact:
E. Patrick Robbins 251-690-2511
Ervin.P.Robbins@usace.army.mil

Flow reduction: USACE approves GA request

MOBILE, Ala. – On Nov. 7, 2011 the Georgia Department of Natural Resources requested the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reduce water quality releases from Lake Sidney Lanier at Buford Dam from 750 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 650 cfs at the earliest possible date, continuing through March 31, 2012 in order to conserve as much storage as possible in Lake Lanier.

Water quality analysis provided by GA DNR indicated that water quality criteria for fishable streams could be maintained through the cooler winter and spring seasons with a reduced flow of 650 cfs at Peachtree Creek.

“We currently have a target flow of 750 cfs at Peachtree Creek to meet minimum water quality standards in the river,” Mobile District Public Affairs Officer E. Patrick Robbins said. “The minimum flow requirement, established by Georgia DNR, is in addition to flows required for water supply from the river.”

Mobile District evaluated the data provided by GA DNR and determined the lower flow criteria would have no negative effect on the environment of the river and would provide the ability to conserve storage in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint rivers system. The request also included an adaptive management plan to address any changes that might occur to the environment due to the decreased flows.

“After evaluating the data we determined that the decreased flows would not have a negative effect on the environmental quality of the river and would allow some minimal increase in storage for the system headwaters,” Robbins said. “This increased storage, while not significant at this time, could prove very beneficial to the system if the La Nina weather pattern persists as predicted.”

USACE will begin implementation of the lower flow criteria beginning on Wednesday, Nov.23, 2011 and running through March 31, 2012.

“In order to avoid confusion, it’s important to note that a 100 cfs decrease will be invisible to the general public seeing releases from Buford Dam,” Robbins said. “We will still be releasing the necessary flows for water supply and system needs, which will be reduced by 100 cfs.”

This request is in line with a similar request from GA DNR in 2008 during the last drought and request the Mobile District has approved on the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa rivers system already as that system is facing the same drought situation.

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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS MOBILE DISTRICT
109 SAINT JOSEPH STREET, MOBILE, AL 36602-3630
WWW.SAM.USACE.ARMY.MIL