



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Mobile District

News Release

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Contacts: E. Patrick Robbins 251-690-2512
ervin.p.robbins@sam.usace.army.mil

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Marilyn Phipps 251-690-2506
marilyn.j.phipps@sam.usace.army.mil

News Release: www.sam.usace.army.mil/pa/

ALABAMA POWER REQUESTS CORPS OF ENGINEER APPROVAL TO REDUCE FLOWS TO THE ALABAMA RIVER

Mobile, Ala. – The Alabama Power Company has made a request to the Mobile District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to reduce their minimum required flows from Alabama Power Projects on the Tallapoosa River, Coosa River and tributaries to the Alabama River. These projects would include Lakes Harris, Martin, Yates, Thurlow, Weiss, H. Neely Henry, Logan Martin, Lay, Mitchell, Jordan and Bouldin.

“Under the terms of the current minimum flow requirements, Alabama Power Company projects provide sufficient releases from their Coosa and Tallapoosa River projects to meet a continuous minimum 7-day average flow of 4,640 cubic feet per second,” said E. Patrick Robbins, Public Affairs Officer, Mobile District. “Due to the current drought conditions, they requested permission to reduce the minimum flow to as low as 2,784 cubic feet per second, a forty percent reduction. They propose to do this incrementally over several weeks.”

Monitoring of drought conditions this year has confirmed that 2007 is the driest year-to-date through May recorded in contemporary Alabama climate records. Some areas in the northern portions of the States of Alabama and Georgia received no rainfall during May. Severe to Extreme drought conditions

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have developed across these areas. January to May 2007 is the driest in more than 100 years for Alabama, Georgia, north Florida and portions of the Carolinas. Long range computer models do not indicate any significant changes to this pattern.

The Alabama Power Company has indicated in their request to the Corps that their storage projects on the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers are all below their drought contingency curve peak elevations. Alabama Power Company states with inflows at record lows on the Coosa and Tallapoosa, the impact of maintaining the current minimum flow requirement has fallen completely on storage from Lake Martin. If the proposed reductions in minimum flow are not implemented, their models show the Coosa River projects would be drawn down to their winter levels. Lake Martin is projected to be 14-feet below average by early August which would impact water intakes around the lake. Their analysis also indicates if the drought continues, they are in danger of losing all generating capability at Weiss, H. Neely Henry and Logan Martin dams as water levels become too low to operate the turbines, severely impacting the reliability of the electric system.

In addition to reducing the minimum flow requirements, Alabama Power has also requested that the Corps provide additional releases from the Federal Projects at the headwaters of the Alabama-Coosa river system, Allatoona and Carters lakes in Georgia. The specified minimum release for both Allatoona and Carters is 240 cubic feet per second. Current releases from those two projects are averaging around 1000 cubic feet per second combined.

“Alabama Power’s request has been sent to all known interested persons to assist us in developing facts on which to base our decision via a public notice,” said Robbins. “Our decision on the appropriate drought operations for the waterway systems will be based on the evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts of the proposed reduction in flows on the public interest.

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“The public notice can be accessed on our web site <http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/>” said Robbins. “Due to the critical nature of the situation, the public comment period will be for 10 days, ending on June 10, 2007.”

Correspondence concerning the proposed reduction in flows as proposed by APC and should be directed to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Engineer District, Mobile, ATTN: Planning Division, P.O. Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001. Comments may sent to Chuck Sumner, planning division, via email lewis.c.sumner@sam.usace.army.mil or via fax to (251) 694-3815.