Enclosure 20

Memorandum for Record
Informal Consultation Telecon
4 May 2004

CESAM-PD-EI

5 May 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Fish Spawn Coordination Teleconference, 4 May 2004

1. The following agency representatives participated in this week's teleconference:

Jerry Ziewitz, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Panama City, FL
Ted Hoehn,, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Tallahassee, FL
Charlie Mesing, Florida fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Midway, FL
Cheryl Hrabovsky, US Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Water Management
Rob Erhardt, US Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Meteorologist
Joanne Brandt, US Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Planning and Environmental

2. Rob gave an update on the amount of rainfall that was received due to the weather system that passed through the District over the weekend. Up to 3 inches was received in southeast Alabama and southwest Georgia and across the Florida Panhandle. However only between ½ inch to 1 inch was received in north Georgia and Alabama. In the ACF basin, most of the rainfall occurred over Lake Seminole and the Flint River basin, which does not provide for any significant storage. Some rainfall was captured in West Point Lake and Walter F. George Lake. No additional rainfall is predicted for the next 10 days to 2 weeks, and the 5-week forecast is for continued dry and warm conditions. Daytime temperatures by the end of the week will be in the upper 1980s.

3. Cheryl noted that due to the recent rainfall in the basin, we can sustain a minimum of 9100 cfs release from Jim Woodruff Dam through this week and into early next week. We are currently releasing 10,000 cfs due to inflows and head limits at Jim Woodruff Dam, which may increase somewhat depending upon additional inflows from the Flint River arm. However, we expect to gradually reduce releases over the next few days. By early next week we will have to evaluate the status of the upstream reservoirs and the inflows to the system to determine when and how much to reduce releases if we do not receive any additional rainfall in the basin.

4. Ted and Charlie were concerned that due to the water temperatures and full moon that peak spawning of the non-bass species was occurring in the floodplain areas. They requested that the 9100 cfs release from Jim Woodruff be sustained as long as possible and that any drawdowns on the river be as gradual as possible. Cheryl noted that we could not sustain the 10,000 cfs release and may not be able to sustain the 9100 cfs past early next week, but that any reduction in release would be very gradual. Jerry concurred with the recommendations that any drawdown on the river be as gradual as possible, but that any drawdowns on the reservoirs also be very gradual since shad species are likely spawning in the reservoirs and fry from recent spawn could also be affected by any dramatic changes in reservoir levels.

5. The reservoir level charts have been updated and posted on the Mobile District Water Management Website, and reflect the following assumptions: no additional rainfall in the basin;

holding a release from Jim Woodruff Dam of 9100 cfs through 11 May; gradual reduction to 8500 cfs for the remainder of the week of 11 May; gradual reduction to 7500 cfs for the week of 17 May; followed by an additional gradual reduction to 6500 cfs for the week of 24 May. We will continue to monitor basin conditions and any rainfall received in the basin over the next few weeks and make adjustments as necessary or in response to additional natural flows in the system.

6. Below is a summary of the status of fish spawn operations for this year.

a. Fish spawn operations at Allatoona Lake began 15 March and are still underway. Allatoona Lake levels have continued to closely follow the rule curve for the lake and is currently at elevation 840 ft, which is the top of the conservation pool.

b. Fish spawn operations at Okatibbee Lake began on 1 April and are still underway. Okatibbee Lake levels have been maintained relatively steady or rising and are currently near 342 ft (top of conservation pool is 344 ft.).

c. Fish spawn operations began at Lake Lanier on 1 April and are still underway. Lake Levels have been maintained steady at approximate 1070 ft. Top of conservation pool is 1071 ft.

d. Fish spawn operations began at West Point Lake on 1 April and are still underway. Lake elevations have been held steady or slightly rising as we attempt to follow the rule curve. Elevations are currently at approximate elevation 632 ft. and projected to remain between 632 and 633 over the next few weeks. The rule curve shows refilling of the lake by 1 June, with levels during the month of May between elevations 633 and 635. Lake levels are projected to remain below the rule curve over the next few weeks, with levels remaining between Zones 1 and 2.

e. Fish spawn operations began at Walter F. George on 15 March and are still underway. Lake levels have been at or above the rule curve of 188 ft for winter pool. The rule curve shows refilling of the lake during the month of May with full pool of 189 ft by 1 June. However, lake levels are projected to remain steady at approximately 188.5 ft over the next few weeks, remaining between Zones 1 and 2.

f. Fish spawn operations began at Lake Seminole on 4 March and the minimum 4-week operations period was completed on 8 April. Recent rainfall raised lake levels to between 77.0 and 77.5, with stages predicted to remain above 76.5 over the next few weeks.

g. Fish spawn operations began on the Apalachicola River on 15 March when we began to manage releases from Jim Woodruff to maintain a minimum flow of approximately 11,500 cfs to provide for minimum inundation of sturgeon fish spawning habitat located immediately below the dam, and matching releases from Jim Woodruff to match basin inflows into the system. Beginning 21 April, we have gradually reduced releases to match system inflows. Blountstown gage on the Apalachicola Rive is approximately 4.0 feet, and expected to be gradually lowered (less than ½ foot per day) over the next few weeks to approximately 2.0 feet if we do not receive additional rainfall in

the basin. A reduction in releases of 1000 cfs equated to approximately ½ foot fall in stage at Blountstown gage.

7. The next Fish Spawn Coordination teleconference is scheduled for Tuesday, 11 May, 10:30 a.m. CDT/11:30 a.m. EDT. Please let me or Matt Lang know if you plan to participate in this conference call so we will be able to patch you in.

JOANNE BRANDT
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Inland Environment Team