



# News Release

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## Corps releases draft operating plan for 2004

OMAHA – If drought conditions persist next year, the Army Corps of Engineers is predicting a shortened navigation season with minimum flows during most of the summer and steady to rising reservoir levels during the spring fish spawn.

Without above normal runoff, the Corps' 2003-2004 Draft Annual Operating Plan predicts minimum navigation flows and a shortened season length. Steady to rising reservoir levels during the spring fish spawn are expected unless drought conditions are exceptionally bad. All of the Corps' computer studies show ample storage space in the reservoirs to control flood inflows.

The Corps will conduct three public meetings this month to review and take comments on the draft plan. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 28, in Pierre, S.D., at 7 p.m. in the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 920 West Sioux Ave. The second will be Wednesday, Oct. 29, in Omaha, Neb. at 5 p.m. at the Northwestern Division Office, 12565 West Center Road. The third will be on Thursday, Oct. 30, in Columbia, Mo., at 7 p.m., in the Holiday Inn Select, 2200 I-70 Drive.

The meetings will open with presentations on this year's runoff, reservoir storage, management of the dams and reservoirs and downstream flows. These will be followed by a presentation of the draft plan for the remainder of 2003 and the year 2004. Corps officials will outline the proposed regulation for flood control, hydropower generation, navigation, irrigation, recreation, fish and wildlife, endangered species, water supply and water quality for a wide variety of runoff and storage conditions.

Members of the public will be invited to comment and discuss the draft plan.

“We are really looking forward to the public’s participation in this process,” said Brig. Gen. William Grisoli, Northwestern Division commander. “Their input is important. We want people to have an understanding of how our operational decisions are made and help us fully understand the impacts of those decisions.”

The Draft AOP is available at the “Reports and Publications” link on the Northwestern Division website at: <http://www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc> or by calling the Water Management office at (402) 697-2676.

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