



News Release

**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Northwestern Division
Public Affairs Office

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Omaha – The Army Corps of Engineers will be conducting four public meetings in October to discuss and take comments on the Draft 2004-2005 Annual Operating Plan for the Missouri River.

The draft anticipates that there will be only minimum flows for the 2005 navigation season and that it will be shortened 27 to 61 days, depending on runoff this winter and spring. A final determination on season length will be made on July 1, 2005.

Releases from Gavins Point Dam will be cycled during May to encourage the least terns and piping plovers to nest high on the sandbars. They will be increased in June to meet minimum navigation flows through August.

Steady to rising reservoir levels during the spring fish spawn are likely if there is normal or above normal runoff. However, continued severe drought conditions may not make that possible at all the upper three reservoirs. The ability to provide such conditions depends on the volume, timing, and distribution of the runoff from melting snow on the plains and in the mountains of Montana and Wyoming.

The public meetings will be held:

- Tuesday, Oct. 12, 7 p.m. in Williston, N.D., at the El Rancho Motor Hotel, 1623 Second Ave., West
- Wednesday, Oct. 13, 11 a.m. in Glasgow, Mont., at the Cottonwood Inn, Hwy 2 East
- Wednesday, Oct. 13, 5 p.m. in Pierre, S.D., at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 920 West Sioux Ave.
- Thursday, Oct. 14, 7 p.m. in Kansas City, Mo., at the Hilton Kansas City Airport

The meetings will open with presentations on this year's runoff, reservoir storage, and the management of the six dams and reservoirs. These will be followed by descriptions of the regulation for the remainder of 2004 and the year 2005 for flood control, hydropower, navigation, irrigation, recreation, water supply, water quality, fish and wildlife and endangered species for a wide variety of runoff and storage conditions.

Members of the public will be invited to ask questions, comment, and discuss the draft plan. The draft is available at the "Reports and Publications" link on our website at: www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc or by calling (402) 697-2675.

Comments will be accepted at the meetings or by writing to: Water Management Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 12565 West Center Road, Omaha, NE 68144 or via e-mail to: Missouri.water.management@nwd02.usace.army.mil.