



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Savannah District

Balancing the Basin

Updates on the Savannah River Basin from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Balancing the Basin is an electronic newsletter produced quarterly by the Savannah District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Its purpose is to foster communication with stakeholders in the Savannah River Basin concerning the Corps management of water resources and related issues. For more information about the Savannah District (SAS), visit <http://www.sas.usace.army.mil>. In addition to providing the newsletter to e-mail subscribers, it is posted on the website at [SAS Newsroom](#).

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<p>A Balanced Conversation on water management</p> <p>Back in October I had a whirlwind tour of the upper Savannah River Basin and met with a number of stakeholder and media groups representing a wide array of interests, including hydropower, lake community, business, recreation, veterans, environmental and natural resources. During my visit, stakeholders had an opportunity to voice their concerns and interests. The meetings also gave me a chance to share my command philosophy and approach for balancing the water needs of stakeholders in the basin.</p> <p>During my discussion, I emphasized that rain and drought are natural occurrences. Even before we built the three Corps of Engineers dams on the upper Savannah River, this region would go through periods of heavy rain and drought. READ MORE</p>	<p>Lake Information</p> <p>Water Management</p> <p>District Commander's Page</p> <p>Subscribe or Unsubscribe</p> <p>Link to Us</p>
<p>Managing reservoir levels has its ups-and-downs</p> <p>Water levels in the three Corps of Engineers reservoirs on the upper Savannah River change constantly - and with good reasons, according to the experts who manage the water in the basin. Changes in precipitation patterns, evaporation levels, and downstream flow requirements occur every year in an ecosystem like the Savannah River Basin. Even in years of abundant rain, the reservoirs will fluctuate up and down.</p> <p>"It takes constant monitoring of data and adjustment to fulfill as many of the purposes of the reservoirs as we can," said Stan Simpson, a Corps water manager in Savannah, Ga., who helps oversee water flows out of the dams and onward downstream. "We must balance water supply, water quality, flood risk reduction, navigation, recreation, hydropower production, and environmental stewardship. It is our mission to meet these project purposes in an equitable manner within our authorities". READ MORE</p>	

Reservoir Discharge Rates to remain at current levels

The [Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) will keep discharge rates from its three reservoirs on the upper Savannah River at the currently reduced "drought level 1" rates following an environmental assessment (EA) conducted this month.

The EA examined the effects of reducing discharges on the Savannah River. "We launched the EA this season as a proactive step to preserve water in reservoirs as we face a predicted dry winter and spring" said [Col. Jeff Hall, Savannah District Commander](#). "This process highlights the complexities of managing the vast Savannah River system as a 'system'." [READ MORE](#)

Savannah River Basin Comprehensive Study

The Savannah District recently received \$493,000 in federal funding to undertake the next phase of the Savannah River Basin Comprehensive Study. The comprehensive study will address the current and future needs of the basin for flood risk management, hydropower, water supply and water quality, fish and wildlife management, recreation, and other water resource related issues. The federal share of the study must be matched by the states of Georgia and South Carolina. The states will share their 50 percent of the funding primarily through "Work-in-Kind" contributions. The district is currently developing a project management plan that will identify the scope of work, costs and schedule. Additional information can be found in the study's [Peer Review Plan](#).

Savannah Harbor Expansion Project

The Savannah District has released a Draft General Re-evaluation Report and Environmental Impact Statement on a proposal to deepen the Savannah Harbor from its current depth of 42 feet up to a maximum depth of 48 feet. The study, authorized by Congress, reflects an extensive analysis of the engineering alternatives, environmental impacts, and economic costs and benefits of deepening the Savannah Harbor and shipping channel. Funded by the federal government and the state of Georgia, the study includes an environmental impact statement. [READ MORE](#)

New oxygenation system to improve fish habitat at Thurmond Lake

After a decade in the making, the Savannah District reached an historic milestone in April with the delivery of two 20,000-gallon liquid oxygen tanks, bringing it closer to completion of an underwater oxygenation system for the J. Strom Thurmond Lake. The project, near Modoc, S.C., is one of 126 federally-funded construction projects in the district made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) supporting economic growth with funding initiatives totaling \$224 million.

This \$9.1 million ARRA project supports the completion of the Richard B. Russell [Pump Back Project](#), located on the Savannah River, near Augusta, Ga. Although the total \$12.6 million project, which includes \$3.5 million in general construction funds, will immediately benefit fish and fishermen, the oxygen system is part of a broader plan for wiser use of Thurmond and Richard B. Russell Lakes sometimes sparse water supplies and ability to generate more electricity. [READ MORE](#).

Outdoor Dream Foundation host terminally ill teens

The Russell Project in cooperation with the [Outdoor Dream Foundation](#) hosted the first youth deer hunt on Lake Russell for five terminally ill children. The Dream Foundation is similar to "Make a Wish Foundation," but with a hunting and fishing theme. The adventure was a great success thanks to the efforts of the South Carolina and Georgia Departments of Natural Resources, volunteers from the Dream Foundation and the Russell Lake staff. The youth hunted with either a parent or DNR agent. During the hunt one of the youth, a 15-year old boy, from Elberton, Ga., harvested a six-point buck.

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For more information about Balancing the Basin, please contact the SAS Office of Corporate Communications at CESAS-CCO@usace.army.mil or 912-652-5756.

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