



For Immediate Release: NR12- 023
March 27, 2012

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers balances flood risk management with water supply needs during release at Lavon Lake

FORT WORTH, Texas – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District officials, in partnership with the North Texas Municipal Water District will release water at a controlled rate from Lavon Lake March 30 to balance water supply concerns with flood risk management requirements.

“We understand there are concerns over releasing water at Lavon when there are still water restrictions in place for nearby communities and we do not take them lightly,” said Fort Worth District reservoir control chief, Jerry Cotter. However, this action is necessary so we can prepare for the next rain event while also providing some benefit of the additional stored flood waters to the water district.”

The plan calls for releases at a rate of 800 cubic feet per second to drop the lake level down from 493.20 to 493 feet, then reduce the rate to approximately 400cfs until reaching conservation pool.

“We are working closely with the North Texas Municipal Water District on a scaled back, controlled release of the water above the top of the conservation pool to support their water supply mission,” said Cotter. “We are both in agreement that this is the right thing to do when considering factors such as flood risk, water supply and downstream water rights.”

The Fort Worth District, with few exceptions, does not maintain the right to retain water in the 25 flood control reservoirs above the top of conservation pool for purposes other than flood risk management. The right to retain water for water supply purposes is obtained by water use stakeholders from the state of Texas through the water rights permitting process.

“In an effort to balance life safety requirements while still meeting water supply needs, we will work very closely with the public, our water partners and stakeholders when releasing water from our area lakes,” concluded Cotter.

Current water restrictions that remain in place are not directly related to water levels at Lavon Lake. These restrictions were not put in place by the Corps.

The elevation of the reservoir's normal maximum operating level or conservation pool elevation for Lavon is 492 feet. If water rises beyond this level it enters the flood pool.

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MEDIA AVAILABILITY: Reservoir Control Section operational overview, 10 a.m. Friday, March 30. The Reservoir Control Section is located in the Fritz Lanham Federal Building at 819 Taylor Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102. A Public Affairs rep will meet interested media in the 1st floor lobby and escort media to the 4th floor. Call the Public Affairs Office at 817-886-1310, or 817-291-2953 to confirm attendance or gather additional information.