

Project Factsheet for: Water Level Management - Lake Red Rock and Saylorville Lake

Date Last Updated: 2006-09-15 09:47:09.0

Project Location Information

Location: Lake Red Rock and Saylorville Lake, in central Iowa
State(s): IA
Congressional District(s): IA-3

Status

No additional funds are needed to implement the water level management strategy. The water level management regime was successfully implemented in May 2006 due to favorable weather patterns. The Iowa DNR will be surveying fish species by size over the coming years to determine if the species age class is improved from this years effort. The fish need to grow to a size that the DNR can catch in their survey nets, so it will be a few years before results will be known and available.

Description

In Dec 2003, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources requested consideration of 3 water level management scenarios for improved fish spawning during the spring at Lake Red Rock and Saylorville Lake. After inter-district and division discussion and subsequent meetings with the Iowa DNR fisheries and wildlife staff, we concluded that the Corps could implement Option 2 (hold pool) or Option 3 (release water to the target elevation) at either reservoir subject to appropriate weather and inflow conditions. The target elevation at Saylorville is 839 NGVD and 745 NGVD at Lake Red Rock. In both cases, we would hold or release water to achieve the target elevation between May 5th and May 28th. Then we would decrease the water elevation by no more than 0.5 foot per day to achieve an elevation of 836 at Saylorville and 742 at Lake Red Rock, by June 4th. The May timeframe affords an opportunity to increase fish spawning and egg/young survival due to appropriate water temperature and increase acres of inundation. Rapid decreases in water level must be avoided during this time period for the management regime to be successful. The DNR understands that the opportunity to manage water levels in this fashion may only occur periodically and not necessarily concurrent at Saylorville and Red Rock in any one season. At this point, we are still coordinating the plan with easement holders. Secondly, public notification is warranted. Assuming that these steps can be accomplished, the plan is to try to implement Option 2 or 3 at Saylorville Lake in CY 05. We would then try to implement the practice at Lake Red Rock in CY 06. Option 1, hold pool and raise the lake level to the targeted elevation from April 15th to June 14th, was eliminated from consideration because it is not consistent with the existing regulation plans. Additional funds, NEPA compliance, and public meetings would be needed for this scenario.

Major Work Item (This Fiscal Year)

FY 2006: Hold the Saylorville Lake pool at 839 NGVD from May 5th to May 28th if the weather conditions and inflow to the reservoir allows.

Major Work Item (Next Fiscal Year)

FY 2007: Try to implement the Saylorville Lake scenario again if possible in FY07. Hold the Lake Red Rock pool at 745 NGVD from May 5th to May 28th if the weather conditions and inflow to the reservoir allows.

Authority

OM - Operations and Maintenance -- Individual flood control project authorizations, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act; Environmental Operating Principles

Project Manager Information

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