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# News Release

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## Corps Prepares for Continued Multi Year Drought

**Mobile, Ala.** – Drought conditions throughout many areas of the Southeastern United States have begun to settle in again. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, water managers and basin stakeholders are implementing plans and operational changes to meet the persistent dry conditions.

“We were fortunate that we received near normal winter/spring rains throughout much of the region,” said E. Patrick Robbins, Chief Public Affairs Officer, Mobile District. “The winter/spring rains combined with conservative reservoir operation allowed all the lakes on the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) river system to refill from last year’s drought conditions. On the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) river system, all lakes except Lake Lanier refilled during this same time frame. However, since then rainfall has been sporadic throughout the ACF system, which has led to very low inflows into the lakes and the river system.”

Due to the declining inflows and increased lake evaporation, augmentation from the lakes will be required to maintain minimum flows in the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola Rivers unless weather conditions change.

“We expect, if there are no changes in weather patterns, to see a decline in lake levels at West Point Lake and Lake Walter F. George over the next five

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## **2-2-2-2 Corps Prepares for Continued Multi Year Drought**

weeks,” said Robbins. “There just isn’t enough inflow into the system to maintain required downstream flow levels.”

West Point Lake is forecasted to drop nearly 2.5 feet over the next five weeks if weather conditions persist. Walter F. George will decline approximately 1.25 feet during the same time period. Lake Lanier is also forecasted to drop nearly 1.3 feet over the next five weeks as inflows are less than required for releases for water supply and water quality.

“It would appear from this forecast that West Point is bearing the brunt of the additional needs for downstream uses,” said Robbins. “However, that isn’t the case. Due to the shallowness of West Point Lake it drops faster while providing the same amount of water as Lake Walter F. George.”

“The Corps water managers will be monitoring conditions very carefully,” said Robbins. “Hopefully weather patterns will improve providing additional rainfall allowing the lakes to remain steady or rise while still providing necessary flows in the river system.”

The Corps, and its stakeholders in both the ACF and ACT basins are continuing bi-monthly drought conference calls so everyone involved is aware of the conditions within the basins and operational decisions can be made with the most up-to-date information

“Areas of the Southeast region may be facing drought conditions unprecedented in their scope and severity,” Robbins emphasized. “Everyone involved and affected will have to be part of the solution to get through these difficult times.”