



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

NEWS RELEASE

BUILDING STRONG®

Release 19-010

For Immediate Release

Feb. 23, 2019

Contact:

Bill Peoples, 615-736-7161

chief.public-affairs@usace.army.mil

Wolf Creek Dam increasing releases to 45,000 cfs today

JAMESTOWN, Ky. (Feb. 22, 2019) – Officials with the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District](#) announce that releases at Wolf Creek Dam are increasing to 45,000 cubic feet per second this afternoon, and releases are expected to increase to 60,000 cfs by noon Sunday, Feb. 23.

Inflows into Lake Cumberland overnight were larger than forecast and the lake's flood storage is quickly reaching its capacity, prompting water managers to move up the timetable for the increased releases. Impacts are expected in areas near the river downstream, especially in the Cumberland River reach in Kentucky from Rowena to Burkesville.

As of 10 a.m. today, the elevation of 749.74 at Lake Cumberland is the highest observed since the pool of record of 751.69 in May 1984. A total of 70 percent of the flood control pool is currently being utilized.

“Our water managers constantly monitor how the precipitation affects lake levels and are proactive as possible to ensure we are making controlled releases to mitigate future possibilities of even larger releases,” explained Lt. Col. Cullen Jones, Nashville District commander.

Jones said 60,000 cfs means that water will completely fill the river channel downstream of the dam. Coupled with rain runoff it will impact low-lying areas and cause some backwater with other small streams that run into the river, he said.

The Corps of Engineers is working with state officials to communicate with land owners downstream and to get the word out about these increases for public safety. The Nashville District is communicating with the Louisville District Emergency Management Operations Center and they are in turn communicating with Kentucky Emergency Management.

Residents can contact emergency managers for Russell County at 270-343-2112, Ext. 1402; Clinton County at 606-387-8636; Cumberland County at 270-864-2511, Ext. 339; Wayne County at 606-348-3302; and Monroe County at 270-487-5505 for more information about the increased releases at Wolf Creek Dam.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District officials talk about increasing releases at Wolf Creek Dam with Kentucky Emergency Management officials this morning from the Nashville District Emergency Management Center in Nashville, Tenn. (USACE photo by Mark Rankin)

Michael Dossett, director of Kentucky Emergency Management, said, "With the expectation of additional heavy rainfall, we are constantly monitoring developments in the State Emergency Operations Center. Communities and citizens are asked to be on high alert for continuing flooding conditions. Emergency preparedness is key - have a plan and act on that plan."

Anthony Rodino, Nashville District Water Management Section chief, continues to reinforce the message that the Nashville District has to increase releases to regain storage in the reservoir.

The flood control pool at Lake Cumberland spans elevations 723 to 760, which allocates 2,094,000 acre feet of storage in the pool and allows for storage of 6.78 inches of rainfall runoff from the 5,789 square-mile watershed. In calendar year 2019, Corps' rain gages have recorded a basin average rainfall total of 16.2 inches in the Wolf Creek watershed.

The water management plan designates Celina, Tenn., as the downstream control point. The flow at Celina, which is made up of discharges from Wolf Creek Dam and Dale Hollow Dam, as well as the 583 square miles of uncontrolled watershed below the dams, is normally maintained at or below 40,000 cfs. The Corps has continued to operate Wolf Creek Dam in this manner allowing the reservoir to continually fill this year because downstream conditions have not been conducive to higher releases. However, the reservoir is now approaching capacity necessitating higher releases. The release plan from Wolf Creek is being continuously revisited and additional increases beyond 60,000 cfs are possible.

For more information about how the Nashville District operates the Cumberland River Reservoir System, see the Water Management Education Series at <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/Missions/WaterManagement/EducationSeries.aspx>.

As necessary, news and information regarding water management and flood operations will be made available on the district's website at www.lrn.usace.army.mil, on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/nashvillecorps>, and on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/nashvillecorps>.

-30-