



United States Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District
P.O. Box 1890
Wilmington, North Carolina 28402-1890

News Release

Contact: PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
Phone: (910) 251-4626

Sept. 25, 1999

No. 99-09-25

For Release: Immediately

Releases working as planned, US Army Corps of Engineers says

WILMINGTON, North Carolina—Releases from the Falls Dam reached the 3,000 cubic-foot-per-second level this morning, and will go to 4,000 cfs tomorrow morning as planned, said Terry Brown, Water Control Manager for the Wilmington District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "After intensive work to calculate just how long we could hold back and how low we could keep these releases, we're satisfied that we have achieved the best balance we can," Brown said.

The balance he spoke of? "We are increasing flood storage capacity behind the Falls Dam, yet minimizing effects on communities downstream." For more than a week, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers held back literally 99.9 percent of the runoff from the upper Neuse River Basin, as water from Hurricane Floyd's massive rains drained into the Falls Reservoir. "History shows that just as many hurricanes and tropical storms typically occur in the next six weeks as happened in the last six," explained Wilmington District Emergency Operations Manager Joel Hendrix. "The season isn't over yet." That's why Water Control Managers at the Corps want to clear flood storage space in the Falls Reservoir.

"The major storm has passed," Brown said, "but we will be putting in extra hours for weeks to come, monitoring and evaluating every potential rainfall system. Right now, the picture looks good for us to continue in an orderly way down the path we've set. We have our eyes on a tropical system that should bring rain on Monday or Tuesday, but we think that rain will fall in the western parts of North Carolina and Virginia, where it will be a welcome relief from drought."

Water Control staff members at the Wilmington District are also keeping a close and careful eye on down river areas still swollen with Hurricane Floyd's flood waters. "Flood stages are dropping," Brown said. "We are confident that the release pattern we have established will not worsen conditions as water takes several days to reach the Goldsboro and Kinston areas. Feeder

streams are way down, and that's good news. The Little River, for example, showed a five-foot drop over the past five days."

For current information on elevations and releases, and for real-time river and flow data, refer to the Wilmington District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers home page at URL_HYPERLINK <http://www.saw.usace.army.mil> and choose the "more links" button on the home page to see water levels.