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# Public Affairs Office

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## **Corps, State agree to water-saving measures at Jordan Lake**

**Raleigh, N.C.** -- Participants in a Drought Management Team meeting conferred here this week, agreeing to step down releases from B. Everett Jordan Lake this weekend as the Water Quality Pool in the lake rapidly diminishes due to drought.

"We will step releases down from 500 cubic feet per second (cfs)," said Wilmington District Water Control Manager, Terry Brown. "Releases were cut to 450 cfs immediately on Thursday, and will be reduced to 400 cfs on Monday, and 350 cfs by next Wednesday." The gradual decreases will give State Water Quality and Water Resources officials the time needed to assess the effects of the reduced releases, he said.

Extreme to Exceptional Drought, as defined by the National Weather Service, now grips much of North Carolina, with the State's central counties suffering most. Many streams and rivers statewide are experiencing very low flows—some record lows, and many at 10 percent of normal levels for this time of year. "We are in an enduring drought pattern," Brown said. "Four years of below average rainfalls are resulting in serious problems all over the region."

Conditions at Jordan drew extra attention this week as the remaining water quality pool continued to decrease and stream flows fell to historic lows. "We needed to take steps to conserve water, as forecasts show no relief from dry conditions," Brown said.

"We agree with the assessment the North Carolina Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources has made that this is an extraordinary situation. We have some indications that a drought like this might have hit the region in the 1850s. We know for sure that there hasn't been anything worse since then. We urge people to follow the state and their local government's advisories," Brown emphasized. "Conserving water this summer will make a critical difference!"

State officials and the Corps recommend that all water users in the Cape Fear basin, which covers an area from Durham and Orange counties southeast to Wilmington, operate under mandatory conservation measures.

"Everyone in the Cape Fear River basin, and across the state, needs to recognize the severity of this situation never before faced in North Carolina," said Bill Ross, secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources. "Without dramatic reductions in water use by all those who rely on Jordan Lake and the river for water supply, some communities may not survive the drought without running out of water. All water systems, consumers and industries need to take part in these efforts."

Together with officials from the State, the Wildlife Resources Commission, communities who rely upon Jordan Lake, and other federal and local officials and stakeholders, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been making conservative decisions about its water resources for many months. Besides the Cape Fear River, where Jordan lake is located, the Corps also manages facilities on the Roanoke River, the Neuse River, and the Yadkin River

For more information on the regional drought and Corps drought management efforts, visit the Wilmington District Drought Web Page at <http://water.sas.usace.army.mil/drought>