

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## DELAWARE BASIN STATES AND NEW YORK CITY ANNOUNCE NEW RESERVOIR OPERATING PLAN AGREEMENT

MILFORD, Pa. (May 31, 2011) – New York State, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the City of New York today announced that they have signed a one-year agreement for a new interim flow program intended to protect fisheries habitat downstream of the New York City (NYC)-Delaware Basin reservoirs, enhance flood mitigation, and repel the upstream movement of salt water in the Delaware Estuary.

Diversions and releases of water from the three city reservoirs (Cannonsville, Pepacton, and Neversink) are jointly managed by the four states and NYC under the terms of a 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree that settled an interstate water dispute between New York State and New York City, and the lower basin states.

This new agreement, which will be in effect June 1, 2011 through May 31, 2012, will make better use of the shared water in the three City reservoirs, located in the headwaters of the Delaware River through the use of the City's new Operations Support Tool (OST). The OST, a sophisticated monitoring and modeling system that NYC Department of Environmental Protection began to develop in February 2010, will enable the Decree Parties (four basin states and NYC) to better manage the movement of water throughout the reservoir system and the Delaware River Basin. This new tool allows better prediction of reservoir-specific water storage levels, quality, and inflows, which will guide selection of releases from the three reservoirs to the Delaware River.

Release rates in the agreement are patterned after recommendations provided in a January 2010 joint fisheries paper from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

Under the new agreement with the OST integration, NYC will create a higher potential to achieve a 10 percent storage void in the reservoirs from September 1 to March 15 as well as an average five percent void from July 1 to September 1 and from March 15 to May 1. It is the intention of this program to help mitigate river flooding during periods of high inflows and heavy snow melt.

In addition, reservoir releases under the new agreement will be adjusted to repel the upstream migration of salty water from the Atlantic Ocean that moves up the tidal Delaware River during low-flow conditions. As salt-laced water moves upriver, the City of Philadelphia and other public water suppliers can be affected along with industrial surface water users.

The new FFMP also increases New Jersey's maximum diversion from the Delaware River Basin via the Delaware & Raritan Canal to a daily running average of 85 million gallons per day (mgd) when the basin is in a drought emergency.

The new operating plan is described as a one-year "bridge agreement" since it updates the Flexible Flow Management Program (FFMP) that has been in effect since approved by the five Decree Parties in 2007. The intention of the original FFMP, which will expire on May 31, 2011, was to provide a more adaptive means for managing releases from the three NYC reservoirs by providing for releases based solely on the time of year and reservoir storage conditions. The Decree Parties will evaluate the interim reservoir management plan over the next year and use the experience to help guide the development of future agreements.

The agreement can be viewed on the web site of the Office of the Delaware River Master, which administers the provisions of the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree, at <http://water.usgs.gov/osw/odrm/>.

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