
NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Gary Paulachok, Deputy Delaware River Master, (570) 296-7213

DECREE PARTIES ANNOUNCE TEMPORARY SUPPLEMENTAL RELEASES PROGRAM FROM NEW YORK CITY-DELAWARE BASIN RESERVOIRS

MILFORD, Pa. (Sept. 2) - New York State, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the City of New York (Parties to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree) today announced an agreement providing temporary additional releases of water from three New York City reservoirs to the Delaware River in anticipation of a future shutdown of the Rondout to West Branch Tunnel.

Under the terms of the September 2, 2009 agreement now in effect, total supplemental water available to be released from the Cannonsville, Pepacton, and Neversink reservoirs could be as high as 50 billion gallons over the course of this program that is scheduled to expire on May 31, 2010. These temporary releases will be in addition to water that will be released under the Decree Parties' September 2007 Flexible Flow Management Program (FFMP) agreement that was amended in December 2008.

The supplemental releases will be based on National Weather Service (NWS) long-term probabilistic reservoir inflow forecasts, New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) historical inflow data, and the water supply condition of each reservoir. Acting in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, NYCDEP will determine which shutdown supplemental release quantity to use for the three reservoirs. The release amounts are expected to be reevaluated on a weekly basis in conjunction with the issuance of updated NWS probabilistic forecasts and be adjusted accordingly. These additional quantities, when combined with FFMP releases, could result in amounts totaling as much as 495 cubic feet per second (cfs) from Cannonsville, 260 cfs from Pepacton, and 145 cfs from Neversink. The Office of the Delaware River Master's web site (<http://water.usgs.gov/osw/odrm/>) will provide the public with the updated weekly supplemental release information while this agreement is in effect.

The 45-mile-long tunnel transports water from the city's Rondout Reservoir to its West Branch Reservoir in the Croton Watershed. This tunnel is in need of repairs in order to improve the reliability and long-term sustainability of the city's drinking water supply system. In order to perform critical, necessary work in preparation of the repairs, the tunnel will need to be shut down. The temporary supplemental releases program is being implemented since water cannot be diverted from the Cannonsville, Pepacton, and Neversink reservoirs in the Delaware River Basin to Rondout Reservoir during this shutdown period. The estimated amount of water that would normally be diverted to Rondout during the length of time that the tunnel is expected to be shutdown is less than the 50 billion gallons that could be released to the Delaware River under the terms of this temporary program.

The temporary supplemental releases program is being implemented in accordance with a provision contained in the Decree Parties' FFMP agreement. A final decision has not yet been made by NYCDEP on when the tunnel shutdown will take place. In the event the tunnel shutdown does not occur, the temporary releases program could be terminated by NYCDEP.

This and other Decree Party agreements, including the FFMP, may be viewed on the Delaware River Master's web site at <http://water.usgs.gov/osw/odrm/>.

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