

Missouri River Water Releases to Remain High

(KLZA)-- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Missouri River Basin Water Management Division is maintaining above normal releases at the four lower dams on the Missouri River.

As expected, September runoff above Sioux City, Iowa, remained well above normal, totaling 1.8 million acre feet, 157 percent of normal. The 2014 runoff forecast is 35.5 million acre feet, 141 percent of normal, down slightly from one month ago. Average annual runoff is 25.2 million acre feet.

Higher releases now from Oahe, Big Bend, Fort Randall, and Gavins Point dams will evacuate flood water stored in the Mainstem Reservoir System, thus reducing our future flood risk,” says Jody Farhat, chief of the Missouri River Basin Water Management Division. “Higher releases will ensure we have the entire flood control capacity available next year.”

The excess water also will allow the Corps to extend the navigation season and provide higher winter releases, which will benefit winter hydropower generation and reduce risks to water intakes during periods of ice formation this winter.

Navigation service at the mouth of the Missouri River will now end on December 10. Gavins Point winter releases, which are normally near 17,000 cfs, will be scheduled at 20,000 cfs from December through February. The longer navigation season and the higher winter release will better serve downstream water users during the remainder of the year.

Many Signals Communications