



# News Release

**U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District**

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**Public Affairs**

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## Corps to wrap up 2004 Headwater's drawdowns

SAINT PAUL, MINN. –The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, will wrap up most of its drawdowns of the headwaters lakes, located in and around Bemidji, Minn., by March 1.

Drawing down the lakes provides thousands of acres of additional feet of storage space for spring runoff and precipitation, which aids in flood-damage reduction.

The Corps will complete less than normal drawdown at all six sites this year due to a moderate winter and moderate levels of moisture in the snow. However, the Corps' water control section will continue to monitor the precipitation and determine if more water will need to be released at a later date.

Drawdowns of Gull, Cross and Sandy lakes are scheduled to be completed by March 1. Gull Lake will be drawn down to 1193.30 feet from its normal summer elevation level of 1193.87 feet, providing 7,400 acre-feet of additional water storage. Cross Lake will be drawn down to 1,228 feet from its normal summer elevation level of 1229.32 feet, providing 18,000 acre-feet of storage. Sandy Lake, normally at 1216.31 feet in the summer, will be drawn down to 1214.4 feet to provide 16,800 acre-feet of storage.

A drawdown of Lake Pokegama began after Labor Day and has a March 1 target of 1271.35 feet. Normal summer elevation level is around 1273.42 feet. Lake Pokegama's drawdown is typically not complete until the beginning of April. On March 1, the Corps will evaluate snow depth and water content maps to determine the future drawdown needs of Lake Pokegama.

The Corps will complete only a partial drawdown of Leech Lake and Lake Winnibigoshish this spring. Leech Lake is usually drawn down to 1,293.8 from 1,294.7; however, this years target is 1,294.15 feet. Lake Winnibigoshish is usually drawn down to 1,296.94 from 1,298.19 but has a target of 1297.40 feet.

“Regulating the reservoirs is a balancing act between providing enough flood control storage versus having enough potential spring runoff to fill the reservoirs back to their normal summer levels by the beginning of the fishing season in May,” said Corps' hydrologist Jodi Kormanik. “This is of a particular concern on the big reservoirs like Winnibigoshish and Leech.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, serves the American public in the areas of environmental enhancement, navigation, flood damage reduction, wetlands regulation, recreation sites and disaster response. It contributes around \$142 million to the five-state district economy. The more than 750 employees work at more than 40 sites in five upper-Midwest states. For more information, see [www.mvp.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil).

