



News Release

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Four Corps of Engineers Lakes Reducing Services for 2008

Mark Twain Lake—March 5, 2008---The Corps is realizing other savings by accepting gaps in vacated full time positions and not hiring as many of the temporary summer employees as in the past. “This will result in fewer education and water safety programs and less frequent visibility of patrolling park rangers,” O’Bryan acknowledged. Roving visits by area law enforcement patrols that the Corps funds will also be reduced, although law and safety organizations and personnel will still respond to emergencies as before.

Corps managers also acknowledge that they have no contingency funding for unexpected breakdowns. They explained that if something major breaks they will either have to identify additional cuts for repairs or do without the service until they can find other funds.

Corps managers also explained the different levels of service cuts as a function of the Federal budget process. Funds are allocated to each lake project for the broad spectrum of missions each lake has such as flood risk management, environmental stewardship and water supply. While minor adjustments can be made between those requirements at a given lake, regulations restrict moving – or reallocating – money between different projects.

The St. Louis District lakes hosted some 11 million visits last year, providing regional recreational economic benefits of some \$322 million. While it’s anticipated that those numbers will fall this year, with income impacts for businesses near the lakes, especially those serving seasonal or recreation needs, Corps officials say they have sought ways to minimize those losses. They are continuing to explore greater involvement by volunteers as well as regional partners and stakeholders.

At Mark Twain Lake, all campgrounds and day use areas will be open but at a reduced level of service. The reductions in services will include: reduced cleaning of facilities, reduced mowing, reduced refuse removal, reduced ranger patrols due to the lack of summer employees and vacancies of permanent staff not filled, reduced outreach and summer programs, reduced or eliminated support for special events, and reduced routine local law enforcement presence. There is currently no Visitors Center at Mark Twain Lake, but visitors may come to the Lake Operations Office for information.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is attempting to sustain the maximum level of safe and healthy recreation that we can at Mark Twain Lake in the coming 2008

recreation season. We ask you to call the project office to check on availability of specific parks, facilities or services. You may reach the Mark Twain Lake Project at 573-735-4097, email marktwaininfo@usace.army.mil or stop by the office Monday through Friday 8AM – 4PM at 20642 Highway J, Monroe City, Missouri.