

Wet weather makes flood control spill at Libby Dam necessary

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SEATTLE -- Due to heavy precipitation in the Kootenai Basin, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers water managers are increasing outflows from Libby Dam.

Outflows were increased from full powerhouse capacity of 24,200 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 32,200 cfs, with a spill of 8,000 cfs on Thursday, June 8, and will be further increased to 38,000 cfs today, Friday, June 9.

The increase in outflow now is necessary to slow the refill of reservoir and reduce the potential for higher releases from the dam later. The river stage downstream at Bonners Ferry, ID is forecast to peak the afternoon and evening of Sunday, June 11 at elevation 1765.0 ft, which is one foot above flood stage.

Corps emergency management teams have been on the ground this past month and are currently in Montana and northern Idaho, providing technical assistance at sites that have been affected by rising rivers. The public is urged to be aware and take caution near the river during these higher flows. The water velocities are high and water temperatures are still quite cold. An added danger is debris accumulation along the river and possible stream bank erosion in some locations.

River forecasts are being monitored and Libby operations may be adjusted as new information becomes available.