



Late Showers Possible, Cool

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## Flow Of The Future

### Flooding To Drought Forces Army Corps Of Engineers To Ask 'Where Do We Go From Here?'

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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**T**he Missouri River basin saw a dramatic swing of the pendulum from historic flooding in 2011 to historic drought in 2012.

So where to go with the Mighty Mo? The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has embarked on a two-part strategy in 2013.

The Corps has implemented drought conservation measures while retaining flood control as a priority, said Jody Farhat, chief of the basin's Water Management Division in Omaha.

"Flood control remains a primary consideration as we move into 2013, despite the concerns about the impacts of the drought on the basin's resources, due to the potential for flooding caused by localized thunderstorms," Farhat said.

For now, drought conditions appear to remain the norm for parts of the Great Plains. Southeast South Dakota and northeast Nebraska have experienced exceptional drought, the most severe category.

Dry conditions continue in the upper basin, indicating less-than-normal runoff in 2013. Runoff above Sioux City is forecast to be 20.5 million acre feet, or 81 percent of normal. Runoff for the month of March was 55 percent of normal.

The total volume of water stored in the mainstem reservoir system on April 1 was 48.8 million acre-feet.

"(The Missouri River) system storage is 8 million acre feet below the top of the Carryover Multiple Use Zone in the system," Farhat said. "That zone is designed to provide service to the eight congressionally authorized purposes, though at reduced levels, through a 12-year drought like that of the 1930s and early 1940s."

The current falling river levels and the prospects of continued dry conditions has triggered the Corps' actions, Farhat said.

"Drought conservation measures, such as minimum winter releases and reduced flow support for navigation, are implemented as the volume of water in the reservoir system declines," she said.

In mid-March, the Corps increased releases out of Gavins Point Dam from 14,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 25,000 cfs. The action was taken in support of the navigation season which began April 1 near St. Louis.

The drought has had one measurable impact — a drop in hydropower production. The six mainstem power plants generated 612 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in March. Typical energy generation for the month of March is 639 million kWh.

The power plants are projected to generate 8.2 billion kWh of electricity this year, compared to the normal of 10 billion kWh.

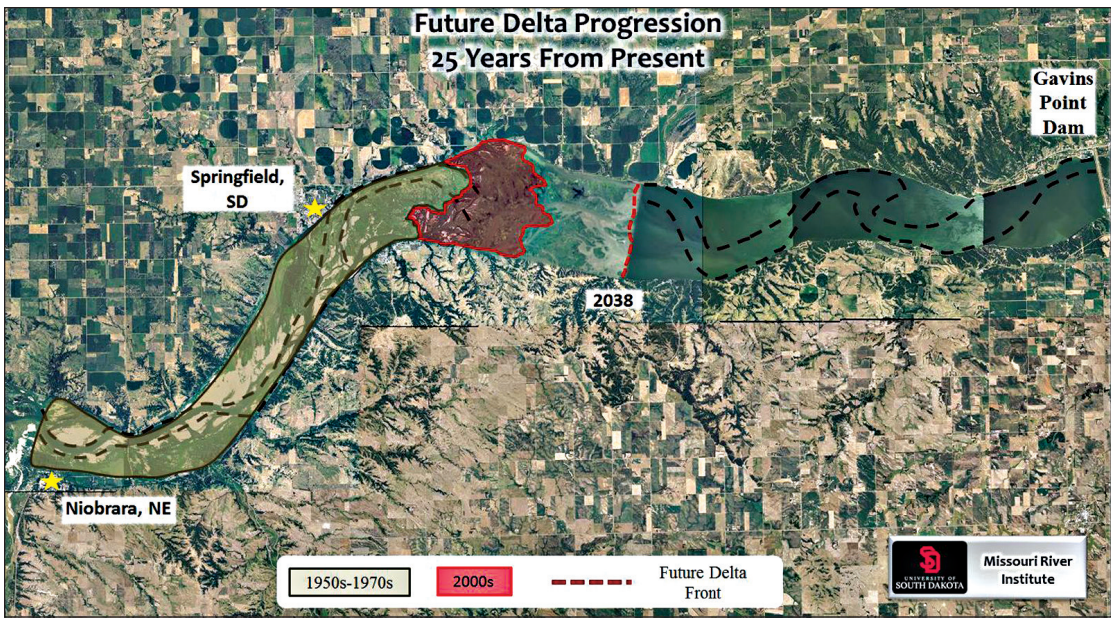
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### ALL SMASHED UP



One person was reported injured in this two-vehicle accident at approximately 1:35 p.m. Friday at the intersection of 23rd St. and Green St. in Yankton. Traffic in the area was blocked for several minutes while law enforcement and emergency crews worked on the scene. No other information on this accident was available at press time.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D



This artist's rendition, produced by University of South Dakota student Nicole Geary, offers a projection of the future progression of the Missouri River delta from the Springfield and Niobrara, Neb., downstream during the next 25 years. (Courtesy Graphic) ABOVE: A boater enjoys a day on the Missouri River, just beneath Meridian Bridge at Yankton, in this photo shot last month. The growing sedimentation could have a long-range impact on recreation and other uses for the Missouri River basin. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)

## Cloudy With A Chance Of Vultures, Weather Causes Havoc With Wildlife

BY DEREK BARTOS  
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The spring storm that wreaked havoc on the Yankton area brought with it not only ice, sleet and snow, but also a fowl presence.

During the past week, a large number of turkey vultures have made the area their home, much to the displeasure of several residents.

Yankton Animal Control Officer Lisa Brasel said numerous people have been complaining about the presence of the birds, as her office received more than 20 reports between Monday and Thursday alone.

"Everybody in the world is calling them in," she said. "People are creeped out."

The large birds — which typically have wingspans between 5 and 6 feet — feed mostly on dead animals, according to Eileen Dowd Stukel, wildlife diversity coordinator with the South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks (GF&P). While they don't usually pose any danger, they can be seen as a nuisance by many people, she said.

"There are places where they congregate, such as radio towers or TV towers," Dowd Stukel said. "There are neighborhoods where they might find a particular place to roost and they can cause a lot of mess, and people don't appreciate that."

Dowd Stukel said that while she isn't completely sure about the reason for the vultures' presence in Yankton, the birds have likely found themselves in a situation similar to that of other early migrant birds, which can get caught in spring storms as they travel north.

"This happens some years," she said. "They likely got stalled with this widespread system that we had in South Dakota, and particularly the ice storms we had in southeast South Dakota. Whether they got stalled out because they couldn't roost — and that is something that I saw speculation about, that they couldn't sit in trees because the trees were iced over — or whether the ice and the storm reduced their ability to find prey and they were just weakened. That is really what I'm not sure about."



JEANNINE ECONOMY/P&D

These turkey vultures were spotted earlier this week perched along (and on top of) a Yankton residence. The birds, which are a protected species, were reported in several residential areas earlier this week, probably because they were grounded by the snowstorm.

Brasel said there also have been reports of the birds "falling out of the sky."

This could be attributed to the weather as well, Dowd Stukel said, although it is difficult to know without doing a physical examination.

"It could be that they were actually iced over and that restricted their ability to fly," she said. "Or it

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## Clean-up Continues Following Winter Storm

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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Inmates from the Yankton trusty unit could be headed to the Sioux Falls area Monday to assist with clean-up in the aftermath of this week's ice and snow storms.

Governor Dennis Daugaard issued an emergency declaration Friday to provide state assistance with tree debris removal in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties in the wake of a major spring storm.

The emergency declaration will allow inmate crews from the Department of Corrections and personnel and equipment from the Department of Transportation to be used to assist local emergency officials in clearing from streets massive amounts of debris from trees downed in the ice storm.

In addition, Daugaard placed soldiers from the South Dakota National Guard on alert. A decision on whether those additional units are needed to assist with the clean-up will be made Monday after consultation with local officials.

"At the state level, we have been in constant contact with local officials and monitoring the response to this disaster," Daugaard said. "Together, we determined that state assistance would help the local officials clear the debris and restore normal conditions for our citizens."

Monday morning, a 50-member crew of inmates from the Department of Correction's Jameson Unit in Sioux Falls will arrive on the scene to assist in removing downed trees and other debris from the streets. The Department of Transportation will have five loaders with grapple forks and 10 dump trucks on the scene at the same time.

Another crew of inmates is available from the Yankton unit if needed to assist Minnehaha County with debris clean-up, the governor said.

The state resources are

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