

# U.S. Postal Service Honors Rosa Parks With A New Stamp

**BY MIKE HOUSEHOLDER**  
 Associated Press

DEARBORN, Mich. — Hundreds of people, including some of Michigan’s political elite, gathered Monday to celebrate the late Rosa Parks on what would have been her 100th birthday by unveiling a postage stamp in her honor steps from the Alabama bus on which she stared down segregation nearly 60 years ago.

Parks, who died in 2005, became one of the enduring figures of the Civil Rights movement when she refused to cede her

seat in the colored section of the Montgomery, Ala., bus to a white man after the whites-only section filled up. Her defiance and the ensuing black boycott of the city bus system helped the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. rise to national prominence.

“This is being done in sight of the bus where future generations can sit in a seat where Rosa Parks sat and refused to budge and in a seat where the world was changed,” U.S. Sen. Carl Levin said before he and U.S. Rep. John Conyers, a fellow Democrat, pulled the curtain to reveal the Rosa Parks Forever Stamp, which bears

her 1950’s likeness.

The stamp ceremony was part of a 12-hour event at The Henry Ford in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Parks’ birth that also featured speeches and live music.

At one point, officials cleared the vehicle and allowed Deputy Postmaster General Ronald Stroman — who as a young lawyer worked on Conyers’ staff while Parks worked at Conyers’ Detroit office — to sit on the bus by himself.

Stroman looked around the bus and gathered his thoughts before saying: “It’s

such a powerful experience to be actually in the seat that Rosa Parks sat in. It’s almost emotional — very overwhelming to be here.”

The Parks stamp is the second in a set of civil rights stamps being issued this year by the U.S. Postal Service.

USPS launched the series Jan. 1 with the Emancipation Proclamation Forever Stamp, which was issued at The National Archives in Washington. In August, the series will culminate with the dedication of a stamp recognizing the 50th anniversary of the historic March on Washington.

The value of a Forever Stamp is the domestic First-Class Mail letter price in effect on the day of use. They always are sold at the same price as a regular First-Class Mail stamp.

Forever Stamps currently are being sold for 46 cents.

The Parks stamp went on sale Monday at post offices nationwide and at The Henry Ford, where dozens of people lined up to buy it, and nearby where collectors gathered to get their new stamps and other collectables stamped — or officially “canceled” — by a postal service employee.

## Rivers

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ing the effect of historic 2012 drought after massive 2011 flooding. Niobrara, Neb., reported a stage of 14.16 feet with a flood stage of 21 feet, while neighboring Springfield reported a stage of 7.36 feet with a flood stage of 10 feet.

Across eastern South Dakota, precipitation in November and December averaged 0.10 to 0.75 inches below normal, according to NWS hydrologist Mike Gillispie.

During January, areas from east of the James River to the Big Sioux River were running 110 to 150 percent above normal, with 200 to 300 percent of normal in the upper James basin around Aberdeen.

The drought conditions of southeast South Dakota are reflected in the rest of the James River readings, Gillispie said.

“The western portions of the lower James basin, below Mitchell, only received 50 to 90 percent of normal precipitation in January,” he said.

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report still lists southeast South Dakota and northeast Nebraska in D4 (exceptional) drought, the most extreme category, Gillispie said. The D4 drought generally runs south of a line from near Pierre to Chamberlain to Tyndall to just south of Sioux Falls, he said.

The drought’s impact is seen in the James River levels, Gillispie said.

“The James River is running well below what we’ve seen for many years, so even the additional one inch of liquid in the snows around Aberdeen shouldn’t cause any concerns,” he said.

“The latest flood outlooks for February through April show about a 10 to 20 percent chance of hitting flood stage on the James River, which is below the normal 30 to 40 percent chance.”

The Missouri River has seen a dramatic swing during the last two years, from major flooding in 2011 to historic drought in 2012. The continued dry conditions are exerting an impact on the “Mighty Mo.”

“Snowpack in the northern Rockies is running near normal, with below normal snowpack in the plains of Montana through North Dakota and South Dakota,” Gillispie said. “This would make me think that there will be below normal runoff in the upper Missouri basin this spring and early summer. But if we can get even normal precipitation during that period, things will not be anywhere near as low as they were last year.”

However, the dry conditions will apparently remain for now, according to climatologist Mark Svoboda with the U.S. Drought Monitor.

“The drought is firmly entrenched,” he said. “The relative lack of winter in back-to-back years will certainly place a much greater onus on well-above-normal spring rains if the region is to have any real chance of shaking this drought.”

Those changes have not been forthcoming, nor are they expected in the immediate future, Svoboda said.

“Same song, fifth verse with no changes of note on the map in what is now the epicenter of the 2013 drought,” he said.

With no relief in sight, the Corps is predicting runoff into the Missouri River mainstem reservoir system will remain below normal, at least through spring.

Corps officials provided their outlook in a news release.

Based on the current soil moisture and snowpack conditions, 2013 runoff in the Missouri River basin above Sioux City, Iowa, is forecast to be 20.5 million acre feet, 82 percent of normal. Runoff during 2012 totaled 19.8 million acre feet, 80 percent of normal.

The 2013 runoff season should begin around March 1. At that time, the total volume of water stored in the mainstem reservoir system is expected to be 8.5 million acre feet below the top of the carryover multiple use zone.

The zone, often referred to as the reservoir system’s “bank ac-

count for drought,” contains 38.9 million acre-feet (MAF) of water when full. It’s 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.

Those authorized purposes are: flood control, navigation, water supply, irrigation, hydropower, recreation, water quality control, and fish and wildlife.

More than 20 percent of the drought storage was used to serve the authorized project purposes during 2012.

To relieve a continued drought, Corps officials said they could conserve water in the system by reducing services such as hydropower or by lowering lake levels.

Releases from Gavins Point Dam are scheduled at the lowest possible level this winter while still serving the needs of municipal, industrial and powerplant water intakes along the lower Missouri River.

The Corps has been tracking snowpack which usually enters the Missouri River.

As of last month, mountain snowpack was tracking near nor-

mal in the reach above Fort Peck (101 percent) and slightly below normal in the reach between the Fort Peck and Garrison dams (91 percent of normal). Typically, 45 percent of the peak mountain snowpack accumulation has occurred by Jan. 1.

Snowpack on the plains was generally light, with most areas reporting less than the equivalent of an inch of water.

“The Corps will continue to monitor both the plains and mountain snowpack throughout the winter, as well as basin soil conditions to fine tune the regulation of the reservoir system based on the most up-to-date information,” said Jody Farhat, chief of the Missouri River Basin Water Management.

The drought has affected hydropower production along the system, according to the Corps.

The six mainstem power plants generated 569 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in December. Typical power generation for the month of December is 696 million kWh. The power plants are projected to generate 8 billion kWh of electricity this year, compared to the normal of 10 billion kWh.

With a continued outlook for drought, JRWDD manager Bartel has been studying river conditions. He will meet separately today (Tuesday) with the Hutchinson County Commission and with the Yankton County Commission.

Bartel joined landowners and other officials for a tour last week of the heavy siltation at the mouth of the James River, which meets the Missouri River east of Yankton. The group discussed the sediment blocking and backing up the James River.

“They talked about the water backing up the entire (James River) channel, but I’m not so convinced that’s going to happen,” he said. “Maybe up toward the Highway 81 bridge and the Highway 46 bridge, but I’m not sure how much further (north).”

Bartel will explore the southern James River during the down time between today’s two commission meetings.

“Generally, I’m in too big of a hurry to see all that is going on (while in Yankton for meetings),” he said. “I am going to enjoy the delay to get out and see things.”

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at [twitter.com/RDockendorf](#)

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