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Corps will tweak Hartwell lake levels

By CARLOS GALARZA
carlos@dailyjm.com

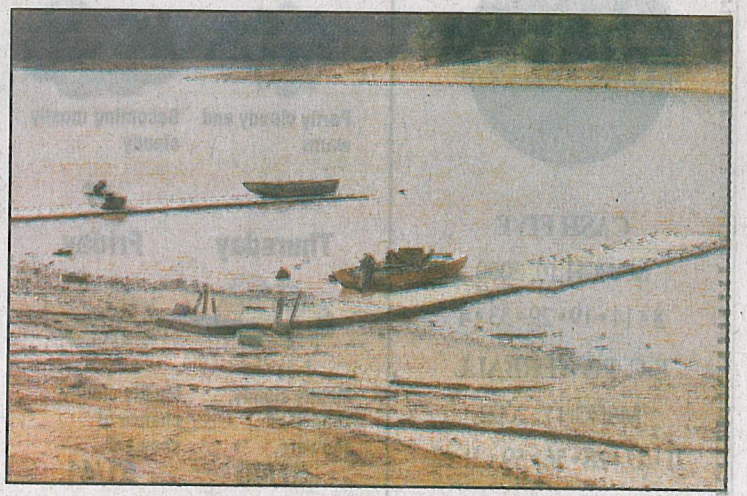
SENECA — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is in the process of assessing outflow reductions from Lake Thurmond that would allow lake levels to also rise at lakes Hartwell and Russell.

Billy Birdwell, a spokesman for the Corps, said Tuesday the agency would be ready by October to reduce outflows from Lake Thurmond from 3,600 cubic feet per second to 3,100 cfs, Birdwell said the Corps would maintain the reduced outflow for four months through January 2010.

The desired result, Birdwell said, would be higher levels at the three lakes, which have been at historically low levels because of the severe drought affecting the Southeast for the past few years.

Birdwell said assessing Lake Thurmond's outflow is something the Corps looks at all the time and is not a result of a petition drive by an organization called Save Our

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Jessica Nelms/Staff

Lake Hartwell remains more than 12 feet below full pond. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hopes to increase levels by reducing LakeThurmond outflows in October.