



# NEWS RELEASE

## North Dakota State Water Commission

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## **ND State Water Commission will begin discharge operations from the West End Devils Lake Outlet this week**

The Devils Lake West End Outlet started discharging approximately 125 cfs (cubic feet per second) to the Sheyenne River on Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> and the East End Outlet is expected to begin discharging later in the month after repair and maintenance work are complete. This will mark the thirteenth year of discharge from the West End Outlet, and it will be the seventh year of operation for the East End Outlet. Over that time, the two outlets have combined to discharge over 1.04 million acre-feet. For reference, that volume of water is nearly enough to cover all of Burleigh County to a depth of 1 foot.

The outlet infrastructure has been a critical aspect to flood relief for the Devils Lake Basin. Without their slow and steady discharge throughout the summer months, the lake system would be over 4.5 feet higher than its current elevation and approximately 50 thousand additional acres of farmland would currently be inundated. The combined outlet capacity is 600 cfs, however, in recent years the discharge has averaged between 350 and 400 cfs to prevent exceedances of downstream water quality limitations and minor flooding along the Upper Sheyenne River.

Inflow from spring runoff and precipitation may cause a small lake rise from the current elevation of 1449.8 ft (NGVD29) but the 2018 lake rise is expected to be minimal. The West and East outlets were designed to accommodate low intake elevations of 1445 ft and 1446 ft respectively and their operation is managed by the State Water Commission under advisement from the Devils Lake Outlets Management Advisory Committee (DLOMAC). In April 2018, the committee met and agreed to continue operation of the Devils Lake Outlets within the established limitations on downstream water quantity and quality in the Upper Sheyenne River until the lake reaches an elevation of 1448.0 ft. At that time, the Committee plans to reconvene and discuss future outlet operating parameters.