

FEATURES

Water: Return of long-covered islands is illustration of drought

continued from 1C

than 2,800 cfs from the dam. That means that in coming months, the lake could drop even more.

"We'd like a minimum outflow of 4,100 cfs," Felchle said. "That's needed to provide an optimum flow for fisheries downriver. But we haven't provided that for the past four or five years."

Fish downstream are already crowded into less river. Most side streams dried up when release levels from Canyon Ferry Dam fell below 3,000 cfs. Fish have fewer places to spawn and less to eat, and will become more vulnerable to disease.

Felchle said the current outflow of 2,800 cfs is the bottom line. Anything more could result in a drawdown of the reservoir. It's a possibility if the rain doesn't fall. That so-called bottom line of 2,800 cfs, Felchle said, was

created using models from the drought of the 1930s.

In the event of a drawdown — a worst-case scenario, Felchle admitted — Canyon Ferry would be the first in the system to feel the pinch. Water levels would drop about 60 feet — a point at which the power plants become inoperative. Other lakes in the river system would meet the same fate.

"We would use all the storage to try to keep the rivers alive," Felchle said. "We haven't had to do that. I don't think we're at that point yet. But it's been a real challenge in these drought years."

The reality of the drought hits visitors when they arrive at the lake. Islands not seen for years have appeared where boaters once played. A fisherman only has to wade through knee-deep water to reach them. Streams now cascade down banks of rock and mud

to reach the lake. Water rings stain the cliffs as a reminder of the way it used to be.

"It's not going to be a normal year," said Kathy Frazier, owner of Yacht Basin Marina. "It's going to have an impact on the lake as a whole. Will I lose my slips because of it? That depends on how far it drops. We may have to connect the docks differently to accommodate some boats."

Across the lake, Axtman is currently in the same situation. He has worked to improve his facility for the past five years. But with the water level where it is, he may have to extend his docks past the breakwater. He may also ask the Army Corps of Engineers to remove the breakwater altogether to allow low-water access to his marina.

Axtman holds out hope that water levels will rebound by Memorial Day.

Felchle would like to see that happen as well, and he admits it wouldn't take much moisture to bring lake levels up.

Current models suggest the lake will rise as much as five feet by June, Felchle said. While it still leaves the lake 12 feet below full, it's more than enough for most boaters to safely enter the bays and marinas.

"We're trying to preserve

the storage, but it isn't helping our fishery flows," Felchle said.

Even if the water level rises five feet by June, it's likely to drop steadily thereafter. How far it drops depends on a number of issues, like how much precipitation falls, how fast the remaining snow pack melts, and how much water irrigators draw from rivers and streams.

"I don't like to estimate record low flows, but we're seeing it happen," Felchle said. "We should see lake levels coming up this time of year, but they're not. What's really hurting the river system is the lack of rain this spring."

Reporter Martin Kidston can be reached at 447-4086, or at mkidston@helenair.com.

CDs both kids and parents will love

By GLENN WHIPP

Los Angeles Daily News

Looking to move beyond Barney and friends? Limiting the list to albums recorded in 21st century, here's a road map on where to start. Most aren't available through mass merchants but can easily be found on the Internet (search through, say, Google, or check out Amazon.com) or at children's speciality bookstores or Barnes & Noble and Borders bookstores, which also have Web sites.

BEETHOVEN'S WIG: "Sing Along Symphonies" (Rounder) Richard Perlmutter adds silly lyrics to famous classical music pieces, providing the best introduction to culture since Bugs Bunny did Rossini in "The Rabbit of Seville." Also recommended: "Beethoven's Wig 2."

Laurie Berkner: "Under a Shady Tree" (Two Tomatoes) Berkner's latest is also her best and includes a couple of Noggin favorites — "This Hat" and "Song in My Tummy." Incredibly varied, guaranteed to make the kids turn the living room into a dance floor. Also recommended: "Victor Vito."

Sandra Boynton: "Philadelphia Chickens" (Rounder) The children's author proves she's equally adept at writing funny songs. Apparently the only thing she can't do is sing; the vocal chores are handled by fans like Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline and Natasha Richardson, along with the Bacon Brothers who find "poultry in motion" in the title

track. Also recommended: "Rhinoceros Tap." DADDY A GO GO: "Mojo a Go Go" One-man band John Boydston expands his repertoire, including his son, Max "The Axe," on guitar and a greater emphasis on comedy. Still the hardest rocking stay-at-home daddy on the scene.

JOHNETTE DOWNING: "The Second Line: Scarf Activity Songs" Gentle Cajun and creole for the toddler set with an eye on participation. Your kids (more so the girls, what with the scarves and all) won't be able to sit still or stop smiling.

CATHY FINK AND MARCY MARXER: "All Wound Up! A Family Music Party" (Rounder) The name says it all. It's never too early to get your kids doing the polka. Also recommended: "Bon Appetit! Musical Food Fun."

HAYES GREENFIELD: "Jazz-a-Ma-Tazz" (Baby Music Boom) The New York saxophonist takes children's staples — "Old MacDonald," "Skip to My Lou" — and jazzes them up. Perfect for all ages, including little ones whose language skills are confined to words like "be" and "bop."

HAP PALMER: "Two Little Sounds" (Hap-Pal) Woodland Hills' Palmer has been a force in educational music for more than 30 years, writing and performing clever, catchy songs that pack a potent punch for learning. Preschool teachers know him well. So should you.

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Los Angeles Times Sunday Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- "KP DUTY" By ARLAN & LINDA BUSHMAN
ACROSS
1 Adult tadpole
5 PDA entry
9 Obligation
13 Comparable
19 By itself, to start
20 Corker
21 Cupid alias
22 His "Au Moulin de la Galette"
23 Heel
25 Rapids-shooter's aid
27 Afghanistan-Pakistan
29 Composer Norman Dello
30 Checks
31 Druggery
32 Flying prefix
34 Like old news
36 Yoda is one
39 Lincoln's st.
41 Attention
42 Hit-or-miss
46 In the red
48 Level in a hierarchy
50 Defense gp. formed in '54
51 Napoleon cohort
52 Outback nursery?
56 Rainbows
58 "Here Come the Warm Jets" composer
59 Revels (in)
60 Hunky-dory
62 Talisman
63 Lake floaters
64 Cut loose
67 Pay for a pad
68 Tempo
70 Tear repair
72 Beget
73 Soybean paste
74 Styling stuff
75 Honshu city
77 Amount consumed
79 "Third Watch" actress Long
80 In concert
81 Pistol, in old slang
84 _ arts
86 It'll floor you
90 Skater Midori
91 Comes out a bit at a time

Crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares and some filled-in letters.

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