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News Release

Drought Conditions May Affect Refill of Lakes Hamilton and Catherine

Hot Springs, Ark. - Entergy may allow rainfall to help refill Lakes Hamilton and Catherine before the official refill start date of March 4 due to drought conditions in Arkansas. In addition, the company has implemented its Drought Contingency Plan which allows a reduction in its required continuous minimum flow from R Emmel Dam.

Lakes Hamilton and Catherine are annually drawn down in the winter to facilitate shoreline maintenance and inspection, and to control nuisance aquatic vegetation. "Entergy will complete the refill of the lakes through rainfall inflows and generation from Blakely Mountain Dam, if needed, beginning March 4, reaching their normal springtime levels by March 10," said Bobby Pharr, process superintendent of Entergy's Hydro Operations.

The Ouachita River watershed is experiencing one of the worst droughts in recent history. The last three months of 2005 were the driest period on record since 1895, according to the National Weather Service. According to the NOAA's Palmer Drought Index, the region has been in a Moderate Drought condition since June 2005, which intensified to a Severe Drought in December. The long-range forecast is for the drought to persist or intensify through the spring and summer.

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Rainfall for the Ouachita River watershed is between 25 to 30 inches below normal. Many lakes in Arkansas are experiencing extremely low levels. Lake Ouachita's lake elevation is currently at approximately 568. This winter Lake Ouachita has been at the lowest level since before 1983. The target summer peak elevation is 578.1.

During the summer, Lake Ouachita's level slowly falls through hydroelectric generation. This water is then passed through Lakes Hamilton and Catherine and used again for hydroelectric generation at Entergy's Carpenter and Rammel dams. Lake Ouachita then is allowed to refill during the winter months through rainfall.

In an earlier effort to conserve water, Entergy began restricting generation in September 2005 except for emergency electrical system demands and to maintain its required minimum flow into the Ouachita River below Rammel Dam. Entergy also generated to maintain levels in Lake Hamilton and Catherine during the few rains experienced this winter.

Lakefront property owners and lake users on Lakes Hamilton and Catherine should take precautions if the area receives rainfall and the lakes begin to rise before the official refill start date of March 4. Precautions might include moving construction debris or burn piles in the lakebed to higher ground, installing posts early for newly permitted facilities or securing boats or floating docks properly to withstand higher water.

"We hope the public understands the need for Entergy to do whatever possible to conserve water to allow Lake Ouachita to refill to its normal springtime level," Pharr said. "We're asking folks to be flexible during this critical time because we just don't know how much rainfall will occur or how much the lakes will rise before the official refill start date."

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Lake Catherine is formed by Rimmel Dam, and Lake Hamilton is formed by Carpenter Dam, both of which Entergy built more than 60 years ago for hydroelectric generation. Lakes Hamilton and Catherine are part of Project 271, a hydroelectric project licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The reservoirs, project lands, and associated Rimmel and Carpenter Dams are operated under a license granted by the FERC. The FERC license requires and authorizes Entergy to control certain activities that affect the lake's environmental, safety and recreational values. Permits must be obtained from Entergy for any construction activity on the lake or shoreline, including boat docks, piers, walkways, swim docks, PWC ramps, decks, landings, embankments, bulkheads, seawalls, and dredging and filling operations. Relocation, replacement, enlargement or significant alteration of existing facilities also requires a new permit from Entergy.

For more information concerning the annual drawdown, information on aquatic vegetation management strategies or to obtain a booklet on the permitting of docks and seawalls, visit our Web site at www.entergy.com/hydro or call Entergy's Hydro Operations office at 501-844-2148.

Entergy Corporation is an integrated energy company engaged primarily in electric power production and retail distribution operations. Entergy owns and operates power plants with approximately 30,000 megawatts of electric generating capacity, and it is the second-largest nuclear generator in the United States. Entergy delivers electricity to 2.7 million utility customers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Entergy has approximately 14,000 employees.