



# News Release

**Date:** August 24, 2006  
**For Release:** Immediately  
**Contact:** Blake Hogue, (501) 844-2197

## **Winter Drawdown Scheduled for Lakes Hamilton and Catherine; Previous Drawdowns Successful at Controlling Nuisance Aquatic Vegetation**

Hot Springs, Ark.— This winter both lakes Hamilton and Catherine will be drawn down three feet, according to Entergy, which is responsible for managing the lake levels.

Both lakes will drop approximately nine inches per day beginning Saturday, Nov. 4 through Tuesday, Nov. 7. The lakes will be returned to their normal summertime levels in mid-March 2007.

In addition to facilitating shoreline maintenance and inspection, the annual drawdown is part of a plan to help control nuisance aquatic vegetation. In recent summers, Eurasian Milfoil was the culprit that had clogged much of the upper portion of Lake Hamilton. Thankfully, for the third year in row, only minimal amounts of this vegetation were observed, according to Entergy.

Last year, the 2005/6 drawdown was five feet for both lakes. Due to the recent success with vegetation conditions and to allow for long-range planning, Entergy will tentatively plan future drawdown seasons to continue on an alternating pattern of three- and five-foot drawdowns. In other words, this year's drawdown is three feet, so next year's will be five feet, and the next will be three feet, and so on. Alternating the drawdown depths will help prevent any one vegetation species from adapting to a particular depth. Annual inspections will continue to verify that this plan is working, and adjustments to the long-range plan will be made as needed to do what is best for overall lake management.

Each year Entergy coordinates the upcoming winter's drawdown with the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. Fisheries, vegetation, and facility management, as well as downstream water needs, are a few of the factors considered in deciding the drawdown's depth and timing. In 1996, in cooperation with the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, Entergy developed an Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan in response to the explosive growth of Southern naiad, a nuisance underwater vegetation. The plan called for drawdowns to be the primary tool to reduce the spreading growth of nuisance underwater vegetation, which has significantly interfered with recreational use of portions of Lake Hamilton. The plan also called for Entergy and the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission to perform annual inspections to determine the appropriate drawdown depths and timing on Lake Hamilton.

This summer's annual aquatic vegetation inspection indicated that Entergy's Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan has again been effective in combating the excessive growth of water milfoil and naiad in Lake Hamilton, according to Blake Hogue, Entergy's lakes and property coordinator for Hydro Operations and Stuart Wooldridge, fisheries biologist for the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. "This summer's inspection of the lake found the normal level of native species of aquatic vegetation but only a very minute amount of Eurasian water

-- more --

## Winter Drawdown

August 24, 2006

### Page 2

milfoil and Southern naiad, the nuisance aquatic vegetation that has caused many lake users problems in past years.” said Hogue. “We are again excited that the plan has been successful and appreciate the patience of all the users of our lakes and especially the lakefront property owners on Lake Hamilton. We must be cautious because it is unlikely that we have totally eradicated these nuisance species of vegetation from the lake, and we are susceptible to being reinfested from other lakes, as well. Due to the success of past nine-foot drawdowns, we think a three-foot drawdown is the right thing to do this year.”

Boaters should be extra cautious while on the lakes during the drawdown period because additional shallow areas will exist, and winter rains can increase the amount of debris washed into the lakes. Also, boat and dock owners should take the necessary precautions to ensure that their boats and docks are able to adjust to the drawdown. Failure to do so may cause damage to docks and boats. Some docks will be able to rest on the lakebed with little or no problem. If the shoreline is steep or rocky in your area you may wish to temporarily move your dock to deeper water. If you relocate your dock, be sure that it does not restrict navigation or become a boating hazard. Entergy will not require a permit for the *temporary* relocation of docks due to the drawdown, but the dock *must* be returned to its permitted location once the lake returns to its summertime level. Entergy also recommends that you use a licensed electrician to make any alterations to your wiring in conjunction with the drawdown.

Lake Catherine is formed by Rimmell 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 (FERC). The license grants to Entergy authority to operate these reservoirs and related shorelines and Rimmell and Carpenter Dams. The license also requires that Entergy to control activities that affect the lakes’ environmental, safety, and recreational values.

Permits must be obtained from Entergy for any construction on the lake or shoreline, including boat docks, piers, walkways, swim docks, landings, embankments, bulkheads, seawalls, rip-rap and dredging and filling operations. Relocation, replacement, enlargement, or significant alteration of existing facilities also requires a new permit from Entergy. Entergy’s guidelines are revised periodically, so be sure to obtain the latest revision if you are planning on building on Entergy’s shoreline property.

Lakefront property owners needing further information on the drawdown schedule or shoreline permitting guidelines and applications for Lakes Hamilton or Catherine may call Entergy’s Hydro Operations office at (501) 844-2148 or visit the Hydro Operations website at [www.Entergy.com/hydro](http://www.Entergy.com/hydro).

###