



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor
Scott Hassett, Secretary
Ruthe E. Badger, Regional Director

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Josephine Heimler
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Dear Mrs. Heimler:

You asked in your August 4th letter to Secretary Hassett what dictates the normal water level on Lake Koshkonong, how far above normal did the lake rise when the Indianford Dam gates were opened on June 27 and 28, 2005 and what major impact did it have on the environment? Secretary Hassett asked me to respond since Lake Koshkonong is in my Region. In the early 1980's, the department established the normal level of 776.20 feet above mean sea level (msl), which represented the historical levels on Lake Koshkonong. I've included the Rock Koshkonong Lake District's (RKLD) operator's June and July logs for the Indianford Dam so that you can see the lake's level and the dam's operation. On June 27th the lake level was 776.24 msl and on June 28th, the lake level was 776.23 msl. For a single event, it would be very difficult to predict the impacts. It is the long-term impacts of repeated summer high water that we are concerned about. For a two-day duration of a half-inch rise above the target water level, I wouldn't expect impacts on the environment or recreation but my staff did not investigate the 10,000-acre lake for impacts during that two-day period.

I will point out that the RKLD's proposal is to raise the normal from 776.2 to 776.8 feet msl, 7 inches higher than the lake's level on June 27 and 28. My staff believes that 7 additional inches will have impacts on the Lake Koshkonong area. You state that the Rock Koshkonong Lake District (RKLD) apparently presented adequate information to show the higher levels wouldn't harm the wetlands. You may know that the department's experts don't agree with the RKLD's experts on the impacts.

I agree with you, environmental issues can be contradicting and Lake Koshkonong is no exception. Higher lake levels will benefit some issues like navigation while detracting from other issues like shoreline erosion.

I hope I have addressed your questions. I appreciate your interest and concern about Lake Koshkonong.

Sincerely,

Jay Hochmuth
Acting Director
South Central Region