

Daily Water Level Forecast for the Richmond City Locks Coming January 24th

Richmond, VA, January 18, 2017 -- The National Weather Service will enhance water level forecasts at the Richmond City Locks on the James River from a high water crest only forecast to a full time hourly forecast beginning January 24, 2017. This change will provide much improved timing of floods and impacts in Richmond.

The measuring of river levels on the James River at Great Ship Lock Park has been ongoing for more than a century, but forecast water levels were only provided during periods of high water when flooding was possible. Even then, forecasts were limited to providing only one forecast of crest information and were not detailed enough to communicate flood timing and duration. The new forecast provided by the National Weather Service will predict hourly water levels 3 days into the future and will be updated at least once per day with more frequent updates during periods of high water. This will provide everyone with interests along the James River in Richmond important information needed to prepare for flooding.

The enhanced river forecast capability at Richmond City Locks has been made possible through the development of a new water model developed by the US Army Corps of Engineers in Norfolk and the National Weather Service. Until now, it was not possible for the National Weather Service to provide a full water level forecast at the Richmond Locks location because of the strong tidal influence on the water level which the previous model could not simulate. Previous water level modeling on the James River ended at the Richmond Westham Gage located about 7 miles upstream from the City Locks, near the Huguenot Bridge. Using the new water model, the water level at the Richmond Locks River gage can now be forecasted incorporating the upstream river flow and the tidal influences critical for accurate forecasting.

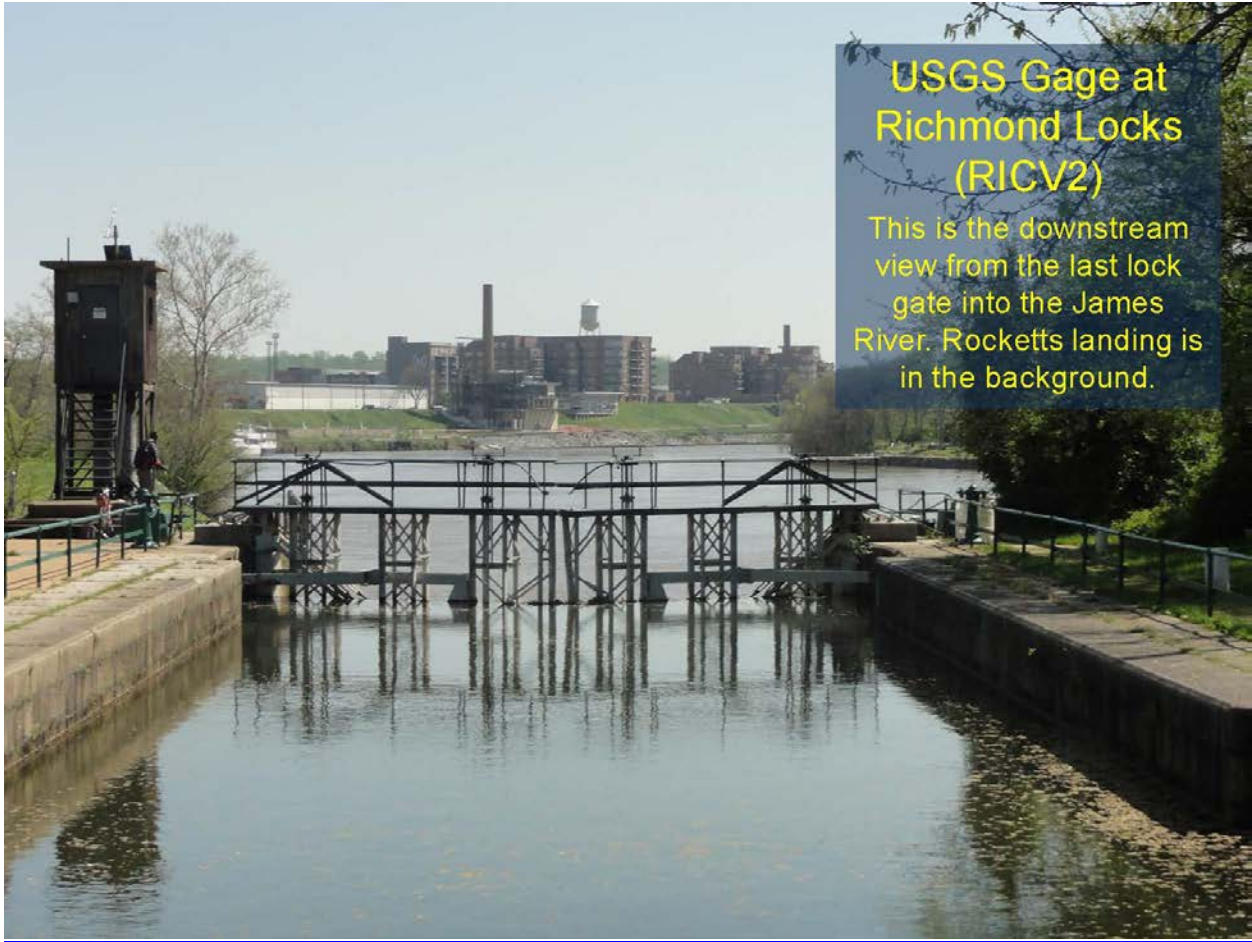
The forecast will be available daily in two forms; the first is graphical on the Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service web page at:

<http://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=akq&gage=ricv2>

Secondly, the data is also available in text form at:

<http://forecast.weather.gov/product.php?site=NWS&issuedby=AKQ&product=RVD>





If you have any questions about this new forecast service, please contact:

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For questions regarding the specifics of the new water model please contact:

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