



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Pittsburgh District

MEDIA ALERT

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Corps Re-Opens Braddock Main Lock Chamber Ahead of Schedule *Quick response, work by repair party minimizes impacts to recreation, commerce*

PITTSBURGH – The US Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District, has re-opened the main lock chamber at Locks and Dam #2, Braddock, Pa. on the Monongahela River a day ahead of schedule after repairing damaged steel gate anchorage on the upstream land wall.

The first lockage of a tow and barges occurred around 11 a.m, Sunday, about 53 hours after repair crews arrived on site. Crews worked day and night shifts to speed the work.

The closure greatly delayed commercial and recreational traffic on the river with tow boats waiting nearly 17 hours to lock through the smaller, still operational secondary chamber. Commercial lockages through the 56-ft by 360-ft auxiliary chamber take eight times longer than through the main 110-ft by 720-ft lock chamber.

Lock staff noticed the damage during a shift change inspection just after midnight on Friday. A Corps repair party rapidly deployed to the site and immediately began assessing the damage and fixing the anchorage. The navigation industry quickly responded to the Corps' closure notices by adjusting schedules.

COL Mike Crall, the Corps' district commander, applauded industry and Corps lock and repair crews for their effective response to the incident. "The good news is that the operational procedures we have in place – including daily inspections and staff training – worked to prevent a catastrophic failure from happening," said Crall.

The unexpected damages highlight the fragile state of the region's waterway infrastructure, he added. "Everyday that we don't address critical maintenance of our aging infrastructure, we increase the risk of failure and of severe impacts to public safety and health, our regional economy, and our environment," said Crall.

The Corps is investigating the cause of the damages and will conduct a systemwide evaluation of its anchorage assembly in all of its 16 locks and dam facilities. A scheduled de-watering of the Braddock main lock chamber will help the Corps significantly curb the original estimated half million dollar price tag for permanently repairing anchorage assemblies at the lock.

Crews from the Corps' Pittsburgh Engineers Warehouse and Repair (PEWARS) Branch removed a damaged I-beam embedded into the lock wall and transported to the warehouse facility, where machinists fabricated a new steel member. Corps official said the beam design was unique to that facility; crews replaced the original anchorage assembly during a 1953 rehabilitation project.

Braddock Locks and Dam is located at river mile 11.2 at the city of Braddock, Pa. The structure averages about 3,826 commercial and 2400 recreational lockages per year. The lock chambers and operations buildings are situated along the right bank of the river adjacent to a major steel-making plant. Construction of Locks and Dam 2 at this present site was begun in 1902 and completed in 1906. After some 40 years of use, a major

rehabilitation of the project was completed in 1953. This work involved reconstruction and enlargement of the lock chambers and adjustment of the length of the dam.

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