



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Recent rainfall provides improved outlook for Mississippi River navigation

VICKSBURG, MISS., January 18, 2013 – Recent weather events across the Mississippi Valley will ensure continuing navigation on the Mississippi River through mid-February, even if no additional rain falls between now and Feb. 15.

The period from January 9-13 saw three-eighths inches of rain, with 10+ inches locally, over the Ohio River Valley and the Mississippi watershed south of St. Louis, Mo. Warm temperatures last week also melted existing snow water equivalents of one to two inches over the watershed to the north of Memphis, Tenn., helping provide much needed relief from the persistent drought plaguing the middle and lower Mississippi valley since mid-2012.

Additionally, the first phase of the most critical rock removal work on the Mississippi River near Thebes, Ill., was completed ahead of schedule last week, deepening the navigation channel by two feet in just three weeks.

"The Corps has used every resource available to us to successfully sustain navigation," said Maj. Gen. John Peabody, Mississippi Valley Division Commander. "The success of the rock removal work, combined with recent and forecast rain, increases our confidence we will sustain an adequate channel through this spring," he added.

The rain and melting snow have caused numerous tributaries within the Ohio and lower Mississippi watersheds to rise above minor to moderate flood levels. The confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers at Cairo, Ill., is forecasted to crest at flood stage Jan. 21. Weekend rainfall amounts of one-half to two inches to the north of St. Louis have caused the mainstem Mississippi River to rise slowly and have delayed the river from dropping below critical stages north of the confluence with the Mississippi River. The critical navigation area near Thebes, Ill., rose nine feet on Sunday, Jan. 13, due to local heavy rains.

Removing the rock formations was one of many operations the Corps initiated along the narrowing river to maintain a 9-foot-deep channel for river navigation. Dredging has been ongoing since early May 2012 to preserve the channel, as well as continued surveys and channel patrols by the Corp and U.S. Coast Guard to keep commerce safely moving on the middle Mississippi River.

For more information, visit www.mvs.usace.army.mil/lowwater.

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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION

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