



US Army Corps
of Engineers

OPERATION MAKE SAFE PROJECT UPDATE Sept. 12, 2011

Birds Point - New Madrid Floodway
Missouri

New Madrid Project Office

Memphis District

Schedule

Authorization to proceed:	June 15, 2011
Began construction:	June 16, 2011
Original required completion:	Nov. 30, 2011
Current required completion:	Nov. 30, 2011
Current scheduled completion:	Nov. 30, 2011
- Upper crevasse:	Nov. 16, 2011
- Center crevasse:	To be determined
- Lower crevasse:	Oct. 9, 2011



Progress

Location:	Scheduled Progress:	Actual Progress:
Upper crevasse:	40%	47%
Center crevasse:	N/A	N/A
Lower crevasse:	60%	62%

Funding

Expended to date: (As of Sept. 8)	\$4,337,000
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Crews finish a 2,000-foot levee segment at the western end of the lower crevasse.

Scope of work

During activation of the Birds Point - New Madrid Floodway, three artificial crevasses in the levee were opened to allow floodwater to flow through the Floodway, reducing water elevations and pressure on the flood control system. This project repairs the levee at the three crevasse locations to provide interim protection to a flood elevation of 51 feet on the gage at Cairo, Ill. (39 feet on the gage at New Madrid).

The upper crevasse is located at Birds Point, near the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. Repairs are required for 9,000 feet of levee at this location. Work here includes filling five scour holes back to level grade, repairing four levee segments and constructing one segment realignment.

The center crevasse is located near Seven Island Conservation Area. Repairs are required for 800 feet of levee at this location. A scour hole developed here, connecting with the existing 1937 scour hole. The scope of work and construction schedule will be determined following completion of an environmental assessment in mid-September.

The lower crevasse is located near Donaldson Point Conservation Area. Repairs are required for 4,700 feet of levee at this location. Work here includes removing excess water at the foundation, and repairing the levee to the interim grade.

Current Progress

Upper crevasse: Two Memphis District crews consisting of 37 personnel and 23 pieces of heavy equipment are on site. All five scour holes are filled with sand to the required depth. Crews continue to apply a clay cap to the third of five scour holes. Crews continue to construct a 1,600-foot levee realignment and a 2,000-foot segment across the two scour holes. A total of 1,800 feet of levee have been built to a (Cairo) gage elevation of 51 feet at this location.

Center crevasse: Col. Vernie L. Reichling, Memphis District Commander, today signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Environmental Assessment (EA). This action clears the way for work to proceed at the center crevasse, repairing it to the interim level of protection by Nov. 30. The FONSI also provides clearance for restoring the levee at all three crevasses to the full authorized grade. A crew will be mobilized to the center crevasse Tuesday to begin preparing the site for construction.

Lower crevasse: A Vicksburg District crew consisting of 14 personnel and 16 pieces of heavy equipment is on site. The crew is nearly complete with a 2,000-foot levee segment. Effort has shifted to drying oversaturated soil and preparing the levee foundation at the eastern end of the site.

Blasting agent removal: Desensitized blasting agent remains stored at the upper and lower crevasses. The results of a laboratory characterization confirmed the blasting agent is not an explosive risk. The Corps has requested and is awaiting permits from the US Department of Transportation to remove the blasting agent. The current estimated date for permit approval and removal of the desensitized blasting agent is Sept. 30, a week later than originally estimated. Until then, the blasting agent will remain secured inside a fenced perimeter at each site.

OPERATION RESTORE

The follow-on project to Operation "Make Safe", called Operation "Restore", will reconstruct the Floodway system to the pre-operational level of protection. The construction schedule is contingent on the availability of funding.



Center crevasse near Seven Island Conservation Area. The existing levee is visible behind the tree. Crews will begin preparing the ground for construction beginning Tuesday.



Constructing the realignment at the upper crevasse. Crews spread and compacted clay into the levee today to repair the segment to the interim elevation.



Placing clay into the third of five scour holes today. Crews previously filled the holes to the water table with sand, and are now placing clay in the hole to provide a stable base for the levee and to resist seepage.