



US Army Corps
of Engineers

OPERATION MAKE SAFE PROJECT UPDATE Aug. 31, 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:	30%	32%
Center crevasse:	N/A	N/A
Lower crevasse:	43%	45%

Funding

Expended to date: (As of Aug. 25)	\$2,700,000
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Filling the final scour hole with sand. Clay will be used later to bring the hole back up to level grade and prevent seepage.

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: *The District received a protest to the award of the clay hauling service contract Monday. The contract was set aside for small business concerns and an offeror has alleged the winning contractor is not classified as a small business as defined by regulation. The District is required to suspend this contract until the Small Business Administration has made a determination regarding the protest.* Two Memphis District crews consisting of 27 personnel and 24 pieces of heavy equipment are on site. Four of five scour holes are filled with sand to the required depth and the fifth is filled to 50 percent of the required depth. Crews continue to apply a clay cap to the first scour hole. Current priorities are filling scour holes. A total of 1,800 feet of levee has been built to a (Cairo) gage elevation of 51 feet at this location.

Center crevasse: The environmental assessment (EA) was released for public review and comment Aug. 25, and comments are due by Sept. 6 (see link below). The EA is scheduled for completion in mid-September, and addresses multiple options for interim protection at the center crevasse, as well as repair of all three crevasses to the final authorized grade.

Lower crevasse: Three additional employees were assigned here, bringing the total to 16 personnel from the Vicksburg District. The crew is operating 13 pieces of heavy equipment at this location. Crews continue to make excellent progress drying oversaturated soil and placing material into a 2,000-foot levee segment.

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 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 not later than Sept. 21. 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.



A crew reads the results of a compaction test at the lower crevasse. Seven tests were conducted Sunday and all showed passing results. The tests ensure the levee is being built to the design specifications.

The Environmental Assessment is now posted for public review and comment:

<http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/regulatory/public-notices/pn.asp>



The levee at the western end of the lower crevasse is within three feet from the interim protection elevation.



Center crevasse near Seven Island Conservation Area. The existing levee is visible behind the tree.