



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Pittsburgh District

MEDIA ALERT

Public Affairs Office
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Release No. 08-302

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Oct. 28, 2008

SEVERE EROSION THREATENS DAM STABILITY AT ALLEGHENY LOCK AND DAM #6

PITTSBURGH -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh, is taking urgent measures to address severe erosion discovered at Allegheny River Lock and Dam #6 near Clinton, Pa. during a recent dive inspection. The erosion, or scour, threatens to undermine the stability of the dam at the navigation facility. The main concern is the impact a barge collision or ice loads may have on the dam. High river flows may also threaten stability.

"We are very concerned that ice collecting on the dam or large chunks of ice slamming into the dam may cause it to fail," said Col. Michael Crall, district engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh. "We are taking immediate actions to address the high risk of failure at the dam before winter arrives," said Crall.

Pittsburgh District officials stress that there is no immediate threat to public safety and the facility is currently operational. The district has implemented additional measures to ensure the risk of failure is minimized and the facility is operated safely until a permanent fix can be constructed. They include 24/7 staffing, hourly gauge checks, and local emergency and water management coordination.

A dam failure at Allegheny Lock and Dam #6 could have serious impacts for the region. A loss of the pool would shut down commercial and recreational navigation on the river until the dam is replaced or repaired. Severe water quality degradation for the first week would impact water intakes and sanitary facilities. A hydropower facility located at the dam may suffer severe damage and cease operations. One of the largest wetlands in the region -- the Cogleys Island Complex downstream of Kittanning, Pa. -- would dry up. It is highly possible that federally listed mussel species could be negatively impacted.

District dam safety officials expected to find erosion at the facility during a periodic inspection, but not to the extent that currently exists. The agency is preparing a solicitation for emergency repair work at the dam and plans to have a permanent fix in place before severe winter weather arrives. As a precaution, the Pittsburgh District is using remotely operated vehicles to inspect the remaining Allegheny River navigation facilities.

Allegheny River Lock & Dam #6 is one of eight navigation facilities on the Allegheny River. All the facilities require critical repairs as do several on the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers, according to a recent Corps assessment. In a State of the Infrastructure event held in July, the Pittsburgh District reported that the state of the navigation system is not good for the nation's oldest, largest and most fatigued navigation system in the Army Corps' inland waterways inventory. The Army Corps of Engineers in Pittsburgh operates 23 locks and dams for navigation and 16 flood damage reduction reservoirs in five states. Its missions also include environmental restoration, water supply, recreation and regulation of The Clean Water Act. The Corps often partners with local communities to help them reduce the risk of flooding and to improve sanitary and stormwater infrastructure.

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