



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Pittsburgh District

# News Release

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Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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Contact: Richard Dowling, 412-395-7501  
Richard.Dowling@usace.army.mil

## Braddock Dam's Demolition Day Nears

PITTSBURGH – A contractor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District, will be removing the existing fixed crest dam at Locks and Dam 2 at Braddock, Pa., on the Monongahela River, beginning in late March. It should take approximately 60 days to remove the dam. This removal is possible now that its replacement, the new gated Braddock Dam, is fully operational.

Due to security and safety concerns, Locks 2 will be closed to the public during this time period. The event however can be viewed on the Pittsburgh District's webcams at [www.lrp.usace.army.mil](http://www.lrp.usace.army.mil).

The removal process will involve drilling and controlled underwater blasting. After an initial breach, the existing dam will be removed in a systematic fashion that involves a succession of detonations over the course of several days. The initial breach will remove a 90-foot section in the center of the dam, with the successive demolition proceeding in approximately 30 to 40 foot sections. Aside from the periodic sounds of controlled detonations, there should be no obvious disturbances since most of the blasting will take place underwater. It is possible that some detonations will be accompanied by a plume of water and a loud noise.

River traffic should not be interrupted with the exception of periodic delays just prior to and immediately after any scheduled blast. These delays may occur as often as once per day during the main demolition phase of this work. Scheduled blasting is expected to occur sometime between noon and 4 p.m.

During the demolition phase, warning signs will be posted at all accesses to the lock, at the lock and along the left abutment to indicate the area is within the blast zone. Warning signs will also be posted approximately ¼ mile upstream and downstream of the dam site.

All navigation traffic will be halted within the area one hour prior to the scheduled blast. Access to the locks by boat and to any other areas leading into the blasting area will be prohibited. Minutes prior to the anticipated blast, air horns and other safety warning sounds will be heard until the detonation.

After detonation, navigation traffic and access will continue to be halted until the contractor can complete the necessary post-blast safety checks of the blast area to make sure all is safe. When the ½- to 1-hour post-blast safety checks are complete, an "all clear" signal will be given and traffic and access to the locks will be resumed.

(MORE)

The initial breach of a 90-foot section in the middle of the dam will release a surge of water impounded in the 500-foot section of river between this dam and the new Braddock dam. This surge is not expected to exceed one foot in height immediately below the dam at Braddock and is not expected to cause any flooding problems downriver. At the Pittsburgh Point the surge will be negligible.

The demolition of the existing dam is part of the Corps' Lower Monongahela River project. In addition to replacing the nearly 100 year-old fixed crest Dam 2 with the new gated Braddock Dam, the project will also replace Locks 4 in Charleroi with new larger locks and remove Locks and Dam 3 in Elizabeth. This project is the final phase of the post-World War II modernization program for the historically significant Monongahela River Navigation System, which dates to the 1840s. The historic waterways engineering technology and contributions of these older facilities are being well documented in a variety of ways as the Corps works with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in complying with federal historic preservation law.

***Editors, Please Note:*** *Because of security and safety concerns, Locks 2 will not be accessible to the media or the public during the removal process. From noon until 2 p.m. on the day of the initial detonation a Corps of Engineers representative will be available for interviews at the Braddock Resident Engineer Office located off of Route 837 in Duquesne, Pa. 24-hour notice of the date of the initial detonation will be provided. For more information and directions to the resident engineer office, please contact Pittsburgh District's Public Affairs Office at 412-395-7501.*

*The event can be viewed on the district's webcams at [www.lrp.usace.army.mil](http://www.lrp.usace.army.mil).*