



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District®

News Release

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Corps Dredging on Mississippi River

St. Louis, Mo. – Two different stretches of the Mississippi River near St. Louis were closed over the past few days as the St. Louis District's Dredge Potter worked to reestablish a safe navigation channel.

Currently the Dredge Potter is working below St. Louis, near the Meramec River mouth, at mile marker 161. To allow for dredging in the main navigation channel, the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port St. Louis closed the Upper Mississippi River between mile markers 158 and 162 to all commercial barge traffic on Monday from 3 a.m. to 6 p.m. This portion of the river is now reopened.

Friday the Motor Vessel (MV) Mary Evelyn ran aground with 25 loads at mile marker 166.5, just south of the Jefferson Barracks Bridge. The Captain of the Port closed the river between mile markers 165 and 168 due to channel depths and groundings on Friday.

Dredge Potter mobilized and moved to the area and began work in the main channel Saturday morning at 7 a.m. The channel was reopened Sunday at 8 p.m.

An extremely dry summer, drought throughout most of the Midwest, and low water levels on tributaries has the Mississippi River at St. Louis near record lows for this time of year.

The St. Louis gage stood at minus 1.4 this morning and based on National Weather Service projections (NWS) will be at minus 1.9 by Saturday. The record low for today, Aug. 26, is minus 3.8 in 1936.

The St. Louis District maintains a navigation channel nine feet deep and 300 feet wide on 300 miles of the Mississippi River from Saverton, Mo. to Cairo, Ill.

This mission is accomplished through several methods. The channel patrol boat MV Pathfinder identifies possible dredging locations by performing channel reconnaissance surveys and when necessary the District's dredges are mobilized.

Dredging in the St. Louis District is accomplished by using hydraulic pipeline dredges, -- Dredge Potter and Dredge America. A hydraulic dredge mixes large quantities of water with the excavated material (almost always sand in the St. Louis District) to create a slurry which is then pumped out of the navigable channel.

Dredge Potter is a dustpan dredge, a type of dredge specifically designed by the Army Corps of Engineers for work on the Mississippi River. The dustpan is very efficient in excavating sand material from the river bottom.

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Add 1-1-1 Corps busy on Mississippi

Dredge America is a cutterhead dredge. This type of dredge is used to excavate hard material and pump it a long distance.

Dredging is coordinated with other agencies so that our operations are done with as little disruption as possible and in an environmentally sensitive manner. The Corps, Coast Guard and barge industry representatives are having twice weekly telephone conferences to discuss low water levels and take necessary actions to prevent losses and damages.

The MV Pathfinder also assists the Coast Guard with buoy positioning on the navigable waterways within the St. Louis District boundaries. Last week the MV Pathfinder completed a run from Cairo, Ill. to St. Louis repositioning buoys to prepare for lower water conditions.

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Editor's note: These points of contact and email addresses are offered to media wishing to follow this story:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers public affairs office	314-331-8068
Cell	573-512-0110
National Weather Service	636-441-8216
United States Coast Guard	314-539-3091 x3225

River Stages available online at <http://mvs-wc.mvs.usace.army.mil/>

River Industry Bulletin Board available online at <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/dinfo/pa/NEWNAVIGATIONPAGE/NewNavigation1.htm>