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of Engineers®**
St. Louis District

News Release

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Berm Construction Resumes on Chain of Rocks Canal Levee

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, and A&H Contractors, Inc., of Detroit, Mich., have started constructing an 18 acre seepage berm along the east side of the Chain of Rocks Canal between Interstate 270 and the Cahokia Diversion Canal in Granite City, Ill.

The berm construction is part of an overall design deficiency correction project that is addressing unacceptable levels of risk for underseepage along the nine-mile-long levee. The berms will help counteract underseepage issues that arise during a flood and can degrade a levee's foundation.

This is the second contract awarded by the Army Corps for seepage berm and relief well construction in this area. An earlier contract executed by Lakeshore Engineering Services Inc., included the construction of 28 acres of seepage berms, using nearly 400,000 cubic yards of sand between December 2005 and October 2006. The Corps is prioritizing its efforts, working in the areas with the highest levels of risk first.

The contractor began dredging work December 3 and will continue thru the winter. The berms will be constructed like earlier ones using sand fill extracted from dredging material collected near the mouth of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. The sand is being piped through 22-inch diameter steel pipe spanning the Mississippi River. Dredging operations will be conducted 24 hours a day, 5 days a week, for approximately a month and a half.

Bulldozers and other heavy equipment are spreading the sand to form the berm. Eventually top soil will be placed over the sand and grasses will be planted. A&H Contractors is the prime contractor and L.W. Matteson of Burlington, Iowa is the dredging sub-contractor.

"Residents may observe pools of water landside of the levee north of Interstate 270," explained Susan Wilson, project manager for the Army Corps of Engineers. "We want to make people aware of the work we are doing and its purpose. This work is essential to ensuring the Chain of Rocks Canal Levee provides its authorized level of protection. At the current level of funding, we anticipate construction will last another five years."

This construction is part of the ongoing Chain of Rocks Deficiency Project to correct design deficiencies and assure that the Chain of Rocks levee will withstand a future 500-year flood event. The floods of the 1990s revealed areas for improvement to the Chain of Rocks Canal Levee. The deficiency correction project was authorized in 1998 and includes constructing seepage berms and relief wells, which will serve to better control the underseepage problems. Additionally, a new pump station is planned near Chouteau Slough to better handle interior drainage.