



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**®  
Walla Walla District

# News Release

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Contact: Public Affairs Office

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## Little Goose Dam NavLock opens to commercial vessels

**STARBUCK, Wash.** – Little Goose Dam’s navigation lock, located at Snake River mile 70.3, opened earlier than anticipated on Wednesday to begin locking through commercial vessels using a floating bulkhead, according to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials at the Walla Walla District.

District operations officials said that the first commercial lockage began at 4:50 p.m. Wednesday, April 4 – more than an hour before officials’ anticipated 6 p.m. reopening. The towboat “The Clarkston” was the first vessel to enter the navigation lock, pushing three empty grain barges and a barge loaded with wood products. Seven commercial vessels were locked past Little Goose Dam during the night, including several other barges pushed by towboats and the “Empress of the North,” a paddle-boat-style, 223-passenger-capacity, cruise liner.

The navigation lock was closed on March 21 when the upstream navigation lock gate hinge arm bolts broke, causing the hinge points to detach from the concrete structure. Dozens of Corps employees and contractors from Knight Construction, of Deer Park, Wash. worked day and night in shifts to reopen the lock to commercial vessels. Initially, the District had anticipated having the navigation lock reopened for interim lockage of commercial vessels using a floating bulkhead by March 30. But, several days of windy weather preventing the use of cranes, combined with the need for more in-depth research to ensure safe operations while lowering the damaged gate out of the way, delayed reopening until April 4.

The floating bulkhead will be used to provide interim lockage ability for commercial vessels only during night-time hours – 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. – this schedule for lockage will continue until all repairs to the damaged gate are completed. The lock will remain closed to recreational vessels until the lock returns to full service.

There will be at least one other lock closure (no night or day lockages) in April during the repair process, with times and dates to be determined. Little Goose lock is expected to return to full service on or about May 1. Updates will be provided as repair work progresses.

Public Notices and other navigation lock information are available on the Walla Walla District Web site at [www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/t/navdata/default.html](http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/t/navdata/default.html).

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