



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

# News Release

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## **Little Goose NavLock expected to reopen for full service Saturday night**

**STARBUCK, Wash.** – Little Goose Dam’s navigation lock, located at Snake River mile 70.3, is expected to return to full service earlier than anticipated, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials at the Walla Walla District announced today.

Repairs to the lock, which went out of service on March 21 when the upstream navigation lock gate hinge arm bolts broke, are almost complete, according to District operations staff. Normal lock operations are slated to begin at 8 p.m. on Saturday, April 28 – more than 48 hours earlier than anticipated in the original repair schedule.

“Workers are finishing up the last few tasks,” said Dwayne Weston, project manager for the repair job. “If all goes according to plan, the lock will reopen for full service with the removal of the floating bulkhead at 8 p.m. (on Saturday).”

Lockage for recreational vessels will also resume at this time.

A floating bulkhead was used to provide interim lockage service for commercial vessels during night-time hours – Corps employees teamed up with workers from Shaver Transportation Company, of Portland, Ore., to operate the bulkhead as efficiently as possible, maximizing the number of vessels that could be locked through during the night. During daytime hours, contractors from Knight Construction, of Deer Park, Wash., worked to make permanent repairs to the lock gate.

The lock was closed to recreational vessels during the repair period.

While repairs were being made to the gate, a team of Corps employees investigated the incident and concluded several factors combined to cause the gate hinge to break. The hinges of the upstream navigation lock gate failed when the gate was subjected to water pressure on the back side of the gate, pressure that the gate and hinges were not designed to withstand. This situation developed during the annual navigation lock maintenance outage when workers, being unable to complete activities in the routine order due to a leak in the structure, shifted to related maintenance activities that were not affected by the leak. As workers shifted activities, the damaging water pressure developed. This situation had not been identified in the navigation lock's 30-year-old maintenance manuals, according to investigators.

“We’re updating our manuals and revising standard operating procedures to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future,” said Scott Ross, District operations division chief. “The findings of the investigation are being shared throughout the Corps.”

It is common practice for Corps organizations to share “lessons learned” from work projects and incidents to improve the efficiency and quality of operations.

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).

**-30-**

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