



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

News Release

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More woody debris at Little Goose Dam slated for downstream passage

STARBUCK, Wash. -- Water recreation enthusiasts should watch out for more floating woody debris in the lower Snake River between Little Goose and Lower Monumental dams starting Wednesday morning, June 25, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials announced today.

Because of high spring flows, an unusually large amount of floating wood – ranging in size from small twigs to telephone pole-sized logs – has accumulated upstream of Little Goose Lock and Dam. On May 28, more than 3 surface acres of woody debris were passed downriver because it was putting stress on the several-hundred-foot-long debris boom that kept it from nearing the powerhouse-intake side of the dam. Officials at the dam estimate the current floating log pile covers about 1-1/2 to 2 acres of the water's surface.

Operators will start the debris downstream at about 7 a.m. tomorrow by briefly closing all but one spillway gate. The remaining spillway gate would then be fully raised to concentrate spill until all or most of the debris has passed. It usually takes 20-30 minutes to raise the remaining gate into desired spill position and another 20-30 minutes to restore normal operations after the debris has passed, said Tim Roberts, operations manager at the dam.

The Corps cautions boaters, swimmers and others out enjoying the river on Lake West upstream of Lower Monumental Lock and Dam to watch for potentially hazardous floating debris for about two weeks after the wood is released downstream. Operations officials estimate it will take about two to three days for debris to start showing up at Lower Monumental, but it's uncertain how much will sink or wash up on shore and how much will ultimately arrive at the next dam.

The debris, swept into the river from high-flowing streams and tributaries, can pose a danger to boaters, swimmers and others out enjoying the water.

“We want to be sure folks are on the lookout for in-water hazards while they're out enjoying the river,” said Bill Akin, operations and maintenance manager at Little Goose Lock and Dam. “We've seen a lot of woody debris in the river this year – some of it really large pieces – that could cause damage to boats or injury to people. So, be careful out there.”

Wearing a life jacket or other personal floatation device is the best way to stay safe when out on the water.

For more information about outdoor recreation opportunities in the Walla Walla District, check out www.nww.usace.army.mil/corpsoutdoors/. For streamflow data, go to www.nww.usace.army.mil/wm/index.html. Learn more about water safety at <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/>.

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