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Levee Breaks In Poplar Bluff

APRIL 26TH 2011 BY NEWS

Levee Breaks In Poplar Bluff

*By Andrew Cato,
ShowMe Times*

After days of rain and forced evacuations on Monday, the levee along the Black River in Butler County has finally given way to the the forces of nature.

The Black River levee at County Road 607 in Poplar Bluff breached in at least two places Tuesday morning, a spokesman for the Butler County Sheriff's Department said.

"There was a break and more than one break," the spokesman said at 11 a.m. Tuesday. "We went from evacuation to search and rescue operations."

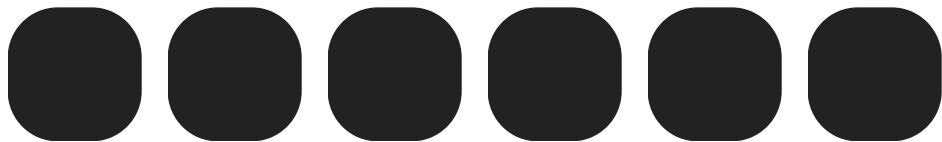
The sheriff's spokesman did not know specific details concerning the number of households affected by the breach, or the number of people evacuated.

However, water patrol reported 59 water rescues over night Monday. About 1,000 people were displaced Tuesday morning and 230 people are at the Black River Coliseum.

The American Red Cross has established a center for evacuees at the Black River Coliseum in Poplar Bluff.

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Leaders Question Plan To Blow Levee

APRIL 26TH 2011 BY NEWS

Leaders Question Plan To Blow Levee

BREAKING NEWS

By Annabeth Miller
ShowMe Times Editor

The plan by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to intentionally breach the Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway – and flood more than 100,000 acres of farmland in Southeast Missouri – is drawing the ire of a trio of Missouri elected officials.

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, Missouri Governor Jay Nixon and Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder have all expressed their opposition to the plan proposed by the Corps.

“I am strongly opposed to any plan to blow the levee,” Kinder said in an exclusive interview Tuesday morning with the ShowMe Times. “It didn’t work for the stated purpose in 1937. I think this is a terrible plan.”

Kinder is concerned that the plan will not work in 2011 but it will also destroy thousands of acres of Missouri farmland.

“One important difference between now and back then is that the area in 1937 had the trees characteristic of a swamp, and they acted as breaks for water. The vast majority of those trees have virtually all been cleared and there is nothing to slow the speed of the water running into the floodway,” Kinder said.

Emerson also voiced strong concerns about a plan to intentionally breach the levee. On her Facebook network page early Tuesday morning, Emerson said she would be meeting in Mississippi County today with local leaders and the corps concerning the flooding along the Mississippi River.

“I am going to be meeting with local elected officials and the Army Corps of Engineers throughout the next few days,” Emerson said. “Southeast Missouri has been hit hard. My number one job today (Tuesday) is to make sure the corps exhausts every other option before blowing the fuse plug and causing massive devastation in the St. Johns/New Madrid Floodway.”

Emerson, Nixon and Kinder agree that the breaching of the Birds Point levee would be harmful.

“At this critical time, I have serious concerns about plans by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to intentionally breach the Birds Point levee along the Mississippi River near Mississippi and New Madrid counties,” Nixon said Monday afternoon.

Nixon said intentionally breaching the levee would affect hundreds of Missouri families, pour a tremendous amount of water through the floodway, and flood 130,000 of prime farmland.

“As Missouri families deal with this dangerous flooding, intentionally breaching this levee would be a harmful and inappropriate action.” Nixon said.

“We need to take this all the way to the White House if need be to slow this action down,” Kinder said.

The actual decision to intentionally blow the levee will not rest with the corps, but with the Mississippi River Commission. The Commission, established 1879, includes three corps officers, but also three civilians. Members of the MRV are nominated by the president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Businessman R.D. James of New Madrid is one of the three civilian members of the MRC.

The commission will meet Tuesday afternoon and make its decision on the corps plan.

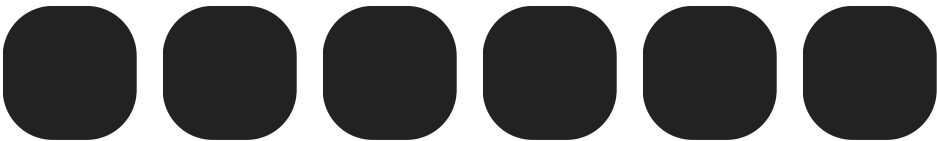
The Corps of Engineers in Memphis announced late Monday that it had started “readiness plans” to operate the floodway. In addition, it stepped up its floodfighting response in the region, opening offices in Cape Girardeau and Dyersburg, Tenn.

Related link:
[<http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/Readiness/bpnm/bpnminfo.asp>

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Area Colleges, Schools Closed Tuesday

APRIL 26TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Area Colleges, Schools Closed Tuesday

The weather and flooding conditions in Southeast Missouri have forced a number of schools in Southeast Missouri to close for classes for Tuesday, April 26.

Three Rivers College is closed Tuesday at its main campus in Poplar Bluff and campuses in Dexter, Sikeston, Malden and Kennett.

In addition, Central Methodist University classes in Poplar Bluff have been cancelled and Murray State University in Kentucky is closed on Tuesday due to storm damage in that region from Monday night.

Stoddard County Schools

Advance
Bell City
Puxico

Other Schools

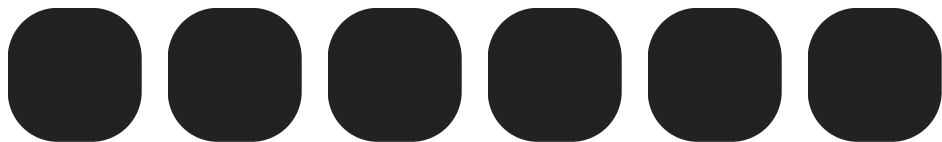
Bunker R-III
Chaffee Head Start
Clearwater R-I Schools Delta R-V Schools
Doniphan R-I Schools East Carter County R-II
Greenville R-II
Lesterville R-IV
Marquand-Zion R-VI
Meadow Heights R-II
Naylor R-II Schools
Neelyville R-IV

New Hope Christian Academy
New Salem Baptist Academy
Oran R-III
Poplar Bluff R-I
Ripley County R-IV Schools
South Iron County R-I
Southern Reynolds Co. R-II
Twin Rivers R-X
Van Buren R-I
Westwood Baptist Academy
Woodland R-IV
Zalma R-V

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Lake Closes Some Areas Due To Flood

APRIL 25TH 2011 BY NEWS

Lake Closes Some Areas Due To Flood

By Annabeth Miller, ShowMe Times Editor

WAPPAPELLO, Mo. - The floods in Southeast Missouri have not only had a major affect on rivers and streams, but on the region's largest lake.

Officials with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Lake Wappapello reported on Monday that most of the recreational areas at the lake are now closed to the public.

Doug Nichols with the Corps reported to the ShowMe Times that on Sunday campers were evacuated from both the Greeneville and People's Creek campgrounds and those two recreation areas are now closed due to the flooding.

In addition, Nichols reported that part of Chaonia Landng, Holiday Landing, the Rockwood Point beach and recreation area are all closed due to flood issues.

.As of 2 p.m. on Monday, lake level was 379.08 feet. Nichols said the summer pool at the lake is normally 360 feet. The lake is expected to crest at 384.0 feet Friday, April 29 without additional rain. More heavy rainfall is predicted to occur over the next several days. The discharge at the spillway will be increased to its maximum controlled release of 10,000 cfs (cubit feet per second) once the lake reaches 380.0 feet.

“We are protecting lots of folks and crops down streem (from the lake),” Nichols said of the lake levels. “So we are doing our mission.” Wappapello is a reservoir on the St. Francios River and was created in 1941 as a flood control project on the river.

Wapppapello Lake annually provides an estimated \$3.9 million in flood protection to agricultural lands and developed areas along the St. Francis River Wappapello has Over 44,000 acres of public lands and water for hunting, fishing, swimming, boating, camping and picnicking.

Nichols advises that visitors to the lake should to use caution in flash flood-prone areas and when traveling low roads near the lake. Boaters are urged to use caution when on the lake. Inflows have caused floating debris such as logs, limbs, etc., on the lake.

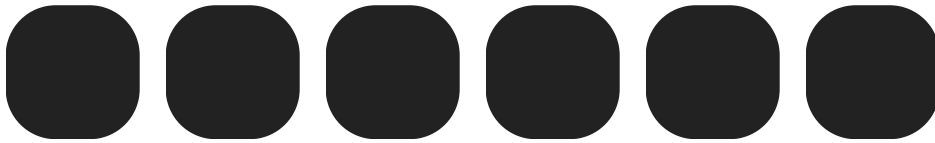
For up-to-date lake information and facility closings, call the Wappapello Lake Hotline at (573) 222-8139 or toll-free at 1-877-LAKE-INFO (1-877-525-3463) or call the Wappapello Lake Management Office at (573) 222-8562.

Photo Above: The water flows fast at Wappapello during the March 2008 flood. The lake is expected to crest later this week at 384 feet. (Photo by April Isbell. Thanks, April!

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Mandatory Evacuations In 'Bluff Flood Area

APRIL 25TH 2011 BY NEWS

Mandatory Evacuations In 'Bluff Flood Area

A SMT News Report

The National Weather Service continues to keep a close watch over the rivers and contributories in Southeast Missouri as residents prepare for more storms. Lakes, Rivers and streams are under severe stress and are swollen to exceeding design limits.

Poplar Bluff has seen the initial threats of flooding in the low elevation areas of the south end of that community. Businesses and homes are all being affected by a mandatory evacuation of areas surrounding the Black River. It is undetermined how many of the 17,000 residents of this community will be effected by the flood waters.

[images/Blog Images/Local News/show/uiis](#)

Local businesses on Ditch Road in Poplar Bluff have taken steps to move their properties to higher ground throughout the day as the water rises. The Ditch Road area is comprised of areas south of Poplar Bluff and east of Highway WW.

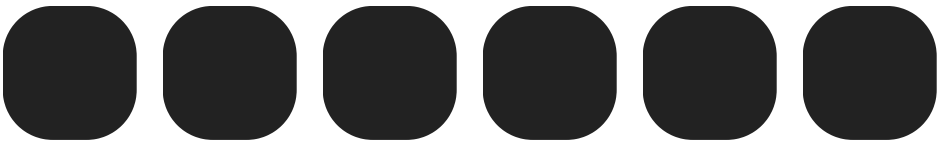
There have been several reports of the levee having leaks and weakening throughout the day. Many authorities are predicting a “catastrophic failure” of the levee system.

Poplar Bluff authorities have established a shelter for local residence at the Black River Coliseum for victims of flooding.

LAST UPDATED ON APRIL 25TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

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