

## Press Release

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For Release 4:00 EST  
June 1, 2004

### **Contractor to begin blasting at Marmet Locks and Dam**

HUNTINGTON, WV... The contractor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Marmet Lock Replacement project will begin controlled blasting operations June 21, 2004 and continue for the next six months. The blasting is required to allow the excavation for the foundation of the new lock.

Blasting operations will occur daily for the next six months within the cofferdam area, approximately 60 feet below ground level. The intermittent blasts will take place during daylight hours, and each blast should last about 5 seconds. There will be two blasts per day, the first at noon and the second at 5:30 p.m.

Prior to each blast, citizens will be notified by a series of horn signals as listed below:

- Five minutes before detonation, a horn will sound with intermittent long blasts.
- Two minutes before the detonation, a horn will sound with intermittent short blasts.
- After the blasting operation, a horn will sound with one continuous tone indicating all is clear.

The contractor will submit blasting plans which are designed by a certified blasting specialist to minimize vibrations and reduce the risk of flying debris. Since the blasts will occur within the cofferdam 60 feet below ground level, air blasts and fly rock should be minimal. Though the blasts will be short in duration, the potential of some noise and vibration after the blast is likely. Four seismographs will be placed in the vicinity of the project to monitor these ground vibrations and air blasts.

Pre-blast surveys were performed by the contractors on structures in the vicinity of the construction area as a precaution. About 85 residences participated in the surveys. The blasting site will be secured for the safety of local citizens, and river traffic will be restricted during blasting operations.

Excavation work is part of the Marmet lock construction project which will add a new 110-foot by 800-foot main lock chamber to the existing facility. Built in 1934, the Marmet Locks and Dam consists of twin lock chambers 56-feet by 360-feet. These chambers will remain and serve as auxiliary chambers to the new main chamber.

For more information, call Mike Keathley, 304-399-5864.