



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Huntington District

Notice to Navigation Interests

Date: 13 JANUARY 2014

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In Reply Refer to: CELRH-OR-TW 502 Eighth Street, Huntington, WV 25701-2070 Telephone: 304-399-5239

RESTRICTED AREAS AT NAVIGATION STRUCTURES

IN THE HUNTINGTON DISTRICT

This Notice is applicable to the following Huntington District Corps of Engineers' Ohio River Locks and Dams: Captain Anthony Meldahl, Greenup, R.C. Byrd, Racine, Belleville, and Willow Island, and the following Kanawha River Locks and Dams: Winfield, Marmet, and London.

A number of accidents have occurred in the past when vessels, particularly small recreation/fishing craft, violated existing regulations and entered the "Restricted Areas" either above or below the navigation dams. These "Restricted Areas" are exceedingly dangerous and have been permanently declared restricted to all vessels excepting those on official business. Vessel operators who enter these "Restricted Areas" risk their lives and property and may interfere with required operation of the locks and dam.

The Huntington District has adopted a practice whereby as soon as river flow conditions permit each spring, "special purpose" buoys are placed in the river to physically mark the boundaries of the "Restricted Areas." These "special purpose" buoys have a white background with two reflective orange horizontal bands and a reflective orange cross enclosed within a diamond. The words "KEEP OUT" are lettered on each buoy. The buoys are placed above and below the dam to delineate the "Restricted Area" at each project. Signs are also in place adjacent to the buoy lines on the river wall of the lock and on the opposite riverbank.

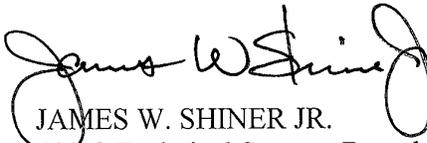
These signs and buoys are positioned to delineate areas where unpredictable currents flow upstream toward the dam on the surface. These currents create dangerously turbulent water and nearly always contain hidden undertows. Additional signs (Day Markers) are installed on the downstream side of the dam stating "DANGER, STAY OUT". An additional hazard exists in the culvert valve discharge areas where water from the locks empties into the river. These areas are in the "Restricted Areas" and are marked by signs mounted on the riverside of the lock wall over the discharge areas reading "DANGER, TURBULENT WATER." The force of water issuing from these underwater discharges is extremely violent and can capsize vessels, especially small recreation/fishing craft. The releases are intermittent and can cause sudden changes in the character of the water surface. A long warning siren is sounded prior to each such discharge to alert all persons of the release of water. This is a total different sound than the whistle to enter and leave the lock chamber.

Navigators must educate themselves to the boundaries of the "Restricted Areas" and stay clear at all times, even when buoys are off station. "Restricted Areas" are delineated on the current issue of the Navigation Charts.

The Federal regulations which control restricted areas are contained in the current issue of the "Blue Book" and are repeated here in part:

33 CFR 207.300 “ (s) Restricted Areas at Lock and Dam. All waters immediately above and below each dam, as posted by the respective District Engineers, are hereby designated as restricted areas. No vessel or other floating craft shall enter any such restricted areas at any time. The limits of the restricted areas at each dam will be determined by the responsible District Engineer and marked by signs and/or flashing red lights in conspicuous and appropriate places.”

Lockmasters, their staff, and Corps Park Rangers will enforce these Federal regulations. The U. S. Coast Guard and local law enforcement officers may render assistance as appropriate. Violators may be subject to a citation requiring appearance in Federal and / or State Court and upon conviction are subject to fine and / or imprisonment – (or both).


JAMES W. SHINER JR.
Chief, Technical Support Branch