



The Tribune-Star, Terre Haute, Ind.

Removal of Markle Mill Dam tentatively set to begin Oct. 9

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September 19, 2023 · 2 min read



Sep. 19—Pending final approval of permits, Vigo County has set a tentative date of Oct. 9 to begin removal of the Markle Mill Dam on Otter Creek.

A contractor may show up a few days earlier to build a temporary roadway for its equipment, but work on the dam itself will not begin until at least Oct. 9, said Vigo County Commissioner Chris Switzer.

That morning, the county also may close portions of Park Avenue and Rosedale Road so people may observe and take photos, Switzer said. Updates will be provided as soon as possible, he added.

After two well-attended public meetings on the dam removal project, Vigo County commissioners approved it March 14.

Commissioners at the time said removal of the historic property was not something they foresaw or desired, but given the safety, environmental and cost concerns, the decision was nearly inevitable.

To rebuild the low-head dam as a step-down dam would cost as much as \$5 million, Commissioner Mark Clinkenbeard said at the time, "even though the dam serves no practical use now."

The dam was originally built as a wood crib dam in 1817 to power a gristmill, but it was rebuilt using concrete in 1910. The dam is 215 feet long,

The dam has been the site of a fatality. In June 2010, Tyler E. Jackson, 21, was swept over the Markle Mill Dam after entering the water just a few yards to the south. The creek was filled to bank level with fast-flowing water fed by recent heavy rains. It was the first drowning at the dam site since it became a county park in 1999.

Cost to remove the dam is estimated at more than \$220,000. The county has secured about \$190,000 in state funds to pay the remaining share as its local obligation.

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