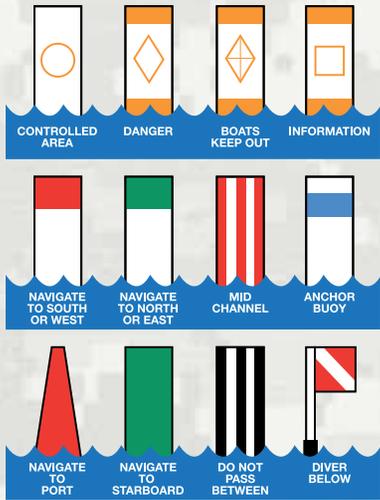


**FOR YOUR SAFETY RECOGNIZE AND OBEY ALL BUOYS AND MARKERS**



**TRAFFIC SIGNALS**



- Flashing Red**  
Stand clear, do not enter
- Flashing Amber**  
Approach lock under full control
- Flashing Green**  
Enter lock

**AIR HORN SIGNALS**

- 1 Long Blast (4 to 6 seconds) – Enter lock
- 1 Short Blast (1 second) – Leave lock
- 4 or more Short Blasts - DANGER SIGNAL

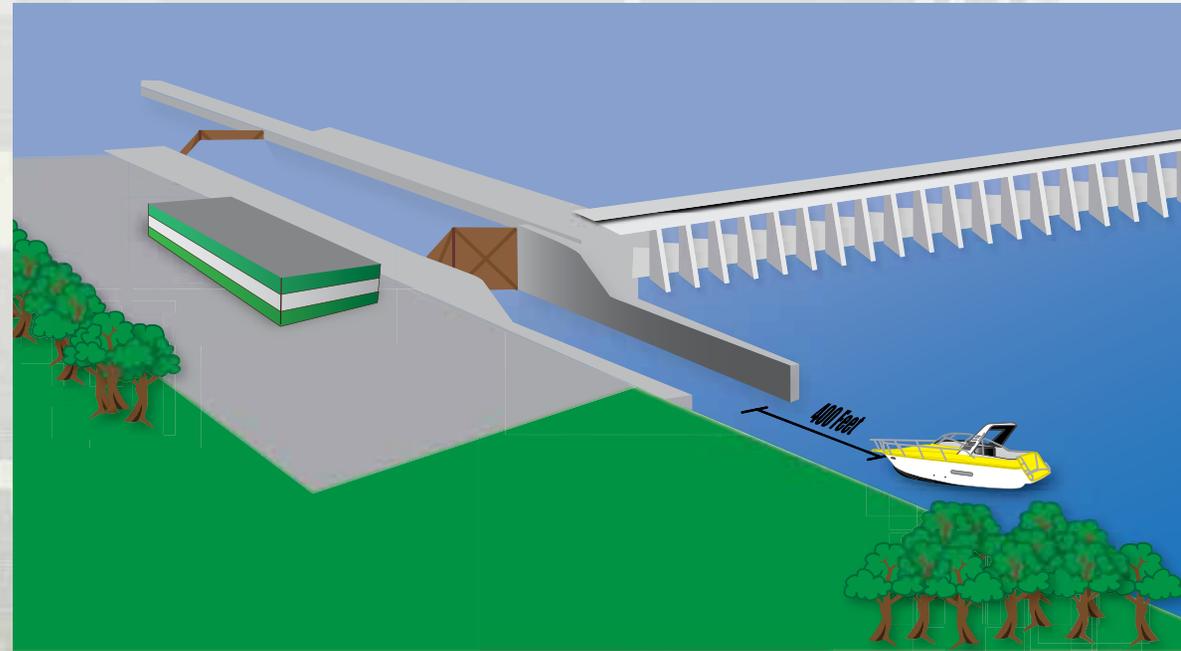


**WHY WE NEED LOCKS & DAMS**

Navigation structures are necessary to make inland waterways viable, year-round transportation corridors. Prior to the construction of the locks and dams in the region, some river depths were less than 12 inches at times during the year and would not support commercial or pleasure boat traffic.

The dams which the Corps has constructed create an “aquatic staircase” in the river and prevent the river from draining in dry weather, so navigation can go on year-round. Each step on the slope of the riverbed is a pool of water extending miles upstream, maintaining sufficient depth for boats and barges. The normal flow of the river runs through these pools and the excess flows over the dam into the next pool and on down the river. However, these dams do not provide flood protection.

The entire width of the river is not used for navigation, but there is a channel in which the water is maintained in support of commercial navigation. Congress mandated that the channel should be at least nine feet deep.



# Safety in Locking Through

**THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW IF YOU USE NAVIGATION LOCKS**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Little Rock District  
700 West Capitol Avenue  
Little Rock, AR 72203-0867  
501-324-5739

[www.swl.usace.army.mil](http://www.swl.usace.army.mil)



[www.Bobber.info](http://www.Bobber.info)



US Army Corps of Engineers®  
Little Rock District

**BUILDING STRONG®**

**Navigation locks and dams on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System are operated and maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The duty operator has full authority over the boats in the lock and its approaches. Please do not get impatient on busy boating days when traffic through a lock is heavy. The lock crews are interested in locking you through – safely – and in your turn. Allow yourself enough time for your trip on days when traffic is heavy.**

## HOW TO LOCK THROUGH

1. Stay between red and green buoys. They mark the river's navigable channel.
2. Personal watercraft of the "sit down" variety are allowed to lock through but must enter and depart according to the lock operator's instructions. The craft must remain stable. The operator must wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket at all times and remain seated when the craft is not in motion. The "stand up" variety of personal watercraft must be tied-off to an approved vessel during approach, lockage and departure with the operator remaining on-board the approved vessel until clear of the lock approach wall.
3. Pull cords, which sound an alarm letting the duty operator know that you desire lockage, are provided at the upstream and downstream ends of the lock wall. You may signal the duty operator by marine radio using channel 16 initially, then working channels 14, 13 or 12.
4. Traffic signal lights guide you at all navigation locks on the Arkansas River. They look like automobile traffic lights.
5. The duty operator may, in addition to the traffic lights, signal you with an air horn.
6. When approaching a lock, wait for the green light and the long horn blast from the duty operator before entering. While waiting for these signals, stay 400 feet from the end of the guide wall. This is particularly true if large vessels are about to leave the lock and are headed in your direction.

7. Carry aboard at least 50 feet of mooring line. You will need it during lockage to tie your boat safely to the floating mooring bitt. If you do not have a proper mooring line you may not be locked. DO NOT tie up to ladders or recessed mooring pins along the wall. Follow the instructions of the duty operator as to the location where you will moor. If you are unfamiliar with floating mooring bitts, ask the duty operator how to use one.

8. Make sure there is a mooring ring or similar device on your boat to which a mooring line can be tied.



Ring



Bitt



Cleat



Chock



Ring Bitt

9. Small boats with only one person aboard may use one long line securely fastened at one end of the boat with the bight of the line around the mooring post on the lock wall and the free end of the line around a cleat at the other end of the boat. This will allow the person at the free end of the line to pay out or take in mooring as the water level changes.

10. Larger boats should use two separate mooring lines leading from bow to stern to separate mooring posts on the lock wall. This will require a person at each end of the boat to pay out or take in mooring lines as the water level changes.

11. Use fenders to save damage to your boat and to lock walls.

12. Passengers should remain seated in your boat during lockage.

13. Always wear a life jacket when it is necessary to handle lines on deck or in rough weather.

14. Duty operators have been given the same authority over your boat in the locks as the traffic policemen have over your car at intersections. For your own safety, you must obey their instructions.

15. Wait for the duty operator's signal (short horn blast and green light) to leave the lock. Travel at reduced speed on entering and leaving the lock.

16. Keep away from the stern of passing tows. The stern waves are apt to capsize small boats.

17. Avoid passing across the head or line of travel of tows. Tows cannot be maneuvered to change course or stop quickly.

**Be DAM CONSCIOUS and know your location on the river with regard to each dam and lock. Keep a lookout for the "DANGER DAM" and "NO BOATING" signs. All water immediately above and below each dam are DANGER areas. DO NOT approach the DAM! Currents may draw your boat into or under the dam. Approach lock along the bank, directly in line with lock, at a reduced speed. It is recommended that boaters use Navigation Charts that provide valuable information on the location of the dams and other structures in the river.**

## LOCKAGE PRIORITY

**Here is how the Secretary of the Army has ordered us to pass shipping through the locks:**

- Vessels owned by the U.S. Government
- Passenger Vessels
- Commercial Vessels
- Rafts
- Pleasure Craft

**Sometimes small craft are required to wait and lock through with other craft.**

