



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Columbia Canal Embankment Repair - Update

A small section on the river side of the Columbia Canal embankment was cleared of understory vegetation in July to enable an inspection of the slope for seepage of water from the canal toward the Broad River. The work was done in an area just upstream of the I-126 Bridge. Mature trees were not disturbed during the clearing.

A portion of asphalt trail atop the embankment was sinking, suggesting the possibility of a seep.

Contractors hand cut underbrush, shrubbery, saplings and dead trees from the river side of the embankment. Two large dead trees were removed, and silt fence was installed near the toe of the slope. Areas of disturbed soil will be stabilized and planted in the coming weeks.

Inspection of the slope revealed no seepage. The pavement apparently sank as roots from the dead trees decomposed.

The City of Columbia plans further clearing along the canal embankment to assess the extent of seepage problems and undertake appropriate repairs. The work will involve:

- All underbrush, shrubbery, saplings and dead trees will be hand cut from the embankment with little or no ground disturbance.
- A six foot wide path will be cleared along the toe of the embankment including trees four inches in diameter and less to enable periodic visual inspection of the slope

Once this work has taken place, all seeps, dead trees and animal burrows will be cataloged. Any unsafe conditions such as slope erosion and dead trees that may cause piping will be immediately repaired. (Piping occurs when water flows along pathways opened along decomposing trees' roots zones)

A comprehensive plan for repair and maintenance of the canal will then be designed, using the findings from this study along with previous surveys.



The City of Columbia is working with environmental groups coordinated by Sustainable Midlands to lessen negative impacts of the clearing project. Native plants that provide food and cover for wildlife will be identified for potential propagation. Mature grapevines with high vegetation may remain in place. The FERC is involved in ongoing discussions with the City and resource agencies about this project.