



News Release

Public Affairs Office
PO Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103
505/248-6911
505/248-6915 (Fax)

Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) <http://fws.gov/southwest>

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Contacts: Mike Montagne, Mike_Montagne@fws.gov, 512-353-0011
Jessie Jobs, Jessie_Jobs@fws.gov, 505-248-6970

Ottine Dam Removal Will Benefit Fish and Wildlife in San Marcos River

The much anticipated removal of the 104 year old historical dam located on the San Marcos River in Gonzales County is finally underway. The dam damaged by a storm in 2008 was originally scheduled to be removed in 2012. Removal of the Ottine Dam is good news for the fish and other aquatic species of the river, as well as recreational organizations that sponsor events on this stretch of the San Marcos River. The project is expected to be completed by the end of January.

The Ottine Dam project was funded through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Fish Passage Program and coordinated by the Texas Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. Project partners include the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the San Marcos River Foundation, and Texas Water Safari. The Service's Southeast Region Dam Removal Team and the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge are also assisting with the project.

Once the dam removal is complete botanists from the San Marcos Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (Center) will replant the disturbed areas with native plants. The Center has a robust native plant propagation program for habitat restoration on the San Marcos River and other river systems within the Edward's Plateau. Revegetation of the area will help stabilize the river banks and lesson erosion as well as reduce the potential for invasive plants to establish themselves in the disturbed areas.

Without the dam, the river will have an unobstructed 39 mile stretch of water and regain its natural movement and flow. This will benefit fish and other aquatic species, including mussels. Those who enjoy spending time on the San Marcos River will also benefit. Kayakers and canoers that participate in the Texas Water Safari annual race from the San Marcos headwaters to the coast will no longer be required to port and carry their equipment up and down a steep incline to bypass the dangerous dam. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is also considering now adding the stretch of river to their paddling trails system for Palmetto State Park which is just downstream of the dam.

Additional information on the Ottine Dam project is available at:
<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/txfwco/nfpp.html>.

America's fish, wildlife, and plant resources belong to all of us, and ensuring the health of imperiled species is a shared responsibility. We're working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#) and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).

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