

Missouri General Assembly News Release



Sen. Wes Shoemyer



Rep. Rachel Bringer



Rep. Paul Quinn

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Federal Funding Secured to Replace Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center

JEFFERSON CITY – The United States Army Corps of Engineers has approved the construction of a new M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center at Mark Twain Lake. The visitor center was closed in 2004 due to structural problems and safety issues.

Yesterday the Corps of Engineers released a list of civil works projects to be funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Clarence Cannon Dam and Mark Twain Lake Project will receive funding to replace the visitor center, a small watercraft barrier upstream of the dam and recreation area road repairs.

“We’ve been working hard on this project for a long time,” Sen. Wes Shoemyer, D-Clarence, said. “I’m glad some of the federal stimulus dollars will be used to help us rebuild our infrastructure in this important tourism destination. Rep. Paul Quinn of Monroe City and Rep. Rachel Bringer of Palmyra and I have spent a lot of time working with others to secure funding to replace the visitor center. We believe this project will help boost the local economy and increase tourism to Mark Twain Lake.”

Prior to the closing of the visitor center for safety reasons in 2004, the center served as a central location for tourists to get information. The Mark Twain Lake Chamber of Commerce says about 2.3-million people visited the lake area in 2004, and as many as 20,000 people stopped at the visitor center before it was closed. The visitor center also housed a small museum that featured the cultural and natural history of the region.

“I am grateful that the reconstruction of the Boudreaux Visitor Center has been chosen as a priority, and I believe this choice is a credit to the hard work of countless northeast Missourians who helped explain this need to the Army Corps of Engineers,” said Rep. Bringer.

The M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center was originally constructed in 1982 at a cost of \$1.08-million. The new center will be approximately the same size as the original, with more space for public meetings and educational programs.

“This is how these federal stimulus dollars should be spent,” said Rep. Quinn. “This money is designed to stimulate our economy and to get people working again, and this project will accomplish both of those goals. I can’t say enough about the efforts of Sen. Shoemyer and Rep. Bringer to make this project a reality. We also need to acknowledge all of the visitors and friends who wrote letters and emails and signed petitions in support of this important project.”

Officials with Mark Twain Lake say the contract for the new visitor center should be awarded July 1, with construction slated to begin shortly after that. The new visitor center is expected to open by Memorial Day 2010.

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