



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Kansas City District

Information Paper

Missouri River Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Project Rocheport Cave, MO



View of the new cave gate at the Rocheport Cave mitigation site.

Contact

Jud Kneuvean, Site Project Manager
Email: eugene.j.kneuvean@usace.army.mil
Phone: 816-983-3281

Location

20 miles southwest of Columbia in Boone County,
Missouri

Description

This site is located up a side drainage on the left descending bank at Missouri River mile 183. In 1996, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) purchased the opening of this cave and 51 surrounding acres to enhance hibernation, nursery and migratory habitat for the federally endangered Indiana and Grey bats. The endangered Grey bat traditionally used this cave, created by erosive forces of Sinking Creek, as both a wintering hibernation spot and day roost site from which it left to forage over the adjacent Missouri River floodplain.

Recognizing that restricting visitors' access to the cave's interior is paramount to preserving the bats, various proposals to restrict access to the interior of the cave were considered. The most viable option for developing bat use while allowing limited public access to the scenic area was constructing a metal gate across the entrance to the cave.

A joint project was undertaken with MDC, Corps and the American Cave Association to construct the project in the summer of 2002. The cave gate was constructed to allow safe passage of the bats through a 'window' at the top of the gate while restricting any human trespass into the cave's interior.

Current Status

During the summer of 2004, a large rainfall washed large logs and debris through sinking creek. The debris stacked up against the gate with such force that the gate sustained considerable damage. While the gate in its current condition still functions to prevent human access, repairs are needed. These repairs will be undertaken in 2005. Until the repairs are made, the area will remain closed to the public.



View of the metal gate being constructed across the entrance to Rocheport Cave.