



Kentucky Transportation Cabinet • District 1

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Target date set for new Lake Barkley Bridge arch placement *Weather conditions are critical scheduling factor*

Paducah, Ky. (Feb. 7, 2017) – Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) engineers and the contractor on the new Lake Barkley Bridge at Canton have set Tuesday, Feb. 14, as the target date for placing the 550-foot main span – a \$20 million steel basket-handle arch – on the new bridge structure. The process will be similar to placement of the main span on the nearby Eggners Ferry Bridge in December 2015.

The new bridge will replace the Henry Lawrence Memorial Bridge at Canton, which was built in 1932 and long ago ceased to meet modern design standards. The bridge, at U.S. 68 mile point 8.56 in Trigg County, has two lanes, each 10 feet wide, with no shoulders. The new bridge will have four travel lanes, each 11 feet wide, plus 4-foot shoulders and a 10-foot multi-use trail.

The arch – 110 feet tall and 5.1 million pounds – has been constructed and painted on barges at the east end of the construction site. Starting early on Feb. 14, the arch will be floated next to the main piers and raised about 80 feet into the air. Barges then will maneuver the span between piers and the arch will be lowered into position on piers above the main navigation channel.

Weather will be a critical factor in the move. Engineers for PCL Constructors have indicated the move will require winds below 15 miles per hour. The contractor, KYTC engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard will check the weather on Friday, Feb. 10, and Monday, Feb. 13, to determine if placement of the arch can proceed as planned. If weather is expected to be favorable on Tuesday, officials will put the following plans in motion for Feb. 14:

- U.S. Coast Guard will close the navigational channel at 7:00 a.m. for up to 72 hours
- KYTC will close U.S. 68 promptly at 9:00 a.m. CST for up to 48 hours
- A 2,000-foot clear zone will be established around the work site
- U.S. Coast Guard and local emergency agencies will assist with water patrols

KYTC District 1 Chief Engineer Mike McGregor said moving the main arch into place is expected to take 10 to 14 hours to complete and will require restrictions on both river traffic and the public. The existing bridge will have to remain closed until a crane used during placement of the arch can be removed.

“Just as it was for the placement of the main arch on Eggners Ferry Bridge, floating the new span into place is something akin to a NASA rocket launch with weather being the critical item. The navigation channel will be closed to commercial river traffic and pleasure boat traffic,” McGregor said. “The existing bridge will be closed to vehicle traffic and detoured for up to 48 hours while the arch span is being moved into place.”

KYTC personnel, the U.S. Coast Guard, area emergency management agencies, police agencies and the contractor will work to establish a 2,000-foot clear zone around the construction area during this move. Opportunities for the public to watch placement of the arch are limited.

“We ask the public to be respectful of private property along the eastern shoreline of Lake Barkley at Canton. The best opportunity for the public to view the arch placement is in the Land Between The Lakes along the downstream shoreline. Boaters will be kept about 2,000 feet back from the work area,” McGregor said. “We’re specifically asking the public to avoid intrusions into the active construction area around the new bridge to prevent interfering with this critical move.”

The clear zone will be strictly enforced. The U.S. Coast Guard and emergency management personnel will be responsible for keeping pleasure boats at a safe distance. Multiple police agencies and KYTC personnel will assist with security for the site.

Once the span is safely in place on the main piers, the contractor will be able to more accurately calculate the time needed to place a concrete deck on the structure.

“Successful placement of the main arch will allow a reasonable calculation of the time needed to move traffic to the new bridge,” McGregor said. “Just as we did at Eggners Ferry, the contractor is expected to move two lanes of traffic to the new bridge sometime in early 2018 with finish work continuing about a year beyond that.”

Once two travel lanes have been moved to the new structure, the contractor will build a permanent connection that will eventually allow four travel lanes with a multi-use trail across the new bridge. Completing all of those permanent connections could take up to a year.

PCL Civil Construction of Denver is the prime contractor on the \$128.3 million project. The new four-lane bridge will carry U.S. 68/KY 80 over Lake Barkley and serve as the eastern entrance to Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area.

The larger Lake Bridges Project creates unique twin basket handle arch bridges within a 9-mile drive on each side of Land Between The Lakes. The bridges will be connected by a multi-use trail through Land Between The Lakes that will eventually continue on to Cadiz. The new Eggners Ferry Bridge on Kentucky Lake first opened to traffic in April 2016.

Combined with the ongoing widening of U.S. 68/KY 80 to four lanes between Cadiz and Canton, the Lake Bridges project will provide a continuous, four-lane route from Aurora to Cadiz,

crossing both lakes and Land Between The Lakes, connecting a four-lane corridor from Mayfield to Bowling Green.

The new Lake Barkley Bridge is expected to be open to traffic by October 2017. Additional information on the Lake Bridges project can be found at www.lakebridges.com.