

# Late nights at the Moon Tower may be bygone if vandalism continues

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
June 25 2018 3:54 PM



**WEST ALTON** – The beloved Lincoln-Shields Recreation Area may begin closing overnight if vandals get their way.

In a release from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers labeled “unclassified,” it is stated the Rivers Project Office is considering an overnight closure of the area, which is currently available to the public at all hours due to its popularity as a night fishing spot, Park Ranger Chris Garcia said Monday. That closure would be due to an excessive

amount of vandalism in the area. Garcia said the area – especially the overlook, commonly known by locals as “The Moon Tower,” which was part of an old lock and dam – has been targeted by vandals, despite having the entire area cleaned and scrubbed less than a month ago.

Since then, Garcia said people have come onto the property, scaled the stairs to the peak of the overlook and left graffiti of various names, aliases and genitalia. He said the area has even been treated with a graffiti-resistant stain, which is able to repel almost any color but black.

“It's good with reds, blues, purples and yellows, but black is hard,” he said. “We're hoping it all comes off soon when we go out to power wash.”

Both Garcia and the release stated vandals have entered and defaced the property several times after being refurbished. If that behavior continues, the area may be closed during the evening, late night and early morning areas.

One idea, Garcia said may be happening soon is a wireless surveillance system, assuming money in the budget can be found for such a system. Until then, however, rangers and the Corps are working with law enforcement to catch the culprit(s) and prevent any further damage to the property.

“We need the public's help and are asking them to report suspicious or criminal behavior,” Recreation Manager at the Corps' River Project Office Kimberly Rea said in the release. “The cost of repeated cleanup and repairs significantly impacts the levels of service provided to the public.

“Vandalism is not funny and is not a joke. The reality is vandalism is a crime, it costs money to remove, and it takes away from other visitors' enjoyment of public lands,” she added in that release.

Anyone with any information on the vandalism is requested to call the Rivers Project Office at (636) 899-2600 or the St. Charles County Police Department at (636) 949-3000.