

The End is in Sight: Flood levels lowering slowly but surely

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July 14 2019 9:50 AM



ALTON - The National Weather Service (NWS) in St. Louis is seeing an end to flood levels in the Riverbend.

After a lengthy spring and summer of flood walls, closed roads, and severe damage to the local economy, the waters of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers are retreating to minor flood stages across the area. Even those minor levels could soon be a distant terrible memory, according to the latest models from the NWS.

Alton is at minor flood stage, currently at 25.3 feet. It is predicted to slowly fall, finally coming out of flood stage by Thursday, July 25.

Grafton, which has been celebrating the reopening of The Loading Dock this weekend as well as the return to work on the highly anticipated gondolas, is at 22.9 feet, which is also midway through minor flooding levels. It, too, is expected to slowly wane throughout the next week, finally ending its time at flood stage around Wednesday, July 24.

Hardin is falling extremely slowly, as is the way of the Illinois River. As of current models, the NWS does not see a predicted end in sight for flooding there, however, it has fallen to minor stage at 28.8 feet, and is expected to fall to around 27 feet over the course of the week.

These numbers, however, are only based on the next 24 hours of predicted precipitation of which there is little to none in the forecast. Meteorologists said more precipitation may come close to the area from the remains of Tropical Storm Barry, but the furthest north that is expected to reach could be the St. Louis Metro Area, which could see less than an inch. Therefore, that precipitation will most likely not severely affect river levels.

Following those scattered showers, however, the area is expected to experience a heat wave. While many variables may change between now and late next week, meteorologists are predicting the possibility of heat indexes hovering around 100-110 degrees by next Thursday and Friday.

If that is the case, meteorologists from the NWS doubt much rain will be a factor for the river systems in the area.