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Levee Intentionally Blown Up Along Missouri River

Authorities Investigate Detonation

Authorities are investigating an intentional breach in a levee near Desoto Bend.

Pottawattamie County officials said a half-mile stretch of the Vanmann #30 levee was mechanically excavated and then lowered by using explosives.

Emergency Management Coordinator Jeff Theulen said he was alerted Friday morning that the levee may have been in the process of being intentionally breached.

About 20 minutes later, officials said they received calls from people wanting to know why levees were being blown up. One caller claimed to have witnessed the explosion.

Authorities said they're investigating the levee breach. Pottawattamie County officials said no government entity had anything to do with the detonation, and they did not have advance notice from the people responsible for the breach.

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Officials said they're disappointed with the decision to breach the levee without notifying authorities. They said a group of citizens had wanted to breach the levee to allow pooling water to go back into the Missouri River. However, there seemed to have been some confusion as to who would grant permission for this levee to be breached.

On June 28, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources said it did not regulate the levee in question. The Army Corps of Engineers initially said it would not approve the breach of the levee. But Friday morning, the Corps also said it did not have authority to regulate the Vanmann #30 levee.

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