

Two Northeast Arkansas counties are bracing for a potential levee failure following heavy rain from earlier in the week. KASU's Brandon Tabor reports.

NEWS

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JACKSON AND WOODRUFF COUNTY OFFICIALS ARE KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON AN ERODING LEVEE ON THE WHITE RIVER.

JACKSON COUNTY JUDGE JEFF PHILLIPS TOLD KASU NEWS , NOT MUCH ABOUT THE LEVEE'S STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY HAS CHANGED SINCE WEDNESDAY MORNING...

[TAKE :CUT NAME:1-7s OUTCUE:...so, that's a good sign. DURATION:7]

BUT, PHILLIPS DOES NOT WANT THE RESIDENTS LIVING NEAR THE LEVEE SOUTH OF ARKANSAS HIGHWAY 224 TO TAKE ANY CHANCES. HE ISSUED A VOLUNTARY EVACUATION FOR RESIDENTS IN THE AREA TUESDAY AFTER ANALYSIS FROM THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS.

PHILLIPS SAID HE DIDN'T WANT TO ISSUE A MANDATORY EVACUATION BECAUSE...

[TAKE :CUT NAME:2-10s OUTCUE:...that's why I did the voluntary. DURATION:10]

HE SAID THE AREA IS MOSTLY FARMLAND, BUT ABOUT THIRTY RESIDENTS LIVE IN THE AREA. PHILLIPS SAID HE'S BEEN IN CONTACT WITH STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS. HE'S ALSO BEEN TALKING TO WOODRUFF COUNTY JUDGE CHARLES DALLAS.

PHILLIPS SAID IF THE LEVEE BREACHES, PORTIONS OF WOODRUFF COUNTY COULD ALSO BE AFFECTED, WHICH IS SOUTH OF JACKSON COUNTY.

JUDGE DALLAS WASN'T AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT, BUT WOODRUFF COUNTY'S EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR BRENDA BYERLY SPOKE ABOUT THE SITUATION.

BYERLY SAID RIGHT NOW, IT'S TOO HARD TO TELL HOW IT COULD IMPACT THEIR COUNTY..

[TAKE :CUT NAME:3-13s OUTCUE:...raising it just a little bit. DURATION:13]

BYERLY SAID IT DEPENDS ON HOW MUCH WATER BREACHES THE LEVEE. BUT, THEIR COUNTY IS NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES. BYERLY SAID SANDBAGS HAVE BEEN MADE AND THAT SHE'S BEEN IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH VARIOUS AGENCIES..

[TAKE :CUT NAME:4-14s OUTCUE:...what might be affected. DURATION:14]

PHILLIPS HIGHLY URGES PEOPLE WHO ARE IN DIRECT THREAT OF THE LEVEE BREACH IN JACKSON COUNTY TO EVACUATE. HE ALSO SAID SANDBAGS ARE AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTS WHO MIGHT WANT TO TRY TO WAIT IT OUT.

[TAKE :CUT NAME:5-16s OUTCUE:...them to their resident. DURATION:16]

BUT STAYING MAY NOT BE A GOOD IDEA. FORECASTERS HAVE A FLOOD WARNING IN EFFECT FOR AREAS ALONG THE WHITE RIVER. ALSO, MORE RAIN IS EXPECTED TO COME OVER THE WEEKEND.

BYERLY ISSUES ONE PIECE OF SOUND ADVICE FOR MOTORIST--TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.

[TAKE :CUT NAME:6-13s OUTCUE:...goes across a road. DURATION:13]

IN JONESBORO, I'M BRANDON TABOR. KASU NEWS.