

BETTER BUILDING



IN OLMSTED, ILL., THE U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' \$3.1 billion Olmsted Locks and Dam project is replacing two aging locks and dams on the Ohio River with a single, dual-chamber structure that will improve commercial navigation to and from cities such as Pittsburgh and Louisville. Now scheduled to be operational in 2018, the replacement structure is being built "in the wet." Unlike traditional "in-the-dry" dams, which are cast in place in drained riverbeds, in-the-wet dams are prefabricated on the riverbanks, then floated out and sunk into pre-installed foundations. The benefits include lower costs, faster construction, reduced environmental impact and safer construction – not to mention improved quality, as prefabricated segments are built to strict standards within a more controlled environment, which could translate to longer life.

— Matt Alderton