

## Bog Walk gorge to close for two months

The Bog Walk gorge is set to be closed for two months due to pipe laying work being carried out by the National Water Commission (NWC).

The closure will begin towards the end of March 2011.

This was outlined by senior officials of the National Water Commission (NWC), who were speaking at a 'Think Tank', at the offices of the Jamaica Information Service, today.

According to Senior Project Manager, Gary Walters, this closure is necessary in order for the NWC to undertake urgent pipe laying work in the gorge, which will help to significantly improve water supply to Jamaicans in several areas of the island, including Portmore and other areas in St. Catherine, and in Kingston and St. Andrew.

'We are currently approaching the stage where a full closure of the roadway is imminent. This is necessary for the safety of the motoring public and for the road crews,' Walters said.

The Project Manager pointed out that the work is now at a stage where the public and the road crews who are using heavy equipment would be coming in contact around a deep bend in the road and at narrow sections of the gorge, situations which would expose both parties to extreme danger.

He also said that the work is also approaching several areas which are known for precariously poised boulders, which have been known to fall, posing an additional danger to all.

'There are times when rocks come down from the cliffs,' he added.

Walters reminded the public that there are two frequently used alternative routes to the Bog Walk gorge, through Sligoville and Barry.

He pointed out that signs will be erected to instruct drivers long before they approach the gorge, which will be fully closed, except to persons who live in the Kent Village community that is located in the area.

These residents, he said, will be allowed access from one direction only, which will effectively close the area to other motorists who have in the past ignored warnings when the gorge is officially closed.

'The NWC is aware that these routes are not in the best of condition and we have been given a proposal from the National Works Agency (NWA) to get them into suitable driving condition and we will be putting that in place,' Walters said.

According to NWC Corporate Public Relations Manager, Charles Buchanan, the work being undertaken in the gorge is challenging.

'The Rio Cobre pipeline work is extremely difficult. So far, we have been able to undertake that project while allowing vehicle access through the gorge. At present there is a tidal flow of traffic regulated through the arrangements with the National Works Agency,' he said.

This, Buchanan said, facilitates traffic flowing in from St. Ann to Kingston between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and in the opposite direction between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

'Some persons have had some delays and challenges using the gorge and we apologise for this. However, the work is of such a difficult nature that it will unavoidably result in some of these delays,' he added.