

Tennessee Infrastructure In The News

August 20, 2008

A daily roundup of news stories and opinion pieces about Tennessee transportation, water and flood control infrastructure

For the full story, click on the link below the excerpt.

New spillway key to lake's survival (Weakley County Press)

Constructing a new spillway at Reelfoot Lake is the "key to survival" of one of Tennessee's greatest natural resources, Gov. Phil Bredesen said Monday. He was commenting on Friday's disclosure that the U.S. Corps of Engineers has approved a permit requested by the state Department of Transportation for the construction program. "This is certainly great news," Bredesen said. "The lake is a major economic driver for the region. This (construction program) has been a priority since I first took office." Bredesen said he's proud to have worked on the project with Congressman John Tanner, state Rep. Phillip Pinion and state Sen. Roy Herron. Friday, Col. Thomas P. Smith, commander of the U.S. Corps of Engineers Memphis District Office, made the decision to grant the permit. Target date Construction could start as early as January 2009, according to TDOT commissioner Gerald Nicely. "We are very pleased that this critical milestone has been achieved," he said.

<http://www.nwntoday.com/news.php?viewStory=15401>

Corps Approves Plans for New Reelfoot Spillway (Memphis Daily News)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has granted the state a long-sought permit to build a new spillway at Reelfoot Lake. "I'm extremely excited," Rep. Phillip Pinion, D-Union City, said on Monday. "For six years, we've been working diligently on this." The new spillway will replace a leaking, seven-decade-old structure that required \$3 million worth of work 18 months ago to keep it intact. The spillway impounds the largest natural lake in Tennessee - a shallow 15,000-acre lake on the Tennessee-Kentucky border near the Mississippi River. "Had it broken, in three weeks' time, 90 percent of the lake would be a marsh," Pinion said. "It would have been the loss of Reelfoot Lake." Reelfoot attracts fishermen from a wide area as well as dozens of mating pairs of American bald eagles. Pinion said the spillway's problems go back to the 1960s and replacing it became an early priority for Gov. Phil Bredesen. Pinion said when Bredesen was still a candidate for governor, Bredesen, U.S. Rep. John Tanner, state Sen. Roy Herron and Pinion crawled into the spillway to show Bredesen - who holds a degree in physics - the cracks and leaks in the structure. <http://www.memphisdailynews.com/editorial/Article.aspx?id=38249>

Wamp Updates Lock Progress at Chickamauga Dam (WRCB)

Congressman Zach Wamp is making sure a project near to his heart is on schedule. Monday afternoon, he gave Channel 3 a progress report on repairs at the Chickamauga Lock. This is the first cell built on the Tennessee River. These cells will play an important role in the lock building process. When it's finally complete, the wait time for barges carrying goods up and down the river will drop. And that's good news for business, delivery costs will decrease. Those savings may be passed along to the consumer. The completion date of the lock is expected in 2014, assuming funding is allocated each year.

<http://www.wrcbtv.com/Global/story.asp?S=8826102>

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