

June 21, 2010

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

For the full story, click the headline or use the link.

[Tennessee Asks for Additional Disaster Designations \(Mid-South Farmer\)](#)

Tenn. Gov. Phil Bredesen expects federal officials to declare three additional counties natural disaster areas as a result of the May floods. Bredesen made the request of Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack for Giles, Lake and Obion counties. "I'm pleased that USDA acted promptly on my initial request for farm assistance, and I expect federal officials will move on subsequent requests just as quickly," said Bredesen. "A secretarial disaster designation will help make more assistance available to farmers who suffered significant losses as a result of the storms and flooding." A secretarial disaster designation would make farmers in these and adjoining counties eligible to apply for supplemental farm payments through their local USDA Farm Service Agency. For those counties already covered under a presidential declaration, farmers are also eligible to apply for low-interest emergency loans. Assistance for livestock losses and emergency conservation assistance to help rehabilitate damaged farmland is also available to eligible farmers.

<http://mobile.midsouthfarmer.com/main.aspx>

[Rutherford Flood Victims Can Meet With Fema On Thursday \(Gannett\)](#)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency will hold a meeting Thursday for Rutherford County residents seeking compensation for damage caused by the May 1-2 flood. The meeting will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday at La Vergne City Hall, 5093 Murfreesboro Road. The deadline for applications for any FEMA program is July 6. All interested parties are encouraged to attend. FEMA officials, along with representatives from the Small Business Administration and mitigation representatives, will be on hand to help residents who have been affected by the flooding. They will discuss the sequence of delivery for the Individuals and Households Program for those affected by flooding. Anyone who has been denied compensation should attend this meeting to see what other options are available. Several steps are required for assistance, and if they are not completed correctly, applicants may be kicked out of the program.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100621/NEWS01/6210316/1001/NEWS/Rutherford+flood+victim+can+meet+with+FEMA+on+Thursday>

[July 6 Deadline Nears To Apply For Flood Aid, Loans From Fema, Sba \(Commercial Appeal/Mckenzie\)](#)

FEMA officials urge registration by July 6 Mary Flagg waited for weeks after her storm-damaged roof began leaking in her Northaven home to find out whether federal disaster assistance might help her fix it. On Friday, Flagg left a Federal Emergency Management Agency Disaster Recovery Center in Millington optimistic about getting a disaster assistance loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration to finance repairs. "I wasn't sure about what to do, since I didn't have flood damage," said Flagg, 65, a respiratory therapist. With the July 6 deadline nearing to apply for FEMA assistance and SBA loans, FEMA spokesman Michael McCurdy said anyone unsure should register. "If you suffered any damage at all, or think you did, let a FEMA inspector come out," McCurdy said. That will no doubt be one of the messages repeated by FEMA's top administrator, Craig Fugate, who is scheduled to visit Millington and Dyersburg today to meet with state and local officials. Fugate will stop in Nashville on Tuesday.

<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2010/jun/21/deadline-nears-to-apply-for-flood-aid-loans/>

[Tva Using Rock And Clay To Restore Structure \(Knoxville News-Sentinel/Simmons\)](#)

The Tennessee Valley Authority is using a small river barge loaded with rock and clay to repair a dike on an island in the middle of the Clinch River. For the past two weeks the barge has been ferrying work crews and heavy equipment to Hibbs Island, located along U.S. Highway 441 about two miles downstream of Norris Dam. The island is well-known to trout fishermen and sightseers because of the weir dams that flank it on both sides. Located at the upstream end of the island, the dike was designed to divert high water around the island and over the adjoining weir dam. TVA officials say the 26-year-old dike was severely eroded last fall when heavy rain increased tailwater flows. "Our main concern is the island eroding during extreme water releases at the dam," said Chuck Parkins, project manager. After digging a 2-foot-deep trench, workers began rebuilding the dike with layers of rock and clay. A 75-foot section of the dike is being restored to a height of about 4 feet. So far, TVA has used 40 tons of clay and 350 tons of riprap in the project.

<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2010/jun/21/tva-using-rock-and-clay-to-restore-structure/>

[Recovery Time In Nashville After Deadly Floods \(Associated Press/Edwards\)](#)

It's recovery time in Nashville. Since flooding swamped the city in early May, residential building permits have soared. Millions of dollars in flood relief have been raised through telethons and other means. Colleges across the state are helping. Pounding rain dumped 13.5 inches of water on the city May 1-2, leaving parts of Nashville submerged for days. Nine people were killed. Six weeks later, the spirit in the city doesn't seem like a sad country song. "Nashville is making significant strides in the recovery process," Mayor Karl Dean said. T-shirts with positive proclamations reflect the sunny atmosphere: "We'll Be Right Back." "We Are Nashville." And even a little gallows humor: "Nashville 2010 Swim Team." Since May 2, more than 2,100 residential building permits have been issued and about 300 are pending as owners of flood-damaged property begin to rebuild. The average is 10,000 a year "Recovery is long term but achievable due to the collaborative spirit of our city," Dean said. Nashville country music stars and others have raised relief funds through telethons and similar events since the flooding.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=33841249.story>

[Nashville Flood Rebuilding Projects Lift Battered Builders \(Tennessean/Cass\)](#)

Seven weeks after the flood, Metro property owners have taken out almost \$100 million worth of building permits, putting some homes and businesses on a path back to normalcy while creating a small boom for the construction industry. "The flood has certainly put some folks to work," said Katie Bouldin, marketing manager for Franklin-based Rock City Construction Co., which is repairing a Metro Water Services building and recently finished a short project at Bridgestone Arena. Metro Codes has issued more than 2,100 residential building permits worth \$54.6 million and more than 260 commercial permits worth \$42.7 million, said Joey Hargis, the city's zoning examinations chief. The largest single permit went to the Nashville Symphony, which will spend \$15 million to restore the Schermerhorn Symphony Center, Hargis said. The work comes at a welcome time for general contractors, HVAC specialists, electricians and the like. Their industry has been battered for a couple of years by the economic downturn. Kelly Dando, executive director of the Associated General Contractors of Tennessee, said some construction workers with 20 to 30 years of experience had been laid off for lack of work.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100620/NEWS0202/6200364/Nashville+flood+rebuilding+projects+lift+battered+builders>

[New Vw Waterline Enables Expansion \(Chattanooga Times Free-Press/Pare\)](#)

A decision to install a larger waterline at the Volkswagen plant site will help enable the automaker to expand its factory and supplier park, a water utility executive said. "It's trying to think ahead," said Don Stafford, general manager of the Eastside Utility District, which is providing water to the \$1 billion assembly plant under construction. "Any plant they want to put up ... they'll have their own big line." Putting in a bigger, dedicated 24-inch water line, approved by the city's Industrial Development Board last week, is one indicator that plant expansion already is on the minds of local officials and VW executives. VW officials have said they're building their current 2 million-square-foot facility on a footprint that enables them to add more space and about double production capacity. Guenther Scherelis, VW's general manager of communication in Chattanooga, said installing a larger waterline doesn't mean there's a decision to expand, but officials want to keep the possibility on the table. "It's just to keep the options open for the plant and the supplier park," he said.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/jun/20/new-vw-waterline-enables-expansion/>

[Cooper, Alexander Want Funds For Flood Report \(Associated Press\)](#)

U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper and U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander say they would secure funding for the Army Corps of Engineers to produce a detailed report of the May flooding in Tennessee. On Friday, Cooper issued a statement saying he had been told that the agency's Washington, D.C., leadership had decided not to do a more in-depth report because of budget considerations. Bill Peoples, spokesman for the Nashville District Corps, told The Tennessean that a lessons-learned study will be finished in 30-60 days and that they have requested funding for a post-flood report. The newspaper could not get comment from the Corps' Washington office. Cooper said the report would dig deeper into data that could provide information to protect local communities from flooding.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=33840269.story>

[I-65, I-24 Closures Are Back \(Tennessean/Young\)](#)

Prepare for delays or alternate routes, TDOT advises As Tennessee Department of Transportation crews plan to again reduce traffic to one lane in both directions on I-65 at the Millersville/Springfield exit this weekend, I can't help but groan. My mind goes back to the first time crews shut down a lane of traffic there. That Saturday evening in April I spent three hours in bumper-to-bumper traffic. My husband kept calling me on the cell. First it was to tell me not to go the interstate — like I didn't know that. Then, he called to tell me not to go Dickerson Road because it was backed up with people trying to get away from the interstate jam. By the time I reached Trinity Lane in East Nashville, we'd settled on Gallatin Road. It looked promising at first, but 15 minutes into the journey north, I hit the traffic. I'd been with my mom for a spa day in Bellevue all afternoon. I'm sorry to say the relaxation I'd felt earlier that day melted away as I crept along in my car.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100619/NEWS09/6190325/1001/news/Here+we+groan+again.+I-65++I-24+closures+are+back>

[Tdot Making Plans For Five-Lane 48/13 \(Leaf Chronicle\)](#)

State seeks comments on project to include bridge Traffic backups are common on both sides of the McClure Bridge, which connects downtown Clarksville to southern Montgomery County, but three more lanes are coming to ease the congestion. While the Tennessee Department of Transportation doesn't yet have a timeline for when construction might start, the next step in the process is a June 29 public meeting where officials will explain the widening project and gather comments from residents. "We're pretty much looking for any comments people may have on the project; whether they're 100 percent in favor of it or not," said B.J. Doughty, TDOT spokeswoman. "Most people who come to these meetings just want to know what it will look like and from where to where it will be." The project calls for widening state Highway 48/13 starting at the turnoff for Zinc Plant Road, going across the bridge over the Cumberland River past the intersection with state Highway 149, through the Hilltop area of 149 and ending some 700 feet past River Road.

<http://www.theleafchronicle.com/article/20100619/NEWS01/6190310/1002/TDOT-making-plans-for-five-lane-48/13-->

[Environmental Group Responds To Middle Tennessee Flood](#) (Clarksville Online)

The Sustainable Tennessee coalition will discuss the recent flooding in Middle Tennessee and develop recommendations for long term actions Tennessee residents can take in response to this crisis at a meeting to be scheduled for August in Nashville.

<http://www.clarksvilleonline.com/2010/06/19/environmental-group-responds-to-middle-tennessee-flood/>

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