

June 29, 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.

[I-65 Widening South Of Nashville Forthcoming \(Associated Press\)](#)

Work to widen Interstate 65 south of Nashville could begin later this summer. The Tennessee Department of Transportation wants to add more lanes to two sections in Williamson County between Highway 96 and State Route 840. According to WTVF-TV in Nashville, TDOT has secured \$100 million in federal money for the project. The heavily traveled interstate flows south into Alabama and north into Kentucky.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=33922635.story>

[Alexander Sets Date For Senate Hearing On Floods \(Associated Press\)](#)

U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander said he does not want to judge the actions of federal agencies during last month's flooding in Tennessee before listening to their representatives at a Senate hearing next month. In a conference call with reporters on Monday, Alexander said the purpose of the July 22 hearing in Washington is to find out how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the National Weather Service communicated with other agencies and the public and learn what can be done better in the future. Alexander said witnesses will include the Corps' Commander of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Gen. John Peabody, National Weather Service Director Jack Hayes and Tennessee Emergency Management Agency Director James Bassham. Record rainfall in early May killed 22 people across Middle and West Tennessee and caused more than \$2 billion in damage in Nashville alone.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=33919839.story>

[Hearing on Corps' Flood Communication Set for Next Month \(WPLN-Radio Nash\)](#)

Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander will hold a hearing next month on how the Army Corps of Engineers and the National Weather Service handled last month's record flooding. Alexander is expecting an "after-action report" from the Corps, and wants to hear from officials about lessons learned in the deadly flood's aftermath. "My purpose in asking for this hearing is to focus specifically on how the Army Corps of Engineers and the National Weather Service communicated with other agencies as well as with the public about rising waters." Some have argued the Corps didn't give enough warning to people downstream when the flood forced its dams to start letting water through. Alexander also expects Nashville Mayor Karl Dean and the head of Tennessee's Emergency Management Agency to speak at the hearing.

<http://wpln.org/?p=18837>

[Senate To Hold Hearing On Response To Tennessee Flood \(City Paper/George\)](#)

Tennesseans may soon find out exactly what went right — and wrong — at the Army Corps of Engineers during the devastating and historical floods of May 1 and 2. U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., announced Monday that the Senate's Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, of which he is a member, would hold a hearing July 22 on the Corps' actions during the flood. The major topics of discussion are likely to be how the Corps and the National Weather Service communicated information to the public as the flood unfolded, whether the Corps acted properly in releasing water from dams along the Cumberland River, and whether those releases resulted in additional flooding in Nashville. "The purpose of the hearing is to bring forward the people who are supposed to know what happened, ask them what happened, let them tell their story, and then make a judgment about that," Alexander said during a conference call with reporters Monday afternoon.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/city-news/senate-hold-hearing-response-tennessee-flood>

[U.S. Senators' Hearing On Nashville Flood Will Focus On Corps \(Tenn/Theobald\)](#)

A Senate subcommittee will convene a hearing on the May flooding in Middle Tennessee, focusing on how well the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers communicated with other agencies and the public, Sen. Lamar Alexander announced Monday. The response of the National Weather Service also will be examined. The July 22 hearing will be held by the Senate Appropriations Committee's energy and water subcommittee and will include testimony from Gen. John Peabody, commander of the Corps division that includes Nashville, and Jack Hayes, director of the National Weather Service. Alexander, R-Tenn., is a member of the Appropriations Committee. "The goal of the hearing is to determine what actions can be taken to improve those communications to prevent loss of life and property in future floods," Alexander said. He said systems for tracking and warning the public about tornadoes have improved "1,000 percent" and suggested that similar improvements could be made before and during floods. Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Nashville, and Alexander, to a lesser extent, have raised concerns about the Corps' actions during the flood. They and others have questioned the way water was released from dams on the Cumberland River, as well as the quality of forecasting, communication and flood warnings.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100629/NEWS01/6290338/U.S.+senators++hearing+on+Nashville+flood+will+focus+on+Corps>

[Alexander Says Senate Subcommittee Will Check How Agencies Reacted \(Commercial Appeal/Locker\)](#)

U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander announced Monday that a Senate subcommittee will hold a public hearing July 22 to examine how the Corps of Engineers and the National Weather Service performed during last month's Tennessee flooding. Alexander, R-Tenn., a member of the subcommittee, said he wants to focus on how the two federal agencies communicated information about the flooding with the public and local government agencies. Mayors of two of the cities hardest hit by the May flooding -- Millington Mayor Richard Hodges and Nashville Mayor Karl Dean -- are among eight people scheduled to testify before the Energy and Water Appropriations subcommittee in Washington, along with officials of the agencies involved. "My concern is to first try to find out what happened and whether the gathering of information about rising water and flooding water, and the communication of it in Nashville and Clarksville and Ashland city and all the way to Millington, was done as well as it could have been -- and if it wasn't to see if there are changes that we could make that might affect future floods," Alexander said in a conference call.

<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2010/jun/28/alexander-says-senate-subcommittee-will-check-how/>

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