

July 22, 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.

**[ROCKSLIDE TRIGGERS I-75 CRASH \(LEX18.com\) KY](#)**

Police say a rockslide triggered an accident along I-75 in Rockcastle County Thursday morning. Kentucky State Police say drivers traveling southbound along the interstate near mile marker 62 slammed on their brakes when they saw rocks fall into the roadway around 6 a.m. A southbound semi lost control, crossed the median, flipped and slammed into a rock wall on the northbound side of highway. Police say the driver of the semi suffered some minor injuries, but walked away from his demolished rig. A load of lumber was spread across both lanes. At least five cars were involved in the accident, but no other injuries were reported. Southbound lanes are still closed as of 7:30 a.m., as crews worked to remove the rock and debris. Northbound I-75 is down to one lane and traffic is at a crawl.

<http://www.lex18.com/news/rockslide-triggers-i-75-crash>

**[Corps Says It Kept Tenn. Flood Crest 5 Feet Lower \(Associated Press\)](#)**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has concluded its actions during the May floods reduced the Cumberland River's flood crest in Nashville by 5 feet, but the agency suffered numerous communications problems during the crisis, according to a report released Wednesday. The corps and National Weather Service have been criticized for not providing the public enough warning about the severity of the floods that killed 22 people in Tennessee and caused over \$2 billion in damage in Nashville alone. Record two-day rains swelled the Cumberland River and caused it to crest at 51.86 feet on May 3. "At the height of the event, Corps personnel were making minute-by-minute decisions for the operation of eight projects in an extremely dynamic and dangerous environment," the 300-page "After Action Review" says. U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander is convening a hearing on Thursday to probe the Corps' actions during the flood.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=34103547.story>

**[Corps Admits Miscues In Flood \(Tennessean/Theobald, Paine\)](#)**

But agency's report says it averted more damage Poor communication within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and among the Corps and the National Weather Service and other agencies caused errant flood forecasts and other problems during the devastating May flooding in Tennessee, a Corps report released Wednesday concludes. But the Corps' after-action review also states that the Corps operated successfully and that its actions reduced the flood crest on the Cumberland River in Nashville by 5 feet. The Corps' report will be the centerpiece of a Senate hearing today to look at what happened and discuss lessons that can be used to lessen future disasters U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper of Nashville, who has questioned the Corps' reactions during the crisis, found the report at least somewhat forthcoming, but flawed.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100722/NEWS01/7220334/1001/news/Corps+admits+miscues+in+flood>

**[Pellissippi Parkway Extension \(Blount Today\)](#)**

More than 300 showed Tuesday night, July 20, to hear about the latest installment in the Pellissippi Parkway Extension saga. The Tennessee Department of Transportation has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) regarding completing the Extension. The majority of folks who spoke came out against \$105 million alternatives A and C that would construct routes cutting across 4 miles of mainly farmland between East Lamar Alexander Parkway and East Broadway Avenue. Some said the \$60 million alternative D to improve existing roads such as Sam Houston School House, Peppermint, Hitch and Helton roads was the way to go. Still others said the Tennessee Department of Transportation should use Alternative B, save the money and not build anything.

<http://www.blounttoday.com/news/2010/jul/21/pellissippi-parkway-extension/>

**Opinion**

**[Jim Cooper: Congressional Hearings Seek Facts From Corps \(Tennessean\)](#)**

Today, the Army Corps of Engineers will testify before Congress on its performance during the historic flood. As I pointed out in this series, the Corps did not apply the lessons learned from the 1975 flood, and its structural

problems limited their response. The hearing should help start correcting these problems. On its website, the Corps says that one of its top missions is “to reduce risks from disasters.” There are two ways to do that: by preparing us before a record rainfall and by warning us before the river rises to dangerous levels. Did the Corps prepare us or warn us? Here’s what happened before the flood: The Corps uses misleading words like 100-year, or 500-year, to describe rare events, often causing people to underestimate risk. Those adjectives do not mean you are safe for 100 years, or that you only face a 1 percent risk of flooding. Almost no one in low-lying areas of Nashville knew there was a 26 percent chance of serious, 100-year flooding during thei 30-year mortgage.

<http://blogs.tennessean.com/opinion/2010/07/21/congressional-hearings-see-facts-from-corps/>

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