

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
KNOXVILLE SOUTH WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT – SUTTREE LANDING PARK
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) has received an application from the City of Knoxville (City) requesting approval by TVA under Section 26a of the TVA Act for modifications to a portion of the Knoxville South Waterfront Public Improvements project, previously approved by TVA in 2012. Modifications are proposed to the project's Middle Section (previously identified as projects 9 and 10), an area to be named Suttree Landing Park (previously named River Plain Park and Lincoln Landing). The project area is approximately 13 acres in size and is located along the southern bank of the Tennessee River just east of downtown Knoxville, between Tennessee River Miles (TRM) 648.0 left bank (L) and 648.5L, on Fort Loudoun Reservoir.

The Suttree Landing Park is a proposed public park providing river access and recreation facilities, including walking paths, an event lawn, a play area, picnic tables, river overlooks, a viewing terrace, a ramp, and a dock. The proposed park would be an important element of the City of Knoxville's effort to enhance and develop several areas of South Knoxville along the southern bank of the river and to provide the community with recreation facilities and river access. In addition, the project would improve and develop a former industrial site that has been identified by the State of Tennessee as a Brownfield site and would improve the project area's storm water management system with improved run-off and water quality.

Under the proposal, TVA would approve under Section 26a of the TVA Act the City's request to change the elevation of the walking path; increase the deposition of fill along the shoreline and within the floodplain; alter the bank stabilization design; modify parking areas; add a viewing terrace, dock and concrete kayak launching ramp; and install a landscape irrigation system. Specifically, the TVA's approval would allow:

- Construction of approximately 1,900 linear feet of riverfront walkway with elevation varying from 822 feet to 824.4 feet, resulting in approximately 3,520 cubic yards of material to be placed between the existing normal pool at 813 feet mean sea level and the 100-year flood elevation.
- Construction of a series of landforms and lawn areas and installation of approximately 2,146 linear feet of riprap along the shoreline, requiring approximately 1,720 cubic yards of materials filled riverward.
- Modifications to previously permitted facilities located at Lincoln Landing, including the addition of a floating dock structure that will extend 65 feet into the river, handicap ramps down to a gangway, and a 24-foot wide concrete boat launch for kayaks.

- The addition of a landscape irrigation system for the entire 3.5-acre park, with intake from a 12-inch pipe with a box-screen to be located at least 3 feet below the winter pool elevation. The irrigation system would utilize a 3- to 5-horsepower pump in a vault located approximately 10 feet behind the top of the riverbank, and would be controlled using sensors to reduce watering. The system controller would irrigate the park's stormwater detention area (approximately 0.2 acres) only when the soil is dry; the park's native grasses (approximately 1.7 acres) and festival lawn (approximately 1 acre) only during establishment, after major events, and as needed during dry conditions.
- Modifications to parking areas and approaches, including the addition of a small cul de sac on the west end of park and a reconfigured parking area at the east end of the park.

To consider the City's proposed modifications, TVA reviewed the application and determined that it was necessary to supplement the environmental assessment (EA) completed by U.S. Department of Army, Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 2010 and later adopted by TVA that analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the City's public improvement project. TVA determined that the 2010 EA, incorporated herein by reference, should be supplemented to provide additional analysis of potential impacts and information on cultural resources, floodplains, and river navigation. TVA found that the EA adequately addresses the potential impacts of the modifications to other environmental concerns.

In the Supplemental EA, TVA described how the proposal, as revised, would mitigate impacts to an archaeological site identified in the project area. Under the proposal, the City would not disturb the site during construction activities and would install approximately 2.5 feet of fill over a concrete slab that is currently covering the site in order to protect the archaeological feature. This fill would be necessary to facilitate vegetation growth in the lawn area for the proposed park and establish the elevation of the riverfront walkway. In consultation with the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer, TVA finds that with the commitment of no ground disturbance and the subsequent placement of fill over the existing concrete slab, the proposed undertaking would not adversely affect the archaeological site.

TVA also described the potential impacts of the project to the 100-year floodplain along the proposed Suttree Landing Park. TVA found that the proposed fill of the floodplain is consistent with Executive Order 11988. The City evaluated alternative sites and provided adequate documentation to support a determination that there was no practicable alternative to the proposed fill. The project would also be consistent with local floodplain regulations and would comply with TVA Flood Control Storage Loss Guidelines. Based upon implementation of conditions identified below, TVA found that the proposed Suttree Landing Park would have no significant impact on floodplains.

Finally, the City's application also modifies the original park design by including a floating dock and gangplank extending a total of 65 feet into the Tennessee River at TRM 648.4L. In the Supplemental EA, TVA determined that the proposed dock and

gangplank complies with the TVA and USACE restrictions identified in 2010 during the review of the City's original application. TVA determined that river navigation would not be affected by the new structure.

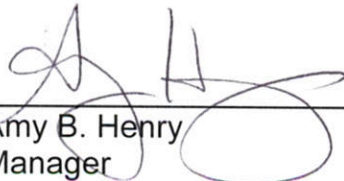
Conditions of Approval

To ensure that the proposed development would not adversely impact floodplains and flood risk, TVA would include the following conditions in issuing its approval under Section 26a of the TVA Act:

- For purposes of shoreline bank stabilization, all portions would be constructed or placed, on average, no more than two feet from the existing shoreline at normal summer pool, elevation 813 feet mean sea level.
- All floating facilities would be anchored securely to prevent them from floating free during major floods.
- TVA would retain the right to flood the area and would not be liable for damages resulting from flooding.
- Best management practices would be used during construction activities.

Conclusion and Findings

Based on the findings listed above and the analyses in the Supplemental EA, we conclude that the City's modification of the proposed Suttree Landing Park design is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the environment. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required. This finding of no significant impact is contingent upon adherence to the conditions and mitigations measures described above.



Amy B. Henry
Manager
NEPA Program and Valley Projects
Project Environmental Planning
Tennessee Valley Authority



Date Signed