



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Department of the Army
NASHVILLE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 1070
NASHVILLE TN 37202-1070

Project Planning Branch

To All Interested Parties:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District (USACE) is initiating scoping and preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The purpose of the EA is to evaluate the impacts of maintenance dredging and open water placement of dredged material in the Tennessee River adjacent to Looney Island near River Mile 643 (Figure 1). By way of this letter, we are soliciting public and agency comments regarding environmental concerns that should be addressed in the EA.

This EA is conducted under the authority of the Rivers and Harbors Act of July 3, 1930, ch. 847, 46 Stat. L. 927 (1930) that authorized the permanent improvement of the Tennessee River to a navigable depth of nine feet at low water from the mouth to Knoxville, Tennessee. The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Act of 1933 (16 U.S.C. §§ 831-831ee) authorized TVA to provide a nine-foot channel in the Tennessee River from Knoxville to its mouth. Since passage of the TVA Act of 1933, USACE, in cooperation with TVA, has maintained the navigation channel on TVA river projects by performing necessary maintenance dredging and open water placement operations. This division of responsibility is outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement between USACE and TVA dated October 26, 1962. A TVA 26a Permit is required. TVA is requested to be a cooperating agency for this NEPA process.

Looney Island is subjected to constant bed load movement resulting in recurring shoaling problems in the navigation channel that creates a hazard to watercraft. Removal of sediment is necessary to restore adequate depth in the navigation channel to provide a safe and open channel. A clamshell bucket would dredge river sediment at the dredge site. A split-hull barge would transport the sediment to the placement site (Figure 1). Since 1963, the area has been dredged ten times; most recently in 2005.

In accordance with NEPA, and associated implementing regulations, the EA will be prepared to evaluate viable alternatives, including the "No Action" alternative, for this proposal. We encourage comments not only about the immediate project area, but also of plans or proposals for any other development that may impact or influence the project or surrounding watershed. This EA would provide the basis for a decision whether to proceed with an Environmental Impact Statement or a Finding of No Significant Impact.

This letter also serves to initiate public involvement requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Section 106, implemented by regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations 800, requires the Corps to consider the effects of its undertakings on historic properties. Appropriate architectural and archaeological investigations would be conducted if deemed necessary within areas affected by the proposed activity. Results would be coordinated with the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Nations, and other consulting parties.

Please submit any comments regarding environmental and cultural resource concerns no later than **November 15, 2014** to ensure evaluation and inclusion in the EA. Responses should

be emailed to: CorpsLRNPlanningPublicCom@usace.army.mil; or mailed to the address listed above. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Joy Broach, Aquatic Biologist, at (615) 736-7956. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Russ L. Rote, P.E., PMP, CFM
Chief, Project Planning Branch

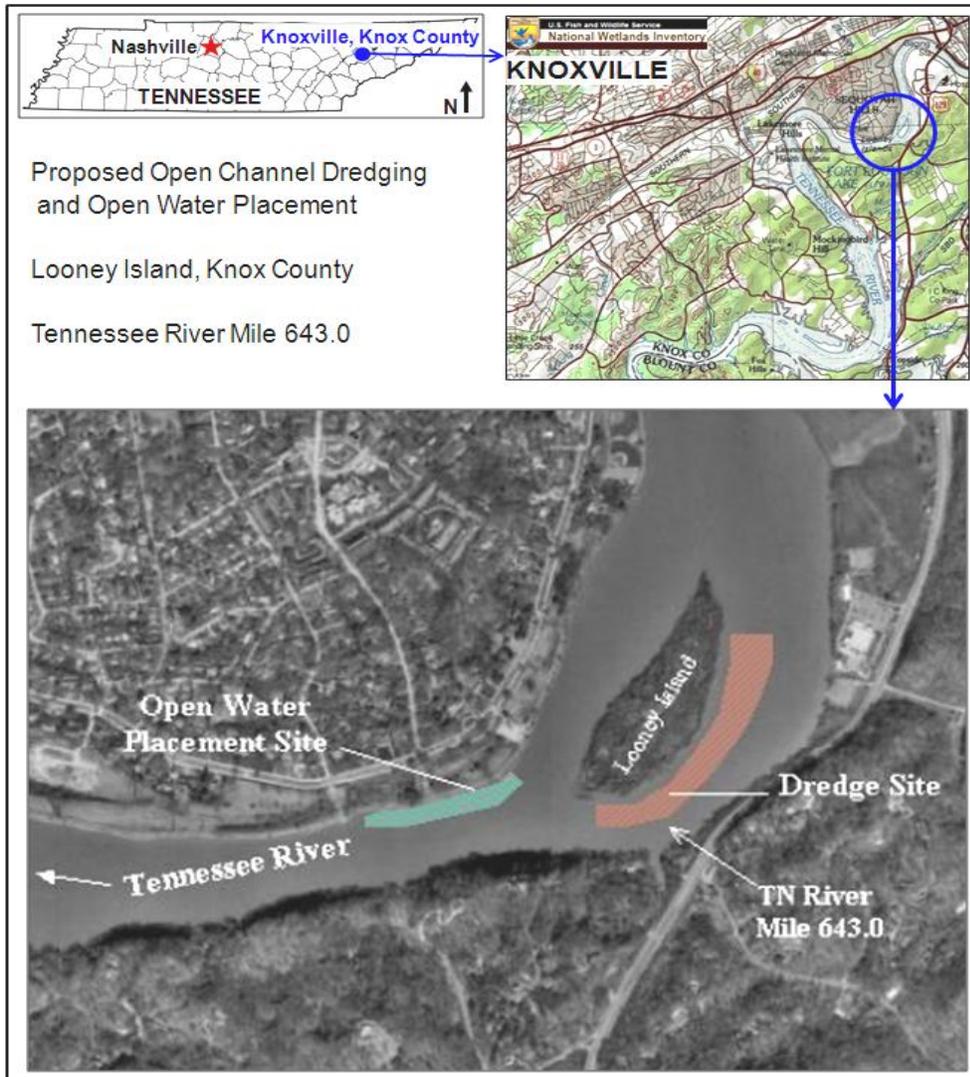


Figure 1. Vicinity Map and Looney Island Dredge and Placement Site Locations