DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NASHVILLE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1070
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37202-1070

AUG 15 2006

IN REPLY REFER TO

Project Planning Branch

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District, is initiating a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to provide National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) coverage for planning, design, construction and operational features of a regional water supply project in Cumberland County, Tennessee. Section 219 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1992, as amended by Section 502(24) of the WRDA of 1999, authorizes $5,000,000 for technical planning, design, and construction of water supply projects in Cumberland County. The City of Crossville has agreed to be a local sponsor for this project and would be responsible for the 25% local cost share.

The intent of the project is to develop a regional water supply system capable of providing the county a reliable water supply for 50 years. The county is currently served by six water systems and development of individual water sources has been problematic from an environmental perspective. The county's current water supply capacity is approximately ten million gallons per day. A regional approach has been recommended to allow more efficient planning to develop future water supplies in an environmentally acceptable manner.

In 1998, the Corps of Engineers, in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, completed a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) titled Cumberland County Regional Water Supply Study. This study was done at the request of Cumberland County under the Planning Assistance to States Program. The PER provided an analysis of information pertaining to engineering and permitting considerations for potential water supply alternatives to meet the county's projected needs through the year 2050. Due to potential environmental impacts associated with some of the alternatives previously studied and carried forward in the current effort, a determination has been made that an EIS is warranted.

Early in the study, alternatives would be screened to identify the most promising alternatives to evaluate in detail. Alternatives identified to date that have potential, either individually or in combination, for providing the county's future water supply needs include the following:

a. Water Conservation. Development and implementation of a water conservation plan which would include a water measurement and accounting system, a water pricing structure to encourage efficiency, a plan to inform and educate water users, assigning the responsibility for conservation activities to a person or group of persons, along with other water conservation measures.

b. Groundwater. Construct groundwater wells at 1-5 locations identified by a 1996 U.S. Geological Survey preliminary investigation as having the greatest potential to provide sufficient quantity for municipal usage.

c. Pipeline to Large Reservoir. Construct a raw water pipeline from an existing large reservoir. Potential water sources include Watts Bar Lake in Roane County, Center Hill Lake in White/DeKalb County, and Great Falls Lake in White County.

d. Storage Impoundments. Construct a new storage impoundment on Clear Creek (Obed River tributary), Meadow Creek (East Fork of the Obey River tributary), Caney Fork River or other suitable stream. A variation of this alternative is to raise the existing Meadow Park Dam, Mayland Dam, Camp Ozone Dam, Tranquilechee Dam or other impoundments to provide additional storage.

e. Water Harvesting. Construct intake and pumping facilities to harvest water only during high flow periods and store that water in an off-site detention area. (For example, harvesting water from Caney Fork River and storing it in a raised Meadow Park Lake.)

f. Other alternatives may be identified over the course of the study. These would also be evaluated in the DEIS.

In accordance with NEPA and applicable implementing regulations, a DEIS is being initiated as an integral part of this planning study. By way of this notice, we are soliciting public and agency comments concerning environmental issues or alternatives that should be addressed in the course of the NEPA process. To consider cumulative effects, 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 water supplies or project resources.

This letter also serves to initiate the public involvement requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Section 106, implemented by regulations at 36 CFR 800, requires the Corps of Engineers to consider the effects of its undertakings on historic properties. Appropriate archeological and historic properties investigations will be conducted within those areas affected by the proposed activities. Investigations will be conducted in consultation with the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and relevant Native American tribes as appropriate.

Activities that may be proposed that require a review under the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), under authority of Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230) will be documented in the DEIS. For example, fill placement would be required for construction of some water supply alternatives (impoundments, weirs, and intakes).

Significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the DEIS include impacts to high quality surface streams such as the Obed National Wild and Scenic River System and the Caney Fork River (upstream of the State of Tennessee's Bridgestone-Firestone Conservation Area), the magnitude of future water supply needs (determining realistic growth scenarios), local acceptability of

some raw water sources (Watts Bar Lake), acceptability of the regional approach among existing water suppliers, and long-term operational costs. A DEIS should be available by December 2007.

A public meeting is scheduled to assist in identifying (scope for) potential issues to be evaluated in the DEIS. The meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2006 (6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Central Standard Time) at the Palace Theater, 72 S. Main Street, Crossville, TN 38555. During the meeting, a brief overview of the project background and anticipated study steps will be presented followed by an open session for submitting verbal comments.

Please contact Tim Higgs, Environmental Engineer, at the address shown on the letterhead or call (615)736-7863 with any questions or comments concerning this notice. Written comments can be mailed or submitted by email to timothy.a.higgs@usace.army.mil. Scoping responses are requested by October 23, 2006, to ensure evaluation and inclusion in the NEPA Document. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Douglas L. Radley

Douglas L. Radley, AICP
Chief, Project Planning Branch