



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NASHVILLE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
110 9TH AVENUE SOUTH, ROOM A-405
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203

November 17, 2025

Project Planning Branch

To ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Nashville District initiates scoping under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate potential impacts of a proposed streambank stabilization project at Long Branch Campground (Figure 1), just below the Center Hill Dam and Reservoir Project. Bank erosion is threatening the structural security of the campsites and the safety of recreation at the site.

Center Hill Dam is located at Mile 26.6 on the Caney Fork River in DeKalb County, Tennessee. Completed in 1949, the reservoir spreads throughout DeKalb, Putnam, Warren, and White Counties and is one of four major flood risk management reservoirs for the Cumberland River with the others being Dale Hollow Reservoir, J. Percy Priest, and Lake Cumberland. Subsequent to construction, Congress authorized additional project purposes including recreation, fish and wildlife conservation, water quality, and water supply.

The Long Branch Campground is one of the most popular recreation sites at the Center Hill project and provides a variety of recreation activities from camping and picnicking to fishing and paddling. As it is located directly below the dam, the rapid changes in flow velocity and water levels from dam releases have resulted in the gradual erosion of the streambank at the Campground. The degradation of the bank was identified as a threat to use of the site, and USACE will be considering various options to restore and stabilize the site and preserve the integrity of this resource for current and future users.

USACE is considering the following courses of action:

- No Action – The streambank will continue to erode and may eventually result in several sites at Long Branch Campground being deemed unsuitable for use.
- Stabilization of the Streambank at Long Branch Campground – USACE shall design and consider several possible stabilization plans to be described in a future NEPA document. There is a potential need to temporarily close recreation access at the campground during construction. Once a path forward is selected, the public shall be notified and additional comments may be made on the proposed plan.

On 8 December 2025, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm, USACE will hold a public meeting at Smith County Ag Center located at 159 Ag Center Ln, South Carthage, TN 37030. USACE aims to gather input from all stakeholders to best balance the reservoir's authorized project purposes. USACE will also evaluate input submitted to determine the proper level of analysis for NEPA review (categorical exclusion, environmental assessment, or environmental impact statement).

This letter serves to solicit scoping comments from the public, federal, state, local agencies and officials, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity as part of the USACE planning process and in accordance with the NEPA process. We encourage comments not only about resources in the immediate project area, but also of plans or proposals for any other development that may influence project resources or potential alternative plans. This letter also serves to initiate the public involvement requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

We request comments be sent to CorpsLRNPlanningPublicCom@usace.army.mil no later than thirty calendar days from the date of this letter. If you are unable to access an email account, you may send written comments to the address listed on the letterhead, ATTN: CELRN-PMP. Comments will also be collected in-person at the Public Meeting. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Valerie J. McCormack, Ph.D.
Chief, Project Planning Branch

Enclosures



Figure 1: Long Branch Campground and Area of Bank Destabilization