Corps ahead of schedule, making plans to raise Lake Cumberland as Wolf Creek Foundation Remediation Project nears completion

JAMESTOWN, Ky. (Jan. 18, 2013) – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District is ahead of schedule on the Wolf Creek Dam Foundation Remediation Project and is now making plans to raise the water level in Lake Cumberland this summer.

As the project has proceeded toward completion, the Corps and the contractor, Treviicos-Soletanche Joint Venture, have been constantly working together to improve efficiencies and work processes, all the while keeping job safety requirements at the forefront. As a result the barrier wall installation has progressed ahead of schedule.

According to Don Getty, project manager, the barrier wall is currently on track to be completed by the early spring of 2013, which is significantly ahead of the previously planned completion date in December 2013. The barrier wall is the most critical component of the dam safety project and will have to be completed prior to raising the lake level.

Also before raising the lake, a dam safety team composed of an outside advisory panel of experts and experts within various Corps offices nationwide will review data on the completed barrier wall to ensure it meets requisite safety and quality standards. "We expect this review to happen within one month of the barrier wall completion," Getty said.

The District is proposing to raise the pool in increments. The initial increment will target an operating zone between elevations 700 and 705 feet or about 20 feet higher than the current range of elevation 680 and 685.

"The purpose of this initial increment is to determine how the dam reacts to these higher sustained lake levels before raising the lake further," Getty said. "Instruments installed in the dam will be monitored and analyzed during this time. If the dam performs as expected during the initial incremental pool raise and after another safety review, the goal is to return the lake to its historical operating levels without further increments."

"The entire team has been working very hard towards getting this project completed and intends to raise the lake to elevation 700-705 feet by the summer of 2013, which is great news for everyone who loves to recreate at Lake Cumberland. More importantly, completion of the barrier wall will provide the safety to the dam and protection to the communities downstream. It will also enhance our ability to generate power and reduce low water environmental impacts" said Lt. Col. James A. DeLapp, Nashville District commander.

Achieving this level is dependent on completing the barrier wall and obtaining safety approval by early spring, Getty added. "Sufficient rainfall after approval of the barrier wall will also be part of the equation of raising the lake for the 2013 summer recreation season," he said.

The lake is expected to be operated in its normal range in the fall of 2013 which means it could be lowered to elevation 685 feet as part of the normal water management cycle during the fall and to facilitate final riprap placement on the upstream face of the earthen portion of the dam. Although the barrier wall will be complete, the project will still have work to remove the work platform extension and its associated rock fill on the dam's embankment.

A final concrete placement and public completion ceremony is being planned for the spring of 2013. More information about this event will be released as the project nears its completion.

The public can obtain news, updates and information from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District on the district's website at www.lrn.usace.army.mil, on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/nashvillecorps and on Twitter at http://www.twitter.com/nashvillecorps. Lake Cumberland also has a Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/lakecumberland.

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