

adequate water supply for its district by constructing a water supply dam and 100 acre impoundment on Clear Creek. Clear Creek is a tributary to the Obed River which, along with part of Clear Creek, was designated a wild and scenic river in 1976 by Public Law 94-486. Engineering and preliminary environmental studies were performed for two alternative dam sites on Clear Creek at approximately river miles 33 and 40.

Based on information gathered during the initial environmental review of the Catoosa proposal, RUS and TVA propose to evaluate alternatives to meet the increasing water supply needs of the upper Cumberland Plateau region rather than limiting the scope of the action to the Catoosa proposal. The agencies decided to prepare an EIS for this action in order to obtain public input on the proposal.

RUS has received funding to address the Catoosa Utility District water supply needs. RUS requested that TVA participate in the preparation of the EIS because of TVA's expertise and experience in regional water supply development and because TVA must approve obstructions or dams along the Tennessee River and its tributaries under Section 26a of the TVA Act.

The first step in the preparation of the EIS will be the determination of the

scope of the EIS. It is anticipated that the scope will include construction of a dam on Clear Creek as originally proposed by the Catoosa Utility District, alternative dam sites, and other potential water supply sources including in-stream flows and pipeline sources. Different design concepts will also be addressed. Potentially significant issues for discussion in the EIS include:

1. Effects on stream discharge, water quality, and availability;
2. Impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecology, including threatened and endangered species;
3. Impacts on floodplains, wetlands, recreation, and existing land use; and
4. Socioeconomic and cultural effects associated with completion of the project and alternatives to it.

This list is not intended to be all inclusive, nor is it intended to be a predetermination of impacts. As scoping and preparation of the EIS proceeds, other issues may be revealed which will necessitate further analyses.

RUS and TVA invite interested persons and agencies to comment on the above suggested scope of the EIS. The agencies also request comments on environmental issues which should not be viewed as significant and which should not be discussed in detail in the EIS.

A public meeting will be held in the project area to receive oral and written comments. Details about this meeting will be announced later in area newspapers and direct mailings. Comments received at this meeting will be accorded the same weight as written comments. The United States Army Corps of Engineers will participate in this EIS process as a cooperating agency. The National Park Service may also become a cooperating agency.

After the scoping process and the initial environmental analysis are completed, RUS and TVA will issue a Draft EIS. A Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS will be published in the **Federal Register** and area newspapers, and public comments will again be solicited. Those persons who choose not to comment on the scope of the document at this time but desire a copy of the Draft EIS should send their names and addresses to Dale V. Wilhelm at the address listed above. RUS and TVA anticipate releasing a final EIS in about 20 months.

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