



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

**NEWS RELEASE**

BUILDING STRONG®

**Release 14-003**

For Immediate Release

Date Jan. 29, 2014

**Contact:**

Bill Peoples, Nashville District, 615-736-7161

[william.l.peoples@usace.army.mil](mailto:william.l.peoples@usace.army.mil)

Tom MacKenzie, USFWS, 404-679-7292

[tom\\_mackenzie@fws.gov](mailto:tom_mackenzie@fws.gov)

**Corps, Fish and Wildlife Service address compliance requirements at Lake Cumberland**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Jan. 29, 2014) – In compliance with federal environmental laws and regulations, the Corps of Engineers' Nashville district is actively consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the discovery of new populations of an existing endangered species in Lake Cumberland, Kentucky. Until this consultation is completed, the Corps will target a maximum pool elevation of 705 feet, which is the same as the 2013 recreation season's elevation.

A species survey report on Dec. 11, 2013, confirmed the presence of the federally endangered Duskytail Darter in five miles of stream habitat in the headwaters region of the lake that were exposed during the drawdown. The survey was a required compliance commitment made by the Corps as part of the Record of Decision for the Wolf Creek Dam/Lake Cumberland Environmental Impact Statement related to the emergency drawdown of the lake.

"We are working closely with the Fish and Wildlife Service to determine an appropriate course of action including what conservation measures could be implemented to minimize any potential impacts to this species," said Lt. Col. John L. Hudson, Nashville District commander. "The lake will operate this coming recreation season at about 25 feet higher than when construction was ongoing at Wolf Creek Dam, which will enable the same access to the lake and its significant recreational opportunities as the public enjoyed last year. We are working in close consultation with the Service to ensure our actions are protective of the endangered species and its habitat as required by the Endangered Species Act."

A final decision about Lake Cumberland pool operating levels will be made after the Corps completes a biological assessment and the Service prepares a biological opinion. The outcome of that formal consultation process will determine the way forward.

"Our plan is to complete consultation with the Corps as soon as possible after we receive their biological assessment," said Lee Andrews, field supervisor of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Kentucky Field Office. "This is our top priority. We have already worked with the Corps to develop a number of potential conservation measures that, when implemented, will minimize impacts to the Duskytail Darter and expedite our review of the project. We will continue to work with our partners in the Corps to make that happen."

Construction on the Wolf Creek Dam cutoff wall is complete. All evidence to date indicates that the dam remediation work is functioning as intended. Ongoing construction activities to remove the remaining shot rock fill on the upstream face of the embankment are expected to be completed by early March 2014.

The public can obtain news, updates and information from the U.S. Army Corps Nashville District website at [www.lrn.usace.army.mil](http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil) and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/nashvillecorps](http://www.facebook.com/nashvillecorps).

-30-

---

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – NASHVILLE DISTRICT**

801 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn. 37203

[www.lrn.usace.army.mil](http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil)