

TVA Implements Flood Risk Reduction Measures After Heavy Rainfall May 8, 2009

TVA has implemented flood risk reduction operations on the Tennessee River because of heavy rainfall across the Tennessee Valley since May 1.

“One of TVA’s main tasks in managing the Tennessee River system, including its tributaries, is maintaining water levels within our operating flood guide,” River Scheduling General Manager Chuck Bach said. “An additional 2 to 4 inches of rain is forecast through May 10, with high spots of 3 to 7 inches in portions of the Valley. These are events we have not faced for about three years, because the Valley has been under extreme drought conditions.”

Bach said that TVA is cooperating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to move water through dams on the Tennessee River ahead of an expected flood crest on the Mississippi River next week. “Moving water from the Tennessee River reservoirs now will allow us to reduce flows from our dams next week when the Mississippi crests,” he said.

The Tennessee River flows into the Ohio River, which flows into the Mississippi River.

As part of its flood risk reduction operations, TVA is storing as much water as possible in the tributary reservoirs and releasing minimum flows through its dams to meet downstream water needs.

Bach said that the rainfall since the beginning of the year has greatly helped relieve drought conditions that have existed since 2007. He said that TVA expects its tributary reservoirs to reach normal levels by June 1, making water-related summer recreational activities much more accessible than they have been under drought conditions.

This year began with an average 30-inch rainfall deficit across the Valley that had accumulated since 2007.

Bach said recreational users, particularly those on the Tennessee River, should use caution and avoid areas near the dams where water is being released through spillways.

TVA is the nation’s largest public power provider and is completely self-financing. TVA provides power to large industries and 158 power distributors that serve approximately 9 million consumers in seven southeastern states. TVA also manages the Tennessee River and its tributaries to provide multiple benefits, including flood damage reduction, navigation, water quality and recreation.

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Media Contact: Jim Allen, Knoxville, (865) 632-7453
TVA News Bureau, Knoxville, (865) 632-6000

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