

From: Elizabeth Webster [ewebster@access.k12.wv.us]
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 1:40 PM
To: O Donnell, Bill - Morgantown, WV
Subject: Lost River Comments
RE: EIS for Lost River Site #16 published April 2009

Concerns and questions related to your published document of April 2009:

1) EMERGENCY SPILLWAY DESIGN CHANGED. You have made major changes to the design of the emergency spillway which will require more land and will dump flood water onto land that you have not investigated and which requires additional loss of farmland. What prompted the change in the location/design of the emergency spillway? Was an investigation done to determine if the new design would create irreparable harm to land that might be damaged by the overflow water? Also, I could not find any evidence that you investigated the impact on the Garrett property or the Biller property where the storm water will be dumped. Is this going to cause massive erosion on the land or are you planning to dig a ditch from the end of the emergency spillway to the Lost River. Did you include the cost of such a ditch or the cost of an easement from the dam to the Lost River. Did you investigate the impact of additional water being added to the Lost River at this point and the impact on the bridge and the possible closure of Rt. 259 as a result of increased volume of water flowing into the river? Do you have an estimation of possible damages the land this water will impact?

Changing the design of the emergency spillway ..."resulted in a change to the land acquisition boundary. As a result about 49 acres of additional land area ... " will be taken. [Pg C-11] This not only increased the cost of land acquisition, but raises other questions about future damage to the area where the emergency flood waters will be dumped.

You changed the design of the emergency spillway but you refuse to consider moving the dam upstream to lessen the impact on prime agricultural land. Why?

Approximately .4 of a mile upstream of the proposed site, nature has provided at the end of the ridge an area, known to locals as "the willows", that could be utilized for this an impoundment. Moving the structure upstream save approximately 250 acres of farm land which includes some 30+ acres of wetlands. We have asked you repeatedly to investigate moving the structure, but you refuse to do so. *WHY? If you can change the design of the dam, why can't you investigate another location on the same steam?*

2) OTHER ALTERNATIVES: One alternative you fail to seriously consider is to buy the floodplain. If the people living along the Lost River are suffering so much from continual flooding, I am sure they would be very willing to sell their land and move some where else. On page 15, you report that the floodplain totals 1,900 acres. At a cost of \$15,000 per acre (The amount that you gave Mr. Snapp for his land.) the total cost of buying the floodplain would be \$2,350,000. That's a lot cheaper than spending \$30+ million on one dam that controls approximately 7% of the drainage area.

You have never seriously considered the "NO BUILD" alternative. On page 86, it states that the

No Action Alternative is "the alternative with the greatest net benefits." *Why is this not your recommendation?*

3) WATER SUPPLY: *Why not renovate Kimsey Run Dam at a cost of \$3 million rather than spend another \$30 million for water supply for phantom people who may or may not live here in 50 years? Check the status of the water treatment plant at Baker. They have been unsuccessful in convincing people to sign up and the Arkansaw area is much more heavily populated than the Lost City area. Where are all the people that you claim need water? You count weekenders who spend two days during the summer months as full time residents. I believe that you have exaggerated your benefits and minimized the costs to make a viable cost benefit ratio.*

You include the benefits of water supply, but you fail to estimate the cost of getting that water to local residents. If you include the benefits, then a reasonable person would expect to see the cost also outlined. Taxpayers will pay for the dam and the treatment plant and the distribution lines. *What is the estimated cost of the water treatment facility and why have you not included these costs in your EIS? Isn't Rural Development under the USDA umbrella of agencies? Isn't there funding derived from tax dollars?*

4) NATIVE TROUT: The Lower Cove Run has native brook trout. Local fishermen believe that the population is reproducing in these waters. *Did you interview local fisherman who could attest to this fact?* The Lower Cove Run is one of two streams in the entire state that has native brook trout that reproduce. Why would you want to destroy their habitat?

**Elizabeth A. Webster
294 Lower Cove Run Road
Mathias, WV 26812**