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**Index Field:** Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)  
**Project Name:** Bridges Over Daddy's Creek and Obed River  
**Project Number:** 2009-56

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY  
REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGES OVER DADDY'S CREEK AND OBED RIVER IN  
CATOOSA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA  
CUMBERLAND COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

On April 21, 2009, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) submitted to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) a request for permit approval in accordance with Section 26a of the *TVA Act* for two bridge replacements in the Emory River watershed in the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The bridges are both located in Cumberland County, Tennessee. The FHWA, in cooperation with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), Tennessee Department of Transportation, and the National Park Service (NPS), Obed Wild and Scenic River, proposes to reestablish an adequate transportation system within the Catoosa WMA by replacing the Potter Ford Road Bridge across the Obed River, which washed out in 2001, and replacing the existing, but structurally compromised, Otter Creek Road Bridge across Daddy's Creek.

The project is needed because there is limited connectivity between the two sections of the Catoosa WMA. The collapse of the Potter Ford Road Bridge has rendered that road unusable, requiring a detour in excess of 20 miles. In addition, the Otter Creek Road Bridge is structurally compromised and therefore poses safety concerns. The road and bridge network is used by the NPS and TWRA personnel in refuge resources management activities and by the public for recreation purposes such as hunting, fishing, canoeing, and hiking.

Two alternatives are available to TVA: (1) the "No Build Alternative," under which TVA would not issue the necessary Section 26a approval to permit the replacement of the two bridges or (2) the "Build Alternative," under which TVA would issue the necessary Section 26a approval to permit the bridge replacements. A replacement of the two bridges in the Catoosa WMA is necessary because of the limited connectivity between the two sections of the WMA. TVA prepared an environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate the environmental impacts of these alternatives; the EA is attached and incorporated by reference.

TVA's issuance of Section 26a approval and the subsequent replacement of the two bridges has the potential to affect endangered species. On February 5, 2009, the Cookeville office of FWS issued to the FHWA a Biological Opinion (BO) based on its review of the proposed bridge replacements and their effects on the spotfin chub (*Erimonax monachus*), purple bean (*Villosa perpurpurea*), Cumberland bean pearlymussel (*Villosa trabalis*), Cumberland rosemary *Conradina verticillata*, and Virginia Spiraea (*Spiraea virginiana*) pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The BO also addressed effects to designated critical habitat for spotfin chub and purple bean. The FWS BO dated February 5, 2009, established reasonable and prudent measures and implementing terms and conditions which when employed would minimize impacts to the identified species and their habitats in the Obed River and Daddy's Creek. These measures are listed below in the Mitigation and Special Permit Conditions

The BO also established a project "action" area, which includes a suitable buffer area both upstream and downstream of the proposed work area. The USFWS determined that this level

of expected take is not likely to result in jeopardy to any of these species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat for spotfin chub or purple bean.

TVA submitted to the USFWS on June 25, 2009, a letter stating our agreement with the FHWA biological assessment (BA) determinations regarding impacts to endangered species and designated critical habitats and requested that TVA be added as a party to the consultation. The USFWS responded to TVA on July 7, 2009, with an amendment to the BO to include TVA as part of the consultation and thus fulfill the agency's obligations under Section 7 of the ESA.

Impacts to recreation (including the nearby Cumberland Trail Scenic State Park), terrestrial ecology, visual resources, and navigation would be insignificant. There would be no impacts to historic properties, wetlands, or prime farmlands. The proposed action is not likely to affect any federally listed as endangered or threatened terrestrial or plant species. Impacts to the floodplain would be minimal, and the proposed action complies with Executive Order 11988 on floodplain management.

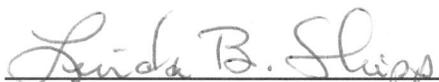
### **Mitigation and Special Permit Conditions**

In addition to the routine Section 26a permit conditions such as the use of best management projects, TVA would require the following measures contained in the BO:

1. In-stream work will be done to avoid direct effects to the listed species.
2. If pouring of concrete at the project sites is necessary, it will be conducted in a way that avoids or minimizes the potential for spillage.
3. Construction of bridge piers will be done in a way that minimizes impacts to stream habitat.
4. Removal of the existing bridge over Daddy's Creek will be done in a manner that will minimize the potential for adverse impacts to the stream.

### **Conclusion and Findings**

TVA has assessed the potential impacts associated with FHWA's proposed action. Based on this review, we conclude that issuance of a Section 26a approval, with implementation of the mitigation measures and permit conditions, would not be a major federal action significantly affecting the environment. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required.

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Daniel H. Ferry, Senior Manager  
Environmental Services and Programs  
Office of Environment and Research  
Tennessee Valley Authority

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August 26, 2009  
Date Signed