

Regional Resource Stewardship Council
Discussion Questions
March 16-17, 2005

1. How can TVA better manage public lands to make a contribution toward meeting conservation, recreation, and economic development needs in the Valley?

- Philosophy, policy or set of standards
- Mini SMI or ROS process
- Public is responsible for helping develop the process.
- Close the loop—reinforce the rationale behind the decision, after the decision has been made.

2. What tradeoff strategies or other approaches should be used by TVA in balancing conservation, recreation, and economic development uses of public land?

- Add an overarching principle for off-cycle requests for changes in allocation. Mitigation, swap, or sale should increase public benefit, over and above the original designated use.
- Consider trades of lands in areas with lots of available land with other reservoirs with little public land.
- Where there has been a lot of development, TVA should take a hard line look. Where there isn't any development, TVA should be more open to potential development. State the philosophy in the guidelines.
- Criteria on whether or not development is allowed should be based on the best science available, not just economics.
- Be flexible to allow for off-site mitigation within the same watershed or an adjoining watershed.

3. The draft criteria address public interest, land use, and financial considerations. Do the proposed criteria adequately address these considerations?

- Does not include lands with use restrictions (i.e., ROS changes mean owners have access to more land). Includes only fee simple land.
- Environmental criteria should be spelled out in greater detail in the land use guidelines. State that the NEPA process will cover the environmental issues.
- Need to consider exchange of lands across different parts of the Valley. Users on one reservoir with substantial amounts of public land can buy parcels on another reservoir for maintain and gain. Create more public lands where needed and increased tax base.
- Impacts of runoff should be added in the criteria for land use guidelines. TVA can recommend technologies or actions to reduce runoff to encourage low runoff and sustainable growth practices (see #3). Clarify #3 and encourage these practices to be carried out.
- Applicant for change in land use should be encouraged to vet the project locally first to ascertain local opinion before submitting proposal to TVA. Provide statements from community members. Some counties require local

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approval of proposals before submitting to TVA. See #5—encourage regional, local and public support before submission to TVA. Encourage integration of regional and local entities.

- 4. Are there other categories that should be addressed? If so, what criteria should be included in these categories?**
- Publicly vet the guidelines to provide TVA with legal protection (NEPA process) and allow flexibility for the organization, while protecting the public trust.
- 5. Do you feel these guidelines will adequately cover the majority of situations likely to arise concerning requests for modifications to land plans and allocations?**
- The broad interpretation of public benefit allows requests to be considered in the majority of situations.
 - #5—Consider adding economic development entities as an element of local support.
 - Include some aspect of the stakeholder's ability to comply with past regulations or requests.
- 6. Among the criteria identified in the draft guidelines and in the Council's discussions, which are of greatest importance to you?**
- The main criterion is maintain and gain.
 - Category of public interest and criteria #1 addresses balance for the public interest better.
 - No net loss, be adequate stewards of the extraordinary resources.
 - Underline the word supersede in criteria #1.
 - Criteria #1 has to underlie everything else.
 - Protection of natural and cultural resources at a no net loss policy.
 - Be proactive instead of reactive.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Are there use restrictions for maintain and gain? After land is "traded" are there restrictions to types of use? (i.e., clear-cutting)
- TVA can sell land with existing deed restrictions. (see #13) Environmental assessment performed on exchange lands.
- Financial Guidelines (see #22) Buyer has to show that they can provide the same level of benefits as the initiating party. TVA asks for qualified bidders.
- Can these criteria be clustered under guiding principles?
- Give preference to off-cycle requests in areas where there is a local zoning or land use plan in place.

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- Encourage use of best practices, using multi-county and multi-government coordination.
- Would putting the guidelines out without seeking public vetting open TVA to criticism? With these criteria as subjective as they are, once the public sees them, they may expect TVA to follow the guidelines. Possible legal action may ensue.