Melton Hill Lock

Clinch River, Oak Ridge, TN

Project Features

- Melton Hill Lock is located 23 river miles upstream of the mouth of the Clinch River entering the main stem of the Tennessee River at mile 568.
- Authorization: TVA first proposed the Melton Hill project to Congress in 1957. President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the funding bill into law on September 2, 1960, and TVA began construction on September 6, 1960
- Melton Hill Dam is a concrete gravity and earthen fill structure measuring 1,020 ft. long, 103 ft. high, and contains 5,470 acres of water surface. The power plant section of the dam contains two generating units capable of producing 79 megawatts. The spillway section contains 3 spillway with an average maximum discharge of 118,000 CFS. Melton Hill Dam is equipped with a navigation lock measuring 400' long x 75' feet wide with a maximum lift of roughly 65'.
- The construction of Melton Hill Lock & Dam was completed on May 1st, 1963. The navigation lock itself was placed in service on June 10th, 1963.
- Like all lock facilities on the Tennessee River, Guntersville Lock is owned by the Tennessee Valley Authority and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Consequences of Not Maintaining the Project

- Failure to provide adequate funding to maintain this facility will have certain effects to the local and regional economy resulting from lack of barge transportation access to industrial plants in Clinton, TN. Railroad rates in the region would increase as a result as well.

Regional Importance

- Melton Hill Lock is not currently staffed with commercial and recreational interests locking though by appointment only.

- Melton Hill Lock had a commercial lockage in April of 2017 whereby a commercial tow with flat deck barge delivered a hot metal stamping unit to the Hyundai manufacturing plant in Clinton, TN.

- Local recreational interests remain a focal point for engagement at the District level.

- Melton Hill Lock provides critical barge access to the Department of Energy, Y-12 Security Complex providing for delivery of goods and materials too large in size for other modes of transportation.

Additional Information

- 2015 lock tonnage (in thousands) 3,733
- National Rank: 119
- Current Miter Gate In Service Date: 1965
- Projected Year Lock Miter Gates Reach "F" Condition: Main: 2023 Auxiliary: 2027
- Projected Miter Gate Replacement: Main: 2033 Auxiliary: 2041

Congressional Interests

Senator Richard Shelby, R-TN
Senator Luther Strange, R-TN
Representative Robert Aderholt, R-AL-4