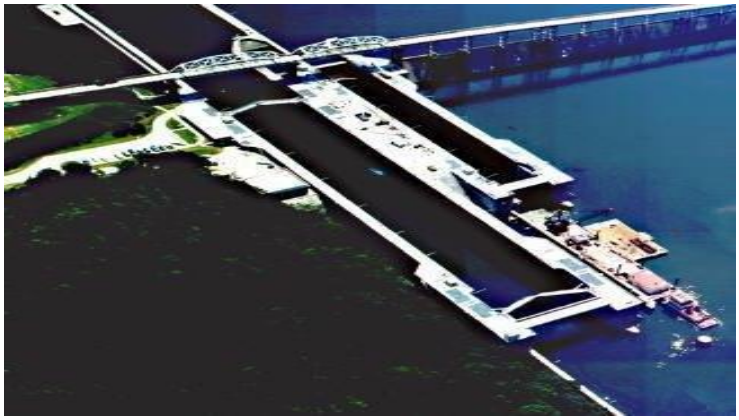
General Joseph Wheeler Lock and Dam

Tennessee River, Rogersville, AL

Project Features

- Wheeler Lock is located 74.1 river miles downstream from Guntersville Lock and 15.5 river miles upstream from Wilson Lock. The nearest community to the dam is Rogersville, Al.
- Authorization: Authorized by the TVA Board of Directors, November 19, 1934, the Flood Control Act of 1938 and the Rivers and Harbor Act of 1946. Primary authorized purposes are navigation, flood control, and production of hydroelectric power
- Wheeler Dam is a concrete gravity dam that measures 6,342 feet. The power plant section of the dam contains eleven generating units capable of producing 361 megawatts. The spillway section contains 60 tainter gates with a maximum discharge capacity of 650,000 cubic feet per second. The project has two lock chambers measuring 600'x110' and 400'x60'.
- The Wheeler pool covers 1,027 miles of shoreline and 67,070 acres of water surface along a 74.1 mile stretch of the Tennessee River through parts of AL. Wheeler Lake is fed by releases from TVA's Guntersville Dam, and various smaller tributaries.



Regional Importance

- Wheeler Lock passes over 3,500 government, commercial, and recreational vessels each year, carrying 9 million tons of cargo to the heart of the nation with major importance to the Tennessee Valley, while also serving the Port of Decatur, Port of Guntersville and Port of Chattanooga. Cargo consists of coal, petroleum, crude materials, manufactured goods, farm products, chemicals, machinery, various components for the aerospace industry, and other commodities.

Consequences of Not Maintaining the Project

- Failure to provide adequate funding to maintain this facility will have significant effects to the local and regional economy as well as the nation's defense capabilities including: increased transportation costs and delays to the shipment of raw materials; reduced power production capabilities; and also a significant impact to the economy throughout AL due to the shipping of goods that rely on the Port of Decatur, Port of Guntersville, and the Port of Chattanooga.

Additional Information

- 2015 lock tonnage (in thousands) 7,828
- National Rank: 73
- Current Miter Gate In Service Date: 1963
- Projected Year Lock Miter Gates Reach "F" Condition:
  Main: Downstream: 2023 Upstream: 2023
  Auxiliary: Downstream: 2028 Upstream: 2028
- Projected Miter Gate Replacement:
  Main: Downstream: 2032 Upstream: 2032
  Auxiliary: Downstream: 2042 Upstream: 2042

Congressional Interests

Senator Richard Shelby, R-AL
Senator Luther Strange, R-AL
Representative Morris Brooks, Jr., R-AL-5