

*1. Administrative Details*

**Proposal Name: Feasibility Study and Project Modification for  
John W. Flannagan Dam**

**by Agency: Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet, Commonwealth of  
Kentucky**

**Locations: KY,VA**

**Date Submitted: 09/23/2015**

**Confirmation Number: 96865ca2-ba33-4780-8fc7-62f6e47853b7**

*Supporting Documents*

<b>File Name</b>	<b>Date Uploaded</b>
Flannagan.SOAR.arnett.pdf	09/23/2015
Haysi.pdf	09/23/2015
Rep. Chris Harris.pdf	09/23/2015
Big Sandy Comm. & Tech. College President.pdf	09/23/2015
Letcher Co. Judge Executive.pdf	09/23/2015
Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.pdf	09/23/2015
Flannagan.Ward.pdf	09/23/2015
Pikeville.pdf	09/23/2015
Speaker Greg Stumbo.pdf	09/23/2015
Dickenson Co. Tourism.pdf	09/23/2015
Prestonsburg Tourism Director.pdf	09/23/2015
Haysi.pdf	09/23/2015
Prestonsburg Tourism Commission.pdf	09/23/2015
Flannagan.Rogers.pdf	09/23/2015
Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority.pdf	09/23/2015
Big Sandy ADD Executive Director.pdf	09/23/2015
Prestonsburg.pdf	09/23/2015
Letcher Co. Chamber of Commerce.pdf	09/23/2015
RussellForkSupportLetters.pdf	09/23/2015
Flannagan Reservoir.SecStewart.pdf	09/23/2015
IWA.BigSandy.pdf	09/23/2015
Dickenson Co. Board of Supervisors.pdf	09/23/2015
Dickenson Co. Chamber of Commerce.pdf	09/23/2015
Pike Co. Judge Executive.pdf	09/23/2015
Flannagan.Jones.pdf	09/23/2015
Floyd Co. Chamber of Commerce.pdf	09/23/2015
University of Pikeville President.pdf	09/23/2015

**2. Provide the name of the primary sponsor and all non-Federal interests that have contributed or are expected to contribute toward the non-Federal share of the proposed feasibility study or modification.**

Sponsor	Letter of Support
Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia(Primary)	The state governments of Kentucky and Virginia are the primary sponsors of this proposal. Both states are submitting letters of support from their respective Governors; Beshear in Kentucky and McAuliffe in Virginia. The letters have been uploaded with this application.

**3. State if this proposal is for a feasibility study, a modification to an authorized USACE feasibility study or a modification to an authorized USACE project. If it is a proposal for a modification, provide the authorized water resources development feasibility study or project name.**

[x] Modification to an Authorized USACE Project : John W. Flannagan Dam and Reservoir

***4. Clearly articulate the specific project purpose(s) of the proposed study or modification. Demonstrate that the proposal is related to USACE mission and authorities and specifically address why additional or new authorization is needed.***

Kentucky and Virginia jointly request a feasibility study for and a modification to the existing J.W. Flannagan Dam project to include “enhanced recreation” as a primary project purpose. Dam operations directly impact the economic potential of one of the premier whitewater destinations in the eastern US, the Russell Fork River.

Russell Fork, a tributary of the Big Sandy is an established international whitewater destination. The world-class whitewater conditions on Russell Fork are the result of the water release schedule for Flannagan Dam. Modifying the Dam’s project purpose to include “enhanced recreation” will allow operational flexibility at the project level to maximize the regional economic potential of Russell Fork River.

J.W. Flannagan Dam, in Dickenson County, VA, is situated on the Pound River, a tributary of the Russell Fork of the Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy River. The Flood Control Act of 1938 and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1961 authorized the project. In June 2014, the USACE Huntington District approved and published an Initial Watershed Assessment for the Big Sandy River Basin, including Flannagan Dam. Per the Corps’ own assessment, the feasibility of additional whitewater releases along Russell Fork could be included in a Final Watershed Assessment or Section 216 Study (IWA pgs. 95, 114). Even with recommended approval from the Corps, additional whitewater releases would still require Congressional authorization through modification to the project’s purpose.

With the persistent decline of the coal industry, and the need to diversify the economy in Central Appalachia, it is critical that we further develop existing opportunities within the region. Russell Fork, through additional whitewater releases, presents a prime opportunity to grow an internationally acclaimed destination and positively impact an entire region. Please consider this request to authorize the next steps toward achieving this goal.

5. To the extent practicable, provide an estimate of the total cost, and the Federal and non-Federal share of those costs, of the proposed study and, separately, an estimate of the cost of construction or modification.

	Federal	Non-Federal	Total
<b>Study</b>	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000
<b>Construction</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Explanation (if necessary)**

An Initial Watershed Assessment has already been performed on the Big Sandy River Basin, within which this project sits. That IWA prescribes several alternative methods to study recommendations for increased flexibility with whitewater releases from Flannagan Dam. The total cost of the study would be contingent upon how in depth USACE would need to go to determine the feasibility of this request. This would require evaluating the issue within the context of the other project purposes for Flannagan Dam. Upon completion of the study, and assuming “enhanced recreation” became a project purpose for Flannagan Dam, it is unlikely scheduling changes in the water release would result in additional expenses upon the federal agency (USACE) or its non-federal partners (Kentucky and Virginia).

***6. To the extent practicable, describe the anticipated monetary and nonmonetary benefits of the proposal including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement to transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States.***

Each fall thousands of whitewater enthusiasts descend upon the Russell Fork gorge to participate in one of the best whitewater experiences in the eastern US. KY and VA both benefit economically, not just from the direct spending impact of the whitewater user group, but also from the reputation of Russell Fork. The economies of small towns like Elkhorn City, KY are dependent on tourists. The success of Breaks Interstate Park, one of 2 multi-state operated parks in the country is significantly impacted by the whitewater experience.

The region surrounding Russell Fork is one of the most economically distressed in America. Severely impacted by the downturn in the coal economy, residents of Appalachia are desperately seeking ways to diversify the economy. The persistent economic disparity and crisis in this region have led to the development of emergency initiatives to reverse the trend; SOAR in KY, and the Appalachian Spring Initiative in Southwest VA. Both efforts have the support of their respective governors, federal delegations, and numerous federal agencies.

Having extended, consistent, and defined whitewater release schedules will provide greater opportunities for tourism professionals to promote the Russell Fork and integrate those efforts into broader tourism and economic development initiatives. In short, more whitewater equals more visitation, increased economic activity and more jobs, fulfilling the objectives of SOAR and Appalachian Spring.

Tourism is the third largest industry in Kentucky, outdoor recreation is its fastest growing sector, and paddle-sports are a primary catalyst for that growth. The Russell Fork inspires people to get outdoors, pursue active lifestyles, and provides economic opportunities for a region that desperately needs them. Modifying the project purpose at Flannagan Dam to create additional whitewater opportunity will create a ripple that will positively impact an entire region.

This request has broad public support.

**7. Does local support exist? If 'Yes', describe the local support for the proposal.**

Yes

### **Local Support Description**

Local support is universal among the relevant local governments, area development districts, tourism and economic development organizations, state government representation, higher education, local outfitters and the paddling community. No opposition is known at this time. Please see attached letters of support and Corps' Initial Watershed Assessment for the Big Sandy Basin.

**8. Does the primary sponsor named in (2.) above have the financial ability to provide for the required cost share?**

Yes

# Additional Proposal Information

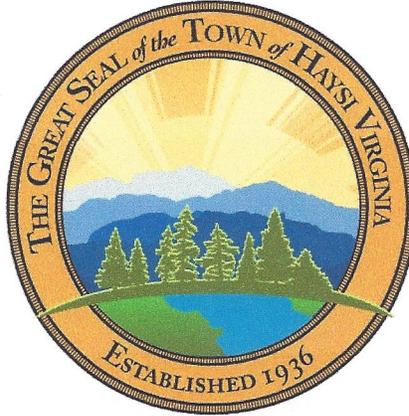
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**Haysi.pdf**

# TOWN OF HAYSI

## Mayor

Larry D. Yates



## Council Members

Wm. "Billy" Counts  
Michael Harris  
Tim Wallace  
Barry Whitt  
Rocky Wood  
Susan Tiller

August 27, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, I believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,



Larry D. Yates  
Mayor

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Big Sandy Comm. & Tech. College President.pdf**

**Office of the President**  
One Bert T. Combs Drive  
Prestonsburg, KY 41653  
Telephone: (606) 886-7332  
Fax: (606) 886-2110  
Website: [bigsandy.kctcs.edu](http://bigsandy.kctcs.edu)

September 9, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy,

We are writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. We believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. We believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.



KCTCS is an equal opportunity employer and education institution.

KENTUCKY COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Respectfully,



Dr. Devin Stephenson  
President/CEO

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Dickenson Co. Board of Supervisors.pdf**

# DICKENSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Supervisors

County Administrator  
G. DAVID MOORE, JR.

DONNIE W. RIFE, CHAIRMAN  
CLINTWOOD DISTRICT



DELANO SYKES, VICE-CHAIRMAN  
SANDLICK DISTRICT

DAVID YATES  
ERVINTON DISTRICT

SHELBY WILLIS  
KENADY DISTRICT

GARY HALL  
WILLIS DISTRICT

P.O. Box 1098  
Clintwood, Virginia 24228  
Telephone: 276/926-1676  
Fax: 276/926-1649  
dmoore@dickensonva.org

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Russell Fork and the Levisa Rivers are outlets for several rivers in Buchanan and Dickenson Counties; and

WHEREAS, this creates tremendous potential to contribute to tourism in these counties and downstream in Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers currently releases excess water at night and during weekdays without regard to recreation; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stated that the current authorization for Flannagan do not require the Corps to consider downstream recreation out of the dam; and

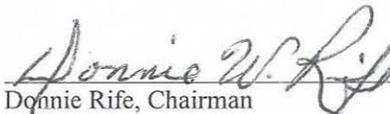
WHEREAS, if such recreation is authorized by Congress, then a reallocation study needs to be performed to study relocation of lake storage for this new project purpose; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of this board to see all stakeholders, including Dickenson County benefit; and

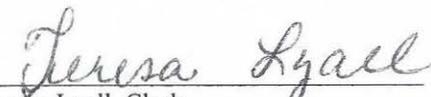
WHEREAS, Senatorial and Congressional representatives have met numerous times at various sites on this unresolved issue since 2006; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Dickenson County Board of Supervisors request our United States Senate and Congress to introduce and pass this authorization for downstream recreation with a resulting reallocation study as one of the project purposes for John Flannagan Dam.

ADOPTED this 23RD day of SEPTEMBER, 2014.

  
Donnie Rife, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Teresa Lyall, Clerk

2014-02

Whereas the Town Council of the Town Of Haysi believes A Diversified Economy Is A Better Economy and

Whereas a key component of The Town Of Haysi's efforts to diversify its economy is to attract outdoor enthusiasts, adventure outdoor enthusiasts and other types of tourism and

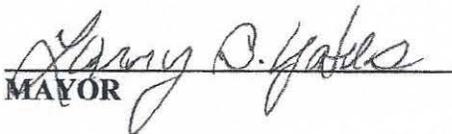
Whereas The Town Of Haysi is a Gateway Town to both John Flannagan Dam and Reservoir and The Breaks Interstate Park, both being connected by waters of The Pound River and The Russell Fork River and

Whereas the current legislation governing The US Army Corps Of Engineers as it manages and releases water downstream from John Flannagan Dam flowing through The Breaks Interstate Park does not currently include "Enhanced Recreation" or "Downstream, Off Property Recreation" as a project purpose and

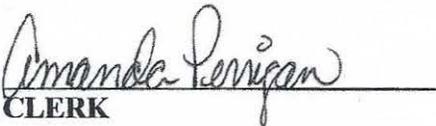
Now, Therefore be it Resolved, that The Town Of Haysi supports changes by The United States Congress to that legislation to include both "Enhanced Recreation" and "Downstream, Off Property Recreation" as project purposes for John Flannagan Dam and Reservoir.

**ADOPTED** by the Town of Haysi this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2014.

**APPROVED BY:**

  
MAYOR

**ATTEST BY:**

  
CLERK

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Dickenson Co. Chamber of Commerce.pdf**

# Dickenson County Chamber of Commerce

194 Clintwood Main Street  
P.O. Box 1990  
Clintwood, Virginia 24228

*"Building the Future, Preserving the Past"*

August 31, 2015



Phone: 276-926-6074  
E-mail: chamber@dcwin.org

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

On behalf of the Dickenson County Chamber of Commerce, we are writing to express our support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. We believe this study will show Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. We believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, chambers of commerce and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rita Surratt".

Rita Surratt, President/CEO  
Dickenson County Chamber of Commerce

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Dickenson Co. Tourism.pdf

**DICKENSON COUNTY TOURISM**  
**RITA SURRATT, TOURISM DIRECTOR**  
**"Building the Future, Preserving the Past"**

August 31, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

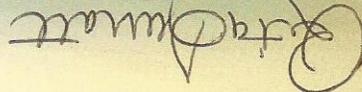
On behalf of the Dickenson County Tourism Committee, we are writing to express our support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. We believe this study will show Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

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Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever.

Sincerely,



Rita Surratt, TMP  
Director of Tourism  
Dickenson County Tourism Committee

(276) 926-6074  
(276) 275-1294  
www.dickensoncountyvirginia.org

194 Clintwood Main Street  
P.O. Box 1990  
Clintwood, VA 24228

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Flannagan Reservoir.SecStewart.pdf**



## **TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET**

**STEVEN L. BESHEAR**  
GOVERNOR

2400 CAPITAL PLAZA TOWER  
500 MERO STREET  
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601  
502-564-4270 – OFFICE  
502-564-1512 – FAX

**LINDY CASEBIER**  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

**BOB STEWART**  
SECRETARY

**MATT SAWYERS**  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

**September 23, 2015**

**The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy**  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

**Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:**

**As Secretary of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, I am writing to express my full support of Governor Beshear's request for a feasibility study to determine the full impact of modifying the Flannagan Reservoir project to permit more frequent, seasonal water releases into the Russell Fork River. I sincerely hope the US Army Corps of Engineers will give serious consideration to granting Governor Beshear's request as expeditiously as possible.**

**Tourism is a significant and important economic contributor to the Commonwealth of Kentucky; however, with the abundance of natural resources in the Big Sandy River Basin, we are confident that there is tremendous potential to more fully develop appropriate recreational opportunities that would bring much needed tourism development into this region, which is struggling mightily to recover from the flagging coal industry.**

**There is an intense regional planning effort underway in the coal region of Eastern Kentucky currently underway led by Governor Beshear and Congressman Hal Rogers called SOAR (which stands for Shaping Our Appalachian Region). Since SOAR's inception nearly two years ago, the development of tourism throughout the region has been identified as a leading strategy for helping to re-shape the economy of Eastern Kentucky to begin to replace the tens of thousands of jobs lost in the coal industry. Furthermore, appropriate tourism development would also support the responsible utilization of the incredible natural resources in the region and help preserve those resources for future generations. More frequent water releases from the Flannagan Reservoir would, in our estimation, create and establish a sustainable whitewater rafting and paddle sports industry much like we have seen evolve on the New and Gauley Rivers in West Virginia.**

Secretary Darcy  
September 23, 2015  
Page 2

We sincerely believe a feasibility study could examine any possible environmental impacts of more frequent water releases to insure the original mission of the Reservoir, namely flood control, would not be minimized and would thereby lead to the future growth and development of a tourism industry built around the water resources in the region.

You may also be aware that the White House and the Obama Administration have fully recognized and supported the efforts of the SOAR initiative and the President has taken actions to support this critically important planning effort as this unique region struggles to regain its economic vibrancy. I join many others from throughout this part of Appalachia, both from Kentucky and Virginia, in urging your consideration of a feasibility study as requested by both Governor Beshear and Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe.

Sincerely,



Bob Stewart  
Secretary

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Flannagan.Jones.pdf**



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Maurice A. Jones  
Secretary of Commerce and Trade

September 11, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Virginia and Kentucky, as conveyed by Governor McAuliffe and Governor Beshear, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southwestern Virginia and southeastern Kentucky, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

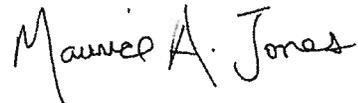
This area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (Appalachian Spring in Virginia and SOAR in Kentucky) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
September 11, 2015  
Page Two

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, I believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maurice A. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a distinct 'A'.

Maurice A. Jones

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Flannagan.Rogers.pdf

HAROLD ROGERS  
5TH DISTRICT, KENTUCKY

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
CHAIRMAN



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-1705

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

2406 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1705  
(202) 225-4601

DISTRICT OFFICES:

551 CLIFTY STREET  
SOMERSET, KY 42503  
(606) 679-8346 OR  
1-800-632-8588

48 SOUTH KENTUCKY HIGHWAY 15  
HAZARD, KY 41701  
(606) 439-0794

110 RESOURCE COURT  
SUITE A  
PRESTONSBURG, KY 41653  
(606) 886-0844

September 17, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing in support of a request submitted by the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia in response to the US Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) request for proposals for feasibility studies for potential inclusion in the Annual Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development. The Governors of these States have requested that the Corps conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential impact of additional whitewater releases from the John W. Flannagan Dam and Reservoir on the Big Sandy River Basin. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the Dam would be able to support an extended whitewater sports season, while maintaining the Corps' crucial flood control responsibilities in the Basin.

There is tremendous potential for recreation in my District in Southern and Eastern Kentucky, and my constituents and tourists alike have expressed significant demand for whitewater sporting opportunities on the Russell Fork River. This river flows through Virginia and Kentucky and has offered whitewater enthusiasts very limited opportunities for rafting and kayaking in recent years. Each of these States host portions of Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park, which is a prime destination for those traveling to the region for whitewater recreation on the river.

As you well know, the recent challenges experienced by the coal industry have left thousands in Appalachia without the good-paying jobs they have relied on for decades. Governor Beshear and I have been working diligently all year long on a bipartisan initiative called Shaping our Appalachian Region (SOAR) in an effort to bring economic growth and new jobs to the region. SOAR has identified promoting tourism and capitalizing on the region's natural resources as key pieces of this movement to retool and rebuild the economy in this part of the country. The tourism and travel industry is already booming in Kentucky. In 2014, this industry contributed over \$13 billion to the Commonwealth's economy, \$8.3 billion of which can be attributed to direct expenditures by tourists - an increase of 4.4 percent since 2013. SOAR is making a concerted effort to continue this trend and provide tourists with even more recreational options to choose from when they visit Kentucky.

The requested feasibility study will allow us to explore new opportunities for recreation, determine the optimal utilization of our water resources and ensure that we have adequate safeguards to protect local communities from flooding. Each of these purposes are integral to the future that SOAR hopes to achieve for communities in central Appalachia.

This beautiful and scenic part of the country has immense opportunities for economic growth and my constituents and I are committed to promoting the many recreational opportunities this region has to offer. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request to bring new economic opportunities to central Appalachia. Please contact Ashley Nichols in my personal office at (202)225-4601 with any questions or concerns about this request.

Sincerely,



Congressman Harold Rogers

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Flannagan.SOAR.arnett.pdf**

Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc. (SOAR)  
137 Main Street Suite 300 Pikeville, KY 41501  
Tel (606) 766-1160



**SEPTEMBER 22, 2015**

**The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108**

**Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:**

**I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.**

**As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.**

**You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the**

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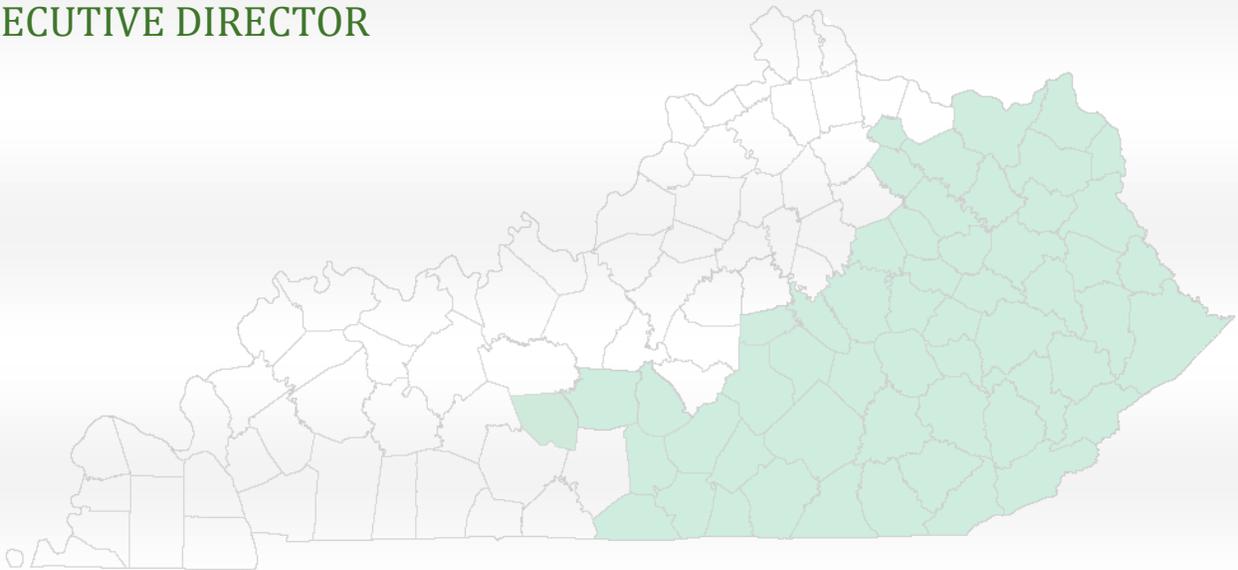
**potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.**

**Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.**

**Sincerely,**

*Jared Amett*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



# Additional Proposal Information

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**Flannagan.Ward.pdf**



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Office of the Governor

Molly Joseph Ward  
Secretary of Natural Resources

September 22, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express support for Governor McAuliffe's request for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to conduct a feasibility study of a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir. The modification would allow for an increase in the frequency of water released from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. At 4,600 acres, Breaks Interstate Park is the nation's only bi-state park and is known as the "Grand Canyon of the South." It is the policy of the Commonwealth to conserve, develop, and utilize its natural resources, and Breaks Interstate Park is one of Virginia's finest resources.

The feasibility study that Governors McAuliffe and Beshear have requested should evaluate whether increasing the frequency of water releases from the Flannagan Reservoir will positively impact tourism growth and development through extension of the whitewater sports season. The evaluation should also consider whether such additional water releases preserve downstream water quality and water quantity.

Currently, there is bi-partisan support in Virginia as well as Kentucky for central Appalachia's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and future economic development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on its outdoor recreation assets.

As we work to build a tourism economy in this region, this study is warranted now more than ever before. Thank you for your careful consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly Ward".

Molly Joseph Ward

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Floyd Co. Chamber of Commerce.pdf**



September 9, 2015

FLOYD COUNTY CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE  
313 Westminster Street,  
Suite 210  
PO Box 1508  
Prestonsburg KY 41653

Phone: 606-886-0364  
Fax: 606-889-6574

e-mail: floydchamber@setel.com  
www.floydcountykentucky.com

#### Executive Board Members

**Rick Hughes**, Chair  
*Hi-Tech Signs & Graphix*  
**Missy Allen**, Vice-Chair  
*Riverview Health Care*  
**Misty R. Jenkins**, Past Chair  
*Citizens National Bank*  
**Nikki Shepherd**, Secretary  
*First Commonwealth Bank*  
**Kindra Horne Baker**, Treasurer  
*Daffodils*

#### Board of Directors

**Jennifer Bates**  
*First Commonwealth Bank*  
**Paula Davis**  
*Carl D. Perkins Job Corps*  
**Brandon Feltner**  
*Citizens National Bank*  
**Elmer Hamilton**  
*US Bank*  
**Tyler Hamilton**  
*BB & T*  
**Ellen Harris**  
*Century 21 American Way Realty*  
**Michelle Meek**

*Big Sandy Community &  
Technical College*  
**Matthew Skeans**  
*Skeans Marathon*  
**Thursa Sloan**  
*Floyd County Health Department*  
**Dr. Henry Webb**  
*Floyd County Board of Education*

#### Chamber of Commerce

**Kathy King Allen**  
*Executive Director*  
**Beverly Hackworth**  
*Office Assistant*

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

We are writing to express support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. The Floyd County Chamber believes this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, our area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild our economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. Our chamber believes the request made by both Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. Our region is struggling and as we work to re-engineer the economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

Kathy King Allen  
Executive Director  
Floyd County Chamber of Commerce

# Additional Proposal Information

(This is as uploaded, a blank page will show if nothing was submitted)

**Haysi.pdf**

2014-02

Whereas the Town Council of the Town Of Haysi believes A Diversified Economy Is A Better Economy and

Whereas a key component of The Town Of Haysi's efforts to diversify its economy is to attract outdoor enthusiasts, adventure outdoor enthusiasts and other types of tourism and

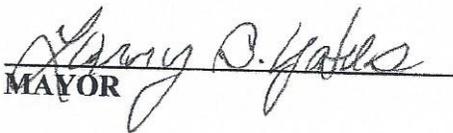
Whereas The Town Of Haysi is a Gateway Town to both John Flannagan Dam and Reservoir and The Breaks Interstate Park, both being connected by waters of The Pound River and The Russell Fork River and

Whereas the current legislation governing The US Army Corps Of Engineers as it manages and releases water downstream from John Flannagan Dam flowing though The Breaks Interstate Park does not currently include "Enhanced Recreation" or "Downstream, Off Property Recreation" as a project purpose and

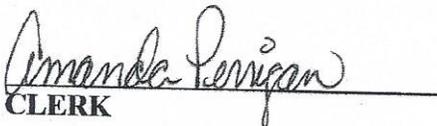
Now, Therefore be it Resolved, that The Town Of Haysi supports changes by The United States Congress to that legislation to include both "Enhanced Recreation" and "Downstream, Off Property Recreation" as project purposes for John Flannagan Dam and Reservoir.

**ADOPTED** by the Town of Haysi this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2014.

**APPROVED BY:**

  
MAYOR

**ATTEST BY:**

  
CLERK

# Additional Proposal Information

(This is as uploaded, a blank page will show if nothing was submitted)

## Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority.pdf



## Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority

3028 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Market Square ~ PO Box 186  
St. Paul, Virginia 24283  
276-762-0011 • info@heartofappalachia.com •  
www.heartofappalachia.com

September 4, 2015

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy,

I am writing to express my full support for the effort to conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the expected economic benefits from increasing the frequency of water releases from the John Flannagan Dam into the Russell Fork River. I wholeheartedly believe that the study will confirm what we already know to be true. Scheduled water releases from the Flannagan Reservoir have a significant positive impact to the local economy by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park.

Visitor spending in the Coalfield Region of Southwestern Virginia contributes \$166 million per year to the regional economy. That revenue is vital to localities that are suffering from the diminishing impact from the coal industry. The October weekend water release has long been recognized as a popular tourist attraction for whitewater enthusiasts from around the world and brings instant revenue into the region as travelers need lodging, food, supplies, gas, and other activities while they visit.

If the water releases were conducted in such a manner that allowed for organizations like Heart of Appalachia and Virginia Tourism Corp. to promote and market the event, the increase in visitor spending would have a significantly beneficial impact on the local economy. The addition of occasional year-round whitewater activities to our impressive slate of outdoor recreation would expand and enhance our marketing strategy and create economic development opportunities for entrepreneurs and existing businesses.

There is a great deal of bi-partisan support in both Virginia and Kentucky for this project as this area struggles to find ways to supplement the losses of a waning coal industry. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

I enthusiastically echo the scores of voices that support this feasibility study and urge you to consider the request favorably.

Respectfully,

Erin Riedhammer  
Executive Director

# Additional Proposal Information

(This is as uploaded, a blank page will show if nothing was submitted)

**Letcher Co. Chamber of Commerce.pdf**



**Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi**

**region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy.**

**future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize**

**m both states'**

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Letcher Co. Judge Executive.pdf**



## *Letcher County Fiscal Court*

**JIM WARD, COUNTY JUDGE-EXECUTIVE**

156 MAIN STREET • SUITE 107 • WHITESBURG, KENTUCKY 41858 • PHONE: 606-633-2129 • FAX: 606-633-7105

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

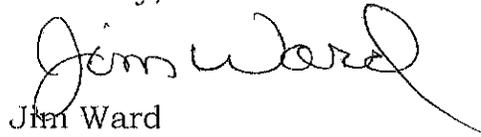
As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area

businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, I believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Ward". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jim Ward

Letcher County Judge/Executive

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Pike Co. Judge Executive.pdf**



## Office of Pike County Judge/Executive

WILLIAM M. DESKINS

September 14, 2015

Pike County Courthouse  
146 Main Street  
Pikeville, Kentucky 41501  
Office: (606) 432-6247  
Fax: (606) 432-6242

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, (as proposed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe), to have the US Army Corps of Engineers conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to increase the frequency of water released from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe such a study would show that increasing the frequency of water releases would positively impact tourism in the southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia region by extending the whitewater sports season, particularly near the Breaks Interstate Park.

The Central Appalachian region is currently struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of the significant loss of jobs related to the recent downturn in the coal industry. Currently, there are a number of bi-partisan efforts from both Kentucky and Virginia (SOAR in Kentucky and Spring in Virginia) to support this effort. The tourism industry has been recognized in both states as one of the keys to the economic recovery and future stability of our region. We must capitalize on the potential our region's natural resources provide, and lengthening the season for whitewater and other outdoor sports is essential to future development and eventual growth.

The feasibility study requested by the Governors of Kentucky and Virginia will no doubt demonstrate the tremendous potential we have for growth in the tourism industry of our region. It is significant to note that congressional delegations from both states also support this initiative, as well as all state and local tourism officials and local business owners, all of whom see the potential that exists for development of this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

I appreciate your careful consideration of this request. The future economic stability of our region is in doubt, and it is firmly believed, by all concerned, that developing our natural resources is one of the keys to our future success. I believe this study is necessary. I appreciate your time, and I hope we can count on your support.

Sincerely,

William M. Deskins  
Pike County Judge/Executive

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Pikeville.pdf



## CITY OF PIKEVILLE

243 Main Street  
Pikeville, Kentucky 41501  
(606) 437-5100  
Fax Number (606) 437-5136

**James A. Carter**  
*Mayor*

**Donovan Blackburn**  
*City Manager*

**September 12, 2015**

**The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy**  
**Assistant Secretary of the Army**  
**108 Army Pentagon**  
**Washington, DC 20310-0108**

**Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:**

On behalf of the Pikeville City Commission, I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. We believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources.



We believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donovan Blackburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Donovan Blackburn  
City Manager – Pikeville, KY

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Prestonsburg Tourism Commission.pdf



The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

We are writing to express support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. We believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. We believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,  
Prestonsburg Tourism Commission

Jim Ousley, Chairman

Ralph Little, Vice Chairman

Jeremiah Parson, Treasurer

Tim Branham

Cliff Latta

Thomas Rainey

Julian Slone

113 South Central Avenue, Prestonsburg, Kentucky 41653  
606-886-1341/Fax 606-886-6997/800-844-4704

[www.prestonsburgky.org](http://www.prestonsburgky.org)

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Prestonsburg Tourism Director.pdf



The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

We are writing to express support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. We believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. We believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, we believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

Fred James, Executive Director  
Prestonsburg Convention & Visitors Bureau

113 South Central Avenue, Prestonsburg, Kentucky 41653  
606-886-1341/Fax 606-886-6997/800-844-4704  
[www.prestonsburgky.org](http://www.prestonsburgky.org)

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Prestonsburg.pdf

**MAYOR**  
LES STAPLETON

**CITY COUNCIL**  
HARRY ADAMS  
TIMOTHY C. COOLEY  
DAVID GEARHEART  
FREDDIE L. GOBLE  
KIMBER McGUIRE  
B.D. NUNNERY  
ROY ROBERTS  
DON WILLIS



200 North Lake Drive  
Prestonsburg, Kentucky 41653

(606) 886-2335  
Fax (606) 886-0563

**The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy**  
**Assistant Secretary of the Army**  
**108 Army Pentagon**  
**Washington, DC 20310-0108**

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.



Home of  
The Kentucky Opry - Mountain Arts Center • Thunder Ridge Racetrack • Jenny Wiley  
Summer Music Theatre and State Park • Jenny Wiley Pioneer Festival • StoneCrest Golf Course



Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, I believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Les Stapleton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Les Stapleton, Mayor  
City of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

# Additional Proposal Information

(This is as uploaded, a blank page will show if nothing was submitted)

**Rep. Chris Harris.pdf**



CHRIS HARRIS  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

COMMONWEALTH of KENTUCKY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

September 14, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the white water sports season in this region.

As a Kentucky State Representative from the Appalachian Region, I see firsthand how communities are struggling to rebuild their economies in the wake of significant job loss related to the coal industry. Many believe and agree that tourism development is an integral part of the rebirth of this region. The feasibility study will show how a lengthened season for white water and other water adventure sports will positively impact tourism and the regional economy.

The natural beauty of the Appalachian Region could and should be shared with all, and I believe this study would be a step in being able to do so. Thank you for your consideration and assistance. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christian Harris".

Chris Harris  
State Representative  
93<sup>rd</sup> District

CRH/tar

CAPITOL ANNEX  
702 CAPITOL AVENUE  
FRANKFORT, KY 40601  
OFFICE: 502-564-8100 EXT 635  
TOLL-FREE MESSAGE LINE: 1.800.372.7181  
CHRIS.HARRIS@LRC.KY.GOV

# Primary Sponsor Letter of Support

(As uploaded)

## RussellForkSupportLetters.pdf



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STEVEN L. BESHEAR  
GOVERNOR

700 CAPITOL AVENUE  
SUITE 100  
FRANKFORT, KY 40601  
(502) 564-2611  
FAX: (502) 564-2517

September 18, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

As Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, I am writing to officially request that the US Army Corps of Engineers conduct a feasibility study for the purpose of evaluating the potential impact of increasing the frequency of seasonal water releases from the J.W. Flannagan Reservoir located in Dickenson County, Virginia, on flood control and recreation in the Big Sandy River Basin. I am joining with Governor Terry McAuliffe in making this request.

Governor McAuliffe and I are both very involved in regional planning efforts in our respective states – SOAR in Southeastern Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in southwestern Virginia – which seeks to support, assist, explore and facilitate regional strategies that will help this area of the central Appalachian region recover from the devastating economic impacts of the loss of thousands of coal jobs. High on the list of strategies for economic recovery in both states is the careful and appropriate development of the tremendous tourism potential that exists due to the beauty and abundance of the nature resources in this region.

USACE Huntington District has already done considerable work and study on the issue of water release frequency from the Flannagan reservoir including the June, 2014 *Initial Watershed Assessment Report of the Big Sandy River Basin* (copy attached). Based on information included in that report, we believe the next step is to request a full feasibility study, which includes an environmental assessment, with the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia serving equally as the non-federal sponsors of this report. The details of our request are included in the attachments to this letter along with a number of letters of support from area officials and organizations indicating widespread interest and support.

The impact that more frequent seasonal water releases from the Flannagan Reservoir would have on the future growth of tourism in and around the Breaks Interstate Park is significant, which would help the several counties in southeastern Kentucky including Pike, Letcher and Floyd. Therefore, I am designating the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet as the state agency point of contact for the USACE as it relates to this request, and it is my understanding that Governor McAuliffe is designating the Virginia Tourism Corporation to serve similarly as Virginia's point of contact.

THE HONORABLE JO-ELLEN DARCY  
September 18, 2015  
Page 2

I urge you to consider this joint request and include it as a priority item in the report USACE will issue for future action by the Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven L. Beshear". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "B".

Steven L. Beshear

Attachments



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Terence R. McAuliffe  
Governor

September 22, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

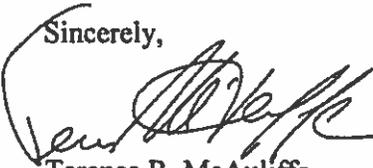
I am writing to request that the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) conduct a feasibility study for the purpose of evaluating an increase in the frequency of seasonal water releases from the J.W. Flannagan Reservoir located in Dickenson County, Virginia. I request that this study evaluate the impact that more frequent seasonal water releases would have on the future growth of tourism in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, while ensuring that project purposes can be met in a way that preserves downstream water quality.

I have been very involved in regional planning efforts in this region. One such effort is Appalachian Spring, which seeks to support, assist, and facilitate regional strategies that will help the central Appalachian region recover from the economic impacts of declining coal jobs. High on the list of strategies for economic recovery is the careful and appropriate development of the tremendous tourism potential that exists in southwestern Virginia due to the beauty and abundance of the nature resources in this region.

The USACE has already done considerable work on the issue of water release frequency from the Flannagan Reservoir. This includes the Initial Watershed Assessment Report of the Big Sandy River Basin (copy attached). I request that the next step is development of a full feasibility study to evaluate the ability to accommodate additional release days while preserving water quality and other water supply considerations. I am designating the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality as the state agency point of contact for the USACE as it relates to this request.

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
September 22, 2015  
Page Two

I urge you to consider this request and include it as a priority item for future action.

Sincerely,  
  
Terence R. McAuliffe

Enclosure

# Additional Proposal Information

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**Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.pdf**

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

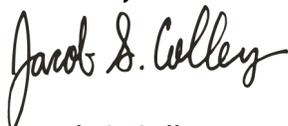
I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park, the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, I believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,



Jacob S. Colley  
President/CEO  
Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

# Additional Proposal Information

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## Speaker Greg Stumbo.pdf

**Commonwealth of Kentucky**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

GREGORY D. STUMBO  
95th Legislative District  
PO Box 1473  
108 Cassidy Drive  
Prestonsburg, Kentucky 41653



STATE CAPITOL  
Room 309  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601  
(502) 564-3366

**SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE**

September 9, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to express my support for the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study that would support a project modification to the Flannagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River. I believe this study will show that increasing the frequency of the water releases will positively impact tourism by extending the whitewater sports season in this region of southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia, particularly in and around the Breaks Interstate Park—the nation's only bi-state park.

As you know, this area of central Appalachia is struggling to rebuild its economy in the wake of a significant loss of jobs related to the coal industry. Currently, there are bi-partisan efforts in both states (SOAR in Kentucky and Appalachian Spring in Virginia) to support this region's urgent efforts to rebuild its economy. Tourism development has been identified as a priority strategy in both states, and this future development is predicated on this region's ability to capitalize on the natural resources and recreation associated with these resources. I believe the request made by the Governors for a feasibility study will show the tremendous potential for tourism growth and development that would come as a result of a lengthened season for whitewater and associated sports.

You will find strong support for this request from both states' congressional delegations, the governors, state and local tourism officials, and area businesses, all of whom see the potential that exists for appropriate tourism development in this beautiful and scenic part of the country.

Your careful consideration of this request is urgently requested. This region is struggling and as it works to re-engineer its economy and future, I believe this study is warranted now more than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. D. Stumbo".

Gregory D. Stumbo  
Speaker of the House  
Kentucky House of Representatives

# Additional Proposal Information

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## University of Pikeville President.pdf

# UNIVERSITY OF PIKEVILLE

## *Office of the President*

PAUL E. PATTON  
Chancellor  
Governor of Kentucky  
(1995-2003)  
Interim President

147 Sycamore Street  
Pikeville, KY 41501  
(606) 218-5261  
Fax: (606) 218-5269  
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September 15, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I write to support the request from the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia, as conveyed by Governor Beshear and Governor McAuliffe, for the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study to support a project modification to the Flanagan Reservoir to allow for an increase in the frequency of water release from the reservoir into the Russell Fork River.

I am going to assume that you are aware that our area of Central Appalachia is suffering severe economic strain because of the precipitous decline in the production of coal, the basis of our economy. Our Governor Steve Beshear and our Congressman Hal Rogers have partnered to lead us to restructure our economy. A part of this new economy will be travel-tourism.

When I was the County Judge/Executive of Pike County in the mid 1980's, I lead the effort to establish a white-water rafting-kayaking experience on the Russell Fork River by persuading the Corps to schedule controlled releases on four weekends in October as they dropped the level of the reservoir to winter pool. We have some of the best white-water in the eastern United States. It is a small but important part of our economy and quality of life today. Small weekend releases during the summer months will allow this activity to be magnified exponentially. It could greatly benefit our overall program to rebuild our economy.

I urge your careful consideration of this proposal and request of our Governor and Congressman.

Sincerely,



Paul E. Patton  
Chancellor & Interim President

*The Leading University*



*of Central Appalachia*