



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 16-0063, **Version:** 1

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### Approval of pre-application for Greenway and Habitat Conservation Easement Project

#### SUMMARY:

As a result of the TVA Kingston Coal Ash disaster, TVA was fined by TDEC. These funds have been designated to provide improvements to habitat and restoration in the three watersheds affected by the ash spill - the Emory River system, the Clinch River system, and the streams that flow into the upper part of the Watts Bar Reservoir. More than half of the funds were awarded for project in 2013 with projects completed by 2015. There is \$750,000 remaining in this cycle. There are two project categories: Habitat Restoration and Provision of New/Improved Recreational Opportunities. The application manual encourages projects that provide benefits in both categories. The application specifically allows funds to be used for land acquisition and easements and for habitat enhancement, which this project involve.

The application process consists of a pre-proposal due February 29<sup>th</sup>. Selected projects will be notified by March 25<sup>th</sup> and full proposals will be due on April 15. The projects selected from that group will be notified by summer (date not specified). Contracts would then be drawn up and executed, so work under the contract might be able to start by August (my estimate).

There is a minimum 20% match required, with in-kind contributions eligible. No administrative costs are allowed using grant funds. It may be possible to count administrative costs as part of the match.

The work under the grant must be completed within two years.

Proposal Summary (Pre-proposal Application has not been completed at this time)

#### A. Easement Acquisition

The City of Crossville and OWCA will acquire through donation or purchase approximately fifty foot easement on both sides of the Little Obed River running from approximately the point on the stream below the end of Obed Court to the County's Obed River Park, covering roughly 1.7 miles, as indicated on the attached map. The fifty foot easement on the right bank will include the right to develop a paved greenway with lighting and other improvements over time. The easement on the left bank will be a buffer easement only and will not include public access to that land. Both easements will require that the banks and a minimum of ten to twenty foot strip be vegetated with woody species, giving the city and its agents the right to plant native species and remove invasive species within this area. On the buffer only side, the width will not exceed the flood plain and the landowner will have wide latitude to select and plant their choice of native plants. On the greenway side, the city will have primary responsibility for planting and maintenance.

#### B. Habitat Restoration

Stream corridors are important for wildlife because they provide a continuous connection that is often broken up by normal development patterns. Much of this stream corridor is already forested on at

least one side of the stream but for maximum bank stability and habitat completeness, trees and shrubs are needed on both sides of the stream. The segment from Old Jamestown Hwy to 127 is well vegetated on both sides and previous plantings have been done here. New plantings will need to be done along the banks on some of the property in the Hillcrest subdivision and in the Charleston Plantation. Small seedlings and saplings will be used. This work will be done by OWCA, who will coordinate with the landowners in the selection of plants.

**Costs:**

**Easement acquisition:**

It is expected that over 50% of the easements required will be donated by the landowners, but \$75,000 will be allocated for purchasing easements.

City of Crossville staff time in negotiating with landowners and legal costs in drawing up and executing the easements will be estimated and submitted as the cost share for this project.

**Planting:**

\$2,500 B & B 5' Trees

1,000 Seedlings

**OWCA Staff Time meeting:**

\$1,500 With landowners

1,000 Planting labor, volunteers will be used as well

250 Equipment rental (tree auger)

250 Minor equipment

\$6,500 Total for planting

**BUDGET ACCOUNT:** Not budgeted

**NECESSARY COUNCIL ACTION:** Approve partnership and the submittal of a pre-application for a grant.