



Commonwealth of Kentucky
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Project to build Lake Barkley, Kentucky Lake
bridges moves into new design phase**

Basket handle arch spans will form 'signature gateway' to Land Between The Lakes

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 3, 2010) — Gov. Steve Beshear today announced that the project to build two bridges that will form a “signature gateway” to the Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area (LBL) has moved into an intermediate design phase.

The twin basket handle, tied-arch spans will carry US 68 and KY 80 across Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake, forming unique gateways at the eastern and western entrances to the LBL and adding a signature attraction in Kentucky’s Western Waterland region.

“Construction of these new bridges will create two new landmarks for our state,” Gov. Beshear said. “Just as the Land Between The Lakes is unique, these bridges across Lake Barkley at Canton and across Kentucky Lake at Aurora will provide a signature gateway to the natural beauty that attracts thousands of tourists to Western Kentucky each year.”

The new bridges will be the only basket handle, tied-arch bridges in Kentucky and among fewer than a dozen built worldwide. Gov. Beshear announced the selection of the striking design in July 2009 following a three-year public participation process that included input from more than 300 citizens. Since then, engineers have moved ahead with preliminary work to prepare for more detailed engineering that is now required.

Kentucky Transportation Secretary Mike Hancock noted that the Lake Bridges Project has many complexities.

“The next phase of design encompasses alignment issues, structure layout, and anticipated construction issues,” Hancock said. “This intermediate design phase is expected to take about 9 months to complete and is among the various steps required to commence final design and engineering plans. It’s a painstaking process, but because of the size, complexity, and cost of this project, the Cabinet is determined to get it right.”

The new, four-lane bridges will replace a pair of functionally obsolete two-lane steel bridges that were built in 1932 to span the mighty Cumberland and Tennessee rivers – long before the rivers were impounded to form the lakes and the LBL.

Each of the new bridges will be 550 feet long with travel lanes 11 feet wide. They will have 4-foot-wide shoulders and an 8-foot-wide hike and bike path that will extend through LBL along the US 68/KY 80 Corridor.

The bridges are being designed by two firms – Michael Baker Jr. Inc. and Palmer Engineering. In addition to the design contract, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has awarded a contract for geotechnical work required to evaluate foundation requirements at both bridge sites.

Each bridge will cost an estimated \$165 million to build. Construction of the new crossings is expected to take five to six years each. The entire US 68 corridor reconstruction, including the bridges project, is expected to be complete by late 2017.

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