

natives to the proposed Big Walnut Reservoir were made and a special Advisory Committee was established to assist in a reevaluation of proposals for Big Walnut Valley. Possible modifications of the proposed reservoir and a wide range of alternative plans were studied in an effort to preserve the natural forest areas while meeting the water resources needs of the region. One of the considered plans to protect the forest by a bypass channel would be objectionable because of the extreme depth of the channel, the great volume of excavated materials which would be piled high along the channel and change the environment, possible changes in ground water levels and alteration of stream flow and a cost increase of \$12,000,000. All of the numerous alternative plans investigated were eliminated by reason of loss of storage capacity, high costs or other disadvantages.

With respect to your last question on the values assigned to preserving the Big Walnut Valley site, I believe the effort to apply judgement and carefully weigh these values is evident in the special studies described above. Also additional lands, now privately owned, would be acquired by the Federal Government under the modified plan for Big Walnut Reservoir to preserve natural values, and a nature center and related facilities would be provided. While regrettably the project would cause some loss in natural values, this was carefully considered in relation to the costs and benefits in determining the advisability of the modified plan.

I am enclosing a summary sheet giving information on the special additional studies and proposals to preserve the ecological values in the proposed reservoir area.

Sincerely yours,

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Assistant Director of Civil Works for Central Divisions.

INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED BIG WALNUT RESERVOIR, IND.

The Big Walnut Reservoir project is one of five reservoir projects recommended in Interim Report No. 3, Wabash River Basin Comprehensive Study, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. The proposed report of the Chief of Engineers on the interim study has been circulated to the State and Federal agencies concerned together with the report of the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, accompanied by the reports of the District and Division Engineers, as a step in processing the report for submission to Congress.

Big Walnut Reservoir, on Big Walnut Creek near Greencastle, was recommended as a result of the comprehensive studies which have been made in cooperation with the States and Federal agencies through the Coordinating Committee for the Wabash River Basin comprehensive study. The project would provide for the protection of flood prone areas, supply water for municipal and industrial use in the vicinity of Indianapolis, improve water quality, develop water-related recreational opportunities for the public, and enhance fish and wildlife values.

Conservation interests have expressed opposition to authorization of the Big Walnut Reservoir on the ground that it would destroy an important ecological area of Indiana. With a view to finding a solution to this problem, the Chief of Engineers directed the District Engineer in Louisville to make a supplemental report detailing alternatives to the Big Walnut Reservoir plan recommended in his proposed report. He also directed the District Engineer to establish a special advisory committee to develop information on the ecological aspects of the area in question for use in the supplemental report. Members of the special advisory committee were:

Dr. Alton A. Lindsey, Professor of Biology, Purdue University.
Mr. Robert Lindahl, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.
Mr. S. L. Frost, Executive Secretary, Ohio Water Commission.
Mr. Robert Gramelspacher, Eckstein Lumber Inc., Jasper, Indiana.

Modification of the proposed Big Walnut project and a wide range of alternative plans were thoroughly investigated in an effort to preserve the natural forest areas along Big Walnut Creek. The objective was to meet the existing and near future needs of an expanding population and economy for flood control, water supply, water quality control, recreation, and fish and wildlife while at the same time giving full consideration to social consequences including the preservation of natural and historic values of significance to the region and the nation. The numerous plans of alternative reservoir sites, multiple reservoir systems, and redesign of Big Walnut reservoir to avoid or protect the forest area