Cherokee Reservoir

Cherokee Dam is on the Holston River in east Tennessee, 52 miles upstream from the point at which the Holston and French Broad Rivers converge to form the Tennessee.

Cherokee Reservoir attracts millions of recreational visitors each year. Along its shorelines are public access areas, county and municipal parks, commercial boat docks and resorts, a state park, and a state wildlife management area. There are many tent and trailer sites for campers.

Fishing is popular at Cherokee, and the reservoir's fish population is very similar to that found in other east Tennessee reservoirs—black bass, sauger, walleye, crappie, various sunfish, and the usual rough-fish species.

Cherokee was built to generate hydroelectric power during the World War II emergency, but it also plays an important role as one of the chain of TVA reservoirs that over the years have prevented billions of dollars of flood damage in areas downstream.

The deep waters of Cherokee Reservoir lose oxygen during the summer months, and the water that generates power is drawn out of these depths. In order to increase oxygen levels for aquatic life below the reservoir, TVA injects oxygen through miles of perforated hoses suspended above the reservoir bottom. TVA also uses huge, slow-turning fans just above the dam to push oxygenated surface water into the depths of the reservoir.

Cherokee:
Facts & Figures

Construction of Cherokee Dam began in August 1, 1940, and was completed on a crash schedule on December 5, 1941.

Cherokee Reservoir provides nearly 400 miles of winding shoreline and about 28,780 acres of water surface.

Cherokee Reservoir is named for the tribe of Native Americans who once inhabited the area. The great Indian warpath, once followed by Daniel Boone, crossed the basin now filled by the reservoir.

The dam is 175 feet high and stretches over a mile—6,760 feet—from one end to the other.

The water level in the reservoir varies about 27 feet in a normal year.

Cherokee has a flood-storage capacity of 749,406 acre-feet.

The generating capacity of the four hydroelectric units at Cherokee is 135,200 kilowatts of electricity