



Raccoon Mountain Pumped-Storage Plant

TVA Region Map



The Raccoon Mountain project is TVA's largest hydroelectric facility. Water is pumped to the reservoir on top of the mountain and then used to generate electricity when additional power is needed by the TVA system.

Raccoon Mountain Pumped-Storage Plant is located in southeast Tennessee on a site that overlooks the Tennessee River near Chattanooga.

The plant works like a large storage battery. During periods of low demand, water is pumped from Nickajack Reservoir at the base of the mountain to the reservoir built at the top. It takes 28 hours to fill the upper reservoir. When demand is high, water is released via a tunnel drilled through the center of the mountain to drive generators in the mountain's underground power plant.

The area around Raccoon Mountain is a state-designated Wildlife Observation Area. The mountaintop is home to whitetail deer, woodchucks, gray foxes, and, of course, raccoons. The most compelling wildlife attraction of the area is a large wintering population of bald eagles, which can be sighted from the overlook as they hunt in the woods and waters.

The Raccoon Mountain Visitor Center

The Raccoon Mountain visitor center is now open after a brief closing to upgrade the displays. New displays include videos depicting the history of TVA and the construction of the pumped storage facility. Maps show how the TVA facilities work together to provide power to the 9 million people in TVA's service area.

The Visitor Center is normally open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except major holidays and during the winter months, when it closes at 4 p.m.

Tours of the power plant itself are no longer available, but the center has photographs, models, and knowledgeable staff to discuss plant operations and TVA. TVA closes all visitor centers when the homeland security alert level is orange (high) or red (severe).

Time-lapse Raccoon Mountain Unit Disassembly

Raccoon Mountain: Facts & Figures

Construction at Raccoon Mountain began in 1970 and was completed in 1978.

The reservoir constructed at the top of the mountain has 528 acres of water surface.

The dam at Raccoon Mountain's upper reservoir is 230 feet high and 8,500 feet long. It's the largest rockfill dam ever built by TVA.

Raccoon Mountain Pumped-Storage Station is a hydroelectric facility. It has four generating units with a net dependable capacity of 1,616 megawatts. Net dependable capacity is the amount of power a plant can produce on an average day, minus the electricity used by the plant itself.

Raccoon Mountain Brochure

Download a color brochure with pictures of Raccoon Mountain and information about the site (PDF, 238 kb).

Time-lapse video of the 81 days of disassembly and 30,000 man hours for Unit 3 maintenance at TVA's Raccoon Mountain Pumped Storage facility near Chattanooga, Tennessee.

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