

Land Between the Lakes, The largest inland peninsula in the United States

Forty miles long and ranging from six to eight miles wide, the 170,000 acre national recreation area of Land Between the Lakes (LBL) was formed

when the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers were impounded in 1944, which created Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley. The two lakes form one of the world's largest man-made bodies of water.



In 1963, John F. Kennedy designated the inland peninsula as the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area to demonstrate how the economy of an area with limited timber, agricultural and industrial resources could be stimulated by converting it into a recreation asset. LBL is now the focal point of the region's \$600 million tourism industry which includes one of the most popular inland birding areas in the eastern U.S. with over 250 species of birds observed since 1963.

With the development of the National Recreation Area, approximately 2,500 people were displaced from the area with the last Kentucky resident leaving in the fall of 1970. Many former residents of Between the Rivers maintain a strong identity to the once close-knit communities. Those with strong ties to the area continue to have an annual homecoming event every summer to reconnect with former neighbors and family members.

Oral history interviews with former residents of the area and about Land Between the Lakes can be found at <http://passtheword.ky.gov>. (Photo courtesy of Murray State University)

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