
SAYLORVILLE LAKE MASTER PLAN

**DES MOINES RIVER WATERSHED
JOHNSTON, IOWA**

APPENDIX B

AGENCY AND PUBLIC COORDINATION

POLK, DALLAS, BOONE COUNTIES, IOWA

JANUARY 2015

SAYLORVILLE LAKE MASTER PLAN

DES MOINES RIVER WATERSHED JOHNSTON, IOWA

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Public involvement is critically important to the success of the overall master planning effort. The Corps has involved the public, affected tribes, Federal, state, and local agencies in the revision process. The public involvement effort related to developing this Master Plan occurred from June 2012 when Saylorville Lake announced its plan to revise the Master Plan through June 2014. During this time the public, stakeholders, and public agencies were given the opportunity to comment and participate in defining the project issues and formulating resource use objectives.

Comments were received from a number of agencies, groups, and private citizens. These comments are provided in the following sections:

- 1. PRESS AND MEDIA - MASTER PLANNING PROCESS**
- 2. PUBLIC SCOPING JUNE 2012 – 2014**
- 3. PUBLIC MEETING MAY 15, 2014**
- 4. AGENCY COORDINATION**
- 5. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW COMMENTS,
NOVEMBER 17 THROUGH DECEMBER 18, 2014**

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The Des Moines Register

2016 OLYMPICS

GABBY DO
The gymnast who trains at the Saylorville Ranch in Texas, inching h

SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2014 | THE NEWS IOWA DEPENDS UPON | DESMOINESREGISTER.COM | METRO EDITION

Big makeover to bring upgrades to Saylorville



Max Becker, 15, of Urbandale unties his grandfather's boat at Saylorville Lake on Friday. Improvement plans call for adding Wi-Fi capability, an education center, cabins and a bike trail, among other things. BRYON HOULGRAVE/THE REGISTER

However, silt likely to force no-boating zone on lake's north end

By William Petroski
bpetrosk@dmreg.com

Saylorville Lake, which drew 1.4 million visitors last year, is about to undergo its first major makeover in three decades.

Outdoor enthusiasts can expect some significant upgrades in recreational venues. But a buildup of silt — caused gradually by years of erosion upstream — will likely force the creation of a no-boating zone during the summer months north of the Mile-Long Bridge, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the Saylorville dam and reservoir north of Des Moines.

Siltation is a chronic problem facing Midwest lakes and reservoirs.

"Siltation impacts Saylorville Lake by reducing water storage capacity, reducing recreational use of the water, degrades habitat for fish/mussel populations and promotes excessive algae growth," the Corps of Engineers said in a statement.

Already, silt has caused low-water conditions and mud flats north of the bridge. The area is marked with buoys to warn people, but it has become common for motorboats and jet skis to get stuck in that section of the lake, which is also a prime area for wildlife habitat, said Jeff Rose, the Corps' Saylorville operations manager.

Rose said the Corps of Engineers is considering a proposal to create a no-boating zone north of the bridge annually between April 1 through Aug. 31. Under the proposal, canoeists and kayakers could still paddle through the channel on the Des Moines River, Rose said.

Some users would like to see dredging to preserve full

See PLANS, Page 11A

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The Des Moines Register | DesMoinesRegister.com | Metro Edition



John Williams of Urbandale navigates his boat at Saylorville Lake on Friday. BRYON HOULGRAVE/THE REGISTER

PLANS

Continued from Page 1A

recreational uses of the lake.

But Rose said dredging costs would be prohibitive. Initial estimates by the Corps of Engineers to dredge the area north of the Mile-Long Bridge, as well as the lake's marina cove, indicate the bills would run more than \$100 million.

"All dredging does is buy you more time," Rose said. "It is not a permanent solution."

But while siltation threatens to curb recreation in the northern part of the lake, a preliminary master plan drafted by the Corps envisions improved amenities for other park users, including establishment of Wi-Fi capability throughout the Saylorville area. In addition, officials are exploring the possibility of reopening an abandoned trail on the west side of the lake that's been closed since major flooding in 1993.

The Corps is also looking at building rental cabins at Saylorville's Acorn Valley Campgrounds on the west side of the lake, and an education building for community groups is proposed just west of the dam. Another proposal calls for development of a hiking trail on the south edge of the asphalt road atop the dam.

No exact timetable or price tags were attached to the proposals.

"We've been taking feedback on this plan since 2012, and I think the overarching theme has been to protect what we have," Rose said. "Saylorville is an urban lake now. We are almost completely surrounded by urban sprawl, and people want to make sure it is around for years to come."

The last time the master plan was revised was 1984. The new plan is expected to be approved by the Corps of Engineers

ABOUT SAYLORVILLE DAM

Construction began: 1965
Completed: 1977
Cost: \$130 million
Normal pool: 24 miles long, covering 5,520 acres
Flood storage pool: 54 miles long, covering 16,100 acres
Dam: Earth-filled embankment, more than a mile long and 105 feet high
Operator: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

AMENITIES AT SAYLORVILLE

Recreation areas: 25
Beaches: 2
Camping areas: Four, with 530 campsites available
Marinas: 1
Boat ramps: 3, with a total of 12 launch lanes
Group picnic shelters: 24
Operator: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Saylorville proposes no-boating zone

Because of siltation that has gradually filled in a stretch of Saylorville Lake north of the Mile-Long Bridge, federal officials are proposing it be closed to boats between April 1 and Aug. 31 annually. It could be used by canoes and kayaks, though.



later this year, probably around November. About 80 people attended a public meeting on the plan recently at the Johnston Public Library. The Corps is still accepting public comments through its Saylorville Lake website.

Congress authorized construction of the Saylorville dam in 1958, both

VIEWS FROM SAYLORVILLE USERS



"I think the Corps knows what it is doing. They haven't suggested anything to me that's out of line. More and more people are using this area, so they need to find out what people like and give them what they want."

— Frank Gustafson, 60, of West Des Moines, a retired carpenter catching fish below the Saylorville dam Friday



"We love it here. It's peaceful." But some campsites have only 30 amp electrical service, while many newer recreational vehicles require 50 amp service to run both air conditioners in hot weather. "If it gets hot, we just run one air conditioner."

— Leon Krogmeier, 57, a truck driver from Argyle, who was in a campground below the dam in a 39-foot trailer Friday



"Everything is fine here. I come here for many years. It's good."

— Charshua Yang, 62, of Des Moines, an immigrant from Laos who was fishing with minnows to catch white bass below the dam

as a federal project to curb flooding of the Des Moines River and to provide recreation. The facility became fully operational in 1977 with an earthen dam. The lake has a normal pool of 5,520 acres of water surrounded by 25 recreation areas, a marina and two beaches.

Don Ostergaard, 78, a retired tool and die maker from Des Moines who has held two state records for angling, regularly fishes at Saylorville. He contends it's inevitable that dredging will be needed to preserve the Saylorville reservoir in the long run, and he'd also like to see

the Des Moines River dredged from downtown Des Moines north to the Saylorville dam.

"If you gave me about \$7 million or \$8 million and a dredge, in about five years we will have some fishing that will equal Minnesota," Ostergaard said. "We have this silt problem, and everybody talks about it, but nobody is doing anything. It is going to take some government money to get some things done."

Several other Iowans who were camping or fishing on Friday praised the Corps' management of Saylorville, although

WHAT'S IN THE DRAFT PLAN?

- Create no-boating area annually between April 1 and Aug. 31 in an area north of the Mile-Long Bridge that's affected by siltation.
- Establish Wi-Fi capability throughout the Saylorville area.
- Reopen an abandoned trail on the west edge of the lake for hiking and off-road bicycles.
- Establish a bicycle trail on the south edge of the road on top of the Saylorville dam.
- Construct cabins at Saylorville's Acorn Valley campgrounds.
- Build an education facility for public use, probably at a site just west of the dam.
- Develop a strategy to address damage caused by the emerald ash borer, which is expected to kill ash trees throughout the park, although a handful of trees will be preserved with special chemicals for legacy purposes.

they said they would welcome additional improvements.

"We like it a lot here. We have probably camped here every year for 12 years," said Michelle Schneider of Des Moines, who was at Saylorville's Cherry Glen campground with her husband, Mark, and their grandson, Austin, who is almost 2.

But Schneider said she would appreciate the opportunity to use Wi-Fi service, which would allow her to bring her laptop to the campground. She would also like to see more water hookups at

Purchase Your Memorial Before The Need Arises

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

COPY OF ADVERTISEMENT

Exhibit "A"

STATE OF IOWA

SS

COUNTY OF POLK

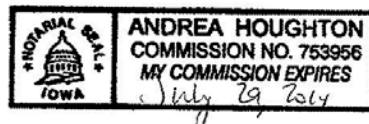
The undersigned, being first duly sworn on oath, states that The Des Moines Register and Tribune Company, a corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Iowa, which its principal place of business in Des Moines, Iowa, a daily newspaper of general circulation printed and published in the City of Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa, and that an advertisement, a printed copy of which is attached as Exhibit "A" and made a part of this affidavit, was printed and published in The Des Moines Register on the following dates

May 6, 2014 through May 15, 2014
\$274.57

Angie L. Dunbar

I certify under penalty of perjury and pursuant to the laws of the State of Iowa that the preceding is true and correct.

[Signature]
Notary Public in and for the State of Iowa



SAYLORVILLE LAKE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
Where: City of Johnston Public Library 6700 Merle Hay Rd. Johnston, IA 50131
When: 12:00 PM - 7:00 PM, Thursday May 15th, 2014
The US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, is in the process of revising the Saylorville Lake Master Plan, which was last updated in 1984. The purpose of the Master Plan revision is to bring the Master Plan into compliance with current US Army Corps of Engineers policies and regulations, identify management opportunities, constraints, user needs and characteristics, and to balance it all while protecting natural resources and providing stewardship for the future. A Master Plan is the document that conceptually establishes and guides the orderly development, administration, maintenance, preservation, enhancement, and management of all natural, cultural, and recreational resources of a US Army Corps of Engineers water resource project. The Master Plan does not address water level management. Water levels are managed in accordance with a separate Water Regulation Manual. The primary benefit of revising the current Master Plan is to reflect changes in recreation facilities, the surrounding environment, economic conditions, and visitation patterns. Public input is critical in the Master Plan update and we invite you to come to our final public meeting to review the progress we have made to this point. An open house style meeting will be held to answer questions and seek public input with conceptual posters and a draft Master Plan document for review and comment. For any further questions please feel free to contact Natural Resource Specialist Brian Nall at 515.276.4646 x6515 or via email at brian.r.nall@usace.army.mil

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2. REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING INITIAL SCOPING FROM THE PUBLIC

Comments were submitted in writing, by email, or online to the Saylorville Lake project office. Over 91 Questionnaire's were filled out and submitted online, through e-mail, or in person. The planning team considered all written and verbal comments received. Comments were received on a wide range of topics including:

- Concerns about Urban Sprawl and Development
- Pollution (Runoff, Siltation)
- Campsite Improvements
- Improving/Restoring Habitat
- Adding Dump Stations
- Increasing Accessibility (Camping, Fishing, and Trails)
- Improving Restroom Facilities
- Increase Enforcement of Regulations
- Controlling Invasive Species

 US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District	Master Plan Questionnaire
<i>(Electronic version of this form also available at)</i>	
1) In your opinion, what are current or future environmental threats facing public lands and waters at Saylorville Lake?	
2) With projected funding for Saylorville Lake declining, what other options do you see that could help accomplish management tasks?	
3) If you were in charge of Saylorville Lake what improvements would you make? Where would you make them?	
4) Why does managing the land and waters at Saylorville Lake matter to you?	
5) What do you like or what changes would you make to improve plant communities, fish habitat or wildlife habitat at Saylorville Lake?	
6) What are some outdoor recreation opportunities that should be continued, expanded, added or eliminated at Saylorville Lake?	
7) What are the important benefits of Saylorville Lake to you and your family?	
Name (Optional): _____	
Email (Optional): _____	

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Question 1: What are the current or future environmental threats facing public lands/waters at Saylorville Lake?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Development (Sprawl)	23
Siltation/Erosion (Upstream & Lake)	13
Pollution - Runoff (General)	12
Pollution - Chemical Runoff (Farm/Stream)	12
Pollution (Water/Litter/Residential Runoff)	11
Water Levels (Drop in/too Low/Climate Change/Drought)	9
Overpopulation/Overuse of Area	6
Trees (diseased/dying/plant more)	5
Invasive Species/Lack Biodiversity	5
Lack of Funding	2
Poor Conservation Practices/Watershed by General Public	2
Flooding	1
Des Moines Water Usage	1
Lack of Green Corridors	1

Question 2: With projected funding for Saylorville Lake declining, what other options do you see that could help accomplish management tasks?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Volunteers (more of them)	25
Raise fees (bike trail usage, boats, day users, campsites, for big RV's)	18
Fundraisers (donations/advertising/events/corporate sponsorship)	16
Campsites (add more/make improvements/extend season)	7
Reservation System (Get rid of it)	3
Do less for recreation and more for biological integrity	3
Recycle Program (collect money from cans/bottles)	2
Sell Firewood	2
Retain Money (Earned here, stays here)	2
Politics (?)	2
Establish Friends Group/Partnerships	2
Work Campers	1
Put Future Projects on Hold	1

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Question 3 Part 1: If you were in charge of Saylorville Lake, what improvements would you make?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Campsites (Improvements)	35
Dump Stations (Add/Make Improvements)	19
Handicapped Accessibility (Camping/Fishing/Trails)	10
Bathrooms - Improvements	8
Add/Maintain Equestrian Trails	8
Regulation (More Patrol/Enforcement Action)	7
Improve Biodiversity/Natural Capital/Environmental Protection	6
Wi-Fi (Add/Need)	5
Longer Camping Season/Hours	5
More Hiking Trails	5
Playgrounds	4
Dredge Lake	4
Support Watershed Improvements	4
Trim Dead Tree Limbs	3
Spray Poison Ivy	3
Plant More Trees/Landscaping	3
Better Signage	3
Advertising Programs (Social Media, Use Restrooms, More)	3
Fix Railroad Ties	3
Add Non-Reservable Sites	3
More Trash Receptacles	2
Add Recycling Receptacles	1
Add temp/weather display outside the VC	1
Eliminate Non-Reservable Sites	1
Add Biking Trail (all the way around lake)	1
Add Cabins	1
More multi use trails	1
Improve Offseason Access	1
Improve Beaches	1
Remove Dam	1

Question 3 Part 2: Where would you make them?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Prairie Flower	11
Cherry Glen	6
Visitor Center	2
Acorn Valley	2
All	2
Red Feather	2
Sandpiper Shelter	1
Oak Grove	1
Big Creek	1
Marina	1

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Question 4: Why does managing the land and waters at Saylorville Lake matter to you?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Green space - (Close Getaway/Relax)	22
Recreation - (Opportunities/All)	22
Green space - (Environment - Wildlife/Flora)	21
Community Asset - (For the Next Generation)	13
Community Asset - (Location/Close Getaway)	8
Community Asset - (Economic -Visitors/Pop. Retention/Drinking Water)	8
Flood Control	5

Question 5: What do you like or what changes would you make to improve plant communities, fish habitat, or wildlife habitat at Saylorville Lake?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Nothing/Don't Know/Good Job	13
Keep/Improve Prairie/Savannah/Grassy/Wildflower Areas	12
Improve Fish Habitat	10
Plant More Trees (Fruit/Shade/Other)	9
Watershed Education	6
More Interpretive Signage/Education	4
Reduce Invasive Species/Improve Biodiversity (Fire)	4
More Regulations	3
More Wildlife Food Plots/Habitat	3
Dredge	2
Stop Clearing Brushy Areas	1
Remove Dam	1
Acquire Land	1
Improve Bird Habitat	1

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Question 6: What are some outdoor recreation opportunities that should be continued, expanded, added or eliminated at Saylorville Lake?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Continue All Recreational opportunities available now	22
Expand Educational/Science/hikes Programs for Kids/adults	12
None - (Satisfied & No funding available)	9
Add/Expand/Continue Horseback Riding	9
Add/Expand hiking trails	8
Eliminate or restrict access (Intensive Recreation, ATVs, etc)	7
Add Sports Amenities (Basketball/Volleyball/Tennis/Horse Shoe Pits)	6
Expand hiking trails/birdwatching	6
Expand bike trails	5
Add Campsites	4
Stop paving everything (no ADA, keep some unpaved hiking trails)	3
Expand fishing access	2
Expand Frisbee Golf	2
Add Concessions/Rentals	2
Continue Walk-Up Campsites	2
Add Cabins	1
Eliminate Alcohol	1
Add Urban Hunting	1

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Question 7: What are the important benefits of Saylorville Lake to you and your family?	
Response	Number of Similar Responses
Camping	29
Relaxing/Peaceful/Beautiful	22
Well Kept (grounds and facilities)	10
Boating	10
Proximity to Des Moines	10
Wildlife and Bird Viewing/Nature	10
Fishing	9
Family Memories	8
Environmental Protection	8
Biking	6
Swimming	5
Flood Control	5
Horseback Riding	5
Great recreation area, love it.	4
Reasonably Priced	4
Walking/Hiking	4
Friendly Staff	3
Great Place to Work	3
Safe	2
Being able to see the lake	1
Fun	1
Interpretive/Educational	1
No Alcohol	1
Eco-Tourism Benefits/Economics	1
Picnics	1
Health	1

Comments Received From Focus Groups June 2013–August 2013

Birding – June 18, 2013

- The letter to the interests groups was generic and led many to believe that this meeting was a general public information meeting and not specific to the birding community.
- Follow up with other interest groups reference the above comment
- Would like the opportunity to specifically counter arguments made by other user groups
- Want year round vehicle access to recreation areas for the purposes of birding. Understanding that occasionally areas may have to be closed due to weather.
- In the last few years the recreation area policy has changed to the date specific to opening/closing. This unfairly limits access to the public.
- Public education and signage to demonstrate/explain ecosystem restoration projects
- Protecting migrating waterfowl (pelicans & shorebirds) from disturbance prior to hunting season, specifically at Jester Park.

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Biking – June 19-2013

- Enjoy single track soft trails type of biking (unpaved trails)
- Lack of soft trails north of NW 66th Ave
- Need something similar to Sugar Bottom (Coralville lake)
- Users invest time in maintaining & protecting Sycamore Trail, protect with gated trails, fencing, etc.
- If you don't build authorized trails around Saylorville Lake you will have rogue/social trails become a problem
- Equestrians rule Jester Park (not bikers)
- More cross-country skiing, then there is potential to use soft trails for bikers as well
- Soft trails would be multi-use (hikers, runners, bird watchers, etc).
- West side trail is too steep to enjoy
- Signage is extremely important
- Build the loops off the main spine trail (Sugar Bottom is like this, very good)
- ATVs are a problem at Sycamore Trail – detriment to trail
- Soft trails would be more of a benefit than a negative to an area
- Great benefit to Polk City with a diverse well designed soft trail system; economic benefit to the area
- Many experts available to use to build soft trails, professionally build in 2-3 years for much less than paved trail
- Corporate money available in DM-interested in supporting health and wellness, i.e. biking.
- Corps at Coralville has the ability to close sections of the trail if necessary
- Sugar bottom may not be applicable as a model for Saylorville
- Difficult sections are relatively short, less than 1 mile
- Two concepts for trails 1) long narrow trail or 2) maintain trail with loops off the spine
- Mountain bikers travel to many areas/states and provide and economic boom to those destinations. Cuyana, MN – Copper Harbor, MI – Raystown, PA
- 40 miles of trail outside Birmingham, Al is extremely popular with bikers from all over the US
- AR,MN,CO,FL – all states where meeting attendees have biked in the past year
- Trails would be easily maintained
- Trails would be used year round
- Trails would need to be managed when trail is in poor condition
- Hunting and biking usually are not a conflict, trails would provide access for hunting population
- Enjoy riding bikes on Neal Smith Trail
- Would like connection of Neal Smith with High Trestle Trail
- If looking at putting in hard trail, consider instead to triple amount and make a soft trail
- Soft trail means dirt, not rock
- It would be great to have trails that are long (i.e. 10 miles) and secluded/quiet
- Not experiencing user conflict with trails in Des Moines between bikers, walkers, runners, etc.

Local Entities – June 25, 2013

No Attendees

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Boating – June 26, 2013

- What can we do to stop the siltation? Are there any attempts to slow it down?
- Marina infrastructure concerns in relation to siltation knowing continued siltation will occur
- Are there any thoughts of purchasing additional lands/
- Are there any intentions to increase the number of campsites?
- Who makes the final decision as to what goes into the Master Plan?
- Is there a possibility that the Master Plan will include the construction of public use buildings on Corps lands for educational purposes, trainings, public meetings, etc?
- The Corps should confront adjacent landowners to pass on/donate land
- Carlyle Lake leased a building, constructed by the Corps, to teach/instruct students out of a central location for boating safety courses
- Compliment to Big Creek looking so nice “ A Real Showplace”
- When a boater launches a boat alone, it’s would be nice to have a dock to tie that boat up to while retrieving the vehicle

Hunting – July 9, 2013

- Increased opportunity for hunter recruitment in the urban setting in the form of youth/mentored hunts or special events DNR hunts. Coordinator AJ Winters
- Predator control, increased predators decreases game species
- Recruiting and organizing volunteers to help manage resources in times of shrinking budgets
- Look at potential to connect Neal Smith Trail and future NW Beaver Ave trail across 78th Ave
- The ability of federal property to continue to provide public services/recreation in spite of continued urban development.
- Fragmentation of federal lands by adjacent development/roadways/utilities
- Wayfinding, reflective directional signs
- Signage/Availability of hunting maps, both hunting and non-hunting areas
- Corps discussion/involvement on the issue of siltation and its effects on economy/natural resources
- Master Plan vulnerability assessment in regards to climate change

Fishing - July 10, 2013

No Attendees – Held previous meeting on March 7th with local fishing clubs

- Need the ability to make negative comments
- Too large of boats with too much horsepower. Look into possible horsepower restrictions or speed restrictions
- Require safe boating course for operators or at least for one person on board
- Public education on ramp usage
- People with large boats need a place to go too
- Daytime and nighttime speed limits
- Bike trail users pay their share for trails and facilities, need a trail use fee
- Longer docks, loading docks
- Boating etiquette sign son the ramp
- Fishing regulations posted near the water and tail water
- Fish cleaning stations near the lake
- Additional dock at Cherry Glen lower ramp

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- Isolate smaller vessels, give them their own dock
- Better signage for directing Jet Skis to Jet Ski ramp
- More rearing ponds at higher elevations
- More information on who to contact with problems on the water
- 300ft rule with boating and shoreline buoys or signage
- Updated bathymetric survey data available to the public
- Address siltation on north end of the lake
- Raise the pool
- Small vessel ramp at oak grove
- Benches with a view of the lake

Local Businesses - July 16, 2013

No Attendees

Local Colleges - July 17, 2013

- Add educational services for local college use
- Build an education building designated for local schools/universities use
- Look into re-opening the gorge viewing area to the general public
- Increased focus on restoration via a “friends group”
- Expansion of past secondary restoration classes may be a problem with local colleges, currently reached capacity of classes offered
- Establish a list of local experts on topics that are important to this project, archeology, geology, etc. Use a resource for public programs
- Protection of existing natural resources from overdevelopment

Outdoor Recreation – July 23, 2013

No Attendees

Miscellaneous Interest Groups – July 24, 2013

- Possibility/Availability of Corps land being designated training lands for Camp Dodge?

Environmental Groups – July 31, 2013

- Influence of USACE on regional water quality issues in the watershed
- Siltation is a major concern
- Important to do up-stream conservation
- Can USACE apply leverage to force improved water quality
- Increase [public education on water quality
- Monitor/mitigate for urban sprawl influence on wildlife
- Larger lake, more bays/diverse habitat

Youth Groups – August 6, 2013

No Attendees

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Other Comments Submitted to the Saylorville Lake Office

A.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Saylorville Lake (Saylorville) Master Plan. My family and I live approximately four miles from the dam in Saylor Township. We moved to this location in large part due to the quick and easy access to Saylorville. I estimate that over the past ten years, I have made just over 1,000 recreational visits to Saylorville. Approximately ninety-five percent of those visits were for the purpose of bird watching. The others were for fishing or jogging on the Neal Smith trail.

I have two main concerns related to management of the Saylorville Reservoir plan area:

1. Public access. To be candid, public access at Saylorville is poor and is the subject of great frustration to me and most local birders that I know. As a birder, I visit the lake primarily because it attracts large numbers of waterfowl, gulls, terns, wading birds, shorebirds, and other water related species. Saylorville is arguably the single best birding location in Iowa and is prominently featured as the first stop on the Makoke Birding Trail. Unfortunately, Saylorville has become an increasingly difficult place to bird, solely due to Army Corps policy of closing off most of the recreation areas and access points for the majority of the year. Saylorville is a big lake and on any given day, most of the birds may be congregated in a specific area of the lake due to boat traffic, habitat conditions, or the presence of ice. To effectively bird Saylorville, birders need access to multiple shoreline vantage points in order to scan the lake and locate the birds. Current Corps policy seems to be to close all recreation areas, except for Cherry Glen, from October through April. This is literally more than half of the year that these public areas and their extensive (and expensive) infrastructure of roads, parking areas, boat ramps, playgrounds, picnic areas, beaches, etc. sit unused behind locked gates. This is extremely frustrating to me as a birder, because the Corps closes off these areas at precisely the times of year that they are most valuable to birders. This is especially true at beach areas such as Oak Grove and Sandpiper, where birds congregate in the fall and spring when it is too cold for swimmers and other traditional beach users. The reality is that once the gates are closed on these recreation areas in the fall, the lake is effectively unbirdable and birders stop coming other than maybe for a quick check to see what is below the dam. The current access situation is not how things used to be. In the not too distant past, most if not all the recreation areas remained open so long as there was not a safety issue with snow or ice on the roads. This seemed to be a reasonable policy and it is one that the Corps absolutely must return to. The current situation is unacceptable and it is hard to understand how closing off all of the lake except for Cherry Glen for seven months out of the year is justifiable given all the taxpayer money that has been spent on developing and maintaining the recreation areas. Considering all the concerns about the obesity epidemic, kids being out of touch with nature, declines in participation in hunting, and the State of Iowa's initiative to be the healthiest state in the nation, keeping people from accessing this large public area also seems counter to good public policy.

It has been explained to me that these areas are closed for two main reasons. One is lower staffing levels in the winter compared to the summer, and the other that deer poaching is a problem in these areas. Regarding the lower staff levels in the non-summer seasons—it is not clear to me why exactly this is such an issue when all that is being requested is access to the recreation areas. Clearly a huge focus of the Saylorville project is recreation. There is a visitor center, there are designated recreation areas, and there is the previously referenced infrastructure already in place. It seems unreasonable that

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all of this should go to waste for the majority of the year because the Corps will not allocate the staff time to open and close the gates and perform the occasional patrol. As I previously mentioned, these areas used to be open year-round, weather permitting, so I am not requesting anything that hasn't been done before, and in fact was the status quo for many, many years. As for the issue of deer poaching, I am certainly anti-poaching and I hope anyone poaching deer around the lake will be caught and punished appropriately. However, making the recreation areas into trophy buck refuges at the expense of general public access is not an acceptable solution to this problem. I fail to see how closing areas to protect certain large deer is in any way related to any of the missions of the Corps. It is certainly not justifiable from an ecological perspective.

2. Habitat management. As is obvious to anyone who has regularly spent time around the lake over the past decade, sprawling development from Ankeny has begun impacting the east/north side of the lake and residential development has seriously impacted the south/west side of the lake. This development has continued to isolate the natural areas found on Corps land and fragment the natural habitat on the private lands being developed. All of this has and will presumably continue to degrade these areas in terms of their value to wildlife and will contribute to siltation and nutrient problems in the water. While most of these activities and impacts are out of the Corps hands, the Corps should ensure that natural habitats on Corps lands are protected and should make all possible efforts to restore native communities when possible. To these ends, the Corps should not further fragment existing habitat by building new roads or developing new recreation areas. No new recreational uses should be allowed that negatively impact habitat. Specifically, it has been suggested that there may be a proposal to allow ORV/ATV use in some of the wooded areas on the north shore of the lake. Such use would be disruptive to wildlife, disruptive to the public, would fragment and degrade habitat, and would contribute to soil erosion. Similarly, new trails for other purposes, such as equestrian trails, should be very carefully placed, if allowed at all. As an example, the recent construction of a new horse trail at Lincoln Access caused the abandonment of a communal roost of the state-threatened Long-eared Owl.

I would also like to state my support for some of the habitat improvement projects that have been taking place around the lake. I strongly support savannah and prairie restoration efforts where appropriate. I also strongly support efforts to control invasive species such as non-native honeysuckles and garlic mustard.

B.

All I need to do is consider the impact of Mountain Bikes on Thomas Mitchell Park in the Des Moines area, to have an idea of what the fragile riparian corridor could look like if the Corps of Engineers allows access by mountain bikers to this area. I "get" the need for youth to test themselves "against" "stuff". Sadly, the "stuff" is often the natural world. There is little of that left in Iowa. The 13,000 acres of the Saylorville Lake project under DNR management as "out granted" land presents a situation where an underfunded agency is even less capable of monitoring and enforcing activities on their lands than the Corps of Engineers is. Unlike motorized wheeled vehicles, less noise is involved with Mountain biking so the damage will be done before it is noticed. Perhaps it is unrealistic to believe Iowans might grow up and recognize that their tax dollars secures a place that produces essential ecological services necessary for human survival. The riparian corridor is providing ecological services in the undeveloped (untrammelled) acres. That thin corridor is also the ONLY

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contiguous habitat running through Iowa from border to border as the Des Moines River flows from NW to SE Iowa. It is not necessary for this minuscule land base to provide entertainment for every possible outdoor recreation venue on Earth. If the Corps errs in its delivery of outdoor recreation “demanded” by the public, I pray that the C.O.E. err on the side of the land. In the over 30 + years that I have wandered through this landscape, the only barrier to my travel was ice, snow, flood waters and personal energy. When I am old, I may not have the physical capacity to hike into the remote clefts in the hogbacks along the Des Moines River where rare plants cling to the steep slopes. Nor walk miles to see the Hoary Puccoons flower in the springtime. But I know they are there and will continue to be there, even if I cannot. I would not expect the Corps to put in an escalator so I could gain access to these areas.

C.

My concerns:

These bikes are hard on trails, and in order to be at all sustainable, considerable time and money would have to go into professional trail design and maintenance. Frequently riders go on wet trails, go off trail (create their own “new” trails,) and seek steep slopes (with highly erodible soils) for more “adventure.” And other even more damaging users (ORV's) would soon find and take advantage of these trails.

Human impact would affect the ecology of the area; the plants and animals that call this area their home. And it is likely that the Environmental Survey will find uncommon, threatened and endangered species here. Siltation is a big concern for Saylorville Lake, and barer trail dirt would exacerbate the problem.

Does the Army Corps of Engineers have the manpower to oversee construction, monitor trail conditions, allow only designated uses on designated trails, and make timely repairs? Volunteer efforts come and go. The Corp would be ultimately responsible.

D.

Iowans still need places of “lovely solitude.”

Central Iowans are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the Central Iowa Des Moines River Greenbelt, and its corridors that are crucial for our green infrastructure. I serve on and participate in several groups that have been focusing attention on the importance of the Des Moines (and Raccoon) River corridors. These include the Des Moines/Polk County Trails and Greenbelt Advisory Committee, the Des Moines initiated DM/Raccoon Greenbelt Study, The Tomorrow Plan (MPO), the recently held Green Infrastructure Conference, the recently created Four-Mile and other Watershed Management Authorities, and many local initiatives.

Over and Over I’ve heard the importance of preserving and protecting the flood plain so that it can “do its thing;”slow down, infiltrate, and clean river water and store water during flooding.

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My goal would be to manage this riparian area along the Des Moines River to conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide related benefit to all.

Two questions to ask about any new impact: Does it degrade the resource? and, is it sustainable? To achieve desired results, the area needs to manage features and processes to maintain essential environmental services. What are these desired results?

A livable community.

Support of tourism (healthy rivers for fishing, swimming, paddling, boating or just enjoying as we watch or sit and watch).

Good housing market for lots near “natural areas.”

Attracting a “creative class” of entrepreneurs.

Enhancing quality of life, including physical and mental wellness.

Preserving connectivity for humans as well as flora and fauna

Helping restore health and function to the watershed

It is important to link green spaces for the benefit of people. It is also crucial for biodiversity and the movement of species to avoid fragmentation.

Supporting environmental education and maintaining the existing trail system are two ways to get people into and appreciating these natural corridors.

Building roads through them is NOT! I’m especially concerned about the attempts to extend Martin Luther Parkway north from Euclid Ave. in Des Moines, through the Des Moines River Floodplain, along the river, to connect with NW 26th St north of I 80/35

E.

I have a number of concerns which I would like included with the other comments from the meeting.

The letter of invitation talks about the orderly development, administration, maintenance, preservation, and management of the natural, cultural and recreational resources of Saylorville Lake. Much of the conversation Wednesday focused on mountain bikes and their “soft” trails. I have real concerns about the negative impact they would have on the natural resources of the area: primarily with issues about the preservation, management and use of the area’s resources.

There are many thousands of bicycle riders in the metro area. We ride for exercise, enjoyment, commuting, getting outdoors, and to be with family and friends. The many multi-use trails in the area, including the backbone trail of the system, the Neal Smith Trail, provide us wonderful opportunities to ride. Efforts to connect the trail with adjoining trails and communities are ongoing and quite successful. The recent renovation of much of the trail was a much-needed improvement, and maintenance needs to be an on-going priority. (The trail just south of and paralleling I 80/35 is especially needing work.)

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The impacts of mountain biking to the area are, however, a concern to me. Mountain biking in Iowa, in fact, is somewhat of an oxymoron. We don't have mountains with rocky hillsides. We have hills with highly erodible soils. And with the siltation of the lake, removing vegetation from the hillsides and allowing bike traffic would seem to me to exacerbate the problem. Experts in this area say that mt. biking is not sustainable in Iowa without a substantial fee to professionally maintain the track. And improper use of the "soft" trails seems to be common, and very hard to manage and patrol. Is there adequate staff to manage these trails properly? To keep them on established trails and not create offshoots? To prevent ORV's doing further damage?

As I hike and camp, I frequently see admonishments to "leave no trace." I think this is impossible for mountain bikers. Their impact on soil, vegetation, storm water, wildlife, and the lovely solitude of the woods is significant.

The Tomorrow Plan's GOAL 2 Improve the region's environmental health and access to the outdoors includes;

- Enlarge wildlife populations and habitat for forest, wetland and prairie species;
- Improve water quality and stream stability, and reduce soil erosion and flooding;
- Increase trail connectivity and distribution;
- Improve personal and public health and well-being, both physical and mental;
- Establish a unique identity and distinctive landscape character for the region.

I would hope that you seriously consider the ramifications of allowing mountain bike trails in the area, realizing how difficult they would be to manage in a sustainable way.

Thanks for your consideration.

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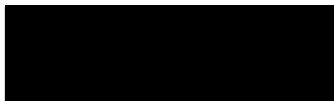


REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAYLORVILLE LAKE PROJECT, 5600 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IOWA 50131-1941
<http://www.CorpsLakes.us/Saylorville>

November 13, 2014

Operations Division, Saylorville Lake



Ms. Soelberg:

I appreciate you taking the time to send us written comments regarding the Saylorville Lake Master Plan. Your suggestions, concerns and comments help make the document a better product capable of serving both the resource and visitors for the future. Resource protection in a rapidly changing urban environment has shown broad public support through the master plan process.

Some of your comments were addressed in poster format and presented at the public meeting. Other comments and concerns were addressed through policy alterations. We appreciate the support for our natural resource protection within the new master plan. Continued urbanization and projected increased visitation to USACE lands will increase pressure on the resources. Federal lands belong to everyone and insuring that Saylorville maintains its biodiversity is a significant component of the master plan.

Thank you for your time and effort to help us create a Master Plan that will serve the public need and protect the resource for wildlife and plant diversity into the future. We encourage you to visit the Saylorville Lake webpage and review the Master Plan which will be posted on November 19th.

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx>

If you have further questions or concerns please feel free to contact Natural Resource Specialist Brian Nail at Brian.R.Nail@usace.army.mil or by phone at 515-276-4656 x6515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey W. Rose, II".

Jeffrey W. Rose, II
Operations Project Manager

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F.

5 March 2014

Saylorville Lake
5600 NW 78th Avenue
Johnston IA 50131

Attn: Master Plan Committee:

This letter shall serve to provide comments regarding birds, habitat, birdwatching, and issues related to bird conservation, submitted for consideration in the Master Plan for Saylorville Lake, currently under revision. Comments herein are submitted jointly on behalf of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, Iowa Audubon, and Des Moines Audubon Society, the major bird recordkeeping, conservation and education citizen organizations in Iowa. Together, our membership is approximately 800 members, and Iowa Audubon also represents more than 2,000 members of various local Audubon chapters and affiliated birding clubs. A large percentage of these birders have visited Saylorville Lake, one of Iowa's premier birding areas and of critical importance especially to migrating waterbirds during annual spring and fall migration seasons.

It should first be recognized that Iowa Audubon and the National Audubon Society have designated Saylorville Lake as one of currently 91 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the state. In addition, the American Bird Conservancy, under its own separate IBA program, has designated Saylorville Lake as one of four Globally Important Bird Areas in Iowa, again based upon importance to large migratory concentrations of waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds and white pelicans.

Due to the presence of a large lake and river, mudflats, upland forest, savanna, and remnant or restored prairie, Corps lands and waters here provide a great "island" of habitat essential to both resident and migratory birds. This, in turn attracts innumerable local birdwatchers to spend time seeking out the more than 275 species recorded as occurring here. Saylorville is also one of 22 key birding areas comprising the Makoke Birding Trail, a collection of avian habitats within about 45 miles of Des Moines all intended to provide great opportunities for local birdwatchers.

Because the Saylorville Project is so important both to birds and to the birding community, we appreciate the chance to provide the following comments and suggestions for protecting birds and their habitat, and for improving bird observation opportunities at Saylorville Lake and all associated Corps lands.

1. **Identifying and protecting "sensitive areas" for birds.** There are many habitats that could use additional attention and/or measures to insure minimal disturbance for migrating, foraging and nesting birds. One of the most sensitive areas consists of the mudflats occurring seasonally or during low water periods, above a line extending from the Big Creek spillway on the east side to Jester Park on the west. These mudflats, sandbars, and shallow water areas provide crucial foraging and resting sites for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds and pelicans. They can be seriously disturbed especially by motorized watercraft during the spring and late summer/early fall migratory peaks. Besides these sensitive mudflats, there are a number of large, fairly intact, timbered blocks along the lake and upstream bordering the Des Moines River on Corps property.

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Such woodlands should be considered sensitive for the important nesting and foraging habitat provided to forest birds. Remnant prairie and savanna tracts also remain in isolated locations, all critically important habitats especially for seasonally nesting birds of many varieties. All such sites should be managed as well as possible to retain the historic and natural qualities of those habitats. Lands extending along the Des Moines River north to Fraser and licensed to the Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources also have many sensitive avian habitat areas identified and are managed for the entire bird community, with extensive regulations to restrict human disturbance of nesting, foraging and migrating birds. Another site that may require more management attention includes the wooded bottomlands extending from below Saylorville Dam south to Highway I-35/80, along the Des Moines River. Habitat here potentially could support rare Iowa nesting species such as Cerulean Warblers or Red-shouldered Hawks.

2. **Avian habitat management practices.** There are numerous practices of benefit to birds and their habitat, although it is recognized that some of these require intensive labor and costs, and some (such as prescribed burning) may be regulated by adjacent governmental jurisdictions that make such practices even more difficult. The Corps is to be commended for work accomplished to date on restoring prairies and oaks savannas, and these practices should be continued and expanded when and wherever possible. Water level management on the lake itself can also greatly affect avian use of the area, especially in the upper lake mudflat areas described in item #1, above. While waterfowl hunting is sometimes taken into consideration when planning water level manipulations, more attention should also be given to the many non-game aquatic birds that rely upon the upper lake for migrating and foraging habitat. Finally, perhaps the most important management practice that might benefit avian life here is restriction of any motorized access to critical habitats (addressed further in item # 3, below).
3. **Impacts of public recreation upon birds on Corps Lands at Saylorville.** Many human activities result in disturbance or harm to birds using almost any habitat. In general, however, hiking and other foot traffic are relatively minimal in causing lasting problems. Saylorville's existing trails, picnic grounds, camping areas and similar areas of concentrated recreation on uplands generally have achieved a balance with the more common birdlife associated with or near these recreation sites. Dogs, however, if not kept on leash can and do cause harmful effects, especially on ground-nesting birds in places like Red Feather Prairie, critical to declining species such as Henslow's Sparrow. It is recommended that regulations be promulgated or enforced so that no unleashed dogs, or other pets, are allowed on all recreational lands here, and prominent signage to this effect should be posted at all access or recreation sites. Demand for public equestrian use of public lands across Iowa is growing, and the Corps will doubtless receive increasing requests for equestrian trails and facilities at Saylorville. Horses, even when restricted to designated trails, can cause significant soil and habitat deterioration, and large group trail rides can cause disturbance or displacement of nesting birds. Because Jester Park already maintains equestrian trails for public use, we believe there is no reason to consider opening any additional Corps lands to this use.

A notorious cause of disturbance of birds and their habitats is motorized vehicle use. Of foremost concern here is motorized watercraft activity in the mudflat areas, described as a sensitive

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area in item #1, above. We suggest closing this area to all motorized watercraft during the prime migration periods, from mid-March to mid-May and from August 1 until the opening of fall waterfowl hunting seasons on the upper lake. This might be done simply by posting closure signs, with dates, at all key access points above the mile-long bridge and in printed regulation materials. Enforcement would, of course, be required but should not add greatly to the other water enforcement already conducted annually from spring through fall.

On upland areas, including lakeside beaches, ATV or other 4x4 vehicle use must simply be prohibited and related regulations enforced. Motorized recreation greatly disturbs avian foraging and nesting, resulting in reduced reproductive success or increased migratory mortality. Therefore, we strongly urge that no ATV trails be considered for future placement in any natural habitats here. If there is increasing demand by ATV groups for a place to recreate on Corps property, any site selected should be restricted to a block of "wasteland" such as old mine sites, fill areas, or otherwise already greatly compromised habitat. Another consideration for providing ATV recreation might be to work in cooperation with the Red Rock Lake Corps program and staff. There appear to be more such waste areas on or near Corps lands there, and it is close enough to Des Moines that such a site could serve most Des Moines area ATV enthusiasts, reducing the threats to Saylorville's more endangered remaining habitats.

4. How to better serve birders and other nature-oriented visitors. Because Saylorville Reservoir has become such a renowned site particularly for viewing waterbirds, suitable access to lakeside observation areas must be provided through as much of the year as possible. A major complaint from the Iowa birding community has been the seemingly unnecessary early fall closure and late spring opening of access roads to such key bird observation sites as Sandpiper, Oak Grove, Cherry Glen and Lakeview Recreation Areas. Some of the rarest or most unusual birdlife appears at Saylorville during the spring and fall migration seasons, and it is at these critical times that there is some of the largest interest and visitation by birders. Yet these areas are usually gated and closed to vehicle access long before snow and ice conditions commence in the fall, and remain closed until long after conditions have suitably melted out in the spring. It is understood that gates must be closed to vehicles for public safety reasons when weather and road conditions become dangerous, but not when such safety threats are absent. Therefore, we request that existing road access to all public recreation areas remain open by default until presence of snow and/or ice conditions are determined unsuitable for safety. They should then be reopened once conditions are again deemed safe. In mild, open winters, these areas may seldom realize any need for closure.

The method used by most parks or nature centers for notifying visitors of daily unusual bird observations is by simply posting a list on a bulletin board or erasable whiteboard. This is sometimes done inside the Saylorville visitor center; unfortunately, the center is frequently closed or offers shortened daily hours during the prime migration season, when birding visitors most often want to know what has been seen and where, or how many pelicans might have been seen using this prime central U.S. staging area. Many local area birders subscribe to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union's internet list serve, on which are posted unusual bird sightings or records for Saylorville. However, many visiting birders from other states do not have access to this Iowa service. We suggest that the Corps institute a phone number that visitors might call to hear a recorded list of

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what unusual birds have been observed each day or in a reasonably recent time frame. Signs or posters with this number could be posted at various parks and access areas around the lake.

Finally, we suggest considering daily or annual user fees to be established for all recreation pursuits on Corps lands at Saylorville, whether for birding, picnicking, boating, bicycling, or other activities. In this day of increasingly reduced government budgets, it is often no longer possible for agencies to adequately meet all recreation and management needs on public lands. User fees might assist in reversing this problem. If there is a standard, nationwide policy that currently prevents implementing such user fees on Corps lands, then this issue should be lifted to the Corp's national administrators for review, or to Congress if necessary.

We understand that not all our concerns might be completely addressed, due to other Corps of Engineers priorities, and to limited budgets or staffs. However, we reiterate that Saylorville Lake and its surrounding habitats are of nearly incalculable importance to avian life, especially migrating waterbirds. Exploding residential development now enveloping nearly all Corps lands and waters here will have a deleterious effect on birds, as well as other natural resources. It is, therefore, imperative that proper protection and management of all birds and their habitats on Corps lands and waters at Saylorville be considered of primary importance in preparing the new Master Plan. To conclude, we also pledge that our organizations stand ready to assist the Corps in decision making that might stand to influence birds positively or negatively.

Douglas C. Harr
President
Iowa Audubon



Jane Clark
President
Des Moines Audubon Society



Paul Roisen
President
Iowa Ornithologists' Union



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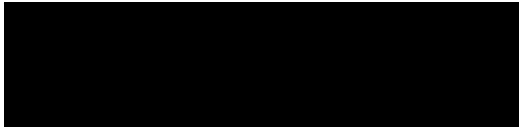


DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAYLORVILLE LAKE PROJECT, 5600 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IOWA 50131-1941
<http://www.CorpsLakes.us/Saylorville>

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

November 13, 2014

Operations Division, Saylorville Lake



Mr. Harr:

I appreciated your written comments regarding the Saylorville Lake Master Plan update. Your suggestions, concerns and comments help make the document a better product capable of serving both the resource and visitors for the future. Strengthening resource protection in a rapidly changing urban environment has received broad public support through the master plan process.

Some of your comments were addressed in poster format presentations at the public meeting and which are on line at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake/MasterPlan.aspx>. Other comments and concerns have been addressed through policy alterations where appropriate. For clarity we will provide comments to your letter in the general sections listed in your letter.

Sensitive Areas: My staff continues to define sensitive areas as we work to finalize the master plan and your suggested sites for avian species helped in our process. The mudflats (when water conditions allow) are well recognized for their value. They will be considered a sensitive area when water levels are near 836 conservation level and shallow conditions provide habitat for water birds. We would appreciate more detail on the northern sections of the river regarding forest birds. We are less familiar with project lands near Fraser and the Ledges area. Perhaps Doug Harr and/or other representatives could assist us in mapping these potential sensitive areas in Boone County.

Avian Habitat Management: I appreciate the recognition for our restorative efforts on prairies and oak savanna as well as our reforestations. Water level management is outside the scope of Master Plan and it is governed by the approved Saylorville Lake Water Level Management Plan. There are provisions within the current plan that allow relatively minor pool increases in the fall for waterfowl and provisions for maintaining a short term stable pool for fish spawning in the spring. When conditions warrant we have requested the

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conservation pool to be brought down from 836.3 (often maintained elevation) to 836.0 from July 1st through August; this three tenths of a foot reduction provides significant shorebird habitat and allows for aquatic vegetation on the slightly higher elevations to establish and mature. These provisions were incorporated in the current plan, but as you are probably aware flood risk management is the primary function for the operation of the reservoir. Funding for an update of the Water Level Management Plan has been requested but is not currently funded. Public and agency input will be solicited whenever the plan undergoes a major revision.

Impacts of Public Recreation: There was significant comment from the public regarding the desire for more hiking trails and mountain bike trails. We are proposing re-opening the west side hiking trail to help meet the demand. All other proposed recreation improvements are confined to existing recreation areas and we do not propose expanding equestrian areas. Significant erosion control measures have been installed by Polk County Conservation Board improving conditions within their outgranted lands. ATV's have reduced activity through better enforcement here in Polk County. Illegal riding still occurs, particularly in Boone and Dallas Counties, but continued enforcement will help. Given the need for strong resource protection as described in the Master Plan, developed ATV parks on Corps lands are not a consideration. We have reviewed your suggestion to restrict motorized vessels. We are proposing a restriction from 1 April through 31 August that the mudflat zone is restricted to non-motorized vessel (provided we are at or near conservation pool). This proposal should reduce disturbance on wildlife and improve public safety by reducing stranded boater situations. We have been in early contact with the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the "Urban Wildlife Refuge" initiative. We are interested in nominating our lands from the Dam south to approximately 6th avenue as an urban refuge. The resource appears to have enough quality to qualify as a candidate. If the initiative moves, we would hope your organizations would actively support it.

Better Serving Birders: Most of the comments deal with policy as opposed to inclusion in the Master Plan. We have reviewed our Standard Operating Procedure regarding opening and closing areas in an attempt to keep these areas open as long weather allows safe travel. Sandpiper, Oak Grove and Lake View Main accesses will remain open until winter weather no longer allows safe travel. Once the areas have closed for the season we will not open until the roadways are safe to operate on a consistent basis. I am open to ways to partner with my interpretive staff to determine ways of keeping bird sightings up to date for area birders. We subscribe to the list serve and stay abreast of rare sightings but don't currently relay to the public. You may be aware of the "Guide by cell"

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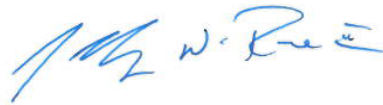
signs utilized around the lake and there may be a way to update that message to meet your needs.

Again thank you for your time and effort to help us create a master plan that will serve the public need and protect the resource for wildlife and plant diversity into the future. We encourage you to visit the Saylorville Lake webpage and review the Master Plan which will be posted on November 19th.

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx>

If you have further questions or concerns please feel free to contact Natural Resource Specialist Brian Nail at Brian.R.Nail@usace.army.mil or by phone at 515-276-4656 x6515.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Rose, II
Operations Project Manager

3. COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM PUBLIC MEETING MAY 15, 2014

**Public Meeting Comments
May 15, 2014
Attendees at the meeting: 76
Comment Cards received: 29**

Comment: The main purpose of interest in the Master Plan for us is to support the development of “natural surface” trail. It was interesting to learn about the complexity of the management of the land and all of its current users! It appears to be quite daunting. I would hope that the effort to revitalize the West Side Trail is successful.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Rehab the West Side Trail and other mountain bike opportunities is important to me. Having a variety of local bike trails, both paved and dirt is key to the area. Bike access is part of the high quality of life in DSM. I’m here as part of CITA.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Would love to see the west side trail back in commission.

Response: Comments Noted. Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail.”

Comment: I represent CITA, a large volunteer group that builds and maintains soft trail. We are very pleased with the redevelopment of previous trails on the west side of the lake, north of the dam. We would like for that project to receive a high priority going forward. We are also very interested in a network of connected loops in the campground areas on the east side of the lake, using the Neal Smith Trail as a connecting “spine.” We also favor adding loops off the “Boyscout” trail on the west side that I discussed on the front side.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: It’s nice to see the potential development of the 3.5 mile western. I’d like to see its use as a shared hike/mountain bike trail fully explored. I’m also encouraged by the Sycamore development, particularly the improvement of the north Parking lot.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

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Comment: Soft surface trail “Old Boy Scout” revitalization is a great plan! More and more we are seeing paved trails and many of us would rather ride bikes on soft surface trail closer to nature. This trail would greatly improve opportunity to enjoy the area and adds to existing trails in Sycamore area.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: CITA would love to see the West Side Trail restored and allow hiking, running, and mountain biking. Also the dirt parking lot at the sycamore trail access should be suspended to allow more care. There has been an increase in soft trail usage in IA and should continue.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: West Side Trail re-opening to multi-use traffic would be great. Multi-use includes mountain bikes. I remember hiking that trail 20+ years ago and it was not well built for erosion control. I would recommend extending trail along the contours of the land to greatly extend length of trail and extend the sustainability of the trail. Avoid putting stairs on the trail. Biking stairs is hard.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Glad to see the possibility of re-opening the west side trail to mountain bikes. The challenges could be handled with proper trail design. It would be great to have some soft trails to Sycamore (with hard trail as needed). Thanks for all of your work.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Would like to see mountain bike trail system

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: pleased to see trail improvements!

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

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Comment: I support the development of the soft multipurpose trails for the west side trail

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Very interested in mountain bike trails on the west side of Saylorville Lake. Those old hiking trails are ideal for mountain biking, and the terrain would provide a very challenging trail.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Love seeing the single track trails at Saylorville. Also love hearing about the bridge by the Johnston soccer fields. Scary bridge to cross on a bike.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: The line tracing the West Side Trail appears to cut across the terrain. Trail in the same area that follows the terrain would likely be more sustainable and would offer more miles. Love the connection (coming from Johnston) to get from Neal Smith to the Sycamore Trail. Would appreciate connection from NS to High Trestle Trail.

Hillside Trail behind old science center in DSM is an example of a place that took out fall-line trails and built one that follow the contours. Sugar Bottom is an example of a successful trail system which experiences high water events.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: If you do soft trail development on steep, dissected land there should be no mechanized use. Use of mountain bikes, ATV’s or mechanized recreation is not sustainable and is harmful to the resource.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: Please do not allow mountain bikers on the proposed “West Side Trail.”

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

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Comment: Encourage development of the West side trail and hope research points to re-establishment of the West Side Trail

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 - Special Topics section 6.02 “West Side Trail,” section 6.04 “Need for Additional Recreation Facilities” and Chapter 2 Project Setting and Factors Influencing Management and Development section 2.11 “Trails.”

Comment: I’m most interested in boater education (safety). As a trained boating instructor have had students endangered by basic rules being ignored or unknown. We need something to promote peaceful co-existence.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 – Special Topics section 6.08 “Need for Educational Building for Public Use” and section 6.17 “Water Surface Zoning.”

Comment: Boater education facility for our sailing school on Sandpiper which would be closer to marina and boats. Place for teaching boats.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 – Special Topics section 6.08 “Need for Educational Building for Public Use.”

Comment: Is there any way to have a storage-classroom building-launch site for educational purposes? Sailing and power, 10-14 foot teaching sailboats and powerboats

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 – Special Topics section 6.08 “Need for Educational Building for Public Use.”

Comment: There should be an archeological survey of all Corps areas that we “slighted” during the initial survey. There are many sites on the bluffs that are not recorded hence not protected.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 5 section 5.01.c Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Chapter 7 Agency and Public Coordination specifically the section on Agency and Tribal Coordination. As funding allows Saylorville Lake will utilize the Programmatic Agreement to further investigate possible archeological sites.

Comment: Survey and update archeological sites

Response: Please refer to Chapter 5 section 5.01.c Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Chapter 7 Agency and Public Coordination specifically the section on Agency and Tribal Coordination. As funding allows Saylorville Lake will utilize the Programmatic Agreement to further investigate possible archeological sites.

Comment: Support the F&W sanctuary zone April 1-Aug 31. Climate change adaptation strategies important and need work

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 section 6.17 “Water Surface Zoning” and section 6.21 “Significant Environmental Challenges on the Horizon”

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Comment: I support the closed refuge area above the mile long bridge

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 section 6.17 “Water Surface Zoning.”

Comment: Archery at Bob Shetler sounds nice. I enjoy using Oak Grove swim area. It will be fun to see the Red Feather Prairie kiosk revived.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 section 6.10 “Archery Range.”

Comment: Very interesting, thanks for displays and staff to give added info. I donated the bench in the ponding area and visit it often, every season. Keep up the good work.

Response: General comments noted.

Comment: I like the plans for shelter 7 and the parking there at shelter 7 in cottonwood. I think the cabins at Acorn Valley will be an asset.

Response: Please refer to Chapter 6 section 6.08 “Educational Building for Public Use.”

Comment: Excellent presentation – rangers were really helpful and informative-spoke to us in a clear and understandable way. Would like to have seen a picture of “Ding Darling” w/ visual. Tyler was very good-informative.

Response: General comments noted.

Comment: Looks like several good updates. Glad to hear reservations is now only 1 day in advance. Need more large RV sites.

Response: General comment noted.

Comment: Nice plans. Like plans for cement camping pads and proposed changes for Beaver Creek improvements.

Response: General comment noted.

Comment: As a subcontractor at Cottonwood Rec area I am glad to see some plans for improvement, they look good and will help the park.

Response: General comment noted.

Comment: Please keep access to picnic and lake areas open later than currently done

Response: General comment noted.

Comment: Recreation and natural resource management is very good

Response: General comment noted.

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Des Moines River Watershed
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Comment: Level cement pads would be really wonderful. Great job to all staff. Excellent displays, we learned some new things. Keep improving volunteer sites so they are inviting and enticing for volunteers. Adding small sheds at each site would be helpful. There are lots of volunteer opportunities available so Saylorville needs to offer excellent site to draw more volunteers.

Response: General comments noted.

Comment: Really endorse/support prospect of archery range! Propose and off-leash Dog Park in one of the recreation areas. Support the re-purposing of the Bob Shetler campground to a volunteer village and the upgrades therein. Additional educational programs for the public about the area e.g.-Indian artifacts, & history of area, animals that inhabit the area. Build an amphitheater for summer concerts and other events. Need a sign on Hwy 415 for Red Feather Prairie.

Response: General comments noted.

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Submitted Written Comments

Comment:

First off the rough draft, 6.17 surface water zoning implies a no motorized vehicle zone that would enhance safety and the Corps and other agencies assume the cost of pulling boats and getting people. This is totally incorrect. In the mud flats I don't know of any accidents that have happened but there's been a significant amount of injuries in the main lake. For the last two years I have been the only salvation for boaters with the misfortune to find themselves blown, stuck, or broken down in the mud flats. It doesn't cost the people or the Corps and I don't mind retrieving these people with a phone call. I have two airboats and due to the noise concerns I have changed the style of blades to reduce decibels and on the other I have a counter rotating system, which is even quieter. Airplanes are the greatest nuisances for this water fowl. One fly over at 1000 AGL (more than the legal 500 FT) will lift every pelican and most ducks off the mud flats. You need to rectify this problem first, before, you start picking on boats that safely operate on these mud flats. Florida wild life said that the wildlife gets accustomed to the noise so therefore that is not an issue. I have noticed the more frequent I am in the mud flats, the wildlife have become more unconcerned of my presence. I bow fish in shallow or stagnant water where the birds do not feed and there doesn't appear to be a conflict with me being there. About these canoes and kayakers, they already have no wake lakes/no motor lakes and therefore don't need any more sanctuaries, and yet, they still persist to choke the remaining rivers and lakes of Iowa. I boat Raccoon River and the mouth of Red Rock Lake. I have come across situations where kayakers are bank to bank across the river drinking beer and obstructing the channel where I have to run aground to avoid collision. I have noticed in the mud flats kayakers and canoers, where their presence severely disrupts wildlife. They navigate every possible place disrupting wild life. They pursue wildlife to look and/or take pictures until the bird eventually leaves. If a bird could talk he would say that guy is harassing me. Myself, and many others bow fish, I think it is essential to the health of the lake to remove rough fish. I shoot over 1000 carp varieties per season ranging between 8 and 40 pounds (a necessity for turtle farms) and so do hundreds of other people. Looking back at the rough draft, there is a lot of information that is misleading and incorrect.

The argument of safety won't even hold water let alone mud. I have made many concessions for the wild life so I can continue to boat and fish there, it is important to me to not scare up the pelicans. I have been good about maneuvering around them or using different boat ramps to avoid them. I and many other people have purchased expensive boats or crafts for the use on Saylorville Lake so we could run safely in shallow water or mud flats without getting stuck. We pay taxes and boat registration where kayakers elude any fees, but still use public waters. I do not understand why it is the highest priority to give these people priority when they are definitely not funding any of the resources and fowl up the parking on the ramps making it impossible to navigate a trailer. I know if I get stuck it's not a problem or an expense on anybody but me. Two years since I got the first airboat, I have seen many things happen at Saylorville Lake in the mud flats. Boats and canoes getting stuck when the wind raises the water level and when its stops blowing the water retreats leaving the boat stuck on higher ground. I have seen wind blow boats with mechanical problems into shallow water. I have seen wind make it impossible for kayakers to get back to the dock without my help. Over two years now I have helped too many people to count never asking or charging for anything. There are two situations so far that I will never forget. A jet ski boat launched at Jester Park ramp missed navigating the river channel and got stuck. It had been eight or ten years since he had boated there and the channel had moved. He thought he was going to walk his boat out of the mud flats but he was

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wrong! It took three people from my boat to get him released from the mud. I pulled the boat and his crew, back to the channel. Maybe if the channel could be marked there would be fewer mishaps. The second instance was back in the weeds and small ponds not visible from shore or cliffs. I saw a canoe that looked like it had been abandoned. Free for the taking I had thought, as I got closer I saw a man in the water with his arm draped in the canoe clenching trying to keep his chest and face out of the muddy water. There wasn't enough water to float the canoe with him in it. He was a large man and he got out to push his boat and was overtaken with exhaustion. Too exhausted and unable to get back in the boat there he hung. We managed to get him onto our boat. There he lay on the deck of the boat too exhausted to get into the seat. We returned him and his boat to the Jester Park ramp where some relatives came and got him. Me, boating there greatly increased the chance of this man living. Are we going to put human life over the conservation of the birds? I, and other boaters that navigate these mud flats come across these situations often that need to be addressed. We are the ones making it a much safer place to boat at no expense to anybody but ourselves, and, don't regret it. I would be willing to take my boat out on the ice or mud where seconds count for a medical emergency and pull someone out without hesitation. The habitat there doesn't even come close to the preferred 1000's of miles of rivers and streams, only the locals nest there and, with the rising water or flooded mud flats is not a good spot to nest. Some ducks and geese do hatch there (mainly geese). I have witnessed when the goslings hatch, the coyotes move into the mud flats and islands and have a feast. I think these bird lovers are going to have to put up with the people making noise. People made it possible for the habitat that their existence needs at this location.

If it is really about the ducks and birds, there would be a place where there would be no interaction from humans from the water and the shore and definitely no hunting, this would be the best sanctuary, but instead you are trying to remove the mud boats from their sanctuary.

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Response:

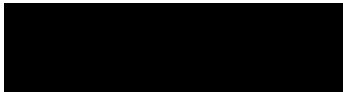


DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAYLORVILLE LAKE PROJECT, 5600 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IOWA 50131-1941
<http://www.CorpsLakes.us/Saylorville>

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

November 13, 2014

Operations Division, Saylorville Lake



Mr Coulson:

I appreciate you taking the time and providing your written comments regarding the Saylorville Lake Master Plan update. Your suggestions, concerns and comments help make the document a better product capable of serving both the resource and visitors for the future. Strengthening resource protection in a rapidly changing urban environment has received broad public support through the master plan process. The following is in response to your written comments.

No Motorized Vessel Zoning: The primary purpose for the zoning change on the northern stretches of the reservoir is to provide a limited disturbance zone for associated water birds. This area of Saylorville Lake is recognized as "Globally Significant" by The American Bird Conservancy due to the number and diversity of migratory birds using the mudflats as a feeding and loafing area during migration. There has been significant research that has been done on motorized vessels and their disturbance on water birds. The size and speed of vessels and the noise produced by motorized vessels all contribute to the degree of disturbance.

With continued high water events resulting in the increase of siltation the Corps feels this area is best suited to restrict motorized vessels when Saylorville Lake is at conservation pool 836 msl and up to 840 msl. During increased pool events this restriction will be lifted once the pool reaches elevation 840 msl and is projected to continue to rise. At this point recreational motorized boating will be allowed in this zone.

Aircraft Disturbance on Wildlife: We agree that low-level aircraft is disruptive to water birds. In 2012, Park Rangers cited two pilots who intentionally

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Johnston, Iowa*

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flew low when large numbers of birds were present. Working with the US Attorney and the FAA, we pursued legal action with these individuals. Park Rangers will continue to enforce this federal regulation and pursue legal actions where necessary.

We encourage you to visit the Saylorville Lake webpage and review the Master Plan which will be posted on November 19th.

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx>

If you have further questions or concerns please feel free to contact Natural Resource Specialist Brian Nail at Brian.R.Nail@usace.army.mil or by phone at 515-276-4656 x6515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. W. Rose II".

Jeffrey W. Rose, II
Operations Project Manager

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Johnston, Iowa*

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Comment:

Section 2.03 Sedimentation and Shoreline Erosion: The OMP, if I remember correctly, calls for a lower of the lake level at a rate of one foot per day to prevent shoreline erosion. I have walked the shoreline multiple times on both sides of the lake and the worst erosion came after the 2010 flood followed by the 2008 flood. In 2008 the water level dropped over a foot a day 20 times. In 2010 the water level dropped over a foot a day 37 times with an exceeding large number of these being over a foot and a half per day. I would re-examine the OMP and perhaps change the drop rate to one foot or less per day to save the shoreline.

Section 2.07 and 6. I want to preface my comments on recreation with a historical note. When we first worked on the original master plan there was resistance to establishing a bike trail, because there were no bikers. We pushed the ideas noting the urban bike trail around Birdland Park and the strong belief that there was a lot of latent demand for bike trails. Fortunately some in the Division office also agreed and the bike trail was included. After its construction biking and trail development exploded across Iowa as people saw the demand was really there as was economic benefit of bike trails. When the original master plan was developed we tried to look into the future as far as what needs would be but it was mostly meeting current needs. Thus the establishment of the campgrounds, picnic areas, beaches, boat launches and trails. Originally there was a larger demand for tent sites and Cherry Glen had many tent campers and Acorn Valley tent areas was usually full on the weekend. As noted technology has changed, tenting is no longer as popular and the cabin proposal is a great one for the Acorn Valley area.

I would expand on the proposal to put a community center area in Walnut Ridge. This would be a great site for an Outdoor Activity/Adventure Center that could possibly be concession operated. A zip line course could be managed that would utilize the ravines to the south of Walnut Ridge and to the north of the area to the Acorn Valley ravines. Additionally this could be a mountain/trail biking hub with loop trails going to the south and north. Other outdoor activities could be included here such as climbing, kayak/canoe center, fishing guides etc. Using some imagination we could meet perhaps several latent demands.

With regards to the trail on the west side: This trail has often been inaccurately described as being built by the boy scouts. While a few boy scouts had some eagle projects that assisted in the development of the trail it was by and large constructed by Corps staff and summer labor. To rehabilitate this trail a 'high' water route (I have one that I use) should be established to reduce and eliminate bridge damage. Bridge footing should be secured and decking be bolted down so if a bridge were to become inundated the bridge will not float. The trail (looking into the future again) should extend to the Jester Park area or at least to the boat ramp by the mile long bridge. The trail should be opened to mountain/trail bikes. As a park manager I was originally against this, thinking of the damage this would cause to the trail. But having seen bikers on this trail, especially in the late 90's, I came to understand that they really did not stray too much off of the trail and in reality kept it open and maintained. Also it added more eyes to the area to report unlawful activities such as poaching and firewood cutting.

The paved bike trail going up the west side of the lake should be extended to connect to Jester Park, traveling on Corps ground in certain areas where needed. The bike trail should also be extended across the mile long bridge to better connect a lake loop. This could be done with a cantilevered trail

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made of decking similar to that near Lutheran Hospital and the Des Moines Botanical Center. (Thinking long term again.)

An additional activity that I might recommend to be added to Oak Grove that would bring in a lot of visitation would be footgolf. (www.footgolf.net) This would take a lot of clearing though and might not be a viable option here but there is a lot of openings in the wooded area to the north and south of 98th and west of the bike trail. If not at Oak Grove this might be a good thing for Cottonwood. Something to look at anyway.

Lakeview: Suggest using this area as a winter recreation area, especially after the rehabilitation of the Moingona Trail. The hill facing east could be used for sledding but it would need to be smoothed out somewhat. An east facing hill would be better for snow conditions than the current west facing hill at Cherry Glen. I would keep Cherry Glen area open though I think, for those that live on the east side of the lake. The trail can be used for cross country skiing, as it is currently being used for that and snowshoeing in the winter. Even ice skating could be provided in the shallow area of the harbor itself, ice conditions permitting. The picnic shelter would be used and there is ample parking. The area of the parking lot to be cleared determined by the amount of use, the entire lot would not need to be cleared.

Section 3.05 page 3-6: 15% of respondents say there is not opportunity that equates latent demand. Why city instead of Federal? Probably proximity. Otherwise it would be day use activities that are short in duration.

Section 3.06 It would seem that there needs to be a continuous rotation of displays on an annual, or seasonal basis to keep up interest.

Section 3.07 The expansion of the volunteer partnership is great and will promote many new and other ideas.

Section 6.05 There are several areas along the west side where storm water drainage is eroding the Corps ground and the developer has inadequate rip-rap protection. Some of this protection needs to be extended further onto Corps ground to arrest further erosion. Some erosion is potentially going to affect at least one house causing structural failure. Some erosion is potentially going to affect at least one house causing structural failure. Not that this is directly a Corps problem but it is Corps ground that is eroding.

There is one area on the west side where a pond dam failed and the bridge that crossed this area was collapsed by a cottonwood tree that was undercut during the 2010 flood. The area upstream of the bridge was supposed to have been purchased by Rock Island real estate year ago because the land behind the failed dam was lower than 890. I am not sure that this happened in talking to the developer and it probably fell through the crack somewhere. Anyway the Corps may be potentially flooding private ground. Needs to be looked into.

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Response:



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAYLORVILLE LAKE PROJECT, 5800 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IOWA 50131-1941
<http://www.CorpsLakes.us/Saylorville>

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

November 13, 2014

Operations Division, Saylorville Lake



Mr Scherer:

I appreciate you taking the time to send us written comments regarding the Saylorville Lake Master Plan update. Your suggestions, concerns and comments help make the document a better product capable of serving both the resource and visitors for the future. Resource protection in a rapidly changing urban environment has shown broad public support through the master plan process.

Some of your comments were addressed in poster format and presented at the public meeting. Other comments and concerns were addressed through policy alterations. For your convenience I will discuss your letter in the order presented.

Rate of Pool Decrease: Determining the amount of feet we decrease the pool in a 24 hour period has many factors, first and foremost is meeting our dam safety regulations. We understand that we already suffer from siltation issues on Saylorville Lake and that bank-pull during pool decrease can add to that issue. From a dam safety and geo-technical standpoint, we drop approximately 1' per day.

Acorn Valley Cabins: I appreciate the recognition for our efforts in proposing cabins at Acorn Valley Campground. We have seen a decrease over the years in tent camping in that particular park. We understand that the public likes to get out into nature and would like to enjoy the camping experience, but does not necessarily have the equipment, nor are they interested in purchasing an RV. We think these cabins will allow visitors to experience camping, but without the large expense of an RV.

Community Center in Walnut Ridge: The idea for a community center was brought to our attention in numerous focus group meetings. We heard from different user groups wanting a meeting space that their particular group that

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could be used for meetings, teaching seminars, events, etc. In the Master Plan document there are two options to meet this suggestion: (1) Walnut Ridge and (2) the Oak Woods Learning Center which is currently being used as a construction office. Either one of these suggestions would meet the need.

West Side Trail: This is the topic in which we received most comment either for or against. We have the possibility of re-opening this trail in the Master Plan document knowing that future studies will need to be completed to find the feasibility. Depending on the findings of those studies we will then determine what types of activities are best suited for that particular trail.

Lakeview Winter Recreation Area: We have added your comments into the document and agree that Lakeview can offer many winter recreation opportunities that we are currently not offering at this time.

Real Estate Concerns: We are aware of two sites adjacent to the Orchard Meadows development that have been causing severe erosion issues on federal lands. For the past two years, my staff has been working with the city to develop a plan to address the issue. The city intends to complete construction/stabilization of both sites this year. Regarding the pond dam failure and potential flooding of private property, we will be forwarding this information onto our real estate office for their review.

Thank you for your time and effort to help us create a Master Plan that will serve the public need and protect the resource for wildlife and plant diversity into the future. We encourage you to visit the Saylorville Lake webpage and review the Master Plan which will be posted on November 19th.

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx>

If you have further questions or concerns please feel free to contact Natural Resource Specialist Brian Nail at Brian.R.Nail@usace.army.mil or by phone at 515-276-4656 x6515.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Rose, II
Operations Project Manager

*Saylorville Lake Master Plan
Des Moines River Watershed
Johnston, Iowa*

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4. AGENCY COORDINATION



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS – ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT
CLOCK TOWER BUILDING - PO BOX 2004
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61204-2004

May 1, 2014

SEE DISTRIBUTION LIST

The US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District (District), is revising the Saylorville Lake Master Plan, which was last updated in 1984. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the District is preparing an Integrated Environmental Assessment (EA) to address impacts associated with this revision. Your organization is invited to provide comments and input to assist with the development of the Master Plan and the preparation of an Integrated Environmental Assessment.

The Master Plan serves as a guide for coordination of project development and management of all Saylorville Lake land and water resources. The purpose of the revised Master Plan is to bring it into compliance with current Corps of Engineers policies and regulations, identify management opportunities and constraints, user needs and characteristics, and to balance all of the above while protecting natural resources and providing stewardship for the future. Public lands are allocated and classified into management categories (i.e. zoning) which, based upon resources available and public needs, will provide for full utilization while protecting Saylorville Lake resources (Enclosures 1 & 2).

The EA will address impacts associated with land use classification changes, similar to zoning. Two alternatives will be evaluated:

- 1) No Action – There would be no revision to the existing Master Plan. No new resource classification, resource objectives, or assessment would occur.
- 2) Revising the 1984 Master Plan – This preferred alternative would:
 - a. revise the existing master plan document;
 - b. include changes in land classifications;
 - c. recommend a low level of development to upgrade and expand facilities at existing recreation areas; and
 - d. make natural resource management improvements.

The primary benefit of revising the current Master Plan would be to reflect changes in recreation facilities, the environment, economic conditions, and visitation patterns. The District anticipates the preferred alternative will have no significant adverse impacts to the quality of the human environment.

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The US Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species website indicated there are six species listed as either threatened or endangered for Polk, Boone, and Dallas Counties, Iowa (Enclosure 3). The District anticipates revising the Master Plan will have "no effect" to any threatened or endangered species since the plan serves as a guide for project development and management. The District's management recommendations of establishing environmentally sensitive areas and conducting invasive species removal may improve habitat for threatened and endangered species while development or other specific projects will continue to be coordinated with agencies as they have been in the past.

Your organization has been identified by the District as one that may have an interest in this project. The land classifications established through the Master Plan may have important implications for surrounding communities, parks, businesses, and natural areas. The District requests your comments to assist in the development of the proposed Master Plan revision and preparation of an Integrated EA. Comments should include any potential impacts land classification changes may have on any significant natural or manmade resources you manage. Your comments will contribute to the Master Planning process as well as a thorough environmental evaluation. The District would greatly appreciate your timely review of this information and a written response for inclusion into the Master Plan with Integrated EA. Please provide your written recommendations, comments, and concerns relative to resources in your area of expertise no later than May 31, 2014.

There will be a public meeting, open house style, held to answer questions and seek input to the Master Planning process. The meeting will be held on May 15, 2014 from 12:00 noon to 7 p.m at the Johnston Public Library 6700 Merle Hay Road, Johnston IA. A preview of concepts and posters will be available after Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake/MasterPlan.aspx>.

If you have any questions, we invite you to attend the public meeting or call Wendy Frohlich of our Environmental Compliance Branch, (309) 794-5573, or write to our address, ATTN: Environmental Compliance Branch (Frohlich).

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Kenneth A. Barr
Chief, Environmental Planning Branch (RPEDN)

Encl (3)

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DISTRIBUTION LIST

Mr. Kraig McPeck
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1511 47th Avenue
Moline, IL 61265

Mr. John Askew, Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region VII
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

Ms. Kathy Mulder
Water Resources Protection Branch
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region VII
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

Mr. Chuck Gipp Director
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
900 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

Ms. Christine M. Schwake
Water Quality Bureau
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
900 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

Mr. Nate Hoogeveen
Rivers Programs Coordinator
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
502 E 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

Mr. Chris Larson
Iowa Dept of Natural Resources
57744 Lewis Road
Lewis, IA 51544

Mr. Steve Espeland
Iowa Dept of Natural Resources
1436 255th Street
Boone, IA 50036

Mr. Josh Gansen
Iowa Dept of Natural Resources
1436 255th Street
Boone, IA 52052

Mr. John Pearson
Iowa Dept of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
502 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Mr. Ben Dodd
Iowa Dept of Natural Resources
1436 255th Street
Boone, IA 50036

Mr. Greg Van Fossen
Iowa Dept of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, IA, 50319-0034

Ms. Pauline Drobney, Refuge Manager
Neil Smith National Wildlife Refuge
9981 Pacific Street/P.O. Box 399
Prairie City, IA 50228

Mr. Loren Lown, Resource Specialist
Polk County Conservation Board
11407 NW Jester Park Drive
Granger, IA 50109

Mr. Dennis Parker, Director
Polk County Conservation Board
11407 NW Jester Park Drive
Granger, IA 50109

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Mr. Mark Dungan, Forester
Polk County Conservation Board
11407 NW Jester Park Drive
Granger, IA 50109

Mr. Andy Hockenson, Director
Boone County Conservation Board
610 H Avenue
Ogden, IA 50212

Mr. Mike Wallace
Dallas County Conservation Board
801 Court Street
Abel, IA 50003

Mr. Chad Kelchen
IA DNR, Big Creek State Park
8794 NW 125th Avenue
Polk City, IA 50226

Mr. Paul Miller
Polk County NRCS
1513 N. Ankeny Blvd #3
Ankeny, IA 50023-4167

Mr. Brad Harrison
Dallas County NRCS
1918 Greene Street
Adel, IA 50003-1641

Mr. Kevin Kordick
Boone County NRCS
1602 Snedden Drive
Boone, IA 50036-5421

Mr. Randy Hyler
Office of Location & Environment
Iowa Dept of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Mr. Michael LaPietra
Environment and Realty Manager
Federal Hwy Admin, Iowa Division
105 6th Street
Ames, IA 50010

Mr. Ben Page, Parks and Rec Director
City of Des Moines
3226 University Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50311

Mr. Jim Sanders, City Administrator
6221 Merle Hay Road/PO Box 410
Johnston, IA 50131

Mr. Todd Redenius, Parks and Rec
210 S. Ankeny Blvd.
Ankeny, IA 50021

Mr. Gary Mahannah, City Administrator
112 3rd Street/PO Box 426
Polk City, IA 50226

Polk County Board of Supervisors
Polk County Administration Building
111 Court Avenue, Room 300
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dallas County Board of Supervisors
121 N. 9th Street
Adel, IA 50003

Boone County Board of Supervisors
201 State Street
Boone, IA 50036

Mr. Robert Rice
Polk County Department of Public Works
5885 NE 14 Street
Des Moines, IA 50313

Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
3345 Thrasher Rd.
White Cloud, KS 66094

Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
Rt. 1, Box 721
Perkins, OK 74059

Sac & Fox Nation
Rt. 2, Box 246
Stroud, OK 74079

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Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri in
Kansas and Missouri
305 N. Main Street
Reserve, KS 66434

Sac & Fox Tribe of
the Mississippi in Iowa
349 Meskwaki Road
Tama, IA 52339-9629

Santee Sioux Nation
108 Spirit Lake Ave. West
Niobrara, NE 68760-7219

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
P.O. Box 687
Winnebago, NE 68071

Sisseton-Wahpeton
Oyate of the Lake Traverse
Old Agency Box 509
Agency Village, SD 57262

Yankton Sioux Tribe of South Dakota
P.O. Box 1153
Wagner, SD 57380

Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort
Peck Indian Reservation
P.O. Box 1027
Poplar, MT 59255

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**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Rock Island District

SAYLORVILLE LAKE
5600 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IA 50131
DES MOINES RIVER

CONSTRUCTION

Began: 1965
Completed: 1977

COST

Federal: est. \$130,100,000

RESERVOIR

Normal Pool:
Length: 24 miles
Area: 5,520 acres
Storage: 73,600 acre feet (23.9 billion gallons) ¹
Flood Storage Pool:
Length: 54 miles
Area: 16,100 acres
Storage: 567,000 acre feet (184.7 billion gallons)

WATER SURFACE ELEVATION

Normal Pool: 836' National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) 29
(11.5% total storage capacity)
Flood Storage Pool: 884' NGVD29 (Top of Concrete Spillway)
890' NGVD29 (Top of Pneumatic Crest Gates)

DAM

Type: Earth Filled Embankment
Length: 6,750 feet
Height: 105 feet
Top Width: 44 feet
Spillway Elevation: 884' NGVD29 (Top of Concrete Spillway)
890' NGVD29 (Top of Pneumatic Crest Gates)
Dam Elevation (top of dam): 915.5' NGVD29

DAMAGES PREVENTED (1975-2010)

\$183,665,200* (estimated)

**DAMAGES PREVENTED (2010)
(2008)
(1993)**

\$1,732,900* (estimated)
\$1,653,200* (estimated)
\$113,466,800* (estimated)
* (not indexed for 2010 price levels)

(MORE INFORMATION ON THE REVERSE SIDE)

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At the Heart of the Upper Mississippi River System

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MILES ABOVE DES MOINES, IOWA	11 miles
SQUARE MILES OF WATERSHED ABOVE DAM	5,823 square miles
AVERAGE NORMAL INFLOW (JUNE) (JULY)	6,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) ² 4,200 cfs
HIGHEST INFLOWS RECORDED	60,600 cfs (June 10, 2008) 47,100 cfs (July 11, 1993)
MAXIMUM CAPABLE OUTFLOW (CONDUIT/GATES)	21,000 cfs
AVERAGE NORMAL OUTFLOW (JUNE) (JULY)	7,200 cfs 6,100 cfs
HIGHEST OUTFLOWS RECORDED	47,000 cfs (June 12, 2008)
PREVIOUS HIGHEST OUTFLOWS RECORDED	44,500 cfs (July 18, 1993)
RECORD HIGH POOL ELEVATIONS	892.03' NGVD29 (July 11, 1993) 891.03' NGVD29 (June 12, 2008) 889.25' NGVD29 (June 22, 1984) 889.15' NGVD29 (July 1, 2010) 888.99' NGVD29 (June 11, 1991) 886.17' NGVD29 (April 27, 1993) 883.59' NGVD29 (April 06, 1979)
OVER SPILLWAY / # DAYS (Date pool reached spillway crest of 884' NGVD29)	July 1, 2010 (7 Days) - Pneumatic crest gates lowered June 10, 2008 (12 Days) - Pneumatic crest gates lowered; (first time gates put into operation) June 18, 1993 (42 Days) April 24, 1993 (7 Days) June 6, 1991 (9 Days) June 18, 1984 (15 Days)
RECREATION	Total Recreation Areas: 25 Beaches: 2 Camping Areas: 4; 530 campsites available Marinas: 1 Boat Ramps: 3; total of 12 launch lanes Group Picnic Shelters: 24
VISITATION HOURS	10/1/10 – 9/30/11: 1,246,612 Visitors; 6,348,673 Visitor Hours 10/1/09 – 9/30/10: 1,156,074 Visitors; 5,751,779 Visitor Hours 10/1/08 – 9/30/09: 1,286,550 Visitors; 6,242,743 Visitor Hours 10/1/07 – 9/30/08: 1,088,810 Visitors; 5,458,726 Visitor Hours (FY10 regional economic impact of visitation is \$27,000,000)

¹ NOTE: An acre-foot is one acre of water one foot deep. One acre foot is equivalent to 325,851.4 U.S. gallons.

² NOTE: Cubic feet per second (cfs). The rate of flow past a given point, measured in cubic feet per second. One cubic foot of water equals about 7.5 gallons and weighs 62 pounds.

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The Master Planning Process

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is the document that conceptually establishes and guides the orderly development, administration, maintenance, preservation, enhancement, and management of all natural, cultural, and recreational resources of a Corps water resource project. A Master Plan is a land use management document. It is focused on the operations and maintenance of an existing project and is no longer a "new project" document. Master Plans do not include water management operations and associated prime facilities (dam, gates, powerhouses, spillways, etc.). Of critical importance is the need to emphasize that a Master Plan is stewardship driven and must seek to balance recreational development and use with protection and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

Why do we need a new Master Plan?

The current Saylorville Lake Master Plan was completed in 1984 and has been used as guide for recreational and environmental stewardship decisions for the past 28 years. Because this master plan is nearly 30 years old, the plan includes little information on cultural resources, invasive species, endangered species, wildlife



habitat value, jurisdictional wetlands, and other environmental features that have become critically important following the passage of landmark legislation such as the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act. The focus of the old master plan was primarily recreation development, with little attention given to natural and cultural resources. The new master plan will focus on these important issues as well as focusing on updating the recreation analysis. The new master plan will not include detailed recreation plans. This master plan will serve as a dynamic document that guides future development and resource use. The previous master plan and current master plan did not and will not address water level management and flood control as a separate manual is used to regulate discharge and storage of the reservoir.



Public Involvement in Master Planning Process

Public participation will be a priority in the current Master Planning process. We will be seeking public input from key stakeholders through a focus group process. In addition, open houses or public meetings will also be utilized to gather input from the general public. We really want to know what you want, what your vision for the future of the lake's recreation and natural resources might be, etc.



Saylorville Lake - 5600 NW 78th Avenue - Johnston, IA 50131
Phone: (515) 964-0672 or (515) 276-4656
Website: www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/Saylorville/ Email: SaylorvilleLake@usace.army.mil

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Master Plan Classification

The master plan identifies classification (i.e. zoning) for Saylorville Lake. Public lands are allocated and classified into management categories which, based upon resources available and public needs, will provide for full utilization while protecting project resources. This zoning determines what types of development are permitted – for instance campgrounds are permitted in intensive use areas but not wildlife management zones. The 1984 Master Plan used slightly different zoning terminology than the new plan will use and also included detailed construction diagrams for campgrounds, picnic areas etc., this level of detail will not be outlined in the new plan.

We will again re-assess the project's environmental attributes, public needs etc. but will not be producing detailed site designs. Instead the focus will be on gathering public input and developing detailed natural resource inventories to guide in reassessing the future recreational needs and desired future condition for natural resources.

Current Classification Categories*:

Project Operations. This classification category should include those lands required for the structure, operations center, office, maintenance compound and other areas that are used solely for project operations.

Recreation. Land developed for intensive recreational activities by the visiting public, including developed recreation areas and areas for concession, resort, and quasi-public development.

Mitigation. This will only include land acquired or designated specifically for mitigation.

Environmental Sensitive Areas. These are areas where scientific, ecological, cultural or aesthetic features have been identified. These areas must be considered by management to ensure the sensitive areas are not adversely impacted.

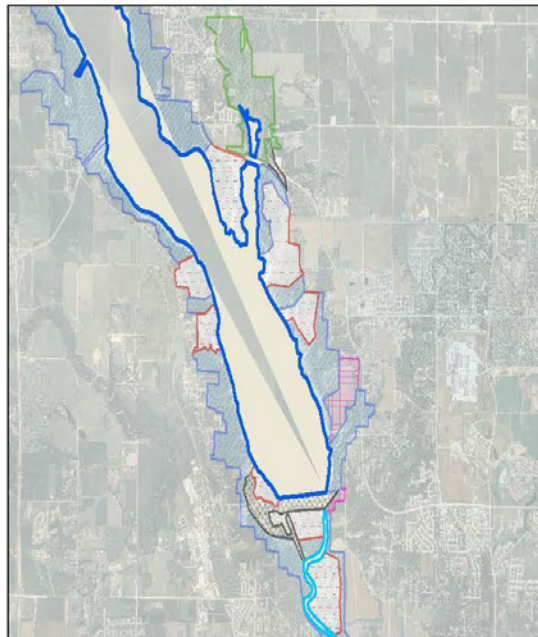
Multiple Resource Management. Lands managed for one or more of, but not limited to, these activities:

- (a) Recreation - Low Density - low density recreation activities such as hiking, primitive camping, wildlife observation, hunting, or similar low density recreational activities.
- (b) Wildlife Management General - fish and wildlife management activities. Lands in this sub-category shall be evaluated for consideration for lease or license to the Department of the Interior or the state or shall be designated for direct management by the Corps.
- (c) Vegetative Management - management activities for the protection and development of forest and vegetative cover
- (d) Inactive and/or Future Recreation Areas - recreation areas planned for the future or that have been temporarily closed. These lands will be classified as multiple resource management in the interim.

* Current zoning categories are slightly different than those used in 1984 planning.

Zoning Categories from 1984 Plan

Land Use Classification	
 Natural Area	 Recreation/ Low Density
 Project Operations	 Reserve Forest Land
 Recreation/ Intensive Use	 Wildlife Management



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Federally Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, and Candidate Species, Polk, IA

Species	Scientific Name	Status	Habitat
Indiana bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Endangered	Caves, mines (hibernacula); small stream corridors with well-developed riparian woods; upland forests (foraging)
Northern long-eared bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Proposed as Endangered	Hibernates in caves and mines – swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during late spring and summer.
Prairie bush clover	<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>	Threatened	Dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soil
Western prairie fringed orchid	<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	Threatened	Wet prairies and sedge meadows
Least tern	<i>Sterna antillarum</i>	Endangered	Bare alluvial and dredged spoil islands

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service Website, April, 2014

Federally Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, and Candidate Species, Boone, IA

Species	Scientific Name	Status	Habitat
Indiana bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Endangered	Caves, mines (hibernacula); small stream corridors with well-developed riparian woods; upland forests (foraging)
Northern long-eared bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Proposed as Endangered	Hibernates in caves and mines – swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during late spring and summer.
Topeka shiner	<i>Notropis topeka</i>	Endangered & Critical Habitat	Prairie streams and rivers
Prairie bush clover	<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>	Threatened	Dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soil
Western prairie fringed orchid	<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	Threatened	Wet prairies and sedge meadows

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service Website, April, 2014

Federally Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, and Candidate Species, Dallas, IA

Species	Scientific	Status	Habitat
Indiana bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Endangered	Caves, mines (hibernacula); small stream corridors with well-developed riparian woods; upland forests (foraging)
Northern long-eared bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Proposed as Endangered	Hibernates in caves and mines – swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during late spring and summer.
Topeka shiner	<i>Notropis topeka</i>	Endangered & Critical Habitat	Prairie streams and rivers
Prairie bush clover	<i>Lespedeza leptostach</i>	Threatened	Dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soil
Western prairie fringed orchid	<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	Threatened	Wet prairies and sedge meadows

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service Website, April, 2014

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Subject: Saylorville Lake Master Plan Update (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 3:54:00 PM
Attachments: [Master Planning Fact Sheet1.pdf](#)
[Recreation Fact Sheet.pdf](#)
[Environmental Stewardship Fact Sheet.pdf](#)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Good Afternoon,

I wanted to share with all of you our intentions to update the Saylorville Lake Master Plan in FY13. A Master Plan (MP) is the document that conceptually establishes and guides the orderly development, administration, maintenance, preservation, enhancement, and management of all natural, cultural, and recreational resources of a Corps water resource project. A MP is a land use management document. It is focused on the operations and maintenance (O&M) of an existing project and is no longer a "new project" document. MPs do not include water management operations and associated prime facilities (dam, gates, powerhouses, spillways, etc.). Of critical importance is the need to emphasize that a MP is stewardship driven and must seek to balance recreational development and use with protection and conservation of natural and cultural resources. We have been planning and will start gathering agency and public input during the current fiscal year to get a jump start on this long process. Today we met with other Government Stakeholders who manage state, county and federal lands on the Saylorville Lake Project to advise them of our undertaking as those agencies will play key roles in the update. We will be notifying the public very soon about our update as the public will play a critical role as well in developing the master plan. We will be gathering public input through questionnaires, website, email, public meetings, workshops, mailings and the media. I have attached some fact sheets regarding the master plan process, our recreation mission and our environmental stewardship mission. The master plan does not address water quality, shoreline management, or water level management. Below are a few bullets on why we are updating the master plan and the goals of the new updated master plan. As we go through this process, your offices will be kept in the loop on our progress, public workshops etc.

Why Update the Master Plan??

Last Master Plan Update was in 1984

Significant growth in the adjacent communities of Johnston, Polk City, Ankeny and Des Moines, including annexation of portions of project lands.

Substantial change in project resources and a climatic shift that has required more frequent storage of flood waters than originally estimated.

Demographic change in the region

Addition of water supply mission and potentially hydropower as authorized purpose

Increased demand for outdoor recreation and shifting interest in more and varied types of outdoor experiences. Both facilities developed and built 30-40 years ago and habitat plans developed in 1960's must be updated and improved to meet current and future public needs, current ecosystem management guidelines, and current Federal environmental laws and regulations.

Future development of the area demands an updated vision for both environmental stewardship and recreation to meet the needs and challenges of the 21st Century

Goals of New Master Plan:

Master Plan document - 30 pages

Provide Best Management Practices to respond to regional needs, resource capabilities and sustainability, and expressed public interests

Protect and manage natural and cultural resources through sustainable stewardship programs

Provide outdoor recreation opportunities based on public demands while sustaining project natural resources

Recognize the particular qualities, characteristics, and potentials of the project

Provide consistency and compatibility with other State and regional goals and programs

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The MP will address all Corps-managed resources including but not limited to, fish and wildlife, vegetation, cultural resources, recreational, minerals, and resources on out granted lands
Guides efficient and cost-effective management, development, and use of project lands
Vital tool for responsible stewardship and sustainability of project resources for the present and future generations

If you have any questions, inquiries etc. please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks
Jeff

Jeff Rose
Operations Project Manager
Saylorville Lake
5600 NW 78th Ave
Johnston Iowa 50131

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Subject: Master Plan Update Focus Group Meetings (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:16:00 PM
Attachments: [Master Planning Fact Sheet1.pdf](#)
[Focus Group Meetings.pdf](#)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Good afternoon all....

As we continue the process of updating the Saylorville Lake Master Plan, we have scheduled several focus group meetings starting June 18 through August 6th. The meetings will be in the auditorium at the Saylorville Lake Visitor Center. Feedback from these meetings, as well as the feedback we received from Saylorville Lake users last summer, will help us in decision making as we develop the draft master plan. These focus group meetings will not be the only public meetings. Once a draft is written we will hold more public meetings sometime in FY14. I am attaching the days of the focus group meetings in the event you would like to attend any of them. Starting time for these meetings will be 6pm.

As a reminder of why we are updating our master plan, I have also attached a fact sheet.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.
Thanks
Jeff

Jeff Rose
Operations Project Manager
Saylorville Lake
5600 NW 78th Ave
Johnston Iowa 50131

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Subject: Master Plan Update Public Meeting (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Thursday, May 01, 2014 1:54:00 PM

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Good afternoon all,

My staff has been very busy developing our new Master Plan DRAFT since gathering public feedback from our recreation surveys, focus group meetings and other public input. As a reminder, the Master Plan is a document that conceptually establishes and guides the orderly development, administration, maintenance, preservation, enhancement and management of all natural, cultural and recreational resources on Federal Lands at Saylorville Lake. Water management at the reservoir is governed under a separate water regulation manual and is not a part of the master plan.

We will be hosting a public meeting on May 15, 2014 from Noon - 7pm at the Johnston Public Library. This open house style meeting will enable the public to review conceptual posters and a DRAFT Master Plan for review and comment. A DRAFT will also be made available on our Saylorville Lake webpage on the 15th.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks
Jeff

Jeff Rose
Operations Project Manager
Saylorville Lake
5600 NW 78th Ave
Johnston Iowa 50131

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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS - ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT
CLOCK TOWER BUILDING - PO BOX 2004
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61204-2004

June 19, 2014

Regional Planning and Environmental
Division North (RPEDN)

SEE DISTRIBUTION LIST

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District (District) is updating the programmatic agreement between the District, Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding the Saylorville Archeological District at Saylorville Reservoir, Polk, Dallas, and Boone Counties, Iowa. As part of this process, the District seeks input of interested parties so that concerns and ideas can be incorporated into the process as well as the final programmatic agreement. Your participation is not mandatory, but your thoughts are welcomed due to your involvement with Saylorville Reservoir, cultural resources in Iowa, or your cultural relationship to the area.

Federal Undertaking

Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800, the District has determined that this project has potential to cause effects to archeological and architectural historic properties [36 CFR 800.3(a)(1)] and as a consequence will require a determination of effect within the Area of Potential Effect (APE).

Area of Potential Effect

The District has defined the APE for the Saylorville Reservoir as the same as the Saylorville Reservoir Management Area (Enclosure 1).

Consulting Parties

The District finds the organizations identified on the Distribution List are entitled to be consulting parties, as set out in 36 CFR 800.2, and invites them by copy of this letter to participate in the Section 106 process.

State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Invitation

The District invites the SHPO to:

- identify any other consulting parties as per 36 CFR 800.3(f);

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- comment as per 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3) on the District's plan to involve the public by utilizing the Corps' normal procedures for public involvement under the National Environmental Policy Act; and,
- comment on or contribute to identification efforts including definition of the APE, all as per 36 CFR 800.4(a-b).

Identification of Historic Properties

Review of Existing Information and Level of Future Identification Efforts: The District has previously sent out a draft of the revised Saylorville Reservoir PA for comment. Enclosed is an updated draft of the PA that now includes an initial draft of the appendices as well.

Request for Information from Consulting Parties: The District is seeking information from all consulting parties regarding their concerns with issues relating to this undertaking's potential effects on historic properties and, particularly, the tribes' concerns with identifying properties that may be of religious and cultural significance to them and may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places [36 CFR 800.4(a)(3-4)]. Concerns about confidentiality [36 CFR 800.11(c)] regarding locations of properties can be addressed under Section 304 of the NHPA which provides withholding from public disclosure the location of properties under several circumstances, including in cases where it would cause a significant invasion of privacy, impede the use of a traditional religious site by practitioners, endanger the site, etc.

The District has identified the consulting parties for this undertaking as set out in 36 CFR 800.2 and invites them by copy of this letter to participate in the Section 106 process (See Distribution List). We request your written comments on this project within 30 days, pursuant to 36 CFR 800.3(c)(4). Please comment or concur with our opinion and recommendations within 30 days, or the District will assume that you have reviewed the information package and agree with our findings.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call Mr. Brant Vollman of our Environmental Compliance Branch, (309) 794-5857, or write to our address above, ATTN: Environmental Compliance Branch (Brant Vollman).

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Kenneth A. Barr
Chief, Environmental Planning Branch RPEDN

Enclosures

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DISTRIBUTION LIST

Mr. Alan Kelley
Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
3345 Thrasher Rd.
White Cloud, KS 66094

Ms. Janice Rowe-Kurak
Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
Rt. 1, Box 721
Perkins, OK 74059

Mr. George Thurman
Sac & Fox Nation
Rt. 2, Box 246
Stroud, OK 74079

Ms. Twen Barton
Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri in
Kansas and Nebraska
305 N. Main Street
Reserve, KS 66434

Ms. Gailey Wanatee
Sac & Fox Tribe of the
Mississippi in Iowa
349 Meskwaki Road
Tama, IA 52339-9629

Mr. Richard Thomas
Santee Sioux Nation
108 Spirit Lake Ave. West
Niobrara, NE 68760-7219

Mr. Robert Shepherd
Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate
of the Lake Traverse
Old Agency Box 509
Agency Village, SD 57262

Ms. Lana Gravatt
Yankton Sioux Tribe of South Dakota
P.O. Box 1153
Wagner, SD 57380

Mr. Darrell "Curly" Youpee
Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort
Peck Indian Reservation
P.O. Box 1027
Poplar, MT 59255

Ms. Emily DeLeon
Winnebago Tribe of
Nebraska
P.O. Box 687
Winnebago, NE 6807

Ms. Kathy Gourley
State Historical Society of Iowa
600 East Locust
Des Moines IA 50319-0290

Mr. Reid Nelson, Director
Office of Federal Agency Programs
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Old Post Office Building
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest, #803
Washington, DC 20004

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**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 7**

11201 Renner Boulevard
Lenexa, Kansas 66219

JUN 4 2014

Ms. Wendy Frohlich
Environmental Compliance Branch
Department of the Army
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Rock Island District
Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

Dear Ms. Frohlich:

I received the April 29, 2014, request for review and comment regarding the planned revision of the 1984 Saylorville Lake Master Plan by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps intends to develop an Integrated Environmental Assessment, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, to address impacts associated with this revision. Saylorville Lake was created by the 1977 closing of an earth-filled embankment dam across the Des Moines River approximately 11 miles upstream of Des Moines, Iowa. The reservoir stores 73,600 acre-feet of water at normal pool and drains 5,823 square miles of watershed.

The Master Plan is a land use management document that conceptually establishes and guides the orderly development, administration, maintenance, preservation, enhancement and management of all natural, cultural and recreational resources of this Corps water resources project. As stated in the informational material supplied by the Corps, the Master Plan does not address water level management and flood control. The Corps has in place a separate manual to guide the regulation of discharge from and storage within the reservoir.

The following issues should be addressed within the Integrated Environmental Assessment and incorporated into the revised Master Plan.

Invasive Species

The EA should include an inventory of invasive species currently found within the bounds of the project, including their locations and status. The EA should also assess the potential for the introduction or spread of other invasive species from the surrounding watershed into the project area. The Master Plan should commit to the development of an invasive species management and control plan by date certain.



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Baseline Natural Resources Inventory

The EA should include a baseline assessment of the project's ecological and physical resources, including the status of those resources and any change in condition since the 1984 Master Plan. In addition, the Master Plan should include a monitoring program with which to track changes in the status of terrestrial and aquatic resources within the project. This monitoring program would support an adaptive approach to project management.

Reservoir and Tributary Water Quality Status

The EA should identify the status of the reservoir and tributaries under Iowa water quality standards and trends in water quality status since 1977. The EA should also identify any water quality impairments included in the State's listing of impaired waters under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. In addition, the EA should characterize the history and status of the reservoir with regard to nutrients and sedimentation. Any history of blue-green algae blooms within the reservoir should also be included in the EA. To a great extent, project health and the effectiveness of the Master Plan is largely a function of the health of the reservoir itself.

Climate Change

The EA should evaluate the potential for changes to project management brought on by possible regional changes in precipitation patterns associated with climate change.

Integration with Water Management Operations

The Master Plan should document how the Master Plan is affected by and integrates with the requirements and prescriptions of the water management manual.

Land Use Accommodations

The EA should assess the potential for future land use changes and the effects of those changes on project resources, specifically in response to transportation or energy projects which might place right-of-ways across tributaries/arms and downstream from the dam. The Master Plan should identify project areas which are and are not suitable for accommodating transportation or energy corridors, e.g., gas pipelines, transmission lines, highways, bridges. Given the project's close proximity to the greater Des Moines metropolitan area, it is possible that city, county or state government could site these projects such that they negatively affect project resources.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments early in the development of the Integrated Environmental Assessment and revised Master Plan. My review would be improved if you would transmit a copy of the 1984 Master Plan as soon as is convenient. I would also appreciate the opportunity to review a draft of the EA when available. In addition, please correct your Distribution List for District projects to reflect Karl Brooks, Regional Administrator, and Brad Horchem, Chief, Watershed Support, Wetlands and Streams Protection Section, Watershed Planning and Implementation Branch, and our new address.

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If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at 913-551-7441 or shepard.larry@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Shepard".

Larry Shepard
NEPA Reviewer

cc: Brad Horchem, WWPD/WPIB/WWSP

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STATE OF IOWA

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
CHUCK GIPP, DIRECTOR

May 14, 2014

Department of the Army
Rock Island District Corps of Engineers
ATTN: Planning, Programs, and Project Management Division (Wendy Frohlich)
PO BOX 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004

RE: Preparations for the Integrated Environmental Assessment for the Saylorville Lake Master Plan in Polk County

Dear Ms. Frohlich:

This letter is in response to the April 29, 2014 letter concerning the Saylorville Lake Integrated Master Plan. Thank you for inviting our comments.

As you are aware, waters of the United States (includes wetlands) should not be disturbed if a less environmentally damaging alternative exists. Unavoidable adverse impacts should be minimized to the extent practicable. Any remaining adverse impacts should be compensated for through restoration, enhancement, creation and/or preservation activities.

We would ask that Best Management Practices be used to control erosion and protect water quality near the project(s). You are encouraged to conduct your construction activities during a period of low flow. You are required to seed all disturbed areas with native grasses and to implement appropriate erosion control measures to insure that sediments are not introduced into waters of the United States during construction of this project. Clearing of vegetation, including trees located in or immediately adjacent to waters of the state, should be limited to that which is absolutely necessary for construction of the project. Please continue working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if trees will be cleared for the project.

If you have any questions, please call me at (515) 281-6615.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine M. Schwake".

Christine Schwake
Environmental Specialist

502 EAST 9th STREET / DES MOINES, IOWA 50319-0034
PHONE 515-281-5918 FAX 515-281-8895 www.iowadnr.gov

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TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

STATE OF IOWA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
CHUCK GIPP, DIRECTOR

June 3, 2014

Saylorville Lake
5600 NW 78th Ave
Johnston, IA 50131

Attn: Saylorville Lake Master Plan Committee

Saylorville Lake has experienced significant physical changes since construction. Probably the most obvious change is the accumulation of sediment in the upper end of the lake. Excessive sedimentation from the watershed and shoreline erosion has contributed to this issue. The sediment has smothered in-lake fish habitat, increased turbidity and reduced the depth of the lake.

Despite these changes, Saylorville Lake is still a highly valued resource among anglers. A recent survey of Iowa anglers indicated that Polk County ranked as the second most popular county for fishing and Saylorville Lake was the 19th most popular fishing destination in Iowa. The fishing opportunities provided by Saylorville Lake and other central Iowa water bodies are extremely important because the majority (60%) of anglers travel 20 miles or less to fish (Iowa Angler Survey, 2008).

Saylorville Lake is owned/operated by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the fishery is managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Fisheries Bureau. The Corps and the IDNR Fisheries Bureau have been partners on several successful projects in recent years. In addition, both agencies have incorporated community involvement and volunteer assistance into these projects. The IDNR Fisheries Bureau values this partnership and we hope to continue to collaborate with the Corps and local stakeholders in the future.

The IDNR Fisheries Bureau represents anglers and their interests, so it's important to us that the angler's needs are incorporated into the proposed Master Plan. We are providing comment on six items related to angling and angler access at Saylorville Lake.

1) Water zone map

The Master Plan proposes to restrict the use of boat motors in the upper end of the lake when the lake is at normal pool. Sedimentation has reduced the water depth in this area, which has created dangerous power boating situations and rescue missions. However, angling for catfish in the upper end of Saylorville Lake has become extremely popular in recent years. The mud flats provide

www.iowadnr.gov

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opportunity as water levels fluctuate. Additional access along the west side of the tail-water and around the emergency spillway arm could potentially disperse the angling pressure as well.

5) Fish cleaning stations

The Corps has proposed to install several fish cleaning stations around Saylorville Lake and in the tail-water area. The IDNR Fisheries Bureau speculates that fish cleaning stations reduce the likelihood of anglers distributing undesirable fish species to other water bodies. The IDNR Fisheries Bureau fully supports the addition of this much needed amenity.

6) Increased access to the lake in spring, fall and winter months

Numerous anglers have commented over the years about the lack of access to Saylorville Lake during the early spring, late fall and winter months. The IDNR Fisheries Bureau supports increased access to the lake year round.

Sincerely,



Ben Dodd

Iowa Department of Natural Resources, *Fisheries Management Biologist*

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Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
Chairman

Clement A. Price, Ph.D.
Vice Chairman

John M. Fowler
Executive Director



Preserving America's Heritage

August 1, 2014

Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick
Commanding General and Chief of Engineers
Headquarters
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

REF: *Programmatic Agreement for the proposed Operation Management Plan, Master Plan, and Land Use Activities at the Saylorville Reservoir, Polk County, Iowa*

Dear General Bostick:

In response to a notification by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) will participate in consultation to develop a Programmatic Agreement for the proposed Operation Management Plan, Master Plan, and Land Use Activities at the Saylorville Reservoir, Polk County, Iowa. Our decision to participate in this consultation is based on the *Criteria for Council Involvement in Reviewing Individual Section 106 Cases*, contained within our regulations. The criteria are met for this proposed undertaking because it may have substantial impacts on important historic properties.

Section 800.6(a)(1)(iii) of our regulations requires that we notify you, as the head of the agency, of our decision to participate in consultation. By copy of this letter, we are also notifying Mr. Kenneth A. Barr, Chief, Environmental Planning Branch RPEDN, of this decision.

Our participation in this consultation will be handled by Mr. Brian Lusher who can be reached at 202-517-0221, or via e-mail at blusher@achp.gov. We look forward to working with your agency and other consulting parties to develop a Programmatic Agreement.

Sincerely,

John M. Fowler
Executive Director

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
401 F Street NW, Suite 308 • Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-517-0200 • Fax: 202-517-6381 • achp@achp.gov • www.achp.gov

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAYLORVILLE LAKE PROJECT, 5600 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IOWA 50131-1941
<http://www.CorpsLakes.us/Saylorville>

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

November 13, 2014

Operations Division, Saylorville Lake

Ben Dodd
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
1436 255th St.
Boone IA 50036

Mr. Dodd:

I appreciate your written comments regarding the Saylorville Lake Master Plan. Your suggestions, concerns and comments help make the document a better product capable of serving both the resource and visitors for the future. Strengthening resource protection in a rapidly changing urban environment has received broad public support through the master plan process.

Some of your comments were addressed in poster format presentations at the public meeting which you attended. Other comments and concerns have been addressed through policy alterations where appropriate. For clarity I will provide comments to your letter in the order written.

Water Zone Map: The proposed water zoning map will exclude motorized vessels from the buoy line south of the mudflats to the Hwy 17 bridge at normal conservation pool of 836 msl to allow for habitat protection for migrating birds. When the lake level is at 840 msl and forecasted to rise the restriction will be lifted and boats will be allowed to recreate into the northern stretches of the reservoir.

Big Creek Spillway: We concur with your comments in regards to fishing access overall in the Big Creek Spillway area needs to be improved. We have identified improvements in the Master Plan to include access on both NW Jester Park Drive as well as the upper spillway road. Improved fishing platforms have been identified in the Big Creek Spillway area as well as the Saylorville Dam outlet in Bob Shetler Recreation area to improve access for anglers. Siltation at the upper reaches of the lake continues to occur and we realize keeping the mouth of the spillway open and accessible to boating anglers will need further evaluation in the future.

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Tail-Water Access Improvements: We have included in the Master Plan the need for improving fishing access along the tail water as it continues to be a popular fishing location.

Fish Cleaning Stations: We have purchased a new fish cleaning station to replace the current one in the Bob Shetler Recreation Area. The installation of this new station is scheduled for the fall/winter of 2014. The Master Plan also identifies the need for fish cleaning stations at other locations around the lake.

Increased Access in Spring, Fall and Winter Months: Recreation Areas are developed and operated with public funds so public access will be maximized, but within the constraints of budgets, staffing, safety considerations and other management concerns. In an effort to maximize public access, day use areas will remain open for lake access until weather (snow/ice) require the area to be closed to ensure public safety throughout the winter months.

We encourage you to visit the Saylorville Lake webpage and review the Master Plan which will be posted on November 19th.

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx>

If you have further questions or concerns please feel free to contact Natural Resource Specialist Brian Nail at Brian.R.Nail@usace.army.mil or by phone at 515-276-4656 x6515.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Rose, II
Operations Project Manager

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5. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW COMMENTS NOVEMBER 17 – DECEMBER 18, 2014

Public Review Correspondence: E-mail from Mr. Steve Espeland, Natural Resources Tech, Iowa DNR, to Mr. Scott Rolfes, MVR Natural Resource Manager, Saylorville Lake, dated November 25, 2014

-----Original Message-----

From: Espeland, Steve [DNR] [<mailto:Steve.Espeland@dnr.iowa.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 9:10 AM

To: Rolfes, Scott F MVR

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Water Zoning

I was looking at your Master Plan on the CD and saw the section addressing the Water Surface Zoning (5.1.5.). "During periods of flood storage of elevation 840' NGVD elevation and rising, this motorized vessel restriction may be lifted until the lake returns to conservation pool of 836' NGVD." Would it make more sense to word it as "During periods of flood storage of elevation 840' NGVD elevation and rising, this motorized vessel restriction may be lifted until the lake returns to elevation 840' NGVD and falling."

It doesn't seem like the lake elevation is brought back down to a flat 836.00 very often after flooding and the way it is worded would technically negate your restriction until it again was brought back down to a flat 836.00 during the April 1 -Aug 31 time period.

Just a thought, but may not be what you had in mind.

STEVE ESPELAND NATURAL RESOURCES TECHNICIAN II

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Office 515.432.2545 | Cell 712-330-5673 | Fax 515-432-2835
Steve.Espeland@dnr.iowa.gov

Saylorville Wildlife Unit | 1436-255th Street | Boone, IA 50036

WWW.IOWADNR.GOV

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Public Review Correspondence: Phone Conversation Record between Mr. Jonathon Wuebker, MVR Natural Resource Specialist, Saylorville Lake, and Mr. Bob Coulson, dated December 2, 2014

CEMVR-OD-S

2 December 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR FILE

SUBJECT: Statement of received phone call from Bob Coulson 16 November 2014

1. At approximately 1400 hrs I received a phone call from Bob Coulson regarding a letter he received from Mr. Jeff Rose and his submitted comments on the master plan.
2. Mr. Coulson appeared to be upset on the phone but stated several times that he was not upset and that the response he received contradicted itself. He stated several times how he couldn't understand why we wouldn't allow boaters up in an area because of wildlife and then allow that same protected wildlife to be hunted and shot. He stated there was no difference in harassment between his boat making noise and a shotgun killing the birds. There were other instances and examples Mr. Coulson gave to this line that what we were doing to stop one thing was no different from something else we were allowing in the same zone.
3. Mr. Coulson commented he could purchase a helicopter and bowfish from a helicopter as there is no height regulation for a helicopter as there is for an airplane that he could just shoot fish from his helicopter then. He also stated he was investigating the definition of an airboat because in other states they do not carry the same regulations as a traditional boat with outboard motor.
4. The last comment Mr. Coulson left me with was he had plans to purchase a farm in Louisiana and leave his boat there and just fly down during the weekends. He was frustrated with the new planned policy but stated there was nothing he could do about it and then hung up with me after about 40 minutes on the phone.

WUEBKER.JONATHAN
DAVID.1289141835

Digitally signed by
WUEBKER.JONATHAN.DAVID.1289141835
DN: c=US, o=U.S. GOVERNMENT, ou=DOE, ou=PEL,
ou=ISA, cn=WUEBKER.JONATHAN.DAVID.1289141835
Date: 2014.12.02 09:06:00 -0500

JONATHAN D. WUEBKER
Natural Resource Specialist

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**Public Review Correspondence: E-mail from Mr. Ken Miller to Mr. Jeffrey Rose, MVR
Operations Manager, Saylorville Lake, dated December 9, 2014**

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 5:27 PM
To: Rose, Jeffrey W MVR
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Saylorville Wildlife Sanctuary

Jeffrey,

I am writting with regard to the proposed Wildlife Sanctuary at the North end of Saylorville Reservoir on the Des Moines River at Johnston, Iowa.

As I understand it, the proposed plan is to close all access by motorized (boats) vehicles at the North end of Saylorville Reservoir for a Wildlife Sanctuary. I believe this is a rather extreme step. I have heard that the Iowa DNR has been complaining about power boater using this shallow area and getting stuck in the mud when they power down. I can understand that complaint. However, closing the area is just too extreme of a measure to take.

I would suggest simply placing a No Wake zone through the shallows. This will allow for the Wildlife to still live relatively undisturbed as large power boats won't travel into the area knowing they will get stuck (and the fact that they can't "go fast"). And it allows fishermen to still utilize the area. As a matter of fact, fishermen would applaud that option. It would give fishermen a sort of sanctuary from the normal uncontrolled power boat traffic that raises havock and creates many dangerous situations for most fishermen.

I know I am not alone on this option as I have discussed this with many of my fishermen friends. I just hope they will all express their ideas and feeling to you as well.

Saylorville is a great body of water. I know it was not created specifcally for recreation, but being so close to the mentro Des Moines area, that is exactly what it hasbecome...a water recreation area for thousands of people. With the current proposal, you will be elliminating about 1/3 of the lake to those people. That would be a great loss for the community.

So please reconsider the option and consider the people that currently use the area, that they would be losing if you closed it.

Sincerely,
Ken Miller
[REDACTED]
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404
[REDACTED]

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Public Review Correspondence: E-mail from Mr. Jeff Rose, MVR Operations Manager, Saylorville Lake, to Mr. Ken Miller, dated December 11, 2014

Email sent 12/11/2014

From: Mr. Jeffery Rose, Operations Project Manager, Saylorville Lake

To: Mr. Ken Miller

Mr. Miller,

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the Saylorville Lake Master Plan revision. The proposed sanctuary you mentioned is a category defined within water zoning guidance provided by Corps headquarters on Master Plan development. This category allows for the protection of sensitive water areas that may have intensive or unique shallow water fish spawning sites, contain mussel beds of rare species or some aquatic characteristic that needs protection from disturbance. In this instance, the shallow water mud flat complex is very attractive to water birds, sometimes in great numbers. This area was designated as a sensitive area among many sites identified at Saylorville Lake. Identifying such sites is a requirement of the master plan process. The sanctuary is seasonal in that the motorized vessel restriction only applies from April 1 through the end of August each year. This area is a popular waterfowl hunting area that through measured pool increases attracts significant waterfowl numbers in the fall. The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) ranked Saylorville Lake and adjacent land holding as Globally Significant for birds. This is the highest rating in their important bird areas program. Most of the species identified in their analysis were water birds who are attracted to this large mudflat complex. Some of the largest numbers of white pelicans in North America congregate here in August as they migrate to the warm south. Both least terns and piping plovers are federally endangered species that are routinely found on these sites. Part of the responsibility of managing these sensitive sites is to minimize disturbance. Power boats and their disturbance on water birds is well documented. This area is important to several species that rely on undisturbed loafing, feeding and nesting areas to thrive. We understand the urban nature of Saylorville Lake and the high amount of boating use it receives. We will allow non-motorized craft such as canoes and kayaks to use the area and enjoy the wildlife resources.

If you are familiar with the north end of the reservoir, we currently use shallow water buoys to mark waters that are 3 feet deep or less. The shallow water buoys are currently placed approximately 2,000 yards north of the Mile Long bridge and will remain in place. Our proposal is to restrict motorized vessels from waters that are on average approximately 2 feet deep or less. Our restricted zone will be north of the shallow water buoy line. We have allowed for motorized vessel access to the Big Creek Spillway to keep access open to fishermen. Some misinformation has been circulating, that the wildlife sanctuary zoning includes all waters north of the mile long bridge and this is not the case. The proposed zone represents about 600 acres of shallow islands and 800 acres of very shallow waters surrounding these islands. This silt deposition continues to be a chronic problem shortening the life of recreational use of the reservoir. This vessel restriction is only during times of near conservation pool elevation 836 mean sea level. When the reservoir rises above 840 msl with projected higher elevations the restriction is lifted until conditions begin to return to near normal levels. I have included a bathymetric/LiDAR survey which was completed last summer that shows the increasing shallow waters on the upper end of the reservoir. The link

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below will take you to the draft master plan revision and specifically appendix H where you find maps of the mud flats and the approximate seasonal restricted motorized vessel zoning.

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Portals/48/docs/Recreation/ODS/Master%20Plan/Draft%20Master%20Plan/Appendix%20H.pdf>

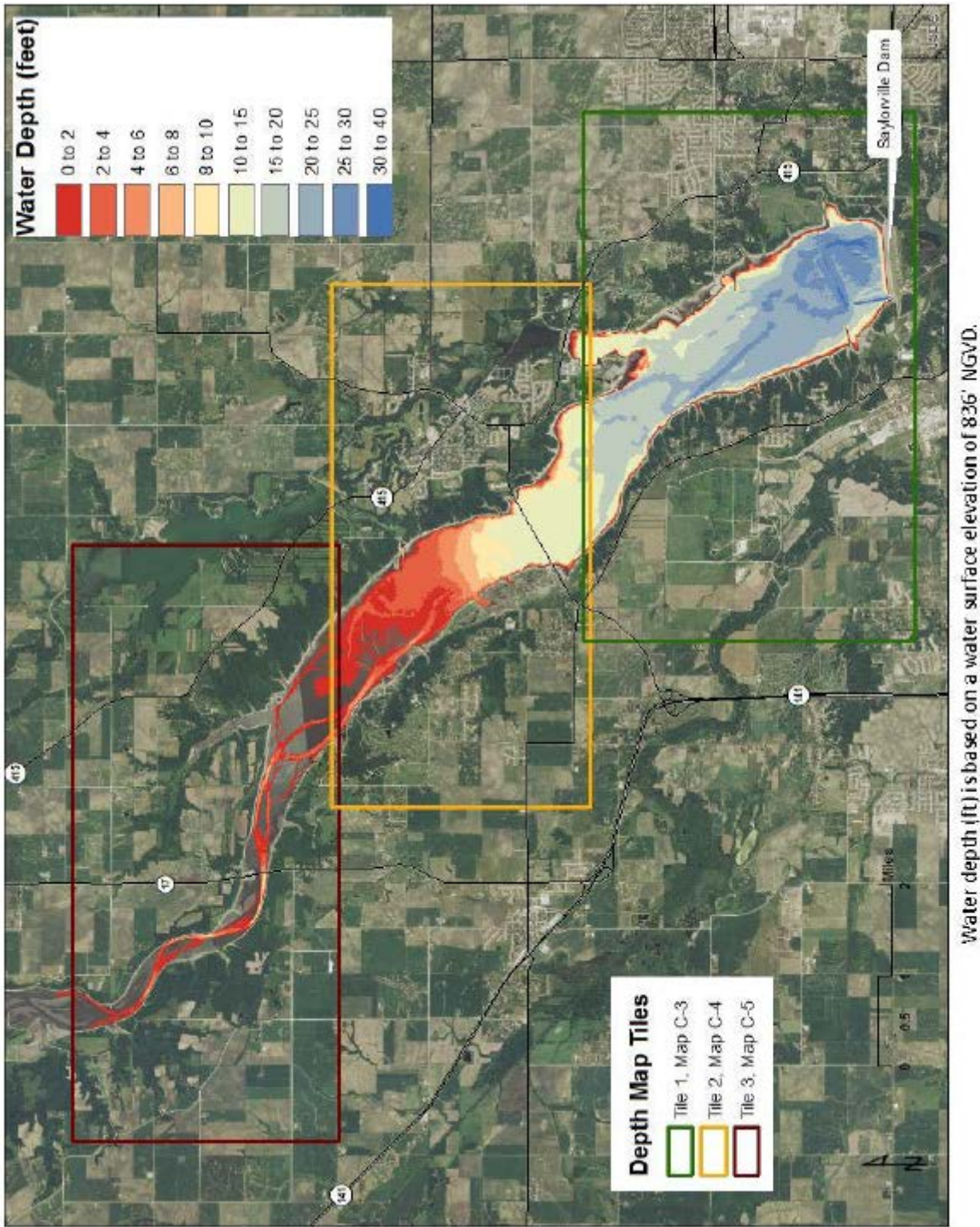
I hope this information helps better explain our arrival at this policy. Unless siltation rates drastically reduce, this area will grow in size and scope over time. The Master Plan is to provide guidance for the next 20 years and siltation continues to be a chronic threat.

Again, I appreciate you taking the time to send me your comment.

Jeff Rose
Operations Project Manager
Saylorville Lake

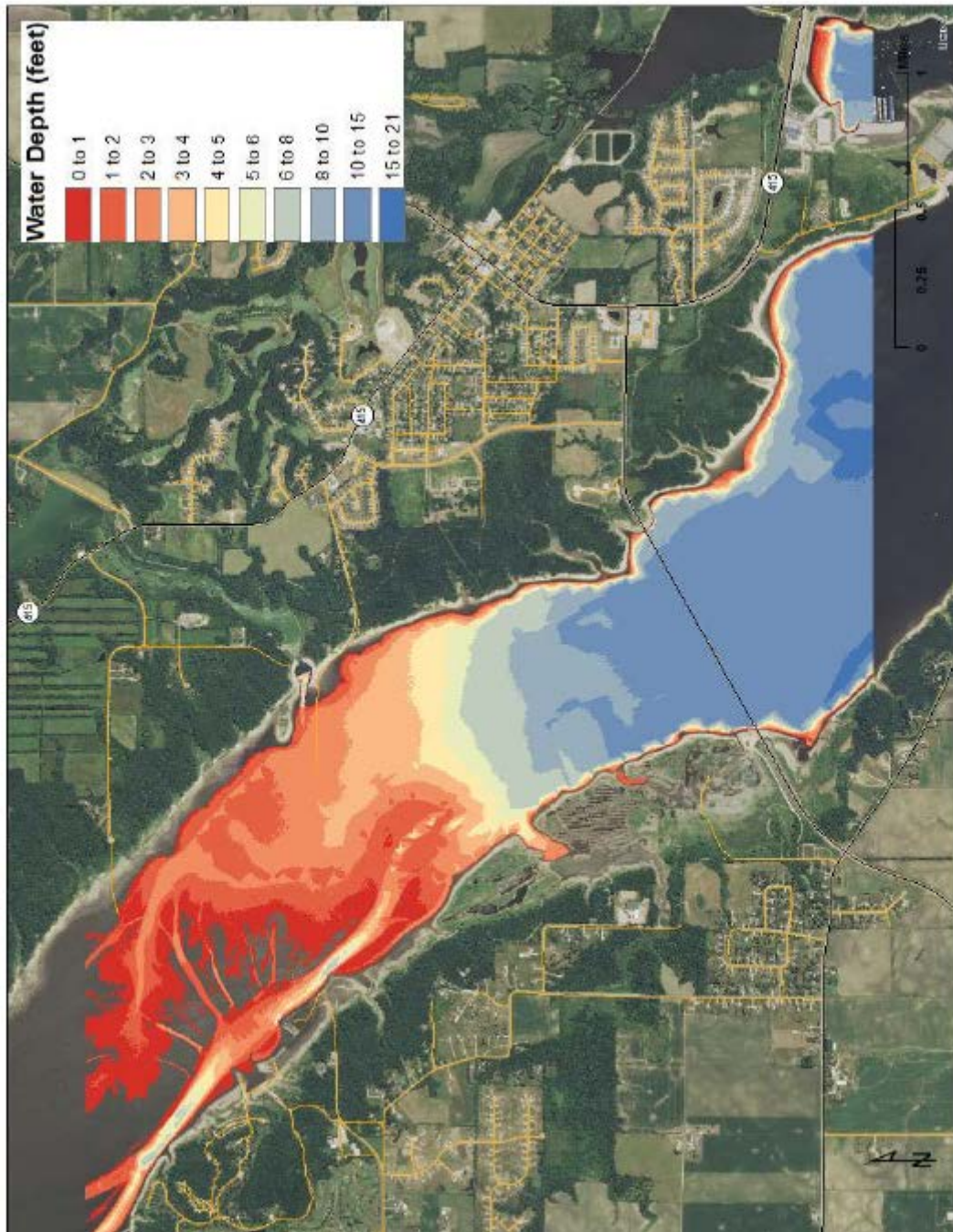
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Public Review Correspondence: Letter from Mr. Gale Urquhart to Ms. Wendy Frohlich, MVR Biologist, dated December 9, 2014

December 9, 2014

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Rock Island District
Attention: Wendy Frohlich, Biologist
Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004
(309) 794-5573
wendy.m.frohlich@usace.army.mil

Re: Saylorville Lake Master Plan Des Moines River Watershed Johnston, Iowa Appendix A
Environmental Assessment EA-9 Figure EA-3. Fish and Wildlife Sanctuary



Dear Wendy Frohlich:

I respectfully disagree with the planning teams proposed seasonal water surface classification for Saylorville Lake. Although I understand the need for migratory wildlife refuge I don't understand why fishermen/women can't coexist in the same environment. These waters being restricted to non motorized vessels will restrict many people from great fishing waters that have produced many fine fish species in the past and future as well.

I would like to propose that the planning team look into continuing to allow motorized vessels into the proposed area during the suggested April 1st thru August 31st time frame but restricted to a controlled speed of 5 miles per hour or as a no wake zone. I believe this would accomplish the task of having a migratory wildlife area but still allow fishermen/women to enjoy the prosperous fishing and enjoyment that we have enjoyed for years in that area.

Sincerely,

Gale Urquhart

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Public Review Correspondence: E-mail from Mr. Jeff Rose, MVR Operations Manager, Saylorville Lake, to Mr. Gale Urquhart, dated January 5, 2015

From: Rose, Jeffrey W MVR
Sent: Monday, January 05, 2015 3:17 PM
Cc: Frohlich, Wendy M MVR
Subject: Saylorville Lake Master Plan Revision- water zoning (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Ms. Urquhart,

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the Saylorville Lake Master Plan revision. The proposed sanctuary is a category defined within water zoning guidance provided by Corps headquarters on Master Plan development. This category allows for the protection of sensitive water areas that may have intensive or unique shallow water fish spawning sites, contain mussel beds of rare species or some aquatic characteristic that needs protection from disturbance. In this instance, the shallow water mud flat complex is very attractive to water birds, sometimes in great numbers. This area was designated as a sensitive area among many sites identified at Saylorville Lake. Identifying such sites is a requirement of the master plan process. The sanctuary is seasonal in that the motorized vessel restriction only applies from April 1 through the end of August each year. This area is a popular waterfowl hunting area that through measured pool increases attracts significant waterfowl numbers in the fall. The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) ranked Saylorville Lake and adjacent land holding as Globally Significant for birds. This is the highest rating in their important bird areas program. Most of the species identified in their analysis were water birds who are attracted to this large mudflat complex. Some of the largest numbers of white pelicans in North America congregate here in August as they migrate to the warm south. Both least terns and piping plovers are federally endangered species that are routinely found on these sites. Part of the responsibility of managing these sensitive sites is to minimize disturbance. Power boats and their disturbance on water birds is well documented. This area is important to several species that rely on undisturbed loafing, feeding and nesting areas to thrive. We understand the urban nature of Saylorville Lake and the high amount of boating use it receives. We will allow non-motorized craft such as canoes and kayaks to use the area and enjoy the wildlife resources.

If you are familiar with the north end of the reservoir, we currently use shallow water buoys to mark waters that are 3 feet deep or less. The shallow water buoys are currently placed approximately 2,000 yards north of the Mile Long bridge and will remain in place. Our proposal is to restrict motorized vessels from waters that are on average approximately 2 feet deep or less. Our restricted zone will be north of the shallow water buoy line. We have allowed for motorized vessel access to the Big Creek Spillway to keep access open to fishermen/women. Some misinformation has been circulating, that the wildlife sanctuary zoning includes all waters north of the mile long bridge and this is not the case. The proposed zone represents about 600 acres of shallow islands and 800 acres of very shallow waters surrounding these islands. This silt deposition continues to be a chronic problem shortening the life of recreational use of the reservoir. This vessel restriction is only during times of near conservation pool elevation 836 mean sea level. When the reservoir rises above 840 msl with projected higher elevations

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level. When the reservoir rises above 840 msl with projected higher elevations the restriction is lifted until conditions begin to return to near normal levels. I have included a bathymetric/LiDAR survey which was completed last summer that shows the increasing shallow waters on the upper end of the reservoir.

I hope this information helps better explain our arrival at this policy. Unless siltation rates drastically reduce, this area will grow in size and scope over time. The Master Plan is to provide guidance for the next 20 years and siltation continues to be a chronic threat.

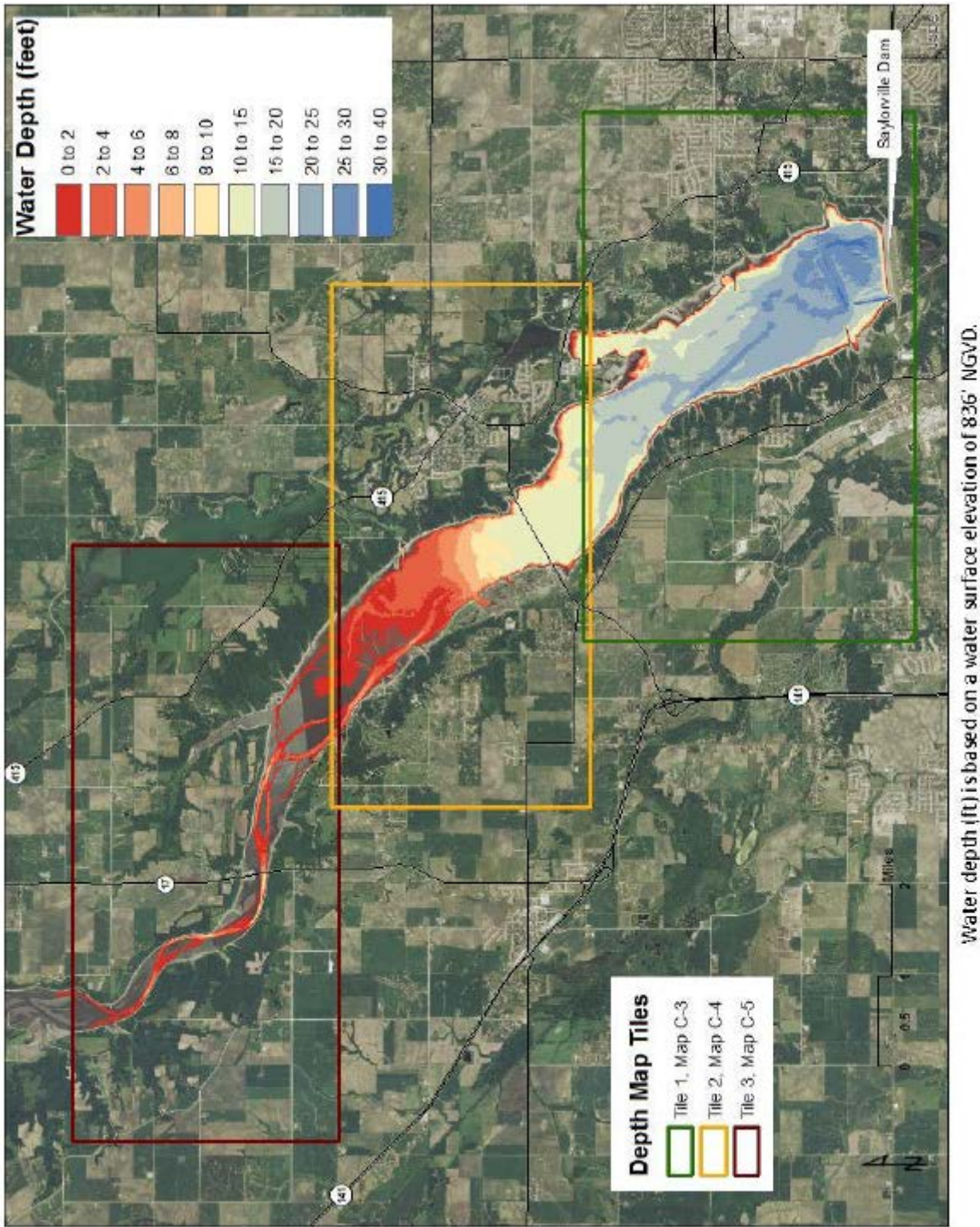
Again, I appreciate you taking the time to send us your comment.

Jeff Rose
Operations Project Manager
Saylorville Lake

Jeff Rose
Operations Project Manager
Saylorville Lake
5600 NW 78th Ave
Johnston Iowa 50131

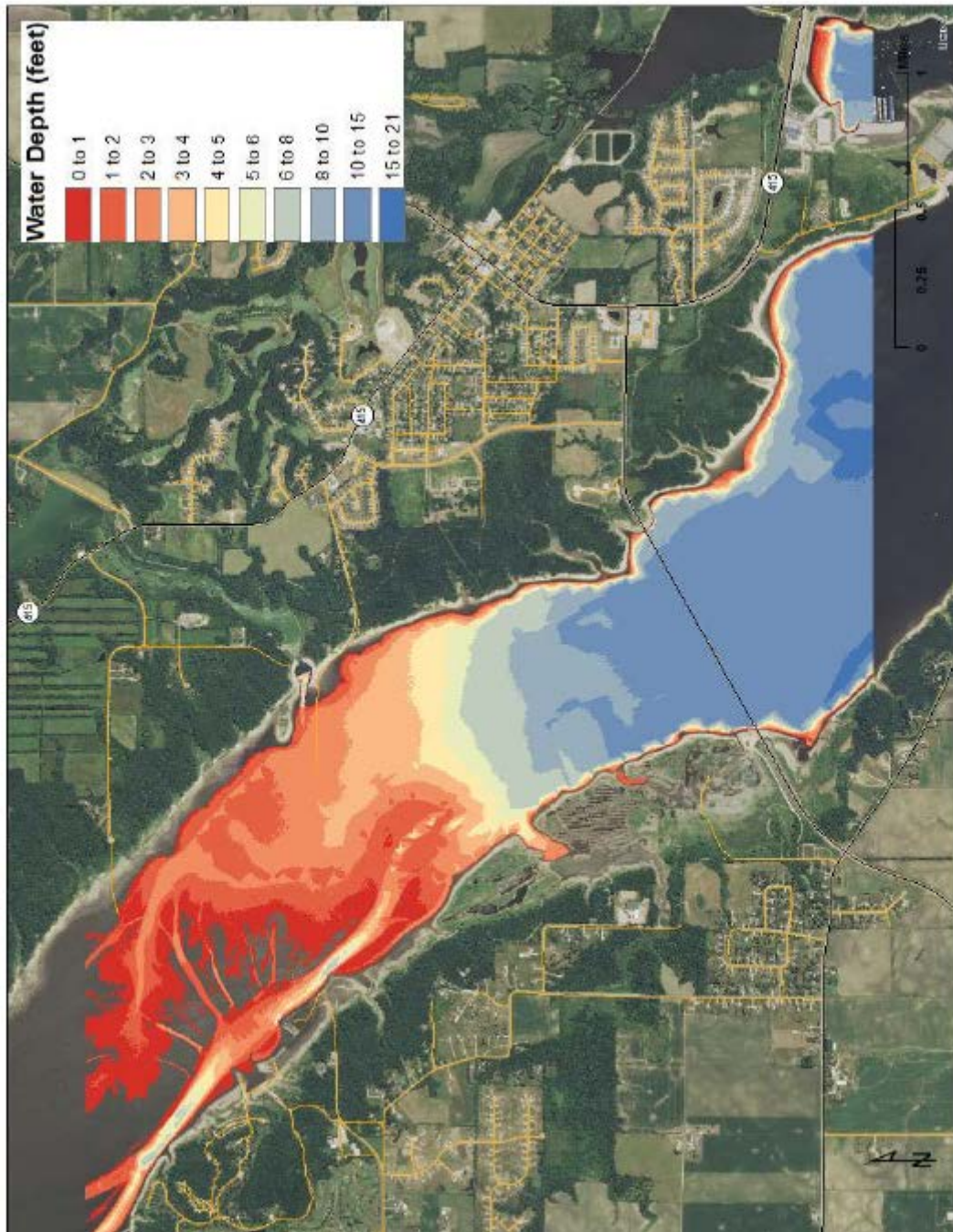
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Public Review Correspondence: Letter from Mr. Kraig McPeck, Field Supervisor, USFWS, to Col Mark Deschenes, MVR Commander & District Engineer, dated December 15, 2014



IN REPLY REFER
TO
FWS/RIFO

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Rock Island Field Office
1511 47th Avenue
Moline, Illinois 61265
Phone: (309) 757-5800 Fax: (309) 757-5807



December 15, 2014

Colonel Mark J. Deschenes
District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Rock Island District
Attn: Wendy Frolich RPEDN
Clock Tower Building, P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

Dear Colonel Deschenes:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Saylorville Master Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) dated November 19, 2014. Given the high recreational demand at Saylorville lands, we commend your efforts to balance the needs of public recreation with fish and wildlife resources.

We support the recommendation to classify 3,120 acres of downstream riparian lands as an Urban Wildlife Refuge. This will provide protection for numerous species using riparian corridors, but especially for the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). We also support the recommendation to create a 1,433 acre water protection zone near the Highway 17 Bridge. Such a zone will improve habitat suitability for all migratory birds, and especially for the Least tern (*Sterna antillarum*) which may use the area. Additionally, we support your effort to confine future utility corridors to those already in existence. This will help avoid impacts to other wildlife habitats and may reduce bird collisions with aerial utility lines.

With respect to the six proposed/endangered species listed in the EA, I concur that the proposed plan is not likely to adversely affect any listed species that may occur on Saylorville lands. We understand that any future actions potentially affecting habitat for these species will be addressed on an individual basis.

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Colonel Mark J. Deschenes, District Engineer

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Please contact us if we can be of further support in your Master Plan efforts. This letter provides comments under the authority of and in accordance with provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.); and the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Questions concerning this letter should be directed to Mr. Jon Duyvejonck (telephone 309.757-5800, ext. 207).

Sincerely,


for Kraig McPeck
Field Supervisor

cc: IADNR (Poole)

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Public Review Correspondence: E-mail from Mr. Larry Shepard, NEPA Team, USEPA, to Ms. Wendy Frohlich, MVR Biologist, dated December 19, 2014

From: Shepard, Larry [<mailto:Shepard.Larry@epa.gov>]
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 4:29 PM
To: Frohlich, Wendy M MVR
Cc: Nichols, Robert; Tapia, Cecilia
Subject: [EXTERNAL] EPA Comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Revised Saylorville Lake Master Plan

I have reviewed the draft Environmental Assessment supporting the Saylorville Lake Master Plan, Des Moines River Watershed, Johnston, Iowa. The revised Saylorville Master Plan would replace the 1984 Master Plan which applies changes to the land and water classifications assigned by the Corps to the 25,515 acres of acquired land constituting the project area. Saylorville Lake was created by the 1977 closing of an earth-filled embankment across the Des Moines River approximately 11 miles upstream of Des Moines, Iowa. Saylorville Lake is a multi-use project with five authorized purposes: flood risk management; low-flow augmentation; recreation; environmental stewardship; and water supply. The Corps considers the primary mission of the project to be flood risk management, low-flow augmentation and water supply support. The Saylorville Master Plan states that it is a land and recreational use management plan that does not address the technical aspects of water management for flood risk management, navigation or water supply. The Corps has developed a separate manual to guide the regulation of discharge from and storage within the reservoir.

These comments follow project scoping comments requested by the Rock Island District and provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in a June 4, 2014, letter. After reviewing both the draft EA and the revised Saylorville Master Plan, I agree with the District's draft Finding of No Significant Impact. However, I would appreciate your review of the following comments regarding the content of the draft EA and the Saylorville Master Plan and the Plan's implementation.

In general, I found the Master Plan to lack substantive and meaningful detail regarding the Master Plan's Chapter 3, Management Goals and Resource Objectives, Chapter 4, Land Allocation, Land Classification, and Easement Lands, Chapter 5, Resource Plan, and Chapter 6, Special Topics. Without detailed information regarding the implementation and application of the Master Plan to locations within the project area, it is difficult to evaluate the impacts of implementing this Master Plan. A statement in Section 1.7.2 claims that "The proposed solutions to issues and concerns are covered more extensively in the Master Plan." I could never locate that "extensive" coverage.

Environmental Assessment

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for the overall management of the project is clearly articulated throughout Section 1. Rapid, nearby urbanization and population growth are identified as causes of increasing habitat fragmentation and overuse by the public of the resources managed by the Corps within the project area. However, the clarity in purpose for the proposed revision of the 1984 Master Plan

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found later in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, is critically missing at the beginning of the document. That the purpose of this EA is limited to assessing the impacts of “adopting the Land Classifications” newly proposed in the revised Master Plan and not “specific recommended future management actions” as would be contained in a completely separate management document (i.e., the OMP) is not clear at all. Frankly, I am not sure of the value of assessing the impacts of a Master Plan that contains merely a new classification framework without any specifics as to detailed implementation of that framework. Possibly a more meaningful exercise under NEPA might have been to reserve any analysis of impacts for an assessment of the “Saylorville Lake Operational Management Plan” which is responding to the new classification framework.

Alternatives

The NEPA process would have been better supported if the Corps selected more than simply ‘action’ and ‘no action’ alternatives. That is, since the ‘no action’ alternative would default to on-going management of project resources using the existing Management Plan, the ‘action’ alternatives could have included more than just one version of a revised Master Plan. For example, two versions of a revised Master Plan would optimally contrast two clearly different ‘visions’ for resource management, e.g., a higher percentage of sensitive land use in one action alternative versus another. A more robust range of alternatives, beyond ‘action’ and ‘no action’ would better serve the spirit of NEPA if not also the CEQ requirements for a “robust range of alternatives.”

The data presented in Tables EA-1, EA-2 and EA-3 outline proposed real changes to land and water use between the existing Master Plan and the proposed revision. Given that many of the classifications did not exist under the existing Master Plan, it is difficult to assess the significance of these changes to address potential impacts to project resources. Further, the discussion on page EA-14 of proposed features of the preferred alternative also provides a general guide to understanding the differences between the existing and proposed Master Plan. The Master Plan documentation would have been improved immensely if that kind description would have been included in that document.

I found the maps labeled H.23 and H.24 to be of no use in understanding the nature or impacts of land or water use classification changes.

Affected Environment

Management and implementation of a monitoring program is critical to the successful execution of an adaptive management framework. Although not expressly described in either the Master Plan or the EA, it appears that the Corps is effectively managing project resources using an adaptive management approach. According to both documents, baseline and resource response monitoring is conducted through and documented in the Multiple Species Inventory and Monitoring Program. This program does not seem to be either comprehensive or complete. The MSIM appears primarily to be an species inventory program rather than a monitoring and resource condition assessment program. There seemed to be very little evidence that data collected through this program was utilized in the development of either document. Based on a review of what little information was provided in the Master Plan and the EA, it does not appear that the MSIM Program

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was designed nor could it be relied upon as a monitoring and assessment program which could assist resource management. EPA's June 4, 2014, scoping comments suggested an analysis and the inclusion of management actions addressing invasive species and reservoir and tributary water quality condition as well as a baseline assessment of the project's ecological and physical resources. We also suggested the inclusion of a monitoring program within the Master Plan to support an adaptive management approach. The MSIM Program is not adequate for any of these purposes and there appears to be no plans for including such a program within the Master Plan or the OPM.

Environmental Consequences

The EA does a good job of describing the affected environment and characterizing the impacts and anticipated future impacts on project resources resulting from increasing development and overuse. Despite the statement in Section 1.3, page EA-4, regarding the strategic advantages of engaging NEPA early in the planning process, it is difficult to assess the impacts of a management plan on project resources or surrounding environment when the plan consists only of a framework without the details of how it would be implemented.

Chapter 4 includes the only clear explanation in this document of what action this EA is addressing. In the third paragraph, page EA-30, the EA states that "this EA assesses the impacts of adopting the Land Classifications included in the proposed Master Plan but not the specific recommended future management actions and opportunities mentioned in Table EA-3, Future Recommendations of Management Actions by Land Classification (emphasis added), of this document." In fact, to my knowledge, the revised Master Plan does not include any of the information contained in Tables EA-1, EA-2 or EA-3. In addition, the EA states that "These recommendations will be part of the OMP and identified as tasks which will be reviewed and completed at a later date." Apparently, additional NEPA compliance efforts will be necessary to address those specific actions. I suggest duplicating this information in the front of the EA.

Revised Master Plan

It appears that the Master Plan is largely conceptual and merely outlines a process for developing specific action plans at a later time or in other documents to address these issues. The Master Plan describes the fundamental tools available to the Corps for addressing issues and impacts potentially affecting project resource health and sustainability yet there is no detail in this document regarding how the Corps intends to use or change these classifications. Apparently, that information is generally summarized only in the EA. For example, the Master Plan within Chapter 5, Resource Plan, states that "a more descriptive plan for managing these lands can be found in the Saylorville Lake Operational Management Plan." The Master Plan also references a multi-partner document guiding restoration and protection activities along the larger recreational corridor (Saylorville Corridor Master Plan). It is not clear within the proposed Master Plan revision or in the draft EA how this Master Plan interacts with these two major planning documents affecting the project resources.

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It is also not clear of what practical use is the revised Master Plan itself. It is clear that the intent of this revision to the Master Plan is to address increasing urban encroachment and overuse which could result in degraded resource condition, but it is not clear in this document what specific steps the Corps will take to accomplish this. As the purpose of this action is to limit further loss of project and ecological integrity, implementation of the Master Plan is not likely to have significant negative environmental impact (i.e., a FONSI). The value of the Master Plan as a standalone document, however, is questionable.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft EA supporting the Saylorville Lake Master Plan. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (913) 551-7441 or shepard.larry@epa.gov <<mailto:shepard.larry@epa.gov>> .

Larry Shepard

NEPA Team
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 7
11201 Renner Blvd.
Lenexa, Kansas 66219
913-551-7441
shepard.larry@epa.gov

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Public Review Correspondence: Letter from Ms. Pauline Drobney, Prairie Zone Biologist, USFWS, to Ms. Wendy Frohlich, MVR Biologist, dated December 19, 2014



**United States Department of the Interior
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
Division of Biological Resources
P.O. Box 399
Prairie City, Iowa 50228
Phone: (515) 994-3400
Fax: (515) 994-3459**



December 19, 2014

ATTN: Mrs. Wendy Frohlich
Department of the Army
Rock Island District, Corps of Engineers
Clock Tower Building – PO Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004

Dear Mrs. Frohlich:

The following are comments on the Saylorville Lake Master Plan, summarized under two main topics:

Sensitive lands: Remnant savannas, prairie and sedge meadow should be given the utmost protection from negative impact from motorized vehicles, recreational and other activities in order to protect globally imperiled natural systems. Fire should be employed as a management tool frequently to restore natural quality.

Water Quality and Erosion Reduction: Sedimentation is a major threat to the reservoir and to natural resources (prairie, savanna, sedge meadow, wildlife habitat, aquatic areas), especially when adjacent to farmed land, or on bare or disturbed land (from recreation or for other reasons) or highly erodible land. Research (see <http://www.nrem.iastate.edu/research/STRIPs/>) shows that strips of diverse prairie planted within farmed landscapes can reduce sediment export by 95%, total phosphorus loss by 90%, and total nitrogen loss from farmland by nearly 85%. Larger prairie plantings can reduce such pollutants to nearly 0%.

Prairie plantings also significantly increase water storage potential in the soil, reducing water runoff and thus erosion. Saylorville Lake staff should consider planting diverse prairie as much as possible between cropland and the lake or waterways to the lake. I highly recommend armoring steeply sloping drainageways and land leading to them with prairie plantings with a high diversity of prairie species (50-150 species are recommended) to maximize benefits to water quality, and to increase wildlife habitat, and recreational value. In addition to species mentioned in the Master Plan, such areas could provide prime habitat for the beleaguered monarch butterfly lately recognized as highly vulnerable to extinction, if plantings include a variety of native milkweeds and

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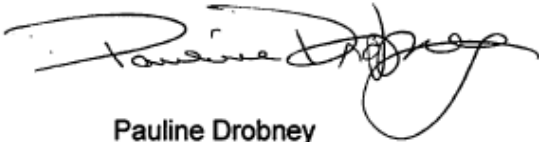
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nectaring plants. Trails and paths through such areas should be avoided or thoughtfully constructed to reduce potential for erosion, degradation to prairie, and to maintain wildlife habitat.

Another useful strategy could be to partner with the Natural Resource Conservation Service to prioritize farmed areas near Saylorville Lake as areas where use of prairie strips could be incentivized through adaptation of existing Farm Bill programs. Researchers at Iowa State University can provide advice on this process.

Best of all in the work you are doing at Saylorville Lake. If you have questions or wish to discuss above thoughts, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pauline Drobney", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Pauline Drobney
Prairie Zone Biologist
Division of Biological Resources
R3 USFWS

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Public Review Correspondence: E-mail from Ms. Christine Schwake, Environmental Specialist, Iowa DNR, to Ms. Wendy Frohlich, MVR Biologist, dated December 19, 2014

From: Schwake, Christine [DNR] [<mailto:Christine.Schwake@dnr.iowa.gov>]
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2014 8:40 AM
To: Frohlich, Wendy M MVR
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Saylorville Lake Master Plan

Hi Wendy,

I reviewed the document and have no comments.

Have a wonderful holiday season! Chris

CHRISTINE SCHWAKE Environmental Specialist
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
515.725.8399 | F 515-725-8302 | christine.schwake@dnr.iowa.gov
<<mailto:Email.Name@dnr.iowa.gov>>
502 E 9th St | Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

Leading Iowans in Caring for Our Natural Resources.

