



Massachusetts West Hill Dam

West Hill Dam is located on the West River in Uxbridge, about 14 miles southeast of Worcester. From Worcester, the dam can be reached by traveling 15 miles south on Route 122 to North Uxbridge, then east on Hartford Avenue.

The project provides substantial flood protection in communities along the West River in Massachusetts, including Uxbridge, Millville, and Blackstone, and along the Blackstone River in Rhode Island, including Woonsocket and Pawtucket.

West Hill Dam was started in June 1959 and completed in June 1961, requiring the relocation of several town roads and utilities. The cost of construction was \$2.3 million. The project consists of an earthfill dam with stone slope protection 2,400 feet long and 48 feet high; four earthfill dikes with stone slope protection totaling 1,910 feet in length with a maximum elevation of 14 feet; three gated conduits, each measuring five feet high, three feet wide, and 39 feet long; and a chute spillway cut in rock with a concrete weir 50 feet long. The weir's crest elevation is 18 feet lower than the top of the dam.

There is no lake at West Hill Dam. The flood storage area of the project covers 1,025 acres and extends about 4.7 miles upstream into Northbridge and Upton. This area is normally empty and is utilized only to store floodwaters. The project and all associated lands cover 1,401 acres. West Hill Dam can store up to 4.04 billion gallons of water for flood control purposes. This is equivalent to 8.3 inches of water covering its drainage area of 27.9 square miles. The Corps of Engineers operates West Hill Park at a small natural pool in the West River that offers a beach area and swimming. The pool is approximately 1/2 acre and six feet deep. There is also a picnic area with 36 tables, 25 fireplaces, a change house, picnic shelter, a hiking trail, drinking water, and parking and sanitary facilities. Hiking/cross-country skiing is permitted.

There is stream fishing along two miles of the West River, which the state stocks with trout. Center Brook and other streams in the project area offer native bass, pickerel, and horned pout. There is in-season hunting for state-stocked pheasant and native deer, wild turkey, partridge, squirrels, and rabbits.

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