



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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## New Hampshire Surry Mountain Lake

The dam at Surry Mountain Lake is located on the Ashuelot River in Surry, about five miles north of downtown Keene and .5 mile north of the Keene-Surry line, on Route 12A.

In conjunction with Otter Brook Lake, Surry Mountain Lake provides flood protection to downstream communities on the Ashuelot River, including Keene, Swanzey, Winchester, and Hinsdale. Along with other Corps dams, Surry Mountain Lake also helps reduce flooding along the Connecticut River.

Construction on the project began in August 1939 and was completed in October 1941 at a cost of \$2.8 million. The project consists of an earthfill dam with stone slope protection 1,800 feet long and 86 feet high; a concrete horseshoe conduit 10 feet in diameter and 383 feet long; and an L-shaped spillway excavated in rock with a concrete weir 338 feet long. The weir's crest elevation is 18 feet lower than the top of the dam. The work included relocating a portion of Route 12A and a utility line.

Surry Mountain Lake contains a 260-acre recreation pool with a maximum depth of 15 feet that was established in 1962 at the request of the town. The flood storage area of the project totals 970 acres and extends about five miles upstream. The lake and all associated project lands cover 1,779 acres. Surry Mountain Lake can store almost 10.6 billion gallons of water for flood control purposes. This is equivalent to 5.9 inches of water covering its drainage area of 100 square miles.

The Surry Mountain Recreation Area, which is accessible on Route 12A from Keene (about .75 mile north of the dam entrance), offers visitors many recreational opportunities. A large picnic area offers 80 tables and 45 fireplace grills. There is a 600-foot-long sandy beach and swimming area, and a boat ramp is available for those who enjoy canoeing, sailing, and motor boating. The .75-mile-long Beaver Lodge Nature Trail is popular with hikers. Cross-country skiers and snowmobilers enjoy the old abandoned roads and the five acres of open field, which are also used for ball playing and other sporting activities. The recreation area also has a change house, drinking water, and sanitary facilities.

Fishing opportunities abound within the project. Surry Mountain Lake offers self-sustaining largemouth and small-mouth bass, pickerel, brown bullhead, and yellow perch. A section of the Ashuelot River that runs through project lands offers streamside fishing for state-stocked brook and rainbow trout. Ice fishing is permitted. There is in-season hunting and/or trapping for state-stocked pheasant, as well as deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, wild turkey, raccoon, fox, fisher, beaver, mink, and otter.

Visitors are encouraged to enjoy the panoramic view from atop the dam, which reveals the wide U-shaped valley encompassing Surry Mountain Lake. The scenery is especially spectacular during the foliage season. Wildlife is abundant throughout the project area, and several waterfowl species thrive in the shrub swamp at the upper end of

the lake. The project's diverse habitat also supports many species of birds, including the broad-winged hawk, herring gull, osprey, kestrel, and songbirds. Whitetail deer and black bear have also been spotted utilizing their natural environment.

The privately-owned Surry Mountain Campground lies on nonfederal land adjacent to the project area and offers 35 campsites.