

# **VISION 2012**

## **Buffumville Lake**

### **A Plan for the Next Ten Years**



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
New England District

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## Vision 2012

*Our Ten-Year Plan is designed to enhance the quality and safety of your visit at Buffumville Lake.*

*Vision 2012 is an evolving document, a planning tool that will promote and encourage additional projects and improvements to our facilities and programs solely for the visiting public at Buffumville Lake. The project management team will use this document during the annual budget process to ensure the missions of the Corps and the approved goals of the community are implemented.*

We are presenting you this plan to get your insights, comments, and recommendations so we can better tailor our vision to your needs. We appreciate your feedback!

## History

As a result of severe flooding that occurred during the hurricanes of 1936 and 1938 a series of flood control projects were built by the US Army Corps of Engineers on the Quinebaug River and with-in the Thames River Basin. Buffumville Lake was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1941. Authorization for development and use of the reservoir area for public recreation purpose is contained in Section 4 of the Flood Control Act of 1944.

Buffumville Dam, completed in 1958, is located on the Little River, 1.3 miles upstream of its confluence with the French River in Charlton, Massachusetts. Buffumville Lake is operated for flood control and provides major flood protection to the towns of Oxford and Webster, MA and in conjunction with the other projects in the Thames River Basin, provides protection to downstream communities on the Quinebaug and Thames River, such as Putnam and Norwich, CT. As of Oct. 2001 the dam had prevented over \$54 million in cumulative flood damages.



# Today

Natural and recreation resources at Buffumville Lake provide social, economic and environmental benefits. The following facts relate to the ways in which the US Army Corps of Engineers helps to make the region a more interesting place to live and visit.

## Social Benefits

### Recreation Facilities

- 2 recreation areas
- 48 picnic sites
- 0 camping sites
- 0 playgrounds
- 1 swimming areas
- 18 trail miles
- 1 fishing docks
- 1 boat ramps
- 0 marinas
- 0 marina slips

### Recreation Visits (person-trips)

- 111,600 in total
- 42,408 picnickers
- 0 campers
- 47,988 swimmers
- 0 water skiers
- 10,044 boaters
- 8,928 sightseers
- 23,436 fishermen
- 0 hunters
- 26,784 others

### Social Benefits in Perspective

By providing opportunities for active recreation, Corps lakes also help overcome one of the most significant of the nation's health problems: lack of physical activity. Exercise opportunities like those offered at Corps lakes also have a positive effect on individuals' mental and emotional outlook and sense of well-being by:

- Strengthening family ties and friendships.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop personal skills and social values while building self-esteem.
- Expanding knowledge about the area's nature and culture.
- Increasing everyone's safety when participating in recreational activities in and outside of Corps recreational areas.

## Economic Benefits

### Economic Benefits\*

- 111,600 visits per year.
- \$1.53 million in visitor spending within 30 miles of the Corps lake. 66% of the spending was captured by local economy as direct sales effects.

With multiplier effects, visitor trip spending resulted in:

- \$1.67 million in total sales.
- \$0.88 million in total income.
- Supported 43 jobs in the local community surrounding the lake.

\* From visitor trip spending within 30 miles of the lake only, does not include purchases of durable goods.

### Economic Benefits in Perspective

- Visitors to Corps lakes spend money on trip expenses such as lodging and meals, and on durable goods like boats and campers.
- This spending contributes to the local and national economies by supporting jobs and generating income to those who directly and indirectly provide goods and services to Corps visitors.
- Revenues from visitor spending represent a sizable component of the economy in many communities around Corps lakes.

## Environmental Benefits

### Environmental Resources

- 553 land acres
- 200 water acres
- 6 shoreline miles
- 16 acres reforested
- 2,948 environmental interpretation contacts

### Environmental Resources in Perspective

Recreation experiences increase:

- Motivation to learn more about the environment.
- Sensitivity toward the environment.
- Deeper understanding of environmental processes.
- Awareness of environmental issues.
- Knowledge about the environment and one's place in it.

## Accomplishments to Date

27 hole disc golf course

Project of the Year 2000

Handicap Accessible Park

National Public Lands Day

3,000+ Interpretive Contacts yearly

## Resources

As the annual budget has remained fixed for the past ten years and is projected to not increase in the next ten years, our expenditures increase every year. With the cost of living increasing we too are affected. Everything from gas and oil, to repairing a 45-year-old facility, drain our resources therefore we continuously look for new ways to accomplish our mission.

Through interpretation and outreach education we want to build partnerships with local business and community groups. Volunteers donated over \$77,886 worth of time and materials in 2001 and we should top that in 2002 with new partnerships created this year. The following are plans and ideas in each of our major program areas. We are looking for feedback and input on how we can accomplish all of our goals and objectives within the next ten years.



# Annual Work Programming

## Operation and Maintenance of Flood Control Facility

### *Goal:*

To maintain all flood control facilities in a high state of operation and readiness with zero failure.

### *Objectives:*

2003 Replace gate seal #3 in dam, replace electrical plugs in dam, expand parking at dam, create barrier free access to office, perform toe drain inspections.

2204 Remove overhead crane in dam, new roofs on buildings at dam site.

2005 Host Periodic Inspection, Master Plan update, Modify restroom at Dam site to make it barrier free.

2006 Repaint interior of dam.

2007 Replace furnaces in all buildings at dam.

2008 Replace auto relay switch in dam.

2010 Replace generator in dam, replace exterior doors on the dam.

2012 Seal coat parking lot at dam site.



# Annual Work Programming

## Recreation Management, Interpretation, Environmental Education and Outreach

### *Goal:*

Promote, improve and expand outdoor recreational opportunities in a safe and family oriented environment while protecting and enhancing the project resources and surrounding environment. To increase awareness of the US Army Corps of Engineers and the valuable resources we are managing.



### *Objectives:*

2003 Engineering & Design work to create an Oxford Road Overlook and Repave the boat ramp, Put in park solar lighting, begin upgrade of sanitary facilities at park, begin barrier free beach, install Pipe beach buoys.

2004 Install boat ramp payphone, begin park playground, Add a Romtec restroom at park, mount park hand dryers, orienteering course at park, start park electrical system upgrade, establish dam site waysides.

2005 Renovate boat ramp, add a stone fireplace at park, put new roofs on park storage buildings.

2006 Project brochure update, well pump replacement.

2010 Park staircase rehabilitation.

2012 Purchase a golf cart.

## Annual Work Programming

### Cultural and Historical Resources, Natural Resources and the Environment

#### *Goals:*

Identify, preserve, celebrate and promote historical and cultural resources with the least amount of impact while enhancing the knowledge of the public of their significance. Natural Resources will be conserved, protected, managed and restored for future generations. Support sustainable use of renewable resources.



#### *Objectives:*

- 2003 Hire a forester consultant to begin plan for 100-year cutting cycle at project.
- 2004 Do an Endangered Species inventory, do a wetlands survey, Research Nipmuck/White Activities to 1950.
- 2005 Begin forest inventory.
- 2007 Update water quality.
- 2010 EA update.

## Annual Work Programming

### Volunteer, Partnership and Co-operative Associations



#### *Goals:*

Increase our loyal and active volunteer base. Create new partnerships and Co-operative Associations within the community to achieve synergy.

#### *Objectives:*

- 2003 Investigate the feasibility of 3<sup>rd</sup> park host site at boat ramp.
- 2004 Upgrade park host parking, Begin construction on septic and electrical for 3<sup>rd</sup> host site.

## Annual Work Programming

### Visitor Assistance, Safety and Security



#### *Goals:*

Increase voluntary compliance of park and project rules and regulations through positive interaction with the visiting public.  
Promote and ever improve personnel and public safety and the security of government property.

#### *Objectives:*

- 2003 Begin plans for a Patrol boathouse, Begin investigation in maintaining guardrails on Oxford Street causeway, Create access to Little River.
- 2004 Install emergency lighting at Buffumville Office.
- 2005 Purchase new patrol boat and motor, Install gate at boat ramp, Install security cameras at dam site.

## Annual Work Programming

### Fiscal Year 2013 and Beyond

#### *Goals:*

Continue to provide quality service to the public.

#### *Objectives:*

- 2015 Contract for a comprehensive Cultural Resources inventory.
- 2017 Re-roof dam control house.

# Partners

In these times, the Federal Government is tasked to do more with less. Less money and with fewer resources. Now more than ever, partnering with other agencies, like minded civic groups and our local users of our resource is the best way to do business. Below is many, but possibly not all of the “partners” the US Army Corps of Engineers works with at Buffumville Lake.

Baystate Barefooters	Project Coffee
Midstate Trail Committee	Friendly House
AMC	Massachusetts Riverways Program
American Hiking Society	Toyota Corporation
Baystate Trail Riders	Scouts
CMA Studies	Capen Hill Nature Sanctuary
Bass Clubs	Charlton Land Trust
EOEA (MA Env. Affairs)	Thames River Flood Control Comm.
SHPO	MA Watershed Comm. (Secchi folk)
Local Historical Commission	News media
The National Guard	Nichols College
Oxford NJROTC	Area Colleges/.Universities
Paintball groups	NEETF
Schools in community (Oxford X-country)	WWW (Nat. Fishing)
Public Access Board	Thames River Partnership
Massachusetts State Police	NE Bait & Tackle
Other Sporting Goods stores	Singletary Rod and Gun Club
7-Hills Occupational Training	200 Sportsman Club
Auxiliary (Coast Guard)	Area Little Leagues
Abutters	Libraries
Town of Charlton Police Dept.	NPS-QSRVNH
Town of Oxford Police Dept.	USGS
MA Environmental Police	PAL/Cultural Res. Group
Mobile Pipeline	Clara Barton Camp
Allen Joslin Camp	Audubon
Tenneco Pipeline	Town of Dudley
Hylka Construction Company	J. S. Lane
Cranston Print Works	Center of Hope
Gordon Dam	Tri-State Trail Riders
Ware Electric	NEMBA
NEFA	Nipmuc Nation
Concessionaires – Disc Golf	Town of Webster
SCA	Grouse Society
HVEEA	National Heritage
US F&W Angler Educ. Div.	MA F& W Angler Education Div.
MA EPA (DEP)	DEM
US EPA	
LPPs – Worcester, Saxonville, New London, Pawcatuck, Swansea	

## Conclusion

As we look forward through the next ten years our goal is one of awareness and conservation of our cultural, historical, recreational and natural resources for now and for the future. We are committed to enhancing your experiences at Buffumville Lake.

New volunteers and partnerships with residents and local government are key to our success as we maximize our limited resources to preserve the quality of life around the community and at Buffumville Lake.



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### **To get to Buffumville Lake**

Easily accessible from the Mass Turnpike and I-395. From I-395, take exit 4 to Oxford. Go through Oxford Center and continue straight for two and one-half miles to Buffumville Park. The Buffumville Lake Office is on Old Oxford Road (Buffums Dam Road, look for the signs). From the Mass Turnpike, take the Sturbridge exit and follow Route 20 to Charlton. From Charlton, take a right on to Route 31 and follow the signs to Buffumville Lake.