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USACE to host Host Blackwater Dam Master Plan Open House April 10 in Webster

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will host an open house on Thursday, April 10, 2025, to kick off a process to revise the 1967 Blackwater Dam Master Plan. The open house will be held from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Webster Town Hall at 945 Battle St. Webster, NH.

During the open house session, there will be no formal presentation. The public is invited to visit at any point during the 4:00-6:00 p.m. time frame to interact with USACE team members. Team members will be stationed around the room and can share information about the revision process, provide the general schedule, and gather initial feedback from the public.

Master Plan Overview

The Master Plan is defined as the strategic land use management document that guides the comprehensive management and development of all recreational, natural, and cultural resources throughout the life of the water resource development project. It defines "how" USACE will manage the resources for public use and conservation.

The current Blackwater Dam Master Plan, last approved in 1967, needs revision to address changes in regional land use, population, outdoor recreation trends, and the USACE management policy. Key topics to be discussed in the revised Master Plan include revised land use classifications, new natural and recreational resource management objectives, recreation facility needs, and special issues such as invasive species management and threatened and endangered species habitat. The Master Plan revision will not address the technical and operational aspects of the lake related to flood risk management or the water conservation missions of the project.

Initial Comments

An initial 30-day comment period will begin April 10, 2025, and end May 12, 2025. The public can send comments, suggestions, and concerns during this time. Comments must be submitted in writing at the open house or digitally via the comment form on the Master Plan Revision web page: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/missions/recreation/blackwater-dam/blackwater-dam-master-plan/>. The web page also contains a presentation which will be running during the open house. The presentation provides a schedule as well as details on an additional comment period after the draft report is released (currently scheduled for December 2026).

About Blackwater Dam

Blackwater Dam in Webster and Salisbury, New Hampshire is located in the upper Merrimack River Basin. This is a multi-purpose project built and maintained by the USACE New England District. The dam was authorized by Congress for flood risk management in 1938. While the main purpose of Blackwater Dam is to provide flood risk management to the Merrimack River Basin, over the years the project has become known for its recreational opportunities such as fishing, hunting, horseback riding, snowmobiling, etc. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages the natural resources at Blackwater Dam for multiple uses: flood risk management, wildlife habitat, forestry, watershed protection, and outdoor recreation. Blackwater Dam receives approximately 23,000 person-visits per year.

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