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USACE to host Host North Springfield Lake Master Plan Open House April 17

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will host an open house on Thursday, April 17, 2025, to kick off a process to revise the 2004 North Springfield Lake Master Plan. The open house will be held from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Springfield Town Library, 43 Main Street, Springfield, VT 05156.

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 North Springfield Lake Master Plan, last approved in 2004, 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 17, 2025, and end May 16, 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: www.nae.usace.army.mil/missions/recreation/north-springfield-lake/north-springfield-lake-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 July 2026).

About North Springfield Lake

North Springfield Lake is located on the Black River in the towns of Springfield and Weathersfield, Vermont. North Springfield Lake is approximately 8.7 miles upstream of the confluence of the Black and Connecticut Rivers, just northwest of the Village of North Springfield adjacent to the Hartness State Airport. The project consists of 1,372 acres of fee-owned land, and 376 acres of flowage easement.

North Springfield Lake is a unit of the Comprehensive Plan for Flood Control in the Upper Connecticut River Basin. Construction of the North Springfield Lake dam and reservoir began in May 1958 and was completed in November 1960 at a cost of $6,832,000. The project is one of numerous other projects in the Comprehensive Plan for flood damage reduction and other multiple purposes within the Connecticut River Basin. North Springfield Lake provides flood damage reduction at downstream communities along the Black River in Springfield and Connecticut River in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

North Springfield Lake Dam is a rolled-earth fill embankment with rock slope protection. The outlet works consist of a concrete intake structure that houses three 5-foot by 12-foot slide gates, a gated concrete horseshoe conduit, and a discharge channel. An emergency spillway, cut in rock, is located on the left abutment of the dam, and includes a concrete ogee weir. The project has two permanent impoundments or pools: the “conservation pool” or North Springfield Lake, is located just upstream of the dam structure; and the North Branch Dam, also called Stoughton Pond, located approximately three miles upstream of the dam, on the North Branch of the Black River in Weathersfield, Vermont. This dam was constructed as part of the project to allow continued east/west access at this location.

The outlet from Stoughton Pond is a 21-foot-wide concrete weir that leads to a circular metal conduit through the embankment. At its normal elevation (467 feet N.G.V.D.), North Springfield Lake has a maximum depth of 15 feet. Stoughton Pond, normally at an elevation of about 502 feet N.G.V.D., has a maximum depth of about 20 feet. At spillway crest elevation (545.5 feet N.G.V.D.), the flood storage reservoir at the project would encompass 1,200 acres and extend about 4.5 miles upstream of the dam. This reservoir has a storage capacity of 50,200 acre-feet (about 16.6 billion gallons of water), which is equivalent to 5.93 inches of runoff from the contributing 158 square mile drainage area.While the main purpose of North Springfield Lake was to provide flood risk management, over the years the Lake and Stoughton Pond have become a recreational draw for nearby visitors. With multi-use trails, picnic area, swimming beach, boat launch, the lake can accommodate all kinds of outdoor enthusiasts across all seasons.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages the natural resources at North Springfield Lake Lake for multiple uses: flood risk management, natural resources management, and outdoor recreation. The outdoor sports enthusiast can hunt, fish and boat at North Springfield Lake and Stoughton Pond. The natural environment of project reflects the diverse nature and beauty of Vermont. The glacially formed topography showcase the forested mountains and ridges the river valleys below and home to all types of flora and fauna. All project lands and waters are under the jurisdiction of CFR Title 36 regulations, state, and local laws.

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