

April 30, 2025  
Release No. MA 2025-011

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## USACE hosts open house June 12 in Sturbridge, MA, for East Brimfield Lake and Conant Brook Dam Master Plan revisions

**CONCORD, Mass.** – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District will host an open house on June 12, 2025, in Sturbridge, MA, to share details on a draft revision of the 1998 East Brimfield Lake Master Plan and the 1998 Conant Brook Dam Master Plan.

The open house will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Sturbridge Town Hall (Veterans Memorial Hall) at 308 Main Street in Sturbridge. The public open house will cover the proposed changes to the current East Brimfield Lake and Conant Brook Dam Master Plans. Team members will share instructions on how to submit comments and provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions and provide feedback. A 30-day public comment period will begin on June 12th, 2025, and end on July 12th, 2025.

### 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 East Brimfield Lake Master Plan and Conant Brook Dam Master Plan, both last approved in 1998, need 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.

### Submitting Comments & Reviewing Draft Plans:

Comments must be submitted in writing at the open house or digitally via the comment form on the Master Plan Revision webpages during the 30-day public comment period that begins on June 12th, 2025, and ends on July 12th, 2025.

- East Brimfield: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/East-Brimfield-Lake/East-Brimfield-Lake-Master-Plan/>
- Conant Brook: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Conant-Brook-Dam/Conant-Brook-Dam-Master-Plan/>

During the 30-day public comment period, comments can also be emailed to

- East Brimfield: [eastbrimfieldlakemasterplan@usace.army.mil](mailto:eastbrimfieldlakemasterplan@usace.army.mil)
- Conant Brook: [conantbrookmasterplan@usace.army.mil](mailto:conantbrookmasterplan@usace.army.mil)

On June 12, the websites will also have digital copies of the draft Master Plans, Environmental Assessments and associated documents, a comment form with instructions, and a downloadable presentation covering the topics highlighted in the open house.

### **About East Brimfield Lake**

The East Brimfield Lake project is located along the upper reaches of the Quinebaug River in south central Massachusetts in the towns of Brimfield, Holland and Sturbridge. Construction of the East Brimfield Dam was completed in June 1960 at a cost of \$7,057,000. It is a rolled earthfill dam that is 520 feet long and 55 feet high and holds back a lake capable of storing 9.4 billion gallons of water. East Brimfield Dam helps to reduce flooding in Sturbridge and Southbridge and optimizes its flood damage reduction by coordinating its operation with other dams in the comprehensive Thames River Basin system.

USACE manages the natural resources at East Brimfield Lake for multiple uses to include flood risk management, wildlife habitat, forest production, watershed protection and outdoor recreation. While the main purpose of East Brimfield Lake is to provide flood risk management to the Thames River Basin, over the years the lake has become a recreational draw for approximately 135,000 visitors a year. With over 10 miles of multi-use trails, a five-mile-long canoe trail, 1,670 acres of land, 400 acres of water, picnic areas, a swimming beach, and three boat launches, the lake can accommodate all kinds of outdoor enthusiasts.

For more information about East Brimfield Lake, visit the project website at <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/East-Brimfield-Lake/>

### **About Conant Brook Dam**

Conant Brook Dam is located on Conant Brook, a tributary of Chicopee Brook which flows to the Quaboag River. The Quaboag River is a major tributary of the Chicopee River. The project is situated entirely within the town of Monson in Hampden County. This is a multi-purpose project built and maintained by USACE. Construction of Conant Brook Dam started in June 1964 and was completed in December 1966 at a cost of \$3 million. Conant Brook Dam is part of the comprehensive plan for the development of the Lower Connecticut River Basin, but its operation and maintenance is carried out by project personnel located in the Thames River Basin.

USACE manages the natural resources at Conant Brook Dam for multiple uses to include flood risk management, wildlife habitat, forest production, watershed protection and outdoor recreation. Conant Brook Dam offers a wide array of trails for outdoor recreational purposes to include hiking and mountain biking. Several trails have been modified to best suit equestrian groups. During the winter, visitors can cross country ski and snowshoe on the trails. Hunting is allowed throughout the property during the proper seasons. The project also offers three miles of stream fishing for state-stocked trout along Conant Brook and Vinica Brook.

For more information about Conant Brook Dam, visit the project website at <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Conant-Brook-Dam/>.

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