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USACE hosts open house July 31 in Uxbridge, MA, for West Hill Dam Master Plan revision

CONCORD, MA. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District will host an open house on July 31, 2025, in Uxbridge, MA, to share details on a draft revision of the 2011 West Hill Dam Master Plan.

The open house will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. at Valley Chapel located at 14 Hunter Road in Uxbridge. The public open house will cover the proposed changes to the current West Hill Dam Master Plan. 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 July 31, 2025, and end on August 31, 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 West Hill Dam Master Plan, last approved in 2011, 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.

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 webpage during the 30-day public comment period that begins on July 31, 2025, and ends on August 31, 2025 (<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/West-Hill-Dam/West-Hill-Dam-Master-Plan/>) or emailed to westhillmasterplan@usace.army.mil.

On July 31, the website will also have digital copies of the draft Master Plan, Environmental Assessment and associated documents, a comment form with instructions, and a downloadable presentation covering the topics highlighted in the open house.

About West Hill Dam

The West Hill Dam project is located along the West River in the Blackstone River Basin. This is a multi-purpose project built and maintained by USACE. Construction of West Hill Dam began in June 1959 and was completed in June 1961 at a cost of \$2.3 million. The dam consists of earthfill with stone slope protection. It has a length of 2,400 feet and a height of 48 feet. West Hill Dam helps to reduce flooding in Uxbridge and in towns downstream along the Blackstone River, including Woonsocket and Providence.

USACE manages the natural resources at West Hill Dam for multiple uses to include flood risk management, wildlife habitat, forest production, watershed protection and outdoor recreation. While the main purpose of West Hill Dam is to provide flood risk management, the project over the years has become a recreational draw for approximately 80,000 visitors a year. With over 17 miles of trails, 567 acres of land, a beautiful scenic river, picnic shelters, and a mountain bike skills course, the project can accommodate all kinds of outdoor enthusiasts.

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

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