

Whitney Lake Master Plan Revision Public Information Meeting July 14, 2015

Billy Haferkamp
Environmental Stewardship Manager
Three Rivers Regional Office
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Worth District



Purpose of this Meeting

- Describe the purpose and intent of a Master Plan
- Describe the revision process
- Answer questions you may have
- Ask for your participation
- Explain why the Whitney Lake Master Plan is in need of revision and how it may affect nearby communities and the public at large



National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

- Applies to all Federal Actions, including Master Plan Revisions
- Requires Federal agencies to *CONSIDER and DOCUMENT the environmental impacts of their proposed actions as part of an agency's OVERALL planning and decision-making process*
- Requires Federal agencies to cooperate with Federal, state and local governments, and other concerned public and private organizations and citizens during project planning
- Scoping is where the agency asks for initial input from “the public” (agencies, governments, citizens, non-profits) with information about the project area, resources, etc



Purpose and Intent of Master Plans

The Corps defines a Master Plan as...

“ The strategic land use management document that guides the comprehensive management and development of all project recreational, natural and cultural resources throughout the life of the water resource development project.”



Source: Chapter 3 of EP 1130-2-550 available at www.usace.army.mil/library/publications



BUILDING STRONG®

Key Points Regarding Master Plans

- Main focus is stewardship of natural and cultural resources and provision of high quality outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities
- Proposed effective life of a Master Plan is 25 years
- Recreational use of the water surface is addressed
- Master Plans do not address in detail the technical aspects of water management for flood risk management, hydroelectric power generation or water supply



Additional Key Points

- Key sections of the Master Plan Revision include resource management objectives, revised land use classifications and a conceptual management plan for each land classification
- Potential outcomes could be designation of lands for resort development, new marinas, and utility corridors
- Stakeholder and public input is critical
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas is given priority



What Will Not be Addressed

- National policy places strict limitations on the proposed construction of new public roads on Corps lands. With few exceptions road proposals that would cross Federal land will not be addressed
- The Shoreline Management Plan, which is focused solely on the management of private uses of Federal land, such as private boat docks and vegetation alteration, will not be directly addressed. Some aspects of the Master Plan revision could affect the Shoreline Management Plan



Why Revise the Whitney Lake Master Plan?

- Current Master Plan is dated June 1972... has exceeded its useful life. The way the Lake is managed today is different from the vision set forth in 1972 plan.
- Population in the regional area grew significantly during the 2000-2010 period : Hill County-8.6%; Bosque Co-5.9%; Johnson Co-19%; Tarrant Co-25.1%; McLennan Co-10%. This trend is predicted to continue
- Lakeside communities continue to grow around Whitney Lake
- The Master Plan must be revised to address current and future growth in the region



The Corps' Vision for Whitney Lake

The land, water surface and recreational resources of Whitney Lake will be managed to protect, conserve, and sustain natural and cultural resources, especially environmentally sensitive resources, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities that complement overall project purposes for the benefit of present and future generations.



Whitney Lake Missions

- Flood Risk Management
- Hydroelectric Power
- Water Conservation
- Environmental Stewardship
- Public Outdoor Recreation



Construction – Whitney Lake Dam
November 1950



Fast Facts about Whitney Lake

- Construction of the dam was completed in 1951
- At conservation (normal) pool elevation (533' NGVD) the lake covers 23,560 acres
- At conservation pool, there is 20,139 acres of public land above the pool
- At the 100-year flood pool elevation the lake covers 49,820 acres
- The federal property boundary line is 281 miles long
- The shoreline at normal pool is 225 miles long



More Fast Facts

- Whitney Lake has an annual visitation of over 1.5 Million people
- Annually, the Corps office at Whitney Lake issues more than 2800 public hunting permits
- \$50 Million Local Economic Impact within a 30 mile radius
- Since its completion in 1951, the Whitney Dam has prevented more than \$331 Million in flood damages downstream

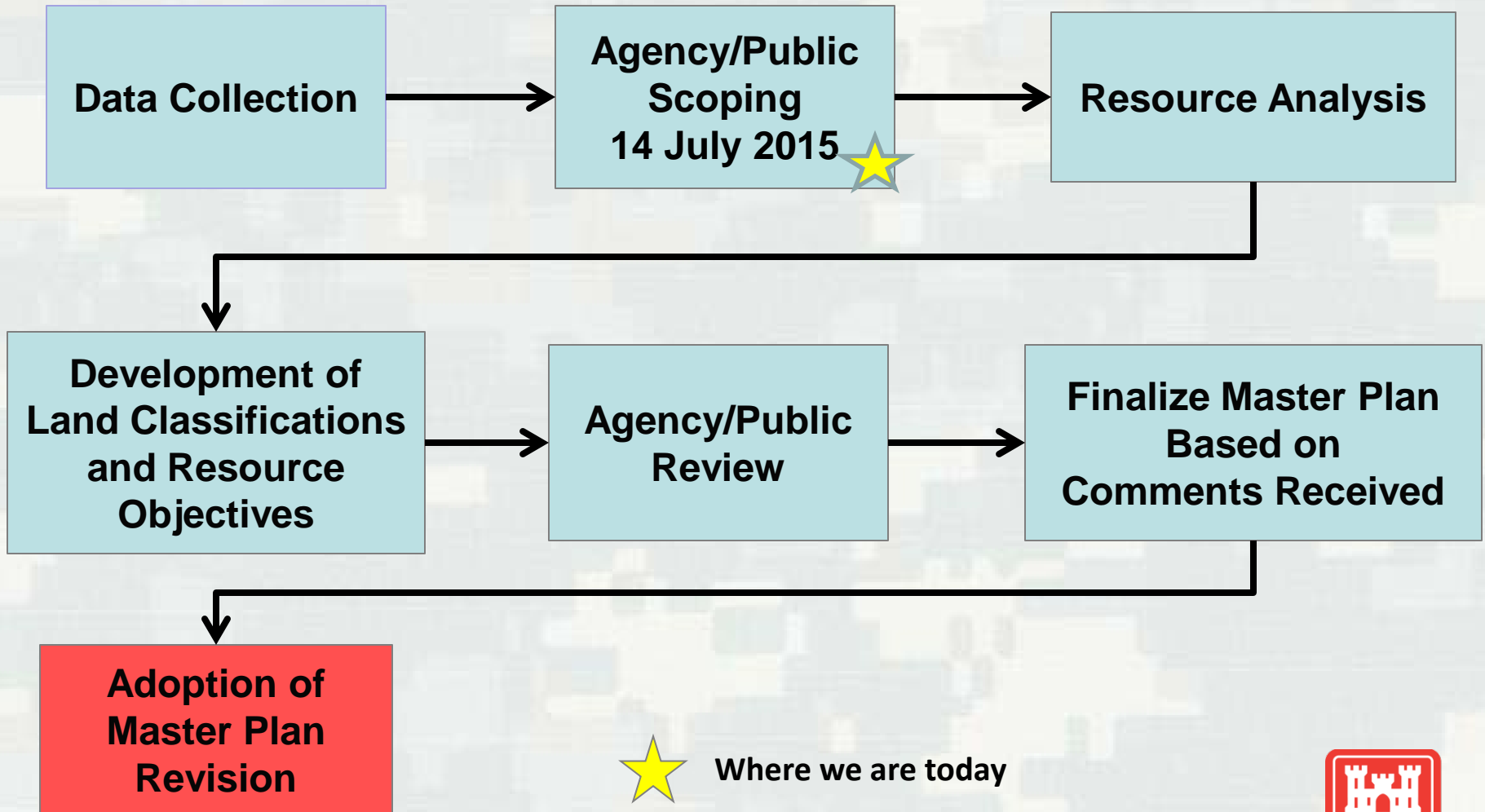


Master Plan Revision Process

- Accomplished by a team of Corps employees with input from other agencies
- Public and stakeholder input will be carefully considered
- An Environmental Assessment of the Master Plan will be prepared and included as an appendix



The Master Planning Process



What Major Changes Are Needed in the Current Master Plan?

- Re-examine the classification of all project lands and water surface
 - ▶ Some currently designated parks (those that are closed or were never developed) may be reclassified as wildlife or low intensity recreation lands
 - ▶ New or expanded high density recreation areas could be designated
 - ▶ Anticipate some lands being classified as environmentally sensitive areas, especially areas with Endangered Species Habitat
 - ▶ Possibly designate utility corridors



Additional Major Changes

- Prepare new Resource Objectives
 - ▶ Need current recreation objectives that reflect major trends identified by TPWD and through public input (Specify types and number of facilities and related amenities needed to meet demand)
 - ▶ Need current natural resource objectives that reflect major habitat and open space needs identified by TPWD, USFWS, and public input

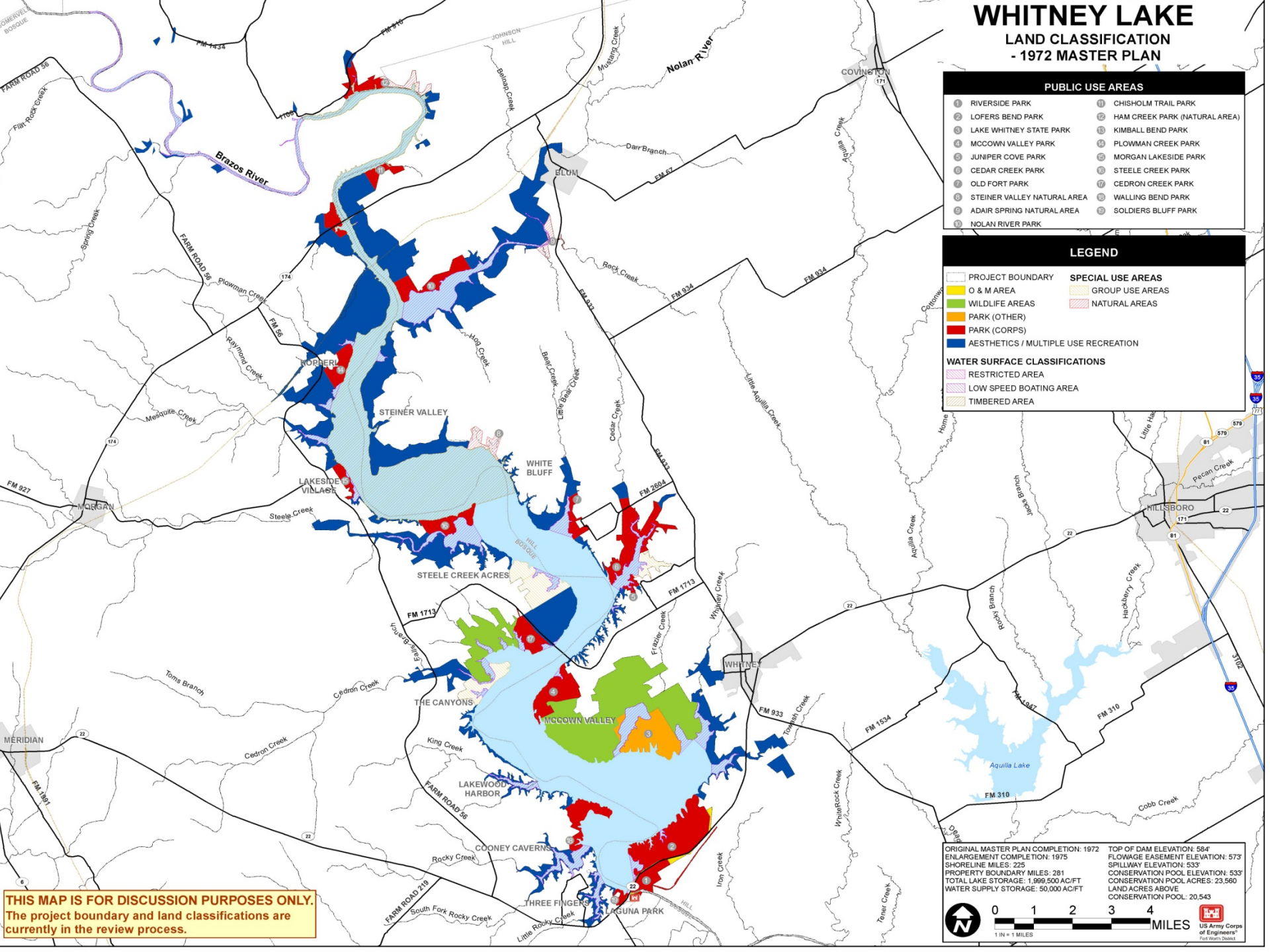


Whitney Lake Land Classification

Current Land Classifications	Proposed New Land Classifications
Operations and Maintenance	Project Operations
Recreational Areas	High Density Recreation
Special Use Areas - Natural Areas - Group Use Areas	Environmentally Sensitive Areas
Aesthetic and Multiple Use Recreation	Multiple Resource Management -Low Density Recreation -Wildlife Management -Vegetation Management -Future/Inactive Recreation
Wildlife Areas	Water Surface



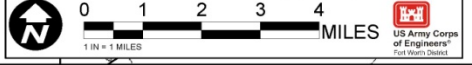
WHITE LAKE LAND CLASSIFICATION - 1972 MASTER PLAN



PUBLIC USE AREAS	
1 RIVERSIDE PARK	11 CHISHOLM TRAIL PARK
2 LOFERS BEND PARK	12 HAM CREEK PARK (NATURAL AREA)
3 LAKE WHITNEY STATE PARK	13 KIMBALL BEND PARK
4 MCCOWN VALLEY PARK	14 PLOWMAN CREEK PARK
5 JUNIPER COVE PARK	15 MORGAN LAKESIDE PARK
6 CEDAR CREEK PARK	16 STEELE CREEK PARK
7 OLD FORT PARK	17 CEDRON CREEK PARK
8 STEINER VALLEY NATURAL AREA	18 WALLING BEND PARK
9 ADAIR SPRING NATURAL AREA	19 SOLDIERS BLUFF PARK
10 NOLAN RIVER PARK	

LEGEND	
[Black outline] PROJECT BOUNDARY	[Yellow box] SPECIAL USE AREAS
[Yellow box] O & M AREA	[Light yellow box] GROUP USE AREAS
[Green box] WILDLIFE AREAS	[Pink box] NATURAL AREAS
[Light green box] PARK (OTHER)	
[Red box] PARK (CORPS)	
[Blue box] AESTHETICS / MULTIPLE USE RECREATION	
WATER SURFACE CLASSIFICATIONS	
[Light blue box] RESTRICTED AREA	
[Light blue box with diagonal lines] LOW SPEED BOATING AREA	
[Light blue box with horizontal lines] TIMBERED AREA	

ORIGINAL MASTER PLAN COMPLETION: 1972
 ENLARGEMENT COMPLETION: 1975
 SHORELINE MILES: 225
 PROPERTY BOUNDARY MILES: 281
 TOTAL LAKE STORAGE: 1,999,500 AC/FT
 WATER SUPPLY STORAGE: 50,000 AC/FT
 TOP OF DAM ELEVATION: 584'
 FLOWAGE EASEMENT ELEVATION: 573'
 SPILLWAY ELEVATION: 533'
 CONSERVATION POOL ELEVATION: 533'
 CONSERVATION POOL ACRES: 23,560
 LAND ACRES ABOVE CONSERVATION POOL: 20,543



THIS MAP IS FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY.
 The project boundary and land classifications are currently in the review process.



Land Classification	Definition
Project Operations	Those lands required for the dam, operations center, office, maintenance compound and other areas that are used solely for project operations
High Density Recreation	Land developed for intensive recreational activities by the visiting public, including developed recreation areas and areas for marinas and related concessions, and resorts
Multiple Resource Management	Recreation –Low Density: Activities such as hiking, primitive camping, wildlife observation, and hunting
	Wildlife Management General: Fish and wildlife management activities
	Vegetative Management: Management activities for the protection and development of a specific vegetative cover
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	Areas where scientific, ecological, cultural or aesthetic features have been identified. These areas must be considered by management to ensure they are not adversely impacted
Easement Lands	All land for which USACE holds an easement interest but not fee title. Planned use and management of easement lands will be in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of the easement estate acquired for the project



Water Surface Classification

Definition

Restricted

Water areas restricted for project operations, safety, and security purposes

Designated No-Wake

To protect environmentally sensitive shoreline areas, recreational water access areas from disturbance, and for public safety

Fish and Wildlife Sanctuary

Annual or seasonal restrictions on areas to protect fish and wildlife species during periods of migration, resting, feeding, nesting, and/or spawning

Open Recreation

Those waters available for year round or seasonal water-based recreational use



Land Classifications

Project Operations - This category includes those lands required for the dam, spillway, powerhouse, switchyard, levees, dikes, offices, maintenance facilities, and other areas that are used solely for the operation of the project



Land Classifications

High Density Recreation - Lands developed for intensive recreational activities for the visiting public including day use areas and/or campgrounds. These could include areas for concessions (marinas, comprehensive resorts, etc)



Land Classifications

Environmentally Sensitive Areas - Areas where scientific, ecological, cultural or aesthetic features have been identified. Designation of these lands is not limited to just lands that are otherwise protected by laws such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act or applicable State statutes. These areas must be considered by management to ensure they are not adversely impacted

Examples may include mature bottomland forests, river and stream corridors, scenic bluffs, and native prairie.



Land Classifications

Low Density Recreation - Lands with minimal development or infrastructure that support passive public recreational use (e.g. primitive camping, fishing, hunting, trails, wildlife viewing, etc.)



Land Classifications

Wildlife Management - Lands designated for stewardship of fish and wildlife resources



Land Classifications

Vegetative Management - Lands designated for stewardship of forest, prairie, and other native vegetative cover



Water Classifications

- Water Surface- Restricted
- Water Surface-Designated No Wake
- Water Surface-Fish and Wildlife Sanctuary
- Water Surface- Open Recreation



Utility Corridors

- Linear strips of Federal land used for consolidation of multiple utility lines
- Establish only where no viable alternative to crossing Federal land exists
- Main purpose is to reduce negative environmental impacts
- Generally follow existing roads or utility lines



Examples of Resource Objectives

- **Recreation Objective:**
 - ▶ Expand existing trails and create new trails for a variety of users
 - ▶ Extend key boat ramps to accommodate low lake levels

- **Natural Resource Objective:**
 - ▶ Restore degraded prairie sites to support a diversity of native grasses and forbs
 - ▶ Implement a zebra mussel control program

- **General Objective:**
 - ▶ Reduce encroachments and trespass through improved boundary marking and surveillance



How Can I Participate?

- Attend Meetings
- Visit our website at: (www.swf.usace.army.mil)
- Send us an e-mail: (whitneylakemp@usace.army.mil)
- Visit with our lake staff at the three designated stations outside the auditorium
- Tell your friends
- Fill out a comment card now or take it home and send later (30 days)



Master Plan Next Steps

- Typical lake master plan update will take 12 to 18 months to finalize. Whitney Lake Master Plan update is in the early stage of development
- First 30 day public comment – 15 July thru 15 August
- Draft MP document: 6 - 8 months (December 2015)
- Draft MP / EA public meeting in Spring of 2016, followed by another 30 day Public/Agency comment period
- Final document: 4 - 6 months (Summer 2016)



The End

Please feel free to visit with staff members, view the maps, ask questions and help us produce an excellent Master Plan



BUILDING STRONG®