APPENDIX B - NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) DOCUMENTATION

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Environmental Assessment for the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan

Lampasas River
Brazos River Basin

Bell County, Texas

May 2021

US Army Corps of Engineers ®
Fort Worth District

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE
2021 STILLHOUSE HOLLOW LAKE MASTER PLAN
BRAZOS RIVER BASIN
BELL COUNTY, TX

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and implementing regulations in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500 – 1508, including guidelines in 33 CFR Part 230, the Fort Worth District and Regional Planning and Environmental Center (RPEC) of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have assessed the potential environmental impacts of the final 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan (MP) revision.

Engineering Regulation (ER) 1130-2-550 Change 07, dated January 2013 and Engineering Pamphlet (EP) 1130-2-550 Change 05, dated 30 January 2013, require Master Plans for most USACE water resources development projects having a federally owned land base. The revision of the 1975 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan was conducted pursuant to this ER and EP, and is necessary to bring it up to date to reflect current ecological, socio-demographic, and outdoor recreation trends that are affecting the lake, as well as those anticipated to occur within the planning period of 2021 to 2046. The recommended plan is contained in Chapter 8 of the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan dated May 2021.

The revision of the *Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan* (hereafter Plan or Master Plan) is a framework built collaboratively to serve as a guide toward appropriate stewardship of USACE administered resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake over the next 25 years.

In addition to a "no action" plan, one alternative that fully meets the project purpose was evaluated (recommended plan). Section 2.0 of the Master Plan EA discusses alternative formulation and selection. The recommended plan includes coordination with the public, updates to comply with the USACE regulations and guidance, and reflects changes in land management and land uses that have occurred since 1975. Land classifications were refined to meet authorized project purposes and current resource objectives that address a mix of natural resources and recreation management objectives that are compatible with regional goals, recognize outdoor recreation trends, and are responsive to public comments.

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary of potential effects of the proposed action are listed in Table 1:

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan

Resource	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Aesthetics	☐	☐	☒
Air quality	☐	☐	☒
Aquatic resources/wetlands	☐	☐	☒
Invasive species	☐	☐	☒
Fish and wildlife habitat	☒	☐	☐
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	☒	☐	☐
Historic properties	☐	☐	☒
Other cultural resources	☒	☐	☐
Floodplains	☐	☐	☒
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	☐	☐	☒
Hydrology	☐	☐	☒
Land use	☐	☐	☒
Socioeconomics	☐	☐	☒
Environmental justice	☐	☐	☒
Soils	☐	☐	☒
Water quality	☒	☐	☐
Climate change	☐	☐	☒

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. The recommended plan does not entail ground-disturbing activities. Future ground-disturbing activities on USACE property would be subject to all necessary environmental evaluations and compliance regulations.

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan.

Public review of the final Master Plan, Environmental Assessment, and FONSI was completed on March 26, 2021. All comments submitted during the public review period have been addressed, as appropriate, in the final Master Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the Corps has determined that the final Master Plan will have no effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Corps has determined the final Master Plan would have no effect on historic properties.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed.

All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives. Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State, and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the final 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan will not cause significant adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment, therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date

Kenneth N. Reed, PMP
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ORGANIZATION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluates the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan revision. This EA will facilitate the decision process regarding the Proposed Action and alternatives.

SECTION 1	*INTRODUCTION* of the Proposed Action summarizes the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action, provides relevant background information, and describes the scope of the EA.
SECTION 2	*PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES* examines alternatives for implementing the Proposed Action and describes the recommended alternative.
SECTION 3	*AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT* describes the existing environmental and socioeconomic setting.
	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES identify the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects of implementing the Proposed Action and alternatives.
SECTION 4	*CUMULATIVE IMPACTS* describe the impact on the environment that may result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions.
SECTION 5	*COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS* provides a listing of environmental protection statutes and other environmental requirements.
SECTION 6	*IRRETRIEVABLE AND IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES* identifies any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved in the Proposed Action should it be implemented.
SECTION 7	*PUBLIC AND AGENCY COORDINATION* provides a listing of individuals and agencies consulted during preparation of the EA.
SECTION 8	*REFERENCES* provide bibliographical information for cited sources.
SECTION 9	*ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS*
SECTION 10	*LIST OF PREPARERS* identifies persons who prepared the document and their areas of expertise.
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Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan
Bell County, TX

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Master Plan (Master Plan or Plan) is the strategic land use management document that guides the comprehensive management and development actions related to all project recreational, natural, and cultural resources throughout the life of the water resource project. The Master Plan guides the execution of efficient and cost-effective management, development, and use of project lands. The Master Plan is a vital tool for the responsible stewardship and sustainability of project resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

Stillhouse Hollow Lake and Dam are located at the northern extent of the Edwards' Plateau, approximately five miles southwest of Belton, Texas in Bell County. The dam was constructed on the Lampasas River, a tributary of the Little River which is a tributary to the Brazos River. The drainage area above the dam is 1,318 square miles.

The dam and associated infrastructure, as well as all the project lands which were acquired for the Stillhouse Hollow Lake project, are federally owned and are managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Congressional authority for the construction of Stillhouse Hollow Lake and programs are found in Section 1.2 of the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Master Plan. The entire 2021 Master Plan and Appendices are incorporated herein by reference.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to ensure that the conservation and sustainability of the land, water, and recreational resources on Stillhouse Hollow Lake comply with applicable environmental laws and regulations and to maintain quality lands for future public use. The 2021 Master Plan is intended to serve as a comprehensive land and recreation management plan with an effective life of approximately 25 years.

The need for the Proposed Action is to bring the 1975 Master Plan up-to-date and to reflect ecological, socio-political, and socio-demographic changes that are currently impacting Stillhouse Hollow Lake, as well as those changes anticipated to occur through 2046. Changes in outdoor recreation trends, regional land use, population, current legislative requirements and USACE management policy have indicated the need to revise the plan. Additionally, increasing fragmentation of wildlife habitat, national policies related to climate change and growing demand for recreational access and protection of natural resources are all factors affecting Stillhouse Hollow Lake and the surrounding region in general. In response to these continually evolving trends, the USACE determined that a full revision of the 1975 plan would be required.

The following factors may influence reevaluation of management practices and land uses:

- Changes in national policies or public law mandates
- Operations and maintenance budget allocations
- Recreation area closures
- Facility and infrastructure improvements
- Cooperative agreements with stakeholder agencies (such as Texas Parks and Wildlife Department [TPWD]) to operate and maintain public lands
- Outdoor recreation trends identified in the Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan (TORP)
- Ecoregion priorities identified in the Texas Conservation Action Plan (TCAP)
- Evolving public concerns

As part of the master planning process, the project delivery team evaluated public comments and current land uses, determined any necessary changes to land classifications, and formulated proposed alternatives. As a result of public coordination and a public information meeting, alternatives were developed, and this EA was initiated.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

This EA was prepared to evaluate existing conditions and potential impacts of proposed alternatives associated with implementation of the 2021 Master Plan. The alternative considerations were formulated with special attention given to revised land classifications, new resource management objectives, and a conceptual resource plan for each land classification category. This EA was prepared pursuant to NEPA, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1500–1508), and the USACE implementing regulations, Policy and Procedures for Implementing NEPA, ER 200-2-2.

SECTION 2: PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The project need is to revise the 1975 Master Plan so that it is compliant with current USACE regulations and guidance, incorporates public needs, and recognizes surrounding land use and recreational trends. As part of this process, which includes public outreach and comment, two alternatives were developed for evaluation, including a No Action Alternative. The alternatives were developed using land classifications that indicate the primary use for which project lands would be managed. USACE regulations specify five possible categories of land classification: Project Operations (PO), High Density Recreation (HDR), Mitigation, Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA), and Multiple Resource Managed Lands (MRML). The MRML classification is divided into four subcategories: Low Density Recreation (MRML-LDR), Wildlife Management (MRML-WM), Vegetative Management (MRML-VM), and Future/Inactive Recreation (MRML-IFR) Areas.

The Proposed Action evaluated in this EA is compared to the No Action Alternative. The USACE guidance recommends the establishment of resource goals and objectives for purposes of development, conservation, and management of natural, cultural, and man-made resources for a project. Goals describe the desired end state of overall management efforts, whereas objectives are concise statements describing measurable and attainable management activities that support the stated goals. Goals and objectives are guidelines for obtaining maximum public benefits while minimizing adverse impacts on the environment and are developed in accordance with 1) authorized project purposes, 2) applicable laws and regulations, 3) resource capabilities and suitability, 4) regional needs, 5) other governmental plans and programs, and 6) expressed public desires.

In the context of the 2021 Master Plan, goals express the overall desired end state of the Master Plan, whereas resource objectives are specific task-oriented actions necessary to achieve the Master Plan goals. The objectives in the 2021 Master Plan are intended to provide project benefits, meet public needs, and foster environmental sustainability of Belton Lake to the greatest extent possible. The goals for the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan are:

- Goal A: Provide the best management practices (BMPs) to respond to regional needs, resource capabilities and capacities, and expressed public interests consistent with authorized project purposes.
- Goal B: Protect and manage project natural and cultural resources through sustainable environmental stewardship programs.
- Goal C: Provide public outdoor recreation opportunities that support project purposes and public interests while sustaining project natural resources.
- Goal D: Recognize the unique qualities, characteristics, and potentials of the project.
- Goal E: Provide consistency and compatibility with natural objectives and other state and regional goals and programs.

A detailed discussion of these goals can be found in Chapter 3 of the 2021 Master Plan. Specific resource objectives to accomplish these goals can be found in Chapter 3.3 of the 2021 Master Plan.

In addition to the above goals, USACE management activities are also guided by USACE-wide Environmental Operating Principles as follows:

- Strive to achieve environmental sustainability. An environment maintained in a healthy, diverse and sustainable condition is necessary to support life.
- Recognize the interdependence of life and the physical environment. Proactively consider environmental consequences of USACE programs and act accordingly in all appropriate circumstances.
- Seek balance and synergy among human development activities and natural systems by designing economic and environmental solutions that support and reinforce one another.
- Continue to accept corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities and decisions under our control that impact human health and welfare and the continued viability of natural systems.
- Seek ways and means to assess and mitigate cumulative impacts on the environment; bring systems approaches to the full life cycle of our processes and work.
- Build and share an integrated scientific, economic, and social knowledge base that supports a greater understanding of the environment and impacts of our work.
- Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in USACE activities; listen to them actively and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment.

The Proposed Action would meet regional goals associated with good stewardship of land and water resources, would meet regional recreation goals, would address identified recreational trends, and would allow for continued use and development of project lands without violating national policies or public laws.

2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The No Action Alternative serves as a basis for comparison to the anticipated effects of the other action alternatives, and its inclusion in this EA is required by NEPA and CEQ regulations (40 CFR § 1502.14(d)). Under the No Action Alternative, no new resource analyses or land-use classifications would occur at the project. Instead the USACE would continue to manage Stillhouse Hollow Lake’s natural resources as set forth in the 1975 Master Plan. The 1975 Master Plan would continue to provide the only source of comprehensive management guidelines and philosophy. However, the 1975 Master Plan is out of date and does not reflect the current ecological, socio-political, or socio-demographic conditions of Stillhouse Hollow Lake. The No Action Alternative, while it does not meet the purpose of, or need for, the Proposed Action, serves as a benchmark of existing conditions against which federal actions can be evaluated, and as such, the No Action Alternative is included in this EA, as prescribed by CEQ regulations.

2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, the 2021 Master Plan would be reviewed, coordinated with the public, revised to comply with USACE regulations and guidance, and to reflect changes in the land management and land uses that have occurred over time or are

desired in the near future. Key components include the reclassifications of land and the water surface, adoption of new resource objectives, and preparation of a resource plan that would guide the management of each classification to sustain the lake's natural resources and provide recreational experiences for the next 25 years.

The proposed land classification categories are defined as follows:

- Project Operations (PO): Lands required for the dam, spillway, switchyard, levees, dikes, offices, maintenance facilities, and other areas used solely for the operation of Stillhouse Hollow Lake.
- High Density Recreation (HDR): Lands developed for the intensive recreational activities for the visiting public including day use and campgrounds. These areas could also be for commercial concessions and quasi-public development.
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA): Areas where scientific, ecological, cultural, or aesthetic features have been identified.
- Multiple Resource Management Lands (MRML): Allows for the designation of a predominate use with the understanding that other compatible uses may also occur on these lands.
    - Wildlife Management (WM): Lands designated for stewardship of fish and wildlife resources.
    - Low Density Recreation (LDR)**:** Lands with minimal development or infrastructure that support passive recreation use (primitive camping, fishing, hunting, trails, wildlife, viewing, etc.).
    - Vegetative Management (VM): Lands designated for stewardship of forest, prairie, and other native vegetative cover.
    - Future or Inactive Recreation Areas: Areas with site characteristics compatible with potential future recreational development or recreation areas that are closed. Until there is an opportunity to develop or reopen these areas, they will be managed for multiple resources.
- Water Surface: Allows for surface water zones.
    - Restricted: Water areas restricted for Stillhouse Hollow Lake operations, safety, and security.
    - Designated No-Wake: Water areas to protect environmentally sensitive shoreline areas and recreational water access areas from disturbance and areas to protect public safety.
    - Open Recreation: Water areas available for year-round or seasonal water-based recreational use.

Section 4.2 of the 2021 Master Plan provides details of these classifications. Table 2.1 lists the proposed land and water surface classification changes and acres. Table 2.2 provides the justification for the proposed reclassifications.

Table 2.1 Change from Prior Land Classification to New Land Classification

1975 Land Classifications	Acres	Proposed New Land Classifications	Acres
Project Operations[1]	627	Project Operations	500
Recreation – Intensive Use (Includes 236 acres Allocated Recreation Lands)	1,934	High Density Recreation (HDR)[2]	982
Natural Areas	230	Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)[2]	625
Recreation Low Density	2,416	Multiple Resource Management Lands (MRML) – Low Density Recreation (LDR)	55
Wildlife Management	3,726	Multiple Resource Management Lands (MRML) – Wildlife Management (WM)[2]	6,178
	0	Future/Inactive Recreation[2]	414
Total Fee Land 1975	**8,933**	**Total Fee Land 2021**	**8,754**
Prior (1975) Water Surface Classifications	**Acres**	**2021 Water Surface Classifications**	**Acres**
Water Surface*	6,430	Water Surface: Open Recreation	6,375
		Water Surface: Restricted	23
		Water Surface: Designated No-Wake	75
Total Water Surface 1975	**6,430**	**Total Water Surface 2021**	**6,473**
Total Fee	**15,363**	**Total Fee**	**15,227**
1975 Flowage easement	882	2021 Flowage easement	914
1975 Shoreline Miles	58	2021 Shoreline Miles[3]	71.8

Conservation Pool 622.0 NGVD29

*Acreage differences from the 1975 total to the 2021 totals are due to improvements in measurement technology, siltation and erosion.

[1] Includes 26 acres of Project Operations by Other

[2] These classifications include a portion of the Separable Recreation Lands as follows: HDR, 65 acres; WMA, 13 acres; ESA, 93 acres; and Future Recreation, 65 acres.

[3] 1975 Master Plan did not include a good portion of the Lampasas River on USACE lands.

Table 2.2 Justification for the Proposed Reclassification

Proposal	Description	Justification
Project Operations (PO)	PO acres were reduced from 627 acres to 500 acres as a result of the following reclassifications:	The Project Operations land classification was expanded to take in the spillway, staging

	• ESA: -189 acres • HDR: +16 acres • LDR: +39 acres • Project Operations by Others: +26 • Disposed: -15 acres • GIS Correction: -4 acres	area, and operations by other entities associated with the water supply mission. The conversion of these lands will have no effect on current or projected public use.
High Density Recreation (HDR)	HDR acres were reduced from 1,934 acres to 982 acres as a result of the following reclassifications: • PO: -31 aces • ESA: -252 acres • LDR: -29 acres • WM: -237 acres • FIR: -398 acres • Disposed: -1 acres • GIS Correction: -4 acres	Decreases in prior Recreation Intensive Use lands were the result of evaluating historic land uses in these areas and reclassifying acres to more appropriately reflect current needs and uses, especially ESA's to protect golden cheeked warbler habitat. The conversion of these lands will have no effect on current or projected public use.
Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)	The classification of 625 acres as ESA resulted from reclassifying acres from the following: • PO: +189 acres • HRD: +252 acres • LDR: +49 acres • WM: +135 acres	These classification changes were necessary to recognize those areas at Stillhouse Hollow Lake having the highest ecological value, including areas of high value for protection of important habitat for the endangered GCWA as designated by the USFWS, and to protect unique views and cultural and archeological sites. The conversion of lands will have little to no effect on current or projected public use. Lands classified as ESA are given the highest order of protection among possible land classifications.
MRML – Low Density Recreation (LDR)	LDR acres were reduced from 2,416 acres to 55 acres as a result of the following reclassifications: • PO: -50 acres • ESA: -49 acres • WM: -2015 acres • FIR: -16 acres • Disposed: -80 acres • HDR: +29 • GIS Change: -180	The land in the former classification of Operations: Recreation Low Density were converted to other land uses due to the areas having historic land use patterns supporting the change. The conversion of these lands will have no effect on current or projected public use.

MRML – Wildlife Management (WM)	WM acres were increased from 3,726 acres to 6,178 acres as a result of the following reclassifications: • HDR: +237 acres • ESA: -135 acres • LDR: +2,015 acres • Formally Natural Areas: +230 acres • Property not calculated in the 1975 plan: +30 acres • GIS Change: +75	Lands were converted from previous land classifications of Project Operations, Operation: Low Density Recreation, and Natural Areas to Wildlife Management to more appropriately align with historic and current land use patterns. Additionally, some lands were converted to ESA to protect important cultural and habitat areas. The conversion of these lands will have no effect on current or projected public use.
MRML – Future or Inactive Recreation (FIR)	The classification of 414 acres as FUT resulted from reclassifying acres in the prior classifications of Operations: • HDR: 398 acres • LDR: 16 acres	These classification changes were necessary to recognize areas at Stillhouse Hollow Lake having potential for future recreation.
Water Surface	The classification of 6,473 acres of water surface of the lake at the conservation pool elevation is as follows: • 23 acres of Restricted water surface include the water surface in front of Stillhouse Hollow Dam, water intakes, and designated swimming areas in the parks around Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Buoys mark the line in front of the dam. Keep-out buoys and floating barrier pipes mark the designated swimming areas in each park. • 75 acres of Designated No-Wake areas are in place near the boat ramps at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. • There are 6,375 acres of Open Recreation water surface at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.	The previous Master Plan for Stillhouse Hollow Lake did not specify different classifications on the water surface, though these classifications were recognized in practice. This Master Plan revision recognizes and specifies these uses. The classification of water surfaces will have no effect on current or projected public use

The land classification changes described in this table are the result of changes to several individual parcels of land ranging from a few acres to over 100 acres. Acreages were measured using GIS technology. The acreage numbers provided are approximate.

2.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Other alternatives to the Proposed Action were initially considered as part of the scoping process for this EA. However, none met the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action or the current USACE regulations and guidance. Furthermore, no other alternatives addressed public concerns. Therefore, no other alternatives are being carried forward for analysis in this EA.

SECTION 3: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND CONSEQUENCES

This section of the EA describes the natural and human environments that exist at the project and the potential impacts of the No Action Alternative (Alternative 1) and Proposed Action (Alternative 2), outlined in Section 2.0 of this document. Only those issues that have the potential to be affected by any of the alternatives are described, per CEQ guidance (40 CFR § 1501.7 [3]). Some topics are limited in scope due to the lack of direct effect from the Proposed Action on the resource or because that resource is not located within the project area. For example, no body of water in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake watershed is designated as a federally designated Wild or Scenic River, so this resource will not be discussed.

Impacts (consequence or effect) can be either beneficial or adverse and can be either directly related to the action or indirectly caused by the action. Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place (40 CFR § 1508.8 [a]). Indirect effects are caused by the action and are later in time or further removed in distance but are still reasonably foreseeable (40 CFR § 1508.8 [b]). As discussed in this section, the alternatives may create temporary (less than one year), short-term (up to three years), long-term (three to ten years following the master plan revision), or permanent effects.

Whether an impact is significant depends on the context in which the impact occurs and the intensity of the impact (40 CFR § 1508.27). The context refers to the setting in which the impact occurs and may include society as a whole, the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Impacts on each resource can vary in degree or magnitude from a slightly noticeable change to a total change in the environment. For the purpose of this analysis, the intensity of impacts would be classified as negligible, minor, moderate, or major. The intensity thresholds are defined as follows:

- Negligible: A resource would not be affected, or the effects would be at or below the level of detection, and changes would not be of any measurable or perceptible consequence.
- Minor: Effects on a resource would be detectable, although the effects would be localized, small, and of little consequence to the sustainability of the resource. Mitigation measures, if needed to offset adverse effects, would be simple and achievable.
- Moderate: Effects on a resource would be readily detectable, long-term, localized, and measurable. Mitigation measures, if needed to offset adverse effects, would be extensive and likely achievable.
- Major: Effects on a resource would be obvious and long-term and would have substantial consequences on a regional scale. Mitigation measures to offset the adverse effects would be required and extensive, and success of the mitigation measures would not be guaranteed.

3.1 LAND USE

Construction of the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Dam began in 1962 and was completed in 1968. The total project area at Stillhouse Hollow Lake encompasses 15,227 acres in fee owned land and water, in addition to 914 acres of flowage easement lands. When the pool elevation is at the normal or conservation pool elevation of 622.0 mean sea level

([msl] NGVD29), the lake has a surface area of approximately 6,473 acres and a shoreline of about 71.8 miles.

The USACE lands above elevation 622.0 msl associated with Stillhouse Hollow Lake are listed in the 1975 Master Plan as follows:

- 627 acres of land managed as operations and maintenance;
- 1,934 acres of land managed as intensive use public recreational areas;
- 2,416 acres managed for low density recreation;
- 3,956 acres of land managed as wildlife management and natural areas;

The USACE operates and manages numerous areas designated as High Density Recreation. In addition to the USACE-operated parks, the USACE leases three areas to non-Federal partners referred to as grantees. Each grantee is responsible for the operation and maintenance of their leased area. The USACE does not provide direct maintenance within any of the leased locations, but it may occasionally lend support where appropriate. The USACE reviews requests and ensures compliance with applicable laws and regulations for proposed activities in all leased and USACE-operated High Density Recreation areas. These parks are Overlook Park, Stillhouse Park, Dana Peak Park, Cedar Gap Park, Union Grove Park, Bluff Park, and Chalk Ridge Environmental Learning Center.

Section 5.3 of the 2021 Master Plan further describes recreational areas at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.1.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The No Action Alternative for Stillhouse Hollow Lake is defined as the USACE taking no action, which means the operation and maintenance of USACE lands at Stillhouse Hollow Lake would continue as outlined in the existing 1975 Master Plan. No new resources analysis, resources management objectives, or land-use classifications would occur. Although this alternative does not result in a Master Plan that meets current regulations and guidance, there would be no direct or indirect impacts on land uses surrounding Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.1.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

The objectives for revising the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan were to describe current and foreseeable land uses while considering expressed public opinion and USACE policies that have evolved to meet day-to-day operational needs.

The USACE intends to continue to operate the campgrounds, day use areas, and access points, by maintaining and improving existing facilities with no plans for expansion. Emphasis will be placed on improvements such as upgrading aging water and electrical infrastructure, improving service facilities such as restrooms and showers, improving energy efficiency, and sustainability of facilities.

The recommended changes for the Proposed Action were developed to help fulfill the regional goals associated with good stewardship of natural resources that would allow for the continued use and development of project lands. For example, 625 acres would be reclassified as ESA compared to the No Action Alternative which contains 0 acres (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2). The ESA reclassifications would afford protection to and potentially

benefit wildlife, wildlife habitats, sensitive species habitat, and cultural resources. The protection and appropriate management of these areas aligns with Resource Goals B, C, D, and E as described in Section 3.2 of the revised Master Plan, as well as numerous cultural and natural resource objectives listed in Tables 3.3 and 3.5 of the revised Master Plan. The reduction of HDR by 952 acres and MRM-LDR by 2,361 acres occur in areas of parks with little to no recreational development. No decrease in recreational opportunities are expected as low impact activities like fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing can still occur in these land classes. Maintaining the HDR and MRML-LDR areas allows for continued outdoor recreation opportunities at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. New resource goals A, C, and E and several recreational objectives are supported by these reclassifications as described in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, and Table 3.1 of the revised Master Plan. The new resources objectives will provide a level of consistency in beneficial management practices that would not occur with the No Action Alternative. The designation of two utility corridors, as described in Section 6.10 of the 2021 Master Plan, will serve to avoid and minimize impacts of fragmentation on the proposed land uses. Utility corridors provide areas for existing and future infrastructure while minimizing the extent of reoccurring maintenance activities and additional habitat fragmentation.

No changes in land use are expected, as recreation and project maintenance areas and operation areas will largely remain the same. As such, no direct or indirect impacts are anticipated as a result of implementing the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan.

3.2 WATER RESOURCES

The 45,573 square mile Brazos Basin, which feeds Stillhouse Hollow Lake, is the second largest river basin by area within Texas. The total basin is 840 miles long with an annual flow of 6,074,000 ac-ft per year, most of which is in Texas. The basin's namesake river was named Los Brazos de Dios, "the arms of God," by early Spanish explorers. The Brazos River flows from the confluence of its Salt and Double Mountain forks in Stonewall County to the Gulf of Mexico. It is the state's third longest river and has the largest average annual flow volume of any river in the state. Other streams in the basin include the Salt, Double Mountain, and Clear forks of the Brazos River; Gabriel, Lampasas, Little, Leon, Navasota, Nolan, Paluxy, Sabana, and White rivers; and many creeks such as Big Sandy, Cedar, Millers, Salt, Sweetwater, and Yegua creeks.

The water resources for Stillhouse Hollow Lake can be classified into three categories; surface water, groundwater, and wetlands. The primary water resource in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area is surface water.

3.2.1 SURFACE WATER

Stillhouse Hollow Dam and Lake is located entirely in Bell County, Texas on the Lampasas River, approximately 16 miles upstream of its' confluence with the Leon River. The estimated drainage area above the dam is 1,318 miles. According to a 2017 TPWD fisheries management report, the lake has a mean depth of 37 feet and a maximum depth of 107 feet. The reservoir is classified as oligotrophic based on a chlorophyll concentration of 1.6 milligrams per cubic meter (mg/m^3) and a total phosphorus concentration of 15.7 mg/m^3 (TPWD 2018).

Congressional authority for the construction of the Lampasas Lake, now Stillhouse Hollow Lake, is contained in Public Law 780-399, (83rd Congress, 2nd Session). Water Rights Permit (No. 2109) to impound and appropriate the water was issued by the State of Texas on 24 July 1964. A contract between the USACE and the Brazos River Authority (BRA) executed on 13 April 1962 granted the BRA the right to utilize the storage space below elevation 572.0 for water supply. The storage space between elevations 572.0 and 622.0 (top of conservation storage) is contracted for future use.

A 2015 Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) volumetric survey indicates that Stillhouse Hollow Lake has a total reservoir capacity of 229,881 acre-feet and a surface area of 6,429 acres at conservation pool elevation (622 feet above msl, NGVD29).

There are currently three permanent pumping stations on the reservoir. The first is operated by BRA and transfers untreated water to Lake Georgetown to be used for municipal water supply. The other two are operated by the town of Kempner and Central Texas Water Supply, both of which pull water from the lake, treat it, and deliver it for use as municipal water. There is a proposed waterline between Belton Lake and Stillhouse Hollow Lake (Bellhouse Project) to pump untreated water to Stillhouse Hollow, thereby increasing the water transfer capabilities of Stillhouse Hollow. The City of Killeen has installed a waterline from Stillhouse Hollow Lake and is currently constructing the intake structure at the lake. A reproducing zebra mussel population was documented on 25 July 2016 by TPWD fisheries staff. The population is expanding, and the reservoir is considered infested. The presence of zebra mussels in Stillhouse Hollow and Belton Reservoirs will certainly play a role in future water transfer projects.

3.2.2 GROUNDWATER

The two primary sources of groundwater in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area are the Edwards Balcones Fault Zone (BFZ) Aquifer and the Trinity Aquifer (TWDB, 2015). The Edwards BFZ forms a narrow belt extending through most of the southwestern part of the state of Texas, through 13 counties from a groundwater divide in Kinney County through the San Antonio area, northwestward to the Leon River in Bell County. Water in the aquifer occurs in fractures, honeycomb zones, and solution channels in the Edwards and associated limestone formations of Cretaceous age. Water quality for the Edwards BFZ ranges from fresh to slightly saline as it approaches the west side of the Trinity Group, with total mineral dissolve ranging from 100 to 3,000 milligram per liter. Water from the Edwards BFZ is primarily used for municipal, irrigation, and recreational purposes.

The Trinity Aquifer consists of basal Cretaceous-age Trinity Group formations extending across much of the central and northwest parts of the state of Texas, through 61 counties. From the Red River in North Texas to the Hill Country of Central Texas, the aquifer is comprised of the Antlers, Twin Mountains, Glen Rose, Paluxy, Hosston, Travis Peak, and Hensell formations. In general, groundwater in the Trinity Aquifer is fresh but very hard in the outcrop. The dissolved solids increase from 1,000 - 5,000 milligram per liter, and slightly to moderately saline as the depth of the aquifer increases. Sulfate and chloride concentrations increase in the aquifer as depth increases. The Trinity Aquifer is mostly used for municipalities, irrigation, and livestock and is one of the most used groundwater resources in the state of Texas.

3.2.3 WETLANDS

Waters of the United States are defined within the Clean Water Act (CWA), and jurisdiction is addressed by the USACE and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Wetlands are a subset of the waters of the United States that may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the CWA (40 CFR 230.3). Wetlands are those areas inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

Wetlands in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area are most common on floodplains along rivers and streams (riparian wetland), along the margin of the lake and in other low-lying areas where groundwater intercepts the soil (springs). Wetlands generally occur as small emergent wetland associated with ephemeral streams or as large forested wetland complexes adjacent to perennial channels.

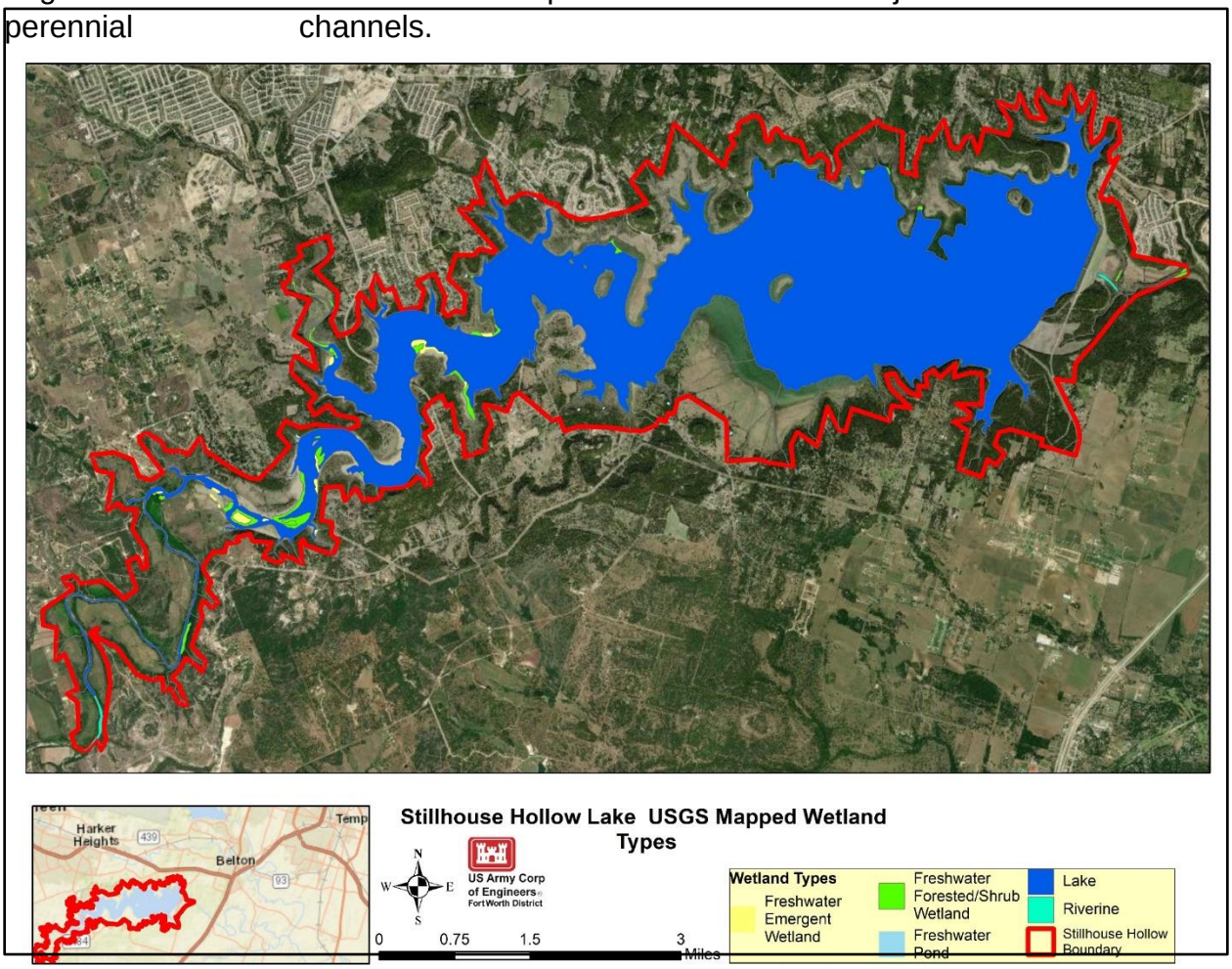

Figure 3.1. NWI mapped wetlands at Stillhouse Hollow Lake

Table 3.1 lists the acreages of various types of wetlands present at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Wetland classifications, as depicted in Figure 3.1, are derived from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) (USFWS, 2020).

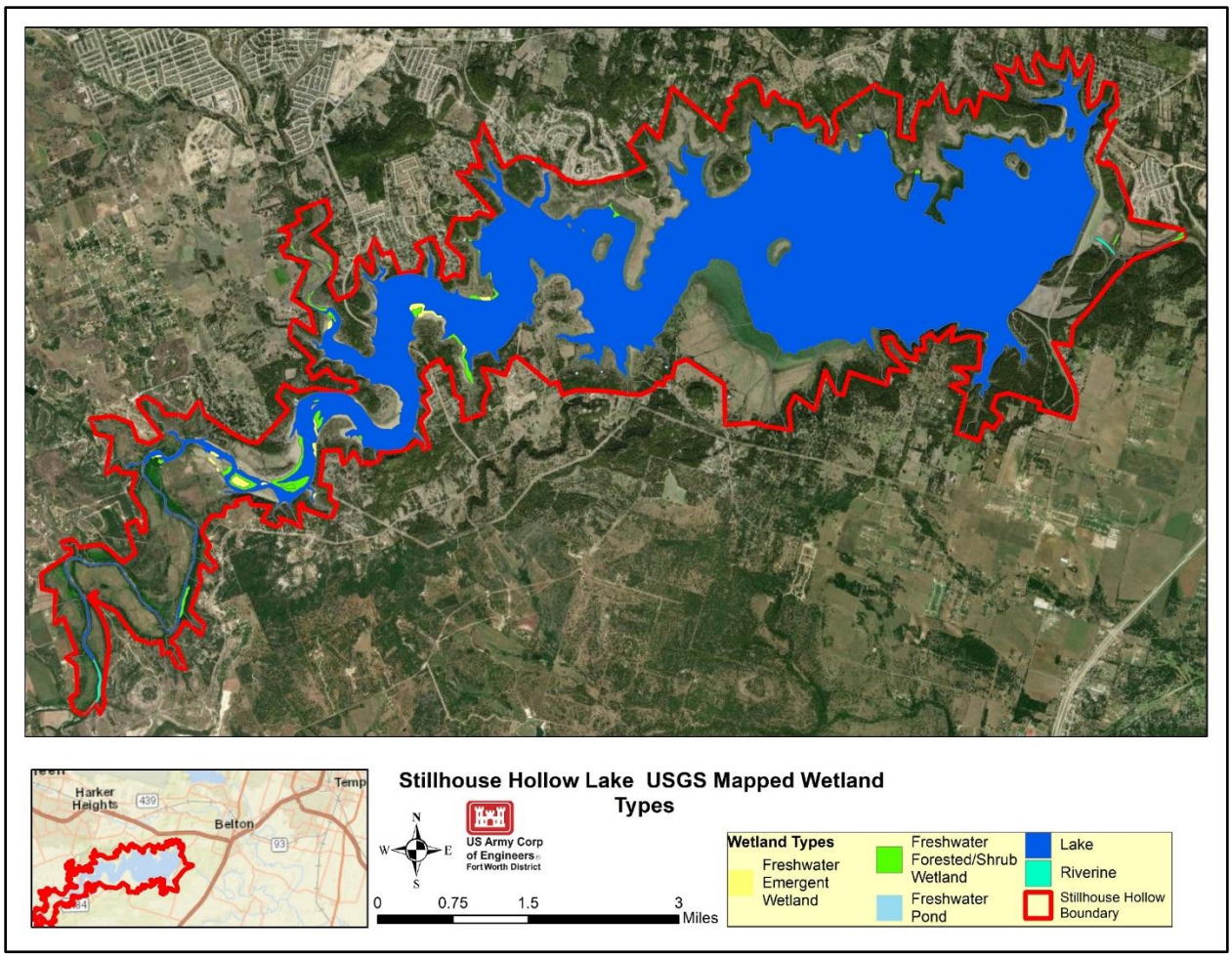

Figure 3.1. NWI mapped wetlands at Stillhouse Hollow Lake

Table 3-1. Wetland Resources

Wetland Types	Total Acres
Lake	6,555.7
Riverine	802.4
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	122.8
Freshwater Emergent Wetland	31.8
Freshwater Pond	3.5
Total Inventoried	7516.2

Note: Acreages from the USFWS website do not match exactly with the USACE digitized acreages.

3.2.4 WATER QUALITY

Stillhouse Hollow Lake is identified as Segment ID 1216 within the Brazos River Basin. According to the 2020 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Section 305(b) and 303(d), no water quality parameters measured were considered impaired at Stillhouse Hollow Lake (TCEQ 2020). All parameters measured such as metals in water, organics in water, sediment Toxicity sets, and macrobenthos communities, show Stillhouse Hollow Lake as fully supported (FS) or no concern (NC) for aquatic life, contact recreation, public water supply and general uses. Depressed dissolved oxygen levels were noted for the screening level of analysis in 7 out of 89 samples collected between 01 December 2011 and 30 November 2018 for Aquatic Life Use, but those samples exceeded minimum level requirements (TCEQ 2020).

Upstream of Stillhouse Hollow Lake, Lampasas River (Segment ID 1217) all parameters measured, such as dissolved Oxygen levels, metals in water, organics in water, sediment Toxicity sets, and macrobenthos communities, show the river as fully supported (FS) or no concern (NC) for aquatic life, contact recreation, public water supply and general uses (TCEQ 2020).

3.2.5 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

Operation and maintenance of USACE lands and waters at Stillhouse Hollow Lake would continue as outlined in the existing 1975 Master Plan. No new resources analysis, resources management objectives, or land-use classifications would occur. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on the hydrology, groundwater or wetlands in and around Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.2.6 ATERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

The reclassifications included in the Proposed Action would allow land management and land uses to be compatible with the goals of good stewardship of water resources. The classification of 625 acres as ESA (compared to the No Action Alternative which allocates no acres) directly supports resource goals B, D, and E and several natural resource management objectives including minimizing activities that disturb the aesthetic value and protect natural habitat, all of which are further described in Chapter 3 of the revised Master Plan. The net reduction in HDR land classification from 1,934 acres to 982 acres will limit future intensive development, thus reducing the potential for erosion and sedimentation. Natural vegetation communities act as buffers to trap runoff, thus potentially reducing sedimentation. Furthermore, the utility corridors were designated to avoid and minimize impacts on water resources by future actions by requiring future actions to bore under streams and wetlands where feasible. The new resources objectives will provide a level of consistency in beneficial management practices that would not occur with the No Action Alternative. Land reclassifications and new resource objectives proposed as part of the Proposed Action would have moderate long-term beneficial impacts on water quality. No direct or indirect impacts to groundwater or wetlands are anticipated with implementation of the 2021 Master Plan.

3.3 CLIMATE

Stillhouse Hollow Lake lies near the intersection of the Cross Timbers and Texas Blackland ecoregions, along the northern extent of the Edward's Plateau. The climate is characterized by short, mild winters and long hot summers. In spring, summer, and fall, prevailing winds are from the south and southwest. The average annual temperature in nearby Belton, TX is 66.3 degrees Fahrenheit (F). The maximum recorded temperature at Belton, TX was 99.1° F. The recorded low was 22° F. The average annual precipitation for Belton, TX is 35.2 inches. May typically has the most precipitation (4.6") and January with the least (1.7"). The area surrounding Stillhouse Hollow Lake has little to no snowfall annually, with an average of 0.1" which usually occurs in January.

Section 2.1.2 of the 2021 Master Plan further describes the regional and local climate.

3.3.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The No Action Alternative does not involve any activities that would contribute to changes in existing conditions. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on climate as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative.

3.3.2 ATERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Revision of the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan would have no direct or indirect impacts on the climate of the study area.

3.4 CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE GASES

The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) looks at potential impacts of climate change globally, nationally, regionally, and by resource (e.g., water resources, ecosystems, human health). Stillhouse Hollow Lake area lies within the Southern Great Plains region of analysis. The Southern Great Plains region has already seen evidence of climate change in the form of rising temperatures that are leading to increased demand for water and energy and impacts on agricultural practices. Over the last few decades, the Southern Great Plains have seen fewer cold days and more hot days, as well as an overall increase in total precipitation. The decrease in the cold days has resulted in an overall increase of the frost-free (growing) season. Within this region, there has been an increase in average temperatures 1.2° Fahrenheit (F) for the period 1986-2016 (USGCRP 2018). In addition to more extreme rainfall, extreme heat events have also been increasing. Most of the increases of heat wave severity in the U.S. are likely due to human activity, with a detectable human influence in recent heat waves in the Southern Great Plains (USGCRP, 2018).

Texas, in general, experiences multiple climate and weather hazards including floods, droughts, severe storms, tornadoes, hurricanes and winter storms. The National Climate Assessment (Shafer et al., 2014) reports that large parts of Texas and Oklahoma are projected to see longer dry spells by mid-century (2041-2070), particularly in the western edges of the states. The projected number of heavy precipitation days is not expected to change dramatically through the remainder of the century.

According to the most recent estimating tools from the USEPA, there are no contributors to GHG within Bell or Coryell Counties.

3.4.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The No Action Alternative does not involve any activities that would contribute to changes in existing conditions. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on climate change or contributions to GHG emissions as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative.

3.4.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, current Stillhouse Hollow Lake project management plans and monitoring programs would not be changed. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on climate change or contributions to GHG emissions as a result of implementing the 2021 Master Plan. If GHG emission issues become significant enough to impact the current operations at Stillhouse Hollow Lake, the 2021 Master Plan and all associated documents would be reviewed and revised as necessary.

3.5 AIR QUALITY

The USEPA established nationwide air quality standards to protect public health and welfare in 1971. The State of Texas has adopted the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as the state's air quality criteria. NAAQS standards specify maximum permissible short- and long-term and concentrations of various air contaminants including primary and secondary standards for six criteria pollutants: Ozone (O_3), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2), Nitrogen Oxide (NO), particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), and Lead (Pb). Based on both Federal and state air quality standards, an area can be classified as either an "attainment," "maintenance," or "non-attainment" area for each pollutant. According to TCEQ current State Implementation Plan (TCEQ 2015), the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area (Bell and Coryell Counties) is an attainment area and does not require a pollutant control strategy. Through the first six months of 2020, Bell County, Texas air quality was rated as "Good" for 143 days out of 182 days, "Moderate" for 38 days, and only 1 day was listed as "Unhealthy" (EPA, 2020). In 2019, only 2 days out of 365 were listed as "Unhealthy".

3.5.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The existing operation and management of Stillhouse Hollow Lake is compliant with the Clean Air Act. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on air quality as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative, since there would be no change to the existing Master Plan.

3.5.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Existing operation and management of Stillhouse Hollow Lake is compliant with the Clean Air Act and would not change with implementation of the 2021 Master Plan. No direct or indirect impacts on air quality would occur as a result of implementing the proposed revisions to the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan. The 2021 Master Plan does not entail ground disturbance activities or associated GHG emissions, as such a General Conformity analysis and determination is not required.

3.6 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY, AND SOILS

3.6.1 TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the lands surrounding Stillhouse Hollow Lake is controlled, for the most part, by the underlying and surface geology and soils. It is defined by rolling prairies and steep breaks. Stillhouse Hollow Lake is in the Balcones Fault Zone, a region of many small faults. Over geological time, the area surrounding this fault zone, has elevated as much as 500 ft. above sea level in the eastern part and as high as 1,200 feet in the western part. Erosion in the area has created an irregular steep sloping terrain. Soils developed from thousands of years of slow erosion by major streams and tributaries cover most of the relatively flat areas of limestone surface, resulting in a rolling topography of hills bisected by steep bluffs where streams are located. Meandering stream beds and floodplains cut into the limestone are filled with relatively flat alluvial deposits in the stream valleys. Further discussion on the topography in the region can be found in Section 2.1.3 of the 2021 Master Plan.

3.6.2 GEOLOGY

The underlying geology of Stillhouse Hollow Lake is that of valleys, buttes, and mesas. It is located in the Mid- Continent Plains and Escarpments physiographic region, and the eastern edge of the Edwards Plateau. The area of Stillhouse Hollow Lake was originally that of rolling prairies with limestone beds. However, the softer limestone was eroded slowly forming narrow long valleys and streams flowing in a southeastward direction leaving the ridges of the harder limestone. The area is characterized by karst topographic features such as sinkholes, caves, and underground springs. The geologic formations of Cretaceous and Quaternary Ages in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area are Glen Rose, Paluxy Sand, Walnut Clay, Comanche Peak Limestone, and Denton Clay formations. Further discussion on the geology in the region can be found in Section 2.1.3 of the 2021 Master Plan.

3.6.3 SOILS

Geology influences the kind of soils that develop in any area. Geologic formation in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake is wholly within the Mesozoic period. All the rock outcrops are of the lower Cretaceous (Comanche) formation and the Cretaceous Gulf formation. Soils in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area are naturally susceptible to soil erosion. The major soil series found in the area are Brackett association, Bosque clay loam, Purves association, and Real-Rock outcrop complex. The soils in general are well drained and moderately permeable, but can vary in depth, parent material, and slope. Hydrologically, these soil groups generally have moderate infiltration water rate. However, in the areas where soils tend to be of clay formation, a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) is recorded which gives the soil a shrink-swell potential.

There are 1,022.3 acres of Prime Farmland soils (11.6%) and 637.6 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance soils (7.2%) found on USACE fee-owned lands at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Prime Farmland soils include Crawford silty clay (0 to 1% and 1 to 3% slopes), Denton silty clay, 0-1% slopes, Krum silty clay (0 to 1% and 1 to 3% slopes), Lewisville silty clay, 1 to 3% slopes, San Saba clay (0 to 2% and to 3% slopes), Venus clay loam (1 to 3% and 3 to 5% slopes). Farmlands of Statewide Importance

include Denton silty clay 1 to 3% slopes and Lewisville-Altoga complex, 2 to 5% slopes. (USDA 2020).

3.6.4 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

No direct or indirect impacts on topography, geology, or soils (including Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance) would occur as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative.

3.6.5 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Topography, geology, and soils were considered during the refining process of land reclassifications for the 2021 Master Plan. Some lands under the prior classification of Recreation Areas were reclassified to the new and similar classification of High Density Recreation, but total acreage was reduced from 1,934 acres to 982 acres. This reduction is solely based on the realization that the amount of acreage originally planned for intensive recreation use per the 1975 Master Plan significantly exceeded the amount necessary to meet public needs and was excessive and not being fully utilized. Areas currently developed as park would continue to operate as parks and no change would occur. However, 2,252 acres of the lands previously designated as Recreation Areas (high and low use) would be reclassified to Wildlife Management, along with 625 acres to ESA, to better reflect historic use patterns and current land management efforts. The conversion of these lands would have no effect on current or projected public use. No direct or indirect impacts on topography, geology, or soils (including Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance) would occur as a result of implementing the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan.

3.7 NATURAL RESOURCES

Operational civil works projects administered by USACE are required, with few exceptions, to prepare an inventory of natural resources. The basic inventory required is referred to within USACE regulations (ER and EP 1130-2-540) as a Level One Inventory. This inventory includes the following: vegetation in accordance with the National Vegetation Classification System through the sub-class level; assessment of the potential presence of special status species including but not limited to Federal and state listed endangered and threatened species, migratory species, and birds of conservation concern listed by the USFWS; land (soils) capability classes in accordance with NRCS soil surveys; and wetlands in accordance with the USFWS Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States, which are previously discussed in Section 3.2.

In addition to the data from the Level One Inventories, a Habitat Assessment was conducted on 24-28 August 2020 at Stillhouse Hollow Lake by USACE staff using TPWD's Wildlife Habitat Appraisal Procedure [(WHAP) TPWD 1995] to assist the preparation of the 2021 Master Plan. A total of 83 points were identified and vegetation data collected. Three major habitat types that were selected and assessed were grasslands, upland forests, and riparian/bottomland hardwood forests. The WHAP assessment report is included as Appendix E of the 2021 Master Plan.

3.7.1 VEGETATION

Stillhouse Hollow Lake is located within the Cross Timber ecological region in central Texas. The region is a transitional area between tall grass prairies and oak savannas. The dominant trees include honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*), winged elm (*Ulmus alata*), salt cedar (*Tamarix*), boxelder (*Acer negundo*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), Ashe juniper (*Juniperus ashei*), and black willow (*Salix nigra*). Predominate herbaceous species include various grasses and forbs. The dominate forbs found on Stillhouse Hollow Lake lands include switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum)*, false nettle (*Boehmerieae ramiflora*), johnsongrass *(Sorghum halepense),* bermuda grass *(Cynodon dactylon)*, sea oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium)*, panic grass (*Panicum spp.*), and eastern baccharis (*Baccharis halimifolia)*.

Additional discussion of vegetation resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake can be found in Section 2.2.1 of the 2021 Master Plan and Appendix E: WHAP Summary Report.

3.7.2 FISHERIES

Stillhouse Hollow Lake provides habitat for an abundance of fish species including popular sport fish species such as largemouth bass *(Micropterus salmoides)*, crappie *(Pomoxis spp.)*, and channel catfish *(Ictalurus punctatus)*. Other sportfish species include a variety of sunfish species including bluegill *(Lepomis macrochirus)* and redear (*Lepomis microlophus*), smallmouth bass *(Micropterus dolomieu)*, spotted bass (*Micropterus* punctulatus), blue catfish (*Ictalurus furcatus*), and flathead catfish (*Pylodictus olivaris*).

3.7.3 WILDLIFE

Stillhouse Hollow Lake provides habitat for an abundance of wildlife species, including game and non-game species, migratory waterfowl, resident and migratory songbirds, wading birds, reptiles, amphibians, and insects. The area offers a mixture of geologic features, riparian forest, grasslands, springs, and river habitats, which support white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), gray foxes (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), fox squirrels (*Sciurus niger*), bobwhite quail (*Colinus* virginianus), owls (Order *Strigiformes*), and over a hundred other species of birds (Class *Aves*).

Additional discussion of fish and wildlife resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake can be found in Section 2.2.3 of the 2021 Master Plan and in the Trust Resources Report in Appendix C of the 2021 Master Plan.

3.7.4 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The No Action Alternative does not involve any activities that would contribute to changes in existing conditions. No direct or indirect impacts on natural resources would be anticipated as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative.

3.7.5 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

The reclassifications, resource management objectives, and resource plan required for the Proposed Action would allow land management and land uses to be compatible with the goals of good stewardship of natural resources. The proposed net

increase of ESA by 625 acres and MMRL-WM by 2,452 acres would cause major long-term beneficial impacts to natural resources within these areas. The ESA classification provides the highest form of protection for natural resources. These proposed changes would protect natural resources from various types of adverse impacts such as habitat fragmentation. Furthermore, the utility corridors were designated to avoid and minimize impacts on current natural resources by future actions by selecting corridors with lesser quality habitats and that would avoid continued fragmentation of habitats. The Proposed Action would be compatible with conservation principles and measures to protect migratory birds as mandated by EO 13186. The Proposed Action is expected to provide moderate, direct, long-term beneficial impacts on the natural resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.8 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The Endangered Species Act was enacted to provide a program for the preservation of endangered and threatened species and to provide protection for the ecosystems upon which these species depend for their survival. All Federal agencies are required to implement protective measures for designated species and to use their authorities to further the purposes of the Endangered Species Act. The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce (marine species) are responsible for the identification of threatened or endangered species and development of any potential recovery plan.

The USFWS is the primary agency responsible for implementing the Endangered Species Act and is responsible for birds and other terrestrial and freshwater species. USFWS responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act include (1) the identification of threatened and endangered species; (2) the identification of critical habitats for listed species; (3) implementation of research on, and recovery efforts for, these species; and (4) consultation with other Federal agencies concerning measures to avoid harm to listed species.

An endangered species is a species officially recognized by the USFWS as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A threatened species is a species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. The USFWS also identifies species that are candidates for listing as a result of identified threats to their continued existence. The Candidate designation includes those species for which USFWS has enough information to support proposals to list as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act; however, proposed rules have not yet been issued because such actions are precluded at present by other listing activity. Proposed species are those candidate species that are found to warrant listing as either threatened or endangered, after completion of a scientific review including biology, ecology, abundance and population trends, and threats. Official listing occurs after considering public comments and any new data that may become available, and publication of a Final Rule in the Federal Register. Species may be considered eligible for listing as endangered or threatened when any of the five following criteria occur: (1) current/imminent destruction, modification, or curtailment of their habitat or range; (2) overuse of the species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) inadequacy

of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (5) other natural or human-induced factors affecting their continued existence. Although not afforded protection by the Endangered Species Act, candidate and proposed species may be protected under other federal or state laws.

There are 5 federally listed species that could be found at Stillhouse Hollow Lake based on information from USFWS' Information for Planning and Consultation website (Consultation Code: 02ETAU00-2020-SLI-0872) (USFWS 2020B). A list of these species is presented in Table 3-2. No Critical Habitat has been designated within or near Stillhouse Hollow Lake. The species identified as Threatened, Endangered or Candidate by TPWD, as well as all federally listed species by the USFWS are included in Section 2.2.4 of the 2021 Master Plan and in Appendix D of the 2021 Master Plan.

Table 3-2. Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Species with Potential to Occur at Stillhouse Hollow Lake

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Occurrence
Whooping Crane	*Grus americana*	Endangered	Rare; migrant
Piping Plover	*Charadrius melodus*	Threatened	Rare; migrant
Red Knot	*Calidris canutus rufa*	Threatened	Rare; migrant
Golden-cheeked Warbler	*Dendroica chrysoparia*	Endangered	Resident
Salado Salamander	*Eurycea chisholmensis*	Threatened	None

Source: USFWS 2020B

Determinations for impacts to the Piping Plover, and Red Knot are only required for wind energy projects, therefore a determination for these species is not warranted.

The Whooping Crane is a large white bird, with males approaching 1.5 m tall. Whooping Cranes are a long-lived species. Current estimates suggest a maximum longevity in the wild of at least 30 years. Whooping cranes currently exist in the wild at three locations and in captivity at 12 sites. There is only one self-sustaining wild population that nests in Wood Buffalo National Park and adjacent areas in Canada, and winters in coastal marshes at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. Habitat for this species consists of marshes, shallow lakes, lagoons, salt flats, grain and stubble fields, and barrier islands (NatureServe 2020A). Whooping Cranes have not been documented as occurring at Stillhouse Hollow Lake, nor are they anticipated to use the area for feeding or resting during their migratory flight to and from Canada each year. While some habitat for this species is present within Stillhouse Hollow Lake Federal Fee Boundary, there have been no known sightings, therefore it would be considered a rare occurrence.

Golden-cheeked Warbler *[GCWA]*) is a small, neo-tropical songbird that live and breed in Texas during the spring and early summer, leaving in July to spend the winter in Mexico and Central America. GCWA breeding habitat consists of woodlands with old-growth and mature regrowth Ashe juniper in a natural mix with oaks (*Quercus* spp.), elms (*Ulmus* spp.), and other hardwoods, in relatively moist areas such as steep canyons, slopes, and adjacent uplands. Of the nearly 360 bird species that breed in Texas, the

GCWA is the only one that nests exclusively in Texas. Habitat destruction is the primary threat to GCWAs (NatureServe 2020B). Pockets of suitable habitat for GCWAs is present within and adjacent to Stillhouse Hollow Lake Federal Fee Boundary. A survey conducted during the 2013 breeding season at Stillhouse Hollow Lake revealed GCWAs at three separate locations, therefore they are considered a common occurrence (Peak, 2013).

The Salado Salamander is entirely aquatic and reaches lengths up to 6cm, with a grayish-brown dorsal color and slight cinnamon tinge (Herps of Texas, 2018). Of the 19 known populations, most appear to consistently produce low numbers of salamanders when surveyed, providing weak evidence of stable populations in the short term. A few populations are located in heavily developed areas and probably lack long term viability. Monitoring at 2 sites since 2015 (Robertson Spring and Salado Springs Complex) show stable to increasing detections that are clearly related to spring flow. As with most spring salamanders in this genus in Texas, a small geographic distribution, rapidly expanding urban development, and long-term ground water depletion are the principle threats to this species (NatureServe 2020C). With the Salado Salamander being a spring obligate, they are not expected to be present within the Stillhouse Hollow Lake fee-boundary area.

3.8.1 TEXAS NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE

The Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD), administered by TPWD, manages and disseminates information on occurrence of rare species, native plant communities, and animal aggregations in Texas to help guide project planning efforts. A request for information was submitted to TPWD for the following USGS quadrangles that encompass Stillhouse Hollow project lands: Nolanville, Salado, Killeen, and Youngsport. USACE received the requested information from TXNDD on 10 December 2020.

Within Stillhouse Hollow Lake project lands, two locations were identified by the TXNDD that contain unique species. There is one record of an American (formally “Western”) hog-nosed skunk (*Conepatus leuconotus*) from a location within the project lands at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. No date was listed for this record. In Texas, they are commonly known as “rooter skunks”, for its habit of rooting and overturning rocks and debris in search of food. Western hog-nosed skunks are one of the largest skunks in the world, growing to lengths of 2.7 feet. The distinguishing feature of the American hog-nosed skunk is it has a single, broad white stripe from the top of the head to the base of the tail, with the tail itself being completely white. Habitat preference is fairly broad, with the exception of wetlands (NatureServe 2020D). Because of this information and lack of recent sightings, the occurrence of this species at Stillhouse Hollow Lake project lands is considered rare.

One specimen of mountain mullet (*Agonostomus monticola*) was recorded on 25 March 2002 below the Stillhouse Hollow Dam. The mountain mullet is a diadromous species (living in both fresh and sea water). Their body is elongated and slightly compressed, with a greyish-brown color on its back with dark outlines on the scales. The sides of adults have silver lateral scales and a white ventral region. Adults can reach lengths of approximately 28 inches. Mountain mullets are found along both the Atlantic and Gulf coasts rom North Carolina to Texas, Mexico, Central America, West Indies, and northern South America. Mountain mullets spawn in the sea, where juveniles are found (sometimes drifting in currents hundreds of miles from shore). Adults and subadults

ascend tropical and subtropical streams, often to their headwaters, where they are found in pools and runs with strong currents and rocky bottoms (NatureServe 2020E). The presence of the Stillhouse Hollow Dam prevents this species from migrating into or through the lake, thus it does not occur in the lake.

3.8.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

While the No Action Alternative does not involve any activities that would contribute to changes in existing conditions, it does fail to recognize current federal and state-listed species. No direct or indirect impacts on natural resources would be anticipated as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative.

3.8.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, the USACE would continue cooperative management plans with the USFWS and TPWD to preserve, enhance, and protect wildlife habitat resources. To further management opportunities and beneficially impact habitat diversity, several land parcels that were previously classified as Recreation Intensive Use and Project Operations were converted to ESAs in order to recognize those areas having the highest ecological value and to ensure they are given the highest order of protection among possible land classifications. Included as Environmentally Sensitive were areas of high-value bottomland hardwood and areas identified by USFWS as high-quality habitat for GCWA. Any future activities that could potentially result in impacts on federally listed species will be coordinated with USFWS through Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Direct and indirect long-term, beneficial impacts on state and federally listed threatened and endangered species would occur as a result of implementing the reclassifications outlined in the 2021 Master Plan. There would be no adverse impacts to Federally listed Threatened and Endangered species as a result of implementing the proposed 2021 Stillhouse Lake Master P, therefore USACE has determined the Proposed Action would have no effect on Federally Threatened and Endangered Species.

3.9 INVASIVE SPECIES

Executive Order (EO) 13751, dated December 5, 2016, which amends EO 13112 (1999), directs federal agencies to expand and coordinate their efforts to prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread, as well as to eradicate and control populations of invasive species. Invasive species are any kind of living organism which, if uncontrolled, causes harm to the environment, economy, or human health. Invasive species generally grow and reproduce quickly and spread aggressively. Non-native, or exotic, species have been introduced, either intentionally or unintentionally, and can out-compete native species for resources or otherwise alter the ecosystem. Native invasive species are those species that spread aggressively due to an alteration in the ecosystem, such as lack of fire or the removal of a predator from the food chain. Table 3.3 lists the currently known invasive species occurring at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

Table 3.3: Stillhouse Hollow Lake Invasive Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Prevalence
Zebra mussel	*Dreissena polymorpha*	Significant/Major

Hydrilla	*Hydrilla verticillata*	Moderate
*Chinaberry	*Melia azedarach*	Major
*Willow baccharis	*Baccharis salicina*	Major
Feral hog	*Sus scrofa*	Minor

Zebra mussels reproduce rapidly once introduced to lakes. This species was first documented 25 July 2016 by TPWD. Since then the population has expanded and the lake is considered infested. An effective population control of zebra mussels has yet to be discovered. The best control as this time is the prevention from further spread to other aquatic systems.

Hydrilla was first discovered in the lake in 1995 and is monitored by TPWD and USACE. Concentrations of hydrilla fluctuate as water levels in the reservoir change during the growing season. In low densities, hydrilla provides habitat for some fish species. However, this is an aggressive plant that forms large, dense populations that displace native species and impair water use. Additionally, as populations grow, they can cause choke out waterways, causing serious impacts to water quality, water supply, and recreation. Hydrilla is all but impossible to eradicate by manual removal methods. Chemical control is possible but harms other aquatic life. Prevention from further spread to other aquatic systems is an important approach to reduce possible impacts (ANS 2020).

Chinaberry is a tree native to Asia that was introduced to the United States (U.S.) around 1830. Originally introduced to develop a soap-making industry, they have been widely planted as ornamentals. Since introduction, Chinaberry escaped cultivation, as it is fast-growing, highly disease resistant, and easily adapts to various habitat conditions. The fruit is poisonous to humans and animals if ingested in quantity. Chinaberry is prevalent around the lake and the population continues to expand.

Willow baccharis is a smooth shrub in the sunflower family that is native to the southern great plains and southwestern U.S. While mainly found in moist soils, the plant can tolerate a wide range of habitat conditions and is extremely heat tolerant, allowing it to spread easily. This plant has little value for wildlife or livestock. Once established in an area, it grows in dense stands where it out-competes more desirable vegetation for sunlight, water, and soil nutrients. Willow baccharis is prevalent around the lake in wet areas and uplands. Common control of willow baccharis is by springtime use of 2, 4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D).

Feral hogs are an old-world species belonging to the family Suidae, and in Texas include European wild hogs, feral hogs, and European-feral crossbreeds. Feral hogs are domestic hogs that either escaped or were released for hunting purposes. With each generation, the hog's domestic characteristics diminish, and they develop the traits needed for survival in the wild. Feral hog populations continue to expand in Texas and elsewhere. They are prolific breeders, thus rapidly expand their populations once established. While popular for recreational hunting, their destructive feeding habits and potential to spread disease are a substantial liability to agriculture and native wildlife in Texas. Feral hogs have been documented in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake watershed on private property. It is likely that this species will occur on USACE property in the future.

Several methods of population control have been used to control feral hog populations (e.g. hunting at night, trapping, hunting, shooting from a helicopter).

Sections 2.2.5 of the 2021 Master Plan provides additional information on these invasive species.

3.9.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

Stillhouse Hollow Lake would continue to be managed according to the 1975 Master Plan. With implementation of existing invasive species management programs, direct and indirect effects from Chinaberry and willow baccharis are anticipated to be minor.

Hydrilla is a difficult aquatic species to control. Monitoring by TPWD and USACE indicate past densities have ranged from 5 – 40 percent annually, depending on summer water levels. Direct and indirect adverse impacts from hydrilla is expected to be minor to moderate with the continued implementation of the 1975 Master Plan.

Effective control of zebra mussel populations has yet to be identified, thus this species will continue to expand in the lake and adversely impact native species and infrastructure such as gates and water supply intakes. Additional funding beyond normal maintenance will likely be necessary to maintain equipment in proper working order.

Feral hog populations are expected to expand to USACE fee-owned property, causing minor to moderate habitat damage. Population eradication is unlikely due to their prolific breeding. Recreational hunting may provide some initial control, but unlikely to provide long-term population control. As populations expand, trapping may be needed to remove large numbers.

While some invasive species could have moderate to major long-term adverse impacts to resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake, none would result due to the continued implementation of the No Action Alterative.

3.9.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

The land reclassifications, resource objectives, and resource plan required to revise the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan are compatible with the lake's invasive species management practices. Invasive species would continue to be monitored and eradication programs instituted to control their spread. Resource impacts from invasive species will be the same as those in Alternative 1.

3.10 CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The earliest well-documented evidence of human occupation in the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area is the Clovis culture, which dates to about 13,000 years before present (B.P.). Recent claims of an earlier pre-Clovis occupation (ca. 16,000 B.P.) have been made for the Gault Site in far southern Bell County.

Section 2.3 of the 2021 Master Plan provides prehistoric and historic background discussions for the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area as well as a summary regarding previous cultural resources investigations.

3.10.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

Stillhouse Hollow Lake would continue to be managed according to the 1975 Master Plan and cultural resource management plans. No direct or indirect impacts on cultural, historical, or archaeological resources is anticipated as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative.

3.10.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Impacts on cultural, historical, and archaeological resources were considered during the refinement processes of land reclassifications. No ground disturbing activities are associated with the revision of the master plan; therefore, no direct impacts are expected to occur to cultural resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. The allocation of 625 acres to ESA and 6,178 acres to Wildlife Management would provide an increased level of protection to cultural resources as ground disturbance to these areas would be limited. Implementation of the 2021 Master Plan will provide long-term direct and indirect beneficial impacts to cultural resources that exist at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.11 SOCIOECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Stillhouse Hollow Lake lies primarily within the northern portion of Bell County and extends into Coryell County. The zone of influence for the socio-economic analysis of Stillhouse Hollow Lake is defined as the counties in which the lake lies, Bell and Coryell, as well as the six additional counties that surrounding the lake, which are Burnet, Falls, Lampasas, McLennan, Milam, and Williamson counties.

Section 2.4 of the 2021 Master Plan provides a detailed discussion on regional demographics.

3.11.1 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

EO 13045 requires each Federal agency “to identify and assess environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children” and “ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health risks or safety risks.” This EO was prompted by the recognition that children, still undergoing physiological growth and development, are more sensitive to adverse environmental health and safety risks than adults. The potential for impacts on the health and safety of children is greater where projects are located near residential areas. The U.S. Census estimates show that persons under 18 years of age range from 22 percent of the population in Bosque County to 26 percent of the population in McLennan County and in the State of Texas.

3.11.2 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order 12898 directs Federal agencies to achieve environmental justice to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, and consistent with the principles set forth in the report on the National Performance Review. Agencies are required to identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

Section 2.4 of the Stillhouse Hollow Master Plan provides statistics on minority and low-income populations in the region surrounding the lake (zone of interest). Table 2.18 in the Master Plan displays the population in the zone of interest, Bell County, and the State of Texas by race and Hispanic Origin. The zone of interest is approximately 56 percent White (42 percent in the State of Texas), 12 percent Black (12 percent Black in the State of Texas), and 24 percent Hispanic or Latino (39 percent in the State of Texas). The other race categories accounted for less than four percent each of the population.

3.11.3 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

Under the No Action Alternative, the USACE would continue to manage Stillhouse Hollow Lake's natural resources as set forth in the 1975 Master Plan. While camping in USACE-operated campgrounds, many visitors purchase goods such as groceries, fuel, and camping supplies locally, eat in local restaurants, stay in local hotels and resorts, play golf at local golf courses, and shop in local retail establishments. These activities would continue to bring revenues to local companies, provide jobs for residents, and generate local and state tax revenues. Beneficial economic impacts existing as a result of the implementation of the current Master Plan would continue. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on minority or low-income populations (Environmental Justice Populations) or children with the implementation of the No Action Alternative.

3.11.4 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, the land reclassifications, resources objectives, and resource plan reflect changes in land management and land uses that have occurred since 1975. Stillhouse Hollow Lake offers a variety of free recreational opportunities for visitors. It is beneficial to the local economy through direct and indirect job creation and local spending by visitors. Beneficial economic impacts would be similar to the No Action Alternative. The reduction of 952 acres of HDR would have no adverse effect the public as these lands will remain open for public use. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on minority or low-income populations (Environmental Justice Populations) or children as a result of the Proposed Action.

3.12 RECREATION

The primary area having a significant influence on the public use and management of Stillhouse Hollow Lake includes Bell and Coryell Counties, situated in central Texas. Most visitors to Stillhouse Hollow Lake come from within a 100-mile radius of the lake. Stillhouse Hollow Lake visitors are a diverse group ranging from campers who utilize the campgrounds around the lake, full-time and part-time residents of the private housing developments that border the lake, hunters and anglers who utilize public lands around the lake, day users who picnic in the locally and federally operated parks, marina customers, and many other user groups.

Section 2.5 of the 2021 Master Plan provides a further discussion on recreation opportunities at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.12.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no direct or indirect impacts on recreational resources, as there would be no changes to the existing Master Plan.

3.12.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Stillhouse Hollow Lake is beneficial to the local visitors and offers a variety of free recreation opportunities. Even though the acreage available for High- and Low-Density Recreation would decrease (952 acres for HDR and 2,361 acres for LDR) with implementation of the 2021 Master Plan, these land reclassifications reflect changes in land management and land uses that have occurred since 1975 at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Existing parks and other recreation areas would continue to be available to the public along with ESA and WM lands that would still be available to low impact activities like fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. The conversion of these lands would have no effect on current or projected public use as they will open for public usage. There would be direct or indirect impacts on recreational resources by implementing the Proposed Action.

3.13 AESTHETIC RESOURCES

Stillhouse Hollow Lake is known for its scenic rocky bluffs; this makes it a popular destination for boating and camping. Section 2.2.6 of the 2021 Master Plan provides additional descriptions of scenic opportunities around Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

3.13.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

There would be no direct or indirect impacts on visual resources as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative, as there would be no changes to the existing Master Plan.

3.13.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Stillhouse Hollow Lake currently plays a pivotal role in availability of parks and open space in Bell and Coryell counties. The reclassification of land would have no effect on current or projected public use or visual aesthetics. Furthermore, the increase in the acreage of land classified as ESAs and MRML – Wildlife Management would protect lands that are aesthetically pleasing at Stillhouse Hollow Lake and limit future development. No direct or indirect impacts on visual resources would result from implementation of the 2021 Master Plan.

3.14 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND SOLID WASTE

This section describes existing conditions within the Stillhouse Hollow Lake area regarding potential environmental contamination and the sources of releases to the environment. Contaminants could enter the Stillhouse Hollow Lake environment via air or water pathways. The highways and roads, marinas, and private residences in the vicinity of the lake could also provide sources of contaminants. There is one marina at Stillhouse Hollow Lake that provides boat fueling service. The fuel dock is regulated by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) regarding spill containment and cleanup requirements. There are also numerous public campgrounds/resorts and recreation areas/parks around the lake that could contribute small amounts of hazardous materials and waste to the watershed.

Illegal trash dumping on project lands by individuals and businesses is a persistent problem. USACE and area law enforcement officials work cooperatively to apprehend those responsible for illegal trash dumping.

Several private residences and commercial facilities also surround the lake shores, and fertilizer and pesticide/herbicide use at those locations could contribute minor amounts of hazardous materials to the lake.

3.14.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

There would be no direct or indirect impacts from hazardous, toxic, radioactive, or solid wastes as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative, as there would be no changes to the existing Master Plan.

3.14.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

The land reclassifications required to revise the Master Plan would be compatible with Stillhouse Hollow Lake hazardous and toxic waste and solid waste management practices. There would be no direct or indirect impacts from hazardous, toxic, radioactive, or solid wastes as a result of implementing the 2021 Master Plan.

3.15 HEALTH AND SAFETY

As mentioned earlier in this document, Stillhouse Hollow Lake's authorized purposes include flood risk management, water conservation, and recreation. Compatible uses incorporated in project operation management plans include conservation and fish and wildlife habitat management components. The USACE, with some assistance from the TPWD, has established public outreach programs to educate the public on water safety and conservation of natural resources. In addition to the water safety outreach programs, the project has established recreation management practices in place to protect the public. These include safe boating and swimming regulations, safe hunting regulations, and speed limit and pedestrian signs for park roads. Stillhouse Hollow Lake also has solid waste management plans in place for camping and day use areas. Belton Lake has personnel in place to enforce these policies, rules, and regulations during normal park hours.

The Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) Seafood and Aquatic Life Group protects consumers from contaminants, disease or other health hazards transmissible or found in fish and shellfish using several functions including Fish Consumption Advisories and Bans for Public Waters. Currently, there are no fish consumption advisories for Stillhouse Hollow Lake (TDSHS 2020).

3.15.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

Under the No Action Alternative, the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan would not be revised. No direct or indirect impacts on human health or safety would be anticipated.

3.15.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, the proposed revisions to the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan would be compatible with project safety management plans. The revised classifications of Restricted water surface (23 acres) and Designated No-Wake areas (75 acres) would improve boating safety near key recreational water access areas such as

boat ramps. The Project would continue to have reporting guidelines in place should water quality become a threat to public health. Existing regulations and safety programs throughout the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Project area would continue to be enforced to ensure public safety. There would be moderate, long-term beneficial impacts on public health and safety as a result of implementing the Proposed Action.

3.16 SUMMARY OF CONSEQUENCES AND BENEFITS

Table 3.4 provides a tabular summary of the consequences and benefits for the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives for each of the assessed resource categories.

Table 3.4 Summary of Consequences and Benefits

Resource	Change Resulting from Revised Master Plan	Environmental Consequences		Benefits Summary
		No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	
Land Use	No effect on private lands. Emphasis is on protection of wildlife and environmental values on USACE land and maintaining current level of developed recreation facilities.	Fails to recognize recreation trends and regional natural resource priorities.	Recognizes recreation trends and regional natural resource priorities identified by TPWD and public comments.	Land classification changes and new resource objectives fully recognize passive use recreation trends and regional environmental values.
Water Resources Including Groundwater, Wetlands, and Water Quality	Minor change with benefits to recognize value of wetlands.	Fails to recognize the water quality benefits of good land stewardship and need to protect wetlands.	Promotes restoration and protection of wetlands and good land stewardship.	Specific resource objective promotes restoration and protection of wetlands.
Climate	No change.	No effect.	No effect.	No added benefit.
Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases	Minor change to recognize need for sustainable, energy efficient design.	Fails to promote sustainable, energy efficient design.	Promotes land management practices and design standards that promote sustainability.	Specific resource objectives promote national climate change mitigation goal. Leadership in Engineering and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for green design, construction, and operation activities will be employed to the extent practicable.
Air Quality	No change.	No effect.	No effect.	No added benefit.
Topography, Geology and Soils	Beneficial change to place emphasis on good stewardship of land and water resources.	Fails to specifically recognize known and potential soil erosion problems.	Encourages good stewardship that would reduce existing and potential erosion.	Specific resource objectives call for stopping erosion from overuse and land disturbing activities.

Resource	Change Resulting from Revised Master Plan	Environmental Consequences		Benefits Summary
		No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	
Natural Resources	Moderate benefits through land reclassification and resource objectives.	Fails to recognize ESAs, and regional priorities calling for protection of wildlife habitat.	Gives full recognition of sensitive resources and regional trends and priorities related to natural resources.	Reclassification of lands included 625 acres of ESA and a net increase in lands emphasizing wildlife management.
Threatened & Endangered Species and rare/unique communities as identified in the TXNDD Database	Moderate benefits from land reclassifications and utility corridors for recognizing both federal and state-listed species.	Fails to recognize current federal and state-listed species.	Fully recognizes federal and state-listed species as well as the TXNDD Database listed by TPWD.	The master plan sets forth the most recent listing of federal and state-listed species. The allocation of 625 acres of ESA and 6,178 acres of MRML-WM provides increased habitat for T&E and rare/unique species and communities.
Invasive Species	Minor change to recognize several recent and potentially aggressive invasive species.	Fails to recognize current invasive species and associated problems.	Recognizes current species and the need to be vigilant as new species may occur.	Specific resource objectives specify that invasive species shall be monitored and controlled as needed.
Cultural, Historical and Archaeological Resources	Minor change to recognize current status of cultural resource.	Included cursory information about cultural resources that is inadequate for future management and protection.	Recognizes the presence of cultural resources and places emphasis on protection and management.	Reclassification of lands and specific resource objectives were included for protection of cultural resources.
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	No change.	No effect.	No effect.	No added benefit.
Recreation	Negligible benefits to outdoor recreation programs.	Fails to recognize current outdoor recreation trends.	Fully recognizes current outdoor recreation trends and places special emphasis on trails.	Specific management objectives focused on outdoor recreation opportunities and trends are included.

Resource	Change Resulting from Revised Master Plan	Environmental Consequences		Benefits Summary
		No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	
Aesthetic Resources	Minor benefits through land reclassification, utility corridors, and resource objectives.	Fails to minimize activities that disturb the scenic beauty and aesthetics of the lake.	Promotes activities that limit disturbance to the scenic beauty and aesthetics of the lake.	Specific management objectives to minimize activities that disturb the scenic beauty and aesthetics of the lake.
Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste	No change.	No effect.	No effect.	No added benefit.
Health and Safety	Minor change to promote public safety awareness.	Fails to emphasize public safety programs.	Recognizes the need for public safety programs.	Includes specific management objectives to increase water safety outreach efforts. Also, classifies 98 acres of water surface as restricted and designated no-wake for public safety purposes.

SECTION 4: CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

NEPA regulations require that cumulative impacts of a proposed action be assessed and disclosed in an EA. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations define a cumulative impact as "*the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time*." (40 CFR 1508.7). Impacts can be positive or negative.

By Memorandum dated June 24, 2005 from the Chairman of the CEQ to the Heads of Federal Agencies entitled "Guidance on the Consideration of Past Actions in Cumulative Effects Analysis", CEQ made clear its interpretation that "…generally, agencies can conduct an adequate cumulative effects analysis by focusing on the current aggregate effects of past actions without delving into the historical details of individual past actions…" and that the "…CEQ regulations do not require agencies to catalogue or exhaustively list and analyze all individual past actions." CEQ guidance also recommends narrowing the focus of cumulative impacts analysis to important issues of national, regional, or local significance.

The initial step of the cumulative impact analysis uses information from the evaluation of direct and indirect impacts in the selection of environmental resources that should be evaluated for cumulative impacts. A proposed action would not contribute to a cumulative impact if it would not have a direct or indirect effect on the resource.

USACE used NEPA guidance to identify resource topics discussed in the cumulative impact analysis (40 CFR 1508.25). Based on a review of the likely environmental impacts analyzed in Section 3 (Affected Environment and Consequences) the USACE determined that the analysis of cumulative impacts would be limited to: natural resources, threatened and endangered species, water quality, cultural resources, and safety. With respect to the remaining resource topics such as climate, environmental justice, and HTRW, both the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives would either:

1. Not result in any direct or indirect impacts and therefore would not contribute to a cumulative impact; or,

2. That the nature of the resource is such that impacts do not have the potential to cumulate. For example, impacts related to geology are site specific and do not cumulate; or,

3. That the future with or future without project condition analysis is a cumulative analysis and no further evaluation is required. For example, because climate change is global in nature, the future without project condition and future with project condition analysis is inherently a cumulative impact assessment.

For each resource topic carried forward for cumulative impact analysis, the timeframe for analysis is the time since the 1975 Master Plan was implemented (past) and thru the

proposed life of the 2021 Master Plan (25 years – to 2046). The zone of interest for all resources except economy is Bell County, Texas. The zone of interest for economics is the same used in Section 3.11.

4.1 PAST IMPACTS WITHIN THE ZONE OF INTEREST

The construction of Stillhouse Hollow Lake was authorized in the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended. Construction of the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Dam began in 1962 with impoundment of water beginning in 1968. The dam is rolled earth filled, approximately 15,624 feet in length including the spillway and dike, is 200 feet high and has a top width of 42 feet, with the dike at 10 feet. The spillway is a broad-crested weir that is 1,650 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD). The outlet works consist of one gate-controlled conduit that is 12 feet in diameter with two 5.67 feet by 12 feet hydraulically operated slide gates and invert evaluation of 515.0 feet NGVD.

The total project area at Stillhouse Hollow Lake encompasses approximately 16,141 acres. Of this total area about 15,227 acres were acquired in fee simple title by USACE, and perpetual flowage easements were acquired on an additional 914 acres.

Four water intake structures have been built on USACE property at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Central Texas Water Supply constructed an intake in the mid-1970's to provide water to the cities of Belton, Harker Heights, Salado, Rogers, Lott, Rosebud, Westphalia, Heidenheimer, and other smaller communities. The BRA constructed their intake in the late 1990's that serves the city of Georgetown. The city of Kempner constructed an intake in the early 2000's to provide water for their city and the city of Lampasas.

4.2 CURRENT AND REASONABLY FORESEEABLE PROJECTS WITHIN AND NEAR THE ZONE OF INTEREST

Future management of the 914 acres of Flowage Easement Lands at Stillhouse Hollow Lake includes routine inspection of these areas to ensure that the Federal Government's rights specified in the easement deeds are protected. In almost all cases, the Federal Government acquired the right to prevent placement of fill material or habitable structures on the easement area. Placement of any structure that may interfere with the USACE flood risk management and water conservation missions may also be prohibited.

The City of Killeen is currently constructing a waterline between Belton Lake and Stillhouse Hollow Lake to pump untreated water to Stillhouse Hollow, thereby increasing the water transfer capabilities of Stillhouse Hollow. The waterline from Stillhouse Hollow Lake and is currently constructing the intake structure at the lake.

The primary planning responsibilities for the road network serving Bell County is the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), Waco office. One project is currently under construction, that being the widening of Interstate 14 (I-14) from Highway 2410 in west Belton to Interstate 35. This project is in its last phase.

A TXDOT project to widen Service Loop 121 from Farm to Market Road 439 to Interstate 14 is slated to begin the summer of 2021.

Locally, the City of Belton has proposed a new road that would run from FM 2271 to FM 1670, connecting Belton Lake to Stillhouse Hollow Lake and creating a loop road from Highway 190 (I-14) to the north side of the City of Belton. USACE has been in discussions with the City of Belton, TXDOT, Central Texas County of Governments, Killeen Temple Metropolitan Planning Organization (KTMP), and other county groups concerning this road expansion crossing government property.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Impacts on each resource were analyzed according to how other actions and projects within the zone of interest might be affected by the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action. Impacts can vary in degree or magnitude from a slightly noticeable change to a total change in the environment. For the purpose of this analysis the intensity of impacts will be classified as negligible, minor, moderate, or major. These intensity thresholds were previously defined in Section 3.0. Minimal growth and development are expected to continue in the vicinity of Belton Lake and cumulative adverse impacts on resources would not be expected when added to the impacts of activities associated with the Proposed Action or No Action Alternative. A summary of the anticipated cumulative impacts on each resource is presented below.

4.3.1 HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES

Operation and maintenance of USACE lands and waters at Stillhouse Hollow Lake would continue as outlined in the existing 1975 Master Plan. The No Action Alternative, when combined with other past, current, and future projects in the zone of interest, would not result in any cumulative impacts.

A major impact would occur if any action is inconsistent with adopted surface water classifications or water use plans, or if an action would substantially alter those resources required for, supporting, or benefiting the current use. Stillhouse Hollow Lake is a multipurpose water resource project constructed and operated by USACE for the purposes of flood risk management, water supply, recreation, and fish and wildlife. The reclassifications and resource objectives proposed in the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan are compatible with water use plans and surface water classification; further, they were developed to help fulfill regional goals associated with good stewardship of water resources that would allow for continued use of water resources associated with Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Land reclassifications and new resource objectives proposed as part of the Proposed Action would have moderate long-term beneficial impacts on water quality. Past and future projects are not anticipated to have significant impacts on the hydrology or water resources of Stillhouse Hollow Lake. Any construction associated with such projects would have to meet state water quality protection standards. Cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the Proposed Action, when combined with other past, current, and proposed actions in the zone of interest, are anticipated to be beneficial for water quality.

4.3.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

The No Action Alternative does not involve any activities that would contribute to changes in existing conditions. The No Action Alternative, when combined with other past,

current, and future projects in the zone of interest, would not result in any cumulative impacts.

By implementing the Proposed Action, the establishment of ESA and MRML – WM areas, as well as resource objectives and resource plans would allow land management and land uses to be compatible with the goals of good stewardship of natural resources. The Proposed Action would allow project lands to continue TPWD missions associated with wildlife conservation and implementation of operational practices that would protect and enhance wildlife and fishery populations and habitat. In addition, the Proposed Action would be compatible with conservation principles and measures to protect migratory birds as mandated by EO 13186. Past, present, and future projects are not anticipated to adversely impact the viability of any plant species or community, rare or sensitive habitats, or wildlife. The Proposed Action is expected to provide direct, long-term beneficial impacts on the natural resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. There would be long-term beneficial cumulative impacts to natural resources resulting from implementation of the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan, when combined with other past, current, and proposed actions in the zone of interest.

4.3.3 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The No Action Alternative does not involve any activities that would contribute to changes in existing conditions. The No Action Alternative, when combined with other past, current, and future projects in the zone of interest, would not result in any cumulative impacts.

The Proposed Action, as well as other past, present, and future projects, are not anticipated to adversely impact threatened and endangered species. The proposed land reclassifications will allow for further protection of threatened, endangered and other unique/rare communities found within the TXNDD database. The reclassifications will also allow future land management practices that would maintain and enhance habitats for these species. The proposed utility corridors would limit further fragmentation of habitat and confine ongoing maintenance disturbances. There would be long-term beneficial cumulative impacts to threatened and endangered species resulting from implementation of the 2021 Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan, when combined with other past, current, and proposed actions in the zone of interest.

4.3.4 CULTURAL, HISTORIC, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The No Action Alternative does not involve any ground disturbing activities. Any future ground disturbing activities proposed for Stillhouse Hollow Lake, as well as other past, current, and future projects would have to be coordinated with the Texas State Historic Preservation Office to minimize impacts to cultural, historic, and archaeological resources. The No Action Alternative, when combined with other past, current, and future projects in the zone of interest, would not result in any cumulative impacts.

While the Proposed Action does not involve ground disturbing activities, the allocation of 625 acres to ESA and 6,178 acres to MRML-WM would provide an increased level of protection to cultural resources, as ground disturbance to these areas would be limited. The proposed utility corridors in the 2021 Proposed Action would restrict any future pipelines, roads, or other infrastructure to already disturbed areas, further limiting

impacts on cultural resources. Any future ground disturbing activities proposed for Stillhouse Hollow Lake, as well as other past, current, and future projects, would have to be coordinated with the Texas State Historic Preservation Office to minimize impacts to cultural, historic, and archaeological resources. Implementation of the 2021 Master Plan would beneficially impact cultural resources.

The Proposed Action, when combined with other past, current, and future projects in the zone of interest, would provide beneficial cumulative impacts to cultural, historical, and archaeological resources present at Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

4.3.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The No Action Alternative would continue reporting guidelines should water quality become a threat to public health. Existing regulations and safety programs throughout the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Project area would continue to be enforced to ensure public safety. The No Action Alternative, when combined with other past, current, and future projects, is not expected to result in cumulative impacts to human health or safety.

The Proposed Action would have beneficial impacts on safety by revising water surface classifications that would improve boating safety near key recreational water access areas. Stillhouse Hollow Lake Project Office would continue current reporting guidelines should water quality become a threat to public health. Current regulations and safety programs would continue to be implemented. Other past, current, and future projects have not, and are not expected to cause impacts to the public health and safety in the zone of interest. The Proposed Action, when combined with other past, current, and future projects, is expected to have beneficial impacts to the human health and safety in the zone of interest.

SECTION 5: COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS

This EA has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of all applicable environmental laws and regulations and has been prepared in accordance with the CEQ's implementing regulations for NEPA, 40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508, and the USACE ER 200-2-2, *Environmental Quality: Procedures for Implementing NEPA*. The revision of the 1975 Master Plan is consistent with the USACE's Environmental Operating Principles. The following is a list of applicable environmental laws and regulations that were considered in the planning of this project and the status of compliance with each:

Master Plan revision process, as well as identify reclassification proposals, and identify significant issues related to the Proposed Action. Information provided by USFWS and TPWD on fish and wildlife resources has been utilized in the development of the 2021 Master Plan.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958, as amended – The USACE initiated public involvement and agency scoping activities to solicit input on the 2021 Master Plan revision process, as well as identify reclassification proposals, and identify significant issues related to the Proposed Action. Information provided by USFWS and TPWD on fish and wildlife resources has been utilized in the development of the 2021 Master Plan.

Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended – Current lists of threatened or endangered species were compiled for the revision of the 2021 Master Plan. The 2021 Master Plan revision will not result in adverse impacts on endangered species or their habitat. There would be beneficial impacts, such as habitat protection, as a result of implementation of the 2021 Master Plan.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act – The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 extends Federal protection to migratory bird species. The nonregulated "take" of migratory birds is prohibited under this act in a manner similar to the prohibition of "take" of threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. The timing of resource management activities would be coordinated to avoid impacts on migratory and nesting birds.

Executive Order 13186 (Migratory Bird Habitat Protection) – Sections 3a and 3e of EO 13186 direct Federal agencies to evaluate the impacts of their actions on migratory birds, with emphasis on species of concern, and inform the USFWS of potential negative impacts on migratory birds. The 2021 Master Plan revision will not result in adverse impacts on migratory birds or their habitat. Beneficial impacts could occur through protection of habitat as a result of implementing the 2021 Master Plan revision.

Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 – The Proposed Action complies with all state and federal CWA regulations and requirements and is regularly monitored by the USACE and TCEQ for water quality. A state water quality certification pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is not required for the 2021 Master Plan revision. There will be no change in the existing management of the reservoir that would impact water quality.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended – Compliance with the NHPA of 1966, as amended, requires identification of all properties in the project area listed in, or eligible for listing in, the NRHP. All previous surveys and site salvages were coordinated with the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer. Known sites are mapped and avoided by maintenance activities. Areas that have not undergone cultural resources surveys or evaluations will need to do so prior to any earthmoving or other potentially impacting activities.

Clean Air Act of 1963 – The USEPA established nationwide air quality standards to protect public health and welfare. Existing operation and management of the reservoir is compliant with the Clean Air Act and will not change with implementation of the 2021 Master Plan.

Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) – The FPPA was enacted as a subtitle of the 1981 Farm Bill. Its purpose is to minimize the extent to which Federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. It assures that to the extent possible federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local units of government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. There are 1,022.3 acres of Prime Farmland and 637.6 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance on Stillhouse Hollow Lake Project Office Lands.

CEQ Memorandum dated August 11, 1980, Prime or Unique Farmlands – Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is also available for these uses. The Proposed Action would not impact Prime Farmland present on Stillhouse Hollow Lake project lands.

Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands – EO 11990 requires Federal agencies to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands in executing Federal projects. The Proposed Action complies with EO 11990.

Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management – This EO directs Federal agencies to evaluate the potential impacts of proposed actions in floodplains. The Proposed Action complies with EO 11988.

Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice – This EO directs Federal agencies to achieve environmental justice to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, and consistent with the principles set forth in the report on the National Performance Review. Agencies are required to identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. The revision of the 1975 Master Plan will not result in a disproportionate adverse impact on minority or low-income population groups.

SECTION 6: IRRETRIEVABLE AND IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

NEPA requires that Federal agencies identify “any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the Proposed Action should it be implemented” (42 U.S.C. § 4332). An irreversible commitment of resources occurs when the primary or secondary impacts of an action result in the loss of future options for a resource. Usually, this is when the action affects the use of a nonrenewable resource or it affects a renewable resource that takes a long time to renew. Impacts from the reclassification of land would not be considered an irreversible commitment because subsequent Master Plan revisions could reclassify lands to a prior land classification.

SECTION 7: PUBLIC AND AGENCY COORDINATION

In accordance with 40 CFR §§1501.7, 1503, and 1506.6, the USACE initiated public involvement and agency scoping activities to solicit input on the 2021 Master Plan revision process, identify reclassification proposals, and identify significant issues related to the Proposed Action. The USACE began its public involvement process with a public scoping meeting to provide an avenue for public and agency stakeholders to ask questions and provide comments. The USACE, Fort Worth District, placed advertisements on the USACE webpage, social media, and print publications prior to the meeting. This public scoping meeting was held on 12 March 2020 at the Harris Community Center in Belton, Texas. Twenty members of the public attended the public meeting. This low turnout was likely due to the COVID 19 pandemic. A 30-day public comment period (13 March – 11 April 2020) resulted in 21 comments from eight (8) members of the public.

The EA was coordinated with agencies having legislative and administrative responsibilities for environmental protection. Please refer to Section 7 of the 2021 Master Plan for a summary of comments received at the public meetings.

A copy of the correspondence from the agencies that provided comments and planning assistance for preparation of the EA is included in Attachment A of this EA.

Appendix A includes the ads published in the local newspaper, the agency coordination letters, and the distribution list for the coordination letters.

SECTION 8: REFERENCES

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SECTION 9: ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

%	Percent
°	Degrees
BMP	Best Management Practice
BP	Before Present
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
cfs	Cubic Feet per Second
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CO2e	CO2-equivalent
CWA	Clean Water Act
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
EP	Engineer Pamphlet
ER	Engineer Regulation
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
F	Fahrenheit
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GCWA	Golden-cheeked Warbler
HDR	High Density Recreation
LDR	Low Density Recreation
MP	Master Plan
MRML	Multiple Resource Management Lands
msl	Mean Sea Level
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO	Nitrogen Oxide
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NRRS	National Recreation Reservation Service
O_3	Ozone
OAQPS	Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards
Pb	Lead
PCB	Polychlorinated Biphenyls
PCPI	Per Capita Personal Incomes
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulate Matter Less than 2.5 Microns
PM_{10}	Particulate Matter Less than 10 Microns
ROD	Record of Decision
RPEC	Regional Planning and Environmental Center
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
SO_2	Sulfur Dioxide

SUPER	USACE Suite of Computer Programs
TCAP	Texas Conservation Action Plan
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TCLP	Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
U.S.	United States
U.S.C.	U.S. Code
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC	Volatile Organic Compounds
VM	Vegetation Management
WHAP	Wildlife Habitat Appraisal Procedures
WM	Wildlife Management

SECTION 10: LIST OF PREPARERS

Craig Hilburn - Environmental Regional Technical Specialist, Regional Planning and Environmental Center; 6 years of USACE experience

Paul Roberts – Biologist, Compliance Section, Regional Planning and Environmental Center; 6 years of USACE experience.

ATTACHMENT A: NEPA COORDINATION AND PUBLIC SCOPING

STILLHOUSE HOLLOW LAKE STAKEHOLDER/CONSTITUENTS MAILING LIST 2020-21
FOR MP KICKOFF MEETING PUBLIC NOTICE AND NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Eddy Lange, Sheriff Bell County Sheriff's Department 104 S. Main St. Belton, TX. 76513 eddy.lange@co.bell.tx.us	Russell Schneider, Precinct 1 Commissioner Bell County TX Commissioner's Court Post Office Box 768 Belton, Texas 76513 russell.schneider@bellcounty.texas.gov	Congressman John Carter Rep Sheryl Hassmann 6544B S. General Bruce Drive Temple, TX 76502 cheryl.hassman@mail.house.gov
Michael Harmon, Director Office of Emergency Management 708 West Avenue O Belton, Texas 76513 michael.harmon@bellcounty.texas.gov	Bobby Whitson, Precinct 2 Commissioner Bell County TX Commissioner's Court Post Office Box 768 Belton, Texas 76513 bobby.whitson@bellcounty.texas.gov	State Representative Hugh Shine Rep. Charlette Blakemore 4 South 1st Street Temple, TX 76501 Charlotte.blakemore@house.texas.gov
Bryan Neaves, P.E., CFM County Engineer Bell County Engineer's Office Post Office Box 264 Belton, Texas 76513 bryan.neaves@bellcounty.texas.gov	Rick Smith, Owner Marine Outlet 4410 South General Bruce Drive Temple, Texas 76502 rick@marineoutlet.com	Brad Burnett, Central and Lower Basin Regional Manager Brazos River Authority 4600 Cobbs Drive Waco, TX 76710 brad.brunett@brazos.org
Bryan Neaves, P.E., CFM County Engineer Bell County Engineer's Office Post Office Box 264 Belton, Texas 76513 bryan.neaves@bellcounty.texas.gov	Cliff Brown, Owner Texas Boat World 303 W. Central Texas Expy Harker Heights, TX 76548	Matt Bates, Director Parks and Recreation City of Belton 401 N. Alexander St. Belton, TX 76513 mbates@beltontexas.gov
Don Ferguson, Administrator Village of Salado 301 N. Stagecoach Salado, Texas 76571 vos@saladotx.gov	Major Jeff Gillenwater Region 7 Texas Parks and Wildlife 3615 South General Bruce Drive Temple, Texas 76504 Jeff.gillenwaters@tpwd.texas.gov	Jeff Achee, Director Parks and Recreation City of Harker Heights 307 Miller's Crossing Harker Heights, TX 76548 jachee@ci.harker-heights.tx.us
Sam A. Listi, City Manager Belton City Hall 333 Water Street Post Office Box 120 Belton, Texas 76513 slisti@beltontexas.gov	Ricky Garrett, P.E., General Manager Bell County Water Control & Improvement, District 1 201 South 38th Street Killeen, Texas 76543 r.garrett@wcid1.org	Jerry Bark, Director Public Relations City of Harker Heights 401 Indian Trail Harker Heights, TX 76548 jbark@ci.harker-heights.tx.us
Kathy Clapper, Owner Stillhouse Hollow Marina 4596 Simmons Road Belton, Texas 76513 kmclapper@yahoo.com		

STILLHOUSE HOLLOW LAKE AGENCY MAILING LIST 2020-21
FOR MP KICKOFF MEETING PUBLIC NOTICE AND NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Karen Hardin, Natural Resources Specialist Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. 4200 Smith School Road Austin, TX 78744 Karen.Hardin@tpwd.texas.gov	Fred Schrank, State Agronomist Natural Resources Conservation Service 101 South Main Street Temple, TX 76501 Fred.schrank@tx.usda.gov	Debra Bills, Field Supervisor U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Arlington Field Office 2005 NE Green Oaks Blvd, Suite 140, Arlington, TX 76006 debra_bills@fws.gov
Robert Houston, Chief Special Projects Section Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200 (6EN), Dallas, TX 75202-2733 houston.robert@epa.gov	Peter Schafer, Biologist Water Quality Assessment Section Texas Council on Environmental Quality MC 150, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087 Peter.Schafer@tceq.texas.gov	Richard Hanson Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program Texas Parks and Wildlife Department 1702 Landmark Lane, Suite 3 Lubbock, TX 79415 Richard.Hanson@tpwd.texas.gov
Richard Hanson Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program Texas Parks and Wildlife Department 1702 Landmark Lane, Suite 3 Lubbock, TX 79415 Richard.Hanson@tpwd.texas.gov		

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, FORT WORTH DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TX 76102-0300

February 20, 2020

Public Notice

Public Meeting for Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan Revision, Stillhouse Hollow Lake, Brazos River Basin, Bell County, Texas

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Fort Worth District, hereby informs the public of the initiation of the revision to the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan. The Master Plan is a vital tool produced and used by USACE to guide the responsible stewardship of USACE-administered lands/waters and resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Public participation is critical to the successful revision of the Master Plan.

An open house public meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2020 at Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander Street, Belton, Texas 76513. A brief overview outlining the purpose and scope of the Master Plan, as well as the proposed schedule and opportunities for public involvement will be presented at 6:00 pm, followed by a session to view maps, ask questions, and provide written comments about the project.

The open house public meeting information will be available to download at the following USACE website beginning on Thursday, March 12, 2020:

http://www.swf.usace.army.mil/About/LakesandRecreationInformation/MasterPlanUpdates/Stillhouse-Hollow_Lake

Key topics to be addressed in the revised Master Plan include revised land classifications, new natural and recreational resource management objectives, recreational land needs, and special topics such as invasive species management. Revision of the Master Plan will not address in detail the technical operations and maintenance or aspects related to the water supply or flood risk management missions of the project.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, and other applicable laws and regulations, a 30-day public comment period will begin on Friday, March 13, 2020. Comments and questions pertaining to the proposed revision may be submitted at the public meeting, or emailed to CESWF-PER-StillhouseHollow@usace.army.mil, or mailed to Ronnie Bruggman: Lake Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 3740 FM 1670, Belton, Texas 76513.

Sincerely,

Amanda M. McGuire
Chief, Environmental Branch
Regional Planning and Environmental Center

News Release

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:
20 January 2020

Contact:

Corps to host public meeting for the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan revision

FORT WORTH, Texas – The Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will host a public meeting on 12 March 2020 at **Harris Community Center located at 401 N Alexander Street, Belton TX 76513** to provide information and receive public input for the revision of the Stillhouse Hollow Lake aster Plan.

The meeting will begin with a brief presentation at 6:00 p.m. followed by an open house for the public to view the current land use maps, ask questions and provide comments about the project.

USACE defines the Master Plan 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.

The Master Plan study area will include Stillhouse Hollow Lake proper and all adjacent recreational and natural resources properties under USACE administration. Revision of the Master Plan **will not** address in detail the technical operational aspects of the reservoir related to the water supply or flood risk management missions of the project. Stillhouse Hollow Lake is a multi-purpose reservoir constructed and managed for flood risk management, water supply, fish and wildlife, and recreation.

The current Master Plan, last updated in 1970, is in need of revision to address changes in regional land use, population, outdoor recreation trends and USACE management policy. Key topics to be addressed in the revised Master Plan include revised land classifications, new natural and recreational resource management objectives, recreation facility needs and special topics such as invasive species management and threatened and endangered species habitat. **Public participation is critical to the successful revision of the Master Plan**.

Questions pertaining to the proposed revision can be addressed to: **Ronnie Bruggman**, Lake Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 3740 FM 1670, Belton, Texas 76513, (254) 939-2461.

About the Fort Worth District: The Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was established in 1950. The District is responsible for water resources development in two-thirds of Texas, and design and construction at military installations in Texas and parts of Louisiana and New Mexico. Visit the Fort Worth District Web site at: www.swf.usace.army.mil and SWF Facebook at: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fort-Worth-District-US-Army-Corps-of-Engineers/188083711219308.

Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan Revision

General Information

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Fort Worth District, is revising the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan. The Master Plan is intended to serve as a comprehensive land and recreational management plan with a life span of 25 years. The Plan guides the stewardship of natural and cultural resources and the provision of outdoor recreation facilities with opportunities to ensure sustainability of federal land associated with Stillhouse Hollow Lake.

About Stillhouse Hollow Lake

Stillhouse Hollow Lake, (formally Lampasas Lake) was authorized by the Flood Control Act 03 September 1954 (Public Law (PL) 83-780) for the purpose of flood control, water conservation storage, recreation, and fish and wildlife enhancement. The name of the lake was changed by PL 86-307 from 'Lampasas" to 'Stillhouse Hollow.' Stillhouse Hollow Lake is currently a multipurpose water resources project operated by USACE that includes balancing the needs of the surrounding population, visitors, and the ecological system. The lake, located on the Lampasas River, is also managed for public recreation and environmental stewardship, including fish and wildlife conservation.

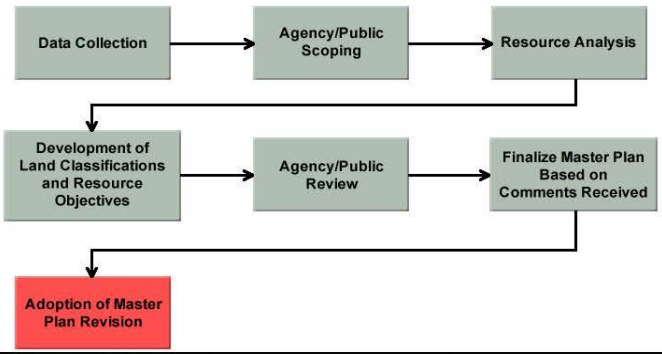
What is a Master Plan?

The Master Plan is the strategic land use management document that guides the comprehensive management and development of all recreational, natural, and cultural resources of the lake throughout the life of the water resources project.

Why Revise the Stillhouse Hollow Master Plan?

The current Master Plan for Stillhouse Hollow Lake was last updated in 1970. The Plan and the land classifications are in need of revision to address changes in regional land use, population, outdoor recreation trends and USACE management policy. Key topics to be addressed in the revised Master Plan include revised land classifications, new natural and recreational resource management objectives, recreation facility needs and special topics such as invasive species management and threatened and endangered species habitat. Public participation is critical to the successful revision of the Master Plan.

The Master Planning Process



Related Files

March 12, 2020

- Public Meeting Presentation
- Public Meeting Notice
- Stillhouse Hollow Master Plan - 1975 (37MB)
- Comment Form with Instructions

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

February 9, 2021

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

DRAFT MASTER PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS 2021 STILLHOUSE HOLLOW LAKE MASTER PLAN BELL COUNTY, TEXAS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Fort Worth District, hereby informs the public of the release of the 2021 draft Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan (hereafter Plan), draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and draft Environmental Assessment (EA).

The Plan is a vital tool produced and used by USACE to guide the responsible stewardship of USACE-administered lands and resources for the benefit of present and future generations. The Plan provides direction for appropriate management, use, development, enhancement, protection, and conservation of the natural, cultural, and manmade resources at Stillhouse Hollow Lake. The Plan presents an inventory and analysis of land resources, resource management objectives, land use classifications, resource use plan for each land use classification, current and projected park facility needs, an analysis of existing and anticipated resource use, and anticipated influences on overall project operation and management. The most current Master Plan for Stillhouse Hollow Lake was approved in February of 1975.

In lieu of a face-to-face public meeting due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, USACE will provide a virtual presentation that gives an overview of the proposed changes to the current Stillhouse Hollow Master Plan and instructions on how to submit comments. A 30-day public comment period will begin on **February 24, 2021 and end on March 26, 2021**. The draft Plan, FONSI, EA, and comment instructions will be available for download starting February 24, 2021 at the following Fort Worth District website:

https://www.swf.usace.army.mil/About/Lakes-and-Recreation-Information/Master-Plan-Updates/Stillhouse-Hollow-Lake/

You may also send written comments or questions to Lake Manager, Stillhouse Hollow Lake, 3740 FM 1670, Belton, Texas 76513. Comments or questions may also be emailed to CESWF-PER-StillhouseHollow@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

Amanda McGuire

Amanda M. McGuire
Chief, Environmental Branch
Regional Planning and Environmental Center

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS BUILDING STRONG®

Contact: Denisha Braxton

For Immediate Release:

USACE to host a virtual public involvement presentation for the draft release of the Stillhouse Hollow Lake Master Plan Revision

Fort Worth, Texas – Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Fort Worth District, U.S. will host a virtual public involvement presentation to provide information and receive public input regarding the draft master plan revision for **Stillhouse Hollow Lake**. The presentation will be available beginning **Wednesday, February 24** with public comment open from **February 24 through Wednesday, March 26, 2021. The public is encouraged to view information and send comments.**

Please access the following website beginning February 24th, which contains the presentation describing the planning process and changes, revised land classification maps, the 1970 Master Plan, and the 2021 draft Master Plan revision, as well as comment forms and instructions for making comments.

https://www.swf.usace.army.mil/About/Lakes-and-Recreation-Information/Master-Plan-Updates/Stillhouse-Hollow-Lake/

Questions may be directed to the USACE Lake Manager, Ronnie Bruggman, 3740 FM 1670, Belton, Texas 76513, (254) 939-2461. Please note that only *written* comments regarding the Master Plan revision will be considered.

The Master Plan study area includes Stillhouse Hollow Lake proper and all adjacent recreational and natural resources properties under USACE administration. Revision of the Master Plan does not address in detail the technical operational aspects of the reservoir related to the water supply or flood risk management missions of the project. Stillhouse Hollow Lake is a multi-purpose reservoir constructed and managed for flood risk management, water supply, fish and wildlife, and recreation.

This is a revision from the current Master Plan, last updated in 1970, which is no longer useful for addressing changes in regional land use, population, outdoor recreation trends and USACE management policy. Key topics addressed in the revised Master Plan include revised land classifications, new natural and recreational resource management objectives, recreation facility needs and special topics such as invasive species management and threatened and endangered species habitat. Please access the presentation and **participate in the successful revision of the Master Plan**. Thank you.

-30-