

APPENDIX F – Public and Stakeholder Comments

Table F.9.1 Public Comments from 21 August 2019 Public Scoping Meeting

Comment	USACE Response
Comments from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	
<p>After being in the field with you for the wildlife habitat assessments, we were able to find some quality areas that need to be classified as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA), and we came across areas that would be suitable as Multiple Resource Management classification (low density recreation, wildlife management, vegetation management, and future/inactive recreation). TPWD recommends ESA classification for native prairies, stream and riparian corridors, scenic bluffs, and bottomland forests/wetlands, as USACE indicated in the public meeting presentation. TPWD also supports addressing invasive species, restoring degraded prairies, addressing encroachments & trespass, improving recreational infrastructure and opportunity as appropriate to the meet public demand without exceeding carrying capacity of the property and its resources, while balancing the stewardship of the natural resources. The upcoming prairie habitat assessments will provide additional information to guide selection of revised classifications specific to prairie ESAs and prairie restoration areas. TPWD encourages conservation of quality native grasslands and restoration of degraded grasslands to provide diverse floral resources for pollinators and habitat for grassland wildlife.</p>	<p>Concur. Areas that received a high score in the WHAP including several grasslands, riparian corridors, scenic bluffs, wetlands, and both upland and bottomland forests have been changed to an ESA classification. Other areas were classified as Multiple Resource Management, either Wildlife Management or Vegetative Management, to reflect management and stewardship of natural resources. The prairie assessment also helped differentiate the quality of prairies and informed in the decision to designate a prairie as an ESA or Vegetative Management.</p>
<p>Please refer to the TPWD WHAB website for the recently updated rare, threatened, and endangered species lists (RTEST) for the project area at https://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/rtest/. With recent updates, you will see additional species of greatest conservation need within RTEST that align more closely with the Texas Conservation Action Plan.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Please continue to coordinate the Master Plan Revision and Environmental Assessment with the TPWD WHAB program through my email as well as our project review repository: whab@tpwd.texas.gov. Feel free to share preliminary land use classifications with me.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Comments from City of Benbrook</p>	
<p>[Comments from the City of Benbrook in their entirety are provided in Figure F.1]</p>	<p>These requests are outside the scope of the Master Plan. Lease holders should contact the USACE Lake Office for specific requests to their lease area.</p>
<p>[After further communication to clarify the purpose of the Master Plan, The City of Benbrook would like to ensure that their lease area remains High Density Recreation, and possibly expand their lease area to additional HDR with plans to make additional improvements, possibly including a comprehensive development/resort.]</p>	<p>Noted. Lease areas including those conducive for a comprehensive development/resort will remain HDR. Please contact the Lake Office for specific requests to expand/increase the lease area, and for requests to make improvements to existing lease areas.</p>
<p>Comments from the Public</p>	
<p>Open roads around lake for free public access.</p>	<p>Non-Concur, USACE does not have the resources to maintain free public access. USACE policy requires fees to be charged in parks where certain facilities are provided.</p>
<p>Keep the fees in place, and reinstate the fees at Rock Creek to pay for improvements.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>I think it would be awesome if there was a fly over bridge from the intersection of 377 & 2871 over the lake & arrives at Southwest Christian School. That way it would unclog a lot of the traffic that backs up along 377 near the YMCA.</p>	<p>TXDOT is responsible for developing major highways, while cities develop secondary roads and arterials. USACE is willing to work with government organizations to further develop road and highway networks. USACE policy regarding roads on USACE property: new roads must be major arterials.</p>
<p>Keep the park open year-round (except when closure is needed for flooding)</p>	<p>Some parks are open year-round. Low demand dictates that some parks are not economical to keep open during off seasons.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Expand the dates that Bear Creek Campground is open. Closing Bear Creek on October 1 is too early in the season. Some of the best weather for camping occurs in October and November. If it is necessary to close Bear Creek during the winter months, I suggest closing no earlier than December 15 and reopening March 1 so that the park would be open for Spring Break weeks.</p>	<p>Our campground seasons are always under review, but our current visitation demand doesn't justify keeping it open during extended seasons.</p>
<p>Consider adding an aircraft training center located at the south of the field to enable instruction, course development and other interaction between the public and the organization.</p>	<p>Current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.</p>
<p>The Thunderbird Club would like assistance in extending the runway to improve support of turbine aircraft operations.</p>	<p>Current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.</p>
<p>The Thunderbird Club would like assistance in clearing trees that have now encroached in the take-off and landing zones thus present hazards to aircraft operations.</p>	<p>Current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.</p>
<p>No alcoholic beverage - strictly enforced - would solve most of the behavior problems</p>	<p>USACE relies on local municipalities to make these decision and partners with those municipalities for enforcement.</p>
<p>The west end of Alta Mesa Blvd and it's turn into Lakeside Dr. all the way to Winscott Rd. are in desperate need of widening and improvement. It is likely this will/would be a multi-year or multi-decade project in connection with the City of Fort Worth and possibly the City of Benbrook. Having lived in Fort Worth all my life, and southwest Fort Worth most of my life, I travel that road frequently. You are no doubt very aware of this need. If there is a more appropriate/additional place for my comments, please share that information and I will be happy to further address the issue.</p>	<p>This is an existing road, and USACE will work with municipalities on a case by case basis; these roads are part of Fort Worth.</p>
<p>Consider adding more bird watching amenities such as boardwalks, bird blinds, feeding features, and similar facilities. Consider</p>	<p>USACE currently partner with several organizations who maintain and monitor bird boxes and are open</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>working with the Audubon Society for member activities. Many unique birds are located at Benbrook Lake, including bobwhite quail near the lake office. With shrinking habitats, projects like Benbrook Lake are increasingly important to many birds and to bird watching activities/birding.</p>	<p>to more partnerships with those and other organizations. USACE has 85 bluebird boxes around the lake. Some prime birding areas are very flood prone which limits the types of facilities which can be built and maintained.</p>
<p>Improve boat ramps and launch areas for times when the lake level is low by lengthening existing boat ramps and building new ones. An additional boat ramp near the old marina or Saint Francis Village would be nice. The public ramps near Benbrook Marina are not steep enough into the water - difficult to launch because the water is not deep enough.</p>	<p>Concur; many boat ramps are not useable when the water level is low. Fluctuating water levels are not a topic governed by the Master Plan, and these concerns have been forwarded to those the appropriate individuals affecting water levels and water supply contracts.</p>
<p>It would be nice if the Benbrook Marina would do some basic maintenance to their boat ramp and launch areas. Drivers literally risk breaking an axel to launch there. Sometimes the boat ramp at the marina is the only one available, highlighting the importance for improving roads here.</p>	<p>Concur; but current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.</p>
<p>Improve cycling opportunities and trails and include cycling access in the Master Plan. A separate concrete road bike trail similar to Trinity Trail would be much safer than on the two-lane black-top park road on the west side of the lake.</p>	<p>USACE would welcome the opportunity to partner with cycling organizations to make additional cycling improvements.</p>
<p>Allow walkers and bicyclists to use roads and trails when parks are closed due to high water. When the lake levels are above conservation pool and force the closure of the picnic areas along the lake, there needs to be continued access to the main park road thru Dutch Branch Park and Holiday to walkers and cyclist. This is one of the safest roads for cyclist to ride, and to have it shut down for weeks or months while the lake level is receding is hazardous to their health as they are forced to ride on roads with heavy auto traffic.</p>	<p>USACE keeps parks closed for as short time as possible, but they are closed for emergency maintenance or other immediate safety reasons.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Allow official bicycle access to the “Nice Hill” by-pass in Holiday Park. That hill can be very difficult for novice or weaker cyclist, having the option to bypass the hill opens up a few more miles of safe road. The park road is one of the safest roads for cyclist to ride in all of Tarrant County.</p>	<p>That road in question is a separate campground for paid campground use. USACE attempts to separate user groups for visitors' safety and recreational satisfaction.</p>
<p>It would be great if there were some boat docks to park boats around the picnic areas.</p>	<p>There are four courtesy loading docks, but they are not for boat parking, and picnic areas are not suitable for boat parking or docks.</p>
<p>Improve the drainage of Dutch Branch Creek at the low water crossing on Lake Shore Dr. near Stevens Drive. The culverts under this road get clogged up on a regular basis. This causes water to flow over the surface of the road instead of underneath. Which in turn, makes it hazardous for cyclist to cross.</p>	<p>This area is leased by the City of Benbrook. The city closes the road when the water level causes unsafe conditions. Additional improvements would be the responsibility of the lessee.</p>
<p>Improve education opportunities about the history, biological diversity, ecological functions and importance of the native prairie.</p>	<p>Concur. USACE is looking for additional partnership opportunities to improve public education and outreach opportunities.</p>
<p>Have available bulletin boards with illustration of the birds, mammals, lizards people are likely to see around this area.</p>	<p>Concur. USACE is looking for additional partnership opportunities to improve public education and outreach opportunities.</p>
<p>Manage land to protect threatened and endangered species.</p>	<p>USACE policy is to manage for threatened and endangered species when present. Benbrook Lake has no listed T&E species, but sensitive habitat is included in environmentally sensitive areas.</p>
<p>Keep out all horses and no longer provide equestrian trails. We don't want invasive plants.</p>	<p>USACE manages for multiple types of recreation. The trails at Benbrook Lake used by equestrians is a multiuse trail to include pedestrians and horses. USACE does manage for invasive species and welcomes partnerships with other organizations to help manage invasive plants.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Hire park rangers who are familiar with horseback riding. The ranger who is in charge of equestrian trails should be familiar with horseback riding, which [Ranger Name] is NOT!!</p>	<p>Trail management is done in partnership with other organizations and is ongoing. USACE welcomes partnerships with other organizations to help manage and maintain equestrian recreation.</p>
<p>We need more camping areas for the equestrian riders besides Holiday Park which only has room for (two) trailers.</p>	<p>USACE currently has one campsite with two paddocks, however demand and use for that campsite remains low.</p>
<p>Also, we need a better designated area for the horses along Holiday Park for the horses and riders to picnic. The current one has no shade what so ever except for (1) covered picnic table. Rocky Creek Park has a camping area that would be perfect for equestrian camping.</p>	<p>USACE welcomes partnerships with other organizations to make improvements to the camping and picnic areas.</p>
<p>The Clearfork river has been gradually changing its course, and it is effecting properties. We are worried about the continual erosion to our property, and would like to know how we can best fix this major issue.</p> <p>The Clearfork river has been changing shape over time, and it has been eroding properties that are on the outside of the curves. There are several properties that have this problem, and loss of soil is substantial. The erosion has caused land to sag, support structures to be damaged and structures in backyards (pools, courts) to be displaced.</p> <p>This spring we had a lot of rain and the river was high and flowed fast. Benbrook lake also empties excess water into the river as well. A future water treatment plant will empty more water into Mary's Creek, which joins the Clearfork not to far from our property. This will cause more water to flow through the Clearfork river as well, causing more erosion.</p> <p>What can we do? How can you help us?</p>	<p>Noted. Erosion and the changing river channel are not topics covered by the Master Plan, and these concerns have been forwarded to those the appropriate individuals affecting operations.</p>
<p>Have TPWD conduct a survey on the fish population. It may need restocking.</p>	<p>TPWD frequently conducts surveys and restocking, and USACE works</p>

Comment	USACE Response
	with TPWD to continue fish management at Benbrook Lake.
I'd love to see more fishing opportunities from the banks of the lake, i.e. floating docks or crappie houses. Places where families without boats can take kids to actually have a chance to catch fish from shore. Keep Benbrook lake accessible to the public, secure the fishing and hunting access for future generations and develop the land so that wildlife flourishes.	Due to the shallow shoreline in park areas, much of Benbrook Lake is not conducive to floating docks or fishing houses.
I encourage that more green spaces be used to help with flood control off of the newly developed spaces.	Concur; we encourage developers to practice best management practices (BMP) to help reduce runoff and storm water management.
Professional gate attendants - our current gate attendants are rude, profane, and unprofessional.	USACE requires that gate attendants abide by a code of conduct and request feedback from users on our gate attendants.
Manage all prairie and wildland habitat for ecological integrity, optimal grassland nesting bird habitat, and whole prairie ecosystem functionality.	USACE policy is to manage for threatened and endangered species when present. Benbrook Lake has no listed T&E species, but sensitive habitat is included in environmentally sensitive areas.
Protect old [historic] structures such as the one located to the west of West Creek Circle.	Concur.
Ban clay pigeon shooting and the use of all lead bullets which can lead to lead poisoning of land, water, and wildlife.	Per Title 36 Chapter 3 Part 327 Code of Federal Regulation, firearm use is only for permitted hunting. Target practice of any kind is not allowed, and lead ammunition is governed and enforced by TPWD.
Keep existing hunting grounds or add more land to hunting grounds.	Concur.
Keep hunting permits the same or increase hunting slots for permit lottery.	Hunting permits are based on a variety of factors including hunter safety, adjacent landowners, size of hunting areas, available space, user enjoyment, and balancing other recreational uses. Other hunting opportunities are available at nearby

Comment	USACE Response
	USACE lakes, and hunters are encouraged to check with each lake for policies, regulations, and hunting availability.
Telephone connection to provide internet, communications and to facilitate security.	Current infrastructure does not support improved communication networks.
Abandon new aquatic vegetation work ... recent TPWD attempts have failed due to water fluctuations	Need additional information. USACE works with TPWD on both native vegetation and controlling invasive species.
Classify native, old-growth prairie habitat as Environmentally Sensitive Areas.	Concur.
Landscaped areas should include native, low-water plants.	Concur.
Explore additional concessionaires/subleases.	USACE is open to new concessionaires and subleases.
Artificial lighting should follow established best practices for reducing light pollution. I realize there is little hope of reducing light pollution near the metroplex, but our public parks should not contribute to the light pollution problem. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nightskies/practices.htm	Concur. As USACE makes improvements, they will replace existing lights with those that reduce glare and light pollution.
Maintenance and signage for unpaved trails - currently these trails are poorly maintained - needs regular mowing, grading, and signage. I would prefer to volunteer to help maintain.	Concur. USACE is improving signage and trails and welcome partner organizations and volunteers. Volunteers are encouraged to contact the Lake Office for volunteer opportunities.
Suggestion: the roads need to be repaired. Replace and update barriers to keep traffic off of grass.	Many USACE roads have ongoing repair needs. Existing barriers are operational, and traffic is not permitted on grass except in Mustang Park.
You would see a huge boost in income, which pays for maintenance, if you would be interested in improving the parks. This is a	Park fees go to the Department of the Treasury and do not directly fund park budgets. USACE welcomes working with other organizations to

Comment	USACE Response
family area and families would flock to the parks if the amenities were updated.	make additional park improvements and opportunities.
Close under-utilized parks in order to make improvements to the more popular parks.	USACE will continue to monitor demand at all parks and will close or open parks due to seasonal fluctuations and other changes in demand.
Consider dredging out the marina to improve access during low water levels or consider other changes to improve access during low water. A nice marina to rent a boat slip would be beneficial as well as a smooth driving area down to the ramp.	Current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.
Traveling RV'ers would also "find" the parks if you simply market the parks with this updated information in a typical browser search, or Facebook page.	USACE lake website are currently undergoing updates. The Fort Worth District has a Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/usacefortworth/ . Both the lake websites and Facebook page can be found via internet search engines.
Open access of existing equestrian trails to mountain bikes and dirt bikes. There are no mountain bike trails in the southwest part of Fort Worth. The trails around Benbrook Lake are awesome and should be made available everyone. This could be similar to the one at Cedar Hill State Park on Joe Pool Lake.	For safety, USACE separates the uses of biking and horses. Mountain bike lakes are available at other regional lakes including Joe Pool, Grapevine, and Ray Roberts Lakes.
Pearl Ranch Road is in "severe decay" and in need of maintenance and resurfacing. It is a danger for both cars and cyclists who use the road to enter the park as well as communities along the road. There have been several blowouts and near accidents due to potholes and crumbling shoulders, and it's only a matter of time before it results in a severe accident. Repairs will also improve access to the park.	USACE is aware of the road condition and is working with Tarrant County on maintenance and repairs.
Include more pet-friendly designated areas.	Pets are allowed at all areas except swim beaches.
No plastic allowed around the lake.	Need additional information.

Comment	USACE Response
Local native pollinators are critical to the environment, and the Corps should ensure landscaping is beneficial to pollinators as well as preserve existing pollinator habitat.	Concur.
Prevent prairie degradation by no longer providing equestrian trails, managing for invasive species, and preventing habitat fragmentation.	Equestrian use is limited to specific multi-use trails. USACE strives to protect and preserve natural resource while providing diverse recreational opportunities.
Preserve as much as possible: wildlife, habitat, prairie, trees, and green space. Consider closing off some lesser-used area to increase habitat for wildlife.	USACE strives to protect and preserve natural resource while providing diverse recreational opportunities.
Please do not sell or lease land to any private party.	There is currently no plan to sell or lease additional land to any private entity.
Please consider building into the plan a primary focus on families and kids. Technology is robbing children of the opportunity to explore and enjoy the outdoors. This WILL require being open to new ideas beyond camping sites and swing sets.	Recreational opportunities at the lake provide many opportunities to explore and enjoy the outdoors. USACE welcomes the chance to work with other organizations to enhance other outdoor education opportunities.
Consider the reintroduction of Texas horned lizards and bison.	The Fort Worth Zoo has a horned lizard breeding program and looked at Benbrook Lake as a potential release site. USACE would welcome the opportunity for the Fort Worth Zoo or other organization to reintroduce horned lizards. Reintroducing bison would require a significant management program to ensure safety of recreational users as well as bison. Although USACE is not opposed to reintroducing bison, an organization wanting to do so on USACE property would need to invest into upgrades required to contain the bison as well as maintaining the upgrades and monitoring the bison herd.

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Campground reservations - this is a great place for us to take the kids fishing and camping. I know in the past, there have been some mismanagement issues with this area - on a few occasions, we've been told there was a "mix-up" with the reservations we made on recreation.gov and they would assign us a different spot.</p>	<p>Recreation.gov is constantly undergoing maintenance and updates to improve their reservation system.</p>
<p>Restore degraded habitat, primarily prairie habitat. And adopt and implement a management plan that will protect this prairie in its native state, for use by native grassland birds, butterflies and other wildlife, and by people who wish to see and imagine the prairie as it once was.</p>	<p>USACE is aware of the importance of prairie habitat and has conducted habitat assessments in many of the prairie locations. These grasslands have been considered when creating the revised Land Classifications of the Master Plan.</p>
<p>Upgrade porta potty to permanent restroom facility near the Fort Worth Thunderbirds flying field.</p>	<p>Current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.</p>
<p>Update/renovate restroom facilities and increase number of permanent restroom facilities.</p>	<p>USACE is constantly making repairs and improvements as budget allows.</p>
<p>Old Rock Creek marina area opened up for day use - but just the old marina area. Despite some nice primitive type campsites up the road from there, I understand and appreciate keeping that area/road that goes up behind the retirement village closed for safety/security purposes. We, as well as many of the residents of the retirement village use that road for walking - and the horse trails go through there - none of us want to deal with dodging automobile traffic.</p>	<p>Currently that area is considered unsafe for vehicle traffic. Plans are underway to reopen the park when it is deemed safe.</p>
<p>Since the park was built, RVs have become longer and in need of both 30 and 50 amp service. 50 amp is especially important since we have such high summer temperatures. Many long-distance travelers also have longer RVs. Improve infrastructure to handle more large RVs, add new loops or modify existing loops, trim trees to fit larger rigs, make it possible to back into each pad, add loops with RV pull-throughs, add loops to service both</p>	<p>USACE is constantly making repairs and improvements as budget allows.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
RVs and tents. Also increase the number of RV spots. Provision for RV parking for overnight stays. This is in huge demand and the CoE is missing out on income.	
Clean up shoreline as small trees/bushes are taking over the west side - very dangerous for guests. Weed eater with cutting blade could easily solve this.	USACE maintains a natural shoreline except in specific recreation areas where safety is a concern.
Personally, I don't want to see any lakefront development at all - commercial or homes with docks especially.	Concur.
Benbrook needs free, family-friendly amenities like a Splash Pad. If this is not in line with what the Corps is envisioning. I think improving the beach access to make something similar to the public beach at Eagle Mountain Lake or Granbury would also be nice!	Benbrook Lake does offer many free, family-friendly amenities. However, a splash pad is not consistent with recreational development policy unless it is part of a larger comprehensive resort.
Also, please give maximum authority to local municipal governments that you intersect with. They have a pulse on their community that you do not. Moreover, it's their land. Please be willing to distribute power to the lowest level possible. Please be open to new ideas and projects.	USACE works with local municipalities to provide recreation opportunities at Benbrook Lake. The cities of Fort Worth and Benbrook operate on a lease agreement and USACE retains ownership of all fee lands.
Create a state or national park to provide a refuge for wildlife including monarch butterflies, grazing animals, and protected habitat.	USACE is willing to work with TPWD to designate a state park at Benbrook Lake. USACE also maintains habitat for wildlife and would welcome the opportunity to work with other organizations to make improvements.
Conduct regular annual maintenance in existing swimming designated areas/beaches (such as sand) and include additional swimming areas. Also include water-based recreation equipment in swimming areas.	USACE refreshes the swim beaches with pea gravel every year. They also provide life jackets in swimming areas.
The Fort Worth Thunderbirds enjoy working with the Corps and field would like to continue operations, and also take opportunities to make further improvements to their facilities:	Current USACE policy relies on the lessee to provide all facilities and O&M associated with the lease.

Comment	USACE Response
restrooms, landing strip improvements, co-located lodging amenities (cabins, camp sites, RV sites, etc.), water-based (fly-float) operations, and include aviation history/education.	
I would like more trails for walking and bikes; separated paths would be better. Resurface existing roads and trails for better access.	USACE is constantly making repairs and improvements as budget allows. USACE also welcomes the opportunity to work with other organizations to make other trail and path upgrades and improvements.
Also, expanded trails (concrete or good DG) that loop around the whole lake would be great.	Although a trail or path around the entire lake would expand recreational opportunities for the community, there would be many obstacles to connecting separate existing trails. Many areas have narrow shoreline or are not conducive to a trail without expanding trails onto neighboring private property. Many wetlands and riparian corridors are also without trails or do not connect trails on either side of a river or creek, which would require bridges and other trail upgrades. However, USACE does welcome the opportunity to work with organizations to make trail and path upgrades and improvements.
My biggest suggestion is to maintain the trail through the prairie just south of Winscott. This is one of the most beautiful spots in Ftw that I would hate to see anything happen to this natural beauty.	Concur. This prairie will be designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area which limits the permissible activities. Paved trails normally would not be permitted, but existing paved trails would be grandfathered. This area is leased by the City of Fort Worth, who is managing it as a trail through a wild prairie. Fort Worth was given the opportunity to comment on the proposed change from High Density Recreation to Environmentally Sensitive Area.

Comment	USACE Response
<p>The bike trail loop toward the south through Day Use Area #2 as depicted in the 1972 Plan Plate 3.2 does not exist - instead, bicyclists going to or coming from the Art Cowsen Trailhead must traverse Memorial Oak between that trailhead and the start of the bike trail across the prairie along Winscott Road. Due to Memorial Oak being narrow and somewhat twisty, the situation seems somewhat hazardous between cars and bicycles/walkers/runners. A dedicated bike/running/walking path basically paralleling Memorial Oak is suggested, perhaps using the unused soap box derby plot of land.</p>	<p>That area is leased to the City of Fort Worth, and any improvements to that area would need to be included in Fort Worth's development plan.</p>
<p>Despite the wonderful efforts of the volunteer trash crew, the cove and adjacent shoreline near the boat ramp at Longhorn Park are overrun with trash. Perhaps installing additional trash receptacles would help. But a more active approach is also suggested, that is, could this area be included as a cleanup location for TRWD annual Trinity Trash Bash? This could help provide a heavy-lift boost to the current volunteer trash pickup program. Also be more proactive moving trash receptacles before flood events (2019 was better than 2015).</p>	<p>USACE appreciates the efforts by staff and volunteers to remove trash and also provides trash receptacles in many convenient locations around the lake. USACE would welcome the opportunity to partner with other volunteer groups to host a "Trash Bash" or another volunteer trash pickup program.</p>
<p>Improve fluctuating water level. Water level drops too quickly to allow recreational water use for much of the recreational boating season.</p>	<p>Noted. Fluctuating water levels are not a topic affected by the Master Plan, and these concerns have been forwarded to those the appropriate individuals affecting water levels and water supply contracts.</p>
<p>Need more buoys marking underwater hazards.</p>	<p>USACE typically does not mark underwater hazards.</p>
<p>Is there within or beyond the Benbrook Lake Master Plan to increase water supply capacity by either expanding the lake or building another reservoir? During the last drought cycle, lake levels dropped to extreme (record?) lows for a long while. It's only a matter of time before we experience another such occurrence.</p>	<p>Noted. Fluctuating water levels are not a topic affected by the Master Plan, and these concerns have been forwarded to those the appropriate individuals affecting water levels and water supply contracts.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Website page - http://www.swf-wc.usace.army.mil/benbrook/index.asp - we use this page daily for lake elevation data. My gripe is the "Facility Closure Report" portion of this page is always behind - just needs to be updated promptly.</p>	<p>Changes are noted on the website as they occur.</p>
<p>I'd also love to see some additional habitat management specifically to encourage deer and Turkey populations.</p>	<p>USACE manages under a stewardship concept and do not manage for a specific species unless they are a species of concern.</p>

Figure F.1.1 Comments from the City of Benbrook

September 17, 2019



Mr. Joshua Quiring
Project Manager
Benbrook Lake
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regional Planning and Environmental Center
Fort Worth District
P. O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Mr. Quiring:

Below please find the City of Benbrook's comments to the Benbrook Lake Master Plan update:

Policy or Operational Recommendations

- Stabilize lake level.
- Commission new Environmental Assessment.
- Establish plan to improve Benbrook Marina operations – dredging, increase pool level, relocate to near Baja Beach, etc.
- Grant ROW/Easement for widening of Benbrook Boulevard from Winscott Road south toward Whitestone Golf Course.
- Increase number of mowing occurrences on Fort Worth and COE controlled property along Winscott Road to improve overall appearance and reduce fire hazards.
- Classify entire park as a "resort".
- Evaluate drainage throughout park and establish corrective action plan.
- Allow free pedestrian and bicycle access to Holiday Park.
- Authorize City to review and approve all Special Events (within COE accepted guidelines) held at Dutch Branch Park.
- Consider utilizing the land surrounding the lake to meet the additional demands of our citizenry. Develop play fountains, small splash pads, dog parks, small amphitheaters, areas for food trucks, and other similar amenities that would draw families with children.
- Consider allowing additional vendors the opportunity to lease equipment like kayaks, canoes, and jet skis.
- Provide the City of Benbrook greater access and flexibility to utilize the lease areas based on citizen interests.

Physical/Operational Improvements to Dutch Branch Park

- Establish an R.V. resort to include restaurant and water access, perhaps in the Baja Beach area.
- Establish additional soccer fields – with parking.
- Increase pasture land for Benbrook Stables, but not increase the number of horses.
- Connect Creekside Drive to Lake Shore.

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- Eliminate low water crossing by constructing a bridge or a bridge-class culvert crossing.
- Establish trailhead and commercial pad site at SE Corner of Winscott Road at Benbrook Boulevard for recreational support businesses (i.e. bike shop, sporting outfitter, snack shop, etc.).
- Allow expansion of YMCA building and operations (possibly to include an outdoor splash pad).
- Add pedestrian tunnel under Benbrook Boulevard at Overcrest Drive with sidewalk connecting to trails throughout the park.
- Eliminate Par 3 building and move its operations to driving range building. Driving range building may need expansion.
- Add new signs to match City Hall design:
 - Park entrance sign at Cary Conklin Drive.
 - YMCA.
 - Driving Range.
 - Wayfinding sign for Par 3 and Baja Beach at Winscott Road at Beach Road and intersection/corner improvements.
 - New Benbrook Marina and Power Play sign at Benbrook Boulevard at Stevens Drive.
- Revise the horse trail map by Pavilions 1 and 2.
- Add bird watching stations in the park and at Baja Beach.
- Add nature trail from Dutch Branch Park to lake to better tie park to the lake.
- Change out park equipment as needed (replace Castle Park and Robot Park equipment and update baseball fields as needed) as part of a new Master Park Plan.
- Revive the swimming and beach areas to include water-based play equipment (e.g. slides, balloon pads, etc.).
- Consider utilizing the land surrounding the lake to meet the additional demands of our citizenry. Develop play fountains, small splash pads, dog parks, small amphitheaters, areas for food trucks, and other similar amenities.
- Add a food truck court, where vendors are on a rotating basis.

Other Recommendations

- Improve connectivity between Tiger Trail and Lakeview Drive. Create a nice entrance to the south end of the lake.
- Regrade areas north of Winscott Road to improve drainage of dead-end streets.
- Evaluate drainage ditch from Cozby West to south of Winscott Road. City streets will be impacted by erosion over time.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy Wayman".

Andy Wayman
City Manager

911 Winscott Road • P.O. Box 26569 • Benbrook, Texas 76126-0569 • 817-249-3000 • FAX 817-249-0884 • www.benbrook-tx.gov



Figure F.1.2 Comments from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Email Received September 25, 2019

After being in the field with you for the wildlife habitat assessments, we were able to find some quality areas that need to be classified as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA), and we came across areas that would be suitable as Multiple Resource Management classification (low density recreation, wildlife management, vegetation management, and future/inactive recreation). TPWD recommends ESA classification for native prairies, stream and riparian corridors, scenic bluffs, and bottomland forests/wetlands, as USACE indicated in the public meeting presentation. TPWD also supports addressing invasive species, restoring degraded prairies, addressing encroachments & trespass, improving recreational infrastructure and opportunity as appropriate to the meet public demand without exceeding carrying capacity of the property and its resources, while balancing the stewardship of the natural resources. The upcoming prairie habitat assessments will provide additional information to guide selection of revised classifications specific to prairie ESAs and prairie restoration areas. TPWD encourages conservation of quality native grasslands and restoration of degraded grasslands to provide diverse floral resources for pollinators and habitat for grassland wildlife.

Please refer to the TPWD WHAB website for the recently updated rare, threatened, and endangered species lists (RTEST) for the project area at <https://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/rtest/>. With recent updates, you will see additional species of greatest conservation need within RTEST that align more closely with the Texas Conservation Action Plan.

Please continue to coordinate the Master Plan Revision and Environmental Assessment with the TPWD WHAB program through my email as well as our project review repository: whab@tpwd.texas.gov. Feel free to share preliminary land use classifications with me.

Sincerely,

Karen Hardin
Natural Resource Specialist
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

Table F.2 Public Comments from 5 March 2021 Draft Master Plan Virtual Public Presentation

Comment	USACE Response
Comments from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	
<p>The least tern (<i>Sternula antillarum</i>) was federally-delisted by final rule on January 13, 2021.</p> <p>Recommendation: TPWD recommends obtaining an updated version of the USFWS IPaC Resource List of Appendix C and reflecting the federal delisting of the least tern in the Master Plan and EA.</p>	Noted.
<p>Section 2.2.4 of the Master Plan indicates species identified as Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate species by TPWD can be found in Appendix C. The resource in Appendix C is the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Resources for Tarrant County generated using the TPWD Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas by County (RTEST) web-based tool. Please note that Candidate designation at the state level does not exist. The species without a threatened or endangered designation are rare species that represent species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) potentially occurring in Tarrant County.</p> <p>Recommendation: TPWD recommends replacing “Candidate Species” with either “rare species of Tarrant County” or “SGCN of Tarrant County” in line 1083 of Section 2.2.4.</p>	Appendix C also includes a species list from the USFWS which identifies threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species that may occur at Benbrook Lake. Per their species list in Appendix C, no candidate species are known to occur at Benbrook Lake. The reference to candidate species in Section 2.2.4 is in reference to the USFWS designation. Added the following text to the next paragraph “There are no candidate species known to exist at Benbrook Lake.”
<p>Appendix C of the Master Plan includes an August 25, 2020, version of the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Species for Tarrant County. A recent update has been made that reflects the federal delisting of the least tern and includes changes to the species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) that may occur in Tarrant County.</p> <p>Recommendation: TPWD recommends obtaining an updated version of the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Species for Tarrant County using the RTEST webbased tool.</p>	Noted.

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Section 2.2.4 of the Master Plan, line 1126 may have a typo where it refers to a mixed herbaceous plant. The <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> - <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i> - <i>Nassella leucotricha</i> Herbaceous Vegetation is a mapped community that represents a natural grassland or native prairie.</p> <p>Recommendation: TPWD recommends replacing “plant” with “vegetation community” or “grassland”.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>Table 2.5 of the Master Plan does not list any invasive mammal species identified at Benbrook Lake. Feral swine (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) are known to occur in almost every county in Texas per the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service maps.</p> <p>Recommendation: If feral swine are known or suspected to occur at Benbrook Lake, TPWD recommends adding feral swine to Table 2.5.</p>	<p>Updated Table 2.5 and the text with the following: "Feral hogs (<i>Sus scrofa</i>), although not confirmed to be present on USACE land at Benbrook Lake, are likely to occur due to their widespread presence across the region and are often very destructive to ecosystems where they are found."</p>
<p>TPWD supports the proposed action alternative of the EA and revisions to the Master Plan. The Master Plan would create a balance between recreational opportunity and stewardship of the natural resources at Benbrook Lake. Thank you for conserving the fish and wildlife resources of Texas and considering TPWD’s input on the Master Plan and EA.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>Comments from City of Fort Worth Park & Recreation Department</p>	
<p>I excitedly read the USACE Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan & I am very happy to know that USACE partners with the cities of Fort Worth & Benbrook with the goal of positive stewardship of project lands. USACE lands surrounding Benbrook Lake are very important for water quality & for wildlife habitat. The 1,122 acres designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas contains very unique geology, topography, & hydrology, which in turn fosters endemic plant species that are found nowhere else in the world. Designating importance &</p>	<p>Concur.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>value for these areas sets the tone for equally important stewardship practices for these unique north Texas assets.</p> <p>Likewise, USACE's expressed dedication to protect these areas while managing the land overall for multiple use - serves as a regional example of how land can be managed with wildlife habitat in mind. For example, there are several City of Fort Worth parks with the same sensitive habitats; whereby the City could follow USACE's scientific lead to designate Environmentally Sensitive Areas (as appropriate & approved).</p> <p>By properly stewarding these designated areas, as well as all lands, the entire region will benefit. Many ecological & environmental benefits are difficult to place a monetary value upon. However, protecting vegetative cover (regardless of whether its environmentally sensitive or endemic) protects our municipal drinking water quality, reduces erosion & siltation, slows & reduces the impacts of flooding, improves air quality, & reduces urban heat island temperatures.</p> <p>Simultaneously, managing the vegetation for prairies & woodlands provides wildlife habitat while providing residents with an escape from the challenges of urban living. Hiking, wildlife & wildflower viewing, & general immersion in nature has scientifically-documented positive effects on humans & society as a whole.</p> <p>With a growing population & expansion of cities, open space will become increasingly important. You may be aware that the City of Fort Worth has embarked upon an Open Space Conservation Program. Many of the topics within the USACE Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan are points we have discussed & incorporated into our decision matrices for property acquisition & stewardship. The USACE Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan surely will serve as a resource for future endeavors.</p> <p>I found the Master Plan to be</p>	

Comment	USACE Response
comprehensive & thoughtful. I've submitted a few edits & comments throughout; & highlighted what I believe are the most important points. Thank you for this comprehensive guiding document.	
<p>[The following comments were as comments in a PDF form of the MP and EA]:</p> <p>Table ES.1</p> <p>Essentially a decrease in acreage for wildlife habitat (calculation). Essentially, 2,380 acres available as habitat, not including aquatic habitat. On a landscape scale, other agencies (i.e. CFW) need to add more acreage to this in general, across the city.</p>	Although the acres decreased for wildlife management, the addition of ESAs and vegetation management areas increases the total acres available for wildlife habitat. Concur that more acreage is needed for wildlife habitat across the region.
<p>Section 1.4</p> <p>PARD [Park & Recreation Department] needs a Natural Resources Master Plan!</p>	Noted.
<p>Section 1.5</p> <p>Mary's Creek is a focus area (somewhat) for OS program.</p>	Noted.
<p>Section 2.1.3</p> <p>Makes a good case for planning to conserve more open space for mitigation long-term.</p>	Concur.
<p>Section 2.1.6</p> <p>Very important for the City of FW to partner & help protect USACE land & watershed because it provides drinking water to a burgeoning population.</p>	Concur. USACE welcomes the opportunity to work with the City of Fort Worth to partner with their lease areas, especially Winscott Prairie.
<p>Figure 2.6</p> <p>Like the map</p>	Noted
<p>Section 2.1.7</p> <p>RE: "Generally, fish caught above the dam and within Benbrook Lake are considered safe to consume."</p> <p>This is going to change as urbanization consumes the land around & upstream of the lake.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The state advisory is due to PCBs and dioxins due to contamination in and around Lake Worth. Such contamination likely won't affect water above Benbrook Dam, but other contaminants like consumer runoff, nitrogen, and oils from vehicles will likely increase.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Section 2.2.1 RE: "haphazardly"</p> <p>Odd choice of word for a scientific survey. Maybe use 'randomly'?</p>	<p>Sites were selected using both a mix of areas known to include unique species or habitats as well as randomly to include a wide variety of sites in each habitat type. Sentence was reworded to better describe the process.</p>
<p>Section 2.2.1 RE: "areas within Pecan Valley Park have the greatest potential for improvement."</p> <p>Partner with PARD to improve habitat here?</p>	<p>Concur. USACE welcomes the opportunity to work with the City of Fort Worth to partner with their lease areas, including areas within Pecan Valley Park.</p>
<p>Section 2.2.2 RE: "the region, like many other ecological regions in Texas, has undergone significant changes in the past 150 years... habitat... diversity... fragmentation... competition... urban to rural developments... lack of proper wildlife and habitat management."</p> <p>Major challenges for managing wildlife habitat. PARD should be a regional partner within our parks to improve habitat overall.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>Section 2.2.4 RE: "There is a formal recording of earleaf false foxglove (<i>Agalinis auriculata</i>) being detected from a location on the project lands at Benbrook Lake but with no date recorded, and no other recordings being listed..."</p> <p>Many local botanist & naturalists may be able to find the foxglove. What about on CFW property? Should PARD be thinking about these species as well?</p>	<p>Concur. There are other known species of <i>Agalinis</i> on the site as well as other uncommon species, but no recent documentation of <i>Agalinis auriculata</i>. USACE welcomes the opportunity to work with PARD and BRIT to assist in identifying and protecting these and other species. In addition, local botanists and naturalists are encouraged to help document species on government property.</p>
<p>Section 2.2.4 RE: #3)</p> <p>Those grasses are very common & cannot be used as indicators of habitat for the species listed above.</p>	<p>Those specific habitats may not be common in the region but are common at Benbrook Lake relative to other habitats throughout North Central Texas. Due to urbanization, these habitats are facing pressure and becoming less common.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Table 2.5</p> <p>RE: Mammals</p> <p>What about feral hogs?!</p>	<p>Updated Table 2.5 and the text with the following: "Feral hogs (<i>Sus scrofa</i>), although not confirmed to be present on USACE land at Benbrook Lake, are likely to occur due to their widespread presence across the region and are often very destructive to ecosystems where they are found."</p>
<p>Table 2.5</p> <p>RE: Insects</p> <p>Emerald ash borer?</p>	<p>Emerald Ash Borers have been discovered in the DFW area, so far only in northwest Tarrant County. However, TPWD notes that it will likely spread throughout the DFW area, and it is mentioned as a species which staff will monitor for.</p>
<p>Table 2.5</p> <p>Category for reptiles/amphibians?</p> <p>Mediterranean gecko?</p>	<p>These are common in urban and suburban communities and are found at the Lake Office and some of the developed park areas.</p>
<p>Table 2.5</p> <p>RE: Mollusks</p> <p>Zebra mussel? Surely it's in Benbrook Lake now.</p>	<p>Zebra mussels are not yet at Benbrook Lake, and TRWD does have a system to monitor and eradicate them when discovered.</p>
<p>Section 2.2.6</p> <p>RE: Adjacent landowners are informed that removing trees..."</p> <p>removing trees on their property? Or trespassing & removing trees on USACE property?</p>	<p>Changed text to clarify that removing trees on USACE property is not permitted.</p>
<p>Figure 2.7</p> <p>Add caption to explain this map</p>	<p>Noted. The map is updated to include a legend.</p>
<p>Section 2.3.1</p> <p>RE: "Sites with Late Archaic components are well represented in the Tarrant County area"</p> <p>Archeology dig at the FWNCR is a site in Tarant County.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 2.3.2</p> <p>Any mention of Comanche?</p>	<p>Added reference to Comanche who were also present in the region.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Section 2.3.5 RE: "All currently known sites with unknown eligibility and newly recorded sites must be evaluated to determine their eligibility for the NRHP. In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, any proposed ground-disturbing activities or projects, such as those described in this master plan or as may be proposed in the future by others for right-of-way easements, will require cultural resource surveys to locate and evaluate historic and prehistoric resources."</p> <p>This is important protection of our cultural history.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>Figure 2.8</p> <p>RE: the following age groups: 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54</p> <p>This is the most physically active age range; so generally a target range for recreation & outdoor pursuits.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>Figure 2.10</p> <p>"typo. Add comma or slash; need dash for continuation of administrative if not on same line"</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 2.5.1</p> <p>Shouldn't this be defined earlier in the document? It was used several pages prior before this definition.</p>	<p>Added to beginning of 2.4.</p>
<p>Table 2.16</p> <p>RE: Tarrant County 55.7%</p> <p>Generally can be assumed that most of these were from Fort Worth residents.</p>	<p>Concur, and 76.4% from within the ZOI shows how most don't travel far to visit Benbrook Lake.</p>
<p>Table 2.17</p> <p>RE: City of Fort Worth column</p> <p>This sets the USACE property visitation apart from why someone would visit it instead of a City park.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Figure 2.11</p> <p>RE: top three activities</p> <p>Similar survey results for CFW Open Space program & PARD survey.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>End of Section 2.5.4</p> <p>This demand may have increased since COVID.</p>	<p>Concur, USACE has noted that demand for some activities has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, however it is not feasible to include in the Master Plan due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic.</p>
<p>Table 2.18</p> <p>RE: Flowage Easement Acres</p> <p>Would it be appropriate to provide map showing flowage easements? Or would that compromise landowner resale value?</p>	<p>We typically don't include a map of the flowage easement in the Master Plan, since it is not USACE owned land, and the Master Plan does not affect how that land is managed. A description of flowage easement lands is described in section 4.3.</p>
<p>Section 3.2</p> <p>RE: Goal A "best management practices" not well-defined</p>	<p>There are best management practices for a variety of activities and objectives. Such practices are defined by subject matter experts and are subject to change based on needs and/or requirements.</p>
<p>Table 3.2</p> <p>RE: "as funding permits."</p> <p>Replace period with comma</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 4.2.3</p> <p>RE: "city of Fort Worth"</p> <p>capitalize City</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 4.2.6</p> <p>RE: Wildlife Management</p> <p>Only 128 acres? Isn't that low for the amount of acreage under USACE management?</p>	<p>Although there are 128 acres of Wildlife Management, USACE will conduct wildlife management activities in ESAs and other land classifications. A habitat assessment was conducted, and those areas with highest value to wildlife and the habitat were classified as ESAs rather than WM.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Section 4.2.6</p> <p>RE: Vegetative Management "stewardship of forest, prairie, and other native vegetative cover"</p> <p>Give examples of vegetative management. Prescribed burns, shredding, forestry mulching, mowing, herbicide application for invasive woody species/grasses, etc.</p>	<p>Concur. These are all examples that we include in vegetative management stewardship and added to the VM description in 5.5.2.</p>
<p>Section 4.2.7</p> <p>RE: Fish and Wildlife Sanctuary</p> <p>Sloughs aren't classified for water surface protection? Sloughs are where the wetlands are on lakes & they are likely providing the best habitat for fish & wildlife.</p>	<p>We don't have any water surface designated as fish and wildlife sanctuary.</p>
<p>Section 5.1</p> <p>"city of Fort Worth"</p> <p>Capitalize City</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 5.3.2</p> <p>"city of Fort Worth"</p> <p>Capitalize City</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 5.4</p> <p>Insert "survey" after Prairie Survey is a United States Agriculture Department (USDA)</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Table 5.1</p> <p>RE: ESA16</p> <p>This tract has broad support from the conservation community including several non-profit organizations that provide volunteer assistance for biological surveys, brush management, & natural history education.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Table 5.1</p> <p>RE: ESA17</p> <p>Winscott Prairie is recognized by Native Prairies Association of Texas by a sign signifying it's a registered native Texas prairie. The sign is located at the intersection of Winscott Road & Highway 377.</p> <p>RE: grasses and forbs including several endemic species found only in north central Texas.</p>	<p>Concur</p>
<p>Section 5.6.3</p> <p>Remove Period</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Section 6.1</p> <p>Should Federal be capitalized? (twice in paragraph)</p>	<p>Not in this usage.</p>
<p>Section 6.2</p> <p>RE: "encourages the establishment of designated corridors..."</p> <p>really? Utility corridors are 'encouraged'?! Maybe permitted after careful & fair consideration?</p>	<p>They're encouraged to consolidate utilities where no alternative exists to have utilities cross USACE property. The primary alternative will be for the utilities to find a route off USACE property, and when no external feasible alternative exists, can cross within a designated utility corridor.</p>
<p>Section 6.5</p> <p>So happy to see prairie as an important consideration for stewardship. Prairies are the most endangered habitat locally & across the U.S. It's the forgotten jewel. And typically the most biologically diverse.</p>	<p>Concur.</p>
<p>Section 6.5</p> <p>RE: "planting more native species."</p> <p>Introducing seeds & plantings should be done after great consideration. Most relict sites have the genetic diversity & stock to self- restore without introducing distant genotypes into the system.</p>	<p>Concur. While it isn't always feasible, mitigation plans and habitat restorations should use locally collected seeds or plant material. Although we require native species in our restorations and mitigation, locally collected plant material isn't always available.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>End of Section 6.5</p> <p>RE: city's mowing ordinance</p> <p>Did it officially change the weed ordinance? Not sure. But reduced-mowing for natural resource management is something PARD is working on.</p> <p>https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/files/assets/public/government/documents/84001826-53dc-405c-9e1b-20219dfebaad.pdf</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 6.6</p> <p>This will likely change as more subdivisions encroach upon the USACE lands.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 6.6</p> <p>"Texas Parks and Wildlife"</p> <p>replace "and" with &, and add "Department" in both places</p>	<p>Added "Department" where it was missing.</p>
Comments from the Public	
<p>I wanted to voice my opinion that all communities need wild places.</p> <p>Natural landscapes provide countless resources for humans and wild animals, insects, and plants. Once these areas are developed, it's almost impossible to return them to their wild state.</p> <p>Most people probably see natural areas as wasted space, where you could build something or put a road to somewhere. But natural areas feed the soul of a community and the wildlife of a community. Think of our national parks, like Yellowstone. Think of Big Bend.</p> <p>Please don't destroy every inch of unspoiled land just to satisfy human greed. Please save some space for gentle souls to thrive.</p>	<p>Concur. USACE lands are often located in urban areas and values the access to and preservation of natural resources.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>I commented in the original comment period but I would like to emphasize that the high quality ecological areas should not have outside genetic material (i.e. seeds, transplants, etc.) from other locations brought in. Genetics collected on site or very nearby would maintain the genetic as well as the biological association integrity. These original existing areas serve as a critical template for other restoration projects that define the desired ecosystem endstate for those restorations. Also, any restoration plan should be formalized and written for review by qualified professionals. Thanks for the work you all have put in to this.</p>	<p>Concur. While it isn't always feasible, mitigation plans and habitat restorations should use locally collected seeds or plant material. Although we require native species in our restorations and mitigation, locally collected plant material isn't always available.</p>
<p>This comment by email is submitted for review regarding the Benbrook Lake Master Plan.</p> <p>Noted in appendix D, page D-2, is Public Law 91-190, National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.</p> <p>Specifically, the Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act declaration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations; o Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings; o Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences; o Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain wherever possible an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice; o Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities, and o Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable 	<p>USACE acknowledges NEPA stewardship policies and attempts to achieve a balance between public access and resource management.</p> <p>New facilities are made to be handicap accessible when feasible.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>resources.</p> <p>I would like to request the Master Plan be reviewed for optimization of suggested reclassifications of land use to include handicapped accessibility to the lands, shorelines, and facilities, and a prioritization of compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.</p>	
<p>The City of Fort Worth Park & Recreation Department appreciates the opportunity to provide comment of your draft Mater Plan. The Department supports both your Five Resource Goals and your Recreational Objective. We further support the change of the Recreation Areas classification to High Density Recreation with the understanding that the National USACE policy ER 1130-2-550 that limits recreation development on USACE lands to those activities that are dependent on a project's natural resources will not impact pre-existing uses such as Pecan Valley Golf Course or the soccer complex managed by the Fort Worth Youth Soccer Association.</p> <p>The Master Plan identifies trails as one of the most requested recreational amenities. Additional hike and bike trails are one of the City's most requested amenities as well and is reflected in the City of Fort Worth's Park Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. As the City continues to grow specifically in the southern sector, it is important that both entities work together to extend the Trinity Trail south to connect to these upcoming residential areas. The ability to provide trail connectivity through such unique habitat and recreational lake areas will provide the user with an exceptional experience.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you in the future.</p>	<p>The policy limits new stand-alone facilities, which could be allowed as part of a larger development, but not impact pre-existing facilities such as the golf course or sports fields. The Master Plan will not affect those pre-existing uses at Benbrook Lake.</p> <p>USACE welcomes the opportunity to work with Fort Worth and other partners to provide recreation opportunities including trail connections to existing trails and new residential areas.</p>


Comment	USACE Response
<p>Allow me to make a simple comment on how to best proceed with the Master Plan.</p> <p>Please conserve as much native prairie area as possible. Walking trails, birding, plant appreciation, no motorized vehicles. Just refreshing activity out in nature. The prairie isn't just for people to enjoy at their leisure. It's a vital reserve for plant and animal diversity, down to creatures too small to see but vitally important to our world nonetheless. Native prairie supports local species and those that migrate through our area. It supports pollinators like native bees, moths, butterflies, hummingbirds, and others whose numbers are decreasing sharply due to human activities including air, water, light and sound pollution. We need to preserve all of this if we are to survive.</p>	<p>Concur. USACE acknowledges the value in prairies and other habitats and the support for local wildlife. Prior to this Master Plan there were not any ESAs, and now there are 1,122 acres of ESA and 1,129 acres of Vegetative Management lands which include prairies and other habitat types.</p>
<p>MP should include a plan to redistribute more land to preserve & protect the native prairie lands. As FTW & Benbrook continue to grow at exponential rates, migrating species have lost considerable land around the lake (subdivisions Bryant Irvin @ Altamesa Blvd, south of Whitestone Golf Course, near Holiday Park area). We need to continue to provide these species as well as the local animals a sustainable habitat.</p> <p>As a visitor to the lake for 30+ years, I have seen visitors encroach on land not marked as trails or recreational use more often looking for "adventure." As well, the deterioration progresses at a considerably faster rate the higher the use by the growing animal population that needs the land and the general public.</p> <p>Again, to reiterate, more land should be dedicated to preserving and protecting the native prairie lands.</p>	<p>USACE acknowledges the value of prairies and other habitat types attempts to achieve a balance between public access and resource management. With that in mind, USACE added 1,122 acres of ESA, 1,129 acres of VM, and 128 acres of WM, all of which provide sustainable habitat for local wildlife.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>We would like to see the prairie stay the way it is and not be touched by new infrastructure or housing. It is important to see the natural habitat of animals to stay the way it is. We would not like it if somebody came to our homes and destroyed them just like the animals who are helpless, it is important as humans to play a role to keep our ecosystem healthy.</p>	<p>Housing will not occur on government property at Benbrook Lake. USACE acknowledges the value of prairies and other habitat types attempts to achieve a balance between public access and resource management. The primary option for new utilities will be to avoid crossing USACE property, but where no other feasible option exists, any utilities and similar infrastructure will be consolidated to utility corridors to restrict the footprint and impact on federal land.</p>
<p>On behalf of our 3,000 members and supporters, Great Plains Restoration Council, a diverse 501(c)3 non-profit organization working for the health of people, prairies and waters, supports permanent protection and the Environmentally Sensitive Areas designations of native prairies on Benbrook Lake established in the new master plan. We also support the Fort Worth Prairie Park partnership, protection of all native wildlife, plant communities and other native biodiversity, ecological restoration including brush removal, youth work, outdoor wellness, community engagement and education, green jobs in conservation and more, and hope that the Corps never sells off any of these public lands. Benbrook Lake is an excellent, high-quality stronghold of the fast-disappearing Fort Worth Prairie ecosystem, now one of the rarest ecosystems in North America, and as such provides irreplaceable refuge for people and wildlife, including rapidly declining grassland nesting birds and Monarch butterflies.</p> <p>Great Plains Restoration Council will continue to offer its support to achieve and maintain these goals. We are appreciative of the friendly, conscientious, dedicated, and highly-knowledgeable staff at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Benbrook Lake, and their commitment to conservation and human well-being through prairie preservation.</p>	<p>USACE welcomes the opportunity to work with partners in managing resources at Benbrook Lake and appreciates the continued interest and work by the GPRC and partners at the lake. USACE acknowledges the value of prairies and other habitat types attempts to achieve a balance between public access and resource management and has included many prairies in ESAs and Vegetative Management areas to protect and maintain those habitats.</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>Because of the unprecedented new growth and construction in the area resulting in the destruction of so many prairies and mature forests, I feel that it is imperative that your new plan includes the continued preservation of native prairies and old growth forests in order to protect the bees, birds and butterflies along with the wildlife, for future generations.</p>	<p>Concur. The new land classifications that include ESAs, vegetation management, and wildlife management areas help to preserve native prairies and old growth forests and protect vital wildlife habitat. Any significant change to this Master Plan will require NEPA compliance and additional public involvement.</p>
<p>It is vitally important that as much Fort Worth Prairie be conserved and restored since we are losing it daily with development. The impact our natural prairie has on species support as well as for the water retention and other ecological services performed by this unique landscape.</p>	<p>Concur. The new land classifications that include ESAs, vegetation management, and wildlife management areas help with water retention and performing other vital ecological services.</p>
<p>My name is [Removed PII], I learned was how to give back to the community and how to work as a team also basically to be aware of mother earth we throw away trash on the streets and loiter and don't realize the harm caused to animals for the most part my experience with this project was amazing and great.</p>	<p>USACE appreciates the volunteer efforts to help clean up garbage and in habitat restoration.</p>
<p>Thank you for taking on this endeavor. I would still like to comment to show my continued support for keeping as much native prairie and grassland along Winscott as possible, as it is very beautiful.</p> <p>Also, one of the highest and best uses for additional land in Dutch Park that would benefit the community would be a splash pad/park.</p>	<p>USACE acknowledges the value of prairies and other habitat types attempts to achieve a balance between public access and resource management and has included many prairies in ESAs and VM areas to protect and maintain those habitats.</p> <p>Any new developments in Dutch Branch Park or any other USACE parks would need to be consistent with the Master Plan as well as current regulations.</p>
<p>In most places, but especially on the east side of the lake, I believe that priority should be given to conservation (environmental) concerns. The environmentally sensitive prairie on the east side should be thoughtfully managed to preserve and protect the native prairie ecosystem. Passive recreation such as trail walking is a great public activity and could enhance public awareness and understanding of the prairie. I am active in the Native Plant Society of Texas and</p>	<p>USACE acknowledges the value of prairies and other habitat types attempts to achieve a balance between public access and resource management and has included many prairies in ESAs and Vegetative Management areas to protect and maintain those habitats. USACE created ESAs and VM areas in part to help conserve those areas. USACE welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Native Plant Society of Texas and</p>

Comment	USACE Response
<p>can envision educational opportunities such as plant/botany hikes in small groups on the prairie.</p> <p>Hopefully, the City of Fort Worth will purchase and protect the prairie lands on the east side of the lake bordering the Corp property.</p>	<p>other organizations for educational outreach opportunities.</p>
<p>At this point, me and everyone that I have visited with at Holiday Park Day use area is much more concerned with the absolute disaster area the park is turning into than any Master Plan. At the rate that it is deteriorating, very few of us regular Park Pass owners will be using the park. We were forced to tolerate last summer where no admission fee was charged with very little to no supervision which anyone could predict, led to chaos in the park on a regular basis. Now we are told that the two long time park attendants, [Removed PII] and [Removed PII] will no longer be there and an "Honor System" gate entry of some sort will be installed. Any Elementary Student could easily predict what the results of that system will quickly be but apparently by their actions, the Corp of Engineers and the Lake Manager [Removed PII] are totally unconcerned with the safety of Law Abiding Park Pass owners and other people with respectful well behaved families. It is very sad to see Benbrook Holiday Park return to the old days when it was extremely dangerous to visit the lake due to the behavior of a large number of people in the park that do not respect any rules that keep the park safe for everyone. I do not remember any of this being mentioned at the August 2019 meeting that me and many others attended as this "Master Plan" is in no way the future anyone wants to see. Thank you.</p>	<p>Noted. The Benbrook Lake staff continues to maintain and upgrade facilities within the budget constraints and limited resources. During the COVID-19 pandemic, USACE has tried to innovate to minimize expenses, simplify reservations, and make general improvements. Staff will continue to make improvements while maintaining patrols in the park.</p>

Figure F.1.3 Comments from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department



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Carter P. Smith
Executive Director

March 25, 2021

Mr. Joshua Quiring, Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Fort Worth District
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Re: Draft Benbrook Lake Master Plan Revision and Environmental Assessment
(Tarrant County)

Dear Mr. Joshua Quiring:

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) received the February 25, 2021, Notice of Availability of the Draft Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan (Master Plan) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for public comment.

Project Description

The Benbrook Dam and Lake Project (Project) consists of approximately 3,635 acres of water surface at a conservation pool elevation of 694.0 feet NGVD29, approximately 4,375 acres of fee-simple federal land above the conservation pool, 3,200 acres of flowage easements, and 46 miles of shoreline. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Fort Worth District operates and maintains the dam and associated facilities and administers the Federal lands and flowage easements comprising the Project through a combination of direct management and leases for park and recreation purposes. The lake and dam provide a multi-purpose reservoir for the original purposes of flood mitigation, water supply, fish and wildlife management, and recreation.

The USACE has proposed the Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan to replace the 1972 Master Plan to guide the stewardship of natural and cultural resources and make provisions for outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities on federal land associated with Benbrook Lake. The Master Plan guides the efficient and cost-effective development, management, and use of Project lands and provides for the sustainability of the Project's resources for the benefit of present and future generations. The Master Plan presents an inventory and analysis of Project resources, resource goals and objective, land allocation and classification, and a management plan for each land use classification. The Master Plan is intended to serve as a comprehensive land and recreation management guide with an effective life of approximately 25 years.

As a result of stakeholder input and assessing Project resources, proposed land classifications include Project operations (234 acres), high density recreation (HDR) (1,761 acres), environmentally sensitive areas (ESA) (1,122 acres), and 1,257 acres of multiple resource management lands (MRML) which are sub-classified as vegetation management (VM) (1,129 acres) and wildlife management (WM) (128 acres). Proposed water surface classifications of the permanent pool (3,635 acres) include restricted (9 acres), designated no-wake (115 acres), and open recreation (3,511 acres).

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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AUSTIN, TEXAS 78744-3291
512.389.4800
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Mr. Joshua Quiring
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The EA evaluated the No Action alternative and the Proposed Action alternative. The EA indicates that the USACE has chosen the Proposed Action alternative to adopt and implement the 2021 Master Plan because the proposed action would meet regional goals associated with good stewardship of land, water, and recreational resources, would address identified recreational trends, and would allow for continued use and development of Project lands without violating national policies or public laws.

As the state agency with primary responsibility for protecting the state's fish and wildlife resources and in accordance with the authority granted by Parks and Wildlife Code (PWC) section 12.0011, TPWD provides the following comments and recommendations regarding the draft Master Plan and EA.

The least tern (*Sternula antillarum*) was federally-delisted by final rule on January 13, 2021.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends obtaining an updated version of the USFWS IPaC Resource List of Appendix C and reflecting the federal delisting of the least tern in the Master Plan and EA.

Section 2.2.4 of the Master Plan indicates species identified as Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate species by TPWD can be found in Appendix C. The resource in Appendix C is the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Resources for Tarrant County generated using the TPWD Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas by County (RTEST) web-based tool. Please note that Candidate designation at the state level does not exist. The species without a threatened or endangered designation are rare species that represent species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) potentially occurring in Tarrant County.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends replacing "Candidate Species" with either "rare species of Tarrant County" or "SGCN of Tarrant County" in line 1083 of Section 2.2.4.

Appendix C of the Master Plan includes an August 25, 2020, version of the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Species for Tarrant County. A recent update has been made that reflects the federal delisting of the least tern and includes changes to the species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) that may occur in Tarrant County.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends obtaining an updated version of the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Species for Tarrant County using the RTEST web-based tool.

Section 2.2.4 of the Master Plan, line 1126 may have a typo where it refers to a mixed herbaceous plant. The *Schizachyrium scoparium* - *Bouteloua curtipendula* - *Nassella leucotricha* Herbaceous Vegetation is a mapped community that represents a natural grassland or native prairie.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends replacing "plant" with "vegetation community" or "grassland".

Mr. Joshua Quiring
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Table 2.5 of the Master Plan does not list any invasive mammal species identified at Benbrook Lake. Feral swine (*Sus scrofa*) are known to occur in almost every county in Texas per the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service maps.

Recommendation: If feral swine are known or suspected to occur at Benbrook Lake, TPWD recommends adding feral swine to Table 2.5.

TPWD supports the proposed action alternative of the EA and revisions to the Master Plan. The Master Plan would create a balance between recreational opportunity and stewardship of the natural resources at Benbrook Lake. Thank you for conserving the fish and wildlife resources of Texas and considering TPWD's input on the Master Plan and EA.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 903-322-5001 or Karen.Hardin@tpwd.texas.gov.

Sincerely,



Karen B. Hardin
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Wildlife Division

kbh/46176

Figure F.4 Comments from City of Fort Worth Park & Recreation Department

Email Received April 12, 2021

I excitedly read the USACE Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan & I am very happy to know that USACE partners with the cities of Fort Worth & Benbrook with the goal of positive stewardship of project lands. USACE lands surrounding Benbrook Lake are very important for water quality & for wildlife habitat. The 1,122 acres designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas contains very unique geology, topography, & hydrology, which in turn fosters endemic plant species that are found nowhere else in the world. Designating importance & value for these areas sets the tone for equally important stewardship practices for these unique north Texas assets.

Likewise, USACE's expressed dedication to protect these areas while managing the land overall for multiple use - serves as a regional example of how land can be managed with wildlife habitat in mind. For example, there are several City of Fort Worth parks with the same sensitive habitats; whereby the City could follow USACE's scientific lead to designate Environmentally Sensitive Areas (as appropriate & approved).

By properly stewarding these designated areas, as well as all lands, the entire region will benefit. Many ecological & environmental benefits are difficult to place a monetary value upon. However, protecting vegetative cover (regardless of whether its environmentally sensitive or endemic) protects our municipal drinking water quality, reduces erosion & siltation, slows & reduces the impacts of flooding, improves air quality, & reduces urban heat island temperatures. Simultaneously, managing the vegetation for prairies & woodlands provides wildlife habitat while providing residents with an escape from the challenges of urban living. Hiking, wildlife & wildflower viewing, & general immersion in nature has scientifically-documented positive effects on humans & society as a whole.

With a growing population & expansion of cities, open space will become increasingly important. You may be aware that the City of Fort Worth has embarked upon an Open Space Conservation Program. Many of the topics within the USACE Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan are points we have discussed & incorporated into our decision matrices for property acquisition & stewardship. The USACE Benbrook Lake 2021 Master Plan surely will serve as a resource for future endeavors.

I found the Master Plan to be comprehensive & thoughtful. I've submitted a few edits & comments throughout; & highlighted what I believe are the most important points. Thank you for this comprehensive guiding document.

Thanks,

Michelle Villafranca, GIP
Park Operations Planner
City of Fort Worth Park & Recreation Department
817/392-5479

[NOTE: Additional comments were provided in pdf form of the MP document, which are included in Table F.2]