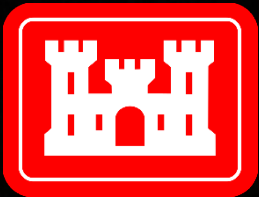


# Benbrook Lake Master Plan Revision Public Information Meeting August 21, 2019



US Army Corps of Engineers  
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Benbrook Senior Center  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Fort Worth District

# Purpose of this Meeting

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



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# The Corps' Vision for Benbrook Lake

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





# Benbrook Lake Missions



**Benbrook Lake – Construction**  
Began..... 1947  
Completed..... 1950  
Impoundment..... 1952

- Flood Risk Management
- Water Supply
- Environmental Stewardship
- Public Outdoor Recreation
- Future Navigation\*

\* Although still part of the lake's mission, a portion of navigation storage is contracted for water supply.



# Facts about Benbrook Lake

- Conservation pool elevation (694.00 MSL)
- Top of Flood Control Pool and Spillway Crest (724.00 MSL)
- Top of Dam (747.00 MSL)
- At conservation pool, there is 3,635 surface acres of water and 4,463 acres of public land.
- The federal property boundary line is 46 miles long
- The shoreline at normal pool is 40 miles long
- Benbrook Lake has an annual visitation of approximately 1.1 million visits.



# More Fun Facts

- 9 parks/recreational areas
- 19+ miles of hiking & biking trail network
- \$41 million in sales and \$23 million in added value to the local economy within a 30 mile radius
- **Between 1952 and 2015, Benbrook Dam and Lake prevented an estimated \$7.3 billion in flood damages, including \$390 million in 2015 alone.**





# Purpose and Intent of Master Plans



The Corps defines a Master Plan as...

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

Source: Chapter 3 of EP 1130-2-550 at [www.usace.army.mil/library/publications](http://www.usace.army.mil/library/publications)



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# National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Applies to all Federal Actions that affect the environment such as Master Plan revisions
- Requires Federal agencies to *CONSIDER and DOCUMENT the environmental impacts of their proposed actions as part of an agency's OVERALL planning and decision-making process*
- Requires Federal agencies to cooperate with federal, state and local governments, and other concerned public and private organizations and citizens during project planning
- Scoping is where the federal agency asks for initial input from other agencies, citizens and organizations regarding project area, resources and uses





# Key Points Regarding Master Plans

- Main focus is stewardship of natural and cultural resources and provision of quality outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities
- Proposed effective life of a Master Plan is 25 years
- Recreational use of the water surface is addressed



# Additional Key Points

- Key sections of the Master Plan Revision include
  - ▶ Resource management objectives
  - ▶ Revised land use classifications
  - ▶ Conceptual management plan for each land classification
- Potential outcomes could be
  - ▶ Designation of lands for utility corridors, environmentally sensitive areas...
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas is given priority



# What Master Plans Are Not

- Master Plans **do not** address in detail the technical aspects of:
  - ▶ Regional water quality
  - ▶ Water management for flood risk management
  - ▶ Water supply or water level management
  - ▶ Shoreline management





# What About Drought/Flood?

- Master Plans cannot change how water in the lake is managed – addressed in separate Water Control Plan
- Natural resources and recreation management must be implemented within the constraints of the primary missions of flood risk management and water supply





# Why Revise the Benbrook Lake Master Plan?

- Current Master Plan is dated March 1972 and has exceeded its useful life. The way the Lake is managed today is different from the vision set forth in the 1972 plan.
- Land classifications have not been updated since the 1972 Master Plan
- Population in the area has grown significantly:

	1950 Population	2018 Population	% Change
City of Benbrook	617	23,566	+3,719%
City of Fort Worth	278,778	895,000	+221%
Tarrant County	361,253	2,084,931	+477%

- The Master Plan must be revised to address current and projected future growth in the region

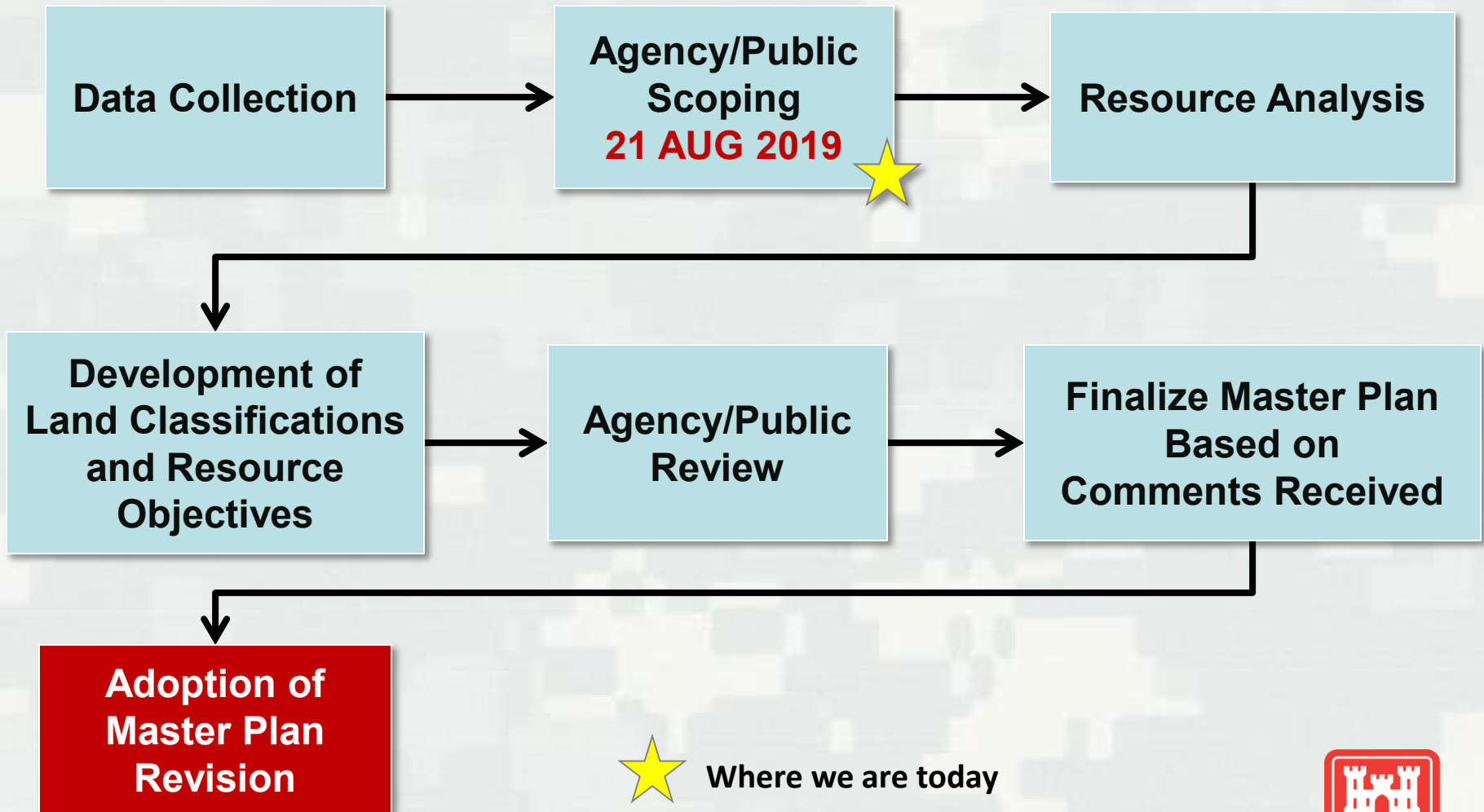


# Master Plan Revision Process

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



# The Master Planning Process



# What Major Changes Are Needed in the Current Master Plan?

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





# Additional Major Changes

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



# Benbrook Lake Land Classification

Current (1972) Land Classifications	Proposed New Land Classifications
Operation and Maintenance	Project Operations
Recreational Areas	High Density Recreation
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas
Aesthetic Areas Multiple Use Recreation Areas Special Use Recreation Areas Wildlife Areas	Multiple Resource Management -Low Density Recreation -Wildlife Management -Vegetation Management -Future/Inactive Recreation
Water Surface	Water Surface Restricted No Wake Open Recreation



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



Water Surface Classification	Definition
Restricted	Water areas restricted for project operations, safety, and security purposes
Designated No-Wake	To protect environmentally sensitive shoreline areas, recreational water access areas from disturbance, and for public safety
Fish and Wildlife Sanctuary	Annual or seasonal restrictions on areas to protect fish and wildlife species during periods of migration, resting, feeding, nesting, and/or spawning
Open Recreation	Those waters available for year round or seasonal water-based recreational use





# Land Classifications

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





# Land Classifications

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





# Land Classifications

## **Environmentally Sensitive**

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

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



# Land Classifications

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





# Land Classifications

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



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# Land Classifications

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



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# Water Classifications



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



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# Utility Corridors

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



# Examples of Resource Objectives

- **Recreation Objective:**
  - ▶ Expand existing trails and create new trails for a variety of users
  - ▶ Extend key boat ramps to accommodate low or high lake levels
  - ▶ Leasing Corps operated parks to other entities
  
- **Natural Resource Objective:**
  - ▶ Restore degraded prairie sites to support a diversity of native grasses and forbs
  - ▶ Implement invasive species control programs
  - ▶ Identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas
  - ▶ Refine wildlife management programs
  
- **General Objective:**
  - ▶ Protect resources by reducing encroachments and trespass through improved boundary marking and surveillance





# How Can I Participate?

- Attend Meetings
- Visit our website at:  
(<https://www.swf.usace.army.mil/About/Lakes-and-Recreation-Information/Master-Plan-Updates/Benbrook-Lake/>)
- Send us an e-mail:  
([CESWF-PER-Benbrook@usace.army.mil](mailto:CESWF-PER-Benbrook@usace.army.mil))
- Visit with our lake staff at the Benbrook Lake Office
- Tell your friends
- Fill out a comment card now or take it home and send later (30 days)



# Master Plan Next Steps

- Typical lake master plan update will take 24 to 36 months to finalize. The Benbrook Lake Master Plan update is in the early stage of development
- First 30 day public comment – 21 Aug through 20 Sep
- Prairie Habitat Assessment – 7-11 October 2019  
(Wildlife Habitat Assessment was 8-12 April 2019)
- Draft MP / EA public meeting in May 2020, followed by another 30 day Public/Agency comment period
- Final document: 4 - 6 months (Fall 2020)



# The End

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

