

Section 8

SUMMARY

Under the authority of Section 318 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District investigated the Raystown Lake Project and prepared the 1994 Master Plan Update. The study area includes the Raystown Lake and associated project lands, which are located in Huntingdon and Bedford Counties in south central Pennsylvania. The project is on the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River approximately five miles upstream of the confluence of the Juniata River and the Raystown Branch.

Preparation of the Master Plan Update involved many decisions about future development and management of the project. The update describes and directs a general land and water management plan that reflects regional recreational and environmental needs, resource capabilities, and expressed public interests and desires.

A public involvement plan was developed and implemented to provide opportunities for participation by residents of Huntingdon and Bedford Counties, elected officials, user groups of the project, and the general public. Participants in the process offered ideas for future development and management of project lands, and reviewed and suggested preferences for alternative plans and facilities considered for development. The program for the update began with several informal meetings with citizens groups in Huntingdon and Bedford Counties. The program continued through public workshops, news articles, advertisements and Congressional briefings. The public workshops were working meetings, which allowed participants with differing views to work closely together to define a common vision for the future use of Raystown Lake. The final Master Plan update includes changes that address those comments and other factors such as environmental impacts, recreation needs/analysis, and economic impacts.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses impacts in a way that is consistent with the conceptual level of design. A site specific EAs will be prepared for individual development plans as the master plan is implemented and more detailed designs are initiated.

The Raystown Lake Master Plan Update is a working document that will guide the use and development of the natural and constructed resources on Corps' fee-owned lands at Raystown Lake. The Master Plan Update process has included review and evaluation of the 1976 Project Master Plan, data gathering and analysis of economic and environmental impacts of alternative and proposed plans, formal and informal in-house and agency coordination, preparation of preliminary concepts and alternative plans, design and implementation of a public involvement program, discussion of the issues and special considerations inherent in the project, selection of a proposed plan, review and incorporation of comments into the alternative and proposed plans, and preparation of the proposed plan.

The Master Plan fulfills all requirements identified in Corps regulations and policies. As a planning document, the Master Plan Update presents conceptual plans, rather than details of design or administration.

This Master Plan Update reflects changes in policy and management techniques since the preparation of the 1976 Master Plan. The update incorporates expressed public concerns, current accepted environmental management techniques, and sound engineering practices. In addition, the proposed actions satisfy a project purpose as defined in the original project authorization. The plan provides conceptual guidance for the development and future management of recreation facilities at the project. Development actions outlined in the document are expected to be carried out over approximately a 20-year time span. It should be recognized that the project is dynamic and that continual updating of the Master Plan will be necessary to respond to new and different conditions as changes occur.

The Baltimore District has identified seven new recreation sites to be constructed and several upgrades of existing recreation areas over the next 10 to 20 years, as funding is available. The total cost for all the facilities is approximately \$70 million.