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USACE to host Ball Mountain Master Plan public meeting, open comments

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will host an open house on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, to kick off a process to revise the 1977 Ball Mountain Lake Master Plan. The open house will be held from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Jamaica Town Hall, 3735 VT Route 30, Jamaica, VT 05343. During the open house session, there will be no formal presentation. The public is invited to visit at any point during the 4:00-6:00 p.m. time frame to interact with USACE team members. Team members will be stationed around the room and can share information about the revision process, provide the general schedule, and gather initial feedback from the public.

Master Plan Overview

The Master Plan is defined as the strategic land use management document that guides the comprehensive management and development of all recreational, natural, and cultural resources throughout the life of the water resource development project. It defines "how" USACE will manage the resources for public use and conservation.

The current Ball Mountain Lake Master Plan, last approved in 1977, needs revision to address changes in regional land use, population, outdoor recreation trends, and the USACE management policy. Key topics to be discussed in the revised Master Plan include revised land use classifications, new natural and recreational resource management objectives, recreation facility needs, and special issues such as invasive species management and threatened and endangered species habitat. The Master Plan revision WILL NOT address the technical and operational aspects of the lake related to flood risk management or the water conservation missions of the project.

Initial Comments

An initial 30-day comment period will begin April 15, 2025, and end May 16, 2025. The public can send comments, suggestions, and concerns during this time. Comments must be submitted in writing at the open house or digitally via the comment form on the Master Plan Revision web page: www.nae.usace.army.mil/missions/recreation/ball-mountain-lake/ball-mountain-lake-master-plan/. The web page also contains a presentation which will be running during the open house. The presentation provides a schedule as well as details on an additional comment period after the draft report is released (currently scheduled for July 2026).

About Ball Mountain Lake

Ball Mountain Lake, is located in Jamaica Vermont, on the West River, a tributary to the Connecticut River, and is part of a network of flood damage reduction projects in the Upper Connecticut River Basin. Construction of the dam began in May 1957 and was completed in October 1961 at a cost of \$11 million. The project features an earthfill dam with stone slope protection 915-feet long and 265-feet high; a gated, 864-foot-long circular concrete conduit with a diameter of 13.5 feet; and a chute spillway cut in rock with a 235-foot-long concrete weir. The weir's crest elevation is 35 feet lower than the top of the dam.

Construction of the recreational facilities at the reservoir began in June 1975 and were completed in June 1977. Winhall Brook Camping Area being one of the main recreational attractions at Ball Mountain Lake offers 111 campsites comprised of 14 Lean-to shelters and 23 water and electric sites and tent sites. The reservoir provides flood protection to the downstream communities in the West River Valley, including Jamaica, Townshend (particularly the West Townshend and Harmonyville sections), and Dummerston. In conjunction with other reservoirs in the Connecticut River Basin, Ball Mountain Lake also reduces flood stages on the Connecticut River.

Ball Mountain Lake has a permanent pool of 75 acres with a stage of 65 feet. The flood storage area of the project totals 810 acres and extends 6.5 miles upstream through Londonderry. The project and associated lands cover 1,227 acres. Ball Mountain Lake can store up to 17.8 billion gallons of water for flood control purposes. This is equivalent to 5.9 inches of water covering its drainage area of 172 square miles.

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