Initial Public Engagement & Scoping Phase

June 2020

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Natural Resources Specialist
Omaha District, Operations Division
Natural Resources Management Section
PAPIO LAKES MASTER PLAN

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District (Corps) has initiated the process of updating and revising the Master Plans for the Papio Lakes and…. 

…the Corps wants your input in the development of this important document!

Playground at Standing Bear Lake
GOALS OF THIS PRESENTATION

• Describe the purpose and intent of a Master Plan.

• Explain why revision is needed.

• Describe the revision process.

• Identify how you can help with this important process.
The Papillion Creek and Tributaries Lakes Project

The “Papio Lakes”
Omaha Metro Area, Nebraska

- Papio Dam Site No. 11
  Cunningham Lake

- Papio Dam Site No. 16
  Standing Bear Lake

- Papio Dam Site No. 18
  Zorinsky Lake

- Papio Dam Site No. 20
  Wehrspann Lake
## THE PAPILLION CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES LAKES PROJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dam Site No.</th>
<th>Lake</th>
<th>Water Surface Acres</th>
<th>Land Acres</th>
<th>Total Acres</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cunningham Lake</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>1,134</td>
<td>1,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Standing Bear Lake</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Zorinsky Lake</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>1,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Wehrspann Lake</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>1,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,021</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,207</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,228</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Outgrants (Lessees) – as of 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lake</th>
<th>Lessee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cunningham Lake</td>
<td>City of Omaha, Department of Parks, Recreation &amp; Public Property Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Bear Lake</td>
<td>City of Omaha, Department of Parks, Recreation &amp; Public Property Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zorinsky Lake</td>
<td>City of Omaha, Department of Parks, Recreation &amp; Public Property Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehrspann Lake</td>
<td>Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Authority: The Papillion Creek and Tributaries Lakes, Nebraska Project was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1968, Public Law 90-483.

Project’s Authorized Purposes:
1) Flood Control
2) Water Quality
3) Recreation
4) Fish and Wildlife enhancement

The project was authorized to provide recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement in accordance with Public Law 89-72, the Federal Water Project Recreation Act. In order to develop the recreational component local participation is required.
“The Master Plan is the strategic land use management document that guides the comprehensive management and development of all project recreational, natural, cultural and man-made resources throughout the life of the water resources development project.”
WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The overall land use management plan: Guides the responsible and sustainable use of project resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

The guidance document that provides the vision for how the resources of the lake and surrounding public lands will be managed in the future.

Focuses on the management of:
- Recreation
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Man-made/ aesthetic resources

*The MP deals in concepts, not in details of design or administration.*
Master Plan (MP)

- The “Mother” Planning Document
- Conceptual
- Proposed effective life of 25-30 years
- Reviewed every 5 years (can be supplemented as needed)

Annual Management Plan (AMP)

- Annual Agency goals and objectives for management. Addressing needs now, operating recreation areas/facilities and resource management objectives

Operational Management Plan (OMP)

Specifics of HOW the agency will meet the MP goals such as staffing, budget/funding, establishes Standard Operating Procedures, specifically WHAT actions will be taken to address management. Specific objectives and goals to meet intent of MP – Reviewed annually for creation of AMP.
OVERALL GOALS & OBJECTIVES OF A MASTER PLAN

• Identify the best management practices to respond to regional needs, resource capabilities and suitability, and expressed public interests consistent with authorized project purposes.

• Protect and manage the project’s natural and cultural resources through sustainable environmental stewardship programs.

• Identify outdoor recreation opportunities that support project purposes and public demands, while sustaining project natural resources.

• Recognize and identify the particular qualities, characteristics and potentials of the project.

• Provide consistency and compatibility with national objectives and other state and regional goals and programs.
WHY DO WE NEED A MASTER PLAN?

1. Assists the Omaha District and Project Office in making decisions with regard to land management practices.

2. Guidance for appropriate uses, development, enhancement, protection, and conservation of the natural, cultural, and man-made resources at the project.

3. Includes description of project resources, factors influencing resource management and development, and strategy for developing and managing project resources to meet the needs of the public and wildlife.

4. Identify specific issues/problems – unique characteristics or issues to the specific lake project.

5. Identifies and makes land-use classifications.

6. Valuable tool to help the Omaha District and Project Office make decisions for proposals from the public, outgrantee (lessee) and others (including internal uses/proposals).
THE MASTER PLAN **DOES NOT**... 

- Address specifics for water level management, releases regarding to flood control. *(Water Control Manual does this).*

- Provide the details of design or daily project operations, *(Operational Management Plan (OMP) does this).*

- The Master Plan provides **authority**, *not funding.*
WHY DO WE NEED TO REVISE AND UPDATE MASTER PLANS?

Current Master Plans for Papio Lakes

Cunningham Lake 1975
Standing Bear Lake 1974
Zorinsky Lake 1983
Wehrspann Lake 1986

Corps Project Master Plans are prepared and written for a lifespan of about 25 years.
WHY DO WE NEED TO REVISE AND UPDATE MASTER PLANS?

Corps Project Master Plans are prepared and written for a lifespan of ~25 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omaha-Council Bluffs MSA Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US Census Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 (Est.)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: US Census Bureau

Current Master Plans

Increase of 402,000 +/- people since 1970

We are here

What will these numbers look like 25 years from now?
WHY DO WE NEED TO REVISE AND UPDATE MASTER PLANS?

• Current Papio Lakes MPs are all 30-40+ years old (life span of 25 years)

• Need to ensure effective management practices and be responsive to existing and future needs.

• Better reflect and be in compliance with current Federal and Corps policies, regulations, and processes.

• Provide consistency and compatibility with other state and regional goals and programs, and to reflect user group changes in the region.
USACE manages more than 400+ Water Resources Development Projects (lake and river projects) in 43 states.

USACE is responsible for 12 million acres of public lands and waters nationwide, including:
- 55,390 miles of shoreline
- 7,856 miles of trails
- 92,588 campsites
- 3,754 boat ramps
Omaha District:
- 432,760 land acres
- 1,172,494 water acres
- 6,349 shoreline miles
- 235 recreation areas
- 1,106 picnic sites
- 5,164 camping sites
- 89 playgrounds
- 26 swimming areas
- 155 trails
- 304 trail miles
- 25 fishing docks
- 253 boat ramps
- 2,068 marina slips

*As of 2016 data*
The Master Planning Process

1. Data Collection
2. Agency/Public Scoping
3. Resource Analysis
4. Development of Land Classifications and Resource Objectives
5. Agency/Public Review
6. Finalize Master Plan Based on Comments Received
7. Adoption of Master Plan Revision
COMPONENTS OF A MASTER PLAN

- Project Setting & influencing factors
- Resource goals & objectives
- Land allocation & classification
- Resource Plans
- Special Topics/Situations
- Agency & Public Coordination
- Mapping
INTENT OF THIS REVISION PROCESS

1. Implement and maintain the project’s Congressionally Authorized Purposes.

2. Determine appropriate uses and level of development of project resources.

3. Provide a framework within which Operational Management Plans (OMPs) and Annual Management Plans (AMPs) can be developed and implemented.

4. Establish a basis for which recreational development and other real estate action proposals can be evaluated.
MOVING TOWARDS ONE “REGIONALIZED” MASTER PLAN

PAPILLION CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES LAKES PROJECT
REGIONAL MASTER PLAN
Papillion Creek Basin, Nebraska

Cunningham Lake – Standing Bear Lake
Zorinsky Lake – Wehrspann Lake

2020

One MP = Efficiency

• Same watershed/ basin
• Similar natural resources, fish & wildlife habitat – water quality.
• Similar demographic areas and public needs.
• Similar regional parks & recreation trends
• Similar management
• Similar goals and objectives
MASTER PLAN TOPICS

1. Inventory of Project resources
2. Objectives for resource use
3. Land use classifications
4. Public facility demand
5. Outdoor recreation opportunities
6. Cultural and historical resources
7. Environmental protection and compliance needs
The Corps has a multi-disciplined team to help design this Master Plan, including:

- Project Manager
- 2 Natural Resources Specialists
- 1 Geographer
- 1 Environmental Resource Specialist
- 1 Archeologist
- 1 Tribal Consultation Specialist
- 1 Limnologist
- 1 Geologist
- 1 Economist
- 2 Real Estate Specialists
- 1 Public Affairs Specialist
- 1 Attorney
- Other disciplines as necessary through the process – engineering, planning/design, etc.
ADDITIONAL AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The Corps works in partnership with other agencies and organizations to assist in the management of public lands. The following are part of the process for revising this Master Plan:

• City of Omaha, Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property
  • Lease and operate Cunningham, Standing Bear, and Zorinsky Lakes
    – Website: https://parks.cityofomaha.org/

• Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
  • Lease and operate Wehrspann Lake
    – Website: https://www.papionrd.org/

• Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy
  • Monitor and assist in water quality assurance
    – Website: http://dee.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/Water

• Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
  • Manage the wildlife and fisheries resources at the Papio Lakes
    – Website: http://outdoornebraska.gov/
LAND CLASSIFICATIONS

1. Project Operations

2. High Density Recreation

3. Mitigation

4. Environmentally Sensitive Areas

5. Multiple Resource Management
   - a. Low Density Recreation
   - b. Wildlife Management
   - c. Vegetative Management
   - d. Future or inactive recreation
GOALS AND STEPS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

**Initial Public Meetings (Round One)**
- Economic Growth
- More protection
- Nature/Environmental Concerns, Stakeholder Concerns

**Shape into cohesive concepts**

**Second Round of Public Meetings (Round 2)**
- Present public with more clearly articulated options, choices, and ideas about the resource’s future.
- Refine and verify public comments and concerns

**Take refined ideas & comments**

**Revised Master Plan**
PAPIO LAKES REVISION SCHEDULE

PHASE 1 (FY 2020) – Information Gathering/ Agency, Tribal, & Public Scoping, April – September 2020

PHASE 2 (FY 2021) – Draft Master Plan & Environmental Assessment, October 2020 – September 2021

PHASE 3 (FY 2022) – Final Master Plan & Environmental Assessment, November 2021 – January 2022

*Subject to change
Make your voice heard, tell us what you think!

How can we do better? How can we improve the management of these public lands and related resources?

Please be assured that your input will affect how the planning and development of this document revision moves forward.
We want to know what your vision is for management of these public lands for the next 5, 10, 15, 25+ years. **Some questions we need your help in answering include:**

- What is the current quality of how existing recreation areas, facilities, and public resources (including natural resources/historical and cultural resources) are currently managed?

- Would you like to see additional recreational facilities constructed or developed? Do adequate recreational facilities currently exist? If not, what kinds of facilities should be developed, and where?

- Are there types of recreational activities or opportunities would you like to see better promoted or developed?

- How could the management of these areas (recreational resources, natural resources, etc.) be managed better, or more effectively?

- Do you believe there is a good balance between both development and protection of resources?

- Help us identify any other issues or special problems we may not be aware of.
UNIQUE ISSUES/ CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS

1. Significant population growth since original DMs/MPs in Omaha Metro and adjacent communities.

2. Substantial changes for development of areas for recreation. Increased demand for more or changed recreational opportunities.

3. Demographic/ population changes in region.

4. Master Plans for each lake are over 40 years old in some situations.

5. New laws, regulations, policies, and management practices (both by USACE, and outgrantees)

6. Identify if environmental resources, wildlife/fish management objectives are being met.

7. Identify if past management activities are in-line with current management strategies, should some areas be re-evaluated and restored to original condition?

8. Lakes are important recreationally to region – due to proximity to Omaha Metro
   1. Trails (multi-use, hiking, equestrian), camping (Cunningham), archery, etc.
   2. Many are linked to regional trails systems for public recreation.
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) COMPLIANCE

• NEPA (Environmental Assessment (EA)) process runs parallel with the Master Plan process.

• Typically develops two alternatives:
  • 1 - Approve Master Plan as drafted
  • 2 - No action [project would continue to operate under existing master plan]

• If approval of the plan is found to have no significant impact, the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is typically signed before the Master Plan is approved.
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT WILL COVER:

• Social and economic conditions
• Environmental justice
• Public health and safety
• Surface and groundwater resources
• Air Quality
• Cultural Resources
• Threatened, endangered, and candidate species
• Other wildlife
• Vegetation and invasive species
• Recreation
• Soils
• Visual resources
• Geology and geological resources
• Wetlands
• Land use
• Roads and utilities
CONCLUSION – SUMMARY OF PROCESS

After tribal, public and agency/stakeholder comments are gathered:

- Master Plan is drafted, including land and water classifications for management
  - Conduct Environmental Assessment, concurrently with Master Plan draft
- Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment is presented to the public for review and comment.
- Public and agency/stakeholder comments are incorporated
- Internal agency review
- Final Master Plan Approved and signed by Omaha District Commander
HOW YOU CAN HELP

Review current Master Plans, Fact Sheets and more information at our Master Plans website at:


Send in comments and make your voice heard on how these lands should be managed:

Email comments to: NWO-Master-Plan@usace.army.mil

Mail Comments to:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Missouri River Project Office
ATTN: Papio Lakes Master Plan
9901 John J. Pershing Dr.
Omaha, NE 68112-1547