

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
MAHONING CREEK LAKE MASTER PLAN UPDATE  
MAHONING CREEK WATERSHED

The US Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District (Corps) is proposing to adopt a new Master Plan as the strategic land use planning document to guide comprehensive management and development of all project recreational, natural and cultural resources at Mahoning Creek Lake in southwestern Pennsylvania. The original Master Plan (MP) was completed in 1950 and last updated in 1976. Changes in Corps regulations and community needs necessitate a revision to these Master Plans. The revised MP will replace the draft and provide a balanced, up to date management plan that follows current Federal laws and Corps regulations while sustaining natural resources and providing outdoor recreational experiences.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Corps prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that evaluated impacts to the physical environment, biological environment and community setting. The EA examines three alternatives: No Action, the preferred alternative of adopting a revised MP with an emphasis on conservation and low-density recreation development, and a revised MP alternative with high-density recreational development. The preferred alternative changes the land and water classifications, most notably the addition of sensitive area and water surface classifications. The revised plan also lays out future recommendations for management of both recreation and natural resources.

The No Action alternative does not meet the purpose of providing a strategic land use management plan that balances the development of recreation features with environmental stewardship practices and natural resource conservation and is in compliance with current regulations, policies and laws governing Master Plans. Under the No Action alternative, the original development-focused document would prevent a proactive approach to managing Loyalhanna Lake and Conemaugh River Lake.

I have reasonably determined that implementation of the revised Mahoning Creek Lake MP will not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, as defined in the Council on Environmental Quality's current regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act. The preparation of an environmental impact statement is therefore unwarranted and the public interest will be best served by the implementation of the proposed action. This determination precedes the Corps of Engineer's final decision concerning this proposed action. The MP and EA will be circulated for a 30-day review period.

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Date

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John P. Lloyd  
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
District Engineer