

Summersville Lake

Recreation Areas

① Dam Site & Picnic Area



② Office & Information Center



③ Battle Run Area



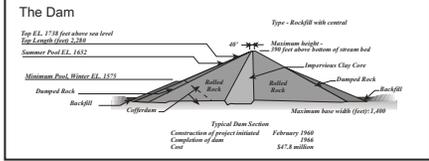
④ Long Point Area



⑤ Long Point Overlook



⑥ Salmon Run Area



Intake Structure

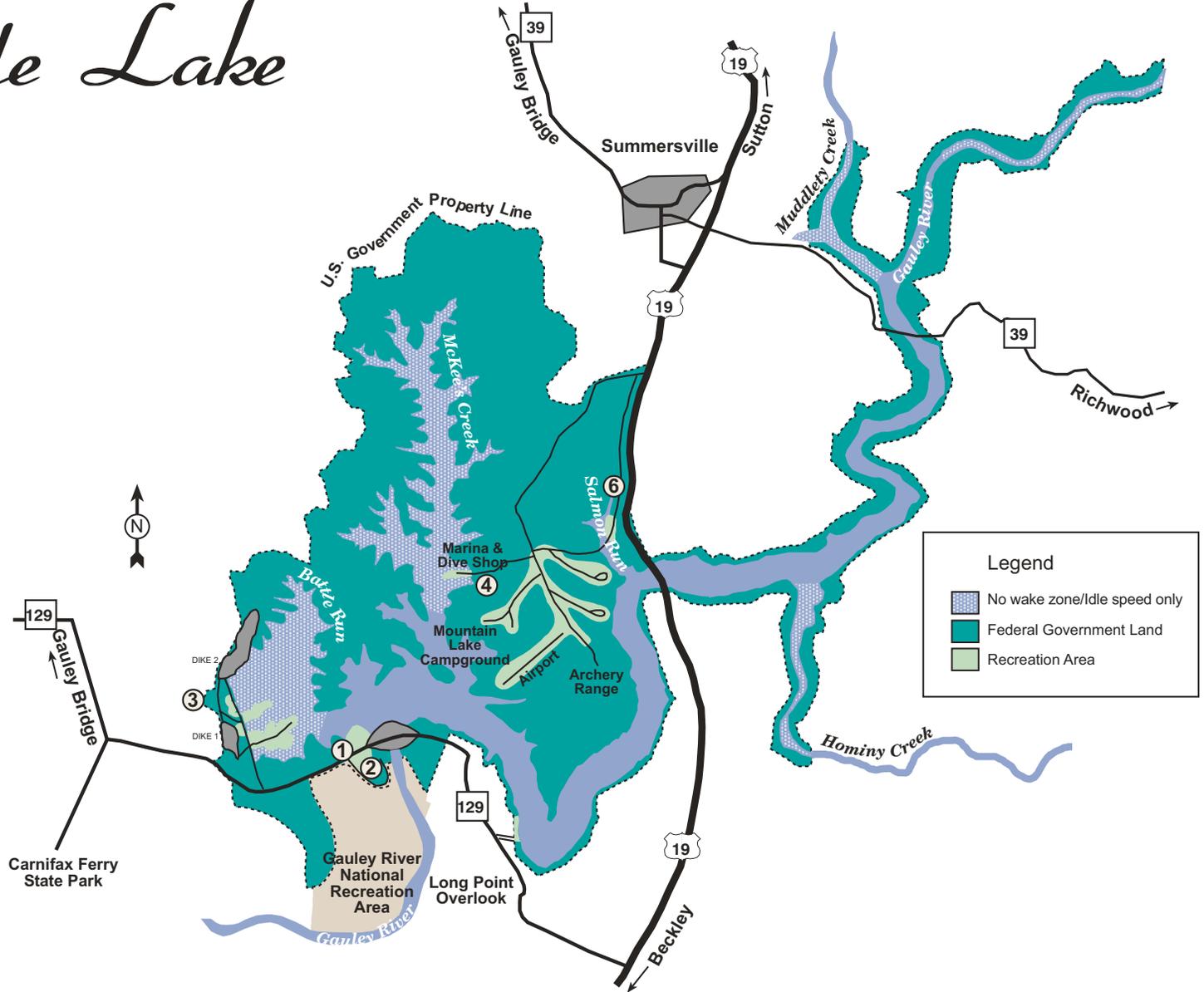
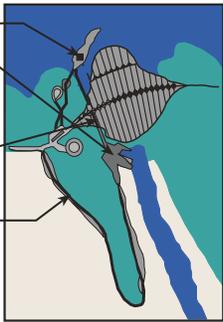
Howell Bunger Valves

Number of flood control valves (3)
 Size of flood control valves (diameter in inches-108)
 Low Flow Valve (diameter in inches-30)

Outlet Works

Type - Circular tunnel with intake structure and downstream outlet structure
 Size & shape of tunnel 1,555' x 29' circular

Road to Downstream Area



Summersville Lake

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Kanawha River, a major tributary of the Ohio River drains a 12,300-square mile basin located in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. Army Engineers have built three dams in the Kanawha basin-Sutton on the Elk, Summersville on the Gauley, and Bluestone on the New River. Operated as a system, they have been most effective in fulfilling the four primary reasons for their construction: reduce flood damage, maintaining dependable stream flow, provide recreation opportunities, and enhancing the fish and wildlife environment.

Summersville Dam is on the Gauley River near the town of Summersville in Nicholas County, West Virginia, and controls a drainage area of 803 square miles. It is one of the Corps' most scenic dams. A rock-fill type, it gives the impression that nature, not man, planned and placed



it. Summersville is the second largest dam of this type in the eastern United States and required 12 million cubic yards of earth and rock. The dam is 390 feet high (about as tall as a 40-story building) and 2, 280 feet

long. During summer, the lake elevation is raised to elevation 1,652 feet above sea level, which provides 2,790 surface acres and 60 miles of shoreline for recreation. During fall and winter it is lowered to elevation 1,575 to provide a maximum space for storage of floodwaters.

Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of the United States, dedicated Summersville Lake on September 3, 1966. He said, "We have come here to consummate an act of faith in the future of West Virginia." Prophetic words on the part of President Johnson. Summersville Lake has become a major destination in the mid-Atlantic region, attracting nearly one million visitors annually.

FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION

The Summersville Lake project was built under the supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers between 1960 and 1966 at a cost of nearly \$48 million. By the end of 1974, it had paid for itself by prevented flood damages in the Gauley and Kanawha River areas estimated at almost \$67 million. By 2000, that figure had grown to more than \$400 million, a return of over \$8 for every dollar originally invested.

Water is released from the lake through a 1,555-foot long, 29-foot diameter tunnel controlled at the lower end by three 9-foot diameter valves, which resemble nozzles of a giant water hose.

LOW FLOW AUGMENTATION

Another important purpose of the dam is to help provide additional water flows on the lower Gauley, Kanawha and Ohio Rivers. During periods of drought, the cool, clear and oxygen rich water from the 300 foot deep lake is released to increase the dissolved oxygen content downstream which keeps the river's aquatic life healthy. An added benefit of these special releases is helping to sustain the economic base of these river valleys.



RECREATION

Summersville Lake boasts exceptional water clarity and a scenic contrast of terrain ranging from rolling hills to vertical rock cliffs. The Corps of Engineers staff manages the lake and adjoining lands. It is their job and desire to make your visit as pleasant as possible. In addition to fishing, boating, scuba diving and water skiing, there are facilities for picnicking and camping along with restrooms, showers, trailer and boat waste disposal stations. There are also several trails through open fields and wooded areas for hiking or exploring. During the annual fall drawdown of the lake, special releases occur for whitewater recreation on the world class Gauley River. The recreation areas and their facilities are shown on the map side of this brochure.

There are two campgrounds, three boat-launching sites with parking for cars and trailers, a marina, a swimming beach, and a scenic overlook with picnic and parking facilities.



Three concession activities are operated under a lease agreement between the Corps of Engineers and commercial interests: the Long Point Marina, the Mountain Lake Campground, and the airport. The marina offers boat rentals and a dive shop.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources leases almost 6,000 acres of federal land for the management of fish and wildlife resources. They also enforce the state's hunting, fishing, and boating regulations at the project. Summersville Lake boasts a fish population including smallmouth and largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, walleye, and channel catfish. Trout are stocked below the dam in the spring and fall. Hunting for white-tailed deer, turkey, waterfowl and small game species is popular. West Virginia Division of Natural Resources continually monitors the success of the wildlife and fishery programs at Summersville Lake.

HYDROPOWER

In 2001, a hydropower facility was completed below the dam. By harnessing the energy of water released from the lake, up to 80 megawatts of electricity can be made. Flows capable of generating power are between 700 and 4000 cubic feet per second.

GAD, WEST VIRGINIA...ABOUT 1906

The Army Corps of Engineers broke a long-standing tradition in naming the Summersville project. Usually the Corps names a project after the town nearest the construction site. This name becomes permanent unless the project is later named for some famous person, as was Barkley Dam in Kentucky. Summersville was not the town nearest the site in this case. It was Gad, West Virginia, located near the present site of the Long Point Marina. After briefly considering the name "Gad Dam," the name "Summersville" was used instead.

CIVIL WAR BATTLE

About three miles west of the dam on State Route 129 lies Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park. The site of a significant battle during the Civil War, this State Park preserves an integral part of the historic heritage of West Virginia. The Patterson House, situated between Union and Confederate lines during the skirmish, has been restored as an interpretive museum containing Civil War relics from the area. An annual battle reenactment occurs each fall.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Summersville Lake

