

DRAFT FONSI
Finding of No Significant Impact
Programmatic Environmental Assessment
Dewey Lake Master Plan Update
Floyd County, Kentucky

Introduction

The Dewey Lake project was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1938 (PL 75-761) as a unit of the comprehensive flood control plan for the Ohio River Basin. Current authorized project purposes include flood control (flood risk management), low flow augmentation, fish and wildlife enhancement, forest resources conservation, and recreation. In 2016, the Dewey Lake Master Plan was updated to assess regional and ecosystem needs, resource capabilities and sustainability, expressed public interests compatible with authorized purposes, and environmental sustainability elements. As part of this effort, a Programmatic Environmental Assessment was completed to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed master plan recommendations.

This Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) is being prepared to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4327). The PEA identifies and broadly assesses the potential impacts associated with proposed measures (proposed actions) of the master plan update. As required under NEPA, the PEA also contains an assessment of a “no action” alternative which identifies future project conditions as if the proposed measures were not implemented. The PEA was prepared in coordination with Federal and State agencies, project stakeholders and the general public; and will serve to support USACE decision-making regarding implementation and/or further study needs of the measures recommended in the updated master plan.

Approach

Master Plan (MP) recommendations are conceptual in nature and typically involve a broad range of proposed management and development measures. For these reasons, MPs lend themselves to a programmatic/tiered style NEPA approach. As such, the enclosed Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) has been developed to evaluate the potential impacts from implementation of proposed master plan recommendations.

Upon completion of this MP/PEA effort, the conceptual recommendations of the MP are to be further refined and developed through other design and management means including: feature design memorandums, contract plans, specifications, and the Operational Management Plan (OMP). Following such refinement, the preparation of supplemental NEPA documents may be required prior to implementing specific measures or actions of the MP.

Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA)

Programmatic NEPA assessments are used to evaluate initial/broad-scale actions, such as agency programs and similar actions under the Council on Environmental Quality’s (CEQ’s) NEPA implementing regulations (40 CFR § 1502.4). Programmatic NEPA documents present sufficient information regarding overall impacts of the proposed action(s) so that decision-makers can make a reasoned judgment on the merits of the action at the present stage of planning or development, and exclude from consideration issues already decided or not ready for decision. Programmatic NEPA documents allow for tiering (40 CFR 1502.20 and 1508.28). Tiering of this PEA will occur when a supplemental NEPA document is prepared to address a specific action of the programmatic NEPA document, and incorporates the initial programmatic NEPA document by reference. The information gained from initial evaluations aid in the preparation and prioritization of future budgeting activities.

Programmatic analyses may also be used to address mitigation parameters at the broad landscape, ecosystem or regional level, thereby reducing the need to re-address these measures at the site-specific level.

Potential Effects of management and development measures

The management and development measures (proposed actions) recommended in the Master Plan are summarized in table 2.1 of this EA. These measures address problematic issues that were identified within the study. Some of the negative effects expected from the implementation of proposed measures include: erosion, sedimentation, clearing of vegetation, disruption to recreational activities, reduction in water and air quality, and an increase in noise. All of the effects are anticipated to be minor and/or temporary, and could be further reduced through the use of best management practices as described within the EA.

Taken in whole, the cumulative effects of the measures proposed are minor, with a majority of the negative effects being limited to the duration of initial construction/implementation. It is anticipated that cumulative effects to the overall project would be positive, as proposed measures provide an avenue for the improvement of areas within the human and natural environment.

I find that the Programmatic Environmental Assessment developed for the Dewey Master Plan Update has been planned in accordance with current authorization and is consistent with national policy, statutes, and administrative directives. This determination is based on the evaluation of the potential impacts from the implementation of proposed master plan measures. In conclusion, I find the recommendations described within the Dewey Master Plan Update and associated Programmatic Environmental Assessment will have No Significant Adverse Impacts on the quality of the human and/or natural environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be required for this study.

Date

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