

## SENDING A COMMENT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is soliciting our comments NOW. Here are some suggested talking points for you to choose from and the email address for sending your comment. The more original, personal comments the Corps receives the better. Don't worry if you think you're not a great writer - the fact that you care enough to be involved is very, very important!

### Suggested Format and Ideas

Date

Dear Bear Creek Lake Study Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bear Creek Lake Reallocation Feasibility Study.

- Describe the activities you enjoy in the Park and/or how often you visit.
- Describe what you value most about the park.
- How does BCLP improve your quality of life?
- Choose a few talking points from below that are important to you.

Respectfully,

Your Name

### Talking Points - Bear Creek Reservoir Expansion

USACE is advancing two alternatives: 300 and 6,000 ac-ft reallocations. *Save Bear Creek Lake Park* supports the 300 ac-ft alternative. Adding 300 ac-ft to the reservoir would have minimal impact to the Park and would offer storage to a few local water providers. However, we strongly oppose a 6,000 acre feet reallocation, which would be highly destructive to the Park and its ecosystem. Here are points to consider for your comment to the Army Corps of Engineers.

#### Negative Impacts/Reasons to OPPOSE a 6,000 Acre Feet Expansion

##### Habitat and Park Amenities

- Reduction of land area in the park: nearly 200 acres;
- Loss of .6 mile of Bear Creek riparian corridor;
- Loss of .5 mile of Turkey Creek riparian corridor;
- Loss of 7 miles of trails with additional trails disrupted through segmentation;
- Loss of important botanical and wildlife habitat within the nearly 200 acre inundation zone;
- Trails within the area of impact are relatively flat and therefore accessible to a wide range of users. These trails are cherished for their shady, forested, creekside qualities.
- Numerous amenities including shaded picnic areas, parking areas and boat launch areas would be destroyed or have to be relocated.
- Over 800,000 people visit the park annually with usage increasing every year.
- True on-site mitigation is not possible at the 6,000 acre feet level. There is nowhere available to "replace" the riparian corridors that would be lost inside the park.

- A larger reservoir would be more shallow, degrading water quality for habitat, recreation and downstream users.
- A larger reservoir surface area with shallow storage would cause more evaporation, thereby decreasing total available water.
- Loss of trees will increase temperatures in the park and beyond.

#### **Low Dependable Yield**

- Inflow from Bear Creek and Turkey Creek is likely insufficient to maintain a 6,000 acre feet storage pool, especially as existing senior rights are further exercised in the future.
- During below average water years/cycles, the reservoir could be surrounded by an expansive “bathtub ring” of mudflats, further diminishing wildlife and recreational values.
- Climate change may further reduce average available inflows to the reservoir.

#### **Flooding and Dam Safety Concerns**

- If an additional 6,000 acre feet of water were stored in Bear Creek Lake, future high water events would flood an even larger area and damage or destroy remaining riparian areas within the park.
- 6,000 acre feet of stored water would decrease the reservoir’s flood capacity in a time of increased uncertainty about the possible severity of future flooding events.
- Wildfire risks are increasing everywhere. A major wildfire in the Bear Creek watershed would pose increased flood risks for years to come.

#### **Alternative Solutions to a 6,000 Acre Feet Expansion**

- The Army Corps of Engineers presented four “Non-Federal Alternatives” for storing this water. All are off-site and two have a lower cost per acre foot than storing water at Bear Creek Lake. These less destructive options should be considered.
- Gravel pit storage downstream along the S. Platte (nearer to potential users) offers better locations for intermittently available water.
- Conservation along Colorado’s Front Range and the American West should be prioritized over destroying critical habitat and ecosystems.

#### **Reasons to SUPPORT a 300 Acre Feet Expansion**

- The footprint of the existing reservoir would be largely unchanged.
- Loss of riparian corridor and wildlife habitat would be negligible.
- No trails would be effected.
- Water storage would be provided for small, local water users.
- Mitigation would be minimal.
- Structural changes to the dam and intake tower would be unnecessary.

**Send your comments to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at:**

Email (preferred)- **[Bear-Creek-Study@usace.army.mil](mailto: Bear-Creek-Study@usace.army.mil)**

U.S. Mail- US Army Corps of Engineers  
 ATTN: CENWO-PM-AC  
 Bear Creek Study Team  
 1616 Capitol Ave  
 Omaha, NE 68102