

Raystown Lake – Master Plan Revision – March 18, 2021

Chapter 8.4 Hawn’s Bridge Area

In 2016, USACE received an unsolicited proposal for development, including a marina, campground, beach, and lodging, in an area known as Hawn’s Bridge. The proposal was not accepted for a number of reasons, primarily because it did not conform to the land use classifications set forth in the 1994 Plan.

During this MP revision, USACE recognized the sensitivity of public sentiment and political interest in the land classification of the Hawn’s Bridge area. The Project Delivery Team used the criteria noted above with specific focus and additional analysis regarding public comment, the biological inventories, and the 2018 Raystown Lake Boating Carrying Capacity Study, none of which supported a land classification change to high density recreation. While a number of public and elected official comments requested changes to the land use classification of the Hawn’s Bridge area, nearly all of these cited economic development as the only or primary benefit. Economic development, while important, is not an authorized project purpose for Raystown Lake.

While the interest in the reclassification of the Hawn’s Bridge area did receive support for economic development and recreation, it was not supported by a number of other criteria. The following factors were determined to be negative, or potentially negative, regarding reclassification of Hawn’s Bridge area as high density recreation:

- Proximity to Bat Conservation Area
- Proximity to Shale Barren area
- Impact on timber resources or tree cover
- Impact on fisheries • Impact on hunting
- Topographic impacts to infrastructure construction

Appropriate MP Objectives were applied in the classification analysis with the following results:

- The proposal would support the objective to identify and evaluate increased opportunities to provide and implement education and outreach on the missions of the RLP.
- It would not preserve the unique scenic beauty and aesthetics of the Project by minimizing development and maintaining the undisturbed natural buffer between the shoreline and all future development.
- It would not achieve recreation goals in conjunction with the USACE Recreation Strategic Plan and the Pennsylvania SCORP.
- It would not actively manage and conserve fish, wildlife, and special status species or enhance biodiversity.
- In addition, it would not support goals to manage invasive species, promote forest health, or prevent erosion and sedimentation.

The proportion of public comments received specifically opposing the proposal to develop and/or reclassify the Hawn’s Bridge area was significant. This indicates that expressed public desires at this time do not support the reclassification to High Density Recreation.

The final determination resulted in classification of the area of interest as an ESA (Parcel 4013) and Multiple Resource Management, sub classified as Wildlife Management (Parcel 5205 and 5206) and Vegetative Management (Parcel 5303).