

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 7, 2020

Col. Eric D. Crispino
District Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District
P.O. Box 59
Louisville, KY 40201-0059

Dear Col. Crispino,

We are writing in support of expanding recreational development in the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Louisville District 2020 Brookville Lake Master Plan. Located between Franklin and Union Counties of Southeast Indiana, the Brookville Lake Complex – which includes three areas: Mounds State Recreation Area (SRA), Quakertown SRA, and Whitewater Memorial State Park – offers visitors the opportunity to use public land for hiking, camping, hunting, and other water-related recreation. However, there is dire need for economic development and expansion – especially during this challenging economic crisis. If utilized, the land surrounding Brookville Lake has great potential for commercial success. To put it into perspective, currently, there is only one place to eat and one place to buy fuel near the lake. Furthermore, there are just over 2,800 places to stay around the lake – including campsites and vacation rentals – which are supported and maintained by local taxpayers.

Brookville Lake is the 3rd largest state park complex covering around 23,000 acres between Cincinnati, Ohio, and Indianapolis, Indiana. Every year, the Brookville Lake sees over a million visitors from all across the Midwest – typically positioning it as one of the state's top three most visited state parks. With populations of about 22,000 and 7,200 in Franklin and Union Counties, respectively, the total number of visitors puts a strain on the current infrastructure.

For decades, local communities could have reaped the benefits from additional development around the lake. Today, the surrounding counties want to better meet the needs of the increasing number of tourists. A solution that would assist the local community, cost nothing for the federal government, and would not impair public use, is to open up Brookville Lake's surrounding land for recreational development. As a result, both Union and Franklin Counties would be able to use the additional revenue to support the ever-increasing infrastructure demands – including emergency services – and rebuild a robust and stable economy.

The USACE's 1979 Brookville Lake Master Plan included multiple expansion ideas that never came to fruition. For example, the 1979 Master Plan called for a restaurant, campground, and a 6-acre swimming pool complex to be built in the Battlepoint Area. In addition, a lodge/restaurant complex was planned to be built in the Mounds SRA, and cabins were planned in the Quakertown SRA to overlook the lake. Unfortunately, the current iteration of USACE's 2020 Master Plan does not include any of these major expansions. As the USACE considers public comments, we strongly urge you to consider including additional recreational developments in the 2020 Master Plan, similar to the 1979 Brookville Lake Master Plan. We are confident that further development will bring critical investments to the region and provide the local community with needed economic opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact our offices if we can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Todd Young
United States Senator



Greg Pence
Member of Congress