

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
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**SRBC, ARMY CORPS, LIBOUS AND REGIONAL LEADERS BREAK
GROUND ON \$7.1 MILLION WHITNEY POINT LAKE PROJECT**

Project to Enhance Environment, Recreation and Economy

WHITNEY POINT, N.Y. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) were joined today by Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works John Paul Woodley, Senator Tom Libous, Broome County Executive Barbara Fiala and Broome County Legislator Ronald Keibel to break ground on the Whitney Point Lake modification project at the Whitney Point Flood Control Reservoir, Dorchester Park, Broome County, N.Y.

Funding sources for the \$7.1 million project include \$5 million from USACE and \$2 million delivered by Senator Libous from New York's state budget. Today marks the beginning of the project's construction phase, which represents the successful culmination of a nearly decade-long effort led by SRBC – the non-federal partner – to adopt new operations at the lake for environmental restoration purposes, and to provide significant recreational, ecosystem and economic enhancements for Broome County and the region.

“The modifications to Whitney Point Lake will result in the current summer lake level being maintained year-round, allowing for water to be released from the lake during low flow periods when aquatic ecosystems are stressed,” said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. “With current low flow conditions, if this modification project were already in place, up to 60 million gallons of water would be released each day from the lake to relieve stresses on the Otselic, Tioughnioga, Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers.”

Among the environmental benefits, USACE is enhancing an existing 20-acre wetland area in the north end of the lake, including constructing escape channels and deep pools for fish, planting wetland vegetation, creating waterfowl nesting areas and installing fish habitat structures.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is deeply committed to habitat protection and restoration and working in partnership with local, state, and regional stakeholders to achieve these goals,” said Col. Peter Mueller, Commander, Baltimore District USACE and SRBC Alternate Federal Commissioner. “The supplemental flows from Whitney Point Lake will reduce stresses on the ecosystem, protect susceptible aquatic species and increase the population of others, including fish, amphibians and mammals.”

The project includes numerous construction activities to significantly enhance recreational opportunities. The new amenities in Dorchester Park will include improvements to beaches, swim areas and boat ramps; restrooms and bathhouse; roads and parking lots; and electrical, water and waste treatment systems.

“This project is a great asset for Northern Broome County and will make Dorchester Park an even more attractive destination for outdoors enthusiasts,” said Libous. “Improved restrooms, parking lots, roads, beaches and swim areas as well as a new boat launch will only increase the accessibility of this already great lake.”

“This environmental restoration project is a win-win from a number of perspectives,” said New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis. “There will be significant enhancements to in-lake and downstream habitat, the region’s economy will benefit from increased recreational opportunities, and the infusion of federal dollars to the Southern Tier region will certainly benefit the state’s taxpayers.”

“This project is significant to the maintenance of our beautiful park and the ecosystems of our waterways,” said County Executive Fiala. “Through this important environmental project by the Army Corps of Engineers our facilities here at Dorchester are going to be improved even more. Dorchester Park is a jewel in our county and we are looking forward to the enhancements this project will bring. I want to thank Senator Tom Libous and the Army Corp of Engineers for their work to fund and carryout this important project.”

Key Web Sites

Susquehanna River Basin Commission: www.srbc.net

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: www.nab.usace.army.mil

Whitney Point Lake Section 1135 Project Modification: www.srbc.net/whitpoint_proj.htm

Whitney Point Lake general, USACE: www.nab.usace.army.mil/recreation/whitney.htm

Broome County Department of Parks and Recreation, Dorchester Park:
www.gobroomecounty.com/parks/ParksDorchester.php

Whitney Point Lake Information

Whitney Point Lake is a reservoir behind the Whitney Point Dam on the Otselic River near the Village of Whitney Point in Broome County, N.Y. The 95-foot high dam was constructed in the late 1930s and early 1940s (operationally complete in 1942) by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) primarily for flood control purposes. The lake has a total storage capacity of 86,500 acre-feet, of which 74,000 acre-feet are currently dedicated to flood control. Whitney Point Lake is one of 13 USACE reservoir projects in the Susquehanna basin.

Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Within the North Atlantic region, Baltimore District supports the Civil Works missions of flood damage reduction, navigation, shoreline protection and ecosystem restoration. In addition, the district supports large-scale renovation programs such as technological research facilities, designing and cleaning formerly used defense sites and civilian sites, protecting and regulating wetlands and waters of the United States, and performing the unique mission of providing drinking water to the District of Columbia, Arlington County and Falls Church, Va.

Susquehanna River Basin Commission

SRBC – headquartered in Harrisburg, Pa. – is the governing agency established under a 100-year compact signed on December 24, 1970, by the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to protect and wisely manage the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.

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