



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Louisville District

Green River Lake
U S Army Corps of Engineers
544 Lake Road
Campbellsville Kentucky 42718-9805

Office Phone: 270-465-4463

Visit our website at <http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/grl>

INFORMATIONAL FACT SHEET...

SUBJECT: SHORELINE MANAGEMENT POLICY AT GREEN RIVER LAKE

Through a long series of laws dating back 150-years, Congress has mandated the development and management of the Nation's water resources in the public interest and has charged the Corps with the mission of carrying out that mandate. Under these laws, the Corps has acquired over 11-million acres of land, and built approximately 420 lakes for the purposes of flood control, navigation, fish & wildlife enhancement, and general recreation.

While it is true that the Corps' shoreline management policy is based on an agency regulation, it was developed in response to Public Law 91-190, which was the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. This law in essence required all Federal agencies who manage public lands for recreational purposes to leave as much of the land in its natural state as possible, and to manage these lands in a responsible, environmentally sound manner. In keeping with that law, an Engineer Regulation was issued in 1974 (*ER 1130-2-406, rev. dtd 31 Oct 90*) which covered Corps lakes nationwide, and gave policy and guidance both for (1) lakes that are allowed to have boat docks, and (2) those that are not. The policy was that private exclusive use would not be permitted on new lakes, or on lakes where no private facilities or uses existed as of the date of the Regulation. Green River Lake, impounded in 1969, fell into that category. Many other lakes nationwide are administered in this manner. In the Louisville District for instance, Taylorsville, Carr Creek, Caesar Creek, and Patoka Lakes have shoreline management policies like Green River Lake.

To understand the restrictive shoreline management policy we have here (which is consistent with what has been mandated for all Corps projects nationwide under *ER 1130-2-406*) it is helpful to first look at some history. When Corps lakes came into being, visitation was small and our nation was not particularly environmentally conscious in comparison to today. Thus, when an adjacent landowner asked to install a boat dock or mow a section of shoreline, he was usually given a permit to do so. This rather loose policy led to large sections of shoreline taking on the appearance of private property due to the docks, steps, mowing, etc. This in effect closed those sections of shoreline to public use, because the majority of the visiting public did not want to trespass upon what appeared to be private property.

Several things happened that caused the Corps' shoreline management policy to be developed. First was the tremendous increase in visitation to the projects, which was followed by increased private development. For instance, in 1952, Corps lakes attracted 30-million visitors. In 1975, the Corps recorded 376-million visitor days. This represented a twelve-fold increase in just two decades. The private development of the Corps' shorelines was also growing at an alarming rate. At Lake Hartwell, 810 floating facilities were built from 1963 to 1969 whereas from 1970 to 1975, 2,653 such private facilities were built. With this surge came problems with pollution, encroachment on public lands, law enforcement, provision of adequate public facilities, environmental impacts, and just plain crowding. Shoreline management is one part of our overall program to solve such problems in the public interest.

As stated earlier, Green River Lake and the other more recent lakes nationwide are managed differently than some of the older lakes. These management policies came about in response to major problems that had been experienced in the past. For instance, land acquisition at the older lakes such as Rough River, Nolin River, and Barren River Lakes was accomplished under what was known as the 'Eisenhower policy'. That policy was to purchase lands only up to 5-foot above flood pool, which resulted in a largely private type shoreline. This was a nationwide policy, and nationwide many of the same problems in administering these lakes resulted. The joint land acquisition policy used to acquire lands for later projects such as Green River Lake tried to avoid those problems by buying land up to the top of freeboard → 5-foot above emergency spillway elevation (at elevation 718), or 300 feet horizontally from the spillway elevation (at elevation 713), whichever was greater. This also grew out of the national environmental law mentioned previously.