



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Walla Walla District
Public Affairs Office

News Release

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Budget cutbacks impact Corps recreation facilities

Walla Walla, Wash. – Campgrounds, picnic shelters and other U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation facilities in the Walla Walla District area will open later and close earlier in the year because of cutbacks in the fiscal year 2004 operating budget, according to recreation planners.

Overall, the budget cutbacks caused planners to reduce their typical recreation facility operating schedule by about six to eight weeks. Although the total number of days these facilities will operate was adjusted, District officials made every effort to see that they would be available to the public throughout the high-use recreation season.

“All of our District parks will be open at least one week before Memorial Day weekend, May 29-31, and remain open through Labor Day, Sept. 6,” said District Commander Lt Col. Edward J. Kertis Jr. “In order to do this, we have reduced the level of some services, eliminated some planned contract operations and maintenance work. We’re also not filling two permanent park ranger vacancies at this time.”

“After Labor Day, visitation numbers fall off as the weather gets colder,” said Phil Benge, a District natural resource specialist. “It’s just not economically feasible this year to maintain and staff our parks after the prime season. A couple of our leased parks are currently scheduled to stay open through the end of October to accommodate autumn-season hunting and fishing.”

“Many of our parks and visitor facilities opened April 1,” Benge added. “Typically, those facilities are in high demand, so people who want to use them should get in touch with our park managers to make reservations for picnic shelters.”

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Campsite reservations can be made by calling the National Recreation Reservation Service at 1-877-444-6777.

District recreation facilities' adjusted opening and closing dates are posted online at <http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/corpsoutdoors/> and on the parks' and facilities' individual web pages: <http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/corpsoutdoors/parkslist.htm>.

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FY04 PARKS SCHEDULE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mill Creek – For more information or to reserve the picnic shelter, call (509) 527-7160.

The Mill Creek Recreation Trail is open all hours, year-round. Bennington Lake is open year-round, 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Flush toilets will be available April 1 to Oct. 15. Rooks Park opens to motor vehicle traffic April 1 to Oct. 15 with flush toilets. It is open for walk-in traffic during the rest of the year with no-flush toilets.

McNary -- For more information or to make picnic shelter reservations, call (541) 922-2268. The Pacific Salmon Visitor Information Center is open year round 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Powerhouse Visitor Center opens May 1. Visitors will not be allowed to bring the following items inside the powerhouse: backpacks, purses or bags of any sort (including diaper bags), cameras, cell phones and other electronic devices. All adults must carry photo identification with them at all times and will be required to wear a visitor pass that is easily visible while in the center.

Picnic shelters at West Park, Spillway Park and McNary Beach are available for reservation April 1 to Sept. 15. Hood Park on Lake Wallulla will be open April 10 to Sept. 12.

Ice Harbor -- For more information or picnic shelter reservations, call (509) 547-2048.

The Visitor Center and fish-viewing room will be open April 1 to Sept. 30, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. There is no visitor access to other areas of the dam. Parking is located outside the complex, and visitors must pass the guard station to enter. Visitors will not be allowed to bring the following items inside the powerhouse: backpacks, purses or bags of any sort (including diaper bags), cameras, cell phones and other electronic devices. All adults must carry photo identification with them at all times and will be required to wear a visitor pass that is easily visible while in the center.

Lake Sacajawea: Charbonneau, Fishhook and Windust parks will open May 21. Levey Day-Use Park will open May 28. These parks will close Sept. 12.

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Lower Monumental -- For more information about Lower Monumental's habitat-management areas, call (509) 751-0240.

Lyons Ferry Park on Lake West will be open May 21 to Sept. 30. For more information, call (509) 758-8613.

Little Goose -- For more information about Little Goose's habitat-management areas, call (509) 751-0240.

The Esplanade and fish-viewing room is open 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. year round.

Central Ferry Park on Lake Bryan will open May 21 with one camping loop opening May 8. This park closes Oct. 31. For more information, call (509) 758-8613. Boyer Park and Marina reservations can be made by calling (509) 387-3208.

Lower Granite -- For more information about Lower Granite's habitat-management areas, call (509) 751-0240.

The Visitor Center and fish-viewing room is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. year round.

Lower Granite Lake: Chief Timothy Park will be open May 21 to Oct. 31. For more information, call (509) 758-8613. Hell's Gate State Park is open year round. For reservations, call (208) 799-5015.

Dworshak -- For more information about Dworshak's recreation and habitat-management areas, call (208) 476-1255.

The Visitor Center is open year-round, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The center offers interpretive displays and movies about Dworshak and the history of the area, including the film "Last of the Log Drives." Public tours of the dam are not available.

Boat Ramps are open at Big Eddy, Bruce's Eddy and Dent Acres.

Primitive campsites at Canyon Creek, Grandad and mini camps around the lake are available on first-come-first-served basis.

Merry's Bay day-use area and the Picnic Glen recreational vehicle camping area will open April 1. Below the dam, steelhead season is on, and natural resource specialists expect another big Chinook salmon season sometime in April. Contact the Idaho Department of Fish and Game at (208) 799-5010 for more information about Idaho licensing requirements for anglers.

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Dent Acres opens for early season camping April 9. Sites are available on a first-come-first-served basis. Dent Acres summer season opens May 20.

Dworshak State Park reservations can be made by calling (208) 476-5994.

Lucky Peak -- For more information about Luck Peak's recreation and habitat-management areas, call (208) 343-0671.

All Lucky Peak Parks are open. However, the current lake level does not allow convenient access to "boat-in" sites. Dam officials expect the lake to be full by Memorial Day.

The Turner Gulch and Barclay Bay boat ramps and the main ramp at the Spring Shores Marina are open.

Lucky Peak State Park's day-use areas are open year round during daylight hours. Call (208) 334-4199 for more information.

To make reservations at Corps campgrounds, go online to www.ReserveUSA.com or call toll-free 1-877-444-6777.

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