



# NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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## Army Corps of Engineers requires face masks at all recreation projects

**WASHINGTON** – As we work to slow the spread of COVID-19, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reminds all visitors, volunteers and employees that a face mask is required in all USACE buildings and facilities. Masks must also be worn outdoors on USACE-managed lands and recreation areas if physical distancing cannot be met, such as when hiking on trails or visiting sites that may be popular or crowded.

Visitors actively engaged in water-related activities with a clear and immediate risk of masks becoming wet may temporarily forgo wearing masks. These activities may include but are not limited to swimming, waterskiing, riding on personal watercraft, kayaking and other boating related activities that present a clear and immediate risk to the mask becoming wet. However, physical distancing must always be maintained whenever possible.

This requirement complies with President Biden’s Executive Order on Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing, issued Jan. 20, as well as guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

USACE continues to evaluate facility capacity limits and implement measures to adjust the density of visitors in buildings, recreation areas, and other areas prone to crowding. Areas where crowding impedes physical distancing will be evaluated for closure or modification of operating procedures to reduce impacts.

USACE will continue to leverage social media and local media to inform the public of mask and physical distancing requirements, and to inform the public when areas have reached capacity to reduce overcrowding. We ask visitors to assist in our efforts by avoiding crowded areas and wearing masks. Park rangers are available to provide information, protect visitors and park resources, and to encourage compliance with this requirement.

“Protecting the health and safety of our visitors and workforce are our top priorities,” said Thomas Smith, USACE Chief of Operations and Regulatory Division. “We must do all we can to ensure the health and safety of our workforce, our families, and our communities.”

For information on the current status of USACE recreation areas, we ask that you contact the USACE lake or river project before your visit. A complete list of recreation areas is available at [www.CorpsLakes.us](http://www.CorpsLakes.us).

USACE is one of the nation’s leading federal providers of outdoor and water-based recreation, hosting millions of visits annually to its more than 400 lake and river projects. It’s estimated that 90 percent of the USACE-operated recreation areas are within 50 miles of metropolitan areas, offering diverse outdoor activities for all ages close to home.

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