

2021 Recreation Plan Update - Draft

February 2021

Lake Lynn Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2459)

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ACRONYM LIST

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
Commission	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission or FERC
Draft Plan	Draft 2021 Recreation Plan Update - February 2021
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission or Commission
ft	feet
Lake Lynn	Lake Lynn Generation, LLC or Licensee
Licensee	Lake Lynn Generation, LLC or Lake Lynn
NGVD	National Geodetic Vertical Datum
NVA	Nature Viewing Areas
Project	Lake Lynn Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2459)
WVDNR	West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

In accordance with Article 417 of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) License¹ for the Lake Lynn Hydroelectric Project (Project) (FERC No. 2459), as amended² in the FERC “Order Modifying and Approving Recreation Plan”, dated April 11, 1997, Lake Lynn Generation, LLC (Lake Lynn), as the Licensee for the Project, is required to file a Recreation Plan Update with FERC every three years. The Recreation Plan was updated on March 31, 2008, May 18, 2010, June 1, 2015, and on April 2, 2018.

The most recent Recreation Plan Update was filed with FERC on April 2, 2018 and was modified and approved by FERC by order dated August 10, 2018. FERC’s order modifying and approving the 2018 Recreation Plan Update requires Lake Lynn to file a Recreation Plan Update by March 31, 2021 in accordance with Article 417 that includes: (1) annual recreational use numbers collected in 2020; (2) a discussion of the adequacy of the Project recreation facilities to meet recreation demand; (3) a description of the methodology used to collect all recreational use data; (4) if there is a need for additional facilities, a discussion of how the licensee will address recreation needs during relicensing; and (5) documentation of agency consultation and agency comments on the update after it has been prepared and provided to the agencies.

This Draft Recreation Plan Update (Draft Plan) includes an evaluation of facility recreation use data collected in 2020 and an inventory of the Project recreation sites and facilities that was conducted in early October 2020.

1.2. Project Description

The Project is located on the Cheat River, in Monongalia County, West Virginia near the City of Morgantown, and in Fayette County, Pennsylvania near the Borough of Point Marion, Pennsylvania. The Project currently operates under a license issued by FERC that expires November 30, 2024. The Project is operated as a dispatchable peaking hydroelectric facility with storage capability. The facility’s ponding capability varies by season and allows for peaking. The current FERC license requires that Lake Lynn operate the Project to maintain Cheat Lake between 868 and 870 ft National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) from May 1 through October 31, between 857 and 870 ft from November 1 through March 31, and between 863 ft and 870 ft from April 1 through April 30, each year.

2. Existing Project Recreation Sites and Facilities

Project recreation sites provide fishing, boating, nature viewing, picnicking, and hiking/biking opportunities. Existing Project recreation sites are described in the following subsections and summarized in Table 2-1. Table 2-2 provides specific details regarding recreation amenities provided at the Project recreation sites. Figure 2-1 depicts the locations of the Project recreation sites. Photos of the Project recreation sites are included in Appendix B and the field forms for the Project recreation site inventory are included in Appendix C.

¹ Order Issuing New License issued December 27, 1994 (69 FERC ¶ 62,253)

² Article 417 was amended by ordering paragraph (G) of Order Modifying and Approving Recreation and Land Management Plan, issued April 11, 1997 (79 FERC ¶ 62,017).

2.1. Tailrace Fishing Area

The Tailrace Fishing Area provides access to the Cheat River below Cheat Dam for fishing. The site consists of a parking area, a concrete fishing platform, and bank fishing access (see Table 2-2, Appendix B and Appendix C). The fishing platform is accessed from Lake Lynn Road.

Both the fishing platform and parking area are illuminated. A handicap accessible pedestrian ramp connects the parking area with the fishing platform. The fishing platform can accommodate approximately 20 anglers and has handrails constructed with barrier free cutouts to provide handicap accessibility. An existing roadway provides easy foot access from the parking lot to the riverbank. A portable toilet is provided at the site. To enhance public safety, visual and audible alarms are operated and maintained to provide sufficient notification of flow increases from the Project facility and to warn the public to exit the water.

2.2. Cheat Lake Trail

The Cheat Lake Trail is a 4.5-mile hiking/biking trail that extends from a parking area near the Lake Lynn powerhouse (the Substation Parking Area) to its southern terminus at the Cheat Haven Nature Viewing Area (see Table 2-2, Appendix B and Appendix C). The trail can be accessed from the Substation Parking Area or from Cheat Lake Park (the Upper or Lower Parking Areas). The northern portion of the Cheat Lake Trail is approximately 1.4 miles long and extends from the Substation Parking Area to Cheat Lake Park. The Trail passes through Cheat Lake Park. The South Cheat Lake Trail begins at Cheat Lake Park. The southern-most 3.1 miles of the Trail is accessed through a gate at Mannings Run. The gate allows Lake Lynn to close the southern-most 3.1-mile section of the Trail at dusk during the recreation season and the winter months. Interpretive signs are installed at several historical sites along the Cheat Lake Trail. Additionally, there are mile-markers every half-mile along the length of the trail. Because of safety concerns, the Trail may be temporarily closed if snow and/or ice are present or other hazardous conditions exist. Signs are posted on the Morgan Run Bridge to inform hikers of any trail closures.

2.3. Cheat Lake Park

Cheat Lake Park consists of an area of about 46 acres primarily situated on a peninsula between two embayments (Rubles Run and Morgan Run) of Cheat Lake. Recreation facilities at Cheat Lake Park include an upper picnic area, a shoreline picnic area, parking areas, a playground area, a car-top/winter boat launch, three restroom facilities, a security/maintenance station, day-use boat docks, a swimming beach, a fish cleaning station, fishing platforms, and access to the Cheat Lake Trail (see Table 2-2, Appendix B and Appendix C). Cheat Lake Park is accessible from a gravel parking area (the Upper Parking Area). A second gravel parking area also provides overflow parking, if needed. A paved roadway provides access from the Upper Parking Area to the facilities along the shoreline of Cheat Lake. The roadway is wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic and pedestrians. A short-term and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible parking area for the car-top/winter boat launch and loading/unloading area is located near the shoreline. This Lower Parking Area provides parking without time restrictions for the disabled.

The car-top/winter boat launch at Cheat Lake Park is available for use from November 1 through April 30. This boat launch provides access to Cheat Lake for those periods when the public boat launch at Sunset Beach Marina is unavailable due to lake levels below 865-ft NGVD.

A courtesy dock, ADA accessible at the normal recreational pool level of 868-ft to 870-ft, is available for car-top boat users. This courtesy dock is located in the Rubles Run embayment. Another courtesy dock is located on the main body of Cheat Lake near the Morgan Run embayment.

Two timber bridge structures constructed over the Morgan Run and Rubles Run embayments provide access to the 4.5-mile Cheat Lake Trail along the Cheat Lake shoreline, additional picnic areas, and fishing access. The bridge structures at Rubles Run and Morgan Run both have a pavilion deck with picnic tables and a 200-foot-long fishing platform. Both bridges over the Rubles Run and Morgan Run embayments have a 13-foot clearance when Cheat Lake is at maximum depth to allow most boaters access to the embayments. Although the bridge structures are intended for pedestrians only, they can support emergency and maintenance vehicles weighing up to 10 tons.

Three restroom facilities are available at the park. An ADA accessible restroom facility is located at the Upper Picnic Area. A second ADA accessible restroom facility is located at the peninsula, near the children's playground, and also provides office space for security and maintenance, a public telephone, and a water fountain. A third restroom facility is located between the Morgan and Manning Run embayments and provides a convenient location for boaters using the day-use boat docks. A fish cleaning station for public use is provided at the restroom facility located between the Morgan and Manning Run embayments. All restroom facilities have indoor lighting and a proper ventilation system.

A small swimming beach is located along the Cheat Lake Trail. This "swim at your own risk area" is approximately 200 feet long and 15 feet wide and is roped off for swimming. The swimming beach is a natural beach, vegetation has been removed and sand has been added to the area. The beach is located near the restroom facility with the fish cleaning station. The swimming beach is open from dawn to dusk and is adjacent to a small picnic area with four picnic tables.

2.4. Sunset Beach Marina Public Boat Launch

A free public boat launch and associated parking area are located at Sunset Beach Marina and provide public access to Cheat Lake (see Table 2-2, Appendix B and Appendix C). This Public Boat Launch is available year-round when the lake level is above 865-ft NGVD. Lake Lynn maintains the surface elevation of Cheat Lake at certain levels throughout the year, as described in Section 1.2.

During the recreation season, the lake level is maintained so that use of the boat launch is not affected by Project operations. During the winter months, if the lake level is drawn down to 857-ft NGVD for power generation, there could be shallow water in Cheat Lake near the Ices Ferry Bridge and the embayments, however, most boaters using Cheat Lake in the winter are typically familiar with these conditions and would avoid shallow areas. A winter boat launch is available for use from November 1 through March 31 at Cheat Lake Park. Lake Lynn provides lake elevation and water temperature information on the Cheat Lake website at <https://cheatlake.today/>.

2.5. Wildlife and Nature Viewing Areas

In addition to the developed Project recreation sites, four parcels of Project lands have been designated as wildlife and nature viewing areas (NVAs). These areas are open for certain public recreation uses and there are no plans to develop these areas in the future. These areas include the following:

- 40 acres between Morgan and Manning Run embayments;
- the 140-acre Cheat Haven Peninsula;
- 12-acre parcel across the reservoir from the Cheat Haven peninsula (accessible by boat only); and
- 25 acres at Tower Run.

Forty acres located between Morgan and Manning Run embayments is an undeveloped NVA.

The 140-acre Cheat Haven Peninsula NVA provides hikers on the South Cheat Lake Trail the opportunity to leave the Cheat Lake Trail and hike along the 1-mile trail through the woods. A bike rack is provided at the trailhead for trail users. A three-sided storm shelter is also on the South Cheat Lake Trail near the trailhead for the Cheat Haven NVA trail. A designated trail through the NVA was developed to reduce habitat destruction in the NVA.

A small NVA that is accessible by boat only is located on about 12 acres across the reservoir from the Cheat Haven peninsula.

The Tower Run area was identified in the original Recreation Plan as a hunting area. By order dated October 7, 1997, FERC approved the Hunting Area Management Plan and amended the Project Recreation and Land Management Plan. Due to the number of nearby property owners and the small size of the parcel, FERC prohibited hunting in this area. This NVA has Project signage and a small pull-off parking area for approximately 3 cars.

Table 2-1: Commission Approved Recreation Facilities at the Project

Recreation Site Name	Recreation Facilities
Tailrace Fishing Area	100-ft concrete handicap accessible fishing platform, bank fishing opportunities, gravel parking area for approximately 22 vehicle, portable toilet, trash receptacles
Cheat Lake Trail	4.5-mile hiking/biking trail (handicap accessible) consisting of northern and southern sections, parking at Substation Parking Area or Cheat Lake Park, bike rack, storm shelter, benches, interpretive historical signs, trash receptacle
Substation Parking Area	Gravel parking area for approximately 20 vehicles, steps to the Cheat Lake Trail
Cheat Lake Park	Winter/car-top boat ramp with courtesy dock, 2 courtesy docks, swimming beach, 14 picnic tables including 4 in picnic area next to the beach, 8 day-use boat docks, playground area, 2 restroom facilities, 9 benches, security/maintenance station, fish cleaning station, 2 200-ft long fishing platforms, 6 water fountains, access to the Cheat Lake Trail, interpretive historical signs
Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking Area	Gravel parking area for approximately 50 vehicles, trash receptacle
Cheat Lake Park Overflow Parking Area	Gravel parking area for approximately 30 vehicles
Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area	6 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking spaces
Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	Picnic loop with 29 drive-in picnic sites (each with parking for up to 2 vehicles) one of which includes handicapped accessible parking, 23 grills, 20 picnic tables, restroom building, 2 water fountains, 9 trash receptacles, parking lot with 11 parking spaces (of which 2 are ADA accessible)

Recreation Site Name	Recreation Facilities
Sunset Beach Marina Public Boat Launch	Public boat ramp, parking area for up to 85 vehicles with trailers, 2 portable toilets
Cheat Haven Peninsula Nature Viewing Area	Nature area, approximately 1.4-mile-long trail
Cheat Lake Park Nature Viewing Area	Nature viewing area
Nature Viewing Area across from Cheat Haven	Nature area accessible by boat only
Tower Run Nature Viewing Area	Pull-off parking for approximately 3 vehicles, nature area

Table 2-2: Commission Approved Recreation Amenities at the Project

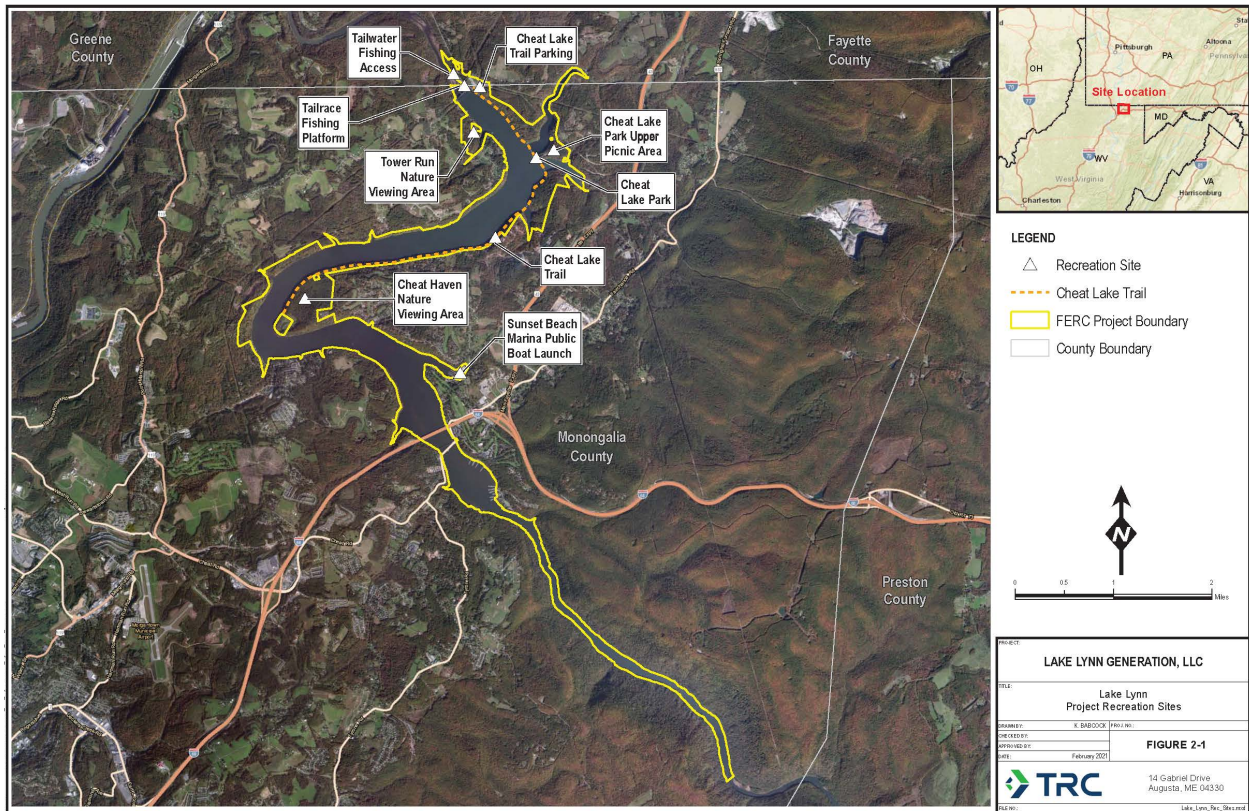
FE RC Project No.	Development Name	Recreation Amenity Name	Recreation Amenity Type	Amenity Status	Latitude	Longitude	FERC Citation and Date	Notes
2459	Lake Lynn	Sunset Beach Marina Boat Launch	Public Boat Ramp	Constructed	39.6783553	-79.8582892	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Bench	Constructed	39.687408	-79.8919843	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Located at southern terminus of the trail
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Haven Nature Trail	Trail	Constructed	39.6884484	-79.8911941	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	End of Cheat Haven Natural Trail near southern terminus of Cheat Lake Trail
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Haven Nature Viewing Area	Nature Viewing Area	Constructed	39.6893100	-79.8846700	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Storm Shelter and Bike Rack	Constructed	39.6929451	-79.8861185	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Haven Nature Trail	Trail	Constructed	39.6929502	-79.8860874	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Trailhead near storm shelter
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Bench	Constructed	39.6997168	-79.8495378	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Trail	Constructed	39.701901	-79.8465054	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Gated trailhead
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Viewpoint	Constructed	39.7020054	-79.8464871	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Bench	Constructed	39.701989	-79.8461322	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Located before gate to trail
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail South	Bench	Constructed	39.703014	-79.844851	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Located south of picnic area and beach
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Lower Picnic Area	Picnic Area	Constructed	39.7057931	-79.8438131	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Adjacent to beach
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Beach	Beach	Constructed	39.7060597	-79.8431082	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail	Cultural Resource Sign 4	Constructed	39.7057219	-79.8434283	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Signage about millstones
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail	Cultural Resource Sign 3	Constructed	39.7062508	-79.8424690	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Signage about historic foundations
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Restroom Building	Constructed	39.7066170	-79.8421644	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Located near day-use boat docks

FE RC Project No.	Development Name	Recreation Amenity Name	Recreation Amenity Type	Amenity Status	Latitude	Longitude	FERC Citation and Date	Notes
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Fish Cleaning Station	Constructed	39.7066170	-79.8421644	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Located at restroom building
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 1	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7069843	-79.8420758	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 2	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7069457	-79.8421546	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 3	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7068796	-79.8422025	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 4	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7068373	-79.8422649	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 5	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7067815	-79.8423241	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 6	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7067361	-79.8423879	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 7	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7066895	-79.8424397	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Day Use Boat Dock 8	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7066895	-79.8424397	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Morgan Run Causeway Pavilion Deck	Deck and Picnic Table	Constructed	39.7086276	-79.8421256	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Morgan Run Fishing Platform	Fishing Pier	Constructed	39.7082037	-79.8416733	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Courtesy Boat Dock	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7092698	-79.8429610	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Picnic Table	Constructed	39.7094546	-79.8434828	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Picnic Table	Constructed	39.7094845	-79.843598	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Cultural Resource Sign 2	Constructed	39.7095353	-79.8436710	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Signage about Bruceton Railroad
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Playground	Constructed	39.7097151	-79.8435524	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	

FE RC Project No.	Development Name	Recreation Amenity Name	Recreation Amenity Type	Amenity Status	Latitude	Longitude	FERC Citation and Date	Notes
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Picnic Table	Constructed	39.7096669	-79.8434484	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Bench	Constructed	39.7097412	-79.8438414	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park	Restroom/ Security Office	Constructed	39.709644	-79.843278	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area	Parking Area	Constructed	39.7096865	-79.8433459	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Winter Boat Ramp/Car Top Boat Ramp	Boat Ramp	Constructed	39.7100543	-79.8438393	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Courtesy Boat Dock	Boat Dock	Constructed	39.7103239	-79.8433635	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Located on Rubles Run embayment
2459	Lake Lynn	Rubles Run Fishing Platform	Fishing Pier	Constructed	39.7114969	-79.8444811	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Rubles Run Causeway Pavilion Deck	Deck and Picnic Table	Constructed	39.7110053	-79.8442133	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail North	Trail	Constructed	39.7119939	-79.8450082	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Trailhead past Rubles Rin causeway
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail	Cultural Resource Sign 1	Constructed	39.7137546	-79.8471367	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking Area	Parking Area	Constructed	39.7100066	-79.8419058	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Overflow Parking	Parking Area	Constructed	39.7104320	-79.8403869	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	Parking Area	Constructed	39.710833	-79.839958	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	Restroom	Constructed	39.710989	-79.839894	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	Picnic Area Loop	Constructed	39.7116880	-79.8387755	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Substation Parking Area	Parking Area	Constructed	39.7205600	-79.8537465	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	

FERC Project No.	Development Name	Recreation Amenity Name	Recreation Amenity Type	Amenity Status	Latitude	Longitude	FERC Citation and Date	Notes
2459	Lake Lynn	Cheat Lake Trail	Trailhead	Constructed	39.7200832	-79.8542142	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	Steps from parking area to trail
2459	Lake Lynn	Tailrace Fishing Area	Parking Area	Constructed	39.7215442	-79.8574737	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Tailrace Fishing Area	Concrete Fishing Platform	Constructed	39.7206322	-79.8567070	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Tailrace Fishing Area	Portable Toilet	Constructed	39.721386	-79.857458	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Tailrace Unimproved Access Area	Unimproved Tailrace Fishing Access	Constructed	39.7217426	-79.8577291	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	
2459	Lake Lynn	Tower Run Nature Viewing Area	Nature Viewing Area	Constructed	39.7123015	-79.8553553	97 FERC ¶ 62,197 (12/5/2001)	

Figure 2-1: Lake Lynn Project Recreation Sites



3. Recreation Site Operation and Maintenance

Lake Lynn currently contracts with a private company to provide security patrols and operation and maintenance activities at the Project recreation sites. In accordance with the FERC-approved 2018 Recreation Plan Update, Lake Lynn provides security personnel patrol at the Project's recreation sites during daylight hours on weekends and holidays from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day.

4. Recreation Use Monitoring

4.1. Public Recreation Use Methodology

Lake Lynn conducted an in-depth recreation study in 2020 to assess the type and level of use at Project recreation sites. Data collection objectives included the determination of the amount of recreation use and demand at Project recreation sites. The data regarding the type and amount of use was obtained by spot counts conducted on random weekdays, weekend days, and holiday weekends (Memorial Day weekend, Independence Day weekend, and Labor Day weekend) and Sunset Beach Marina data. Spot counts were conducted at parking locations associated with the recreation sites (primary sites) and at other specific recreation sites (secondary sites). The study determined the type and amount of use at primary sites in terms of recreation days, with a recreation day being defined as each visit by a person to a development for recreational purposes during any portion of a 24-hour period.³ The capacity use at primary recreation sites, which were defined as sites with on-site parking, was estimated based on a comparison of total parking available against typical current use of parking lots during weekends during the peak season. For both primary and secondary recreation sites, the seasonal use patterns and recreation activities were determined.

4.2. Results

Based on data collected in 2020, the total annual recreation use of the monitored recreation sites at the Project was estimated to be 143,981 recreation days (Table 4-1).

It is important to note that most of the 2020 data collection was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In response to state Executive Orders, Emergency Orders, or Department of Health advisories urging individuals to stay home and minimize the spread of COVID-19, Eagle Creek developed a policy for all of its recreation sites and facilities during the pandemic. This policy included the removal of temporary toilets and the closure of permanent toilet facilities and certain other facilities.

Outdoor recreation in the United States has seen significant impacts from COVID-19 and its related lockdowns and continuing restrictions. Overall, participation in outdoor recreation has increased, despite the closure of various facilities and amenities. The increase in use has been coupled with a shift in use patterns and in recreational users. Through its surveys, the Outdoor Industry Association found that day hiking participation rates in April, May, and June of 2020 increased more than 8 percent over the same period in 2019. Additionally, the organization found that running, bicycling, day hiking, bird watching and camping participation by urban respondents increased noticeably since March shutdowns.⁴

³ Recreation use was not calculated for secondary sites (those without on-site parking). Recreationists who visit secondary sites are already counted with the primary site at which they have parked.

⁴ See: <https://outdoorindustry.org/article/increase-outdoor-activities-due-covid-19/>

Table 4-1: Estimated Annual Use of Primary Sites *

Recreation Site	Estimated Annual Use (2020)
Tailrace Fishing Area	5,156
Substation Parking Area	3,974
Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	723
Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking Area	89,748
Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area	13,524
Sunset Beach Marina	30,856
Total Annual Use	143,981

* Primary sites are those locations with on-site parking or are designated parking facilities. Use at these sites is based on counts of recreationists and parked vehicles. Therefore, these counts include those who have used the on-site parking but may be recreating in other areas of the Park.

Table 4-2 provides a breakdown of estimated 2020 use by season. As shown, approximately half of the recreation use occurred during the summer with 53 percent of recreation days. Recreation use was lowest in winter (7%), with moderate use in spring (25%) and fall (14%).

Table 4-2: Estimated Use of Surveyed Sites by Season

Recreation Site	Spring Use %	Summer Use %	Fall Use %	Winter Use %
Estimated Use at Primary Sites¹				
Tailrace Fishing Area	23%	49%	15%	12%
Substation Parking Area	44%	37%	12%	7%
Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	0%	100%	0%	0%
Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking Area	29%	50%	14%	7%
Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area	28%	42%	16%	14%
Sunset Beach Marina	11%	71%	15%	3%
Total Annual Use	25%	53%	14%	7%
Estimated Use at Secondary Sites²				
Cheat Lake Park Day Use Boat Dock	18%	45%	15%	22%
Cheat Lake Park Lower Picnic Area	30%	49%	20%	1%
Cheat Lake Trail North	23%	41%	17%	18%
Cheat Lake Trail South	38%	32%	20%	10%
Cheat Lake Park Playground	0%	8%	46%	46%
Cheat Lake Park Beach	10%	77%	12%	1%
Cheat Lake Winter Boat Launch	14%	63%	20%	3%

Note: Percentages of estimated use by season at each recreation site may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

¹Primary sites are those locations with on-site parking or are designated parking facilities. Use at these sites is based on counts of recreationists and parked vehicles. Therefore, these percentages include those who have used the on-site parking but may be recreating in other areas of the Park.

²Secondary sites are those locations that do not have on-site parking, but rather are accessed from parking areas in other sections of the Park. Recreationists using these sites are included in the use estimates of the primary sites.

Table 4-3 shows a breakdown of recreation use by activity type for each recreation site surveyed. As shown, recreationists participated in a wide variety of activities at the Lake Lynn Project. Project-wide walking, hiking, and jogging was found to be the most popular recreation activity at the many of the Lake Lynn Project recreation sites. Platform fishing was popular at the Tailrace Fishing Area (83%) and the Day Use Boat Dock (33%). Sightseeing/shoreline relaxation was popular at the Beach (59%), the Day Use Boat Dock (36%), the Lower Picnic Area (34%), and Lower Parking Area (26%). Recreationists also enjoyed motor boating (87% at Sunset Beach Marina), spending time at the playground (85% at the Playground), non-motor boating (51% at the Winter Boat Launch), picnicking (50% at the Lower Picnic Area), and swimming (30% at the Beach).

In addition to determining the type and amount of use at each of the primary recreation sites, the degree to which each recreation site had the capacity to sustain the recreation activity occurring at a site was estimated. Table 4-4 provides a breakdown of percent capacity utilized for each primary site. Percent capacity was determined by the available amount of parking at each site versus the average number of parking spaces that were occupied during surveys during each site's peak recreation season.

Table 4-3: Estimated Recreation Types

Recreation Site	Motor boat	Non-Motor boat	Platform Fishing	Bank Fishing	Boat Fishing	Picnic	Swim	Walk/Hike/Jog	Bike	Playground	Sightseeing/Shoreline Relaxation	Bird Watching	Other Recreation Use
Use Type at Primary Sites													
Tailrace Fishing Area	0%	0%	83%	10%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%
Substation Parking Area	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking Area	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	90%	2%	0%	6%	0%	1%
Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	59%	4%	0%	26%	0%	7%
Sunset Beach Marina	87%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	1%	0%	5%
Use Type at Secondary Sites													
Cheat Lake Park Day Use Boat Dock	9%	9%	33%	0%	0%	11%	1%	0%	0%	0%	36%	0%	0%
Cheat Lake Park Lower Picnic Area	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%	50%	0%	0%	9%	0%	34%	1%	0%
Cheat Lake Trail North	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%	3%	1%	77%	10%	0%	3%	2%	0%
Cheat Lake Trail South	0%	0%	3%	5%	0%	5%	1%	75%	5%	0%	6%	0%	0%
Cheat Lake Park Playground	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	85%	15%	0%	0%
Cheat Lake Park Beach	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	30%	11%	0%	0%	59%	0%	0%

Table 4-3: Estimated Recreation Types

Cheat Lake Winter Boat Launch	12%	51%	3%	0%	0%	3%	5%	6%	0%	0%	17%	0%	3%
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Note: Percentages of estimated recreation type at each recreation site may not sum to 100% due to rounding. The most popular activity for the site is shown in **bold**.

¹Primary sites are those locations with on-site parking or are designated parking facilities.

²Secondary sites are those locations that do not have on-site parking, but rather are accessed from parking areas in other sections of the Park.

Table 4-4: Capacity Utilization by Primary Recreation Site

Site	Parking Spaces	Maximum Utilization Observed	Percent Capacity Utilized, Weekends, Peak Season	Peak Season
Tailrace Fishing Area	22	4	9%	summer
Substation Parking Area	20	4	20%	spring
Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area	64	5	8%	summer
Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking	50	80	11%	summer
Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking	6	12	76%	summer
Sunset Beach Marina	85*	309	65%	summer

*The adjacent restaurant parking area accommodates approximately 25 vehicles. These parking spaces, and the related use, are not included in this table.

4.2.1. Recreation Use at Primary Recreation Sites

Tailrace Fishing Area: Annual recreation use at the Tailrace Fishing Area was estimated to be 5,156 recreation days in 2020. The site is estimated to be utilized at about 9 percent of capacity on summer weekends. The site was used most heavily in the summer (49%). The spring (23%) fall (15%), and winter (12%) seasons saw more moderate use. Fishing from platforms (83%) was the most popular recreation use at the recreation site followed by fishing from banks (10%). Shoreline relaxation/sightseeing (5%) and picnicking were also observed (2%).

Substation Parking Area: In 2020, there were an estimated 3,974 recreation days associated with the Substation Parking Area. This parking area is located at the northern terminus of the Cheat Lake Trail North. Recreationists also visit other areas of the Park and the Cheat Lake Trail South from this parking area. The site was estimated to be utilized at approximately 20 percent of capacity on weekends in the spring (peak season). The spring (44%) and summer (35%) saw the majority of the use at the Substation Parking Area, with light use in the fall (12%) and winter (7%). All of the recreation use observed at the Substation Parking Area was for walking, hiking, and jogging (100% of use).

Cheat Lake Park Upper Picnic Area: In 2020, annual recreation use at the Cheat Lake Upper Picnic Area was estimated to be 723 recreation days. The Upper Picnic Area was closed for the majority of 2020. The site was utilized at 8 percent of capacity on the one summer weekend when use was observed. Use at the site was only observed in the summer (100%). Walking, hiking, and jogging were the only activities observed at the site.

Cheat Lake Park Upper Parking Area: There were an estimated 89,748 recreation days spent in 2020 at recreation facilities associated with the Cheat Lake Upper Parking Area. This site was the busiest recreation area at the Project. The parking area supports many of the Cheat Lake Park recreation sites. The site is utilized at roughly 11 percent capacity on weekends in the summer (peak season). Half of the use (50%) at the Upper Parking Area occurred in the summer, with 29 percent of use in the spring. Use was light in the fall (14%) and winter (7%). Walking, hiking, and jogging accounted for 90 percent of the use. Shoreline recreation (6%), biking (2%), and “other recreation” (1%) were also observed at this site.

Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area: Annual recreation use associated with the Cheat Lake Lower Parking Area was estimated to be 13,524 recreation days. The parking area was utilized at 76 percent capacity during the summer weekends in 2020. Summer (42%) and spring (28%) were the most popular seasons at the Lower Parking Area. Use in the summer was estimated

to be 16 percent, with winter use at 14 percent. Walking, hiking, and jogging were the most popular uses of this area and accounted for 59 percent of annual use. Sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (26%) was also popular, with “other recreation” (7%), biking (4%), and picnicking (4%) also observed.

Sunset Beach Marina: Annual recreation use at the Sunset Beach Marina was estimated to be 30,856 recreation days in 2020. The site is utilized at approximately 65 percent capacity on summer weekends (peak season).⁵ On peak weekends, capacity is often exceeded. The majority of the recreation use (71%) at Sunset Beach Marina occurred in the summer, with the fall (15%) the second most popular season. Use was light in the spring (11%) and winter (3%). Motor boating was the dominant recreation activity at the marina (87%). Other recreation activities included walking, hiking, and jogging (4%), non-motor boating (3%), sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (1%), fishing from banks (1%), and “other recreation” (5%).

4.2.2. Recreation Use at Secondary Sites

Cheat Lake Park Day Use Boat Docks: Recreationists at the boat docks may arrive at the docks by boat and then visit other areas of the park or may have come from other areas within Cheat Lake Park to visit the Day Use Boat Docks. The summer is the most popular recreation time (45%), followed by winter (22%), spring (18%), and fall (15%). The most popular recreation activities noted in the area were sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (36%), platform fishing (33%), picnicking (11%), motor boating (9%), non-motor boating (9%), and swimming (1%).

Cheat Lake Park Lower Picnic Area: Recreationists visiting the Lower Picnic Area may park at the Upper or Lower Parking Areas or the Substation Parking Area or may arrive by boat. Summer use at the Lower Picnic Area was 41 percent, with spring use at 23 percent, winter use at 18 percent, and fall use at 17 percent. Picnicking was the most commonly observed recreation activity at the site, with 50 percent of use. Sightseeing/shoreline relaxation was also population (34%). Biking (9%), bank fishing (6%), and bird watching (1%) were also observed.

Cheat Lake Trail North: Recreationists at Cheat Lake Trail North typically use the Substation Parking Area and are also included in the recreation use count for that site. Summer was the most popular time at the trail, with 41 percent of the use. Spring use was 23 percent, with winter at 18 percent and fall at 17 percent. The most popular recreation activities observed at Cheat Lake Trail North were walking, hiking, and jogging (77%), followed by biking (10%). Several other recreational activities were also noted: picnicking (3%), sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (3%), bank fishing (3%), bird watching (2%), swimming (1%), non-motor boating (1%), and platform fishing (1%).

Cheat Lake Trail South: Recreationists at Cheat Lake Trail South may use the Upper or Lower Parking Areas or the Substation Parking Area. A portion of the trail was closed until late August 2020; however, the open portion of the trail (beyond the beach) saw its heaviest use in the spring (38%), with strong use in the summer (32%) as well. The fall (20%) and winter experienced lighter use. The most popular recreation activities included walking, hiking, and jogging (75%). Sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (6%), bank fishing (5%), picnicking (5%), biking (5%), platform fishing (3%), and swimming (1%) were also observed.

Cheat Lake Park Playground: Playground users typically use the Upper or Lower Parking Areas, as well as the Substation Parking Area. Recreationists may have also accessed the Park via boat. The playground was closed for much of the spring and summer recreation seasons due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, fall (46%) and winter (46%) were the most popular

⁵ The area sees additional use associated with the adjacent restaurant.

seasons at the site, with no use recorded in the spring and only 8 percent of the use noted in the summer. The most popular recreational activities were playground use (85%) and sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (15%).

Cheat Lake Park Beach: Parking for the beach is available at the Upper and Lower Parking Areas. Beachgoers may have also parked at the Substation Parking Area or arrived at the Park via boat. Despite being closed during the initial part of summer due to the COVID-19 pandemic, summer was the dominant season with 77 percent of total use at the site. Fall (12%), spring (10%), and winter (1%) saw light use. Sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (59%) and swimming (30%) were the most popular activities noted at the Beach, with walking/hiking/jogging (11%) also observed.

Cheat Lake Park Winter Boat Launch: Recreationists at the Winter Boat Launch typically use the Upper or Lower Parking Areas. The Winter Boat Launch experienced its lightest use in the winter, with only 3 percent of use occurring then. The majority of the use (63%) occurred in the summer, with light use in the fall (20%) and spring (14%). Non-motor boating (51%) was the most popular activity observed at the site. Recreationists also participated in sightseeing/shoreline relaxation (17%), motor boating (12%), walking/hiking/jogging (6%), swimming (5%), platform fishing (3%), picnicking (3%), and “other recreation” (3%).

4.3. Adequacy of Recreation Facilities

As discussed in Section 4.2, the degree to which each Project recreation site had the capacity to sustain the recreation activity occurring at a site was estimated. Table 4-4 provides a breakdown of percent capacity utilized which was determined by the available amount of parking at each site versus the average number of parking spaces that were occupied during surveys during weekends during each site’s peak recreation season. Most of the Project recreation facilities continue to be utilized at less than 50 percent of capacity. The Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area (76%) and Sunset Beach Marina (65%) were both over 50 percent. Lake Lynn is working to address the parking issues that occur at the Sunset Beach Marina on certain peak weekends. The Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area provides ADA parking and temporary unloading/loading parking. Nothing in the recreation use data collected in 2020 suggests any significant changes in recreation facility capacity. Based on the recreation site inventory, review of the available facilities, annual use numbers generated in 2020 and the estimated capacity utilization rates, the existing facilities, as operated, are adequate to meet the current demonstrated demand for recreation use at the Project and comply with the Recreation and Land Management Plan approved by FERC on June 26, 1995 and amended on April 11, 1997, March 31, 2008, and May 18, 2010.

5. Project Specific Issues (Article 417)

Article 417 of the FERC License requires that the Recreation Plan Update consider Project-specific issues. FERC's order modifying and approving the 2018 Recreation Plan Update did not include any issues or conclusions that need to be addressed as part of this 2021 Recreation Plan Update.

6. Proposed Recreation Plan Amendments

Lake Lynn is not proposing any new recreation sites, facilities, or amenities in this draft Plan. As discussed in Section 4.2, the Project recreation facilities continue to be utilized at less than 50 percent of capacity except for the Cheat Lake Park Lower Parking Area and Sunset Beach Marina. Lake Lynn is working to address the parking issues that have been observed at Sunset Beach Marina on certain peak weekends. Based on the recreation site inventory, review of the available facilities, annual use numbers generated in 2020 and the estimated capacity utilization rates, the existing facilities, as operated, are adequate to meet the current demonstrated demand for recreation use at the Project.

The FERC license for the Project expires on November 30, 2024. The relicensing process for the Project was initiated in 2019 and will continue through 2022. Since the existing FERC License expires in November 2024, Lake Lynn proposes to make this 2021 Recreation Plan update the final update under the existing FERC license. During relicensing, agencies and stakeholders will have an opportunity to participate in the process and provide input on resource concerns, including those related to recreation resources. The relicensing process may result in the creation of new Recreation Management Plan that will better address recreation needs under a new license and concerns that may be raised by agencies and stakeholders.

Lake Lynn is also proposing to remove the fish cleaning station at Cheat Lake Park. The station is rarely used and no use at the station was observed during recreation spot counts in 2020.

In summary, Lake Lynn proposes the following amendments to the Recreation Plan:

1. Lake Lynn proposes that this is the final update of the Recreation Plan under the current FERC license.
2. Lake Lynn proposes to remove the fish cleaning station at Cheat Lake Park.

7. Agency Consultation

On February 22, 2021, Lake Lynn distributed a draft 2021 Recreation Plan Update for review and comment. Lake Lynn provided a 30-day comment period for all parties to comment on the draft Plan.

Appendix A includes a summary of comments received on the draft Plan and Lake Lynn's responses to comments along with specific descriptions of how comments are accommodated. Attachment A also includes copies of the comments received, in chronological order, and documentation of agency consultation.

APPENDIX A

RECREATION PLAN UPDATE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES AND DOCUMENTATION OF AGENCY CONSULTATION

Draft 2021 Recreation Plan Update for the Lake Lynn Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2459)
Comment and Response Summary

Agency / Stakeholder	Date	Comment	Response

APPENDIX B
RECREATION SITE PHOTOS

APPENDIX C

RECREATION SITE FIELD INVENTORY FORMS