

Modernization Efforts

The Success Story of Canyon Lake, TX Little River Project, Ft Worth District

The Potential

Canyon Lake is located on the edge of the scenic Texas Hill country less than an hour's drive from both San Antonio and Austin. The crystal clear waters of the lake plus the nearby popular Guadalupe River recreation area make the lake area both a destination vacation site and a popular weekend getaway for thousands of Texans wishing to beat the heat. Also, the mild winters of South Texas enables Canyon Lake to have a year round recreation season which is a definite attraction to the "winter Texan" campers who annually flock to the state in their RV's.

The Problem

The recreation facilities at Canyon Lake were originally built in the early 1960's and consisted only of concrete tables with grills randomly scattered wherever a shade tree had grown. Volunteer roads sprung up connecting the maze of tables to the main roads. As the visitation at Canyon Lake grew in the 1970's and 80's, the parks began to show signs of overuse and misuse. Parks with no gate entry control allowed unlimited access to unlimited numbers. Vandalism and other more serious crimes were becoming common in the park areas. Flood impoundments in 1978, 1987 and 1992 also caused serious damage to recreation facilities and needed repairs had never been funded. Flooding had also caused loss of the shade trees near the shoreline. Since camping facilities were now outdated, inadequate and poor in quality, more family campers left and a more rowdy clientele took their place.

The "Fix"

Recognition of the problem was the first step. A concentrated effort was undertaken to update and modernize the facilities at Canyon Lake by all players including the lake and project staff, the Ft. Worth District leaders, as well as headquarters and Congressional members. One of the first steps was to incorporate Canyon Lake

Office into the Little River Project Office, which comprises five fully operational lakes. The small lake staff now became part of a larger project team that supplied:

- Team members and management experienced in park rehab
- Increased engineering tech support for construction work
- Increased contracting capability for service and construction work
- Increased budgeting flexibility