

A RESOLUTION directing the County Executive to develop and implement a comprehensive repair, restoration, safety, accessibility, and preservation plan for Lake Jacomo and to provide periodic reports to the Legislature regarding the condition and future of the Lake.

WHEREAS, Lake Jacomo is one of Jackson County's most significant recreational, environmental, and tourism assets, serving boaters, campers, anglers, kayakers, hikers, families, and residents from throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, residents and lake users have expressed substantial concerns regarding public safety, infrastructure deterioration, accessibility, environmental stewardship, and the long-term preservation of the Lake; and

WHEREAS, the Jackson County Legislature recognizes the importance of maintaining safe boating conditions, accessible public facilities, and environmentally responsible lake management practices; and

WHEREAS, many docks, ramps, lighting systems, restrooms, launch areas, and other facilities throughout the Lake require repair, modernization, or replacement; and

WHEREAS, users of the Lake have also expressed concerns regarding insufficient ranger staffing, emergency response capabilities, water patrol enforcement, navigational safety, and communication infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature further recognizes the need to preserve the historic and ecological character of the Lake, including the protection of wildlife habitats and historic structures located within the park system; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the County Legislature of Jackson County, Missouri, as follows:

Section 1. Comprehensive Assessment and Repair Plan.

The County Executive is hereby directed to conduct or cause to be conducted a comprehensive assessment of conditions at Lake Jacomo and to prepare a repair, restoration, and modernization plan addressing the following categories:

A. Public Safety and Water Enforcement.

The plan shall include recommendations regarding:

1. Expanded water patrol presence during all operational hours of the Lake;
2. Enforcement of boating permits, speed limits, no-wake zones, life jacket requirements, and reckless boating violations;
3. Enhanced safety oversight for rental watercraft, including mandatory safety instructions and boating etiquette information provided within all rental vessels;

4. Inspection and enforcement measures to ensure all vessels comply with applicable Coast Guard regulations;
5. Increased ranger staffing levels throughout the Lake area, including docks, ramps, campgrounds, and remote recreation areas;
6. Improved emergency response access and communication systems for lake users and park personnel; and
7. Evaluation of policies regarding personal watercraft usage, including jet skis, and recommendations regarding future regulation or codification.

Section 2. Accessibility and Public Infrastructure.

The County Executive shall further evaluate and provide recommendations regarding:

1. Repair, renovation, and ADA-compliance upgrades for all restroom facilities throughout the Lake and campground areas;
2. Expansion of accessible parking spaces at parking lots, docks, ramps, launches, and recreational facilities;
3. Repair or replacement of damaged, unsafe, or deteriorated boat ramps, docks, and launch facilities;
4. Installation and repair of lighting throughout the Lake area, with preference given to “night sky” compliant lighting that minimizes light pollution while improving public safety;
5. Improvements to cellphone and emergency communication coverage throughout the Lake property; and
6. Safety improvements for remote recreation areas, including kayak launches and nighttime recreation access points.

Section 3. Lake Operations and Recreational Improvements.

The County Executive is directed to study and provide recommendations regarding:

1. Dredging operations and water depth restoration in shallow areas affecting sailboats, docks, ramps, and navigation;
2. Improvements to sailboat access and navigability throughout the Lake;
3. Development or expansion of kayak launches and kayak slip rental opportunities;
4. Consultation with professional marina, dock, and recreational waterway planners before major infrastructure modifications are undertaken;
5. Review of best practices utilized by other regional and national park systems, including water trail systems and interconnecting recreational waterways;
6. Fish stocking and habitat enhancement programs, including increased stocking of crappie and bluegill where appropriate; and
7. Notification procedures for permit holders and dock renters regarding future operational or policy changes affecting the Lake.

Section 4. Historic Preservation and Environmental Stewardship.

The County Executive shall ensure that:

1. Wildlife and ecological studies are completed before any major modifications or redevelopment activities occur at the Lake;
2. Sensitive wildlife habitats, including bald eagle nesting areas and other unique ecological resources, are protected;
3. Historic structures and culturally significant facilities located near the South Dock and elsewhere within the Lake area are evaluated for restoration and preservation opportunities before demolition is considered; and
4. Long-term preservation strategies are evaluated to maintain the historic character and recreational identity of Lake Jacomo.

Section 5. Reporting Requirement.

Within sixty (60) days of the adoption of this Resolution, the County Executive shall submit a written report to the Legislature detailing:

1. Findings from the comprehensive assessment;
2. Estimated costs of recommended repairs and improvements;
3. Potential funding sources;
4. Recommended timelines for implementation; and
5. Any legislative or administrative actions necessary to carry out the recommendations contained herein.

Section 6. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the County Legislature.