

APPENDIX A

HEART BUTTE RMP NEWSLETTERS

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Heart Butte Reservoir

Resource Management Plan



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

January 2021



Heart Butte Dam and Reservoir

Reclamation Initiates Resource Management Plan

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), in cooperation with Tri-Cities Joint Job Development Authority (TCJJDA), is updating the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Heart Butte Reservoir, known locally as Lake Tschida. The update will serve as the blueprint for the next 10+ years of recreation development on Reclamation lands surrounding Heart Butte Reservoir. The RMP will not address wildlife management, Reservoir water operations, or irrigation.

Reclamation needs your help to provide input on past experiences and expectations for future uses at Heart Butte Reservoir. Reclamation will send newsletters to make you aware of the RMP status and keep you informed throughout the process. In this newsletter, you will find the current status of recreation development already happening, timeline of the RMP process, and upcoming public involvement opportunities.

Project Background

Heart Butte Dam construction was completed in 1949. Soon after, in 1952, the National Park Service developed the recreation plan for Heart Butte Reservoir and lands. Public use of Heart Butte Reservoir was administered by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGF) for recreation and wildlife development from February 22, 1952, through May 25, 1979. NDGF discontinued recreation management in 1979 and wildlife management



May 24, 1948, a crowd of more than 500 people gather at the site of what would become the Heart Butte Dam and Reservoir to witness then North Dakota Governor Fred Aandahl turn the first "official" shovel of dirt at the day's groundbreaking ceremony.

in 1994. Tri-Cities Joint Job Development Authority assumed management of the recreational areas in 2010 and signed a 20-year Management Agreement with Reclamation in 2013. Reclamation currently manages the wildlife development areas.

The total area within the boundary of Heart Butte Reservoir is 10,975 acres. Water surface area is 3,400 acres (at elevation 2064.5 mean sea level) and the remaining lands are 7,575 acres. Reclamation currently manages the land for project operation areas (34 acres) and multiple resource management areas (6,575 acres). Management of these areas **will not** be addressed during this RMP process.

On behalf of Reclamation, Tri-Cities Joint Job Development Authority manages the land for: recreation areas (225 acres), group use permitted areas (246 acres), cabin and trailer permitted areas (217 acres), and miscellaneous areas (278 acres). Cabin and trailer permitted areas **will not** be addressed during the RMP process.



This newly completed ADA compliant cabin is in Rimrock Recreation Area in the Hillside Camping Loop and offers prime views of the lake. This is one of five camper cabin rentals offered at the lake. In addition to the camper cabins, the Gilligan's Cabin is a three-bedroom full-service cabin located at Hawebesi Recreation Area.



The Downstream Recreation Area offers a sensory-friendly playground, shore fishing, camper cabin rentals, camper sites, walking paths, and a visitor-centered experience.



Lake Tschida swim beach visitors have been enjoying the beach upgrades since 2005. Visitors continue to appreciate the expanded size of the swimming area and safety offered by the separation from the boat ramp in addition to the accessible sidewalk, benches, parking area, and waste disposal bins.

RMP Purpose

The purpose of an RMP is to promote stewardship of public lands, enabling managers to make land use and resource management decisions that are consistent with management objectives and the needs of the public. RMP's assist land managers in minimizing conflicts among users, following environmental and cultural resource objectives, Federal laws, agency policies and guidelines, and in obtaining public support for the management of public resources.

The RMP update is being initiated to address the increased recreation use at Heart Butte Reservoir over the last 7 years, which has resulted in current facilities reaching maximum capacity, additional public health and safety concerns, and the changing needs of diverse recreational users. The management of the recreation areas, group use areas, and miscellaneous areas **will** be addressed in this RMP update.

The current RMP for Heart Butte Reservoir was finalized in 2008 and updated in 2013. Reclamation, in cooperation with TCJDA, have made numerous improvements at Heart Butte Reservoir recreational areas based on the previous RMP and will continue to make improvements in 2021. Improvements planned for the 2021 construction season include:

- A welcome center located at the entrance of Rimrock Recreation Area (2021 planning phase)
- Additional rental cabin
- Road spraying for dust and erosion control
- Boat wash station for aquatic nuisance species will be completed



RMP public scoping meeting in Dickinson, North Dakota, March 29, 2006. Reclamation staff take input regarding concerns on limited campsite availability at Heart Butte Reservoir.

Public Involvement

Reclamation and TCJJDA are conducting a recreation user survey through April 1, 2021.

The survey is available by visiting the following online locations:

Reclamation's website <https://www.usbr.gov/gp/dkao>

Lake Tschida [Facebook page](#)

Lake Tschida website at <http://www.laketschida.com/>

Reclamation and TCJJDA have been and will continue reaching out to the general public, including former and current Heart Butte Reservoir recreation users, local, state and federal agencies, and non-profits throughout the RMP process.

Reclamation and TCJJDA welcome your comments on the RMP. We are especially interested in your ideas regarding future developments. Your input is vital in helping us plan for Heart Butte Reservoir's future recreational amenities, services, and facilities.

How to Stay Involved

Public involvement is one of the most important aspects of planning during the RMP development process. The public is encouraged to stay involved by providing comments and suggestions at any time during the RMP development process.



How to participate in the public involvement process:

- Complete the user survey
- Visit the RMP website to review new information
- Watch and listen for media coverage on upcoming events
- Read newsletters
- Provide comments

Comments may be submitted to:

Mail: Andrea Gue
304 East Broadway Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58501

Phone: 701-221-1223

E-mail: Ague@usbr.gov



January 11, 2021	RMP Information Newsletter and User Survey
April 1, 2021	User Survey Closes
June 1, 2021	2 nd Newsletter with User Survey Results and Preliminary Plans
August 15, 2021	3 rd Newsletter and Draft Release of RMP for public review and comments

Heart Butte Reservoir

Resource Management Plan



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

June 2021



Heart River and Downstream Recreation Area

Resource Management Plan Continues!

For those of you new to our mailing list, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), in cooperation with the Tri-Cities Joint Job Development Authority (TCJJDA), continues to work on updating the Heart Butte Reservoir Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP will serve as the blueprint for future use, management, and development of Heart Butte Reservoir.

This is the second newsletter regarding the Heart Butte RMP. Newsletters are sent to provide information on the progress of the RMP. This newsletter provides a summary of the 2021 Recreational User Survey and status of the RMP, as well preliminary results from the User Survey. It is important to note that the RMP will

not address Heart Butte Reservoir water operations, irrigation, project operations areas, cabin and trailer permitted areas, or the multiple resource management areas.

User Survey Results

Since the January 2021 RMP newsletter, the RMP team has reviewed all public comments and worked to incorporate them into the updated RMP. The user survey was made available to the public in many formats to gather input from the largest possible audience. Surveys were available from January 11, 2021, through April 1, 2021. Survey formats included QR code access, direct web access, email, and paper forms.

TCJJDA and Reclamation received a total of **278 survey responses** between January and April 2021. A summary of the survey results will be included in the RMP. Reclamation and TCJJDA have chosen select survey questions (shown below) to provide the public with a sample of preliminary results from the survey. Note that the sum of percentages for certain questions

will exceed 100% due to the ability for respondents to check multiple answers.

Most respondents (66%) said Lake Tschida was their primary lodging destination. Rimrock Recreation Area and Koehler's Point Recreation Area were the top two recreation areas where facilities are being used.

- The top five recreation activities participated in by respondents at Lake Tschida are relaxing (94%), swimming (78%), sunbathing (63%), walking/hiking (60%), and motorized boating (56%).



Additions most likely to be supported by the recreating public include:

- Canoe and kayak rentals (46%)
- Additional biking and walking trails (42%)
- Fresh water activities (40%)
- Paddle boat rentals (37%)



Kayak rental stand

When asked about fishing, a majority of the respondents that fish do so from a boat (66%), followed by bank/shoreline fishing (57%). When asked

which area they would like to see more fishing access, Koehler's Point Recreation Area had the highest percentage of respondents for all types of fishing (bank/shoreline, boat, pier, ice).

While 24% of respondents used Lake Tschida for day use, for those recreationists that stayed overnight, over half (54%) of respondents stayed more than 16 nights. A majority (85%) of the campers used a travel trailer or RV/motorhome as a shelter.

When recreation users were asked what kinds of camping facilities or amenities they would be most interested in if Lake Tschida were to add facilities or amenities, the highest percentage of respondents (59%) wanted full-service campsites to include water, electrical, sewer, hookups for overnight camping.

When users were asked if they experienced conflict at Lake Tschida, 60% of respondents did not experience any conflict during their stay. Of those that experienced conflict, 14% encountered inconsiderate groups of individuals and 9% encountered noise conflicts.



When asked about campground facilities, access to the beach was ranked as the most important facility, followed closely by a boat ramp. For campground services, the campsite reservation system was ranked as the most important service, followed by ice for sale. For campsite amenities, well-spaced campsites were ranked as the most important amenity, followed by shady campsites. Overall, respondents were satisfied with the recreation facilities offered at Lake Tschida.

Survey Comments

As discussed above, Reclamation and TCJDA have reviewed all 278 responses from the user survey. Each Heart Bu

response has been separated into the appropriate category to be better discussed in the RMP. Below we have included some comments received through the user survey. Due to space limitations, only a select few comments are provided here, however, the RMP will include all received comments. Comments follow:

“Concession stand needs to upgrade to include more inventory. Beer, cigarettes, ice, food, cheap firewood.”

“It would be great if you could sponsor some activities/events during the summer while people are enjoying the lake. I really enjoy spending time at Lake Tschida!”

“Have not stayed at this facility but would if equestrian facilities were developed.”

“Paved roads to camp resorts”

“Possibly a place to rent skis, wake boards, sailboat and other water toys.”

“Would really enjoy a sit down restaurant with more to offer than North Shore currently provides.”

Phased Development Strategy

The TCJJDA is Reclamation’s current managing partner at Heart Butte Reservoir. Reclamation and TCJJDA currently use a Federal program called Title 28 to fund recreation and fish and wildlife improvements. This program allows Reclamation to share the cost of recreation improvement projects by 50% and up to 75% for fish and wildlife improvement projects. Reclamation, in conjunction with our managing partner, will plan a phased approach, including both 5-year and 10-year development strategies to budget for the cost of additional facilities.

How to Stay Involved

Although the User Survey concluded April 1, 2021, Reclamation and TCJJDA encourage you to stay involved in the RMP process. You may continue to provide comments and suggestions to the mailing addresses, email address, or phone number provided.



Please send additional comments or suggestions to:

Meg Claypool- Reclamation

Email: mclaypool@usbr.gov

Phone: 701-221-1267

Address: 304 East Broadway Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58501

Shannon Wangsvick – TCJJDA

Email: recreation@laketschida.com

Phone: 701-584-2201

Address: 5675 ND Highway 49
Elgin, ND 58533



Next Steps

The next phase of the RMP process is to complete a draft version of the RMP and provide it to the public for review. The draft RMP will include proposed projects for development at Lake Tschida in the next five to ten years. Please see the timeline below for the next steps in the RMP process.

Resource Management Plan Schedule:

August 2021	Newsletter 3 and Release of Draft RMP
September 2021	Revise RMP and National Environmental Policy Act documentation
October 2021	Release of Final RMP

Heart Butte Reservoir

Resource Management Plan



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

September 2021

Draft Resource Management Plan Released!

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), in cooperation with the Tri-Cities Joint Job Development Authority (TCJJDA), began updating the Heart Butte Reservoir Resource Management Plan (RMP) in early 2021. To maximize the public's involvement in this process, user surveys were made available in January 2021, in a variety of formats with the comment period open through March 2021.

When finalized, the RMP will serve as the blueprint for the future use, management, and development of Heart Butte Reservoir. The RMP does not address Heart Butte Reservoir water operations, irrigation, project operations areas, cabin and trailer permitted areas, or the multiple resource management areas. This is the third newsletter regarding the Heart Butte RMP and is provided to share information on the progress of the RMP.

RMP Update

Since the last newsletter in June 2021, the RMP team has worked to complete a draft document. The draft RMP is now available for public review and comment.

As mentioned in the June newsletter, a total of 278 survey responses were received between January and April 2021. The RMP team has reviewed these responses and comments and has considered this input for updates around the reservoir. The RMP focuses on recreation updates in accordance with public input and TCJJDA's future goals around the Heart Butte Reservoir.

What Comes Next

The draft RMP is now available for a 30-day comment period. When the comment period closes, Reclamation and TCJJDA will consider and then incorporate

additional comments into the plan. When this step is completed, a final RMP will be available.

How to Stay Involved

Reclamation and TCJJDA encourage you to stay involved in the RMP process by providing comments on the draft RMP. This phase of the process includes the release of the draft RMP with a 30-day comment period that is open until October 1, 2021.

When the public comment has ended, Reclamation and TCJJDA will finalize the RMP and make it publicly available. The final step in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process will be completing a Categorical Exclusion Checklist for the RMP.

Please Send Comments to:

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September 2021	Revise RMP and complete National Environmental Policy Act documentation
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