

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 TCJJDA, 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
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