

Notice to the Public:

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the implementation of a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Belle Fourche Reservoir (BFR). Reclamation is the lead federal agency responsible for ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and related federal environmental and cultural resource laws. To ensure that all social, economic, and environmental effects are considered in the development of this plan, Reclamation is seeking your input pursuant to Section 102 (2) (D) (IV) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Reclamation and managing partner South Dakota Game Fish & Parks (SDGFP) estimate that public use at BFR has doubled since the previously-completed RMP from 2004. The increased use has created management challenges for Reclamation, SDGFP, and the recreating public. A new RMP would serve as the blueprint for the future use, management, and development for BFR. Public involvement efforts on the RMP began in May 2018 and to date includes an online and paper survey, an initial scoping letter, open house, public meeting to discuss options, numerous press releases to local newspapers, radio stations, and local businesses advertising the survey and public meetings, and newsletters updating the public on the progress.

Reclamation has developed an Action Alternative based on previous public involvement activities to determine the best uses for BFR. This Alternative includes enhanced recreation development on Middle and Gadens Point, a change to day use for Fruitdale Area, Inlet Canal, and CCC Point, and the elimination of the off-road vehicle area, among other changes from current management strategies.

Reclamation is requesting your input about the proposed action and information or concerns you may have regarding the potential effects. If no significant issues are identified during scoping or in the preparation of the EA, Reclamation would issue a Finding of No Significant Impact. Conversely, if any significant issues are identified, Reclamation would consider whether to proceed with the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement. Reclamation defines significance in accordance with 40 CFR 1508.27.

Please provide comments, concerns, or information by September 1, 2019. Questions or comments regarding the preparation of the EA may be delivered to Andrea Gue at 701-221-1223, ague@usbr.gov, or in writing to: Area Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, P.O. Box 1017, Bismarck, North Dakota 58502.