

# Peer Review Plan

## Water Operations Study for Heart Butte Dam

Date: 2/13/2023

Originating office:

Dakotas Area Office, MB-ART Region Bureau of Reclamation

Reclamation Roles:

Director or Delegated Manager:

Brent Esplin - Regional Director, MB-ART Region

Peer Review Lead:

Tim Dodd - Civil Engineer, Dakotas Area Office, MB-ART Region

Subject and Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to summarize the average water balance relationship for Lake Tschida and to provide an estimate of the future conditions while a Safety of Dams modification project is conducted. The analysis is intended to inform future decisions regarding the project timeline and to serve as a basis of estimation for the economic impact of a reservoir drawdown for Lake Tschida. The scenarios presented do not attempt to predict specific conditions but do provide an outlook of the time required for drawdown and re-filling of the reservoir based on average inflow and the available capacities.

Impact of Dissemination:

The study does contain “scientific information” but does not meet the conditions of influential or highly influential scientific information as defined by Office of Management and Budget Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (70 FR 2664-2677) and the Reclamation Manual Policy CMP P14 Peer Review of Scientific Information and Assessments. This internal peer review is considered discretionary based upon Reclamation Manual Policy CMP P14.

The study uses routine statistical data available from publicly available sources to document average conditions for Lake Tschida. The conclusions and timelines presented in the study are intended to be used as a basis of estimation for the economic impact of the Safety of Dams Modification Project. The study will provide a method for comparison of the Corrective Action Study alternatives and is not expected to be a major standalone factor which will have a substantial impact on a Reclamation decision. It is one of many pieces of information that will be used to develop a decision document regarding the selected corrective action for Heart Butte Dam.

### Peer Review Scope:

The study is being reviewed as a best practice to ensure completeness, clarity, and quality of any scientific information. Necessary background information will be provided within the study and the reviewer will be asked the following questions:

1. Does the methodology used for estimation of the monthly water balance appear reasonable for a feasibility level analysis?
2. Does the comparison of USGS gage data and Hydromet inflow data add value to the study?
3. Are the assumptions clear and valid for each scenario?
4. Do the project benefit timeline tables adequately summarize the estimated timing of benefit loss for economic impact evaluation?
5. Are there any concerns about the content or scope of the draft study document?

Reviewers are to provide comment solely on the scientific information being reviewed, and not on any agency decision or policy.

### Timing of Review:

The review period is expected to be February 14-28, 2023.

### Methodology and Reviewer Selection:

The review will be conducted by one individual in the Regional Hydrology and Water Operations Group. The individual will have expertise in hydrology, water resource engineering, and reservoir management. The peer review process will not provide opportunities for public participation.

### Number of Peer Reviewers:

1

### Delivery of findings:

Comments and responses to the peer review questions will be transmitted electronically to the peer review lead.

### Response to Peer Review:

The peer reviewer will submit their comments to the Peer Review Lead by the end of the review period. The comments will include a response to each of the questions cited under the peer review scope. The peer review lead will review the comments and undertake actions to resolve any problems and finalize the study.

### Federal Register Notice:

Federal Register notices will not be provided announcing the formation of a peer review team and completion of the final report.

### Applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA):

This peer review is not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) because the

review does not involve open meetings or committee chartering and reviewers are being asked to provide individual reviews on the subject matter. Reclamation is not seeking consensus advice from the reviewers as a group.

Agency contact:

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