

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Categorical Exclusion Checklist

Boca Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project Test Pit Investigation

MP-CEC-15-04

Prepared by:

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Native American Affairs Program Manager
Mid Pacific Regional Office
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Approved by:

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Proposed Action

The Bureau of Reclamation proposes to perform a second geotechnical investigation for the Boca Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project. Six backhoe test pits would be excavated and backfilled on the downstream face of Boca Dam, and three test pits within 100 feet of the dam toe to investigate the existing rock fill material and Zone 3 materials.

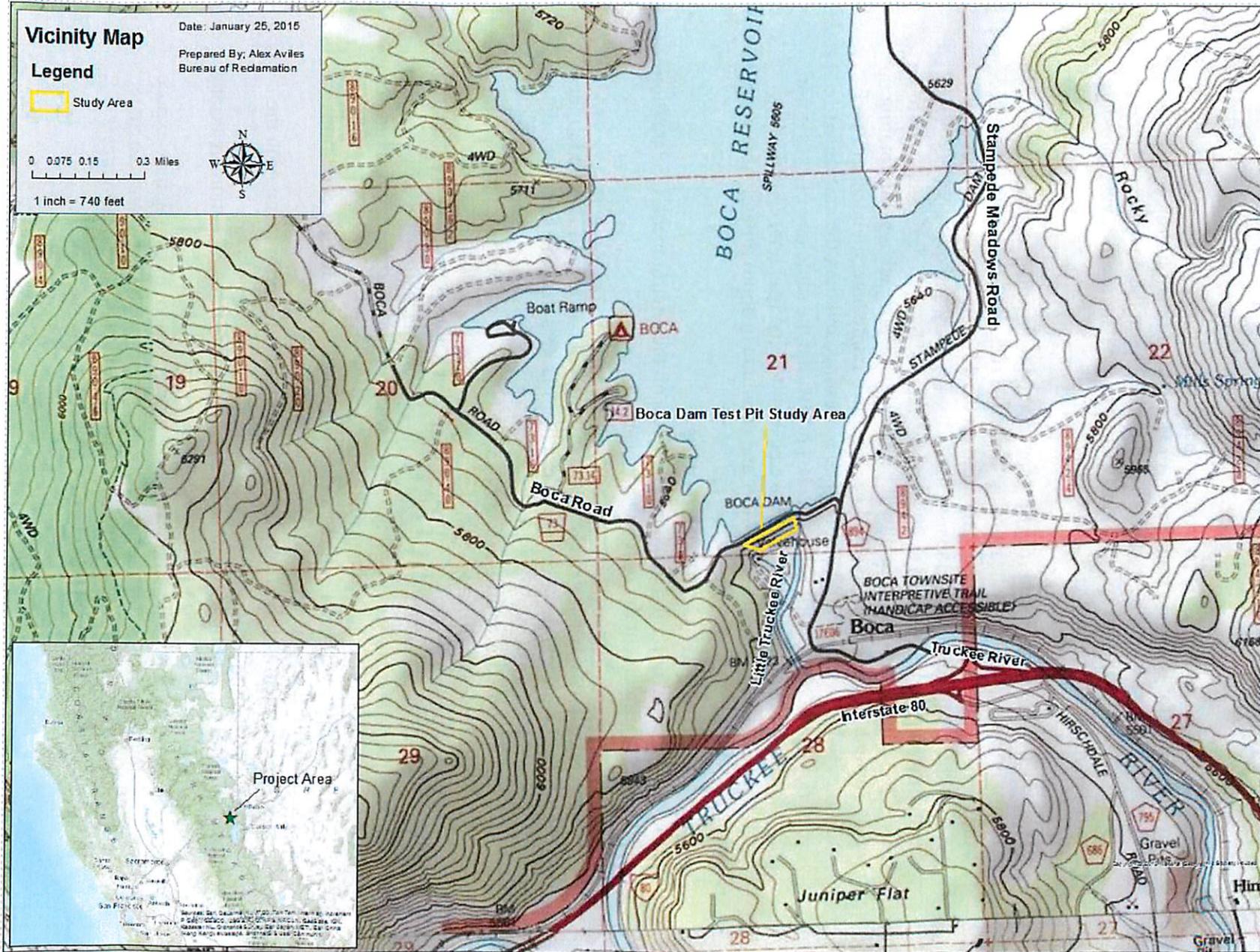
Boca Dam is an earthen and rockfill dam covered with riprap, and is located approximately 7 miles northeast of the town of Truckee. Equipment would access the test pit locations by the existing ramp on the downstream face of the dam. The Little Truckee River is downstream of the spillway and outlet works. Each test pit would be between up to 20'-long by 4'-wide by up to 20'-deep. No more than 300 cubic-yards of material will be excavated from each test pit, totaling up to 2,700 cubic-yards, which would be stockpiled immediately adjacent to each test pit. Soil samples would be obtained for testing, and then the stockpiled material would be backfilled into the test pits within the same day of excavation. Equipment to be used includes a tracked excavator and backhoe. This work is anticipated to begin in late September and conclude in approximately one week.

Environmental Commitments

In order to avoid or minimize potential effects on the environment, Reclamation proposes to implement the following measures:

- 1) The limits of disturbance at each test pit will be clearly identified in the field with orange safety cones or other markers that will be removed once work is finished.
- 2) A 15 foot buffer around waters of the U.S. will be observed for the test pits, access road and stockpiles.
- 3) A silt fence or straw wattle will be placed between the test pit excavations, stockpiles, and waters of the U.S. to prevent discharge of sediments.
- 4) Trenching activities will not occur within 24 hours of an approaching rain event in order to avoid turbidity impacts.
- 5) Test pits will be backfilled and re-contoured to pre-testing conditions within the same day of excavation.
- 6) Equipment will be cleaned and checked for leaks prior to entering the project area.
- 7) Spill prevention kits will be in close proximity to construction areas, and workers will be trained in their use.
- 8) Work will be stopped immediately in areas where trenching may expose human remains, historic artifacts, or prehistoric resources and the State Historic Preservation Officer, Water Board, and Corps of Engineers notified for guidance on how to proceed.

FIGURE 1. PROJECT VICINITY MAP



Exclusion Category

516 DM 14.5 Paragraph B (3): *Data collection studies that involve test excavations for cultural resources investigations or test pitting, drilling, or seismic investigations for geologic exploration purposes where the impacts will be localized.*

Extraordinary Circumstances

Below is an evaluation of the extraordinary circumstances as required in 43 CFR 46.215.

1. This action would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR 1502.3). No Uncertain Yes

2. This action would have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA Section 102(2)(E) and 43 CFR 46.215(c)). No Uncertain Yes

3. This action would have significant impacts on public health or safety (43 CFR 46.215(a)). No Uncertain Yes

4. This action would have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographical characteristics as historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (43 CFR 46.215 (b)). No Uncertain Yes

5. This action would have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks (43 CFR 46.215(d)). No Uncertain Yes

6. This action would establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects (43 CFR 46.215 (e)). No Uncertain Yes
7. This action would have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects (43 CFR 46.215 (f)). No Uncertain Yes
8. This action would have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by Reclamation (LND 02-01) (43 CFR 46.215 (g)). No Uncertain Yes
9. This action would have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated critical habitat for these species (43 CFR 46.215 (h)). No Uncertain Yes
10. This action would violate a Federal, tribal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for protection of the environment (43 CFR 46.215 (i)). No Uncertain Yes
11. This action would affect Indian Trust Assets (ITA) (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993). No Uncertain Yes
12. This action would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898) (43 CFR 46.215 (j)). No Uncertain Yes
13. This action would limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites No Uncertain Yes

on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007, 43 CFR 46.215 (k), and 512 DM 3)).

14. This action would contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act, EO 13112, and 43 CFR 46.215 (l)).
- No Uncertain Yes

Archaeologist concurred with Items 4 and 8 (see Appendix A for concurrence).
ITA Designee concurred with Item 11 (see Appendix B for concurrence).

Special Considerations

Endangered Species Act of 1973

Reclamation requested a species list from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office for this project on December 24, 2015. Species from that list which may occur in the project area include the federally-threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi*) and federally-endangered Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*). Reclamation determined that the project would have no effect on Lahontan cutthroat trout or Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (see memo dated February 24, 2016 from A. Aviles to T. Hill).

NEPA Action Recommended

CEC – This action is covered by the exclusion category and no extraordinary circumstances exist. The action is excluded from further documentation in an EA or EIS.

Further environmental review is required, and the following document should be prepared.

- EA
- EIS

Appendix A – NHPA Section 106 Compliance

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE
Division of Environmental Affairs
Cultural Resources Branch (MP-153)

MP-153 Tracking Number: 11-MPRO-265

Project Name: Boca Safety of Dams Modification Project, Nevada County, CA

NEPA Contact: Alexandra Aviles, Natural Resource Specialist

MP 153 Cultural Resources Reviewer: Scott Williams, Archaeologist 

Date: April 11, 2016

Reclamation has proposed to complete identified corrective structural and non-structural safety issues to Boca Dam located six miles northeast of Truckee, California. This action constitutes an undertaking with the potential to cause effects to historic properties, assuming such properties are present, requiring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as amended.

Reclamation has determined, from updated seismic data, specifically an updated Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Analysis, that the risk to public safety from Boca Dam exceeds the Reclamation Interim Dam Safety Public Protection Guidelines. Corrective actions proposed at Boca Dam to protect against overtopping during a seismic event are construction of a shear key, a stability berm, and replacement of the spillway crest structure. The shear key and stability berm will be constructed on the downstream side of the main embankment and dike and would include a chimney filter and new toe drain. The stability berm will be extended to the top of the dam increasing the crest width. An in-reservoir borrow area will be excavated, processed, and hauled to a primary stockpile area nearer to the construction zone. Project activities would also include a test fill investigation that would involve excavation, sampling, and compacting materials within the investigated borrow area to assure they meet the requirements for construction.

Based on historic properties identification efforts conducted by Far Western Anthropological Research, Inc., Reclamation consulted with, and received concurrence from, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on a finding of no adverse effect to historic properties, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.5(b). Consultation correspondence between Reclamation and the SHPO has been provided with this cultural resources compliance document for inclusion in the administrative record for this action.

This document serves as notification that Section 106 compliance has been completed for this undertaking. Please note that if project activities subsequently change, additional NHPA Section 106 review, including further consultation with the SHPO, may be required.

Attachments:

Letter: Reclamation to SHPO dated March 11, 2016

Letter: SHPO to Reclamation dated April 8, 2016

Appendix B – ITA Determination

10/22/2015

**Indian Trust Assets
Request Form (MP Region)**

Submit your request to your office's ITA designee or to MP-400, attention Kevin Clancy.

Date: 01/27/2016

Requested by (office/program)	Alex Aviles, MP-152
Fund	16XR0680A5
WBS	RX154700040024107
Fund Cost Center	RR02015200
Region # (if other than MP)	N/A
Project Name	Boca Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project Test Pit Investigation
CEC or EA Number	MP-CEC-15-04
Project Description (attach additional sheets if needed and include photos if appropriate)	<p>The Bureau of Reclamation proposes to perform a second geotechnical investigation for the Boca Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project. Six backhoe test pits would be excavated and backfilled on the downstream face of Boca Dam to investigate the existing rock fill material and Zone 3 materials.</p> <p>Equipment would access the test pit locations by the existing ramp on the downstream face of the dam. The Little Truckee River is downstream of the spillway and outlet works. Each test pit would be between 10' to 20'-long by 4'-wide by 10' to 20'-deep. Between 150 and 300 cubic-yards of material will be excavated, totaling up to 1,800 cubic-yards, which would be stockpiled immediately adjacent to each test pit. This work is anticipated to begin in late September and conclude in approximately one week.</p>
*Project Location (Township, Range, Section, e.g., T12 R5E S10, or Lat/Long cords, DD-MM-SS or decimal degrees). Include map(s)	Nevada County. T18N, T17E, S21 X: -120.09578; Y: 39.38952


Signature

Alexandra C. Aviles
Printed name of preparer

01/27/16
Date

10/22/2015
ITA Determination:

The closest ITA to the proposed Boca Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project Test Pit Investigation activity is the

Reno-Sparks Indian Colony about 18.85 miles to the East/Northeast
Insert activity name Insert ITA name approx.. compass direction
(see attached image).

Based on the nature of the planned work it does not appear to be in an area that will impact Indian hunting or fishing resources or water rights nor is the proposed activity on actual Indian lands. It is reasonable to assume that the proposed action will not have any impacts on ITAs.


Signature

Kevin Crancy
Printed name of approver

1-28-2016
Date

10/22/2015

Nearest Native American Lands: Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Nevada, 18.85 miles E/NE of Project Site.

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Search in Reclamation

Native American Lands

Close App

Step 1. Search radius in miles
25

Step 2. Longitude and latitude
If you CLICK on the map, the lat/longs are inserted below:
Or you can type them in.
Longitude: 120.09578
Latitude: 39.38952

Step 3.
Find closest Native American Lands
Distance to closest native american land: 18.85 miles
Name: Reno-Sparks Colony
Tribe: Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Nevada

Scale: 5" = 1' Long: 110°-01' W, Lat: 39° 59' S

ES

