

**BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION CHECKLIST**

Mid-Pacific Region
Lahontan Basin Area Office

Project Name: Vegetation Management at Stampede and Boca Dams

CEC Number: LO – 2012-1018

Cost Authority: A40-1912-8604-000-00-0-0

Date: March 7, 2013

EXCLUSION CATEGORY

516 DM 14.5 D.1 – Operation and Maintenance Activities. Maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement of existing facilities which may involve a minor change in size, location, and/or operation.

NATURE OF ACTION

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), Lahontan Basin Area Office (LBAO) is proposing to authorize vegetation management activities at Stampede Dam and Boca Dam.

Bureau of Reclamation Operation and Maintenance Field Guidelines (Appendix B) for removal of trees and other vegetative growth from earth dams, dikes, and conveyance features discloses that vegetation should be prevented from becoming established for the following reasons:

1. To allow proper surveillance and inspection of the structures and adjacent areas for seepage, cracking, sinkholes, settlement, deflection, and other signs of distress.
2. To allow adequate access for normal and emergency operation and maintenance (O&M) activities.
3. To prevent damage to the structures due to root growth, such as shortened seepage paths through embankments; voids in embankments from decayed roots or toppled trees; expansion of cracks or joints of concrete walls, canal lining, or pipes; and plugging of perforated or open-jointed drainage pipes.
4. To discourage animal/rodent activity (by eliminating their food source and habitat), thereby preventing voids within embankments and possible shortened seepage paths.
5. To allow adequate flow-carrying capability of water conveyance channels (e.g.

spillway inlet and outlet channels; open canals, laterals, and drains).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Vegetation removal is required on approximately 15.2 acres at Stampede Dam and Dike and on approximately 6.7 acres at Boca Dam and Dike.

Bureau of Reclamation dams and dikes are primarily built of compacted soil and rock. Riprap is placed on the upstream and downstream face of these facilities and it is required that these areas need to be cleared vegetative growth.

Target species for removal that are currently present on the dam and dike faces include Common sagebrush, Bitterbrush, Woolly mule's ears, and Jeffrey pine and Ponderosa pine seedlings that are beginning to establish on-site. Additionally, other species present that exhibit significant growth and/or woody vegetative characteristics require removal.

Eradication is required because root establishment on the dam and dike faces compromises the structural integrity of the facilities. This occurs when the roots of woody vegetation spread deep, vertically and horizontally through the soil in search of water and nutrients. Root spread can result in the development of air pockets and may create borrowing animal habitat. Also, vegetation growth hides potential failures including sloughed soil, seepage, cracking, or settlement. By removing the vegetative growth, dam and dike inspectors will have greater visibility and will have a greater chance of identifying characteristics that could potentially lead to dam failure.

Vegetative growth will be removed manually and will include one or more of the following techniques:

- hand pulling,
- chainsaw,
- weed whips and,
- hand tools such as shovels, pitch forks, etc.

Removed vegetation will be hand piled and burned once the piles have cured. Pile burning will occur per California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection parameters and guidelines and in accordance with United States Forest Service (USFS) Project Activity Level (PAL) emergency precautions for operations. The PAL will be obtained by calling 530-587-2158 before starting work each day. The USFS, Truckee Ranger District will be notified when burning activities are proposed to occur.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Washington Ridge Conservation Camp will conduct the vegetation management activities with supervision from their Administrative Captain. Vegetation removal will be coordinated through the Bureau of Reclamation, Lahontan Basin Area Office, Operations and Maintenance Division.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PERMITTING

The Little Truckee River will be maintained to flow at approximately 39 cubic feet per second (cfs) or as determined by the Federal Court appointed Watermaster. Activities associated with this proposed action will have no impact to flows.

It has been determined that vegetation removal will have *No Effect* to any threatened or endangered species or their designated critical habitats protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 therefore, no review or consultation by the USFWS is required.

The proposed activities to remove vegetation will have *No Effect* to the American Bald Eagle. Under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, no review or consultation by the USFSW is required.

This project is exempt from obtaining a Section 404 permit of the Clean Water Act, because vegetation removal activities will not be conducted within waters of the United States and material will not be discharged into Navigable waters of the United States.

This project is exempt from obtaining a Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit of the Clean Water Act, because project activities will not result in discharges of pollutants into Waters of the United States.

This project is exempt from obtaining a Section 401 permit of the Clean Water Act, because there will be no discharges of pollutants to surface waters.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) and mitigation measures will be deployed to the maximum extent practicable to minimize any potential soil erosion/or surface runoff problems.

TIMELINE

Vegetation removal will occur on an as needed basis, no more than 10 consecutive days at each dam/dike site. All work will be during daylight hours between the months of March - December and potentially through 2018.

LOCATION

Stampede Dam is located in Sierra County, California, in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and approximately 11 miles northeast of the town of Truckee, California. Legal description: T19N R17E, M.D.M.

Boca Dam is located in Nevada County, California, in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and approximately 6.5 miles northeast of the town of Truckee, California. Legal description: T18N R17E, M.D.M.

Evaluation of Criteria for Categorical Exclusion		
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 will have significant impacts on public health or safety (43 CFR 46.215(a)).		No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐
4. This action would have significant impacts 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 principle drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (E.O.11990); floodplains (E.O. 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (43 CFR 46.215 (b)).		No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐
5. The action would have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risk (43 CFR 46.215 (d)).		No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐
6. This action would establish a precedent for future actions 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 the bureau (in coordination with a Reclamation cultural resources professional, RM LND 02-01 D(1)(a)) (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, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for protection of the environment (43 CFR 46.215 (i)).		No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐

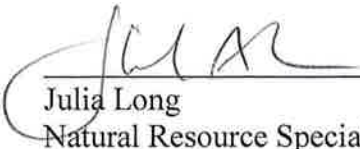
Evaluation of Criteria for Categorical Exclusion		
11. This action would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (E.O. 12898) (43 CFR 46.215 (j)).		No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___
12. This action would limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (E.O. 13007 and 43 CFR 46.215 (k)).		No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___
13. This action would affect Indian Trust Assets. (To be completed by Reclamation official responsible for ITAs) (S.O. 3175; Policy Memorandum dated 12/15/93).		No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___
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, E.O. 13112, and 43 CFR 46.215 (l)).		No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___

NEPA Action Recommended: Categorical Exclusion ☒ EA ___ EIS ___

Environmental commitments, explanation, and/or remarks:

See the attached correspondence from the Mid-Pacific Region Cultural Resources Division regarding concurrence with Item 8 (cultural resources), and from Patricia Rivera regarding Item 13 (Indian Trust Assets).

Prepared by:


Julia Long
Natural Resource Specialist

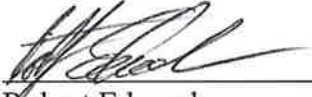
3-7-13
Date

Recommended:


Locke Hahne
Manager, Operations & Maintenance
Division

3/7/2013
Date

Concurrence:


Robert Edwards
Resource Division Manager

3/11/2013
Date

Approved:


Terri Edwards
Deputy Area Manager

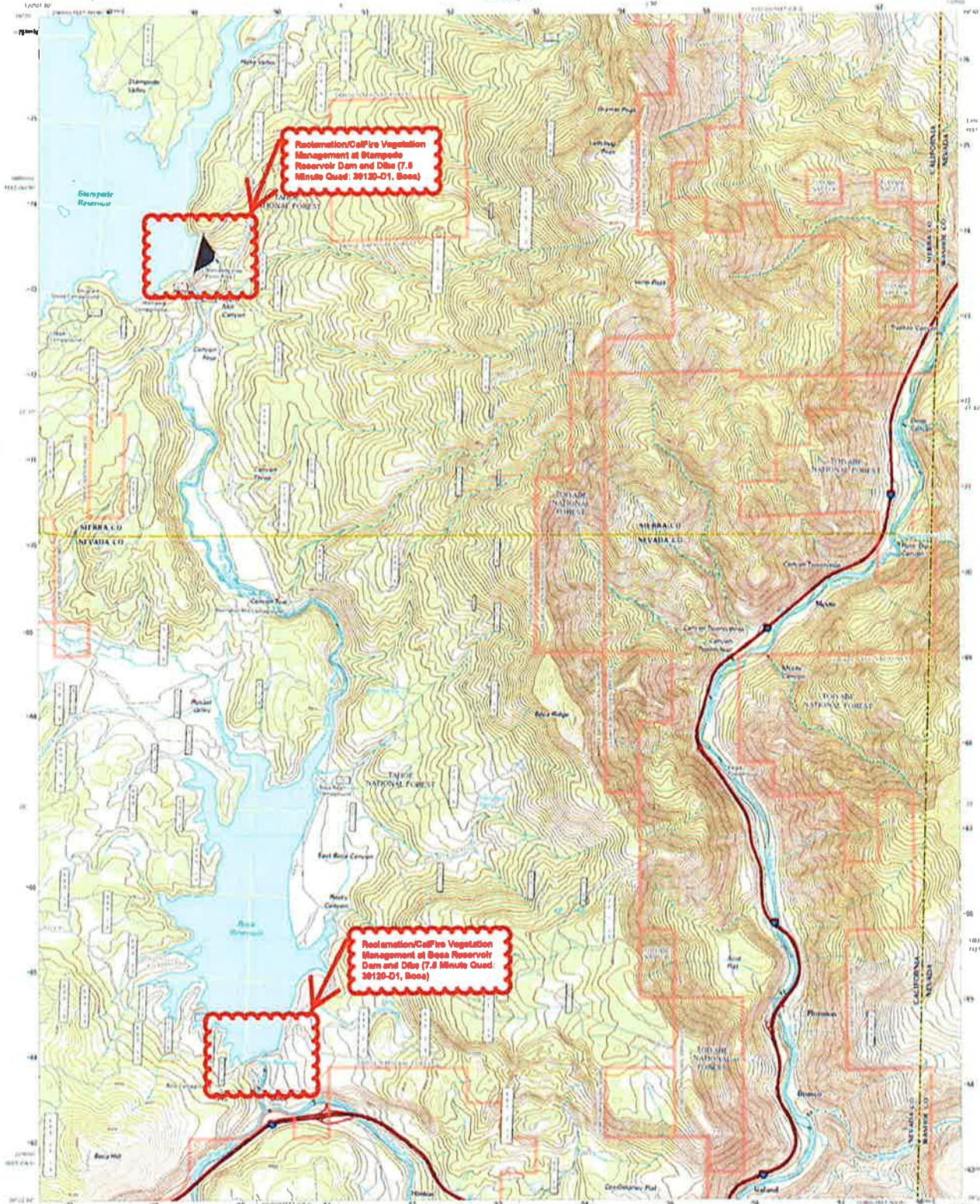
3/12/2013
Date



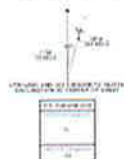
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



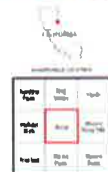
BOCA QUADRANGLE
CALIFORNIA-NEVADA
7.5-MINUTE EDITION



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)
Vertical Datum: Mean Sea Level (MSL)
Horizontal Datum: North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)
Datum: NAD83
Projection: UTM
Zone: 12N
Units: Meters
Scale: 1:84,000
Sheet: 39120-D1
Edition: 7.5-Minute Edition
Date: 2012



SCALE 1:84 000
LONGER BY 66 FEET
SHORTER BY 66 FEET
This map was produced in accordance with the
Federal Geographic Data Act (50 USC 3101)
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Department of the Interior shall make the
information it collects available to the public in the most useful form possible.



BOCA, CA-NV
7.5-MINUTE EDITION
2012



RECLAMATION

Lahontan Basin Area Office
705 N. Plaza Street, Carson City, NV 89701

Vegetation Management Areas

Reclamation/CalFire Vegetation Management at
Stampede Reservoir Dam and Dike
Boca Reservoir Dam and Dike
LO-2012-1018



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825-1898

IN REPLY
REFER TO:
MP-153
ENV-3.00

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

March 7 2013
MEMORANDUM

To: Julia Long
LBAO

From: Scott A. Williams
Archaeologist – Division of Environmental Affairs

Subject: Vegetation Management at Stampede and Boca Dams (13-LBAO-113)

Julia,

The proposed undertaking to authorize vegetation management activities at Stampede Dam and Boca Dam has no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to the Section 106 implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1). Stampede Dam is located in Sierra County, California, in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and approximately 11 miles northeast of the town of Truckee, California. Legal description: T19N R17E, M.D.M. Boca Dam is located in Nevada County, California, in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and approximately 6.5 miles northeast of the town of Truckee, California. Legal description: T18N R17E, M.D.M.

The project involves the removal of vegetation on approximately 15.2 acres at Stampede Dam and Dike and on approximately 6.7 acres at Boca Dam and Dike. Bureau of Reclamation dams and dikes are primarily built of compacted soil and rock. Riprap is placed on the upstream and downstream face of these facilities and it is required that these areas need to be cleared vegetative growth. Eradication is required because root establishment on the dam and dike faces compromises the structural integrity of the facilities.

Vegetative growth will be removed manually and will include one or more of the following techniques: hand pulling, chainsaw, weed whips and, hand tools such as shovels, pitch forks, etc. Removed vegetation will be hand piled and burned once the piles have cured. Pile burning will occur per California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection parameters and guidelines and in accordance with United States Forest Service (USFS) Project Activity Level (PAL) emergency precautions for operations.

I concur with Item 8 of the CEC-LO-2012-1018, for this action.

This concludes the Section 106 review process. Please retain a copy of this e-mail with the administrative record for this action. If the project activities change or circumstances are altered after this review, there may be additional Section 106 review responsibilities up to and including consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Officer.



Long, Julia <jlong@usbr.gov>

Re: ITA Request form Vegetation Management at Stampede and Boca Dams--THIS IS ADMIN

1 message

RIVERA, PATRICIA <privera@usbr.gov> Thu, Mar 7, 2013 at 11:04 AM
To: "Long, Julia" <jlong@usbr.gov>
Cc: Mary Williams <marywilliams@usbr.gov>, Kristi Seabrook <kseabrook@usbr.gov>

Julia,

I reviewed the proposed action to remove vegetation at Stampede and Boca Dams and Dikes. Vegetation removal is required on approximately 15.2 acres.

Reclamation dams and dikes are primarily built of compacted soil and rock. Riprap is placed on the upstream and downstream face of these facilities and it is required that these areas need to be cleared of vegetative growth.

Target species for removal that are currently present on the dam and dike faces include common sagebrush, Bitterbrush, Woolly mule's ears and Jeffrey pine and Ponderosa pine seedlings that are beginning to establish on-site.

Additionally, other species present that exhibit significant growth and/or woody vegetative characteristics require removal.

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The proposed action does not have a potential to affect Indian Trust Assets.

Patricia Rivera
Native American Affairs Program Manager
US Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
2800 Sacramento, California 95825
(916) 978-5194