

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project Draft Environmental Assessment

Elmore County, Idaho



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Pacific Northwest Region
Snake River Area Office, Boise, Idaho

April 2010

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Code Federal Register	CFR
Endangered Species Act	ESA
Environmental Assessment	EA
Executive Order	E.O.
finding of no significant impact	FONSI
Feet	ft
Homeland Security Presidential Directives	HSPD
Mountain Home Highway District	District
National Environmental Policy Act	NEPA
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System	NPDES
National Register of Historic Places	NRHP
Percent	%
Public Law	P.L.
river mile	RM
State Historic Preservation Office	SHPO
Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan	SWPPP
United States	US
U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation	Reclamation
U.S. Code	USC
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	EPA
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	USFWS
U.S. Geological Survey	USGS
versus	v.

Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need for Action

This draft environmental assessment (EA) evaluates the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project proposed by the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Reclamation proposes to address security vulnerabilities associated with the dam, which impounds Anderson Ranch Reservoir, a water storage reservoir near the town of Pine, in Elmore County, Idaho.

In response to the attacks of September 11, 2001, Reclamation has completed in-depth security assessments of its facilities and a full-scale evaluation of potential vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks at certain facilities. Reclamation's Safety, Security, and Law Enforcement Office identified vulnerabilities at a number of Reclamation dams, including Anderson Ranch Dam. The studies determined that the dam is vulnerable to explosives that could be carried by a motor vehicle traveling across the dam on Anderson Dam Road.

Reclamation is also investigating dam safety at Anderson Ranch related to seismic or overtopping events. These investigations may determine that a major structural modification to the dam is required. For this reason, the current need is for an interim measure to reduce security vulnerabilities until a final dam safety solution is determined. The interim measure is the focus of this EA. The long-term security solution would then be incorporated into the safety of dams project if structural remedies are required.

1.1 Authority

This project was authorized under the Reclamation Act of 1902, the USA Patriot Act of 2001 (P.L. 107 56), Homeland Security Act of 2002 (P.L.107-296), and directed by Department Manual (Parts 440-446) and several Homeland Security Presidential Directives (including HSPD 7, December 17, 2003), and Executive Orders (E.O. 10450, 10577, 12958, as amended).

1.2 Proposed Federal Action

The proposed Federal action (proposed action) is to remedy security vulnerabilities at the Anderson Ranch Dam, related to motor vehicles using the access road (Anderson Dam Road) across the crest of the dam. The Proposed Action is an interim measure until a final dam safety solution is determined.

1.3 Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to address security vulnerabilities at Anderson Ranch Dam. Action is needed because the dam is vulnerable to explosives that could be carried by a motor vehicle traveling on Anderson Dam Road across the dam crest.

This EA is being prepared to assist Reclamation in finalizing a decision on the Proposed Action, and to determine whether to issue a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) or a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement. Environmental analysis is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for any Federal action that may have a significant impact on the environment.

NEPA requires Reclamation to explore a reasonable range of alternatives and to analyze the environmental effects of these actions. Two alternatives are evaluated and compared in this document: the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The impacts of these alternatives were evaluated considering specific issues of public concern, including transportation and access, recreation, cultural

resources, threatened and endangered species, environmental justice, Indian Trust Assets, and cumulative impacts. These issues are covered in detail in this EA.

1.4 Project Location, Background and History

The proposed project is located 28 miles northeast of the City of Mountain Home in Elmore County, Idaho (see Figure 1-1, Project Area Map, page 1-3). The dam, constructed in 1954, is situated on the South Fork of the Boise River and is a major feature of the Boise Project. A county road – Anderson Dam Road – crosses the dam (see Figures 1-2 and 1-3) and serves as a main access to the west side of the reservoir, the South Fork of the Boise River, and to areas north and east of the reservoir, including the town of Prairie and the Trinity Mountains. Anderson Ranch Dam is a zoned-earthfill embankment that impounds Anderson Ranch Reservoir, with a crest length of 1,350 feet.



Figure 1-2. Photo shows Anderson Dam Road crossing the dam crest. This is a view of the downstream slope with photographer standing on the right abutment.

Anderson Ranch Reservoir is formed in a natural depression along the South Fork of the Boise River. The reservoir has an active storage capacity of 413,074 acre-feet at reservoir water surface elevation 4,196 feet above mean sea level. Benefits provided by the reservoir include storage for irrigation, hydroelectric power generation, fish and wildlife enhancement, and recreation. Anderson Dam Road, the access road that crosses the crest of the embankment, is the focus of the proposed interim security enhancement project. This route serves traffic traveling across the dam, and it is the main route to the small community of Prairie and to recreation areas along the west side of the reservoir and the north side of the South Fork of the Boise River.



Figure 1-3. Photo shows Anderson Dam Road crossing the dam crest. This is a view of upstream slope with photographer standing on the right abutment.

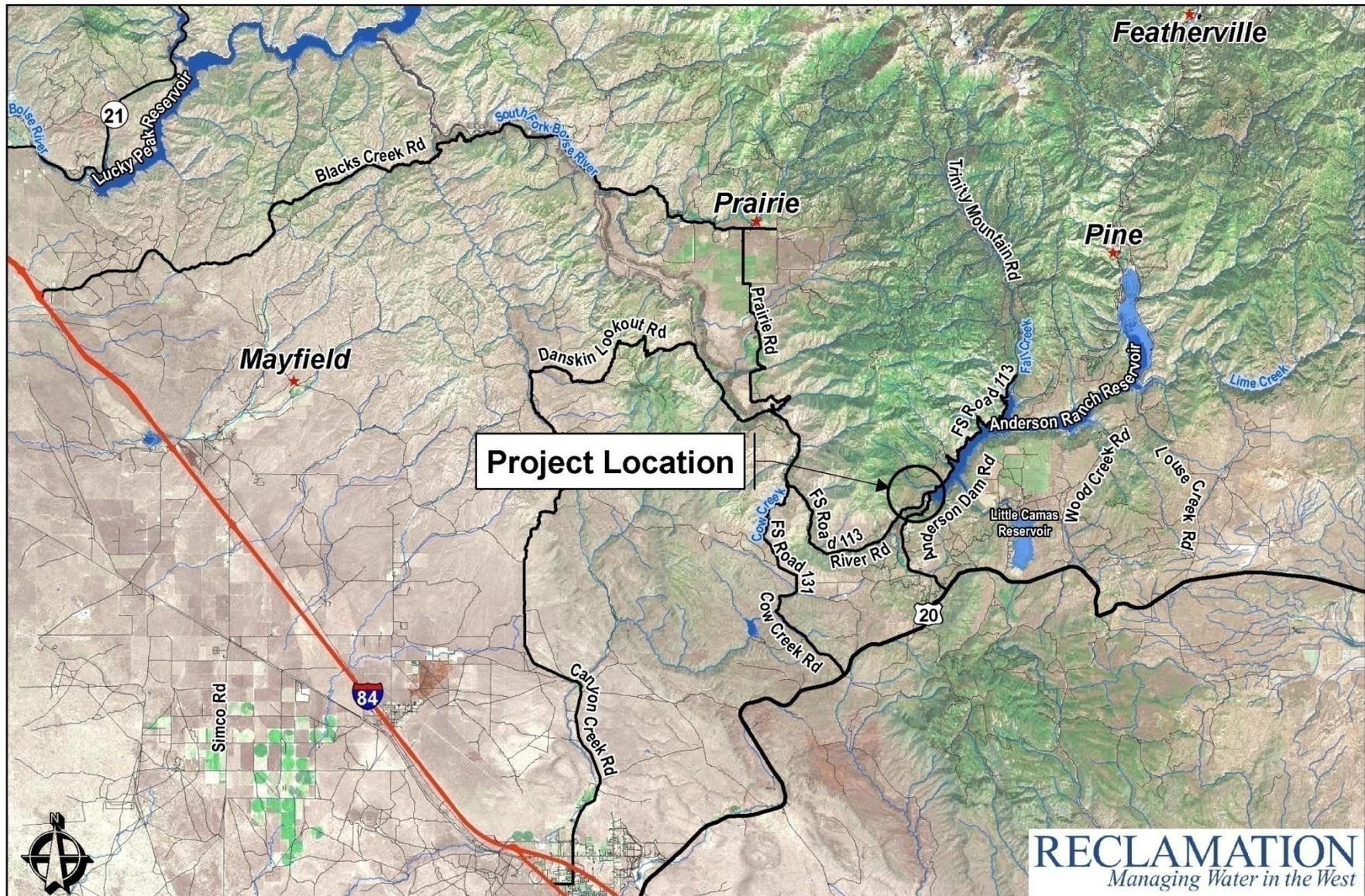


Figure 1-1. Project Area Map
Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project

Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational and planning purposes only. The Bureau of Reclamation makes no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the completeness, accuracy, or utility of these data and will in no event be liable for their use beyond the above expressed purpose.

Data Sources: Bureau of Reclamation, Inside Idaho, US Census Bureau
Map Date: February 2010



1.5 Scoping

Scoping is an early and open process used to obtain information that helps identify issues and concerns related to a proposed action, the affected public and geographical area, alternatives, and constraints in the NEPA process.

Reclamation first announced its proposal to implement security measures at Anderson Ranch Dam through a news release on July 16, 2008. Reclamation identified potential security threats that could jeopardize the dam's safety and completed a study that described alternatives to modify the crest of the dam to limit damage from a potential explosion.

In July 2009, Reclamation mailed a scoping document to approximately 80 Federal, state and local government officials and other known and potential stakeholders. A newspaper article was published in local newspapers, including *The Idaho Statesman*, describing the proposed interim security measures and announcing a public open house and other opportunities for public and agency involvement. Fliers were distributed one week before the public open house in the communities of Pine and Prairie.

Reclamation hosted a public open house from noon to 2 p.m. on August 4, 2009, in the community of Pine in Elmore County, to provide information about the project and opportunities for public involvement in the NEPA process, and to gather public input on the initially-proposed interim action to place a median barrier on the road that crosses the crest of the dam. Thirty-five to 40 people, including local residents, government officials, and agency representatives attended the open house.

Reclamation began the open house with a presentation on the purpose and scope of the project, including plans for the interim security action and issues, such as funding, ongoing studies, and the NEPA process. During the meeting, concerns were expressed about adequate space for passage of snow-removal equipment, farm and maintenance equipment, cattle trucks, semi-trailers, and other wide loads through the proposed 12-foot travel lanes around the median barrier. Residents of Prairie were especially concerned about these issues. Comment sheets were provided to the attendees to submit at the open house, mail to Reclamation, or email to the project manager. Comments were accepted via mail and email during the 30-day scoping public comment period after the open house. Reclamation received seven written comments – two from agencies or local governments and five from individuals.

Following the open house, a meeting was held with the Mountain Home Highway District (District) on August 6, 2009. The District is responsible for maintenance and snow removal of Anderson Dam Road, including the section across the dam. The District emphasized that it would be difficult to remove snow and maintain access across the dam in the winter with the proposed median alternative. Additional concerns were raised about road maintenance on the north side of the dam and about getting heavy equipment through the proposed 12-foot travel lanes throughout the year. The District indicated that a 18- to 20-foot-wide travel lane would be required to accommodate their equipment. Reclamation agreed to consider the District's recommendations in their continued evaluation.

A range of viewpoints have been expressed about the interim security measures proposed for Anderson Ranch Dam (see Section 1.6). Chapter 4, Consultation and Coordination, summarizes the public involvement process. Appendix A contains the Scoping Report.

1.6 Summary of Issues from Scoping

In addition to input provided by the public and other stakeholders at the open house on August 4, 2009, Reclamation also received seven written comments during the 30-day public comment period that identified similar issues and concerns about the project. Issues and concerns raised by the public and other stakeholders included:

- Anderson Dam Road is the main access to the town of Prairie. The road is the only route open year round.
- For the interim action, provide at least one lane that is wide enough (18 to 20 feet) to accommodate large-wide vehicles and machinery.
- Build a new road (road improvements) down Dixie Creek and close the dam to traffic.
- Rather than a median barrier, a guard should attend the gates that can allow local motor vehicles through.
- The project is a waste of money.
- Snow removal on narrow lanes with the median barrier would be impossible with existing equipment owned by the District.

Most comments, from both the public and from local government agencies, verified that a width of at least 18 to 20 feet is required for one of the travel lanes to accommodate farm machinery and road-maintenance equipment. During a meeting with the District, the District emphasized that it would be difficult to remove snow with their current equipment to maintain access across the dam and also to move heavy equipment through the proposed 12-foot travel lanes throughout the year. The District indicated that a 18- to 20-foot-wide travel lane would be preferable to accommodate their equipment.

Based on comments received from the public and the District, Reclamation agreed to study an alternative with a lane across the dam with adequate width for farm and maintenance equipment, trucks, and other wide loads. This alternative became the Proposed Action (see section 2.2.2).

1.7 Authorizing Actions, Permits, and Licenses

Table 1-1 lists the agencies, permits and approvals that may be required for the Proposed Action.

Table 1-1 Permits and Approvals that may be Required for the Proposed Action		
Agency/Department	Permit/Approval	Required for
<i>Federal Agencies</i>		
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	General construction activity stormwater permit	Stormwater discharges associated with construction activity
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Section 7 consultation (Endangered Species Act, 16 USC 15311544)	Ensures Endangered Species Act compliance
<i>State Agencies</i>		
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office	Section 106 Consultation (National Historic Preservation Act, 16 USC 470)	Historic, architectural, archeological or cultural characteristics of properties that meet National Register criteria (State Historic Preservation Officer responsible for administration). Note: also refer to National Landmarks Program (36 Code of Federal Register (CFR) and National Historic Landmarks Program [36 CFR 65])

1.8 Interrelated Projects

1.8.1 Safety of Dams Project

Reclamation is currently investigating dam safety measures at Anderson Ranch Dam related to seismic or potential overtopping events. These on-going investigations may determine that a major structural modification of the dam is required. The final dam safety solution will likely be decided in 5 to 7 years. A long-term solution to the dam's security vulnerability would then be incorporated into the safety of dams project if structural modifications are required.

Chapter 2 – Description of Alternatives

Chapter 2 describes the proposed Federal action (Proposed Action), the No Action Alternative, and alternatives that were eliminated from consideration for the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project. The Proposed Action is an interim measure to address security vulnerabilities until a final dam safety solution is determined.

2.1 Alternative Development

Reclamation originally developed conceptual engineering designs for three permanent build alternatives (two crest raise options and a crest widening option) and one interim alternative. The original interim alternative, which involved a median barrier for the road over the dam crest, was the only alternative advanced for further consideration, because Reclamation is investigating safety issues at the dam that could determine the need for additional structural modifications in the future. This interim alternative was presented to the public and agency stakeholders in 2009 (see Section 1.5, Scoping).

In response to stakeholder concerns related to snow removal and access for large vehicles and equipment, Reclamation developed a 4-foot crest raise interim alternative, which is the Proposed Action, described in Section 2.2.2.

2.2 Alternatives Considered in Detail

Alternatives that were considered in detail in this EA include the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, as required by NEPA.

An element common to both alternatives is that if the national security level goes to level red, or if there is a direct threat made to the dam, security gates at both ends of the dam will be closed. Winter access for residents of Prairie would be accommodated.

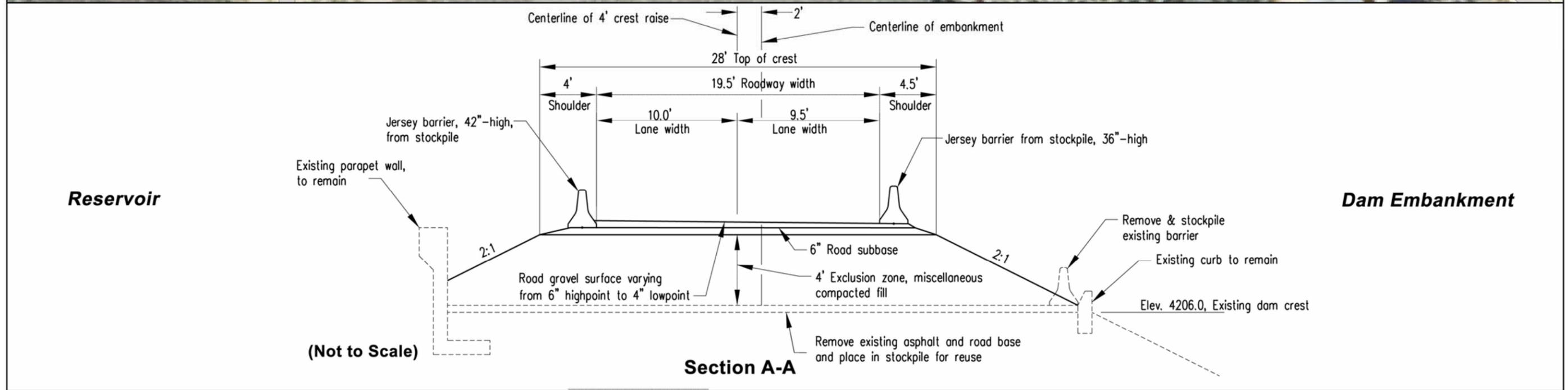
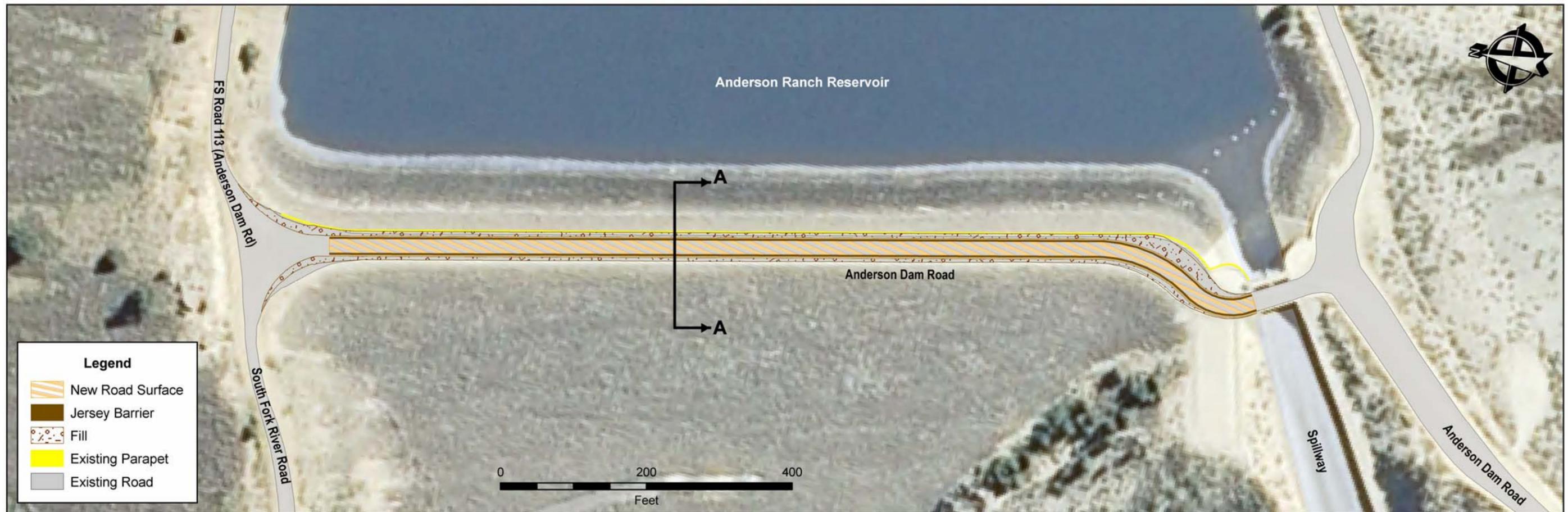
2.2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no changes to Anderson Ranch Dam. Two-way traffic would continue to cross the dam crest, except during high security alerts or if direct threats are made to the facility.

2.2.2 Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would raise the existing dam crest by 4 feet and provide a 19.5-foot travel lane with jersey barriers on each side of the travel lane (see Figure 2-1). The 19.5-foot travel lane would be designated to allow one-way traffic, with adequate width for farm and maintenance equipment, trucks, and other oversized vehicles, and with signage or signals posted at each end of the dam.

The dam raise would involve, first, removing existing jersey barriers, asphalt and road base from Anderson Dam Road, and stockpiling these components for reuse in construction. The existing curb and parapet wall would remain in place. Subsequently, construction of the dam raise would be accomplished by placing 4 feet of compacted fill, including waste-asphalt and road base from the stockpile and fill material from a local borrow site. Six inches of road subbase would be placed over the compacted fill and a gravel road surface, varying in thickness from 6 inches at the highpoint to 4 inches at the low point, would be placed on top to facilitate drainage. Fill side slopes would be at 2:1 (horizontal to vertical). The stockpiled jersey barriers would be installed at the edges of the new travel lanes.



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational and planning purposes only. The Bureau of Reclamation makes no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the completeness, accuracy, or utility of these data and will in no event be liable for their use beyond the above expressed purpose.

Data Sources: INSIDE Idaho, Bureau of Reclamation, NRCS (2009 NAIP 1 meter Imagery)

Map Date: February 2010



Figure 2-1. Crest Raise Interim Alternative
Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project

At the left abutment (south side of the dam) a 100-foot ramp at a 4% grade would be required to transition the road to the 4-foot raise across the crest. Because the spillway structure near the left abutment is offset from the dam, the crest raise would not require modification to the spillway bridge.

The road at the right abutment (north side of dam) widens to allow a transition onto National Forest Road 113 that runs along the canyon sidewall (Figure 2-1). A 100-foot ramp at 4% grade would be required to meet the 4-foot raise across the crest. To achieve a 4% transition to the crest raise, the new transition ramp would extend to the opposite side of Road 113 and extend both upstream and downstream along Road 113.

Road material and fill needed for the Proposed Action would be obtained commercially or from the same source used for the original construction of the dam, located about 2 miles southeast of the dam along Anderson Dam Road (see Figure 2-2). An estimated 14,000 cubic yards of fill would be necessary to construct the 4-foot raise. To the extent practical, fill material would be taken from areas already disturbed within the borrow area, and reclaimed areas would be avoided.

Construction is expected to begin in late September 2010. During construction, which is expected to take about three months, the crest road would be temporarily closed and travelers would have to use alternate routes, which would include Cow Creek Road (closed in winter) or Blacks Creek Road (intermittently closed in winter). See Figure 1-1 for road locations. The recreation area on the east side of the dam would be closed during construction and used as a staging area, then reopened to the public after completion of construction.

Estimated construction cost for the Proposed Action is \$705,000.

2.3 Alternatives Eliminated from Consideration

As described in Section 2.1, conceptual designs of three permanent alternatives were originally considered by Reclamation, but were not evaluated in this EA because the immediate need is for an interim solution to address security vulnerability. Permanent alternatives will be considered in concert with any determination made regarding dam safety engineering studies. The original median barrier interim alternative that was presented during scoping meetings is summarized below.

2.3.1 Median Barrier

The interim alternative was originally presented to the public and other stakeholders as the Proposed Action. The objective of this alternative would be to offset traffic from the center section of the crest by constructing a median barrier to prevent vehicular access to certain areas of the dam crest.

The median barrier on top of the crest would consist of 4-foot-high, anchored jersey barriers filled with loose cobbles and boulders to inhibit motor vehicle access along the top of the median if the jersey barriers were to be breached. Additional asphaltic road surfacing would not be needed for this alternative. The downstream lane would require removal of the existing concrete curb and construction of a 3-foot-wide shoulder at the downstream edge of the crest. Borrow would be used for median fill material.

Estimated construction costs for this alternative range from \$1.15 million to \$1.2 million.

This interim alternative was eliminated from detailed evaluation because it would not provide travel lanes wide enough to accommodate large, wide vehicles and equipment and would make snow removal difficult.

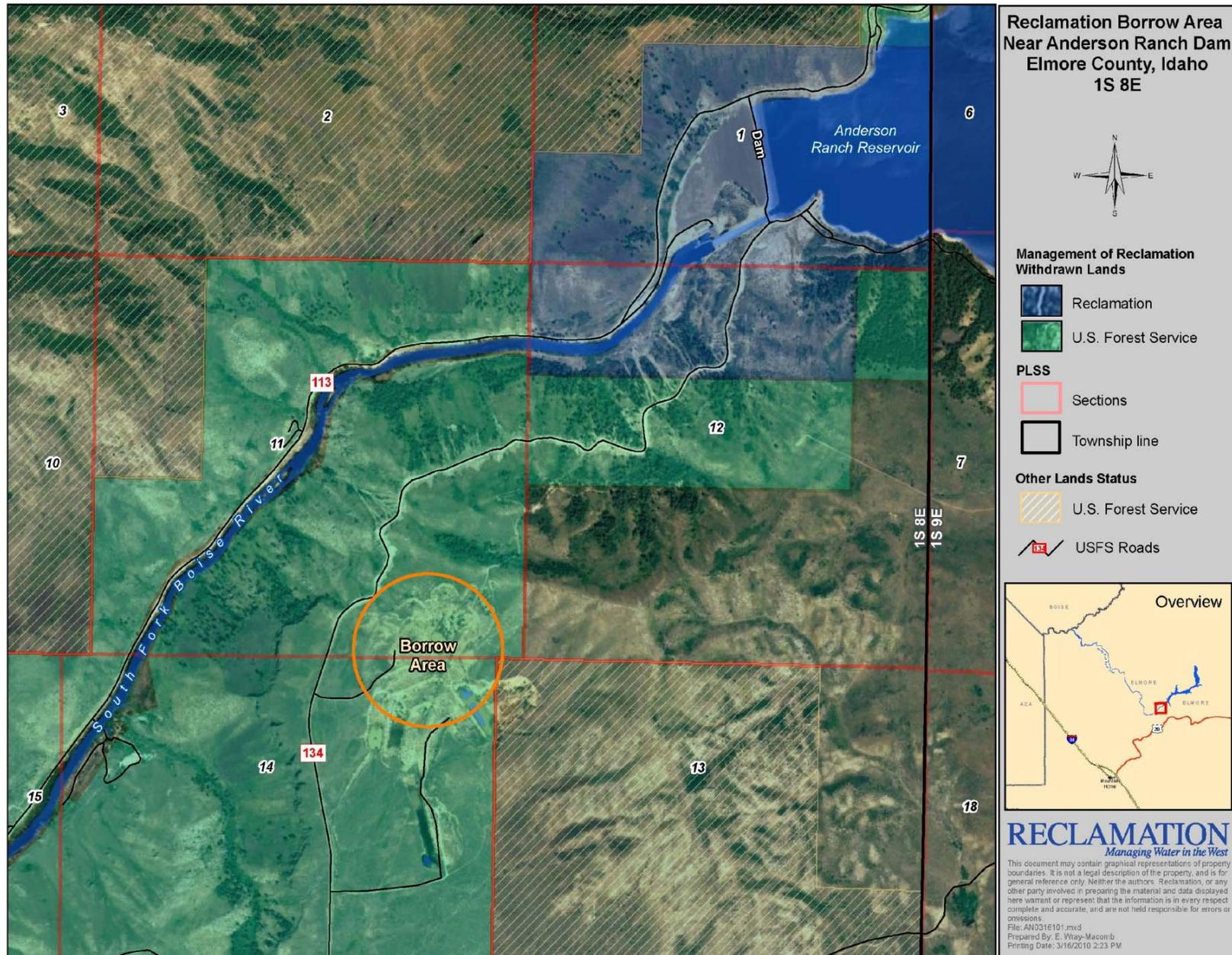


Figure 2-2. Borrow Area
Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project

2.4 Design and Cost Comparative Analysis of Alternatives

Table 2-1 compares the advantages, disadvantages and costs of the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action that is analyzed in this EA. Chapter 3 describes the affected environment and environmental consequences for these two alternatives.

Table 2-1 Advantages, Disadvantages, Estimated Costs of No Action Alternative and Proposed Action for Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project			
Alternative	Advantages	Disadvantages	Estimated Cost
Alternative A – No Action	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Doesn't meet purpose and need ▪ Could result in significant impacts if dam was breached by an attack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No construction costs ▪ Cost from property loss and loss of life could be significant if dam was breached by an attack
Proposed Action – Crest Raise Interim Alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy to implement ▪ Familiar construction methods ▪ Nearby borrow source for fill material ▪ Depending on outcome of dam safety, modifications to crest are easily removed or revised ▪ Allows for snow removal on travel lane ▪ Provides a travel lane wide enough to accommodate large vehicles and equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current practice is to push snow off road with graders and pile it along the shoulder. This approach would not be feasible with proposed barriers on both sides of road. 	\$705,000

Chapter 3 – Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This chapter describes existing conditions, environmental consequences, and proposed mitigation for key resources in the project area. This is not a comprehensive discussion of every resource, rather this chapter focuses on aspects of the environment that were identified as issues during scoping, or that may be affected by the Proposed Action being considered. This chapter compares the effects of the proposed action and the No Action Alternative described in Chapter 2.

3.1. Transportation and Access

3.1.1 Affected Environment

The road network in the general region of Anderson Ranch Dam includes the following state highway and rural roads (see Figure 1-1, Project Area Map):

- State Highway 20, maintained by the Idaho Transportation Department.
- Forest Road 131 (Cow Creek Road), a gravel road maintained by the District.
- Forest Road 113 (River Road), a gravel road maintained by District.
- Anderson Dam Road, a paved and gravel road maintained by District.

Anderson Dam Road serves as a connecting route from State Highway 20 to the small community of Prairie, and to recreation areas along the west side of the reservoir and the north side of the South Fork of the Boise River. Traffic over the dam crest (Anderson Dam Road) primarily consists of a mix of local residents from Prairie and other rural communities, Forest Service personnel, local ranchers and farmers, and recreation travelers.

Access options from the Prairie area to Highway 20 are as follows (see Figure 1-1):

- Prairie Road to River Road to Anderson Dam Road (cross dam crest) to Highway 20 – This is the main route used by Prairie residents and nearby ranchers and farmers to access Mountain Home, and points east of Mountain Home. Roads along this route are maintained in winter and are wide enough to allow for tractor trailers and wide farm equipment. This route (Prairie to Highway 20) is 27 miles one-way.
- Prairie Road to River Road to Cow Creek Road to Highway 20 – Snow is not removed from Cow Creek Road, which is closed during the winter. This road has several steep grades and narrow, winding sections, making travel by tractor trailers and wide farm equipment difficult. This route (Prairie to Highway 20) is 24 miles one-way.
- Town of Prairie to the town of Pine to Wood Creek Road to Highway 20 – Travel from Prairie to Pine is along a series of gravel roads (Smith Creek Road to Trinity Mountain Road to Lester Creek Road). These roads are closed during the winter. Wood Creek Road is paved and maintained during winter. This route is 40 miles one-way.
- Another route to access Prairie is from Interstate 84 to Blacks Creek Road to Prairie (see Figure 1-1), which is 34 miles one-way. This is the main route used by Prairie residents and nearby ranchers and farmers traveling to and from Boise and points west of Boise, except in the winter months when this route is often closed.

3.1.2 Environmental Consequences

3.1.2.1 *No Action*

For the No Action Alternative, the existing transportation network would not be affected. Traffic would continue to cross the dam crest and connect to other regional roads.

3.1.2.2 *Proposed Action*

This alternative would raise the existing dam crest and would not affect access to Prairie, surrounding ranches and farms, or recreational areas associated with or near Anderson Ranch Reservoir or the South Fork of the Boise River. The 19.5-foot travel lane would be designated to allow one-way traffic with adequate width for farm and maintenance equipment, trucks, and other oversized vehicles, and with signage or signals posted at each end of the dam. Anderson Dam Road across the dam crest would be temporarily closed during construction, which would affect access and travel. Travelers to and from the Prairie area, and to and from recreation areas, would have to use Cow Creek Road or Blacks Creek Road. Construction activities would mostly occur during the non-winter months to allow access along Cow Creek Road while the dam crest is temporarily closed. Construction is anticipated to take approximately three months.

The District performs current snow removal operations on Anderson Dam Road across the dam crest, using a grader with blades. With the raise of the dam and placement of 42-inch-high jersey barriers (Figures 2-1), pushing the snow with a blade along the crest, and then piling it along the roadway shoulder, would not be feasible, and a truck- or tractor-mounted snow blower would be necessary.

3.1.3 Mitigation Summary

Because the Proposed Action would impact snow removal across the dam crest, Reclamation will provide the District with equipment to facilitate efficient snow removal.

3.2 Recreation

3.2.1 Affected Environment

Recreational uses of the project region are related to boating, fishing, and other water-related activities on the reservoir, the South Fork of the Boise River, and creeks in the project region; picnicking and camping; hiking and mountain biking; snow machine and all-terrain vehicle use; and dispersed activities such as hunting and bird watching.

Recreation on the 7.4-square-mile (4,730-acre) Anderson Ranch Reservoir is managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Boise National Forest. The reservoir is about 14 miles long, 1 mile wide, a maximum of about 315 feet deep, and has about 50 miles of shoreline.

The Boise National Forest manages a number of campgrounds and boat ramps on and near the reservoir. Only two facilities on the reservoir, the Spillway Campground and the Elk Creek boat ramp, are near the dam. Spillway Campground is a very small, primitive campground (three sites) near the south end of the dam that is accessed off of Anderson Dam Road. The Elk Creek boat ramp is on the western shore of the reservoir less than one-half mile northeast of the north side of the dam.

The South Fork of the Boise River is a popular destination for fishing and whitewater boating. The Boise National Forest maintains boat launching areas along the river downstream of the dam; the closest is about 1.3 road miles downstream.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

3.2.2.1 *No-Action Alternative*

The No-Action Alternative would not affect recreational use of Anderson Ranch Reservoir, the South Fork of the Boise River, or recreational lands in the area. Recreational facilities would continue to be managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

3.2.2.2 *Proposed Action*

This alternative would result in the raising of the existing dam crest and would not affect access to recreational areas associated with or near Anderson Ranch Reservoir or the South Fork of the Boise River over the long term. Following construction, visitors would still be able to use Anderson Dam Road across the dam crest to access developed recreational facilities (such as the Spillway Campground and Elk Creek boat ramp) and dispersed recreational opportunities on surrounding public lands (such as fishing and boating on the South Fork of the Boise River). Anderson Dam Road across the dam crest would be temporarily closed during construction, which would affect convenient access to recreational destinations and facilities for some users. Construction activities would start in September and would be expected to last up to three months. Travelers would have to use alternate routes, which would include Cow Creek Road (closed in winter) or Blacks Creek Road (intermittently closed in winter).

Furthermore, the Spillway Campground, located just southeast of the dam off Anderson Dam Road, would likely be closed during construction of the crest raise. Closure would be necessary because of the anticipated high truck traffic between the dam and the borrow source 2 miles southeast of the dam off Anderson Dam Road.

3.2.3 Mitigation Summary

No mitigation is proposed because this alternative would not permanently affect recreational facilities or access to recreational activities in the project region.

3.3 Cultural Resources

3.3.1 Affected Environment

The affected cultural resource environment is based on records from Reclamation, the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), historic maps from the United States Geological Service (USGS), and aerial photographs. Anderson Ranch Dam was built in 1954 and was officially determined to be eligible for the Nation Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the Idaho SHPO in 1998. While the dam is eligible for the NRHP, the road that crosses the crest (Anderson Dam Road) is not considered to be part of the historic features of the dam because it includes modern railings and barriers.

As part of this EA, Reclamation requested information from local Native American groups regarding areas or resources of concern to Native Americans in or near the project area. Reclamation did not receive any responses to its inquiries, so it assumes that the site does not contain any sacred sites or other areas of cultural importance to local tribes. Therefore, sacred Native American sites are not considered to be a key resource and are not discussed in this EA.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

Based on consultation between the Idaho SHPO and Reclamation, it was determined that no cultural resources would be effected by the No Action Alternative or the Proposed Action.

Furthermore, because the Proposed Action is interim, the placement of the 4-foot raised crest is considered to be reversible.

Because no cultural resources would be affected by the No Action Alternative or Proposed Action, there would be no adverse effects on cultural resources for either alternative. Therefore, there are no environmental consequences to cultural resources as a result of the Proposed Action.

3.3.3 Mitigation Summary

No mitigation is required because there are no impacts to cultural resources.

3.4 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice, 59 Federal Register 7629 [1994]) requires Federal agencies to achieve environmental justice by addressing “disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.” To determine if environmental justice populations are present, the Federal agency examines the demographics of the affected area to determine if minority (including Native Americans) and/or low-income populations are present. If present, the agency must determine if construction of the Proposed Action would cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on the populations.

3.4.1 Affected Environment

3.4.1.1 Racial Minorities

The project area is located in Elmore County, a remote and sparsely populated area, where much of the land is owned by the Federal government. Near the project area, there are only scattered residential dwellings along Anderson Dam Road, around the reservoir, and along the South Fork of the Boise River downstream from the dam. The general proportions of race and ethnicity in Elmore County are similar to Idaho as a whole, with a white population of more than 96%, according to the Census Bureau’s 2006-2008 American Community Survey (see Table 3-1).

Race or Ethnicity	Idaho	Elmore County
One Race	97.7%	96.2%
White	94.6%	91.5%
Black or African American	0.6%	2.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.2%	1.2%
Asian	1.2%	2.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%
Some Other Race	2.2%	2.2%
Two or More Races	2.3%	3.8%
Hispanic or Latino Origin (any race)¹	9.9%	13.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2008
¹By definition from the Federal Office of Management and Budget, race and Hispanic or Latino origin are two separate categories. People who report themselves as Hispanic or Latino can be of any race.

The 2008 Census data in Table 3-1 do not provide detailed information about the project area. However, data in the project area from the 2000 Census (see Table 3-2), shows that race and ethnicity in two Census blocks, that include the project area and a land area that is much larger than the project area, are similar to the countywide data for 2008. While one of the Census blocks (Tract 9802, Block Group 1) includes part of the city of Mountain Home – an urban area with a nearby Air Force base – the 2000 Census data indicate that the population living in or near the project area is only slightly more white than the county as a whole. However, the difference is negligible.

Table 3-2
2000 Racial and Ethnic Minority Distribution in Elmore County
and Census Block Groups that Include the Project Area

Race or Ethnicity	Elmore County	Census Tract 9801, Block Group 1	Census Tract 9802, Block Group 2 (including Mountain Home)
One Race	96.7%	97.2%	97.6%
White	88.2%	97.5%	93.8%
Black or African American	3.4%	0.0%	0.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.9%	0.0%	2.1%
Asian	1.7%	0.0%	0.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
Some Other Race	5.6%	2.5%	2.9%
Two or More Races	3.3%	2.8%	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	12.0%	5.5%	6.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000a

3.4.1.2 Low-Income Populations

The Census Bureau's 2006-2008 American Community Survey shows a 2008 median household income of \$50,228 for Elmore County and \$47,331 for Idaho (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). The Census Bureau reported that about 12% of the population of Elmore County and 12.1% of the state's population were living in poverty in 2007 (U.S. Census Bureau 2009).

The most recent data for the Census block groups that include the project area are from the 2000 Census (see Table 3-3). The large area upstream of the dam, north of Highway 20 and east of Prairie Road (Census Tract 9801, Block Group 1), shows a higher percentage of poverty (15.7%) compared to the county as a whole and Tract 9802, Block Group 1 (7.6%), which includes part of the Mountain Home urban area. Tract 9802, Block Group 1, also had a lower poverty level than the county as a whole (11.2%). Median household income for Tract 9802, Block Group 1, also is higher than Tract 9801, Block Group 1, and the county as a whole.

**Table 3-3
2000 Income and Poverty Status for Elmore County
and Census Block Groups that Include the Project Area**

	Elmore County	Census Tract 9801, Block Group 1	Census Tract 9802, Block Group 1 (including Mountain Home)
Median Household Income (1999)	\$35,256	\$31,500	\$41,081
Persons for whom Poverty Status was Determined (1999)	25,148	313	1,256
Percentage of persons living in poverty	11.2%	15.7%	7.6%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000b			

A comparison of the countywide data indicates that the percentage of people living in poverty has increased by only about 0.8% since the 2000 Census (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). The 2000 Census data indicate that there could be some low-income persons living in the project area, but the residential development pattern in this part of the county and in the project area indicates that low-income residents are scattered throughout the area and not concentrated in any one location.

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

The information presented previously indicates that there are few, if any, minority populations in or near the project area. The impacts associated with the Proposed Action would affect persons of all races in the same manner and would not result in any disproportionately high and adverse impacts on particular minority populations.

The 2000 Census data indicate that there could be some low-income residents living in or near the project area, but not concentrated in any one location. Construction of the Proposed Action would not require the relocation of any residents, so no low-income households would be directly affected by the project. Construction-related impacts, such as those associated with fugitive dust and noise and temporary road closures during construction, could temporarily affect these residents and would affect all residents in the same manner, regardless of income. Construction of the Proposed Action would not result in any significant and adverse impacts on any low-income populations.

3.4.3 Mitigation Summary

No mitigation is proposed because there are no environmental justice populations in the area, and therefore no impact on any environmental justice populations.

3.5 Indian Trust Assets

Indian Trust Assets are legal interests in property held in trust by the United States for Indian tribes and individuals. The Secretary of the Interior, acting as trustee, holds many assets in trust for Indian tribes and individuals. Examples of trust assets are lands, minerals, grazing, hunting, fishing, and water rights. While most Indian Trust Assets are on-reservation, they may also be found off-reservation.

The United States has a responsibility to protect and maintain rights reserved by or granted to Indian tribes and Indian individuals by treaties, statutes and executive orders. These are sometimes further interpreted through court decisions and regulations.

3.5.1 Affected Environment

Anderson Ranch Reservoir is located in an area historically used by many tribes. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, a Federally-recognized tribe at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in southeastern Idaho, has trust assets both on- and off-reservation. The Fort Bridger Treaty was signed and agreed to by the Bannock and Shoshone headman on July 3, 1868. Article 4 of the 1868 treaty states that members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe “shall have the right to hunt on the unoccupied lands of the United States.” This has been interpreted to mean unoccupied Federal lands.

The Fort Bridger Treaty for the Shoshone-Bannock has been interpreted in the case of *State of Idaho v. Tinno*, an off-reservation fishing case in Idaho. The Idaho Supreme Court determined that the Shoshone word for “hunt” also included to “fish.” Under *Tinno*, the Court affirmed the tribal members’ right to take fish off-reservation pursuant to the Fort Bridger Treaty (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 1994).

The Nez Perce are a Federally-recognized tribe of the Nez Perce reservation in northern Idaho. The United States and the tribes entered into three treaties (Treaty of 1855, Treaty of 1863, and Treaty of 1868) and one agreement (Agreement of 1893). The rights of the Nez Perce Tribes include the right to hunt, gather and graze livestock on open and unclaimed lands, and fish in all usual and accustomed places (Nez Perce Tribe 1995).

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Indians, a Federally-recognized tribe without a reservation, has treaty-protected hunting and fishing rights that may be exercised on unoccupied lands within the area acquired by the United States pursuant to the 1868 Fort Bridger Treaty.

The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes are a Federally-recognized tribe located at the Duck Valley Reservation in southern Idaho and northern Nevada. The reservation was established by executive orders dated April 16, 1877; May 4, 1886; and July 1, 1910. The Shoshone-Paiute say the interests of the tribes are also reflected in the Bruneau, Boise, Fort Bridger, Box Elder, Ruby Valley, and other treaties and executive orders that the tribes’ ancestors agreed to with the United States. The tribe continues to observe these treaties and executive orders in good faith despite the fact that the Federal government failed to ratify some of them. Therefore, the tribes assert they have aboriginal title and rights to those areas. All such treaties and executive orders recognize the need for the tribes to continue having access to off-reservation resources because most of the reservations established were and continue to be incapable of sustaining their tribal populations. This need continues and has not diminished from the time of the first treaties and executive orders that established the Duck Valley Reservation (*Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation v. Leavitt*, 543 U.S. 631, 2005).

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

There is no universally accepted understanding of any specific tribal off-reservation treaty rights to hunt and fish in the vicinity of Anderson Ranch Dam. Thus the Indian Trust Assets considered are tribal hunting and fishing rights that might exist. The No Action Alternative and Proposed Action would not affect tribal hunting and fishing in the area.

3.5.3 Mitigation Summary

No mitigation is required since the Proposed Action would not affect tribal hunting and fishing in the area.

3.6 Threatened and Endangered Species

3.6.1 Affected Environment

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Elmore County supports five species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA): the endangered Snake River physa snail (*Haitia [Physa] natricina*), the threatened Bliss Rapids snail (*Taylorconcha serpenticola*), Bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) listed as threatened, the threatened Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), and slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*) listed as threatened (USFWS 2010). The USFWS does not currently identify any candidate species in Elmore County (USFWS 2010). Proposed species are candidate species that were found to warrant listing as either threatened or endangered and were officially proposed as such in a Federal Register Notice after completion of a status review and consideration of other protective conservation measures. Following is a brief summary of the five species listed in Elmore County:

- **Snake River physa snail** is a freshwater mollusk found in the middle Snake River of southern Idaho (USFWS 2010a). The snail is not known to inhabit any tributaries of the Snake River (Taylor 2003).
- **The Bliss Rapids snail** resides on the sides and undersides of rocks in free-flowing and cold-water springs in the middle Snake River of Idaho. It prefers relatively clean and rocky substrates so it can graze on algae and diatoms at night. The recovery area for the Bliss Rapids Snail includes the main stem Snake River and associated tributary cold-water spring complexes between RM 547 and RM 585. On June 6, 2007, the USFWS announced that it would take a further look at the status of this snail, finding that a petition to delist the species may be warranted (USWS 2010b).
- **Bull trout** have been observed throughout the South Fork of the Boise River subbasin (both up and downstream of the dam) and exhibit both the migratory and resident life history forms. A detailed study of bull trout life history within the South Fork of the Boise River subbasin was completed in 2001 (Partridge et al., 2001). Bull trout have the capability to colonize all tributaries of the subbasin that do not contain impassable barriers.
- **Canada Lynx** are generally solitary animals, hunting and traveling alone. They are slightly more active at night than by day, and have complex habitat needs. They require different forest types, including young forests with thick vegetation for hunting snowshoe hares, and older forests with good cover for their dens.
- **Slickspot peppergrass** is an herbaceous annual or biennial plant that occurs in sagebrush steppe habitats in southwestern Idaho, including the Elmore County area. The plant is 4 to 12 inches high, with many tiny, white flowers that resemble the garden flower sweet alyssum. It typically grows in “slickspots,” which are small areas (microsites) within larger sagebrush habitat.

3.6.2 Environmental Consequences

Because the project would not affect the Snake River, it would not affect the Snake River physa snail, the Bliss Rapids snail or their habitats. Also, no suitable habitat for Canada lynx, or slickspot peppergrass is found within the footprint of the Proposed Action or the immediate surrounding area.

The South Fork of the Boise River below the dam is bull trout habitat and bull trout populate the river. The Proposed Action involves the placement of fill and road base material on top of the dam crest and the placement of jersey barriers. Road material and fill needed for the Proposed Action would be obtained from the same source used for the original construction of the dam, about 2 miles southeast of the dam along Anderson Dam Road. Since construction associated with the improvements is expected to

disturb more than 1 acre of ground, Federal law requires Reclamation to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for construction-related stormwater discharges. Reclamation would develop a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) and follow NPDES requirements for stormwater control. Such action would prevent the runoff of sediment into the South Fork of the Boise River bull trout habitat. With control of stormwater runoff during construction, the Proposed Action is not expected to affect bull trout habitat in the South Fork of the Boise River.

In summary, the Proposed Action would not affect Snake River physa snail, Bliss Rapids snail, bull trout, Canada lynx, or slickspot peppergrass.

3.6.3 Mitigation Summary

No mitigation is proposed because the Proposed Action would not affect the Snake River physa snail, Bliss Rapids snail, Bull trout, Canada lynx, or slickspot peppergrass.

3.7 Cumulative and Indirect Impacts

NEPA regulations define cumulative impacts as impacts that result from “the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such actions.”

A reasonable, foreseeable future action is possible dam safety modifications. Reclamation is investigating dam safety at Anderson Ranch related to seismic or overtopping events. These investigations may determine that a major structural modification of the dam is required. If necessary, such action, associated impacts, and potential mitigation, would be addressed through the NEPA process. At this time, the magnitude of any future modifications and associated impacts and mitigation are unknown. The Proposed Action presented in this EA is for an interim action (raised crest) to address security vulnerabilities along the dam crest. If dam modifications are done in the future, the interim action would be removed to allow modification to the dam crest and/or spillway.

No present or reasonably foreseeable future actions at Anderson Ranch Dam or the surrounding area would have additive or interactive impacts on the environmental resources affected by the Proposed Action.

Chapter 4 – Consultation and Coordination

4.1 Summary of Public and Agency Involvement

4.1.1 News Briefs

Reclamation first announced security vulnerabilities and the need for security mitigation at Anderson Ranch Dam in a news release on July 16, 2008. Reclamation identified potential security threats that could jeopardize the dam's safety and completed a study that described alternatives to modify the crest structure of the dam to limit damage from a potential explosion.

An article was published in local newspapers, including The Idaho Statesman, describing the need for security measures and announcing a public open house and other opportunities for public and agency involvement. Fliers were distributed one week before the public open house in the communities of Pine and Prairie in Elmore County.

4.1.2 Scoping Letter

A scoping letter introducing the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project and requesting input was mailed in July 2009 to Federal, state and local government officials and other known and potential stakeholders.

4.1.3 Public Meetings/Open House

Reclamation hosted a public open house from noon to 2:00 p.m. on August 4, 2009, in the community of Pine. Details of the meeting are described in Section 1.5 and in Appendix A.

4.2 Agency Consultation and Coordination

Reclamation provided notification of the project to local, state, and Federal agencies through the scoping letter described in Section 4.1.2. In addition, agencies were invited to the public meeting (Section 4.1.3) to learn about the project and to provide input. Agencies participating in the public meeting included the District and Elmore County Disaster Services.

Reclamation participated in a separate meeting with the District on August 6, 2009, to discuss the District's concerns and to receive input on the project. The District also provided written comments to Reclamation.

Reclamation consulted with Idaho SHPO on March 2, 2010, regarding the modification to the road that crosses the top of the dam. The SHPO concurred with Reclamation in a March 20, 2010 letter that the Proposed Action will not adversely affect the site.

4.3 Tribal Consultation and Coordination

Reclamation presented the status of the project to the Shoshone Bannock Tribal Council during the annual update meetings in 2008 and 2009 and to the Tribal Council for Shoshone-Paiute from Duck Valley in 2008. The tribes have provided no written or oral comment thus far.

4.4 Distribution List

A copy of this draft EA was mailed to the following agencies, tribes, organizations and individuals:

4.4.1 Federal Agencies and Elected Officials

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Idaho Operations Office
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Boise Outreach
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District
 Bureau of Land Management, Boise District
 U.S. Forest Service, Boise National Forest, Forest Supervisor's Office
 U.S. Forest Service, Boise National Forest Mountain Home Ranger District
 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Fort Hall Agency
 Bureau of Homeland Security
 Bonneville Power Administration
 U.S. Senator Mike Crapo
 U.S. Senator Jim Risch
 U.S. Representative Walt Minnick
 U.S. Representative Mike Simpson

4.4.2 State and Local Agencies and Officials

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Directors Office, Southwest Region and Magic Valley Region
 Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
 Governor, State of Idaho
 State Senator Tim Corder
 State Representative Richard Wills
 State Representative Pete Nielson
 Western Elmore County Recreation
 Elmore County Commissioners
 Elmore County Sheriff's Office
 Mountain Home Highway District
 Elmore County Disaster Services
 Mayor, Mountain Home

4.4.3 Tribes

Shoshone Bannock Tribes
 Northwestern Shoshone Tribe

4.4.4 Irrigation Organizations

Pioneer Irrigation District
 Settlers Irrigation District
 Idaho Water Users Association
 Wilder Irrigation District
 New Dry Creek Ditch Company
 Boise-Kuna Irrigation District
 Big Bend Irrigation District
 Farmers Union Ditch Company
 Pioneer Ditch Company
 Boise Valley Irrigation Ditch Company
 Boise Project Board of Control

New York irrigation District
Ballentyne Ditch Company
Capitol View Irrigation District
South Boise Mutual Irrigation Company
Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District

4.4.5 Organizations

Idaho Conservation League
Idaho Rivers United
Idaho Wildlife Federation
Trout Unlimited
Golden Eagle Audubon Society
Boise Valley Fly Fisherman
Mountain Home Air Force Base, Outdoor Adventure Program
Outdoors Program, Boise State University

4.4.6 Individuals and Businesses

Leroy Bentzinger
Travis Cook
Victoria Cook
Donna Freeman
S.L. Holder
Elmer Ireland
Dave Owen
Dave Mills
Middle Fork Rapid Transit
Rocky Mountain River Tours
Mackey Wilderness River Trips
Custom River Tour
Idaho Guide Service
Middlefork Wilderness Outfitters
Riverroots

Chapter 5 – References

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- 2010b. Species profile of the Bliss Rapids snail. <http://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=G01K>. Accessed January 15, 2010
- 2010c. Species profile of the Canada lynx. <http://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=A073>. Accessed January 15, 2010

Chapter 6 – List of Preparers

Name	Background	Responsibility
Bureau of Reclamation		
Steve Dunn	NEPA Specialist	NEPA Manager, Senior Review
Jerry Gregg	Agricultural Engineer	Manager Snake River Area Office
Ray Leicht and J. Huang	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources
John Tiedemann	Biological Sciences	Activity Manager
Lisa Wuttke, PE	Senior Engineer	Contracting Officer’s Representative
HDR Engineering, Inc.		
Heather Carroll, PE	Civil Engineer	Transportation and Access
Diane Holloran	GIS Specialist	GIS Mapping and Figures
Sue Lee	Planner	Chapter 3 – Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences, Author
Mike Murray, PhD	Soil Scientist, NEPA	Review and Coordination
Lesley Thode	English, Communications	Editing, Word processing
Bob Waldher	Landscape Designer	Chapters 1 – Purpose and Need for Action and Chapter 2 – Description of Alternatives
Christine Whittaker, RLA	Landscape Architect	EA Project Manager, Revisions Chapters 1, 2, and 3, Author Chapters 4, 5, and 6, QC Review
Menzel Higgins Communications		
Tom Menzel	Technical Editor	Technical Writing and Editor
Sagebrush Consultants		
Michael Polk	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources

Appendix A - Scoping Report

This report describes results of the scoping process for interim measures proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to address security vulnerabilities at Anderson Ranch Dam in Elmore County, Idaho. Comments summarized in this report are part of the scoping process defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as “an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.”

The purpose of scoping is to obtain information that helps identify important issues, the affected public, affected geographical area, alternatives, and constraints in the NEPA process. Reclamation will use this information to help evaluate the impacts of the Proposed Action for the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project in an Environmental Assessment required under NEPA.

Reclamation first announced that there were certain security vulnerabilities on three dams under its purview in Idaho, and the need for security mitigation at the Anderson Ranch Dam in a news release on July 16, 2008. Reclamation identified potential security threats that could jeopardize the dam’s safety and completed a study that described alternatives to modify the crest structure of the dam to limit damage from a potential explosion. The Proposed Action at Anderson Ranch Dam is to place a 15-foot-wide median barrier on the existing road that crosses the crest of the dam to prevent motor vehicle access to the most vulnerable area of the dam crest, while still allowing two-way traffic across the crest.

Reclamation is also investigating safety issues related to seismic and overtopping events at Anderson Ranch Dam, which could determine the need for additional structural modifications. Therefore due to the time needed to adequately consider the potential safety issues, the current need is to develop interim measures to address security vulnerabilities until a final dam safety solution is identified and implemented.

Based on comments received from the public and the Mountain Home Highway District (District), Reclamation will explore an additional alternative to widen one of the lanes across the crest to provide adequate space for passage of snow removal, farm and maintenance equipment, trucks, and other wide loads; providing just one way traffic across the crest.

Public input is a key component of the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project. Details of the scoping process, comments received, and recommendations are described below. This report and the information presented at the open house are also posted on Reclamation’s Pacific Northwest Region’s website at: http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/srao_misc/security/.

Public and Agency Notification

A scoping letter introducing the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancement Project and requesting input was mailed in July 2009 to the local public, Federal, state and local government officials and other known and potential stakeholders. A newspaper article was published in local newspapers, including The Idaho Statesman, describing the proposed security measures and announcing a public open house and other opportunities for public and agency involvement. Fliers were distributed one week before the public open house in the communities of Pine and Prairie, ID.

Public Open House

Reclamation hosted a public open house from 12 to 2 p.m. on August 4, 2009, in the community of Pine in Elmore County to provide information about the project and opportunities for public involvement in the NEPA process, and to gather public input on the Proposed Action to place a median barrier on the road that crosses the crest of the dam. The open house was attended by 35 to 40 people, including local residents, government officials, and agency representatives. Comment sheets were provided to attendees to submit at the open house, mail to Reclamation, or email to the project manager.

Reclamation began the open house with a presentation on the purpose and scope of the project, including plans for the interim security action and issues such as funding, ongoing studies, and the NEPA process. During the meeting, concerns were expressed about adequate space for passage of snow-removal, farm and maintenance equipment, livestock trucks, semi-trailers, and other wide loads through the two proposed 12-foot travel lanes around the median barrier.

Written Comments

Comments were accepted via mail and email during the 30-day public comment period after the open house. Reclamation received a total of seven written comments – two from agencies or local governments and five from individuals. The issues and concerns expressed in each letter or email were summarized and combined into the common themes summarized below.

Comment Summary	Total No. of Times Issue Identified	Agency or Local Government	Individuals
<i>Transportation-related</i>			
This is the only road that accesses the town of Prairie.	5	1	4
<i>Alternatives-related</i>			
Provide one lane that is wide enough (18-20 ft) to accommodate large vehicles and machinery.	6	1	5
Build a new road (road improvement) down Dixie Creek.	1	0	1
<i>Miscellaneous</i>			
A guard should attend the gates that can let local vehicles through.	2	0	2
The project is a waste of money.	1	0	1
Snow removal on narrow lanes would be impossible with existing equipment.	1	1	0

Public Comment Summary

Several common themes were identified in comments from the public. The most frequent comment was that installing a median barrier would result in two very narrow travel lanes that would inhibit access of heavy machinery or large trucks. Many comments stated that the road across Anderson Ranch Dam provides the only winter access to the town of Prairie and needs to accommodate motor vehicles and

equipment that are used in the area. Most comments verified that a width of at least 18 to 20 feet is required for one of the travel lanes to accommodate farm machinery and road-maintenance equipment. These comments were received from both the public and from local government agencies. One comment stated that an improved Dixie Creek Road could provide alternative access to Prairie.

The District said their existing snow removal equipment is too wide for a 12-foot lane around the proposed median. They said a rotary snow-blower could be used, but the District does not own one.

Several comments suggested that a guard should tend the existing gate at the south entrance to the road that crosses the dam to allow local traffic in the event that the crest is closed due to a high security alert.

Meeting with Mountain Home Highway District

During a meeting with the District on August 6, 2009, after the public open house, the District emphasized that it would be difficult to remove snow and maintain access across Anderson Dam in the winter with the proposed median alternative. Additional concerns were raised with road maintenance on the north side of the dam and getting heavy equipment through the proposed 12-foot travel lanes throughout the year. The District indicated that a 20-foot-wide travel lane would be preferable to accommodate their equipment.

The District suggested that they could use a snow-blower on the front of a large truck or loader to accommodate smaller travel lanes, but they would have to purchase or lease such equipment. Options were discussed for keeping the equipment from freezing, including using the local facilities electric capabilities or installing a storage building on the north side of the crest. Suggestions for further consideration as part of the potential option of a 20-foot lane across the dam include the following:

1. The dam crest median zone could be moved slightly upstream or one lane of travel could be put on the upstream or downstream side.
2. Consider using an electronic, automated traffic-control device instead of warning signs for one-lane traffic.
3. Consider accommodating the entrance and departure of a two trailer semi-tractor especially around the “S” curve on the south side of the dam.
4. After a certain approach distance, consider jersey barriers of less than 4 feet high on the downstream side; so that snow could be more easily disposed of.
5. Consider a concrete cantilever over-hang road surface on the downstream side offset.

Reclamation agreed to consider the District’s recommendations in their continued evaluation. The District agreed to provide Reclamation with cost estimates on the purchase or lease of a truck and snow-blower.

Recommendations Forward (Next Steps)

While no comments opposed the purpose of the project, comments received from the public suggest that additional alternatives should be explored using a 20-foot-wide lane. The Mountain Home Highway District provided considerable input regarding road maintenance and recommendations for further evaluation. The District verified the public’s suggestions for a 20-foot-wide lane across the dam to accommodate farm machinery and other wide vehicles. They provided additional recommendations that should be considered in any further evaluation of the Proposed Action. Cost estimates for snow removal along the dam crest should also be considered, if necessary, as part of the Proposed Action.

Several comments suggested that a security guard could tend the existing gate at the south entrance to the road that crosses Anderson Ranch Dam. However, the purpose of the gate is to limit vehicle access only when security threats are elevated. Since it is not anticipated that the gate will limit access across the dam on a frequent basis, Reclamation has determined that a guard is not necessary at this time.

The comments and recommendations in this report will be used to help evaluate the impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives for the Anderson Ranch Dam Security Enhancements Project in an Environmental Assessment that will be completed in 2010.

List of Comments

Agencies, Local Government

Mountain Home Highway District, August 17, 2009

- With interim action, snow removal will be impossible without a rotary-blower and the District does not own one.
- District needs to haul wide loads across dam for emergency road work or to support fire crews. Farmers also have wide loads. A 20-foot lane would likely resolve the wide-load issue.

Elmore County Disaster Services, August 12, 2009

- ECDS has no concerns from the law enforcement or disaster services prospective.

Individuals

Leroy Bentzinger, August 9, 2009

- Spending a lot of money for nothing.
- Make one lane wide enough for oversized machinery, 20-foot-wide.
- If gates are closed, should be a guard to let locals and recreationalist through.

Elmer Ireland, August 4, 2009

- Action does not accommodate wide loads of up to 18 feet.
- Dam crest is the only accessible road for hauling hay, cattle, and equipment out of Prairie that is open year round.
- Post guards or build new road down Dixie Creek and cross the river.

S.L. Holder, August 4, 2009

- Concern how interim action would affect travel of heavy equipment over the dam, especially during winter months.

Travis and Victoria Cook, August 4, 2009 (two comment forms)

- Proposed width of road across dam will inhibit agricultural and excavation equipment. The Anderson Ranch Road (crest crossing) is the only access for equipment to Prairie.

Donna Freeman, August 4, 2009

- Need to consider ranching community in Prairie area.
- This is the only road for hauling cattle and equipment to and from Prairie. Farm equipment is up to 18 feet wide.
- Any heavy equipment needed by logging, Forest Service, etc. between South Fork and Middle Fork must use Anderson Dam for access.