BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

American Falls Dam and Reservoir

DRAFT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region Office
1150 N. Curtis Road
Boise, Idaho 83706

September 2025

Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

	Full Phrase
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978
AMP	access management plan
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
AUM	animal unit month
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BP	before the present
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COVID-19	coronavirus disease of 2019
CRMP	cultural resource management plan
CWA	Clean Water Act of 1972
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DOI	Department of the Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act of 1973
°F	degrees Fahrenheit
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
GIS	geographic information system
GMP	grazing management plan
HPMP	historic properties management plan
IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
IPC	Idaho Power Company
ITA	Indian trust asset
Kw	soil erodibility factor
LND	Land Management and Development
mg/L	milligrams per liter
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MU	management unit

NAAQS	national ambient air quality standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
OHV	off-highway vehicle
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller
PM_{10}	particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometers or smaller
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
RM	Reclamation Manual
RMP	resource management plan
RV	recreational vehicle
Services	US Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service
SGCN	species of greatest conservation need
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation
TCP	traditional cultural place
TMDL	total maximum daily load
US	United States
USC	United States Code
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
VdB	vibration decibels
WEG	wind erodibility group
WMA	wildlife management area
WMP	wildlife management plan

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The United States (US) Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) Upper Snake Field Office has prepared a revised draft resource management plan (RMP) for American Falls Dam and Reservoir. The revised draft RMP establishes guidelines for the conservation, protection, development, use, enhancement, and management of planning area lands (see **Figure 1-1**, **American Falls Planning Area**) and associated resources to maximize overall public and resource benefits to the extent that legislative authority provides. This RMP will supersede the American Falls RMP approved in 1995 (see **Appendix A**, **1995 RMP Management Summary**). Reclamation has determined the RMP needs to be updated to align with current conditions and management needs. The Reclamation Recreation Management Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-575, Title 28 Section 2805(c)(1)(A)) authorizes the preparation of RMPs to "provide for the development, use, conservation, protection, enhancement, and management of resources of Reclamation lands in a manner that is compatible with the authorized purposes of the Reclamation project associated with the Reclamation lands."

American Falls Reservoir, located on the Snake River in southeast Idaho, is part of the federal Minidoka Project. The Minidoka Project is a series of public works to control the flow of the Snake River in Wyoming and Idaho and provide irrigation, hydropower, flood control, fish and wildlife, and recreational benefits. The Minidoka Project consists of the North Side Division, Gravity Division, American Falls Division, Island Park, Grassy Lake, and Jackson Lake areas. The primary irrigation districts lie between Ashton in eastern Idaho and Bliss in the southwestern corner of the state. There are five main reservoirs that collect water and distribute through canals and later distribution ditches. American Falls Reservoir is the largest reservoir of the Minidoka Project. Lands needed for construction and operation of the project were purchased and withdrawn for construction. At American Falls Reservoir, these include lands inundated by the reservoir, a narrow strip of land that surrounds the reservoir above the high-water line, and some lands along the Snake River downstream of American Falls Dam.

Reclamation operates American Falls Reservoir and manages the associated Reclamation lands to accommodate a variety of resource needs in accordance with existing federal laws and Reclamation policy. However, the primary management objective is continued fulfillment of the legal and contractual obligations to store and deliver water for authorized purposes. Cooperative agreements have been signed with other agencies and organizations for programs focused on controlling erosion and enhancing wetlands and other wildlife habitat. Local jurisdictions and organizations have entered into agreements to develop and operate recreational facilities on Reclamation lands. Reclamation activities are continually evaluated to ensure that resource management is consistent with legal, statutory, and regulatory guidelines.

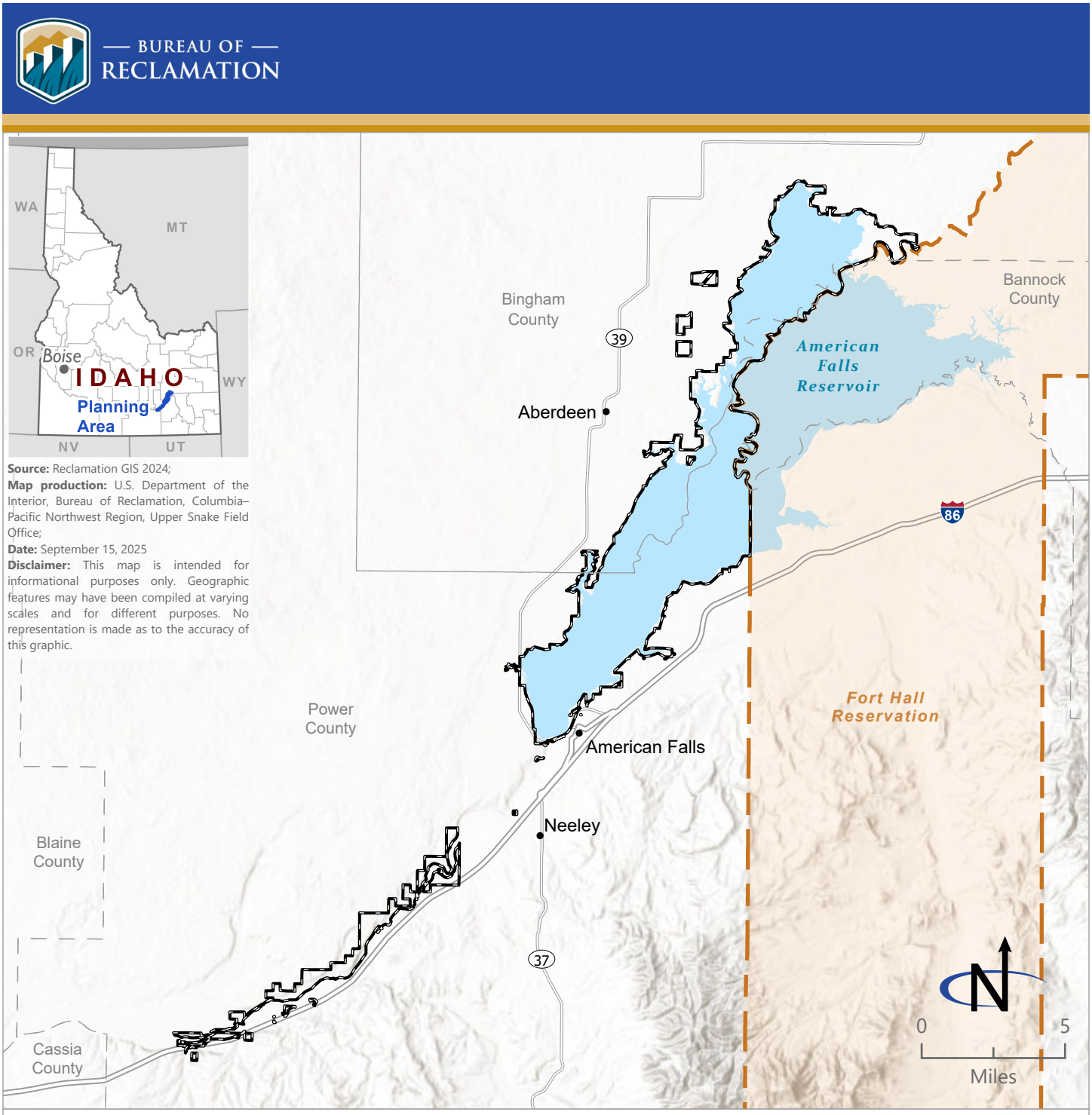


Figure 1-1
American Falls Planning Area

Planning area

Reclamation is developing a revised RMP for the Reclamation lands and associated land-based resources in the American Falls Dam and Reservoir planning area, which encompasses Reclamation lands surrounding the reservoir and a stretch of the Snake River below American Falls Dam (totaling 40,140 acres). The initial RMP was published in 1995, and Reclamation has determined a revised RMP is needed to better align with current conditions and management needs (see **Section 1.4**, **Purpose of the RMP**).

RMPs serve as a basis for future resource decisions and incorporate into one document all the information pertinent to the future guidance of an area. This can include an analysis of the area's resources, identification of land-use suitability and capability, identification of land acquisition and disposal needs, determination and designation of land-use zones, and development of management policies, objectives, responsibilities, guidelines, and plans. An RMP sets goals for management areas, establishes desirable use levels, identifies the types of development and land uses, and, finally, determines how all these will be accomplished. To meet these requirements, this RMP is organized into 10 chapters and 5 appendixes, as follows:

- Chapter 1 (Introduction)—Chapter 1 provides general information. It explains the purpose of this RMP document, summarizes outreach efforts, and lists federal policies pertaining to the project.
- Chapter 2 (Scope of the American Falls RMP)—Chapter 2 provides background for the project and planning area, including a description of the 14 management units (MUs) that comprise the planning area.
- Chapter 3 (Existing Conditions)—Chapter 3 characterizes existing resources, resource uses, special designations, and social and economic conditions within the planning area, including existing conditions.
- Chapter 4 (Constraints, Issues, and Opportunities)—Chapter 4 details the constraints, issues, and opportunities identified by Reclamation and through public involvement efforts.
- Chapter 5 (Resource Management Plan)—This chapter details the revised RMP for the planning area, including resource and MU goals, objectives, and actions.
- Chapter 6 (Implementation)—Chapter 6 outlines the process for implementing the RMP.
- Chapter 7 (Monitoring)—This chapter details how Reclamation will monitor compliance with and the success of the RMP.
- Chapter 8 (List of Preparers)—Chapter 8 lists the resource specialists and authors who assisted in the RMP's preparation.
- Chapter 9 (References)—Chapter 9 is a complete list of references used in the development of this document.
- Chapter 10 (Glossary)—Chapter 10 is a glossary of terms used throughout the document.
- Appendix A (1995 RMP Management Summary)—This appendix summarizes the management, including goals, objectives, and actions, found in the 1995 RMP.
- Appendix B (Regulatory Framework)—This appendix outlines key laws, executive orders, secretarial orders, and Reclamation policies that apply to the RMP.
- Appendix C (Water Quality Data)—This appendix contains trace element, nutrient, and sediment data collected from 2019 to 2023 by Reclamation during water quality monitoring.

- Appendix D (Erosion Control Plan)—This appendix identifies erosion control segments and possible erosion control methods as part of compliance with the American Falls Dam Replacement Act of 1973.
- Appendix E (Sterling Wildlife Management Area Plan)—This appendix contains a list of proposed projects for the Sterling Wildlife Management Area developed in coordination with Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG).

1.2 Background

American Falls Dam and Reservoir are located in Bannock, Bingham, and Power Counties in Idaho. American Falls Reservoir comprises a significant component of the unified Upper Snake Reservoir System. At full pool, the reservoir inundates approximately 87 square miles (56,000 acres) and provides nearly 100 miles of shoreline. While some lands within the planning area remain undeveloped for reservoir management, others are used for farming, grazing, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Popular recreational activities include boating, canoeing, fishing, swimming, wildlife viewing, picnicking, jet boating, water skiing, camping, and other activities on a seasonal basis. In 1904, the Secretary of the Interior authorized the construction of the Minidoka Project to bring irrigation water to the arid lands along the Snake River, beginning with the construction of Minidoka Dam, completed in 1906. As irrigation demands continued to grow along the Snake River plain, additional storage and control features were constructed to support the expanding agricultural development. To meet these needs, American Falls Dam was constructed in 1927 as a key component of the broader Minidoka Project. The dam increased available water storage by 1,700,00 acre-feet. Construction of the dam necessitated the relocation of the city of American Falls, which had been situated in the area designated to be inundated by the new reservoir. The entire town, including residences, businesses, public buildings, and supporting infrastructure, was moved to a newly planned location on higher ground (City of American Falls, n.d.).

In the early 1960s, a core-drilling program identified significant deterioration in sections of the dam, caused by a chemical reaction between alkalis in the cement and components of the aggregate. This type of reaction, unknown at the time of construction, compromised the structural integrity and durability of the concrete, threatening the dam's competence. As a result, by the early 1970s, storage was limited to approximately 11 feet below full pool, which reduced the reservoir storage capacity to 1,125,000 acre-feet, which was about 66 percent of maximum design capacity.

Following passage of a congressional act on December 28, 1973, the American Falls Reservoir District, acting as the constructing agency representing the storage space holders, was authorized to finance and contract for the replacement of American Falls Dam. The new dam, completed in 1978, replaced the concrete portion of the original structure and was built immediately downstream from the old dam. During reconstruction, the reservoir storage capacity was resurveyed and reduced from the original storage capacity estimate of 1,700,000 acre-feet to the current estimated 1,672,590 acre-feet. In 1979, it was identified that the original dead pool had completely filled with sediment; therefore, ongoing sedimentation since then directly reduces the reservoir's live storage capacity. Space holder contracts are based on a percentage of active capacity.

1.3 Federal Regulations and Policy

Reclamation's authority to prepare RMPs is vested in the broad authority of the Reclamation Act of 1902 (Chapter 1093, 32 Statute 388); the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (Chapter 418, 53 Statute 1 187); the Federal Water Project Recreation Act (Public Law 89-72, 79 Statute 213); and, more specifically, the Reclamation Recreation Management Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-575, Title 28 Section 2805(c)(1)(A)). The RMP is a continuation of Reclamation's authorities, policies, and guidelines developed through public input.

Numerous federal laws, rules, and regulations govern management of Reclamation lands. It is not the intent of this RMP to list all these; however, regulations relevant to the RMP are detailed in **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**. Reclamation's resource management policy is to provide a broad level of stewardship to ensure and encourage resource protection, conservation, and multiple use. Management practices and principles, in accordance with existing federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies, are to be applied to provide for the protection of fish, wildlife, other natural resources, cultural resources, public health and safety, public access, and a variety of recreational opportunities to accommodate the increasing public demand to use Reclamation land and recreational areas.

1.4 Purpose of the RMP

The 1995 American Falls RMP provides guidance for management of Reclamation lands associated with American Falls Reservoir, including the lands downstream of American Falls Dam (see **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**). It provides management direction for the conservation, enhancement, use, and development of Reclamation lands and the associated natural and cultural resources. Although there is no expiration of the RMP, there is a need to update the 1995 RMP to align with current conditions, uses, and management needs. Reclamation seeks to balance public and private use of Reclamation lands with the protection of resource values. The proposed RMP's goals are to:

- Manage, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and natural, cultural, and recreational resources
- Preserve the aesthetic quality and natural environment
- Promote the safe and healthful use of the reservoir lands and waters
- Strengthen the local economy through expanding services and seasons of use

The revised RMP is intended to provide a 10-year framework for resource management. During this period, it may be necessary to review, reevaluate, revise, and amend the RMP, in cooperation with involved agencies, Tribes, and the public, to reflect changing conditions and management objectives. If modification of the RMP is expected to significantly affect resources or public use, opportunities for additional public involvement may be provided.

1.5 Outreach and Coordination

Public involvement is a key component of Reclamation's RMP planning process and assists in the identification of issues, opportunities, and constraints. Although public involvement is typically

associated with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, early coordination with the public, Tribes, and other federal, state, and local agencies is critical to the successful development of an RMP. Reclamation conducts outreach and public involvement to design a planning strategy that will identify the most important issues that need to be addressed and the management actions that should be implemented to resolve those issues.

Reclamation initiated outreach and public involvement in the earliest stages of the RMP's development and prior to the initiation of the NEPA process to facilitate the development of a robust RMP. To that effect, Reclamation has engaged in ongoing collaboration with Tribal, federal, state, and local governments, as well as the broader public, through various mechanisms, including individual outreach, Tribal and agency coordination, working group coordination, and public meetings.

1.5.1 Agency Coordination

Reclamation identified and engaged federal agencies early in the RMP process and throughout the RMP's development. Reclamation coordinated and facilitated meetings with federal agencies to identify issues, develop management directions, and identify opportunities for collaboration. Reclamation coordinated with federal agencies through agency-to-agency coordination and as part of the working group (**Section 1.5.4, Working Group**).

1.5.2 Tribal Consultation and Coordination

Reclamation has a responsibility to conduct government-to-government consultation with Tribes. Government-to-government consultation is guided by numerous regulations and legal decisions related to the federal government's trust relationship with Indian Tribes. Reclamation maintains a relationship with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes), whose reservation includes a portion of American Falls Reservoir and who continue to use the area for important cultural activities and religious purposes.

Reclamation engaged Tribes early in the RMP process to identify issues, potential alternatives, impacts, and other concerns. Outreach activities included emails and telephone calls to share project updates, virtual and in-person Tribal meetings, and responses to questions and requests for information about the project from the Tribes.

1.5.3 Public Involvement

Public involvement is a key component of the RMP process. Public involvement vests the public in the decision-making process and provides full environmental disclosure. The pre-NEPA public involvement process for the RMP included developing a project website; mailing notifications of opportunities for public involvement; sharing project updates in existing, scheduled, quarterly coordination meetings with the Tribes; developing public meeting newsletters and advertisements; and holding public open houses.

Virtual Meeting Website

A virtual public meeting website was developed to house project materials, provide information on the project's background, answer frequently asked questions, and solicit public input. The website became available on August 27, 2024, corresponding with the publication for the first public open house. Reclamation included the website location in media advertisements and public meeting materials; it also made available background documents, maps, project updates, and contact

information during the public engagement periods. The website was and will continue to be updated as Reclamation moves through the planning process.

Media Advertisements and Mailings

Reclamation advertised public meetings and comment submittal opportunities in the following four newspapers across the planning area: the *Magic Valley Times-News*, *Idaho State Journal*, *Bingham News Chronicle*, and *Power County Press*. Additionally, through postcards and emails, Reclamation distributed public notices to a project mailing list of over 440 recipients.

Public Open Houses

Reclamation held the first open house for the RMP planning process on September 30, 2024, in American Falls, Idaho, at the beginning of the planning process to seek public input on issues, opportunities, and constraints to be addressed in the RMP. In addition to the public meeting, Reclamation accepted public input as it related to the aforementioned topics. Reclamation scheduled a second public meeting on February 13, 2025, in Pocatello, Idaho, to provide project updates, information on issues, opportunities, and constraints, and to outline the next steps of the RMP process. This second in-person meeting was canceled due to adverse weather conditions.

Public input was received during the open house, by mail, and via the virtual public meeting website Reclamation considered this input in the development of the draft RMP.

1.5.4 Working Group

Reclamation developed a working group as part of this project to support the RMP's development. The role of the working group is to provide information and subject matter expertise as they relate to management of resources within the scope of the RMP; it is not a decision-making entity. Members were identified through existing mailing lists that include interested parties and Tribes, newspaper announcements soliciting participants, and public meetings. Working group members submitted requests to join the group and were selected based on a number of factors, such as their association and interest in the American Falls planning area, representation of local government and organizations, and area of interest or expertise (for example, recreation, agricultural permittees, etc.). The goal was to create a group that represented a variety of users and interests to obtain a range of perspectives on resolving issues, identifying concerns, pursuing opportunities, and assessing management alternatives.

The following entities constituted the working group:

Bingham County
Bingham County Sheriff's Office
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management Burley Field Office (BLM)
Driscoll Brothers Partnership
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ)
IDFG, Southeast Region
Idaho Power Company (IPC)
Idaho State University
Minidoka Irrigation District
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Weather Service
Northside Canal Company
Private citizens
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

Working group members participated in multiple meetings during the development of the RMP; these meetings were held on November 13, 2024; March 12, 2025; and August 27, 2025. The first working group meeting focused on gathering input on issues, opportunities, and constraints to be addressed in the RMP. The second working group meeting reviewed management direction for specific MUs. During the third working group meeting, participants reviewed and discussed Reclamation's preliminary draft proposed action, specifically resource management objectives and actions. These meetings used a hybrid format, with attendees participating both in person and virtually. All working group meetings were open to the public. Working group meetings were advertised through the same modalities as the public meetings, as described in **Section 1.5.3, Public Involvement**.

Chapter 2. Scope of the American Falls RMP

2.1 Project and Legal Authorities

The scope of the RMP encompasses Reclamation lands associated with American Falls Dam and Reservoir (that is, the planning area). The lands and resources considered in this RMP are managed by the Reclamation, Upper Snake Field Office in coordination with the IDFG, Bingham County, Power County, and the City of American Falls. Reclamation lands located within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation are not within the scope of this RMP. Management of those lands is coordinated directly with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, who have primary jurisdiction over management of all waters and lands located within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

Reclamation is responsible for providing proper stewardship of project lands and resources under its jurisdiction. Moreover, Reclamation's considerations are limited by the extent of Reclamation's authorities, contractual obligations, and capability and compliance with federal regulations and policy. The Secretary of the Interior authorized the Minidoka Project in 1904 to provide irrigation, hydropower, flood control, and fish and wildlife benefits. The Federal Water Project Recreation Act (Public Law 89-72) requires that recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement be given full consideration in federal water resource projects. As such, these are the primary purposes that guide Reclamation in the management of lands in the planning area along American Falls Reservoir. The associated Reclamation lands are subsequently managed to accommodate a variety of resource needs in accordance with existing federal laws and Reclamation policy.

Lands irrigated with water from the Minidoka Project extend from Fremont County in northeast Idaho to Twin Falls County and Gooding County in southwest Idaho. There are approximately 2,500,000 irrigated acres in the upper Snake River system, with approximately half the irrigated acres receiving water from the Minidoka Project. American Falls Dam provides water supply for approximately 1,150,000 acres of irrigated lands in southern Idaho. American Falls Dam is one of the nine major dams that store and regulate water in the upper Snake River watershed upstream of Milner Dam, a drainage area of approximately 17,000 square miles. **Figure 2-1**, **Upper Snake River Storage System**, shows the location of American Falls Dam and the other eight major dams in the watershed, with the dams in the upper right located generally farther upstream and the dams in the lower left located generally farther downstream in the watershed. American Falls Reservoir's storage capacity is 1,672,590 acre-feet, which is approximately 40 percent of the total 4,135,695 acre-feet storage capacity of the overall storage system.

The dams in the upper Snake River watershed are operated together as a system and fulfill the obligations of Reclamation's contracts with water user entities to maximize water conservation for water supply purposes. To maximize water supply in the system, water is prioritized to be stored in reservoirs with less drainage area (for example, Jackson Lake) farthest upstream in the system, leaving available space to store additional water in reservoirs with more drainage area (for example, American Falls Reservoir) lower in the system. Water is delivered to water user entities with a right to the water when they request it from the lowest dam in the system that can deliver the called for water. The rights to water in the basin are defined by Idaho State law and have been adjudicated

through the Snake River Basin Adjudication, which occurred between 1987 and 2014. Storage content in American Falls Reservoir and the outflow from American Falls Dam are governed by hydrologic cycles and water rights in the basin. Additional information regarding water rights and water distribution in the watershed can be accessed at the Idaho Water District 1 website.[1]

IPC constructed and currently maintains a 92-megawatt hydroelectric power plant located downstream from the dam on the river's right bank. IPC holds a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license to manage power generation from the dam and is responsible for its operation and maintenance.

In accordance with other rules, regulations, and specific agreements that apply to the operation of American Falls Dam and Reservoir and the federal lands that encompass the planning area, Reclamation would do the following:

- Comply with federal regulations for protected species, critical habitat, and cultural resources. Additionally, within the limitations of project authorizations, consider actions to benefit State-designated species of special concern.
- Protect and enhance wetlands in accordance with existing federal regulations.
- Complete cultural resource management actions in accordance with requirements in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 800, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, and other appropriate laws and regulations.
- Include appropriate NEPA compliance and consultation in implementation actions.
- Obtain necessary water quality permits prior to construction.
- Coordinate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (collectively, the Services) to ensure any conditions or commitments made as the result of Section 7 consultation activities (under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [ESA]) are integrated into construction specifications, contracts, and operational agreements, as appropriate, to avoid violating provisions of the ESA or jeopardizing the continued existence of a species.
- Implement most actions depending on the availability of funds and identify cost-share partners as required by current laws and regulations. Maintain basic facilities at designated recreation areas, in accordance with current cost-share agreements, and protect specific resources.

Additional federal regulations and Reclamation policy that provide the framework within which Reclamation operates and developed the RMP are detailed in **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**.

[1] Website: https://www.waterdistrict1.com

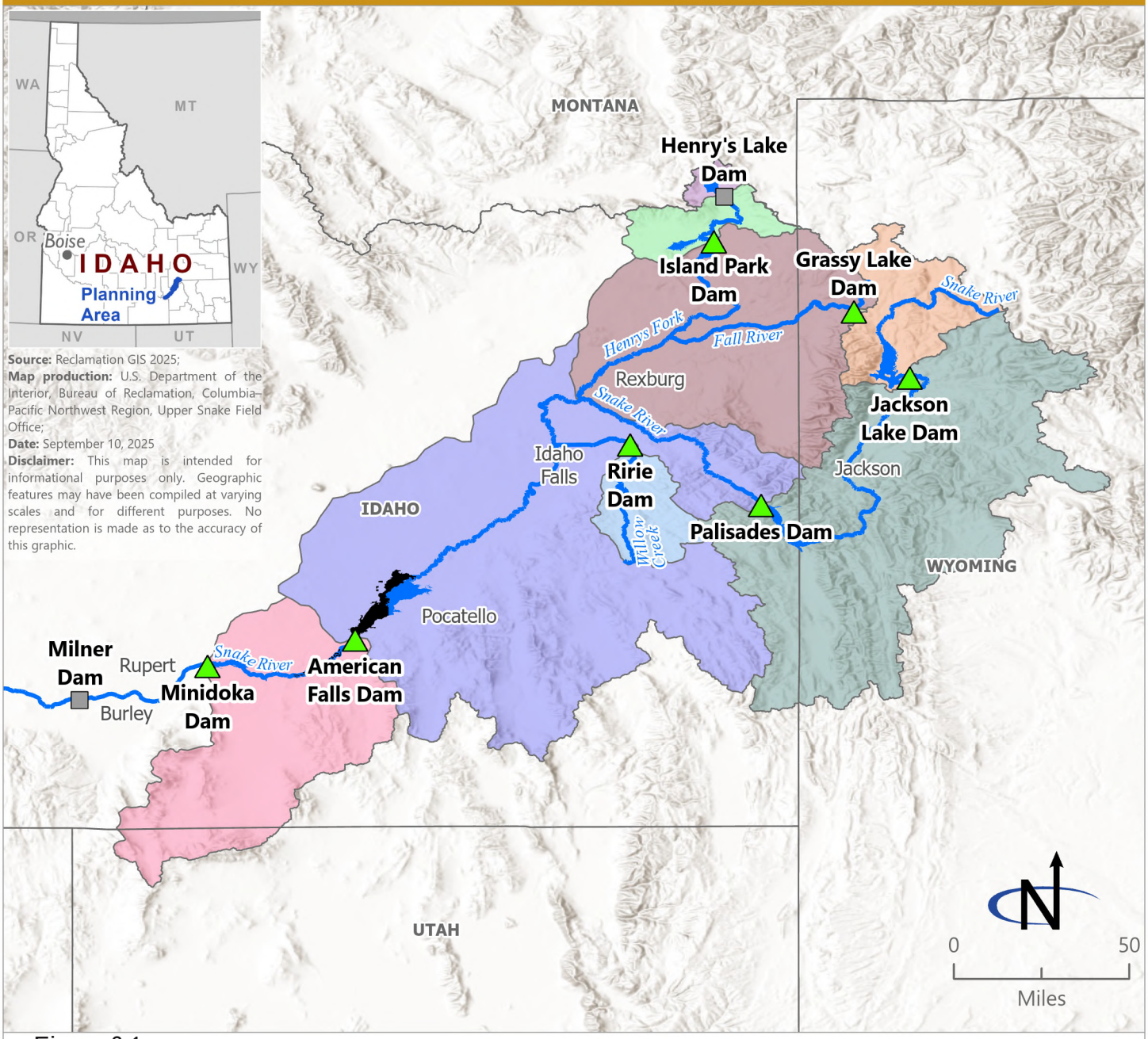


Figure 2-1
Upper Snake River Storage System

- Reclamation Dams
- Non-Reclamation Dams
- American Falls RMP Planning Area
- Rivers
- Reservoirs

Basin

- Henry's Lake
- Island Park Reservoir
- Jackson Lake
- Palisades Reservoir
- Grassy Lake
- Henry's Fork
- Ririe Reservoir
- American Falls Reservoir
- Lake Walcott (Minidoka)

2.2 Management Units

MUs are subunits of the planning area defined based on their geography and unique management needs. Reclamation has defined 14 MUs within the RMP planning area (**Figure 2-2**, **Management Unit Overview**). The MUs in this document differ from those defined in the 1995 RMP to be responsive to changes in management needs since the previous RMP was published. All maps associated with the MUs are included as **Figure 2-2, Management Unit Overview**, through **2-16, Management Unit – Inundation Zone,** at the end of this section.

2.2.1 MU 1: Dam Site

The Dam Site (90 acres) is at the reservoir's southern end and includes the concrete and earthen dam itself and the associated infrastructure, including a hydroelectric power plant (**Figure 2-3, Management Unit – Dam Site**). The MU includes Reclamation's fee title lands located south of the dam along the Snake River, some of which are used by IDFG for a hatchery. The power plant was added when the dam was rebuilt in 1976 and consists of three generators with a combined capacity of 92,340 kilowatts. The former Island Powerhouse, built in 1902 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), still stands on an island immediately south of the present dam.

The dam is used primarily for irrigation purposes and secondarily for power production and recreational activities. Fishing access is available along the dam's west wall. There are also picnic tables and portable toilets at the earthen and concrete sections of the dam. IPC maintains and operates the hydroelectric power plant.

2.2.2 MU 2: West Boat Ramp

The West Boat Ramp (18 acres) is at the reservoir's southern end, west of the Dam Site. The West Boat Ramp MU is used primarily for recreational purposes and includes boat ramp access, parking, restroom facilities, and picnic areas (**Figure 2-4, Management Unit – West Boat Ramp**). To the north and south of the unit is a mix of commercial and residential development. This MU is a popular recreation area due to its location near the City of American Falls, its amenities, and the easy access to the boat ramp and shoreline. The boat ramp remains accessible the longest compared to others in the planning area, even as water levels drop, which makes it the primary boat access to the reservoir during low water periods. Prevailing winds and waves result in sediment accumulation by the ramp that requires periodic dredging. Recreational usage is managed via a management agreement with Power County.

2.2.3 MU 3: West Bank

The West Bank (659 acres) is a large but narrow MU that extends along the reservoir's western edge and consists largely of undeveloped shoreline with limited access (**Figure 2-5, Management Unit - West Bank**). The MU is adjacent to several private parcels used for agricultural purposes. The MU includes Spring Hollow, which is a small inlet just off State Highway 39 and close to boat launches. For these reasons, and because it has a beach and is generally protected from wind, it is a popular place to boat and picnic, despite its lack of developed facilities. There are no management partners for this MU.

2.2.4 MU 4: Sterling Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

The Sterling WMA (1,670 acres) is on the reservoir's western side to the north of an inlet called Little Hole (**Figure 2-6, Management Unit – Sterling WMA**). The WMA was designated for its highly productive wetlands and uplands landscape that support quality opportunities for wildlife viewing, particularly birding, hunting, and trapping. It includes fragments of shoreline and inland areas. Paddle Beach, a popular recreational attraction, forms part of this unit's shoreline. Several small island areas are associated with this MU; most of these are characterized by sagebrush and cheatgrass. IDFG manages the Sterling WMA via a management agreement.

2.2.5 MU 5: Sportsman's Park

Sportsman's Park (137 acres) is at the reservoir's western side and north end. It includes a developed recreation area that includes camping facilities, picnic areas, restrooms, a playground, a gazebo, a floating dock, and boat ramps (**Figure 2-7, Management Unit – Sportsman's Park**). This MU experiences significant public recreational use, although to a lesser extent than the West Boat Ramp. The park provides boating and fishing access, camping, and additional developed recreational opportunities. Bingham County currently manages recreation via a management agreement.

2.2.6 MU 6: Springfield

The Springfield MU (486 acres) is at the reservoir's northern end and consists of shoreline surrounded by agricultural land with intermittent farmhouses and commercial businesses (**Figure 2-8, Management Unit – Springfield**). There is limited public use of this MU and no current management partner.

2.2.7 MU 7: McTucker Ponds

McTucker Ponds (1,330 acres) encompasses a complex of eight ponds surrounded by willows and large cottonwood trees, located along the reservoir's north side (**Figure 2-9, Management Unit – McTucker Ponds**). Immediately south of the MU is the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, which is managed by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. The MU is primarily used for recreational and wildlife purposes and supports feral horses. Recreational use has increased in the McTucker Ponds unit. Available recreational opportunities include fishing, hunting, bird-watching, and camping. The majority of this unit is managed under a management agreement with Bingham County and IDFG. Bingham County manages the road and vegetation, and IDFG manages the pond's restocking and pheasant releases.

2.2.8 MU 8: Seagull Bay

Seagull Bay (445 acres) is the most northern inlet; it is on the eastern shore outside the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (**Figure 2-10, Management Unit – Seagull Bay**). The MU is used primarily for developed recreational purposes, including boating and special events. Seagull Bay Yacht Club maintains a marina and recreational vehicle (RV) park, which are at the MU's southern end, under lease from Reclamation. The unit is managed under a management agreement with Power County Waterways as well as a 10-year plan. Seagull Bay Yacht Club is a concessionaire for Power County Waterways and services the MU.

2.2.9 MU 9: Willow Bay

Willow Bay (235 acres) is at the reservoir's southeastern end and consists of shoreline (**Figure 2-11, Management Unit – Willow Bay**). The area includes a portion of the Willow Bay Recreation Area, a growing recreation site; thus, this unit is primarily used for recreational purposes. Recreational infrastructure includes a boat ramp and jetty, RV sites, day-use sites, and trails. The MU is managed under a management agreement with the City of American Falls and a vendor that services the MU.

2.2.10 MU 10: Old Town Site

The Old Town Site (658 acres) is at the reservoir's southern end. It consists of shoreline and the remains of the original townsite, which now sits at the bottom of the reservoir. In low water years, the submerged remains of foundations, sidewalks, and building depressions are visible (**Figure 2-12, Management Unit – Old Town Site**). The area is primarily used for recreation and interpretation purposes. The Old American Falls Town Site and the Oneida Grain Elevator are located within this MU and are listed on the NRHP. Additionally, a nonvisible section of the Oregon Trail passes through the MU on the bottom of the reservoir. There are no management partners for this MU.

2.2.11 MU 11: Neeley

Neeley (10 acres) is south of the reservoir on the Snake River's eastern bank (**Figure 2-13, Management Unit – Neeley**). The unit consists of mostly undeveloped land with a bathroom facility and a boat ramp, which are located adjacent and on BLM lands. The area is used primarily for recreational purposes, particularly fishing and hunting, although there is little recreation management. The MU is a withdrawn parcel administered by the BLM per the withdrawal order, until used by Reclamation for project purposes.

2.2.12 MU 12: Coldwater

Coldwater (80 acres) consists of dispersed parcels along the Snake River's southern bank to the south of the reservoir (**Figure 2-14, Management Unit – Coldwater**). The MU is used primarily for recreational purposes, including fishing and hunting. There are no management partners for this MU.

2.2.13 MU 13: Archaeological District

The Archaeological District (80 acres) is to the south of the reservoir along both banks of the Snake River (**Figure 2-15, Management Unit – Archaeological District**). This MU is based on the boundaries of the American Falls Archaeological District, which is listed on the NRHP and therefore highly culturally sensitive. The area is also used for recreational purposes, including hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, and hiking. Motorized use is limited to existing roads only, and the area is closed to rock climbing. The area is adjacent to BLM lands. While the BLM is not a formal management partner, the BLM shares law enforcement across the jurisdictional boundary.

2.2.14 MU 14: Inundation Zone

The Inundation Zone (31,110 acres) is in the middle of the reservoir and includes the area inundated by water the majority of the year (**Figure 2-16, Management Unit – Inundation Zone**). It includes all lands below the reservoir high-water mark except the Old Town Site. This MU is primarily used for recreational purposes, especially when water levels decrease.

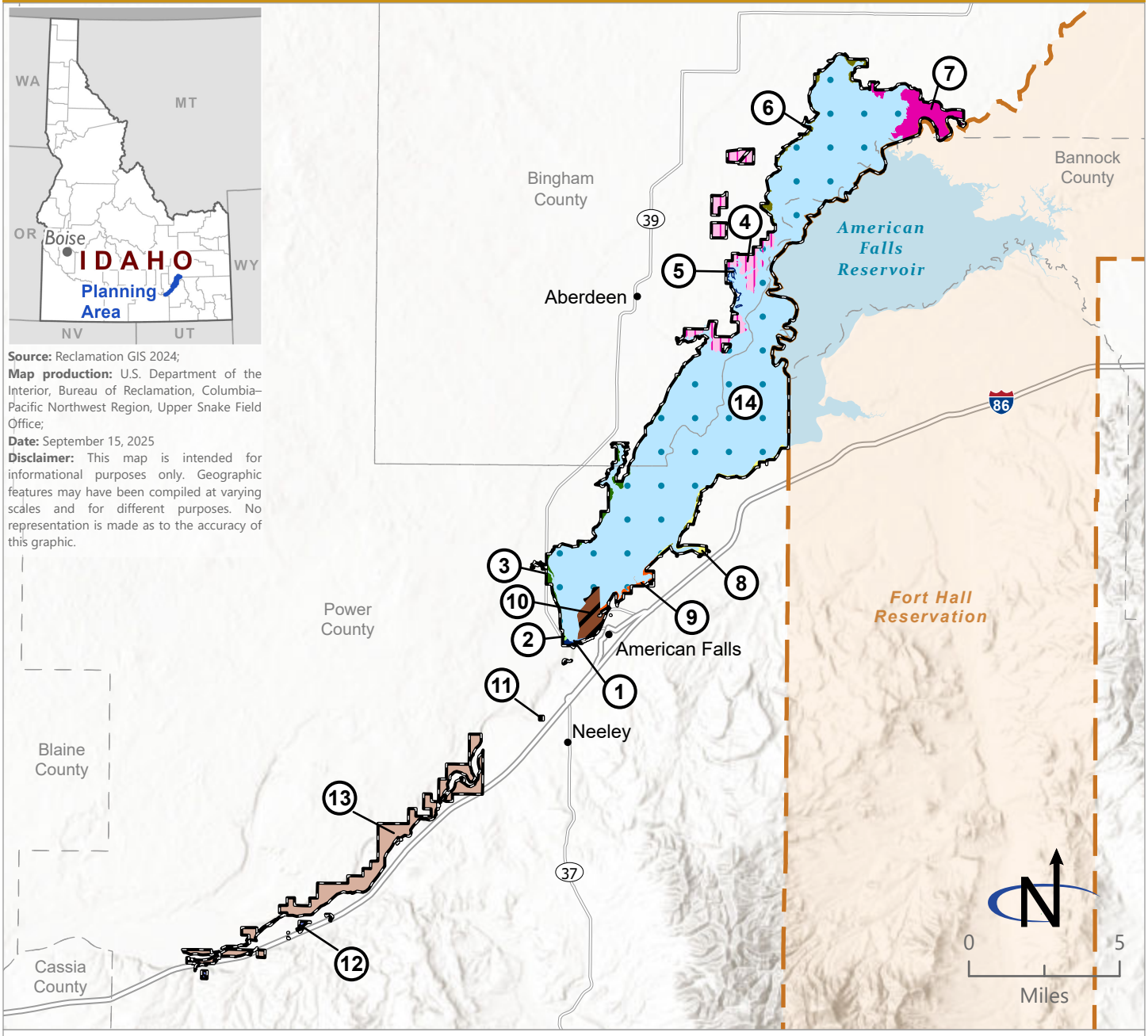


Figure 2-2
Management Unit Overview

- Planning area
- MU01 - Dam Site
- MU02 - West Boat Ramp
- MU03 - West Bank
- MU04 - Sterling WMA
- MU05 - Sportsman's Park
- MU06 - Springfield
- MU07 - McTucker Ponds
- MU08 - Seagull Bay
- MU09 - Willow Bay
- MU10 - Old Town Site
- MU11 - Neeley
- MU12 - Coldwater
- MU13 - Archaeological District
- MU14 - Inundation Zone

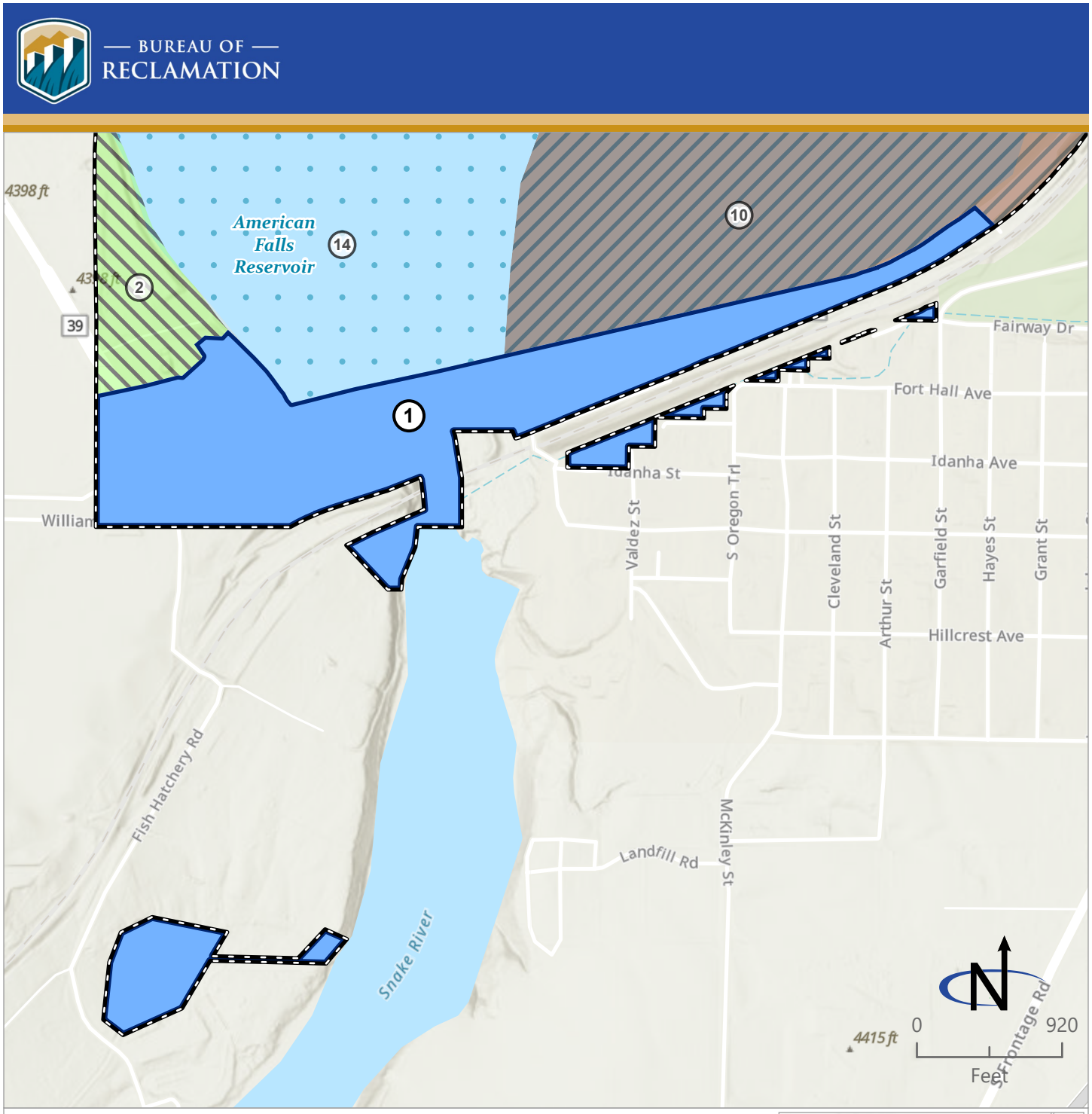


Figure 2-3
Management Unit — Dam Site

MU01 - Dam Site

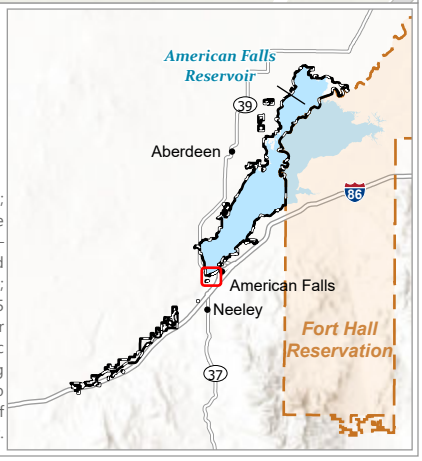
Planning area

Nearby management unit

MU02 - West Boat Ramp

MU10 - Old Town Site

MU14 - Inundation Zone



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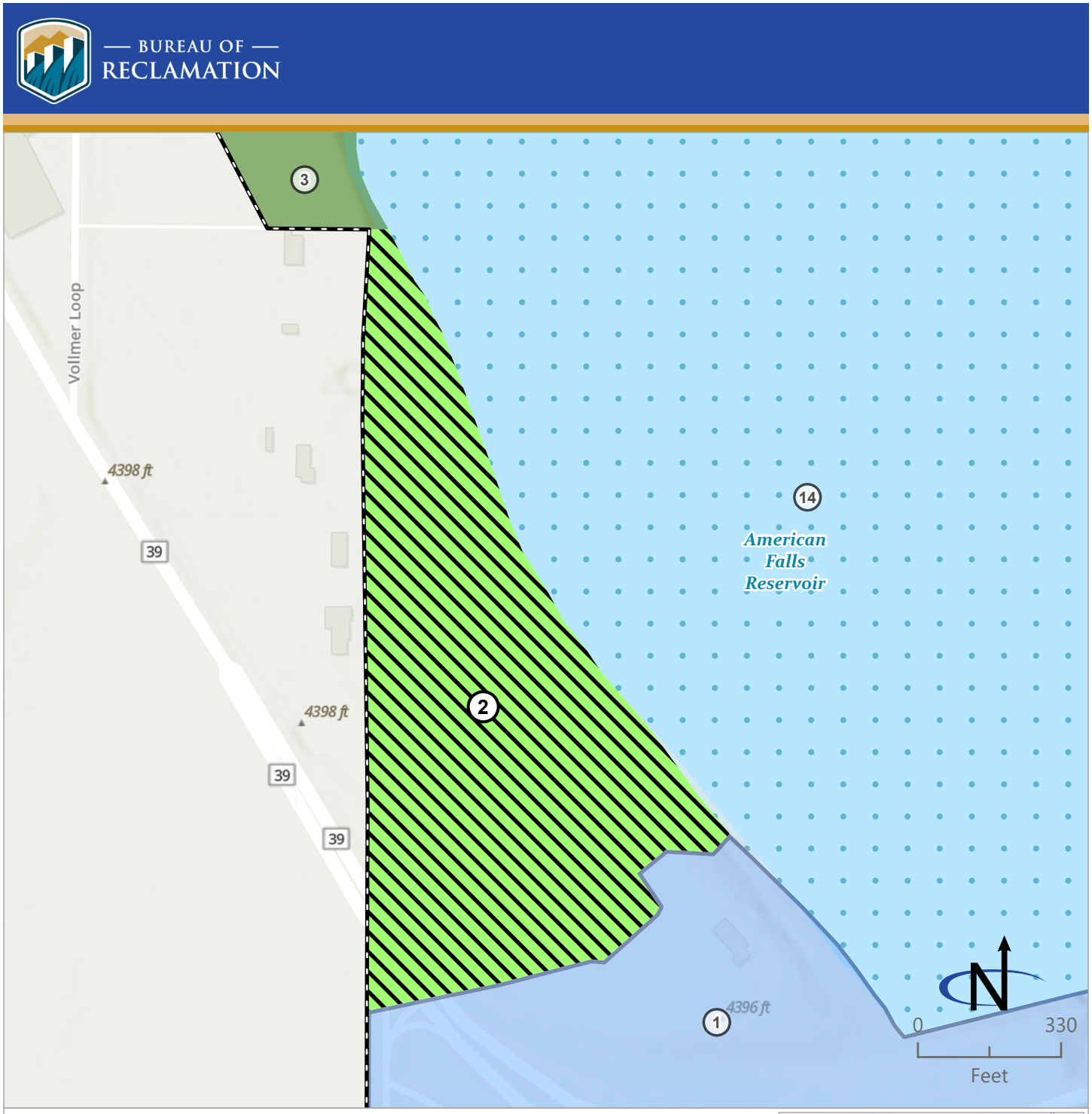
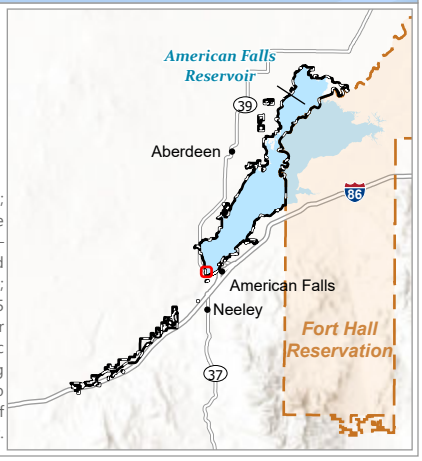


Figure 2-4
Management Unit — West Boat Ramp

MU02 - West Boat Ramp
Planning area

Nearby management unit

MU01 - Dam Site
MU03 - West Bank
MU14 - Inundation Zone



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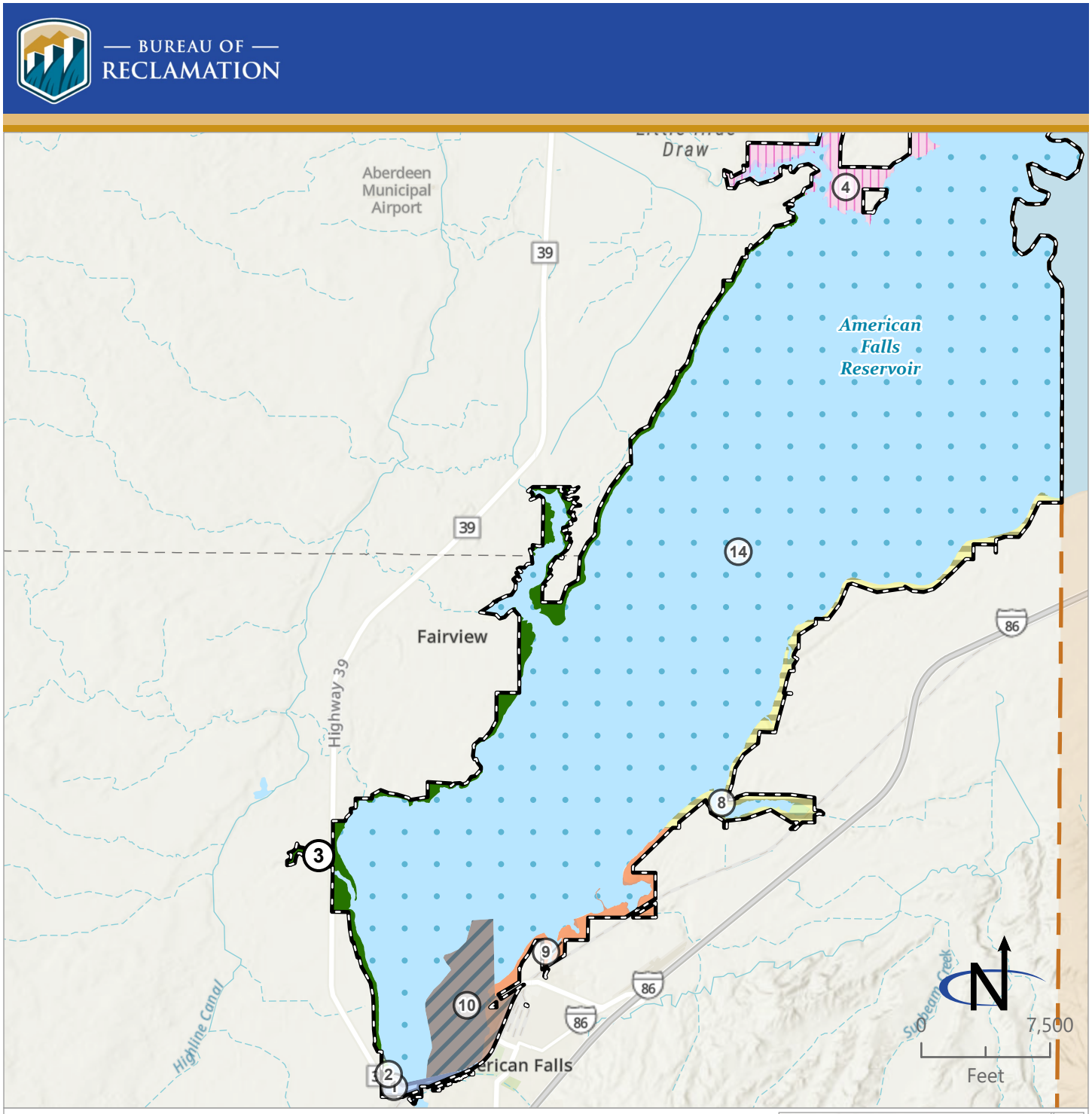

Figure 2-5
Management Unit — West Bank

Source: Reclamation GIS 2024;
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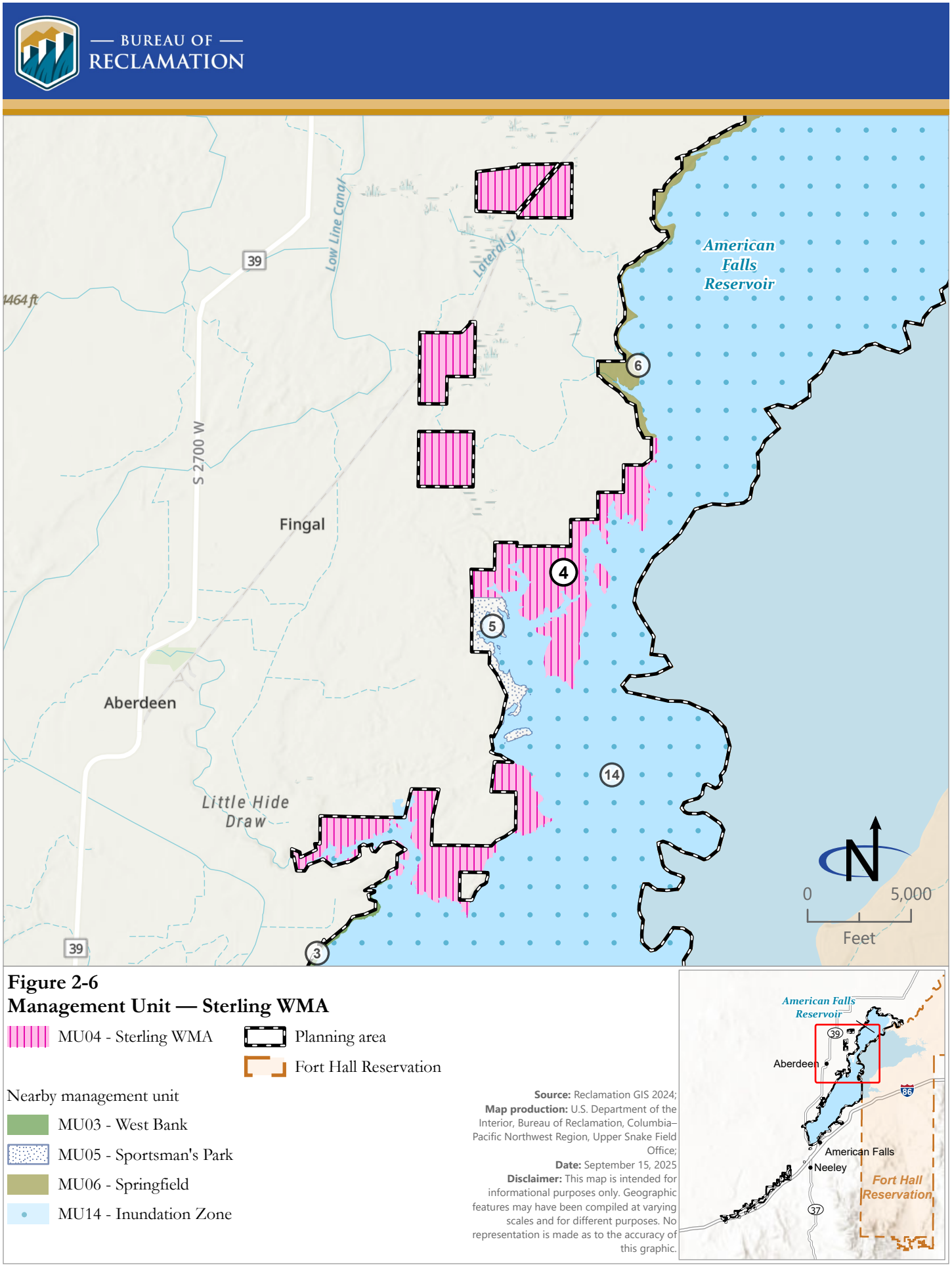

Figure 2-6
Management Unit — Sterling WMA

MU04 - Sterling WMA
Planning area
Fort Hall Reservation

Nearby management unit
MU03 - West Bank
MU05 - Sportsman's Park
MU06 - Springfield
MU14 - Inundation Zone

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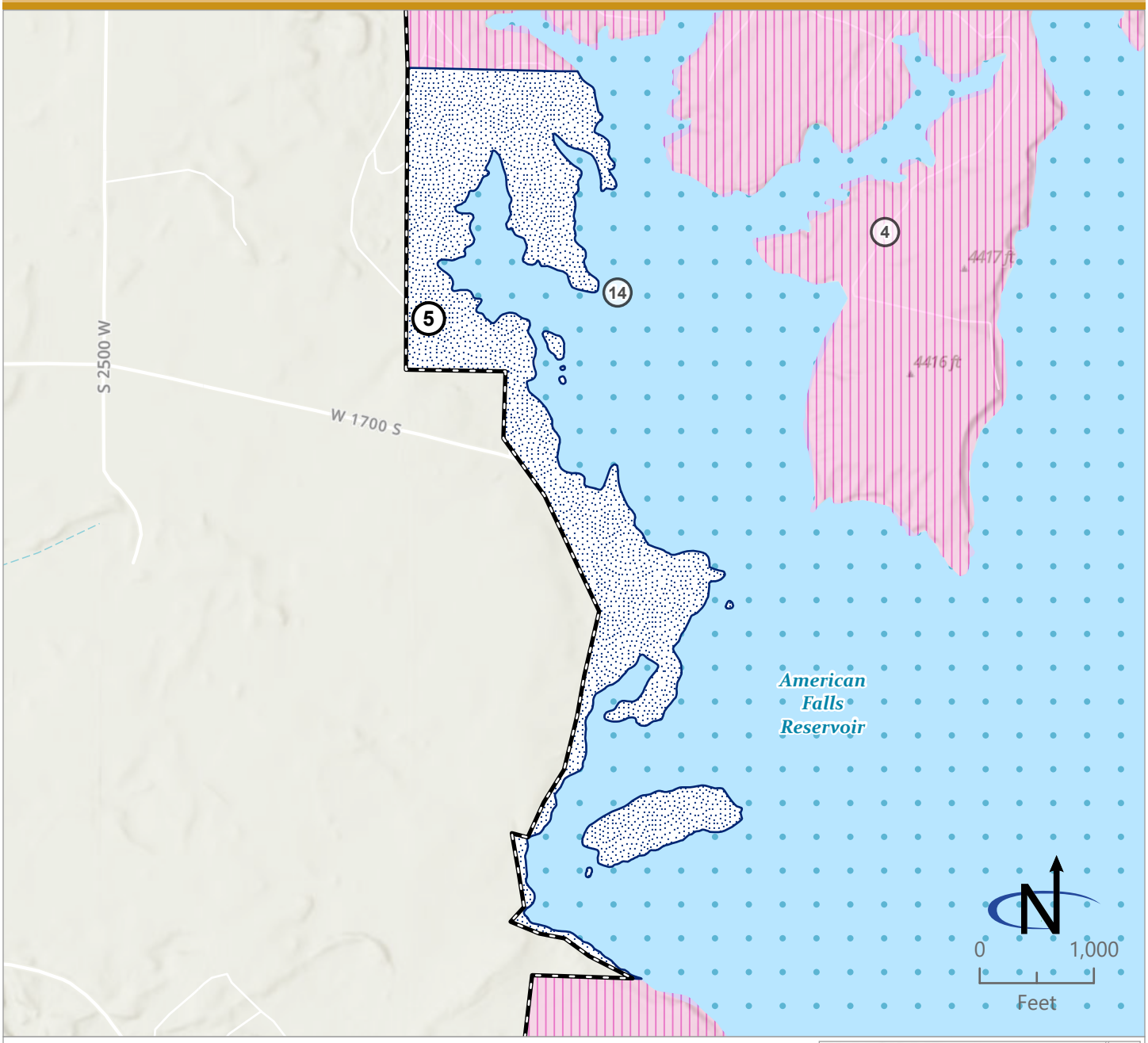
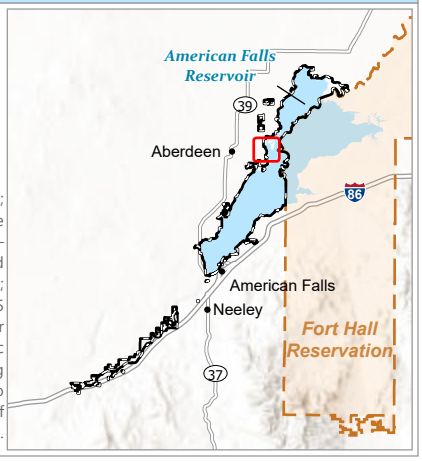


Figure 2-7
Management Unit — Sportsman's Park

MU05 - Sportsman's Park
Planning area

Nearby management unit

MU04 - Sterling WMA
MU14 - Inundation Zone



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Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
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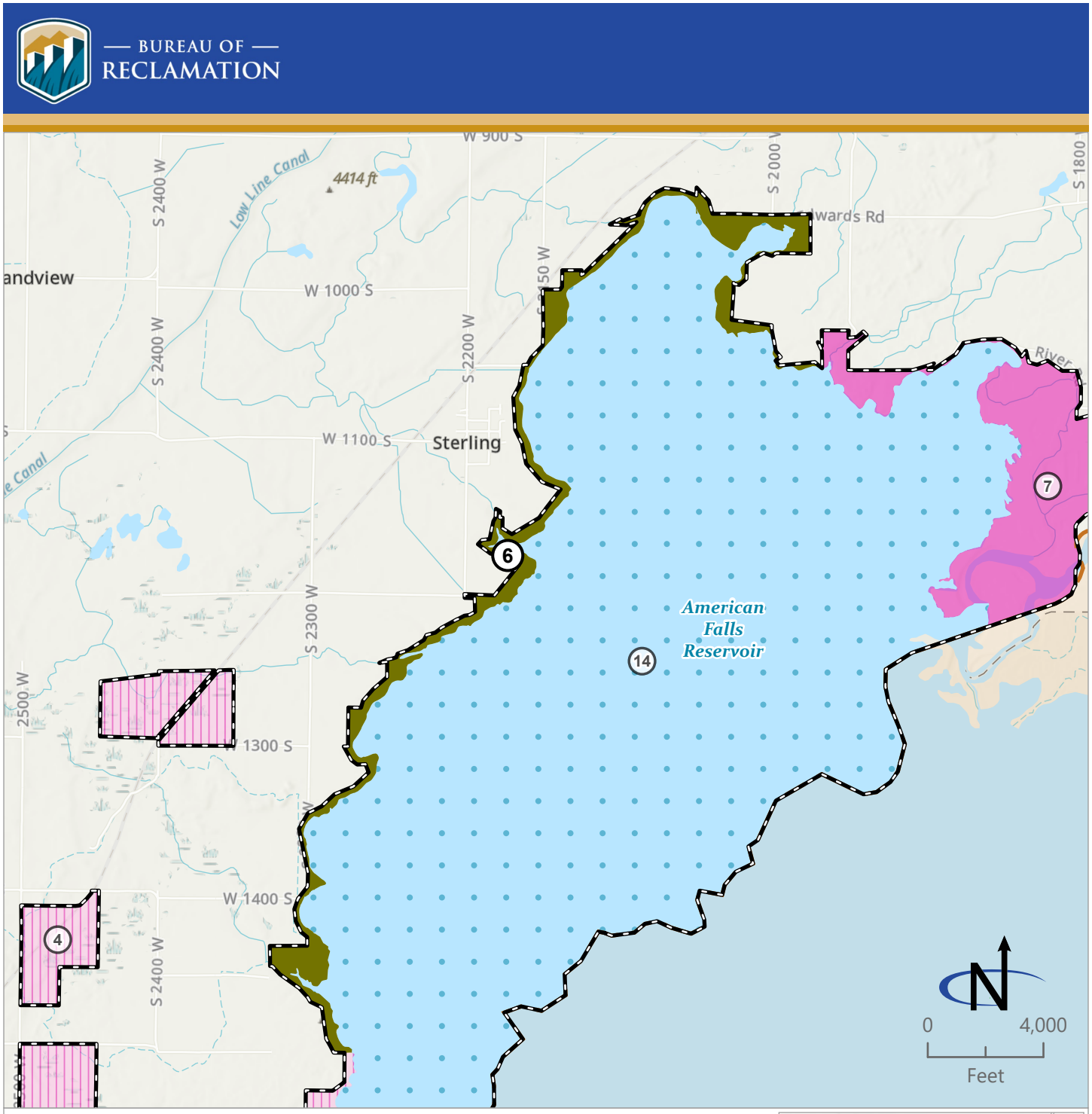
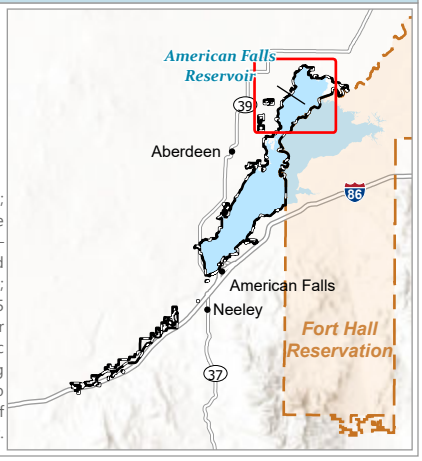


Figure 2-8
Management Unit — Springfield

MU06 - Springfield
Planning area
Fort Hall Reservation

Nearby management unit

MU04 - Sterling WMA
MU07 - McTucker Ponds
MU14 - Inundation Zone



Source: Reclamation GIS 2024;
Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
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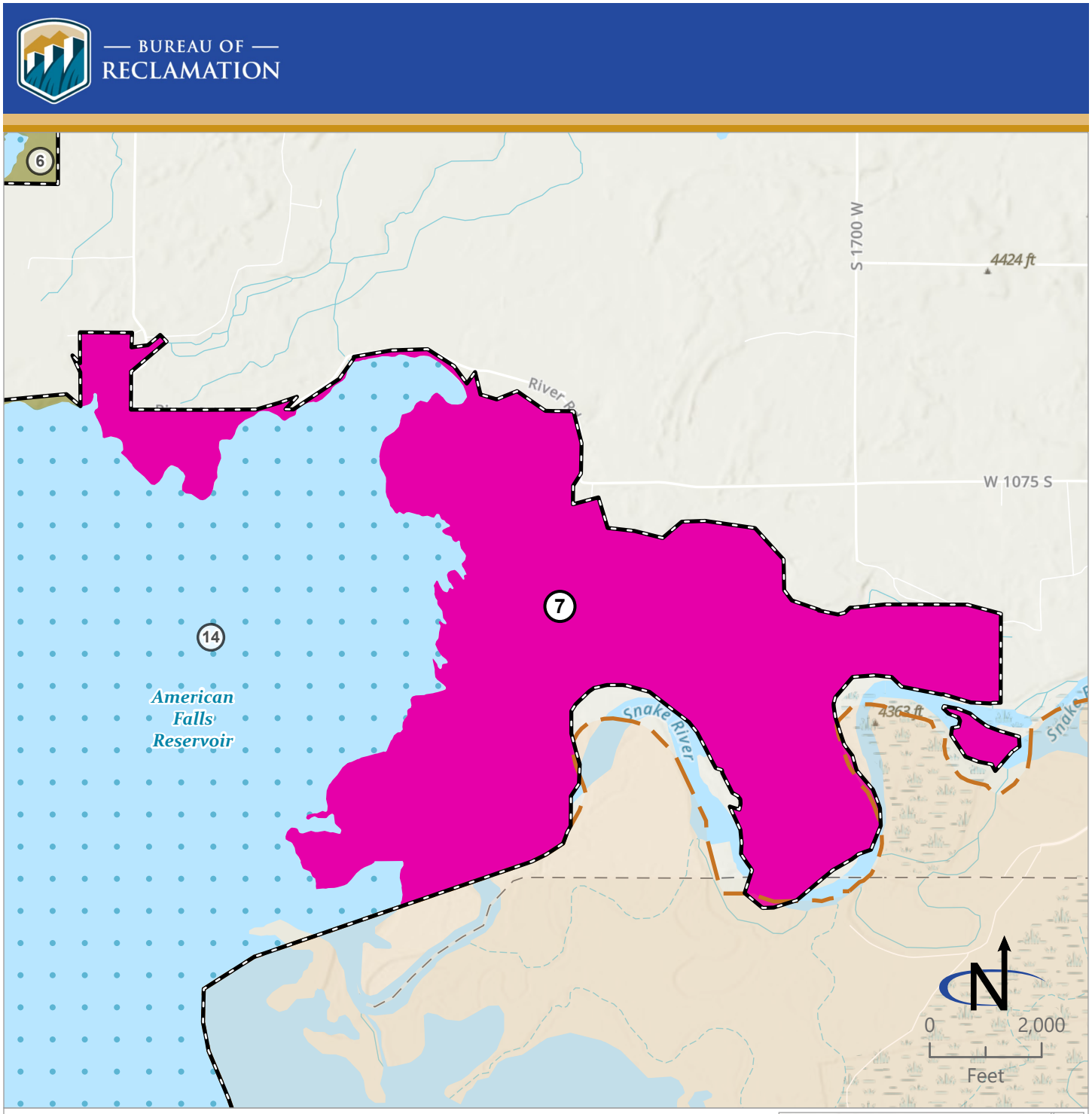
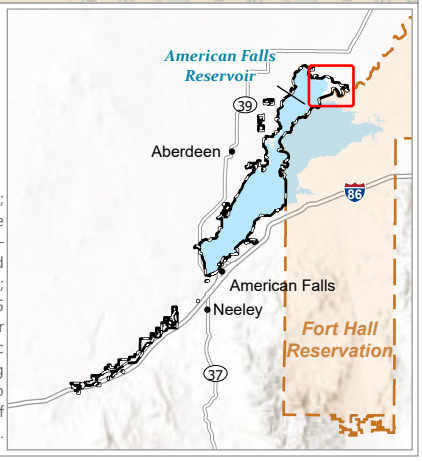


Figure 2-9
Management Unit — McTucker Ponds

MU07 - McTucker Ponds
Planning area
Fort Hall Reservation

Nearby management unit

MU06 - Springfield
MU14 - Inundation Zone



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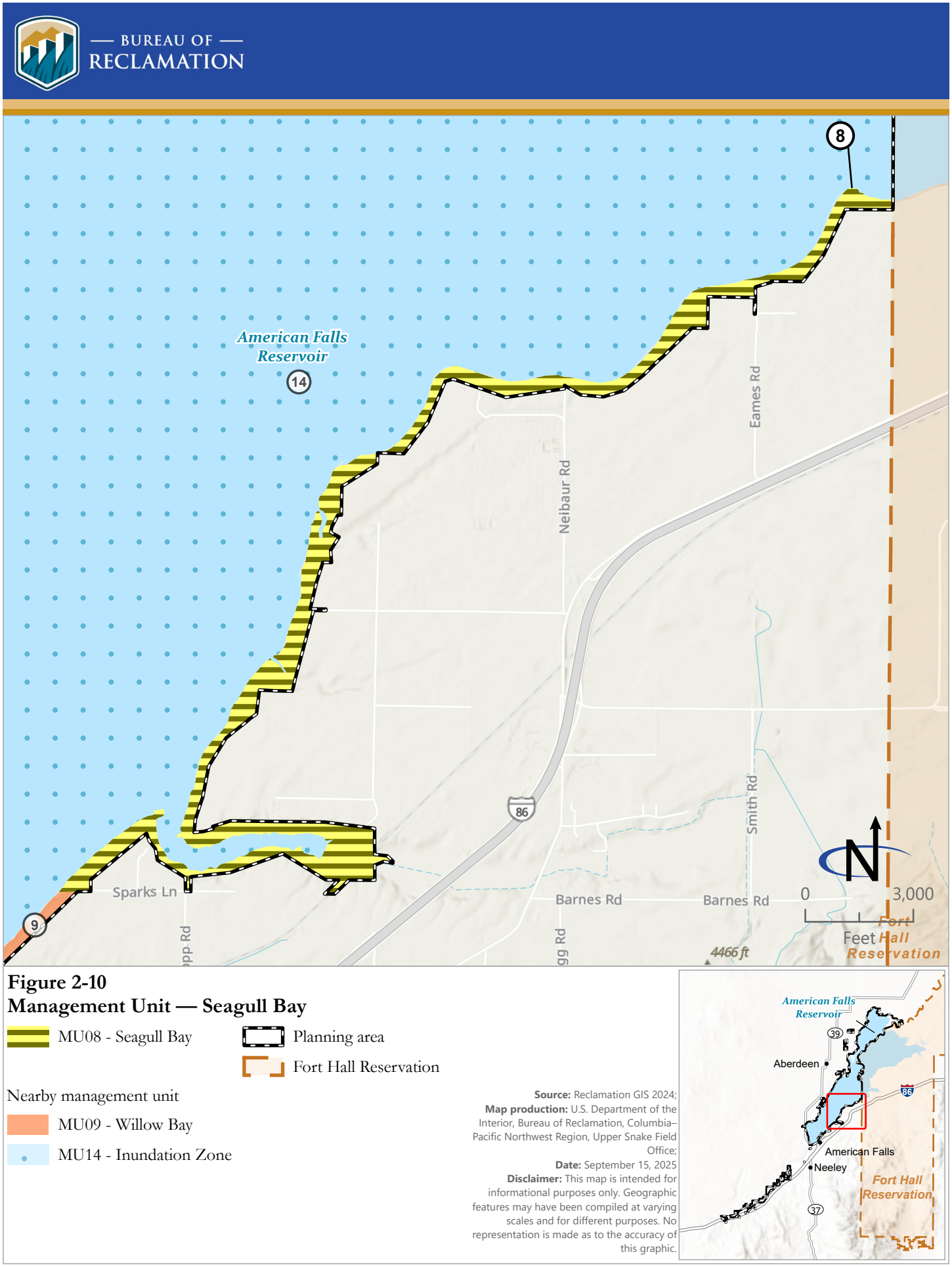

Figure 2-10
Management Unit — Seagull Bay

MU08 - Seagull Bay

Planning area

Fort Hall Reservation

Nearby management unit

MU09 - Willow Bay

MU14 - Inundation Zone

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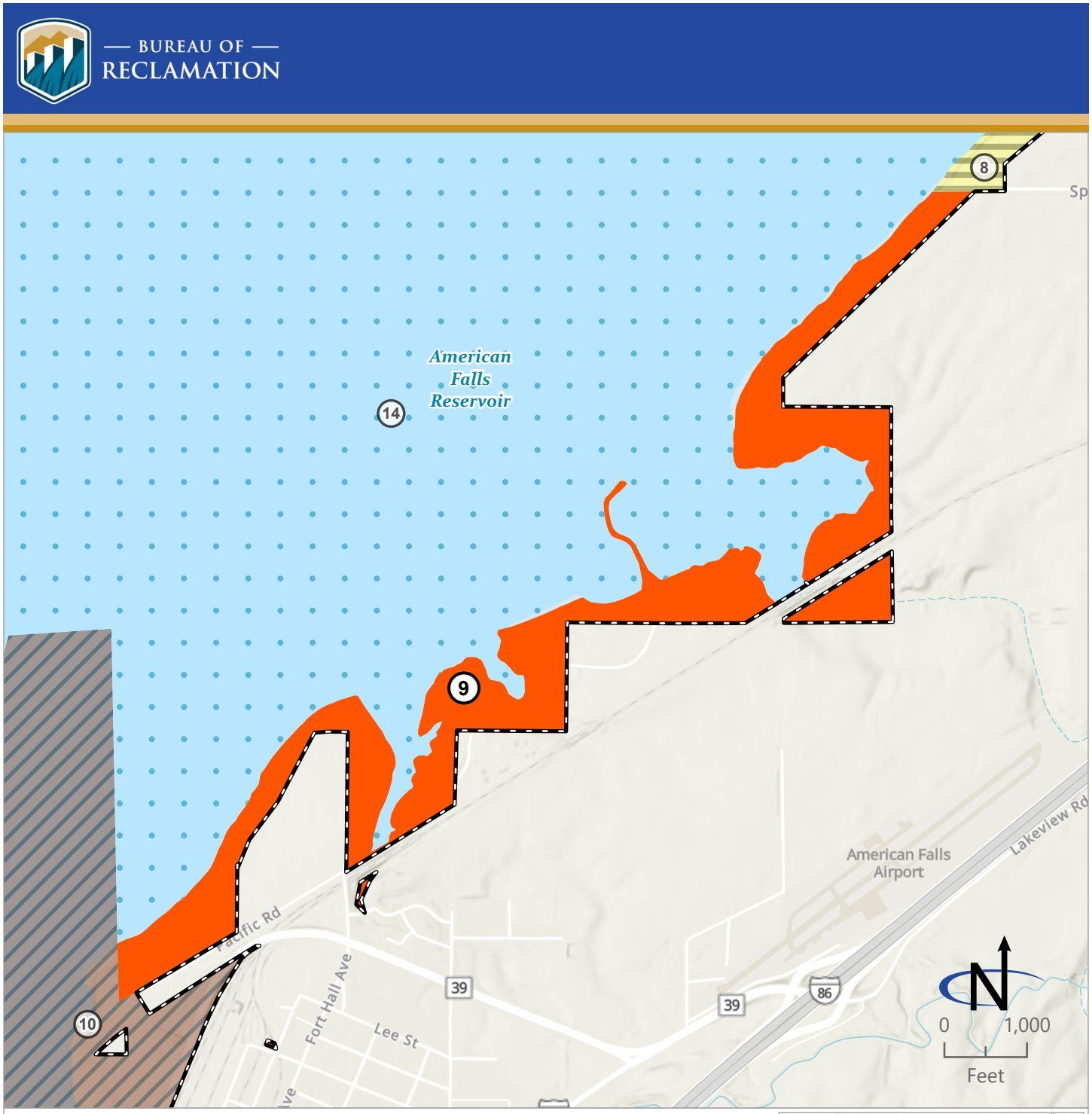


Figure 2-11
Management Unit — Willow Bay

MU09 - Willow Bay

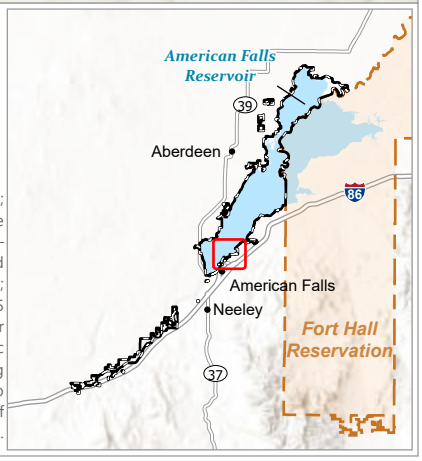
Planning area

Nearby management unit

MU08 - Seagull Bay

MU10 - Old Town Site

MU14 - Inundation Zone



Source: Reclamation GIS 2024;
Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
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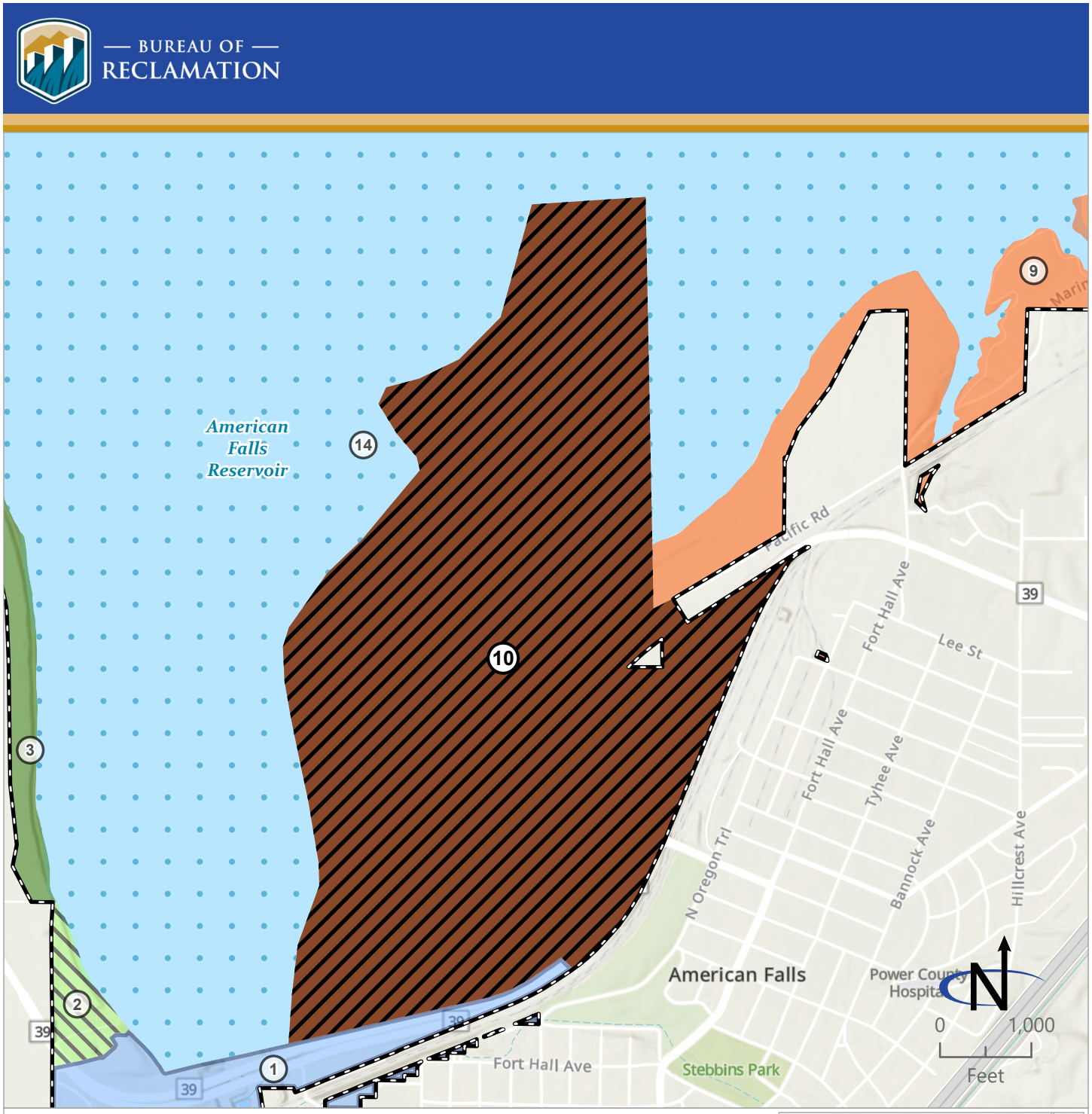

Figure 2-12
Management Unit — Old Town Site

MU10 - Old Town Site
Planning area

Nearby management unit
MU01 - Dam Site
MU02 - West Boat Ramp
MU03 - West Bank
MU09 - Willow Bay
MU14 - Inundation Zone

Source: Reclamation GIS 2024;
Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
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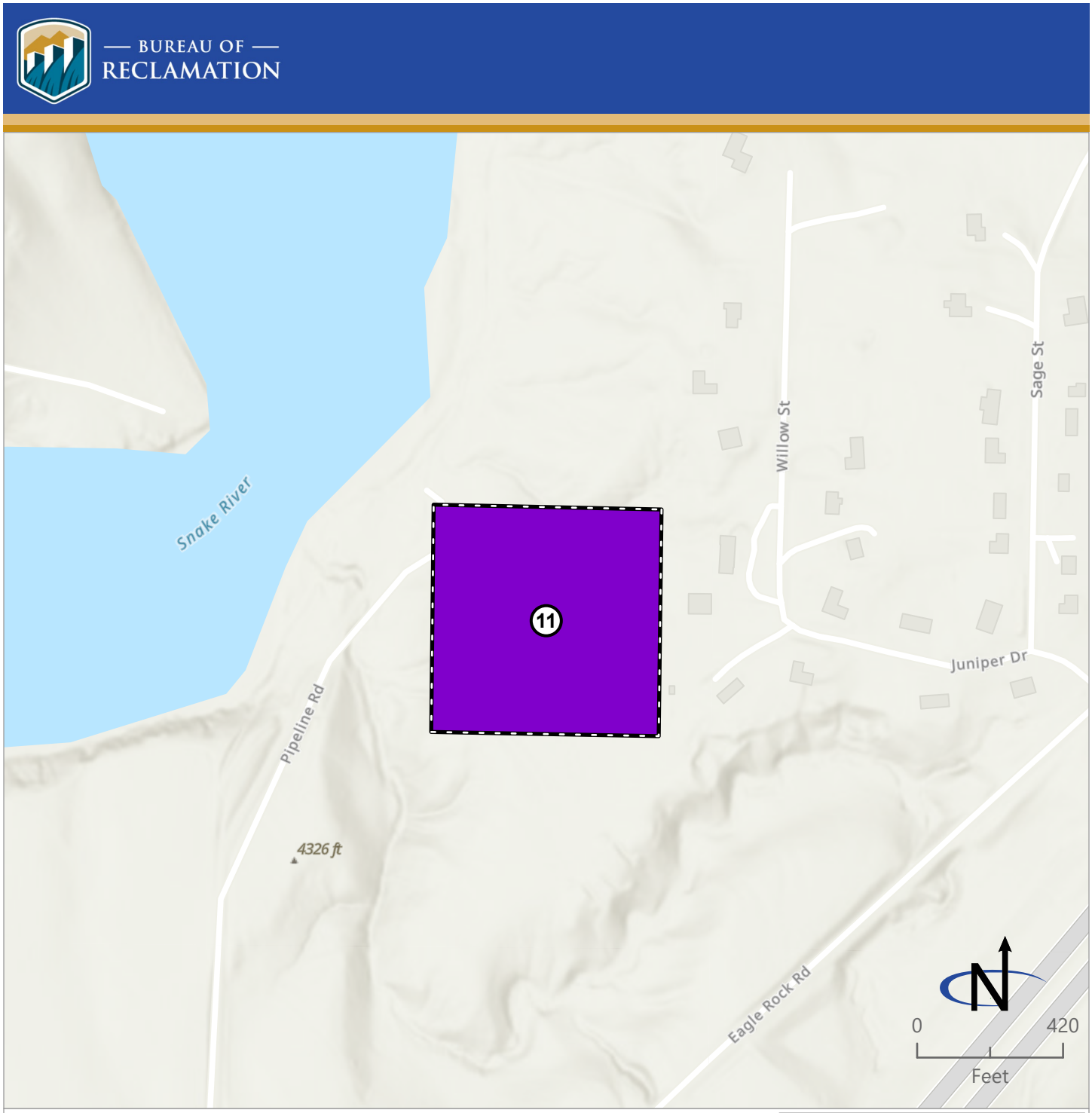

Figure 2-13
Management Unit — Neeley

MU11 - Neeley Planning area

Source: Reclamation GIS 2024;
Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
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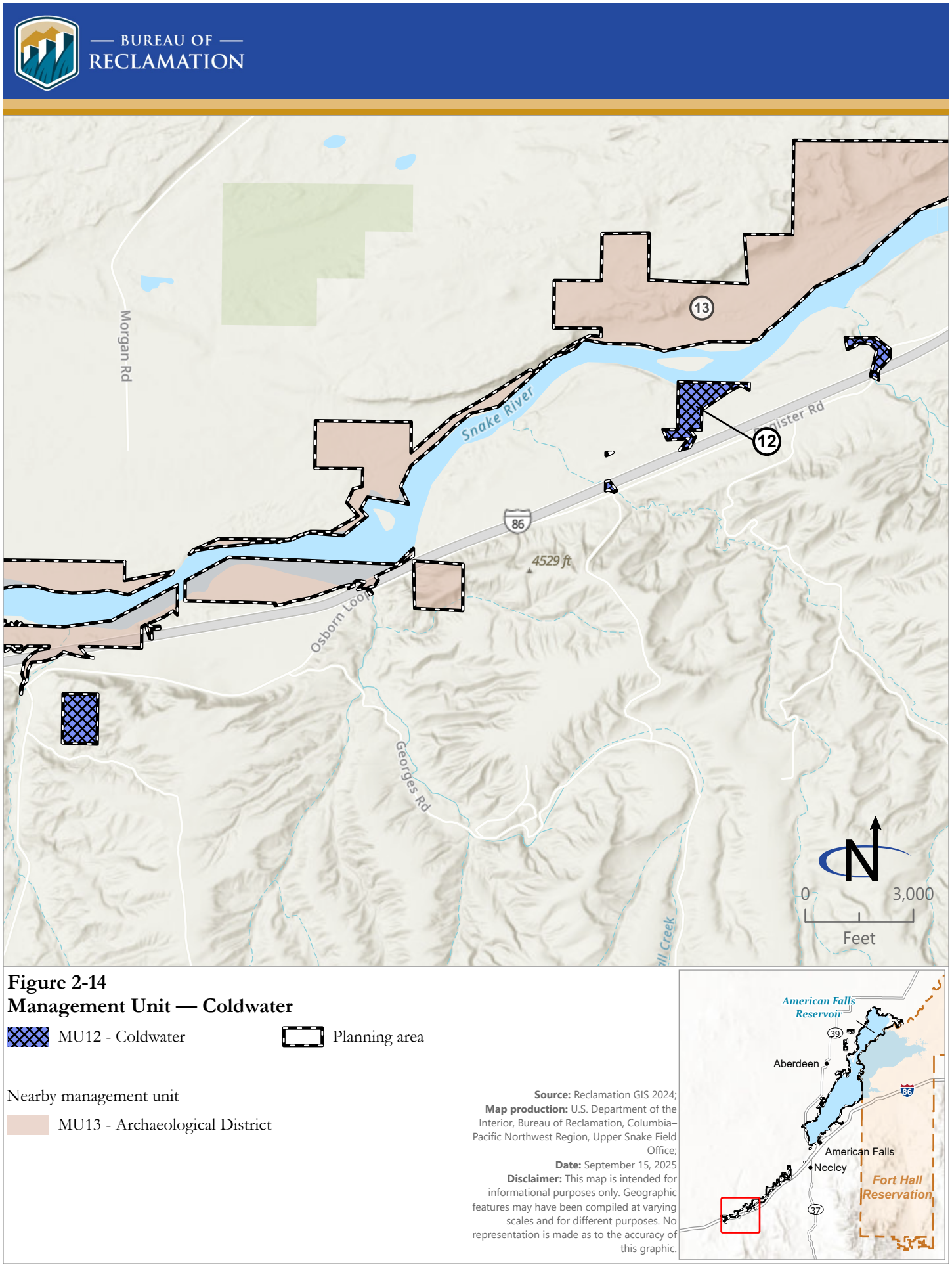

Figure 2-14
Management Unit — Coldwater

MU12 - Coldwater

Planning area

Nearby management unit

MU13 - Archaeological District

Source: Reclamation GIS 2024;
Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
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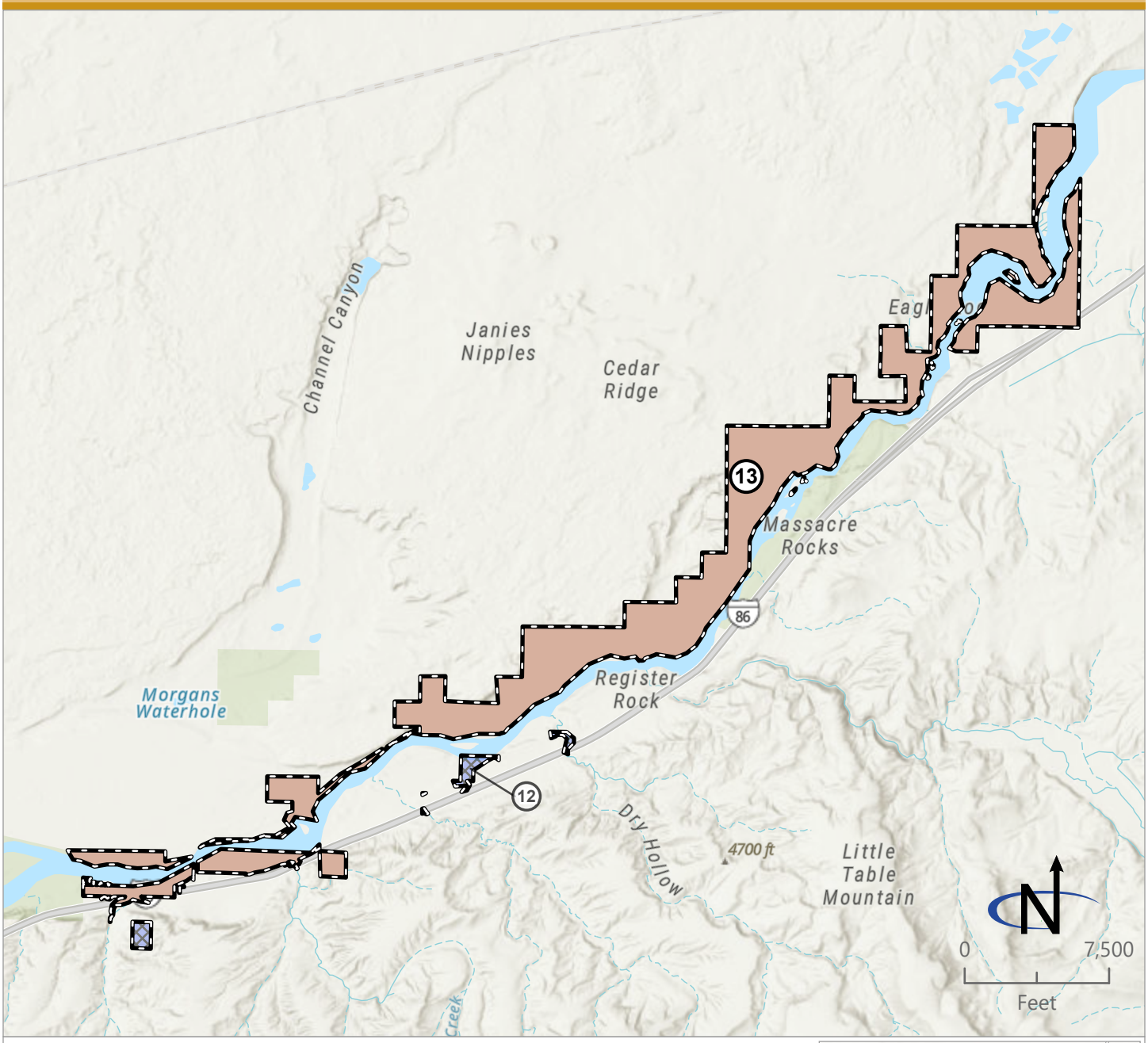


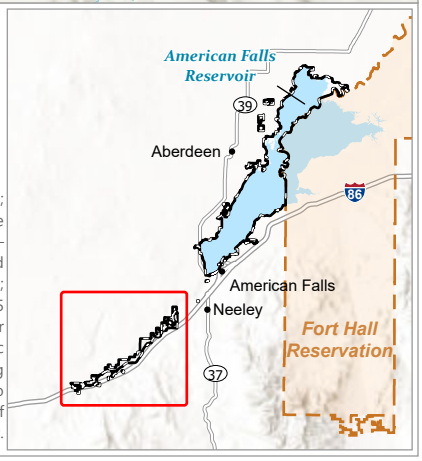
Figure 2-15
Management Unit — Archaeological District

MU13 - Archaeological District

Planning area

Nearby management unit

MU12 - Coldwater



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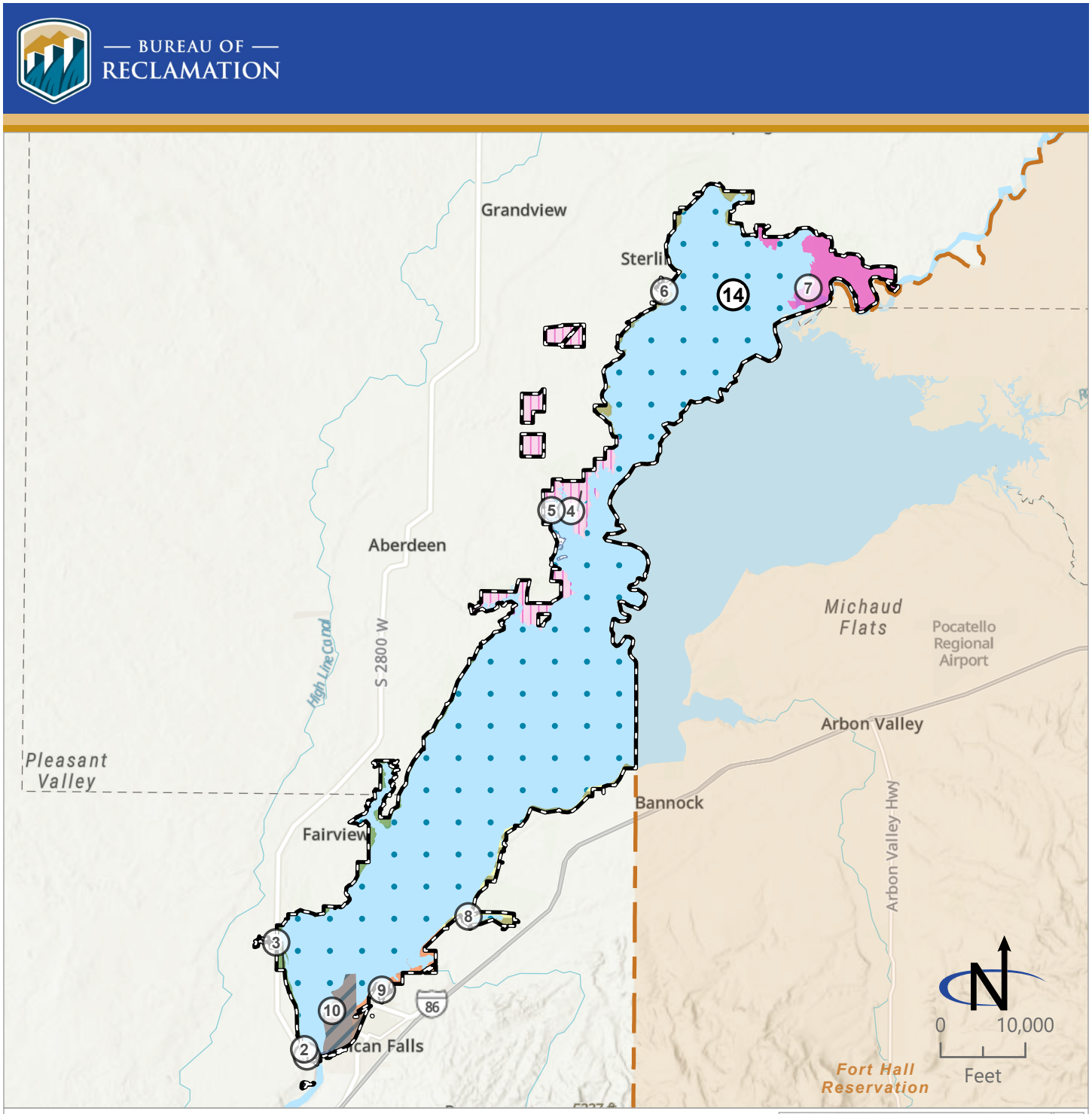

Figure 2-16
Management Unit — Inundation Zone

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Chapter 3. Existing Conditions

3.1 Dam Operations and Reservoir Storage

Management of American Falls facilities, including dam operations and reservoir storage, are guided by various federal laws, including the Reclamation Act of 1902 and subsequent acts such as the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 and Safety of Dams Act of 1978. The Clean Water Act of 1972 (CWA) also guides how dam projects are permitted and managed to protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems. Water project operations are further governed by agency-specific policy and technical direction contained in the Reclamation Manual, including directives and standards under project planning and facility operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation; water management and development; safety management; and program economics, revenues, and contracts. These directives establish procedures for operating and maintaining Reclamation water projects and infrastructure, conducting dam safety monitoring and evaluations, managing water storage allocations, and engaging in cooperative management.

Reservoir operations for American Falls Reservoir are controlled by the reservoir's authorized purposes. The primary operation strategy is storage of water for irrigation of lands; as such, all the storage space in American Falls Reservoir is contracted, primarily for irrigation. Minidoka Project reservoir operations, including irrigation water management and management of storage and release of water from the Minidoka Project's integrated system of reservoirs, are beyond the scope of this RMP.

Reclamation can enter into management agreements with other entities for day-to-day operations of its facilities. At American Falls, Reclamation maintains a management agreement with IPC, which is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the hydropower facility connected to American Falls Reservoir.

Reservoir storage pertains to American Falls Reservoir's storage conditions and water operations. Maintaining sufficient reservoir storage is important for meeting water operation requirements, and this maintenance impacts other resources. While there is no management direction in the 1995 RMP specific to dam operations and reservoir storage, relevant management direction is generally addressed in various sections of this document, including **Section 3.2.2, Hydrology and Water Resources**; **Section 3.2.3, Geology and Soils**; **Section 3.3.1; Public Access and Recreational Use**; and **Section 3.4.3, Public Health and Safety**. Relevant reservoir and river management goals related to reservoir storage and identified in these sections include reservoir operations and releases for water quality, instream flows, and water deliveries; erosion control; and sediment control.

3.1.1 Dam Structure and Operations

American Falls Dam is located at Snake River mile 714.1. It was completed in 1927 and rebuilt in 1977. The dam is now a 94-foot-high composite concrete-and-earth structure with a crest length of 5,277 feet at elevation 4,366.5 feet. Lands around American Falls Reservoir were withdrawn and acquired, and they are managed by Reclamation; lands on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation are managed by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Reclamation operates and maintains American Falls

Reservoir for water supply and informal flood control. Reclamation Water Operations staff determine the amount of water that needs released from the dam and prescribe discharge targets that are released by the dam. Through an agreement, IPC operates and maintains an integrated power plant at the dam and can route the required releases from the dam through IPC's power plant for generation. IPC's power plant's generation is incidental to Reclamation's functional mission at American Falls Dam.

The original American Falls Power Plant downstream from the dam was acquired by IPC in 1916 and rebuilt by Reclamation in 1927. The power plant has three generators with a total nameplate generating capacity of 92,340 kilowatts (IPC 2025). IPC holds a FERC license to manage power generation from the dam.

Reservoir operations for American Falls Reservoir are controlled by the reservoir's authorized purposes and not considered in this RMP. American Falls Reservoir and the associated Reclamation lands are operated to accommodate a variety of resource needs in accordance with federal laws and Reclamation policy; however, the primary operation strategy is storage of water for irrigation of lands. Reclamation operates the reservoir to hold space for deliveries but must respond when water users need water.

3.1.2 Reservoir Storage and Water Use

The storage capacity of the Minidoka Project, including American Falls Reservoir, is fully developed and obligated primarily for agricultural contracts. American Falls Reservoir contains a storage capacity of 1,672,590 acre-feet at an elevation of 4,354.5 feet, though erosion and sedimentation have impacted the reservoir's total storage capacity. Reclamation currently employs many sediment and erosion management techniques to mitigate these issues; however, adjacent private lands have impeded access to banks and sandy cliffs.

At full pool, American Falls Reservoir inundates approximately 87 square miles (56,000 acres) and provides nearly 100 miles of shoreline. Reclamation uses conjunctive water management, considering streamflows, groundwater levels, and other hydrologic variables within the watershed, to track changes in the supply and demand of groundwater and surface water resources over time. Water levels in the reservoir normally reach a yearly maximum pool level in the spring. By September, water levels generally drop to an elevation of approximately 4,325.6 feet. By October, water levels typically reach their annual minimum levels in fulfillment and utilization of the water rights appropriated from the State of Idaho. When water deliveries cease, releases from the dam are reduced and the reservoir begins to refill with unregulated gains and releases from upstream reservoirs. At the end of water delivery, having enough space in American Falls Reservoir to capture future inflow ensures that Reclamation complies with contractual obligations to operate the integrated system to affect the greatest practicable conservation of water. Moreover, the seasonal drawdown also aids in reducing the annual accumulation of pollutants and sediment in active reservoir space. This management approach is also essential to managing the risk of more extreme effects in challenging drought cycles.

In keeping with the purpose of operating American Falls Reservoir to affect the greatest practicable conservation of water for the United States and water users having storage rights in the reservoir system, Reclamation has received incidental take statements from the USFWS for continued operations. Storage and releases occur in accordance with authorized project purposes, Reclamation

contracts, federal laws, and state water law. While Reclamation has no obligation to maintain 100,000 acre-feet to comply with water quality compliance standards and USFWS biological opinion conditions, Reclamation aims to minimize the frequency, extent, and duration of American Falls Reservoir's drawdown below 50,000 acre-feet and monitors sediment transport at several specific locations in the Snake River in the vicinity of American Falls Dam (Reclamation 2010, 2016).

Effective asset management and preserving storage capacity in the inundation zone are of the highest priority for Reclamation and require proactive, pragmatic, and objective coordinated action. The loss of active storage space to sedimentation is an important ongoing concern. A paradigm shift regarding effective sediment management, including annual sediment transport by drawdown flushing, is needed to effectively manage the dam and inundation zone resources in the long term.

Approximately 600,000 acres of land are irrigated downstream from American Falls Dam and Reservoir. Due to natural gains within the reservoir, particularly during wet years, American Falls Reservoir can sometimes retain high water levels late into the irritation season, which ends on November 1.

Reclamation shares equitable ownership with irrigation entities for the fulfillment and utilization of the water rights appropriated from the State of Idaho. The fulfillment and utilization of these water rights are beyond the scope of the RMP.

3.2 Biological and Physical Resources

3.2.1 Air Quality and Climate

Reclamation adheres to the Clean Air Act (42 United States Code [USC] 7401 et seq.), under which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) defining levels necessary to protect public health (primary standards) and levels necessary to protect public welfare (secondary standards) for six criteria air pollutants. States may establish their own ambient air quality standards, but the states' standards must be at least as stringent as the NAAQS. The existing conditions related to the six criteria air pollutants are described in greater detail in **Table 3-1, National Emissions Inventory**. Please refer to **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework,** for detailed descriptions of applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies. The 1995 RMP does not contain any existing air quality and climate management direction.

American Falls Reservoir, located in southeastern Idaho, experiences a semiarid climate characterized by warm summers and cold winters. The warmest month is July, with an average high of 90 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) and an average low of 56°F. The coldest month is January, with an average high of 35°F and low of 19°F. Annual average precipitation is approximately 11 inches. Most precipitation falls during the fall, spring, and winter, while summer rainfall is low. The maximum average precipitation falls in May, at approximately 1.54 inches, while August is generally the driest month with an average precipitation of 0.49 inches (NOAA 2025).

Air quality is determined by the concentration of air pollutants and air quality–related values, including atmospheric deposition and visibility. Within the planning area, these conditions are impacted by human-related activities, including recreation, in addition to ecological factors such as temperature, wind, humidity, occurrence and severity of wildland fires, vegetation, and geographic features. Activities outside the planning area, such as agriculture, also affect air quality within the planning area.

The EPA establishes NAAQS, as directed by the Clean Air Act, to protect public health and welfare, including protection against decreased visibility and environmental damage. The NAAQS focus on the following six criteria pollutants that have the potential to result in adverse human health and environmental impacts: ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and particulate matter, including both course particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometers or smaller (PM_{10}) and fine particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller ($PM_{2.5}$). Idaho adheres to the NAAQS.

The IDEQ monitors air quality to ensure compliance with the NAAQS. Monitoring of criteria pollutants is primarily focused in densely populated areas where the risk of human exposure is highest. The IDEQ operates a PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and sulfur dioxide monitoring station in Pocatello, Idaho (IDEQ 2018). Areas with air quality that meet state and federal air quality standards are designated as attainment areas, while areas that regularly fail to meet state and federal air quality standards (or contribute to ambient air quality in nearby areas that do not meet federal air quality standards) are known as nonattainment areas. State and local governments with nonattainment areas must develop implementation plans that outline how those areas will attain and maintain the air quality standards by reducing air pollutant emissions. Areas with a history of nonattainment that begin consistently meeting the standards are referred to as air quality maintenance areas. Air quality in American Falls, Idaho, is primarily affected by particulate matter (both PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) emissions. Power and Bannock Counties include moderate nonattainment for PM_{10} (EPA 2025b).

Particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) refers to a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. Particles originate from a variety of human-made stationary and mobile sources, as well as from natural sources such as forest fires. Particles may be emitted directly or formed in the atmosphere by transformations of gaseous emissions, such as oxides of sulfur, nitrogen, and volatile organic compounds. Sources of PM_{10} include crushing or grinding operations, dust from paved or unpaved roads, residential burning, and wildland fires. Sources of $PM_{2.5}$ include all types of combustion (from motor vehicles, power plants, wood burning, etc.), some industrial processes, and atmospheric re-creations of gaseous pollutants. Inhaling particulate matter can cause serious health issues, especially particles less than 10 microns. Elevated $PM_{2.5}$ levels can arise from various sources, including vehicle emissions; wildfires; prescribed burning, including agricultural burning; and wood burning during colder months.

The EPA provides annual criteria for air pollutant emissions through the National Emissions Inventory, which is a compilation of air emissions based on data provided by state, local, and Tribal agencies supplemented by EPA data. The EPA releases the National Emissions Inventory every 3 years; the most recent available data were published in 2023.

Table 3-1, National Emissions Inventory, shows the county-level annual emissions from various sources in Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties. A major source of PM_{10} emissions in the planning area includes dust from agriculture, road dust, and dust kicked up by the wind from unpaved and exposed surfaces. During periods of high wind, fugitive dust created by wind can greatly degrade visibility.

Visibility is generally described as the maximum distance that an observer can see a landscape viewed against the background sky. It also refers to the clarity with which the texture, form, colors, and details of the landscape appear. Visibility impairment is a clear indicator of air pollution; high levels of pollution affect visibility to absorbing or scattering light.

Table 3-1. National Emissions Inventory – Criteria Air Pollutant (Tons per Year)

Source	Carbon Monoxide	Nitrogen Oxide	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$	Sulfur Dioxide	Volatile Organic Compounds
Bingham County, Idaho						
Agriculture	—	—	8,785	1,764	—	122
Construction and road dust	—	—	7,240	687	—	—
Wildfire	738	19	83	71	8	177
Mobile	4,614	1,246	66	48	2	355
Total*	**7,482**	**2,033**	**16,523**	**2,861**	**30**	**6,434**
Bannock County, Idaho						
Agriculture	—	—	1,902	382	—	24
Construction and road dust	—	—	4,345	395	—	—
Wildfire	639	14	69	59	6	152
Mobile	7,976	1,928	101	62	3	635
Total*	**11,275**	**2,544**	**6,899**	**1,331**	**31**	**5,340**
Power County, Idaho						
Agriculture	—	—	4,632	928	—	42
Construction and road dust	—	—	1,255	116	—	—
Wildfire	124	2	13	11	1	29
Mobile	2,294	788	40	34	1	330
Total*	**3,382**	**1,235**	**6,128**	**1,264**	**717**	**3,905**

Source: EPA 2023

* Select source categories are presented for each county. Totals represent the sum of all emissions from all sources in each county, and may exceed the sum of the categories presented for each county.

— : Not applicable

3.2.2 Hydrology and Water Resources

Current legislation for the management of hydrology and water resources includes the CWA, Water Resource Development Act of 2024, and Executive Order 11644. The CWA requires federal agencies to consider the impact of proposed actions on water quality, particularly the potential pollution of surface waters, such as through Section 303(d) of the CWA, which authorizes the EPA to assist states, territories, and Tribes in listing impaired waters and developing total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for these waterbodies. Water rights and storage contracts limit the ability to use releases to manage water quality issues. Drought conditions further exacerbate this constraint, since low water years provide little flexibility for releases, unless there is precipitation downstream. Please refer to **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**, for more detail on relevant policies and regulations governing hydrology and water resources.

Hydrology and water resources pertain to the American Falls Reservoir watershed, water operations, and water quality conditions. Existing Reclamation management of hydrology and water resources is broken into goals for the reservoir and the river. Maintaining water quality is important for meeting

designated beneficial uses of water at American Falls Reservoir. Water quality is monitored by the IDEQ.

The term "water resources" encompasses both surface water and groundwater sources, such as streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, and aquifers. Reclamation manages, develops, and protects water resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public. Part of this management includes the consideration of both water quantity and water quality, where applicable by regulations such as the CWA. Multipurpose water management within American Falls Reservoir is integral to the region, providing irrigation, flood control, power generation, and recreation, and supporting fish and wildlife ecosystem health. American Falls Reservoir plays a pivotal role in providing these essential services.

Reservoir and Watershed

American Falls Reservoir is the largest reservoir in the upper Snake River basin. American Falls Reservoir primarily falls within the American Falls subbasin, and less than 12 percent falls within the Lake Walcott and Portneuf subbasins. The planning area also falls partially or completely within eight watersheds, as shown in **Table 3-2, Hydrologic Units Within the Planning Area**.

The American Falls subbasin centers around American Falls Reservoir and is highly diverse, containing dry, high desert to high mountains and valleys. The American Falls subbasin also contains the Snake River, which is used to irrigate cropland along this corridor and supply water for livestock grazing, which is a prominent land use (ISWCC 2014).

Table 3-2. Hydrologic Units Within the Planning Area

Hydrologic Units	Hydrologic Unit Code[2]	Acres in the Planning Area
American Falls Subbasin	17040206	35,520
American Falls Reservoir Watershed	1704020610	34,690
City of Aberdeen Watershed	1704020607	470
Ryegrass Flat-High Line Canal Watershed	1704020606	210
Town of Springfield-Danielson Creek Watershed	1704020604	110
Town of Sterling-Big Fill Reservoir Watershed	1704020605	40
Lake Walcott Subbasin	17040209	3,370
Massacre Rocks-Snake River Watershed	1704020903	3,350
Pleasant Valley-Lake Channel Canyon Watershed	1704020902	20
Portneuf Subbasin	17040208	1,250
Ross Fork Watershed	1704020806	1,250

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

American Falls Reservoir is fed by the Snake River, Portneuf River, other smaller watercourses, and groundwater inflow. The Snake River headwaters lie at the heart of the greater Yellowstone area, encompassing parts of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, John D. Rockefeller Memorial Parkway, National Elk Refuge, Bridger-Teton National Forest, and small portions of State and private lands (NWSRS 2023; NPS 2024b). The river flows through Idaho along a great arc curving

[2] Hydrologic unit codes are the unique numeric codes that identify the areas of land upstream of a point that contribute to surface water runoff directly to this outlet point. The level of classification is determined by the number of digits.

south. As shown below in **Table 3-3, Average Annual Inflow to American Falls Reservoir**, the Snake River contributes about 60 percent of inflow, and the Portneuf River contributes about 3 percent of inflow to American Falls Reservoir. Other surface sources provide about 3 percent of inflow and include numerous drains, wasteways, and creek beds that channel runoff into the reservoir from the agricultural areas to the north and south. Irrigation drainage from approximately 550,000 acres of land enters the reservoir. **Figure 3-1, Water Resources**, shows the water resources in the planning area.

Table 3-3. Average Annual Inflow to American Falls Reservoir

Source	Acre-feet	Percentage of the Total
Snake and Portneuf Rivers	3,694,000	63
Ungauged surface inflow	174,000	3
Groundwater and major spring flow	1,900,000	33
Precipitation	50,000	1
Total	**5,818,000**	**100**

Sources: USGS 1988, 1990

Groundwater provides about 33 percent of the inflow to the reservoir. Major aquifers in the area are part of the Eastern Snake River Plain regional aquifer system. The planning area does not fall within a critical groundwater area. Discharges to the reservoir and the Snake River are from sand and gravel and basalt aquifers to the south and from basalt aquifers to the north. Recharge to groundwater in the area is predominantly from river losses and upstream irrigation. Groundwater discharges are higher from June to January and lower from March to May than in pre-irrigation times. Measurable groundwater entering the reservoir is channeled from perennial springs via Danielson, Spring, Kinney, and Clear Creeks. However, most groundwater that enters the reservoir below the water surface is not observed and cannot be directly measured. Reclamation provides discretionary actions, including funding and projects to optimize outcomes for fish and wildlife, surface water quality, and recreation (Idaho Water Resource Board 2009).

Natural processes within and beyond the planning area contribute to water quality issues, sedimentation, reduced operational flexibility, and declining storage capacity in American Falls Reservoir. Reclamation has implemented various control measures to reduce erosion, including installing jetties and armoring shorelines. Reclamation has also installed riprap to deter off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in areas with high erosion potential and to prevent illegal dumping. As the planning area experiences longer and more severe drought conditions in the future (USDA 2023), high winds and lower reservoir elevations will continue to create sediment issues from erosion.

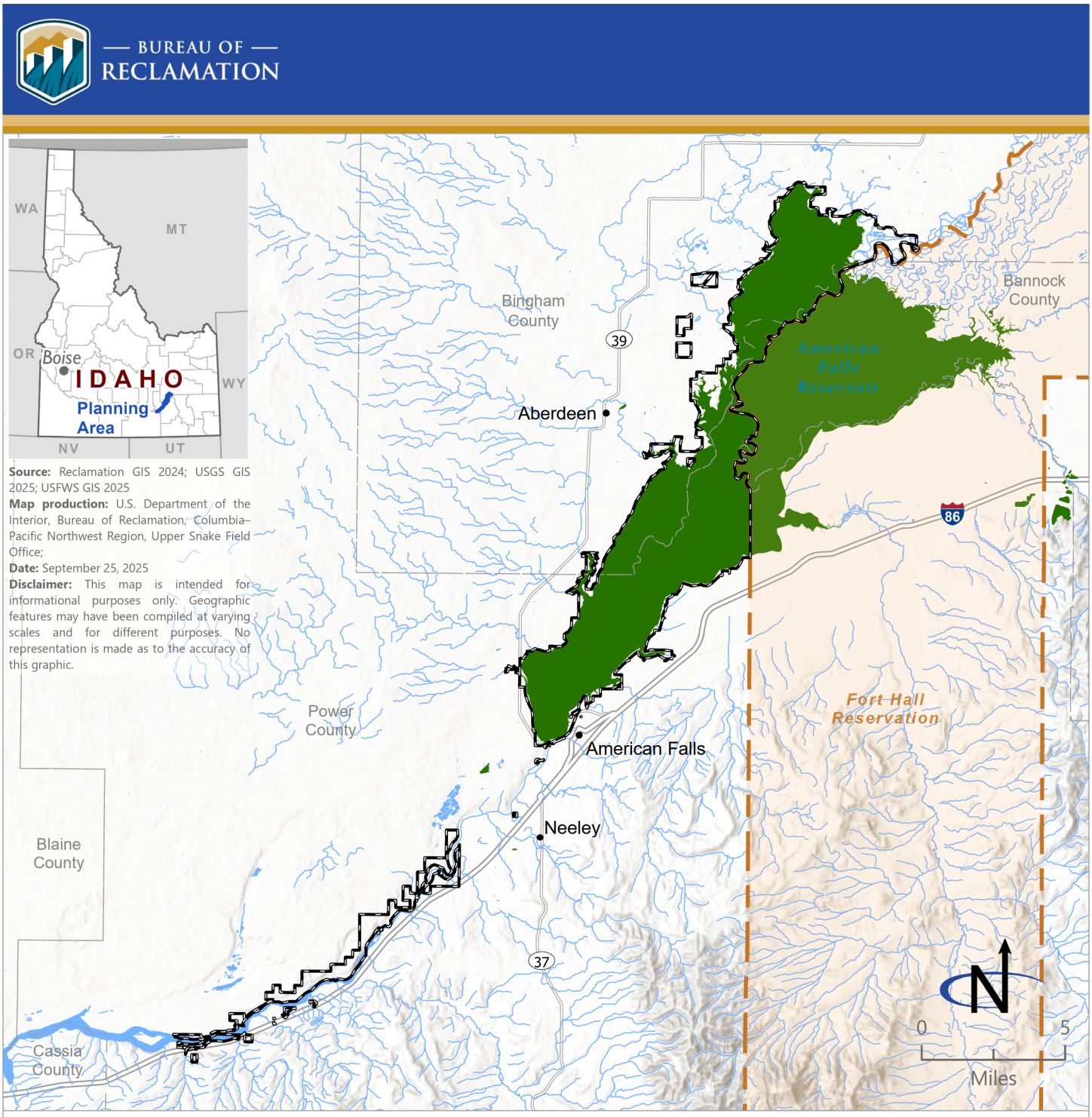


Figure 3-1
Water Resources

Stream
Planning area
Lake or pond
Reservoir

Water Quality

The State of Idaho has assigned beneficial uses[3] to American Falls Reservoir and the Snake River to include cold-water aquatic life, contact recreation, and domestic water supply (IDEQ 2012a). The Snake River has an additional beneficial use for salmonid spawning. Both waterbodies are on the CWA Section 303(d) list, which means the waterbodies are impaired and cannot support their designated beneficial use. The State of Idaho has listed several waterbodies in the planning area, as outlined in and displayed in **Table 3-4, CWA 303(d)-Listed Waterbodies**, and **Figure 3-2, CWA 303(d)-Listed Waterbodies**.

Table 3-4. CWA 303(d)-Listed Waterbodies

CWA 303(d)-Listed Waterbody	Extent	Parameter[4] Impacting Beneficial Use
American Falls Reservoir (Snake River)	42.5 miles	Dissolved oxygen, nutrients, sediment, and chlorophyll *a*
Snake River – Upper segment to Tilden Bridge	1.2 miles	Mercury
Snake River – American Falls Reservoir Dam to Rock Creek (upstream)	0.3 miles	Combined biota and habitat bioassessment
Snake River – American Falls Reservoir Dam to Rock Creek (downstream)	0.2 miles	Combined biota and habitat bioassessment
Fall Creek (source to mouth)	0.1 miles	Combined biota and habitat bioassessment
American Falls Reservoir	31,730 acres	Dissolved oxygen, nutrients, chlorophyll *a*, and sediment

Sources: Reclamation GIS 2024; IDEQ 2012a, 2012b; EPA 2025a

Channelization, grazing, sewage treatment, food processing, and phosphate processing have contributed to these water quality impairments (IDEQ 2012a). In 2012, the IDEQ, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and EPA issued a TMDL plan for the American Falls subbasin. A TMDL plan is a plan issued to address waters impaired by pollutants to achieve water quality standards (IDEQ 2012a). Pollutant control actions for achieving water quality targets include funding the implementation of best management practices, outreach, and monitoring and evaluation (ISWCC 2014). Reclamation water quality data can be publicly accessed through the Water Quality Portal (https://www.waterqualitydata.us/), which is a site operated and maintained by the US Geological Survey and EPA.

[3] Beneficial use refers to the designation of a waterbody by the State of Idaho for uses and values, such as domestic, irrigation, stock watering, manufacturing, mining, hydropower, municipal, aquacultural, and recreational use, as well as for fish and wildlife.

[4] Water quality parameters are characteristics used to assess the suitability and safety of water for various purposes; the parameters include physical, chemical, and biological properties, like temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity.

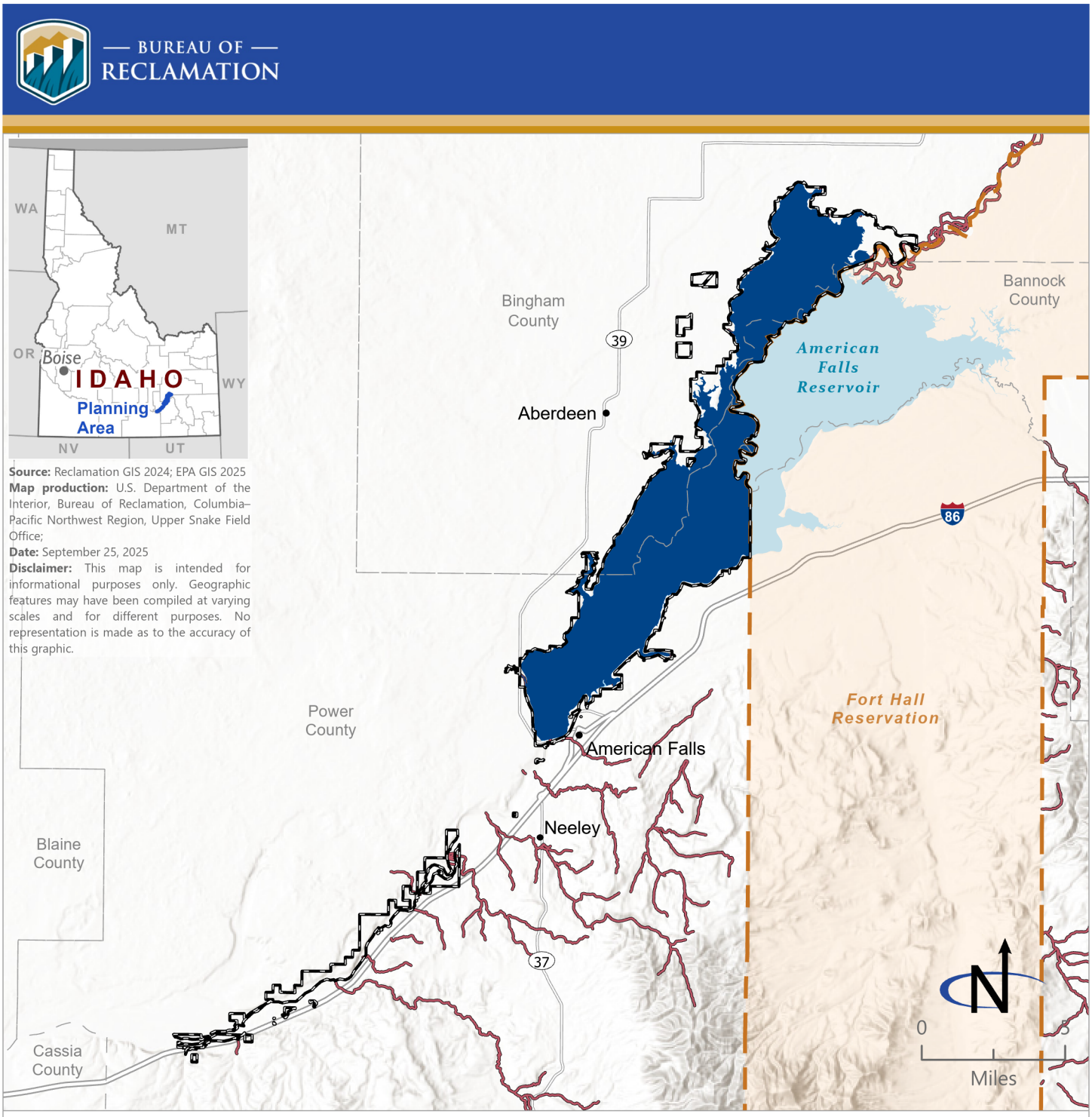


Figure 3-2
CWA 303(d)-Listed Waterbodies

303(d)-listed stream
Planning area
303(d)-listed waterbody

Within the planning area, ongoing American Falls erosion control activities that would have the potential to impact water quality require a Section 401 water quality certification. The State of Idaho files these certifications to ensure federally permitted or licensed activities comply with state water quality standards and any other water quality requirements under state law if those activities may result in a discharge into the waters of the US. Compliance with Section 401 water quality certifications ensures that these activities do not impair water quality.

Waste associated with recreation and trespassing can impact water quality through littering and illegal dumping. Reclamation has partnered with the USFWS to manage the sanitation facilities at McTucker Ponds and with Bingham County to maintain sanitation facilities at Sportsman's Park. As recreation in the planning area continues to increase, waste, litter, and illegal dumping could continue to present water quality challenges.

Water quality monitoring within American Falls Reservoir and the Snake River is currently being conducted as a collaborative effort among Reclamation, the IDEQ, the US Geological Survey, and IPC. Monitoring is a mechanism for tracking trends and providing accurate data for TMDLs.

Nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus are essential for plant growth; however, nutrient runoff from human activities and other sources, such as fertilizers, wastewater, and animal waste, can lead to an overabundance of nutrients in the water and eutrophication. Eutrophication is a process by which excessive nutrients lead to algal blooms and cyanobacterial growth (USGS 2019b). Certain species of cyanobacteria produce toxins that are harmful to human health, animals, and aquatic ecosystems and form what are referred to as harmful cyanobacterial blooms or harmful algal blooms (EPA 2025d). In a water sample taken at American Falls Reservoir near the boat ramp in 2022, one of these toxins, anatoxin-a, was not detected (Reclamation 2023b).

As these mats of algae or cyanobacteria die, the decay requires oxygen consumption, which leads to low dissolved oxygen conditions and fish kills (USGS 2019). In cooperation with Reclamation, IPC's FERC license requires monitoring of water temperature and dissolved oxygen and mitigation for low dissolved oxygen. Dissolved oxygen mitigation includes the operation of an automated system for blowers and a manual spill operation when dissolved oxygen levels reach or drop below 3.8 milligrams per liter (mg/L) (IPC 2020). Average concentrations of chlorophyll *a*, a key component of photosynthesis and an indicator for the amount of algae and cyanobacteria in a waterbody (EPA 2025c), have slightly increased between 2006 and 2024 (Reclamation 2023b). This upward trend could indicate nutrient loading and an increase in excess amounts of algae and cyanobacteria that could create these low dissolved oxygen conditions (EPA 2025c).

As shown in **Table 3-5**, the average total phosphorus concentrations ranged between 0.04 and 0.27 mg/L, and average nitrogen (that is, nitrate and nitrite) concentrations ranged between 0.01 and 0.28 mg/L between 2019 and 2023. See **Figure 3-3** for a map of sampling sites and **Appendix C**, **Water Quality Data**, for specific monitoring data.

Table 3-5. American Falls Reservoir and Snake River Average Nutrient Concentrations 2019–2023

Sampling Site	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Nitrate and Nitrite (mg/L)
American Falls – near boat ramp (AFE[5] 010)	0.04	0.18
American Falls – Willow Bay (AFE 020)	0.27	0.28
American Falls – Sportsman's Cove (AFE 050)	0.04	0.24
Snake River below the American Falls outlet works (AFE 101)	0.06	0.01
Snake River at Tilden Bridge (AFE 119)	0.08	0.04

Source: Reclamation 2023

Using Reclamation's current funding to supplement the IDEQ's responsibilities to monitor TMDL effectiveness, the IDEQ samples water resources on Reclamation lands for water quality parameters, such as nutrients, bacteria, and sediment. Data analysis and the resulting reports help the IDEQ to work toward TMDL implementation efforts and to identify areas of concern where future water quality improvement work can be directed (Reclamation 2024a). Total phosphorus concentrations have decreased since 2000, as indicated by sampling results for the boat ramp sampling site adjacent to the outlet works at American Falls (AFE 010) and shown in **Figure 3-4**. This decrease may be related to these efforts and the implementation of Reclamation's Water Quality Management Action Plan (Reclamation 2010).

Sediment is another water quality parameter of concern in the planning area. Suspended sediment is an important factor in determining water quality and appearance. Sediment can also shorten the lifespan of dams and reservoirs as sediments in river flows slow and deposit in the reservoir (USGS 2018). Further, increased sediment mobilization occurs at American Falls Reservoir when the reservoir is drawn down below 60,000 to 80,000 acre-feet to meet water delivery demands. As shown in **Table 3-6**, average concentrations of total suspended solids[6] range between 7 and 37 mg/L.

American Falls Reservoir is part of a long-term monitoring program that Reclamation has implemented for over 30 years. To adequately monitor Reclamation reservoirs throughout the Pacific Northwest, Reclamation's regional reservoir program limits reservoir monitoring to once every 3 years. However, when the American Falls Reservoir water level drops below 100,000 acre-feet, as a buffer, Reclamation increases monitoring and collects water quality samples above and below American Falls Reservoir on a weekly basis. The samples are collected above the reservoir at Tilden Bridge and immediately below the dam. The samples are analyzed at Reclamation's water quality laboratory for total suspended solids, suspended sediment concentration, volatile solids, and turbidity.

[5] AFE is part of the site code used by the Columbia Pacific Northwest Soil and Water Quality Regional Laboratory to identify sample sites.

[6] Total suspended solids refer to a measurement of waterborne particles that exceed 2 microns in size and is used as a surrogate for suspended sediment.

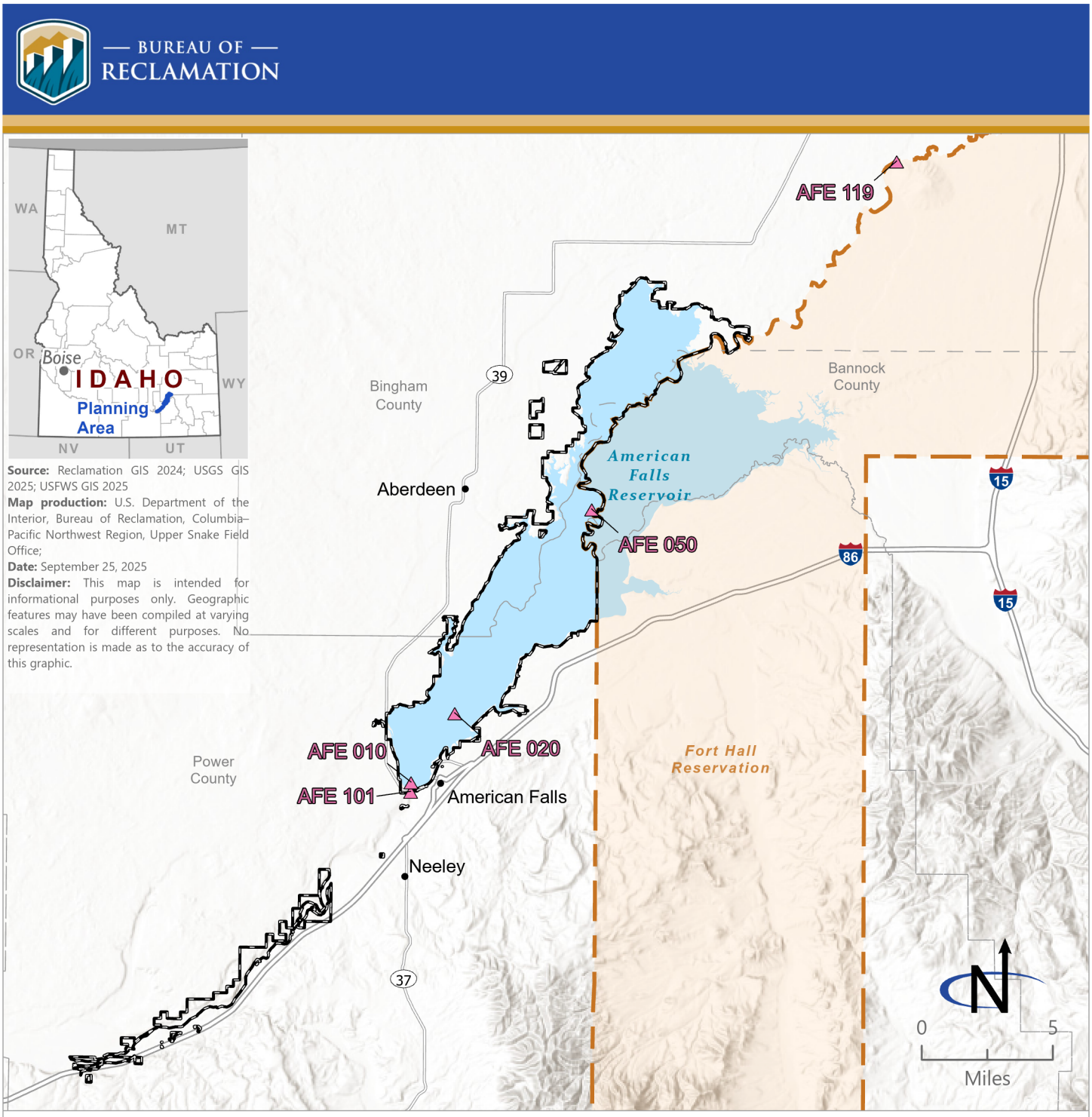
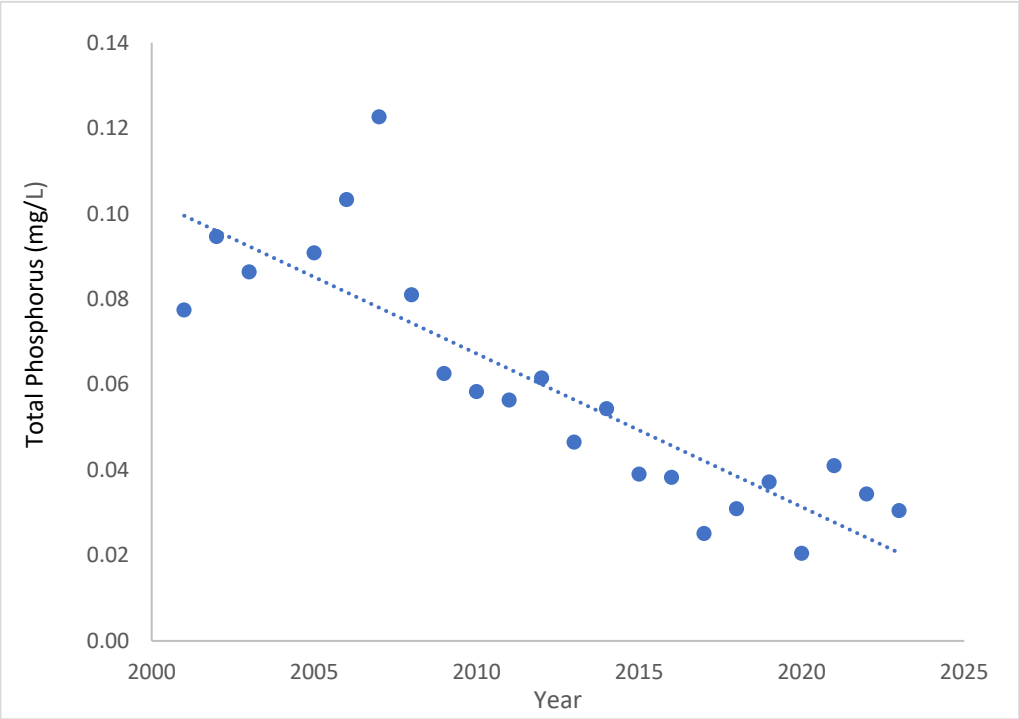


Figure 3-3
Water Quality Monitoring Sites

▲ Water quality monitoring site ▭ Planning area

Figure 3-4. Total Phosphorus Measurements Collected by IDEQ at American Falls near the Boat Ramp 2000–2025



Source: Reclamation 2023b

Table 3-6. American Falls Reservoir and Snake River Average Total Suspended Solids Concentrations 2019–2022*

Sampling Site	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)
American Falls – near boat ramp (AFE 010)	7
American Falls – Sportsman's Cove (AFE 050)	37
American Falls – 33 feet above the outlet works (AFE 101)	7
Snake River at Tilden Bridge (AFE 119)	17

Source: Reclamation 2023b
*Note that these samples were taken when American Falls Reservoir levels were 100,000 acre-feet or greater.

American Falls Reservoir is a nonpoint source for sediment pollution. Historically, American Falls Reservoir's levels dropped below 100,000 acre-feet in 2013 and 2022 to meet water demands. As shown in **Table 3-7, Average Total Suspended Solids Concentrations when American Falls Reservoir Levels Are Below 100,000 Acre-feet**, during this period in 2022, sediment below the outlet works increased 585 percent on average, compared with years when reservoir levels were 100,000 acre-feet or greater. For reference, at a monitoring site upstream of the reservoir, Snake River at Tilden Bridge, the average concentration of total suspended solids decreased during this

same period. However, generally, Snake River water quality is very good and the American Falls Reservoir, in conjunction with Minidoka Dam and Milner Dam, acts as a large settling basin for sediment and to remove the bedload portion of sediment from the Snake River (IDEQ 2000).

Table 3-7. Average Total Suspended Solids Concentrations when American Falls Reservoir Levels Are Below 100,000 Acre-feet

Sampling Site	Year	Average Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Percent Difference from 100,000 Acre-feet or Above
Snake River below American Falls outlet works (AFE 101)	2022	48	+585
Snake River at Tilden Bridge (AFE 119)	2022	14	–17

Source: Reclamation 2023b

Additionally, as part of the regional reservoir monitoring plan, Reclamation, in coordination with IDEQ and the US Geological Survey, monitors trace elements, or elements present in minute amounts in the environment that can dissolve in the water and present a risk to human and aquatic health (USGS 2019a). Trace elements monitored at the American Falls Reservoir and Snake River are listed below. See **Appendix C, Water Quality Data**, for specific monitoring data.

- Arsenic
- Cadmium
- Chromium
- Copper
- Manganese
- Mercury
- Silica
- Zinc
- Sodium

There are two Idaho Department of Water Resources groundwater monitoring wells within the planning area (9621 and 9624) and no US Geological Survey groundwater monitoring wells within the planning area (Reclamation GIS 2025).

3.2.3 Geology and Soils

There is no overarching legislation or Reclamation policy regarding the management of geological features and soils. The CWA directs federal agencies to disclose and reduce impacts on water quality, which includes sedimentation. Erosion control and sedimentation are an important management priority, as demonstrated by the goals and actions in the 1995 RMP, and will continue to be a focus in the future. Soil erodibility is closely tied to sedimentation, which is connected to water quality and the overall reservoir storage capacity.

American Falls Reservoir is underlain by a series of Pleistocene[7] lake beds deposited when intermittent basalt eruptions diverted and dammed streams to form lakes. The Lake Bonneville

[7] The geological epoch that lasted from about 2.6 million to 11,700 years ago.

flood nearly 15,000 years ago caused much of the erosion and deposition of sediments in the planning area (**Figure 3-5**).

Much of the reservoir shoreline is dominated by steep cliffs that are subject to constant erosion from wave action and prevailing winds. This erosion causes the loss of land area and increased sedimentation, which reduce the reservoir storage capacity and lowers water quality, respectively. The gentle terrain at the upper end of the reservoir results in shallow water, which inhibits boating late in the recreation season. In July, the drawdown of the reservoir exposes much of the reservoir bottom at the northeast end and affects boat launching capability elsewhere on the reservoir.

There are approximately 6,950 acres of soils within the American Falls Reservoir planning area (approximately 17 percent of the planning area, with the rest of the area encompassing the inundation zone). **Table 3-8** groups the soils by soil texture. Soil textures are classifications used to describe the relative amounts of sand, silt, and clay in the soil. Sand grains are between 0.05 and 2.00 millimeters in size, silt grains are between 0.002 and 0.050 millimeters in size, and clay grains are less than 0.002 millimeters in size (USDA NRCS 2022).

Of the 12 soil orders in soil taxonomy, the soils in the planning area are mainly Mollisols or Aridisols. Mollisols are very fertile soils that have a thick and dark upper soil horizon with high organic material content (USDA NRCS 2022). Aridisols are characteristically dry soils that have a light upper soil horizon with low organic matter content (USDA NRCS 2022). Some sandy Entisols also occur, which are recently deposited (in this case, they are recently deposited from a mix of windblown and water-transported sediments), young soils with little soil horizon development (USDA NRCS 2022).

According to the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), many soils in the planning area are well drained or somewhat excessively well drained, and they are suitable farmlands, if irrigated (USDA NRCS 2025). However, interspersed rock outcrops and areas of shallow soils are the main limitations for farming. Most soils in the planning area have a moderate risk for compaction; silt loams are the most susceptible to compaction when the soils are moist or wet (USDA NRCS 2025).

Soil disturbance and erosion within the planning area are most commonly associated with wind and water erosion, and OHV use. Outside the planning area, agriculture and livestock grazing contribute to soil disturbance and erosion. The soil landscape position; steepness of the slope; physical properties, including texture and structure; and chemical properties contribute to susceptibility to wind and water erosion.

Wind erosion is the movement of soil particles due to wind direction and speed, which results in the displacement or loss of topsoil in some areas, increased sediment deposition in other areas, and impacts on ambient air quality from elevated dust levels. Wind erodibility is greatest for sandy soils and soils with minimal rock fragments. Windblown soil is common in spring on previously disturbed soils in the planning area. The NRCS uses wind erodibility groups (WEGs) to rate a soil's susceptibility to wind erosion. The soils most susceptible to wind erosion are those in WEGs 1 and 2 (approximately 500 acres in the planning area; see **Table 3-8, Acres of Soil Surface Textures and Corresponding Ratings**).

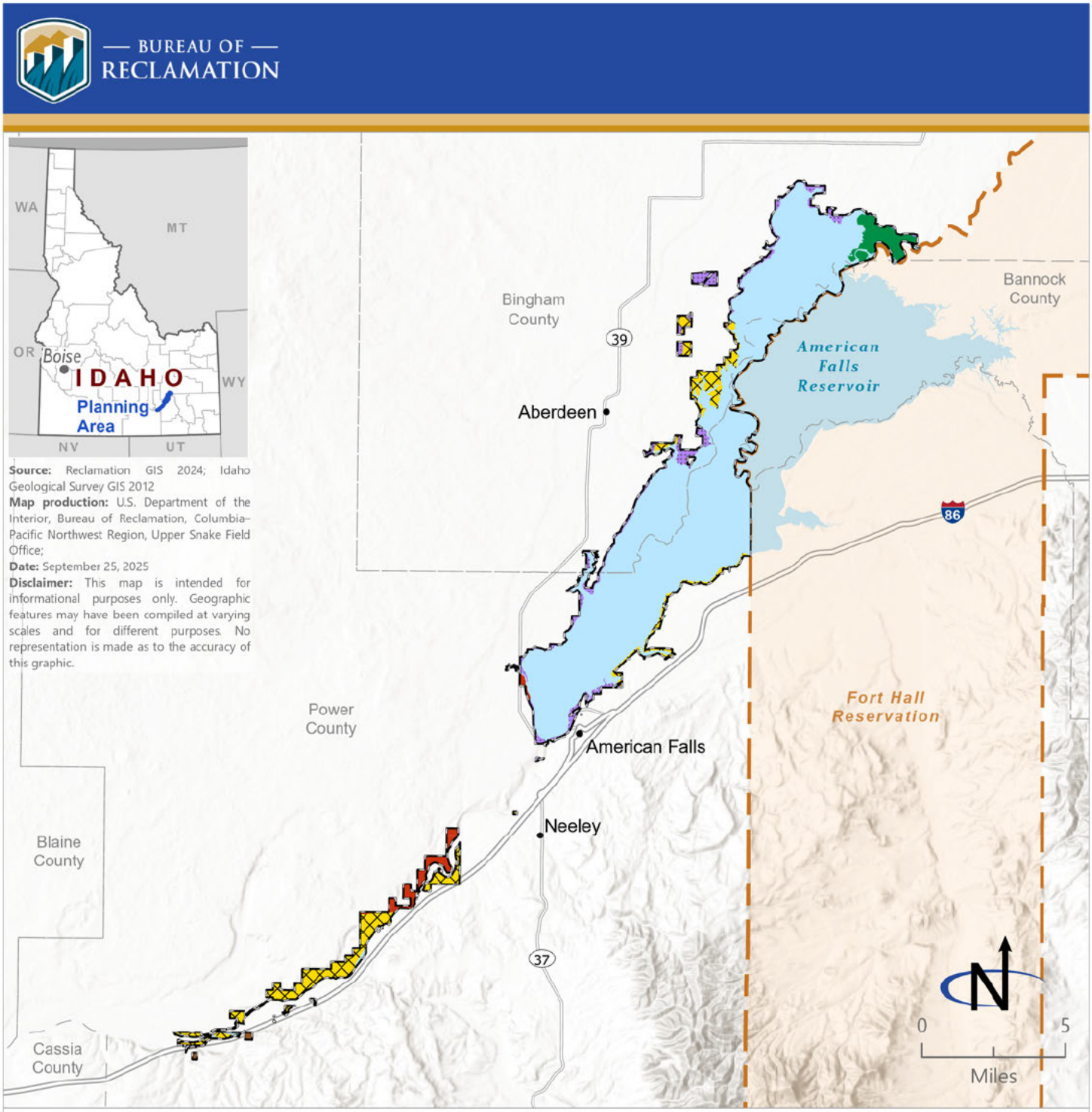


Figure 3-5
Geological Formations

- Lake Bonneville deposits (Pleistocene)
- Planning area
- Fluvial and lake sediment (Quaternary)
- Alluvial deposits (Quaternary)
- Windblown sand deposits (Quaternary)
- Loess deposits (Pleistocene)
- Basalt (Pleistocene and Pliocene)
- Water bodies

Water erosion is the detachment and removal of soil material by water. Surface disturbance that applies force to the soil surface can cause compaction that squeezes particles together and decreases the pore spaces between them. This compaction can also decrease water infiltration and increase potential runoff. The NRCS uses the Kw factor, which is a rating index with values from 0.02 to 0.64, to indicate a soil's susceptibility to water erosion by sheet and rill erosion. Sheet erosion occurs uniformly over a land surface, and rill erosion forms narrow and shallow channels. Other factors being equal, the higher the number, the greater the soil's susceptibility to water erosion. According to the soils' Kw factor values, except for soils with fine sand, stoney, or gravelly texture, most soils in the planning area are susceptible to water erosion (**Table 3-8, Acres of Soil Surface Textures and Corresponding Ratings**).

Table 3-8. Acres of Soil Surface Textures and Corresponding Ratings

Soil Surface Texture	Kw Factor	WEG	Acres
Stratified sand to gravel	Not rated	1	380
Fine sand	0.05	1	50
Loamy sand	0.43–0.49	2	70
Sandy loam	0.43–0.55	3	810
Fine sandy loam	0.28–0.43	3	1,390
Stony loam	0.28	6	240
Gravelly loam	0.15	7	10
Very gravelly loam	0.10	7	450
Loam	0.37–0.55	4L[8], 5, or 6	2,830
Silt loam	0.43–0.64	4L or 5	480
Silty clay loam	0.49	4L	120
Clay loam	0.37	4L	120
Other[1]	Not rated	Not rated	33,190
Total	**—**	**—**	**40,140**

Source: USDA NRCS 2025

[1] Water (approximately 32,100 acres), rock outcrops (approximately 1,080 acres), and gravel and cobbles (approximately 10 acres) that do not have a soil erosion rating.

OHV use can compact and displace soils, and lead to soil erosion from wind and water, especially in places where there is very little to no vegetation ground cover. OHV users prefer the hilly topography along the north side of the river downstream from the dam. Reclamation lands along the river are closed to vehicle access, but OHV use occurs on adjacent BLM lands that are open to such use.

3.2.4 Vegetation

The ESA, as amended, requires Reclamation to ensure its activities do not harm the existence of endangered or threatened species, or adversely affect the species' critical habitats. This act mandates coordination with the Services as part of the Section 7 consultation process. The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act encourages the conservation of wildlife and the aquatic and land vegetation that

[8] Group 4L denotes soils that are calcareous loams, silt loams, clay loams, or silty clay loams. Calcareous refers to the presence of significant calcium carbonate, which affects the soil's recreation to acid.

wildlife depends on, promoting the use of conservation plans and programs. Reclamation regularly consults with the USFWS and IDFG to manage wildlife resources.

The Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1975 (Public Law 93-629) establishes requirements to control the spread of noxious weeds on federal lands. Additionally, Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 address the protection of wetlands and floodplains, respectively, requiring Reclamation to minimize adverse impacts on these areas, avoid construction in floodplains or wetlands, and assess these impacts as part of the NEPA review process.

Existing management for vegetation resources provides direction to protect and enhance habitat values on Reclamation lands. Objectives include ensuring that livestock grazing does not harm existing habitats or slow recovery of damaged areas, promoting balanced habitat conservation and enhancement in land trade decisions, and protecting key species assemblages like cottonwood forests and riparian vegetation. Management objectives provide direction for coordinating with state and Tribal governments for managing native species and private contractors for noxious weed control. Finally, existing management provides direction for restoration of degraded habitats and maintenance of riparian and wetland habitats.

American Falls Reservoir is contained within the Inter-Mountain Semi-Desert ecoregion of Idaho, which is primarily composed of short to medium sagebrush communities, chaparral scrub, and some pinyon-juniper woodland, with varying amounts of wetlands and marsh communities. Privately owned lands surrounding the reservoir are primarily composed of agricultural, residential, mixed-use, and commercial properties. **Table 3-9, Vegetation Types in the Planning Area**, summarizes the dominant vegetation types on lands in the planning area; these vegetation types are described in further detail below.

Table 3-9. Vegetation Types in the Planning Area

Vegetation Classification	Area (Acres)
Shrubland and grassland	2,800
Pinyon-juniper woodland	210
Marsh, wetland, or riparian area	1,010
Developed area	520

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

Shrubland and Grasslands

Sagebrush shrublands occupy approximately 2,800 acres in the planning area (Reclamation GIS 2025). This ecological system occurs throughout much of the western US, typically in broad basins between mountain ranges, in plains, and in foothills between about 4,900- and 7,500-feet elevation. Soils are typically deep, well drained, and nonsaline. These shrublands are dominated by basin big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata tridentata*) or Wyoming big sagebrush (*A. tridentata wyomingensis*), or both. Scattered juniper (*Juniperus* spp.), greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*), and saltbush (*Atriplex* spp.) may be present in some stands. Rubber rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), yellow rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), antelope bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), or mountain snowberry (*Symphoricarpos oreophilus*) may co-dominate disturbed stands.

Grasses and other herbaceous plants associated with sagebrush communities include Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), bluegrasses (*Poa* spp.), wheatgrasses (*Agropyron* spp.), and Great Basin wild

rye (*Leymus cinereus*). In disturbed sage communities, cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) intrusion is a common problem, due to grazing, fires, or recreation, and can cause a runaway cycle from increasingly frequent grass fires, if cheatgrass is left unchecked (Molvar et al. 2024).

Pinyon-Juniper Woodland

Approximately 210 acres of juniper habitat occurs in the planning area, primarily located downstream of American Falls Dam, as scattered tree cover. This ecosystem primarily occurs in warm, dry sites near mountain slopes, plateaus, and ridges. Tree species can consist of a mix of juniper or pine species but are primarily juniper species in the planning area. Understory species include shrub species, including low sagebrush (*Artemisia arbuscula*), black sagebrush (*A. nova*), basin big sagebrush, mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*), and bunchgrasses, including needle and thread grass (*Hesperostipa comata*), Idaho fescue, (*Festuca idahoensis*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), Great Basin wild rye, and Indian ricegrass.

Marshes and Wetlands

Aquatic and wetland habitats are the primary limiting resource for fish and wildlife species in the area surrounding American Falls Reservoir. Wetlands and marshes provide erosion control and fish and wildlife habitat; they also support water quality. Wetlands have the highest vegetation productivity in the landscape and provide key habitat types for herbivores. Their dense vegetation cover also provides key wildlife habitat. Wetlands north of American Falls Dam are the result of flooding from the Snake River, after construction of the dam. Arid freshwater marshes, typically found in shallow freshwater or brackish waterbodies, such as river floodplain depressions, support lush, dense herbaceous vegetation with species like woolly sedge (*Carex pellita*), bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), chairmakers bulrush (*Schoenoplectus americanus*), and canary grass (*Phalaris canariensis*).

Rooted vegetation can exist in up to 6.5 feet of open water. Vegetation may also include floating or partially to fully submerged species. These marshes are semi-permanently or seasonally flooded, relying on a consistent freshwater source to maintain their function. Soils are typically nutrient-rich muck or mineral soils, and these wetlands often occur along the borders of ponds, lakes, or reservoirs. Disturbed wetland habitats include wet meadows and marshes that have been overtaken by nonnative species due to human-induced disturbances such as heavy grazing, industrial activity, or land clearing. These habitats are often dominated by species like black bent (*Agrostis gigantea*), common reed (*Phragmites australis*), and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), with native species present in low abundance. These wetlands are typically found in floodplains or groundwater discharge sites and may be seasonally or permanently flooded. Due to disturbance, soils may be compacted, enriched, or depleted unnaturally, leading to a predominance of ruderal[9] species.

Riparian Areas

Approximately 530 acres within the planning area consist of riverine or riparian ecosystems. Riparian communities depend on annual flooding of riverine and lacustrine systems. They can be found occupying floodplains, sand and cobble bars, islands, and irrigation ditches. These ecosystems thrive in areas with permanent, intermittent, and ephemeral streams, as well as in backwater channels, floodplain swales, and irrigation ditches. Periodic flooding and sediment deposition are vital for

[9] A ruderal species is a plant species that is first to colonize disturbed lands. The disturbance may be natural (for example, from wildfires or avalanches) or the consequences of human activities, such as construction or agriculture.

regeneration, and the vegetation structure varies from herbaceous meadows to woody shrublands. These habitats depend on hydric soils and fluctuating water levels for persistence.

Vegetation types in these communities correspond with the Great Basin Foothill and Lower Montane Riparian Shrubland, composed of tree communities with varying dominant tree species and a highly diverse shrub component. Common tree species include box elder (*Acer negundo*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), narrowleaf cottonwood (*P. angustifolia*), Fremont cottonwood (*P. fremontii*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and blue spruce (*Picea pungens*). Shrub species include redosier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), skunkbush sumac (*Rhus trilobata*), willow (*Salix* spp.), silver buffaloberry (*Shepherdia argentea*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos* spp.), and river hawthorn (*Crataegus rivularis*).

Disturbances such as livestock grazing and land-use changes, such as logging or irrigation, can significantly alter riparian areas' composition, often leading to the dominance of nonnative and ruderal species. Disturbed or ruderal habitats in these regions often feature aggressive, nonnative species, including common reed, salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp.), and Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), which can outcompete native plants, especially when water availability or flooding patterns are altered. As these systems are impacted by human activity, they transition into ruderal zones, where once-productive wetlands or riparian ecosystems are now dominated by generalist species or invasive species, resulting in degraded ecological conditions.

Federally and State-Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

Vegetation communities have the potential to support federally and State-listed species of concern in the planning area. Two rare plant species have the potential to occur near the planning area, including one federally threatened species and one State-listed critically imperiled species (Reclamation GIS 2025). These species are listed in **Table 3-10, Federally and State-Listed Threatened and Endangered Plant Species**.

Table 3-10. Federally and State-Listed Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Global Rank[1]	State Rank[2]	Federal Status
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	G2G3	S3	Threatened
Xanthoparmelia lichen	*Xanthoparmelia norchlorochroa*	G1G2	S1	None

Sources: Reclamation GIS 2025; IDFG 2023

[1] Global Ranking: G1 = critically imperiled—At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often five or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors. G2 = imperiled—At high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations, steep declines, or other factors. G3 = vulnerable—At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations, recent and widespread declines, or other factors.

[2] State Ranking: S1 = critically imperiled—At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often five or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors. S3 = vulnerable—At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations, recent and widespread declines, or other factors.

Potential occurrence of these species is based on suitable habitat near the reservoir and does not indicate the species' presence in the planning area. For implementation of site-specific projects, field surveys would need to be carried out to determine species' occupancy in the planning area. IDFG's management of these species includes invasive species control, proper herbicide application, grazing rotations, and pasture management, to balance species of greatest conservation need (SGCN)

protections with livestock and agricultural operations (IDFG 2023). IDFG provides incentives for protective measures, such as targeted fencing and educational programs, which can help safeguard plant SGCN populations vulnerable to improper livestock management (IDFG 2023). Further descriptions of federally listed species are provided below.

Ute Ladies'-Tresses

Ute ladies'-tresses were federally listed as a threatened species in 1992 (USFWS 1992). No critical habitat has been designated. At the time of listing, fewer than 6,000 individuals were known across 11 populations in Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, with some populations lost due to urbanization, agriculture, and water diversion (USFWS 1992). In 2025, the USFWS proposed to remove the Ute ladies'-tresses from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Plants, citing a recovery of populations to the point of no longer requiring federal protections (USFWS 2025b).

This species is a perennial orchid that thrives in moist, silty loam soils at elevations of 4,300 to 7,000 feet in the Great Basin in wetlands, riparian areas, irrigation ditches, and reservoir edges (USFWS 1992). The species is mainly found in northern and northeastern Utah, with the potential to occur in the Great Basin region of southern Idaho. It prefers open riparian meadows over shaded woodland environments. This species has somewhat adapted to hydrologic changes from irrigation and grazing (USFWS 2025b). Flowering occurs from mid-July through October, with pollination primarily by bumblebees (*Bombus* spp.) and Anthophorans (*Anthophora* spp.) (Sipes and Tepedino 1995).

Despite the proposed de-listing, Ute ladies'-tresses still face threats at the population level, including from hydrologic modifications, habitat disturbance from recreation and construction, invasive species, herbicide misuse, rural development, pollinator decline, and improper livestock grazing (USFWS 2025b). The planning area contains habitat suitable for this species, but Ute ladies-tresses have not been identified by Reclamation biologists during surveys.

3.2.5 Fish and Wildlife

The ESA, as amended, requires Reclamation to ensure its activities do not harm the existence of endangered or threatened species, or adversely affect the species' critical habitats. This act mandates coordination with the Services as part of the Section 7 consultation process. The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act encourages the conservation of nongame fish and wildlife species and their habitats, promoting the use of conservation plans and programs. Reclamation regularly consults with the USFWS and IDFG to manage wildlife resources.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 prohibits the take of protected migratory bird species, ensuring their protection under US law. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (16 USC 668) prohibits take, possession, or disturbance of any eagle, as defined in 50 CFR 22.6.

Existing management for fish and wildlife resources provides direction to protect and enhance habitat values on Reclamation lands. Objectives include ensuring that livestock grazing does not harm existing habitats or slow recovery of damaged areas, promoting balanced habitat conservation and enhancement in land trade decisions, and protecting key species assemblages. Management objectives provide direction for coordinating with state and Tribal governments for managing native species. Finally, existing management provides direction for restoration of degraded habitats and maintenance of riparian and wetland habitats.

American Falls Reservoir and the planning area are home to numerous native aquatic and terrestrial wildlife species. These species include those that are stocked for hunting and fishing, as well as those that are native to the area, some of which are considered special status species or listed as threatened or endangered species under the ESA.

Native and Game Fish Species

American Falls Reservoir is a relatively shallow reservoir, and the water temperature tracks the ambient air temperature closer than deep-channel reservoirs would. There is also little stratification of water. Bathymetry[10] of the reservoir and irrigation drawdowns limit the persistence of a cold-water layer during the summer months. High water temperatures and a lack of cold-water refuge affect the survival of cold-water fish, like trout, and necessitate stocking to maintain these fisheries.

McTucker Ponds, located in the northern section of the planning area, is a popular angling destination. The stretch of the Snake River immediately downstream of the dam is another popular angling location. The IDFG is responsible for stocking the reservoir. Native and game fish species found in the reservoir include largemouth (*Micropterus nigricans*) and smallmouth (*M. dolomieu*) bass, black crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), cutthroat trout (*O. clarkii*), yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*), sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*), mountain whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*), bullhead (*Ameiurus melas*), and channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*).

Aquatic and Wetland Habitats

Idaho's expanding urban, suburban, and rural development affects aquatic vegetation and freshwater habitats, which are vital for water supply, recreation, and biodiversity. Key stressors include prolonged drought, changing precipitation patterns, pollutants from runoff and facility discharges, surface and groundwater diversions, and invasive species. These stressors impact SGCN and community water resources. State and federal agencies, including the Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Lands, and the US Army Corps of Engineers, regulate development near aquatic habitats through permitting and protective measures. The Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System also enforce water quality standards. Voluntary conservation actions include incentivizing landowners to conserve priority aquatic habitats, implementing sustainable diversion rates and aquifer recharge, improving stormwater management, designing projects to minimize impacts on SGCN while supporting community needs, enhancing erosion prevention, creating wetland buffers, and enhancing water treatment systems, providing technical assistance, and promoting conservation through outreach (IDFG 2023).

SGCN affected by development include the green sucker (*Pantosteus virescens*), mountain whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*), northern leatherside chub (*Snyderichthys copei*), Yellowstone cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*), and various aquatic waterfowl (IDFG 2023). Agriculture, aquaculture, and transportation infrastructure further impact aquatic habitats through water use and pollution. Conservation strategies focus on improving irrigation efficiency, controlling invasive species, mitigating runoff, and restoring shorelines.

[10] The measurement of water depth at various places in a waterbody

Terrestrial Wildlife

Wildlife habitat needs vary significantly by species. However, it is generally understood that healthy and sustainable wildlife populations can be supported where there is a diverse mix of vegetation communities that supply structure, forage, cover, and other specific habitat requirements. Sagebrush steppe habitat composes a majority of the vegetation surrounding American Falls Reservoir, supporting a wide variety of species, including big game, small mammals, birds, and reptile species.

Large mammals and big game species native to the area include mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus canadensis*), bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*), North American pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*), and moose (*Alces alces*). These species can be found year-round on lands surrounding the reservoir. Seasonal movements are influenced by forage availability and weather conditions, with pronghorn typically concentrating in areas with accessible water sources and adequate forage during the summer months.

A large diversity of birds are found throughout wetlands and riparian areas surrounding the reservoir. Some are year-round residents, while most are present seasonally and are considered migratory. Common raptor species include the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*). Migratory birds concentrate around wetland, marsh, and riparian corridors in the planning area, including McTucker Ponds, Springfield bottoms, and the Sterling WMA. Species include the northern pintail (*Anas acuta*), trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*), snow goose (*Anser caerulescens*), marbled godwit (*Limosa fedoa*), short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), American avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), long-billed dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*), and Bohemian waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*). Other migratory and nonmigratory bird species require upland habitat, such as sagebrush (*Artemisia* sp.) or juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*), including the sage thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*).

Small mammals, including the southern Idaho ground squirrel (*Urocitellus endemicus*), desert wood rat (*Neotoma lepida*), and pygmy rabbit (*Brachylagus idahoensis*), are also found throughout the planning area. The planning area provides habitat for a large number of bat species, including sensitive species such as the canyon bat (*Parastrellus hesperus*), the long-legged myotis (*Myotis volans*), the pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), and the Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) (Reclamation GIS 2025).

Reptiles and amphibians are also prevalent in much of the sagebrush steppe and grasslands of the planning area. The Great Basin rattlesnake (*Crotalus oreganus lutosus*), Great Basin fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis longipes*), and western toad (*Bufo boreas*) are a few of the herptiles that are present in the planning area.

Idaho's recreational hunting, fishing, and trapping traditions play an important role in both the state's outdoor heritage and economy. The Idaho Fish and Game Commission establishes regulations for managing wildlife harvests, with the IDFG overseeing the harvests' implementation. The IDFG's overarching strategic goals focus on conserving native species and their habitats, enhancing recreational opportunities, expanding public engagement, and improving agency capabilities (IDFG 2023).

Management actions for sustaining Idaho's wildlife include maintaining game populations to meet recreational demand, ensuring the long-term survival of native species, increasing habitat capacity, and mitigating disease impacts on wildlife, livestock, and humans (IDFG 2023). Efforts also support

diverse and accessible recreational opportunities by sustaining fish and wildlife recreation on public lands, improving landowner cooperation for private land access, and promoting ethical hunting and wildlife appreciation.

Special Status Wildlife

On the lands it administers in the planning area, Reclamation is directly responsible for managing habitat for special status species and is responsible for the health of special status species that these habitats support. These species are animals and plants that require specific management attention because of population or habitat concerns. Special status species are federally threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species, as well as species designated as SGCN by the IDFG.

To be considered for Idaho's State Wildlife Action Plan, species must be native, regularly occurring, reliably reported, and currently present in the state. Additionally, they must meet at least one criterion related to conservation status, such as being listed under the ESA, classified as imperiled or vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List, or showing significant population declines. The State Wildlife Action Plan species are categorized as SGCN if they are at risk due to known stressors, and conservation actions can be identified; they are categorized as species of greatest information need if they are potentially at risk but lack sufficient data on taxonomy, distribution, or ecology. Further evaluations consider species-specific attributes that may warrant inclusion on the State Wildlife Action Plan.

The planning area contains habitat suitable for many wildlife species that are listed as IDFG SGCN (**Table 3-11, IDFG Species of Greatest Conservation and Information Need**). These species are either found in the planning area, likely to be found in the planning area, or have historical or suitable habitat within the planning area.

Table 3-11. IDFG Species of Greatest Conservation and Information Need

Taxa	Common Name	Scientific Name	Global Rank*	State Rank**
Amphibians	Great Basin spadefoot	*Spea intermontana*	G5	S3
Amphibians	Northern leopard frog	*Lithobates pipiens*	G5	S2
Amphibians	Western toad	*Anaxyrus boreas*	G5	S3
Birds	American bittern	*Botaurus lentiginosus*	G5	S1B
Birds	American white pelican	*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*	G4	S3B
Birds	Bobolink	*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*	G5	S2B
Birds	Brewer's sparrow	*Spizella breweri*	G5	S3B
Birds	Burrowing owl	*Athene cunicularia*	G4	S2B
Birds	California gull	*Larus californicus*	G5	S2B, S5N
Birds	Caspian tern	*Hydroprogne caspia*	G5	S1B
Birds	Cassin's finch	*Haemorhous cassinii*	G5	S3
Birds	Cinnamon teal	*Anas cyanoptera*	G5	S3B
Birds	Clark's grebe	*Aechmophorus clarkii*	G5	S2B
Birds	Eared grebe	*Podiceps nigricollis*	G5	S3B, S3N
Birds	Evening grosbeak	*Coccothraustes vespertinus*	G5	S4
Birds	Ferruginous hawk	*Buteo regalis*	G5	S3B
Birds	Franklin's gull	*Leucophaeus pipixcan*	G5	S2B
Birds	Golden eagle	*Aquila chrysaetos*	G5	S3

Taxa	Common Name	Scientific Name	Global Rank*	State Rank**
Birds	Grasshopper sparrow	*Ammodramus savannarum*	G5	S3B
Birds	Lewis's woodpecker	*Melanerpes lewis*	G4	S3B
Birds	Loggerhead shrike	*Lanius ludovicianus*	G4	S3
Birds	Long-billed curlew	*Numenius americanus*	G5	S2B
Birds	Northern pintail	*Anas acuta*	G5	S3B, S3N
Birds	Pinyon jay	*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*	G3	S2
Birds	Ring-billed gull	*Larus delawarensis*	G5	S3B, S3N
Birds	Sage thrasher	*Oreoscoptes montanus*	G4	S3B
Birds	Sagebrush sparrow	*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*	G5	S2B
Birds	Sandhill crane	*Grus canadensis*	G5	S3B
Birds	Sharp-tailed grouse	*Tympanuchus phasianellus*	G5	S3
Birds	Short-eared owl	*Asio flammeus*	G5	S3
Birds	Trumpeter swan	*Cygnus buccinator*	G4	S1B, S4N
Birds	Western grebe	*Aechmophorus occidentalis*	G5	S2B
Birds	White-faced ibis	*Plegadis chihi*	G5	S3B
Birds	Yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus*	G5	S1B
Fish	Green sucker	*Pantosteus virescens*	GNR	S3
Fish	Mountain whitefish	*Prosopium williamsoni*	G5	S3
Fish	Northern leatherside chub	*Snyderichthys copei*	G2	S3
Fish	Yellowstone cutthroat trout	*Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*	G5, T4	S3
Invertebrates	Blind cave leiodid beetle	*Glacicavicola bathyscioides*	G1, G3	S1
Invertebrates	Idaho dune tiger beetle	*Cicindela arenicola*	G4, G5, TNR	S1, S2
Invertebrates	Idaho lava tube millipede	*Idagona westcotti*	G1, G2	S1
Invertebrates	Morrison's bumblebee	*Bombus morrisoni*	G3	S2
Invertebrates	Pilose crayfish	*Pacifastacus gambelii*	G4, G5	S2
Invertebrates	Suckley's cuckoo bumblebee	*Bombus suckleyi*	G2, G3	S1
Invertebrates	Western pearlshell	*Margaritifera falcata*	G5	S2
Invertebrates	Western ridged mussel	*Gonidea angulata*	G3	S3
Invertebrates	Yellow bumblebee	*Bombus fervidus*	G3, G4	S3
Mammals	Big brown bat	*Eptesicus fuscus*	G5	S3
Mammals	Canyon bat	*Parastrellus hesperus*	G5	S3
Mammals	Kit fox	*Vulpes macrotis*	G4	S2
Mammals	Little brown myotis	*Myotis lucifugus*	G3	S3
Mammals	Long-eared myotis	*Myotis evotis*	G5	S3
Mammals	Long-legged myotis	*Myotis volans*	G4, G5	S3
Mammals	Pallid bat	*Antrozous pallidus*	G4	S3
Mammals	Pronghorn	*Antilocapra americana*	G5	S3
Mammals	Pygmy rabbit	*Brachylagus idahoensis*	G4	S3
Mammals	Silver-haired bat	*Lasionycteris noctivagans*	G3, G4	S3
Mammals	Townsend's big-eared bat	*Corynorhinus townsendii*	G4	S3
Mammals	Western small-footed myotis	*Myotis ciliolabrum*	G5	S3

Taxa	Common Name	Scientific Name	Global Rank*	State Rank**
Mammals	Western spotted skunk	*Spilogale gracilis*	G5	S3
Mammals	Wyoming ground squirrel	*Urocitellus elegans*	G4, T4	S2
Mammals	Yuma myotis	*Myotis yumanensis*	G5	S3
Reptiles	Common garter snake	*Thamnophis sirtalis*	G5	S3
Reptiles	Desert horned lizard	*Phrynosoma platyrhinos*	G5	S3
Reptiles	Pygmy short-horned lizard	*Phrynosoma douglasii*	G5	S3

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

* Global Ranking: G1 = critically imperiled—At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often five or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors. G2 = imperiled—At high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations, steep declines, or other factors. G3 = vulnerable—At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations, recent and widespread declines, or other factors. G4 = apparently secure—Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. G5 = secure—At very low risk or extinction or collapse due to a very extensive range, abundant populations or occurrences, and little to no concern from declines or threats. GNR = Unranked — Global rank not yet assessed.

Infraspecific Taxon (trinomial) — The status of infraspecific taxa (subspecies or varieties) are indicated by a "T-rank" following the species' global rank. T4 = apparently secure—Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. TNR = Unranked— Taxon rank not yet assessed.

** State Ranking: S1 = critically imperiled—At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often five or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors. S2 = imperiled—At high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations, steep declines, or other factors. S3 = vulnerable—At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations, recent and widespread declines, or other factors. S4 = apparently secure—Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. S5 = secure—At very low risk or extinction or collapse due to a very extensive range, abundant populations or occurrences, and little to no concern from declines or threats.

*** B = Breeding—Species is regularly found in the state and present during its breeding season. N = Nonbreeding—Species is regularly present in the state but does not breed there.

Endangered or threatened species are those that the Secretary of the Interior has officially listed under the ESA. Proposed species are those that the Secretary has officially proposed for listing as endangered or threatened. Candidate species are those that the USFWS has designated as candidates for listing, indicating that existing information supports listing the species, but other species have higher priority for listing.

There are three species that are listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered that have the potential to occur in the planning area. These species and their associated habitats are detailed in **Table 3-12, Federally Listed Species**, and discussed further below.

Table 3-12. Federally Listed Species

Taxa	Common Name	Scientific Name	Status (Federal)*
Birds	Yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus*	FT
Invertebrates	Monarch butterfly	*Danaus plexippus*	PT
Invertebrates	Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee	*Bombus suckleyi*	PE

Source: USFWS 2025a

* FT = federal threatened; PT = proposed threatened under the ESA; PE = proposed endangered

Yellow-Billed Cuckoo (Coccyzus americanus)

The western distinct population segment of the yellow-billed cuckoo was listed as federally threatened under the ESA in 2014 due to habitat loss and fragmentation, as well as other factors like

climate change and pesticide exposure (Reclamation 2017). The species migrates between its wintering grounds in Central and South America and breeding areas in western North America, primarily nesting in riparian woodlands dominated by cottonwood and willow (Reclamation 2017). Although data indicate yellow-billed cuckoos' historical nesting and breeding range extend through Idaho, current populations are believed to be small, with estimates of under 40 breeding pairs occupying habitat in riparian corridors along the Snake River annually (Reclamation 2017).

The species faces ongoing threats from altered hydrology, invasive species, and habitat degradation, leading to continued population declines, with an estimated 1,300 breeding pairs remaining (USFWS 2019). The planning area contains 9,294 acres of critical habitat north of the reservoir in the McTucker Bottoms WMA (**Figure 3-6**); Reclamation manages 1,598 acres of this habitat. Reclamation and the US Army Corp of Engineers performed 22 surveys along the Snake River during 2014 and 2015, with five vocalization detections indicating the presence of three individuals (Reclamation 2017).

Monarch Butterfly (Danaus plexippus)

On December 10, 2024, the USFWS announced that the monarch butterfly would be proposed as a threatened species. The monarch butterfly requires specific habitat for breeding, migration, and overwintering. Breeding habitat includes milkweed plants (*Asclepias* spp.) and nectar plants, while overwintering habitat includes oyamel fir trees (*Abies religiosa*) in the highlands of central Mexico (USFWS 2024a). The monarch butterfly faces a number of threats throughout its range, including habitat loss, climate change, pesticides, and disease. Milkweed plants, which are essential for breeding, have declined due to habitat loss and herbicide use in agricultural and urban areas. Climate change has also impacted the monarch butterfly, affecting the timing of migration and the availability of suitable habitat. Pesticide use can also impact the monarch butterfly and its habitat and expose the species to disease (USFWS 2024a).

The western North American population has a much higher risk of extinction due to current threats than the eastern North American population. At the current and projected population numbers, both the eastern and western populations have become more vulnerable to catastrophic events (for example, extreme storms at the overwintering habitat).

Also, under different climate change scenarios, the number of days and the area in which monarch butterflies will be exposed to unsuitably high temperatures within their migration and breeding habitats will increase markedly (USFWS 2024a). The species has been documented throughout the planning area, and breeding is known to occur from approximately June through October. There is no designated or proposed critical habitat for this species in the planning area.

Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee (Bombus suckleyi)

On December 17, 2024, the USFWS announced in the *Federal Register* that the Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee was proposed for listing as endangered under the ESA due to host species decline, pathogens, pesticides, habitat fragmentation, and climate change (USFWS 2024b). A parasitic species within the genus *Bombus*, it lacks pollen-collecting structures and relies on host bumble bees, particularly the western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*) and the Nevada bumble bee (*Bombus nevadensis*), to raise its offspring (Lhomme and Hines 2018). Its range spans western and central North America, though sightings are rare, and its population has declined significantly, with the probability of occupancy dropping from 0.65 historically to 0.13 between 2000 and 2020 (USFWS 2024b).

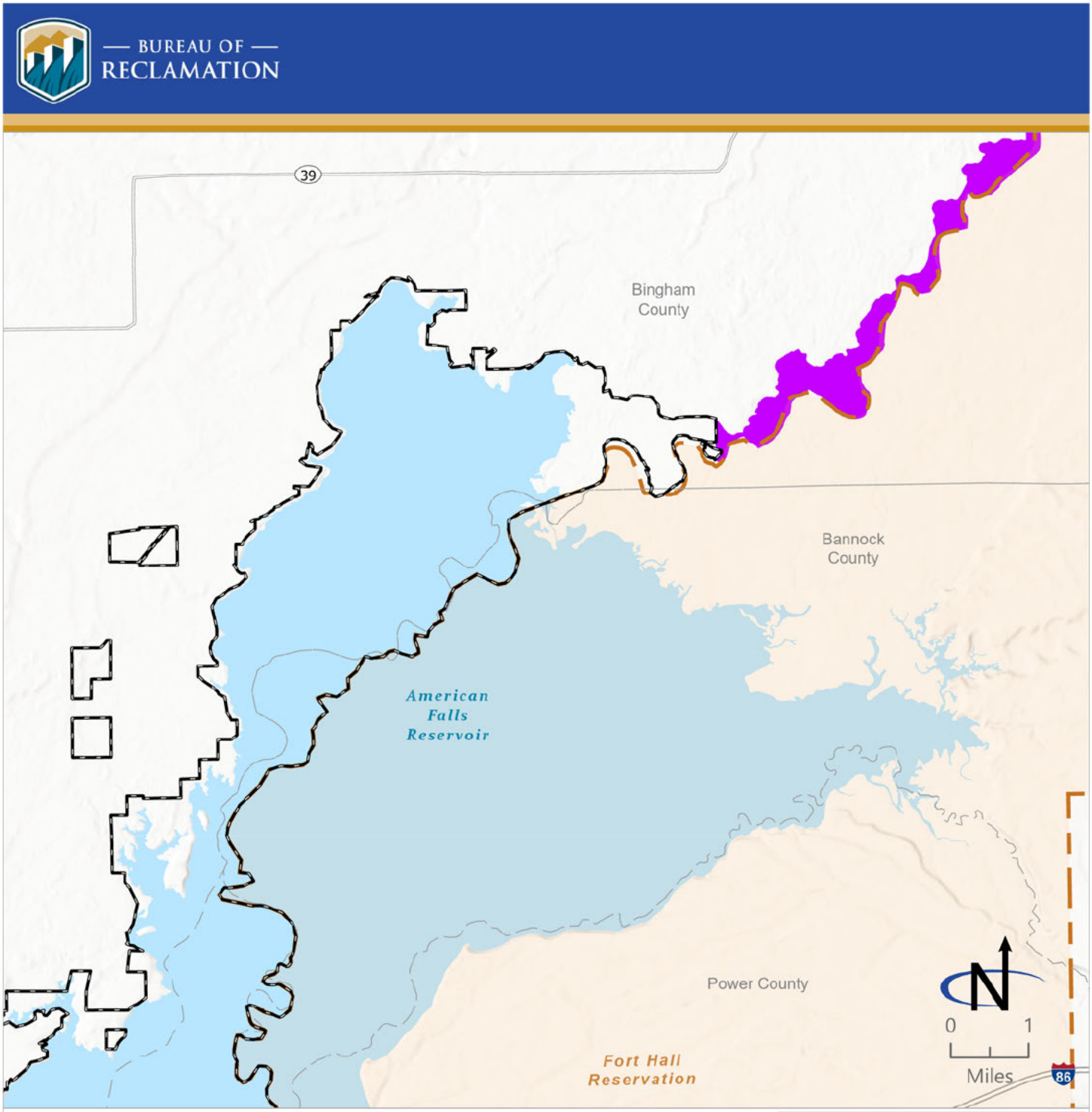
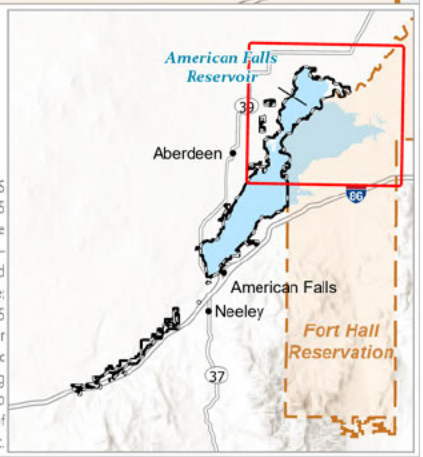


Figure 3-6
Critical Habitat

Yellow-billed cuckoo critical habitat

Planning area



Source: Reclamation GIS 2024; USFWS GIS 2025
Map production: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region, Upper Snake Field Office;
Date: September 25, 2025
Disclaimer: This map is intended for informational purposes only. Geographic features may have been compiled at varying scales and for different purposes. No representation is made as to the accuracy of this graphic.

The species requires diverse floral resources, suitable overwintering sites, and healthy host populations to persist. While its critical habitat has not been designated, potential habitat exists within lands surrounding American Falls Reservoir, particularly in ruderal flooded and swamp forest and woodland communities, though the species has not been documented there by the IDFG or Reclamation surveys (USFWS 2025a; IDFG 2023).

Birds of Conservation Concern

The planning area is in Bird Conservation Region 9, the Great Basin region, which encapsulates the entire planning area. The USFWS lists 25 birds of conservation concern that have the potential to occur in the planning area; the USFWS has identified these species as needing special conservation actions (**Table 3-13, Birds of Conservation Concern**; USFWS 2025a).

Table 3-13. Birds of Conservation Concern

Species Name	Scientific Name	Breeding Status*
American avocet	*Recurvirostra americana*	B
American white pelican	*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*	B
Bald eagle	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	B
Black tern	*Chlidonias niger*	B
Broad-tailed hummingbird	*Selasphorus platycercus*	B
California gull	*Larus californicus*	B
Cassin's finch	*Haemorhous cassinii*	B
Clark's grebe	*Aechmophorus clarkii*	B
Evening grosbeak	*Coccothraustes vespertinus*	B
Flammulated owl	*Psiloscops flammeolus*	B
Forster's tern	*Sterna forsteri*	B
Franklin's gull	*Leucophaeus pipixcan*	B
Golden eagle	*Aquila chrysaetos*	B
Lesser yellowlegs	*Tringa flavipes*	N
Lewis's woodpecker	*Melanerpes lewis*	B
Long-eared owl	*Asio otus*	B
Marbled godwit	*Limosa fedoa*	N
Northern harrier	*Circus hudsonius*	B
Olive-sided flycatcher	*Contopus cooperi*	B
Pectoral sandpiper	*Calidris melanotos*	N
Rufous hummingbird	*Selasphorus rufus*	B
Sage thrasher	*Oreoscoptes montanus*	B
Virginia's warbler	*Leiothlypis virginiae*	B
Western grebe	*Aechmophorus occidentals*	B
Willet	*Tringa semipalmata*	B

Source: USFWS 2025a

* "B" indicates the species breeds within the Great Basin Bird Conservation Region; "N" indicates the species breeds elsewhere.

Future Trends for Terrestrial and Special Status Wildlife

Desert and semidesert habitats in Idaho support economic activities like ranching and mining while providing recreational opportunities and open space, especially on public lands. When managed

adaptively, grazing supports rangeland health, but historical overgrazing, invasive plant species, and nonnative forage management have altered the native vegetation. These past uses and issues, combined with modern stressors like prolonged drought, shifting precipitation patterns, invasive species, and altered wildfire regimes, continue to impact ecosystem productivity and SGCN such as the pygmy rabbit, burrowing owl, and Nevada bumblebee (IDFG 2023). Unnatural wildfire cycles and cheatgrass infestations have significantly altered sagebrush steppe ecosystems, impacting both wildlife and human communities by increasing wildfire risks, especially in expanding wildland-urban interfaces (IDFG 2023).

To mitigate these effects, conservation efforts aim to balance agricultural productivity with wildlife needs through actions such as invasive species control, rangeland restoration, strategic grazing practices, and wildfire risk reduction. Additionally, improving fence design and placement can reduce negative impacts on SGCN migration and survival (IDFG 2023).

3.2.6 Invasive Species (Vegetation and Wildlife)

The 1995 RMP does not contain any management direction for invasive wildlife species. Under the 1995 RMP, there is no specific invasive species section; however, noxious weeds, a subset of invasive plant species, are referenced under **Section 3.2.4, Vegetation**. Noxious weed management in the planning area is managed under federal legislation, including the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act of 1947, as amended; the Carson-Foley Act of 1968; the Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, as amended; and the Plant Protection Act of 2000. These authorize and direct Reclamation to implement weed management and to coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies on the management of noxious weeds and invasive plants.

Management objectives provide direction for coordinating with state and Tribal governments for managing native species and private contractors for noxious weed control. Existing management provides direction for restoration of degraded habitats and maintenance of riparian and wetland habitats.

An invasive species is a nonnative species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human, animal, or plant health. The intentional or unintentional introduction and establishment of invasive species to the planning area can pose a significant threat to native plant and animal communities. Invasive species can lead to the extinction of native plants and animals, destroy biodiversity, and permanently alter habitats.

Noxious Weeds

Invasive plants are nonnative species that have been introduced into an environment in which they did not evolve. Noxious weeds, a subset of invasive plants, are designated and regulated by state and federal laws because they are known to be detrimental to agriculture, commerce, natural resources, and public health.

Reclamation uses an integrated pest management approach to control noxious weeds and invasive plants. This approach includes multiple methods, such as chemical, mechanical, and biological control on all undeveloped lands within the Upper Snake Field Office's administrative boundaries that are located in Power County, Idaho. Currently, Reclamation has neither the personnel nor the equipment to successfully conduct noxious weed and invasive plant treatments for its undeveloped lands.

The portions of the planning area that are most vulnerable to infestation by noxious weeds include roadsides, camping areas, fishing access areas, and the reservoir shoreline. Noxious weeds frequently infest roadsides because vehicles help disperse seeds over large geographical areas. All-terrain vehicle travel, fishing and hunting access, and other recreational activities may also promote the spread of noxious species by disturbing existing vegetation and by helping to disperse seeds. Persons walking through undisturbed or otherwise sensitive habitats can facilitate the spread of species, including, but not limited to, cheatgrass, poison hemlock (*Conium* spp.), creeping thistle, hoary cress (*Lepidium draba*), and perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*). Dogs may spread species such as houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) and thistle by carrying seeds in their fur. Fluctuating water levels along shorelines are vulnerable to salt cedar and Russian olive infestation.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Numerous aquatic invasive species occurring across the planning area have been implicated in the decline of populations of native species. The adverse effects of invasive species (for example, disruption of ecological processes, competition with native species for resources, and reduction of biological diversity) have been well-documented (Mack and D'Antonio 1998). Aquatic systems and associated biotic communities are susceptible to introduced species' colonization due to widespread alterations in the hydrologic regime, community composition, and other human-induced habitat alterations. Multiple pathways have provided for and continue to provide for dispersal of aquatic invasive organisms. These pathways include releases by individuals seeking to establish a food or sport resource; aquarium trade; use as bait or forage; organisms that were introduced for food, fur, or sport that subsequently escaped or were intentionally released; pest or biocontrol; erosion control; introductions by agencies for game enhancement; and dispersal from naturalized populations.

In September 2023, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture confirmed the presence of quagga mussel veligers[11] in the Snake River south of the planning area (near Twin Falls, Idaho), marking the first rapid response plan for quagga mussels in Idaho. The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has since implemented an aggressive treatment plan and monitored the river, conducting over 300 samples in 2024, and confirmed a small number of adult quagga mussels in the Twin Falls area on September 24, 2024. The mussels pose a significant threat to Idaho's water infrastructure, wildlife, and economy, with the potential to cost hundreds of millions if left untreated (ISDA 2023).

3.2.7 Cultural Resources

The existing management treats paleontological resource management as one aspect under cultural resources-specific management, while paleontological resources are dealt with as a distinct resource under this revised RMP. There are multiple laws that pertain specifically to the management of cultural and paleontological resources. For cultural resources, these laws include the Antiquities Act of 1906, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA). Federal agencies must also consider other regulatory and policy authorities in managing cultural resources, such as those contained within the DOI Departmental Manual (DOI 2024) and Reclamation Manual LND P01 (Reclamation 2011).

[11] A veliger is a larval mollusk in the stage when it has developed the velum.

The Antiquities Act of 1906, as well as the DOI and Reclamation-specific manuals cited above, also apply to paleontological resources management. Reclamation manages paleontological resources in accordance with the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (Subtitle D of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009) and recent DOI rulemaking on casual collection (43 CFR 49.810).

The term "historic and cultural properties" refers to archaeological and historic built-environment sites, structures, objects, and districts, as well as sacred sites, natural resources, and other resources of Tribal or other special interest group concern. NEPA requires a consideration of "important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage" (42 USC 4331(b)(4)). This includes the necessity of independent compliance with the applicable procedures and requirements of other federal and state laws, regulations, and executive orders.

The principal federal law addressing cultural resources is the NHPA, as amended (16 USC 470a et seq.) and its implementing regulations found at 36 CFR 800. These regulations, commonly referred to as the Section 106 process, describe the procedures for identifying and evaluating historic properties, for assessing the impacts of federal actions on historic properties, and for project proponents consulting with appropriate agencies to avoid, reduce, or minimize adverse effects. The term "historic properties" refers to cultural resources that meet specific criteria for inclusion on the NRHP.

Cultural resources and historic properties also include traditional cultural places (TCPs). These are buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts eligible for inclusion on the NRHP because of their association with the cultural beliefs, customs, or practices of a living community that are rooted in the community's history and are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community (NPS 2024a). Places that are not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP may still receive protections as sacred sites under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 or Executive Order 13007 (refer to **Section 3.4.1, Tribal Interests**).

Culture History Overview

Evidence for precontact occupation in southern Idaho stretches back to the Paleo-Indian period (14,500 to 7000 before the present [BP]). The information presented in this section draws on a variety of research and synthesis by others, particularly the cultural contexts developed as part of the cultural and paleontological inventory of the Snake River plain (Bruder et al. 1999). The earliest evidence of human activity in the area is at Wilson Butte Cave, where modified chipped bone and stone artifacts have been recovered (Gruhn 1961). The region would have been affected by glaciation around this Paleo-Indian period, with paleoenvironmental evidence of pine at low- and mid-elevation sites indicating a cooler and moister climate. This environment sustained a variety of fauna, including mammoths, camels, and extinct species of bison and horse (Davis et al. 1986).

The earliest technological style is represented by the fluted, lanceolate Clovis point. Clovis points have been discovered in the vicinity of American Falls, including at Bannock Creek. These points do not have datable contexts, but the style was generally used between 11,000 and 11,500 BP across North America. The style indicates that the primary subsistence resource during the Paleo-Indian period was large game. Climatic warming around 11,500 BP led to dramatic changes in flora and fauna. Pollen analysis reveals a decline in pine and an increase in chenopod and shrub vegetation. Vegetal changes likely resulted in the extinction of certain mammals, including elephant, camel, horse, and bison species. The Plano style of point became popular during this time of

paleoenvironmental change and was likely used to hunt large game, such as certain bison species (Davis et al. 1986; Franzen 1981, 223).

During the Early Archaic period (7000 to 4500 BP), climatic conditions were warmer and drier than they are currently, and modern forms of fauna began to appear. Like the previous period, human populations were highly mobile and subsisted primarily on large game. Diets were likely becoming more diverse, however, and may have consisted of both large and small mammals, as well as a variety of plant foods. Technological forms shifted at this time, as stemmed and notched projectile points were increasingly used. Early styles include northern side-notched (Bitterroot) and stemmed-indented base Pinto series points.

The Middle Archaic period (4500 BP to 1300 BP) witnessed a diversification of projectile point styles and the possible appearance of earth ovens. The introduction of the bow and arrow in 1650 BP is suggested from changes in projectile point shape and likely became the main weapon system by 1300 BP (Franzen 1981). The Midvale Complex also developed at this time. It is a cultural unit defined by its distinctive large side-notched Cascade and "turkey tail" projectile points. Also, a variety of scrapers, choppers, preforms, gravers, drills, and ground-stone implements were developed at this time. The Midvale Complex is defined by multiple sites along the Weiser River near Midvale, Idaho. These sites indicate the prevalence of various activities, including quarrying, tool manufacturing, hunting, and food processing. The Midvale Complex is also associated with house pit structures, complex fishing technology, and formalized cemeteries. These formalized cemeteries are linked to the Western Idaho Burial Complex and characterized by burials and elaborate burial goods. The archaeological remains indicate a move toward sedentism as populations exploited root crops and salmon more intensively.

The Late Archaic period (1300 to 300 BP) witnessed the introduction of ceramics and small corner-notched, side-notched, and tri-notched projectile points. Hunter-gatherer culture continued to persist. Changes are seen in the increasing number of sites, which either indicates an increase in population or an increase in the intensity of use of the Eastern Snake River Plain (Franzen 1981, 225). The archaeological record also indicates a cultural diversity that may be a result of higher mobility, cultural interaction, and trade. Franzen (1981) and Bruder et al. (1999) believe the presence of Fremont ceramics may represent trade, for example, rather than the adoption of Fremont culture, which is characterized by horticulture and a semisedentary lifeway (Franzen 1981, 225).

The introduction of the horse impacted aboriginal settlement and subsistence patterns in the Protohistoric-Historic period (300 to 150 BP). Ethnographic studies indicate that the arrival of the horse in the region made Native groups even more mobile as they ranged across the Great Basin, the Columbia River Plateau, and the Great Plains. Movements varied from year to year, likely due to resource availability or sociopolitical events. Horses became an important symbol of social status, contributing to increased social stratification and conflict. Excavations in the early 1990s along American Falls Reservoir's southeast shore uncovered evidence of four sites that were likely occupied by Numic groups during the late precontact period. In the 1960s, Swanson (1963) also observed the remains of two Native American village sites with associated surface finds eroding from the bluff.

During the 1800s, the first European explorers and fur trappers entered southern Idaho, initiating the Historic period. The region's first European explorer was John Colter who was a member of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804–1806 (Franzen 1981). In 1806, Colter received permission to

leave the party and spend the winter with two trappers around Yellowstone. Colter left them in 1807 and spent the next few years trapping and exploring alone (Franzen 1981; Fiori 1981, 115–117). In 1810, Andrew Henry, the captain of a fur company, established Fort Henry near Henrys Lake. Although several log structures were built, the party departed for St. Louis by the spring of 1811 (Franzen 1981; Fiori 1981, 115–117).

In the following fall, an expedition led by Wison Price Hunt arrived at Fort Henry. This overland party was sponsored by John Jacob Astor, a wealthy and prominent fur dealer, who desired to establish a trading post on the Pacific coast. He dispatched two expeditions from St. Louis to go by land and sea. The "Overland Astorians" stopped at Fort Henry to build canoes before continuing downstream. They camped for a time at American Falls and eventually abandoned their boats. After much hardship, they reached Fort Astoria, which had been established by Astor's seafaring expedition (Franzen 1981; Fiori 1981, 115-191; Conley 1982, 261).

Members of the Astorian expedition began their return journey in the summer of 1812. Part of their route across southern Idaho later became the Oregon Trail. The Oregon Trail originated as a precontact route. It was developed by fur trappers and later became an important route for emigration (Fiori 1981, 118–119). Travelers to the region between 1840 and 1860 were mostly bound for Oregon or California. Some of them left descriptions of American Falls in their travelogues.

During the 19th century, mining and mineral extraction were popular industries. American Falls was one of three areas of significant mining in southeastern Idaho. Gold was discovered here in the 1870s. A mining camp called Bonanza Bar was consequently established on the north bank of the Snake River, just to the west of American Falls (Fiori 1981, 141–142; Franzen 1981, 226). The main industry during this period, however, was stock raising. The first products were cattle and sheep, although hogs, dairies, and raising poultry became more popular at a later date. Idaho's cattle industry was developed out of Fort Hall. As a key location on the Oregon Trail, it served as a supply station for missionaries and emigrants who brought cattle and sheep with them. There was good grazing in the area and traders had a variety of potential customers, including Native American Tribes, Oregon Trail emigrants, and members of mining camps (Fiori 1981, 144–147).

In the 1840s and 1850s, the US government established military posts along major emigration routes. The US Army's Fort Hall was established in 1870 to oversee the Native Americans residing on the nearby reservation of the same name. The fort was made redundant in 1883 when a railroad was constructed, allowing troops to be deployed from Utah (Fiori 1981, 175–178; NPS 1971, 138; Conley 1982, 513). Some members of the Hudson's Bay Company stayed and became farmers in the area. Mormon pioneers established the first permanent settlements in southeastern Idaho, starting at Franklin in 1860 (Fiori 1981, 148).

President Lincoln signed the Homestead Act in 1862, initiating the Homestead era (1860s–1870s). By 1880, many settlements had been established in Cassia, Bear Lake, and Oneida Counties. This was followed by settlement along the upper Snake River Valley in 1882 (Fiori 1981, 148–149).

Settlement was aided by developments in communication and transportation. Telegraph lines, Pony Express routes, and stagecoach lines were established. Freight and stagecoach roads passed through American Falls and helped channel gold seekers to discoveries across Idaho. The mining industry

encouraged the growth of the transportation industry and contributed to the creation of the First Idaho Territorial Legislature (Fiori 1981, 163, 149, 159–160).

Mining communities were also supported by a growing number of farmers. By 1880, Mormon settlers had established a variety of dairies, flour mills, and woolen mills and were early proponents of irrigation technology (Fiori 1981, 150). The area became more ethnically diverse with the arrival of Mexican, Japanese, German, Russian, French Canadian, Greek, Basque, and African American settlers, who arrived as railway and agricultural employees.

Towns were largely established to support settlers in outlying areas. Some of the first stores were established in the 1860s at Rock Creek, Eagle Rock, Preston, Marsh Valley, Malad, and American Falls. Other towns developed due to the arrival of the railroad or Reclamation projects. For example, Aberdeen was founded by the American Falls Canal and Power Company in 1908 (Fiori 1981, 68, 156; Conley 1982, 265).

The 1893 depression severely affected the agricultural industry in Idaho, but its recovery was assisted by the Carey Act of 1894–5 and the Reclamation Act of 1902 (Fiori 1981, 152). One of the largest population booms occurred as a result of the construction projects created to support irrigated agriculture. The Carey Act permitted the sale of public lands to fund private irrigation development. Carey Act projects in Idaho included the Aberdeen-Springfield Canal proposed by the American Falls Canal and Power Company, the Marysville Canal Company near Ashton in Fremont County, the Portneuf Marsh Valley Irrigation Company's reservoir near Chesterfield and Downey, and the Twin Falls Land and Water Company project. Although successful in southern Idaho, most Carey Act projects across the US failed due to personnel and resource limitations (Fiori 1981, 152–153). As a response, Congress passed the Reclamation Act, which funded new irrigation storage reservoirs and distribution systems. The goal was to make the arid and semiarid public lands in the West more productive.

The US Reclamation Service (later the Bureau of Reclamation in 1923) was established to construct and manage these projects. Reclamation Act projects included the Minidoka Project/Lake Walcott Reservoir, the American Falls Project/American Falls Reservoir, the Milner-Gooding Canal system, the Fort Hall Irrigation Project, and the Palisades Project. Due to these projects, hydroelectric power was introduced in Idaho at an early date (Fiori 1981, 153; Conley 1982, 192).

American Falls Dam was completed in 1927 to help irrigate lands around Pocatello and north of the reservoir. The creation of the dam destroyed some paleontological and archaeological sites, including Fort Hall Bottoms. Fort Hall Bottoms was the center of 19th-century Northern Shoshoni settlement (Swanson 1963).

Sportsman's Park was created in 1941, reflecting the growing recreational amenities provided around the dam and reservoir. In this year, two private citizens named Clifford Wride and Cal Moser sought permission from Reclamation to build a boat ramp. Although supplies were scarce due to the Second World War, Wride used salvaged railroad rails from an abandoned mine in the Arco area for a ramp. This was later replaced by a cement boat access. Wride, Moser, and a group of five other individuals founded the Sportsman's Club, and from this the park was established. Wride served as chairman and oversaw many improvements to the park, including the installation of the pavilion (Reclamation 2024c).

Inventories

Beginning in the 1960s, multiple cultural resources surveys have been conducted in support of improving American Falls Dam and Reservoir with the most recent Class III inventory undertaken by Historical Research Associates between 2024 and 2025. Along with background and archival research, this most recent inventory has produced records of 481 cultural resources documented within the planning area. These resources include archaeological sites, built-environment resources, isolated finds, and the American Falls Archaeological District. Of these previously documented resources, 143 resources could not be relocated. This includes sites and isolates that may have been incorrectly plotted and are potentially subsumed within updated or newly recorded sites (Historical Research Associates 2025).

Cultural Resource Summary

Of the 338 newly documented and relocated cultural resources, 252 date to the precontact period, 60 are historic in age, 19 contain more than one temporal or cultural affiliation, and 7 are of unknown cultural or temporal affiliation. Four of the previously documented cultural resources within the Class III APE are currently listed in the NRHP; the American Falls Reservoir Flooded Townsite (NRHP reference 01001480), the Oregon Trail Historic District (NRHP reference 73000688), the American Falls East Shore Power Plants (NRHP reference 76000680), and the American Falls Archaeological District (NRHP reference 99000804). Numerous NRHP-listed resources are also present very close to the planning area, such as historic properties within the current American Falls townsite. Though the designated Oregon National Historic Trail route is within the planning area (NPS 2025), and associated resources are known nearby such as Register Rock within Massacre Rocks State Park, no surface expressions of the Oregon Trail have been identified in the planning area to date (NRHP 2025, Historical Research Associates 2025).

Of the 334 newly documented or relocated cultural resources in the planning area that are not currently listed in the NRHP, 165 are currently or have been previously recommended eligible for listing, and 166 are recommended ineligible. The remaining three unevaluated resources do not have sufficient data available to develop a complete evaluation at this time (Historical Research Associates 2025).

The condition of a cultural resource is influenced by many factors, including the nature of the resource as well as the natural and human-influenced processes at work in and around it. Accordingly, site condition varies widely across the planning area. Cultural resources inventories indicate that while cultural resources exist in a variety of conditions throughout the planning area for due to a variety of reasons (natural processes, public access, reservoir inundation, etc.), many sites in the planning area are known or suspected to contain intact buried deposits in addition to the surface components documented during pedestrian surveys (Bruder et al. 1999, Historical Research Associates 2025).

Traditional Cultural Places

Based on written documentation and consultation with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, the Tribes consider the cultural resources and surrounding landscape in the area downstream of the American Falls Dam (listed in the NRHP as the American Falls Archaeological District) a TCP (Bruder et al. 1999). Recommendations made regarding the respectful treatment of these resources (based on the results of ethnohistoric studies completed in the 1990's) include preservation and avoidance through enforced closure to vehicular access. The American Falls Archaeological District and the

surrounding area also contain individual cultural resource sites recognized as potential TCPs (Bruder et al. 1999).

Bruder et al. (1999) recommended that a downstream area be considered for listing on the NRHP as a district under Criteria A and C. Bruder et al. noted that "Shoshone-Bannock community representatives have stated that they view the entire downstream area as a traditional use area, and thus consider it significant for its cultural values. As we discuss in the following chapter, however, for a variety of reasons the Tribes have been unwilling to articulate their concerns from the perspective of the NHPA. Therefore, it is unclear whether or not a district nomination also should describe the downstream area as a traditional cultural property" (Bruder et al. 1999, 5-28, 6-1, 6-35 to 6-37).

3.2.8 Paleontological Resources

The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2009 defines a paleontological resource as any fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms preserved in the earth's crust that are of paleontological interest and provide information about the history of life on earth (16 USC 470); they are valuable and nonrenewable resources.

As described in **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**, a lack of resource-specific management direction in the 1995 RMP means that management of paleontological resources on Reclamation lands at American Falls Reservoir is provided for by adherence to the existing legal and regulatory framework. Since the development of the 1995 RMP, this regulatory environment has trended toward an increased emphasis on the study and preservation of paleontological resources on public lands. Specifically, the 2009 Paleontological Resources Preservation Act requires the US Secretary of the Interior to "manage and protect paleontological resources on federal land using scientific principles and expertise." Along with subsequent DOI rulemaking implementing the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (36 CFR 291.1), this demonstrates an ongoing trend toward greater understanding, appreciation, and protection in the federal management of these resources.

Ongoing bank stabilization efforts at the reservoir, such as riprap installation, function to cut down on resource deterioration. They also limit opportunities for exposure and discovery of new specimens due to erosion (Bruder et al. 1999, 7 –2).

Research History

The information gathered here is drawn from a great deal of research and synthesis by others, particularly the 1999 Class III cultural and paleontological resource inventory of Reclamation lands at American Falls (Bruder et al. 1999) as well as research and analysis on the known fossil localities documented in the American Falls Reservoir vertebrate paleontology collection curated at the Idaho Museum of Natural History (Stratton 2013).

Pleistocene-aged fluvial (stream and river-laid) deposits on the Eastern Snake River Plain, within which the planning area is located, have been recognized as containing fossils of interest for over 100 years, with the area around the town of American Falls being particularly rich in fossil resources. Since construction of American Falls Dam in the 1920s, erosion of sedimentary rock layers bordering the reservoir has exposed a stratigraphic sequence containing multiple fossil-rich layers (Bruder et al. 1999). These fossils have been studied by many researchers and appreciated by the

general public a great deal over the following decades, enough to earn the reservoir a reputation as a host to a highly diverse, productive, and important paleontological record (O'Connell 2015).

Research and curation of fossils from American Falls Reservoir are ongoing at the Idaho Museum of Natural History, host to one of the largest Pleistocene mammal fossil collections in North America. Around one-fifth of the collection, an estimated 12,000 specimens (Stratton 2013), have been sourced from American Falls Reservoir, where collaboration between researchers, recreationists, farmers, and federal land managers continues to contribute to a better understanding of the record of life on earth (O'Connell 2015).

Known Paleontological Resources

The sediments at American Falls Reservoir contain a large and well-studied North American Pleistocene fossil assemblage, which has been the subject of scientific study and interest since the late 1800s. The American Falls assemblage housed at the Idaho Museum of Natural History contains many of the largest and best-preserved fossil bison specimens in the world (Hopkins 1951), including specimens of all four known species of extinct North American bison (Huang 2018).

In addition to the remarkable preservation, abundance, and diversity of the paleontological resources at American Falls Reservoir, these resources also remain a valuable tool for scientific research. This includes work such as the three-dimensional fossil scans and modeling made publicly available through the Bison Digitization Project (Idaho Virtual Museum 2025), genetic testing of dire wolf specimens from American Falls Reservoir (Perri et al. 2021), and research on the impressive variety of Pleistocene-aged trackways that have been found at the reservoir. The trackways found at American Falls Reservoir reflect the wide variety of the known fossil assemblage and may be further useful for studying the environment at the time of the trackways' creation and the lifestyle of the animals that made them (Idaho State University 2013).

The ages of specimens from around the reservoir span nearly 100,000 years. Specimens include pollen, plant macrofossils, invertebrates, and vertebrates, including Pleistocene megafauna such as ground sloths, bison, mammoth, mastodon, camel, horse, tiger, and lion. Two well-documented and fossil-rich strata, or layers of sediment, have produced many well-preserved late-Pleistocene vertebrate fossils. Fossils collected from the lower stratum are known as the American Falls local fauna, while fossils from the upper stratum have been described by various researchers as the Rainbow Beach, Dam, and Duck Point local faunas.

The lower stratum containing the American Falls local fauna consists of sand and gravel deposited by the ancestral Snake River and its major tributaries. The rich paleontological record attributed to the American Falls local fauna includes fish, turtles, frogs, birds, and a variety of mammal species. The American Falls local fauna is quantitatively dominated by extinct ungulates (bison, horse, and camel), ground sloths, mammoths, and mastodons. There are at least 40 fossil mammalian taxa (a group of one or more distinct populations such as a species or family of organisms) represented, including at least 14 species of carnivores. The age of the American Falls local fauna has been determined to be between 72,000 and 125,000 years BP (Bruder et al. 1999, 7 –18).

The upper stratum containing the Rainbow Beach, Dam, and Duck Point local faunas also consists of gravel and sand deposited by the ancestral Snake River. The fossil assemblage known from the upper stratum is not significantly different from that of the lower stratum, though it was observed that there are more small- and medium-sized taxa present in the upper stratum, potentially reflecting

differences in the natural processes at work producing fossils within them. It has been determined that the upper horizon was deposited approximately 21,000 to 33,000 years BP, corresponding roughly to the last phase of the Wisconsin glacial period (Bruder et al. 1999, 7 –19).

Localities are sites where paleontological specimens have been found. **Table 3-14, Paleontological Localities**, gives the number of localities known to exist within each American Falls Reservoir MU. It is important to note that while the number of known localities within a MU could be used as an indicator of the paleontological productivity and sensitivity of that unit, the MUs are not the same and the data represented by each locality are not equivalent. Some localities represent point, line, or shape data of varying sizes; in some cases, the data have questionable accuracy. Some localities represent single specimens while others represent multiple specimens or large areas (Stratton 2013).

Table 3-14. Paleontological Localities

Management Unit	Known Localities
MU 1 – Dam Site	2
MU 2 – West Boat Ramp	2
MU 3 – West Bank	35
MU 4 – Sterling WMA	6
MU 6 – Springfield	5
MU 7 – McTucker Ponds	1
MU 8 – Seagull Bay	30
MU 9 – Willow Bay	10
MU 10 – Old Town Site	4
MU 13 – Archaeological District	8
MU 14 – Inundation Zone	90

Source: Stratton 2013

3.2.9 Visual Resources

On federal lands, visual resources refer to the visible, natural and human-made elements that contribute to the scenic quality of a landscape. These resources include landforms, vegetation, water features, and any human modifications such as structures or infrastructure. The existing management framework considers visual resource management an integral component of the overall visitor experience. Management direction informs building and facility design, visitor education, trash collection, and scenic enjoyment. Visual resources are included as a concern in all management and development decisions. There are no laws that specifically pertain to visual resource management outside what is outlined in the 1995 RMP. Reclamation does not have a visual resources handbook or management guide.

A viewshed is the landscape that can be directly seen under favorable atmospheric conditions from a specific viewpoint along a transportation corridor. For the purposes of this RMP, each MU has its own viewshed. Reclamation does not have a manual or handbook for management of visual resources.

The landscape character of American Falls Reservoir and the land around its perimeter are wide and open, dominated by water and sky. Views extend for miles in all directions toward a distant, flat horizon. Views from the reservoir surface to the shore are limited by cliffs up to 40 feet high along

the west bank. At low water levels, the historic remnants of the original town of American Falls are visible within the Old Town Site (**Image 1**), which creates a unique cultural viewing opportunity. Riparian vegetation in the wetlands and riparian areas throughout the bottomlands at the reservoir's northeast end in McTucker Ponds is dominant, but elsewhere there is little vegetation except for a narrow strip at the base of the cliffs. In general, the landscape lacks contrast and a variety of colors and textures. The bottomlands are covered with a rich mosaic of wetland grasses, shrubs, and trees, where masses of waterfowl and shorebirds can be seen at certain times of the year. The bottomlands are perhaps the most visually attractive resources around the reservoir.

Image 1. American Falls Reservoir and Old Town Site
Source: Allison Piazzoni. Personal photograph. October 2, 2024.

The area's scenic quality is generally undeveloped and well protected. Areas of disturbance are visible at several locations, particularly around the West Boat Ramp and Archaeological District MUs, where unauthorized vehicular access has caused random and pervasive scarring of the ground cover. Many upland areas have been disturbed, and native vegetation has been replaced with invasive weeds. This is a visual concern mostly in locations of heavy recreational use, such as on the beach or in picnic areas of developed recreation sites like Sportsman's Park. At the reservoir's southern end, buildings in the city of American Falls and several residences near the west shore can be seen, with some encroaching and trespassing onto Reclamation lands. Recently, erosion control projects along the west bank have altered the natural appearance of the shoreline through the use of rock slope protection and riprap revetments.[12] To help minimize these visual changes, Reclamation has planted willows and smaller wetland species in and around the treated areas.

When water levels drop, extensive mudflats are exposed in McTucker Ponds, altering the reservoir's overall scenic quality. In these areas, the views change from open water to vast, exposed flats on

[12] A revetment is a facing (of stone or concrete) to sustain an embankment.

which annual vegetation emerges and high concentrations of waterfowl and shorebirds congregate. Numerous channels, including the Snake River, weave through these flats. Both the open water and vegetated mudflat conditions contribute to the area's high scenic quality. Elsewhere around the reservoir, lower water levels have mixed appearances; wider beaches may be viewed favorably, but erosion control projects are more visible.

The landscape's scenic quality is also affected by the quality of water in American Falls Reservoir. When the water quality is poor, the water takes on an unattractive color, and aquatic weed growth becomes prevalent.

The Snake River is free flowing from American Falls Dam to the Eagle Rock area. From this point west, the river is technically the backwater of Lake Walcott, although it continues to assume the appearance of a river through this stretch. Unlike in the upper segment, there are no shallow rapids in this portion of the river.

From the dam, the river flows through a broad lava plain in a sinuous canyon that is less than a half-mile wide; the lower end is much narrower. The canyon is generally 200 feet deep, which greatly restricts views from within the canyon. The north side is steeper, and vegetation is sparser than on the south side, which is composed of undulating hills and ravines dotted with junipers and sagebrush. There are numerous rock outcroppings along the shorelines and several large islands, some of which are bedrock remnants and others are mudflats covered with wetland vegetation. These areas, particularly within the Archaeological District MU (**Image 2**), have high scenic quality and offer opportunities for cultural site viewing. An exposed and extremely weathered basalt mesa winds along the north side of the canyon for several miles at the west end of the Archaeological District MU.

Image 2. The Snake River at the Archaeological District
Source: Allison Piazzoni. Personal photograph. October 2, 2024.

Views from the river are generally linear, framed by the riverbanks and surrounding landscape, creating a sense of enclosure. Above the canyon, views open up and extend toward the distant hills to the south and to the horizon in other directions.

The scenic quality of the canyon and immediate uplands on both sides of the river is high. However, in some areas, there is evidence of human development. There is a pipeline that crosses the Snake River at Pipeline Campground adjacent to the Neeley parcel (**Image 3**); this pipeline is easily seen by recreationists on and off the river. Despite this development, the canyon retains strong visual interest, which is largely due to the varied terrain and many colors and textures of the rock and vegetation. These qualities are further enhanced by the presence of the river and waterfowl. There are numerous vistas with different orientations and compositions all along the river. The most notable views have been captured through the strategic siting of the Register Rock Rest Stop and Massacre Rocks State Park Visitors Center.

Image 3. Pipeline Across the Snake River at Neeley
Source: Allison Piazzoni. Personal photograph. October 2, 2024.

Due to the sandy and shallow soils within the river canyon, the vegetation is particularly sensitive to foot and vehicular traffic and does not easily reestablish after disturbance. As a popular regional recreational resource, the area has received a considerable amount of vehicular use on and off designated roads. In the absence of structured development and management, this heavy use has degraded the scenic quality in specific areas. To address this, many of these roads have been closed to motorized use to restore the vegetation cover.

3.2.10 Noise

When noise-sensitive biological resources are identified within an area, certain federal provisions may apply, depending on the resource. The Noise Control Act of 1972 reserves primary

responsibility for setting noise limits to state and local authorities. Title IV of the Clean Air Act provides requirements for abating noise pollution when it is determined that federal activities amount to a public nuisance or the noise is otherwise objectionable. The EPA also offers nonbinding guidelines for noise levels, including a maximum day-night noise level of 55 A-weighted decibels (dBA) in residential areas to avoid interference with sleep. There is no management direction in the existing 1995 RMP specific to noise management.

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. It can be intermittent, continuous, steady, or impulsive. Humans' response to noise is extremely diverse and varies according to the type of noise source, the receptor's sensitivity and expectations, the time of day, and the distance between the noise source and the receptor. Noise-sensitive receptors are individuals or noise-sensitive land uses that would be affected by project-related noise levels, such as permanent and seasonal residents or individuals engaged in recreational activities.[13]

Sound is measured in decibels; an dBA is one of the most frequently used sound measurements because it best matches the range of human hearing. Low and very high frequencies are given less weight on this scale than on the standard decibel scale (OSHA 2013).

The planning area encompasses or is adjacent to developed, agricultural, and undeveloped areas in Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties. The reservoir is the centerpiece of the planning area. The reservoir provides opportunities for water-based recreation, hiking, and motorized recreation. Sound levels throughout most of the reservoir and downstream area are generally rural in nature.

Natural sounds are those that exist in the absence of human-caused sounds. Natural sounds around the reservoir contribute to the visitor experience and provide valuable indicators of the health of various ecosystems. Existing natural sounds include birds, insects, wind in the vegetation, and wind making waves on the reservoir. The natural soundscape is the aggregate of all natural sounds that occur within an area, together with the physical capacity for transmitting natural sounds.

Ambient noise is the background sound in an environment, excluding the primary sound a person is focusing on. It can be a combination of many different sounds, such as traffic, nature sounds, or people talking. The ambient level is affected by noise from vehicular traffic on nearby roads (particularly from Interstate 86) and from recreational activities, such as motorized vehicle use and power boating. Periodic maintenance activities, such as landscaping and roadway maintenance, also affect noise levels.

Humans, buildings, and other structures can be sensitive to vibration. Ground-borne vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions of the ground transmitted into a receptor (such as a building) from a vibration source (such as construction equipment). Vibration can be characterized by its velocity, displacement, or acceleration. Human and building response to vibration correlates more strongly with the velocity level than the other two descriptors; therefore, velocity is used to describe vibration effects on humans and buildings.

The root-mean-square velocity of a motion over a 1-second period is commonly used to evaluate human response to vibration. The peak particle velocity is used to evaluate building and structural

[13] Note that recreational land uses are not listed as noise-sensitive receptors according to applicable state and local ordinances. However, Federal Transit Administration guidance considers recreational uses to be noise sensitive when a lack of noise is part of the appeal of the land use.

response to vibration. The vibration velocity level is expressed in terms of vibration decibels (VdB), which are decibels relative to a reference quantity of 1 micro-inch per second. The level of vibration represents how much the ground is moving. The background vibration level in residential areas is usually 50 VdB or lower, which is well below the threshold of perception for humans, which is around 65 VdB. Annoyance begins to occur at vibration levels over 70 VdB.

There are no known major existing sources of vibration in the planning area.

3.3 Resource Uses

3.3.1 Public Access and Recreational Use

Current legislation limits the number of locations where Reclamation may directly manage developed recreation. Without specific authority, Reclamation is limited by the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-72) to provide only "minimum basic" facilities. Pursuant to Public Law 89-72, minimum basic facilities are defined as guardrails, turnarounds at the ends of existing roads, and pit toilets necessary to protect the health and safety of the public. Reclamation has further defined minimum basic facilities as those facilities required for public health and safety and those that are necessary to protect or preserve federal property and the public. Public Law 89-72 encourages Reclamation to enter into partnerships with nonfederal public entities to plan, develop, and manage recreation for public purpose. Please refer to **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**, for more detail on relevant policies and regulations governing public access and recreational use.

Emphasis for existing public access and recreational use management direction in the 1995 RMP includes improving access to recreation areas; improving existing recreational facilities; developing new facilities, where feasible; providing opportunities for allowed recreation types; and promoting recreational safety, particularly boating safety. Reclamation pursues cooperative agreements with other jurisdictions where agreements improve recreational opportunity and safety.

Reclamation land, facilities, and waterbodies are generally open for public use, unless they are specifically closed. Recreational use in designated areas and facilities is generally permitted without specific use authorizations. Some recreational facilities on American Falls Reservoir are managed by nonfederal public entities who may have concessionaires, which are private companies or individuals authorized to operate and manage recreational facilities and services on Reclamation lands. Recreation is permitted across Reclamation's lands, the Snake River, and American Falls Reservoir; however, a portion of the American Falls Archaeological District is closed to rock climbing and OHV use to protect nationally significant Tribal and cultural resources.

Outdoor recreational demand has increased consistently, and it spiked between 2020 and 2022, likely due to the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The state also experienced record visitation to Idaho state parks, with 7.7 million visitors in 2020 (Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation 2023). American Falls Reservoir plays a large part in meeting regional recreational demand in southeast Idaho. When completely full, American Falls Reservoir is the largest reservoir on the Snake River and in Idaho. Boating, canoeing, fishing, swimming, wildlife viewing, picnicking, jet boating, waterskiing, wildlife viewing, and windsurfing are the major recreational activities on the reservoir (Recreation.gov 2025).

Most visitors to the reservoir come from the local communities of American Falls, Pocatello, and Blackfoot. A high proportion of the visitors to this area pass through the American Falls area on their way to Yellowstone National Park, which is approximately 170 miles northeast of the reservoir. Roadside rest areas along the Snake River near American Falls receive up to one million visitors annually. Although American Falls is not a destination for most of these visitors, many use a variety of existing recreational facilities as they pass through.

Developed Recreational Facilities

There are four developed, public recreation sites around the reservoir, and each offers a different mixture and intensity of recreational opportunities. Seagull Bay Yacht Club, located in the Seagull Bay MU, is a member-owned and -operated facility that provides limited services for the general public. The Seagull Bay Yacht Club holds a concessionaire contract with Power County, Reclamation's managing partner at the Seagull Bay Recreation Area. Reclamation renewed the management agreement with Power County in 2017 for a 20-year term, which expires in 2037. Willow Bay Recreation Area, located 1 mile south of Seagull Bay, is adjacent to the city of American Falls. It is managed by the City of American Falls and is the most developed of the four recreation areas. The jetty was recently rebuilt. Reclamation has a partnership with the City of American Falls who subcontracts with a private concessionaire. The concessionaire runs the campground facilities, bait shop, and rental business.

Finally, Sportsman's Park, located on the reservoir's west side, is a 30-acre park with facilities and activities for a variety of recreational uses. Sportsman's Park provides primary access to the lake for boaters and anglers during high water levels with two boat ramps. In the winter, this area is popular for ice fishing. Sportsman's Park has two large group shelters and three smaller picnic shelters, two playgrounds, five restrooms, horseshoe pits, and volleyball courts. The campground offers 37 sites and is managed by Bingham County. Sportsman's Park also has a 1-mile paved trail that is popular for bird-watching, hiking, and biking along the rim of the reservoir. The West Boat Ramp area has one large boat ramp that is accessible at low water levels. The area has ample parking and some covered picnic areas.

Visitation to these sites depends heavily on water levels and the usability of the boat launches. When launching becomes difficult or impossible at the Seagull Bay boat ramp, which is the first boat ramp to be affected on the reservoir, recreationists shift to Willow Bay, Sportsman's Park, and finally the West Boat Ramp. Later in the season, when all the ramps become unusable, recreationists generally move away from American Falls Reservoir to other reservoirs and bodies of water in the mountains to the northeast. A small number of boaters and anglers also relocate to the downstream segment of the Snake River, accessed below American Falls Dam, or to Neeley.

Seagull Bay Yacht Club

Seagull Bay Yacht Club is on the east side of American Falls Reservoir, approximately 4 miles north of American Falls Dam. It is accessed from US Interstate 86 and a 3-mile gravel road; it is the nearest developed recreational site to Pocatello. The club is operated as a member-owned, nonprofit organization with annual dues. The management agreement between Reclamation, Power County, and the Seagull Bay Yacht Club was recently renewed in 2017. This agreement governs the operations and maintenance of the facilities at the yacht club, including the boat launches and campground.

Current issues at the Seagull Bay Yacht Club include the large fluctuations in water levels, making the boat launches unusable. There is also no precedent set for wake zones, which can greatly impact the experience of kayaking, kite surfing, sailing, and other in-water recreational activities. Fishing can also be impacted by large, nearshore wakes.

Reclamation, as the managing partner, can grant special use permits to allow certain events to occur at the Seagull Bay Yacht Club, such as weddings. The heaviest use occurs from the beginning of April through October, if water levels permit. Of the four developed recreation areas, Seagull Bay Yacht Club is the first to close due to low water levels.

Willow Bay Recreation Area

Willow Bay Recreation Area, on the reservoir's southeast shore approximately 1 mile north of the city of American Falls, is managed by the American Falls' Parks and Recreation Department. The City owns 88 acres of the 128-acre recreation area. Facilities include pull-through campsites, a boat ramp, boat docks, a 4-acre picnic area, and sports fields. There is one paved walking trail that has become degraded due to overuse. The boat ramp, jetty, and boat docks were recently rebuilt and are in good condition. Support facilities include a restaurant, restrooms, showers, and an RV dump station. The park has one accessible campsite, and the campground laundry and restroom facilities are also accessible. The area has a large parking lot with hundreds of vehicle spaces and approximately 30 boat trailer spaces. The parking lot needs to be repaved. A visitation survey was conducted in 2024 to record trends at the recreation area.

The primary recreational activities at the Willow Bay Recreation Area include swimming, waterskiing, parasailing, and windsurfing. Other activities include boating and fishing. Recreationists participating in these activities generally use the campground and related facilities. The boat launch is typically the second to close each summer, and visitation to the marina drops drastically after closure. Beach and day use remain active until the water quality drops in the later part of the summer.

Other management needs at the Willow Bay Recreation Area include the creation of new and improved signage throughout the recreation area and the development of other amenities. There is also a need to prioritize trash cleanup on the overlapping ownership boundaries. New signage would improve cultural interpretation and educational opportunities in this area, as well as provide wayfinding information for trails and access points. Additionally, there is a landowner within Willow Bay that is currently collecting large vehicles, trash, and assorted mechanical objects on the property. This degrades the scenic viewing experience and may overlap onto Reclamation lands.

Sportsman's Park

Sportsman's Park is near the mid-point of the reservoir and approximately 3 miles east of the community of Aberdeen. It was developed and is managed by Bingham County. Access is provided from State Highway 39, and directional signs are supplied by the IDFG. The 30-acre park is a multiuse area with several facilities. Two boat ramps are accessible through most of the summer; the park also provides access to winter ice fishing opportunities on the reservoir. The park also provides access to duck and goose hunting areas on Reclamation lands.

The 1-mile trail, which travels the rim of the reservoir, is popular for hiking, biking, and birding. Special features along the trail include two observation platforms with a pavilion and benches for users to observe waterfowl.

The campground at Sportsman's Park is managed by Bingham County and offers 37 sites for tents and RVs. Amenities include water and electric hookups at some sites.

West Boat Ramp

The West Boat Ramp day-use area includes approximately 10 acres of land adjacent to the dam operations office just off State Highway 39 at the west end of American Falls Dam. Power County manages the operation of the West Boat Ramp area. Facilities include a large, paved parking area, boat ramp, three picnic shelters, and a small, gravel parking area to the south. The boat ramp is concrete and in good condition. The boat ramp can accommodate two lanes of launch traffic and provides boating access at low water levels late in the summer season. The facility office is no longer operating at this location.

Bank fishing, boat fishing, and other motorized boat activities are the predominant uses at this location. The beaches in this area are popular for recreation, with similar levels of use on both weekdays and weekends. There are currently no camping facilities at this location.

Issues at the West Boat Ramp include illegal beach driving, sedimentation, and trespass from existing homeowners. Visitors often drive their cars or trucks onto the beach and can get stuck in the sand or mud. Driving also increases erosion significantly, compared with natural processes, and stuck vehicles may be left in the sand for extended periods of time until proper towing capabilities are available to remove the vehicle. Additionally, sedimentation is an ongoing issue at the West Boat Ramp and American Falls Dam downstream to Lake Walcott. This sedimentation continues to be addressed by Reclamation projects. Finally, encroachment by adjacent homeowners further restricts the area available for public use. Homeowners within the West Boat Ramp area have extended their yard perimeters onto Reclamation lands, and there is currently a permanent gazebo and multiple lawns that are trespassing. All these issues affect recreational access because they impact some portion of Reclamation lands that would normally be accessible to visitors.

Undeveloped Recreation Areas

Although use is concentrated at developed sites, a number of other areas along the northwest shore are used informally by campers, boaters, swimmers, anglers, waterfowl hunters, and bird-watchers. Many of these sites are identified as sportsmen access points by IDFG signs at highway turnoffs. Recreationists also access dispersed beaches by boat around the reservoir.

One of the more popular areas for recreation is McTucker Ponds. This area is popular for moose and pheasant hunting opportunities and fishing. A small boating access point exists on the Snake River at McTucker Creek and is primarily used by hunters during goose season. The launch is identified by signs as a sportsmen access point and is maintained by Bingham County Waterways and the IDFG. However, the use of this boat launch is highly variable and dependent on the river conditions. It has been difficult to launch at this location, which has hindered emergency response efforts. There is an interest in developing a new boat ramp in this area; the development of this boat ramp would have to be in coordination with Tribes and management partners.

A considerable portion of the northwest shoreline of American Falls Reservoir provides good bank fishing, especially where erosion control projects have been implemented, and waterfowl hunting; however, access is limited in some areas because of a lack of public roads and signs. Inlets provide protection from winds and storms for boaters and other recreationists.

Spring Hollow is a popular recreation area in the West Bank MU. Trolling boats are common here, and there is a 14-day stay limit for camping. However, this area is highly inaccessible due to surrounding private lands and is also subject to heavy winds, which make boating unsafe. There is an interest by Reclamation to pursue safe harbor locations along the west bank, particularly where high concentrations of issues have occurred.

Recreation Below American Falls Dam

The downstream stretch of the Snake River supports a variety of recreational uses. A number of developed or signed public use sites exist on BLM, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, IDFG, and IPC property along the river between American Falls Dam and the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge. Reclamation has no developed or designated recreational facilities on this reach of the Snake River, although informal recreational use occurs at various locations.

The Snake River attracts mostly local residents, who prefer camping at dispersed locations that are not well known and are less accessible. Sites with boat ramps serve principally as overnight and day-use areas for boaters and anglers. Sites without boat ramps provide opportunities for bank fishing and primitive camping. Boat camping occurs across from the Massacre Rocks State Park, where beaches are available.

The 7-mile stretch of river immediately downstream from American Falls Dam supports a variable trout fishery that is heavily impacted by periods of drought. Rainbow trout in this section can reach large sizes and include some fish that have survived entrainment through the dam. Depending on the water conditions, rainbow trout in this section migrate back and forth between American Falls Dam downstream to Lake Walcott. The IDFG's American Falls Fish Hatchery is responsible for stocking the reservoir. In 2024, the IDFG stocked over 71,000 catchable rainbow trout. When fishing is good, this section of the Snake River receives fishing pressure comparable with other well-known Idaho fishing streams. Fishing activity is the heaviest from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day. The river between American Falls Dam and Eagle Rock is limited to only catch and release during the winter to protect the trout fishery.

Waterfowl hunting occurs along the river, and a popular access point is in the Coldwater MU, which consists of a small boat ramp and parking area. There is a human waste issue at this location due to the lack of facilities.

Rock climbing used to occur on the basalt cliffs near Massacre Rocks State Park. Since 1974, over 650 routes were established in the area. However, due to cultural sensitivities, the area is now closed to rock climbing, and rock climbing is no longer a recreational opportunity in the area. Reclamation successfully coordinated with climbing groups to have some bolts and fixed anchors removed.

Within the Archaeological District MU, many roads have been closed to vehicle use due to significant degradation from overuse and OHV use. Motorized recreation in this MU conflicts with Reclamation's legislative obligation to protect and preserve the cultural resources on its lands and under its jurisdiction.

3.3.2 Travel and Transportation

Travel and transportation management consists of implementing travel and transportation planning decisions; inventorying and mapping routes; signing areas, authorized routes, roads, and trails;

providing education and interpretation; enforcing laws; acquiring easements; monitoring; and undertaking other measures necessary to provide access to and across public lands for a wide variety of uses. Such uses include recreational, traditional, authorized, commercial, educational, and other kinds of uses involving travel and transportation, as well as all forms of motorized and nonmotorized traveler use, such as foot, pack stock or animal-assisted, mountain bike, and OHV travel. Transportation infrastructure is vital to Reclamation's mission of managing water resources and providing public access to recreational areas (Reclamation 2021).

Roads

The major roads in the vicinity of American Falls Reservoir are US Interstates 86 and 15, located to the east and south of the reservoir, respectively, and State Highway 39, to the west of the reservoir. A segment of the Union Pacific Railroad runs along the reservoir's northwestern side with its terminus in Aberdeen. Another leg of the railroad runs adjacent to the US Interstate 86 from Pocatello to American Falls and farther west.

The Seagull Bay Yacht Club, within the Seagull Bay MU located on the reservoir's east side, is accessed by a gravel-surface county road from US Interstate 86. The Willow Bay Recreation Area, located in the Willow Bay MU a few miles south of Seagull Bay, is also accessed from the interstate via a bypass linking the interstate with State Highway 39.

The Dam Site and West Boat Ramp MUs are on the reservoir's southwestern shore and accessed directly from State Highway 39. The West Bank MU, which extends the entire west side of the reservoir, is highly inaccessible from surface roads due to private landowners. This area is mostly accessed and seen from the water by boat.

The Sterling WMA MU is accessible by county roads from State Highway 39. There are 15 different parking areas in the WMA, and access is allowed per WMA regulations through two bordering private parcels.

Sportsman's Park, a developed recreation area within the Sportsman's Park MU, is accessed primarily via Boat Dock and Final Roads from State Highway 39. This area has large parking areas and paved boat ramps.

The Springfield MU is accessed by an informal arrangement with local landowners. This MU does not offer substantial recreational opportunities. The McTucker Ponds MU, located in the reservoir's northeast end, is accessible via Chandler Road and other county roads that have "Sportsman's Access" signs leading to gravel pit ponds and a boat ramp. From the county road, numerous unimproved roads wind down to the reservoir and the in-flowing streams. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes manage access to Reclamation lands and the reservoir through the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

Reclamation lands along the Snake River are accessed via county roads from US Interstate 86, which runs south of and parallel to the Snake River, and from State Highway 39, which crosses the dam and then turns west on Lake Channel Boulevard. Numerous river access points are adjacent to the Neeley MU parcel, off Neeley Road. Access to the Archaeological District and Coldwater MUs is off US Interstate 86. The Archaeological District roads are unpaved, and Reclamation has closed many of them due to impacts from overuse and illegal off-road vehicle use. Access to the remaining MUs is sufficient and suitable for various vehicle types and needs.

Trails

In 2000, Reclamation conducted a formal trails inventory as part of the development of an access management plan (Reclamation 2000). A total of 84 miles of trails were mapped on the Reclamation lands. An additional 51.6 miles of trails were mapped on adjoining state, federal, and private lands, which helped to define the primary access points or connecting trails between noncontiguous Reclamation lands.

Sportsman's Park has a 1-mile paved trail that is popular for birding and wildlife watching. This trail had degraded over heavy seasons of use and is currently being repaired and repaved, along with the boat parking area, per a Federal Lands Transportation Program grant and improvement project with Federal Highways Administration. The Willow Bay Recreation Area also has a popular unpaved trail that is deteriorating due to high levels of use, and there is an opportunity to pursue paving the trail.

Table 3-15, Miles of Trail by Type, depicts the trail types and miles in the planning area.

Table 3-15. Miles of Trail by Type

Type of Trail	Length of Trail	Percentage of Trails
Gravel road	9.9	11.8
Double-track trail	47.8	56.8
All-terrain vehicle trail	2.5	3.0
Motor bike trail	5.7	6.8
Foot path	2.3	2.7
Cow trail	12.4	14.7
Paved road	3.5	4.2
Total	**84.1**	**100**

Source: Reclamation 2000

Current and historical OHV use are noted throughout the reservoir areas except for McTucker Ponds. Extensive signage indicating closure to motor vehicle use exists on the major routes in the Archaeological District MU. Some areas can be accessed without passing any signs and can be inadvertently entered, creating confusion around closed and authorized routes, roads, and trails. There are also some issues with unauthorized cattle grazing on Reclamation lands, which has led to the creation of several discontinuous cattle trails. These trails, which compact the soil over time, can appear intentional and encourage unauthorized recreational use on these routes.

3.3.3 Land Use and Realty

Issuance of land-use authorizations and the conditions under which individuals, businesses, or government entities can occupy and use Reclamation lands are specified in 43 CFR 429 and existing Reclamation standards and directives from LND 08-01 (the Manual for Land Use Authorizations; Use Authorizations). Realty actions, such as withdrawals, acquisitions, and disposals, are addressed under LND 03-01 (Land Withdrawal, Withdrawal Management, and Withdrawal Revocation), LND 06-01 (Land Acquisition), and Comprehensive Manual CMP 11-03 (Real Property Disposal).

The ability to engage in flexible cost-sharing arrangements with nonfederal partners for the management and maintenance of recreation or fish and wildlife enhancement on Reclamation lands is limited by Public Law 89-72, which requires nonfederal entities to fund at least 50 percent of

separable costs. Please refer to **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**, for more detail on relevant policies and regulations governing land use and realty.

Emphasis for existing lands and realty management direction in the 1995 RMP includes minimizing and resolving existing encroachment and trespass, maintaining and adding new provisions to land-use authorizations to provide for wildlife benefits, and exploring opportunities for cooperative management agreements with State, private, or federal entities to facilitate habitat conservation or recreational programs on Reclamation lands.

Lands and realty are assessed by analyzing current land activities, landownership, and land-use designations in adopted plans and policies. A land-use assessment also considers legal guarantees or limitations, such as those provided by easements, deeds, rights-of-way, claims, leases, permits, or other use authorizations and management agreements.

Reclamation manages lands within the planning area in accordance with 43 CFR 429 and Reclamation policies, regulations, and directives and standards. The primary management focus for American Falls Dam and Reservoir and the surrounding Reclamation lands is providing irrigation, hydropower, flood control, fish and wildlife, and recreational benefits.

Landownership

The current landownership and use pattern around American Falls are largely influenced by the region's history of land acquisition and federal policies like the Carey Act of 1894, which allowed western states to sell federal land to private settlers on the condition that the lands be reclaimed, cultivated, and irrigated (Lovin 1987). Subsequent policies, such as the National Reclamation Act of 1902, authorized the construction of large-scale irrigation infrastructure, including dams, reservoirs, and canals. As a result, the US Reclamation Service (now Reclamation) began acquiring private farmland to support these water management projects and facilitate irrigated agriculture throughout the region (Reclamation 2018).

As part of the Minidoka Project, the construction of American Falls Dam and Reservoir further transformed the landscape, necessitating the relocation of the city of American Falls and consolidating federal landholdings as Reclamation acquired private lands to accommodate rising water levels and infrastructure needs. During these land acquisitions, many private landowners requested and were granted permanent easement rights to continue cattle grazing and farming; however, Reclamation retained fee title to the land for reservoir management purposes. Land use within these easements was, and still is, restricted to agricultural and grazing activities (Reclamation 1995).

Today, Reclamation currently manages approximately 7,700 acres of land above the normal high-water line, including 4,300 acres surrounding the reservoir and 3,400 acres along the Snake River extending downstream to the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge. Additionally, Reclamation oversees approximately 56,000 acres of land that becomes inundated at the reservoir's normal maximum pool. Approximately 5,685 acres of Reclamation land, nearly one-third of the reservoir and shoreline, are also within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation managed by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. These Tribal lands were not included in the 1995 RMP and are not included in this RMP's planning area. The Tribes manage a permanent easement to continue grazing, hunting, fishing, and wood gathering on these lands, though the lands are generally not open for public use.

Most land surrounding the reservoir is privately owned, while federal and State ownership predominate along the river. Other adjacent land management includes the BLM, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and private individuals (see **Figure 3-7**).

Land Use

The overall landscape within the region is predominantly privately owned and used for residential or agricultural purposes. Potatoes, sugar beets, wheat, barley, and alfalfa hay form the major crops produced in the region (PSWCD 2023). Given the area's semiarid climate (see **Section 3.2.1**), most cropland relies on irrigation from the Snake River and reservoir system to support production. In addition to cropland, livestock production, particularly beef cattle, is also a major part of the regional economy, with rangelands dedicated to livestock grazing. However, rangeland acreage has been gradually decreasing throughout the region as more land is converted to irrigated cropland (PSWCD 2023).

Reclamation lands within the planning area primarily serve to support dam and reservoir operations, including hydropower generation, irrigation infrastructure, and water storage. While some areas remain undeveloped for reservoir management, other areas are used for a variety of purposes, including farming, grazing, and wildlife habitat enhancement and management. Reclamation lands are also permitted for utilities and services or used for general recreation. Boating, fishing, hunting, camping, and picnicking are popular recreational activities within the planning area. Downstream from the dam, some Reclamation lands along the river are closed to motor vehicles, including off-road OHV use, as well as rock climbing, to protect archaeological and historic resources, though most adjacent federal and State lands remain open.

Reclamation manages several public use sites and recreational facilities in coordination with local counties (Power County and Bingham County), the City of American Falls, IDFG, or private, local organizations (see **Section 3.3.1**). Support from management agreements and partnerships are invaluable in maintaining recreation sites and managing activities on Reclamation lands in the planning area. However, unauthorized activities, such as illegal dumping, unpermitted burning, encroachments, and off-road OHV use, continue to pose management challenges throughout several MUs. These activities have contributed to resource degradation, safety hazards, and increased monitoring and enforcement needs.

Residential lots are interspersed throughout the planning area, with some directly adjacent to Reclamation lands along the reservoir. The reservoir's proximity to private parcels presents several challenges, as numerous trespass and encroachments have been documented. There are several areas where private landscaping and structures extend from private lands onto federal land. Language in the 1995 RMP encouraging planting has also led to increased unauthorized tree planting near the reservoir and shelter belts by private landowners. The 1995 RMP actions removed potential tools for resolving some types of unauthorized uses. Finally, private landownership presents access issues for Reclamation in reaching certain parcels of Reclamation lands.

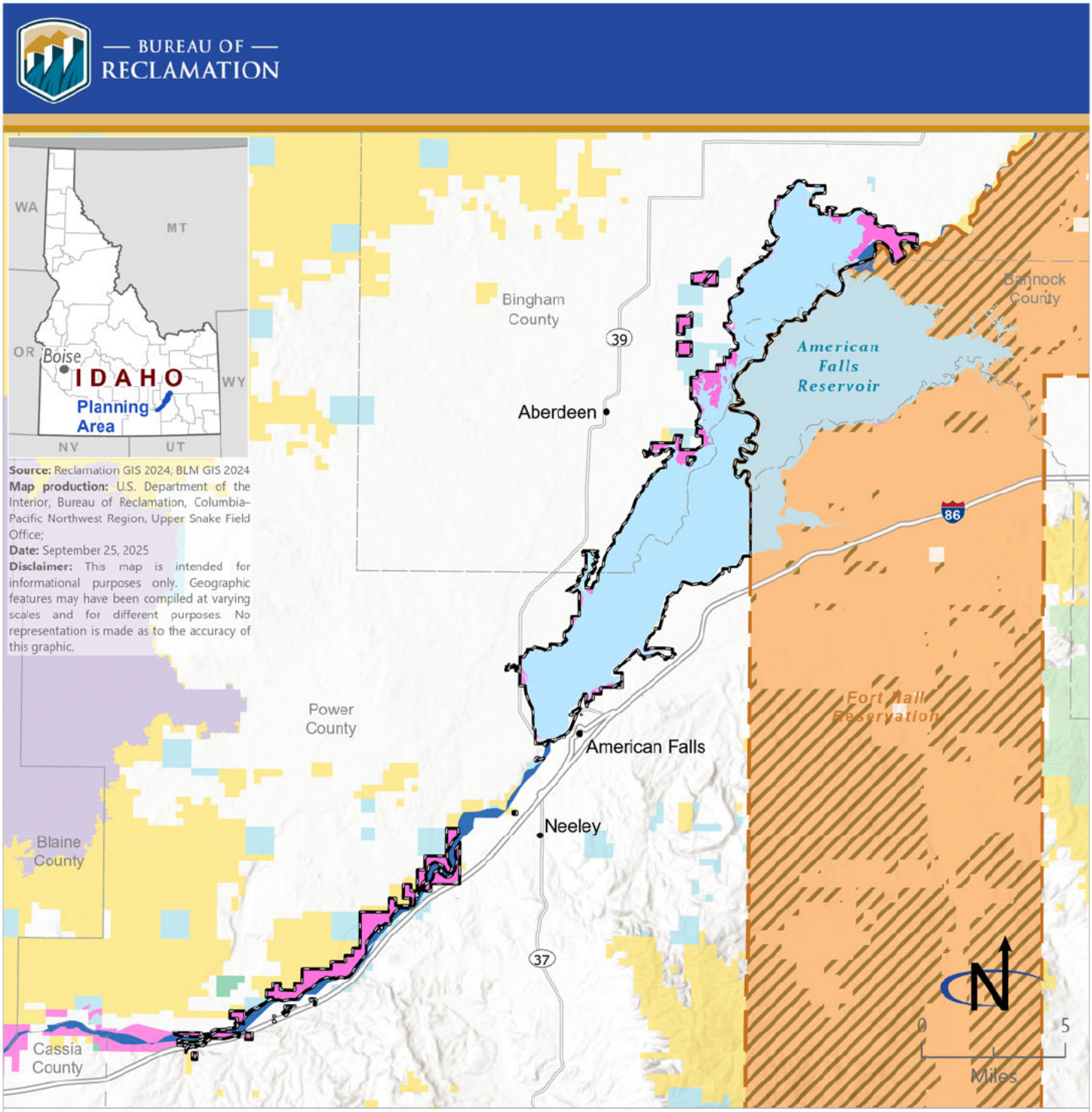


Figure 3-7
Surface Management

- Bureau of Reclamation
- Indian Reservation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Private
- State
- Water
- Planning area

Land-Use Authorizations

Land-use authorizations regulate the use of Reclamation's lands, facilities, and waterbodies by granting specific use rights to private individuals, as well as state and federal agencies. These use authorizations, which include permits, licenses, easements, leases, and consent documents, are discretionary and must comply with the requirements outlined in 43 CFR 429 and LND 08-01 (the Manual for Land Use Authorizations; Use Authorizations; Reclamation 2024b).

Land-use authorizations do not convey any possessory interest in the land; rather, these authorizations manage the land's use for activities such as grazing, agriculture, infrastructure development, access, and habitat conservation. Commercial activities, including filming, photography, guiding, outfitting, or other organized commercial events and activities, also require a use authorization from Reclamation.

Permits and Licenses

Reclamation currently maintains 31 permits or licenses within the planning area. The following section provides an overview of each permit and license type and the total acres of land authorized for use under each authorization.

Grazing

The 1995 RMP identifies lands that are above the normal high-water mark or are seasonally submerged as available for land-use authorizations issued by Reclamation. Per the 1995 RMP, land-use authorizations are issued through a bid process for a 1-year period and are renewable for an additional 4 years. Land-use authorizations authorize the use of lands above the high-water line from April 15 to June 15, and lands within the drawdown area from July 15 to October 15. The 1995 RMP set a stocking rate of 15 acres per animal unit month (AUM) for dry land, half an acre per AUM for irrigated pastureland, and 7 acres per AUM for grazing lands within the drawdown area.

The 1995 RMP identifies land-use objectives and actions to be included in a grazing plan. In 2019, Reclamation finalized a grazing management plan to meet the requirements set forth by the 1995 RMP and included two additional objectives. These objectives are detailed in **Section A.8** of **Appendix A.**

In 2019, Reclamation finalized the Minidoka Project American Falls Division Grazing Plan to guide the management of grazing on Reclamation lands within the greater Minidoka Project American Falls area (Reclamation 2019). The plan established two grazing allotments: the 5,052-acre American Falls Reservoir Allotment and the 31.84-acre American Falls River Allotment.

As of 2019, six grazing authorizations totaling approximately 91.2 acres have been issued for the American Falls Reservoir Allotment (Reclamation 2019). No authorizations have been issued for the American Falls River Allotment (Reclamation 2019).

Approximately 1,780 acres of Reclamation land along the north side of the Snake River also fall within the following BLM-managed grazing allotments: Eagle Rock, Cedar Fields, Ponderosa, and Cold Water Isolated (see **Table 3-16**). The BLM has permitted grazing on these lands under agreements with Reclamation that date back to 1941.

Table 3-16. Acres of Reclamation Land Within BLM Grazing Allotments

Allotment Name	Acres
Cedar Fields	1,180
Cold Water Isolated	30
Eagle Rock	480
Ponderosa	90
Total	**1,780**

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

Agriculture

Per the 1995 RMP, all existing land-use authorizations would be renewed but reevaluated to consider fair market values and modified authorization terms to require that holders plant a percentage of the leased area with forage crops or provide wildlife benefits for upland game birds, especially pheasant. The 1995 RMP also clearly precluded the issuance of any new land-use authorizations on land that was not leased at that time.

Today, Reclamation maintains 16 agricultural permits totaling approximately 310 acres.

Power Lines and Telecommunications

There are five telecommunications infrastructure licenses totaling approximately 5 acres within the planning area. These licenses authorize the operation and maintenance of buried fiber-optic cables and conduits, as well as buried telephone cables.

There are four licenses issued for power lines totaling approximately 4 acres. These authorize a power distribution line; a power transmission line; an underground 12.5-kilovolt power line; and a power line providing electricity to Seagull Bay Yacht Club, an adjacent residence on private property on the north side of Seagull Bay, and pumps to the south of Seagull Bay on Pump Road.

Water and Sewer

There are two active permits for wells; one permit is specifically for monitoring a well site and an associated 20-foot-wide access road. The other permit is for operation and maintenance of a domestic well to provide water to a power plant complex. These permits authorize use on less than 1 acre of land.

Recreation

Reclamation also maintains one active permit for recreational use, totaling 31,670 acres for access and operation of a powerboat for guided fishing in American Falls Reservoir (except those areas within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation).

Access

There are two active permits totaling approximately 3 acres for access; one is for road access to commercial land use, and the other is for access, construction, operation, and maintenance of an emergency road from Pacific Road to State Highway 39 for the Willow Bay Recreation Area.

Table 3-17, Permit or License Type and Acres in the Planning Area, details the type of permits or licenses issued and their associated acreages.

Table 3-17. Permit or License Type and Acres in the Planning Area

Permit or License	Acres
Agricultural	310
Power lines and telecommunications infrastructure	9
Recreation	31,670
Water and sewer	<1
Access	3
Total	**31,993**

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

Easements

Permanent Agricultural Easements

Reclamation maintains 16 permanent agricultural easements with private landowners encompassing approximately 240 acres. These permanent easements must be used for agricultural or grazing purposes.

Power Lines and Telecommunications

There is one easement for a power line totaling 4.5 acres. There are also two active easements for telecommunications infrastructure totaling approximately 2 acres; one is a perpetual easement for operation and maintenance of a copper communications line, fiber-optic line, and associated service equipment, and the other easement is for operation and maintenance of a buried telephone cable.

Water and Sewer

There is one existing easement for operation and maintenance of a sewer line. There is also one perpetual easement to operate and maintain a well (including ingress and egress), totaling less than 1 acre.

Access

Reclamation maintains two general access easements for vendors, totaling approximately 35 acres. There is also one easement for operation and maintenance of a 50-foot-wide county road totaling 6 acres. Two other road easements are for general access purposes; they encompass 2 acres.

Table 3-18, Easement Type and Acres in the Planning Area, details the types of easements within the planning area and their associated acreages.

Table 3-18. Easement Type and Acres in the Planning Area

Easement Type	Acres
Permanent agricultural easement	240
Power lines and telecommunication infrastructure	6.5
Water and sewer	<1
Access	43
Total	**290.5**

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

Consent Documents

Reclamation has issued five consent documents, or crossing agreements, totaling approximately 6 acres. These consent documents are for a variety of purposes, including one permission to maintain and operate a buried power transmission line; one permission for a natural gas pipeline crossing for the formerly Northwest Pipeline Corporation on Reclamation withdrawn land; one operation of a buried fiber-optic telephone cable (covered under a regional master crossing agreement); one permission for Power County to relocate, operate, and maintain Beach County Road; and a permission to cross Reclamation land with a buried fiber telephone cable (also covered under a regional master agreement).

Management Agreements

Public Law 89-72, the Federal Water Project Recreation Act, as amended by Title 28 of Public Law 102-575, provides a framework for nonfederal entities to partner with and participate in the development, operation, and maintenance of recreational facilities or fish and wildlife enhancement at federal water projects. Section 3(b) specifically addresses cost-sharing arrangements, noting that Reclamation can enter into financing agreements with nonfederal entities, provided the nonfederal partners fund at least half of the share of separable costs associated with management and maintenance activities for recreation, or exactly one-quarter of costs allocated to fish and wildlife enhancement (Public Law 89-72; Public Law 102-575). These agreements are primarily for construction of facilities and management of lands and do not authorize a change in the use of storage space in a reservoir.

Nonfederal partners or concessionaires can manage commercial services on Reclamation lands (for example, providing commercial services such as marinas, shops, or campgrounds), but operations must align with Reclamation's goals and priorities (Reclamation 2020). However, if the nonfederal managing partner earns revenue through their facilities or site management, Reclamation cannot contribute toward cost sharing. Reclamation retains oversight to approve fees and facility standards to ensure that revenue generated by concessions is returned to the recreation management area and that facilities remain financially self-sustaining and accessible (Reclamation 2020).

Additionally, per 43 CFR 423, Reclamation's managing partners may apply their own public conduct regulations, provided they are consistent with federal law and Reclamation policies. However, Reclamation retains the ultimate authority, and its regulations take precedence if there is a conflict.

The following section details the management agreements applicable to the following MUs:

- *MU 2 West Boat Ramp*: Power County is Reclamation's managing partner at West Boat Ramp. This unit abuts several private properties and contains the only usable dock, at certain water levels. There is some interest from the County in developing a camping area within this MU.
- *MU 4 Sterling WMA:* The Sterling WMA encompasses approximately 1,670 acres of Reclamation land. These lands are managed to protect and enhance wildlife habitat through a cooperative agreement with IDFG. Under Public Law 89-72, Reclamation maintains a cooperative agreement with IDFG. Under this agreement, Reclamation covers 75 percent of costs associated with management of the Sterling WMA, while IDFG is responsible for the remaining 25 percent for fish and wildlife enhancement. Diverse vegetation and water resources within the WMA support a wide variety of fish and wildlife species, including migratory birds, waterfowl, deer,

beaver, muskrat, and various reptiles. The WMA is a popular destination for ring-necked pheasant hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, and birding (IDFG 2014).

- *MU 5 Sportsman's Park:* Sportsman's Park is managed under an agreement with Bingham County. A popular recreation area, the site contains 37 campsites, a full-time camp host, two boat ramps, a 1-mile trail, gazebos, and informational kiosks.
- *MU 7 McTucker Ponds:* Reclamation has an existing memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Bingham County and IDFG for the management of McTucker Ponds. The MOU defines roles and outlines each party's management responsibilities, which include road and vegetation management by the County and pond restocking and pheasant releases by IDFG.
- *MU 8 Seagull Bay:* At Seagull Bay, Reclamation maintains management agreements with Power County for trash removal and restroom cleaning and maintenance, and with the Seagull Bay Yacht Club for recreational services. The club provides RV and camping space for members to stay on-site, as well as buoy moorings and dock rentals.
- *MU 9 Willow Bay:* The City of American Falls is Reclamation's managing partner at Willow Bay for the recreation area. This site provides a boat ramp to the reservoir, playground areas, picnic and camping areas, and full hookups for RV camping.
- *MU 13 Archaeological District:* Reclamation has an existing MOU with the IDFG to manage several parcels on the south side of the MU. Lands within this unit are culturally and historically sensitive. Reclamation has closed this area to OHV use and motorized access to protect sensitive resources.

Table 3-19, below, shows each MU, Reclamation's managing partner for that unit, and the total acres of land under each management agreement.

Table 3-19. Acres of Land Managed Under Management Agreements by MU

Management Unit (MU)	Managing Partner	Acres
MU 2 - West Boat Ramp	Power County	10
MU 4 - Sterling WMA	IDFG	1,670
MU 5 - Sportsman's Park	Bingham County	90
MU 7 - McTucker Ponds	Bingham County; IDFG	1,130
MU 8 - Seagull Bay	Power County; Seagull Bay Yacht Club	20
MU 9 - Willow Bay	City of American Falls	100
MU 13 - Archaeological District	IDFG	3,210
Total		**6,230**

Source: Reclamation GIS 2025

3.4 Social and Economic Conditions

3.4.1 Tribal Interests

The planning area lies within the traditional homelands of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Tribal use and occupation of the Snake River and American Falls area have occurred for millennia, resulting in well-established cultural relationships and identities that are tied to the region and the natural and cultural resources within it. The Snake River, its tributaries, and the many fish and animal species that rely on these waterways have shaped Indigenous lifeways and identities throughout this time.

Locations within the planning area continue to be important fishing or gathering locations and are associated with important Tribal ceremonies, history, stories, traditional knowledge, and sacred sites.

Federally recognized Tribes are sovereign nations within the boundaries of the US. Tribal sovereignty refers to the right of Tribal governments to govern themselves. The US Constitution recognizes Indian Tribes as distinct governments that have, with a few exceptions, the same powers as federal and state governments to regulate their internal affairs. Today, Tribal sovereignty is further upheld or expressed under treaties, acts of Congress, executive orders, federal administrative agreements, and court decisions.

Treaties are negotiated contracts made pursuant to the US Constitution and are considered the "supreme law of the land." They take precedence over any conflicting state laws because of the Constitution's supremacy clause (Article 6, Clause 2). The reciprocal obligations assumed by the federal government and Tribes constitute the chief source of present-day federal Indian law. Treaty rights are not gifts or grants from the US; they are bargained for concessions. These rights are grants-of-rights from the Tribes, rather than to the Tribes. The US and represented agencies, including Reclamation, have a special trust relationship with Tribes because of these treaties. The Tribal trust responsibility and consultation are defined in numerous federal regulations, executive orders, agency policy, and court decisions (see **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**, for a summary of key regulations and policy).

Under the 1995 RMP, there is no specific Tribal interests section, but cooperation is noted under numerous subjects. The 1995 RMP does outline the following two concerns regarding Tribal treaty rights: (1) conflicts between public use rights and Tribal use rights of the reservoir shoreline and the water surface within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and (2) potential access and use by Native Americans of federal lands outside the reservation. The conflict area of the first issue is the Reclamation land above the high waterline on the reservation; this land did not form part of the 1995 RMP. Through the Fort Bridger Treaty, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have the right to use unoccupied land (federal lands) for traditional purposes. Traditional purposes were being researched at the time of the 1995 RMP's publication.

Another concern identified in the 1995 RMP is that there should continue to be—and improvements should be made to—coordination of Reclamation and other agency programs with counterparts at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Specific programs highlighted for coordination included erosion control, fish stocking and habitat enhancement, and wildlife and hunting management.

Per the 1995 RMP, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will be consulted to ensure the protection of sensitive cultural and paleontological resources (refer to **Section A.4, Cultural and Paleontological Resources**, of **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**). They were to provide input and participate in the development and implementation of a cultural resources management plan. The Tribes will also be involved in the management of protecting and removing any human burials that are found. NAGPRA items are to be returned to the appropriate Tribe. Tribal interests are also included in the 1995 RMP's management and program implementation direction, including the objective to ensure the protection of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' treaty rights and forming cooperative agreements and relationships with Tribes and other parties to achieve beneficial vegetation, wildlife, habitat, and recreation management within and outside the

reservoir (refer to **Section A.9**, **Management and Implementation**, of **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**).

Joint efforts with Tribes are highlighted as part of the protection and conservation of a variety of natural resources and habitats. For example, coordination with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes is included within the ongoing shoreline erosion control program (see **Section A.2**, **Geology and Soils**, of **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**). Coordination is also encouraged with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes for fishery management efforts under the goal of protecting and enhancing important vegetation, fish, and wildlife habitat values (refer to **Section A.3, Vegetation, Wildlife, and Fish**, of **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**). The 1995 RMP called for involving the Tribes in a 5-year assessment of passerine and colonial nesting at the reservoir. The 1995 RMP also included management for cooperative agreements with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to consider nesting towers on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation to help the introduction of peregrine falcons in the Snake River plain. Tribes were to be involved in the protection of riparian areas and nesting habitat as part of the development of a grazing management plan (refer to **Section A.8, Grazing Management**, of **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**).

Tribes, specifically the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, were consulted and made an active contribution to the 1995 American Falls RMP and are part of its implementation (Reclamation 1995, pp. 1-4 to 1-5).

Background and Policy

The Shoshone believe that they have lived in the Snake River region since the beginning of time, and ethnographic sources indicate that the Bannock, who are related to the Northern Paiute, may have occupied the region as early as circa 1500 settling in the region and living cooperatively with the Shoshone. Together, their occupations in various bands in southern Idaho focused on the Weiser, Payette, Boise, and Snake Rivers. Large reservations across several states were originally established by treaty with US government in 1863, but the 1868 Fort Bridger Treaty established the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. While the treaty limited the permanent occupancy of the Tribes to the reservation, the Tribes retained rights to hunt, fish, and collect on unoccupied lands outside the reservation (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999).

Sacred Sites

Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites (May 24, 1996), directs federal agencies to accommodate access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites on federal land. The executive order further directs agencies to provide reasonable notice for proposed land actions or policies that may restrict future access to or ceremonial use of, or adversely affect the physical integrity of, sacred sites. Executive Order 13007 defines a sacred site as a "specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on federal land that is identified by an Indian Tribe, or Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion."

Sacred sites may include ceremonial areas and natural landmarks that are religious or symbolic representations. Sacred sites are typically identified during NHPA Section 106 consultation or during government-to-government consultation. According to Kooistra-Manning and Deaver (1999, 6-14 to 6-15),

> The traditional Shoshone-Bannock worldview is based on a belief in the supernatural aspects of human existence and nature within an animate (living) universe…The traditional worldview of the Shoshone-Bannock acknowledges the coexistence and interdependence of the natural and supernatural. This worldview is expressed in a reverence for nature…. Consequently, areas which provide food, water and medicine are considered sacred, as are the dwelling places of the spirits … These localities are therefore bestowed respect.

In the 1999 American Falls cultural and paleontological resource inventory on the Snake River plain, ethnographic research indicated that the downstream area contained sacred sites, including burials, fasting places, and ceremonial sites, that the Shoshone-Bannock hold sacred (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, p. 6-37). While Shoshone-Bannock Tribal members have often referred to the entire area as sacred, specific sacred locations within the planning area reported as sacred include Fort Hall Bottoms, Cedar Butte, Cedar Bluff, and Wah'-muzza. Other potentially sacred areas may include Ferry Butte; Lava Hot Springs; the Malade River, which was also called Magic River; and Eagle Rock (Bonney and Bonney 1970, p. 557). Kooistra-Manning and Deaver (1999, p. 6-37) note, "[s]ome of these localities are not on the lands managed by Reclamation. However, land management decisions may directly or indirectly affect these areas."

Other types of sites, locations, and objectives that can be sacred include burials, petroglyph and pictographs, monumental rock features, rock or vision quest structures, stone rings, dance grounds and lodges, sweat lodges, timber and brush structures, historic battle sites, offering and prayer locales, and resource collection areas. While there were not confirmed recorded burial sites in the 1999 study area, several sites recorded during a 1992 survey include features such as large cairns that may be associated with burials, and there were other unconfirmed reports of burials along the shore of the reservoir (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, 6-22).

Rock imagery motifs commonly associated with the Shoshone include shield-bearing warriors and hunting scenes. There were documented sites with pictograph features in the 1999 study area (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, 6-23). Sacred sites can also include ceremonial rock features such as medicine wheels, large cairns, stacked rocks, stone alignments, and stone effigies. Rock features such as cairns and alignments that may be associated with these site types are documented at in the planning area, including one that was confirmed by a Shoshone-Bannock elder to be a vision quest structure (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, 6-23 to 6-25). No large stone ring features were documented in the 1999 study area, though Franzen (1981, 88) did document stone ring sites north of American Falls Reservoir (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, 6-25).

Other sacred sites such as dance grounds and sweat lodges discussed in the Kooistra-Manning and Deaver (1999) study were noted as not previously documented in the study area, though a sun dance ground is noted as close enough to the reservoir to consider potential audio and visual impacts from public use of Reclamation areas. Timber lodges and brush shelters are other types of structures that can also be considered sacred through association with ceremonial uses. One documented site along Bannock Creek includes a series of larger, circular depressions that may be the remains of such structures. At another location, a sagebrush structure was previously reported in the fluctuation zone that may be associated with gathering eagle feathers (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, 6-25 to 6-28).

Historic battle sites are also a part of detailed oral history, and the locations of conflict can hold spiritual importance for Tribes. A battle occurred on the butte overlooking Massacre Rocks, several

miles downstream from American Falls. Shoshone elders noted several alternative interpretations of the conflict that differ from the Euro-American perspectives on the conflict between emigrants and Native Americans in 1862 (Kooistra-Manning and Deaver 1999, 6-29).

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs)

ITAs are legal interests in property held in trust by the US for federally recognized Indian Tribes or individual Indians. ITAs may include land, minerals, federally reserved hunting and fishing rights, federally reserved water rights, and instream flows associated with trust land. The General Allotment Act of 1887 allotted land to some Tribes, while other Tribes were allotted land through treaty or specific legislation until 1934. These allotments are ITAs. In 1934, further allotments were prohibited.

The DOI requires that all impacts on trust assets, even impacts considered nonsignificant, be analyzed in NEPA documentation, and that appropriate compensation and mitigation be implemented for impacts. In compliance with Secretarial Order 3175 and DOI 512 Department Manual, Reclamation developed procedures for protecting ITAs. Reclamation is committed to protecting and avoiding harm to trust assets. Where harm cannot be avoided, mitigation or compensation will be provided. As part of the NEPA process, Reclamation evaluates any potential impacts of its proposed activities on ITAs through an interdisciplinary analysis (Reclamation 1993a, 1993b, 1994a, 1994b, 2012).

The planning area was originally part of lands granted to the Tribes under the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 but was later ceded to the US government. The right to continue traditional uses, such as hunting, fishing, and gathering, is an inherent treaty right and is considered to be an ITA.

TCPs

For information on TCPs, refer to **Section 3.2.7, Cultural Resources**.

Areas of Tribal Importance and Use

Locations of Importance to Tribes

The importance of locations to Tribes is defined through Tribal consultation. These locations could be important for a variety of reasons and could include the sacred sites discussed above; ITAs; culturally important fish, wildlife, and plants; or TCPs. A TCP is a particular kind of ethnographic cultural resource, such as a sacred site, that is associated with the cultural practices of a living community and meets the criteria for listing on the NRHP (refer to **Section 3.2.7, Cultural Resources**).

The Fort Hall National Historic Landmark is on the reservation south of the Snake River across from McTucker Island. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and Reclamation have joint responsibility for preserving and managing this landmark. An agreement was drafted in 1987, outlining the interest of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the National Park Service, and the Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer in the landmark's preservation (Reclamation 1995, 2-30).

Members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have indicated that the northwest side of the downstream area is a sacred area. Some Tribal members have even indicated that the whole planning area is sacred, representing a holistic setting for resources, sites, traditions, religious practices, and trails that are significant to Tribes. Archaeological sites have been identified that are associated with

ceremonial activities, and additional sites are known to Tribal members beyond cultural resource survey results that represent TCPs (Reclamation 1995, 2-30 to 2-31).

Tribal Use and Access

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have traditionally used the planning area, and Tribal representatives have indicated in the past that all of the planning area is important for their traditional territory. The planning area is adjacent to the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and is accessible without crossing private land, which is important relative to exercising the Tribes' treaty rights to use ITA land without needing permission from private landholders (Edmo et al. 1999, 2). Tribal members have noted participating in traditional social and ceremonial activities, including gathering natural resources in the downstream area, and that particular activities can only be practiced properly in areas that are not significantly changed by modern land use. Several canyons on the downstream area's northwestern shore were identified as still appropriate for traditional use (Reclamation 1995). Many locations of traditional cultural significance are on lands surrounding the reservoir, and these also are particularly important to the Tribes; this is because many sites were destroyed, and areas were made inaccessible by the inundation for the reservoir (Reclamation 2000, 44).

Traditional natural resource-use gathering includes a large variety of plants, birds, animals, and minerals for a range of uses, including personal adornment, ceremonials use, domestic use, food, medicinal uses for both people and horses, and craft or trade. These resources are detailed in Table 6.3 of the ethnographic summary by Kooistra-Manning and Deaver (1999, 6-41 to 6-81). Specific locations identified in the study for medicinal and ceremonial resource gathering include Fort Hall Bottoms, Lava Hot Springs, and Spring Creek.

Consultation

Reclamation conducts consultation with federally recognized Tribes in accordance with legal and regulatory guidelines, including, but not limited to, the NHPA; the American Indian Religious Freedom Act; NAGPRA; Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; Secretarial Order 3175, Departmental Responsibilities for Indian Trust Resources; Joint Secretarial Order 3403 on Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters; Departmental Manual, Series 30 Part 512, American Indian and Alaska Natives Programs; and the Reclamation Manual, Indian Policy of the Bureau of Reclamation (NIA P10). Chapter 5, Consultation and Coordination, presents an up-to-date summary of outreach and communication with federally recognized Tribes.

3.4.2 Socioeconomic Conditions

NEPA provides the overarching guiding framework for how Reclamation manages and addresses socioeconomic conditions in its projects, along with Reclamation-specific departmental guidance. The 1995 RMP does not contain any management direction for socioeconomic conditions.

Evaluating socioeconomic conditions provides important context for understanding how resource management decisions influence the economic well-being and quality of life of nearby communities. These conditions can shape and be shaped by factors such as employment opportunities, population growth, and the stability of an area's major economic sectors. Evaluating these factors offers insight on how management changes may affect business activity and local livelihoods, particularly in rural areas where natural resources and recreation play an important role in the local economy.

The socioeconomic study area for American Falls Dam and Reservoir includes the counties in which the reservoir is located: Bannock, Bingham, and Power Counties. This section summarizes trends in population growth, identifies key industries, describes the regional economic setting, and highlights relevant factors such as labor force composition and income. While tourism is not a major economic sector in the area, information on tourism activity is also provided to demonstrate the contribution of outdoor recreation, which can include reservoir-based amenities, in local economies within the study area.

Population trends provide insight on the scale and pace of regional development, which can influence demands for infrastructure, public services, and recreational opportunities. Area population trends over the past 15 years indicate a slower rate of growth in the study area as compared with the state of Idaho as a whole (24 percent increase between 2010 and 2023), particularly for Power County (5 percent increase between 2010 and 2023; see **Table 3-20**). This slower rate of population growth highlights the socioeconomic study area's rural setting and may influence the demand for area recreation.

Table 3-20. Socioeconomic Study Area Population Trends

Geographic Area	2010	2023	% Change 2010–23
Bingham County	44,496	48,993	10.1
Bannock County	80,701	88,457	9.6
Power County	7,633	8,018	5.0
Idaho	1,526,797	1,893,296	24.0

Source: Headwaters Economics 2025a

Compared with the state of Idaho as a whole, Bingham County, and particularly Power County, have a greater reliance on the nonservice sectors of the economy, representing 29.5 percent and 51.0 percent of total employment, respectively, compared with the Idaho state level of 19.5 percent. Nonservice sectors include farming, forestry and agricultural services, mining, construction, and manufacturing. Key employment sectors in Bingham and Power Counties include manufacturing and farming. Government also represents an important employment sector in Bingham County.

Bannock County has a decreased reliance on nonservice sectors as compared with the state of Idaho, representing only 13.7 percent of total employment. Key sectors in Bannock County include health care, retail trade, and government employment. Over the past 20 years for all geographic areas examined, the percentage of jobs in nonservice sectors has decreased (see **Table 3-21**).

Nonservice sectors tend to have higher wages than service sectors as a whole; this is because nonservice jobs typically involve more technical and specialized skills, or they require specific training. As a result, nonservice sector jobs account for a smaller share of total income than they do of total employment across all geographic areas examined (see **Table 3-22**).

Reservoir recreation can support area jobs in the travel and tourism sector. Outdoor recreation spending in Idaho as a whole represented 3.3 percent of total state gross domestic product in 2023. This includes a wide range of activities, such as boating, fishing, hiking, camping, and wildlife viewing; other activities such as gardening and outdoor concerts; and supporting activities, such as transportation, hotels, and restaurants. All these contribute to local business revenues and

employment opportunities. In 2023, total outdoor recreation and the associated spending represented $3.96 million in total economic value, with boating and fishing representing approximately 5 percent of this total (BEA 2024).

While travel and tourism jobs in Power (4.6 percent) and Bingham (11.2 percent) Counties represent a smaller share of jobs as compared with the percentage of jobs in these sectors for the state of Idaho as a whole (14.1 percent) (Headwaters Economics 2025e), these jobs still provide seasonal employment opportunities in rural areas and may be important at the local level in the region. In Bannock County, travel and tourism jobs were slightly higher than for the state level at 15.7 percent. These positions may be connected to locally owned businesses such as outfitters, lodging facilities, and food service establishments that depend on seasonal visitor traffic. It should be noted that jobs specifically supported by recreational use on Reclamation lands and from reservoir-based recreation represent only a portion of recreational jobs in the socioeconomic study area. Data on the specific level of jobs supported are not available.

3.4.3 Public Health and Safety

There are numerous federal, state, and local regulations and ordinances aimed at protecting public health and safety. The 1995 RMP emphasizes public health and safety through management actions addressing trespass, boater safety, public access information, and safe entry to Reclamation lands. Goals and actions related to public health and safety are integrated across multiple resource management components within the 1995 RMP. Additionally, Reclamation maintains a resource management policy that emphasizes stewardship for resource protection, conservation, and multiple-use management, including practices that ensure the protection of public health and safety.

Specific management in the 1995 RMP related to public health and safety includes actions to control litter, including a "pack it in–pack it out" policy and assurance of litter removal through various methods, and for boater safety (refer to **Table 11**, including navigational lights, signage of boater safety regulations, and other measures in **Section A.6, Public Access and Recreational Use**, in **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**). The section also notes that issues related to illegal dumping will be addressed in coordination with local law enforcement when necessary.

In general, and as described in **Section A.6, Public Access and Recreational Use**, in **Appendix A, 1995 RMP Management Summary**, Reclamation has multiple existing management goals and actions that intend to provide clear, accessible public information to support safe recreation and access on Reclamation lands.

As authorized under the Reclamation Recreation Management Act, it is Reclamation policy to provide for the protection, comfort, and well-being of the public and protection of public safety with respect to the use of Reclamation lands. Reclamation currently manages public health and safety through a variety of methods, partnerships, and agreements, such as signage at important recreation sites and agreements with local law enforcement. However, there are a number of public health and safety concerns throughout the planning area. These include hazardous boating conditions caused by high winds, temporary downstream flooding from emergency dam releases, limited access for emergency personnel and extended response times, and unauthorized use that contributes to both illegal dumping and prolonged camping beyond allowable limits. Trespass on Reclamation lands, such as OHV use, extended camping, and encroachments from private lands, are recurring issues across the planning area.

Table 3-21. Socioeconomic Study Area Employment by Industry - Trends

Geographic Area	Bingham County				Bannock County				Power County				Idaho			
Year	2001		2023		2001		2023		2001		2023		2001		2023	
Total employment (number of jobs)	19,910		24,369		43,013		52,063		4,936		5,170		783,399		1,190,624	
Nonservices related	6,902	34.7%	7,193	29.5%	6,801	15.8%	7,112	13.7%	2,832	57.4%	2,636	51.0%	186,254	23.8%	232,306	19.5%
Farm	2,455	12.3%	2,263	9.3%	1,110	2.6%	892	1.7%	669	13.6%	943	18.2%	40,625	5.2%	40,378	3.4%
Forestry, fishing, and agricultural services	682	3.4%	653	2.7%	119	0.3%	62	0.1%	257	5.2%	290	5.6%	12,088	1.5%	13,753	1.2%
Mining (including fossil fuels)	27	0.1%	45	0.2%	43	0.1%	87	0.2%	10	0.2%	1	0.0%	3,022	0.4%	4,833	0.4%
Construction	1,340	6.7%	1,976	8.1%	2,619	6.1%	3,582	6.9%	319	6.5%	146	2.8%	58,043	7.4%	93,405	7.8%
Manufacturing	2,398	12.0%	2,256	9.3%	2,910	6.8%	2,489	4.8%	1,577	31.9%	1,256	24.3%	72,476	9.3%	79,937	6.7%
Services related	9,042	45.4%	12,891	52.9%	27,024	62.8%	35,973	69.1%	1,839	37.3%	1,892	36.6%	478,035	61.0%	823,345	69.2%
Utilities	53	0.3%	74	0.3%	69	0.2%	125	0.2%	12	0.2%	13	0.3%	1,944	0.2%	3,415	0.3%
Wholesale trade	1,623	8.2%	954	3.9%	1,261	2.9%	1,540	3.0%	279	5.7%	264	5.1%	27,950	3.6%	38,945	3.3%
Retail trade	1,980	9.9%	2,151	8.8%	5,712	13.3%	6,024	11.6%	319	6.5%	238	4.6%	93,453	11.9%	122,917	10.3%
Transportation and warehousing	504	2.5%	818	3.4%	1,254	2.9%	1,881	3.6%	294	6.0%	330	6.4%	22,572	2.9%	50,967	4.3%
Information	157	0.8%	67	0.3%	754	1.8%	382	0.7%	77	1.6%	56	1.1%	11,528	1.5%	12,888	1.1%
Finance and insurance	503	2.5%	1,094	4.5%	1,789	4.2%	2,375	4.6%	83	1.7%	82	1.6%	26,965	3.4%	57,109	4.8%
Real estate and rental and leasing	355	1.8%	1,119	4.6%	1,156	2.7%	2,536	4.9%	83	1.7%	148	2.9%	26,026	3.3%	73,842	6.2%
Professional and technical services	451	2.3%	771	3.2%	1,933	4.5%	2,591	5.0%	93	1.9%	69	1.3%	44,138	5.6%	77,793	6.5%
Management of companies	56	0.3%	64	0.3%	221	0.5%	613	1.2%	43	0.9%	51	1.0%	8,091	1.0%	11,008	0.9%
Administrative and waste services	376	1.9%	730	3.0%	2,829	6.6%	2,168	4.2%	101	2.0%	71	1.4%	40,330	5.1%	65,200	5.5%
Educational services	68	0.3%	292	1.2%	286	0.7%	795	1.5%	7	0.1%	51	1.0%	9,076	1.2%	26,229	2.2%
Health care and social assistance	968	4.9%	2,066	8.5%	3,764	8.8%	7,238	13.9%	91	1.8%	148	2.9%	63,865	8.2%	120,991	10.2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	199	1.0%	293	1.2%	650	1.5%	1,006	1.9%	19	0.4%	43	0.8%	13,122	1.7%	24,838	2.1%
Accommodation and food services	748	3.8%	1,017	4.2%	3,267	7.6%	4,284	8.2%	128	2.6%	146	2.8%	50,331	6.4%	81,610	6.9%
Other services, except public administration	1,001	5.0%	1,381	5.7%	2,079	4.8%	2,415	4.6%	210	4.3%	182	3.5%	38,644	4.9%	55,593	4.7%
Government	4,061	20.4%	4,285	17.6%	9,230	21.5%	8,679	16.7%	719	14.6%	715	13.8%	119,110	15.2%	134,973	11.3%

Sources: Headwaters Economics 2025b, 2025c, 2025d

Table 3-22. Socioeconomic Study Area Average Labor Income by Industry (1000s 2024$)

Geographic Area	Bingham County				Bannock County				Power County				Idaho			
Year	2001		2023		2001		2023		2001		2023		2001		2023	
Total labor income	886,500		1,400,000		2,100,000		2,700,000		329,000		348,000		44,300,000		75,700,000	
Nonservices related	354,100	39.9%	459,000	32.8%	392,363	18.7%	436,186,	16.2%	236,406	71.9%	213,971	61.5%	12,507,485	28.2%	18,067,598	23.9%
Farm	83,300	9.4%	135,700	9.7%	15,119	0.7%	9,479	0.4%	48,167	14.6%	82,004	23.6%	1,996,023	4.5%	2,937,087	3.9%
Forestry, fishing, and agricultural services	56,600	6.4%	43,100	3.1%	1,311	0.1%	8,400	0.3%	17,071	5.2%	15,184	4.4%	574,956	1.3%	686,590	0.9%
Mining (including fossil fuels)	895	0.1%	1,900	0.1%	1,125	0.1%	1,438	0.1%	159	0.1%	76	0.0%	242,821	0.6%	310,208	0.4%
Construction	75,200	8.5%	118,600	8.5%	140,761	6.7%	236,153	8.8%	19,494	5.9%	6,950	2.0%	4,099,827	9.3%	6,856,090	9.1%
Manufacturing	138,100	15.6%	160,400	11.5%	234,048	11.2%	180,717	6.7%	151,516	46.1%	109,758	31.5%	5,593,858	0.0%	7,277,626	0.0%
Services related	310,400	35.0%	676,800	48.3%	1,127,003	53.7%	1,638,375	60.7%	86,474	26.3%	110,032	31.6%	23,745,913	53.6%	47,461,823	62.7%
Utilities	4,500	0.5%	9,500	0.7%	4908	0.2%	19,640	0.7%	466	0.1%	1,886	0.5%	175,596	0.4%	513,571	0.7%
Wholesale trade	81,300	9.2%	140,900	10.1%	85,722	4.1%	119,172	4.4%	25,099	7.6%	23,987	6.9%	1,956,465	4.4%	4,023,405	5.3%
Retail trade	51,000	5.7%	69,800	5.0%	187,090	8.9%	217,510	8.1%	8,436	2.6%	7,622	2.2%	3,847,246	8.7%	6,854,927	9.1%
Transportation and warehousing	31,800	3.6%	47,400	3.4%	131,667	6.3%	107,614	4.0%	16,510	5.0%	20,360	5.9%	1,433,853	3.2%	2,523,557	3.3%
Information	5,600	0.6%	1,300	0.1%	42,953	2.1%	13,868	0.5%	6,239	1.9%	4,092	1.2%	757,073	1.7%	985,752	1.3%
Finance and insurance	19,200	2.2%	39,900	2.9%	108,758	5.2%	113,920	4.2%	3,563	1.1%	3,667	1.1%	1,668,138	3.8%	3,349,992	4.4%
Real estate and rental and leasing	6,500	0.7%	93,000	6.7%	28,496	1.4%	71,596	2.7%	2,490	0.8%	7,826	2.3%	713,717	1.6%	2,457,088	3.3%
Professional and technical services	14,700	1.7%	30,700	2.2%	87,985	4.2%	156,952	5.8%	1,802	0.6%	2,850	0.8%	32,944	7.4%	6,256,059	8.3%
Management of companies	6,500	0.7%	1,600	0.1%	22226	1.1%	49,396	1.8%	6,163	1.8%	2,272	0.7%	1,116,454	2.5%	1,149,044	1.5%
Administrative and waste services	8,900	1.0%	20,900	1.5%	69,526	3.3%	84,377	3.1%	1,662	0.5%	974,	0.3%	1,605,336	3.6%	3,650,507	4.8%
Educational services	741	0.1%	3,800	0.3%	7,010	0.3%	23,299	0.9%	161	0.1%	2,134	0.6%	308,358	0.7%	897,904	1.2%
Health care and social assistance	39,300	4.4%	132,600	9.5%	207,058	9.9%	437,149	16.2%	4,102	1.3%	16,113	4.6%	4,003,935	9.0%	8,816,868	11.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	902	0.1%	4,900	0.4%	7,634	0.4%	12,253	0.5%	379	0.1%	2,096	0.6%	305,277	0.7%	779,555	1.0%
Accommodation and food services	11,600	1.3%	24,600	1.8%	66,198	3.2%	110,12	4.1%	1,760	0.5%	6,608	1.9%	1,155,202	2.6%	2,723,903	3.6%
Other services, except public administration	28,000	3.2%	55,600	4.0%	69,771	3.3%	101,507	3.8%	7,641	2.3%	7,544	2.2%	1,404,569	3.2%	2,479,693	3.3%
Government	260,700	29.4%	259,600	18.5%	600,793	28.6%	576,772	21.4%	40,883	12.4%	41,495	11.9%	8,081,543	18.2%	10,145,348	13.4%

Sources: Headwaters Economics 2025b, 2025c, 2025d

The 1995 RMP has various management actions in place regarding boating safety, including navigational lights for use at night and signage of boater safety regulations and etiquette. However, strong winds at the reservoir, primarily from the southwest, can create hazardous conditions for boaters, sometimes resulting in emergencies and the need to call first responders or search and rescue. These strong winds can cause boats to capsize or drift away from the boat ramps and into areas with limited access or opportunities for emergency rescue. Boaters are often blown into the West Bank or Springfield MUs by southwest winds. Proactive steps have been taken to help educate and inform the general public about safety precautions, such as the location of life jacket stations, awareness and signage to avoid the reservoir during high winds, and road and boat launch repairs. Local sheriff offices perform regular boat inspections and patrol the reservoir.

In addition to boating emergencies caused by strong winds, the potential for boating accidents increases during low water periods when reduced water levels limit navigable space, especially in shallow areas at the reservoir's north end. The reservoir's northern portion can become particularly shallow, limiting access and use of the Sportsman's Park boat ramps and pullout locations at McTucker Ponds. In the south, the Willow Bay or Seagull Bay boat ramps quickly become inaccessible during low water periods, leaving the West Boat Ramp as the only accessible option.

Other boating-related safety concerns include the intake at the dam, which causes safety concerns for wave runners and boats, and boats traveling at high speeds (65–70 miles per hour) at the dam, presenting a safety hazard for Reclamation staff who perform operations at the dam.

Emergency releases at the dam from IPC to manage flood risk or reservoir levels can cause temporary flooding downstream of the dam, which has the potential to create a public safety hazard. When significant flow changes are expected, Reclamation collaborates with IPC, Power County Emergency Management, and the Power County Sheriff. As required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Reclamation completes tabletop exercises[14] and maintains a calling tree that is used for safety during emergency releases from the dam (FEMA 2024). Maintaining the contact tree encourages greater public engagement and understanding of the operations and emergencies at the dam. When changes in the water depth in the Snake River downstream of American Falls are imminent, the public is notified by horn near the dam and within the city of American Falls.

There are ongoing issues related to illegal dumping, trash and litter, spent shells from shooting, and general crime across many of the MUs; many of these issues stem from unauthorized use that also contributes to prolonged camping beyond allowable limits. There is a lack of adequate signage regarding authorized and prohibited uses throughout Reclamation lands, which results in a continuation of unauthorized uses and makes enforcement difficult.

Reclamation is not a law enforcement agency and will continue to rely on BLM law enforcement, as well as local and county law enforcement and emergency response agencies, as authorized under 43 CFR 422, which allows Reclamation to enter into law enforcement contracts. This includes BLM law enforcement officers, the Power County and Bingham County sheriffs' offices, and the appropriate county emergency response departments. Reclamation is also not a fire management agency but coordinates with federal and local fire response agencies as appropriate.

[14] Tabletop exercises are discussion-based sessions in which key personnel assigned emergency management roles and responsibilities meet in an informal setting to discuss their roles during an emergency and their responses to a hypothetical, simulated emergency. A facilitator guides participants through a discussion of one or more scenarios.

It should be noted that even though Reclamation relies on local law enforcement, county and state law enforcement agencies operating on Reclamation land do not have the authority to enforce regulations found at 43 CFR 423 pertaining to public conduct on Reclamation facilities, lands, and waterbodies. These regulations specifically address unauthorized use of public lands managed by Reclamation and include provisions related to various offenses, such as vandalism. Enforcement of these regulations, including penalties for vandalism, is within the jurisdiction of federal law enforcement officers, as county and state agencies are not authorized to enforce 43 CFR regulations.

There are some notable public health and safety concerns associated with specific MUs (see **Table 3-23**). Camping overstays, trespass, and illegal dumping are common at some of the western shore MUs, such as the West Bank, Sportsman's Park, and Archaeological District MUs. In the northern end of the planning area, there are notable public health and safety concerns at McTucker Ponds. Shallow waters during low water periods increase the risk of boating accidents in the area around McTucker Ponds. Additionally, this area is occasionally used for search and rescue operations, which can be difficult during both low water conditions and periods of high flow from the Snake River, as access for emergency crews may be hindered. As recreational use in the planning area increases, response times and accessibility for such operations may become more challenging, particularly in the McTucker Ponds MU due to its distance from communities. This MU also faces issues such as frequent boat accidents; congestion; trespassing, including unauthorized vehicle access; and a lack of clear signage for directional and authorized use. As a popular recreation area, particularly for fishing, growing visitor use is expected to further compound these public health and safety challenges.

Table 3-23. Public Health and Safety Issues by Management Unit

Management Unit (MU)	Public Health and Safety Issue
MU 2 – West Boat Ramp	• Long-term campers staying longer than the authorized 14-day limit • Boaters often cannot return to the boat ramp during high wind conditions.
MU 3 – West Bank	• Long-term campers staying longer than the authorized 14-day limit and other unauthorized uses
MU 5 – Sportsman's Park	• Limited directional and authorized use-related signage • Illegal dumping, particularly dumping fertilizer, diesel, and other chemicals associated with agricultural use
MU 7 – McTucker Ponds	• High number/frequency of boat accidents • Ongoing congestion • Limited access for Bingham County search and rescue • Limited directional and authorized use-related signage • Unauthorized automobile use
MU 12 – Coldwater	• High-use area without minimum basic facilities
MU 13 – Archaeological District	• No current police force; limited force previously with only one BLM officer; limited law enforcement monitoring • Limited directional signage
MU 14 – Inundation Zone	• Recreation increases at exposed areas when water levels decrease • Overall lack of signage of authorized uses

Source: Reclamation 2025

Chapter 4. Constraints, Issues, and Opportunities

This chapter summarizes the management constraints, issues, and opportunities identified in the RMP planning process. The information provided in this chapter establishes some parameters that influence how the planning area is managed. In an effort to accommodate future demand and to meet public expectations, managers must take advantage of the available opportunities to secure supplemental funding and to secure a managing partner or cooperator to share in the recreation management responsibilities in the planning area. Managers must formulate a strategy that addresses the identified issues and concerns and takes into consideration existing constraints or limitations.

4.1 Constraints

Constraints are limitations or restrictions that can affect the implementation of management actions. Constraints are inherent with all land-managing agencies (due to budgets, staffing, priorities, politics, environmental limitations, policies, environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders). These constraints may determine how Reclamation resolves certain planning issues in the RMP. The following broad constraints have been identified in the RMP planning process:

- Reclamation must comply with all federal laws and regulations, including existing management agreements and enabling legislation.
- It is not within the scope of the RMP to study, alter, or change water rights and reservoir operations. Existing operational requirements, legal and contractual obligations, and operations of the integrated Upper Snake Reservoir System are beyond the scope of the RMP.
- Most lands surrounding and adjacent to the planning area are privately owned. There are associated challenges with trespass, encroachment, law enforcement, and emergency response on Reclamation lands. Reclamation has both limited access and authority to address some trespass and encroachment.
- The ability to implement and enforce most actions depends on availability of funds and identifying cost-sharing partners, as required by laws and regulations.
- General environmental conditions, including the semiarid climate, wind, shoreline geography, and propensity for sedimentation, have resulted in specific user trends and uses.

4.2 Issues

A planning issue in an RMP represents unrealized opportunities, unresolved conflicts or problems, efforts to implement new management approaches (driven by new initiatives, laws, or regulations), or concerns about diminishing values. To identify issues and concerns regarding management of the planning area, this planning effort included a robust public involvement process, as described in **Section 1.5**. In addition, Reclamation resource specialists collected and evaluated existing resource data and reviewed Reclamation's programs and policies. During this process, Reclamation identified

issues and concerns similar to those identified by the public and working group. Generally, the issues and concerns addressed in the RMP relate to the following:

- A primary issue raised during the planning process is the need to manage erosion around the reservoir and the associated sedimentation within the reservoir itself. The issue of erosion could be directly connected to impacts on air and water quality with increased erosion resulting in parallel impacts on these resources.
- As noted in the constraints above, access to and management of Reclamation lands in the planning area are difficult due to limited access. Limited access results in a variety of issues related to the management of natural and cultural resources as well as public uses (see below). Issues with access are compounded by limited signage about access and general public information about Reclamation lands and appropriate uses, as well as the need for enforcement and infrastructure improvements. Limited access is directly tied to the constraints posed by private ownership of adjacent lands.

  In some cases, adjacent private landowners are encroaching or trespassing on Reclamation lands. Reclamation has limited authority to address these trespass and encroachments, particularly under the 1995 RMP, which prohibits the issuance of new agricultural permits. Limited access hampers Reclamation's ability to address trespass and encroachments.
- It is the responsibility of the IDEQ to monitor, assess, track, and restore the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the State's surface waters. American Falls Reservoir is a receiving body from nonpoint and point source pollution and is considered a nonpoint source for these pollutants, including sediment. For example, wastewater treatment plants in Blackfoot, Firth, Shelley, and others contribute nutrient loading to American Falls Reservoir. The transport of those pollutants contributes to water quality issues in American Falls Reservoir (IDEQ 2012a). It is the highest priority for Reclamation to not pursue actions that will increase the accumulation of pollutants and sediment in American Falls Reservoir. The quality and quantity of water that passes through Reclamation's facilities are managed under different authorities and obligations, and are therefore beyond the scope of this RMP, as discussed in **Chapter 2, Scope of the American Falls RMP**.
- Management of wildlife and vegetation is a challenge in the planning area due to the presence of invasive terrestrial and aquatic species, such as salt cedar (tamarisk), and noxious weeds that require active management and compliance with federal and state regulations. These species impact habitat quality, particularly when coupled with increased development, warming water temperatures, and seasonal drawdowns. Additional challenges exist within lands leased to IDFG, including degraded habitat conditions in the Sterling WMA and deteriorating dikes and water conveyance infrastructure in the Sportsman's Park MU.
- Numerous cultural and paleontological resources in the planning area are vulnerable to both natural and human-induced processes. Resources within the shoreline frequently erode, damaging their context while also making them more apparent and susceptible to damage or collection by the public. Recreational uses also impact cultural and paleontological resources, particularly unauthorized vehicle use along the shoreline and elsewhere. Given the constraints associated with adjacent landownership, many cultural resources are difficult to access, particularly in the Archaeological District MU, and are, therefore, difficult to monitor and manage.
- Portions of the planning area are adjacent to the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, and there is a risk of unintentional trespass from Reclamation lands onto Tribal lands. The Tribes have expressed

concern regarding reservoir management and recreational use, particularly in the northern portion near the McTucker Ponds MU, where shallow water and safety issues increase the potential for conflicts. Reclamation must coordinate with the Tribes to ensure management actions respect Tribal lands, minimize trespass, and address shared safety concerns.

- Recreational use in the area has increased over time, resulting in impacts on natural and cultural resources, public facilities, and recreational infrastructure. Illegal dumping, human waste, litter, and pallet burning negatively affect public health, safety, and the quality of the recreational experience. Additionally, seasonal drawdowns increase access to the shoreline, leading to recreational use of these areas and exposure to hazardous conditions, such as mud and quicksand, that pose safety risks and increase vehicle incidents. High wind events present risks for boaters, while the dam intake area poses safety concerns for motorized watercraft. Emergency releases from the dam also require consideration of downstream recreational and public safety impacts. Several roads and parking areas require maintenance or repaving, and high-use locations lack restroom facilities. Recreational demand has intensified due to nearby residential development, increasing the potential for user conflicts, especially in areas like the McTucker Ponds MU that are also managed for wildlife.

4.2.1 Opportunities

In the context of an RMP, opportunities refer to potential actions or strategies that can be employed to address identified issues, improve resource management practices, and/or enhance the value of resources. During the planning process, Reclamation identified potential resource management opportunities to address the operational, natural resources management, land-use, cultural, and recreational issues that fall under the issues overview presented in **Section 4.2**, above. Many opportunities rely on expanding or initiating partnerships with local, Tribal, state, and federal entities, as well as the broader public.

Opportunities exist to develop management strategies that support integrated, landscape-scale stewardship across resource categories. These include closing or enforcing restrictions on redundant and informal roads and unauthorized motorized use to reduce erosion and limit impacts on natural and cultural resources. Additionally, a planning area–wide signage plan would enhance public safety, raise regulatory awareness, and support educational outreach, while addressing resource protection and recreational needs. In addition, strengthening existing partnerships and developing new collaborative relationships with the Tribes, local governments, nonprofits, and federal and state agencies would improve coordination, enable data sharing, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of resource management efforts throughout the planning area. Reclamation should continue to work closely with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to identify opportunities for collaborative management and expanded stewardship of natural and cultural resources, particularly in areas of shared concern. Opportunities include clarifying jurisdiction, improving recreational management in overlapping areas, and reducing the potential for trespass.

Proactive management of erosion would improve water quality in the planning area. Expanding the erosion control programs by armoring the shoreline, managing OHV access, and restoring vegetation in agricultural zones would help reduce sedimentation. Incorporating CWA Section 404 and 401 permitting processes into planning efforts can further enhance operational efficiency. Limiting unauthorized motorized use and improving roads and recreation sites, along with strategic vegetation planting, can help reduce erosion and fugitive dust. Limiting erosion through an expanded erosion control program would have a corresponding positive outcome for reservoir

storage capacity. The development of a sediment management plan, under the direction of other Reclamation authorities, would be an opportunity to further decrease or respond to sedimentation and decreases in storage capacity.

In addition to erosion control, there are opportunities to improve water quality while working within the constraints of water rights and operations. Existing water quality datasets maintained by Reclamation, the Minidoka Irrigation District, and the US Geological Survey could be used to inform adaptive management approaches. Partnerships and coordination with local, state, and federal agencies offer opportunities to better monitor and respond to water quality concerns, such as algal blooms. For example, Reclamation could work with storage contractors and the State of Idaho to develop solutions for concerns on tailwater turbidity and heavy metals in the reservoir.

Reclamation management would be facilitated by clarifying landownership boundaries, proactively addressing encroachment issues, and developing land-use authorizations to manage compatible land uses. Coordinated trash cleanup and improved scenic quality could be pursued in areas with overlapping landownership to protect natural resources and the public's experience. Activities aimed at better identification of land boundaries and signage of access points would benefit a number of resources and Reclamation management activities, including for wildlife and cultural, paleontological, and recreational resources, while also fostering safe public use of Reclamation lands.

There are opportunities for wildlife habitat restoration, particularly in the MUs focused on wildlife management. Opportunities for habitat restoration include using prescribed fire for wetland enhancement, implementing habitat protection for bird SGCN and federally listed species, and improving aquatic habitat through refined fishery stocking practices. Collaborations with land trusts, private landowners, and other conservation entities could be pursued to secure conservation easements, safeguard high-value habitat, and secure dedicated funding for habitat enhancement.

Cultural and paleontological resource management could be strengthened through increased collaboration with the Tribes, expanded interpretation and signage, and protection of vulnerable structures. Cultural resource preservation activities would benefit from education and outreach at known sites, such as the Old Town Site and Archaeological District, and particularly signage related to Archaeological Resources Protection Act violations and protection of resources. Similarly, education and interpretation of paleontological specimens would increase public awareness and preservation of these resources. There are also opportunities to create partnerships to monitor for paleontological resources and support research on fossil specimens from the American Falls collections and to partner with museums and scientific organizations to enhance public education and stewardship of fossil resources.

A variety of opportunities exists to improve recreational infrastructure, access, and the user experience, while minimizing resource degradation. Priorities include improving roads, campgrounds, vault toilets, and parking areas across key MUs. There is the potential to develop a new, safe harbor boat launch and potentially other boat launch opportunities on the main stem that would increase access to the reservoir during key periods of the year, such as during low water conditions or spring thaw. There are also opportunities for Reclamation to develop interpretive and safety signage programs, including public education on public health and safety concerns, directional signage, and interpretive signage. Partnerships with Power County, IPC, and others could be leveraged or expanded to support recreational development and management.

Expanding partnerships with local sheriff's offices and search and rescue teams could improve enforcement and emergency response, while deterrents such as riprap and signage may help curb illegal dumping and improve law enforcement response. Increasing public engagement around Reclamation operations and emergency protocols can enhance community awareness, preparedness, and safety across the planning area.

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Chapter 5. RMP for the Planning Area

5.1 Plan Development

Reclamation has the primary stewardship responsibility to manage the lands under its jurisdiction in accordance with existing laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines. The goals, objectives, and management actions outlined in this chapter must be met in an environmentally and economically feasible manner. A primary step in the planning process was to identify goals, objectives, and associated management actions needed to address the identified issues and concerns that would not conflict with existing laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines. In addition, many of the goals, objectives, and management actions were formulated in response to basic land management principles and concepts.

The RMP assumes that Reclamation will follow existing and future federal laws, regulations, and executive orders when managing lands in the planning area. **Appendix B, Regulatory Framework**, provides a partial list of applicable federal laws, regulations, and executive orders.

5.2 Management Actions to Implement the RMP

Certain management actions were identified during the planning process that would facilitate the management of the 40,140 acres in the planning area. The following information sets forth the management actions that Reclamation would implement within the 10-year planning life of this RMP. Specific management actions and the goals and objectives of each resource and resource use are provided in this chapter.

5.2.1 Goals, Objectives, and Actions

As stated previously, Reclamation developed goals and objectives in direct response to the issues and concerns identified through the planning process. A goal is a general statement that describes the desired future condition that is expected to be achieved once the RMP is fully implemented. An objective is a brief statement that describes a broad-based strategy that can accomplish a goal.

Each set of goals and objectives outlined in this chapter is accompanied by specific management actions that would facilitate completion of the objectives. The management actions are grouped together to show their relationship to the associated goals and objectives. Many actions may be specific, and other actions may be broad and intended to initiate other actions that are needed to achieve the desired future condition.

Implementation of the action(s) is ultimately Reclamation's responsibility and contingent on appropriations from Congress and other funding sources, if available, as well as staffing. Some actions may be accomplished in cooperation with other entities or organizations.

Reclamation's mission is to "manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public."

5.2.2 General Direction and Management

- Comply with the ESA to protect federally protected species and critical habitat. Comply with legal responsibilities for recovery and maintenance of federally listed species.
- Protect and enhance wetlands in accordance with existing federal regulations.
- Continue to target and maintain a minimum 300 cubic feet per second baseline winter flow at American Falls Dam to meet ESA and other regulatory requirements.
- Complete cultural resource management actions in accordance with requirements in the NHPA (36 CFR 800), American Indian Religious Freedom Act, NAGPRA, and other appropriate laws and regulations.
- Include appropriate NEPA compliance and consultation in implementation actions.
- Obtain necessary water quality permits prior to construction.
- Implement most actions depending on the availability of funds and identify cost-share partners as required by current laws and regulations. Maintain basic facilities at designated recreation areas in accordance with current cost-share agreements and protect specific resources.
- Reclamation lands are closed to off-road vehicle use unless otherwise stated open (43 CFR 420).
- Encroachment and trespass on Reclamation lands will not be allowed. Yearly inspections will be conducted on an informal basis and a formal review will be conducted every 5 years. Agricultural and grazing use of Reclamation lands will be allowed only if authorized and if wildlife and cultural values are met. Equipment, pipes, haystacks, etc. will not be allowed on Reclamation lands. Follow any illegal dumping on public lands, which is a violation of federal and local regulations, with local law enforcement officials, if necessary. Improve boundary identification, where feasible, with installation of signs, monuments, and fences.
- Because the management philosophy for the area downstream from American Falls Dam focuses on protection of natural and cultural resources, Reclamation lands will generally remain closed to OHVs.

5.2.3 Air Quality and Climate

Goal: Preserve, protect, and maintain air quality and air resource-related values consistent with public health.

Objective: Within the scope of Reclamation's authority, maintain concentrations of criteria pollutants in compliance with applicable state and federal ambient air quality standards.

Objective: Manage public land activities consistent with the Clean Air Act, as amended, and at least the federal Class II area standards and visibility (regional haze) criteria, and no less than any local governments' air quality criteria.

- **Action:** Incorporate air quality protection consistent with the Clean Air Act, as amended, into all surface-disturbing activities on Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** To ensure compliance with the Clean Air Act Prevention of Significant Deterioration program, consider requiring further analysis of air resources before authorizing activities.

- **Action:** Reduce air quality impacts from activities on public land through mitigation measures developed on a case-by-case basis through NEPA or other statutory or regulatory processes. Evaluate each impact to see if it is allowable and acceptable.

5.2.4 Hydrology and Water Resources

Goal 1: Manage water resources to protect water rights and storage capacity within the reservoir.

Objective: Ensure water resources' management and uses do not conflict with established water rights, storage contracts, or irrigation.

- **Action:** If feasible, implement with the consent of the space holders (advisory committee), reservoir operational adjustments that contribute to achieving fishery, endangered species, wildlife, and recreational objectives while protecting water rights, reservoir storage rights, and irrigation operational needs.

Goal 2: Protect and improve water quality through management of potential contaminants on Reclamation lands and coordination with partners and local stakeholders.

Objective: Collaborate with partners, adjacent landowners, and local stakeholders to monitor and protect water quality and address potential water quality issues.

- **Action:** Continue to encourage farmers to reduce their rates of chemical applications of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands and include usage guidelines in lease agreements to continue positive trends in water quality as demonstrated from water sampling.
- **Action:** Continue to encourage the appropriate use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** Continue to monitor water quality programs targeting point source and nonpoint source pollution and drainage inflow points where studies have indicated a potential for water contaminants, as funding allows.
- **Action:** Continue to participate in regional, ongoing and planned water quality monitoring programs and work with partners to address water quality deficiencies based on the results of water quality monitoring.
- **Action:** Where water quality monitoring of restoration and enhancement projects is needed, conduct water quality monitoring in consultation with the IDEQ.
- **Action:** Develop partnerships to identify point source pollutants and coordinate on emerging water quality concerns to ensure compliance with the CWA.
- **Action:** Maintain and expand partnerships with the US Geological Survey, IDEQ, and IPC for the development of a general water quality monitoring plan, which would identify monitoring objectives; water quality parameters of interest; the location and frequency of sampling; sampling protocols, where applicable; and data management protocols.
- **Action:** Provide sanitation and waste management services through continued partnerships and agreements with nonfederal entities to reduce potential water quality issues, where feasible and appropriate.
- **Action:** Continue to administer grant opportunities (such as the WaterSMART program) to benefit water quality in tributaries to American Falls Reservoir and downstream.

5.2.5 Soils and Erosion Control

Goal 1: Maintain the shoreline and reduce erosion and sedimentation.

Objective: Continue the erosion control program to reduce the rate of erosion on Reclamation lands.

- **Action:** Continue to implement the sediment control plan (see Appendix C). Consider a range of erosion control strategies, incorporating mechanical and biological approaches, where appropriate.
- **Action:** Implement and monitor engineered erosion mitigation and control features, such as willow planting and riprap placement, where such features appear effective and are less costly than land acquisition, and planting of vegetation on the shoreline and tributary riparian areas. Modify plans to slope the upper portion of cliffs to minimize erosion and establish upland wildlife habitat in areas where significant colonies of bank swallows reside. Determine the method of accomplishing control work. Use funds provided by Reclamation and the space holders.
- **Action:** Protect and establish riparian vegetation to help control erosion.
- **Action:** Do not pursue actions that increase net sedimentation and loss of storage capacity over the life of the dam unless mitigation measures are identified to limit sedimentation.
- **Action:** Coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes regarding shoreline erosion control priorities within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.
- **Action:** Install deterrents, like riprap and vegetation, to minimize unauthorized uses such as off-road OHV use.
- **Action:** Continue to acquire sufficient lands necessary for the construction, operations, and maintenance of federal project works, including an appropriate freeboard around the reservoir. Acquire land in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, at a width adequate to prevent encroachment, and ensure long-term project integrity. Ensure landowners receive just compensation as provided by law for any property interests acquired.

Objective: Control erosion in all construction projects under Reclamation's jurisdiction.

- **Action:** Include erosion control measures, such as straw mulches, sediment traps, and filter fabric, in the design and construction specifications for any proposed development. Ensure contract specifications contain the best management practices designed to prevent erosion and sediment-laden runoff from leaving project sites during construction. Immediately revegetate and stabilize all exposed areas.
- **Action:** Monitor locations of high use, such as recreation areas and agricultural and grazing easements and authorizations, for erosion.

5.2.6 Vegetation

Goal 1: Protect and enhance important vegetation and associated values.

Objective: Protect, enhance, and restore vegetation, including native vegetation, where feasible.

- **Action:** Rehabilitate vegetation in degraded areas. Consider closures where needed to provide for rehabilitation activities and establishment of vegetation. Prioritize the use of native vegetation when rehabilitating these areas.
- **Action:** Identify methods to restore upland vegetation and habitat damaged by vehicular access, focusing on areas where access has been terminated. Restoration will depend on the ability to provide irrigation, if necessary to protect new plant growth, and Reclamation's ability to fund or cost share the project.
- **Action:** Protect existing trees and promote the establishment of cottonwood forest and shelter belt growth, where feasible.
- **Action:** Restore riparian vegetation on Reclamation lands, to include tributaries and springs, where feasible.
- **Action:** Consider the use of various vegetation treatments, such as mechanical, chemical, and biological treatments and prescribed fire, to maintain and improve vegetation and habitats.
- **Action:** Continue the prescribed burning program.
- **Action:** Continue partnerships or agreements with other agencies to implement prescribed burning on Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** Develop viable vegetation management programs for Reclamation lands. Focus on cooperative efforts to achieve optimum wildlife habitat value on these lands while minimizing adverse effects on farming operations.

5.2.7 Wildlife and Fish

Goal 1: Protect and enhance important wildlife and fisheries species, habitats, and associated values.

Objective: Promote the timely implementation of a habitat conservation and enhancement program.

- **Action:** Assure that habitat management and enhancement consider key habitat and wildlife values, including wetland, riparian mudflat, and upland habitats. Prioritize and coordinate wildlife habitat management actions.
- **Action:** Explore the potential for cooperative agreements, land-use authorizations, or other relationships with private landowners to achieve (1) mutually beneficial vegetation and habitat management on Reclamation land bordering private cropland and (2) retention and enhancement of habitat values within private agricultural lands. Implement these agreements and authorizations, if feasible.
- **Action:** Identify actions needed to protect habitats on Reclamation land from unauthorized uses, such as grazing, agriculture, trespass, and fire.
- **Action:** Restore riparian vegetation and habitat, including areas adjacent to wetland development sites, currently degraded riparian areas, and locations where riparian vegetation was historically found, where feasible.
- **Action:** Explore the potential for using sediment cleared from boat ramps or dredged from the reservoir to benefit wetland re-creation and restoration efforts.
- **Action:** Consider implementing sediment control structures that may also benefit wildlife and other purposes.

- **Action:** Manage for conservation of sage-steppe habitats and consider upland seeding of native and native-like shrubs, forbs, and grasses in areas, as needed.
- **Action:** In the case of wildlife disturbance or habitat degradation, or both, restrict public access, as needed, to affected areas.

Objective: Continue to coordinate with the Services, Tribes, the IDFG, and other working parties regarding the management of wildlife habitat within the planning area.

- **Action:** Coordinate with the IDFG on appropriate priorities in the IDFG fisheries management plan, as applicable to American Falls Reservoir, within Reclamation authorities.
- **Action:** Coordinate with and support the IDFG's fish stocking activities in American Falls Reservoir and river downstream of the dam, when feasible.
- **Action:** Encourage coordination of IDFG stocking and other fishery management efforts with involved agencies, organizations, and Tribes.
- **Action:** Explore the potential for cooperative agreements with Tribes and other partners to meet objectives of habitat conservation and enhancement, recreation, and other areas of mutual use. Focus the agreements on planning, funding, and implementing specific habitat programs consistent with RMP objectives.
- **Action:** Coordinate with the USFWS, the IDFG, Tribes, and other public agencies and interested parties in developing and implementing vegetation and wildlife habitat management programs, including exploration of joint funding programs.

Objective: Protect habitat for federally protected species.

- **Action:** Continue to monitor operational effects on federally protected species and coordinate with the Services on those effects, as applicable.
- **Action:** Protect bald eagle perch trees used by eagles during the day, especially those located where there tends to be a concentration of eagles, by prohibiting the cutting of trees and by signing areas accordingly. Identify and protect any bald eagle nest sites and potential nesting areas. If bald eagles begin nesting in the area, develop nest site management plans to establish protective dates and buffer zones that are consistent with those that have been developed for the upper Snake River.
- **Action:** As applicable, cooperate with the USFWS for impacts on bald eagles from Reclamation activities.
- **Action:** Comply with existing biological opinions or other consultations with the Services for species present on Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** In consultation with the Services, conduct surveys for the presence of federally listed species before constructing any improvements within spring discharge areas.
- **Action:** Consider opportunities to introduce native species to the area based on coordination with the Services, Tribes, and other management partners.

5.2.8 Invasive Species

Goal 1: Maintain healthy native vegetation and wildlife communities by reducing, preventing the expansion of, or eliminating the occurrence of invasive, nonnative species or noxious weeds.

Objective: Prevent the establishment of and control the spread of noxious weeds and invasive, nonnative species, including invasive aquatic species (for example, quagga mussels), through integrated pest management practices.

- **Action:** Work with partners to consider appropriate actions for the control of invasive species (terrestrial and aquatic) and to improve habitat affected by invasive species within this RMP's jurisdiction.
- **Action:** Work cooperatively with Tribes and federal, State, and local entities to identify and prioritize areas where control of noxious weeds is necessary. Incorporate integrated pest management concepts and practices into Reclamation programs. Where possible, coordinate these actions with the wetland and riparian development and shoreline erosion control programs.
- **Action:** Employ targeted vegetation treatments that use a combination of prescribed fire and mechanical, manual, and biological methods to control noxious weeds.
- **Action:** Control aquatic and terrestrial invasive species and enhance habitat quality and functionality on Reclamation lands and the inundation zone managed by Reclamation. Ensure active management involves developing and implementing habitat improvement projects to compensate for the ecosystem services lost due to the development and operation of American Falls Reservoir.
- **Action:** Conduct a detailed vegetation cover inventory around the reservoir to catalog native plant species and identify locations where State-listed noxious weeds, invasive exotics, and other plants are a problem requiring action. Prioritize the inventorying of Reclamation lands first and easements second.
- **Action:** Prioritize the identification and treatment of noxious weeds and invasive species following an early detection, rapid-response process, in coordination with State agencies, where applicable.
- **Action:** Coordinate monitoring and response to detection of aquatic invasive species with the Idaho Department of Agriculture and Tribes, as needed.
- **Action:** Promote wash stations and public education for the identification and prevention of aquatic invasive species.
- **Action:** Improve information for the public on how to reduce the spread of noxious weeds and invasive species through a variety of mediums with a focus on signage at access points.
- **Action:** Coordinate with adjacent landowners to control the spread of noxious weed populations that are identified and span the Reclamation boundary.
- **Action:** Identify priority vegetation treatment areas in limited-access upland and wetland environments and pursue collaborative approaches for implementing treatment.

5.2.9 Visual Resources

Goal 1: Protect and enhance the existing scenic quality and visual resources.

Objective: Manage to retain the existing scenic quality of the landscape.

- **Action:** Manage Reclamation lands to retain the existing character of the landscape. Allow existing features and activities, such as American Falls Dam and the pump stations, to continue as they are. Encourage voluntary consideration for opportunities to reduce visual contrast.

- **Action:** When proposing new activities, ensure that while they may be seen, they should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Ensure the level of change to the characteristic landscape would be low.

Objective: Ensure the siting and design of all new facilities on Reclamation lands blend into the rural landscape.

- **Action:** Develop siting, building design, and screening guidelines and criteria for the improved appearance of structures and the preservation of the rural landscape. Apply these guidelines and criteria to the planning, design, and construction of all new facilities and maintenance or modification of existing facilities.
- **Action:** Continue to remove trash and waste dumps. Explore means of assuring litter removal and trash collection through contracts, agreements, partnerships, and/or signage. Explore means to avoid trash and waste in highly visible areas around the reservoir.
- **Action:** Implement the litter control policy of "pack it in, pack it out" and other litter control programs governing all Reclamation lands, and include policy statements in all visitor information materials. Provide litter receptacles and dumpsters at dispersed recreation sites only if monitoring indicates a need.

5.2.10 Cultural Resources

Goal 1: Manage cultural resources to ensure their protection and preservation for the benefit of future generations and descendant communities.

Objective: Ensure protection of sensitive cultural resources in accordance with existing federal regulations and through consultation with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' cultural committee.

- **Action:** Complete a historic properties management plan (HPMP) within 5 years of the RMP's implementation, if funding is available. In the HPMP, include protocols for inventorying, collection, monitoring, research, education, and interpretation. In the HPMP, include a NAGPRA plan of action. Invite Tribes to provide input into and participate in the preparation and implementation of the HPMP.
- **Action:** Identify, record, and evaluate cultural resources and maintain a database of surveys and resources. Prioritize areas prone to impacts stemming from recreational use for cultural resource inventory.
- **Action:** Obtain location-specific cultural resource clearances when Reclamation acts to enhance recreation or wetlands. Avoid adverse effects on cultural resource sites by relocating or redesigning any proposed development.
- **Action:** Manage and monitor significant archaeological sites that are prone to natural and anthropogenic impacts. Reduce, mitigate, and prevent impacts on sites that would result in the loss of integrity.
- **Action:** Coordinate with Tribes to monitor cultural resources, prioritizing those identified as culturally significant or of particular Tribal interest and importance.
- **Action:** Monitor cultural resources on Reclamation lands to determine whether operations, natural erosion, or land use are damaging cultural resources.
    - If damage is identified, implement the following actions to be considered, in order of priority: (1) relocate the damaging activity; (2) prohibit the damaging activity in part or in

total; (3) protect the site by stabilization, revegetation, or other action; and (4) mitigate damage through excavation.

- Obtain location-specific cultural resource clearances for agency actions.
- In accordance with 36 CFR 800, conduct consultations to determine site eligibility for the NRHP, project effect, and appropriate treatment of adversely affected sites.

- **Action:** Stabilize or protect cultural sites when avoidance is not possible, such as for reservoir bank stabilization projects. Conduct consultations, per 36 CFR 800, to determine site eligibility, project effect, and appropriate treatment of adversely affected NRHP-eligible sites.
- **Action:** Using relevant archaeological and environmental data, determine whether areas that are under land-use authorizations or managed by partners have been surveyed for cultural resources and whether any cultural resource sites are present within those areas. If NRHP-eligible or unevaluated sites are present, determine whether the use will affect those sites. If damage could occur or is occurring, consider altering the land-use authorization or agreement to exclude use of the site area or include conditions that would avoid or reduce damage.
- **Action:** Close areas where Reclamation determines closure is necessary to protect cultural resources from ongoing or accelerated damage. Ensure closures to protect natural and cultural resources would not restrict access or uses of Tribal cultural practices, lands, or resources, or access to traditional areas of cultural or religious importance on Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** Require all visitors and recreationists to stay on authorized roads and trails to avoid ground disturbance that could affect cultural and natural resources.
- **Action:** Continue to install, update, and replace signage at key access points and high-use areas to indicate that damage of cultural resources is punishable by law, citing the Archaeological Resources Protection Act and appropriate State codes.
- **Action:** Using verified geographic information system (GIS) data, clearly mark Reclamation boundaries on authorized roads and trails and seek funding and assistance to enforce vehicle closure.
- **Action:** Curate archaeological collection, in most cases at the Earl H. Swanson Archaeological Repository at the Idaho Museum of Natural History or an approved repository. Make exceptions for human burials, grave goods associated with a burial, and items that are sacred to or of cultural patrimony to Tribes (NAGPRA items). When NAGPRA items are recovered, ensure they are returned to the appropriate Tribe.
- **Action:** Prepare a programmatic memorandum of agreement with Tribes, the BLM, the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, outlining actions to manage resources within the downstream historic district. Formulate the programmatic memorandum of agreement in accordance with requirements of 36 CFR 800, in consultation with the agreement entities and with input from Tribes and the BLM.
- **Action:** Ensure confidentiality of information about sensitive cultural resources, consistent with Section 304 of the NHPA and Section 9 of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act.

Objective: Enhance public understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of cultural resources, including proper site etiquette, and the importance of protecting cultural resources, including Tribal sites, TCPs, and traditional use areas.

- **Action:** Facilitate cultural resources research opportunities that contribute to the understanding of the ways humans have used and influenced natural systems and processes. Incorporate Indigenous knowledge into cultural resource interpretation and investigations.
- **Action:** To promote resource protection, implement public education programs that include interpretive facilities, signs, and programs about cultural resources on Reclamation lands and the value of the resources, as appropriate and depending on funding.
- **Action:** Build and sustain diverse communities of partners and volunteers dedicated to conserving, protecting, restoring, and interpreting cultural histories and resources.
- **Action:** Seek to collaborate with Tribes and other partners to develop educational and interpretive materials and programs about cultural resources and site etiquette for the public.

Goal 2: Protect cultural resources important to Tribes to allow for the continuation of cultural uses and provide access, as necessary, for such traditional resource uses.

Objective: Focus management on protecting and preserving resources of traditional value to Native Americans. Ensure management actions respect the concept that the lands are sacred.

- **Action:** Conduct consultation with Tribes to identify and document, as feasible, TCPs, sacred sites, and other traditional use areas on Reclamation lands and ensure they are adequately protected and managed.
- **Action:** Develop monitoring systems as part of the HPMP and with Tribes to evaluate the HPMP's effectiveness. Include the following measures to be employed in monitoring site disturbance: subjective evaluations of the site condition (through surveillance by rangers, archaeologists, paleontologists, other staff members, the concerned public, and Tribes) and more objective measures of the number, condition, size, types, etc. of artifacts, features, and remains.
- **Action:** Initiate actions to protect or remove human burials as soon as possible, if they are reported to be exposed or endangered by reservoir operation, natural erosion, or land use. Unless the burials are clearly non-Indian, inform the Tribes prior to action and ensure they are involved in selecting and implementing the management option.
- **Action:** Identify culturally important viewsheds through consultation with Tribes and develop management specific to the protection of those viewsheds.
- **Action:** Consult with Tribes to ensure the protection of Indigenous sacred sites and cultural sites on Reclamation lands and to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of the sites by members of Tribes for traditional cultural and customary uses.
- **Action:** Ensure federal actions that may affect resources important to Tribes are properly reviewed and considered consistent with the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA, Executive Order 13007, and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

5.2.11 Paleontological Resources

Goal 1: Identify, study, interpret, and protect unique and important paleontological resources and values, while allowing for scientific research.

Objective: Protect and manage paleontological resources on Reclamation land.

- **Action:** Plan to develop a comprehensive paleontological resources management plan within 5 years of implementing the RMP. Ensure the plan includes a paleontological locality database as

well as protocols for inventorying, collection, monitoring, research, education, and interpretation.

- **Action:** Identify locations where paleontological resources could be present and install signage related to the Paleontological Resources Protection Act around the reservoir.
- **Action:** Seek funds for systematic monitoring and scientific collection of paleontological materials eroded from the reservoir shore. Ensure paleontologists conduct the monitoring and collection, and ensure the collected materials are curated at Idaho State University.
- **Action:** Require that anyone engaging in research or salvage collection of paleontological resources must have a permit issued by Reclamation. Ensure collection would be done as per professional research standards, and all collected items would be stored in qualified repositories and made available for research and education.
- **Action:** Establish a long-term permit with Idaho State University, Idaho Museum of Natural History for collection of specimens exposed by erosion or other processes.

Objective: Increase public education and appreciation of paleontological resources through interpretation and dissemination of research.

- **Action:** Develop educational and interpretive materials emphasizing the protection of paleontological resources.
- **Action:** Work with Tribes and partners to develop educational and interpretive products and opportunities and to foster preservation of resources.
- **Action:** Work cooperatively with museums and universities (such as Idaho State University) to collect and curate important materials to the standards outlined in DOI Manual 411.

5.2.12 Public Access and Recreational Use

Goal 1: Provide adequate safe and suitable road access to designated recreation areas.

Objective: Increase public accessibility where appropriate and consistent with resource management goals.

- **Action:** Coordinate with adjacent landowners to minimize land-use conflicts, when accommodating the access needs of recreationists and other users of Reclamation land.
- **Action:** Consider landownership changes or cooperative agreements as potential tools for consolidating or managing access or increasing public accessibility.
- **Action:** Cooperate with involved counties, agencies, and landowners to achieve needed access, including improvements and maintenance, to designated recreation sites, angler access points, and other locations, as determined necessary, on Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** If necessary, acquire access easements or rights-of-way into important, designated Reclamation public use areas that are currently inaccessible by public road.
- **Action:** Revise the access management plan, as needed, to address hiking, climbing, bicycling, equestrian use, and motor vehicle use.
- **Action:** Provide adequate access management and parking within designated public use sites.
- **Action:** Ensure compliance with existing federal legislation and regulations regarding access for the physically challenged to designated, developed sites and facilities.

Objective: Manage motorized uses on Reclamation lands to protect natural and cultural resources while providing for recreational opportunities.

- **Action:** Continue closure of Reclamation lands to off-road OHV access and use except for the purposes defined in 43 CFR 420 (primarily official and emergency uses) and 43 CFR 423 and as authorized under rights granted by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Clarify closure to vehicles on signs at existing access points and illustrate closure in a public information brochure.
- **Action:** Monitor the effects of motorized access on Reclamation lands on an annual basis. Based on the information gathered, amend or rescind authorized areas, roads, or trails, or take other actions necessary to further Reclamation policies, goals, and objectives.
- **Action:** Improve and maintain authorized roads and trails on Reclamation lands that lead to developed recreation sites and areas designated for public use in the RMP.
- **Action:** Restrict motorized access to the shoreline where such use impacts natural or cultural resources or to provide for public health and safety.

Objective: Develop a signage plan that identifies the location and types of signs, and installation priorities.

- **Action:** Provide clear, consistent directional signs, where needed, and work with affected counties and the Idaho Transportation Department to make and install signs.
- **Action:** In coordination with partners, clearly identify access points through signage and other tools, such as website maps.
- **Action:** Identify water-based access points, where appropriate, and illustrate on public information maps.
- **Action:** Mark areas, roads, and trails with appropriate signs to permit public access (including motorized) on Reclamation lands. Post signs beside county roads at access points to Reclamation lands.
- **Action:** Develop and disseminate public information materials, including signage and guide maps, to support public access and recreational use of Reclamation lands and facilities.
- **Action:** Partner with the Tribes to incorporate Tribal input, cooperative management, and interpretation into signage, reports, and other interpretive materials related to resources.

Goal 2: Manage for recreational uses consistent with Reclamation policy and in coordination with partners and other stakeholders.

Objective: Encourage recreational use and stewardship through collaborative efforts with Tribes, local agencies, schools, and interest groups.

- **Action:** Develop partnerships to maintain and manage designated recreation sites.
- **Action:** To the extent administratively feasible, ensure coordination and cooperation among Reclamation, the BLM, and Idaho Department of Lands to promote compatibility of management on adjacent public lands.
- **Action:** Explore and, if feasible, implement cooperative agreements with other agencies and jurisdictions to provide efficient and coordinated recreation management.
- **Action:** Work with local user groups to promote cleanup efforts.

Objective: Accommodate recreational uses and future increases in recreational demand at existing and new sites where such use does not conflict with other established land uses and resource management goals.

- **Action:** Continue to allow dispersed recreation in all areas that are not under an agricultural or grazing authorization or easement and that will not damage cultural or natural resources.
- **Action:** Continue to allow nonmotorized recreation on all Reclamation lands where such use does not conflict with other established land uses.
- **Action:** Allow hunting on all Reclamation lands consistent with existing State and local regulations.
- **Action:** Continue the policy of "pack it in, pack it out."
- **Action:** Provide land-based trail opportunities for hiking, equestrian, and bicycle opportunities, where appropriate and considering resource protection needs.
- **Action:** Consider additional bird-watching facilities consistent with wildlife management goals and objectives.
- **Action:** Actively manage recreation, especially restroom and trash removal services, at sites that are heavily used by recreationists or where heavy use is more desirable and management efforts can be concentrated. Focus on visitor health, safety, and welfare.

Goal 3: Accommodate boating access and provide appropriate recreation site improvements, consistent with demand, available funding, and the carrying capacity of the resource base.

Objective: Improve boater safety and accessibility.

- **Action:** Consider options for additional boat access sites in coordination with management partners and Tribes.
- **Action:** Work with local Counties on proposed ordinances related to safety-related activities.

5.2.13 Land Use and Realty

Goal 1: Achieve a consistent framework to manage encroachments and land uses on Reclamation lands.

Objective: Address encroachments and trespass on Reclamation lands.

- **Action:** Identify, negotiate, and resolve encroachment consistent with Reclamation policy.
- **Action:** Evaluate encroachments on Reclamation lands and resolve on a case-by-case basis based on ongoing discussions with the affected parties. Where encroachments are removed, prioritize vegetation restoration and erosion control on Reclamation lands.

Objective: Ensure all land-use authorizations are consistent with the goals and objectives of the RMP; if significant conflicts arise, modification or termination of authorizations may be required.

- **Action:** Require and enforce a condition in land-use authorizations that prohibit farming and irrigation on land within 75 feet of the cliff edge. Ensure development adjacent to the reservoir is set back a minimum of 300 feet from the reservoir's high-water mark to ensure adequate space

for operation, maintenance, and public safety. Allow the setback distance to be adjusted based on site-specific engineering and environmental considerations.

- **Action:** Ensure public agencies (federal, State, or local) and Tribes operating under land-use authorizations for resource use or extraction on Reclamation lands fulfill their responsibility for site rehabilitation or reclamation.
- **Action:** Coordinate with law enforcement officials to resolve illegal activities, as necessary.
- **Action:** Improve boundary identification, where feasible, with signs, monuments of boundary lines, and fences.
- **Action:** Manage grazing in accordance with the grazing management plan.

5.2.14 Tribal Interests

Goal 1: Engage in consultation with Tribes to ensure their interests and access to the land are recognized, preserved, and protected.

Objective: Ensure Tribal treaty rights on Reclamation lands are not significantly affected by the RMP actions.

- **Action:** Consult with Tribes to protect their traditional use areas, sacred sites, and other areas of Tribal significance.

Objective: Consider Tribal values and concerns about places of religious and cultural importance to Tribes in land-use planning and management decisions, consistent with statutes, regulation, and policy.

- **Action:** Ensure Tribes have access to their traditional use areas, sacred sites, and other areas of Tribal significance.
- **Action:** Ensure Reclamation's discretionary actions seek to avoid or minimize inadvertent impacts on resources that are of traditional, cultural, and religious importance to Tribes, in consultation with Tribes. In cases when discretionary actions cannot avoid impacts on resources that are of traditional, cultural, or religious importance to Tribes, consult with Tribes to determine ways to mitigate impacts.
- **Action:** Develop a strategy that outlines opportunities for Tribal engagement and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and traditional ecological knowledge into resource management. Identify funding opportunities that bolster stakeholder engagement in resource management and research.
- **Action:** In accordance with federal regulations and Reclamation policy, ensure confidentiality about sensitive and confidential Tribal information, resources, and uses.
- **Action:** Provide and encourage educational outreach and stewardship programs that involve the public and Tribes through partnerships and other means, as determined in consultation with Tribes for locations of religious and cultural importance.
- **Action:** During consultation with Tribes, coordinate on opportunities to educate the public about Tribes in the planning area.
- **Action:** In consultation with Tribes, consider opportunities to incorporate Tribal history and Indigenous information into public education, interpretive materials, and signage.

5.2.15 Public Health and Safety

Goal 1: Manage public use of Reclamation lands to protect public health and safety.

Objective: Ensure Reclamation enforcement and management needs associated with the RMP's implementation are met by appropriate cooperative agreements or contracts with other agencies, including local, State, and other federal law enforcement assistance.

- **Action:** Seek more opportunities to partner with other agencies, local governments, and Tribes to provide law enforcement coverage and reduce general crime.
- **Action:** Where feasible and appropriate, consider opportunities to use campsite hosts to help manage public health and safety issues.
- **Action:** Continue to pursue Reclamation law enforcement authority.
- **Action:** To the extent authorized by law, prescribe appropriate penalties for violation of regulations pertaining to areas closed to motorized access and establish procedures for the enforcement of these regulations. Work with and enter into cooperative agreements with federal, State, or county law enforcement officials to enforce these regulations. Encourage self-regulation and voluntary compliance among recreational users.

Objective: Continue to promote safe boating opportunities and signage at appropriate boat launches and explore opportunities to provide a safe harbor.

- **Action:** In coordination with Bingham County, the IDFG, and Tribes, consider locations to establish a new boat ramp(s) in the main stem of the Snake River to address public safety.

Objective: Manage recreational facilities and public use sites for public and environmental health and safety.

- **Action:** Where feasible, develop a plan and guidance for Reclamation staff and partners to provide trash services and monitoring of illegal dumping.
- **Action:** Sign and safeguard trails, sidewalks, recreational facilities, and public use sites to communicate hazards for the particular issues at each unique site.
- **Action:** Communicate environmental hazards to the public through signage and media platforms.
- **Action:** Provide clean, user-friendly recreational access points that offer potable water and restrooms, where feasible and appropriate.
- **Action:** Continue to coordinate with the IDEQ and Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to monitor and issue health advisories for cyanobacteria harmful algal blooms.

5.2.16 Management and Implementation

Goal 1: Achieve effective implementation of the RMP through appropriate planning for funding and enforcement.

Objective: To the extent possible, safeguard priority existing and currently funded programs to avoid jeopardy from diversion of funds to other programs.

- **Action:** Continue to explore existing and potential sources to adequately fund the RMP's programs. Explore direct funding by Reclamation and cooperative funding with other federal, State, and local agencies and private interests.
- **Action:** Continue to seek funding for resource management and resource management staff.

5.2.17 Coordination, Public Outreach, and Education

Goal 1: Promote cooperative management and program implementation efforts with other agencies, Tribes, and the private sector.

Objective: Ensure local, State, and other federal agencies are aware of management activities and have an opportunity to participate in developing and implementing specific actions and general management plans directed toward wildlife management and grazing management.

Objective: Ensure private interest groups, Tribes, State and local agencies, and other federal agencies are aware of management actions and are offered an opportunity to participate through cooperative and cost-share agreements.

- **Action:** Continue public education programs to reduce accidental damage to or vandalism of natural and cultural resources, and promote resource protection by the public.
- **Action:** Maintain coordination and cooperative planning liaisons with involved agencies throughout the RMP's implementation. To the extent possible, make all regulations and guidelines related to Reclamation lands consistent with those of other adjacent or involved jurisdictions. Where needed regulations or guidelines are not now in place, coordinate development of these management tools.

Management Direction for Management Units

5.2.18 MU 1: Dam Site

- **Action:** To enhance recreational uses, develop or update facilities, including the following:
  - Repave the road and parking areas on top of the dam and install vault toilets.
  - Identify and develop additional recreational access points as needed.
- **Action:** In coordination with partners, maintain and improve recreational opportunities below the dam, to include identification of additional access points.
- **Action:** Install additional signage at major access points, as needed, and to include the following:
  - Signs that relate to the Archaeological Resources Protection Act and paleontological resources at popular use areas.
  - Signs indicating water level fluctuations to promote public health and safety.
- **Action:** Consider a partner for management of recreational activities and facilities within the Dam Site MU.
- **Action:** Continue to pursue partnerships for greater public engagement related to dam operations and emergencies.
- **Action:** Where feasible, maintain buoys or other barriers and signage at the dam to prevent watercraft dangers.

- **Action:** Collaborate with the Idaho Transportation Department to limit vehicle speeds at the dam bridge.
- **Action:** Review and address concerns related to the Idaho Transportation Department's easement within the dam area.
- **Action:** Continue to coordinate with IPC for releases to the river for water deliveries and public health and safety issues.

5.2.19 MU 2: West Boat Ramp

- **Action:** Where feasible, deter motorized use in areas with greater erosion potential, particularly on beaches.
- **Action:** In coordination with partners, consider improving and increasing designated parking and camping opportunities.
- **Action:** Consider partnerships and agreements for law enforcement support within the West Boat Ramp MU.
- **Action:** Develop partnerships for monitoring paleontologically sensitive areas to identify and collect specimens following periods of erosion.
- **Action:** Ensure continued coordination with IPC for year-round access to the boat ramp for public health and safety and to ensure timely sediment removal at the boat ramp.

5.2.20 MU 3: West Bank

- **Action:** Review existing access and facilities to determine whether additional improvements are needed to manage recreational uses.
- **Action:** Consider a partner for management of recreational activities and facilities at Spring Hollow.
- **Action:** Continue to support public access to the American Falls Reservoir. Work with partners to look for opportunities to expand access to the reservoir via foot paths, small nonmotorized boat access (kayaks and canoes), and/or new boat ramps from safe access points.
- **Action:** Partner with local law enforcement to monitor use and ensure camping time frames are enforced.
- **Action:** Consider identifying possible locations within the West Bank MU for new boat ramps in coordination with the Tribes and others.
- **Action:** Collaborate with Tribes, partners, law enforcement, and adjacent landowners to identify specific locations that may serve as a safe harbor and access points for emergency search and rescue operations during weather events or other emergencies.
- **Action:** Collaborate with land trusts, private landowners, and other partners to safeguard habitats and shorelines from development impacts through conservation easements and other mechanisms, alongside securing dedicated funding for these efforts.

5.2.21 MU 4: Sterling WMA

- **Action:** Implement the Sterling Wildlife Management Area Action Plan (see Appendix E).
- **Action:** Consider participation in an initiative for planning, design, and implementation of wetland restorations as outlined in the 2022 Sterling WMA wetland review.

5.2.22 MU 5: Sportsman's Park

- **Action:** Continue recreation leases with Bingham County and other potential partners to provide recreational access at Sportsman's Park.
- **Action:** Consider addressing lighthouse maintenance in a management agreement with Bingham County.
- **Action:** Consider current partnerships and future grant projects and partnerships with local governments, such as Bingham County, to improve boater access through boat ramp projects at Sportsman's Park.

5.2.23 MU 6: Springfield

- **Action:** Continue to manage the Springfield MU primarily for the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat and undeveloped recreational opportunities. Allow small improvement projects that are needed for safety, access, or proper management of the assets.
- **Action:** Consider the appropriate amount of public use at Sterling Wasteway but discourage motorized access through public information activities.
- **Action:** Consider the appropriate amount of public use at Smith Springs but discourage motorized access through public information activities.
- **Action:** Consider implementing additional safety measures or improved access, or both, to assist in emergency response (such as considering the development of an additional boat ramp).

5.2.24 MU 7: McTucker Ponds

- **Action:** To minimize impacts on sensitive resources and reduce unauthorized uses, consider restricting or limiting access to the MU in concert with the original intent of the mitigation agreement for the dam.
- **Action:** Identify locations and methods for preventing unauthorized off-road motorized use within the area.
- **Action:** Oversee archaeological survey of the McTucker Island area as funds are available to identify any sites that are eligible to the NRHP and ensure no historic properties will be affected by sand and gravel extraction or intensified recreational activities.
- **Action:** Consider new recreational developments, as appropriate. Ensure the type and scale of any development would be consistent with the area's wildlife and cultural protection and enhancement goals.
- **Action:** Consider actions to maintain the cottonwood trees in the McTucker Island area.
- **Action:** Consider allowing sand and gravel extraction opportunities from McTucker Ponds.
- **Action:** During the nesting season, apply seasonal restrictions on public use to the McTucker Island area except for the pond area.
- **Action:** Support partnership with the IDFG to enhance managed access to the Danielson Creek area, including parking for motorized vehicles, and reservoir access, including a boat ramp.
- **Action:** Identify the routes necessary to maintain access for recreational uses and safety, while closing other user-created routes.
- **Action:** Consider an area-specific access management plan to reduce unlawful activity.
- **Action:** Develop partnerships to enforce off-road OHV closures.

- **Action:** Where feasible, maintain and develop signage for safety zones established at McTucker Ponds for faster emergency response times.
- **Action:** Install directional and educational signage throughout the MU.
- **Action:** Work with existing partners to address unauthorized uses and illegal activities.
- **Action:** As recreational access increases, consider seasonal camp hosts to supplement limited enforcement in the McTucker Island area.
- **Action:** To address public safety, continue to support efforts to analyze and establish a new boat ramp in the area of the main stem of the Snake River.
- **Action:** Implement the use of prescribed fire for management of riparian vegetation within the MU.
- **Action:** Work with partners, including the IDFG, to implement measures to control invasive plant species, such as the removal of tamarisk.
- **Action:** Reduce impacts from trespasses of feral horses.

5.2.25 MU 8: Seagull Bay

- **Action:** Work with the managing partner to identify access needs and manage vehicle access within the MU.
- **Action:** Continue to work with the managing partner to address recreational needs, deficiencies, and future improvement projects at Seagull Bay.
- **Action:** Work with the managing partner to identify and manage vandalism and trespass issues.
- **Action:** Work with the managing partner to develop or update facilities, as needed.
- **Action:** Install signage related to paleontological resources in the MU.

5.2.26 MU 9: Willow Bay

- **Action:** Continue recreational leases to the City of American Falls for the Willow Bay Recreation Area. With review and approval, permit the lessee to make improvements in accordance with the City's master plans. Revise plans, as needed, to protect significant natural and cultural resources. Establish consistent general lease provisions that reflect all applicable federal rules, regulations, and policies.
- **Action:** Prohibit vehicular access in portions of the land areas surrounding Willow Bay and allow managing partners to institute closures, as needed, for resource protection, health and safety, and law enforcement best management practices.
- **Action:** Monitor and repair the new jetty at Willow Bay, as needed.
- **Action:** Improve facilities, walkways, the campground, etc. through the Federal Lands Transportation Program. Priority projects include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Repave the walking trail.
  - Update and install new signage.
  - Improve transportation (roads), boater access, and parking, as needed.

5.2.27 MU 10: Old Town Site

- **Action:** Consider installing interpretive signage regarding the history and cultural resources present in the MU. Consider partnering with a local group in the development of interpretive signage and monitoring of site conditions.
- **Action:** Consider working with the City of American Falls and Power County to construct a bicycle path connecting the Willow Bay Recreation Area with the City of American Falls through this area.
- **Action:** Install signage and, where appropriate, physical barriers to restrict off-road vehicle use in the drawdown area.

5.2.28 MU 11: Neeley

- **Action:** Consider transferring the Neeley parcel to the BLM.

5.2.29 MU 12: Coldwater

- **Action:** Identify trespasses and determine whether land-use authorizations, rights-of-way, or other agreements are appropriate.
- **Action:** Where feasible, identify locations within the MU that need improvement for items such as vault toilets, access improvements, or public health and safety items related to heavy recreational use.

5.2.30 MU 13: Archaeological District

- **Action:** Continue coordinating and management with the BLM on federal lands that are within the Archaeological District.
- **Action:** Partner with the Tribes to incorporate Tribal input, cooperative management, and interpretation into signage, reports, and other interpretive materials related to resources in this area.
- **Action:** Coordinate with the BLM and Tribes regarding management of cultural resources within the MU.
- **Action:** (Re)install signage related to closures for motor vehicle use and rock climbing, where appropriate. Develop educational materials related to climbing and motorized closures in this area.
- **Action:** Coordinate with Tribes and the BLM to continue cultural resource protection and proper access management on the south side of the Snake River within the MU.

5.2.31 MU 14: Inundation Zone

- **Action:** Install signage regarding off-road OHV use in the inundation zone.
- **Action:** Consider increasing parking opportunities for shoreline anglers and boaters within the MU.
- **Action:** Maintain and consider improving access for shoreline fishing and boating within the MU.
- **Action:** Implement permanent best management practices to reduce or remove sediment from the reservoir during periods of low pool.

Chapter 6. Implementation

Reclamation's Upper Snake Field Office has primary responsibility for implementing and monitoring the RMP. The success of the RMP will ultimately be measured by the degree to which it is implemented. Effective cooperation and coordination with managing partners are necessary for successful implementation of specific actions of the RMP. During implementation, the DOI, Reclamation, and Reclamation's managing partners will be guided by existing and future laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines. This RMP is designed to supplement existing direction provided by these sources.

This chapter provides a framework necessary to meet the goals and objectives and to implement the management actions presented in **Chapter 5**.

6.1 Implementation Components

6.1.1 Prioritization

Management actions are prioritized in a hierarchy ranging from high to low. High-priority management actions are identified as critical to the success of the RMP. Management actions identified as medium are considered important, but they are not critical. Low-priority management actions are those that should be implemented as resources are available. Mandatory actions are listed as required.

6.1.2 Lead Agency

The entity with lead responsibility for implementation of each management action is detailed in the implementation schedule. In addition to Reclamation, managing partners or other responsible agencies include IDFG, IDEQ, City of American Falls, Power County, and Bingham County.

6.1.3 Funding and Timing

Due to uncertainty of funding between fiscal years and the availability of federal and nonfederal cost-share funds, a precise schedule cannot be developed for implementing the RMP's provisions. Therefore, management actions have been identified to be phased in over a specified period of time. Those actions that do not require new or additional funding are scheduled for immediate implementation. Because this RMP identifies such items as capital and facility improvements, improvements that require additional appropriation of funds will occur over a period of years as funds become available. Factors for additional consideration that may influence timing and priority of when a management action is to be initiated should be based on whether the action:

- Is procedural (for example, preparing agreements) or technical (for example, developing specific plans)
- Needs to address public health and safety concerns
- Brings Reclamation into compliance with existing laws, regulations, and executive orders
- Is required to prevent resource damage to protect wildlife species or habitats

- Requires large capital investments, such as facility, trail, or road development
- Requires the assistance or support of other entities

6.2 Plan Revision or Amendment

Reclamation may revise or amend the RMP within the established 10-year planning period, if it is determined necessary due to changing conditions and as a result of monitoring (see **Chapter 7**). If needed, Reclamation will determine the decision to amend the RMP as issues arise. A plan revision may be needed based on the following:

- Plan implementation that substantially alters the goals of the RMP
- Changes necessitated by changed social, physical, and/or environmental conditions
- Changes needed to accommodate changed conditions that occur during implementation of the plan
- Uses that require authorization from permits, contracts, and cooperative agreements that are not consistent with the RMP

Amendments may be necessary over time to maintain a viable, workable RMP for management of American Falls Dam and Reservoir. The need for a plan amendment may be identified during implementation or monitoring by Reclamation if there are resource changes, use changes, and/or new issues that need to be addressed. Managing partners, the public, or interested agencies may also identify deficiencies or issues that need to be addressed. Any major changes or amendments to the RMP would require additional public involvement, agency and Tribal coordination, and NEPA analysis.

Chapter 7. Monitoring

To track the success of implementing the management actions (that is, evaluate, observe, enforce, comply, or document that a management action is achieved), monitoring activities will be initiated by Reclamation or in cooperation with other entities. Monitoring will occur on a regular basis and will be conducted by qualified personnel.

The following is a partial list of possible reviews and monitoring efforts that may help Reclamation track the success of implementing certain management actions:

- Reviews of land-use authorizations
- Monitoring of water quality
- Monitoring of the groundwater levels
- Assessments of the facilities' condition
- Reviews of accessibility

In addition to the above-mentioned monitoring activities, which Reclamation routinely conducts on its lands and which will help in identifying the success of implementing a particular management action, Reclamation should consider the following:

- Reclamation should ensure public use and facility development are consistent with the goals and objectives of an approved planning document.
- Reclamation should close areas for resource protection or public safety purposes, as a result of monitoring effects. However, Reclamation's goal is to properly monitor public use of its lands to prevent such closures from happening.
- Reclamation should conduct periodic land management reviews and other monitoring efforts to ensure the lands are being managed pursuant to existing agreements and land-use authorizations.
- Reclamation should monitor the variety of land uses to identify user conflicts and investigate corrective measures to prevent further conflicts from occurring.

Reclamation will use a combination of the above-mentioned monitoring efforts and considerations in cooperation with involved entities to track the success of management initiatives.

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Chapter 8. Preparers

This chapter lists the roles and responsibilities of the Reclamation and AECOM (a third-party contractor) staff involved in preparing this RMP.

Name	Role/Responsibility
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Malena Sanderlin	Contract Specialist
Laura Eck	Budget
Mark Arana	Wildlife and Natural Resources
Jessica Asbill-Case	Tribal Resources
Marc Ayalin	Public Affairs
Jason Brunk	Realty Specialist
Rob Carroll	Soils and Geology
Bonnie Christensen	Noise and Light
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AECOM Preparers	
Erin Hudson	Project Manager
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Megan Stone	Public Involvement Lead; Socioeconomics Specialist; Public Outreach and Comment Analysis
Brandt Bates	Facilitator
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Melissa Estep	Reservoir Storage Capacity Specialist
Zoe Ghali	Socioeconomics Specialist
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Name	Role/Responsibility
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Nikki Morris	Vegetation Specialist
Kim Murdock	Technical Editor
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Allison Piazzoni	Recreation Specialist
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Chapter 10. Glossary

A

Access: The ability of a particular transportation mode, such as a vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian, to enter or use a portion of the transportation network.

Acquired lands: Lands that Reclamation has acquired by purchase, donation, exchange, or condemnation.

Aquatic: Living or growing in or on the water.

Area-wide management direction: Area management actions that apply equally to the entire management area covered by an RMP.

C

Categorical exclusion: An environmental document covering routine activities that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

Climate: The collective typical weather conditions in a region averaged over a series of years.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): The annual cumulation of executive agency regulations published in the daily *Federal Register*, combined with regulations issued previously that are still in effect. The regulations are divided into 50 titles, each representing a broad subject area. Individual volumes of the CFR are revised at least once each calendar year and issued on a staggered quarterly basis. The CFR contains the general body of regulatory laws governing practices and procedures for federal administrative agencies.

Concessionaire: Private company or individual authorized to operate and manage recreational facilities and services on Reclamation lands.

Consent document: A written agreement or notification listing conditions that will prevent unreasonable interference with a Reclamation easement on non-Reclamation land.

Cultural resource: An object or definite location of human activity, occupation, or use identifiable through field survey, historical documentation, or oral evidence.

D

Desired condition (in an RMP): The future condition of the management area that results from achieving the goals and objectives identified in an RMP.

Disposal: All methods of transferring ownership or jurisdiction of Reclamation land to any other private or governmental party. These include transfers, withdrawal revocations, sales, reconveyances, or exchanges. Disposal does not include transfers for management purposes where Reclamation

retains the ultimate jurisdiction, such as when operation and maintenance responsibilities are transferred to federal or nonfederal managing partners.

E

Easement: An interest in land that consists of the right to use or control the land for a specific purpose but does not constitute full ownership of the land.

Environmental analysis: Systematic process for consideration of environmental factors in land management actions in compliance with the NEPA.

Executive order: A written directive of the president of the United States.

F

Federal lands: Lands, or interests in lands (such as easements and rights-of-way), owned by the United States.

***Federal Register*:** A publication of the federal government that publishes actions and notices related to government activities.

Forage: All browse and herbaceous foods that are available to grazing animals.

G

Geographic information system (GIS): A digital geographic database used to analyze and store data.

Goal (in an RMP): A brief statement describing the end result of implementing a management action or series of actions. A goal also can be considered as a desired condition that Reclamation wishes to achieve within the management area.

H

Habitat: An environment that meets a specific set of physical, biological, temporal, or spatial characteristics that satisfy the requirements of a plant or animal species or group of species for part or all of their life cycle.

Historic property: A cultural resource, such as a historic building, structure, object, district, or archaeological site, that is listed on, or eligible for inclusion on, the NRHP.

I

Indian trust assets (ITAs): Legal interests in property held in trust by the US for Indian Tribes or individuals. ITAs include trust lands, natural resources, trust funds, or other assets held by the federal government in trust. An ITA has three components: (1) the trustee, (2) the beneficiary, and (3) the trust asset.

Invasive species: A species that is not native to the region or area and whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

Invertebrate: An animal lacking a backbone or spinal column, such as an insect, snail, and worm. The group includes 97 percent of all animal species.

J

Jurisdiction: A term used to describe the level of management responsibility an entity has for a specific area using the entity's rules and regulations.

K

Kw factor: An erosion factor that indicates the susceptibility of a soil to sheet and rill erosion by water. The Kw factor is one of six factors used in the Universal Soil Loss Equation to predict the average annual rate of soil loss by sheet and rill erosion in tons per acre per year. The estimates are based primarily on the percentage of silt, sand, and organic matter and on soil structure and saturated hydraulic conductivity. Values of Kw range from 0.02 to 0.69. Other factors being equal, the higher the value, the more susceptible the soil is to sheet and rill erosion by water.

L

Land-use authorization: A document that defines the terms and conditions under which Reclamation will allow the use of Reclamation land, facilities, and waterbodies. Use authorizations can take the form of easements, leases, licenses, permits, and consent documents.

M

Management area: A geographic or study area that can be effectively managed as a relatively independent area. Project and management areas are not necessarily synonymous because there can be several management areas within a project area. A management area may be a reservoir area, wildlife area, or canal, or an area that has similar problems or issues.

Managing partner: A federal or nonfederal public entity that manages land, facilities, or waterbodies through a management agreement with Reclamation entered into pursuant to the Federal Water Project Recreation Act, as amended.

Monitoring (in an RMP): An established strategy that is developed to track the progress of implementing the management actions identified in an RMP.

N

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): The Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The NRHP is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect the country's historic and archaeological resources.

Native vegetation: Plant species that were found in the area prior to Euro-American settlement. Consequently, these plant species are in balance with their ecosystems because they have well-developed parasites, predators, and pollinators.

Notice of intent: A written document generally published in the *Federal Register* that discloses an action to be taken by a federal agency.

Noxious weed: A plant species designated by federal or state law as generally possessing one or more of the following characteristics: aggressive and difficult to manage; parasitic; a carrier or host of serious insects or disease; or nonnative, new, or not common to the United States.

O

Objective (in an RMP): A statement or series of statements that briefly describe an action that will achieve a specific goal identified in an RMP. Specific management actions are developed from RMP objectives.

Off-highway vehicle (OHV): Any vehicle that travels off designated roads or trails.

P

Penstock: A pipe or channel that conveys water from a reservoir to a turbine to generate hydroelectric power.

Pleistocene: A geological epoch that lasted from approximately 2.58 million to 11,700 years ago, defined by a recent period of repeated glaciation. It is known commonly as the "Ice Age."

Pollutants (pollution): Unwanted chemicals or other materials found in the environment. Pollutants can harm human health, the environment, and property. Air pollutants occur as gases, liquid droplets, and solids. Once released into the environment, many pollutants can persist, travel long distances, and move from one environmental medium—air, water, or land—to another.

Project facilities: Canals, laterals, drains, pumps, buildings, etc. owned by the United States. Note: Title to project facilities and lands remains in the United States until specific legislation is enacted to authorize disposal (regardless of who is responsible for care, operation, and maintenance of the facilities).

Project purposes: Lands withdrawn and acquired for authorized purposes of the specific project, including irrigation, flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife.

Public law: A law passed by the Congress of the United States.

R

Reclamation project lands: Federal lands or interests in lands under the jurisdiction of Reclamation, including withdrawn lands, acquired lands, and 1890 Canal Act reserved rights-of-way that have been exercised. Note: Reclamation project lands are not the same as public lands. Reclamation project lands were initially withdrawn, acquired, or exercised for specific project purposes and are governed by different federal land management laws and regulations than public lands. Public uses of Reclamation project lands can be suspended, as necessary, to protect project facilities, and Reclamation project lands are not open to off-road vehicles unless they are specifically opened for that use.

S

Sacred site: An Indian sacred sites defined by Executive Order 13007 as "any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on Federal land that is identified by an Indian Tribe, or Indian

individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion."

Scenic quality: The relative worth of a landscape from a visual perception point of view.

Sheet erosion: The removal of a uniform layer of soil from the land surface by runoff water.

Soil texture: A physical characterization that describes the relative amounts of clay, silt, and sand in a soil.

State Historical Preservation Officers: Individuals that need to be consulted on National Historic Preservation Act and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act issues.

Stewardship: Responsibility of land management entities to manage public lands under their respective jurisdictions for the public good using sound land management principles, practices, procedures, and guidelines and to meet each entity's mission statement, goals, and objectives in the context of existing laws, regulations, policies, and executive orders.

Strategic plan: A written plan outlining a government agency's framework for management.

T

Traditional cultural properties (TCP): A cultural resource that is eligible for inclusion on the NRHP because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (1) are rooted in that community's history, and (2) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community.

U

United States Code (USC): The written directives for public law.

Use authorization: A document that defines the terms and conditions under which Reclamation will allow permission to use Reclamation land, facilities, and waterbodies. Use authorizations can take the form of easements, leases, licenses, permits, and consent documents.

V

Viewshed: The landscape that can be directly seen under favorable atmospheric conditions, from a viewpoint or along a transportation corridor.

Visual resources: The visible physical features on a landscape (for example, land, water, vegetation, animals, structures, and other features).

W

Water quality parameter: A characteristic used to assess the suitability and safety of water for various purposes, and can include physical, chemical, and biological properties, like temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity.

Wetland: An area where water covers the soil or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season.

Wind erodibility group (WEG): A group that consists of soils that have similar properties that affect the soil's susceptibility to wind erosion in cultivated areas. The soils assigned to group 1 are the most susceptible to wind erosion, and those assigned to group 8 are the least susceptible.

Withdrawn lands: Withholding of an area of public land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under some or all of the general land laws to (1) limit activity under those laws to maintain other public values in the area, (2) reserve the area for a particular public purpose or program, or (3) transfer jurisdiction of the area from one federal agency to another.

Z

Zoning: Identification of areas for specified uses or restrictions.

Appendix A

Summary of Management from the 1995 American Falls RMP

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Appendix A. Summary of Management from the 1995 American Falls RMP

This appendix provides an overview of the federal regulations and policy that relate to the management of Reclamation resources. It also provides an overview of the 1995 RMP goals, objectives, and actions that tier from those broader regulations and policy. The 1995 RMP details management direction under three broad categories: natural and cultural resources, public access and recreation, and management and implementation.

Given changing conditions since the 1995 RMP was developed, Reclamation has identified additional resources that should be considered as stand-alone sections in the revised RMP; some of these were subsumed within other sections of the 1995 RMP. Sections for these resources, which are included in other sections in the 1995 RMP, are included in this appendix and describe applicable federal regulations or policy of relevant direction from the 1995 RMP. Resources and uses are grouped into four categories— dam operations and reservoir storage, biological and physical resources, resource uses, and social and economic conditions—under which the 1995 RMP's goals, objectives, and actions are detailed by resource or use.

The 1995 RMP also split management goals, objectives, and actions between the reservoir in Chapter 4 and river in Chapter 5. Both chapters include general requirements and policies before proceeding to goals, objectives, management plans, and management actions by specific areas. Each resource section begins with a brief narrative overview describing the existing management approach, followed by a table outlining goals, objectives, and actions detailed in the 1995 RMP. There are two tables associated with resources that have existing management detailed in the 1995 RMP; one is for reservoir management, and one is for river management. In some cases, there are additional plans that tier from the 1995 RMP that include management direction relevant to resources included in the RMP. Where applicable, existing management direction from these plans is also included. It should also be noted that general rules and regulations itemized for the reservoir in the existing RMP (Reclamation 1995, Chapter 4) also apply to the management of the downstream river area (Reclamation 1995, Chapter 5).

A.1. Hydrology and Water Resources

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Hydrology and Water Resources in the Reservoir Area

	Reservoir Management
Goal	Promote optimal use of water resources and protect water rights
Objective	Ensure that management decisions for conservation, use, and enhancement of land resources do not conflict with established water rights, storage contracts, or irrigation operational needs.
Action	If feasible, implement with the consent of the spaceholders, reservoir operational adjustments which contribute to achieving fishery, endangered species, wildlife, and recreational objectives while protecting water rights, reservoir storage rights, and irrigation operational needs.
Action	Encourage measurement of all water diversions to ensure that all measuring devices are functioning accurately.
Goal	Protect And Improve Water Quality
Objective	Ensure that any planned or proposed reservoir sub-impoundments or tributary impoundments are designed to avoid concentration of trace elements and will not cause other adverse water quality effects.
Objective	Discourage use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands.
Objective	Ensure that water quality monitoring programs target runoff/drainage inflow points where studies have indicated potential for water contaminants.
Action	If feasible, operate the system to help meet instream flow quantity and quality needs consistent with other project purposes and contractual requirements in the Snake River below the reservoir. Reclamation will determine (in cooperation with [Idaho Power], the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, the EPA, spaceholders, and other agencies and interest groups) instream flow needs, identify flexibility in reservoir operations to help meet needs, and modify operations where feasible.
Action	Where feasible and appropriate, provide adequate sanitation and waste management facilities at existing developed recreation sites.

Reservoir Management	
Action	Cooperate, within budget constraints, with other Federal agencies to investigate the quality and quantity of surface and subsurface return flows and the potential effects on human health, fish, and wildlife.
Action	Cooperate and assist in coordinating and integrating regional ongoing and planned water quality monitoring programs. Based on the results of water quality monitoring, evaluate and act on any defined need to establish a local/regional cooperative effort to address water quality concerns. Institute new programs only if concerns are identified which cannot be covered by existing efforts.
Action	Encourage the local Soil Conservation Districts to continue to work with area farmers to (1) reduce amounts of applied fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides and (2) prevent overspray on Reclamation lands. Encourage farmers to voluntarily reduce application rates of chemical fertilizer and herbicides and include usage guidelines in lease agreements.
Action	Projects designed to accomplish identified goals of restoration and enhancement will include water quality monitoring in consultation with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ).

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Hydrology and Water Resources in the River Area

River Management	
Goal	Protect and improve water quality
Objective	Discourage use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on leased Reclamation lands. Encourage farmers to reduce their rates of application and include usage guidelines in lease agreements.
Objective	Encourage the local Soil Conservation Districts to continue to work with area farmers to (1) reduce amounts of applied fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides and (2) prevent overspray on Reclamation lands.
Action	Cooperate, within budget constraints, with other Federal agencies to investigate the quality and quantity of surface and subsurface return flows and the potential effects on human health, fish, and wildlife.
Action	Cooperate and assist in coordinating and integrating regional ongoing and planned water quality monitoring programs to ensure that programs target runoff/drainage inflow points where studies have indicated potential for water contaminants. Institute new programs only if concerns are identified which cannot be covered by existing efforts.
Action	Based on the results of water quality monitoring, evaluate and act on any defined need to establish a local/regional cooperative effort to address water quality concerns.

River Management	
Action	If feasible, operate the system to help meet instream flow quantity and quality needs consistent with other project purposes and contractual requirements in the Snake River below the reservoir. Reclamation will determine (in cooperation with [Idaho Power], the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, the EPA, spaceholders, and other agencies and interest groups) instream flow needs, identify flexibility in reservoir operations to help meet needs, and modify operations where feasible.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.2. Geology and Soils

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Geology and Soils in the Reservoir Area

Reservoir Management	
Goal	Control Erosion and Siltation
Objective	Reduce the rate of shoreline erosion and release of sediment downstream.
Action	Continue the ongoing shoreline erosion control program around the reservoir, including coordination with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes regarding priorities within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. The program will include engineered erosion mitigation and control features, such as willow planting and riprap placement, where such features appear effective and are less costly than land acquisition, and planting of vegetation on the shoreline and tributary riparian areas. Plans to slope the upper portion of cliffs to minimize erosion and establish upland wildlife habitat will be modified in areas where significant colonies of bank swallows reside. The method of accomplishing control work will be determined by Reclamation. Funds will be provided by Reclamation and the spaceholders.
Action	Continue to acquire sufficient lands to construct, operate, and maintain Federal project works, including a freeboard around the reservoir. Property will be acquired in accordance with current law at a width sufficient to accommodate up to 50 years of erosion or to prevent encroachment until the erosion control program has been fully implemented. Landowners will be fully compensated for lands taken for these purposes.
Action	Control erosion in all construction projects under Reclamation's jurisdiction.

Reservoir Management	
Action	Reclamation will include erosion control measures (e.g., straw mulches, sediment traps, and filter fabric) in the design and construction specifications for any proposed development. Contract specifications will contain the best management practice designed to prevent erosion and sediment-laden runoff from leaving project sites during construction. All exposed areas will be immediately revegetated and stabilized.
Action	Explore means of reducing sediment contributions from the reservoir by adjustments to reservoir operations.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Geology and Soils in the River Area

River Management	
Goal	Control Erosion and Siltation
Objective	Reduce the rate of erosion on Reclamation lands.
Objective	Control erosion in all construction projects under Reclamation's jurisdiction.
Action	Reclamation will include erosion control measures (e.g., straw mulches, sediment traps, and filter fabric) in the design and construction specifications for any proposed development. Contract specifications will contain the best management practice designed to prevent erosion and sediment-laden runoff from leaving project sites during construction. All exposed areas will be immediately revegetated and stabilized.
Action	Develop a soil stabilization program to identify and prioritize eroded features and areas, unstable landforms, and areas susceptible to soil erosion and compaction. Reclamation will also identify corrective and mitigative measures, prioritize areas to be rehabilitated, and develop a monitoring program to assess results of the program.
Action	Protect and establish riparian vegetation to help control erosion.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.3. Vegetation, Wildlife, and Fish

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Vegetation, Wildlife, and Fish in the Reservoir Area

Reservoir Management	
Goal	Protect And Enhance Important Vegetation, Fish, And Wildlife Habitat Values
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Ensure that any permitted livestock grazing on Reclamation land does not result in a significant adverse effect on (1) existing valuable vegetation and wildlife habitat or (2) the rate of recovery of habitat previously damaged or targeted for enhancement.
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	In all decisions for trade, purchase, and lease of Reclamation lands, promote implementation of a balanced habitat conservation and enhancement program.
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Protect existing trees and promote the establishment of cottonwood forest and shelter belt growth.
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Restore riparian vegetation along tributary streams wherever feasible.
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Continue program to control noxious weeds and promote the growth of native species.
Objective (Fishery)	Encourage IPC [Idaho Power Company] to consider additional research on fish passage options and improve fish survival rates.
Objective (Fishery)	Encourage IDFG to research which species and stocks of fish can better survive fluctuating conditions in the reservoir and the river downstream from the dam.
Objective (Fishery)	Encourage coordination of the IDFG stocking and other fishery management efforts with involved agencies, organizations, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	A WMP [wildlife management plan] will be prepared (see "Management Plans"); however, all of the general activities in this section will benefit wildlife.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Continue to prohibit the burning of stubble, shrub, and other vegetative cover on Reclamation lands as a means of retaining and protecting wildlife values.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Replant the graded slopes created at the tops of the cliffs as weather and hydrologic conditions permit; cooperative efforts with adjacent landowners may also be valuable tools in such efforts.

Reservoir Management	
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Conduct a detailed vegetative cover inventory around the reservoir to (1) catalog native plant species and (2) identify locations where State-listed noxious weeds, invasive exotics, and other plants are a problem requiring action. Priorities will be to inventory Reclamation lands first and easements second.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Develop viable vegetation management programs for small and narrow Reclamation ownerships adjacent to private farmland. Focus on cooperative efforts to achieve optimum wildlife habitat value on these lands while minimizing adverse effects on farming operations.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Explore and, if feasible, implement reservoir operational adjustments which will enhance wildlife habitat values. Examples include reduction of water level fluctuations and a more constant rate of drawdown during the waterfowl and shorebird nesting season.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	As part of the AMP [Access Management Plan], identify methods to restore upland vegetation/habitat damaged by vehicular access, focusing on areas where access has been terminated. Restoration will depend on the ability to provide irrigation if necessary, to protect new plant growth, and Reclamation's ability to fund or cost share the project.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Support an USFWS recommended program to plant vegetation shelter belts along the exposed shoreline areas of the reservoir on public and private lands. The program will encourage farmers to plant and maintain conifers, deciduous trees, and shrubs for habitat enhancement.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Continue updating the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) inventory for all the mammalian and avian attributes that were digitized and mapped in 1992, including such categories as waterfowl, shorebirds, candidate, threatened, and endangered species. Focus on the land status GIS attributes and develop refinements to the important wetland category, particularly as it relates to private lands and any new areas following development of subimpoundments.
Action (Birds)	Conduct a survey, in consultation with wildlife specialists at Idaho State University, to determine existing and potential swallow habitat focusing on the bluffs on the west and east sides.
Action (Birds)	In cooperation with USFWS, IDFG, the Tribes, and Idaho State University. participate in a 5-year assessment of passerine and colonial nesting at the reservoir as part of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Program.

Reservoir Management	
Action (Eagles)	Subject to available funds and partners, conduct annual winter bald eagle surveys during the months of January through April, and every 5 years use the onboard geoposition system or its equivalent to accumulate data into the GIS data system. Key use sites including perch trees will be noted and correlated with winter conditions such as ice flows in the Snake River, percentage of ice formation on the reservoir, temperature, water fowl numbers, and other variables.
Action Eagles)	Protect bald eagle perch trees used during the day, especially those located where there tends to be a concentration of eagles, by prohibiting cutting of trees and signing areas accordingly. Identify and protect any bald eagle nest sites and potential nesting areas. If bald eagles begin nesting in the area, develop nest site management plans to establish protective dates and buffer zones that are consistent with those that have been developed for the upper Snake River.
Action (Eagles)	Every 3 years, in cooperation with the USFWS and in conjunction with the annual winter bald eagle census, conduct a comprehensive study to document the location of night roost sites, frequency of use, and density of bald eagles using the roosts throughout the winter.
Action (ESA Species)	Prior to constructing any improvements near a spring discharge area, conduct a survey in coordination with the USFWS for the presence of federally-listed snails.
Action (ESA Species)	In consultation with USFWS, consider opportunities to introduce peregrine falcons in the Snake River plain. Recommendations are for two 40-foot nesting towers on the west side of the reservoir. Additional structures will be considered through cooperative agreements with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.
Action (Weeds)	Work cooperatively with Federal, State, and local entities to identify and prioritize areas where control of noxious weeds is necessary. Incorporate Integrated Pest Management concepts and practices into Reclamation programs. Where possible, these actions will be coordinated with the wetland/riparian development and shoreline erosion control programs.
Action (Fish)	Participate with other regional managing agencies and the State to explore potentials for storing more water in the American Falls Reservoir (particularly at the end of irrigation season, to provide over-winter fish habitat). Opportunities may include IDFG purchasing water from the upper Snake River reservoirs.

Reservoir Management	
Wildlife Management Plan	
Action	Identify and establish specific food and winter habitat plots for pheasant and other wildlife on agricultural leases of Reclamation lands.
Action	Identify, protect, and rehabilitate specific riparian and upland areas to improve habitat for pheasants, wintering big game, and other wildlife.
Action	Restore riparian vegetation/habitat, including areas adjacent to wetland development sites, presently degraded riparian areas, and locations where riparian vegetation was historically found, where feasible.
Action	Assure that vegetation/wildlife habitat management and enhancement equally considers and responds to all key habitat and wildlife values including wetland, riparian, mudflat, and upland habitats. Prioritize and coordinate wildlife management actions.
Action	Construct impoundments and sub impoundments at various tributaries/inflow sources around the reservoir and in the drawdown zone to improve wildlife habitat, enhance fisheries, promote wetlands and/or open water areas, increase biological diversity, and improve water quality in the reservoir area. Prepare site plans that address each project to determine topography, soil conditions, hydrology, and target species.
Action	Reclamation will evaluate any impoundments considered for reservoir tributaries and any sub impoundments planned for the drawdown area before implementation for their effects on the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve. The evaluation will determine the appropriate impoundment size to enhance use by shorebirds that use the area on a seasonal basis.
Action	Explore the potential for using sediment cleared from boat ramps or dredged from the reservoir to benefit wetland re-creation and restoration efforts.
Action	Beginning in fiscal year 1997, secure partnerships to cost share the actions listed and to achieve the goals and objectives of the AFRMP [1995 RMP].
Action	Explore the potential for adding 25-30 Canada goose nesting platforms. Longterm funding alternatives to maintain and monitor nest platforms using interested parties in the area (i.e., IDFG's 1990 agreement with the Blackfoot Ducks Unlimited chapter) to monitor and maintain 10 nest platforms around McTucker Island will be evaluated.
Action	Consider the potential for erecting 15-20 rock islands in the tailwaters of the drawdown area for waterfowl and other water-dependent birds as resting and nesting sites.

	Reservoir Management
Action	Monitor the success of wetland development projects, riparian restoration/creation efforts, and upland rehabilitation along with changes to the cottonwood forest and understory in the McTucker Island area and riparian edge of the northeast end of the reservoir. Objectives include increasing waterfowl, shorebird, and upland game bird habitat, especially for nesting and brooding. Emphasize nesting and brooding waterflow in the management of McTucker Island.
Action	Maintain sage-shrub habitats, pursue upland seeding of native shrubs, forbs, and grasses in the weedy herbaceous areas, and plant shelterbelt vegetation along exposed shoreline areas.
Action	When possible avoid minimum pool water levels for American Falls Reservoir. Water management should include an analysis of strategies to maintain and enhance colonial and shore bird foraging habitat.
Action	Identify actions needed to protect habitats on Reclamation land from unauthorized uses (e.g., grazing, agriculture, occupancy trespass, and fire).

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Vegetation, Wildlife, and Fish in the River Area

	River Management
Goal	Protect And Enhance Important Vegetation, Fish, And Wildlife Habitat Values
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	In all decisions for trade, purchase, and lease of Reclamation lands, promote implementation of a balanced habitat conservation and enhancement program.
Objective (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Develop a program to control noxious weeds and promote the growth of native species.
Objective (Fisheries)	Encourage IPC [Idaho Power] to consider additional research on fish passage options and improve fish survival rates.
Objective (Fisheries)	Encourage IDFG to research which species and strains of fish can better survive fluctuating conditions in the river downstream from the dam.
Objective (Fisheries)	Encourage coordination of the IDFG stocking and other fishery management efforts with involved agencies, organizations, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Develop a WMP to prioritize and coordinate wildlife management actions (see under "Wildlife Management Plan").
Action (Vegetation and Wildlife)	Renegotiate the existing IDFG wildlife management lease in Area 6 only (see exhibit 12), with provisions that IDFG assist in improving the road to Monument Sportsman's Access.

River Management	
Action (ESA Species)	Comply with legal responsibilities for recovery and maintenance of federally-listed threatened or endangered species. This will include protecting bald eagle perch trees used during the day, especially those located where there tends to be a concentration of eagles.
Action (ESA Species)	In consultation with USFWS, Reclamation will conduct surveys for the presence of federally-listed snails before constructing any improvements within spring discharge areas.
Action (Weeds)	Work cooperatively with Federal, State, and local entities to identify and prioritize areas where control of noxious weeds is necessary. Any program on Reclamation lands, waters, and facilities will incorporate Integrated Pest Management concepts and practices. Where possible, these actions will be coordinated with the wetland/riparian development and shoreline erosion control programs.
Wildlife Management Plan	
Action	Restore riparian vegetation along the Snake River, wherever feasible.
Action	Coordinate with the Tribes, USFWS, IDFG, BLM, and other public agencies in developing and implementing vegetation and wildlife management programs including exploration of joint funding programs.
Action	Cooperate with interested private organizations in developing and implementing vegetation and wildlife management programs including exploration of joint funding programs.
Action	Develop and implement a balanced vegetation/wildlife habitat management and enhancement program that equally considers and responds to all key habitat and wildlife values including wetland, riparian, mudflat, and upland habitats.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.4. Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Cultural and Paleontological Resources in the Reservoir Area

Reservoir Management	
Goal	Protect Cultural Resources and Provide Educational/Interpretive Opportunities
Objective	Ensure protection of sensitive cultural and paleontological resources in accordance with existing Federal regulations and through consultation with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Cultural Committee.
Action	At the Facility Office, consider interpretive signs and programs as part of protection of cultural and paleontological resources on Reclamation lands.

Reservoir Management	
Action	Complete a cultural resource management plan (CRMP) for these lands which outlines actions and methods to protect the cultural resources. This will include definitions of the consultation processes and parties; enforcement strategies; resource protection actions, including vehicle access management, monitoring, site stabilization, and public education; and data recovery actions in the case of adverse effects to sites from agency actions or uncontrollable natural conditions. The CRMP will also identify procedures to address NAGPRA issues of burial protection and repatriation of cultural materials. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will provide input to and participate in CRMP preparation and implementation.
Action	Obtain location-specific cultural resource clearances when the agency acts to enhance recreation or wetlands. Avoid adverse effects to cultural resource sites by relocating or redesigning any proposed development.
Action	Stabilize or protect cultural sites when avoidance is not possible such as for reservoir bank stabilization projects. Test excavations will be conducted as necessary to determine if the sites are eligible for the National Register. Consultations, per 36 CFR 800, will also be conducted to determine site eligibility, project effect, and appropriate treatment of adversely affected Register-eligible sites.
Action	Cultural resources personnel, or other land management personnel sensitized to cultural resource management concerns, will participate in the annual monitoring of Reclamation lands to determine if operations, natural erosion, or land use is damaging cultural resources. If significant sites are being damaged, management actions will be implemented. If the site cannot be protected, mitigation may be considered.
Action	Determine if cultural resource sites are present on lands leased for agriculture, grazing, or recreation and if issuance or renewal of leases is under consideration. If National Register eligible or unevaluated sites are present, Reclamation will determine if the lessee's use will affect those sites. If damage could occur or is occurring, Reclamation will consider altering the lease to exclude use of the site area or include conditions that will avoid or reduce damage.
Action	Initiate actions to protect or remove human burials as soon as possible if they are reported to be exposed or endangered by reservoir operation, natural erosion, or land use. Unless the burials are clearly non-Indian, the Tribes will be informed prior to action and involved in selecting and implementing the management option.
Action	Install signs at key access points to indicate damage of cultural resources is punishable by law, citing ARPA and appropriate State codes.

	Reservoir Management
Action	Curate archaeological collections, in most cases, at the Southeastern Idaho Regional Archaeological Center. Exceptions will be human burials, grave goods associated with a burial, and items that are sacred to or of cultural patrimony to American Indian tribes (NAGPRA items). When NAGPRA items are recovered, they will be returned to the appropriate tribe.
Action	Continue to identify paleontological specimens exposed by erosion and collect for curation where archaeological surveys are being completed or will be done by the archaeological surveyor. The permit will continue to be issued for shoreline fossil collection by paleontologists from the Idaho Museum of Natural History.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Cultural and Paleontological Resources in the River Area

	River Management
Goal	Protect Cultural Resources and Provide Educational/Interpretive Opportunities
Objective	Ensure protection of sensitive cultural and paleontological resources in accordance with existing Federal regulations and through consultation with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Cultural Committee.
Objective	Management will focus on protecting and preserving resources of traditional value to the Native Americans. Management actions should respect the concept that the lands are sacred.
Action	Prepare a programmatic memorandum of agreement with the Idaho SHPO [State Historic Preservation Office] and the Advisory Council, outlining actions to manage resources within the downstream historic district. Formulate in accordance with requirements of 36 CFR 800 and in consultation with the agreement entities and with input from the Tribes.
Action	Forward to the Keeper of the National Register a nomination to list Reclamation lands below American Falls Dam as an Historic District or Historic Multiple Resource Area on the National Register of Historic Places.
Action	Complete a CRMP which outlines actions and methods to protect the cultural resources and defines the consultation processes and parties; enforcement strategies; resource Protection actions, including access management, monitoring, site stabilization, and public education; data recovery actions in the case of adverse effects to sites; and procedures to address NAGPRA issues of burial protection and repatriation of cultural materials. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will provide input to and participate in CRMP preparation and implementation. Contingent upon funding by the Congress, the CRMP will be completed within 2 years of signature of the Programmatic memorandum of agreement.
Action	Clearly mark Reclamation boundaries on existing roads and trails and seek funding and assistance to enforce vehicle closure.

River Management	
Action	Install signs at principal points of access points of public lands and water that state that damage of cultural resources is punishable by law; cite the Archaeological Resource Protection Act and appropriate State codes.
Action	To promote resource protection, implement public education programs that include interpretive facilities, signs, and programs about cultural resources on Reclamation lands and the value of the resources as appropriate and depending on funding.
Action	Cultural resources personnel, or other land management personnel sensitized to cultural resource management concerns, will participate in the annual monitoring of Reclamation lands to determine if operations, natural erosion, or land use is damaging cultural resources. Management actions to be considered in order of priority are: (1) relocate the damaging activity, (2) prohibit the damaging activity in part or in total, (3) protect the site by stabilization, revegetation, or other action, and (4) mitigate damage through excavation. • Location-specific cultural resource clearances will be obtained for agency actions. • In accordance with 36 CFR 800, conduct consultations to determine site eligibility, project effect, and appropriate treatment of adversely affected sites.
Action	Reclamation will conduct periodic, systematic collection of surface artifacts from selected sites in areas most commonly used by recreationists. Reclamation will excavate small, intact features that are exposed and vulnerable to user damage if the sites are likely to contain datable charcoal or uncontaminated plant samples.
Action	Reclamation will close selected areas to all access or grazing to protect archaeological sites from ongoing or accelerating damage as determined necessary on a site by site basis.
Action	Require recreation equestrian users to stay on existing trails to avoid churning soils.
Action	Initiate actions to protect or remove human burials as soon as possible if they are reported to be exposed or endangered by reservoir operation, natural erosion, or land use. Unless the burials are clearly non-Indian, the Tribes will be informed prior to action and be involved in selecting and implementing the management option.
Action	If archaeological sites are present on lands leased for agriculture, recreation, or other actions, Reclamation will determine if lessee use could further damage those sites. If additional damage could occur, Reclamation will consider altering the lease to exclude use of the site area or include conditions that will avoid or reduce additional damage.
Action	A paleontologist will periodically review the paleontological localities in the downstream area to collect exposed diagnostic fossils and assess conditions.
Action	Curate archaeological collections, mostly at the Southeastern Idaho Regional Archaeological Center. Exceptions are human burials, grave goods associated with a burial, and items that are sacred to or of cultural patrimony to American Indian tribes. Recovered NAGPRA items will be returned to the appropriate tribe.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.5. Visual Resources

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Visual Resources in the Reservoir Area

Reservoir Management	
Goal	Protect And Enhance Visual Resources/Scenic Quality
Objective	Avoid damage to the landscape (caused by motor vehicles or other uses) in areas which are highly visible from scenic viewpoints or from recreational travel routes (including the interstate highway).
Objective	Ensure that the siting and design of all new facilities on Reclamation lands blends into the rural landscape.
Objective	Emphasize enjoyment of the scenic resources in planning land/water uses.
Action	Continue to remove trash and waste dumps and explore means of assuring litter removal and trash collection through lease terms, cooperative agreements, etc. Explore means to avoid trash and waste in highly visible areas around the reservoir.
Action	Implement the litter control policy of "pack it in--pack it out" and programs governing all Reclamation lands and include policy statements in all visitor information materials. Do not provide litter receptacles and dumpsters at dispersed recreation sites unless monitoring indicates a need.
Action	Consider restoration of existing degraded areas which are visible from key vantage points.
Action	Include visual quality as a concern in all management and development decisions.
Action	Develop siting, building design, and screening guidelines and criteria for the improved appearance of structures and preservation of the rural landscape. Apply to the planning, design, and construction of all new facilities and maintenance or modification of existing facilities.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Visuals Resources in the River Area

River Management	
Goal	Protect And Enhance Visual Resources/Scenic Quality
Objective	Avoid damage to the landscape (caused by motor vehicles or other uses) in areas which are highly visible from scenic viewpoints or from recreational travel routes (including the Interstate highway). Rehabilitate those areas with existing damage.

River Management	
Objective	Emphasize enjoyment of the scenic resources in planning land/water uses.
Action	Continue to remove trash and waste dumps and avoid future repetition in highly visible areas along the river.
Action	Implement the "pack it in—pack it out" policy and programs governing all Reclamation lands and include policy statements in all visitor information materials.
Action	Explore means of assuring litter removal and trash collection through lease terms, cooperative agreements, etc.
Action	Include visual quality as a concern in all management and development decisions.
Action	Consider restoration of existing degraded areas which are visible from key vantage points.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.6. Public Access and Recreational Use

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Public Access and Recreational Use in the Reservoir Area

Reservoir Management	
Goal	Provide Adequate Safe And Suitable Road Access To Designated Recreation Areas
Objective	Increase public accessibility where appropriate and consistent with resource management goals.
Objective	Ensure compliance with existing Federal legislation and regulations regarding access for the physically challenged to designated, developed sites and facilities.
Objective	Provide adequate access management and parking within designated public use sites.
Action	An AMP will be developed to address hiking, climbing, bicycling, equestrian, and motor vehicle use (see "Management Plans").
Action	Continue to allow dispersed recreation activities in all areas which are not under an agricultural lease or easement and will not damage cultural or natural resources. Allow hunting on all Reclamation lands consistent with existing State and local regulations. Do not actively manage recreation sites unless monitoring indicates a need. Implement a policy of "pack it in/pack it out."
Action	Coordinate with adjacent landowners to minimize land use conflicts, when accommodating the access needs of recreationists and other users of Reclamation land.
Action	Consider land ownership changes or cooperative agreements as potential tools for consolidating and/or managing access or to increase public accessibility.

Reservoir Management	
Action	Cooperate with involved counties, agencies, and landowners to achieve needed access, including improvements and maintenance, to designated recreation sites, sportsmen access points, etc. on Reclamation lands.
Action	If necessary, acquire access easements or rights-of-way into important, designated Reclamation public use areas which are currently inaccessible by public road.
Action	As part of monitoring and review of effects, Reclamation will inspect designated areas, roads, and trails for motorized use to determine conditions resulting from vehicular access and use. If substantial damage or disturbance of Reclamation lands, water wildlife, vegetative resources, or archaeological and historic resources is found, areas, roads, and trails will be closed per 43 CFR 420 or appropriate controls established to prevent further deterioration of the environment.
Action	Restrict and actively manage vehicular access in areas where: there are potential conflicts with other existing land uses; soils, vegetation, and cultural resources are particularly sensitive to damage; water quality may be adversely affected; wildlife sensitive to human disturbance are concentrated; and the visual impacts can be readily seen.
Goal	Accommodate Boating Access And Provide Appropriate Recreation Site Improvements, Consistent with Demand, Available Funding, And Carrying Capacity of The Resource Base
Objective (Boating Access)	Improve boater safety and accessibility.
Objective (Boating Access)	Promote boater safety in general by developing public information brochures and installing highly visible signs which describe boater safety regulations, boater etiquette, and hazardous conditions. Coordinate with County Waterways and the Coast Guard Auxiliary.
Objective (Land Based Recreational Opportunities)	Accommodate future increases in recreation demand at new sites as appropriate.
Action (General Boating Access)	Promote night-time boater safety and convenience by encouraging and cooperating in maintaining appropriate navigational lights at various boat ramps and bays around the reservoir. Explore potential funding and implementation sources for promoting use of and maintaining navigational lights with County Waterways and/or Coast Guard Auxiliary.
Action (General Boating Access)	Install highly visible signs which describe boater safety regulations, boater etiquette, and hazardous conditions and coordinate with County Waterways and/or the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Provide public information brochures.
Action (General Land Based Recreation)	Provide land-based trail opportunities for hiking, equestrian, and bicycle opportunities where appropriate and considering resource protection needs.
Action (General Land Based Recreation)	Develop bird watching facilities consistent with wildlife management goals and objectives.
Action (General Land Based Recreation)	If feasible and with the cooperation of spaceholders, maintain the water level of the reservoir at elevation 4335 so that developed boat launches are usable at least through the 4th of July holiday.

Reservoir Management	
Action (General Land Based Recreation)	Continue to allow non-motorized recreation activities on all Reclamation lands where such use does not conflict with other established land uses.
Action (General Land Based Recreation)	Actively manage recreation, especially restroom and trash removal services, at sites which are heavily used by recreationists or where heavy use is more desirable and management efforts can be concentrated. Visitor health, safety, and welfare will be a focus.
Action (General Land Based Recreation)	Work with local user groups to promote clean-up efforts.
Access Management Plan	
Action	Improve and maintain roads on Reclamation lands which lead to developed recreation sites and areas designated for public use in the AFRMP [1995 American Falls RMP].
Action	Prohibit vehicular access along the southeast shoreline bluff where public roads do not exist and there is potential for conflict with adjacent private landowners and Reclamation agricultural leaseholders.
Action	Prohibit vehicular access in portions of the land areas surrounding Big Hole, Little Hole, and Willow Bay, as well as on McTucker Island and in the Danielson Creek/Crystal Wasteway Area (the latter consistent with current policy).
Action	Areas where vehicular access is prohibited will be illustrated on public information brochures and indicated by signs.
Action	Physical barriers will not be used unless necessary. Active enforcement will be sought as a last measure in those areas where significant resources must be protected and vehicular access continues to occur despite closure.
Action	Seasonal restrictions on public use will be applied during the nesting season to the McTucker Island area except for the pond area.
Action	Identify water based access points where appropriate and illustrate on public information maps.
Action	Provide clear, consistent directional signs where needed and work with affected counties and Idaho Department of Transportation (IDOT) to make and install signs.
Action	Accommodate OHV [off-highway vehicle], four-wheel drive, and general vehicular access in areas which are not subject to conflicts in use or particularly sensitive to environmental, cultural, or visual damage.
Action	Mark areas, roads, and trails with appropriate signs to permit public access (including motorized) on Reclamation lands. Signs will be posted beside county roads at access points to Reclamation lands.
Action	Monitor the effects of motorized access on Reclamation lands on an annual basis. On the basis of the information gathered, Reclamation will amend or rescind designated areas, roads, or trails, or take other actions necessary to further Reclamation policies, goals, and objectives.
Action	Publish new OHV closures in the Federal Register.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Public Access and Recreational Use in the River Area

River Management	
Goal	Provide Adequate Safe And Suitable Road Access to Designed Recreation Areas
Objective	Increase public accessibility where appropriate and consistent with resource management goals.
Objective	Provide adequate access management and parking within designated public use sites.
Objective	Management emphasis is to protect natural and cultural resources.
Action	A designated road will be opened to motorized vehicle use to Monument Sportsman's Access on the southeast side of the river near Eagle Rock. In cooperation with the IDFG, improve and maintain the road. Road improvements and/or fencing may be required. The road that winds around the agricultural lease and extends to the beach at Eagle Rock may remain open dependent on the results of specific cultural surveys.
Action	Develop an AMP to address hiking, climbing, bicycling, and equestrian uses. The AMP will be developed after the CRMP is completed.
Action	Continue to allow dispersed non-motorized recreation activities in all areas which are not under an agricultural lease or easement and will not damage cultural or natural resources.
Action	Allow hunting on all Reclamation lands consistent with existing State and local regulations.
Action	Continue closure of all areas on both sides of the river to vehicular access and use except for purposes defined in 43 CFR 420 (primarily official and emergency uses) and as authorized under rights granted by the AIRFA. Closure to vehicles will be clarified on signs at existing access points and illustrated in a public information brochure. Physical barriers will be used.
Action	To the extent authorized by law, Reclamation will prescribe appropriate penalties for violation of motorized access regulations and will establish procedures for the enforcement of these regulations. Reclamation will work with and enter into cooperative agreements with Federal, State, county, and/or local law enforcement officials to enforce the regulations relating to vehicle access and motorized vehicle use. Self-regulation and voluntary compliance among motorized vehicle users will be encouraged.
Action	To the extent administratively feasible, ensure coordination and cooperation among Reclamation, BLM, and Idaho Department of Lands to promote compatibility of management on adjacent public lands.
Action	Reclamation will work with OHV user groups, BLM, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), and others to locate another OHV recreation area in southeastern Idaho.
Goal	Accommodate Boating Access and Provide Appropriate Recreation Site Improvements, Consistent with Demand, Available Funding, and Carrying Capacity of the Resource Base

River Management	
Objective (Boating Access)	Promote boater safety in general by developing public information brochures and installing highly visible signs which describe boater safety regulations, boater etiquette, and hazardous conditions. Coordinate with County Waterways, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Massacre Rocks State Park.
Objective (Land-Based Recreational Opportunities)	Continue to allow non-motorized recreation activities on all Reclamation lands where such use does not conflict with other established land uses and resource management goals.
Actions	Provide non-motorized land-based trail opportunities where appropriate and considering resource protection needs.
Action	Develop bird watching facilities consistent with wildlife management goals and objectives.
Action	Explore and, if feasible, implement cooperative agreements with other agencies/jurisdictions to provide efficient and coordinated recreation management.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.7. Land Use and Realty

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Land Use and Realty in the Reservoir Area

Reservoir Management	
Goal	Achieve a Consistent Framework for Eliminating/Avoiding Encroachments On Reclamation Land And Managing Mining and Agricultural Lease Activities
Objective	Eliminate encroachments and trespass on Reclamation lands.
Objective	In the continuing program of removing/resolving encroachments on Reclamation lands, promote objectives relating to wildlife habitat enhancement and controlling erosion in a consistent manner.
Objective	Emphasize resource conservation and enhancement, avoidance of adverse environmental impact, and achievement of broad public use benefits in all land management decisions; permit single-purpose leasing/permitting only when compatible with this philosophy.
Objective	Ensure that all agricultural leases are consistent with the goals and objectives of the AFRMP; if significant conflicts arise, modification or termination of leases may be required.
Objective	Ensure that public agencies (Federal, State, or local) and Tribes operating under lease or permit for resource use or extraction on Reclamation lands fulfill their responsibility for site rehabilitation and/or reclamation.

Reservoir Management	
Action (Encroachments)	Develop specific procedures to eliminate encroachment in accordance with the policy on encroachment on Reclamation lands.
Action (Encroachments)	Continue evaluating the numerous encroachments on Reclamation lands. Decisions will be made to allow or remove the encroachments on a case-by-case basis and based on ongoing discussions with affected parties. A majority of encroachments involve cropland but also include portions of roads, irrigation equipment, farm structures, and buildings.
Action (Encroachments)	Conduct yearly inspections for encroachment and trespass on an informal basis, with a formal review conducted every 5 years. Unauthorized agricultural and grazing use on Reclamation lands will not be allowed. Equipment, pipes, haystacks, etc. will not be allowed on Reclamation land.
Action (Encroachments)	Follow up any dumping problems with local law enforcement officials if necessary.
Action (Encroachments)	Improve boundary identification, where feasible, with signs, monuments of boundary lines, and fences.
Action (Agricultural and Grazing Leases)	A GMP [grazing management plan] will be developed (see "Management Plans").
Action (Agricultural and Grazing Leases)	Renew all agricultural leases, but reevaluate fair market values to consider modified agricultural practices for increasing the availability of food and cover for upland game birds, especially pheasant. The new lease terms, to be cooperatively developed with each lessee, will require leaseholders to plant a negotiated percentage of the leased field with forage crops or provide other wildlife benefits. No new agricultural leases will be issued on land not leased at present.
Action (Agricultural and Grazing Leases)	Require and enforce a condition in agricultural leases that land within 75 feet of the edge of the shoreline bluff is not irrigated.
Action (Agricultural and Grazing Leases)	Modify, as necessary, agricultural leases to be consistent with other AFRMP goals and objectives.
Action (Mining)	See section on McTucker Island.
Action (Mining)	No mineral leasing will be permitted elsewhere around the reservoir.
Action (Mining)	Continue to prohibit mining claims on all lands around the reservoir, consistent with Federal law.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Land Use and Realty in the River Area

	River Management
Goal	Achieve A Consistent Framework For Eliminating/Avoiding Encroachments On Reclamation Land And Managing Mining And Agricultural Lease Activities
Objective	In the continuing program of removing/resolving encroachments on Reclamation lands, promote wildlife habitat enhancement and control erosion in a consistent manner.
Objective	Emphasize resource conservation and enhancement, avoidance of adverse environmental impact, and achievement of broad public use benefits in all land management decisions; permit single purpose leasing/permitting only when compatible with this philosophy.
Objective	Ensure that all agricultural leases are consistent with the goals and objectives of the AFRMP; if significant conflicts arise, modification or termination of leases may be required.
Action (Encroachments)	Implement the no encroachment policy. Identify specific procedures to follow.
Action (Encroachments)	Continue to evaluate and resolve all existing encroachments on Reclamation land.
Action (Encroachments)	Determine where fencing may be needed to prevent cattle trespass and who will be responsible for installing and maintaining the fencing.
Action (Livestock/Agricultural Leases)	Modify, as necessary, agricultural leases and allotment terms to be consistent with other AFRMP goals and objectives.
Action (Livestock/Agricultural Leases)	Renew the agricultural leases in the Eagle Rock area (Area 8) (see exhibit 12) and on other isolated parcels west of Register Rock day-use area. Reevaluate fair market values to consider modified agricultural practices for increasing the availability of food and cover for upland game birds, especially pheasant. The new lease terms, to be cooperatively developed with each lessee, will require leaseholders to plant a negotiated percentage of the leased field with forage crops or provide other wildlife benefits and minimize damage to cultural resources. No new agricultural leases will be issued for lands not currently leased.
Action (Livestock/Agricultural Leases)	Exclude Reclamation lands from BLM grazing allotments (Areas 3 and 4 on exhibit 12). Reclamation will work with BLM and affected ranchers along the river to examine other methods of obtaining livestock water.
Action (Mining)	Continue to prohibit mining, consistent with Federal Law, on both sides of the river.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.8. Grazing Management

Table 1. Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Grazing

1995 RMP Grazing Management Plan	
Objective	Ensure that any permitted livestock grazing on Reclamation land does not result in a significant adverse effect on (1) existing valuable vegetation and wildlife habitat or (2) the rate of recovery of habitat previously damaged or targeted for enhancement.
Action	Protect riparian areas and nesting habitat for upland game and waterfowl and address water quality concerns. This will be a joint effort with the affected ranchers, and may include BLM, USFWS, IDFG, and the Tribes.
Action	Continue livestock grazing on Reclamation lands where there are no significant adverse effects on water quality and where consistent with other AFRMP objectives and goals.
Action	Determine where fencing may be needed to prevent cattle trespassing and who will be responsible for installing and maintaining the fencing.
Action	Modify livestock grazing leases and allotment terms to be consistent with other AFRMP goals and objectives.
2019 Grazing Management Plan	
Objective	Management of lands in a manner consistent with Federal laws and regulations, and the principles of good stewardship in support of the authorized Minidoka Project.
Objective	Serving and supporting the public interest by providing for the management of livestock use such that it strikes an appropriate balance between grazing and natural resource protection, cultural resource preservation, recreation use, and ecological integrity. This should include, but is not limited to, the following specific objectives: a) maintenance or establishment of upward trends on all authorized grazed areas of use; b) protection of sensitive resources to the greatest extent possible, including threatened and endangered species, State species of special concern, and wetlands; and c) management of resources in such a manner as to reduce conflicts between uses.

Sources: Reclamation 1995, 2019

A.9. Management and Implementation

Table 1: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Management and Implementation in the Reservoir Area

	Reservoir Management and Implementation
Goal	Clarify And More Actively/Efficiently Manage Reclamation/Private Land Boundaries Including Tribal Lands
Objective	Provide adequate buffer zones between public use areas and adjacent private land uses (including adequate signs and fencing as appropriate) to reduce/eliminate trespass and encroachment concerns.
Objective	Provide adequate buffer zones between important wildlife habitat and high use recreation or other activity areas.
Objective	Prevent livestock damage to public and private lands caused by inadequate livestock management on Reclamation land.
Action	Publish a map illustrating existing and planned Reclamation ownership and communicate management and use policies for all lands as part of AFRMP documentation and visitor information materials.
Action	Explore means to clarify and simplify Reclamation ownerships and management boundaries around the reservoir; achieve a more understandable boundary from a public use standpoint and a more efficient boundary from a resource management standpoint; and consider land tenure changes (relocations, disposal, purchase) as means to accomplish this objective.
Goal	Promote Cooperative Management and Program Implementation Efforts with Other Agencies, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and The Private Sector
Objective	Ensure that Shoshone-Bannock priority treaty rights on Reclamation land outside of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation are not significantly affected by AFRMP actions.
Objective	Ensure that local, State, and other Federal agencies are aware of management activities and have an opportunity to participate in developing and implementing specific actions and general management plans directed toward wildlife management and grazing management.

Reservoir Management and Implementation	
Action	Explore and, if feasible, implement cooperative agreements, lease arrangements, or other relationships with private landowners, organizations, and the Tribes to achieve (1) mutually beneficial vegetation/habitat management on Reclamation land bordering private cropland and (2) retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat values within private agricultural lands.
Action	Cooperate with interested private organizations in developing and implementing vegetation and wildlife management programs including exploration of joint funding programs.
Action	Coordinate with USFWS, IDFG, other public agencies, and the Tribes in developing and implementing vegetation and wildlife management programs including exploration of joint funding programs.
Action	Explore the potential for cooperative agreements with private interest groups, the Tribes, and involved Federal, State, and local agencies to achieve rapid response to objectives of habitat conservation and enhancement; recreation; and other areas of mutual use. Agreements will focus on planning, funding, and implementing specific habitat programs consistent with AFRMP objectives.
Action	Maintain coordination and cooperative planning liaison with involved agencies and the Tribes, and to the extent possible, make all regulations and guidelines related to Reclamation lands consistent with those of other, adjacent, or involved jurisdictions. Where needed regulations and/or guidelines are not now in place, coordinate development of these management tools.
Goal	Achieve Effective Implementation of The AFRMP Through Appropriate Planning for Funding, Enforcement, And Public Information Programs
Objective (Funding)	Ensure that all permitees, leaseholders, and others using Reclamation land under special agreements assume their fair share of public service and management costs.
Objective (Funding)	Ensure that priority existing and currently funded programs (i.e., erosion control) are not jeopardized by diversion of funds to other programs.
Objective (Enforcement)	Ensure that Reclamation enforcement/management needs associated with AFRMP implementation are met by appropriate cooperative agreements or contracts with other agencies including local, State, and other Federal law enforcement assistance.

Reservoir Management and Implementation	
Objective (Public Information/Education)	Ensure dissemination of public information through (1) availability of materials and displays at the Facility Office and other locations and (2) cooperative efforts with surrounding jurisdictions, school districts, businesses, and interest groups.
Action	Continue to explore existing and potential sources to adequately fund AFRMP programs. Direct funding by Reclamation and cooperative funding with other Federal, State, and local agencies and private interests will be explored.
Action	Continue to pursue Reclamation law enforcement authority.
Action	Seek funding for full-time resource managers to implement the resource management program and enforce management and trespass guidelines.
Action	Continue public education programs to reduce accidental damage to or vandalism of natural and cultural resources, and promote resource protection by the public.
Action	Construct observation blinds for bird and other wildlife viewing kiosks or blinds with complementary road access and interpretive signs.
Action	Seek funds for systematic monitoring and scientific collection of paleontological materials eroded from the reservoir shore. The monitoring and collection will be conducted by paleontologists, and the collected materials will be curated at Idaho State University.
Action	To the extent authorized by law, prescribe appropriate penalties for violation of regulations pertaining to areas closed to motorized access and establish procedures for the enforcement of these regulations. Reclamation will work with and enter into cooperative agreements with Federal, State, and/or county law enforcement officials to enforce these regulations. Self-regulation and voluntary compliance among recreational users will be encouraged.

Reservoir Management and Implementation	
Action	Develop and disseminate visitor information materials that clearly identify and explain Reclamation lands and facilities available for public use and policies and regulations on motorized access, recreation, and resource management. Explore cooperative efforts with private enterprise or other agencies to publish public information materials. Public informational materials will include: • An overall guide map to facilities and access points, Reclamation boundaries, public access roads, and specification of conservation and wildlife management areas where use is restricted. • Environmental interpretation and education of natural and cultural resources. • Facility and access characteristics, capacities, and limitations. • Facility and access regulations. • Boating etiquette, safety regulations, and waste management. • Dispersed use regulations. • Other management regulations and guidelines, as appropriate.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Table 2: Existing Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions for Management and Implementation in the River Area

River Management and Implementation	
Goal	Clarify And More Actively/Efficiently Manage Reclamation/Private Land Boundaries Including Tribal Lands
Objective	Provide adequate buffer zones between public use areas and adjacent private land uses (including adequate signs and fencing as appropriate) to reduce/eliminate trespass and encroachment concerns.
Objective	Provide adequate buffer zones between important wildlife habitat and high use recreation or other activity areas.
Action	Publish a map illustrating existing and planned Reclamation ownership and communicate management and use policies for all lands as part of AFRMP documentation and visitor information materials.
Action	Explore means to clarify and simplify Reclamation ownerships and management boundaries. Achieve a more understandable boundary from a public use standpoint and a more efficient boundary from a resource management standpoint.
Goal	Promote Cooperative Management And Program Implementation Efforts With Other Agencies, The Private Sector, And The Tribes
Objective	Ensure that private interest groups, the Tribes, State and local agencies, and other Federal agencies are aware of management actions and are offered an opportunity to participate through cooperative and cost-share agreements.

River Management and Implementation	
Action	Explore the potential for cooperative agreements, lease arrangements, or other relationships with private landowners to achieve (1) mutually beneficial vegetation/habitat management on Reclamation land bordering private cropland and (2) retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat values within private agricultural lands. Implement if feasible.
Action	Explore the potential for cooperative agreements with private interest groups, the Tribes, and involved Federal, State, and local agencies to achieve rapid response to objectives of habitat conservation and enhancement; recreation; and other areas of mutual use. Agreements should focus on planning, funding, and implementing specific habitat programs consistent with AFRMP objectives.
Action	Maintain coordination and cooperative planning liaison with involved agencies throughout implementation of the AFRMP. To the extent possible, make all regulations and guidelines related to Reclamation lands consistent with those of other, adjacent or involved jurisdictions. Where needed regulations and/or guidelines are not now in place, coordinate development of these management tools.
Action	Ensure that Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' priority treaty rights on Reclamation land outside of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation are not significantly affected by AFRMP actions.
Action	Explore cooperative management of a National Historic District with the BLM.
Goal	Achieve Effective Implementation of the AFRMP Through Appropriate Planning for Funding, Enforcement, and Public Information Programs
Objective (Funding)	Ensure that all permitees, leaseholders and others using Reclamation land under special agreements assume their fair share of public service and management costs.
Objective (Funding)	To the extent possible, safeguard priority existing and currently funded programs to avoid jeopardy from diversion of funds to other programs.
Objective (Enforcement)	Ensure that Reclamation enforcement/management needs associated with AFRMP implementation are met by appropriate cooperative agreements or contracts with local, State, other Federal agency law enforcement assistance.
Objective (Public Information/Education)	Ensure dissemination of public information through (1) availability of materials and displays at the Reclamation Facility Office, Massacre Rocks State Park, and Interstate rest area and (2) cooperative efforts with surrounding jurisdictions, school districts, businesses, and interest groups.
Action	Seek funding for full-time resource managers to implement the resource management program and enforce management and trespass policies.
Action	If necessary. seek funds for programmatic cultural resource site management which includes test excavation of sites being damaged by ongoing land use or operations. and stabilization or other protection of sites suffering from erosion or other threatening disturbances.
Action	Continue to explore existing and potential sources to adequately fund AFRMP programs. Direct funding by Reclamation and cooperative funding with other Federal, State, and local agencies and private interests will be explored.

River Management and Implementation	
Action	Continue to pursue Reclamation law enforcement authority through Congress.
Action	Prepare concise public information materials including: • Clear, consistent signs to guide public access and use of Reclamation lands. • An overall guide map to facilities and access points, Reclamation boundaries, public access roads, and specification of conservation and wildlife management areas where use is restricted. • Environmental interpretation and education discussions. • Boating etiquette, safety regulations, and waste management. • Dispersed use regulations. • Other management regulations and guidelines, as appropriate. • Explore cooperative efforts with private enterprise or other agencies to publish public information materials.

Source: Reclamation 1995

A.10.Management Area-Specific Objectives and Actions

Table 1. Management Area–Specific Objectives and Actions

Management Area	Objectives and Actions
McTucker Island - General	
Action	Restrict public use of the McTucker Island area, except for the pond area, during nesting season.
Action	Continue to prohibit vehicular access onto McTucker Island.
Action	Explore and, if feasible, implement cooperative agreements with other agencies/jurisdictions to provide efficient and coordinated recreation management.
Action	Reclamation will determine if there are any archaeological sites in the McTucker Island area that are eligible to the National Register, and if so, whether the sites will be endangered by sand and gravel extraction or intensified recreational. Reclamation will prohibit or relocate activities as appropriate to protect eligible sites.
Action	Focus new recreation development in the McTucker Island area, where no facilities currently exist. The type and scale of development will be consistent with the area's wildlife and cultural protection and enhancement goals. The area will be designated for dispersed/informal camping until need for a developed campground is indicated. Additional facilities will require a cost-share partner.

Management Area	Objectives and Actions
Action	Apply actions identified in the Interagency Snake River Study to determine to the extent of natural regeneration of cottonwood trees in the McTucker Island area and the effects of hydrology, windfall, and harvest of cottonwood forest.
Action	Issue a lease to Bingham County and IDOT to extract sand and gravel in the McTucker Island Ponds area. Prior to issuance of a lease for any further expansion of mining operations or initiation of mining on new sites, an approved extraction and rehabilitation plan including the following will be required: • Maps and sections illustrating existing conditions and proposed excavations, an EA [environmental assessment], and a mitigation/rehabilitation plan. • A commitment to funding full implementation of the plan and subsequent monitoring will be a requirement. • Take into consideration existing and potential wetland and wildlife concerns, water quality issues, any other known natural and cultural resource conflicts, and recreational opportunities.
McTucker Island (Drawdown Area)	
Action	No recreation site improvements.
Action	Allow public use but discourage motorized access through public information materials and signs.
Action	A grazing management plan will be developed (See "Grazing Management Plan").
Action	Priority area for sub impoundments and other wildlife enhancement projects will be identified (see "Wildlife Management Plan").
McTucker Island (Danielson Creek/Crystal Wasteway)	
Action	No recreation site improvements: however, there will be wildlife viewing opportunities and designated wildlife viewing marked on maps.
Action	Provide managed access (non-motorized) to the area through public information materials and signs (part of the Access Management Plan) but prohibit vehicular access into the Danielson Creek/Crystal Wasteway Area consistent with current policy.
Action	A grazing management plan will be developed (See "Grazing Management Plan").
Action	Priority area for sub impoundments and other wildlife enhancement projects will be identified in the Wildlife Management Plan (see "Wildlife Management Plan").

Management Area	Objectives and Actions
McTucker Island (Sterling Wasteway and Smith Springs)	
Action	No recreation site improvements; however, provide managed pedestrian access and wildlife viewing opportunities in the Sterling Wasteway area. Cost-share partners will be needed.
Action	Designate as a wildlife viewing area on maps.
Action	Allow public use at Sterling Wasteway but discourage motorized access through public information materials and signs.
Action	Maintain agricultural lease but include enhanced provisions for wildlife benefits.
Action	Prepare a WMP to enhance wetlands and restore sagebrush uplands in disturbed areas.
Action	Explore public access (non-vehicle or pedestrian) to Smith Springs.
Action	Evaluate the feasibility of constructing small sub impoundment areas around spring sources to maintain habitat for waterfowl during the drawdown period.
McTucker Island (Sterling WMA)	
Action	Renew the existing IDFG wildlife leases in the Big Hole and Little Hole Areas (see Big Hole and Little Hole illustrations). Reclamation will be responsible for restoring wetland and upland wildlife habitat, but IDFG will assume long-term management of wildlife.
McTucker Island (Big Hole)	
Action	Continue recreation leases with Bingham County for Sportsman's Park (exclude other parts of the lease) and identify dispersed recreation sites. With review and approval, permit the County to make improvements in accordance with its master plans. Plans will be revised as needed to protect significant natural and cultural resources. Establish consistent general lease provisions that reflect all applicable Federal rules, regulations, and policies.
Action	Designate sites which can serve as informal picnic areas for boat-in day use.
Action	Prohibit vehicular access in portions of the land areas surrounding Big Hole.
McTucker Island (Little Hole)	
Action	Designate sites which can serve as informal picnic areas for boat-in day use. Action: Acquire additional shoreline acreage for operational purposes and to ensure that access to a popular beach is maintained in public ownership.

Management Area	Objectives and Actions
Action	Evaluate a sub impoundment at Little Hole Bay to enhance waterfowl production and provide habitat for smallmouth bass.
Action	Prohibit vehicular access in portions of the land areas surrounding Little Hole.
McTucker Island (West Bay)	
Action	Discourage motorized access on land and continue to allow boating in the southern half of the bay.
Action	Encourage boaters to "pack in/pack out" garbage; monitor use and provide facilities if warranted.
Action	Restrict boat access in the northern end of West Bay to minimize the disturbance of birds and to prevent damage to wetlands and riparian areas. Install signs and provide maps.
Action	Maintain agricultural leases but include enhanced provisions for wildlife benefits and cultural resource protection.
Action	A GMP will be developed (see "Grazing Management Plan").
McTucker Island (Spring House)	
Action	When recreation demand at existing developed sites on the reservoir exceeds available capacity during periods of peak use, consider improving the road to the area currently receiving high use, developing a small gravel parking lot, and providing sanitary facilities, picnic facilities, and a dock.
Action	Rehabilitate all remaining disturbed upland areas.
Action	Explore and, if feasible, implement cooperative agreements with other agencies/jurisdictions to provide efficient and coordinated recreation management.
Action	Any further development will require a cost share partner.
McTucker Island (Visitors Centre, North Side)	
Action	Implement a regular sediment removal program. Evaluate the feasibility of realigning the ramp so less sediment is deposited; constructing a breakwater to minimize sediment deposition; or implementing a combination of measures to improve boat accessibility at the ramp.
Action	Provide facilities such as additional picnic tables and barbecue grills.
Action	Upgrade the restroom facility.
Action	Pave and stripe the parking lot, entrance road, and boat launch.

Management Area	Objectives and Actions
Action	Landscape the parking lot and picnic area to reduce wind, provide shade, and minimize the visibility of vehicles from the Visitors Center and Highway 39.
Action	Install and maintain turf and an irrigation system in the picnic area.
Action	Place topsoil on the embankments on either side of the boat ramp and hydroseed with native plants/wildflowers.
McTucker Island (Visitors Centre, South Side)	
Action	Develop a small gravel parking lot for 10 to 15 vehicles.
Action	Provide a one-unit restroom facility.
Action	Landscape the parking lot to visually screen it from the Visitors Center and Highway 39.
Action	Landscape the picnic area to provide more shade and wind protection.
McTucker Island (Everglades)	
	Action: Provide a gravel parking lot, portable toilets and, signs interpreting the old American Falls town site at the end of the existing access road. Reclamation will support current efforts of the local Historical Society in promoting self-guided tours.
Action	Work with the city and county to construct a bicycle path connecting Willow Bay Recreation Area with the city of American Falls through this area.
Action	Allow public use but manage vehicular access through public information materials and signs.
Action	Maintain agricultural lease but include enhanced provisions for wildlife benefits.
McTucker Island (Willow Bay)	
Action	Support efforts, exclusive of funding, of the city of American Falls in studying the feasibility of dredging the channel from the boat launch to the reservoir.
Action	Continue recreation leases to the city of American Falls for Willow Bay Recreation Area. With review and approval, permit the lessees to make improvements in accordance with their master plans. Plans will be revised as needed to protect significant natural and cultural resources. Establish consistent general lease provisions that reflect all applicable Federal rules, regulations, and policies.
Action	Seek funding to test recorded archaeological sites at Willow Bay recreation area and review plans for facilities improvements for effect on archaeological sites. Seek funding to protect or mitigate sites.

Management Area	Objectives and Actions
Action	Declare as surplus two small parcels in Area 6 in the Willow Bay area which are currently being farmed; these are no longer necessary for project operations or maintenance.
Action	Prohibit vehicular access in portions of the land areas surrounding Willow Bay.
McTucker Island (Seagull Bay)	
Action	Continue recreation leases with the Seagull Bay Yacht Club for the Seagull Bay Recreation Area. With review and approval, permit the lessee to make improvements in accordance with their master plans. Plans will be revised as needed to protect significant natural and cultural resources. Establish consistent general lease provisions that reflect all applicable Federal rules, regulations, and policies.
Action	Allow public use but manage vehicular access through public information materials and signs.
Action	Allow public use but manage vehicular access through public information materials and signs.
Action	Through relocation, acquire additional wetland habitat to the east, if feasible.
Action	Obtain and enhance wetland habitats located between Interstate 86 and the existing railroad right-of-way.
Action	Seek funding to test recorded archaeological sites at Seagull Bay recreation area and review plans for facilities improvements for effect on archaeological sites. Seek funding to protect or mitigate sites.
McTucker Island (Narrow Bluffs)	
Action	No recreation site improvements.
Action	No vehicular access below the bluff tops.
Action	Allow public use along the bluff tops but discourage vehicle access through public information materials and installation of signs.
Action	Maintain existing agricultural leases but include enhanced provisions for wildlife benefits.

Source: Reclamation 1995

Appendix B

Regulatory Framework

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Appendix B. Regulatory Framework

The following are some of the key laws, executive orders, secretarial orders, and Reclamation policies that apply specifically to the resource management plan, and compliance with their requirements is documented in this resource management plan:

Federal

- **The American Indian Religious Freedom Act** protects the rights of Native Americans to exercise their traditional religions by ensuring access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonial and traditional rites.
- **The Endangered Species Act** of 1973, as amended, requires all federal agencies to ensure their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species, or destroy or adversely modify their critical habitat. As part of the Endangered Species Act's Section 7 process, an agency must coordinate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (collectively, the Services) on whether threatened and endangered species exist within or near the planning area and evaluate the impacts on the species, if present.
- **The Federal Water Project Recreation Act** of 1965 requires that plans for any federal water resources project for navigation, flood control, reclamation, hydroelectric, or multiple purposes give "full consideration" to potential opportunities for outdoor recreation and for fish and wildlife enhancement.
- **The Reclamation Recreation Management Act** of 1992 amended the Federal Water Project Recreation Act under provision 2804 and also authorized several additional recreation authorities, including safe outdoor recreation and protection of resource values. This act adds stronger language than "full consideration," which was used in the Federal Water Project Recreation Act. The Federal Water Project Recreation Act cites that it "is a Federal responsibility to provide opportunities for public recreation at Federal water projects."
- **The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act** acknowledges the historical focus of fish and wildlife conservation programs on recreationally and commercially important species, without provisions for the conservation and management of nongame fish and wildlife. This act encourages all federal departments and agencies to use their statutory and administrative authority, to the maximum extent practicable and consistent with each agency's statutory responsibilities, to conserve and promote conservation of nongame fish and wildlife and their habitats through the implementation of conservation plans and programs for nongame fish and wildlife. Federal agencies must consult with the Services and the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources.
- **Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act** of 1966, as amended, requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Federal agencies must determine whether there are historic properties in the planning area, the effects of the project on those properties, and the appropriate mitigation for adverse effects. In making these determinations, federal agencies are required to consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer, Native American Tribes with

traditional or culturally significant religious interest in the planning area, and the interested public.

- **Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act** of 1966, as amended, states the following: "(1) The heads of all Federal agencies shall assume responsibility for the preservation of historic properties which are owned or controlled by such agency. Prior to acquiring, constructing, or leasing buildings for purposes of carrying out agency responsibilities, each Federal agency shall use, to the maximum extent feasible, historic properties available to the agency. Each agency shall undertake, consistent with the preservation of such properties and the mission of the agency and the professional standards established pursuant to section 101(g), any preservation, as may be necessary to carry out this section. . . . (2) Each Federal agency shall establish (unless exempted pursuant to section 214), in consultation with the Secretary, a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and protection of historic properties. . . . Such program shall ensure—(a) That historic properties under the jurisdiction or control of the agency are identified, evaluated, and nominated to the National Register . . .; (b) That such properties under the jurisdiction or control of the agency as are listed in or may be eligible for the National Register are managed and maintained in a way that considers the preservation of their historic, archaeological, architectural, and cultural values in compliance with section 106 and gives special consideration to the preservation of such values in the case of properties designated as having National significance."
- **The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act** requires federal agencies and institutions that receive federal funds, including museums, universities, state agencies, and local governments, to repatriate or transfer Native American human remains and other cultural items to the appropriate parties by consulting with lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations on Native American human remains and other cultural items; protect and plan for Native American human remains and other cultural items that may be removed from federal or Tribal lands; identify and report all Native American human remains and other cultural items in inventories and summaries of holdings or collections; and give notice prior to repatriating or transferring human remains and other cultural items.
- **The Archaeological Resources Protection Act** of 1979 protects archaeological resources and sites on public and Native American lands. It prohibits unauthorized excavation, removal, damage, or trafficking of archaeological materials that are over 100 years old. The act establishes permitting requirements for legitimate archaeological investigations and sets criminal and civil penalties for violations. It aims to preserve cultural heritage by ensuring archaeological resources are studied scientifically and not exploited or destroyed.
- **The Antiquities Act** of 1906 is a landmark US law that empowers the president to designate national monuments on federal lands to protect significant natural, cultural, or historical features. It was the first law to provide general protection for archaeological and historic sites; it prohibits unauthorized excavation or destruction of such resources. The act also allows for permits to be issued for scientific and educational purposes and serves as the foundation for many subsequent conservation efforts. Its broad authority has been used to preserve a wide range of landscapes and cultural sites across the United States.
- **The Noise Control Act** of 1972 establishes a national policy to promote an environment free from noise that jeopardizes the health and welfare of all Americans. It further requires federal agencies to coordinate their noise research and control programs with the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) and consult with the EPA when developing or revising noise regulations.

- **The Paleontological Resources Protection Act** of 2009 directs the Department of the Interior (DOI) to manage and protect paleontological resources on federal land using scientific principles and expertise. The Secretary of the Interior should develop appropriate plans for inventory, monitoring, and the scientific and educational use of paleontological resources, in accordance with applicable departmental laws, regulations, and policies. These plans should emphasize interagency coordination and collaborative efforts, where possible, with nonfederal partners, the scientific community, and the general public.
- **The Clean Water Act** of 1972 requires federal agencies to consider the impact of proposed actions on water quality, particularly the potential pollution of surface waters.
- **The Clean Air Act** of 1970, as amended, directs federal agencies to address air quality and emissions of hazardous pollutants from proposed activities. The federal Clean Air Act, as amended (42 United States Code 7401 et seq.), requires the EPA and individual states to carry out a wide range of regulatory programs intended to assure attainment of the national ambient air quality standards. Air quality impacts from the proposed activities include limited temporary fugitive dust and vehicle emissions from construction, and negligible effects from operation.
- **The Migratory Bird Treaty Act** of 1918 prohibits the take (killing, capturing, selling, trading, or transport) of protected migratory bird species without prior authorization from the USFWS.
- **Executive Order 11990**, Protection of Wetlands, dated May 24, 1977, requires federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and to avoid new construction in wetlands.
- **Executive Order 11988**, Floodplain Management, dated May 24, 1977, states that as part of the NEPA review, US Department of Energy NEPA regulations require that impacts on floodplains and wetlands be assessed and alternatives for protection of these resources be evaluated in accordance with Compliance with Floodplain/Wetlands Environmental Review Requirements (10 Code of Federal Regulations 1022.12).
- **Executive Order 13007**, Indian Sacred Sites, dated May 24, 1996, instructs federal agencies to promote the accommodation of access to and protect the physical integrity of American Indian sacred sites. An Indian Tribe or an Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative must identify a site as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion.
- **Executive Order 13175**, Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments, dated November 6, 2000, states that the US has a unique legal relationship with Indian Tribal governments as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, treaties, statutes, executive orders, and court decisions. This executive order directs federal agencies to formulate and establish "regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have Tribal implications, to strengthen the United States government-to-government relationships with Indian Tribes, and to reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian Tribes." This consultation is meant to work toward a mutual consensus and is intended to begin at the earliest planning stages, before decisions are made and actions are taken.
- **Executive Order 14148**, Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions, dated January 20, 2025, revokes a wide range of previous executive actions, particularly those enacted during the prior administration, that the current administration views as harmful or radical. The

actions cover a variety of policy areas, including racial equity, climate change, public health, and immigration. Key orders, such as Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity, and Executive Order 13990, Protecting Public Health and the Environment, are rescinded, alongside several pandemic-related actions and initiatives that the administration believes imposed undue burdens on the economy or American citizens. Executive Order 14148 also outlines steps for reviewing and revising federal actions taken under these prior orders, with a focus on ensuring that future policies prioritize American prosperity.

- **Federal Noxious Weed Act (Public Law 93-629)** of 1975 provides for the management of undesirable plants on federal lands.
- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** of 1969 requires the preparation of environmental assessments or environmental impact statements for federal actions. These documents describe the environmental effects of federal actions and determine whether the actions have a significant effect on the human environment.
- **Secretarial Order 3175**, Department[15] Responsibilities for Indian Trust Assets (ITAs), dated November 8, 1993, identifies ITAs as legal interests in property held in trust by the United States (with the Secretary of the Interior acting as trustee) for Indian Tribes or Indian individuals. Examples of ITAs are lands, minerals, hunting and fishing rights, and water rights. In many cases, ITAs are on a reservation; however, they may also be found off the reservation.
- **Joint Secretarial Order 3403 on Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters**, dated November 15, 2021, recognizes that protecting the interests of federally recognized Indian Tribes is an important component of managing federal lands. It requires the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior to implement Tribal consultation and collaboration as part of their management responsibilities.
- **Presidential Memorandum – Climate Change and National Security**, dated September 21, 2016, requires the federal government to ensure the climate change–related impacts are fully considered in policies and plans.

- **Title 43 CFR, Public Lands**, contains rules and regulations governing public lands and their management by the Department of the Interior and its bureaus, including Reclamation. It covers a wide range of topics, including the sale and use of public land resources, off-road vehicle use, law enforcement authority at Reclamation projects, water conservation rules, and public conduct on Reclamation lands. Part 423, Public Conduct on Bureau of Reclamation Facilities, Lands, and Waterbodies, defines areas open and closed to public use, rules of conduct on Reclamation lands, the designation of special use areas, and the requirement for public compliance. Reclamation is authorized to issue permits to allow activities on Reclamation's facilities, lands, and waterbodies otherwise prohibited or restricted, and the public is required to pay any associated fees related to them. Part 429, Use of Bureau of Reclamation Land, Facilities, and Waterbodies, prohibits the possession and disturbance of any natural resources on Reclamation land, facilities, or waterbodies without written authorization from Reclamation. Regulated activities include, but are not limited to, commercial filming; commercial guiding; commercial or organized sporting and recreational activities; agricultural uses; infrastructure; removal of sand, gravel, and other mineral resources; and timber harvesting. This part authorizes Reclamation to

[15] Department of the Interior

issue land authorizations and outlines the requesting process, associated fees and costs, and terms and conditions.

DOI Policies

- **Series 30, Part 512, Chapter 5, Procedures for Consultation with Indian Tribes**, provides the procedures for government-to-government consultation between Tribal officials and DOI officials. The DOI's bureaus and offices must invite Tribes early in the planning process to participate in consultation when a DOI action will have Tribal implications.

Reclamation Policies

- **Reclamation Manual (RM) Land Management and Development (LND) P01 Cultural Resources Management** defines Reclamation's responsibility for the cultural resources it owns, controls, or administers on behalf of the United States in accordance with federal laws, regulations, executive orders, and DOI policies. The benefit of this policy is improved management and protection of, and accountability for, the cultural resources under Reclamation's stewardship.
- **RM LND P02 Concessions Management** defines Reclamation's overall roles and responsibilities in providing recreational opportunities, amenities, and visitor services through concession service providers. The policy benefits Reclamation by providing requirements and principles for implementing a successful concession program at Reclamation's recreation areas. The benefit of this policy is the establishment of uniform requirements for concession operations at both direct and partner-managed concessions areas.
- **RM LND P03 Wetlands Mitigation and Enhancement** establishes policy for Reclamation to use in determining appropriate mitigation for all actions affecting wetlands. The benefit of this policy is the consistent management of activities for protecting, preserving, and enhancing wetlands.
- **RM LND P04 Recreation Program Management** defines Reclamation's requirements in providing public outdoor recreational facilities and opportunities. This policy benefits Reclamation by providing the basic strategies for implementing a successful recreation program at Reclamation's water resource projects.
- **RM LND P06 Land Program Management** defines Reclamation's overall roles and responsibilities in managing federal land and interests in land under the jurisdiction of or administered by Reclamation. This policy benefits Reclamation by providing the primary principles for implementing a successful land management strategy.
- **RM LND P14 Wildland Fire Management** establishes policy for implementing and managing Reclamation's Wildland Fire Management Program. This policy benefits Reclamation by ensuring protection of critical project facilities and land in compliance with existing laws and DOI policy regarding wildland fire management. It also ensures consistency with other DOI bureaus that have established wildland fire management programs.
- **RM NIA (Native American and Indian Affairs) P10 Indian Policy of the Bureau of Reclamation** provides an integrated framework for Reclamation to comply with applicable law and policy pertaining to working with Indian Tribes. The benefit is to aid Reclamation to appropriately consider and interact with Indian Tribes when executing Reclamation's mission.

- **RM LND 08-01 Land Use Authorizations** outlines procedures for authorizing non-Reclamation uses of its lands, facilities, and waterbodies. It establishes the application process, evaluation criteria, and approval requirements for activities such as utility crossings, recreational events, and commercial operations. The directive ensures that such uses are compatible with Reclamation's mission and do not interfere with project purposes. It also addresses cost recovery, environmental compliance, and the terms and conditions of land-use authorizations.
- **RM LND 03-01 Land Withdrawal, Withdrawal Management and Withdrawal Revocation** provides guidance on the management of land withdrawals under Reclamation's jurisdiction. It details the processes for initiating, modifying, and revoking land withdrawals, ensuring that such actions align with project needs and legal requirements. The directive emphasizes coordination with the Bureau of Land Management and other stakeholders, and it outlines documentation and reporting procedures to maintain accurate records of land status.
- **RM LND 06-01 Land and Water Rights Acquisition** establishes the policies and procedures for acquiring land and water rights necessary for Reclamation projects. It delineates the responsibilities of various officials, including the chief realty officer, in overseeing acquisitions, especially those involving sensitive or complex issues. The directive covers appraisal requirements, negotiation strategies, and the approval process for acquisitions exceeding appraised values. It also addresses condemnation procedures and relocation assistance, ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- **RM Comprehensive Manual CMP 11-03 Real Property Disposal** outlines the procedures for disposing of real property assets that are no longer needed for Reclamation purposes. It provides criteria for determining the eligibility of properties for disposal and details the steps for transferring ownership, including valuation, environmental compliance, and coordination with other federal agencies. The directive ensures that disposals are conducted transparently and in accordance with legal and policy requirements.

Appendix C

Water Quality Data

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Appendix C. Water Quality Data

Reclamation completes or provides funding for partners to complete water quality monitoring across multiple sites within the planning area (see **Figure 3-3, Water Quality Sites**). Below are the trace element, nutrient, and sediment data collected from 2019 to 2022.

C.1. American Falls – Near Boat Ramp (Site ID: AFE 010)

C.1.1. Trace Metals and Other Elements

Table C-1. Trace Metals and Other Elements for American Falls – Near Boat Ramp*

Sample Date	Arsenic, Total (ug/L)	Cadmium, Total (ug/L)	Calcium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Chromium, Total (ug/L)	Copper, Total (ug/L)	Fluoride (mg/L)	Iron, Total (ug/L)	Lead, Total (mg/L)	Magnesium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Manganese, Total (ug/L)	Potassium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Selenium, Total (ug/L)	Sodium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Zinc, Total (ug/L)
6/19/2019	ND	ND	45.1	ND	ND	0.60	77.7	ND	13.3	10.9	2.7	ND	14.6	ND
7/10/2019	3.2	ND	42.2	ND	ND	0.59	107.0	ND	12.7	12.1	2.7	ND	14.1	ND
8/22/2019	2.4	ND	40.9	ND	ND	0.61	111.0	ND	13.6	12.3	3.0	ND	15.4	17.0

Source: Reclamation 2023

* ug/L = micrograms per liter; mg/L = milligrams per liter; ND =

C.1.2. Nutrients and Sediment

Table C-2. Nutrient and Sediment for American Falls – Near Boat Ramp*

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Turbidity (NTU)
4/17/2019	0.31	0.020	—	—
5/6/2019	0.18	0.020	—	—
5/29/2019	0.10	0.023	—	—
6/12/2019	0.01	0.016	—	—
6/19/2019	0.03	0.015	4	4
6/25/2019	0.02	0.015	3	—
7/10/2019	0.02	0.018	5	3
7/16/2019	0.02	0.023	—	—
7/16/2019	ND	0.129	—	—

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Turbidity (NTU)
7/31/2019	0.02	0.047	—	—
7/31/2019	—	0.159	—	—
8/19/2019	ND	0.053	—	—
8/22/2019	ND	0.052	9	6
9/3/2019	0.03	0.044	—	—
9/18/2019	0.02	0.105	18	—
10/1/2019	0.24	0.080	—	—
4/21/2020	0.40	0.013	—	—
5/5/2020	0.33	0.015	—	—
5/19/2020	0.29	0.018	—	—
6/2/2020	0.24	0.014	—	—
6/15/2020	0.21	0.011	—	—
7/14/2020	0.15	0.023	—	—
7/27/2020	0.04	0.011	—	—
8/10/2020	ND	0.038	—	—
8/24/2020	ND	0.015	—	—
9/15/2020	0.03	0.027	—	—
11/3/2020	0.24	0.040	—	—
4/27/2021	0.47	0.026	—	—
5/10/2021	0.39	0.020	—	—
6/1/2021	0.36	0.014	—	—
6/16/2021	0.31	0.023	—	—
6/30/2021	0.20	0.029	—	—
7/12/2021	0.01	0.031	—	—
7/28/2021	ND	0.063	—	—
8/11/2021	0.07	0.080	—	—
8/23/2021	0.03	0.076	—	—
9/8/2021	0.01	0.048	—	—
4/18/2022	0.57	0.016	—	—

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Turbidity (NTU)
5/4/2022	0.51	0.011	—	—
5/16/2022	0.47	ND	—	—
6/1/2022	0.44	0.014	—	—
6/15/2022	0.34	0.019	—	—
6/27/2022	0.28	0.010	—	—
7/11/2022	0.19	0.024	3	—
7/26/2022	0.05	0.070	—	—
8/9/2022	0.02	0.111	—	—

Source: Reclamation 2023

* mg/L = milligrams per liter; NTU = nephelometric turbidity units; ND =

C.2. American Falls – Willow Bay (Site ID: 020)

C.2.1. Nutrients

Table C-3. Nutrient Data for American Falls – Willow Bay

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)*	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)*
10/1/2019	0.280	0.271

Source: Reclamation 2023

* mg/L = milligrams per liter

C.3. American Falls – Sportsman's Cove (Site ID: 050)

C.3.1. Nutrients and Sediment

Table C-4. Nutrient and Sediment Data for American Falls – Sportsman's Cove

Row Labels	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)*	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)*	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)*
5/6/2019	0.15	0.026	—
5/29/2019	0.07	0.031	—
6/12/2019	ND	0.019	—
6/25/2019	0.03	0.027	5
7/16/2019	0.03	0.018	—
7/31/2019	0.02	0.036	—
8/19/2019	0.02	0.081	—
9/3/2019	0.33	0.150	—
9/18/2019	0.81	0.182	84
10/1/2019	0.30	0.099	51
4/21/2020	0.31	0.013	—
5/5/2020	0.28	0.024	—
5/19/2020	0.15	0.018	—
6/2/2020	0.22	0.040	—
6/15/2020	0.18	0.017	—
7/14/2020	0.10	0.023	—
7/27/2020	0.02	0.037	—
8/10/2020	0.03	0.061	—
8/24/2020	0.01	0.023	—
11/3/2020	0.32	0.049	—
4/27/2021	0.45	0.021	—
5/10/2021	0.38	0.033	—

Row Labels	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)*	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)*	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)*
6/1/2021	0.34	0.013	—
6/30/2021	0.22	0.046	—
7/12/2021	0.35	0.120	—
4/18/2022	0.53	0.023	—
5/4/2022	0.47	0.013	—
5/16/2022	0.46	0.022	—
6/1/2022	0.36	0.022	—
6/27/2022	0.24	0.018	—
7/11/2022	0.22	0.038	8
7/26/2022	0.12	0.057	—

Source: Reclamation 2023

* mg/L = milligrams per liter

C.4. Snake River at American Falls Outlet Works (Site ID: AFE 101)

C.4.1. Trace Metals and Other Elements

Table C-5. Trace Metals and Other Elements for Snake River at American Falls Outlet Works*

Sample Date	Arsenic, Total (ug/L)	Cadmium, Total (ug/L)	Calcium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Chromium, Total (ug/L)	Copper, Total (ug/L)	Fluoride (mg/L)	Iron, Total (ug/L)	Lead, Total (mg/L)	Magnesium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Manganese, Total (ug/L)	Potassium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Selenium, Total (ug/L)	Sodium, Dissolved (mg/L)	Zinc, Total (ug/L)
8/1/2019 9:30	2.2	ND	41.3	ND	ND	0.59	79.1	ND	13.0	25.3	3.0	ND	14.5	10.5
8/22/2019 9:18	2.7	ND	42.1	ND	ND	0.60	115.0	ND	13.9	22.0	3.0	ND	15.8	11.6
7/12/2021 17:42	4.5	ND	41.3	ND	ND	0.73	209.0	ND	15.3	33.2	3.6	ND	19.8	ND

Source: Reclamation 2023

* ug/L = micrograms per liter; mg/L = milligrams per liter; ND = no data

C.4.2. Nutrients and Sediment

Table C-6. Nutrient and Sediment Data for Snake River at American Falls Outlet Works*

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Turbidity (NTU)
8/1/2019	0.02	0.034	4	4
8/22/2019	ND	0.060	6	6
7/12/2021	0.02	0.041	12	7

Source: Reclamation 2023

* mg/L = milligrams per liter; NTU = nephelometric turbidity units; ND = no data

C.5. Snake River at Tilden Bridge (AFE 119)

C.5.1. Nutrients and Sediment

Table C-7. Nutrient and Sediment Data for Snake River at Tilden Bridge

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)		Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Turbidity (NTU)
4/22/2019	0.14		73	0.088	—
5/28/2019	0.07		34	0.056	—
7/22/2019	0.04		21	0.027	—
8/21/2019	0.02	—		0.026	10
9/17/2019	ND	—		0.018	8
4/8/2020	0.21	—		0.091	57
5/11/2020	0.11	—		0.055	28
6/3/2020	0.07	—		0.051	27
7/6/2020	0.10	—		0.033	15
8/10/2020	0.08	—		0.021	10
9/14/2020	0.04	—		0.015	6

Sample Date	Nitrate + Nitrite (mg/L)		Total Phosphorus (mg/L)		Total Suspended Solids (mg/L)	Turbidity (NTU)
10/27/2020	0.20	—			0.013	4
4/19/2021	0.23	—			0.038	19
5/19/2021	0.07	—			0.041	20
6/14/2021	0.05	—			0.030	20
7/20/2021	0.07	—			0.043	22
8/12/2021	0.04	—			0.024	11
9/15/2021	0.02	—			0.016	5
10/21/2021	0.10	—			0.029	8
4/27/2022	0.19	—			0.039	18
5/16/2022	0.12	—			0.047	21
6/9/2022	0.01	—			0.037	18
7/13/2022	0.03	—			0.053	26
8/18/2022	0.01	—			0.026	10
9/1/2022	—		19	—		25
9/6/2022	—		27	—		24
9/12/2022	0.06	—		—		22
9/12/2022	—		27	—		24
9/26/2022	—		9	—		7
10/3/2022	—		7	—		7
10/12/2022	—		5	—		6
10/17/2022	0.07	—			0.015	6
10/17/2022	—		3	—		4

Source: Reclamation 2023

* mg/L = milligrams per liter; NTU = nephelometric turbidity units; ND = no data

References

Reclamation (United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation). 2023. Water Quality Monitoring Data. Columbia Pacific Northwest Soil and Water Quality Regional Laboratory. Boise, Idaho.

Appendix D

Erosion Control Plan

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Appendix D. Erosion Control Plan

The American Falls Dam Replacement Act of 1973 states that "provision shall be made for the correction and prevention of erosion related to the reservoir or for the full and adequate compensation of adjacent landowners (including owners of land subject to a flowage easement for the reservoir) if erosion cannot be corrected or prevented." By providing erosion protection, Reclamation ensures compliance with the American Falls Dam Replacement Act of 1973 and reduces the potential of future purchases of land around the reservoir. Typical actions for erosion prevention include regrading eroded banks to a more gradual slope; placing erosional control structures, such as riprap and geomembrane; and revegetating exposed soils through seeding to reduce soil surface loss. Reclamation has identified eight erosion control segments around the left bank (L) and right bank (R) of the reservoir. These segments are depicted in **Figure D-1, Erosion Control Zones**.

The lengths of the erosion control segments were derived from what Reclamation could construct and maintain in a season. Depending on the zone and erosion correction and prevention necessary, projects could consist of regrading steep, eroded areas to more gradual slope; reinforcing the shoreline with riprap; and seeding. Areas that were previously washed out and are in need of repair, as well as new areas that need to be regraded, would be prepared by using a long boom excavator (with ground clearance of 2.4 feet, track length of 15.5 feet, track length to center of rollers of 13.3 feet, and transport width of 12 feet) to regrade areas with high cliffs and to create an access road at the base of the slope, as necessary. The road access would be approximately 2 to 3 feet above the high-water elevation[1] and wide enough for truck access. An erosion control blanket would cover the area from the lower slope to the water's edge. Large trucks (32 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 17 feet high) would transport 3-foot-diameter boulders and offload the boulders to a designated area to a depth of approximately 3 to 4 feet per linear foot. A dozer (Caterpillar D8; 16 feet long, 8.5 feet wide, and 13 feet high) would spread and evenly distribute the rock. See the figure of the profile view of the typical erosion pad in **Figure D-2, Erosion Pad Profile View**.

It is anticipated that this work would discharge less than 1 cubic yard per linear foot. To minimize erosion during project activities, the long boom excavator would operate machinery on the washed-out cliffsides in a manner to minimize transporting topsoil material below the high-water mark. Operators would also avoid pushing the rock below the high-water mark.

Erosion correction and prevention would occur strategically and target areas in Zones R2, R3, and L2 (see **Figure D-1, Erosion Control Zones**, for details). After completing erosion prevention in Zones R2, R3, and L2, Reclamation would continue to repair remaining zones. Each zone would undergo multiyear erosion correction and prevention projects. Projects would include minor repairs, such as reinforcing the shoreline with riprap and seeding, and major repairs, such as regrading the steep, eroded areas to a more gradual slope and reinforcing the shoreline with riprap. Typical major

[1] The high-water pad elevation is 4,357 feet.

repairs can take up to 2 months to complete. Typical minor repairs can take up to 3 weeks to complete. Approximately 2,000 to 5,000 linear feet of work would be completed each year. The annual work window for these projects would be from May to October. Erosion control will be a continual process between construction, maintenance, and reconstruction.

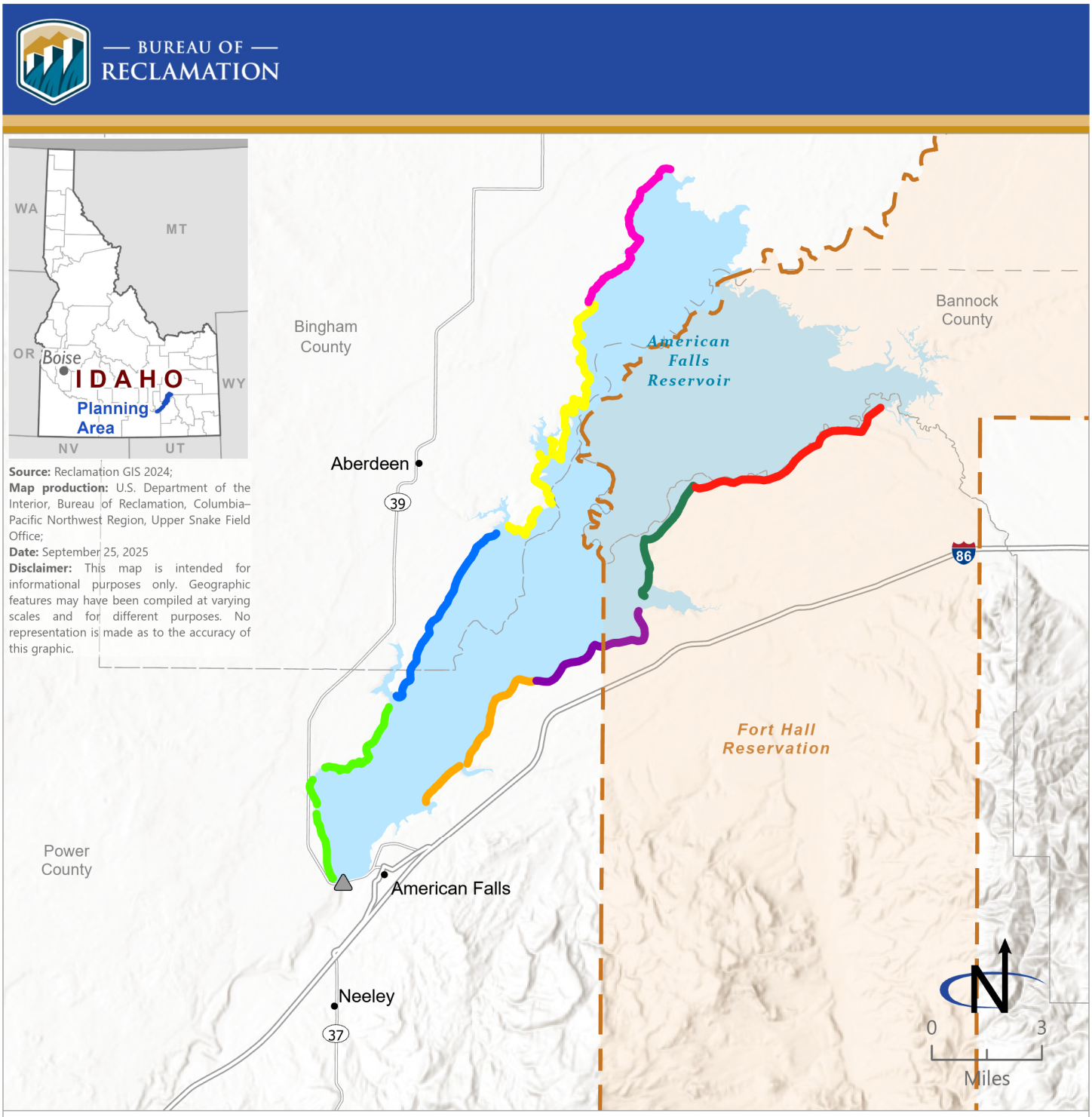


Figure D-1
Erosion Control Zones

American Falls dam

Fort Hall Reservation

Erosion Control Zones

L1 R1

L2 R2

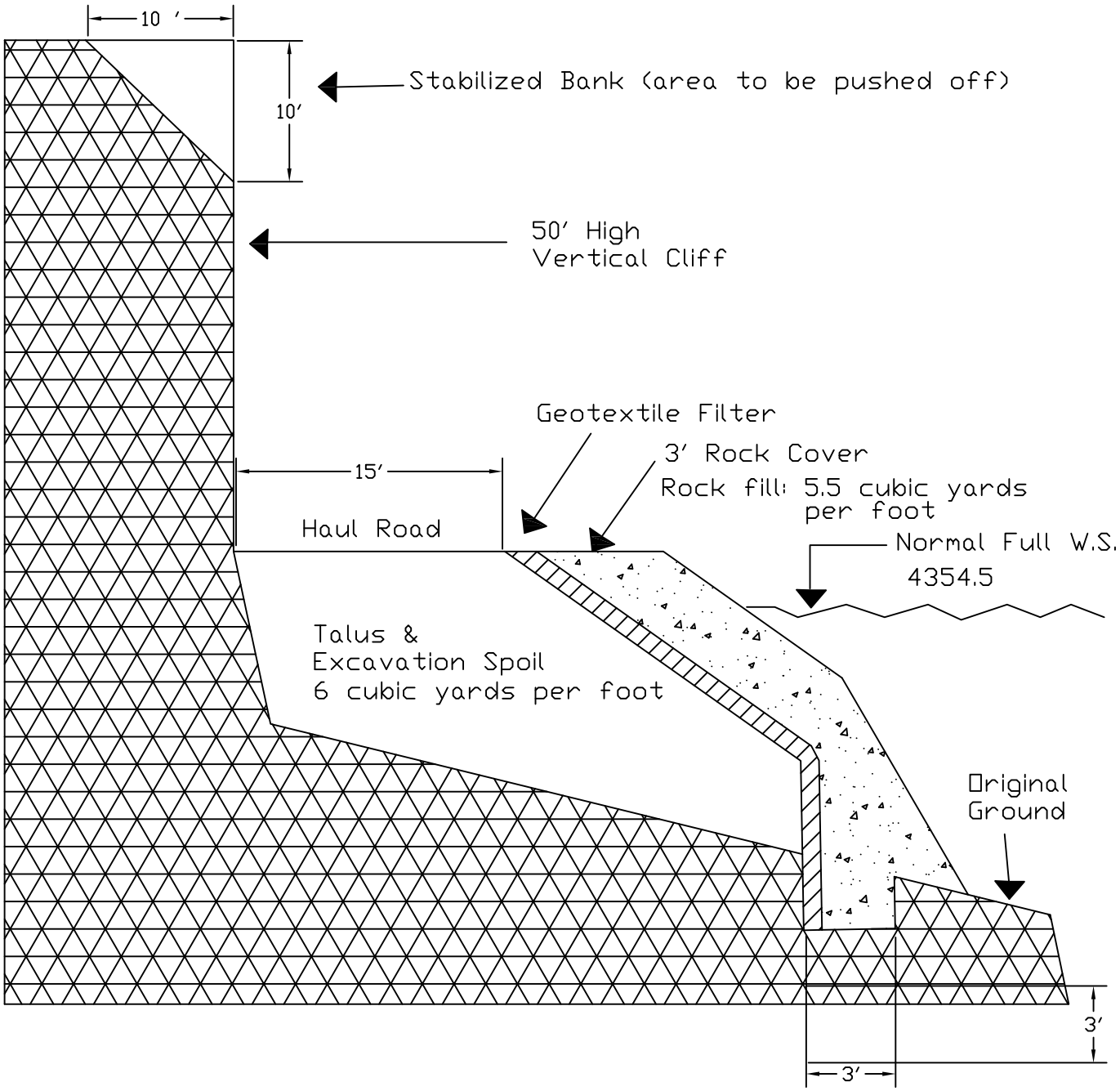
L3 R3

L4 R4

Map notes: The American Falls Dam Replacement Act of 1973 mandates that provisions shall be made for the correction and prevention of erosion related to the reservoir or for the full and adequate compensation of adjacent landowners (including owners of land subject to a flowage easement for the reservoir) if erosion cannot be corrected or prevented.

Typical actions for erosion prevention include: sloping the shoreline, placing erosional control structures such as rip rap (boulders), geomembrane, and seeding the area with vegetation to reduce soil surface loss. Reclamation does this to provide erosion protection to eliminate future purchases of land around the reservoir. The erosion control segments are depicted on the map as erosion control zones.

Profile View



Drawing N.T.S.

NWW No.

US Bureau of Reclamation
Snake River
Power and Bingham County, Idaho

D-4 Sept 23, 2020 Sheet 1 of 2

American Falls Reservoir
Erosion work on reservoir shoreline

Power and Bingham County, Idaho

Appendix E

Sterling Wildlife Management Area Plan

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Appendix E. Sterling Wildlife Management Area Plan

The proposed projects for the Sterling Wildlife Management Area (WMA) were developed in coordination with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Southeast Region. These project descriptions will serve as a guide for managers, partners, and the public in making management decisions that will serve the priorities and goals of the Sterling WMA most efficiently.

WMA Shop, Compound, and Outbuildings

Future expansion: The planned expansion includes additional storage sheds, increased parking capacity, a bunkhouse, a shop addition, and designated recreational vehicle (RV) pad(s).

The shop and compound area (**Figure E-1**, **Sterling Wildlife Management Area Shop**) are situated on Reclamation land, with the original construction costs shared equally between the IDFG and Reclamation. Given that the current facility has reached capacity, there is a growing need for additional space to store essential project materials such as fence rails and irrigation pipes.

Future expansion will also address the need for staff and visiting agency accommodations. The original shop construction did not include sleeping quarters. Currently, the facility can accommodate one camper; however, it lacks a developed RV site. The absence of proper housing has increasingly impacted IDFG's ability to recruit and retain employees. Additionally, Sterling WMA frequently hosts visiting groups and agencies, further underscoring the need for housing and camper spaces.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M): Ongoing maintenance of the existing shop and outbuildings, including electrical and plumbing systems, will remain a priority. Currently, O&M is funded by IDFG; however, future funding requirements may necessitate additional support from Reclamation.

Project Timeframe:

- **Construction Period:** Ideally scheduled from April to November, though winter construction may be feasible.
- **Staging Area:** Equipment and materials will be staged at the shop location.
- **Estimated Duration:** Major construction efforts should be completed within six months or less.

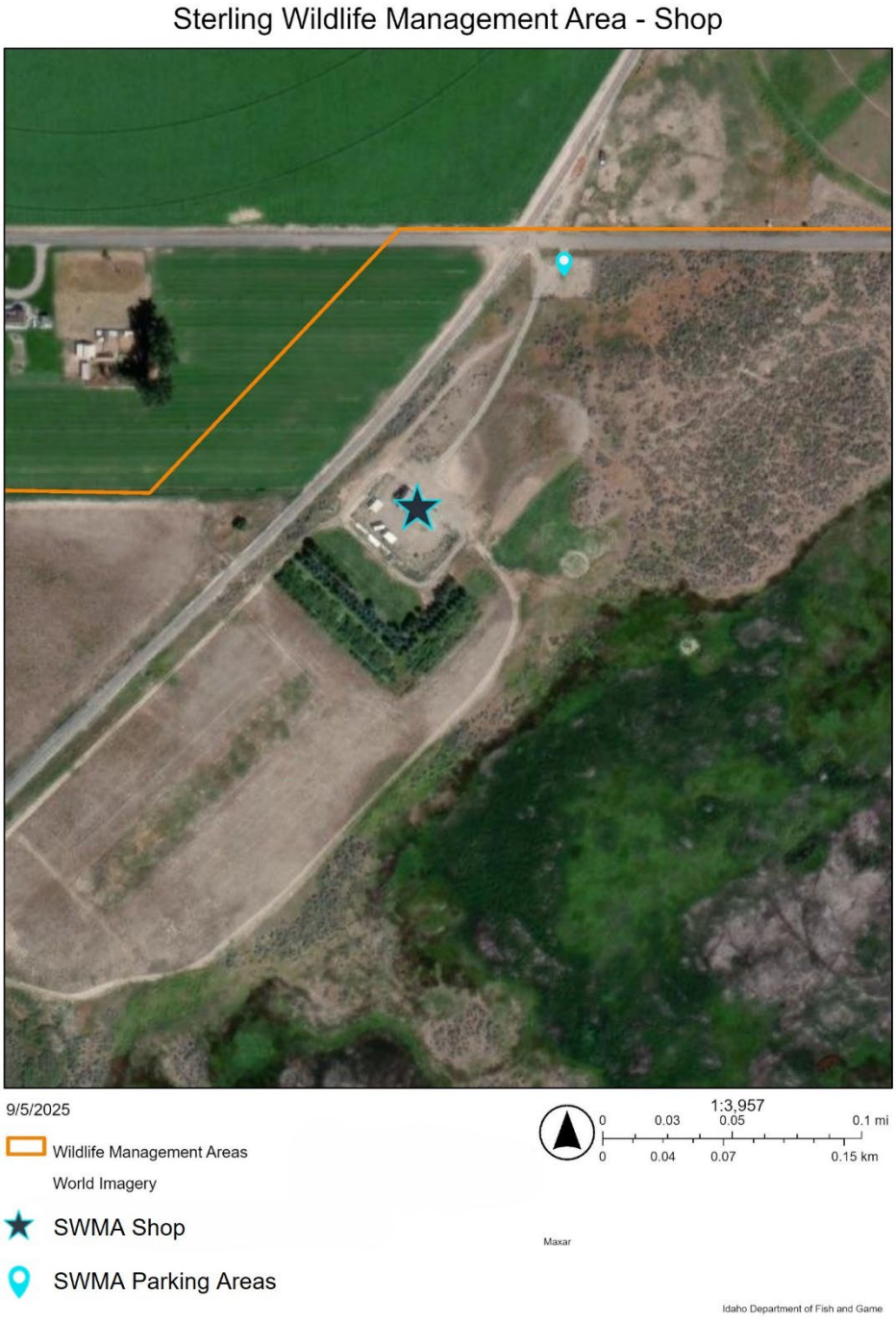

Figure E-1: Sterling Wildlife Management Area Shop and Outbuildings
Approximate coordinate location: 42.9934906, -112.7801715

Fence Replacement and Improvement Plan

The following is a list of WMA boundary and interior fences located on Reclamation land that need removal or replacement (**Figure E-2, WMA Boundary and Interior Fences to be Replaced or Removed**):

- **Harder:** Internal fence removed in 2024. Boundary fence requires replacement. Internal fence structures are needed to support hot-wire grazing. *Approx. 2.5 miles of internal and boundary fence.*
- **Johnson:** Internal fence requires removal. Boundary fence requires replacement. Internal fence structures are needed to support hot-wire grazing. *Approx. 2 miles.*
- **Plunkett:** Internal and railroad fences require removal. Boundary fence requires replacement. Internal fence structures are needed to support hot-wire grazing. *Approx. 2.25 miles.*
- **Horsch:** Internal fence requires removal. Boundary fence replacement is needed only in certain sections. *Approx. 2.5 miles.*

Project Timeline

- Work will proceed as funding allows.
- Fence removal and replacement can take place year-round, with a preference for spring, summer, and fall.
- The shop compound will serve as the main staging area for fence materials.
- Site-specific needs will be assessed on a project-by-project basis.
- Estimated completion time:
    - Larger projects: *6 to 8 weeks*
    - Smaller projects: *4 weeks*

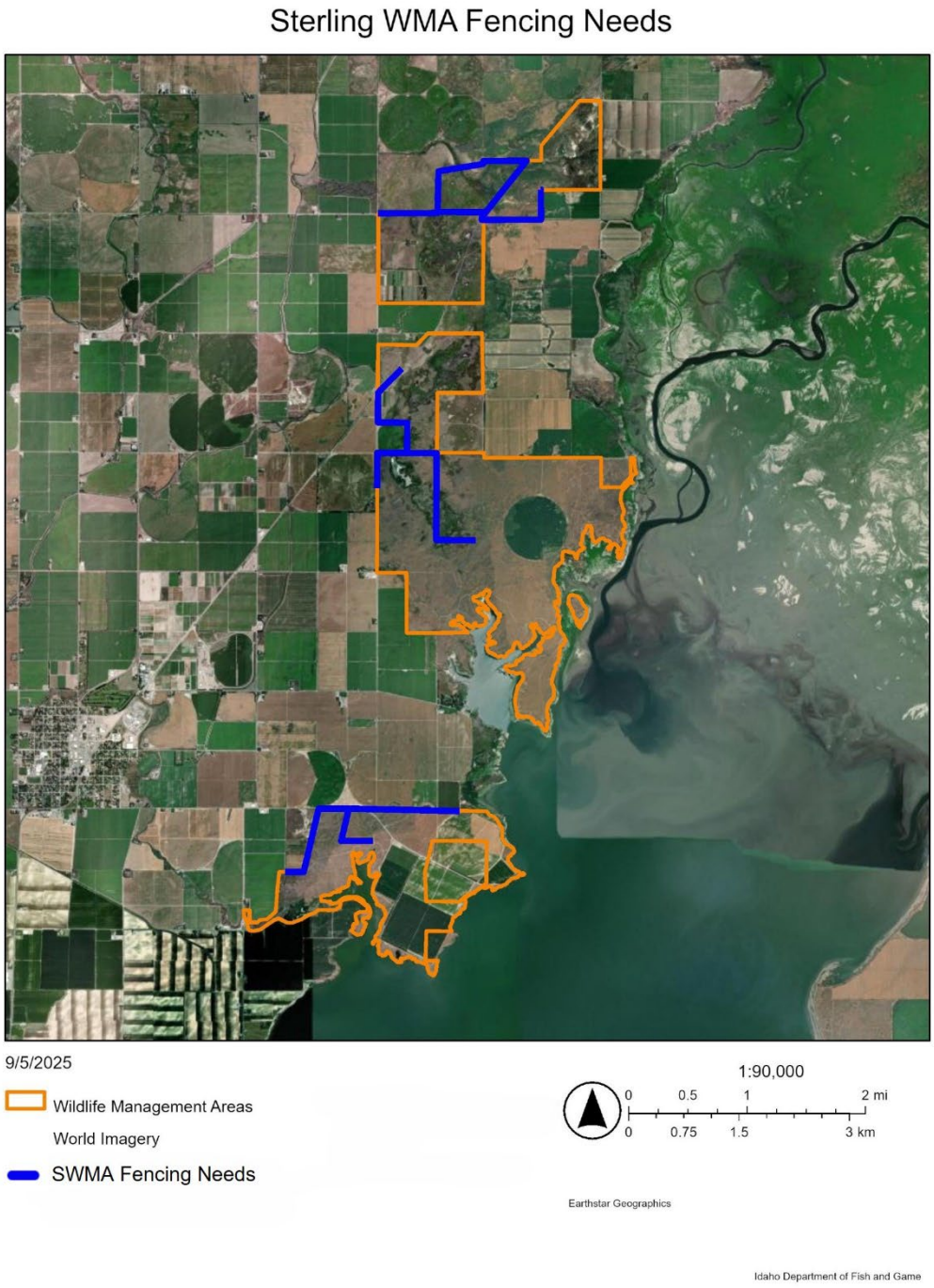

Figure E-2: WMA Boundary and Interior Fences to be Replaced or Removed

Parking Areas, Access Roads, and Bridges

Project Scope (Figure E-3, Locations of Parking Areas and Access Bridges)

- **Horsch:** One existing parking area; a second parking area is needed. Multiple two-track access roads require improvements.
- **Little Hole:** One parking area and one two-track access road, both requiring improvements.
- **Johnson:** Two parking areas; one two-track access road, with one parking area needing expansion.
- **Harder:** Two parking areas, one canal crossing bridge, and multiple two-track access roads.
- **Plunkett:** One parking area; two access bridges need replacement.
- For all parking areas, work on updating kiosks and signage for visitors

Project Timeline

- **Parking Area Improvements:** Work can be completed year-round (January–December) based on contractor availability. Estimated completion time: *Less than 4 weeks.*
- **Bridge Repairs/Replacements:** Work must be completed between April and November. Estimated completion time: *Less than 4 weeks per bridge.*
- **Staging Area:** The shop compound will serve as the primary staging area as needed.

Figure E-3: Location of Parking Areas and Access Bridges

Portable Toilet Installation

- **Johnson Segment:** Tentatively scheduled for installation in 2026 (**Figure E-4, Johnson Pond Parking Lot Vault Toilet and Johnson Viewing/Hunting Blind**), funded by IDFG.
- **Future Need:** A second unit may be required within the next 10–20 years.

Project Timeline

- Installation will take place between April and November.
- **Estimated completion time:** *Less than 6 weeks.*

Viewing & Hunting Blinds

- **Existing Infrastructure:** The WMA currently has one ADA-accessible hunting & viewing blind located on BOR land (**Figure E-4, Johnson Pond Parking Lot Vault Toilet and Johnson Viewing/Hunting Blind).**
- **Future Expansion:** There is ongoing discussion about adding additional viewing and hunting blind opportunities both on and off Reclamation lands.
- **Johnson Segment:** Potential expansion includes the addition of a new boardwalk section.
- **New Blinds & Structures:** Proposed locations for additional blinds include Harder, Wells, Orth, and Plunkett.

Project Timeline

- **Expansion Work:** Can be completed year-round (January–December) as funding allows.
- **New Construction:** Recommended timeframe is April–November.
- **Estimated Completion Time:** Approximately 6 weeks per project unit.

Figure E-4: Johnson Pond Parking Lot Vault Toilet (42.584868°N, -112.47385°W) and Johnson Viewing/Hunting Blind (42.979059°N, 112.785244°W)

Irrigation and Groundwater Management

- **O&M:** Continued participation in irrigation water programs. Reclamation holds 100 water shares on SWMA, and IDFG has an additional 140 shares with Aberdeen-Springfield Canal Company. Currently, IDFG covers all associated water fees.
- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** Potential development of new or replacement underground irrigation lines and ongoing maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- **Groundwater Management:** Continued funding for the Johnson Pond groundwater well and wetland complex. Explore the feasibility of installing a solar pump.
- **Irrigation Pump Conversion:** Investigate the potential for converting existing irrigation pumps to solar-powered systems.

Project Timeline:

- **April–November:** Operations, pump work, and repairs.
- **December–March:** Extensive infrastructure upgrades.

Uplands & Agricultural Fields

- **Cheatgrass Restoration:** Utilize mechanical, chemical, and cultural strategies across the WMA.
- **Wildlife Plots & Shelter Belts:** Implement a variety of habitat improvement techniques, including tilling, plowing, no-till and standard seed drilling, harrowing, disking, seeding, planting (plugs and whole trees), mowing, spraying, and seed collection.

Project Timeline: January–December (Year-round implementation).

Cooperative Farming

- Maintain cooperative agreements with Natural Resources Conservation Service, Feld Entertainment, and Gehring Agri-Business for WMA segments, with opportunities for new agreements as needed.

Project Timeline: January–December (Year-round implementation).

Wetlands, Ponds, and Marshlands

- **Wetland Restoration Initiative:**
    - Secure funding for planning, design, and implementation in collaboration with Reclamation, IDFG, and other partners.
    - Implement diverse restoration strategies, including dike and water control structure modifications, culvert installations, access road improvements, headgate repairs, basin redesigns, and vegetation management (removal, re-vegetation, prescribed

burns, invasive species control, grazing, disking, tilling, mowing, flooding, and drying).

- Ensure compliance with wetland permitting requirements and WMA water rights.

- **Reference Document:** WMA Wetland Review Document (April 2022), funded by IDFG, outlining restoration needs across all Reclamation wetlands.

Project Timeline:

- **January–December:** Planning phase. Estimated completion: 6 months to 1 year.
- **March–November:** Construction phase. Estimated completion: 4–6 months per wetland unit.

Prescribed Fire Management

- **Rotational Burn Plan:** Collaboration with Reclamation, BLM, USFWS, IDFG, and Idaho Department of Lands to conduct wetland burns every 3–5 years, based on habitat assessments.
- **Small-Scale Burns:** Conduct Russian olive pile burning and other O&M burns per IDFG policy W-5.0, *Employee Participation in Wildfire and Prescribed Burn*.

Project Timeline:

- **January–December:** Planning phase.
- **December–March:** Implementation phase (weather and conditions permitting).
- **Reference Document:** *Sterling Wildlife Management Area Prescribed Fire Plan* (National Wildfire Coordinating Group [NWCG] 2021).

Noxious & Invasive Species Control

- **Aerial Treatments:** Fixed-wing, helicopter, and/or drone-based treatments targeting cheatgrass and tall emergent vegetation (e.g., cattails).
- **Ground Treatments:** Continuous invasive species control using backpack sprayers, handheld equipment, all-terrain vehicles, trucks, and tractors.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** Continued participation in Headwaters Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA, i.e., grant-funded spray day projects on the WMA and assisting partners on noxious weed projects).
- **Tree & Shrub Removal:** Future contractor-led efforts for large-scale removal of salt cedar and Russian olive along the western edge of the American Falls Reservoir.
- **Biological Control:** Continue releasing biological agents for invasive species management.

Project Timeline: January–December (Year-round implementation).

Grazing Management

- Expand and maintain winter grazing programs across wetlands and uplands.
- Continue rotational grazing systems.
- Develop and manage grazing contracts.
- Install solar stock water wells on Reclamation segments (Harder, Johnson, Plunkett) and additional WMA locations.

Project Timeline:

- **December–March:** Winter grazing operations.
- **March–September:** Specialized grazing projects.
- **January–December:** Solar stock water well installations. Estimated completion: >6 weeks per project.
- **Reference Documents:** *Sterling Wildlife Management Area Service Contract Grazing Agreement* (includes detailed pasture maps).

Pheasant Stocking

- Continue pheasant stocking program across all WMA segments.

Project Timeline: October–November.

Wildlife Monitoring & Research Support

- **Motus Tower Network:** Maintain O&M for the existing tower at the WMA shop and allow mobile solar tower installations for future projects.
- **Wildlife Monitoring Initiatives:**
    - Dove banding
    - Waterfowl banding
    - Monitoring Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), including potential future collaring, tagging, and surveying
    - Monarch and native pollinator studies/habitat projects
    - Amphibian population studies
    - Monitoring state and federally listed species (ESA and SGCN)

Project Timeline: January–December (Year-round implementation).

Scientific Research Support

- Continue supporting student and professional research through IDFG's special use and collection permit system.

- Consult Reclamation on research projects occurring on Reclamation lands.
- Support the Common Sagebrush Garden Site, Idaho State University's long-term, National Science Foundation-funded project on the Harder segment (i.e., planting, mowing, seeding, irrigation, weed control, and fencing).

Project Timeline: January–December (Year-round implementation).

Property Acquisition & Easements

- Pursue property acquisitions and conservation easements to support current and future WMA habitat operations.

Project Timeline: January–December (Year-round implementation).

Reservoir Access Management

- Continue supporting public access to the American Falls Reservoir along the WMA Reclamation shoreline.
- Collaborate with IDFG's fishing and boating access program to identify opportunities for expanding reservoir access, including:
    - Footpath enhancements
    - Small non-motorized boat access (kayaks/canoes)
    - Additional small-scale boat ramps at safe access points

Project Timeline: January–December (Ongoing management).