

Scoping Notice Environmental Assessment

Carter Lake Dam No. 1 Outlet Works Addition

Carter Lake
Colorado-Big Thompson Project

Background

This scoping notice announces and seeks public comment on a proposal by the Bureau of Reclamation to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to address the effects of a proposal by the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District (NCWCD) for the construction of an additional outlet structure at Carter Lake Dam No. 1, a feature of the Colorado-Big Thompson (CBT) Project.

Reclamation constructed the three dams that impound Carter Lake. The reservoir is one of the two main project storage reservoirs in the East Slope distribution system of the C-BT project. Water is stored in Carter Lake for delivery to the Little Thompson River, St. Vrain Creek, Boulder Creek, and the South Platte River, or for return to Flatiron Reservoir for power generation and use in the Big Thompson or Cache la Poudre Valleys.

The Proposal

The need for a supplemental outlet has developed due to a shift in water deliveries from primarily agricultural irrigation users toward municipal and industrial (M&I) users. In the past, maintenance and repairs would occur seasonally, during periods following the irrigation season. Because municipalities rely on year-round water deliveries to meet their projected demands, disruption of M&I water deliveries for outlet maintenance and repair is not feasible. The redundant outlet would facilitate continued M&I deliveries during maintenance and repair of the existing outlet.

The project would require a reservoir drawdown from fall of 2007 to the following spring. Overall construction would last about 18 months.

Following completion of the new outlet, the reservoir would be refilled, and the areas of temporary construction activities would be re-contoured, re-vegetated and reclaimed. Reservoir storage would not change. Following construction, operation of the reservoir would return to its pre-construction regimen.



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Reclamation will prepare an environmental assessment in accordance with the NEPA. The compliance was initiated as an EA because there is not an appropriate Categorical Exclusion for this type of construction activity.

The document will describe the proposal and its purpose, the proposed action and no-action alternatives, describe potential effects of the proposal and no-action alternatives, and mitigation of the proposed action, if any. The environmental document will be made available for public review and comment.

General Location of Study Area

Carter Lake Reservoir and Dam No. 1

Timing

Reclamation intends to complete the Environmental Assessment by January 2007.

Public Comments Requested

Reclamation is seeking comments from the interested public, organizations, and agencies regarding the proposed outlet work. Comments that will be most useful to Reclamation in preparing the EA include: (1) significant issues relevant to the proposal; (2) elements of the environment that could be affected by the proposal; and (3) alternatives to the proposal. Public comments must be received by November 1, 2006. Please send written comment by mail, e-mail or facsimile transmission to:

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: Brian Little
11056 W. County Rd 18E
Attention: B. Little
Loveland, CO 80537
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Fax: 970-663-3212

For additional information on the Carter Lake proposal, the Colorado-Big Thompson Project or the NEPA Process, please contact Kara Lamb, public information, at either (970) 962-4326 or klamb@gp.usbr.gov; or visit Reclamation on line at www.usbr.gov.