

John Tiedeman, Activity Manager, Pacific Northwest Regional Office, (208) 378-5034
Jerrold Gregg, Snake River Area Manager, (208) 383-2246

Frequently Asked Questions about Lower Deer Flat Dam

There are a lot of rumors. What exactly does Reclamation intend to do about access over Lower Deer Flat Dam?

In the short term (2008) Reclamation intends to procure crash rated barriers to replace the jersey barriers that would be deployed during an elevated threat condition. The barriers would be moved to both ends of the dam to temporarily restrict vehicle traffic across the crest of the dam. Unless and until that happens, the public will see no change and vehicles can continue to travel across the dam.

Several options for a long term solution are currently being evaluated by Reclamation. We will involve the public in identifying alternatives, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, beginning later this fall.

What are the alternatives being considered?

At this time Reclamation is evaluating several alternatives:

- Raise the crest of the dam to reduce the vulnerability.
- Widen the crest of the dam and relocate the road towards the downstream side of the embankment to reduce the vulnerability.
- Build a new roadway downstream of the dam that would connect to existing roads on both sides of the dam, and then close the road across the top of the dam to vehicle traffic.
- Close the road across the top of the dam and require vehicle traffic to detour using existing county roads.

These alternatives are preliminary and may change.

Why is Reclamation planning this action?

Vulnerabilities to a number of Reclamation Dams, including Deer Flat Dam, have been identified by our Safety, Security, and Law Enforcement Office. One possible scenario is a truck with explosives, similar to what happened intentionally in Oklahoma City in 1995 and accidentally in French Canyon, Utah, ten years later. An accidental rollover involving a fuel or fertilizer truck could happen at Deer Flat Dam. Simply put, removing cars and trucks from the top of the dam will make it safer for everyone. It is Reclamation's responsibility to reduce these vulnerabilities wherever and whenever possible.

How can I get involved?

During public scoping the public will be invited to comment on the potential impacts—including economic and environmental impacts—of these alternatives as well as suggest others we may not have considered. For more information visit http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/srao_misc/security/index.html.

September 24, 2008