

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
DUNCAN CREEK SPRING RESERVOIR MAINTENANCE – T 11S, R 03E, SEC 24 (#306214)

BACKGROUND

The project is located on a Public Water Reserve withdrawal (No. 83, dated April 15, 1922). While the project was developed after passage of FLPMA, no clearances or other environmental documentation are present in the project file. The project has a water right claim submitted to IDWR for 0.5 acre-feet. The project has been excluded from the Big Jacks Wilderness Area.

WHO

Dickshooter Cattle Co. (permittee) retains a grazing permit in the Northwest Allotment of the Bruneau Field Office, BLM. The permittee proposes to clean accumulated sediment from the reservoir to improve the reservoir's water-holding capacity while the reservoir is completely dry and is amenable to completion of the work. The project dates from 1981, with no maintenance of record after that time. While this project is not on the list of assigned maintenance responsibility as a condition of the 1995 permit transfer, and no Cooperative Agreement is present in the file, the permittee will cooperate with BLM in performance of maintenance activities.

WHAT

Maintenance activities would include removing sediment from the bottom of the reservoir using a bulldozer to displace the sediment. The sediment would be spread out and pushed on to the berm. All earth work would occur in areas previously disturbed by impoundment construction. Care would be taken to avoid breaking the seal in the excavation area, in particular, to avoid the need to use bentonite to reestablish the seal. Bentonite is absorbent clay consisting mostly of Montmorillonite. The extent of the disturbed area would not exceed 1 acre.

WHEN

Prior to September 15, 2014. The timing will be constrained by a combination of factors, but especially by continuing dryness of the proposed treatment area, equipment and operator availability, and completion of BLM clearances and/or availability of BLM staff. Wet conditions would create unacceptable risk of delay in completion or even of equipment loss.

WHERE

Maintenance work would be done at the existing reservoir located in the Southwest of the Northwest quarter of Section 24, Township 11 South, Range 3 East. The project map depicts the location of the reservoir and access route. The equipment operator could access the reservoir along the 2-track way from the east, and walk the dozer in from an unloading point on the main road.

Figure 3. Reservoir Maintenance Location and Access Overview





Figure 2. Duncan Creek Spring Reservoir on July 23, 2013. 2nd year of low snowpack.



Figure 3. Duncan Creek Spring Reservoir on July 23, 2013. Small amount of water stored, mostly gone before scheduled use.



Figure 4. Duncan Creek Spring Reservoir on June 19, 2014. Lack of water forced very short use period for this pasture, focused around private springs on Harvey Place.



Figure 4. Duncan Creek Spring Reservoir. Pond captures flow of spring at rimrock base.

HOW

Work would be performed with a bulldozer (Figure 5). Equipment would access the reservoir along an existing but unmapped route from the Wickahoney Road to the east (Figure 1). The bulldozer would be transported on a low boy trailer to a staging area along the Wickahoney Road. The operator would then drive the bulldozer along the remainder of the route to the reservoir. The probable area of surface disturbance at the reservoir maintenance site at the base of the dam would total approximately 1 acre. The dimensions of the finished project would retain up to 0.5 acre feet per year of surface water, per the terms of the claimed water right.

The following maintenance stipulations would be in effect:

1. All earth work will occur within the original area of disturbance.
2. Excavation will avoid a depth that will break seal in pit. Bentonite may be necessary to restore seal if broken.
3. Disturbed areas will be graded to resemble existing landscape contours to minimize visual contrast.
4. Maintenance work will be restricted to periods when the soil is dry and firm enough to support vehicles without creating ruts.
5. No new roads or blading will be allowed in moving equipment to the reservoir site.



Figure 5. Example of Bulldozer (D8)