

# Heart Butte Reservoir

## Resource Management Plan



— BUREAU OF —  
RECLAMATION

June 2021



Heart River and Downstream Recreation Area

## Resource Management Plan Continues!

For those of you new to our mailing list, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), in cooperation with the Tri-Cities Joint Job Development Authority (TCJJDA), continues to work on updating the Heart Butte Reservoir Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP will serve as the blueprint for future use, management, and development of Heart Butte Reservoir.

This is the second newsletter regarding the Heart Butte RMP. Newsletters are sent to provide information on the progress of the RMP. This newsletter provides a summary of the 2021 Recreational User Survey and status of the RMP, as well preliminary results from the User Survey. It is important to note that the RMP will

not address Heart Butte Reservoir water operations, irrigation, project operations areas, cabin and trailer permitted areas, or the multiple resource management areas.

### User Survey Results

Since the January 2021 RMP newsletter, the RMP team has reviewed all public comments and worked to incorporate them into the updated RMP. The user survey was made available to the public in many formats to gather input from the largest possible audience. Surveys were available from January 11, 2021, through April 1, 2021. Survey formats included QR code access, direct web access, email, and paper forms.

TCJJDA and Reclamation received a total of **278 survey responses** between January and April 2021. A summary of the survey results will be included in the RMP. Reclamation and TCJJDA have chosen select survey questions (shown below) to provide the public with a sample of preliminary results from the survey. Note that the sum of percentages for certain questions



will exceed 100% due to the ability for respondents to check multiple answers.

Most respondents (66%) said Lake Tschida was their primary lodging destination. Rimrock Recreation Area and Koehler's Point Recreation Area were the top two recreation areas where facilities are being used.

- The top five recreation activities participated in by respondents at Lake Tschida are relaxing (94%), swimming (78%), sunbathing (63%), walking/hiking (60%), and motorized boating (56%).



Rimrock Recreation Area

Additions most likely to be supported by the recreating public include:

- Canoe and kayak rentals (46%)
- Additional biking and walking trails (42%)
- Fresh water activities (40%)
- Paddle boat rentals (37%)



Kayak rental stand

When asked about fishing, a majority of the respondents that fish do so from a boat (66%), followed by bank/shoreline fishing (57%). When asked

which area they would like to see more fishing access, **Koehler's Point Recreation Area** had the highest percentage of respondents for all types of fishing (**bank/shoreline, boat, pier, ice**).

While 24% of respondents used Lake Tschida for day use, for those recreationists that stayed overnight, over half (54%) of respondents stayed more than 16 nights. A majority (85%) of the campers used a travel trailer or RV/motorhome as a shelter.

When recreation users were asked what kinds of camping facilities or amenities they would be most interested in if Lake Tschida were to add facilities or amenities, the highest percentage of respondents (59%) **wanted full-service campsites to include water, electrical, sewer, hookups for overnight camping.**

When users were asked if they experienced conflict at Lake Tschida, 60% of respondents did not experience any conflict during their stay. Of those that experienced conflict, 14% encountered inconsiderate groups of individuals and 9% encountered noise conflicts.



Lake Tschida Swim Beach and parking lot

When asked about campground facilities, **access to the beach was ranked as the most important facility**, followed closely by a boat ramp. For campground services, the **campsite reservation system** was ranked as the most important service, followed by ice for sale. For campsite amenities, **well-spaced campsites** were ranked as the most important amenity, followed by shady campsites. Overall, respondents were satisfied with the recreation facilities offered at Lake Tschida.

### Survey Comments

As discussed above, Reclamation and TCJDA have reviewed all 278 responses from the user survey. Each

response has been separated into the appropriate category to be better discussed in the RMP. Below we have included some comments received through the user survey. Due to space limitations, only a select few comments are provided here, however, the RMP will include all received comments. Comments follow:

*“Concession stand needs to upgrade to include more inventory. Beer, cigarettes, ice, food, cheap firewood.”*

*“It would be great if you could sponsor some activities/events during the summer while people are enjoying the lake. I really enjoy spending time at Lake Tschida!”*

*“Have not stayed at this facility but would if equestrian facilities were developed.”*

*“Paved roads to camp resorts”*

*“Possibly a place to rent skis, wake boards, sailboat and other water toys.”*

*“Would really enjoy a sit down restaurant with more to offer than North Shore currently provides.”*

### Phased Development Strategy

The TCJJDA is Reclamation’s current managing partner at Heart Butte Reservoir. Reclamation and TCJJDA currently use a Federal program called Title 28 to fund recreation and fish and wildlife improvements. This program allows Reclamation to share the cost of recreation improvement projects by 50% and up to 75% for fish and wildlife improvement projects. Reclamation, in conjunction with our managing partner, will plan a phased approach, including both 5-year and 10-year development strategies to budget for the cost of additional facilities.

### How to Stay Involved

Although the User Survey concluded April 1, 2021, Reclamation and TCJJDA encourage you to stay involved in the RMP process. You may continue to provide comments and suggestions to the mailing addresses, email address, or phone number provided.



### Please send additional comments or suggestions to:

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### Next Steps

The next phase of the RMP process is to complete a draft version of the RMP and provide it to the public for review. The draft RMP will include proposed projects for development at Lake Tschida in the next five to ten years. Please see the timeline below for the next steps in the RMP process.

### Resource Management Plan Schedule:

August 2021	Newsletter 3 and Release of Draft RMP
September 2021	Revise RMP and National Environmental Policy Act documentation
October 2021	Release of Final RMP