

Bureau of Reclamation Information
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The following is a brief background on Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) laws, regulations, lands and land use for consideration in Mesa County's Resource Management Plan. This information is not all-inclusive. Additional information can be provided as necessary.

Reclamation

- Mission- 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.
- Laws
 - General Federal- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), National Register of Historic Places Act (NRHPA), Endangered Species Act, Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, etc.)
 - Reclamation Laws- Reclamation Act of 1902 and acts amendatory or supplemental thereto, including but not limited to: project authorizing acts, the 1890 Canal Act; the Federal Water Project Recreation Act (Public Law 89-72), and the Reclamation Recreation Management Act of 1992 (Title XXVIII of Public Law 102-575)
- Regulations
 - General Federal- regulations related to the general federal laws (NEPA, NAGPRA, Endangered Species Act; Wild and Scenic Rivers Act; Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, etc.)
 - Interior- 43 CFR 1-199, as applicable
 - Reclamation- 43 CFR 402-431, as applicable, especially,
 - 43 CFR 420 Off-Road Vehicle Use
 - 43 CFR 423 Public Conduct on Bureau of Reclamation Facilities, Lands, and Waterbodies
 - 43 CFR 429 Use of Bureau of Reclamation Land, Facilities, and Waterbodies
- Policies
 - General Federal
 - Interior- Departmental Manual, as applicable
 - Reclamation- Reclamation Manual Policies
- Guidelines and Handbooks
 - General Federal
 - Interior- Departmental Manual, as applicable
 - Reclamation
 - Reclamation Manual Directives and Standards (Public Involvement, NEPA, Cultural Resource Management, Land Use, Recreation Management, Wildland Fire Management, etc.)

- Handbooks and Guidebooks (NEPA, Resource Management Planning, Wildland Fire Management, etc.)
- Reclamation Land and Resource Management
 - Policy
 - Retain the minimum amount of lands and land interests necessary to operate and maintain the project.
 - Secondary project purposes must not interfere with primary project purposes.
 - Land use authorizations must be consistent with project purposes, both primary and secondary;
 - Priorities
 - Project and Program Planning and Construction- Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, salinity control, Colorado River endangered-fish recovery,
 - Project and Program Operation and Maintenance- all constructed programs and projects.
 - Land and resource management and planning within the Western Colorado Area Office follows applicable laws, policies, regulations and directives and standards.
 - Funding
 - Budgeting is prepared and requested through 3-year budgeting cycles.
 - Annual budgets are subject to Congressional appropriations.
 - Budgets are tiered to projects, programs and sub-categories thereunder.

Reclamation Project Lands, Program Purposes and Management

- Reclamation's lands are "project lands." They are not "public lands" in the same sense as Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or US Forest Service (USFS) lands. They are acquired or withdrawn and managed for specific authorized project or program purposes.
- Project and program purposes may be primary or secondary and are usually identified in the project authorizing act or supplemental or amendatory acts. Primary project purposes are the foremost purposes for authorized projects; they may include agricultural irrigation water, hydro-electric generation, water storage, flood control, and municipal and industrial water. Secondary project purposes are additional purposes that a project may be used for, but they must be compatible with the primary project purposes; they generally include recreation, and fish and wildlife propagation.
- Reclamation's management focuses on project or program construction, operation, maintenance, and reconstruction.
- Projects and programs are generally managed by a managing entity under a contract or agreement with Reclamation and with Reclamation oversight.
- We have national interagency agreements with BLM, USFS, the National Park Service (NPS), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for joint management of Reclamation project lands and waters, (includes resources and land uses). These agreements generally require a "supplemental project agreement" for management of a specific project area or resource by the other agency.

Reclamation Projects, Programs and Lands in Mesa County

- Projects
 - Active
 - Collbran Project (0482)- the Collbran project was authorized by Congress on 7/3/1952. There are approximately 1,868 acres of acquired lands and 1,592 acres of withdrawn lands, plus rights-of-way. Project facilities include Vega Dam and Reservoir, the Southside Canal, Bonham Reservoir and the Upper and Lower Molina penstocks and powerplants. The Collbran Conservancy District manages the project for irrigation. Colorado Parks and Wildlife manages recreation at Vega Reservoir (Vega State Park). Reclamation manages the hydropower generation and about 15 dams and reservoirs around Bonham Reservoir, including: Atkinson, Cottonwood 1, 2, 3 and 4 reservoirs, etc.
 - Grand Valley Project (0008)- The Grand Valley Project was reported on favorably by Army Engineers in accordance with the Act of 6/25/1910 (36 Stat. 835 and approved by the President on 1/5/1911. The project includes 225 acres of acquired lands and 3,315 acres of withdrawn lands, plus rights-of-way. Project facilities include the Grand Valley Diversion Dam, the Government Highline Canal and Orchard Mesa Canal systems. Water for the Palisade Irrigation and Mesa County Irrigation districts is delivered to their systems through the Government Highline Canal. The Grand Valley Water Users Association manages the Government Highline Canal system; the Orchard Mesa Irrigation District manages the Orchard Mesa Canal System. The USFWS manages some endangered fish recovery facilities on project lands.
 - Grand Valley Unit, Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Project (1295)- This salinity control unit was authorized by Title II of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 6/24/1974 (Public Law 93-320, 88 Stat. 266). It is a modification to the Grand Valley Project to reduce salinity input to the Colorado River by piping laterals and lining canals. The Unit includes an additional 1,639 acres of acquired lands and 496 acres of withdrawn lands. These lands are wildlife mitigation lands. Colorado Parks and Wildlife manages some of the wildlife mitigation lands for wildlife and recreation. Reclamation manages the remainder of the wildlife mitigation lands. The USFWS manages some endangered fish recovery facilities on these wildlife mitigation lands.
 - Inactive
 - Whitewater Unit, Colorado River Storage Project (aka Dominguez Project)- The Whitewater Unit, re-purposed as the Dominguez Project, was proposed, but never authorized for construction. Approximately 28,196 acres of land within Mesa, and Delta counties was withdrawn for this project. These lands were identified by Reclamation as no longer needed in the late 1980s pursuant to the FLPMA mandated withdrawal review. Reclamation has applied for revocation of the withdrawal and BLM action on that application is pending. BLM has administrative jurisdiction of these lands.

- Programs- Reclamation programs include, but are not necessarily limited to: salinity control, Colorado River endangered-fish recovery (15 acres of acquired lands in Mesa County), recreation, fish and wildlife, and water conservation