

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, UTAH

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for the

INSTALLATION OF DREISSENIID MUSSEL DECONTAMINATION UNITS FOR
HUNTINGTON NORTH AND RED FLEET RESERVOIRS

Introduction

During Fiscal Year 2009, Congress appropriated funds through a Congressional Earmark to NRCS to provide technical and financial assistance to the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) for the Installation of Dreissenid Mussel Decontamination Units for Huntington North and Red Fleet Reservoirs. An Environmental Assessment was prepared in order to make a reasoned and informed decision in selecting which alternative to implement and also to determine if the proposed action is a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The Environmental Assessment was developed by Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) staff with review and assistance from UDWR and NRCS staff.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide an effective means of decontaminating the significant number of boats entering and leaving Huntington North Reservoir and Red Fleet Reservoir State Parks. The Proposed Action is needed to limit the spread of invasive mussels in Utah and reduce the adverse impacts caused by the invasive mussels. The State of Utah requires that all boats leaving these *Dreissenid* affected waters must be decontaminated. Also, any boats coming from *Dreissenid* affected waters across North America must be qualified as mussel free before entering any Utah water (Aquatic Invasive Species Interdiction Act, S.B. 238 and Rule R657-60). These requirements are intended to help stop the spread of invasive mussel species within the state of Utah.

The objective of the proposed action is to aid the UDWR in its efforts to control and contain the spread of Dreissenid mussels through the installation of two semi-permanent decontamination units.

Proposed Action – Alternative B

The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Utah, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) propose to install two semi-permanent *Dreissenid* mussel decontamination units, one within Huntington Reservoir State Park and the other within Red Fleet Reservoir State Park in Emery and Uintah Counties, Utah, respectively. These units would employ pressurized hot water to decontaminate boats, trailers, personal watercraft, and other vehicles or equipment that could be contaminated with mussels or other aquatic invasive species. Each unit would be placed near existing recreational vehicle sewage dump stations and boat ramps. These locations

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are paved or otherwise disturbed areas. The technology behind these units is proven to be effective. Similar units have been used by the United States military in many and varied circumstances and at Lakes Mead and Powell for *Dreissenid* mussel decontamination.

This proposed project is an element of the Interdiction and Decontamination objective in the "Utah Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan." Dreissenid mussels (quagga and zebra species) are aquatic invasive species that can remove significant volumes of nutrients from the water, and severely degrade water infrastructure and recreational facilities. An aggressive boat decontamination program has been launched at these reservoirs to stop further spread of these invasive species. Installation of the decontamination units would allow the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) to better combat the invasion of these mussels in Utah.

Other Alternatives Considered

Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, was analyzed in the Environmental Assessment. Under this alternative, the two decontamination units would not be installed. The UDWR would continue to use existing portable units that would not adequately service watercraft traffic at these reservoirs. The No Action Alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act and also serves as a baseline for comparing the other alternative. This alternative was not selected because it would not meet the need for the project.

Decision

Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment for the Installation of Dreissenid Mussel Decontamination Units for Huntington North and Red Fleet Reservoirs, it is my decision to implement Alternative B, the Proposed Action. It is my decision that Alternative B, the Proposed Action, is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Reasons for Decision

Alternative B, the Proposed Action, was selected for implementation because it will meet the purpose and need for the project by providing an effective means of decontaminating the significant number of boats entering and leaving Huntington North Reservoir and Red Fleet Reservoir State Parks. Alternative B will limit the spread of invasive mussels in Utah and reduce the adverse impacts caused by the invasive mussels.

After reviewing the predicted environmental effects of the proposed action on Invasive Animal Species; Water Quantity; Fish and Wildlife; Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species and Land Use, Capital, Labor Management Level, Risk, Economic and Social Considerations as presented in Chapter 3: Environmental Impacts and summarized in Table 2.4.3 in the Environmental Assessment, I have concluded that the impacts of the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

Environmental Commitments

The following environmental commitments would be implemented as an integral part of the Proposed Action.

1. Standard Management Practices—NRCS construction specifications would be applied during construction activities to minimize environmental effects and would be implemented by construction forces or included in construction specifications. Such practices or specifications include sections on public safety, dust abatement, air pollution, noise abatement, water pollution abatement, waste material disposal, erosion control, archaeological and historical resources, vegetation, and wildlife.
2. Additional Analyses--If the Proposed Action were to change significantly from that described in the EA because of additional or new information, such as work areas outside the proposed construction site, additional environmental analysis including cultural and paleontological analyses may be necessary.
3. Hazardous or Solid Wastes—Construction and installation entities would be responsible for ensuring that any hazardous substance required or used for this project such as gasoline, diesel, paint and others would be properly labeled, stored and disposed according to the National Fire Protection Association [(NFPA) 704], the Hazardous Materials Identification System (HMIS) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.
4. Cultural Resources--Any person who knows or has reason to know that he/she has inadvertently discovered possible human remains on Federal land, must provide immediate telephone notification of the discovery to Reclamation's Provo Area Office archaeologist. Work would stop until the proper authorities are able to assess the situation onsite. This action would promptly be followed by written confirmation to the responsible Federal agency official, with respect to Federal lands, and, with respect to tribal lands, to the responsible Indian tribe official. The Utah State Historic Preservation Office and interested Native American tribal representatives will be promptly notified by the Provo Area Office archaeologist. This requirement is prescribed under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (43 CFR Part 10); the National Historic Preservation act of 1966 (36 CFR Part 800); and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470).

The above process is listed on a "yellow card," to be placed in the cabs of heavy equipment used during construction of the proposed project. This card would be distributed to the equipment operators and verbal direction and description of possible inadvertent discovery scenarios would be given at a preconstruction meeting by the Provo Area Office archaeologist prior to any ground-disturbing activity.

5. Construction Activities Confined to Previously Disturbed Areas--All construction activities would be confined to previously disturbed areas, for such activities as work, staging, and storage; waste areas; and vehicle and equipment parking areas.
6. Public Access--Construction sites would be closed to public access.
7. Disturbed Areas--All disturbed areas resulting from the project would be smoothed, shaped, seeded, contoured, and rehabilitated to as near their pre-project construction condition as practicable. After completion of the construction and restoration activities, disturbed areas would be seeded at appropriate times with weed-free seed mixes. The composition of seed mixes would be coordinated with wildlife habitat specialists. Weed control on all disturbed areas would be required.

Agency and Tribal Involvement

The following agencies and tribal governments were consulted as part of the scoping process: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Utah State Parks and Recreation, the Utah State Historic Preservation Officer, Utah Geological Survey, and the Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation.

Project Implementation

In accordance with federal regulation 7 CFR 650.12, the public will be allowed 30 days to comment on the project before any implementing action is initiated.

Conclusion

I find that neither the Proposed Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative is a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.



Sylvia A. Gillen
State Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Utah

10/15/09
Date