



Bureau of Reclamation
Anderson Ranch Dam is 456 feet tall and is on the South Fork of the Boise River, 28 miles northeast of Mountain Home, Idaho.

Release of Anderson Ranch Dam draft EIS delayed

By **BRAD CARLSON**
Capital Press

Draft reports on the feasibility and environmental impact of raising Anderson Ranch Dam have been postponed but are expected to be finished later this spring, an official says.

The project would increase the supply of water stored behind the dam, which is in the Boise River Basin.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation had tentatively scheduled releasing the documents in February, though it did not specify a date. The release now is expected by late spring, said Megan Sloan, who works the bureau’s Snake River Area Office in Boise.

“The project is experiencing a schedule delay as Reclamation assesses viable project alternatives

and (Endangered Species Act) consultation considerations,” she said. “Reclamation is making every effort to minimize schedule impacts.”

ESA considerations refer to possible flow-augmentation needs for protected salmon and steelhead, she said.

Population growth in southwestern Idaho has prompted concerns about maintaining adequate water supplies for cities, irrigation, wildlife habitat and recreation.

Sloan manages the Boise River Basin Feasibility Study, which looks at enhancing water storage in the basin. Boise River water is stored behind the Reclamation-owned Anderson Ranch and Arrowrock dams and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Lucky Peak Dam, which is closest to the

city of Boise and is used for flood control and irrigation.

An initial engineering and technical analysis led by Reclamation showed raising the 456-foot Anderson Ranch Dam by 6 feet to be the alternative with the lowest technical difficulty, Sloan said. The storage capacity of the reservoir, on the South Fork Boise River outside Mountain Home, is about 413,000 acre-feet. Raising the dam 6 feet would add about 29,000 acre-feet of water capacity to the reservoir.

The draft EIS will look at the environmental impact of the project and alternatives, including taking no action, she said. Its release will trigger a 45-day public comment period during which Reclamation will have meetings in Mountain Home and Boise.

The draft feasibility

report will look at the economic benefits of the project and alternatives, Sloan said.

During a public scoping period last August and September, Reclamation received comments from irrigation districts, municipalities and environmental groups, among others.

“One of our planning objectives also is maintained or enhanced fish and wildlife environment,” Sloan said.

Fish species in Anderson Ranch Reservoir include kokanee and trout. The South Fork Boise is a well-known trout fishery.

Reclamation is the lead agency on the draft EIS; the U.S. Forest Service and Army Corps are cooperating. Reclamation has partnered with the Idaho Water Resource Board on the feasibility study.

Women in Ag conference focuses on self-care

By **CAROL RYAN DUMAS**
Capital Press

TWIN FALLS, Idaho — Not many people like stress, but it was the center of conversation at Saturday’s Women in Agriculture Conference, hosted by Washington State University.

The conference was delivered digitally to about 700 women at more than 30 locations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska in an effort to help farm women cultivate personal resiliency.

“A healthy you is going to mean a healthy farm,” Shauna Reitmeier, a third-generation farmer who specializes in behavioral health with the Northwestern Mental Health Center in Minnesota, said.

There are tools women can use to focus on self-care and alleviate stress before it becomes an illness, she said.

For some people, stress can be neutral — it just rolls off their back. In some cases, it can be positive — motivating them to meet deadlines. But it can also be negative — and that’s where it can really impact people, she said.

Stress can become overwhelming due to different priorities competing for a woman’s time, external and self expectations, financial issues and worry. That can cause people to internalize and stop communicating, affecting the individuals, their families and their employees, she said.

There are different ways to handle stress, but a good place to start is with the three-legged self-care stool, Brenda Mack, also a third-generation farmer in Minnesota and behavior and wellness professor with Bemidji University, said.

The stool includes relational, physical and cognitive components.

Healthy relationships and



Carol Ryan Dumas/Capital Press
Women work on a self-care exercise during the Women in Agriculture conference in Twin Falls, Idaho, on Jan. 25.

connections to others help reduce stress, whereas holding up increases stress. And it isn’t even necessary to talk about the issue. Just being with someone or connecting with someone — through social media or face-to-face — can relieve stress, she said.

“Much of what we talk about in self care is relationships — who’s on your team,” she said.

The physical component is also a big piece of self-care, Reitmeier said.

That means eating healthy, staying hydrated, exercising and getting enough high-quality sleep. All of those things also lend themselves to on-farm safety, alertness and fewer health issues, she said.

The cognitive component of self-care is thinking positively about one’s self, and women should start and end their day telling themselves they are amazing instead of focusing on what they see as shortcomings or failures, Mack said.

Stress manifests itself in eating and sleeping disorders, which have a ripple effect in all areas of life, she said.

She recommends using a worksheet to change old patterns of thought, feelings and behavior and reframe negative self-talk.



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