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Dinosaur National Monument

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## 1942 Correspondence Regarding Archeological Conditions of Dinosaur National Monument in Relation to Proposed Reservoir Projects

Jesse L. Nusbaum  
*Senior Archeologist*

Newton Bishop Drury  
*Director of the National Park Service*

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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
REGION THREE  
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

March 18, 1942.

MEMORANDUM for the Director.

Fuller information than previously available here on physiographic, transportation, and archeological conditions in the Yampa River Canyon has been received in letters from Charles Scoggin, archeologist of the University of Colorado Museum, dated February 25, from Superintendent Canfield, Coordinating Superintendent, dated February 24, and others, and through review of a report by Mr. Scoggin on his archeological reconnaissance survey in the area covering the eastern section of Dinosaur National Monument. Mr. Scoggin's knowledge of the country generally, and its archeological sites especially, have proven of greatest help to us.

In the light of new information from these and other sources, and areal extension of the survey beyond the initially stated objective, a supplementary statement appears necessary to clarify all planning, etc.

In your memorandum to me of December 10, it is stated that the Bureau of Reclamation suggests the immediate conduct of investigations "along Yampa River from its confluence with the Green River, upstream to approximately Juniper Springs", apparently the area to be inundated on Yampa River by future construction of the proposed Echo Park Dam on Green River, just below the Yampa confluence. Pursuant to my request, Investigating Engineer E. G. Nielsen, of the Bureau of Reclamation, stated that his "best guess" as to maximum water level of the reservoir would be elevation 5500. This maximum water level on Yampa River established for us the approximate area for survey planning.

The head water of a reservoir impounded to the 5500 feet contour would still the flow of Yampa River in its canyon area within Range 101 W, on the basis of the photostatic copy of the advance preliminary topographic map sent me by the Service, or some 12 miles west of the east boundary of Dinosaur on the Yampa, presumably the lower end of Lily Park where we proposed to embark by boats.

Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted's letter to Neil Butterfield of March 6, commenting on Mr. Butterfield's memorandum to me of March 4, asks if he

elsewhere had made clear to me that Mr. Debler of the Bureau of Reclamation, at the joint Denver meeting in the fall of 1941, "rather definitely requested of us orally the archeological exploration of the site of prospective Juniper Reservoir on the Yampa." Since no instructions reference survey of the area of the proposed Juniper Mountain Dam had been received, I wrote Mr. Debler under date of March 17 requesting the exact location of the dam, and the maximum elevation of its wasteway, so that the area of this additional survey may be envisioned and plotted on existing maps for survey purposes.

In view of the above information, Reed and I will abandon the previous plan of surveying the Yampa River upstream from Lily Park, outside of the monument area, to Juniper Springs, which, I believe, is closely adjacent to the Juniper Mountain dam site, but will plan on surveying the area of the Juniper Mountain Reservoir, further upstream and away from the monument area, if you so instruct us.

Since the Echo Park Dam on Green River will also back water up through Lodore Canyon and Brown's Park to some distance northward of the north boundary of Dinosaur National Monument on Green River, and inundate archeological sites lying below the maximum capacity level of its reservoir, Superintendent Canfield in his memorandum to me of February 24, has suggested the desirability, and attendant difficulties, of surveying at least principal known sites on the Green River area of the future reservoir.

Survey in this area, as Superintendent Canfield has stated, will be difficult and slow and will very considerably extend the initial estimate of time and expense for the Yampa Survey alone. A river boat with outboard motor can proceed not to exceed 4 or 5 miles up Lodore Canyon from the confluence, and the Brown's Park area apparently presents no particular difficulties. But the upper and intervening 15 miles of Lodore Canyon is very deep, the water is fast and tumultuous in its rapids.

One of its rapids, from which there is no alternate by-pass, so I am informed, has cracked up several boats, even of the compartmented, cataract type, and defeated several expeditions. Norman Neville has conducted several parties through successfully. In the fall of 1939, at his anchorage at Jensen, E. C. La Rue, now with the Army Engineer Corps, and I talked with Buzz Holmstrom, now boatman for the Bureau of Reclamation at the Bridge Canyon dam site, following like employment with Engineer Nielsen at Echo Park. He was then preparing to continue to Boulder Dam with Amos Burg, a famous color photographer, in two boats,

the third boat having been lost in this bad rapid in Upper Ledore. Burg picked up its navigator in his boat below the rapids. Allegedly, he was so shaken by the incident that he left the expedition forthwith on arriving at Jensen.

What are your wishes with respect to the conduct of the survey on the Green River arm of a potential future reservoir?

In his memorandum to you of February 24, Superintendent Canfield recommended the inclusion of Charles Scoggin by Reed and me, believing our work would be much facilitated by reason of his prior reconnaissance and investigations in the Yampa area, and subsequent research at the University Museum. Reed and I had anticipated this suggestion of Canfield's, offering to meet his subsistence expense personally on the trip should other means of remunerative employment not be possible. This tender is still open.

Contrary to Superintendent Canfield's statement of availability, however, Mr. Scoggin informed me, with deep regret, that as far as he could envision conditions in the future, military service and completion of his final archeological report on excavations in the Castle Valley section of Dinosaur National Monument would preclude his participation, much as he desired to accompany us. Copy of his pertinent letter to me of March 1 is attached.

Pursuant to Mr. Scoggin's information, later also suggested by Superintendent Canfield, I wrote to Mr. Gus Hatch of Vernal, Utah, on the same basis I did to Norman Nevills, reference furnishing boat service for us on Yampa River down stream from Lily Park. Engineer Nielsen, of the Bureau of Reclamation, wrote that Hatch was apparently a well-to-do building contractor, that boating on the river was a hobby, and his services and boat equipment were probably not available on a commercial basis. Nevills commends him highly, and wrote that his own quotation was to be disregarded, should Hatch be available to us, as he couldn't compete from a distance of four hundred or more miles with one living closely adjacent the section of the river we proposed to navigate. Copy of Mr. Hatch's letter and bid of March 9 is attached. I am submitting regulation bid forms for Mr. Hatch's execution.

The acceptance of the Hatch bid reduces the cost under my original estimate for the hire of a single boat and carman by \$150, but against this saving on boat hire must be measured the cost and time involved in additionally surveying the Juniper Mountain Reservoir area, and the slowest and most difficult Green River area above the confluence for

which, at present, I am without information to estimate the cost in time, boat, or horse hire, or to suggest the most feasible and economical method.

Proper information will be sought on receiving from you a statement of your desires in the situations discussed above which were not contemplated in initial planning.

Regional Director Merriam has advised that Region Two will appreciate any pertinent information on the area, but plans no participation of its technical staff. Superintendent Canfield, in his memorandum to me of February 24, assumes that Custodian Hateliff will accompany us. If Hatch's boat will accommodate four persons at the stage of water we propose to travel, and Scoggin is definitely removed from consideration, we will welcome his participation.

JESSE L. ROSSIGNOL

Senior Archeologist.

Encl. 2372271.

cc: Supt. Canfield, with cc Hatch's letter.  
Region Two.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON

ROUTING  
Melcolm  
cc-Olcott  
cc-Reed  
cc-McNair

April 29, 1942.

ADDRESS ONLY  
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

AIR MAIL

MEMORANDUM for the Regional Director, Region Three.

We find that Mr. Nusbaum's memorandum of March 18, copy attached, regarding the forthcoming archeological field work in the Dinosaur National Monument region has inadvertently gone unanswered.

In view of Mr. Nusbaum's inability to carry on the above mentioned archeological work because of his assignment to Mesa Verde, it is desirable to make changes in the handling of the survey work, as outlined in our telegram of April 23.

Mr. Nusbaum has in his files a complete list of all the reservoir sites, together with up-to-date information on locations, elevations, etc., which, together with other special data he may have on the subject, should be loaned to Mr. Olcott and Mr. Reed. At least all pertinent material not now in Regional Headquarters files should be so loaned, so there will be no gaps in the information of Mr. Olcott, Mr. Reed, et al. who are responsible for completion of the assignment.

Mr. Reed should be relieved from the Mancos Canyon archeological work in sufficient time to permit his carrying on as chief of party for the archeological survey of the Dinosaur National Monument region. The archeological work at Mancos Canyon should be taken over by Mr. Nusbaum.

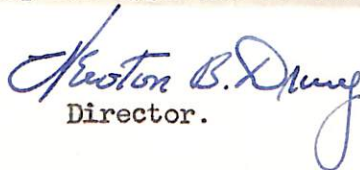
In view of the questions raised in Mr. Nusbaum's memorandum of March 18, we wish to summarize the plan of action for the Dinosaur survey as we see it. Last fall, when Mr. Olmsted and Mr. Butterfield talked with Mr. Debler in Denver at the end of their visit in the Colorado River Basin, Mr. Debler stated that he hoped the Yampa River, from the junction of Green River up to and including the Juniper Reservoir site, would be included in the archeological survey of possible reservoirs. If possible, Mr. Debler's wishes should be met.

When Messrs. Olmsted, Butterfield, and Howard Baker visited the Dinosaur region last fall they found that it is practicable to travel the Yampa River from about Lily Park to its confluence with the Green River; also, that the Green River can be traveled upstream for about 5 miles from the mouth of the Yampa, thence down the Green River to Jensen, Utah. They found that the local practice, with regard to points farther upstream, is to go around to the north side of the monument and hire the boat and operator who lives on the east bank of the

river just inside the monument boundary. This facilitates a reasonably easy round trip down to the rapids, which point is about 12 miles above the place reached on the upstream trip from the mouth of the Yampa. Thus it appears that travel by boat is feasible throughout most of the area to be seen along the rivers. Travel by car and on foot, or possibly by saddle, is feasible for the country between Lily Park and the upper reaches of the Juniper Reservoir area, and for the Browns Park country north of the monument boundary.

Of course, no one should undertake a boat trip in Lodore Canyon, or in any other waters, that would entail great personal risk, much time for special arrangements, equipment, etc. What is needed is a general preliminary reconnaissance to show enough of the nature and extent of archeological considerations in the various reservoir possibilities so that something can be said on the subject from the standpoint of possible water control projects, and as a start toward arranging for specific site investigations later on, if any are needed. If some places, such as the bad part of Lodore Canyon, must be left out for the time being because of physical difficulties, or even altogether, as we have fully realized might be the case, the party will still obtain, we should think, a satisfactorily comprehensive picture of the archeological significance of the region for our present purposes in dealing with the Bureau of Reclamation.

This communication is written in detail because of Mr. Nusbaum's assignment to Mesa Verde before completion of all arrangements for the archeological survey, and because his memorandum of March 18 shows some little doubt as to just what is expected. Perhaps this will be helpful in clarifying the approach to the project.

  
Director.

Enclosure 2365397.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY  
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

*McClatchy*  
*Reed* EX-123183  
*Filed*

RECEIVED  
MAR 9 1942  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
III REGIONAL OFFICE

March 4, 1942.

*Dinosaur*  
*740-02*  
*up*

MEMORANDUM for the Senior Archeologist,  
Region Three Headquarters.

Further reference is made to the archeological studies of the  
Dinosaur National Monument region.

Enclosed for your information is a photostat copy of the pen-  
cilled field sheets showing the topography of the Dinosaur National  
Monument by the United States Geological Survey.

Also enclosed is a tabulation concerning the three possible  
dam sites which would affect the Dinosaur National Monument. This  
information was outlined orally to Mr. Olmsted and the writer by  
Mr. Debler last fall. The mileage figures refer to the river sur-  
veys, and indicate the length of reservoirs, and the elevations  
refer to the areas to be flooded, and, of course, the height of  
structures.

Mr. Debler explained that this information is not final but at  
this time appears to be the most feasible ultimate development of  
the Green and Yampa Rivers in the Dinosaur region. It was empha-  
sized to us that of the three dam sites the Echo Park probably would  
be first in priority. By checking the river surveys you will notice  
that it is possible for the Echo Park Dam site to back water up a  
considerable distance beyond the north boundary of the monument.  
Your reconnaissance should, of course, cover the area north of the  
monument, as well as the readily accessible portion of the Green  
River in this same vicinity.

(SGD) NEAL A. BUTTERFIELD

Enclosure 2365336.      Manager and Research Associate,  
Colorado River Recreational Survey.  
cc: Region Two      w/c of tabulation  
Supt. Canfield, Rocky Mountain N. P.      "      "  
Region Three      "      "  
Mr. Olcott, Region Three      "      "  
Custodian Radcliff, Dinosaur N. M.      "      "  
Mr. Olmsted      "      "  
Elkton, Maryland      "      "



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION ESTIMATES OF RESERVOIRS ON THE  
GREEN AND YAMPA RIVERS AFFECTING DINOSAUR NATIONAL  
MONUMENT.

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1. Echo Park Dam Site

Green River -

Mileage 221 to 280  
Elevation 5045 to 5500 feet.

Yampa River -

Mileage 0 to 38-  
Elevation 5045 to 5500 feet.

2. Split Mountain Dam Site

Green River -

Mileage 200+ to 222-  
Elevation 4785 to 5045 feet.

3. Dinosaur Dam Site

Mileage 190 + to 200 +  
Elevation 4738 to 4788 feet.