Formerly Used Defense Sites
Located In
The State of Utah

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Red Butte Reservoir Fact Sheet

Site Description

Red Butte Reservoir is located in the Wasatch National Forest in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah. Also known as the Red Butte Military Reservation, it is adjacent to downtown Salt Lake City and the University of Utah; it is located at the base of Red Butte Canyon 1.5 miles east of the University of Utah.

Site History

Red Butte Reservoir is located on land acquired by the U.S. Army in 1906. The dam was constructed in 1930 to provide a water supply for Fort Douglas. In 1969, the property was reported as surplus to the General Services Administration (GSA) for disposal. GSA transferred the property to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) by Memorandum Agreement dated March 16, 1970. Under a separate Memorandum Agreement, the U.S. Army reserved water rights. The Army also reserved a right-of-way from the dam to Fort Douglas. The USFS maintained the area until 2004 when the property was transferred to the Central Utah Water Conservancy District (CUWCD). The area is currently closed to the public except for research by the University of Utah.

Site Investigation

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, conducted a site visit in 1984 accompanied by Assistant District Ranger for the Wasatch National Forest. In 2003, staff from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, their contractor, and the State of Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) visited the site. There was no overt evidence of hazardous waste, waste ordnance, or hazardous building debris as a result of DoD use of the site. The toilet and septic pit were found to have been previously removed or otherwise naturally deteriorated. The beacon tower was found to be beneficially reused at the time of the visit. The quarry area and associated historic structure were inspected and are now part of a publicly accessible hiking area and had numerous foot paths and associated benches. While the building structure and some surrounding quarry ends would be eligible for Building Demolition and Debris Removal (BD/DR), it is believed that they are of historic significance. This site is recommended for No Department of Defense (DoD) Actions Indicated (NDAI). During the records research, interviews, and site inspections conducted for this property, there were no hazards or potential environmental liabilities noted from past use of the site by the DoD for which the DoD would be responsible. No projects are recommended at this site.

For More Information

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