

# **Scoping Information Package**

## **Proposal for Development of Poison Creek Marina Facilities Project, Payette Division, Boise Project, Valley County, Idaho**

This information package summarizes Tamarack Resort's proposal to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) to develop a public marina and recreation area. This action would occur on land owned by the Bureau of Reclamation at Poison Creek Campground on Lake Cascade in Donnelly, Idaho. The project would increase the public parking area and install up to 200 seasonal boat slips for the public, on-site fuel sales for boats, and a small rental and retail facility.

This Federal action must be analyzed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations to determine potential environmental consequences. Reclamation is seeking input to better identify issues and concerns associated with this proposal as detailed below.

### **Background and Existing Condition**

The proposed project would occur on the shores of Lake Cascade, a reservoir and state park on the North Fork of the Payette River in Donnelly, Idaho. Cascade Dam, which created Lake Cascade, was constructed in 1948 and was authorized primarily for irrigation and Federal hydroelectric power production purposes. The Cascade Power Plant is licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to the Idaho Power Company.

Lake Cascade became a state park through an agreement with IDPR and Reclamation in 1994. Although Reclamation owns most of the land surrounding the reservoir, IDPR manages all of Reclamation's public recreation areas at Lake Cascade. The state park boasts many activities such as camping, boating, paddle sports, biking, Nordic tracks, and hiking. Poison Creek Campground sits on the northwest side of the reservoir and is named after the tributary to the south. The campground was redeveloped in 2011 to provide updated amenities like day-use areas, vaulted toilet restrooms, and 21 campsites that are all managed by IDPR. A parking lot connects the campground to a boat ramp to the south where there are currently two handling docks on either side of a two-vehicle wide asphalt ramp. An additional L-shaped boat dock exists to the north of the boat ramp and is operated by Tamarack Resort.

Tamarack Resort is a four-season destination resort across the Old State Highway/West Mountain Road from Poison Creek Campground and originally opened as a ski resort in 2004. Now Tamarack Resort offers lodging, dining, event space, skiing, mountain biking, zip lining and watersport rentals. Tamarack Resort has operated under small concessions permit with the IDPR at Poison Creek since 2005, offering public access to boat, stand up paddle board, jet ski and kayak rentals as well as seasonal boat moorage using an EZ Dock marina system that is removed at the end of each season. A small building currently sits on the shore next to the L-shaped dock, near the day-use area, where concessions and rentals are handled. The seasonal operation of these services usually runs from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend.

Lake Cascade does not have any permanent marina services currently and growing support has occurred over the last few decades from the recreating public, surrounding community and IDPR itself. A request for proposals was issued by Lake Cascade State Park in 2021 after the Cascade Community Review was completed in 2016 which revealed continued support for marina development on the lake. Tamarack Resort's proposal was approved by IDPR, and an agreement was established between the two entities and Reclamation in 2023. A 20-year agreement between IDPR and Tamarack is contingent upon Reclamation's review and approval.

### **Need for Action**

Reclamation's purpose and need for the Proposed Action is to approve IDPR's request to proceed with construction of Tamarack Resort's Poison Creek Marina facilities proposal on land owned by Reclamation. Public services have been offered on an annual basis at this location through IDPR permitting since 2005. The proposed action is permitted by Public Law 89-72 which authorizes Reclamation to arrange for the operation and maintenance of recreation facilities by a non-federal public entity; Idaho Code 67-4204 and 67-4223 (7) which authorizes IDPR to grant concessions to parties; and Reclamation Agreement No. 21-07-11-L5422 which states IDPR is authorized to enter into contracts with concessionaires to develop, operate and manage certain Lake Cascade lands and facilities for recreation concessions with Reclamation's approval.

### **Proposed Action**

IDPR is requesting to proceed with Tamarack Resort's proposal to develop a public marina and recreation area on land owned by Reclamation consisting of up to 200 seasonal boat slips for the public at Poison Creek Campground area. The marina would also include the following facilities and improvements:

- On-site fuel sales for boats including a 12,000 gallon above ground tank
- 1,000 square foot rental and retail facility
- Expanded public parking area at a ratio of 1.5 parking stalls per boat slip
- Enhanced recreation area for the public on the beach and upland areas.

The boat slips have been engineered to be removed from the water at the end of the season (Labor Day time frame) as the reservoir reaches low water due to spring ice melt and ice movement on Lake Cascade. The marina will be taken apart in approximately 50-foot sections and will remain below the high-water mark, but above the water line, effectively on dry ground for the winter. In the spring, after the ice melts, the slips will be installed for the season. The slips are anchored in place using helical anchors that are approximately 9 inches in diameter with a 2-inch shaft and will be seated at a depth of approximately 20–25 feet depending on their location. The anchors will have marine grade chains connected to the slips. These anchors will be permanently in place while the marina sections will be removed and replaced seasonally.

## Preliminary Alternative Development

The environmental assessment would include consideration of the Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative. Additionally, alternatives would be developed with the identified issues throughout the NEPA process.

## Exhibits

### 1. Project Area Map

