

High Mountain Dams in Upalco Unit,
Bluebell Lake Dam
Ashley National Forest
11.2 miles northwest of Swift Creek Campground
Mountain Home vicinity
Duchesne County
Utah

HAER No. UT-42-A

HAER
UTAH,
7-MOHO, V,
1-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80537

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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High Mountain Dams in Upalco Unit, Bluebell Lake Dam

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Location: 11.2 miles northwest of Swift Creek Campground, Ashley National Forest
Mountain Home vicinity, Duchesne County, Utah

UTM: 12.543480.4504940
Quad: Garfield Basin

Date of Construction: 1930

Builder/Designer: Farmers Irrigation Company

Present Owner: Moon Lake Water Users Association, Roosevelt, Utah 84066

Original Use: Dam

Present Use: Dam

Significance: Bluebell Lake is one of several natural high mountain lakes in the Swift
Creek and Yellowstone River drainages dammed by the Farmers Irrigation
Company in the 1920s and 1930s, to store water for irrigation. The dam is
a representative example of small-scale earth-fill construction in the Upalco
Unit of the Central Utah Project.

Inventoried by: Clayton Fraser and James Jurale
Fraserdesign
Loveland, Colorado

October 21, 1985

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

On July 21, 1926, the National Forest Service granted special use permits to the Farmers Irrigation Company for the water storage rights on Bluebell and Drift lakes, two high mountain lakes in the Yellowstone River drainage. Both were natural pools located at the base of a rock slide ridge which forms the western wall of the Garfield Basin. The Forest Service recommended that a 200-foot-long by 2-foot-high dam across the northeastern outlet of Bluebell Lake would greatly increase its active storage capacity. The structure that the irrigation company completed in 1930 was similar in length, though taller than the recommended size, substantially increasing the lake's volume. The dam featured standard earth-fill construction, with a sloped upstream face covered with riprap stone and a steel pipe outlet with upright screw-type gate. The original dam and outlet remain. It is proposed that the dam be breached, a spillway built through it, and the outlet blocked to return the water to its natural level.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Dam length: 230 feet
Dam height: 8 feet
Dam width: 7 feet
Construct: Earth fill dam with stone riprap facing
Lake size: 47.2 acres; 258 acre-foot maximum capacity; 6 vertical foot maximum drawdown
Outlet: Gated steel pipe

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

"Preliminary Engineering Report: Stabilization of High Mountain Lakes, Upalco Unit," National Forest Service Report, 1970, page 25.

William F. Gettleman, "Report on the Lakes and Reservoir of the Headwaters of the Uintah, Whiterocks and Lakefork Rivers, Uintah Project, Utah; February 1932," page 22.

Bluebell Lake Reservoir File #5151, Roosevelt District Ranger Office, Ashley National Forest, Roosevelt, Utah.

Field inspection by Robert Righter, July 28, 1985.

For additional information, see Irrigation Canals in the Uintah Basin, HAER No. UT-30.

