WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

MOUNT NEBO DAM AND RESERVOIR

HAER No. UT-95

Location: Currant Creek, Mona vicinity, Juab County, Utah

Dates of Construction: 1895-1896

Engineers: O.R. Young, Chief Engineer
William Hammond Hall, Consulting Engineer

Original Owner, Use: Mount Nebo Irrigation Company; irrigation

Current Use: Irrigation

Significance: The Mount Nebo Reservoir is a well-preserved example of a late nineteenth-century corporate irrigation project in Utah.

Description: The Mount Nebo Reservoir is located on Currant Creek, which runs from south to north through the Juab Valley. The Wasatch, on the east, and the Long Ridge, on the west, surround the valley. An earthen dam was built to form the reservoir at the point where the creek leaves the valley and enters a narrow canyon. The dam is 210' long across the top and 130' long across the bottom. The dam site was excavated to rock. An outlet tunnel dug through solid rock on the west end of the dam is the most noteworthy feature of this dam. The tunnel is 140' long with an arched roof 6' high and a width varying from 4' to 5'. Flow through the tunnel is regulated by two cast-iron butterfly gates. To control these gates, a 35' vertical shaft was sunk directly over the tunnel and a gate house was placed at the top.

There do not appear to have been any alterations to the dam or reservoir.

History: The Mount Nebo Irrigation Company began a water supply project in central Utah in 1895 that has successfully provided irrigation water to the Kimball Creek Valley through the years.

Construction of the dam began in early 1895. First, surveys were made of the area, and then a tunnel was cut through one of the two rock banks at the dam site. This tunnel served as a passageway for the waters of Currant Creek during the construction of the reservoir and later as the outlet for the reservoir. Next, the foundation of the dam was dug and filled with

materials designed to stop seepage under the dam. Then the actual earth fill of the dam itself was placed in position and pressed by a 5,000-pound corrugated iron roller. The surface of the dam was covered with heavy gravel and loose rock to prevent erosion.

Sources:

Hardesty, W.P. "The Mt. Nebo Reservoir and Canal System, Utah." *Engineering News* XXXVI, no. 23 (December 3, 1896): 354-357.

Historians: Steve Rae and T. Lindsay Baker, July 27 and October 23, 1971

Project Information: The Mount Nebo Dam and Reservoir were inventoried for the Historic American Engineering Record as part of the Southwest Water Resources Project, a joint project with the Texas Tech Water Resources Center. The survey was subsequently published as *Water for the Southwest: Historical Survey and Guide to Historic Sites* by the American Society of Civil Engineers in September 1973.