

Glen Canyon Declaration Signed

03/14/00

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Today people from across the country joined more than 50 organizations and businesses to celebrate and inaugurate "The Century of River Restoration" at Carl Hayden Visitors Center at Glen Canyon Dam, Arizona. Led by longtime Colorado River advocate and environmental leader David Brower, the event was highlighted by a signing ceremony of the "Glen Canyon Declaration," calling for restoration of the Colorado River and Glen Canyon.

David Brower, who has led the fight to save Glen Canyon for 40 years, addressed the festive crowd with his concerns about dam safety, water evaporation, seepage, and sustainable economics. He described Glen Canyon as a rich and beautiful landscape that should have become a national park as early as the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration.

Brower was joined by Thomas Morris, president of the Diné Medicine Men's Association, whose organization unanimously voted to drain "Lake" Powell on Saturday, March 11th, and who gave the invocation at the river rendezvous and celebration. Morris said, "'Lake' Powell Reservoir has submerged our sacred sites and destroyed our ability to communicate with sacred gods. These sites must be restored for our children and grandchildren."

Yvon Chouinard, owner of Patagonia, Inc., the world's leading manufacturer of quality outdoor clothing, stated in a letter read at the celebration, "The construction of Glen Canyon Dam more than any other dam in the United States represented the most blatant disrespect for the planet's sacred landscape -- all for a facility that we know was not needed."

Significant parts of the declaration--presented by John Weisheit of the Moab-based Glen Canyon Action Network, primary sponsor of the celebration, and Phil Williams of International Rivers Network--include:

- The Bureau of Reclamation should begin the process of developing and then implementing a decommissioning plan for Glen Canyon Dam.
- The Bureau of Reclamation should establish a federal laboratory to serve as the nation's primary research facility for river and riverine habitat restoration, and give strong consideration to locating this facility in the town of Page, Arizona.
- All new management plans affecting the Colorado River watershed should undergo rigorous analysis of basinwide impacts.
- No new dams within the Colorado River watershed should be constructed, nor should existing dams be reconstructed in the event of their failure.
- Operating licenses should be required for all federal dams, as has long been the case with all non-federal dams. Federal dams must be subject to periodic relicensing reviews to ensure compliance with all environmental laws and safety standards.
- The Bureau of Reclamation should provide funding to support scientific research on the biological and habitat requirements of the endangered native fish of the Colorado River.
- The National Park Service should implement a program to quantify, monitor, and evaluate the presence of a wide range of pollutants including toxic and radioactive metals, petroleum compounds, bacteria, and other contaminants in Lake Powell Reservoir.

"We're thrilled by the outpouring of support we're seeing from all across the country for restoring Glen Canyon," said John Weisheit, President of Glen Canyon Action Network. "We are on our way to Glen Canyon, a movement of people seeking to restore the world's most beautiful canyons and a world-class river."

The celebration was one of 65 actions taking place in twenty other countries today on this, the Third Annual International Day of Action Against Dams, and For Rivers, Water and Life. "There is a rapidly growing global movement for 'Living Rivers,'" said Juliette Majot, Executive Director of the California-based International Rivers Network. "We're excited to be part of the leadership for restoration. The Colorado, long a symbol of the development of rivers, is now becoming a symbol of society's growing commitment to heal them."

Among the organizations and businesses endorsing the declaration are:

Alaska Action Center	Four Corners School of Outdoor Education	Solar Energy International
American Lands Alliance	Free The Planet! (N.A.U.)	Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Project
Arizona Green Party	Friends of the Earth	Terra Firma (Univ. of UT)
Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project	Friends of the Eel River	Utah Environmental Congress
Blue Water Network	Friends of the River	Virginians for Wilderness
Californians For Utah Wilderness	Grassroots Environmental Effectiveness Network	Western Land Exchange Project
Center for Biological Diversity	Great Basin Mine Watch,	Wetlands Action Network
Coast Range Association	Great Old Broads for Wilderness,	Wild Angels
Colorado Plateau River Guides	GreenAction,	Canyon Voyages & Adventure Company
Columbia Gorge Audubon Society	Green Party Of Utah,	Back of Beyond Books
Committee for Idaho's High Desert	Hells Canyon Preservation Council,	Moab Man Construction
Diné Medicine Men's Association	International Rivers Network,	Knave of Hearts Bakery
Earth First! Journal	John Muir Project,	Fry Canyon Lodge
Earth Island Institute	Living Arts Center For Ecology,	Tag-A-Long Expeditions
Environmental Law Society (Univ. of AZ)	National Forest Protection Alliance,	The Rio Colorado Restaurant
Environmental Resource Center (Evergreen Coll.)	Native Environmental Justice Advocacy Fund,	Wildland Scapes
Escalante Wilderness Project	Oregon Wildlife Federation	North American River Expeditions/ O.A.R.S.
European Rivers Network	Oregonians for Utah Wilderness,	Patagonia
Eyak Preservation Council	Round River Conservation Studies,	
Flagstaff Activist Network	Sea Shepherd Conservation Society,	
Forest Conservation Council	Sky Island Watch	