

LR Letter 01/14/02

To GCNRA/BuRec: Sediment management for Lake Powell reservoir

Superintendent Kitty Roberts
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
P.O. Box 1507
691 Scenic View Road
Page, AZ 86040-1507

Re: Development Concept Plan (DCP) for Hite Marina and Sediment Management Plan for Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA)

Dear Ms. Roberts:

Living Rivers and the eight undersigned groups submit the following comments pertaining to the DCP at Hite Marina. Our concerns with the proposed Plan are threefold.

- 1) The Plan must give sufficient consideration to impacts of sediment on the continued operations and future development in and around Hite Marina.
- 2) Because sediment accumulation is a growing concern, not only at Hite Marina but elsewhere on the reservoir, and at Glen Canyon Dam, GCNRA, in conjunction with other management agencies, should first complete a comprehensive sediment management plan for the reservoir. Such a study must assess the operational life span of GCNRA's reservoir activities as dictated by sediment impacts on the operation of Glen Canyon Dam.
- 3) The prioritization by GCNRA to move forward on the Hite Marina DCP demonstrates a bias toward further accommodation of one form of recreation, namely those employing motorized reservoir watercraft, while continuing to ignore the concerns being raised by those utilizing GCNRA river corridors.

INTRODUCTION

It is encouraging that the outline for the DCP makes reference to sediment mitigation at Hite Marina. For this to be properly addressed GCNRA must first ensure that all potential inflows, not just the Colorado's main stem but the Dirty Devil, Escalante, and San Juan rivers, are evaluated. This includes the numerous, ephemeral side-canyons of the reservoir too. It is also critical that GCNRA work with the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) to incorporate potential changes in dam operations that will affect sediment mobilization and the impacts they will have at Hite Bay. This should include dam operations affected by climate, as well as those associated with other management plans such as the Interim Surplus Criteria (ISC).

Sediment mitigation is not solely an issue at Hite Marina, but an unavoidable problem throughout the NRA. Sediment in Lake Powell reservoir was anticipated when Glen Canyon Dam was built and when the NRA became operational. Now that sediment impacts are becoming more commonplace, it's critical that GCNRA coordinate with other agencies within the Department the Interior (DOI) to prepare a comprehensive Sediment Management Plan and associated EIS for its implementation. This must be completed prior to any further work on the Hite Marina DCP, as its findings will directly inform development options for the area.

In the past, concerns with regard to sediment management have been raised by Living Rivers and others in the context of impaired access for river users at GCNRA, especially along the San Juan arm. Although staff from GCNRA has participated in several meetings, GCNRA has made no commitment to address this matter of growing public safety, health and access. GCNRA, however, is investing significant resources in moving forward on the DCP for Hite Marina, principally to benefit motorized recreation on Lake Powell reservoir. GCNRA should be working to ensure maintaining access for all existing users first. It should not be investing in expansion plans for one group of users, while ignoring those issues that are impeding access for others. Work on the DCP for Hite Marina should be suspended until GCNRA has mitigated the sediment problem along the San Juan arm of the reservoir.

BACKGROUND

The construction of Glen Canyon Dam began in 1957 and the impoundment of Colorado River water at Glen Canyon began in 1963. The reservoir reached an appropriate elevation to generate electricity in 1964. The Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) manages the operation of the dam, power plant and reservoir. In 1972 Congress created GCNRA to manage the recreation and natural resources in the Glen Canyon region, including Rainbow Bridge National Monument. The Navajo Nation manages the resources south of the San Juan River and the Corps of Engineers regulates the waterways (Section 404 of the Clean Water Act).

The Colorado River is famous for its suspended sediment load. In 1925 testimony was presented before a Senate committee stating that the "Colorado has a silt content three times that of the Ganges and ten times that of the Nile. With the possible exception of the Tigris, it is the greatest silt-bearing stream in the world (*The Boulder Canyon Project* by Paul L. Kleinsorge)." This quantity of sediment is one of the two reasons why Hoover Dam was built. The other was to store water for consumptive use by agriculture interests downstream.

According to the *Weymouth Report* of 1929 (Senate Document #186, 70th Congress), the total suspended sediment load for Lake Mead reservoir created by the Boulder Canyon Project would amount to 137,000 acre-feet per year. Weymouth predicted that a sediment plug would ultimately form before the dam face that would compromise the dam's generator penstocks after 50 years (1985) of impounding the Colorado River. Such sediment mitigation has now been pre-empted and transferred upstream to Glen Canyon Dam.

A report published in 1961 by Ernest R. Schultz of BuRec titled *Design Features of Glen Canyon*, states that sediment mitigation at Glen Canyon Dam would need to be underway within 100 years of impoundment (2063), as sediment levels would reach the four bypass tubes necessary for emergency releases. Once sediment exceeds this level the dam and reservoir will need to be decommissioned to avoid compromising public safety. Despite this inevitability, and the impact it would have on recreation at GCNRA, no sediment management plan has been conducted for the reservoir area or dam operations. As noted below, sediment management is already becoming a major problem in the San Juan arm of the reservoir.

The only substantive work done to date by BuRec for sedimentation was conducted 15 years ago, *The 1986 Lake Powell Survey*. Although the data for this report is instructive, its conclusions are meaningless. The report states that the reservoir would completely fill with sediment by the year 2663 (700 years). As Weymouth stated for Hoover Dam, and Schultz for Glen Canyon Dam, accumulate sediment will eventually compromise the function and safety of the dams long before there is any chance that their reservoirs could actually fill with sediment. It's imperative that BuRec first determine when sediment accumulation will compromise the operation of Glen Canyon Dam so that other managing agencies, such as GCNRA, can better implement their own management plans, such as that for Hite Marina.

A technical memorandum was provided by Mussetter Engineering, Inc., on May 21, 2001 concerning sediment aggradation specific to the DCP for Hite Marina. The collection of data was completed in March of 2000 and included a reach on the Colorado River arm from ten miles upstream of the Dirty Devil River to .8 miles below North Wash, and a reach on the Dirty Devil arm ten miles above its confluence with the Colorado River arm. The data does not include a sediment study of North Wash Bay, which was also not collected during the BuRec 1986 sediment survey.

The memo states that the delta foreset slope will pass the boat ramp at Hite Marina by the year 2003. It also states the top of the delta builds up at a much slower rate and suggested that sediment would not impact access to the boat ramp for 35 to 40 years. However, the authors of the memo acknowledged that the results of their study did not include such variables as high volume freshets (for example, the freshets of 1983 and 1984), nor the mobilization of upstream sediments due to a lower reservoir pool as experienced between July 1990 and April 1993.

The authors calculated that by year 2003, the bottom of the bay before the Hite boat ramp would be 3630 feet. As of this writing the reservoir's elevation is currently 3660 feet. In April of 1993, the reservoir's elevation was 3610 feet. If such a scenario were to repeat itself, access to the boat ramp at Hite Marina would be completely cut-off in as little as two years.

HITE MARINA

BuRec's 1986 sediment survey provides some useful, though somewhat out of date, data to quantitatively evaluate the current rate in which the reservoir's deltas expand and encroach upon recreational infrastructure. The survey data would indicate that the

Colorado River delta has now progressed into the bay at Hite Marina and that the Dirty Devil River arm is completely filled. Recent observations confirm that the tributary streams above Hite Marina, such as Gypsum, Dark and Clearwater canyons are also completely filled.

Unfortunately the report's data for sediment content in North Wash Bay is incomplete and should be gathered prior to any management decisions are taken for Hite Marina. This area drains a large area of soft Mesozoic host rocks that are allowing a sediment plug to form and encroach on the area just below Hite Marina. Over time, or in the case of one significant dump, sediment from North Wash will cause access to Hite Marine to be cut off by impeding the flows of sediment coming in from upstream. A similar problem at Hite would occur when the Dirty Devil River arm, completely full of sediment, ultimately deposits its contents into the reservoir.

A more immediate challenge is that the existing sediment plug from the Dirty Devil will cut off access to the existing camp developments in the area, as dam operations force the reservoir to drop. Lower reservoir pools are likely to become commonplace, especially over the medium term, with the implementation of the Interim Surplus Criteria. To meet ISC guidelines, Lake Powell reservoir will be drawn down more frequently to assist California with its off-stream storage plans. This is likely to be exacerbated by lower than expected precipitation patterns, and higher water utilization in the Lower Basin as is predicted by the Global Change Research Program.

Lower reservoir pools will significantly aggravate existing problems for river runners, which have historical precedence in the use of the recreational resources at Hite. It is already difficult to locate safe camps below Rapid #26 (Ten Cent). Popular hikes such as those conducted at Gypsum, Clearwater and Dark canyons on the Colorado River arm are very problematic because unconsolidated sediment restricts safe access, especially when liquefied. When the river incises the sediment at depth, such as what occurred in lower Cataract Canyon in 1992, hiking access is restricted due to unstable slopes of about 30 degrees. These impacts degrade the full value of the river trip experience and the associated financial commitment necessary to engage in such activities.

Such reservoir operations and sediment (mis) management issues have caused significant problems for Colorado River users at Pearce's Ferry on Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LMNRA). The low reservoir levels at Lake Mead, accompanied by the buildup of silt from the Colorado River above, made boating activities increasingly dangerous there this past season and forced the LMNRA to implement an emergency closure of the launch ramp.

Located near the top of the reservoir, Hite Bay will be one of the reservoir's first facilities to be inundated with sediment. How this will be managed, and how long before sediment will force its permanent closure must be addressed by the DCP to evaluate the merits of any additional capital expenditures. Furthermore, the DCP cannot strictly focus on the marina facility itself, but must develop plans to assure access for river

runners, hikers and other users of the river corridors and side canyons in GCNRA's jurisdiction above the bay at Hite.

CLAY HILLS

Another immediate and ongoing sediment management problem for GCNRA exists along the reservoir's San Juan arm. The San Juan River is the greatest single contributor of sediment to the Colorado River system. Historically, the San Juan River provided 15 percent of the Colorado River's annual flow and 35 percent of the sediment. The 1986 sediment survey indicates that the San Juan delta in Lake Powell reservoir is progressing at a rate of about 10% less than that from the Colorado River. Since the 1986 survey, the access at Piute Farms has been completely eliminated and has disenfranchised the Navajo Nation from generating revenue at that locality.

The access problem at Clay Hills Crossing is especially acute. When the San Juan River is low, access to the take-out is dependent on where the river channel is. Sometimes the river flows directly to the access ramp and sometimes it does not. River channels naturally migrate and abrade over sediment fill. When the channel migrates to the opposing side of the take-out, conditions mandate that the boaters physically carry gear and boats across the sediment. Such a task is unsafe due to the quicksand-like consistency. Senior citizens and disabled people especially experience difficulties with such a circumstance.

Another sediment-related problem occurs below Clay Hills Crossing when the reservoir is at low pool. Specifically, a waterfall emerges impeding further passage downstream. In 1992 the vertical drop at this waterfall was approximately 35 feet. The waterfall is a safety consideration to boaters and needs to be addressed in a more substantive way than a warning sign or educational brochure.

The eventual desiccation of the perched delta will cause the elimination of access to the boat ramp at Clay Hills. When the river channel at the waterfall migrates down the bedrock slope, it will excavate down into the delta and the river's gradient upstream will increase. When this occurs a deep, canyon-like slope of sediment will result at the boat ramp and extensive mitigation will be required. This will be costly and likely involves management decisions in consultation with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Gene Stevenson, a consulting geologist, outlined this problem to GCNRA staff in November of 2000 in Monticello, Utah, and in January 2001 in Page, Arizona. Mr. Stevenson also informed attendees that the San Juan delta was mobilized in 1983 and 1984, and deposited sediment as pulses into Zahn's Bay (40 miles from the confluence). The floods of 1983 and 1984 too contributed generous, fresh sediment in to the San Juan delta system.

At the Page meeting of January, 2001, GCNRA staff also heard from Dr. John Dohrenwend, a retired USGS surficial geologist. He displayed satellite image maps and explained that sediment has been accumulating in the arroyos and tributary stream channels of the San Juan River basin since the early 1940s. He explained that this is a natural occurring process for rivers in arid and semi-arid areas. For southern Colorado

Plateau streams, this period of aggradation is very likely the result of a decrease in peak-flood discharge from these tributaries. At some point in the future, a regional climatic shift to more intense and frequent flood events will very likely occur. When intense storms return to the San Juan basin, the sediment deposits stored in the aggraded stream channels will be mobilized and carried into the main stem river system. Such a climatic shift could dump more sediment into the reservoir than what has occurred since Glen Canyon began filling in 1963.

Lake Powell reservoir inundates a total of 71 miles of the San Juan River canyon and its delta may soon reach its confluence with the Colorado. Because of San Juan sediment, mitigation pertaining to dam operations may be required prior to the period projected by Schultz in 1961. When the San Juan River sediment reaches the Colorado River confluence, it will effectively divide the main stem reservoir in half. During times of progressive down draw, this sediment plug will effectively leave the upstream half of the reservoir perched. Once formed, a breach of this plug would jeopardize GCNRA and BuRec infrastructures and could result in loss of life.

OTHER GCNRA DEVELOPMENTS

Another anticipated problem concerning sediment in the reservoir will occur for the facilities at **Bullfrog Bay**. Hall's and Bullfrog creeks have extensive watersheds in soft Mesozoic host rocks that have the potential to send massive sediment pulses into their respective bays after a significant meteorological event(s). The access road (531) that crosses Bullfrog Creek is underwater when the reservoir is at full pool. Sediment deposition from Bullfrog Creek will impact this access road in the coming years. This area has camp facilities at the head of the bay where Bullfrog Creek drains into the reservoir. Access to these facilities will also be impacted by reservoir sediment filling. The sediment plug will also eventually reach the marina and the ferry terminus.

Access to **Rainbow Bridge** National Monument (RBNM) will also be compromised when a sediment pulse occurs at Bridge and/or Aztec canyons. These watersheds originate in the Navajo Mountain watershed. More importantly, as Rainbow Bridge is a sacred site of the Navajo people, it would also be appropriate to include their spiritual elders in the processing of a sediment management plan. According to Executive Order 13007, the mandate for national agencies to do so is actually quite specific.

Though **Antelope Point** and **Wahweap Marina** are distanced from the Colorado and San Juan deltas, these boat launches too will be affected by sediment deposition from local tributary streams, compounded by the underwater turbidity flows that are currently building before the face of Glen Canyon Dam. The depth of Wahweap Bay averages about 230 feet and Wahweap Creek is an extensive watershed that drains soft Mesozoic strata from the Kaiparowits Plateau.

Antelope Point is located next to the original Glen Canyon gorge, which is about 530 feet deep when the reservoir is at full pool. However, the reservoir is quite narrow at this location and does not have an abundant storage capacity for sediment. Antelope Point lies between two drainages, Navajo Creek and Antelope Canyon, which drain large areas of soft Mesozoic rocks. These drainages already have progressive deltas building

within their respective gorges. In 1997 a sediment pulse killed eleven visitors hiking in Antelope Canyon.

SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

In conjunction with their General Management Plan, NPS entities often prepare more specialized management plans for issues specific to the natural environment and uses in a particular park, monument, or recreation area. As sediment is a major issue affecting present access in GCNRA, and ultimately the life span of much of its operations, it's vital that the agency undertake the preparation of a Sediment Management Plan as a component to its General Management Plan.

The study should be undertaken in partnership with BuRec, which itself has been delinquent in preparing a plan for addressing the impact of sediment on Glen Canyon Dam operations. The chief concerns in this regard are, one, that sediment storage displaces water storage capacity, and two, turbidity flows transports sediment before the dam's face. Displacement of water storage will stress the emergency spill criteria of the dam and turbidity flows will stress the mechanics of the emergency bypass tubes and power generation penstocks. Studies to date have not addressed how these problems are to be mitigated, despite representing a significant risks to dam operations. BuRec, should determine when and how such mitigation plans are to be implemented so that other management agencies, such as GCNRA, can develop their own management criteria.

In undertaking this work, it is vital that management agencies not focus merely on short-term trends. During the past 10,000 years, river valleys on the Colorado Plateau have experienced cycles of erosion and deposition having periods of decades to centuries. These pulses of cutting and filling are considered by most researchers to be closely related to the frequency and magnitude of large storms (100 year to 500 year flood events). Therefore the 40 to 50 year record of sedimentation in reservoirs, such as Lake Powell, are not necessarily an adequate basis for calculations of the rates and magnitude of sedimentation within these reservoirs, and for estimating the remaining useful lives of these reservoirs. Moreover, significant climate change is anticipated to occur during the next 100 years, and it is unresolved whether this climate change will bring larger and more frequent large storms (major floods) to the Colorado Plateau.

To this end, the plan must:

- 1) Determine the present distribution and thickness of sediment in Lake Powell and quantitatively compare these deposits with the 1986 sediment survey.
- 2) Contain detailed and consistent surficial geologic and geomorphic mapping and analysis of all Holocene deposits within the major watersheds tributary to Lake Powell.
- 3) Provide an updated analyses of sediment delivery to the reservoir via the main stem Colorado upstream of Hite and the San Juan River..
- 4) Estimate near term climate change on the Colorado Plateau (with special emphasis on the probabilities of significant changes in the frequency and magnitude of large

storms; and estimate the potential impact of such changes on the possible mobilization of sediment deposits presently stored on the hillslopes, piedmonts, floodplains and river channels of the region.

5) Synthesize (and evaluate) all of the above with respect to potential sediment delivery to and deposition within Lake Powell.

Additionally, the plan must address water quality issues. When the river begins to cut into the sediment, it mobilizes heavy metals and toxins that originate from upstream industrial and agricultural activities. This includes toxins, which erode naturally from the host rocks upstream, such as uranium and selenium. Currently GCNRA does not have a management plan to address such potential human and animal health problems.

CONCLUSION

Lake Powell reservoir is a trap for sediment transported by the Green, Colorado, Dirty Devil, Escalante, and San Juan rivers (including numerous local side canyons). Hite Marina's future will be significantly impacted by ongoing sediment deposition, as will most of the development and recreational opportunities within GCNRA. Ultimately, as Schultz alluded to, increasing sediment accumulation in the reservoir will eventually force BuRec to make management decisions to address public safety problems associated with Glen Canyon Dam operations. These decisions will have a profound affect on the recreational infrastructures at GCNRA. It's critical that GCNRA address these issue directly, and prepare a management plan to guide its planning decisions as the reservoir continues to fill with sediment. We believe that the preparation of such a plan should take precedence over the completion of the Hite DCP, as the findings will inform future management challenges in the bay of Hite.

GCNRA should also direct immediate resources to address the existing sediment induced access problems at Clay Hills and elsewhere. This matter has been brought to your agency's attention in the past, yet no action has been taken. GCNRA is, however, proceeding with a variety of studies, such as the Hite DCP, Antelope Point EA and Wahweap DCP principally to benefit motorized users of the reservoir. The San Juan and Colorado River arms of the reservoir are also in the GCNRA's jurisdiction, and are used extensively by river runners.

We are concerned that GCNRA is displaying a culture of general avoidance to address the geologic processes concerning the public lands within its jurisdiction, as well as a preference for expanding services for high-speed recreation as opposed to river users.

We look forward to working with you to remedy this situation, and to ensure equitable and safe access for all visitors to the NRA.

Sincerely yours,

/ signed

John Weisheit

Conservation Director

And on behalf of the following organizations:

Colorado Outward Bound School
Colorado Plateau Rivers Guides
Four Corners School of Outdoor Education
Glen Canyon Institute
Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association
Sierra Club Glen Canyon Group
Utah Rivers Council
Utah Whitewater Club

CC:

Hon. Gale Norton, Secretary, Department of the Interior
Hon. Fran Mainella, Director, National Park Service
Hon. John Keys, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
Hon. Kathleen Burton Clarke, Director, Bureau of Land Management
Hon. Kelsey Begaye, President, Navajo Nation
Elouise Chicharello, Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Rick Gold, Director, Upper Colorado Region, Bureau of Reclamation
Carol DeAngelis, Grand Junction Area Manager, Bureau of Reclamation
Pat Schumacher, Durango Area Manager, Bureau of Reclamation
Karen Wade, Regional Director, National Park Service
Jerry Banta, Superintendent, Canyonlands National Park
Joe Alston, Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park
Sally Wisely, Utah State Director, Bureau of Land Management
Nick Sandberg, San Juan Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management
Bob Hart, Research Associate, United States Geological Survey
Barry Gold, Director, Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center
Colonel Michael J. Conrad, Sacramento District, Corps of Engineers, US Army

LR Press Release 01/14/02

Sediment Problems: Beginning of the End for Lake Powell

CONTACT:

John Weisheit, 435-260-2590 (mobile)
Owen Lammers, 435-259-1063

**Park Service, BuRec fail to address Lake Powell's growing sediment problems;
Rafting industry and environmentalists issue urgent call for action**

**World-famous Cataract Canyon and San Juan River trips threatened; Hite Marina
will be rendered useless**

MOAB, UTAH (Jan. 14) -- It's official: Lake Powell Reservoir is filling with sediment. And the government had better start dealing with it.

So says a [letter](#) sent today by LIVING RIVERS and eight other river protection and recreation organizations, to the National Park Service (NPS), calling for federal action to address the growing problem of river mud that is interfering with boating activities in the upper reaches of the nation's second-largest artificial lake. The Utah Guides & Outfitters Association, a recreational industry trade group, made the same points in a concurring letter.

"This is the beginning of the end for Lake Powell," said John Weisheit, LIVING RIVERS conservation director and a professional river guide with 17 years experience. "People talk about Lake Powell filling with silt sometime in the future, but the future is now."

Of immediate concern is the slimy muck that threatens the environment and the Colorado Plateau's multimillion-dollar recreational river rafting industry. Similar impacts are being felt today in the Grand Canyon far downstream, where in summer 2001 the Pearce's Ferry take-out was closed indefinitely due to thick layers of oozing sediment clogging the upper reach of Lake Mead Reservoir.

The groups' letters were sent in response to a NPS redevelopment proposal for Hite Marina, a commercial concession within Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA), located in San Juan County, Utah. The coalition of groups and businesses is asking for the marina project to be put on hold pending a study of sediment-caused access problems, not only for boaters on the reservoir but also for rafters using the Colorado River's Cataract Canyon and the lower canyons of the San Juan River. Whitewater trips through both canyons terminate on Lake Powell Reservoir.

This is the first serious indication of problems that will inevitably worsen in the coming years. Prudent management compels the Park Service to undertake a comprehensive sediment study prior to investing more public funds on infrastructure that sediment deposition will ultimately render useless. The agency has a legal duty to prevent impairment of park resources and provide high-quality recreational opportunities, yet the Park Service emphasizes reservoir-based, flat water recreation to the detriment of maintaining a world-renowned rafting experience. An industry that not only predates the reservoir's existence but also employs hundreds of people is dependent on maintaining an open channel from the mouth of Cataract to the take-out at Hite Marina, and from the lower San Juan to Clay Hills Crossing on the reservoir's San Juan arm.

"People have been using these rivers for recreation since the 1920s," said Bob Jones, owner of Tag-A-Long Expeditions, the oldest river outfitting company in Moab. Jones is a member of Utah Guides & Outfitters Association. "Something has to be done about this access problem at Clay Hills, and now I am very worried that my business will be impacted by the problems I see coming for Hite Marina. Our customers come from all over the world, and I sure would hate to disappoint them."

LIVING RIVERS' letter warns that access problems already exist at Clay Hills Crossing, and that access to Hite Marina could begin to be curtailed by sediment in as little as two

years. Colorado River sediments are quickly filling the bay at Hite and may soon inhibit access to the marina, the terminus for all Cataract Canyon trips.

"We're losing two of the country's most spectacular whitewater boating experiences," stated Annie Payne, President of Colorado Plateau River Guides. "The Park Service and Bureau of Reclamation have ignored the situation in the past, but it won't go away; it just gets worse each passing year."

The Park Service, in its 1979 General Management Plan for GCNRA, estimated that Hite Marina would have to be abandoned "within thirty years" because of sediment accumulation. The silt arrived ahead of schedule. But despite this predicted event, the agency is moving forward with plans to redevelop the existing marina at its current site.

Sedimentation occurs in all reservoirs, but the problem at Powell is particularly acute, say the groups. The extraordinarily high silt loads carried by the San Juan and Colorado Rivers are the result of the region's unique geology. Geologists consider the soils to be among the fastest eroding in the world. Flash floods, common occurrences during the desert's hot summers, carry huge quantities of silt and debris into surging streams. When these sediment-laden waters reach the still waters of Lake Powell Reservoir, the particles settle out and form unsightly mudflats that at lower water levels can make boat travel impossible.

Today's letter requests the Park Service to work with the Bureau of Reclamation to develop the requested plan and an environmental impact statement. Both agencies have responsibility for managing public resources and facilities safely and economically, and for encouraging public participation in addressing any problems. Yet they have failed to inform the public of the inevitable--and worsening--conflicts and damage that will occur.

According to a recent [NPS-sponsored study](#) [20k PDF File], the sediment deposit is quickly advancing toward Hite, and will make the launch ramp there inaccessible within two years whenever the reservoir surface level falls to 3630 feet above sea level. In 1992, the reservoir dropped to about 3610 feet above sea level. The current level is 3660 feet above sea level.

Sediment at Clay Hills Crossing is already impacting recreational usage. Boaters must often lift and carry their boats and equipment across quicksand-like mud flats to the take-out, creating unsafe conditions for recreationists.

"There's nothing much they can do but attempt to manage this problem in the near term, but in the long term, decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam is inevitable," said Weisheit.

[View Living Rivers Letter to the National Park Service](#)

[May 2001 Sediment Study for Hite Marina](#) [20k PDF File]

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On the Net:

[LIVING RIVERS](#)

[Colorado Outward Bound School](#)

[Colorado Plateau River Guides](#)

[Four Corners School of Outdoor Education](#)

[Glen Canyon Institute](#)

[Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association](#)

[Sierra Club](#)

[Utah Guides and Outfitters Association](#)

[Utah Rivers Council](#)

[Utah Whitewater Club](#)

NOTE: Many Interior Department websites are temporarily offline as a result of a court order. The following links may become functional at any time.

National Park Service

[GCNRA Planning Page](#)

Bureau of Reclamation

[Upper Colorado Region](#)

LR in the News 01/15/02

Silt threatens Lake Powell, lucrative rafting industry

By MICHAEL C. BENDER The Daily Sentinel

Lake Powell is filling with sediment and soon will have to be decommissioned, according to a letter sent Monday from nine river protection and recreation groups to the National Park Service.

"This is the beginning of the end for Lake Powell," said John Weisheit, Living Rivers conservation director. "People talk about Lake Powell filling with silt sometime in the future, but the future is now."

The river groups' letter was sent in response to a National Park Service redevelopment proposal for Hite Marina. The groups are asking for the marina project to be put on hold pending a study of sediment-caused access problems.

A spokeswoman for the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area did not return phone calls.

The river groups point to a "slimy muck that threatens the environment and the Colorado Plateau's multimillion-dollar recreation river-rafting industry."

The letter says that access problems already exist at Clay Hills Crossing and that access to Hite Marina could begin to be curtailed by sediment in two years.

The letter also says that the park service is ignoring its 1979 General Management Plan for Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

That plan, the group says, "estimated that Hite Marina would have to be abandoned within 30 years because of sediment accumulation."

The silt, the groups say, has arrived ahead of schedule.

The groups say silt impacts are being felt downstream in the Grand Canyon, where in summer 2001 the Pearce's Ferry take-out was closed indefinitely "due to thick layers of oozing sediment clogging the upper reach of Lake Mead Reservoir."

"Prudent management compels the park service to undertake a comprehensive study prior to investing more public funds on infrastructure that sediment deposition will ultimately render useless," Weisheit said.

The groups point out that they represent an industry that predates the reservoir and one that employs hundreds of people dependent on maintaining an open channel from the mouth of Cataract to the take-out at Hite Marina and from the lower San Juan to Clay Hills Crossing on the reservoir's San Juan arm.

"People have been using these rivers for recreation since the 1920s," said Bob Jones, owner of Tag-A-Long Expeditions, the oldest outfitting company in Moab.

"Something has to be done about this access problem at Clay Hills and now I am very worried that my business will be impacted by the problems I see coming for Hite Marina."

Sedimentation occurs in all reservoirs, but the problem at Lake Powell is particularly acute, the groups say.

"There's nothing much they can do but attempt to manage this problem in the near term," Weisheit said. "But in the long term, decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam is inevitable."

LR in the News 01/16/02

Canyon changes are crucial by Lisa Force

Arizona Republic

This week, government officials, scientists and others will gather in Phoenix to flutter and fuss around the sickbed of Adaptive Management, the program implemented in 1996 that was supposed to save the Grand Canyon.

The program turned 5 years old last October, but no one celebrated because despite infusions of nearly \$40 million, the program is failing, leaving the Grand Canyon ecosystem on the brink of collapse.

The Grand Canyon plays a critical role in Arizona's economic and cultural life. But few of our elected leaders have addressed the river's decline, or the consequences this will have on our state.

As the Legislature convenes this week, Arizona citizens should insist that our elected officials speak up for the state's grandest natural treasure.

Scientists first began noticing disturbing changes in the Canyon in the 1970s. The wide diversity of native fish, birds and wildlife began to disappear. River runners arrived at familiar camping spots only to find the formerly lush white-sand beaches turned to narrow strips of mud and the cottonwoods washed away. The Grand Canyon was becoming sterile, and understandably so.

Even small dams disrupt natural river ecological processes, and the Grand Canyon's lifeblood - the Colorado River - is imprisoned between two of North America's largest dams: Glen Canyon and Hoover.

Glen Canyon Dam holds back tons of nutrient-rich sediment that used to feed native fish, form beaches and nourish native plants. The dam also severely drops water temperature in the Grand Canyon Colorado River, eliminates the river's life-giving flooding regimes, and paves the way for the insidious march of damaging non-native species.

In 1992, in response to the alarming degradation of the Grand Canyon ecosystems, Congress passed the Grand Canyon Protection Act and later established the Adaptive Management Program.

The management program was to recommend modifications to Glen Canyon Dam operations to help mitigate adverse impacts caused by the dam to Grand Canyon natural and cultural resources. An advisory committee of representatives from state and federal agencies, Indian tribes, water and power interests, and environmental groups governs the management program.

The impact of this program? Good science is being done, but that's where the good news ends. Three of the five native Grand Canyon fish have disappeared from the Canyon. A fourth species is in serious trouble and now, the only self-sustaining population of endangered Humpback Chub in the Canyon - relatively healthy until this year - is in steep decline.

While fish may be of little interest to the general public, the plight of native fish is the most visible evidence of a complex web of life coming unraveled.

Adaptive Management has been extremely effective, not in restoring the Grand Canyon, but in demonstrating that change is overdue. Among the urgently needed changes are dam operations that mimic natural, seasonal fluctuations in river flows, removal of non-native fish, and restoration of habitats that support native species.

Those changes may mean occasionally producing less power from Glen Canyon dam, reducing the number of trout available for recreational fishing or leaving more water in the river. The commercial power producers, fishing groups and irrigation districts are sure to object.

But many more of us should object to our leaders allowing the Grand Canyon's ecosystems to slowly collapse. This is our Canyon, our culture, our collective identity and if that is too esoteric, our primary draw for tourism and all the attendant economic benefits. What kind of tourism will the "Grand Ditch" attract?

Arizona in 2002 is still a state of great natural beauty, with the Grand Canyon at center stage. Although the state faces a challenging year, we can't let our elected officials ignore the dying elephant in the middle of the room.

###

Lisa Force is program director of Living Rivers, an organization with offices in Scottsdale and Moab, Utah, that seeks to protect and restore the integrity of rivers and watersheds.

Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Volume 2, Number 1 (Special Issue: Grand Canyon in Crisis)

On January 17-18, 2002 Phoenix will host a meeting of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Group--the stakeholder group responsible for managing the impacts of Glen Canyon Dam on Grand Canyon National Park. This group is clearly failing, as native species in Grand Canyon are worse off since the program began in 1996.

The Articles

- [Electroshock in the Grand Canyon](#)
- [Grand Canyon: LR Calls for Immediate Action](#)
- [Native Fish: Recovery or Rhetoric?](#)

- [Silt Happens: LR Forcing Agencies to Respond](#)
- [Take Action for the Grand Canyon](#)
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Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Taking Action for the Grand Canyon

[LRC V2, N1, January 2002](#)

I want to hear from you about the declining health of the Grand Canyon ecosystem.

Should I:

- prepare a supplemental EIS for Glen Canyon Dam
- operate the dam to mimic natural river flows and temperatures
- support removal of non-native fish that prey on native species
- make endangered fish recovery a top priority for managers, and
- make hydropower production subservient to ecosystem management?

Write to me, Gale Norton Secretary of the Interior 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240

Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Silt Happens: LR Forcing Agencies to Respond

[LRC V2, N1, January 2002](#)

The National Park Service is currently preparing a Development Concept Plan for Hite Marina on Lake Powell reservoir, despite the fact that sediment is about to fill the marina's bay.

LIVING RIVERS is leading a coalition of environmental, river recreation and outfitter interests demanding that NPS immediately prepare a sediment management plan and associated environmental impact statement for the entire reservoir.

There's no doubt this reservoir is filling with sediment, said Annie Payne, president of Colorado Plateau River Guides. It's amazing that the government wants to pretend that it's not happening. Payne and other commercial river runners must deal with an

increasing amount of sediment each year, as thousands of multi-day river trips on the San Juan River and Colorado River terminate at Lake Powell reservoir. Most people think of this artificial lake as deep and clear, but for us river guides, it means travelling through miles of exposed sediment, mud, exotic weeds, and dust. This makes for a very unpleasant and sometimes dangerous experience for our customers.

The sediment problem is already affecting Hite Marina, as it will the entire reservoir and dam eventually. In the coalition's nine-page submission to the National Park Service, LIVING RIVERS demanded that no more public funds be expended for infrastructure planning until, one, the public knows how long it will be before sediment renders existing and planned infrastructure useless, and two, immediate work is undertaken to improve access in the river corridors' prior to spending more money on temporary marina facilities.

A brief sediment study for the area surrounding the marina in question, revealed the reservoir's sediment delta will advance up to and beyond the marina in 2003. This will immediately render the marina useless in low water years, with access continuing to decline over time as the delta continues to expand.

Estimates for how long it will take sediment flows to reach the intake infrastructure for Glen Canyon Dam forcing the dam's decommissioning range from 50 to 150 years. But as noted in the submission, geologists point out that any number of factors could cause the large amounts of sediment building-up in the upper part of the watershed to mobilize and rapidly flow into Lake Powell, thus greatly accelerating the rate of siltation and hastening the arrival of the day when Lake Powell reservoir must be drained.

Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Native Fish: Recovery or Rhetoric?

[LRC V2, N1, January 2002](#)

The freshwater fishes of the Colorado River watershed are among the most imperiled animals in the United States. In response to mandates of the Endangered Species Act, three endangered fish recovery programs have been implemented in the Colorado basin since 1988. Despite more than \$100 million invested so far, these programs have generated few results. So this fall, the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) released a draft set of recovery goals which, if approved, would lower the federal standard by which these fish could be removed from the endangered species list.

LIVING RIVERS and several other groups were outraged, and submitted comments opposing the adoption of these weaker, and ecologically dangerous standards. The USFWS proposed to emphasize the use of hatchery fish to be dumped in depleted habitats. Success will be proclaimed by merely continuously restocking the area with a

given number of hatchery fish to maintain an arbitrary population count. Emphasis will not be placed on habitat restoration to allow for self-reproducing populations.

“Species cannot be perpetuated without appropriate habitats, and an aquatic habitat cannot persist without some ecosystem order in its surroundings,” said Dr. Joseph Shannon, an aquatic ecologist at Northern Arizona University. “The water and power interests control the flow of the Colorado River; ecosystem restoration and native fish recovery are not their priorities. I question if this is the sentiment of the majority of the public.”

The state of Colorado is leading the charge to advance the weaker standards. Kent Holsinger, Assistant Director for Colorado’s Division of Water Resources has stated that Colorado is committed to maximizing power generation to finance irrigation, and to diverting more water for development and industrial use. He has declared his state’s intent to fight any federal regulations that may infringe on these objectives.

The prestigious Desert Fishes Council is also concerned, especially over the limited scientific input sought in the preparation of these new guidelines. This international society of academic, government and private organizations, adopted a resolution in November 2001, asking that the USFWS redraft the recovery goals based upon the results of a rigorous, independent, scientific review process.

But if Holsinger and others have their way, it may not be long before visitors to the Grand Canyon will see truckloads of hatchery-raised fish emptied into the Colorado river because agencies were unwilling to work to restore their habitat. Should this trend continue, the same approach could become commonplace with other endangered species—birds, mammals, reptiles—born in captivity and placed in unsuitable habitats to meet the objectives of the government’s bean counters.

Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Grand Canyon: LR Calls for Immediate Action

[LRC V2, N1, January 2002](#)

Ecologists have known for years that the operation of Glen Canyon Dam is causing negative impacts on the Colorado River ecosystem in Grand Canyon National Park. The Grand Canyon Protection Act was passed a decade ago to force action to reduce environmental damage downstream of the dam. Yet scientific data show the situation is worsening.

LIVING RIVERS and other groups are calling for an immediate overhaul of the dam management program set up by the Act. The program was established in 1996 following completion of an environmental impact statement on dam operations. A stakeholders group known as the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) guides scientific research and management activities. According to Randy Peterson, Director of Adaptive

Management Programs for the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec), the AMWG has operated since 1997 with an annual budget of roughly \$8 million. But many wonder if the AMWG is capable of making the necessary changes required to protect and restore the native ecosystem.

The science shows that the program is failing, said David Haskell, retired Science Director of Grand Canyon National Park, and former AMWG representative for the Park Service. The program has been extremely successful and effective, not in complying with the Grand Canyon Protection Act, but in demonstrating that as long as the dam continues to be operated for water and power needs, the ecosystem will continue to be degraded. Five years and forty million dollars have bought us the knowledge that nothing's improving.

In a letter delivered to the AMWG at its January meeting, LIVING RIVERS was joined by a number of groups in demanding action. Among the key concerns is the structure of the process that has accorded hydropower production equal importance to restoration of native habitat.

Protecting native fish and other species is a higher priority than generating cheap hydropower, said David Sherman, a Sierra Club representative in Flagstaff. Changes are needed now to get the adaptive management program on track and in compliance with the law.

LIVING RIVERS is seeking a supplemental environmental impact statement on dam operations to address the rapid decline of the river's ecosystem. The Grand Canyon Protection Act and other laws require agencies to protect the park's riverine environment, but the responsible federal agencies have failed to make progress toward this goal. Management has not benefited the endangered humpback chub. Non-native trout, on the other hand, thrive despite scientists warnings that trout prey on native fish and compete for a limited food supply.

Science shows that changes are needed, but those changes have not been implemented, said Dr. Robert Witzeman, of Maricopa Audubon Society in Phoenix. There is resistance to doing what needs to be done.

LIVING RIVERS is also calling on the AMWG to recommend changes in dam operations to mimic natural, seasonal fluctuations in river flows, remove non-native fish, and reintroduce and recover endangered native fish. Scientists now openly wonder whether it is possible to adequately mitigate the impacts of Glen Canyon Dam. Decommissioning may prove to be the only option. Time is running out for the Grand Canyon, and hard choices must be made. LIVING RIVERS will continue to press for doing what's right for the river.

Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Electroshock in the Grand Canyon

[LRC V2, N1, January 2002](#)

Along with every watt of power extracted from the Colorado River at Glen Canyon Dam goes another piece of Grand Canyon's natural heritage. The hourly, daily and seasonal regulation of flows at the dam to accommodate variations in energy demand is one of the major variables causing habitat degradation in the nation's premier national park. Although scientists have been pushing for releases that mimic more the river's natural flow condition, those representing electrical utilities remain unconvinced. According to some, power interests are using their influence to impede efforts to reverse the decline of the Grand Canyon ecosystem.

From the beginning, power users have had to be dragged into this kicking and screaming, said Dave Wegner, who headed up Glen Canyon Environmental Studies, forerunner of the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center. We lost two years alone navigating the hoops and hurdles they put in our way just to run our first test back in 1996.

Others working with the Adaptive Management Program now concur, citing a general pattern of objections to most proposals, dragging out decisions and delaying action whenever possible.

Meanwhile, the situation in the Canyon worsens, stated Nikolai Ramsey of the Grand Canyon Trust. The latest studies show that humpback chub, an endangered fish, are in substantial decline.

It's categorically untrue that power interests are obfuscating or impeding this process, said Clayton Palmer, with the Western Area Power Administration, the federal agency responsible for marketing power from Glen Canyon Dam. Palmer cited several examples where other agencies were unwilling to support proposals advanced by power interests. One, advocating large releases which might aid with preserving sediment in the Canyon, was opposed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service concerned about impacts on an endangered invertebrate, the Kanab ambersnail.

Palmer and other power proponents are quick to point out that they are indeed full partners, as nearly all the money used for Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management comes from hydropower revenues. It's ludicrous that other government agencies and private foundations aren't helping us out, said Leslie James of Colorado River Energy Distributors Association. Such mitigation funds are, however, routinely tied to hydropower revenues.

James also argues that there is not yet enough science to determine if dam operations are the major problem. But a new report out for review this month by Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center indicated that dam operations are affecting not only

native fish, but also the food web of the entire Canyon. Native biodiversity of the Grand Canyon's river ecosystem is on a downward spiral, largely the result of Glen Canyon Dam. The report recommends that dam operations mimic seasonal flows, not fluctuating flows. Utilities are concerned because this would cause a price increase for power from Glen Canyon Dam of about 21 percent, to about \$21 per megawatt. This is still a bargain, costing only about half the price these utilities would pay should they choose to obtain power from other sources.

Living Rivers Currents 01/17/02

Colorado River Water Users Meeting: Environment Gains Recognition

[LRC V2, N1, January 2002](#)

Just a few short years ago the ecological and social values of the Colorado River delta were barely acknowledged. At this year's Colorado River Water Users Association (CRWUA) annual conference, nearly every speaker addressed the environmental issues of the delta, even though no advocacy group was invited to speak on its behalf. But we were there nonetheless. In the halls, business meetings and press briefing, LIVING RIVERS took every opportunity to advance the cause of the delta and other critical environmental and social issues not being addressed by agencies using and managing the Colorado River.

Gilbert Sanchez of Tribal Environmental Watch Alliance told journalists during the LIVING RIVERS press briefing that the cultural heritage of Indian people is threatened by water development projects. All this damage, and for what? Much of this water is stored just to evaporate into the sky. Ancestral gravesites should not be sacrificed for more golf courses, backyard swimming pools and hayfields in the desert.

Yamilett Carrillo-Guerrero, of ProNatura Sonora, a Mexican environmental protection group, echoed these concerns. Local communities in the delta are ready to contribute with land and water to help restore the delta. For them, a river with water means life. In no way do they consider water nurturing the Colorado River delta wetlands and the Upper Gulf of California as wasted, said Ms. Carrillo-Guerrero.

LIVING RIVERS presented a letter to CRWUA's board on behalf of the binational coalition working for delta restoration, seeking a partnership with the association in working to move more water to the Colorado River delta. Although some members expressed opposition, the board did invite a formal presentation on the proposal for its spring meeting. Pat Mulroy, Director of the Southern Nevada Water Authority, noted that water agencies indeed need to start paying attention. Environmental responsibility is the job of every water manager, she said. Those who are demanding to have their voices heard are not our traditional customers.

LR Letter 01/18/02

To department of Interior demanding action on restoration of Grand Canyon

Mr. Michael Gabaldon
Deputy Director of Operations
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Interior
1849 'C' Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
January 18, 2002

RE: Comments on Adaptive Management Working Group and proposed Strategic Plan

Dear Mr. Gabaldon,

The eight undersigned non-governmental organizations, including LIVING RIVERS, Center for Biological Diversity, Colorado Plateau River Guides, Flagstaff Activist Network, Forest Conservation Council, Glen Canyon Institute, John Muir Project (Earth Island Institute), Maricopa Audubon Society, and Sierra Club write to submit comments on the proposed Strategic Plan of the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG).

We recognize the large amount work that has been done on this plan, and we commend the scientists and others who have labored to produce that document. In the short period of its existence, the Program has made a significant contribution to expanding the scientific knowledge and understanding of the Grand Canyon ecosystem. However, despite its accomplishments the Program can and must be more effective. It is failing in its primary goal of protecting and mitigating the adverse impacts of Glen Canyon Dam on the river ecosystem of Grand Canyon National Park.

Our comments address a number of shortcomings of the Program and its Strategic Plan document as well as makes recommendations for addressing these shortcomings.

I. SUMMARY OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM CONCERNS

- A. The Program has failed to establish a new population of the endangered humpback chub, as required by the Record of Decision. This should be a top priority.
- B. The Program has not made measurable progress toward recovery of endangered species, including the humpback chub and razorback sucker, or towards reintroducing extirpated species, including the endangered Colorado pikeminnow and bonytail chub.
- C. The Program has failed to provide suitable aquatic habitat conditions and water temperatures necessary for native fish reproduction and survival in accordance with the biological opinion on endangered fish.
- D. The Program has not attempted to remove non-native fish including trout and catfish that are known to prey on or compete with humpback chub.

E. The Program has not undertaken necessary management activities, including dam operation changes, to significantly increase sediment deposition (including silts, sands, clays and detritus) into the riverine ecosystem which would increase the number and extent of beaches, backwaters, eddies and sand bars throughout the canyon ecosystem, provide wildlife and fish habitat and benefit recreational users, and protect from erosion damage irreplaceable archeological resources and cultural and sacred sites;

F. The Program has failed to demonstrate compliance with the directive in the Record of Decision, to "find an alternative dam operating plan that would permit recovery and long-term sustainability of downstream resources while limiting hydropower capability and flexibility only to the extent necessary to achieve recovery and long-term sustainability."

G. The Program has failed to encourage public involvement and participation in Program work.

H. The Program has not prioritized goals and management activities, to emphasize protecting and mitigating the adverse impacts to park resources from Glen Canyon Dam, over hydropower generation and trout production.

I. The Program has failed to publish and distribute an annual report on the review of monitoring data required by the Program's Charter, together with recommendations for management actions and modifications to the Record of Decision. Neither has the Program provided input to the Secretary for her required annual report to Congress and the States, pursuant to the Grand Canyon Protection Act, Section 1804(c)(2).

J. The Program has failed to consult regularly with the US Fish & Wildlife Service on progress toward meeting reasonable and prudent alternatives, as required in the December 1994 biological opinion on endangered fish.

K. The Program has failed to implement seasonally adjusted steady flows from Glen Canyon Dam as required by the December 1994 biological opinion on endangered fish.

These concerns will be addressed in more detail below.

II. CONSULTATIVE GROUPS, ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT, AND THE SCIENTIFIC PROCESS

The shortcomings identified above result in part from the structure and function of the Adaptive Management Program. Despite the focus on science as a guiding principle for informing the process, decisions are made mostly by governmental officials and representatives of political and economic interest groups appointed to the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG). Science plays only an advisory role in the process.

The Grand Canyon Protection Act, Section 1805 requires consultation with various stakeholder interests on long-term monitoring programs and activities. Creation of the AMWG is authorized by the Record of Decision, Section VI(1), Environmental Commitments and Monitoring, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committees Act

(FACA). Specific direction for Program management and operations is found in the updated AMWG Charter, dated January 10, 2001, and the AMWG Operating Procedures, dated June 18, 1998.

The AMWG delegates authority to the Technical Work Group (TWG) to supervise the scientific and management work of the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center (GCMRC), a federally funded agency affiliated with Reclamation and the US Geological Survey. The TWG makes recommendations to the AMWG about scientific priorities, protocols, and research needs. The AMWG takes those recommendations into consideration when making Program recommendations to the Secretary.

The Program is structured so that a diverse group of stakeholder interests (AMWG) makes recommendations to the Secretary on a consensus basis (or nearly so), on a wide range of complex scientific and technical issues that are often highly contentious. Economic interests within this framework have significant influence over the decision making process, including the scientific monitoring and research agenda.

Program scientific work is of high caliber and is making an important contribution to the body of knowledge of river ecosystem function in Grand Canyon National Park. However, managers are ignoring much of this science. Program decisions, dominated by water and power interests, often limit scientific effectiveness. Restoration objectives are subservient to water and power objectives. Hydropower revenues fund the vast majority of Program activities, and it is not surprising that hydropower interests have blocked some efforts to run experimental high flows that bypass the dam's turbines. Water users insist that all experimental flow regimes be consistent with, and subordinate to Law of the River delivery criteria, even when this limits the effectiveness of the scientific research agenda.

The Program has been extremely successful and effective in demonstrating that as long as the dam is operated for water and power needs, the ecosystem continues to be degraded. The science may conclusively confirm that the dam's impacts cannot be adequately mitigated or overcome, yet there exists no provision in the Program for addressing such an eventuality.

III. DAM OPERATING CONSTRAINTS LIMIT SCIENTIFIC FLEXIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Glen Canyon Dam is currently managed under operating constraints that limit flexibility for scientific inquiry and experimentation. Dam operations--including meeting water delivery criteria and hydropower generation demands--are sometimes in direct conflict with scientific experimentation objectives. Constraints on dam operations can infringe upon experimental flow regimes that may offer significant benefits. The Record of Decision mandates that high experimental flows that bypass the dam's turbine generators may only occur in conjunction with "dam safety" releases--i.e. high-water events that require the reservoir to be drawn down quickly. The pre-dam Colorado River in Grand Canyon reached its peak flow in late spring and early summer, and scientists argued for conducting high flows tests to coincide with the natural high flow season. However, "dam safety release" conditions tend to occur in early spring. It is therefore

not possible under existing operating criteria to fully mimic the river's natural hydrograph, which may be necessary to ensure recovery.

To realize the full benefits of adaptive management for dam-controlled river ecosystems, scientists need freedom to design and conduct a range of experimental flows and other management actions. Legal constraints, including mandated water delivery schedules under the Law of the River, are probably not possible to change. However, hydropower generation needs do not have the same level of legal protection that water delivery does. Program managers should consider potential changes to dam operating criteria that would permit greater flexibility for scientists, even if hydropower production may be reduced.

IV. COMMENTS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan proposed for adoption contains a "Vision and Mission" statement, a set of nine Principles, a list of twelve Goals, a matrix of Management Objectives tiered to each of the Goals, and a detailed set of Research and Information Needs identified to address the Management Objectives. We appreciate the extensive effort that has gone into producing this complex document, and we applaud the high caliber of scientific work and analysis that underlies this plan. However, here are several areas where the plan is deficient and in need of changes or refinement.

A. Vision and Mission.

The statement notes the Program's obligation to follow applicable laws and mentions the "Law of the River" by name, but lacks an explicit reference to the Grand Canyon Protection Act. Since the Program owes its existence to the Act, it is appropriate to note that. The statement also refers to protecting, mitigating, and improving the "Colorado River ecosystem affected by Glen Canyon Dam." This is useful language, but should be strengthened by adding specific reference to Grand Canyon National Park.

The Secretary has a substantial legal mandate, embodied in numerous laws, that requires protection of the natural ecosystem of Grand Canyon National Park. This body of law has been made subservient to the body of law that supports the interests of water and power users. When conflicts occur, the weight is usually in favor of water and power. The Program vision and mission statement must recognize that the two bodies of law have equal force, and note that these are in substantial, direct conflict.

B. Principles and Goals.

Funding Concerns: Principle One states, "Some of the objectives and actions that fall under these goals may not be the responsibility of the ... Program, and may be funded by other sources, but are included here for completeness." Given the growing and urgent problems affecting the Grand Canyon, it is critical to indicate in the Plan, which objectives and actions are not considered to be the responsibility of the Program. There is an expressed need for additional funding for scientific monitoring and research. The Secretary and the public need to know which activities are funded, and through what sources, and those activities where other sources must be secured.

C. Managing for Endangered and Native Species.

Principle Two states, "The construction of Glen Canyon Dam and the introduction of non-native species have irreversibly changed the Colorado River ecosystem." While some ecosystem changes may be irreversible, others are susceptible to change. This statement should be modified to read "... non-native species have led to many changes to the Colorado River ecosystem, some of which may be irreversible."

Principle Three states, "Much remains unknown about the Colorado River ecosystem below Glen Canyon Dam and how to achieve the Adaptive Management Program goals." There is much about the ecosystem that is known, and this statement could be interpreted so as to mean that too little is known for management actions to be taken at this time. The Principle should be reworded to avoid giving the Secretary a misleading impression. Suggested change: "Much remains unknown about the Colorado River ecosystem below Glen Canyon Dam but enough is known to guide the implementation of the Adaptive Management Program goals."

Principle Four states, "Management efforts will prevent any further human-induced extirpation or extinction of native species." This statement should be strengthened to make the Principle consistent with the National Park Organic Act and the recovery standard of the Endangered Species Act. Suggested addition: "...and will strive to recover endangered species and reintroduce extirpated species."

Goal One states, "Protect or improve the aquatic foodbase so that it will support viable populations of desired species at higher trophic levels." Non-native species generally constitute a threat to native species' survival. This Goal should be clarified to emphasize viable populations of desired native species.

Goal Two states, "Maintain or attain viable populations of existing native fish, remove jeopardy from humpback chub and razorback sucker, and prevent adverse modification to their critical habitat." Federal agencies are required to contribute to endangered species recovery. This Goal should be amended to read: "Maintain or attain viable populations of existing native fish, remove jeopardy from humpback chub and razorback sucker and contribute to their recovery, and prevent adverse modification to their critical habitat."

Goal Three states, "Restore populations of extirpated species, as feasible and advisable." This Goal may be inconsistent with National Park Service regulations that require the agency to reintroduce all native species, wherever it is ecologically feasible to do so. Use of the term "advisable" in the context of this Goal implies that the National Park Service has discretion to reintroduce species on the basis of "advice," but such is not the case. Also, use of the term "feasible," without qualification, may be interpreted as economic feasibility, implying that extirpated species may be restored only if funding is readily available. Finally, as noted above, agencies are required to contribute to recovery of listed species. The Goal should be amended to read, "Restore populations of extirpated native species, wherever ecologically feasible, and contribute to their recovery."

D. Rainbow Trout Management

Goal Four states, "Maintain a naturally reproducing population of rainbow trout above the Paria River, to the extent practicable and consistent with the maintenance of viable populations of native fish." This Goal is not supported by law, and is known to be in direct conflict with native fish recovery efforts. Trout are known predators of endangered humpback chub and other fish, and the cold water temperatures needed to support trout are known to hamper humpback chub reproduction. Maintaining a reproducing population of rainbow trout requires maintaining a year-round, cold-water regime. Low water temperature in summer is one of the primary known contributing factors of native fish endangerment. This Goal should be deleted because it is in direct conflict with achieving the goal of the Grand Canyon Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act.

E. Kanab Ambersnail

Goal Five states, "Maintain or attain viable populations of Kanab ambersnail." The Vasey's Paradise population of Kanab ambersnail, by virtue of its primary habitat location below the pre-dam high water line, is considered to be at risk in the event of future high experimental flows. To emphasize the need for protecting this population, this Goal should be qualified by adding a phrase such as, "...including one or more populations located above the old (pre-dam) high water line."

F. Experimental Approaches

Principle Six states, "Dam operations and management actions will be tried that attempt to return ecosystem patterns and processes to their range of natural variability. When this is not appropriate, experiments will be conducted to test other approaches." The Principle does not explain what circumstances might make restoration of natural processes inappropriate, nor does it suggest what other approaches would be appropriate that accomplish something other than restoring ecosystem patterns and processes. The first sentence of the Principle stands on its own, and the second sentence should be deleted.

G. Prioritizing Competing Management Actions

Principle Seven reflects the intent to maximize benefits across the board wherever possible, while minimizing negative impacts on individual goals where conflicts arise. This approach assumes that all Program goals are (more or less) equally worthy. However, the goals that promote non-native fish reproduction and seek to increase hydropower generation should be considered of lower priority than those that improve native habitat and contribute to species recovery. The Principle should be rewritten to clarify this distinction.

H. Hydropower Generation

Goal Ten states, "Maintain power production capacity and energy generation, and increase where feasible and advisable, within the framework of the Adaptive Management ecosystem goals." As noted above, power generation is a lower priority

relative to Program priorities and is often in conflict or potential conflict with ecosystem restoration objectives. The intended meaning of the phrase "increase where feasible and advisable" is unclear. This Goal should be modified with language like the following: "Allow for power production capacity and energy generation, where not in conflict within the framework of the Adaptive Management ecosystem restoration goals."

V. RECOMMENDED PROGRAM CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS

A. Annual Report. According to the AMWG Operating Procedures, Item #11, "Records and Record Keeping."

AMWG is required to prepare an annual report pursuant to the Grand Canyon Protection Act, Section 1804(c)(2). This report should include the State of the Natural and Cultural Resources in the Colorado River Ecosystem, as well as recommendations to the Secretary on future dam operations.

B. Establish a New Population of Humpback Chub.

The Record of Decision, Section VI(5), states, "New Population of Humpback Chub: In consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service, and Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), [Bureau of] Reclamation will make every effort (through funding, facilitating, and technical support) to ensure that a new population of humpback chub is established in the mainstem or one or more of the tributaries within Grand Canyon." This language makes clear that the Secretary intended that every effort should be made to establish a new population of chub, yet there is no evidence that the agency has undertaken this task. This is a major concern that must be addressed immediately by Reclamation and by the Program.

C. New Information on Chub Requires a Supplemental EIS.

Preliminary data recently released by the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center (GCMRC) indicate a precipitous decline in the number of adult humpback chub of reproducing age. This decline, while not surprising given lack of management activities on behalf of the chub, was not anticipated when the Record of Decision was signed. The population has been considered to be fairly stable over the last decade or more. Therefore, under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations found at 40 CFR 1502.9(c)(1)(ii), these new data represent "significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns," triggering a requirement to prepare a Supplemental EIS (SEIS) to the 1996 Glen Canyon Dam EIS. The Bureau of Reclamation, the National Park Service, and other agencies may be in violation of the Endangered Species Act and the Grand Canyon Protection Act for failing to ensure protection and recovery of the humpback chub population in Grand Canyon National Park.

D. Trout and Non-Native Fish Management

Eliminate from the Plan the Goal and Management Objectives for encouraging trout production, and pursue an aggressive effort to reduce the population of brown trout,

rainbow trout, and the various species of catfish, carp and other non-native fish that prey on or compete with the native fish species.

E. Recover and Reintroduce Endangered Species

Make measurable progress toward endangered species recovery. Reintroduce razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, bonytail chub, and other extirpated native species. In accordance with the biological opinion on endangered fish, prevent adverse modification of critical habitat, and provide suitable aquatic habitat conditions and water temperatures necessary for native fish reproduction and survival. Assess and report on the status of flannel-mouth suckers and other native species that are not yet listed but which may require special management assistance to prevent listing in the future.

F. Establish an Independent Review Panel to Study the Program and Make Recommendations

The Record of Decision provides for independent scientific review panels to monitor and provide oversight of Program research activities. An independent review panel should be convened to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the Program as a whole, and make annual recommendations on ways of making the Program more effective, including changing the structure of the Program.

G. Establish a Public Communications and Outreach Program

The Program should undertake an outreach effort to inform the public and encourage public participation in the adaptive management process. Information about the Program is not readily accessible to a lay audience, and few people are well informed of the important yet complex issues. Holding public meetings in different cities would help to raise the profile of the issues. Making creative use of the Program's Internet site as an access point for information could be a particularly helpful strategy. Combining efforts with the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center, Grand Canyon National Park, and other entities could result in dramatically increasing public understanding of the issues before the Program.

H. Seek Additional Program Funding Sources

The Program must have sufficient funding to conduct science activities and take authorized management actions. Additional funding from hydropower revenues, as well as appropriated funds and grants from non-governmental sources should be sought to ensure that all necessary scientific and management activities are conducted in a timely fashion.

I. Increase the Role and Visibility of the National Park Service

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is designated as the lead agency for logistical coordination of Program work. However the focus of the Program is protecting and restoring the riverine ecosystem of Grand Canyon National Park. As the agency charged with protecting the park, the National Park Service should play a prominent role

in public outreach as well as in the Program's decision making process and scientific research efforts.

J. Comply with the USFWS Reasonable & Prudent Alternative

The USFWS December 1994 biological opinion, under "Elements of the Reasonable and Prudent Alternative [RPA]," page 34 states, "Those elements [of the RPA] that can be accomplished without further verification of NEPA compliance should be implemented without delay... Reclamation and the Service will meet at least annually to coordinate reasonable and prudent alternative activities."

The document goes on to prescribe, on page 35, "high steady flows in the spring and low steady flows in summer and fall during low water years (releases of approximately 8.23 maf) to verify an effective flow regime" and specifies that the "research design and hypotheses to be tested will be based on a flow pattern that resembles the natural hydrograph, as described for those seasons in the SASF [seasonally adjusted steady flow regime]." The RPA requires these flows to be implemented by 1998 at latest, and provides for re-initiation of consultation with Reclamation in the event that study design does not provide information necessary to support removal of jeopardy to the endangered fish. Reclamation must demonstrate that it is making every effort to comply with RPA requirements and remove jeopardy, including managing Glen Canyon Dam releases in accord with the SASF regime and experimenting with beach habitat building flows in spring in conformance with RPA specifications. Should it be necessary, Reclamation should reinitiate consultation with USFWS at the earliest opportunity.

K. Tribal relationships

The Program should make every effort to include the Indian tribes in the decision making process and ensure that their concerns and their funding needs are addressed . In particular, the protection of archeological and cultural resources, as well as sacred sites in the Grand Canyon should be a high priority. The Program should consider the tribes as sovereign nations and coordinate administrative and programmatic work with them in recognition of their sovereign status.

VI. CONCLUSION

The importance of the Adaptive Management Program to ensuring the future health and vitality of the globally significant Grand Canyon ecosystem cannot be overstated. Much good work has been done to illuminate the opportunities for addressing threats to ecosystem function, and this work must continue. However, growing evidence indicates an ongoing decline in many key indicators. At the same time, there exist numerous inefficiencies and impediments to solving the difficult problems caused by Glen Canyon Dam, and these threaten the integrity of the Program over the long term.

Our organizations seek a cooperative and constructive approach that maximizes the effectiveness of management actions and makes full use of the scientific data being collected. We look to the agencies and other entities involved in the Program to provide

leadership and expertise to make progress, before more species go extinct or are added to the endangered list.

We seek evidence of forward momentum, in particular, from the agencies with statutory responsibility to protect the Grand Canyon ecosystem. As noted above, the new population data on humpback chub appears to require a Supplemental EIS for dam operations. This would provide an opportunity to address a range of scientific and management issues that have been informed by five years of Program monitoring and research activities. We look forward to working with you on these issues. Please let us know how we can be of assistance. We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Lisa Force, Program Director
LIVING RIVERS
Scottsdale, Arizona

and the following organizations:

Center for Biological Diversity
Daniel Patterson, Ecologist
Idyllwild, California

Colorado Plateau River Guides
Annie Payne, President
Salt Lake City, Utah

Flagstaff Activist Network
Roxane George, Director
Flagstaff, Arizona

Forest Conservation Council
John Talbert, Executive Director
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Glen Canyon Institute Jeri Ledbetter, Executive Director Flagstaff, Arizona

John Muir Project (Earth Island Institute)
Chad Hanson, Executive Director
Washington, DC

Maricopa Audubon Society
Robert Witzeman, M.D., Conservation Chair
Phoenix, Arizona

Sierra Club (Plateau Group)
David Sherman, Chair
Flagstaff, Arizona

cc: Hon. Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior Hon. John Keys, Commissioner, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mr. Rick Gold, Director, Upper Colorado Region, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mr. Robert Johnston, Director, Lower Colorado Region, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mr. Joseph Alston, Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park
Ms. Kitty Rogers, Superintendent, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Mr. Barry Gold, Director, Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center

LR Press Release 01/18/02

Groups Call for Action to Save Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park

CONTACT:

John Weisheit or David Orr 435-260-2590

Lisa Force 480-990-7839

PHOENIX, Jan. 18 -- The environmental and social justice organization LIVING RIVERS led a rally in downtown Phoenix today to demand immediate action to save the ecosystem in Grand Canyon, the nation's premier national park.

LIVING RIVERS was joined by the Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club, Audubon Society and other groups in calling on the Department of the Interior to start following the laws that require mitigation of the Glen Canyon Dam's adverse impacts to the Colorado River ecosystem--the heart of the Grand Canyon National Park.

"Several native fish species have already been lost, and one more numbers in only the thousands," David Orr of LIVING RIVERS told the crowd of about 60. "Add to this the changes in the food web that form the foundation for the Canyon's ecology and the picture is clear, the Grand Canyon is becoming the Grand Ditch."

Interior officials and other stakeholders interested in Glen Canyon Dam and the Grand Canyon wrapped-up a two-day meeting today at the site of the rally. They were attempting to salvage a five-year old federal program that was supposed to reverse the dam's negative impact on Grand Canyon.

"The environment of Grand Canyon is being sacrificed," said Michelle Harrington of the Center for Biological Diversity. "Americans are outraged to learn that, despite five years and forty million dollars this program has made so little progress."

In advance of the rally the groups formally presented their demands in a [ten-page letter](#) to Mr. Michael Gabaldon, deputy Interior Secretary and chair of the government program known as Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management. The groups seek

remedies where the program stands in violation of laws governing the Grand Canyon ecosystem, including the Grand Canyon Protection Act and National Park Organic Act. Specifically, the program fails to:

- * develop a dam operating plan that would permit recovery and long-term sustainability of downstream resources.
- * provide suitable aquatic habitat conditions and water temperatures necessary for native fish reproduction generally, and the establishment of a new population of the federally endangered humpback chub.
- * address the removal of alien fish, such as trout and catfish that compete with natives.
- * to increase sediment deposition for habitat mitigation and river recreation.
- * to produce mandated annual reports or to properly consult with the public and key federal agencies including the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

"It's a travesty that those involved in this program have been so negligent in fulfilling their mandate to reverse the habitat decline of this international treasure," added Mr. Orr. "Although we hope they will quickly address our concerns, we trust litigation may ultimately be required to force this body into action."

The groups are demanding that a new environmental impact statement on Glen Canyon Dam operations be undertaken in light of new science data that demonstrate declines in key ecological indicators, including native fish, invertebrates, and sediment.

###

For additional information:

[LIVING RIVERS](#)

[Center for Biological Diversity](#)

[Maricopa Audubon Society](#)

[Sierra Club](#)

[Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center](#)

[Arizona Game & Fish Department](#)

[Western Area Power Administration Colorado River Storage Project Management Center](#)

[NOTE: The following Interior Department websites are temporarily unavailable as a result of a court order. Service may be restored at any time.]

[U.S. Bureau of Reclamation: Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program](#)

[National Park Service: Grand Canyon National Park](#)

Take Action 01/20/02

Save Grand Canyon from Glen Canyon Dam

Join LIVING RIVERS, Maricopa Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, Glen Canyon Institute, Forest Conservation Council, and others to send a message to the Department of Interior to stop killing the Grand Canyon. Several native fish species have already been lost, and one more numbers only in the thousands. Add to this the changes in the food web that forms the foundation for the Canyon's ecology and the picture is clear, the Grand Canyon is becoming the Grand Ditch.

The federal program established five years ago to mitigate these problems, caused by the operation of Glen Canyon Dam, is clearly failing. On January 18, 2002 these groups presented a letter to the Glen Canyon Adaptive Management Program outlining the program's flaws, violations of law and remedies that must be pursued to reverse the decline of the Colorado River ecosystem through Grand Canyon National Park. The major concerns include:

- Failing to develop a dam operating plan that would permit recovery and long-term sustainability of the Grand Canyon's riverine resources.
- Failing to establish suitable aquatic habitat conditions and water temperatures necessary for native fish reproduction generally, and the establishment of a new population of the federally endangered humpback chub.
- Failing to address the removal of alien fish, such as trout and catfish that compete with natives.
- Failing to increase sediment deposition for habitat restoration and river recreation.
- Failing to produce mandated annual reports or to properly consult with the public and key federal agencies including the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

But hearing from us is not enough. Let Gale Norton hear from you!.

It's critical that the public let her know that the time for action is NOW!



"I want to hear from you about the declining health of the Grand Canyon ecosystem."

Should I:

- Prepare a supplemental EIS for Glen Canyon Dam?
- Operate the dam to mimic natural river flows and temperatures?
- Support removal of non-native fish that prey on native species?
- Make endangered fish recovery a top priority for managers, and
- Make hydropower production subservient to ecosystem management?

Write to me:

Honorable Gale Norton
Secretary, Department of Interior
1849 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20240

Fax: (202) 208-6950

email: gale_norton@ios.doi.gov

Note: my email may not be functioning due to restricted access the courts placed on DOI's electronic information services--check [DOI's website](#) for updates. If it's not, please fax it or use snail mail. Thank you.

[Information on Living Rivers efforts to restore Grand Canyon, part of our Canyon's of the Colorado Campaign.](#)

[Living Rivers Coalition demands action by the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Working Group to follow the law and restore Grand Canyon.](#)

Living Rivers letter to Michael Gabaldon, Deputy Director of Operations U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, January 18, 2002

[Minority opinion of Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Working Group on censorship of Living Rivers coalition's comments of January 18, 2002.](#)

Letter from Southwest Rivers et.al. to Michael Gabaldon, Deputy Director of Operations U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, January 28, 2002

[Groups Call for Action to Save Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park](#)

Living Rivers Press Release, July 18, 2002

[Canyon Changes are Crucial](#)

Arizona Republic: January 16, 2002

[Grand Canyon: Living Rivers Calls for Immediate Action](#)

Living Rivers Currents, January 2002

[Electroshock in the Grand Canyon](#)

Living Rivers Currents, January 2002

[Native Fish: Recovery or Rhetoric?](#)

Living Rivers Currents, January 2002

[Grand Canyon Native Fish: Going, Going, Gone?](#)

Living Rivers Currents, December 2001

[Grand Canyon Fish at Risk of Extinction](#) Living Rivers Press Release, December 10, 2001

[Living Rivers Comment Letter on Endangered Colorado River Fish to US Fish and Wildlife Service, December 10, 2001](#)

[Environmental groups criticize plan to rescue endangered fish](#)

Associated Press, December 11, 2001

[Download PDF of January 18, 2002 Save the Grand Canyon" Rally Flyer](#)

[Flap over Endangered Fish](#)

Rocky Mountain News, December 11, 2001

[Resolution of the Desert Fishes Council on Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery, November 18, 2001](#)

[Decline of the aquatic food base in the Grand Canyon](#) Northern Arizona Aquatic Ecology Research Laboratory

River News 01/28/02

Groups voice concern about censor of public comments on Grand Canyon Restoration.

Mr. Michael Gabaldon, W-6000
Director of Policy, Management, and Technical Services
Bureau of Reclamation
Main Interior Building
Room 760-MIB
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001
Dear Mr. Gabaldon;

At the Adaptive Management Work Group meeting on 18 January 2002, a presentation was made by Mr. David Orr regarding [concerns that Living Rivers and other organizations have about the AMWG and its strategic plan.](#)

Following Mr. Orr's presentation, Rick Johnson moved to have the letter outlining these concerns remanded to the Strategic Plan ad hoc committee to review and make recommendations as appropriate. This motion resulted in considerable heated discussion and was ultimately rejected. This letter is to convey the views of the minority group to you, members of the AMWG, and the Secretary of Interior.

We feel strongly that the AMWG, which makes recommendations to the Secretary of Interior about the management of public resources, not only would benefit from public input, but also has a responsibility to consider comments from the public. Although the AMWG represents diverse interests, it clearly does not represent all interests. To meet the program's vision of providing a "stewardship worthy of the Grand Canyon," the AMWG must be open to considering how to improve the process and the management of these resources.

The responsibility to consider comments from the public is derived from the AMWG Operating Procedures and the Grand Canyon Protection Act. The Operating Procedures state that the AMWG was formed to comply with the consultation requirement of the Grand Canyon Protection Act. The consultation section of the Act states that monitoring and other activities shall be established and implemented in consultation with the general public. It seems clear that Congress did not intend for the AMWG to make recommendations in isolation from the general public.

In addition to our concerns about the AMWG rejecting an opportunity to consider public comments, we are also disturbed about the speculative and untrue remarks about motives and credibility that were made during the discussion. These remarks were deeply offensive and inappropriate. We request that in the future, the chair take active steps to discourage such remarks and refocus discussion on the motion at hand. We regret that the AMWG refused to review comments from a member of the public and that the discussion was so acrimonious. It is our fervent hope that this does not happen

again, and that the AMWG will develop a mechanism to gracefully consider the views of those who are not appointed stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Rick Johnson
Southwest Rivers

And the other members of the minority group,

Andre Potochnik
Grand Canyon River Guides

Geoffrey Barnard
Grand Canyon Trust

River News 01/29/02

One Step Closer to Taking Down Fossil Creek Dams

After the historic agreement between Arizona Public Service Company (APS) and a contingent of environmental groups to remove two hydroelectric plants on Fossil Creek was reached in November 2000, the Federal Energy Commission (FERC) slammed on the brakes. FERC was simply unsure how to proceed with the unprecedented request of an electric utility, positioned to receive a renewed 50-year license, to surrender their license.

The first complication was that APS refused to apply for license surrender until it had confirmation from FERC that it could continue operate under annual licenses until 2004. To complicate matters, APS requested that FERC issue a Declaratory Order seeking confirmation that FERC would not allow other utilities to compete for future operation of the plants, if for some reason FERC did not accept APS's surrender.

Intervening environmental groups, including Living Rivers, asked that FERC issue an order which would allow us to proceed with the terms of the settlement agreement, including decommissioning of both plants and return of full flows to Fossil Creek by 2004. The agreement also included removal of most plant facilities and restoration the damaged areas by 2009, by APS at APS's cost.

In a huge victory for decommissioning efforts everywhere, FERC issued a Declaratory Order in December 2000 that supports our decommissioning agreement with APS. In response to APS concerns about competition for operating the plants, FERC stated, "We conclude that there is no compelling reason for allowing another round of relicensing competition. We do not believe it would be in the public interest to initiate a new relicensing procedure when the existing licensee has attempted to resolve matters by seeking a settlement, even if that settlement might lead to surrender of the license and removal of project works, including any associated dams."

In response to APS's foot-dragging on applying for license surrender, FERC responded, "Delay of a license surrender, rather than being precluded by our regulations, is actually required by them. There is nothing in the FPA or our regulations prohibiting continued generation beyond the time at which we issue a surrender order."

FERC followed up its Declaratory Order with a letter just last week to APS stating that since FERC has resolved the procedural issues, it now needs to know APS plan and schedule for filing its application to surrender the license to operate the hydro plants. Once the surrender application is filed, the next step will be convince FERC to accept it as written under the terms of the decommissioning agreement. Any substantial changes imposed by FERC would give either party the option to withdraw. Stay tuned to this website for further updates.

Living Rivers Currents 02/01/02

Volume 2, Number 2 (Special Issue: Colorado River Compact)

From January 30 through February 1, the 2002 Colorado River Symposium took place at historic Bishop's Lodge—site of the 1922 negotiations for the Colorado River Compact. While various management challenges for the once-mighty Colorado were on the agenda, this issue of LIVING RIVERS Currents was circulated to promote efforts to bring about fundamental changes in the Compact itself, so that Colorado River laws are up to date with present concerns.

The Articles

[Bishop's Lodge: Return to the Scent of the Crime](#)

[Colorado River Compact in the Way of Delta Restoration](#)

[Ten Reasons for Renegotiating the Colorado River Compact](#)

[Dam Reoperations: Avoiding the Inevitable](#)

[Fossil Creek: One Step Closer to Dam Removal](#)

[Grand Canyon: Phoenix Takes Action](#)

PDF Version Download

[LRC V2, N1, February 2002](#)

Ten Reasons for Renegotiating the Colorado River Compact

LIVING RIVERS is calling for renegotiating the Colorado River Compact. This would make possible a number of needed changes and innovations, including the following:

1. Indian tribes participating as sovereign nations, protecting and defending their own rights and interests in the river;
 2. Making protection of the environment and the river's ecosystem top priorities in management decisions;
 3. Equitably apportioning among all the basin's stakeholders, including the environment, the actual amount of water in the river—to ensure that even in drought years stakeholders receive a proportional allocation;
 4. Applying the public trust doctrine in apportionment and river management decisions, in recognition that the waters of the Colorado River and its tributaries are to be held in trust for the enjoyment, benefit and welfare of all the basin's inhabitants;
 5. Creating a basin-wide water trust fund to accept and protect from appropriation donations of voluntarily conserved water to benefit the environment;
 6. Establishing and enforcing mandatory water conservation measures, and providing incentives for implementation and penalties for wasteful use;
 7. Harmonizing state water laws basin-wide, and removing legal barriers to ecologically sound river management;
 8. Encouraging appropriate (sustainable) agricultural practices by imposing reasonable restrictions on irrigation technologies and cropping patterns;
 9. Establishing strict limits on interbasin transfers including prohibition of new out-of-basin diversions; and
 10. Providing mechanisms for ongoing dialogue and negotiation among the interested parties to address new information and changing circumstances.
-

Living Rivers Currents 02/01/02

One Step Closer To Removing Two Dams on Fossil Creek

In a huge victory for decommissioning efforts everywhere, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a Declaratory Order that supports movement toward the removal of two dams on Fossil Creek in central Arizona. LIVING RIVERS and other groups have been protesting efforts by Arizona Public Service (APS) to renege on an agreement to surrender its operating license for the dams—a critical step toward decommissioning.

APS claimed that, should it surrender its operating license, FERC might then choose to grant the license to a competitor. However, in late December FERC wrote, “We conclude that there is no compelling reason for allowing another round of relicensing competition. We do not believe it would be in the public interest to initiate a new relicensing procedure when the existing licensee has attempted to resolve matters by seeking a settlement, even if that settlement might lead to surrender of the license and removal of project works, including any associated dams.”

FERC followed up its Declaratory Order with a letter to APS in January stating that, since FERC has resolved the procedural issues, FERC now needs to know APS’ plan and schedule for filing its application to surrender the license to operate the hydro plants. Once surrendered, and approved by FERC, decommissioning can commence.

Living Rivers Currents 02/01/02

Grand Canyon: Phoenix Takes Action

Last month, while bureaucrats and scientists convened in Phoenix’s premier downtown office tower to discuss the disintegrating health of the Grand Canyon, activists led by LIVING RIVERS gathered outside to demand results.

The Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) gathered January 17-18, five years and \$40 million dollars into a process that so far has not yet put in place a plan for pulling the Grand Canyon ecosystem back from the brink of collapse, where it teeters today.

Although AMWG is mandated to provide a mechanism for public input, it rejected such input when offered by LIVING RIVERS, Sierra Club and other groups who collectively submitted a ten-page letter demanding immediate action. The organizations pointed out that in spite of Grand Canyon Protection Act requirements, the impacts of Glen Canyon Dam on Grand Canyon are not being adequately addressed.

The dam holds back nutrient-rich river sediments vital to many Grand Canyon native species, keeps water temperature unnaturally cold in the canyon and eliminates the

river's life-giving flooding regimes. The result: a Grand Canyon that is slowly becoming sterilized of its native life forms.

More than forty Phoenix-area activists responded to LIVING RIVERS' call for support for action on behalf of the Grand Canyon. Michelle Harrington with the Center for Biological Diversity spoke of the plight of native fish in the Grand Canyon. "Three of the canyon's native fish species have disappeared, a fourth is in serious trouble, and a fifth should probably be listed," she said. "Worse, the only population of endangered humpback chub in Grand Canyon is now experiencing a sharp decline."

Dr. Robert Witzeman of Maricopa Audubon Society and dean of Arizona's conservation community, spoke of the complex web of life in the Grand Canyon ecosystem and the evidence that it is becoming unraveled, beginning with the very base of the food chain. He ended his speech with advice for forcing action from the powers-that-be: "Constant pressure, constantly applied." When the AMWG convenes again this summer, LIVING RIVERS will be there again, with an even larger coalition.

Living Rivers Currents 02/01/02

Dam Re-operations: Avoiding the Inevitable

As citizens lament the failings of ongoing federal efforts to protect Grand Canyon from the impacts of Glen Canyon Dam, they should recognize that these problems won't readily go away.

Instead of addressing the inevitable need to decommission the dam to restore native habitat for endangered fish, the Department of the Interior is spending millions of dollars tinkering with minor changes in dam operations, while the riverine environments that these programs are designed to improve, only worsen.

The Glen Canyon Dam re-operation program is a flagship—for a fleet of dam re-operation programs that are sinking the possibility of habitat restoration for critical environments downstream. The Bureau of Reclamation is at least a year behind in releasing its draft plan for changing Flaming Gorge Dam operations, to mitigate impacts on endangered fish in the Green River through Dinosaur National Monument. The agency is perhaps even farther behind in publishing its re-operation plan for Navajo Dam on the San Juan River. A plan for the Gunnison River dams, expected in 2001, has never yet materialized.

One reason for the failure of these efforts is the raft of antiquated laws and the overweening political interference from user groups that unnecessarily impair managers' best efforts to apply a full range of adaptive management techniques. If these newer programs were intended to benefit from what's being learned with Glen Canyon, there should be little wonder that they all seem to be faltering.

Dam re-operation will be one of the topics at the 2002 Colorado River Symposium in Santa Fe, however, the topic on the agenda should instead be dam decommissioning.

Federal programs have yet to demonstrate any results in their hypothesis that these facilities can be operated in such a way to reverse, or even halt, the extensive habitat decline they've already caused.

This is why the movement toward decommissioning federal hydropower facilities is building rapidly. "The federal government requires private dam owners to evaluate decommissioning alternatives when their projects come under review," said Dr. Patrick Diehl with the Sierra Club's Glen Canyon Group. "Yet the politicians fight against decommissioning studies when their own sacred-cow projects like Glen Canyon and Flaming Gorge are put under the microscope."

Living Rivers Currents 02/01/02

Colorado River Compact In the Way of Delta Restoration

The Colorado River Compact of 1922 was negotiated by the seven basin states without input from Mexico or Indian tribes. When the river flows were parceled out, only about ten percent was allocated to Mexico, a quantity formalized by treaty 22 years later. Mexico currently uses its entire share for agricultural and urban needs. This has had a profound effect on the Colorado River delta. With so little water moving across the border, and Mexico's growing demand for it, the delta today receives no water.

"It should not be Mexico's sole responsibility to fix the delta when the US takes so much of the river's flow from them," said LIVING RIVERS' Lisa Force, who is leading efforts to get water users throughout the Colorado to donate one percent of their water to delta restoration. "The delta's native Cucupá communities, along with all Indian tribes were excluded from this allocation process; it's time to renegotiate."

The plight of the delta also illustrates another major flaw in the Compact: no allocation provisions were made for flows and river management strategies to protect the environment. The Compact pre-dated such concerns, but today, critical habitat—from the river's headwaters to its delta—suffers from lack of water.

While interest in delta restoration grows, and water agencies express interest in assisting, the Compact and other laws governing the Colorado River make such support difficult, if not impossible. Water conserved and left in the river by one agency may be freely diverted by another user downstream. Moreover, if it is proven that a user routinely leaves water in the river, that user's rights to the water may be lost altogether by not putting the water to "beneficial" use.

LIVING RIVERS has requested on behalf of the Delta Restoration Coalition—a group of 133 organizations representing more than 12 million people—that the Secretary of the

Interior examine the Compact and other laws governing the Colorado to identify opportunities to deliver water to the delta. The Secretary, as the arbiter of water allocations in the lower basin, has great discretion to interpret the Law of the River.

As an initial step, reforms should recognize in-stream flows as a beneficial use throughout the basin and across borders. Effective mechanisms are needed to offer water users assurances that conserved water will be protected from appropriation by other users, and allowed to become part of a dedicated, basin-wide system of in-stream flows that would replenish the delta.

In his December 2001 address to the Colorado River Water Users' Association, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Bennett Raley stated that Colorado River delta issues are among his Department's "top priorities" for the coming year. The Interior Department must join with those seeking new and innovative ways to address today's pressing environmental and social needs of stakeholders, not continue perpetuating the mistakes of the past.

Living Rivers Currents 02/01/02

Bishop's Lodge: Return to the Scene of the Crime

Water lawyers, politicians, representatives from Indian tribes and environmental interests will be gathering in Santa Fe, New Mexico early this month for the 2002 Colorado River Symposium at historic Bishop's Lodge—site of the 1922 negotiations for the Colorado River Compact. While various management challenges for the once-mighty Colorado will be on the agenda, LIVING RIVERS will be promoting fundamental changes in the Compact itself, to bring Colorado River laws up to date with present concerns.

From the exclusion of Indian nations, Mexico and the environment as equal stakeholders in the river's water, to apportioning more water to the states than actually exists in the river most years, the Compact's shortcomings are so significant that one wonders why it was not revisited sooner.

"The Compact was flawed from the beginning," said University of Kansas environmental historian and western water expert Dr. Donald Worster. "All kinds of laws dating to the 1920s have been reassessed—including Prohibition and civil rights—so why not western water laws?"

But to many, the Compact has acquired sacrosanct status. Added Worster, "An agreement like this is thought by some to have come from the hand of God; there is an enormous cultural resistance, particularly if someone is going to lose some money in the deal."

Despite such obstacles, attempts have been made over the years to find solutions, and the discussion seems to come back to Santa Fe and the Compact. In 1983 a group gathered at Bishop's Lodge to debate many of the same issues on the table at this year's meeting. "The underlying thrust was a revisionist effort," said University of California, Santa Barbara environmental ethicist Dr. Roderick Nash, a 1983 participant. "Coming together was evidence of dissatisfaction." Yet despite a list of suggested improvements—including amending the Compact—little has been done to address the fundamental problems.

In addition to environmental problems, serious concerns about representation have been in the forefront of discussions about amending the Compact. Compact negotiators simply ignored the issue of reserved rights for Indian tribes, recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1908. Only one reference to Indian rights appears in the document, stating that the agreement does not affect federal obligations to Indian tribes. "Herbert Hoover called that clause the 'wild Indian article,'" said historian Dr. Norris Hundley of the University of California, Los Angeles, an expert on southwest water history and law. "They didn't pay any attention to Indian rights."

Indians today see water that rightfully belongs to their people being delivered to corporate farms and cities hundreds of miles away, while many on the reservation still must haul their drinking water in buckets. Some scholars believe the Navajo Nation alone has rights to several million acre-feet. While some Indian nations have pursued negotiated settlements to obtain water, the usual result has been that the tribes are forced to make significant concessions to obtain water deliveries.

Dr. Helen Ingram, of the University of California, Irvine, presented a paper at the 1983 conference calling for equitable re-allocation of Colorado River water. Today she expresses concern that the momentum for change is hampered by differing strategies within the environmental movement itself. "Some groups think that the best way to protect environmental values is by privatizing water rights and using markets but this won't work for Indian tribes," she said. "It's been an enormous disappointment that environmental groups have walked away from water battles. Before we change the Compact we have to change the environmental movement."

River News 02/04/02

BuRec invitation to 100th anniversary celebrations

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO: W-1540

Dear Friend:

It is with great pride that I announce the Bureau of Reclamation's upcoming Centennial Anniversary on June 17, 2002. From that date through June 17, 2003, we will be celebrating 100 years as a Federal bureau dedicated to supplying the Western United States with vital water and hydroelectricity supplies.

Congress established the Bureau of Reclamation on June 17, 1902, to provide for the irrigation, storage, diversion, and development of water that ultimately made settlement of the West possible. Today, Reclamation has more than 180 projects located throughout the 17 Western States. Our facilities provide agricultural, municipal, and industrial water to about 33 percent of the West's population; hydroelectricity for more than 4 million households; and recreational opportunities at over 300 sites. We also have a wide variety of partnerships with other Federal, State, and local government entities; Native American Tribes; stakeholders; customers; and other interest groups to address the often-competing needs for the West's limited water supplies through water conservation, reuse, marketing, and other innovative methods. As a contemporary water resources management agency, we believe that, by collaborating and cooperating with all water users, Reclamation can successfully continue to serve in our role as a steward of the West's valuable water resources.

I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to join Reclamation employees in celebrating this occasion. With events being planned by our regional and area offices throughout the 17 Western States during our Centennial, numerous opportunities will exist for you to participate. For more information, please contact one of our offices in your local area. A contact listing is enclosed.

I look forward to your participation at one or more of our upcoming events.

Sincerely,

/signed

John W. Keys, III Commissioner

Enclosure

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION'S
CENTENNIAL EVENTS CONTACTS

Mr. Brit Storey
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LOWER COLORADO REGION

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Living Rivers Currents 03/10/02

Undamming National Parks

Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2002

A primary motive for decommissioning several dams on the Colorado River system is to restore habitat in some of the country's national parks and monuments. While concentrating on just a few of these dams, LIVING RIVERS has learned that there are a total of 742 dams affecting our parks, 482 inside Park Service boundaries and another 260 outside.

I'm not sure the public is fully aware of the number of dams in what are supposed to be protected natural areas," says LIVING RIVERS conservation director, John Weisheit. "The idea of dams is wholly inconsistent with the legislation which created our parks."

Few people see these dams, many of which are located away from the parking lots and paved roads. They are for the most part small and quite old, originally built for water supply or flood management purposes, which are no longer critical. Many pose safety risks or are otherwise in disrepair. However, their removal could significantly improve the parks' natural integrity.

With the growing nationwide awareness of opportunities for river restoration through dam decommissioning, it is somewhat surprising that with the exception of a few high profile campaigns, many of these small dams that are ripe for removal have yet to be targeted. "We probably have 150 dams in the park system that we could take out right now, but there is no money available to remove them," says Charles Karpowicz with the National Park Service Maintenance and Operations Safety of Dams Program. The program does remove about four to five dams a year for safety reasons.

Even those dams that are arguably providing benefits, such as the sixty or so generating hydroelectricity, could be decommissioned as their output is relatively negligible. Such is the case on the Elwha River in Olympia National Park. Friends of the Earth is nearing the end of an 18-year effort to remove two dams. They've succeeded in getting the Park Service to purchase the dams for \$30 million, and within three years expect to see endangered salmon again thriving in natural habitat conditions.

"This is how our parks should be," says Shawn Cantrell who has spearheaded Friends of the Earth's Elwha campaign. "We should be eliminating dams like these that do not make sense." Cantrell would like to see the Park Service establish an objective of removing 25 percent of its dams within the next four to five years.

Greg Adair of Friends of Yosemite Valley agrees. "In 1923, the public suffered a major loss with the submergence of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park, but this damage is not permanent and must be corrected," says Adair. Yosemite's O'Shaughnessy Dam is the most politically challenging facility to remove from the national park system. It is the largest, and like the dams on the Elwha, it is not owned by the Park Service. San Francisco operates it for water storage and generating \$30 million of hydropower revenue annually. "But this is public land, what John Muir described as "More beautiful than Yosemite itself," and the public and the ecosystem deserves to have it back," adds Adair. Adair points out that San Francisco can store its water in neighboring reservoirs, and the power revenues represents a federal subsidy from the Park Service to San Francisco.

"Whether restoring Hetch Hetchy or a tributary stream on the Yellowstone, dams aren't needed and certainly don't belong in our National Parks. It's time we organized to bring this about," concludes Weisheit.

Living Rivers Currents 03/10/02

River Guides for the Colorado River

Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2002

In 1996 Colorado Plateau River Guides (CPRG) became one of the first organizations to publicly call for the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam. A fairly straightforward action most would assume, but in the complex realm of the river recreation industry, the action so far is unique.

In early days of river running, the river outfitting business was a small-scale seat-of-the-pants business. When dams were proposed, opposition was fierce, albeit not always successful. Lost revenue was certainly a concern, but there was clearly a passion for maintaining wild rivers. As the industry has matured, and the number of new dam proposals ground to near zero, advocacy in the river business has shifted more toward perceiving business opportunities, than for the river itself.

For example, in the 1950s a task force of Western River Guides Association endeavored to stop construction of Glen Canyon Dam. That organization has since evolved into American Outdoors, the nation's leading trade association for outfitters. But despite nearly 100 organizations already on board with the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam, American Outdoors has yet to join on.

"The guides, too, are often caught up in the business side of the culture. Guides are generally so happy to be employed as river runners, they are often reluctant to become involved in advocating something their employers are not yet willing to support," says Annie Tueller-Payne, president of CPRG.

Nowhere is this better reflected than amongst the guides in Grand Canyon, whose ecosystem is being destroyed by Glen Canyon Dam. Now, six years after CPRG called for decommissioning, only 34 percent of the Grand Canyon guides believe there is enough information to support such a position.

Payne continues, "They've lost their beaches, the native fish are dying, and the rapids never change. Flows that once fluctuated from 4,000 to 90,000 cfs now fluctuate little beyond 8,000 to 20,000 cfs. Where is their environmental ethic? I guess more of our education needs to be directed down there."

"Such advocacy work is now unprecedented in the guiding community. No river industry group has ever provided such leadership in putting river resources first," says David Focardi, vice-president of CPRG. "We want to walk the talk. River guides have a captive audience of people who vote and guides need to capitalize on this. No other group has the ability to advance this campaign forward than do river guides. The guides need to know the issues about river ecosystems and how to protect them. They also must be

able to answer the questions about ecosystem restoration and CPRG will be there to provide them with that information.”

In May, LIVING RIVERS will be welcoming CPRG as one of our sponsored projects.

You will be able to find information about their programs at www.riverguides.org.

LIVING RIVERS will also be welcoming the formation of [River Runners for Wilderness](#), whose mission is to promote wilderness river corridors within the Colorado watershed. We're pleased to be supporting increased river advocacy within the river recreation industry and look forward to further partnerships like these that strengthen the movement to bring about the Colorado River's protection.

Living Rivers Currents 03/10/02

Reclaim the Bureau

Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2002

While activists begin organizing for the upcoming centennial celebration of the Bureau of Reclamation, on June 17, the agency itself has finally begun circulating information on its own plans. A letter circulated by Commissioner John Keys near the end of February did not elaborate on the details, but stated that events are being planned by regional and area offices throughout the 17 Western states that will span the twelve months between June 17, 2002 and June 17, 2003. According to the letter, the public is invited to participate.

For information contact: Mr. Brit Storey, Reclamation Wide Centennial Committee, (303)445-2912, . Although not noted in the letter, a coalition of water and power interests has been working to secure \$900,000 to aid in a major celebration at Hoover Dam on June 17, 2002. The event is to include “high-ranking” representatives of the Bush administration. It is unclear whether the public is invited to attend.

LIVING RIVERS is promoting a region-wide day of action for June 17, to ensure that the media and the general public are aware of the true impacts associated with the BuRec 100-year dismantling of the West's river corridors. Rallies, river memorials and candlelight vigils are some of the events being contemplated.

For additional information contact LIVING RIVERS' Moab office.

Living Rivers Currents 03/10/02

Making the Green River Wild & Free

Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2002

Nearly fifty years ago, one of the most celebrated campaigns in the history of river advocacy began. The Sierra Club, Wilderness Society and the Izaak Walton League successfully fought to protect Dinosaur National Monument on the Green River from inundation by the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams. Despite that victory two other dams were constructed above Dinosaur. This summer LIVING RIVERS will be ramping up efforts to eliminate these two dams to bring about one of the longest dam-free rivers in the continental United States.

As reported on previously in LIVING RIVERS Currents, the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) plans to release a draft environmental impact statement for its plans to alter the operations of the 502-foot-high Flaming Gorge Dam in an effort to correct the dam's impacts on endangered fish habitat in Dinosaur National Monument downstream. We've recently learned that this document will be published in late summer, and despite the demands of LIVING RIVERS and the sixty environmental organizations which supported us, BuRec will not evaluate the decommissioning of this dam as one of its alternatives to achieve the necessary mitigation.

The Bureau is violating the spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act, says Brian Dunkiel, staff attorney with Friends of the Earth. Dam decommissioning is being supported by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and a number of state agencies as a means to recover endangered species. The Bureau has a legal obligation to consider this as a reasonable and scientifically defensible alternative for endangered fish recovery on the Green River.

Unfortunately, this was not a surprise. LIVING RIVERS had anticipated the need to be prepared to mobilize the legal resources to ensure this matter be properly addressed by the courts. Removing Flaming Gorge Dam alone, however, will not be enough to reestablish native fish habitat in Dinosaur National Monument, because a much smaller dam upstream of Flaming Gorge duplicates the problem. The 139-foot-high Fontenelle Dam must also be decommissioned. Its 29-mile reservoir stores only 1.3 percent the amount of water of the reservoirs behind Glen Canyon or Hoover dams, and its 10MW power generation represents slightly more than half that of the two dams currently being slated for decommissioning in Olympia National Park. Moreover, its earthen structure has been plagued with leaks since its completion. Therefore, advocating Fontenelle's removal will generate negligible controversy relative to Flaming Gorge upstream.

The Sierra Club et.al. succeeded in protecting Dinosaur National Monument from inundation a half century ago, but failed to prevent the slow death of its riverine habitat by dams upstream, says LIVING RIVERS executive director, Owen Lammers. We hope, however, that the same nationwide enthusiasm and passion can again be mobilized on Dinosaur's behalf, leading to further success.

Lasting protection for Dinosaur National Monument is critical, but the removal of these two dams will also pave the way for re-opening discussions for a Green River National Park. This nearly 500-mile-long river corridor was proposed for protection prior to BuRec's interests in the Green River. Nearly all the land remains in the public trust; thus, establishing the nation's longest park would indeed be viable and a fitting testament to the work and vision of the environmental leaders of the past.

Living Rivers Currents 03/10/02

1% Campaign Turns One

Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2002

At just one year old, LIVING RIVERS' 1% for the Delta campaign has grown some serious teeth. The campaign is now backed by a coalition of 133 groups representing 12 million people and has been the subject of over thirty television, radio and newspaper stories including the nationally broadcast News Hour with Jim Lehrer. The simplicity of the "1%" voluntary contribution from major Colorado River water users, equaling one percent of the river's flow to begin reviving the delta region, is what has made it so attractive.

At the prestigious Water Education Foundation meeting, held outside Santa Fe, New Mexico, the 1% campaign was referenced repeatedly by speakers from across the country. All this interest has helped draw the attention of the Department of the Interior, which deemed the delta a top priority, yet is moving cautiously. It does support using U.S. technical assistance, but not the necessary contribution of U.S. water of even the tiniest proportion.

During the conference, Bennett Raley, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, met with LIVING RIVERS' Lisa Force and other environmental activists about reviving the dying delta. No agreements have been reached, but further discussions are planned when Raley and Force meet in Eugene, Oregon this month at the Land, Air and Water Conference sponsored by the University of Oregon Law School.

LR Letter 03/14/02

To Utah Governor Mike Leavitt on State of Utah's Rivers

Governor Michael Leavitt 210 State Capitol Salt Lake City, Utah 84114

Dear Governor Leavitt,

Attached please find a copy of LIVING RIVERS' 2002 State of Utah's Rivers report. As river stewards gather around the world on this, the 5th International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life, we are heartened that the Utah legislature is exercising increased caution with regard to unnecessary water projects, such as the Bear River dams. It is also encouraging to see mounting public interest in restoration efforts to repair the damage past projects have caused.

What is most promising, however, is the evolving dialogue concerning water conservation. As you noted last summer, even if Utah focused exclusively on developing all available water supplies, not enough water exists to service projected future demand. Managing the state's water consumption is the only way to buffer against shortages like those anticipated this year. Water conservation policies are also the most cost effective means to bolster supplies for both the short and long term. Utah's per capita water consumption is the second highest in the country after Nevada, indicating significant opportunities for improved water use efficiency should appropriate incentives be offered.

Sustained progress in water conservation will also allow for the preservation and restoration of key elements of Utah's natural heritage—its rivers. As a leader within the Colorado River watershed, you are undoubtedly aware of the increasing strain the basin's water consumption practices place on river habitat. Arizona has sacrificed nearly the entire Salt and Gila river system to diversions. Water seldom reaches the Colorado River delta and the Gulf of California. Riparian habitat throughout the watershed is suffering, and Utah is not immune. More diversions planned for the San Juan River and Green River tributaries signal dry streams ahead. Reduced water consumption must become a priority if these rivers are to be sustained.

LIVING RIVERS is committed to river protection through water conservation. Increased water efficiency will eliminate the perceived need for many projects, such as the St. George Pipeline or the Narrows Dam. Energy efficiency, too, can help to replace destructive hydroelectric projects, such as on the Bear River, American Fork and Boulder Creek, not to mention help to revive critical habitat in Dinosaur National Monument from the impacts of Flaming Gorge Dam.

Greater balance can be achieved in meeting ecological needs, as well as our own, from what rivers have to offer. That is the theme of the enclosed report as it highlights issues affecting river management across the state. We look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,

Owen Lammers
Executive Director

cc: Utah Congressional delegation
Utah State Legislature

[Download: State of Utah's Rivers](#) [PDF File]

LR Press Release 03/14/02

Rally for Utah's Rivers

State of Utah's Rivers Report Released at State Capital on Day of Action Against Dams

CONTACT: Owen Lammers 435-259-1063



As river advocates from around the world gathered for the [5th Annual International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water & Life](#), Utah environmental leaders from across the state joined Living Rivers in the release of a report on the [State of Utah's Rivers](#) [272k PDF File].

With the theme of adapting lifestyles to rivers, not rivers to lifestyles, the report laid out the good and the bad happening to the rivers in Utah.

"We're quite pleased that efforts are underway to kill two dams proposed for the Bear River Valley, and that water conservation is now on the tongues of elected officials," said Living Rivers executive director Owen Lammers. "But Utah's quest to continue consuming water at a per capita rate higher than 48 other states, will soon cause our rivers to run dry.

Among the report's highlight:

Bill passed and ready for Governor Leavitt's signature to cancel plans for two dams in the Bear River Valley.

Media coverage of the need for water conservation, and Governor Leavitt's support for the role water conservation must play in Utah's present and future water management strategies.

Momentum to move a radioactive waste pile from the banks of the Colorado River in Moab to a less environmentally vulnerable location.

River restoration projects on the Provo and Jordan rivers, and Moab's Mill Creek. Habitat degradation on the Green River through Dinosaur National Monument as a result of Flaming Gorge Dam.

A proposed pipeline from Lake Powell reservoir to St. George.

The dewatering of the San Juan River.

Sediment build-up impeding river access at the top of Lake Powell reservoir.

The decline of East Canyon Creek's premiere trout fishery around Park City.

The destruction of southern Utah's only natural hot spring.

Small hydroelectric dam re-licensing impeding river restoration.

Protecting rivers on national forest lands, and ensuring the management of rivers as wilderness in designated and proposed wilderness areas.

Two awards were presented. The 2002 "Utah River Stewardship" was presented to reporters Jenny Brundin and Vince Pearson of KUER public radio for their three-part documentary ["Soaking The Desert, the Story of Water in Utah."](#)

The 2002 "Rivers be Dammed Award" went to Ron Thompson, director of the Washington County Water Conservancy District, for promoting the yet funded 200-mile pipeline from Lake Powell reservoir to St. George Utah to maintain per capita water consumption in Southwest Utah as the highest in the U.S., 335 gallons per person per day.

The report was sent to [Governor Leavitt](#) with copies to the Utah Congressional delegation and state house and senate members.

In addition to Living Rivers, other organizations participating include: Colorado Plateau River Guides, Escalante Wilderness Project, Great Salt Lake Audubon, Rim-to-Rim Restoration, Sierra Club Glen Canyon Group, Trout Unlimited, Utah Environmental Congress, Utah Green Party, and Utah Waters.

LR in the News 03/15/02

SL Tribune: San Juan River Choking On Sediment, Groups Say

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Water diversions have left the San Juan River choking on its own sediment, say conservation groups that issued a report Thursday on the state of Utah's rivers.

Thirty water diversions along the San Juan River have slowed its flow, but it still carries a heavy load of sediment. The silt sometimes blocks the river where it empties into an upper arm of Lake Powell reservoir, said John Weisheit, conservation director for Living Rivers.

Conservationists say the San Juan River will only get worse as more water is taken from it for irrigation and for Albuquerque, N.M.

Native fish are dying off, hatchery fish aren't taking hold and rural towns like Bluff, Utah, that depend on revenue from whitewater rafting could see their economy decline, they said.

The river groups also listed as threatened East Canyon Creek, which springs from the Wasatch Mountains around Park City. Government officials have known for 20 years that development in the Snyderville basin would degrade the trout stream.

Officials were right -- but they didn't do anything to stop shrinking flows and phosphorous pollution. Conservationists say state and federal governments have failed to enforce laws that would have protected East Canyon Creek. The river groups are considering filing suit to force governments to take action.

The inaugural annual report on the state of Utah rivers also came with a "River Steward" award for Jenny Brundin and Vince Pearson, reporters for KUER radio who produced a three-part documentary, "Soaking the Desert: The Story of Water in Utah."

Living Rivers also bestowed a "Rivers Be Dammed" award on Ron Thompson, director of Washington County Water Conservancy District, who was not on hand to receive his plaque. Thompson was razed for promoting a pipeline that would take water from Lake Powell to St. George, Utah.

LR in the News 03/15/02

Ogden Standard Examiner: Leavitt pressured to sign dam bill Group commends Legislature for river resolution

By CHARLES F. TRENTELMAN Standard-Examiner staff

SALT LAKE CITY -- Hoping to encourage the governor to support what the Legislature approved, Living Rivers is praising lawmakers for their decision to block two proposed dam sites on the Bear River.

Thursday in the Capitol Rotunda, the Moab-based river advocacy group urged Gov. Mike Leavitt to sign Senate Bill 92, which was passed by the Legislature in its last session.

The bill removes Honeyville, in Box Elder County, and the Barrens, in Cache County, from a list of potential river dam projects on the Bear River. As of Thursday Leavitt had not signed it.

The state already decided not to pursue building dams in those areas because of public opposition. Opponents said the dams would flood valuable agricultural and wildlife areas as well as Native American and pioneer historical sites.

Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers, said the Bear River proposal is one of several things the group felt Utah was doing right. "Hopefully this is the piece of legislation that will bring about the end of the Bear River dams," which have been a subject of debate for years.

Improved water conservation would also negate the need for more water.

"Utah does not need to bring in more water. There's plenty of water here, it's just a matter of how you use what they have," he said.

Lammers was joined by Green Party Candidate Craig Axford, who hopes to capture Rep. Jim Hansen's seat in Congress.

Axford said stopping the Bear River dams are only a start if Utah hopes to live within its existing supply of water.

"Utah has to realize that, as Edward Abbey said, growth for its own sake is the philosophy of the cancer cell," he said.

He said Utah needs to begin serious water conservation measures now, including metering and charging for all water used.

*** Ogden Standard Examiner 3/15/02

LR in the News 03/15/02

**Deseret News: Rally backs rivers in West
But we can do better, group at Capitol says**



By Donna Kemp Spangler Deseret News staff writer

It may be a first for Utah environmentalists — showering kudos on lawmakers for pulling the plug on two proposed dams on the Bear River. Environmentalists gather at the Utah Capitol in a rally calling for improved care of Western rivers. Peter Chudleigh, Deseret News But it wasn't all that warm and fuzzy at a rally environmental leaders held Thursday at the Capitol.

"We have to stop adapting rivers to our lifestyle," said Owen Lammers, executive director of the Moab environmental group Living Rivers. "We hope decision-makers will heed that message."

The rally was held to mark the fifth International Day of Action Against Dams. It drew about 30 people from different environmental groups around the state who highlighted the good and bad things that are being done to manage Utah's rivers and watersheds.

Lawmakers were praised for passing a bill that would prevent the construction of two dams in the Bear River Valley. And Gov. Mike Leavitt was lauded for calling on Utahns to conserve water during last summer's drought.

But more needs to be done, environmentalists said. "Utah is the No. 2 most wasteful consumer of water, second to Nevada," Lammers said. "We can do better."

Craig Axford of Utah Environmental Congress and Green Party candidate for the 1st Congressional District seat proposed doing away with the current water pricing system that relies heavily on taxes. "Utah has to begin billing according to consumption," he said.

Alfalfa farmers were blamed for much of the water use. "The amount of water used to grow alfalfa is stupid," added Denise Boggs, executive director of Utah Environmental Congress. "There's no reason to grow that crop in the arid West."

She also criticized federal land managers for not doing enough to protect watersheds. "All of the headwaters to municipal drinking water are found in the six national forests in Utah. Yet they are all threatened by logging and oil and gas drilling."

On the bad side of things, environmentalists pointed to:

- A long-standing but unfunded plan to construct a water pipeline from Lake Powell reservoir to provide water to a growing St. George area. Environmentalists lambasted Ron Thompson, director of the Washington County Water Conservancy District, for promoting the \$250 million project by presenting him with the "Rivers Be Dammed Award." Thompson, who wasn't at the rally, did not return press calls.
 - Too much sediment in the San Juan River causing a problem for river runners who get stuck in the mud, according to John Weisheit of Living Rivers. Some 30 diversions of water upstream have lowered the San Juan River, a threat to the reproduction of endangered fish.
 - Water releases from Flaming Gorge Dam causing problems for native plants and animals that live in Dinosaur National Monument on the Green River. Later this year, the Bureau of Reclamation will be proposing changes in the dam's operations. But de-commissioning Flaming Gorge Dam was not an option studied, environmentalists argued.
 - Too much pollution in East Canyon Creek in the Snyderville Basin around Park City. Darrell Mensel, coordinator of the relatively new group Utah Waters, blames it on overdevelopment. "I find no other place that's been more disgraceful of a river than East Canyon Creek," he said. He encouraged the governor and lawmakers to make sure environmental laws are followed to protect the creek, once known for its prime trout fishing.
-

Take Action 04/05/02

Arizona Game & Fish Commission Approves Cougar Slaughter

Arizona's cougars are under attack by a state Game and Fish Commission and Department which are more interested in helping hunters and wealthy ranchers to kill predators than they are in protecting wildlife. Even in deficit budget years, such as 2002 and 2003, when the legislature must cut spending by \$200 million and \$1 billion respectively, the subsidy for killing wildlife remains firmly in place.

36 COUGARS TO BE KILLED

The AGFD is now planning to kill seventy-five percent of the cougars - up to thirty-six individuals - in the Four Peaks Wilderness Area on the Tonto National Forest over the next three years. To trap the animals, AGFD will use snaring, a brutal technique that will result in the death of dependent kittens through starvation, exposure or predation while the trapped mother looks on.

The AGFD claims the experiment is necessary to determine the role of cougars on a declining bighorn sheep population. The AGFD's own data, however, show that the population is actually increasing and that the primary causes of bighorn deaths are disease introduced by domestic sheep and drought.

More than eighty percent of the individuals and groups commenting on the Draft Environmental Assessment opposed the project. The former chief of the AGFD's research division along with other qualified scientists condemned the experiment as "ill-concieved, unnecessary, wasteful and bad science."

PROJECT PROPOSED BY TROPHY HUNTERS

Hunters speak louder than scientists to the Commission, however. The project was first proposed by the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society which hunts bighorns for trophies. The group contributed \$150,000 to pay for the project, obviously designed to increase the number of bighorn sheep available to be killed by trophy hunters. The snaring and killing may begin at any time, as approval to implement the plan was given in January, though the public wasn't notified until March. The Game and Fish Commissioners originally approved the plan in 1999.

TAKE ACTION

There's still time to stop this outrageous attack. Please call, or send a letter or fax expressing your opposition to:

Michael Golightly, Chairman AGFC c/o Director Wayne Shrouffe 2221 W. Greenway Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85023-4399; 602-942-3000 Phone 602-789-3299 Fax

If you would like to volunteer for this or other campaigns in defense of Arizona predators, or if you have information which may help in the campaign to end rancher subsidies for predator control, please contact Living Rivers at 480-990-7839.

River News 04/11/02

APS Announces Intent to Surrender Childs-Irving Power License

In a letter dated March 29, 2002, Arizona Public Service (APS) announced its intention to submit to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) a Surrender Application for the Childs-Irving Hydropower Plants at Fossil Creek. The Surrender Application will supercede the current application that APS has before FERC, which is a request to continue operating the plants, thus devastating the ecosystem, for another 30 years

The written intension to surrender is a milestone in a process which began more than five years ago when a coalition of environmental groups began putting pressure on APS to abandon its effort to relicense the plants. The plants produce a miniscule amount of power in comparison to the major damage they wreak on Fossil Creek, a perennial stream in the central Arizona desert.

After years of negotiations, public pressure and grassroots action, APS signed an agreement to decommission the plants in September 2000. However, with FERC unsure about how to proceed in the unprecedented situation and with California's energy "crisis" heating up, some parties to the agreement began to waiver. It was suggested that decommissioning Childs-Irving may not be in the public interest, and APS's request to continue operating Childs-Irving remained on FERC's desk.

Following a declaratory order in which FERC resolved many of APS's concerns, FERC asked APS to submit a plan for surrendering the license. APS responded that it was unwilling to do so at the time. (See previous Fossil Creek update.) FERC responded with a request for a conference call with APS and other interested parties.

Living Rivers and the Yavapai-Apache Nation, formal Intervenors in the process, as well as a number of other environmental groups joined the call to assure APS that we are all still involved and highly motivated to see the decommissioning through. APS responded with a letter which included the following vital statement:

"As discussed during the March 6, 2002 teleconference between Arizona Public Service (APS), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and interested parties, APS hereby informs FERC that it plans to submit the surrender application on or before April 30, 2002. The Surrender Application will support the Offer of Settlement and Settlement Agreement submitted by APS to FERC on September 15, 2000. The Surrender

Application will also contain a schedule for the submission of additional required information."

Potential roadblocks remain. FERC could deny the surrender request; FERC could require substantial changes to the Agreement, giving the parties the option of backing out; the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Department could require substantial investments in environmental studies putting an unreasonable burden on APS. But with each baby step forward, Fossil Creek is that much closer to freedom after being entrapped in metal flumes, concrete tunnels, holding ponds, reservoirs and man's icy grip for over 100 years.

LR Letter 04/14/02

Comments on proposed Antelope Point Marina Resort at Lake Powell reservoir

April 14, 2002
Ms. Kitty Roberts
Superintendent
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
National Park Service
PO Box 1507
Page, AZ 86040

Via Fax: 928-608-6212

RE: Antelope Point Marina Resort Development Project Environmental Assessment

Dear Ms. Roberts:

Living Rivers, on behalf of American Canoe Association, Bluewater Network, Center for Biological Diversity, Colorado Plateau River Guides, Diné Bidziil Coalition (representing 17 grassroots Navajo groups), Diné Medicinemens Association, Flagstaff Activist Network, Forest Conservation Council, Forest Guardians, Friends of Arizona's Rivers, Glen Canyon Institute, Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, Great Salt Lake Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Utah Environmental Congress, Utah Rivers Council, and Utah Whitewater Club, submit the following comments on the *Antelope Point Marina Resort Development Project Environmental Assessment* dated March 20, 2002.

At the outset, we must stress our dissatisfaction with the public notification and comment periods established for review of this Environmental Assessment (EA), and project evaluation process as a whole. The publication was made available for distribution one week in advance of the public workshop and not received until four days prior to that scheduled public workshop. Similarly, short notification was granted for the scoping workshop. Less than 20 workdays has been available for public comment on this document. This is wholly inconsistent with the spirit of public participation as defined

by the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines.

Summary

Significant procedural issues exist with respect to compliance with sound planning objectives and the requirements of NEPA that have not been adequately addressed in the EA.

Overall, we find the National Park Service (NPS) negligent in promoting the Antelope Point project at this time, as it should first update the Park's outdated General Management Plan (GMP), addressing current and future recreational and resource protection needs at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA). This document is out of date and out of step with declining trends in flat water recreation, concerns with regard to water quality, and the increasing role sediment accumulation is playing in reducing the reservoir's operating life span. The agency should also complete, prior to moving forward on Antelope Point, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) currently in preparation on personal watercraft (PWC) management at Glen Canyon. Approval of this project by the Park Service would mark a setback for the Park's efforts to protect water quality in the reservoir, ultimately a drinking water source for more than twenty million people downstream.

Living Rivers and seven other non-governmental organizations requested, in a letter (attached) to then Acting Superintendent Kathryn Cook, and dated November 30, 2000, that an EIS be prepared for this project. Citing several examples of environmentally damaging actions, which would result from NPS approval of the marina and resort, we pointed out that an EIS would be required under the NEPA statute and its implementing regulations by the CEQ. We find the EA, as presently prepared, inadequate, addressing few of the issues raised in our previous letter on this matter. We again request that a full EIS be undertaken prior to any further contemplation of this project. Contrary to the EA's findings, the proposed alternative would cause significant environmental impacts and potential impacts, and these must be properly analyzed and evaluated in an EIS.

What follows are the procedural and substantive issues we have with the EA, as well as the Park Service's approach to evaluating the project:

- Coordination with other park planning efforts
- Protection of park resources
- Purpose and need for the project
- Alternatives analysis
- Economic development and social impacts on Navajo people
- Ethnographic resources & sacred sites impacts.
- Cumulative impacts and reasonably foreseeable consequences

- Site constraints and visitor safety issues
- Water quality impacts
- Air quality impacts
- Recreation and noise impacts
- Antelope Island management concerns
- Endangered native Colorado River fish species
- Environmental Impact Statement required
- Public participation concerns

- 1) **Coordination with other park planning efforts** The GMP for GCNRA is more than two decades old (the undated GMP was published in 1979), and does not reflect numerous unanticipated, undocumented visitor use and recreational trends or problems in resource management that have developed since the document's publication. The GMP is the primary document to which both the current Antelope Point planning effort and the 1986 Antelope Point Development Concept Plan/ Environmental Assessment (DCP/EA) were tiered. Park officials have stated in private communications that a new GMP is unlikely in the near future due to lack of funds.
- 2) The GMP lacks substantive, relevant data and analysis of the purpose, and need for a marina at Antelope Point. Because the GMP lacks important, basic information that would inform current planning efforts for Antelope Point, the NPS must address these missing elements in detail within the Antelope Point NEPA process. The situation with personal watercraft is an excellent example.

The proliferation of such machinery was never contemplated in the 1979 plan and now a full EIS is being undertaken to determine how, and if, PWCs should continue to operate on the reservoir. Waiting until this EIS is complete, before moving forward on Antelope Point, would provide an opportunity to incorporate the findings of the PWC study in to the Antelope Point alternatives analysis. One alternative NPS is reportedly considering, in the PWC EIS, is to restrict jet skis from designated areas of the reservoir-to provide "jet ski-free" quiet zones. The narrow, old river channel at Antelope Point, on the south side of Antelope Island, would be an ideal area for such restricted uses. In its alternatives analysis, NPS should consider the value of the Antelope Point area to non-motorized recreation use.

2) Protection of park resources

The laws, regulations and policies that govern management of national parklands, including GCNRA, require the NPS to make protection of park resources a top priority. The Organic Act of 1916 and the Redwood Park Amendments Act of 1978, in particular, require NPS to manage park resources to a "non-impairment" or "non-derogation"

standard. Contrary to the EA's conclusions, a major development project, such as the Antelope Point marina, risks degrading water quality and air quality, significantly increasing noise and visitor crowding, and decreasing opportunities for solitude and low-impact, non-motorized recreation. The need to provide such areas was not fully contemplated when the GMP was developed, but is a critical factor that must now be addressed prior to potentially exacerbating these problems by approving the Antelope Point Marina Resort Development project.

NPS has no legal justification or authority to favor motorized recreation over non-motorized. Given the growing impairment of park resources caused by motorboats, the burden is on NPS to explain how each recreational alternative considered in the broader sense, Antelope Point, Hite Marina expansion and etc., complies with the non-impairment standard. This should be a key component of the revised GMP and which must be addressed prior to any decision on Antelope Point.

Furthermore, as noted in our scoping comments dated January 14, 2002 (attached) related to Hite Marina DCP/EA, GCNRA planners are demonstrating a bias toward further development of park resources for motorized flat water recreation, while ignoring its obligation to maintain access for other users, such as river rafters.

3) Purpose and need for the project

As stated above, the purpose and need for new development in national parks should be justified by, and tiered to, the Park's GMP. However, the Park's outdated GMP lacks important information. The Antelope Point EA is addressing a perceived need that is nearly 25 years old. Demand for any new marina development at GCNRA, in close proximity to the existing Wahweap Marina in particular, must be well documented. NPS must show: why existing facilities at Wahweap cannot meet that demand; why a new facility is needed so close to Wahweap Marina when so many public services and facilities would have to be duplicated and; why constructing a new facility would be preferable to expanding existing facilities, especially at a time when visitation is on the decline. As regards to addressing Navajo Nation economic development needs, there are a variety of other, more environmentally and economically sustainable means for GCNRA to accommodate this, as outlined in our letter of November 30, 2000 and noted below.

4) Alternatives analysis

Because of the outdated GMP, the Antelope Point EA failed to analyze possible alternative uses for the site (other than the marina). Given water quality concerns, demand for quiet areas, potential changes in watercraft usage and any demonstrated need for the proliferation of more marina facilities at this time, it is imprudent to restrict such a unique area as Antelope Point to the findings of an outdated GMP. An updated GMP may reveal that management alternatives for serving marina demand through (expanded) existing facilities is not only feasible, but desirable, and that alternative uses for the Antelope Point site other than a resort marina development would be a better fit for present and future trends.

The Diné Medicinemens Association, Inc. (DMAI) has proposed that NPS study the possibility of establishing a traditional healing center for Navajo people and others, rather than a marina, on the Antelope Point project site. NPS must consider this proposal in detail. The DMAI represents the interests of traditional religious healers and cultural practitioners, whose interests must also be protected and respected under Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites (May 24, 1996). The DMAI, and other Navajo groups, could contribute significantly to a new GMP, whereas such voices were absent 23 years ago. This would seem particularly important in the case of Antelope Point. The alternatives some Navajo interests have proposed were never contemplated by the 1979 GMP, and not inconsistent with NRA goals. Such uses might include traditional healing centers, retreat/conference center and educational facilities for both local Navajo, and tourists alike.

In addressing NPS' interest in aiding the Navajo Nation, the Park Service should not restrict its evaluation to Antelope Point. NPS should consider the possibility of the tribal government taking over management and operation of existing GCNRA marinas including Wahweap. This would meet the economic development criteria without additional environmental impacts.

5) Economic development and social impacts on Navajo people

The proposed marina is being promoted in part as a means of providing economic development opportunities for members of the Navajo Nation, and of the nearby LeChee Chapter in particular. While no one would dispute the need for additional opportunities for tribal members, the EA has not demonstrated how the Navajo Nation's desires for a revenue stream from a project that would negatively impact the Park's shoreline and waters, against NPS' legal duty to protect park resources from impairment. Navajo Nation economic development goals may not always be consistent with park management objectives. If NPS determines that the purpose and need for the project include providing economic development opportunities for the Navajo people, then NPS must demonstrate that legal authority exists for the agency to undertake development projects or other management activities on that basis. NPS must also explain how such projects are consistent with the agency's legal mandates to ensure non-impairment of park resources.

6) Ethnographic resources & sacred sites impacts

The EA asserts that only two ceremonial sites have been identified, and that both do not qualify for National Register of Historical Places, as they were not used prior the inundation of Glen Canyon. Further, the EA states "Despite this determination, an attempt was made to accommodate the needs of the Diné Medicineman's [sic] Association, Inc. and further consultation identified an acceptable alternative to the original ceremonial location."

The Diné Medicinemens Association, Inc. has identified numerous ceremonial and sacred sites in and around the project area. The Association's president, Mr. Thomas Morris, is unaware of any contact with Antelope Point planning officials regarding the

applicability of these or any other sites to the National Register of Historic Places, nor discussions regarding "suitable" alternatives.

NPS must consult with all appropriate traditional practitioners, including the DMAI to address these issues. NPS must explain how it intends to comply with Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites (May 24, 1996), that requires agencies including NPS to "... accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and ... avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites." By dramatically increasing visitation to the area, it will become very difficult for NPS to accomplish the objectives of the Executive Order. NPS must avoid damaging any such sites and provide a range of alternatives for ensuring the sites' protection under a range of alternative development scenarios for the project. NPS should publish a full accounting of the consultation efforts and mitigation plans for the archeological, cultural and sacred sites.

Furthermore, it is the position of the DMAI that the Antelope Point Marina Resort Development not be built, but that a traditional healing center be established at that location should NPS be interested in assisting with sustainable economic development on the Navajo reservation.

7) Cumulative impacts and reasonably foreseeable consequences

NEPA requires analysis of reasonably foreseeable consequences of projects and the cumulative effects of specific impacts over time. Development of a new marina would likely lead to additional construction of tourist-oriented business and industry in the vicinity of Antelope Point. For example, the act of providing utility services to Antelope Point—an area that is currently not served by utilities—will create opportunities for additional development and land use changes outside the project boundary, changes that would be very unlikely to occur without the project. The Navajo Nation and LeChee Chapter are reportedly studying the feasibility of building a casino and shopping center along the Antelope Point access road. Such construction, if undertaken, would likely be feasible only if the marina were built.

The EA has not addressed these cumulative impacts, despite noting that the proposed project will increase the area's employment by upwards of eight percent. The EA has not identified the land-use control and regulatory mechanisms that may exist, if any, to limit sprawling strip development in the vicinity of Antelope Point. By approving this project, NPS would be effectively facilitating the development of many additional acres of land on the approach to Antelope Point. NPS must investigate and evaluate these reasonably foreseeable consequences of the Antelope Point project. Issues such as water supplies, power supplies and sewage disposal (that NPS must study for the marina proper) must also be considered in light of likely adjacent development. Basic services such as police and fire protection must have facilities appropriate to the anticipated need over time. NPS must address these infrastructure questions in a quantitative way.

8) Site constraints and visitor safety issues

The EA gave no consideration to the unique geography associated with Antelope Point, as it may affect public safety. Antelope Point is located on the south shoreline of a narrow bend in the old river channel, with the undeveloped Antelope Island on the opposite shore. There is limited space for large watercraft such as tour boats to maneuver in the narrow channel, especially in the presence of other boats. Site constraints make the area prone to potential user conflicts. Because Antelope Point is on a sweeping bend in the channel, line of sight and visibility are reduced. During heavy use periods, any combination of large tour boats, powerboats, houseboats, high-performance "cigarette" boats and jet skis could be in the immediate vicinity, negotiating the narrow, bending channel, on the way to or from the marina. Swimmers, wake-boarders and water-skiers may be in the water. Anglers may stand on the shoreline or fish from boats. Antelope Island's shoreline provides camping and picnicking opportunities, and boats are often tied along the shore. With the establishment of a marina, it is likely that such use will only increase. The potential for serious visitor safety conflicts and boating accidents at Antelope Point appears to be great. The ready availability of alcoholic beverages for sale from the nearby marina would only exacerbate the risk of serious accidents. Vessel fires, a fairly common occurrence at GCNRA, can significantly increase risk of injury to bystanders and boaters, especially in a constricted channel environment with heavy traffic.

NPS must assess the expected near-term and long-term (cumulative) impacts on visitor safety and public health, resulting from funneling a large number of disparately-sized motor vessels into a narrow channel that is frequently used by families and children for water contact sports.

9) Water quality impacts

The reservoir at GCNRA is an artificial feature that is part of the Colorado River, which is in turn a primary source of drinking water for millions of people downstream in Arizona, California, Nevada and Mexico. In addition to its obligation to protect park resources, including water bodies from non-impairment, NPS has an obligation to ensure the protection of water quality at GCNRA for downstream users. This issue was not given sufficient consideration in the EA.

NPS must consider the cumulative downstream impacts resulting from polluted runoff from streets, parking lots and lawn areas entering the reservoir and which may percolate directly into groundwater. Contamination of groundwater supplies at Antelope Point could be potentially disastrous, since NPS is considering onsite wells as the sole source of the marina's water supply system. Combined, the potential for local and downstream impacts associated with water quality warrant a much more comprehensive examination than offered in the EA.

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has estimated that roughly 25 percent, on average, of the fuel mixture that drives two-cycle motors is emitted through the vehicle's exhaust system, unburned. Two-cycle motors are commonly used at GCNRA in powerboats as well as in PWCs. NPS should be concerned about petroleum pollution

from all powerboats, but especially that from PWCs, where the oily exhaust is essentially injected (mixed) directly into a stream of water (the "jet"), and thence into the reservoir. While open-water areas may offer some advantage in terms of diluting petroleum pollution, the narrow channel at Antelope Point and the anticipated high traffic volume may lead to significant accumulations of petroleum on or in the water, which may be less likely to disperse than more open areas. If such impacts are sufficient to warrant an EIS on PWCs, then certainly a similar level of analysis should be conducted for a major marina development as proposed for Antelope Point.

10) Air quality impacts

The Antelope Point project area is in close proximity to Navajo Generating Station (NGS), one of the largest sources of carbon dioxide and oxides of nitrogen in the Southwest. Data published by the Public Interest Research Group in 2000 indicate that more than 700 pounds of mercury were emitted from NGS in one year. The EA did not sufficiently address the long-term human health impacts of prolonged exposure to NGS power plant emissions on visitors and marina employees; especially those who work a significant portion of their time outdoors, where they would be considered to be at higher risk from long-term exposure.

11) Recreation and noise impacts

The EA discounts the noise impacts as they relate to the objective of a marina resort operation, but as noted earlier, a revised GMP reflecting contemporary issues would generate a greater range of alternatives to be investigated in and around Antelope Point. In particular, GCNRA currently provides no designated "quiet zones" on or near the water for non-motorized recreation activities (e.g., "sea" kayaking, canoeing, swimming or camping). There are virtually no places on the reservoir with more than 1900 miles of shoreline where families and others may enjoy water sports and other recreation activities free from the sights, sounds, and intrusions of houseboats, powerboats, high-performance "cigarette" boats and jet skis. Despite the growing popularity of non-motorized recreation, a legislative mandate to provide for a broad spectrum of recreation opportunities and the generally benign environmental impact of non-motorized recreation activities, NPS has mostly ignored the interests and needs of those who prefer human-powered water sports at GCNRA.

In the case of Antelope Point, the narrow, bending river channel offers ideal conditions for such low-impact, non-motorized recreation. There are few places on the reservoir's shoreline with easy auto access that could easily accommodate these recreational activities with few conflicts with motorboat users. Antelope Point's new launch ramp and close proximity to the town of Page make it perhaps the best choice for a facility that would cater to non-motorized users. Antelope Island, on the opposite side of the channel from the launch ramp at Antelope Point, provides readily accessible camping and shoreline hiking opportunities, while the island's hilly landform offers effective screening from the noise of motorized watercraft traffic traveling uplake around the north side of the island. But just as a "quiet zone" in the Antelope Point channel reach would be protected by the topographic screening afforded by the island, the channel

would likely be subjected to near-constant noise levels if Antelope Point marina were built. The island's topography would tend to reflect noise back to the water and the south shore, virtually guaranteeing that the passing motorboats and tour boats would make camping and non-motorized water sports unpleasant at the very least.

Through a revision of the GMP, NPS should identify and characterize the range of alternatives available within the NRA to provide accessible and adequate quiet zones, such as may be available around Antelope Point. Additionally, noise is a major issue being addressed by the PWC EIS. Noise should receive no less consideration for a major marina development, yet here again NPS has relegated the issue and the entire analysis to EA status.

12) Antelope Island management concerns

In the GMP for GCNRA, Antelope Island is zoned for "wilderness," i.e., non-motorized use. NPS has not analyzed expected impacts that the Antelope Point marina would have on naturalness, wildlife, and primitive camping at Antelope Island. NPS must explain the management rationale that justifies placing a marina in such close proximity to an area that is to be managed in an undeveloped state. NPS must also describe how it intends to ensure that Antelope Island will remain a low-impact, protected environment in light of the heavy boat traffic that will bring additional noise, air and water quality degradation, and people to the area, especially during heavy use periods.

13) Endangered native Colorado River fish species

NPS has an obligation to support recovery of endangered species that are native to the parklands under NPS jurisdiction. In the context of an updated GMP, NPS could consider utilizing the Antelope Point channel zone as a protected rearing area for some or all of the four listed, Colorado River native endangered fish (bonytail chub, Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub and razorback sucker). Few endangered fish are known to currently inhabit Lake Powell reservoir. The only referenced in the EA was the razorback sucker. These native fish have had their habitat dramatically altered and invaded by striped bass, carp, and other introduced game fish species. While GCNRA has done little to reintroduce listed endangered fish into the reservoir, there are indications that under protected conditions, a limited number of individuals could survive. The razorback sucker in particular survives in low numbers in several lower basin reservoirs, mainly in response to ongoing U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) hatchery rearing efforts. A major challenge in ensuring these fish reach reproducing age is predation by and competition with introduced non-native fish including trout, catfish, bass and carp. In at least one Colorado River reservoir, a screen or curtain has been put in place to separate the endangered native fish from the game fish, and initial reports indicate that the system is working.

NPS should investigate, in collaboration with USFWS, the possibility of creating a similar type of curtain that could be employed at GCNRA (perhaps in a number of locations) to create protected rearing zones for endangered native fish. NPS should give serious consideration to experimenting with the Antelope Point channel area for this purpose. The narrow, deep channel could afford a unique opportunity for providing

at relatively low cost a controlled, easily monitored, predator-free environment. A curtain or screen dropped across the channel on both ends of Antelope Island would provide a very deep area in the old, river channel, as well as extensive, shallower habitat in the Antelope Creek bay.

Pursuing a more detailed study of the potential benefits of such an experiment would require consultation with fish biologists and with the two USFWS-sponsored endangered fish recovery implementation programs in the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River watersheds. NPS should give this consideration in conjunction with future management plans and not unnecessarily compromise potentially suitable habitat like Antelope Point prior to completion of such an evaluation.

14) Environmental Impact Statement required

Given the extensive and controversial nature of the project impacts expressed herein, NPS is required by CEQ guidelines to abandon the EA process and conduct an EIS on the Antelope Point Marina Resort Development Project. There is clear, current precedent for doing so. As noted above, GCNRA is currently preparing an EIS for PWC management. It is difficult to imagine a rationale that would justify an EIS for jet skis while preparing only an EA for a large marina complex. A decision by NPS to move forward with an EA and a Finding of No Significant Impact, without preparing an EIS for this complex project would appear to be an arbitrary and capricious act by the agency.

15) Public participation concerns

Public involvement in planning by federal agencies is a key element of the NEPA process. NPS should endeavor to improve its outreach and public involvement efforts related to the Antelope Point project. In particular, NPS should conduct public hearings on the project in diverse communities throughout the region. NPS must avoid the appearance that it is interested in receiving input from only a narrow demographic audience. The NEPA process requires federal agencies to promote public involvement in project planning. We were therefore profoundly disappointed to learn that, despite our requests for multiple scoping meetings, NPS chose to hold only one such public meeting for Antelope Point and now only one public workshop on the EA, both in Page, AZ. In both instances there was less than two weeks advance notice, which does not typify the sort of public participation effort envisioned by NEPA.

In contrast to what appears to be NPS' intent to restrict the audience for its Antelope Point project, NPS recently held scoping meetings for the PWC EIS in the Salt Lake City and Phoenix metropolitan areas, as well as in Page. There is a growing perception and concern that NPS may be using scoping meetings in an arbitrary and capricious manner. At the very least, there is an apparent lack of consistency in the agency's selection of communities for public involvement activities. NPS should hold future public meetings on Antelope Point in the following locations at least, to ensure a well-informed public: Page AZ, Salt Lake City UT, Phoenix AZ and Flagstaff AZ. Consideration should be given to also conducting meetings in Gallup NM, Moab UT, Durango CO and Las Vegas NV, to ensure broad geographic coverage.

Finally, the quantity and quality of materials and information about the project provided by NPS to attendees to the scoping meeting, through the EA process and the EA itself has been disappointing. There has been precious little useful information in the materials to explain the controversial nature of the environmental, social and economic impacts of this project. Part of the public involvement process is informing the public well in advance of the issues that have been raised, to encourage additional public response and understanding. NPS should dramatically improve the information provided the public in future communications, on the Internet, via the US Mail, and especially in public meetings.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns, and we look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Owen Lammers
Executive Director

On behalf of:

American Canoe Association
Bluewater Network
Center for Biological Diversity
Colorado Plateau River Guides
Diné Bidziil Coalition (representing 17 grassroots Navajo groups)
Diné Medicinemens Association
Flagstaff Activist Network
Forest Conservation Council
Forest Guardians
Friends of Arizona's Rivers
Glen Canyon Institute
Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association
Great Salt Lake Audubon Society
Sierra Club
Utah Environmental Congress
Utah Rivers Council
Utah Whitewater Club

cc: Edward S. Richards, Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development

Media Advisory 04/14/02

Arizona and Utah environmental groups support Navajo activists in blasting National Park Service for promoting Lake Powell marina complex on Navajo land.

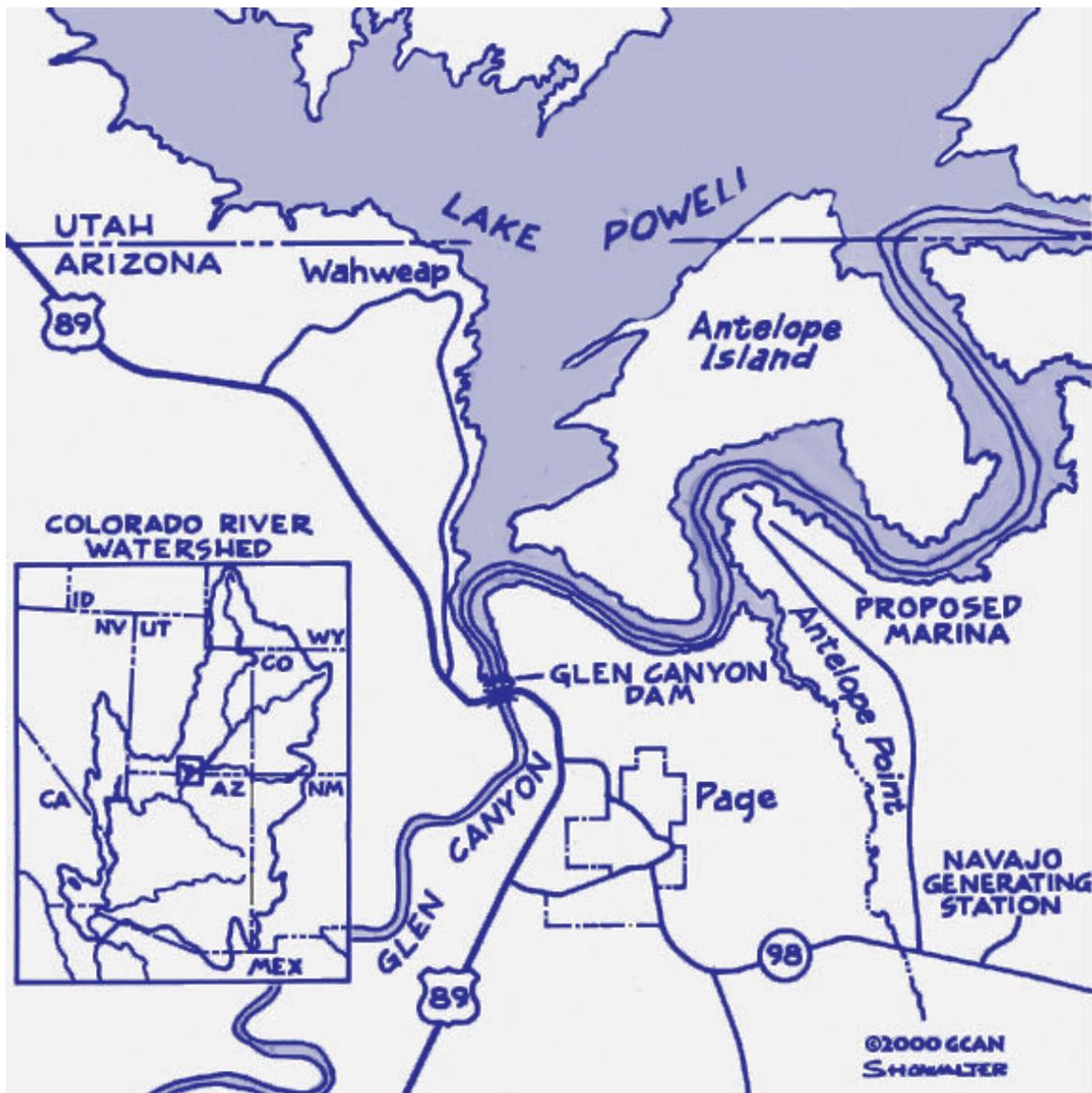
Contact:

Owen Lammers, Living Rivers (435) 259-1063/206-2590

Hazel James, Diné Bidziil Coalition (928) 779-9322
Mr. Thomas Morris, Diné Medicinemens Association (928) 871-5133
Dave Sherman, Sierra Club Plateau Group (928) 773-1064

In an [eleven-page letter](#) sent today to superintendent Kitty Roberts of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA), Living Rivers and 17 other environmental and social justice organizations demanded suspension of the planning process for the proposed Antelope Point Marina project on Lake Powell reservoir.

Citing numerous violations of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), utilization of outdated planning guidelines, a bias toward servicing motorized flat water recreation, and failure to consult with Navajo interests, the groups called for a revision to the Recreation Area's General Management Plan prior to any further work on the Antelope Point Marina proposal.



At issue is GCNRA's proposal to construct a 410-slip marina, 225-room hotel complex, 150-site campground, restaurants, fuel dock, convenience store and related infrastructure over a 950-acre site, 710 owned by the Navajo Nation and 240 administered by the National Park Service. Of major concern is that the project evolved from a 23 year-old planning document which has little relevance to the reservoir's current operation. An Environmental Assessment for the project was released three weeks ago, and today is the final day for the public to submit comments on the document.

The Diné Bidziil Coalition, representing 17 grassroots Navajo groups, and the Diné Medicinemens Association have been in opposition to the project, as it would impact ceremonial and sacred sites, and promote inappropriate development on the Navajo Reservation.

"Their document claims that they consulted with us about the impact on sacred sites, but no consultation ever occurred," said Thomas Morris Jr., president of the Diné Medicinemens Association. Federal regulations require the National Park Service to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners, and to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sites.

"Our people will derive virtually no benefits from this project, only a few low wage jobs and some lease payments. The bulk of the money flows off the reservation to a non-Indian company in Scottsdale AZ," says Hazel James, with Diné Bidziil Coalition. "Most families on the reservation live near or below the poverty line; we don't have houseboats and jet skis to take to Lake Powell reservoir."

"If anything is to be built out at Antelope Point, it should be a building that is dedicated to traditional healing, not for a building that is dedicated to such vices as drinking, gambling and environmental degradation," says Philmer Bluehouse, of the Bluehouse Peacemaking Institute, and member of Diné Bidziil Coalition. Antelope Point will be the first place alcoholic beverages will be allowed on the Navajo Reservation, and it is anticipated that once the project is underway a casino will be constructed as well.

Despite this proposal being the most substantial development initiative at Lake Powell reservoir in decades, the Park Service has done only cursory environmental analysis, hoping to avoid undertaking a more rigorous Environmental Impact Statement. In contrast, the Park Service is presently conducting a full-scale Environmental Impact Statement on the use of personal watercraft within its jurisdiction.

"The likely impact on water, air, noise, public health, not to mention the cumulative development impacts on the surrounding community compels the Park Service to undertake an Environmental Impact Statement," says Owen Lammers, director of Living Rivers. "But more importantly, the Park Service must reassess the perceived need for this new resort marina in light of declining visitation and other unanticipated management issues not addressed in 1979 when Antelope Point marina was first contemplated."

Indeed, visitation in 2000 and 2001 is off 11 percent at Lake Powell reservoir. There is now demand for non-motorized quiet zones on the reservoir unanticipated in 1979, and Antelope Point affords one of the best locations for such an area. Sediment accumulation is now a major management problem at the top of the reservoir, especially for private and commercial river rafting trips which conclude there. The Park Service is ignoring the need to maintain access for these users, or to address the fact that sediment accumulation is an increasing problem that will eventually force the decommissioning of Lake Powell reservoir. The Park Service should be addressing the sediment problem first, prior to proposing investments in new infrastructure.

"This is merely the latest round of the commercialization of our National Parks," says Dave Sherman, co-chairman of the Sierra Club's Plateau Group in Flagstaff, Arizona. "If the Park Service was serious about promoting economic development for Navajo people, it would work with the Navajo Nation to enable them to operate existing GCNRA concessions, such as those at Wahweap Marina, instead of building Antelope Point, which is wholly unnecessary."

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The groups signing today's letter include: American Canoe Association, Bluewater Network, Center for Biological Diversity, Colorado Plateau River Guides, Diné Bidziil Coalition (representing 17 grassroots Navajo groups), Diné Medicinemens Association, Flagstaff Activist Network, Forest Conservation Council, Forest Guardians, Friends of Arizona's Rivers, Glen Canyon Institute, Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, Great Salt Lake Audubon Society, Living Rivers, Sierra Club, Utah Environmental Congress, Utah Rivers Council, and Utah Whitewater Club.

Additional Information

[April 14, 2002 to Ms. Kitty Roberts, Superintendent, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area from Living Rivers and 17 other environmental and social justice organizations commenting on Antelope Point Marina Resort Development Project Environmental Assessment.](#)

[November 29, 2000 letter to Mr. Kelsey Begaye President, Navajo Nation from Diné Medicinemens Association on the matter of Antelope Point marina proposal.](#)

[November 30, 2000 letter to Kathryn Cook, Acting Superintendent, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, from Living Rivers \(then Glen Canyon Action Network\) and seven other environmental and social justice organizations commenting on the proposed Antelope Point Marina project.](#)

[January 14, 2002 letter to Ms. Kitty Roberts Superintendent, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area from Living Rivers and eight other organizations on sediment issues at Lake Powell reservoir and the proposal to expand Hite Marina.](#)

[Glen Canyon National Recreation Area information on Antelope Point Marina Resort Development Project.](#)

Event 04/15/02

Sedimental Journey -- Reclaim the Bureau/Reclaim Our Canyons, June 13 - 17

Canyonlands National Park • Glen Canyon Dam • Lee's Ferry • Grand Canyon National Park • Hoover Dam



June 17, 2002 marks the centennial of the Bureau of Reclamation. As public officials, large-scale irrigators, and power interests gather to celebrate a century of river devastation at Hoover Dam, Living Rivers and others will be there too, but with a different message. "100 years—600 dams is too much" will be the rallying cry that will conclude a five-day road show aimed at drawing public attention to the extensive environmental damage that is BuRec's legacy.

Nowhere are the problems with BuRec's exploits more apparent than in one of the world's premier national parks, [Grand Canyon](#). Sandwiched between BuRec's two largest dams, Hoover and Glen Canyon, the mighty Colorado, which carved this one of seven natural wonders of the world, has been transformed into the Grand Ditch.

Glen Canyon Dam has changed: the Colorado's natural flows; its seasonal variations in water temperature; sediment and nutrients deposition and fish migration into and out of Grand Canyon. The artery feeding this unique ecosystem is near death. The Canyon's entire food web is being dramatically altered. Three of eight native fish species are gone and two more are on their way. Native vegetation is disappearing at an alarming rate, as are the beaches so revered by the Canyon's river runners—all thanks to BuRec.

On our way to BuRec's official celebration at Hoover Dam, Living Rivers will be launching the first mission of the Bureau of Restoration. Vital sediment not able to reach Grand Canyon will be transported by truck from the upper Colorado watershed around Glen Canyon Dam and deposited at several locations in and around Grand Canyon.

Rallies, press conferences and outreach activities will take place throughout the five-day journey, including its final stop at Hoover Dam on June 17th. Riverside music, cookouts and camping will round out the festivities as we promote the need for BuRec to reverse its policy of shaping rivers to meet non-essential human needs, to shaping BuRec to meet the needs of our dying rivers.

Join the caravan for one or all the events!



Thursday, June 13, Moab, Utah

6:00 - 10:00 pm

Sediment Loading and Kick-Off Rally

Gold Bar Campground along the banks of the Colorado

Friday, June 14, Lake Powell Reservoir (near Page, Arizona)

12:00 - 1:30 pm

Sacred Sediment/Sacred Rivers

Antelope Point Shore

Saturday, June 15, Lee's Ferry, Arizona

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Boating for the Canyon

Boating for Wilderness

Lee's Ferry Campground

Sunday, June 16, South Rim, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

12:00 - 2:00 pm

Save Grand Canyon from Glen Canyon Dam

Ampitheater at Grand Canyon Village

Monday, June 17, Hoover Dam, Arizona/Nevada border

11:00 - 1:00 pm

Reclaim the Bureau Rally

100 Years is Enough
Arizona-side parking lot

For information on BuRec's plans:

[Plans for Hoover Dam](#)

[General invitation from BuRec Commissioner John Keys](#)

River News 04/15/02

BuRec plans for private celebration at Hoover Dam 6/17/02

A \$400,000 private gala is being organized by BuRec for its centennial celebration at Hoover Dam.

2,400 invitations have been sent to acting and retired Burec employees, elected officials, and leaders within Western water and power interests. The public is not allowed to attend.

Participants will be bussed by BuRec from Las Vegas hotels to the Dam for the evening festivities. The highway servicing Hoover Dam will be closed from 3:00 - 11:00pm.

The event will take place in the Dam on the generator floor, including buffet, speeches, concluding with a fireworks display.

Interior Secretary Gale Norton, and BuRec Commissioner John Keys are the senior-most administration officials confirmed for the event, though both President Bush and Vice President Cheney have been invited.

June 17th itinerary

3:00 pm: Highways to the dam are closed

4:15 pm: Shuttle buses leave the Las Vegas hotels

6:00 pm: Dinner buffet at the floor of the generator gallery

6:30 pm: Thunderbirds air show

8:00 pm: Speakers on the transformer deck (outside)

9:15 pm: Fireworks and laser light show

9:45 pm: Shuttle buses roll
11:00 pm: Highways reopened

BuRec on site contact:
Robert Walsh
Boulder City, NV
702-293-8420; rwalsh@lc.usbr.gov

LR in the News 04/21/02

Profiting from Powell: Planned 'Antelope' marina splits Navajos; pits environmentalists against Park Service

By Peter Corbett
The Arizona Republic

A planned \$70 million Lake Powell marina and resort at the mouth of one of the world's most photographed canyons has divided Navajos and pitted federal park officials and developers against environmentalists.

National Park Service officials contend that the new marina at Antelope Point is needed to relieve overcrowding at existing marinas within the 1.3 million-acre Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, and they are prepared to approve the project this summer.

The marina is supported by boat enthusiasts, business interests in nearby Page and by the Navajo Nation.

"The facilities at Wahweap (Marina) have been developed to their maximum potential and more services are needed," said Steve Ward, Lake Powell Resorts & Marinas spokesman. Wahweap has a long waiting list for slips, he said.

But a coalition of environmentalists and Navajo groups contend that the marina is not needed, would encourage more noisy motorized boating, do little to help the tribe and could be expanded to include casino gaming.

"This is a good place for canoeing and a quieter recreational experience, and the marina would ruin that," said Randy Rasmussen, acting Southwest regional director of the National Parks Conservation Association.

Proponents say the Antelope Point project would create badly needed jobs for area residents, including tribal members, and would boost tourism.

For environmentalists, a marina at Antelope Point would be yet another nail in the coffin for Glen Canyon and the area's environment. They say they want to protect Antelope Canyon from the buzz of powerboats and personal watercraft.

Visitation at the park last year, 2.3 million, was the lowest in a decade, and 35 percent below the 1992 peak of 3.6 million. Park Service officials said part of the drop is because of a 1995 change in how records are tallied, but they have no explanation for the flatness of the visits since then.

The marina would border part of Antelope Canyon, a deep and narrow maze of finely eroded and twisting sandstone that explodes into a rainbow of colors at midday.

Widely photographed and used in numerous commercials, the canyon made international news in 1997 when 11 people, including several European tourists, drowned during a flash flood.

The decision by the Park Service to develop the marina could have long-term consequences for the management of Lake Powell.

The area has been an environmental battleground since before 1963, when Glen Canyon Dam plugged the Colorado River near the Arizona-Utah line and flooded picturesque Glen Canyon.

By the time it filled in 1980, Lake Powell - the second-largest man-made lake in America - extended 186 miles into Utah in a spider web of 96 canyons, following 1,960 miles of shoreline, longer than the West Coast.

Glen Canyon was first mapped in 1869 by Maj. John Wesley Powell, who during a pioneering journey described it as "a curious ensemble of wonderful features - carved walls, royal arches, glens, alcove gulches, mounds and monuments. From which of these features shall we select a name? We decide to call it Glen Canyon."

Today, nearly 2.5 million people visit the lake annually, with most boats launched from Wahweap and State Line marinas.

In launch mode

The Park Service and Navajo Nation are poised to approve the marina, which would be developed by Paradise Valley-based Antelope Holdings.

The public comment period ended last week and federal park officials say they see no reason not to proceed.

"We're hoping to have signed documents by the end of July," which would allow the developer to start construction as early as this fall, said Kathy Fleming, the park's chief of concessions.

If approved, developer Antelope Holdings would, over five years, build 300 private slips and a fuel dock within the federal park.

A 225-room hotel, campground, store and storage area for boats would follow on adjacent land that the Navajo Nation has sought to develop for 30 years.

Antelope Holdings is headed by David Maule-Ffinch and Jerry Moyes, CEO of Swift Transportation, a Phoenix-based trucking company.

The two men also were partners in an \$18 million marina project at Lake Pleasant and \$23 million marina at Roosevelt Lake.

Building a casino at the site is not something the developers have considered, Maule-Ffinch said.

The Navajo Nation authorized a casino in New Mexico last year, but the tribe does not have a gaming pact in Arizona.

"If it were legal, we would maybe consider it," said Maule-Ffinch, who insists the project will not harm the environment. "I don't know what their (environmentalists') concerns are."

Point of contention

Owen Lammers, director of Living Rivers and head of the coalition fighting the new marina, said that the National Park Service "is demonstrating a massive bias for motorized, flat-water recreation, and pimping for that."

The coalition complains that park officials are skirting federal regulations by not conducting a formal Environmental Impact Statement to study in full the marina's potential harm.

In 1993, a Del Webb Corp. subsidiary paid a \$1 million fine - at the time the largest ever in Arizona for an environmental crime - for the systematic dumping of as many as 100 truckloads of batteries and other debris into Lake Powell.

In addition, ARA Leisure Services, which took over the marina boat-renting concessions from Del Webb's Marina Operation Corp. in 1988, agreed to pay a \$225,000 fine.

Suzy Schulman, the park's environmental specialist, said that a full environmental study is not needed for the new marina because it would not have significant environmental impacts on Lake Powell.

The Park Service is looking at limiting motorized boats, including personal watercraft, in some canyons, she said.

The coalition wants Antelope Point to be one of those areas.

Kayakers explore steep-walled Antelope Canyon where it enters Lake Powell. Hikers trek into the serpentine maze past fossilized dinosaur tracks in a canyon the Navajos consider sacred.

A small boat launch was built at Antelope Point in 1999, but is not used for speed boats now because the lake level is so low, said Steve Cassens, owner of Twin Finn Scuba and Kayaks, a Page outfitter, who supports the proposed marina.

The coalition, which includes the Sierra Club, Diné Medicinemens Association and other boating and environmental groups, questions the need for the new marina, especially since visits have declined.

Instead of building a new marina, the coalition suggests that the Navajo Nation take over the concession contract to operate Wahweap.

"Our people will derive virtually no benefits from this project, only a few low-wage jobs and some lease payments," said Hazel James of Diné Bidzil, a Navajo group in the coalition.

"The bulk of the money flows off the reservation to a non-Indian company."

Thomas Boyd, a project manager in the Navajo Nation's tourism office, said that the marina would create nearly 250 jobs, most during construction and some during ongoing operations.

Unemployment in the area is nearly 44 percent.

Antelope Holdings will be required to follow the tribe's preference laws in hiring contractors and marina workers. The company will have a 20-year lease with a 25-year option, Boyd said.

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Media Advisory 04/24/02

BuRec and Interior Move One Step Closer to Killing the Grand Canyon with Glen Canyon Dam

Activists plan "Sediment-al Journey" to encourage Grand Canyon restoration

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The Department of the Interior's Adaptive Management Working Group (AMWG) will convene today in Phoenix to discuss yet another proposal to prop up the collapsing Grand Canyon ecosystems. It is the contention of a growing number of environmental groups and scientists that the proposed plan will succeed only in perpetuating the illusion that the Grand Canyon's destruction, brought about by the operation of Glen Canyon Dam, is being addressed.

With the stated goal of helping the Grand Canyon's endangered native humpback chub, water, power and environmental interests will be debating a proposal to implement special water releases from Glen Canyon Dam. The releases are intended to improve the fish's spawning and rearing habitat lost since the dam began operation in 1963.

"Interior's been at this process for twenty years, has spent more than a \$100 million and has nothing but a further degraded Grand Canyon to show for it," says Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers. "They're letting the water and power interests drive habitat destruction and override the public's growing desire for the preservation and restoration of native habitat in Grand Canyon National Park."

The proposed flow regime would be the fourth planned experimental release since 1996. All have failed, as demonstrated by the collapse of Grand Canyon native plant and fish populations and continually eroding beaches. The Canyon's humpback chub population has declined 75% in seven years. In 1992, Congress mandated that dam operations be changed to establish a second population of humpback chub. Yet, management manipulations so far have not even sustained the one current population.

"There's no more time. Minor tinkering of the dam's operation won't help the chub and can't compensate for its overall impact on Grand Canyon's ecosystem," says Roxanne George with the Sierra Club's Plateau Group in Flagstaff, AZ. "Up to ninety five percent of the sediment and nutrients critical for nourishing Grand Canyon's artery are blocked by Glen Canyon Dam."

Lack of sediment has eliminated beaches, changed the carbon base and caused the near disappearance of the Canyon's natural food web. Cladophora (green algae) has replaced wood as the primary carbon-based nutrient for the system. This means that the macroinvertebrate assemblage (insects) is disrupted; that the historic food source for this fish has vanished. Of the 50 to 100 insects native to the Canyon, none remain. Riparian vegetation struggles in the sterile soil. Non-native species have firmly established themselves in this artificial environment, gradually forcing out native vegetation and animal life.

"Manipulating the dam's operations can't change this, nor will it change the chilly water temperatures that have further contributed to the chub's demise and extinction of three of the seven other fish species native to the Grand Canyon," says Michelle Harrington of the Center for Biological Diversity.

Water released into the Grand Canyon from Glen Canyon Dam is a constant 46 degrees F., causing the river temperature to seldom exceed 55 degrees. Native fish require warmer water with temperatures reaching 80 degrees, the natural pre-dam temperature of the water. Moreover, cooler temperatures have allowed cold water fish, especially brown trout, to flourish and prey on young native fish such as the humpback chub.

"The three key things this ecosystem needs are warmer water, sediment and annual high flows to distribute sediment into the system," says Dave Haskell, former science director for Grand Canyon National Park. "The current guidelines and funding do not allow scientists to address these three fundamental elements."

"The Working Group is running out of time to undertake more useless experimentation. A world renowned resource is at stake," adds Lammers. "That's why a growing coalition

of groups will be taking the issue on the road in mid-June to mobilize public support for immediate attention to the Grand Canyon's ecosystem."

The timing of these events will coincide with the centennial celebration planned for the Bureau of Reclamation at Hoover Dam on June 17. The Bureau of Reclamation is principally responsible for the collapse of the Grand Canyon's ecosystem, by first inundating 40 miles of Grand Canyon behind Hoover Dam and then by delivering slower, but nonetheless lethal impacts to the remainder of the canyon through the operation of Glen Canyon Dam.

Embarking on the first "Sediment-al Journey," participants will be transporting sediment via a dump truck from the upper reaches of the Colorado River watershed for deposit into the Colorado River in Grand Canyon. Events will be taking place on the Colorado River near Moab UT, Glen Canyon Dam, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park and Hoover Dam.

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For more information:

[LIVING RIVERS](#)

[Sierra Club](#)

[Center for Biological Diversity](#)

[U.S. Bureau of Reclamation: Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program](#)

[National Park Service: Grand Canyon National Park](#)

[Arizona Game & Fish Department](#)

River News 05/01/02

Motorized Rafting – An Illegitimate Industry?

The 35 Year Wilderness War for Grand Canyon

by Byron Hayes

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“As long as the commercial passenger gets easier and more preferential treatment than the non-commercial user, you can be absolutely certain that the struggle will never end.”
Joe Munroe - June 16, 1980[1]

The Frustrating Reality (1998 - Commercial Revenues \$27 Million; Non-commercial Passengers Wait 20 years)

A 20 year wait to take your own raft down a river, penalties that selectively send you to the end of the line if you go earlier, motorized rafts with helicopter exchanges on America's premier wilderness river, and commercial river operators emphatically insisting that everything is fine and should stay the way it is. Ever wonder how things got to this point and how not just one, but two virtually final non-motorized wilderness decisions somehow evaporated into the described scenario?

This article brings together a unique historical examination of the behind the scene activities that delivered this seemingly incredible outcome into current day reality. It provides a true story of how familial ties and political maneuvering succeeded in facilitating National Park access to those Americans most able to contribute to the Grand Canyon river concessionaires' bottom line. Ignored were existing laws, the public process, and the independent boating public who are now waiting 20 years for river access in the crown jewel of America's National Parks, the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon.

The Park and Public Involvement (1975 - Commercial Revenues \$6 million; Private Wait 0 years)

With the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, Congress directed the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct an inventory to determine which of its lands were suitable for Wilderness classification. Multiple segments of the Canyon were under threat of inundation by proposed reservoirs and Glen Canyon Dam was filling up. In 1967 only 2,099 people visited the river, but reportedly "Passengers and boatmen were still scuttling beer cans in the river ('Open them at both ends to make them sink.'), squatting behind big rocks or tall bushes, and burying garbage wherever the sand was soft." [2] Under these virtually unregulated conditions visitation rapidly increased to 16,432 visitors annually by 1972, facilitated by the existence of 22 commercial river companies, many of which operated motorized rafts. [3] It was becoming readily evident that the Canyon was coming under a real and severe threat of damage from haphazard use.

In 1970 the Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP, or the "Park") commenced its Wilderness inventory process with the release of its Preliminary Wilderness Study for Grand Canyon National Park, Marble Canyon National Monument, and Grand Canyon National Monument. [4] In 1969 Congress had already passed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which required that significant environmental decisions must be considered with the input of those affected. Consequently, public hearings on this Wilderness issue began in May 1971 at Grand Canyon and in Phoenix, Arizona. Additionally, public comments were solicited in newspapers in Williams and Flagstaff, Arizona and in Kanab, Utah. [5] Management of the river corridor was recognized to be an important issue during these hearings. [6] The Colorado River Outfitters Association (CROA) was established to lobby the outfitter's perspective and became an important participant in these hearings.

After compiling the public's overall input, the Hearing Officer explicitly reported, "The desired river experience is felt to be a slow float trip in small parties." However, after recognizing that the existing NPS management directives were to allow continued use of motorized rafts, the hearing officer concluded that "The plan for continued use of motors precludes wilderness classification for the river itself." [7] As a result, the Colorado River was excluded from consideration for inclusion in the Canyon's NPS Wilderness Recommendation despite public opinion otherwise. [8] The Wilderness Recommendation was then forwarded on September 14, 1972 to then President Nixon who officially communicated the plan to Congress on September 21, 1972. [9]

Meanwhile, the Park was continuing to be plagued with the problems caused by the River's rapidly increasing popularity. On December 5, 1972, after soliciting broad and varied public comment, the Park announced adoption of a plan to control the use of the River and the adjacent lands. This Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) provided for the freezing of commercial user days at the existing level (89,000) and for the complete phase out of motors by 1977. This action functionally removed the basis for the prior exclusion of the river from Wilderness consideration.

On March 20, 1973 Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ) introduced (93) Senate Bill 1296 that provided for the enlargement of the Grand Canyon National Park. [10] Included in this bill was a section that provided for Wilderness in the expanded Park that was consistent with the NPS and President Nixon's earlier recommendation which failed to include the river. While introducing the bill, Goldwater acknowledged the new December 5th regulations that removed motorized rafts from the River by stating, "... I believe it is unnecessary to legislate on this (motorized rafting) matter while it is being resolved administratively." [11] Consequently, under Goldwater's interpretation, the administrative track to phase out motorized rafts by 1977 could continue, but the river corridor would remain outside of consideration for Wilderness protection.

Outfitters Enraged

Needless to say, the recommendation to phase over to non-motorized trips was not greeted with much enthusiasm by the solidly established motorized outfitters. One approach that was pursued by the motorized outfitters was to oppose the NPS decision on the legal front. Western River Expeditions itself brought a suit in Salt Lake City, Utah against the Park Service alleging the decision to eliminate motors was "arbitrary" and that no data had been acquired to support the decision. [12]

Although he generally supported the Western lawsuit, Fred Burke, owner/operator of Arizona River Runners, a motorized outfitter then located at Marble Canyon, took on a political tact in dealing with the motor controversy. Burke had been fighting Canyon Wilderness designation individually, as President of Arizona River Runners, and with the Colorado River Outfitters Association (CROA). Besides political experience derived directly from river issues, Burke had developed significant additional experience by running for a seat on the Arizona state legislature. At that time U.S. Congressman Sam

Steiger (R-AZ) was one of the most prominent supporters of Bridge Canyon Dam, a project that, if implemented, would have put almost a third of the Canyon's river miles under a water.[13] Burke and Steiger each saw any Wilderness designation of the Canyon, and especially the river itself as their mutual enemy. Consequently, they became good friends.

In the course of Burke's unsuccessful November 1972 attempt at a seat in the Arizona State Senate, Barry Goldwater had helped Burke, a fellow Republican, with his commercial campaign spots.[14] Once Burke became aware of Goldwater's bill and his statements in Congress, he contacted Goldwater imploring him to listen to his perspective and those of fellow outfitter Jerry Sanderson and Gay Staveley, the owner/operator of Canyoneers, a completely motorized rafting company located in Flagstaff. Fred requested Goldwater change the wording of his bill to provide for the ongoing use of both motors and oars. He went on to claim that he was opposed to fast trips and that "There is no monetary gain under my plan if motors were left on." [15]

NPS Wants River As "Potential Wilderness"

When hearings on Goldwater's S. 1296 commenced on June 20, 1973, both the Interior Secretary and NPS, the originators of the 1972 Wilderness Recommendation, jointly requested the river corridor itself now be included as an additional 4500 acres of "Potential Wilderness" since motorized rafts were now officially being phased out.[16] NPS Director Ronald Walker stated during the hearings that these new provisions were necessary because the NPS had been allowed "no input" into Goldwater's bill.[17]

Upon hearing the NPS proposal to include the river, the Utah Congressional delegation, which had numerous river company interests at stake, immediately blasted the Park Service for their proposition to phase out motors. Utah Congressman Gunn McKay said that the presence of motors did not shatter the sanctity of a wilderness experience and that the noise they created was only a "technical problem" that would be solved in the future. He also inferred that motors were necessary to safely navigate the difficult rapids and that the larger size motorized rafts provide for the removal of human waste and trash that would otherwise be left on the beaches.[18]

Utah Senator Frank Moss joined the attack on the NPS proposal stating that the absence of motorized trips would effectively remove access to both children and the elderly. Sen. Moss repeated Gunn's accusation that small boats are less safe and promote garbage. Moss discounted NPS Regional Director Howard Chapman's report that a recent hearing in the Salt Lake Western suit had disclosed that motorized river craft produce significant numbers of injuries, especially from the propeller. Although active at the time, this suit against the Park's decision to eliminate motorized rafts would eventually be dismissed. Chapman continued by explaining to Moss that the NPS was trying to manage a total system and in the Canyon and their objective was to provide an experience different from the numerous motorized options available on other rivers. If people wanted a motorized experience, they had available many options elsewhere.

Moss appeared to gain the upper hand in the argument when he discovered that Park

action was based only on unscientific observations and that no formal studies had been undertaken to justify the elimination of motors or a reduction of use. Citing this administrative deficiency, Moss proposed that both motors and user days be maintained at current use levels until sufficient scientific studies were completed sometime in the future.[19]

Due to the controversy it had generated with the Utah delegation, by the time the Committee Report for S 1296 was filed on September 21, 1973, the wilderness provision of Goldwater's bill had been completely dropped. At least in part due to this controversy and in part due to the still pending Western lawsuit, implementation of the CRMP became sufficiently delayed that on October 31, 1973 NPS Regional Director Howard Chapman announced deferment of the decision to eliminate motors. Current use and allocations would be maintained until newly commissioned studies on the impact of motor use levels were complete.

Restarting the Public Process Since the Grand Canyon Enlargement Act's Wilderness component had been dropped, a provision was added that called for the Secretary of the Interior to report within two years all areas suitable for preservation as Wilderness. [20] Once the Grand Canyon Enlargement Act finally became law in 1975, an exhaustive public input process commenced in an effort to determine the public's feelings regarding Wilderness status for the Canyon. A series of meetings were held in September and October of 1975[21].

In July of 1976, following the release of the Preliminary Wilderness Proposal (DES 76-28), an additional series of meetings were held in St. George, Utah and in Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, and Phoenix, Arizona. Comments were acquired from a total of 23 Federal agencies, 17 state agencies, 3 Indian tribes, 39 organizations, 24 companies, and 501 individuals.[22] The five-year series of meetings consistently showed public sentiment strongly favored Wilderness designation for the Canyon below the rim and for the river itself, including the elimination of motorized river travel[23].

The conclusion of the wilderness study process resulted in the February 1977 Final Wilderness Recommendation that was signed by the NPS Director and called for immediate Wilderness designation of over one million acres within the Canyon, including the river corridor. Instead of promptly forwarding this now fully approved Recommendation to then President Carter, the NPS Legislative Counsel effectively stalled its Congressional approval by recommending that it be held until completion of the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP).[24] Instead of using the approved Final Wilderness Recommendation as the driving force for setting management policies for the river, its presentation to the President was instead postponed until the final outcome of the CRMP became known and compatible. As you will find, this critical two-year delay based on somewhat questionable reasoning at least partially contributed to altering the environment on the river for well over 20 years into the future.

The 1975 Enlargement Act also had a direct effect on the CRMP itself. Indexed off the Wilderness pre-planning meetings held in the Fall of 1975, six river management

workshops were held in March of 1976 in Phoenix, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, and Denver, as well as at the Grand Canyon. Comments of 365 participants and over 100 organizations were acquired, including those of the Hualapai Tribe, the Sierra Club, Western River Guides, and independent river runners from across the country.[25] As a result, in January of 1978 the Draft Environmental Statement - Proposed Colorado River Management Plan was released for public consideration.

In February of the same year, six more public meetings were held in the same cities and in March an additional meeting was held in Washington D.C. In all, 2,716 comments were received with 1476 respondents, or 54% favoring the elimination of motorized trips.[26] It is notable that only four people expressed opposition to Wilderness designation for the river corridor.[27]

In July of 1979 the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which provided for the phase out of motor powered trips over a five-year period was released. Some of the specific conclusions of the plan were that the transition to all oar powered trips would cause no significant increase in trip costs, that oar powered trips were recognized to be a better buy for consumers, that commercial guides would benefit from a longer commercial running season and increased guide to passenger ratios, and that there would be no significant impact on the local or regional economies.[28]

One of the primary features of the ensuing 1980 Colorado River Management Plan was to limit river use by the number of launches, rather than by user days as in the past. This approach was intended to minimize the on-river congestion and inter-group contact problems produced by the user day system and unlimited launches. The 497 commercial launches of 1979 were thus reduced to 443 launches while the 89,000 commercial user days of 1979 were increased to 115,500. Total commercial passengers would remain at approximately 11,500 per year. This action was intended to both reduce congestion and accommodate the longer duration oar-powered trips, while delivering an increased "economic base" to smaller concessionaires.[29]

Of particular interest was a statement by the Park that the 70% commercial/30% non-commercial user day allocation ratio presented in the 1980 plan was only an estimate and would need to be adjusted in the future. More specifically, the 1980 CRMP states: "The allocation ratio is, because of the above factors, a best estimate based on the experience and interpretation of the above data. This ratio will be reviewed and adjusted as more reliable information becomes available." [30] From this statement it is readily apparent that, at the time, the Park wanted to avoid situations like the present where some Americans are being required to wait 20 years while others freely access the River almost on demand.

The 1980 Colorado River Management Plan

Implementing the provisions of the final EIS was signed on December 20, 1979 by Park Superintendent Merle Stitt, NPS Western Regional Director Howard Chapman, and NPS Director William J. Whalen. This action commenced what should have been a five-

year process of slowly eliminating motorized raft trips from the Canyon by the end of December, 1984.

Dam & Motors Anyone? (1979)

In 1979 in an effort to expand their clout with Congress, Fred Burke and Gaylord Staveley, together, reincarnated the earlier CROA into what was now called PROA, the Professional River Outfitters Association, (not to be confused with the contemporary PRO, Professional River Outfitters, a private trip outfitting and equipment company, ed.) chaired by Staveley. PROA purported to present a unified voice for the river outfitters who had historically been factional on a variety of issues.

Second term Congressman Robert Lee "Bob" Stump (R-AZ) had taken up the cause of Grand Canyon dam building from the efforts of his predecessor Sam Steiger. Stump, a Phoenix area farmer wanted more water for valley farming. Stump introduced a bill in March 1979, which, if passed, would have eliminated the motors vs. oars question, and possibly that of Wilderness altogether. Stump's proposal, House Bill (96) H.R. 3034, was to license construction of Hualapai Dam (also known as Bridge Canyon Dam) and would have cut a third of the river miles under dispute by drowning them under a proposed reservoir. Steiger had unsuccessfully sponsored a similar effort during 1975 with his introduction of (94) H.R. 6745. Stump had futilely attempted to revive Steiger's project during his first term as (95) H.R. 6906, and would again during in his third term as (97) H.R. 3167. To this day Stump reportedly continues to support construction of Bridge Canyon dam.[31]

Despite his ongoing efforts to drown the Canyon, the outfitters turned to Stump after the July 1979 release of the final CRMP EIS. Paying no attention to nearly a decade of NPS gathered public input urging the elimination of motorized trips, Stump fully subscribed to the outfitters position. In October of 1979, Stump introduced a bill to prohibit the Park Service from reducing the number of commercialized motorized trip user days to less than 1978 levels (96 H.R. 5712 - Oct 25, 79). The bill was officially summarized as follows:

"Prohibits the United States Park Service, for any calendar year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, from reducing the number of user days of commercial motorized water craft travel permitted on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon National Park to less than the number of such days permitted during calendar year 1978."

Stump's bill was referred to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, then chaired by the late Mo Udall (D -AZ), where it never received a hearing and was allowed to die. No public review or discussion of the bill's provisions was ever held. Despite the fact that Stump's proposals for both motors and the dam had floundered in committee, the foundation was being laid for both the elimination of Wilderness management and the generation of the 20 year wait that non-commercial Canyon rafters now face.

Enter James Watt, the Mountain States Legal Foundation, and Beer (1980)

Burke, Staveley, and PROA were not content to limit their efforts to throw out the NPS Wilderness recommendations only to Stump's obscure and poorly received bill. Staveley and Burke soon turned to the Mountain States Legal Foundation (MSLF).

The MSLF was established by and has been continuously funded by Adolph Coors, the famous western beer magnate. At that time, the fledging organization's chief legal officer and President was James Watt, an outspoken fellow who would later become Secretary of the Interior under the yet to be elected Ronald Reagan. James Watt, a Wyoming native, joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1966 where he directed the natural resources section.[32] He began his federal career in 1969, appointed by President Nixon to the Interior Department as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Power Resources. In 1972 he became Director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. At that time he spoke of that job, "I am a manager by profession. I could be managing widgets. I happen just now to be managing recreation." [33] In 1975 Watt became vice chairman of the Federal Power Commission until he resigned in 1977 when the Democratic Carter administration made him a persona non-gratis. In July of 1977, Watt became President and Chief Legal Officer of the Mountain States Legal Foundation (MSLF).

On March 27, 1980, the MSLF, still headed by Watt, filed suit on behalf of Canyoneers, Arizona River Runners, Hatch River Expeditions, and other motorized outfitters against NPS Director William J. Whalen in an effort to halt the elimination of motorized raft trips (MSLF vs. Whalen, et al).[34] Assisting PROA, Staveley, Burke, and the Mountain States Legal Foundation was a lawyer by the name of Jon Kyl, who at that time worked for the Phoenix law firm Jennings, Strouss & Salmon.[35] Unknown to anyone at that time, Jon Kyl would be elected in 1986 to his first of four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and, in 1994, would become the freshman and current Republican U.S. Senator from Arizona.

Park Politically Pressure Cooked 1980 - Industry Gross \$7 Million Private Wait 6 Years Consistent with their expanded political efforts, PROA and the outfitters persistently complained to the Arizona Congressional delegation about the provisions of the 1980 plan. These political efforts first became publicly evident during an Interior Appropriations hearing in May of 1980. At that time Senator Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) acknowledged that he had received "complaints" about the 1980 CRMP plan during a meeting between the Park Service and outfitters in his Washington office.

At the request of Senator DeConcini, the Park granted the outfitters a meeting on June 5, 1980 allowing them an opportunity to suggest adjustments to the 1980 river plan. The Park emphasized no direct discussion of the decision to phase out motors would be allowed. Without any doubt, the efforts of the PROA consortium were starting to get results.

Staveley, Burke, and their wives attended the meeting along with Park officials and representatives from the offices of Senators DeConcini and Goldwater, and

Congressmen Stump, Rhodes (R-AZ), and Rudd (R-AZ). The subject matter primarily focused around determining the number of passengers accommodated in 1979 (11,665) and then giving motorized companies additional passengers to offset potential profit losses from their conversion to rowing. This provided for an annual "economic increase" of 1400 additional passengers, a 12% increase to the motorized outfitters over 1979 levels. Since the new rowing trips were inherently longer, this would effectively deliver well over 15,000 new user days and annually millions of dollars of new revenues to the motor companies. At the same time non-motorized outfitters consequently would receive less market share and non-commercial users would continue to increase their wait. Staveley later, in a press release, would describe the meeting simply as "very solid and productive" and that it resolved the scheduling issues related to the phase out of motors.[36]

A summary of the meeting was sent by the NPS to all river concessionaires that did not attend the meeting and to others who would be affected by modifications to the 1980 plan. After receiving extensive responses from other outfitters and interested parties, Regional Director Howard Chapman reported to Gaylord Staveley in an August 13, 1980 letter that at least a third of the river concessionaires disagreed with the Staveley and Burke's proposed modifications to the 1980 plan. Chapman also informed Staveley that, according to the Department of Interior Solicitor's (administrative law) Office, any implementation of their suggestions without a full public review would violate the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. Effectively, Chapman, with the concurrence of Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus, was rejecting the provisions of the June 5th meeting and upheld continuation of the 1980 CRMP and its provision to eliminate motors.

Staveley, stung by the Regional Director's rebuke, wrote to Stump on August 19th stating that all the arguments provided by the "ecopeople" who disagreed with him were generated by the Park. He suggested that his "opponents" were being manipulated and "... they are just saying what they are told to say." He went on to claim "untrue and unreal" comments and "lies" were being delivered by his opponents. Staveley charged as false the argument that increasing concessionaire allocations would in any way diminish opportunities for private, non-commercial boating. He described the argument as: "The lie that private (non-concessionaire) use is threatened by giving concessionaires the 1979 passenger levels." [37] In a subsequent letter dated August 21, 1980 to NPS Western Regional Director Chapman, Staveley continued attacking the "fabrications" of those in the "ecobizness"(sic).

Just a Concerned Taxpayer

After PROA's embarrassing summer defeat, it became apparent that a new approach would be needed. Congressman Eldon Rudd (R-AZ) had already requested details on GCNP river expenditures from then Acting NPS Director Ira Hutchison. Rudd, in an August 29 letter to C . J. Ross, forwarded Hutchison's August 19, 1980 response and invited the outfitters to any input they deemed appropriate.[38] One person responding to Rudd's expenditure inquiries was Pamela Manning, then Executive Vice President for

Burke's Arizona River Runners business. Without disclosing her affiliation with ARR, Manning alleged that the GCNP had significantly increased their operational costs by hiring five permanent river staff and an extra patrol crew to accommodate the new management plan. She further alleged that the Park had incurred significant expense and "bureaucratic waste" in purchasing a trailer to accommodate the non-commercial permittees. Manning went on to state that one motorized patrol crew could perform as much work as two oar crews, and inferred that oar trips were popular with Park personnel simply because they had to do less work.[39] Manning concluded by stating that she was concerned about the waste of tax dollars, and that did not wish her name to be attached to the letter's contents since she was known in the river community.

Rudd responded to Manning with a letter stating he was confident that Bob Stump's previously ignored proposed legislation would be reintroduced to combat "the unfair CRMP" and thereby protect the rights of river runners.[40] That same day Rudd sent another letter to Hutchison paraphrasing Manning's allegations of misuse of funds and demanded a detailed budget for the GCNP River Management Unit. Hutchison compiled the requested information and, in his November 28, 1980 response, explained to Rudd that the trailer under dispute was surplus property given to the GCNP by Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, and that permanent GCNP river personnel had increased not by the alleged five, but only by a single person since 1973.[41] Although the information previously provided to the Congressman by Manning was proven to be incorrect, by the end of November it really didn't matter; something else had already happened that would change the whole river horizon for decades to come.

The Hatch (River Expeditions) Amendment

In 1980 first term Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) was in his fourth year in office. Orrin is the great grandson of Jeremiah Hatch, the founder of Vernal, Utah. Orrin's father, Jesse, was cousin to Bus Hatch, the founder of Hatch River Expeditions, who was also a grandson of Jeremiah. Bus' son Ted Hatch, like Orrin, was a great grandson of Jeremiah. Ted was then, and currently still is the owner of Hatch River Expeditions, the oldest and, at that time, the largest motorized raft company in the Grand Canyon. Hatch maintains a warehouse in Marble Canyon where ARR was located at the time.

Fred and Carol Burke along with Pam Manning telegraphed Senator Hatch on November 4, 1980 stating that motor elimination would deliver a negative economic impact on Southern Utah and Northern Arizona. They also stated, "We urgently support your amendment to the Appropriation bill." [42] By this communication, it was now evident that the outfitters were very aware that Hatch was preparing to introduce legislation in their behalf.

On Nov. 14, 1980, Sen. Orrin Hatch hastily introduced from the Senate floor Amendment SU175 to the 1981 Interior Appropriations Bill (96 H.R. 7724). This Interior Appropriations Bill provided the crucial annual funding necessary to maintain the operations of the Department of the Interior for the fiscal year ending September 30,

1981. It was common knowledge to the Senate that any appropriations amendment would be effective only for the single year the bill provided funds to run the Department of Interior.

SU175, which would later become known as the "Hatch Amendment," was first considered by the Senate on the Friday just prior to its Tuesday, November 17th final approval. Neither the amendment nor its content ever received public review, even in the form of a committee hearing. The Amendment was cosponsored by Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ) and Jake Garn (R-UT)[43] and consisted of the following words:

(a) None of the funds appropriated in this Act shall be used for the implementation of any management plan for the Colorado River within the Grand Canyon National Park which reduces the number of user days or passenger-launches for commercial motorized watercraft excursions, for the preferred use period, from all current launch points below that which was available for the same period of use in the calendar year 1978.

(b) For the purposes of this section "preferred use period" denotes the period May 1, through Sept. 30, inclusive.

Hatch's and others' presentations in support of the Amendment, spanning four pages of the Congressional Record, was in no way subtle. Throughout the testimony process, Hatch made no public mention of his familial relationship to the companies his action would ultimately benefit. Hatch commenced by echoing the same safety and access issues that his predecessor, Frank Moss, had voiced 8 years earlier. He indisputably demonized the Park Service for even offering the CRMP, stating that they were "jeopardizing the availability" of the Canyon. He extolled the virtues of motorized rafts as the most cost-effective way to get the greatest numbers of people into the Canyon. He continued by stating that the Park Service was inflicting its non-motorized oar provisions on an "unwilling and often unknowing public without regards to cost. And, I might add under more dangerous circumstances.[44]"

Hatch's cost arguments were flawed, completely ignoring the fact that non-commercials were dramatically less expensive than any commercial trip, motorized or not. He never mentioned to the Senate that the CRMP he opposed was part of a 10 year NEPA compliant public decision process. He never acknowledged that continuation of motorized rafts would enhance public demand for a resource already outstripped in its ability to handle it. Hatch never acknowledged that his amendment would provide his relatives and the motorized outfitters dramatically increased profits.

An Ambivalent Passage

Some Senators expressed concern that the amendment was inappropriate for this appropriations bill and that no hearings were ever held on this specific matter. In particular, Senator Huddleston moved that the Hatch Amendment should not be allowed since it should have been more fully considered in the appropriate committee[45]. In

effect Huddleston recognized that the Senate was unable to vote on this subject from a position of knowledge.

Retrospectively, Hatch was probably aware that if he forthrightly introduced a bill opposing NPS actions, it would spur debate and the subsequent analysis would expose the extensive history behind the NPS actions. Such an effort to defeat the issue on its merits would be certain to fail, as had Stump's earlier attempt. Cleverly, Hatch opted for the much easier alternate and apparently successful approach of legislatively defunding his NPS opponents.

Since it was attached to a one year appropriations bill, it was obvious to the Senate that the provisions of the Hatch Amendment were not permanent and could only affect management policy for one year. Rather than waste precious time in this late stage of the legislative session and after senators on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee promised hearings on the issue during the following year, the Senate accepted the amendment on a voice vote.

As a result SU 1754 was quietly absorbed into the appropriations bill which eventually evolved into public law 96-514.

Reveling in his apparent success, Burke wrote to Lisa Jackson of Rep. Stump's office with his recommendations for implementation of the Hatch Amendment. In a November 29th letter, Burke recommended an increase in launches so that the motorized outfitters could be able to accommodate the 150 people per day maximum historical use provided for in the Amendment. In his letter, Burke additionally asked for Congressional hearings early in 1981 so that as soon as possible a determination could be made as to the scheduling of motor trips and whether motors would be allowed during the 1982 season. [46] Burke's correspondence shows that both he and the outfitters were aware that Hatch's Amendment, as passed, was only temporary and that the phase out of motors might begin anew the following season.

Introducing - Secretary of the Interior James Watt (Watt's Senate Confirmation Hearings)

Staveley, Burke, and the other motorized outfitters were probably delighted by the good fortune that had befallen them as a result of the November 1980 election of Ronald Reagan as President. When Senator Clifford Hansen (R - WY) declined Reagan's offer of Secretary of Interior, on December 22nd, 1980 the position was then offered to the same James Watt, President of the Mountain States Legal Foundation, who was already helping the motorized outfitters by suing the Park to retain motorized rafts.[47] As virtually everyone in the country would soon know, Watt, who had already described environmentalists as "the greatest threat to the ecology of the West,"[48] accepted the position as Secretary of Interior, the trustee of America's public lands.

Reagan's election to the presidency became official on January 6, 1981 when a joint session of Congress counted the votes of the Electoral College.[49] The following day Watt's confirmation hearing in the Committee on Senate Energy and Natural Resources began. The Committee was particularly interested in Watt's potential for conflict of interest since, as President of the MSLF, he had sponsored numerous suits against the

Department of Interior. The committee's interest was justified. During questioning about the MSLF, Watt made the surprising claim that he didn't even know who the contributors to the MSLF were. Senator John Seiberling (D-Ohio), Chairman of the Interior Subcommittee on Public Lands informed Watt with the specifics of who the financial supporters of the MSLF were and then concluded with the following observation. "These are people whose primary interest in public lands is to exploit them for their own profit. Their idea of multiple land use is to have everything with any conceivable value developed, even if its primary value is Wilderness."[50]

Watt had been asked to submit to the committee a summary of those MSLF cases that involved the agency. Watt's prepared summary incorrectly cited his Arizona suit to retain motorized rafts in the Canyon. Instead of describing the MSLF v. Whalen case as filed, the description supplied to the committee was "MSLF v. Dickenson," the NPS Director that succeeded Whalen. In Watt's statement, the suit was summarized as follows: "MSLF seeks to protect the right of the public to reasonable, environmentally sound access to the Grand Canyon for recreation by challenging the Park Service's decision to ban all motorized raft trips on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon."[51]

During the hearing segment questioning Watt's involvement with motorized rafting, Senator Dale Bumpers (D-AR) explicitly stated that the Senate (against his [Bumpers] own vigorous protest) had adopted only a one-year postponement of the Park Service river management plan.[52] Bumpers even directly asked Watt, "Do you favor the Wilderness Act." Watt's response: "Absolutely."

Before the hearings had begun, Watt had generated a recusal statement wherein he consented only to refrain from assisting the MSLF in any further prosecution of the Interior cases. Watt submitted his statement to the Committee after having already discussed its content with the chairman of the Committee, Senator James McClure (R. Idaho).

Curiously absent from Watt's commitment was any promise to, as Secretary of the Interior, refrain from involving himself in the issues surrounding the MSLF's Interior Department litigations. The statement successfully made it through the hearing without any mention of this deficiency. Time would prove that Watt would utilize this oversight to MSLF's fullest advantage.

More Concessions, Motors, and the Brave New World of Watt

Once Watt was confirmed and sworn in there soon became little doubt that he had an agenda and that he would do whatever it took to get it through. A main feature of the Watt plan for the parks was a significantly larger role for the concessionaires, displaying an almost zealous drive to involve them in park operations wherever possible. In a March 9, 1981 appearance before the Conference of National Park Concessionaires, Watt pledged, "It is time for a new beginning and the private enterprise system must be looked to for rejuvenation and enthusiasm as we try to make the parks more accessible and usable for the people.... You folks (the concessionaires) are going to play a

tremendously important role and a growing role in the administration of our National Parks and we are going to reach out and involve you in some areas that you haven't been asked to be involved in before.”[53]

So zealous was Watt's desire to facilitate concessionaire involvement, he expressed a ready willingness to remove anyone who might be in his path. “If we need to change personnel under Russ (Dickenson – NPS Director) to accomplish a more aggressive concessionaires program, we will change the people.”[54] Watt continued, “If a personality is giving you (the concessionaires) a problem, we are going to get rid of the problem or the personality, whichever is faster.”[55]

Besides his overt enthusiasm for more privatization of the parks, Watt felt no need to withhold his opinion supporting motorized rafting in the Canyon. “I don't like to paddle and I don't like to walk.” James Watt would say, almost with a touch of pride.[56] Watt himself saw little value for extended river trips. Relating about his own Grand Canyon motorized raft trip, “The first day was spectacular.... The second day started to get a little tedious, but the third day I wanted bigger motors to move that raft out. There is no way you could get me on an oar-powered raft on that river – I'll guarantee you that. On the fourth day we were praying for helicopters and they came.”[57]

The country now had a Secretary of Interior that thought the motor trips were too long and the motorized Wilderness was still much too tedious.

On the Monday following Watt's confirmation hearing, January 12, 1981, a press release came from NPS Western Regional Director Howard Chapman announcing “... the public will have the option of motor or oar trips in the future.” Chapman also disclosed that he would be using the Hatch Amendment as a guide to future river management.

The next day, GCNP Superintendent Dick Marks both called and wrote Fred Burke with the good news that the commercial “preferred use season” allocation would be for 105,500 user days. Use would be based upon user days, rather for the “total number of people” method provided in the 1979 plan.[58] This single provision emphasizing user days handed to the outfitters the economic motivation to supply the public with the shorter motorized trips that deliver the most profit, rather than to provide the longer oar powered trips which cost patrons less per day. This same increased frequency of short trips set the stage for the current use of helicopters, which now service more than 50% of the commercial river passengers.

On February 10, 1981, the MSLF wrote to Fred Burke advising him that the MSLF would be putting their suit on inactive status as they waited for the Park, now officially under the supervision of their former leader, to take the “appropriate action” to fulfill their new promises[59]

1981 Draft Alternatives – Motors, Motors, or Motors?

Other than Watt's intermittent comments in support of motorized rafts, little was conveyed to the public about the status of the river until that summer. On June 8, 1981 ignoring ten years of public input calling for the elimination of motors, a new set of fully motorized management alternatives emerged for public comment with release of "Draft Alternatives for the Colorado River Management Plan." This completely new set of four separate motor-oar combination alternatives, each of which provided for continuation of motor use throughout the summer season, was announced by NPS Western Regional Director Howard Chapman who now claimed that the 1979 plan had been "vetoed by Congress." [60] These new alternatives did not allow the historical public preference for the elimination of motors to even be considered.

This draft document stated that the new set of presented alternatives were needed because "The (Hatch) Amendment prohibited a reduction of user days or passenger launches for commercial motorized craft below 1978 levels during the summer season. The commercial use level in 1978 was 89,000 user days." [61] The press release accompanying the draft plan further echoed Chapman's erroneous conclusion that "... the plan adopted by the Park Service in 1979 was subsequently vetoed by Congress last year." [62] A two-month public comment period was provided and closed on August 12, 1981.

With the release of this new plan the Senate's vote for a single year postponement of the implementation of the 1980 CRMP had somehow been transformed into a full purge of the motor phase-out concept. Also, conveniently forgotten were the Senate hearings that were promised to have occurred in early 1981 that would have more thoroughly examined the facts Orrin Hatch abruptly introduced on the Senate floor on November 14, 1980. Completely forgotten was the Park's plan to revise the user day allocations. Using the same misinterpretation of Congressional directives, the 1980 plan's temporary 70% commercial user day ratio spontaneously, in the 1981 Plan, became inflexible at 115,500 user days for the commercials and 54,450 for the privates. [63] The die was now being cast for the twenty-year wait currently confronting those Americans who choose to access the Canyon non-commercially.

Quite happy with the completely motorized horizon the 1981 draft provided, Watt's Mountain States Legal Foundation abandoned their lawsuit on July 16, 1981.

1981 CRMP – The Incredible End to the Decade of Public Input

In December of 1981 came the issuance of the final 1981 CRMP that provided continuation of motors and the foundation upon which the river is managed today. This 1981 document also repeated and further codified the earlier draft version's dubious interpretation of the Hatch Amendment with the statement, "The amendment prohibited a reduction of user days or passenger launches for commercial motorized craft below 1978 levels during the summer season." Without ever mentioning that the only alternatives presented for public comment in the June of 1981 Draft were combinations of motor and oar use, the plan justifies its final conclusion with the statement, "The

preponderance of these (public) comments favored some combination of oars and motors, while voicing interest to have a period of oar only use."[64]

This 1981 CRMP contained no mention of any consideration of the non-motorized options consistently requested and preferred by the public. The preceding 1980 CRMP had been developed through processes that complied with the National Environmental Policy Act. Such NEPA processes, which require that "all reasonable alternatives be considered," form legal, binding decisions that require implementation by the administering agency. A decision arrived at via the NEPA process cannot be withdrawn or a new decision made without going through a similar NEPA compliant process. Clearly, the publicly preferred no motor option was a "reasonable" alternative that was never considered in the 1981 plan. The failure to include those "no motor" options in the development of the 1981 plan would seem to be in violation of the NEPA process. The temporary defunding of a project had been magically transformed into an illegal "veto" of a decade of public input.

Of particular note is the 1981 CRMP document that was signed by Superintendent Richard "Dick" Marks on 11/25/81, Western Regional Director Howard Chapman on 12/8/1981, and by NPS Director Russell Dickenson on 12/13/1981. Significantly, at the time of each of their 1981 CRMP authorization signatures, the federal government had already entered into the 1982 fiscal year. Since the provisions of both public law 96-514 and its Hatch Amendment had already expired with the September 30th end of the 1981 fiscal year (94 Stat. 2957), the very basis for the provisions of the 1981 plan no longer existed.

At that time of its signing there weren't any grounds for deviation from the elimination of motors provided in the publicly reviewed 1979 Final EIS and 1980 CRMP. That fact was apparently forgotten despite numerous references on the Senate floor and during Watt's Confirmation hearing that the Hatch Amendment was "solely a one year postponement of the 1979 decision." [65] As stated earlier, even the outfitters had recognized that the Amendment provided only for a single year postponement and "that motors may not be allowed in 1982." [66] Somehow, all this was forgotten by the National Park Service while it was under the supervision of James Watt.

1999 Have Your Cake And Eat It Too (Commercial Outfitters Gross over \$27,000,000 - Privates Wait 20+Years)

The 1981 plan provided for 1979 commercial use levels of 89,000 user days to be increased by 26,500, a 30% increase. This increase resulted in the current total commercial allocation of 115,000 user days, none of which includes the 30,000 user days allocated to crew members that accompany the commercial passengers. This commercial user day level was originally provided in the 1980 plan as an "economic base" to effectively compensate the outfitters for reduced total revenues created by conversion to the longer oar powered trips. Now, under the 1981 CRMP, the motorized outfitters were able to keep their motors while still being compensated as if they had

converted to oars. For Ted Hatch of Hatch River Expeditions alone, the increased user days indirectly provided for by his distant cousin's Amendment translated to almost 1,000 more user days per year, or 17,000 more user days over the last seventeen years.[67] Since Orrin Hatch had failed to disclose his family's benefit from the outcome of his amendment, the Senate could not have been aware that they would be providing the Hatch family with more than \$4,250,000[68] in cumulative gross revenues over the next 17 years. In fact the "economic increase" by itself delivered the group of motorized outfitters additional gross revenues of \$78,800,000 between 1981 and 1998 once the 1980 CRMP was aborted.[69]

No matter how you look at it, the monetary returns from Staveley and Burke's one-year effort were excellent. The motorized raft industry in the Canyon is now approximately a \$20 million dollar a year industry. Staveley's Canyoneers business alone now grosses more than \$1,000,000 per year. Arizona River Runners, no longer owned by Burke, similarly grossed over \$3 million in 1998. Today motors prevail in America's foremost river Wilderness while non-commercial river runners are now waiting 20 years for access.

All this, while the river flows and the outfitters continue to insist, everything is fine; don't change it.

[1] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, handwritten correspondence to Supt. Richard Marks from Joe Munroe, Wilderness Public Rights Fund, June 16, 1980.

[2] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, November 13, 1972 correspondence to The Honorable Barry Goldwater from Carol Burke.

[3] "Final Environmental Statement, Proposed Colorado River Management Plan" (FES 79-30), finalized July 31, 1979, pg. I-1.

[4] "Draft Wilderness Management Plan, Grand Canyon National Park", April 1998, pg. C-1.

[5] Revised Draft Environmental Statement, Proposed Wilderness Classification, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, pg. 22, included in Additions to the National Wilderness System, Communication from the President to Congress, Part 5, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, House Document 92-357, September 21, 1972.

[6] "Final Environmental Statement, Proposed Colorado River Management Plan" (FES 79-30), finalized July 31, 1979, pg. IX-1.

[7] Wilderness Recommendation, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, pg. 20, included in Additions to the National Wilderness System, Communication from the President to

Congress, Part 5, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, House Document 92-357, September 21, 1972.

[8] Wilderness Recommendation, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, pg. 20, included in Additions to the National Wilderness System, Communication from the President to Congress, Part 5, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, House Document 92-357, September 21, 1972.

[9] Additions to the National Wilderness System, Communication from the President to Congress, Part 5, Grand Canyon Complex, Arizona, House Document 92-357, September 21, 1972.

[10] See (93) S. 1296 discussions Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, June 20, 1973.

[11] Congressional Record, March 20, 1973, pg. 8691, col. 3.

[12] Western River Expeditions, Inc., et al, versus Roger C. B. Morton, et al.

[13] See House Report 93-1374, 9/25/74, pg. 4.

[14] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, November 13, 1972 correspondence to The Honorable Barry Goldwater from Carol Burke.

[15] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, April 4, 1973 correspondence to The Honorable Barry Goldwater from Fred Burke, President, Arizona River Runners.

[16] U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, 6/20/73.

[17] U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, 6/20/73, pg. 53.

[18] U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, 6/20/73, pp. 30-1.

[19] U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, 6/20/73, pp. 47-53.

[20] See House Report 93-1374, 9/25/74, pp. 35-6.

[21] "Final Environmental Statement, Proposed Colorado River Management Plan" (FES 79-30), finalized July 31, 1979, pg. IX-1.

[22] " Draft Wilderness Management Plan, Grand Canyon National Park," April 1998, pg. C-2.

[23] Final Environmental Statement FES 79-30 – Proposed Colorado River Management Plan, July 31, 1979, pg. IX-1.

[24] “ Draft Wilderness Management Plan, Grand Canyon National Park”, April 1998, pg. C-2.

[25] Final Environmental Statement FES 79-30 – Proposed Colorado River Management Plan, July 31, 1979, pg. IX-1.

[26] “ Final Environmental Statement, Proposed Colorado River Management Plan” (FES 79-30), finalized July 31, 1979, pg. IX-7,8.

[27] “ Final Environmental Statement, Proposed Colorado River Management Plan” (FES 79-30), finalized July 31, 1979, pg. IX-12.

[28] Final Environmental Statement FES 79-30 – Proposed Colorado River Management Plan, July 31, 1979, pg. III-23.

[29] Colorado River Management Plan, Grand Canyon National Park, 1980, see pp. 15-21.

[30] Colorado River Management Plan, Grand Canyon National Park, 1980, p. 21.

[31] Author’s conversation with Stump’s chief aide Lisa Jackson in March of 1998 affirmed that Stump still adheres to the belief that Bridge Canyon Dam remains a good idea for the Grand Canyon, even in light of the late Barry Goldwater’s expressed regret for voting for Glen Canyon dam.

[32] Congressional Quarterly, 12/27/80, pg. 3649.

[33] National Parks, September/October 1982, p 15.

[34] U.S. Court, Arizona District (Phoenix), Case: 2:CV-80-233PHX CLH, opened 03/27/80, closed 07/16/81.

[35] See Kyl biography entry present on personal Senate web site 2/26/99: “Lawyer with Jennings, Strouss & Salmon in Phoenix, Arizona 1966-1986.”

[36] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, PROA Press Release dated June 6, 1980.

[37] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, August 19, 1980 correspondence to Bob Stump from Professional River Outfitters Association, signed by Gaylord I. Staveley.

[38] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, August 29, 1980 correspondence to Miss C. J. Ross from Eldon Rudd, Member of Congress, signed by Eldon Rudd.

[39] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, October 16, 1980 correspondence to Eldon Rudd from Pamela Manning, signed by Pamela Manning.

[40] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, October 20, 1980 correspondence to Pamela Manning from Eldon Rudd, Member of Congress, signed by Eldon Rudd.

[41] 11/28/80 correspondence from acting NPS Director Ira Hutchison to Eldon Rudd.

[42] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, Western Union Mailgram confirmation dated 11/04/80, signed by Fred Burke, Carol Burke, Pam Manning, Allison Schmidt, and Judy Welch.

[43] Congressional Record, 11/14/80, p S14467, col. 2.

[44] Congressional Record, 11/14/80, p S14467, col. 1.

[45] Congressional Record, 11/14/80, p S14469, col. 1.

[46] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, Correspondence from Fred Burke to Congressman Bob Stump, dated November 29, 1980.

[47] Congressional Quarterly, December 27, 1980, pg. 3650.

[48] Wall Street Journal, May 18, 1979 (see Congressional Quarterly, 12/27/80, p 3649)

[49] Congressional Quarterly, January 10, 1981, pg. 52.

[50] "Reagan Names Five More Cabinet Members", Congressional Quarterly, Dec 27, 1980, pg. 3649.

[51] Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Proposed Nomination of James G. Watt to be Secretary of the Interior, Publication #97-1, January 7-8, 1981.

[52] Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Proposed Nomination of James G. Watt to be Secretary of the Interior, Publication #97-1, January 7-8, 1981, pg. 123.

[53] Statements made during March 9, 1981 meeting before the Conference of National Park Concessionaires, reported in Stealing The National Parks, Don Hummel, p 372. Also in National Parks, June 1981, p 16.

[54] March 9, 1981 meeting with the Conference of National Park Concessionaires.

[55] March 9, 1981 meeting with the Conference of National Park Concessionaires

[56] Sierra, July/August 1981, p. 7.

[57] Sierra, July/August 1981, p 7.; also National Parks, June 1981, p 18.

[58] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, January 13, 1981 correspondence from Richard Marks to Fred Burke, reply reference C3823-ARIZ.

[59] ARR Inc. Collection, Northern Arizona University, Cline Library Special Collections, Manuscript #30, February 10, 1981 correspondence from William Mellor (MSLF) to Fred Burke.

[60] Federal Register, 46:109, June 8, 1981, p 30397 [61] Draft Alternatives for the Colorado River Management Plan, June 1981, pg. 3. Note: no signatures were attached and no authors attested to its content.

[62] Draft Alternatives for the Colorado River Management Plan, June 1981, pg. 3.

[63] Colorado River Management Plan, December 1981, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona, pp. 7-9.

[64] Colorado River Management Plan, December 1981, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona, pg. 4.

[65] Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Proposed Nomination of James G. Watt to be Secretary of the Interior, Publication #97-1, January 7-8, 1981. Senator Bumpers statement to James Watt, pg. 123.

[66] 11/29/80 correspondence to Bob Stump (attn. Lisa Jackson) from Fred Burke, Arizona River Runners, Inc.

[67] As of 1979 Hatch River Expeditions had been allocated 10,080 user days/year. In 1989, after final assignment of all summer and winter dates, the Hatch allocation had

increased to 11,027 user days/year. Source: Colorado River Management Plan, 1989, Grand Canyon National Park, page C-14.

[68] In 1998 dollars, based upon the consideration that trip per day fares/value are the same from year to year, valued at the 1998 average per day fare of \$250.

[69] In 1998 dollars. Motor operators comprise 70% of commercial river running activities. They received 70% of the additional annual award of 26,500 more commercial user days granted in 1981 to concessionaires. That is a total of nearly 315,000 user days made available for motor trips since 1981.

River News 05/01/02

Mission and Goals of River Runners for Wilderness

Principals: Jo Johnson, Tom Martin

An organization for all river runners dedicated to the Wilderness Colorado River and its tributaries.

Guiding principles:

Champion Wilderness designation and protection for all suitable reaches of the Colorado River watershed, including the backcountry and Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park.

Encourage allocation free management plans for all suitable reaches of the Colorado River watershed, including the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park.

Protect the WILDERNESS resources of the Colorado River Watershed.

Mission statement:

Promote the highest resource protection values through Wilderness management and stewardship activities on the Colorado River watershed.

Safeguard non-allocated access to the Colorado River watershed for all recreational river runners.

Goals:

Establish and safeguard a non-motorized Wilderness river corridor for the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park, including congressional wilderness designation for the backcountry and river in Grand Canyon National Park.

Establish and oversee a transparently fair state of the art access model that is not based on allocated set asides for any one user group on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park.

Promote the highest resource protection values through stewardship activities on the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park, including service projects such as education of river runners, partnership with GCNP on data gathering and resource protection activities.

Letter to LR 05/01/02

Congressional Friends of Lake Powell

Dear Friend:

If you love Lake Powell, we need your help to protect it!

It may not be too apparent at first, but, ***Lake Powell is under assault by radical environmentalists***. They have engaged in a slow, deliberate effort to convince the public over time that Lake Powell must go and that we must "restore" Glen Canyon to its primitive state (even though that is impossible). Just ask anyone in the Phoenix media market if they've seen or heard the ads being aired right now by the Sierra Club that talk about restoring Glen Canyon. The ads don't say "Drain Lake Powell," but that is what they're advocating.

And while these extremist groups are subtle and try to stay under the radar of Lake Powell supporters, over the last few months, they have redoubled their efforts and raised nearly a million dollars, dedicated to one thing -- draining Lake Powell.

Here's a little history on the movement:

In November of 1996 the Board of Directors for **the Sierra Club voted unanimously to "drain the reservoir behind Glen Canyon Dam."** They didn't vote to study whether Lake Powell should be drained; they didn't vote to engage in conversations about decommissioning the dam; **they voted to drain Lake Powell -- end of discussion.**

Following that vote two organizations were formed: The Glen Canyon Institute and the Glen Canyon Action Network (now known as Living Rivers). These two organizations have one common goal -- to drain Lake Powell.

We wish we could say that advocates of draining the lake are just far-out fringe organizations with marginal support, but the truth is that their efforts are funded to the tune of almost a million dollars Per year and they have large staffs working every single day toward the single purpose of draining Lake Powell.

You may be thinking: "Well, they may have all this money and organization, and may blow a lot of hot air, but Lake Powell will never really be drained."

We must make one thing perfectly clear: ***If there were a vote on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives tomorrow that called for the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam and the draining of Lake Powell, there is a chance that we would lose that vote!***

Environmental groups work to sway public opinion with emotional pleas and campaigns of misinformation. For example, the Executive Director of Living Rivers in a recent *Arizona Republic* opinion piece claimed that the Grand Canyon river corridor is now rapidly once lush and that it was now rapidly "becoming sterile".

And the President of the Glen Canyon Institute recently argued that because of Glen Canyon Dam:

Wildlife, plant life and whole communities are dying big dams, for all their water storage capability, are bad and whatever benefits they give to the world are immensely overshadowed by the destruction that they cause.

Species are endangered from the headwaters all the way to the Delta because of Glen Canyon Dam, (which) is silting in at an alarming rate and after only 40 years of life, the San Juan arm of Lake Powell is completely sedimented in.

Is the San Juan arm silted in? Of course not, it has over 50 miles of navigable water!

Was the Grand Canyon corridor once lush and only recently turned sterile? Not according to Helen Yard, a consulting ornithologist for the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center:

The Colorado River corridor was a scour zone before the dam went in. There was little, if any, nutrient-rich sand on which trees could grow. There is probably a higher abundance of birds here now than there was before the dam because [now] there are trees. The newly created habitat might be a boon for bird populations that are crashing elsewhere. Riparian systems are declining in the Southwest. Perhaps this is somewhat of a refuge."

The truth is that Lake Powell provides over 40% of the water storage on the Colorado River - water storage that serves millions of Americans who depend on the Colorado for electricity generation, protection from drought, livelihood of communities and for recreation.

But when powerful "green" groups put out misinformation, the public and elected officials from the East and Midwest believe it, largely because those who understand the issues and the value of Lake Powell are not financially able to counter the lies being told.

While the numbers and dollars of groups who want to drain Lake Powell continue to rise, there is only one organization that is working every day to protect Lake Powell. It has one full-time staff member and a current budget of less than \$70,000 per year. It is the **Friends of Lake Powell, Inc.**

All of us who are Friends of Lake Powell recognize the huge educational task we face to protect the Lake, and we need your help to counter such outrageous claims before public opinion and political leaders are turned against Lake Powell.

Certainly you see the problem. *How likely are we to effectively protect and defend the lake that w, love with one person fighting these large and well-funded organizations?* The odds aren't good. At some point, unless we significantly strengthen our defense, those of us who love Lake Powell will get rolled. It may not happen this year or next, but if there is a lesson to be learned from other aggressive environmental efforts (like banning snowmobiles in Yellowstone), the lesson is that extreme changes in policy can be adopted and implemented so quickly that you don't have time to mount a defense.

Won't you become a Friend of Lake Powell, and encourage your friends and neighbors to add their names, dollars and collective strength to this important cause?

We must step up and do our part! Ask yourself where you could go to replace the Lake Powell experience..? Ask yourself what it is worth to protect a place so unique in all the world..?

Please fill out the enclosed card and send a tax-deductible contribution today! Your gift of \$1,000, \$500, \$ 100 or even \$35 will help the Friends of Lake Powell to mount a vigorous defense for our beautiful desert jewel.

We cannot emphasize enough, how important it is for you to get involved in protecting Lake Powell. Please act today, and help us preserve the many benefits of Lake Powell -- the water supply, power supply, recreation and wildlife habitat -- so that our children and grandchildren can enjoy Lake Powell in the future.

Thank you very much for supporting this important effort.

Sincerely,

Jim Hansen, U.S. Congressman, Utah's 1st District; John Shadegg, U.S. Congressman, Arizona's 4th District; Chris Cannon, U.S. Congressman, Utah's 3rd District; Jim Gibbons, U.S. Congressman, Nevada's 2nd District.

P.S. Your tax-deductible contribution of \$1,000, \$500, \$100 or even \$35 is critical to our continued efforts to protect Lake Powell. Please send a contribution today! Thanks!

Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02
Volume 2, Number 4 (Special Drainit Times Issue)

Update on the national campaign to drain Lake Powell reservoir and restore Glen and Grand Canyons.

The Articles

- [Sediment-al Journey, Roadshow for the Grand Canyon](#)
- [Sediment Problems: the Beginning of the End for Lake Powell](#)
- [Simulated Floods: No Help for the Grand Canyon](#)
- [Antelope Point: LR Coalition Fights New Marina](#)
- [Dam Risks: Interior Denies Public Right to Know](#)
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-

Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02

Simulated Floods: No Help for the Grand Canyon

Vol. 2, No. 4, May 2002

The Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) is working on another public relations charade to combat mounting pressure that it is not doing enough to stop the decline of the Grand Canyon ecosystem caused by Glen Canyon Dam. As a result they are contemplating a two-year series of experimental flows from Glen Canyon Dam to improve habitat conditions for humpback chub, an endangered native fish. But like similar exercises conducted over the past five years, these too are doomed to fail.

According to Dave Haskell, retired science director for Grand Canyon National Park, "The three key things this ecosystem needs are warmer water, sediment, and annual high flows to distribute sediment into the system. These experiments will not provide this."

Ninety to ninety-five percent of the sediment Grand Canyon needs remains trapped behind Glen Canyon Dam. Lack of sediment and driftwood has eliminated beaches and changed the carbon base, which in turn has caused the near disappearance of the Canyon's natural food web. The historic food source for native fish has vanished; no insects native to the Canyon remain and riparian vegetation is struggling in the sterile soil.

At best these experimental flows will move a tiny fraction of the Canyon's remaining sediment. Moreover, since these flows are not designed to exceed 45,000 cubic feet per second, when pre-dam flows were routinely twice this, the overall benefit to native fish and plants will be further compromised.

Manipulating the dam won't change the chilly water temperatures either. Water released from Glen Canyon Dam is a constant 46° F., causing the river temperature to seldom exceed 55° F. Native fish require warmer water with temperatures reaching 80° F., the natural pre-dam summer temperature of the water.

In 1996 BuRec received a huge public relations boost for implementing simulated flood flows from the dam, but the native habitat gained nothing. "Here we are five years and

\$40 million later, ready to repeat history," says John Weisheit, LIVING RIVERS' Conservation Director. "That's why we are building a new Grand Canyon Restoration Coalition to mobilize widespread support for true restoration of the Grand Canyon."

Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02

Sediment-al Journey, Roadshow for the Grand Canyon

Vol. 2, No 4, May 2002 (Drainit Times No. 2)

Moving the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) to move sediment is the focus of LIVING RIVERS' upcoming "Sediment-al Journey." June 17, 2002 is the 100th anniversary of BuRec's founding, marking a century of river devastation. The victimization of the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon is a case study of the Bureau's exploits.

Caught between BuRec's two largest concrete dams, Hoover and Glen Canyon, the Grand Canyon is slowly becoming sterile. Glen Canyon Dam disrupts the food chain because it traps the nutrient-laden sediment. The dam also causes drastic water temperature changes, and tames the formerly life-giving seasonal flood flows. Five of eight Grand Canyon native fish species are either gone or on the verge of collapse, beaches are disappearing, and damaging exotics are choking out native vegetation. Public officials and others who have profited at the expense of the river will celebrate BuRec's anniversary at Hoover Dam. LIVING RIVERS and the Grand Canyon Restoration Coalition will be there too, but with a different message. The Sediment-al Journey, which will conclude its five-day road trip at Hoover Dam on June 17, will draw public attention to the extensive environmental damage that is BuRec's 600-dam legacy.

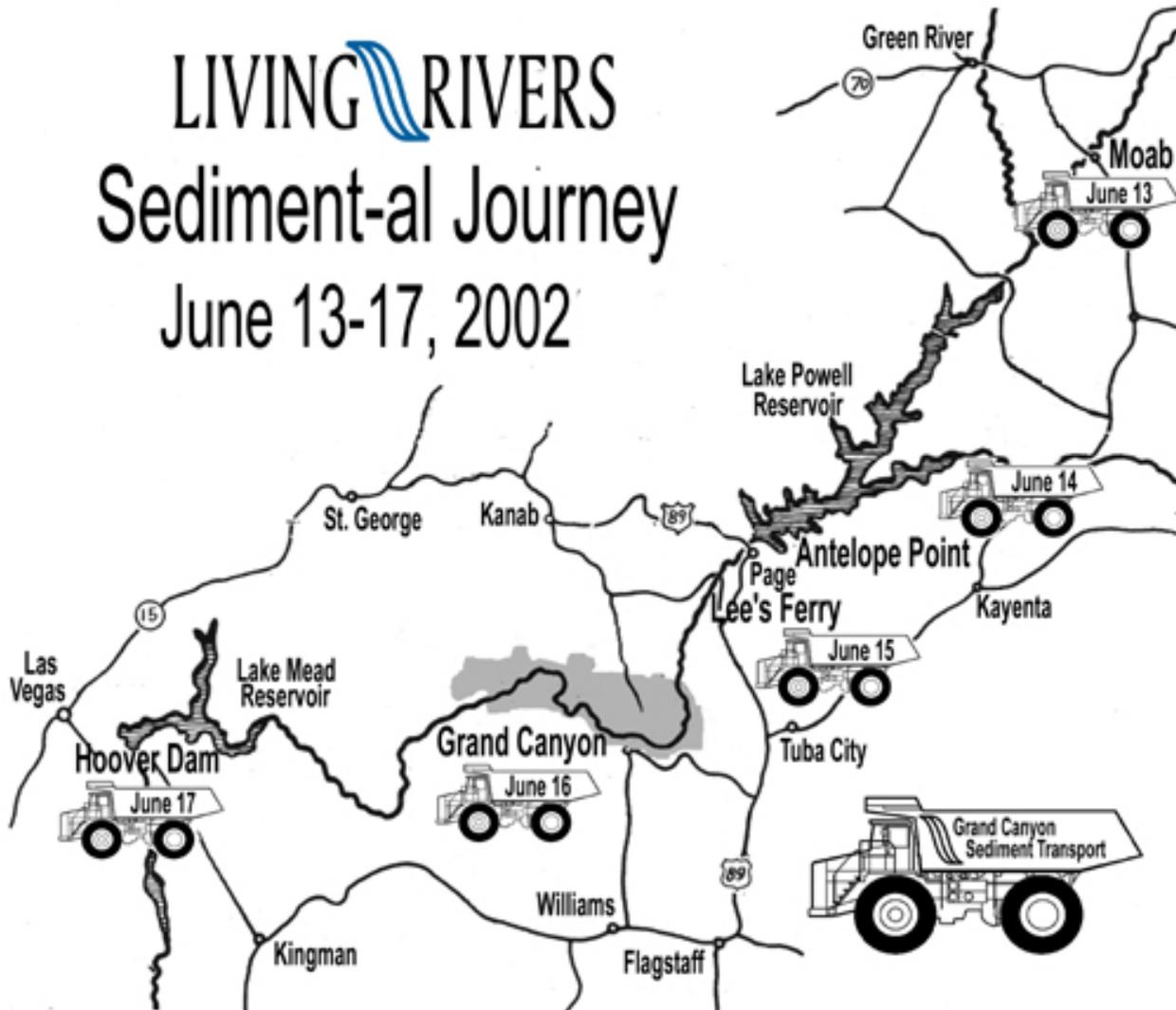
Our journey will begin with an evening rally and banquet on the banks of the Colorado near Canyonlands National Park. People will be bringing sediment from throughout the basin to load into a dump truck for transport to the Grand Canyon. Participants will then head to Antelope Point, on the edge of Lake Powell, to collect more sediment and to support Navajo activists in their opposition to a proposed marina (see back page). Then it's off to Glen Canyon Dam and the first ceremonial sediment dump below the dam. We'll then spend two nights along the river at Lee's Ferry, passing out sediment to those embarking on their Grand Canyon river trips, as well as taking a day-long trip ourselves from Glen Canyon Dam back to Lee's Ferry.

On the eve of arriving at Hoover Dam we will gather at Grand Canyon National Park to rally and inform visitors of the Park's dying ecosystem at the hands of BuRec. Riverside music, cookouts and camping will round out the festivities as we promote the need for BuRec to transform its mission from one of devastation to restoration. Please join us.

LIVING RIVERS

Sediment-al Journey

June 13-17, 2002



Sediment-al Journey June 13-17, 2002

Moab, UT

June 13, 6:00pm - 10:00pm
Sediment Loading and Kick-off Rally
Gold Bar Campground

Lake Powell Reservoir, AZ

June 14, 12:00pm - 1:30pm
Sacred Sediment/Sacred Rivers
Antelope Point

Marble Canyon, AZ

June 15, 9:00am - 5:00pm
Boating for the Canyon

Boating for Wilderness
Leeís Ferry Campground

Grand Canyon National Park, AZ

June 16, 12:00pm - 2:00pm
Save Grand Canyon from Glen Canyon Dam
South Rim Concession Area

Hoover Dam, AZ/NV

June 17, 11:00am - 1:00pm
Reclaim the Bureau
100 Years is Enough
Arizona-side parking lot

Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02

Sediment Problems: the Beginning of the End for Lake Powell

Vol. 2, No 4, May 2002 (Drainit Times No. 2)



In late March LIVING RIVERS completed a reconnaissance of the upper Colorado River arm at Lake Powell reservoir to further ascertain the gravity of the sediment build-up and delta formation at the head of the reservoir. With the reservoir at its lowest level in

nine years, we were provided with a vivid picture of nature's progress toward forcing the decommissioning of the reservoir marinas, and ultimately Glen Canyon Dam.

As anticipated, there was extensive sediment accumulation in both the main stem and side canyons. In many places the Colorado is cutting channels 25-foot deep, with perched segments calving off like glacier slabs along the Alaska coastline. River travel is difficult, as a minefield of sandbars and mudflats significantly complicate navigation through much of the main channel as it enters the reservoir.

An examination of the Dirty Devil River, one of the major tributaries flowing into the reservoir, revealed a ticking time bomb. Its river channel is completely full of stored sediment, a situation we observed in many of the side canyons. This suggests that a significant amount of sediment will be dumped beyond the suspended pile and into Hite Bay when strong summer storms resume on the Colorado Plateau.

There was also evidence of the river remobilizing sediment for transport toward the dam. With the reservoir level down 54 feet, the Colorado River has regained 30 miles of current, which is churning up and reworking the sediment down-reservoir. Because of new operating guidelines to store more Colorado River water in California, and cumulative poor snow packs in the headwaters, it will be difficult to keep Lake Powell reservoir full. The low reservoir levels will restore a flowing river over sediment, which will mobilize and quickly advance the delta and associated turbidity flows towards Glen Canyon Dam. Turbidity flows are the suspended sediments that continue flowing along the bottom of the reservoir and pile up before the front of the dam.

Currently the main delta sits about 150 miles from the dam, and less than one mile from Hite Marina. The delta's advancement will soon force the closure of this marina, possibly as early as the end of this year. The sediment accumulation and reduced marina access will create problems for private and commercial river runners who end their Colorado River Cataract Canyon trips at Hite Marina. A similar situation already exists for river runners on the San Juan River arm of the reservoir. The San Juan delta is growing nearly as fast as the Colorado's, and has only about 100 miles to travel before reaching Glen Canyon Dam.

According to Dr. John Dohrenwend, a geomorphologist formerly with the US Geological Survey who took part in the expedition, reservoir and dam managers may be in for a shock. Similar to how BuRec planners misjudged the amount of water in the Colorado watershed, giving away 22% more water on paper than the river actually delivers, they may have misjudged the sedimentation rates too. Researchers have documented incredible cycles of erosion followed by deposition in the arroyos and rivers of the Colorado Plateau. In the 1880s, for example, a cycle of arroyo cutting and sediment movement began in the Southwest; this cycle ended in the early 1940s. Since then, there has been less erosion and more valley bottom deposition. "Thus," says Dohrenwend, "sedimentation in Lake Powell, from its creation to the present, occurred during a time of relatively slow landscape change that is not fully representative of historic times. Indeed, a return to the conditions that prevailed during the first half of the

twentieth century would significantly accelerate sedimentation in Lake Powell and would significantly affect future use and operation of this reservoir."

Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02

Lake Powell Pipeline: Opposition Builds on Anti-Dam Day

Vol. 2, No. 4, May 2002 (Drainit Times No. 2)

Water conservation and river restoration were the rallying cries outside Utah governor Mike Leavitt's office on the fifth International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life, March 14, 2002. LIVING RIVERS was joined by eleven other Utah river advocacy organizations in presenting the first annual "State of Utah's Rivers Report" which highlighted the rapidly declining health of the Green, San Juan and Colorado rivers, as a result of excessive water consumption.

Of major concern is a proposed pipeline from Lake Powell reservoir to St. George in Utah's Washington County. The proposed \$250-million project is designed to bring 70,000 acre-feet of water to southwest Utah, which is 150 percent more than the region is presently using. Washington County now wastes more water than practically any other community in the country; its per capita water use is 355 gallons per day. In contrast, the community of Tucson uses only half this amount of water: 170 gallons per person, per day.

If constructed, this pipeline would also represent the first major water diversion directly from Lake Powell reservoir. LIVING RIVERS is opposing any such infrastructure as it would be unnecessary and add to the costs associated with the eventual decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam.

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Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02

Dam Risks Interior Denies Public Right to Know

Vol. 2, No. 4, (Drainit Times No. 2)

LIVING RIVERS' efforts to obtain information on the communities impacted, should Glen Canyon and Hoover dams fail, are headed for the courts. On April 2, the Department of Interior denied LIVING RIVERS' appeal of the BuRec's November 2001 decision to deny its Freedom of Information Act request for dam failure inundation maps.

At issue is BuRec's claim that this information should be withheld because it pertains solely to the internal operations of the agency. LIVING RIVERS contends that the tremendous risks associated with the failure of one or both of these dams should be made known to the public. BuRec documents obtained through other sources reveal that if Glen Canyon Dam failed, a 500-foot wall of water will scour much of the Grand Canyon. This will cause tremendous ecological damage, loss of sacred sites, and the certain death of any recreationists unable to escape to higher ground.

But of potentially greater concern are the impacts this torrent will have when it reaches Hoover Dam. It is estimated that a 75-foot wall of water will overtop Hoover Dam, posing significant threat to dams downstream, riverside communities such as Laughlin, Nevada and Blythe, California, as well as several Indian nations. Such a flood could also threaten the water supplies of tens of millions of people. If Hoover Dam failed in the process, the catastrophe would be monumental. BuRec, however, is withholding this information and keeping those who might be affected, in either scenario, in the dark.

In 1997, the US Court of Appeals forced the Department of Agriculture to release maps pertaining to spotted owl habitat to the Maricopa Audubon Society. At that time, the Federal government was asserting that such maps were germane solely to the internal operations of the agency and thus not releasable to the public. LIVING RIVERS hopes that the courts will find that inundation maps belong in the public domain too.

More Information:

[Glen Canyon Dam Failure Study](#)

Living Rivers Currents 05/10/02

Antelope Point: LR Coalition Fights New Marina

Vol. 2, No. 4, May 2002 (Drainit Times No. 2)

LIVING RIVERS was recently joined by 17 other organizations in demanding suspension of the planning process for the proposed Antelope Point Marina project on Lake Powell reservoir. In an eleven-page letter sent April 14 to Glen Canyon National Recreation Area officials, the coalition expressed concern regarding violations of environmental laws, utilization of outdated planning guidelines, a bias toward servicing motorized flatwater recreation, and failure to consult with Navajo interests. The coalition demanded a revision of the Recreation Area's General Management Plan prior to any further work on the proposed marina.

At issue is a proposal to construct a 410-slip marina, 225-room hotel complex, 150-site campground, fuel dock, convenience store, restaurants and related infrastructure over a 950-acre site; 710 of which are owned by the Navajo Nation, with the remaining 240 administered by the Park Service. Of major concern is that the project evolved from a planning document which is 23 years-old and has little relevance to the reservoir's current operation.

The Diné Bidziil Coalition, representing 17 grassroots Navajo groups, and the Diné Medicinemens Association are opposed to the project, as it would impact ceremonial and sacred sites, and promote inappropriate development on the Navajo Reservation. "Our people will derive virtually no benefits from this project, only a few low-wage jobs and some lease payments. The bulk of the money flows off the reservation to a non-Indian company in Scottsdale Arizona," says Hazel James, with the Diné Bidziil Coalition. "Most families on the reservation live near or below the poverty line; we don't have houseboats and jet skis to take on Lake Powell reservoir."

"Their documents claim that they consulted with us about sacred site impacts, but no consultation ever occurred," said Thomas Morris Jr., president of the Diné Medicinemens Association. Federal regulations require the National Park Service to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners, and to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sites.

Despite this proposal being the most substantial development initiative at Lake Powell reservoir in decades, the Park Service has done only cursory environmental analysis. The likely impact on water, air, noise, and public health, not to mention the cumulative development impacts on the surrounding community, compel the Park Service to undertake an Environmental Impact Statement. More importantly, the Park Service must reassess the perceived need for this new resort marina in light of declining visitation, which is down 11 percent since 2000 and 35 percent since 1992.

LIVING RIVERS is now mobilizing legal assistance to further support Navajo activists in their efforts to stop development at Antelope Point.

River News 05/16/02

Living Rivers announces the founding of River Runners for Wilderness

RRFW RIVER WIRE No. 1

New Organization to Launch Lee's Ferry, AZ

River Runners For Wilderness (RRFW), a new river resource protection organization, has formed as a direct response to the threats to the wilderness reaches of the Colorado River basin. RRFW will formally launch June 15, 2002, at the boat ramp at Lee's Ferry, Arizona.

"There's just no other multi-day wilderness white water river run like the Grand Canyon. As river runners, we want to do our utmost to preserve this wilderness resource, while maintaining fair and equitable river access for all river runners," said Jo Johnson, RRFW Grand Canyon coordinator, as she discussed reasons to launch a new group. "The National Wilderness Preservation system is missing a key resource in the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park. There's no other group dedicated to wilderness river running. Once you embrace wilderness management, many of the conflicting river issues we see today are resolved."

Longtime wilderness advocate Jeff Ingram, also with RRFW, is pleased to see this issue alive again. "The public, as it did every time it had a chance in the 1970's & 1990's, will support a motor-free Grand Canyon Wilderness. Lets not let the same Hatch-Watt-Marks back room ploy be used again. Let's work for an open, public, democratic process on wilderness and river management, starting with a comprehensive Park Service planning effort and ending with a Congressional establishment of a real, complete Grand Canyon Wilderness."

Among those excited to see the new organization get underway is Tom Martin, also a RRFW Grand Canyon coordinator. "The do-it-yourself, muscle-powered river runners wait in an almost 8000 river-trip-long backlog, while the park's river outfitters continue to make a mockery of the river wilderness. The 32 folks on an outfitted trip pay a king's ransom to see the canyon on motorized tour boats operated by unpaid or underpaid river guides, then end their trip boarding a waiting helicopter at the river's edge less than 2/3 of the way through the canyon. What kind of wilderness is that?"

The group will host a "launching" party at Lee's Ferry, Arizona, on Friday afternoon/evening, June 14, and Saturday, June 15, 2002, in concert with Living Rivers and the Grand Canyon Restoration Coalition. The launch will be part of Living Rivers 700 mile long "Sediment-al Journey," building support for the restoration of Grand Canyon and the reformation of the Bureau of Reclamation. Festivities will get underway with a cookout and program talk Friday evening, followed by river music, dance and good cheer. Saturday morning will begin with outreach at the boat ramp, then a ceremony commemorating the founding of RRFW. This will be followed by a float from Glen Canyon Dam back to Lee's Ferry where the festivities will continue into the evening. Among the participants include: Jeff Ingram, a longtime Grand Canyon wilderness activist; Kim Crumbo, a Colorado River guide, former wilderness coordinator for Grand Canyon National Park, and currently the Grand Canyon representative for Arizona Wilderness Coalition; John Weisheit, a Colorado River guide and conservation director for Living Rivers; Brent Blackwelder, president of Friends of the Earth and veteran of 400 successful dam fights over 32 years; musician and author Katie Lee; and additional riverside music from Peg Millet, Bill Oliver and Peter Neils. For more information stay tuned to our [website](#) (now under construction) or [Living Rivers](#)

For more information, you can contact River Runners For Wilderness
PO Box 466
Moab, UT 84532

Tel: 435-259-1063
Fax: 435-259-7612

email: info@rrfw.org

RRFW RIVER WIRE is a free service to the boating community from River Runners For Wilderness. Participation is FREE (and required!). Send your e-mail address to riverwire@rrfw.org and we'll add you to the RRFW RIVER WIRE e-mail list. RRFW is a project of Living Rivers

LR Press Release 05/17/02

No Cause for Celebration: Groups to Protest 100th Anniversary of Bureau of Reclamation

Launching "Sediment-al Journey" to Save the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park

Contact:

Owen Lammers (435) 259-1063
Lisa Force (480) 990-7839

One month from today, on June 17, the nation's leading dam building organization, the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec), will be celebrating 100 years of river manipulation at Hoover Dam. Living Rivers, in conjunction with more than sixty other environmental and

social justice organizations, will also convene at Hoover Dam that day, but will be articulating a much different message.

"There's no cause for celebration; this should be a wake," says Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers. "Thousands of river miles, critical habitat for endangered species and the cultural heritage of a number of indigenous tribes have all been devastated by the 600 dams BuRec has constructed in the western United States."

Nowhere is BuRec's damage more apparent than in the world-renowned Grand Canyon, just upstream of Hoover Dam. Twenty per cent of the Grand Canyon was inundated by Hoover Dam, while the remainder of the Canyon's river corridor is seeing its native ecosystem completely disappear as a result of BuRec's second largest dam, Glen Canyon, 370 miles upstream of Hoover.

Glen Canyon Dam has changed the Colorado's natural flows, its seasonal variations in water temperature, sediment and nutrient deposition and fish migration into and out of Grand Canyon. "The Canyon's entire food web is being dramatically altered. Three of eight native fish species are gone and two more are on their way. The beaches, so revered by the Canyon's river runners, are going as well and all at the hands of BuRec," says Michelle Harrington with the Center for Biological Diversity.

To highlight the damage BuRec has caused, especially to Grand Canyon, the groups will be conducting a five-day, 700-mile, six-stop road show, which will conclude June 17, at Hoover Dam. Known as the Sediment-al Journey, they will be traveling by caravan led by a dump truck which will be collecting, then delivering, sediment and nutrients to the Grand Canyon ecosystem. According to Grand Canyon National Park's retired science director, Dave Haskell, "Lack of sediment in the canyon is a huge problem that needs to be dealt with now. Glen Canyon Dam presents the most serious threat to the Park."

"It's time for BuRec to get on with the task of decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam," says Tori Woodard, conservation director of the Sierra Club's Glen Canyon Group, which is co-sponsoring the Journey's kick-off rally near Moab, Utah on June 13. "BuRec must take responsibility for the damage it has caused and get on with the task of reviving the Colorado River."

"BuRec has submerged so many of our sacred sites and destroyed this principle artery of mother earth and vital part of our people's culture," adds Thomas Morris, president of the DinÈ (Navajo) Medicinemens Association, which will be co-hosting the Journey's second stop adjacent to Lake Powell reservoir and at Glen Canyon Dam.

The Journey will then spend two days in Grand Canyon. The first will be at Lee's Ferry meeting with those preparing for launching their Grand Canyon river trips, then for a Grand Canyon gathering and folk concert at the amphitheater near the South Rim's concession area. Then it's off to Hoover Dam for the rally in advance of BuRec's official event.

"The situation at Grand Canyon and the Colorado River are merely a sampling of the destruction BuRec has caused," says Brent Blackwelder, president of Friends of the Earth and veteran of more than 400 successful dam fights across the US. "From the Columbia to the Rio Grande, BuRec has been wasting taxpayer money subsidizing low-value crop production for cattle feed. It's time to end this practice and bring these rivers back to life."

"It's bad enough that BuRec has dammed-up rivers here, but its destructive legacy extends to rivers all over the world. From the Amazon to the Yangtze, BuRec consultants have traveled the globe spreading their concrete messageñsomething nobody should be celebrating," adds Juliette Majot, executive director from International Rivers Network.

For additional information please visit:

[Living Rivers Sediment-al Journey](#)

[Bureau of Reclamation's proposed itinerary for Hoover Dam celebration](#)

[Center for Biological Diversity](#)

[Friends of the Earth](#)

[International Rivers Network](#)

LR Press Release 06/13/02

Sedimental Journey Gets Underway

Groups Protesting 100 years of River Destruction by the Bureau of Reclamation Five Day Tour Begins Today to Save the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park

Contact: Owen Lammers (435) 259-1063, (435) 260-2590

Lisa Force (602) 321-1753

MOAB, UT From the banks of Colorado River near Canyonlands National Park, a caravan of activists departs today for Hoover Dam, site of the Bureau of Reclamation's (BuRec's) centennial festivities that take place next Monday, June 17th. With banners proclaiming "600 dams, 100 years is too much," and "Save Grand Canyon from Glen Canyon Dam" the group will host a series of events along the way to draw attention to negative environmental and cultural impacts caused by BuRec's dam-building legacy, especially to the world-renowned [Grand Canyon National Park](#).

Leaders from Living Rivers, the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth and others, representing a network of more than eighty environmental and social justice organizations, will be demanding immediate action by BuRec to restore the river canyon through one of the world's most famous national parks. "This represents the largest grassroots movement assembled for Grand Canyon advocacy since BuRec's plans to inundate the Park with two major dams were defeated over forty years ago," says Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers. "Stopping those dams clearly was not

enough, because the operation of BuRec's Glen Canyon Dam upstream has caused a slow, but nonetheless lethal blow to Grand Canyon's ecosystem."

- Grand Canyon's food web has been completely transformed, causing the loss of all native insect species.
- Four of eight native fish in Grand Canyon have disappeared, while two more are almost gone.
- Mammals such as muskrats and beavers are gone from the river corridor.
- Riparian vegetation in the Canyon's high water zones has disappeared.

This decline is occurring because: ninety five percent of the sediment and nutrients that once flowed into Grand Canyon is now trapped behind the dam; seasonal flow fluctuations critical for building beaches and spawning habitat no longer occurs, and water released from the dam is nearly a constant 46 degrees F, whereas the native system requires temperatures in excess of 80 degrees.

"We will be traveling to Hoover Dam to reinforce the growing public outcry to reverse the damage BuRec is causing in Grand Canyon, the Colorado River watershed and rivers across the Western United States, " says Brent Blackwelder, president of Friends of the Earth. "What's happening in Grand Canyon is emblematic of the problems we're now experiencing throughout BuRec's 600-dam plumbing system."

In a [three-page declaration](#) to be presented to the BuRec at Hoover Dam the 82 groups will be calling for:

- The restoration of essential sediment and nutrient flows from the main stem Colorado into Grand Canyon.
- The restoration of natural flow regimes to properly transport this sediment within Grand Canyon, when and where it belongs.
- The restoration of more natural seasonally variable water temperatures in the main stem Colorado through Grand Canyon.
- Development of a restoration and recovery program for the Colorado River corridor in Grand Canyon that includes the full recovery of all species known to be native to Grand Canyon prior to the operation of Glen Canyon Dam.

"BuRec's efforts to correct these problems with modification of the dam's operations will continue to fail because they only address a tiny part of the problem, modification of flows," adds Lammers. "No feasible plan exists to address the lack of sediment and nutrients, water temperature or elimination of non-native species."

"This is why we support decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam," says Sierra Club board member Ed Dobson, who lives along the San Juan River in Bluff Utah." We must get on with the task of reviving Grand Canyon's dying river ecosystem."

Grand Canyon's ecosystem also represents a critical part of the cultural heritage of a number of Native Nations, including the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Havasupai, and Halapai. "BuRec must restore the natural flow regime to the Canyon's artery," says Cal Seciwa, Zuni tribal member and director of academic affairs for the American Indian Institute at Arizona State University. "The ecosystem functioned for thousands of years without

intervention, and will thrive for thousands more once these shortsighted manipulations cease."

En route to Hoover Dam, the groups will host events at: Lake Powell Reservoir and Glen Canyon Dam; Lee's Ferry Campground, launch site for Grand Canyon river trips; and the amphitheater near Grand Canyon National Park's South Rim. Titled "Sediment-al Journey" the caravan will be led by a dump truck which will be transporting much needed sediment and nutrients to Grand Canyon's river corridor.

###



LR in the News 06/14/02

Hoover Dam site of celebration, protests Monday

**By Jace Radke
Las Vegas Sun**

While the Bureau of Reclamation celebrates 100 years of existence with a gala at Hoover Dam Monday, environmental activists are planning to protest the effects that dams have on the ecosystem.

About 30 protesters are expected at Hoover Dam Monday morning, a few hours before Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner John Keys, Gov. Kenny Guinn and other dignitaries are scheduled to arrive.

Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers, an organization dedicated to preserving natural ecosystems, said his group believes the celebration should be more like a wake.

"Thousands of river miles, critical habitat for endangered species and the cultural heritage of a number of indigenous tribes have all been devastated by the 600 dams that have been constructed in the Western United States," Lammers said.

Dams act as obstacles to the natural flow of rivers and sediment -- which has led to the deterioration of ecosystems in places such as the Grand Canyon, Lammers said.

Lammers plans to have about 30 people and a dump truck full of sediment at the protest to bring attention to what he calls the West's failing river ecosystems.

"Our main focus is on Glen Canyon Dam (a Utah facility that created Lake Powell)," Lammers said.

"It is restricting the flow of sediment into the Grand Canyon, while Hoover Dam is farther down river and not causing these types of problems in a national landmark.

"We'll always have the geology in the Grand Canyon, but the flora and fauna (are) disappearing, and all we'll be left with is a lunar landscape."

Bureau of Reclamation spokesman Barry Wirth acknowledged that dams can hurt ecosystems, but said that dams are very much needed.

"There are 25 million people in seven states that rely on the water that Glen Canyon Dam provides from a river that would otherwise serve only three million people," Wirth said.

The Bureau of Reclamation is experimenting with flow releases designed to replace sediment in the Grand Canyon and build up beaches and areas for plants and animals to thrive, Wirth said.

The protest will be held on the Arizona side of the dam in a parking area, which will be as close as protesters will be permitted because of security precautions.

About 2,000 invited guests are expected, and Bureau of Reclamation Police will work with Metro Police, Nevada Highway Patrol, Arizona Department of Public Safety and the FBI to ensure security at the event.

The portion of U.S. 93 that runs over the dam will be closed to vehicle traffic from noon until midnight Monday, Bureau of Reclamation spokesman Bob Walsh said. Travelers are advised that traffic will be detoured through Laughlin and Searchlight via U.S. 95 and State Route 163.

Norton is expected to give a keynote address at the event, which will also feature a flyover by the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, fireworks and a laser show on the face of the dam.

The event is not open to the public.

LR in the News 06/14/02

Hoover Dam centerpiece of Reclamation Bureau's celebration

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) - The Bureau of Reclamation's yearlong 100th birthday party begins Monday at Hoover Dam with dignitaries, a laser light show and the sound of protest.

"The Hoover Dam was chosen because it's a recognizable American icon," said bureau spokeswoman Dana Mishoe of the monument that draws 1.2 million tourists annually and is considered one of the nation's greatest engineering feats.

Some of the bureau's former employees and current partners are expected to be among the estimated 2,000 guests of the 8:30 p.m. program on the dam. Plans call for an Air Force fly over, fireworks and a sound and laser show.

Expected to participate are Interior Secretary Gale Norton, Reclamation Bureau commissioner John W. Keys III, Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn, Arizona Gov. Jane Hull and U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif., chairman of the House subcommittee on water and power resources.

The celebration will close U.S. 93 - the main route from Las Vegas to Phoenix - south of Boulder City and north of Kingman, Ariz., from noon to midnight. Traffic will be rerouted to U.S. 95 and State Route 163 through Searchlight and Laughlin, authorities said.

Dam traffic has been closed to commercial trucks since Sept. 11 due to security concerns. Limited dam tours resumed in December after all access around the dam had been restricted.

The Hoover Dam, built some 30 miles southeast of Las Vegas in the 1930s, is among the Bureau of Reclamation's 180 water projects in 17 Western states. It provides drinking water, electricity and recreation to 23 million people in the Southwest.

President Theodore Roosevelt created the bureau with the Reclamation Act of 1902 to provide water to Western farmers. Today the bureau is faced with balancing endangered species against the needs of large-scale agriculture, industry, growing cities and Indian tribes - a task that some say it has failed.

Some 100 activists have a permit to gather at 11 a.m. on the dam's Arizona side parking lot to protest what they say are the negative impacts caused by bureau's dam-building legacy, specifically to the Grand Canyon National Park.

Leaders of groups including the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, representing a network of 82 environmental and social justice organizations, will demand that the bureau develop a restoration plan for the river canyon, said Owen Lammers, Living Rivers executive director.

"This is really the largest coalition that has come together since the 1960s when they fought the bureau's plans to inundate the (Grand Canyon) park with two major dams," he said.

The protest is expected to last an hour because of the road closure.

"Clearly we have a message that they don't want to get mixed up with theirs," Lammers said.

To address the debate about the bureau's responsibilities, a symposium of experts from federal agencies, universities and the private sector is scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday at UNLV.

LR in the News 06/15/02

Sedimental Journey' makes stop in Page

By Todd Glasenapp

Arizona Daily Sun

PAGE -- An environmentalist group that wants to see the end of Lake Powell made its first Arizona stop Friday on a five-day "Sedimental Journey."

Moab, Utah-based Living Rivers brought a dump truck, director Owen Lammers, three singers and the president of the Dine Medicinemen's Association.

The presentations at Antelope Point and Glen Canyon Dam were similar to the one conducted by Living Rivers' predecessor, Glen Canyon Action Network, at the dam in March 2000.

This time, Living Rivers primarily wants to call attention to sediment buildup above the dam, robbing the Grand Canyon of precious nutrients and altering the canyon ecosystem. The group is driving a dump truck, destined for the other side of the dam.

But the National Park Service said Living Rivers needed a permit to redeposit the three tons of sand, drawn from sand bars at a kickoff rally Thursday night in Moab.

The tour, to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, continues today with a stop at Lees Ferry and tomorrow's program at the South Rim tomorrow. The 700-mile trip concludes with Monday's rally at Hoover Dam.

Criticism of the proposed \$75 million resort-marina was the main topic of the day's first stop, at Antelope Point, a few miles east of Page on Lake Powell.

Only half a dozen Living Rivers members and about 25 curious onlookers -- most of them law enforcement officers and reporters -- attended the shadeless program near the closed Antelope Point boat launch in 95-degree heat. Lammers expects much bigger turnouts as the tour progresses.

Lammers has said Living Rivers is considering a lawsuit about Antelope Point, citing an "only cursory environmental analysis" by the Park Service in the way of an environmental assessment.

The Park Service and Navajo Nation have retained URS Corp. of Phoenix to prepare an environmental assessment. The assessment is expected to be released this summer with construction beginning not long after. Development in the area began with a launch ramp three years ago. But dropping lake levels have rendered the ramp useless this summer.

Lammers suggested that the Navajo Nation take on nearby Wahweap Marina and abandon plans for the one at Antelope Point to avoid disrupting sacred sites.

Water lobbyist to the Navajo Nation Council Max Goldtooth attributed the drought to dams, saying that offerings are being blocked in their journey to the ocean. He cited traditional beliefs.

"White Shell Mother lives in the ocean," he said. "She's willing to bless us with rain. But the offering never comes. That's why we have a drought. "These places here, these sacred cliffs, you can hear the echoes of those people in them," Goldtooth said.

Thomas Morris, president of the Dine Medicinemens Association, said: "We have polluted the water and sky. Mother Earth has been damaged ... When are we going to learn the people are destroying the healthy sacredness?"

Friends of Lake Powell's Ostapuk said, "If Living Rivers really cared about the Navajo people, they would have come here today with water in their trucks and spent the day hauling water to drought-stricken Navajo water supply systems."

Watching from a distance was Thomas Boyd, acting director of the Navajo Nation Tourism Department. Boyd declined an invitation to take the microphone.

Projections supplied by Boyd indicate the resort-marina will provide 150 permanent jobs, 175 temporary positions, \$10 million in approximate annual payroll, \$30 million in annual community economic impact and other opportunities for Navajo-owned small businesses.

LR in the News 06/15/02

A 'Sedimental Journey' on the Colorado

By Brent Israelsen
Salt Lake Tribune

Hauling a dumptruck full of sand from the Colorado River near Canyonlands, an environmental group plans to ceremoniously throw the sand into the river today below Glen Canyon Dam.

It would be the first time in nearly 40 years that sediment from the upper Colorado River Basin has found its way into the Grand Canyon.

In the scheme of all things ecological, this modest transfer of earth does not amount to a hill of beans.

But Living Rivers, a group based in Moab, is hoping its "Sedimental Journey," which coincides with Monday's 100th anniversary celebration of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, will illustrate the plight of the sediment-starved lower Colorado River.

Before 1963, when the gates to the newly built Glen Canyon Dam were closed, sand and silt in the upper Colorado River Basin eventually swirled in the depths of the Grand Canyon, providing nutrients for plants, habitat for fish and beaches for river runners.

Those sediments, millions of tons per year, now wind up on the bottom of Lake Powell, the reservoir behind the dam.

By the 1980s, scientists began documenting dramatic changes in the river's ecosystem as a result of the dam, which was at that time operated primarily to produce hydropower. The dearth of sediment, the drop in water temperature and the unnatural flows below the dam contributed to the extinction of four fish species and the near-extinction of four others, which are now on the endangered list.

A coalition of environmentalists is calling for the river to be restored.

Ultimately, the best solution is "decommissioning" -- knocking down or bypassing -- Glen Canyon Dam, said Owen Lammers, Living Rivers director.

"If we are going to protect and restore the integrity of the Grand Canyon ecosystem, the decommissioning is the most viable option. It is inevitable anyway," he said.

The bureau is not considering such an option. Instead, it is concentrating on altering dam operations to take advantage of sediment deposits from tributaries below.

For example, last month, the bureau's Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group recommended to Interior Secretary Gale Norton that the dam's releases be reduced this fall to conserve sediment deposited by the Paria River during the monsoons of late summer. Releases would then be ramped up in January to force those deposits onto the shores and into the backwaters where they are beneficial to fish, flora and fauna.

Randy Peterson, who directs the adaptive management program, believes this experiment will be more effective than the much-publicized beach-building flows the agency released from the dam in 1996.

Lammers was less optimistic, noting that no change in dam operations can overcome the fact that 95 percent of the Grand Canyon's pre-dam sediments came from upstream of the dam.

The Sedimental Journey ends Monday at Hoover Dam, where Living Rivers plans to hold a rally and protest. Later that evening at the dam, the bureau will stage a \$400,000 celebration of its 100th anniversary.

LR in the News 06/16/02

Bureau's birthday celebration to be met with protest

By Luke Turf
Yuma Daily Sun

Protesters plan to crash the party before the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation can blow out the candles on its 100th birthday cake.

The protest, set for Monday, is directed at the bureau's control of the Colorado River.

Yuma Audubon Society Conservation Chairman Cary Meister said the bureau has done some good scientific studies recently, but that 100 years of dam construction without considering the environmental effects has taken a toll on the river's natural ecosystem.

"Unfortunately now we're paying some of the prices for that," Meister said. And though no one can argue the management of the river — or mismanagement, depending on who you talk to — allowed Yuma to blossom into an agricultural haven, that transformation had a price.

"What the agency is really celebrating is 100 years of environmental devastation and unsustainable human population growth in the arid West," said David Hogan, rivers' program coordinator for the Center for Biological Diversity. "This legacy continues with the agency's turning a blind eye to harm it's causing to the Colorado River Delta in Mexico, among many other issues."

The delta has been a concern for environmentalists because the Colorado River no longer reaches the Sea of Cortez. The delta's fragile ecosystem depends on water making it to the area, which is home to several species listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Now, since no Colorado River water makes it to the area, the delta is literally hanging on to life thanks to a small amount of agricultural runoff water from the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District. However, with more Colorado River water, the delta would flourish.

Virtually the entire river is diverted before it reaches the sea. The United States is allocated 10 times as much water as Mexico, and environmental advocacy groups have filed lawsuits charging the bureau needs to consider the impacts its activities are having south of the border. They contend the bureau needs to focus on restoring the natural ecosystem in the next 100 years, since they destroyed it in the first 100 years.

But the bureau isn't going to focus on restoring the natural environment, said Colleen Dwyer, an agency spokeswoman. She said the bureau wants to work within the existing framework of river management to allow for wildlife to live in harmony with the current water delivery system.

The groups also are trying to get state and federal governmental bodies to allocate more water to cross the border and a promise from Mexico that any additional water allocations will make it to the delta, and not just be consumed between the border and the delta.

The environmental advocacy groups say getting that guarantee from Mexican officials likely will be the most difficult part of saving the delta. So they also want to work with Mexico to make its water use more efficient, allowing some of the water Mexico now receives to reach the delta, rather than being wasted by poor irrigation methods.

At the same time, they'd also like to see more efficiency north of the border.

"Other dams and diversions can be managed to leave more water in the river so as to better protect the natural river wildlife and vegetation," Hogan said.

The protestors are gathering at Hoover Dam Monday, where the bureau is also celebrating, to protest what they call the bureau's mismanagement of the river.

"The Bureau of Reclamation has 49 dams along the Colorado River, but there's only one Grand Canyon," said Steve Glazer, chairman of the Sierra Club's Colorado River Task Force, which is also protesting.

Many environmental groups advocate tearing down Glen Canyon Dam, or draining its reservoir to improve river flows and protect the Grand Canyon. The groups say enough water is tied up in the river's other dams and that the dam at Glen Canyon impounding Lake Powell is unnecessary.

The Grand Canyon, they say, is threatened because the lack of natural river flow creates a lack of nutrients which causes beach and native wildlife loss. Non-native sport fish also have crippled the native fish populations, they say.

"We're not saying remove all game fish from the area," Hogan said. "We're saying there needs to be a balance, and right now there is not a balance."

Living Rivers, another environmental advocacy group, is guiding the "Sediment-al Journey" along the river to show the negative effects the bureau allegedly has created in the Grand Canyon and along the rest of the Colorado.

The main problem lies in a buildup of sediment, the fine clay and course sand that is a natural result of weathering and the basis of the ecosystem's food chain — insects survive off the minerals in the water from the sediment and fish eat the insects. According to Living Rivers officials, 95 percent of sediment and nutrients that once flowed through the Grand Canyon are now trapped behind Glen Canyon Dam, crippling the river downstream.

"The river is no longer a natural river ecosystem, it is a highly managed conveyance system," Hogan said.

River News 06/17/02

Grand Canyon's Colorado River –The Facts

What is the Grand Canyon? The Grand Canyon and the region it defines includes thousands of square miles of incised canyons, mesas and volcanoes overlain by a web of drainages that feed into the Colorado River, which carved the canyon. The Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park is 277 miles long, and the Canyon is about 18 miles wide near the south rim facilities and nearly a mile deep. It was made a national park in 1919.

Where is the Grand Canyon? In northwest Arizona, bordering Utah. The south rim of the canyon in Grand Canyon National Park is most often accessed from Hwy 180 out of Flagstaff, Arizona. The north rim is most often accessed from Hwy 89 out of southern Utah.

What is the cultural history of the Grand Canyon? Human habitation of the canyon goes back at least 10,000 years to the Clovis and Folsom cultures, who were sophisticated big-game hunters. When the climate changed to warmer and drier conditions, another culture called Desert Archaic existed from 6500 BC to 1 AD. The farming cultures, known as Basketmaker and Puebloan, inhabited the Grand Canyon until about 1275 AD. Many modern-day cultures trace their origins to the canyon, including 34 Hopi clans. The Havasupai still live in the canyon and consider themselves its guardians.

What impact has the US government had on the canyon and the Colorado River? The Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec), an agency of the US Department of the Interior, was formed in 1902 to build water projects in the West. In 1935, BuRec began filling the reservoir formed by Hoover Dam. The reservoir filled in 1941 and inundated twenty percent of the Grand Canyon. In 1963, upstream of Grand Canyon, the gates of Glen Canyon Dam were closed, initiating a potentially lethal blow to the Colorado through Grand Canyon.

How have the Colorado River dams impacted the Grand Canyon? The Grand Canyon ecosystems are collapsing because Glen Canyon Dam has prevented sediment and nutrients from flowing into the canyon, lowered the water temperature, and eliminated life-giving floods. What is sediment? Sediment comes from natural weathering processes, such as rain and ice, and is typically composed of fine clay and coarse sand. In natural systems, sediment is eventually transported by flowing water to the sea. The Colorado River drains an area of soft rocks and is one of the muddiest rivers in the world. The plants and animals that depend on the Colorado River evolved with this high-sediment system.

Why is sediment important? Organic materials are mixed into the sediment matrix and provide the carbon necessary for tissue growth. Organisms such as insects depend on these nutrients and provide the base for the ecosystem's food chain. Of the 50 + species of native insects that once formed the natural food base for the Grand Canyon, none remain. The unnatural water temperature is another reason why the native insects do not reproduce. Because the Colorado River runs clear, a green alga called cladophora grows abundantly. This is an unnatural food source for native fish and has replaced the natural food web. Sediment deposits also form the Canyon's beaches and sandbars, which in turn provide habitat for the plants, birds and mammals that evolved with this muddy river.

Doesn't any of the sediment get through the dam? Ninety-five percent of the sediment and nutrients that once flowed through Grand Canyon's riverine ecosystem are now trapped behind Glen Canyon Dam.

Why have water temperatures changed? Water is released through large pipes (penstocks) built into Glen Canyon Dam and turns large turbines that produce electricity. The water enters the penstocks at a depth of about 200 feet below the surface of Lake Powell, the reservoir formed by Glen Canyon Dam. Because the sun's rays cannot penetrate water at that depth, the water is very cold. When the water exits the dam's power plant and flows as a river once again, the temperature is about 47 ° F.

Previously, when the Colorado River flowed in its natural riverbed, water temperatures reached 80 ° F in the summer. It was these warm temperatures that triggered animal reproduction. Non-native fish, such as trout, thrive in the artificially cold water and compete with the native fish for available food. They also prey on the few native fish that manage to reproduce in the warmer waters of the Little Colorado River, a tributary of the Colorado 75 miles below Glen Canyon Dam.

Why are flood flows important? Natural flows in the Grand Canyon fluctuated seasonally from 3,000 to 90,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). A cubic foot is about eight gallons of water. Every spring the melting snows from the Rocky Mountains brought a rushing torrent of water into the Canyon. The floods moved the sediment around to form new beaches and sandbars (beaches naturally degrade due to water and wind erosion) and replenished the nutrients high on the shores of the river to be utilized by plants and animals. This process also triggered seed germination for trees such as the mesquite. Now, with dam-controlled flows, the Colorado fluctuates every day between 8,000 to 20,000 cfs, creating a near static flow regime for an ecosystem that is dependent upon a dynamic system of annual recharge.



What has happened to the native species of the Grand Canyon? River otters and muskrats are now gone from the canyon. Four of the eight native Colorado River fish are gone and two more are struggling for survival. Native vegetation is disappearing from the high water zone or is stunted due to the lack of nutrients and the invasion of competing non-native plants.

Has there been any impact on the cultural values of the Canyon? Erosion poses a threat to native burial and sacred sites near the riverbed. The loss of native species represents additional native cultural losses.

What can be done to reverse these impacts? These impacts represent a significant violation of the 1916 Organic Act (which created the National Park Service) and the Grand Canyon Protection Act of 1992. These acts require that the federal government ensure and enhance the natural integrity of Grand Canyon's resources for future generations. This is why a growing nationwide coalition is demanding that the government obey the law and immediately:

- Restore natural sediment and nutrients flows from the Colorado into Grand Canyon
- Restore natural flow regimes to properly transport this sediment within the Canyon
- Restore the natural water temperatures of the Colorado River

What would be the initial steps for accomplishing these restoration goals? The Bureau of Reclamation and National Park Service must develop a recovery program for the Colorado River corridor in Grand Canyon that includes all species known to be native prior to the operation of Glen Canyon Dam. They need to implement a non-native eradication program to rid the Grand Canyon river corridor of alien species with a priority on those that prey on, compete with, or otherwise impair the health of native plants and animals.

How will the other restoration goals be accomplished without removing the dams? It may not be possible to save the Grand Canyon without removing Glen Canyon Dam. Over \$100 million has been spent on science programs in the Grand Canyon, but no viable plan to restore the canyon has resulted. This is not due to faulty science as much as it is to the priority politics of water and power. We must initiate the necessary measures to preserve the Grand Canyon in accordance with our nation's laws before the ecosystem collapses.

<http://www.livingrivers2.org/NewsImages/GCimpactsWeb.jpg>

LR in the News 06/17/02

Dignitaries, protesters mark bureau's birthday at Hoover Dam

Associated Press

BOULDER CITY, Nev. (AP) - The Bureau of Reclamation began its 100th birthday Monday with a dazzling celebration to light up the Hoover Dam as protesters nearby sought to spoil the party.

Hours before the speeches and fireworks, a group of protesters representing 84 environmental and social justice organizations including Friends of the Earth and the Sierra Club gathered near the bureau's most recognizable icon, calling for repair of the damage they say was created by the Reclamation Act of 1902.

The 100-year-old act launched by President Theodore Roosevelt created the bureau and a federal effort to "reclaim" the Western desert.

"If Roosevelt was here today, I think he would be amazed at all that we've accomplished," said Reclamation Bureau Commissioner John W. Keys III. "Our mission is water management. We're the go-between to provide water where it's needed most."

If the bureau were to sum up its vision for the next 100 years, it would be to work to balance the needs of water users with the environment, Interior Secretary Gale Norton said.

"We're going to be engaged in long-term planning that will allow the bureau to manage its current resources and to find environmentally sensitive ways to obtain more water supplies," she said as she stood atop the dam, a popular tourist attraction 30 miles southeast of Las Vegas.

President Bush, who turned down an invitation to the celebration, congratulated the bureau on what he said was its commitment to environmental protection, access to affordable energy and economic growth.

Some 40 activists, some dressed as fish and carrying signs, gathered on the dam's Arizona-side parking lot in 100-degree heat for about an hour to protest what they say is the negative impact of the bureau's dam-building legacy.

A group of musicians played atop a dump truck filled with Colorado River sediment to symbolize how dams - like the Glen Canyon on the Utah-Arizona line - have reduced water supply and choked off nutrients that nourish downstream habitat.

Owen Lammers, executive director of Moab, Utah-based Living Rivers, said the groups' key message was that while the bureau invested about \$200,000 to mark a century of river management, environmentalists see no cause for celebration.

"We're not there to protest or complain about the work that was done in the early days of the bureau," he said. "The planners weren't interested in ecological impacts. But we would like to see the same ingenuity and spirit applied to the problems that have been created."

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds precision flying team of six F-16 Falcons flew over the dam at 6:20 p.m. to kick off the festivities, which included dinner in the power houses on either side of the dam and fireworks and laser shows.

Traffic over Hoover Dam was to be halted and detoured from noon to midnight for the celebration that was to include about 2,200 guests.

"Almost all of the bureau's former commissioners are coming," said spokeswoman Trudy Harlow. Other expected participants included Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn, Arizona Gov. Jane Hull, and Wyoming Gov. Jim Geringer.

Security was expected to be tight with hundreds of law enforcement agents on hand, bureau spokeswoman Dana Mishoe said.

The Hoover Dam, built in the 1930s, draws 1.2 million tourists annually and is considered one of the nation's greatest engineering feats. It provides drinking water,

electricity and recreation to 23 million people in the Southwest, and is one of the Bureau of Reclamation's 180 water projects in 17 Western states.

Roosevelt created the bureau with the Reclamation Act of 1902 to provide water to Western farmers.

Today it is faced with balancing the needs of endangered species against those of large-scale agriculture, industry, growing cities and Indian tribes.

To address the debate about whether the bureau is meeting its responsibilities, a symposium of experts from federal agencies, universities and the private sector is scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Monday's privately funded party was cosponsored by Water for the West, a nonprofit organization created solely for celebrating the Reclamation Bureau's birthday, Harlow said.

To attend the celebration, individuals had to contribute \$5,000. A \$10,000 contribution allowed a company's logo to be projected on the dam during the program, according to Keith Ashdown, spokesman for Taxpayers for Common Sense.

River News 06/17/02

Declaration for the Restoration of the Colorado River through Grand Canyon

We gather here today atop Hoover Dam on June 17th 2002, the centennial of the founding of the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec). One hundred years ago Congress passed the Reclamation Act of 1902, spawning an epoch of dam building and river diversion unsurpassed by any resource management agency in the developed world. More than 600 BuRec dams dot the landscape of the 17 western states, with their tallest concrete dam being the one beneath us. Just upstream lay the degraded remains of the once thriving Grand Canyon ecosystem. The demise of this Canyon, one of the seven natural wonders of the world, symbolizes the unnecessary impacts brought upon rivers throughout the West by BuRec's environmentally and culturally destructive policies designed to optimize water delivery.

Although BuRec's present mission states, "... protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public," the agency has yet to demonstrate a significant commitment to environmental stewardship or to recognize the significant water scarcity problems that future generations will face. BuRec's day-to-day policies remain largely driven by the water and power industries, whose economic viability is largely dependent upon subsidies sponsored by the Federal government. Throughout its domain BuRec's promotion of wasteful water and energy practices has resulted in the loss of functioning rivers, the loss of critical habitat, and the loss of natural and cultural heritage.

Nowhere are these losses more pronounced than in the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park. In 1941, as Lake Mead reservoir filled, 20 percent of the Grand Canyon was inundated behind Hoover Dam. In 1963, upstream of Grand Canyon, the gates at Glen Canyon Dam closed, which initiated a slow, and left unchecked, potentially lethal blow to the remainder of the Colorado River through Grand Canyon.

The following impacts on the collapsing Grand Canyon ecosystem are now evident:

... Ninety-five percent of the sediment and nutrients that once flowed into Grand Canyon's riverine ecosystem are now trapped behind Glen Canyon Dam causing the beaches to erode away and the native vegetation to disappear, disrupting the historic food base.

... Seasonal water temperatures that previously fluctuated from freezing to 80 degrees Fahrenheit, now range from 43 to 55 degrees, blocking the warm water necessary to trigger native animal reproduction, and fostering non-native fish species at the expense of native species.

... Natural flows, which fluctuated seasonally from 3,000 to 90,000 cubic feet per second, now can fluctuate only from 8,000 to 20,000, cubic feet per second, creating a near static flow regime for an ecosystem that is adapted to and dependent upon the dynamic pre-dam flow. Public concern about these devastating impacts caused BuRec, in 1982, to establish the Glen Canyon Environmental Studies. In 1992 Congress passed the Grand Canyon Protection Act, and in 1996 new rules were established for altering the operation of Glen Canyon Dam. Unfortunately, a narrow interpretation of these laws has failed to halt the further decline of Grand Canyon's native habitat. Other impacts to the ecosystem include:

... A green non-native algae called cladophora has replaced the natural food mix of macroinvertebrates, such as insects.

... Of the 50 to 100 insect species that once formed the food base of the Grand Canyon, none remain. They have been replaced by 25 alien species.

... Of the eight native Colorado River fish, four are extirpated, and two are struggling for survival. Twenty alien species now thrive in the artificial environment.

... Otters and muskrats are now gone from the Canyon, in part due to loss of streamside wetlands.

... Native riparian vegetation is disappearing from the high water zone, or is stunted due to the lack of nutrients and the invasion of competing non-native plants.

... Erosion poses a threat to native burial and sacred sites near the riverbed, and the loss of native species represents additional native cultural losses.

These changes represent a significant violation of the National Park Service's Organic Act (1916), which requires that the Department of Interior ensure the protection of the natural integrity of Grand Canyon's resources for future generations. The Organic Act

and the establishment of Grand Canyon National Park pre-date the decision to construct Glen Canyon Dam. Whereas numerous alternatives exist to provide for the societal needs associated with Glen Canyon Dam, there are no alternatives to the unique ecosystem that is Grand Canyon National Park. Moreover, according to BuRec documents, safety concerns associated with the continued operation of Glen Canyon dam pose a significant risk to the ecology and to the native cultures throughout the Grand Canyon in the event of dam failure.

Grand Canyon's river corridor environment is also suffering due to the proliferation of motorized watercraft, in what otherwise would be designated wilderness area. Noise and effluent from motor boats are adding additional stress to an already overburdened ecosystem.

The construction and operation of BuRec facilities has brought about the near collapse of the Grand Canyon ecosystem. For over twenty years the public has been demanding action, but the decline has continued. As the Canyon's needs are self-evident, we call upon the BuRec to deliver the following:

... The restoration of essential sediment and nutrient flows from the main stem Colorado into Grand Canyon.

... The restoration of natural flow regimes to properly transport this sediment within Grand Canyon, when and where it belongs.

... The restoration of more natural seasonally variable water temperatures in the main stem Colorado through Grand Canyon.

BuRec and the National Park Service must also cooperate to:

... Develop a restoration and recovery program for the Colorado River corridor in Grand Canyon that includes the full recovery of all species known to be native to Grand Canyon prior to the operation of Glen Canyon Dam.

... Implement a non-native eradication program to minimize alien species in the Grand Canyon river corridor with a priority on those that prey on, compete with, or otherwise impair the health of native plants and animals.

To aid in the restoration effort and ensure equitable access to a restored Grand Canyon riverine ecosystem we further request management of the Colorado River through Grand Canyon as wilderness, as is currently the policy for the surrounding landscape, precluding the use of motorized watercraft.

The Grand Canyon is a world-renowned resource that demands restoration. It is, however, merely the most famous of river corridors devastated by BuRec projects and policies. We call upon BuRec, on this, its centennial day, to demonstrate to the public its commitment to reversing this damage by reviving the Grand Canyon ecosystem as its first significant step in an agency-wide effort to, as its mission states, "...protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public."

Presented here at Hoover Dam on the 17th Day of June 2002, one hundred years after passage of the Reclamation Act, by the following undersigned advocates for Grand Canyon restoration.

Access for All
Alliance for Sustainable Communities
Alliance for the wild Rockies
American Lands Alliance
Bear Creek Farms
Blue Water Network
Bridgerland Audubon Society
Canoe Cruisers Association of Greater Washington, DC
Center for Biological Diversity
Central AZ Paddlers Club
Christions Caring for Creation
Citizens Progressive Alliance
Clearwater Biodiversity Project
Colorado Plateau River Guides
Colorado Rivers Alliance
Committee for Idaho's High Desert
Community Clean Water Institute
Copper River Watershed Project
Dine Medicinemens Association
Earth Island Institute
Electors Concerned About Animas
Endangered Habitats League
Escalante Wilderness Project
Eyak Preservation Council
Flagstaff Activist Network
Forest Conservation Council
Four Corners School of Outdoor Educations
Friends of AZ Rivers
Friends of the Earth
Friends of the Eel River
Friends of the Los Angeles River
Friends of the Santa Clara River
Friends of Yosemite Valley
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Great Swamp Watershed Association
Green Delaware
Greenpeace
Hudspeth County Green Party
International Rivers Network
John Muir Project
Jumping Frog Research Institute
Kettle Range Conservation Group

Land Institute
Living Oregon Waters
Living Rivers
Mankato Area Environmentalists
Maricopa Audubon Society
Montana River Action
National Forest Protection Alliance
Northwest Rafters Association
Oil & Gas Accountability Project
Oregon Natural Desert Association
Oregon Toxics Alliance
Pequannock River Coalition
RangeBiome
River Runners for Wilderness
Riparian Improvement Organization
Sacramento River Preservation Trust
San Juan Audubon
San Juan Citizens Alliance
Save the Illinois River
Shark River Cleanup Coalition
Shundahai Network
Sierra Club
Sky Island Alliance
Solar Energy International
Souther Utah Wilderness Alliance
Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Proj.
Spirit of the Sage Council
Superior Wilderness Action Network
Taxpayers for the Animas River
These EXIT Times
Utah Animal Rights Coalition
Utah Environmental Congress
Utah Rivers Council
Wasatch Mountain Club
Western Watershed Partnership
Western Wildlife Conservancy
Wild Angels
Wild Utah Project
Wild Wilderness
Wilderness Watch

LR in the News 06/17/02

Dams' role in flux for urban West , Agency rethinks task at 100-year mark

By Shaun McKinnon

Arizona Republic

You can talk about the climate, the citrus, the copper. You can wax rhapsodic about the plentiful land and even air-conditioning. But the truth is, Phoenix would still be a dusty, sparsely populated cow town if it weren't for an unglamorous government agency dreamed up more than a century ago by a one-armed river runner.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation was born 100 years ago today with a narrowly defined mission: Water the arid West. Find a way to tame the wild rivers and make the deserts blossom. In other words: Just dam it.

And from the dams the bureau built sprang metropolitan Phoenix : Roosevelt Dam on the Salt River, one of the agency's first undertakings, gave the Valley its first sure water supply and a way to survive the region's unpredictable dry spells. Hoover and Glen Canyon dams on the Colorado River provided the expanding region a place to store even more water and the Central Arizona Project furnished the means to deliver it.

Yet as the bureau celebrates its centennial tonight at Hoover Dam, the agency faces serious questions about its role in the new, more urban West. Many of the original dams and canals were built to serve farmers and, critics charge, are now inefficient and wasteful. Environmentalists accuse the bureau of destroying ecosystems by damming rivers like the Colorado. Some groups want much of what the bureau did undone, beginning with the dismantling of Glen Canyon Dam.

Bureau officials insist they have kept up with changing needs, working with cities to adapt agricultural water projects. They also point to the drought that grips the intermountain West and say the network of reclamation projects is protecting many areas, including Phoenix, from severe water restrictions.

They acknowledge that their mission has evolved from simply building dams and canals to managing a valuable natural resource, a job that may now include knocking down a dam or two.

"It is a different world," said Robert Johnson, the bureau's Lower Colorado regional director. "We have to balance a lot of different interests. In many ways, it's probably as challenging as the historic role of building projects. It takes a different set of skills, but nonetheless it's a very important role." Phoenix was emerging from a disastrous drought when President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Newlands Reclamation Act on June 17, 1902. Many settlers left the Valley after suffering through several dry years that ruined crops and stripped the land of its topsoil. The rivers simply couldn't support traditional farming.

John Wesley Powell, the famed Colorado River explorer, foresaw such trouble and proposed a series of land management reforms that took into account the fickle waters of the West. The one idea that survived was the U.S. Reclamation Service, which was charged with building dams to store water for dry years and control flooding in wet ones.

Roosevelt among 1st

One of the first dams proposed was Roosevelt, about 70 miles northeast of central Phoenix on the Salt River. It created what was, for a while, the largest artificial reservoir in the country. It was also the first dam to serve so many purposes: storing water, controlling floods and generating power.

"I really think the seminal moment in the history of the Valley of the Sun is the building of Roosevelt Dam," said Grady Gammage Jr., a Phoenix attorney and author who sits on the board that manages the Central Arizona Project.

"There's been lots of stuff that's happened since then, a lot of other dams built, and the CAP, but if Roosevelt Dam hadn't been built as one of the very first of the federal reclamation projects, we wouldn't have a city like this. We wouldn't have the storage capacity to support this kind of a population."

Major milestones

Three other milestones in the bureau's history further influenced the development of the Valley and the West:

- Construction of Hoover Dam, which created storage space for nearly 30 million acre-feet of water, or about twice the annual flow of the Colorado River.
- Construction of Glen Canyon Dam, upstream from Hoover, which generates enormous amounts of power for the Southwest.
- Construction of the Central Arizona Project, the 336-mile canal that moves water from Parker Dam to Phoenix and Tucson. Without that water, the Valley would have reached its growth limits by now.

"It's hard to imagine the Phoenix metropolitan area without reclamation projects," said Larry Dozier, the CAP's deputy general manager and a 16-year bureau veteran. "Here we are in the midst of one of the worst droughts in history and central Arizona hardly notices."

Protesters to gather

But not everyone will be celebrating the agency's work tonight. Activists from more than 80 environmental groups have planned a counterevent to protest what they believe is a legacy of ecological neglect at best and wholesale destruction at worst.

The focus of the protest is Glen Canyon Dam, which conservationists say has wrecked the ecosystem of the lower Colorado River and the Grand Canyon. Most of the groups involved support a Sierra Club proposal to drain Lake Powell and decommission the dam.

"The Canyon is an Arizona icon, yet a lot of people don't realize its ecosystem is on the brink of collapse," said Lisa Force, Arizona program director for the group Living Rivers. "It's just so ironic that the bureau is spending tremendous time and money celebrating its own existence while the Grand Canyon and rivers all over the West are suffering from bureau mismanagement."

Construction of Glen Canyon Dam halted the natural flow of sediment down the river and lowered the water temperature significantly. As a result, environmentalists say, many wildlife species have been pushed toward extinction. Four of eight native fish species, for example, no longer live in the Canyon.

Force said dismantling Glen Canyon Dam is not as radical an idea as many people believe it is. The lost water storage could be made up in part by taking more water directly from the river, eliminating losses to evaporation from Lake Powell's surface. She and others also dispute the importance of Glen Canyon's power supply, insisting other sources could easily fill in the gaps.

"We do not expect or even want the bureau to go out and rip out all their dams," Force said. "We recognize some of those dams are vital for power and water. We're suggesting they put responsible management in place, and that begins with water conservation all over the basin."

Johnson, the bureau's regional director, said the changes sought by the environmental groups reflect increasing awareness of such issues throughout the West. But the bureau has to balance changes with the needs of those who hold legitimate water rights.

"Change will occur," he said, "but it will occur slowly and incrementally." For example, he said, both Salt River Project and the CAP are gradually shifting agricultural water to urban uses, while in California, officials are working with farmers to reduce waste.

Gammage doesn't believe the environmental groups will succeed in bringing down Glen Canyon Dam. "There is a legitimate need for that storage," he said. "It isn't just 'dam it because we can.' "

Even Force of Living Rivers admits that gaining widespread public support for the idea won't be easy. But the message she and others are trying to deliver isn't that far removed from the one John Wesley Powell preached when he proposed a reclamation agency in the first place.

"People have to learn that we live in a desert, that this is the arid West," Force said. "We have this false sense that the fed government has conquered nature and has drought and flooding under control. But no matter how many reservoirs we build, no matter how many dams we build, we can never make more water."

LR in the News 06/18/02

Dam hosts centennial celebration

By Keith Rogers

Las Vegas Review-Journal

With fireworks and a laser light show driven by technology that didn't exist 100 years ago, the Bureau of Reclamation celebrated its centennial birthday Monday at Hoover Dam, its proudest achievement.

Hundreds of police officers from numerous law enforcement agencies guarded the 6.6-million-ton concrete dam while 2,200 bureau employees, former employees and invited guests toured the 67-year-old structure and ate dinner below where turbines churn out hydroelectricity.

In an interview before she addressed the throng, Interior Secretary Gale Norton described the \$600,000-event as "a great celebration" of the work the bureau had done over the century.

"They have transformed so much of the West," she said.

The event "also signals the future," she said. "Water continues to be a major issue for the West. With more and more people, the pressure on the water supply keeps growing."

She defended the event's price tag, saying, "It's an unusual opportunity to have a centennial celebration. It's important to remind people about the necessity for water in the West."

Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn, Arizona Gov. Jane Hull and Wyoming Gov. Jim Geringer were among the invited guests.

Guinn, too, acknowledged the need to mark the occasion, noting the sheer volume of water supplied by the bureau: 10 trillion gallons to more than 31 million people each year.

"Certainly any time you can last 100 years in any program, it's time to celebrate," Guinn said.

A short time later, at 6:20 p.m., the Air Force's aerial demonstration team, the Thunderbirds from Nellis Air Force Base, swooped down in formation, making two, low-altitude passes over the dam with smoke trailing from their red, white and blue F-16s.

Kathy Maybee, a six-year bureau employee, watched the planes pass as she stood atop the dam with family and friends.

"I was joyous that it's still here, that we can still do this. It's still the United States of America," she said.

The nonprofit Water for the West Foundation shouldered about two-thirds of the bill for the event. The foundation, a group of water providers, contractors and power organizations that deal with the bureau, spent more than \$400,000 on the fireworks, light show, transportation, the event program and dinner for 2,200 guests, said foundation President John Sullivan.

A bureau spokeswoman, Trudy Harlow, said the bureau spent about \$200,000 on the celebration, mostly for site preparation and security. The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks spurred the bureau to heighten security at Hoover Dam and officials, who had planned the event for a year, decided to close the dam to traffic for 12 hours beginning at noon.

Motorists heading southbound on U.S. Highway 93 were directed to take U.S. Highway 95 and state Route 168 through Laughlin to get into Arizona.

At the event, bureau Commissioner John Keys lauded the work done in the 100 years since the Reclamation Act was signed by President Theodore Roosevelt. The first project, he said, "Specification No. 1," was Derby Dam on Nevada's Truckee-Carson Irrigation district.

"These were never-before-imagined projects of colossal size, surpassing the technology of the day. Soon, reclamation engineers were pushing the limits of dam building technology. They built larger and higher structures than had ever been thought possible," he said.

Hoover Dam, originally called Boulder Dam, is one of the tallest in the world and it was finished only five years after construction began in 1931.

"Men worked under dangerous and extreme conditions. And they didn't have any of the advantages we have today in terms of machinery or technology," Keys said in his prepared remarks.

About six hours before the festivities began, some 25 environmental activists staged a protest to call attention to the impact of the construction of Hoover Dam and hundreds of others in the West.

The contingent had traveled 700 miles in five days hauling sediment in a 25-ton dump truck from the banks of the Colorado River near Utah's Canyonlands National Park to a parking lot on the Arizona side of Hoover Dam.

Owen Lammers, executive director of the nonprofit group, Living Rivers, based in Moab, said the rally was symbolic because the bureau's Glen Canyon Dam has prevented sediment and nutrients from flowing into the Grand Canyon, affecting the food chain for fish and wildlife.

President Bush weighed in on the celebration in a letter to bureau officials. "These efforts strengthen our nation's economy, ensure the efficient use of limited resources, benefit fish and wildlife and contribute to outdoor recreation opportunities," his message said.

LR in the News 06/18/02

Dam Builder Turns 100 Amid Praise, Criticism By Brent Isrealsen

Salt Lake Tribune

HOOVER DAM, Nev. -- What do the lake-sized swimming pools on the Las Vegas Strip have in common with artichokes growing in California's Imperial Valley? Neither would be possible without the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which on Monday celebrated its 100th birthday.

In festivities marked by fireworks, F-16 flyovers and flowery speeches by top Bush administration officials, the bureau was honored Monday night at Hoover Dam on the lower Colorado River.

Formed in 1902 to store water and generate electricity, the bureau has had an extraordinary amount of influence on population growth and economic development in the arid West, including Salt Lake City, which relies heavily on Reclamation water diverted from the Uinta Mountains.

"Look at the great cities out here in the West -- Boise, Salt Lake City, Spokane, Phoenix, Las Vegas. All were built around Reclamation projects," said Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner John Keys, a Utah resident.

"It was Reclamation that turned the dust and sand to arable soil and the brown to green," said Interior Secretary Gale Norton.

More than 2,000 bureau employees, their families, representatives from Western states and officials from water and power agencies attended the \$500,000 gala, which took place at the bottom of the 67-year-old dam.

Norton thanked past and present bureau employees.

"You [provided] a long, cool drink of water to a parched land," she said. "For this we will be forever grateful."

She and Keys also paid tribute to Hoover Dam, which remains an icon of the bureau's engineering prowess. Impressive even by 21st century standards, Hoover was the first of a series of big dams that would tame all of the West's big rivers.

The bureau today manages 348 dams, which store 245 million acre feet of water. They provide drinking water to 25 million people in 17 states and irrigate farms that account for 60 percent of the nation's vegetables and 25 percent of its fruits and nuts.

The bureau also generates more than 42 billion kilowatt hours of electricity from 58 hydroelectric facilities -- enough power for more than 9 million people.

Keys said the bureau has accomplished the mission President Roosevelt gave it a century ago. "If only Teddy Roosevelt could see us now," Keys said. "He'd be amazed."

Roosevelt, a pioneer of natural resource conservation, also might be chagrined at the environmental devastation caused by the numerous dams, which have forever altered ecosystems, led to the extinction or near-extinction of dozens of fish and other species, and impounded hundreds of pristine places, including Glen Canyon in Utah and the western end of the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

"There's no cause for celebration. This should be a wake," said Owen Lammers, director of Living Rivers, a Moab-based environmental group that protested Monday's gala.

A coalition of environmental groups on Monday called for an overhaul of the Bureau of Reclamation, in particular its management of the Colorado River.

Environmentalists say the bureau should pay more attention to the Grand Canyon, which is losing its beaches and native riparian and fish species at a high rate.

"We're calling on the bureau to invest its next 100 years in protecting and restoring what's been lost," said Jim Wechsler, a Utah representative of the Sierra Club.

In an interview Monday evening, Keys responded, "Where have they [bureau critics] been for the past 10 years?"

Keys said the bureau already has made the shift from its era of dam-building to one of management and environmental restoration. He pointed to a bureau-sponsored "adaptive management" group that is working on solutions to ecosystem problems below Glen Canyon Dam.

But he promised the dam, which environmentalists ultimately want to see removed or bypassed, will be intact 100 years from now.

"People are going to look up there and say, 'What a grand facility that is.' "

LR in the News 06/18/02

Columnist Susan Synder: Dam these difficult questions Las Vegas Sun

This morning I drew water from the tap and poured it into the coffee maker. I changed the water in the cat's dish, and then filled the watering can. I watered the banana tree and African violets I inherited from a close friend who moved away. I watered the basil, cilantro and teeny forget-me-nots. I watered the pink geraniums in the guest room and a plant I cannot name, though it is my favorite because it refuses to let me kill it.

I started a load of wash and hopped into the shower.

When this is your daily routine, it's rather sticky to plop down at a computer terminal two hours later and bang out 475 words saying the Bureau of Reclamation's 100th anniversary is cause for a wake rather than the celebration conducted Monday at Hoover Dam.

President Theodore Roosevelt's Reclamation Act of 1902 created the bureau to provide water to the West's farmers. In 100 years it has built more than 180 projects in 17 states. The 67-year-old Hoover Dam alone provides drinking water and electricity to 23 million people.

But bureau adversaries say these projects are killing the West. About 400 miles upriver from Las Vegas is Glen Canyon Dam, which created Lake Powell on the Utah-Arizona border. Researchers were given barely three months to excavate and study Glen Canyon's more than 3,000 Indian cultural sites before the bureau flooded it with Colorado River water in 1962.

Downriver from Lake Powell, the Grand Canyon rewards those who sweat it out to the bottom with an ecosystem possessing beauty that defies description. Beaver, otter and muskrat once lived there. But we didn't get to see them.

Environmentalists say they have disappeared along with native flora and fish species because dams such as Glen Canyon trap nutrient-bearing sediments and ruin seasonal changes in water flow.

The Grand Canyon is dying.

But without the dams, reclamation bureau officials say we wouldn't have water for the irrigation and electricity that has allowed most of us to settle in the West.

Told you this was sticky. Do we want coffee and forget-me-nots in the kitchen every day or unparalleled beauty at the bottom of the Grand Canyon once in a lifetime?

We want both. But at what price?

"Thousands of river miles, critical habitat for endangered species and the cultural heritage of a number of indigenous tribes have all been devastated by the dams BuRec has constructed in the western United States," Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers, has said.

Lammers and a group of Living Rivers supporters left Moab, Utah, on Thursday with a dump truck of sediment and stopped at Lake Powell, Lee's Ferry in Arizona and the Grand Canyon's South Rim before arriving at Hoover Dam Monday. They staged a demonstration a few hours before the bureau's laser light show and gala.

Living Rivers members say the bureau needs to overhaul its manner of doing business, including properly collecting water-delivery costs from corporate farmers and closing projects such as Glen Canyon Dam before it is too late.

It's a sticky spot. The ever-elusive "win-win" for which government officials strive doesn't seem to exist. Someone has to lose. But who?

LR in the News 06/18/02

Bureau has birthday bash at Hoover Dam

By Jace Radke

Las Vegas Sun

The workers who built Hoover Dam in the 1930s were used to the explosions that thundered through Boulder Canyon to make way for the dam.

On Monday night some of those same workers again heard the sound of explosions reverberating through Boulder Canyon, as the Bureau of Reclamation celebrated its centennial by lighting up the sky over Hoover Dam with fireworks.

Interior Secretary Gale Norton joined Gov. Kenny Guinn and a crowd of more than 2,000, including current and former Bureau of Reclamation employees, to celebrate the agency's role in bringing water and power to the Western United States.

Norton called the bureau's history "a century of progress, a century of making the arid west bloom."

"(The Bureau of Reclamation) has changed the course of rivers, filled irrigation ditches, enabled new communities and fed a hungry nation," Norton told the crowd assembled at the base of the dam, the agency's premier project.

Guinn said that the Bureau of Reclamation's legacy is seen in mammoth structures like the 726-foot Hoover Dam.

"Hoover Dam is often defined as one of the wonders of the world," Guinn said. "Before the Bureau of Reclamation built the dam Las Vegas was little more than a hot and dusty railroad stop between Los Angeles and Salt Lake City."

Carl Hoffman, a 94-year-old who helped design the dam, said Guinn was right with his characterization of Las Vegas in the early '30s.

"This is the thing that made the West," Hoffman said. "When I came in 1933, Las Vegas was just a whistle-stop."

Hoover Dam meets the domestic water and irrigation needs of more than 18 million people in Nevada, Arizona and California. The dam generates 4 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity a year, enough to serve 1.3 million people.

While Hoover is a major project, the Bureau of Reclamation operates a total of about 180 projects in 17 Western States, providing water to about 33 percent of the population

in the American West. Dams and Bureau of Reclamation power plants generate more than 34 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity a year.

While the electricity and water provided by reclamation projects is easily identifiable, protesters argued that the projects can harm ecosystems and destroy environments.

About 40 activists parked a dump truck full of Colorado River sediment on the Arizona side of the dam Monday morning.

Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers, an organization dedicated to preserving natural environments, said that dams stop rich sediment needed by plants and animals from traveling down river.

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner John Keys, said that he understood the concern and that the bureau is looking at ways to address the problem.

"The dams are here," Keys said. "We're not going to spend money to decommission dams, but we will spend money to find ways to adapt."

The Bureau of Reclamation has experimented with flow releases on the upper Colorado River designed to replace sediment in the Grand Canyon and build up beaches and areas for plants and animals to thrive. The last releases were in 1996, and they could again be used this winter, Keys said.

Although the protesters were allowed to set up in a parking lot on the Arizona side of the dam, security was tight at the event. U.S. 93 was shut down from noon Monday until after midnight this morning, and guests were bused down to the dam from a staging area about two miles away.

Although security concerns at Bureau of Reclamation projects have moved to the forefront since Sept. 11 the projects themselves continue to run in much the same way they have for most of the last century.

In July 1902, Interior Secretary Ethan Allen Hitchcock established the United States Reclamation Service within the U.S. Geological Survey, to study potential water development projects in Western states. In 1907 the service was separated from the Geological Survey, and an independent bureau was established under the Department of the Interior.

Congress authorized Hoover Dam, then known as Boulder Canyon Dam, to be built in 1928 marking the start of the heyday of reclamation construction of water facilities that occurred during the Depression and the 35 years after World War II.

The Bureau of Reclamation spent about \$200,000 for the event, and Water for the West, a non-profit organization of water users and businesses created for the celebration, spent \$400,000.

The Bureau of Reclamation's bill went mostly toward security and also included the loss in power caused by the need to shut down some generators Monday while guests ate a dinner of beef brisket and Caesar salad in the dam's two powerhouses.

Some of those in attendance were invited guests and others had contributed \$5,000 toward the celebration.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

LR in the News 06/18/02

**Bureau hailed for building West
By Donna Kemp Spangler**

Deseret News

HOOVER DAM, Nev. — It's a cliché as old as cowboy boots, but water is and always has been the lifeblood of the West.

And with the help of engineering marvels that tamed the wild rivers with massive concrete dams holding back sprawling reservoirs it is now possible to quench the thirst of tens of millions of people who now call the desert home.

"Tonight we celebrate a milestone, a century of progress, a century of making the arid West bloom," said Secretary of Interior Gale Norton, who arrived here Monday evening to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the Reclamation Act and its offspring, the Bureau of Reclamation.

Without the more than 600 dams built by the dam-building agency, "Would Las Vegas, Boise, Salt Lake City, Spokane and Phoenix be cities or simply trading posts?" she asked.

Hundreds of bureau supporters were on hand with a resounding endorsement of the obvious: The West would look nothing like it does today without the Bureau of Reclamation.

"The West has literally grown up around reclamation projects, the farms, the cities, the way of life; all were made possible with reclamation's help," said John W. Keys III, commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation and a Moab resident. "Look at all the great cities out here in the West. All were built around reclamation projects."

Hoover Dam, built in the 1930s and considered one of the nation's greatest engineering feats, draws 1.2 million tourists annually and provides drinking water, electricity and recreation to 23 million people in the Southwest.

Monday's celebration was a chance for the agency — much maligned by its environmental critics — to pat itself on the back for a job well done.

Every year, the bureau delivers 10 trillion gallons of drinking water to 31 million homes, electrical power to 3.5 million homes. The historic problem of river flooding has become

almost nonexistent, 10 million acres of farmland is now irrigated and playground wonderlands have sprung up around reservoirs like Lake Powell.

"These efforts strengthen the nation's economy, ensure the effective use of limited resources, benefit fish and wildlife, and contribute to outdoor recreation opportunities," said President Bush in a message delivered to the Hoover Dam gathering attended by dignitaries from around the West.

But for the few conservationists protesting outside the event there was nothing to celebrate about the bureau's 100-year legacy of environmental degradation, extinct species and wild rivers stunted by concrete.

The flood control that benefits farmers has destroyed the natural ecosystem that thrives on the seasonal ups and downs of the rivers now blocked by concrete dams, they say. "We're not faulting the individuals who made decisions back then," said Owen Lammers, executive director of the Moab-based Living Rivers, which has an agenda to pull the plug on dams. "They did the best with what they knew at the time."

But it is time, he said, for the bureau to become one of restoration and healing.

Living Rivers is one of more than 80 environmental groups that pledged support for a series of protests along the Colorado River in Utah and Arizona leading up to Monday's event. Fewer than a dozen protesters were on hand at Hoover Dam.

Lammers believes the Bureau of Reclamation could apply the same creative genius that built Hoover Dam and Glen Canyon Dam toward correcting the problems created in the past 100 years. Only then it could achieve that elusive balance between the needs of humans and healthy river ecosystems.

The Sierra Club, meanwhile, is pledging to help the Bureau of Reclamation transform itself into agency that fixes the damage it has caused.

"The bureau must include among its primary goals the restoration of rivers, streams and riparian habitat to conditions that enable native fish and wildlife to flourish and thereby ensure that the needs of the natural environment and the human population will be served," the Sierra Club said in a prepared statement.

Department of Interior officials defended the bureau's environmental record, pointing out a series of cooperative projects to restore river corridors and riparian areas.

"The bureau has certainly become environmentally sensitive," Norton told the Deseret News. "There's lots of innovative things being done."

Norton and Keys both agreed the bureau's next 100 years will not be focused on building new dams but on using the water more efficiently, while developing new, environmentally sound water supplies in the process.

LR in the News 06/20/02

Officials party while the flannel-mouthed sucker dies

By David Hare

Las Vegas City Life

Depending on who you ask, the Bureau of Reclamation's June 17 centennial birthday party was either a celebration of man's taming of the Western water supply, or a gathering of inept, contemptible bureaucrats who threw themselves a \$600,000 shindig at the expense and inconvenience of the public.

As the bureaucrats partied, a caravan of protesters led by Living Rivers, a group of Phoenix-based environmentalists, gathered nearby on the Arizona side of the Hoover Dam. The group wanted to draw attention to what they claim is the bureau's 100-year track record of ruining what it was designed to protect: water supplies in the American West.

"[The Bureau of Reclamation] throws this hellacious, expensive party after 100 years of destroying rivers and habitats all through the Colorado River Basin," said Lisa Force, a spokeswoman for Living Rivers.

So that explains the roadblocks being set up on Hoover Dam in the middle of the day.

Force and other representatives of the 88 environmental groups at the demonstration are angry at BuRec officials for the "devastating" amount of damage done to ecosystems allegedly caused by the 600 dams the bureau has constructed in the West.

In particular, the protesters are up in arms over the Glen Canyon Dam, about 370 miles upstream of Hoover. Among BuRec's 600 dams, Glen Canyon is the worst, according to Living Rivers.

"The Glen Canyon Dam is causing the death of the Grand Canyon's ecosystem," said Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers, who claimed that 95 percent of the sediments and nutrients the Grand Canyon ecosystem depends on are being choked off by the dam.

Since the 1960s, he said, the dam has changed the Colorado River's natural flows, its seasonal variations in water temperature, sediment and nutrient deposition, and fish migration into and out of the Grand Canyon.

For example, the dam releases water at a constant temperature of 48 degrees, where natural flow conditions at this time of year would be around 80 degrees. Fish can't spawn in such chilly waters and, thus, Lammers said at least four species of fish have already been lost.

And, according to Lammers, we're about to lose two more fish species - the humpback chub and the flannel-mouthed sucker. Populations of these two fish have decreased dramatically in the last few years, he said.

So that explains the two girls who were dancing in the parking lot while dressed in fish costumes.

Moreover, Lammers said the federal government mandated about 10 years ago that BuRec correct the damage caused to the Grand Canyon ecosystem, but to no avail.

Instead, he said BuRec has merely "tinkered" at fixing the river flow problems.

Not so, said Doug Hendrix, acting public affairs officer at the BuRec office in Salt Lake City.

"Our view is that we're working with our stake holders, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through a number of programs designed to recreate the rivers' natural flow as it goes through the Grand Canyon," he said.

Hendrix then admitted to being on the job for only four months and said he felt uncomfortable commenting any further.

His superior, Barry Wirth, was out of the office for several days.

On the other hand, Robert Walsh, external affairs officer at the Las Vegas BuRec office, was available to comment on the centennial celebration's hefty price tag: "Close to \$600,000," he said.

Of that amount, about \$400,000 was donated by the nonprofit Water for the West Foundation and was spent on fireworks, laser beams and other party favors, Walsh said. The rest of the money - used for "security costs for protection of the dam and its surrounding facilities," among other expenses, Walsh said - was billed to American taxpayers.

The public, however, was not invited to the gala celebration, as traffic was diverted from Hoover Dam for the duration of the ceremony, which lasted about 10 hours.

Among the invited guests were Interior Secretary Gale Norton, BuRec Commissioner John Keys and Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn.

It's been reported that Norton and company thought the centennial celebration was neat.

Tell that to the humpback chub and the flannel-mouthed sucker.

LR in the News 06/20/02

From AP to NPR, Sedimental Journey's Message Gets Out

From June 13-17, Living Rivers led a caravan of activists in a [Sediment-al Journey](#) to Hoover Dam to protest the 100th anniversary of the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec). Our objective was to raise public awareness of the problems caused by BuRec's

century of dam building, especially pertaining to [Grand Canyon National Park](#) just below Glen Canyon Dam. We succeeded. Wide-spread media coverage resulted, especially in Arizona, Nevada and Utah. John Keys, BuRec's commissioner, was forced to address the problems associated with Glen Canyon Dam as one of the major criticisms of his agency. Although Keys continued his efforts to mislead the public regarding Glen Canyon Dam's future, the growing public awareness aided by BuRec's centennial will soon force him to abandon such public relations foolishness.

The [network of groups](#) supporting the call for immediate BuRec action on Grand Canyon and Glen Canyon Dam now stands at 85, and will continue to grow. The events at Hoover Dam and along our five-day, 700-mile journey had widespread participation including former Grand Canyon National Park and Bureau of Reclamation employees, representatives of a number of Native American tribes, and a host of environmental groups including the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth. Whereas the remote location of these events restricted turnout, the media coverage more than made up for it.

We also succeeded in transporting much-needed sediment to the Grand Canyon. Our dump truck, which was filled with sediment at the beginning of the journey near Moab, was unloaded into the Grand Canyon five days later. While our one-ton contribution may have been tiny in comparison to the 100 million tons Glen Canyon Dam takes from Grand Canyon annually, it was nonetheless representative of the commitment by a growing number of constituencies to get all this sediment back permanently.

Here's a sampling of the coverage:

- [Hoover Dam centerpiece of Reclamation Bureau's celebration](#), Associated Press, June 14, 2002
 - [Hoover Dam site of celebration, protests Monday](#), Las Vegas Sun, June 14, 2002
 - [A 'Sedimental Journey' on the Colorado](#), Salt Lake Tribune, June 15, 2002
 - ['Sedimental Journey' makes stop in Page, Arizona Daily Sun](#), June 15, 2002
 - [Bureau's birthday celebration to be met with protest](#), Yuma Daily Sun, Jun 16, 2002
 - [Dams' role in flux for urban West, Agency rethinks task at 100-year mark](#), The Arizona Republic, June 17, 2002
 - [Dignitaries, protesters mark bureau's birthday at Hoover Dam](#), Associated Press June 17, 2002
 - [Dam hosts centennial celebration, Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), June 18, 2002
 - [Dam Builder Turns 100 Amid Praise, Criticism](#), Salt Lake Tribune, June 18, 2002
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LR in the News 06/30/02

Wildfire is only one face of Colorado drought

By ROBERT WELLER Associated Press Writer

CENTER, Colo.- With only seven inches of precipitation a year, the San Luis Valley is a desert, but it's a water-rich desert.

Experts at milking water from the earth, farmers can grow potatoes right next to the Great Sand Dunes National Monument.

After the driest nine months in a century, matched by unceasing high winds that dry what little moisture is left, even miserly water users may have met their equal.

"It's kind of a cruel trick of nature that our best efforts are getting shot down pretty hard this summer," said Ray Wright, who farms potatoes in the valley.

On Colorado's Great Plains, about 200 miles to the east, Brad Ivey is trying to raise winter wheat, sunflowers and milo in the same winds that have already blown across Wright's valley.

"The winds blow every day. We have not had a day all spring that the wind hasn't blown. It sucks the little bit of moisture you get right out of the ground," Ivey said.

At the end of May, not one of Colorado's 241 water monitoring stations had reached the average rainfall for the period. More than 200 had less than 70 percent and 107 less than 50 percent.

Colorado farmers have seen their winter wheat crop fail. Ranchers are slaughtering cattle because there is no hay. Cities are imposing mandatory water restrictions. And wildfires have already burned more than 346,000 acres.

Most years, the same 14,000-foot mountains that ring the 7,600-high San Luis Valley, about 150 miles southwest of Denver, trap the sand blowing across the valley floor and deliver plenty of water when the snow melts each spring and summer.

Water from snowmelt-charged rivers was diverted into irrigation ditches, the general practice in the West, to water fields. Much of it was lost to evaporation in the process.

Then the biggest valley farms switched to center-pivot sprinkler systems, drawing from wells that tapped into the valley's aquifer. Water coming down the steep mountainsides is trapped between volcanic sediment and clay in two aquifers, one only 50 feet below the surface at some points.

The well-drawn sprinklers, which circle the irrigated area on metal poles, use less than half the water of conventional irrigation.

Now the irrigation ditches are used to recharge the aquifer. Water is pumped into them and allowed to settle into the ground.

"If you can store water below ground, it doesn't evaporate," said Nolan Doesken, assistant state climatologist.

San Luis Valley folks know the value of the water below.

They rose up with bake sales, pie auctions and kiss-a-pig auctions to fight a developer who spent \$1 million trying to get a referendum passed that would allow him to sell aquifer water to Denver's booming suburbs.

But it's harder to fight Mother Nature. Doesken wrote a report in 1999 warning that after the wettest string of years since the Dust Bowl days, Colorado was due for a drought.

After all, much of the West is semiarid or desert. The first military expedition to the Rocky Mountains returned east to advise that it had encountered "The Great American Desert."

"Ninety-seven percent of the time it doesn't rain. You only have to change that to 97.5 percent and you have a drought," said Doesken.

"If you look at the meteorological activity over the last 100 years, scientists now believe what we once characterized as drought conditions are actually quite normal," said Owen Lammers, executive director of Living Rivers, a group critical of dam construction in arid areas.

"Civilizations for thousands of years have tried to farm in the West and failed," Lammers said.

"We are starting to see signs of that happening again," he said. "We don't believe you can't grow food out here, but not the way we are doing it. Alfalfa is one of the most water-intensive crops and it is used to feed cattle."

After the Civil War, the federal government gave away land for a transcontinental rail line and the railroads promoted the region as an agricultural paradise. The government created the Bureau of Reclamation in 1902 and promised settlers they would get the water they needed to farm.

Once settlers poured in, hundreds of dams were built to provide irrigation water, much of it generated from the streams fed by the mountains of Colorado.

This year water has been cut off to ranchers in Gunnison County for the first time since a string of dams was built in the 1960s. Water is distributed based on the age of claims, and other users, including a farming area, have held water rights longer than the ranchers.

Cities depend on their own reservoirs. Denver has enough water to get through at least this season, but neighboring Aurora and some other suburbs have already had to impose mandatory water rationing. Last week, Denver imposed mandatory water restrictions.

In the last two decades, Colorado's population increased by 50 percent. Many farmers and ranchers sold their water rights to cities, which may have prevented more water shortages in suburbs.

Clouding the water are agreements that share Colorado's water with 10 states and Mexico. Wildlife agencies also insist that streams be maintained in some areas to protect aquatic life.

"The last time the San Luis Valley aquifer was seriously depleted, after a 1977 drought, it took five years to replenish it," said Wright.

"Our aquifer is just another reservoir. You have to put more in than you take out. If you mine water there, it is only a matter of time until it is played out.

"I am concerned that by the end of the summer many areas of the valley will see seriously declining water tables. I know there are going to be areas where there isn't sufficient water to finish a crop," said Wright.
