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Group Opens Ice Cream Shop with Mission to Drain Lake Powell

Where just an ice cream parlor once stood, the headquarters for a nationwide effort to protect and restore the Colorado River is now evolving. The shop, located at 21 N. Main St., will soon house the headquarters for the Glen Canyon Action Network (GCAN) -- a grassroots group dedicated to the integrity of the Colorado River watershed.

Over the past two months, a group of Moabites have teamed-up with river restoration groups in Utah, Arizona, California, New Mexico and even France, to launch the organization. And Jan. 24, the group will hold its inaugural event at the Moab Arts and Recreation Center.

GCAN's immediate priority is building broad-based national and international support for the draining of Lake Powell.

"The restoration of Glen Canyon, more than any other initiative, encompasses all the issues that must be addressed if we are to sustainably manage this river for generations to come," said John Weisheit, GCAN's president.

"The opposition to that dam has had its roots in this town for 40 years; it's no surprise that folks in Moab are getting on with the task of leading the nation to get that reservoir drained," said Ken Sleight, one of GCAN founders.

Sleight and others will be hosting GCAN's inaugural event on Monday evening, January 24 at the MARC. There, Sleight will be discussing the history of opposition to the Glen Canyon Dam, and the role Moab residents have played in keeping the idea of a restored Glen Canyon alive since the reservoir began filling in 1963.

Susette Weisheit, GCAN campaign committee chair, will introduce GCAN's immediate plans, especially the rally to take place at Glen Canyon Dam March 14.

"Tens of thousands of people will be out in support of rivers all over the world on this third annual International Day of Action against dams. We here in Moab want to be right alongside them," Weisheit predicted.

Also in attendance will be Owen Lammers, who for the past 12 years led the development of International Rivers Network, now the world's leading river advocacy organization. Lammers, who recently relocated to Moab has since joined GCAN and will discuss the rapidly growing international movement to remove dams, and the leadership many activists around the world see coming from a restored Glen Canyon.

Admission is free and refreshments will be available.

"But don't forget the ice cream," says Weisheit. "Three days after our rally at Glen Canyon, GCAN will open Restoration Creamery, where every scoop of ice cream sold will help another gallon of water soon drain out of that reservoir."

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Note: Glen Canyon Action Network was fiscally sponsored by Center for Biological Diversity from 2000 to 2004.

In 2001, the name of our organization became Living Rivers.

In 2002, our conservation director, John Weisheit, was recruited by the Waterkeeper Alliance to serve the public as the official Colorado Riverkeeper.

In 2005, Living Rivers was approved by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501c3 charitable organization.