

January 2007

— Project Fact Sheet —

Environmental Impact Statement for the Adoption of a Long-Term Experimental Plan for the Future Operation of Glen Canyon Dam and Other Associated Management Activities

Project Overview

The construction and operation of Glen Canyon Dam fundamentally altered the Colorado River ecosystem. Because of the importance of the Colorado River to the Desert Southwest, there has been considerable discussion on how to manage and protect this natural resource. To address this challenge, the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program (AMP) was established in 1997 to provide for long-term research and monitoring of resources downstream from Glen Canyon Dam. While significant progress has been made over the past ten years, it has become apparent that a structured, long-term experimentation plan is needed for a more thorough and systematic understanding of the environmental resources located below Glen Canyon Dam.

The proposed Long-Term Experimental Plan would implement a structured, long-term program of experimentation (including dam operations, potential modifications to Glen Canyon Dam intake structures, and other potential management actions, such as removal of non-native fish species) in the Colorado River below the dam.

The Long-Term Experimental Plan would build on a decade of scientific experimentation and monitoring that has taken place as part of the AMP, and would build on the knowledge gained by experiments, operations, and management actions taken under the AMP. Accordingly, Reclamation intends to tier from earlier National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance documents such as those prepared as part of the Department of the Interior's Glen Canyon AMP efforts.

Proposed Federal Action

The proposed action is to develop and adopt a Long-Term Experimental Plan that will implement a structured, long-term program of experimentation (including dam operations, modifications to Glen Canyon Dam intake structures, and other non-flow management actions, such as removal of non-native fish species) in the Colorado River below the dam.

Glen Canyon Dam



Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the proposed federal action is to increase scientific understanding of the ecosystem downstream from Glen Canyon Dam and to improve and protect important downstream resources. Specific hypotheses to be addressed include the effect of dam release temperatures; ramp rates; non-native control; and the timing, duration, and magnitude of beach/habitat-building flow releases.

Adoption of a Long-Term Experimental Plan is needed to

ensure a continued, structured application of adaptive management in such a manner as to protect, mitigate adverse impacts to, and improve the values for which Grand Canyon National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area were established, including, but not limited to natural and cultural resources and visitor use, consistent with applicable federal law. Adoption of a Long-Term Experimental Plan will assist scientists, policy makers, and resource managers to better understand resource management options, tradeoffs and consequences, and assist in the long-term operations of Glen Canyon Dam.

Background

Glen Canyon Dam was authorized by the Colorado River Storage Project Act of 1956 and completed by Reclamation in 1963. The primary purpose of Glen Canyon Dam is water conservation and storage. The dam is specifically managed to regulate releases of water from the Upper Colorado River Basin to the Lower Colorado River Basin to satisfy provisions of the 1922 Colorado River Compact. In addition to the primary purpose of water delivery, another purpose of Glen Canyon Dam is to generate hydroelectric power. Between the dam's completion in 1963 and 1990, the dam's daily operations were primarily undertaken to maximize generation of hydroelectric power.

Over time, concerns arose with respect to the operation of Glen Canyon Dam, including effects of operations on species listed pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. In 1992, Congress passed and the President signed into law, the Grand Canyon Protection Act (GCPA) which addresses potential impacts of dam operations on downstream resources in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Grand Canyon National Park.

The GCPA required the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to complete an environmental impact statement (EIS) evaluating alternative operating criteria, consistent with existing law, that would determine how Glen Canyon Dam would be operated to both meet the purposes for which the dam was authorized and meet the goals for protection of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Grand Canyon National Park. The final EIS was completed in March 1995 and a Record of Decision (ROD) was issued on October 9, 1996.

Additionally, the GCPA requires the Secretary to undertake research and monitoring to determine if revised dam operations were achieving the resource protection objectives of the final EIS and ROD. These provisions of the GCPA were incorporated into the 1996 ROD and led to the establishment of the AMP, administered by Reclamation, and of the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center within the U.S. Geological Survey.

The AMP includes a federal advisory committee known as the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG), a Technical Work Group, the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center, and independent review panels. The Technical Work Group is a subcommittee of the AMWG and provides technical advice and recommendations to the AMWG. The AMWG

makes recommendations to the Secretary concerning Glen Canyon Dam operations and other management actions to protect resources downstream from Glen Canyon Dam consistent with the GCPA and other applicable provisions of federal law.

Public Participation

Reclamation is implementing a public participation program to fully inform and engage the public in this NEPA process. Understanding your views on the scope of the EIS as well as the issues and alternatives to be analyzed is critical to a successful completion. To that end, we ask that you please provide us with your comments by close of business on **Wednesday, February 28, 2007**.

Reclamation intends to use the information developed through prior meetings of the AMWG, Technical Work Group, and Science Planning Group as relevant information for the purposes of scoping the upcoming NEPA process and to develop the appropriate scope of analysis. In addition, the range of alternatives for the proposed action will be developed following recommendations provided by the AMWG and through information received at public scoping meetings.

Project Schedule

- ◆ December 12, 2006-February 28, 2007 – Formal Scoping Period
- ◆ March 2007 – Issue Scoping Report
- ◆ May 2007 – Develop Alternatives
- ◆ April 2008 – Publish Draft EIS
- ◆ October 2008 – Publish Final EIS
- ◆ December 2008 – Issue Record of Decision

Please Provide Us With Your Comments

Written comments may be sent by close of business on **Wednesday, February 28, 2007**, to: Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Upper Colorado Region, Attention: UC-402, 125 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84318-1147, faxogram at (801) 524-3858, or e-mail at GCDExpPlan@uc.usbr.gov.

For Further Information

Contact Dennis Kubly, Bureau of Reclamation, at (801) 524-3715 or e-mail at GCDExpPlan@uc.usbr.gov. In addition, information about this EIS will be posted to the project website at the following web address: <http://www.usbr.gov/uc/rm/gcdltp/index.html>.