

WCS-PPage
ADM-10.00

Subject: Navajo Unit Operations

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our April 18, 2002, meeting to coordinate Reclamation's operation of the Navajo Unit. The meeting was held in Farmington's Civic Center.

Highlights of the meeting include:

–The April 2002 forecast predicted the most probable April-July inflow to Navajo Reservoir for 2002 at 195,000 acre feet or about 24% percent of average seasonal runoff.

– There will not be a Spring Release this year.

–Reclamation will continue to adjust releases from the reservoir, as necessary, to attempt to maintain a weekly average target base flow of between 500 cfs and 1,000 cfs in the critical habitat section of the San Juan River. Minimum releases from the reservoir will be 500 cfs this summer.

–The draft Navajo Reservoir Operations Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was sent to the cooperating agencies for their review. Comments have been received. The last two weeks have been spent incorporating the comments into the DEIS. The DEIS will be sent to the public in the summer for comments. A Record of Decision should occur before the end of the 2002 or the beginning of 2003.

If you have any suggestions on improving the operation meetings or the summaries of the meetings, please let us know. The next operation meeting will be held on **Thursday, August 15, 2002 at 1:00 in the Civic Center, Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street)**. If you have questions, please call Pat Page at (970) 385-6560 or Ruth Swickard at (970) 385-6523.

Sincerely,

/s/

Pat Page, Team Leader
Water Management Team
Resource Management Division

Enclosure
Distribution (see attached list)

bc: Regional Director, Salt Lake City UT
Attention: UC-400, UC-434, UC-438, UC-600, UC-723, UC-720, UC-726 (ea w/encl)

Director, Technical Service Center, Denver CO
Attention: D-8510 (w/encl)

WCN-CDeAngelis, SMoyer, EWarner, DCrabtree, SMcCall, JOzga, KOzga., CStanton,
KFogelquist, MSteves, RStorbo, JWright (ea w/ encl)

WCD-PPage, RSwickard, JSimons, KLashmett, KBeck, MCharito, BDodd, MVelasquez

Distribution list (e/encl)

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING

April 18, 2002

Participation: This meeting was held in Farmington, New Mexico at the Civic Center.

Purpose of Meeting: The purpose of these meetings-- held in January, April, and August-- is to gather input for determining upcoming operations for Navajo Reservoir. This input is used in Reclamation's development of an overall 24-month study for operation of Reclamation projects in the Upper Colorado River Basin, which includes plans for Glen Canyon, Flaming Gorge, Aspinall Unit and Navajo. Input from individuals, organizations, and agencies along with other factors such as weather, water rights, endangered species requirements, flood control, hydro power, recreation, fish and wildlife management and reservoir levels, will be considered in the development of these reservoir operation plans. In addition, the meetings are used to coordinate activities and exchange information among agencies, water users, and other interested parties concerning the San Juan River and Navajo Reservoir.

2001 Operation

–Handouts provided included a review of the 2001 operation, and the proposed operation for the water year 2002.

Preliminary April-July 2002 Operation

–The April mid-month Most Probable Unregulated forecast volume is 195,000 acre-feet for the April-July Inflow, 125,000 acre-foot decrease from the Mid-March forecast. This is only 26% of the average inflow forecast. After adjustments for Vallecito Reservoir storage and San Juan-Chama diversions, April-July reservoir inflow is projected to be about 188,000 acre-feet.

–An increase in the minimum release of 500 cfs is projected to occur to help maintain the minimum target flows in the Recovery Area.

–Total inflows to Navajo Reservoir from January to March 2002 was 33,500 acre-feet or 26 percent of average. Reservoir releases averaged between 500 and 700 cfs.

–As outlined in the (San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Plan (SJRBRIP) Operating Rule Decision Tree and with the forecasted inflows expected for Most Probable condition, a spring release from Navajo Dam is not required for this year. It was determined that a perturbation did not occur last year.

–The flow recommendations for the endangered fish call for weekly average target base flows in the critical habitat section of the San Juan River of between 500 cfs and 1,000 cfs. Reclamation will adjust releases to attempt to meet this criteria, with the minimum release being 500 cfs this summer. To the extent possible, a twenty four hour notice will be provided to interested parties and the media before releases are increased and a one week notice will be given

before a decrease is made. The one week notice for a decrease only applies in a non-flood control situation.

Other Comments:

–Reclamation is preparing the Navajo Reservoir Operations Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to describe the environmental impacts of alternatives for operating the dam and reservoir to implement the SJRBRIP flow recommendations. Comments were received from the Cooperating Agencies. These comments are currently being incorporated into the draft EIS. Public comment period is scheduled for the summer of 2002. This is the next opportunity for formal public participation. It should be noted, however, that this schedule could be revised in the future. Comments and concerns are welcome at any time by contacting Ken Beck at 970-385-6558.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 15, 2002** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – April 18, 2002 Navajo Operations Meeting

Ashcroft, Nick, West Hammond Domestic Water Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Bliesner, Ron, Keller-Bliesner Engineering, Logan UT
Crabtree, Dan, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
DeLorme, Charlie, Wild Rivers Expeditions, Bluff UT
Holm, Chris, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO
Horner, Gary, Farmington NM
Johnson, Lawrence W., Soaring Eagle Lodge, Navajo Dam NM
Lane, Harry, San Juan Trout Outfitters, Farmington NM
Lashmett, Kirk, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Meloy, Mark, Bureau of Land Management, Bluff UT
Nordby, Brett, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Durango CO
Page, Pat, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Rasor, Julie, Land Owner, Bloomfield NM
Simons, John, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Stevens, Lynette, New Mexico State Surface Water Quality Bureau, Santa Fe NM
Swickard, Ruth, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Turney, Pat, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, Santa Fe NM
Velasquez, Mike, Bureau of Reclamation, Navajo Dam NM
Walden, Larry, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington NM
Weiss, John, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO
Wethington, Marc, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Navajo Dam NM