

WCS-PPage  
ADM-10.00

Subject: Navajo Unit Operations

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our January 22, 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 January 2002 forecast predicted the most probable April-July inflow to Navajo Reservoir for 2002 at 515,000 acre feet or about 64% percent of average seasonal runoff. Runoff predictions often change significantly between January and May, so inflow predictions should be considered **very preliminary** at this time.

–The January 2002 forecast predicted the most probable April-July inflow to Navajo Reservoir for 2002 at 515,000 acre feet or about 64% percent of average seasonal runoff. Runoff predictions often change significantly between January and May, so inflow predictions should be considered **very preliminary** at this time.

–Reclamation will continue to adjust releases from the reservoir, as necessary, 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 will be sent out the last week of January to cooperating agencies for their review. It will be sent to the public sometime in the spring. A Record of Decision should occur before the end of the year.

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, April 18, 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

January 22, 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, Aspinal 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.

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

### **2001 Operation**

- Total inflows to Navajo Reservoir from January to December was 901,000 acre-feet. Reservoir releases for the year averaged between 250 and 5,000 cfs. The total release was 940,000 acre feet. Navajo Reservoir elevation was about 26 feet below the spillway at elevation 6,058.91 feet, on December 31, 2001.

### **Preliminary January-July 2002 Operation**

–Based on the January 1, 2002 forecast, the most probable April to July inflow to Navajo Reservoir is 515,000 acre-feet or 64 % of the 30-year average.

–As outlined in the 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. The SJRBRIP biology committee has to perform a visual inspection as to the occurrence of a perturbation. If it is determined that perturbation occurred, a spring release of 118,000 acre feet would be necessary. This release would be with one week ramp up, one week at 5,000 cfs and one week to ramp down to 500 cfs. Runoff forecasts, this early in the season will probably change, so inflow predictions should be considered very preliminary at this time.

–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 meet this criteria, with the minimum release being 500 cfs this summer. A twenty four hour notice will be provided to interested parties and the media before releases are increased. A one week notice will be given before a decrease is made.

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 SJRBRIB flow recommendations. The draft EIS is scheduled for release to the Cooperating Agencies for their review the last week of January. Public comment period will be in the spring 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.

–The low flow test report is not yet complete. It will probably be sent out with the draft EIS.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 18, 2002** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List - January 22, 2002 Navajo Operations Meeting

Aaron Carithers, Anasazi Angler, Hesperus CO  
Bernadette Tsosie, Navajo Water Management Branch, Fort Defiance AZ  
Bob Krakow, BIA-NIIP, Farmington NM  
Chris Holm, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO  
Evert Oldham, Private Citizen, Flora Vista NM  
John Weiss, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO  
John Simons, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO  
John Tavenner, San Juan River Guide Association, Aztec NM  
John Whipple, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, Santa Fe NM  
Julie Rasor, Land Owner, Bloomfield NM  
Ken Beegles, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Durango CO  
LuAnn Kraemer, Rep. Congressman Scott McInnis, Durango CO  
Marc Wethington, New Mexico Game and Fish, Navajo Dam NM  
Melvin Symonds, Shrine Park, Farmington NM  
Nick Ashcroft, West Hammond Domestic Water Assoc., Bloomfield NM  
Pat Page, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO  
Paul F. Martin, City of Farmington, Farmington NM  
Ralph Phelps, Private Citizen, Ignacio CO  
Randy Kirkpatrick, San Juan Water Commission, Farmington NM  
Rob Ashman, Public Service Company of NM, Waterflow NM  
Ron Bliesner, Keller-Bliesner Engineering, Logan UT  
Ruth Swickard, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO  
Steve Harris, Southwestern Water Conservation District, Durango CO  
Zan G. Wood, Flora Vista Water Users, Flora Vista NM