

WCS-PPage
ADM-10.00

Subject: Navajo Unit Operations Meeting Notes

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our January 24, 2006, meeting to coordinate Reclamation's operation of the Navajo Unit. The meeting was held at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico. Highlights of the meeting include:

— The April through July actual inflow to Navajo Reservoir during 2005 was 965,100 acre-feet, or 142 percent of the 30- year average.

— Releases are currently at 350 cubic feet per second (cfs). Adjustments to the releases will be made as necessary to react to changing weather and stream flow conditions. The reservoir elevation on January 23, 2006 was 6,072.98 feet which corresponds to 1,522,300 acre-feet of live storage. This is 121% of the 30-year average for this time of the year.

—The preliminary inflow forecast for 2006 is estimated to be around 70% of the 30 year average. However, this is very preliminary and will change as updated forecasts become available.

— According to the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program's (SJ RIP) Flow Recommendations a spring peak release will be made from the reservoir this year.

—The Fish Wildlife Service's Biological Opinion for Navajo Reservoir Operations was released January 5, 2006. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be released in 3-4 months with the Record of Decision (ROD) following a minimum of 30 days after the FEIS is finalized.

— In lieu of a ROD, and in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for operations this winter (November 2005 to April 2006). The EA contains a preferred alternative that would allow minimum releases as low as 250 cfs.

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 **Tuesday, April 18, 2006, 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,

Pat Page
Water Management Group Chief

Enclosure

BC: Regional Director, Salt Lake City, UT

Attention: UC-100, UC-140, UC-400, UC-434, UC-436, UC-438, UC-600, UC-700, UC-723,
UC-720, UC-726, UC-735 (ea w/encl)

Director, Technical Service Center, Denver, CO

Attention: D-8510 (w/encl)

WCG-CDeAngelis, SMoyer, EWarner, DCrabtree, SMcCall, KOzga, CStanton, MSteves, JHock (ea
w/encl)

WCD-PPage, RSwickard, JSimons, Klashmett, KBeck, MCharito, BDodd, MVelasquez
(ea w/encl)

Phoenix Area Office – LWalden

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING

January 24, 2006

Participation: This meeting was held in Farmington, New Mexico at the Civic Center. The attendance list is attached.

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.

2005 Water Year Summary

The actual inflow into Navajo Reservoir during April through July 2005 was 965,100 acre-feet (af) or 142 percent of the 30-year average. The reservoir water surface elevation on December 31, 2005 was 6073.74 feet which corresponds to 1,533,200 af of live storage.

Preliminary 2006 Operation

The January forecast gives a very preliminary indication of what may happen this year in regards to inflow. Generally speaking, the forecast is derived by assessing the current snowpack and predicting the future snowpack. Given that it is so early in the year, it is reasonable to assume that the inflow estimates will change as forecasts are updated.

The Snow Water Equivalent, which measures the amount of water in the snowpack, as of January 23, 2006, indicates the San Juan Basin is 46 percent of average for this time of year.

The April through July actual inflow to Navajo Reservoir during 2005 was 965,100 acre-feet, or 142 percent of the 30-year average.

As outlined in the San Juan River Implementation Program (SJRIP) Operating Rule Decision Tree, and based on the January Most Probable Inflow Forecast, a spring release of 128,400 af would occur this year. This peak release would correlate to a release rate of 5,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) for 7 days, with 7 days of ramping up and 7 days of ramping down. A Spring Release under the Maximum Probable inflow condition would be for about 316,000 af for 21 days of 5,000 cfs.

Releases are currently at 350 cubic feet per second. Adjustments to the releases will be made as necessary to react to changing weather, stream flow, and reservoir storage conditions in order to meet project purposes, including maintaining the target base flow of 500 cfs for the endangered fish.

With the Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) not yet completed, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for operations this winter (November 2005 to April 2006). The EA contains a preferred alternative that would allow minimum releases as low as 250 cfs.

Recommendations for San Juan River Operations and Administration for 2006

The ten major New Mexico water users in the San Juan River Basin have developed water sharing recommendations for 2006. The recommendations are currently going through each entity's respective approval process. Based on the current forecast, a shortage is not anticipated this year.

Navajo Reservoir Operations Environmental Impact Statement

The Final Biological Opinion was received on January 5, 2006. The Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) can now be completed and finalized. The Record of Decision is anticipated to be signed this summer, with the allowable minimum releases as low as 250 cfs and maximum releases as high as 5,000 cfs.

Agency/Organization Activities and Discussion of Related Activities

Marc Wethington with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish reported on the trout habitat improvement project completed in December in the San Juan River below Navajo Dam. This was a multi-agency cooperative effort designed to enhance trout habitat at low flows. A similar trout habitat improvement project is scheduled for November 2006.

John Weiss announced that he is retiring as the manager of the Navajo State Park (Colorado). Good luck in your retirement John! Doug Secrist will be his replacement. He also introduced Neal Dennis, the Colorado State Parks marina manager at Arboles.

The Jicarilla Apache and Navajo Nations respectively, are making their way through their approval processes for the Recommendations for San Juan River Administration and Operation for 2006.

Dave Campbell, San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program Coordinator for the Fish & Wildlife Service stated that the endangered fish are starting to show some signs of recovery, a sign of success for the Program. Dave also announced that the Annual Program Review meeting will be held February 21-22, 2006 at the Farmington Civic Center.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 18, 2006** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – January 24, 2006 Navajo Operations Meeting

Ashman, Rob, San Juan Generation Station, PNM, Waterflow NM
Bentler, Aaron, Keller-Bliesner Engineering, Logan UT
Bloomfield, Dave, Arizona Public Service, Fruitland NM
Brinton, Scott D., Colorado Division of Water Resources, Durango, CO
Brooks, Jim, US Fish & Wildlife, Albuquerque NM
Campbell, Dave, US Fish & Wildlife, Albuquerque NM
Charley, Wilton, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Crawford, Carroll, Bloomfield Irrigation District and Citizen, Farmington NM
Cutler, Chris, Bureau of Reclamation, Salt Lake City UT
Dennis, Neal, Arboles Marina, Arboles CO
Granthem-Richards, Maude, City of Farmington NM
Hart, Cheston, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Durango, CO
Johnston, Clay, Self, Turley NM
Knopick, Tom, Fisherman, Durango CO
Kraft, Amy, Southwestern Water Conservation District, Durango CO
Lane, Teresa, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM
Lashmett, Kirk, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Leeper, John, Navajo Nation, Dept. of Natural Resources, Fort Defiance, AZ
LeFevre, Andrea, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Dulce NM
Lincoln, Jr., E.J., BHP Billiton, Farmington NM
Montoia Paul, City of Farmington, Farmington, NM
Mueller, Steve, New Mexico State Parks, Navajo Dam NM
Oxford, Bob, Citizen, Farmington NM
Page, Pat, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Simons, John, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Symonds, Melvin, S.J. Shrine Park, Farmington NM
Trost, Rick, BHP Billiton, Farmington NM
Walden, Larry, Bureau of Reclamation, Phoenix AZ
Wethington, Marc, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Navajo Dam NM
Weiss, John, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO
Williams, Shawn, New Mexico Office of the State Engineer, Aztec NM
Zwiener, Don, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM