

WCS-PPage
ADM-10.00

Subject: Navajo Unit Operations Coordination Meeting Summary

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our January 18, 2005, Navajo Unit Operations Coordination Meeting. The meeting was held at the Farmington Civic Center.

Highlights of the meeting include:

—Based on the Most Probable Inflow Forecast as of January 14, 2005, this year's April through July forecasted inflow to Navajo Reservoir is anticipated to be 1,200,000 acre-feet, or 153 percent of the average inflow.

—The January forecast gives a very preliminary indication of what may happen this year in regards to inflow. Inflow estimates can and will change as forecasts are updated. For example, for the past three years the actual April through July inflow has been less than the Minimum Probable Inflow anticipated in the January forecast.

—As outlined in the SJRIP Operating Rule Decision Tree, and based on the January Most Probable Inflow Forecast, a spring peak release of 375,000 acre-feet (af) would occur this year. This peak release would correlate to a release rate of 5,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) for 21 days, with a four-week ramp up and a one-week ramp down. The ramp up would begin around the end of April and the release would reach 5,000 cfs around the third week of May. *Changes in the forecast would impact the duration and magnitude of a spring peak release.*

—Maintenance and repair work on the auxiliary outlet works two 4 by 4 gates is proceeding. All work should be complete in February 2005.

—Issuance of the Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) continues to be delayed pending completion of a Final Biological Opinion (BO). Reclamation and the Fish and Wildlife Service are still trying to resolve issues brought out in a draft BO developed by the Service last year. Because of the delay in the BO, there is no scheduled date for the FEIS to be completed at this time. A Record of Decision would be signed a minimum of one month after the FEIS is released to the public.

—Releases are currently at 250 cfs, which is the current minimum allowable rate. The minimum allowable release rate will remain at 250 cfs through the winter. Because of the current delay in completing the Navajo Reservoir Operations FEIS, the release will likely be increased to 350 cfs when irrigation season begins (April 2005). Adjustments to the releases will be made as necessary to react to changing weather, stream flow, and storage conditions in order to meet project purposes, including maintaining the target base flow for the endangered fish.

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 19, 2005, at 2:00 pm at the Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street)**. If you have questions, please call me at 970-385-6560 or email at ppage@uc.usbr.gov.

Sincerely,

Pat Page
Southern Water Management Group Chief

Enclosure

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-8150 (w/encl)

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

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

WBR:RS:mll:02-08-05:970-385-6523:Navajo Coordination Meeting Summary

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING

January 18, 2005

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.

2004 Summary

From January 2004 through December 2004, the inflow was 762,900 acre-feet (af), or 73 percent of average. This is a big increase over the last two years (2002 was 15 percent and 2003 was 38 percent).

The reservoir water surface elevation on January 18, 2005 was 6030.45 feet which corresponds to 1,013,082 acre-feet of live storage. This is an improvement of over 34 feet in elevation and 304,500 acre-feet in storage compared to this time last year.

Since November 1, 2004, we have been releasing 250 cfs, and the reservoir has been storing water since mid-September 2004.

Preliminary 2005 Planned Operations

The January forecast gives a very preliminary indication of what may happen this year in regards to inflow. Inflow estimates can and will change as forecasts are updated. For example, for the past three years the actual April through July inflow has been less than the Minimum Probable Inflow anticipated in the January forecast.

The Snow Water Equivalent, which measures the amount of water in the snowpack, as of January 16, 2005, indicates the San Juan Basin is 176 percent of average for this time of year.

Based on the Most Probable Inflow Forecast as of January 14, 2005, the April through July forecasted inflow is predicted to be 1,200,000 acre-feet, or 153 percent of average.

Minimum releases will remain at 250 cfs until irrigation season begins (early April 2005). Because of the current schedule for completion of the Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the minimum release may be increased when irrigation

season begins. 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 for the endangered fish.

As outlined in the SJRIP Operating Rule Decision Tree, and based on the January Most Probable Inflow Forecast, a spring peak release of 375,000 acre-feet (af) would occur this year. This peak release would correlate to a release rate of 5,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) for 21 days, with a four-week ramp up and a two-week ramp down. The ramp up would begin around the end of April and the release would reach 5,000 cfs around the third week of May. The release would begin to be ramped down around the middle of June and would reach the base release by the end of June. *The January forecast gives a very preliminary indication of what may happen this year in regards to inflow. Inflow estimates can and will change as forecasts are updated. Changes in the forecast will impact the duration and magnitude of a spring peak release.*

Recommendations for San Juan River Operations and Administration for 2005

The ten major water users in the San Juan River Basin are developing similar shortage sharing recommendations for 2005 as were developed in 2003 and 2004. These recommendations helped to prevent major shortages to users and uses during the extreme drought conditions in the basin the last few years. All parties have not yet endorsed the 2005 Recommendations. Based upon the current forecast, a shortage is not anticipated at this time. Also, based upon the current forecast, the reduced target base flow recommended by the San Juan RIP would not be triggered; therefore the target base flow would be 500 cfs through the critical habitat designated for endangered fish.

Navajo Reservoir Operations Environmental Impact Statement

Issuance of the Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) continues to be delayed pending completion of a Final Biological Opinion (BO). Reclamation and the Fish and Wildlife Service are still trying to resolve issues brought out in a draft BO submitted by the Service last year. Because of the delay in the BO, there is no scheduled date for the FEIS to be completed at this time. A Record of Decision would be signed a minimum of one month after the FEIS is released to the public.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19, 2005** at the Farmington Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – January 18, 2005 Navajo Operations Meeting

Austin, Steve, Navajo EPA, Shiprock NM
Ashcroft, Nick, West Hammond Domestic Water Users Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Begay, Edward T., Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Bliesner, Ron, Keller-Bliesner Engineering, Logan UT
Bloomfield, Dave, Arizona Public Service, Fruitland NM
Branstetter, John, Fish & Wildlife Service, Albuquerque NM
Bryant, Doug, New Mexico State Parks, Navajo Dam NM
Charley, Wilton, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Crawford, Carroll, Bloomfield Irrigation District, Farmington NM
Davidson, Paul, Bureau of Reclamation, Salt Lake City UT
Dodd, Brad, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Horner, Gary, Citizen, Farmington NM
Johnson, Lawrence W., Soaring Eagle Lodge, Navajo Dam NM
Johnston, Clay, Citizen
Lane, Teresa, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM
Lashmett, Kirk, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
LeFevre, Andrea, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Dulce NM
Montoia, Paul, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Montoya, Pat, Turley-Manzanaras Ditch Co, Blanco NM
Oxford, Bob, Citizen
Page, Pat, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Reid, Jack, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM
Renfro, Jim, Lee Acres Water Association, Farmington NM
Simons, John, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Smeal, Dan, New Mexico State University Ag Science Center, Farmington NM
Snyder, Jim, Daily Times, Farmington NM
Stant, Jack, West Hammond Domestic Water Users Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Symonds, Melvin, Shrine Park, Farmington NM
Tavener, John, Sandstone Anglers
Teller, Ernest, BIA-NIIP, Farmington NM
Trost, Richard, BHP Billiton, Farmington NM
Tosie, Bernadette, Navajo Nation, Water Management Branch, Ft. Defiance AZ
Utton, John, NM Interstate Stream Commission, Santa Fe, NM
Walden, Larry, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington NM
Weiss, John, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO
West, Margaret, New Mexico State University Ag Science Center, Farmington NM
Whipple, John, NM Interstate Stream Commission, Santa Fe NM
Williams, Shawn, NM State Engineers Office, Aztec NM
Wood, Zang, Citizen, Farmington NM
Yazzie, Duane, Navajo Agricultural Production Inc., Farmington NM