

WCS-PPage
RES-13.10

Subject: Navajo Unit Operations

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our April 19, 2005, meeting to coordinate Reclamation's operation of the Navajo Unit. The meeting was held in Farmington's Civic Center.

Highlights of the meeting include:

—Based on the Most Probable Inflow Forecast as of April 15, 2005, this year's April through July forecasted runoff is anticipated to be 1,270,000 acre-feet or 162 percent of normal inflow into Navajo Reservoir. This is an increase from the mid-January April to July forecast of 1,200,000 acre feet or 153 percent of normal.

— As outlined in the SJRIP Operating Rule Decision Tree, a spring peak release will occur this year. For more information, including a chart showing the proposed spring release schedule, go to http://www.usbr.gov/uc/wcao/water/rsvrs/notice/nav_rel.html.

—The base summer release will not be less than 350 cfs, and may be higher depending on the reservoir storage level at that time.

—Reclamation has held several meetings with the Navajo Reservoir contractors to discuss different operating scenarios and shortage sharing criteria in the event that a shortage is realized. The Most Probable Forecast indicates that all users will receive a full supply.

—The Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is awaiting a final Biological Opinion from Fish and Wildlife Service. After receiving it approximately eight weeks to finalize the FEIS, print and release to the public. The record of decision would take approximately three months for signature.

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 18, 2005 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)

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING

April 18, 2005

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.

Preliminary April-July 2005 Planned Operation

Based on the Most Probable Inflow Forecast as of April 15, 2005, the April through July forecasted inflow is 1,270,000 acre-feet or 162 percent of average. The reservoir water surface elevation on April 15, 2003 was 6052.65 feet which corresponds to 1,257,000 acre-feet of live storage.

Releases from the reservoir will be adjusted on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 to be 1,000 cfs. The releases will be adjusted as necessary to meet the SJRIP Flow Recommendations which call for a 7-day average target base flow of 500 cfs to 1,000 cfs in the critical habitat area (Farmington to Lake Powell).

A spring release of 467,107 acre feet will be occurring from April 27 through July 29, 2005. The initial ramp up will consist of an increase of 500 cfs over a one-day period, then holding at that rate (1,000 cfs) for a week, followed by a one-day increase of 1,000 cfs, and holding at that rate (2,000 cfs) for another week. Subsequent 1,000 cfs increases will be made weekly until a maximum release of 5,000 cfs is reached on May 25, 2005. Releases will remain at 5,000 cfs until June 15, 2005, at which time releases will be ramped down over a two-week period. Releases are expected to be back to the base summer release of 500 cfs on approximately June 29, 2005. For more information, including a chart showing the proposed spring release schedule, go to http://www.usbr.gov/uc/wcao/water/rsvrs/notice/nav_rel.html.

Recommendation for San Juan River Operations and Administration

The ten contractors of the Recommendation for San Juan River Operations and Administration for 2005 has signed letters of Endorsement. Using the April forecasts, no shortage is predicted to occur this year.

Maintenance

All major rehabilitation has been completed. The 4'x4' gates, the 72" hollow jet valves and both hydraulic systems were rebuilt. No other major maintenance is scheduled until 2008.

Navajo Reservoir Operations Environmental Impact Statement

The Navajo Reservoir Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to describe the environmental impacts of alternatives for operating the dam and reservoir to implement the SJRBRIP flow recommendations will be finalized after a final biological opinion is received from Fish and Wildlife Service. It will take approximately 6 weeks to finalize, print and release to the public. The public will have two weeks to review it. Then the FEIS will be finalized with comments and sent for a Record of Decision. The Record of Decision is expected to take no longer than three months.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 18, 2005** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – April 19, 2005 Navajo Operations Meeting

Ashcroft, Nick, West Hammond Domestic Water Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Austin, Steve, Navajo EPA, Shiprock NM
Bransetter, John, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque NM
Bryant, Doug, New Mexico State Parks, Navajo Dam NM
Bloomfield, Dave, Arizona Public Service, Fruitland NM
Crabtree, Dan, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
Crawford, Carol, Bloomfield Irrigation District, Bloomfield NM
Cutler, Chris, Bureau of Reclamation, Salt Lake City, UT
Dockter, Doug, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington NM
Harris, Steve, Southwest Water Conservancy District, Durango CO
Hart, Brandt, Bureau of Land Management, Montecillo UT
Horner, Gary, Attorney, Farmington NM
Johnson, Lawrence W., Soaring Eagle Lodge, Navajo Dam NM
Lincoln, Jr., E.J., BHP Billiton, Farmington NM
Madalena, Leia, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington NM
McCall, Steve, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
McKim, Kathy, NM Department of Game and Fish, Bloomfield NM
Mendenhall, Mark, Corp of Engineers, Albuquerque NM
Oxford, Bob, Citizen
Page, Pat, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Richmond Linda, Bureau of Land Management, Montecillo UT
Sidlow, Marc, Corp of Engineers, Albuquerque NM
Simons, John, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Swickard, Ruth, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Thompson, Ruthie, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington NM
Trost, Richard, BHP Billiton, Farmington NM
Velasquez, Mike, Bureau of Reclamation, Navajo Dam NM
Walden, Larry, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington CO
Warner, Ed, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
Weiss, John, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO
Whitehead, Bruce, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Durango CO
Williams, Shawn, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Yuska, Mark, Corp of Engineers, Albuquerque NM