

WCD-RSwickard
PRJ-13.1

Subject: Navajo Unit Operations Meeting Notes

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our April 27, 2010, 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 most probable April through July modified unregulated inflow to Navajo Reservoir, based on the mid-April forecast, is 635,000 acre-feet, (84% of average). However, this may change as updated forecasts become available.

—The reservoir elevation on April 25, 2010 was 6,061.30 feet which corresponds to approximately 1,364,407 acre-feet of live storage (101% of average).

—Snowpack for the months of January through March in the San Juan Basin above Navajo Reservoir was greater than average with April being average. As of April 25, 2010, the current basin snowpack was at 100 percent of average with a snow water equivalent (SWE) of 17.7 inches.

— The release from Navajo Reservoir has been approximately 500 cubic feet per second (cfs) since October 20, 2009.

— Based on the most probable inflow forecast, there would not be a spring peak release this year. However, if the April-July forecast increases in the month of May, a one-week spring peak release may still be necessary; otherwise the current 500 cfs release would continue through the spring and early summer until hydrologic conditions change.

Copies of these meeting notes and the material presented at the meeting are available online at <http://www.usbr.gov/uc/wcao/water/rsvrs/mtgs/nmcurrnt.html>.

If you have any suggestions on improving the operation meetings or the summaries of the meetings, please let us know. The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, August 24, 2010 at 1:00 at the Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street)**. If you have questions, please call me at 970-385-6560.

Sincerely,

Pat Page
Water Management Group Chief

Enclosure

bc: 86-68140

UC-400, UC-434, UC-438, UC-436, UC-600, UC-723, UC-720, UC-726 (ea w/encl)
WCG-EWarner, WCG-DCrabtree, WCG-SMcCall,
WCG-JHock , WCG-Erik Knight (ea w/encl)
WCD-PPage, WCD-RSwickard, WCD-RChristianson, WCD-MChiarito,
WCD-BDodd, WCD-MVelasquez (ea w/encl)

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING

April 27, 2010

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 annually 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.

Review of Water Year 2010 Operations to date

Since late October, a release of 500 cfs from Navajo Reservoir has been sufficient to meet target base flows in the critical habitat area. A drier than average summer and fall resulted in a reservoir elevation approximately 15 feet lower than what was modeled previous to the 2009 Spring Peak Release.

Navajo Reservoir lost storage until early March when an increase in inflow allowed water to be stored. The reservoir hit a low elevation of 6049. The inflow for the month of April was 122% of average.

Water Year 2010 Hydrologic Conditions

The pattern of a dry fall followed by above average precipitation in the early winter was very similar to what was observed during the same time period in 2007 and 2008. Inflow in October and November was near record lows (<50% of average).

Strong winter storms in December and January brought the San Juan Basin snowpack above Navajo Reservoir to above average for most of the winter. The snowpack above Navajo Reservoir as of April 26, 2010, was 100 percent of average with a snow water equivalent (SWE) of 17.7 inches. (UPDATE: San Juan Basin snowpack above Navajo Reservoir is 10.5 inches SWE or 82% of average as of May 13, 2010.)

Water Year 2010 Forecasts

The most probable April-July 2010 modified unregulated inflow, based on the mid-April forecast, is 635,000 acre-feet, which is 84 percent of average. The minimum probable and maximum probable April-July inflow forecasts are 450,000 acre-feet (60% of average) and 865,000 acre-feet (126% of average), respectively.

Under the current most probable inflow forecast, there would not be a spring peak release in 2010. However, if the April-July forecast increases in the month of May, a one-week spring peak release may still be necessary. The current release of 500 cfs would continue into the summer unless hydrologic conditions change. (UPDATE: This is still the current operation plan based on the May Final Forecast; a final determination on whether or not a spring peak release will be necessary will be made based on the mid-May forecast.)

Only under the maximum probable forecast would a Spring Peak Release be required and is unlikely to occur. Under the minimum or most probable forecast, there would not be a spring peak release, and additional water would be released to meet target base flows.

Our operation models indicate that, based on the inflow forecasts, fluctuations in the reservoir elevation should be normal (rise with runoff followed by small, steady decline),. Under the most probable forecast, an increase of approximately 25 feet may be expected, peaking at near 6075 and ending the water year near 6070 or less.

Using the current most probable forecast, the San Juan River downstream of Farmington could be expected to peak near 3,200 cfs from early May to the first of June. This estimate is based on models using comparable historical years, which is likely to change throughout the season.

Current Conditions

The reservoir elevation on April 25, 2010 was 6,061.30 feet which corresponds to approximately 1,364,407 acre-feet of storage which was 101% percent of the 30-year average. The reservoir is 80 percent of total capacity. The current release to the river is approximately 500 cfs.

An overview of the conditions of nearby reservoirs was given, including a brief update on the Animas-La Plata Project. According to the forecasted inflow for Vallecito and Lemon Reservoirs neither is anticipated to reach full capacity this year. On April 25, 2010, Vallecito Reservoir elevation was 7,637.0 which correspond to 58,051 acre-feet which represents 79 percent of average or 40 percent of total capacity. Lemon Reservoir elevation was 8,091.3 which correspond to 12,793 acre-feet which represents to 53 percent of average or 32 percent of total capacity. Pumping was resumed on March 3rd, for the second year on the Animas-La Plata Project, to supply water to Lake Nighthorse. The reservoir is 29 percent of full with a storage value of 35,500 acre-feet. No pumping will occur during June. This thirty day holding period allows for required inspection of the dam.

Maintenance Activities

The stilling basin is scheduled to be mucked out during the fall of 2010. The bolts on the penstocks are also scheduled to be replaced.

Other Issues

Recent testing for Quagga mussels turned up negative and a facility risk assessment report was finalized.

An overview and status report was given on the New Mexico, non-Navajo ditch improvement program under Public Law 111-11.

Agency/Organization Activities and Discussion of Related Activities

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – announced upcoming meetings in Durango on May 11-13, 2010.

Colorado State Parks – Will begin 3rd season of boat inspections for mussels, which is part of a state-wide program. CDOW completed substrate testing on the Colorado side of the reservoir with all results being negative. One boat with Quagga mussels was identified and was decontaminated. The State is working with Reclamation to construct a permanent decontamination center at the reservoir.

San Juan River Dineh Water Users – Only cleanup work remains to be completed on the 2008 Water 2025 grant. The Shiprock Chapters open ditches have been converted to underground pipeline. This has been a great water saving program.

New Mexico Fish & Game Department – interested in the method/process that will be used for mucking out the stilling basin.

Bureau of Indian Affairs – Navajo Indian Irrigation Project – Irrigation has started.

Bloomfield Irrigation District – Work was completed on two city reservoirs. District is waiting for a permit from City of Bloomfield to put in siphon.

Soaring Eagle Lodge/San Juan River Guide Association – New Mexico Legislature did not pass the proposal for special trout stamp that would provide funding for improvements in the Quality Waters section of the San Juan River. The habitat improvements provided by BLM in the quality waters have improved the fishing.

Hammond Conservancy District – Irrigation has begun.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 24, 2010** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – April 27, 2010 Navajo Operations Meeting

Armijo, Myron, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, Albuquerque NM
Ashcroft, Nick, West Hammond Domestic Water Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Becker, Herb, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Dulce NM
Brinton, Scott, CO Division of Water Resources, Durango CO
Broughton, Brian, CO Division of Water Resources, Durango CO
Campbell, Dave, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque NM
Christianson, Ryan, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Crawford, Carroll, Bloomfield Irrigation District, Bloomfield NM
Davidson, Robert, Navajo Dam Water Users, Navajo Dam NM
Davis, Kim, Navajo Nation, Water Resources, Fort Defiance AZ
Dennis, Neal, Navajo State Park, Arboles CO
Duncan, Martin, San Juan River Water Users Inc., Shiprock NM
Durst, Scott, Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque NM
Greene, Mike, PNM, Albuquerque NM
Hodges, Jimmy, NM State Engineer's Office, Aztec NM
Horner, Gary, Citizen, Farmington NM
Joe, Jeanette, NAPI O&M, Farmington NM
Johnson, Larry, Soaring Eagle Lodge, Navajo Dam NM
Julian, Ronald, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Dulce NM
Kimball, John, Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque NM
Landry, Chris, Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies, Silverton CO
Lane, Teresa, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM
Lile, Carrie, Southwest Conservation District, Durango CO
Lynch, Steve, BIA NIIP, Farmington NM
McFadden, Curtis, Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque NM
McKim, Kathy, NM Game & Fish, Bloomfield NM
Miller, Richard, Farmington Electric Utility, Farmington NM
Ontis, Toni, for Roy Andrews, Shrine Park, Fruitland NM
Oxford, Robert, Citizen, Farmington NM
Page, Pat, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Peterman, Rin, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Pety, Charles, NM State Parks, Navajo Dam NM
Prda, Sam, West Hammond Water Users, Bloomfield NM
Renfro, Jim, Lee Acres Water Users Assoc, Farmington NM
Richie, Kevin, Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque NM
Secrist, Doug, Colorado State Parks, Arboles CO
Sorrelhorse, James, Navajo Nation Emergency Management, Shiprock NM
Swickard, Ruth, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Vigil, Darrel, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Dulce NM
Vigil, Warren, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Dulce NM
Warner, Ed, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
Wethington, Marc, NM Department of Game and Fish, Navajo Dam NM
Williams, Michael, Soaring Eagle Lodge, Navajo Dam NM
Wimsatt, Marian, BHP Billiton, Farmington NM