

**BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
NAVAJO RESERVOIR
JANUARY 20, 2015 MEETING NOTES
SENT VIA FAX AND E-MAIL**

Note: Date of Next Meeting has changed to April 28, 2015

Enclosed is a summary of our January 20, 2015, 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 unregulated inflow to Navajo Reservoir, based on the January forecast, is 450,000 acre-feet, or 61 percent of the 30-year average. However, this is very preliminary and will change as updated forecasts become available.
- The reservoir elevation on January 19, 2015 was 6,037.83 feet which corresponds to approximately 1,089,541 acre-feet of storage which was 86% of average and 64% full (41% active).
- Precipitation for the months of October through January 19 was below average; the San Juan River Basin was well below 30-year average for these months. As of January 19, 2015, the current snowpack above Navajo was at 66 percent of average.
- The release from Navajo Reservoir has been 350 cfs since September 24th, 2014.
- Based on the January mid-month most probable inflow forecast, a one week spring peak release is possible, though considering the current snowpack conditions, and the likelihood of a decreasing forecast, this outcome is unlikely.

Copies of the material presented and meeting notes from the January 20 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, April 28, 2015 at 1:00pm at the Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street)**. If you have questions, please call Ryan Christianson at 970-248-0652 or Susan Novak Behery at 970-385-6560 or Ruth Swickard at 970-385-6523.

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING

January 20, 2015

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, hydropower, 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 2014 Operations

A graph was presented showing daily data, since the last meeting in August 2014 through January 19, 2015 showing adjustments to releases made to keep downstream flows within the target base flow range. The target base flow is 500 to 1,000 cfs from the San Juan Basin Recovery Implementation Project (SJRIP) Flow Recommendations dated 1999. The release ranged from 700 cfs in August down to 350 cfs by late September. Monsoonal rainstorms were able to bring the reservoir storage up nearly three feet in September and October. NIIP ceased diverting for the year by the end of October.

Water Year 2015 Conditions & Forecasts

Water Year 2015 precipitation so far has been below average. The snowpack above Navajo Reservoir, as of January 20, 2015, was at 66 percent of average.. The modeled soil moisture entering the 2015 season is also below average.

The NOAA Climate Prediction Center (CPC) long-term weather outlook (last updated on December 31st) shows equal odds for precipitation in the San Juan River Basin in January. The 3-month outlook (last updated January 15th), indicates a slight chance of higher-than-average precipitation in the San Juan River Basin. While the CPC is forecasting looks favorable for precipitation in the future, keep in mind that the CPC forecast was similar for the fall and winter of 2014, yet the last several months have shown drier than average conditions.

The CPC's El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Alert System Status (last updated December 4th) is in El Niño Watch status. There is an approximately 50 to 60% chance that El Niño conditions during the next two months, with ENSO- neutral favored to be present during the upcoming spring and summer. The effects of El Niño on the San Juan River Basin are unclear, however, and do not provide much additional skill in forecasting.

The most probable modified-unregulated inflow forecast for January at Navajo is 17,000 acre-feet (78% of average), for February is 20,000 acre-feet (66% of average), and for March is 50,000 acre-feet (54% of average). The April-July inflow forecasts are as follows: Min Probable: 250,000 acre-feet (34% of average), Most Probable, 450,000 acre-feet (61% of average), and Max Probable: 750,000 acre-feet (102% of average).

Under the SJRIP Flow Recommendations, the most probable inflow forecasts call for a 1-week at 5,000 cfs spring peak release. Under the Maximum Probable inflow forecasts call for a full hydrograph release of 5,000 cfs for three weeks. The minimum probable does not call for a spring peak release. Typically the San Juan River Basin's snowpack is over forecast this time of year, so it is likely that the most probable forecast will decrease as the season progresses.

The minimum storage over next winter is forecast to be 6020 feet (ft.) under Minimum Probable Conditions. This is 30 feet above the minimum 5990 ft. where shortage sharing would be forecast. However, because of the likelihood of a dropping forecast due to lack of snowpack accumulation, Reclamation will continue releasing the goal minimum of 350 cfs from Navajo throughout the winter as long as it satisfies the target baseflow minimum requirements in an effort to conserve water and recover the reservoir.

Current Reservoir Status

The reservoir elevation on January 19, 2015 was 6,037.83 feet which corresponds to approximately 1,089,541 acre-feet of storage, which is 88% of average or 64% percent full with 41% active. The elevation is 12 feet higher than this time last year. The current release to the river is approximately 350 cfs.

An overview of the conditions of nearby reservoirs was presented. Currently, Vallecito Reservoir is approximately 77% full, which is 154% of average for mid-January. Vallecito's new ice-preventing bubbler system is allowing higher winter storage levels than in previous years. Currently, Lemon is approximately 55% of full, which is 105% of average. Lake Nighthorse is 98% full. Some pumping is anticipated during May and June of 2015 to bring the reservoir up to full storage. No releases are presently scheduled.

Maintenance Activities

The rock fall mitigation and concrete repairs to the spillway have been completed. The security fence along the frontage road was installed. The right groin rehabilitation work has been successfully completed. No new maintenance activities have been scheduled during the rest of the year.

Agency/Organization Activities and Discussion of Related Activities

USGS- 2014 records should be out by the end of this week. The Animas at Farmington gage may be relocated ½ mile upstream sometime in April.

Colorado State Parks and Wildlife – due to the low reservoir the boat ramp is being resurfaced. Renovations of the ANS decontamination station is 50% complete, and design for construction of a new inspection facility is underway.

NAPI – NIIP will begin releasing March 2 for irrigation of 73,000 acres.

PNM –USPEA approved plan to shut down 2 units.; awaiting NMPRC case hearing. The two units will discontinue operation at approximately the end of 2017.

Bloomfield Irrigation District - Stockwater will run late January through early February. Large maintenance to shut down city water 2-3 weeks to the city of Bloomfield through no later than early March.

Dine Water Users- Working on funding for Phase 4 Cudei Water Plan. Last October, completed 10 acres habitat rehab project with FWS and Nature Conservancy.

Farmington Electric Utility System – currently the power plant is off-line for maintenance through April.

Lee Acres- Closed funding on replacing line along Hwy 64 corridor.

Next Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2015** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – January 20, 2015 Navajo Operations Meeting

Ashcroft, Nick, West Hammond Domestic Water Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Begay, Nathaniel, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Behery, Susan, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Brown, Carol, NM State Parks and Wildlife, Navajo NM
Carusle, Alexandra, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Chavez, Aaron, San Juan Water Commission, Farmington NM
Cederberg, Jay, US Geological Survey, Albuquerque NM
Christianson, Ryan, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Day, Henry, Arizona Public Service, Phoenix AZ
Dodd, Stacy, Bloomfield Irrigation District. Bloomfield NM
Duncan, Martin, San Juan River Water Dineh Water Users, Inc., Shiprock NM
Etcitty, Albert, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Gould, Stacey, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Green, Kristin, NM State Interstate Commission, Santa Fe, NM
Greene, Mike, Public Service of New Mexico, Bloomfield NM
Grover, Hannah, The Daily Times, Farmington NM
Harvey, Jason, BHP Billiton, Farmington NM
Hayes, Sky, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Hodges, Jimmy, Office of NM State Engineer, Aztec NM
Horner, Gary, Citizen, Farmington NM
Joe, Jeanette, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Johnson, Larry, Soaring Eagle Lodge, Navajo Dam NM
Krakow, Bob, Western Refinery, Bloomfield NM
Lane, Teresa, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM
Lee, Aaron, Lee Acres Water Users Association, Farmington NM
Lile, Carrie, Southwest Conservation District, Durango CO
McFadden, Curtis, US Army Corp of Engineers, Albuquerque NM
Miller, Gordon, San Juan Water Commission, Aztec NM
Miller, Richard, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Montoia, Paul, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Neal, Jason, Bureau of Reclamation, Farmington NM
Oxford, Robert E., Citizen, Aztec NM
Prde, Sam, West Hammond Domestic Water Assoc., Bloomfield NM
Secrist, Doug, CO Parks and Wildlife, Arboles, CO
Shockey, Jamie, Public Service of New Mexico, Bloomfield NM
Steele, Kara, Bloomfield Irrigation District. Bloomfield NM
Swickard, Ruth, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Thompson, Paul L., Bureau of Indian Affairs, Farmington NM
Tsinnyinne Ty, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Todachine, Heather, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Trujillo, Leonard, Bloomfield Irrigation District. Bloomfield NM
Wethington, Marc, NM Department of Game and Fish, Navajo Dam NM
Yazzie, Roselyn, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Young, Rick, US Army Corp of Engineers, Albuquerque NM