We are requesting reopening brown trout (BT) planning in the Colorado River from Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Meade to active GCDAMP recreational fishing participation. After the initial open BT discussion call, arranged by Melissa Trammel and Ken Hyde, recreational fishing representatives have not been included in further discussions. The BT presentations and side conversations at the recent Annual Reporting and TWG meetings included BT control and management actions that are under consideration. From questions and concerns raised about one of those actions, mechanical removal of BT throughout the Lees Ferry reach, it should be apparent that there are a number of challenges to that action that need to be resolved. Absent that resolution it should be anticipated that active opposition to mechanical removal of trout throughout the Lees Ferry reach will occur.

Recent increasing numbers of BT are neither desirable nor compatible with Lees Ferry rainbow trout (RBT) fishery goals. We believe that before moving forward with any management actions there needs to be an open discussion (e.g. workshop) among scientists, managers, tribes, and stakeholders to address: (1) the root causes of the increases in BT, (2) the risk associated with an expanding BT population to a quality RBT fishery in Lees Ferry and the recovery/conservation of humpback chub and other native fish down river, (3) the pros and cons of different management options to address those risks, and (4) the research needs to support more informed decisions moving forward.

Mechanical removal and/or using trout management flows to control BT in Lees Ferry is a serious concern of ours for a number of reasons. We believe the best way to manage BT is to address the root causes of BT population growth (repeated fall high flow experiments, warmer water, etc). It would be beneficial to work openly and collectively to develop a plan we can all support. In going forward recreational fishing representatives would like to continue as a stakeholder partner in sound native and non native fishery management.

In anticipation of our active participation we are also requesting the compliance document for BT removal throughout the Lees Ferry reach. In a cursory exam of the LTEMP EIS/ROD, the Non Native Fish Control EA, and associated documents BT removal compliance throughout the Lees Ferry reach wasn’t apparent. May we have the compliance document with the particular page(s) cited that address BT removal in Lees Ferry?
Your response will be appreciated.

Thank you.

cc: Brian Healy
    Ken Hyde
    Chris Cantrell
    Katrina Grantz
    Scott Vanderkooi