



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

MEMORANDUM

To: Brent Rhees, Regional Director
Upper Colorado Region, Bureau of Reclamation

From: Thomas Iseman, Chair, Glen Canyon Leadership Team
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Water & Science

Subject: Approval of Recommendation for Experimental High-Flow release from Glen Canyon Dam, November 7-12, 2016

OCT 26 2016

Thomas M Iseman

On October 20, 2016, the Glen Canyon Technical Team (Technical Team) recommended a high-flow experimental (HFE) release from Glen Canyon Dam (Attachment 1, Technical Team Recommendation to Implement a Fall 2016 High Flow Experiment at Glen Canyon Dam). This recommendation was developed in accordance with the *Development and Implementation of a Protocol for High-Flow Experimental Releases from Glen Canyon Dam, Arizona, 2011 through 2020* (HFE Protocol), and the associated Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

In accordance with the HFE Protocol, The Glen Canyon Leadership Team (Leadership Team) carefully reviewed and considered the Technical Committee's recommendation. The Leadership Team also considered the assessment of key resources that may be impacted or affected by a 2016 HFE based on the most recent information, and in particular, information collected since the fall 2012, 2013 and 2014 HFEs.

On an October 20, 2016 conference call, the Leadership Team unanimously recommended to the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science to proceed with the HFE release, contingent on two conditions relating to non-native fish species. First, the Leadership Team required that the risk associated with a small population of green sunfish in a backwater slough be effectively addressed. This was satisfied by chemical ammonia treatment of the population on October 20, 2016, per a report from USGS. Second, the Leadership Team sought a Department of Interior commitment to prioritizing the development and implementation of non-native species monitoring and mitigation to be in place within the next year. These efforts will be implemented by USGS Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center, Reclamation, and National Park Service, in collaboration with partner agencies. In particular, more targeted monitoring for potentially harmful nonnative fishes at sites with suitable habitat in Glen and Grand Canyons as well as an analysis of possible mitigation options for the backwater slough in Glen Canyon will be conducted over the next year.

As a result of these conditions being satisfied, the Leadership Team unanimously recommended the HFE release for 2016. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science concurs and has decided to proceed with this recommendation.

This HFE will be the fourth conducted under the HFE Protocol and demonstrates the utility of the HFE Protocol to allow for HFEs when conditions warrant and the HFE would not cause undue harm to other resources. The recommended HFE will provide resource benefits in the near term and will also provide scientific information to be used in future decision making. The HFE will satisfy the Department's goal to ensure effective and coordinated implementation of important research that the Department of the Interior is undertaking through the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program.

The Leadership Team would like to thank the Technical Team for the sustained hard work that has led to this recommendation. The individual efforts from members of the Technical Team and coordination of the team as a whole has made this process a success that will ensure benefits to the incomparable resources of Grand Canyon National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and effective and coordinated research to benefit the adaptive management process.

Attachment

cc:

Glen Canyon Leadership Team

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Christine Lehnertz, National Park Service
Billy Shott, National Park Service
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Steve Spangle, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chip Lewis, Bureau of Indian Affairs
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Glen Canyon Technical Team

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