



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

MEMORANDUM

To: Members and Alternates
Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG)

From: Anne J. Castle, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
Secretary's Designee, Glen Canyon Dam AMWG

 FEB 29 2012

Subject: Follow up from February 22, 2012 meeting

In reflecting on last week's meeting, I thought it was important that we acknowledge and commemorate the significant achievements that are taking place in the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program. Your dedicated attention to GCDAMP issues is the instigation and the basis for these results.

As with many accomplishments, when you've been working toward a goal for a lengthy period of time, the passing of a milestone can feel more like merely the next stride down the field, rather than a cause for celebration. But the adoption of Desired Future Conditions to recommend to the Secretary is really an historic moment in the work of the Adaptive Management Work Group. While many iterations of draft DFCs and similar documents have been floating around for years, never before has the AMWG come together to establish goals for itself and the program. The lack of these guiding principles has been noted as a serious flaw by commentators and interested observers over the years, and as AMWG participants, we've all felt the deficiency when struggling to determine the best direction for the AMP. One of the problems, of course, was internal dissension on the appropriate DFCs and the specific articulation of those goals. The open, inclusive process conducted by Larry Stevens and George Caan in the first phase, and by Larry and Perri Benemelis in the second phase, contributed greatly to the incredible feat of adopting the DFCs *by consensus* at the meeting last Thursday. I also greatly appreciate the work of each of the members of the DFC Ad Hoc Group and the Regional Directors and staff from the Federal agencies who worked with Larry, George, and Perri to bring this to closure. As Perri said so articulately last week, we get the most done and we obtain the best results when we come together in person and work through our issues face to face.

Not to be overlooked is the direction given by the AMWG on the socioeconomic program. Again, this deficiency has been identified by neutral observers like the National Research Council as a critical missing element in the Adaptive Management Program. The Technical Work Group has been struggling with this issue for several years, but under Shane Capron's

leadership, together with significant input from the Science Advisors led by Dave Garrett, the group was able to make a recommendation for filling the information gaps, which the AMWG refined and adopted, also by consensus. Your recommendations on both issues will be sent to the Secretary for his consideration, and we expect to be able to report back on the results very soon.

I am also grateful for the manner in which AMWG members have been willing to work with each other to address issues that come up at the meetings. While our sessions provide a deluge of complex information, much of the important work occurs outside the meeting room, at breakfast, breaks, and over food and beverage after the meetings. Your commitment to working on these issues outside of formal meetings is essential to continued progress and is very much appreciated. That occurred with both the socioeconomic program motion and the fish management recommendation. Issues surfaced in the meeting discussion, we postponed the decision point, key members worked together to resolve differences, and resolutions were reached that satisfied all concerned and allowed action – again, by consensus. Those are stellar examples of the way collaborative programs are supposed to work.

I don't think I exaggerate when I say the eyes of the world are on us as we forge the next long term plan for the operation of Glen Canyon Dam. The variety and breadth of comments received in the scoping process bear this out. The Colorado River downstream from Glen Canyon Dam is one of the treasures of the natural world. People are overcome with emotion when they see the view from the rim. Those who have the privilege of floating the river uniformly say that words can't describe the power and beauty of what they've seen. It's the Secretary's job to balance the complex set of interests above and below the Dam, and the advice this group provides to him is an extremely important component of his evaluation of the myriad issues associated with Glen Canyon Dam management. As you know, this program is a priority for my office and of great personal interest to me. It's an honor to be the Secretary's designee to the AMWG and I so appreciate the time and attention each of you devotes to it. The milestones from the last meeting are testimony to your accomplishments and to the success of the Adaptive Management Program.