

**Letter #:** 213  
**Date Received:** 12/20/2022  
**Sender Names:** 276: Gary Papke  
**Emails:** 276: [REDACTED]  
**Organizations:**  
**Subject:** Proposed SEIS Guidelines and NPS Policies regarding the Colorado Basin

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Dear Project Manager:

While I am an Illinois resident, I am very concerned about issues currently affecting the Colorado River Basin and activities at both Lake Mead National Recreation Area and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. I have been visiting and working at Lake Mead and Lake Powell for 20 years. I have seen the continuing interest in recreation at these National Recreation Areas, in spite of the ongoing declines in water levels. I believe that maintaining strong visitation levels for many types of recreational uses creates a natural constituency for protection and enhancement of these nationally-important resources, with their important mix of recreational, natural resource protection, water supply and power generation purposes.

I am writing to provide feedback for the BOR's Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to the Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead; as well as for the National Park Service's proposed concepts for addressing low water levels on Lake Mead. I recognize that this message is being sent to my congressional representatives and to both agencies, because even though each agency is conducting a separate planning process, the two plans are interrelated.

I believe the Bureau of Reclamation needs to take action due to declining water levels in the reservoirs. However, I urge the Bureau of Reclamation and National Park Service to consider the recreation interests of Lake Mead and Lake Powell. I believe BOR and NPS need to protect the future of recreation and motorized access on the reservoirs. If NPS chooses to not build new infrastructure or maintain current resources based on low water levels it could jeopardize or completely eliminate the recreational experience of over 7 million visitors to Lake Mead and 4 million visitors to Lake Powell.

I support the BlueRibbon Coalition's Path to 3588' Plan as it will address low water levels in Lake Powell and Lake Mead. This plan is a common sense path that balances the needs of all the water users in the basin. By adjusting outflows against actual inflows and current lake levels in Lake Mead and Lake Powell, this plan creates a sustainable path forward for adaptively managing these reservoirs instead of managing them headlong into a crisis. I oppose BOR's current path of liquidating these reservoirs to the point of crisis.

Regarding Lake Mead, the National Park Service is considering the closure of each major marina on Lake Mead, I do not support any of the proposals identified in Concept 3 of the NPS plan, which would remove virtually all visitor service infrastructure and facilities. Concept 3 completely ignores the current and future needs of the public and should not be considered. Regardless of any near term issues raised by BOR plans for managing lake levels, NPS should not make drastic short-term decisions to remove established visitor facilities, that would limit long-term options for both active and passive recreational visitation for generations to come.

Sincerely,

