

Mr, Rick Gold, Regional Director
Bureau of Reclamation, Upper Colorado Region
Attention: UC-402
125 South State Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84318-1147

August 24, 2005

Dear Mr. Gold:

I am writing to express my concerns about the management of the Colorado River water and the management of it in Lake Powell and Lake Mead. I would encourage you to give serious consideration to the possibility of ceasing operations at the Glen Canyon Dam. There are several reasons that this scenario would be beneficial. Water consumption levels for the Colorado River are near the river's historic average flow and are expected to rise. It is unlikely that Lake Powell will fill again. The surplus water that filled it during 17 years the first time is no longer there to build a storage cushion. Even should surplus water accumulate, Lake Mead on its own could accommodate it.

There is evaporation of about 17 percent of the water that flows into the se reservoirs; it's time that a more efficient means is explored for storing this precious water. Vacant space in underground aquifers on, or accessible to, existing Colorado River infrastructure could accommodate more water than these two reservoirs combined—and with far greater efficiency. Lake Powell's water storage capacity diminishes yearly as the sediments accumulate in the slack water. Maintaining Powell as an efficient reservoir would require the implementation of an expensive dredging program.

Removing sediment from Lake Mead rather than Lake Powell is the most feasible and least expensive likely alternative. While original estimates projected that sediment would not effect the safe operations of Glen Canyon Dam for another 60 years, scientists now warn that major problems could occur sooner. The sediments accumulating behind the Glen Canyon dam will resume their original beneficial role in the maintenance of the natural ecology of the Colorado River in our Grand Canyon National Park when they are allowed to continue on past the dam. Allowing the flowing water to begin restoring a healthy ecosystem to the Grand Canyon River corridor is reason enough, I feel, to seriously consider the possibility of decommissioning the Glen Canyon Dam.

The growing challenges and looming shortages facing Colorado River water users as a result of these dams requires that a far more comprehensive assessment addressing the issues above is fully warranted, and should be done through an Environmental Impact Statement. Thank-you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,



Tom Ferguson
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