

## **ATTACHMENT R**

### **Public Scoping Process**

This attachment summarizes the scoping process conducted by Reclamation in 1999 to inform the public of the proposal to formulate interim surplus criteria and to obtain public input to the alternative formulation process.

# **PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This attachment summarizes public and governmental agency responses received during the initial scoping process. It consists of verbal responses at public scoping meetings held by Reclamation and written responses that are included in the summary table. This section also describes the various agencies involved in the production of this document, and associated permitting or formal consultation that may be necessary.

“Scoping” is an integral part of the NEPA process. It provides “an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action” (40 CFR § 1501.7).

In the June 9, 1999 letter, addressed to “all interested persons”, Reclamation inviting public participation in the scoping meeting, Reclamation invited oral or written comments concerning the following:

“(1) the need for the development of surplus criteria, (2) the format for the criteria [either by revising Article III(3) of the Long-Range Operating Criteria or by developing interim criteria pursuant to Article III(3) of the Long-Range Operating Criteria], and (3) the specific issues and alternatives to be analyzed in the National Environment Policy Act process.”

## **SCOPING ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES**

### **SCOPING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Two notices were published in the *Federal Register* regarding the development of surplus criteria for management of the Colorado River. The first notice (64 FR 27008), published on May 18, 1999, was Reclamation’s Notice to solicit comments and initiation of NEPA Process. The second notice (64 FR 29068), published on May 28, 1999, was Reclamation’s Notice of public meetings.

Reclamation issued a press release on May 19, 1999 to ten newspapers, announcing the publication in the *Federal Register* of the Notice of Intent.

The public scoping meetings were announced by press release and by a memorandum sent to interested parties. Reclamation sent the press release to ten newspapers on May 28, 1999 with the dates and locations of the scoping meetings. The memorandum was sent on June 9, 1999 to nearly 530 interested parties.

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS**

Four public scoping meetings were held within the Colorado River Basin (including the Southern California service area) as part of the scoping process. The location, date, attendance and number of oral comments received at each meeting are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Scoping Meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number Attending</b>	<b>Number Speaking</b>
June 15, 1999	Phoenix, AZ	34	4
June 16, 1999	Ontario, CA	12	1
June 22, 1999	Las Vegas, NV	32	6
June 23, 1999	Salt Lake City, UT	15	2

**ISSUES RAISED THROUGH SCOPING MEETINGS**

A total of 35 response letters and eight oral responses (several individuals and organizations made both oral and written comments) were received during the scoping process.

To assist in understanding public concerns, a list of all responses including the name of the person commenting, their organizational affiliation, if any, and the subjects which they commented on is included in Table 2. A review of the responses helped identified areas of concern. The review used a list of five areas to categorize the responses:

- Authorized project purposes (32 comments, 26% of the comments)
- Habitat (12 comments, 10%)
- Socio-economic (11 comments, 9%)
- Special concerns (10 comments, 8%)
- Process ( 57 comments, 46%)

Typically the responses included comments in several different categories and often had several thoughts in a single category. For purposes of quantifying the public concerns, multiple thoughts in a single category contained in a single response were only counted once.

#### **AUTHORIZED PROJECT PURPOSES**

The Boulder Canyon Project Act identified five authorized project purposes: navigation, flood control, water supply, recreation and power. Nineteen (19) of the 32 comments in this category focused on water supply. There was no single focus of these water supply comments. Only one comment was received on navigation and the concern with regard to navigation was not identified.

#### **HABITAT**

The twelve (12) comments on habitat were wide ranging. There were no concerns expressed over air quality.

#### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC**

The comments on Socio-economic concerns were highly focused. All eleven addressed the regional distribution of water supply. This high level of concern is due to recognition that the allocation of surplus water and impacts of shortages are not equally shared among all users of Colorado River water. There were no concerns raised with possible impacts on land use, social conditions or growth inducing impacts. Note that the comments on project purposes discussed previously could also be considered socio-economic.

#### **SPECIAL CONCERNS**

The ten comments received within the area of Special Concerns noted the potential impacts of the Interim Surplus Criteria on Indian Issues (predominately reliability of water supply) and on obligations to Mexico.

#### **PLAN FORMULATION PROCESS**

The 57 comments received on the process to be followed dominated the letters. Many had specific alternatives they wanted considered. Most significant among those were supporters of the "Six States Plan" and supporters of the "California Plan". Additional remarks included opinions as to whether or not the Long-Range Operating Criteria should be modified to implement to Interim Surplus Criteria,

concerns that the alternatives address the impacts on Lake Powell and three requests for additional time to respond.











