

COMMENT LETTER

RESPONSES



GARY E. JOHNSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855
Fax: (505) 827-2836



PETER MAGGIORE
SECRETARY
AUG 21 2000
PAUL R. RITZMA
DEPUTY SECRETARY

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August 16, 2000

Regional Director
Lower Colorado Region
Attn.: Jayne Harkins (LC-4600)
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 61470
Boulder City
Nevada 89006-1470

Dear Ms. Harkins:

**RE: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE COLORADO RIVER
INTERIM SURPLUS CRITERIA**

This transmits New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) comments concerning the above-referenced Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The DEIS describes alternatives for managing water stored in Lakes Mead and Powell. The alternatives are criteria for determining whether a surplus of water is stored in either of the reservoirs. Identification of a surplus may trigger a release, and the timing and nature of releases may influence surface water resources including aquatic life downstream of Glen Canyon Dam.

1 The NMED concurs with the Bureau of Reclamation that it is appropriate that, because operation of upper basin reservoirs (upstream of Lake Powell) is independent of Lake Powell, the "northern [upstream] limit of the potentially affected area under consideration in this DEIS is the upper reaches of Lake Powell" (DEIS, p. 3.2-1). The affected area is therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the NMED.

1: Comment noted.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document. Please let us know if you have any questions on the above.

Sincerely,

PETER MAGGIORE
SECRETARY

NMED File No. 1382ER