

## COMMENT LETTER

## RESPONSES

SEP-07-2000 12:19

POWER SCHEDULING WAPA

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Department of Energy  
Western Area Power Administration  
Desert Southwest Customer Service Region  
P.O. Box 6457  
Phoenix, AZ 85005-6457

SEP - 7 2000

Ms. Jayne Harkins  
Attention: BCOO-4600  
P.O. Box 61470  
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470

Dear Ms. Harkins:

1 Western Area Power Administration (Desert Southwest Region) supports the effort by the Bureau of Reclamation to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Colorado River Interim Surplus Criteria. However, long-term projections prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation show a significant probability that the elevation of Lake Mead will trend to a much lower level. Using existing power production facilities at Hoover Dam, Federal electric power capacity (megawatts, MW) and energy (megawatt-hours, MWH) will fall as the elevation of Lake Mead is lowered. Generation may be curtailed if Lake Mead approaches the Minimum Power Pool elevation. Thus, less low cost Federal power will be available for delivery to electric power consumers in Arizona, California and Nevada.

2 In addition, Western notes that on July 12, 2000, the Bureau of Reclamation reduced the Hoover Powerplant rated capacity from 2074 MW to 2062 MW due to the lowering of Lake Mead elevation to 1203-feet. Thus, actual output capability is less than indicated in Table 6: "Hoover Dam Elevation and Output" in Appendix N: "Energy Analysis Worksheets". In this projection model table, a reduced capability of 2062 MW is not expected until an elevation of 1172-feet, not 1203-feet.

3 From the public power perspective, Western believes that it is in the public interest to maintain Lake Mead at an elevation range similar to its recent historical average. Western supports giving special consideration to essential water needs and a lower lake elevation during severe drought conditions.

1: Comment noted. As the EIS discusses, the amounts of power available from Glen Canyon and Hoover Dams will be reduced when lake levels decline.

2: The capacity of 2074 MW is produced from the application of theoretical turbine curves to year-end reservoir elevations. There will always be a difference between theoretical curves and actual operating results. Since the difference is approximately 0.5 percent, this error is believed to be within the error of the forecast.

3: Comment noted.

Sincerely,

Anthony H. Montoya  
Assistant Regional Manager  
for Power Marketing

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