VOLUME III, PART B

COMMENT LETTER

RESPONSES

Department of Energy Western Area Power Administration P.O. Box 11606 Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0606

SEP 1 2 2000

Ms. Jayne Harkins ATTN: BC))-4600 P.O. Box 61470 Boulder City, NV 89006-1470



Dear Ms. Harkins:

Western Area Power Administration (Western) supports the Bureau of Reclamation in its efforts to describe the impacts of various Colorado River Interim Surplus Criteria Proposals in a draft environmental impact statement.

Our Desert Southwest Regional Office will provide you with comments related to Hoover Dam and Lake Mead. This, the CRSP MC, will comment on details in your EIS that deal with Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell.

Comments:

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- Figure 3.3-5 illustrates that the elevation of Lake Powell declines over the 50-year time frame of the analysis in the baseline case. It is difficult to understand why this happens and the text of the EIS provides very little explanation. This should be clarified. If it is a result of increased Upper Basin depletions, the EIS should describe how this, under existing reservoir management practices, would affect lake level elevations.
- 2. The description of existing conditions related to hydropower production from Glen Canyon Dam is woefully inadequate. While the Glen Canyon Powerplant is part of the CRSP power system and in turn part of the WSCC power "grid," the electrical power from Glen Canyon Dam is sold to specific electrical power customers. For the most part, these customers serve rural areas and small towns and are a very small part of the total WSCC system of generators, consumers, and transmission lines. Actions at Glen Canyon Dam have affects on these customers that the WSCC system would scarcely take note of. Therefore, the existing conditions for hydropower ought to be a description of those long-term firm customers who buy power from the CRSP and their retail customers. Further, the impacts of the various alternatives ought to be described in terms of the impacts to those who ultimately bare them: CRSP firm power customers and their member systems and retail loads.

1: Figure 3.3-5 of the DEIS presents the range of Lake Powell water surface elevations modeled under baseline conditions (90th, 50th and 10th percentile values). This same figure also shows the results for four of the 85 hydrologic traces modeled under the baseline conditions. The four traces provide a representation of the fluctuation that occurs under the various assumed hydrologic sequences. As can be seen from these four traces, the water surface elevations of Lake Powell fluctuate from full to lowered conditions throughout the 50-year modeled period. However, as time progresses, due to increasing Upper Basin depletions, Lake Powell's median and 10th percentile elveations decline.

2: Please see response to Comment 16-2. Reclamation believes that the level of analysis for energy resources presented in the EIS appropriately identifies the potential effects of interim surplus criteria.

COLORADO RIVER INTERIM SURPLUS CRITERIA FEIS

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We appreciate the opportunity to comment. Please telephone me at (801) 524-3522 if you have questions or need clarification on these comments.

Sincerely

S.C. autor Pah

Clayton Palmer Team Lead, Environmental Planning and Resource Analysis