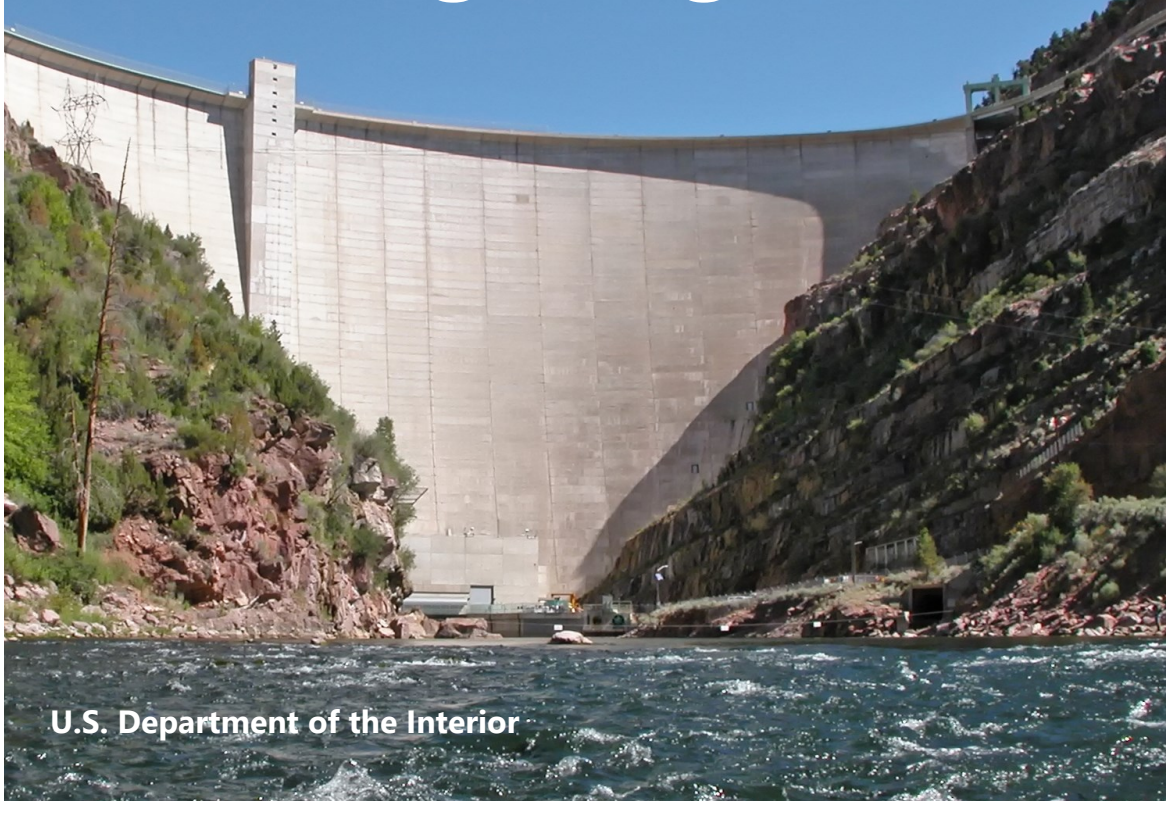
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Flaming Gorge Dam



Flaming Gorge Dam rises 502 feet above the bedrock of the Green River, 32 miles south of the Utah-Wyoming border, and forms the Flaming Gorge Reservoir that extends 91 miles north into Wyoming. The reservoir has a total capacity of nearly 3.8 million acre-feet and, at the full capacity elevation of 6,040 feet above sea level, the reservoir has a surface area of 42,020 acres and 375 miles of shoreline.

The dam is located near Dutch John, Utah, a town originally established by Reclamation to house those who built the dam. The reservoir and the surrounding Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area stretch north from the Uintah Mountains in Utah to just south of Green River, Wyoming.

Water from Flaming Gorge Reservoir is released through the dam and back into the Green River. It then travels about 250 miles south to Canyonlands National Park, Utah, where it joins the Colorado River. The Green River is the largest tributary of the Colorado River.

Dam Facts
Height above bedrock: 502 feet
Height above original river channel: 455 feet
Crest length (arc length at axis of dam): 1,285 feet
Cost of dam and reservoir: $49,600,000
Cost of powerplant and switchyard: $65,300,000
(Paid in full to the U.S. Treasury from the sale of hydropower.)
Excavation total:
1,023,971 cubic yards of rock and sand, including 1,775 feet of tunnels, down to 60 feet below the original river channel.

History
Construction authorized April 11, 1956
First construction contract awarded Jan. 4, 1957
Prime contract awarded June 18, 1958
Green River diverted around dam site Aug. 17, 1959
First bucket of concrete poured Sept. 18, 1960
Last bucket of concrete poured Nov. 15, 1962
Reservoir started filling Dec. 10, 1962
First generator started Sept. 27, 1963 *by President John F. Kennedy*
Last generator completed Feb. 12, 1964
Dam dedicated Aug. 17, 1964 *by First Lady "Lady Bird" Johnson*

The Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) Storage Dams

Map sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

The Colorado River Storage Project Act of 1956 allowed for the comprehensive development of water resources by the Upper Colorado Basin states (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming) to provide long-term, regulatory storage of water to meet the entitlements of the Lower Colorado Basin states (Arizona, California and Nevada).

There are four initial storage units of the CRSP: Flaming Gorge on the Green River in Utah; the Wayne N. Aspinall Unit (Blue Mesa, Morrow Point and Crystal) on the Gunnison River in Colorado; Navajo on the San Juan River in New Mexico; and Glen Canyon on the Colorado River in Arizona. Each unit consists of a reservoir, dam and powerplant, with the exception of the Navajo Unit, which does not have a federally owned and operated powerplant.

These units work together to regulate the flow of the Colorado River and its tributaries to provide flood control, store water for times of drought, produce hydropower, and deliver water for agricultural, municipal, and industrial uses.

Meeting one of its important functions as an initial storage unit of the CRSP, Flaming Gorge delivered 588,000 acre-feet of supplemental water to Lake Powell in 2021 and 2022 to help protect the reservoir from dropping below critical elevations. Due to the improved hydrology in early 2023, this additional release volume is expected to be completely recovered by the end of February 2024.

Powerplant Facts
Generating units: 3
Capacity: 50,500 kW each
Plant peak to date: 138,000 kW
First unit on line: Nov. 11, 1963
Last unit on line: Feb. 12, 1964
Unit Voltage: 11,500 Volts
Transformer Voltage: 138,000 Volts