

The ROD represents the Department's "first cut" on providing an answer as to how that target might be achieved. The EIS and ROD are relevant to the AMP process in several respects. First of all, the EIS identifies the specific downstream resources sought to be benefitted (i.e. "protected, mitigated for, or enhanced") by changes in dam operations (see EIS, pp. 54-57 and Table II-7). Secondly, its discussions and analyses of various alternatives provide a starting point for the state of the science at the time the decision was made to implement the "modified low fluctuating flow" pattern of operations with a commitment for long-term modifications in response to further research. In the language of the ROD, "the Modified Low Fluctuating Flow Alternative was selected as the preferred alternative because it would provide the most benefits with respect to the original selection criteria, given existing information."

The monitoring, research and experimental programs are intended to develop additional information, working with the AMWG recommendations, "which could result in some additional operational changes." The selection criteria against which such changes are to be measured, however, remain unchanged. Elsewhere the ROD amplifies that this alternative was selected because it "meets the critical requirements of the sediment resource by restoring some of the pre-dam variability through floods and by providing a long-term balance between the supply of sand from Grand Canyon tributaries and the sand-transport capacity of the river" with corresponding benefits to habitat. The ROD, in part in conjunction with the EIS, also describes in detail the decision made, including modifications to the selected alternative, specific environmental and monitoring commitments, the scope and objectives of the AMP, the role and function of the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center (GCMRC), and the role expected for the AMWG and TWG. It is important to understand that before either the targeted resource blend or the operational pattern in the Glen Canyon Dam operating criteria can be changed materially, additional NEPA work would have to be done.

Among the environmental commitments made in the ROD was the commitment to restrict Glen Canyon Dam release upramp rates to 4,000 cfs per hour and downramp rates to 1,500 cfs per hour. Consistent with interagency agreements between BOR and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) both prior and subsequent to the 1996 ROD, these figures should be understood to represent a firm limit on anticipated changes in release rates integrated over each hourly interval, to be enforced by the Secretary. Anticipated, i.e. targeted, changes to ramping rates should exceed the ROD limits only in times of emergency unless and until changed by subsequent decision of the Secretary. It is recognized that automatic generating control will result in some fluctuation on both sides of the scheduled releases, due to constraints and inherent tolerances in existing technology.

As part of the adaptive management process, studies and information needs specified in the EIS/ROD are expected to be completed and to result in the identification of new information needs or definitions of effects, impacts and mitigation requirements.

All applicable federal laws must be complied with, including NEPA, NHPA, ESA, FACA, and the APA, in addition to the federal laws considered part of the "Law of the River." It is not expected that the Adaptive Management Program will result in additional required NEPA compliance unless additional resources (i.e. "management objectives") are identified and targeted for inclusion in the revised dam operations beyond those identified in the existing EIS.