

Minority Report

Date: 12/1/06

To: AMWG and Secretary's Designee

From: Grand Canyon River Guides, Grand Canyon Trust, Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, and the Hopi Tribe

The TWG representatives from the above listed stakeholders wish to express our objections to the vote and motion on the Long-term Experimental Plan as follows:

1. The EIS process recently initiated by the Department of Interior will require public scoping and development of alternatives. At this time, any preferences expressed by the TWG or AMWG for alternatives that are potentially going to be included in the range of alternatives is pre-decisional, ill-timed, and inappropriate.
2. The SPG did not develop a full range of options for consideration or define explicitly the goals for the options (e.g., desired outcomes for all resources and or research questions to be addressed).
3. These protocols are broad conceptual outlines with no detailed experimental plans that follow specific hypothesis-testing procedures. There is no synthesis of projected outcomes when treatments are combined in various ways. There is no acknowledgement and estimation of the scientific uncertainty around the flow options described.
4. The GCMRC scientific assessment and the "economic" assessment presented at the TWG meeting have not been fully discussed nor accepted by the TWG as a fair and accurate portrayal of the options.
5. A full economic assessment, including the effects of the different options on non-use values, has not been conducted.
6. The options have not been assessed in regards to whether they: 1) meet the intent of the Grand Canyon Protection Act (i.e., contribute to the protection of park resources and values as described in the NPS Management Policies and GRCA management plans); 2) comply with the Endangered Species Act; 3) result in progress in meeting the terms of the RPA; or 4) are consistent with other relevant legal imperatives.
7. An objective set of criteria for ranking the 3-4 alternatives was not developed and agreed to by the TWG. There is no uniform rationale that exists for the recommendation.
8. The two TWG motions contradict one another. Motion #1 forwards all current possibilities, including the MLFF alternative. Motion #2 does not consider MLFF in the ranking.
9. Only 15 members voted, 10 abstained (40% of members present). Clearly there was much discomfort about this motion.

We recommend that the AMWG and the Secretary provide clear and unambiguous direction to the TWG to use their time to evaluate scientific and technical issues to inform the AMWG, and refrain from making ad hoc policy recommendations by popular vote