

Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group
Agenda Item Information
September 9-10, 2008

Agenda Item

Lees Ferry Trout Fishery Ad Hoc Group Update

Action Requested

√ Information item. A motion may be presented for AMWG consideration.

Presenters

Sam Spiller (Co-Chair, Lees Ferry Trout Fishery Ad Hoc Group), Lower Colorado River
Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Bob Broscheid (Co-Chair, Lees Ferry Trout Fishery Ad Hoc Group), Acting Deputy Director,
Arizona Game and Fish Department

Previous Action Taken

√ Other:

The Bureau of Reclamation executed an experimental high flow test of approximately 41,500 cfs for 60 hours beginning March 4, 2008. Prior to that test, on February 29, 2008, Reclamation completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed action. The EA describes Mitigation Measures that were to be conducted. The final EA and the FONSI, along with public comments received and other pertinent documents, can be found at <http://www.usbr.gov/uc/envdocs/ea/gc/2008hfe/index.html>.

√ By AMWG:

At its May 2008 meeting, AMWG passed the following motion by consensus:

That the AMWG form a “Lees Ferry Trout Fishery Ad Hoc Group” to make a recommendation to the AMWG by its next meeting on the following two Environmental Assessment (EA) mitigation commitment items:

1. How the AMWG, consistent with the EA, might facilitate discussion among trout fishing guides and anglers, Marble Canyon business owners, recreational rafting companies, and other interested parties regarding proposed experimental actions affecting these resources, to include a projected schedule for meetings, cost-effective location, and whether Federal and State agencies should serve as support to the work of this ad hoc group, and
2. Whether and how AMWG should be involved in updating the Lees Ferry Trout Management Plan, including whether the AMP should sponsor workshops that could be used to help develop the specific aspects of the management plan, and including an assessment of work, projected schedule, and cost-effective locations.

Relevant Science

√ The following describes the relevant research or monitoring on this subject:

See the SCORE report at <http://www.gcmrc.gov/products/score/2005/score.htm>.

Background Information

In advance of the High Flow Experiment (HFE) described above, and per request from Secretary's Designee Brenda Burman, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided the following report: Glen Canyon Dam Operations Beach Habitat Building Flow Proposal: input from trout guides and other dependent businesses (S. Spiller, Lower Colorado River Coordinator, Fish and Wildlife Service, Phoenix, AZ, 12/17/07). This report stated the interests and concerns of Lees Ferry trout users with regard to a HFE and suggested ways to avoid and/or minimize detrimental impacts to the Lees Ferry trout fishery.

In response to these concerns, the Bureau of Reclamation in their EA (1) shifted the timing of the proposed HFE as early in 2008 as possible, and (2) committed to work with the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service (NPS), and Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) to propose measures within the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program dedicated to improving communication between management agencies and the angling guides, dependent local businesses, and the public. These mitigation measures included:

- Creation of an Ad Hoc Group within the Glen Canyon Dam AMWG to facilitate discussion among trout fishing guides and anglers, Marble Canyon business owners, recreational rafting companies, and other interested parties regarding proposed experimental actions affecting these resources, and
- Consideration of updating the Lees Ferry Management Plan. The NPS and AGFD have primary authority and responsibility for this action, with FWS and Reclamation participating in an advisory role. If this proposal were accepted by these agencies, workshops could be used to help develop specific aspects of the management plan.

The Ad Hoc Group was created by AMWG at its last meeting. The Group members will meet between the time this Agenda Item Form is sent to the AMWG members and the September 2008 AMWG meeting. At the AMWG meeting, members will hear a report from the Ad Hoc Group with any recommendations for action that have been developed for AMWG's consideration.