



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Memorandum

To: Members and Alternates

From: Kameran L. Onley, Secretary's Designee - Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group *Kameran L. Onley*

Subject: Transition and Farewell

For the past six months, I have had the privilege to serve as Secretary Kempthorne's Designee to the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG). My one regret with respect to my service as the Secretary's Designee is that I did not have a longer opportunity to work with all of you on the important issues addressed by AMWG. In my short tenure, and especially at our recent meeting in Flagstaff, I saw firsthand the importance of the issues facing the AMWG, as well as the passion that you all bring to the consideration of these issues. It was very impressive for me to see the various federal, state, tribal officials, as well as scientists, environmental organizations, recreational interests as well as water and power organizations all at the table engaged in respectful and collaborative discussion.

Following the end of my tenure, Larry Walkoviak, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Regional Director, who serves as the Department's Permanent Alternate Designated Federal Official for the AMWG, will be assuming the duties of the Secretary's Designee. I have great respect for Larry and believe that he will do an outstanding job in this role.

I wish you all the best of luck with your ongoing engagement in Glen Canyon issues. There are certainly no easy answers or approaches to balancing the views and statutory obligations applicable to Glen Canyon Dam, but having had the opportunity to work in public service, I continue to strongly believe in the importance of public processes and collaborative engagement.

cc: Department of Interior, Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Policy Group

Excerpt of Secretary Kempthorne's Remarks - December 17, 2008¹

... Another area where we still have challenges ahead is in the Adaptive Management Program at Glen Canyon Dam. This Glen Canyon [adaptive management] program is clearly one of the most important adaptive management-based efforts in the United States. It involves the operation of one of the most critical water storage and hydropower facilities in the nation and was established to help protect downstream resources in one of the world's most awesome wonders, the Grand Canyon.

I recently visited Grand Canyon National Park with senior Department of the Interior career staff and gained a better appreciation for the complexity of the efforts to balance water delivery, hydropower production, endangered species conservation and national park protection. Knowing that adaptive management will play a critical role in our ongoing management and stewardship efforts, I identified some key principles that I believe should guide the Department's efforts in this program in coming years:

First, we should recognize the extraordinary expertise that the U.S. Geological Survey has developed in the ongoing monitoring and research efforts devoted to the Adaptive Management Program. Having an independent, research-based group of scientists at the Survey take the lead in this effort was a decision made by then-Secretary Bruce Babbitt many years ago. I continue to believe it was -- and is -- the right decision.

Second, as our scientists work to assess the results of the March 2008 high flow experiment, we will need to integrate those results with earlier tests performed in 1996 and 2004. I hope that we can develop better analytical and modeling tools as part of the adaptive management plan to support future decision-making by the Department.

Third, we need to consider these type of high flow releases in the future. However, as the Department of the Interior considers the effectiveness of this type of action, we must carefully and respectfully consider the input of all stakeholder groups - including the views of the seven basin states.

Fourth, we must continue to be guided by the principle of balancing competing interests and meeting the clear statutory responsibilities for endangered species, water delivery, protecting downstream resources and producing hydropower, all while recognizing the unique Native American interests in the Grand Canyon.

We must continue to do our best to strike that proper balance - one that integrates all our statutory responsibilities. Finally, as our efforts go forward, there is no question that the West needs - and will continue to need - affordable, clean, reliable power. Hydropower from Glen Canyon Dam is an important asset that shouldn't be further curtailed without a thorough assessment of the costs and benefits...

¹ The full text of Secretary Kempthorne's remarks can be found at:
http://www.doi.gov/secretary/speeches/121708_speech.html