

**Colorado River Storage Project  
Flaming Gorge Working Group  
Meeting Minutes  
August 19, 2004**

**Participation:**

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This meeting was held at the Western Park Convention Center in Vernal, Utah. Attendees are listed below.

**Purpose of Meeting:**

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The purpose of operation meetings (held in April, and August) is to inform the public and other interested parties of Reclamation's current and future operational plans and to gather information from the public regarding specific resources associated with Flaming Gorge Reservoir. In addition, the meetings are used to coordinate activities and exchange information among agencies, water users, and other interested parties concerning the Green River.

**General**

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The meeting began at 10 a.m. with 19 people attending and Rick Clayton conducting the meeting.

**Flaming Gorge Hydrology**

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Rick Clayton gave a presentation on the current and anticipated hydrology for Flaming Gorge ([download this presentation](#)). Through consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service and Western, the spring release for 2004 was limited to 2 days of duration at approximately 4400 cfs. This was done in order to store water for releases later in the summer to elevation the base flows from 800 cfs to 1000 cfs. Elevation of the base flows provided an opportunity for Western to schedule some fluctuations each day. For about 3 months, daily releases have peaked at near 1450 cfs in the afternoon with evening and morning releases of about 800 cfs. The water that was saved during the spring release has now been released however inflows have been slightly higher than were originally forecasted so the elevation of the reservoir is about 2 feet above what was projected.

The original plan was to reduce releases to 800 cfs to conserve water in the reservoir after the water savings of the spring was fully released. However, the Yampa River measured at Deerlodge CO is currently flowing at less than 100 cfs. To achieve the minimum Biological Opinion flow at Jensen, releases should remain at 1000 cfs for the time being. If the Yampa River rebounds then releases should be reduced appropriately to save water.

The Annual Operating Plan scenarios were presented (Min, Most, Max) to show potential operations for WY05. The Min inflow scenario was 29% of normal, the most was 79% of normal and the max was 127%. Under each scenario, a power plant capacity release is projected for the spring of 2005. The duration under the min is 7 days. The duration under the most is approximately 16 days and the duration under the max would be approximately 42 days with no scheduled bypass.

There was some discussion of the special release made on July 2nd to lower the flows of the river to extract the body of a drowning victim in the reach just below Split Mountain. Chas

Cartwright (NPS) asked what criteria Reclamation has for honoring such requests and how will issues like this be handled in the future. Reclamation does not currently have well specified emergency criteria in place and these decisions are made on a case by case basis. It was suggested by NPS that Reclamation identify these emergency criteria.

### **Special Releases**

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There are 2 special releases planned for the month of September. On September 11th in the morning hours, the Forest Service has requested a reduction in flows to 500 cfs for 2 hours to allow divers an opportunity to recover a capsized canoe. Reclamation has agreed to this reduction and will work with the Forest Service, DWR, Fish and Wildlife Service and Western to schedule this reduction such that potential negative impacts will be minimized. It was suggested that the downward ramp for this particular reduction should be 100 cfs per hour and there were no objections to this. Clayton Palmer of Western Area Power Administration stated that he supports the slow ramp down but wanted it stated that this slow ramp rate does not set the standard for future fluctuations due to no quantitative data available on fish stranding.

On September 13th and 14th, the DWR is requesting a special release of 1600 cfs for 7 hours each day to conduct an annual tailwater fishery assessment. This request is made each year and historically Reclamation and Western have honored this request. There was no objection to making this special release. Reclamation will schedule this release as requested.

The NPS is also requesting steady flows of 800 cfs for 2 weeks in October, November to conduct an assessment of tamarisk in the river channel. Reclamation indicated that most likely releases during this time would be 800 cfs. If the releases are not 800 cfs then it will be possible to adjust flows to meet the NPS request.

### **Flaming Gorge Environmental Impact Statement**

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The Flaming Gorge EIS Draft is currently being printed in Denver. In October four public hearing will be held at the following locations:

- Salt Lake City, UT - October 12, 2004
- Rock Springs, WY - October 19 2004
- Vernal, UT - October 20, 2004
- Moab, UT - October 21, 2004

It was suggested that a public meeting should definitely be held in Dutch John, UT. Peter Crookston will look into the possibility of making this meeting happen.

### **Previous Meeting Minutes:**

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Flaming Gorge Working Group Meeting Minutes: April 15, 2004

### **Next Meeting:**

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The next meeting of the Flaming Gorge Working Group will be held on April 21, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. in the Western Park Convention Center in Vernal, Utah.

**Attendees:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Heather Patno	WAPA	801-524-5490
Amy Thatcher	Reclamation	801-524-3635
Ted Rampton	UAMPS	801-566-3938
Kevin Clegg	USFS	435-781-5245
Peter Crookston	Reclamation	801-379-1152
Chas Cartwright	NPS	970-374-3001
Melissa Trammel	NPS	801-539-4255
Chad Crosby	DWR	435-781-9453
Roger Schneidervin	DWR	435-885-3164
Warren Blanchard	Reclamation	435-885-9453
Walt Donaldson	DWR	435-781-9453
Rick Clayton	Reclamation	801-524-3710
Larry Crist	FWS	801-975-3330
Eileen Richmond	USFS	435-781-5163
Joe Brinton	USFS	435-781-5163
Dennis Breer	GROGA	435-885-3355
Clayton Palmer	WAPA	801-524-3522