Subject: Proposed Operating Plan for Navajo Reservoir, Navajo Unit, Colorado River Storage Project, Colorado and New Mexico

Dear Mr. Verhines:

Public Law 87-483, Section 111, directs the Bureau of Reclamation to apportion shortages to entitled users of Navajo Reservoir storage water, on a pro-rata basis, in the event shortages are anticipated. Current conditions (inflow forecast and reservoir content) indicate that a shortage is a possibility this year. Notwithstanding the direction provided in §11, a group of ten water users has developed an agreement among themselves as to how they will allocate the water supply in a shortage situation ("Recommendations for San Juan River Operations and Administration for 2013-2016, July 2, 2012").

Because Reclamation has no ability to control or influence agreements among water users, and because this agreement among the users will not cause Reclamation to undertake any change in its operations from how we would operate under §11, the recommendations fall within our anticipated operating plans for 2013 through 2016. We also anticipate that operations under §11 will not cause releases to fall below the minimum allowable release rate from Navajo Dam.

We have received endorsement letters from the following Navajo Unit contractors and subcontractors, all endorsing this same plan:

Arizona Public Service Company
BHP Navajo Coal Company
Hammond Conservancy District
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Navajo Nation
Public Service Company of New Mexico

In addition, we have received similar letters of endorsement from the following entities:

Bloomfield Irrigation District
City of Farmington
Farmers Mutual Ditch
Jewett Valley Ditch
While Reclamation recognizes these recommendations as a temporary solution to providing some means of water rights administration, we encourage the State Engineer to continue proceeding towards promulgation of rules and regulations for administering water rights within the San Juan River Basin in New Mexico. Also, please be advised that Reclamation's acknowledgement of these recommendations does not constitute endorsement of any disclaimers included in any parties' endorsement letter.

I offer my thanks to you and staff members of the Office of the State Engineer and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission who helped facilitate the development of these recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Ryan Christianson of our Western Colorado Area Office at 970-385-6590, or by email at rchristianson@usbr.gov.

Sincerely,

Larry Walkoviak
Regional Director

cc:  
Mr. Michael Howe  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Navajo Indian Irrigation Project  
304 North Auburn, Suite B  
Farmington, NM 87401

Honorable Ben Shelly  
President  
Navajo Nation  
c/o Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 9000  
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Honorable Alan Vaughn  
President  
Hammond Conservancy District  
790 Road 4990  
Bloomfield, NM 87413

Mr. Robert Lotts  
Arizona Public Service Company  
P.O. Box 53999 MS-9424  
Phoenix, AZ 85072-3999

Mr. David Campbell  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office  
2105 Osuna Road NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87113-1001

Honorable Ty Vicenti  
President  
Jicarilla Apache Nation  
P.O. Box 709  
Dulce, NM 87528

Mr. Mike Greene  
Public Service Company of New Mexico  
2401 Aztec N.E.  
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Mr. Pat Risner  
Vice President  
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Mr. James Rogers  
Jewett Valley Water District  
P.O. Box 91  
Waterflow, NM 87421

Mr. Kevin Flanigan  
New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission  
P.O. Box 25102  
Santa Fe, NM 87504-5102

Mr. Jason John  
Navajo Nation  
Water Management Branch  
P.O. Drawer 678  
Fort Defiance, AZ 86504

Carroll Crawford  
Bloomfield Irrigation District  
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Bloomfield, NM 87413

Mr. Pat Risner  
Vice President  
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Mr. Lawrence Stock  
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Mr. Blain Watson  
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Aztec, NM 87410

Mr. Tsosie Lewis  
CEO  
Navajo Agricultural Products Industry  
P.O. Drawer 1318  
Farmington, NM 87499

Mr. Martin Duncan  
San Juan River Dineh Water Users Inc.  
P.O. Box 3688  
Shiprock, NM 87420

bc: WCG/EWamer, WCD-RChristianson, WCD-SBehery

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