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Memorandum

Date: June 10, 2009
To: Interior Secretary Ken Salazar
CC: Larry Walkoviak, Alternate for Secretary's Designee, GCDAMP
From: Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.
Re: Minority Report - BHBF

Dear Mr. Secretary;

As you know, the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) was established in 1997 as a Federal Advisory Committee to the Secretary of the Interior for the purpose of providing stakeholder input regarding the impact of dam operations on the river ecosystem in Grand Canyon National Park. The purpose of this memo is to provide you with a 'minority report' on a motion recently voted on by the AMWG, April 29-30, 2009. We wish to provide you a perspective that may not be otherwise apparent from a simple up-down vote of the AMWG.

The motion language, as amended at the April 29th AMWG meeting, reads as follows:

AMWG recommends to the Secretary of the Interior that during FY10-11 a high flow experiment be conducted if and when sediment-enriched conditions are reached, as described in U.S. Geological Survey, 2006 (USGS, 2006, Assessment of the Estimated Effects of Four Experimental Options on Resources Below Glen Canyon Dam Draft Report dated October 27, 2006), contingent upon satisfying language in section 1.4.2, requiring data analysis and reports in the "Biological Assessment on the Operation of Glen Canyon Dam and Proposed Experimental Flows for the Colorado River Below Glen Canyon Dam During the Years 2008 through 2012."

(Note: Please refer to the attached AMWG agenda item sheet for relevant science and background information)

Sediment conservation and maintenance of sand bar habitats are primary goals of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program for multiple resource needs. Periodic artificial 'floods' serve to rebuild sand bars and beaches and may yet prove to achieve this important goal for the river ecosystem in Grand Canyon National Park.

The purpose of this motion was to engage various agencies in the necessary preparatory activities to best serve the purposes of Congress under the Grand Canyon Protection Act of 1992, the stated goals of the Adaptive Management Program, and the best available scientific advice and recommendations brought forward by the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center. These advance activities include:

- Preparation by the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center (USGS) of a Science Plan for the next optimal high flow experimental release from the dam to meet objectives of the GCDAMP.
- Preparation by the Bureau of Reclamation to complete necessary Environmental Compliance for such a release.
- Preparation by the AMWG to set aside necessary funds from the FY10-11 budget in order to ensure adequate completion of a high flow release.

This motion is scientifically reasonable, administratively necessary, and a logical next step to improve ‘adaptability’ allowing for a more nimble response to changing ecosystem conditions and needs. The motion required a two-thirds majority to pass, but was blocked by a coalition of hydropower and basin states offering little discussion.

Stakeholder votes in favor of this motion included:

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Grand Canyon River Guides
Grand Canyon National Park
Grand Canyon Trust
Grand Canyon Wildlands Council
Hopi Tribe
Hualapai Tribe
Southern Paiute Consortium

Abstentions included:

Bureau of Reclamation
Federation of Fly Fishers
US Fish and Wildlife Service

This AMWG motion would not affect water distribution between the states. Hydropower revenues may be slightly affected, and although important, are ancillary to the purpose of the dam.

We offer you this memo as a point of reference for your decisions on how best to satisfy the will of Congress and the American people. We hope you decide for the Grand Canyon ecosystem and the preservation of its natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

Andre Potochnik, Ph.D.
Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.