BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
NAVAJO RESERVOIR COORDINATION MEETING
JANUARY 21, 2020
MEETING NOTES

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a summary of our January 21st, 2020 meeting to coordinate Reclamation's operation of the Navajo Unit. The meeting was held at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico.

Summary points of the meeting:

- Snowpack is slightly above average (109% above Navajo) but dry soils coming into the season have kept our inflow forecasts below average (Most Probable as of January 1st is 75% of average for Navajo).

- The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) outlook is showing a slight chance for drier than average conditions through the spring and a high chance for warmer than average.

- Based on current conditions (snowpack and reservoirs), and the range of forecast possibilities provided by Colorado Basin River Forecast Center (CBRFC), there is a 30% chance for a spring peak release in 2020.

- Releases for the remainder of the winter will likely range between 400 and 500 cubic feet per second (cfs).

Copies of the material presented, and past meeting notes are available online at: http://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/crsp/cs/nvd.html

If you have any suggestions on improving the operation meetings or the summaries of the meetings, please let us know. The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 21st at 1:00 at the Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).**

NAVAJO UNIT OPERATIONS MEETING
January 21st, 2020

Participation: This meeting was held in Farmington, New Mexico at the Civic Center. The attendance list is attached.

Purpose of Meeting: The purpose of these meetings, held annually in January, April, and August, is to gather input for determining upcoming operations for Navajo Reservoir. This input is used in Reclamation's development of an overall 24-month study for operation of Reclamation projects in the Upper Colorado River Basin, which includes plans for Glen Canyon, Flaming Gorge, Aspinall Unit and Navajo. Input from individuals, organizations, and agencies along with other factors such as weather, water rights, endangered species requirements, flood control, hydro power, recreation, fish and wildlife management, and reservoir levels, will be considered in the development of these reservoir operation plans. In addition, the meetings are used to coordinate activities and exchange information among agencies, water users, and other interested parties concerning the San Juan River and Navajo Reservoir.

Review of Water Year 2020 Operations to date

The release at the beginning of October was 600 cfs. By early November, the release was decreased to 300 cfs for a period of time to allow baseflows in the critical habitat to drop to their minimum of 500 cfs. During this time some instream work was performed by a variety of entities who required low flows. The release was increased back to 600 cfs after the work was completed in mid-November. Navajo has been slowly losing storage over the winter, as is typical. The reservoir began the water year (October 1st, 2019) at 6063.0 ft (1,386,548 af live storage). This is 43 feet higher than the reservoir elevation at the start of the previous water year.

Despite the long and late spring runoff season last year, summer and fall baseflows in the basin have been average to below-average. This is likely due to the persistent dry soils from the previous year, coupled with lack of monsoon this year.

Releases are made to target the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program's (SJRIP) recommended target base flow of between 500 cfs and 1,000 cfs through the critical habitat area. The target base flow is calculated as the weekly average of gaged flows throughout the critical habitat area (Farmington to Lake Powell).

Water Year 2020 Current Conditions

Current snowpack above Navajo Reservoir is at 12.5 inches of snow water equivalent (SWE), which is 109% of average. Snowpack above the Animas River basin is at 11.4 inches of SWE, which is 113% of average for that basin.

Reservoirs in the San Juan River Basin are all at average or above average storage levels for this time of year. Navajo Reservoir is 77% full, or 63% of active storage. Other area reservoirs are as follows: Vallecito, 62% full; Lemon, 44% full; Nighthorse, 97% full; McPhee, 76% full, and Jackson, 37% full.

Water Year 2020 Weather and Hydrologic Forecast

Weather patterns have been favorable in the last month (December) for the San Juan River Basin, and SNOTEL sites are showing above average snowpack. However, the lack of early season weather, which would normally have started the snow accumulation at very high elevations, has resulted in below-average snowpack above the SNOTEL sites. Current soil moisture conditions are very dry due to the inactive monsoon season of 2019.

Drought status this time last year was D2 "Severe Drought" over the Four Corners region. This year the drought status is mixed between D1, "Moderate Drought" and D2.

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) status is trending towards Neutral conditions. Neutral conditions are expected to continue through late summer and into the fall of 2020. ENSO conditions don't tend to have a great correlation in the San Juan River Basin.

CPC is showing a high likelihood of above-average temperatures for the coming year, and a chance of below average precipitation.

Monsoon season did not appear last fall, keeping soils dry and baseflows low. Soil moisture conditions entering the 2020 winter season are slightly improved compared to last year but are still much below normal.

Due to the below-average high elevation (above 11,000 ft) snow, and the dry soil moisture conditions, the inflow forecasts for 2020 are below-average, despite having average SNOTEL conditions.

Current Most Probable inflow forecasts (as of January 1st) for the April-July runoff season are as follows:

Navajo:	550kaf (75% avg)
Vallecito:	160kaf (82% avg)
Lemon:	45 kaf (82% avg)
Animas:	350 kaf (84% avg)
McPhee:	260 kaf (88% avg)
Powell:	5900 kaf (82% avg)

Water Year 2020 Proposed Operations

Based on current storage levels and the latest forecast from the CBRFC, there is a 30% chance of SJRIP-prescribed spring peak release of at least 21 days at 5,000 cfs. If no spring peak release is prescribed, it is unlikely a maintenance release will be performed. There is a 97% chance that the Sept 30th storage will be greater than 6050 ft. There is a 30% chance the Sept 30th storage will be greater than 6063 ft. The maximum reservoir elevation under any scenario was 6079 ft in the spring.

If a spring peak release is conducted, it will be timed to peak with the Animas River. State Parks

requests that if we can avoid holiday weekends (Memorial Day, Father's Day, Mother's Day) that we try to do so.

The release over the rest of the winter and into early spring will likely range from 400 to 500 cfs.

Agency/Organization Reports

Bloomfield Irrigation District – Requests coordination to avoid the negative impact to their operations during the ramp-up for the spring peak release.

City of Farmington Utilities – February 5th an outage will require changing control of the 4x4 to Reclamation. It is not expected that the 4x4 will open during this time.

San Juan River Dineh Water Users – 182 k ft of open ditch is being converted to pipeline is ahead of schedule with 80% completion. Completion date scheduled for 2021.

NIIP – Will open the gates to start filling Cutter in February (date TBD)

SWWCD – SW Annual Seminar will be April 3rd. More info at https://swwcd.org/

FWS (San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program)- Good pikeminnow production was recorded last year, so pikeminnow was not stocked. The next BC meeting is scheduled for Feb 19th-20th in Farmington and is open to the public. The Annual Meeting will be in May, with a date TBD. It is also open to the public. More info at https://www.fws.gov/southwest/sjrip/

Next Coordination Meeting - Scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21st, 2020** at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico (200 West Arrington Street).

Attendance List – January 21, 2020 Navajo Operations Meeting

Archuleta, David, Citizen, Bloomfield NM
Archuleta, Evelyn, Citizen, Bloomfield NM
Austin, Steve, Navajo Nation EPA, Shiprock NM
Behery, Susan, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Brackeen, Ty, Self, Farmington NM
Branham, Scott, Bureau of Reclamation, Navajo Dam NM
Corwin, Linda, Citizen, Bloomfield NM
Day, Henry, Arizona Public Service, Phoenix AZ
Dodd, Stacy, Bloomfield Irrigation District, Bloomfield NM
Duncan, Martin, San Juan River Dineh Water Users, Inc., Shiprock NM
Dumont, Jim, Senator Henricks Office, Farmington NM
Durst, Scott, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque NM
Fowlds, Tom, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
Johnson, Clay, Turley-Manzanres Ditch Company, Bloomfield NM
Grover, Hannah, Daily Times, Farmington. NM
Horner, Gary, Citizen, Farmington. NM
Isaacson, Mike, Keller-Bliesner Engineering, Farmington NM
Kupfer, Barb, West Hammond, Bloomfield NM
Larson, Les, Hillside Irrigation District, La Plata NM
Maston, Larry, San Juan County Emergency Management, Bloomfield NM
Miller, Gordon, San Juan Water Commission, Aztec NM
Miller, Marc, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Miller, Scott, Arizona Public Service, Phoenix AZ
Montoia, Paul, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Moritz, Nic, CO Parks and Wildlife, Arboles CO
Norris, Pamela, Arizona Public Service, Fruitland NM
Pablo, Renae, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Farmington NM
Padgett, Carrie, Southwestern Water Conservancy District, Durango CO
Prda, Sam, West Hammond Water Users, Bloomfield NM
Royer, Ryan Seamus, BOR Four Corners Construction Office, Farmington NM
Serrano, Elizabeth, Bloomfield Irrigation District, Bloomfield NM
Shockey, Jamie, City of Farmington, Farmington NM
Smith, Chris, NM State Parks, Navajo Dam, NM
Smith, Kathi, Hammond Conservancy District, Bloomfield NM
Swickard, Ruth, Bureau of Reclamation, Durango CO
Trujillo, Leonard, Bloomfield Irrigation District, Bloomfield NM
Warner, Ed, Bureau of Reclamation, Grand Junction CO
Wethington, Marc, NM Department of Game and Fish, Navajo NM
Yazzie, Letisha, NM State Engineer’s Office, Aztec NM