

commitments by Reclamation to evaluate those effects and consider implementing the flow recommendations.

Formal consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on the Unit was requested by Reclamation in a July 30, 1991, memorandum to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Reclamation committed at that time to, among other things, operate Navajo Dam in the manner most consistent with endangered fish recovery, including mimicking a natural hydrograph if that is the recommended course, for the life of Navajo Dam. In an August 19, 1991, response to Reclamation, the Service concurred that the consultation process should be initiated, and that the consultation period for the operations of the Unit be extended while research on the San Juan River was conducted.

Flow Recommendations

Under the direction of the Program's Biology Committee, test releases were conducted and evaluated during the 1992-1998 research period. At the completion of the research period, the Biology Committee completed a report, entitled Flow Recommendations for the San Juan River (1999), which provides recommended flows for the endangered fishes in the San Juan River below Farmington, New Mexico. The recommendations define the conditions for mimicking a natural hydrograph in terms of magnitude, duration, and frequency of flows in the San Juan River.

If the Service follows these recommendations in future biological opinions, then the flow criteria or a reasonable alternative would have to be met to avoid jeopardy. These recommendations have been accepted by the Program's Coordination Committee and have been provided to the Service for their use in future Section 7 consultations.

Related Projects

Subsequent consultations with the Service on other San Juan Basin projects and associated federal actions included the operation of the Unit as an element of the proposed plan or the resulting reasonable and prudent alternative. These related projects include conversion of irrigation water to municipal and industrial water on the Mancos Project, Florida Project water sale contracts, the Animas La-Plata Project, and completion of the Navajo

Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP) and related water service contracts.

The Proposed Federal Action

Reclamation proposes to prepare a DEIS which will describe the effects of operating the Unit to implement the flow recommendations, or reasonable alternatives, as contained in the recommendation from the Program's Biology Committee resulting from consultation under the ESA. Reclamation would implement the proposed action by modifying the operations decision criteria of the Unit. Modifying the operations would provide sufficient releases of water at times, quantities, and durations necessary to mimic the natural hydrograph of the river to create and maintain habitat and to maintain a healthy biological community in order to conserve populations of two endangered fishes, while maintaining the other authorized purposes of the Unit.

Public Scoping

Scoping meetings will be held in Farmington, New Mexico; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Durango, Colorado; and Pagosa Springs, Colorado in early November 1999 for the purpose of obtaining public input on the significant issues related to the proposed action. The schedule and locations for the meetings are shown below. The public is asked to provide input on the following:

1. Identification of relevant issues related to the proposed action.
2. Whether the overall range of alternatives is appropriate.

Schedule of Scoping Meetings

The following scoping meetings will be conducted in New Mexico and Colorado.

- November 3, 1999, from 6-9 p.m., Farmington Civic Center, 200 W. Arrington, Farmington, New Mexico.
- November 4, 1999, from 6:30-9:30 p.m., Doubletree Hotel, 501 Camino Del Rio, Durango, Colorado.
- November 9, 1999, from 6-9 p.m., Crown Plaza Pyramid, 5151 San Francisco Road, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- November 10, 1999, from 6-9 p.m., Pagosa Inn, 3565 Highway 160, Pagosa Springs, Colorado.

Dated: September 24, 1999.

Charles A. Calhoun,

Regional Director, Upper Colorado Region.
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation, Interior

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Public Meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, announcement is made of a meeting of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council (Council).

DATES AND LOCATIONS: The meeting is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, October 26, 1999, and recess at 5 p.m. The Council will briefly reconvene at about 1 p.m. the following day after the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum meeting. The meeting will be held at the York Hotel located at 940 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California. For reservations and information, please contact the York Hotel at (415) 885-6800.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Trueman, Colorado River Salinity Control Program Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Attention: UC-240, 125 South State Street, Room 6107, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1102, telephone (801) 524-3753.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Council members will be briefed on the status of salinity control activities and receive input for drafting the Council's annual report. The Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and Environmental Protection Agency will each present a progress report and schedule of activities on salinity control in the Colorado River Basin. The Council will discuss salinity control activities and the content of their report.

The meeting of the Council is open to the public. Any member of the public may file written statements with the Council before, during, or after the meeting, in person or by mail. Time will be allowed on the agenda for any individual or organization wishing to make formal oral comments (limited to 10 minutes) at the meeting.

Dated: September 14, 1999.

Charles A. Calhoun,

Regional Director, Upper Colorado Region.
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