



Comprehensive Fisheries Management Plan

Project Scoping

June 1, 2012

Dear Interested Party:

Grand Canyon National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, in coordination with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, propose to develop and implement a coordinated plan for fisheries management in the face of threats related to nonnative species, habitat alteration, and other potential environmental impacts. The Plan will provide an adaptive management framework for fisheries management decisions in all waters between Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Mead, including tributaries, over the coming decades. Urgency exists because sport fish populations are out of balance in the Lees Ferry area of Glen Canyon, and native and endangered fish are threatened in Grand Canyon. The Plan will address the following general fisheries management goals in the two Park units, among others:

1) Restoration and maintenance of healthy, self-sustaining native fish communities that include endangered and extirpated (i.e., fish no longer present) species in Grand Canyon.

2) Establishment and maintenance of a high quality recreational rainbow trout fishery using a wide range of tools developed with stakeholders in the Lees Ferry area.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide the decision-making framework that: 1) explores a reasonable range of alternatives to meet project objectives; 2) evaluates potential issues and impacts to park resources and values; 3) identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts; and 4) describes an adaptive management framework for decisions over the coming decades.

The National Park Service encourages public participation throughout the NEPA process during which the public has opportunities to formally comment on the project including during initial project scoping and again following release of the Plan/EA. With this scoping announcement, we invite you to voice your ideas, comments, or concerns in this effort. These comments will be considered during preparation of the EA. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

David Uberuaga

*Superintendent,
Grand Canyon NP*

Todd Brindle

*Superintendent,
Glen Canyon NRA*

Waters Under Consideration

The Plan/Environmental Assessment will evaluate a strategy which attempts to conserve native fish and manage sport fish in all waters between Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Mead, including tributaries to the Colorado River in both National Park Service (NPS) units.

This proposal does not include management of sport fisheries in Lake Powell or Lake Mead.

Possible Actions

The Plan/EA will consider and analyze a comprehensive toolbox of fish management techniques that may include, but not limited to:

- Translocations of endangered humpback chub or other native fish species;
- Control/removal of nonnative fish in tributaries and selected areas of the Colorado River;
- Development of a beneficial use program for nonnative fish removed from Park waters;
- Stocking sterile (triploid) rainbow trout in Lees Ferry;
- Fishing regulations (e.g., bag limits, etc.);
- Reintroduction of extirpated fish species (e.g., razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, bonytail, roundtail chub)
- Aquatic food base enhancement;
- Construction of barriers to prevent invasion by nonnative fish;
- Habitat enhancements;
- Development of management objectives, thresholds, and monitoring programs to provide for adaptive management.

Resources and Concerns

The Plan/EA will analyze potential impacts to a number of resources including:

- Geology, soils, and vegetation;
- Wildlife and species of special concern;
- Non-target species (amphibians, aquatic insects);
- Water resources, floodplains, and wetlands;
- Cultural and ethnographic resources;
- Air quality, soundscapes;
- Socioeconomics;
- Visitor use, Wilderness, and recreation experience;
- Wilderness values;
- Human health and safety.

Overview of the Process

Project milestones include:

- Public scoping - Closes June 30th;**
- Preparation of Plan/EA – Summer 2012;
- Public review of Plan/EA – Late Summer/Fall 2012;**
- Analysis of public comments – Fall 2012;
- Preparation of decision document; and
- Expected announcement of decision – Winter 2012.

** Milestone with opportunity for public comment

Ideas to Consider

Following are a few ideas to keep in mind as you develop your comments on this proposal:

- Do you have any issues/concerns about the project that you think we should consider?
- Are there other actions that you think should be considered?
- Do you have other ideas, comments, or suggestions for us to consider during the development of the comprehensive fisheries management plan/EA?
- This proposal is separate from the ongoing planning process related to the operation of Glen Canyon Dam (Long Term Experimental and Management Plan).



NEPA PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD

Public comments will help the NPS identify issues, develop alternatives, and guide the analysis during preparation of the EA. Comments may be submitted on-line to <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/GRCA> the website for the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) database, hand-delivered to the park's headquarters in Grand Canyon, Arizona, or mailed to:

David Uberuaga, Superintendent
Attn: Fisheries Management Plan EA
Grand Canyon National Park
P.O. Box 129
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023-0129

Comments must be received by *June 30, 2012.*

Please note that names and addresses of people who comment become part of the public record. We will make all submissions from organizations, businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Additional information on the park's fisheries program is available on-line at

www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/fish.htm

