

reservoir" for the purposes of the Colorado River Storage Project Act, administered by the Bureau of Reclamation.

As stated in the General Management Plan and Strategic Plan, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area is significant because it offers a tremendous diversity of both water-based and land-based recreational opportunities. It contains Lake Powell, the second largest man-made lake in North America, which provides both a unique opportunity for recreation in a natural environment and a transportation corridor to remote backcountry areas of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. It is in the heart of the Colorado Plateau region, which offers a unique combination of water and desert environments. It offers a natural diversity of rugged water and wind carved canyons, buttes, mesas, and other outstanding physiographic features. The climate and physical features have created local environments favorable to the preservation of scientifically important objects, sites, populations, habitats, or communities that are significant in and of themselves or provide opportunities to add to our understanding of past or ongoing events. It possesses evidence of 10,000 years of human occupation and use of resources, which provides a continuing story of the prehistoric, historic, and present-day affiliation of humans and their environments. It constitutes a significant part of the outstanding public lands of the Colorado Plateau.

The recreation area offers a tremendous diversity of land and water-based recreational opportunities. The area's major recreational resource is Lake Powell, a 186-mile-long reservoir at full pool that was created when the Colorado River was dammed. Boating is very popular on the lake, including the use of PWC, houseboats, powerboats, fishing boats, tour boats, canoes, kayaks, and sailboats. Other popular activities include fishing, camping, water skiing, hiking, photography, and driving for pleasure.

#### **Description of the Recreation Area**

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area encompasses 1,254,306 acres of land and water in northern Arizona and southeastern Utah. Its southern boundary is contiguous with the Navajo Nation. Other boundaries adjoin Grand Canyon National Park, Capitol Reef National Park, Canyonlands National Park, and Rainbow Bridge National Monument, all managed by the National Park Service. The recreation area also adjoins areas administered by the Bureau of Land Management that

include Grand Staircase—Escalante National Monument, Vermillion Cliffs National Monument, and Paria Canyon Wilderness. Lake Powell is the predominant physical feature and at full pool (3700 feet elevation), occupies about 163,000 surface acres, storing approximately 27 million acre feet of water, and providing about 1,960 miles of shoreline. More than 2 million people visit Glen Canyon National Recreation Area each year.

#### **Motorized Watercraft**

Motorboats and other motorized watercraft such as houseboats, ski boats, fishing boats, and powerboats have been used in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area since its establishment in 1972. PWC use has emerged at the recreation area with the introduction of this type of vessel in the 1980s. Prior to 2000, PWC use was allowed throughout Glen Canyon National Recreation Area except in the waters of the Colorado River between the Glen Canyon Dam and the downstream river boundary of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area where it adjoins Grand Canyon National Park near Lees Ferry. The waters of the recreation area above the dam where PWC use could occur, as identified in the superintendent's compendium, are within the scope of this proposed rule.

The 15-mile corridor of the Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam was closed to PWC use in the superintendent's compendium for the protection of environmental values and the avoidance of conflict among traditional visitor use activities. This stretch of river is a nationally significant resource known for its scenery and "blue-ribbon" trout fishery. The historical recreational uses include fly-fishing and rafting trips. In March 2000, provisions of the National Park Service PWC rule closed the waters below the dam to PWC use. These waters continue to be an inappropriate area for PWC use and are not considered within the environmental impact statement (NPS, September 2002) or this proposed rule.

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area is located within the states of Arizona and Utah. Both states enforce their laws on Lake Powell within their respective state jurisdictions. The National Park Service manages these regulations in concert with the federal boating regulations that are addressed within Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the United States Coast Guard Regulations pursuant to Title 36.

#### **Resource Impact Topics**

The following summarizes the predominant natural resources, cultural resources, and public use concerns and

issues associated with PWC use at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Each of these issues is discussed in greater detail in the environmental impact statement.

#### **Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat**

Shoreline areas that typically are exposed to PWC uses provide limited habitats for the large, highly mobile mammals of the recreation area. Although areas are typically unvegetated and steep, shoreline areas may occasionally be briefly occupied by several species of mammals while searching for food or water or while moving through the area. These species include desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, antelope, feral horse, bobcat, mountain lion, gray fox, badger, kit fox, and coyote. However, they spend most of the time in adjacent upland areas and are not affected by motorized watercraft, including PWC.

Vegetation and corresponding habitat conditions are different in the tributaries and upper river reaches of the recreation area where water level fluctuations generally follow normal seasonal patterns. Such reaches provide riparian vegetation complexes that support different wildlife species assemblages than those encountered along main lake shorelines. Therefore, management actions should be consistent with protecting these resources.

Shore birds, waterfowl, and other water-associated bird species frequently use Lake Powell and its surrounding shoreline during migration for resting, security, and foraging purposes. Groups commonly observed on the lake and near shoreline areas include several species of grebes, cormorants, herons, egrets, coots, and ducks. Waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and other water-associated bird species tend to concentrate in highest number and greatest diversity at Lake Powell in the late fall, winter, and the early spring months during peak migration periods. PWC use is minimal or not existent during this time of year; therefore, there is not a significant impact upon bird species associated with PWC operation.

The recreation area currently supports an assemblage of fish species that includes those adapted to either lake (lacustrine) or flowing-water (riverine) environments. Most of the lake-adapted species have been introduced intentionally or unintentionally by man through past fish-stocking programs or bait release. These species are more abundant because of the larger abundance of suitable aquatic habitat.

The flowing-water or riverine fish species tend to be native species that are