

responded to in the document. The criteria for determination of substantive comments is found in CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1503.4) and amplified in *Director's Order 12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision Making* (section 4.6 (B)). Public comments, as well as other factors, were used by Glen Canyon National Recreation Area to modify the "preferred alternative" (alternative B) that was analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. A description of the modified preferred alternative B is found in the "Alternatives" chapter of the Final Environmental Impact Statement and in this document.

The National Park Service acknowledges the 30,000 citizen comments submitted on the National Park Service PWC rulemaking. The administrative record for this rulemaking includes all comments and most documents received from the public, including those comments submitted by the Bluewater Network.

#### Comments Related to Alternatives

14. A number of commenters disagreed with the restrictions on the Escalante River presented in the analysis.

*NPS Response:* Under current PWC management as described in the Superintendent's Compendium 2002, PWC travel upstream in the San Juan, Escalante, Colorado, and Dirty Devil Rivers is restricted. The management actions under the modified preferred alternative B, for the San Juan, Escalante, Colorado, and Dirty Devil Rivers, will additionally restrict travel downstream on the same stretches of river. Access will also be restricted in both directions on 10 additional miles of the Dirty Devil River and 23 miles on the Colorado River. We understand the disagreement with the restrictions, but based on the best available information developed in the EIS process, the NPS has determined these restrictions are necessary on the rivers to reduce visitor conflicts with river rafters, fishermen, and backcountry hikers; promote visitor enjoyment; and ensure visitor safety.

15. Many commenters stated that the selection of alternative B provides no significant benefit, except to areas at the extreme ends of the tributaries where there is no significant visitation (and now no access). Additional alternatives are available that allow PWC's access to enjoy Lake Powell without destroying the experience of other users.

*NPS Response:* The NPS *Director's Order 12: Conservation Planning, Environment Impact Analysis and Decision-Making* (NPS 2001b) states that

a full range of alternatives must be examined, and that "the alternatives carried forward for analysis must meet project objectives to a large degree, although not necessarily completely." The National Park Service believes the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements contain a reasonable range of alternatives under this definition.

In addition, the modified preferred alternative B provides for a three-year pilot study to further evaluate PWC use areas. Potential restrictions of PWC use in other locations of the recreation area will be evaluated during the pilot study. The purpose of the pilot study and a description of how it will be implemented are provided in appendix C of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

16. Several commenters suggested that the alternative selected should incorporate increased education, strict enforcement, and testing and licensing of PWC operators and that they would support increased fees for these improvements or institution of a permit system.

*NPS Response:* The states of Arizona and Utah establish the current operational age of PWC users. The licensing of boat or PWC operators rests with the State governments and is not an appropriate administrative activity for the Federal government. Currently, the State of Utah provides an extensive and nationally recognized mandatory education program for PWC users between the ages of 12 and 17. The National Park Service will continue to support this existing program. In addition, the modified preferred alternative B will provide enhanced educational materials and programs highlighting PWC issues to distribute to the public familiar with the State of Utah education program and for those from out of state and will seek funding to increase visitor protection staff.

17. Several commenters suggested that the alternative selected should ban the use of conventional two-stroke technology and only allow clean technology engines that would meet 2006 EPA standards.

*NPS Response:* The NPS considered an immediate ban of conventional two-stroke technology but, based upon the findings of the EIS process, determined it was not necessary to protect the resource and would impose an unreasonable economic burden on PWC users. Instead, the modified preferred alternative B of the Final Environmental Impact Statement requires that PWC used at Glen Canyon NRA must meet the EPA 2006 emission standards by the end of 2012. PWC not meeting the standards would no longer be allowed

to operate in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area beginning in 2013.

The National Park Service expects that by 2012, most PWC owners would already be in compliance with the 2006 EPA marine engine standards. The economic impact on visitors as a result of the 2012 engine type restrictions is expected to be small. PWC manufacturers currently offer models that are compliant with the EPA 2006 standards, and new PWC purchased after 2006 will all meet the EPA emission standards. The average operating life of a PWC is 5 to 10 years, depending upon the source (see the "General Methodology" section in the "Environmental Consequences" chapter of the Final Environmental Impact Statement). As a result, it is expected that the majority of noncompliant PWC would no longer be in operation when the engine restrictions proposed under the modified preferred alternative B take effect at the end of 2012.

18. Several commenters suggested restricting speed in narrow canyons or making major canyons flat-wake zones to reduce visitor conflicts and to improve visitor safety.

*NPS Response:* NPS considered these measures, but concluded they were not necessary because of existing restriction under state law. Under Utah State law, all boaters must operate at flat-wake speeds or idle speed within 150 feet of another boat, a person in or floating on the water, a waterskier (except those being towed), a shore fisherman, a launching ramp, a dock, or a designated swimming area. Arizona State law requires all boaters to operate at flat-wake speeds within 60 feet of another vessel. The modified preferred alternative B addresses signing, buoys, and boater education that will enhance other watercraft operators' observance of safe boating practices.

In addition, the modified preferred alternative B currently provides for a three-year pilot study to further evaluate PWC-use areas. Potential restrictions of PWC use in other locations of the recreation area will be evaluated during the pilot study. The purpose of the pilot study and a description of how it will be implemented are provided in appendix C of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

19. Many commenters suggested additional alternatives to restrict PWC to specific areas such as: Wahweap Bay, Warm Creek Bay, the areas near Hall's Crossing and Bullfrog Bay, and the Colorado River from Warm Creek to the Dam. At a minimum, restrict their usage to the less remote areas of the lake, e.g., the main channel and certain large bays.