



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon
National Park

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Grand Canyon National Park News Release

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GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK INVITES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN REVISION OF COLORADO RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent, Joseph F. Alston, today announced the Park's intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to update the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) for Grand Canyon National Park. The National Park Service is preparing the EIS for the Plan under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The purpose of this EIS is to update management guidelines for the Colorado River corridor through Grand Canyon National Park. Current guidelines can be found in the 1989 CRMP. A copy of this plan as well as background information and public comments received from past CRMP discussions can be found on the Internet at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp.

Prior to the development of a draft CRMP/EIS, the National Park Service will seek public input to reaffirm previously identified agency and public issues, and to identify any new public issues and concerns. Scoping information will also be used to help narrow and define the significant environmental issues and management alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS. Public input will continue throughout the planning process. The National Park Service (NPS) will actively seek out and consult with all interested members of the public.

The NPS will host at least two series of public meetings to receive comments on the EIS over the next three years in each of the following five cities: Flagstaff, AZ; Phoenix, AZ; Salt Lake City, UT; Las Vegas, NV; and Denver, CO. The NPS anticipates announcing a public scoping meeting schedule by the end of June. The times and locations of those meetings, along with updated information on the planning process, will be listed on the park's CRMP Web site.

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During this process, the NPS will develop and evaluate alternatives to address resource protection issues, potential resource impacts, user capacities, and mitigation measures necessary or desirable to achieve the NPS mission. The NPS will review some key resource issues outside of the park's boundaries that affect the integrity of the Grand Canyon and will consider alternatives that include no-action (the status quo), no motorized use, and varying levels of motorized and non-motorized watercraft use.

Issues to be addressed in the EIS will include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ appropriate levels of visitor use consistent with natural and cultural resource protection and preservation mandates;
- ✓ allocation of use between commercial and non-commercial groups;
- ✓ non-commercial permitting system;
- ✓ level of motorized versus non-motorized raft use;
- ✓ the range of services and opportunities provided to the public; and, in consultation with the Hualapai Indian Tribe and other appropriate parties, the continued use of helicopters to transport river passengers from the Colorado River near Whitmore Wash.

Information about this planning effort and how the public can be involved throughout the process will be provided in a newsletter, available on the Internet at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp. The NPS will accept public comment for a period of 60 days beginning on June 13, 2002. Should the public scoping meetings extend beyond the 60-day comment period, the NPS will continue to accept comments for a period of 30 days following the final public meeting.

Comments can be submitted by any one of the following ways:

- ✓ mail to CRMP Project, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023;
- ✓ send by electronic mail to grca_crmp@nps.gov;
- ✓ hand-deliver to Grand Canyon National Park; or
- ✓ provide at one of the public scoping meetings to be announced.

Completion of the EIS process will fulfill an agreement reached through a negotiated settlement of recent litigation between several organizations and individuals and the federal government. The settlement requires the NPS to complete this EIS by December 31, 2004. The NPS plans to restart the process to review and revise the park's 1988 Backcountry Management Plan subsequent to the completion of the CRMP.

For further information on this planning process, please contact Jeffrey Cross, Director, Grand Canyon Science Center at 928-638-7759.

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Editors Note: To be placed on the park's CRMP Newsletter mailing list, please send your request along with your email address to: grca_crmp@nps.gov.