

Statement of Alan Mikkelsen
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U.S. Department of the Interior
Before the
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Subcommittee on Water and Power
U.S. Senate
on S. 2166, the Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Extension Act of 2017
February 28, 2017

Chairman Flake, Ranking Member King, and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Alan Mikkelsen, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Interior for Water and Western Resource Issues, and former Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Department of the Interior (Department) on S. 2166, the Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Extension Act of 2017. The Department provided testimony the House-companion to this bill, H.R. 4465, and our testimony here reflects the same conclusions.

As described below, the Department supports the efforts of both the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (Programs) and as such does not object to HR 4465 or S. 2166.

The Programs share the dual goals of recovering populations of endangered fish while water development continues to meet current and future human needs. The Programs' actions provide Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance for more than 2,400 federal, tribal, and non-federal water projects consuming 3.7 million acre-feet of water to support municipal, industrial and agricultural water use and related economic development. The Programs, initially authorized by Public Law (PL) 106-392, were established under cooperative agreements in 1988 (Upper Colorado) and 1992 (San Juan). The Programs' partners include the states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming; the Bureau of Reclamation, Western Area Power Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs; Native American tribes; environmental organizations; water users; and power customers.

PL 106-392 expressly authorized the use of a maximum of \$6 million per year (indexed for inflation) of Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) hydropower revenues from Glen Canyon Dam and other CRSP facilities to support the base funding needs of the Programs through 2011. Subsequent legislation extended this authority through 2019. Base funding is used for program management, scientific research, fish population monitoring, fish stocking, control of non-native fish, and operation and maintenance of capital projects.

Section 2 as introduced would extend the authorization to utilize CRSP hydropower revenues at the current level (up to \$6 million per year adjusted for inflation, or approximately \$8.48 million in 2017 dollars) through 2023 to support the base funding needs of the Programs. Section 3 of HR 4465 would also require the Secretary to submit a report to Congress in 2021 that includes a

description of Program accomplishments, expenditures, and status of the four endangered fish species. The report will also project listing status of the fish at the end of fiscal year 2023, identify management activities beyond 2023, and estimate costs of the post-2023 activities.

The Programs are nationally recognized for their cooperative approach to recovering native fish species, avoiding litigation, and providing ESA compliance to federal and non-federal water users. The continued use of CRSP hydropower revenues is critical to ensuring these Programs accomplish their goals. Both Programs have developed strong grassroots support and the bill is unanimously supported by the Programs diverse non-federal partners.

This concludes my written statement. I would be pleased to answer questions at the appropriate time.