

## **Project Summary**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Economic Values of National Park System Resources Along the Colorado River, Phases 1-3

**Discipline:** Social science

**Type of Project:** Research

**Funding Agency:** National Park Service

**Other Partners/Cooperators:** University of Montana

**Effective Dates:** 6/1/2005 - 12/31/2011

**Funding Amount:** \$764,074 (\$349,999 added in FY08; \$159,769 added in FY10)

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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**Project Abstract:**

The National Park Service (NPS) requires an evaluation of the economic values of National Park System resources within the Colorado River Watershed (CRW). National Park System resources within the CRW contribute substantial benefits to local economies in the form of business output, jobs, and tax revenues resulting from recreational visitation. These resources also provide other significant values including the consumer surplus individuals derive from visitation and non-use values held by the public. NPS manages several units within the CRW and is responsible for providing many of these benefits. This Statement of Work describes Phase I of a project that will estimate the economic values of National Park System resources within the CRW. The entire project will consist of the following four phases.

Phase I: Produce a white paper that summarizes how different operating scenarios and water levels are determined within the CRW, describes the types of economic values provided by National Park System resources within that watershed, and discusses how alternative allocations of Colorado River water may affect those economic values. The economic values to be described include welfare measures (market, non-market, use, and non-use values) and regional economic impacts. The white paper will also present a recommended approach to estimating the economic values of National Park System resources within the CRW.

Phase II: Conduct an analysis of existing literature and data relevant to the economic values of National Park System resources within the CRW. Synthesize the existing literature and data to present as complete a set of economic values as possible for National Park System resources within the CRW. Identify data gaps that must be filled using original research techniques. Conduct a peer review of the report prepared as part of Phase II.

Phase III: Design and get OMB review for Passive Use and Direct Use survey instruments.

Additional funds were added late in FY06 to allow the investigator to travel to Glen Canyon, Lake Mead and Grand Canyon NPs for the purposes of data collection. Additional funds were added in FY07 to allow the investigators to give two briefings to the BOR. Funds from the BOR were obligated late in FY 07 to include analyses of new visitation functions for Lake Mead and Lake Mohave. Phase 3 tasks were begun in 2007-2008, with additional funds from GRCA, GLCA and LAME and from the NPS-Environmental Quality Division.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

Ten (10) paper copies and one (1) electronic copy (in MS Word format) of the final white paper and the phase II report to the NPS Technical Representative, and; Two (2) paper copies and one (1) electronic copy (in MS Word format) of the final white paper and the phase II report to the Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit. Presentation before the Colorado River Steering Committee stating results of Phase II, to Bureau of Reclamation staff in Las Vegas, NV in February 2007. Another presentation will be made to Bureau of Reclamation staff in Salt Lake City, UT on April 5, 2007. The additional analyses for Lake Mead and Lake Mohave are due in a Phase 2 final report by November 9, 2007. Phase 3 products will include draft survey instruments due by end of 2008.

**Keywords:** economic value, natural resources, water resources, Colorado River, Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, Grand Canyon NP, Lake Mead NRA, Glen Canyon NRA, Bureau of Reclamation, NPS Environmental Quality Division, University of Montana