



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glen Canyon National  
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## Glen Canyon News Release

### **Heavy Snowpack in Rockies Will Likely Raise Lake Powell to Highest Levels Since 2002** *Castle Rock Cut Expected to Become Passable to Boaters by June*

Page, Ariz. – This winter’s heavy snowfall in the Rocky Mountains means that Lake Powell is projected by the Bureau of Reclamation to rise some 50- feet this summer, with the lake seeing its highest water levels since 2002. Snowpack in the Upper Colorado River Basin is currently at 124% of average. As this snow melts, it will flow into the Colorado River and eventually into Lake Powell.

The spring runoff is expected to reopen the Castle Rock Cut early this June. The Castle Rock Cut is a popular route on Lake Powell that allows boaters to conveniently travel between the Wahweap Marina and other destinations uplake. Traveling through the Castle Rock Cut saves about 12- miles to popular areas such as Rainbow Bridge, Padre Bay, and Warm Creek Bay. Due to long- term drought conditions, however, the Castle Rock Cut has not been usable since 2003.

With the promising spring runoff expected, the National Park Service will not need to proceed with plans to deepen the Castle Rock Cut this spring. The Bureau of Reclamation’s projections for Lake Powell indicate that the Castle Rock Cut is expected to remain passable for boats into 2010. This will also save Glen Canyon National Recreation Area \$1.5 million, which can be directed toward other park needs.

“With the runoff anticipated into Lake Powell this spring, it’s going to be a great summer at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. We are expecting a busy season with the likely opening of the Castle Rock Cut,” said Superintendent Stan Austin. “Lake Powell should quickly start rising in April and May and it will be nearly impossible for us to deepen the cut this spring.”

The National Park Service released an environmental assessment for public review in February 2008 that examined deepening the Castle Rock Cut so it would be passable for boats at lower water levels. The environmental assessment process will continue, even though the Castle Rock Cut will likely become passable to boats this summer. Currently, public comments are being reviewed and analyzed. A formal decision about whether or not to proceed with the deepening project is expected to be made later this year, and the Cut could be deepened in the future if lake levels drop again.

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