

# A Call to Action

## *Crystal Clear*

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area



## Evaluating Water and Sediment Contamination and Accumulation in Biota



Gregory Butte reflected in the waters of Lake Powell in Glen Canyon NRA (Utah). NPS/BOB MOFFITT

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (NRA) encompasses over 1.2 million acres and includes the popular boating destination of Lake Powell, which developed along the Colorado River when the Glen Canyon Dam was built in 1963. In 2003 the National Park Service adopted regulations for the management of personal watercraft on Lake Powell. These regulations require Glen Canyon NRA to monitor for hydrocarbon contamination in the lake. During 2004 a total of 20 sampling sites were established at various locations such as marinas, inflow areas, and selected high-use sites. Preliminary results indicated that between 2004 and 2006 contaminants increased. These results provided baseline information for long-term monitoring and to document change over time.

### Background

The effect of recreational activities on Lake Powell through the introduction of organic and inorganic contaminants is not known. In 2004 twenty long-term sampling locations were established at popular sites on Lake Powell to evaluate contaminants related to recreational boating and other recreational activities.

During the period from 2004 to 2006, water samples from the monitoring locations were analyzed for volatile organic compounds, total petroleum hydrocarbons, oil and grease, and select trace elements.

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**Status**

Current research efforts will help determine the presence and distribution of semi-volatile organic compounds (hydrocarbons) and trace elements in sediment. Studies will also examine the potential for concentration of selected compounds and elements of concern

in aquatic life. This assessment will allow the NPS to improve long-term monitoring of water and sediment quality and inform management decisions at Lake Powell.

**Red canyons reflected in the water at Glen Canyon NRA.**  
NPS/BOB MOFFITT



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**More Information**

Mark Anderson  
Aquatic Ecologist  
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area  
928-608-6266  
mark\_anderson@nps.gov

[www.nps.gov/glca](http://www.nps.gov/glca)