



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Eastern Colorado Area Office  
11056 West County RD 18E  
Loveland, Colorado 80537-9711

IN REPLY  
REFER TO:

EC-1000  
RES-3.20

FEB 8 2007

Mr. John Stahl, President  
Greater Grand Lake Shoreline Association  
P.O. Box 1096  
Grand Lake, CO 80447

Subject: Water Quality

Dear Mr. Stahl:

This letter is a follow-up to the meeting held at Denver Water on September 29, 2006, which was in response to your letter of August 21, 2006. We appreciate your interest in the water quality of Grand Lake, and we share your concern for Colorado's largest natural lake.

As you know, water quality is typically not a result of only one factor, but rather a combination of several things such as nutrient levels, depth of the lake, water quality of inflow to the lake, atmosphere, etc.

The Bureau of Reclamation is continually striving to increase our knowledge of the water quality in both Grand Lake and Shadow Mountain Reservoir as demonstrated by the following: A Survey of Aquatic Plants in Shadow Mountain Reservoir, Technical Memorandum 8220-05-10, completed by Reclamation in March 2005; active participation in the Shadow Mountain Reservoir drawdown, October- December 2006 and a subsequent follow-up weed survey to determine effectiveness of the drawdown; continued and increased monitoring through contracts with U.S. Geological Survey and others at various sampling sites throughout the Colorado Big Thompson Project; and cooperation with the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District on their multi-year nutrient study.

I realize you believe the water quality in Grand Lake is deteriorating and you would like Reclamation to construct a pipeline or tunnel from Shadow Mountain or Granby Reservoir direct to the Adams Tunnel, bypassing Grand Lake. Your estimate for construction of such a pipeline as described in the McLaughlin-Rincon report is \$60 million. I am sure you are aware that Reclamation currently does not have the authority or appropriations to construct this pipeline or any of the alternatives identified in the McLaughlin-Rincon report. The Colorado-Big Thompson Project was authorized to be constructed in the manner described in Senate Document 80. To change the constructed facilities as envisioned in the McLaughlin-Rincon report would require Congressional authorization and a funding source. It would also require an extensive environmental review process, such as an Environmental Impact Statement, to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

In this time of declining Federal budgets, and in order to ensure the best use of tax dollars, it is incumbent upon us to ensure we have a reasonably complete understanding of the factors affecting Grand Lake's water quality before implementing any change in the way the project is operated. Our Technical Service Center staff in Denver has been involved in various water quality studies and surveys in the Three Lakes area and has the expertise to assist in future efforts. Since there are many different agencies and organizations involved in this water quality issue, it may be wise to get a representative of each organization together so we can have an organized collaborative effort working toward the same goal. I would suggest the group may want to compile a summary of current water quality in Grand Lake, factors that impact the water quality, and perform an assessment as to whether the water quality is degrading and if so, what actions may need to be taken. We realize it is important to move this process quickly to ensure preventative measures can be taken. Reclamation is committed to participating in a collaborative project and hope others are as well.

As you stated in your letter, collaboration by many agencies and organizations is necessary to maintain or improve the water quality in Grand Lake. We should all work together to share available information so we can jointly reach an informed conclusion and develop any needed solution.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please call me at 970 962-4300.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred R. Ore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Fred" being the most prominent.

Fred R. Ore  
Area Manager

cc: see next page