

1-27-21

House Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Committee

Bill: HCR 1, Concurrent Resolution Encouraging a Balanced Approach to the Release of Water from Flaming Gorge

Sponsor: Rep. Chew

Floor Sponsor: Sen. Hinkins

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: This concurrent resolution expresses support and recognition of the Green River Stakeholders and the need to reduce the adverse effects of current Flaming Gorge Dam operations to the local communities, recreational businesses, ranchers, farmers, landowners, and individuals who work and live within the river corridor.

Discussion: Rep. Chew said inconsistent and drastic fluctuations of water flowing from the Flaming Gorge dam was causing problems for endangered fish, landowners property and animals. Some landowners do not get compensation from flooding caused by water released. The stakeholders went to the Bureau of Reclamation and offered to help grow endangered fish through the intentional flooding of their land. This was the beginning step that led to the current resolution. The hope is the water can get released in a more controlled manner to help the residents and the endangered fish. This resolution supports the creation of new management plan to work with this Bureau of Reclamation and the land owners. Rep. Watkins voiced support for this bill. This bill has been heard by the Legislative Water Development Commission. Rep. Chew said this resolution will not have an effect on white water rafting on the Green River. This Resolution is asking for recognition of what is happening along the river. The Daggett County Commissioner voiced support for this resolution. The Utah Division of Water Resources supports this resolution. The Colorado River Energy Distributors Association would like a voice in what happens with this resolution. The Recovery Program of the Utah Department of Natural Resources encouraged the stake holders to get involved with the hearings in the Bureau of Reclamation. The Holiday River Expedition would like to note this resolution does many good things, but remains skeptical of the benefits of this resolution. They would also request to be considered in the talks that come after this resolution. The Utah Petroleum Association supports this resolution.

Yeas: 9

Nays: 0

N/V: 5

Outcome: Passed out of committee with a favorable recommendation