

Inventory of Glen Canyon Visual Resources

An extensive inventory of viewsheds throughout Glen Canyon NRA was completed in the spring of 1988 using panorama photography and mapping. The purpose of this study was to photograph the various scenic views within the NRA and to document these views by mapping their aerial extent (viewshed). The scenic viewshed inventory will be used as a baseline to analyze potential effects of proposed development (such as mineral leasing, livestock grazing, and recreational facilities) on Glen Canyon's scenic resources.

A total of 81 overlook points were surveyed, photographed, and documented on both land and water throughout the NRA. Scenic viewsheds were surveyed and the following priorities established:

1. Signed or designated overlooks – 17 overlook points;
2. Overlooks from existing or proposed marinas – 9 overlook points;
3. Views from the main travel routes on the lake – 43 overlook points;
4. Views from access roads to Glen Canyon – 11 overlook points;
5. Views from backcountry areas – 1 overlook point.

The complete inventory consisted of two main processes. The first involved visiting each potential overlook point, documenting the location and angle of view, and photographing the entire view using panoramic techniques. The second process was sorting and labeling the photographs (a total of approximately 810 photographs), splicing the panoramas, mapping the aerial extent of the view, and mounting each overlook point documentation in a binder.

Three volumes and two appendices completed the documentation of the surveyed overlook points. As time and budget allow, more backcountry overlook points will be added to the inventory. The mapped extent of each viewshed was formatted for future addition to GIS files.

An independent study conducted in southern Utah by the Five-County Association of Governments indicated that scenery was the primary reason tourists visited Glen Canyon NRA. Viewing scenery also was rated as an extremely important activity by 93% percent of visitors who participated in the 1988 Visitor Survey at the park.

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