

[The Washington Post reports](#) that officials at the Department of Interior ignored “key scientific findings” and the views of National Park Service officials “when they limited water flows in the Grand Canyon to optimize generation of electric power there, risking damage to the ecology of the spectacular national landmark.” The Post story, written by Juliet Eilperin and based in part on documents provided by [Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility](#), describes a power struggle within Interior between the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park Service, with the Bureau prevailing and the Service told to keep its criticisms of the plan and the supporting environmental assessment to itself.

This is far from the first criticism of the Bush-era Interior Department’s use of science or implementation of environmental law. It’s especially troubling, however, because since passage of the 1992 Grand Canyon Protection Act management of Colorado River flows below Glen Canyon Dam has been touted as the premier example of science-driven adaptive management. If even this flagship program was subordinated to political pressure from extractive interests (in this case the hydropower utilities) its hard to imagine that anything was spared.