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SLIDES: Who Should Be at the Table, and What Should They Be Talking About?

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Who Should be at the Table and What Should They Be Talking About?

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Photo credit Salt Lake Tribune

Who is at the table?

- Main players with full seats:
 - Federal Government (DOI) (federal law, Ariz v. Cal)
 - 7 Basin States (Compact)
 - Water and power users (through the states and BOR)
- Sitting closer to the table:
 - Mexico (via treaty)
 - Tribes (via federal reserved rights)
- Sitting around the back of the room:
 - Environmental groups and other NGOs (any leverage through federal statutes and public opinion)

What is there to talk about?

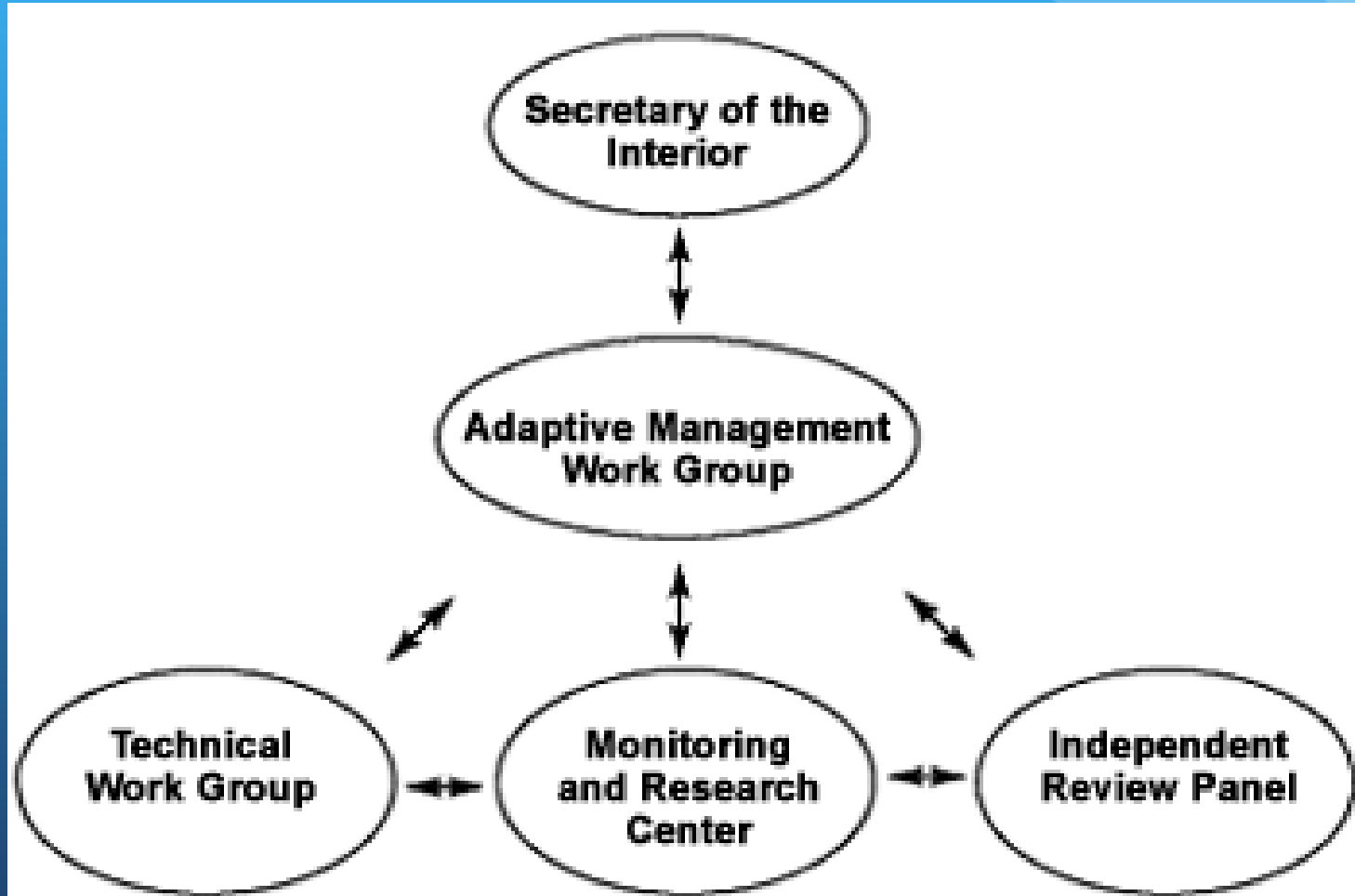
- Will there be enough water for the Delta?
- Will the Tribes get (and be able to use) their fair share?
- Can we restore the river and meet Compact obligations?
- Can the basin states continue to avoid litigation through flexible Compact implementation?
- How to deal with the massive uncertainties due to climate disruption?

Participation in Colorado River decisions

Process	Who's "in"?	Who's "out"?
Compact	States, Interior	Tribes, Mexico, NGOs
Upper River Recovery Program	States, Interior, water & power users, NGOs	Nongovernmental roles advisory
GCDAMP	States, Tribes, Interior, water & power users, NGOs	Nongovernmental roles advisory
LCRMSCP	States, Tribes, Interior, water & power users, some NGOs	Mexico, Some NGOs (by choice)
Salinity Control Program	States, Interior, Water Users, Mexico (via IWBC)	NGOs

Note: Analysis does not include regular participation in NEPA or notice and comment rulemaking processes.

What does “participation” mean?



Source: Bureau of Reclamation

Value of more participants

Criterion	Result	Comments
Efficiency	No	Takes longer to make decisions
Effectiveness	Maybe	“Good” result depends on goals; better to agree on goals?
Public Acceptance	Yes	External challenge less likely; more efficient in long run?

Other large watershed programs

Program	Whole Watershed	Single Decision Body	NGO Participation	Tribal or International Participation
Great Lakes	Yes	No	Advisory	Yes
Everglades	Yes	Yes	No	No
Chesapeake Bay	Yes	Yes	Advisory	N/A
SF Bay-Delta	Yes	Yes (Advisory)	Advisory	Advisory

Some potential lessons

- Whole watershed focus (Getches 1997)
 - Nest existing efforts within watershed process
- Single decision forum for entire basin
- *At minimum* provide advisory status for all stakeholders in all aspects of Colorado River decision making
 - No participation and even advisory status leads to litigation - common interest in avoiding