Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton today announced that a coordinated report of the Department of the Interior on the proposed San Juan-Chama Project, Colorado-New Mexico, and the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project in New Mexico, as participating projects of the Colorado River Storage Project, has been transmitted to the Congress.

The Department on May 20 recommended enactment of H.R. 2352 and H.R. 2494, identical bills which would authorize construction of the projects.

Indians would be the sole users of water supplied by the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project and would use it on a potential irrigable area of 110,630 acres. The project would cost an estimated $135,000,000 at January 1959 prices.

A feature of the project would be a gravity canal which would divert water from the Navajo Reservoir, now under construction, to the Gallegos Powerplant. At that point, about 75 miles from the reservoir, the water would be dropped through the powerplant to develop seasonal electrical energy for three pumping plants to supply water to lands in the Gallegos, Newcomb and Bennett Peak areas above the main gravity canal on the Navajo Reservation.

The project also would entail an exchange of certain lands between the Navajos and the State of New Mexico, agreements on which have been made in principle by State officials and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The development would provide the Navajo people an opportunity to raise their living standard.

Water to supplement the deficient supplies of the Rio Grande and Canadian River basins would be provided by the comprehensive plan of development for the San Juan-Chama Project. New Mexico desires that, for an initial stage of development, 110,000 acre-feet be diverted annually from the San Juan Basin to the Rio Grande Basin at an estimated cost of $86,000,000 at January 1959 prices.
Water imported from the San Juan River by the San Juan-Chama Project would be used in part to augment the municipal water supply of Albuquerque and to provide supplemental irrigation water to about 39,300 acres of land in the Cerro, Taos, Llano, and Pojoaque tributary irrigation units in the Rio Grande Basin in New Mexico. It would also provide supplemental water for irrigation of irrigable land in the existing Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. Recreation and conservation and development of fish and wildlife also would be purposes of the initial stage of development.

Water to be used by the two projects rises on the San Juan River in Colorado. In his comments on the proposed projects, the Governor of Colorado said it would be desirable for New Mexico and Colorado to have an analysis made of a complete San Juan Basin plan "in order to assess the long time requirements important to both States."

New Mexico commented that the "depletion effected by the projects contemplated in the coordinated report are well within New Mexico's water allocation."

California held that if the projects are authorized, "authorizing legislation should provide specifically that the projects shall not impair, either in quality or quantity, the rights of California in and to the waters of the Colorado."

Secretary Seaton's letter of transmittal is attached.

xxx
Dear Mr. Speaker:

As provided by section 9(a) of the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (53 Stat. 1187), transmitted herewith is my coordinated report on the San Juan-Chama Project, Colorado-New Mexico, and the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project, New Mexico.

The report presents coordinated plans for development of two multipurpose projects which are proposed as participating projects of the authorized Colorado River Storage Project. The projects have engineering feasibility and are economically justified.

My proposed coordinated report was reviewed by the affected States, the Secretary of the Army, and the interested Federal agencies as required by law and interagency agreement. Copies of the comments received as a result of that review are attached to the report.

The coordinated report and copies of the comments received were submitted to the President on July 3, 1958. A copy of letter dated May 19, 1960, from the Bureau of the Budget advising that, subject to consideration of its comments, there would be no objection to the submission of the coordinated report to the Congress.

I recommend that construction of the San Juan-Chama and Navajo Indian Irrigation Projects, New Mexico and Colorado, be authorized.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Fred A. Seaton
Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Sam Rayburn
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.

IDENTICAL LETTER TO:
Hon. Richard M. Nixon
President of the Senate
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosures