



Glen Canyon Dam Overlook Viewing Guide

This overlook is located on Scenic View Drive off of Hwy 89. This 10 minute one-way walk is about 200 yards (183 meters) downhill over uneven, sandy and rocky terrain. There is a handrail halfway down the trail. Don't forget your camera. You will see a spectacular view of the dam and the Colorado River. Enjoy!

Safety Comes First

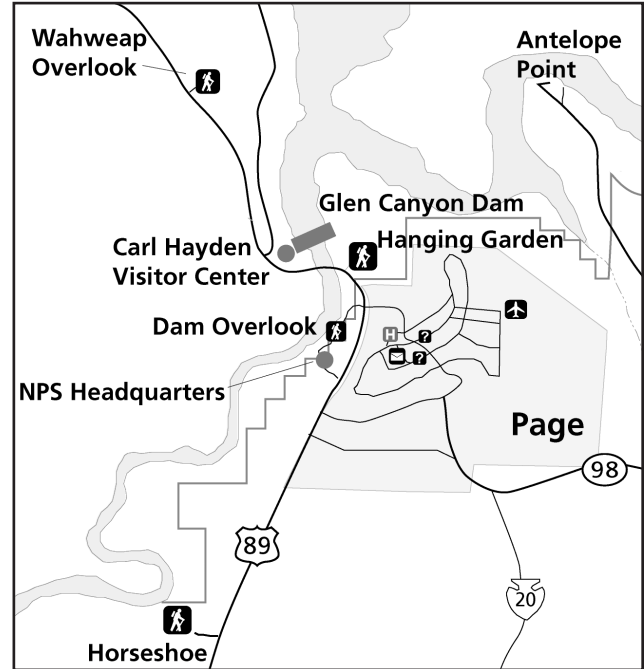
Take plenty of water. Wear sunglasses, sunscreen, and a hat. Avoid hiking in the hottest part of the day. The handrail can be very hot to the touch! Tell a friend where you are hiking and when you will be home. Parts of the trail are very slippery. The handrail only extends halfway down the trail. Watch your footing, and keep track of your children!

Leave No Trace

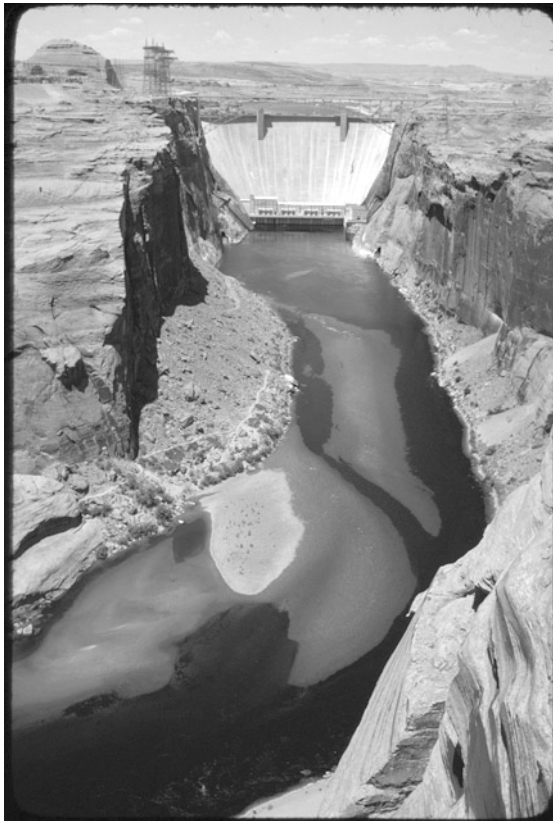
Pack garbage out. Don't disturb any plants or animals you come across. Do not carve on the rocks, graffiti is illegal! Dogs must stay on leashes no longer than six feet.

Map to Glen Canyon Dam Overlook.

From Hwy 89, turn west onto Scenic View Dr at the intersection of Hwy 89, Scenic View Dr, and Lake Powell Blvd (Hwy 89L). Drive for a quarter mile and turn into the "scenic view" parking lot.



Colorado River



Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam

Before you stands Glen Canyon Dam. Below the dam is the Colorado River and behind the dam is Lake Powell. Some consider the Colorado River the lifeblood of the Western United States. The Colorado River begins its journey as a trickle in Estes Park, Colorado. Over its 1420 mile (2,285 km) course it drops about 12,000 feet (3,658 m). From snowcapped mountain headwaters, it courses through desert red rock canyons and fertile green valleys to empty into the Gulf of California. The mighty Colorado wends its way from Colorado through Utah, Arizona, Nevada, California, and the country of Mexico.

In 1869, Civil War veteran, John Wesley Powell, and his crew of 9 men were the first to explore the length of the Colorado River. They loaded 4 boats with food and supplies and left Green River, Wyoming on the first of two expeditions. A little over 100 days later the trip ended at the mouth of the Virgin River in Nevada. John Wesley Powell was the first person to write about and photograph the Colorado River. His subsequent writings piqued public interest and the development of water resources in the West.

Glen Canyon Dam is tasked with releasing 8.23 million acre-feet of water downstream to the lower Colorado River states. 85% of the water is used for farming. 1 acre foot of water equals 325,851 gallons of water and is enough for a family of 4 for one year

The building of Glen Canyon Dam was controversial from the beginning. A dam was originally intended to be built in Echo Canyon, within Dinosaur National Monument (NM). The Sierra Club headed a campaign to save Dinosaur NM from being flooded by the proposed dam. The Sierra Club launched an early media campaign in order to bring public awareness to the monument in hopes of building support to prevent the building of a dam.

What started as a grassroots effort soon became a political victory. Dinosaur NM was saved! The outcome was that the dam would be built at its current location 15 miles above Lees Ferry. This site was chosen because of the quality of the Navajo Sandstone, the narrowness of the canyon, and the height of the canyon walls. By the time people realized the beauty to be lost as Lake Powell filled Glen Canyon, it was too late. Glen Canyon became known as "The Place No One Knew".

Electricity and the City of Page

October 15, 1956 dawned clear and cool. The quiet was electrifying as people waited for the first blast that would signal the beginning of Glen Canyon Dam. The explosion propelled rock 400 feet to the river below, and for the next 8 years the quiet of the canyon would be alive with the sounds of construction.

But - where to put the thousands of workers? All the land surrounding the dam site was either managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or owned by the Navajo Nation. In order to house the workers and their families, the BOR exchanged 24.3 square miles of land on Manson Mesa for a similar sized piece of McCracken Mesa from the Navajo Nation in Southeast Utah and the town of Page, Arizona was born. Page

was named after John C. Page, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Commissioner from 1936-1943. In 1956, the US Government Survey listed this area as the most isolated - with the fewest people and towns in the nation - and Page was the most remote town in the lower 48 states.

People used generators for electricity, and the water often ran red as it was pumped from the muddy Colorado. Today, Page gets some of its electricity from the dam and the city's water runs clear. Glen Canyon Dam supplies electricity to its neighboring states, and to cities as far away as Garland, Texas. When the dam is operating at full capacity it can produce up to 1.3 million kilowatt hours of electricity. This is enough electricity for 1.5 million people!

Construction of the dam was completed in 1964. Even though many people were excited about harnessing water from the Colorado river - the construction of the dam would mean water for crops and electricity - others were saddened by the loss of the beautiful scenery of Glen Canyon. The construction of Glen Canyon Dam prompted people to examine the value of nature versus industrial progress and the compromises involved. The controversy surrounding the building of the dam was the beginning of the environmental movement as we know it today. Many environmental groups would like to return the river to its natural free-flowing state. On the other hand, the water stored in Lake Powell is necessary during periods of drought. Controversy still surrounds the dam today.

Interesting Water Facts

- A clothes washer uses about 50 gallons of water.
- About 2 gallons of water go down the drain when the kitchen faucet is run until the water's cold.
- Flushing a toilet requires 2 to 7 gallons of water.
- 400 gallons of water are recycled through our kidneys each day.
- You can refill an 8 oz. glass of water approximately 15,000 times for the same cost as a six pack of soda pop - and water has no sugar or caffeine.
- The United States and Canada have about one million miles of pipelines and aqueducts, enough to circle the planet 40 times.



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