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RESULTS THIS SUMMER

Lake Lowering Effects Studied

R-J Capital Bureau

RENO — The U. S. Public Health Service has begun a study to determine effects of lowering Lake Mead on the Las Vegas water supply, recreation, fish life and pesticide levels.

Results are expected to be made known in about two months. W. W. "Wally" White, state environmental health bureau chief, stated.

REPRESENTATIVES of seven states attending a conference in Las Vegas two weeks ago on Colorado River pollution passed the resolution urging intervention by the federal health agency.

White expressed fear that cutting the flow of Colorado River water into Lake Mead could possibly make it excessively salty and unpotable.

The level of salts and sulphates in the lake water already approaches maximum tolerable limits recommended by the U.S.P.H., White said.

SECRETARY of Interior Stewart L. Udall ordered the gates on Glen Canyon Dam closed a month ago to allow Lake Powell to be filled. The gates will be reopened in September.

The state health official noted that the level of sulphates in drinking water in Henderson and Boulder City is only a notch below the recommended maximum tolerable limit.

Both cities get virtually all their drinking water from Lake Mead. Las Vegas and North Las Vegas use the lake water to supplement well water.

RECENT tests show Lake Mead water contains 715 particles of salts and solids per million parts, White said.

The maximum tolerable level has been set at 1,000 parts per million by the Public Health Service.

Federal reclamation officials have predicted that Lake Mead will drop three

inches a day to bring the total decline to 40 feet by September.

DURING that period, evaporation alone will lower the water level by a dozen feet making the lake saltier and murkier.

At this point, no one knows the effect of the increasing salt content will have on fish life and reproduction, White said.

Nor is the effect of the receding lake on recreation fully anticipated, White indicated in the resolution.

WHITE SAID the U.S.P.H. was urged to make a determination of the effect of pesticides in Colorado River water on the Las Vegas drinking water supply because of increasing use of the chemicals.

Public Health Service officials in Phoenix and Salt Lake are expected to carry out the study.