BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPEALS BOARD

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY WASHINGTON, D.C.

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ORAL ARGUMENT

IN RE: ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE CO., : NPDES Appeal No. : 19-06 NPDES Permit No. NN0000019

> Thursday, September 3, 2020

Video-Teleconference

The above-entitled matter came on for hearing, pursuant to notice, at 1:30 p.m. EDT

BEFORE:

THE HONORABLE AARON AVILA Environmental Appeals Judge

THE HONORABLE MARY KAY LYNCH Environmental Appeals Judge

THE HONORABLE KATHIE STEIN

Environmental Appeals Judge

APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of the Petitioners: JOHN BARTH, ESQ. Attorney at Law P.O. Box 409 Hygiene, CO 80533 303-774-8868 barthlawoffice@gmail.com On Behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency Region IX: THOMAS HAGLER, ESQ. DUSTIN MINOR, ESQ. Environmental Protection Agency of: Office of Regional Counsel Region IX 75 Hawthorne Street Mail Code ORC-2 San Francisco, CA 94105-3901 415-972-3945 (Hagler) 415-972-3888 hagler.tom@epa.gov minor.dustin@epa.gov and ELISE O'DEA, ESQ. Environmental Protection Agency of: Office of General Counsel 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Mail Code 2366A Washington, D.C. 20460 202-564-4201 202-564-5477 fax odea.elise@epa.gov

APPEARANCES (continued):

On Behalf of the Arizona Public Service Company:

KERRY McGRATH, ESQ. of: Hunton Andrews Kurth, LLP 2200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20037 202-955-1519 kmcgrath@huntonak.com

On Behalf of the Navajo Transitional Energy Company, LLC:

RYEN L. GODWIN, ESQ. of: Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, P.S. 1420 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3400 Seattle, WA 98101 206-622-1711 rgodwin@schwabe.com

ALSO PRESENT:

Eurika Durr, Clerk of the Board Jon Fleuchaus, Senior Counsel, EAB Susan Gardinier Kimball, Senior Counsel, EAB

C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

Presentation	on E	Behalf	of	Petitic	oner	•	••	•	•	•	.14
Presentation	on I	Behalf	of	Region	IX	and	OGO	2.	•	•	.34
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I	5
1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
2	(1:30 p.m.)
3	JUDGE LYNCH: Good afternoon,
4	everyone. This is Judge Lynch, and I want to
5	start by thanking you for participating today.
6	And I trust everyone is doing well. We are going
7	to do another roll call in a moment, so that we
8	will have it on the record.
9	But I first wanted to provide you with
10	a few reminders for today's argument. And I
11	understand you may be somewhat tired of getting
12	instructions, but we think it would be useful to
13	do so.
14	So first, the Judges will keep our
15	cameras and microphones on for the duration of
16	the argument. The presenters will turn on their
17	camera and unmute their microphones when I ask
18	you to begin your portion of the argument.
19	And at the conclusion of your time, if
20	you would please once again turn off your camera
21	and mute your microphones. And the observers
22	will keep their microphones and cameras off for

the duration of the argument.

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2 And if you haven't already done so, if you would disconnect from any VPN connections. 3 So we do have a number of participants and 4 observers today, so let's now begin with a roll 5 call for the record. 6 7 And when I call your organization, if 8 you would please unmute your microphone and state 9 your name and affiliation and your role for 10 today's argument, and by that I mean whether 11 you're a presenter or an observer. So let's 12 start with petitioners, please. 13 MR. BARTH: Good morning. It's John 14 Barth, and I'm a presenter and also counsel for 15 the petitioners. 16 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And if those 17 others who are here for petitioners, if you could 18 identify yourself, and who you're with in 19 particular, and your role today? This is Matthew Gerhart. 20 MR. GERHART: 21 I'm an attorney with Sierra Club, which is one of 22 the petitioners, and I'm an attendee today.

1	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And then
2	Amigos Bravos?
3	MR. ZUPAN: This is Joe Zupan. I'm
4	Executive Director of Amigos Bravos, and a
5	petitioner.
6	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And then San
7	Juan Citizens' Organization?
8	MR. BARTH: Judge Lynch, I saw Mike
9	Eisenfeld's name appear in Skype, but he hasn't
10	been able to communicate. So I don't know
11	whether he's having problems or not, but he may
12	be joining during the presentation.
13	JUDGE LYNCH: All right. And you have
14	the phone number to call for technical
15	difficulties. Correct?
16	MR. BARTH: Yes, and I forwarded that
17	to all of my clients. This is John Barth
18	speaking.
19	JUDGE LYNCH: All right. Yes. Thank
20	you, Mr. Barth. Hopefully he'll be able to
21	become operational. And I believe that's it for
22	petitioners. Then let's hear from Region IX and

First Region IX, please. 1 OGC. 2 MR. HAGLER: Thank you, Your Honor. Tom Hagler with Region IX. I'm a presenter. 3 4 JUDGE LYNCH: All right. Thank you. MR. MINOR: And Dustin Minor, from 5 Region IX as well. I'm a presenter. 6 7 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. 8 MR. SHETH: This is Gary Sheth from 9 Region IX. I'm an observer. 10 JUDGE LYNCH: All right. 11 MS. VONVACANO: Marcela VonVacano, 12 Region IX, observer. 13 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And then, 14 EPA OGC? MS. O'DEA: Hi, Your Honor. 15 This is 16 Elise O'Dea, and I'm a presenter. 17 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And then for 18 APS, please? 19 MS. MCGRATH: Good afternoon, Your 20 Honor. This is Kerry McGrath for the permittee, 21 APS, and I am a presenter, and I am joined in the room by Lauren Bachtel, who is an observer. 22

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1 Thank you. Anyone else JUDGE LYNCH: 2 -- do you have anyone else from APS on? MR. ALLMON: Yes, this is Jeff Allmon. 3 4 JUDGE LYNCH: Okay. Thank you. And 5 then, for NTEC? This is Ryen Godwin, 6 MR. GODWIN: 7 counsel for the Navajo Transitional Energy 8 Company, as amicus. We are here observing. And 9 nobody else is with me. Thank you. And then if 10 JUDGE LYNCH: the court reporter could identify himself? 11 12 MR. WOJACK: This is Sam Wojack, the 13 court reporter. 14 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And then, 15 for the Board, if the clerk could identify herself for the record? 16 17 MS. DURR: Eurika Durr, clerk of the 18 Board. 19 Thank you. And then we JUDGE LYNCH: 20 have two senior counsel to the Board on today, 21 and if you could identify yourselves, starting with Ms. Kimball? 22

1	MS. KIMBALL: This is Susan Gardinier
2	Kimball of the Environmental Appeals Board.
3	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.
4	MR. FLEUCHAUS: Jon Fleuchaus, also of
5	the Environmental Appeals Board.
6	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And we have
7	outstanding technical assistance today, and so,
8	Ihab Mahmoud, if you could just identify yourself
9	for the record?
10	MR. MAHMOUD: Yes, this is Ihab
11	Mahmoud, and I'm here for tech support.
12	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And then we
13	have two observers from the law firm of Beveridge
14	& Diamond, and if you could each identify
15	yourselves, that would be helpful.
16	MR. STILTON: Good afternoon, Judge
17	Lynch, this is Andrew Stilton from Beveridge &
18	Diamond.
19	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.
20	MR. DAVIS: Good afternoon, Your
21	Honor. It's Richard Davis from Beveridge &
22	Diamond.

1	JUDGE LYNCH: Well, thank you,
2	everyone, for that. I want to let you know that
3	this is the second time the Environmental Appeals
4	Board is conducting an oral argument by Skype.
5	And on behalf of the Board, I'd like
6	to say thank you for working with us to make this
7	happen, given the current circumstances. This is
8	the first time we have participants using visual
9	aids, and in advance I'd like to commend you for
10	your skill in that regard.
11	And I'd also like to thank you for
12	submitting those visual aids in advance. That
13	way, we'll have a backup system, if you will. We
14	anticipate things will go smoothly, but if we do
15	run into any technical difficulties, we'll deal
16	with it.
17	And as the clerk has already
18	announced, the Environmental Appeals Board is
19	hearing oral argument today on a petition for
20	review of a Clean Water Act permit that Region IX
21	issued to the Arizona Public Service Company for
22	the Four Corners Power Plant.

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1	The petitioners are the Diné Citizens
2	Against Ruining the Environment, the San Juan
3	Citizens' Alliance, Amigos Bravos, the Center for
4	Biological Diversity, and the Sierra Club.
5	In today's argument, we'll proceed as
6	outlined in the Board's July 9th, 2020, order.
7	We will hear first from petitioners, then EPA
8	Region IX, and OGC, then APS, and finally the
9	petitioners, if they decide to reserve time for
10	rebuttal. And they may reserve up to ten minutes
11	of the allocated time for rebuttal.
12	The Board has allotted 60 minutes for
13	argument, as follows. The petitioners for 30
14	minutes and, Mr. Barth, when you begin your
15	argument, if you would please let us know if you
16	want to reserve any rebuttal time. And then
17	Region IX and OCG combined, 20 minutes, and APS,
18	ten minutes.
19	So, on behalf of the Board, I want to
20	express that we very much appreciate all the time
21	and effort each of you has expended to date in
22	connection with the briefing on the petition and

preparing for and participating in this oral argument.

Oral argument is an important 3 4 opportunity for you to explain your contentions 5 and the issues, in this case. It's also an opportunity for the Judges to explore with you 6 7 the contours of your arguments and the issues. 8 You should assume that we've read the 9 briefs and the record in this case, and therefore we're likely to ask questions that are going to 10 assist us in our deliberations. 11 12 You should not assume that the Judges 13 have made up their minds about any of the issues 14 in a case, but instead, we're really using this as an opportunity to listen, and to understand 15 16 your position, and to probe the legal and the 17 record support on which the Region based its 18 permitting decision in this case. 19 So as the clerk has stated, there's no 20 recording of any kind allowed. The court 21 reporter will be transcribing the oral argument, and a transcript of the argument will be posted 22

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to the docket in this matter. So we'll now
 proceed with oral argument.

And, again, if you're not presenting 3 oral argument, please turn off your video and 4 5 mute your microphone. And also, just please be aware, we do not have a timer that everyone can 6 7 see, but the clerk of the Board will verbally 8 inform you when you have five minutes remaining 9 in your allotted time, and also when your time has expired. 10 11 Does anyone have any questions? 12 All right. So now, counsel for 13 petitioner, Mr. Barth, if you could please 14 proceed, and let us know if you want to reserve rebuttal time. 15 16 MR. BARTH: Good afternoon. I'm John 17 Barth, counsel for the petitioners. Thank you 18 for granting our request for oral argument and 19 considering our petition for review. Petitioners 20 are reserving ten minutes for rebuttal. 21 As noted in our briefing, EPA's final

permit is based on multiple clear errors of law

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and fact that must be corrected by the Board. My presentation today will focus on three main issues.

First, why EPA committed clear error 4 5 in its Reasonable Potential, RP, analysis, and in setting effluent limitations for temperature and 6 7 total dissolved solids from Outfall 001. Second, 8 why EPA committed clear error in finding that 9 Morgan Lake is not a Water of the United States. And three, why EPA committed clear 10 error in concluding that the Four Corners Power 11 12 Plant cooling system is a, quote, closed-cycle 13 recirculating system. We are seeking the 14 following relief from the Board.

First, we ask that the Board issue a decision finding that the EPA committed clear error on the issues in our petition. Second, we ask that the Board vacate EPA's final permit and remand it back to EPA to correct the errors, consistent with the Board's opinion. Third, we ask that EPA -- given that

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EPA last issued a final and effective permit in

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2001 for this facility, we ask that the Board 1 2 impose a tight remand schedule requiring EPA to issue a revised draft permit within three months, 3 and a revised final permit within six months of 4 the Board's order. 5 This schedule is necessary, because as 6 7 you may remember, petitioners had to sue in 8 federal court to force EPA to issue a draft and 9 final permit. If you don't impose a schedule, it will likely lead to more litigation over the 10 timing of the permit reissuance. 11 12 Finally, we ask that the Board deny 13 any future request by EPA for a voluntary remand 14 of this permit. The Board previously granted EPA's request for a voluntary remand of this 15 16 permit only to have EPA issue a revised final 17 permit containing some of the same errors in the 18 previous permit. 19 Before I begin, I want to inform the Board that petitioners have submitted four 20 21 argument exhibits. Let me know if you'd like to 22 review any of these exhibits during my

I'm now going to just briefly 1 presentation. 2 describe what these exhibits are. Exhibit 1 is a map, with the layout of 3 4 the Four Corners Power Plant facility, the receiving waters, and other features. It does 5 contain color highlighting, which is mine, but 6 7 otherwise, the document is from the 8 Administrative Record. 9 Exhibit 2 is a map of some relevant 10 Navajo Nation EPA surface water sampling sites, 11 and their relationship to the receiving waters. 12 This document is not in the Administrative 13 Record. However, at this time, I'm not seeking to introduce it into the Administrative Record. 14 Instead, I'm only offering it as a 15 16 demonstrative exhibit, in the event the Board 17 would like to see the relationship of these 18 surface water monitoring sites to the receiving 19 waters. Exhibit 3 is a list and narrative 20 21 description of the location of the Navajo Nation surface water monitoring sites. And this is 22

contained in Administrative Record -- and I'll 1 2 abbreviate, AR -- Number 27-B, which is that Navajo Nation surface water monitoring data. 3 Exhibits 4 and 5 are EPA's approved 4 5 2007 Navajo Nation water quality standards. Exhibit 4 is a table showing that No Name Wash, 6 7 the Chaco River, the San Juan River are all 8 designated Waters of the Navajo Nation, with 9 water quality classifications and standards. All of these standards have been 10 approved by EPA. Exhibit 5 is the Navajo Nation 11 12 water quality standard for temperature that's 13 applicable to all waters on the Navajo Nation, 14 and also approved by EPA. Exhibit 6 is an excerpt from the site 15 16 lease between the Navajo Nation and the power 17 plant operators, containing a total dissolved 18 solids, or TDS, water quality standard for wastewater discharged into the San Juan River 19 20 from the power plant. 21 Again, all of these are in the Administrative Record, except for Exhibit 2. 22

1	I'll now turn to the three main issues I
2	identified in my introduction.
3	First, I'll discuss why EPA committed
4	clear error in its Reasonable Potential analysis,
5	and in setting effluent limitations for
6	temperature and TDS from Outfall 001, which is
7	the outfall from Morgan Lake to downstream
8	receiving waters No Name Wash, the Chaco River,
9	and the San Juan River.
10	JUDGE AVILA: Mr. Barth? Before you
11	get there, I think I need a kind of common
12	ground. What definition what rule defining
13	the Waters of the United States do you think
14	applies here, and why?
15	MR. BARTH: Well, as we all know,
16	there have been three different Waters of the
17	United States rules issued since the final
18	permit.
19	So what I am going to suggest to the
20	Board, given the fact that this permit has never
21	been effective, and has been stayed the entire
22	time, we are requesting that the Board remand

this to EPA to apply the new April 2020 rule to
 this permit.

As you know, the existing permit's 3 been in effect for 20 years. This one will be in 4 5 effect for five years. So I think it's important 6 to get it -- to have EPA apply the new rule, 7 which to date it has not done. However, it 8 doesn't really matter which of the three rules 9 you apply. All of them would require Morgan Lake 10 11 to be considered a Water of the United States, 12 because it impounds jurisdictional waters from 13 the San Juan River, and has a significant 14 hydrologic connection to the San Juan River, 15 which is a traditional navigable water. 16 So no matter which one you apply, you It's a Water of the 17 reach the same conclusion. 18 United States. 19 JUDGE LYNCH: So Mr. Barth, you're 20 saying -- your position is that if the water is a 21 traditional navigable water, it cannot fall under

22 the exemption?

That's correct. 1 MR. BARTH: The 2 purpose of the Clean Water Act is to interpret these provisions broadly, not narrowly. 3 The 4 exceptions to the Clean Water Act are what should 5 be interpreted narrowly. And once a Water of the United States 6 7 is triggered, and it's a navigable water, it is 8 not removed from jurisdiction by a narrower 9 exception. And there's nothing contained in the 10 waste treatment system exception that says even 11 if it's a navigable water, it still can comply 12 with the waste treatment system exception. 13 JUDGE STEIN: Can I interrupt you for 14 a moment, Mr. Barth? 15 MR. BARTH: Sure. 16 JUDGE STEIN: Because the 2015 17 definition says, the following are not Waters of 18 the United States, even where they otherwise meet 19 the terms of Paragraphs 1(iv) through (viii) of 20 this definition. And under that is the waste 21 treatment systems exclusion. 22 So why doesn't -- why shouldn't we

reject your argument and determine that if we 1 2 think that the 2015 definition applies, and if we think that it meets the waste treatment systems 3 exclusion, why shouldn't our decision be 4 controlled by that? 5 MR. BARTH: I believe -- my 6 recollection is Section 40 CFR 122.2 says that if 7 8 you have impoundments of jurisdictional waters, 9 it is a Water of the United States. And remember that this facility has been in effect and been 10 11 operational for over 50 years. 12 EPA has never applied the waste 13 treatment system exclusion to this body of water. 14 It has always treated it as a receiving water. The Navajo Mine coal mine NPDES permit, issued by 15 EPA, treats it as a receiving water, not as a 16 17 Water of the United States. 18 And in fact in 2018, when EPA issued 19 its draft permit, it stated in its response to 20 comments, quote, we are not applying the waste 21 treatment system exception to Morgan Lake. So this is the first time in the 50-year history of 22

this facility that EPA has ever tried to apply 1 2 that exception to the facility. 3 JUDGE LYNCH: So Mr. Barth, are you 4 saying that the status of a water body can never 5 change? It could change if there 6 MR. BARTH: was a physical change, but there's nothing in the 7 8 record that says there's been any physical change 9 to this water body to isolate it from navigable 10 waters, or to otherwise change its status. 11 So if in, let's say, JUDGE LYNCH: 12 1960, before the Clean Water Act, the facility 13 had a body of water that was a pond or a pool, on 14 their property, and then after the Clean Water Act is enacted, they incorporated that body of 15 16 water in a Clean Water Act permit, and regulated 17 the discharges from it, that would have no impact 18 on the status of that water body? 19 MR. BARTH: I'm not sure I understand 20 your question. You know, we have a water body 21 here. Let's look at the one that's at issue. 22 It's a large lake. It's been identified by the

Navajo Nation in the water quality standards as a
 Water of the Navajo Nation.

3 It has water quality standards and
4 classifications. Those have not been approved by
5 EPA, that's the one exception to the Navajo
6 Nation 2007 water quality standards.

7 The body of water is actually used --8 there's primary physical contact, there's 9 secondary physical contact. There's aquatic life 10 criteria, there's boating, there's fishing, 11 there's hydrologic connection. And nothing has 12 changed since this body of water came into 13 existence.

And let me just add, as well, you'll remember from our briefing that EPA's initial finding was that Morgan Lake was created by the damming of a jurisdictional water on the Navajo Nation. So --

JUDGE LYNCH: So the provision -excuse me. So the provision that Judge Stein quoted from the 2015 definition of Waters of the United States says, the following are not waters

of the United States, even if they otherwise meet 1 2 the terms of Paragraphs 1(iv) through (viii) of this definition. What does that mean to you, 3 4 then? 5 Well, again, you know, MR. BARTH: what I've seen in the 40 CFR Part 122, WOTUS 6 7 rule, says that if you're impounding 8 jurisdictional waters --9 JUDGE LYNCH: Which one are you reading from? 10 11 MR. BARTH: 2015. 12 JUDGE STEIN: But Mr. Barth, isn't there a note that is in the 2015 version that 13 14 basically says that as of 1980 EPA suspended that last sentence relating to impoundments? 15 16 MR. BARTH: So that rule, the 17 Perciasepe memo, or wherever it -- I'm sorry if 18 I'm torturing its name. 19 JUDGE STEIN: Perciasepe. I'm not 20 referring to the memo, I'm referring to the note 21 that's in the federal regulation. The 1980 regulation. 22 JUDGE LYNCH:

MR. BARTH: The definition is --1 2 JUDGE LYNCH: The July 21st, 1980 regulation, suspended. 3 So the definition of 4 MR. BARTH: 5 cooling water was removed, but --JUDGE LYNCH: That was in 1982. 6 7 MR. BARTH: Right, but the --8 Judge Stein's asking JUDGE LYNCH: 9 about 1980. 10 MR. BARTH: Okay. 11 The 1980 rulemaking. JUDGE LYNCH: 12 MR. BARTH: Yeah, I'm sorry. I'm not 13 14 JUDGE LYNCH: July 21, 1980. 15 MR. BARTH: -- familiar with the 16 distinction between the two. 17 JUDGE STEIN: I'm just asking about 18 the language, because in the version of the 19 federal register that I have, or the regulations, 20 the question that I'm asking relates to the fact 21 that I think that the language that you're 22 relating to concerning impoundments was suspended

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2	So what I'm looking at is whether or
3	not this facility meets the definition of the
4	waste treatment system, because I don't think the
5	language you're pointing to is in effect.
6	MR. BARTH: Okay. Well, let me go
7	back to why it's not a waste treatment system.
8	Okay? So first of all, there's no evidence in
9	the record that this was designed to treat
10	pollutants before they're discharged in the
11	receiving waters.
12	There's nothing in the record and
13	let's look at this is important. Let's look
14	at EPA's let's look at the timeline here
15	first. EPA last issued this permit in 2001.
16	Since that time, the Navajo Nation has adopted
17	water quality standards, including a water
18	quality standard for temperature. Okay?
19	This will be the first time that the
20	agency's ever had to consider whether that
21	temperature requirement meets the water quality
22	standard. The effluent limit in the current

permit allows them to discharge between 90 and 95
 degrees into receiving waters.

EPA has never evaluated whether that 3 4 complies with water quality standards. The waste 5 treatment exception assumes that the system was not designed to meet water quality standards. 6 7 But we have no evidence in the record 8 here that this system was designed to meet that 9 water quality standard. And in fact it doesn't meet that standard. 10 11 JUDGE AVILA: When you say, designed 12 to meet that water quality standard, are you 13 talking about the Navajo Nation's water quality 14 standard from Morgan Lake? MR. BARTH: No, the water quality 15 16 standard for all receiving waters for 17 temperature, which is 90 -- right. And that 18 water quality standard says you may not increase 19 the ambient temperature downstream more than five 20 degrees for warm water, and two degrees for cold 21 water. EPA's never evaluated whether that 22

1	effluent limit in the final permit meets that
2	standard. In fact, what they said is there's no
3	data to make that assessment, and that
4	MS. DURR: Five minutes.
5	MR. BARTH: and that is a clear
6	error of fact. In AR 27-B, EPA had, at the time
7	it issued this permit, Navajo Nation water
8	quality data for the downstream receiving waters.
9	EPA did not apply that data in its
10	Reasonable Potential analysis, nor did they
11	provide any kind of rationale for why Morgan
12	Lake, the discharge from Morgan Lake, should
13	qualify as a waste treatment system, because it
14	complies with water quality standards downstream.
15	There's just, you know, this is
16	JUDGE LYNCH: Which AR number is that,
17	Mr. Barth? This is Judge Lynch. What AR number
18	are you referring to?
19	MR. BARTH: AR 27-B. It's a
20	JUDGE LYNCH: This is the argument you
21	were making in Footnote 57 on Page 17 of your
22	reply brief?

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1	MR. BARTH: Well, we've made this
2	argument that EPA needs to
3	JUDGE LYNCH: No, this specific
4	argument, based on this data. AR 27-B.
5	MR. BARTH: AR 27-B is Navajo Nation
6	water quality data that EPA should have
7	considered in its temperature Reasonable
8	Potential analysis and in its TDS Reasonable
9	Potential analysis.
10	JUDGE LYNCH: My question about it is
11	that when I was reviewing the record in this case
12	
13	MR. BARTH: Yes.
14	JUDGE LYNCH: I don't see any
15	reference to that, or that argument, in your
16	comments on the permit.
17	MR. BARTH: Okay. I can tell you
18	where that is.
19	JUDGE LYNCH: The first time I see
20	this is in your reply brief.
21	MR. BARTH: So it's in our comment
22	letter, first of all, on the draft permit, which

1	is AR 20.1.a, at Page 39 and 40. It's also in
2	our petition for review on Page 15, Pages 34
3	through 35, 39, 40, 41, and 42.
4	And in fact we even reproduced the
5	temperature standard on Page 40 of our petition.
6	It's also in EPA's response to comments, which is
7	AR Number 26-D
8	JUDGE LYNCH: Not these specific
9	stations that you're talking about. This
10	particular argument, the first time it shows up
11	is here in Footnote 57.
12	MR. BARTH: I think if you look at
13	what I was just referring to, you'll see that our
14	argument is that EPA needs to conduct a
15	Reasonable Potential analysis relying on
16	downstream receiving water data. So that data is
17	
18	JUDGE LYNCH: I understand that.
19	That's right.
20	MR. BARTH: That data exists. EPA
21	said it did not exist at the time it issued its
22	permit. But remember, EPA relied on the same

Navajo Nation data in issuing its Reasonable 1 2 Potential analysis for mercury and selenium, but then said the data didn't exist when it did its 3 4 Reasonable Potential analysis for temperature and 5 TDS. In terms of the -- I 6 JUDGE LYNCH: 7 have one question about the effluent limits. 8 MR. BARTH: Yes. JUDGE LYNCH: Are the effluent limits 9 in the 2019 permit that's before us the same as 10 11 those in the 2001 permit? I have the 2001 in 12 front of me. 13 MR. BARTH: Yes, they largely are the 14 But remember, when EPA issued that permit, same. it had not approved water quality standards for 15 16 the Navajo Nation. 17 JUDGE LYNCH: Yes, that wasn't my 18 question. I don't see a difference here, so --19 MR. BARTH: But there's no -- there's 20 also nothing in the record from the 2001 permit. 21 There's no Reasonable Potential analysis in the 2001 permit saying that their temperature 22

<pre>1 effluent limit complies with downstream qualit 2 standards. 3 (Simultaneous speaking.)</pre>	-
3 (Simultaneous speaking.)	2
)
)
4 JUDGE LYNCH: not answering the	
5 right question about the effluent limits, so	-
6 MR. BARTH: So I want to make w	re've
7 talked a bit about the Reasonable Potential	
8 analysis and the water quality effluent limits	· ,
9 but I'd like to talk just briefly in the time	
10 that I have left is why EPA's decision that the	le
11 Four Corners Power Plant cooling system is a	
12 closed-cycle recirculating system is clear er	or.
13 If you look at the 2001 permit and	L
14 fact sheet for that permit, it applies 40 CFR	
15 423.11(g) for once-through cooling water, which	!h
16 it says is passed through the main cooling	
17 condensers in a one or two passes	
18 MS. DURR: Time.	
19 MR. BARTH: process of removing	г
20 heat. So in the 2001 permit and in the current	ıt
21 permit	
22 JUDGE LYNCH: You could just in	you

1	would just finish your point, that would be
2	MR. BARTH: So in both the 2001 permit
3	and the current permit, they are applying once-
4	through cooling water effluent limitation
5	guidelines for discharges into the lake, but then
6	they turn around and say it's not once-through
7	cooling water for purposes of Section 316(b) of
8	the Clean Water Act.
9	They can't have it both ways. They've
10	already determined that it's once-through cooling
11	water from a regulatory standpoint. They need to
12	live with that same finding for Section 316(b) of
13	the Clean Water Act.
14	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you, Mr. Barth.
15	All right. If EPA Region IX and OGC could
16	proceed, but if you would let us know who is
17	addressing what issues in your argument?
18	MR. HAGLER: I'm sorry, Your Honor, my
19	screen was getting confused between the Skype
20	function and the exhibit that I was trying to put
21	up.
22	Tom Hagler with EPA Region IX. With

1	me today are Ms. O'Dea from OGC, and Mr. Minor,
2	also from Region IX. I think we'd probably like
3	to mainly leave time available for your
4	questions, because I know you probably have some.
5	And so I might abbreviate some of my
6	intended presentation, but our proposal is and
7	was to give you a short overview of the facility
8	and of how the permit actually works, and then
9	turn it over to Ms. O'Dea to discuss WOTUS and
10	waste treatment exemptions, and to Mr. Minor to
11	discuss the ELGs and 316(b) and then if we still
12	have time, come back to me for the rest of the
13	issues.
14	And if we don't get to the rest of the
15	issues, we will probably be willing to submit our
16	briefs on those. So I'll proceed until
17	JUDGE LYNCH: All right.
18	MR. HAGLER: until you have a
19	question. I'm going to work off of the exhibit
20	that is a map of the whole facility. I think I
21	know how to do this, but you do have this in your
22	stack.

1 JUDGE LYNCH: Yes. Thank you. 2 MR. HAGLER: Let's see. JUDGE LYNCH: I can't help you. 3 4 MS. O'DEA: Mr. Hagler, I just wanted 5 to note that your video's not on. MR. HAGLER: It takes a second. 6 Let 7 me know when it's on, if it shows up. Hold on. 8 This is very slow. Now it says It's not on. 9 it's sharing. Let me go through the process Share window. 10 again. 11 JUDGE LYNCH: There may be a delay. 12 MR. HAGLER: Select the window. Share the window. 13 14 JUDGE LYNCH: There we go. Wait eight seconds. 15 MR. HAGLER: A11 16 right. And I apologize, this is, on your screen, 17 what we found in our dry run that this is a very 18 small graphic, and you may just want to work off 19 the hard copy, if you have one there. 20 Anyway, this is the plant site. This 21 is the San Juan River at the top of the screen. 22 It goes downstream from your right to your left.

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The Chaco River is on the bottom left of your screen, goes downstream this direction, up, and the confluence is a little bit off your screen up 4 there at the top left.

5 The plant was put there in around --6 it was built in the 50s. It started operations around 1961, 1962. 7 It was installed on this 8 plateau between the two rivers, and they have 9 this lake that is used as the cooling pond for the boilers, and the only water that's in that 10 11 Morgan Lake is water that's pumped up from the 12 San Juan River.

13 We have a pumping station here, it 14 goes through a pipeline about two miles into the lake, here at Morgan Lake. The plant itself 15 16 cycles about 1.7 billion, with a b, gallons of 17 water daily between the cooling pond and the 18 plant.

19 The pumping plant brings in from Morgan Lake an average of around 14 million 20 21 gallons daily, about one percent of the amount 22 that's cycled in and out of here. There's also

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one other feature -- and then I'm going to make
 this bigger, now.

I'm going to make this bigger now, so you can see better. Maybe I'll go a little bigger. What I'm trying to display here is -this is the dam. There is a flume in the bottom of the dam.

8 And for regulation purposes -- the way 9 the lake is regulated is either by adding more water from the San Juan to top it off, or by 10 discharging some water through this flume out 11 into No Name Wash, which is this wash right here, 12 13 which they do approximately, on average, four 14 days a week, and they average about four million gallons per day, discharging out of this flume. 15

A couple other features and then I'm going to zero in on the plant itself. These are the ash ponds that have been used over the 60 years this has been here. The only one currently still in operation, I believe, is this one at the bottom right, in blue.

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And that one's scheduled to be closed,

I believe, in October of this year. Another
 feature that we will talk about is our seeps, and
 these were seeps that were along the canyon wall
 roughly here. Those are south seeps, and I
 believe the other ones are right about there, on
 the north seeps.

7 I'm going to move up and go to the 8 black and white picture and try to blow it up a 9 little bit, so you can actually see it. So this 10 is the plant facility itself. The permit is 11 pretty darn simple.

12 We've got the one outfall, the one formal outfall, which is on the dam that I just 13 14 showed you. And we have three internal outfalls. Internal outfalls, you're allowed to use them 15 16 when you find that your dilution is so great that 17 it doesn't really -- it's impractical to actually 18 measure something if you can measure it at the 19 formal outfall, so you're allowed to go upstream 20 into the plant and identify internal outfalls. 21 We have two that are operational. We have three that are permitted. One is not in 22

1	use. One of them is for units 4 and 5, which are
2	the only two boilers in use right now. That is
3	internal outfall 001A, and then another outfall,
4	01E, is for the combined waste treatment plant.
5	Those two combine in the discharge
6	canal, and are sent over to Morgan Lake, so the
7	discharge from those two internal outfalls
8	actually goes into Morgan Lake somewhere around
9	here.
10	And I think I showed you the rest of
11	the permit. I think we've been through it. The
12	first permit was written in 1983, additional ones
13	in 1988, 1993, 2001. I'm going to turn my no.
14	Yes. I think I will turn off my map.
15	And I think at that point, that's
16	enough of an overview that I'm going to turn it
17	over to
18	JUDGE LYNCH: Can I ask you a
19	question? This is Judge Lynch.
20	MR. HAGLER: Yes.
21	JUDGE LYNCH: Based on the how did
22	you treat Morgan Lake in the 2001 permit, in

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1 terms of whether or not it was a Water of the US, 2 or an exempt waste treatment system? I'm going to hand off 3 MR. HAGLER: 4 that question to Ms. O'Dea --5 JUDGE LYNCH: Okay. -- if I may. 6 MR. HAGLER: 7 JUDGE LYNCH: Yes. 8 May I do that? MR. HAGLER: 9 JUDGE LYNCH: Sure. Yes. 10 MR. HAGLER: I'm going to turn this 11 off, so that we can actually do that. Let me get rid of this. I'm trying to find a way to turn 12 13 myself off. Up here, I believe. Stop sharing. 14 And --15 MS. O'DEA: Good afternoon, Your This is Elise O'Dea. Can you hear and 16 Honor. 17 see me? 18 JUDGE LYNCH: Yes. Thank you. 19 MS. O'DEA: Hi. So to answer your 20 question, Judge Lynch, the permits for this 21 facility have consistently regulated Morgan Lake not as a Water of the United States. 22

1	So in the 2001 permit, to answer your
2	question directly, we regulated the final point
3	of discharge from Morgan Lake to downstream
4	jurisdictional waters.
5	And then as Tom explained, we had also
6	internal outfalls in the 2001 permit, given the
7	issue of dilution and monitoring parameters of
8	effluent limits at the final point of discharge
9	from Morgan Lake to the downstream jurisdictional
10	waters.
11	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. And
12	JUDGE AVILA: Just, could I follow up
13	on that, Judge Lynch?
14	JUDGE LYNCH: Sure.
15	JUDGE AVILA: Just to be so was it
16	part did you conclude that it was subject to
17	the waste treatment system exclusion in 2001?
18	MS. O'DEA: So the interesting thing
19	about the waste treatment system exclusion, being
20	completely blunt with you all, is the exclusion
21	is not something that the agency has consistently
22	stated that it is relying on in its permits. And

that's provided for in the Grumbles 2006 1 2 Memorandum. That's in the record at AR 14-E. 3 And 4 there -- the guidance provided in that memo is 5 that we do not need to explicitly state that we're relying on the exclusion. 6 7 And in fact it's quite common that 8 permits, where the waste treatment system is just 9 incorporated as a part of treating the discharges, do not explicitly state that that 10 11 body of water is acting as a waste treatment 12 system. All that's required is that we ensure 13 14 that the discharges are indeed being treated by 15 that system to meet the effluent limits under the 16 permit. 17 JUDGE AVILA: And if I wanted, I 18 guess, the evidence that it would be, even though 19 it wasn't explicitly said, a waste treatment system exclusion, is the fact that there were 20 21 internal outfalls versus the -- I think you 22 called it the final point outfall?

1	That is consistent with it being a
2	waste treatment system. Right?
3	MS. O'DEA: Absolutely. It would be
4	inconsistent with the agency's practice to
5	regulate a discharge from one WOTUS to another.
6	So the fact that the structure of the permit has
7	consistently been that we have these internal
8	outfalls, but then the final point of discharge
9	that we consider when we are evaluating whether
10	the permit limits have been met is that discharge
11	point from Morgan Lake to the downstream
12	jurisdictional waters.
13	JUDGE AVILA: Thank you.
14	JUDGE STEIN: So let me ask you a
15	question, and I perhaps have not fully understood
16	the record, but I thought that in the 2018
17	permit, you declined to take a position on the
18	waste treatment exclusion. And now you have
19	taken a position.
20	So how is that consistent with what
21	you just told us, that it's always been subject
22	to the exclusion?

MS. O'DEA: Well, Your Honor, you are 1 2 correct that in the 2018 permit Region IX said that it was not relying on the exclusion, and 3 instead evaluated that the lake was not a Water 4 5 of the United States, which in essence has the same practical effect as not regulating that body 6 7 of water. 8 However, we did not disavow that the 9 exclusion could apply, and upon a further analysis in the 2019 permit, following our 10 withdrawal of the 2018 permit, we found that this 11 body of water does indeed fall squarely within 12 13 the exclusion, and that's the appropriate determination to make for this lake. 14 I had a question, Ms. 15 JUDGE LYNCH: 16 O'Dea. If a water body is otherwise a 17 jurisdictional water, could it still fall under 18 the exemption? 19 When it comes to the MS. O'DEA: Yes. 20 waste treatment system exclusion, whether we're 21 looking at the 2015 rule, which applied to this 22 permit, or the 1980s regulations, and

1 particularly under the new rule, the Navigable 2 Waters Protection Rule, it is irrelevant whether 3 the body of water could otherwise fall within a 4 jurisdictional category. 5 The Perciasepe memo in particular --6 which you all have mentioned, so I know that 7 you're aware of it -- makes that clear that the

8 regions have the discretion to find that the 9 exclusion applies to cooling ponds in particular, 10 regardless of uses of those ponds that may 11 indicate that they could be considered an 12 otherwise jurisdictional water.

JUDGE LYNCH: Do you have to first undertake an analysis of whether it's a jurisdictional water body?

MS. O'DEA: Under the guidance in the Perciasepe memo, no. The memo lends the regions the flexibility to decide on a case-by-case basis whether to apply a waste treatment system exclusion analysis or to apply a WOTUS jurisdictional determination.

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And that was as a result -- I'm sure

1	you're aware of this, but just to refresh your
2	memories of the ambiguity that was introduced
3	given the deletion of the parenthetical about
4	cooling ponds from the WOTUS definition in 1982.
5	JUDGE AVILA: So can I were you
6	done, Judge Lynch? I'm sorry.
7	JUDGE LYNCH: Yes. I have another
8	question, but go ahead with yours.
9	JUDGE AVILA: I just the waste
10	treatment system exclusion applies to, among
11	other things, treatment ponds or lagoons that
12	are, quote, designed to meet the requirements of
13	the Clean Water Act.
14	What do you understand the term,
15	designed to meet the requirements of the Clean
16	Water Act to mean in this context? I'm kind of
17	struggling with what work that does.
18	MS. O'DEA: It's a fair question, Your
19	Honor. And hopefully in the new revised
20	definition of WOTUS we've tried to make that more
21	clear.
22	But proceeding under the 2015 rule,

which in essence just continues the 80s version
of the exclusion, both courts including the 9th
Circuit and the Agency have considered that
language to be interpreted as meaning that the
system is treating discharges such that they will
meet Clean Water Act requirements, in this case
Section 402 permit requirements.

8 So in essence, to break it down, you 9 need to have a system that is actually providing treatment, so here this cooling pond is 10 11 dissipating waste heat, so it's providing 12 treatment, and it needs to be designed to meet 13 the requirements of the Clean Water Act, meaning 14 that it is treating water, such that the 15 discharges are complying with these permit 16 requirements.

JUDGE AVILA: I don't know if this is possible, but could you have a cooling pond that doesn't discharge to a Water of the US? And then how would you apply --MS. O'DEA: There are isolated -- I'm relatively certain that there are isolated

cooling ponds that do not have -- that don't 1 2 require a NPDES permit for discharges from them, in which case this question wouldn't arise. 3 4 JUDGE AVILA: Okay. 5 JUDGE LYNCH: And then my other 6 question I had for you - this is Judge Lynch -was whether the effluent standards limits in the 7 2019 permit are the same as those in the 2001 8 9 permit. That is my understanding, 10 MS. O'DEA: 11 although admittedly, being in headquarters and 12 not one of the regional attorneys, I welcome Mr. 13 Minor or Mr. Hagler to correct me if I am wrong. 14 But that's my understanding. JUDGE LYNCH: Can one of them answer 15 16 my question? I'm looking at the 2001 permit and I don't see a difference, but I'm asking because 17 18 I want to confirm my reading. 19 I'm sorry. MR. HAGLER: This is Tom 20 Hagler. What was the question here? 21 Specifically what were you looking for in the --22 JUDGE LYNCH: Whether the effluent

1	limits in the 2019 permit are the same as those
2	in the 2001 permit?
3	MS. O'DEA: Your Honor, flipping
4	through my notes, I can confirm that that's the
5	case.
6	MR. HAGLER: Yes, that is my
7	understanding, too. We were relying on the old
8	effluent limitation guidelines numbers
9	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.
10	MR. HAGLER: which are actually
11	very old.
12	JUDGE LYNCH: Thanks. Thank you. So
13	if you want to proceed with your argument, Region
14	IX, and/or OGC, however you divided it up?
15	MS. O'DEA: Well, Your Honor, I
16	realize we've taken a lot of time on the WOTUS
17	waste treatment system exclusion issues, so I do
18	want to defer to my colleagues, unless there are
19	any more question from the Board on those issues.
20	JUDGE LYNCH: I don't have any. Judge
21	Stein or Judge Avila?
22	JUDGE STEIN: Not on those issues, but

I do have a question about the effluent 1 2 limitation guidelines and whether the 1982 rule is what is in effect as a result of the Fifth 3 Circuit decision or not. 4 I'm interested in OGC's 5 slash Region's view of that. Your Honor, this is Tom 6 MR. HAGLER: 7 Hagler. That would be addressed by Mr. Minor. 8 Hello. Can you all hear MR. MINOR: 9 me and see me? I tried to get in and answer the previous question about the permit limits and I 10 was having technical difficulties. 11 12 JUDGE LYNCH: You're fine now. 13 MR. HAGLER: Yes, you're fine. 14 MR. MINOR: Okay, great. This is 15 Dustin Minor from EPA Region IX and just give me 16 one moment, because I've lost all visual here. Ι 17 apologize. 18 JUDGE LYNCH: It's fine. 19 JUDGE STEIN: Yes, we can see you. 20 MR. MINOR: Okay, now I can see you 21 all. I can't see myself, but that's okay. Yes, and it's actually -- what I was going to say is 22

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related to your question, Your Honor.

2 So to answer the previous question, the only difference in this permit from the prior 3 4 permit in terms of changes is that it provides, 5 pursuant to the revisions to the 2015 ELGs, effluent limitations guidelines, that there shall 6 be no discharge of bottom ash transport water 7 8 starting December 31st of 2023. 9 So the levels are the same, prior to 10 that date, but then starting at that date there 11 is a difference in the permit. Would you mind 12 repeating your question? I'm sorry, I was so 13 flustered with the technology there. 14 So my question relates JUDGE STEIN: to the effluent limitation guidelines and the 15 16 effect of the Fifth Circuit decision, and how EPA 17 reads that Fifth Circuit decision and whether, as 18 a result, they consider the '82 rule to be in 19 effect or not. 20 MR. MINOR: Thank you. Yes, I will 21 point out that the Fifth Circuit decision came out in mid-April of 2019, and we put our permit 22

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out for public comment in late April of 2019, so the decision was right on the heels of putting the permit out for comment.

And as Mr. Barth noted earlier, we were trying to address his concerns in the lawsuit that he filed to expedite issuance of the permit. But that's just a background. So the Fifth Circuit invalidated the best available treatment technology, or BAT, for legacy bottom ash transport waters.

So just to clarify, as I noted for non-legacy bottom ash transport water, which is really the same discharge, it's just defined by the date of when it occurs, so the no-discharge requirement that kicks in in December '23 -well, bottom ash transport water after that is non-legacy.

Bottom ash transport water discharged between the effective date of this permit and -or even in the existing permit, I guess -- till December of 2023, is legacy bottom ash transport water.

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So the Fifth Circuit invalidated the 1 2 best available treatment technology standard for legacy bottom ash transport water. So under 3 applicable standards, we go back to the existing 4 5 standards on the books, which are the standards -6 7 JUDGE LYNCH: Which standards are 8 those? 9 MR. MINOR: -- of 1982. What -- you said it's based --10 JUDGE: why do you go back to '82? 11 12 MR. MINOR: Well, when a regulation is 13 invalidated, the previous regulation applies. 14 JUDGE LYNCH: Automatically? What are 15 you basing that on? What's your legal basis for 16 that? 17 MR. MINOR: I believe that is how the 18 agency has operated. If you'd like me to provide 19 some support for that, you know, following the 20 brief, I may, but also --21 (Simultaneous speaking.) 22 JUDGE LYNCH: In 1982 --

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1	MR. MINOR: they did invalidate the
2	BPT standard for legacy bottom ash transport
3	water, and that is still on the books, as well.
4	So there is an existing standard that wasn't
5	invalidated, because we were just creating a BAT
6	standard, so
7	JUDGE AVILA: Do you but in, under
8	the I'm sorry to interrupt, but in the 1982
9	rule, do you understand the agency to have made a
10	BPT or BAT determination?
11	MR. MINOR: Well, we clearly made a
12	BPT determination, and if you look at the
13	regulations, it's under the BPT section of the
14	CFR. So we clearly made that determination. The
15	
16	JUDGE AVILA: There's some confusing
17	language in there.
18	MR. MINOR: Excuse me?
19	JUDGE AVILA: There's some confusing
20	language that talks about, therefore we don't
21	feel like we need to do BAT, but that's not
22	really how the statute reads. It says you're

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supposed to do BAT by 1989, right? 1 2 MR. MINOR: Yes. And, you know, the permittee has argued that we've looked at this in 3 4 '82 and that by choosing not to select BAT in 5 '82, that was, in effect, a determination that is still valid. And we --6 7 MS. DURR: Time. 8 MR. MINOR: We evaluated that issue 9 and chose not to address it, and make a decision one way or another whether that decision in '82 10 11 regarding BAT occupies the field or not. And, 12 you know, we determined that in this circumstance 13 -- if I may just continue briefly? 14 JUDGE LYNCH: Is two minutes enough? MR. MINOR: Yes. Yes. 15 What 16 petitioner is requesting is that we go back and 17 use our best professional judgement to make a 18 determination regarding legacy bottom ash 19 transport water, and what the Fifth Circuit 20 looked at was sediment ponds. 21 The facility is closing, as of next month, the sediment pond, and its bottom ash 22

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transport water will be in a holding tank, which 1 2 will then ultimately be used as part of a closedloop system by December of 2023. We determined 3 4 that they could not do that any sooner. 5 So if the permit were remanded and we 6 were to go back, we would have to require the facility to look at all the information that's in 7 8 the regs for BAT determination, which would 9 include cost, ongoing changes at the facilities, all the same information you would otherwise look 10 11 at. 12 And that would only cover the period 13 up to 2023, and if it took us, you know, six 14 months or a year to get the information from them 15 and then make a decision --16 JUDGE LYNCH: If I could pause you, 17 because I have one legal question on what you're 18 saying, and just in the interest of time, if -- I 19 take it, your position is that the 1982 ELG is in 20 effect. 21 I think that's what you just said. If that's the case, what's your position about 22

whether or not you have discretion to undertake a 1 2 **BPJ** analysis? MR. MINOR: We believe we have 3 4 discretion not to, in this case. 5 JUDGE LYNCH: Are you prohibited? Ι don't understand what you just said. 6 7 MR. MINOR: No, we're not prohibited. 8 So you have the JUDGE AVILA: discretion to do it or to not do it. 9 MR. MINOR: Yes, and in this case we 10 determined that we would rather wait on the 11 national guidelines, so that we're not making a 12 site-specific determination that would come out 13 14 that would, you know, sort of supersede what 15 might be the best available technology as part of 16 a national rule for legacy bottom ash transport 17 water. 18 JUDGE LYNCH: All right. 19 JUDGE STEIN: If there's an ELG in 20 effect, where does your discretion come from? 21 MR. MINOR: Well, if the ELG is only for BPT, then --22

1	MS. DURR: Time.
2	MR. MINOR: we could do a BPJ
3	determination for best available technology.
4	JUDGE LYNCH: Well then what's your
5	position? What's the EPA's position about
6	whether it's BPT or BAT.
7	JUDGE AVILA: BAT.
8	JUDGE LYNCH: BAT.
9	MR. MINOR: Our position is that it's
10	clearly BPT. The regulations say that. And we
11	haven't taken a position as to whether it was in
12	effect a BAT determination in 1982 when we
13	determined not to do a we haven't decided that
14	yet. And that would be evaluated as part of the
15	national rulemaking.
16	JUDGE LYNCH: All right. Thank you.
17	So we're mindful that we had added about three
18	minutes and the clerk can correct me if I'm
19	off on that to EPA's time, so if others need
20	commensurate amount of additional time, we'll
21	grant that.
22	MS. DURR: Sure.

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1 JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. 2 MS. DURR: You're welcome. All right. Thank you. 3 JUDGE LYNCH: 4 And so let's proceed with APS. 5 MS. MCGRATH: Good afternoon, Your Can you see and hear me? 6 Honors. 7 JUDGE LYNCH: Now, yes. 8 JUDGE AVILA: Yes. 9 MS. MCGRATH: Okay. Thank you. 10 JUDGE AVILA: Yes. Thank you. 11 Hi, I'm Kerry McGrath MS. MCGRATH: 12 for the permittee, APS. There are a few points I would like to make but if I could, I would like 13 14 to just start (audio interference) with the 1982 15 ELGs, and kind of pick up on the point that Mr. 16 Minor was making. 17 The 1982 ELGs, which as noted set a 18 BPT standard but declined to set a BAT standard, 19 are what is in effect now that the Fifth Circuit 20 has remanded the legacy wastewater provisions of 21 the 2015 rule, and I wanted to make a slight 22 correction.

1	You know, I think that the BPJ, the
2	best professional judgment analysis, is pretty
3	clear from the regulations is meant to be a gap
4	filler. There is when the ELGs are
5	inapplicable, when they haven't looked at a
6	particular pollutant.
7	But in this case there is no gap to
8	fill, and so it is our position that, you know,
9	of course, you know, EPA used its discretion to
10	not do a best professional judgement
11	determination, but our position is that it would
12	not have been appropriate to do so
13	JUDGE AVILA: Why isn't there a gap as
14	to a BAT for this type of effluent and facility,
15	given that the Fifth Circuit vacated it and there
16	was supposed to be one by 1989?
17	MS. MCGRATH: Well, the timing, you
18	know, the as we noted, the 1982 regulations,
19	EPA looked at potentially a BAT and decided it
20	would not propose one at that time. The way that
21	the ELG regulations have been interpreted and
22	applied is that that decision in itself, it is

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part of the ELG.

2	And so it's the determination not to
3	set a BAT. And, you know, as you note, the 2015
4	rule would have essentially made that those
5	numeric limits for total suspended solids and oil
6	and grease, the BAT for that legacy wastewater,
7	but in the absence of those provisions, the 1982
8	provisions are in effect.
9	JUDGE AVILA: I mean, it is a little
10	odd, isn't it, that you have the Fifth Circuit
11	saying that the record for the 2015 ELG BAT
12	determination didn't support impoundments, and
13	that there were things in the record suggesting
14	that there were alternative technologies other
15	than impoundment that should have been addressed,
16	and yet we're going back to impoundments?
17	MS. MCGRATH: Yes, I mean, the record
18	in that case was the court found was that the
19	record that was supporting that rulemaking did
20	not support the determination that as a new
21	BAT, for legacy wastewater, the record didn't
22	support the determination that surface

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impoundments were appropriate.

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2	It did not say that the agency could
3	not decide to use surface impoundments if it did
4	so based on an evaluation of the statutory
5	factors.
6	But I think that the key inquiry here
7	is, you know, the legacy wastewater is just, as
8	Mr. Minor said, the water that is generated until
9	you get to that applicability date where the new
10	bottom ash transport water technology is going to
11	be implemented.
12	And there's a recognition that it
13	takes some time to get to that place where you
14	implement that new technology. And that's what
15	this permit requires the permittee to do, is to,
16	you know, overhaul its systems and put a new
17	system in place to treat legacy bottom ash
18	transport, to treat bottom ash transport water
19	generated after that applicability date.
20	JUDGE AVILA: And this may not be a
21	fair question, since Mr. Minor is the one who
22	said it, but I thought I heard him say that

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you're going to stop using the surface 1 2 impoundments within a certain date, and then use some sort of surface --3 4 MS. MCGRATH: Yes. 5 JUDGE AVILA: -- storage area? Is that under the permit? 6 Yes. 7 MS. MCGRATH: So, if I could, I 8 will share my screen and show you on this 9 exhibit, it might be useful. Okay. Are you able to see that -- oh, it looks like it's still 10 11 connecting. Sorry. 12 JUDGE STEIN: Yes, we can see. So this 13 MS. MCGRATH: Okay. Great. is an exhibit that has a schematic of the current 14 15 system as well as the three projects that APS 16 plans to undertake to comply with the legacy --17 sorry, the bottom ash transport water 18 requirements from the 2015 rule, as well as the 19 related CCR, coal combustion residuals 20 requirements. 21 And so if you can see my pointer, the 22 current bottom ash from units 4 and 5 is sluiced

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to the hydrovents. It goes through this pumping
 system and this tank system where polymers are
 added to help settle it out.

Then it goes into this concrete channel and into this combined waste treatment pond for additional treatment, and then eventually out this internal Outfall 01E.

8 And so, as you know, Mr. Minor alluded 9 to, as part of this three-stage process to comply with both the ELGs and the CCR rule, the Four 10 Corners Plant will close this combined waste 11 12 treatment pond, and the first step of that process will be to build this bottom ash 13 14 transport water tank that will accept the bottom ash transport water instead of this combined 15 16 waste treatment pond.

The second stage will be to close the pond and this outfall, and then the third stage would be to add this closed-loop system, this recirculating system, and close this outfall, so that the tank will -- the tank system will allow for recycling, rather -- and meet that zero

liquid discharge limit. 1 2 JUDGE AVILA: And that last step has to be done by December 31st, 2023? 3 4 MS. MCGRATH: Correct. Exactly. And 5 I'll stop the --JUDGE LYNCH: I had a question about 6 7 the cooling water intake structure, but if the 8 other judges have more questions on the ELG, go 9 ahead and ask those first. I don't. 10 JUDGE AVILA: 11 JUDGE STEIN: I don't. 12 JUDGE LYNCH: All right. So on the issue that Mr. Barth raised about whether the 13 14 structure is a closed-cycle or a once-through 15 system, he noted in his petition, on Page 53, 16 that in your 2005 permit application it appears 17 that you've referred to the system as a once-18 through cooling system. 19 And my question is, well, explain And if it was in fact -- if the structure 20 that. 21 was operating as a once-through system, what 22 changes have you made to it to convert it, if you 1 will, to a closed system?

2	MS. MCGRATH: Thanks, Your Honor.
3	There have been later amendments to that
4	statement, so that statement was kind of pulled
5	out in isolation, doesn't give the full picture,
6	which is what EPA looked at, including the
7	revised 2013 application.
8	But to answer your question, between
9	that time frame and this application, there
10	wasn't a change, a major change to the intake
11	structure itself.
12	There was the shutdown of the first
13	three units, and, you know, I can't necessarily
14	speculate as to why it was called once-through
15	mistakenly in that application, but I think at
16	the time the regulations well, as the previous
17	Phase 1 and Phase 2 316(b) regulations were new
18	at that point.
19	And I think everyone was trying to
20	understand what is the relevant intake, what are
21	we talking about when we talk about the system,
22	and then, you know, looked like between the

correspondence, further correspondence between 1 2 the permittee and the agency, when they actually looked at the San Juan River intake, and the 3 4 amount that was going through the system and how 5 the water was used and recirculated, that it made 6 more sense to treat it as a closed-cycle recirculating system, because that is actually 7 what is happening. 8 9 JUDGE LYNCH: All right. Thank you. So I have one additional 10 JUDGE STEIN: 11 question. 12 MS. MCGRATH: Sure. 13 JUDGE STEIN: What happens to the BATW 14 in the new tanks? When they are full, is it still pumped into Morgan Lake? 15 16 MS. MCGRATH: Sorry, do you mean under 17 -- when they put in the new system, the zero-18 limit discharge? 19 JUDGE STEIN: Yes. 20 MS. MCGRATH: No, they do not -- they 21 will no longer be pumped into Morgan Lake. They 22 will be put into a closed-cycle recirculating

1	loop, where it is treated in the tank system and
2	then pumped back into the plant for reuse.
3	And that's actually part of the reason
4	that it's going to take until 2023 to complete
5	that project, because it's a pretty complicated
6	project to manage the amount of volume and get
7	the water quality and the chemical makeup exactly
8	right so that it can be recirculated through,
9	rather than discharged through an outfall.
10	JUDGE AVILA: But until December 31st,
11	2023, there will be discharges to Morgan Lake.
12	MS. DURR: Time.
13	MS. MCGRATH: Correct. There will be
14	a discharge through an internal outfall that will
15	then eventually go into Morgan Lake.
16	JUDGE AVILA: Yes. Sorry. Yes. I
17	was using shorthand, I apologize.
18	MS. MCGRATH: That's fine.
19	JUDGE LYNCH: Any other questions from
20	the other Judges?
21	JUDGE STEIN: So can you explain just
22	so I'm clear what happens

1	JUDGE LYNCH: We'll add a few minutes
2	here. So go ahead.
3	JUDGE STEIN: I want to be clear on
4	what happens between 2020 and 2023.
5	MS. MCGRATH: Would it help to put the
6	diagram back up, or that might. Let me do
7	that. Let's see.
8	JUDGE AVILA: Well, isn't that where
9	you kind of used a settling tank, in part? But
10	there's still an outfall to the current channel,
11	that then goes to Outfall 01E? Internal Outfall
12	01E?
13	MC. MCGRATH: Yes, exactly. So the
14	combined waste treatment pond will be closed, and
15	it will be routed through the settling tank
16	system, and that maintains an internal outfall,
17	although a different location of internal
18	outfall.
19	And between that time frame and 2023
20	they will be installing this closed-loop system.
21	The blue line here represents the closed-loop
22	system. But it requires a lot of an entire

new system, essentially, that will run under the 1 2 power block, and recirculate the bottom ash transport water in a closed-loop system. 3 So that process will take several 4 5 There's a lot that has to be done with years. safety and making sure that -- you can only work 6 It's also, you 7 on certain parts of it at a time. know, right under the power block, so the units 8 9 cannot be running when they're doing that work, so they have to do it during certain times. 10 11 So this process will take several 12 years, and let me just say that APS is really working all hands on deck to meet that 2023 13 14 deadline. And it is going to be a tight fit to get it in in that time frame, but they are, you 15 16 know, committed to doing that. 17 JUDGE AVILA: And in that tank, it's 18 just a settling tank, essentially. Right? 19 There's no treatment, and I took it from your 20 statement about it taking a long time to figure 21 out that what you're trying to do is get the 22 chemistry in that tank right so it can just be an

1 internal recirculation process. That's what's 2 going to take until 2023. MS. MCGRATH: Exactly. 3 There's 4 construct the system, and then once the system is 5 constructed, to get it just right in terms of water flow and the chemistry. 6 7 JUDGE AVILA: And just to -- what's 8 called the settling basins on that? When will 9 the discharge -- when does that outfall close, or is there --10 11 MC. MCGRATH: This outfall will close 12 in 2023, once the system is up and running -- the 13 tank system is up and running. 14 JUDGE AVILA: So even when the tank system is not a closed-loop system or thing, both 15 16 of those outfalls will be functioning? 17 MS. MCGRATH: So when the system is --18 the tank system is up and running, this outfall 19 in the combined waste treatment pond area will be 20 closed. 21 And instead you'll have bottom ash 22 transport water discharged through this internal

1	outfall during that interim time frame between				
2	the closure of the combined waste treatment pond				
3	and when you get the bottom ash transport water				
4	recirculating system up and running.				
5	JUDGE AVILA: Okay.				
6	JUDGE LYNCH: I have one final				
7	question for you, Ms. McGrath. And I don't know				
8	if you have this handy, but in petitioner's reply				
9	brief on Page 9, he refers to a Form 2C, that's				
10	associated with your 2005 permit application.				
11	And petitioner, you know, is saying				
12	that it's an indication that you admit Morgan				
13	Lake the Morgan Lake cooling pond provides				
14	no treatment. But I find the form confusing on				
15	that point, or certainly not clear on that point.				
16	I couldn't tell if this is indicating				
17	that Morgan Lake provides no treatment, or that				
18	the discharge from the cooling pond receives no				
19	treatment. But do you have that document?				
20	MS. MCGRATH: I know what that				
21	document looks like. I don't have it right in				
22	front of me, but I'm familiar with it. The 2005				

Neal R. Gross and Co., Inc. Washington DC version of that form, where there's a little
 section where it says Treatment and I think it
 says none in the 2005 version.

4 The 2013 version, the corrected and, 5 you know, more recent application, explains that Morgan Lake provides treatment. But I don't 6 7 think that that was meant to suggest, in 2005, 8 that Morgan Lake was not providing treatment, 9 since its conception in the 60s and since the power plant has been operating, it has been 10 11 providing treatment in the form of dissipating 12 heat and controlling total dissolved solids.

13 So I don't think there's any world in 14 which the plant would say that that lake is not 15 providing treatment, and I, you know, don't know 16 the reason for the error, but I do know that they 17 corrected it later and many times consistently 18 since then.

19JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you. Any other20questions from the Judges?

21JUDGE AVILA: None here. Thanks.22JUDGE STEIN: Not from me.

1	JUDGE LYNCH: All right. Thank you.				
2	With that, we'll return to Mr. Barth for your				
3	rebuttal. And we'll give you three additional				
4	minutes to be commensurate with the time allotted				
5	to the other parties.				
6	MR. BARTH: Okay. Thank you.				
7	JUDGE LYNCH: Yes.				
8	MR. BARTH: So I want to go back to				
9	Morgan Lake, whether it's a Water of the United				
10	States or whether it's a treatment system. So				
11	the final permit treats Morgan Lake both ways,				
12	really.				
13	What you have is a permit that				
14	regulates discharges into the lake, for oil and				
15	grease and chlorine, and then you have a permit,				
16	the same permit, that treats it as a so, I'm				
17	sorry treats it as a Water of the United				
18	States for purposes of chlorine and oil and gas,				
19	because it's basically regulating those				
20	discharges before they reach the lake, and then				
21	treats it as a treatment system when it				
22	discharges temperature.				

So EPA kind of wants to have it both 1 2 ways here. It's one or the other. It's either a treatment system or it's not. And the reason 3 4 it's not a treatment system is for the reason 5 that Judge Avila said. There's absolutely no evidence in the 6 7 record here that this was designed to comply with 8 the requirements of the Clean Water Act. And 9 here we have a new water quality standard for 10 temperature. 11 They can only discharge between 90 and 12 95 degrees, and there has been no evidence, and EPA in this permit has not evaluated whether 13 14 there's a reasonable potential to violate the 15 downstream water quality standards for 16 temperature. 17 So there's no evidence that it 18 complies with the waste treatment system 19 requirements. So --20 JUDGE LYNCH: Could I just pause you 21 for a moment, Mr. Barth? 22 MR. BARTH: Sure.

1	JUDGE LYNCH: So just explain to me
2	how you're defining, designed to meet the
3	requirements of the Clean Water Act?
4	MR. BARTH: Well, when that question
5	was asked to Ms. O'Dea, she did give the correct
6	answer, that its compliance with the requirements
7	of the Clean Water Act include water quality-
8	based effluent limits.
9	She didn't come out and say that, but
10	of course whenever you're evaluating a discharge
11	from a treatment system, what you're trying to
12	evaluate is whether that discharge is going to
13	comply with technology-based standards, and water
14	quality-based standard And
15	JUDGE LYNCH: And at what point do you
16	look at design? So does it have to be when the
17	plant was first constructed?
18	MR. BARTH: Well, you look at the
19	first
20	JUDGE LYNCH: Or is it a moving
21	MR. BARTH: Yes, Judge Lynch, the
22	first time in its 50 plus years of operation that

1 they've ever asserted the waste treatment system
2 exemption is in this permit. So it needs to be
3 evaluated now.
4 And same with the water quality
5 standard. You have a new water quality standard.
6 This permit needs to be evaluated to see whether

8 JUDGE AVILA: Isn't there federal case 9 law that says that if a water body is 10 incorporated in an NPDES permit as part of a 11 treatment system, that's sufficient.

that standard is violated.

12 And I take part of what I read in the 13 response to comments in this case to say that 14 Morgan Lake is covered by an NPDES permit and 15 it's part of the treatment system. It's treating 16 waste heat.

And then we can debate about whether the discharge from Morgan Lake, you know, whether the effluent limitations for that are sufficient, but under the federal case law, that's -- why isn't that dispositive?

22

7

MR. BARTH: Because the permit itself

1	doesn't say it's a waste treatment system. It's				
2	never said that. And this is only occurring				
3	you're only seeing this in the response to				
4	comments, and in 2018 they said something				
5	completely different. So yes, I mean				
6	JUDGE LYNCH: Where in 2018 are you				
7	referring to?				
8	MR. BARTH: The EPA's prior draft				
9	permit and final permit that they issued for this				
10	facility in 2018, that they completely withdrew				
11	when we challenged that permit in front of the				
12	EAB.				
13	So in their response to comments in				
14	2018, they said, we are not asserting the waste				
15	treatment system exception for Morgan Lake. And				
16	then in 2019 they reversed course and said they				
17	were.				
18	So EPA's been all over the map, but				
19	one thing they haven't ever done is said that in				
20	a permit, in the permit, that this is a waste				
21	treatment system. They've regulated discharges				
22	into the lake as though it's a Water of the				

United States, and then they've regulated other 1 2 discharges going out of the lake. So I just -- no deference here, 3 4 because EPA has been just all over the map. We 5 ask that you, you know, review this de novo, and 6 look at the history here. And you look at the 7 admissions by APS saying, yes, Morgan Lake is a 8 Water of the United States. 9 You've got the Nation treating it as a Water of the United States. The thing that's 10 11 important to recognize here, this is not an 12 isolated pond where only pollution goes into. This is a water that's used. 13 People 14 are swimming in it, they're windsurfing in it, 15 they're fishing it, they're eating the fish that 16 they catch. You know, by not treating it as a 17 Water of the United States, we're, you know, not 18 only harming the beneficial uses, there's a human 19 health issue here. So please consider that when 20 you make your decision. JUDGE LYNCH: Mr. Barth, I had a 21 question on the ELGs. 22

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1	MR. BARTH: Yes.
2	JUDGE LYNCH: What's your position on
3	whether the 1982 ELGs are in effect?
4	MR. BARTH: So we don't agree with
5	what EPA stated. Our position on the legacy
6	bottom ash transport water has been well-briefed.
7	We rely on the briefing. But in essence, in
8	summary, we believe that basically both BPT and
9	BAT requirements currently apply.
10	And it needs to be done on a case-by-
11	case basis. As Judge Avila pointed out, the
12	decision from the Court basically said the
13	impoundments are not enough. So then you just
14	don't go back and say the impoundments are
15	enough. They need to do more and they need to do
16	it case-by-case analysis.
17	JUDGE LYNCH: Well, what about the
18	Paulsen case, which APS cites in its brief that
19	says you do go back to the prior rule?
20	MR. BARTH: We think that that case
21	and we stated this in our briefing that that's
22	a very limited application of that case, and it

does not apply broadly, nor does it apply here.
 But I'll just stand on what we said in our
 briefing on that.

So now I'd just like to basically quickly go back to the cooling water intake structure. So let's just step back for a minute. What we have here is, we have an admission by APS that they withdraw 14.3 million gallons a day from the San Juan River.

10 And we have a permit that allows them 11 to discharge 14.7 million gallons per day. When 12 you're withdrawing the same amount of water from 13 a river that you're discharging back into it, 14 that is, by definition, once-through cooling.

15 This is not a case where they withdraw 16 water for maybe one or two days, and then don't 17 withdraw any more for months, because they've got 18 cooling towers and a closed-cycle system, and 19 they're able to recycle it. They're discharging 20 the same amount back in that they withdraw. 21 And the other thing that's important

22

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to recognize here is, the cooling water intake

structure at this facility is located in a 1 2 location where there's endangered species. There's two endangered fish species. 3 They 4 actually use this stretch of the river --5 MS. DURR: Five minutes. -- to stock and to 6 MR. BARTH: 7 propagate these endangered species. If the Board 8 finds that this is not a closed-cycle system --9 as it's not, it's open at both ends, it's both open coming in and going out -- but if you find 10 11 that it's not a closed-cycle system, there are 12 all sort of requirements that kick in. They need 13 to --14 JUDGE AVILA: Can I ask you about that real quick? Don't they have an incidental take 15 16 statement for this, and reasonable and prudent 17 measures? I mean, don't they -- under the Endangered Species Act, I mean, what more would 18 19 they do? 20 MR. BARTH: They would do what's required under 316(b), and that's what I was just 21 getting into. 22 They would have to do a source

water characterization, they'd have to do an 1 2 analysis of what their actual impingement and entrainment is. To date, they haven't reported 3 any data on this. 4 So, you know, they -- if there's any 5 facility in freshwater that should be undertaking 6 the 316(b) requirements, it's this one. 7 For gosh 8 sakes, we've got endangered species right there 9 in the river, and the Fish and Wildlife Service is trying to use that stretch of the river to 10 keep these species alive. 11 12 JUDGE AVILA: Is 316(b) more 13 protective than the Endangered Species Act? 14 The biological opinion MR. BARTH: acknowledged was that this cooling water intake 15 16 structure could be causing harm to these 17 endangered species. It recognized that. And so--18 JUDGE AVILA: And they gave reasonable 19 and prudent measures, which we then incorporated 20 into the permit, and there's an incidental take 21 statement, that --MR. BARTH: But the reasonable and 22

prudent measures are a pumping plan that don't 1 2 align with what the requirements of 316(b) are. The pumping plan didn't do a source water 3 4 characterization. It didn't look at impingement 5 and entrainment data. It didn't look at traveling --6 7 JUDGE LYNCH: Mr. Barth, you 8 challenged the BO and Biological Opinion in 9 court, and did not prevail. The reason we did not 10 MR. BARTH: prevail was not on substance, Your Honor, it was 11 12 because they found that Navajo Transitional 13 Energy Company has sovereign immunity and 14 couldn't be joined in the case, and therefore the 15 court never got to the merits. 16 JUDGE LYNCH: But I could ask you, but 17 there's no further challenge in court to make. 18 MR. BARTH: There is no current 19 challenge to the Biological Opinion, but I'm --20 JUDGE LYNCH: -- forgetting about --21 qo ahead. 22 MR. BARTH: The point I'm getting to

ĺ				
1	is, look at the pumping plan. It's in the			
2	record. Compare that pumping plan to the 316(b)			
3	requirements, and when you do that, it doesn't			
4	come close to covering the ground that the 316(b)			
5	requirements do.			
6	JUDGE LYNCH: On the sovereign			
7	immunity			
8	MR. BARTH: Yes.			
9	JUDGE LYNCH: I don't see where in			
10	your comments you raise that argument on the			
11	region's requirement to have NTEC waive their			
12	sovereign immunity.			
13	MR. BARTH: Your Honor, I don't have			
14	the timeline in front of me. But that purchase			
15	of that share occurred fairly late in time. I'm			
16	not certain that we were aware of that when we			
17	submitted our comment letter.			
18	So it may be a newly raised issue, but			
19	I don't remember when that purchase took place			
20	and when we got knowledge of it.			
21	JUDGE LYNCH: All right. Thank you.			
22	MR. BARTH: Sure. I think that's all			

1	I have. I do want to thank you all for
2	accommodating with this virtual oral argument.
3	I know that we raised petitioners raised a lot
4	of issues.
5	I really appreciate your attention to
6	those, and earlier I believe it was Judge Lynch
7	who said that the Board would give this close
8	scrutiny, and I really encourage you to do that.
9	You've got EPA contradicting itself left and
10	right in this permit.
11	They've contradicted themselves on
12	Waters of the United States, whether it's a waste
13	treatment system, whether it's once-through or
14	whether it's closed-cycle. Given all of EPA's
15	inconsistent positions, you should not give them
16	any deference, and you should really look at this
17	permit de novo and make the decisions that way.
18	So I'll close there. Thank you again
19	very much for your time.
20	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you, Mr. Barth.
21	Do any of the other Judges have any additional
22	questions for the parties?

1	JUDGE AVILA: None here.
2	JUDGE STEIN: Not from me.
3	JUDGE LYNCH: Well, thank you, and I
4	really want to thank everyone involved for
5	working with the Board on making this oral
6	argument happen. It's really been very helpful,
7	and the discussion has been very helpful.
8	And thank you again for the
9	submissions, your work on the case, and your
10	participation, and your flexibility. And now we
11	have, you know, our first argument behind us
12	where we had visual aids. And so, again, I
13	commend you for your skill in that regard.
14	And with that, this case is submitted.
15	Thank you.
16	MS. DURR: These proceedings are now
17	adjourned. Thank you.
18	JUDGE LYNCH: Thank you.
19	JUDGE AVILA: Thank you.
20	JUDGE STEIN: Thank you.
21	(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
22	went off the record at 2:59 p.m.)

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Before: US EPA/EAB

Date: 09-03-20

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