



Imported Water Committee

Update on Colorado River Basin System Conditions and Colorado River Basin State Discussions

Item 6b

September 12, 2022

August 24-Month Study

Lake Powell & Lake Mead Operations

Tier Determinations

- Each year the 24-Month Study is used to set the Tier Determinations and operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead in the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Annual Operating Plan
- The Study forecasts end-of-year reservoir elevations, but actual elevations on January 1 are used to determine reservoir operations

August 24-Month Study

Shortages & DCP Contributions

Lake Mead forecast to be in
the first-ever Tier 2a Shortage

Lake Mead Operations in CY 2023

- Arizona - 592,000 acre-feet
~21% of AZ annual apportionment
- Nevada - 25,000 acre-feet
~8% of NV annual apportionment
- Mexico - 104,000 acre-feet
~7% of Mexico's annual allotment
- California does not take shortages and has no DCP Contribution in Tier 2a
- Intentionally Created Surplus can be taken

24-Month Study

Lake Powell Protection

Lake Powell Operations in WY 2023

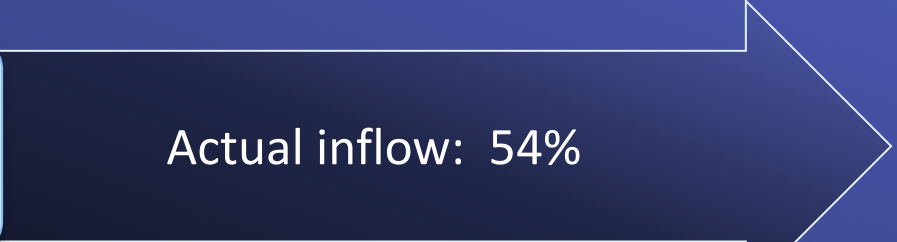
- Annual release from Glen Canyon Dam initially 7.0 maf;
- Determination of whether balancing releases will be made in April, based on actual hydrology;
- Balancing releases will be limited to protect Lake Powell from declining below elevation 3,525 feet at the end of December 2023;
- Balancing releases will take into account operational neutrality of the 0.480 maf that was retained in Lake Powell under the May 2022 action

24-Month Study

Forecast Assumptions



2020 most probable inflow forecast: 100%



Actual inflow: 54%

2021 most probable inflow forecast: 76%



Actual inflow: 32%

2022 most probable inflow forecast: 98%



Actual inflow: 62%

2023 most probable inflow forecast: 86%



Actual inflow: TBD

24-Month Study

Lake Powell &
Lake Mead
Protection Volumes

Interior Department Announcements

- In June, the Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner identified the need for 2-4 maf of conservation or additional water annually to stabilize the levels of Lake Powell and Lake Mead
- Reclamation provided updated analysis of the need for “Protection Volumes”
 - 600,000 acre-feet to 4.2 maf annually

24-Month Study

Interior Department Announcements

Reclamation will support technical studies to ascertain if physical modifications can be made to Hoover Dam to allow water to be pumped/released from elevations below currently identified dead pool elevations

Reclamation's Plans in Lower Basin

- Prepare for additional administrative initiatives that would ensure maximum efficient and beneficial use of urban and agricultural water, and address evaporation, seepage, and other system losses in the Lower Basin;
- Invest in system conservation and voluntary agreements;
- Consider other operational actions to establish flexibility in Lower Basin operations at Reclamation facilities;
- Take administrative actions needed to further define reservoir operations at Lake Mead, including shortage operations at elevations below 1,025 feet to reduce the risk of Lake Mead declining to critically low elevations

Arizona - Stated that it is unacceptable for AZ to continue to bear the disproportionate share of the burdens of cuts

Nevada - Concern regarding Basin States' failure to meet goals of 2-4 maf and leadership from Interior Department

Metropolitan called on everyone who relies on Colorado River water, including communities across Southern California, to prepare for reduced supplies from this source, permanently

Upper Division States (CO, WY, UT and NM) announced 5 Point Plan to extend or continue existing programs and studies

24-Month Study

No Deal on Protection Volumes Yet

Inflation Reduction Act

Drought Mitigation

To mitigate drought impacts in the States, with priority given to the Colorado River Basin

\$4 billion to Reclamation through 2026

For grants to public entities and Tribes

- Temporary or multiyear voluntary reduction in diversion of water or consumptive water use;
- Voluntary system conservation projects that achieve verifiable reductions in use of or demand for water supplies or provide environmental benefits in the Lower Basin or Upper Basin of the Colorado River;
- Ecosystem and habitat restoration projects to address issues directly caused by drought in a river basin or inland water body.

Next Steps for Metropolitan

- Participate in ongoing discussions with the Basin States about meeting Protection Volume goals;
- Monitor and provide input regarding Interior Department administrative actions;
- Provide input on spending criteria and potentially seek funding for conservation projects such as non-functional turf replacement

