



Colorado River Resources

- **Colorado River Management Report**

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to management of Metropolitan's Colorado River resources for September 2024.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Implementation of Metropolitan-San Diego County Water Authority-Imperial Irrigation District Agreement Update

Following board authorization on August 20, 2024, staff moved forward with entering into an implementing agreement with Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) for joint participation in IID's System Conservation Implementation Agreement with the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Under this implementing agreement, 50,000 acre-feet (AF) of conserved water that was otherwise intended for transfer to the SDCWA and exchanged with Metropolitan under the Exchange Agreement will be left in Lake Mead as system water. Additionally, under the implementing agreement, SDCWA will purchase an additional 50,000 AF of Metropolitan supplies by the end of this calendar year. This implementing agreement also provides for additional flexibility if all parties mutually agree that it would be beneficial to increase this amount based on future conditions and updated estimates of IID conservation yields, up to a total combined volume of 75,000 AF. Metropolitan staff will effect this change through its billing to SDCWA and will submit a revised water order to the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) that is inclusive of this change. This implementing agreement was signed on September 6, and is expected to take effect as of the August 2024 billing cycle.

Land Acquisition for Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

The state of California took title to 1,971 acres of land in the Palo Verde Valley that will be used to establish crucial aquatic habitat for the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP). The lands were purchased from the Gabrych family with funding from the LCR MSCP and the State Wildlife Conservation Board. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife will hold title and the lands will be used by Reclamation to construct and manage marsh and backwater areas for native fish and bird species. The purchase culminates years of effort to acquire the lands by Metropolitan, the state, and environmental groups.

The newly acquired lands are located within the Palo Verde Irrigation District with frontage on the Colorado River. The location, size, and topography of the lands make them suitable to complete the remaining areas of aquatic habitat required by the federal and California incidental take permits issued to LCR MSCP participants. The importance of the lands is reflected in the commitment of \$25.5 million in LCR MSCP funds towards the purchase price. The state of California paid the balance of \$10 million. The LCR MSCP anticipates spending an additional \$80 million to excavate and plant the marsh and backwater areas.