Special Subcommittee on Imported Water

Update on Colorado River Hydrologic Conditions

Item 3a

June 23, 2025

Item 3d
Colorado River Hydrologic Conditions

Subject

Update on Colorado River Hydrologic Conditions

Purpose

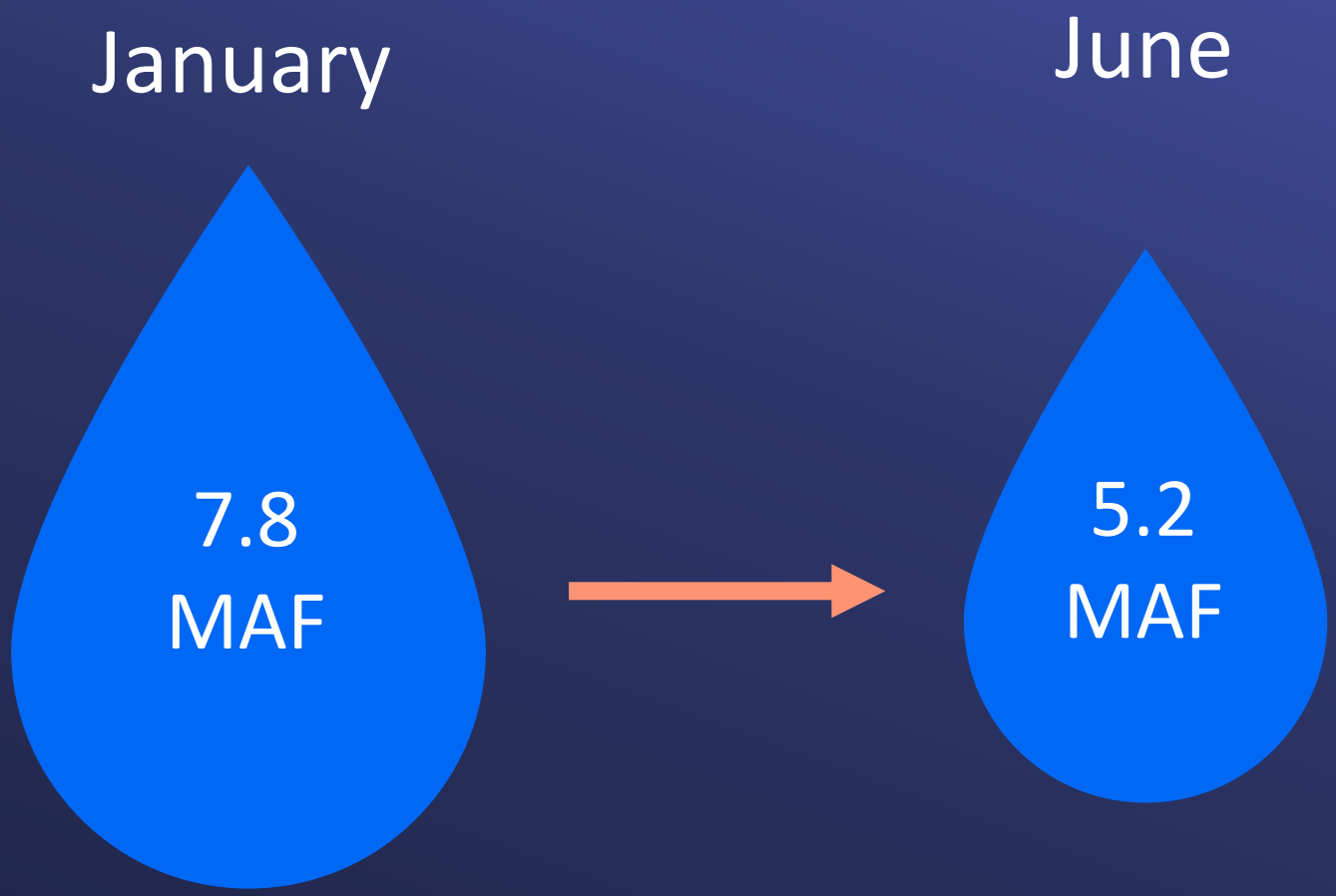
To provide the Board with an update the rapidly deteriorating hydrology on the Colorado River and the potential implications of reaching at- or near-record low storage levels in the next year or two.

Next Steps

Continue monitoring hydrologic conditions and update the Board as needed.

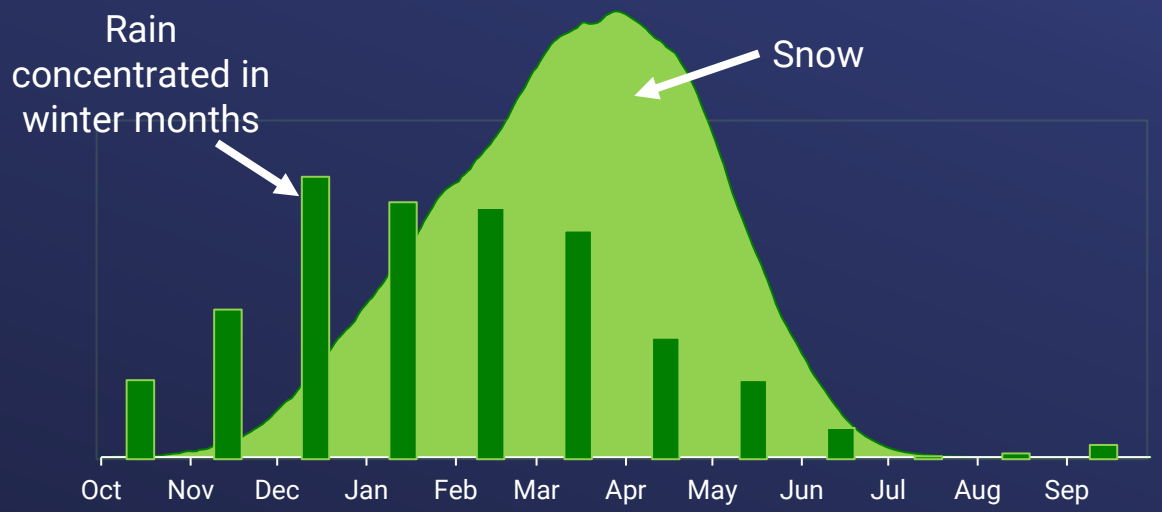
Planning for 2026 Operations Under Worse Hydrologic Conditions

Forecasted Water Year Unregulated Inflow to Lake Powell



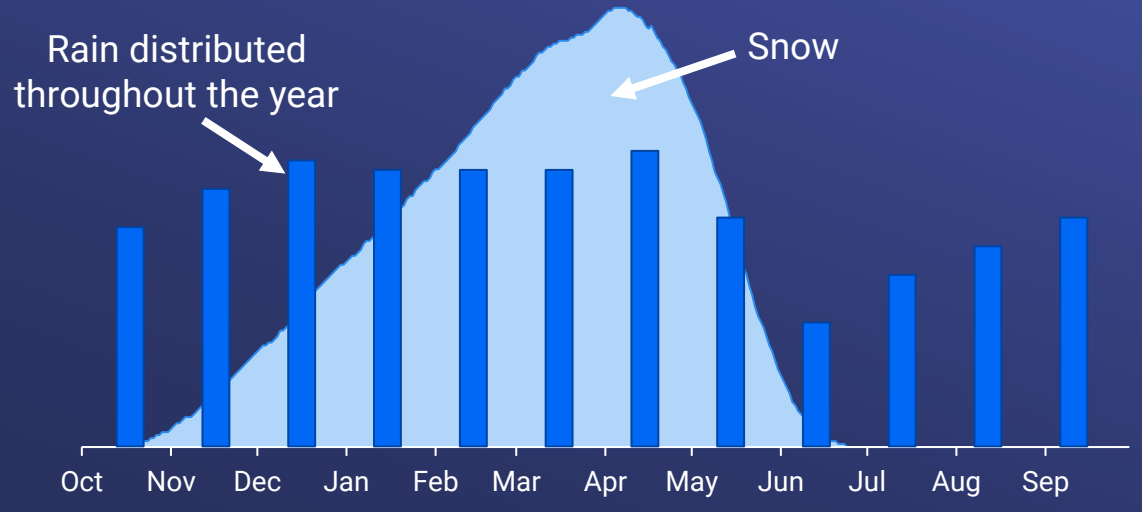
Precipitation Occurs in the Upper Colorado River Basin Year Round

Northern Sierra
(1991-2020 average snowpack and precipitation)



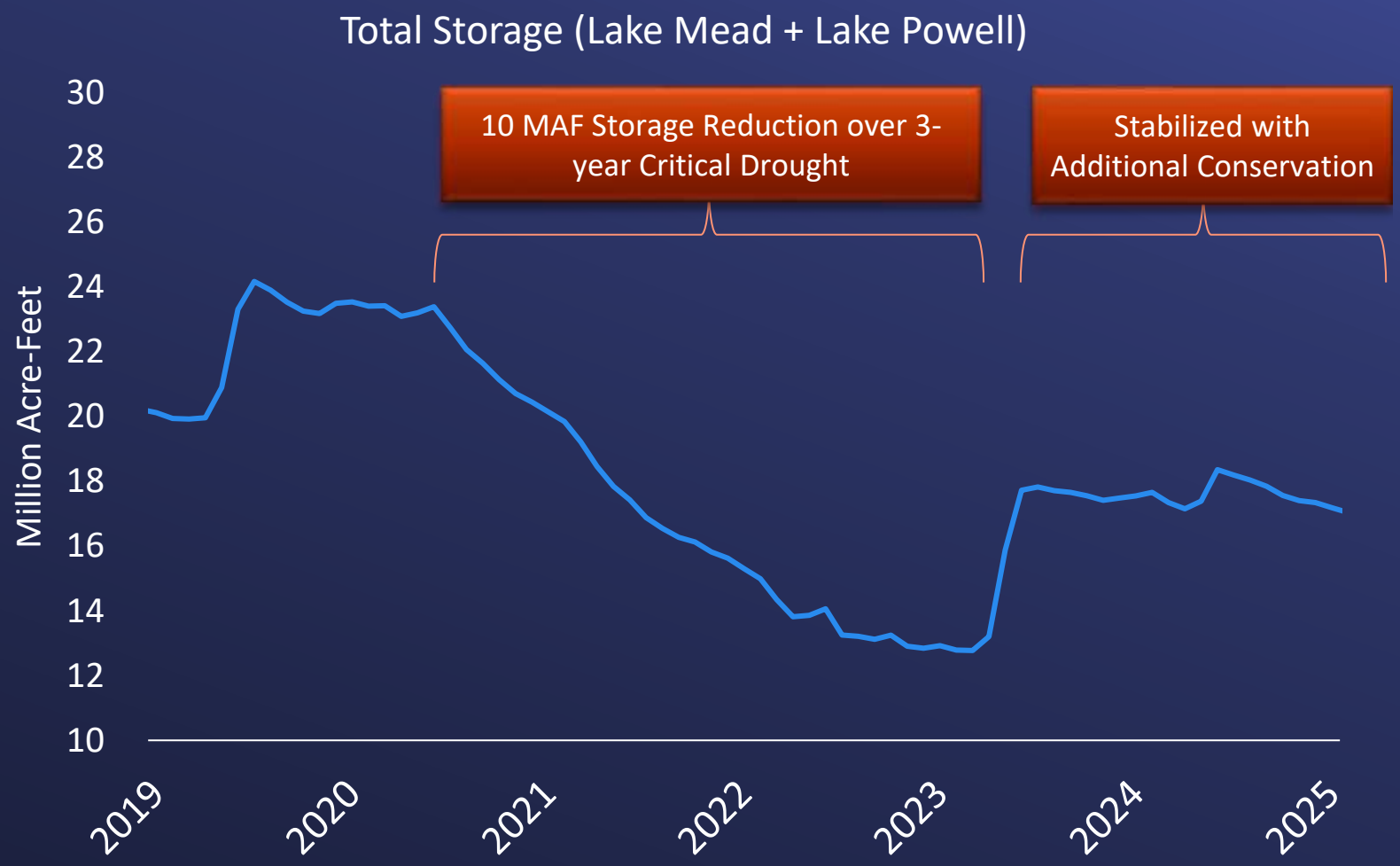
83% of precipitation occurs in first half of water year

Upper Colorado River Basin
(1991-2020 average snowpack and precipitation)



56% of precipitation occurs in first half of water year

Started Year with Stable Storage and Near Normal Snowpack



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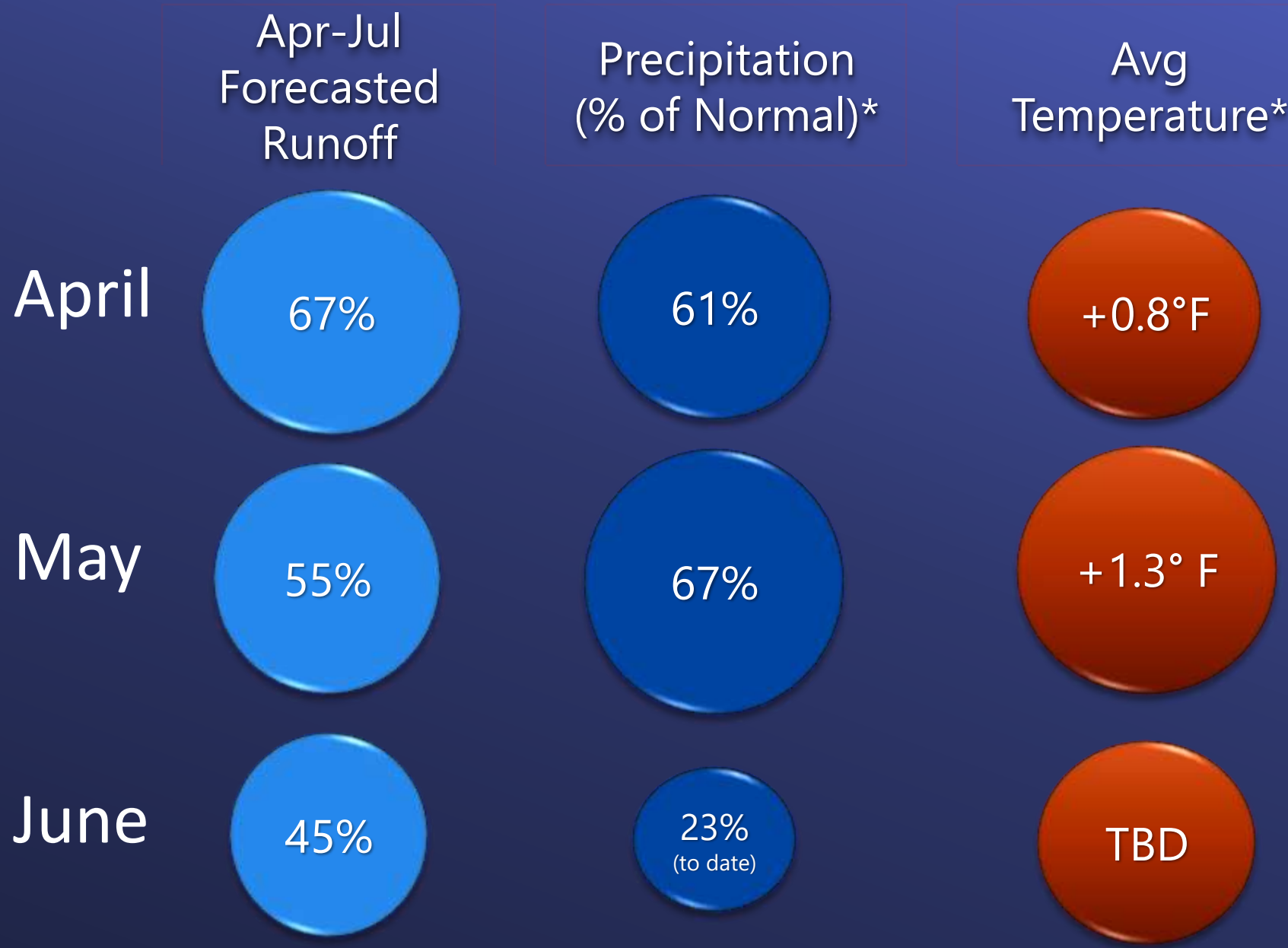
Upper Colorado River Basin

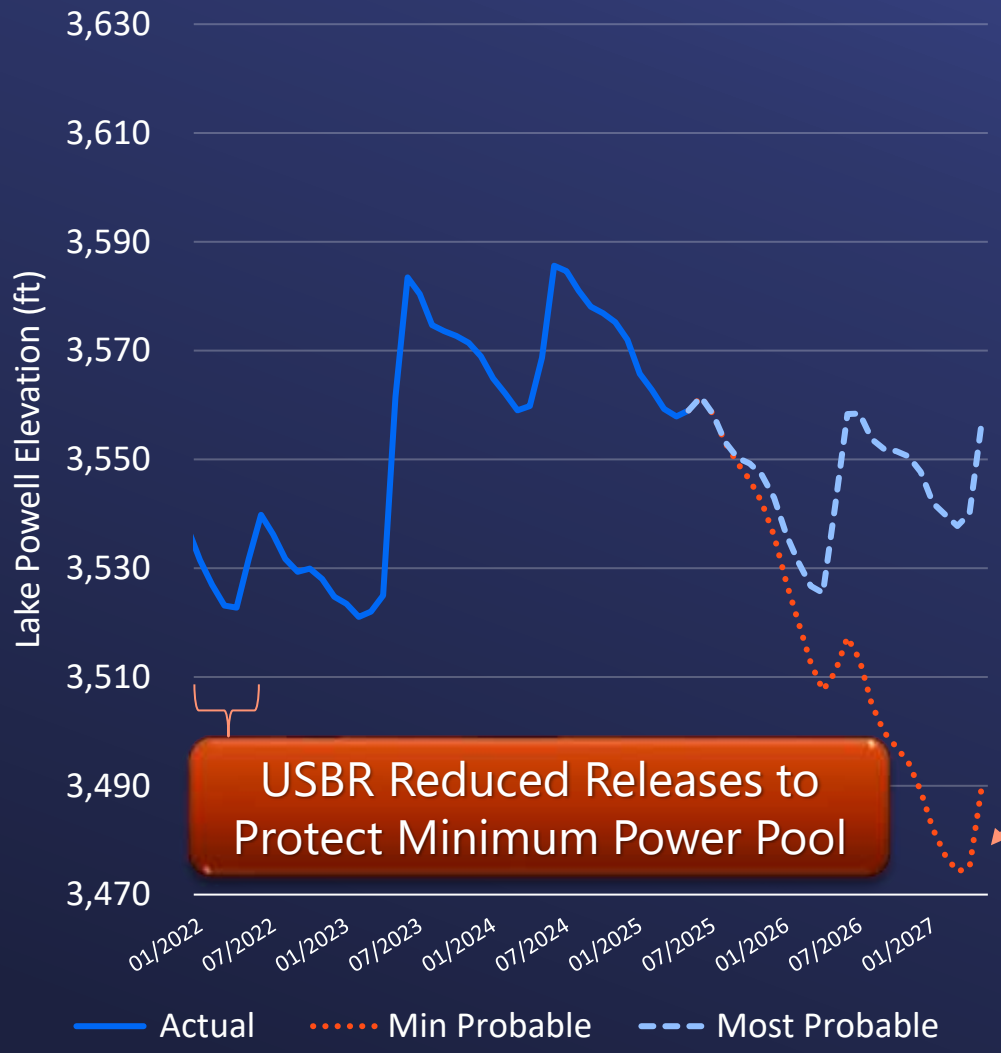
2025: Hot and Dry Spring

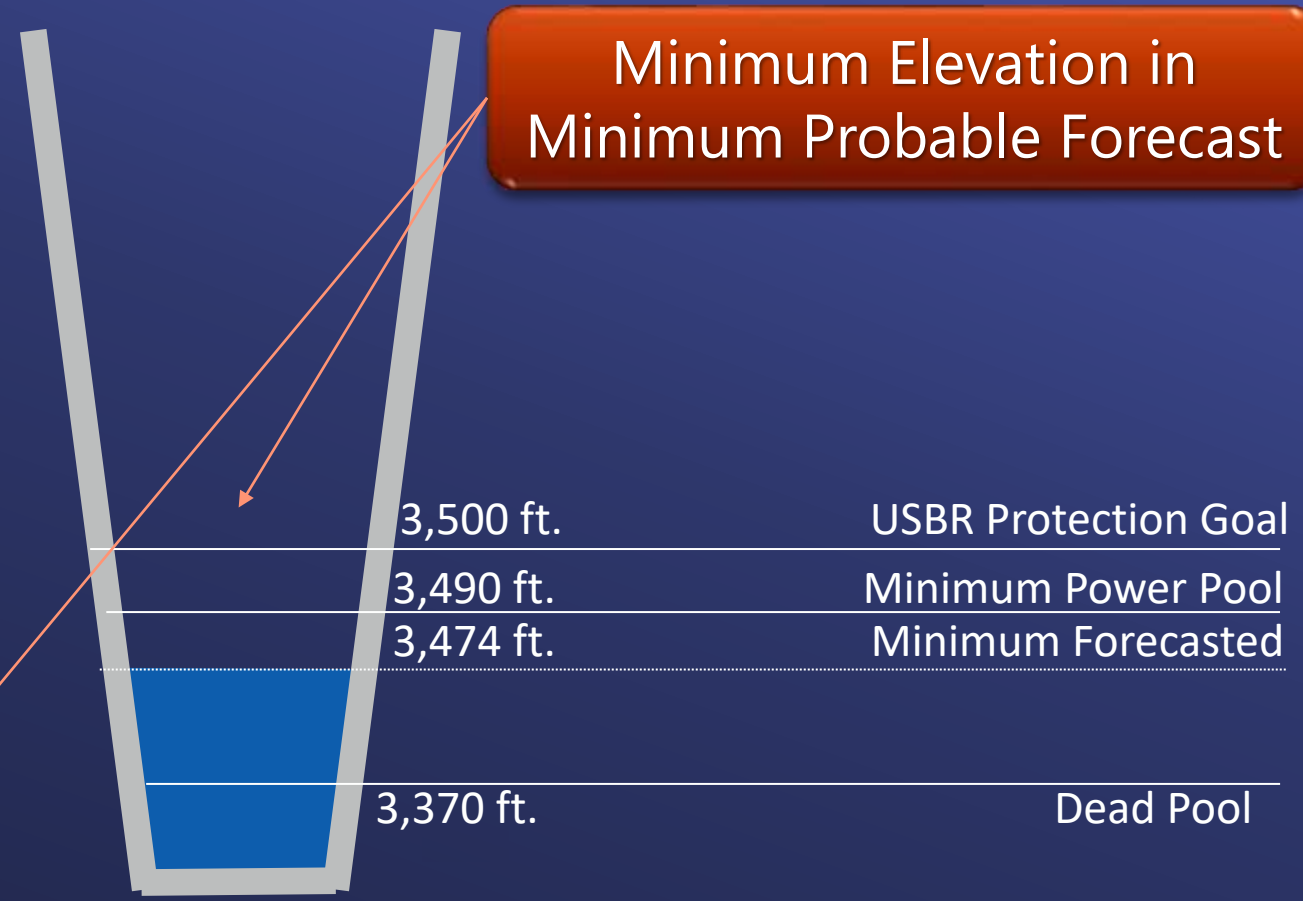
Lake Powell Apr – Jul Runoff Forecast: **45% of Normal**



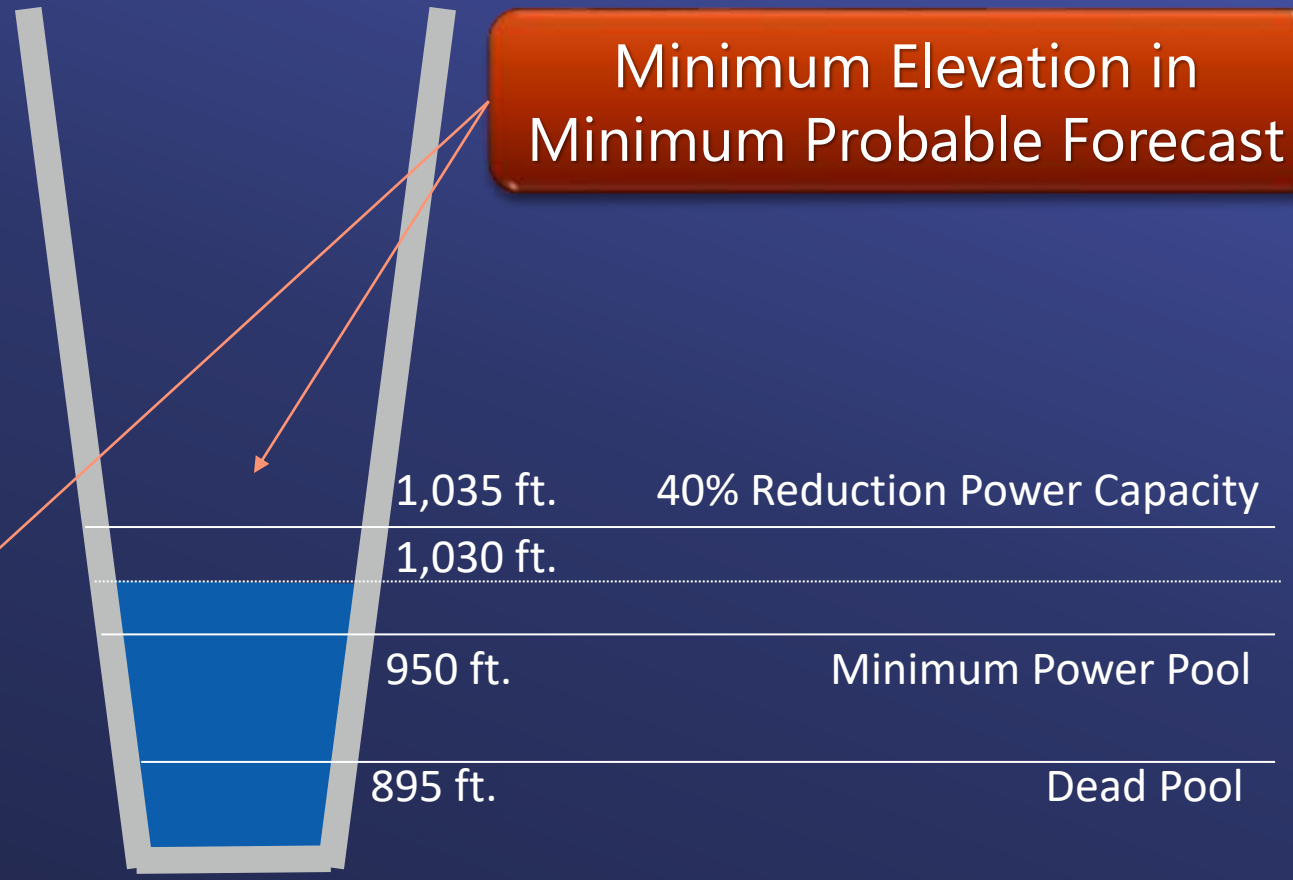
*Normal precipitation and monthly average temperature based on 1991-2020 average

Lake Powell Forecasted to Decrease to Critical Elevation if Next Year is Dry





Lake Mead Forecasted to Decrease to Near Critical Elevation if Next Year is Dry



Potential Near-Term Impacts

If Conditions Stay Dry in 2026…….

- Actions may be taken to protect Lake Powell
  - Increase releases from upstream reservoirs
  - Reduce releases from 7.48 MAF to 7 MAF or lower
    - Reduced power resources at Lake Mead
- Potential expectation for larger reductions at the start of new guidelines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