



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

Colorado River Resources

• Report on the Colorado River Board Meeting

Summary

The Colorado River Board (Board), Colorado River Authority, and Six Agency Committee met on May 14 at the City of Monterey City Hall. The meeting location was set to coordinate with the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) conference. However, five board members, including Metropolitan, were absent leaving the Board without a quorum to act.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Water Supply Reports

Following the direction from the Board workshop in March, the Board will no longer use oral reports to provide water supply information. The Board's written packet included a 25-page summary of water supply conditions on the Colorado River and within California. Of note, system storage in Colorado River reservoirs has dropped 1.1 million acre-feet over the last year despite ongoing conservation programs in the Lower Basin. Both Lake Powell and Lake Mead are at 33 percent of storage capacity. Inflows to Lake Powell in the current water year are expected to be well below average.

Colorado River Basin Program

Board staff reported that federal cuts include approximately 25 percent of employees of the Bureau of Reclamation, with significant reductions in staff working on salinity control and the Multi-Species Conservation Program. Additional staff cuts may be coming with a potential 30 percent reduction in appropriations for the Department of the Interior.

Glen Canyon Dam and Hoover Dam are operated in compliance with federal environmental laws through programs to mitigate the impacts on endangered species. Releases from Glen Canyon include bypass flows, if needed, to maintain colder water temperatures in the downstream Grand Canyon for the benefit of endangered humpback chub fish. Impacts of bypass flows on hydropower generation are a concern with an estimated loss of \$18 million in power revenues last year.

Operations at and below Lake Mead were confirmed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be in conformance with the scope of incidental take permits provided by the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program.

Budget and Funding Agreement

The Executive Director provided a summary of the budget for fiscal year 2025-2026. The Six Agency Committee, which funds both the Board and the Authority, has a budget of \$3.3 million. The Board's annual budget remained essentially flat at \$2.8 million. The funding agreement among the six water agencies represented on the Board will expire this year and is expected to be extended for one year while the agencies negotiate terms for a longer extension.

Date of Report: 5/27/2025

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Basin States Negotiations

There was an open session discussion of the status of negotiations on operating guidelines for the Post-2026 period. The Basin States have a deadline of early June 2025 to agree on the outline of terms that may be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to be issued later this year. Regular meetings among the Basin States continue, but terms for an alternative remain elusive.

Board members expressed their concern that California must improve its messaging about the water-saving successes achieved in the Quantification Settlement Agreement and related conservation projects.