



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

Office of the General Manager

• Colorado River Management Report

Summary

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

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Lower Basin States Submit Proposed Colorado River Operational Alternative to Reclamation

On March 6, the Lower Basin States submitted a proposal for the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to model in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for post-2026 operations of the Colorado River. The alternative included significant new reductions to stabilize Colorado River storage in the face of recent drought and the future potential impacts of climate change. The proposal includes 1.5 million acre-feet of nearly permanent reductions to Lower Basin water users, with reductions increasing to 3.9 million acre-feet to address future climate change scenarios. Those additional reductions would be shared by all seven Colorado River Basin States.

The Lower Basin State representatives had tried to develop an alternative that all seven Colorado River Basin States would support. Progress was made, but by the March deadline imposed by Reclamation, there were still some outstanding issues that were not resolved, so the Upper Basin States and Lower Basin States each submitted separate alternatives. The main difference between the alternatives is that the Upper Basin States do not propose any additional reduction beyond those that normally occur in dry years. Reclamation will consider the two alternatives, including others that they may receive, in preparation of the Draft EIS, which is scheduled for release this December. The Basin States will continue to meet to try and resolve outstanding issues and come together with a consensus alternative before the Final EIS is published sometime next year.

Colorado River Non-Governmental Organizations Collaboration Meeting

On March 22, General Manager Hagekhalil convened several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are interested in or are working on Colorado River matters to meet and discuss mutual areas of interest. The organizations included LA Waterkeeper, Natural Resources Defense Council, Terra Regenerative Capital, Kiss the Ground, Southwest River Council of American Rivers, Andy Shrader, Sierra Club, Walton Family Foundation, National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and Culp and Kelly.

Metropolitan staff provided an overview of the Lower Basin Proposal. The Walton Family Foundation and the Colorado River NGOs discussed their priorities in the basin. The parties agreed to continue to meet and identify shared priorities, opportunities for future funding, and climate resilience projects.