



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

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 October 21 – November 14, 2025.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Develop Post-2026 Guidelines and Negotiate Implementation Agreements: Provide input that shapes U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) selected alternative

Colorado River Basin States (Basin States) Meetings

The Basin States continued to meet up to November 11, 2025, the deadline the Interior Department had given the Basin States to reach consensus on operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead in the post-2026 period. On that day, the Basin States and the federal team issued a joint statement:

The seven Colorado River Basin States together with the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation recognize the serious and ongoing challenges facing the Colorado River. Prolonged drought and low reservoir conditions have placed extraordinary pressure on this critical water resource that supports 40 million people, tribal nations, agriculture, and industry.

While more work needs to be done, collective progress has been made that warrants continued efforts to define and approve details for a finalized agreement. Through continued cooperation and coordinated action, there is a shared commitment to ensuring the long-term sustainability and resilience of the Colorado River system.

On the same day Arizona leaders including the Governor and bipartisan leadership from state house and senate submitted a letter to Interior Secretary Burgum asking that he ensure that the Post-2026 Guidelines maintain compliance with the Colorado River Compact and stating that they “find it alarming that the Upper Basin States have repeatedly refused to implement any volume of binding, verifiable water supply reductions” and that this “extreme negotiating posture—four of the seven Basin States refusing to participate in any sharing of water shortages—has led to fundamental impasse that is preventing the successful development of a Seven-State consensus plan for management of the Colorado River.”

The Basin States have not yet reached agreement on the key operational elements of the Post-2026 Guidelines including criteria for releases from Lake Powell, Lower Basin reduction triggers, storage in Lake Mead, and whether and under what conditions the Upper Basin will reduce water uses, but will continue to meet to discuss these issues. Metropolitan staff participates in these meetings as advisors to California's principal representative in the Basin States negotiations, JB Hamby, in his role as Chair of the Colorado River Board of California.

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Colorado River Salinity Control Forum Meeting

Metropolitan hosted the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum meeting at Union Station on October 29. The Forum is made up of representatives from the seven Colorado River Basin States which provide guidance to numerous federal agencies on implementing the Colorado River Salinity Control Program. Due to the federal shutdown, federal staff was limited during the meeting. During the meeting, the Forum received a report from the Bureau of Reclamation that the paradox well has been operating at 2/3 capacity with no increase in seismic activity in the region. The well was shut down for a few years following an earthquake in Paradox Valley when the well was operating at full capacity, but it appears that the well can operate at reduced capacity without inducing additional earthquakes. The salinity near Metropolitan's intake at Lake Havasu is estimated to be 125 milligrams per liter lower due to the overall implementation of the Salinity Control Program.