



● Colorado River Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities related to management of Metropolitan's Colorado River resources for the month of November 2021.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Colorado River Basin States Coordination Update

Representatives of the seven Colorado River Basin States met to discuss the aspects of Drought Contingency Plan implementation that have been triggered by recent 24-Month Study projections. In the Upper Basin Drought Contingency Plan, 24-Month Study projections that Lake Powell fall to be at elevation 3,525 feet trigger additional actions. The Upper Basin States provided an update on their work to develop an implementation agreement for Drought Response Operations in Colorado River Storage Project reservoirs above Lake Powell. Under the plan, water is moved from upstream reservoirs into Lake Powell to help keep the reservoir at a level where power generation can continue.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation hosted a public webinar on November 5 to discuss the approach and responsive actions being considered in response to the 1,030 Consultation provision in the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan. Arizona, Nevada, and California began discussing options for keeping Lake Mead from declining below elevation 1,030 feet in August, after the 24-Month Study minimum probable scenario showed the risk of Lake Mead reaching elevation 1,030 feet with the next two years triggered the provision in the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan called the 1,030 Consultation. The webinar included information on reservoir conditions, modeling done by Nevada and Arizona, and options for additional actions being considered by Lower Basin managers in the 1,030 Consultation.

Modeling done by Arizona and Nevada showed that adding an additional 500,000 acre-feet per year to Lake Mead through 2026 would significantly increase the likelihood of keeping lake levels above elevation 1,020 feet. Based on this modeling, the Lower Basin States have been working to develop options to add at least 500,000 acre-feet to Lake Mead in 2022 and 2023. This is being called the 500+ Plan. Metropolitan has worked with water managers in Arizona and Nevada to discuss options for potential supply and funding for a 500+ Plan. Potential sources of water supply generally would come from creation of additional system water and ICS. The Southern Nevada Authority Water Authority and Central Arizona Water Conservation District both took board action authorizing their general managers to enter into agreements and spend money to implement a 500+ Plan. A related board action item will be brought to the Metropolitan board in December.

Outreach Trip to Imperial Irrigation District and Palo Verde Irrigation District

On November 18, Metropolitan's Chairwoman, several directors, and some staff members traveled to the offices of Imperial Irrigation District and Palo Verde Irrigation District to meet with new directors from those agencies and explore opportunities to expand our existing partnerships. Discussions included options to enhance the local farming communities in those regions and explore opportunities to highlight needs to protect the Salton Sea. Both agencies expressed appreciation for Metropolitan making this trip and look forward to further dialogue about options to enhance our partnership with those agricultural communities.