



# Report on Upcoming Colorado River Negotiations

Water Planning and Stewardship Committee  
Item 6b

August 16, 2021

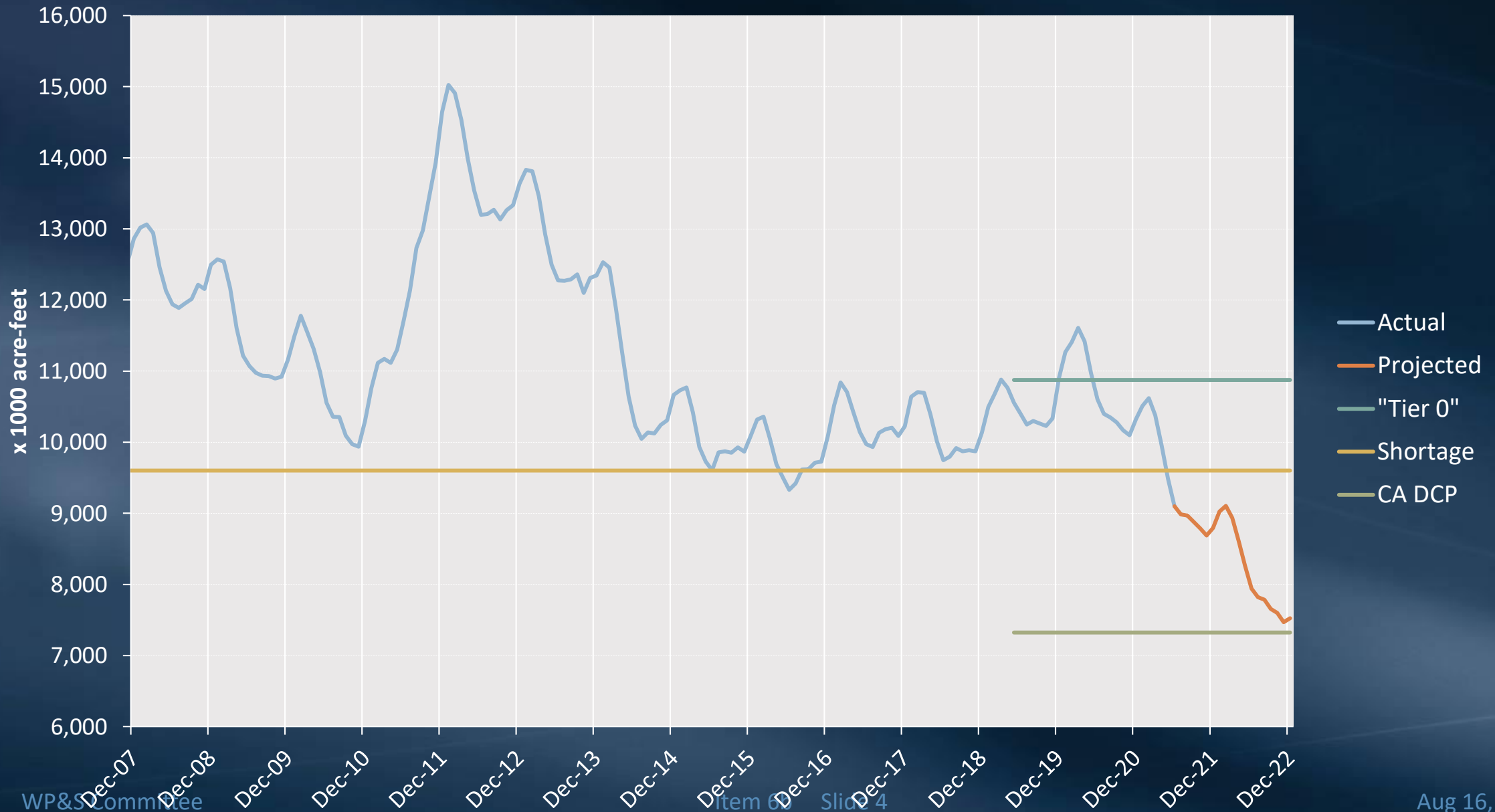
# Overview of Report

- Current Conditions
- Scope of Upcoming Negotiations
  - New Colorado River Guidelines
  - Near-term Drought Response Actions
- Process for Receiving Board Direction

# Powell, Mead, Oroville all at Record Low Levels



# Lake Mead Storage 2007 - 2022





# Upcoming DOI Determinations

- Shortage Declaration for 2022
  - 330,000 AF Total Cut to Arizona, Nevada
    - 200,000 AF of DCP contributions also required
  - Mexico's Supplies Reduced by 50,000 AF
    - 30,000 AF of contributions also required
  - Total Lower Basin Reduction: 610,000 AF
  - No California Shortage, may withdraw ICS

# Upcoming DOI Determinations

- Anticipate Reaching DCP Consultation Trigger
  - If any 24-Month Study projects Lake Mead reaching 1,030' in two Years, the Secretary and Lower Division States shall consult and determine what additional measures will be taken by the Secretary and the States to avoid and protect against the potential for Lake Mead to decline below 1,020'.

# Current Drought Response

- PVID System Conservation Agreement
  - Funded by USBR, CAP, SNWA, Metropolitan
  - PVID Fallowing Increased by 60,000 AF/yr
    - In addition to MWD's existing fallowing call
    - Three-year program; first year voluntary
  - Program will add about 3 feet to Lake Mead
- Agencies Considering Similar Agreement for Bard Seasonal Fallowing Program

# Additional Potential Short-term Drought Actions Being Explored

- Funding Additional Agricultural Conservation
- Increasing ICS Storage Space in Lake Mead
- Operation of Yuma Desalting Plant
- Partner with Mexico for Additional Conservation
- Fund Urban Conservation/Local Resources



# Development of New Colorado River Guidelines



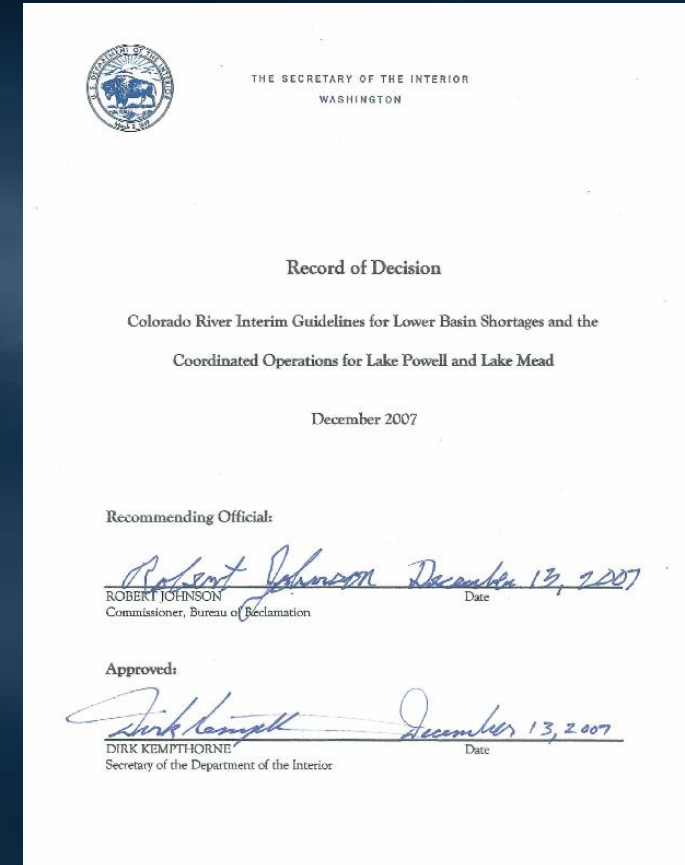
# 2005 Lower Colorado River Multispecies Conservation Plan

- Key MSCP Provisions
  - Provides CESA/ESA Coverage for Current and Future Water and Power Operations
  - 50 year Program
  - Develops Critical Habitat for Endangered Species



# 2007 Interim Guidelines

- Effective through 2026
- Key Guidelines Provisions
  - Established Lower Basin Surplus and Shortage Triggers
  - Coordinated Reservoir Operations
  - Developed Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS)





# Cooperative Minutes with Mexico

- Key Provisions of Minutes
  - Mexico shares in surplus and shortage
  - Mexico may store water in US Reservoirs
  - US agencies, Mexico partner to conserve water
  - Environmental flows to Colorado River Delta



# 2019 Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan

- Key DCP Provisions
  - Established triggers for Lower Basin Lake Mead Contributions
  - Incentivized Storage
  - Provided flexibility for recovering storage, implementing exchanges





# Looking Towards New Guidelines

- Interim Guidelines (incl. DCP) Terminate in 2025
  - Mexico's related minutes also expire
- Tasks to Complete New Guidelines
  - DOI Completion of EIS Process, ROD
  - Companion Minutes with Mexico
  - Develop Implementing Agreements
  - Increase Lower Colorado MSCP Compliance
  - Obtain Federal Legislation (anticipated)

# Staff Assisting in Negotiations

- Manager, Colorado River Resources
- Colorado River Policy Manager
- Senior Policy Advisor, Colorado River
- Colorado River Hydrologic Modelers
- Legal Department
- External Affairs
- Executive Management

# Obtaining Board Direction

- Provide Regular Updates to WPS Committee
  - Inform Committee of Key Milestones/Decisions
  - Consider Board Workshop(s)
  - Ad Hoc Committee option if needed/desired
- Seek Input to Update/Develop Colorado River Guiding Policies

# Potential New Colorado River Board Policies

To What Extent and Under What Conditions will Metropolitan:

- Share in Colorado River Delivery Reductions
- Allow Interstate Investments in and Sharing Yield from Water Recycling or Desalination Projects
- Pursue and Share Storage Opportunities
- Purchase Agriculture Land

# Next Steps

- Begin Obtaining Board Input for Colorado River Policies
  - Land Purchase Policy Discussion in Sept.
- Collaborate with other Stakeholders to Develop Short-term Drought Response Options
- Evaluate Options to Address Anticipated Long-term Demand/Supply Gap
- Determine Additional MSCP Coverage Needed
- Develop Plan Consistent with Board Principles



