



● **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 September 2021.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Colorado River Basin States Coordination Update

The 2007 Interim Guidelines for operation and management of the Colorado River expire at the end of 2025, and in anticipation of the development of new operating rules, representatives of the Colorado River Basin States (Basin States) have started to meet regularly to coordinate in advance of formal reconsultation on the guidelines, a process that will begin when the U.S. Department of the Interior starts the National Environmental Policy Act process necessary for adoption of new guidelines. In advance of the next set of negotiations, the Basin States have been working on a sensitivity analysis that is intended to evaluate how various parameters are effected by incremental changes, especially with the projections of reduced runoff into the Colorado River and lower reservoir elevations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead.

Representatives of the Upper and Lower Basins are also coordinating separately to work on issues in each Basin's Drought Contingency Plan that have been triggered by elevation declines in Lake Powell and Lake Mead. In the Lower Basin, Metropolitan is engaged in the discussions regarding possible Lower Basin response to the 24-Month Study showing that Lake Mead will decline to an elevation of 1,030 feet in the minimum probable scenario. The Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan includes a provision that requires the Lower Division States (Arizona, California and Nevada) and the Department of the Interior to consult when this occurs to discuss actions that will be taken by the Secretary and Lower Division States to prevent Lake Mead from declining below 1,020 feet. The Governor's representatives from the Lower Division States have set up four Workgroups to develop approaches to accomplish this goal and have been given until early December to develop approaches that could be implemented in 2022. Metropolitan staff is participating in each of these Workgroups and will provide updates to the Committee as the action plan develops.

Metropolitan's Colorado River Water Order for 2022

On September 15, Metropolitan submitted its Colorado River Diversion Estimate and Part 417 Consultation Questionnaire (Water Order) to Reclamation for calendar year 2022. Submitting the Water Order helps ensure Metropolitan's ability to fully access available Colorado River supplies. Metropolitan's 2022 Water Order estimates a total Colorado River water supply of 998,700 acre feet (AF), with a minimum diversion of 601,300 AF and a maximum creation of 400,000 AF of Extraordinary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus. The Water Order reflects the 50,800 AF of water that will be generated through the Palo Verde Irrigation District/Metropolitan Forbearance and Fallowing Program and left in Lake Mead as system conservation water.

Metropolitan and Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Execute Settlement Agreement

Following Metropolitan's September Board authorization, on September 16 Metropolitan and IID executed an agreement to settle two lawsuits that had been filed by IID related to Metropolitan's approval of the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan. Per the terms of the agreement, IID will dismiss both of those lawsuits, and following their dismissal, IID has indicated that it intends to request Metropolitan to store 25,000 acre-feet of water that it conserved this year in a sub-account to Metropolitan's Intentionally Created Surplus Account in Lake Mead.