



● **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 October 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 will 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. These actions include moving water from upstream reservoirs to Lake Powell to reduce the risk of the Lake falling below the level that power can be produced. The Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan includes a consultation provision triggered when the 24-Month Study minimum probable scenario forecast shows Lake Mead declining to elevation 1,030 feet or below. The Department of the Interior and Lower Basin States have started the "1,030' Consultation," and work is underway to develop approaches to avoid Lake Mead declining below elevation 1,030 feet. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) announced a webinar on November 5 to discuss the approach and responsive actions being considered in response to the "1,030' Consultation". Reclamation also informed the Basin States representatives that reconsultation to establish rules for management and operation of the Colorado River after the 2007 Interim Guidelines expire at the end of 2025 will not begin until the Spring of 2022, at the earliest.

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum Meeting

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum convened a hybrid meeting on October 27 and 28 in Lake Las Vegas. Recently, Governor Newsom filled the two open California seats by appointing Jessica Neuwerth, from the Colorado River Board of California, and Joaquin Esquivel, Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board to the Forum. Ms. Neuwerth and Mr. Esquivel join Metropolitan's Bill Hasencamp as the representatives from California to the Forum, which works with Reclamation to oversee implementation of the Colorado River Salinity Control Program. The Forum heard a report from Wayne Pullan, the Director of the Upper Colorado Region, about the status of the salinity control project in the Paradox Valley. Mr. Pullan indicated that Reclamation is conducting a risk analysis of further operation of the brine injection well and following the completion of that assessment will determine any future operation of the well. He stated that the risk analysis would be completed in about two years. The Forum urged Reclamation to see if it can operate the well at some safe level while the assessment is being completed. The Forum also received a report that salinity levels are expected to rise at Lake Havasu over the next two years due to recent dry years and nonoperation of the Paradox well. Finally, the Forum received a report showing that insufficient revenue from the Basin States is being collected to cost share with the federal government to fully implement the Salinity Control Program. The states have begun discussions to consider options to obtain addition funding for the Program. The changes being discussed may require congressional authorization to implement. Staff will keep the Committee updated as discussions continue.