



● **Colorado River Management Report**

Summary

This Report provides a summary of the activities related to management of Metropolitan's Colorado River Resources during November 2011.

Detailed Report

Colorado River Basin Study Solicits Ideas from the Public

The Colorado River Basin Study (Basin Study) is entering its fourth and final phase: development and evaluation of opportunities for balancing water supply and demand in the Colorado River Basin (Basin). The two-year, \$2 million study, which was jointly funded by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and seven Colorado River Basin States, is evaluating the potential future water supply imbalances in the Colorado Basin and considering alternatives to reduce those imbalances. To date, Reclamation has completed a demand assessment; a projection of future supplies, factoring in the potential impacts of climate change; and has developed a number of metrics to evaluate impacts to Basin resources (e.g., water supply needs, power generation, recreation, etc.). The next phase, which is now beginning, will evaluate the effectiveness of different options and strategies to meet the Basin's future needs, including implementation of new projects, modifying project operations, and institutional changes.

This fourth phase will solicit the public's input on identifying and evaluating options that will be considered in the Basin Study. In late November, Reclamation issued a press release seeking input and will inform the public at the upcoming Colorado River Water Users Association conference and other venues. In order for someone to provide input, a detailed form must be filled out, which includes a description of the proposal and any cost information available. Reclamation and the Basin States will seek public input through February 1, 2012. After that date, the ideas will be evaluated, and the most promising ones will be modeled to see what impact that option could have on the various metrics evaluated in the Basin Study. The Basin Study is scheduled to be completed in July 2012.

Reclamation Seeks Input from QSA Parties on Water Accounting Issues

In November, Imperial Irrigation District (IID) notified Reclamation that IID will not conserve enough water to meet its transfer obligation to San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) in 2011. Under the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) and related agreements, IID agreed to conserve water on an annual schedule and transfer that amount of water to SDCWA. In 2011, IID is obligated to conserve 80,000 acre-feet of water developed by implementing land fallowing programs to meet its transfer obligation. (This is in addition to water made available to SDCWA by lining the All-American Canal.) IID informed Reclamation that it will conserve only about 65,000 acre-feet in 2011. Since the QSA and related agreements did not address dealing with shortfalls in conservation requirements, on November 28, Reclamation sent a letter to the QSA and related agreement parties to provide input on how to account for the QSA transfers in 2011. After receiving input from the QSA parties, Reclamation will make a decision in time for the completion of the Colorado River Water Accounting Report, which is due to be completed in May 2012.

Reclamation and Basin States Developing Procedures Document for Binational Agreement

The Basin States and Reclamation are developing a procedures document to guide implementation of a binational water management agreement that the International Boundary and Water Commission hopes to complete by spring of 2012. The document describes the specific proposals to implement the agreement between the United States and Mexico, including conditions under which Mexico takes shortages and surplus, stores water in Lake Mead, and partners with the United States to develop binational water management projects. As of December 1, 2011, the document is mostly complete, but there are a few outstanding issues that still need to be addressed. Staff will report on any updates to these discussions at the December 2011 committee meeting.