



● Colorado River Management Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities related to management of Metropolitan's Colorado River Resources for the month of March 2013.

Detailed Report

Work Groups Meet to Implement Minute 319

In November 2012, officials from Mexico and the United States executed Minute 319 (Minute) to the United States-Mexico 1944 Water Treaty (Water Treaty), which provides a number of operational benefits for the two countries. The term of the Minute is through 2017, and the International Boundary and Water Commission, which oversees implementation of the Water Treaty, is in the process of setting up a number of work groups to implement specific provisions of the Minute. Government officials, water districts, and non-governmental organizations from both countries have been invited to participate in the work groups.

Several of the work groups met during March, including one exploring an emergency connection from the All-American Canal to Mexico, one exploring the development of a seawater desalination plant in Rosarito Beach to provide water to both countries, one looking at an environmental restoration project in Mexico, and one tasked with developing a plan to provide environmental flows to the Colorado River Delta in the spring and summer of 2014. The last work group is tasked with developing a plan to release both a base flow and a pulse flow to the Colorado River Delta by the end of this year. Staff from Metropolitan and the Colorado River Board of California participated in several of the work groups.

Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) Hosts Public Outreach Meetings on Basin Study Implementation

Last December, Reclamation and the Colorado River Basin States completed the Colorado River Water Supply and Demand Study (Basin Study), which identified a potential water supply gap of 3.2 million acre-feet per year by 2060 under current water use patterns. Reclamation is developing a process to identify the Basin Study's next steps. In March, Reclamation hosted two workshops, one in Salt Lake City and one in Arizona, to discuss the Basin Study's findings and discuss participation in developing solutions. A webinar will be held in April 2013 for those unable to attend in person. A formal process for outlining participation in the next steps of the Basin Study will be released shortly.

String of Dry Months Continue

March continued the series of dry months in the Colorado River Basin, and as of April 1, the snowpack measures 72 percent of average. The forecast runoff into Lake Powell dropped during the month, and is currently 48 percent of average for the 2012/2013 water year (October-September). The total storage in the Colorado River Basin has dropped by nearly 6 million acre-feet in the last year, and with the low runoff forecast, will likely drop by a similar amount over the next year. In April 2013, Reclamation will hold a workshop discussing the increased chance of shortages in the Colorado Basin for the next few years; staff will report on those discussions at the May 2013 Water Planning and Stewardship Committee Meeting.