



- Colorado River Management Report

Summary

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

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Glen Canyon High Flow Release

In mid-November, the Department of Interior (Interior) released high flows from Glen Canyon Dam (Dam) to help build sand bars and provide other environmental benefits in the Grand Canyon. Since the construction of the Dam, the transport of sediment into the Grand Canyon has been limited, and many of the beach areas have eroded. The Paria River flows into the Colorado River below the Dam, and is now the major source of sediment into the Grand Canyon. The Paria River, however, is a relatively small tributary, and only provides sediment during heavy monsoonal rains along the Colorado Plateau. This September there were large rainstorms that caused the Paria River to transport a significant amount of sediment into the Colorado River. As part of an effort to transport that sediment to the backwaters and beaches in the Grand Canyon, Interior significantly increased the releases from the Dam over a five-day period, increasing from about 6,000 cfs before the releases began to over 34,000 cfs at its peak. In order to reach those high flows, water was bypassed around the hydropower generators and released out of the bypass tubes. Although extra water was released from the Dam into Lake Mead in November, the annual release for the water year remains unchanged at 7.48 million acre-feet.

QSA Implementation Workgroup Holds First Meeting

In an effort to better coordinate implementation of the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) and its related agreements, staff from Imperial Irrigation District, Coachella Valley Water District, San Diego County Water Authority, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and Metropolitan met in November to review each agency's activities related to the QSA. The meeting was the first of the newly-formed QSA Implementation Workgroup, which has a goal of providing greater transparency in conservation and transfer programs and avoiding conflicts related to accounting decisions made by Reclamation in its annual Water Accounting Report. The group will meet on a quarterly basis with each agency taking a turn to host the meeting.

SNWA, CAP, and Metropolitan Urge Reclamation to Assist in Aiding Lake Mead Level

The general managers of Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA), Central Arizona Project (CAP), and Metropolitan wrote a letter to the Lower Colorado Regional Director on November 1 urging him to leave any unused state apportionment in Lake Mead this year and not allow it to be reallocated to another state. It appears that the state of Arizona will not use all of its apportioned water this year, and the agencies requested Reclamation to let the water be kept in Lake Mead, which is being drawn down significantly this year due to drought conditions. The letter also highlighted the efforts the agencies have made to add storage to Lake Mead, including (1) creation of Intentionally Created Surplus water which has been stored in the reservoir; (2) funding the operation of the Yuma Desalting Plant in 2010; and (3) funding construction of Brock Reservoir, which has been operational for three years reducing system spills. Finally, the letter highlighted the additional efforts the agencies will be exploring over the next two years to further help storage levels in Lake Mead.