



● 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 2014.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

2014 Water Year ends with Lakes Powell and Mead Moving in Opposite Directions

On September 30, the 2014 water year (October 1 to September 30) came to an end. It will be remembered as the year with the lowest releases from Lake Powell since it began filling more than 50 years ago. The Lake Powell releases were reduced to just under 7.5 million acre-feet due to drought conditions in the Upper Colorado River Basin in water year 2013. With the reduced releases, storage in Lake Powell went up by 1.4 million acre-feet during the water year and was 50 percent full on September 30. Levels in Lake Mead, on the other hand, dropped significantly due to the reduced inflow, with storage dropping by 2.2 million acre-feet during the water year, measuring 39 percent full on September 30. Starting with the new water year on October 1, releases from Lake Powell will increase and are expected to total 9.0 million acre-feet during water year 2015, which will significantly slow or even stop the declines in Lake Mead next year. Currently, Lake Mead stands at 6 feet above the level at which the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) would issue a first-ever shortage declaration for the Colorado River.

Lower Basin States Continue Drought Management Discussions

During September, staff from Metropolitan met with staff from Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA), Central Arizona Project (CAP), Reclamation and other agencies to further discuss programs that could be implemented to provide some drought relief for the Colorado River, while also assisting Metropolitan to meet water supply needs during the exceptional drought conditions in California. The parties hope to bring viable options forward for consideration before the end of the calendar year.

Reclamation Seeks Requests to Participate in System Conservation Program

At the end of September, Reclamation sent letters to the larger water contract holders on the Lower Colorado River seeking their interest in participation in a program in which municipal entities and Reclamation would fund conservation activities, with the conserved water remaining in Lake Mead as system water for everyone's benefit. The letter was part of the agreement whereby Metropolitan, SNWA, CAP, Denver Water, and Reclamation will contribute up to \$11 million for water conservation activities in the Colorado River Basin. The Reclamation letter asks for interested parties to submit proposals that include the type of conservation that could be implemented, the amount of water conserved, and the estimated cost of the project. After the proposals have been received, the funding agencies and Reclamation will evaluate the proposals and determine which projects to pursue.

Reclamation Approves Metropolitan's 2015 ICS Plan

On September 25, Reclamation sent a letter to Metropolitan approving the ability to create up to 200,000 acre-feet of ICS water for storage in Lake Mead in 2015. While the Reclamation letter gives Metropolitan the approval to store up to 200,000 acre-feet of water in Lake Mead in 2015, unless drought conditions ease in California, it is not likely that Metropolitan will be able to store water in Lake Mead in 2015 as the water would be needed in Southern California.

Board Report (Colorado River Management Report)

Mexico Identifies Conservation Project to be Funded by Metropolitan

On September 26, the International Boundary and Water Commission hosted a meeting in San Ysidro with representatives from the United States and Mexico providing an update on the implementation of Minute 319 to the United States-Mexico International Water Treaty. In that meeting, Mexico identified a ten-mile segment of the Canal Revolucion that would be lined with funding provided by Metropolitan, SNWA, CAP, and through a separate agreement with Metropolitan and IID. Construction of the lining project could begin within the next year and be completed by 2017. Under the terms of Minute 319, Metropolitan has agreed to fund \$5 million for the conservation project in exchange for 47,500 acre-feet of ICS credits in Lake Mead. IID has the option of funding up to half of Metropolitan's contribution in exchange for an equal portion of the water. The first payment is due at the end of 2014, and the water is scheduled to be available in 2017.