



- Colorado River Management Report

## Summary

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This report provides a summary of activities related to management of Metropolitan's Colorado River resources for the month of November 2015.

## Purpose

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Informational

## Detailed Report

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### **Metropolitan and Bard Water District Discuss Pilot Fallowing Proposal**

On November 17, staff and board members from Bard Water District (Bard) met with Metropolitan to review a draft term sheet for a two-year pilot fallowing proposal. Under the draft proposal, Metropolitan would pay farmers on a voluntary basis to not grow crops during the high water use periods of late spring and early summer. Metropolitan would also cover any costs incurred by Bard to implement the program. Following the meeting, Bard agreed to discuss the proposal at its next board meeting. If Bard approves the draft term sheet, Metropolitan would send the term sheet to farmers in Bard to see if they are interested in participating in the proposed program. If there is sufficient interest, Metropolitan's Board will consider the term sheet for approval in February or March of 2016, with fallowing beginning as early as April of 2016.

### **Additional System Conservation Proposals Under Review**

To date, 11 conservation projects in four states have been funded under the Colorado River Basin System Conservation Agreement, which is being funded by the Bureau of Reclamation, Denver Water, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Central Arizona Project, and Metropolitan. About 32,000 acre-feet is estimated to be conserved from those projects. An additional five projects are being reviewed and could be approved by the end of 2015. Additionally, the Upper Basin solicited a second round of proposals, which will be reviewed by the funding agencies in December 2015. If the current proposals being considered are approved, about 66,000 acre-feet of system water would be conserved over the next two years.

### **Staff view Colorado River Delta Pulse Flow Response**

On November 5, Metropolitan staff participated in a site visit of the Colorado River Delta in Mexico to see the environmental response of the 2014 pulse flow event. Sites visited included Morelos Dam, the Miguel Aleman restoration site, and the bridges at San Luis Rio Colorado. The group saw that many areas responded positively to the pulse flow, with native vegetation sprouting in new areas, which provide habitat for critical species in the region. Representatives from Mexico have said that a follow-up pulse flow would be a necessary item in any follow-up minute to Minute 319.

### **Salton Sea Restoration Project Moves Forward**

On November 5, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Imperial Irrigation District held a ground breaking ceremony for the Red Hill Bay Restoration Project (Project), which will include 420 acres of wetlands near the Alamo River outlet to the Salton Sea. The Project, which is being constructed on the now dry playa on the shore of the Salton Sea, will provide habitat for endangered species and reduce the dust impact from that area. Bruce Wilcox, the new assistant secretary for Salton Sea policy at the Natural Resources Agency, presided over the event.