



● 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 December 2018.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Drought Contingency Plan Status

Approvals in California

At Metropolitan's December 11 board meeting, the Board authorized staff to sign all of the agreements necessary for implementation of the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP).

The Imperial Irrigation District (IID) authorized staff to sign the California Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) Agreement Amendment No. 2, which extends the storage agreement between Metropolitan and IID, and conditionally approved the California ICS Agreement Amendment No. 3 and the agreement between Metropolitan and IID regarding DCP implementation at its December 11 board meeting. The IID board has not yet authorized staff to sign the interstate agreements necessary for DCP implementation.

The Coachella Valley Irrigation District authorized staff to sign the California ICS Agreement Amendment No.2 on December 19, and will consider approval of the agreements relating to the DCP in early January.

The Palo Verde Irrigation District board approved its agreement with Metropolitan regarding DCP implementation in October 2018 and approved the remaining agreements necessary for DCP implementation on December 18.

Arizona

At the seven Basin States Principals' meeting in Las Vegas on December 11, representatives of the State of Arizona and the Central Arizona Water Conservation District provided updates on the progress that has been made in reaching agreement within Arizona, but they stated that they have not gotten to a point of being able to provide approval of the DCP. The representatives stated their hope that they may have the necessary intrastate agreements developed by the time that their legislature convenes in January, but cautioned that this was not yet certain.

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman addressed the status of Lower Division States' approvals of the DCP in her remarks at the Colorado River Water Users' Annual Conference in Las Vegas on December 13. In her statement, the Commissioner noted the urgency in getting all three of the Lower Division States' approval of the Lower Basin DCP, pointing out that "close isn't done." The Commissioner gave Arizona and the entities in California that have not approved the Lower Basin DCP a deadline of January 31, 2019 to receive the needed approvals to implement the agreements. The Commissioner noted that the importance of implementing the DCP this year was sufficient for the Secretary to use his discretion to act. If the approvals have not been made by January 31, 2019, the Secretary will issue a notice in the Federal Register seeking input from each of the seven Basin States regarding potential Secretarial action.

Wet Fall Reduces Agricultural Demands

Board Report (Colorado River Management Report)

The southwest desert regions have experienced one of the wetter fall seasons on record, with many parts of the region receiving more than 6 times the average rainfall during the period. As a result, agricultural water demands have dropped significantly in both Arizona and California. That rainfall has resulted in two beneficial outcomes for Metropolitan; (1) Releases from Lake Mead have been reduced, and the reservoir is now forecast to end the year 2 to 3 feet higher than was projected a few months ago; and (2) Metropolitan's Colorado River water supplies have increased, and now Metropolitan's ICS account is projected to increase by about 80,000 acre-feet this year.