



● 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 August 2019.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Metropolitan's 2019 Intentionally Created Surplus Plan of Creation Approved

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) approved Metropolitan's 2019 Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) Plan of Creation. As part of the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) authorization and implementation, Metropolitan added and amended conservation programs that would qualify for the creation of Extraordinary Conservation ICS (EC ICS). The state of California's annual ICS creation limit is 400,000 acre-feet, however, the DCP authorization provides ICS creation limit flexibility if one, but not all, of the Lower Division States reaches its EC ICS creation limit in a given year. In light of this new flexibility, Metropolitan submitted an ICS Creation Plan that sought approval of up to 450,000 acre-feet of EC ICS, with the amount above the 400,000 acre-feet annual creation volume to be determined upon further accounting and determination by the other Lower Division States of whether they will use their states' total annual EC ICS creation limit by the end of the year. As such, if ICS creation space is available at the end of 2019, California's approved 2019 ICS Creation Plan would enable Metropolitan to work with Reclamation and the other Lower Division States to store more than 400,000 acre-feet of EC ICS in 2019. The actual amount of ICS the Metropolitan will store will be determined by the end of the year and will depend on operational conditions.

Bureau of Reclamation Issues Colorado River Basin August 24-Month Study

Reclamation uses the August 24-Month Study to project January 1 water elevations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Reservoir elevations and system storage are used to set the operational tier for the coordinated operation for Water Year 2020, which will be governed by the Upper Elevation Balancing Tier. An 8.23 million acre-feet release from Lake Powell is expected, however, actual releases may vary due to hydrology through the remainder of the year. The runoff projection of unregulated inflow into Lake Powell April-July 2019 was 2.451 million acre-feet, or 225 percent of the 30-year average. Consistent with Section 2.B.5 of the 2007 Interim Guidelines, in 2018 the ICS Surplus Condition applies, which gives Metropolitan and other ICS contractors the option to order delivery of ICS.

Reclamation issued a press release with this August 24-Month Study in which Brenda Burman, Reclamation Commissioner, stated that "[w]hile we appreciate this year's above average snowpack, one good year doesn't mean the drought is over. We must remain vigilant. I applaud everyone who came together this year to get the drought contingency plans done. The additional actions under the contingency plans will help ensure the reliability of the Colorado River system for the 40 million people dependent upon it."