



## ● 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 October 2020.

### Purpose

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Informational

### Detailed Report

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#### **Bureau of Reclamation Review of the 2007 Interim Guidelines**

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is currently conducting a review of the 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and the Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead (Guidelines) required in Section 7.D. of the 2007 Record of Decision (7.D. Review). This report is intended to review the effectiveness of the Guidelines in meeting the stated objectives of that Record of Decision.

Reclamation initiated the public part of the 7.D. Review process with two webinars hosted in March 2020 that addressed the scope and schedule of the 7.D. Review. Those webinars were attended by participants from the seven Colorado River Basin States, tribes, water districts (including Metropolitan), non-governmental organizations, and hydropower producers. The webinars included an overview of the proposed scope, approach, and schedule for the 7.D. Review.

Reclamation released its draft 7.D. Review report during the week of October 19 and hosted webinars to present the contents of the draft 7.D. Review report on October 23 and October 29. The draft 7.D. Review report both reviews the effectiveness of the Guidelines and documents Reclamation's operational experience under the Guidelines. Reclamation plans to complete this review by end of 2020.

#### **Salinity Control Forum Virtual Meeting**

In late October, the Colorado River Salinity Control Forum (Forum) held its semi-annual meeting via webinar to review the status of the Colorado River Salinity Control Program. During the meeting, the Forum approved the Triennial Review, which provides an overview of the current status of the program and recommends future funding levels for program implementation. The Forum recommends continued funding to ensure salinity remains below established standards. Additionally, the Forum received a report on the status of the Paradox Valley Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Reclamation intends to release a Final EIS in November 2020. In the near future, Reclamation plans to begin a six-month test operation of the existing well at two-thirds of its design capacity and monitor seismic activity in the area. If there are earthquakes of concern, Reclamation would suspend the test operation. The Paradox brine injection well has been shut down for about 18 months; to date, the increased salinity has not reached Metropolitan's Colorado River Aqueduct intake, as models suggest salt from the Upper Colorado Basin takes between two to four years to reach Lake Havasu.

#### **Reclamation Reviews Metropolitan's Water Conservation Activities**

As part of Reclamation's annual approval of Metropolitan's Colorado River order, Reclamation staff reviews Metropolitan's water conservation activities to ensure it is reasonably and beneficially using water from the Colorado River. Each Colorado River contactor must go through a similar effort before Reclamation approves any agency's annual water order. Additionally, as part of the process, Metropolitan submitted a Municipal and Industrial Water Conservation Plan, which is required each year. The Plan highlighted the efforts Metropolitan and its member agencies have done to reduce our region's demands for imported water. Those efforts are highlighted this year, as Metropolitan has a Table A allocation of only 20 percent from the State Water Project,

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yet Metropolitan will likely store close to 300,000 acre-feet of water in its Intentionally Created Surplus account in Lake Mead. Reclamation will review Metropolitan's plan and, if acceptable, will approve Metropolitan's water order later this year.