

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT  
TO THE  
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

**April 10, 2012**

**ADMINISTRATION**

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – March 14, 2012

A copy of the draft March 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes have been included in the Board folder for review and consideration. I am respectfully requesting the Board's adoption and approval at the regularly scheduled Board meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

**PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS**

Colorado River Water Report

As of April 1, 2012, storage in the major Upper Basin reservoirs decreased by 23,600 acre-feet and storage in the Lower Basin reservoirs decreased by 349,900 acre-feet during March 2012. Total System active storage as of April 2<sup>nd</sup> was 37.559 million acre-feet (maf), or 63 percent of capacity, which is 6.067 maf more than one year ago (Upper Basin reservoirs increased by 2.763 maf and Lower Basin reservoirs increased by 3.304 maf).

March releases from Hoover, Davis, and Parker Dams averaged 16,040, 15,140 and 11,550 cubic feet per second (cfs), respectively. Planned releases from those three dams for the month of April 2012, are 14,700, 14,300, and 11,100 cfs, respectively. The April releases represent those needed to meet downstream water requirements including those caused by reduced operation of Senator Wash Reservoir and storage in the Warren H. Brock (Drop 2) Reservoir.

As of April 2<sup>nd</sup>, taking into account both measured and unmeasured return flows, the Lower Division states' consumptive use of Colorado River water for calendar year 2012, as forecasted by Reclamation, totals 7.375 maf and is described as follows: Arizona, 2.852 maf; California, 4.249 maf; and Nevada, 0.274 maf. The Central Arizona Project (CAP) will divert 1.600 maf, of which 0.134 maf are planned to be delivered to the Arizona Water Bank. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) will use about 0.619 maf, which is 80,000 acre-feet less than its 2011 use of mainstream water.

The preliminary end-of-year estimate by the Board staff for 2012 California agricultural consumptive use of Colorado River water under the first three priorities and the sixth priority of the 1931 *California Seven Party Agreement* is 3.585 maf with IID's estimate if the QSA remains in place and 3.660 maf if QSA is ruled invalid. This estimate is based on the collective use, through February 2012, by the Palo Verde Irrigation District, the Yuma Project-Reservation

Division (YPRD), the Imperial Irrigation District, and the Coachella Valley Water District. Figure 1, found at the end of this report, depicts the projected end-of-year agricultural use for the year.

As of April 8<sup>th</sup>, the water level at the Lake Mead was at 1,128.24 feet above the mean sea level, and the storage was 14.416 maf, 55.7 percent of capacity, while the water level at Lake Powell was at 3,635.70 feet above the mean sea level and the storage was 15.501 maf, 63.7 percent of capacity.

## Colorado River Operations

### *Status of the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study Report*

As has been discussed at previous Board meetings, the Project Team and consultants are currently in the process of evaluating and analyzing the options and strategies that were submitted by interested stakeholders and members of the public in early 2012. A total of 139 options and strategies for balancing water supply and demand were submitted. Twenty-one (21) of the options/strategies were submitted by Project members, and 118 options were submitted by members of the public.

Currently members of the Project Team and the consultants are continuing to work on developing and refining the “Project Types” and “Categories” that each of the submitted options /strategies can be included within. For example, the Project Team has identified the following Project Types as those projects that (1) Increase Supply; (2) Reduce Demand; (3) Modify Operations; and (4) Governance and Implementation. Within those major project types, the following sub-divisions of categories have been identified, including: Importation, Desalination, Reuse, Local Supply, Watershed Management, Municipal and Industrial Conservation, Agricultural Water Conservation, Energy Water Use Efficiency, System Evaporation Reduction, System Reoperation, Policy Changes, Banking, Transfers and Exchanges, Governance, Finance, Implementation, and Information. In the context of evaluating and analyzing the submitted options/strategies, the Project Team and consultants are looking at the options from the perspective of the potential quantity of water created and/or conserved, the location of the proposed project/activity, the timing of implementation of the proposed project or activity, seasonal timing, and the potential requirements for integrating the proposed project/activity into the system.

A webinar/conference call was held on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and a Project Team meeting held in Salt Lake City, Utah, at Reclamation’s Upper Colorado Regional Office on March 26<sup>th</sup> to continue the process of evaluating and analyzing the options and strategies and incorporation in the next iteration of the report. There is an aggressive schedule of a series of face-to-face meetings and conference calls that have been scheduled between March and July in an effort to ensure that the Basin Study Report is completed and published in July 2012 as planned.

*Reclamation's Letter of Verification for MWD's Creation of Extraordinary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus (EC ICS) in 2010, and Letter of Approval of MWD's 2012 Plan for Creation of EC ICS*

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Reclamation acknowledged and certified, via a letter, that MWD had created 100,864 acre-feet of extraordinary conservation intentionally created surplus (EC ICS) during calendar year 2010. This specified amount does not reflect the one-time deduction of five (5) percent for the System pursuant to Section 3.B.2 of the 2007 Interim Guidelines. Additionally, Reclamation has approved MWD's 2012 Plan for Creation of EC ICS. In its plan, MWD proposed to create the EC ICS via (1) its Palo Verde Irrigation District Forebearance and Following Program, (2) the Imperial Irrigation District Water Conservation Program and (3) the MWD-funded Water Supply from Desalination. According to the plan and these programs, MWD is planning to create up to 200,000 acre-feet of EC ICS during calendar year 2012. I have included copies of both letters from Reclamation to MWD in the Board folder materials.

Basin States Discussions

*Status of Binational Discussions/Negotiations*

Significant progress has been made in the discussions related to Minute 319. Representatives from Mexico have indicated that they will be prepared to share a counterproposal on the draft of Minute 319 that the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) sent to Mexico in February. As such, a meeting has been scheduled in Juarez, Mexico on April 10<sup>th</sup>. At the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting it is anticipated that counterproposal will be delivered to the United States Section of IBWC and the U. S. Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. During the meeting, Mexico's representatives will explain the contents of the counterproposal. Since the counterproposal will be in Spanish, it will take about one week for it to be translated into English.

Commissioner Connor has scheduled a conference call on April 11<sup>th</sup> to update the Basin States Technical Group members on the meeting with Mexico. The Basin States Technical Group has scheduled a meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup> to review the counterproposal from Mexico and to outline the next steps.

Regarding the domestic documents that are needed before Minute 319 can be executed, progress is being made in their development. The 2012 Lower Colorado River Basin Forbearance Agreement for Binational Intentionally Created Surplus, Exhibit A to the Forbearance Agreement covering the Binational Intentionally Created Surplus Pilot Project, the Interim Operating Agreement for Implementation of Minute 319, and the Domestic Protocol for Minute 319 are all nearing final form. These documents, as well as Mexico's counterproposal regarding Minute 319, will be discussed in more detail at the Board meeting.

## Colorado River Water Quality & Environmental Issues

### *Status of the Development of the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan for the Operation of Glen Canyon Dam*

As you may recall from the previous Board meeting in March, the seven Colorado River Basin states recently submitted a joint letter providing Reclamation with scoping comments associated with Reclamation's initiation of the process for preparation of the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan for the Operation of Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Impact Statement (LTEMP EIS). The letter included a statement of the Basin states' collective interests in the effective administration of the Colorado River System reservoirs (e.g., water supplies and hydroelectric energy generation, etc.).

Also, at the March Board meeting I had briefed Board members about a meeting that was held in late-February with representatives of the Basin states, staff from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and several scientists that are involved in on-going long-term research and monitoring activities through the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program. These scientists represented expertise in the following: (1) the biology and ecology of the endangered Humpback chub; (2) the biology and ecology of rainbow trout; (3) the aquatic foodbase ecology of Glen and Marble Canyons; and (4) the sand and sediment resources of the Grand Canyon ecosystem. The primary purpose of the meeting was to receive a brief synthesis and overview of the current state-of-knowledge of the science, and then open up discussions among the state representatives to determine if there is any interest in developing a Basin states' alternative for inclusion in the LTEMP EIS process. I attended this all-day meeting, and found it incredibly informative and helpful.

This meeting was then followed up with a series of conference calls among the Basin states and the decision has been made that the Basin states will develop a "Basin States' Alternative" for analysis and evaluation in the LTEMP EIS process. Toward this end, the Basin states submitted a joint-letter to the LTEMP EIS co-leads, Reclamation and the National Park Service, requesting an extension of time to develop a preliminary alternative. The letter requested that the co-leads extend the deadline by 90-days from the original deadline of early-April 2012. I understand that the LTEMP EIS co-leads have not formally responded with a letter to the Basin states letter, in an electronic mail response (April 3, 2012) the co-leads indicated—

"We indicated at our February 24 cooperating agencies meeting that we would request that all alternatives be submitted for consideration not later than April 13, 2012. We are no longer holding to that deadline, recognizing the need for additional time for everyone to develop alternatives for consideration in the EIS. While we are willing to consider providing the Basin States with additional time to develop an alternative, we believe that it is premature in advance of the Flagstaff meetings to decide on an exact time frame for an extension. We would prefer to allow all the participating stakeholders, including the Basin States, to provide input on the alternative concepts we have preliminarily identified as an initial step to help assess the appropriate period of additional time that would facilitate subsequent input from various stakeholders."

Meanwhile the Basin states, WAPA and scientists have scheduled a conference call for April 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss a proposed schedule that allows for the development and submittal of a Basin States' Alternative for the LTEMP EIS. Currently that proposed schedule shows completion of the alternative and submittal to the co-leads on May 30, 2012. Additionally, the scientists and WAPA have developed a very preliminary "Basin States Review Draft of a Proposed Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan for Flow and Non-Flow Actions Related to the Operation of Glen Canyon Dam". I have included a copy of the proposed schedule in the Board handout materials.

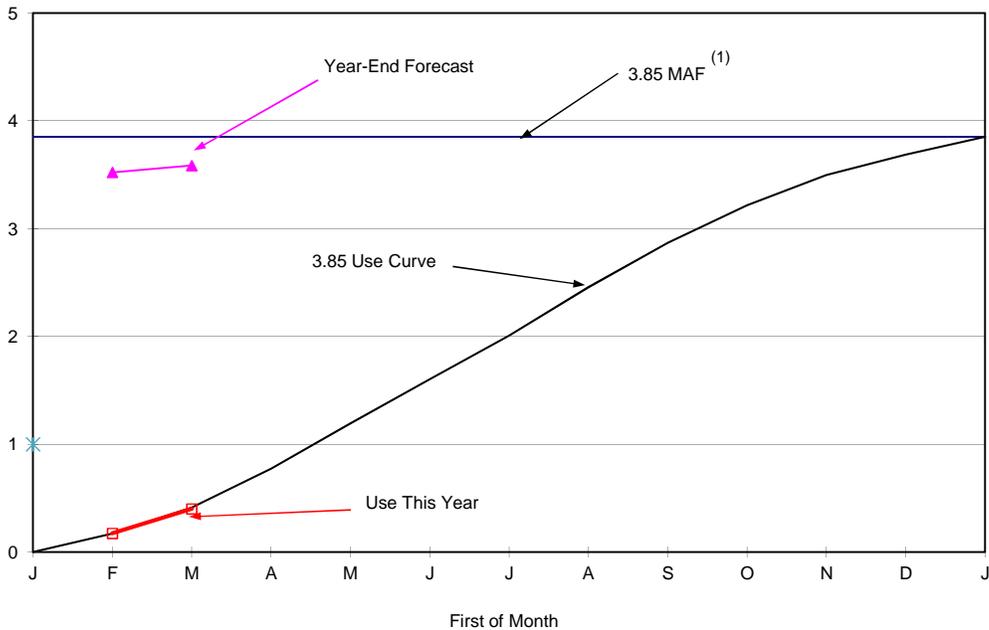
*Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program*

Generally, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum and the seven Basin states submit written testimony to the various Senate and House committees and subcommittees dealing with agency appropriations. As in past years, the Forum encourages submission of testimony-of-support from each state, as well as appropriate organizations within each state. Consequently, in support of the Salinity Control Program's agency funding requests for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, the Board submitted testimony to various House and Senate committees and/or subcommittees. The testimony was submitted in support of \$14.5 million for Reclamation's Basin-wide Salinity Control Program; \$18 million annually of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Environmental Quality Incentives Program; and \$5.2 million for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to assist in continued implementation of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, with \$1.5 million to be designated specifically to identified salinity control efforts. This level of appropriation being requested by the federal agencies is that which is required in order to continue to fully implement the 2011 Triennial Review "Plan of Implementation". Representative copies of the Board's written testimony has been included in the Board folder.

/s/

Christopher S. Harris  
Acting Executive Director

**FIGURE 1**  
**APRIL 1, 2012 FORECAST OF 2012 YEAR-END COLORADO RIVER WATER USE**  
**BY THE CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL AGENCIES**



Forecast of Colorado River Water Use by the California Agricultural Agencies (Millions of Acre-feet)			
Month	Use as of First of Month	Forecast of Year End Use (1)	Forecast of Unused Water (2)
Jan	0.000	-----	-----
Feb	0.174	3.522	-0.008
Mar	0.401	3.585	-0.071
Apr			
May			
Jun			
Jul			
Aug			
Sep			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			
Jan			

- (1) The forecast of year end use is based on continuation of the QSA, without QSA year end use is estimated to be about 3.660 maf.
- (2) The forecast of unused water is based on the availability of 3.514 MAF under the first three priorities of the water delivery contracts. This accounts for the 85,000 af of conserved water available to MWD under the 1988 IID-MWD Conservation agreement and the 1988 IID-MWD-CVWD-PVID Agreement as amended; 90,000 AF of conserved water available to SDCWA under the IID-SDCWA Transfer Agreement as amended being diverted by MWD; as estimated 24,500 AF of conserved water available to SDCWA and MWD as a result of the Coachella Canal Lining Project, 67,700 AF of water available to SDCWA and MWD as a result of the All American Canal Lining Project; 14,500 AF of water IID and CVWD are forbearing to permit the Secretary of the Interior to satisfy a portion of Indian and miscellaneous present perfected rights use and 25,000 AF of water IID is conserving to create Extraordinary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus. 22,500 AF has been subtracted for IID's Salton Sea Salinity Management in 2012. As USBR is charging uses by Yuma Island pumpers to priority 2, the amount of unused water has been reduced by those uses - 6,660 AF. The CRB does not concur with USBR's viewpoint on this matter.