

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

November 12, 2013

ADMINISTRATION

Minutes of the October 9, 2013 Meeting of the Colorado River Board

A copy of the draft Board meeting minutes from the meeting held on October 9 has been included in the Board packet for your review.

2014 Board Meeting Schedule

A memo describing options for the 2014 Board meeting schedule is included in the Board packet for review during the meeting.

Resolution Honoring Dennis Strong

Dennis Strong, the Director of the Utah Division of Water Resources and Colorado River representative for the State of Utah retired on November 1, 2013. Included in the Board packet for your consideration is a proposed Resolution recognizing his 38 years of public service within Utah and his work on the Colorado River.

PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS

Colorado River Basin Water Report

As of November 1, 2013, the water level at Lake Mead was at 1,104 feet with 12.10 million acre-feet (maf) of storage, or 47 % of capacity, while the water level at Lake Powell was at 3,591 feet with 10.90 maf of storage, or 45 % of capacity. The total System active storage as of November 1 was 29.62 maf, or 50 % of capacity, which is 4.02 maf less than one year ago when the System storage was at 56 % of capacity. October releases from Hoover, Davis, and Parker Dams averaged 11,920, 12,510, and 7,590 cubic feet per second (cfs), respectively. Planned releases from those three dams for the month of November 2013 are 9,400, 9,400, and 6,300 cfs, respectively.

As of November 1, taking into account both measured and unmeasured return flows, the Lower Division states' consumptive use of Colorado River water for calendar year 2013 is forecasted to be 7.44 maf and is described as follows: Arizona, 2.82 maf; California, 4.38 maf; and Nevada, 0.253 maf.

As of November 1, the preliminary end-of-year estimate by the Bureau of Reclamation for 2013 for California's agricultural consumptive use of Colorado River water under the first three

priorities and the sixth priority of the 1931 *California Seven Party Agreement* is 3.38 maf. This estimate is based on the collective use, through October 2013, by the Palo Verde Irrigation District, the Yuma Project-Reservation Division, the Imperial Irrigation District, and the Coachella Valley Water District. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is forecasted to use about 0.913 maf.

COLORADO RIVER OPERATIONS

Glen Canyon Dam High-Flow Experimental Release, November 11-16, 2013

On November 11-16, 2013, the Department of Interior will conduct a high flow experimental (HFE) release from Glen Canyon Dam in accordance with the 2012 High-Flow Experimental Release Protocol. Under the Protocol, high flow releases are linked to sediment input and other resource conditions below Glen Canyon Dam. The 2013 HFE will be the second conducted under the HFE Protocol, and was scheduled because of an input of approximately one million metric tons of sediment from the Paria River watershed during a mid-September monsoonal storm event. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that there is between 1.5 and 2.4 million metric tons of sediment in the upper Marble Canyon reach of the Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam. This HFE is intended to remobilize much of this sediment and redistribute it among the backwaters and beaches along the Colorado River to benefit natural and cultural resources.

Beginning on the morning of November 11, releases from Glen Canyon Dam will begin ramping up to approximately 19,100 cfs from 6 power generation units. At midday on November 11, the bypass tubes at Glen Canyon Dam will be opened and releases will continue to increase up to full power plant and bypass capacity (approximately 34,100 cfs) by the evening of November 11th. Releases will be maintained at peak release for 4 days (96 hours) and then begin ramping back down. Releases will return to normal operations in the afternoon of November 16. The entire experiment, including ramping is expected to last five-and-a-half days, with the four days at peak release. November releases from Glen Canyon Dam prior to and after the HFE are expected to fluctuate between 5,000 cfs and 8,000 cfs. The elevation of Lake Powell is expected to decrease approximately 2.5 feet during the HFE release experiment. The annual release volume from Lake Powell for Water-Year 2014 remains at 7.48 maf and will not change as a result of the HFE.

BASIN STATES DISCUSSIONS

Minute 319 Implementation Update

The only bi-national work group that has met in person since the October 9 Board meeting was the group investigating the potential for a desalination facility at Rosarito, Mexico. The meeting included a presentation by a private company that is interested in constructing a desalination plant for delivery of water to Otay, California in addition to providing water within Mexico. The Environmental Projects work group has continued its efforts to develop a proposed pulse flow delivery plan and a corresponding monitoring plan. It is anticipated that a pulse flow plan will be presented to the Consultative Council for review within the next few weeks and that

the plan can be submitted to the IBWC and CILA Commissioners by January 2014 in accordance with the schedule established in Minute 319.

Status of the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study

In October 2013, all three workgroups (municipal conservation, agricultural conservation and environmental flows) met in person and/or by webinar to discuss data collection protocols and processes. The *Municipal and Industrial Conservation and Reuse* and *Agricultural Conservation, Productivity and Water Transfers* workgroups have completed draft data collection templates, with the Agricultural workgroup setting a deadline of January 10, 2014 to complete their data collection efforts. The *Environmental and Recreational Flows* Workgroup has reviewed potential focus reaches in the Upper and Lower Basin and the selection criteria for these reaches. The Environmental Flows workgroup will create a “Reach Delineation” sub-group to develop draft reaches for consideration by the workgroup. The next meetings for each workgroup are scheduled for the second and third weeks of November.

The Basin Study Coordination Team is scheduled to meet on November 14 in San Diego. Agenda topics will include a review of workgroup progress, updates regarding the federally led projects relating to climate science research, data development and the tribal basin study, and a review of state-led efforts such as water banking, augmentation and watershed management.

Status of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program and LTEMP EIS Process

Technical representatives of the Basin States met with the science experts that aided in development of the Basin States’ Resource Targeted Condition-Dependent (RTCD) alternative for the LTEMP EIS on October 15-16, 2013, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The group reviewed follow-up issues regarding the LTEMP EIS Alternatives workshop that was held in Flagstaff, Arizona in August. The science experts and Basin States technical representatives prepared more detailed comments associated with all of the various models being used to evaluate the alternatives being analyzed in the EIS. The Basin States are planning to meet with the EIS Team on November 22 to discuss the detailed comments submitted by the Basin States regarding the EIS process.

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum met on October 23 and 24 in Los Angeles. Due to the recent government shutdown, the Advisory Council did not meet. The Work Group met for two days prior to the Forum meeting. The Forum recognized Mr. Jerry Zimmerman for his services on the Forum and Advisory Council. The Forum continued to discuss the cash-flow issue of the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund (LCRBDF) and its potential impact on implementation of the Salinity Control Program. Representatives from each state will meet to evaluate long-term funding solutions. For the short-term, the Work Group recommended several options including (1) delaying repayment to the U.S. Treasury on completed projects such as Paradox Injection Unit starting in 2014, (2) adjusting allocations to the state agricultural agencies to keep 2014 expenditures to \$9.5 million, and (3) reducing expenditures for studies, administration and other purposes. A letter of recommendation of proposed short-term solutions was submitted to Reclamation for its consideration. As part of the effort to address the

LCRBDF cash-flow issue, the Work Group will develop a definition of cost-effectiveness for salinity projects at future meetings.

The Work Group is also working on the 2014 Triennial Review (Review). As part of the process, Reclamation provided a detailed presentation of the CRSS modeling efforts that will be performed as part of the Review. The initial reservoir conditions will reflect December 2013 projections, the 2007 Upper Colorado River Commission Demand Schedule will be used, and the economic damages model will be run against various salinity control scenarios. It is expected that the final Review will be presented to the Forum at its Fall 2014 meeting.

Reclamation updated the Forum on the status of the Paradox Valley Brine Injection Well and the on-going EIS process to replace or supplement the well in case of failure. There has been no recent major seismic activity as a result of brine injection. The cooperating agencies in the EIS process are evaluating brine disposal alternatives such as construction of a second injection well or use of evaporation ponds. The USGS is working with Reclamation on a groundwater flow model for the Dolores River to assist in better management of salt loading. The results are expected near end of the calendar year and should provide a better understanding of the freshwater and brine interface at Paradox Valley.

The USGS reported that the first phase of the Pah Tempe Springs experiment has been scheduled for the week of November 18. The Work Group has scheduled a field trip to the site on November 20, in conjunction with its regular meeting on November 21 and 22 in St. George, Utah. The purpose of the experiment is to try to determine how much salt is actually entering the Virgin River.

The next Forum and Advisory Council meetings have been tentatively scheduled for the first week of June 2014 in Jackson, Wyoming.

Tanya M. Trujillo
Executive Director