

Minutes of Meeting
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, December 13, 2023

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (Board) was held on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at the Paris Las Vegas, 3655 S Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV, 89109.

Board Members and Alternates Present:

Gloria Cordero (MWD)	Jeanine Jones (DWR Designee)
David De Jesus (MWD Alternate)	Jim Madaffer, Vice Chairman (SDCWA)
Gina Dockstader (IID Alternate)	Peter Nelson (CVWD)
Dana B. Fisher, Jr. (PVID)	David R. Pettijohn (LADWP)
John B. Hamby, Chairman (IID)	Frank Ruiz (Public Member)
Eric Heidemann (SDCWA Alternate)	Jack Seiler (PVID)
Jordan Joaquin (Public Member)	

Board Members and Alternates Absent:

Castulo Estrada (CVWD Alternate)	Delon Kwan (LADWP Alternate)
Christopher Hayes (DFW Designee)	David Vigil (DFW Alternate)

Others Present:

Steven Abbott	Justina Gamboa-Arce
Kim Adamson	Alyson Gould
Nick Bahr	Emily Guerin
Heather Barz	Geoff Halbrook
Melissa Baum-Haley	Christopher Harris
Anthony Bianco	Mark Hartney
Jerry Butkiewicz	Tom Havens
Robert Cheng	Alex Heide
Michael Cohen	Joanna Hoff
Dennis Davis	Elliot Howard
Dan Denham	Ned Hyduke
Matthew Diserio	Steve Kasower
JR Echard	Marnie Kremer
Ray Face	Cynthia Kurtz
Kelley Gage	Larry Lai

Victoria Llord
Timothy Lynch
Felicia Marcus
Tana McCoy
Brian McNeece
Aaron Mead
Dylan Mohamed
Yuanyuan Myint
Jessica Neuwerth
G. Patrick O'Dowd
David Osias
Michael Pacheco
Shana Rapoport
David Rheinheimer
Brad Robinson
Shanti Rosset

Jon Rubin
Abby Schneider
Alexi Schnell
Tina Shields
Darren Simon
Ed Smith
Jay Tanner
Gary Tavetian
Sara Tucker
Charles Vandyke
Richard L. Vasquez
Meena Westford
Tony Willardson
Jennifer Yachnin
Jerry Zimmerman
Dee Zinke

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hamby announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 11:12 a.m.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Chairman Hamby invited members of the audience to address the Board on items on the agenda or matters related to the Board. Hearing none, he moved on to the next item on the agenda.

REMARKS FROM U.S. SENATOR ALEX PADILLA

Senator Alex Padilla addressed the Colorado River Board via video. Senator Padilla thanked California's Colorado River agencies for their leadership on Colorado River water issues, noting that California was the first state to commit to voluntary water reductions during the interim period. Senator Padilla congratulated California on the signature of several interim period conservation agreements. Senator Padilla urged California's water users to remain united and to continue working with partners across the Basin in resolving the challenges ahead.

Chairman Hamby thanked the Senator and his office for the comments.

CALIFORNIA WATER IN THE 21ST CENTURY: LEADING THROUGH RESILLIENCY

Deputy Director Neuwerth presented an overview of historical and ongoing efforts within California to meet its water needs. Deputy Director Neuwerth noted that, while California has a relatively large allocation of Colorado River water, the state also has the largest population in the Basin, with approximately 20 million people within California that rely on Colorado River water. Overall, the Lower Basin is home to approximately 75% of the Basin's population, and the consumptive use is not proportional to this large population. This has required creative thinking and significant effort to move water among users when necessary.

Deputy Director Neuwerth reported that California had to begin transfers and conservation programs earlier than any other state, and California has been in an era of limitations for decades. Deputy Director Neuwerth reported that California began initiating water transfers among users back in the 1980s, and now has transfers that reach almost all water users, including the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) transfers and the Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) fallowing program, which regularly fallows up to 30% of PVID's acreage. Deputy Director Neuwerth played a video commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the QSA, which was signed in 2003.

Deputy Director Neuwerth noted that, although the QSA is one of the biggest programs in California, it's far from the only activity California's water users are undertaking to conserve water.

MEMBER AGENCY AND PUBLIC MEMBER REPORTS

San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)

Vice Chairman Madaffer stated that his presentation would demonstrate how SDCWA and its member agencies have invested in water reliability and collaboration with partners in the Colorado River Basin over that last three decades. He reported on the 20th anniversary of the QSA, noting that IID did a great job honoring the anniversary at the last CRB meeting in El Centro, California. He stated that the QSA stabilized water supplies on the Colorado River with the nation's largest ag-to-urban conserved water transfer between the SDCWA and IID. He added that under the QSA, SDCWA and other QSA partners have funded conservation in the Imperial Valley that has saved hundreds of thousands of acre-feet of water and has done so in a way that allows farming to thrive and addresses the environment and the Salton Sea.

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that conservation supported by SDCWA has generated over 2 million acre-feet (MAF) over the last 20 years. He added that SDCWA's investment with the state of California for canal lining projects has conserved over 1 MAF of water since 2003. He stated that the QSA was established to be mutually beneficial and today, 20 years later, it stands as a model on how to collaborate on a mutually beneficial voluntary conservation program and flexible management of the river. He added that the QSA is a model as we enter into 2026.

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that SDCWA has been able to reduce its demand for Colorado River water by improving water efficiency use standards. He stated that since the 1990s, SDCWA has been a statewide leader in sponsoring legislation to improve both indoor and outdoor water use efficiency, noting that the agency sponsored the legislation that mandated low flow toilets in the entire State of California as well as many other leading-edge conservation measures. He stated that during this same time period, SDCWA invested in a suite of water use efficiency programs and initiatives with the help of its partners, including the MWD, to offer major rebates to replace turf, high efficiency clothes washers and toilets, and water saving irrigation systems. He added that SDCWA also provides free resources including landscape workshops, which are very popular through the WaterSmart Landscape Makeover Program. He added that these efforts together have ultimately conserved over 1 MAF of water in the San Diego region, stating that this water stays in Lake Mead. Since the '90s, SDCWA has successfully implemented several award-winning outreach campaigns such as Don't Be a Waterhog, Brought to You by Water, and the 20-Gallon Challenge which also resulted in significant conservation in the region. He stated that as of 2023, San Diego County has the lowest per capita water use in Southern California, dropping

40% from its 1990 per capita water use volume, while the population has grown by almost 750,000 people during that same time.

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that in 2015, SDCWA made a strategic investment, along with its member agencies, in the Carlsbad Desalination Plant, which generates drought proof water supplies. He added that SDCWA would like to exchange some of this water to Arizona and Nevada through exchange agreements. He stated the plant generates up to 56,000 AF of water and has the potential to expand its operating capacity, which could be a tool to improve Lake Mead's water level and the Colorado River.

Lastly, Vice Chairman Madaffer reported on local water supply development. He stated that several local projects, including the Sweetwater Brackish Groundwater Recovery, Pure Water Oceanside, and Fallbrook Santa Margarita Conjunctive Use, have all supplemented and complemented the QSA through water reuse. He noted that the projects generate about 12,000 AF of water a year, reducing the volume of imported supplies needed to meet the region's demands. He reported that a few near-term projects anticipated to come online by 2025 that will generate about 33,000 AF of water in its initial phases. He reported that SDCWA climate change efforts have been popular.

Los Angeles Department Water and Power (LADWP)

Member Pettijohn reported that LADWP's service area has had declining water use over the last few years on a per capita basis. He added that LADWP has done a lot in the way of conservation of water use efficiency in the city since the early 1980s. He reported that LADWP water use was 159 gallons per person per day in 2000 and is currently 101 gallons per person per day. He added that Los Angeles has a million more people living there since the 1970s, and the city is using less water than in 1970.

Member Pettijohn reported on LADWP's water conservation program and partnerships. He stated that in 2022, LADWP increased its turf rebate for commercial and residential customers to \$5 per square foot. He added that LADWP has instituted hands-on workshops to train people on how to implement conservation in their landscapes, adding that the agency also has turf rebate design services to redesign a homeowner's landscape. He stated that these programs remove the barrier for a lot of customers who would like to remove their turf, but do not know how to design a landscape. He stated that LADWP has increased the rebate for the Technical Assistance Program for businesses. He stated that businesses in the City of LA can get up to \$2 million for water conservation improvements for businesses. He reported on the many businesses and industries, such as cooling towers and hospitals, that have benefited from the LADWP rebate program.

Member Pettijohn reported on LADWP's Flume Program. He explained that the Flume is a home water metering device that can be monitored from a phone. He stated that the device retails for \$249 but it is available to LADWP customers for \$24 plus tax and shipping costs. He stated that the device is installed on a water meter and provides real-time water use. He noted that LADWP customers can also monitor their water use with home water use reports, that show the homeowners use compared to their neighbors. He reported that LADWP also has a direct installation program partnership with the gas company. He explained that LADWP comes into the homes and replaces appliances with more energy, water, and gas efficient devices. He added that LADWP also has a community partnership grant program that helps implement these programs in communities within the service area.

Lastly, Member Pettijohn reported on LADWP's groundwater and local storage efforts. He stated that the San Fernando Basin is the largest groundwater basin in the City of LA. LADWP has about 100,000 acre-feet of pumping rights in that basin. He noted, unfortunately, that there is contamination in that basin in the form of trichloroethylene, perchloroethylene and dioxane. He explained that the contamination resulted from industry back in the '60s and '70s. He stated that LADWP has built several remediation facilities that have cost about \$700 million to recover the groundwater basin. Construction of the remediation facilities is expected to be completed in 2024 to restore the full use of the basin.

Member Pettijohn added that LADWP also introduced the Stormwater Parks Program which grew out of our Stormwater Capture Master Plan. He stated that the master plan gave the agency a roadmap on how to double or triple the amount of stormwater the city captures in a year. He stated that it is one of the agency's signature programs. He stated that with the innovative program, LADWP will take nine parks in the City of LA in disadvantaged communities and retrofit those parks, create a new park, and underneath that park there will be large stormwater capture facilities. He reported that this will add about 3,000 AF of stormwater and will be completed in 2031.

Member Pettijohn reported on LADWP's Groundwater Replenishment Program. He stated that 21,000 AF of advanced treated recycled water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant will be recharged into the San Fernando Basin and will be able to be pumped and served to its customers. He stated that the project will be completed by 2027. He concluded that LADWP has a general approach to water use efficiency, which is to "capture, conserve and reuse" water.

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)

Member Cordero reviewed several of MWD's efforts to implement water conservation and ensure water reliability. She highlighted MWD's leadership in regional water management in

the face of unpredictability, including environmental issues, natural disasters, and now climate change. She noted MWD's partnerships with local agencies and communities in its demand management program, reporting that MWD had invested about \$1.6 billion since the early 1990s in programs to support conservation efforts, recycled water, and groundwater recovery and cleanup, resulting in a reduction of about 8.25 MAF of water use.

Member Cordero then highlighted MWD's conservation programs for residential, business, public agency, and industrial water users. She noted that these programs saved about 1.4 billion gallons of water, or about 4,000 acre-feet, in FY 2022-2023. She further noted that MWD's most significant conservation is its turf replacement program, which has helped replace about 218 million square feet of grass.

Member Cordero then highlighted MWD's success in managing water demand in the face of population growth, noting that the regional population has grown by almost 30% since 1990 but that water use for the same period has dropped by almost 40%.

With her last slide, Member Cordero highlighted MWD's partnerships and collaborations, beginning in 1988. She acknowledged and thanked those in the meeting room and MWD's agency partners. She also thanked MWD's directors, noting that some of them are in the room, including David De Jesus, Cindy Katz, Director McCoy and Director Glen Peterson. She also thanked MWD General Manager Adel Hagekhalil, noting he was in the room earlier, and MWD Chair Adan Ortega. She also thanked MWD staff, mentioning eleven staff members in particular.

Imperial Irrigation District (IID)

Tina Shields, the Water Department Manager of the Imperial Irrigation District, stated that IID's priority is to provide water to the Imperial Valley community and to its growers, supporting a \$2.6 billion agricultural community as well as the broader community indirectly. She highlighted that the IID community grows food to help keep vegetable prices low, noting that most lettuce in Las Vegas would be coming from the Imperial Valley and shipped through Yuma, Arizona.

Ms. Shields stated that IID has a long history of conservation, noting in particular IID's partnership with MWD for conservation. She noted that IID's partnership with MWD started in 1988, their first collaborative partnership with other agencies to provide funding for conservation related upgrades to IID's system. She noted that the 1988 agreement with MWD was significant as IID's system had not changed much since it was first developed about 115 years ago. She noted several of the upgrades resulting from the 1988 agreement with MWD, including over 200 miles of concrete lining of canals, three new reservoirs, two reservoir upgrades, and lateral interceptors to reuse agricultural runoff. She also noted that at the time, the Salton Sea level was rising, so

they were not concerned about falling sea levels as they are today, and that these initial efforts resulted in 105,000 acre-feet of conserved water per year.

Ms. Shields then reported on the 2003 QSA and the additional partnerships from that, including with SDCWA and CVWD, resulting in another 303,000 acre-feet of conserved water. She noted that transfers to SDCWA is now completely ramped up and the transfer with CVWD will be in about three years. She highlighted some of the system improvements resulting from the QSA, including on-farm conservation activities such as drip systems, sprinkler systems, tail water return systems, and precision laser leveling. She emphasized that the QSA resulted in efficiency improvements and not fallowing. She also mentioned the lining of the All-American Canal funded by SDCWA, noting that it has saved 67,700 acre-feet of water per year.

Ms. Shields noted that these investments have improved California's water supply reliability and the continued success of agricultural production. Ms. Shields stated that these programs have conserved over 7.7 million acre-feet of water over the 20-year period since the QSA.

Ms. Shields also noted that one consequence of these programs has been the declining level of the Salton Sea and requested that the federal government recognize this in connection to the Colorado River. She noted that with the federal investment in the Salton Sea, the state was able to accelerate their related projects and start to meet their Salton Sea targets to help ensure the Imperial Valley community can not only continue to grow food but also remain healthy without the public health and environmental impacts associated with the decline of the Salton Sea.

Ms. Shields additionally noted the value of the new federal funding and conservation actions for saving even more water in the future. Ms. Shields also noted another forthcoming three-year agreement to save an additional 250,000 acre-feet per year, amounting to 24% of IID's water supply.

Ms. Shields emphasized that these are 100% voluntary programs, but that it takes significant collaboration between the water agencies, the federal government, and the state government, in addition to funding, to move these projects forward.

California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Member Jones provided a table displaying DWR water supply related grants awarded from 2000 to 2023. She stated the State of California has provided more money in grants to its water users across the state than the other six Basin states. She stated that since 2000, DWR provided a total of \$3 billion in grants for water resilience, drought relief, sustainable groundwater, and QSA implementation. She added that the State Water Resources Control Board

(SWRCB) also provided significant assistance for water recycling. She stated that as of 2021, California had 287 water recycling projects in operation. She stated that during the most recent drought, DWR provided \$1 to \$2 million grants to small water agencies in rural communities that ran out of water. She stated that most recently, DWR executed a grant agreement to give MWD \$50 million to fund infrastructure projects that bring Colorado River water supplies to its furthest west service area within its distribution system. She noted that DWR also provided funding to LADWP's San Fernando Valley groundwater remediation projects. Ms. Jones reported that during the last drought the State was fortunate to have been in a budget surplus and had funds from previously approved bond acts.

Member Jones reported that in 2009, California developed legislation that mandated improving water conservation and water use efficiency by 20% by 2020. She stated that in 2018, the State passed legislation titled, Making Water Conservation a Way of Life legislation which set a standard of 55 gallons per capita per day for indoor water use. She stated that the SWRCB is currently in the regulatory process to decrease the indoor water use standard from 55 to 47 gallons per capita per day by 2025, noting that outdoor water use standards are also under review.

Member Jones stated that DWR's investments in technology such as OpenET, Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) & Flood Managed Aquifer Recharge (FloodMAR) and the Airborne Snow Observatories (ASOs), provide decisional support to water agencies. She explained that DWR purchases \$68 million worth of data every year and then provides it to the water agencies that can use the data. She stated that DWR has invested in Airborne Electromagnetic Monitoring (AEM) work to map out areas that are suitable for groundwater recharge and to help incentivize local agencies to undertake groundwater recharge projects. Member Jones stated that she is very passionate about improving precipitation forecasting for longer lead times and making investments in programs such as FIRO and FloodMAR. She added that the Army Corps of Engineers is moving towards adoption of FIRO at the nationwide scale building off the experience generated from projects in California. She added that DWR's FloodMAR work addresses the State's sustainable groundwater efforts.

Lastly, Member Jones discussed DWR's work with improving subseasonal to seasonal (S2S) precipitation forecasting. She praised the relationship that Reclamation has had with DWR on Colorado River Basin forecasting issues and hopes that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) creates more opportunity to improve its S2S forecasting efforts. She reported that the Weather Act Reauthorization bill has a significant funding for pilot projects, including for the Western U.S.

Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID)

Upon invitation by Deputy Director Neuwerth for agencies without slides to speak, Member Seiler recognized PVID general manager JR Echard and PVID trustees Brad Robinson and Charles Vandyke, noting they are in the audience. He indicated the Mr. Echard would speak.

Mr. Echard first described PVID's efforts to help keep water in Lake Mead, noting that from August 1st, 2021 through July 31st, 2023, PVID, with MWD's support, left 118,000 acre-feet of water in Lake Mead and that with the agreement signed this morning they would leave an additional 87,000 acre-feet in Lake Mead for the next 3 years, through 2026.

Mr. Echard noted that PVID has proposed four long-term conservation projects. He stated that one would be a regulating reservoir below PVID's diversion dam in Palo Verde that would capture 3,000 acre-feet during the summer monsoon storms that would otherwise flow to Mexico. He reported that the second proposal is to line as many canals as possible, hopefully one quarter of a mile per year, to reduce seepage. The third, he noted, is to clean up 142 miles of their open cut drain system that is full of brush, reducing consumptive losses in the drains. Finally, he mentioned a deficit irrigation program, which a 2021-2022 study showed could save one acre-foot per acre by cutting back on the watering cycle of alfalfa.

Mr. Echard concluded by noting that PVID is doing the best they can and that they will continue to find ways to save water through conservation rather than fallowing. He also noted that PVID is in its 19th year of a program with MWD and that they have 17 more years to go with that program.

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)

Member Nelson first acknowledged Anthony Bianco, the CVWD Board of Director for Division Two, and CVWD staff members present, including Robert Cheng, Steve Abbott, and Victoria Llort.

Member Nelson stated that in 2022 CVWD participated in the 500+ Plan, conserving almost 10,000 acre-feet of water, and over the next 3 years will cumulatively conserve over 100,000 acre-feet. He also noted that CVWD is adding to that another program with farmers to hopefully save another 10,000 acre-feet per year.

Member Nelson also noted that CVWD is interested in urban conservation, saying CVWD previously offered their customers \$6 per square foot for turf replacement, but that they are back down to \$3. He emphasized that his shows their commitment to urban conservation.

Member Nelson went on to describe CVWD's tiered rate structure for domestic use, with two examples. He explained that the rates consist of monthly, weather-dependent budgets that are comprised of both indoor use—55 gallons per person per day—and on the size of the property. He noted that exceeding a domestic water budget scales with the size of the property. He emphasized that the scheme is based on a sliding scale, individualized to 100,000 accounts.

Member Nelson also noted that CVWD has groundwater replenishment, and that they have replenished over five million acre-feet of water at their replenishment sites in the area. He acknowledged their partnership with MWD on State Water Project water for replenishment.

Member Nelson noted a few more miscellaneous recent developments and activities, emphasizing the value of partnerships with others. He noted that some of the canal lining from the QSA has resulted in lining popping off, causing operating costs, so they are removing some lining. He mentioned the effects of tropical storm Hilary on their infrastructure and delivery of Colorado River water, noting their partnership with MWD to pay for repairs.

Member Nelson noted CVWD's activity with their disadvantaged communities, supported with funding from the State of California and the federal government, to deliver safe water supplies in the East Valley.

Finally, Member Nelson noted a loan program with Reclamation to improve CVWD's infrastructure and reduce system losses. He noted that Reclamation came out to CVWD to celebrate their 120th birthday and together they celebrated the \$60 million loan from Reclamation to improve facilities.

Public Member Joaquin

Member Joaquin expressed that it is an honor to be on the Board, noting that he is the first tribal representative, tribal elected leader, and tribal member to serve on the Board.

Member Joaquin noted that Reclamation Commissioner Touton said earlier that California is leading the cause to preserve our water. Member Joaquin noted that tribes have been wanting a seat at the table. He emphasized that not everybody in the tribes will be happy with the final post-2026 agreement, and that we have to acknowledge that, but that there are still some solutions for tribes on the table.

Member Joaquin emphasized that California is leading because it wants to maintain a living river and that now more than ever preserving the Colorado River should be a theme.

Member Joaquin again expressed honor to be part of the Board, and thanked Board Deputy Director Neuwerth and Executive Director Harris for their behind-the-scenes work getting tribal representation on the Board.

ADMINISTRATION

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the September 13, 2023, Board meeting minutes. Member Madaffer moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Member Pettijohn. By roll-call vote, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the October 11, 2023, Board meeting minutes. Member Madaffer moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Member Pettijohn. By roll-call vote, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the 2024 board meeting schedule. Executive Director Harris noted that the 2024 board meeting schedule was subject to change. Member Madaffer moved that the 2024 board meeting schedule be approved, seconded by Member De Jesus. By roll-call vote, the 2024 board meeting schedule was unanimously approved.

LOCAL AND STATE WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORT

Member Jones, representing DWR reported that the State has not seen much precipitation, noting that there is still time in the winter season. She added that the months of October and November are not big contributors to the State's water budget for the water year. However, about 50% of the State's annual precipitation comes during December, January, and February. Ms. Jones reported that current reservoir storage is above average, due to last year's atypical precipitation conditions.

Member Jones reported on results from a forecasting model from Scripps that shows the probability of atmospheric rivers (ARs) making landfall during the winter season. She explained that most of the skill of weather forecasts is the first seven days, noting that the model she is using is running up to sixteen days. She added that NOAA's seasonal forecast for winter predicts wetter than average conditions because their models are influenced by El Niño conditions. She stated that DWR has funded research from UCLA, which found that ENSO contributes 25% percent to influencing California's annual precipitation. She stated that the modeling results forecast the probability of atmospheric water vapor that is characteristic of an atmospheric river. She stated that the model shows that by the end of the week there is a probability that it will rain along the coast. She noted that California's peak period for big storms occurs between the end of December and the middle of January, noting that we should have a better idea of California's overall precipitation conditions by early February.

Member De Jesus, representing MWD, reported that as of December 1st, reservoir storage was 89% of capacity. He stated that the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) will remain on a 4-pump flow for the rest of the calendar year. In 2023, the diversion target is 662,000 AF and as of December 11th, MWD diverted slightly over 125,000 AF. He added that deliveries for the first ten months of the year are 80% of average. He reported that the 2023 delivery target for the Desert Water Agency and the Coachella Valley Water District, is 231,000 AF.

Member Pettijohn, representing LADWP, reported on the Eastern Sierra precipitation conditions. He stated there has been little to no snow since an early storm in October. He stated that current snow conditions are on track with the conditions from winter 2021/2022 which experienced poor winter storm activity. He added that it is still early in the winter season, and the current conditions are not indicative of the winter precipitation season.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORT

Executive Director Harris reported that as of December 11th, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,570.58 feet with 8.56 MAF of storage, or 37% of capacity. The water level at Lake Mead was 1,065.93 feet with 8.88 MAF of storage, or 34% of capacity. The total system storage was 24.86 MAF, or 43% of capacity, which is 5.74 MAF more than system storage at this time last year.

Executive Director Harris reported that as of December 1st, for Water Year-2024 (WY-2024) forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell is 7.62 MAF, or 79% of normal. He reported that the forecasted April to July inflow into Lake Powell is 4.8 MAF, or 75% of normal. He stated that observed inflow into Lake Powell for November was 91% of normal and the December inflow forecast was 98% of normal. He reported that WY-2024 precipitation to date is 87% of normal.

Executive Director Harris remarked that last year was remarkable not only due to the great winter storms but also because the combined water use by Arizona, California, Nevada and Mexico was 7.26 MAF, noting that the Lower Basin States combined water use was 5.8 MAF. He added that California's use for 2023 is projected to be about 3.7 MAF, which is the lowest since 1949. He commended the agencies for their hard work in 2023 and going into the interim period. He stated that there is still a lot to do with respect to post-2026 efforts. He stated that the Lower Basin did a lot of good work securing funding for the Salton Sea projects, and then moving into executing and beginning the implementation of the IRA funding agreements, which he stated will continue for the next few years. He stated that the Lower Basin is committed to working with the Upper Basin collaboratively.

Executive Director Harris reported on precipitation conditions in December, stating precipitation conditions are below normal. He reported that Upper Basin snow water equivalent (SWE) is currently tracking below precipitation conditions from 2022.

Executive Director Harris reported that through the end of November, the Brock and Senator Wash regulating reservoirs captured 102,861 AF and 68,600 AF, respectively. He also reported that the excess deliveries to Mexico were 54,695 AF, compared to 8,637 AF at this time last year. He noted Hurricane Hilary contributed to the excess flows. He stated that saline drainage bypass to the Cienga de Santa Clara is currently about 105,526 AF, noting that bypass drainage averages about 125,000 AF a year.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAM STAFF REPORTS

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum

Executive Director Harris reported that the Salinity Control Forum (Forum) Work Group (Work Group) met in late October. He stated that the Forum has approved the proposed 2023 triennial review, which maintained the previous Colorado River water quality standards.

Executive Director Harris reported Reclamation published a Request for Information regarding brine management and disposal at the Paradox Valley Unit. He noted that the Salinity Work Group and Reclamation were in the process of collecting the information and evaluating it.

Executive Director Harris reported that Aaron Mead from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) has been appointed as the new Work Group Chairman.

Status of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the scoping comments and a comment summary have been made available by Reclamation as part of the process to develop a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to revise the Long Term Experimental Management Plan (LTEMP). The proposed revisions are intended to: (1) evaluate flow options to prevent warmwater invasive nonnative fish from establishing below Glen Canyon Dam and (2) incorporate new information regarding the sediment accounting window associated with the LTEMP High-Flow Experiment protocol. The final SEIS and Record of Decision are anticipated to be available by June 2024.

Status of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) has requested initiation of reconsultation with the U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service to obtain coverage for increased flow reductions. The LCR MSCP is seeking to increase its current coverage of 1.574 MAFY to between 2.083 MAFY and 2.5 MAFY. To mitigate for the potential decreased flow, measures have been proposed to minimize the impact. These measures include additional monitoring, research, and habitat creation.

Staff Member Rapoport added that the LCR MSCP Steering Committee will meet this afternoon.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Basin States Activities

Executive Director Harris reported that the Upper Basin and Lower Basin both submitted comment letters in response to Reclamation's revised draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS), released in October. Executive Director Harris noted that all seven Basin States are committed to preparing a framework concept for post-2026 reservoir operations by spring 2024. Executive Director Harris reported that there are still significant differences of opinion among the Basin's many water users, and there is an extremely compressed timeframe to develop a framework that is acceptable and increases water supply reliability.

Post-2026 Operations Web Tool

Executive Director Harris closed by stating that Reclamation has released a web tool for building potential operational elements that could be used in efforts to develop post-2026 operations and alternatives. He noted that the Reclamation Commissioner indicated that they intend to run every submitted alternative through this web tool and perform an impact assessment of the results in their draft EIS. He noted that he thinks Reclamation wants alternatives by early March to be able to run the alternatives through their tool, and that there may need to be a back and forth among proponents of different alternatives. He expressed that the use of the tool was good, that it would provide additional transparency, and that it is something the general public can easily use. He additionally encouraged all to go online to explore and use the web tool.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Hamby reported that a ceremony was held to celebrate Reclamation's provision of funding for restoration of the Salton Sea. In December 2023, Reclamation committed \$250 million for Salton Sea restoration; the ceremony marked delivery of the first \$70 million. Chairman Hamby noted that the funding would dramatically expand the state's Species Conservation Habitat to suppress dust and improve the habitat availability for birds and other

species. He reported that Secretary Crowfoot, Commissioner Touton, and many others had attended the ceremony.

Chairman Hamby reported that he was part of a panel at a recent Association of California Water Users (ACWA) conference. The panel included speakers from IID, MWD, CVWD, and the Quechan Tribe. Chairman Hamby noted that the panel was a good chance to update the rest of California on Colorado River issues.

Chairman Hamby reported that in late October, he and Board staff had visited Washington D.C. and had a set of very productive meetings with Congressional and White House staff, as well as Bureau of Reclamation leadership.

Chairman Hamby noted that the submittal of comment letters on the SEIS concluded over year of difficult negotiations between the states on interim period operations. He reported that the Lower Basin Plan analyzed in the SEIS performs well and has successfully replaced the two alternatives in an earlier version of the SEIS.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hamby adjourned the meeting at 12:38 p.m.