

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

July 15, 2020

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER REPORT

As of July 13th, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,609.26 feet with 12.76 million-acre feet (MAF) of storage, or 52% of capacity. The water level at Lake Mead was 1,086.02 feet with 10.52 MAF of storage, or 40% of capacity. As of July 12th, the total system storage was 31.11 MAF, or 52% of capacity, which is about 1.43 MAF less than system storage at this same time last year.

As of July 5th, the Upper Colorado River basin reservoirs, excluding Lake Powell, ranged from 96% of capacity at Fontenelle Reservoir in Wyoming; 88% of capacity at Flaming Gorge Reservoir in Wyoming and Utah; 94% of capacity at Morrow Point and 71% of capacity at Blue Mesa Reservoir in Colorado; and 79% of capacity at Navajo Reservoir in New Mexico.

As of July 1st, the forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell for Water Year 2020 is 6.59 MAF (61% of normal). The forecasted April to July 2020 runoff into Lake Powell for Water Year-2020 is 3.93 MAF (55% of normal). For WY-2020, the June observed Lake Powell inflow was 1.45 MAF (55% of normal), and the July Lake Powell inflow forecast is 0.46 MAF (42% of normal). To date, the Water Year-2020 precipitation is 82% of normal.

2021 Colorado River Annual Operating Plan, Second Consultation

The second consultation meeting for the development of the 2021 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) for Colorado River Reservoirs will be held via webinar at 10:00 a.m., Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), on July 23, 2020, to provide an overview of the draft 2021 AOP and accept comments from stakeholders. The 1968 Colorado River Basin Project Act (P.L. 90-537) requires that the Secretary of the Department of the Interior prepare a report documenting the actual operations for the previous water year and projected operations for the upcoming water year. Based on the operating criteria established within the 2007 Interim Guidelines, the August 24-Month Study Report projections for January 1st elevations in the following year sets the operational tiers for the coordinated operations of Lakes Powell and Mead.

Based on the April and June 2020 24-Month Study Report Study and the most probable inflow scenario, the projected operational tier for Water-Year 2021 for Lake Powell is the Upper Elevation Balancing Tier with the most probable release of 9.0 MAF from Glen Canyon Dam. It was determined that the most probable operational tier for Lake Mead is the Normal or ICS Surplus Condition. However, as mentioned above, it is the August 2020 24-Month Study Report results that will determine the official operating tiers for Lakes Powell and Mead, and this information will be updated and documented in the final version of the 2021 AOP. The current draft of the proposed 2021 Annual Operating Plan for Colorado River Reservoirs can be accessed and viewed online at:

https://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/rsrvs/ops/aop/AOP21_draft.pdf .

The final AOP consultation meeting is currently scheduled to be held via webinar on September 3rd, at 10:00 am PDT.

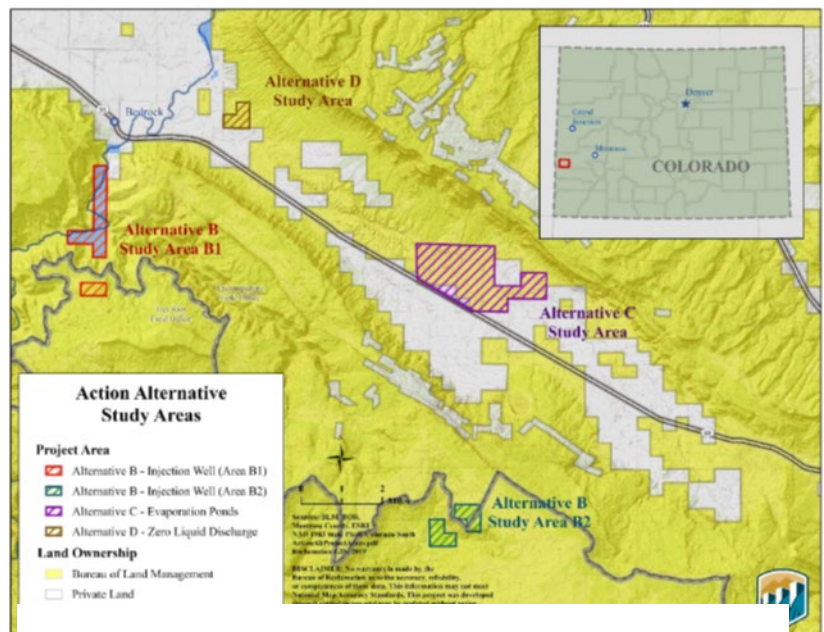
COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAM UPDATES

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Status of the Paradox Valley Environmental Impact Statement

The Paradox Valley salinity control unit (PVU) is one of the original salinity control projects authorized under Title II of the 1974 Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (P.L. 93-320, as amended). The PVU is comprised of a series of brine collection wells and a deep injection disposal well that has prevented approximately 100,000 tons of salt each year from entering the waters of the Colorado River until its closure in March 2019 due to seismic activity. Reclamation identified four PVU replacement alternatives in the Draft EIS released on December 6, 2019, including: A) No Action, B) New Injection Well, C) Evaporation Ponds, and D) Zero Liquid Discharge at locations shown in Figure 1.

Reclamation released the Administrative Draft of the Final EIS on April 17, 2020, for a 30-day review by the cooperating agencies. At the request of the Basin States cooperating agencies, Reclamation granted additional comment extensions to June 22, 2020. As one



of the cooperating agencies for California, the Board has coordinated the preparation of consensus-based comments with cooperating agencies from the other six basin states. The Final EIS is scheduled for release in mid-August 2020, with a Record of Decision in late September 2020.

Suspension of Brine Injection at Paradox Valley

Reclamation resumed operation of brine-water injection operations at PVU for a six-month test on April 21, 2020. However, on May 29, 2020, Reclamation suspended operations of the PVU six-month injection test, while it sought an outside contractor's review of the brine injection test procedures and protocols. Reclamation expects the outside review to be completed by mid-July. Preliminary findings suggest the injection pressure has not performed according to initial model predictions and preliminary analysis appears to indicate some possible degradation to the reservoir since long term injection was interrupted in March 2019. Further analysis is required to verify these preliminary results.

2020 Triennial Review Water Quality Standards for Salinity for the Colorado River System released for public comment

Pursuant to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act the Basin States are required to review at least once every three years water quality standards relating to the salinity of the Colorado River. The attached draft of the 2020 Review is available for public comment. CRB staff have been extensively involved with development of the report and are also working with the Colorado Regional Water Quality Control Board to make this document public for California stakeholders. After inclusion of public comments, the 2020 Review will be adopted by the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum at their Fall 2020 meeting. Please provide any comments you may have to CRB staff by August 28, 2020.

Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program

The Technical Work Group (TWG) for the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program met via webinar on June 23-24. The group discussed the draft Triennial Work Plan and Budget for Fiscal Years 2021-2023. The work plan directs approximately \$11 million in funding per year for program management, tribal projects, and research and monitoring efforts below Glen Canyon Dam. The draft FY21-23 work plan includes ongoing monitoring for native fish, sediment, cultural and tribal resources, nonnative fish, and aquatic insects. The budget includes increased funding to study the population dynamics of brown trout, a highly predatory nonnative species that has recently increased dramatically in the Lees Ferry area, and the population of endangered humpback chub in the Western Grand Canyon, which has increased significantly since 2014.

The TWG recommended approval of the FY21-23 Triennial Work Plan, which will be evaluated by the Adaptive Management Work Group at its August 19-20 meeting.

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

The Steering Committee for the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) met via webinar on June 24th. The group considered and approved the Final Implementation Report, FY21 Work Plan and Budget, FY19 Accomplishment Report. This plan describes the activities implemented in FY19, those underway in FY20, and those planned for FY21. It also includes a description of the covered activities that occurred in FY19. During the call, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) expressed some concern and confusion regarding the changes in flow that occurred in 2019, and a small group was formed to follow up with the USFWS and chart a path forward. The Final Implementation Report can be found at https://www.lcrmscp.gov/workplans/imp_2021.pdf.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

Appointment of the New Commissioner of the Mexican Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission

Mr. Humberto Marengo Mogollón, PhD, C.E., was appointed by the Mexican federal administration to serve as the new Commissioner of the Mexican Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (CILA) on June 29, 2020. Dr. Marengo replaces outgoing Mexican Commissioner Roberto Salmon. Dr. Marengo recently spent the last few years as a professor at the National University in Mexico City, and nearly thirty-five years with Mexico's Federal Electricity Commission. Dr. Marengo is originally from southern Mexico and is now spending his time being briefed on Rio Grande and Colorado River issues by CILA staff.

Lake Powell Pipeline Project Environmental Impact Statement

On June 8, 2020, Reclamation released the Notice of Availability of the draft Environmental Impact Statement/draft Resource Management Plan Amendment for the Lake Powell Pipeline Project (LPP). Reclamation is seeking public comment on the DEIS / draft RMPA during a 90-day public comment period that will close at 11:59 pm MDT on September 8, 2020. Board staff previously submitted scoping comments on January 10, 2020, in a letter to Reclamation for the LPP project proposed by the Utah Board of Water Resources (UBWR). The proposed LPP is a 140-mile, 69-inch-diameter water delivery pipeline that begins at Lake Powell, located in the upper basin of the Colorado River, and ends at Sand Hollow Reservoir near St. George, Utah, located in the lower basin of the Colorado River. The UBWR proposes building the LPP in order to convey up to approximately 86,000 acre-feet of additional water supplies to Washington County in extreme southwestern Utah to meet future water demands, diversify the regional water supply portfolio, and for water supply reliability enhancement. Board staff currently believe that Congressional authorization will be required to implement the LPP. Board staff will work with

the agencies to develop comment responses regarding the draft EIS. Staff have included in the Board packet a preliminary overview of the LPP with initial findings from the DEIS. Additional information about the LPP is available here:

<https://www.usbr.gov/uc/DocLibrary/EnvironmentalImpactStatements/LakePowellPipeline/index.html>

On June 27, 2020, the CRB received an email from Mr. Richard Spotts, a resident of St. George, Utah, expressing concerns over the proposed LPP. The email requests CRB to challenge the LPP due to Colorado River Compact issues and lack of water conservation alternatives in the DEIS. CRB staff prepared a short response in a letter to Mr. Spotts dated July 10, 2020, summarizing the scoping comments that the CRB provided in its January 10, 2020, letter to Reclamation, highlighting its current position opinion that the LPP Project will require Congressional approval. A copy of Mr. Spotts' email and the CRB response letter are attached to the Board packet.

Washington, D.C. Updates

Last week the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act, a massive stimulus infrastructure bill with several provisions important to the Colorado River Basin, most notably provisions addressing tribal water rights. The first is the inclusion of the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement, and the second is the inclusion of the Reclamation Water Settlements Fund.

The Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act would provide access to water and wastewater facilities for the Navajo Nation as well as supply certainty for a water delivery system within the Utah portion of the Navajo Nation. The Reclamation Water Settlements Fund is extended in H.R. 2 to meet the Federal government's legal trust obligation to tribal nations. The Settlements Fund provides \$120 million per year to pay for Indian water rights settlements, which fund clean water and wastewater infrastructure across Indian Country.
