

Minutes of Meeting  
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA  
Wednesday, June 15, 2023

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (Board) was held on Wednesday, June 15, 2023, at the Burbank City Council Chambers, 275 East Olive Avenue, Burbank, CA, 91502.

Board Members and Alternates Present:

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

Board Members and Alternates Absent:

David De Jesus (MWD Alternate)	Delon Kwan (LADWP Alternate)
Castulo Estrada (CVWD Alternate)	Jim Madaffer, Vice Chairman (SDCWA)
Christopher Hayes (DFW Designee)	Jack Seiler (PVID Alternate)

Others Present:

Linda Bahr	David Rheinheimer
Nick Bahr	Jason Rollo
Bill Hasencamp	Shanti Rosset
Ned Hyduke	Eric Ruckdaschel
David Palomino	Jessica Neuwerth
Mojgan Poursadighi	Sabrina Tsui
Angela Rashid	Meena Westford
	Jerry Zimmerman

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Hamby announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. Chairman Hamby welcomed the Board and stated that the meeting was hosted by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP).

Board member Pettijohn, representing LADWP welcomed the Board to the city of Burbank. He stated Board members and agency staff had a chance to tour a few of LADWPs capital improvement projects and gain insight on the agency's capital program and its vision for the future of Los Angeles.

## **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.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the April 12, 2023, Board meeting minutes. Mr. Fisher moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Pettijohn. By roll-call vote, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the Colorado River Board of California budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Mr. Pettijohn moved that the budget be approved, seconded by Mr. Fisher. By roll-call vote, the budget was approved with abstention from Mr. Vigil.

## **SPECIAL PRESENTATION: LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER**

Ms. Sabrina Tsui, a member of LADWP's Resource Development and Watershed Management department gave a presentation about the agency's facilities and programs. She reported that LADWP is the largest municipal utility in the nation, providing water and power to approximately 4 million people within the city limits, as well as additional cities and unincorporated parts of L.A. County. She added that LADWP serves drinking and recycled water to an area of approximately 473 square miles, adding that LADWP delivers approximately 450 million gallons of water every day, which is about 500,000 AF of water per year. She stated that LADWP also has connections with neighboring cities such as Santa Monica and Beverly Hills.

Ms. Tsui stated that LADWP has invested billions into its water infrastructure system, as LADWP is invested in ensuring a resilient infrastructure to deliver high quality water to its customers. She provided an overview of LADWP's important water infrastructure noting that there is 7.4 miles of pipeline. She stated that the city's pipelines are old and LADWP has spent millions improving it and has the lowest leak rate in the nation. She added that there are several reservoirs and tanks along the L.A. Aqueduct system, yielding a total storage capacity of over 320,000 AF.

Ms. Tsui stated that LADWP receives water from the Eastern Sierra Nevada mountains via the L.A. Aqueduct. She added that LADWP also purchases water from The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) as well as the State Water Project (SWP). She stated locally, LADWP utilizes groundwater, storm water capture, recycled water and conservation, noting that these are the pillars of LADWP's supply reliability program. She added that LADWP's supply mix has evolved over the past few decades. She explained that the city uses less water than in the 1970s and 1980s. She stated that LADWP educates customers about how to use water more efficiently and has also invested heavily in repairing leaks in its pipelines. She explained that reducing waste and promoting conservation are the cornerstone of its water efficiency program. She also lauded LADWP's storm water capture program, noting that the stormwater capture facilities are also used to spread L.A. Aqueduct supplies for groundwater recharge, when needed. Ms. Tsui reiterated the importance of developing local supplies, explaining that treating its groundwater is paramount in order for LADWP to properly utilize its groundwater supplies.

Ms. Tsui stated that over the past year, severe drought conditions impacted LADWP's ability to purchase water from MWD. She stated that LADWP's customers responded quickly by reducing their demands by approximately 10% every single month. She added that outdoor irrigation was reduced from three to two days a week starting last June. She stated that LADWP increased its conservation messaging and incentives over the past year to encourage water use efficiency. She added that the water conservation program has been increased and turf replacement rebates are now \$5 per square foot. She added that customers also had the ability to participate in a hands-on drought tolerant gardening workshop. She reported that LADWP started a Flume program which provides a rebate to install a water use monitoring device to help customers improve their water use and detect leaks.

Ms. Tsui reported that the San Fernando groundwater basin is polluted with industrial contaminants and LADWP is restoring access to this local supply with the construction of treatment facilities to remediate the groundwater and add to its water supply system. She explained that another challenge to utilizing groundwater has been urbanization, which has impacted natural infiltration to the region's groundwater basin.

Ms. Tsui provided additional information about LADWP's stormwater capture projects. She stated that LADWP established the Stormwater Capture program in 2008 within the Watershed Management Group for the sole purpose of implementing various projects that benefit supply and infiltration into the groundwater basin. She noted that the Tujunga Spreading Grounds, which was part of yesterday's day tour, provides groundwater replenishment.

Ms. Tsui concluded her presentation by providing more details about LADWP's recycled water program. She provided a timeline of LADWP's recycled water efforts from 1979 to the present. She stated that LADWP is investigating and designing a groundwater replenishment program using advanced treated wastewater. She added that LADWP is currently constructing a facility for direct potable reuse of wastewater. It is anticipated that State guidelines for direct potable reuse will be finalized this year.

### **SALINITY CONTROL PROGRAM FUNDING UPDATE**

Ms. Jessica Neuwerth introduced Mr. Don Barnett, Executive Director of the Salinity Control Forum (Forum), noting that he would give an update on program funding.

Mr. Barnett reviewed funding law and sources related to the Salinity Control Program, noting the program was set up under the Salinity Control Act and that the act set up a cost share structure whereby approximately 70% of program funding comes from appropriations and 30% from cost share. He further explained that of the cost share funds, 15% comes from the Upper Colorado River Basin Fund and the remaining 85% comes from the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund. He explained that the Upper Basin Fund is financed through adjusting power rates as needed and that the Lower Basin Fund is financed through a continuous levy on power sold to California and Nevada power users. He finally noted that while historically there has been a surplus in the Lower Basin Fund, there is now a deficit. He indicated that the current deficit is about \$12 to \$13 million, with an imbalance of approximately \$2 million per year.

Mr. Barnett explained that an increase in the proportion paid by the Federal government is being proposed in draft congressional legislation by Senator Bennett of Colorado. This proposed change would specifically increase federal contributions to operations and maintenance of control facilities, recognizing both the responsibility of the Federal government for salinity control. He noted that with this change, obligations from the Lower Basin Fund would decrease by \$4 million, allowing the Lower Basin Fund to start paying off its current obligation.

Mr. Barnett reported that the Forum last week unanimously agreed to the legislative changes and is now working to write a letter of support from the Forum and organize letters of

support from government agencies and the seven states. He also described Senator Bennett's status in moving this legislation through the U.S. Senate.

Board member Nelson noted that Mr. Barnett mentioned California and Nevada contributing to the Salinity Fund and asked if any sales in Arizona contribute to the fund. Mr. Barnett explained that Arizona power users are charged four-and-a-half mills, but that these go to Central Arizona Project repayment, after the CAP is repaid in 2024, the mill levy on Arizona power users will drop to two mills and would then go to salinity control.

Ms. Neuwerth noted that the proposed funding change resolves the current ballooning accrual in the Lower Basin Fund, but that longer standing inequities remain. She specifically noted the desire for Arizona to contribute to the Salinity Fund at the same rates as California and Nevada and to change the cost share proportion between the Upper Basin and Lower Basin.

Mr. Barnett noted that the Forum has created a program funding committee, that Ms. Neuwerth sits on that committee, and that the committee is looking at the Arizona contribution and the Upper Basin contribution.

Ms. Neuwerth asked for comments from Mr. Bill Hasencamp, the current chairman of the Forum.

Mr. Hasencamp reiterated concerns about the equitability of the current cost share scheme, noting California contributes 61% of non-federal costs, and the need for a more equitable share for California.

Board member Pettijohn asked Mr. Hasencamp when would be a good time to move something like that forward.

Mr. Hasencamp suggested possibly 2025/2026, and that there will likely be other legislative opportunities in the future.

Mr. Barnett noted that this has been discussed before, with three of the four Upper Basin states ready to increase their cost share to 25%. This is contingent on Arizona contributing.

Mr. Hasencamp noted that Jerry Zimmerman has been trying to change the cost share for twenty years.

## **STATE AND LOCAL REPORTS**

Ms. Jones, representing the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) reported that the State's snowpack is on the tail end of its melt phase, noting that the State had a fantastic snowpack this winter. She stated that currently, the statewide precipitation is 138% of average, snowpack is 60% of the historical April 1<sup>st</sup> average and reservoir storage is 111% of average. She explained that streamflow conditions are average to above average, adding this is not what you would usually see in June.

Ms. Jones reported that DWR has been working for some time to get the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to invest in sub-seasonal to seasonal precipitation (S2S) forecasting in the West, including funding for a pilot project, which has been a challenge. She stated that the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is up for reauthorization. She stated that she testified at the Science Committee hearing last week, urging for the inclusion of the pilot project in the reauthorization. She stated that NOAA does not want to spend money on projects like these, especially in the Western U.S., because it is not a priority. She added that Representative Garcia sponsored a health bill last week that includes the reauthorization efforts and the pilot project. She stated that the committee is circulating a full draft bill with similar language. She stated that the U.S. House of Representatives expects to finish its bill this summer, while the U.S. Senate has not started work on this issue. She stated that the Senate may work on this issue sometime this year, rather than next year, because of the impending presidential election.

Ms. Cordero, representing MWD stated that MWD's reservoir storage was at about 75% capacity, and the Colorado River Aqueduct will be on a five- pump flow through August. She stated that the 2023 diversion target is 804,000 AF, and as of June 9<sup>th</sup>, MWD has diverted 276,710 AF. She stated that deliveries for the first third of 2023, which includes immediate storage or the replenishment to its member agencies were 65% of average. The 2023 delivery target for the Desert Water Agency and Coachella Valley District is at 343,000 AF.

Mr. Pettijohn reported that the snow in the Eastern Sierra Mountains is melting. He stated that LADWP's previous wettest year on record was 2016-2017 but noted that this year snowpack was 30% higher. He added that it has been very difficult to manage the large amount of water, stating that LADWP has been turning out a lot of the water into the valley floor in the Owens Valley to percolate into the groundwater basin where LADWP has groundwater pumping rights. He added that LADWP will not be able to capture most of the snowmelt coming from the Eastern Sierra. He reported that LADWP and MWD are working on an agreement, in years where there is capacity in the East branch of the State Water Project, to deliver some of that water to MWD.

Mr. Pettijohn reported that due to the supply from the Eastern Sierra, it has been the sole source of the water supply for the city of Los Angeles and no supplies were purchased from MWD. He stated that LADWP is also spreading as much water as possible into the spreading basin in the San Fernando Valley. He stated that LADWP had the exact opposite situation last year, noting that there was so little access to water that LADWP had to borrow water from the State of California to meet human health and safety needs, a first in LADWP's history. He stated that LADWP is looking for ways to manage large swings in water availability. He stated that LADWP is currently working to recover the San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basin to store more water in wet years and recover it in dry years.

Responding to a question from Chairman Hamby about the amount of runoff expected into the valley this year, Mr. Pettijohn stated that normally LADWP delivers 240,000 AF to Los Angeles and it is expected that LADWP will bring down close to 500,000 AF through the L.A. Aqueduct, which is the capacity of the aqueduct. He stated that any water above that capacity of the L.A. Aqueduct would remain in the Owens Valley, which is a challenge due to the potential for damage to the millions of dollars of infrastructure used to manage dust at Owens Lake.

#### **COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER REPORT**

Dr. Rheinheimer reported that as of June 12<sup>th</sup>, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,571.75 feet with 8.65 million-acre feet (MAF) of storage, or 37% of capacity. The water level at Lake Mead was 1,054.76 feet with 8.03 MAF of storage, or 31% of capacity. The total system storage was 24.37 MAF, or 41% of capacity, which is 3.68 MAF more than system storage at this time last year. He noted that since May, Lake Powell's elevation rose 41 feet and Lake Mead's elevation rose 14 feet.

Dr. Rheinheimer reported that as of June 6<sup>th</sup>, for Water Year-2023 (WY-2023) the forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell is 13.85 MAF, or 144% of normal. He reported that the forecasted April to July inflow into Lake Powell is 10.7 MAF, or 167% of normal. He stated that observed inflow into Lake Powell for May was 218% of normal and the June inflow forecast was 151% of normal. He reported that the May and June inflow accounted for 60% of the total forecasted water year inflow into Lake Powell. He added that precipitation to date is 119% of normal.

Dr. Rheinheimer reported that SWE conditions above Lake Powell were 201% of median. He stated precipitation conditions for April were well below average for most of the Basin. In May, precipitation conditions improved in the Lower Basin, but precipitation conditions in the Upper Basin were below average, ranging from 30% to 70% of average. He explained that this contributed to the decrease in projected water year inflow into Lake Powell for June.

Dr. Rheinheimer reported on the May 24-Month Study. He presented a figure showing the end of month elevations for Lakes Powell and Mead. He explained that the figure shows a conglomeration of end of month elevation projections from April and May 2023. He noted that in June, Lake Powell's projected elevation moves up to the Upper Elevation Balancing Tier, adding that the projected most probable release is 9.29 MAF. He explained that the projections assumed that the 480 KAF of water retained in Lake Powell under the May 2022 action will be released as part of the WY-2023 balancing release. He added that although DROA releases have ceased, the model is still in DROA recovery mode for WY-2023.

Dr. Rheinheimer reported that through the end of May, the Brock and Senator Wash regulating reservoirs captured 43,169 AF and 37, 313 AF, respectively. He also reported that the excess deliveries to Mexico were 21,959 AF, compared to 1,444 AF at this time last year.

Board member Pettijohn asked why the excess flow to Mexico was large. Ms. Neuwerth responded that is likely due to water orders made before storm events occurred. She noted that it takes three to four days for water ordered from Lake Mead to travel to farmers in Southern California, noting storms can occur during this time. She stated that not all the water can be captured in Brock or Senator Wash reservoir and ends up undelivered.

## **COLORADO RIVER BASIN STATES ACTIVITIES**

### **Salinity Control Program Update**

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the Forum and counsel met on June 6-7. She noted that the main agenda item was the 2023 triennial review of salinity standards in the Lower Basin and whether the program will be able to meet those standards. She reported that the group recommended no changes to the EPA's salinity standards, and that the program will keep salinity below existing standards into the near future. She further noted that the triennial report is now open for public comments, which will be considered before the final report in October.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the Forum received an update from Reclamation on the Paradox Valley Unit (PVU), noting that Reclamation took it offline for three years after it caused an earthquake in 2019 and that Reclamation tested it for 6 months in 2022. She further reported that Reclamation started reoperating it again in February 2023 after assessing the test run. She reported that Reclamation is planning to run it indefinitely until they detect an issue. Reclamation is operating PVU at 65% capacity. She noted that at that rate about 65,000 tons of salinity is controlled every year.



Ms. Neuwerth reported that Reclamation has a request for information from industry or the public to identify potential new solutions through public/private partnerships. She noted that the hope is to find a way to use the brine that is being produced instead of having to dig a new injection well or build evaporation ponds.

Ms. Neuwerth followed up on Mr. Barnetts earlier discussion on updating the salinity control cost share mechanism, noting in particular the ongoing effort to develop letters of support for inclusion in the upcoming Farm Bill.

#### Status of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program (GCDAMP) held a virtual meeting on May 17.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that a unique spring high flow experiment (HFE) was held in April. A lot of HFEs have been held in the fall and this one was in the spring. and that initial results show the experiment met the purpose of moving sediment up on the banks prior to the high summer release.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that frequent sampling is ongoing for non-native fish. Ms. Neuwerth stated that there may have been some positive results from the smallmouth bass removal efforts over the winter and more information will be available in the coming months.

#### Status of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) met May 10 - 11 to look at the implementation report, the work plan, and budget for the coming year, as well as what was accomplished by the program in the previous year. Ms. Neuwerth added that the LCR MSCP has built over 7,000 acres of habitat. The program requires 8,100 acres to be built over the 55-year program and is ahead of schedule in habitat creation.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the LCR MSCP has stocked over 400,000 native fish since the program's inception in 2005. The total program goal is 1.2 million fish.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the LCR MSCP is still detecting plenty of yellow-billed cuckoos and is struggling with the southwestern willow flycatcher. The southwestern willow flycatchers pass through LCR MSCP habitat during migration, but so far they have not nested in the program's conservation areas.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the LCR MSCP Steering Committee will be meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Pettijohn asked when doing fish removal like smallmouth bass, how non-native fish removal, such as smallmouth bass, is done without impacting any of the native fish? Ms. Neuwerth replied that luckily in the Grand Canyon, the areas where there are native fish and where there are non-native fish are well segregated. The removal efforts are right below the dam where the water is cold and fast moving with no sediment. Most of the fish in the area are nonnatives. Ms. Neuwerth added that electrofishing zaps the water with electricity, which stuns the fish. The fish then float up and the target species can be removed while the rest of the fish are left in the river. Ms. Neuwerth added that there are concerns about the prized non-native rainbow trout fishery. The anglers are concerned that electrofishing could decimate their fishing resource but so far this has not occurred.

### **MEMBER AGENCY REPORTS**

#### **California Department of Water Resources (DWR)**

Board member Jones reported that in the last month DWR issued a couple of large chunks of grants, both of which are in their final funding round. She noted that one was under the Integrated Regional Water Management grant program. She also indicated that the program is wrapping up after 20 years due to lack of a new bond measure to provide it with more funding. Ms. Jones noted that the second chunk was for DWR's large urban drought grant program. She further noted that she does not expect this program to continue in the future given that the drought ended in January although some financial assistance for very small water systems that run out of water would still be expected.

Ms. Jones discussed the budget process, noting that the legislature must pass a budget on June 15<sup>th</sup> for the governor to sign by the end of the month. She also noted that the state is now in a deficit mode after a record number of years in surplus mode.

Ms. Jones described DWR's efforts to help local agencies recharge as much groundwater as possible, including through expedited temporary permitting for groundwater recharge and renting very large capacity pumps for use by local agencies to put water in nontraditional places such as almond orchards or vineyards. She noted the difficulty of doing this at the last minute, stating that DWR estimates that these programs might result in an additional 50,000 AF in groundwater recharge, relatively little compared to the total amount of water California received last winter. She finally noted that this is why DWR is pushing hard on improved forecasting, to provide the lead time to have these activities in place well in advance of the runoff.

### California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Board member Vigil shared slides showing CDFW's Colorado River program staff delivering water to "guzzlers and drinkers" in the desert, noting that these are artificial sources of water for wildlife. He noted that many of these were built in the early 1950s and that CDFW is adding larger tanks that hold more water and restoring old drinkers, with funding from a grant for up to 18 of them. Mr. Vigil shared photos and noted that this is the time of year when CDFW starts to haul water and monitor the drinkers.

### Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)

Board member Cordero reported that in May MWD received \$80 million from the state to help advance the Pure Water Project and that last week they received an additional \$80 million in state water efficiency grant funds to increase their turf removal rebates, which, she further noted, have been popular.

Ms. Cordero reported that MWD recently hosted its first One Water Awards, honoring six projects that represented public agencies and associations that will collectively save over one billion gallons of water over the next decade and that these projects also received funds from the Water Savings Investment Program.

Ms. Cordero reported that MWD recently hosted Water Education for Latino Leaders on a recent Colorado River inspection trip and thanked Chairman Hamby for participating in that and sharing his perspective on agriculture.

Ms. Cordero reported that a current major initiative for the MWD board is their climate adaptive master plan to help the board plan for the future, perform budget prioritization, and address climate change. She reported that, while developing this plan, MWD is receiving input from its member agencies and through community engagement.

Finally, Ms. Cordero reported some of MWD's work promoting safety at facilities during National Safety Month.

### Imperial Irrigation District (IID)

Chairman Hamby called on IID Director Ms. Gina Dockstader to provide the IID report. Ms. Dockstader described IID activities related to Water Safety Month. She described their water safety mascot, Dippy Duck, noting that he was debuted in May 1966, is based on a real duck that went through a hydropower turbine on the All-American Canal who came through alive but with

no feathers. His message is to encourage children to stay out of the canals. Ms. Dockstader further described activities related to Dippy Duck and his social impact.

#### San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)

Board Member Heidemann reported that he would share a statement made on the new consensus-based plan for the Colorado River and provide an update on new leadership at SDCWA.

Mr. Heidemann reported that SDCWA General Manager Sandra Kerl issued a statement on the consensus-based proposal expressing general appreciation for the consensus approach and focusing on conservation rather than mandated reductions. He also noted that through the CRB, California was the only basin state to respond to Commissioner Touton's initial call last year for additional conservation, in the form of the California plan, now being rolled out in the Lower Basin consensus proposal.

Mr. Heidemann noted that Ms. Sandra Kerl will be retiring at the end of June and thanked her for her service. He followed up by stating that SDCWA expects to have a smooth transition in leadership, with Mr. Dan Denham to serve as Acting General Manager. He also announced that Ms. Alexi Schnell has been named as the Colorado River Program Manager, noting her membership in the Colorado River Program as a principal water resource specialist. He followed up with general concluding remarks about this transition.

#### Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)

Board member Nelson reported that last week CVWD approved their Replenishment Curtailment Program (RCP) for the Colorado River water for 2023 through 2025 as a board. He stated CVWD made its last Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) payment of \$3.285 million to the Joint Powers Authority (JPA).

Mr. Nelson reported that, with the help of its exchange agreement with MWD, CVWD has recharged about 76,000 acre-feet of water into their groundwater basin from the State Water Project supplies with their Colorado River exchange. He indicated that CVWD is recharging at a rate of about 700 cubic feet per second (CFS).

#### **BASIN STATES ACTIVITIES**

Ms. Neuwerth reported that on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Basin States announced that a consensus Lower Basin Plan had been submitted to Reclamation for consideration. She explained that the

Lower Basin States have been working together on a plan since the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) was announced last year.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that the Lower Basin Plan calls for cumulative reductions of 3 MAF over the interim period, noting that this is an addition to any reductions that are triggered under the existing rules in the 2007 Guidelines and the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). She stated that up to 2.3 MAF will be compensated through funding under Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) (Bucket 1) and the remainder will be funded locally or through IRA (Bucket 2). She stated that the heart of the plan was part of that which California proposed in October 2022 which called for reductions of 400,000 AF of water per year from California. She added that the Lower Basin Plan also states that if Lake Mead's elevation continues to decline below 1,025 feet, the Lower Basin States have 45 days to propose a plan to prevent Lake Mead from reaching 1,000 AF. She stated that Lake Powell releases can be adjusted to as low as 6 MAF to protect elevation 3,500 feet.

Ms. Neuwerth reported that on May 26<sup>th</sup>, Reclamation withdrew the draft SEIS in order to analyze the Lower Basin Plan as a new action alternative. She stated that the Lower Basin States and CRB Staff continue to work with Reclamation's modeling team to make sure that the proposal's assumptions are correct.

## **GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**

### *2024 Colorado River Annual Operating Plan, Consultation Schedule*

Ms. Neuwerth reported that due to on-going activities related to the SEIS process, the 2024 Colorado River Annual Operating Plan (AOP) project schedule and the timing of consultations have been adjusted. She stated that the 1<sup>st</sup> AOP consultation is scheduled for Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, while the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> are scheduled for Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, respectively.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Hamby concurred with Ms. Neuwerth's statements regarding development and submittal of the Lower Basin plan to Reclamation. He recounted the Basin's SEIS process over that past year as well as the development of the Lower Basin Plan, noting that it has been a challenging time for everyone involved. He stated that fortunately, the Lower Basin States were able to renew their relationships with each other. He reiterated that Reclamation pulled back on the SEIS process and is in the process of analyzing the plan. He stated that the Lower Basin States

need to work throughout the summer on executing contracts to generate the IRA funding for compensated reductions.

Chairman Hamby stated that he was very heartened by the renewed relationship with his Lower Basin counterparts, noting that there will a long road to go reach a similar relationship with the Upper Basin. He stated that California will continue that process and kick off in earnest for the Post-2026 discussions that will be initiated in the next couple of weeks.

Chairman Hamby stated last month he was able to participate on a panel at an annual Colorado River Law Conference in Colorado. He stated that he participated with Mr. Gene Shawcroft of Utah and Ms. Brenda Burman from the Central Arizona Project. He stated that he shared California's historical perspective on the Colorado River. He added that he is headed to the Upper Colorado River Commission's meeting and giving an update about California's position moving forward on the Colorado River.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hamby adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.