

MINUTES OF MEETING
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
Wednesday, August 14, 2024

A meeting of the Colorado River Board of California (CRB or Board) was held on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, at the Poway City Hall, 13325 Civic Center Drive, Poway, CA 92064.

Board Members and Alternates Present:

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

Board Members and Alternates Absent:

David De Jesus (MWD Alternate)	Christopher Hayes (DFW Designee)
Castulo Estrada (CVWD Alternate)	Delon Kwan (LADWP Alternate)
Dana B. Fisher, Jr. (PVID)	David Vigil (DFW Alternate)

Others Present:

Brian Alvarez	Jessica Neuwerth
Nick Bahr	Shana Rapoport
Linda Bahr	Angela Rashid
Vikki Dee Bradshaw	Dylan Redor
Jeremy Brooks	David Rheinheimer
Robert Cheng	Jason Rollo
Dennis Davis	Shanti Rosset
JR Echard	Eric Ruckdaschel
Christopher Harris	Alexi Schnell
Ned Hyduke	Tina Shields
Aaron Mead	Gary Tavetian
Marty Miller	Joseph Vanderhorst
Terry Murphy	Petya Vasileva
Yuanyuan Myint	Jerry Zimmerman

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hamby announced the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

WELCOME FROM SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

Vice Chairman Madaffer thanked everyone for visiting City of Poway, California and joining the tour for San Vicente Dam Reservoir. Vice Chairman Madaffer stated that the San Vicente Reservoir was crucial water storage for the San Diego region and praised the partnership with City of San Diego to raise the dam to increase the storage capacity.

Member Heideman welcomed everyone for visiting.

Vice Chairman Madaffer acknowledged Mr. Marty Miller, a member of the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

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

Announcement

Mr. Gary Tavetian, Attorney General for the Board, announced that he would be retiring at the end of August 2024. Mr. Tavetian introduced his successor, Dylan Redor, from the California Office of Attorney General. Mr. Tavetian stated that Eric Katz, from the California Office of Attorney General, would continue working for the Board. The Board welcomed Mr. Redor.

Recognition of the Services of Executive Director Christopher Harris

Ms. Tina Shields presented a plaque to Executive Director Harris on behalf of the Imperial Irrigation District (IID). Ms. Shields stated that Executive Director Harris has done so much over the last 24 years for the Colorado River Board. In collaboration with IID, Executive Director Harris played a critical role developing the Lower Basin Drought Plan for the 2022-2026 federally funded conservation, 400,000 acre-feet (AF) per year for California. Ms. Shields added that Executive Director Harris led California's efforts in discussions regarding post-2026 interim guidelines. In

addition, Executive Director Harris has been a dedicated advocate for the Salton Sea Initiatives. Ms. Shields congratulated Executive Director Harris on his retirement.

Member Nelson stated that Executive Director Harris has been a good friend and a mentor. Member Nelson presented a plaque and resolution from the board of the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). Member Nelson highlighted three statements from the resolution, stating that Executive Director Harris has demonstrated outstanding leadership in western water; had a significant impact on everyone who was present today; and helped ensure the sustainability of the river, which provides water to forty million people. Member Nelson stated his appreciation for the many contributions of Executive Director Harris.

Vice Chairman Madaffer stated that Executive Director Harris has been a stalwart advocate for California. Vice Chairman Madaffer presented gifts on behalf of San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA): a bottle of water representing the water supply of SDCWA, with 71% from the Colorado River, 29% from local supply, and 1% from the State Water Project; a plant pot that made with the pipeline material from San Vicente Reservoir, and a coring sample from the San Vicente Dam raise.

Member Robinson thanked Executive Director Harris and presented a resolution on behalf of Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) honoring Executive Director Harris. Member Robinson stated that Executive Director Harris's leadership has been instrumental in the development and success of many programs to ensure the resources of the Colorado River Basin are properly managed, including the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program, 2001 Interim Surplus Guidelines, 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines, and 2019 Drought Contingency Plan.

Member Cordero recognized the Executive Director's services and accomplishments on behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Member Cordero noted that the MWD had presented Executive Director Harris with a framed certificate in appreciation for his nearly 25 years of service with the Board. Member Cordero congratulated Executive Director Harris on his retirement.

Member Jones stated that the Department of Water Resources had framed a special artistic photo of some State Water Project infrastructure, which would be sent to Executive Director Harris once the framing was complete. Member Jones noted her appreciation for Executive Director Harris's service.

Mr. Terry Murphy and Mr. Jeremy Brooks presented, on behalf of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), a flag which had been flown in several different locations: at Hoover Dam, at the Capitol in Washington D.C., and at the Department of Interior.

Deputy Director Neuwerth thanked Executive Director Harris for his service, leadership, and friendship. Deputy Director Neuwerth presented a wood carved Colorado River map on behalf of the Colorado River Board.

Executive Director Harris stated that it has been his greatest honor and privilege to work with everyone over his years with the Board

Consideration and Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2024, Board Meeting

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the May 15th, 2024, Board meeting minutes. Vice Chairman Madaffer moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Cordero. By roll-call vote, this item was unanimously approved.

Consideration and Approval of Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2024, Board Meeting

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve the June 12th, 2024, Board meeting minutes. Member Nelson moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Vice Chairman Madaffer. By roll-call vote, this item was unanimously approved.

LOCAL AND STATE WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORTS

Member Jones, representing the Department of Water Resources (DWR), reported that the rainy season has concluded, and Water Year 2024 (WY-2024) is nearing its end. She noted that precipitation conditions were average during WY-2024. She reported that statewide reservoir storage conditions were average to slightly above average in some areas. She concluded her report showing a figure that compared drought inflow conditions in 2014, 2015 and 2021 with current inflow conditions, noting that WY-2024 inflow volume was average to slightly above average.

Member Cordero, representing MWD, reported that, as of August 1st, the combined reservoir storage was 88% of capacity. She reported that the Colorado River Aqueduct will be on a seven-pump flow through November. She reported that the 2024 diversion target is 931,000 acre-feet and as of August 9th, MWD has diverted 494,242 acre-feet. She reported that MWD's deliveries to member agencies for the first part of the year were 82% of the annual average. The 2024 delivery target for Desert Water Agency and Coachella Valley Water District is 312,000 acre-feet.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS REPORT

Staff Member Rashid reported that as of August 5th, the water level at Lake Powell was 3,583.86 feet with 9.61 million-acre feet (MAF) of storage, or 41% of capacity. She reported that the water level at Lake Mead was 1,061.37 feet with 8.53 MAF of storage, or 33% of capacity.

She reported that the total system storage was 25.85 MAF, or 42% of capacity, which is 20 killo-acre-feet (KAF) more than system storage at this time last year.

Staff Member Rashid reported that as of August 1st, the WY-2024 forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell is 7.94 MAF, or 83% of normal. She reported that the preliminary observed April to July inflow into Lake Powell is 5.33 MAF, or 83% of normal. She stated that the observed inflow into Lake Powell for July was 67% of normal and the August inflow forecast was 56% of normal. She reported that WY-2024 precipitation to date is 98% of normal.

Staff Member Rashid reported on the monthly precipitation conditions for June and July 2024. She reported that conditions in June in parts of Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico were above average, likely to due to monsoonal activities. She explained that precipitation conditions in July were dry throughout most of the Colorado River Basin.

Staff Member Rashid reported on the May and July 24-Month Study for Lakes Powell and Mead. She explained that the May 24-Month study is used to project the maximum projected inflow, while the July 24-Month projects the most probable and minimum projected inflows. She noted that the most probable release from Glen Canyon Dam will be 7.48 MAF in 2024 and 2025. She explained that the 24-Month Study projections show Lake Mead's elevation holding steady in 2024, but its elevation is impacted by back-to-back 7.48 MAF release in 2025 and is projected to decline below 1,050 ft by the end of 2025. She also noted that the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will release the August 24-Month study on August 15th, noting that the August 24-Month Study is used to set the operational tiers for Lakes Powell and Mead in the 2025 Annual Operating Plan (AOP).

Staff Member Rashid reported that through the end of July, the Brock and Senator Wash regulating reservoirs captured 63,334 AF and 45,923 AF respectively. She also reported that excess deliveries to Mexico were 17,915 AF, compared to 22,995 AF at this time last year. She stated that saline drainage bypass to the Cienga de Santa Clara is currently about 80,441 AF.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN PROGRAMS STAFF REPORT

Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program

Staff Member Rapoport reported that Reclamation signed the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) for Glen Canyon Dam.

Staff Member Rapoport clarified that there were two main purposes for the SEIS. The first was to incorporate experimental smallmouth bass flows to potentially disrupt smallmouth bass spawning, by releasing colder water through the bypass tubes to cool the river to prevent

spawning and the establishment of smallmouth bass populations. Staff Member Rapoport added that the flows will result in less hydropower generation through the dam. While opening the LTEMP, Reclamation also authorized a change to the high flow experiment accounting window and implementation window to help better manage the sediment in the system.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the ROD was signed on July 3rd, just before the temperature trigger was met to initiate smallmouth bass flows. Smallmouth bass flows began being implemented on July 9th.

Staff Member Rapoport showed a figure of the water temperature below Glen Canyon Dam. The graph shows the temperature steadily creeping up at the beginning of July, then dropping dramatically when smallmouth bass flows were initiated on July 9th. The figure also shows temperature fluctuation that is incorporated in the experiment to allow the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) as much flexibility to generate power as possible while maintaining an average daily water temperature below sixteen degrees.

Chairman Hamby requested clarification that the temperature drops in the figure were the release of cold water to discourage the smallmouth bass population. Staff Member Rapoport confirmed that Chairman Hamby's interpretation was correct and that the experiment was aiming to maintain the water temperature below 16°C at River Mile 61. Staff Member Rapoport added that the figure indicates that the releases are achieving their goals and successfully cooling the river.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that, as of last Friday, ninety-four smallmouth bass have been captured below the dam in 2024. None of the smallmouth bass captured are age zero which indicates that there may not have been spawning yet this year. Staff Member Rapoport added that other nonnatives are being identified in the system including quite a few green sunfish and walleye.

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the Technical Work Group (TWG) of the Glen Canyon Dam program held an in-person meeting in July in Flagstaff. The main item was to recommend a triennial work plan and budget to fund the U.S. Geological Survey's Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center and Reclamation for their work on the program for the next three years. The TWG makes a recommendation to the Adaptive Management Work Group, which would then recommend the work plan and budget to the Secretary of the Interior. The TWG did not vote on a recommendation in Flagstaff so held two virtual follow-up meetings. On August 8th, the TWG passed a resolution for the Adaptive Management Work Group to consider next week.

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Staff Member Rapoport reported that the purchase of the Gabrych property is continuing. The funds from the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (MSCP) were transferred on August 1st and the agreement is supposed to close on August 21st. Staff Member Rapoport added that the program is moving forward with informal meetings with PVID staff to hopefully find a good way to use that property to meet both the needs of the MSCP and the PVID community. The meeting is scheduled for the 20th.

Executive Director Harris acknowledged Terry Murphy and Jeremy Brooks, who had previously left the meeting, stating that Reclamation was incredibly helpful in working with Arizona, California, and Nevada to acquire that property. Executive Director Harris added that this property will be critical to California and the Lower Basin in providing MSCP coverage post-2026.

Staff Member Rapoport expressed her gratitude to Executive Director Harris.

MEMBER AGENCY REPORTS

California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Member Jones reported that last month DWR released the latest iteration of its Delivery Capability Report, highlighting that the latest version indicates the State Water Project delivery capability could be reduced by up to 23% in 20 years because of climate change. Member Jones provided historical context, noting that the project was constructed in the late 1960s and that, up until about 1990, provided 100% of deliveries except in two drought years (1976-1977), after which delivery capability fell due to growth in the service area, increased demand, and changes in environmental regulations in the Bay Delta.

Member Jones explained that while we can model climate change and associated uncertainties, human decisions—including regulatory decisions, changes in water demand, and decisions related to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)—are unpredictable and can be more significant than climate uncertainties.

San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that SDCWA received about \$35 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to help maintain water resiliency. He reported that of that, \$19.4 million went to upgrade the Carlsbad desalination plant. He noted that most of SDCWA's water portfolio comes from the Colorado River, desalination, and local supply, and that BIL funding for desalination therefore protects the Colorado River.

Vice Chairman Madaffer reported that the City of Oceanside, an SDCWA member, received more than \$15 million in federal funding this summer to support its water recycling and brackish water purification plants. He reported that of that, more than \$7 million will help the city with its Pure Water Oceanside facility, which will ultimately provide about 35% of all water needed in the City of Oceanside. He reported that \$5.2 million is going to the Mission Basin Groundwater Purification facility, also in Oceanside, and that the remaining \$3.1 million is going to the city's expanding recycled water systems.

Vice Chairman Madaffer concluded by noting that these local projects are reducing dependency on the Colorado River.

Imperial Irrigation District (IID)

IID Water Manager Tina Shields first reported that IID was pre-selected for a U.S. Department of Agriculture water-savings commodity grant program to receive up to \$15 million in funding for on-farm conservation.

Ms. Shields then reported that IID has spent the past couple of months executing its 2024-2026 System Conservation Implementation Agreement (SCIA). She reported that IID completed its Environmental Assessment for the program and, over the past weekend, received a Finding of No Significant Impact from Reclamation.

Ms. Shields reported that over the next two-and-a-half years IID will be implementing programs to conserve up to 300,000 acre-feet a year, with a cumulative total of 700,000 acre-feet, or about 24% of IID's water supply on an annual basis.

Ms. Shields reported that IID's board authorized the environmental documents and approved the SCIA on Monday, and that on Tuesday morning IID staff began locking gates to implement a Deficit Irrigation Program. She noted that IID anticipates it will temporarily not deliver irrigation water to a total of 160,000 acres of alfalfa, Bermuda grass, and Kleingrass. Finally, Ms. Shields noted that the SCIA will add eight to ten feet to the elevation of Lake Mead.

Ms. Shields noted that the SCIA will allow IID to expand its On-Farm Efficiency Conservation Program, and that IID will be working with SDCWA and MWD to utilize some existing Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) transfer water to help avoid full-year fallowing in the Imperial Valley and still conserve the volumes IID committed to as part of the Lower Basin Drought Plan.

Finally, Ms. Shields thanked Executive Director Harris for his service, noting his involvement in the Salton Sea, and friendship.

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)

Member Cordero reported that the MWD board authorized \$3 million to fund studies and pilot tests as part of its Future Supply Action Funding Program, projects to advance work on recycled water, stormwater, seawater, desalination, and groundwater capture. She listed several regional water agencies that will receive funding from this program.

Member Cordero reported that MWD achieved a milestone this summer with a record 3.4 million acre-feet of water in storage, including a nearly full Diamond Valley Lake, groundwater basin, and other reservoirs in the region. She emphasized that more than half of this water in storage is from conservation efforts in Southern California.

Member Cordero reported that this year is the 50th anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act as well as the 50th anniversary of MWD's Water Quality Section. She noted that in the fall there will be a celebration of the annual quality report, which will be released later this month and will highlight water quality contributions of MWD over the decades.

Member Cordero reported that MWD received a \$30 million grant from DWR, with which MWD has increased the rebate to businesses and public agencies for removing nonfunctional turf. She noted that this is to help comply with Assembly Bill 1572, which was signed into law last year and phases out irrigation of nonfunctional turf with potable water beginning in 2027.

Member Cordero concluded by recognizing MWD board member Marty Miller, noting that Director Miller chairs MWD's Colorado River ad hoc committee.

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)

Member Nelson recognized the efforts of IID for finalizing 2024-2026 SCIA and recollected his own initial efforts to start the program with Executive Director Harris, IID and CVWD, as well as with Reclamation Commissioner Touton and California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Crowfoot for Salton Sea funds.

Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID)

PVID General Manager JR Echard reported on PVID's community outreach and safety program, including outreach with local schools to promote safety around canals and with Palo Verde College for job recruitment.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Annual Operating Plan for Colorado River Operations

Executive Director Harris reported that that 2025 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) is under development. The second consultation and review of the 2025 AOP was held on July 25th. Executive Director Harris reported that the 2024 AOP was recently signed by the Secretary, after a long delay in order to incorporate the Record of Decision for the Supplement Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the 2007 Interim Shortage Guidelines.

Executive Director Harris reported that the August 24-Month Study would be issued on August 15th. Based on the projected elevations of Lakes Powell and Mead, the annual release from Glen Canyon Dam in WY-2025 will be 7.48 MAF. Executive Director Harris noted that because of record-breaking conservation in the Lower Basin over the past several years, Lake Mead's elevation has remained fairly steady. Lake Mead is projected to be at elevation 1,060' on January 1st, 2025, putting Lake Mead in a Tier 1 shortage, triggering 613 KAF of reductions from Arizona, Nevada, and Mexico under the 2007 Guidelines and 2019 Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). Executive Director Harris reported that the projected delivery to Mexico in 2025 is 1.45 MAF.

Post-2026 Process Update

Deputy Director Neuwerth reported that the Colorado River Basin States have continued to meet periodically over the past several months. These meetings have included modeling options that fall between the two alternatives submitted by the Upper and Lower Basins in March 2024. Deputy Director Neuwerth noted that there is still a lot of work to be done before agreement can be reached between the Basins. Deputy Director Neuwerth reported that the Lower Basin states have also continued to meet to resolve some final pieces of the Lower Basin alternative, including the rules for a new water storage program for Lake Mead.

Washington, D.C. Report

Executive Director Harris reported that Reclamation has recently announced the "Bucket 2 Environmental Drought Mitigation" program in the Upper Basin. The goal of the program is to provide general environmental benefits or ecosystem/habitat restoration benefits that address issues directly caused by drought.

Executive Director Harris also noted that Reclamation announced \$105 million in new WaterSMART grants, and the Department of Agriculture announced \$400 million for farm water conservation efforts in the West.

Executive Director Harris reported that legislation had been introduced in the House and Senate to settle water rights claims of the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe, and San Juan Southern

Paiute Tribe in Arizona. Mr. Harris noted that the settlement is the result of decades of effort by the tribes, State of Arizona, and the U.S. The settlement would provide safe drinking water across the Navajo Nation, many parts of which are without running water, and would establish a new reservation for the San Juan Paiute tribe.

Finally, Executive Director Harris reported that the Senate Appropriations Committee passed an appropriations bill that would fund Reclamation at \$1.8 billion, an increase of about 6% from their current funding level.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Hamby reported that he participated in a PBS special recorded at Hoover Dam. Other speakers included Commissioner Touton, Jim Lochhead, Pat Mulroy, John Fleck, and other representatives from across the Basin.

Chairman Hamby reported that the Navajo Nation provided an update to California stakeholders on the status of the Northern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement. Chairman Hamby noted that despite its large price tag of \$5 billion, the settlement is one of the cheaper Indian water rights settlements on a per capita basis. The settlement would include building significant new infrastructure to deliver settlement water to rural, sparsely settled areas of the reservation.

Chairman Hamby reported that he had also attended the Fed-State-Tribes meeting, the forum established earlier in the year to improve coordination between the tribes and state and federal stakeholders. Chairman Hamby noted that the meeting was interesting and included some excellent remarks from President Joaquin of the Quechan Tribe.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board entered Executive Session at 2:16 p.m.

Pursuant to Section 11126, subdivision (a)(1) of the Government Code, an Executive Session was held to discuss the search for the Executive Director and the appointment of a Interim Executive Director.

REGULAR SESSION

The Board resumed the regular session at 2:48 a.m.

Actions Taken in Executive Session

Chairman Hamby reported that the Board took action during the Executive Session to appoint Deputy Director Neuwerth as Interim Executive Director of the Colorado River Board.

This action was motioned by Chairman Hamby, second by Vice Chairman Madaffer, and was unanimously approved.

Deputy Director Neuwerth thanked the Board.

Discussion/Potential Action to Approve Salary Adjustment for an Interim Executive Director

Chairman Hamby asked for a motion to approve salary adjustment for Interim Executive Director. Vice Chairman Madaffer moved to approve a salary adjustment for the Interim Executive Director for \$16,789 per month, seconded by Member Pettijohn. By roll-call vote, this item was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hamby announced the next Board meeting will be on September 11, 2024, at San Diego, CA.

With no further items to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hamby adjourned the meeting at 2:49 p.m.