



PRESS STATEMENT

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CONTACT: Shauna Evans or Doug MacEachern

PHONE: 480.251.4668 or 602.510.0104

STATEMENT ON RECLAMATION' S FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR FUTURE COLORADO RIVER OPERATIONS

For many months it has been clear that the direction of Colorado River negotiations has been an exercise in lowering expectations, particularly for a long-term, seven-state agreement on operating this vital river system. It was that increasingly bleak scenario that prompted the three Lower Basin states of Arizona, California and Nevada to step forward with our proposal to help stabilize Lake Powell and Lake Mead with more than three million acre-feet of water savings over a two-year period.

While the [FEIS just released](#) by the Department of the Interior does nothing to elevate expectations around a coherent seven-state plan for shared sacrifice, it includes an analysis that allows the adoption of many of the core elements of the Lower Basin proposal. We will continue to work with the federal government, as well as with our tribal, agricultural and municipal partners in Arizona, and the other Colorado River Basin states, to make river operations work for the betterment of all.

The FEIS contains a framework that includes sideboards that are unacceptable for the state of Arizona including reductions in the Lower Basin of up to 3 million acre-feet per year, in priority. Such reductions would devastate Arizona's water users and its economy. The FEIS framework also fails to include any Upper Basin reductions or sufficient use of water stored in the Upper Initial Units (reservoirs above Lake Powell).

A forthcoming Record of Decision and operating guidelines will provide the details for operations through 2028 and a framework for an additional eight years of operations. We hope to see those documents provide for operations in 2027 and 2028 consistent with the [May 1 Lower Basin Proposal](#), including sharing reductions among the three Lower Basin states (Arizona, California, and Nevada) of 1.25 million acre-feet in each year, as well as an additional commitment of 700,000 acre-feet of system conservation water.

ADWR will continue to work to complete the agreements necessary to implement the Lower Basin Proposal while preserving Arizona's legal rights.

We will provide additional statements and opportunities for interviews when Interior releases the Record of Decision and the operating guidelines.

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