



MEMORANDUM

TO: IEDA Board
FROM: Ed Gerak
RE: Water Committee Report
DATE: August 9, 2024

Hydrology

As of July 21st, Upper Colorado system storage sits at 15.28 MAF (51% of system total). The majority of this is stored in Lake Powell, with 9.79 MAF (42% of lake storage). SWE peaked on April 3rd at 114% of median. Unfortunately, 900K AC-FT disappeared from the projections from April to May. This is the second year in a row with major unexpected losses. We have asked BOR to revise their modeling to more accurately account for SWE and runoff. WY2025 Most Probable forecast is 9.15 MAF, with a 7.48 MAF release from Powell most probable based on May & July 2024 modeling.

The current system storage in the Lower Basin is 45%, up 1% from this time last year. Lake Mead holds 8.57 MAF (33% Full). In discussions with APA, WAPA projections are Pollyanna again, so APA expects to revise its budget to match 2024 expectations. Imperial Irrigation District is the only major conservation piece remaining, and Mexico signed Minute 330 to conserve more water, but projections continue to exceed rationale expectations.

- 7.48 MAF Most Probable Release in 2025
- West in Line for Strong “La Nina” Year
- Lower Basin Reservoirs 45% Full (July 21)

Bureau of Reclamation

- Interior Opens up to \$450M for Upper Colorado River Ecosystem Projects
- Zebra Mussels Detected in Colorado River

Tribal Water Settlements

- Kelly/Ciscomani Introduce Bills for NE Arizona Tribal Water Settlement
- Kelly Bill to Ratify & Fund Yavapai-Apache Nation Water Rights Settlement

PCAST

President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology met at Arizona State University in July to discuss groundwater and some national initiatives. Some in attendance were struck how little the academics knew about groundwater.

This could ultimately be a threat to groundwater at the state and federal levels, but with groundwater being managed by the states, it is hard to believe that this will have much traction outside of guiding principles in the near term. With the recent Chevron decision (and WOTUS), unless a specific piece of legislation gets introduced that requires some of these implied requirements, it probably won't go anywhere.

Others

- White House Launches Review of PFAS Wastewater Proposal
- Corps Extended Flood Storage Space at Roosevelt from 20 to 120 Days
- Department of Agriculture (USDA) leaders today rolled out their "US Water Savings Commodities
- Additional \$43M Going Towards Rural Water Projects
- CA Advances First-In-Nation Plan To Set Water Budgets For Cities Statewide
- Administration Announces Creation of Columbia River Task Force; Releases Report Saying Federal Hydropower Dams Harm Tribes