

12/28/18

Snowpack in Trouble Across the West and Around the Globe, Researchers Say

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the *Arizona Daily Star* about new research from the scientists at Scripps Institute

12/14/18

Fear and Grieving in Las Vegas: Colorado River Managers Struggle With Water Scarcity

[Fear and Grieving in Las Vegas: Colorado River Managers Struggle with Water Scarcity](#) by Luke Runyon of KUNC Public Radio

[Utah, Other Southwestern USA States Get Jan. 31 Deadline for Drought Deal](#) by Ken Ritter of Associated Press

[Federal Official Threatens Takeover of Key Colorado River Decisions From States](#) by Tony Davis of Arizona Daily Star

[Upper Colorado River Basin States Approve Drought Management Agreements](#) by Brent Gardner-Smith of Aspen Journalism

12/13/18

Tribal Water Study released to the public

[2018 - Tribal Water Study of the Ten-Tribe Partnership](#) (all documents combined and starting with the press release). This study is a new feature of the 2012 Basin Study.

###

WASHINGTON (PRWEB) DECEMBER 13, 2018

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman announced today the release of the Colorado River Basin Ten Tribes Partnership Tribal Water Study that was conducted collaboratively with the member tribes of the Ten Tribes Partnership.

The study documents how Partnership Tribes currently use their water, projects how future water development could occur and describes the potential effects of future tribal water development on the Colorado River System. The study also identifies challenges

related to the use of tribal water and explores opportunities that provide a wide range of benefits to both Partnership Tribes and other water users.

"We face a prolonged drought that represents one of the driest 20-year periods on the Colorado River in the last 1,200 years," said Commissioner Burman. "This study is an important step forward that furthers our understanding of the challenges facing the Colorado River Basin and the actions we can take to collaboratively address them."

While not all federally-recognized tribes in the basin are members of the Ten Tribes Partnership, the Partnership Tribes have reserved water rights, including unresolved claims, to potentially divert nearly 2.8 million acre-feet of water per year from the Colorado River and its tributaries. In many cases, these rights are senior to other uses.

The study is the outcome of a commitment between Reclamation and the Partnership Tribes to engage in a joint study to build on the scientific foundation of the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study, published by Reclamation in 2012.

"Reclamation recognized the need for additional analyses and work following the 2012 Colorado River Basin Study," said Reclamation Lower Colorado Regional Director Terry Fulp. "Working together, the Ten Tribes Partnership and Reclamation have produced a valuable reference that is the first of its kind in the Colorado River Basin."

The study highlights tribal observations and concerns, including lack of water security, incomplete distribution systems and regulatory and economic challenges to developing water systems in geographically diverse areas. "In light of the importance of tribal water rights in the Colorado River Basin, the Partnership and Reclamation collaborated to contribute crucial tribal-specific information to the discussions regarding Colorado River management," said Lorelei Cloud, Chairman of the Ten Tribes Partnership. "Without the hard work and dedication of Reclamation, tribal leaders, and tribal staff, this critical project would not have been possible."

The Ten Tribes Partnership was formed in 1992 by ten federally recognized tribes with federal Indian reserved water rights in the Colorado River or its tributaries. Five member tribes are located in the Upper Basin (Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe, Jicarilla Apache Nation and Navajo Nation) and five are in the Lower Basin (Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, Colorado River Indian Tribes, Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, Quechan Indian Tribe and Cocopah Indian Tribe).

The study is available at: <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/crbstudy/tribalwaterstudy.html>

12/02/18

Las Vegas Water Planners Hedge Bets Prepare for Worst Case Scenario

[Click here](#) to read "Las Vegas Water Planners Hedge Bets to Prepare for Worst-Case Scenario" by Daniel Rothberg of *The Nevada Independent*.

[Click here](#) to read "Lake Mead Drinking Water Pumping Project Meets Milestone" by Henry Brean of *The Las Vegas Review Journal*.

[Click here](#) to read "Project to Build Deeper Lake Mead Water Intake Passes Key Milestone."

11/27/18

Robert Kennedy Jr. in Las Vegas to Assist the Launch of New Program for Waterkeeper Alliance

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dana Gentry in *Nevada Current*

[Click here](#) for NBC coverage in Las Vegas

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ramona Giwargis of *Las Vegas Review Journal*

11/23/18

Delving Deeper Into Anticipatory Mandatory Curtailment In Colorado

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith in *Aspen Times*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith in *Aspen Times*

[Click here](#) to read Draft Policy for Drought Contingency Planning in Colorado

[Click here](#) to read memo of strategic initiatives from Colorado River Water Conservancy District also be found at:

<https://www.usbr.gov/uc/envdocs/eis/LakePowellPipeline/index.html>

11/23/18

Managing Water in the Arid West

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Sarah Stock in *Moab Sun News*

11/13/18

Can the Outdoor Recreational Economy Save Colorado's Environment?

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Gary Wockner in *The Colorado Sun*

11/09/18

Environmentalists, Feds & Utah's Agree: Don't Send Green River Water to Colorado

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of *The Salt Lake Tribune*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Amy Joi O'Donoghue of *Deseret News*

11/06/18

Are taxpayers getting soaked by water district salaries?

[Click here](#) to view this video from KSL TV, Salt Lake City

11/02/18

Living Rivers Comments for Draft EA for Green River Block Water Rights Contract

[Click here](#) to read our letter to the Bureau of Reclamation

For More Information

[Click here](#) to visit: On The Colorado

10/29/18

The precarious plan for the Lake Powell Pipeline (Warring figures, hidden costs)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emma Penrod in *High Country News*

10/24/18

Demand Management schemes in the Upper Basin need time and money to succeed

[River Official Praises Provisions In New Deals](#)

[Water Czar Unveils Wyoming Plan For a West-Wide Reckoning](#)

[Western Slope Wants Limits on Water Sent to Lake Powell](#)

10/22/18

Central Arizona Cities and Gila River Indian Community Balks at Arizona's DCP scheme

[Click here](#) to read this blog from John Fleck

[Click here](#) to read the letter from the Governor of the Gila River Indian Community

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ian James of *The Arizona Republic* called "Arizona Tribal Leader Aims to Help Reach Colorado River Water Deal." (22 November, 2018)

[Click here](#) to read the blog by John Fleck called "Arizona's efforts to cope with reduced Colorado River supplies, moving in reverse."

[Click here](#) to read the letter from the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ian James of *The Arizona Republic*

10/18/18

The Future of the Colorado River: a Moab community symposium

SPONSORED BY:

- Center for Colorado River Studies Quinney College of Natural Resources
- Utah State University

- Event Website is [HERE](#)

PRODUCTS

- [Event Poster](#)
- [Schmidt Powerpoint](#)
- [Rubin Powerpoint](#)
- [Udall Powerpoint](#)
- [Castle PowerPoint](#)
- [Budy Powerpoint](#)

NEWS

Times-Independent

- [River Symposium: Let's Figure Out How to Do a Good Job](#) by Nathaniel Smith.
- [New Normal: Dam Releases Help Offset Droughts Low Flows](#) by Emma Renly

LOCATION

- Star Hall
- Moab, Utah
- 8:45am to 1:00pm
- 13 October 2018

PROGRAM

8:45a: Introduction

- Jack Schmidt, Professor and Director, Center for Colorado River Studies, Utah State University (former: Chief, USGS Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center)

9a: Reading the rivers sediments: basic science applied to managed reservoir releases from Glen Canyon Dam

- David Rubin, researcher, University of California Santa Cruz (previously Senior Scientist, USGS Pacific Marine Geology)
- Paul Grams, hydrologist, USGS Southwest Biological Science Center, Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center

9:45a: How will the river run? Colorado River stream flow in a warming world

- Brad Udall, Senior Water and Climate Research Fellow, Colorado Water Institute, Colorado State University

10:15a: Panel Discussion: Meeting water supply, hydropower, and environmental objectives for the Colorado River can we have it all?

- Anne Castle, Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, University of Colorado-Boulder (former Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, US Department of the Interior)
- Chris Harris, Executive Director, Colorado River Board of California

- Eric Kuhn, retired (former General Manager, Colorado River Water Conservation District)
- Clayton Palmer, environmental specialist, Western Area Power Administration
- John Weisheit, Conservation Director, Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper

11:15a: The future of riparian vegetation communities along the big rivers

- Sasha Reed, ecologist, USGS Southwest Biological Science Center, Moab Research Station

11:45a: The future of the endangered big river fish

- Phaedra Budy, ecologist and Unit Leader, USGS Utah Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit, Utah State University

12:15p: Public Discussion: Does the river have a future?

- Jack Schmidt - facilitator
-

10/16/18

Colorado River District Leaders to Discuss Idea of Mandatory Water Cuts Across State

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith at *Aspen Journalism*

10/11/18

A Call on the Yampa River Occurs for the First Time in History

[Click here](#) to read this story by Alan Best of *Mountain Town News*

10/10/18

Final Review Draft of Agreements for Drought Contingency Planning

October 5, 2018 - Final Review Draft Agreements for Drought Contingency Planning. Reclamation.

[CLICK HERE](#)

FROM TONY DAVIS OF ARIZONA DAILY STAR

It was another bad year on the Colorado River, and the numbers prove it.

- River flows into Lake Powell at the Arizona-Utah border were 43 percent of normal in water year 2017-2018, which ended at the end of last month. That's the lowest since the extreme drought year of 2002, when they were 24 percent of normal. It's the third lowest annual flow into Powell since records on river flows started being kept in 1906.

- The river's annual flows were above average in only four of the 19 years since 2000. This was the river's driest 19-year period on record.

- The combined storage of river water in Lake Powell and Lake Mead is about 41 percent of normal. It's the lowest combined storage since Lake Powell was filling during the mid-1960s after the closing of the gates at the newly constructed Glen Canyon Dam.
- This year's flows into Lake Powell were far less than the federal forecast back in April of about 52 percent of normal. One reason is that flows into Powell were 1 percent of normal in September — the driest on record — and 2 percent of normal in August — the second driest on record.

"We had a pretty good year in 2017, with an inflow into Powell of 110 percent of average. But unfortunately we lost that storage and a little bit more in 2018," said Dan Bunk, a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation hydrologist.

He presented these and other figures Wednesday at a meeting of the steering committee working on a proposed Drought Contingency Plan for the river's Lower Basin. "Really that buffer that we saw in Lake Powell, the extra storage that helped protect the Colorado River system, was lost this year," Bunk said.

The bureau predicts a 57 percent chance of the river's first shortage in 2020, with the odds of shortages increasing in future years. That would happen if Lake Mead drops below 1,075 feet at the end of 2019.

Without a formal Drought Contingency Plan in place, under which less water would be used, there's about a 75 percent chance of Mead dropping below 1,050 feet by 2026, which would require deeper cuts in deliveries, the bureau says. That's based on assuming the trends of declining river flows from 1988 to 2015 continues. With a drought plan, the odds of Mead dropping below 1,050 by then fall to a little over 50 percent.

Without a drought plan, there's also at least a 40 percent chance of Mead dropping below 1,025 feet from 2024 through 2026, bureau figures show, based on the same 1988-2015 flow record. With a plan, the odds of such low levels drops to less than 20 percent for all those years and to as low as 10 percent in 2024.

At 1,025 feet, a federal takeover of how the river's flows are divided is possible, as federal officials would want to keep the lake from sinking lower and approaching "dead pool" at 895 feet, when no water could be pulled from Mead.

09/21/18

Mandatory Curtailment of Water Rights in Colorado Raised as Possibility! Lake Powell Empty in Three Years?

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *Aspen Journalism*

09/20/18

White River: Economic Feasibility of Off-Channel Dam and Reservoir Questioned.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *Aspen Journalism*
[Big Dam Proposal Seeking Supporters](#). *Grand Junction Sentinel*.

[Colorado Water Agencies Going Different Ways on White River Dam Project](#). *Aspen Journalism*.

For more information, visit: [On The Colorado](#)

09/18/18

A heavy week for news and opinion about water resource management in the State of Colorado

WINDY GAP PROJECT

[Click here](#) to read this story for *The Longmont Observer*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *Aspen Journalism*

RISKY BUSINESS CONFERENCE

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *Aspen Journalism*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb of *The Grand Junction Sentinel*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb of *The Grand Junction Sentinel*

OPINION PIECE BY DANIEL BEARD AND GARY WOCKNER

[Click here](#) to read why Glen Canyon Dam should be decommissioned in *The Denver Post*

ADAPTING TO CLIMATE

[Click here](#) to read this story by Bruce Findley of *The Denver Post*

Soothing words on water, but little else

DENNIS WEBB

Grand Junction Sentinel

Sep 20, 2018

Western Slope water interests received verbal assurances but nothing more formal from the Colorado Water Conservation Board Wednesday in regard to concerns about interstate drought-response negotiations and the implications for agriculture west of the Continental Divide.

CWCB staff and board members sought to ease Western Slope worries that Colorado and other states are moving toward agreement about creating a dedicated account or

pool in Lake Powell or other reservoirs for storing water saved through a potential demand management program. Those worries arise from a lack of any rules that would govern such a program in Colorado.

"Our fear is as Western Slope water users that we may become the target for demand management, and we want to do whatever we can to ensure that doesn't happen," Tom Alvey, a Delta County fruit-grower who is president of the Colorado River District board of directors, told the state board at its meeting in Steamboat Springs.

Alvey was reiterating comments made Friday by the district's general manager, Andy Mueller, at a district forum in Grand Junction focused on contingency planning measures should the region's long-term drought continue. States in the Upper Colorado River Basin are working on ways to try to keep levels in Lake Powell from falling low enough that the states could no longer meet their water-delivery obligations to downstream states under a 1922 agreement, leading to curtailment of water uses in the Upper Basin. Among measures under consideration is a potential demand management program that could involve measures such as temporary fallowing of fields.

Mueller on Friday voiced frustration about not being able to see a demand-management document that James Eklund, Colorado's representative on the Upper Colorado River Commission, may soon be signing. The river district fears the agreement could help facilitate a demand management program in Colorado inconsistent with what criteria the river district believes such a program should have.

Mueller's understanding Friday was that Eklund might be signing such a document within a month, but Eklund told The Daily Sentinel that instead draft documents would likely be made public within a month or so, with the goal of reaching final agreements later.

Eklund also said the point of the interstate demand-management negotiations is to reach an agreement under which conserved water could be stored in a separate account in a location such as Powell without being subject to release under an existing interstate agreement that seeks to help balance water levels in Powell and Lake Mead downstream. He sees the particulars about what a demand-management program would entail within Colorado as something to be determined in separate, in-state discussions.

Karen Kwon, first assistant attorney general with the Colorado Attorney General's Office, reiterated that Wednesday at the CWCB meeting.

"If we did a demand-management program and we had nowhere to put the water, it's for naught. We did nothing," Kwon said.

The river district and other Western Slope entities including the Southwestern Water Conservation District are uncomfortable with the idea of working out the storage side of things without first spelling out what constraints a demand management program should

have. They asked the state board Wednesday to adopt a resolution stating that any such program should comply with a number of principles laid out by the districts, but the board took no action on the matter.

Among principles the Western Slope sought were that any water conserved in a demand-management program should be able to be stored free of charge; that participation by water users in the program should be voluntary, compensated and temporary; that the conserved water shouldn't be subject to release under the Powell-Mead equalization agreement; and that the program should not have disproportionate impacts on any single basin or region in the state.

Principles such as the free storage are ones Colorado officials already are negotiating with other states, according to Kwon.

The river district also was concerned ahead of Wednesday's meeting about a memo from CWCB staff talking about key issues for consideration should Colorado create a demand-management program. Among those issues were whether such a program should be limited to temporary, voluntary and compensated activities "or be expanded to include something more," and the potential for considering a pivot "to something more akin to mandatory curtailment."

CWCB staff member Brent Newman said at Wednesday's meeting that the memo was simply intended to summarize the full spectrum of discussions, concerns and opportunities as identified by water users when it comes to a possible demand management program. He said CWCB and Attorney General's Office staff aren't "assessing, pursuing or recommending to the board any type of involuntary or anticipatory curtailment scenario."

Peter Fleming, the river district's general counsel, told the state board that Newman's clarifications "were very helpful."

Fleming said the issue has resulted in "a little period of unfortunate tension" of the kind that sometimes arises in the state regarding water issues.

"Sometimes it's unavoidable and sometimes it needs to be aired and it happens and we work through it," Fleming said.

But he said the river district remains concerned about that range of options raised by the CWCB staff in the memo. He said the district is worried about the "unfettered use" of a new tool.

"It is demand management. It is a controversial topic and we can't shy away from that. The reduction of consumptive uses is something that is a new thing on the West Slope in particular."

Kathleen Curry, a former state lawmaker whose family in Gunnison runs a cattle and

hay operation, said the Western Slope wants to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. But she also worried that measures aimed at avoiding compact curtailment could significantly impact the viability of Western Slope agriculture.

"I hope that the treatment isn't worse than the disease," she said.

Jim Lochhead, chief executive officer and manager of Denver Water, said he saw a media account describing the West Slope position as a "manifesto."

"From Denver Water's perspective, I don't believe we need manifestos. What we need is diplomacy and what we need is leadership," he said.

Referring to letters Western Slope and Front Range water entities sent to the CWCB, he said there's actually a lot of common ground in them, which is no coincidence because those groups have been in conversations with each other.

But he added that while Denver Water prefers a voluntary, temporary, compensated demand management program, not talking about the prospect of mandatory curtailment won't make the problem go away

"We need to be thinking about that and we need to be thinking about it proactively," he said.

In choosing against taking any action on the issue Wednesday, CWCB board members voiced a desire to wait to see what's in the draft negotiation documents once they're released. They also referred to what they viewed as the importance of addressing the storage aspect of demand management.

"The storage is vital," said board chair Jim Yahn. "How we use it, we can agree to figure that out."

###

Something more?

Grand Junction Sentinel Editorial Board

September 20, 2018

It's never fun to learn that authorities aren't on the same page about something as critical as water, which is the lifeblood of any Western community.

Over the last several years, we've seen greater harmony between the Front Range and the Western Slope when it comes to water. As the Colorado Water Conservation Board went about finalizing the state's first-ever water plan, entities from both sides of the state met often in public forums and hammered out a consensus that worked for all parties.

But old suspicions die hard. In a departure from this new spirit of collaboration, we got a

dose of old-school saber rattling last week from the Colorado River District. Warranted or not, it's a reminder how communication and transparency can go a long way toward easing long-held tensions.

On Friday, Andy Mueller, the general manager of the Colorado River District took advantage of a public forum to announce his concerns with a "demand-management document" and its implications for Western Slope water users. The states in the Upper Colorado River Basin are supposed to spell out how they intend to deal with falling water levels in Lake Powell.

As the Sentinel's Dennis Webb reported, Mueller said the district hasn't seen documents that would commit the state to a drought contingency plan to fulfill its downstream obligations under the 1922 Colorado River Compact. Mueller said that was "unacceptable."

He's right. It would be unacceptable for the state water board to keep the documents from the district or the public, but that doesn't appear to be the case. James Eklund, Colorado's representative on the Upper Colorado River Commission and a former director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board said the goal is to get documents ready for review by this month, but that the district and other stakeholders would have plenty of time to evaluate and analyze them before they're executed.

Reassuring as that is, Mueller pointed to a memo written by the Colorado Water Conservation Board staff ahead of Wednesday's board meeting asking if a demand-management program should be confined to temporary, voluntary and compensated activities "or be expanded to include something more."

The memo also raised the question of whether the program would be used to help assure continued compliance with the river compact "or something more." The memo later suggests that mandatory curtailment is an option, but Mueller said it's never been discussed by water roundtables around the state.

Clearly, there's enough concerning language in the memo to justify an inquiry about the status of the documents in question. But it seems a simple phone call from the district to the CWCB staff could have cleared up any confusion before it escalated into a public calling-out of Eklund and the board. Perhaps some outreach from the board staff to the district and roundtables might have headed off Mueller's public concerns that conserved water could somehow be co-opted by wealthy Front Range water interests.

###

High and dry irrigators getting a hand

DENNIS WEBB
Grand Junction Sentinel
Sep 19, 2018

The Grand Valley's largest domestic water provider and a leading energy company are stepping in to help area irrigators stretch out their watering season due to western Colorado's severe drought conditions.

The Ute Water Conservancy District board of directors has agreed to donate 4,000 acre-feet of contract water it owns in Ruedi Reservoir above Basalt to help keep water flowing in local canals. Meanwhile, ExxonMobil subsidiary XTO Energy is contributing 5,000 acre-feet that it maintains in Ruedi Reservoir for use downstream of the reservoir, including for irrigation needs in Mesa County and to help protect endangered fish in a crucial 15-mile stretch of the Colorado River in the county.

An acre-foot is about 326,000 gallons. XTO said in a news release that its donation is equivalent to the water needed for 1,500 homes or to irrigate 10,000 acres of farmland for a year.

"Oh man, the whole Grand Valley ought to be very appreciative of that water," Dan Crabtree, who manages the Palisade Irrigation District, said of the donations.

The donations come in a year when much of western Colorado is in extreme and in some areas even exceptional drought, the most extreme category. That drought has come to threaten even Grand Valley irrigation water that involves some of the most senior water rights on the river in Colorado. That makes it some of the last water to get cut off when supplies run out, and also helps protect upstream Colorado River flows that ensure delivery of that water.

Some Grand Valley irrigation water comes from what's called a historic users pool at Green Mountain Reservoir outside Kremmling. This year, Grand Valley irrigation water providers began tapping that 60,000-acre-foot pool earlier than usual due to the drought.

In August, the Colorado River District agreed to release water from Ruedi Reservoir to help trout suffering from low water flows in the Fryingpan and Roaring Fork rivers and help meet Grand Valley irrigation needs while taking pressure off the users pool.

Even with that donation, by Sept. 12, just 8,700 acre-feet remained in the pool, and irrigation providers were anticipating shortages affecting more than 45,000 acres in the Grand Valley.

Ute Water spokesman Joe Burtard said the amount of water in the pool has continued to dwindle since then, prompting Ute Water to step in with the water of its own.

Ute Water owns 12,000 acre-feet of contract water in Ruedi, and in June already agreed to lease half that amount to the state to help endangered fish in the so-called "15-Mile Reach" stretch of the Colorado.

Ute Water held on to the other 6,000 acre-feet for domestic use, in case drought conditions continued to worsen. It now believes the 2,000 acre-feet it is keeping is sufficient as a reserve for domestic use.

"We're being very conservative in maintaining the 2,000 acre-feet for domestic use should we be in a situation where we need it," Burtard said.

So far, Ute Water has been able to meet its water needs from supplies coming off the Grand Mesa.

The donation of the irrigation water could help avert heavier demand on Ute Water and other local domestic water suppliers. Reduced flows in irrigation canals would mean subdivisions would be without irrigation water and homeowners would turn to their domestic water services to water landscaping.

The Ute Water donation will benefit the Palisade Irrigation District, Grand Valley Irrigation Company, Grand Valley Water Users Association, Mesa County Irrigation District and Orchard Mesa Irrigation District.

Burtard said it's hard to put a dollar value on the water Ute Water is donating. It paid \$1,289.90 an acre-foot for the contract water, he said. It is receiving \$7.20 an acre-foot for the 6,000 acre-feet it leased in June to the Colorado Water Conservation Board, an amount intended to cover related operation and maintenance costs for the district.

XTO's water releases will be coordinated with the state's Division of Water Resources, and with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service in terms of timing to best benefit endangered fish.

"XTO Energy shares the state of Colorado's concerns about the persistent drought that is affecting much of Colorado," Michael Johnson, vice president of XTO's Central Division, said in a news release. "Just as we did during the 2002 drought, we are making an effort to offer our assistance by donating water we would normally use for internal operational purposes to help mitigate drought impacts." Said Crabtree, "The Exxon(Mobil) water, that's to keep water in the river, not only for recreation or aesthetics or the fish. It is just good to keep the ecosystem healthy."

Burtard said the Colorado River District is working with other entities to secure another 1,900 acre-feet for Grand Valley irrigators.

Crabtree said irrigators already have cut back use substantially to extend the historic users pool, which otherwise probably would have run out last week or this week. Without the newly donated water, irrigation providers would have to rely on the river's natural flows, "and there would definitely be some shortages," he said.

Mark Harris, general manager of the Grand Valley Water Users Association, said in the XTO news release that XTO's contribution helps ensure the proper operation of his

association's diversion structures, which also benefit other irrigation districts.

Crabtree, a retired Bureau of Reclamation employee, said he's been doing water work for 40 years and never has seen conditions so bad.

Dennis Clark, owner of Clark Family Orchards in Palisade, said the river is "about as low as I've ever seen it."

He said his farm probably has been irrigating a bit more than normal and will continue to do so this fall "just because we've been so hot and dry."

Another concern is the potential for moss issues developing in the river's low water that could create problems with irrigation filtration systems, he said.

So far, he said, his farm has survived the drought fairly well.

"It's going to be dire straits if we don't have a winter," he said.

Alan Rossi, whose R Ranch in Mack raises hay and cows, said his operation has always had water this year, and has had to irrigate a little more than usual due to this year's hot and windy weather.

"If we don't get any snow this winter that's the big concern, but right now everything seems to be OK," he said.

He said that even in the case of senior water rights, if there's no snow and resulting snowmelt, "then we're out of luck too."

09/18/18

Utah's Mormon Republican Establishment is Backing Trump's Assault on Public Lands

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Stephen Trimble in *The Los Angeles Times*

09/17/18

Congress Restores Funds to 'Crucial' Colorado River Programs

Melissa Sevigny
KNAU Radio
September 17, 2018

The U.S. House and Senate have passed an appropriations bill that will restore full funding to environmental programs on the Colorado River for the next fiscal year.

KNAU's Melissa Sevigny reports, the programs were at risk of closing after the White House redirected their funding.

An amendment to the 2019 energy and water bill <https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/hrpt929/CRPT-115hrpt929.pdf>

restores 21.4 million dollars to the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center in Flagstaff and to other programs related to river management and endangered species recovery. President Trump has yet to sign the bill into law.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation spokesperson Marlon Duke says he's pleased by the decision. "For us, these programs are crucial along the river. In addition to the science that they provide, it helps us in Reclamation to make sure that we stay compliant with the operation of our facilities along the river."

Duke says Reclamation will continue to work with Congress and stakeholders to find funding for future years. For decades the scientific research programs have been supported by hydropower revenues. The White House Office of Management and Budget ordered that money to go to the U.S. Treasury instead.

###

Jobs, Research At Risk After Government Defunds Grand Canyon Programs

[Click here](#) to read this story by Scott Buffon of *The Arizona Daily Sun*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Melissa Sevigny from *KNAU Radio*

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Kristina Young from Moab, Utah in *The Salt Lake Tribune*

09/14/18

Can We Operate Colorado River Differently Amid Climate Change?

[Click here](#) to read this story by Matt Weiser of *Water Deeply*. A conversation with Professor Jack Schmidt from Utah State University at Logan.

09/08/18

Warming Is Driving Much of the Colorado River's Decline, Scientists Say

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ian James of *The Arizona Republic*

[Click here](#) to read the paper, "On the causes of declining Colorado River streamflows," by Xiao et al., and published by *American Geophysical Union*

09/07/18

Southwest Colorado's Basins, Reservoirs are Parched; Blue Mesa Nears Historic Low

[Click here](#) to read this story by Haley Sanchez of *Colorado Public Radio and Associated Press*

09/05/18

Yampa River Placed

[Click here](#) to read this story by Eleanor C. Hasenbeck of *The Steamboat Pilot*

08/24/18

It's Hard to Fill a Bathtub When the Drain is Wide Open: The Case for Lake Powell

[Click here](#) to read this report by the Colorado River Research Group

[Click here](#) to visit CRRGs website

Conversation with former Chief Justice of Colorado Supreme Court, Gregory Hobbs, answers questions from John Ingold of *The Colorado Sun*," [HERE](#)

08/24/18

Notice of Intent to Sue Over Expansion of Boulder County's Gross Reservoir

[Click here](#) to read this story by Charlie Brennan of *The Daily Camera*

[Click here](#) to read the 60-day notice

[Click here](#) to read the testimony of the expert witness

[Click here](#) to read the coalition press release

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *Aspen Journalism*

08/23/18

Is There Water Left To Be Developed In Colorado River Basin? Yes, says Water Horse Resources.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Luke Runyon of KUNC Radio.

08/21/18

Water Banking Bill Surfaces Amid Sea of Questions

[Click here](#) to read this story by Angus M. Thuermer Jr. in *WyoFile*

08/20/18

Doomsday For The Colorado River Approaches

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ry Rivard for *Voice of San Diego*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dan Elliott of *Associated Press*

08/18/18

Arizona's Plan to Withdraw Years of Banked CAP Water Lagging

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of *The Arizona Daily Star*

08/18/18

Nevada State Denies Applications to Pump Rural Water to Las Vegas

[Click here](#) to read this story by Benjamin Spillman of *The Reno Gazette Journal*

9/14/2018

Southern Nevada Water Authority vows to appeal the court order.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ken Ritter of *The Associated Press*

08/18/18

Why One Arizona County Could Upend The Southwest's Drought Plan

[Click here](#) to read this story by Mark Weiser of *Water Deeply*

08/15/18

In California Desert Farm Baron Mike Abatti Builds Water Energy Empire

Two stories by Sammy Roth of *The Desert Sun*

[First Feature](#)

[Second Feature](#)

08/15/18

Utah's Big Water Grab

[Click here](#) to read this story by Mark Sundeen in *Outside Magazine*

08/11/18

Utah Records Committee Orders Utah Rep Mike Noel's Agency to Provide Lake Powell Pipeline Records to Public

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of *The Salt Lake Tribune*

[Click here](#) to read this story by *The Independent*

HUMOR

[Why Lake Powell Pipeline Is Good and Will Make Us All Rich](#)

08/10/18

Projections On Inflow Into Lake Powell In The Coming "Water Season": They've Looked Better

[Click here](#) to read this feature from Arizona Department of Water Resources

08/08/18

Lakes Powell & Mead: The Quagga Muscle and Perched Sediment Problem

[Click here](#) to read this story by Kurt Repanshek in *National Parks Traveler Magazine*

[Click here](#) to view this photo essay by David Wallace of *The Arizona Republic*

07/13/18

Lake Powell Pipeline: Young people are writing Letters to the Editor

[Sarah Stock](#)
[Taylor Graham](#)

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd from the editorial board of *The Salt Lake Tribune*

07/09/18

Utahns Move Towards Water Conservation While Keeping an Eye on Lake Powell Pipeline

[Click here](#) to read and listen to this story by Judy Fahys of KUER (and KNPR)

06/29/18

Colorado River Managers See a Possible Future and It Doesn't Look Pretty

[Click here](#) to read this story by Luke Runyon of *KUNC Radio*

06/29/18

Plug Pulled on Program Paying Farmers to Conserve Colorado River

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *Aspen Journalism*
[Click here](#) for more information about Drought Contingency Planning

06/27/18

Senior Calls on River & Fish Water in the 'Pan

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brent Gardner-Smith of *The Aspen Times*

06/02/18

Arizona Makes No Legislative Progress on Water Issues Despite Governor's Push

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of *The Arizona Daily Star*

05/31/18

Fontenelle Reservoir: Draining the Bathtub

[Click here](#) to read this story by Angela Evans of *The Boulder Weekly*

05/31/18

The new model for saving the Colorado River might just kill it

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd from Joel Dryer of *The Boulder Weekly*

05/24/18

To the Last Drop: Planning for Water Shortage

[Click here](#) to read this story by Vanessa Barchfield and Tony Davis for *Arizona Public Media*

05/21/18

Decision on Shale Project Right of Way May Be Made in Early July

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb of *The Daily Sentinel*
For additional information, please visit the website called On The Colorado [HERE](#)

05/15/18

Utah Scraps \$53 Million Plan to Ship Coal to Oakland

[Click here](#) to read this story by David DeBolt of the East Bay Times
May 15, 2018 - AP story about the result of the developer's lawsuit [HERE](#). And this story
by Brian Maffly of the Sal Lake Tribune [HERE](#)

Additional news

[Click here](#) to read this story called *Coal Industry Attorneys Threaten to Sue Oakland Over Records*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Molly Marcello of the Moab Times Independent

[Click here](#) to read about Oakland's City Council Ban from William Yardley of the LA Times

[Click here](#) to read this High Country News article by Sarah Troy

5/10/18

'We Need Action' Federal Officials Tells Colorado River States

[Click here](#) to read this story by Henry Brean of *Las Vegas Review Journal*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of *Arizona Daily Star*

"Lake Mead Shortage Declaration Would Do This To Arizona's Water Supply"

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Joanna Allhands in *The Arizona Republic*

05/02/18

Uinta Basin Now Ozone Nonattainment Area; Rio Blanco County Not Included by EPA

[Click here](#) to read this story by Gary Harmon for *The Grand Junction Sentinel*

04/27/18

Colorado Denies License for Paradox Uranium Mill

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jim Mimiaga in *The Journal*

[Click here](#) for detailed information about the uranium mill proposal at Paradox Valley

04/20/18

Five Things to Know About the Latest Colorado River Dust Up (manipulating the System Conservation Pilot Program)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Luke Runyon and Bret Jasper for KUNC and KJZZ radio

[Click here](#) to read letter from Upper Colorado River Commission

[Click here](#) to read letter from Denver Water

[Click here](#) to read the letter from the Pueblo Board of Water Works

[Click here](#) to read this story by Angela Evans in *The Boulder Weekly* called "A Drop in the Bucket."

03/29/18

In the Imperial Valley, a Fight Over Water is Heating Up

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ian James of *The Desert Sun*

03/16/18

Utah launching first comprehensive planning effort for Green, Colorado rivers

To participate in this process, please visit the following web page - [Far Country](#)

By Amy Joi O'Donoghue of Deseret News

Published: March 16, 2018 4:39 pm

SALT LAKE CITY — To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Green and Colorado rivers as they flow through portions of Utah, state sovereign land managers are launching a first-ever effort to craft comprehensive management plans for the waterways.

The plans affect those state-owned sovereign land sections of the rivers as they go through Uintah, Grand, Emery, Wayne, Garfield, Kane and San Juan counties. The beds of navigable waters are owned by the state but held in trust for the public.

Plans will be developed, with public input, under the purview of the Utah Department of Natural Resources' Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

That division is required to regulate all uses on, beneath or above the bed of the rivers, including protecting navigation, fish and wildlife habitat, aquatic beauty, public recreation and water quality.

These first-ever comprehensive management plans will also include an update of mineral leasing plans impacting Green and Colorado river resources.

During March and April, the division — assisted by contractors SWCA Environmental Consultants; CRSA architects, planning and design; and Hansen, Allen & Luce — will present information regarding the plan development process at open house meetings in each county that contains state-owned sovereign land sections of the rivers.

The open houses, all from 6 to 8 p.m., are as follows:

- Uintah County, March 27, at the Uintah County Library in Vernal
- Kane County, April 10, at the Kanab City Library in Kanab
- Garfield County April 11, at the Escalante Senior Center in Escalante
- Wayne County, April 12, at the Hanksville EMS Building in Hanksville
- San Juan County, April 17, at the San Juan County Administration Building in Monticello
- Grand County, April 18, at the Grand County High School Auditorium in Moab

- Emery County, April 19, at the John Wesley Powell Museum in Green River

All residents are encouraged to attend the public open house meeting in their county.

"Public involvement is an important part of the Green and Colorado river planning process," said project manager Laura Vernon, adding "suggestions and concerns about the rivers can help us identify issues and develop management plan objectives."

Vernon said the state developed comprehensive management plans for the Jordan and Bear rivers, two distinctly different waterways facing sharply contrasting issues because Jordan is an urban river, while the Bear River flows through a rural setting.

"It is interesting to see the different issues that come up," she said. "I suspect we will see some here."

Draft plans and a range of management actions and alternatives, in addition to an assessment of each of the river's resources, will be available for review during a second round of meetings a year from now.

In the summer of 2019, those draft plans will be open for public comment.

The drafts should be finalized in December of 2019.

03/13/18

Ute Tribe Takes Feds to Court Over Theft of Land & Water in Historic Uncompahgre

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly in *The Salt Lake Tribune*

03/07/18

Proposed railroad would haul freight from Uintah Basin to Craig

[Click here](#) to read this story in *Craig Press* by Ryan Collins

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Panel Shifts Gears On Best Rail Route To Move Oil From Eastern Utah.](#) *Salt Lake Tribune.*

[Feds Looking For Public Input On Uinta Basin Railway Proposed Route Through Moffat County.](#) *Craig Daily Press.*

[A New Freight Train Route For Utah? Uinta Basin Hopes So.](#) *Deseret News*

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

[On The Colorado Blog](#)

02/27/18

Entrepreneur Revives Proposed Pipeline to Carry Green River Water from Utah to Colorado

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of *The Salt Lake Tribune*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb in *The Grand Junction Sentinel*.

Here is a link to documents for this water right (#41-3747) at the website of Utah Division of Water Rights: <https://www.waterrights.utah.gov/cgi-bin/docview.exe?Folder=41-3747>

Opportunities to file a PROTEST and REQUEST FOR A HEARING will be forthcoming and will appear as a public notice in the UDWR website (above paragraph) and also [HERE](#) (under Daggett County).

The administrative record for the previous pipeline proposal is archived at On The Colorado located [HERE](#)

The reason why the first application failed is provided here:

<http://www.riversimulator.org/Resources/UCRC/UCRCflamingGorgeWaterAvailabilityReclamation2007.pdf>

02/10/18

Snow Map for the Upper Basin the Colorado River (very dry)

[Click here](#) to view the snow map from the Bureau of Reclamation.

02/07/18

Arizona Lawmakers are Trying to Decimate Your Groundwater (Again)

[Click here](#) to read this Op Ed in the Arizona Republic by Kathleen Ferris

01/29/18

Utah Spent \$33 Million on Pipeline Application it Never Finished. The Feds Approved it Anyway

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emma Penrod of *The Salt Lake Tribune*

01/22/18

Snow Droughts

Nevada Researchers Warn of More "Snow Droughts," Even in Wet Years. Also "rain on snow events," and the wettest century of the last 4,000 years.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Henry Breaun of *The Las Vegas Review Journal*

[Click here](#) to review the research paper *Exploring the Origins of Snow Droughts in the Northern Sierra Nevada, California*

01/20/18

Experts Warn About Dry Conditions In Colorado

[Click here](#) to read this article by H2O Radio as reported in Coyote Gulch

01/06/18

Utah Reluctantly Asks Feds to Push Pause on State's Lake Powell Pipeline

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emma Penrod of *The Salt Lake Tribune*

[Click here](#) to read this story by David DeMille of *The Spectrum*
