

12/20/19

Gila River Diversion: Feds Deny Extension of \$60 million

[Click here](#) to read this breaking story by the staff of *Silver City Daily Press*

12/19/19

Interior Secretary Skips Climate Change In Colorado River Users Speech

[Click here](#) to read this story by Laura Paskus of *Santa Fe Reporter*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rebecca Leber of *High Country News* called "Pay to Play: Interior Secretary's Old Clients Spend Big Profit Bigly."

12/11/19

Water Cutbacks Set to Begin Under Deal Designed to buy down risk on the Colorado River

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

12/07/19

Moab Science on Tap: The Returning Rapids of Cataract Canyon

[Click here](#) to read this story by Maggie McQuire of *Moab Sun News*

12/06/19

Reclamation Seeks Alternatives to Colorados Earthquake Prone Paradox Valley Salinity Control Project

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rachel Fixsen of the *Moab Sun News*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb from *The Grand Junction Sentinel* called "What is Paradox Salt Injection Program's Future."

And this [story](#) of December 23, 2019 by Dennis Webb "Shaking Things Up in Paradox Valley"

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

[Click here](#) to read this Press Release from *Bureau of Reclamation*

Two public meetings will be held on:

- Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2020 in Paradox, Colorado at the Paradox Valley Charter School, 21501 6 Mile Rd., at 5 p.m
- Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020 in Montrose, Colorado at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 1391 S. Townsend Ave., at 6 p.m.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement is available online at:

- www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/paradox/index.html
- or a copy can be requested by contacting Reclamation

Comments are due:

- 11:59 p.m. Mountain Standard Time on Feb. 4, 2020

Submit comments by email to:

- Via eMail: paradoxeis@usbr.gov

Via US Postal Service to:

Ed Warner, Area Manager
Bureau of Reclamation
445 West Gunnison Ave, Suite 221
Grand Junction, CO 81501

To view documents from the Scoping Period, please visit this post from 2012: [On The Colorado](#)

NEW DOCUMENTS FOR PARADOX UNIT

- [DEIS and Appendices \(combined\)](#). 2019.
- [DEIS Volume 1](#)

APPENDICES

- [DEIS Volume 2, Apps A to D](#)
- [DEIS Volume 3 Apps E to J](#)
- [DEIS Volume 4, Apps K to M](#)

TECHNICAL REPORTS AND MEMOS

- [Review: Geologic Investigations](#). Block, 2012.

- [Assessment 2nd Injection Well](#). Atkins, 2013.
 - [Paradox Valley 2nd Well Design Report](#). Petrotek, 2014.
 - [Far-field Reservoir Pressurization](#). USBR TM, 2016.
 - [2nd Well Site Investigation](#). Block, 2016.
 - [2nd Injection Well REPORT](#). CRBR, 2017.
 - [Injection Data \(csv file\)](#)
-

12/05/19

Reclamation announces scoping for Lake Powell Pipeline

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

[WEBSITE](#)

Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Public Scoping Period for the Lake Powell Pipeline Project

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Upper Colorado Basin, Interior Region 7. **ACTION:** Notice of Intent; request for scoping comments. **(SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Lake Powell Pipeline (LPP) Project. Reclamation is requesting public scoping comments to identify significant issues or other alternatives to be addressed in the EIS.

DATES: Submit comments on or before January 10, 2020. (Three scoping meetings will be held during the scoping period from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on January 7-9, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Provide written scoping comments and requests to be added to the mailing list to:

Mr. Rick Baxter, Program Manager
Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office
302 East Lakeview Parkway
Provo, UT 84606

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

Via eMail: lpp@usbr.gov

The three scoping meetings will be held at the following locations:

- January, 7th 6PM - 8PM; Kanab Center, 20 North 100 East, Kanab, UT, 84741
- January, 8th 6PM - 8PM; Dixie Center, 1835 South Convention Center Dr., St. George, UT, 84790
- January, 9th 6PM - 8PM; Valley High, 325 West 11000 South, South Jordan, UT, 84095

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Rick Baxter, Program Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office, 302 East Lakeview Parkway, Provo, UT 84606; telephone (801) 379-1078; facsimile (801) 379-1159; e-mail lpp@usbr.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf may call the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at 1-800-877-8339 TTY/ASCII to contact the above individual during normal business hours or to leave a message or question after hours. You will receive a reply during normal business hours. Information on this project may also be found at:

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Reclamation is issuing this notice pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.; the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA, 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508; Department of the Interior's NEPA regulations, 43 CFR part 46; and Bureau of Land Management regulations at 43 CFR 1610.2.(Background.

Reclamation will prepare an EIS for the LPP Project as proposed by the Utah Board of Water Resources (UBWR). The LPP is a proposed 140-mile, 69-inch- diameter water delivery pipeline that begins at Lake Powell near Glen Canyon Dam in Page, Arizona, and ends at Sand Hollow Reservoir near St. George, Utah. The pipeline would deliver up to 86,249 acre-feet of water from Lake Powell to Sand Hollow Reservoir. UBWR proposes building the LPP in order to bring a second source of water to Washington and Kane Counties in Utah to meet future water demands, diversify the regional water supply portfolio, and enhance the water supply reliability.

UBWR previously proposed a pipeline project with an intake at Lake Powell that included a hydroelectric peaking station at Hurricane Cliffs, Utah. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) was the lead Federal agency for that project because it would have required a hydroelectric license issued by the FERC. The UBWR withdrew its application to the FERC on September 25, 2019, and the project was terminated effective October 10, 2019. (https://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file_list.asp?accession_num=20191016-3069)

Reclamation has been designated the lead Federal agency by the Department for the LPP NEPA process. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and National Park Service (NPS) are cooperating agencies. Based on the changes to project design and the lead federal agency, Reclamation is initiating a new public scoping process, which will require interested parties to submit new comments on the current proposal. Reclamation is also reinitiating government to government consultation with Indian tribes under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and in accordance with Executive Order 13175. Two pipeline alignments have been proposed: the Southern Alternative and the Highway Alternative. Both alternatives begin and end in the same locations. The Southern Alternative would travel south of the Kaibab Indian Reservation while the

alignment for the Highway Alternative would cross lands held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, following Arizona State Route 389. The Southern Alternative would cross land administered by the BLM in Utah and Arizona and would require multiple right-of-way (ROW) grants and an amendment to the Arizona Strip Resource Management Plan (RMP), because a small portion of the pipeline would go outside an approved utility corridor.

The Highway Alternative would cross BLM and Tribal trust lands, which would require the BLM and BIA to issue ROW grants and require a tribal resolution from the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians. Both alternatives would cross lands administered by Reclamation and the NPS, requiring Reclamation to issue a license agreement and the NPS to issue a ROW permit under either alternative.

In addition, UBWR has requested a water exchange contract with Reclamation. Under the exchange contract, UBWR would forbear the diversion of a portion of the natural flows to which UBWR is entitled and allow these flows to contribute to meeting the Endangered Species Act Upper Colorado River Recovery Implementation Program requirements in the Green River. In exchange, UBWR would deplete an equal amount of water released from Flaming Gorge Dam throughout the year and available at Lake Powell. This exchange contract would not entitle UBWR to call for releases from Flaming Gorge. (Public Disclosure.)

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Brent Esplin,
Regional Director,(Upper Colorado Basin
Interior Region 7, Bureau of Reclamation.
[FR Doc. 2019-26357
Filed: 12/5/2019 8:45 am
Publication Date: 12/6/2019

Intro and Project Overview

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Bureau of Reclamation will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Lake Powell Pipeline Project proposed by the Utah Board of Water Resources. The LPP is a 140-mile, 69-inch-diameter water delivery pipeline that begins at Lake Powell near Glen Canyon Dam in Page, Arizona, and ends at Sand Hollow Reservoir near St. George, Utah. UBWR proposes building LPP in order to bring a second source of water to Washington and Kane Counties in Utah to meet future water demands, diversify the regional water supply portfolio, and enhance the reliability of the water supply.

A map showing two proposed alternatives for the Lake Powell Pipeline project: The Highway Alternative and the Southern Alternative. Both alternatives begin and end in the same locations. The Southern Alternative would travel south of the Kaibab Indian Reservation. The Highway Alternative would cross lands held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, following Arizona State Route 389.

This [MAP](#) shows the two proposed alternative water conveyance systems for the Lake Powell Pipeline to carry water from Lake Powell to Sand Hollow Reservoir. The Highway Alternative is shown in blue while the Southern Alternative is shown in green. UBWR previously proposed a pipeline project with an intake at Lake Powell that included a hydroelectric peaking station at Hurricane Cliffs, Utah. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission was the lead Federal agency for that project because it would have required a hydroelectric license issued by the FERC. The UBWR withdrew its application to the FERC on September 25, 2019, and the project was terminated effective October 10, 2019. (https://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file_list.asp?accession_num=20191016-3069)

Reclamation has been designated the lead Federal agency by the Department of the Interior for the LPP National Environmental Policy Act process. Based on the changes to project design and the lead federal agency, Reclamation is initiating a new public scoping process, which will require interested parties to submit new comments on the current proposal. Reclamation is also reinitiating government-to-government consultation with Indian tribes under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and in accordance with Executive Order 13175.

EIS Process

General Information

Scoping is the first step in the NEPA process and can include various means of information-gathering activities. It is to be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action. (40 CFR 1501.7)

Public participation is an integral part of scoping because it gives the public an opportunity to help Reclamation identify issues of special concern and alternatives to the proposed action that may be included in the Environmental Impact Statement. Public scoping period for Reclamation's Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the pipeline project was announced in the Federal Register on December 6, 2019, and in a press release from Reclamation. The purpose of soliciting input is to identify relevant issues, alternatives, mitigation measures, and analytical tools so that they can be incorporated into the EIS. Comments may be submitted by 11:59 p.m. MST on January 10, 2020.

Getting input from as many affected and interested parties as possible is an important part of preparing an EIS. These usually include:

Citizens who live, work, or play in the area where the proposed project may occur.

Public interest groups and Native communities that have concerns about possible impacts to environmental, social, or economic resources.

Federal, State, and local government agencies that have responsibilities for managing public resources or services.

Scientists and other technical experts with knowledge of the area's natural resources and the possible impacts of the project development.

Impact Analysis

An EIS analyzes the environmental concerns that were identified for each alternative. The objective of the analysis is to determine the nature, severity, and duration of impacts that might occur and to compare the impacts of the alternatives. Numerous technical aids are used in making the assessment, including 23 ecological and socioeconomic studies that were completed when Federal Energy Regulatory Commission was the lead agency. These studies will be updated and incorporated as appropriate for Reclamation's EIS.

Draft EIS and Public Review

The impact analysis is first documented in a draft EIS. The draft EIS is made available to the public for 45 days for review and comment. The availability of the draft EIS is announced in a Federal Register notice and in press releases. Copies of the document are made available to the public on our web page. Requests for hard copies can also be submitted by email or phone using the "Contact Us" information. In order to make sure Reclamation can adequately respond to issues or concerns raised by the public, we ask that all comments be written and submitted via the methods described in the Notice of Intent or in the "Contact Us" section of this web page.

Final EIS

The principal objective when developing the final EIS is to address public comments on the draft EIS. The final EIS includes a summary of comments and Reclamation's responses.

After the comments on the draft EIS are reviewed, Reclamation will revise the document to correct technical errors and add any relevant new information that became available since the draft EIS was published. Once again, the availability of the final EIS is announced in a Federal Register Notice and press releases.

###

ON THE COLORADO

Articles about the Lake Powell Pipeline

- September 23, 2019: [The Administrative History of Lake Powell Pipeline](#)
 - October 22, 2018 - [The Water Rights of Central Utah Project, including Ultimate Phase](#)
 - September 18, 2018 - [Green River Block Environmental Assessment for a Federal Water Contract for Eastern Utah Counties](#)
 - August 22, 2018- [Lake Powell Pipeline Permitting Process Renewed](#)
 - June 28, 2018 - [Proposal to amend the Arizona Strip Resource Management Plan \(RMP\)](#)
 - December 26, 2017 - [Lake Powell Pipeline Approved for Environmental Analysis \(Temporarily Suspended\)](#)
 - March 21, 2011 - [Lake Powell Pipeline Documents](#)
 - June 03, 2010 - [Ultimate Phase Water Rights Stored at Flaming Gorge Reservoir](#)
 - May 06, 2008 - [Announcing: Scoping of environmental issues for the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline Project in Utah and Arizona](#)
-

12/05/19

Sinking Feeling: How Ignoring Inconvenient Science Drained the Colorado.

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Eric Kuhn and John Fleck in *The Tucson Weekly*

[Click here](#) to read this interview by Jeff Gardner with Eric Kuhn and John Fleck in *The Tucson Weekly*

12/02/19

At Least 1,680 Dams in USA Pose Potential Risk

[Click here](#) for this story by David A. Lieb, Michael Casey, and Michele Minkoff in *The Associated Press*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Bruce Finley of *The Denver Post* called "Colorado Rethinks Dam Safety as Climate Change Heightens Risk for 27 Dams"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Sofia Jeremias in *The Deseret News*

12/01/19

New paleoflood hydrology research paper: 700-year record of floods on Lower Green River in Stillwater Canyon

[Paleoflood Hydrology on the lower Green River, Upper Colorado River Basin, USA: An example of a naturalist approach to flood-risk analysis](#). 2019, Liu et al.

###

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Approach: analysis of physical evidence from past flood phenomena

Physical evidence: slackwater deposits (sediment) and paleostage indicators (perched driftwood is an example)

Year of obtaining samples: 2012

Dating techniques: Accelerator Mass Spectrometry, radiocarbon, optically stimulated luminescence

Number of sites: 6

Location of sites: Stillwater Canyon; lower Green River, Utah. Beginning 21 miles above confluence with the Colorado River, in Canyonlands National Park.

Basin: Colorado River in southwest USA

Time-frame: the last seven centuries

Total number of floods: 27

Magnitude (range in cubic meters per second): 500 to 7,500

Magnitude (range in cubic feet per second): 17,657 to 264,860

Highest peak from gage record: 68,122 cubic feet per second

Number of floods greater than gage record: 14

11/27/19

How the Fossil Fuel Industry Deliberately Misled Americans About Climate Change

"Climate scientists are as sure that burning fossil fuels causes global warming as public health scientists are sure that smoking tobacco causes cancer."

Over the past few decades, the fossil fuel industry has subjected the American public to a well-funded, well-orchestrated disinformation campaign about the reality and severity of human-caused climate change. The purpose of this web of denial has been to confuse the public and decision-makers in order to delay climate action and thereby protect fossil fuel business interests and defend libertarian, free-market conservative ideologies. The fossil fuel industry's denial and delay tactics come straight out of Big Tobacco's playbook. As a result, the American public have been denied the right to be

accurately informed about climate change, just as they were denied the right to be informed about the risks of smoking by the tobacco industry. While fossil fuel companies attacked the science and called on politicians to “reset the alarm,” climate-catalyzed damages worsened, including increased storm intensities, droughts, forest damage and wildfires, all at substantial loss of life and cost to the American people.

This report explores the techniques used to mislead the American public about climate change, and outlines ways of inoculating against disinformation.

[Click here](#) to read this report

11/25/19

Journal of Hydrology: Paleoflood hydrology research at Lower Green River in Stillwater Canyon, Utah

Through a comprehensive paleoflood investigation, employing the abductive mode of inference, we document natural evidence of 70 paleofloods at six sites on the Lower Green River, Utah. Hydraulic analysis, using the Sedimentation and River Hydraulic-2D model (SRH-2D), shows that the responsible peak paleoflood discharges ranged between 507 (18,000 cfs) and 7499 m³/s (264,824 cfs). At least 14 of these paleoflood discharge peaks exceed a level twice that of the maximum systematic gauged flow of 1929 m³/s.

Geochronological analysis, employing optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) and radiocarbon dating techniques, demonstrates that these 14 paleoflood peaks occurred in the past 700 years. Integrated of these paleoflood data into flood frequency analyses (FFA) showed higher values for the upper tails of the flood distribution than did an FFA based only on the systematic record, showing that extreme floods are more frequent than indicated by the relatively short gauged records. Through philosophical examination the three approaches to extreme flood estimation, FFA, probable maximum flood estimation, paleoflood hydrology, we show the significance of the natural evidence for advancing the scientific understanding of extreme floods.

[Paleoflood hydrology on the lower Green River, upper Colorado River Basin, USA: An example of a naturalist approach to flood-risk analysis](#). Journal of Hydrology, 2019, Liu et al.

11/24/19

Arizona Homebuilders Study Says: Embattled Water District an Economic Boon

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

11/19/19

Whatever happened to the water wars? (they never left)

"So, whatever happened to the water wars? The answer is that they continued—and that repeated forecasts did nothing to reduce the risk of bigger conflicts."

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

11/13/19

OpEd: Minnesota groundwater should not be sold to Colorado River Basin

https://www.ifallsjournal.com/news/opinion/editorial/our-view-water-not-for-sale/article_b741043a-46c6-5387-ac2a-00cf6f6df6a1.html

OUR VIEW: Water not for sale

Laurel Beager
November 13, 2019

The water that makes up the Land of 10,000 Lakes is a precious and valuable resource. But that value shouldn't come in the form of money to allow other states to use.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources was right when it told a company it's not likely Minnesota will grant a permit allowing it to supply 500 million gallons each year of groundwater from Minnesota to the Southwestern United States by rail car.

Empire Builder Investments, based in Lakeville, Minn., submitted a preliminary well assessment request to the state in hopes of drilling two wells in Dakota County. The water produced from the wells would go on to be shipped by train to Southwestern states surrounding the Colorado River. A preliminary well assessment, required under state law, is an early stage review designed to identify potential issues before a proposer invests in equipment or well drilling.

Under Minnesota law, the DNR regulates the use of groundwater and surface water, and must manage public water resources for the benefit of the state of Minnesota, including future generations. The agency said in a statement that it must ensure that water appropriations are reasonable, practical, and adequately protect public safety and promote the public welfare.

The agency did all but outright reject the Empire Builder request after its initial review.

Minnesota DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen stated “we see virtually no scenario where the DNR would grant a water appropriation permit for the project, as it does not appear it could meet applicable statutory requirements, including significant restrictions on use of the Mt. Simon aquifer.”

State restrictions limit the pumping of that aquifer for only for drinking water, and only when there’s no other feasible source.

The Minnesota Water Well Association, or MWWA, strongly opposes the proposal. The MWWA is a nonprofit organization representing water well drilling and pump contractors, geologists, hydrologists, engineers, state and local government employees, and groundwater industry suppliers and manufacturers.

Don’t get us wrong. Our hearts go out to the residents of drought-stricken states in the Southwest of our nation. We get that those states need water to avoid and fight devastating fires, and produce some of the vegetables and fruit we eat.

But we must join with others who also believe that the water resources in the Land of 10,000 Lakes are too precious and valuable to sell now and in the future.

11/13/19

White paper & story: Now is the time to prepare for shortages, water watchers say

https://www.gjsentinel.com/news/western_colorado/now-is-the-time-to-prepare-for-shortages-water-watchers/article_a5cffe08-069b-11ea-b08d-20677ce07cb4.html

[The Risk of Curtailment under the Colorado River Compact](#). 2019, Anne Castle and John Fleck.

DENNIS WEBB
Grand Junction Daily Sentinel
November 12, 2019

Trying to come up with water demand management programs is hard, but the alternative is a riskier future that could involve a forced curtailment of Colorado River use in Colorado, a speaker said Wednesday at Colorado Mesa University.

Demand management "is a form of insurance," Anne Castle said at the ninth annual Upper Colorado River Basin Water Forum, which continues today and is presented by CMU's Ruth Powell Hutchins Water Center.

Castle was a longtime water attorney and served from 2009-14 as assistant secretary for water and science at the U.S. Department of Interior. She now is a senior fellow at the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment at the University of Colorado.

Castle and John Fleck, director of the University of New Mexico Water Resources Program, recently released a report evaluating the risk of future curtailment of river water use in Upper Colorado River Basin states under a 1922 river basin compact. The report discusses the concept of working to take an insurance-based approach to address the risk of curtailment.

"As with any form of risk, you can insure against it," Castle said.

The new paper's issuance comes amidst concern that potential droughts and a warming climate increase the likelihood of a future compact call on the river. That would force reduction in municipal, agricultural and other uses in the state, at least in the case of some water rights junior to the 1922 compact.

Earlier this year, Congress approved legislation allowing implementation of drought contingency agreements involving both Upper and Lower basin states. The agreements are aimed at helping keep water levels in Lake Powell and Lake Mead from falling so low as to jeopardize hydropower production and force water supply reductions. In the Upper Basin, an agreement allows in part for any water conserved by possible demand management programs to be stored in a separate account in Lake Powell to protect the reservoir's water levels.

Colorado and other Upper Basin states since have begun exploring the possibility of pursuing demand management programs. Becky Mitchell, director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, said at Wednesday's forum that in Colorado, nearly 100 members of work groups have been meeting as the state begins "to investigate just the feasibility of that program."

Colorado is looking into issues surrounding the idea of a possible program involving temporary, compensated, voluntary reductions in use by agricultural and other water users.

Castle said demand management is complex and "not an easy solution but it does give us the opportunity to plan and we can hedge our bets a little bit."

The other option is going without insurance against the risk of curtailment, or "going bare," Castle said.

"Going bare is rolling the dice. It could work but it also could have very significant adverse economic impact," she said.

The curtailment threat derives from the 1922 compact requirement that Upper Basin states including Colorado not cause the flow of the river at Lee Ferry, which is below Lake Powell, to be depleted below 75 million acre feet over any 10-year period. A treaty with Mexico effectively ups that requirement to 82.5 million acre feet.

Castle said a legal question surrounds whether the 1922 requirement not to deplete water means a requirement to deliver it.

"We don't know the answer and this is the underpinning of risk to the Upper Basin," she said.

If it only means don't deplete, the Upper Basin is fine as long as it doesn't use more than 7.5 million acre feet a year under the 1922 compact, she said. But if it must deliver that much, it bears all the risk of climate change and reduced river flows in future years, she said.

The paper she and Fleck wrote points out that just a repeat of the drought in the first decade of this century could drop Powell levels so low in just four years that its hydropower generation would be threatened, and below those levels not enough water could be pushed through the dam to move 7.5 million acre feet a year downstream.

Meanwhile, climate scientists have projected a 20 to 30% reduction in the river's flows by mid-century, and a 35 to 55% drop by the end of the century.

"Those are conceivable situations that we just don't have any means of dealing with right now," Castle said.

Projected future water development projects in the Upper Basin further add to the concerns about curtailment potentially occurring.

The Upper Basin could go to court to try to deal with river compact issues, but Castle called litigation "not a basket where you want to put all your eggs."

"Litigation is very high-stakes poker. It is lengthy, it is costly and it is uncertain, and the biggest risk in litigation is that you lose," she said.

She said demand management would have costs, including payments to water users and secondary impacts. Some on the Western Slope want to ensure that temporary cutbacks in use aren't borne disproportionately by agricultural users, harming rural economies.

Castle said the costs of curtailment need to be considered as well, and those costs could be greater, could last longer and potentially can't be planned for.

Curtailment would particularly affect municipal transmountain diversions of Colorado River water to the Front Range, because those generally involve more junior water rights.

But Castle and Fleck note in a white-paper, summary version of their report, "While that might sound superficially attractive to West Slope agricultural interests, such a prospect could motivate affected municipal water providers to buy or lease pre-Compact West Slope irrigation water rights, possibly in substantial volume. Although these would almost certainly be market-based, arms-length transactions, the resulting economic impact could be geographically concentrated and tremendously disruptive to commodity supply chains and rural communities."

The white paper says that when it comes to demand management, "There are many barriers — legal, operational, economic, and political — that must be addressed. While it is not clear that a demand management program is the right, or the only, appropriate form of contingency plan, it does seem to be the only viable insurance policy proposed thus far."

10/29/19

Lake Powell Pipeline: Reclamation will become the agency to led the environmental review process

[Click here](#) to read this story by Lexi Perry of *The Spectrum and Daily News*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ami Joi O'Donoghue of *The Desert News*

10/25/19

Appeals court panel hears Lions Back arguments. Attorney: lower court decision a 'travesty of justice'

- October 25, 2019 - [Appeals court panel hears Lions Back arguments. Attorney: lower court decision a 'travesty of justice'](#). McMurdo, *Times Independent*.
- July 5, 2019 - [Court of Appeals to Hear Lions Back Case In Moab. McMurdo](#), *Times Independent*.
- [Click here](#) to read the announcement from the Utah Court of Appeals
- The hearing is on October 18, 2019 and begins at 10:00 A.M. at the Grand County Courthouse.

[Click here](#) to read the opinion of the Appellate Court that upheld the complaint from citizens.

10/23/19

Bill Hudson: The Murder and Resurrection of the Colorado River (Parts I to VI)

By Bill Hudson · October of 2019 Pagosa Springs Daily Editor

[Part One to Six, combined as a pdf.](#)

10/19/19

Arizona will struggle to find enough water for suburban growth, report says

By Tony Davis of *The Arizona Daily Star*

Oct 19, 2019 Updated 6 hrs ago

https://tucson.com/news/local/arizona-will-struggle-to-find-enough-water-for-suburban-growth/article_570e2de4-f13e-5753-b3c2-38ff731fc221.html

Some suburbs of Tucson and Phoenix will struggle to find enough water to keep growing without damaging underground aquifers by overpumping groundwater, a new report warns.

This could lead to land subsidence, including ground fissures; lower water quality; and even the possibility of wells drying up.

The report from Arizona State University's water institute also warns of potentially catastrophic financial problems for the agency that finds renewable water supplies for development in far-flung suburban areas.

That, in turn, could ratchet up already soaring rates for homeowners there. The state's system for ensuring there's enough water for much of the new suburban growth — in accord with the landmark 1980 Groundwater Management Act — is environmentally unsustainable and needs an overhaul, the report suggests.

- [Click here](#) to read the Kyl Center Report of 2019
- [Click here](#) to read the Pollack Report of 2017
- [Cadillac Desert Revisited: Property Rights, Public Policy and Water Resource Depletion](#). 2001; Holland.

The findings raise questions about how much more growth should continue in areas without renewable supplies such as Central Arizona Project water, said Kathleen Ferris, a former Arizona Department of Water Resources director and chief counsel who co-authored the report. CAP water comes to Arizona's cities and farms from the Colorado River via a 336-mile-long canal system.

"Failure to find solutions to these problems could have devastating consequences down the road. Taking action to address them is the only way to protect Arizona's water supplies for its current and future citizens," said the report, prepared by ASU's Kyl Center for Water Policy.

At issue is where authorities will find enough water to replenish aquifers in fast-growing areas of Pima, Pinal and Maricopa counties where groundwater is or will be pumped to supply new homes, because they don't have access to CAP water.

The report focuses on the work of the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District, a part of the CAP, whose job is to find the renewable supplies for those homes in the three counties. Under state law, the homes in these areas can be built only if renewable supplies can be found to compensate for the water pumped to serve them. In the Tucson area, such development is occurring or is projected to occur over the next few decades in unincorporated areas north, south, northwest and southeast of the city. The areas include the Green Valley and Quail Creek areas south of Tucson, the SaddleBrooke area just north of the Pinal County border, and the Vail area southeast of Tucson.

Far more intense future development and pressure on water supplies is expected for Pinal County closer to Phoenix and for the Buckeye area west of Phoenix.

These supply issues could get worse if climate change continues to reduce Colorado River supplies, said Sarah Porter, the report's co-author and director of the Kyl Center. During a CAP shortage, water earmarked for the suburban areas would be among the first supplies to be cut. So climate change will have a bigger impact on such water users than on cities with their own CAP supplies. Those cities have higher priorities for the water during shortages, Porter said.

Specifically, the report found:

- Because pumping for these subdivisions often occurs far from where renewable supplies are recharged — placed on the ground to seep into the aquifers — groundwater levels under these subdivisions are falling.
- Membership in the water district by homes needing groundwater replenishment has hit 286,000 homes statewide, including more than 24,000 in 122 subdivisions in the Tucson area. By 2024, about 383,000 homes statewide are expected to be district members, far more than previously expected, putting additional pressure on water supplies.
- The potential exists for a huge gap between the amount of renewable water that's available for replenishing aquifers and the amount that new development will need over the next century. Statistics from the report suggest it could be up to 300,000 acre-feet a year — enough to serve Tucson for three years.
- The three-county district says there's plenty of water potentially available for future development. But the report says the availability of these supplies is questionable.
- Various fees and assessments imposed on homeowners living in the areas served by the water district have escalated. The annual charge assessed on homes to pay for water supplies, water rights purchases and administrative costs, for instance, jumped in the Tucson area from \$188 an acre-foot per home in 2000 to \$738 this year. It's expected to hit \$775 by the mid-2020s.

Over the years, the three-county replenishment district has taken considerable criticism from environmentalists and others who say its practices encouraged unsustainable urban sprawl.

But the district isn't to blame for problems outlined in the report, said Ferris, because it has carried out all that state law requires it to do: "The problem is that the statutes are too lenient."

Responding through a spokeswoman, the water district said it won't comment on the report specifically, because it just received it Thursday. In a statement, the district said it's fulfilled its legal duties effectively, "demonstrating fiscal responsibility while securing a robust water supply portfolio that will be available through the mid-2030s."

The district said it conducts thorough analyses of water supplies and costs to monitor their viability and changes. Due to leadership and oversight by its governing board, the

district said, it is positioned as “a strong and stable component in the fabric of Arizona’s water policy.”

Here are details of the problems the new report says have been caused by allowing groundwater pumping for new growth away from where aquifers are recharged:

Despite replenishment, well levels fall

The law sets up a disconnect between groundwater pumping and recharge that’s “problematic.”

Because no CAP is delivered to developing areas such as SaddleBrooke and Green Valley, private water companies and other utilities continue pumping groundwater there. To compensate for that pumping, the water replenishment district recharges aquifers in areas far away, such as the Pima Mine Road Recharge Project south of Tucson, the Avra Valley Recharge Project west of Tucson and the Lower Santa Cruz Recharge Project adjacent to the Santa Cruz River and northwest of Avra Valley Road. So the water table under developing areas keeps falling.

“When replenishment does not take place near the site of groundwater withdrawal, the replenished water will not reduce the local geological impacts of pumping and will do nothing to recharge the aquifers that CAGRDR members are counting on to supply groundwater,” the report said, using an acronym for the replenishment district.

One problem is that in some of these areas, it’s highly uncertain whether even enough groundwater is physically available. Just last week, for instance, the Arizona Department of Water Resources released information showing that Pinal County has 8 million acre feet less groundwater than is expected to be demanded over the next 100 years.

An aquifer that keeps falling can trigger land subsidence, or a settlement of the ground that causes earth fissures. Groundwater quality can also worsen and pumping costs invariably rise. Once aquifers collapse from subsidence, they can’t be restored, the report said.

The biggest problem with the pumping is that it’s unsustainable, leading to eventual groundwater depletion, said the report, adding: “This grim reality leads to a crucial question: Who will provide water to homeowners and businesses on CAGRDR member lands if their wells run dry?”

Since groundwater may legally be pumped to 1,000 feet below land surface in the Phoenix and Tucson areas and 1,100 feet deep in the Pinal County area, “this is not an academic question. It is a serious likelihood, with major consequences that must be considered.”

Escalating water demands By 2114, the district expects to have legal obligations to recharge 113,000 acre feet of renewable water, nearly three times what it does today. That doesn't account for massive growth expected in Pinal County and in Buckeye in Maricopa County.

Bold predictions, uncertain supplies

The water replenishment district says it has identified up to 980,000 acre-feet of what it calls "potentially available" supplies it expects to have access to by 2114. Even if only half that amount turns out to be realistic, that's still far more than it expects to need by then.

But it's questionable whether many of those supplies will be available, the Kyl Center report said.

A big chunk of that expected supply, for instance, would come from CAP water that other urban and tribal users don't want. But that "excess" supply has rapidly diminished in recent years as cities have used more of their water. It's expected to go away once CAP shortages get worse, the report said.

The replenishment district has also projected it could buy a large amount of Colorado River water from on-river users in places such as Mohave County.

But since then, the district has canceled efforts to buy water rights from there and from Quartzsite in neighboring La Paz County. Residents of Mohave and La Paz counties fought the plan because they didn't want their own water supplies drained.

The district has also projected that it could buy and import groundwater from Western Arizona and buy and recharge treated sewage effluent. But those supplies both look uncertain today, said Porter.

Importing groundwater will be very expensive, in part because it may require some treatment before putting it into the CAP canal. As for effluent, "the (municipal) water providers that have effluent already have a plan for their effluent. A lot of water providers are looking to effluent as an important part of their growth portfolio," Porter said.

The replenishment district did strike a deal last year that virtually doubled its total supply: a \$95 million water rights purchase from the Gila River Indian Community that will bring the district 900,000 acre-feet over 25 years.

But about half that water has lower priority during shortages than what's typical for Indian-owned CAP water. So "the full amount of this supply is not likely to be available every year," the report said.

Runaway costs

As costs escalate for homeowners and subdivisions to join the replenishment district and pay it to recharge renewable water, some water district members — subdivisions and homeowners associations — are finding cheaper alternatives.

They include two types of credits that water rights owners can buy, letting them pump groundwater and avoid having to recharge surface water to compensate for it.

With one, someone who owns a historic “grandfathered” water right can give up that right in exchange for such credits. With another, people or government entities can buy long-term storage credits from others who have recharged CAP water or effluent into the ground. That gives the purchaser the right to pump groundwater.

If these practices continue, declining customers for the water district could force rates to rise further, triggering a painful cycle of rising rates and declining customers, said Ferris. The ultimate result for the district could be catastrophic financially.

Reactions

The Arizona Department of Water Resources, which enforces the 1980 groundwater law, won’t comment until it reviews the report, a spokesman said.

Southern Arizona Home Builders Association President David Godlewski said the link between the groundwater replenishment district and Arizona’s economy is “undeniable,” and that “everything in our power must be done, including acquisitions of additional water resources, to protect and enhance it.”

Efforts to change or weaken it pose serious economic risks, said Godlewski, adding that without the district, “new economic development, as well as the existing economy in Tucson, would be adversely impacted.”

The CAP said it wants to be part of the discussion about appropriate growth, but “it may not be the appropriate agency to lead it because the focus of this debate would go beyond its legal responsibilities,” it said.

Kathy Jacobs, who helped write the 1993 rules to assure Arizona’s growing areas have water supplies for 100 years, called the report “excellent, very well researched and documented.” She agrees with all but one of its recommendations.

She has reservations only about its proposal to require that all pumping of groundwater be done in the same places where recharge occurs. Exceptions to such a rule should definitely be allowed, she said. An example includes recharging water away from pumping areas to restore riparian habitat.

There were practical reasons for creating the groundwater replenishment district, “but with the benefit of hindsight it is clear that certain components of the Assured Water Supply program need to be tightened up,” said Jacobs.

One oversight in past water management, she said, has been its failure to fully acknowledge, until recently, the implications of climate change and the chronic overuse of the Colorado River.

University of Arizona law professor Robert Glennon, who has written two books about water supply issues, gave the report high marks.

“The CAGR (water district) has been a house of cards from its inception. Facing the problems with it is long past due,” Glennon said. “I hope our legislators, the Governor’s Office, the Department of Water Resources, and the CAP district pay close attention to the findings in this report and take swift action.”

10/12/19

A Documentary Debut: The Unfinished Fight of Seldom Seen Sleight

A film by Chris Simon and Susette Weisheit
Narrated by Hal Cannon
Produced by Sageland Media and Living Rivers

October 12, 7:00 PM @ Star Hall; 159 E. Center St.; Moab, UT 84532
Reception at 6:00 PM @ the adjacent Sun Court
Live music performance by Sand Sheff and Tamara Frieida

Suggested Donation: \$10
Donations for this event were approximately \$2,500. THANK YOU!!

[TRAILER](#)

[Poster](#)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Maggie McQuire of *Moab Sun News*

[Click here](#) to read this story in the *Moab Happenings*

[Click here](#) to listen to this podcast from Podship Earth at the Wild and Scenic Film Festival in Nevada City, California.

Star Hall was packed for this event!



10/01/19

Eco-groups sue feds, allege Glen Canyon Dam Plan ignores climate change

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

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

[Click here](#) to read the press release from *The Center for Biological Diversity*

[Click here](#) to read the Complaint

[Click here](#) to read the administrative history of the LTEMP EIS

09/28/19

Lake Powell Pipeline: Department of Interior will likely be the lead agency for permitting process

[Click here](#) to read this story by Mori Kessler of *St. George News*

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Lisa Rutherford in the *Utah Independent*

09/28/19

Little Colorado River Gorge: Four new dams proposed for hydropower pump back project

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

[Click here](#) to read this story by Debra Utacia Krol of *The Arizona Republic*

[Click here](#) to read more detailed information at *On The Colorado*

09/12/19

Lawsuit: Climate change impacts ignored in gas leases

SALT LAKE CITY (Associated Press) — A coalition of environmental organizations allege in a new lawsuit that the U.S. government failed to adequately analyze climate change impacts while approving 130 oil and gas leases in Utah.

The lawsuit filed Thursday accuses Bureau of Land Management officials of violating the National Environmental Policy Act in approving leases on about 274 square miles (710 square kilometers) of land in rural Utah from 2014 to 2018.

Bureau of Land Management spokeswoman Kimberly Finch declined comment since it's a pending lawsuit.

The lawsuit accuses the agency of "dutifully" implementing President Donald Trump's push to ramp up oil and gas drilling on public lands.

[Click here](#) to read the press release from Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity and Living Rivers/Colorado Rivekeeper

08/25/19

Grand Bargain: Colorado River Water Rights Debated As Climate Change Depletes Supply

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

08/19/19

This Country Gave All Its Rivers Their Own Legal Rights

[Click here](#) to read this story by Sigal Samuel of *Vox*

08/16/19

USGS: Evaluation of Groundwater Resources in the Spanish Valley Watershed, Grand and San Juan Counties, Utah

[Click here](#) to read this story by *Moab Sun News* called "USGS Study Shows Less Water Than Previously Reported"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb in the *Grand Junction Sentinel* about how the Western Slope of Colorado and Grand County, Utah are warming at a faster pace than the rest of the USA

[Click here](#) to read this story by Carter Pape of *Times Independent* called "Moab Watershed 30 to 40 Percent Smaller Than Previously Reported"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Carter Pape of *Times Independent* called "How Water Ends Up In Moab"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Carter Pape of *Times Independent* called "USGS Confirms Valley Water Budget"

[Click here](#) to read the summary, report and to view three plates (graphics and maps)

08/15/19

Colorado River: First-ever mandatory water cutbacks will kick in next year along the Colorado River

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

[Click here](#) to read the August, 2019 "24-month Report"

[Click here](#) to read the press release by the Bureau of Reclamation

08/15/19

Seldom Seen: A Poignant Look Back At Glen Canyon Before The Dam

[Click here](#) to visit this site from Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies; a film by Taylor Graham.

08/07/19

HEAL Utah Hosts Forum on Small Nuclear Reactors In Response To Upcoming Project

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emily Means of *KPCW*

[Click here](#) to read the report by *HEAL Utah*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Taylor Stevens of *Salt Lake Tribune*

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT

[Uranium Watch](#)

[HEAL Utah](#)

07/18/19

For a while in 1983, sheets of plywood were all that kept the mighty Glen Canyon Dam from overflowing

"Lake Powell wasn't always half empty. In 1983, the reservoir filled nearly to overflowing, and saved by resourceful engineers and a lot of concrete."

Living Rivers would like to remind readers that spillways are not how an agency properly manages a big snow melt. Foresight planning and prudent reservoir management is how an agency should manage a flood. This incident was a human mistake that nearly caused an incomprehensible, catastrophic tragedy of epic proportion.

[A story](#) by John D'Anna in the Arizona Republic

This article is archived [here](#)

07/18/19

Panel Shifts Gears On Best Rail Route To Move Oil From Eastern Utah

[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](#)

07/17/19

Aurora & Colorado Springs seek to drill on lower Homestake Creek dam sites

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

7/11/19

A Presentation by Professor Victor Baker about Paleoflood Hydrology Research on the Green and Colorado Rivers

[Click here](#) to view the poster for this event.

[Click here](#) to read the story in the *Moab Sun News* by Sharon Sullivan

[Click here](#) to learn more about floods on the Colorado

Title: History of the Great Floods of the Colorado and Green Rivers

Where: Grand County Library 257 East Center Street, Moab

When: Thursday, July 18, 6 pm

Free and open to the public

Professor Baker is the leading scientist of paleoflood hydrology research and the former president of the Geological Society of America.

07/11/19

The Colorado River needs a long-term plan for drought

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Brad Udall, Douglas Kenney and John Fleck

07/05/19

Court of Appeals to Hear Lionsback Case In Moab

Hearing is on October 18, 2019 and begins at 10:00 A.M. at the Grand County Courthouse.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Doug McMurdo in the *Moab Times-Independent*

[Click here](#) to read the announcement from the Utah Court of Appeals

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information by visiting FarCountry.org

06/21/19

Lake Powell Pipeline: ACOE Wants Quagga Muscle Plan Before 404 Permitting

[Click here](#) to read this story by the *Associated Press*

[Click here](#) to read the letter from the Army Corps of Engineers to Utah Division of Water Resources

06/20/19

Moab Event on June 22 & 23: “Weaving narratives and policy: storytelling on the Colorado Plateau”

[Click here](#) to read the the news story from the *Moab Sun News*.

Moab is one of the largest communities along the Colorado River, and will serve as the venue for a two-day event sponsored by the [SCREE expedition](#) and Living Rivers on June 22 and 23, 2019. Taking place at the Moab Arts & Recreation Center Dance Hall, the two-day event will feature storytellers, dancers, authors, artists, and academics. As described in detail below, these activities will attract local community members, students, rafters, artists, and water managers.

EVENT LOCATION

Moab Arts and Recreation Center (MARC) The Dance Hall 100 East and 100 North

SCHEDULE FOR SATURDAY

June 22: Public Lands

- 9:30 a.m.: Light breakfast refreshments
- 10:00 a.m.-10:15 a.m.: Introduction to the event and invocation by with Howard Dennis, Hopi Tribe, Second Mesa, AZ.
- Note: This brief introduction will be a welcome, description of themes and events, quick background on SCREE, acknowledgements, etc.
- 10:15-10:45 a.m.: Hopi Dancers
- 10:50 a.m.-11:30 a.m.: USGS – Perspectives of the SCREE trip so far.
- Note: Question and Answers
- 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Dan McCool “Climate Change and Public Lands” Note: A legal follow-up to the themes of Bears Ears. 15 minutes of audience questions included.
- 12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.: Light lunch and social hour.
- 1:20 p.m.-2:00 p.m.: Serena Supplee, renowned local artist - “Painting the Colorado Plateau”

Note: A visual presentation of artwork and the process of creation. The artists may describe the adventure in going to sites to paint, what areas spark interest from an artist's perspective, and contrast experiences.

- 2:00 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.: Patrick Kikut – SCREE Lead Artist Note: Art and Inspiration on the SCREE trip so far
- 2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.: Chris Warren of Beatnik Prints – Present his artwork and discuss methods and how landscape as inspired his work
- 3:15-3:45: Hopi Dancers

SCHEDULE FOR SUNDAY

June 23: Water

- 9:30 a.m.: Light breakfast refreshments
- 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: John Weisheit & Tom Minckley, Introduction – “Relationship of water and the community of Moab”
- Note: A local connection between the town, economies, and culture of Moab. Potential issues in the future: groundwater, drought, pollution, etc.
- 11:15-11:45: Hopi Dancers
- 11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.: Robert Adler, “Water Law and Climate Change”
- 12:30-1:15: Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.: Cody Perry, Rig to Flip - The Story of Chicken Raper; the Story Behind One of the Most Infamous Rapids on the Dolores River – Note: Q&A and presentation from the filmmaker.
- 2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.: Taylor Graham, Glen Canyon Rediscovered film showing and Q&A with The filmmaker.

06/19/19

Uinta Railway: Disputed rail project seeking to ship eastern Utah oil to more lucrative markets clears hurdle with \$21 million funding boost

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

For more information, please visit: [Colorado River Connected](#)

05/29/19

Fontenelle Reservoir Completion Put On Hold Until Absolutely Necessary

[Click here](#) to read this story by Melodie Edwards of *Wyoming Public Media*

OTHER NEWS ABOUT FONTENELLE

[Click here](#) to read this story called "Draining the Bathtub." by *Wyoming Public Media*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Alanna Elder of *Wyoming Public Media*

[Click here](#) to read the water strategy of the state of Wyoming (Governor Mead)

05/29/19

MEETING: Demand Management Stakeholder Workshop Sponsored by the Upper Division States

WORKSHOP LOGISTICS

When/Where

Friday, 21 June, 2019; 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Utah Department of Natural Resources 1594 W. North Temple Salt Lake City, UT

Participation: Anyone interested in the topic of Demand Management (DM) in the Upper Basin is welcome to attend. However, YOU MUST RSVP to Susan Jenkins at susan.jenkins@wyo.gov or (307) 777- 6150. on or before June 14, 2019 if you do plan to attend to enable us to adequately plan for the appropriate number of attendees.

05/20/19

A signing ceremony at Hoover Dam: Colorado River Basin Drought Contingency Plan

[Click here](#) to read this summary by Bureau of Reclamation

[Click here](#) to read BOR Transmittal Statement for Drought Contingency Planning

[Click here](#) to read the Seven States Transmittal Statement for Drought Contingency Planning

[Table: Shortage amounts and elevation triggers at Lake Mead / Hoover Dam](#)

05/20/19

LAWSUIT FILED: THE Enefit Oil Shale Project Would be a Disaster For the Colorado River Basin

[Click here](#) to read this story by Meteor Blades of *DailyKos*

[Click here](#) to read the complaint (Living Rivers vs. Dept. of Interior)

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

04/18/19

Colorado Rivers's Biggest Champion: Walmart Heirs

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jeffrey P. Jacobs of *Greenwire*

04/09/19

Summary: Colorado River Basin Contingency Plans

[Click here](#) to read this summary by Bureau of Reclamation

[Click here](#) to read BOR Transmittal Statement for Drought Contingency Planning

[Click here](#) to read the Seven States Transmittal Statement for Drought Contingency Planning

03/22/19

Navajo Nation Vote to End Efforts to Purchase Coal-fired Power Plant Sealing Its Fate

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ryan Randazzo and Noel Lyn Smith of *The Arizona Republic*

03/21/19

Lawsuit Challenges Utah's New Green River Water Contract

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

[Click here](#) to read this story by Mori Kessler of *St. George News*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tim Ryan of *Courthouse News Service*

[Click here](#) to read this article by Jeremy Jacobs of *E & E News; Greenwire*

###

For Immediate Release, March 21, 2019

**Lawsuit Challenges Utah's New Green River Water Contract
Trump Administration Failed to Consider Other Water Deals, Climate Change**

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[CLICK HERE](#) to read the complaint

WASHINGTON - Conservation groups sued the Trump administration today to challenge the Interior Department's decision allowing additional water to be taken from the Green River below Utah's Flaming Gorge Dam. The decision was made without a full accounting of reduced Colorado River basin flows or how the region's persistent drought and climate change could harm endangered species and recreation.

Today's lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., says Interior's Bureau of Reclamation failed to consider other pending water contracts, including the Lake Powell Pipeline, which could further deplete the Green and Colorado rivers.

The agency claimed in its environmental assessment that the new Green River Water Rights Exchange contract, signed Wednesday, would have no significant environmental impact. But it did not consider climate change, drought or over-allocation of water.

“The water resources of the Colorado River Basin are already headed toward irretrievable decline in both quantity and quality,” said John Weisheit of Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper. “The environmental review ignored the reality of declining river flows in the Green River and the rest of the Colorado basin and the connected impacts of this contract and the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline water contract.”

“This review was appalling. The Green and Colorado river systems need a full accounting,” said Robin Silver, a cofounder of the Center for Biological Diversity.

“Drought, climate change and over-allocation are sucking the Colorado River basin dry right in front of our eyes. But officials ignored declining river flows, pretended this new Green River contract stands alone and ignored multiple proposed water projects like the Lake Powell Pipeline. We’ll fight to defend these spectacular rivers.”

Four endangered fish could be harmed by changes to water flows and timing contemplated under the Green River Water Rights Exchange contract and other pending water deals. Changes to Flaming Gorge Dam operations necessary to accommodate the water contracts and drought-contingency planning could be devastating for these fish and other species. Endangered species at risk include the Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker, humpback chub and bonytail chub.

The river includes fragile riparian areas and wetlands, as well as breathtaking canyons popular with rafters. It winds through Browns Park National Wildlife Refuge, Dinosaur National Monument, Ouray National Wildlife Refuge and Canyonlands National Park before joining up with the Colorado River.

“The Bureau’s Green River Block environmental review is a disingenuous facade that ignores the agency’s own climate change warnings and myriad scientific studies about water-supply shortfalls to advance the largest new proposed diversion of the Colorado River, the Lake Powell Pipeline,” said Zach Frankel, executive director of Utah Rivers Council.

The groups are represented by attorneys from the Center for Biological Diversity.

###

The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.4 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

03/20/19

State, Federal Officials Sign Green River Block Water Exchange Contract

[Click here](#) to read this story by Mori Kessler of *St. George News*
March 21, 2019

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

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tim Ryan of *Courthouse News Service*

03/12/19

LA's Water District Votes to Contribute IID's Water; IID Threatens to Sue Them

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

03/10/19

Pair of Lawsuits Challenges Need for More Colorado River Water

[Click here](#) to read this story by Linday Fendt of *Aspen Journalism*

02/26/19

Lawsuit Launched Over Massive Utah Oil Shale Development Project; Threatens Endangered Species, River Flows, Climate

[Click here](#) to read this story in *The Moab Times-Independent*

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

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

[Click here](#) to read the 60-Day Notice

PRESS RELEASE of Conservation Groups

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Lawsuit Launched Over Massive Utah Oil Shale Development Project Threatens Endangered Species, River Flows, Climate

SALT LAKE CITY— Conservation groups today issued a notice of intent to sue the Trump administration for approving rights-of-way for pipelines and powerlines that pave the way for the nation's first commercial oil shale development. The massive Enefit project in Utah's Uintah Basin would drain billions of gallons of water from the Green River, threaten endangered species and generate enormous amounts of greenhouse gas pollution.

Oil shale is one of world's most carbon-intensive fuels whose strip mining can require several barrels of water for each barrel of oil, or kerogen, produced. At full buildout, Enefit's facility would produce 50,000 barrels per day of oil from the Green River Formation.

"This project would be a disaster for the climate, the Colorado River and endangered species," said Taylor McKinnon, a senior campaigner at the Center for Biological Diversity. "Draining rivers to mine high-carbon fossil fuels will accelerate climate change that's already drying the Colorado River Basin. The West needs to chart a sustainable future, but the Trump administration is paving the road to catastrophe."

Today's notice says the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service failed to protect several endangered species when they approved electricity, oil, gas and water lines across public lands. The notice argues that federal agencies violated the law by ignoring the potential harm to imperiled fish, studying only the harm from water depletions necessary to build the pipeline, not to operate it.

"The BLM approved the rights-of-way to service the oil-shale development based on an utterly inadequate analysis of its potentially devastating environmental impacts," said Michael Toll, a staff attorney at the Grand Canyon Trust. "Considering the rights-of-way are a public subsidy of an otherwise economically unfeasible oil-shale facility, the public has a right to know exactly how Enefit's project will impact the environment."

The water pipeline will allow the Estonia-owned Enefit American Oil to drain more than 10,000 acre feet annually from the Green River, harming critical habitat for endangered fish, including the Colorado pikeminnow and the razorback sucker. Mining the oil shale will destroy habitat for two rare wildflower species for which Endangered Species Act protections are proposed. The project comes as western states struggle with record droughts and climate-driven declines in river flows in the Colorado River Basin.

“The water resources of the Colorado River Basin are already headed toward irretrievable decline in both quantity and quality,” said John Weisheit with Living Rivers Colorado Riverkeeper. “Opposing the Enefit Project is a no brainer; it epitomizes exactly what inappropriate development looks like.”

Enefit intends to strip-mine about 28 million tons of rock a year over thousands of acres of high-desert habitat. It will also construct a major production facility to bake the rock at high temperatures. The half-square-mile processing plant, about 45 miles south of Dinosaur National Monument, will turn pre-petroleum stones into refinery-ready oil. “There are very levelheaded reasons why the United States hasn’t invested in commercial oil shale extraction before – and this project in particular would be uniquely destructive in Utah,” said Alex Hardee, an attorney at Earthjustice. “The Fish and Wildlife Service has a duty to ensure that federal approvals do not drive endangered species off the cliff of extinction. But the agency turned a blind eye to the devastating effects this oil shale project would inflict by only paying attention to the water it would suck up to build this nonsensical pipeline but not to actually operate it.”

“Every resident of the state should be alarmed. This oil shale project would exploit, degrade, and exhaust Utah’s most precious natural resources – our water, our air, and our beautiful natural landscapes,” said Dr. Brian Moench, president of Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment. “It threatens public health, will tie Utah’s future to dirty energy, and will accelerate climate the crisis. Even worse, the only beneficiary of this scheme is a foreign oil company.”

“BLM is essentially telling the public not to worry because the pipes and power lines themselves won’t have much impact, while turning a blind eye to the large-scale destruction that this infrastructure will enable,” said Ann Alexander, senior attorney with Natural Resources Defense Council.

The project would produce 547 million barrels of oil over three decades, spewing more than 200 million tons of greenhouse gas — as much as 50 coal-fired power plants produce in a year. Those emissions would contribute to global warming and regional drought already afflicting the rivers and their endangered fish.

“Everything related to this project represents a worst case scenario for this severely climate change impacted region and the planet,” said Dan Mayhew, conservation chair of the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club. “Rampant destruction of public lands and large

scale water dependency while adding pollution to an already challenged airshed. This project needs to be stopped in its tracks now.”

The 60-day notice gives the agencies an opportunity to comply with the Endangered Species Act and avoid a lawsuit.

“The Colorado River is disappearing due to mismanagement, drought and accelerating climate change, putting at risk not only multiple endangered species but also the drinking water for nearly 40 million people,” said Daniel E. Estrin, advocacy director at Waterkeeper Alliance. “In the face of this crisis, FWS and BLM’s approvals could cause 100 billion gallons of water to be removed from the basin over the next three decades, harming government-protected endangered species and hastening the collapse of a critical water supply system already teetering on the brink of failure.”

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The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.4 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

02/21/19

Arizona Lawmaker Withdraws Bill That Angered Tribe Imperiled Drought Contingency Plan

["Gila River Indian Community Moves Ahead With Colorado River Deal"](#) by Ian James of *The Arizona Republic* (2/24/19)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ian James of *The Arizona Republic* (2/19/19)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of *Arizona Daily Star* "Arizona Lawmaker Withdraws Bill That Angered Tribe, Imperiled Drought Contingency Plan"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis in *Arizona Daily Star* "Arizona, Other Western States Unlikely to Meet Colorado River Drought Plan Deadline"

[Click here](#) to read the *Associated Press* story by Jonathan J. Copper entitled: "Officials - Arizona Will Miss US Deadline For Key Water Plan"

[Click here](#) to read this story in *Cronkite News* by Lauren Schieler "Arizona Lawmakers Agree On Crucial Drought Contingency Plan"

02/15/19

Arizona Lawmaker Accused of Endangering Colorado River Drought Plan

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jonathan J. Cooper of *The Associated Press*

[Gila River Tribe Backs Away From Arizona Drought Plan](#) By Elizabeth Whitman of *Phoenix New Times*

02/04/19

Changes Proposed To Flaming Gorge Operations

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jack Gillund of *Uintah Basin Standard/Vernal Express*
Reclamation (Provo Office) has scheduled the following Flaming Gorge Working Group coordination Meeting for:

March 7th, 2019
11:00 am to 2:00 pm
Carbon County Event Center in Price UT
310 South Fairgrounds Rd.

02/04/19

Feds says 2 States Missed Deadline On Colorado River Drought Plan

Felicia Fonseca, Associated Press:

[US Says 2 States Missed Deadline on Colorado River Drought Plan](#)

Luke Runyon, KUNC:

[What is Happening With the Colorado River Drought Plans?](#)

Reclamation Press Release:

[Reclamation Seeks Formal Input from Governors to Protect Colorado River Basin](#)

Commission Burman:

[Speech at Colorado River Water Users Association Conference in December 2018](#)

Federal Register Notice:

[Drought Contingency Planning](#)

Additional News:

Christopher Conover, Arizona Public Media:
[Not So Fast On Drought Plan: State & Feds Disagree](#)

Ian James, Arizona Republic:
[With Colorado River Drought Deal Not Done Federal Government Steps In](#)

Priscilla Totiya, Arizona Republic:
[What's Next for Arizona After Passing Colorado River Drought Plan](#)

KSAZ:
[Arizona Joins Colorado River Drought Plan](#)

Tony Davis, Arizona Daily Star:
[Arizona Drought Plan Tab Could Hit 280 Million](#)

Jose Ivan Cazares, Cronkite News:
[Late Push for Salton Sea Improvements Complicates Colorado River Drought Plan](#)

Tom Bodus, Imperial Valley Press:
[Federal Register Notice on DCP Draws Ire From IID](#)

Michael Hiltzik, LA Times:
[Despite Signs of Interstate Cooperation the Decline of Lake Mead Isn't Near Being Solved](#)

Brent Gardner-Smith, Aspen Times:
[Officials Explain Drought Measures in Lower Colorado River Basin](#)

01/25/19

OpEd by Ron Thompson: Invest in New Water Infrastructure (Read: stay on autopilot and never mind the cliff ahead)

[Click here](#) to read Ron Thompson's OpEd in Deseret News

And, let's continue to just make things up:
[Aaron Million's pipeline from the Green River in Utah to the Front Range of Colorado](#)

01/20/19

Lake Powell Could Become 'Dead Pool' As Climate Change, Political Wars and Unabated Growth Drain Its Waters

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

Also from Brian Maffly:

[Click here](#) to read this story called "Scientists Study Lake Powell Sediments to See How Climate Change, Humans Are Affecting the Water"

[Click here](#) to read a rebuttal by John Fleck called "No, Lake Powell Is Not Inexorably Headed Toward Dead Pool."

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by the Editorial Board of *The Salt Lake Tribune* called "If We Build Powell Pipeline, Will the Water Come?"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Allen Best of *Mountain Town News* called "Again, The Question About Whether Lake Powell Is Doomed."

[Pat Bagley Editorial Cartoon](#) from *The Salt Lake Tribune* "There will be mud!"

01/15/19

Babbitt: Colorado River drought plan just the beginning of tough decisions needed

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

01/15/19

Yale University: Crisis on the Colorado River (A Series)

[Click here](#) to visit the website for a special look into the Colorado River by Yale University

FIRST IN THE SERIES

[The West' s Great River Hits Its Limits: Will The Colorado Run Dry?](#)

SECOND IN THE SERIES

[On The Water-Starved Colorado River Drought Is The New Normal](#)

THIRD IN THE SERIES

[Running Dry: New Strategies For Conserving Water On The Colorado](#)

FOURTH IN THE SERIES

[In Era Of Drought: Phoenix Prepares For Future Without Colorado River Water](#)

FIFTH IN THE SERIES

[Restoring The Colorado Bringing New Life To Stressed River](#)
