

Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study Basin Study Program

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Spanning parts of the seven states of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming (Basin States), the Colorado River Basin (Basin) is one of the most critical sources of water in the West. The Colorado River and its tributaries provide water for the municipal supply to 30 million people, irrigation of nearly 4 million acres of land, and hydropower facilities that generate more than 4,200 MW, helping to meet the power needs of the West and offset the use of fossil fuels. The Colorado River is also the lifeblood for at least 15 Native American tribes, seven National Wildlife Refuges, four National Recreation Areas, and five National Parks.

Water supply and demand imbalances already exist in some geographic areas in the Basin and are projected to increase in both magnitude and spatial extent in the future. Storage capacity of approximately four times the average inflow has provided the ability to meet most demands even over periods of sustained drought, such as is currently being experienced. However, studies indicate that droughts of greater severity have occurred in the far past and climate experts and scientists suggest that such droughts are likely to occur in the future. Furthermore, studies have postulated that the average yield of the Colorado River could be reduced by as much as 30 percent due to climate change. Meanwhile, the Basin States include some of the fastest growing urban and industrial areas in the United States.



Increasing demands coupled with decreasing supplies may exacerbate imbalances throughout the Basin. The study will:

- analyze water supply and demand imbalances throughout the study area through 2060;
- assess options for resolving such imbalances; and
- develop recommendations to address current and projected imbalances.

Non-Federal cost-share partners include each of the seven Basin States, water management authorities, and irrigation and water districts. Broad support for the study exists among stakeholders throughout the Basin and their input and participation will be sought throughout the study.

The total cost of the study is \$2 million (50/50 cost share).

