ARIZONA
RECONSULTATION
COMMITTEE

April 7, 2026

Dear ARC members,

We wanted to give you an update regarding the hydrology in the Colorado River Basin, impacts at Lake Powell and preliminary actions to be taken by the United States to address those issues.

The winter and spring snowpack and runoff projections in the upper basin are abysmal. The runoff projection has reduced by 1 maf from the March projection. Things are trending towards the lowest runoff on record, perhaps lower than 2002 runoff volume, the lowest year on record.

As a result, the elevation of Lake Powell is projected to fall below the minimum power pool elevation, 3490'. That outcome implicates Glen Canyon Dam operations and the uncertainties that attend to operating that dam exclusively with the river outlet works.

To protect against that eventuality, Reclamation is going to take action to prop up the elevation at Lake Powell. They are planning to release up to 1 maf from the Upper Initial Units, reservoirs above Lake Powell, e.g. Flaming Gorge reservoir. To be clear, the initial plan is to release 1 maf from the UIUs. That action may begin in about one week and continue through April 2027. Hydrology may force that volume to be reduced to a minimum of 660 acre-feet. The release volume of 1 maf from the UIUs is more in line with advocacy by the State of Arizona and is a positive outcome.

Reclamation also plans to reduce the Lake Powel to Lake Mead release from 7.48 maf to 6 maf. That would occur by September 30, 2026. At this time, there is no ask by Reclamation for reductions in the lower basin and Mexico that would exceed 1.5maf in calendar year 2027. Reductions at that level would translate to an expected reduction in the State of Arizona of 760,000 af consistent with outcomes we have been discussing with you.

We must stress that Reclamation has made no final decision on the actions described above. The final decision will be made on or about April 17 when the April 24-month study is finalized.

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