

Studying Our Water Future

When it comes to providing the water that we count on in the West, the Colorado River is irreplaceable.

The Colorado and its tributaries (streams and smaller rivers that feed into this major river) provide water to nearly 40 million people, irrigate 5.5 million acres of crops, support at least 22 Native American tribes, 7 National Wildlife Refuges, 4 National Recreation Areas and 11 National Parks. Central Arizona Project (CAP) carries water from the Colorado to where it's needed in the state. Hydroelectric power from the Colorado helps to meet our power needs in the West, and the river supports some of Mexico's water needs as well.

Seven Western states—Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming—contain portions of the sprawling Colorado Basin.

The Big Study: Will There Be Enough Water for the Growing Demand?

Over the next 50 years, will the Colorado River be able to meet the Basin states' growing demand for its water? That's one of the big questions looked into by an important study called the Colorado River Basin Water Demand and Supply Study, or "Basin Study" for short.

The three-year study cost \$5.5 million and was just com-

pleted. Such a big study looking into our water future

requires a lot of people working together—climatologists and other scientists, water providers, tribal and population experts, environmentalists, etc.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the seven Basin States, water providers like CAP, tribes and other stakeholders of water from the Colorado River supported the Basin Study.

With populations in the West growing, experts project the demand for water in the Basin States will continue to grow.

Unfortunately, the increased demand is expected to exceed what the Colorado will be able to provide. And the numbers seem to get worse if there are droughts or other climate changes that reduce the water supply of the Colorado. The differences between the water supply and the demand are called imbalances.

But the Basin Study includes steps that might be taken to help correct these imbalances. They include steps to conserve (not waste) water and augmentation projects, which add to the water supply. Such steps

will take a lot of effort and teamwork between the Basin States, the federal government, water suppliers, Native American tribes and others who rely on the Colorado River.



More Ways to Learn About Water

How Do You Conserve Water?

List three ways you and your family can cut down on water use or save water!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Central Arizona Project is a 336 mile long system of aqueducts, pumping plants, and pipelines which carries Colorado River water into central and southern Arizona.

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www.CentralArizonaProject.com