



Arizona Reconsultation Committee Meeting #10

November 18, 2024



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COMMITTEE

Meeting Logistics Summary

- Roll Call
 - Members will acknowledge their attendance when their name is called.
- ARC Delegates
 - Please raise your hand to request to speak or ask questions.
 - If online, use the Teams “raise hand” feature to request to speak or ask questions.
 - Wait to be recognized before speaking to ensure clear communication.
- Livestream Attendees
 - Electronic public comment forms are available at cap-az.com/ARC for anyone wishing to submit a comment or question during the meeting.
 - All submissions will be addressed during the Call to the Public at the end of the meeting, unless relevant to a specific topic in the presentation.



ARC Meeting #10 Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- ARC Meeting #9 (March 2024) Summary
- Post-2026 Update
- Lower Division States Alternative
- Next Steps



ARC Meeting #9 (March 6, 2024) Summary

- Final Supplemental EIS released with Lower Basin States Proposal as the proposed action
- Glen Canyon Dam Infrastructure Issues
- Post-2026 Lower Division States (LDS) Alternative overview and submittal



Post-2026 Process Update



Post-2026 Process

- June 2022: “Pre-Scoping” Federal Register Notice
- June 2023: Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS formally initiates the Post-2026 process and public scoping period
- October 2023: Scoping Summary Report and Federal Register Notice identifies Proposed Federal Action and Purpose & Need
- Spring 2024: Began Alternatives Development Phase
 - Overall process is currently in this phase
- December 2024: Release Range of Alternatives
- Record of Decision planned for mid-2026



Purpose & Need

- Crafted to allow for a broad range of innovative, flexible approaches to be analyzed leading to robust and sustainable future operating guidelines
- Include explicit statements on the importance of addressing tribal concerns and promoting conservation

Current Status: Development of NEPA Alternatives

- Goal is to develop a reasonable – and broad – range of alternatives through collaboration with our key partners
- Since Scoping Report, Reclamation:
 - Received proposed alternatives and concepts/principles from several entities
 - Is continuing to work to find areas of overlap between proposals
 - Is designing additional alternative/s as needed to ensure a broad enough range is reflected
- Have not made a final determination on the NEPA alternatives that will be carried forward for consideration in the Draft EIS
- Anticipate releasing the range of alternatives in December 2024



Summary of Alternatives Input Received

- Received proposed alternatives from: *(details in following slide)*
 - Upper Division States (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming) - *received March 5, 2024*
 - Lower Division States (Arizona, California, and Nevada) - *received March 6, 2024*
 - Gila River Indian Community - *received March 29, 2024*
 - Group of Conservation Organizations - *received March 29, 2024*
- Received concepts/principles from:
 - **Basin Tribes** (20 Tribes) - *received May 16, 2024*
 - Protection of tribal water and empowering of Tribes to use their water rights by exploring portfolio of flexible tools
 - **U.S. FWS and National Park Service** - *received April 29, 2024*
 - Emphasis on protecting Grand Canyon resources by prioritizing higher elevations at Lake Powell and flows that better mimic a more natural hydrograph with some interannual variability.
 - **Hydropower interests** (Western Area Power Administration, CRSP) - *received June 3, 2024*
 - Incorporate and analyze alternative elements that maintain and improve the federal hydropower resource
 - **City of Phoenix** - *received May 8, 2024*
 - "Mitigation measures" (via storage & delivery mechanism) enabled through broad range of transactional behaviors among water users and coordinated approach
 - **Schmidt-Kuhn-Fleck** - *received March 29, 2024*
 - Powell release determined annually by Secretary based on recommendations from stakeholders (AMWG), flexible delivery system with accounting



Overview of Proposed Alternatives

Proposed Alternative	Lower Basin Shortage Guidelines	Lake Powell & Lake Mead Coordinated Operations	Storage & Delivery Mechanism for Conserved & Non-System Water	Lower Basin Surplus Guidelines	Activities Above Lake Powell
Upper Division States' Proposed Alternative (UDS)	Lower Basin reductions ramp from 0 maf at 92% (Powell + Mead contents) to 1.5 maf (75%) with a total of 3.9 maf (18%) . Lake Powell and Lake Mead operations are independent. Limits releases from Lake Powell to less than 8.1 MAF except when above 3670' (81% full). Activities above Powell to be part of a parallel process. Proposes conservation mechanism in Lake Mead (Lower Basin water) and Lake Powell (Upper Basin water) that are operationally neutral.				
Lower Division States' Proposed Alternative (LDS)	Lower Basin reductions ramp from 0 maf at 69% (total system contents) to 1.5 maf (58%), with a total of 2.7 maf (23%). Upper Basin reductions begin when the Lower Basin reductions exceed 1.5 maf - ramping from 0 (38%) to 1.2 maf (23%). Lake Powell releases are based on CRSP percent capacity and historical Upper Basin consumptive use and include balancing releases (8.5-11 maf) in certain conditions. Also includes a large (5-10 maf) operationally neutral conservation mechanism in Lake Mead.				
Gila River Indian Community's Proposed Alternative (GRIC)	Modifies LDS Lower Basin reduction strategy to start with 1.3 MAF of reductions at 90% (total system contents) for evaporation and system losses. Reductions above 1.5 maf are proportionally distributed between the Upper and Lower Basins. Maintains the LDS Powell release strategy. Lower Basin evaporation and system losses reductions distributed proportional by reach, and reductions above 1.3 maf distributed both pro-rata and by priority.				
Cooperative Conservation Proposed Alternative (NGO)	Implements an operationally neutral "conservation reserve" that allows storing conserved water in either Lake Powell or Lake Mead for ecological benefits or infrastructure protection. Lake Powell and Lake Mead releases based on combined storage and recent hydrology. Maintains Lake Powell in target zone to benefit Grand Canyon resources. Lower Basin reductions begin at 80% and can reach up to 5 maf under extremely dry hydrology.				
Continued Current Strategies comparative baseline (CCS)	Assumes a continuation of existing agreements (2007 Interim Guidelines as amended by the 2024 SEIS, 2019 DCPs, Minute 323 and the Binational Water Scarcity Contingency Plan)				

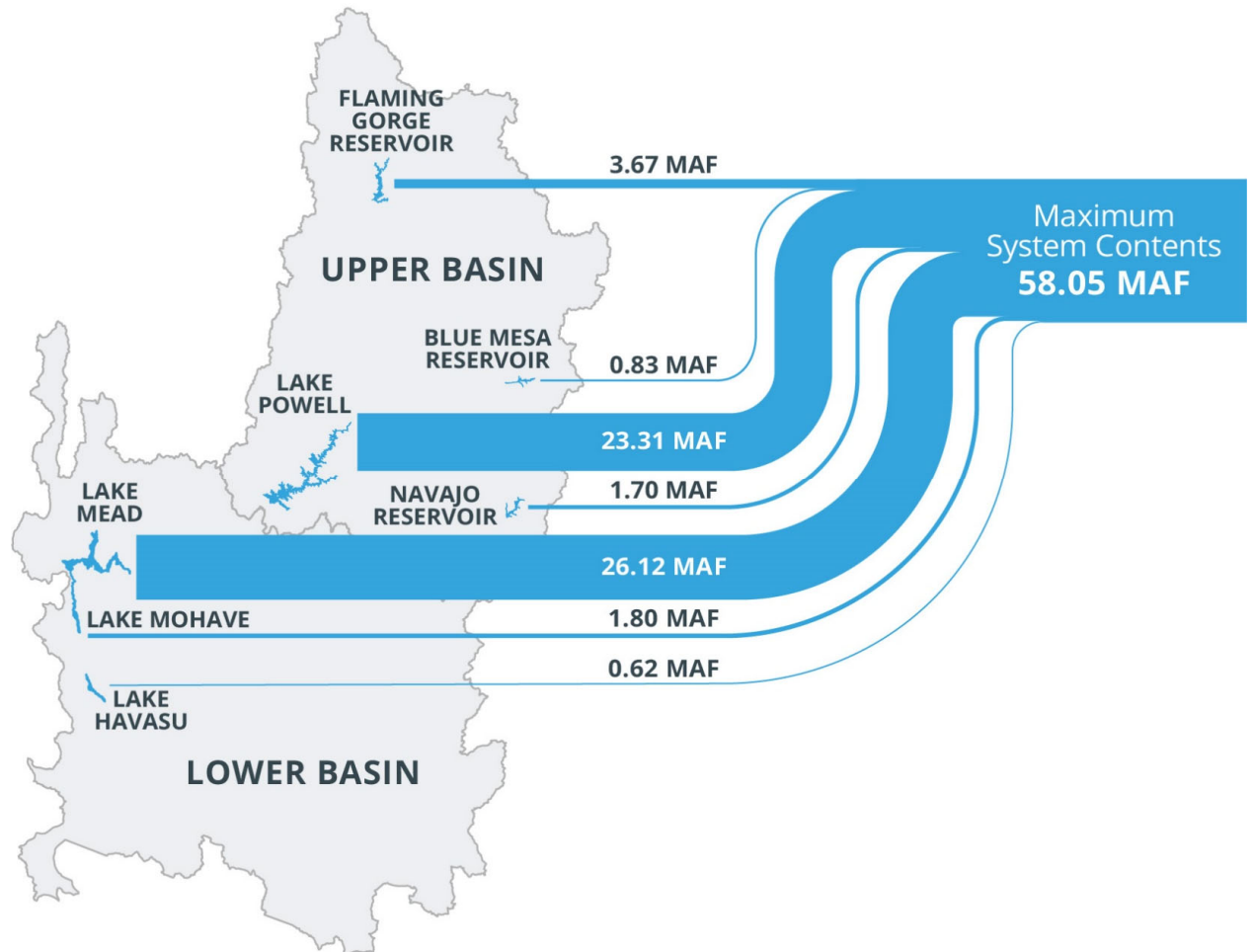
9 – Post-2026 Status Update Webinar, 10/10/24

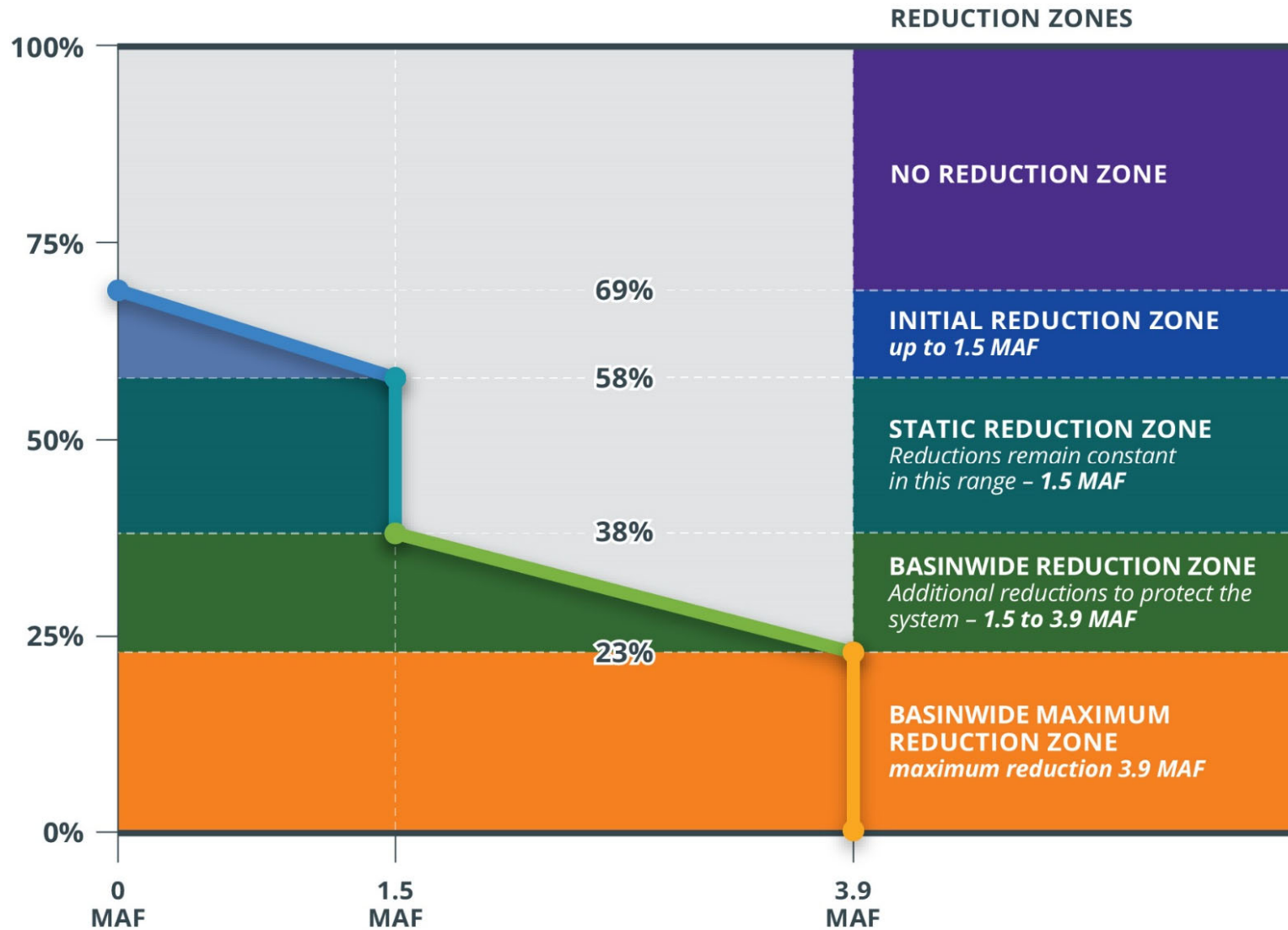
Process Overview & Status Update Webinar, October 10, 2024, Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1CpCk-aWR8>



Lower Basin Alternative: Reduction Determination

System contents are based on the volume in each reservoir that is available for release, in millions of acre-feet (MAF).



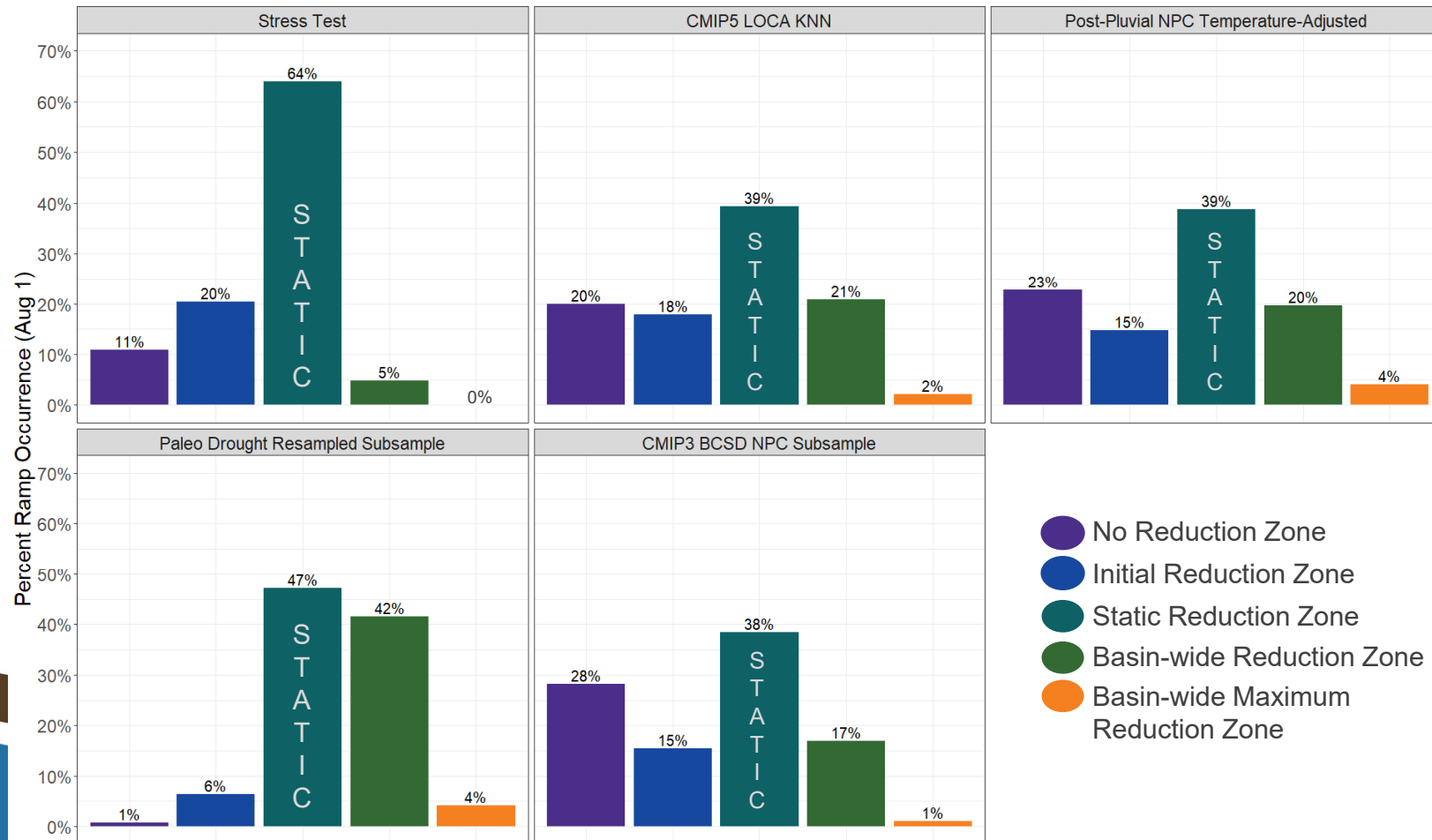


Lower Basin Alternative: Reduction Determination



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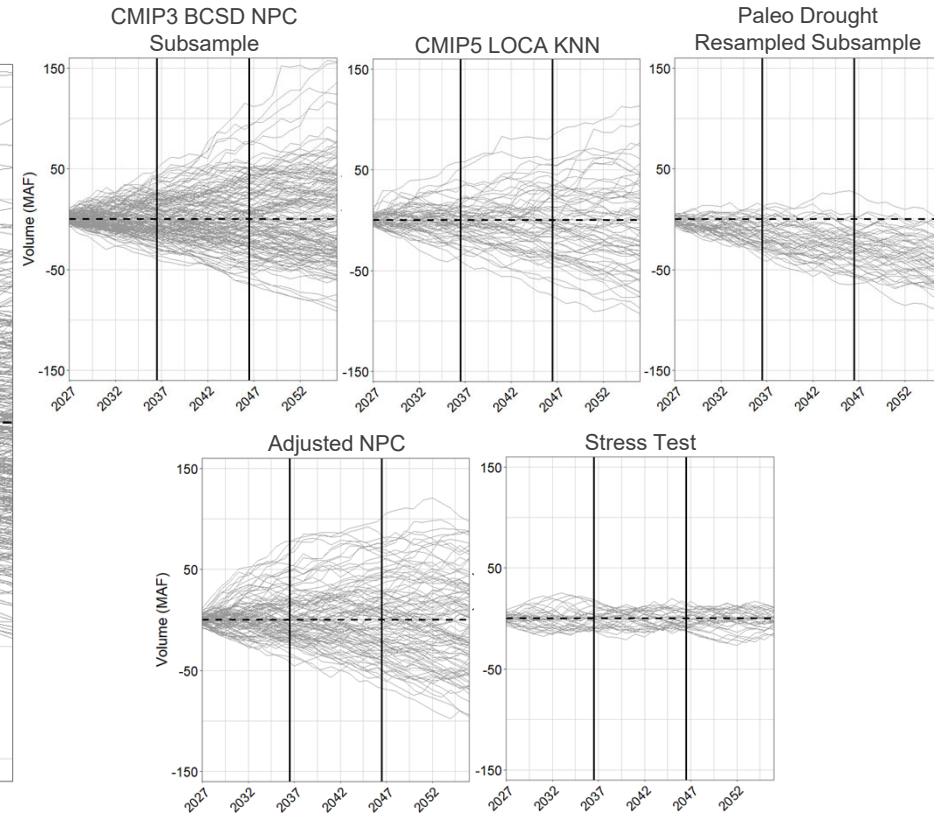
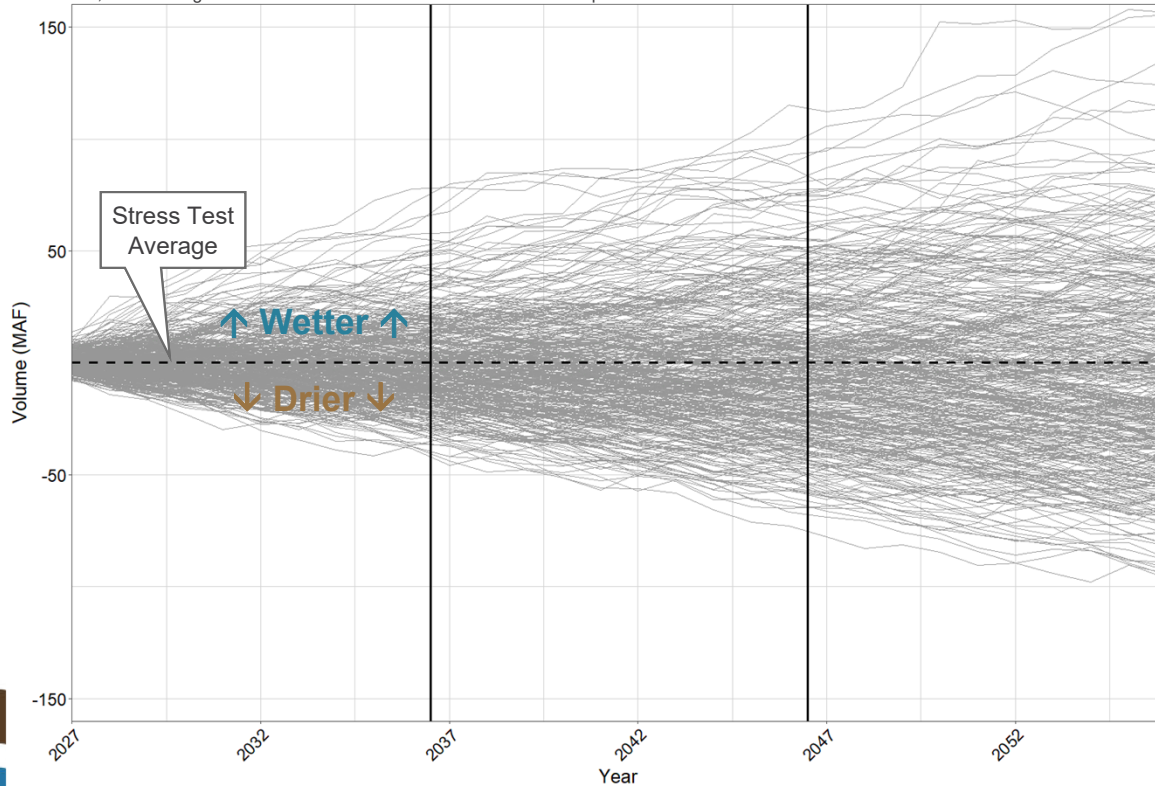
Technical Analysis from March 6, 2024 ARC



Reclamation Ensemble Hydrologies

Difference in Cumulative Natural Flow at Lee Ferry Compared to Stress Test Average

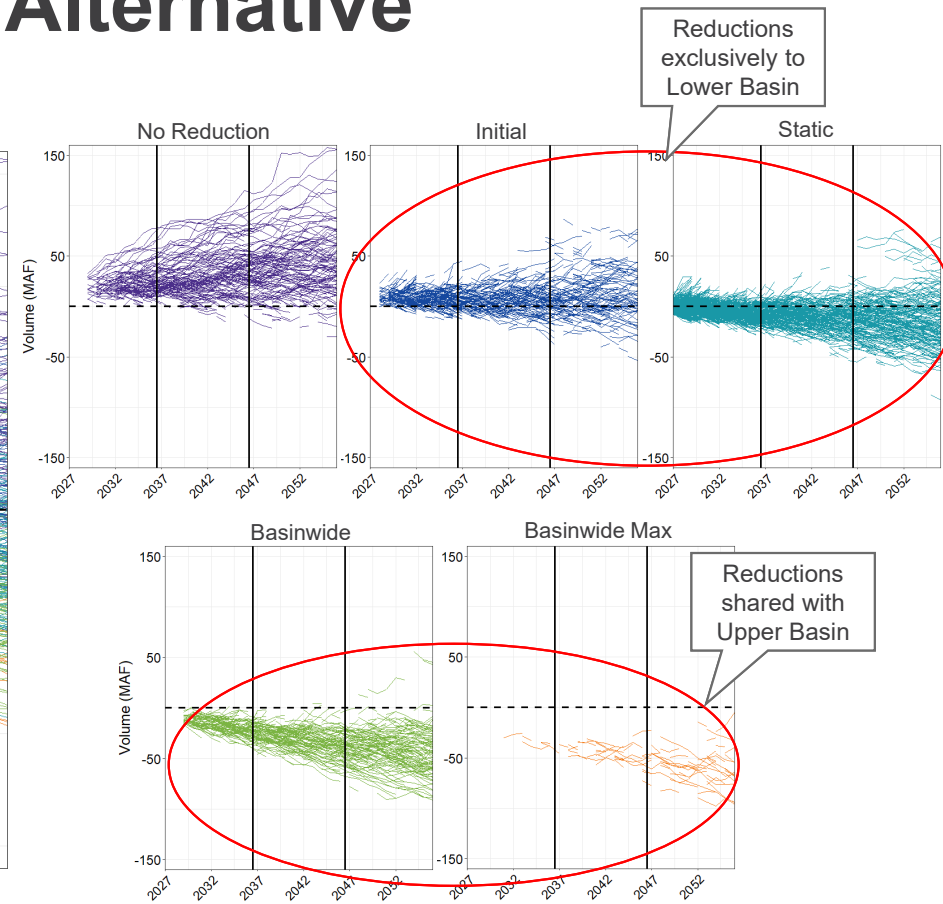
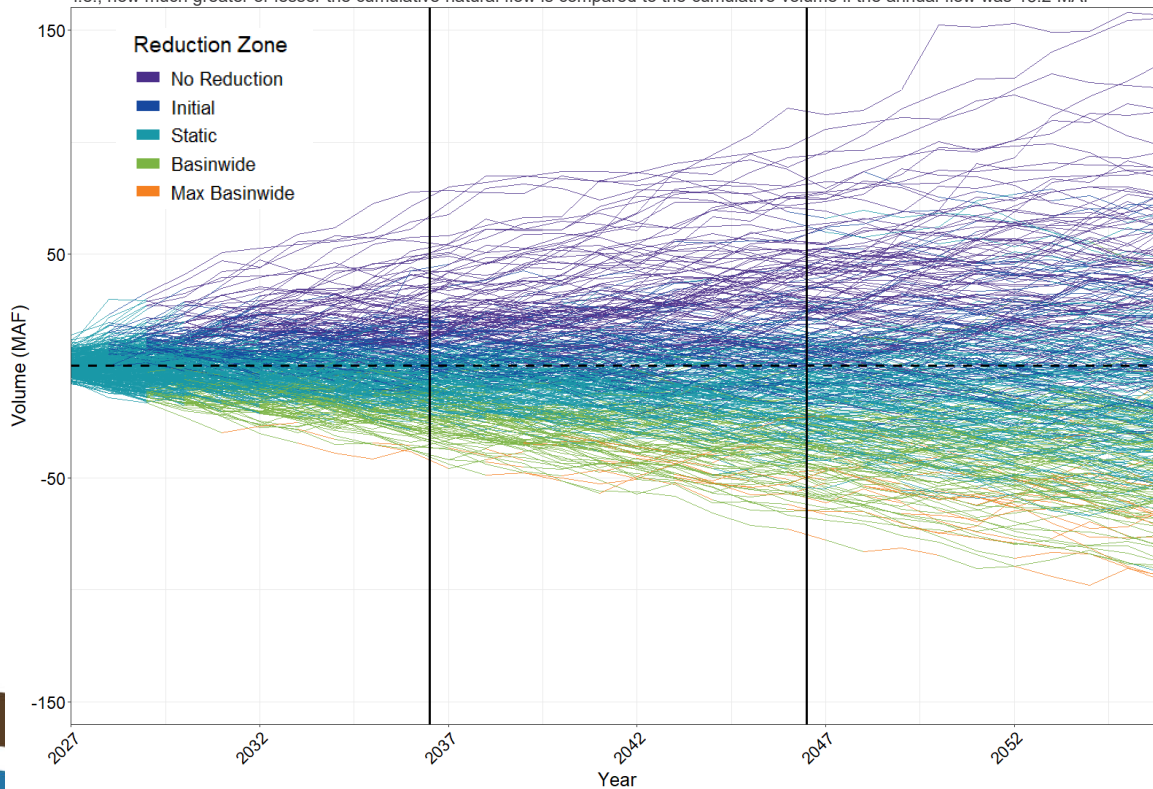
i.e., how much greater or lesser the cumulative natural flow is compared to the cumulative volume if the annual flow was 13.2 MAF



Reductions in Lower Basin Alternative

Difference in Cumulative Natural Flow at Lee Ferry Compared to Stress Test Average, by Reduction Zone

i.e., how much greater or lesser the cumulative natural flow is compared to the cumulative volume if the annual flow was 13.2 MAF



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Staged Approach to Modeling Proposed Alternatives

- Stage 1: Lakes Powell and Mead operations and water delivery reductions (not distributed by user).
- Stage 2: Storage & Delivery Mechanism in Lake Mead and/or Lake Powell.
- Stage 3: Additional operations, including distribution of Lower Basin reductions by user.
- **Stage 4: Feds have agreed to a Stage 4 to review previous stages holistically and redo the analysis.**

Lower Basin Deliveries (Shortage and Surplus)	Coordinated Operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead	Storage and Delivery of Conserved Lower Basin System and Non-system Water	Activities Above Lake Powell
Triggers	Factors Determining Powell Release	Creation, Delivery and Storage	Upper Basin Reductions*
Volumes	Release Volumes	Operational Considerations (e.g. operationally neutral)	Upper Basin Conservation
Distribution		Treatment of Existing Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS)	Releases from Upper Initial CRSP Units



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Preliminary Proposal Performance Key Takeaway

- **On CCS:** The continuation of current agreements may be unable to stabilize the system, even in average but certainly during dry flow conditions. The primary reason is insufficient volume of reductions.
- **On UDS:** Due to having an overall lower-volume release curve, the UDS proposal keeps Powell higher (sometimes much higher) under all flow conditions. Despite the lowest Powell releases of all scenarios modeled, UDS maintains Mead elevations higher than CCS and almost always above 1,000' by imposing large LB reductions. LB reductions begin in wet flow conditions with a median of around 750 KAF.
- **On LDS:** Under dry flow conditions, Powell is slightly lower than CCS- falling below 3,500' in over 50% of years even while imposing Upper Basin policy reductions (a median reduction around 350 KAF). Mead stays above 1,000' in almost 90% of years, even under the driest conditions.
- **On GRIC:** Performance at Powell is nearly identical to LDS, however Upper Basin policy reductions imposed are less with a median reduction around 200 KAF. Performance at Mead differs from LDS under average and wet flow conditions: Mead tends to stay higher under the GRIC proposal because Lower Basin reductions > 1 MAF occur at higher levels of combined storage.
- **On NGO:** Under dry flow conditions, the NGO proposal keeps Powell above 3,500' and Mead above 1,000' in over 90% of years. This performance is achieved by applying the largest reductions – a median of 3.2 maf in the dry flow conditions.



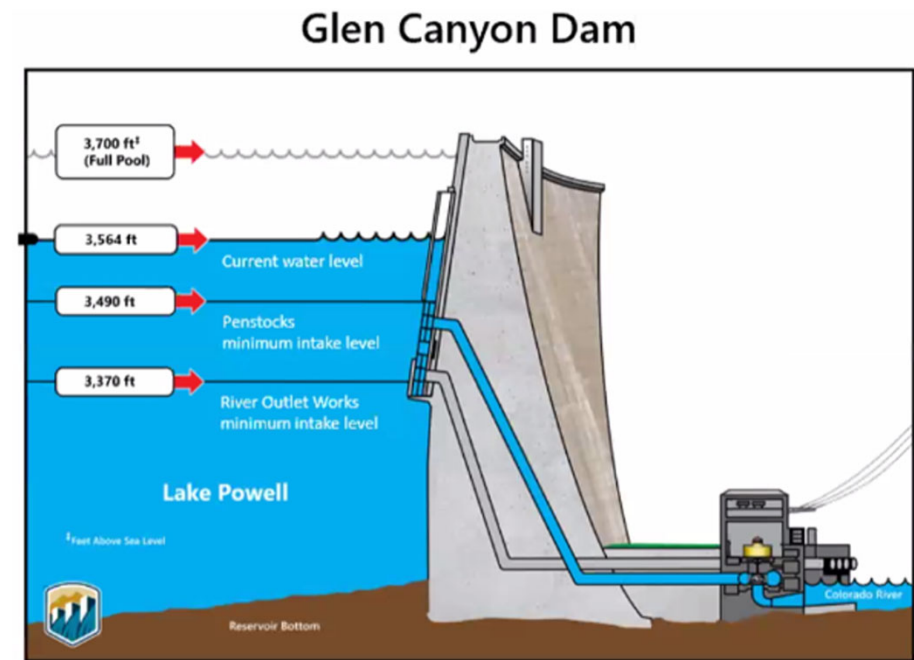
AZ Concerns with Reclamation's Stage 1 Analysis and Key Takeaways

- Draws premature conclusions based on Stage 1 analysis
 - If all alternatives are evaluated holistically under Stage 4, this issue may be resolved
- Evaluation metrics value Lake Powell at the expense of Lower Basin water users
- Upper Basin reductions necessary for compact compliance have not been included in any alternatives
- CRSP reservoirs have been excluded from the alternatives



Glen Canyon Dam Infrastructure Update

- Reclamation is prioritizing protection of existing Glen Canyon Dam infrastructure.
- Reclamation has yet to identify permanent solutions to the Glen Canyon Dam infrastructure issue.
- Arizona will oppose any actions to protect Glen Canyon Dam infrastructure disproportionately at the expense of Lower Basin water users.



Lower Division States' Current Status

- The Lower Division States alternative remains a reasonable and effective Basin-wide approach to managing the system.
- We have reiterated a willingness to refine elements of our proposal.
- Conversations are ongoing regarding future storage accounts.
- Importantly, the LDS alternative was developed as a package, and each element of the LDS alternative must stay together for successful implementation.
- Partnership among the Lower Division States remains strong.

Seven State Discussions

Upper Division States' positions:

- Unwilling to consider sharing in necessary reductions to stabilize the Colorado River, even if natural hydrology worsens
- Insist they should be allowed to continue their historic use and grow without regard to the Compact, thus resulting in greater reductions in the Lower Basin
- Won't consider reductions until LB use is reduced to the same volume as UDS use
- Unwilling to take reductions from their available supply by taking actions to reduce their consumptive use

Arizona's Positions

Arizona believes the impacts of declining hydrology and growth in the UB should not be borne exclusively by the Lower Basin

Arizona does not consent to waiving our Compact rights under existing law under any other alternative, including the Continuing Current Strategies concept constructed by Reclamation.



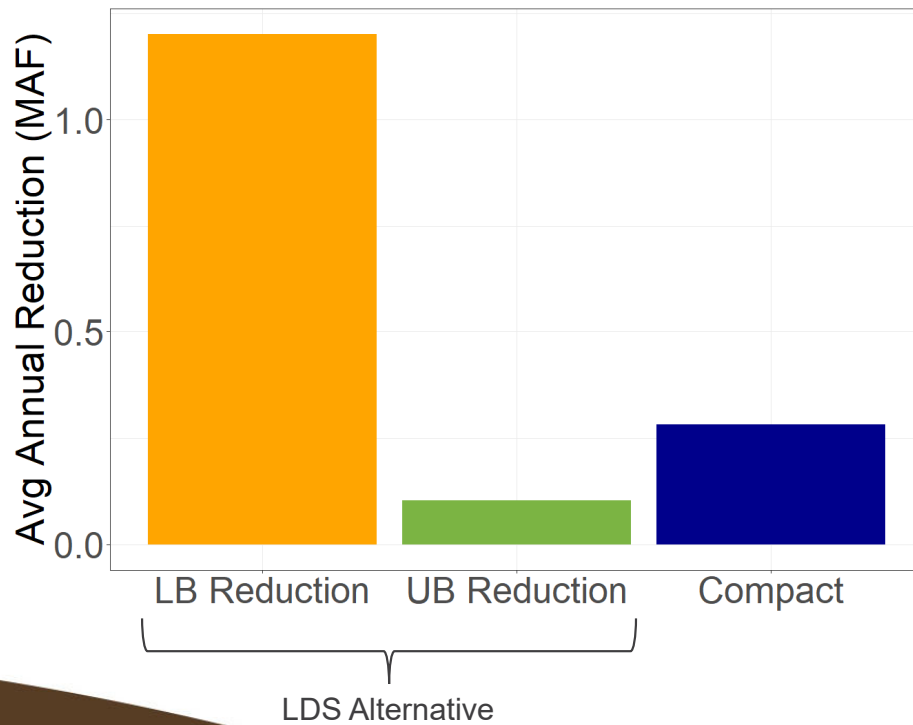
Compact Compliance Analysis



1922 Compact Issues



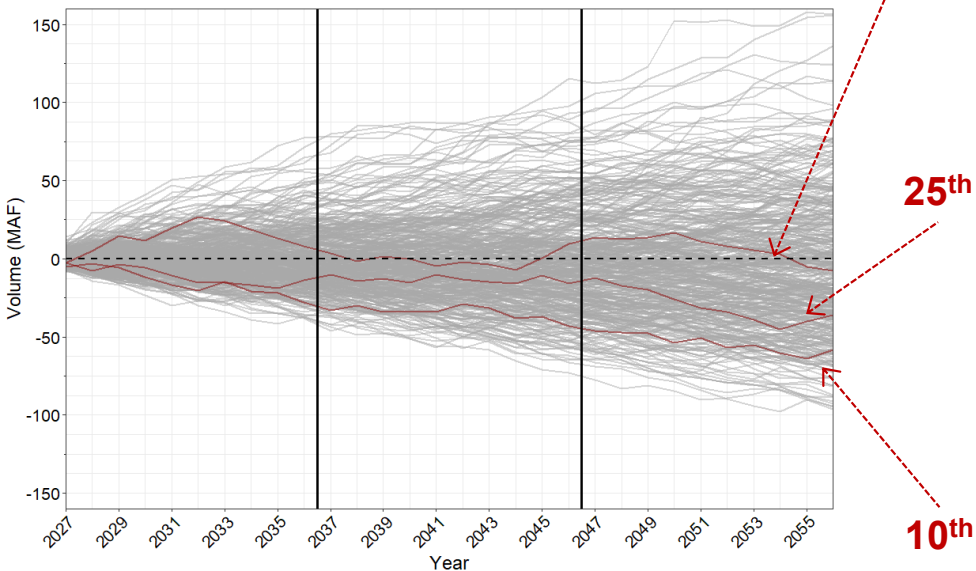
Lower Basin Alternative vs. Compact



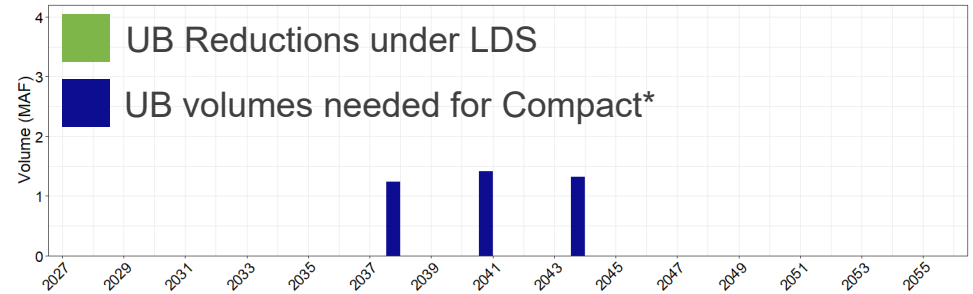
- The Lower Basin takes most of the reductions under the LDS Alternative
- If hydrology is significantly worse than the last 30 years, the Upper Basin would share in reductions greater than 1.5 MAF
- Alternatively, enforcement of the Lee Ferry flow requirement of the Compact would result in much greater Upper Basin reductions
- Upper Basin reductions for Compact compliance could occur even at high total system contents
- Under certain conditions, Reclamation and the Upper Basin maybe out of compliance as early as 2027



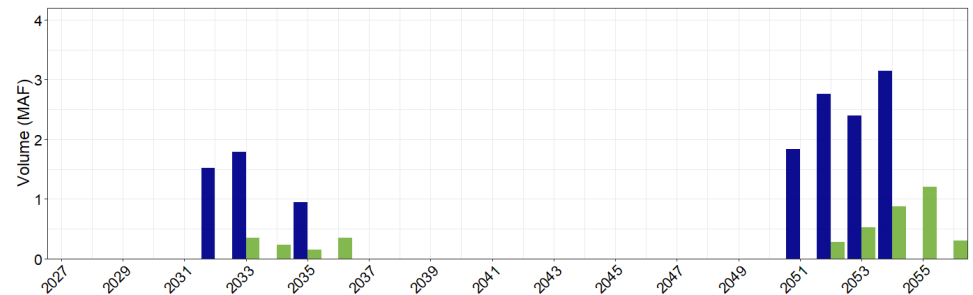
Lower Basin Alternative vs. Compact*



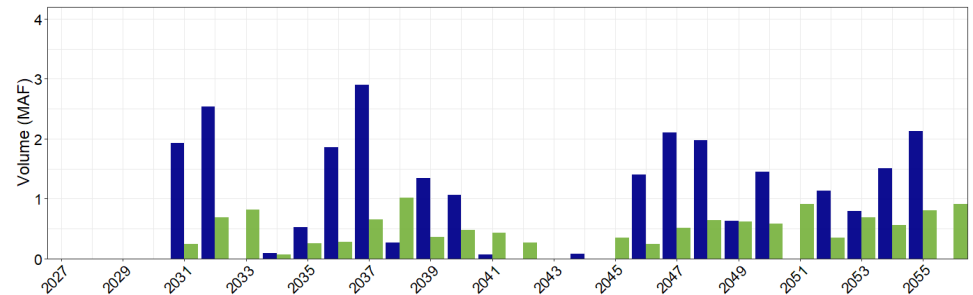
*8.23 MAF annual Powell target release



0 MAF
4 MAF



4 MAF
14 MAF



13 MAF
26 MAF



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Next Steps



Next Steps

- The Lower Division States continue to work with Reclamation to refine modeling assumptions.
- Based on Reclamation's October webinar, an alternatives matrix is expected to be issued in December followed by a Draft EIS.
 - A Record of Decision is required by approx. August 2026 to implement new Guidelines into Calendar Year 2027.
 - Until a clearer picture of what the new Guidelines may contain, it is not possible to project whether new authorities will be necessary.



Discussion/Questions





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For continued information
and updates, visit
azwater.gov/ARC or
cap-az.com/ARC