



**For Immediate Release  
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**Contacts: See below**

## **Arizona, California, Nevada issue statement on release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Near-Term Colorado River Operations**

The governors' representatives of the three Lower Colorado River Basin States – **Arizona Department of Water Resources Director Tom Buschatzke, Colorado River Commissioner for California JB Hamby, and Southern Nevada Water Authority General Manager John Entsminger** – jointly issue the following statement regarding the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's release today of the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Near-Term Colorado River Operations*. The Final SEIS features as the preferred alternative the states' May 2023 Lower Basin Plan to conserve 3 million acre-feet of Colorado River water by 2026, beyond reductions previously agreed to under the Interim Shortage Guidelines and the Drought Contingency Plan.

### **The Lower Basin States statement:**

"The plan for additional near-term water use reductions released today provides the stability we need to fully focus on long-term solutions to challenges ahead on the Colorado River. We are grateful to our federal partners at the Bureau of Reclamation for recognizing that the consensus approach proposed by the Lower Basin States last year for these near-term operations is the best way to protect the Colorado River system through 2026."

"That spirit of cooperation continues to guide us as we work to resolve the even greater challenge ahead – planning the river's long-term sustainability. As we negotiate the next set of guidelines for Colorado River operations after 2026, the success of these water conservation commitments reminds us that only by working together, each making sacrifices, will we see real results."

"In 2023, Arizona, California and Nevada already took a significant step toward fulfilling our conservation commitment through 2026 made under the Lower Basin Plan – together conserving more than 1.1 million acre-feet of water that has been left in Lake Mead, in addition to more than 600,000 acre-feet contributed under previous commitments. Our use of Colorado River water last year was the lowest since 1983. This accomplishment was achieved not through litigation, but through collective recognition that the river's health is the responsibility of everyone who relies on it."

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