

Colorado River Updates

Becky Mitchell

Colorado Commissioner

Upper Colorado River Commission



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Department of Natural Resources

Post-2026 Negotiations



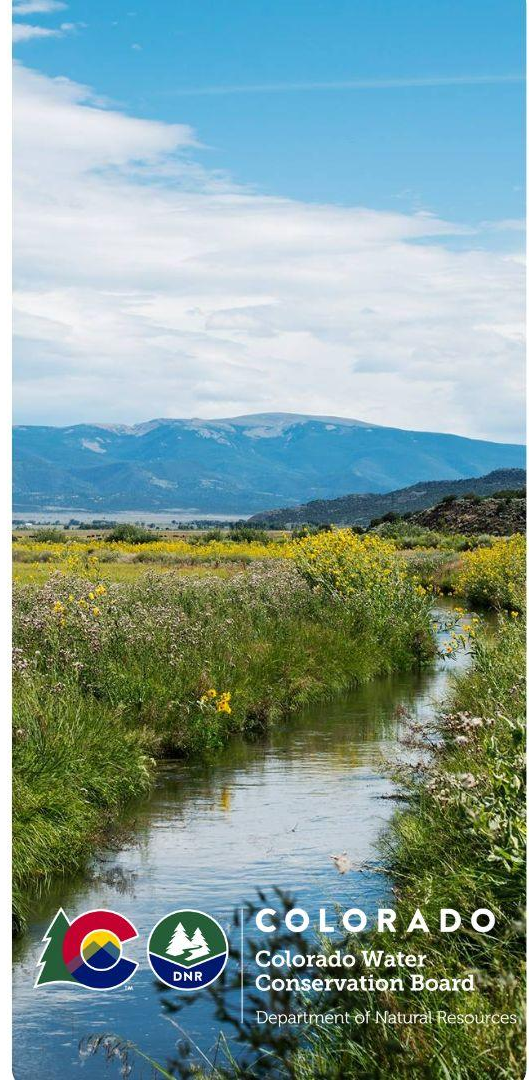
- Focused on operations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead
- Issues are difficult and complex
- Without consensus, BOR will select a preferred alternative



'07 Guidelines

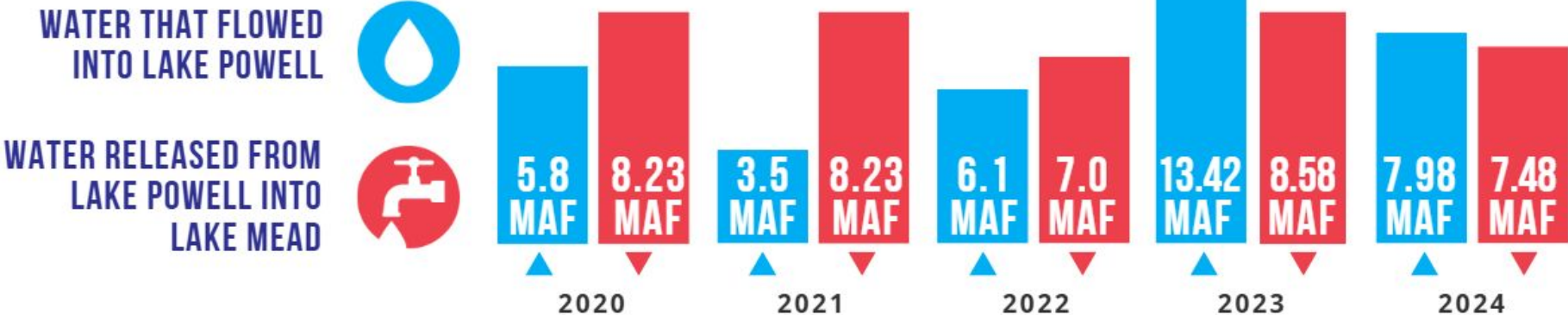
Expiring Operating Guidelines

- The 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines govern operations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead until 2026.
- Post-2026 Guidelines must bring reservoir operations and uses into alignment with available supplies.



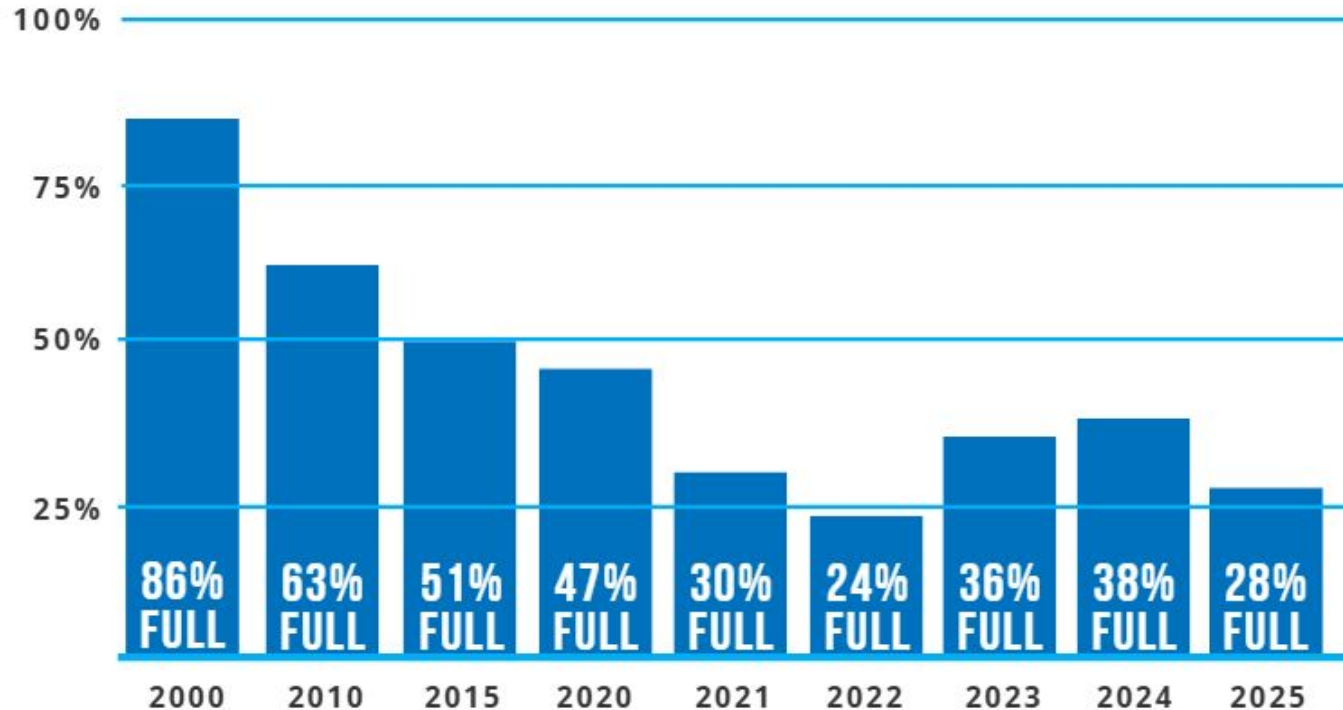
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Powell's Inflows & Releases





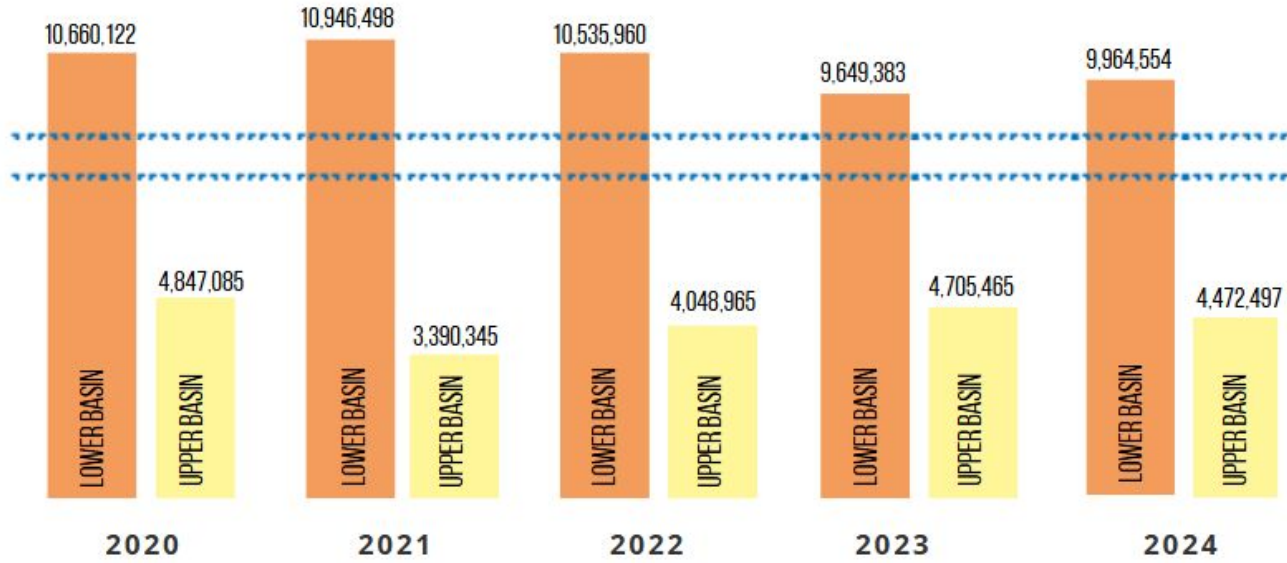
Powell's Decline



8.5 MAF*
for the Lower
Basin Compact
apportionment

7.5 MAF
apportionment

*The Lower
Basin has an
additional 1.0
million acre-feet
available under
the 1922
Compact



WATER USE BY BASIN

Lower Basin use includes Mainstem Colorado River deliveries, evaporation and transit losses, and estimated tributary use.

Lower Basin tributary uses have not been reported since 2005.

Mexico's uses are not included in this graphic.
Mexico's apportionment of 1.5 million acre-feet is first satisfied by surplus



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Upper Basin Framework



- Generous rule curve for Powell releases
- Releases from the Upstream Initial Units
- Robust contribution program
- Strict administration



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March 2, 2026

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: BCOO-1000
P.O. Box 61470
Boulder City, NV 89006

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
crbpost2026@usbr.gov

RE: The State of Colorado's Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Post-2026 Operational Guidelines and Strategies for Lake Powell and Lake Mead, 91 Fed. Reg. 2131 (Jan. 16, 2026)

Dear Acting Commissioner Cameron:

The State of Colorado, acting through the Governor's Representative and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (collectively "Colorado"), submits the following comments in response to the Bureau of Reclamation's ("Reclamation") Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Post-2026 Operational Guidelines and Strategies for Lake Powell and Lake Mead ("DEIS"), 91 Fed. Reg. 2131 (Jan. 16, 2026).

In addition to joining the Comment Letter submitted by the Upper Division States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming through the Upper Colorado River Commission ("UCRC"), Colorado submits the following comments and requests that they be incorporated into the preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement ("FEIS").

Colorado appreciates the opportunity to engage in this process and looks forward to continued coordination with Reclamation and the Secretary of the Interior ("Secretary") in advance of the FEIS being published. Colorado also remains committed to engage with the other Basin States, Colorado River Basin Tribes, water users, and stakeholders.

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XI. Conclusion

As a Colorado River Basin State, Colorado has a unique interest in the water use and allocation of the Colorado River. As a signatory to the interstate compacts that govern the use and allocation of the Colorado River, Colorado has an obligation to protect the interests of its water users who rely on the Colorado River. We are committed to working with Reclamation and the Secretary as this NEPA process moves forward. Moreover, Colorado remains a partner and committed to engage with the other Basin States, Colorado River Basin Tribes, water users, and stakeholders.

Colorado appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments on the DEIS and looks forward to continuing our partnership with you and our partners in the Colorado River Basin as we move forward in protecting and managing the river for the future.

Mitchell

Commissioner

Lauren Ris

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Tribal Nations & Inclusion





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Thank You!



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