Reaching Across the Border to Improve Water Supply for People and Nature

Jennifer Pitt, Colorado River Program Director
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Historical Supply and Use

Water Supply (10-year Running Average)

Water Use (10-year Running Average)

Projected Future Supply and Demand

Projected Water Demand

Projected Water Supply (10-year Running Average)

source: USBR 2012
Lake Mead levels
Elevation in feet above sea level

1,081.56 feet as of June 1

Storage capacity: 1,229 feet

Dead storage: 895 feet

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Elevation at which rationing begins
Colorado Basin River Forecast Center
Colorado River above Lake Powell Group

Percent Median To Date: 52% (3.6 / 6.9)
Percent Seasonal Median: 22% (3.6 / 16.0)

Melt rate -0.0 in/day averaged over last 3 days.


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NOAA/CBRFC, 2018
Not so easy…

2000 - “surplus” for delta
   beyond purpose and need
2000 - campaign for “one percent for the delta”
   but no way to move water across the border
2001 - Mexicali delta summit is binational, federally convened
   9/11
2003 - Defenders v. Norton
   finds Treaty trumps ESA
2003 - UN Security Council vote to support invasion of Iraq
   Mexico does not support
2007 - US rulemaking on CO River shortages
   unilaterally suggests MX takes shortages too
2007 - NGOs bring water managers to the table, US and MX
   announce “holistic” water management discussions
   2008 US & MX lead negotiators die in a tragic plane crash
United States – Mexico Colorado River Agreements

Minute 319 (2012 – 2017)
Minute 323 (2017 – 2026)
Shortage sharing, water banking
Binational water conservation
Restoration in the Colorado River Delta
Minute 323
Environmental Commitments
2018 - 2026

Resources from US, Mexico, and NGOs (1/3 each):

- 210,000 acre-feet
  (may increase to 405,000 af)
- $9M for restoration
- $9M for science and monitoring
Habitat Restoration

2012-2017 - 1336 acres
2018-2026 - 4000 acres?
OUR MISSION
JUST ADD WATER
AND LIFE BEGINS.
Reconnecting the Colorado River and restoring its Delta.
LEARN MORE
Behold
The Mighty Colorado River.

This river has thrived for six million years. It took fifty years to deplete it.

For more than six million years, the Colorado River served as the lifeblood of the American West. In recent times, however, it’s become anything but. Due to intensive water consumption, the river and its surrounding ecosystems have suffered, and the Colorado River runs dry 70 miles before it reaches the sea. But there is hope. As a result of our efforts to date, in May of 2014 the river reached the sea for the first time in decades. Help us continue to breathe life back into the Delta. Learn more at: www.raisetheriver.org
Thank You
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