

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT  
TO THE  
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

**February 9, 2010**

**ADMINISTRATION**

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2010

A copy of the January 13<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes has been included in the Board folder for review and comment. I am respectfully asking for approval and adoption of these meeting minutes by Board members.

Governor Schwarzenegger's Executive Order S-01-10

On January 8<sup>th</sup>, Governor Schwarzenegger issued an executive order that directed all state agencies to cap available workforces through an additional 5% salary savings by July 1, 2010. The Governor has directed that the 5% savings should be achieved through attrition, where possible, and that a plan to achieve the savings be submitted to Cabinet secretaries by February 1<sup>st</sup>. The plans are intended to be implemented beginning on March 1<sup>st</sup>, and that the Department of Finance will monitor compliance with the plans. I have included a copy of the Governor's executive order in the Board folder.

Professional Engineers in California Government vs. Arnold Schwarzenegger, et al

On January 21, 2010, the Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG) filed a lawsuit in California Superior Court in Alameda County against Arnold Schwarzenegger and a number of state agencies employing PECG members alleging that the furloughs for employees that are not compensated from the State's General Fund is arbitrary, capricious, and constitutes an abuse of discretion. The Colorado River Board, through Chairman Fisher, has been named in this lawsuit since none of the Board's funding comes from the State's General Fund. Discussions regarding this matter are occurring with representatives of the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Personnel Administration.

**AGENCY MANAGERS MEETING**

Agency Managers' Meeting

The Agency Managers have not met since their last meeting following the November 12<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. The Agency Managers will be meeting immediately following the February 10<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to discuss issues associated with the proposed solar energy projects along the Colorado River and their use of water from the Lower Colorado Water Supply Project.

## PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS

### Colorado River Water Report

As of February 1, 2010, storage in the major Upper Basin reservoirs decreased by 563,850 acre-feet and storage in the Lower Basin reservoirs increased by 514,100 acre-feet during January 2010. Total System active storage as of February 1<sup>st</sup> was 33.093 million acre-feet (maf), or 55 percent of capacity, which is 0.091 maf more than one year ago (Upper Basin reservoirs increased by 1.039 maf and Lower Basin reservoirs decreased 0.948 maf).

January releases from Hoover, Davis, and Parker Dams averaged 10,310, 7,420 and 3,790 cubic feet per second (cfs), respectively. Planned releases from those three dams for the month of February 2010 are 12,400, 12,200, and 8,000 cfs, respectively. The February releases represent those needed to meet downstream water requirements including those caused by reduced operation of Senator Wash Reservoir.

As of January 21<sup>st</sup>, taking into account both measured and unmeasured return flows, the Lower Division states' consumptive use of Colorado River water for calendar year 2009, as forecasted by Reclamation, totals 7.439 maf and is described as follows: Arizona, 2.827 maf; California, 4.364 maf; and Nevada, 0.248 maf. The Central Arizona Project (CAP) will divert 1.660 maf, of which 0.134 maf are planned to be delivered to the Arizona Water Bank. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) will use about 1.105 maf, which is 199,000 acre-feet more than its 2008 use of mainstream water.

The preliminary end-of-year estimate by the Board staff for 2009 California agricultural consumptive use of Colorado River water under the first three priorities and the sixth priority of the 1931 *California Seven Party Agreement* is 3.290 maf. This estimate is based on the collective use, through December 2009, by the Palo Verde Irrigation District, the Yuma Project-Reservation Division (YPRD), the Imperial Irrigation District, and the Coachella Valley Water District. Figure 1, found at the end of this report, depicts the projected end-of-year agricultural use for the year.

As of February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the water level at the Lake Mead was at 1,100.47 feet above the mean sea level, and the storage was 11,533 maf, 42 percent of capacity, while the water level at Lake Powell was at 3,621.91 feet above the mean sea level and the storage was 13,967 maf, 57 percent of capacity.

### Colorado River Operations

*Mr. Edward Drusina Sworn In As Commissioner of the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission*

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Edward Drusina was sworn in as the Commissioner of the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission. Mr. Drusina was appointed to the post by President Obama on January 15<sup>th</sup>. A registered engineer, Mr. Drusina

has worked for the private sector as well as the City of El Paso, Texas. Included in the Board folder is a copy of the press release announcing Mr. Drusina's appointment and swearing in.

*Board Letter Supporting National Science Foundation Establishment of a Regional Climate Change Modeling Fund*

Based upon action by the Board during its January meeting, on January 21<sup>st</sup> I submitted a letter, on behalf of the Board, to the National Science Foundation requesting that the Foundation establish a competitive regional climate modeling fund to provide grants to university and research institutions for developing regional climate models. In the letter, a recommendation has been made that the Foundation set aside \$25 million to be used for research grants over the next three years. A copy of the Board's letter has been included in the Board folder.

*Proposed Solar Energy Projects in California's Colorado River Desert*

I have included several items of potential interest associated with proposed solar energy projects planned for areas in California's Colorado River Desert. The first item is a recent *Federal Register* notice announcing the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) intent to prepare an environmental impact statement related to the proposed First Solar Farm Project near Desert Center in Riverside County. I have also included a copy of a press release from the BLM announcing an open house to be held in Needles, California associated with the proposed Ivanpah Solar Project in San Bernardino County. The open house, to discuss the project, was scheduled for February 4<sup>th</sup>.

On January 25<sup>th</sup> a field hearing was held in Blythe, California in front of the California Energy Commission to visit and discuss the proposed Rice, Blythe, and Palen Solar Projects. This meeting also served as a scoping meeting for the BLM as part of its National Environmental Policy Act review process. Two members of the Board's staff attended this field hearing and site visit.

Included in the Board folder is a copy of Secretary Salazar's testimony before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee associated with Solar Energy on Public Lands. This testimony was posted on the Department of the Interior's webpage on January 28<sup>th</sup>. According to the Secretary's statement, the BLM has identified about 23 million acres of public lands with solar energy potential. Currently, the BLM is processing approximately 128 applications, involving the generation of approximately 77,000 megawatts on 1.2 million acres of public lands.

Finally, the Board has received a Public Records Act request from the California Unions for Reliable Energy dealing with the Solar Millennium Blythe Solar Power Project in Riverside County. Currently, that request is being reviewed and an appropriate response will be made within the established deadline.

*Department of the Interior's Water Smart Program Workshop – February 23-24, 2010, Las Vegas, Nevada*

A copy of the updated proposed agenda and registration information for the Department of the Interior's Water Smart workshop scheduled for February 23-24, 2010, at Aria in the City Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, has been included in the Board folder. It is my understanding that Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, Ms. Anne Castle, will be attending the workshop. Ms. Lorrie Gray-Lee, the Regional Director of the Lower Colorado Region of the Bureau of Reclamation, has encouraged representatives of the water community to attend this workshop.

Basin States Discussions

*Status of Bi-National Projects and Programs with Mexico*

As discussed at previous Board meeting, the discussions with Mexico to evaluate potential projects and programs that the United States and Mexico could move forward on that may produce bi-national benefits are continuing. At this time, the discussions are focused on potential environmental and conservation "pilot projects" and the modeling of the six scenarios identified by the United States and Mexico. These six scenarios include: the baseline scenario; the United States scenario; the Mexico scenario; the surplus sharing scenario; the Mexico no shortage scenario; and the Mexico basinwide shortage scenario. Meetings were held on January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss the potential pilot projects and the initial modeling results.

During the January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> meetings, Mexico identified three potential environmental pilot projects and two potential conservation pilot projects. Further information regarding these potential pilot projects will be obtained before the next meeting. Representatives from the United States discussed the modeling assumptions for each of the six scenarios and the results from the modeling runs. Reclamation staff indicated that three key assumptions have been modified: 1) the starting condition for the reservoirs was changed to January 1, 2010; 2) the Upper Basin states depletion schedule was updated; and 3) the United States schedules for the creation and delivery of Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) was modified. Reclamation staff then presented the results from the model runs. Because Mexico was not aware of these modeling changes, a comparison of Mexico's and the United States modeling results was not possible. This comparison will occur at the next meeting of the modeling group.

Also, during the January meeting Reclamation staff presented an initial analysis of the potential salinity impacts at the Northerly International Boundary (NIB) resulting from the Mexico's creation of Intentionally Created Mexican Apportionment (ICMA). This analysis indicated that if Mexico creates 100,000 acre-feet of ICMA the increase of salinity at the NIB would be 11 ppm; and if 400,000 acre-feet of ICMA was created by Mexico the increase in salinity at the NIB would be 60 ppm.

Based upon the discussions at the January bi-national meetings, additional meetings have been scheduled in February to discuss the potential pilot projects and the modeling results. The meeting to discuss the pilot projects will be held on February 16<sup>th</sup>; and the modeling meeting will be held on February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

### *Status of the Colorado River Basin Study*

As we discussed at the last few Board meetings, representatives of Reclamation's Upper and Lower Colorado Regions and the Basin states prepared and finalized a proposed Plan of Study and Contributed Funds Act Agreement for the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study (Basin Study). The kick-off meeting for the Basin Study was held on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. During that meeting, three sub-teams were formed to begin development of the draft methodology and metrics that would be utilized during the study. Three sub-teams include the water supply, water demand, and system reliability sub-teams. This initial work by the sub-teams will lay the foundation for the study effort to proceed.

Based upon the completed documents, Reclamation has moved forward with the issuance of a request-for-proposal process for obtaining contracting support to prepare the Basin Study technical reports. It is anticipated that several technical consulting firms will submit proposals and bids for the project. A sub-team has been formed to review the proposals that are received from the consultants. A copy of the Hydroworld News regarding Reclamation's plans to recruit consultants has been included in the handout materials.

In a related matter, included in the handout material for the Board meeting is a statement from Ms. Patricia Mulroy of the Southern Nevada Water Authority. This statement has been submitted to the Water and Power Subcommittee and was to be presented during an Oversight Hearing to be held on February 9, 2010, regarding the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Water Conservation Initiative. However, due to the weather this oversight hearing was postponed. In her statement Ms. Mulroy addressed the current and potential water supply and demand imbalances within the Colorado River Basin and the impact that climate change could have on these imbalances. She strongly supported Reclamation's ongoing Water Conservation Initiative and the cooperative Reclamation/Colorado River Basin States' Basin Study that was initiated on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. She did express some concern regarding being able to get the best results because of the adequacy of funding for a study of this scope and magnitude and urged Congress to consider the potential to provide additional funding to enable further cost sharing to fully achieve the study's goals.

### Colorado River Environmental Programs

#### *Status of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program*

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) issued a news release that stated that the natural and cultural resources along the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park appeared to have benefitted from the 2008 High-Flow experiment at Glen Canyon Dam. According to the USGS, the 2008 experiment resulted in an increase in area and volume of sandbars and beaches along the river corridor. Additionally, it appears that the experiment resulted in better survival and growth rates for trout in the Lees Ferry reach of the river, and in a reduction in the amount of non-native riparian vegetation seedling germination along the riverine corridor. I have included a copy of the USGS news release in the Board folder.

The Glen Canyon Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) met in Phoenix, Arizona on February 3-4, 2010. The primary purpose of the meeting was to present the first draft of the biennial budget and work plan for Fiscal Years 2010/2011. Additionally, the AMWG meeting served as a scoping meeting associated with the Department of the Interior's initiation of a process to develop protocols for the implementation of future experimental high-flow releases from Glen Canyon Dam. Reclamation plans to prepare an EA that will evaluate and address any potential environmental impacts related to the protocols for high-flow releases. Reclamation anticipates issuing a final EA in October 2010.

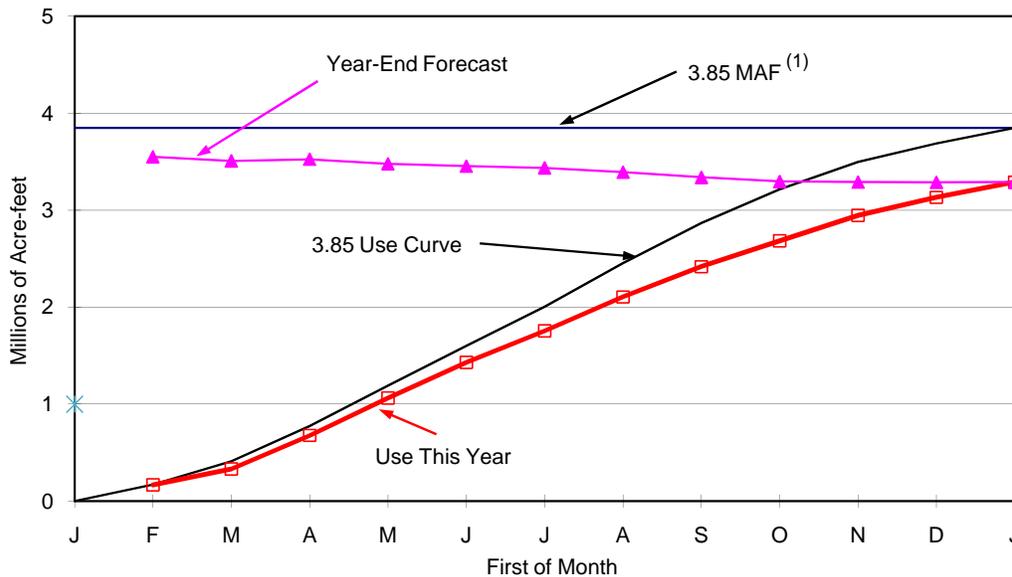
*Status of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program*

As we have discussed at several Board meetings over the past couple of years, Congress has been working on legislation that would address the use of mainstream Colorado River water supplies pursuant to implementation of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP). This legislation was finalized and signed into law on March 30, 2009 (Public Law 111-11). Accordingly, Reclamation, in cooperation with the non-federal LCR MSCP participants, developed a Water Accounting Agreement that will guide how mainstream water is used pursuant to LCR MSCP implementation. The final agreement is being circulated for signature by the Lower Division States and Reclamation. I have included a copy of Reclamation's cover letter, dated January 12<sup>th</sup>, and the final agreement in the Board folder. It is worth noting that the Board's Chairman signed the final agreement on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

/S/

Gerald R. Zimmerman  
Executive Director

**FIGURE 1**  
**FEBRUARY 1, 2010 FORECAST OF 2009 YEAR-END COLORADO RIVER WATER USE**  
**BY THE CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL AGENCIES**



Forecast of Colorado River Water Use by the California Agricultural Agencies (Millions of Acre-feet)			
Month	Use as of First of Month	Forecast of Year End Use	Forecast of Unused Water (1)
Jan	0.000	-----	-----
Feb	0.168	3.551	0.018
Mar	0.332	3.509	0.061
Apr	0.678	3.526	0.044
May	1.064	3.478	0.091
Jun	1.430	3.454	0.116
Jul	1.755	3.437	0.133
Aug	2.106	3.392	0.178
Sep	2.418	3.340	0.230
Oct	2.685	3.297	0.273
Nov	2.948	3.292	0.278
Dec	3.133	3.289	0.281
Jan	3.290	3.290	0.280

(1) The forecast of unused water is based on the availability of 3.569 MAF under the first three priorities of the water delivery contracts. This accounts for the 85,000 af of conserved water available to MWD under the 1988 IID-MWD Conservation agreement plus 8,000 per CVWD-IID transfer (11/25/09) and the 1989 IID-MWD-CVWD-PVID Agreement as amended; 60,000 af of conserved water available to SDCWA under the IID-SDCWA Transfer agreement as amended being diverted by MWD; 30,259 af of conserved water available to SDCWA and MWD as a result of the Coachella Canal Lining Project; 65,577 af of water available to SDCWA and MWD as a result of the All-American Canal Lining Project; 14,500 af of water IID and CVWD are forbearing to permit the Secretary of the Interior to satisfy a portion of Indian and miscellaneous present perfected rights use; 3,751 af of CVWD paybacks; and 15,000 af of Intentionally Created Surplus by IID. As USBR is charging disputed uses by Yuma island pumpers to Priority 2, the amount of unused water has been reduced by those uses -6,136 af. The CRB does not concur with USBR's viewpoint on this matter.