RESOLUTION TO PROTECT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COLORADO RIVER

WHEREAS, for more than twenty years, the Colorado River basin has suffered an extended drought and a warmer and drier climate, contributing to substantially reduced flows into the system; and

WHEREAS, in response to the emerging climate reality, the United States Secretary of the Interior adopted, and with the support and agreement of the Colorado River Basin Upper Division States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming, and the Lower Division States of Arizona, California, and Nevada, implemented the 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and the Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, certain parties funded a Pilot System Conservation Program to reduce diversions from the Colorado River System through the voluntary, compensated, and temporary reduction in water use; and

WHEREAS, also in 2014, certain parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to which additional “protection volumes” were generated through conservation and other means and left in Lake Mead between 2014 and 2017 to help maintain Lake Mead elevation; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, pursuant to federal legislation, the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan Authorization Act, Pub. L. No. 116-14 (2019), the Secretary and certain parties entered and implemented a number of agreements known as the Drought Contingency Plan Agreements prescribing additional measures to protect the sustainability of the Colorado River system; and

WHEREAS, through Minute Nos. 318 (2010), 319 (2012), and 323 (2017) to the "United States-Mexico Treaty on Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande," signed February 3, 1944 ("1944 Water Treaty"), and in furtherance of the 1944 Water Treaty, the United States and Mexico incentivized the conservation of water in Mexico for subsequent delivery thereby benefitting storage in the United States; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the collective impact of the programs set forth above (approximately 4.0 million acre-feet), Lake Mead’s elevation at the end of 2020 was approximately 50 feet higher than it would have been in their absence; and

WHEREAS, there have been numerous examples of successful collaboration among Colorado River water users, including the signatories as well as other federal and state agencies, water users, tribes, and non-governmental organizations, to advance actions and projects throughout the Basin that have worked to reduce water use and/or improve resiliency to a warmer and drier climate; and

WHEREAS, despite the successes of implementing programs designed to meet the challenge brought about by a warmer, drier climate discussed above, Lake Powell and Lake Mead have seen significant reductions in system storage and reservoir elevations; and

WHEREAS, Reclamation’s August 2021 24-Monthly Study projected Lake Mead’s elevation would be below 1,075 feet on January 1, 2022, and consistent with the provisions of the 2007 Interim Guidelines, a shortage declaration limiting deliveries of Colorado River water to Arizona and Nevada will be in effect in Calendar Year 2022; and

Resolution to Protect the Sustainability of the Colorado River
WHEREAS, the August, September and October 2021 24-Month Study using the minimum probable inflow projected that reservoirs would reach critically low elevations in the ensuing two years; and

WHEREAS, the signatories below recognize the need to take collective and separate actions in the immediate future, including but not limited to additional reductions in water use and actions to improve the resiliency of the basin to a warmer and drier climate; and

NOW, THEREFORE the signatories below resolve to collaborate and coordinate to take action collectively and separately to seek effective consensus-based solutions, including both short-term and long-term reductions in Colorado River water use in accordance with the Law of the River and actions that improve the resiliency of the basin to a warmer and drier climate in order to protect the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River system.
STATE OF ARIZONA
ACTING THROUGH THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

By: [Signature]
Thomas Buschatzke, Director

Date: December 15, 2021
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
ACTING THROUGH THE COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF
CALIFORNIA

By: ________________________________
    Peter Nelson, Commissioner

Date: December 15, 2021

Resolution to Protect the Sustainability of the
Colorado River
SOUTHERN NEVADA WATER AUTHORITY

By: John J. Eutsminger, General Manager

Date: December 15, 2021
BONNEVILLE ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION and
BUSINESS FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP

By: Todd Reeve
Chief Executive Officer and Director

Date: December 15, 2021

Resolution to Protect the Sustainability of the Colorado River
ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND, INC.

By:  [Signature]
Kevin Moran, Senior Director
Colorado River Program

Date: December 15, 2021

Resolution to Protect the Sustainability of the Colorado River