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PRESS STATEMENT

Colorado River protection

The Arizona Department of Water Resources and Central Arizona Project announce a consensus proposal developed by Arizona, California, and Nevada to conserve historic volumes of Colorado River water in Lake Mead.

This proposal is expected to have an immediate impact on the stability of the Colorado River system, a source of water for 40 million people, including some of the most productive farmland in North America.

"This proposal does more than just 'protect' elevations in the system's major reservoirs, Lake Powell and Lake Mead," said Arizona Department of Water Resources Director Tom Buschatzke. "It builds critical elevation in both reservoirs."

The proposal is built around the collaborative actions by water users in the lower basin through enforceable commitments to conserve water that will total three million acre-feet in Lake Mead over the next three years. This winter's good hydrology in the west has provided the flexibility for water users to pledge their water to this program.

We commend our Arizona partners including tribes, cities, agriculture and industry who have committed water as part of this effort.

We also appreciate our river partners, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior for working together on these agreements.

"This proposal protects the system in the short term so we can dedicate our energy and resources to a longer-term solution," says Central Arizona Project General Manager Brenda Burman. "New guidelines for operating the river system will be due by the end of 2026. There's a lot to do and it's time to focus."

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