



May 21, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

For months, Basin state water officials have been in discussions with representatives from the United States Department of the Interior and Bureau of Reclamation to develop a path forward for stabilizing the Colorado River system. We are pleased to write in support of the proposal submitted by the Lower Basin States to bolster the Colorado River system with three million acre-feet of conserved water through 2026.

The product of this collaboration is measurable, verifiable, and enforceable water conservation volumes that provide immediate and substantial support for the Colorado River. The proposal's emphasis on early and large contributions reduces the risk of Lake Mead and Lake Powell declining to critically low elevations and is accomplished through voluntary agreements with a diverse range of Arizona, California, and Nevada water users that include Tribes, cities, and agriculture.


We have been informed that under almost all modeling conditions, the Lower Basin States consensus proposal would result in greater protections for Lake Mead and Lake Powell than either of the alternatives analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS). The consensus proposal would increase storage in Lake Mead and protect higher elevations than were proposed in the DSEIS.

Implementation of this proposal will also enable the Basin States, in collaboration with Reclamation, to pivot to discussions on post-2026 operations that will address the impacts of climate change on system water supply availability and the existing overallocation of water. We urge you to quickly suspend the DSEIS and commence with the analysis of the Lower Basin States consensus proposal.

We are pleased and encouraged by this successful collaboration. We thank the Arizona, California, and Nevada representatives and members of the U.S. Department of the Interior and Bureau of Reclamation teams involved with the Basin discussions, as well as the contributing water users. While much work

remains, we are hopeful the momentum from this Lower Basin States proposal will extend into the upcoming conversations regarding the long-term operations of the system.

Sincerely,



Katie Hobbs
Governor
State of Arizona



Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California



Joe Lombardo
Governor
State of Nevada

CC:

Tommy Beaudreau
Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior

Camille Calimlim Touton
Commissioner, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation