

DOI/BOR Statement - American Rivers Report
April 16, 2013

With today's release of the American Rivers' 2013 Most Endangered Rivers list, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science Anne Castle made the following statement:

“The Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation are among the many individuals and organizations that care deeply about the future of the Colorado River. The river is the essential foundation to the health and prosperity of the American Southwest and provides multiple and diverse benefits including water supplies for agriculture and people, outdoor recreation, clean energy generation, and unparalleled ecosystems. We commend American Rivers for bringing further visibility to the problems facing this critical resource and for acknowledging the successes of the Department's WaterSMART and Title XVI programs in mitigating some of these problems. The Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study is our most recent collaborative effort with the seven Colorado River Basin states and a broad spectrum of interested stakeholders to address the challenges to the river. The study is a critical first step in the basin to establish a common technical foundation from which important discussions can begin regarding possible strategies to reduce future supply and demand imbalances. The recent supplement to the treaty between the United States and Mexico on the Colorado River, Minute 319, also provides for unprecedented collaboration across the border and will result in water coursing to the Gulf of California for the first time in decades. We will continue to work with all stakeholders to move forward and build on the foundations laid by laid by these ground breaking efforts.”
([additional info below](#))

Significant Colorado River Management and Related Accomplishments

- [WaterSMART](#)
 - WaterSMART grants and cost-share programs have resulted in 500,000 acre-feet of water conserved in the first three years of the program (enough water for 1 million households).
- [Title XVI](#)
 - Title XVI projects have resulted in over 295,000 acre-feet of recycled water that was delivered in 2012, and are generating infrastructure projects for reusing and recycling water throughout the West.
- Environmental Impact Statements
 - Glen Canyon Dam – 1995
 - Colorado River Interim Surplus Criteria - 2000
 - Flaming Gorge – 2005
 - Navajo – 2006
 - Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages & Coordinated Operations - 2007
 - Aspinall Unit – 2012
 - Glen Canyon Dam LTEMP – underway
- Environmental Assessments
 - High-Flow Experiment Protocol – 2012
 - Non-native Fish Control -2012
- Adaptive Management Program – 1996
- High-flow Experimental Releases at Glen Canyon Dam: 1996, 2004, 2008, 2012
- Yuma Desalting Plant test operations - 2011
- Minute 318 to 1944 Mexican Water Treaty – signed in 2010 (covering 2010 – 2012)
- [Minute 319](#) to 1944 Mexican Water Treaty – signed in 2012 (covering 2012 – 2017)
- [Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study](#) – 2012
- Endangered Species Recovery Programs
 - [Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program](#)
 - [Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program](#)
 - [San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program](#)

Additional Information

- [Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study](#)
 - Provides foundation to begin discussion with stakeholders in earnest what actions (near-term, mid-term, and long-term) to ensure sustainability of the system
 - Path forward is a process to further the “no regrets” solutions identified in the study including urban/agricultural conservation, reuse, and water transfers.
 - Funding cuts resulting from sequestration will reduce what we can be done in to encourage creation of the necessary infrastructure for more water conservation.
- Colorado River Management Complexity
 - The allocation, appropriation, development, exportation and management of the Colorado River among the seven Colorado River Basin states and between the United States and Mexico is governed by a body of legal agreements comprising the “Law of the River.”
 - In November 2012, the United States and Mexico signed Minute 319 to the 1944 Mexican Water Treaty, an historic binational agreement. [[more](#)]