

# STATE OF COLORADO

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## Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor

FROM: Ted Kowalski, Chief Interstate & Federal Section

Mike King  
DNR Executive Director

DATE: January 13, 2011

Jennifer L. Gimbel  
CWCB Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 29, January 24-26, 2011 Board Meeting**  
Interstate & Federal Section – Colorado River Basin Study Update

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### Background

At the September, 2010 Board meeting, the Board received an update on the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (“Bureau”) and Colorado River Basin states’ basin study (“Study”) that was selected for funding under the Bureau’s “Basin Study Program.” This Study will include: an assessment of current and future water supplies; an assessment of current and future water demands; a development of reliability metrics for evaluating the system performance of the Colorado River; and the development and evaluation of options and strategies to resolve supply-demand water imbalances and mitigate risks associated with such imbalances. This intent of this Study has been described as trying to get at two fundamental questions: 1) what is the future reliability of the Colorado River system to meet the needs of Basin Resources; and 2) what are the options and strategies to mitigate future risks to these resources?

The Bureau and the basin States have made significant progress in developing a draft report that addresses: current and future water supplies, current and future water demands, and comparing these to reliability metrics to assess system reliability. In 2011, the Study will roll out a draft report for review, comment, and a peer review. In addition, the Study will begin evaluating different options and strategies that may help reduce risks to future system reliability.

### Staff Recommendation

The Staff will provide a presentation on the Study and seek the Board’s input on the current assumptions. Staff will also present on the next phase of the Study: related to the options and strategies to reduce risks to future system reliability.