



December 17, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL – COPIES TO FOLLOW VIA U. S. MAIL

The Honorable David L. Bernhardt, Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Brenda Burman, Commissioner  
United States Bureau of Reclamation  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt and Commissioner Burman:

On April 23, 2007, representatives of the seven Colorado River Basin States entered the Agreement Concerning Colorado River Management and Operations, commonly referred to as the “Seven States’ Agreement,” to memorialize the States’ consensus recommendation to the Secretary regarding Colorado River management and operations during an interim period. The Seven States’ Agreement also established a process for collaboration and cooperation among the Basin States. The recommendation to the Secretary, as memorialized in the Seven States’ Agreement, was substantially incorporated into the 2007 *Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and the Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead* (Guidelines).

As agreed in Section 7 of the Seven States’ Agreement, the Basin States are initiating preliminary conversations with one another to determine future recommendations to the Secretary regarding operations for Lakes Powell and Mead beyond 2026. We recognize that our prospects of success depend on working with those invested in the outcomes of effective river management, including water users, tribes, NGOs, and Mexico. We intend to expand engagement related to our discussions as they progress.

While the full scope and framework for the Basin States’ discussions are not yet developed, we believe that building a collective understanding of how Colorado River system modeling results are impacted by changes to key elements in the Guidelines and the Upper and Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plans will contribute greatly to our effort, and to that end are establishing a technical work group to evaluate modeling considerations. We hope that the United States

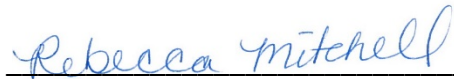
Bureau of Reclamation will be willing and able to provide technical support to the Basin States' efforts as they move forward.

As you know, the Colorado River provides a vital and irreplaceable resource to communities across the seven Basin States and the Republic of Mexico. Collaboration and cooperation have proven to be a very successful approach not only in negotiating the Guidelines, but also for actions subsequent to the Guidelines intended to help stabilize the system until 2026. Improved collaboration and cooperation will be critical to charting the course of river management post-2026. Today, climate change, on-going drought, and warming temperatures put tremendous pressure on our limited hydrologic resources. We look forward to continuing our unique partnership with you, as well as other Colorado River stakeholders, as we move forward in managing this critical resource.

Sincerely,



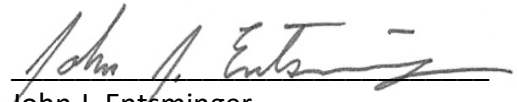
Thomas Buschatzke  
Governor's Representative  
State of Arizona



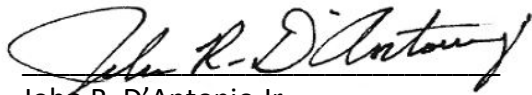
Rebecca Mitchell  
Governor's Representative  
State of Colorado



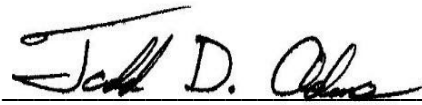
Peter Nelson  
Governor's Representative  
State of California



John J. Entsminger  
Governor's Representative  
State of Nevada



John R. D'Antonio Jr.  
Governor's Representative  
State of New Mexico



Todd D. Adams  
Governor's Representative  
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