

ARIZONA WATER SYMPOSIUM 2015: BUILDING PROACTIVE SOLUTIONS



Professionals Dedicated To Arizona's Water



Monday July 27th, 2015

Flagstaff, Arizona

OVERVIEW

- **Colorado River and Western Drought Challenges**
- **Increasing Water Storage Projects and Solutions**
 - **Bureau of Reclamation Transparency Act**
 - **Bill Williams Water Rights Settlement Act**
 - **Blocking Federal Water Grabs**
 - **Tamarisk Problem**
 - **Active Forest Management**



COLORADO RIVER WATER SUPPLY

Status of Possible Colorado River shortage:

- Risk for a shortage for 2016 dropped significantly
- Result of May rainstorms and record setting precipitation

Projected forecast for Lake Mead water elevation in 2016:

- over 6 feet above the shortage trigger of 1,075 feet

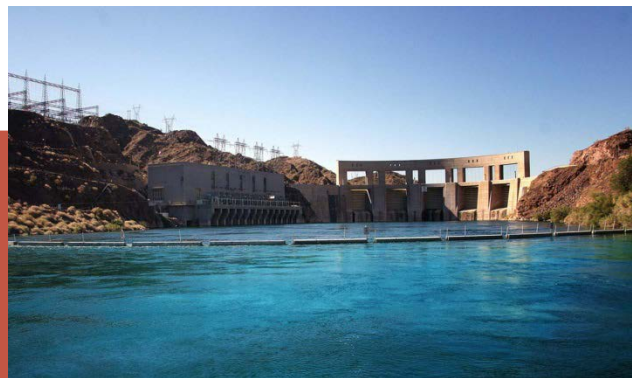


**Bureau of Reclamation will make a formal
declaration of water supply conditions
for next year in August**

COLORADO RIVER WATER SUPPLY

What a shortage would mean to the Central Arizona Project & Arizona?

- **Still a significant possibility in 2017 and in future years despite improved numbers**
- **CAP and Arizona are hit the hardest by any reductions**
- **CAP could see up to a 320,000 Acre-Feet reduction and other Arizona water users could lose an additional 32,000 Acre-feet**
- **The shortage reductions triggered by the water elevation at Lake Mead are allocated into 3 tiers**

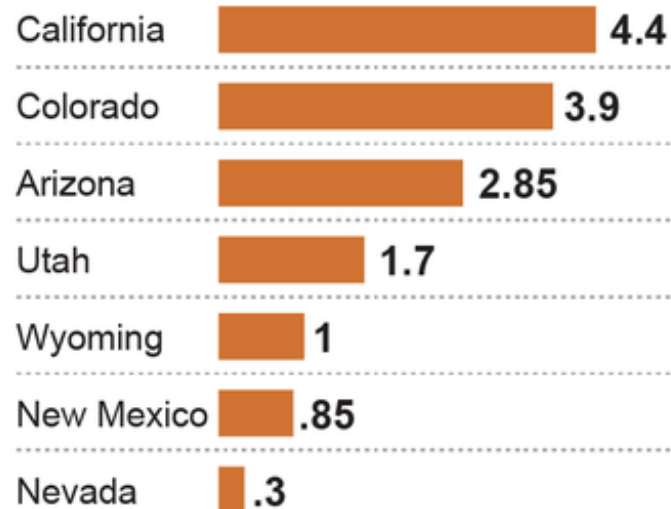


The Colorado River Basin



Sources: USGS, Southern Nevada Water Authority

How the water is apportioned,
in millions of acre-feet per year



Lou Spirito / @latimesgraphics

COLORADO RIVER & ARIZONA

- **Approximately 40 million people in 7 different states rely on the Colorado River**
- **Current demand in the state of Arizona requires use of about 7 million Acre-feet of water/year**
- **Projected population increases, drought and other factors will prevent the Colorado from meeting future demands if we don't have a strategic vision**



COLORADO RIVER & ARIZONA

- **Arizona in a better position than most as it prepared for the drought and has an excellent foundation**
- **The Groundwater Management Act of 1980**
 - **Reclaimed groundwater**
 - **Protected aquifers**
 - **Incentivized conservation**
- **Later amended to allow for the storage of underground water which has benefitted Arizona by adding 9 million Acre-feet of water to our aquifers**



**This was a tough fight but
passage of this law in 1980 has
yielded significant benefits**

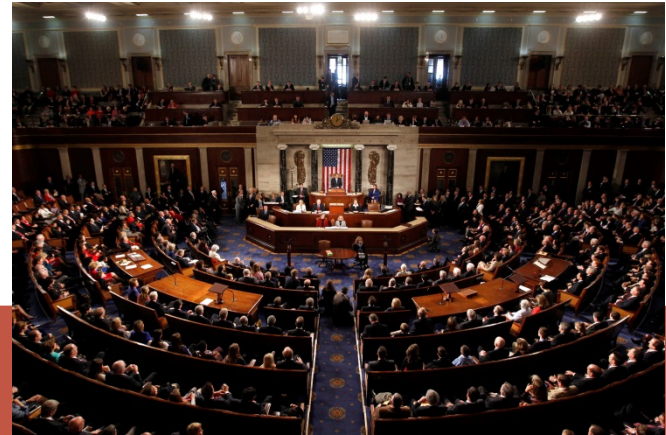
HISTORIC DROUGHT CONDITIONS

- **Western states and the Colorado River watershed have experienced 16 straight years of drought conditions**
- **This has exacerbated water challenges as well as threatened the livelihoods of farmers, tribes and local communities**



INCREASING WATER STORAGE & WESTERN DROUGHT SOLUTIONS

- **May 1, 2015: House passes three Gosar amendments**
- **Prevents removal of any federally-owned or operated dams**
- **Increases Corps of Engineers Construction and Investigations budgets**
- **Reduces the backlog of Army Corps of Engineers' projects**



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION TRANSPARENCY ACT

- In 2008 BOR testified that the agency's maintenance backlog was \$3.2 billion
- BOR failed to provide adequate information and details on this backlog to Congress



My bill requires BOR to take inventory of assets and prioritize major repairs necessary at the agency's facilities

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION TRANSPARENCY ACT

- **Allows for meaningful steps to be taken to address the maintenance backlog**
- **Will ensure an abundant supply of clean water and power for future generations**



23 Bipartisan cosponsors

**Hearings have been held
in the House and Senate**

THE BILL WILLIAMS WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENT ACT

- **Facilitates settlement of claims within the Bill Williams River Watershed**
- **Sustains 4,000 good-paying jobs**
- **Overall net water use reduction in the basin of nearly 30,000 acre-feet/year**



**Good for private property owners,
Good for local economies**

LOWER SANTA CRUZ RIVER WATERSHED PROJECT

- **Army Corps of Engineers authorized work plans:**
 - **\$200,000 for the Lower Santa Cruz River Watershed Project in Pinal County in fiscal year 2014**
 - **\$700,000 for the Lower Santa Cruz River Watershed Project in Pinal County in fiscal year 2016**
 - **\$1.6 million for the Rio de Flag flood control project in Flagstaff in fiscal year 2014**



PROPOSED EPA WATER RULE

(WATERS OF THE U.S.)



EPA overreach: Expands the Clean Water Act and seizes control of our water resources

- **Unilateral regulation that directly contradicts prior Supreme Court decisions**
- **Will harm agriculture, small businesses, property owners, municipalities and water users throughout the country.**

Arizonans can't afford more economic hurdles and thievery of precious water resources

DOING EVERYTHING I CAN TO FIGHT WOTUS



- 5.1.14 Letter to EPA, withdraw the rule
- 6.2.14 Field hearing in Phoenix, 9 witnesses
- 1.28.15, introduced the Waters of the United States Regulatory Overreach Protection Act
- 5.12.15 House passes legislation blocking rule
- 7.7.15 Gosar WOTUS rider in two appropriations bills
I also defeated an amendment to strip it

**Only Congress has the
authority to change the CWA...
NOT bureaucrats in DC**



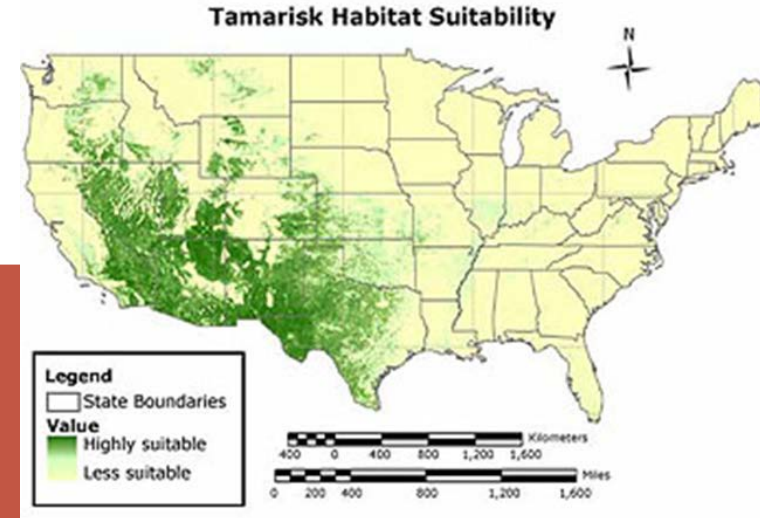
U.S. FOREST SERVICE WITHDRAWS OVERREACHING GROUNDWATER DIRECTIVE

- **Would have allowed Forest Service's control over groundwater resources traditionally managed by states and private ownership**
- **Forest Service permanently withdraw the Proposed Directive in April as a result of Congressional pressure**
- **Water grabs threaten successful relationships and private water rights**



TAMARISK PROBLEM

- **An invasive and non-native plant**
- **Causes major economic losses in agriculture and forestry as well as negatively impacts ecological integrity**
- **Located primarily throughout Southwest**



WATER USAGE

Up to 200 gallons per day, per plant



EXPLORING PROACTIVE SOLUTIONS

Held Multiple Invasive Species Roundtables to heighten awareness and discuss best practices for combating the tamarisk problem

- **The City of Yuma has shown real promise and plans to remove 1,400 acres of water-guzzling tamarisks**
- **More than 400 acres have been completed to date**




Invasive Species Roundtable

Hosted By Congressman Paul Gosar

Thursday September 25
5:30-6:30 PM

Aquatic Center, 100 Park Ave.
Lake Havasu City, AZ

visit GOSAR.house.gov or call 928-445-1683
for more information

 @RepGosar

ACTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

**Good for the Environment, Leads to Healthier Forests,
Good for Watersheds**

- **Active forest management reduces greenhouse gas emissions and increase water yields**
- **Crown fires cause significant damage to watersheds reducing the rate at which the ground can absorb water absorption rates making soil “hydrophobic”**



**One catastrophic wildfire can emit more
carbon emissions than total vehicle
emissions in an entire state over the course
of a year**



FOUR FOREST RESTORATION INITIATIVE

4FRI RESTORATION INITIATIVE

- **We've had some setbacks...**
- **10-year contract proposed to clear 30,000 acres/year**
- **To date, less than 4,000 acres have been cleared**



4FRI RESTORATION INITIATIVE

**4FRI will yield critical benefits to watersheds and for Arizona's water supply...
If we ever get going...**

- **If the goals of the 10 year contract are met:
water yield is expected to increase 8,700-26,500
acre-feet/year**
- **As a result of these treatments, water yield is
expected to increase 7%-21% overall**



**This increase will
predominantly benefit the
Verde Watershed**



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www.GOSAR.house.gov



QUESTIONS

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