



December 11, 2023

Reclamation 2007 Interim Guidelines SEIS Project Manager
Upper Colorado Basin Region
125 South State Street, Suite 8100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138

Re: Comments on the Revised Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement ("Revised Draft SEIS") for Near-term Operations to Modify the 2007 Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead ("2007 Interim Guidelines")

Dear Commissioner Touton,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Revised Draft EIS to modify the 2007 Interim Guidelines to address current and foreseeable conditions beginning in October 2024 through the remainder of the interim period.

The Washington County Water Conservancy District (district) is a political subdivision of the State of Utah. The district is charged with conserving, developing, managing, and stabilizing water supplies for the citizens of Washington County.

Washington County is one of the fastest-growing communities in the nation. The county's population is projected to more than double by 2050.¹ Washington County is Utah's hottest, driest region. All major population centers are currently dependent on a single water source, the Virgin River Basin, which is reaching its full development capacity.

Washington County has already reduced its per capita water use more than 30% since 2000—the greatest reduction in water use in Utah—and is planning for an additional 24% reduction by 2070. The district's 20-year water supply plan includes additional conservation, regional reuse, local supply development, groundwater optimization, and agricultural conversion.²

¹ *Utah Long-Term Planning Projection Summary*, (2022, January 31). Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. <https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/LongTermProj-Jan2022.pdf?x71849&x71849>

² *20-Year Plan to Secure New Water Supplies for Washington County, Utah*, (2023 July). Washington County Water Conservancy District. <https://www.wcwcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/20-Year-Plan-071023.pdf>

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Because the Virgin River is a tributary of the Colorado River located within the Colorado River Basin, Washington County's water supply is directly affected by Colorado River operations in both the near and long-term. The district hereby endorses and incorporates the Upper Colorado River Commission's comments on the Revised Draft SEIS.

Respectfully,



Zachary Renstrom
General Manager
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