



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

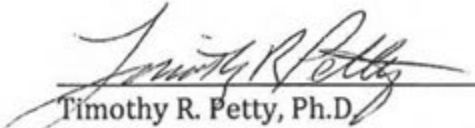
Department of the Interior Statement: March 19, 2019 Transmittal of Drought Contingency Plans by the Seven Colorado River Basin States and Key Water Districts to Congress for Implementation

Since 2000, the Colorado River Basin has experienced historic drought and dry conditions. Currently, the combined storage in Lakes Powell and Mead are at their lowest levels since Lake Powell initially began filling in the 1960s.


On February 6, 2019, the Department of the Interior published a notice in the Federal Register, 84 Fed. Reg. 2244, requesting input from the Governors, or designated Governors representatives, of the Colorado River Basin States regarding recommendations for potential actions by the Department of the Interior that: (a) would be appropriate to take to reduce the risks the Colorado River Basin is facing, and (b) could be adopted prior to the August 2019 determinations of operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead in 2020, in the event that the Drought Contingency Plans (DCPs) could not be completed and promptly adopted.

On March 19, 2019, the Governor's representatives of the seven Colorado River Basin States and key water districts formally submitted Drought Contingency Plans to Congress for immediate implementation. The Department of the Interior commends the Basin States and key water contractors on this important milestone. Given their successful efforts to reach consensus on the DCPs, the Department, by this statement, terminates its request for input from the Colorado River Basin States, as the immediate completion and implementation of the DCPs demonstrates the best path forward to: a) reduce the risks the Colorado River Basin is facing, and that b) can be adopted prior to the August 2019 determinations of operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead in 2020.

Dated: March 19, 2019.



Timothy R. Petty, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary for Water & Science
U.S. Department of the Interior



Brenda W. Burman
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of the Interior