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September 1, 2022

Camille Touton  
Commissioner  
United States Bureau of Reclamation  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Subject: Colorado River System-Cut 20

Dear Commissioner Touton:

The Tortolita Alliance (TA) is a local (Marana, AZ) non-profit organization that advocates for land conservancy, ensuring protection of open space, wildlife habitat, watershed, and compatible recreational use.

TA has also been active in area of water education, conservation and ensuring an adequate water supply for the Tucson region and the entire southwest.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of Arizona's water supply comes from the Colorado River. The Colorado River system is in dire straits with Lake Mead and Lake Powell at historic low levels.

We offer the following observations:

- Period 1 (1953-1974)<sup>1</sup>- Average Colorado River flow = 13.1 mafy.
- Period 2 (2000-2021)<sup>1</sup> - Average Colorado River flow = 12.3 mafy.
- Average Colorado River flow for Periods 1 & 2 = 12.7 mafy.
- Colorado River Full Allocation = 16.5 mafy
- Historic Allocation Imbalance = 16.5 – 12.7 = 3.8 mafy.
- Experts<sup>2</sup> predict Average Colorado River flows to be even lower than 12.7 mafy in the future due to aridification.
- In 2012 USBR<sup>3</sup> predicted a future 3.2 mafy imbalance.
- Average Historic and Projected Imbalance = 3.5 mafy [(3.2 + 3.8)/2]

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<sup>1</sup> How Climate Change Is Impacting The Colorado River, Brad Udall, Senior Scientist/Scholar, Colorado State University, Grand Canyon River Virtual River Guides Training Seminar, March 27, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> The Future of the Colorado River Project-Alternative Management Paradigms for the Future of the Colorado and Green Rivers, Whitepaper No. 6, K. Wheeler, B. Udall et al, February 5, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study, USBR, December 2012.

The data is clear---the Colorado River is over-allocated. There is not enough Colorado River water supply to meet existing or future demands, yet much of the southwest depends on it. The current reservoir capacity (Mead-28% and Powell-26%) is confirmation.

The existing and proposed shortage cuts are not enough and the parties cannot come to consensus or agreement. Therefore, it is time for USBR to take drastic action and permanently cut Colorado River delivery contracts by 20% (3.5/16.5 rounded) across the board (Cut 20). This will be the new Law of the River.

Taking this action will protect our public water supply and the Colorado River ecosystem and force water suppliers and users to conserve and implement sustainable water supply planning.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark L. Johnson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark L. Johnson  
President

cc: Senator Mark Kelly  
Senator Kyrsten Sinema  
Congressman Tom O'Halleran  
Tom Buschatzke, ADWR