



CENTRAL ARIZONA PROJECT

**P.O. Box 43020
Phoenix, Arizona 85080**

October 7, 2025

Mr. Troy Wirth
Acting Group Manager, Water Accounting and Verification Group
Bureau of Reclamation
Lower Colorado Regional Office
LCB-4200
P.O. Box 61470
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470

Dear Mr. Wirth,

Following your letter regarding the Estimate of Calendar Year (CY) Colorado Diversions – Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD) and in preparation for our upcoming consultation, we have developed an estimate of CAWCD’s Colorado River Diversions for your use. The Central Arizona Project (CAP) 2026 Diversion estimate includes reductions required pursuant to the 2007 Interim Guidelines, contributions to Lake Mead in accordance with the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan (LB DCP), reduction in diversions based on system conservation agreements by CAP Contractors and Subcontractors and wheeling of non-project water pursuant to federal wheeling agreements.

The August Most Probable 24-Month Study projected end of CY 2025 Lake Mead elevation at 1055.9 feet. Consistent with Section 2.D.1 of the 2007 Interim Guidelines and Section III.B of Exhibit 1 to the LB DCP, a Tier 1 shortage condition will govern the operation of Lake Mead in CY 2026. Pursuant to the 2007 Interim Guidelines and the LB DCP Agreements there will be a shortage reduction of 320,000 acre-feet (AF) and a DCP contribution of 192,000 AF to Arizona’s Basic Apportionment. Reclamation has estimated that 1,150,354 AF will be available for Arizona fourth priority Colorado River water in CY 2026. Notwithstanding this estimate inclusion in CAWCD’s estimate of the CAP’s Colorado River diversion for 2026, CAWCD does intend to divert the balance of Arizona’s reduced apportionment not consumed by equal and higher priority entitlement holders in accordance with contract No. 14-06-W-245, as amended and supplemented. CAWCD will also provide Arizona’s 192,000 AF of LB DCP contributions through a range of actions consistent with the LB DCP Agreements.

CAWCD acknowledges the efforts of Reclamation and water users in the Lower Colorado River Basin to conserve water through participation in Reclamations’ Lower Colorado River Basin Conservation and Efficiency program in 2026. A summary of the system conservation agreements and associated reductions considered in the CAP diversion estimate are included in the table below.

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2026 Forbearance and Reductions to CAP Diversion	Per Letter Agreement #	Amount (AF) ¹
Hopi Tribe	23-XX-30-W0779	3,059
Yuma Mesa Irrigation and Drainage District -	23-XX-30-W0769	23,197
Mohave Valley Irrigation and Drainage District -	23-XX-30-W0770	14,475
Matador Farms, LLC	23-XX-30-W0774	3,240
Cibola Valley Irrigation and Drainage District	23-XX-30-W0771	2,700
Cathcarts	23-XX-30-W0776	60.5
Total On-River Forbearance		46,732
System Conservation Water - ASARCO LLC	23-XX-30-W0752	21,000
System Conservation Water - Gilbert	Multiple ²	1,600
System Conservation Water - Glendale	23-XX-30-W0778	7,000
System Conservation Water - Metro Water	23-XX-30-W0753	5,000
System Conservation Water - Peoria	23-XX-30-W0757	7,200
System Conservation Water - Scottsdale	23-XX-30-W0755	4,000
System Conservation Water - Tucson	Multiple ³	52,800
System Conservation Water - Spanish Trails Water	23-XX-30-W0801	2,400
Subtotal CAP Subcontractors		101,000
System Conservation Water - Fort McDowell Yavapai	23-XX-30-W0750	13,933
System Conservation Water - Gila River Indian Community	Multiple ⁴	125,216
System Conservation Water -- San Carlos Apache Tribe	24-XX-30-W0829	23,451
Subtotal CAP Federal Contractors		162,600
2007 Guidelines Reduction		320,000
Reduction for CAP DCP Contribution		192,000
Total CAP Reductions		775,600

¹ These figures are estimates of program system conservation. Final amounts will be verified according to provisions in each System Conservation Implementation Agreement (SCIA).

² Estimated system conservation by the Town of Gilbert pursuant to SCIA 24-XX-30-W0841 and SCIA 24-XX-W0842.

³ Estimated system conservation by Tucson pursuant SCIA 23-XX-30-W0756 and SCIA 24-XX-30-W0830.

⁴ Estimated system conservation for the GRIC in 2026. The specific SCIA to which this conserved water will be applied are yet to be determined.

CAWCD also intends to divert 2,033 AF of Colorado River water for the Town of Queen Creek in accordance with Reclamation wheeling contract 20-XX-30-W0691 with Reclamation's approval of the Town's water order. The table below shows factors considered in developing CAWCD's Colorado River water diversion estimate for CY 2026 but it is anticipated that CAWCD will modify this estimate, following the final development of its Annual Operating Plan, which will incorporate all customer water orders and delivery requirements, and conservation activities.

CAP Colorado River Diversion Estimate	Amount (AF)
Arizona Basic Apportionment	2,800,000
Reduction to Arizona Basic Apportionment for Shortage Condition (2007 Guidelines)	(320,000)
Estimated Consumptive Use by Equal or Higher Priority Entitlement Holders ¹	(1,136,289)
Other Arizona Unauthorized uses ²	(1,646)
DCP Contribution ³	(192,000)
System Conservation Water, CAP Subcontractors	(101,000)
System Conservation Water, CAP Federal Contractors	(162,600)
Diversion of Non-Project Mainstream Water ⁴	2,033
Total CAWCD planned Colorado River Water Diversion	888,498

¹ Calculated as the average historical consumptive use of Arizona first, second, and third priority users (1,137,646 AF) + the P4(i) Available Supply (70,643 AF which is the CU equivalent of 113,940 AF diversion) - CAP Subcontractors 3rd priority water pursuant to the Salt River Pima Indian Community Water Rights Settlement and the AK-Chin Indian Community Water Rights Settlement Act of 1984 (72,000 AF). This value includes an on-river system conservation volume of 46,732 AF, which CAWCD will forbear diverting.

² Three-year averages of consumptive use of unauthorized on-River users. Unauthorized on-River users currently identified in Reclamation's 2025 Colorado River Accounting and Water Use Report include Cibola Island, ASLD Ott Lease, Martinez Lake cabin sites, South Gila valley/Yuma Mesa-other uses, R. Griffin and Power.

³ CAP is planning to make the DCP contribution for the state of Arizona of 192,000 AF from a reduction in available diversion volume, in accordance with Section II Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan (LBDCP) Agreement - Exhibit 1 Lower Basin Drought Contingency Operations (LBOps). Final accounting for DCP contribution and the delivery of EC-ICS S will be determined pursuant to the end of year Colorado River Water Available to CAP and any space available to CAWCD within approved ICS accumulation limits and sharing agreements in consultation between CAP and Reclamation.

⁴The amount shown includes Queen Creek's Mainstream Water Entitlement being wheeled through the CAP pursuant to federal wheeling contract 20-XX-30-W0691.

Listed below are the CAP's monthly Colorado River diversion estimates to be pumped through the Mark Wilmer (Havasu) Pumping Plant for calendar year 2026.

Month	Acre-Feet
January	56,900
February	53,500
March	151,300
April	172,000
May	174,100
June	72,300
July	11,400
August	19,100
September	53,500
October	54,200
November	44,100
December	26,098
Total	888,498

CAWCD will continue to coordinate with Reclamation and modify its water order accordingly as ICS and conservation activities that affect CAP's diversion become known. If Arizona's final 2026 use is less than Arizona's apportionment, when accounting for mandatory contributions and other system conservation activities, CAWCD requests the unused volume remain in the Colorado River system storage.

Attached you will find a completed Part 417 Consultation Questionnaire for CY 2026.

If you have any questions or require additional information, feel free to contact me or Don Crandall at 623-869-2457.

Sincerely,



Brenda Burman, General Manager
Central Arizona Water Conservation District

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