



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
P.O. Box 61470
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470

IN REPLY REFER TO:

LCB-4220
2.2.4.23

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Anieul “JR” Echard
General Manager
Palo Verde Irrigation District
180 West 14th Avenue
Blythe, CA 92225

Subject: Approval of Calendar Year (CY) 2026 Colorado River Water Diversion – Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID)

Dear Mr. Echard:

The Bureau of Reclamation has received PVID’s CY 2026 Colorado River water diversion estimate, initially submitted in October 2025 and subsequently revised in December 2025, in which PVID requests approval to divert up to 700,000 acre-feet (AF) in CY 2026. In accordance with Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations Part 417 (Part 417), this letter provides PVID with my determination regarding PVID’s proposed diversion and beneficial use of Colorado River water for CY 2026.

Water rights for lands located within PVID are based on the California Seven-Party Agreement of 1931 and PVID’s 1933 Colorado River Water Delivery Contract with the Bureau of Reclamation, which establish a priority system for delivery of Colorado River water to California water districts. PVID has a Priority 1 right to sufficient water to irrigate up to 104,500 acres of land located in the Palo Verde Valley and a Priority 3(b) right to irrigate up to 16,000 acres of land on the Palo Verde Mesa.

On August 15, 2025, Reclamation released its Colorado River Basin August 2025 24-Month Study,¹ which projects Lake Mead’s most probable elevation on January 1, 2026, to be 1,055.88 feet. In its letter dated August 21, 2025, Reclamation announced that, in accordance with the 2007 Interim Guidelines,² Lake Mead and the lower Colorado River will operate in a Tier 1 Shortage Condition in CY 2026. In addition, the 2019 *Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan Agreement* will also govern the operation of Lake Mead for CY 2026. The CY 2026 lower Colorado River Shortage Condition will not reduce the volume of Colorado River water available to the state of California in CY 2026. Additionally, no Drought Contingency Plan Contributions are required by California in CY 2026.

¹ Available at <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/24mo/>.

² Referring to *Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and the Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead* dated December 13, 2007.

Based upon the Shortage Condition determination, a review of the CY 2026 diversion estimate provided by PVID, and the information gathered during Reclamation's Part 417 consultation, I approve the diversion of up to 700,000 AF of Colorado River water during CY 2026 for use in PVID's service area. This approved diversion results in an estimated consumptive use of 294,171 AF.

Reclamation would like to highlight that, in accordance with the *Inadvertent Overrun and Payback Policy*,³ **accumulations of inadvertent overruns are not permitted in CY 2026 and are suspended as long as a Shortage condition is in effect.** To assist entitlement holders in monitoring their Colorado River water use to ensure they remain within available quantities, Reclamation will project diversions and consumptive use of Colorado River water during CY 2026 and will make these projections available daily on Reclamation's Lower Colorado River Water Accounting website⁴ beginning in January 2026. Reclamation encourages Colorado River water entitlement holders to use the projections to adjust diversions to remain within their Reclamation-approved annual Colorado River water order.

Thank you for submitting PVID's diversion estimate for CY 2026. Should you have questions, please contact Kerim Dickson, Team Lead, Water Accounting and Verification Group, at (725) 232-6443 or kdickson@usbr.gov. Individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunication relay services.

Sincerely,

Genevieve R. Johnson
Acting Regional Director

cc: Jessica Neuwerth
Executive Director
Colorado River Board of California
770 Fairmont Avenue, Suite 100
Glendale, CA 91203

Thomas Buschatzke
Director
Arizona Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 36020
Phoenix, AZ 85067-6020

Eric P. Witkoski
Executive Director
Colorado River Commission of Nevada
555 East Washington Avenue, Suite 3100
Las Vegas, NV 89101

John Entsminger
General Manager
Southern Nevada Water Authority
1001 S. Valley View Boulevard, MS 480
Las Vegas, NV 89153

Continued on next page.

³ Available at: <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/IOPP.pdf>.

⁴ Available at: <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/hourly/forecast.pdf>.

cc: Continued from previous page.

William Hasencamp
Manager, Colorado River Resources
The Metropolitan Water District
of Southern California
P.O. Box 54153
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153

Chris Parrish
Water Master
Palo Verde Irrigation District
180 West 14th Avenue
Blythe, CA 92225