forecasts are adjusted to reflect existing snowpack, basin storage, flow conditions, and as changes occur in projected water deliveries.

Summary

Upper Basin Delivery. Taking into account (1) the existing water storage conditions in the basin, (2) the August 2012 24-Month Study[13] projection of the most probable near-term water supply conditions in the basin, and (3) Section 6.B of the 2007 Interim Guidelines, the Upper Elevation Balancing Tier will govern the operation of Lake Powell for water year 2013. The August 2012 24-Month Study of the most probable inflow scenario projects the water year 2013 release from Glen Canyon Dam to be 8.23 million acre-feet (maf) (10,150 million cubic meters [mcm]). Given the hydrologic variability of the Colorado River System and based on actual 2012 water year operations, the projected water year release from Lake Powell in 2013 could be in the range of 8.23 maf (10,150 mcm) to an estimated 11.21 maf (13,827 mcm) or greater.

For further information about the variability of projected inflow into Lake Powell, see the 2013 Water Supply Assumptions section and the Lake Powell section under the Summary of Reservoir Operations in 2012 and Projected 2013 Reservoir Operations, and Tables 3 and 4.

Lower Basin Delivery. Taking into account (1) the existing water storage conditions in the basin, (2) the most probable near-term water supply conditions in the basin, and (3) Section 2.B.5 of the 2007 Interim Guidelines, the Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) Surplus Condition governs the operation of Lake Mead for calendar year 2013 in accordance with Article III(3)(b) of the Operating Criteria and Article II(B)(2) of the Consolidated Decree.

No unused apportionment for calendar year 2013 is anticipated. If any unused apportionment becomes available after adoption of this AOP, Reclamation, on behalf of the Secretary, may allocate any such available unused apportionment for calendar year 2013. Any such allocation shall be made in accordance with Article II(B)(6) of the Consolidated Decree and the Lower Colorado Region Policy for Apportioned but Unused Water[14] (Unused Water Policy).

Colorado River water may be stored off-stream pursuant to individual Storage and Interstate Release Agreements (SIRAs) and 43 CFR Part 414 within the Lower Division States. The Secretary shall make Intentionally Created Unused Apportionment (ICUA) available to contractors in Arizona, California, or Nevada pursuant to individual SIRAs and 43 CFR Part 414.

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[13] The 24-Month Study refers to the operational study conducted by Reclamation to project future reservoir operations. The most recent 24-Month Study report is available on Reclamation's Water Operations websites and is updated each month. Available online at: http://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/crsp/studies/index.html and http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/24mo.pdf.

[14] Lower Colorado Region Policy for Apportioned but Unused Water, February 11, 2010. Available online at: http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/UnusedWaterPolicy.pdf.

The Inadvertent Overrun and Payback Policy (IOPP), which became effective January 1, 2004, will be in effect during calendar year 2013.[15]

The 2007 Interim Guidelines adopted the ICS mechanism that among other things encourages the efficient use and management of Colorado River water in the Lower Basin. ICS may be created and delivered in 2013 pursuant to the 2007 Interim Guidelines and appropriate delivery and forbearance agreements.

1944 United States-Mexico Water Treaty Delivery. A volume of up to 1.500 maf (1,850 mcm) of water will be available to be scheduled for delivery to Mexico during calendar year 2013 in accordance with Article 15 of the 1944 United States-Mexico Water Treaty and Minutes No. 242, 314, 318, and 319 of the IBWC.

2012 HYDROLOGY SUMMARY AND RESERVOIR STATUS

Below average stream flows were observed throughout much of the Colorado River Basin during water year 2012. Unregulated[16] inflow to Lake Powell in water year 2012 was 4.91 maf (6,056 mcm), or 45 percent of the 30-year average[17] which is 10.83 maf (13,360 mcm). Unregulated inflow to Flaming Gorge, Blue Mesa, and Navajo Reservoirs was 68, 45, and 49 percent of average, respectively.

Precipitation in the Upper Colorado River Basin was below average throughout most of water year 2012. During the fall and winter months (October through March) the overall precipitation rate was approximately 80 percent of average. During the spring runoff period (April through July), the precipitation rate was also below average at approximately 30 percent of average. On September 30, 2012, the cumulative precipitation for the Upper Colorado River Basin for water year 2012 was 69 percent of average.

Snowpack conditions trended near average in the Colorado River Basin until the beginning of December 2011. However, accumulation of snow in December was well below average and by January 1, 2012, snowpack levels in the basin were well below average with the basin-wide snow water equivalent measuring 66 percent of average. During January and February, snow accumulation was above average and the snow water equivalent measured 80 percent of average on March 1, 2012. Snow accumulation in March, however, was well below average resulting in an April 1, 2012, basin wide snow water equivalent of only 55

[15] Record of Decision for Implementation Agreement, Inadvertent Overrun and Payback Policy, and Related Federal Actions, Final Environmental Impact Statement, October 10, 2003 (69 *Federal Register* 12202, March 15, 2004). Available online at: http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/crwda/crwda_rod.pdf.

[16] Unregulated inflow adjusts for the effects of operations at upstream reservoirs. It is computed by adding the change in storage and the evaporation losses from upstream reservoirs to the observed inflow. Unregulated inflow is used because it provides an inflow time series that is not biased by upstream reservoir operations.

[17] Inflow statistics throughout this document will be compared to the 30-year average, 1981-2010, unless otherwise noted.