



COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES

Water Resources Department

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April 30, 2007

Regional Director, Lower Colorado Region

Bureau of Reclamation

Attention: BCOO-1000

P.O. Box 61470

Boulder City, Nevada 89006-1470

Dear Director,

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Water Resources Department (the Tribe) has reviewed the February 2007 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead (Guidelines), and can provide the following comments.

1. The Tribe agrees with the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) determination that there will be no impact on the ability of the Tribe to divert its full entitlement of Colorado River (River) water under the Guidelines as presented. This determination is supported by the projected shortage amounts and the Tribe's present perfected rights priority in both Arizona and California.
2. Biological Resources within the external boundaries of the Tribe's Reservation may be impacted by the reduction in River flows (Section 4.10.4) because the River is essentially free-running in this reach and shortage flow reductions may lower the River below current and historical levels. Economic Resources may be impacted as well due to a reduced ability to use the River for recreation.
3. The Tribe believes the best insurance against shortages is to keep Lake Powell and Lake Mead as full of stored water as possible. This action can be promoted by developing programs and incentives that allow for storage of conserved River water in these Lakes. To be truly successful, such programs and incentives should allow for the retention of the value of this stored water to stay with the storing party. For example, water conserved and stored at a certain cost should be available until used by those who paid for the water, and not be lost by River management actions in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these Guidelines.

Sincerely,

Gary B. Hansen, Director