

Vulnerability of U.S. Water Supply to Shortage

A Technical Document Supporting
the Forest Service 2010 RPA Assessment

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Abstract: Comparison of projected future water demand and supply across the conterminous United States indicates that, due to improving efficiency in water use, expected increases in population and economic activity do not by themselves pose a serious threat of large-scale water shortages. However, climate change can increase water demand and decrease water supply to the extent that, barring major adaptation efforts, substantial future water shortages are likely, especially in the larger Southwest. Because further global temperature increases are probably unavoidable, adaptation will be essential in the areas of greatest increase in projected probability of shortage.

Keywords: vulnerability, water supply, water demand, water yield, climate change

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