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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lower Basin States Advance Plan to Deliver More Than 3.2 Million Acre-Feet Through 2028 to Protect Colorado River

~ Proposal adds at least 700,000 acre-feet of conservation on top of the 1.25 million acre-feet annual Lower Basin reductions proposed earlier ~

The Lower Basin States of Arizona, California, and Nevada today advanced a plan to stabilize the Colorado River through 2028, responding to declining reservoir levels, record low inflows to Lake Powell, and increasing risk of reaching critical elevations at both Lake Powell and Lake Mead.

Earlier in the post-2026 process, the Lower Basin took a significant step by proposing 1.25 million acre-feet in annual reductions, with an additional 250,000 acre-feet from Mexico, totaling 1.5 million acre-feet per year.

This proposal builds on that foundation with an expanded system conservation program across the Lower Basin with an estimated contribution of at least 700,000 acre-feet and a target of up to 1 million acre-feet. In total, the plan identifies more than 3.2 million acre-feet of water contributions to the system through 2028.

The proposal is an integrated package addressing Lake Powell releases, Upper Initial Unit operations, Lower Basin reductions, additional conservation, use of Intentionally Created Surplus, and system infrastructure improvements. Lower Basin contributions are contingent on these coordinated operations to ensure system stability as well as appropriate funding.

“With this proposal, the Lower Basin is putting forth real action to stabilize water supply along the Colorado River. We’re putting forward additional measurable water contributions for the system. Without that, the system will continue to decline,” said JB Hamby, Chairman of the Colorado River Board of California.

“This proposal is about moving from ideas to implementation,” said John Entsminger, General Manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority. “It pairs real measurable water contributions with sensible dry-condition operations at Lake Powell and across the

Upper Initial Units. Now is the time for every water user in the Basin to double down on water conservation as we face historically dry hydrology."

"This proposal reflects the creativity and commitment of water users across the Lower Basin who continue to step forward with solutions that support the river," said Tom Buschatzke, Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources. "We have shown that collaborative, voluntary efforts and reductions that are certain can produce meaningful water savings."

The Lower Basin states recognize the Upper Basin's call for mediation and are open to that process. However, current conditions require immediate, measurable water reductions from every state. The Lower Basin states stand ready to engage in a meaningful process for long-term solutions while encouraging the Upper Basin to step forward now with verifiable water contributions to help stabilize the system and support a near-term, seven-state bridge.

The Lower Basin states confirmed that the proposal preserves legal accountability under the Colorado River Compact, including Upper Basin delivery obligations, while maintaining a clear path toward a broader agreement among all seven Basin States.

The plan has been advanced to the federal government for consideration as part of the ongoing post-2026 planning process and is intended to provide a near-term bridge through 2028 while long-term operating guidelines are finalized.

Implementation of key elements of the proposal, including expanded system conservation, will require federal partnership. The proposal remains subject to approval by the Arizona Legislature and relevant California and Nevada water agency governing boards.

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