

Colorado River Foundational Principles, What do we fight for. V0.4

1. **The Colorado River system has to work.** It needs to be in balance and sustainable, For the river to work the math has to work. There may be difficult choices ahead to achieve that end.
2. **Water is life, so is food. Without agriculture, no cities, no civilization.**
3. **Valuable ecosystems are precious.** They must get enough water to thrive. Once they are lost they are hard to recover. Conversely, marginal ecosystems shouldn't use NEPA to drag down the entire system.
4. **Cities must have adequate clean water** for health and safety, drinking, cooking, bathing and fire suppression. Cities need green space, parks, swimming pools and even golf courses to be livable. Conversely, finding the balance between enough outdoor water use and too much is the challenge.
5. **Rural communities have value too.** Not everyone wants to live in a city. The devastation that has been wrought by following needs to end.
6. **The United States must retain the ability to feed itself.** In a tumultuous world, if we lose that ability, and the rest of the world chooses not to, we starve.
7. **Good farm land is priceless.** The best, most productive farmland, which is at the nexus of an ideal Ag economy is **invaluable**. It must be protected and improved, not fallowed and lost. Once good farm land is lost its hard to recover.
8. **Good farmers and ranchers are invaluable, especially young ones.** They must be encouraged, assisted and protected, not driven out of the life they love by an unappreciative world.
9. **Water speculation must be discouraged** without compromising free markets.
10. **Litigation is the last resort of the desperate.** Article VI, the non litigious, cooperative path must come first. The Upper Basin can no longer succumb to litigation threats. School yard bully rules apply. We may lose but we will fight.
11. **The Upper Basin must not be sacrificed** because it can't compete with the ideal conditions in the Lower Basin. The price the Lower Basin paid to get the high dam that creates those ideal conditions was the Colorado River Compact and the obscure wall between the two basins in Article III(a):
*(a) There is hereby apportioned from the Colorado River System in perpetuity to the Upper Basin and to the Lower Basin, respectively, the **exclusive beneficial consumptive use** of 7,500,000 acre-feet of water...*

Before the high dam the Lower Colorado flooded in the spring and went dry in the Winter, the Winter agriculture which now makes the Lower Basin special wasn't there. The high dam provided the power and water that made its cities thrive. To reiterate, "The Wall" was the price and it must stand.