

Colorado Mesa University
Upper Colorado River Basin Water Forum
Interstate Panel on Drought Contingency Planning
November 8, 2018

Upper Basin Drought Contingency Plan Outline
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Upper Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP)

- ❖ The Upper Basin DCP is designed to:
 1. Protect critical elevations at Lake Powell and help assure continued compliance with the 1922 Colorado River Compact; and
 2. Authorize storage of conserved water in the Upper Basin that could help establish the foundation for a Demand Management Program that may be developed in the future.

- ❖ If critical elevations are breached, the Upper Basin may lose the ability to control its own destiny – Compact compliance, irrigation, drinking water supply, power production, environmental resource preservation, and overall sustainability.

- ❖ The Upper Basin DCP consists of two draft agreements (weather modification not part of the package of agreements): The Drought Response Operations Agreement and the Demand Management Storage Agreement.

Drought Response Operations Agreement

- ❖ Establishes a process for the Upper Division States and Secretary to rely on available water in the CRSPA Initial Units as needed to reduce the risk of Lake Powell dropping below elevation 3,525'.
 - ✓ Conserves water in Lake Powell through operational adjustments or by moving available water from upper CRSP facilities (Aspinall, Flaming Gorge, Navajo).

- ❖ The Agreement guarantees the States a role in how the decision is made.
 - ✓ Does not provide for the operation of any reservoir outside of existing authorities.
 - ✓ Operate Initial Units with maximum flexibility practicable to achieve goals.
 - ✓ Requires recovery of storage as part of any Drought Response Operations plan.
 - ✓ Conduct outreach with stakeholders on terms of draft Drought Response Operations plan.

- ❖ 3,525' target elevation to protect Lake Powell's minimum power pool and infrastructure (somewhere between 3,490' and 3,525').

Lake Powell Minimum Power Pool

- ❖ Elevation ~3,490' at Lake Powell, but negative impacts to power generation occur at higher elevations.
- ❖ Increased risk of not meeting Compact obligations. Only 4 MAF In Lake Powell at elevation 3,490'. Could we even get enough water out?
- ❖ Loss of power generation impacts:
 - ✓ Lose large clean power supply/soft start capability for western grid.
 - ✓ Lose funds for:
 - Repaying for construction of projects.
 - Operating and maintaining Glen Canyon, Aspinall, Flaming Gorge, Navajo, etc. reservoirs.
 - Environmental compliance re Endangered Species Act, NEPA, and Grand Canyon protection legislation.
 - Salinity mitigation.
 - Basin Fund MOA: Projects within each UB State.

Demand Management Storage Agreement

- ❖ Authorizes storage of water conserved under an Upper Basin Demand Management Program in the CRSP Initial Units, without charge, for the purpose of helping to assure continued compliance with the Colorado River Compact.
 - ✓ This authorization does not expire.

- ❖ It does not establish an Upper Basin Demand Management Program.
 - ✓ By securing the storage authorization, the UCRC can effectively consider the feasibility of a demand management program.
 - ✓ The Agreement sets forth the minimum framework under which the Upper Division States can access the authorized storage prior to 2026. Storage not subject to release under 2007 Interim Guidelines.

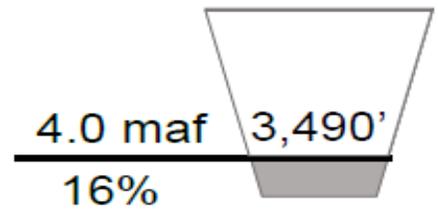
- ❖ If, after study, the UCRC determines that a Demand Management Program is feasible then it may develop and implement a program. Prior to 2026, must reach agreement with Secretary on accounting and verification of conserved water, among other things.

- ❖ Program can only be implemented if approved independently by each of the Upper Division States.

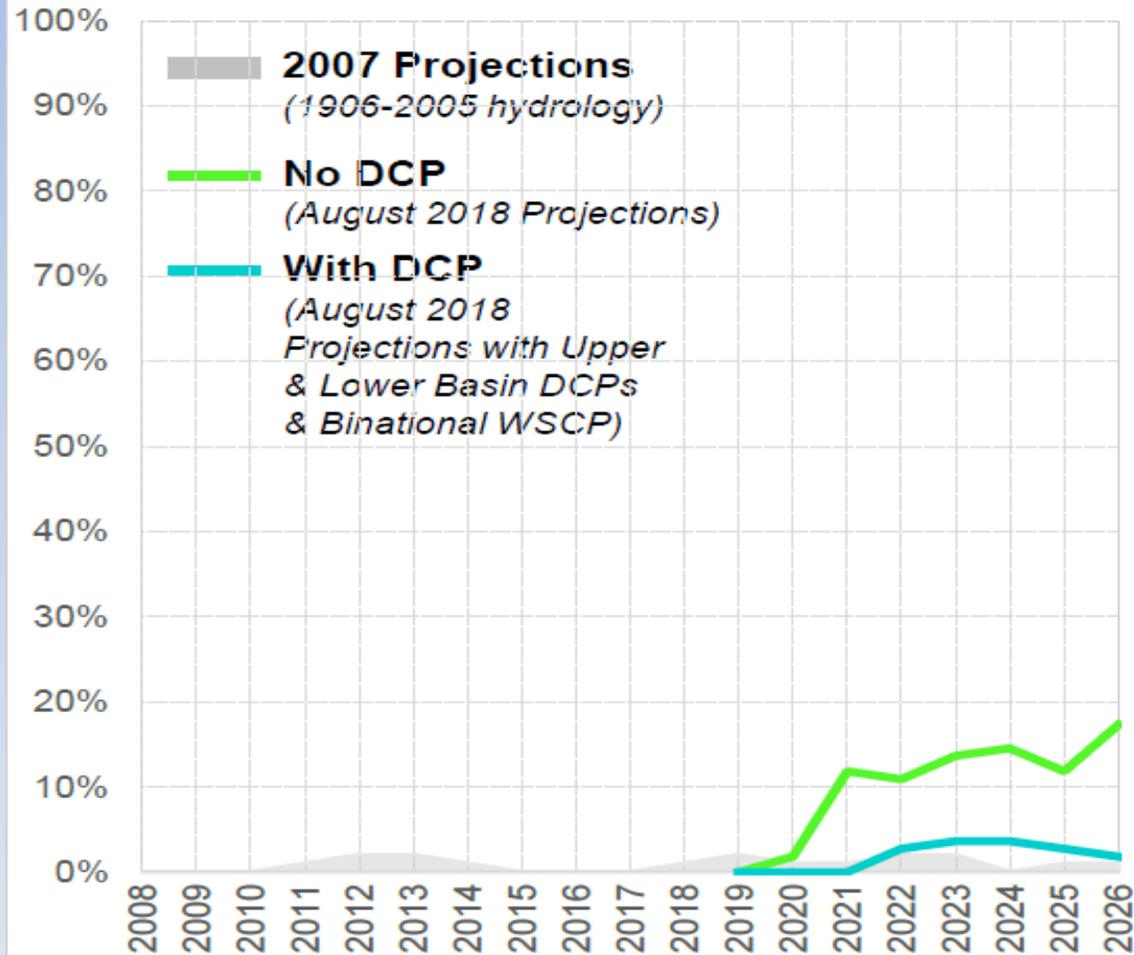
Upper Basin Demand Management

- ❖ Demand Management Program being investigated by the UCRC is voluntary, temporary and compensated.
- ❖ Lots of issues exist – Consistency with water law, protecting existing water rights, ability to achieve the goal, accounting, verification, management and administration, water user interest, shepherding, funding, economic, environmental and others. All need to be investigated before determining if demand management is feasible.
- ❖ Investigation and development of a Demand Management Program will require answering these numerous technical and policy questions in the future with multiple stakeholders (tribal, agriculture, municipal, industry, environmental, recreation) at the table during development.
 - ✓ June 20, 2018 UCRC Resolution: Commission resolved to work with interested entities and parties to explore and investigate outstanding considerations related to demand management.

Risk of Lake Powell < 3,490'



Full Hydrology (1906-2015)



Stress Test Hydrology (1988-2015)

