



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 16, 2013

CONTACTS:

Crystal Thompson, CAP, 602-321-9349, cthompson@cap-az.com

Michelle Moreno, ADWR, 480-251-7621, mamoreno@azwater.gov

Colorado River Shortage Will Have No Direct Impact On CAP City Water Supplies

Phoenix – August 16, 2013 - Today, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation released its monthly Operation Plan for Colorado River System Reservoirs 24-Month Study (Study), which projects that releases from Lake Powell into Lake Mead in water year 2014 (October 2013 through September 2014) will be reduced by 9% as compared to 2013 (7.48 million acre-feet versus 8.23 MAF). The study also indicates that releases will most likely be 7.48 MAF again in 2015. These back-to-back reductions could cause Lake Mead's elevation to fall below the 1,075 foot elevation by the end of 2015, which would result in the U.S. Secretary of the Interior declaring a Lower Basin shortage for 2016. These projections are subject to change as the year progresses, particularly if there is a good winter snowpack in 2014 or 2015.

If there is a Colorado River shortage in 2016, there would be no direct impact to the water supplies for cities, residential water users, and Native American Indian Tribes. The Central Arizona Project's (CAP) deliveries would be reduced by 320,000 acre-feet, which is about 20% of the CAP supply in recent years. This reduction would impact lower priority CAP users, including underground storage by the Arizona Water Banking Authority and Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District, as well as non-Indian agriculture.

"While the possibility of a shortage declaration is significant, Arizona has been planning and preparing for just such a condition for decades," said Sandra Fabritz Whitney, Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources and Chairman of the Arizona Water Banking Authority. "Arizona has led the nation in conservation efforts and long-term water management, including storing millions of acre-feet of water underground as a backup supply."

David Modeer, General Manager of the CAP, added that, "While all of us in Arizona should continue our conservation efforts, this also serves as a call to the federal government and all Colorado River water users that we need to work together to seek creative management solutions in the short term and augmentation of supplies in the long-term."

###