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Contact: UCRC@Comprise.Agency

UPPER DIVISION STATES PROVIDE STATEMENT OF FOCUS FOR 2025

Post-CRWUA perspectives and looking to the future

SALT LAKE CITY — (Jan. 02, 2025) — Following the Colorado River Water Users Association (CRWUA) Conference in Las Vegas and looking to the future with a commitment to working towards a basin-wide consensus solution, the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC) State Commissioners (**Brandon Gebhart** for Wyoming, **Estevan Lopez** for New Mexico, **Rebecca Mitchell** for Colorado, **Gene Shawcroft** for Utah), made the following statement:

“The conversations that took place at Colorado River Water Users Association in December confirm that 2025 will be a pivotal year and critical time in the history of the Colorado River. The representatives of each of the seven Colorado River Basin states unanimously agree that we have a responsibility to come up with a basin-wide consensus solution to managing the Colorado River. Moving forward into 2025, the Upper Division States are committed to working toward a sustainable solution that manages the use of the river within the available supply. All the Basin States representatives agreed that everyone must do their part and adapt to the hydrology we have to guide the operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead going forward.”

The UCRC State commissioners recognized the following facts and values as they continue negotiations with the Lower Basin States in 2025.

There are acute hydrologic shortages in the Upper Basin every year – there simply isn’t enough water in any year to satisfy current needs in the Upper Basin every year.:

The Upper Basin has made uncompensated cuts to their water users every year for the past 24 years. The Upper Basin already lives within the means of the river through its management of water rights and uses.

The Upper Basin supports a supply-based approach that shares the water we have through the sustainable operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead. The Upper Basin and its uses are a vital part of the basin-wide system.

The Upper Basin is committed to finding basin-wide solutions to build a sustainable future for all Basin States water users, Tribes, stakeholders and ecosystems.

We must plan for the river we have, not the river we want.

The Upper Basin is committed to meaningful conversations, creative solution-based discussions and open dialogue on the existing alternatives currently on the table while exploring new ideas. The harsh rhetoric and distractions must stop because time is of the essence.

We will continue discussions in January to explore existing and new approaches. Our collective goal is to move forward in time to build post 2026 operating rules with broad consensus with willing partners.

The Upper Basin has always been committed to doing the right thing for the entire Colorado River basin and that means living within the means of the river. And now, we are more committed than ever to finding a solution that works for everyone. A solution based on supply — not demand. It is the only way to ensure the vitality and longevity of our River.

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About the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC):

UCRC is an interstate administrative agency made up of Representatives of the four Upper Division States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. The UCRC ensures that rights and obligations are met pursuant to the 1922 Colorado River Compact and the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact.