



Upper Colorado
River Commission

Upper Division States' Colorado River Negotiation Statement

The Upper Division States (UDS) have negotiated in good faith to reach a durable, long-term, basin-wide agreement on post-2026 Colorado River operations. We have consistently offered compromises to develop a supply-driven operational framework as a practical and realistic path forward. In addition, we appreciate Reclamation providing concepts rooted in compromise that are largely aligned with many of our core concepts.

While a seven-state consensus has not yet been achieved, the Upper Division continues to work with the Bureau of Reclamation and Lower Basin partners. We are prepared to set aside long-standing legal arguments to reach a workable agreement that stabilizes the system for the 40 million people in the United States and Mexico who depend on the Colorado River.

The reality is straightforward. The Bureau of Reclamation and the Upper Division have proposed serious, implementable solutions grounded in today's hydrology.

This year is a stark reminder of why all in the Colorado River Basin must learn to live within the available supply, as water users across the Upper Basin are preparing for deep cuts to their water supplies. These cuts are mandatory, uncompensated and painful. Upper Basin water users are preparing for reductions of more than 2.0 MAF this year. Across the entire Upper Basin, this will amount to reductions greater than 40% of the proven water rights. Meanwhile, our downstream neighbors are seeking to secure water from the UDS that simply does not exist.

The Upper Division remains committed to working with the states and water users that are prepared to live within the means of the River, act responsibly and move forward with solutions grounded in reality.

Commissioner Quotes:

UCRC Chair and Colorado Commissioner, Becky Mitchell

"We're being asked to solve a problem we didn't create with water we don't have. The Upper Division's approach is aligned with hydrologic reality and we're ready to move forward."

Utah Commissioner, Gene Shawcroft

"The Upper Division is unified, and we continue to seek a path forward. What we need now is for everyone in the Basin to be willing to live within the means of the River."

Wyoming Commissioner, Brandon Gebhart

"The Upper Division has stepped up and offered a compromise framework that could serve as a basis for a long-term agreement. We are choosing workable solutions over litigation and political messaging. Conflict won't change the hydrology."

New Mexico Commissioner, Estevan Lopez

"The River is telling us the truth every year. We can either negotiate based on real conditions, including this year's critically low hydrology in the Upper Basin, or we can keep repeating outdated assumptions until the system breaks. The Upper Division is choosing realism and responsibility."



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