



Lower Colorado River Basin 500+ Plan

The Colorado River system is experiencing long-term drought, exacerbated by climate change. Conditions continued to worsen in 2021. The Lower Basin States, since the adoption of the 2007 Guidelines, have taken proactive actions to respond to worsening conditions, adding 50 feet of elevation to Lake Mead. Despite those efforts, beginning in 2022, the Lower Colorado River Basin will experience its first declared Tier 1 Colorado River shortage. In Arizona, this means a mandatory 512,000 acre-foot reduction to our Colorado River supplies.

Now, the poor hydrology forecast has set in motion new voluntary measure to do even more to protect Lake Mead from falling to critical levels – this is called the 500+ Plan.

WHAT INITIATED THE 500+ PLAN?

This year's poor Colorado River runoff exacerbated conditions in Lake Powell and Lake Mead. The worsening conditions triggered a provision of the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) to protect Lake Mead from descending to critically low elevations. The provision calls for additional actions in the Lower Basin to protect Lake Mead from declining below elevation 1,020'.

In response to the need for additional reductions in water use from Lake Mead – over and above those required by the 2007 Guidelines and DCP – the Lower Basin States and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), including the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) and the Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD), have been developing a plan to implement additional conservation actions. We call it the 500+ Plan.



WHAT DOES THE 500+ PLAN INCLUDE?

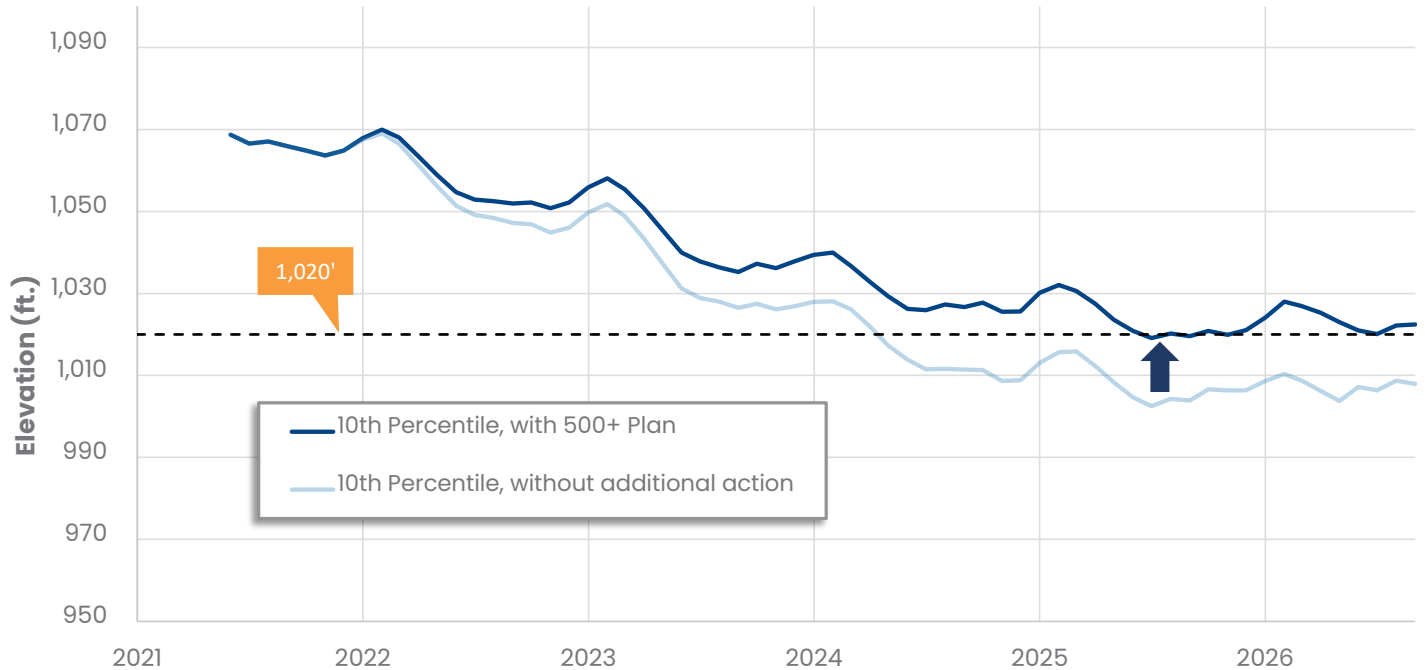
The plan contemplates additional conservation and storage in Lake Mead along with funding commitments to implement the plan from Arizona, California, Nevada and the United States. The goal of the 500+ Plan is to conserve an additional 500,000 acre-feet or more per year to benefit Lake Mead, beyond the DCP reductions.

All three Lower Basin States and the U.S. will contribute to the 500+ Plan to provide additional protections to Lake Mead.

The sources of this new conserved water could include:

- New system water conservation
- New Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS), pledged to remain in Lake Mead through 2026
- Leaving existing ICS in Lake Mead that had been scheduled to be withdrawn
- Voluntary and compensated reductions

PROJECTED LAKE MEAD ELEVATION



* 10th Percentile addresses 90% of potential scenarios

HOW IS THE 500+ PLAN BEING IMPLEMENTED IN ARIZONA?

Within Arizona, ADWR and CAWCD have been working with water leaders from across the state including tribal, agricultural, and municipal water users to fund and implement these additional conservation actions by Arizona consistent with the interstate plan.

ADWR and CAWCD have outlined guiding principles for additional reductions in Colorado River water use by Arizona. They are :

- Voluntary
- Temporary
- Compensated
- System water or storage contributed through 2026

WHO IS PAYING FOR THIS PLAN?

The State of Arizona has pledged \$40 million for drought responses and mitigation. Discussions with other funding parties are ongoing, including CAWCD, Reclamation, California, Nevada and others.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THE 500+ PLAN?

Initial agreements to implement the 500+ Plan may be executed by the end of 2021 and the additional reductions in water use will begin in 2022. The planning includes commitments for 2023, as well as the intent to continue the efforts through 2026, as necessary.

IN SUMMARY:

- In 2022, Arizona, largely CAP customers, will suffer a 512,000 acre-foot reduction per the Drought Contingency Plan.
- Lower Basin parties and the federal government have been meeting since August to develop a plan for commitments to conserve additional water – 500,000 acre-feet or more per year – to benefit Lake Mead.
- Initial agreements to implement the plan may be executed by the end of 2021, and the additional conservation actions will begin in 2022. The plan includes commitments for 2023, as well as the intent to continue the efforts through 2026 as necessary.
- Further details will be announced by the end of the year and implemented in 2022–2026.

