

6 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

About Lake Mead Reservoir Levels

Municipal Water District of Orange County

While the California Drought seems to make the news nightly, the Colorado River is enduring the throngs of a 22-year drought. Lake Mead, which provides water to roughly 25 million people in Arizona, Nevada, California, and Mexico, is losing water at an alarming

rate. The US Bureau of Reclamation reports Lake Mead dropped nearly 10 feet in just two months, settling to just over 1,040 feet above sea level in July. Even less encouraging, the Bureau predicts levels to hover around the same, quarter full capacity come January.



1

ALL COLORADO RIVER RESERVOIRS ARE BEING IMPACTED

by several risk factors, including declining snowpack and reduced runoff.

2

TO KEEP LAKE POWELL ABOVE CRITICAL ELEVATIONS

500 Thousand Acre-Feet (TAF) of water will be released from Flaming Gorge Reservoir. Additionally, 480 TAF will be left in Lake Powell by reducing annual release volumes.

3

THE LOWER BASIN STATES AND THE US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION ENTERED AN MOU

or, Memorandum of Understanding, to add or retain 500 TAF in Lake Mead in both 2022 and 2023 in an effort known as the “500+ Plan”.

4

SINCE 2007, THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HAS FUNDED EXTENSIVE CONSERVATION

of Colorado River water in California. The Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) provides a source of supply that can be taken in years like this.

5

GIVEN THE FORECASTED DECLINES IN LAKE POWELL AND LAKE MEAD

Drought Contingency Plan contributions and shortage cuts may not be enough.

6

IF THESE TRENDS HOLD

the feds could declare a Tier 2 water shortage, meaning new cuts in 2023.