



MEMORANDUM

APRIL 5, 2018

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: DAVE “DK” KANZER, P.E.

SUBJECT: WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS UPDATE – COLORADO RIVER BASIN SPRING 2018

*ACTION: Informational status report on water supply conditions for Colorado River Basin
No action is requested*

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE(S):

- 3. B. The River District will engage in support efforts aimed at understanding climate change and how it may affect water supplies.*
- 3. C. The River District will engage in and support water supply planning efforts, local and regional, which include adapting to climate change impacts.*

Colorado River Basin Hydrology and Water Supply Projections

As the snow accumulation season becomes the snow melt season, April 1st water supply forecasts across the Colorado River Basin are well below average. Conditions are generally better in the north and east portions of the basin and are especially poor for areas to the south of I-70, the west of Glenwood Springs and for those watershed areas with lower average elevations (i.e., snowsheds below 8500 feet).

Although some additional moisture is projected to hit the Upper Basin in the near term, the 30-60 day outlook is not optimistic, especially for the southern basins.

Fortunately, many reservoir facilities within the River District are at average levels entering into the fill season and at this point most are projected to be able to meet summer demands. However, concerns exist at Ridgway Reservoir and at Paonia Reservoir where inflow projections are at historical lows.

With the April-July inflow volume forecast for Lake Powell at 3.1 million acre-feet, it is almost assured that the water year 2019 release will be 9.0 million acre-feet according to the Interim Operating Guidelines. In comparison last year, actual April-July runoff into Lake Powell was 8.2 million acre-feet. If the operating tier is not changed in the April 24-Month Study performed by the USBR, it would be the fifth straight year of 9.0 million acre-feet releases (2014 was a 7.48 million acre-feet release). Additional information is anticipated with the new 24-month study to be released next week for Lakes Powell and Mead. Relevant updates will be provided at the Board meeting.

Summarized below are the April 1st projected spring flow volumes (April through July and the percentage of average) for the some key water supply locations in the Upper Colorado River Basin within the River District.

Water Supply Forecast Location	Percentage of 30 Year Average	April-July Volume (thousands of acre-feet)	30-Year Average
Lake Powell	43	3100	7160
<i>Colorado River</i>			
Cameo	67	1570	2360
Glenwood Springs	70	1470	2110
Dotsero	73	1020	1400
Kremmling	80	690	860
Lake Granby	84	185	220
<i>Gunnison</i>			
Grand Junction	44	650	1480
Blue Mesa	51	345	675
<i>Yampa</i>			
Steamboat Springs	64	167	260
<i>White</i>			
Watson	54	151	280
<i>Dolores</i>			
Mcphee Res	30	89	295
<i>Green</i>			
Flaming Gorge Res	102	1000	980