



International Boundary and Water Commission United States and Mexico

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U.S. AND MEXICO SIGN AGREEMENT TO EXPAND COLORADO RIVER TEMPORARY MEASURES

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (IBWC) has signed Minute No. 330, “Expansion of Colorado River Temporary Measures.” The agreement establishes the commitment of the United States and Mexico to undertake additional measures through December 2026 in light of low reservoir storage in the Colorado River basin and the potential for system reservoirs to drop to critical elevations.

IBWC officials signed Minute 330 at a brief ceremony held in El Paso, Texas. The United States and Mexican Governments have provided notification of their approval of the agreement through the U.S. Department of State and Mexico’s Secretariat of Foreign Relations; therefore, it has entered into force.

As indicated in Minute 330, actions are being undertaken in the United States to conserve approximately 3 million acre-feet (3,700 million cubic meters) of Colorado River water between 2023 and 2026. For the conservation projects in the United States, funding support comes from federal and non-federal sources.

During the same period, the Mexican Government, through conservation projects, will generate a total of 400,000 acre-feet (493.396 million cubic meters) of water for the system and for Mexico’s Water Reserve, in addition to the volumes already identified in IBWC Minute 323, “Extension of Cooperative Measures and Adoption of a Binational Water Scarcity Contingency Plan in the Colorado River Basin,” dated September 21, 2017.

To support water conservation efforts in Mexico, the U.S. Government will provide \$65 million dollars through the IBWC in funding for projects and actions in Mexico to generate water for the Colorado River system and that will also allow for more efficient water use in the Mexicali Valley in the future. The water conservation projects in Mexico will be determined by Mexico’s National Water Commission (CONAGUA).

United States Commissioner Maria-Elena Giner said, “Cooperation between the United States and Mexico is key as we deal with current water scarcity at our shared border and prepare for the future. As we have in the past, we will continue to work with the seven U.S. Colorado River basin states and Mexico to ensure our limited water supply is managed fairly.”

Mexican Commissioner Adriana Resendez said, “Expansion of these temporary measures in the Colorado River basin are necessary to assure the sustainability of the basin, and they were agreed to promptly by CONAGUA, Baja California State Government, and Mexican users.” She added, “Under this same mechanism, work will continue with the interested parties to seek better solutions to the issues that are being faced in the Colorado River basin.”

Deputy Commissioner David Palumbo of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation said, “The Bureau of Reclamation is pleased with this agreement as both countries work to ensure temporary measures are in place to address the Basin’s water conditions through 2026.” He added, “The approval of Minute 330 demonstrates the collaborative spirit so critical to improving and protecting the stability and sustainability of the Colorado River as we develop long-term solutions in the Basin.”

CONAGUA Technical Deputy Director General Humberto Marengo said, “This agreement highlights the Government of Mexico’s interest in addressing the current prevailing shortage conditions in the Colorado River basin, and its implementation will contribute to reducing the potential negative effects in Mexico, particularly in Irrigation District 014.”

The Minute 330 agreement reflects a shared commitment of the two Governments and interested parties in both countries to work to proactively address the potential for unprecedented reductions on the Colorado River as a result of the hydrologic drought conditions, meeting system demands, and increased temperatures in the basin.

In this same cooperative framework, officials from both countries will continue meeting with the goal of identifying potential future actions to address the effects that could be faced as a consequence of the prolonged shortage conditions in the basin. The IBWC will also continue reporting periodically on the evolution of system conditions in order to keep users in both countries informed.

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