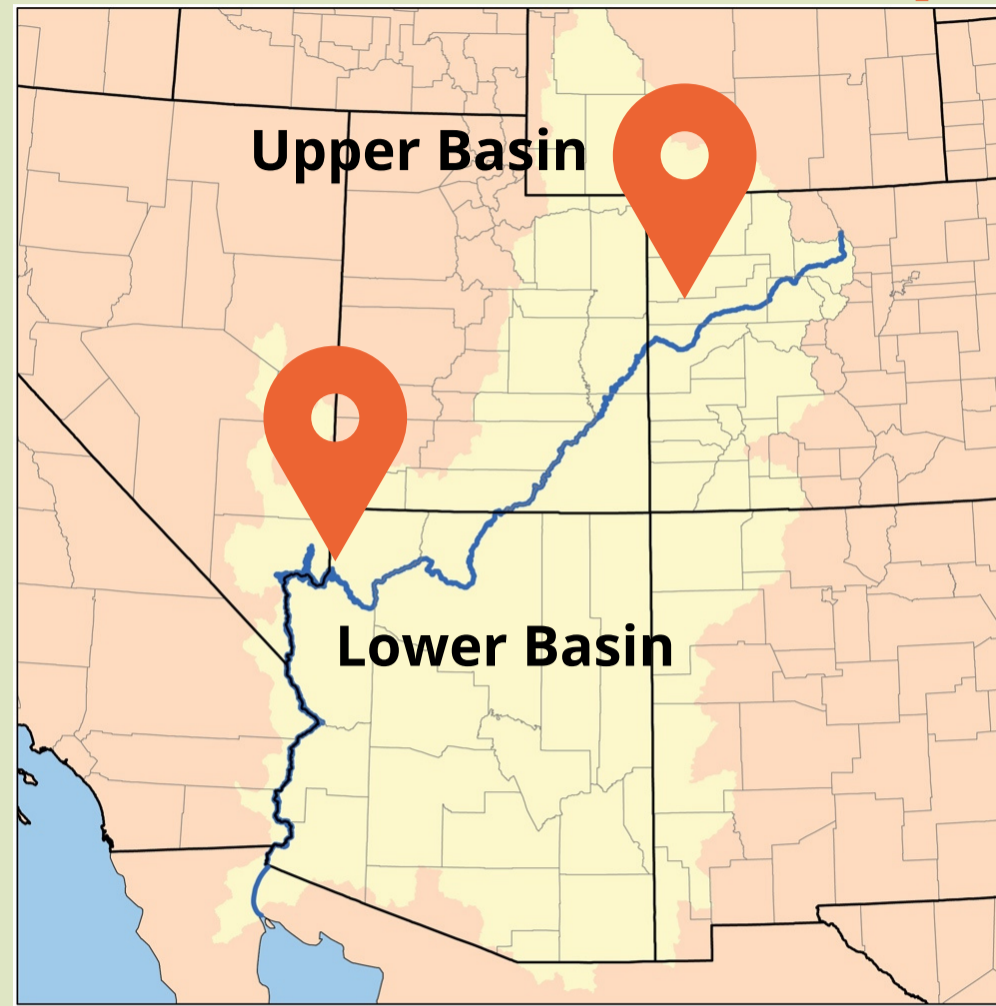


Colorado River

The Colorado River is being depleted through overallocation and over withdrawal from the water table as well as a decrease in the Rocky Mountain snowpack due to global warming.

Colorado River Map



More water is exported from the Colorado River Basin than any other river basin in the United States

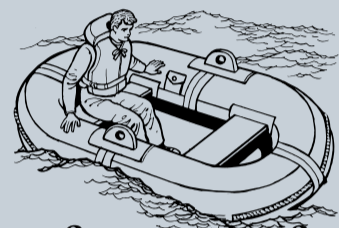
Seven states draw water from the Colorado River, **Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada, Arizona, and California**

90% of winter vegetables in the US are grown using water from the Colorado River

40 million people rely on the Colorado River and its tributaries for **municipal water** use and 5.5 millions acres of land rely on the water for **irrigation**.

The lower basin is experiencing an 11 year-long drought while the basin as a whole has been in a **drought for two decades**.

Social



Used by millions of people for recreational activities year round (water sports to snow sports) which generates billions of dollars of revenue

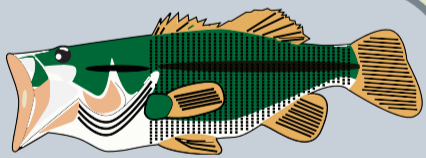
Economical



Supports \$1.4 trillion annually in economic activity and 16 million jobs

"If just 10% of the river's water were unavailable for people, we would see a loss of \$143 billion in economic activity and 1.6 million jobs in just one year"

Ecological



Home to over 30 unique fish species, but about 50% are extinct or vulnerable

Key Processes

What is Being Done to Manage Water

international treaties, interstate compacts, and Supreme Court decrees

Bureau of Reclamation

Federal water projects like Glen Canyon Dam (Lake Powell) and Hoover Dam (Lake Mead)

Positive Feedback Loop

Rise in energy consumption

Overall increase in climate change

Decrease in water supply

investments in energy-intensive water solutions

Solutions

Municipal Conservation and Reuse

- Could save 2.2 million acre-feet of water
- Can happen through better landscaping techniques, rebate programs, and installing new appliances or fixtures

Changing agricultural practices

- could save up to 1 million acre-feet of water
- regulated irrigation, rotational fallowing, crop shifting, and water banking

Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan

Passed in 2019, it brought water cuts to the lower basin and new water management tools to the upper basin w/ 3 basic elements

- Extended operations. Federal reservoirs upstream of Lake Powell – Flaming Gorge, Aspinall and Navajo Reservoirs – would release additional water for storage and use in Lake Powell.
- System augmentation. Enhanced cloud seeding and accelerated removal of non-native vegetation such as tamarisk.
- Demand management. Additional conservation by municipal and irrigation users and deficit irrigation or fallowing by agricultural users

Next Steps

Visit watercalculator.org to calculate your own water footprint at home

Visit the U.S. Geological Survey website to learn about the 3-year study that took place and the main components of the basins water budget, such as evapotranspiration losses, snowpack hydrodynamics, water use, and groundwater discharge to streams

Find an organization that is working to help your local water infrastructure (through friends, social media, or online research), and encourage others to join in

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