

## Issue of the Week: Colorado River Compact

June 16, 2023

### What is the issue?

Due to lower precipitation yields and persistent over-allocation to lower basin states, water levels in Lakes Mead and Powell have dropped to critically low levels. Under the Colorado River Compact, seven states established allocation quotas for upper-basin (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming) and lower-basin states (Arizona, California, and Nevada). The upper basin states do not draw upon their full allocations.

### Why is it important to business?

Legislation, initiatives, and administrative actions by federal, state, and local governments to limit business retention and growth through the reallocation of water resources or limitations upon water development should be opposed. Likewise, the Chamber opposes federal laws and administrative actions which impede the allocation and beneficial use of Colorado water. [Where We Stand 2023]

### How does it affect business?

Ninety percent of all Coloradans and businesses rely upon the Colorado River through direct allocation and trans-basin diversions. Any prescribed reductions to the allocation formula for the State of Colorado could result in significant economic harm to Northern Colorado.

**Business's Role:** While continuing to pursue voluntary efforts to reduce water demand, the business community must impress the need for lower basin states to come into compliance with the Compact among elected officials and policymakers at every level of government.

**Learn More:** <https://www.watereducation.org/aquapedia-background/colorado-river-compact>  
<https://watercenter.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2021/11/CoWC-CR-Papers-Final-11032021.pdf>



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