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**2001 ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE  
COLORADO RIVER BASIN  
SALINITY CONTROL PROGRAM**

**COLORADO RIVER BASIN  
SALINITY CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**December 31, 2001**

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**ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE  
COLORADO RIVER BASIN  
SALINITY CONTROL PROGRAM**

**2001**

**COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY  
CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**December 31, 2001**

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## BACKGROUND

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council (Council) was established pursuant to Section 204 of Public Law 93-320, the "Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974" (Act). The Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior (Interior) and Agriculture (Agriculture) and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) originally approved a charter for the Council on February 6, 1976. It was revised on June 22, 1976 and has been renewed biennially. A copy of the Advisory Council Charter is included as Attachment A.

The Council is comprised of up to three members from each of the seven Colorado River Basin States. Governors of their respective states appoint the members. The Council membership list is included as Attachment B. The Council is to "advise the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior (Interior) and Agriculture (Agriculture) and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on all matters relating to efficient and timely planning and execution of salinity control measures and procedures specified in the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (Public Law 93-320, Title II, as amended by Public Law 98-569)."

Advisory Council membership is similar to the membership of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum). The Forum is an organization created in 1973 by the seven Colorado River Basin States for the purpose of fostering interstate cooperation and to provide the states with the information necessary to comply with the Water Quality Standards for the Colorado River and Section 303 of the Clean Water Act.

This report provides annual recommendations to the federal agencies concerning the progress of the Salinity Control Program and the need for specific actions by involved federal agencies. This report comments on the actions taken by the federal agencies through December 31, 2001.

The report does not contain a full description and analysis of the Salinity Control Program. Readers who are not familiar with the Salinity Control Program are referred to *Quality of Water, Colorado River Basin, Progress Report No. 20, January 2001*, and the *1999 Review, Water Quality Standards for Salinity, Colorado River System, June 1999 and Supplemental Report, October 1999*. The first report can be obtained at [www.uc.usbr.gov/progact/salinity/index.html](http://www.uc.usbr.gov/progact/salinity/index.html) or by contacting David P. Trueman, the Salinity Program Manager for the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). The second and third reports can be obtained by contacting Jack A. Barnett, the Executive Director for the

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum. The addresses and phone numbers for Reclamation and the Forum are provided at the beginning of this report.

The Council met in Phoenix, Arizona on November 7 and 8, 2001. At that meeting, the Council received reports from and made inquiries of the federal agencies involved in salinity control and approved the budget recommendations contained in this report. The Council appreciates receiving, prior to the actual meeting, the written federal agencies' reports detailing their accomplishments for the year. The Council recognizes that this "Federal Accomplishments Report" by the federal agencies is not required by federal mandate, but the Council believes a more complete and focused discussion by the Council members at the meeting can be accomplished with the written reports provided in advance of the annual Council meeting. The Council recommends that in future reports the agencies limit their discussions to their accomplishments and not focus as much on process related activities. The Council expresses its appreciation to the federal agencies for the preparation of the reports and recognizes that the reports reflect only a status of ongoing activities and in no way should be considered as an official report of any of the agencies. It is noted that some of the statistics provided are only preliminary and that the reporting year (a calendar year) is not yet complete at the time of the Council meeting.

Following the meeting, the Council left the record open for 30 days to allow for written comment by the public but no comments were received. The Council directed Dave Trueman to prepare and distribute to the members a summary of the meeting within sixty days following the meeting.

The federal responses to the 2000 Advisory Council Report are included as Attachment C.

## COUNCIL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Overview*

The implementation of the federal portion of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, as described in the *1999 Review, Water Quality Standards for Salinity, Colorado River System, June 1999* (1999 Review) and the *Supplemental Report, October 1999* prepared by the Forum, continues with mixed results. The Council urges each federal agency to more actively consult and coordinate with the other federal agencies having salinity control responsibilities and with the Forum and its

Work Group. The Council appreciates the efforts the agencies have made to keep the Council informed as to the organizational changes that have occurred over the year. The Council encourages the agencies to inform the Council of any additional changes at the earliest possible date.

The Council subscribes to the implementation plan described in the 1999 Review. The Council continues to be concerned that insufficient funding is being requested by the federal agencies. This lack of funding continues to cause delays in the implementation of salinity control reduction measures. These measures, when in place, will provide substantial benefits to Basin water users in the United States and Mexico. It is imperative that the federal agencies request from Congress the funds necessary to carry out the salinity control activities set forth in the 1999 Review.

### ***Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)***

The Basinwide Program continues to move successfully ahead by providing cost-effective projects that control salinity. With the increase in the cost ceiling provided by Congress in 2000, it is expected to do so for many years.

The Council continues to be concerned that a computer model to be used to predict salinity trends into the future is not available. In the past, this model has been a key element in developing the salinity control Plan of Implementation. The Council recognizes that a considerable amount of time and effort has been expended on the preparation of an updated model but until the task is completed this tool is of no value. The Council feels that the model used to make those predictions must be as accurate as possible. In the past, Reclamation's efforts have, in part, focused on software development. However, the data used to run the model are key to accurate forecasts and have not received sufficient attention to date. The Council recommends that Reclamation make every effort necessary to ensure a reliable model is developed.

The Council recommends in the Management and Budget Recommendations portion of this report that the Reclamation portion of the federal program be accelerated to reduce downstream damages and to further reduce the possibility of excursions above the numeric criteria. The Council requests that Reclamation ask for an increased appropriation in FY 2003 and FY 2004 as shown in Table 1 of this report.

The Council asks that Reclamation respond in writing to recommendations contained in this report by May 1, 2002.

***Bureau of Land Management (BLM)***

The Council has serious reservation about the BLM's commitment to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. For the last few years the Council was encouraged by the direction it thought the BLM was taking with its program but based on the report the Council received at the November Advisory Council meeting, the Council is no longer optimistic that the BLM understands its role within the program. The Council is not sure that the BLM understands that its participation in the program is mandated by the Salinity Control Act. The Act has been amended twice by Congress to state the intended role of the BLM. In light of this mandate, the Council recommends that the BLM reevaluate its role with respect to the program and use the current required report to Congress as a mechanism to define its future actions. The Council recommends that the BLM coordinate the development of its report to Congress with the Salinity Control Forum and other involved federal agencies. For this coordination to be effective, it needs to be on an ongoing basis until the final document is prepared for transmittal to Congress. It has now been twelve months since Congress passed legislation requiring the report and it appears that efforts to prepare the report to date have been mired in differences of opinion among BLM staff. The BLM's decisions to date to hold the writing of the report to a small inner circle of staff within the BLM rather than exposing the effort to some "sunshine" where others experienced in salinity control could make helpful comments has delayed the effort. The BLM must be most concerned with looking for creative and cost-effective ways to control salt on federal lands.

In the past, the Council recommended that the BLM add a specific criterion for evaluating salinity control to the guidelines for the BLM's land planning process. This criterion could include methods for identifying high priority watersheds and methodologies for predicting and calculating salt retention. This effort was started more than a decade ago. Watersheds were identified and a consensus was reached by a broad spectrum of state and federal participants that identified watersheds suitable for focused salinity control efforts. To date, the Council has not received a comprehensive written report on this subject and now requests that one be prepared.



After recent discussion between BLM representatives and the Forum's Work Group and after the recent dialogue between the BLM representative and the Advisory Council, it has become apparent that a full technical review of methodologies used by the BLM to predict salt contribution from these lands it manages is needed. The Advisory Council recommends that this occur with experts from other federal agencies and with representatives from the Forum's Work Group being involved.

The Council urges the BLM to investigate the opportunity for creating a full-time Salinity Coordinator for the Colorado River Basin similar to the position created by the USDA. This position could be used to coordinate BLM activities within the Basin and to educate and assist field personnel on how to identify and quantify salinity reducing activities. The USDA has designated a full-time Western Salinity Coordinator who is housed in Reclamation's offices in Salt Lake City. The coordination accomplished has been very helpful to the overall federal efforts. For many years there has been identified within the BLM budget \$800,000 for focused salinity control efforts. There has never been an accounting of how these funds have been expended. For about one-eighth of this total, the USDA Salinity Coordinator position has been funded. The Council now requests that a small portion of the \$800,000 be used for the employment of a BLM Salinity Coordinator and that an accounting to the Council now be made as to past use of these funds and that budgets be present as to how these funds are planned to be used in the future.

The Council requests the BLM to seek funding for salt reduction projects administered either solely by the BLM or in cooperation with state and other federal agencies. The Council asks for a response to this request.

The Council continues to encourage the BLM to identify and plug flowing saline wells on public lands and requests that the BLM continue to monitor and report these activities. The Council also recommends that when reporting salinity retention efforts in the future there be identified ancillary benefits to both domestic stock and wildlife. The role of livestock vs. the impact of wildlife (deer, elk, burros etc.) also needs to be examined.

The Council requests a written report responding to all of the above recommendations herein by May 1, 2002.

*U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)*

The Council, for several years, has expressed concerns about the diminishing USGS role in the gaging station program in the Colorado River Basin. The Council is pleased to hear that some funding has been restored to the gaging program. The Council recommends that part of that funding be directed to the Colorado River Basin, where the USGS has a significant role in fulfilling the federal obligation to assess the progress and effectiveness of the Salinity Control Program through data collection, analysis and study. If the USGS were to fully fund from its budget essential gages, then funds appropriated to implementing agencies could be used for program implementation rather than payments to the USGS for gaging activities.

The Council also notes that the USGS plays an important role in documenting salinity reductions that have been accomplished and in determining whether there are trends in salinity concentration. The Council is appreciative of this role and urges the USGS to continue to have its professional staff perform these key analyses.

The Council requests a written report responding to the recommendations herein by May 1, 2002.

*U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)*

The USFWS has most recently reviewed the ongoing efforts in some areas to replace incidental wildlife values foregone. The USFWS was, to a large degree, reliant on information provided by the USDA in Monitoring and Evaluation reports. It appears that in some areas the Monitoring & Evaluation report information was not complete or was not in a form that made the comparison of replacement efforts between areas easy. The USFWS is urged to work with the USDA to simplify and standardize the Monitoring & Evaluation reports in this regard.

In the above process, USFWS representatives discussed with the Forum's Work Group concepts that compare on-site restoration at discrete small areas with the potential for more meaningful efforts in controlled large areas. For example, small pockets of replacement areas are developed in areas that might soon become eliminated by land use change. The Council urges the USFWS to continue this evaluation effort.

The USBR and the Salinity Control Program have recently completed a demonstration project in which the value of both salinity and selenium control were analyzed. It may be helpful if experts from the USGS, the BLM and the USFWS attempt to better understand the geochemistry and the processes by which the Mancos Shale loads salinity and selenium into the hydrologic system. This knowledge could assist future efforts to control areas where maximum benefits can be obtained for both selenium and salinity control.

The Council requests a written report responding to the recommendations herein by May 1, 2002.

***U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)***

The Council appreciates the funds that the USDA makes available for salinity control. The Council recognizes that there is a great deal of competition for funding under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) but continues to be concerned that the current funding is not adequate. The USDA projects are very cost effective and with additional funding additional salt reduction could be realized. The Council is again recommending a \$12 million funding level. This funding recommendation is necessary to move forward with the Plan of Implementation contained in the 1999 Review, *Water Quality Standards for Salinity, Colorado River System, June 1999*. The Council is encouraged by the ongoing discussions relating to the reauthorization of the farm bill and will continue to support additional funding for Colorado River Basin Salinity Control. The Council notes that significant state cost sharing funds are available and the expenditure of these funds, by federal law, must wait for federal appropriations.

The Council, the Salinity Forum and the Basin States have been diligent in urging Congress to appropriate the full \$200 million for the nationwide EQIP program. It has been noted that when the overall funding is reduced by the Congress, as it has been in the past to \$174 million, the Salinity Program takes a proportionate cut in funding and this reduced funding adds to the shortfall in accomplishments by the USDA in the salinity program. USDA management has suggested that the program proponents should urge the Congress to appropriate the full \$200 million to shore up the funding for salinity control. With the strong urging of the proponents (and many others nationwide), the Congress did appropriate the full \$200 million for FY 02. Recently it has come to light that the Secretary has been given some discretion to redirect a portion of the appropriated funds to other programs and informally we have been told that some of the FY 02 appropriation will be spent on other programs. If this is in fact the case, the Council requests the Department provide a full

explanation of this process and an analysis of the fund reduction the Salinity Control Program will receive as a result of this exercising of the Secretary's discretion. Further, the Council asks that the Department report on opportunities that are available to the Department to restore in FY 03 the Salinity Control Program's portion of these funds.

The Council is pleased with the USDA staff's participation in the Forum's ranking process used to make recommendations to the USDA as to the allocation of EQIP funds and its division between the states of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. To ensure that these annual recommendations are timely and accurate, the Council requests that field personnel be asked to provide the USDA Salinity Coordinator with more timely and assured accurate data.

The Council continues to appreciate the appointment of a USDA Salinity Coordinator. The Council has already seen the value of this individual in coordinating the USDA salinity efforts in the Basin. Having the USDA Salinity Coordinator located in Salt Lake City where he can directly interact with the USBR is most valuable. The Council urges the USDA to make the Salinity Coordinator position a permanent assignment.

The Council requests written responses to all concerns raised concerning the USDA program in this report by May 1, 2002.

#### ***U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)***

The Council continues to be concerned with how the USEPA is administering the NPDES permits for which it has responsibility within the Basin. While the NPDES program is a small component of the Plan of Implementation, it is still important. The Council recognizes that this responsibility is located in three different Regions within the USEPA, making coordination more cumbersome. The Council feels that the USEPA must find a way to enhance its coordination and ensure the Forum policies are applied consistently in all the Regions. One way to assist in this coordination would be to have USEPA personnel more regularly attend the Forum and Advisory Council meetings. The Council notes that the Forum is considering changes to its policies with respect to NPDES permits and that the USEPA's participation is most important in the next six months with respect to this subject. The Council also notes that the USEPA's participation is also most important during the recently commenced triennial review process.

The Council requests written responses to all concerns raised in this report concerning the USEPA by May 1, 2002. The Council further requests that next year in the federal accomplishments report the EPA focus on accomplishments and not processes.

## **MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

The funding levels contained in this report are consistent with and support the conclusions regarding the funding required to accomplish the Plan of Implementation adopted by the Forum in its 1999 Review, including the elimination of the shortfall in salinity control. Unlike other federal programs, the Salinity Control Program provides a significant amount of non-federal cost sharing. The states provide 30% cost share from the Upper Basin Fund and Lower Basin Development Fund. In addition to the states' cost share, the local farmers cost share in the USDA on-farm program. The non-federal participants (the states, landowners, irrigation districts, etc.) again stand ready in FY 2003 to contribute their share of the program costs as an up-front payment. The Council urges the federal agencies to vigorously pursue adequate funding so as to allow timely implementation of the Salinity Control Program in an aggressive and cost-effective manner.

Table 2 contains the Council's recommendations for the federal cost share for FY 2003 and FY 2004. These funds are for the construction activities necessary to meet the program objectives. The Council will forward these recommendations to the Congress and will seek their support for maintaining adequate funding for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. The Council wishes to emphasize that shortfalls in these funding levels will have to be offset by increased funding in subsequent years. In addition, delays in the funding of the Salinity Control Program will result in much larger federal and non-federal expenditures to achieve and maintain the water quality objectives for the Colorado River.

The funding recommendations contained in Table 2 are for the federal portion of project implementation costs only. The Council urges the agencies to provide adequate funding to support operation and maintenance, technical and education assistance, monitoring and evaluation of implemented projects and planning for future projects. The Council recommends that funds for these activities be provided in addition to the funds recommended in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**FEDERAL FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

	Fiscal Years	
	2003	2004
<b>DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR</b>		
Bureau of Reclamation <sup>1</sup>	\$17,500,000	\$17,500,000
Bureau of Land Management <sup>2</sup>	\$5,200,000	\$5,200,000
<b>DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE<sup>3</sup></b>	\$12,000,000	\$12,000,000
<b>TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION</b>	\$34,700,000	\$34,700,000
Notes:		
1	The Council anticipates that Reclamation will also budget sufficient funds for required operation and maintenance of constructed units and for plan formulation.	
2	The Council anticipates that BLM will also budget sufficient funds for inventory and ranking, planning, maintenance, monitoring, evaluation, and support.	
3	The Council anticipates that USDA will also budget sufficient funds for administration, technical assistance, education, monitoring, and evaluation.	

### CONCLUSION

The Council understands and accepts the responsibility for providing recommendations to the federal agencies on salinity control activities. With the noted exceptions, the Council is generally pleased with the agency efforts put forth in 2001 and looks forward to further success in the coming year. There are two notable exceptions. Insufficient funding provided to the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior is a serious impediment to effective program implementation. The Council expresses disappointment in the USDA's management decisions, if in fact it has occurred, where by discretion given to the Secretary funds were diverted away from the Salinity Control Program. The Council requests that written responses to this year's report be provided by **May 1, 2002** so that the Council and the federal agencies can cooperatively and expeditiously continue to carry out this important Basinwide water quality improvement program.

## Attachment A

### COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL

#### CHARTER

1. The Council shall be known as the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council.
2. The Council will advise the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior (Interior) and Agriculture (Agriculture) and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on all matters relating to efficient and timely planning and execution of salinity control measures and procedures specified in the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (Public Law 93-320, Title II, as amended by Public Law 98-569).
3. The Council shall remain active through the planning and construction of the features authorized under Title II which are projected to the year 2015.
4. The Council shall report to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture and the Administrator of EPA.
5. The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) shall coordinate the support activities for the Council.
6. The Commissioner of Reclamation, or his representative, shall act as the Designated Federal Official for the Council.
7. The Council shall serve in an advisory capacity only and shall:
  - a. Receive reports from the Secretary of the Interior on the progress of the salinity control program and review and comment on said reports.
  - b. Provide advice through review and comment on progress, plans, research, and related salinity control activities conducted under Title II.
  - c. Serve a liaison function between the Basin States, Interior, Agriculture, and EPA.
  - d. Recommend to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, and the Administrator of EPA the study of new projects, techniques, and methods that may facilitate salinity control in the basin.
8. The estimated annual operating expenses are expected to be less than \$5,000 per year, including the travel and per diem of some Council members and Interior employees while attending meetings and other scheduled activities of the Council, and for expenses incurred in the recording and reproduction of the minutes, reports, notices, etc. There are no FTE allocated as staff support.
9. There will be no Federal financial support for Council members who are employees of State or local governments. Travel costs and per diem will, however, be paid to private citizens with such payments to be governed by the Federal travel regulations.
10. Membership on the Council is specified in the authorizing statute as being comprised of no more than three representatives from each of the seven Basin States (Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and California). The representatives will serve at the discretion of the Governors of the States involved, with the membership balanced in terms of points of view represented and functions to be performed.
11. The Council is expected to meet, to review program activities and conduct related business, no less than once a year, with other meetings called as deemed necessary by the Council or the Designated Federal Official.

The duties and functions of the Council will extend beyond the termination period of the charter because of the timeframe for the planning and construction of the Title II features, as required by section 14 (a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. Appended.

## Attachment B

### ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

#### ARIZONA

Linda Taunt  
Phoenix, Arizona

Larry R. Dozier  
Phoenix, Arizona

Thomas G. Carr  
Phoenix, Arizona

#### NEVADA

Allen Biaggi  
Carson City, Nevada

Phillip Lehr  
Las Vegas, Nevada

Freeman Johnson  
Carson City, Nevada

#### WYOMING

Dan S. Budd  
Big Piney, Wyoming

Patrick T. Tyrrell  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Gary Beach  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

#### CALIFORNIA

Gerald R. Zimmerman  
Glendale, California

Duane L. Georgeson  
Los Angeles, California

Walter G. Pettit  
Sacramento, California

#### NEW MEXICO

Thomas C. Turney  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

#### UTAH

D. Larry Anderson  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dallin W. Jensen  
Salt Lake City, Utah

#### COLORADO

Rod Kuharich  
Denver, Colorado

Jay B. Pitkin  
Salt Lake City, Utah

David W. Robbins  
Denver, Colorado



**Attachment C**

**Federal Responses to 2000 Advisory Council Report**

MAY 0 6 2001



## United States Department of the Interior

### BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Upper Colorado Regional Office  
125 South State Street, Room 6107  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1102

IN REPLY REFER TO

UC-240  
RES-9:00

MAY 03 2001

Mr. Larry R. Dozier, Chairman  
Colorado River Basin  
Salinity Control Advisory Council  
PO Box 43020  
Phoenix, AZ 85080-3020

Dear Mr. <sup>LARRY</sup>Dozier:

On behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, thank you for your letter dated March 5, 2001, conveying the 2000 Annual Report of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council. The Council asked that Reclamation respond to their recommendations by May 11, 2001.

Reclamation shares the Council's concern that funding of the USDA program has been inadequate to keep pace with Reclamation's aggressive funding of combined USDA/BOR sprinkler projects in Utah. This has been a major bottleneck to our mutual desire to increase the rate of implementation of the salinity program. To address this issue, the participating states and federal agencies have been working together to reallocate funds toward these very cost-effective projects. Last year we were successful at reallocating Basin States cost sharing funds to accelerate the construction of these facilities. In FY-01, the USDA has moved additional priority funds to Utah to help with this problem. We will continue to work with the other federal agencies and Basin States to address this challenge.

Regarding our salinity modeling efforts, Reclamation is now in the process of updating its 20 year old model of the Colorado River in cooperation with the Basin States through our technical modeling subcommittee. Two decades of experience and data collection will allow us to make some major refinements to our salinity model. We now have sufficient data to recalibrate the model to match more recent (post-impoundment) salinity conditions. With the assistance of Ms. Brenda Kinkel in our Denver office, we have completed the consumptive uses and losses study through 1995. We are now inputting this data into the model so that we may then back calculate the natural flow database. Once the water side of the model has been updated, we will then calibrate the salinity side of the model to current salinity conditions (taking into account all the many small unmeasured changes that may impact salt loading). These improvements are being implemented by Mr. Terry Fulp (LC employee) and Mr. Jim Prairie (UC employee).

The final recommendation contained in the report is for Reclamation to request \$17.5 million in federal funding for the Reclamation portion of the program. Our shared program has a great reputation for effectiveness, economy, flexibility, and enjoys local, state, and federal support. Reclamation will carefully consider this recommendation and progress on the USDA backlog addressed above, salinity conditions in the Basin, and the many other demands on its budget when requesting funds within its budget process. Reclamation truly appreciates the support of the Council and looks forward to a bright future.

Sincerely,



Rick L. Gold  
Regional Director

✓ cc: Jack Barnett  
Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum  
106 West 500 South, Suite 101  
Bountiful, UT 84010



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Washington, D.C. 20240

May 4, 2001

In Reply Refer To  
7240 (220)

Mr. Larry R. Dozier  
Chairman, Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council  
Central Arizona Water Conservation District  
P.O. Box 43020  
Phoenix, Arizona 85080-3020

Dear Mr. Dozier:

Thank you for the recommendations recently received as part of the 2000 Annual Report on the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. We have reviewed the 2000 Annual Report of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control (CRBSC) Advisory Council, and have the following comments on the section pertaining to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The comments are listed by topic.

**Specific Criteria for Evaluating Salinity in the BLM Planning Process:**

The BLM is mandated to comply with water quality standards and also identifies area-wide Best Management Practices or other protective measures to meet state and tribal water quality requirements. Salinity, or total dissolved solids, is just one of many constituents that the BLM may address under water quality requirements.

**Education and Training of Field Personnel:**

The BLM engages in several activities designed to educate Field personnel in the area of nonpoint source pollution control, including salinity control. The BLM conducts an annual salinity coordinator's meeting to promote internal consistency and improve communication. The BLM continues to sponsor workshops on soil erosion modeling. These workshops are held in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and the Agricultural Research Service. The purpose of these workshops is to inform and train BLM personnel on the latest developments in soil erosion modeling. The BLM also provides training through our nonpoint source pollution course. The BLM representative to the salinity workgroup is an instructor in that class.

**Tracking Salt Retention and Cost Effectiveness Computations:**

During FY99, the BLM made major changes in accounting for salt retention, in monitoring Soil, Water and Air program funds, and in computing cost effectiveness of salt savings associated with land management measures and projects. These changes were implemented in part based upon

the BLM consideration of past recommendations by the CRBSC Advisory Council. The BLM will continue to use these methods in our reporting to the Council. In particular, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the BLM met in March 1999, to discuss consistent methods of computing cost effectiveness for salinity measures and projects, and to hear the description of the computations that the BOR has used for many years. Representatives of these agencies discussed this method and concurred that it should be used by the NRCS and the BLM.

**Report to Congress and Water Quality Initiatives:**

The BLM is looking forward to working with the Forum's work group on the Report to Congress. We particularly look forward to clearly defining, and establishing a credible scientific and technical quantification of the BLM's potential to effectively reduce salt loading to the Colorado River System. The Report to Congress will describe the relation between the BLM's salinity program with other water quality initiatives. The BLM is proposing a timetable for producing the Report during May 2002. A discussion draft of the timetable for producing this Report is included as Attachment 1, and it will be discussed with the CRBSC Forum at their May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting in Wyoming.

**Plugging of Wells:**

The BLM has consistently placed higher emphasis on point source control of salts over nonpoint sources, and we expect to continue this approach. We will continue to report all well plugging activities that result in salt reductions to the Colorado River system.

We appreciate the Advisory Council's recommendations concerning the BLM's continuing salinity retention efforts. We look forward to working with the Advisory Council and the work group on reporting of accomplishments that pertain to salinity management in the Colorado River system.

If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Lee Barkow at (303) 236-1142.

Sincerely,

/s/

Enclosures

Henri R. Bisson  
Assistant Director,  
Renewable Resources and Planning

**ATTACHMENT 1  
 PROPOSED SCHEDULE  
 BLM REPORT TO CONGRESS  
 COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL**

BLM MEET WITH FORUM/WORKGROUP TO DISCUSS REQUIREMENTS .....	May 17, 2001
BLM NOTIFY CONGRESS OF COMPLETION SCHEDULE .....	June 1, 2001
UPDATE DATA FROM BASIN STATES 45 DAYS .....	July 31, 2001
NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER (NSTC) PRODUCE DRAFT # 1 .....	August 10, 2001
COMPLETE FIRST BLM INTERNAL REVIEW .....	September 14, 2001
NSTC PRODUCE DRAFT # 2 .....	September 28, 2001
COMPLETE FIRST REVIEW BY FORUM/BOR/NRCS/USGS/BLM/OTHERS .....	October 22 2001
CONSULT WITH FORUM/BOR/NRCS/USGS/OTHERS ON EXTERNAL REVIEW .....	October 23, 2001
ITC PRODUCE DRAFT # 3 .....	October 31, 2001
COMPLETE ADDITIONAL REVIEW BY FORUM/BOR/NRCS/USGS/BLM/OTHERS .....	November 16, 2001
NSTC PRODUCE FINAL REPORT/TRANSMIT TO WASHINGTON OFFICE (WO) .....	December 5, 2001
APPROVAL BY WO RANGELANDS, SOIL AND WATER GROUP .....	December 19, 2001
APPROVAL BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, RENEWABLE RESOURCES AND PLANNING .....	January 31, 2002
APPROVAL BY DIRECTOR BLM .....	February 18, 2002
APPROVAL BY DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SOLICITOR .....	March 14, 2002
APPROVAL BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, LANDS AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT .....	April 5, 2002
APPROVAL BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, POLICY/MANAGEMENT/BUDGET .....	April 26, 2002
COMPLETE PRINTING OF FINAL REPORT .....	May 17, 2002
TRANSMIT REPORT TO CONGRESS FROM DOI .....	May 22, 2002
TRANSMIT REPORT TO FORUM .....	June 1, 2002



## United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
Office of the Director  
Reston, Virginia 20192

In Reply Refer To:  
Mail Stop 440  
#20010257

RECEIVED  
MAY 21 2001  
CHEYENNE, WYOMING

MAY 14 2001

Mr. Larry R. Dozier, Chairman  
Colorado River Basin Salinity Control  
Advisory Council  
P.O. Box 43020  
Phoenix, Arizona 85080-3020

Dear Mr. Dozier:

Your letter of March 5, 2001, to Secretary Norton has been referred to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for response. We appreciate the opportunity to review and respond to the recommendations presented in the 2000 Annual Report on the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program with respect to the activities of the USGS. The collection and dissemination of accurate long-term streamflow and water-quality data are the primary functions of the USGS. Among many other uses, these data are necessary to document the effectiveness of salinity control measures.

The USGS shares the Council's concern regarding erosion of the USGS monitoring network in the Colorado River Basin. Overall, the national streamgaging and water-quality monitoring networks operated by the USGS have been adjusting to level and declining funds over the last two decades. Adjustments have been made through eliminating stations and decreasing sampling frequencies at remaining stations. Declines in USGS monitoring in the Colorado River Basin simply mirror these national trends.

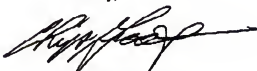
The USGS was fortunate to receive additional funds in the fiscal year 2001 budget to increase Federal support nationwide for the streamgaging network. As a result, 5 new streamgaging stations were added, 2 streamgaging stations were improved to better withstand floods, and 10 streamgaging stations received instrument upgrades to improve delivery of data in the Colorado River Basin. A list of the new and upgraded stations is provided in Enclosure 1. Water-quality activities remained unchanged from our last report. We are hopeful that we will be able to continue increasing the number of monitoring sites we fund in future years.

We want to assure the Council that whenever a USGS district office encounters a situation that requires a reduction in existing monitoring, every effort is made to find alternative funding sources to continue the monitoring. Discussions that involve all interested stakeholders are held in an attempt to keep the threatened monitoring intact. In virtually all cases, these discussions involve the key State agencies that are responsible for water resources.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Mr. Myron Brooks, the USGS District Chief for Wyoming. Mr. Brooks may be reached at:

Mr. Myron H. Brooks  
District Chief  
U.S. Geological Survey  
2617 E. Lincolnway  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001  
(307) 778-2931 extension 2728  
[mhb Brooks@usgs.gov](mailto:mhb Brooks@usgs.gov)

Sincerely,



Charles G. Groat  
Director

Enclosure

Copy to: Mr. Myron H. Brooks



AZ	09469500	Gila River below Coolidge Dam, AZ	Flood Harden	FY2000
AZ	09486350	Canada Del Oro below Ina Road near Tucson, AZ	Upgrade	FY2001 Base
AZ	09470500	San Pedro River at Palomares	Upgrade	FY2001 Base
AZ	09486900	Santa Cruz River at Cortaro, AZ	Upgrade	FY2001 Base
AZ	09508500	Verde River below Tangle Creek AZ	Flood Harden	FY2001 Increase
AZ		Gila River at Duncan, AZ	New	FY2001 Increase
CO	09253000	Little Snake River Near Slater, CO	Reactivate	FY2001 Increase
NM	09386500	La Plata River at Colorado/New Mexico Stateline, NM	Upgrade	FY2001 Increase
NV	094196783	Las Vegas Wash below Flamingo Wash confluence near Las Vegas, NV	Upgrade	FY2000
NV	09419674	Flamingo Wash at Decatur Blvd. at Las Vegas, NV	Upgrade	FY2001 Base
NV	09419665	Sloan Channel at Charleston Blvd near Las Vegas, NV	Upgrade	FY2001 Increase
UT	09405500	North Fork Virgin near Spangdale, UT	Upgrade	FY2000
UT	09333500	Dirty Devil River above Poison Spring, near Harksville, UT	Reactivate	FY2001 Base
UT	09277500	Duchesne River near Tabiona, UT	Upgrade	FY2001 Base
UT	09408195	Fort Pierce Wash Near St. George, UT	Reactivate	FY2001 Increase
WY	09220000	East Fork of Smiths Fork Near Robertson, WY	Upgrade	FY2001 Base
WY	09229500	Henrys Fork near Man'ia, UT	Reactivate	FY2001 Increase

MAY 29 2001



United States Department of the Interior  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
UTAH FIELD OFFICE  
LINCOLN PLAZA  
145 EAST 1300 SOUTH, SUITE 404  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84115

In Reply Refer To  
FWS/R6  
ES/UT

May 25, 2001

Mr. Larry R. Dozier  
Chairman, Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council  
Central Arizona Water Conservation District  
P.O. Box 43020  
Phoenix, Arizona 85080-3020

Dear Mr. Dozier:

Thank you for the recommendations recently received as part of the 2000 Annual Report on the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Annual Report). We have reviewed the Annual Report and have the following comments.

Henry R. Maddux, Utah Field Supervisor, will be the Fish and Wildlife Service's representative to the Forum. Lucy A. Jordan, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, will be the Service's representative to the Work Group.

The Service looks forward to a closer working relationship with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to help with development and implementation of wetland and wildlife resource projects to fulfill responsibilities to compensate for foregone values of these resources resulting from implementation of Salinity Control projects. To that end, we have been attending meetings to discuss the status of wetland and wildlife resource projects. We have also been collaborating with Mr. Travis James, recently appointed NRCS Salinity Control Program Coordinator, and Mr. Dave Trueman, BOR Salinity Control Program Coordinator, to determine how we may best provide input to the process of project development, prioritization, and implementation. We are encouraged by the interest and efforts of these agencies to fulfill wetland and wildlife resource compensation responsibilities.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Dr. Lucy Jordan at the letterhead address or telephone (801) 524-5001 ext. 143.

Sincerely,

Henry R. Maddux  
Utah Field Supervisor

cc: Dave Trueman, Bureau of Reclamation, 125 S. State Street, Room 6432, Salt Lake City,  
Utah 84138-1102

Jack A. Barnett, Executive Director, Executive Director, Colorado River Basin Salinity  
Control Program, 106 West 500 South, Suite 101, Bountiful, Utah 44010

APR 23 2001



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

P.O. Box 2890  
Washington, D.C.  
20013

APR 12 2001

Mr. Larry R. Dozier  
Chairman, Colorado River Basin  
Salinity Control Advisory Council  
Central Arizona Water Conservancy District  
Post Office Box 43020  
Phoenix, Arizona 85080-3020

Dear Mr. Dozier:

Thank you for your letter of March 5, 2001, to Secretary Veneman, regarding a copy of the Advisory Council's 2000 Annual Report on the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control (CRBSC) Program. Your letter has been referred to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for response.

As the Council has requested, NRCS will provide the names of the new Departmental contacts responsible for salinity control when they are announced. Currently, within NRCS, the contacts responsible for salinity control remain the same. Those contacts are as follows:

Thomas A. Weber, Deputy Chief for Programs; Mark W. Berkland, Director, Conservation Operations Division (COD); Dave Mason, Salinity Program Manager, COD, Washington, D.C.; and Travis James, Western Salinity Coordinator, Salt Lake City, Utah.

In deference to the \$12 million CRBSC funding request recommended by the Council, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding for these activities increased in 2000 over the 1999 levels. NRCS did allocate approximately \$5.8 million to the CRBSC program in fiscal year (FY) 2001 from the \$200 million EQIP budget. This is an increase of approximately \$650,000 from the FY 2000 EQIP funding of salinity control activities. Approximately \$620,000 of the \$5.8 million were non-salinity EQIP funds redirected into salinity project areas at the discretion of State Conservationists. Although the FY 2001 national demand for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is 3:1 (funding requests to actual funds available), NRCS was able to increase funding for addressing priority salinity natural resource concerns above that for other competing natural resource concerns. We anticipate being able to maintain the FY 2001 level of funding if EQIP is funded at \$200 million in FY 2002.

Mr. Larry R. Dozier

Page 2

Moreover, this achievement was particularly gained by using available financial assistance dollars to the fullest extent possible, for priority salinity natural resource concerns.

NRCS is very pleased with the effective leveraging of funds through the Basin States cost-share program. This leveraging of funds from the Basin States cost-share program, in conjunction with EQIP, has and will continue to greatly increase the rate of implementation of salinity control practices in the Basin. NRCS is willing to continue to work with the Work Group to obtain their input on a fiscal year basis for identifying how EQIP funds may be most cost-effectively spent in the Basin and in ensuring that contracts from producers for salinity control are processed in a timely manner.

NRCS is pleased that the Council appreciates the employing of a Basin Salinity Coordinator in July 2000. NRCS has received very positive reports of the Coordinator's efforts since his employment from the Forum, Work Group, and other individuals involved in salinity control efforts. Additionally, NRCS is pleased with the Forum's support of this position and their willingness to cost-share in the coordinator's position.

The Basin Salinity Coordinator has been tasked with improving communications with the cooperating Federal and State Agencies, providing better technical and financial coordination with NRCS managers at the local, State and national level, and identifying actions to improve the effectiveness of the salinity program. Progress is apparent in these areas.

The ranking process and criteria used to allocate EQIP funds are developed by the locally-led conservation groups, concurred in by the State Technical Committees, and recommended to the State Conservationists for their approval. The Advisory Council should continue to express their priorities to the affected locally-led work groups and State Technical Committees, so that your priorities are incorporated into the ranking process.

NRCS will give a more detailed breakdown of USDA accomplishments in 2001. The annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports are being revised to better display each State's progress in implementing measures by project area.

Mr. Larry R. Dozier  
Page 3

Work is progressing to develop a report for the FORUM that will highlight the past successes of the salinity program and identify opportunities and strategies to meet future needs. This document will be useful in communicating the salinity story to key congressional figures as deliberations for the next Farm Bill occur.

Sincerely,



MARK W. BERKLAND

Director

Conservation Operations Division

bc: (w/o copy of incoming correspondence)

Travis James, Basin Salinity Coordinator, NRCS, Salt Lake City, Utah

Dave Trueman, Salinity Program Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Salt Lake City, Utah

Jack A. Barnett, Executive Director, Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum,  
Bountiful, Utah

Michael Somerville, State Conservationist, NRCS, Phoenix, Arizona

Joan Perry, West Regional Conservationist, NRCS, Davis, California

Doug McKalip, Acting Director, Legislative Affairs Staff, NRCS, Washington, D.C.

MAY 11 2001



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 8  
999 18<sup>TH</sup> STREET - SUITE 300  
DENVER, CO 80202-2466  
<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

May 7, 2001

8EPR-EP

Larry R. Dozier, Chairman  
Colorado River Basin  
Salinity Control Advisory Council  
Central Arizona Water Conservancy District  
P.O. Box 43020  
Phoenix, Arizona 85080-3020

RE: Comments on 2000 Annual Report on the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Dear Mr. Dozier:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2000 Annual Report. Administrator Whitman has delegated the response to my attention. Enclosed, please find our specific comments on the report. Thank you for your positive comments on participation in Forum meetings and efforts to expedite water quality standards approvals that include the salinity reduction standards. Please contact Nathaniel J. Miullo of my staff at (303) 312-6233 if you have any further comments regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max Dodson".

Max Dodson  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Ecosystems Protection and Remediation

Enclosure

cc: Jack Barnett, Executive Director  
Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum  
Alexis Strauss, EPA Region 9  
David P. Trueman, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Russell Nelson, EPA Region 6  
Phil Woods, EPA Region 9

**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY COMMENTS**  
**2000 ANNUAL REPORT – COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL**  
**PROGRAM – May 11, 2001**

**1. Participation** - The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is pleased to be of support to the Council and the Forum's mission. The Council's note of appreciation (page 9) is acknowledged, and the current level of participation will continue as long as added value and resources for travel to Forum and Council meetings are available.

**2. Requests for Funds** - EPA is interested in any advice or specific requests that the Council and/or Forum may have with regard for increasing funds related to reducing water quality impacts from salinity. One such strategy would be to better coordinate Clean Water Act funded projects under the Non-Point Source Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act), with the EQIP programs. Other possibilities include evaluating ways to gather more information on CWA Section 319 projects that are salinity removal/control in nature. This would require the support and assistance of the states that administer that program as well as the EPA Regions involved in Forum activities. EPA will evaluate and act on, if appropriate, any specific proposals the Council may make. One example of a project that the 2000 Annual report identifies is the Ashley Valley Sewage Lagoon Replacement Project. While complex from an endangered species perspective, and a water loading perspective, projects such as the Ashley Valley project in Utah, funded by Section 319 or Safe Drinking Water Act "State Revolving Fund" may be opportunities for salt reduction. It would be of value to discuss with the Forum, perhaps in a workgroup setting, the possibilities of gathering data on projects within the Colorado River Basin that are also funded by these projects and salinity removal, control and/or reduction in nature.

**3. EPA Point of Contact** - Currently, the EPA point of contact will remain the same. Please send all correspondence to Nathaniel J. Miullo, Chief, Water Quality Unit, EPA-EP-WQU (address on letterhead), e-mail: [miullo.nat@epa.gov](mailto:miullo.nat@epa.gov). However, it is important to continue to assure that copies of all critical documents and e-mail announcements be sent to Russell Nelson of EPA Region 6 in Dallas, Texas as well as Phil Woods in Region 9, San Francisco. This is particularly important due to the fact that the NPDES policy of the Forum is currently being evaluated and will be under review. Coordination is important and a better effort will be made. The success measure of whether or not better coordination can be accomplished is also somewhat dependant on travel resources, but not entirely. It will be very important for the EPA contacts to be able to attend critical work group meetings where the NPDES program and emerging policy issues are discussed.

**4. NPDES Program** - The writing of the triennial report is near. In this report, the Forum has recommended that the NPDES policy be reviewed, and if necessary, revised. It will be very important to clearly identify the specific issues of concern in order to facilitate satisfactory outcomes. In the past, there has been some concern with regard to the approach taken by the Regions, as being inconsistent, or not accommodating information dissemination. Any request that the Council and/or the Forum has for NPDES permitting information will need to be processed through the Regional Offices and may also be looked at by the States who have been



authorized for the NPDES program and currently run it. We urge the Forum's Technical Workgroup and the new acting Forum Policy/NPDES Committee contact, Edward C. Anton, of the California State Water Resources Control Board to inform EPA of any specific informational interests as soon as possible. Adequate notice as to information needs is critical to be able to support a change in the Forum Policy on NPDES. Currently, there is a complex and important challenge that may face the NPDES permit writers for the Colorado River Basin. Coal Bed Methane development was discussed at the last Forum and Council meetings. While the current NPDES Forum Policy appears to primarily focus on a 1 ton/day or 350 tons/year of salt loading thresholds<sup>1</sup> it may be prudent also to begin monitoring another parameter in relationship to this significant energy development. The key indicator of designated use (under the Clean Water Act (CWA)), for agriculture, that must be evaluated and monitored for, is the Salinity Absorption Ratio (SAR), the relationship of sodium to calcium and magnesium.<sup>1</sup>

**5. Approval Process for Triennial Reviews** - EPA acknowledges the Council's appreciation of EPA's efforts to expedite its approval process (page 9). EPA is responding to many policy changes and resource impacts to approval of water quality standards (e.g. MOA between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) consultation on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the "Alaska Rule" implications under the Clean Water Act). However, EPA will continue to attempt to expedite the approval process by working closely with states and the Fish & Wildlife Service Field Offices to expedite reviews. EPA will be as involved with the 2002 review, the seven states as possible. An updated status report will be gathered soon from the Regions and states.

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<sup>1</sup>Relationship of Coal Bed Methane predictive scenarios for well development to salinity loading levels sent to Jack Barnett, Executive Director in October 9, 2000 in a letter from Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Administrator Gary Beach. Letter distributed by Jack Barnett under Forum Memorandum 00-87.

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Denver, CO 80225