

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## Colorado River Basin: Working Together to Address Challenges

Multi-State Salinity Coalition Annual Salinity Summit  
Las Vegas, NV  
March 2, 2017



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation

# Colorado River Basin Hydrology

- 16.5 million acre-feet (maf) allocated annually
- 13 to 14.5 maf of consumptive use annually
- 14.8 maf average annual “natural” inflow into Lake Powell over past 110 years
- Inflow is highly variable year-to-year
  - Snowmelt dominated system
- Approximately 60 maf of storage



RECLAMATION

# WaterSMART Basin Studies Program

- Authorized by Section 9503 of the SECURE Water Act, which was passed in 2009
- Reclamation works collaboratively with non-Federal partners to evaluate current and future water supply and demand imbalances in a changing climate and identify adaptation strategies to meet future water demands.
- Eligible applicants include States, tribes, water districts, cities, and other local governmental entities with water delivery or management authority located in the 17 Western States
- Requires 50/50 cost-share
- In 2009, the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study was funded
- Reclamation has funded 23 studies to date

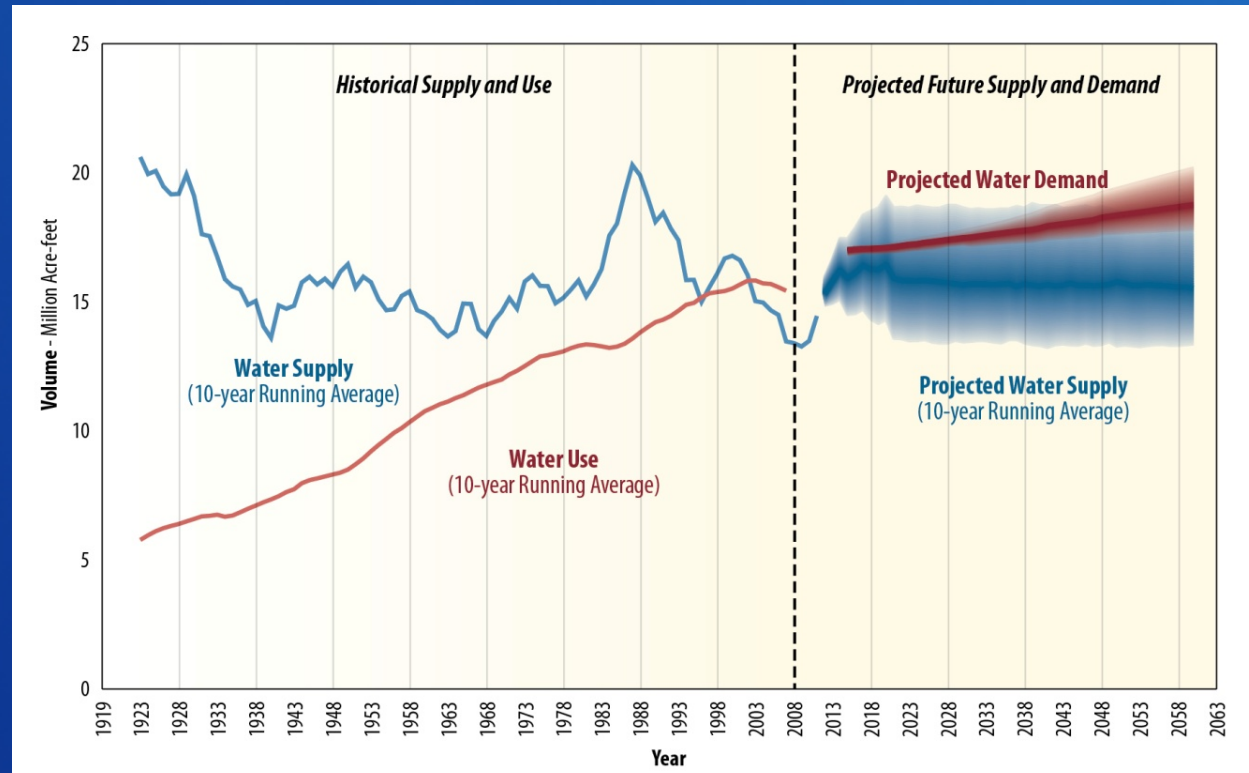
RECLAMATION

# Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study

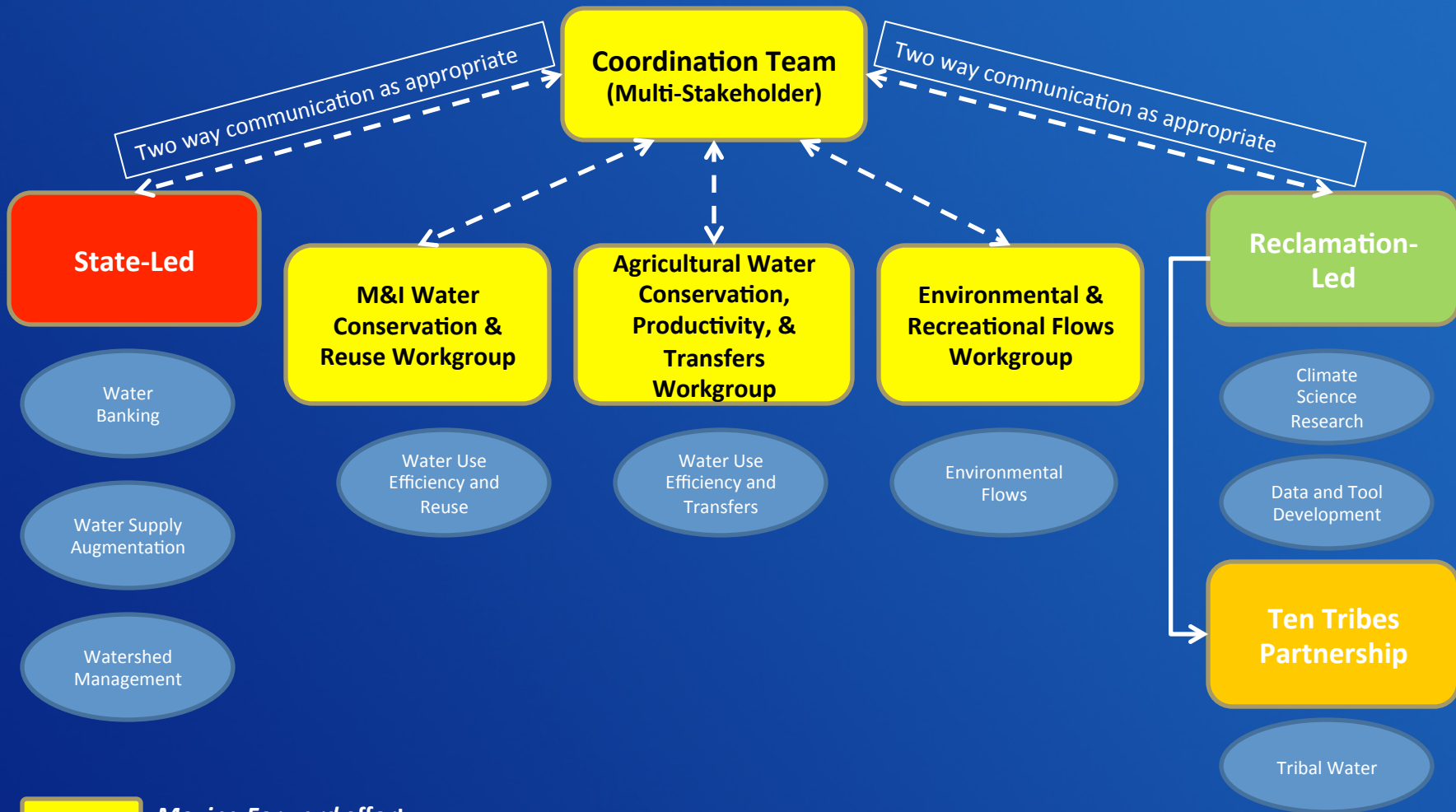
- Study Objective
  - Assess future water supply and demand imbalances over the next 50 years
  - Develop and evaluate opportunities for resolving imbalances
- Conducted by Reclamation and the Basin States, in collaboration with stakeholders throughout the Basin
- Began in January 2010 and completed in December 2012
- A planning study – **did** *not* result in any decisions, but provides the technical foundation for future activities

# Basin Study Summary

- The system is vulnerable if we do nothing
- Doing something greatly reduces that vulnerability and makes the system more resilient but does not eliminate vulnerability



- In the near term, all portfolios show that conservation, transfers, and reuse are cost-effective ways to reduce vulnerability
- In the longer term, more tradeoffs emerge to achieve an acceptable level of risk in terms of options, cost, resources, and other implications



 *Moving Forward effort*

 **State-led**

 **Reclamation-led**

 **Tribes/Reclamation-led**

 **Area identified in Basin Study where next steps should be taken**

## Next Steps Areas Identified in the Basin Study

# *Moving Forward Effort*

- Stakeholder kickoff in May 2013
- Ultimate goal: identify actionable steps to address projected water supply and demand imbalances that have broad-based support and provide a wide-range of benefits.
- Phase 1 began with the formation of:
  - Coordination Team
  - M&I Water Conservation and Reuse Workgroup
  - Agricultural Water Conservation, Productivity, and Transfers Workgroup
  - Environmental and Recreational Flows Workgroup
- Phase 1 Report published in May 2015

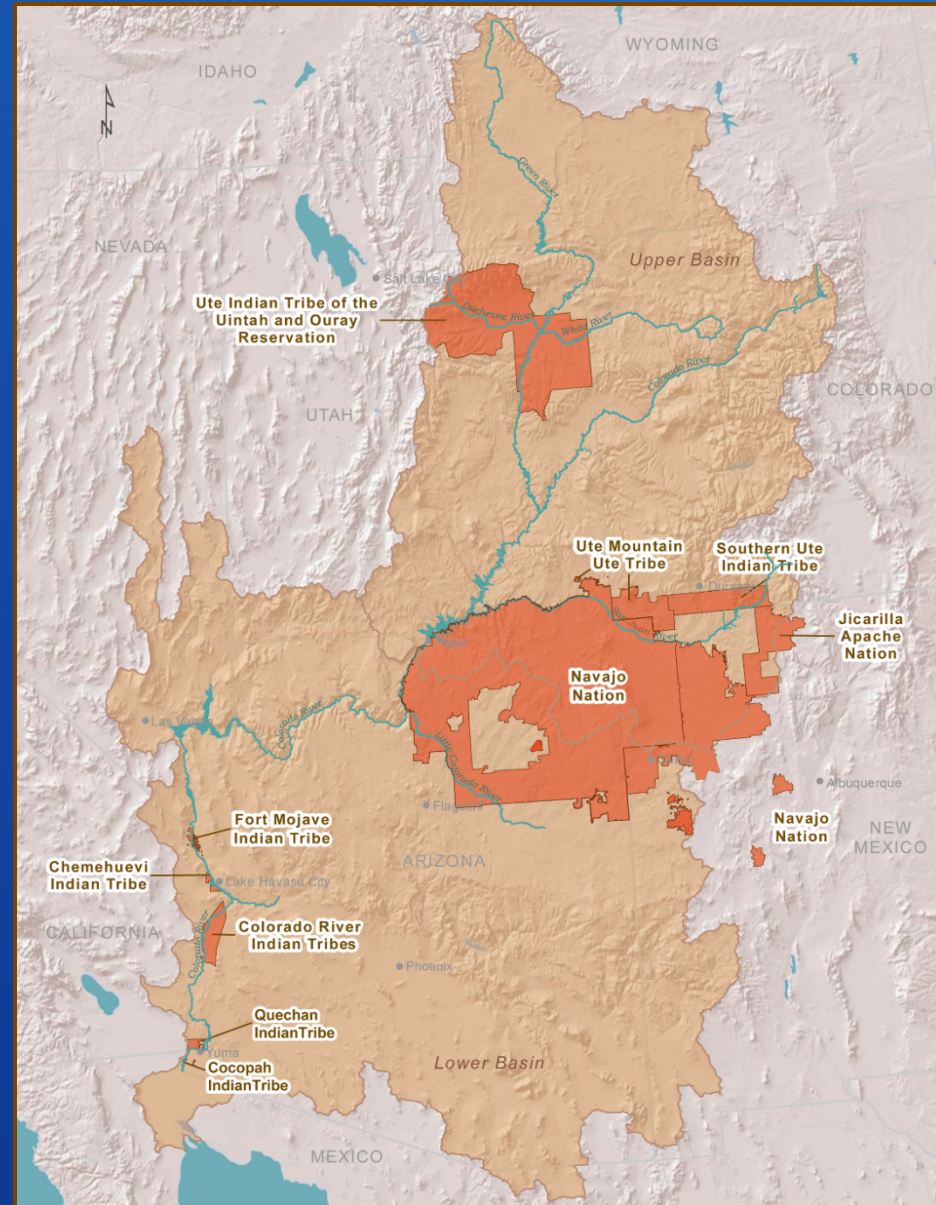
# Summary of *Moving Forward* Effort

- Twenty-five opportunities were identified by the workgroups to address projected imbalances and enhance system resiliency
- Workgroups also identified potential actions associated with each opportunity
- Similar between each workgroup's individual set of findings include opportunities related to:
  - Funding and incentives
  - Data and tools
  - Outreach and partnerships
  - Coordination and integration
  - Infrastructure improvements
  - Flexible water management



# Tribal Water Study

- Objectives
  - Assess current and future water development for tribes of the Ten Tribes Partnership
  - Assess system impacts resulting from development of tribal water, including to those relying on unused tribal water
  - Identify tribal water development challenges and opportunities
- Builds on limited assessment of tribal water issues in Colorado River Basin Study
- Conducted jointly by Reclamation and the Ten Tribes Partnership
- Study began in January 2014
- Publication planned for 2017



RECLAMATION

A wide-angle photograph of a large reservoir, likely Lake Powell, nestled in a deep canyon. The water is a deep blue-green color. In the distance, a long dam spans across the canyon. A small boat is visible on the water in the middle ground. The surrounding cliffs are rugged and brownish-red. The sky is clear and blue.

# Questions?

## For more information:

- Lower Colorado River Operations: <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/riverops.html>
- Colorado River Basin Study: <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/crbstudy.html>
- Moving Forward: <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/crbstudy/MovingForward.html>
- Tribal Water Study: <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/crbstudy/tribalwaterstudy.html>

# RECLAMATION