

Peer Review Plan for the Technical Memorandum on the Implementation Effects of New Area and Capacity Surveys for Lake Mohave and Lake Havasu

Date: December 30, 2024

Originating Office:

Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Basin Region, PO BOX 61470, LC-4600, Boulder City, NV 89006-1470

Reclamation Roles:

Jacklynn Gould, Regional Director, Lower Colorado Basin Region, Bureau of Reclamation

Peer Review Coordinator: Erin Orozco-Whitaker, Hydrologist, Lower Colorado Basin Region, Bureau of Reclamation

Subject and Purpose:

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is analyzing the impacts of implementing new elevation-area-capacity tables within Reclamation's RiverWare models and the Hydrologic Database. The objective of this study was to evaluate the effects on operations and decision making. The most recent topo-bathymetric surveys were completed with cooperation between Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region and a contractor.

These tables will be used for all operations frameworks, including asset management records, reservoir allocation sheets, and all other operational record keeping and hydrologic modeling. Reclamation uses a variety of RiverWare models to inform operations and decision making across multiple time horizons. The use of updated area and capacity tables has the potential to shift operational decisions in the Colorado River Basin when projected elevations are close to the key elevation thresholds. Due to the potential impact to decision making, Reclamation analyzed the impact of new area-capacity tables to all of the basin-wide operations models to better inform Reclamation management and Colorado River basin stakeholders on what changes (if any) could happen.

Impact of Dissemination:

Under Reclamation policy CMP P14, Peer Review of Scientific Information and Assessments, in fulfillment of the Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (70

FR 2664-2677) and implementation of the Information Quality Act (Pub. L. 106-554) the science informing the Technical Memorandum on 2022 Area and Capacity Surveys for Lakes Mohave and Havasu is determined to be influential scientific information. This status was determined based on the impact that updating area and capacity tables can have on reservoir operations. Further impact analysis of the new area and capacity tables resulted in a finding of negligible impact to model results.

Peer Review Scope:

Reviewers will consider the methods used to perform the sensitivity analysis in the technical memorandum and whether any further analysis needs to be performed. Reviewers will also consider the sensitivity analysis results and if they represent a thorough understanding of impacts to Reclamation's models. The following questions should be considered by reviewers:

1. Was the sensitivity analysis performed by Reclamation a thorough investigation to understand the impact to projections?
2. Are the conclusions of the sensitivity analysis reasonable and valid, given the analysis and results provided in the report?

Reviewers are to provide comment solely on the scientific information being reviewed, and not on any agency decision or policy.

Timing of Review:

The review period is expected to run for three weeks in early 2025. The study lead will proceed with the peer review of the technical memo once the Lower Colorado Basin Region's Regional Director's office has been fully briefed on the findings of the study.

The final Peer Reviewed Report is expected to be available on the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's [peer review website](#) later in the spring. No time deferrals are involved.

Methodology of Review:

Review will be conducted by individuals. The identities of the reviewers will be disclosed in the final Peer Review Report. Review findings/comments will be summarized together. The peer review process will not provide opportunities for public participation or public comments.

Number of Peer Reviewers:

It is anticipated that 1 – 3 peer reviewers will be utilized.

Reviewer Selection Process:

Peer reviewers will have had at least 2-years of experience with expertise in hydrology, natural sciences, engineering, or water/reservoir management. The reviewers will be selected by Reclamation from outside of the Lower Colorado Basin Region. The public will not be asked to participate in the reviewer selection process.

Delivery of Findings:

Each peer reviewer will submit a report of their findings to the Peer Review Lead by the end of the review period. At a minimum, their report will include a brief description of their findings and recommendations in a comment matrix. The report will be provided digitally to the Peer Review Lead.

Response to Peer Review:

At the conclusion of receiving peer review comments, the Peer Review Lead will submit a final Peer Review Report to Reclamation's [peer review website](#). The Peer Review Report will summarize the findings of the peer review and list the comments provided by the reviewers, as well as Reclamation's response to the comments, actions the agency will undertake regarding the comments, and reasons the agency believes those actions will satisfy any key concerns or recommendations.

Federal Register Notice:

This peer review is not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) because the review does not involve open meetings or committee chartering and reviewers are being asked to provide individual reviews on the subject matter. Reclamation is not seeking consensus advice from the reviewers as a group.

Applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA):

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Agency Contact:

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