



washington dc update

May 16, 2012

WESTCAS at Twenty!

One of the goals of the June 18-20 summer conference in San Diego will be to celebrate the 20th birthday of WESTCAS . Birthdays are wonderful, especially if they are accompanied by challenges for the future. For example, a person just turning six can look forward to entering first grade. A person turning 18 can expect to graduate from high school and being able to vote for the first time.

WESTCAS faces a very special challenge and opportunity as it enters its 21st year. This is the release, first in draft form in June and then in final form in July of the Bureau of Reclamation’s “Supply and Demand Imbalances of Colorado River Water” study.

It would be easy to yawn and think, “Oh, another Federal water study.” But the fact is that this is the most comprehensive assessment of the water challenges associated with the Colorado River for 40 years. Think about it. When the previous study was released, Richard Nixon was in his first term as President. The number one song was Roberta Flack’s “The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face” and the top TV show was “Al I in the Family” followed closely by the Flip Wilson Show in second place.

The Colorado River lies at the very heart of the water issue in the Arid West. Virtually every water resource agency is impacted in some way, either directly or indirectly, by the policy decisions that will be made based on the Bureau’s study. Should the solutions include building pipelines from other sources of water such as the Mississippi River? Or increasing conservation measures? Or a massive overhaul of regulations? Or maybe banning new diversions for issues like power generation?

We are certain that many of you reading this update have thought and are thinking long and hard what these answers should be and how they will impact your agencies and clients.

We hope you will bring these ideas with you to San Diego. This will allow WESTCAS members to discuss face to face how we can be a voice and a player in helping to shape the policy decisions that emerge from the Bureau’s Colorado River study. We can’t think of a better way for WESTCAS to turn 21.

Summary & Take-Away .

Water issues in West are directly linked to the Colorado River; therefore, when the Bureau of Reclamations issues the draft report on supply and demand imbalances of the Colorado River, WESTCAS needs to be informed of its findings, debate its recommendations, and take a lead role as the voice on Western water.

For more information on the BOR’s Colorado River Study, we suggest the following articles:

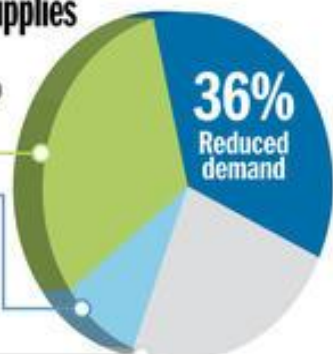
- A multi-part article in [Deseret News](#).
- Bureau of Reclamation [report](#) and [Factsheet](#)

Options to bolster water supplies for Colorado River users

DISTRIBUTION OF OPTIONS RECEIVED

- 31% Increased supply
- 9% Governance & implementation
- 24% Modify operations

SOURCE: Bureau of Reclamation
DESERET NEWS GRAPHIC



WESTCAS
Western Coalition of Arid States

Bring a Perspective Member to San Diego!