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## Overview of Scoping Comments

- More than 24,000 comments received.
  - 321 unique letters, including:56 Federal, State, and local entities
  - 15 Tribes
  - 65 Organizations (approximate)
- 21,292 copies of 7 different form letters Blue Ribbon Coalition
  - Save the Colorado
  - Audubon
  - Glen Canyon Bypass/Fill Mead First
- 1,200 form letter submissions with additional unique content
- Comments posted on the Post-2026 website:  
<https://www.usbr.gov/ColoradoRiverBasin/post2026/scoping/summary-input.html>

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## Purpose and Need

- The Secretary is legally required to coordinate operations of the Colorado River reservoirs
- 2007 Interim Guidelines are expiring
- 2007 Interim Guidelines have not sufficiently reduced risk
- Imbalance between water supply and demand will be exacerbated by increasingly likely low-runoff conditions
- Expanded and innovative use of conservation is needed
- Addressing tribal concerns regarding Colorado River basin management is needed

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## Purpose and Need

- Update and expand management guidelines for Colorado River Reservoirs, particularly for Lakes Powell and Mead
- Provide Colorado River water users a greater degree of predictability with respect to the amount of annual water available in future years under anticipated increasing variability, low runoff and low reservoir conditions
- Provide additional mechanisms for the conservation, storage and delivery of water supplies in Colorado River reservoirs
- Provide new or enhanced opportunities for Basin Tribes to benefit from their water rights; and
- Provide flexibility to build resilience and accommodate future needs and growth that are supported by Colorado River water supplies, including the integration of unquantified tribal water rights once they are resolved

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## Elements of Alternatives

Identification of circumstances under which the Secretary would allocate, reduce, or increase the annual amount of water available for consumptive use from Lake Mead to the Lower Division States

Coordinated Operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead, particularly under low reservoir conditions

Storage and delivery of conserved water in Lake Mead and/or Lake Powell to increase the flexibility to meet water use needs from both reservoirs, including the storage and delivery of non-system water; exchanges; and water conserved through extraordinary measures by or for tribal, agricultural, or municipal entities.

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## Proposed Federal Action

Allows for the development of robust operating guidelines for Lake Powell and Lake Mead without precluding upstream or downstream actions needed to protect critical reservoir elevations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead, such as:

- Approaches that consider total system storage in all major Colorado River reservoirs and/or actual inflows to determine coordinated operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead.
- Approaches that include opportunities for conservation, augmentation, demand management, or other water management strategies.
- Temporary emergency response operations at upstream Colorado River reservoirs to protect critical infrastructure at Glen Canyon Dam, so long as the project-specific operations of those reservoirs remain within their respective Records of Decision.

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## Geographic Scope

The geographic Scope of the environmental analysis in the DEIS is dependent upon the range of alternatives developed in the DEIS

Geographic scope will therefore be determined later in the NEPA process

## Next Steps

Transition to the next phase of the NEPA process – alternative development for analysis in the DEIS

Draft EIS expected in December 2024